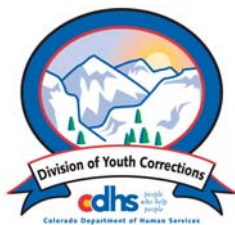


# Recidivism Evaluation of Committed Youth Discharged in Fiscal Year 2004-05



**Colorado Department of Human Services**  
**Office of Children, Youth and Family Services**  
**Division of Youth Corrections**

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*Working with Colorado Communities to Achieve Justice*

January 1, 2007

Any questions concerning the data presented in this report may be directed to the  
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**Colorado Department of Human Services  
Division of Youth Corrections**



January, 2007

<http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/dyc>

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Division of Youth Corrections (DYC) submits annual reports of recidivism outcomes on committed youth. The current report is submitted in response to three separate legislative mandates:

- 1) Footnote 78 of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2006-07 Long Bill (HB06-1385)
- 2) Section 19-2-411.5, C.R.S, the legislation authorizing the construction and operation of the Ridge View Youth Services Center
- 3) Footnote 78a of the FY 2006-07 Long Bill (HB06-1385)

The response to these separate legislative mandates is submitted in this one report because of the similar nature of the requested information.

### ***The Definition of Recidivism***

Recidivism is a measure that is often utilized in determining the level of effectiveness for both adult and juvenile justice agencies. In addition, recidivism rates can also communicate the expected level of public safety as offenders are released back into the community. A common goal across justice agencies is to reduce recidivism, so the measure is tracked closely and regularly. Generally speaking, the term “recidivism” refers to the re-occurrence of delinquent or criminal behavior. However, the more specific definition of recidivism utilized by each agency can vary greatly among states and even among justice agencies within a single state. Prior to 1999, the state of Colorado did not have a standardized definition of recidivism used across justice agencies; then, in response to recommendations resulting from a Legislative audit of the criminal justice system, common definitions were established in FY 1999-00. The definitions that were adopted and utilized by DYC for all reports subsequent to the legislative audit are as follows:

**Pre-Discharge Recidivism:** A filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense that occurred prior to discharge from DYC.

**Post-Discharge Recidivism:** A filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense that occurred within one year following discharge from DYC.

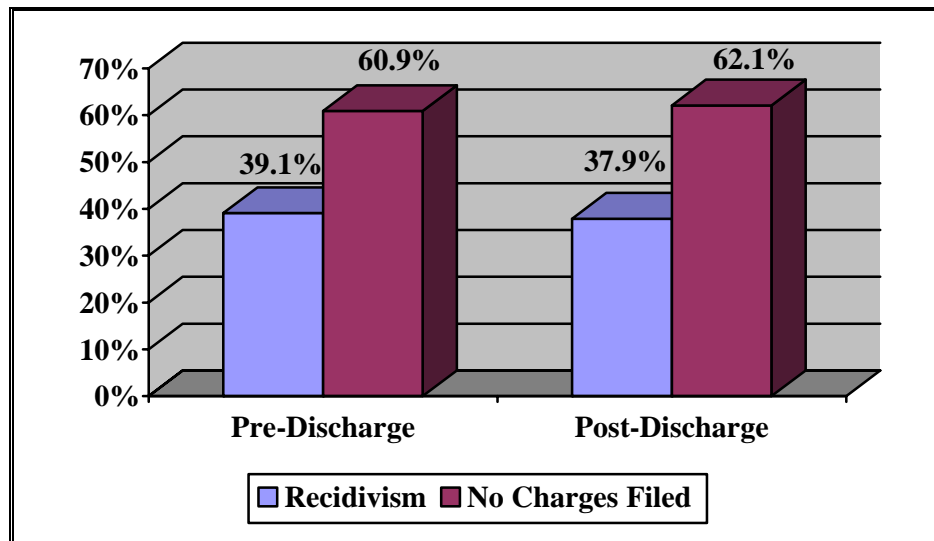
The findings contained in this report are based on an evaluation of youth discharged during the State of Colorado's Fiscal Year (FY) 2004-05. The term 'pre-discharge' is used to identify new offenses filed during the period a youth is on commitment and parole status. For purposes of this report, the period of commitment includes residential out-of-home placement. After a youth leaves residential placement, the period of parole begins. 'Post-discharge' recidivism refers to filings for new felony or misdemeanor offenses that occurred up to one year following discharge from the Division.

Like all recidivism studies, DYC's recidivism study is retrospective in nature. Therefore, each year the recidivism study examines and reports on the recidivism rates of youth that discharged from DYC in the Fiscal Year two years prior. For the current study, the census includes all youth that discharged in FY 2004-05. Because several youth discharged on the last day of FY 2004-05 (June 30, 2005), DYC had to wait until June 30, 2006, to collect recidivism data. This allows each discharged youth a one-year follow-up period. For these reasons, recidivism reports are lagged or retrospective in nature.

The census for this year's report includes 831 youth discharged from DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005 (State FY 2004-2005). The current report analyzes pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates using a number of demographic and risk factors (for re-offending) for the entire FY 2004-05 discharge census, as well as for a sub-group of youth who were placed at the Ridge View facility during their commitment stay (N=298).

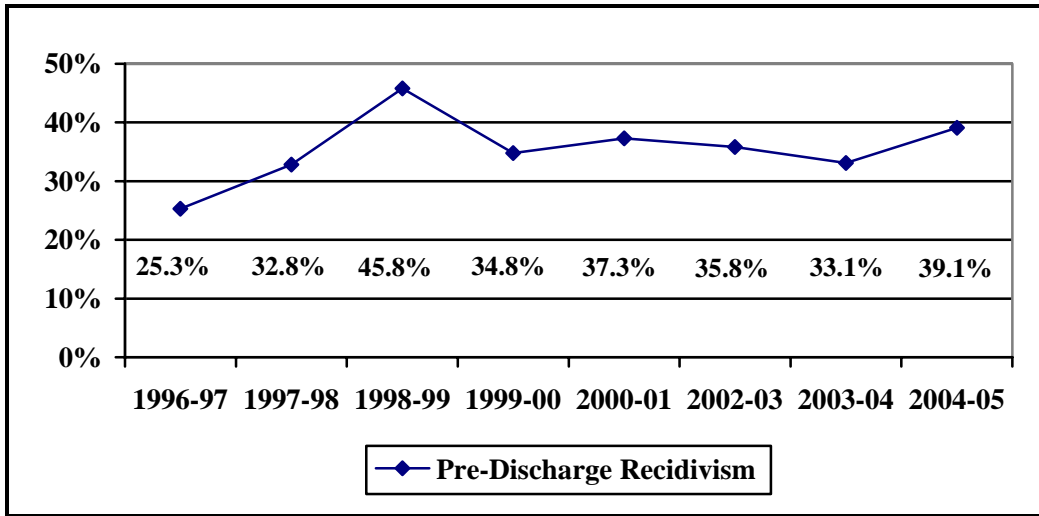
## **Recidivism Results**

- Thirty-nine percent (39.1%) of youth discharged in FY 2004-05 received a new felony or misdemeanor filing (i.e., recidivated) prior to discharge.
- Forty-two percent (41.6%) of pre-discharge filings were for offenses that occurred while youth were on parole status. This is down from 77.1% in the previously discharged cohort. This decrease is most likely a product of more complete and accurate data, which credits technological advances<sup>1</sup>. In previous studies, when offense date was not available, the filing date was used as the default. In that scenario, the number of charges filed while on parole is artificially inflated. It is also possible that the average length of stay (LOS) on parole has impacted this statistic. All 831 youth in this census were required to serve at least 6 months of parole under mandatory parole legislation. Prior cohorts of discharges, however, were subject to longer mandatory parole periods, ranging from 9 to 12 months. The average LOS on parole for this census was 7.1 months. This is almost one full month shorter than last year's parole LOS of 8.0 months. The less time spent in the community on parole, the less likely youth are to pick up a new filing while on parole.
- Thirty-eight percent (37.9%) of youth discharged in FY 2004-05 received a new felony or misdemeanor filing (i.e., recidivated) within one year of discharge from DYC.

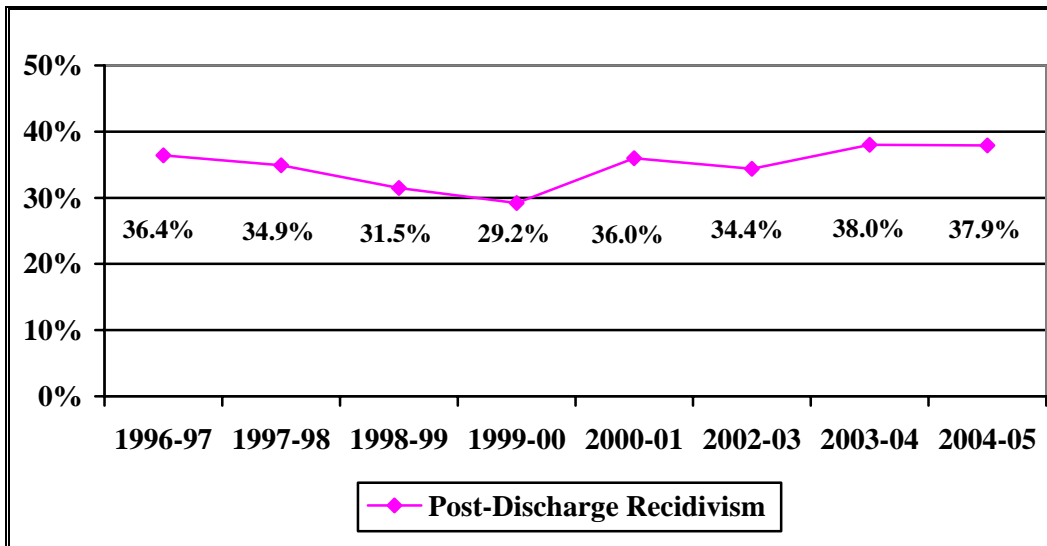


<sup>1</sup> See the “Study Methodology” section for a more detailed explanation of technological advances.

- Trend data show that pre-discharge recidivism rates are at their highest in five years, although improved reporting and validation techniques could explain this increase.



- Post-discharge recidivism rates have remained between 34.4% and 38.0% for the past four years.



- Having a job or attending school at the time of discharge was positively related to a youth's recidivism rate. Youth who were employed or enrolled in school at the time of discharge were significantly less likely to have received a new filing within one year of discharge (35.6%) than youth who were not employed or enrolled (44.2%).

- Twenty-three percent (23.1%) of new filings that occurred pre-discharge were for property felony charges, and 25.7% of post-discharge filings were for property felony offenses.
- The majority of youth who received new filings during commitment, or within one year of commitment discharge, received filings on multiple charges. Although more than half were found guilty on their *most serious* charge (64.6% pre-discharge and 50.5% post-discharge), 86.5% of youth with *any* pre-discharge filings were found guilty for at least one charge and 80.2% of youth with *any* post-discharge filing were found guilty of at least one offense.
- Males were almost twice as likely to receive a post-discharge filing for a new offense (40.1%) than females (20.7%). However, risk (of re-offending) analysis of males compared to females showed differing results. The Colorado Young Offender-Level of Supervision Inventory (CYO-LSI) risk assessment results show that females scored higher on risk to re-offend at time of commitment, however this percentage difference was not statistically significant.
- Commitment classification is determined for both males and females during the assessment process when a youth is first committed to the Division. Commitment classification is decided using the score calculated by the objective Commitment Classification Instrument (CCI), one of the many assessment instruments used at the time of commitment. This score is a composite score based on factors such as the number of prior adjudications, offense type, prior placement history, and age at first adjudication. The CCI results show that males had a higher need to be in secure placements, but once again, these differences were not significant. Trend data show the re-offending rates of females committed to DYC have been consistently lower than the re-offending rates of males.
- The highest rates of re-offending post-discharge were seen in the Northeast Region (44.5%); and the highest rates of re-offending pre-discharge were seen in the Southern Region (43.1%). Risk analysis (CYO-LSI) by DYC management region shows that youth in the Southern and Northeast Regions scored higher on the risk of re-offending assessment instrument than youth in other regions, and youth in the Western Region had more youth scoring low on the risk scale.

- The number of escapes was significantly higher for youth who recidivated (pre-discharge and post-discharge) than for youth who did not receive a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense pre- or post-discharge.
- Youth who did not have any recommitments during residential placement or parole were significantly less likely to have a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense prior to discharge than youth that did get recommitted.
- Youth who obtained a poor or unsatisfactory parole adjustment rating were significantly more likely to recidivate within one year following discharge (45.6%) than youth with a satisfactory to excellent parole adjustment rating (34.4%).
- Youth who had more prior contacts with the juvenile justice system (prior detention admissions and prior adjudications) were more likely to recidivate prior to discharge than youth with no prior contacts.
- Age at first adjudication was significantly lower for youth who committed a post-discharge recidivist act, than for youth that did not receive a new filing within the one-year follow up period.
- More secure placement classifications on the CCI were also highly correlated with a youth having a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense post-discharge. Pre-discharge filings were not significantly different by commitment classification as assessed at the time of commitment.
- Receiving a pre-discharge filing was significantly related to re-offending after discharge from NYC. Almost half (44.6%) of the youth who received a new filing prior to discharge received a filing within one year after discharge also, compared with only 33.6% of youth that did not recidivate prior to discharge. Although it is interesting that over half (55.4%) of the youth who showed an inclination towards future offending (pre-discharge recidivism) did not re-offend following discharge from the Division.
- Survival analysis shows that 81.0% of youth in the census were most likely to receive their first post-discharge offense within the first 8 months following discharge. The rate of recidivism for this population increased more rapidly (when compared to a constant rate) during the first 3 months following discharge. After the 3-month mark,



the actual recidivism rate remained lower than the constant rate, with the exception of month seven.

- Advances in research methodology resulted in less missing data for this year's study. DYC is confident that with more complete data, the analyses yield more accurate results.

### ***Ridge View Youth Services Center***

There were some notable differences in males that were placed in the Ridge View program (N=298) when compared with other DYC males discharged during FY 2004-05 (N=441).

- There were higher rates of minority populations served at Ridge View (65.1%) when compared with all other males discharged from DYC during the same time period (43.1%).
- Youth placed at Ridge View were more likely to have been committed for a property offense (54.2%) than other DYC males (37.3%). Juvenile justice research has shown that property offenders recidivate at higher rates than youth who commit person offenses.
- The Ridge View group had more detention admissions and prior adjudications than the comparison group (i.e., more prior contacts with the juvenile justice system).
- All of these factors suggest that youth in the Ridge View group should be at a higher risk for recidivism than youth in the comparison group, which is comprised of all other males discharged from DYC during FY 2004-05. No statistically significant differences between the two groups were found for pre- or post-discharge recidivism rates.
- The pre-discharge recidivism rate for the Ridge View group was 36.6% (compared to 42.4% for other DYC males).
- The post-discharge recidivism rate for the Ridge View group was 42.6% (compared to 38.3% for other DYC males).
- Youth that successfully completed the Ridge View program did have significantly lower recidivism rates than youth who did not graduate from the program.

- Survival analysis shows that 79.5% of youth in the Ridge View group were most likely to receive their first post-discharge offense within the first 9 months following discharge. Recidivism rates for this group increased at a higher pace (when compared to a constant rate) during the first 2 months following discharge. After the 2-month mark, the growth rate remained lower than the constant rate.

### ***Substance Abuse Treatment and Recidivism***

- At this time the Division is only able to provide limited data related to a recidivism rate comparison. There are several methodological factors that inhibit the Division from providing recidivism rates for the FY 2004-05 discharge cohort, of youth that did or did not receive drug and alcohol treatment.
- Current methodological limitations include the following: the retrospective nature of the recidivism measure, limited verifiable substance abuse data from FY 2004-05 and prior, difficulty producing a control or comparison group, and the spectrum of treatment level youth served by DYC.
- Interestingly, youth that received substance abuse treatment had equal rates of pre- and post-discharge recidivism (42.4%).
- In future responses to this footnote the Division will compare the recidivism rates of treatment level youth (FY 2005-06 and FY 2006-07 discharges) that received at least 6 months of substance abuse services, and those youth that did not.

## DYC Recidivism Section Results

	Pre-Discharge	Post-Discharge	Location
<b>Overall Recidivism Rate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 39.1%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 37.9%</li> </ul>	Figure 1,2,3 and Table 18
<b>Most Serious Felony Filing Type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (14.8%)</li> <li>• Property: (23.1%)</li> <li>• Drug: (6.4%)</li> <li>• Weapon: (6.8%)</li> <li>• Other: (18.4%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (9.6%)</li> <li>• Property: (25.7%)</li> <li>• Drug: (13.3%)</li> <li>• Weapon: (13.3%)</li> <li>• Other: (12.7%)</li> </ul>	Table 1
<b>Most Serious Misdemeanor Filing Type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (13.2%)</li> <li>• Property: (6.8%)</li> <li>• Drug: (0.0%)</li> <li>• Weapon: (0.6%)</li> <li>• Other: (9.9%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (8.6%)</li> <li>• Property: (4.8%)</li> <li>• Drug: (0.3%)</li> <li>• Weapon: (1.6%)</li> <li>• Other: (10.1%)</li> </ul>	Table 1
<b>Most Serious Felony Filing Class</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• F1: (0.0%)</li> <li>• F2: (0.0%)</li> <li>• F3: (5.2%)</li> <li>• F4: (21.2%)</li> <li>• F5: (22.2%)</li> <li>• F6: (20.9%)</li> <li>• F-Unclass: (0.0%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• F1: (0.0%)</li> <li>• F2: (0.3%)</li> <li>• F3: (1.6%)</li> <li>• F4: (16.8%)</li> <li>• F5: (23.8%)</li> <li>• F6: (31.7%)</li> <li>• F-Unclass: (0.3%)</li> </ul>	Table 2
<b>Most Serious Misdemeanor Filing Class</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M1: (5.5%)</li> <li>• M2: (4.0%)</li> <li>• M3: (18.8%)</li> <li>• M-Unclass: (2.2%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M1: (5.4%)</li> <li>• M2: (6.0%)</li> <li>• M3: (11.7%)</li> <li>• M-Unclass: (2.2%)</li> </ul>	Table 2
<b>Finding For Any Felony or Misdemeanor Filing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guilty: (86.5%)</li> <li>• No Finding of Guilt: (11.1%)</li> <li>• Deferred: (1.2%)</li> <li>• Other: (1.2%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guilty: (80.2%)</li> <li>• No Finding of Guilt: (11.2%)</li> <li>• Deferred: (1.0%)</li> <li>• Other: (7.6%)</li> </ul>	Table 3
<b>Gender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male: (40.1%)</li> <li>• Female: (31.5%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male: (40.1%)</li> <li>• Female: (20.7%)</li> </ul>	Table 4
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-American: (41.8%)</li> <li>• Hispanic: (44.1%)</li> <li>• White: (35.4%)</li> <li>• Other: (23.8%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-American: (44.0%)</li> <li>• Hispanic: (40.2%)</li> <li>• White: (34.7%)</li> <li>• Other: (28.6%)</li> </ul>	Table 5
<b>DYC Management Region</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central: (40.7%)</li> <li>• Northeast: (37.2%)</li> <li>• Southern: (43.1%)</li> <li>• Western: (32.2%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central: (35.0%)</li> <li>• Northeast: (44.5%)</li> <li>• Southern: (39.9%)</li> <li>• Western: (3.9%)</li> </ul>	Table 6
<b>Sentence Type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory: (45.3%)</li> <li>• Non-Mandatory: (38.1%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory: (37.6%)</li> <li>• Non-Mandatory: (38.0%)</li> </ul>	Page 24-25

\* Indicates Significant Finding

**DYC Recidivism Section Results (Continued)**

	<b>Pre-Discharge</b>	<b>Post-Discharge</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>Original Commitment Offense</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (38.1%)</li> <li>• Property: (39.7%)</li> <li>• Drug: (33.3%)</li> <li>• Weapon: (23.8%)</li> <li>• Other: (52.0%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (35.9%)</li> <li>• Property: (40.6%)</li> <li>• Drug: (36.5%)</li> <li>• Weapon: (52.4%)</li> <li>• Other: (32.0%)</li> </ul>	Table 7
<b>Number of Recommitments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (25.9%)</li> <li>• One: (75.7%) *</li> <li>• Two or More: (88.9%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (35.7%)</li> <li>• One: (42.8%) *</li> <li>• Two or More: (50.0%)</li> </ul>	Table 8
<b>Type of Pre-Discharge Recidivism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential Commitment Only: (44.9%)</li> <li>• On Parole Only: (41.6%)</li> <li>• Residential Commitment &amp; On Parole: (13.5%)</li> </ul>	N/A	Table 9
<b>Location of Recidivism On Parole (Pre-Discharge)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a DYC facility: (12.8%)</li> <li>• Not in DYC facility: (82.7%)</li> <li>• Both: (4.5%)</li> </ul>	N/A	Table 10
<b>Parole Adjustment at Discharge</b>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor/Unsatisfactory: (45.6%)</li> <li>• Satisfactory/Excellent: (34.4%)</li> <li>• Unknown: (25.9%) *</li> <li>• No Parole: (42.1%)</li> </ul>	Table 11
<b>Job/School Status at Discharge</b>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not Employed or Attending School: (44.2%) *</li> <li>• Employed or in School at Time of Discharge: (35.6%)</li> </ul>	Table 12
<b>Number of Detention Admissions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero to Two: (30.8%)</li> <li>• Three or More: (41.4%) *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero to Two: (24.7%)</li> <li>• Three or More: (41.6%) *</li> </ul>	Table 13
<b>Number of Prior Adjudications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (34.7%)</li> <li>• One: (39.3%)</li> <li>• Two or more: (41.6%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (29.8%)</li> <li>• One: (39.7%) *</li> <li>• Two or more: (41.6%)</li> </ul>	Table 14
<b>Age at First Adjudication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14.0 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13.9 years *</li> </ul>	Figure 11
<b>Commitment Classification (CCI)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community: (30.9%)</li> <li>• Staff-Secure: (39.7%) *</li> <li>• Secure: (45.4%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community: (29.0%)</li> <li>• Staff-Secure: (40.3%) *</li> <li>• Secure: (41.9%)</li> </ul>	Table 15
<b>Assessed Risk Score (CYO-LSI)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low: (33.6%)</li> <li>• Medium: (42.6%)</li> <li>• High: (40.0%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low: (34.0%)</li> <li>• Medium: (43.1%) *</li> <li>• High: (33.5%)</li> </ul>	Table 16

\* Indicates Significant Finding

## Ridge View Section Results

	Ridge View	Other DYC Males	Location
<b>Pre-Discharge Recidivism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36.6%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 42.4%</li> </ul>	Table 20
<b>Post-Discharge Recidivism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 42.6%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 38.3%</li> </ul>	Table 20
<b>Ethnicity *</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-American: (20.8%)</li> <li>• Hispanic: (40.6%)</li> <li>• White: (34.9%)</li> <li>• Other: (3.7%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-American: (13.4%)</li> <li>• Hispanic: (27.9%)</li> <li>• White: (56.9%)</li> <li>• Other: (1.8%)</li> </ul>	Table 18
<b>Commitment Offense *</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (27.1%)</li> <li>• Property: (54.2%)</li> <li>• Other: (18.7%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (47.4%)</li> <li>• Property: (37.3%)</li> <li>• Other: (15.3%)</li> </ul>	Figure 16
<b>Commitment Classification (CCI) *</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community: (28.3%)</li> <li>• Staff-Secure: (49.5%)</li> <li>• Secure: (22.2%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community: (32.2%)</li> <li>• Staff-Secure: (38.1%)</li> <li>• Secure: (29.7%)</li> </ul>	Figure 17
<b>Number of Prior Adjudications *</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (4.8 %)</li> <li>• One: (25.0%)</li> <li>• Two or more: (70.2%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (13.0%)</li> <li>• One: (35.1%)</li> <li>• Two or more: (51.9%)</li> </ul>	Figure 18
<b>Number of Detention Admissions *</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero to Two: (16.8%)</li> <li>• Three or More: (83.2%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero to Two: (27.2%)</li> <li>• Three or More: (72.8%)</li> </ul>	Figure 19
<b>DYC Management Region and Pre-Discharge Recidivism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central: (34.8%)</li> <li>• Northeast: (34.8%)</li> <li>• Southern: (40.3%)</li> <li>• Western: (39.5%)</li> </ul>	N/A	Table 21
<b>DYC Management Region and Post-Discharge Recidivism *</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central: (35.6%)</li> <li>• Northeast: (53.0%)</li> <li>• Southern: (53.2%)</li> <li>• Western: (31.6%)</li> </ul>	N/A	Table 21
<b>Parole Adjustment at Discharge and Post-Discharge Recidivism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor/Unsatisfactory: (50.6%)</li> <li>• Satisfactory/Excellent: (39.7%)</li> <li>• Unknown: (28.6%)</li> <li>• No Parole: (41.7%)</li> </ul>	N/A	Table 22
<b>Job/School Status at Discharge and Post-Discharge Recidivism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not Employed or Attending School: (43.6%)</li> <li>• Employed or in School at Time of Discharge: (41.3%)</li> </ul>	N/A	Table 23
<b>Graduation Status and Pre-Discharge Recidivism *</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated: (30.7%)</li> <li>• Did not Graduate: (50.6%)</li> </ul>	N/A	Table 24
<b>Graduation Status and Post-Discharge Recidivism *</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated: (37.1%)</li> <li>• Did not Graduate: (56.3%)</li> </ul>	N/A	Table 24

\* Indicates Significant Finding



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# INTRODUCTION

The Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Corrections (DYC), prepares an annual recidivism report on committed youth. The current report is submitted in response to three separate Legislative mandates:

- 1) Footnote 78 of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2006-07 Long Bill (HB06-1385)
- 2) Section 19-2-411.5, C.R.S, the legislation authorizing the construction and operation of the Ridge View Youth Services Center
- 3) Footnote 78a of the FY 2006-07 Long Bill (HB06-1385)

The current report, along with the Division's annual Management Reference Manual (MRM), are submitted in response to Footnote 78.

Footnote 78 reads:

*The Division is requested to continue its efforts to provide outcome data on the effectiveness of its programs. The Division is requested to provide to the Joint Budget Committee, by January 1 of each year, an evaluation of Division placements, community placements, and nonresidential placements. The evaluation should include, but not be limited to, the number of juveniles served, length of stay, and recidivism data per placement.*

This report is also intended to serve as DYC's annual response to the legislation authorizing the construction and operation of the Ridge View Youth Services Center (RVYSC) facility<sup>2</sup>. This legislation specifies that:

*Beginning twelve months after the juvenile facility constructed pursuant to this section begins operations, and annually thereafter, the Division of Youth Corrections shall calculate the recidivism rate for juveniles who complete the program offered by the juvenile facility. In calculating the recidivism rate, the division shall include any juvenile who commits a criminal offense, either as a juvenile or as an adult, within three years after leaving the facility. The Division shall report the recidivism rate to the general assembly.*

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<sup>2</sup> Section 19-2-411.5, C.R.S.

In addition, this report is intended to serve as NYC's response to Footnote 78a.

Footnote 78a reads:

*It is the intent of the General Assembly that the Department provide a report to the Joint Budget Committee on November 1, 2006 which tracks and compares recidivism rates between those juveniles receiving drug and alcohol treatment and those not receiving treatment, while sentenced to commitment.*

Given the similarity of the information requested in these separate legislative mandates, the Division is submitting this single report in response to the Legislative directives.

The Division's annual recidivism report has not traditionally been intended to report on outcomes for individual programs or facilities; however, the Ridge View Youth Services Center (RVYSC) is a unique treatment option for eligible youth. Most youth committed to NYC receive multiple treatment interventions, both residential and non-residential, throughout their commitment. Therefore, collection of recidivism outcomes, while useful for understanding the rate of re-offending during the commitment period and monitoring re-offending behaviors by specific sub-populations, is not generally useful in measuring the performance of individual programs. However, the Ridge View program is intended as a primary placement option for youth, and youth placed in the Ridge View Youth Services Center tend to have longer lengths of stay in their initial placement and are often paroled directly from Ridge View to the community. Since the youth that are placed in the Ridge View facility tend to have fewer alternative treatment programs that could influence re-offending behaviors, it is appropriate to report outcome measures for this facility that may not be as meaningful if the analyses were conducted for other NYC treatment programs.

Recidivism is used as an overall outcome measure for NYC commitment programs. This report is intended to evaluate recidivism results for all youth discharged from NYC during FY 2004-05. The results of this report are divided into three sections:

- 1) NYC Recidivism Outcomes provides recidivism outcomes based on new filings for charges that occurred prior to discharge from NYC (pre-discharge recidivism) as well as recidivism results based on new filings for felony or

misdemeanor offenses that occur within one year following discharge from a  
DYC commitment sentence (post-discharge recidivism);

2) RYVSC Recidivism Outcomes examines pre- and post-discharge recidivism rates for youth in the census who were eligible for and placed at Ridge View Youth Services Center during their commitment. To ensure consistency in how the Division reports recidivism data, this report is prepared using the standardized definitions (a one-year follow-up period for the Ridge View group); and

3) Substance Abuse Treatment and Recidivism provides a response to Footnote 78a. A discussion regarding the current methodological limitations in providing outcome data for youth discharged in FY 2004-05 is presented, as well as a plan to answer the Footnote for the FY 2005-06 and FY 2006-07 cohorts of DYC discharges.

Two years ago the Division modified the sampling methodology for its annual recidivism report. This was intended to provide timelier reporting of recidivism data, and to eventually allow for a more accurate evaluation of recidivism trend data over time. This is the third report to include both pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates from the same client census.

## **THE RECIDIVISM MEASURE**

Like all recidivism studies, DYC's recidivism study is retrospective in nature. Therefore, each year the recidivism study examines and reports on the recidivism rates of youth that discharged from DYC in the Fiscal Year two years prior. For the current study, the census includes all youth that discharged in FY 2004-05. Because several youth discharged on the last day of FY 2004-05 (June 30, 2005), DYC had to wait until June 30, 2006, to collect recidivism data. This allows each discharged youth, a one-year follow-up period. For these reasons, recidivism reports are lagged or retrospective in nature.

Before providing the results of this year's study, it is important to outline the history surrounding the use of recidivism as an outcome measure in Colorado<sup>3</sup>.

### ***Establishment of a Common Definition in Colorado***

In Colorado, efforts to establish a common definition of recidivism dates back to the early 1990's. In FY 1990-91, the Office of the State Auditor reviewed various components of Colorado's juvenile justice system. Among numerous other recommendations, the State Auditor's Office recommended to the Legislature that a common definition of recidivism be established. This recommendation eventually resulted in a footnote to the Long Bill that mandated DYC, the Judicial Department, the Division of Criminal Justice, and the Division of Child Welfare to develop a common definition of recidivism.

In 1998, the Office of the State Auditor revisited the standardized definition of recidivism. In its review of the juvenile probation system, the Office of the State Auditor recommended that the definition of recidivism be less restrictive and incorporate juvenile, as well as adult offenders. Based on this recommendation, the Legislature approved a footnote that required the Judicial Branch to consult with the Departments of Human Services, Public Safety, and Corrections to consider a newly revised and common definition of recidivism. A multi-agency committee was formed and a collaborative report was submitted in June 1999. In this report, a two-tiered definition of recidivism was proposed. The first tier focuses on re-offending during supervision (pre-discharge recidivism), while the second tier looks at the rates of re-offending once an individual successfully completes the term of his or her sentence (post-discharge recidivism). The Division of Youth Corrections adopted these definitions of recidivism as outlined by the multi-agency committee. The definitions used in this report are as follows:

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<sup>3</sup> See the Appendix for a discussion on recidivism in other states across the nation.

**Pre-Discharge Recidivism:** A filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense that occurred prior to discharge from the Division of Youth Corrections.

**Post-Discharge Recidivism:** A filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense that occurred within one year following discharge from the Division of Youth Corrections.

This report is the eighth to apply the above definition of recidivism to committed youth served by the Division of Youth Corrections. Keep in mind that while these recidivism definitions may be somewhat standardized for the State of Colorado, Colorado is currently the only state that uses District Attorney filings as a measure of recidivism<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, it is not possible to compare recidivism rates from DYC to those of other states' juvenile justice agencies.

### ***Varied Interpretations: Colorado's Definition of Recidivism***

Although a multi-agency committee was formed and a collective decision was made regarding the adoption of a common definition in Colorado, measures utilized across justice agencies are still not equivalent or comparable. While it was decided that recidivism reporting would use a two-tiered approach and the system reaction measured would be "new filing", over time agencies have changed their definitions to meet their agency's operational goals. In fact, the three Colorado justice agencies (listed below) that regularly report on juvenile recidivism rates, all measure different constructs.

- 1) Division of Youth Corrections (DYC)
- 2) Division of Probation Services (DPS)
- 3) Department of Correction's (DOC) Youthful Offender System (YOS)

DYC reports on new filings for both pre- and post-discharge recidivism. DPS reports on adjudications, convictions, or technical violations for pre-release recidivism, and reports

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<sup>4</sup> Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, DJJ Research Quarterly, Volume III, April 2005.

on new filings for post-release recidivism<sup>5</sup>. DOC only reports post-discharge recidivism and measures recidivism as a “return to DOC for either new criminal activity or a technical violation of parole, probation, or non-department community placement”<sup>6</sup>. In addition, DPS and DOC do not track post-discharge/release recidivism rates for youth who were unsuccessful in the pre-discharge stage, while DYC tracks all discharged youth, regardless of pre-discharge “success”. In the absence of complete uniformity across Colorado justice agencies, cautious interpretation of recidivism rates is necessary.

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<sup>5</sup> Division of Probation Services, Colorado Judicial Branch, October 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Colorado Department of Corrections, Office of Planning and Analysis, May 2006.

## STUDY METHODOLOGY

The source of data is critical for accurately determining recidivism rates. Since recidivism is defined for both the pre-discharge and post-discharge groups as “a filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense,” the Division relied upon the Judicial Branch’s Management Information System<sup>7</sup> for determining whether a recidivist act had occurred. Only those filings (felony and misdemeanor) entered into the Judicial data system are included in these recidivism measures<sup>8</sup>. Traffic, municipal, status, and petty offenses are excluded from this study.

At DYC’s request, the Colorado Judicial Department prepared a data file containing all filings that occurred between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2006, for all persons under 25 years of age. Filing data is requested as early as July 1, 2001 (three years prior to the first possible discharges) for a particular reason—it allows for a 36-month length of stay (LOS), twice as long as the average LOS, for youth discharged on July 1, 2004, the first day of the discharge period studied. DYC requests filing data up through June 30, 2006, as this allows for youth discharged on June 30, 2005, the last day of the discharge period studied, a one-year follow-up period.

The data received from Judicial contained over 800,000 filings. These filings are then processed in an effort to match the 800,778 filings to the 831 DYC committed youth who discharged in FY 2004-05. The process of matching files involves a high level match of youths’ last name, first name, and two of the three birth date elements. These matches are further examined for evidence of accurate matches (review of the full name listed by both agencies, plus further checks against the Lexis-Nexis Courtlink system for aliases, etc.). Any method to match files is limited by data entry errors, spelling differences, and

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<sup>7</sup> The filing data received from the Judicial Branch comes from the Integrated Colorado Online Network (ICON) database accessed through ECLIPSE, the interface software used with ICON.

<sup>8</sup> Adult misdemeanor filings processed by Denver County Court are not captured by the Judicial data system, and therefore are not included in this study. However, Denver county felony filings are captured, because they are processed by Denver District Court, which is part of the Judicial on-line data system. Denver District Court also processes 100% of Denver county juvenile misdemeanor filings. The only filings missing from this report are those from Denver county that were originally filed as *adult* misdemeanor cases.

multiple aliases. Efforts are made to minimize errors through meticulous spot-checking and manual reviews of cases in the Lexis-Nexis Courtlink system. In the past, due to the highly technical matching process and the complicated algorithm used, DYC relied on programmers to match youth in the DYC data with youth in the Judicial filing data. However, for the past two years, DYC has performed the match in-house, which the Division believes has increased the probability of accurate matches.

This is the first year that Lexis-Nexis Courtlink has been used in the data verification and matching process. Previously, ICON was utilized for these purposes. Because Lexis-Nexis is a highly advanced and comprehensive database, DYC is confident that the accuracy of data used within this report has increased as a result of this change. As more complete data is readily available, this reduces the use of default data.

The matched file was used to evaluate pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates on youth discharged from the Division between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005. In the past, the Division has reported pre-discharge recidivism from a cohort of newly committed youth. Increases in lengths of stay over the years produced higher percentages of youth in the new commitment cohorts that were still not discharged at the time recidivism reports were prepared. To alleviate some of these data issues, and also to provide timelier outcome data to assist with internal management decisions, the Division changed the sampling methodology two years ago. The current report uses the same methodology as the 2004 and 2005 report, and provides pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism results for the FY 2004-05 discharge census<sup>9</sup>.

## **DYC RECIDIVISM RATES FOR YOUTH DISCHARGED**

The findings contained in this report are based on an evaluation of youth discharged during the State of Colorado's Fiscal Year (FY) 2004-05. The term 'pre-discharge' is used to identify new offenses filed during the period a youth is on commitment status.

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<sup>9</sup> To focus on more current data, recidivism rates for youth discharged in FY 2001-02 have not been analyzed and are not included in this or past reports.



For purposes of this report, the period of commitment includes both residential out-of-home placement and parole. After a youth leaves residential placement, the period of parole begins. 'Post-discharge' recidivism refers to filings for new felony or misdemeanor offenses that occurred up to one year following discharge from the Division.

**Pre-Discharge Recidivism:** A filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense that occurred prior to discharge from the Division of Youth Corrections.

**Post-Discharge Recidivism:** A filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense that occurred within one year following discharge from the Division of Youth Corrections.

In an effort to provide more current recidivism data, and allow for better comparisons of pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates, DYC has modified the group selection criteria for its annual recidivism report. Prior to 2004, youth for the pre-discharge group were selected independently from the post-discharge group. This report uses the same group of youth for both the pre- and post-discharge census.

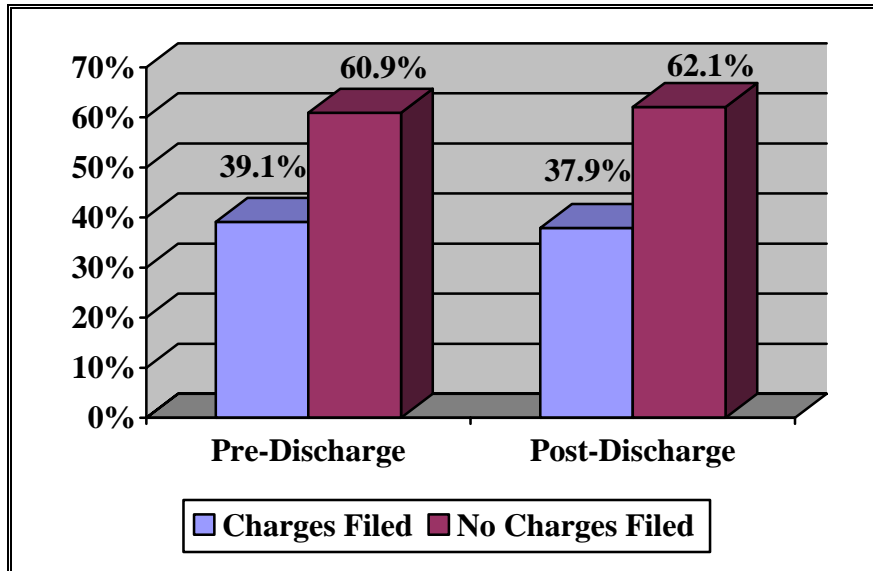
The census consists of all youth discharged from commitment to the Division of Youth Corrections during FY 2004-05. Using the Colorado Judicial Department's database, filing data was collected for offenses that occurred during residential placement and parole (pre-discharge) and offenses that occurred within a one-year time period following each youth's discharge date (post-discharge).

### ***Overall Recidivism Rates for FY 2004-05***

The FY 2004-05 DYC recidivism census consists of 831 youth discharged from DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005. As indicated in Figure 1, of the 831 youth, 325 (39.1%) had a new misdemeanor or felony offense filed prior to discharge, while 60.9% had no new filing prior to discharge. Follow-up information on new misdemeanor or felony offenses committed within one year following discharge from DYC, resulting in a

court filing, and entered into the Judicial Department’s data system, was also collected on all 831 youth discharged in FY 2004-05. Thirty-eight percent (37.9%) of youth discharged (315) received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense within one year following discharge.

**Figure 1**  
**All Juveniles Discharged from July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005**



Recidivism results for this cohort show slightly higher pre-discharge recidivism rates than post-discharge recidivism rates. Youth can be represented in each category, meaning that the same youth could have committed an offense before discharge as well as after their discharge date.

### ***Trends in Recidivism***

The following charts outline trends in recidivism rates for the past eight NYC recidivism studies<sup>10,11</sup>. The pre-discharge recidivism rate increased with the FY 2004-05 discharges, following two years of decline.

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<sup>10</sup> There is no fiscal year 2001-02 census because of the shift in study methodology to study pre- and post-discharge recidivism rates from the same study sample and increased focus on current recidivism data.

<sup>11</sup> This is the eighth NYC recidivism study to include Colorado’s common definitions for pre and post-discharge recidivism.

**Figure 2**  
**Pre-Discharge Recidivism Rates**  
**Fiscal Years 1996-97 through FY2004-05**

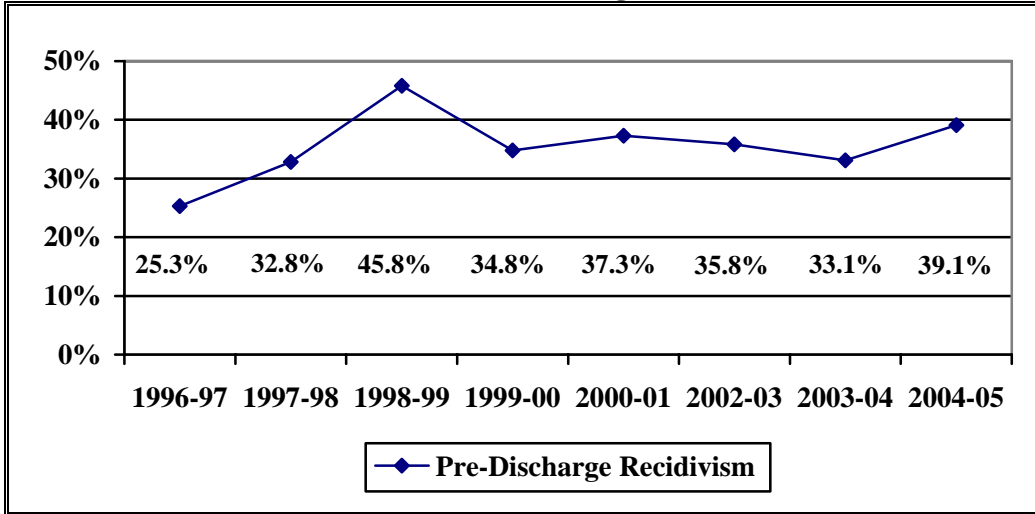
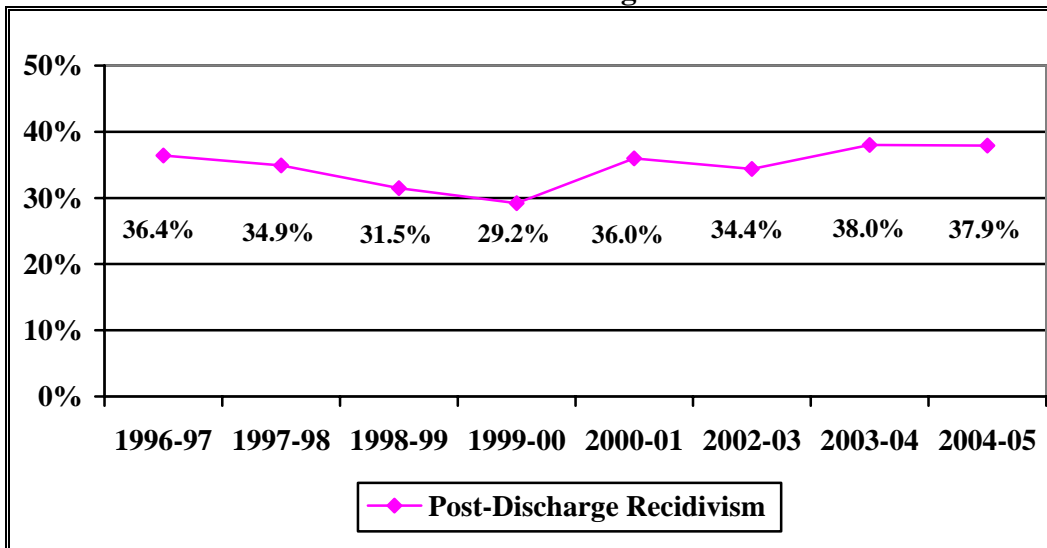


Figure 3 illustrates post-discharge recidivism trends. Post-discharge recidivism rates held steady as compared with the FY 2003-04 discharge cohort, with a 0.1% decrease. Post-discharge rates have remained between 34.4% and 38.0% for the past four years.

**Figure 3**  
**Post-Discharge Recidivism Rates**  
**Fiscal Years 1996-97 through FY2004-05**



Trend data should be cautiously interpreted. It is important to remember that changes have been made with regard to study methodology, including group selection, data collection, and data verification techniques. Additionally, changes in DYC and the juvenile justice system in Colorado, including the reduction in treatment services available to delinquent, committed, and paroled youth, as a result of the State's budget issues, make it difficult to attribute change in recidivism rates to any specific cause. For example, mandatory parole legislation was instituted for all youth committed on or after January 1, 1997. Since that time, the length of mandatory parole has been subsequently lowered from 12 months to 9 months, and the current length of time most youth must remain on parole status is 6 months. In addition, treatment options that were available to committed youth in FY 1999-00 may not be the same as the treatment options available in FY 2003-04 and FY 2004-05. All of these factors could potentially influence recidivism results over time.

### ***Charge Types***

The 'types' of charges for which youth receive new filings are presented in Table 1. Seventy percent (69.5%) of the youth who received a pre-discharge filing for a new offense were filed upon for a felony offense<sup>12</sup>.

Over the past few years the percentage of youth filed on for offenses that are considered to be 'other' offenses has grown. This may be a result of new laws and potentially stricter enforcement of certain offenses. For example, the legislation requiring the registration of sex offenders was recently amended<sup>13</sup>. This has resulted in both an increase in recidivism, especially post-discharge recidivism, and increases in the number of miscellaneous other offenses. Seven (7) youth in this year's study (2.2%) are considered to have recidivated post-discharge for the charges of failing to register as a sex offender and failing to provide an address of residence. In prior years, these youth would not have been included as re-offenders.

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<sup>12</sup> District Attorney's possess significant discretion in determining whether to file a felony or misdemeanor charge. Research has indicated that persons with previous criminal histories are more likely to receive a felony versus a misdemeanor filing.

<sup>13</sup> Section 18-3-412.5, C.R.S.

**Table 1**  
**Most Serious Filing (Offense Type)**  
**Juveniles Discharged From NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Pre-Discharge Recidivism</b>		<b>Post-Discharge Recidivism</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Person Felony	48	14.8%	30	9.6%
Property Felony	75	23.1%	81	25.7%
Drug Felony	21	6.4%	42	13.3%
Weapon Felony	22	6.8%	42	13.3%
Other <sup>14</sup> Felony	60	18.4%	40	12.7%
<b>Total Felony Filings</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>69.5%</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>74.6%</b>
Person Misdemeanor	43	13.2%	27	8.6%
Property Misdemeanor	22	6.8%	15	4.8%
Drug Misdemeanor	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
Weapon Misdemeanor	2	0.6%	5	1.6%
Other <sup>14</sup> Misdemeanor	32	9.9%	32	10.1%
<b>Total Misdemeanor Filings</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>30.5%</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>25.4%</b>
<b>Recidivism Totals</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

This example also illustrates how changes in the criminal justice system can influence recidivism rates. In years prior to the legislation mandating sex offender registration, these youth would not have been included as recidivates. With these offenses removed, the rate of post-discharge recidivism would be 37.1% instead of 37.9%. Similarly, over the past few years, higher numbers of youth in the census have been filed on for DUI charges. Whether this is a result of more police officers on the street, tougher enforcement, or more youth driving under the influence, the increases in DUI filings and the new sex offender registration requirements have clearly increased the rate of both pre- and post-discharge recidivism.

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<sup>14</sup> Other offenses include escapes, DUIs, failure to register as a sex offender, and other miscellaneous offenses.

**Table 2**  
**Most Serious Filing (Offense Class)**  
**Juveniles Discharged From NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

<b>Offense Class</b>	<b>Pre-Discharge Recidivism</b>		<b>Post-Discharge Recidivism</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Felony Class 2	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
Felony Class 3	17	5.2%	5	1.6%
Felony Class 4	69	21.2%	53	16.8%
Felony Class 5	72	22.2%	75	23.8%
Felony Class 6	68	20.9%	100	31.7%
Felony Unclassified	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
<b>Total Felony Filings</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>69.5%</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>74.6%</b>
Misdemeanor Class 1	18	5.5%	17	5.4%
Misdemeanor Class 2	13	4.0%	19	6.0%
Misdemeanor Class 3	61	18.8%	37	11.7%
Misdemeanor Unclassified	7	2.2%	7	2.2%
<b>Total Misdemeanor Filings</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>30.5%</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>25.4%</b>
<b>Recidivism Totals</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 2 shows the breakout of most serious filing by offense class. Given the seriousness of the NYC population, it is not surprising that the majority of pre-discharge (69.5%) and post-discharge filings (74.6%) were for felony class offenses. The majority of pre- and post-discharge offenses are felony class 4, 5, and 6.

### ***Filing v. Adjudication***

#### **Adjudication on Most Serious Charge Filed**

It is important to realize that not all filings resulted in a guilty finding. Sixty-five percent (64.6%) of youth were found guilty of their most serious charge prior to discharge, and 50.5% of youth for the post-discharge census were found guilty by the time of this printing. The percentage of youth found guilty of their most serious charge has increased over the past year.

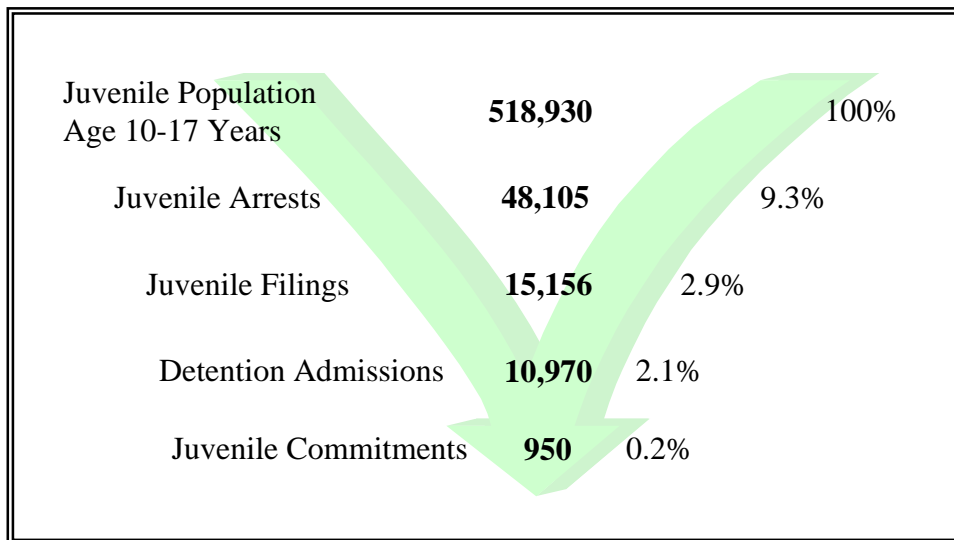
If the definition of recidivism were made more restrictive, to only include guilty findings (or reconvications, as other agencies use), the recidivism rates for both pre-discharge and

post-discharge using this census would be well under 30% (25.3% pre-discharge and 19.0% post-discharge). This illustrates the need to use common definitions of recidivism when comparing Colorado recidivism rates to other states or even across Colorado state agencies.

**Colorado in Context**

As agencies differ on the definition of recidivism, so do their recidivism rates. Figure 4 below helps to illustrate why recidivism rates vary based on type of system reaction and why these rates cannot be compared when the measured components are not equivalent. The figure depicts Colorado’s juvenile justice filtering process that takes place when a youth’s delinquent or criminal behavior is brought to the attention of the justice system. Those states or agencies that use rearrest to represent recidivism, will have higher recidivism rates than Colorado, which uses new filings to represent recidivism. Each stage of the system filters out more and more youth, therefore agencies that use reconviction, reincarceration, or recommitment will have lower recidivism rates than agencies that utilize rearrest, new charge, or new filing. For these reasons, it is imperative that system penetration be investigated when recidivism rates are considered.

**Figure 4  
Colorado Juvenile Justice Filtering Process to Commitment  
FY 2004-05**



## Adjudication on Any Charge Filed

The majority of youth who received new filings prior to discharge, or within one year of discharge, received filings on multiple charges. Although more than half were found guilty on their *most serious* charge (64.5% pre-discharge and 50.5% post-discharge), Table 3 shows that 86.5% of youth with *any* pre-discharge filings were found guilty for at least one charge and 80.2% of youth with *any* post-discharge filing were found guilty of at least one offense. This percentage has increased from last year, as did the percent of youth found guilty of their most serious charge filed.

**Table 3**  
**Guilty Adjudication on Any Charges Filed**  
**Juveniles Discharged From NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Finding	Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Guilty Adjudication <sup>15</sup>	281	86.5%	251	80.2%
No Finding of Guilt <sup>16</sup>	36	11.1%	35	11.2%
Deferred	4	1.2%	3	1.0%
Other <sup>17</sup>	4	1.2%	24	7.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

(Post-Discharge Missing N= 2)

There were only 2 youth in this year's study who received a filing for a new offense that had no findings associated with any of their charges. This is down from the 33 youth last year with no findings associated with their charges. Technological advances and a change in the data validation process (using Lexis-Nexis in place of ICON) have allowed the Division to report on more current recidivism data, and at the same time, overcome limitations on the ability to track case findings. The limitations arise when a youth is discharged near the end of the fiscal year and is filed upon for a new offense near the end of the one-year follow-up period. In those scenarios, the case may still be open when this report is published. However, technological advances have expedited the availability of

<sup>15</sup> Guilty includes guilty and guilty of a lesser charge.

<sup>16</sup> No finding of guilt includes charges dismissed, a plea of Nolo contendere, or a not guilty finding.

<sup>17</sup> Other includes cases that are still open, failure to appear, and youth who have multiple finding types.



this data. There are also other scenarios in which case findings can be delayed, including when there are high-profile cases, filings on more serious charges, or if the youth has failed to appear for his or her court date.

## **Demographics**

The following demographic data is presented to illustrate differences in recidivism rates by gender, ethnicity, and DYC Management Region.

### **Gender**

Recidivism results in this section are presented with pre-discharge recidivism results (filings for a new misdemeanor or felony offense during residential placement or parole) in the top half of each table, and post-discharge recidivism results (filings for new misdemeanor or felony offenses within one year following discharge) in the bottom half.

**Table 4**  
**Recidivism Rates by Gender**  
**Juveniles Discharged From DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>No Pre-Discharge Recidivism</b>		<b>Pre-Discharge Recidivism</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	443	59.9%	296	40.1%	739	88.9%
Female	63	68.5%	29	31.5%	92	11.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>60.9%</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>39.1%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<b>No Post-Discharge Recidivism</b>		<b>Post-Discharge Recidivism</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	443	59.9%	296	40.1%	739	88.9%
Female	73	79.3%	19	20.7%	92	11.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Over the last several years the Division has made efforts to increase the quantity and quality of female-responsive treatment options, including the construction of a new facility for female offenders, the Betty K. Marler Youth Services Center, on the campus

of the Mount View Youth Services Center. Table 4 shows a breakdown of recidivism results by gender.

Eighty-nine percent (88.9%) of the FY 2004-05 discharge census was male. Males (40.1%) were statistically more likely to receive a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense within one year following discharge (post-discharge) than females (20.7%); almost twice as likely (Chi-Square<sup>18</sup>=13.085;  $p<0.01$ ). Although males also had higher rates of pre-discharge recidivism (40.1%) when compared with females (31.5%), the rates of filings for new offenses were not significantly different. Post-discharge recidivism rates for female offenders (20.7%) were back down from the 7-year high reported last year for this population (26.6%). Over the past 7 studies, female post-discharge recidivism rates have remained between 12.7% and 21.5%, with the exception of last year.

Commitment classification is determined for both males and females during the assessment process when a youth is first committed to the Division. Commitment classification is decided using the score calculated by the objective Commitment Classification Instrument (CCI), one of the many assessment instruments used at the time of commitment. This score is a composite score based on factors such as the number of prior adjudications, offense type, prior placement history, and age at first adjudication. Figure 5 illustrates how commitment classification is determined using the CCI. Youth committed to the Division are initially placed into one of three security types (secure, staff-supervised, and community). The CCI is the instrument used to guide these placement decisions.

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<sup>18</sup> See the Appendix for an explanation of statistical measures used in this report.

**Figure 5**  
**Commitment Classification Instrument (CCI)**

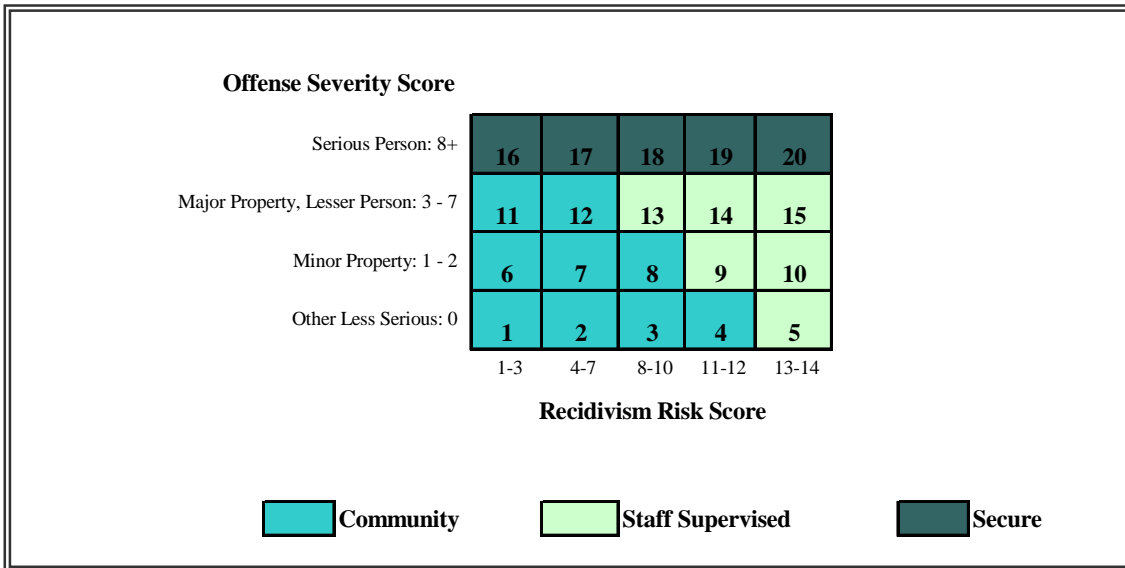
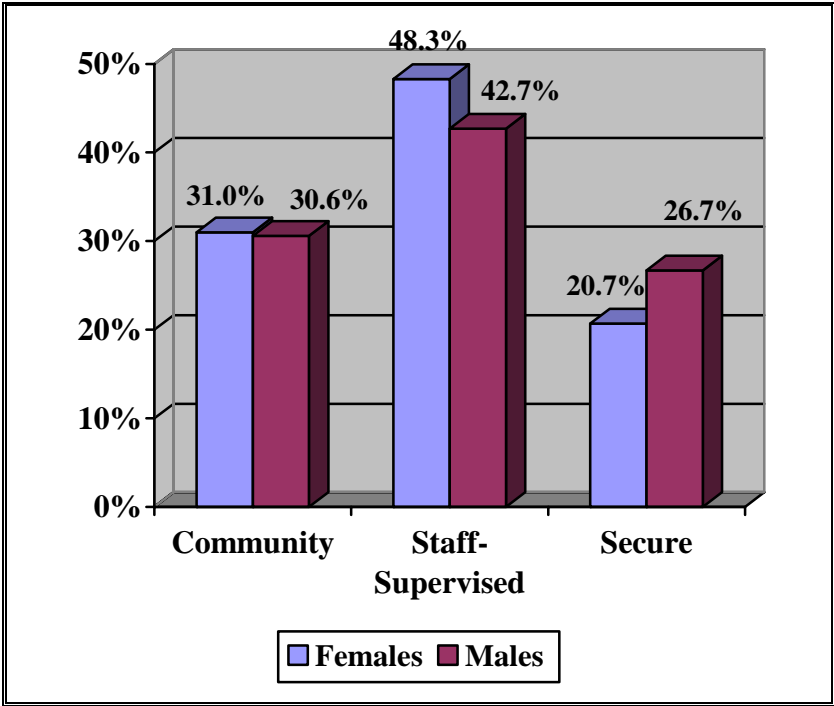


Figure 6 shows the differences in commitment classification by gender, and the differences are in the expected direction, given the higher recidivism outcomes exhibited by the males in this census. A higher percentage of males were assessed as needing secure placement (26.7%) when compared with females (20.7%) in the same discharge census, however this difference was not significant.

**Figure 6**  
**Commitment Classification by Gender (CCI)**  
**Juveniles Discharged From DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**



Missing = 6 (Females N=87; Males N=738)

**Primary Ethnicity**

Table 5 shows differences in recidivism rates by primary ethnicity. The ‘other’ category includes Native-American and Asian-American youth, as well as those officially identified as “other.” These categories are not combined because of commonalities among them, but because the numbers of youth in each category are too small when taken alone to make valid statistical comparisons.

**Table 5**  
**Recidivism by Primary Ethnicity**  
**Juveniles Discharged From DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Ethnicity	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
African-American	78	58.2%	56	41.8%	134	16.1%
Hispanic	157	55.9%	124	44.1%	281	33.8%
Anglo	255	64.6%	140	35.4%	395	47.5%
Other	16	76.2%	5	23.8%	21	2.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>60.9%</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>39.1%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Ethnicity	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
African-American	75	56.0%	59	44.0%	134	16.1%
Hispanic	168	59.8%	113	40.2%	281	33.8%
Anglo	258	65.3%	137	34.7%	395	47.5%
Other	15	71.4%	6	28.6%	21	2.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Although Hispanic youth in the census have slightly higher rates of pre discharge (44.1%) recidivism and African-American youth have slightly higher rates of post-discharge (44.0%) recidivism than Hispanic or White youth, these differences were not statistically significant<sup>19</sup>. The lowest rates of recidivism were noted among youth identified as ‘Other’ (23.8% pre-discharge recidivism, 28.6% post-discharge recidivism). Past studies have found these youth to have lower rates of recidivism than the three largest ethnic groups; however, this category is also historically the smallest in number. Results for the youth in the ‘Other’ category should be interpreted cautiously because of the small census size (N=21).

When comparing recidivism rates between non-Anglo and Anglo youth, non-Anglo youth are significantly more likely to get filed on pre-discharge (Chi-Square=4.250; p<0.05). The post-discharge differences between these two groups were not significant. The juvenile justice system has been working on addressing the issue of minority over-

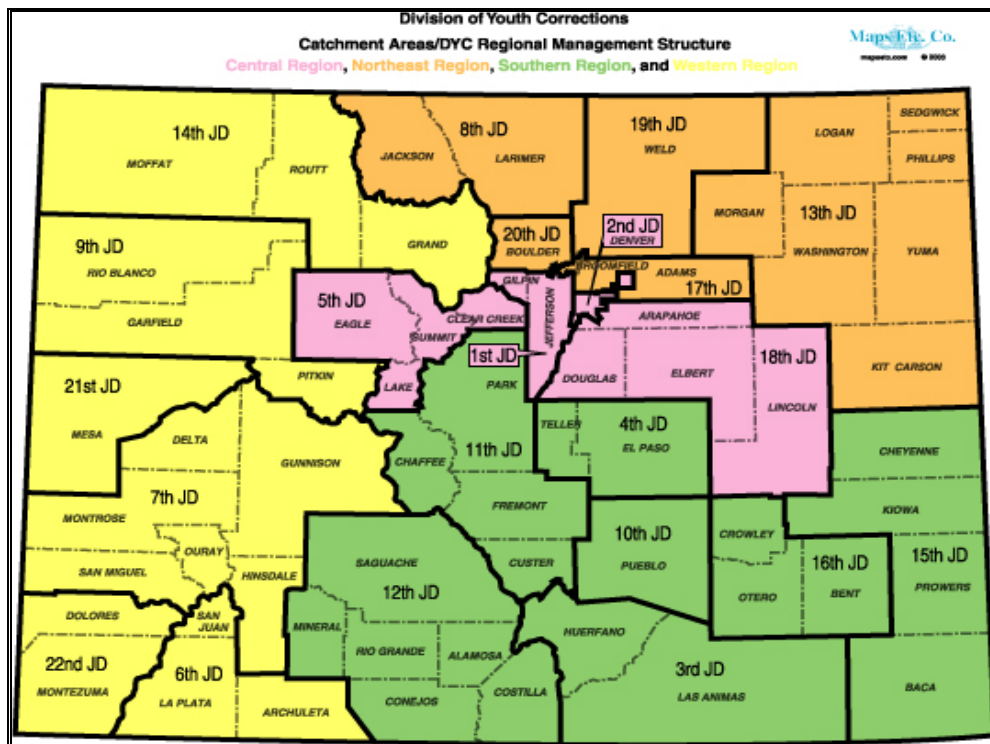
<sup>19</sup> No risk analysis was done on this population because there were no statistically significant differences found in the recidivism analyses.

representation, also referred to as disproportionate minority confinement. The recidivism results presented here are likely an artifact of local policies and practices, not actual differences in rates of re-offense.

## DYC Management Region

DYC has a regionally based management structure, operating from four management regions in the state. The Central Region<sup>20</sup> consists of four judicial districts and includes the major counties of Denver, Jefferson, Arapahoe, and Douglas. The Northeast Region consists of five judicial districts and includes the major counties of Adams, Boulder, Larimer, and Weld. The Southern Region consists of seven judicial districts and includes the major counties of El Paso and Pueblo. The Western Region consists of the six judicial districts on the western slope including the major county of Mesa.

**Figure 7**  
**DYC Management Structure**



<sup>20</sup> In July 2003 the Central Region and the Denver Region merged to form one combined Central Region.

Table 6 shows a breakdown of new offenses filed by DYC management region.

**Table 6**  
**Recidivism by DYC Management Region**  
**Juveniles Discharged From DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Region	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Central	219	59.3%	150	40.7%	369	44.4%
Northeast	120	62.8%	71	37.2%	191	23.0%
Southern	87	56.9%	66	43.1%	153	18.4%
Western	80	67.8%	38	32.2%	118	14.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>60.9%</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>39.1%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

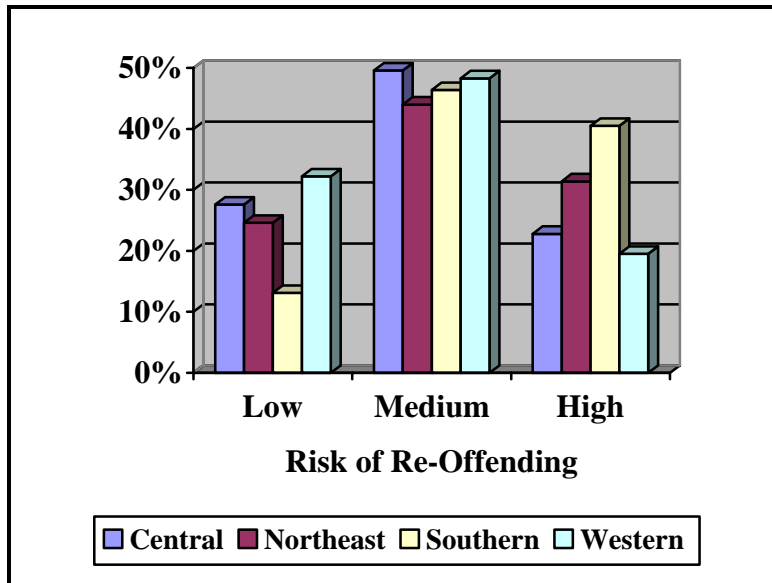
Region	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Central	240	65.0%	129	35.0%	369	44.4%
Northeast	106	55.5%	85	44.5%	191	23.0%
Southern	92	60.1%	61	39.9%	153	18.4%
Western	78	66.1%	40	33.9%	118	14.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

As in prior studies, the Western Region had the lowest pre-discharge recidivism rate of the four DYC management regions. Thirty-two percent (32.2%) of youth in the Western region received a new filing for a misdemeanor or felony offense committed prior to discharge, and 33.9% received a filing within one year following discharge. The highest rate of pre-discharge recidivism was found in the Southern Region (43.1%), and the highest rate of post-discharge recidivism was found in the Northeast Region (44.5%). The overall regional differences found in the rates of pre- and post-discharge filings were not found to be statistically significant.

There are a number of potential reasons why regional rates might differ from one another. Enforcement practices could be different and the decision to file on a particular offense is a discretionary practice by District Attorneys that varies across the state. The amount of delinquent or criminal activity that may be accepted or tolerated in a given community may differ across regions. Additionally, there might be more treatment options or

resources for youth in highly populated areas like the Central Region that are not as readily available to the other regions.

**Figure 8**  
**Risk of Re-Offending by Region (CYO-LSI)**  
**Juveniles Discharged From NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**



A comparison of risk scores for these youth by region (Figure 8) shows that there may be a good reason why the Southern and Northeast Regions have the highest rates of recidivism in the State, pre-and post-discharge respectively. Based on the risk scores from the CYO-LSI, both regions have a higher percentage of high-risk youth and a lower percentage of low-risk youth compared to the other two regions. Similarly, the Western Region’s low recidivism rates appear to be correlated with having the lowest percentage of high-risk youth (19.5%) and the highest percentage of low-risk youth (32.2%). The Central Region also shows a fairly high percentage of youth with medium to high risk of re-offending (72.4%); the combined percentage is slightly lower than the Northeast Region (75.4%), however, both are far below the Southern Region’s combined percentage (86.9%). When looking across all regions, the risk level differences were found to be significant (Chi-Square=29.359;  $p < 0.01$ ).



Utilizing results from the CCI, however, the Central Region is shown as having the highest percentage of youth requiring secure placement (26.8%), with the Northeast coming in second with 26.1% of their population assessed at secure. These findings, however, were not statistically significant.

## ***Commitment***

Commitment data presented in this section illustrates differences in recidivism rates by type of commitment sentence, offense category, and various indicators of successful treatment.

### **Commitment Sentence Type**

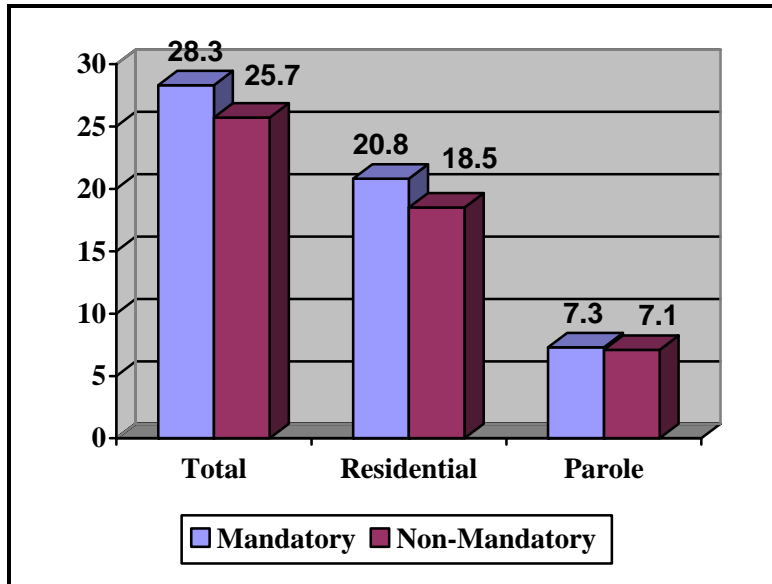
Most youth sentenced to DYC commitment receive a non-mandatory sentence length that varies from zero to twenty-four months. Youth with non-mandatory sentences may be referred for Juvenile Parole Board consideration prior to serving their maximum sentence length. Eighty-six percent (85.9%) of the youth discharged in FY 2004-05 were committed under non-mandatory sentences (N=714). Conversely, there were 117 youth who were required to serve a minimum length of stay (LOS) in residential treatment as determined by the court. In rare instances, the minimum LOS could be up to a seven-year commitment sentence for those youth adjudicated on an aggravated mandatory sentence.

Youth serving mandatory sentences have a significantly longer length of stay (average of 28.3 months, including residential placement and parole supervision) than youth serving non-mandatory sentences (average of 25.7 months)<sup>21</sup>. Because of the longer lengths of stay for youth serving mandatory sentences, it is expected that a greater percentage of these youth would receive a new filing prior to discharge from DYC (pre-discharge recidivism), simply because of the longer length of time served in DYC.

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<sup>21</sup> ANOVA=7.87; p<0.01.

**Figure 9**  
**Length of Stay by Commitment Sentence Type**  
**Juveniles Discharged From DYC between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2004**



(N=831)

Figure 9 shows that there is no statistical difference between the amounts of time these groups spent on parole status. The average LOS on parole for mandatory sentences was 7.3 months, compared with 7.1 months for youth who received non-mandatory sentences. The rates of pre-discharge recidivism for these two groups were not statistically different with 38.1% for youth with non-mandatory sentences, and 45.3% for youth with mandatory sentences. Post-discharge recidivism rates for these youth were much closer; youth serving mandatory sentences had a slightly lower rate of filings for new felony or misdemeanor offenses (37.6%) than youth serving non-mandatory sentences (38.0%).

### **Commitment Offense Type**

The Colorado TRAILS data system includes information on the most serious offense for which youth are committed, as it is recorded on the juvenile's mittimus. These offenses have been grouped into general types of commitment offenses for purposes of analyses. Table 7 presents a breakdown of original commitment offense-type by recidivism outcomes.

**Table 7**  
**Recidivism by Original Committing Offense Type**  
**Juveniles Discharged From DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Offense Type	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Person Offenses	195	61.9%	120	38.1%	315	37.9%
Property Offenses	214	60.3%	141	39.7%	355	42.7%
Drug Offenses	42	66.7%	21	33.3%	63	7.6%
Weapon Offenses	16	76.2%	5	23.8%	21	2.5%
Other <sup>22</sup> Offenses	24	48.0%	26	52.0%	50	6.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>61.1%</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>38.9%</b>	<b>804</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Offense Type	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Person Offenses	202	64.1%	113	35.9%	315	37.9%
Property Offenses	211	59.4%	144	40.6%	355	42.7%
Drug Offenses	40	63.5%	23	36.5%	63	7.6%
Weapon Offenses	10	47.6%	11	52.4%	21	2.5%
Other <sup>22</sup> Offenses	34	68.0%	16	32.0%	50	6.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>61.8%</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>38.2%</b>	<b>804</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

(Missing Data: N=27)

Differences in the recidivism rates shown by offense type are not statistically significant. The highest rate of pre-release recidivism was seen in youth with an original charge for an ‘other’ offense (52.0%). The highest rates of post-release recidivism occurred when the youth was committed for a weapons offense (52.4%); however, the sample sizes for each category were relatively small compared to the person and property offense categories.

### Number of Escapes

The DYC TRAILS database tracks the number of times a youth escapes from residential placement. DYC policy defines an escapee as a juvenile who has left a facility’s custody without proper authorization, or a juvenile who has not returned to a facility within four hours of the prescribed time from any authorized leave.

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<sup>22</sup> Includes escapes, DUIs, failure to register as a sex offender, and other miscellaneous offenses.

Youth with more escapes were more likely to have received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense both prior to discharge from NYC and within one year following discharge from NYC<sup>23</sup>.

Pre-release recidivism rates were investigated further because youth who escape from placement are often charged with an ‘escape’ offense that may be their only pre-discharge filing. Not all youth who are reported as escapees are filed upon, since many escapes are simply youth who returned to the treatment program on their own, yet still long enough after their prescribed return time to count as an escape under NYC policy.

### **Number of Reccommitments**

The NYC TRAILS data system also tracks the number of times a committed youth receives an additional commitment sentence while they are still sentenced to NYC. Since all recommitments are the product of another charge being filed against the youth, either before<sup>24</sup> or during their commitment, it is expected that recommitted youth will have higher rates of pre-discharge recidivism than youth that have no recommitments.

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<sup>23</sup> Pre-discharge (ANOVA=69.281; p<0.01); Post-discharge (ANOVA=10.568; p<0.01).

<sup>24</sup> A youth could receive a recommitment for an offense that occurred prior to their current commitment date. A recommitment occurs whenever a youth currently serving a commitment sentence is committed to NYC for another offense, regardless of the date of the offense.

**Table 8**  
**Recidivism by Number of Recommitments**  
**Juveniles Discharged From NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Number of Recommitments	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	463	74.1%	162	25.9%	625	75.2%
One	37	24.3%	115	75.7%	152	18.3%
Two or More	6	11.1%	48	88.9%	54	6.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>60.9%</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>39.1%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Number of Recommitments	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	402	64.3%	223	35.7%	625	75.2%
One	87	57.2%	65	42.8%	152	18.3%
Two or More	27	50.0%	27	50.0%	54	6.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The majority of youth committed to NYC never receive a recommitment sentence (75.2%). Nonetheless, the pre-discharge recidivism rate for recommitted youth is much higher than the rate for youth that do not have any recommitments (Chi-Square=187.108;  $p < 0.01$ ). Youth with recommitments also had higher rates of post-discharge recidivism than youth with no recommitments, these results were also statistically significant (Chi-Square=6.195;  $p < 0.05$ ).

### **Parole**

Parole data presented in this section examines the recidivist acts that occur when youth are on parole status (pre-discharge recidivism). This includes a breakdown of pre-discharge recidivism into residential placement recidivism and parole recidivism, a breakdown of where parole offenses occurred (in a NYC facility or in the community), and an analysis of time to first parole offense (i.e., how soon youth recidivate after parole begins).

Additionally, post-discharge recidivism rates are compared using two indicators of successful parole completion. It would be counter-intuitive to analyze these for pre-

discharge recidivism, because the offense would have occurred prior to the youth’s completion of their parole sentence.

**Mandatory Parole**

Forty-two percent (41.6%) of youth that received a filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense prior to discharge from the Division committed at least one of their offenses while on parole status, and forty-five percent (44.9%) committed at least one offense prior to beginning parole (see Table 9). Forty-four youth (13.5%) received new filings for multiple offenses that occurred both in residential placement and while on parole in the community. These findings highlight one of the biggest changes concerning pre-discharge recidivism rates. Last year, 81.9% of the youth (who recidivated pre-discharge) committed at least one of their offenses while on parole status. However, these more recent findings show a nearly perfect split between residential placement recidivism (44.9%) and parole recidivism (41.6%). Given that pre-discharge recidivism filings for offenses committed while a youth was on parole status decreased, it is possible that the average length of stay (LOS) on parole has impacted this statistic. All 831 youth in this census were required to serve at least 6 months of parole under mandatory parole legislation. Prior cohorts of discharges, however, were subject to longer mandatory parole periods, ranging from 9 to 12 months. The average LOS on parole for the census was 7.1 months. This is one full month shorter than last year’s parole LOS of 8.0 months, which translates to less time in the community for the cohort studied here.

**Table 9  
Type of Pre-Discharge Recidivism  
Pre-Discharge Filings for Juveniles Discharged From NYC between  
July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
New Offenses In Residential Placement Only <sup>25</sup>	146	44.9%
New Offenses On Parole Only	135	41.6%
New Offenses Residential Commitment and Parole	44	13.5%
<b>Pre-Discharge Recidivism Totals</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<sup>25</sup> “In Residential Placement Only” includes youth that did not parole but discharged directly into adult corrections from residential placement, those that turned 21 years of age in placement, and youth who escaped placement.

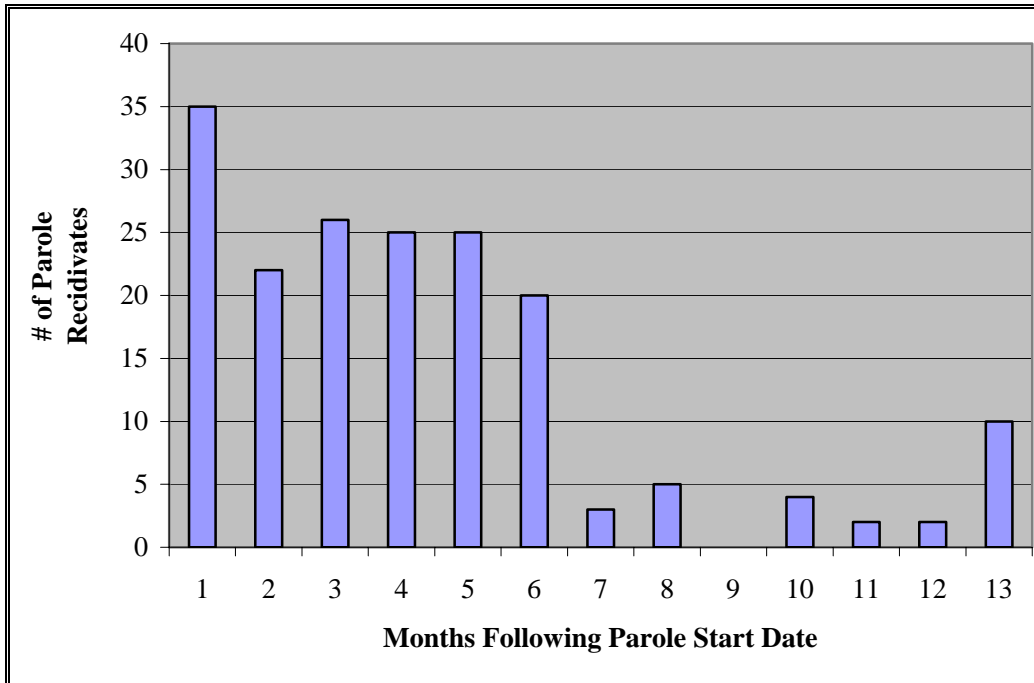
Revisiting the topic of re-offending while on parole status, it is important to note where the offenses on parole are occurring. While on parole status, most youth are out in the community working towards reintegration, and this is called “non-residential parole”. There are, however, instances in which a youth is on parole status, but is confined to a residential facility, and this is called “residential parole”. After investigating those youth who received new filings while on parole status (N=179), it is apparent that most offenses occurred while the youth was in the community (82.7%), as opposed to within a NYC facility (12.8%); four percent (4.5%) of those parole recidivists were filed on for multiple offenses during their parole period, and the offenses occurred both within the facility and within the community (see Table 10).

**Table 10**  
**Location Where Recidivist Acts Occurred On Parole**  
**Pre-Discharge Filings for Juveniles Discharged From NYC between**  
**July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
In a NYC Facility	23	12.8%
Not in a NYC Facility	148	82.7%
Both	8	4.5%
<b>Parole Recidivism Totals</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Also important to investigate is the length of time between parole start date and first parole offense. Of the 179 youth that recidivated while on parole status, 35 (19.6%) committed their first parole offense within one month of starting parole. Figure 10 helps to illustrate the number of youth that recidivate each month after starting parole. Over sixty percent (60.3%) of youth that recidivate on parole status do so by month four. This figure jumps to 85.5% by month six. Results from this analysis indicate that increasing the intensity of supervision and programming within the first month of parole could potentially reduce the number of early parole recidivists.

**Figure 10**  
**Time to First Parole Offense**  
**Juveniles Discharged From NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**



The Division has identified transition services as a priority and is attempting to increase the resources available to youth on parole. In fiscal year 2005-06 the State Legislature allowed NYC some flexibility to spend up to 10% of its residential funding on transition services for youth returning to the community. The Division identified a sample of youth who could potentially benefit from increased services on parole and began utilizing the funding flexibility allowed by the Legislature to increase transition services to youth. Recidivism outcomes for these youth will be reported in the upcoming years' recidivism reports (which will be available January 2008 and 2009).

**Parole Adjustment at Time of Discharge (Post-discharge only)**

When a youth is discharged from NYC they receive a parole adjustment rating. This rating is used to describe a youth's performance while on parole transitioning back into the community, and is used as an outcome measure for NYC that reflects the youth's ability to adapt to life in a community setting. It is expected that youth who successfully reintegrate into community settings would be less likely to receive a new filing for a post-discharge offense than youth who received a less than satisfactory adjustment rating.



Table 11 shows post-discharge recidivism rates<sup>26</sup> by parole adjustment rating at the time of discharge from NYC.

**Table 11**  
**Post-Discharge Recidivism by Parole Adjustment Rating at Discharge**  
**Juveniles Discharged From NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Parole Adjustment at Discharge	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Poor/Unsatisfactory	137	54.4%	115	45.6%	252	30.3%
Satisfactory/Excellent	337	65.6%	177	34.4%	514	61.9%
Unknown	20	74.1%	7	25.9%	27	3.2%
No Parole	22	57.9%	16	42.1%	38	4.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Sixty-two percent (61.9%) of discharged youth received a satisfactory or better parole adjustment rating at the time of discharge from the Division of Youth Corrections. Youth who received a poor or unsatisfactory parole adjustment rating were more likely to have received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense post-discharge (45.6%) than youth who received a satisfactory or better rating (34.4%) (Chi-Square=10.956; p<0.05). This finding suggests that parole officers (client managers) are accurately identifying those youth who are having difficulty transitioning to the community. These youth are more likely to receive a new filing within one year following their discharge date. This finding also suggests that some youth could benefit from a longer time on parole. Client managers may petition the Juvenile Parole Board for an extension order for youth who are having trouble during parole for specified committing offenses<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> Pre-discharge recidivism rates were not analyzed for this factor because parole adjustments are not available until the youth is discharged from NYC.

<sup>27</sup> Section 19-2-1002, C.R.S.

## Job/School Status at Time of Discharge

This study also investigated recidivism rates for youth that were gainfully employed or enrolled in school at the time of parole discharge, another measure of successful reintegration into the community. It is expected that youth who were enrolled in school or employed at the time of discharge from NYC would have lower rates of recidivism than youth that were not enrolled in school or employed. Post-discharge recidivism rates<sup>28</sup> are shown in the table below.

**Table 12**  
**Post-Discharge Recidivism by Job/School Status at Discharge**  
**Juveniles Discharged From NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Job/School Status at Discharge	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Not Employed or Attending School	121	55.8%	96	44.2%	217	27.7%
Employed or in School at Time of Discharge	371	64.4%	205	35.6%	576	72.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>62.0%</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>38.0%</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

(Missing Data: N=38)

As expected, youth that were employed or attending school at the time of discharge were less likely to have received a filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense within one year following discharge (Chi-Square=5.007;  $p < 0.05$ ). This finding validates the Division's ongoing efforts to promote educational and vocational opportunities for committed youth.

## ***Risk of Re-Offending***

During the first thirty days of commitment to NYC, youth undergo a battery of assessments to determine placement needs, treatment needs, and to evaluate the risk the youth poses to himself (i.e. suicide risk) and the community (i.e. public safety). This

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<sup>28</sup> Pre-discharge recidivism rates were not analyzed for this factor because employment and school status at the time of discharge are not known prior to the youth being discharged from NYC.

recidivism study examined a number of factors which have been shown to increase the risk of re-offending, including number of prior out-of home placements, number of prior detentions, number of prior adjudications, age at first adjudication, number of prior commitments, and risk scores (for re-offending).

This section will show the significant findings for the risk factors studied compared to pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism results.

### **Prior Out-of-Home Placements**

Out-of-home placements can include inpatient mental health or substance abuse treatment facilities or Child Welfare placements, as well as any prior NYC placements. In prior recidivism studies, youth with more prior out-of-home placements were found to have higher rates of recidivism prior to discharge as well as within one year following discharge.

In this year's study, analyses of variance (ANOVA<sup>29</sup>) on prior placement history shows that youth who received a pre-discharge filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense had, on average a significantly higher number of prior placements (3.1) as compared with youth that did not receive a new filing (2.3 prior placements)<sup>30</sup>. The post release recidivism differences were not statistically significant; youth that did receive a filing for a new offense within a year of discharge had 2.7 prior placements, compared with 2.5 for youth that did not recidivate after their discharge from NYC.

### **Prior Detention Admissions**

The number of detention admissions prior to commitment for this census ranged from zero to nineteen prior detention admissions. On average, all committed youth discharged in FY 2004-05 had 4.6 detention admissions prior to their commitment. Statistically, youth who received a filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense, both prior to discharge and within one year following discharge, were more likely to also have had

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<sup>29</sup> See the Appendix for an explanation of statistical measures used in this report.

<sup>30</sup> ANOVA=10.255; p<0.01

more detention admissions than youth who did not receive a filing. These results were significant at the  $p < 0.01$  significance level.

A categorical look at the number of detention admissions by pre-discharge recidivism (see Table 13) shows that only 30.8% of youth with less than three prior detention admissions (N=182) received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense prior to discharge. Youth with three or more detention admissions (N=649) were much more likely to receive a filing for a pre-discharge offense (Chi-Square=6.807;  $p < 0.01$ ). A similar pattern was seen in the post-discharge recidivism analysis. Twenty-five percent (24.7%) of youth with less than three detention admissions recidivated after discharge, compared with 41.6 percent with three or more admissions. Those results were statistically significant as well (Chi-Square=17.201;  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 13**  
**Recidivism by Number of Detention Admissions**  
**Juveniles Discharged From NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Number of Detention Admits	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Zero to Two	126	69.2%	56	30.8%	182	21.9%
Three or More	380	58.6%	269	41.4%	649	78.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>60.9%</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>39.1%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Number of Detention Admits	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Zero to Two	137	75.3%	45	24.7%	182	21.9%
Three or More	379	58.4%	270	41.6%	649	78.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Using these results, a decision maker in a facility could identify a youth with four prior detention admissions (i.e. more than two) as being at greater risk of committing another delinquent act while in placement or on parole, and within in a year post-discharge.

## Prior Adjudications

Table 14 shows pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates by the number of prior adjudications for youth discharged in FY 2004-05. Since the number of prior adjudications is a measure of previous involvement in the juvenile justice system, it is expected that youth with more prior adjudications would have higher recidivism rates.

**Table 14**  
**Recidivism by Number of Prior Adjudications**  
**Juveniles Discharged From NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Number of Prior Adjudications	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	147	65.3%	78	34.7%	225	27.1%
One	133	60.7%	86	39.3%	219	26.4%
Two or more	226	58.4%	161	41.6%	387	46.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>60.9%</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>39.1%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Number of Prior Adjudications	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	158	70.2%	67	29.8%	225	27.1%
One	132	60.3%	87	39.7%	219	26.4%
Two or more	226	58.4%	161	41.6%	387	46.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Forty-seven percent (46.6%) of the youth discharged in FY 2004-05 had two or more delinquency adjudications before their commitment to the Division of Youth Corrections. While the pattern of pre-discharge recidivism rates show the expected result, youth with no prior adjudications were less likely to receive a new filing prior to discharge, this finding was not significant. However, the pattern for post-discharge was in the expected direction, and the findings were significant (Chi-Square=8.870; p<0.05).

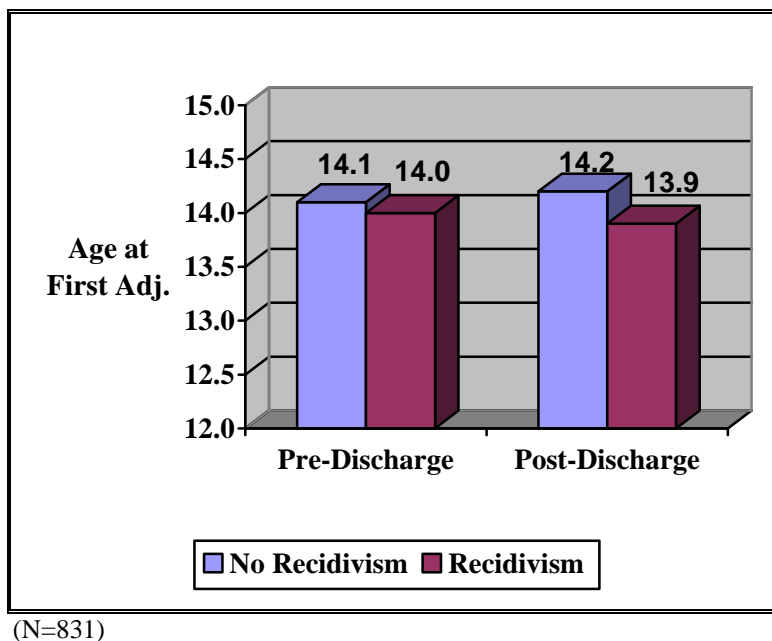
The significant group variance for post-discharge results is expected as juvenile justice research shows an elevated risk of future offending for youth with a history of delinquent

activity (Andrews and Bonta p.165)<sup>31</sup>. Youth with multiple prior adjudications are re-offending after discharge at significantly higher rates than youth that had not been adjudicated for any delinquent acts prior to this commitment.

### Age at First Adjudication

Another primary risk factor for recidivism is the age at the time of the youth's first adjudication. Juvenile justice research has shown that youth who become involved with the criminal justice system at younger ages are more likely to recidivate than youth who are older at the time of their first contact with the system (Andrews and Bonta p.165)<sup>31</sup>. The average age at time of first adjudication is shown in Figure 11.

**Figure 11**  
**Age at First Adjudication**  
**Juveniles Discharged From NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**



The results of this analysis show that youth who received a filing for a new offense following discharge were younger at the time of their first adjudication than the group of youth that did not recidivate (Chi-Square=5.059;  $p < 0.05$ ). Looking at pre-discharge

<sup>31</sup> Andrews, D.A., and Bonta, J. (1994). *The Psychology of Criminal Conduct*. Cincinnati, OH: Anderson Publishing Co.

recidivism, the miniscule difference in age at first adjudication between youth who received a filing and youth who did not is not significant.

### Assessed Risk Score

The objective Commitment Classification Instrument (CCI) and the Colorado Young Offender – Level of Supervision Inventory (CYO-LSI) are two of many assessment instruments used at the time of commitment. The CCI calculates placement needs using the combined risk score and severity of the offense for which the youth was committed. The classification score is a composite score based on factors such as the number of prior adjudications, offense type, prior placement history, and age at first adjudication (see Figure 5).

**Table 15**  
**Recidivism by Commitment Classification (CCI)**  
**Juveniles Discharged From DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Commitment Classification	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Community	143	69.1%	64	30.9%	207	24.9%
Staff-Secure	238	60.3%	157	39.7%	395	47.5%
Secure	125	54.6%	104	45.4%	229	27.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>60.9%</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>39.1%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Commitment Classification	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Community	147	71.0%	60	29.0%	207	24.9%
Staff-Secure	236	59.7%	159	40.3%	395	47.5%
Secure	133	58.1%	96	41.9%	229	27.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The pre-discharge recidivism results presented in Table 15 appear to validate the classification scores obtained by the CCI. Youth assessed as having a need for community placement were significantly less likely to receive a new filing for an offense prior to discharge (30.9%) when compared with youth assessed as needing staff-secure (39.7%) or secure (45.4%) level placements (Chi-Square=9.723; p<0.01).

The post-discharge recidivism analysis also shows a statistical difference between youth in the three placement groups. Youth assessed as having a need for secure placement were significantly more likely to receive a new filing for an offense one year after discharge (41.9%) when compared with youth assessed as needing staff-secure (40.3%) or community (29.0%) level placement (Chi-Square=9.491;  $p<0.01$ ).

The commitment classification factors that were evident at the time of commitment, when the CCI is currently administered, were factors that predicted pre-discharge recidivism and post-discharge recidivism by initial placement score. These results, combined with the results of the analysis on number of prior adjudications, continue to lend support to the importance of identifying specific risk factors through the use of scientific risk assessment instruments, as the assessment results are indeed predictive of the likelihood to re-offend.

Results from the CYO-LSI risk instrument (Table 16) do not show risk level to be significantly related to pre-discharge recidivism. However, the results do indicate that assessed risk level is statistically associated with post-discharge recidivism (Chi-Square=7.584;  $p<0.05$ ).



**Table 16**  
**Recidivism by Assessed Risk Score (CYO-LSI)**  
**Juveniles Discharged From DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Risk of Re-offending	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	168	66.4%	85	33.6%	253	30.7%
Medium	205	57.4%	152	42.6%	357	43.3%
High	129	60.0%	86	40.0%	215	26.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>60.8%</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>39.2%</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Risk of Re-offending	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	167	66.0%	86	34.0%	253	30.7%
Medium	203	56.9%	154	43.1%	357	43.3%
High	143	66.5%	72	33.5%	215	26.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>62.2%</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>37.8%</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

(Missing Data: N=6)

### Comparison of Pre-Discharge and Post-Discharge Recidivism Rates

The sampling methodology for this report allows comparisons of post-discharge recidivism rates by pre-discharge recidivism. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 17.

**Table 17**  
**Post-Discharge Recidivism by Pre-Discharge Recidivism**  
**Juveniles Discharged From DYC Between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Pre-Discharge Recidivism	336	66.4%	170	33.6%	506	60.9%
Pre-Discharge Recidivism	180	55.4%	145	44.6%	325	39.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Youth in the census who received a new filing during residential placement or parole were, as expected, also more likely to have recidivated following discharge (Chi-

Square=10.208;  $p < 0.01$ ). While this is not surprising, it is interesting to note that 55.4% of the youth who received a filing for a new offense during residential placement or parole did not receive a new filing within a year following discharge.

These findings may be an artifact of the supervision that a youth receives while in residential placement and while on parole, and the likelihood that they will be caught re-offending. However, it may also reflect the successful treatment and reintegration back into their communities of youth who had previously been filed upon for a pre-discharge offense. One possible explanation is the influence of case planning and the provision of appropriate surveillance and treatment services. To the extent that these services ameliorate risk factors and augment protective factors, the probability of re-offense will be markedly different for a youth upon discharge as compared to when that youth was originally committed.

### **Time to First Post-Discharge Filing**

Looking at the length of time between discharge and first offense, it is evident that this cohort of youth did not recidivate at a constant rate. Figure 12 shows the actual number of youth who recidivated each month after discharge (blue line), and a depiction of what a constant rate of recidivism would look like (red line).

**Figure 12**  
**Time to First Post-Discharge Offense**  
**Juveniles Discharged from NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

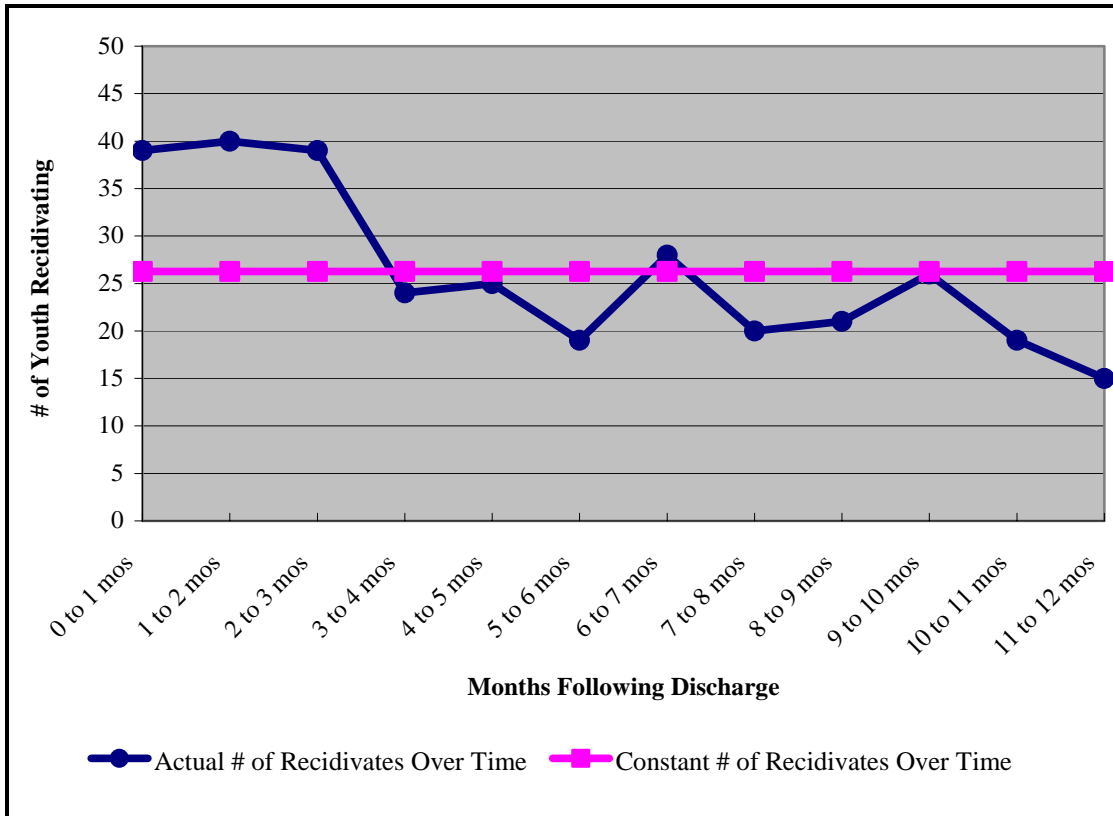
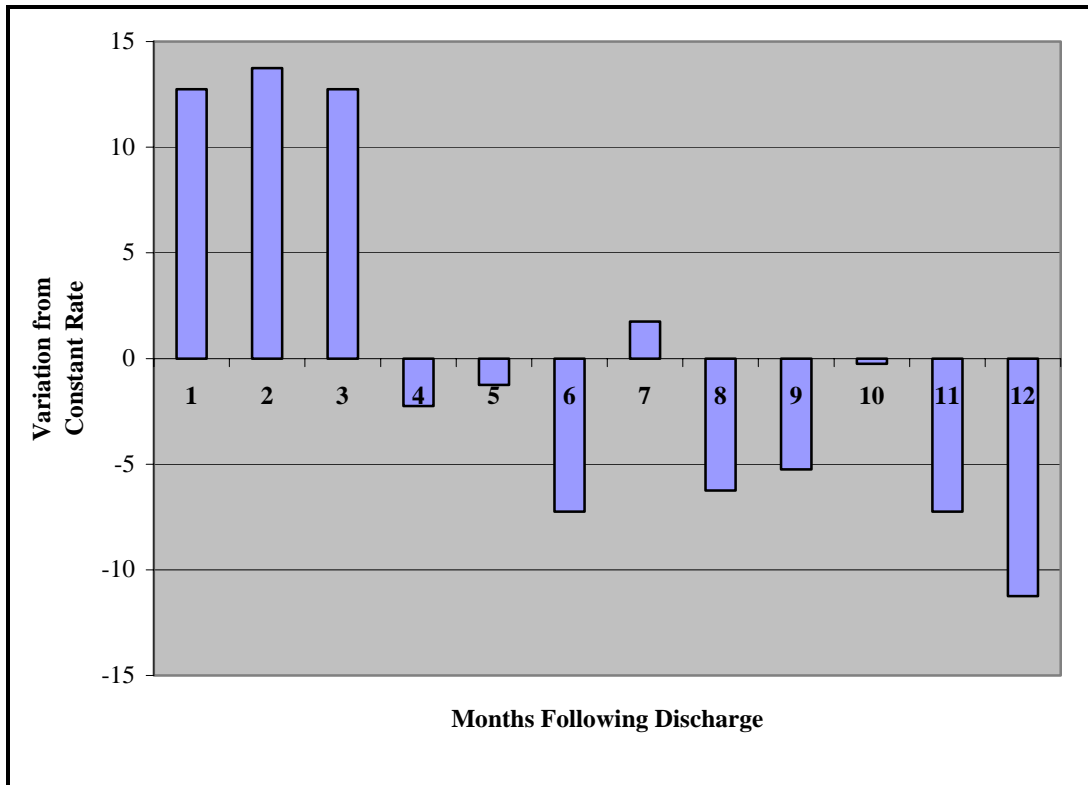


Figure 13 shows the variation in actual rate from the constant rate. The bars show the amount of variation from the constant rate. Any number above “0” shows the number of youth above the constant number of monthly new recidivists. A number below “0” is the number of youth below the constant number of monthly new recidivists. For the first 3 months of the follow-up period, every month has more new post-discharge re-offenders than the constant rate. However, starting at 4 months, the actual number is below the constant number, illustrating the reduction in the number of youth committing their first offense after this time.

**Figure 13**  
**Survival Analysis/Variation from Constant Rate**  
**Juveniles Discharged from NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

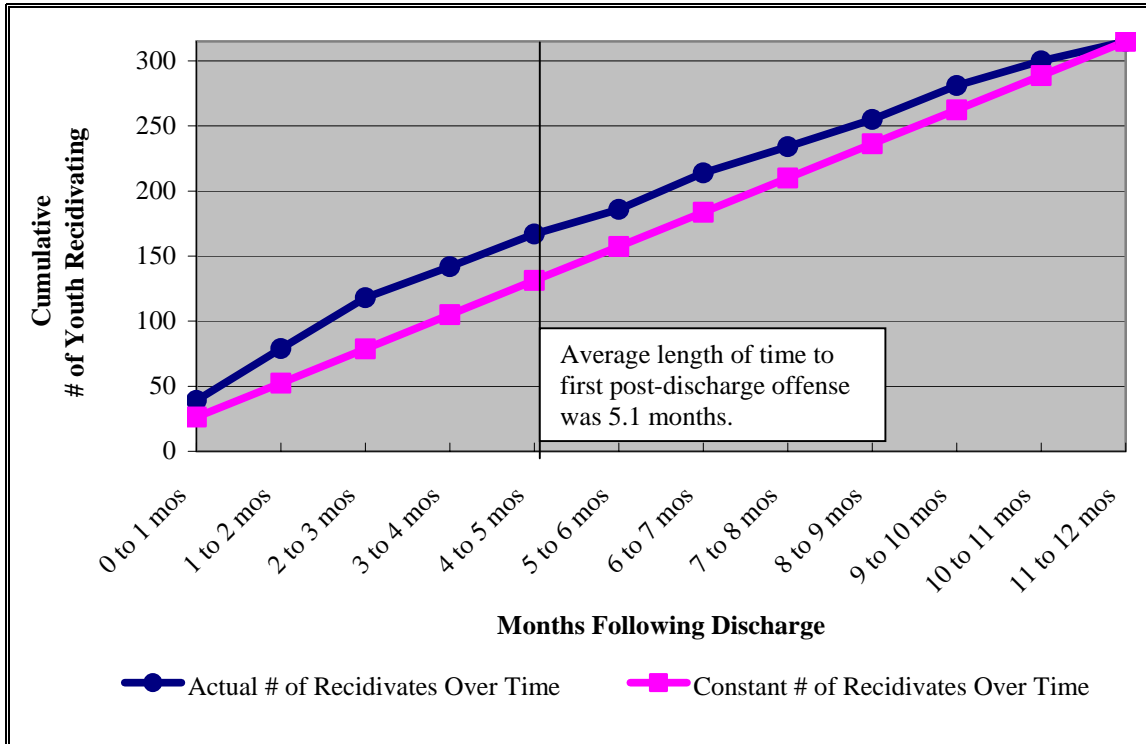


A survival analysis of time to first offense (Figure 14) shows that, of the 315 youth that recidivated within one year following discharge, 53.0% of youth that received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense committed that offense within the first 4 months after their discharge date. Eighty-one percent (81.0%) committed their first offense within 8 months following discharge. The average amount of time following discharge date to the first post-discharge filing that a youth received was 5.1 months (155 days).

The red line in Figure 14 depicts a *constant* linear growth rate in recidivism over one year. In other words, the red line shows graphically what it would look like if all youth in this cohort were to recidivate at an equal rate from the day of discharge to the last day of the follow up period. The blue line shows the *actual* growth in the recidivism rate from the day of discharge through one year following discharge. This analysis shows that youth in this census appear to recidivate at an expedited rate from discharge to three

months following discharge. Then the rate of growth is somewhat stabilized from three to seven months, then continues to increase, but slows down from seven months to twelve months.

**Figure 14**  
**Time to First Post-Discharge Offense (Survival Analysis)**  
**Juveniles Discharged from DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**



Each of these analyses indicates that the majority of growth in the recidivist population (youth who receive filings for new offenses) occurs within the first three months following discharge. After three months the rate of growth begins to decline, and only rises above the constant percentage in month seven (see Figure 13). Therefore, it is not expected that if the follow-up time were extended beyond one year that recidivism rates would continue to increase significantly.



## THE RIDGE VIEW YOUTH

The Division's annual recidivism report has not traditionally reported on outcomes for individual programs or facilities; however, the Ridge View Youth Services Center is a unique treatment option for eligible youth. Most youth committed to DYC experience multiple placements, throughout their commitment. Therefore, collection of recidivism outcomes, while useful for understanding the rate of re-offending during the commitment period and monitoring re-offending behaviors by specific sub-populations, is not generally useful in measuring the performance of individual programs.

However, the Ridge View program is intended as a primary placement option for certain youth, and those youth placed in Ridge View Youth Services Center (RVYSC) tend to have longer lengths of stay in their initial placement and are often paroled directly from Ridge View to the community. Since the youth that are placed at the Ridge View facility tend to have fewer placements that could influence re-offending behaviors it is appropriate to report outcome measures for this facility that may not be as meaningful if the analyses were conducted for other DYC treatment programs.

This next section will look at a sub-group of youth that were discharged from the Division in FY 2004-05. These are youth who were placed at the Ridge View Youth Services Center (RVYSC) for at least a ninety-day length of stay during their commitment<sup>32</sup>. This section will provide a program description for Ridge View and also compare the Ridge View group with a comparison group of males from the FY 2004-05 discharge census that were not placed at RVYSC. Finally, some recidivism outcome measures will be reported for the youth who were treated at the Ridge View Youth Services Center.

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<sup>32</sup> Seven youth who had escaped from Ridge View prior to 90 days were included in the Ridge View sample.

## **Historical Background**

During the 1997 Legislative Session, the General Assembly authorized the Division of Youth Corrections to contract for the design, construction and operation of a 500-bed juvenile facility in the Denver metro area. The goal of the project was to create an academically driven program, within a state-of-the art facility, to serve committed male offenders. The project was designed to use a positive peer culture and a staff-supervised environment for security, rather than a traditional fenced-in structure. This was to emphasize a campus environment and to stress the overall academic mission of the program.

The original impetus for the Ridge View project was a sharp increase in the need for commitment beds, which often resulted in placement of youth in out-of-state facilities. DYC determined that the target population for such a facility would be best managed in the previously described staff-supervised environment. The primary goals stated in the original project description were “gaining control of anti-social behavior, developing new pro-social behavior, and assuring the development of academic, vocational, social and life skills in committed youth.”

The size of the facility, up to 500 beds, dictated that the program would have to serve a large proportion of the youth being committed to DYC. For this reason, the original concept of the facility called for the design of a campus and a program for male committed youth, representing a moderate level security risk, when compared to the DYC male population as a whole. As a result, it was acknowledged that the program would not be appropriate for all DYC youth; particularly those requiring treatment for sexual offenses, severe mental health needs, or those requiring a more secure placement<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup> In prior years, youth with substance abuse needs were also excluded from Ridge View, however recent expansion in treatment programming allows Ridge View to accommodate youth with substance abuse needs.



DYC used the “design, build, and operate” model so that the private contractor awarded the bid to operate this model program could participate actively in the design and construction processes. This ensured that the resulting design and construction of the facility was tailored to specific program needs. Additionally, the State gained the advantage of using private sector construction timeframes and costs. While this model did reduce the flexibility of the resulting facility to some extent, it also maximized the functionality of its intended use.

### ***The Ridge View Program***

The Rite of Passage organization operates the Ridge View Youth Services Center Program under the terms of a contract with the Division, and within the framework of a positive peer culture. This framework recognizes the strengths and potential of all youth in the program, and relies on the strong peer normative environment as a mechanism for control and positive influences on youth behavior. The program focuses on long-term behavior change in youth, rather than just immediate control while in the facility. It uses peer group influence, staff role modeling, and skill development as the primary mechanisms to affect such change. To ensure compliance with state standards for correctional care, DYC staff closely monitors program operations.

The focus of the Ridge View program is skill building through academics, vocational training, and athletics, combined with positive peer and staff interactions and counseling opportunities. A unique feature of the program is that the facility holds a charter with Denver Public Schools (DPS), allowing students to graduate with a diploma from a DPS high school, rather than an alternative school. In addition, Ridge View students who have earned sufficient privileges can compete with other area high schools in various sports. Numerous athletic programs are offered including, football, soccer, baseball, wrestling, cross-country, cycling, rugby, track and field, etc. Ridge View students are referred to as "student athletes" as opposed to "clients". The focus on athletics supports the positive peer culture maintained at Ridge View while developing teamwork and camaraderie.

There is also a focus on family integration on the Ridge View campus. Approved family members are encouraged to participate in scheduled family visits. Family visits occur every three weeks on a rotating schedule. Students are allowed to make a brief phone call to approved family members once a week. The amount of phone minutes is based on the student's status. In addition, family members are encouraged to attend monthly staffings to review their son's progress with the DYC Client Manager and Ridge View staff present. Ridge View also offers the Family After-Care Support and Transition (FAST) group to involved family members. The FAST group meets two times per month, which focuses on youth and their families.

The core of individual youth case plans is the VALIDATE model, with each letter representing an area every student must work on. This model is depicted in Figure 15.

**Figure 15**  
**Ridge View “VALIDATE” Model**

<b>V</b>	- Vocational Training
<b>A</b>	- Athletics
<b>L</b>	- Life Skills
<b>I</b>	- Individual Graduation Plan
<b>D</b>	- Demonstrated Behavioral Changes
<b>A</b>	- Aftercare
<b>T</b>	- Treatment
<b>E</b>	- Education

In order to officially “validate,” or graduate, from the Ridge View program, each of the above VALIDATE components must be completed. The youth's peer group and staff must affirm that the youth has fulfilled each requirement. Once these areas have been completed, and the youth has maintained a RAM status for four consecutive months, he is eligible to officially graduate from the program. Most case plans are designed so that a youth's graduation date closely coincides with his parole date. However, youth do not

always go onto parole after graduation. Some move to other step-down placements, while others remain at Ridge View until parole, or until another placement is made.

### ***Comparing the Ridge View Youth with Other NYC Males***

The Ridge View youth is a sub-group of the entire discharge population studied in the section on NYC recidivism results. Youth were selected to the Ridge View group if they were discharged from NYC during the State FY 2004-05 and had at least a 90-day length of stay (LOS) at Ridge View Youth Services Center (RVYSC) during their commitment<sup>34</sup>. The RVYSC group consists of 298 males discharged from NYC in FY 2004-05 that were placed at the Ridge View facility during their commitment.

The comparison group for the Ridge View group includes 441 other males (not RVYSC) that were discharged from NYC during FY 2004-05. The next section looks at how this group compares to the Ridge View group on a variety of demographic characteristics as well as on some risk factors for re-offending.

### ***Youth Served by Ridge View Youth Services Center***

#### **Demographic Characteristics**

##### ***Ethnicity***

Table 18 shows differences in the ethnic distribution of youth discharged from the Division of Youth Corrections during FY 2004-05 who were served by the Ridge View program and all other males discharged during the same time period.

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<sup>34</sup> Seven youth who had escaped from Ridge View prior to 90 days were included in the Ridge View sample. The majority of juveniles (97.7%) had a 90 days or more LOS at Ridge View.

**Table 18**  
**Ethnic Differences between Ridge View and Other NYC Males**  
**Males Discharged from NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Ridge View Youth (N=298)</b>	<b>NYC Males (N=441)</b>	<b>TOTAL (N=739)</b>
Anglo	34.9%	56.9%	48.0%
African American	20.8%	13.4%	16.4%
Hispanic	40.6%	27.9%	33.0%
Other <sup>35</sup>	3.7%	1.8%	2.6%

There were higher rates of minority populations in the Ridge View group when compared with other NYC males discharged during FY 2004-05. These results were statistically significant (Chi-Square=35.007;  $p < 0.01$ ); however, since there were no differences in pre-discharge or post-discharge recidivism attributed to ethnicity (when ethnicity is broken down into 4 groups) in the larger census of all youth discharged in FY 2004-05, this finding is not expected to influence the comparison of recidivism rates between the Ridge View group and other NYC males. As expected, there were no significant recidivism differences by ethnic group for either of these groups.

### **Age**

The average age at commitment for youth placed at Ridge View was 15.8 years; this is slightly younger than the overall average age at commitment for NYC males (15.9 years). However, the average age at the time youth were admitted to the Ridge View program was somewhat older at 16.2 years. The difference between age at commitment and age at admission to Ridge View can be mostly explained by the fact that all youth committed to the Division are required to participate in an assessment period of up to 30 days in a secure, State-operated facility prior to any other placement.

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<sup>35</sup> This category includes Native American and Asian American youth as well as those officially identified as "other." These categories are not combined because of commonalities among them, but because the numbers of youth in each category are too small when taken alone to make valid statistical comparisons.

The majority of youth were 16 (34.2%), or 17 (35.2%) years of age at the time of first placement in Ridge View Youth Services Center. Table 19 shows the distribution of these youth, by age at time of placement.

**Table 19**  
**Age at Placement in Ridge View<sup>36</sup>**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number Placed</b>	<b>Percent</b>
14	16	5.4%
15	52	17.4%
16	102	34.2%
17	105	35.2%
18	21	7.0%
19	2	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### **Risk Profiles of Youth**

Eligibility restrictions based on type of offense, mental health needs and other factors related to youths' risk and need levels could potentially lead to some differences between youth placed in Ridge View and the overall DYC male population.

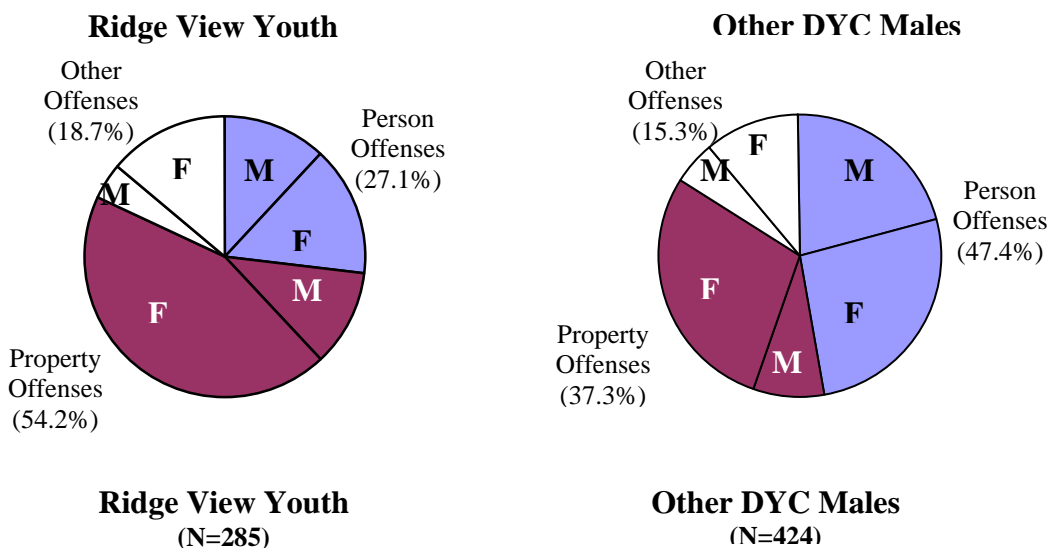
### **Offense Types**

As Figure 16 indicates, more than half (54.2%) of Ridge View youth were committed for property offenses, compared with 37.3% of the males in other DYC placements. Similarly, 27.1% of Ridge View youth were committed for person offenses, compared with 47.4% of other DYC males. These differences between groups were statistically significant (Chi-Square=33.053;  $p < 0.01$ ).

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<sup>36</sup> Represents age at time of placement in Ridge View, rather than age at the time of commitment. Because of the delay between commitment and Ridge View placement, no comparison can be made with age at commitment for other DYC males.

**Figure 16**  
**Type of Offense**  
**Males Discharged from NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**



**F=Felony; M=Misdemeanor**

Since property offenders tend to recidivate at higher levels than other offenders it would be expected that youth in the Ridge View group might have a higher risk of offending than other NYC males. However, because differences were not significant in the larger analyses of all youth discharged in FY 2004-05, these differences are also not expected to influence recidivism rates for these two groups.

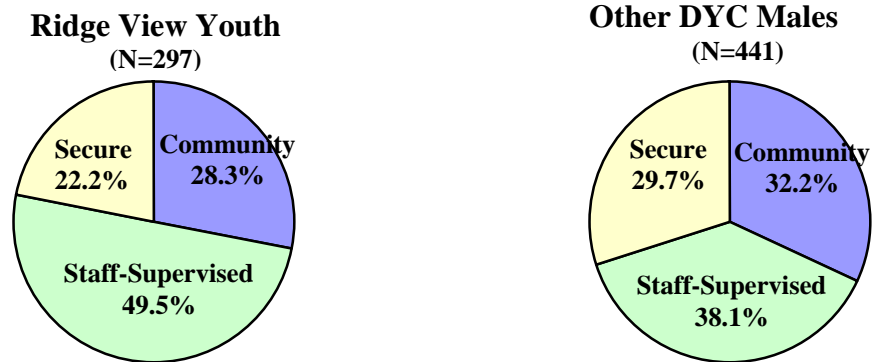
***Risk of Re-offense***

Eligibility requirements for Ridge View placement, based primarily on offense and also on severity of mental health treatment needs, do not translate directly into a significantly lower risk population being served. For example, sex offenders tend to rank low on most risk of re-offense scales, and therefore since these youth are not eligible for placement at Ridge View this could result in higher risk youth being placed at RVYSC.

One of the many assessment instruments used at the time of commitment is the objective Commitment Classification Instrument (CCI). Placement needs are calculated by the CCI using the combined risk of re-offense and severity of the offense for which the youth was

committed. The classification score is based on factors such as the number of prior adjudications, offense type, prior placement history, and age at first adjudication (See Figure 5). Figure 17 shows the differences in classification between youth discharged in FY 2004-05 that were placed in Ridge View and other DYC males discharged during that same time period. These differences are statistically significant (Chi-Square=10.015;  $p < 0.01$ ). According to the CCI results, DYC males require more secure placement as compared to Ridge View youth.

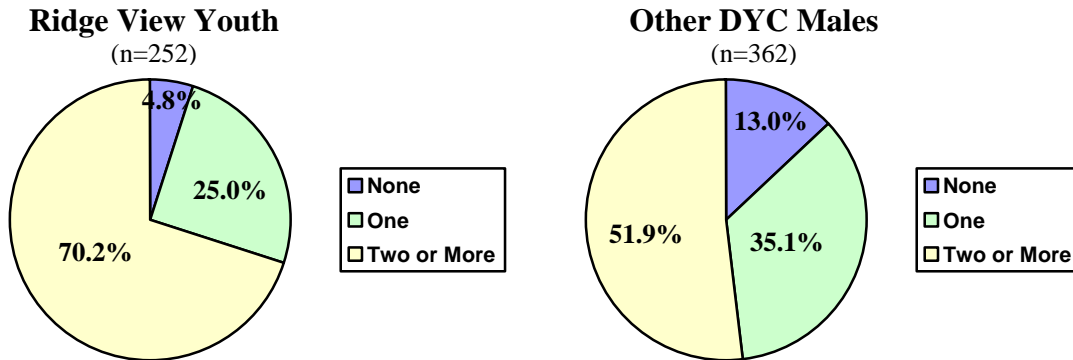
**Figure 17**  
**CCI Commitment Classification Scores**  
**Males Discharged from DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**



Conversely, when looking at the results from the risk assessment used by DYC, the CYO-LSI, a statistically significant difference does not result when comparing Ridge View youth with other DYC males. In other words, the results of the CYO-LSI show that there is no difference in risk level when comparing the two subgroups.

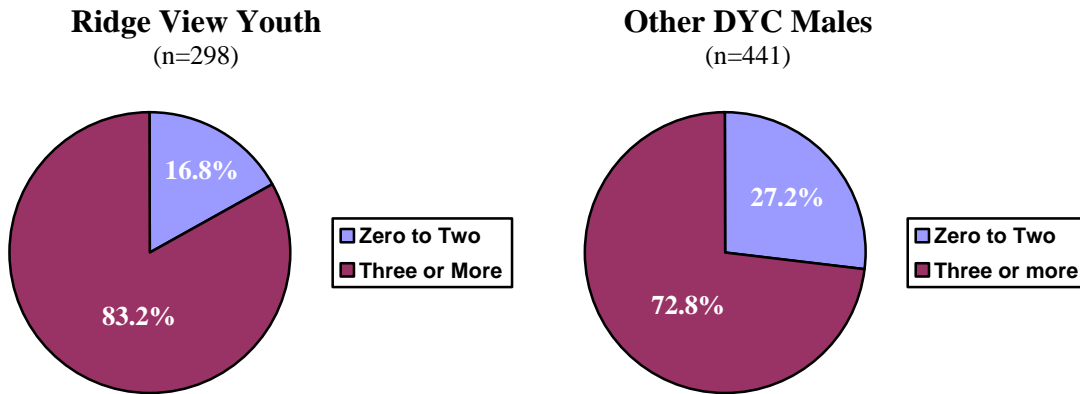
Another estimation of risk is prior involvement in the juvenile justice system. Figure 18 shows a higher proportion of Ridge View youth had two or more prior adjudications than the remaining DYC male population, indicating an elevated risk of re-offending. Conversely, a lower proportion of Ridge View youth had no or one prior adjudication(s) occurring prior to the current commitment (Chi-Square=23.706;  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Figure 18**  
**Number of Prior Adjudications**  
**Males Discharged from NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**



Similarly, Figure 19 shows a higher percentage of Ridge View Youth had more than two prior detention admissions than other NYC males (Chi-square=10.927;  $p < 0.01$ )

**Figure 19**  
**Number of Prior Detention Admissions**  
**Males Discharged from NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**





### ***Length of Stay (LOS)***

Youth placed at RYVSC had a slightly longer average total LOS (26.7 months; median=25.6 months) than other DYC males (26.4 months; median = 24.3 months) discharged between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005<sup>37</sup>. Total length of stay includes time spent in a residential placement and time spent on mandatory parole. All youth in these groups were subject to the mandatory parole statutes and would have been required to spend between six and twelve months on parole status in the community prior to discharge from the Division.

### ***Ridge View Recidivism Results***

This section reports recidivism and other outcome information for the 298 youth discharged from the Division of Youth Corrections between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005, who were placed at Ridge View Youth Services Center (RYVSC) during their commitment to the Division. The Ridge View youth are compared to all other males discharged from DYC during this same time period that did not spend time at RYVSC (n=441). The term ‘pre-discharge’ is used to identify offenses filed during residential placement and/or parole. The term ‘post-discharge’ refers to offenses filed within one year after the youth was discharged from DYC. Table 20 illustrates differences in pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates for the Ridge View group and the comparison group.

Of the 298 youth in the RYVSC group, 109 (36.6%) had a new misdemeanor or felony offense filed prior to discharge<sup>38</sup>. In comparison, 42.4% (n=187) of males in the comparison group had a new filing for a misdemeanor or felony offense prior to discharge from the Division. Conversely, youth in the Ridge View group had higher rates of post-discharge recidivism (42.6%) compared with other males discharged from DYC during FY 2004-05 (38.3%). Overall, the recidivism rates for Ridge View youth were

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<sup>37</sup> These differences were not statistically significant.

<sup>38</sup> Filings on offenses that occurred prior to a youth’s admission to the RYVSC facility are not included in these analyses. If the program had not served a youth prior to the time the recidivist act occurred, the program in question could not have prevented it.

lower than for other DYC males for pre-discharge recidivism and higher for post discharge, however these results were not statistically significant.

**Table 20**  
**Recidivism Rates**  
**Males Discharged From DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ridge View	189	63.4%	109	36.6%	298	40.3%
Other DYC Males	254	57.6%	187	42.4%	441	59.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>59.9%</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>40.1%</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ridge View	171	57.4%	127	42.6%	298	40.3%
Other DYC Males	272	61.7%	169	38.3%	441	59.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>59.9%</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>40.1%</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Since the overall recidivism rates for Ridge View youth were not significantly different from the rates of other DYC males, the following sub-sections will only show the analyses where results for the Ridge View group were significantly different by specific factors for risk of re-offending. Analyses were conducted on all factors identified in the primary recidivism study, however, very few showed significant differences for the Ridge View group.

### **DYC Management Region**

DYC has a regionally based management structure, operating from four management regions in the state (See Figure 7). The Central Region<sup>39</sup> consists of four judicial districts and includes the major counties of Denver, Jefferson, Arapahoe, and Douglas. The Northeast Region consists of five judicial districts and includes the major counties of Adams, Boulder, Larimer, and Weld. The Southern Region consists of seven judicial districts and includes the major counties of El Paso and Pueblo. The Western Region

<sup>39</sup> In July 2003 the Central Region and the Denver Region merged to form one combined Central Region.

consists of the six judicial districts on the western slope including the major county of Mesa. Unlike most DYC placements, which are generally contracted separately for each management region, Ridge View Youth Services Center treats youth from all four regions. Table 21 shows a breakdown of new offenses during and after commitment by DYC management region.

**Table 21**  
**Recidivism by DYC Management Region**  
**RVYSC Youth Discharged From DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Region	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Central	86	65.2%	46	34.8%	132	44.3%
Northeast	43	65.2%	23	34.8%	66	22.1%
Southern	37	59.7%	25	40.3%	62	20.8%
Western	23	60.5%	15	39.5%	38	12.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>63.4%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>36.6%</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Region	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Central	85	64.4%	47	35.6%	132	44.3%
Northeast	31	47.0%	35	53.0%	66	22.1%
Southern	29	46.8%	33	53.2%	62	20.8%
Western	26	68.4%	12	31.6%	38	12.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>57.4%</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>42.6%</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Many results of this analysis are similar to the results for the main recidivism study. The highest pre-discharge and post discharge recidivism rate was found in the Southern region (pre-discharge=40.3%, post discharge=53.2%). The Northeast and Central region have the lowest rates of pre-discharge recidivism (both 34.8%) and the Western region had the lowest post-discharge recidivism rate (31.6%). Only the differences found in the rate of post discharge filings were found to be statistically significant (Chi-square=10.326; p<0.05).

## **Number of Escapes**

The DYC TRAILS database tracks the number of times a youth escapes from residential placement during commitment. DYC policy defines an escapee as a juvenile who has left a facility's custody without proper authorization, or a juvenile who has not returned to a facility within four hours of the prescribed time from any authorized leave.

The Ridge View and DYC male groups had similar average number of escapes (0.71 for the Ridge View group and 0.85 for the DYC male group). Interestingly, Ridge View youth with more escapes were more likely to have received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense prior to discharge from DYC<sup>40</sup>. When looking at the full census, escapes were a significant predictor of both pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism. It is important to note that the District Attorney's Office in Arapahoe County, where Ridge View is located, has a policy of always filing charges on escapes. This could artificially increase the pre-discharge recidivism rates for youth who escape from the RYVSC facility when compared with other DYC males who might have escapes in other jurisdictions.

## **Risk of Re-offending**

The only risk factor to significantly influence recidivism for Ridge View youth was escapes—and this was only significant in predicting pre-discharge recidivism. This finding, however, may be a product of circular reasoning. When a youth escapes from Ridge View it is highly likely, if not guaranteed, that the escape charge will be filed on. In that scenario, an escape *is* technically pre-discharge recidivism.

The overall lack of significant findings could be an indicator of treatment success. It would be expected that a youth group that shows more risk factors than the comparison group (more non-Anglo youth, more property offenders, more prior detention admissions, more prior adjudications) would be more likely to recidivate. The fact that this is not the

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<sup>40</sup> Pre-discharge recidivism by number of escapes (ANOVA=17.540; p<0.01).

case, suggests that there have been some intervening measures during commitment that has kept these youth from receiving a filing for a new offense.

### **Parole Adjustment at Time of Discharge (Post-discharge only)**

When a youth is discharged from NYC they receive a parole adjustment rating. This rating is used to describe a youth's performance while on parole transitioning back into the community, and is used as an outcome measure for NYC that reflects the youth's ability to adapt to life in a community setting. It is expected that youth who successfully reintegrate into community settings would be less likely to receive a new filing for a post-discharge offense than youth who received a less than satisfactory adjustment rating. Table 22 shows post-discharge recidivism rates<sup>41</sup> by parole adjustment rating at the time of discharge from NYC for Ridgeview juveniles.

**Table 22**  
**Post-Discharge Recidivism by Parole Adjustment Rating at Discharge**  
**RVYSC Youth Discharged From NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

<b>Parole Adjustment at Discharge</b>	<b>No Post-Discharge Recidivism</b>		<b>Post-Discharge Recidivism</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Poor/Unsatisfactory	42	49.4%	43	50.6%	85	28.5%
Satisfactory/Excellent	117	60.3%	77	39.7%	194	65.1%
Unknown	5	71.4%	2	28.6%	7	2.3%
No Parole	7	58.3%	5	41.7%	12	4.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>57.4%</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>42.6%</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Over sixty-five percent (65.1%) of discharged youth received a satisfactory or better parole adjustment rating at the time of discharge from the Division of Youth Corrections. While not statistically significant, youth who received a poor or unsatisfactory parole adjustment rating were more likely to have received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense post-discharge (50.6%) than youth who received a satisfactory or better rating (39.7%)

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<sup>41</sup> Pre-discharge recidivism rates were not analyzed for this factor because parole adjustments are not available until the youth is discharged from NYC commitment status.

## Job/School Status at Time of Discharge

This study also investigated recidivism rates for youth that were gainfully employed or enrolled in school at the time of parole discharge, another measure of successful reintegration into the community. It is expected that youth who were going to school or employed at the time of discharge from DYC would have lower rates of recidivism than youth that were not in school or employed. Post-discharge recidivism rates<sup>42</sup> are shown in the table below.

**Table 23**  
**Post-Discharge Recidivism by Job/School Status at Discharge**  
**RVYSC Youth Discharged From DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Job/School Status at Discharge	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Not Employed or Attending School	44	56.4%	34	43.6%	78	27.3%
Employed or in School at Time of Discharge	122	58.7%	86	41.3%	208	72.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>58.0%</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>42.0%</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

(Missing Data: N=12)

As expected, youth that were employed or attending school at the time of discharge were less likely to have received a filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense within one year following discharge. Unlike the general DYC population, this relationship is not statistically significant for Ridge View youth.

## Ridge View Graduation

In order to officially graduate from the Ridge View program, each of the components of the VALIDATE model must be completed, and the youth's peer group and staff must formally agree that the youth has fulfilled all of the graduation requirements. Once these have been completed, and the youth has maintained a RAM status for four consecutive months, he officially validates the program and participates in a graduation ceremony.

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<sup>42</sup> Pre-discharge recidivism rates were not analyzed for this factor because employment and school status at the time of discharge are not known prior to the youth being discharged from DYC commitment status.

**Table 24**  
**Recidivism by Successful Completion of the Ridge View Program**  
**RVYSC Youth Discharged between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

Completion Status	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Graduated	142	69.3%	63	30.7%	205	70.0%
Did Not Graduate	43	49.4%	44	50.6%	87	30.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>63.4%</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>36.6%</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Completion Status	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Number	Number	Percent
Graduated	129	62.9%	76	37.1%	205	70.0%
Did Not Graduate	38	43.7%	49	56.3%	87	30.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>57.2%</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>42.8%</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

(Missing n=6)

Table 24 shows the differences in pre-discharge recidivism for youth that officially graduated from the Ridge View program compared with youth who left for other reasons<sup>43</sup>.

Youth that graduated from the Ridge View program had lower rates of new filing for a recidivist act both prior to discharge (30.7%) and following discharge from DYC (37.1%) than youth who did not fully complete the program. These results were statistically significant (Pre-discharge: Chi-Square=10.359, p<0.01; Post-discharge: Chi-Square=9.243, p<0.01).

### **Time to First Post-Discharge Filing**

Looking at time to first offense, it is evident that Ridge View youth do not recidivate at a constant rate following discharge. Figure 20 shows the *actual* number of youth who

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<sup>43</sup> Youth who did not graduate may have completed the program, but did not fulfill the requirements for validation. Other types of release include medical release, escapes, client manager referrals to another program, youth paroled prior to completion of the program, or program failures. Ridge View staff views all releases that did not validate to be unsuccessful in the program.

recidivated each month after discharge (blue line), and a depiction of what a *constant* rate of recidivism would look like (red line).

**Figure 20**  
**Time to First Post-Discharge Offense**  
**Ridge View Juveniles Discharged from DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**

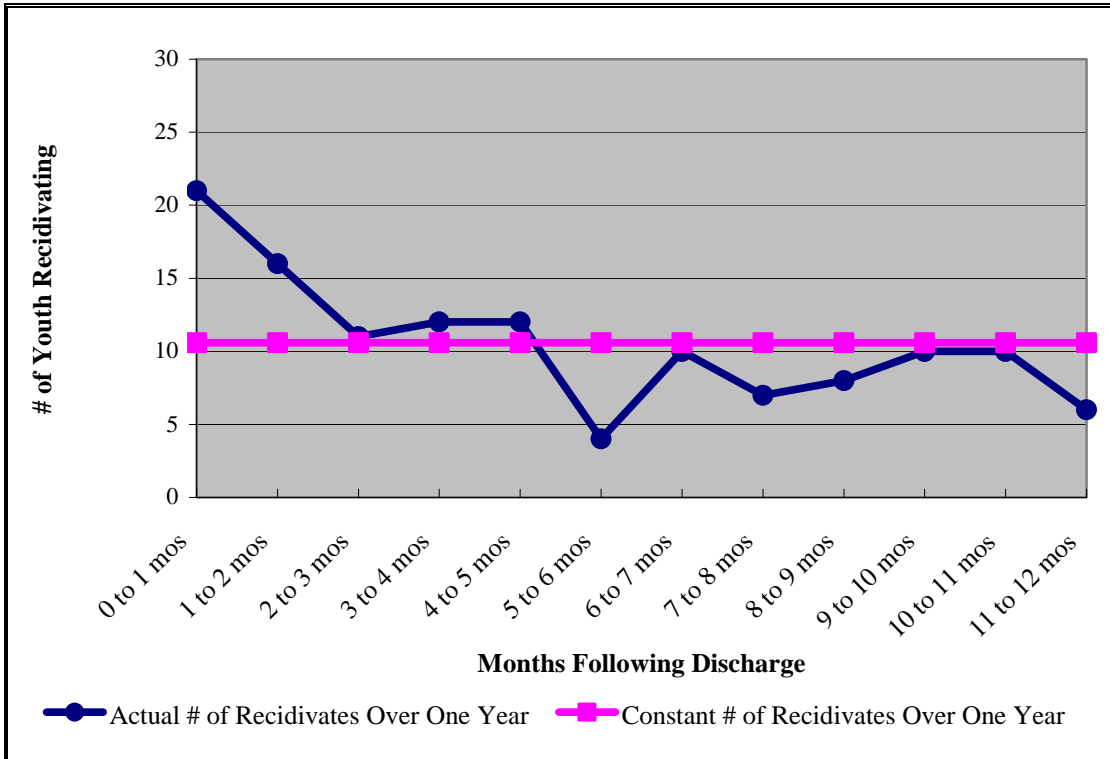
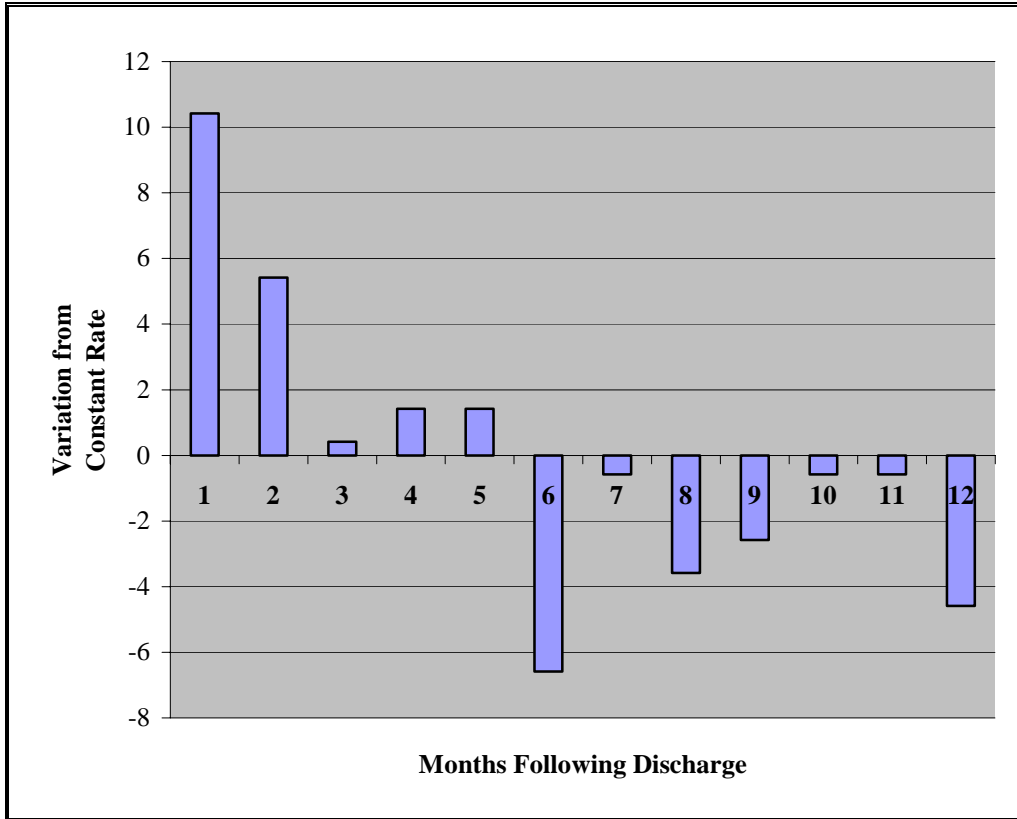


Figure 21 shows the variation in actual rate from the constant rate shown in Figure 16 (red line). The bars show variation from the constant rate. Any number above “0” shows the number of youth above the constant monthly new recidivists. A number below “0” is the number of youth below the monthly constant recidivists. For the first 5 months of the follow-up period every month has more new post-discharge offenders than the constant number. However, starting at 6 months the actual numbers are below the constant, illustrating the reduction in the number of youth committing their first offense after this time.

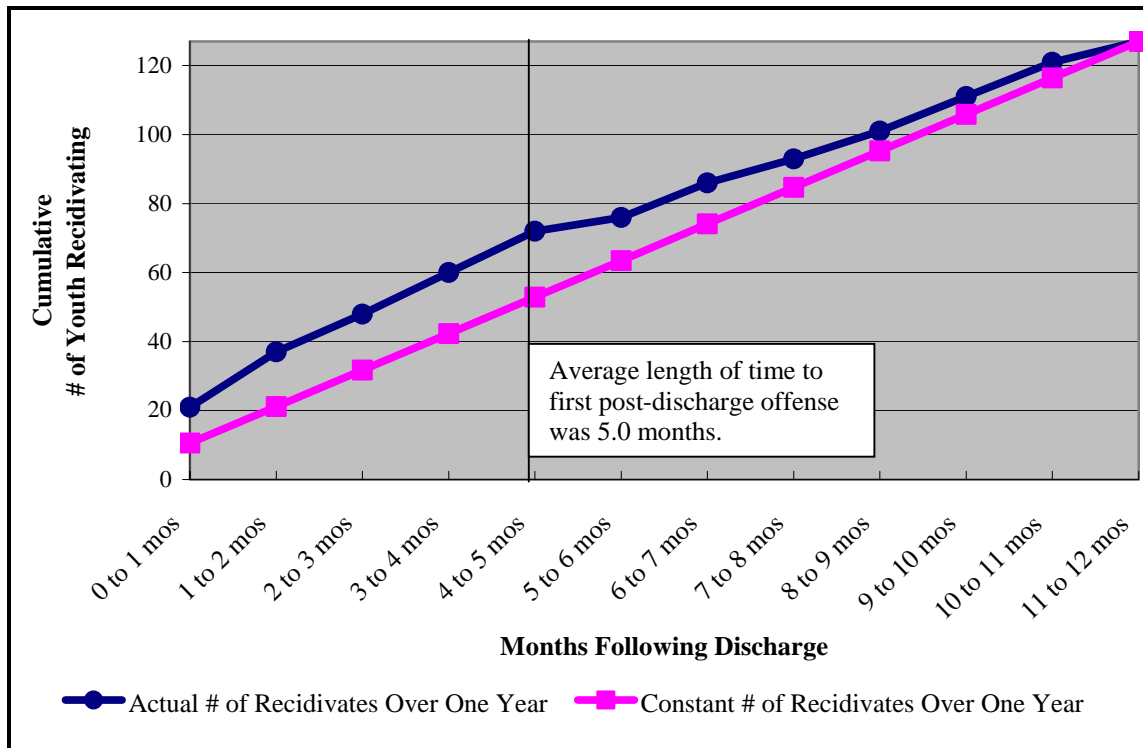


**Figure 21**  
**Survival Analysis/Variation from Constant Rate**  
**Ridge View Juveniles Discharged from NYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**



Another analysis of time to first offense (Figure 22) shows that, of the 127 Ridge View youth that recidivated within one year following discharge, 56.7% of youth that received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense committed that offense within the first 5 months after their discharge date. Eighty percent (79.5%) committed their first offense within 9 months following discharge. The average amount of time following discharge date to the first post-discharge filing that a youth received was 5.0 months (151 days).

**Figure 22**  
**Time to First Post-Discharge Offense (Survival Analysis)**  
**Ridge View Juveniles Discharged from DYC between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005**



The red line in Figure 22 depicts a *constant* linear growth rate in recidivism over one year. The red line shows graphically what it would look like if all youth in this cohort were to recidivate at an equal rate from the day of discharge to the last day of the follow up period. The blue line shows the *actual* growth in recidivism rate from the day of discharge through one year following discharge. This analysis shows that youth in this group appear to recidivate at an increasing rate from discharge to two months following discharge. Then the rate of growth is somewhat stabilized from two to five months, then the rate slows down from five to nine months (although continues to increase). From nine to twelve months the growth rate is slow, but steadily increasing.

These analyses indicate that a higher growth in the Ridge View recidivist population (youth who receive filings for new offenses) occurs within the first five months following discharge. After five months the rate of growth begins to decline, and the rate of growth remains below the constant percentage up through the 12-month follow-up period.

Therefore, it is not expected that if the follow-up time were extended beyond one year that recidivism rates would continue to increase significantly.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***Recidivism Results***

Before discussing the results presented within this report, it is important to realize that any analysis of recidivism rates must be approached cautiously. Policy-makers and juvenile justice practitioners often refer to recidivism as if it were a constant, universal concept. In reality, recidivism is an amorphous concept that is dependent upon its underpinning assumptions. A marked departure from any of these assumptions will result in outcome measures that are significantly disparate. There is a brief discussion of those assumptions that have the greatest potential for influencing recidivism rates<sup>44</sup> included as an appendix to this report.

### **DYC Recidivism**

Overall, thirty-nine percent (39.1%) of the youth discharged in FY 2004-05 received a new filing for an offense that occurred prior to discharge, and 37.9% received a new filing for an offense within one year after their discharge from DYC. Pre-discharge recidivism rates are at their highest in five years, although improved reporting and validation techniques could partially explain this increase. Post-discharge recidivism rates have remained between 34.4% and 38.0% for the past four years.

The risk factors that have traditionally been shown to increase the likelihood of re-offending were analyzed in this report, and for the most part, they do significantly predict the likelihood of re-offending. The risk factors, which have consistently been shown to increase the likelihood of re-offending, include: number of prior out-of-home placements, number of prior adjudications, number of prior detention admissions, and age at first adjudication. Also analyzed were risk scores (CYO-LSI), commitment classification

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<sup>44</sup> Altering the definition of recidivism can influence wholesale changes in outcome results. This discussion assumes that the definition of recidivism remains constant.

scores (CCI), number of escapes, and number of recommitments. All but one risk factor, prior out-of-home placements, significantly predicted post-discharge recidivism. With regards to pre-discharge recidivism, the risk factors that were not significantly predictive were: age at first adjudication, number of prior adjudications and CYO-LSI risk level. Because most of the risk factors analyzed were shown to increase the likelihood of recidivism, it is important that the Division continue to target those criminogenic risk factors in an attempt to mitigate those specific risks.

One interesting finding from this cohort of discharges was that, when looking at pre-discharge recidivism, the percentage of filings while in residential placement mirrored the percentage of filings while on parole. In the past, the number of new filings while on parole has been much higher than the number of new filings while in residential placement.

### **Ridge View Recidivism**

While recidivism rates for Ridge View youth were not statistically lower than the rates of other NYC males discharged in FY 2004-05, the results of this comparison still indicate that the RYVSC program has been successful in reducing the likelihood of re-offending. Where there were differences in the Ridge View group compared with other NYC males on risk factors for re-offending, the Ridge View youth scored significantly higher. Ridge View youth were assessed as needing more secure placements on the CCI, having more prior adjudications, more detention admissions, and more property offenders than the comparison group.

Also of significance were the higher rates of minority populations served at Ridge View (65.1%) when compared with all other males discharged during FY 2004-05 (43.1%). Youth placed at Ridge View were also more likely to have been committed for a property offense (54.2%) than other males (37.3%). Juvenile justice research has shown that property offenders recidivate at higher rates than youth who commit person offenses. Therefore, it would be expected that these youth would also have higher rates of recidivism than the comparison group. For post-discharge recidivism, this turned out to

be true, but not statistically significantly. A higher percentage of Ridge View youth recidivated (42.6%) compared to other DYC males (38.3%). Conversely, youth in the Ridge View group had slightly lower rates of pre-discharge recidivism compared with other males discharged from DYC during FY 2004-05. Of the 298 youth in the RVYSC group, 109 (36.6%) had a new misdemeanor or felony offense filed prior to discharge. In comparison, 42.4% (n=187) of males in the comparison group had a new filing for a misdemeanor or felony offense prior to discharge from the Division.

In addition, youth that successfully completed the Ridge View program did have significantly lower recidivism rates than youth who did not graduate from the program, indicating that Ridge View programming is effective in reducing recidivism.

Overall, the recidivism rates for Ridge View youth were lower than for other DYC males for pre-discharge recidivism and higher for post discharge, however these results were not statistically significant.



## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT AND RECIDIVISM**

The juvenile justice research community has long accepted the relationship between substance abuse and delinquency. Numerous studies have evidenced a significant correlation between early onset and chronic substance abuse with an increased probability for engaging in socially deviant activities and associating with delinquent peers<sup>45</sup>.

In an attempt to stop the cycle of continued substance use and delinquency, juvenile justice agencies have actively sought out resources to address this criminogenic need. Often, the need for substance abuse services outstrips the resources available for this effort. As a result, juvenile justice systems are required to ration this finite resource; dedicating these limited resources to those youth who evidence the highest need.

This rationing process has led some policy-makers to question the success rates for youth who undergo substance abuse treatment compared to those youth who do not receive these services. Recidivism rates are typically used as one measurement of success, which is the focus of FY 2006-07 Long Bill footnote 78a, which states:

***It is the intent of the General Assembly that the Department provide a report to the Joint Budget Committee on November 1, 2006 which tracks and compares recidivism rates between those juveniles receiving drug and alcohol treatment and those not receiving treatment, while sentenced to commitment.***

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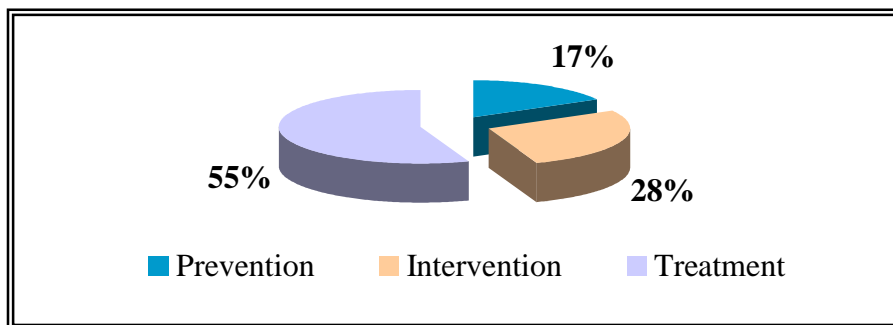
<sup>45</sup> Zhang, Wieczorek, and Welte, "The Impact of Age of Onset of Substance Use on Delinquency" (Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, Vol. 34, No. 2, 253-268 (1997))

Unfortunately, at this time the Division is only able to provide limited data related to a recidivism rate comparison. There are several methodological factors that inhibit the Division from providing recidivism rates for the FY 2004-05 discharge cohort, of youth that did or did not receive drug and alcohol treatment. These factors are described in more detail below and mainly relate to data availability and validity (Section A). Other methodological factors, including NYC's definition of "drug and alcohol treatment", are described as well in Section B. Substance abuse treatment services made available to FY 2004-05 discharges is outlined in Section C, treatment services made available to FY 2005-06 discharges is described in Section D, and services provided (or to be provided) to FY 2006-07 discharges is described in Section E. Finally, sections F and G describe how NYC will provide the requested recidivism rates for the FY 2005-06 and FY 2006-07 cohorts of discharges.

### A. The Risk and Responsibility Principle

In FY 2004-05, eighty-three percent (83%) of the Division's commitment population was assessed at either the Intervention or Treatment level for substance abuse. Given the high percentage of committed youth who are in need of substance abuse treatment services, it may be assumed that all of these youth require the same type of treatment.

**Substance Abuse Level  
FY 2004-05 Committed Youth**





In short, the Risk and Responsivity Principle rejects this notion that “one-size-fits-all”. Instead, the principle asserts that criminogenic needs are most effectively addressed when treatment interventions are appropriately matched. This matching process implies that youth are paired with programs that provide the appropriate intensity of treatment that is best tailored to the individualized needs of the youth.

The Risk and Responsivity Principle is important because the Division does not have a homogeneous population of substance abusers. The causal connection between substance abuse and delinquency varies greatly among the youth committed to the Division. Although it is true that delinquency is highly correlated with substance abuse, youth who are committed to the Division also have a myriad of other treatment needs (e.g., Mental Health, Family Issues, Sex Offender, Educational Issues, Sex Offense, etc.). It is often difficult to determine whether delinquency is a behavioral artifact of chronic substance abuse, or whether the substance abuse is related to an untreated psychological trauma or some other factor. Several studies have documented the high incidence of co-morbidity of disorders for youth involved in the juvenile justice system<sup>46</sup>. Additionally, research also suggests that youth who participate in high-risk behaviors like delinquency, also engage in other high-risk behaviors like substance abuse and sexual promiscuity.

The Risk and Responsivity Principle is also important in how it relates to recidivism. Since the causal connection between substance abuse and delinquency varies greatly within the commitment population, it would be inappropriate to associate recidivist acts solely upon the effectiveness (or lack of effectiveness) of substance abuse programming. For example, it is quite easy to visualize a scenario where a youth received quality and appropriate substance abuse treatment, but later recidivated as a result of unresolved mental health problems.

Substance abuse treatment, alone in isolation, is not the panacea that will “fix” delinquency among youth. In concert with other important criminogenic need

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<sup>46</sup> Feinstein, Sarah and Ginsburg, Joel “Motivational Interviewing With Dually Diagnosed Adolescents in Juvenile Justice Settings”, Source: <http://brief-treatment.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/6/3/218>

programming, substance abuse treatment has been shown to be an effective intervention against reducing substance use - as well as future delinquency and recidivism.

## **B. Limitations of the Data (For the FY 2004-05 Cohort of Discharges)**

- 1) Recidivism is a Retrospective Measure: One very important element, when evaluating substance abuse treatment, is length of treatment. This element was not sufficiently tracked in NYC's Trails database between FY 2002-03 and 2004-05. Given the recommendation that substance abuse treatment be at least six months in duration to be considered "treatment", there is no way for NYC to estimate which youth discharged in FY 2004-05 received substance abuse treatment—the data is largely inadequate and unverifiable.
- 2) Limited Substance Abuse Treatment Data in FY 2004-05: The youth that discharged from NYC in FY 2004-05 (the current study census) were, on average, in residential placement for a period of 18.8 months (1.6 years). This means that most youth were committed to NYC anywhere between FY 2002-03 and FY 2004-05. During this timeframe, substance abuse treatment data was not being recorded in NYC's Trails data system, as the infrastructure was still under development. While limited substance abuse services data (for FY 2004-05 discharges) was extracted from Trails—as Trails evolved over the years to accommodate substance abuse treatment data—the accuracy of the data is suspect and does not meet the validity threshold necessary for critical data analysis.
- 3) Difficulties Producing a Control/Comparison Group: Footnote 78a requires that NYC provide a comparison of recidivism rates between those juveniles receiving substance abuse treatment and those not receiving treatment. When youth are committed to NYC they are assessed for substance abuse treatment need. A youth can fall into one of three levels: prevention, intervention, or treatment. Youth that fall into the "treatment" level are in need of some level of substance abuse treatment services. Because NYC has a moral and legal obligation to provide

treatment to youth that show need, all treatment level youth receive some substance abuse services. In other words, to the extent resources allow, treatment is not withheld from youth who show a need.

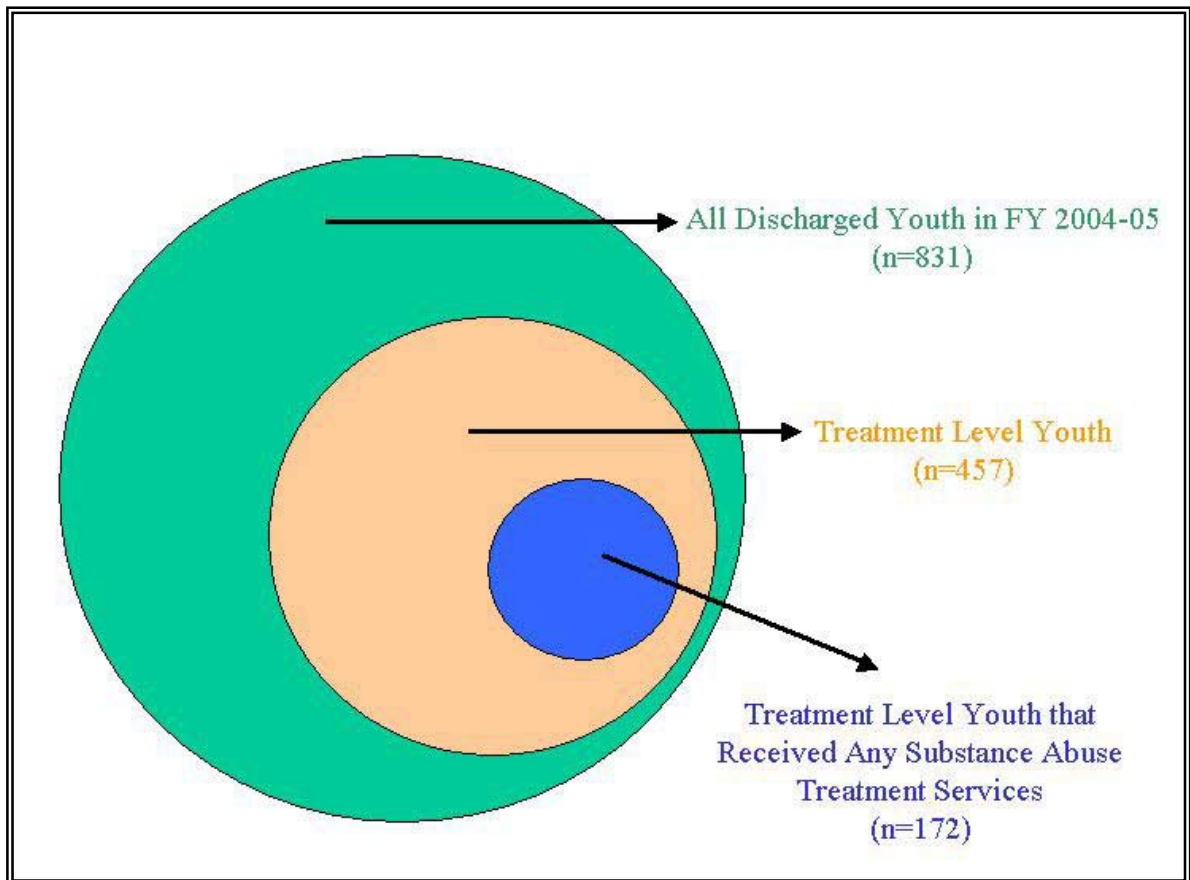
It is certain that all youth with treatment level substance abuse needs had received some level of treatment at some point during their commitment. In many cases, because of limited resources, substance abuse treatment may have been exceedingly minimal. In those instances, treatment services may have been as rudimentary as a group educational session or forwarding of treatment-related materials. However, when treatment is defined as receiving six or more months of services, an evaluation is possible.

- 4) The Spectrum of Treatment Level Youth: In the FY 2004-05 discharge cohort, fifty-five percent (55%) of youth were assessed at the treatment level (457 of 831 discharges). Across the 457 youth, there is a broad range of need for substance abuse treatment services. For example, some treatment level youth are committed to NYC with serious methamphetamine addiction, while some youth confirm only having tried marijuana on a single occasion. While both youth are considered treatment level, and both require and receive substance abuse services while committed to NYC, the two youth have starkly different histories with substances; as such, a very different treatment plan is recommended.

### **C. Recidivism Rates for those Youth that Received Substance Abuse Treatment**

Given the aforementioned caveats and limitations associated with reporting recidivism rates for those youth that received substance abuse treatment, statistics for this first year should be viewed as cursory with perhaps some utility for establishing a baseline measure for future analysis.

For purposes of this analysis, the Division has analyzed the sample of youth for which there was a determination that at least some substance abuse treatment services had been delivered. It is important to note that the intensity, quality, and duration of these substance abuse treatment services vary greatly. This analysis clusters those youth who received periodic and low-level treatment services with those who received long-term intensive services.



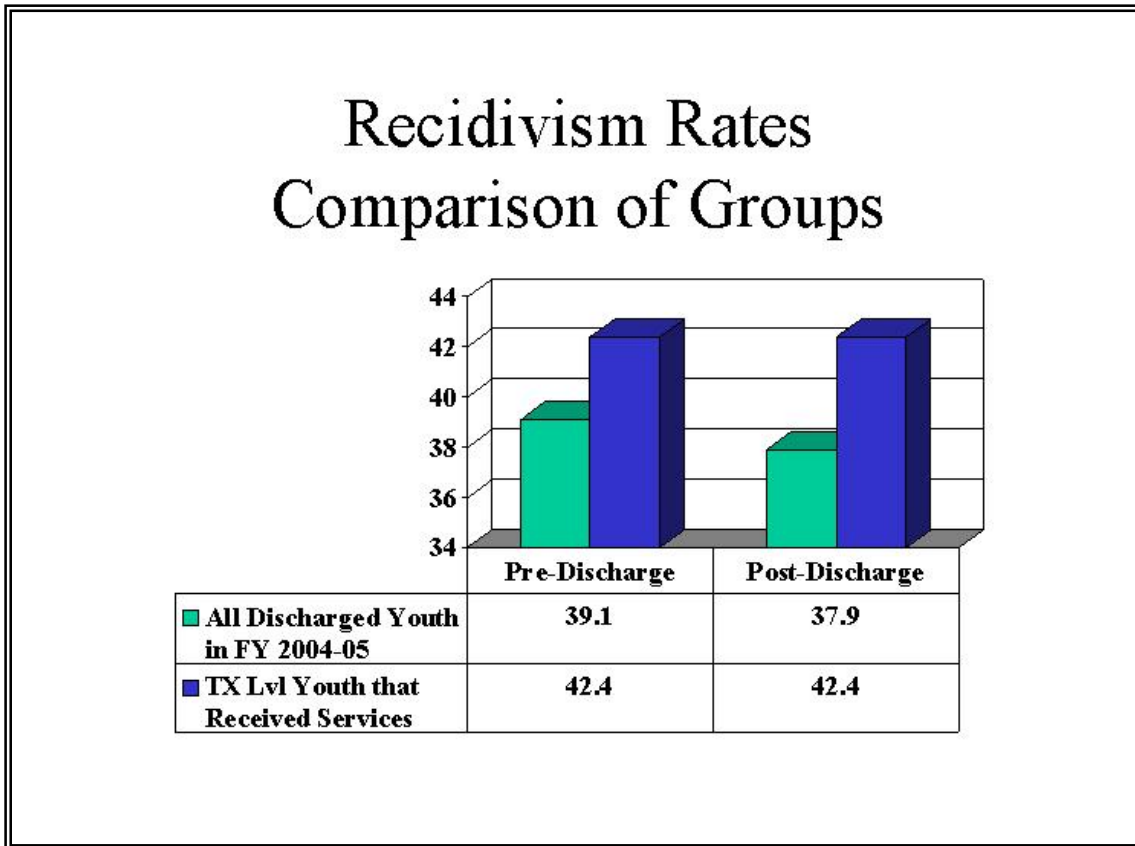
The sample of 172 youth who received treatment services represents 20.7% of all youth who discharged in FY 2004-05 (n=831). The concentric circle chart below illustrates this proportional distribution<sup>47</sup>.

Analysis of the subpopulation of *treatment level youth who received substance abuse services* indicates that the rate of recidivism is higher in this group when compared to the entire discharged population in FY 2004-05. A precautionary note related to this finding

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<sup>47</sup> Graphic for illustrative purposes alone and is not to scale.

is that the differences between these groups were not found to be statistically significant; as such, may be purely coincidental.



Interestingly, this subpopulation of youth had equal rates of pre- and post-discharge recidivism (42.4%). Although for each measure, 73 of the 172 youth in this subpopulation had indicated a new filing in the respective time period (e.g. pre- or post-discharge), not all of the 73 youth were in both categories. However, slightly over half of the youth in this subpopulation who had a pre-discharge filing also had a post-discharge filing (37 of 73 or 50.7%). At this point, the methodology of this study is not sufficient to conclude that the high percentage of youth found to have recidivated both pre- and post-discharge is simply coincidental, reflective of generalized risk, or biases inherent in the sample construction (i.e., placement decisions, focus on highest risk youth, etc.).

#### **D. NYC's Definition of Substance Abuse Treatment**

Length of stay in treatment has been found to be a significant predictor of positive post-treatment outcomes, such as decreases in unemployment and crime<sup>48</sup>. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) completed a study that found that due to the complexity of the treatment process, a 6-month minimum length of stay is recommended, with a goal of 12 months as the maximum length of stay. The report states, "There were no consistent patterns of before/after change in criminal activity across type of treatment, but lengths of stay greater than six months and completion of the treatment were clearly associated with greater reductions in crime than were shorter lengths of stay and non-completion of the treatment plan." These findings support NYC's need to provide treatment to the treatment level youth for a minimum of six months.

To examine whether treatment was effective, researchers would, ideally, compare treated to untreated youths. However, because all treatment level youth receive some services within NYC facilities, such a comparison was not feasible for this report. In fact, research has not been conducted within NYC with a control group in this area. In the absence of a strict control group, the Division's future response to this footnote will compare the recidivism rates of treatment level youth (FY 2005-06 and FY 2006-07 discharges) that received at least 6 months of substance abuse services, and those youth that did not.

It is important to note, however, that measuring substance abuse treatment outcomes for juveniles is difficult due to the many factors involved in their lives. Education, pre-treatment characteristics, motivation, developmental issues, family systems, mental health problems, and environmental obstacles for youth on parole add to the mixture of possible reasons for success or failure. Because treatment is based on the specific needs of the individual youth, length of treatment may be varied. NYC will use the 6-month threshold as an indicator of "treatment received", but this may not signify "adequate treatment length" for some youth.

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<sup>48</sup> Director's Report to the National Advisory Council on Drug Abuse - May, 2003

Other methodological obstacles in evaluating substance abuse treatment effectiveness are the collection of different modalities used, the quality of the provider, and the severity of substance abuse. The only evidence-based treatments for adolescents that have been scientifically evaluated and provide strong empirical support are for a few specifically developed models designed in university environments. Whether these new approaches can be effectively implemented in community settings remains to be seen. NYC contracts with several private treatment providers, all of which implement varied models of substance abuse treatment. More standardized treatment models are used within the NYC State-owned facilities; therefore, recidivism rates of youth that received drug and alcohol treatment in those State-owned facilities will be evaluated in future years.

**E. Description of NYC Substance Abuse Treatment FY 2003-04 – FY 2004-05**

During FY 2003-04 and FY 2004-05, the Division of Youth Corrections received funding from two outside sources to assist in the substance abuse service needs of youth.

	<i><b>FY 2003 - 04</b></i>	<i><b>FY 2004 - 05</b></i>
<i>Source of Funding</i>	<i>Funds</i>	<i>Funds</i>
1. CDHS - ADAD	\$ 49,900	\$ 49,900
2. Bureau of Justice Administration– Residential Substance Abuse Treatment and Transition (RSAT)	\$402,652	\$ 0.00
Total	\$452,552	\$ 49,900

The ADAD funding was utilized to contract with outside community providers to enter State-operated facilities and provide transition group services to youth. Upon release to parole status the youth were linked with the same agency to continue transition and community reintegration.

The following is the breakdown of where the RSAT funding was allocated within NYC State-operated programs. This grant funded, through the Bureau of Justice Administration and managed by the Division of Criminal Justice, allowed for the hiring of Certified Addictions Counselors who provided quality and enhanced treatment to youth assessed at

treatment level. Services included individual, group and transition programs. These were in addition to transition services funded through the ADAD funds. In FY 2003-04, these funds had expired and no additional funds were available in FY 2004-05 and beyond.

<i>RSAT GRANT</i>	<i>Fed FY 2003 – 04</i>
<i>Facility</i>	<i>Grant Amount</i>
Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center (LETTS)	\$225,067
Zebulon Pike Youth Services Center (ZETTS)	\$103,660
Betty K. Marler (GETTS)	\$ 73,925
Total	\$ 402,652

The Bureau of Justice Administration (BJA) did not appropriate RSAT funding for Federal FY 2004-05. However a “no-cost extension” of the Federal FY 2003-04 allowed some services to continue in FY 2004-05.

**F. How to Evaluate this Footnote using FY 2005-06 Discharges**

For the FY 2005-06 and FY 2006-07 cohorts of discharges, DYC will be able to identify those youth in State-owned/operated facilities receiving at least 6 months of substance abuse treatment, and the data will be verifiable. For both cohorts of discharges, the youth assessed as treatment level (i.e., showing a need for substance abuse treatment) will be divided into two groups: youth with 6 or more months of treatment in a State-owned residential facility, and youth with less than 6 months of treatment (0 to 5.999 months of treatment time).

From this sample of youth, DYC will identify treatment level youth (youth that showed a need for substance abuse treatment at time of assessment), and then will discern which youth received treatment in the State-owned facilities for six months or longer. Those youth with at least 6 months of treatment or longer will be deemed to have received adequate or sufficient treatment, those youth with less than 6 months of treatment will not be deemed to have received adequate drug and alcohol treatment.



In order to provide meaningful recidivism results, DYC will create profiles for both youth that received treatment and youth that did not receive treatment. Using a scientific risk (of re-offending) prediction instrument<sup>49</sup>, DYC will categorize treatment level youth into low, medium or high risk to recidivate. Then, a more meaningful comparison of recidivism rates will be possible. An example would be, of those youth that are at high risk to re-offend, rates of those receiving treatment can be compared to those not receiving treatment. These comparisons can also take place for medium risk youth and low risk youth. Additional profiles will also be created to cross-compare recidivism rates of substance abuse treatment and non-treatment youth by mental health needs and sex offender status.

The following table provides DYC discharge data for FY 2005-2006, and breaks down the number of discharged youth by substance abuse treatment level, by region, by gender. This information will be used to discern which treatment level youth received treatment and which youth did not.

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<sup>49</sup> For the FY 2005-06 Discharge Cohort, the Colorado Young Offender – Level of Supervision Inventory (CYO-LSI) will be used in this analysis. Starting in FY 2006-07, coinciding with the Division’s implementation of the Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment (CJRA), a similar analysis will be conducted using the CJRA.

DYC Region	Gender	Treatment Level	# of Youth	% of Youth	
Central	Female	Treatment	31	60.78	
		Intervention	14	27.45	
		Prevention	6	11.76	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100.00</b>
	Male	Unknown	5	1.43	
		Treatment	176	50.43	
		Intervention	111	31.81	
		Prevention	57	16.33	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Northeast	Female	Treatment	23	76.67	
		Intervention	5	16.67	
		Prevention	2	6.67	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.00</b>
	Male	Treatment	120	62.50	
		Intervention	47	24.48	
		Prevention	25	13.02	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Southern	Female	Treatment	14	42.42	
		Intervention	15	45.45	
		Prevention	4	12.12	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100.00</b>
	Male	Treatment	90	57.69	
		Intervention	46	29.49	
		Prevention	20	12.82	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Western	Female	Treatment	17	70.83	
		Intervention	5	20.83	
		Prevention	2	8.33	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100.00</b>
	Male	Unknown	1	1.06	
		Treatment	51	54.26	
		Intervention	22	23.40	
		Prevention	20	21.28	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100.00</b>
State Total	Female	Treatment	85	61.59	
		Intervention	39	28.26	
		Prevention	14	10.15	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100.00</b>
	Male	Unknown	6	0.76	
		Treatment	437	55.25	
		Intervention	226	28.57	
		Prevention	122	15.42	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>100.00</b>

## **G. Future Evaluations of Substance Abuse Treatment and Recidivism**

The Division of Youth Corrections has embarked on defining and redefining the role of assessment and reassessment within the Division's continuum of services to advance its system of care. This system change is designed to adopt best practices in the area of assessment.

The approach to future evaluations of substance abuse and recidivism is similar to the evaluation plan for FY 2005-06 discharges, with the one major difference being the use of the CJRA (Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment) in place of the Colorado Young Offender- Level of Service Inventory (CYO-LSI) for the creation of various youth profiles. In FY 2006-07 the Division discontinued the use of the CYO-LSI risk assessment instrument and adopted a new, more advanced risk assessment instrument called the CJRA. Results from the CJRA will be used by the Division to create profiles of treatment level youth. DYC will then be able to provide corresponding recidivism rates for each of the profiles created, which allows for a more meaningful and realistic rate comparison between treatment level youth. In conjunction with the assessment and treatment improvements mentioned above, DYC plans to utilize the additional information to provide more comprehensive recidivism analyses on discharged youth and their substance abuse treatment outcomes.

The matrix on the following page illustrates a potential approach for how future recidivism results will be displayed. This matrix uses a dual axis. The vertical axis is risk, while the horizontal is substance abuse treatment level. The use of this matrix is considered a superior approach because generalized criminogenic risk is controlled and factored into the analysis. As data is collected, it will be possible to establish baseline performance levels; as well as thoughtfully constructed performance targets and recidivism goals.

## Substance Abuse Risk-Need Matrix

		Substance Abuse Treatment Level Need		
		Prevention	Intervention	Treatment
CJRA Risk Level	Low			
	Medium			
	High			

The vision for enhancing services within NYC includes the desire to continue to seek and implement best practice in a standardized and youth-oriented evidence based approach. Enhancing NYC’s continuity of care model by collaborating with more community agencies on curriculum, uniform outcomes, and methods to measure and document outcomes, will assist in determining treatment success and strategies that work. NYC will include urinalysis services in all facilities as a treatment tool, especially for youth returning from a community pass. Training is necessary to refine treatment approaches in the area of treating youth who experience co-occurring disorders. Training for client managers in the area of relapse prevention, family systems, and contingency management will assist in the management of transition/parole services. While trauma education has been well instituted in NYC programming, the Division has a need to incorporate curriculum that meets the gender specific needs of its youth who experience trauma related disorders.

## **H. Concluding Statements**

Although youth who are committed to the Colorado Division of Youth Corrections may present a number of criminogenic need areas, substance abuse is certainly a significant risk factor that impacts a substantial percentage of the committed population. Research has shown that substance abuse is a major contributor to delinquent behavior.

The Division realizes the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of substance abuse treatment provided to committed youth and the subsequent outcomes related to recidivism. In past years, the infrastructure necessary to capture detailed drug and alcohol treatment information was not in place. Therefore, several methodological obstacles, described throughout this report, have prevented the Division from providing recidivism outcomes for treatment level youth that discharged in FY 2004-05.

However, for the FY 2005-06 discharges, and cohorts of discharges thereafter, the needed system improvements are being made, and the Division has been proactive in assuring that meaningful rates of recidivism will be available to compare across profiles of youth that received substance abuse treatment and those that did not.



# **APPENDIX**

## ***Limitations of Recidivism Research***

### **Definitional Issues**

#### ***The Definition of Recidivism Varies Across the Nation***

Throughout the United States, recidivism is a measure that is often utilized in determining the level of effectiveness of justice agencies and determining the level of public safety that can be expected as offenders are released back into the community. Because a common goal to reduce recidivism exists across justice agencies, the measure seems reasonable and is tracked closely and regularly by most justice agencies. However, due to the varying definitions of recidivism, applying and comparing the outcome measure is an imperfect science. Generally speaking, the term “recidivism” refers to the re-occurrence of delinquent or criminal behavior. However, the more specific definition of recidivism utilized by each agency can vary greatly among states and even among justice agencies within a single state. In the next few paragraphs, the use of varied definitions of recidivism across the U.S. will be explained.

#### ***Recidivism Definition Components***

Before describing the definitional differences across the nation, it is important to note that recidivism is a multi-faceted concept. The definition has two main components: 1) the type of system reaction to the delinquent behavior that constitutes “recidivism”, and 2) the length of the follow-up period, or how long the youth are tracked in the community after being released from the agency. The type of system reaction refers to whether recidivism is defined as rereferral, rearrest, a new charge, a new filing, reconviction, reconviction and return to custody or supervision, reincarceration, or recommitment. The length of follow-up is typically 12 to 36 months, with the norm being 12 months. Other important components of the recidivism definition include the type of offense that lead up

to the system reaction (delinquent, criminal, felony, misdemeanor, petty, etc.), the systems researched in the follow-up period (juvenile, adult, both), and if a cohort is followed, when that cohort was released from the agency. With the understanding that recidivism is a multi-component concept, it becomes apparent that the meaning of the measure differs from venue to venue, with each agency using varied combinations of the concept.

### ***A Glimpse Across the Nation***

According to a study conducted by the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (VDJJ)<sup>50</sup>, twenty-seven states currently measure juvenile recidivism rates statewide. As expected, with the concept of recidivism open for broad interpretation, few states utilize a common definition. This being said, there are some definitional components that are utilized more frequently than others by the states. The most common definitions utilized are reconviction, with 13 of the 27 states (48%) using this definition component, reincarceration (41%), rearrest (33%), and recommitment (11%). The least common definitions include rereferral, new filing, and reconviction and return to custody or supervision, with only one state subscribing to each (Maryland, Colorado, and Louisiana, respectively). Eight states do not restrict themselves to one measure of recidivism, but instead report on two or more of the measures mentioned above.

It is apparent from the summary above that recidivism is an exceedingly fluid concept. In the absence of a standardized definition for recidivism, meaningful comparison across states and agencies is simply not possible. Similar to comparing apples and oranges, recidivism cannot be compared unless the outcome measures are equivalent. The same is true for analyzing historical recidivism trends within an agency or system—without definitional consistency across time, there is no mechanism for meaningful analyses.

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<sup>50</sup> Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, DJJ Research Quarterly, Volume III, April 2005



## **Methodological Issues**

### ***Population Shifts***

In the juvenile justice system, the concept of risk is invariably connected to the probability of re-offending; as such, an “at-risk youth” is a youth who presents a greater than average chance of committing a criminal act. If a juvenile justice agency suddenly realizes a significant realignment of the risk potential of its population, then that realignment can result in differing recidivism rates when all other factors are held constant. For example, if a certain juvenile justice program or project is eliminated because of budget constraints, then youth who would have been directed to that program are then re-directed to other programs. This process, which most often directs youth deeper into the juvenile justice system, has occurred in Colorado. For example, the Community Accountability Program, as well as other programs designed to intervene with youth at earlier stages of the juvenile justice system, have been eliminated or seriously impacted because of State budget cuts. These programs were designed to provide alternatives to NYC detention and commitment sentences. The lack of capacity for delinquent youth in a community placement drives these youth into the NYC population, creating a need for increased treatment services, and overcrowding state-run commitment facilities. The process of shifting delinquent populations into other programs which may not be adequately prepared to treat these youth, or alternatively provide more treatment than is required, can both positively and negatively impact recidivism rates.

### ***Information Technology Advances***

Most juvenile and criminal justice agencies rely upon official records to determine recidivism rates. To the extent that these official records are considered accurate and complete, each agency is able to determine their respective rates of recidivism. It should be noted that the completeness and accuracy of official records have been questioned in the past. In response to these concerns, Colorado has devoted significant resources to

updating its criminal and juvenile justice information systems<sup>51</sup>. An unexpected consequence of updating these information systems is that recidivism rates may begin to increase in the future. These rates of recidivism are not necessarily increasing as a result of actual spikes in criminal behavior, but possibly because of the increased reliability and accuracy of matching offenders between data systems<sup>52</sup>.

### ***Policy Variations***

The juvenile justice system can be viewed as an intricate network of decision points that is generally governed by statute, policy, or administrative regulation, but where key decision-makers are allowed considerable discretion. Clearly, one of the key decision-makers in the juvenile justice system is the District Attorney. The District Attorney (DA) has considerable discretion in whether a Delinquency Petition is filed with the Court. A DA may choose not to file on a case because the case is considered to be without significant merit or because appropriate alternatives exist that can otherwise effectively discharge the case (e.g., a Diversion Program). Because of this discretion, there exist significant differences in filing practices throughout the State. In some jurisdictions, the DA may choose to file upon the majority of cases and allow the judicial process to determine the relative merits of a case. In other jurisdictions, in an attempt to manage the limited resources of the DA's Office or the Court, a DA may only file on those cases where the merits of a case have undergone careful examination. In either scenario, it is policy, not necessarily criminal activity that determines a filing; which in turn influences recidivism data and rates in Colorado.

### ***Actual Change in Criminal Behavior***

Lastly, changes in the recidivism rate can be the result of actual changes in criminal behavior. As research advances juvenile justice programming, it is generally believed that these advances will eventually result in better short-term and long-term outcomes.

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<sup>51</sup> Marked improvements have been made to the Judicial Department's data system (ICON/ECLIPSE) as well as to the Department of Human Services' data system (TRAILS).

<sup>52</sup> Conversely, less than accurate information systems may net lower recidivism rates because of errors associated with data entry or software inconsistencies.

Quantitative evidence of these enhanced outcomes may require years to be realized. Until causal links can be firmly established in data, claims that actual criminal behavior patterns have changed (either positively or negatively) should be made cautiously. This is not to suggest that annual recidivism rates should be ignored. Recidivism rates provide a basic barometer in how the system is reacting. Minimally, changes in recidivism rates should prompt policy-makers to question whether actual behavioral changes have occurred or whether the fluctuation in rates is an artifact of some other change occurring elsewhere in the juvenile justice system.

### ***A Note Regarding Statistical Significance***

Evaluation studies often reveal differences between groups. To this end this report uses two common statistical computations to identify differences in recidivism rates.

Most of the analyses in this report look at differences between categorical groups of youth. For example 'Gender' is a categorical measure. Youth can be in one of two groups, either male or female. To examine differences in categorical factors statisticians use a measure called Chi-Square.

Another statistical measure used in this report is an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). ANOVA's are used to determine differences in the means, or average amounts, of interval or ratio level data. This means that for each number in a series the scale is the same, or each number is exactly the same distance from the previous and subsequent number in the series. Age is a good example of ratio level or continuous data. From the time you are born your age continues to increase at a constant rate, and the difference between any two ages can be identified and measured to any fraction (ratio) of time. Prior adjudications is an example of interval level data. The difference between one and three prior adjudications is the same as the difference between 12 and 14 prior adjudications, but an individual could never have only a part (or fraction) of an adjudication. The numbers can only increase at regular whole intervals.

Differences identified between groups may be the result of some noteworthy impact, or they simply could have occurred because of random chance. Throughout this study, findings are included with their statistical significance. If it is highly unlikely that a finding (such as a difference between two groups) happened due to chance, it is said that the finding is statistically significant. Significance is measured through interpretation of a “p” value. Two “p” values are reported here ( $p < 0.05$  and  $p < 0.01$ ). A “p” value less than 0.05 would mean there is less than a 5% chance that the finding is random (due to chance, rather than the existence of a real relationship or cause). A “p” value less than 0.01 would mean there is less than a 1% chance that the finding is random. Social Science research traditionally accepts findings at the  $p < 0.05$  level or lower as being sufficiently significant to accept those findings as valid and true. Throughout this report, the term “significant” is used only to describe findings that are significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level or lower. Results that are not statistically significant may provide some initial insight into differences between groups, but should not necessarily dictate changes in policy or decision-making processes.