Sonoma County
Juvenile Justice System Study

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Last year Sonoma County decided to conduct a comprehensive analysis of its juvenile justice system. This analysis would parallel the study completed for its adult criminal justice system. The goal was to better understand how resources are used, to explore possible system efficiencies, to consider ideas to improve youth outcomes, and to better anticipate future resource needs.

This Report presents Sonoma County with detailed information about its juvenile justice system. It provides the County with data on juvenile case processing; a ‘snapshot’ of youth held in custody; a risk profile of its juvenile population; and longitudinal recidivism data for three of its out-of-home programs (Camp, Sierra, and Placement). The Report also presents national research on effective interventions. Finally, it offers an analysis of Juvenile Hall trend data and an updated capacity forecast.

Based on this analysis, recommendations are advanced that address the goals of protecting public safety, further reducing the impact on custody resources, improving youth outcomes, streamlining system processing, promoting strong community partnerships, and strengthening an already strong base of effective and innovative interventions.

Key Findings

Sonoma County has embraced innovation. It has adopted a risk and needs assessment instrument, implemented a host of progressive programs, worked to expedite the processing of cases, and is deeply committed to evidence-based interventions. This is commendable. These far-sighted efforts have served to build a strong foundation of juvenile justice services in Sonoma County. Highlights of Report Findings include:

- **A new focus on risk for recidivism is resulting in a realignment of services.** The classification of youth by their likelihood to re-offend allows the system to more tightly focus its resources. Approximately 3,000 youth are arrested each year in Sonoma County. Roughly half of these cases result in a District Attorney filing (1560), and approximately half of these are sustained (790). The new risk tool will result in the concentration of resources on a subset of this population who score at higher risk for recidivism: focusing custody and intensive supervision services on approximately
200 youth. This approach, in combination with other system efforts, is expected to reduce, over time, the impact on local custody resources.

- For the majority of youth who come through Intake (73 percent) this is their first experience being processed at Juvenile Hall.

- 22 percent of youth in Juvenile Hall are awaiting entry to Placement, Camp or Sierra.

- 46 percent of youth in the Sonoma County Juvenile Probation system had a parent or sibling who had been incarcerated.

- In Sonoma County 58 percent of the higher risk youth evidence a problem with alcohol or other drugs, compared to 25 percent of the moderate risk youth.

- In Sonoma County 28 percent of youth, or their families, report the youth as having a mental health problem; 14% report that the youth is currently attending treatment.

- 85 percent of youth in the Sonoma County Juvenile Probation system had been expelled or suspended from school at least once. Of these youth, over half (53 %) were between 10 to 13 years of age at first expulsion or suspension.

- 78 percent of the custody population (Juvenile Hall, Camp and Sierra) is male and 22 percent is female. 10% of the custody population is 14 years old or younger.

- 24% of the custody population is Caucasian, 7% is African American, 64% is Hispanic, and the remainder is comprised of other races.

- Gang issues have a significant impact on the Sonoma County juvenile justice system. 70 percent of youth in custody (Juvenile Hall, Camp and Sierra) had a gang designation. 77% of the Camp population, 58% of Sierra, and 59% of the Placement population were affiliated with gangs. Non-gang affiliates represented 21% of the Camp population and committed only 3% of violent offenses during the tracking period; gang affiliates committed 97% of subsequent violent offenses.

- 34 percent of the boys in the study sample who exited Camp went on to be convicted of a crime in the local adult criminal justice system. Overall, approximately 20% of the boys who exited Camp went on to be prosecuted for a violent crime in the adult system.
• For girls at Sierra, 1.7% (one girl) went on to be convicted for a violent crime in the adult system.

• The relationship between Camp program duration and recidivism was mixed: For some boys at Camp longer stays were related to lowered rates of recidivism, and for some boys longer stays appeared to be associated with increased recidivism. This may reflect a possible treatment effect that is specific to a particular sub-population of high risk/ gang youth.

• For those boys from Camp convicted in the adult system there is no evidence of desistance over the time period observed: the intervals between crimes did not increase over time.

• The girls in the Sierra study had a very low level of recidivism, compared to Camp boys. Only 3% went on to commit a crime in the adult system, compared to 34% of the boys.

• Due to the low number of crimes committed by girls in the Sierra program, we cannot conclude that there is a statistical relationship between program success or failure and subsequent criminal activity. As a result, we must look at other indicators to try and detect a program effect. If involvement in the program reduced crime one would expect to see a relationship between program lengths of stay and recidivism: there was no such clear relationship. Given the low base rate of criminal offending there is also no demonstrable incapacitation effect.

• 64 percent of youth in the Sierra sample escaped at least once while in the program; 35 percent escaped two or more times.

• Youth in Placement have an average length of stay of 454 days. The average length of stay for girls in the Sierra program is, at 219 days, longer than that for Camp, at 203 days.

• Of youth in Placement, 38 percent were in an out-of-home program in Sonoma County, 56 percent were housed out-of-county, and 6 percent were out-of-state.

• Taken as a whole (29 Placement programs were included in the study sample) there was no evidence to suggest that longer program stays in Placement reduced crime.
• National research suggests that community-based treatment provides the best crime reduction benefit for all but the most high-risk youth. There is evidence that when youth not in this very high risk group are placed in custody programs recidivism rates may increase.

• National research reveals that outpatient family-based programs achieve some of the best overall results in terms of recidivism reduction and are the most cost-effective. As an example, the costs of one community-based family program (Multi-Systemic Therapy) is from one-half to one-third less than residential, group or hospital placements, and achieves strong recidivism reductions of over 37 percent.

• 49 percent of youth with felony charges and 39% of the youth with misdemeanor charges had 3 or more court appearances prior to the resolution of their case.

• The overall time from arrest to disposition in the local juvenile court is 90 days.

• Longer times to case disposition are associated with higher pre-adjudication failure rates. In Sonoma County the failure-to-appear (FTA) rate for youth in pre-trial status is 11 percent. Case processing delays result in higher rates of failure. This is evident by looking at failure rates by process times: while the average time from arrest to case disposition is 90 days, the average time from arrest to FTA is 127 days. Of youth with an FTA, 18 percent have 3-9 failure-to-appears before case disposition.

• The re-arrest rate for youth in the community on pre-trial status is 16 percent.

• Custody Capacity Forecasts anticipate a need for an additional 143 to 208 detention beds by 2035. The planning for future capacity is a policy exercise. Decisions regarding risk-based policies (who to target), the future use of Camp and Sierra, the expansion of detention alternatives, and the ability to reduce case processing and custody length of stay all impact future need.
Issues

Data Comparisons

Pre-Trial Failure-to-Appear and Re-arrest

Direct comparisons of pre-trial statistics are made difficult by the lack of comprehensive data for juveniles — at either the state or national level, and by the many factors that frustrate meaningful comparisons. For example, Sonoma County has an FTA rate of 11% and Santa Cruz County, California has an FTA rate of 3%. However, without understanding differences in pre-trial release rates, case processing times, and the profile of the delinquent population, any direct comparison may be misleading.

We can, however, conclude that for those counties which have adopted comprehensive juvenile detention reform that such reform (use of objective risk tools to guide release decisions, expedited case processing, and an expanded range of detention alternatives) does coincide with declines in crime and failure-to-appear rates. As an example, Multnomah County, Oregon, has lowered its pre-trial failure rates since instituting comprehensive juvenile justice reform. It recently reported a 19% total pre-trial failure rate (a combined failure-to-appear and pretrial re-arrest rate) which compares to Sonoma County’s total pre-trial failure rate of 27%. We can assume then that Sonoma County’s pre-trial failure rate will similarly decline. The data presented in this Report is important baseline data to track that change.

Recidivism Rates

There is no single national juvenile recidivism rate. However, research regarding recidivism rates by risk level allows general comparisons.

In this Report, recidivism data is analyzed and presented in different ways: entry into adult system, conviction for violent offense, etc. When recidivism is defined as a subsequent conviction for a felony offense within 18 months of program exit (as it is in the referenced research out of Washington State Institute of Public Policy) we report a 32.3% recidivism rate for the Camp population and 3.9% for Sierra. This can be compared to expected levels of felony convictions by risk level, as presented in juvenile risk assessment research from the Washington State Institute of Public Policy.

This analysis shows felony recidivism for the Sierra girls comparable to a low-risk juvenile population (according to the risk tool research, low-risk girls have an expected felony
recidivism of 6%). Given that an expected felony recidivism rate for **high-risk** girls is roughly **18%**, and highly effective programs reduce recidivism about **20%**, we would expect a 14.4% rate for **high-risk** girls exiting Sierra. The data suggest girls were **low-risk** at entry. Felony recidivism of 32% for the Camp population is consistent with the expected rate for **high-risk** boys (36%).

**Recommendations**

This Report presents many ideas for review and discussion. These include the following:

- **Expand the Continuum of Community Based Programs** to make more alternatives available along the program continuum. Give greatest emphasis to Day Reporting Center, Drug Court, and Intensive Family programs. Make skill development programs now available at Camp also available at Day Reporting program. Develop more post-program options (step-down to Day Reporting, mentors, transition housing, etc.); adopt additional programs with proven recidivism reduction outcomes (extend the range of community-based family programs, and make either cognitive treatment or aggression treatment universal for all higher risk youth).

- **Review Utilization of Out-of-Home Resources**: Given the findings that show a low public safety threat for programs such as Sierra, discuss the principal objectives. If the primary goal is not public safety (the child has not engaged in egregious criminal conduct), but is instead the ‘best interest of the child,’ than who should be targeted; how is this resolved within a risk-based system; and can this objective be achieved with lower cost community-based options?

- **Make more Options Available before Out-of-Home programs**: Expand the continuum of proven family-based programs to forestall entry into out-of-home programs and reduce the length of time waiting for entry into programs. The Report presents options to consider.

- **Reduce Length of Out-of-Home Program Stays**: The findings from this study suggest that longer program stays may not have a strong association with reduced recidivism. The value of extended stays may be limited to an incapacitation effect for a sub-set of higher risk youth. Given this a model should be considered that limits stays to shorter periods, ties length of stay to levels of risk/violence, and is linked to structured evidence-based criteria. Sonoma County is not alone in California in having youth in
programs for 9-12 months or more, but the research on program duration (which can show negative outcomes for longer stays), should cause a reassessment.

- **Focus on Violence:** The Sonoma County juvenile justice system is greatly impacted by gangs. This study shows that gangs have a higher rate of subsequent offending and violent offending, than non-gang youth. However, not all gang affiliated kids are the same; there appear to be subtle differences between sub-populations and patterns of program response and recidivism. For example, youth associated with Caucasian and Hispanic gangs had similar rates of successful outcome at Camp, but only youth associated with Hispanic gangs had lowered recidivism with longer stays. Gang members who had a violent offense at entry to Camp and had weapons charges had the highest rates of subsequent violence. All this speaks to the need to better distinguish those youth who represent the greatest threat of violence and to tailor services accordingly: to develop service tracks that reflect levels of risk and violence; and to reserve longer stays, more intensive services for this population. This is important, given that the greatest benefit of the program appears to be an incapacitation effect rather than a treatment effect. Boys younger than 16 years who are violent should also have a Camp option available.

- **Minimize Program Escapes:** Escapes disrupt treatment continuity and result in lengthened program stays. Convictions for escape also impact a youth’s future risk score. Finally, for programs like Camp that achieve the greatest benefit through incapacitation, escapes undermine this. The challenge with non-secure programs is to preserve a natural learning environment, while reducing the ability to simply walk away.

- **Explore the Concept of Early Case Resolution (ECR):** The Sonoma County adult criminal justice system is adopting an ECR program that includes a restructuring of the front-end process. However, for the juvenile system a more general review of the ECR concept and principles is recommended toward the goal of strengthening the existing process.

- **Take Risk Assessment to Next Level:** Explore how risk assessment (the risk to re-offend) can be applied within a structured sanction model; examine the nexus between risk scores and violence; and further study how gang dynamics and levels of gang involvement translate into risk. It will also be important to validate the new risk tool – especially given the unique gang profile of the local juvenile population. Although the majority of youth currently in Camp and Sierra scored as higher risk with
the new tool, the low rates of recidivism for the Sierra sample demonstrates the importance of local validation.

- **Refine Data Collection:** Through this project data collection protocols have been put in place that will allow the County, over time, to map changes in its juvenile population. Other refinements would include recidivism tracking and the development of program reviews that assess conformance to evidence-based practices. The ability to track outcomes by sub-populations (risk, gender, gang status, specific gang affiliation, age, etc.) is crucial for program refinement and cost considerations.

- **Form a Policy & Planning Workgroup:** Establish a workgroup to address the policy issues advanced in this Report (including policies presented to mitigate future capacity needs); to make recommendations about how to address future resource needs; and to monitor and coordinate juvenile system reform efforts. How this group would relate to existing advisory groups would need discussion.

### Report Organization

**Chapter One: REPORT OVERVIEW**
This chapter provides an overview of the project’s methodology and findings, and presents recommendation highlights.

**Chapter Two: CHANGING THE OUTCOMES**
In this chapter local risk data is reviewed, research on program effectiveness is summarized, and program ideas for special populations (girls, gang affiliates, youth with substance abuse problems, and youth with behavioral health issues) is presented.

**Chapter Three: REVIEWING THE CUSTODY CONTINUUM**
This chapter looks at outcomes for three out-of-custody residential program options in the Sonoma County Juvenile System: Camp, Sierra Youth Center, and a range of out-of-home Placements.
Chapter Four: CASE PROCESSING: SAME JUSTICE SOONER
The data from an analysis of local case processing is presented in this chapter. More than 2,800 cases were tracked from Filing to Court Disposition to reveal decision-making, youth outcomes, and case processing times. This provides the system with important baseline data.

Chapter Five: MEASURING WHAT MATTERS
This chapter focuses on the value of comprehensive and longitudinal data and recommends some areas to strengthen.

Chapter Six: JUVENILE FACILITIES FORECAST
Forecasted custody capacity needs to the year 2035 are presented in this chapter. The forecasts are based on an analysis of trends in admissions and length of stay. The forecast is presented as a range of numbers, reflecting the ability to modify future need based on changes to the existing system. This chapter also includes some policy options to consider for reducing the impact on custody resources.

Chapter Seven: NEXT STEPS
Next steps for the County to consider taking are presented in this chapter.

The chapters are followed by a section, System Research and Data that presents the detailed data collected as part of this project. The data presented in this section are central to a nuanced understanding of the local system, and form the basis for the recommendations advanced. The data reports presented include:

SONOMA COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM DATA
This report presents a study of local case processing from booking to adjudication.

SONOMA COUNTY IN-CUSTODY JUVENILE OFFENDER DATA
This report presents profile information for youth in custody.

THE CAMP STUDY

THE SIERRA STUDY

THE PLACEMENT STUDY
These three outcomes studies track recidivism outcomes, for youth in these programs, in both the juvenile and adult criminal justice system.

APPENDIX
The information presented here includes a recommended program continuum (Appendix 1).
CHAPTER ONE

Report Overview

“Human Beings can change – our Probation Department has an interest and investment in positive change.” (Sonoma County Probation Department Statement of Principle)

Sonoma County has embraced innovation. The Juvenile Probation Department has made a commitment to apply research to its task, and to support staff as agents of change. In so doing, the Department has set a new course. By adopting risk tools and training staff in evidence-based case management it has created a new way of doing business. This has been possible because of County and Department leadership, and the tremendous energy and enthusiasm of staff. Of course, all this change is made in the name of Change: to use our best knowledge to assist youth to chart their own bright future. These are exciting times.

These are also challenging times. As Sonoma County looks forward and develops new models of delivering services it is, like most jurisdictions, confronted by significant budget shortfalls. This forces hard choices and puts pressure on a Juvenile Justice system that must do the equivalent of launching a new ship while navigating strong headwinds. At the same time, Sonoma County has the advantage of new information to help them decide how best to ‘trim the sails.’ New risk assessment information offers another management tool to help focus resources, and system-wide data from a study such as this, can help inform budget choices – both short and long-term.
The Study

System information provides a broad perspective. We collected system baseline data, developed the methodology for a daily custody snapshot, conducted outcome studies to track recidivism, and examined risk assessment data. We interviewed more than 70 staff, observed court hearings, and visited programs; and, we developed capacity forecast scenarios to guide planning of future detention beds. Finally, we talked to youth in the system, sitting down separately with boys at Camp and girls at Sierra to hear their stories and listen to their suggestions. The data elements of the study included:

Data Examined for the Juvenile Justice Project

- Examined preliminary risk assessment data
- Reviewed local alternative-to-detention programs
- Developed a daily custody snapshot routine
- Conducted a case processing analysis from Intake to Disposition
- Tracked outcome data for a sample of youth at Camp and Sierra
- Examined gang vs. non-gang recidivism data
- Tracked outcome data for a sample of youth in out-of-home Placement
- Developed capacity forecast scenarios

And there is more –at the same time that we studied the Juvenile Justice system the County initiated a separate look at Prevention services: The Upstream Project. This commitment to a comprehensive approach to youth services sets this County apart.

Planning is challenging at any time, more so when a system is in flux. This study took place as large shifts were occurring within the Juvenile Probation Department due to the implementation of the risk tool, which made for an interesting, and challenging, project. In the vernacular of the risk tool, this was a ‘dynamic’ process.
The Questions

This Report presents much data. This is valuable. However, the data is only a starting point. For it is not merely data, but the questions we ask, that shape the conclusions that are drawn or the decisions that are made about how best to proceed. Over the course of this project we asked many questions. Not all have simple answers; some require further discussion; some raise new questions altogether – or require more data. But the questions themselves help frame what should be an on-going discourse.

An overarching question for any delinquency system is how to put juvenile justice principles into practice. Sonoma County’s Juvenile Department has beautifully articulated these core principles in their mission statement – and added to them. Keeping these principles at the forefront of any reform is important. How can we make certain that we are responding in the least restrictive manner, minimizing stigma, making decisions based on objective information, and ensuring that our interventions do no harm? Systems have begun to measure ‘evidence-based practices’; similarly, how can we assess progress toward a full realization of ‘principle-based practices’?

We raised many questions over the course of this project, some include:

Questions to Frame the Discourse

- How can the County maximize existing alternative programs?
- How do we ensure the least restrictive approach?
- What works – and why?
- How can we expand community-based alternatives?
- What is the relationship between program participation and recidivism?
- How should we measure program success? What is the principal goal? How can we improve outcomes?
- How do we best respond to violence and gang issues?
- Can we make behavioral distinctions between youth with gang affiliations?
- How do we best design services to address risk factors? Are there proven programs that should be adopted?
- How do we sustain behavioral gains, and prevent entry into the adult system?
- How can we best improve case processing times and efficiency?
- How can we plan the most effective, lowest cost options, without compromising public safety?
- How can County agencies better collaborate to support youth success?
- What opportunity does the new risk and needs assessment present, as a gateway to identify and serve higher risk families? How might the larger system respond?
- What do we want each youth to take with them upon exit from the system?
- What can we learn from listening to youth and their families?
- How do we engage families?
- How can we use data to improve our efforts?
- How do we measure what matters?
- How can we celebrate success – at every chance?

Much to Praise

“While Probation is a neutral voice in the presentation of facts for the Court, we are not neutral in our hopes/desires for offenders.” (Sonoma County Probation Dept. Statement of Principle)

Over the course of this study of the Sonoma County Juvenile Justice system we were impressed my many things.

This is a County that has an exceptional interest in ‘doing it right.’ We were impressed by local police agencies which fund their own youth diversion programs; by communities that have their own social service agencies; by a school system that contributes funds for a court truancy support staff; by a Child Protective Service and a Mental Health Department that has joined with Juvenile Probation to plan wrap-around services; and by an Alcohol and Drug Services team that does much with limited funds in the face of great need.

We were impressed by Juvenile Court judges who are dedicated to new approaches such as the court program for youth with mental health issues, and ready to revive past efforts – such as a Drug Court.

We were also impressed by the philosophy of the Juvenile Probation Department: by their ethic of optimism, humility, and respect; by their commitment to specialized programs for particular groups, such as the Circle program for girls or the ACT program for youth with mental health challenges; by their concerted efforts to deal with the tough issues of gangs; and by the design of programs that give youth a real
gift: a welding certificate, a Girl Scout badge, a chance to bond, a safe place to learn, and an opportunity to make a mistake – and learn from it.

Mostly, we were impressed by Juvenile Justice and treatment provider staff. Sonoma County’s greatest asset is the individuals who bring to their work uncommon passion and caring for youth. Their approaches may vary, and their ideas about how best to achieve the best results may differ, but they all bring an exceptional commitment to making a difference in the lives of young people. This is what it is all about.

The Findings

“Probation must be proactive in helping determine and manage an offender’s level of risk; therefore validated assessments – initially and ongoing- are necessary to determine the appropriate level of supervision at each phase for each offender.”

(Sonoma County Probation Department Statement of Principle)

Risk & Needs Assessment

A juvenile risk assessment tool quantifies the likelihood that a youth will re-offend based on an actuarial analysis.

Approximately 22 percent of Sonoma youth in the juvenile justice system score as higher risk as a result of the risk and needs assessment. The classification of youth by their likelihood to re-offend allows the system to more tightly focus its resources. The first application of the tool revealed, however, that the Department was already doing an overall good job of targeting the higher risk youth: 75 percent of youth in custody (Hall, Camp, and Sierra) were classified higher risk. Neither the Camp nor Sierra had any low risk youth. The new risk tool will result in the concentration of resources on a subset of the population who score at higher risk for recidivism (focusing on approximately 200 youth).

A new focus on risk for recidivism is resulting in a realignment of services. By definition, applying a risk tool limits the mission of the Department, and makes recidivism the driver of services. Over the course of this study, the population of youth on supervision caseloads dropped significantly, in some cases by half. Youth in Placement dropped by one-third and will continue to decline, as lower risk youth are
no longer given first priority for formal supervision or intensive services. Risk information and a corresponding policy to focus the most intensive resources on higher risk youth has resulted in a realignment of resources that is still underway. This represents a significant shift. How this effects the Juvenile Justice system can readily be observed. However, the implications for those youth with high social service needs who do not represent a public safety problem are less clear, but one that merits a larger system discussion. Low risk youth do not pose a public safety threat; by definition they have a low probability of re-offending. These are youth who have made a mistake and are not anti-social or exhibiting a pattern that would indicate future criminal involvement. At the same time they may have specific social needs that might be well addressed. For example, a low risk youth who is missing too much school would benefit from a school-based intervention. The goal is to respond to low risk youth outside the formal proceedings of the juvenile justice system.

“Everyone with whom we work is treated with dignity and respect...It also serves to build relationship, which is fundamental to fulfilling our mission.” (Sonoma County Probation Dept. Statement of Principle)

The risk and needs assessment identifies ‘risk factors’, life circumstances or personal problems, that make a youth vulnerable to begin or continue criminality activity. These risk factors include: use of illegal substances, association with criminally-involved peers, poor school attendance, poor use of leisure time, anti-social attitudes, family stability and discipline issues, behavioral health problems, etc.

The top risk factor for Sonoma’s juvenile offenders in the higher risk category is ‘Current Relationships.’ Included in this category are the absence of a positive adult role model and anti-social peers. Many youth who touch the juvenile justice system do not have a stable, positive adult role model. At the same time, research shows the importance of a consistent and positive role model for a young person to thrive and move in a positive direction. This argues for an approach that focuses on putting resources into developing family and support services: mentors, family-oriented services, and home-based programs. A focus on relationships must animate juvenile probation. Research shows that family-based programs produce some of the best outcomes: the greatest reductions in recidivism of any programs for youth in the juvenile justice system. To what extent could community-based, family-oriented programs substitute for existing out-of-home programs?
“Intervention in an offender’s life should be limited to the extent necessary to protect society and promote law-abiding behavior.” (Sonoma County Juvenile Probation Statement of Principle)

Recidivism Data

Outcome studies were conducted for samples of youth at Camp, Sierra, and in out-of-home Placement. The samples included youth who were in these programs over the last four to five years. Not only was criminal activity tracked, both during and after program exit, but the relationship between youth characteristics/nature of program involvement and program outcome was also examined. The study looked at the relationship between outcomes and age, gender, gang affiliation and, in the case of the Camp, conviction type at point of program entry.

The studies were not designed to track changes in youth offending before and after program involvement but, as with the Washington State Institute for Public Policy work, to look at the effect of program participation on re-offending. For example, was there any difference in subsequent criminal activity for those who stayed in the program for 90 days or less, versus those who stayed more than one year? Was there a difference in outcomes based on successful program completion?

Taken together, this data can help inform management decisions. It can serve to help refine programs to achieve improved outcomes, and it can inform system dialogue about how best to plan future services.

The system response to program outcome data should be framed by the following questions:

- What is the principle objective for each program?
- If the principal goal is to reduce criminal behavior, or suppress it through incapacitation, has the program achieved this goal?
- If the crime reduction benefits are low, are there other economic benefits to the system: for example, if youth were not in this program would they be detained at a higher cost?
If the crime reduction or economic benefits are low, are there other compelling individual or social benefits: for example, if youth were not in this program would we expect higher rates of teen pregnancy or lower levels of school success?

If the principal benefits are not reduction of criminal behavior but improved child well-being, are there other less intensive or less costly means to achieve these ends that might be considered without compromising public safety?

Finally, are there program models that have proven effective in reducing criminal offending and mitigating risk factors?

The 18-month post-program felony recidivism rate for Camp and Sierra is 32.3 percent and 3.9 percent, respectively. This can be compared to the expected recidivism rates (from the Washington State Institute of Public Policy research on risk tools), that use this same definition of recidivism. Based on this research the Camp recidivism is consistent with the expected recidivism for a high-risk boy (36%). On the other hand, the Sierra recidivism falls in the low-end of the expected recidivism for low-risk girls (6%).

There is evidence to suggest that successful completion of the Camp program delays a boy’s subsequent criminal activity. The outcome study did not find evidence of a relationship between successful completion of the program and recidivism: in the aggregate, boys exhibited similar rates of re-offending regardless of program duration or completion. However, there was some evidence to suggest that successful completion did delay time to first subsequent re-offense.

For some boys at Camp longer stays were related to lowered rates of recidivism; for some boys longer stays appeared to increase recidivism. The relationship between length of stay and recidivism is, in this analysis, related to demographic factors of sub-populations at the Camp. For Hispanic youth affiliated with gangs there is evidence that longer program stays are associated with lowered rates of subsequent recidivism. For Caucasian youth affiliated with gangs it appears that longer program stays increase rates of subsequent criminal behavior. This may reflect an interaction effect of youth at Camp; it may reflect different levels of risk related to specific gang culture; or it may reflect other individual risk factors. It merits further study.
Taken in the aggregate, one can argue that time in Camp delays the onset of subsequent criminal behavior, both in the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems. And, the data makes the case for an incapacitation effect for time at Camp: by quantifying the level of criminal activity for boys after they leave the Camp one can estimate a community protection benefit for time in Camp. This is important.

Overall, 34 percent of the boys in the study sample who exited Camp went on to be convicted of a crime in the local adult criminal justice system (56 of 164 boys); approximately 20 percent went on to be convicted or were currently pending adjudication, for a serious, violent crime in either the juvenile or adult system (30 of 164 boys).

**The girls at Sierra have a low level of criminal activity compared to Camp boys.** For the Sierra girls in our study the data paints a very different picture from the Camp population, one in which the level of serious criminal activity is low (both during and after the program), and a great amount of violation behavior is associated with time in the program itself, measured by escapes and technical violations of supervision. Moreover, there is no strong evidence of a relationship between length of stay at Sierra and reoffending: youth with less than 90 days in the program appear to have similar outcomes to those youth with longer stays. The question for the system is, therefore: What is the principal objective for the program?

We recommend a dialogue about the principal objective for Sierra: a discussion about the goals and values that animate its use. This discussion is a natural extension of the adoption of a Risk and Needs tool. The risk tool identifies those youth with a greater likelihood for high frequency re-offending — not necessarily severity of offense. How should the system then use this tool, and structure its decision-making, to best address the sometimes divergent interests of reducing general reoffending, forestalling violence, and the interest — and caring impulse — to address complex quality of life issues in its youth. There are no pat answers. However, as policies are drafted that limit eligibility for Sierra and Placement depending on risk score, it is important to ask: When is our work child protection and when is it public protection? The best response may be: ‘It depends.’

If there is a moral obligation to deal with children who have great needs but low risk for serious criminal behavior the answer for the system is not to ‘do nothing’ but instead to stand back and ask: When does social need trump risk? And, if certain life
circumstances demand attention, in what system is the problem best addressed? To what extent might new community-based, intensive family services provide an alternative?

We can envision a system in which varied goals co-exist, but where the nexus of violence and risk and need is given the highest priority for custody resources. Where that test is not met, we see the need for a common understanding about how best to restructure the larger system response to address higher need youth who do not pose a public safety risk.

“Where public safety is not jeopardized, the community and most offenders are best served through community-based programs.” (Sonoma County Probation Dept. Statement of Principle)

The rate at which Sonoma County youth who exit out-of-home Placement are subsequently convicted in the local adult criminal justice system rivals that of boys (most gang-affiliated) who exit Camp: 32 percent were later convicted in the local adult system.

The dismal results for youth in Placement match those of a recent RAND study of Placement youth in California (presented in the report). The same questions posed for Camp and Sierra apply to Placement. What is the goal? To what extent could community-based, family-supported options be used? In addition, our observations raise other questions: How might county departments better collaborate in delivering services to youth at risk for Placement?

Youth in Placement have an average length of stay of 454 days. The lengths of stay for youth in Camp and Sierra are not as lengthy but are still significant (203 and 219 days respectively).

As a whole, there is no evidence of a relationship between program duration in Placement and reduced time to first subsequent offense. It is not possible to draw conclusions for individual Placement programs given the small numbers in each in our sample. These programs offer varied services to a diverse population of youth. However, taken as a whole, not only was there no evidence to suggest that longer program stays reduced crime: there was evidence that longer stays were actually associated with higher levels of subsequent felony violent offenses. At this time we cannot conclude that longer stays in the program made youth worse, it might only
reflect that more serious youth stay longer. However, this finding, coupled with other research that also finds longer stays associated with poorer outcomes, argues for more analysis.

On its face, given that the study showed no strong relationship between length of stay and improved outcomes, the question becomes: How can we responsibly reduce length of stay? How can this be further studied? As systems we must ensure that first ‘we do no harm.’

“Incarceration can be an appropriate component of a probation program.” (Sonoma County Probation Dept. Statement of Principle)

22 percent of youth in Juvenile Hall are awaiting entry to Placement, Camp or Sierra. Youth in detention waiting for programs are spending unintended time in the most secure custody setting (although some boys waiting for Camp are serving sanction time for violations at Camp, before their return.) On average, youth spend 28 days in Juvenile Hall waiting to enter Camp, 31 days for Sierra, and 63 days for Placement. While some youth are in the Hall on a roll-back (sanction) from one of the programs before they can return, others are simply waiting for entry. As the system debates how to refine out-of-custody programs the goal should be to minimize unnecessary time at Hall waiting for program entry.

Not all youth returning to the community after an extended stay in Custody or in a Placement program have the benefit of comprehensive re-entry services. Both Camp and Sierra work with families in a transition or aftercare phase. In some cases, more is needed: for young men who leave without a plan to return home, for youth returning to communities and families from Placement. Even youth who have spent extended time in Juvenile Hall are in need of strengthened transition services to help sustain gains and ease the return to the community.

“Probation supervision is geared to community protection and offender success.” (Sonoma County Probation Dept. Statement of Principle)

70 percent of youth in custody (Juvenile Hall, Camp and Sierra) had a gang designation: 72 percent of boys and 54 percent of girls. This compares to an estimated 38 percent gang affiliation for all youth on ward probation. In the aggregate, youth with a gang affiliation had higher rates of offending. For the Camp population, youth with a gang affiliation had 5x the rate of future felony convictions as non-gang affiliates.
Gang affiliates in the Camp Outcome study sample had an average rate of serious violent recidivism (convictions and pending cases) approximately 14 times higher than that of non-gang affiliates. The issue of gangs is a reality for the Sonoma County community and its Juvenile system. Camp provides an upper end non-detention alternative. The question is how to better distinguish gang members who are involved in violence, ho to improve violence-related programs, and how to expand and strengthen community-based interventions short of Camp? For example, an Intensive Supervision program with Aggression Replacement treatment plus access to a strong vocational skills training program is worth considering as a first step before Camp.

46 percent of youth in the Sonoma County Juvenile Probation system had a parent or sibling who had been incarcerated. This data, consistent with national figures for juvenile in the delinquency system, reveals patterns of intergenerational involvement with criminal justice systems. How can the cycle be broken; and is there preventive work that can be done with parents in the adult system, such as parenting classes, family counseling, or a Juvenile Probation Family Unit that serves families with members in both systems?

Programs

91 percent of youth in the Sonoma County Juvenile Probation system had been expelled or suspended from school at least once. Of these youth, over half (53%) were between 10 and 13 years of age at first occurrence. This speaks directly, and loudly, to the issue of prevention: How can we stop juvenile delinquency at the schoolhouse door? How do we craft a response to school failure that changes the trajectory of expulsion to conviction?

Sonoma County Juvenile Probation has introduced new and innovative programs: Girls Circle and Boys Council are two examples. The commitment to adopt proven programs for youth is commendable. Sonoma County was recently honored by the National Association of Counties (NACo) for its adoption of the Girls Circle program — and for making it available at many points along the system. Congratulations!

During this project staff expanded the Girls Circle program and added Boys Council in detention. These programs provide youth a safe, group setting to explore their own issues in a facilitated and guided manner. One measure of the success of these efforts is the enthusiasm of both staff and youth involved in this program. Another measure
is change in behavior: early reports from detention staff note that boys in Juvenile Hall in maximum security and the Camp Unit boys who have participated in the Boys Council exhibit reductions in disruptive behavior.

Although this feedback is preliminary, it speaks to the importance of trying new approaches. Girls Circle and Boys Council are not proven but ‘promising’ programs, according to Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Given the limited number of gold standard programs, jurisdictions are advised to adopt a portfolio of programs – and then test them. We applaud Sonoma County for doing just that.

**Case Processing**

*Same Justice Sooner*

The time from arrest and referral/citation to Probation intake can take weeks. Juvenile Probation has done a good job of working to close the gap between arrest and Probation intake. To facilitate citation reviews a Probation Officer is currently making the rounds of police departments each week to meet youth and their families for scheduled assessments. The process could be improved by receiving police reports sooner.

The overall time from arrest to court disposition is 90 days. For youth referred to the Juvenile Department on a citation the time between Probation intake and case disposition was 117 days. Process times can always be improved and doing so can pay real dividends, not only in reducing the time a youth spends in custody and reducing the impact on scarce custody resources, but in lowering failure-to-appear (FTA) rates and re-arrests during the pre-adjudication period.

Longer times to case disposition are associated with higher pre-adjudication failure rates. In Sonoma County the failure-to-appear (FTA) rate for youth in pre-trial status is 11 percent. Case processing delays result in higher rates of failure. This is evident by looking at failure rates by process times: while the average time from arrest to case disposition is 90 days, the average time from arrest to FTA is 127 days. Delays in case resolution result in higher failure. Of youth with an FTA, 18 percent have 3-9 failure-to-appears before case disposition. More than twenty percent have at least two FTA’s and 18 percent have more than three FTA’s.

The cost to the system can be measured in additional police work, an impact on scarce detention resources as youth are brought back to Juvenile Hall, and the extra work and costs of additional court hearings. The less tangible cost is the loss of system
integrity when justice is not delivered in an expeditious manner. Although no state data was found for purposes of FTA rate comparison, any rate with a strong relationship to extended case disposition is too high.

**The re-arrest rate for youth in the community on pre-trial status is 16 percent.** The failure rates of youth awaiting case disposition costs the system time and resources. An Expedited Case Resolution program pays dividends that go beyond the county-funded programs. A reduction in failures reduces the impact on law enforcement as well. Everyone wins.

**Capacity Planning**

‘One Empty Bed’ in Juvenile Hall is needed for system integrity.

The capacity forecast is based on an analysis of youth detained in Juvenile Hall, Camp and Sierra.

**Forecasted custody capacity needs to the year 2035 range from 143 to 208.** The planning for future capacity is a policy exercise. Decisions regarding risk-based policies (who to target), the future use of Camp and Sierra, the expansion of detention alternatives, and the ability to reduce case processing and custody length of stay all impact future need. To this, we overlay an analysis of admission trends and length of stay, showing that over the last 14 years admission numbers and average length of stay have remained fairly stable.

Actions can be taken over time to mitigate the impact on expensive detention beds, but improved efficiencies will not obviate the need for Hall beds. There will always be a need for an empty bed to support effective community alternatives.

**A Philosophy of Systems Change: Evidence-Based Principles**

We propose that Juvenile System reform be animated by its fundamental principles: the mission of positive individual change, the commitment to the least restrictive option, the ethic to ‘do no harm,’ and the obligation to protect public safety – and to realize these goals in the most efficient and cost-effective manner. We suggest that these principles guide and shape juvenile justice; that fulfilling them is the ultimate measure of system success.
We propose that these goals be realized by linking Evidence and Principles; that we employ our best knowledge in support of our best ideals. Toward this end we advance recommendations based on what we know – the best science; and we raise questions and encourage discourse in the interest of broadening what we can learn.

System reform requires change. We propose that a ‘systems approach’ guide this change. This is especially important with youth whose individual needs and challenges span systems. No one agency, no one school, no one department can do it alone. An effective strategy for youth must be forged together as common caretakers. Comprehensive change requires a comprehensive strategy.

The recommendations advanced in this report are also grounded in local data and national research. In this report we present system baseline data, local research on program outcomes, a review of the literature on effectiveness, and some of the science behind risk assessment. All this informs and shapes our recommendations.

Recommendations

This Report contains many recommendations. All are guided by the goal of Evidence-based Principles. All strategies are premised on A Systems Approach. All ideas are advanced in the spirit of taking an already progressive system to the next level.

Evidence-based Principles

Positive Individual Change

“The most effective way to increase community protection is to assist offenders in becoming integrated into the community as crime-free, contributing members of society.” (Sonoma County Probation Department Statement of Principle)

How do we effect positive change? How can this change be sustained? How should it be measured? We outline an approach to program development grounded in the knowledge of ‘what works.’ We recommend the development of continuums of youth services based on, at a minimum, an analysis of the following:

- Local Assessment of Risk
- Local Risk Factors
- Risk factors and their individual correlation with recidivism
- Principles of Evidence Based Practice
- Desistance Research: who persists in crime/who doesn’t
- Model programs
- Service Assumptions: All high risk youth get cognitive treatment
- Developmental Issues: Family vs. Emancipation (skills based) approaches
- Local Values
- Program Costs

Each youth brings a unique set of needs. This requires a diverse set of services. There is no formula for developing an individualized response. The Court and Probation Officers need a range of services, and the flexibility to apply them, to best craft evolving strategies for youth.

Given our review of the research and an examination of local data we recommend the development of several continuums of service: 1. Cognitive-behavioral/Violence reduction treatment; 2. Connections: A focus on relationships and a full range of family-centered and mentor services, and; 3. Competencies: a range of skill and behavioral based services, from addiction treatment to school and vocational learning.

We also encourage an approach to programs that is not simply program-based. Instead we encourage a view that does not think in terms of discreet programs but in terms of a flexible service plan. The planning of interventions should vary and adapt to the changing needs of each young person. We suggest a flexible approach that modifies plans based on feedback from youth, that builds in booster sessions for those finishing treatment, and that celebrates success – at the smallest excuse.

The Report presents program and outcome data for Camp, Sierra and Placement. Based on the data we make recommendations for Camp that would strengthen programs; for Sierra we suggest a discussion about how best to define program goals, and to explore the extent to which new community-based Family programs might offer an alternative; and for Placement programs we recommend taking steps to reduce, and shorten, out-of-home Placement. We also focus on strengthening Re-entry services.

While we argue for a strong emphasis on ‘evidence-based programs’ we also acknowledge that the science is young, and the number of proven programs is limited. We therefore support innovation: the development and testing of new ideas. The
Washington State Institute for Public Policy speaks of a ‘portfolio’ approach. We like this notion, and encourage structured creativity in pursuit of new models of change.

Finally, in the interest of advancing knowledge and refining our efforts, we recommend measuring the effects of interventions – and conformance with our ideals.

**Least Restrictive**

*Intervention in an offender’s life should be limited to the extent necessary to protect society and promote law-abiding behavior.* (Sonoma County Probation Department Statement of Principle)

How can we expand alternatives to custody or out-of-home Placement? How can we make certain that we have exhausted all the alternatives before we place youth out of home: that we have tried the *last step* before we use the *last resort*? And, importantly, when should we do nothing – or very little – in response to misbehavior?

In this Report we recommend an expansion of community alternatives, with a special emphasis on effective Family-centered services. The goal is to build a full range of community-based family services that can provide an option to out-of-home placement– or can serve to reduce lengths of stay. We believe that building a family-based continuum of services should be a priority, and we would add ancillary services to support it: such as short (weekend) respite care for youth involved in these family-centered programs.

*Where public safety is not jeopardized, the community and most offenders are best served through community-based programs.* (Sonoma County Probation Dept. Statement of Principle)

We also recommend Pre-Placement residential options, where youth being sent out of home for the first time can be assessed: to better explore community options; to select the best plan. And, we suggest an out-of-home Placement system geared toward shorter stays and more frequent reviews.

For the population of higher risk youth on Juvenile Probation caseloads we also recommend, as a more intensive option, the re-establishment of a Drug Court program. In the Report we also refer to it as a Violation Court since we suggest that it
not have a sole emphasis on drug-affected youth, but also respond to general violations of supervision, especially for higher risk on supervision. For this group, the Drug Court/Violation Court might become the last step before Camp/Sierra. And, we recommend that the Violation Court have a strong family component for younger youth and a skills-based component for older youth.

The question of when to ‘do nothing’ is a difficult but important question for juvenile systems. It is especially relevant at the front-end of the system, where we craft responses to youth with low level offenses who will, in most cases, never have repeat contact with the justice system. We recommend a least restrictive response: one that focuses on restorative justice strategies, and orders youth to ‘hard-to-fail’ interventions: such as single-day community service.

A ‘least restrictive’ response must always be pursued in the context of ‘the most appropriate’ response. Law enforcement officers deal with complex issues that require nuanced responses and varied options. We recommend a discussion about what resources are needed, short of Juvenile Hall, to support a strengthened community response to family conflict, domestic violence, and other cases where youth would benefit from more immediate assessment or stabilization. The local Youth Shelter in Santa Rosa is an underutilized resource. We suggest a system discussion about how to tap such an existing community resource to expand police options for youth in crisis.

Do No Harm

“Incarceration can be an appropriate component of a Probation program. However, incarceration may be destructive, and should be imposed only when necessary.”
(Sonoma County Probation Department Statement of Principle)

How can we ensure that our best efforts do not - unwittingly – cause harm? How do we guard against the possible effects of stigma, social disruption, or exposure to higher risk youth? How do we make certain that our collective response always serves to improve and bolster youth? And, how do we protect the public against the harm caused by a small number of violent youth?

Gang affiliation is not monolithic. This is confirmed by findings from our Outcome Studies which found different rates of recidivism, and a differential response to program duration, based on gang demographic and cultural characteristics. Given
this, we recommend that behavioral-based risk factors, specific to violence, be further analyzed (especially in the context of gangs) as a possible overlay to risk assessment.

We suggest that the issue of ‘harm’ guide the system response to youth at each level. Youth in the system are not only distinguished by risk, which works best to identify the frequency of offending, but also by their propensity for violence. The issue of whether a youth represents a risk to public safety because of violent behavior should be a litmus test for how strongly the system responds. Programs should design separate program tracks for violent youth and minimize custody for non-violent youth.

We also recommend a system discussion around the prosecution of escapes from custody and Placement programs. Although escapes are most often viewed by program staff as part of the ‘learning curve,’ escapes can result in conviction. This has implications. With the adoption of the new risk assessment tool, escape convictions can elevate a youth’s risk level, which may thereby intensify the future system response. We suggest that the system response to escapes be reviewed; and we recommend a program discussion about how to reduce them in the first place – for the youths’ sake.

Youth waiting for Placement may spend several months or more in Juvenile Hall awaiting a program opening. We recommend that other non-custody options be explored.

Youth in the juvenile system span a broad range of ages and developmental stages. For boys who require out-of-home custody the Camp option is available, but only to youth 16 years or older. Sometimes an exception is made for a 15-year-old boy; however, there is a developmental divide between 15 year old boys and 18 year old young men that argues for program separation. Furthermore, the science behind risk assessment argues for separating lower risk from high-risk offenders to not increase recidivism. For these reasons we recommend the establishment of a Camp-like option for younger, 14 & 15 year old boys.

The experience of incarceration, or involvement in custody programs, will impact individual youth in different ways. There is evidence that for some youth, incarceration that is not a component of a larger program plan may lead to increased offending. Moreover, data findings from the Camp study suggest that, for some youth, longer stays in the program may be associated with increased failure. This merits further study. The key is to minimize custody, to employ short custody sanctions
(measured in days, not weeks) for program non-compliance, and to make distinctions at every stage between violent and non-violent youth.

Where detention or custody options are used we must work vigilantly to address the issue of stigma. By definition, adjudication for a crime involves assigning labels. However, the criminal justice system must work hard to counteract any negative effect. At each encounter with youth we must find something to praise, find something to celebrate – and repeatedly communicate the difference between the crime and the person.

We must also gauge the effect that our activities have on the families. The new Risk & Needs Assessment asks youth and parents to answer detailed questions about sensitive topics (parent substance abuse, family conflict, incarceration, mental health, etc). We should consider how best to link families with community resources after the assessment and consider, as a system, how to use this process as a gateway to a more coordinated system response. The Juvenile assessment can also serve to identify families who would voluntarily benefit from community resources and coordinated support. The question for the system should be: How can we use this point of intervention as an opportunity to engage and support families across multiple systems?

The other side of harm is positive transformation. We saw evidence of this everywhere we went in the Sonoma County Juvenile System. We witnessed children who were safe and happy and learning – sometimes for the first time in a long time. Joy and harm are the intangibles that are difficult to measure.

Safety & Efficiency

“Society has a right to be protected from persons who cause its members harm.”

(Sonoma County Probation Department Statement of Principle)

How can the system operate in the most efficient and cost-effective way? Are there intensive community-based services that are more cost-effective than custody? Can we offer lower cost, community-based services without compromising public safety? To what extent can we expedite case disposition?

In Sonoma County, all Juvenile Probation issues are challenged by the very real need to address youth gang violence. Our outcome studies for Camp and Sierra highlight
the significant difference in serious, violent recidivism (measured by post-program convictions) between gang and non-gang affiliates. Not all gang affiliates are violent and not all youth in gangs score as high risk. But the Camp study found a nexus between gang affiliation, violent convictions and weapons convictions (measured at time of program entry), that deserves further study. We should build upon this data in order to refine how to distinguish between levels and types of gang involvement, and a behavioral-based risk for violence. The finding from the Camp study that longer program duration has a positive effect for one gang/cultural group and a suggestive negative effect on another, challenges us to take a closer look at issues of risk; to better understand how youth benefit from and are impacted by our interventions.

Although there was not strong evidence to suggest a general ‘treatment effect’ for the Camp in reducing future offending, the data does support an argument for an incapacitation effect. Applying future rates of offending to time in Camp results in a potential estimate of crimes prevented. Given this, we suggest keeping the Camp program.

To strengthen programs for gang affiliates we must look at best practices, but we must also think outside the program box. The best program strategies for reducing violence, as noted by the Surgeon General, are family-based programs. Family-based programs are worth pursuing, especially for younger boys. Nevertheless, in cases where violence has already escalated, short-term incapacitation to minimize violence may be needed. However, we should continually be challenged to explore and develop community-based alternatives that can forestall this.

As a profession we must challenge ourselves to continue exploring how best to mitigate future violence for youth in the Juvenile System and the larger community. Can we design a gang-specific cognitive program? How do we design individual change strategies within the context of gang culture, and specific gang dynamics? What can we learn from the gang affiliates themselves?

To address issues of system efficiency, the Report presents data from a local case processing analysis, and recommends that case processing efficiencies be implemented. (See Chapter 4 for case processing analysis.)

It also presents cost information for several proven community-based programs (with recidivism reductions of up to 22 percent and a $13 or higher return on the dollar) and encourages a cost-benefit analysis. The question is whether the system can limit its
use of custody without compromising public safety. We believe that proven family-based programs may not only achieve this, but improve outcomes as well.

Finally, future custody scenarios are explored. We recommend a planning approach that continues to maximize the use of community-based alternatives, while building enough capacity to ensure system integrity by always having One Empty Bed.

A Systems Approach

How can we work together across systems to multiply our efforts toward positive change? As Juvenile Probation shifts to a risk-based service model that will, by definition, limit the number of youth served and realign services, how should the larger system respond? How do we reconcile risk and need?

The idea of a Day Reporting/After-School program is advanced to extend the continuum of probation and court alternatives, and to knit together multiple Probation efforts: a place to provide first step sanctions, last step services before custody, and re-entry services. For Santa Rosa we envision a place-based program; but the geographical spread of the county requires creative thinking about serving all areas.

The idea of a Day Reporting Center has value beyond Probation. We encourage the larger system to discuss how other agencies might join together to develop this into a Youth and Family Support Center to address a common purpose: assisting struggling youth and families across systems.

It would build upon the idea of a Day Reporting/After-School reporting program for youth in the Juvenile Justice system, and address other needs identified in the course of this study: assessments and services for lower risk but higher need youth and families (no longer to receive priority services in the Juvenile system); an intermediate sanction for juvenile offenders; a point of re-entry for youth exiting custody and out-of-home Placement; a skill-building center with computer lab, a vocational workshop for boys and girls; a central reporting place for Probation; and a hub for community services, conflict resolution, school tutorials, family support, and treatment. The goal would be to take the best of the Camp and Sierra and extend them to the community: to make them the basis for a new intermediate.
We envision a Center that is supported with blended funding and that leases space to community youth organizations. Centrally located, it would be supplemented by satellite efforts in other cities – bringing core services by mobile van (or delivered in schools at the end of the day) to other cities. This ‘Hub’ of services should be more than a shared space, but a shared philosophy of integrated services. And, in a time of budget shortfalls it might provide a fiscal benefit by consolidating dispersed resources.

The Center would promote system collaboration, especially important as the ‘bottom falls out’ for low risk/high need youth now served in the Juvenile System, with the adoption of a risk tool. This realignment is important to allow Juvenile Probation to focus resources on those youth most likely to reoffend, but it leaves as an open question how best to reconcile the issues of risk and need in the larger system.

A larger system discussion should also take place about how to best work across systems to improve the academic success of youth, and to address zero tolerance school policies.

The larger youth service system should can also come together to discuss how to best assist youth returning to the community after extended stays in custody programs. The Child Welfare model of extended transition care for youth aging out of foster care should be considered for delinquent youth as well. Providing extended support for that population of high risk, 18-24 year old youth leaving Camp and other custody programs could be a valuable investment against future activity in the adult system. Some youth already access the Tamayo House program after leaving Camp. We suggest that this linkage be more formalized and that sufficient resources be made available to support this need.

In the interest of a systems approach we also recommend enhanced collaboration between county agencies that serve youth. The collaboration between the juvenile justice system and mental health is especially crucial.

This Report includes many recommendations. In many Juvenile Justice Systems the recommendations would be rudimentary; we would be suggesting Department changes to address basic issues. But the Sonoma County Juvenile Justice System is already a progressive system with a good base of services.

Recommendation highlights are presented below. Chapter Six also contains policy and program scenarios for mitigating the impact on detention resources. The estimated
impact of these policy scenarios serves only to help gauge their relative impact. As with all change within a complex and dynamic system, precise estimates of future impacts cannot be given. The goal is to adopt informed and innovative approaches that build upon the good work already accomplished, and to continue to move the Sonoma County juvenile system toward positive change.

**Recommendation Highlights**

**Ensure the Least Restrictive Approach**

- Develop a community-based Family-Centered continuum of services
- Establish Day Reporting/After-School program to extend continuum
- Make Vocational Skills training available at Day Reporting program
- Re-establish Drug Court/Violation Court
- Develop Camp-like program for younger 14 and 15 year old boys
- Distinguish Violent and Non-Violent youth: Less intensive services and shorter stays for non-violent
- Develop Pre-Placement options including a short-term assessment option
- Provide Non-Custody Option for youth in detention waiting programs
- Shorter Stay Options at Custody Programs
- Adopt risk-based structured sanctions

**Change the Outcomes: Effect Positive Change**

- Make Community-based, Family-oriented programs more broadly available
- Develop levels of Family-centered services up to and including ‘wraparound’
- Make Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care available for a small population of chronic, younger, high risk, youth who cannot be treated within their own family
- Enhance Family Services with weekend Respite Care
- Engage Families: Have a ‘Mothers Circle’ and ‘Fathers Council’ to supplement programs for youth; Family Liaison position
- Develop a Family Probation Unit to serve pregnant teens, youth with families in adult criminal justice system, and youth in family-centered programs
- Develop professional Mentor program
- Develop skills-based work crew opportunities, similar to adult SAC program
- Make Cognitive training universal for higher risk youth
• Offer Aggression Replacement Therapy to address violence
• Ensure adequate Alcohol & Drug treatment resources
• Discuss Sierra: goals and how to best measure success
• Bring core services to All geographic areas of County
• Strengthen Re-entry services: Linkage with Day Reporting, Mentors, Transition housing, booster treatment sessions
• Innovate, Measure, Innovate

Public Safety

• Develop violent/gang-specific risk factors
• Provide Extended Transition Services for high risk, 18-24 year olds leaving custody programs/detention after long stays to forestall escalating criminal behavior or entry into adult criminal justice system.
• Retain and strengthen Camp program

Minimize Harm

• Formalize Options for Law Enforcement to address family conflict cases
• Provide trauma counseling for youth
• Shorten time to court review to 3 months for youth in out-of-home custody
• Continue to analyze data regarding recidivism versus length of stay
• Establish shorter treatment ‘tracks’
• Reduce program escapes
• Support Restorative Justice options for all youth: Select appropriate accountability measure including letter of apology, community service, work crew, victim mediation, etc.
• At each encounter with youth find something to Praise

A Systems Approach

• As Juvenile Probation adopts new approach that limits focus to higher risk youth, facilitate system discussion about low risk/high need youth
• Use new assessment as way to identify and refer high risk families
• Consider a system model of service delivery: a Youth & Family Support Center - to concentrate youth services across school and agencies
• Continue discussion about standardizing assessment across systems
- Improve collaboration: clarify respective roles of Mental Health and Juvenile Probation in providing services to juvenile wards
- Work within adult criminal justice system to benefit youth: expanded Parent classes for inmates in Jail and the planned Community Corrections Center

**System Efficiency & Integrity**

- Expedite Case Disposition
- Adopt 2-year minimum Deputy District Attorney assignments
- Discuss with Law Enforcement their citation decision-making
- Encourage linkage of Placement funds to Outcomes
- Formalize data collection and program evaluation
- Ensure System Integrity by planning for One Empty Bed
CHAPTER TWO

Changing the Outcomes

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CHAPTER TWO

Changing the Outcomes

“We are all trying to achieve the same end” (Judge Hardcastle)

If the Juvenile Justice system were a one-room schoolhouse it would require a teacher with an uncommon set of skills. Youth served within its walls range from those who went for a joyride to those who caused serious bodily harm. The youth here come from diverse backgrounds, speak many languages, and range in age from 10 years old to 19 years or older. Importantly, each child has a different story to tell. However, too often there are similar themes — especially for those who repeatedly return to the juvenile system: academic failure, chaos at home, a history of parental incarceration, addiction, and gangs.

The teacher or the administrator who operates this school must be social worker, psychologist, clinician, anthropologist, and coach. They must know how to best excite youth toward positive change, and how to respond to failure; they must know what works — and why, and be able to craft effective programs across gender and developmental levels and cultural need. They must do all this with limited funds.

They have some new and important tools, such as risk assessment, but there is still much to know. Proven programs for juvenile youth are limited, programs with good outcomes often have only short-term gains, and persistent failure (leading to ‘graduation’ into the adult system) can be difficult to predict.

The juvenile justice system cannot do it alone. No one–room schoolhouse will suffice. To achieve positive and sustained change with youth who have complex needs requires a place with many rooms. It requires a ‘systems approach.’ Common assessments; shared case plans; blended funding; common cause. We recommend a ‘systems approach’ to this issue, one that requires the community of agencies,
schools, and programs to join together: to plan across the entire spectrum of youth and family efforts to build continuums of service.

Importantly, we recommend that this approach be guided by Juvenile Justices’ bedrock principles: the commitment to the least restrictive option, the ethic to ‘do no harm,’ the protection of public safety, and the mission of positive change.

And, in service of these principles we suggest a course of action that is grounded in evidence. How can our best knowledge inform our strategies? What proven alternatives might allow us to expand the continuum of community services to offer yet one more option before custody? What can we learn from the fields of child development and psychology and juvenile justice to design interventions that leave youth feeling better, stronger?

These are important questions. No one can pretend to have all the answers. But in the field of juvenile justice the fullest realization of these principles should be our central goal.

Looking Forward

The juvenile justice system was established a century ago on a revolutionary principle for the time: Children are different from adults, and the justice system should reflect these differences. The juvenile justice system was founded on a philosophy that the role of society was to protect its children, support families, and provide hope.

The juvenile justice system has changed over the years, adopting more of the due process principles of the adult system and moving toward a more punitive model of punishment for certain crimes. But hope is alive. To know this, one need only spend time in the Sonoma County Juvenile Justice system. The Sonoma County Juvenile Probation Department has taken important steps to improve the odds of success for delinquent youth. One is the adoption of a risk tool.
To discuss future program needs for Sonoma County we asked a set of questions:

A. What is the risk level of the juvenile population; and how many youth fall into the highest risk category? This helps define the level of need.

B. What are top ranked needs (risk factors) for juvenile justice youth in the higher risk groups? This helps identify the types of programs required. And, what is the relative ‘effect size’ of each risk factor: what is the strength of the correlation between a particular risk factor and recidivism? This helps focus the preponderance of resources on those services, which promise the greatest return.

C. What programs have been shown to produce sustained reductions in recidivism?

The answers to these questions help frame the planning of services. A break-down of the local juvenile population by risk to re-offend, as well as a look at ‘risk factors’ is presented in this chapter. A look at the general literature on program effectiveness is also presented in this chapter; an examination of program effectiveness through longitudinal recidivism tracking for Sonoma County’s Camp, Sierra, and Placement programs can be found in Chapter 3.

A. A Risk-Based Approach

In December 2008 Sonoma County introduced a new juvenile risk and needs tool, the PACT. The tool was adopted to help the Department better target the higher risk youth for the most intensive services, and to develop individualized case plans based on the risk factors underlying the criminal behavior.

The PACT risk tool provides an objective measure of risk. It is based on an actuarial approach that classifies youth according to risk categories, based on prior criminal activity and social risk indicators. The latter include factors or circumstances that increase the probability that a youth will commit another offense: failure in school, family problems, association with anti-social peers, and anti-social attitudes and beliefs — to name a few.
Individual outcomes and behavior are not generated in isolation, but are embedded in a social context. Importantly, the individual risk factors are likely to be inter-related, because they are produced in the same background environment.

The Value of a Risk-Based Approach

- Objective decision-making
- Consistency in decision-making
- Identifies higher risk youth for more intensive resources
- Identifies underlying risk factors that can contribute to criminal behavior

The concept of risk is integral to the wise allocation of juvenile justice resources

For Sonoma County’s Juvenile Probation Department the adoption of a risk tool has not just meant a new way of doing business, it has meant a new way of interacting. As part of the new strategy, for example, staff has received training in Motivational Interviewing.

“If I had had motivational interviewing training earlier I would have been more effective.” (Juvenile Probation Officer)

Knowing the limitations of risk assessment is as important as knowing its value. Risk factors are not necessarily causes.

Limitations of Risk Tools

- Risk scores are actuarial: no risk score can predict the future for any individual
- Risk scores are usually based on non-local populations
- Risk is more difficult to score for young children who lack a criminal history
- Youth are in flux and risk factors can be part of the developmental process
- Violence, especially with youth, is often difficult to predict

Risk factors are not static. Their predictive ability changes depending on when the assessment is administered in relation to a young person’s development. Some risk factors come into play during childhood while others do not appear until adolescence, creating two separate trajectories for youth crime: early onset and late onset offending – each with its own implications for future risk.

Some risk factors involve the family, others the neighborhood, the school, or the peer group. Some become less important as a person matures, while others persist throughout the life span.
It is also important to note that those risk factors that predict the onset of offending are not necessarily the same as those that predict its continuation or cessation.

**Considerations of a Risk-Based Approach**

- Use as a guide not a mandate
- Employ structured discretion
- Remember it is actuarial: it does not consign any youth to a certain future
- Focus on strengths as much as youth problems
- Administer tool in a therapeutic manner

The use of the risk and needs tool has already resulted in a shifting composition of cases on supervision as efforts concentrate on higher risk cases. This change has implications for the mix of resources that will be needed over time to effectively respond to youth under supervision.

**The Relationship between Risk and Crime Behavior**

**Most youth do not come into contact with the Juvenile System.** When assessing those youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system it is important to remember that many youth engage in behavior that could, if detected, result in consequences within the delinquency system.

**Most juvenile crime does not come to the attention of the juvenile justice system.**

**National Youth Data**

- Ever belonged to a gang: 8%
- Sold drugs: 16%
- Carried a handgun: 16%\(^1\)
- Used illicit drugs (excluding alcohol): 46% of seniors in high school\(^2\)

---

\(^1\) In 1997 the Bureau of Labor Statistics mounted the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY97). Between 1997 and 2001, the NLSY97 annually interviewed a nationally representative sample of nearly 9,000 youth who were ages 12–16 on December 31, 1996, asking them about many aspects of their lives—including law-violating behaviors. Results from the first five waves of interviews (through 2001) provide a detailed portrait of the law-violating behaviors of youth ages 12–17 at the beginning of the 21st century.

\(^2\) Monitoring the Future Study The Monitoring the Future Study tracks the drug use of secondary school students. Each year, the Monitoring the Future (MTF) Study asks a nationally representative sample of nearly 50,000 secondary school students in approximately 400 public and private schools to describe their drug use patterns through self-administered questionnaires. Surveying seniors annually since 1975, the study expanded in 1991 to
Of those youth who commit a crime, most do not continue. It is estimated that for 70 percent of youth who are arrested this arrest will be their only encounter with law enforcement. Of the remaining 30 percent who are arrested again, half will never be arrested a third time. Only 15 percent will have 2 or more contacts with law enforcement.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has produced some of the best research reviews on risk and youth violence.\(^3\) Some of their conclusions include:

**Most future offenders cannot be identified in early childhood.** Many children are exposed to the risk factors later associated with criminal behavior. However, no risk factor, or constellation of risk factors can predict future offending.

**Risk factors do not operate in isolation.** Having more risk factors increases the odds of criminal behavior, but it does not ordain it. No single risk factor can predict violence. And, importantly, risk factors can be buffered by protective factors.

**Risk and protective factors vary in predictive power depending on the age of the youth.** As a young person grows and develops the influence of particular risk factors become more or less important. Substance use, for example, is a far more powerful risk factor at age 9 than it is at age 14.

**No single risk factor or combination of factors can predict violence with unerring accuracy.** Few young people exposed to a single risk factor will become involved in violent behavior; similarly, most young people exposed to multiple risks will not become violent. By the same token, protective factors cannot guarantee that a child exposed to risk will not become violent.

**Researchers have identified at least two onset trajectories for youth violence:** a childhood trajectory that begins before puberty and an adolescent one that begins after puberty. Violence peaks during the second decade of life. The small group of offenders who began their violent behavior in childhood commits more violent offenses over the long term.

---

Early risk factors for violence in adolescence include involvement in serious (but not necessarily violent) criminal acts, early substance use (before puberty), being male, aggressiveness, and antisocial parents. The influence of family is largely supplanted in adolescence by peer influences; thus, risk factors with the largest predictive effects in adolescence include weak social ties to conventional peers, ties to antisocial or delinquent peers, and belonging to a gang.

**Protective Factors are equally important.** Several protective factors have been suggested, but only a few have been found to buffer the risk of violence—they include an intolerant attitude toward deviance and commitment to school.

**Violence and Victimization**

Risk factors help identify vulnerable populations of youth who face complex challenges, which, if left unaddressed, can increase the odds for bad outcomes, including criminal behavior. A Needs Assessment documents a host of problems, including negative attitudes, school failure, family problems, mental health, and drug use. It also asks questions about abuse. But no tool can completely capture the extent of violence to which youth are subjected. The link is important to understand.

**Youth who commit violent acts have often been victims of violence.**

In the largest longitudinal study of youth ever conducted (begun in 1994) the linkage between violent victimization and violent behavior has been documented. Being a victim of a violent crime in year 1 was a significant factor for committing a violent crime in year 2. Only violent offending itself had a greater influence.

This important research has also revealed factors that appear to protect against violent offending: juveniles who reported greater support from important people in their lives, such as friends, parents, and teachers, were less likely to commit a violent offense in year 2.

**The Sonoma Risk Data**

According to the research, on which the Sonoma juvenile risk tool is based, youth who score high risk have subsequent felony offending that is 3 times higher than those who score low risk. 5 High-risk youth also have violent felony rates that are four times higher than low-risk youth. 6

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times higher than low risk youth. Felony re-offending was tracked for 18 months from youth assessment (so most recidivism was within the juvenile system); the same youth were followed for an additional 12 months to allow any re-offense that was identified within the 18 month period to come to adjudication.

There are no Low Risk youth in Camp or Sierra. Several months after the implementation of the juvenile risk tool, the risk scores were incorporated into the snapshot routine that we developed for Juvenile Hall, Camp and Sierra. The first ‘run’ of this data revealed that Sonoma County had already been focusing most of its more intensive custody resources on a higher risk population: 75 percent of youth in custody scored as higher risk. This judicious use of scarce custody resources reflects careful and restrained system decision-making.

22 percent of the Youth population under Juvenile jurisdiction scored as higher risk.

The first application of the juvenile risk tool was applied to the population as a whole (Juvenile Hall, Camp, Sierra, and Probation). By local policy, the higher risk group of will receive the most intensive services (Table 1). The breakdown is as follows:

Table 1. Risk composition of Sonoma County juvenile population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Population</th>
<th>Overall Risk Score Distribution (N = 1,096)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Risk</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/High Risk</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Risk</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>188</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Risk</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>670</td>
<td>670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals:</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,096</td>
<td>1,096</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the higher risk Sonoma Juvenile Probation population, the majority, (84 percent) are male (Table 2).
Table 2. High risk juvenile population by gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Justice Population</th>
<th>Higher Risk Population by Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals:</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the Sonoma Juvenile Probation population, there is not a significant difference in average age, by risk level (Table 3).

Table 3. Average age by risk level of Sonoma County juvenile justice population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Justice Population</th>
<th>Average Age by Risk Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Risk</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/High Risk</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Refine Risk Policies: Setting the Bar

Overall, 75% of youth in Juvenile Hall, Camp and Sierra scored Mod/High or High Risk to reoffend. The majority of youth across the three custody facilities scored moderate/high or high risk for recidivism (Table 4).

Table 4. Comparison of risk level composition of the overall Sonoma County juvenile population and custody population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Population Risk Level</th>
<th>(In Custody vs. Overall Population)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Risk</td>
<td>Custody Population: 9% Overall Juvenile Population: 61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Risk</td>
<td>Custody Population: 16% Overall Juvenile Population: 17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/High Risk</td>
<td>Custody Population: 22% Overall Juvenile Population: 11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Risk</td>
<td>Custody Population: 53% Overall Juvenile Population: 11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A comparison of custody risk scores to the overall juvenile population (custody population plus probation) shows that custody resources are reserved for the highest risk youth.

**In the first look at Juvenile Hall risk data, 33 percent of youth scored as low risk.**

The total percentage of high-risk youth in custody (Hall, Camp and Sierra) is somewhat skewed by the concentration of higher risk cases in Camp and Sierra. A separate look at the Juvenile Hall population based on PACT pre-screens from January to March 2009 (data collected by Kim King) shows a sizeable population in the Hall with a low risk score *(Table 5).*

**Table 5. Risk composition of the Sonoma County Juvenile Hall.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Risk</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Risk</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/High Risk</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Risk</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Review alternatives for Low/Moderate Youth Sentenced to JH**

**Of the 7 youth in Juvenile Hall in post-trial status, 4 scored Low or Moderate Risk.**

Youth who are serving a sentence in Juvenile Hall have, in most cases, exhausted all other options. In some cases Juvenile Hall is used as an alternative to sending them to the California Department of Juvenile Justice, a more limited option since the passage of SB81, which restricted access to state custody. Still, to the extent possible, the goal should be to expand the continuum of alternatives to forestall a detention sentence.

**Using the Needs Assessment to Shape Resource Needs**

The full needs assessment will be administered to all youth who score as higher risk. The science behind the risk tool is based on validation studies conducted by the Washington State Institute of Public Policy, a research body funded by the Washington Legislature.
The use of a risk tool raises important questions: How is officer discretion best used in relationship to the risk tool? How well does the tool assess the potential for violence? Should gang factors be used as an overlay? How can risk be integrated into larger system decisions: whether to petition, when to apply consequences, how to structure program intensity, and such? And importantly, how should the larger system respond to the lower risk but high need youth who will no longer receive priority services in juvenile probation? The County is at the beginning of a fascinating and important discourse.

B. Risk Factors

Risk factors are those behaviors or circumstances that have been shown to be correlated with subsequent criminal behavior. The Needs Assessment is designed to ask a series of questions of youth and their families centered on a series of ‘domains’ that address broad issues.

Examples of some domains are noted below. Most information gathered is self-reported; criminal history information (record of referrals) is based on official records.

**Juvenile Risk & Needs Assessment**

1. Record of Referrals to System (age at first offense, number of misdemeanor and felony referrals)
2. School
3. Use of Free Time
4. Employment
5. History of Relationships (peers and positive adult role model)
6. Family History (running away, incarceration of parent, child welfare involvement)
7. Current Living Arrangements (persons at home, problem history of parents)
8. Alcohol and Drug
9. Mental Health History
10. Attitudes and Beliefs (primary emotion when committing crime, impulsivity, empathy or remorse.)
11. Aggression (Low tolerance for frustration, evidence of causing harm)
For the juvenile offenders in the Sonoma County Juvenile system, the number one risk factor for both higher risk youth (moderate high and highest risk) is the lack of a positive ‘relationship.’ As broken out on the risk tool, this category includes the absence of positive adult role models, and anti-social companions. For the highest risk group, 78 percent have ‘relationships’ as the highest risk factor, consistent with a higher likelihood of gang involvement; for the Mod/High group this is also the highest risk factor, with 45% of the Moderate/High risk group having this as their top need.
### Sonoma County Juvenile Population Risk Factors

**Almost All Youth Assessed**
- Anti-social Peers (95%)
- Use Drugs (85%)
- Expelled or Suspended from School (81%)

**41-50 Percent**
- Mother or Father been in Prison (46%)
- Gang membership (50%)
- History of being a runaway (50%)
- No positive non-family adult relationship (50%)

**30-40 Percent**
- Drugs disrupting education (38%)
- Drugs contribute to criminal behavior (32%)
- Nervous or ambivalent about committing crime

**15-20 Percent**
- Felony charge against person (21%)
- Weapon Referral (16%)
- Using cocaine (17%)
- Need increasing amounts of drugs (18%)
- Committed crime for anger or revenge (18%)
- Attending Alternative School (22%)
- Hyper, excited, or stimulated when commit crime (22%)

**10-15 Percent**
- Dependency petition filed (12%)
- History of out-of-home placements (14%)
- Learning disability (11%)
- Not in school (12%)
- Meth use (10%)
- Drugs causing health problems (9%)

**5-10 Percent**
- Felony sex offense (4%)
- Heroin use (2%)
- Experience withdrawal symptoms (4%)
- Current runaway (2%)
- 3+ out-of-home placements (4%)
- Commit crime for power or control (5%)
In the Sonoma County juvenile population, the highest risk group exhibits a broad collection of risk factors. For the highest risk group there is a significant need to address peers and drug issues (Table 6), but beyond common risk factors there is a broad mix of needs, each with similar levels of influence: school problems, poor use of free time, difficult living arrangements, anti-social attitudes and beliefs, aggression, and skill deficiencies.

Table 6. Most serious risk factors by risk level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Population</th>
<th>Most Serious Risk Factors by Risk Level</th>
<th>High Risk</th>
<th>Moderate / High Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peers/Role Models (relationships)</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol and other Drugs</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School, Free Time, Living Arrangements</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The risk tool is constructed upon research that applies weights to various ‘risk factors’ relative to the strength of their correlation with rates of recidivism. As such, an approach based on reducing recidivism should be grounded in this research.

Based on research, prior detention and peers have the highest correlation with the three types of recidivism: all crimes, felony crimes, and violent crimes. 6

The significance of peers in the commission of crimes reflects the group culture of adolescence – kids spend time in groups. The peer factor can be found in the risk domain that captures past and current relationships. This section of the tool also documents the lack of positive adult role models.

In reviewing these findings it is first interesting to note the limited number of factors that research is able to isolate as correlates of violence; and to observe that there are different sets of risk factors for felony and violent felony crimes.

Second, the finding that prior contact with the juvenile system (referrals and detention dispositions) is associated with higher rates of subsequent recidivism reinforces the notion that past behavior is a good indicator of future behavior.

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### Juvenile Offender Research

#### Strength of Correlation between Risk Factor and Recidivism Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Felony Recidivism</th>
<th>Violent Recidivism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moderate Predictor</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Detention Dispositions</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting Style</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felony Referrals</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Problems</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at First Referral</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runaway</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Weak Predictor** | |
|-------------------| |
| Criminal Family | 0.09 | Criminal Family | 0.03 |
| Alcohol and Drug Use | 0.07 | Alcohol and Drug | 0.04 |
| Mental Health Issues | 0.02 | Mental Health Issues | 0.02 |
| Victim of Abuse | 0.02 | Victim of Abuse | 0.02 |
| Runaway | 0.06 | |
| Out-home placement | 0.07 | Out-of-home placement | 0.05 |

Correlations under .10 indicate a weak relationship between the risk factor and recidivism.
Third, the importance of social relationships stands out in the ranking of ‘parenting style’ and ‘relationship with the child.’ This research is consistent with the results from Sonoma County’s risk and needs assessment of the juvenile population under supervision: For highest risk youth the lack of positive family or other adult role model was an area of high concern.

It is interesting to note that based on the research alcohol and drug usage has a very weak correlation with subsequent felony crimes, and no strong correlation with subsequent violence. It only rises to a low-moderate level of predictive strength (.10) when correlated with any type of future offending (misdemeanor or felony). It is ranked at the same level as ‘out-of-home’ placement.

All this goes to show that not all risk factors have the same strong linkage to reoffending. It must also be remembered that a risk factor may be criminogenic (related to crime) for one youth and not another. This speaks to the importance of addressing multiple risk factors. It also speaks to the need to dig deeper. Risk factors provide a new way to understand the unique experiences of each youth, but a risk factor can sometimes be a symptom and not a cause. A youth with issues regarding anger and school failure may be dealing with an undetected learning disability, or struggling with parental conflict and drug addiction. Risk factors are a starting point to ask ‘why?’

C. Knowing What Works

A starting point for planning juvenile justice services is to know what works. This is important in crafting programs for youth, especially those that involve removal from family or community. It is imperative that we know what good a particular program can do, or to at least make certain that it does no harm. Besides, ineffective programs are a waste of scarce resources.

We need research to guide us in knowing where to best invest our time and dollars. Often we do not do a good job of anticipating program outcomes. For example, Scared Straight programs, which were designed to deter delinquency by exposing youth to prison life, actually increase crime (Table 7). Despite this finding ‘shock programs’ like this continue to be used across the country.
Programs that do not reduce recidivism include juvenile boot camps, wilderness programs, peer counseling, probation supervision without treatment, and home detention with electronic monitoring.\textsuperscript{7}

The local mix of programs in Sonoma County for delinquent youth has developed over time. The adoption of the risk and needs tool is an opportune time to review this service base.

**Evidence-Based Programs**

The science of evidence-based research is young. The most rigorous studies have produced a small number of programs evidence of strong, positive outcomes. In some areas the jury is still out on what is most beneficial. This should challenge practitioners to evaluate programs within the juvenile justice system; to look outside the system for models that have proven effective with youth; and to continue to innovate – to develop and test new approaches.

We should also examine the research on effectiveness to see what lessons can be gleaned from what works, as well as what doesn’t work. There are a handful of programs that meet the highest standard of empirical proof for good outcomes (reduced recidivism). These include the following, which are ‘Blueprint Programs’ from the University of Colorado’s Center for the Study of Prevention & Violence. Blueprint programs are those deemed to have met a high standard of proof of effectiveness.

The following juvenile offender programs have also found to be effective, based on work by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP): \textsuperscript{8}

**Functional Family Therapy**

Function Family Therapy is a structured family-based intervention designed to enhance protective factors and reduce risk for the family. It is a three-phase program that strives to motivate the family to change, teaches skills to address specific areas of trouble, and assists families to generalize new problem-solving approaches. The


program is delivered by trained therapists, each who has a caseload of 10-12 families. Families receive roughly 12 visits over three months. The Washington State Institute found an average 25 percent reduction in recidivism.

*Average Recidivism Reduction: 25%*

**Multi-Dimensional Foster Care**

Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) is an alternative to group or residential treatment and incarceration for youth with chronic antisocial behavior, emotional disturbance, and delinquency. Foster parents are contacted daily during telephone calls to check on youth progress and problems, and staff is available for consultation and crisis intervention 24/7. Throughout the placement family therapy is provided for the biological (or adoptive) family, with the goal of returning the youth back to the home. The parents are supported and taught to use behavior management methods that are used in the MTFC foster home. Frequent contact is maintained between the MTFC program supervisor and the youth’s caseworkers, parole/probation officer, teachers, work supervisors, and other involved adults.

Evaluations of MTFC have demonstrated improved outcomes for program youth compared to control group youth who are placed in Group Homes:

- 60% fewer days incarcerated at 12 month follow-up
- Significantly fewer subsequent arrests
- 37% reduction in recidivism
- Significantly less hard drug use in follow-up period
- Better school attendance and homework completion 24 months out
- 3x lower incidence of running from program

The Washington State Institute documented recidivism results and other benefits for Public Policy. In addition, the cost per youth is from one-half to one-third less in

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MTFC than in residential, group or hospital placements and averages approximately $3,900 per month. The average length of stay is seven months.

Recidivism Reduction: 37%

Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)

Multi-systemic Therapy (MST) is an intensive family-based treatment program that addresses the multiple risk factors for juvenile crime (family, peers, school, etc.). The program targets youth with chronic delinquency, violent behavior, substance abuse, and who are at high risk of out-of-home placement. The major goal to help parents gain the skills and resources needed to address the difficulties that arise in raising teenagers, and to teach the youth to cope with family, peer, school, and neighborhood problems. Strategies include family therapy, practical support, parent training, skill building and cognitive behavior therapies. The usual duration of MST treatment is approximately 60 hours of contact over four months, but frequency and duration of sessions are determined by family need.

Evaluations of MST have demonstrated for serious juvenile offenders: reductions of 25-70% in long-term rates of re-arrest; reductions of 47-64% in out-of-home placements; extensive improvements in family functioning; and decreased mental health problems for serious juvenile offenders.  

MST has achieved favorable outcomes at cost saving in comparison with usual mental health and juvenile justice services, such as incarceration and residential treatment. At a cost of $4,500 per youth, a recent policy report concluded that MST was the most cost-effective of a wide range of intervention programs aimed at serious juvenile offenders.

Recidivism Reduction: 25% +

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Assessment and Treatment for Youth and Families

Multnomah County has adopted a family approach that is achieving similar results to MST at a lower cost. This clinical outpatient treatment model is provided to moderate and high risk youth with mental health issues, drug abuse and behavioral issues. A therapist administers clinical assessments and provides clinical recommendations to the court to help with disposition hearings. The program engages higher risk youth and their families before they reach a crisis point, makes treatment more available for youth and their families. It is a family counseling and service brokerage model. Therapeutic strategies were adopted from the MST model. The Global Appraisal of Individual Need (GAIN) assessment is used to determine the level and type of treatment needed. The good outcomes achieved to date demonstrate the ability to implement a range of family-based programs with varying degrees of service intensity and still achieve good outcomes.

Recidivism Reduction outcomes are similar to MST in Multnomah County.

Program can serve 150 youth for every 50 youth served in MST because of lower program costs.

Cognitive-Behavioral

Programs that change patterns of thinking should be fundamental to any change effort. These programs have consistently demonstrated positive and sustained outcomes. Recent research that examines many types of cognitive programs, across adult and juvenile offender populations affirms this. It finds that, not only are different program curricula similarly effective, but that adults and juveniles both benefit. This research also found that these programs achieve the greatest reductions in recidivism when they target higher risk offenders, implement and deliver the program according to the training instructions, and include anger management and interpersonal problem solving components.11

We recommend that all higher risk youth receive cognitive behavioral programs and, that those youth with a history of violence or high risk factors for aggression receive Aggression Replacement Therapy.

Recidivism Reduction: 20% to 50% reduction

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**Aggression Replacement Therapy**

This program is grounded in a cognitive model of service. It involves youth in guided group discussions that address aggression, skill development and moral reasoning. It is considered training, not therapy. Modeling, role-play and homework are used. Youth attend sessions for 1 hour 3 times a week over a 10-week period. Recidivism reductions of 18 percent have been documented by WSIPP.

*Recidivism Reduction: 18%*

**Adolescent Diversion Project**

This diversion program employs college students to work with youth to link them to services and to apply a behavioral change model that uses contracts to chart expected behavior and to provide rewards for progress. An average 27 percent reduction in recidivism was achieved, with a criminal justice return of almost $25 for every dollar spent.

*Recidivism Reduction: 27%*

**Other Family Based Approaches**

Programs that take a family based approach were evaluated together. These include diverse offerings: family counseling, support, modified versions of Multi-Systemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy. Taken together, these programs achieved an overall 17 percent reduction in recidivism.

*Recidivism Reduction: 17%*

**Adolescent Diversion Services**

These programs typically focus on lower risk youth, often first offenders. The programs included in this category for study included counseling programs and restorative justice programs (such as citizen accountability boards). Cost savings are in large part from diversion from more costly formal supervision. Average recidivism reduction was 5%.

*Recidivism Reduction: 5%*
Intensive Supervision

There is no difference in recidivism when comparing intensive supervision to incarceration. However, intensive supervision programs that are an alternative to regular probation (with more of an expected focus on program linkage) do yield a small but consistent return on the dollar. Recidivism reductions for intensive supervision designed as an alternative to regular supervision is approximately 5 percent.

*Intensive Supervision alone: NO reduction in recidivism*

*Intensive Supervision (if program based): 5% reduction in recidivism*

The programs reviewed have demonstrated consistent good outcomes in reducing recidivism, and their fiscal benefits have been estimated. The following breakout (*Table 7*) shows the net benefits per participant in each program (benefits minus costs). The value to the criminal justice system is measured by reduced impact on system processing: police, booking, prosecution, and incarceration. In the case of Multi-Systemic Therapy, a dollar spent today can be expected to return $31,661 dollars to taxpayers for criminal justice expenditures in the future.

*Table 7. Benefits-to-costs of juvenile offender programs based on national research.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Criminal Justice Savings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Systemic Therapy</td>
<td>$31,661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Dimensional Foster Care</td>
<td>$21,836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional Family Therapy</td>
<td>$14,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggression Replacement Training</td>
<td>$8,287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent Diversion Project</td>
<td>$5,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinated Services</td>
<td>$3,131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Family Based Therapy Approaches</td>
<td>$1,537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent Diversion Services</td>
<td>$1,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Probation</td>
<td>$176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Scared Straight</em></td>
<td>-$6,572</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Relative to other investments probation supervision, by itself, appears to yield a lower return on the dollar. However, when probation supervision is provided as an alternative to incarceration, the fiscal benefit improves.

D. Building Program Continuums

We recommend a program planning approach focused on building service continuums tied to risk factors (See Appendix A).

The goal is to construct a varied and flexible service system. Every young person brings his or her own unique history, individual aptitudes and own interests to the process of change. We cannot always anticipate what will capture the imagination or change the thinking of any one adolescent. As such, our approaches must be diverse and changing, adaptable to the feedback from youth.

We suggest that the programs selected and the level of service needed be guided by the following factors. Each of these factors is addressed in this Report.

- Number of Youth in Higher Risk group
- Top Risk Factors for local Higher Risk population
- Risk factors: Strength of Correlation with Recidivism
- Principles of Effective Practice
- Research on Desistance
- Model Programs
- Developmental Issues: Family vs. Emancipation oriented approaches
- Service Assumptions
- Local Values
- Program Costs

Taken together, these factors can help us construct an approach to program planning for the Sonoma County juvenile youth population. To summarize these points:

**Number of Higher Risk Youth**

The first risk survey for Sonoma County youth in the Juvenile Justice system found 237 youth who scored as Moderate/High or High risk to reoffend.
Top Risk Factors

Top risk factors include the absence of a positive adult role model, anti-social peers, alcohol and drugs, and school failure.

Effect Size of Risk Factors

Based on the risk assessment research, dynamic risk factors with the strongest correlation with subsequent recidivism are ‘relationships’ (anti-social peers and absence of an adult role model) and ‘parenting style.’ At the next level, school failure has a moderate correlation. Alcohol and other drugs have a weaker correlation with subsequent recidivism.

Principles of Effective Practice

There are some general findings about ‘what works’ in reducing criminal behavior:

- Punishment oriented approaches do not work
- Involving low risk offenders in intensive programming can increase crime
- Harsh and punitive strategies may increase crime
- Supervision, when coupled with treatment, appears to have a positive effect
- Substance abuse treatment has a positive but short-lived effect
- Addressing 3 or more risk factors increases the odds of success
- Family-based programs achieve some of the strongest recidivism reductions
- Behavioral change requires changing thinking: cognitive-behavioral programs are fundamental to sustained change
- Sufficient duration and intensity of services
- Continuity of services
- Staff Matter

The issue of the recommended intensity or duration of services is less clear in the literature for youth than for adults, where a minimum threshold of 3 months of service of sufficient intensity is necessary for positive and sustained reductions in criminal behavior. It is reasonable to assume that the same would hold for youth – perhaps more so. Given the influence of negative peers on youth criminal behavior it makes sense that youth programs should fully occupy youth during high-risk periods (for adults the recommended intensity is to structure 40-70 percent of their time in positive endeavors).
It is also important that youth programs not be viewed as discreet programs. Instead, we encourage juvenile justice systems to think of moving youth through time and services in a more continuous fashion. For higher risk youth, programs should not simply end. There should be ‘booster’ sessions and follow-up work. We recommend three-month service follow-ups. In addition, services should be linked with the larger systems that youth touch. The local system already does a good job of receiving information from the schools at intake. As youth exit diversion and other shorter-term interventions the system should consider how best to ‘hand-off’ a child (to non-juvenile justice programs) for whom non-juvenile justice issues have been identified.

Finally, given the changeable nature of youth coupled with the chronic, relapsing nature of criminal and addiction behavior, we should not give up with youth – even if our first ...or second...or third...efforts fail.

**Desistance Research**

Criminal offending must be studied in a broad context. If we focus only on early offending without being aware of high rates of desistance (that most youth do not persist in committing crimes, and that the vast majority of youth who have contact with the juvenile justice system will never have a second contact) then we might overreact.

If we do not also look ‘downstream’ at which youth continue on into the adult criminal justice system, we might miss important behavioral clues.

Just to say: It is as important to know the risk factors for committing crime as it is to know the factors associated with continued criminality.

Research on desistance is still under development. The best data comes from longitudinal studies that track individuals over time. There are different pathways of criminal behavior. Some offenders peak at an early age, whereas others persist into adulthood.

Supporting healthy parenting, and improving school success also appears to curtail violent offending.

A national study that looked at youth who enter the adult criminal justice system versus those who do not, showed higher levels of gang affiliation and alcohol and drug issues for those who continued their criminal careers. Our own analysis of Camp boys who are subsequently convicted of a violent crime in the adult system shows a linkage
with gang affiliation, a weapons conviction at entry to Camp, and a violent crime at
time of program entry.

Model Programs

Juvenile youth programs with a proven and consistent record of reducing criminal
behavior are few in number. However, programs that meet this standard appear to
have the following characteristics: they are based in family services, cultivate a
support person for the youth - such as a mentor, and address the underlying thought
patterns that fuel criminal behavior or violence. For older youth, as with adult
offenders, there is also an important linkage between employment and reduced
criminal offending. All this argues for an emphasis on Family Services, and Skill-based
(Emancipation) services, and a need to embed all efforts within a cognitive-behavioral
framework.

Developmental Issues

Some youth will, at the termination of services, return to their families, others will set
off on their own. Just as Camp and Sierra plan individual services based on whether
the youth is returning to family or is on an ‘emancipation’ track, so too should
Probation. For those on a ‘Family Track’ services should focus on working, to the
extent possible, within the context of the family. For those youth on an ‘Emancipation
Track’ the youth should be able to access community-based skill building, vocational,
and other transition services.

Service Assumptions

Should any services be universally delivered? We recommend that cognitive-
behavioral training be the common denominator for treatment for higher risk youth.

Local Values

The process of program planning should be grounded in research. Importantly, it
should also be based on local values. An institutional ethic should be given
expression in the type of programs designed and the manner in which they are
Many of these values are articulated in the Sonoma County Juvenile Probation’s mission statement: a least restrictive approach, a belief in positive change, and the intent to do no harm. We would also support an expansion of Sonoma County’s commitment to the value of ‘restorative justice,’ giving youth a range of opportunities to give back. This already occurs through community service, work crews, restorative conferencing, and restorative councils. To the extent it can be expanded, and made an integral component of all case plans, is something worth consideration.

We also suggest that the notion of ‘giving back’ be set within a broader value of giving each youth a sense of ‘success.’ The whole orientation of the Sonoma County Juvenile Department is already toward this goal. So, how might this notion of celebrating success or youth achievements be formally woven within the very fabric of the task?

In all the talk of risk and consequences, and research and recidivism, this is a little discussed issue. But we believe that this is an area where Sonoma County can lead. There is room for much creativity. We offer a few ideas:

- Begin and end each assessment with a note of praise
- Ask youth at every stage what makes them proud
- At completion of diversion mail a note of a ‘job well done’ from the Court
- In case screenings begin and end with a focus on youth strengths
- Have graduations from supervision
- Provide each youth on work crew (or young adult offenders on Supervised Adult Crews) with photo of themselves next to the finished project
- Thank parents

**Program Cost**

The cost of programs is important information in designing system service plans. The cost of custody programs and detention should also be factored into larger discussions about the relative costs and benefits of different approaches. The main programs used by Sonoma County Juvenile Probation are listed below (Table 8).
The Continuums

Program recommendations are based on a review of the following: a) the risk factors for higher risk youth in Sonoma County; b) the research on the ‘effect size’ of different factors; c) the evidence about model programs, and; d) some suggested values. Based on this information we propose the development of Service Continuums for higher risk youth focused in four areas:

- **Connections** in Relationships: Family-Based/Mentor Services
- **Cognitive** Training: Cognitive-Behavioral and Aggression Management
- **Competencies**: Skills to deal with addictions, succeed in school, develop skills
- **Celebrate** Success: Each child has an opportunity to give back; leave with a success; and be acknowledged for something well done.

Table 8 breaks out existing Juvenile Probation programs, showing the expected time to complete the program: by program design or because of typical length of stay; and the cost per successful completion: defined as satisfying program completion criteria. Local data is not at this time collected that would reveal recidivism outcomes by program.

In reviewing the costs per program it should be noted that community-based programs such as these are less expensive than detention, and that even for those youth who fail a program due to a continued criminality, program participation may serve to lessen any subsequent offense severity and thereby mitigate future system costs.

**Supervision and Control**

In addition to service continuums, juvenile justice systems need a range of options to manage risk in the interest of public safety. A continuum is needed to respond to non-compliance along a continuum of increasing restrictiveness: from low level monitoring to custody detention. We recommend that this response be guided by the development of local structured sanctions that incorporate risk level and offense severity into the response equation.
Table 8: Duration and costs associated with Sonoma County juvenile probation programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth Program</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Ave. Cost per Successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30-Day Alternative To Detention (DAAC)</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>$499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Community Treatment/Wrap</td>
<td>24 weeks</td>
<td>$19,898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl’s Circle</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
<td>$421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families in Action</td>
<td>7 weeks</td>
<td>$659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Coaching</td>
<td>16 weeks</td>
<td>$2,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional Family Therapy</td>
<td>14 weeks</td>
<td>$3,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Strength (violence prevention)</td>
<td>10 weeks</td>
<td>$1,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recourse Victim/Offender Mediation</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>Sliding scale ($500 – 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restorative Conferencing</td>
<td>20 weeks</td>
<td>$1,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Offender Treatment</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>$6,120 (client partial pay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking for Good (cognitive)</td>
<td>10 weeks</td>
<td>$939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Counseling</td>
<td>24 weeks</td>
<td>$1,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Empowerment Services (YES)</td>
<td>20 weeks</td>
<td>$1,542</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Core Service

Varied patterns of offending and need should form the basis for crafting case plans. However, there is one program that is recommended for universal application: cognitive-behavioral therapy. These proven programs work to change patterns of negative thinking, improve problem solving, and help individuals craft a future over which they have positive control. And, where there is evidence of past violence or a risk for aggression, youth should be enrolled in a cognitive program specifically geared to teach aggression management.
Selecting Services

We recommend that each higher risk youth be treated in a holistic fashion, selecting at least three services. For example, a cognitive program; a service that aims to cultivate a support person/network – or strengthen the family; and, the selection of a competency development option that best address an underlying risk factor (drug use, school, skill development, mental health issues, etc.).

Risk Factor Continuums

The following section outlines some services one might find along each continuum. The selection of the right program for an individual youth should be based on factors of risk, need, and other issues such as developmental stage and gender. As noted above we suggest that a holistic approach be taken, addressing three areas for each higher risk youth.

Gaps in Service

The depiction of the service continuums (Appendix A) show where existing programs fit, and also highlights gaps. Each service continuum is organized along a progression of system points, from Diversion to Re-entry. This allows a visual map of existing – and missing – services. One can, for example, see the gaps in Re-entry or Aftercare programs, outside of those associated with Camp and Sierra.

Programs we would recommend adding to fill these gaps include:13

- Aggression Replacement Treatment
- Mentors
- Family Wrap Services: Tiered Levels
- Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care
- Drug Court/Violation Court
- After School Reporting/Youth & Family Center
- Community Based Vocational Skills Development

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13 Some programs listed here reflect suggestions from Leo Tocata, or ideas from Sheralynn and other good system thinkers. We listened to many ideas over the course of this project and have included those that we support. Others we present for consideration. We have combined all in a framework that we believe helps frame a continuum of programs by area of emphasis, across some major system decision points.
- Pre-Placement Services
- Custody and Program Re-entry/Aftercare
- Mothers/Fathers Council (to complement Girls Circle and Boys Council)
- Short Family Conflict Resolution
- Family Domestic Violence Counseling
- Trauma Counseling
- Respite Services as part of Family Services

Existing programs we would recommend expanding to serve more points along the continuum include:

- Functional Family Therapy
- Cognitive Treatment

**Who to Target for Services**

Sonoma County has by policy decided to focus its resources on the higher risk group. The question of how to assign youth to particular programs depends on an assessment of risk factors (needs). The professional judgment of the probation officer should guide program selection and the development of case plans for each youth.

The focus on the higher risk youth does not obscure the fact that within this group are different levels of need. We recommend that higher risk youth who have exhibited violent behavior, for example, be targeted for the most intensive services, and that different treatment tracks be designed within residential programs to accommodate them.

The graduated movement of youth through programs can take different forms. Structured sanction policy is a formalized method of responding to risk and non-compliance. A general program-based approach would build in expectations regarding graduated access to services. For example, we suggest the following as possible **general** scenarios. Certainly, in dealing with youth there can never be any hard and fast formulas: whether it be the need to bring structured discretion to the application of risk or to the assignment of programs based on a constellation of needs. General scenarios like the following do, however, provide a framework of general expectations for case handling.

**High Risk/High Need + Violent:** to Camp and Sierra
**High Risk/High Need:** to Family Services + Respite Care + Treatment ....then to Specialized Foster Care (where appropriate) + treatment....then to Pre-Placement....then to Camp/Sierra/Placement

**Low Risk/High Need:** to Family Resource Center...to Non-Juvenile system Family Services + Respite Care

In some jurisdictions the risk and need assessment is used to guide assignment to specific programs: especially those that are more intensive. One example is from Washington State.

### Washington State Risk-Based Program Assignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Risk Score</th>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ART</td>
<td>Medium-High Risk</td>
<td>Aggression score at least 1 point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFT</td>
<td>Medium-High Risk</td>
<td>Family Risk Score at least 6 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MST</td>
<td>High Risk</td>
<td>Family Risk Score at least 6 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: ART is Aggression Replacement Therapy; FFT is Functional Family Therapy; MST is Multi-Systemic Therapy*

### Connections: The Family/Relationship Continuum

A family-based continuum acknowledges the importance of a constant and stable presence in the life of every youth. Ideally this is provided within the family. In cases where the family is not able or available to offer this, then a positive relationship with another adult /mentors should be nurtured.
Mentoring

Research has demonstrated that programs built around mentoring generally demonstrate good results. They have been shown to increase the number of youth graduating from high school, reduce conduct problems, and improve performance on measures of achievement. Evidence-based mentoring programs operating in California include Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success.14

A review of 10 evaluated mentoring programs concluded that one-on-one mentoring programs could enhance positive youth development. There is evidence that mentored youth have significantly fewer school absences; better school attitudes and behavior; less drug and alcohol use, especially minority youth; less likelihood of committing crimes; improved parental relationships; and higher levels of college entry.15

“A lot of kids don’t have much support and structure at home so they turn to gangs for support.” (Stacey Carlo, Probation Officer)

We recommend the development of a full continuum of family-based and support services. These include a new focus on specially trained mentors (school mentors, business mentors, re-entry mentors, etc.) to supplement efforts across the intervention continuum: from prevention to re-entry. Consistent with the adult Community Corrections Center model, we suggest that some mentors be professional, paid positions.

Family Support Programs

We suggest a full continuum of family-based programs, and a tiered system of wrap-around services for higher risk/higher need youth. Sonoma County already uses Functional Family Therapy (FFT), in most cases at the low end of risk levels. This is a program with excellent outcomes in reducing recidivism and improving youth and family welfare, and we encourage its expansion. It should be considered as a Pre-
Placement option as well as a step-down from custody programs. In addition, it should be considered for those higher risk youth who score high for family/relationship issues – and have aggression. Young boys with siblings in gangs who score high risk would also be good candidates. Depending on the level of individual risk and needs the service model can be intensified, or services extended. Multi-systemic Treatment is a more intensive, clinical model, for example. Both this and FFT are designed to be 6 months or less, but can be lengthened.

For those youth with chronic and serious delinquency and whose home life is disrupted or unhealthy, the Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care model, that places youth in the homes of specially trained foster parents, and then works with them and their families, has shown strong positive results. In control group studies, youth in Treatment Foster Care, compared to those in group homes, have almost 40 percent lower recidivism, 60 percent lower time incarceration, and significant improvements in measures of drug use and positive school indicators.

**Parenting Programs**

**Parent style is moderately predictive of felony recidivism, but not of violent offending.**

As a risk factor it is interesting that parent style is not as strongly correlated with offending as is the presence of a positive role model; and especially interesting that it not strongly linked to violent offending. This may speak to the inherent resiliency of youth and an ability to transcend bad parenting – often by being absorbed in a larger circle of peers. Of course, sometimes the peer influence is negative. (It is interesting to think that peers, even if negative, may mitigate the impact of a negative home life.)

Parental involvement has been found, in studies, to be central to successful interventions. Positive parenting matters.

As reported in community surveys in national research, adolescent offenders who described their parents as warm and firm (sometimes labeled authoritative) were more mature, more academically competent, less prone to internalized distress, and

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less likely to engage in problem behavior than their peers. In contrast, adolescent offenders who described their parents as neglectful (neither warm nor firm) were less mature, less competent, and more troubled. Youth who characterized their parents as authoritarian (firm but lacking warmth) fell somewhere between the two extremes.18

Positive parenting can be a protective factor against other risk factors. For example, neighborhood disorder, high poverty, and environmental crime can increase the likelihood that youth will associate with negative peers and commit crimes. In a recent longitudinal study though, researchers found that the link between neighborhood disorder, deviant peers, and crime was partially explained by parenting practices.19 Parents who monitored their children’s activities, knew their friends, and established firm ground rules and expectations were more effective in mitigating the effects of environmental risk factors.

We support and encourage the Families in Action program currently offered in Sonoma County, and similar efforts that work with parents and their youth together to address issues of family conflict and disruptive youth behavior.

The Officer/Youth Relationship

We hear a lot about ‘evidence-based’ programs but not as much emphasis on the importance of relationships. This is the science of communication – and caring. In the course of this project we met with Probation Officers who spoke of their compassion and concern for the youth they serve. They demonstrated what we know makes an effective parent: warmth, caring, the ability to set boundaries, and an individualized approach to each child.

“If I have to cry with a kid I will do that. If I have to scream I will do that. There is not one approach that works, but they all know I care.” (Sonoma County Probation staff person)

Probation Officers are many things: teacher, coach, role model, and disciplinarian. What makes for an effective Probation Officer? It is interesting that the research on

effective school teachers has found that the best teachers do not necessarily have the most advanced degrees or the most years on the job – things that are rewarded in most schools with higher pay. Instead, it has been found that those teachers with the best student outcomes have a facility to engage and excite students, and hold them to high expectations.

We applaud the training of staff in Motivational Interviewing. We also encourage that all staff be skilled in cognitive training. This will further address techniques for change and move the system toward an expanded ‘common language’ of change. Given the importance of working with families, we also recommend classes for Officers that teach about different parenting styles to promote more nuanced family interactions.

Other Family Oriented Services

*Family Liaison*
We suggest that a Family Liaison position (could be a volunteer) be available to support families through the court process. We observed parents (most often non-English speaking mothers) exiting courtrooms and trying to understand what had just occurred. Often the court translator steps in and attempts to provide information in the limited time available. A dedicated Family Liaison would benefit families.

*Den Mother*
This is not a typical recommendation. After visiting Camp and talking with the boys it occurred to us that some of these boys had not had a constant and positive mother figure. Individuals are spurred to change for many reasons; sometimes it is as simple as wanting to please someone else – or not wanting to let them down. Most staff at the Camp are men. We feel that this would be a wonderful addition.

Cognitive-Behavioral Continuum

Programs that challenge negative patterns of thinking should be fundamental to any change effort. These programs have consistently demonstrated positive and sustained outcomes. Recent research that examines many types of cognitive programs, across adult and juvenile offender populations affirms this. The research finds that not only are different cognitive program curricula similarly effective, but that adults and juveniles benefit equally. This research also found that these programs achieve the greatest reductions in recidivism when they target higher risk
offenders, implement and deliver the program according to the training instructions, and include anger management and interpersonal problem solving components. These powerhouse programs can achieve significant reductions in recidivism.

We recommend that all higher risk youth receive cognitive behavioral programs and, that those youth with a history of violence or high risk factors for aggression receive Aggression Replacement Therapy. This evidence-based program has demonstrated good outcomes, with reductions in recidivism of 18 percent.

Youth Competencies: Treatment & Skills Continuum

Youth competencies that emerge as risk factors for recidivism include: alcohol and drug usage and school failure. Although employment does not emerge as a strong risk factor for youth, there is a real interest in helping youth gain work-related skills to inspire alternative interests, minimize time with negative peers, experience success, envision a future, and strengthen their chances for work, which reduces time with anti-social peers, and as an adult it does emerge as a stronger risk factor.

Alcohol and Drug

Alcohol and drug use often show up as a top risk factor, in large part because it is so prevalent among youth in general, and in the juvenile justice system. However, as an independent variable, it has only a weak correlation with recidivism for youth. At the same time it is highly associated with criminality (it often simultaneously occurs with criminal behavior), and it becomes a stronger risk factor as individuals graduate to adult criminal behavior.

Youth involved in the juvenile justice system appear to have higher rates of drug use than their non-delinquent peers. One study shows delinquent males with 2x times the rate of marijuana use and 3x the rate of cocaine use as their non-delinquent peers. Delinquent girls had 7x the rate of cocaine use as their non-delinquent peers. 21

Of course, rates of substance use are high in the general youth population. According to California Healthy Kids Survey data 10 percent of 9th graders and 18 percent of 11th

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graders may meet the DSM IV criteria for dependency or abuse that requires intervention.

The difference between the general youth population and youth involved in the justice system may be that criminally involved youth may be committing other crimes while under the influence of alcohol and drugs. A longitudinal study of youth in the juvenile system, for example, found that boys with a substance abuse disorder reported more non-drug offenses over time than those without this problem.  

A study by the University of California, Irvine that compared youth alcohol and drug and mental health issues (as measured by the MAYSI screening tool) by setting: Juvenile Hall, Community/Alternative School, and Mainstream High School, produced some interesting findings. Data was collected for 2,989 youth in nine counties in California—including Sonoma County (although only the Juvenile Hall population was included for the local sample). Findings include:

**MAYSI California Youth Study (Alcohol and Drug Profile)**

- Youth in Juvenile Hall and Alternative Schools had similar profiles for alcohol and drug use
- There were no gender differences observed for alcohol or drug use across settings: boys and girls had high rates in Juvenile Hall and Alternative Schools and much lower rates in Mainstream schools
- Alcohol and drug use increased with age for boys but use rates for girls remained more constant with age

Still, with youth it is often more challenging than with adult to diagnose drug dependence. Adolescence is a time of experimentation and flux and a problem that appears serious now may diminish with maturation.

The other challenge is that treatment can have strong, but limited results. It has been found that substance abuse treatment—even after controlling for age, race, gender, initial substance use—can be result in a decline of 15-16% in both substance use and offending over six months after completing treatment. However, often this improvement is not sustained beyond this initial time period.

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22 Ibid, MacArther Foundation
23 Elizabeth Shulman, et. al, “MAYSI 2 Statewide Screening, California: Description of Alcohol/Drug Use & Mental Health Symptoms Among Youth as Identified by the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument 2,” University of California, Irvine, 2006.
We recommend a continuum of services that provides short, cognitive-based responses to alcohol and other drug risk factors; and that reserves the high end of the continuum, such as out-of-home residential treatment for higher risk youth for whom there is a nexus between risk factors of drug use and aggression.

**School**

91 percent of youth in the local juvenile justice system have been expelled or suspended from school.

Academic failure is one of the stronger correlations with recidivism. The level of failure for youth in the local juvenile justice system is startling. The pipeline between school failure and social/behavioral failure must be interrupted.

School completion can set a youth’s future path. Research by UC Santa Barbara shows the dramatic price society pays for school failure. It was found that high school graduation reduces crime by 20% for murder, rape, and other violent crimes; by 11% for property crime; and by 12% for drug-related offenses.  

Only 9 percent of youth in the Sonoma survey had never been expelled or suspended (Table 9).

*Table 9: Sonoma County juvenile expulsion and suspension histories.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Risk Factors History Expulsion and Suspension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 +</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24 UC Santa Barbara, California Dropout Research, August 2007.
In the Sonoma County needs survey, of the youth who had been expelled or suspended over half (53%) were between 10 to 13 years of age at first occurrence. Ideas for improving school success must start in the schools. The main goal should be to keep kids in place, in their own schools. Too often the Community School/Alternative school becomes a way station to the Juvenile Justice system. Zero tolerance policies across the country need rethinking.

In the Sonoma County Juvenile Needs Assessment, approximately 11 percent of youth report (or their families report on their behalf) a learning disability. This number is undoubtedly under-reported as testing is required to determine this. The sad truth is that many learning issues go undetected. The Juvenile Justice and school system should work together to test for those problems that can disrupt learning, such as vision and hearing issues.

For the Sonoma County school district, the number of youth referred to the Student Attendance Review Board in 2007/08 is almost double the number referred in 2004/05.  

The Countywide School Report shows that 331 students from kindergarten through grade 12 were referred to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB) in 2007/08. Of those referred, 94 percent were for reasons of habitual truancy. Of these, 151 (46 percent) were referred to the District Attorney’s Office. The measure of success that is tracked for the youth referred to the DA’s Office is ‘the number of students who improved attendance in the 30 days following DA/Court intervention.’ For these 151 youth that number is a low 15 percent.

Ideas for improvement in school attendance and achievement can be addressed in collaboration with the Juvenile Justice system. Ideas include tutoring and coaching, and other approaches. Research on truancy reduction has shown better outcomes for strategies that are grounded in building strong relationship with peers and teachers.

Contacting parents regarding absenteeism works best with youth in 10th grade or younger; and meaningful incentives for parent involvement is key. Other efforts that

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25 2007/08 County-wide SARB Report, Sonoma County, Districts Served: Bennett Valley USD, Cloverdale Unified School District, Cotati-Rohnert Park, Petaluma City Schools, Piner-Olivet Union School District, Santa Rosa City Schools (Elementary & High School), SCOE Alternative Education, Sonoma Valley Unified & West County SARB.
have shown promise include family counseling that builds on family strengths and resources, and is provided for 6 months.  

Mentors have also shown positive results. In a study of approximately 800 mostly African-American teens in the Midwest, teens with a natural mentor were less likely to use marijuana or participate in nonviolent delinquency, and had higher levels of school attachment, school efficacy, and a belief that it was important to do well in school.  

Youth in the juvenile justice system would benefit from after-school tutoring, graduation coaches, and mentors. We recommend that these be made available across the spectrum of services and be given special emphasis, as has already been discussed locally, at any After-School Reporting program.

**Skills Development**

Sonoma County already has a rich tradition of providing skills building to its youth and adult offenders. Juvenile work crews, the Camp workshop program, and that adult Supervised Adult Crews (SAC) program, which serves as an alternative diversion program, are outstanding programs. We recommend that consideration be given to keeping the vocational skills program at Camp and developing a similar program in the community, ideally at a community-based Center that could and serve juvenile and Community School/Alternative School youth – both boys and girls. Such a program could be an exciting way to stretch existing efforts (a skills course coupled with cognitive treatment and after-school reporting could be a step-up from Intensive Supervision – or enhance it.

At the adult level the Supervised Adult Crew (SAC) program offers probationers a way to gain tangible skills and be involved in substantive building projects. The pride and momentum generated by this work can be a catalyst for change. We recommend that a similar substantive work crew experience be available for higher risk youth.

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Restorative Justice Services Continuum

The existing Restorative Justice services should be maintained and expanded. For family conflict cases the family conferencing program may have benefits that extend beyond youth accountability. An expanded range of services would include brief, one-time sessions, victim panels, and other creative approaches.

Special Programs

System Family & Youth Resource Center

We recommend a community-based Family & Youth Support Center to serve cross-system purposes: assessment, after school probation reporting, school tutorials, a step-up from probation, a step-down from custody, a center for skills development, referral and mentoring, and a place to support families and deliver treatment services. It would serve as a pivot point for service integration.

Over the course of this project the Juvenile Probation Department has been exploring the concept of an After-School Reporting Center. The idea is to offer a program/a place where youth in the juvenile system can take part in a range of mandated programs: cognitive courses, Girls Circle, tutoring, and such. This would strengthen supervision and provide added options for responding to non-compliance. We endorse the idea; and we recommend that consideration be given to expanding the concept to encompass a broader cross-system mission.

We recommend a model that serves multiple systems, all serving at-risk youth and their families across systems: schools, mental health, health, alcohol and other drug, etc. This would promote a more integrated approach to service, and multiply individual efforts – especially at a time of financial downturn. One example of a service model that offers such a broad base of services can be found locally in the programs accessed through the California Human Development Corporation (CHDC).

Moreover, with the adoption of the Risk& Needs tool it allows a place, in the interest of prevention, to address non-juvenile justice needs that require attention. There are, for example, youth who are today in out-of-home Placement who will in the future be
considered lower risk for criminal behavior, and therefore no longer be a priority for this resource. Some of these youth have complex problems, including mental health issues and addictions. As such, this is an important time for the system to work together to provide a safety net for those youth.

“We encourage the young person (at the Evening Reporting Center) to get involved, and then we like to give positive reinforcement. When someone does something well, we say it and give him or her a pat on the back. [Kids here] never fail. What you do is, you never quit.” (Ernest Jenkins, CEO of an Evening Reporting Center in Chicago)

The Evening Reporting Center in Chicago reports that 89 percent of youth assigned to the program complete it successfully. 28

A Family & Youth Center can be common ground for the efforts of many agencies, and address particular gaps within the Juvenile system.

Such a Center might include:

- Assessment: Refer families after initial diversion screening
- Tutoring and after-school academic support
- Conflict resolution classes for at-risk- for- suspension cases
- Skills building: a computer lab
- Vocational skills building: a workshop to extend Camp skills activities to non-Camp youth (as a step up from intensive gang supervision, an add-on for high risk girls, etc.)
- Job readiness and job search classes for youth
- Location for a new Mentor program
- Locate Community Services office for weekend reporting
- A central place for step-down activities for youth exiting custody or programs
- A hub for treatment: alcohol and drug, mental health counseling and support
- A hub for parent support services for at-risk families

Other creative uses could be explored. For the Juvenile population it would fill gaps in service as a middle level intervention, as a step-down resource, and as a community-based resource for tangible skill building (now only available at Camp). The Center

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would need to be made available for different groups at different times. Risk survey data shows that the majority (60%) of higher risk youth under the supervision of Juvenile Probation reside in Santa Rosa. For this reason it makes sense to have any Center located there. However, a Center should not be developed at the expense of serving other population centers. It is recommended that the core programs be brought to these other areas as well: ideally provided in different schools.

A look at risk data reveals that the majority of moderate high/high risk youth reside in Santa Rosa (Table 10). This suggests that a centralized program, as opposed to a series of satellite programs, could be pursued.

In reviewing the table below, note that all cities not broken out, such as Cloverdale and Cotati, have a low percentage of total juvenile arrests, and are therefore included in the ‘Other’ category.

Table 10. Distribution of Sonoma County juvenile arrests by residence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth Program</th>
<th>% of All Juvenile Arrests</th>
<th>High Risk Youth by Residence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Santa Rosa</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petaluma</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Park</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonoma</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healdsburg</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sebastopol</td>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Drug Court/Violation Court**

We recommend extending the continuum of interventions by re-establishing a Juvenile Drug Court.

However, given that the research on drug courts for juveniles is mixed, we do not propose focusing exclusively on substance abuse needs. Instead, we propose a model that captures the unique qualities of a drug court, but is structured on individual service plans, with a common denominator of cognitive groups (to address thinking patterns) and restorative work (to provide a means to resolve harm or give back).
It should be noted that although large scale studies of Juvenile Drug Courts (meta-analyses) have not found large reductions in recidivism some programs in California, and other jurisdictions, report good outcomes. The Monterey County Juvenile Drug Court reports 4x fewer arrests for youth in their Drug Court compared to youth who did not participate. ²⁹ Certainly, drug treatment should be a component. The initial risk and needs survey collected information about reported drug use (Table 11).

Table 11. Drug use survey findings associated with Drug Court and Violation Court.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Risk Factor Survey</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecstasy</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meth</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hallucinogens</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhalants</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a system were to take the 17% who report having used cocaine as an indicator of treatment need, it would be consistent with statewide estimates of treatment need for youth in general.

According to an analysis of data from the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS), a survey of youth indicators of drug use, violence, crime, and physical and mental health, 18% of 11th graders may meet Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM IV) criteria for drug dependency or abuse that requires treatment. (The CHKS data estimates that 10% of 9th graders may meet the dependency criteria.)

With overall high levels of teen usage the challenge is where to focus treatment resources. This is made all the more challenging in that adolescence use occurs during a formative stage, one in which experimentation is high, and by the fact that substance abuse treatment for youth has mixed results.

Working with youth who are part of families where substance abuse can be high, and is often untreated, also complicates it. In the Sonoma County needs survey, approximately one-third of youth and their families report parental alcohol or other

drug abuse; and 43 percent of juvenile youth in the Sonoma County juvenile probation assessment report having already attended an alcohol and drug education classes.

We recommend a new Drug Court program that can serve as a flexible sanction option for higher risk youth. We also recommend that it engage the families (perhaps testing a Mothers/Fathers Council model); provide cognitive treatment, and incorporate substance abuse services.

E. Special Populations

1. Gangs

Sonoma County faces a challenge with gang issues. This is a complex issue with many dimensions. There is not a single answer. Solutions, however, must focus on the schools, families, the community, and the youth themselves. They must be grounded in an understanding of adolescence and group dynamics. They must recognize that, by definition, gangs have cultural dimensions – and that no two gangs, just as no two youth, are exactly alike.

Because, at its core, the problem is one of ‘us versus them’ thinking, the challenge for the larger community is to break down barriers at all levels. Gangs exist within larger communities and cultures. We must supervise, detain, treat, and we must listen – carefully. Gang violence can never be justified nor tolerated. But violence begets violence, and too often gang youth have been victims of violence themselves. The cycle of retribution and harm caused highlights the importance of developing programs that treat the individual but address the group. We must work on both levels.

We must stop larger harm by responding to failure in schools with something short of expulsion, by responding to violence when it first occurs with short and swift sanctions.
Sonoma County Juvenile Probation Gang Data

In Sonoma County, 70% of youth in custody in Juvenile Hall, Camp and Sierra (n=60) had a gang designation: 72 percent of boys and 54 percent of girls.

The high percentage of youth in custody in Sonoma County who are designated as gang affiliates shows a local juvenile system that is concentrating its most costly resources on this issue.

A gang designation can be given in one of several ways: the youth admits to being in a gang; staff make the determination based on observed signs of gang affiliation (clothing, tattoos, etc.); or, the youth is charged with a gang related offense. Care must be taken to limit any punitive response to behavior.

Gang Membership can be a transitory phase and/or the juvenile gang population is on the rise (Table 12)

Table 12 compares gang populations in local juvenile custody versus the Sonoma County Jail. Unlike the juvenile data, the adult jail data breaks out levels of gang involvement, including ‘affiliates’ and ‘associates.’ In the case processing analysis conducted for the adult Master Plan it was found that 10 percent of the misdemeanor inmates and 19 percent of the felony inmates in the adult jail were identified as having an affiliation with a gang. The 14% noted for the adult jail reflects gang ‘affiliation’; if other levels of involvement were noted this figure would be higher.

Table 12. Comparison of juvenile and adult gang affiliation rates in Sonoma County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Gang Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Gang Affiliation by Juvenile vs. Adult Custody)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Custody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The reported percentage of adult inmates with gang affiliation is based on the Master Plan Report that looked at gang ‘association’ and gang ‘affiliation.’ If both levels of involvement are combined the figure for gang involved inmates is closer to 24 percent.

Gang representation, at least as seen in the local juvenile justice custody population, is higher among certain racial/ethnic groups (Table 13).
Table 13. Race/ethnicity composition of juvenile gang affiliates in Sonoma County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Gang Affiliation by Race/Ethnicity (Custody Population)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gangs organize along cultural/racial lines. Given this, the racial make-up of an area’s predominant gangs might be expected to have a higher representation in the juvenile justice system. This, and the knowledge that many youth do not persist in gang activity into adulthood, may explain the difference in race/ethnicity breakdown when comparing the population in juvenile custody (Juvenile Hall, Camp and Sierra) to the adult Jail (Table 14).

The adult data is based on Sonoma County Jail snapshot data for a total 1,100 inmates, in 2006.

This comparison provides an interesting look at what we suspect are changing patterns of criminal offending at the juvenile and adult level. It also suggests that the representation of Hispanic youth in juvenile custody is a function of gang involvement, and may not carry through at the same level into the adult system.

Table 14 provides a comparison of racial/ethnic categories for juvenile and adult in-custody gang populations.

Table 14. Differences in race/ethnicity composition among Sonoma County juvenile and adult gang populations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Race/Ethnicity (Juvenile vs. Adult Custody)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Custody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
National Research on Gangs

According to national studies, gang membership is one of the strongest independent predictors of youth violence.\(^30\)

It is interesting to note that for youth, crimes-against-persons are correlated with violent recidivism, but not necessarily with general felony recidivism.\(^31\)

Nationally, 11 percent of boys (age 17) report current or prior involvement in a gang. Girls report gang involvement at approximately half the rate (6 percent) of boys.

The most strongly related factor for self-reported criminal activity was having friends or family members in gangs. Youth with friends or family members in a gang were at least three times more likely to report having committed major theft, a serious assault, and selling drugs.

Nationally, gang members are responsible for a disproportionate share of criminal activity

By their own account, gang members are more likely to engage in both violent and non-violent criminal behavior than their peers who are not in gangs.

In a study in Seattle that was based on interviews with gang members about their levels of criminal activity, it was learned that gang members were 3 times more likely than non-gang members to report committing break-ins and assaults, 4 times more likely to report committing felony thefts, and 8 times more likely to report committing robberies. When asked about their activities during the prior year, gang members were 3 times more likely to say they had been arrested, and 5 times more likely to say they had sold drugs.

In surveys of high-risk youth, gang members represent a minority of at-risk youth but account for a disproportionate share of the reported crime. In the Rochester Longitudinal Youth study, gang members made up 30% of the sample but accounted for 54% of the arrests, and 69% of the violent offenses.


\(^{31}\) Ibid, Barnoski,2004
Heightened criminality and violence occur only during periods of gang membership — not before or after.

The Rochester study, a longitudinal analysis of juveniles, found that youth who were gang members for only one year, between age 14 and 18, committed more offenses during that one year while active in the gang than they did in any of the remaining years of their adolescence.

Denver youth involved in gangs over some part of a 5-year period committed 85% of their serious violent offenses, 86% of their serious property offenses, and 80% of their drug sales while gang-involved.

All of these findings strongly suggest that the gang structure itself tends to facilitate or even demand increased involvement in delinquency.

National studies find that gang membership is correlated with multiple risk factors

National Data: Risk Factors Associated with Gang Involvement

- Living in a home without both biological parents
- Friends or family member in gang
- Problems in many areas: school, family, etc.

A national study found that 5% of youth age 17 who lived with both biological parents reported ever being in a gang, compared with 12% of youth who lived in other family arrangements. 32

In national studies it has been found that risk factors have a multiplier effect. As the number of risk factors increase the youth becomes more vulnerable to joining a gang.

In Seattle, for example, those with two or three identified risk factors at ages 10–12 were 3 times more likely to go on to join a gang than those with none or one; those with four to six risk factors were 5 times more likely; and those with seven or more risk factors were 13 times more likely to join.

Having background risk factors in more than one broad area of life—that is, individual, family, community — increases the likelihood of gang involvement even more than a general accumulation of factors.

Nationally, guns are a key factor in gang members’ heightened criminality

There is a strong association between gang membership and gun possession. Gang members are far more likely than nonmembers to own or have access to guns, to carry them on the street, and to use them to commit crimes.

Gang membership both facilitates juveniles’ access to guns—through illegal markets and through borrowing—and provides strong and constant incentives for being armed in public. In the Rochester study gang members’ rates of gun carrying was 10 times higher than those of nonmembers. For these youth, carrying a gun increases opportunities to commit violent crimes and raises the risk that ordinary disputes will escalate into violence.

National studies have shown that gang membership can have long-term negative consequences.

Nationally, gang membership is also associated with an increased likelihood of being arrested as an adult.

Being a member of a gang also sharply increases the risk of being a victim of violence. Gang membership can harm a youth for the long-term.

The Rochester longitudinal youth study found that adults who had been in gangs were more likely to have ended their education prematurely, become pregnant or had children early, and fail to establish stable work lives. The differences were most striking among those who had been in a gang for a long time. The study observed serious adult dysfunction among this population that could not be explained by other factors apart from gang membership.

Gang Findings from Camp Outcome Study

The Camp Outcome Study tracked 164 youth, who had entered the program between 2004 and 2008, for recidivism after exit from the program. Gang–related findings include:

- 79 percent of youth in the Camp sample were designated as gang affiliates: 2x the estimated percentage (38 %) of all youth on ward probation.

- Caucasians and Hispanics made up the largest share of gang members in the sample.
Hispanic and Caucasian youth at Camp had equal rates of successful program completion.

In general, gang affiliates at Camp had higher rates of subsequent violent convictions than non-gang affiliates.

Gang affiliates had an average rate of serious violent recidivism (convictions and pending cases) approximately 14 times higher than that of non-gang affiliate.

Rates of subsequent conviction for a violent offense differed by gang cultural/ethnic groupings.

Caucasian and Hispanic gang affiliated youth were equally likely to be convicted of a crime (general recidivism) during the follow-up period.

Hispanic gang affiliated youth had higher rates of subsequent conviction for a crime of violence.

Having a gang specific conviction/condition at time of admission to Camp did not appear to be correlated with higher levels of recidivism.

For some boys at Camp longer stays were related to lowered rates of recidivism; and for some boys longer stays appeared to increase recidivism. The relationship between length of stay and recidivism was associated with demographic factors for sub-populations at the Camp. For Hispanic youth affiliated with gangs there is evidence that longer program stays are associated with lowered rates of subsequent recidivism. For Caucasian youth affiliated with gangs it appears that longer program stays increase the rate of subsequent criminal behavior. This may reflect an interaction effect of youth at Camp; it may reflect different levels of risk related to gang culture; or it may reflect other individual risk factors. It merits further study.

This review only scratches the surface of what is a complex story. One conclusion we can draw, however, is that gang affiliation is not monolithic: association with a gang does not foreordain a youth to a path of violence, nor does it by itself explain or predict future criminality.
Gang affiliation alone is insufficient to predict future violence. Aspects of specific gang cultural norms, criminal pathways, and individual potential for violence all come into play. We recommend a more thorough examination of the relationship between juvenile criminal histories, risk factors, and patterns of re-offense to help tease out gang-related behaviors that may better inform risk assessment – both for general offending and for violence. And we recommend further analysis to help better anticipate which youth are most likely to benefit from longer program stays, and for which youth longer stays may worsen criminal offending.

Recommendations

The Sonoma County Juvenile Probation gang caseload has been reduced by approximately half since implementing the risk tool.

The new policy to supervise only moderate/high and high risk youth has resulted in the reduction of the Intensive Supervision gang caseloads by half: from 60+ cases to around 30 youth per caseload. This lower number of cases will allow more meaningful supervision and should be maintained.

The risk tool helps focus the discussion about the relative risk of gang affiliation to a behavioral based model. It takes into consideration past criminal behavior and individual risk indicators, such as anti-social attitudes and callous personality. This approach can offer an important objective measure to define levels of risk.

Track Moderate Risk Youth

The trajectory of gang involvement is often difficult to ascertain, and the risk tool is not well designed to predict future violence. Because of this, the professional judgment of the Probation Officer becomes an important overlay. This requires time and observation.

We recommend that moderate risk youth with gang affiliations receive short-term supervision to allow a better judgment about their level of commitment. Moderate risk youth who evidence strong risk factors in multiple domains, especially those with aggression and negative attitudes, should be given a second look; as well as those who use weapons. And, special attention should be paid to the nature and extent of
violent victimization, given the association between past violence and future violent offending.

Mitigating and aggravating risk criteria can be developed to refine local decisions about level of supervision and system involvement.

**Small caseloads, Mentors, Enhanced Family-based Services**

Given that a positive relationship with family or another adult model or a friend, can serve as a strong protective factor, we encourage a focus on Mentors for older gang-affiliated youth, and on Mentors and Family–based services for younger gang youth.

Mentors should include both professional (paid) and volunteers. Ex-gang members should be part of this program. Business mentors should be recruited; and special attention paid to engaging mentors from the communities and cultures involved.

The Probation Officer also serves in the role of Mentor. Maintaining smaller caseloads will allow Probation Officers to do meaningful work. Desistance research suggests that longer stays on Probation may protect against reoffending. Similarly, the findings from the local Placement study suggest lowered recidivism associated with successful probation completion.

**Make a Camp-Like Program Available for Younger Boys**

The Camp only accepts boy’s age 16 and older (a few exceptions have been made for 15 year-olds). This level of service/partial incapacitation should be made available for the younger boys.

**Make Camp Programs Also Available in the Community**

Camp has a wonderful skills building program. This should remain a feature of the Camp. At the same time the larger youth population would benefit from having a similar skills-based program in the community. An afterschool program that also has vocational skill building and other services would offer an important community-based alternative for gang (and non-gang) youth as a step before Camp. The process of change must engage youth in any way we can.
Sports

When we asked some boys at Camp what they would find valuable they said To Play Ball...football that is. Sports are an important ‘hook’ to keep youth engaged in other treatment efforts. We visited a Juvenile Probation Department in Ohio that has taken having fun (through sports), seriously! There, youth on juvenile probation caseloads join Department sports teams that compete against each other, and staff, throughout the year. The mantra should be: Anyway We Can – Teach!

Provide Aggression Replacement Therapy Training

In Sonoma County, 10 percent of boys at Camp had ‘Aggression’ as one of their top three risk factors. This is perhaps lower than expected for a group that is ostensibly gang involved. But it may reveal that simple gang affiliation and aggressive tendencies are not synonymous.

Certainly, youth who exhibit aggressive tendencies, or for whom this emerges as a risk factor, should be involved in specialized programs proven to work well in mitigating violence. Aggression Replacement Therapy (ART) is one such program. However, given the gang influence in this County, we recommend that all higher risk boys with a gang affiliation be enrolled in this class, or one similar to it. At this time, Sonoma County is applying for grant funds for this program. It should be a fundamental feature of the continuum of available violence prevention programs.

Re-entry Services

“We need to teach young people in gangs to deal with unbearable situations.”
(Sonoma County Counselor)

All youth who exit our most intensive custody or out-of-home programs need re-entry services. This is especially true for gang members. For older boys the option to exit from Camp to a safe transition house should be pursued. When we asked one older gang member at Camp what he looked forward to upon release he answered by saying:

“The gang will probably look for me. They might beat me if they do.” (Camp participant)
We also encourage the development of Extended Transition Services for youth exiting Camp and Detention after extended stays. These services should close the gap for 18-24 year old youth, and work to forestall their entry into the adult system.

**Extended Transition Care**

Foster youth who exit out-of-home Placement have high rates of subsequent failure: arrests, unemployment, and such. Nationwide, the Child Welfare system is addressing this by providing extended care beyond age 18. It has been found that foster youth who are allowed to stay active in support services for this extended period are more likely to go to college and derive other benefits. Making the transition to adulthood is difficult for any youth, but for young people with long stays in out-of-home settings it can be all the more difficult. Adding gang issues to the mix only complicates the picture.

We recommend a system discussion about how to provide extended transition services for youth, age 18-24, who exit long-term programs in the Juvenile Justice system. The criminal justice outcomes for delinquent youth and child welfare cases leaving out-of-home care or custody are both strikingly high. The larger system should consider how it can best provide extended services for both the child welfare and juvenile justice populations as a common issue. Ideas include fostering college mentors through the local community college, business mentors for those entering the workforce, and a safety net of stabilization (group homes and transitional housing) and support services. These services, coupled with an open door policy to a Resource Vocational skills Center that provides access to voluntary, on-going counseling and case management assistance would help ease the transition. San Diego has the San Diego Youth Services program which provides transition services for foster youth up to the age of 24 through a range of emergency, housing, and support services. Their services are motivated by national statistics that show that between 25 and 40 percent of all foster children become homeless within 12 months after reaching their 18th birthday, often leading to the welfare rolls or the criminal justice system. The range of services they provide offers one model for extended age transition services.
Work toward Development of Gang Specific Risk Factors

A risk assessment ascertains the likelihood that an individual will reoffend – based on a pattern of individual risk factors. But gangs have their own dynamic. An individual’s place in that gang; whether they have been ‘jumped in’ (initiated) or not; their patterns of escalating or remitting behavior in relationship to the gang; the use of weapons; the age of gang enrollment; the nature of violence as it relates to gangs; and other individual behavioral-based indicators may be useful overlays to a risk tool to plan programs or to place a youth on a particular treatment track. The data captured in the Camp outcome study might serve as a first step toward a fuller analysis of this issue.

2. Girls

Nationally, the rate of juvenile violent crime arrests has been on a downward trend since 1994. However, during this period of overall decline in juvenile violence, the female proportion of juvenile violent crime arrests has increased (especially for the crime of assault), marking an important change in the number of girls entering the juvenile justice system.\(^{34}\) It is interesting to note, however, that the rate of crime committed by adolescent girls has not evidenced a significant increase, as measured in National Victim Surveys, suggesting that the overall increase may be more due to changes in the system response. Available evidence strongly suggests that girls are being arrested more frequently for simple assaults, in contrast to evidence from longitudinal self-report and victimization surveys that do not bear out evidence of increased violence.

**Girls who score High Risk for reoffending have felony recidivism rates roughly equivalent (Table 15) to Boys who score as Low/Moderate risk.**\(^{35}\) Using a comparable method for calculating 18 month recidivism rates, Sierra girls have a rate comparable to that of Low Risk in the Barnoski study. Boys in Placement have an 18 month rate comparable to Low Risk for their gender in the Barnoski study. Boys in Camp have a rate comparable to High Risk for their gender.


Table 15. Comparison of gender-related felony recidivism rates by risk level. 18 month felony recidivism rates for select Sonoma program sub-populations are shown for comparison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Felony Recidivism Rates by Risk Score: Girls vs. Boys (Research on 18-month recidivism)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Girls)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Risk (Barnoski, 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Risk (Barnoski, 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Risk (Barnoski, 2004))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonoma - Placement (Males)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonoma - Camp (Males)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonoma - Sierra (Females)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to a lower recidivism rate, the offenses that girls commit are, in the aggregate, less violent than boys. Girls with higher rates of offending are not, as a statistical cohort, committing the same level of serious or violent crimes as boys. This is true for girls as well as for women in the adult system. Based on national crime data, violent acts committed by girls are in most cases directed at peers; but unlike boys, girls are more likely to be involved in both aggravated and simple assaults against adult family members.36 When a girl uses violence against a family member, a parent – most often the mother – is the target.

In Sonoma County, the percentage of girls who scored at the highest risk level (6 percent) is half that of boys. Conversely, there are a significantly higher percentage of girls in the low risk category (70 percent) compared to boys (58 percent) (Table 16).

As we examine crime-related risk factors for boys and girls in the local juvenile justice system we also see different patterns emerge. This is evident when contrasting the top risk factors for girls in Sierra to the boys in Camp.

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Table 16. Sonoma County juvenile risk score distribution by gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Population (n = 1,096)</th>
<th>(Risk Scores by Gender)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Girls)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Risk</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/High Risk</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Risk</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Risk</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Sonoma County both the girls at Sierra and the boys at Camp have, as their top risk factor, a gap or weakness in their ‘current relationships’ (Table 17). This risk domain includes anti-social peers as well as the lack of a positive adult role model.

Table 17. Gender differences in top ranked risk factors among Sonoma County youth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Ranked Risk Factors by Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Girls: Sierra)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Relationships: (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol &amp; Drug: (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School: (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Time: (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Arrangements: (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment: (5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is interesting that while both girls and boys have as their principal risk factor a gap or weakness in their ‘current relationships’ girls present a more diverse profile in terms of risk factors.

A study by the University of California, Irvine that compared youth alcohol and drug and mental health issues (as measured by the MAYS1 screening tool) by setting: Juvenile Hall, Community/Alternative School, and Mainstream High School, produced some interesting findings. 37 Data was collected for 2,989 youth in nine counties in California —including Sonoma County (although only the Juvenile Hall population was included for the local sample). Findings include:

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37 Elizabeth Shulman, et. al, “MAYSI 2 Statewide Screening, California: Description of Alcohol/Drug Use & Mental Health Symptoms Among Youth as Identified by the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument 2,” University of California, Irvine, 2006.
MAYSI California Youth Study (Girls Mental Health Profile)

- Across settings, girls displayed more mental health problems than boys.
- Surprisingly, girls in the Mainstream schools had levels of some mental health problems (depression/anxiety, suicidal ideation, and thought disturbances) that rivaled that of girls in Juvenile Hall or Alternative Schools.
- Girls in the Mainstream schools were distinguished from girls in Juvenile Hall and Alternative Schools by reported traumatic experiences that were half the rate – or more- of girls in the other settings.

Girls at Sierra have more issues in the Needs category of ‘Current Living Arrangements’ than the boys at Camp (Table 18).

Table 18: Living arrangement as a top risk factor by gender among Sonoma County youth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Sierra and Camp Populations</th>
<th>(Current Living Arrangement: One of Top 3 Risk Factors)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Girls: Sierra)</td>
<td>(Boys: Camp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As described in the Needs Assessment tool, issues with ‘living arrangements’ can include:

- Persons with whom youth live (biological parent(s), grandparents, etc.)
- Income of household
- Incarceration history of persons in the home
- Problem history of persons in the home (drugs, mental health, etc.)
- Problem history of siblings
- Support network for family (no support, some, strong support)
- Family willingness to help minor
- Family includes the youth in family activities and decisions affecting youth
- Youth has run away from home

Girls at Sierra have a lower level of alcohol and drug issues than the boys at Camp (Table 19).
Table 19: Drug or alcohol as a top risk factor by gender among Sonoma County youth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Sierra and Camp Populations</th>
<th>(Alcohol &amp; Drug: One of Top 3 Risk Factors)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Girls: Sierra)</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Boys: Camp)</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at clusters of Needs reveals, for example, that one girl at Sierra had Alcohol & Drugs and Aggression as a high Need. The value of having a Risk score and then overlaying Need (risk factors) is that it allows a more refined analysis of service needs. For example, if the system were to target for intensive services those Sierra girls in the sample with both ‘Alcohol & Drug’ and ‘Aggression’ as a top 3 risk factor, it would result in specialized services for 1 girl. To focus on only girls for whom ‘Current Living Arrangement’ issues are one of their top 3 risk factors would result in a focus on an additional 7 girls (in this sample there was no overlap between these two categorizations: a. alcohol & drugs; b. current living arrangements).

Sonoma County has made a tremendous commitment to testing a gender responsive curriculum. The Girl’s Circle program is one of only two gender responsive programs recognized at this time by the government Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency and Prevention (OJJDP). In Sonoma County the program was initially offered only at Sierra, but it has now being expanded to serve girls across the continuum.

“It is an elegant mode... The program re-sets the youth’s frame, changing ideas about culture and language, and making them ready for change.” (Leo Tocata, Juvenile Department Analyst)

Girls Circle is designed as an 8-week course, but can be expanded to 12 weeks. It addresses inter-relational issues with a goal of treatment readiness. The girls with whom we spoke expressed real excitement about the program. It provides a forum in which youth are given permission to discuss personal issues with the promise of no repercussions (unless, of course, they disclose a reportable adult offense) and a safe place to participate in facilitated discussions. Its power comes from the use of ritual and the bonding that occurs between the girls.
Girls Circle + Cognitive Elements

We support the programs expansion as a pre-treatment tool, and recommend that it be viewed as the first step for a second level cognitive program. To ground it in a cognitive base would serve to tap the excitement generated by the Circle as a catalyst to move youth toward the next level of cognitive work – and long-term change. Given its reception by youth, we also recommend that it be considered for use in Placement and as a step-down option.

We also support the move to make the program more widely available to boys (Boy’s Council). Juvenile Hall Detention staff report that since the introduction of the program to boys in detention waiting for Camp (most are gang affiliated) and those in the maximum security unit, the incidence of acting out has dropped off. It was reported that although the gang dynamic seemed to initially make some boys reluctant to share ideas and information, the facilitator was able to call for a group pledge to honor keeping the information within the Circle, and in encouraging involvement.

Girls Probation

Given the role of group bonding for girls as a dynamic for change and development we recommend consideration of a Probation model built on the psychology of the group. Thought should be given to how juvenile justice systems can take full advantage of this. A Probation model in which girls reported to a group, and had access (in the community) to many of the same programs offered at Sierra (girl scouts, restorative resources, tutoring, recreational opportunities, and treatment) is worth discussion.

A Family Unit

Girls’ issues are inextricably tied to family. Given this, we favor an approach that works with girls on Probation in a family-model: one that might include higher risk girls, pregnant girls, those with parents under supervision in the adult system or with significant family issues. Multnomah County has such a unit.
Trauma Counseling

To know how best to respond to violence we need to understand its context: what are the precursors of violence; how can we explain it, when does it occur? For both boys and girls the expression of violence is often associated with violence. Youth witness violence, are goaded to participate in violence, and are the victims of violence.

Children in our juvenile justice systems have a greater likelihood of mourning the loss of a parent who is sent to prison; dealing with parental separation; struggling with family conflict; and witnessing violence. For girls, prior victimization in the home may be an especially potent precursor to violent acting out. 38

Our children need trauma counseling - both boys and girls. And, the identification of those youth in need of this cannot be based exclusively on the results of a Needs assessment. Issues of violence in the home, or experiences on the street, are rarely given voice in a single session. We must continue to ask the questions, and to be alert to past experiences of harm, as victims or as witnesses.

3. Young Offenders

The research on recidivism by age shows higher levels of subsequent offending (at 18 months after system/program exit) for youth under 14 years (Table 20), meaning that reoffending peaks at around 15 to 16 years. 39

Table 20. 18-month recidivism for High Risk youth by age class, based on national research findings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(National Data)</th>
<th>18-Month Recidivism: By Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Risk</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

38 Song, Singer, and Anglin, “Violence Exposure and Emotional Trauma as Contributors to Adolescents’ Violent Behaviors,” 1998, Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 152:531-536.
Efforts to reduce criminal behavior or to interrupt criminal careers must also pay attention to the age at which serious offending begins. This is important given that while only a small fraction of juvenile offenders go on to commit offenses in the adult system, those who commit serious offenses as adults most often started their offending before age 16. In Washington State, 73% of inmates in state prison were involved in their juvenile justice system.

Effective interventions hinge on identifying risk and protective factors and determining when in the course of development they emerge. To be effective, such efforts must be appropriate to a youth’s stage of development.

A program that is effective in childhood may be ineffective in adolescence and vice versa. Moreover, the risk factors targeted by a prevention programs may be different from those targeted by a more intensive intervention program, designed to prevent the reoccurrence of violence. There are many challenges in developing effective programming across age, developmental level, and gender.

Camp Program for Boys age 14-15

Given the propensity for boys to reoffend at greater frequency and, in the aggregate, to commit more serious offenses, we recommend that Sonoma County develop an intensive Camp-like option for younger boys. As with the girls, we recommend that intensive community, family-based options are a first step before Camp.

4. Alcohol and Other Drugs

The treatment of adolescent alcohol and drug abuse presents unique challenges. Adolescence is a time of experimentation; drug usage is a weak risk factor for recidivism; and treatment produces short-term gains. And yet this is an issue that cannot be ignored.

Alcohol and drug usage can interrupt normal youth development and, left untreated, it can lead to host of other problems – including eventual incarceration in the adult system for drug usage.
There are few publicly funded treatment programs for youth in the state, and no state funds dedicated specifically for this area (although when minors are in the community they can access Minor Consent Medical, one of the state’s funding sources for alcohol and drug treatment).

Although state alcohol and drug certification requirements have nothing specific to youth development, Sonoma County has made the commitment to send staff to Adolescent Development Training, and has its own county-based program requirements for youth services.

**Re-establish a Drug Court/Violation Court** We recommend the re-establishment of a Drug Court; one that does not have a sole emphasis on drugs, but where it is addressed to have the support of solid programs.

**Integrate AOD staff Input into Court Reports** AOD staff persons who work in Juvenile Hall spend considerable time with youth and have a unique perspective on their alcohol and drug issues. We recommend that their input be formally solicited and incorporated into reports to the court.

**Consider role of AOD staff in Risk Assessments** The role of TASC workers in the adult criminal justice system presents a model that gives prominence to a specialized assessment and case management as individuals move between systems and programs. This is one approach to providing much needed continuity for youth. Often, AOD staff establishes a relationship with a youth in Juvenile Hall and identify a need only to have the youth exit with no chance for further contact.

As the county moves toward full adoption of the risk assessment the role of AOD in providing assessments, and at what stage, should be fully explored.

**Review the Program/Treatment Continuum** As part of a review of the custody to Placement continuum, we recommend that the issue of where best to treat serious addictions be reviewed. Should a girl with a meth addiction be treated in Sierra, or should she go to R-House or some other program? If the addiction is high but the...
criminal risk is low, in which program/systems are these youth best served? And, how long should youth be engaged in the programs?

**Continue to Explore Treatment Models to Best Address Drug Use & Violence** We were told by a Gang Probation Officer that it is an exception for youth on the gang caseload to be involved with hard drugs. The Officer reports that in two years he has seen one gang affiliate on his caseload have a meth problem; that almost all drug problems are for marijuana. At the same time, with the high percentage of youth on ward probation with purported gang affiliations the issue of how best to treat the interwoven issues of general drug use and violence should be continually explored. For those youth who left Camp and were convicted of a subsequent crime, 18% of those offenses were drug convictions.

The issue of how to respond to gang issues and violence and treatment needs across program type merits discussion. How can we help youth across our programs feel safe in their neighborhoods; how can we present them with some pragmatic steps to take to minimize harm; how do we help them address what to do with their free time; how can we present some very practical advice about forging a new path – advice grounded in the realities they face?

The issue of how to develop programs to address addictions and violence and gender and gangs is challenging. It calls for knowledge and creativity.

> “Some older gang affiliates have no memories of just playing as a kid before they started using. Just the experience of having fun can be tremendously important. If things are fun and compelling a youth has a better chance of learning.” (AOD Counselor)

There are many factors to consider when planning treatment for youth. There are theories of crime, principles of practice, schools of change, and models of treatment. In all this we cannot forget the power of fun.

**Standardize Screening Tools** The adoption of the risk and needs assessment is an opportune time to talk about developing common definitions, screening tools, and referral expectations.
Services across the County A youth who lives in Petaluma but enrolled in the DAAC treatment program must travel by bus or be transported by parents to the program in Santa Rosa. This is true for youth in other cities as well. The delivery of consistent, quality services in Sonoma County is made difficult by geography. This cannot be ignored. Although almost 60 percent of higher risk youth in the local juvenile system reside in Santa Rosa, youth in outlying areas must be served. We have suggested that core services, brought to communities in a mobile van might be one solution.

Treatment Re-entry The issue of re-entry should be addressed for all youth returning to the community after extended stays in detention, custody programs, Placement, and treatment. For those youth not returning to families after treatment the issue of community stabilization services (including transition housing) must be discussed.

5. Mental Health Issues

In addressing mental health needs of juvenile delinquents it is important to know that, taken by itself, it is not strongly correlated with future criminality.

Based on the Sonoma County risk survey, 28 percent of youth, or their families, report the youth as having a mental health problem; 14 percent report currently attending mental health treatment. The reported prevalence of past or current prescribed treatment or medication is noted below (Table 21).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Needs Survey (Mental Health Issues)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADHD prescribed 7% taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescribed Treatment 19% attending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescribed medication 10% taking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Needs Assessment provides interesting levels of information. For youth who report being prescribed treatment or medication for a mental health issue the Assessment also captures whether the youth is actually accessing the treatment or taking the medication. As seen in the information below, 72 percent of those prescribed mental health treatment are attending treatment sessions (Table 22).
Table 22. Mental health medications indicated based on Sonoma County juvenile needs survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Needs Survey</th>
<th>(Indicated Need vs. Active/Receiving)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADHD prescribed</td>
<td>62% taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health treatment prescribed</td>
<td>72% attending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health medication prescribed</td>
<td>71% taking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general, care must be taken in drawing conclusions about levels of mental health problems in any juvenile justice population. Definitions and interpretations vary. National reports on the prevalence of serious mental health issues among a juvenile justice population can vary widely. Often there is not good comparative data.

In Sonoma County 19 percent of youth in the juvenile justice system report having been prescribed treatment for a mental health issue at some time. Nationally, the total percentage of 12 to 17 year olds who received treatment or counseling for emotional or behavior problems in the past year (in the general population) was 20.6% in 2003.40

The risk and needs assessment is an important tool for better identifying, at early contact, youth with mental health issues that need attending to. The Sonoma County Juvenile Department’s decision to apply the PACT pre-screen Needs Assessment for youth at intake into Juvenile Hall (whether released or detained) will assist with early identification of mental health needs, and facilitate a more unified response.

**View Risk as a Dynamic Indicator for Youth in Flux**

Adolescence is a time of enormous change. Many youth outgrow problems that an assessment might identify as a clinical need, or a criminal ‘risk factor.’ For example, a recent study that looked at adolescent rates of Psychopathy found marked changes over time: increasing from mid-to-late adolescence and then significantly declining in adulthood.41

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41 MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice Temple University, Department of Psychology Philadelphia, PA 19122
One of the challenges of assessment is that the very characteristics of adolescence can be consistent with other more clinical traits. For example, some of the defining characteristics of psychopathy (proneness to boredom, thrill-seeking, need for stimulation, impulsivity, and poor behavioral control) are, in a general sense, common features of adolescence.

A limited sense of long-term consequences, common to youth, may also result in high scores on risk tool indicators lack of empathy/callousness and failure to accept responsibility; and developmental changes in identity during adolescence may affect scores on the grandiose sense of self-worth item. Indeed, many of these conditions are normal and transient, developmental characteristics of adolescence.

We must also be careful to acknowledge that, at their best, juvenile risk tools are accurate for a limited period of time. No tool can yet claim to predict desistance from crime, or entry into the adult system.

Along these lines, recent studies have indicated that the Psychopathy risk assessment reliably predicts only short-term violence among adolescents.

“When short-term decisions are being made about juveniles (for example, placement in a secure vs. non-secure setting for six months), the use of these tools may be warranted. However, there is currently little empirical support for using assessments [referring to the psychopathy assessment] to inform long-term decisions, including whether to waive juveniles to the adult criminal justice system. We do not know whether these measures are accurate, valid and stable indicators of juveniles’ long-term probability of recidivism or rehabilitation”.

(MacArthur Foundation Research Network: Assessing Juvenile Psychopathy: Developmental and Legal Implications)

The Sonoma County risk tool is not designed for, nor will it be used, to diagnose mental health conditions. The examples of the dynamic nature of mental health outcomes for youth simply serves to show the importance of re-assessment, and a commitment to the idea that there are no formulas to predict the eventual life-course of any young person.
**Explore Making ACT program Available for Non-Medical Eligible**

“This is a shift in how Probation works.” (ACT Probation Officer)

Sonoma County has made a special commitment to serving youth with mental health issues. A state funded MIOCR program supports wrap-around services for serious mentally ill, DSM-IV, youth, and has been financially supplemented by the county as state funds have diminished. This program, the Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) program can serve 35 youth at any given time and serves around 50 per year. This is a post-adjudication program with a mental health court component.

The average stay in the ACT program is designed to be 3-6 months. The program provides intensive case management by a team, including a Master of Family Therapy clinician. The program also keeps a crisis line open. Staff reports that since program inception there has only been one weekend in which they did not receive a call for assistance.

There is also a judicial, mental health court component. A youth can go to court as frequently as once per week. “Just coming before the Judge is the consequence,” noted staff members. A probation officer is assigned to the program. The emphasis is on developing a relationship with the youth.

The team employs non-traditional responses to acting out behavior. Juvenile Hall is not used as a sanction. “It would not be effective,” says staff. Community detention is used instead. Services include in-home visitation. The goal is to equip the family to take care of the child. The family must be Medical eligible to participate. Ideally, these services would be available for non-Medical eligible youth as well.

An aftercare component has recently been added. The program has been well received by the judges and the affected families. The GAIN assessment tool is being used to measure progress.

Staff reports that the majority of youth in the ACT program have scored as higher risk. For high needs/low risk youth, shared funding to support this kind of program, or to address the need in the larger system should be considered.
A Note on Prevention in the Adult System

Parenting Classes for Incarcerated Adults

46 percent of youth in the Sonoma survey had a parent or sibling who had been incarcerated.

An estimated 856,000 California children—approximately 1 in 9—have a parent currently involved in the adult criminal justice system.\textsuperscript{42} The imprisonment of parents can alter parent-child relationships, and disrupt school, and in some cases can result in out-of-home placement.\textsuperscript{43}

Children of incarcerated parents are more likely to exhibit depression, emotional withdrawal from friends and family, and inappropriate or disruptive behavior at home and in school, and they are at increased risk of future delinquency and criminal behavior.\textsuperscript{44}

Research has shown that a father’s involvement and support is also linked with more positive outcomes for children, even after taking into account the support children receive from their mothers.\textsuperscript{45}

Given the importance of parenting style as both a risk factor and a protective factor in the lives of children we recommend that all sentenced offenders in the Jail and in the Community Corrections Center have access to parenting classes. The Sonoma County Jail already provides parenting classes to inmates and has a wonderful program that works with parents and their young children. This kind of work holds promise as a prevention effort.


CHAPTER THREE

Reviewing the Custody Continuum

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CHAPTER THREE

REVIEWING THE CUSTODY CONTINUUM

This section looks at three out-of-custody residential program options in the Sonoma County Juvenile System: Camp, Sierra Youth Center, and a range of out-of-home Placements.

Sonoma County has a rich tradition providing residential programs for its youth. Its 24-bed Camp was established in 1955 and serves adjudicated young men 16 to 18 years old toward a stated goal to “make change in delinquent patterns of behavior.” It is unique in having an industrial component in which the young men manufacture products, teaching skills and generating income. The program is designed to allow a young man to complete within 6 months – if he successfully moves through progressive program phases – and then begin a step-down phase in which the orientation becomes one of assisting the participant to assimilate back into the community or return to his family. While in the program the residents have access to substance abuse treatment, counseling, education services, recreational opportunities, and other individual and family support services.

The Sierra Youth Center (SYC) program is a residential program for adjudicated girls age 12 to 18 that works to modify behavior and facilitate a positive return to family and community. The program is designed to last between 6 and 12 months. Girls in the program access substance abuse counseling, education and tutoring, family and individual therapy, recreational activities, restorative (giving back) opportunities, and other programs. The residential component of Sierra is followed by an Aftercare phase that can last 8-9 months. During this period the girl lives at home and must abide by certain rules. She must be in school or have a job and is monitored by a staff
person who visits the home and works with the girl. In some cases of non-compliance the girl will be returned to Sierra. Sierra Youth Center is one of the few residential programs in the state for female youth.

Out-of-home Placement options encompass a wide range of residential programs, both in the county and out of the county – some out of state. Many of these programs address specific behavioral needs, including substance use, mental health needs, and other issues. This study included youth from 29 separate programs.

The Outcome Studies

As part of this project we were asked to examine the movement of youth into the adult system. This had not until now been studied, and was complicated by the lack of a single identification number to link persons in both the youth and adult systems. However, with the assistance of dedicated Camp, Sierra and Placement staff (who went through paper records to assemble program samples back to 2004 and 2005), and with the competent assistance of Kim Gilmore from ISD who was able to link the records, we were able to conduct the analysis.

The questions asked by this analysis included:

- What are the characteristics of youth in the programs? (age, gender, ethnicity, gang affiliate, nature of conviction at entry, etc.)

- What is the nature of program involvement? (length of stay, number of escapes, type of exit: successful completion or not)

- What is the recidivism rate? (subsequent convictions for any crime, serious violent crime)

- How many youth are subsequently convicted for an offense in the adult system: for any crime, for a violent crime?

- What is the relationship between individual or program characteristics and recidivism? (Is there, for example, a relationship between length of stay in the program and subsequent recidivism?)
Finally, what can we learn from the findings to strengthen programs or to guide future questions and analysis?

**The Study Methodology**

This is a post-program recidivism analysis. Under ideal conditions, participants would be randomly assigned to treatment and control status. In an observational, retrospective study such as this lacking controls, a dose-response (amount of time in program) can be used to determine whether there is suggestive evidence for a possible “program effect”.

Any conclusions, however, must be considered “suggestive” since there are possible confounding factors. For example, “dose” is not controlled by experimental design but by the subject, and so there may be a confounding relationship between “dose” and recidivism.

For example, individuals who are least likely to commit another crime may also be the most cooperative, and so end up with the longest stays in treatment. Conversely, those with the longest stays may also be individuals who have more discipline problems and, as a result, have extra time added to their stays.

No study can answer all questions. Even the best research in the field will fall short of answering all questions. However, program outcome studies such as these can reveal important information for further analysis and program refinement.

**Study Limitations**

The study has the following limitations:

- Placement data was limited: the level of detail we had for Camp and Sierra was not readily available for these programs
- Placement data includes varied and diverse program types
- Sierra Youth Center sample, with 67 youth (9 of whom are boys) is small
- The Sierra sample includes only 1 girl from 2008 because most girls are still active in program
- Diverse youth population served across the programs
- This is not a control group study
Study Value

We suggest that this kind of analysis can have the following value for the County:

- Provides baseline recidivism data
- Illustrates the relative effect of various program factors
- Helps refine programs and customize services
- Assists in selection of target population
- Helps in refinement of risk assessment
- Sets groundwork for future cost-benefit analysis
- Helps explore how to forestall entry into adult system
- Prompts system discussion about principal program goals
- Helps frame system discussion about reconciling risk and needs within the larger system

The Analysis

We applied Principle Components analysis as a statistical approach to the Camp and Sierra data (for Placement there was not enough data to do the same.) This approach is designed to look at the strength of the relationship between variables. For example, what is the relationship between program completion and a reduction in the rate of recidivism? This technique focuses on the variability and relationship between program and participant characteristics and is used to explore complex inter-relationships. Its findings do not imply a causal relationship but an associative relationship between variables, which can be valuable in guiding further analysis.

This type of analysis is especially suited for this kind of study in which the relationship between variables is not always superficially evident.

Interpretation of the Data

How the system chooses to interpret the findings should be guided by questions regarding program goals and benefits.

✔ What is the principle objective for the program?
✓ If the principal goal is to reduce criminal behavior, or suppress it through incapacitation, has the program achieved this goal?

✓ If the crime reduction benefits are low, does the program produce other economic benefits to the criminal justice system: For example, if youth were not in this program would they be detained at a higher cost?

✓ If the crime reduction benefits are low, does the program have social benefits that supersede a criminal justice objective: for example, without involvement in the program would we expect higher rates of teen pregnancy or lower levels of school success?

✓ If the principle benefit is a social benefit, how might this goal be met at the lowest cost, and in the least restrictive setting?

Program findings can also be interpreted by applying different measures: For example:

a. Does the program reduce the recidivism rate?

One approach to answering this is to conduct a pre/post test to compare recidivism rates for program participants before and after program involvement. However, youth typically do not have long criminal histories and are in a state of development and may reoffend at low rates. Given this, it is often difficult to draw meaningful conclusions about pre/post criminal behavior for youth.

Given this, program-based outcome studies look for clues within the program experience to try and detect a program effect. For example, do youth who briefly touch the program or drop out have different post-program recidivism rates than those who stay longer and receive the full benefit of all the program phases?

A note about recidivism findings: A natural question about any recidivism data is one of relative comparison. How does the recidivism for this particular program stack up with programs in other jurisdictions? The difficulty in answering this question has to do with the both the lack of comprehensive recidivism data for juveniles and the lack of a standardized definition. A U.S. Department of Justice
publication speaks to this: “There is no national recidivism rate for juveniles. Such a rate would not have much meaning since juvenile justice systems vary so much across states.” 46 Although this frustrates a broad comparative analysis jurisdictions can still review local data and come to conclusions about acceptable levels of program success and failure.

b. Does the program reduce the frequency of recidivism?

Do youth who complete the program or have longer program stays reoffend more frequently than those who are briefly involved in the program?

c. Does the program reduce the severity of recidivism?

Do youth who complete the program or have longer program stays commit less violent offenses than those with briefer stays?

d. Does the program improve risk factors (academic achievement, improved family relationships, etc.)?

Within the juvenile justice system these measures are important to track as markers toward the goal of recidivism reduction. Where recidivism is the ultimate goal they are viewed as intermediary measures of progress. The system should develop data collection protocols that track both measures: improvement in risk factors and recidivism.

For example, Drug Court programs track recidivism outcomes as well as improvement in employment stability and other risk factors. The importance of this within a juvenile justice system is to examine the relationship between altering risk factors and reducing crime. By itself, changing a risk factor may not necessarily confer a benefit in terms of decreased criminal behavior. A Drug Court program that graduated participants with improved sobriety but continued high levels of reoffending might need to recalibrate the program or rethink the target population.

Risk factors and recidivism are both important measures. In these outcome studies data was not readily available on individual risk factors for the sample

population. With the new risk and needs tool, this kind of information will be readily available in the future and can help refine data interpretation.

e. Does the program serve other goals, such as protecting the child from harm?

The work and goals of the Juvenile Justice system are multi-faceted. As such, how should a juvenile justice system programs be assessed if there is not strong evidence of a strong recidivism reduction effect, but the program serves another goal: such as protecting a child from harm?

In a bifurcated system with two main doors: the child welfare system and the juvenile justice system, judges and staff are dealing with complex cases that may not always clearly meet the test of one system or the other. What do we do with these cases?

This dilemma is made more pronounced by the introduction of a risk tool that, by definition, sharpens the goals of the justice system toward a more central focus on risk over need. And yet, in some cases, a low risk/high need youth may be in need of attention: such as the example we were given of a girl at risk for involvement in prostitution who scored low risk. The question of how to respond to the low risk/high need youth requires a system discussion, to explore how best to strengthen services outside the juvenile justice system to handle cases such as this. This may require another door out of the system. This Report presents ideas for a Youth and Family Resource Center which might serve as place for assessment and referral for at-risk families and low-risk but high need youth.

f. What is the relationship between different program findings?

Finally, the interpretation of program findings should also be guided by an examination of the sometimes complex relationship between findings.

How we interpret the data, and what it means for programs requires making sense of sometimes complex findings in order to draw conclusions. This can be challenging when the data tells a complex story. For this reason we have applied several analytical approaches to tease apart the findings and look for data inter-relationships.
This approach can help us interpret a finding, such as the low recidivism rate for the Sierra program. The recidivism rate for girls exiting Sierra appears low when compared against expected rates of recidivism for high risk girls in general: as documented in large scale studies, such as the Washington State youth recidivism study. On the other hand, if the program were having a recidivism reduction benefit we would expect to find higher recidivism rates for girls who quickly failed or exited the program after a very short time, compared to those girls who received the full benefit of the program with longer stays.

g.  What local information should inform or guide the interpretation of findings?

Data findings require full review and discussion at the local level, to explore how findings might reflect local population characteristics or system dynamics. A good example of this is the observation offered by a Juvenile Hall staff at the Symposium, during the reporting of differences in gang recidivism by type of gang affiliation: noting that Caucasian gang members are most often participants in Hispanic gangs, not Caucasian gangs. Information such as this is critical to making sense of particular findings, and should inform any next-step analysis. In this example, it will now be important to further explore the differences in outcomes for Hispanic and Caucasian gang affiliates by other indicators, rather than type of gang culture.

Finally, the work of effecting change in youth is about many things: about showing kindness and inspiring hope and planting seeds for the future. Outcome studies, with their focus on recidivism, obscure all this and reduce matters of the heart to simple fact. Outcome studies look at program outcomes in the aggregate, they do not tell stories about individuals.

Sonoma County has staff dedicated to making changes and improving the lives of youth. On a daily basis they see the growth and challenges of the youth they serve. The hope is that program data can help strengthen these efforts.
A. The Camp

The Camp study is based on a sample of 177 boys who entered the program between 2004 and 2009. It tracked recidivism outcomes for 164 youth from program exit (some boys from the full sample were still active in the program). A full report of the findings is presented in Chapter Four.

A central finding for the Camp is its incapacitation benefit. Based on documented rates of criminal offending after program exit, we can estimate the level of criminal activity prevented by boys during their tenure at Camp. Another positive finding was the relationship between program completion and a delay in the time to subsequent offending.

Camp Findings

- 55 percent of the sample were Hispanic, 32 percent Caucasian, and 13 percent Other
- 79 percent of the sample were designated as gang affiliates
- The average length of stay was 203 days, including the transition phase
- The program had a 54 percent successful completion rate
- 66 percent of the boys were convicted of one or more crimes in the juvenile or adult system, after program exit. (If escape and violation of probation convictions are excluded the recidivism rate is 44 percent.)
- The 109 boys who were subsequently convicted had, collectively, 267 convictions or pending cases in the juvenile or adult system.
- Length of stay was related to successful program completion: longer stays = higher rates of successful program completion
- However, successful program completion by itself was not associated with reduced recidivism
• Youth with gang affiliations had the highest rate of subsequent violent recidivism

• There is a strong relationship between gang affiliation, cultural/ethnic gang dynamics, and rates of subsequent serious violent convictions.

• There appears to be a positive relationship between having a weapons conviction or violent conviction at the time of admission to Camp, and subsequent violent recidivism

• Overall, 34 percent of boys who exit Camp go on to be convicted of a crime in the local adult criminal justice system; approximately 20 percent are convicted of a more serious, violent crime as an adult.

• For those youth who entered the adult system there was, over the period tracked, no evidence of desistance: there was no sign of an increase in the time intervals between criminal convictions

• Overall, length of stay in the program is not associated with a lower level of future felony convictions: overall, those boys with longer stays do not have lower rates of felony recidivism than those boys with shorter stays.

• For some boys at Camp, however, longer stays were related to lowered rates of recidivism; and for some boys longer stays appeared to be associated with increased recidivism. The relationship between length of stay and recidivism is associated with demographic factors for sub-populations at the Camp.

• For Hispanic youth affiliated with gangs there is evidence that longer program stays are associated with lowered rates of subsequent recidivism. On the other hand, for Caucasian youth affiliated with gangs longer program stays are associated with increased rates of subsequent criminal behavior. This may reflect an interaction effect of youth at Camp; it may reflect different levels of risk related to gang culture; or it may reflect other individual risk factors. It merits further study.

• Taken in the aggregate, there is evidence that successful program completion delays the onset of subsequent criminal behavior, both in the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems. The only caveat is that this may be influenced in
part by quick convictions for escape and violations for those boys who fail early. Boys with higher program success rates have longer program stays.

- The data makes a case for an incapacitation effect for time at Camp: by quantifying the level of criminal activity for boys after they leave the Camp one can estimate a community protection benefit for time in Camp. This is important.

- While there was mixed evidence of a reduction in recidivism attributable to program participation; time in program likely prevented serious crimes from occurring through incapacitation: preventing approximately 30 adult convictions and 9 serious violent convictions. This is extrapolated by looking at the rates of offending per person per year during the post-program period and then applying this to total time in Camp for the sample.

**Recommendations**

We recommend retaining the Camp program with several modifications.

- Adopt a strong cognitive model
- Add Aggression Replacement Therapy
- Consider tracks based on violent/non-violent behavior: shorter stays for non-violent youth
- Retain wonderful skills development piece but make it also available as part of a community-based phase (before and after Camp)
- Work with the courts for use of short sanctions in detention (counted in days not weeks) in detention
- Strengthen re-entry with a transition housing component for those not returning to families
- Add Mentor component
- Have a ‘Den Mother’ at Camp
- Extended Care: we suggest a system discussion about how to develop a strong extended care model for 18-24 year old youth transitioning back to the community after lengthy stays in out-of-home custody, similar to extended care provided in the Child Welfare system.
- Explore ideas for reducing escapes
- Continue to re-evaluate treatment approach
- Build in more sports
- Establish a Camp-like program, with a more therapeutic and less vocation-oriented approach, for younger boys age 14 & 15 who exhibit violence, and are higher risk
- Use Camp as last resort: Extend family-based continuum, including Functional Family Therapy for younger boys
- Use Camp as last resort: Develop community-based vocational, skills-based program coupled with Intensive Supervision as step before Camp
- Use Camp as last resort: Consider Violation Court (in drug court model) as a step before Camp

B. Sierra

The Sierra study tracked outcomes for 67 youth who entered the program from 2005 to 2007 (one girl who entered the program in 2008 is included). The sample includes 9 younger boys aged 12-14 because it encompasses a period of time when the program was co-ed. The full report is found in Chapter 5.

Because of the small sample size all findings should be treated as provisional. However, there are conclusions that can be drawn based on observed data patterns descriptive statistics. Certain findings, such as the relationship between program completion, gang affiliation status, and violent recidivism, are suggestive of relationships that merit policy review, and given a larger sample size, may be clarified.

The central finding of this study is that the girls in Sierra have a low level of criminal offending when compared to the boys at Camp.

This low level of offending is similar regardless of program completion type (successful or not) or length of stay: girls who receive a low dosage of the program (less than 90 days) have similar rates of violent offending. However, the low sample size and low level of criminal activity challenges any definitive conclusion. On the other hand, we can draw important observations such as the finding that the majority of criminal activity for girls at Sierra (70%) is associated with program escapes and technical violations of Probation.
The 58 Sierra girls in our sample together spent the equivalent of 34 ‘person-years’ years in the program. The sum total of subsequent felony crimes for the population of girls was 5 felony convictions. Two girls were convicted in the adult system.

Sierra Findings

- The average length of stay in the program was 219 days
- 64 percent of youth in the sample were designated as gang affiliates
- The girls had a 36 percent successful completion rate
- 64 percent of youth (boys and girls) escaped at least once; 35 percent escaped two or more times
- Youth (boys and girls) who escaped at least once were one-third as likely to complete the program as those who did not escape
- For the girls, there is no apparent relationship between length of stay in program and subsequent violent convictions: the few subsequent violent convictions occur across the time in program range, from less than 90 days to more than 181 days
- For girls, program completion status (success or not) appears to be associated with subsequent violent convictions: those who succeed appear to have a lower rate of violent recidivism, however due to the low number of subsequent crimes observed in the sample population, these results are not statistically significant.
- For girls, all new violent convictions were committed by girls with gang affiliations.
- In looking for a relationship between the previous three factors (length of stay, completion status, and gang affiliation) and subsequent violent convictions, we cannot ignore the possibility that the apparent relationship between program failure and violent recidivism is not in fact simply a relationship between gang affiliation and recidivism.
Recommendations

Any recommendations for Sierra should be grounded in a discussion about the principal goals for this program. If the goal is general child well-being then the discussion can center on how best to improve those aspects of the program that address that need. If, however, the principal goal is to reduce criminal offending or to protect the public then the question becomes more of an economic analysis.

Regardless of the goal, one question for Sierra might become how to extend the continuum of non-residential, non-custody programs to serve as a last step before the ‘last resort.’ To what extent could we provide Sierra’s services in an outpatient, family-centered model?

Family services (such as Functional Family Therapy) might be coupled with respite stays at Sierra on weekends. This is important because the girls who are today in Sierra have families in need of assistance so they can best support their daughters. Sierra already works diligently to provide quality services for its girls and their families. A Respite option (added to a Sierra program or as another option for some girls) would supplement a strengthened array of general family-based services. In this model, shorter initial stays and weekend ‘time outs’ would be used to enhance family based treatment. Such a program might also serve those girls now in detention waiting for Placement, as well as those girls returning to the community from Placement. The role that Sierra may play in meeting this need should be explored.

For those girls with chronic, serious offending who pose a public safety risk, and who have family problems, the Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care model might be an effective option: a program that employs specially trained families to work with youth at the nexus of chronic offending and high needs, while a team simultaneously works with the family.

In the course of discussing the goals for Sierra, the local system is also encouraged to discuss the shift in target population (that is occurring with a new risk-based approach), and the goals and larger system options available for lower risk and higher risk girls. The larger system should be engaged in this discussion to explore where the limits of one system focused on risk, end, and the larger social service system begins. How can we collectively work to make sure youth are safe and secure and that serious needs, when identified, are addressed?
C. Out- of- Home Placement

An outcome analysis was conducted for all juvenile wards from Sonoma County who exited out-of-home Placement between 2005 and 2007. The sample included 181 youth served across 29 different programs. Each program has different eligibility criteria focuses on different behavioral problems or risk factors: from substance abuse to different levels of mental health need

Unfortunately the definition of program success is not consistently applied. For the most part, ‘successful completion’ refers to successful completion of Probation – not a program.

Given the number of programs in the sample, and the low number of youth being served in each, recidivism rates are presented in the aggregate instead of broken out by program. The number of individual program participants is simply too small to present for meaningful review.

The central findings are the lengthy periods of stay in these programs (an average 454 days); the overall poor results: the recidivism rates almost rival that of boys at Camp (34 percent were subsequently convicted of a crime in the adult system); and the lack of any apparent relationship, in the aggregate, between length of stay and reduced offending — and, in fact, a suggested relationship in the wrong direction between longer stays and violent reoffending.

These findings raise questions regarding program quality and length of stay, and challenge the system to consider the extent to which it can expand the continuum of community-based alternatives – such as family ‘wrap’ services to serve this population.

Placement Findings

- Youth in the sample resided in one of 29 programs
- The average length of stay was 454 days; 51 percent stayed in the program for more than one year
• For youth in the Unicorn program (focus on sex offenders) the median duration was 34 months, or 1,020 days.

• There was a negative relationship between time in program and subsequent convictions for a violent felony: youth with the longest stays in Placement had the highest rate of subsequent violent felony convictions. From this one cannot, however, conclude that time in the program made youth worse. It may simply reflect that more serious youth have longer stays. But this finding, coupled with other research from around the country with similar outcomes, argues for reconsidering length of stay.

• R-House had the most youth with 38 percent of the total (62 youth) over the period.

• 69 percent of the sample was male and 31 percent female.

• Boys in Placement had rates of general recidivism that were more than 2.5 times higher than girls, and rates of violent offending 7 times higher than girls.

• Caucasian youth comprised 56 percent of the sample, Hispanic youth 29 percent, 15 percent were of another race or ethnicity.

• 50 percent of youth in the Placement sample were designated as a gang affiliate.

• Gang affiliates had 2.5 times the rate of subsequent convictions as non-gang affiliates; 3.1 times the rate of felony violent convictions; and 5.8 times the rate of felony violent convictions (including convictions plus pending cases) as non-gang affiliates.

• Of youth in Placement, 38 percent were in a program in Sonoma County, 56 percent were housed out-of-county, and 6 percent were out-of-state.

• 54 percent of youth successful completed probation/program; 39 percent were described as unsuccessful; 7 percent were still active in the program. (note: the definition of ‘successful completion’ in most cases reflected termination status on probation, but was not absolutely consistent.)
In the data we were given, ‘successful completion’ does, for the most part, refer to probation supervision. And, probation completion does evidence a possible protective benefit: those with a successful completion had lower rates of subsequent conviction.

More than half of the youth who exited Placement (54 percent) were subsequently convicted of a crime, either in the juvenile or adult system.

32 percent were subsequently convicted of a crime in the adult system.

20 percent were subsequently convicted of a felony.

**Recommendations**

**Reduce Length of Time Waiting for Placement**

Recent snapshot data for Juvenile Hall show that on any given day, an average of 8 youth in Detention are adjudicated and awaiting Placement or interstate compact. Placement waits can be for 2-3 months. Staff noted that some of this time may be due to cases that are difficult to place, either because of severe issues and/or offense type or the need to find a new Placement due to failure in the original program. In the June snapshot the time in custody in Juvenile Hall awaiting residential Placement was 63 days. This time should be reduced, either by expanding program options, or by making other non-secure options available for those youth awaiting program entry. A short-stay option at Sierra could be an option for a girl.

**Reduce the Number of Youth in Placement: Develop a Wraparound Continuum**

The new risk tool will, by itself, result in an initial reduction in the number of youth in Placement. Just recently the numbers in Placement has dropped from 90 to around 70 youth. In large part we suspect that this is directly related to the application of the new risk tool. By policy, Placement will no longer be an automatic option for youth who score low or moderate risk. Given this, we would expect further reductions as the existing population in Placement exit, and new risk policies screen out more youth. However, the shift of lower risk/higher need youth out of Placement does not obviate a need to attend to complex needs in these youth. This is an issue for the larger system to discuss.
The shift to a risk-based focus represents a new paradigm. Separating out issues of need from issues of risk raises important questions about our collective responsibility to respond. How should we respond to youth who fall out of the juvenile system, but do not enter the child protective system? There is no third system, only a patchwork of underfunded substance abuse and mental health programs. Issues of how best to respond across the larger system to complex needs will remain.

Revisit the Movement of Youth along the Camp/Placement Continuum

Placement offers an option for youth with complex issues. We were interested in comparing the risk levels and profiles of youth in Placement versus Camp and Sierra and other programs but no detailed data was available for youth in individual Placement programs.

Placement officers, however, told us that the distinction between residential placement (in the community) and Camp/Sierra used to be more defined.

“Residential facilities are neither functionally nor conceptually different than the Camp and Sierra programs.” (Placement Staff)

Staff notes that at one time the Camp was a step-up from home care, a last resort before being sent to the Youth Authority; now the concept of a progression from least restrictive to a more restrictive option appears less clear. The issue of how youth progress through the system along a graduated continuum was also raised by a manager of one of the residential treatment programs for youth, and a Placement option. Although we do have data for the collective movement of youth along a Camp to Placement/Placement to Camp continuum, this would benefit from data collection; and merits discussion.

“I don’t know why we get kids after they have already been to Camp/Sierra; it seems backwards to me.” (Mimi Donahue, R-House Director)

Reduce Length of Stay in Placement

There is a general sentiment that Placement programs may retain kids for longer than needed. In the past there has been no risk assessment to guide placement decisions; program operators are not rewarded for moving youth within well-defined timeframes; and a full continuum of graduated step-up and step-down options is not in place to fully support release. The cost to the larger system is high (we are told as
much as $5,000 per month) and the average length of stay is 454 days. Routine reviews of youth in Placement are built into the process, but in many cases a youth’s time in Placement is simply extended. Additionally, there is no common definition of program success. Because of this, our sample study relied on successful completion of Probation supervision as a proxy measure for program success.

According to staff, aside from sex offenders, the average placement is one year, which has become common state wide. Accurate length of stay are difficult to estimate for any given program because many youth run from placement and are quickly replaced in the same or a different program. Staff also noted that for our placement sample, some, perhaps many, were in the noted placement program not for the first time but for a re-arrest or replacements.

A new expectation for shorter stays is encouraged. In addition, whenever possible, length of time should be built around school terms/semesters, with the goal of minimizing disruption of school activity.

The findings that length of stay is not associated with reductions in general recidivism; and the finding that longer stays are actually linked with higher rates of subsequent convictions for violent felony offenses gives pause.

This same finding has been revealed in other studies of Placement, such as a study out of Hennepin County, Minnesota noted below. This is followed by a summary of a recent RAND study that tracked crime-related outcomes for a sample of California delinquent youth who placed into group homes by the courts. The two studies serve to raise questions about the efficacy of longer-term out-of-home delinquency placements as a central method for rehabilitation.
Hennepin County, MN Placement Study

In a study in Hennepin County, Minnesota that tracked 484 youth who exited Placement it was found that stays of 12 months or more not only did not reduce criminal behavior, but appeared to increase recidivism.

The study also found that less than half of youth in Placement could be deemed a public safety threat.

As a result of these findings Hennepin County is reducing lengths of stay in Placement and moving toward a family-based model of treatment.

Extend Pre-Placement Continuum: Family-based services

We recommend that a range of family-based services be developed, at different levels of intensity. Wrap services are being developed for some of the youth in Placement. We applaud this. We would like to see levels of wrap services, with Respite options for youth in community, family-based services. This would supplement family services with an option for weekend ‘time outs’ (such as making Sierra available for girls in family-based programs). Family-based services also need to be supplemented with mental health counseling, drug treatment, and other services to address complex needs. To the extent possible, these programs should be tried first. At the upper end of the continuum, and as one of the steps before Placement, is Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care: the program that provides specially trained foster parents for youth with behavioral and delinquency issues – and works simultaneously with their parents.

Provide Short-Term Pre-Placement

For those youth on a path to out-of-home Placement a short-term Pre-Placement option might be valuable. An opportunity for enhanced observation and assessment, Pre-Placement would be for youth committed to Placement for the first time. The goal is to situate the youth in the most appropriate available Placement by spending a short period of time (no longer than 1 month) in order to more clearly identify the treatment or service needs for the youth and the family– and to explore non-Placement alternatives.

RAND has recently completed a longitudinal study of Juvenile placement: one of the largest and longest efforts to follow juvenile offenders who had been referred to group homes for rehabilitation. The study tracked 449 youth aged 13 to 17 who were referred to group homes by judges in Los Angeles County between 1999 and 2000. The study examined the number of youth who were still involved with crime or drugs seven years later.¹

The participants were interviewed periodically over the next seven years to assess how their lives had progressed. Participants were recruited from all three juvenile detention facilities in Los Angeles County. Researchers sought participation from adolescents referred to any of the seven largest group homes that had contracts with the Los Angeles County Probation Department to provide long-term resident care, typically for periods of 9 to 12 months.

Each of the programs offered a range of services, including schooling, substance abuse treatment or education, family therapy, vocational training and other forms of counseling.

When attempts were made to re-contact these young people in 2007, researchers learned that 12 of the young people had died, including seven from gunshot wounds. Among the 383 participants who completed the final interview, 36 percent had used hard drugs in the past year and 27 percent reported five or more symptoms of substance dependence.

Among the group that completed the final interview, 66 percent reported they had done something illegal, other than using alcohol or drugs, in the previous year. Thirty-seven percent reported being arrested within the previous year and 25 percent had been in jail or prison every day for the previous 90 days.

“We cannot say that these group homes failed to improve anyone’s life, but the large number of poor outcomes we observed raises questions about whether the juvenile justice system is as effective in rehabilitating delinquent youths as it should be,” said Rajeev Ramchand, the study’s lead author and an associate social scientist at RAND, a nonprofit research organization.

The group homes may have contributed to a few bright spots in the study’s findings. About one fifth of the participated reported that they were living productive lives—neither criminally active nor in jail. Among the group that completed the final interview, 58% of the participated of the participants had graduated from High School or obtained a GED, and 63% reported working at a job in the previous year.

¹RAND, Study of Juvenile Placement Outcomes in California, RAND Safety and Justice Program, News Release, March 19, 2009
**Strengthen step-down from Placement**

Youth returning to the community from Placement have often been away from home for a long time. This makes the re-entry process all the more crucial. We recommend strengthening the re-entry process by making transition housing available and other support services. Limited resources currently exist, and these should be built upon. Extended case management to supplement Probation, and treatment ‘booster’ sessions should also be built into the re-entry process.

**Apply a ‘Harm Test’ to Sanctions**

Youth who are committed to out-of-home Placement often have the bad luck of having troubled parents and poor circumstances, combined with the commission of a crime. Oftentimes, (some staff say that this is true in the majority of cases), the criminal behavior is non-violent and of relatively low seriousness level. Yet, a youth who enters the Placement system for a low level offense may find themselves penetrating the system further by being sanctioned for program violations. But it is worth considering how indicators of risk and violence should inform the sanction discussion. How different might the system response be if a question of whether the youth posed a public safety threat served as an overlay to decision-making? How different should the response be to violent versus non-violent youth? We recommend that structured sanctions be developed and that these sanctions incorporate risk and public safety factors.

**Collaborate. Collaborate.**

The Case Management Council provides a multi-disciplinary staffing for Placement cases. This is important. At the same time, based on what staff report, and our observation, the process would seem to benefit from improved clarity about the respective role of county agencies regarding case management and funding.

Based on our limited observation of the process, and follow-up discussions with staff from Probation Placement, AOD, and Mental Health we suggest that there is room for more non-traditional ways to address cases at the Council; to more fully explore why youth are acting out; to hear more clearly from the youth, based on a formatted interview, what they think they need; to apply a test about public safety (does the
youth present a public safety risk) to decisions; and to adopt a process that for each case asks ‘are there community-based or placement options that if they were available would offer a better solution for this child?’ We also recommend that as the group deliberates and elects options for youth it document what option it would like to have employed—if available. This will assist long-term program planning efforts.

D. Juvenile Hall

As part of this project a ‘snapshot’ methodology was put in place to allow a routine review of youth in custody: Juvenile Hall, Camp, and Sierra. Some descriptive data is presented below (Table 23):

Profile of Youth in Juvenile Hall

- 75 percent of the custody population is male and 25 percent is female.
- 10% of the custody population is 14 years old or younger.

Table 23. Sonoma County juvenile custody population age distribution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Custody Population by Age</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 or younger</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 – 16</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 – 18</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 or older</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The break-down of the custody population by race/ethnicity (Table 24):

Table 24. Sonoma County juvenile custody population race/ethnicity distribution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Custody Population by Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collectively, 70% of youth in custody (Juvenile Hall, Camp and Sierra) had a gang designation: 72 percent of boys and 54 percent of girls.

Based on the first assessment of risk, 24.8% of youth in Juvenile Hall are low risk; 21.2% are moderate/high risk; and 36.3% are high risk.

Legal Status of Youth in Juvenile Hall

- Of the youth in Juvenile Hall 36% were in pre-trial status, 38% in post-trial, and 26% in ‘hold’ status (Probation hold, hold for Camp, Sierra, and out-of-home Placement).

- Over 40% of both the pre-trial and post-trial population has a misdemeanor as their most serious charge category (Table 25).

Table 25. Sonoma County juvenile custody legal status.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Serious Charge Category</th>
<th>Misdemeanor</th>
<th>Felony</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Trial</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Trial</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 44% of youth in pre-trial status are lower risk, according to the risk tool (PACT) pre-screen.

Time in Custody

- The overall ‘time in custody’ is 84 days. (this includes JH, Camp and Sierra). Time in custody by legal status is shown in Table 26.

Note: ‘Time in Custody’ is not the same measure as ‘Average Length of Stay.’ Time in Custody documents the total number of days youth have been in custody when captured in a daily snapshot. Time in custody measures for the total detained population, including Juvenile Hall and Camp and Sierra, are important because it reflects a collective detention impact. In the case processing study time in custody does represent only the Juvenile Hall population.
Table 26. Sonoma County juvenile custody time in custody by status.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time in Custody by Legal Status</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Trial</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Trial</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 22% of the Youth in Juvenile Hall (n=18) are waiting for entry to Camp, Sierra, or another out-of-home Placement.

- Youth spend on average 28 days in Juvenile Hall waiting to enter Camp, 31 days for Sierra, and 63 days for Placement. The average daily population waiting in each category: 10 boys for Camp, 1 girl for Sierra, and 9 youth for Placement.
CHAPTER FOUR

Case Processing: Same Justice Sooner

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CHAPTER FOUR

CASE PROCESSING:
SAME JUSTICE SOONER

To examine measures of system efficiency we tracked 2877 cases through the Sonoma County Juvenile Justice system from Filing to Court Disposition. By looking at the number of juvenile arrests for one year (2007) we can get an idea of the ‘funnel effect’ of the system *(Table 27)*: many youth come in contact with the system; few penetrate deep into the system.
Table 27. Sonoma County juvenile system attrition rates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sonoma (n)</th>
<th>Sonoma (%)</th>
<th>State of California (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arrests</strong></td>
<td>3,108</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not Referred by Police</strong></td>
<td>218</td>
<td>7% of arrests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Referred</strong></td>
<td>2,877</td>
<td>93% of arrests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Filed</strong></td>
<td>1,566</td>
<td>54% of referred</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Filing Outcome: Sustain</strong></td>
<td>794</td>
<td>65% of filed</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mod/High or High Risk</strong></td>
<td>174</td>
<td>22% of sustain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of roughly 3,000 annual youth arrests in Sonoma County approximately 5 percent (174) scored as high risk after the first application of the risk tool: that population which Juvenile Probation intends to formally supervise and to whom they will deliver their most intensive services.

**Same Justice Sooner: Adopt Early Case Resolution Principles**

The overall time from arrest to court disposition is 90 days (Table 28).

Table 28 presents the case processing times from arrest to case disposition, comparing the average for all youth to citation releases and those cases received through Intake. These figures do not include those few youth processed in the adult system.

---

- Arrest data is for 2007
- Based on State of California data: 18 percent of youth arrested are not referred to Probation.
- Risk levels based on initial scoring of over 1,000 cases under supervision by Sonoma Juvenile Probation: including Juvenile Hall, Camp, Sierra, and on probation.
Table 28: Arrest to Court Disposition times.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time from Arrest to Court Disposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intakes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The concept of “Same Justice Sooner” is relevant for both the adult and juvenile justice system. An Expedited Case Resolution (ECR) process has been established in Sonoma County in the adult system and, in the first few months of operation, has already shown good results. Although the ECR paradigm is slightly different in the juvenile system the same principles would be applied. An effective ECR program in the Sonoma County Juvenile Justice system would be expected to:

- Reduce time to petition and disposition
- Reduce disparities in case processing times between cite and intake cases
- Reduce impact on Juvenile Hall
- Achieve swift consequences
- Reduce pre-trial failure rates
- Expedite entry into programs
- Strengthen system integrity
A. Arrest Alternatives

The police should also have access to immediate social service/mental health assessment in those rare cases when the level of family conflict or youth mental health needs raise questions. This can be addressed at various levels: having access to county mental health/social worker staff to respond to the police agency to further assess immediate youth needs; formalizing arrangements with the youth shelter regarding assessment capability; and coming to a common agreement among agencies about which cases should be transported to Juvenile Hall.

Strengthen Role of Youth Shelter as Receiving Center

The Coffee House Youth Shelter is not fully utilized.

*Coffee House* is the only 24-hour youth shelter. Law enforcement can make use of it, but it is underutilized. The program capacity is 6 beds, but the shelter is rarely full; they usually have 2-4 youth in residence. The youth need parent permission to stay, and the shelter provides brief crisis mediation and stabilization, a hot meal, and a place to recoup from what is often a power struggle with the parents.

The shelter is an important resource for law enforcement and for the system. Given the services already in place at the shelter to assess, stabilize and refer youth — as well as to work with families — it should be the option of choice for more low-level offenses where there is an indication of family conflict.

This is consistent with the concept of a Receiving Center where, by policy, youth are brought by police for short-term stabilization. This can be a real asset to the system. Fundamental to its success is a common agreement among law enforcement agencies and the juvenile justice system regarding who would be a good candidate.

Under such an agreement, the Shelter would offer assessments, contact families, make referrals to needed community services, and provide short-term case management. They could also handle some domestic dispute cases in which the offense is not serious enough to warrant an Intake at Juvenile Hall, but neither does law enforcement want to immediately return the youth to a potentially volatile home situation.
Youth referred to the Shelter benefit by avoiding the emotional, mental, and physical traumas of being incarcerated. In addition, they are provided immediate family-based services.

The shelter already serves runaway youth, but a Receiving Center concept would formalize its utilization for other kinds of low-level cases. Police should be able to drop off these cases and allow the shelter to screen, contact the parents, and refer to services. For runaway youth and other non-criminal cases the shelter serves an important role in stabilizing youth as acting as a bridge between services.

B. Intake and Front-End Assessment

“Let’s put energy into the front end of the system. Let’s coordinate the boxes”
(Diversion Counselor at a local police agency)

Consistency: Joint agency review of police diversion and cite policies

More than 70 percent of citation cases score as low risk. Sonoma County Juvenile Probation has a new citation screening process in which a Probation Officer meets, by appointment, with parents and youth at local police departments. The Probation Officer rides the circuit, with designated days of the week to be on-site at each involved agencies. The goal is to reduce the time to case review, to use the risk tool to inform decision-making, and to accommodate parents and youth in their own communities. The fact that the majority of cases have scored low risk shows that the police are overall selecting cases to cite that meet the Probation department definition of low risk. Another measure of this is the fact that so far none of these cases have gone to petition.

On the other hand, there is room to review the type of cases referred. Certain types of cases, or thefts below a particular dollar value, might by agreement be responded to with admonishment or by direct citation to a common program (for example, a morning of structured community service). This will save time and money.

We recommend that Juvenile Probation generate a monthly report that captures citations by offense type and agency to help frame a future discussion.
When to Assess/When Not to Assess: Simplifying the Front-End

The majority of citation cases are possession of alcohol, petty theft, vandalism, shoplifting, and possession of marijuana. The risk-screening interview takes from 30 to 60 minutes to administer. This is a significant time commitment. Given the high level of low risk cases, the Department should consider an offense-based approach to particular offenses. There has been some discussion about adopting a specialized response to possession of marijuana offenses. The same should be done for shoplifting and vandalism before certain monetary/harm thresholds. At this level, the time spent assessing risk and specialized needs might better be reserved for only those cases involving some level of family conflict.

Immediacy: Reduce Time between Citation and Response

It can take several weeks for Juvenile Probation to receive a police report. The average time is reported to be around three weeks from the time of the citation to the time the report is received. It is recommended that this issue be discussed with the police agencies to brainstorm ways to hasten the receipt of the reports.

A sizeable number of youth/parents do not show up for the screening appointment. An immediate Probation response is also challenged by a high no-show rate. Every time an appointment is not kept the 45 minutes to one hour set aside by the Probation Officer is lost, and the system response is further delayed. Recent reminder calls made to parents on the morning of the appointment have improved attendance. It was suggested that interns might assist with this.

At this time, the soonest date for an appointment is more than a week out. Once the police report is received then an appointment must be scheduled to meet with the Probation Officer; at this time the earliest appointment is more than nine days out. A quicker turnaround on police reports and a more limited approach to screening would allow the Probation Officer to process more cases faster. Ultimately, a benchmark of seeing cases within 3-5 days should be the ultimate goal.
Behavioral Assessment: Make social/behavioral assessments available at all steps in process

Sonoma County has incorporated the more extensive Pre-Screen into its Intake process.

Sonoma County has two new risk tools at the juvenile level: the DRAI guides the release/detain decision for those youth booked into Juvenile Hall. The PACT pre-screen is a tool designed to assess the criminal risk factors across multiple domains: relationships, alcohol & drugs, living arrangements, etc.

It is commendable that Sonoma County has decided to administer the more in-depth assessment to youth, whether they are released or detained. This allows an immediate look at the issues that need attention.

The Probation Officer conducting the screening is not a clinician, and yet some of the questions asked in the screening and assessment process address sensitive issues (mental health, suicidal thoughts, neglect, etc.). This raises the issue of what should trigger a secondary, clinical assessment.

In low risk cases a basic standard should require a system response to any indications of self-harm, significant family conflict, or serious mental health issues that comes to the attention of the Probation Officer during screening. These cases will not be great in number, but a system should be in place that would allow a mental health worker/social worker to respond and assess.

The research on the juvenile risk tool shows that low risk youth who have the highest level of risk factors recidivate at a level equal to a moderate risk youth. Conversely, the highest risk youth with a low level of risk factors commit future crimes at a level equal to moderate risk youth.
Local policy and the Juvenile Code largely drive who is detained or released prior to the first court hearing.

Three months of Juvenile Hall intake data was collected by Kim King to look at outcomes after the introduction of the new DRAI tool. The intake risk score generated by the risk tool is based on a criminal history, the presenting offense, and prior failure to appear episodes. After entering the information, the tool produces a risk score that corresponds to one of three recommendations: a. Release from detention; b. Release from detention to an Alternative (such as community detention/electronic monitoring, and; c. Detain.

Only 15% of youth receive a D-RAI (pretrial) risk score high enough for a risk tool generated ‘auto detain’ (Table 29). On the other hand, 62% of youth receive an ‘auto detain’ because of offense type or local policy. These automatic detentions are an overlay to the risk tool calculation.

Table 29 shows the break-out of recommended release type according to DRAI scores. This is based on 3 months of data, representing the first data collection of this new approach. As with all the new risk data, the Department will want to compare these findings against a larger database of county data collected over time.

Table 29: Sonoma County DRAI recommended release type proportions sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County DRAI: Recommended Release Type</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Juvenile Hall Intakes: January to March 2009 (n = 388 youth))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended Release</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release to Alternative</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detain</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of those youth at Intake who were designated by the D-RAI risk tool as ‘auto-detain’ only 12% were strictly because of offense severity: 707(b) cases. Other reasons for automatic detention include warrant status (most often a violation of probation), a violation of community detention (either pre or post adjudication in this data), and a court remand in which a youth is placed in detention – often to await program entry (Table 30).
Table 30. Sonoma County DRAI reasons for detention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County DRAI: Auto Detain Reason</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(January to March 2009 (n = 240 youth))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrant</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violation of Probation</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Detention Violation</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court Remand</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offense Mandatory Detain (by Code) 707(b)</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (out-of-county, etc.)</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 14 percent of cases either Juvenile Hall Intake staff or the Probation Officer chose to over-ride the DRAI score indicating Release. In a good percentage of cases the over-ride had to do with a safety issue, such as a victim in the home. Other reasons included: an out-of-county cases, a Valley of the Moon linked case, or parents initially refuse to come claim their child (Table 31).

Table 31. Sonoma County DRAI reasons for over-ride.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County DRAI: Reason for Over-Ride</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(January to March 2009 (n = 54))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation-Related Reason</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim in Home</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of County</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of Control/Public Safety</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents Refuse to Claim</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents out of Town</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley of the Moon Runaway</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (ICE, no phone, transfer in)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C. Case Adjudication

Reduce Time to Disposition

**Overall, the time from arrest to a decision not to file a case is 61 days.** The swift resolution of cases is important to resolve cases that will be filed, and to dispose of those cases that will not be filed. It is important that all youth and families coming into contact with the system experience a fair, humane and efficient process.

Sonoma County has adopted an Expedited Case Resolution (ECR) process in the adult criminal justice system. The implementation of an (ECR) process at the juvenile level is more about the ECR concept than a program, focused on principles that can be adopted or improved upon – rather than a whole new program.

In other Juvenile Justice systems ECR programs have included such features as: time expectation about receiving police reports; time expectations regarding declines, petitions filed, discovery, review; limits on the number of case set-overs; an expectation that disposition happens at the same time as charge resolution (with some exceptions for serious offenses); and agreements about when can accept verbal report on drug testing. Often an expedited process is also accompanied by general agreements about policy issues, such as limits on sanction days in detention. Some of these are already in place. There is room for refinement.

In any case, a juvenile ECR program is not the same paradigm as an ECR program in the adult system. For example, in the Sonoma juvenile system it would not function as a stand-alone court. Instead, ECR principles would be incorporated into each of the two departments.

While case processing times are not a significant problem in Sonoma County there is always room for refinement, and a review of how ECR principles might be applied is worth the review. The data suggests that additional work on the calendaring of cases and adherence to ECR principles could have a real benefit in improving case processing times.

Further exploration of an ECR concept would involve discussions of possible aspects that might be adopted, and the organizational and resource issues that attend any such changes.
In the Sonoma County Juvenile Justice system the average time from arrest to case filing/petition is 38 days. This does not differ depending how the case entered the system (citation vs. intake).

The average time from arrest to filing/petition is 43 days for misdemeanor and 21 days for felony cases. Given that the more serious charges are not, in the aggregate, taking longer to resolve, there would seem to be potential for broad application of the ECR process. Of course, there will always be some cases that by their nature require more time. For 14 percent of the sample population, the time from arrest to court disposition was 151 to 820 days. At the high end some of the cases may include youth remanded to the adult system.

Although more complex cases will take more time, an ECR program brings the value of swift case resolution to the forefront and can, as a result, can have a positive impact on overall case processing times.

Overall, the average time from charge disposition to court disposition is 16 days. The process to expedite the prosecution of cases should also review how to shorten the time to complete the information collection that supports the final disposition (Table 32).

Table 32. Sonoma County case processing times.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Case Process Times (Time from Arrest to Court Disposition)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 days or less</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 – 60 days</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 – 90 days</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 – 150 days</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151 – 820 days</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Improved efficiencies save time and resources. Simply cutting down on the number of court appearances is a boon to the system (Table 33).
Table 33. Number of Court Appearances for Sonoma County Juvenile Case Processing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Case Processing (Number of Court Appearance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 – 2 Appearances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – 5 Appearances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 + Appearances</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each court appearance represents time and resource expenditure. The small percentage of cases with a multiple appearances has an especially strong impact. There are in the sample population, for example, 3 percent of cases with 11 to 21 court appearances.

Reduce Pre-Trial Failure Rates

Pre-Trial failure rates can reflect release decision-making and time to disposition. The recent adoption of a structured pre-trial release decision tool (the D-RAI) is designed to increase the consistency of these decisions and increase the likelihood that those release are lowered risk for committing an offense or failing to appear for court. The tool is based on a set of objective and public safety related criteria that should serve to lower failure rates. Shortening the length of time that a youth is in the community pending case disposition will also serve to improve failure rates.

The failure-to-appear rate for youth in the community on pre-trial status is 11 percent. Longer times to case disposition are associated with higher failure rates. This is evident when we consider that while the average time from arrest to case disposition is 90 days; the average time from arrest to FTA is 127 days.

Although we do not have comparative data for FTA rates for youth in other jurisdictions in California, any rate that is linked to extended case disposition makes the case for further streamlining of case processing. Failure-to-appears result in added system costs: for police officers, for detention resources, and for court personnel.

Of youth with a Pre-Trial Failure-to-Appear (FTA) 18 percent have 3-9 failure-to-appears before case disposition. More than twenty percent of youth with an FTA have at least two FTA’s and 18 percent have more than three FTA’s.

The re-arrest rate for youth in the community on pre-trial status is 16 percent. This costs the system time and resources. An ECR program pays dividends that go beyond
the county-funded programs. A reduction in failures reduces the impact on law enforcement as well.

**Review Policies for Misdemeanor Filing**

In 46 percent of cases referred to the prosecutors there is no filing of charges. Sonoma County’s case attrition is consistent with other California counties, but high rates of no-filing raise the question of what policy guidelines might serve to reduce this number.

In 58 percent of misdemeanor cases referred to the prosecutors there is no Filing of charges. The high rate of no filing on misdemeanor cases is in contrast to felony cases, in which only 12 percent of cases result in No-Filing.

Over 40% of both the pre-trial and post-trial population has a misdemeanor as their most serious charge category. Misdemeanor cases do not have an insignificant impact on the system. This fact, coupled with high No-File rates for misdemeanors merits further discussion.

**Ensure System Integrity**

Of youth released from Detention post-trial, 17 percent were released ‘Time Served.’ One measure of system efficiency is the number of youth who, at the time of disposition, are released having served enough time. It is a matter of system integrity that the process itself not punishes youth. Time in detention should, to the extent possible, be served after being court ordered – not for waiting the outcome.

**Reduce Prosecution Staff Rotations**

Stable prosecution and public defender participation is important, not only for case processing consistency, but for fostering a sense of teamwork with probation officers and other staff, and for building a base of specialized knowledge. The Juvenile Justice system has its own body of law, different from the adult system. The mastery of this system takes time.

In Sonoma County, Deputy District Attorneys are on a 6 month rotation to Juvenile Court. We recommend minimum two-year assignments to Juvenile Court, consistent
with the judicial standards rule. The District Attorney would need to review the pros/cons of this approach.

**Take Closer Look at Cases with no Attorney**

For the most part, an attorney represents the youth (*Table 34*).

Even though the percentage of youth with no attorney is proportionately small, we recommend that this information continue to be collected and examined in more detail.

*Table 34. Type of Counsel representing Sonoma County Juveniles.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma County Juvenile Case Processing (Attorney)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Defender</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Counsel</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Attorney</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Review Policy on Pre-Trial Release**

*Of the Pre-Trial population in Juvenile Hall, 44 percent scored low risk.* The finding of a sizeable percentage of the pre-trial population with a lower risk score does not tell a complete story. This is because the risk tool used to derive this score (the PACT prescreen) is designed to measure only recidivism. It is the second tool applied at the front-end, after a youth has been screened with a pre-trial specific tool (the D-RAI), which informs the pre-trial detention/release decision. While there is not a direct correspondence between the two tools, a general relationship would be expected. As such, the question is why we find a sizeable group in detention in pre-trial status with low risk scores. To some extent it might reflect the policy to give Probation Officers the opportunity to review youth on their caseloads who come through Intake, and to over-ride the D-RAI score for release.
The majority of youth (74 percent) who go through Intake at Juvenile Hall are released to the community. This is as it should be; overall, we would expect most youth to be released pending case adjudication.

Of all youth arrested, 36 percent were on probation at the time of the arrest. Discretion is an important feature of any system, and the probation officer has a central role. The professional judgment of the Probation Officer is certainly central to designing individualized case plans and crafting appropriate responses to progress and failure. How this discretion is best applied at the pre-trial stage is worth a continued discussion.

A study of juvenile pre-trial failure rates in Virginia found lower pre-trial failure rates for youth whose release type matched the release type indicated by the object risk tool. Release types included both the decision to release as well as the level of security for those on pre-trial release.

The overall new offense rate for the sample was 7.1%. When the risk tool recommendation matched the actual decision the new offense rate was 6.5%. When the risk tool recommendation did not match the actual release decision the new offense rate was 9.5%.

In the study, the overall failure-to-appear rate (30 day tracking) was 1.3% when the indicated decision matched the actual release decision. When the indicated decision did not match the actual decision the failure to appear rate was 3.2% (5/158 cases).49

For the majority of youth who come through Intake (73 percent) this is their first experience being processed at Juvenile Hall. At this stage of the process, the goal of consistency is objective decision-making is paramount. We favor an approach in which the risk tool broadly dictates the in/out decision; and the input of the Probation Officer informs decisions about the type of restrictions imposed upon release to monitor compliance.

Of those youth released pre-adjudication, approximately half (47 percent) were released on community detention. The more restrictive community detention option is to be used when the youth represents a higher risk for either fleeing or committing a new offense while on pre-trial status.

CHAPTER FIVE

Measuring What Matters

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CHAPTER FIVE

MEASURING WHAT MATTERS

People are not good at prediction. We are not particularly skilled at selecting those youth who we think represent the highest risk, nor are we particularly good at predicting the outcomes. Studies across disciplines have consistently shown this weakness. Whether it is in medicine, psychology, or juvenile corrections—professionals often guess wrong.

This is likely explained by the fact that it is difficult for us to assess complex patterns of behavior and their interactive effects. It is also likely that we are swayed by emotion in observing the complex needs of the youth we serve. In Sonoma County it was reported that when Probation Officers were asked to select, for full assessment, those youth on their caseload they believed were highest risk, the majority of Officers included youth who, by later scoring, were actually low risk.

All this affirms the importance of risk tools. But it does not discount the need for human judgment. This is indispensable.

A. Defining Goals

The goal of measurement in the juvenile justice system must be grounded in system goals.

If the ultimate goal of the juvenile system is to reduce crime, then we must measure progress toward that goal by charting the mitigation of risk factors. If the principal goal for a program is to improve lives by reducing a risk factor (school success) then we would measure success by improvement in that indicator alone. In some approaches (such as primary prevention) the mitigation of risk factors is a primary goal because long-term benefits cannot be readily measured. In a juvenile justice system the mitigation of risk factors is often viewed as a means to an end: reducing criminal behavior.
This is not to say that there are not cases in which needs (risk factors) trump risk. The treatment of the mentally ill youth for the sole purpose of improving a life is a worthy goal. In these cases, however, juvenile systems should be clear about their purpose and consider whether this need can be better addressed in a non-juvenile social service system. In most cases we expect that it is the nexus of risk and needs that drive use of the most costly resources and for which we expect a crime reduction benefit.

At the lower end of the continuum of risk, we might set goals of youth accountability (did the youth complete community services); or, we might set a goal of engaging the larger system (did we refer a low risk but higher need case for non-juvenile services)?

**B. Defining Outcomes**

At this time there are no county developed outcome measures for programs. State pass through funds (JJCPA) requires data reporting (program completion, new arrests, detention rates, restitution payment) but this information is not then fully used to improve or refine program operations. Also, the outcomes do not reveal the reason for unsuccessful termination beyond the fact that there was a new offense or a VOP.

The County is just completing a new software system that will allow it to better track the required JJCPA data. But, at this time it will only be used for those specific programs. It does, however, provide the framework for expanding the type of data collected and the number of programs tracked.

Outcome data should be collected on different levels: to answer questions about reduced criminal behavior, and to chart our progress toward that goal. We recommend the following measures. Those in italics are mandated reporting measures for county Juvenile Departments under California’s Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA), a state funded initiative that supports juvenile probation programs.
For criminal behavior we prefer capturing convictions rather than arrests, although both can be useful. The California JJCPA requires counties to report ‘arrests’ and ‘incarcerations’ for youth in funded programs. Given this requirement we include them as well in our list of suggested data elements to collect. The JJCPA also requires that counties document ‘probation completion’ and ‘probation violation’ rates, as well as ‘restitution completion’ and ‘community service completion’ rates.

Some counties go beyond what JJCPA requires for data collection and also track improvement in specific risk factors, such as school attendance and grade point average for those youth in the funded programs.

For Risk Factors we recommend tracking risk factors – the highest risk factors for that particular individual - at the point of entry and exit from programs or probation (if the program is at least six months in length).

We also recommend that data be organized by Risk Level, comparing youth and program outcomes by risk category: each with its own expected rate of recidivism.

Measure Youth Improvement

What should be measured at system exit for high risk youth? Goals might include: does the youth have a support group/person; has the youth benefited from treatment while in the juvenile system, and are they connected to continuing treatment in the community; and, have they made progress in school or skill-development – and is there an on-going plan for continued improvement? Which system/agency next receives the case?
C. Measure Outcomes of Service Clusters

Most programs are offered as part of a larger case strategy for youth. There are few programs that are of such intensity, address multiple risk factors, or are of such duration that one might expect large reductions in crime. Out-of-home placement programs fit that definition, as do some longer-term community-based family services. However, for the most part we need to become more sophisticated in how we measure outcomes and analyze the results. Research on Intensive Probation, for example, showed poor results until we asked: how were the results when meaningful treatment accompanied the supervision? This altered the conclusions.

If the goal is to provide every higher risk youth with three interventions then we should measure clusters of service, in addition to individual program outcomes.

D. Standardization of Outcome Measures

Standardize Outcome Measures at State/County

The methodology for tracking outcomes should be standardized across counties and the state. The State reports juvenile outcomes for JJCPA funded programs but the methods used are selected by the counties and are not standardized.

As described by the JJCPA Report, counties can study program progress by comparing the progress of program youth by: comparing them to their own pre-program behavior (a pre/post analysis); by comparing them to other youth who have gone through the program; by assessing them against other comparable youth; or against some other external reference group.

“Moreover, the length and timing of the evaluation periods vary from program to program. For example, one program might compare the arrest rate of participants for the three-month period prior to program entry with their arrest rate during the first three months of the program, whereas another program might use a longer time
The variation in method and tracking periods makes difficult any relative assessment of progress.

E. Data Interpretation

Interpret Data at the Proper Scale

Not only must evaluation approaches be standardized to advance knowledge in the field, but also the results must be interpreted in a meaningful way. One of the measures tracked by counties as part of the JJCPA has to do with crime rates: Are the positive measures taken by counties to reduce delinquency reflected in changes in county arrest rates per 100,000 juveniles age 10 -17.

Counties are asked to speculate about the estimated change in their county juvenile arrest rates, against a baseline year. The estimate and the actual change in rates is then reported and submitted to the Legislature as part of the overall progress report.

We submit that county juvenile programs should not be judged against such a global measure. County Juvenile Probation Departments are delivering programs to a select subset of all arrested juveniles; and patterns of arrest are driven by multiple factors that are largely outside the control of the Probation Department.

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F. Family Involvement

Consult Youth and Their Families

To fully assess our efforts we must listen to youth and their families--not just in exit surveys (which are good) nor only in calls to parents (which are necessary) but in taking the time to really sit and listen. Sometimes it is important to have someone outside the system do this. We had the privilege as part of this project to sit down with youth and discuss their perceptions of programs and the system. This is invaluable to our thinking and our efforts at reform.

G. QA/QC and Evidence-Based Practices

Develop a Quality Control Process to Measure Evidence-Based Practices

Good results depend upon good programs. But how can we assess program quality? Research has shown the importance of assessing the degree to which programs conform to best practices. It makes a difference. Because of this we recommend that Sonoma County develop an assessment protocol that helps programs be aware of these practices and moves the field toward improved services.

A part of this effort is to develop benchmarks for program performance. At this time the one program that we can say was implemented with fidelity to a specific model is Restorative Conferencing (and the Girls Circle, since this was local development).

JJCPA has evidence-based standards for funded programs, but this is met by simply checking a box indicating that the program is evidence based. Moreover, there is no clear definition from the State regarding what constitutes ‘evidence based’ programming.

A County can indicate on the State form that a program has ‘best practice intent’ but we were told that this is not then followed up with a process to assist a program to move towards compliance. This would benefit programs.

The California Department of Corrections is reviewing an assessment protocol to rate program quality. We suggest the County also conduct such a review. We do recommend however, that it be implemented incrementally (start with a few measures to focus on), and that it be an affirmative process – one in which programs are not punished, but assisted (and perhaps rewarded) for improving service delivery.
H. Risk Tool Validation

Validate the Risk Tool

The Juvenile risk tool adopted by Juvenile Department was originally validated on a sample of youth from Washington State. Sonoma County, with its gang issues, presents a youth profile that may differ from the original sample. While we wouldn’t expect the science behind the tool to change, a validation study assists in refining a tool to reflect its own constellation of youth, and to set its own risk thresholds that define the boundaries between risk categories (low, moderate, moderate/high, and high). We recommend such a validation study.

I. Gang-Specific Risk Factors

Collect Data to Explore Gang Specific Risk Factors

Not all gang affiliated youth will commit a violent crime; however our research showed that - at least for youth in our samples – significantly higher rates of violent crimes were committed by youth with a particular grouping of risk factors. Gang affiliation by itself was not the best predictor, but gang affiliation, plus cultural/ethnic gang type, plus weapon convictions, plus prior violent convictions together were strongly correlated with subsequent violence. To better discern the influence of the gang dynamic on individual risk levels we suggest a more nuanced analysis. One that can begin to look at behavior-based indicators associated with gang culture. One place to start is with the outcome study samples. A look at criminal histories coupled with interviews and the collection of other gang-specific information for youth would help use this database to explore broader risk-related issues.

Develop Placement Outcomes

We advocate for a funding approach that contracts with Placement programs based on outcomes, not only services delivered. Outcomes should not only include youth improvement, but family improvement, and placement stability. Moreover, we support an approach that provides financial incentives for improved outcomes.
J. Outcome Studies

The Outcome Studies

We recommend that Sonoma County continue to track youth in the custody program samples to better understand the movement into the local adult system. A local validation of the risk tool would help define local expected rates of recidivism against which to compare and interpret local outcome studies.

Camp: The finding of a differential relationship based on participant characteristics, between program duration and recidivism calls for more analysis. We suggest that criminal history information be documented, along with other characteristics related to gang involvement and violent behavior, to allow a more detailed analysis of an important finding. This can guide program decisions about length of stay, or the development of specific program ‘tracks’ based on youth characteristics.

For Camp, we also recommend that recidivism data continue to be collected over the next several years, to allow continued analysis of patterns of criminality/desistance as youth age. This might serve to inform interventions in the adult system.

The program should also consider how to best document intermediate measures to capture changes in risk factors during the program, in order to better examine the relationship between intermediate progress and reductions in criminal behavior. As part of our study we attempted to look at GED completion rates, but the records were not complete.

Sierra: We have noted the challenge of interpretation of the Sierra data, given the small sample size. We encourage joining with other counties who serve girls in a similar manner to continue to study outcomes. We also recommend comparing outcome data for Sierra with that of a comparable group of girls on Probation.

Given the recommendation to test the extent to which community-based, family-oriented services might provide a safe and effective alternative, we recommend documenting information about family risk factors for the Sierra girls.

As for Camp, we also recommend considering how to best document intermediate measures to capture changes in risk factors during the program, in order to look for relationships between intermediate progress and reductions in criminal behavior.
Placement: Good, reliable, information is not available in the aggregate for youth in Placement. This should be rectified. Our study was limited because of the paucity of available data and the lack of clarity about the existing data: for example, ‘successful completion’ could have more than one meaning, although we were told that in most cases it reflected probation supervision completion status. There is a need for program termination information (successful or not) that can be captured in the aggregate, intermediary measures, and short-term and long-term indicators (percent return to families, services provided in community after exit, length of stay on probation, etc.)

The finding about the relationship between program duration and recidivism bears further analysis. While the evidence suggests that longer program stays are associated with higher levels of violent recidivism, this merits more detailed analysis. Any definitive interpretation is made difficult by the diversity of programs as well as the varied profiles of youth served in these programs. It may be, for example, that the finding is explained by learning that youth with longer program stays are also the more violent kids. This finding, coupled with similar findings from other national research studies argues for a broader, statewide, examination of the issue of optimal program length.

The goal for Placement should be regular data reports that speak to program standards, outcomes, quality indicators, and youth performance.

Continue Work toward Cross-System Measurement

The introduction of the Needs Assessment provides an opportunity to consider how the collection of information can be brought into alignment across local systems. The goal should be to monitor outcomes for children and youth across the systems that serve them, including education, child welfare, and health care. The goal should be to move, to the extent possible, toward common definitions, screening tools and referral expectations across agencies. This discussion has begun and we support this effort.

Establish a Research Institute at State Level

California needs a Criminal Justice Institute akin to the Washington State Institute for Public Policy – established by the State Legislature to ensure effective and lowest cost
programs, to advance knowledge, and to ensure the greatest return on the taxpayer dollar. Everyone in the field has benefited from the science that has come out of the Institute. California, which spent $118 million in 2007/08 on JJCPA funds alone (Sonoma County received $1.5 million), needs this caliber of science.

Subject Research to Peer Review

The social sciences are behind ‘hard’ science when it comes to the rigor it brings to its efforts. We are confident that with the new interest in the science of risk tools, and the need for counties and states to carefully allocate scarce resources that there will be a new interest in research and evaluation. As this develops, corrections should adopt the same standards of hard science, submitting its research for peer review, and publishing all work to benefit the larger Corrections community.

Things Not Easily Measured: The Intangibles

The easy task in any system is counting what can readily be counted. The more difficult task is measuring the more elusive. How do we measure the joy a child feels? How do we quantify bonding; how do we chart hope? And, just as important – and difficult – how do we document feelings of stigma, or reveal any negative impact a system might inadvertently have on the lives or self-perception of youth? How do we tally the moments of pride, and the moments of fear and frustration of the parents? And, how do we calculate the optimism and tenacity of staff in the roster of small actions taken again and again without giving up.

Finally, how do we measure our success as a system in upholding the principles that animate this work? How can we show that we have taken the least restrictive approach; exhausted the alternatives; and done no harm?
CHAPTER SIX

Juvenile System Capacity Forecasts

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CHAPTER SIX

JUVENILE FACILITY CAPACITY FORECASTS

Forecasting future facility population is, or should be, a policy-based task. The changes that have occurred in United States juvenile facility populations during the last twenty-five years provide considerable evidence that shifts in local policies can bring about dramatic increases or decreases in correctional populations within a county. Few planners who did forecasts during the 1970s or 1980s were able to foresee the nation-wide policy-shift trends that would lead to dramatic growth in facility populations in the 1980s and 1990s. They were unable to foresee, for example, the impact of gang and narcotic related crime.

Because of this failure of foresight, even those counties that built new juvenile facilities during the latter half of the 1980s found that space that was supposed to be sufficient until the year 2000 was filled by the early 1990s. In many cases, the decision-makers responsible for the policy shifts at issue had been on hand when the forecasting studies were done; they were no more able than the forecasters to predict where policy emphases would fall during the coming decade.

Too much facility forecasting work done in recent years has assumed that criminal justice system policies in a county will remain the same over the forecast period. In reality, this is rarely the case. When forecasters make their predictions based on the assumption that county decision-makers will make no changes in juvenile justice system policy, they doom their predictions to failure. No county juvenile justice system today can afford not to anticipate change. For better or for worse, all county systems will have to change, with increasing frequency, in the years to come. The question is not whether but how a particular set of policies can be expected to change. Facility forecasters must learn to take the likelihood of such changes into account and try to foresee the various possibilities. As the gang and narcotics examples illustrate, forecasters cannot do this without the close cooperation of county decision-makers. Ultimately, the decision-makers are the ones who must decide where the emphasis will fall in the years to come.
Juvenile facility capacity forecasts must depend in large part on information made available to forecasters by a county. The forecasts contained in this report are no exception. Much historical information exists on the way the Sonoma County Juvenile Facilities have been used during the past 13 years. Juvenile admissions, average length of stay, and average daily population for each of the facilities along with Juvenile Court case filing numbers are available from 1996 to the present.

Attempts to obtain reliable, consistent older data, however, proved impossible — the records simply do not exist or are not reliable. An estimate of the forecast of county population was received from the Association of Bay Area Governments to the year 2035.

As useful as these numbers may be in constructing a picture of what is to come, they will not aid the county unless a consensus regarding juvenile justice system policy for the next twenty-five years is reached. The text, tables, and graphs that follow illustrate several possible population scenarios, scenarios that suggest what the county might expect in terms of bed demand given several possible policy scenarios. No one-policy scenario is the “right” scenario. It will be up to the county decision-makers to select the view of the future that best represents what they believe to be the most likely direction of county decision-makers, and then plan for juvenile space on that basis.
The 2009 data in the following graphics is annualized based upon the first 6 months. The data is a composite from all 3-facilities—Juvenile Hall, Probation Camp, and Sierra.

A. Admissions
The first graphic presents the total admissions per year for the years 1996 to 2009.

In 1996, the Sonoma County Juvenile facilities admitted a total of 1,764 persons. The number of admissions increased through 1999 and then dropped dramatically to 1,342 in 2004. Admissions have been up and down through the present. In 2009, it is expected there will be 1,482 bookings, which is a 20 percent decrease from 1996.
B. Average Length of Stay

The next graphic shows the average length of stay for 1996 to 2009.

![Average Length of Stay](image)

The average length of stay was 23.7 days in 1996. It has been up and down over the years within a range of 23 days to 33 days. In 2009, the average length of stay is 28.4 days, which is a 25 percent increase over the period.
C. Average Daily Population

This section will show the average daily population in the juvenile facilities, beginning with the total for all three facilities followed by a look at the populations within each facility.

1. Total

The next graphic presents the total historic average daily populations (ADP) for the Sonoma County Juvenile system over the period 1996 to 2009.

![Total Juvenile Average Daily Population](image)

The average daily population was 114 in 1996. The average daily population increased until 1998 when it peaked at 139. It remained flat for a couple of years before dropping. In 2002 the population reached its low point for the period at 97 juveniles in custody. It began increasing again and peaked in 2005 at 135. In 2009, the average daily population through June has been 115, making for a 1 percent increase over the period.
2. Juvenile Hall

The next graphic shows the average daily population in Juvenile Hall from 1996 through 2009.

The average daily population was 76 in 1996. The average daily population increased until 1998 when it peaked at 100. It dropped until 2002 when it reached its low point for the period at 65 juveniles in custody. It began increasing again and peaked in 2007 at 99. In 2009, the average daily population through June has been 86, making for an 13 percent increase over the period.
3. Probation Camp

The next graphic shows the average daily population at Probation Camp from 1996 to 2009.

The population at Camp is primarily limited to the available capacity. Most of the time there is a waiting list at the Hall of juveniles who waiting for a bed at Camp. In 2006, the average daily population at the Camp was 24. In 2009, the average daily population is 18, resulting in a decrease over the period of 22 percent.
4. Sierra

The next graphic shows the average daily population at Sierra from 1996 through 2009.

As with Camp, the population at Sierra is partially a function of the available beds. In 1996, there were an average 15 girls at Sierra. In 2009, the average population is 11, a 28 percent decrease from 1996.
D. County Population: Actual and Forecasted — 1996-2035


The next graphic shows the actual county population for each year between 1996 and 2009.

In 1996, 430,043 persons resided in the county. Since then, the population has risen steadily and it is estimated that 484,470 persons live in the county in 2009, a 13 percent increase over the period.
2. County Population: Forecasted — 2010-2035

The next graphic shows the forecasted county population from 2010 to 2035 as provided by the Association of Bay Area Governments.

The county population in 2010 is expected to be 509,100. Population is expected to grow to 568,900 persons by 2035, a 12 percent increase.
E. Rates

1. Admissions

The next graphic shows the rate of admissions to the Sonoma County Juvenile Hall per 100,000 population from 1996 to 2009.

In 1996, the admission rate into the Sonoma County Juvenile Hall was 410 per 100,000 population; by 2009, the rate had dropped to 306 per 100,000 population, a 29 percent decrease.
2. Incarceration

The incarceration rate per 100,000 of the population is shown in the graphic below for the years 1996 to 2009.

The incarceration rate in 1996 was 27 per 100,000 population. In 2009, the rate was 24 per 100,000 population in 2007, a decrease of 11 percent over the period.
F. Filings

1. Number

The next graphic shows the number of filings in Juvenile court from 1996 through 2009.

In 1996, there were 1,547 filing in Juvenile Court. In 2009, it is anticipated that there will be 2,014 filings, an increase of 30 percent.
2. Rate
The next graphic shows the rate of filings in Juvenile Court from 1996 through 2009.

In 1996, there were 360 filings in Juvenile Court per 100,000 population. In 2009, the rate has increased to 416, an increase of 16 percent.
F. Juvenile Facilities Capacity Forecasts

1. Introduction

A detailed approach is recommended to be used to develop Juvenile Facility population forecasts — one in which county officials can help select specific scenarios for the future on which such forecasts can be based.

The average length of stay has not changed significantly over the study period. The average length of stay over the last 14 years averaged 27.3 days; over the last 10 years 27.9 days; and over the last 5 years, the average length of stay averaged 29.4 days. In 2009, the average length of stay is 28 days. For the purposes of these forecasts, three estimated average lengths of stay have been used for the year 2035: 25, 30, and 35 days.

Admissions have been mostly flat over the study period and have decreased in 2009. The number of juveniles booked into the Hall in 2009 is less than in 1996; however, there have been some swings over the years. The admissions rate averaged 352 over the last 14 years. The admissions rates averaged 326 per 100,000 persons over the last 10 years and 319 over the last five years. The admissions rate for 2009 is 307. Three different admissions rates are used for these forecasts: 300, 350, and 400 per 100,000 population.

2. Adjustments: Peaking and Classification Factors

The expected average daily population for each of the forecast scenarios does not mean that the county should have this amount of beds available. Since these are daily averages, the county’s plans should include allowances for those days (in a given year) when the population surges above the average because of normal fluctuations in admissions and releases.

This situation is similar to a storm drain system. A storm drain sits empty most of the year; however, it needs to be large enough to handle the peak run-off from a summer thundershower or melting snow from the mountains. Correctional populations are very similar. During peak periods — traditionally weekends, the end of the month, and the summer months — populations climb. A facility needs to be large enough to handle the peak periods.
The next graphic shows the peaking factor for Juvenile Hall. The three highest population days each month are compared with the average daily population for each of the years 2006-2008.

Each month’s average peak population was determined and then compared with the average daily population to develop the peaking factor. The three-year average was 8.4 percent. The peaking factor was rounded up to 10 percent for the purposes of the forecasts.

A second factor, classification, was used to allow for the daily need, in any facility, to have a few open beds available for new juveniles within each classification category. In a juvenile system of this size, an appropriate classification adjustment factor would be 14 beds. That is, the county should increase its estimate for each year by 14 beds to come to a final figure of what will be needed for each of the years in this planning cycle.
3. The Forecasts for 2035

The next set of graphics gives figures for the year 2035 based on an average length of stay of 25 days, 30 days and 35 days.

The tables below show (1) the average daily population, (2) beds necessary to handle peak periods, and (3) beds necessary for classification purposes. These figures are given for each of the three possible admissions rates. Each table then gives the incarceration rate per 100,000 population for each of the three possible admissions rates per 100,000 population: 300, 350, & 400.

By 2035, it is estimated that 568,900 persons will be living in the county; this figure provides the baseline for the tables.
### Year 2035

#### Average Length of Stay of 25 Days

<table>
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<th>Admissions Rate per 100,000 Population</th>
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<th>Total Beds Necessary for the Peak Populations</th>
<th>Total Beds Necessary for Classification</th>
<th>Incarceration Rate per 100,000 Population</th>
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#### Average Length of Stay of 30 Days

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<th>Average Daily Population</th>
<th>Total Beds Necessary for the Peak Populations</th>
<th>Total Beds Necessary for Classification</th>
<th>Incarceration Rate per 100,000 Population</th>
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#### Average Length of Stay of 35 Days

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<td>400</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>240</td>
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</table>
G. Conclusion

The forecasts presented in this report are just starting points. The projections are, at best, estimates of what is likely to occur in the coming twenty-six years. Should the county decision-makers wish to alter any of the scenarios, they can do so by adjusting the key indices of facility use — county population, admissions rate, expected average lengths of stay, the peaking factor, and the classification factor. By adjusting these factors, the decision-makers will obtain different estimates of the required number of beds.

There is no guarantee that criminal justice system policy will not change and push facility populations higher or lower than these numbers indicate. The forecasters of the 1980s did not foresee the dramatic rise in correctional populations that took place during the 1990s. No one was able to estimate those changes accurately.

Juvenile Hall currently has a capacity of 140 beds and a build out capacity of 240 beds. We do not foresee the need to build out the additional Hall beds. The physical plants of both Camp and Sierra need to be evaluated to determine their useful life. Reconstructing the facilities on a single site and adding the additional program space for the under 15-year old boys is an option. Consideration of the implementation of the policy changes detailed below needs to be completed prior to any decision about the exact number of beds, and the timing of when the construction will occur, can be made.

Some examples of possible policy changes that could impact the demand for space at the Hall, Camp or Sierra are contained below. Some of the data has been taken from risk/needs classification information from the facility snapshots and other data are from facility intake information. These policy change options, if adopted would have interactive impacts that are not necessarily cumulative. The effect of any single policy would depend on the scale and nature of the implementation. In addition, implementation of multiple policy changes would result in interactions that may well be non-linear in their effects on custody resources.
Population Reduction Policies

- 29%--Do not detain any low or moderate risk youth, pre-trial or post trial
- 16% --Expand pre-trial release options for youth who score low or moderate risk
- 5%--Develop an alternative for youth waiting for Placement
- 10%--Eliminate the waiting list for Camp and Sierra
- 5%--Reduce the time by half spent waiting to resolve probation violations
- 5%--Reduce by 1/3 the number of youth being held post-trial by using alternative sanctions
- Re-examine policy on booking technical violators
- Re-examine the use of facilities for the 40% of the population that are charged with or convicted of non-violent offenses
- Institute and Early Case Resolution program
- Reduce the number of escapes from Camp and Sierra
- Implement risk-based structured sanctions
- Develop more front-end options for law enforcement
- Reduce the average length of stay for Camp and Sierra
- Track the system/custody impact of reduced probation caseloads: down by one-third to one-half since implementation of the risk instrument
CHAPTER SEVEN

NEXT STEPS

As a next step we recommend that the County form a Working Policy & Planning Group to review the recommendations advanced in this Report and to establish priority areas of emphasis. This group should serve to oversee changes in the juvenile system and have a permanent role as an active policy body for local juvenile reform efforts. Membership should span the system and include relevant county departments.

Initial policy issues for the Working Policy & Planning Group to discuss include a review of the population reduction strategies suggested; a discussion about how risk assessment might be taken to the next step (developing structured sanctions, for example); a discussion about the policy regarding how youth move along the detention to out-of-home programs to community continuum; etc. This group would also address the Capacity Forecasts.

The work policy group should devise a strategy for moving forward. Initial questions to be addressed by this group include:

- Is there additional data that would be helpful for next stage decision-making?

  We recommend, for example, that comparative cost per day information be developed for detention, out-of-home programs, supervision services, and community interventions to help frame ‘next-step’ planning discussions.

- What issues should be prioritized for attention?

  We recommend that four areas receive priority emphasis:

  ▪ **Alternatives to Detention**: How might the non-custody program continuum be expanded? Which of the recommended programs might be incorporated into that continuum? Who would be targeted for new programs (such as Drug Court)? How much would this cost? As part of this discussion the group should explore the idea of collaborative program models (such as the Family Service Center) that serve multiple purposes: pre-arrest assessment, services for need youth and families, mental health
and counseling services, truancy programs, juvenile aftercare, etc. Programs that hold
great potential for overall system benefit, in terms of lowered cost and improved
outcomes, are those that extend the continuum before a child is sent to higher cost
out-of-home programs (Drug court, a Reporting Center, etc.), and those with a proven
track record for a high return on dollar due to lowered recidivism and system costs
(family based programs are one strong example). These should all be explored.

A special focus should be on expanding the range of family-based programs, building
upon the Functional Family Therapy options already in place. Given the good
outcomes associated with these programs their use as a precursor to out-of-home
placement should be explored. These programs have shown real success in working
with youth with chronic delinquency, violent behavior, substance abuse, and are at
high risk for out-of-home placement.

1. **Expedited Case Resolution**: What would this model look like in the juvenile
system? How might case processing times be improved by adoption of
additional ECR principles? This Report showed that the Juvenile System is, on
the whole, doing a good job in moving youth through the system; however,
there is always room to improve the outcomes. This Report did show the
direct relationship between delays in case disposition and pre-trial failure
rates. Instead of thinking about the adoption of an ECR program as in the
adult system, in the juvenile system the focus should be on a review of the
ECR concept and which principles might be incorporated into the existing
process.

2. **Out-of-Home Placement** programs: Review data and recommendations
presented in this Report.

   a. **Target Violent Youth**: The Camp study found a nexus between gang
   affiliation, violent convictions and weapons convictions (measured at time
   of program entry), that deserves further study. Sonoma County would be
   well served to build upon this data in order to refine how to distinguish
   between levels and types of gang involvement, and how to make
   distinctions based on violent versus non-violent youth. Reserving detention
   resources for high risk/violent youth should be discussed. This is important
given that research shows that all but a small percentage of the highest risk
youth evidence any crime suppression benefit from detention; the great
majority of youth achieve the greatest benefit from community-based services.

b. **Review Program Duration:** The finding from the Camp study that longer program duration has a positive effect for only one gang/cultural group (youth associated with Hispanic gangs) and a suggestive negative effect on other program participants merits further review, including further study to reveal any unique characteristics of the Hispanic-gang involved youth. It may be that this group fits the profile of that highest risk/violent prone group shown in other research to be the only group to evidence strong recidivism reductions benefits from non-community based programs.

The County should consider developing program tracks with varying lengths of stay. This discussion should occur within a larger debate about optimal program length for all out-of-home programs. The data from Sierra does not evidence marked differences in outcomes based on duration; and the Placement study suggests that a possible elevation in recidivism for those youth with the longest stays (the average stay in Placement was 454 days). Given the lack of a strong, consistent relationship between a longer program stay and reduced recidivism (only a suppression effect one segment of the Camp population) a presumption toward short stays should be considered.

c. **Extend the Continuum:** The Report recommends building in additional options to be available before a child is moved to out-of-home detention (pre-placement family case management, a weekend respite program, drug court, and a reporting center/skills development option—to name a few); and expanded post-program options, including a step-down to a reporting center/skill development and mentors.

d. **Clarify Program Goals for the Sierra Program:** The low level of criminal behavior for girls in Sierra begs the question of whether this out-of-home program is serving a public safety goal. The girls in the study sample spent a cumulative 34 person years in the program and were collectively responsible for less than six felony offenses. While 34% of the boys at Camp went on to commit a crime in the adult system, only 3% of the girls did the same.
The interpretation of the Sierra data is itself challenged by the very low level of crimes committed during or after program involvement. In fact, due to the low number of crimes we cannot conclude that there is a statistical relationship between program failure and subsequent criminal activity. As a result, we must look at other indicators to try and detect a program effect.

If involvement in the program reduced crime one would expect to see a decrease in criminal activity associated with increased lengths of stay: there was no such relationship. And, if one cannot claim a program effect based on program duration, then we cannot claim that low overall recidivism is the result of the program. What we can conclude is that the program does not appear to be targeting a group of youth who represent a high public safety risk. The level of serious offenses is very low for the population as a whole relative to boys in the Camp program. On the other hand we can observe that there is a very high level of in-program failure due to escapes, for which girls are subsequently prosecuted.

This Report raises a series of questions for discussion (addressing ‘best interest of child’ versus public safety objectives, for example) to help clarify the goals for this program, and how these goal relate to the overarching goals for the juvenile system in Sonoma County.

The Sonoma County Juvenile Department makes public safety an overarching goal in its statement of principles. The Sonoma County Juvenile Department states in its principles that, “Where public safety is not jeopardized, the community and most offenders are best served through community-based community programs.” And, “Interventions in an offender’s life should be limited to the extent necessary to protect society and promote law-abiding behavior.”

If the principal goal is not public safety but the ‘best interest’ of the child, then the question becomes whether lower cost community-based alternatives might achieve the same ends, thereby freeing up funds to serve a larger number of girls with complex needs.

**e. Address Other Recommendations:** The Report includes other recommendations that should be addressed as part of a review of out-of-
home detention and programs. These include: the development of short-term programs for younger boys; the review of the system response to program escapes by lengthening program stay; the development of evidence-based criteria upon which to measure a child’s progress in Placement; how to foster more local Placement options to reduce the number of youth placed in other counties or states; how to extend the continuum of program options available both before use of out-of-home programs and after program exit; how to make the skills-based programs at the Camp available to a broader group of youth, perhaps as part of a Day Reporting Center program and used as yet another program component on the continuum; etc.

3. **Take Risk Assessment to Next Level:** The adoption of a risk tool has served to realign services, focusing the more intensive resources on the highest risk offender. A discussion about how risk might inform responses to supervision violations, with possible adoption of structured sanctions, should be discussed.

The issue of whether more can be done to overlay issues of gang and violence should be explored. The Camp data revealed that there was no significant difference in successful program completion between youth associated with Hispanic or Caucasian gangs. However, there was a relationship between lowered recidivism and program duration for youth associated with Hispanic gangs, suggesting an incapacitation effect (but not for other sub-groups such as youth associated with Caucasian gangs). This merits further analysis to determine whether this reflects different risk levels of violence.

The data from the Sierra study demonstrates that having a higher risk score does not necessarily translate into high levels of serious, violent crime. Risk is better at predicting the frequency of crime than its severity. All this is important in guiding a discussion about whether out-of-home resources might be better reserved for those high risk youth who have exhibited violent behavior that, left unchecked, represents a real public safety threat.

4. **Data Collection/Best Practice Review:** Develop protocols for recidivism data collection; discuss how to continue to collect data presented in Report; and adopt best practice review protocols for interventions. Adopting evidence-based criteria as a measure of program quality is important. Just as programs
which target higher risk offenders are more effective in achieving significant recidivism reductions, programs which score highest on measures of program integrity and quality demonstrate the strongest treatment effect. A quality assurance process that incorporates these criteria should be pursued.

- What strategy should guide the review of these issues?

What committee(s) should be formed? What timelines should be put in place? How will next-stage recommendations be reviewed and acted upon?

Sonoma County has the talent and the commitment to review the data presented in this Report, and to use it to help improve an already strong system.
SYSTEM RESEARCH & DATA
Juvenile Justice System Data

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SYSTEM RESEARCH & DATA
Juvenile Justice System Data

Introduction

The data contained in this chapter is an examination of all new, fresh, local juvenile arrests either booked into the Sonoma County Juvenile Hall or issued a citation during 2007. The bookings did not include bench warrant only arrests, out of county cases, or probation violations only arrests.

The graphics contained in this chapter were produced as a result of the analysis of the data. The demographic information is self-reported by the defendant at the time of booking—it has not been verified. The “n” varies on each graphic depending upon the number of cases for which there was complete data for the variables being analyzed.

Thanks to all of the expert help at ISD for completing the necessary programming, in particular to Kim Gilmore who under the direction of Mike Livensparger took the lead and is responsible for the programming that produced the data analyzed below.
A. Demographics
   1. Age
      The first graphic shows the age of the juveniles.

Ten percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 9 percent charged with felonies were between the ages of 7 and 13. A third of the misdemeanants and 34 percent of the felons were 14 or 15 years old; and 27 percent of both the misdemeanants and the felons were 16 years old. Thirty-one percent of the misdemeanants and 30 percent of the felons were 17 or 18 years old.

The average age of both the misdemeanants and the felons was 16 years old.
2. Gender
The next graphic shows the gender.

Seventy-two percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 83 percent charged with felonies were male.
3. Race/Ethnicity
   a. Overall

   The next graphic shows the racial/ethnicity make-up of the overall Sonoma County population. The 2006 data is from the Sonoma County Economic and Demographic Profile 2007-08.

   In 2006, there were 492,930 persons residing in Sonoma County. Seventy-two percent of the county’s population was Caucasian, 2 percent were African American, 19 percent were Hispanic, and 1 percent Native American. The remaining 6 percent of the population were “other” races/ethnicity.
b. Juvenile Arrests
The next graphic displays the ethnicity of the juveniles in the sample.

Fifty-six percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 49 percent charged with felonies were Caucasian. Five percent of the misdemeanants and 7 percent of the felons were African American; 32 percent of the misdemeanants and 39 percent of the felons were Hispanic; and 1 percent of the misdemeanants and 2 percent of the felons were Native American. The remaining 6 percent of the misdemeanants and 3 percent of the felons were of “other” races.
4. Residence
   a. Overall
      The next graphic shows the residency.

      Ninety percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanor offenses and 88 percent charged with felonies were residents of Sonoma County.
b. Sonoma County Residents

The next graphic shows the location with Sonoma County for the local residents.

Forty-four percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanor offenses and half charged with felony offenses were from Santa Rosa. Twenty-four percent of the misdemeanants and 17 percent of the felons were from Petaluma; eight percent of both the misdemeanants and felons were from Rohnert Park; 7 percent of the misdemeanants and 5 percent of the felons were from Sonoma; and 4 percent of the misdemeanants and 8 percent of the felons were from Windsor. The remaining 12 percent of the misdemeanants and 13 percent of the felons were from “other” locations within the county.
c. Non-Sonoma County Residents

The next graphic shows those juveniles who do not reside within the county.

Sixty-five percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 78 percent charged with felonies, who were not residents of Sonoma County were residents of other California counties. Five percent of the misdemeanants and 10 percent of the felons were residents of other states. The remaining 29 percent of the misdemeanants and 11 percent of the felons were residents of other countries.
5. State of Birth
   a. Overall
      The next graphic displays the state of birth.

     ![State of Birth Graphic]

     Eighty percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 83 percent charged with felonies were born in California. Eight percent of the misdemeanants and 5 percent of the felons were born in other states. The remaining 12 percent of both the misdemeanants and the felons were born outside the country.
b. Other Country

The next graphic shows the country of birth for the juveniles born outside the United States.

Seventy-eight percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 80 percent charged with felonies were born in Mexico. The remaining 22 percent of the misdemeanants and 20 percent of the felons were born in other countries.
B. Arrest Information

1. Agency

The next graphic shows the arresting agency.

Nine percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 15 percent charged with felonies were arrested by the Sheriff. Forty-five percent of the misdemeanants and 52 percent of the felons were arrested by Central County police agencies, primarily Santa Rosa Police Department; 7 percent of the misdemeanants and 11 percent of the felons were arrested by North County police agencies; and 26 percent of the misdemeanants and 17 percent of the felons were arrested by South County police agencies. The remaining 14 percent of the misdemeanants and 6 percent of the felons were arrested by other agencies.
2. Citation
   a. Overall
   The next graphic examines whether a citation was issued in lieu of booking in the Hall.

   Seventy percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 28 percent charged with felonies were issued a citation.
b. Police Agency Location

The next graphic shows the percentage of citations issued by police agency/location.

Overall, 70 percent of the juveniles arrested for misdemeanors and 28 percent arrested for felonies were issued a citation. Forty-nine percent of the misdemeanants and 30 percent of the felons arrested by the Sheriff were issued a citation; 70% of the misdemeanants and 26 percent of the Central County agency arrests; 71 percent of the misdemeanants and 12 percent of the felons arrested by North County agencies; and 81 percent of the misdemeanants and 43 percent of the felons arrested by South County agencies were issued a citation. The remaining arrests by other agencies issued citations for 63 percent of the misdemeanor arrests and 25 percent of the felony arrests.
c. Race/Ethnicity
The next graphic shows the percentage of citations issued race/ethnicity of the juvenile.

Overall, 70 percent of the juveniles arrested for misdemeanors and 28 percent arrested for felonies were issued a citation. Seventy-five percent of the misdemeanants and 36 percent of the felons who were Caucasian were issued a citation; 58 percent of the misdemeanants and 27 percent of the felons who were African American were issued a citation; and 61 percent of the misdemeanants and 18 percent of the felons who were Hispanic were issued a citation. The remaining 79 percent of the misdemeanants and 32 percent of the felons were issued a citation.
3. Charge Category

The next graphic shows the charge category for the arrests.

Fifteen percent of the juveniles arrested for a misdemeanor offense were arrested for a person crime and 19 percent of the juveniles arrested for a felony were arrested for a person crime. Twenty-four percent of the misdemeanants and 48 percent of the felons were arrested for a property offense; 13 percent of the misdemeanants and 8 percent of the felons were arrested for a narcotics offense; and 44 percent of the misdemeanants and 8 percent of the felons were arrested for a public order offense. The remaining 5 percent of the misdemeanants were arrested for a traffic offense.
4. Probation
   a. Overall

   The next graphic examines whether the arrested juveniles were on probation at the time of their arrest.

   ![Pie charts showing percentage of juveniles on probation at arrest]

   Thirty percent of the juveniles arrested for a misdemeanor offense and 51 percent arrested for a felony offense were on probation at the time of their arrest.
b. Charge Category

The next graphic examines whether the arrested juveniles who were on probation at the time of their arrest by the new arrest charge category.

Overall, 36 percent of the juveniles arrested were on probation. Fifty-four percent of the juveniles arrested for person crimes were on probation; 31 percent of the property offenders; 23 percent of the narcotics arrests; and 36 percent of the public order arrests. The remaining 36 percent of the traffic offenders were on probation at the time of the arrest.
c. Gender

The next graphic shows whether the arrested juveniles were on probation at the time of their arrest by gender.

Overall, 36 percent of the arrested juveniles were on probation. Thirty-eight percent of the males and 29 percent of the females were on probation.
d. Race/Ethnicity

The next graphic shows whether the arrested juveniles were on probation at the time of their arrest by race/ethnicity.

Overall, 36 percent of the arrested juveniles were on probation. Thirty percent of the Caucasians; 49 percent of the African Americans; and 44 percent of the Hispanics were on probation. Twenty-four percent of the remaining population was on probation.
e. Citation Issued

The next graphic shows for the persons issued a citation whether they were on probation.

![Citation Issued by Probation Status]

Overall, citations were issued on 59 percent of the arrests. Twenty-one percent were on probation.
f. File Decision
The next graphic displays the district attorney’s filing decision by whether the juvenile was on probation.

Overall, the district attorney filed cases in 54 percent of the arrests, as opposed to the case being handled informally by probation. Seventy-six percent of the juveniles who were on probation had their case filed as compared with 42 percent of the juveniles who were not on probation.
5. Gang Affiliation

The gang data is a compilation of data recorded either by staff at the Hall that the juvenile either belonged to a gang or was associated with a gang; and/or if at any point the court had entered as a term of probation a gang condition.

a. Overall

The next graphic shows gang affiliation by charge class.

A quarter of the juveniles arrested for a misdemeanor offense and 41 percent arrested for a felony were identified as gang affiliated.
b. Charge Category

The next graphic shows affiliation by charge category.

Overall, 29 percent of the arrested juveniles were identified as affiliated with a gang. Forty percent of the juveniles charged with person crimes; 21 percent of property crime arrests; 23 percent of narcotics arrests; and 34 percent of public order arrests had gang affiliations. Twenty-four percent of the traffic offenders had gang affiliation.
c. Gender
The next graphic shows gang affiliation by gender.

Overall, 29 percent of the arrested juveniles were identified as affiliated with a gang. Thirty-four percent of the males and 16 percent of the females had gang affiliations.
d. Race/Ethnicity

The next graphic displays gang affiliation by race/ethnicity.

Overall, 29 percent of the arrested juveniles were identified as affiliated with a gang. Twelve percent of the Caucasians; 34 percent of the African Americans; and 57 percent of the Hispanics were identified as affiliated with a gang. A quarter of the remaining population was gang affiliated.
e. Citation

The next graphic shows the issuance of a citation as opposed to an intake into the Hall by gang affiliation.

![Citation Issued by Gang Affiliation](image)

Overall, citations were issued in 59 percent of the cases. Of those cases, 30 percent were gang affiliated.
f. District Attorney Filing Decision

The next graphic shows the district attorney decision whether to formally file the case by gang affiliation.

![Graph showing district attorney filing decision by gang affiliation](image)

The district attorney filed charges in 54 percent of the arrests. Juveniles with a gang affiliation had their case filed in 79 percent of the time. Those juveniles without gang involvement had their cases filed in only 44 percent of the cases.
g. Re-Arrest

The next graphic examines whether the juvenile was re-arrested before the offense was adjudicated.

Overall, 16 percent of the juveniles were re-arrested on a new charge before the original cases was resolved. Gang members were re-arrested at the rate of 26 percent while non-gang members were re-arrested in 11 percent of the cases.
6. Prior Intakes

The data in this section is going to examine the number of prior intakes into the juvenile system. It is going to show the average number of prior arrests as well as the average for the group of individuals who had more than 1 arrest.

a. Overall

The next graphic shows the distribution of the prior arrests by charge class at the time of arrest.

Seventy-five percent of the juveniles arrested for a misdemeanor and 68 percent of the juveniles arrested for a felony had no prior intakes. Eleven percent of the misdemeanants and 12 percent of the felons had one prior intake; 7 percent of the misdemeanants and 6 percent of the felons had two prior intakes; and 5 percent of the misdemeanants and 9 percent of the felons had three to five prior intakes. The remaining 3 percent of the juveniles arrested for a misdemeanor and 4 percent of the juveniles arrested for a felony had between six and fourteen prior intakes.
b. Arrest Charge Class

The next graphic shows the average prior intakes by arrest charge class.

Overall, the average prior intakes was 0.72 and for juveniles who had one or more priors, 2.67. Juveniles arrested for a misdemeanor offense had an average of 0.66 prior intakes and 2.64 if more than one. Juveniles arrested for a felony had 0.87 prior intakes and 2.76 if more than one.
c. Citation v. Intake

The next graphic shows the average prior intakes by whether a citation was issued or an intake into the Hall.

Overall, the average prior intakes was .72 and for juveniles who had one or more priors, 2.67. Juveniles who were issued a citation had .36 prior intakes and 2.27 if more than one. Juveniles taken to the Hall had 1.23 prior intakes and 2.89 if more than one.
d. Charge Category

The next graphic shows the average prior intakes by arrest charge category.

**Prior Intakes by Charge Category**

- Overall average prior intakes: 0.72
- Juveniles with one or more priors: 2.67
- Person crimes: 1.05 (average), 2.95 (more than one)
- Property offenses: 0.47 (average), 2.31 (more than one)
- Narcotics arrests: 0.45 (average), 2.03 (more than one)
- Public order offenders: 0.85 (average), 2.87 (more than one)
- Traffic offenders: 0.95 (average), 2.87 (more than one)

Overall, the average prior intakes was 0.72 and for juveniles who had one or more priors, 2.67. Juveniles charged with person crimes had average 1.05 prior intakes and 2.95 if more than one; property offenses had an average .47 prior intakes and 2.31 if more than one; narcotics arrests had an average .45 and 2.03 if more than one; and public order offenders had an average .85 and 2.87 if more than one. Traffic offenders had an average .95 prior intakes and 2.87 if more than one.
e. Gang Affiliation

The next graphic shows the average prior intakes by gang affiliation.

Overall, the average prior intakes was .72 and for juveniles who had one or more priors, 2.67. Juveniles with gang affiliation had 1.67 prior intakes and 3.06 if more than one. Juveniles without gang affiliation had .32 prior intakes and 2.1 if more than one.
f. Gender

The next graphic shows the average number of prior intakes by gender.

Overall, the average prior intakes was .72 and for juveniles who had one or more purs, 2.67. Males had an average .79 prior intakes and 2.64 if more than one. Females had an average .51 prior intakes and 2.84 if more than one.
g. Race/Ethnicity
The next graphic examines the average prior intakes by race/ethnicity.

Overall, the average prior intakes was .72 and for juveniles who had one or more priors, 2.67. Caucasians had an average .57 prior intakes and 2.51 if more than one; African Americans had an average .83 prior intakes and 2.39 if more than one; and Hispanics had an average .93 prior intakes and 2.83 if more than one. The remaining population had an average .71 prior intakes and 3.28 if more than one.
h. Filing Charge Class

The next graphic shows the average prior intakes by filing charge class or decision not to file charges.

![Graph showing Prior Intakes by Filing Charge Class](image)

Overall, the average prior intakes was .72 and for juveniles who had one or more priors, 2.67. Juveniles who had misdemeanor charges filed had average 1.07 prior intakes and 2.83 if more than one; and those with felony charges filed had average 1.08 prior intakes and 2.72 if more than one. Juveniles who did not have charges filed had an average .3 prior intakes and 2.24 if more than one.
i. Failure-to-Appear

The next graphic shows the average prior intakes by whether the defendant failed-to-appear for court.

![Prior Intakes Failure-to-Appear?](image)

Overall, the average prior intakes was .72 and for juveniles who had one or more priors, 2.67. Juveniles who failed to appear and average prior intakes of 1.04 and 2.8 if more than one. Juveniles who did not fail to appear had an average .68 prior intakes and 2.65 if more than one.
C. Juvenile Hall
   1. Release Type
      a. Overall
      The next graphic shows whether the juveniles in the sample who were admitted to the Hall, all identified by being newly arrested, were released from custody prior to adjudication of their case.

Seventy-three of the juveniles arrested on misdemeanor offenses and 75 percent arrested on felony offenses were released prior to their case being adjudicated.
b. Pre-Trial

The next graphic shows the type of pre-trial release for the 454 juveniles arrested on misdemeanor offenses and the 423 arrested on felony offenses who were released prior to trial.

Forty-three percent of the juveniles arrested on misdemeanor charges and 50 percent arrested on felony charges were released on Community Detention (electronic monitoring). Forty-four percent of the misdemeanants and 42 percent of the felons were released on a citation. Thirteen percent of the misdemeanants and 8 percent of the felons were released pending further action.
c. Post Trial

The next graphic shows the type of post trial release for the 169 juveniles arrested for misdemeanors and 142 juveniles arrested for felonies that were not released prior to trial.

Seventeen percent of the juveniles arrested on misdemeanor charges and 20 percent arrested on felony charges were released to placement. Fourteen percent of the misdemeanants and 20 percent of the felons were released to probation; 17 percent of the misdemeanants and felons were released time served; 17 percent of the misdemeanants and 7 percent of the felons escaped from custody (Probation Camp or Sierra); and 18 percent of the misdemeanants and 23 percent of the felons were released to another agency. The remaining 17 percent of the misdemeanants and 13 percent of the felons had another type of release.
2. Time in Custody
   a. Overall
   The next graphic shows the time in custody.

   ![Time in Custody Diagram]

   Thirty percent of the juveniles arrest for a misdemeanor charge and 22 percent arrested for a felony charge were released in 1 day or less. Seventeen percent of the misdemeanants and 16 percent of the felons were released in 2 days; 19 percent of the misdemeanants and 18 percent of the felons were released in 3 to 7 days; and 15 percent of the misdemeanants and 21 percent of the felons were released in 8 to 30 days. The remaining 19 percent of the misdemeanants and 24 percent of the felons stayed in custody longer than 30 days. The average time in custody for the juveniles arrested for a misdemeanor offense was 28.9 days and for juveniles arrested for a felony offense, 33.4 days.
b. Longer than 30 Days

The next graphic details the time in custody for the 119 juveniles arrested on misdemeanor charges and the 133 arrested on felony charges that stayed in custody longer than 30 days.

Twenty-two percent of the juveniles arrested on misdemeanor charges and 34 percent arrested on felony charges were in custody between 31 and 48 days. Ten percent of the misdemeanants and 20 percent of the felons who stayed longer than 30 days were in custody between 49 and 75 days; 37 percent of the misdemeanants and 23 percent of the felons stayed between 76 and 180 days; and 18 percent of the misdemeanants and 11 percent of the felons stayed between 181 and 240 days. The remaining 13 percent of the misdemeanants and 14 percent of the felons stayed between 241 and 461 days.
c. Average Time in Custody

The next graphic displays the average time in custody for the 70 percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and the 78 percent charged with felonies that stayed longer than 1 day.

The overall average time in custody for juveniles who stayed longer than 1 day was 42 days. Juveniles arrested for misdemeanor offenses stayed an average 41.1 days and those charged with felonies 42.9 days.
d. Charge Category

The next graphic shows the average time in custody by charge class and category.

![Time in Custody by Charge Class/Category](image)

The average time in custody was 28.9 days for juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 33.4 days for those charged with a felony. Misdemeanants charged with a person crime stayed an average 27.8 days and felons 52.7 days; property crimes 11.7 days for misdemeanants and 29.7 days for felons; narcotics cases 21 days for misdemeanants and 10.3 days for felons; and public order cases 37.8 days for misdemeanants and 28.9 days for felons. The misdemeanor traffic offenders stayed in custody an average 22.4 days.
D. Court Process
   1. Attorney Type
      The next graphic shows the attorney type.

      Fifty-seven percent of the juveniles arrested on misdemeanor charges and 42 percent
      on felony charges were represented by the public defender. Thirty-two percent of the
      misdemeanants and 40 percent of the felons were appointed conflict counsel; and four
      percent of the misdemeanants and 8 percent of the felons had retained counsel. The
      remaining 7 percent of the misdemeanants and 9 percent of the felons did not have an
      attorney.
2. File Charge
   a. Arrest Charge
      The next graphic shows the file charge by the arrest charge.

![File Charge Class by Arrest Charge](image)

Forty percent of the juveniles arrested on a misdemeanor charge were filed on as a misdemeanor. One percent was increased to a felony and 58 percent were not filed and handled informally.

Forty-three percent of the juveniles arrested on a felony were filed on as a misdemeanor. Forty-six percent were filed as a felony and 12 percent were not filed.
b. Citation Charge Class

The next graphic is a subset of the above graphic and simply looks at the cases that were issued citations.

Twenty-six percent of the juveniles issued a misdemeanor citation were filed on as a misdemeanor. One percent was increased to a felony and 73 percent were not filed and handled informally.

Fifty-one percent of the juveniles issued a felony citation were filed on as a misdemeanor. A quarter was filed as a felony and the remaining 24 percent were not filed.
c. Booking Charge

The next graphic is also a subset of the first graphic in this section and simply examines the cases that were booked into the Hall.

Seventy-four percent of the juveniles booked as a misdemeanor were filed on as a misdemeanor. Two percent were increased to a felony and 24 percent were not filed and handled informally.

Thirty-nine percent of the juveniles booked on a felony charge were filed as a misdemeanor. Fifty-four percent were filed as a felony and 7 percent were not filed.
d. Charge Category
The next graphic shows the file charge category by charge class.

Eighteen percent of the juveniles arrested on a misdemeanor charge and 27 percent arrested on a felony charge were charged as a person crime. Twenty-nine percent of the misdemeanants and 44 percent of the felons were charged with a property crime; 10 percent of both the misdemeanants and felons were charged with a narcotics offense; and 37 percent of the misdemeanants and 19 percent of the felons were charged with a public order offense. The remaining 6 percent of the misdemeanants and 1 percent of the felons were charged with a traffic offense.
3. Disposition
   a. Type
      
      The next graphic shows the disposition type.

      Seventeen percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanor offenses and 3 percent charged with felony offenses received a deferred entry. Twenty-four percent of the misdemeanants and 14 percent of the felons had their cases dismissed. The remaining 59 percent of the misdemeanants and 83 percent of the felons had their charges sustained.
b. Dismissals

The next graphic shows the dismissal rate by charge category.

![Dismissal Rate by Charge Class/Category]

Overall, 24 percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 14 percent charged with felonies had their charges dismissed. Person crimes were dismissed in 21 percent of the misdemeanor cases and 14 percent of the felony cases; property crimes in 16 percent of the misdemeanor cases and 10 percent of the felony cases; narcotic offenses in 37 percent of the misdemeanor cases and 5 percent of the felony cases; and public order charges in 29 percent of the misdemeanor cases and 27 percent of the felony cases. Fifteen percent of the misdemeanor traffic offenses were dismissed.
c. Court Appearances

The next graphic shows the number of court appearances prior to resolution of the case.

Forty-three percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanor offenses and 31 percent charged with felony offenses had their cases resolved on their first appearance. Nineteen percent of the misdemeanants and 20 percent of the felons took 2 court appearances; 28 percent of the misdemeanants and 30 percent of the felons took between 3 and 5 court appearances; and 9 percent of the misdemeanants and 13 percent of the felons took between six and 10 court appearances. The remaining 2 percent of the misdemeanor cases and 6 percent of the felons took between 11 and 21 court appearances to resolve their case.
4. Failure-to-Appear
   a. Overall
   The next graphic shows the failure-to-appear rate.

   Ten percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 14 percent charged with felonies failed-to-appear for court.
b. Number

The next graphic shows the number of failures-to-appear for the 213 misdemeanor charged offenders and 110 charged felony offenders who had at least one failure-to-appear.

![Numbers of Failures to Appear](image)

Fifty-nine percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 68 percent charged with felonies had one failure-to-appear. Twenty-one percent of the misdemeanants and 23 percent of the felons had 2 failure-to-appear. Twenty percent of the misdemeanants and 9 percent of the felons had between 3 and nine failures-to-appear.
5. Re-Arrest

The next graphic examines whether the juveniles in the sample were re-arrested while their cases was still open.

Seventeen percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 14 percent charged with felonies were re-arrested.
6. Process Times
   a. Arrest to Filing

   The average length of time from arrest to filing is the subject of the next graphic.

   The overall length of time between arrest and filing was 37.6 days. Juveniles who were cited took 66.7 days and those booked in the Hall took 21 days. Misdemeanor charged offenders took 43.1 days. Misdemeanants who were cited took 67.5 days and those booked took 25.3 days. Felony charged offenders took an average 20.5 days. Felons who were cited took 60.9 days and those booked took 11.9 days.
b. Filing to Disposition

The next graphic shows the average time between filing and charge disposition.

![Filing to Charge Disposition](image)

The overall average processing time from filing to disposition was 37.3 days. Cases that were cited took an average 38 days and those booked in the Hall took 36.9 days. Juveniles charged with misdemeanor offenses took 36.7 days. Misdemeanants who were cited took 37.9 days and those booked 35.9 days. Felony charged offenders took an average 39 days. Felons who were cited took 38.4 days and those booked took 39.1 days.
c. Charge Disposition to Court Disposition

The next graphic shows the average processing times between charge disposition (charges sustained) and court disposition (sentencing).

The overall average processing time from charge disposition to court disposition was 15.8 days. Cases that were cited took an average 12 days and those booked in the Hall took 17.9 days. Juveniles charged with misdemeanor offenses took 14.8 days. Misdemeanants who were cited took 11.3 days and those booked took 17.5 days. Felony charged offenders took an average 18.4 days. Felons who were cited took 17.3 days and those booked took 18.7 days.
d. Arrest to Court Disposition

(1) Overall
The next graphic shows the overall processing times from arrest to court disposition (sentencing).

![Arrest to Court Disposition Graph]

The overall average processing time from arrest to court disposition was 90 days. Cases that were cited took an average 116.6 days and those booked in the Hall took 75.2 days. Juveniles charged with misdemeanor offenses took 94.3 days. Misdemeanants who were cited took 116.7 days and those booked 78.1 days. Felony charged offenders took an average 76.9 days. Felons who were cited took 115.5 days and those booked took 68.9 days.
(2) Frequencies

The next graphic shows the frequency distribution for the length of time from arrest to court disposition.

Twenty percent of the juveniles charged with misdemeanors and 23 percent charged with felonies were processed in 30 days or less. Nineteen percent of the misdemeanants and 30 percent of the felons took between 31 and 60 days; 22 percent of the misdemeanants and 19 percent of the felons took between 61 and 90 days; and 24 percent of the misdemeanants and 19 percent of the felons took between 91 and 150 days. The remaining 16 percent of the misdemeanants and 9 percent of the felons took between 151 and 820 days.

The average length of time for the misdemeanor cases was 94.3 days and for the felonies 76.9 days.
e. Arrest to Failure-to-Appear

The next graphic shows the average time from arrest to failure-to-appear.

![Arrest to Failure-to-Appear](image)

The overall average processing time prior to the failure-to-appear was 126.7 days. Cases that were cited took an average 69.9 days and those booked in the Hall took 90.5 days. Juveniles charged with misdemeanor offenses took 130 days. Misdemeanants who were cited took 65.6 days and those booked took 91.6 days. Felony charged offenders took an average 91.7 days. Felons who were cited took 84.2 days and those booked took 85.5 days.
f. Arrest to No Filing Decision
   
   (1) Overall
   
   The length of time from arrest to when the district attorney declined to file charges is the subject of the next graphic.

![Arrest to No Filing Decision](chart)

The overall average length of time between arrest and the decision not to file charges was 61.1 days. Juveniles who were cited took 64.1 days and those booked into the Hall took 42 days.
(2) Frequency

The final graphic shows the frequency distribution for the length of time between arrest and the district attorney’s decision not to file the charges.

The decision to not file charges was made in 15 days or less in 17 percent of the cases. Nineteen percent took between 16 and 30 days; 42 percent between 31 and 60 days; and 11 percent between 61 and 90 days. The remaining 11 percent took between 91 and 811 days.

The overall average between arrest and a no filing decision was 61.1 days.
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**SYSTEM RESEARCH & DATA**

In-Custody Juvenile Offender Data

**Introduction**

Kim Gilmore and Diane Jacobs of Information Services Department developed the routines to complete a daily snapshot of every prisoner in custody. Sheralynn Freitas and Kim King from Probation were instrumental in helping define the methodology.

The snapshot methodology uses a hierarchy to determine the most significant charge for which a juvenile is being held and from that determines their status. The snapshot is recorded each night at midnight and a monthly composite is prepared at the end of the month. All juveniles in custody, including those at Probation Camp and Sierra are included.

The data presented in this chapter is a composite of November 2008 through February 2009. It is presented in four sections: the first section details the status of the juveniles, the second section details the charge class and category, the third section time in custody, and the final section the demographics of the juveniles.
A. Juvenile Status

1. Overall

The first graphic displays the status of the juveniles in custody.

Twenty-six percent of the juveniles were awaiting adjudication. Forty-three percent had their charges sustained and were serving a sentence. Thirty-one percent were in custody on a hold.
2. Pre-Trial
The next graphic shows the 30 juveniles awaiting trial.

Half of the juveniles awaiting trial were charged with misdemeanors and half were charged with felonies.
3. Post Trial
The next graphic shows the 50 juveniles serving a sentence.

Forty-five percent of the sentenced juveniles have been convicted of a misdemeanor and the remaining 55 percent were convicted of a felony.
4. Holds
   a. Overall
   The next graphic details the 36 juveniles with holds.

   Thirty-nine percent of the holds were for Probation. Twenty-eight percent were for Camp; 6 percent Sierra; 6 percent were awaiting child welfare; and 17 percent awaiting a residential program. The remaining 6 percent were for some other type of hold.
b. Local Charges

The next graphic shows whether the juveniles with holds also had local charges pending.

Overall 37 percent of the holds also had local charges. Eighty-nine percent of the probation holds were associated with local charges as were 23 percent of the other holds.
B. Charge Category

The next section details the charge category for the juveniles in custody.

1. Pre-Trial
   a. Misdemeanors

   The next graphic shows the charge category for the 14 pre-trial misdemeanants.

   Twenty-nine percent of the pre-trial misdemeanants were awaiting trial for a crime against person. Twenty-nine percent were awaiting trial on a property offense; and 7 percent on a narcotics offense. The remaining 36 percent were awaiting trial on a public order offense.
b. Felonies

The next graphic shows the charge category for the 15 pre-trial felons.

Forty-seven percent of the pre-trial felons were awaiting trial for a crime against person. Forty percent were awaiting trial on a property offense; and 7 percent for a narcotics offense. The remaining 7 percent were awaiting trial for a public order offense.
2. Post Trial
   a. Misdemeanors
      The next graphic displays the charge category for the 23 sentenced misdemeanants.

      Thirty percent were serving a sentence for a person crime. Forty-three percent were
      serving a sentence for a property offense; and 4 percent for a narcotics offense. The
      remaining 22 percent were serving a sentence for a public order offense.
b. Felonies

The next graphic shows the charge category for the 27 sentenced felons.

Fifteen percent were serving a sentence for a person crime. Fifty-nine percent were serving a sentence for a property crime; and 4 percent for a narcotics offense. The remaining 22 percent had been convicted of a public order offense.
3. Post Trial Housing Location  
a. Misdemeanors  
The next graphic shows the housing location for the 23 post juveniles convicted of a misdemeanor.

Forty-eight percent of the juveniles convicted of misdemeanors were housed at the Hall. Seventeen percent were housed at Camp. The remaining 35 percent were housed at Sierra.
b. Felonies

The next graphic shows the housing location for the 28 post juveniles convicted of a felony.

Thirty-two percent of the juveniles convicted of felonies were housed at the Hall. Fifty-four percent were housed at Camp. The remaining 17 percent were housed at Sierra.
C. Time in Custody

Time in custody is a different measurement then Length of Stay. Time in custody is the average length of time each prisoner in the specific category has been in custody as opposed to average length of stay, which captures all of the prisoners in jail during a given period of time.

1. Status
   a. Overall

   The next graphic shows the overall time in custody.

   ![Time in Custody](image)

   The overall average time in custody was 80 days. Pre-trial juveniles had been in custody an average of 35 days and sentenced juveniles an average of 131 days. Juveniles with holds had been in custody an average 47 days.
b. Pre-Trial

The next graphic shows the time in custody for the pre-trial juveniles.

The overall average time in custody for pre-trial juveniles was 35 days. Those awaiting trial on a misdemeanor had been there an average of 19 days while felons had been there an average of 49 days.
c. Post Trial
The next graphic shows the average time in custody for the post trial juveniles.

![Time in Custody Post Trial Prisoners](image)

The overall average time in custody for sentenced juveniles was 131 days. Sentenced misdemeanants had been in custody an average 118 days and sentenced felons an average of 142 days.
2. Charge Category
   a. Pre-Trial Misdemeanors
      The next graphic shows the average time in custody for the pre-trial misdemeanants.

![Time in Custody Pre-Trial Misdemeanors](image)

The overall average time in custody for pre-trial misdemeanors was 19 days. Juveniles charged with person crimes had been in custody an average of 22 days; property crimes 17 days; narcotics offenses 16 days; drunk driving 2 days; and public order offenses 18 days. Traffic offenders had been in custody an average of 32 days.
b. Pre-Trial Felons

The next graphic shows the average time in custody for the pre-trial felons.

![Time in Custody Pre-Trial Felonies](image)

The overall average time in custody for pre-trial felons was 49 days. Juveniles charged with person crimes had been in custody an average of 53 days; property crimes 56 days; narcotics offenses 9 days; and public order offenses 19 days.
c. Post Trial Misdemeanants

The next graphic shows the average time in custody for the post trial misdemeanants.

The overall average time in custody for post trial misdemeanors was 118 days. Juveniles convicted of person crimes had been in custody an average of 113 days; property crimes 135 days; narcotics offenses 34 days; and public order offenses 106 days. Traffic offenders had been in custody an average of 3 days.
d. Post Trial Felons

The next graphic shows the average time in custody for the post trial felons.

The overall average time in custody for post trial felons was 142 days. Juveniles convicted of person crimes had been in custody an average of 223 days; property crimes 111 days; and narcotics offenses 100 days. Public order offenders had been in custody an average 179 days.
e. Holds

The next graphic shows the average time in custody for hold prisoners.

![Bar Chart: Time in Custody Holds]

The overall average time in custody for holds was 47 days. Probation holds had been in custody an average of 19 days; holds for Camp 85 days; holds for Sierra 65 days; holds for child welfare 43 days and residential programs 45 days. The other holds had been in custody an average of 56 days.
D. Demographics

1. Age

The next graphic shows the age of the juveniles.

Eleven percent of the juveniles were less than 14 years old. Forty-eight percent were 15 to 16 years old and 41 percent 17 to 18 years old.

The average age was 16.1 years old.
2. Gender

The next graphic displays the gender of the juveniles.

Seventy-eight percent of the juveniles in custody were male. This compares with 90 percent statewide.
3. Race/Ethnicity
The next graphic shows the race/ethnicity of the juveniles.

Twenty-four percent were Caucasian. Seven percent were African American and 64 percent Hispanic and 4 percent were Native American. The remaining 1 percent were other races.
4. Arresting Agency

The next graphic displays the arresting agency.

The Sheriff arrested eighteen percent of the juveniles. Thirty-four percent were arrested by a central county police agency; 10 percent by “other” Sonoma County police agency; 19 percent by Probation; and 15 percent were a surrender or taken into custody at court. The remaining 3 percent were arrested by an “other” agency.
5. Residence
The next graphic shows the residence of the juveniles.

Sixty-nine percent resided in Central County. Seven percent reside in South County; 5 percent reside in Sonoma Valley; 15 percent in a different California county; and 3 percent resided in an “other” country. The remaining 2 percent either resided at a shelter or the residence was unknown.
6. Gangs

The gang data is a compilation of data recorded either by staff at the Hall that the juvenile either belonged to a gang or was associated with a gang; and/or if at any point the court had entered as a term of probation a gang condition. In any event, it is only an estimation—some juveniles may be recorded positive when they are not only because they want the gang tag other and others may be recorded negative because they do not want the tag. And then, it is not known their level of involvement with a gang for the same reasons discussed above.

a. Affiliation

The next graphic shows whether the juveniles had some level of gang affiliation.

Seventy-three percent of the juveniles registered positive for some level of gang affiliation.
b. Gender

The next graphic shows gang affiliation by gender.

Overall, 73 percent of the juveniles had some level of gang affiliation. Seventy-eight percent of the males had gang affiliation while only 56 percent of the females.
c. Race/Ethnicity

The next graphic shows gang affiliation by race/ethnicity.

Overall, 73 percent had gang affiliation. Thirty-one percent of the Caucasians had gang affiliation; 52 percent of African American; and 90 percent the Hispanic and 94 percent American Indian populations. The “other” race/ethnicity had 81 percent gang affiliation.
7. Sentence Length

The next graphic shows the length of the juveniles who were sentenced to serve time.

![Custody Sentence Length](chart.png)

The overall average length of time ordered served was 99 days. Misdemeanants were sentenced to an average 110 days while felons to an average of 86 days.
8. Transfer Wait

The next graphic shows the average days that juveniles who were released to Camp and Sierra spent awaiting transfer. The juveniles only are included in this category after all other charges have been resolved.

Juveniles released to Camp waited an average 52.1 days while those released to Sierra waited an average 16.7 days for a bed following being sentenced to one of the facilities. In some instances, the juvenile was waiting for a bed to become available, and in others they remained in the Hall for a period of time following a rules violation at either Camp or Sierra.
9. Housing Location
The next graphic shows the housing location for the average 118 juveniles in custody.

Three-fourths of the juveniles were housed at the Hall. Sixteen percent were housed at Camp and 10 percent at Sierra.
E. Risk/Needs

Sonoma County Probation has implemented a risk/needs assessment that is being used department wide. Juveniles in custody from December 2008 are administered the assessment. The results have been tabulated with the facility snapshot that is conducted daily and the results are shown in this section. During this period of time, approximately 90 percent of the juveniles have been administered the assessment.

1. Facility
   a. Juvenile Hall

   The first graphic in this section displays the risk level for the juveniles at Juvenile Hall.

   Eleven percent of the juveniles at the Hall were assessed as being low risk. Eighteen percent were moderate risk and 24 percent moderate/high risk. The remaining 47 percent were assessed as high risk.
b. Probation Camp

The next graphic in this section displays the risk level for the juveniles at Probation Camp.

None of the juveniles at the Camp were assessed as being low risk. Three percent were moderate risk and 7 percent moderate/high risk. The remaining 90 percent were assessed as high risk.
c. Sierra

The next graphic in this section displays the risk level for the juveniles at the Sierra.

None of the juveniles at Sierra were assessed as being low risk. Twelve percent were moderate risk and 32 percent moderate/high risk. The remaining 55 percent were assessed as high risk.
2. Status
   a. Pre-Trial Juveniles
      The next graphic in this section displays the risk level for the juveniles in pre-trial status.

Sixteen percent of the juveniles in pre-trial status were assessed as being low risk. Thirty-one percent were moderate risk and 27 percent moderate/high risk. The remaining 27 percent were assessed as high risk.
b. Post Trial Juveniles

The next graphic in this section displays the risk level for the juveniles in post trial status.

![Risk Level Post Trial Juveniles](image)

Four percent of the juveniles in post trial status were assessed as being low risk. Eleven percent were moderate risk and 20 percent moderate/high risk. The remaining 65 percent were assessed as high risk.
c. Holds
The next graphic in this section displays the risk level for the juveniles in hold status.

Seven percent of the juveniles in holds status were assessed as being low risk. Seven percent were moderate risk and 22 percent moderate/high risk. The remaining 65 percent were assessed as high risk.
3. Totals

The final graphic in this section displays the risk level for all the juveniles being held in the facilities.

Eight percent of the total juveniles being detained were assessed as being low risk. Fifteen percent were moderate risk and 22 percent moderate/high risk. The remaining 55 percent were assessed as high risk.
SYSTEM RESEARCH & DATA

The Camp Study

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A. The Camp Outcome Study Background

Sonoma County has a rich tradition providing residential programs for its youth. Its 24-bed Camp was established in 1955 and serves adjudicated young men 16 to 18 years old toward a stated goal to “make change in delinquent patterns of behavior.”

It is unique in having an industrial component in which the young men manufacture products, teaching skills and generating income. The program is designed to allow a young man to complete within 6 months – if he successfully moves through progressive program phases – and then enters a step-down phase in which the orientation becomes one of assisting the participant to assimilate back into the community or with his family. While in the program the residents have access to substance abuse treatment, counseling, education services, recreational opportunities, as well as other individual and family support services.

1. Study Objectives

As part of this project we were asked to examine the movement of youth into the adult system. This had not until now been studied, and was complicated by the lack of a single identification number to link persons in both the youth and adult systems. However, with the assistance of Camp staff, Lisa Hernandez (who went through paper records to assemble program samples back to 2004), and with the competent assistance of Kim Gilmore who was able to link the records, we were able to conduct the analysis.

The outcome study was conducted for a sample of 177 youth (all young men) who were admitted to the Camp between 2004 and 2009. All youth were sentenced wards of the court. At the time of the analysis 164 youth had exited the Camp and 13 were still active. Demographic data is based on the full sample; outcome data on those who had exited the program. Study questions included:

- What are the characteristics of youth in the programs? (age, gender, ethnicity, gang affiliate, nature of conviction at entry, etc.)

- What is the nature of program involvement and outcome for each youth? (length of stay, number of escapes, type of exit: successful completion or not)
What is the recidivism rate? (subsequent convictions for any crime, serious violent crime)

How many youth are subsequently convicted for an offense in the adult system: for any crime, for a violent crime?

What is the relationship between individual or program characteristics and recidivism? (Is there, for example, a relationship between length of stay in the program and subsequent recidivism?)

Finally, what can we learn from the findings to strengthen programs or to guide future questions and analysis?

The study limitations include the diverse population characteristics and no full criminal history information for participants. While this does not weaken the interpretation, it does limit some questions. Criminal history would, for example, allow a more nuanced analysis of the relationship between past behavior and future offending. Lacking this full history we were able to look at the nature of crimes of conviction at Camp entry, as a proxy measure for prior severity. This information is reported as ‘convictions associated with admission/entry to Camp.’

This yielded interesting findings about the association between the seriousness of conviction at entry and subsequent convictions.

Collection of full criminal history information would be a valuable next step for this analysis – especially as an effort to more fully identify precursors for violent convictions.

Notwithstanding study limitations, this analysis has value.

- Provides baseline recidivism data
- Illustrates the relative effect of different variables
- Helps refine the program and customize services
- Helps in refinement of risk assessment
- Sets groundwork for future cost-benefit analysis
- Helps explore how to forestall entry into adult system
Defining Recidivism

Recidivism can be measured in different ways. Studies often look at subsequent Arrests. We took a more conservative approach and measured subsequent Convictions (in either the juvenile or adult system).

2. Study Methodology

Due to the relatively small sample size, and the multiple questions asked of the data - which reduced the sample to smaller sub-populations (examining, for example, outcome data for gang members, who fail the program, and have a weapons conviction), an emphasis was placed on exploratory data analysis methods, including Principal Components Analysis, as well as descriptive statistics, rather than traditional tests for significance. The objective was to measure the criminal behavior after program exit.

We applied Principle Components analysis as a statistical approach because it is designed to look at the strength of the relationship between variables. For example, what is the relationship between program completion and a reduction in the rate of recidivism?

This technique focuses on the relationships – and degree of variability - between variables and is used to explore complex inter-relationships. Its findings do not imply a causal relationship but an associative relationship between variables, which can be valuable in guiding further analysis.

This type of analysis is especially suited for this kind of study in which the relationship between variables is not always superficially evident.
B. Results & Discussion

Sample Profile

Over the five-year period from which this sample was drawn approximately 36 offenders were admitted to Camp each year. Hispanics (55%) and Caucasians (32%) comprised the majority of the Camp population. In this sample, 79% of youth were identified as gang affiliates; gang-affiliation varied by ethnicity. The average length of stay of 204 days; the overall successful completion rate was 54 percent. Regardless of whether they succeeded of failed, a high number of participants had escapes from the program: 47 percent of youth escaped at least once during their time at Camp.

Sixty six percent of the boys were convicted of 1 or more crimes in the juvenile or adult system after program exit. The 109 boys who were subsequently convicted had, collectively, 267 convictions between them in the juvenile and adult systems. When escape and violation of probation convictions were excluded the recidivism rate was 44%.

Successful Program Completion & Recidivism

Caucasians and Hispanics had comparable rates of program completion.

Longer time in the Camp was associated with higher rates of successful completion; however, there is no evidence to suggest that successful program completion was further associated with a lower rate of adult criminality. For example, successful program completion was not associated with a substantive reduction in subsequent adult conviction rates. In other words, the future crime rate was comparable, regardless of program exit status.

There is also no evidence to suggest that successful completion of the Camp program is associated with lower rates of future serious violent convictions (juvenile or adult).

Applying Principal Components Analysis to look for relationships between variables reveals a cluster of associations: Youth with the longest lengths of stay at Camp and fewer escapes tended to have higher rates of successful completion ---AND a somewhat higher rate of serious violent recidivism.
Offenders who successfully completed the program had a longer time to the first post-release filing date in either the juvenile or adult systems: 17 months to first filing release for those who succeeded versus 4 months to first filing for those who failed. There is evidence to suggest that successful program delays the onset of future crime.

**Escapes and Completion**
Youth who escaped and were returned to Camp were half as likely to succeed as individuals who made no attempt to escape.

**Violent Recidivism**
Gang-affiliation status was strongly associated with subsequent serious violent convictions.

Other factors with a strong association with subsequent violent convictions include: the number of serious violent convictions a youth had at time of admission to Camp, and weapons convictions associated with program entry. For example, offenders convicted of one or more weapons offenses prior to entrance to Camp were about 80% more likely to be involved with a serious violent offense than those with no weapons-related priors.

**Gang Affiliation**

Gang–related findings include:

- 79 percent of youth in sample were designated as gang members.
- Caucasians and Hispanics made up the largest share of gang members in the sample.
- Hispanic and Caucasian affiliates of gangs at Camp had equal rates of successful program completion.
- In general, gang affiliates had higher rates of subsequent violent convictions than non-gang affiliates.
- Gang affiliates had an average rate of serious violent recidivism (convictions and pending cases) approximately 14 times higher than that of non-gang affiliates.
- Rates of subsequent conviction for a violent offense differed by gang cultural/ethnic groupings.
- Caucasian and Hispanic gang affiliates were equally likely to be convicted of a crime during the follow-up period.
- Hispanic gang affiliates had higher rates of subsequent conviction for a crime of violence.

**Program Length of Stay**

The relationship between length of time in the program and recidivism proved interesting. Looking at the population in the aggregate there was no evidence that longer stays in the program were associated with lower rates of recidivism; overall, the amount of time offenders were at Camp (regardless of completion status) did not have an obvious mitigating effect on subsequent involvement in serious violent crime.

However, by examining sub-groups, patterns emerge that suggest that the relationship between length of stay and recidivism may be linked to demographic factors of sub-populations of youth at Camp.

For Hispanic youth in this sample who were affiliated with a gang, longer program stays were associated with lower levels of recidivism; for Caucasian youth affiliated with a gang there was suggestive evidence that longer program stays were associated with higher levels of offending. For those Caucasian youth affiliated with a gang, increased time in the program was suggestive of increased recidivism: both total recidivism and violent recidivism. Although this finding is not statistically significant, given the small sample size, the directional difference between these two subgroups, with respect to length of stay, merits further investigation. Based on the interesting staff observation that Caucasians are often associated with Hispanic gangs, more analysis is warranted to better understand the dynamics behind this finding.

At the same time that Hispanic youth in the sample who were affiliated with a gang appeared to have lowered levels of recidivism after longer program stays, the overall rate of violent offending was still higher for this sub-group than for Caucasian youth associated with a gang. The level of recidivism is a separate measure from the measure of ‘direction of change’: the relationship between program length and reoffending.

This apparent finding regarding the relationship between program dosage (time in program) and recidivism may be an artifact of confounding variables, the sample size, unmeasured variable(s), or may simply be due to chance alone. It does however merit discussion and further review. This differential response to length of stay may have to do with gang-specific risk factors (the general research on risk finds that exposing lower
risk offenders to more intensive services worsens outcomes); an interactive effect between groups; or to other undetected individual factors.

**Entry into the Adult Criminal Justice System**

Overall, 34 percent of Camp youth were later convicted in the adult system.

For those youth who entered the adult system there was also no evidence of desistance. This is measured by looking at the time interval between convictions. If desistance were evidenced it would appear as a progressive shortening of intervals between convictions.

Not only is there no evidence of desistance for Camp youth who entered the adult system but it appears that, in the aggregate, there is slight increase in time between criminal events, suggesting a slight escalation of criminal activity. Of course, it is too soon to know whether this group will continue their criminal careers. This study tracks youth who in some cases are at the upper age limit of the juvenile system, on through a 4-5 year window of opportunity to commit a crime. A look at national desistance research would suggest that much of the observed criminal activity would be expected to decline once a youth reaches their mid to late 20’s.

Desistance research for juveniles shows that while it is difficult to predict which youth will persist or desist in criminal offending, there are a few common characteristics of those who persist: gang involvement, substance use, and use of weapons. The initial findings from this study are consistent with that research on the issue of gangs and weapon convictions. Factors that may protect against continued criminal offending in the adult system include: length of Probation supervision, a positive view of Police, and a mentor.

**Data Interpretation**

Although this analysis did not reveal a direct program effect on future recidivism, it can be argued that confinement in the program prevented crimes from occurring in the community during the program period.

Applying post-release recidivism rates and offending intervals, and factoring in total time in the program can estimate a general crime prevention effect.
This analysis suggests that confining 164 youth at Camp could have prevented approximately 60 total convictions, 30 of which would have been adult convictions. Of these, we estimate that 9 would have been serious violent offenses.

This analysis only scratches the surface of what is a complex story. For example, gang affiliation and its relationship to future violence appear to be associated with aspects of specific gang cultural norms, criminal pathways, and individual potential for violence – as measured by type and number of convictions at admission. Many factors are at play.

As a next step, we recommend a more thorough examination of the relationship between juvenile criminal histories, risk factors, and patterns of re-offense to help tease out gang-related and other behaviors that may better inform risk assessment – both for general offending and for violence – and to better anticipate which youth are most likely to continue on to the adult system.

**DEMOGRAPHICS & OFFENSE AT ADMISSION**

For the Camp sample population, the majority of youth were either Hispanic or Caucasian (Figure 1), and between the ages of 16 and 17 (Figure 2).

- Census-based gang affiliation rates vary by race (Table 1).
- The incidence of violence-related convictions at admission to Camp is higher for older youth. (Table 2).
- Violence-related convictions at admission appear to differ by race (Table 3).
- Violence-related convictions at admission do not appear to be strongly reflected in gang affiliation (Table 4).
Figure 1: Race/Ethnic Composition of Camp Sample

Figure 2: Age Composition at Entry into Camp
Table (1) Census-based gang affiliation rates by race in the sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Gang Affiliates by Ethnicity</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Totals</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (2) Prior serious violent conviction rates associated with commitment to camp by age at commitment to the camp.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Serious Violent Convictions by Age at Commitment*</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Totals</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Associated with conviction type at commitment to camp.

Table (3): Prior serious violent conviction rates associated with commitment to camp by ethnicity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prior Serious Violent Convictions* by Ethnicity</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Totals</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Associated with conviction type at commitment to camp.

Table (4): Prior serious violent conviction rates by gang affiliation status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Serious Violent Offenses* by Gang Affiliation Status</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Gang Affiliation</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang Affiliation</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Totals</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Associated with conviction type at commitment to camp.
PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

- The average wait between commitment and camp admittance was 48.6 ± 28.8 days.

- Approximately 36 offenders were admitted to camp each year (Table 5).

- Average program stay was 204 days (Table 5).

- An average 54% of offenders successfully complete the camp program (Table 5).

- 60% of offenders admitted to camp remain in the program as long, or longer, than the ‘Best Scenario’ program design of six months (Table 6).

- 23% of convictions associated with commitment to camp were violent (Table 7).

- 11% of convictions associated with commitment to camp were weapons-related (Table 7).

- Specific gang-related crimes comprised 7% of offenses associated with commitment to camp (Table 7).

Table (5): General performance statistics by year of admission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Admissions by Year (n)</th>
<th>Ave. Program Stay</th>
<th>Escape Rate (Escapes / Offenders)</th>
<th>Number Remaining at end of Study Period</th>
<th>Succeeded (n)</th>
<th>Succeeded (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>77.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>176</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table (6): Length of stay in the program by time interval

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Stay</th>
<th>0 - 90</th>
<th>91 - 180</th>
<th>181 - 356</th>
<th>&gt;365 Days</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (7): Convictions associated with commitment to camp (n = 176 offenders)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offenses</th>
<th>Total Convictions</th>
<th>Violent</th>
<th>Gang Charges</th>
<th>Weapons Charges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Convictions associated with commitment to Camp.

- The overall average escape rate (total escapes/youths) was 62%. Between the two best-represented ethnic groups, Caucasian youth appear to have a higher rate of escape than Hispanics (Table 8). The overall escape by offender was 47%.

- The escape rate declines with increasing age at commitment (Table 9).

- The completion rate for the program among those who have exited the program was 48.8% (Table 10).

- The program completion rates for Caucasians and Hispanics, the two best-represented ethnic groups were comparable (Table 11), although Hispanics have a higher percentage of gang affiliates.
Table (8): The overall escape rates below were based on the total number of escapes divided by the number offenders by ethnic group. This does not reflect the percentage of individuals who escaped.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Escapes By Ethnicity:</th>
<th>Amer. Indian</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>African Am.</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count(n)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escapes(n)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (9): Frequency of escape tends to decrease as age at commitment increase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Escapes by Age at Commitment</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Totals</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (10): The overall completion rate for those who have exited the program between 2004 and 2009 (n = 164).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Rates (excluding those still in program):</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Failed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>48.8%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Offenders who escaped and were returned were about half as likely to complete the program successfully as those who made no escape attempt (Table 12).
- Offenders who remained in the Camp program longest had higher rates of completion than those who failed quickly or remained shorter lengths of time (Table 13).
Table (11): The completion rate differed somewhat by race, but this may be an artifact of small sample size among certain ethnic subpopulations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion By Ethnicity:</th>
<th>Amer. Indian</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>African Amer.</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count (n)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succeeded (n)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succeeded (%)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (12): Escape was associated with lower likelihood of program completion, even when returned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Rates by Escape Class:</th>
<th>Escaped &amp; returned 2+ times</th>
<th>No Escape</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count (n)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succeeded (n)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succeeded (%)</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>65.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (13): Length of stay in the program is associated with higher rates of program completion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program time versus program completion:</th>
<th>0 - 90</th>
<th>91 - 180</th>
<th>181 - 365</th>
<th>&gt;365 Days</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Offenders (n)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Offenders (%)</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>65.6%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>48.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- Completion status (success vs. failure) was not a good predictor of subsequent number of adult convictions (Table 14).

- Completion status (success vs. failure) was a predictor of the time to first filing resulting in a conviction (Table 15). The lag time was roughly 4 months for those who failed, and 18 months for those who succeeded. The results of Principal Components Analysis suggest that this relationship may not be a direct one: there may be intervening variables. This merits further review. But it can still be said that for new offenses (excluding escapes and juvenile VOPs) those who completed had an average time to first offense of 17.6 months versus 12 months for those who failed, a difference which taken by itself, would have been quite significant (\( U = 4330.5, z \text{ Statistic} = 3.1927, \text{ Prob.} > z = 0.0007 \)). This suggests that there is a positive association between program completion status and time to first new offense.

- General recidivism was 66.5%. 109 of 164 youth were subsequently convicted of one or more juvenile and/or adult offenses (including escapes and VOPs). After excluding convictions for escapes and VOPs, 72 of 164 youth (43.9%) were convicted of one or more juvenile and/or adult offense during the follow-up period.

- Offenders who attempted one or more escapes had roughly twice the rate of subsequent adult convictions during the follow-up period (Table 16), and also had a higher rate of serious violent offenses (Table 17).

- Subsequent adult conviction rates of Caucasians and Hispanics were reasonably similar during the follow-up period (Table 18).

*Table (14) Program completion does not appear to be linked to subsequent adult conviction rate during the follow-up period.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsequent Adult Convictions By Program Completion:</th>
<th>Succeeded</th>
<th>Failed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Convictions (n)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Convictions (%)</td>
<td>61.9%</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table (15) Program completion status appears to be related to the time to first filing of a subsequent conviction during the follow-up period. Note that the first conviction of those who failed was often associated with an escape or juvenile violation of probation associated with failure to complete the program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time to First Conviction During Follow-up or End of Study</th>
<th>Succeeded</th>
<th>Failed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>106</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (16) Attempted escape appears to be linked to subsequent adult conviction rate during the follow-up period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsequent Adult Convictions By Escape Class:</th>
<th>Escaped</th>
<th>No Escape</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count (n)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offenses (n)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>89.6%</td>
<td>44.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (17) Attempted escape also appears to be linked to the rate of serious violent conviction and pending cases during the follow-up period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsequent Adult Convictions By Escape Class:</th>
<th>Escaped</th>
<th>No Escape</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count (n)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offenses (n)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table (18) Subsequent adult convictions by ethnicity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsequent Adult Convictions By Ethnicity:</th>
<th>Amer. Indian</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>African Amer.</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count (n)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes (n)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (19) Subsequent adult criminal activity by number of convictions associated with camp entry.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsequent Adult Convictions By Number of Offenses Associated with Commitment*</th>
<th>1 Offense</th>
<th>2 Offenses</th>
<th>3 Offenses</th>
<th>4 Offenses</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes (n)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes (%)</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Convictions associated with commitment to Camp.

- The number of convictions associated with commitment to the camp appears related to the rate of adult recidivism (convictions) during the follow-up period (Table 19).

- Program completion was not associated with a lower rate of serious violent recidivism during the follow-up period (Table 20).

- The number of convictions associated with commitment to camp was not associated with subsequent violent recidivism during the follow-up period (Table 21).

- The gang affiliation status was strongly associated with subsequent serious violent recidivism in this study (Table 22). Gang affiliates were 9 times more likely to be involved in a serious violent offense during the tracking period than non-affiliates. Had this been evaluated in isolation, we would have found this difference to be quite
statistically significant based on number offenses ($\chi^2 = 8.6508$, df = 1, $p = 0.0033$), or simply on number offenders who committed one or more serious violent offense ($\chi^2 = 7.0930$, df = 1, $p = 0.0077$).

- Violent recidivism also appears to be linked to prior conviction of a weapons-related offense associated with commitment to camp (Table 23). Offenders with one or more weapons-related prior were 40% more likely to be involved (convicted + pending cases) in a serious violent crime during the follow-up period.

- The rate of violent recidivism is higher among offenders with multiple violent priors associated with commitment to camp than those with 0 – 1 violent conviction (Table 24).

Table (20) Subsequent serious violent criminal activity (convictions & pending cases) during the follow-up period were similar between juveniles who successfully completed the camp program and those who failed to complete the program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serious Violent Adult Convictions &amp; Pending Cases by Success Class:</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Failed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offenses (n)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offenses (%)</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (21) Subsequent serious violent criminal activity (convictions & pending cases) during the follow-up period was not associated with the number of prior convictions associated with commitment to the camp program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serious Violent Adult Convictions &amp; Pending Cases by Number of Offenses*:</th>
<th>1 Offense</th>
<th>2 Offenses</th>
<th>3 Offenses</th>
<th>4 Offenses</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes (n)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes (%)</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Convictions associated with commitment to Camp.
Table (22) Subsequent serious violent criminal activity (convictions & pending cases) during the follow-up period was strongly related to gang affiliation status.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serious Violent Adult Convictions &amp; Pending Cases by Gang Affiliation Status:</th>
<th>No Affiliation</th>
<th>Gang Affiliation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes (n)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes (%)</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Convictions associated with commitment to Camp.

Table (23) The conviction of a weapon-related offense associated with the original commitment to camp appeared to increase the likelihood of future serious violent recidivism during the follow-up period in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serious Violent Adult Convictions &amp; Pending Cases by Number of Prior* Weapons-Related Offenses:</th>
<th>0 Offenses</th>
<th>1 or more offenses</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes (n)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes (%)</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Prior convictions associated with commitment to Camp.

Table (24) The conviction of multiple violent offenses associated with the original commitment to camp appeared to be modestly predictive of future serious violent recidivism during the follow-up period in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serious Violent Recidivism (Convictions &amp; Pending Cases) by Prior* Number of Serious Violent</th>
<th>0 Offenses</th>
<th>1 Offense</th>
<th>2 or more Offenses</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes (n)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes (%)</td>
<td>21.60%</td>
<td>15.40%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Convictions associated with commitment to Camp.
Future serious violent recidivism during the follow-up period appear to be related to some factor associated with race, such as level of gang activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serious Violent Adult Convictions &amp; Pending Cases by Ethnicity:</th>
<th>Amer. Indian</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>African Amer.</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count by class</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offenses (n)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offenses (%)</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The likelihood of subsequent involvement in a serious violent crime (conviction & pending) is not related with length of stay in the camp and T=Step program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serious Violent Adult Convictions &amp; Pending Cases by Program time:</th>
<th>0 - 90</th>
<th>91 - 180</th>
<th>181 - 365</th>
<th>&gt;365 Days</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes (n)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes (%)</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Although Hispanics had a completion rate comparable to Caucasians, they were almost 3 times more likely to be involved with a serious violent crime during the follow-up period in this study (Table 25), assumed to reflect differences in gang affiliation rates.

- Increased length of stay in the camp program was expected to be associated with lower rates of violent recidivism, but this was not observed, either in terms of crimes or individuals (Table 26).
Principal Components Analysis

Principal Components Analysis was used as an exploratory tool to characterize the general relationships between variables (e.g. demographic, conviction at admission, program performance, and recidivism outcome). This approach is especially useful when, as in this case, there are multiple factors at play. The objective is to look for clusters of variables that are inter-related, and the directionality of the relationship to one another. In this analysis, clusters of variables (each represented as a Factor) provide useful information: in this case showing the relative relationship between these clusters and subsequent violent convictions.

Each Factor represents a different cluster of variables identified as inter-related. The numerical value represents the strength of the association: the closer to 1.0, the stronger the relationship. The results are shown in Table 27. Five factors (separate variable clusters) explained approximately 60% of the variation in the data.

The first noteworthy observation is that four of the five factors have associations with subsequent serious violent recidivism. This suggests that prediction of future violence has many dimensions. Greater refinement of the input variables would likely improve the loading of serious violent recidivism onto fewer factors.

The second noteworthy observation (Factor 5) is that the recidivism rate for subsequent convictions (excluding convictions for escape and juvenile VOPs, since many are associated with termination from the program) is associated with time to first filing resulting in a conviction. Individuals who start committing crimes sooner following release accumulated more crimes during the tracking period, and hence had higher rates of recidivism. This relationship is intuitive and to be expected.

The first factor is characterized by evidence of prior violence, weapons, and total charges, and subsequent violent recidivism. Individuals who have more violent and weapon charges, and more total charges associated with commitment to Camp are more likely to be involved in subsequent serious violent recidivism (as measured by both convictions and pending cases), than individuals with fewer such priors.

The second factor links program performance indicators with rate of serious violent recidivism. Individuals who have longer lengths of stay and fewer escapes tend to have a higher likelihood of completion. Some of these individuals, ironically, also tend to have higher rates of violent recidivism than individuals who have shorter lengths of stay, escape more often, and fail the program.
The third factor links ethnicity, gang affiliation, and subsequent serious violent recidivism. Gang affiliation differs by ethnicity, which is, in turn, associated with different levels of serious violence during the tracking period in these data. The strength of this relationship with serious violent recidivism warrants a much closer examination.

The fourth factor illustrates the complexity of violence prediction. It suggests that individuals who were older at time of entry into the program tended to have more gang-related and total convictions associated with commitment to camp than younger individuals. These older individuals were less likely to escape than younger ones, and were also less likely to be involved in a serious violent offense during the tracking period. Note, however, that while they had higher total offenses and higher gang-specific offenses, they are not individuals who also tend to have more weapons and violence charges associated with commitment to Camp. This may reflect a subset of criminally active individuals who are less likely to involve themselves with violence.

Finally, as already noted, the fifth factor relates time to first filing (resulting in a conviction other than an escape or juvenile VOP) to general recidivism rates (excluding escapes and juvenile VOPs). This is a relationship that was anticipated. What is interesting to note is that neither of these two recidivism metrics appears meaningfully associated with the other factors, including the proxies for criminal history or indicators of program performance. This is surprising given the strong apparent relationship between program completion and time to first filing of a new offense. This suggests that program completion and time to first filing are not directly related, but instead are linked through some other variable not captured in the dataset.

We cannot conclude from this analysis and these data that there is evidence to suggest that successful program completion or prolonged lengths of stay are associated with lower likelihood of general recidivism, lower serious violent recidivism, or reduced time to first re-offense. The results (and hence interpretation) of this type of analysis will differ depending upon input variables, variability within offenders, and sample size. If we were to draw another 164-person sample, we may end up with different characteristic factors. We did however conduct several other Principal Components analyses (PCAs), using different combinations of variables, and the results appeared reasonably stable. The variables tended to load together in the same way and with the same general relative level of importance.

Although we cannot conclude that program completion or length of stay is associated (at least in the right direction) with a reduction in recidivism, the analysis may be helpful in identifying potential predictor variables for use in identifying individuals who represent the highest risk for serious violent recidivism. The most serious violent recidivism, captured in convictions and cases still being adjudicated, are strongly associated with gang affiliation.
There is also evidence to suggest that gang affiliation status alone is not the only variable available for predicting future violent reoffending. This is not a trivial finding. The general associations identified in this exploratory analysis suggest that a screening tool might be developed to differentiate between those likely to have high rates of general recidivism from those who are more likely to have higher rates of violent recidivism.

Although the expected positive relationship between program completion or length of stay and recidivism was not detected, we cannot conclude that participation in the program had no benefit. Beyond the many intangible benefits that the youth receive, there are very tangible benefits associated with crime prevention. Assuming that the crime rate of offenders during the follow-up tracking period can be used for ‘hind casting,’ we estimate that incapacitation of 164 offenders in the program prevented approximately 60 total convictions, 30 of which would likely have been adult convictions. We also estimate that approximately 9 serious violent offenses (convictions and pending cases) were prevented based on the observed rate during the tracking period.

The offenses recorded during the post-program tracking period are shown in Figure 3. For those youth with subsequent convictions, a separate look at the intervals between successive filings resulting in convictions was examined for evidence of desistence, but none was detected.
Figure 3. Composition of 267 convictions and pending cases committed during follow-up period by 164 youth who had exited the Camp program.
Table (27) A Principal Components Analysis for the Camp program data is shown below, including demographic, pre-camp criminal history data, camp performance indicators, and recidivism metrics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>FACTOR 1</th>
<th>FACTOR 2</th>
<th>FACTOR 3</th>
<th>FACTOR 4</th>
<th>FACTOR 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Demographic and pre-Camp criminal history variables)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at commitment to camp</td>
<td>0.121</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>-0.143</td>
<td><strong>0.426</strong></td>
<td>-0.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.106</td>
<td><strong>-0.711</strong></td>
<td>-0.287</td>
<td>0.070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang affiliation status</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>-0.142</td>
<td><strong>0.720</strong></td>
<td>-0.130</td>
<td>0.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of gang-related conviction associated with commission to Camp</td>
<td>0.272</td>
<td>-0.136</td>
<td>0.265</td>
<td><strong>0.526</strong></td>
<td>0.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of weapons-related convictions associated with commission to Camp</td>
<td>0.838</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.173</td>
<td>-0.040</td>
<td>0.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of serious violent offenses associated with commission to Camp</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
<td>-0.126</td>
<td>0.130</td>
<td>-0.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of convictions associated with commission to Camp</td>
<td>0.561</td>
<td>-0.114</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td><strong>0.470</strong></td>
<td>0.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Camp performance variables)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Stay in Camp &amp; T-Step phase</td>
<td>-0.094</td>
<td><strong>0.810</strong></td>
<td>-0.053</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>-0.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of escapes</td>
<td>0.155</td>
<td><strong>-0.339</strong></td>
<td>-0.043</td>
<td><strong>-0.660</strong></td>
<td>0.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion status</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td><strong>0.786</strong></td>
<td>-0.148</td>
<td>0.265</td>
<td>-0.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Recidivism outcome measures)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time to first filing of new conviction (not escape or VOP)</td>
<td>-0.089</td>
<td>0.184</td>
<td>-0.186</td>
<td>-0.020</td>
<td><strong>-0.719</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of convictions of new crimes (not escape or VOP)</td>
<td>-0.077</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>-0.097</td>
<td>-0.047</td>
<td><strong>0.822</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of serious violent convictions &amp; pending cases</td>
<td><strong>0.326</strong></td>
<td>0.310</td>
<td><strong>0.523</strong></td>
<td><strong>-0.322</strong></td>
<td>0.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of Variation in Rotated Factors:</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>12.334</td>
<td>11.577</td>
<td>10.839</td>
<td>9.796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative Percent of Variation:</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>27.634</td>
<td>39.211</td>
<td>50.05</td>
<td>59.846</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Loadings greater than ± 0.300 are shown in bold and highlighted, and were used to develop descriptions of each factor based on the associated variables, their relative strength, and their directionality.
• While in the aggregate there is no evidence to suggest that increased lengths of stay are associated with lower rates of recidivism, a look at sub-populations detects a differential response. For example, while for Hispanic youth affiliated with a gang longer program stays appear to be related to lowered rates of recidivism, the opposite is suggestive for Caucasian youth affiliated with a gang.

• There is evidence to indicate that those who escape are more likely to commit violent offenses than those who made no escape attempts.

• There appears to be a relationship between subsequent convictions and gang affiliation, and convictions for violence or weapons-related offenses at time of program entry.

• There is suggestive evidence of a positive relationship between successful program completion and delayed onset of subsequent offending.

• A measurable benefit of the program appears to be that time at Camp may prevent (through incapacitation) a number of crimes from being committed.
C. A Closer Look at Program Effect

Relationship between Program Duration and Recidivism for Camp Youth

We conducted a secondary analysis of the data to look for any patterns of relationship between participant characteristics/length of stay and recidivism that might not be apparent in the aggregate. To do this we focused on two sub-populations with reasonably large numbers: Caucasian youth affiliated with gangs, and Hispanic youth affiliated with gangs.

We confined this analysis to those individuals who were convicted of one or more offenses to further reduce variation in the dataset. We expected that a program effect would manifest itself as (1) a positive relationship between program duration and time to first re-offense, and (2) a negative relationship between program duration and rate of re-offense. Based on the literature (Aos et al. 2001), we expected that the effect size would be subtle, and not necessarily significant with small samples.

For Hispanic gang affiliates there was evidence that longer program duration was associated with longer times to first offense (for those convicted of one or more offenses during the post-program tracking period - excluding escapes and VOPs), as shown in Figure 4. There was evidence that for Hispanic gang affiliates longer program duration was also associated with lower rates of recidivism (including adult recidivism, felony recidivism, misdemeanor and felony violent recidivism, and felony violent recidivism (both convictions and pending cases) (Figure 5 through Figure 8). This is consistent with expectations for a program effect.

Interestingly, we failed to detect this same effect for Caucasian youth who were gang affiliates (who commit one or more offenses during the tracking period). While the sample size is small, and the variability is high, the pattern is reversed (Figure 9 through Figure 13), suggesting that for this sub-population, increased time in the program appears to be associated with slightly higher rates of recidivism, including violent recidivism. This suggests that the two groups are responding differently.

Differences in recidivism rates between sub-populations of youth can provide a basis for refinement of risk-based decision criteria. For example, although non-gang affiliates represented 21% of the Camp population, they went on to commit only 3% of violent offenses during the tracking period (Figure 14).
Figure (4). Time to first re-offense during the tracking period for Hispanic gang affiliates who committed one or more crimes during the follow-up period was used to test for a potential dose-response relationship with time in the program.

![Time to First Re-Offense](image1)

*R² = 0.114
*p = 0.033

Figure (5). Rate of total recidivism during the tracking period for Hispanic gang affiliates who committed one or more crimes during the follow-up period was used to test for a potential dose-response relationship with time in the program.

![Rate of Total Recidivism](image2)

*R² = 0.197
*p = 0.005

*Excluding escapes and juvenile VOPs.
Figure (6). Rate of adult recidivism during the tracking period for Hispanic gang affiliates who committed one or more crimes during the follow-up period was used to test for a potential dose-response relationship with time in the program.

Figure (7). Rate of Misdemeanor and Felony violent recidivism during the tracking period for Hispanic gang affiliates who committed one or more crimes during the follow-up period was used to test for a potential dose-response relationship with time in the program.
Figure (8). Rate of Felony violent recidivism (convictions & pending) during the tracking period for Hispanic gang affiliates who committed one or more crimes during the follow-up period was used to test for a potential dose-response relationship with time in the program.

Figure (9). Time to first re-offense during the tracking period for Caucasian youth who were gang affiliates who committed one or more crimes during the follow-up period was used to test for a potential dose-response relationship with time in the program.
Figure (10). Rate of total recidivism during the tracking period for Caucasian youth who were gang affiliates who committed one or more crimes during the follow-up period was used to test for a potential dose-response relationship with time in the program.

*Excluding escapes and juvenile VOIs.

Figure (11). Rate of adult recidivism during the tracking period for Caucasian youth who were gang affiliates who committed one or more crimes during the follow-up period was used to test for a potential dose-response relationship with time in the program.
Figure (12). Rate of adult recidivism during the tracking period for Caucasian youth who were gang affiliates who committed one or more crimes during the follow-up period was used to test for a potential dose-response relationship with time in the program (outlier removed to test strength of relationship).

Figure (13). Rate of Misdemeanor and Felony violent recidivism during the tracking period for Caucasian youth who were gang affiliates who committed one or more crimes during the follow-up period was used to test for a potential dose-response relationship with time in the program.
Figure 14. Example of how offender sub-population characteristics might provide a basis to refine risk-instrument decisions to better distinguish between violent and nonviolent repeat offenders.
D. Summary of Findings

Profile of Youth in Camp

- 89% of the youth at Camp were 16 or 17 years old at the time of admission.
- The majority of youth were Hispanic (55%), and Caucasian (35%).
- Overall, 79% of youth were designated as gang affiliates.
- 54% of youth successfully completed the program.

Recidivism

- 67% of the boys were convicted of 1 or more crimes in the juvenile or adult system after program exit (if escape and violation of probation convictions are excluded the recidivism rate is 44%).
- The 109 boys who were subsequently convicted had, collectively, 267 convictions between them in the juvenile and adult systems.

Entry into the Adult System

- 34% of the youth were subsequently convicted of an offense in the adult system
- Of those out of Camp longer than 1 year, 43% had one or more adult convictions

Outcomes by Program Completion/Failure & Length of Stay

- Longer participation in the Camp was associated with higher completion rates
- Successful completion was associated with a delayed onset of any future offending: Those who successfully completed the program had an average time from program exit to first filing (in either the juvenile or adult system) of 18 months, compared to an average 4 months from exit to filing for those who failed, although much of this dramatic difference is attributable to convictions for escape and juvenile violation of probation, many of which were associated with the termination from the program.
• In the aggregate there was no apparent correlation between successful program completion and lower rates of subsequent serious violent recidivism: youth who either succeeded or failed the Camp program had virtually the same rate of serious, violent adult offending. At the same time, while in the aggregate there is no evidence to suggest that increased lengths of stay are associated with lower rates of recidivism, a look at sub-populations detects a differential response. For example, while for Hispanic youth affiliated with a gang longer program stays appear to be related to lowered rates of recidivism, the opposite is suggestive for Caucasian youth affiliated with a gang.

Outcomes by Escape

• 47% of youth had at least one escape while at Camp.
• Those who escaped and then returned to Camp were half as likely to successful complete program.
• Youth who attempted one or more escapes had roughly twice the rate of subsequent adult convictions during the follow-up period, and had a higher rate of subsequent serious violent offenses.

Outcomes by Offense Type at Admission

• 23% of commitment offenses were violence-related
• 11% of commitment offenses were weapons related
• 7% of commitment offenses were specific-gang charges

Outcomes by Race/Ethnicity

• Caucasians and Hispanics had comparable rates of program completion, and similar rates of recidivism in the adult system; but Hispanics were 3x more likely than Caucasians to be involved in a serious, violent offense in the adult system.
Outcomes by Gang Affiliation

- Gang affiliation greatly increased the odds of being convicted of a subsequent felony; but gang affiliation was not related to the odds of being convicted of a subsequent misdemeanor.

- Youth with a gang affiliation had 3x the rate of future felony convictions as non-gang members; and the likelihood of a future serious violent offense was strongly related to gang affiliation. The results would have been significant had we measured this outcome alone (U = 2700.000, z Statistic = 1.78, \( p = 0.0375 \))

- Gang affiliation was associated with shorter times to first filing, shorter times between criminal convictions, and a higher number of convictions per year (2x the number of convictions as non-gang members).

- There was not a positive association between having a gang specific offense/conviction at the time of admission to Camp, and a future serious, violent offense.

- Those with gang-specific offenses tended to be somewhat older at the time of commitment to Camp, have a higher total number of convictions associated with commitment to Camp, but did not also have a high level of weapons or violent convictions associated with commitment.
SYSTEM RESEARCH & DATA

The Sierra Study

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A. The Sierra Outcome Study Background

1. Study Objectives

As part of this project we were asked to examine the movement of youth into the adult system. This had not until now been studied, and was complicated by the lack of a single identification number to link persons in both the youth and adult systems. However, with the assistance of Sierra staff, Melanie Griffin (who went through paper records to assemble program samples back to 2004), and with the competent assistance of Kim Gilmore who was able to link the records, we were able to conduct the analysis.

The outcome study was conducted for all youth who were admitted to Sonoma County Juvenile Department's Sierra Youth program between 2005 and 2008. A total of 67 youth were included in the sample (boys and girls). All youth were sentenced wards of the court. The study tracked subsequent convictions in the criminal justice system (juvenile and adult) for youth who had exited the program. Study questions included:

- What are the characteristics of youth in the program? (age, gender, ethnicity, gang affiliate, nature of conviction at entry, etc.)

- What is the nature of program involvement and outcome for each youth? (length of stay, number of escapes, type of exit: successful completion or not)

- What is the recidivism rate? (subsequent convictions for any crime, serious violent crime)

- How many youth are subsequently convicted for an offense in the adult system: for any crime, for a violent crime?

- What is the relationship between individual or program characteristics and recidivism? (Is there, for example, a relationship between length of stay in the program and subsequent recidivism?)
Finally, what can we learn from the findings to strengthen programs or to guide future questions and analysis?

The study limitations include the diverse population characteristics and no full criminal history information for participants. While this does not weaken the interpretation, it does limit some questions. Criminal history would, for example, allow a more nuanced analysis of the relationship between past behavior and future offending.

Notwithstanding study limitations, this analysis has value for the system.

- Provides baseline recidivism data
- Illustrates the relative effect of different variables
- Helps refine the program and customize services
- Helps in refinement of risk assessment
- Sets groundwork for future cost-benefit analysis
- Helps explore how to forestall entry into adult system

Defining Recidivism

Recidivism can be measured in different ways. Studies often look at subsequent Arrests. We took a more conservative approach and measured subsequent Convictions (in either the juvenile or adult system).

2. Study Methodology

Due to the relatively small sample size and the multiple questions asked of the data - which reduced the sample to smaller sub-populations an emphasis was placed on exploratory data analysis methods, including Principal Components Analysis, as well as descriptive statistics, rather than traditional tests for significance. The objective was to measure criminal behavior after program exit.

The fact that there were so few new convictions during the follow-up period curtailed our ability to conduct a full statistical analysis: With only 5 subsequent felony convictions among the girls, it is difficult to explore associations between different variables and outcome. Because of this we opted for a descriptive approach, and an exploratory analysis using Principal Components Analysis – the latter to examine possible relationships between demographic and program variables (gang affiliation,
length of stay, number of escapes, completion status), and a single outcome variable – conviction for a new offense after program exit.

We applied Principle Components analysis as a statistical approach because it is designed to focus on the relationships – and degree of variability - between variables. Its findings do not imply a causal relationship but an associative relationship between variables, which can be valuable in guiding further analysis. This type of analysis is especially suited for this kind of study in which the relationship between variables is not always superficially evident.
B. Results & Discussion

DEMOGRAPHICS

A total of 67 youth were included in the sample, including 9 (13%) boys and 58 (87%) girls. Caucasians (46%) and Hispanics (40%) represented the majority racial groups in the program (Figure 1). The age at admittance ranged from 13 to 18 years old (Figure 2). The majority (67%) were designated in the sample data as gang affiliates. Gang affiliation was higher among boys than among girls. The gang affiliation rate for Caucasians was considerably lower than that of Hispanics or other racial groups (collectively) in this sample (Table 1). All youth were in the program were adjudicated.

![Figure 1. Ethnic composition of Sierra Program sample.](image1)

![Figure 2. Age class distribution of Sierra at entry.](image2)

Table 1. Gang affiliation by ethnicity in the Sierra Youth Program sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Gang Affiliates</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>92.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASURES

An average of 30 youth were admitted per year in the two well represented years (Table 2), with an average length of stay of 219 (± 119) days. The intended LOS in the program was 180 days, but more than 60 percent of youths remain the program in excess of 180 days (Table 3), and almost 10% remain longer than 1 year. The average LOS for Sierra Youth Program participants was longer than that of youths at the Camp. The escape rate by youth was 64% (Table 4), but 35% of youths escaped 2 or more times (Table 5). Approximately 5% of youths escaped 4 times during their stay. Girls were more likely to escape than boys (Table 4) in these data.

Individuals who escaped and were returned were much less likely to succeed in the program (20%) than those who did not escape (62.5%) (Table 6). The completion rate of youths who escaped 3 + times was less than 5%. Youths who escaped one or more times averaged 10% longer length of stays. Length of stay was associated with higher rate of completion for girls, but the difference was primarily between those who stayed less than 90 days (10%) and those who stayed longer (39%). There was no difference in completion rate for LOS between 90 – 180 and 180 – 365 days. Completion rate was low among all racial groups, and was higher among Hispanics (40%) than Caucasians (32.3%), although gang affiliation was higher among Hispanics (Table 7).

Table 2. Admissions per year included in the Sierra Youth Program sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADMISSION YEAR</th>
<th>Admitted (n)</th>
<th>Admitted (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Length of stay in the Sierra Youth Program sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOS Class</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 90 days</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 – 180 days</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>181 – 365 days</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;365 days</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4. Escape rate by gender in the Sierra Youth Program sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>Escaped 1+ times</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>67.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>64.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Number of escapes per youth in the Sierra Youth Program sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Escapes by Youth</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Program completion rate by the number of escapes per youth in the Sierra Youth Program sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Status</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed (n)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed (n)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed (%)</td>
<td>65.2%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Program completion rate by ethnicity in the Sierra Youth Program sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Status</th>
<th>Amer. Indian</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>African Amer.</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed (n)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed (n)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed (%)</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Program outcomes were evaluated to determine whether successful program completion was associated with lower or less serious recidivism than with program failure.

A successful evaluation is contingent upon sufficient reoffending during the tracking period to discern a treatment effect, if one is present.

It became apparent that girls should be evaluated separately from the boys, given the gender differences in levels of convictions and the change in policy regarding sending boys to the program during recent years.

It must be stated at the outset that any interpretation of the relationship between program performance and subsequent patterns of re-offending must be approached with great caution due to the small sample size, and the small number of subsequent offenses that were not directly related to program termination (escapes or juvenile violations of probation). Conclusions drawn from these data should be considered preliminary, descriptive, and used as the basis for further analysis or formation of very specific hypotheses regarding specific associations.

Data for Sierra Girls (n = 58), and Boys (n = 9) suggest that successful outcome is associated with in-camp program compliance (Table 6), as reflected in escape attempts. Individuals who made no attempt at escape had a completion rate of 65.2%, whereas those who escaped one or more times had a completion rate of just 18.9%.

Individuals who successfully completed the program had much lower subsequent total convictions during the follow-up period (Table 8), but this is driven in large part by the fact that most convictions were for escapes and VOPs associated with program failure. The adult conviction rate is therefore a less biased indicator of potential program effect, although the sample size is much too small for any statistical comparison. There is no apparent difference between adult re-offense rates for individuals who succeeded and those who failed the Sierra program (Table 9).

A second (and partially overlapping) indicator is a comparison of felony rates, since they too are not directly associated with program termination. The difference between the two groups is too small to support an interpretation of a potential program effect (Table 10). There is suggestive evidence that those who succeed may have a lower misdemeanor and felony violent convictions (Table 11). To investigate this, we examined evidence of a “dose-response” relationship between length of stay and program completion (Table 12). Most people in the class “0 – 90 days” failed because
they escaped and did not return. Among those who stayed at least 90 days, there is no evidence that longer stays were associated with a higher likelihood of completion (Table 12).

The next step was to determine whether there was supportive evidence to indicate a relationship between time in the program and likelihood of conviction for a violent offense (misdemeanor or felony) during the follow-up period. A negative relationship between length of stay and likelihood of conviction of a violent offense would provide tentative support for a relationship between program completion and lower levels of future violence. Keeping in mind that we are evaluating the data in too many ways to assess statistical significance, we must base our interpretations on the weight of the evidence. In this case, there was no evidence to suggest a relationship. (Table 13) We can, however, conclude that there is a relationship between escape and completion, but not a strong relationship between completion and adult re-offense or felony re-offense in these data.

What can be concluded is that the number of new adult and or felony crimes committed during the tracking period by those who exit the program quickly following a short stay does not appear to differ from those who stay a long time.

Table 8. Total juvenile and adult conviction rate by (offenses per youth) by program completion status for Sierra boys and girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Status</th>
<th>Total Convictions</th>
<th>Youths (n)</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1.523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1.030</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9. Adult conviction rate by program completion status for Sierra boys and girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Status</th>
<th>Total Convictions</th>
<th>Youths (n)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10. Felony conviction rate by program completion status for Sierra boys and girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Status</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>(n)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11. Violent conviction rate (Misdemeanor or Felony) by program completion status for Sierra boys and girls. The difference, while significant at $p < 0.05$, is not significant after a Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons ($\chi^2 = 4.2489$, df = 1, $p = 0.0393$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Status</th>
<th>Violent Convictions (M or F)</th>
<th>(n)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12. Length of stay versus rate of program completion for Sierra boys and girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOS Class</th>
<th>Completed (count)</th>
<th>(n)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 90 days</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 – 180 days</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 181 days</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13. Length of stay versus rate of violent crime during the follow-up period for Sierra boys and girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOS_CLASS</th>
<th>Violent Convictions (Misd. &amp; Felony)</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 90 days</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 – 180 days</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 181 days</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14. Program completion versus gang affiliation status for Sierra boys and girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GANG</th>
<th>Completed (count)</th>
<th>(n)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not an Affiliate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang Affiliate</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Patterns of re-offending tend to differ by gender (Table 15). The Sierra program has delivered services primarily to females during recent years. When analyzing the data for girls at Sierra (n = 58), the general findings about program participation at outcomes were comparable to those of the full dataset.

Once again, we must caution against drawing any firm conclusions due to the small number of new-offenses during the follow-up period.

There is no suggested dose-response relationship related to treatment time and outcome. There is also no suggested relationship between program outcome and adult convictions (Table 16) or felony convictions (Table 17).

While it may on the surface appear that program completion is associated with lower levels of subsequent violent criminal convictions (Table 18), these results are not significant with this sample size ($\chi^2 = 3.1055, df = 1, p = 0.0780$). To be convincing, we should at least see some suggestive support based on time in the program reflecting a dose-response relationship (Table 19). We failed to detect this type of relationship. Lacking support, we must accept the null hypothesis of no program affect, and assume at this point in time, that the difference is attributable to chance or the intrusion of one or more uncontrolled factors. We must explore suggestive evidence for an alternate hypothesis perhaps in the apparent relationship between the propensity to escape, gang affiliation, program outcome, and subsequent violent convictions.

In Table 20, we see that an equally plausible explanation for the apparent relationship between program failure and violent recidivism is due to gang affiliates who, in spite of different lengths of stay, all failed and subsequently were convicted of a violent offense.

Table 15. Gender versus rate of violent convictions during the follow-up period for Sierra boys and girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>Violent Convictions (n)</th>
<th>Youths (n)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 16. Completion status versus rate of subsequent adult convictions during the follow-up period for female participants in the Sierra program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Code</th>
<th>Total Adult Convictions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.9%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17. Completion status versus rate of subsequent felony convictions during the follow-up period for female participants in the Sierra program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Code</th>
<th>Total Felony Convictions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.9%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18. Completion status versus rate of subsequent violent convictions (juvenile/adult; misdemeanor/felony) during the follow-up period for female participants in the Sierra program. The results are not significant ($\chi^2 = 3.1055$, df = 1, $p = 0.0780$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Code</th>
<th>Total Violent Convictions</th>
<th>Girls(n)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.6%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19. Program length of stay versus rate of subsequent violent convictions (juvenile/adult; misdemeanor/felony) during the follow-up period for female participants in the Sierra program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOS CLASS</th>
<th>Total Violent Convictions</th>
<th>Girls(n)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 90 days</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 – 180 days</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;181 days</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.6%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 20. Gang affiliation status versus misdemeanor and felony violent conviction rate for Sierra girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GANG Affiliation Status</th>
<th>Total Violent Convictions</th>
<th>Girls (n)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No gang affiliation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang affiliation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 33% of girls made no attempt to escape. Approximately 38% of girls escaped two or more times. There was no relationship between gang affiliation and age at program entry. Length of stay was related to the number of escapes made by youth (Table 21), likely reflecting additional time assigned to youths who returned.

The proportion of youths who are gang affiliates appears to increase with increased length of stay beyond 90 days. Gang affiliates represented 47% of the population between 91 – 180 days, 68% of the population between 181 days and 1 year, and 100% of the population beyond 1 year. As with the total sample, completion is related to LOS. Girls who remain in the program less than 90 days have a completion rate of 11%, in contrast to those who remain longer, who have a completion rate of about 40%. Gang affiliates had longer average lengths of stay than non-affiliates (238 days and 175 days respectively), but had similar rates of program completion (35% versus 38% respectively).

Length of stay does not appear related to subsequent juvenile misdemeanor (Table 22), or violent conviction rates (Table 23).

Gang affiliates averaged less time since release (471 days) than non-affiliates (526 days), but were more likely to have been subsequently convicted of a violent felony (Table 24) and any violent offense (Table 20). Due to the very small sample size and overlapping offense type and severity classifications, these results must be interpreted with caution and considered as descriptive of these data.

Table 21. Length of stay class versus average number of escapes per girl.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOS Class</th>
<th>Average Number of Escaped Per Youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 90 days</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 – 180 days</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>181 – 365 days</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;365 days</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 22. Length of stay class versus misdemeanor conviction rate for Sierra girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOS Class</th>
<th>Misdemeanor Convictions (n)</th>
<th>Girls (n)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 90 days</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>156%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 – 180 days</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>181 – 365 days</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;365 days</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 23. Length of stay class versus misdemeanor and felony violent conviction rate for Sierra girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOS Class</th>
<th>Violent Offense (M &amp; F) Convictions (n)</th>
<th>Girls (n)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 90 days</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 – 180 days</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>181 – 365 days</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;365 days</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>58.00</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 24. Gang affiliation status versus felony violent conviction rate (subset of Table 20) for Sierra girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GANG Affiliation status</th>
<th>Felony Convictions (n)</th>
<th>Girls (n)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No gang affiliation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang affiliation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To examine the relationship between variables we applied Principal Components Analysis (PCA) with Verimax rotation as an exploratory tool. We hoped to characterize the general relationships in the data using a subset of demographic, program performance, and recidivism outcome metrics.

The results of the PCA for the girls in Sierra are shown in Table 25. Four factors (sets of relationships) explained approximately 78% of the variation in the data. Factor loadings used in the descriptive interpretation of the factors are highlighted and in bold. Each Factor presents variables that are related to each other. The strength of the relationship is stronger as the numerical value approaches 1.0.

The first factor captures the relationship between gang affiliation and ethnicity, which we also observed in the data for the boys in the Camp program. There appears, in this
sample, to be a strong relationship between particular race/ethnic groupings and gang affiliation.

The second factor confirms the strong inverse relationship between the escapes and the likelihood of completing the program: the more escapes, the less likely to successfully complete.

The third factor suggests that younger girls who stay longer and have fewer escapes tend to have a somewhat higher likelihood of completion.

Finally, the fourth factor suggests that younger girls who fail to complete the program tend to have a higher likelihood of being convicted of one or more new crimes (excluding escapes and VOPs) during the post-program period than older girls who complete the program. The association with program completion, however, loads less strongly than age, suggesting that subsequent recidivism is more strongly associated with age than program effect.

Table (25). A Principal Components Analysis for the Camp program data is shown below, including demographic, pre-camp criminal history data, camp performance indicators, and recidivism metrics for Sierra girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>(Variimax Rotated Factor Loadings)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FACTOR 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Demographic and pre-Camp criminal history variables)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at commitment to Sierra</td>
<td>-0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity code</td>
<td><strong>0.873</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified gang affiliate</td>
<td><strong>-0.857</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Camp performance variables)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Stay in Sierra</td>
<td>-0.169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of escapes</td>
<td>0.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion status</td>
<td>0.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Recidivism outcome measure)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convicted of one or more new crimes other than escapes and VOPs</td>
<td>0.036</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of Variation in Rotated Factors: 22.099 19.04 18.986 18.231
Cumulative Percent of Variation: 22.099 41.139 60.125 78.356

*Loadings greater than ± 0.300 are shown in bold and highlighted, and were used to develop descriptions of each factor based on the associated variables, their relative strength, and their directionality.
The reader should once again be cautioned that the number of new crimes committed during the tracking period was so small, that any interpretation regarding program effect is suggestive at best.

**CENTRAL FINDINGS**

What can we conclude from this brief examination of the data?

1. First, any conclusions are only suggestive, due to lack of statistical power. We must interpret the findings in context, and seek support from multiple perspectives. The Principal Components analysis was an attempt to do this.

2. The great majority of the convictions for youth in the program appear to be related to unsuccessful termination from the program - due to escapes or violations of probation.

3. The baseline criminal rate, especially in the female population, is low relative to that of the young men in the Camp program.

4. The average time in the program exceeds that of young men in the Camp, who have much higher rates of criminal behavior following release.

5. Participation in the program may inflate the criminal record of many Sierra residents as a direct result of prosecution for escape and violation of probation. There were 31 escape and VOP convictions during the follow-up period.

6. The data seems to suggest that successful program completion is self-selecting, in that those youth who don't make an attempt to escape, tend to succeed; and those who want to leave, usually fail, even if returned multiple times. However, the new offense rate is too low, and the number of variables at play too many, to draw firm conclusions. There is little suggestive evidence that longer duration in the program is associated with lower levels of subsequent recidivism.

7. While there appears on the surface to be a relationship between program completion and lower levels of violent conviction (Table 18), this was not statistically significant, and it appears that it could be explained by gang affiliation alone.
8. Although gang affiliates had a comparable rate of successful completions as non-gang affiliates, gang affiliates were responsible for all of the felonies and violent offenses during the follow-up period, although the results were not significant.

9. Since the proportion of gang affiliates is greater than that of non-affiliates, and their rate of felony and violent recidivism is higher, the odds are stacked in their favor that subsequent convictions would be associated with them. We cannot conclude therefore that the differences, which were observed, were not simply due to gang affiliation rather than program effect at this time. The sample size is too small.

10. The re-offending of Sierra girls was limited to a small handful of persons who were also gang affiliates (2 entered the adult system).

11. Based on the Principal Component Analysis there is suggestive evidence that program completion is associated with lower levels of general recidivism, but it appears to be associated with age of the girl: younger girls are less likely to successful complete and more likely to be convicted of new crimes.

12. One might claim an incapacitation effect for Sierra, based on crime rates during the follow-up period. However, in the measure of recidivism reduction alone, the cost benefit of serving 58 girls, for a collective period of 34 person-years (girls x average length of program stay), to prevent an estimated 7 new convictions (2 estimated felonies) is unclear.

13. This study did not measure the many non-recidivism benefits that may be gained by time in Sierra, independent of recidivism.

14. The central finding is that the girls in Sierra have a low level of criminal offending when compared to the boys at Camp. This low level of offending is similar regardless of program completion type (successful or not) or length of stay: Girls who receive a low dosage of the program (less than 90 days) have similar rates of offending with girls who have longer stays. However, given the small sample size and low level of criminal activity one must interpret all findings with caution.

The composition of offense types for which program participants were convicted during the follow-up period is shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4.
Convictions for Escape and juvenile Violations of Probation accounted for 38% of recidivism for the 9 boys in the sample; they accounted for 68% of the recidivism for the girls.

Below is a summary of observed crime rates during the follow-up period. For comparison, ratios of CAMP MALES to SIERRA FEMALES are shown to illustrate the relative difference in rates of re-offending observed during their respective follow-up periods.

**SIERRA (FEMALE) JUVENILES – FOLLOW-UP CRIME RATES PER MAN-YEAR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime Category</th>
<th>Rate (per person-year)</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felony Convictions</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>felony convictions per person-year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent Convictions</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>person/weapon offense convictions per person-year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Violent Convictions</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>serious person convictions per person-year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Violent (Conv. &amp; Pend.)</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>serious person convictions and pending cases per person-year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CAMP Boys/Sierra Girls Recidivism Ratios**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime Category</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felony Convictions</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Times as many felony convictions per person-year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent Convictions</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Times as many person/weapon offense convictions per person-year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Violent Convictions</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Times as many serious person convictions per person-year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Violent (Conv. &amp; Pend.)</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Times as many serious person convictions &amp; pending cases per person-year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3: Composition of subsequent convictions by offense type for girls in the Sierra sample

Figure 4: Composition of subsequent convictions by offense type for boys in the Sierra sample
C. Summary of Findings

Sierra Outcome Study

Profile of Youth in Sierra

- For the sample studied, 87% were female (n=58) and 13% male (n=9).
- Approximately half the youth were 15 years or younger at admission, and half were 16 or older.
- The racial/ethnic breakout of the total sample of youth at Sierra was: Hispanic (40%); Caucasian (46%); African American (6%); American Indian (5%); Asian (2%); and Unknown (1%).
- Overall, 67% of youth at Sierra were designated as gang affiliates. Boys had a higher rate of gang affiliation (89%) than girls (64%).
- Based on the first risk scores generated there are, at this time at Sierra, no low risk youth; and almost 90% score as moderate/high or high risk.

Successful Completion

- Sierra girls had an overall 36% successful completion rate.
- The average length of stay at Sierra was 219 days (not including the Aftercare phase).
- For girls the LOS for those who failed the program was 194 days versus 252 days for those who successfully completed. Ten percent spent longer than 365 days. The difference between those who completed the program and those who did not was attributable largely to those who escaped and failed to return to the program.
- Youths who escaped tended to have about 10 percent longer lengths of stay than those who did not escape. This did not include any time spent in juvenile hall associated with each escape.
- There are low rates of program completion for those who stay less than 90 days, which is due to early escape and failure to return. Length of stay beyond 90 days does not
improve program completion rate (90-180 days = 40% successful completion; 181-365 days = 39% successful completion).

- Successful completion was collectively lower for American Indian, Asian and African American youth than for Hispanics and Caucasians. Hispanics had the highest rate of completion (41%) and 32% of Caucasian youth completed the program.

- Among girls in this sample, gang affiliation is not related to successful program completion: gang and non-gang affiliates had similar rates of successful program completion.

**Overall Outcomes**

- Of the 58 girls in the sample, 2 girls (3%) went on to commit a felony adult offense.
- The vast majority of crimes associated with girls at Sierra were VOP or escapes.
- Of the 58 girls in the sample, 24 (41%) went on to commit another juvenile offense. However, 70 percent of these offenses were either a VOP or an escape conviction: all directly associated with program failure.

**Outcomes by Program Completion/Failure**

- Successful completion of the program is not associated with adult offending for girls, although the low number of adult offenses (4) is too few for any firm conclusions. New crimes (other than for escape and juvenile VOPs) appear weakly associated with failure to complete the program in the PCA results, but this effect appears associated with a much stronger covariate of age at time of commitment to Sierra.

- There was directionally consistent evidence to suggest that successful program completion was associated with lower levels of violent recidivism for the population of boys and girls at camp in terms of offenses ($\chi^2 = 4.2489, df = 1, p = 0.0393$). The results were not statistically significant considering we were conducting multiple comparisons with the same data. These results were confounded by an equally strong relationship with gang affiliation. There was also no directional evidence of a dose-response between length of stay and violent re-offending (and the sample size was too small to have confirmed a dose-response effect anyway), so at this time we lacked sufficient support to reject the null hypothesis of no program effect. A much larger sample size is required to determine whether these findings were due to chance, due to gang affiliation, or due to program effect. We observed a similar relationship between
Successful program completion and lower violent recidivism among the girls in Sierra, but the difference was not significant ($\chi^2 = 3.1055, \text{df} = 1, p = 0.0780$).

- Because most of the juvenile convictions are directly related to program termination (due to escape or violation of probation) it is difficult to draw a conclusion about program effect independent of these crimes.

Outcomes by Escape

- 64% of youth escaped one or more times while at Sierra; 35% of youth escaped 2 or more times during their stay.
- There was no difference in escape rates by gang or non-gang affiliation.
- In general, youth who escaped and were then returned to the program were one-third as likely to complete the program as those who with no escapes.
- Escape frequencies tend to higher at either the low end (less than 90 days), or the high end of LOS.

Outcomes by Offense Type at Admission

Not collected.

Outcomes by Time in Program

- One cannot draw a conclusion about length of stay (LOS) in the program and subsequent adult convictions for girls because of the low number of adult offenses (4 adult offenses by 2 girls).
- There is no detected association between length of stay in Sierra and subsequent misdemeanant convictions for girls.
- There is no detected association between length of stay and subsequent violent convictions for girls.
- There is no detected association between length of stay and subsequent violent convictions for girls, but the low number of crimes does not allow any firm conclusions.
In the end, for girls, the overall level of subsequent criminal behavior is low, even for those who received limited treatment. This suggests that, for all practical purposes, we can pool the recidivism data for this sample to estimate the number of crimes that would have been prevented through incapacitation alone during the girl’s involvement with the Sierra program.

Outcomes by Ethnicity

The level of subsequent offending is too low for any meaningful analysis by ethnicity.

Outcomes by Gang Affiliation

The few violent offenses that were committed by Sierra girls with a gang affiliation. This is directionally consistent with our observations for boys in the Camp program, but we must caution the reader not to assume that this relationship is meaningful for the girls in Sierra. It is not statistically significant, indicating that the sample size was too small to provide support to reject the null hypothesis of no treatment effect. We cannot exclude the possibility that this was due to chance alone.
The Placement Outcome Study

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A. Placement Outcome Study Background

1. The Study Objectives

This study examined recidivism measures for a sample of 181 youth who exited out-of-home Placement programs between 2005 and 2007. Youth in the sample were served in 29 different programs. The objectives were to collect baseline recidivism data and to analyze the relationship between youth characteristics (gender, gang affiliation), youth performance (length of stay), successful completion (in this case, ‘successful completion’ data was only available for Probation completion status, not program exit status), and recidivism.

Defining Recidivism

Recidivism can be measured in different ways. Studies often look at subsequent Arrests. We took a more conservative approach and measured subsequent Convictions (in either the juvenile or adult system).

2. Study Methodology

In general, there were too few youth in any one program to draw any specific-program conclusions, except for R-House. We also lacked specific performance indicators for programs except length of stay (LOS), since they were not readily available. In addition ‘successful completion’ most often refers to exit status from probation, but is not consistently applied.

Outcome measures include rates of recidivism (total, adult, felony, violent, felony violent, and felony violent convictions and pending cases), and time to first conviction (excluding escapes and juvenile violations of probation).

We also examined the relationship between gang affiliation, length of stay, successful completion of probation, and recidivism variables. We examined these relationships for the 164 youth in the dataset for whom full information was available. We examine boys and girls separately, since the rates of recidivism differ considerably by gender.

We refrained from testing for statistical significance in bivariate or multivariate comparisons since the sample size was small, the population was diverse, and because we asked many questions of the same data. To subject all data to tests of statistical significance would have
required use of the Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons, so only highly significant relationships (~ \( p < 0.0001 \)) would be considered statistically significant.

We did use chi-square tests and Mann-Whitney U-tests on occasion to determine whether a specific comparison would have been interpreted as significant in isolation given the sample size. Finally, because demographic data was expected to be closely associated with outcome measures (such as gang-affiliation) obscuring potential treatment effects, we employed Principal Components analyses with Verimax rotation to better visualize the complex interrelationships between variables to help aid in the final interpretation of findings.
B. Results & Discussion

Total Dataset (Boys & Girls; n = 164)

There was no difference in average age between boys and girls entering Placement (Table 1). Boys tended to remain about 90 days longer in placement on average than girls (Table 2), with boys averaging 483 days, and girls 394 days in Placement. Boys tended to have a slightly higher probation completion rate than girls (understanding that ‘successful completion’ may lack consistency in definition), as shown in Table 3 (53.4% and 47.9% respectively). Recidivism rates were consistently higher for boys than for girls (Table 4). Boys had an adult conviction rate, more than twice that of girls, and almost 3 times the rate of felony convictions. The difference for violent crime was even more pronounced, with boys having a rate between 3.5 and perhaps up to 7 times the rate of girls for the most violent offenses, although the sample size was smaller for girls.

Table 1: Average age at start of Placement was the comparable for boys and girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>AVE. AGE AT PLACEMENT</th>
<th>Boys and Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Boys remained in Placement longer than girls an average of 90 days.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>AVE. PLACEMENT DURATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>456</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: Boys tended to succeed slightly more often in completing probation than girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>Failed</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Boys and Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent Boys: 37.9% 53.4% 8.6% 100.0%

Percent Girls: 37.5% 47.9% 14.6% 100.0%

Table 4: Comparison of recidivism rates for boys and girls after Placement exit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>RATE of ANY</th>
<th>RATE of ADULT</th>
<th>RATE of FELONY</th>
<th>RATE of VIOLENCE</th>
<th>RATE of FEFL VIOL &amp; PEND FEL VIOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Boy/Girl Ratio: 1.53 2.30 2.84 3.53 ~4.00 ~7.00

Probation outcome rates averaged 51.8% (Table 5), but tended to differ by ethnic group in the sample data. Patterns of subsequent recidivism also tended to differ by ethnic group in these data (Table 6), although some groups were poorly represented. We have noted a difference in violent re-offending between Hispanics and Caucasians in other programs evaluated in Sonoma County, attributed, at least in part to different levels of gang involvement. In this case we observed mixed results. Some types of recidivism were higher for Caucasians, others were higher for Hispanics.

Table 5: Ethnic composition and completion status for boys and girls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Probation Outcome</th>
<th>Amer. Indian</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>African Amer.</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(% Failed) 50.0% 40.0% 36.4% 44.4% 33.7% 37.8%

(% Completed) 25.0% 60.0% 45.5% 46.7% 56.8% 51.8%

(% Other) 25.0% 0.0% 18.2% 8.9% 9.5% 10.4%
Table 6: Rates of recidivism by ethnicity for boys and girls in the Placement sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ETHNICITY</th>
<th>RATE of ANY</th>
<th>RATE of ADULT</th>
<th>RATE of FELONY</th>
<th>RATE of VIOLENT</th>
<th>RATE of FEL VIOL</th>
<th>RATE of CONV &amp; PEND FEL VIOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amer. Indian</td>
<td>0.874</td>
<td>0.328</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.489</td>
<td>0.169</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Amer.</td>
<td>0.653</td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td>0.178</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>0.077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>0.536</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>0.551</td>
<td>0.218</td>
<td>0.102</td>
<td>0.100</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>0.568</td>
<td>0.229</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.053</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Rates of recidivism by probation outcome status.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBATION OUTCOME</th>
<th>RATE of ANY</th>
<th>RATE of ADULT</th>
<th>RATE of FELONY</th>
<th>RATE of VIOLENT</th>
<th>RATE of FEL VIOL</th>
<th>RATE of CONV &amp; PEND FEL VIOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>0.843</td>
<td>0.355</td>
<td>0.165</td>
<td>0.174</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.151</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.736</td>
<td>0.157</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>0.568</td>
<td>0.229</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.053</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Failed/Completed Ratio: 2.5  2.3  4.3  5.3  3.2  3.6

Individuals who complete probation successfully have lower rates of all recidivism metrics examined (Table 7). Unfortunately, we lack specific performance measures for programs. We should be cautious in our interpretation of “success” in this case, since it is really an indicator or performance while on probation, rather than on particular programs – and is not consistently applied. The difference is most apparent, however, for the rates of violence. Those who fail probation have recidivism rates 3 – 5 times higher for violent offences than those youth who succeed. Those who fail probation also tend to re-offend earlier than those who complete probation successfully (Table 8). Youth who did re-offend during the tracking period tended to do so on average more than 130 days sooner than those who completed probation.
Table 8: Time to first offense (excluding facility escapes and juvenile VOPs), and first offense or end of tracking period following placement exit for individuals committing an offense, by probation outcome.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBATION OUTCOME</th>
<th>TIME TO FIRST OFFENSE*</th>
<th>TIME TO FIRST OFFENSE* OR END OF TRACKING PERIOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAILED</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPLETED</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>347</strong></td>
<td><strong>598</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Resulting in a conviction other than for escape from facility or VOP.

Figure: Relationship between Placement duration and time to the first re-offense (excluding escapes and VOPs) is shown for the tracking period.
Data Subset (Boys; n = 116)

The obvious difference in rates of recidivism between boys and girls warranted a separate evaluation by gender. An examination of the recidivism rates of boys by probation outcome (Table 9) revealed that the general recidivism rate for those who failed was twice that of those who completed probation. Differences in rates of violent crime were dramatic, ranging from 3.6 to 8.9 times as many for those who failed probation. Time to the first re-offense for those who committed a new crime during the tracking period averaged about 100 days sooner for those who failed probation than for those who completed (Table 10). Once again we noted a difference in probation outcome completion rates between ethnic groups in the sample (Table 11).

Table 9: Rates of recidivism by probation outcome status for boys in Placement (n = 116).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBATION OUTCOME</th>
<th>RATE of ANY</th>
<th>RATE of ADULT</th>
<th>RATE of FELONY</th>
<th>RATE of VIOLENT</th>
<th>RATE of FEL VIOLENT</th>
<th>RATE of CONV &amp; PEND</th>
<th>FEL F VIOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAILED</td>
<td>0.852</td>
<td>0.417</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>0.217</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPLETED</td>
<td>0.408</td>
<td>0.181</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>1.049</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.096</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>0.632</td>
<td>0.274</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed/Completed Ratio:</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Time to first offense (excluding facility escapes and juvenile VOPs), and first offense or end of tracking period following placement exit for individuals committing an offense, by probation outcome for boys in placement (n = 116).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBATION OUTCOME</th>
<th>TIME TO FIRST OFFENSE*</th>
<th>TIME TO FIRST OFFENSE OR END OF TRACKING*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAILED</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPLETED</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>558</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Resulting in a conviction other than for escape from facility or VOP.
Table 11: Ethnic composition and completion status of boys (n = 116) in the placement sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBATION OUTCOME</th>
<th>American</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>African</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td></td>
<td>American</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAILED</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPLETED</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Success (%): 25% 50% 60% 51% 66% 58%

Data Subset (Girls; n = 48)

An examination of the recidivism rates of girls by probation outcome (Table 12) revealed that outcomes were quite different form boys in the sample. For girls who failed to successfully complete probation, general recidivism rates were 6.4 times higher than for those who did successfully complete probation. There were too few violent recidivism incidents to make generalizations about violent offending by probation outcome, except that the rate of violent recidivism appears low in this sample. Time to the first re-offense for those who committed a new crime during the tracking period averaged about 230 days sooner for those who failed probation than for those who completed (Table 13). Probation completion rates did not appear to differ between ethnic groups as much as in the boys, but this may simply be due to the small sample size (Table 14).

Table 12: Rates of recidivism by probation outcome status for girls in placement (n = 48).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBATION OUTCOME</th>
<th>RATE of ANY</th>
<th>RATE of ADULT</th>
<th>RATE of FELONY</th>
<th>RATE of VIOLENT</th>
<th>RATE of FEL VIOL</th>
<th>RATE of CONV &amp; PEND FEL VIOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAILED</td>
<td>0.823</td>
<td>0.204</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPLETED</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>0.290</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>0.412</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Failed/Completed Ratio: 6.430 2.795 1.541 + --- ---
Table 13: Time to first offense (excluding facility escapes and juvenile VOPs), and first offense or end of tracking period following placement exit for youth committing an offense, by probation outcome for girls in placement (n = 48).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBATION OUTCOME</th>
<th>TIME TO FIRST OFFENSE*</th>
<th>TIME TO FIRST OFFENSE* OR END OF TRACKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAILED</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPLETED</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>696</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Resulting in a conviction other than for escape from facility or VOP.

Table 14: Ethnic composition and completion status of girl (n = 48) in the Placement sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBATION OUTCOME</th>
<th>American Indian</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAILED</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPLETED</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Success (%): 50% 100% 50% 50% 57% 56%

Data Subset (Gang Affiliation Status; n = 164)

Gang affiliates represent 50% (n = 82) of the total population of 164 youth in the placement sample. There are major differences in gang affiliation rates by ethnic group in this sample (Table 15), ranging from 29% for Caucasians to 78% percent among Hispanics, the two most well-represented groups.

Table 15: Rates of gang affiliation status by ethnicity for boys and girls in placement (n = 164).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GANG AFFILIATION</th>
<th>American Indian</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not an Affiliate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang Affiliate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gang Affiliation (%) 75% 100% 73% 78% 29% 50%
Table 16: Rates of recidivism by gang status for boys and girls in placement (n = 164).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GANG AFFILIATION</th>
<th>RATE of Total</th>
<th>RATE of ADULT</th>
<th>RATE of FELONY</th>
<th>RATE of VIOLENT</th>
<th>RATE of FEL VIOL</th>
<th>RATE of FEL VIOL (CONV &amp; PEND)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not an Affiliate</td>
<td>0.327</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang Affiliate</td>
<td>0.808</td>
<td>0.296</td>
<td>0.134</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>0.568</td>
<td>0.229</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang/Not Ratio</td>
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Table 17: Time to first offense* by gang status for boys and girls in placement (n = 164).

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<th>TIME to FIRST RE-OFFENSE</th>
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<td>Grand Total</td>
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*Resulting in a conviction other than for escape from facility or VOP.

Program Duration vs. Recidivism

The correlations shown in the following illustrations are used to assess whether general relationships between time in Placement and select outcome measures are consistent with the desired program effects. These are simply associations, and no causality should be inferred. However, directionality and relative magnitude of these relationships may be helpful in guiding future analyses. As a reminder, this is difficult to analyze in the aggregate due to the diverse populations and different program objectives.

There appears to be no relationship between length of stay in Placement and time to first offense during the tracking period (Figure 1). Length of stay also does not appear to be related to general recidivism (Figure 2). Although not significant, the slope of the trend line suggests that longer lengths of stay may be associated with slightly higher recidivism in the adult system (Figure 3). This finding appears to become even more pronounced for felony recidivism (Figure 4) and Felony Violent recidivism (convictions and pending cases) shown in Figure 5.
Figure 1. In the aggregate (n = 164), there is no apparent relationship between time in Placement and time to first offense.
Figure 2. In the aggregate (n = 164), there is no apparent relationship between time in Placement and misdemeanor and felony recidivism.
Figure 3. In the aggregate (n = 164), there is no apparent relationship between time in Placement and recidivism in the adult system. Although the relationship is not significant, the slope of the line trends in the wrong direction to support a desired program effect.
Figure 4. In the aggregate (n = 164), there is no apparent relationship between time in Placement and felony recidivism. Although the relationship is not significant, the slope of the line trends in the wrong direction to support a desired program effect.
Figure 5. In the aggregate (n = 164), there is an apparent relationship between time in Placement and felony violent recidivism. The slope of the line trends in the wrong direction to support a desired program effect.
C. Summary of Findings

Sample Profile

One hundred and eighty one juvenile offenders were included in the dataset, although there were incomplete records for many offenders. 69% of offenders were male and 31% female. Whites and Hispanics comprised the largest racial groups in the sample with 56% and 29% respectively.

Offenders as young as 12 were identified, but most were between 14 – 16 years of age when entering their respective programs.

Twenty one programs were identified, but only 14% had more than 10 offenders from Sonoma County during the study period, and more than half of the programs had only one or two clients. R-House had the most clients (n = 62, 37.6%).

Successful Program Completion

53.5% of offenders had a successful outcome (on probation), 38.8% had an unsuccessful outcome (on probation), and the remainder was still active in a program or had been transferred.

Youth who successfully completed probation had lower rates of recidivism than those who failed to complete probation successfully. However, the definition of ‘successful completion’ was not always clear. Staff indicated that in most cases it referred to exit status from probation, but the lack of consistency in definition make it difficult to draw firm conclusions about this variable. Therefore, the measure of ‘successful completion’ must be treated with caution.

Recidivism

Almost half of the offenders 55 percent of youth in the Placement sample were convicted of a crime after exit from their respective programs. Approximately 20% subsequently were convicted of one or more felony offenses during the follow-up period. 25.5% of offenders were subsequently convicted of 3 or more misdemeanor or felony offenses during the tracking period.
There is a clear difference in rates of recidivism between boys and girls in the program. Boys had more overall recidivism, more felony recidivism, much more violent and serious violent (felony violent) recidivism than girls.

**Gang Affiliation**

50 percent of youth in the Placement sample were designated as having a gang affiliation. Youth with a gang affiliation had a general recidivism conviction rate that was 2.5 times higher than non-gang affiliates; felony violent convictions that were 3.1 times higher; and felony violent convictions plus pending cases that were 5.8 times higher than non-gang affiliates.

**Program Length of Stay**

49% of offenders stayed one year or less in programs, but 51% of offenders stayed between 1 year and almost 5 years in programs. Clients at the sex offender treatment program Unicorn tended to stay considerably longer than other programs, with a median duration of 34.8 months.

There was no relationship between time in program and reduced recidivism: youth with longer program stays did not have lower recidivism than youth with shorter stays. Moreover, there is some evidence that longer stays are associated with increased rates of felony violent convictions.
D. Placement Programs

Placement programs accessed by youth in the sample included:

- **Aldea, Inc.** Multi-service mental health agency serving emotionally disturbed children. (Level 12)
- **Acts for Children**: For youth ages 7-17 who have emotional and behavioral problems as well as youth with psychiatric disorders (Level 12)
- **Children’s Home of Stockton**: sex offender program for boys (Level 9)
- **Crossroads Treatment Center**: Conduct disorder and substance abuse, female only, (Level 12)
- **DN Associates**: (Level 14)
- **Elijah’s Sapphire**: Pregnant girls or with babies (Level 9)
- **Excelsior**: Girls emotionally and behaviorally troubled
- **Family Life Center**: (Level 12)
- **Fred Finch Youth Homes**: Emotionally and sexually abused (Level 14)
- **Glass Mountain**: Girls and boys (Level 12)
- **Grace Homes**: Pregnant girls or with children (Level 10)
- **Greenhouse Children’s Project**: Males 13-17 (Level 12)
- **Harrison Homes**: Males (Level 9)
Mary’s Help: Residential group home for troubled boys, ages 11-17 (Level 7)

Mathiot Group Homes: Sex offender (Level 12)

New Horizons Group Homes: (Level 11)

Oakendell: Sex offenders (Level 11)

Our Common Ground (formally Daytop): Substance abuse/addiction problems (Level 11)

Pacific Lodge Youth Services: Boys 13-17, psychological and emotional (Level 12)

R-House: Residential therapeutic community for chemically dependent boys and girls ages 14-18 (Level 12)

ROP Silver State Academy: At risk youth (Level 9)

ROP Sierra Ridge: Boys 14-17, at risk youth (Level 10)

Tahoe Turning Point: Boys 12-18, troubled youth (Level 10)

Teen Triumph: Male only (Level 12)

TLC: Boys and girls, range of emotional issues (Level 12)

Trinity Sacramento: Boys and girls emotionally disturbed and substance abuse

Trinity Ukiah: Boys and girls emotionally disturbed and substance abuse

Unicorn Youth Services: Sex offenders (Level 10)

Wilderness Recovery Center: Boys 14-18 substance abuse issues with a therapeutic wilderness component (Level 10)

Willow Creek Treatment Center (Victor Treatment Center): Emotionally disturbed youth (Level 14)

Note: the levels pertain to required levels of clinical and other services
APPENDIX I

SERVICE CONTINUUMS

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- Existing Program
- Recommended Program
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- **Existing Program**
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**Additional Recommended Resources:**

1. Enhanced parenting classes for adult inmates.
2. A family component as part of a Drug Court / Violations Court.
3. Written resource and referral materials (regarding community resources, school IEP process, etc.).
## Cognitive Change: Treatment

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*Aggression Replacement Therapy*
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<td>Pre-Placement Options</td>
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<td>Short-Stay Tracks</td>
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<td>Placement</td>
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<td>Transitional Age Youth</td>
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<td>Sierra</td>
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<td>Aftercare</td>
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<td>Camp – Younger Boys</td>
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<td>Camp</td>
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<td>Detention</td>
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<td>Youth &amp; Family Center (Vocational / Skills )</td>
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<td>Mentors</td>
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(Sonoma Juvenile Programs)
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<tr>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>TARGET POPULATION / CRIMINOGENIC NEEDS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>CAPACITY</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Circle Across Sonoma (Girl’s Circle) | Females | • Selected Prevention: delinquency prevention for girls  
• 8 weeks  
• Spanish and English | 400 Clients per year |
| Santa Rosa | Personal Attitudes / Values; Self control / Antisocial Behavior; Pro-criminogenic associates; Callous personality factors | | |
| Healdsburg | | | |
| Guerneville | | | |
| Sebastopol | | | |
| Sonoma | | | |
| Rohnert Park | | | |
| Petaluma | | | |
| Vocational Training Program | 16 – 18 year olds | • Job Preparation and Readiness  
• Daily support groups  
• As needed, part of Abraxis afterschool activities | 60 clients per year |
| Santa Rosa | Personal Attitudes / Values | | |
| Abraxis Charter School | | | |
| Project YES (Youth Empowerment Services) | Gang Conditions | • Indicated Prevention: intervention and suppression program for youth who are affiliated with and/or actively involved in gang activity  
• Weekly two-hour group sessions  
• 12 to 24 weeks  
• Monthly Parents Group  
• Family Advocate will work directly with parents to identify needs and obtain resources in each specific community  
• Spanish and English | 75 clients per year |
<p>| All County regions | Personal Attitudes / Values; Self control / Antisocial Behavior; Pro-criminogenic associates; Callous personality factors; Dysfunctional family relations | | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
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</table>
| Family Coaching                         | Families                                                                                                                                                       | • Indicated Prevention: family intervention  
• In-home, family coaching program  
• Approximately 15 hours per month  
• 3 – 4 months of service  
• English and Spanish                                                                 | 75 clients per year                              |
|                                        | Patterns of aggressive or assaultive behavior in families  
Self control / Antisocial behavior; Dysfunctional family relations; Substance abuse                     |                                                                                                |                         |
| Functional Family Therapy               | Families                                                                                                                                                       | • Outpatient family treatment  
• Family intervention program, offered in-home or at James Coffey Teen Shelter (Santa Rosa)  
• Approximately 8 hours per month  
• Spanish and English                                                                 | 55 families per year                             |
|                                        | All ages 18 and under  
Personal Attitudes / Values; Self Control / Antisocial Behavior; Pro-criminal associates; Callous personality factors; Dysfunctional family relations |                                                                                                |                         |
| 30 Day Alternative-to Detention Program | Immediate Consequence  
Personal Attitudes / Values; Self control / Antisocial behavior; Pro-criminal associates; Callous personality factors; dysfunctional family relations | • Indicated Prevention: Substances abuse intervention  
• Daily two-hour, after-school groups  
• 4 weeks  
• Parents group  
• Referral to Minor Consent MediCal Treatment, if needed  
• Spanish and English                                                                 | 100 clients per year                             |
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|                                        |                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                |                         |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men of Strength Club</td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>• Indicated Prevention: violence prevention</td>
<td>64 clients per year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santa Rosa Chops Teen</td>
<td>Personal Attitudes / Values; Self control / Antisocial behavior; Pro-criminal associates; Callous</td>
<td>• Bi-weekly two-hour, after-school groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Center</td>
<td>personality factors; dysfunctional family relations; Substance abuse</td>
<td>• 10 weeks</td>
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<pre><code>                                                                                 |                                                                           | • Parents group       |                   |
                                                                                 |                                                                           | • Spanish and English   |                   |
</code></pre>
<p>| Assertive Community         | Families                                                                                              | • Intensive Outpatient Family Treatment                                        | 35 families per     |
| Treatment (ACT)             | DSM-IV diagnosed disorders                                                                             | • In-home wraparound family services                                          | year              |
| All County regions          | Personal Attitudes / Values; Self control / Antisocial behavior; Pro-criminal associates; Callous      | • Intensive case management                                                   |                   |
| personality factors; dysfunctional family relations; Substance abuse          | • Medications monitoring                                                 |                   |
|                                                                           | • Crisis intervention                                                   |                   |
|                                                                           | • Spanish and English                                                 |                   |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kids Project: Thinking for Good: Moral Reconciliation</td>
<td>Personal Attitudes / Values; Self control / Antisocial Behavior; Pro-criminogenic associates; Callous personality factors; Substance Abuse</td>
<td>• Selected Prevention: Criminal Thinking and Morals Development</td>
<td>250 clients per year</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Weekly 2.5 hour groups</td>
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<td>• 10 weeks</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parent sessions</td>
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<td>• Spanish and English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kids Project: Families in Action</td>
<td>Families</td>
<td>• Selected Prevention: Asset development and Resiliency</td>
<td>150 clients per year</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Personal Attitudes / Values; Self Control / Antisocial Behavior; Callous personality factors; Dysfunctional family relations; Substance Abuse</td>
<td>• Weekly 2.5 hour groups</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• 6 weeks</td>
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<td>• Parallel and joined youth and parents groups</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Spanish and English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restorative Conferencing</td>
<td>Gang Conditions</td>
<td>• Indicated Prevention</td>
<td>67 clients per year</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Personal Attitudes / Values; Self control / Antisocial Behavior; Pro-criminogenic associates; Callous personality factors;</td>
<td>• Facilitated restorative justice approach</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Environmental mediation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Spanish and English</td>
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### DIVERSION OPTIONS (continued)

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<th>PROGRAM</th>
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<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Functional Family Therapy</td>
<td>Families</td>
<td>• Outpatient family treatment&lt;br&gt;• Family intervention program, offered in-home or at James Coffey Teen Shelter (Santa Rosa)&lt;br&gt;• Approximately 8 hours per month&lt;br&gt;• 3 – 4 months of service&lt;br&gt;• Spanish and English</td>
<td>55 families per year</td>
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<td>All ages 18 and under</td>
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<td>Personal Attitudes / Values; Self Control / Antisocial Behavior; Pro-criminal associates; Callous personality factors;</td>
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<td>All County regions</td>
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<td>Santa Rosa Coffey Teen Shelter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls Across Sonoma (Girls Circle)</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>• Selected Prevention: delinquency prevention services for girls&lt;br&gt;• Weekly two-hour groups&lt;br&gt;• 8 weeks&lt;br&gt;• Spanish and English</td>
<td>400 clients per year</td>
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