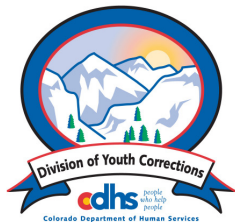


# Recidivism Evaluation of Committed Youth Discharged in Fiscal Year 2006-07



**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, 2009

**Any questions concerning the data presented in this report may be directed to the**

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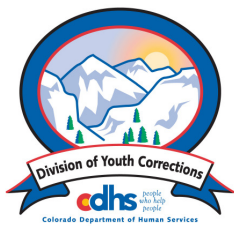
**Colorado Department of Human Services  
Division of Youth Corrections**



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

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## **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) Legislative Request for Information (RFI) 43
- 2) Section 19-2-411.5, C.R.S., the legislation authorizing the construction and operation of the Ridge View Youth Services Center
- 3) Legislative RFI 44

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

### **The Recidivism Measure**

Recidivism is a measure that is often utilized in determining the level of effectiveness for both adult and juvenile justice agencies. 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 (while the youth is under NYC supervision) 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.

The findings contained in this report are based on an evaluation of nine hundred forty-four youth discharged during FY 2006-07. The term ‘pre-discharge’ is used to identify new offenses filed during the period of time a youth is supervised by NYC in residential commitment or on parole. ‘Post-discharge’ recidivism refers to filings for new felony or misdemeanor offenses that occurred up to one year following discharge from NYC supervision.

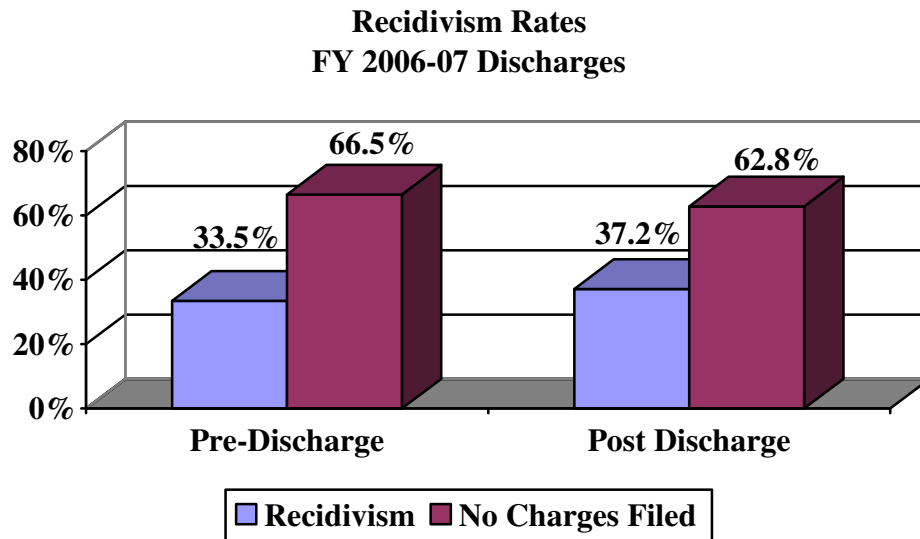
Like all recidivism studies, NYC’s is lagged, or retrospective, in nature. Therefore, each year the recidivism study examines and reports on the recidivism rates of youth that discharged from NYC in the fiscal year two years prior. For the current study, the census includes all youth that discharged in FY 2006-07. Because several youth discharged on the last day of FY 2006-07 (June 30, 2007), NYC had to wait until June 30, 2008, to collect recidivism data. This allows each discharged youth a one-year follow-up period.

The census for this year’s report includes 944 youth discharged from NYC between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007. 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 discharge census, a sub-group of youth who were placed at the Ridge View facility during their commitment stay (N=332), and a substance abuse treatment cohort (N=166).

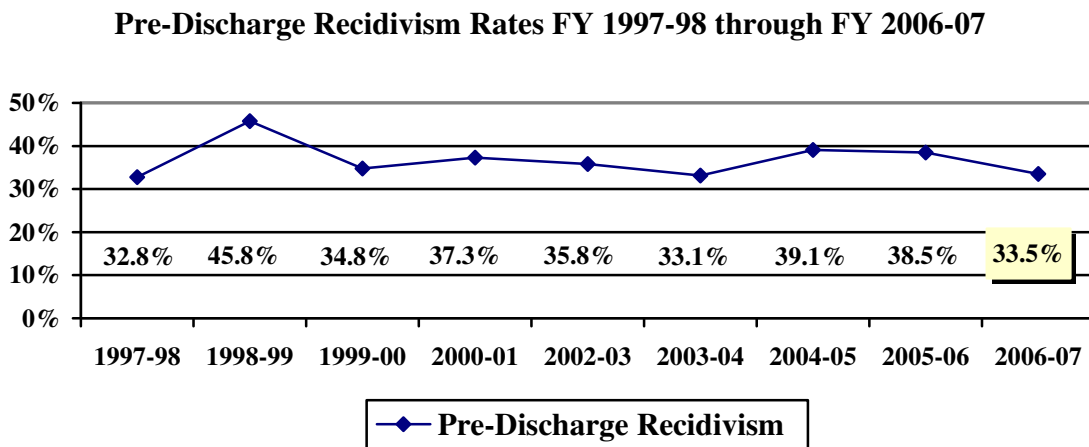


## DYC Recidivism Results

- ◆ Thirty-four percent (33.5%) of youth discharged in FY 2006-07 received a new felony or misdemeanor filing prior to discharge (pre-discharge recidivism).
- ◆ Thirty-seven percent (37.2%) of youth discharged in FY 2006-07 received a new felony or misdemeanor filing within one year following discharge from the Division (post-discharge recidivism).

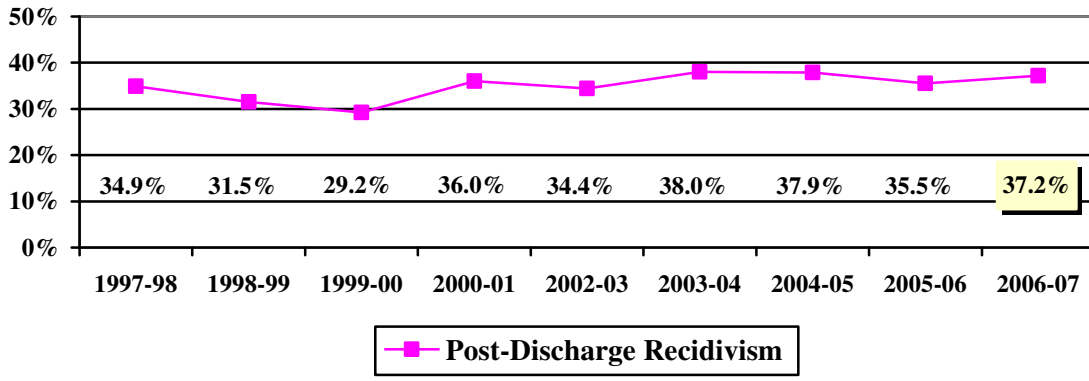


- ◆ Trend data show that pre-discharge recidivism rate (33.5%) is the second lowest in the past five years (33.1% for youth discharged in FY 2003-04)



- ◆ Post-discharge recidivism rates have remained fairly stable over the last four discharge cohorts, ranging between 36% and 38% since FY 2003-04.

**Post-Discharge Recidivism Rates FY 1997-98 through FY 2006-07**



- ◆ Half of the pre-discharge recidivism filings (50.9%) were for criminal offenses, and 49% were delinquency (juvenile) filings. Youth receiving a delinquency filing may be re-committed to the Division of Youth Corrections.
- ◆ Eighty-three percent (82.6%) of post-discharge recidivism filings were for criminal (adult) offenses; adult offenders are not eligible for sentencing to DYC, and if adjudicated guilty would move on to an adult probation or Department of Corrections sentence.
- ◆ Males were significantly more likely to receive a post-discharge filing (40.7%) than females (17.0%). There was no difference in pre-discharge recidivism rates by gender.
- ◆ The Southern Region had the highest rate of pre-discharge recidivism (43.8%) when compared with the other three DYC management regions. Risk scores for the Southern Region showed a significantly greater number of youth at a high risk for recidivism, helping to explain the elevated rates.
- ◆ Post-discharge recidivism rates by DYC management region were highest in the Northeast (45.1%) and Western (45.3%) regions.
- ◆ The number of escapes and recommitments was significantly higher for youth who recidivated (pre-discharge and post-discharge) than for youth who did not.

- ◆ Fifty-seven percent of youth who received a new filing prior to discharge committed at least one of their offenses while in residential placement, while 54.7% committed at least one offense on parole status<sup>1</sup>.
- ◆ Youth who were employed or enrolled in school at the time of discharge were less likely to receive a new filing for an offense within one year of discharge (35.3%) than youth who were not employed or enrolled in school (44.4%).
- ◆ Youth with prior out-of-home placements were more likely to recidivate pre-discharge (36.7%) than youth with no prior out of home placements (25.7%).
- ◆ A prior commitment to the Division of Youth Corrections significantly increased the likelihood of a youth receiving a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor charge prior to discharge from the Division.
- ◆ Common factors for risk of recidivism, including the number of prior detention admissions, number of prior adjudications, age at first adjudication, and a composite risk score obtained at the time of commitment were all positively related to the likelihood of a youth receiving a new filing prior to discharge as well as within one year following discharge.
- ◆ Receiving a pre-discharge filing was not found to be a predictor of post-discharge recidivism with this discharge cohort, potentially indicating a certain degree of success in the treatment practices employed by DYC. Forty percent (39.6%) of pre-discharge recidivates received a post-discharge filing, compared with 36% of youth who did not recidivate prior to discharge.
- ◆ An analysis of time to first post-discharge offense found that the average amount of time to first offense was just less than 5 months. Youth recidivated at a higher rate for the first five months than in the last 7 months following discharge.

### **Ridge View Youth Services Center Recidivism Results**

This year's Ridge View sample consisted of 332 males discharged from the Division of Youth Corrections in FY 2006-07 who spent at least 90 days at the Ridge View Youth

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<sup>1</sup> These categories are not mutually exclusive. Many youth who receive filings do so for multiple offenses, and a single youth could have received a filing for an offense during residential commitment as well as during parole supervision.

Services Center (RVYSC) during their residential commitment. Ridge View recidivism rates were compared with the recidivism rates of all other males (n=471) discharged from DYC who did not attend the RVYSC facility. There were some notable differences between the characteristics of males placed at Ridge View and those in the comparison group.

- ◆ Ridge View youth were more likely to have been committed for property offenses (48%) than other DYC males (40%). Juvenile justice research has shown that property offenders recidivate at higher rates than youth who commit person offenses.
- ◆ A significantly higher percentage of the Ridge View sample scored high for risk of re-offending on the CYO-LSI (33%), when compared with other DYC males discharged in FY 2006-07 (24%).
- ◆ The Ridge View group also had significantly more prior adjudications and detention admissions than youth in the comparison group.
- ◆ The above factors suggest that youth in the Ridge View discharge sample should be at a higher risk for recidivism than youth in the comparison group, however there were no statistically significant differences in either pre-discharge or post-discharge recidivism rates between the two groups.
- ◆ The pre-discharge recidivism rate for Ridge View youth was 34.9% (compared with 32.7% for other DYC males).
- ◆ The post-discharge recidivism rate for Ridge View youth was 41.3% (compared with 40.3% for other DYC males).
- ◆ Similar to the overall DYC recidivism findings, more Ridge View youth in the Northeast and Western regions received a new filing within one year following discharge.
- ◆ The number of escapes and number of recommitments were both significant predictors of pre-discharge recidivism, however there were no noted differences in post-discharge recidivism rates.
- ◆ Ridge View youth with prior out-of-home placements were more likely to have received a new filing post-discharge (47.2%) than Ridge View youth who had no prior placements (29.8%).

- ◆ The only risk of recidivism factor which exhibited a significant influence over pre-discharge recidivism rates was prior adjudications, and not in the expected direction. Youth with no prior adjudications had higher rates of pre-discharge recidivism (49.2%) than youth with one or more than one prior adjudication (24.1% and 37.3%, respectively).
- ◆ Ridge View youth who were employed or enrolled in school at the time of discharge were less likely to receive a new filing within one year following discharge (37.7%) than youth in the Ridge View sample who were not employed or enrolled in school (52.7%).

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

The juvenile justice research community has long accepted the relationship between substance abuse and delinquency. However, often the need for substance abuse services outstrips the resources available and agencies are forced to ration the limited resources; dedicating them to those youth who evidence the highest need.

A subgroup of 233 youth discharged in FY 2006-07 who were assessed with 'Intervention' or 'Treatment' level substance abuse needs at the time of commitment and spent at least six months in a State-secure treatment facility were selected for analysis in this report.

- ◆ Of the 233 youth who were eligible for this sub-group, 71% (n=166) received substance abuse treatment services while a client in the eligible State-secure residential placement.
- ◆ Fifty-seven percent of the youth who received treatment received at least five treatment sessions a month; with significantly more services provided to youth assessed at the 'Treatment' level, compared with the 'Intervention' level youth.
- ◆ The youth who received substance abuse treatment in State-secure facilities were less likely to receive a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense prior to discharge (40.4%) than youth who did not receive treatment in a State-secure facility (56.7%). There were no differences in post-discharge recidivism rates.

# QUICK REFERENCE TABLES

## Pre-Discharge Cohort Comparison

	Pre-Discharge Recidivism FY 2005-06 Discharges	Pre-Discharge Recidivism FY 2006-07 Discharges	Direction
<b>Overall Recidivism Rate</b>	• 38.5%	• 33.5%	- 5.0
<b>Most Serious Felony Filing Type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (8.9%)</li> <li>• Property: (14.3%)</li> <li>• Drug: (6.7%)</li> <li>• Weapon: (8.4%)</li> <li>• Escape: (N/A)</li> <li>• Identity: (N/A)</li> <li>• Sex Registration: (N/A)</li> <li>• Other: (30.7%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (17.1%)</li> <li>• Property: (19.9%)</li> <li>• Drug: (6.6%)</li> <li>• Weapon: (0.9%)</li> <li>• Escape: (19.0%)</li> <li>• Identity: (3.2%)</li> <li>• Sex Registration: (0.9%)</li> <li>• Other: (1.6%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ 8.2</li> <li>+ 5.6</li> <li>- 0.1</li> <li>- 7.5</li> <li>N/A</li> <li>N/A</li> <li>N/A</li> <li>N/A</li> </ul>
<b>Most Serious Misdemeanor Filing Type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (11.7%)</li> <li>• Property: (3.9%)</li> <li>• Drug: (0.8%)</li> <li>• Weapon: (0.8%)</li> <li>• Escape: (N/A)</li> <li>• Identity: (N/A)</li> <li>• Sex Registration: (N/A)</li> <li>• DWI/DUI (N/A)</li> <li>• Other: (13.7%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (13.9%)</li> <li>• Property: (4.4%)</li> <li>• Drug: (0.0%)</li> <li>• Weapon: (0.6%)</li> <li>• Escape: (4.1%)</li> <li>• Identity: (1.6%)</li> <li>• Sex Registration: (0.3%)</li> <li>• DWI/DUI: (1.6%)</li> <li>• Other: (4.1%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ 2.2</li> <li>+ 0.5</li> <li>- 0.8</li> <li>- 0.2</li> <li>N/A</li> <li>N/A</li> <li>N/A</li> <li>N/A</li> <li>N/A</li> </ul>
<b>Type of Filing (Most Serious Charge)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal: (N/A)</li> <li>• Delinquency: (N/A)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal: (50.9%)</li> <li>• Delinquency: (49.1%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A</li> <li>N/A</li> </ul>
<b>Finding For Most Serious Felony or Misdemeanor Filing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guilty: (59.8%)</li> <li>• No Finding of Guilt: (36.6%)</li> <li>• Deferred: (2.5%)</li> <li>• Other: (1.1%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guilty: (54.7%)</li> <li>• No Finding of Guilt: (40.5%)</li> <li>• Deferred: (3.2%)</li> <li>• Other: (1.6%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5.1</li> <li>+ 3.9</li> <li>+ 0.7</li> <li>+ 0.5</li> </ul>
<b>Finding For Any Felony or Misdemeanor Filing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guilty: (98.9%)</li> <li>• No Finding of Guilt: (1.1%)</li> <li>• Deferred: (0.0%)</li> <li>• Other: (0.0%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guilty: (87.7%)</li> <li>• No Finding of Guilt: (8.5%)</li> <li>• Deferred: (3.2%)</li> <li>• Other: (0.6%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 11.2</li> <li>+ 7.4</li> <li>+ 3.2</li> <li>+ 0.6</li> </ul>
<b>Gender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male: (40.1%)</li> <li>• Female: (29.7%) *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male: (33.6%)</li> <li>• Female: (32.6%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6.5</li> <li>+ 2.9</li> </ul>
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-American: (41.6%)</li> <li>• Hispanic: (39.5%)</li> <li>• White: (37.0%)</li> <li>• Other: (33.3%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-American: (35.4%)</li> <li>• Hispanic: (33.1%)</li> <li>• White: (33.0%)</li> <li>• Other: (34.8%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6.2</li> <li>- 6.4</li> <li>- 4.0</li> <li>+ 1.5</li> </ul>
<b>DYC Management Region</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central: (39.4%)</li> <li>• Northeast: (37.4%)</li> <li>• Southern: (42.3%)</li> <li>• Western: (31.6%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central: (32.0%)</li> <li>• Northeast: (30.4%)</li> <li>• Southern: (43.8%) *</li> <li>• Western: (30.2%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 7.4</li> <li>- 7.0</li> <li>+ 1.5</li> <li>- 1.4</li> </ul>
<b>Number of Escapes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.3 (recidivists)</li> <li>• 0.5 (non-recidivists) *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.5 (recidivists)</li> <li>• 0.6 (non-recidivists) *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ 0.2</li> <li>+ 0.1</li> </ul>
<b>Number of Reccommitments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (26.3%)</li> <li>• One: (68.5%) *</li> <li>• Two or More: (92.6%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (22.1%)</li> <li>• One: (65.7%) *</li> <li>• Two or More: (93.6%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4.2</li> <li>- 2.8</li> <li>+ 1.0</li> </ul>

### Pre-Discharge Cohort Comparison (continued)

	Pre-Discharge Recidivism FY 2005-06 Discharges	Pre-Discharge Recidivism FY 2006-07 Discharges	Direction
<b>Type of Pre-Discharge Recidivism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential Commitment Only: (49.4%)</li> <li>On Parole Only: (37.2%)</li> <li>Residential Commitment &amp; On Parole: (13.4%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential Commitment Only: (45.3%)</li> <li>On Parole Only: (43.0%)</li> <li>Residential Commitment &amp; On Parole: (11.7%)</li> </ul>	- 4.1 + 5.8 - 1.7
<b>Prior Out-of-Home Placements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.6 (recidivists) *</li> <li>1.9 (non-recidivists)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.9 (recidivists) *</li> <li>1.8 (non-recidivists)</li> </ul>	+ 0.3 - 0.1
<b>Number of Detention Admissions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zero to Two: (25.8%) *</li> <li>Three or More: (42.3%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zero to Two: (24.6%)</li> <li>Three or More: (36.5%) *</li> </ul>	- 1.2 - 5.8
<b>Number of Prior Adjudications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None: (28.8%)</li> <li>One: (40.2%) *</li> <li>Two or more: (42.9%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None: (27.9%)</li> <li>One: (30.8%) *</li> <li>Two or more: (39.6%)</li> </ul>	- 0.9 - 9.4 - 3.3
<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>14.0 years *</li> </ul>	no change
<b>Number of Prior Commitments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zero: (37.5%)</li> <li>One or More: (60.5%) *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zero: (32.6%)</li> <li>One or More: (57.1%) *</li> </ul>	- 4.9 - 3.4
<b>Assessed Risk Score (CYO-LSI)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low: (31.0%)</li> <li>Medium: (38.9%) *</li> <li>High: (44.9%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low: (21.7%)</li> <li>Medium: (33.7%) *</li> <li>High: (44.7%)</li> </ul>	- 9.3 - 5.2 - 0.2

\* Indicates group differences are statistically significant for that particular study

### Post-Discharge Cohort Comparison

	Post-Discharge Recidivism FY 2005-06 Discharges	Post-Discharge Recidivism FY 2006-07 Discharges	Direction
<b>Overall Recidivism Rate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35.5%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>37.2%</li> </ul>	+ 1.7
<b>Most Serious Felony Filing Type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Person: (5.8%)</li> <li>Property: (18.2%)</li> <li>Drug: (12.7%)</li> <li>Weapon: (9.7%)</li> <li>Escape: (N/A)</li> <li>Identity: (N/A)</li> <li>Sex Registration: (N/A)</li> <li>Other: (25.2%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Person: (19.4%)</li> <li>Property: (26.2%)</li> <li>Drug: (7.4%)</li> <li>Weapon: (2.6%)</li> <li>Escape: (2.0%)</li> <li>Identity: (4.0%)</li> <li>Sex Registration: (2.3%)</li> <li>Other: (2.0%)</li> </ul>	+ 13.6 + 8.0 - 5.3 - 7.1 N/A N/A N/A N/A
<b>Most Serious Misdemeanor Filing Type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Person: (7.9%)</li> <li>Property: (3.6%)</li> <li>Drug: (0.9%)</li> <li>Weapon: (0.6%)</li> <li>Escape: (N/A)</li> <li>Identity: (N/A)</li> <li>Sex Registration: (N/A)</li> <li>DWI/DUI: (N/A)</li> <li>Other: (15.5%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Person: (7.4%)</li> <li>Property: (9.1%)</li> <li>Drug: (0.3%)</li> <li>Weapon: (1.7%)</li> <li>Escape: (0.0%)</li> <li>Identity: (1.1%)</li> <li>Sex Registration: (2.6%)</li> <li>DWI/DUI: (3.1%)</li> <li>Other: (8.8%)</li> </ul>	- 0.5 + 5.5 - 0.6 + 1.1 N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A
<b>Type of Filing (Most Serious Charge)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Criminal: (N/A)</li> <li>Delinquency: (N/A)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Criminal: (82.6%)</li> <li>Delinquency: (17.4%)</li> </ul>	N/A N/A

**Post-Discharge Cohort Comparison (continued)**

	<b>Post-Discharge Recidivism FY 2005-06 Discharges</b>	<b>Post-Discharge Recidivism FY 2006-07 Discharges</b>	<b>Direction</b>
<b>Finding For Most Serious Felony or Misdemeanor Filing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guilty: (47.0%)</li> <li>• No Finding of Guilt: (38.8%)</li> <li>• Deferred: (4.2%)</li> <li>• Other: (10.0%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guilty: (42.7%)</li> <li>• No Finding of Guilt: (44.4%)</li> <li>• Deferred: (6.8%)</li> <li>• Other: (6.0%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4.3</li> <li>+ 5.6</li> <li>+ 2.6</li> <li>- 4.0</li> </ul>
<b>Finding For Any Felony or Misdemeanor Filing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guilty: (99.4%)</li> <li>• No Finding of Guilt: (0.3%)</li> <li>• Deferred: (0.0%)</li> <li>• Other: (0.3%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guilty: (78.3%)</li> <li>• No Finding of Guilt: (11.1%)</li> <li>• Deferred: (7.1%)</li> <li>• Other: (3.4%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 21.1</li> <li>+ 10.8</li> <li>+ 7.1</li> <li>+ 3.1</li> </ul>
<b>Gender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male: (37.7%)</li> <li>• Female: (23.2%) *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male: (40.7%)</li> <li>• Female: (17.0%) *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ 3.0</li> <li>- 6.2</li> </ul>
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-American: (36.1%)</li> <li>• Hispanic: (36.0%)</li> <li>• White: (35.1%)</li> <li>• Other: (33.3%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-American: (40.8%)</li> <li>• Hispanic: (39.4%)</li> <li>• White: (34.9%)</li> <li>• Other: (26.1%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ 4.7</li> <li>+ 3.4</li> <li>- 0.2</li> <li>- 7.2</li> </ul>
<b>DYC Management Region</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central: (34.2%)</li> <li>• Northeast: (37.4%)</li> <li>• Southern: (38.1%)</li> <li>• Western: (32.5%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central: (31.1%)</li> <li>• Northeast: (45.1%)</li> <li>• Southern: (34.9%) *</li> <li>• Western: (45.3%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3.1</li> <li>+ 7.7</li> <li>- 3.2</li> <li>+ 12.8</li> </ul>
<b>Number of Escapes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.9 (recidivists)</li> <li>• 0.8 (non-recidivists)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.1 (recidivists)</li> <li>• 0.7 (non-recidivists) *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ 0.2</li> <li>- 0.1</li> </ul>
<b>Number of Recommitments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (35.2%)</li> <li>• One: (36.4%)</li> <li>• Two or More: (37.0%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (34.9%)</li> <li>• One: (44.4%) *</li> <li>• Two or More: (46.8%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 0.3</li> <li>+ 8.0</li> <li>+ 9.8</li> </ul>
<b>Job/School Status at Discharge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not Employed or Attending School: (37.4%)</li> <li>• Employed or in School at Time of Discharge: (34.4%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not Employed or Attending School: (44.4%) *</li> <li>• Employed or in School at Time of Discharge: (35.3%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ 7.0</li> <li>+ 0.9</li> </ul>
<b>Number of Detention Admissions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero to Two: (27.7%)</li> <li>• Three or More: (37.8%) *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero to Two: (28.8%)</li> <li>• Three or More: (40.1%) *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ 1.1</li> <li>+ 2.3</li> </ul>
<b>Number of Prior Adjudications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (31.3%)</li> <li>• One: (31.0%) *</li> <li>• Two or more: (41.0%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (31.2%)</li> <li>• One: (31.1%) *</li> <li>• Two or more: (46.3%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 0.1</li> <li>+ 0.1</li> <li>+ 5.3</li> </ul>
<b>Age at First Adjudication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14.3 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14.0 years *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 0.3</li> </ul>
<b>Assessed Risk Score (CYO-LSI)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low: (31.8%)</li> <li>• Medium: (32.9%) *</li> <li>• High: (43.0%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low: (31.7%)</li> <li>• Medium: (35.1%) *</li> <li>• High: (46.3%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 0.1</li> <li>+ 2.2</li> <li>+ 3.3</li> </ul>

\* Indicates group differences are statistically significant for that particular study



## Ridge View Section Results

	Ridge View	Other NYC Males
<b>Pre-Discharge Recidivism</b>	• 34.9%	• 32.7%
<b>Post-Discharge Recidivism</b>	• 41.3%	• 40.3%
<b>Ethnicity *</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-American: (20.5%)</li> <li>• Hispanic: (41.3%)</li> <li>• White: (36.1%)</li> <li>• Other: (2.1%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-American: (12.3%)</li> <li>• Hispanic: (33.5%)</li> <li>• White: (51.6%)</li> <li>• Other: (2.5%)</li> </ul>
<b>Age at Commitment</b>	• 16.6	• 16.4
<b>Commitment Offense *</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (35%)</li> <li>• Property: (48%)</li> <li>• Other: (17%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person: (49%)</li> <li>• Property: (40%)</li> <li>• Other: (11%)</li> </ul>
<b>CYO-LSI Risk Assessment*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low Risk (21%)</li> <li>• Moderate Risk (46%)</li> <li>• High Risk (33%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low Risk (30%)</li> <li>• Moderate Risk (46%)</li> <li>• High Risk (24%)</li> </ul>
<b>Number of Prior Adjudications *</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (18%)</li> <li>• One: (34%)</li> <li>• Two or more: (48%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (30%)</li> <li>• One: (30%)</li> <li>• Two or more: (40%)</li> </ul>
<b>Number of Detention Admissions *</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero to Two: (22%)</li> <li>• Three or More: (78%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero to Two: (29%)</li> <li>• Three or More: (71%)</li> </ul>
	Ridge View Pre-Discharge Recidivism	Ridge View Post-Discharge Recidivism
<b>DYC Management Region</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central: (31.0%)</li> <li>• Northeast: (37.5%)</li> <li>• Southern: (42.6%)</li> <li>• Western: (33.3%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central: (34.2%)</li> <li>• Northeast: (53.8%)</li> <li>• Southern: (36.1%)</li> <li>• Western: (54.5%)</li> </ul>
<b>Escapes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.2 (recidivists)</li> <li>• 0.4 (non-recidivists)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.8 (recidivists)</li> <li>• 0.7 (non-recidivists)</li> </ul>
<b>Recommitments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (26.4%)</li> <li>• One: (62.7%)</li> <li>• Two or more: (83.3%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (38.7%)</li> <li>• One: (50.8%)</li> <li>• Two or more: (50.0%)</li> </ul>
<b>Prior Out-of-Home Placements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None (28.9%)</li> <li>• One or More (38.1%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None (29.8%)</li> <li>• One or More (47.2%)</li> </ul>
<b>Number of Prior Adjudications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (49.2%)</li> <li>• One: (24.1%)</li> <li>• Two or more: (37.3%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None: (42.4%)</li> <li>• One: (34.8%)</li> <li>• Two or more: (45.3%)</li> </ul>
<b>Job/School Status at Discharge</b>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not Employed or Attending School: (52.7%)</li> <li>• Employed or in School at Time of Discharge: (37.7%)</li> </ul>
<b>Graduation Status</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated: (32.9%)</li> <li>• Did not Graduate: (52.9%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated: (40.9%)</li> <li>• Did not Graduate: (44.1%)</li> </ul>

\* Indicates group differences are statistically significant for that particular study



## 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:

- 4) Legislative Request for Information (RFI) 43
- 5) Section 19-2-411.5, C.R.S., the legislation authorizing the construction and operation of the Ridge View Youth Services Center
- 6) Legislative RFI 44

Section 1 of this report is submitted in partial response to RFI 43<sup>2</sup>. The text of this Legislative request for information 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.*

Section 1 of this report ‘DYC Recidivism Rates for Youth Discharged’ (pg. 8) provides recidivism outcomes based on new filings for felony or misdemeanor offenses that occurred prior to discharge from DYC (pre-discharge recidivism) as well as recidivism results based on new filings for felony or misdemeanor offenses that occurred within one year following discharge from a DYC commitment sentence (post-discharge recidivism).

The Division’s annual recidivism study has not historically reported recidivism rates by DYC placement. Youth committed to DYC experience multiple residential placements

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<sup>2</sup> The Division’s annual Management Reference Manual includes data on the number of juveniles served and Length of Stay data, while this report focuses on recidivism data.

throughout their commitment. 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 necessarily useful in measuring the performance of individual DYC placements or programs<sup>3</sup>.

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>4</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.*

Section 2 ‘Ridge View Recidivism’ (pg. 44) examines pre-discharge 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 of recidivism (a one-year follow-up period for the Ridge View sample).

Although the Division’s annual recidivism report has not traditionally been intended to report on outcomes for individual programs or facilities, the Ridge View Youth Services Center (RVYSC) is a unique treatment option for eligible youth. The Ridge View program is intended as a primary placement option for youth, and youth placed in RVYSC tend to have longer lengths of service in their initial placement and are often

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<sup>3</sup> Evaluation of the effectiveness of individual programs requires experimental research designs that incorporate control or comparison groups matched on critical characteristics, and strict procedures to measure program fidelity. These efforts are time and staff intensive endeavors, which are beyond the current resource capacity of the Division.

<sup>4</sup> Section 19-2-411.5, C.R.S.

paroled directly from Ridge View to the community. Since the youth that are placed in the RVYSC facility tend to have fewer subsequent 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 NYC treatment programs.

In addition to the two mandates specified above, section 3 of this report ‘Substance Abuse Treatment and Recidivism’ (pg. 65) is also intended to serve as NYC’s response to RFI 44:

*The Department is requested to provide a report to the Joint Budget Committee on January 1, 2009 that 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 three separate Legislative mandates, the Division is submitting this single report in response to all three Legislative directives.

### **The Recidivism Measure**

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 2006-07. Like all recidivism studies, NYC’s evaluation of recidivism rates is retrospective in nature. Therefore, each year the recidivism study examines and reports on the re-offending behaviors of youth who discharged from NYC in the State fiscal year two years before the report date. For the current study, the sample includes all 944 youth who discharged from the Division in FY 2006-07. Several youth discharged near the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2007), therefore NYC needed to wait until June 30, 2008 to collect recidivism data for the post-discharge evaluation. This allows each discharged youth a one-year follow-up period.

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>5</sup>.

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

In Colorado, efforts to establish a common definition of recidivism dates back to the early 1990s. 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.

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix A for a discussion of recidivism in other states across the nation.

The definitions used in this report are as follows:

**Pre-Discharge Recidivism:** A filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense that occurred prior to discharge (while the youth is under DYC supervision) 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 tenth to apply the common definition of recidivism to committed youth served by the Division of Youth Corrections. While these recidivism definitions may be somewhat standardized for the State of Colorado, Colorado is currently the only state that uses District Attorney’s filings as a measure of recidivism<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, it is not possible to directly compare recidivism rates from DYC to those of other states’ juvenile justice agencies. Even within the State of Colorado it is important, when making comparisons, to ensure that the recidivism measures being compared are similarly defined.

### **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 recidivism evaluation.

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<sup>6</sup> Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, DJJ Research Quarterly, Volume III, April 2005.

<sup>7</sup> The filing data received from the Judicial Branch comes from the Integrated Colorado Online Network (ICON) database.

<sup>8</sup> The Denver County Court System is the only county court system in the State whose data is not captured by the Judicial Department’s data system. Therefore, adult misdemeanor filings processed by Denver County Court are not included in this study. Denver County felony filings are captured, because the Denver District Court processes them, which is a part of the Judicial on-line data system. Denver District Court also processes 100% of Denver County juvenile misdemeanor filings.

At DYC's request the Colorado Judicial Department prepared a data file containing all filings that occurred between July 1, 2002 and June 30, 2008, for all persons under 25 years of age. Filing data is requested as early as July 1, 2002 (four years prior to the first possible discharges) to allow for detection of the youth's commitment charge. By capturing the committing offense, research staff were able to better ensure that the appropriate match was being made between the DYC records and the Judicial filings records.

The data received from Judicial was then matched to DYC records using a high-level match of youth's last names, first initial, and two of three birth date elements. These matches were further examined for evidence of accuracy by a manual review of the full name and birth date 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 multiple aliases. Efforts were 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 computer programmers to match youth in the DYC data with youth in the Judicial filing data. However for the past four years, DYC has performed the match in-house, which the Division believes has increased the probability of accurate matches.

This is the third year that Lexis-Nexis Courtlink has been used in the data verification and matching process. 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.

The matched file was used to evaluate pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates on the same cohort of discharged youth, all 944 youth discharged from DYC in FY 2006-07. Four years ago, the Division modified the sampling methodology for this annual recidivism report. Before this time, youth for the pre-discharge group were selected independently from the post-discharge group. The methodology change 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 fifth generation report to include both pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates from the same client census.

## SECTION 1: DYC Recidivism Rates for Youth Discharged in FY 2006-2007

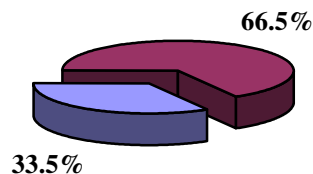
The findings contained in this report are based on an evaluation of nine hundred forty-four (944) youth discharged from the Division of Youth Corrections (DYC) between July 1, 2006 and July 30, 2007. Two types of recidivism are reported in these analyses, pre-discharge recidivism and post-discharge recidivism. The term ‘pre-discharge’ is used to identify new filings for felony or misdemeanor offenses filed during the period of time a youth is supervised by DYC in residential commitment or on parole. ‘Post-discharge’ recidivism refers to filings for new offenses that occurred up to one year following discharge from DYC supervision.

**Pre-Discharge Recidivism:** A filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense that occurred prior to discharge (while the youth is under DYC supervision) 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.

### Overall Recidivism Rates for Youth Discharged in FY 2006-2007

**Figure 1: Pre-Discharge Recidivism**

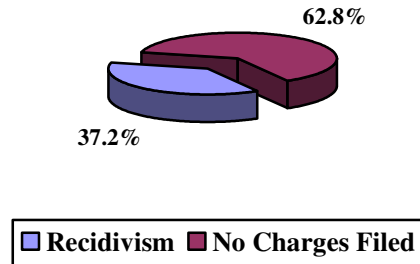


■ Recidivism ■ No Charges Filed

As indicated in Figure 1, of the 944 youth discharged during the fiscal year, 316 (33.5%) had a new felony or misdemeanor offense filed prior to leaving DYC’s supervision. Two-thirds of the discharge cohort (66.5%) did not receive any new filings prior to discharge.

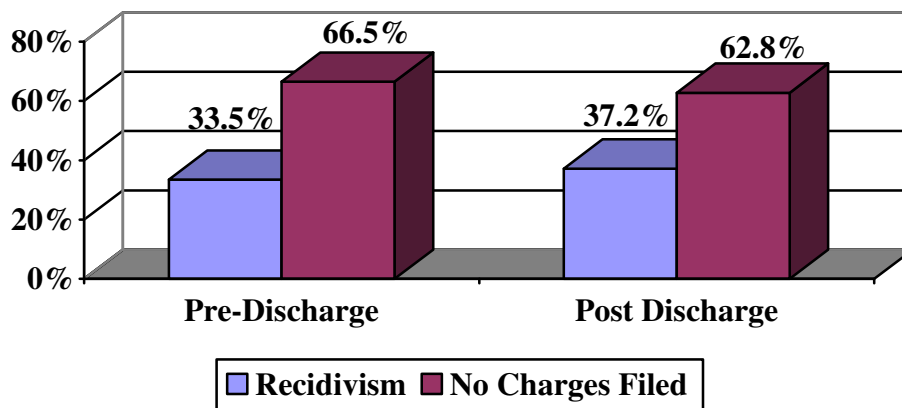
Follow-up information on new felony or misdemeanor offenses committed within one year of discharge from the Division resulting in a court filing was also collected on all 944 youth. Figure 2 shows the post-discharge recidivism rate. Thirty-seven percent (37.2%) of the youth discharged in FY 2006-07 (n=351) received a new filing for an offense committed within one year following discharge.

**Figure 2: Post-Discharge Recidivism**



Recidivism results for this cohort show higher post-discharge recidivism rates than pre-discharge recidivism rates (see Figure 3). Youth can be represented in each category, meaning that the same youth could have committed an offense before being discharged from NYC as well as after their discharge date. Past studies have shown that pre-discharge recidivism is a significant indicator of post-discharge recidivism, and while post-discharge recidivism rates for youth who received a filing prior to discharge were slightly higher than for those youth who did not receive a pre-discharge filing (39.6% and 36.0%, respectively), these results are not statistically significant.

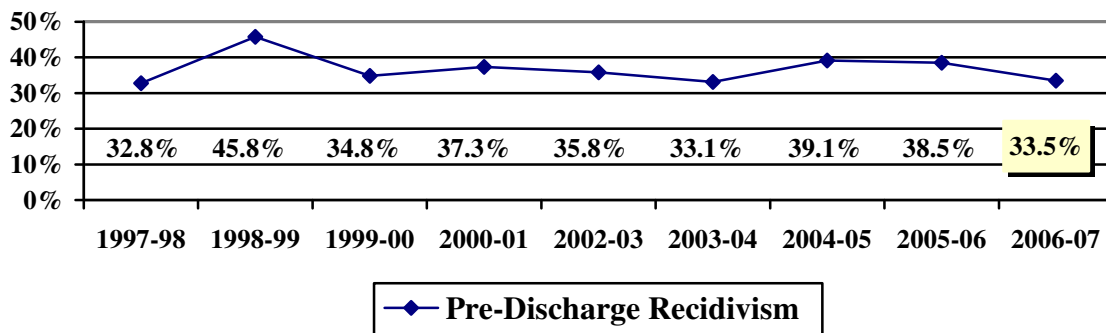
**Figure 3: Recidivism Rates**



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

The following charts outline trends in recidivism rates for the past nine DYC recidivism studies<sup>9</sup>. The pre-discharge recidivism rate (33.5%) decreased to levels last seen in FY 2003-04 after two years of recidivism rates near 39%. Figure 4 shows the pre-discharge recidivism rates since FY 1997-1998.

**Figure 4:  
Pre-Discharge Recidivism Rates FY 1997-98 through FY 2006-07**



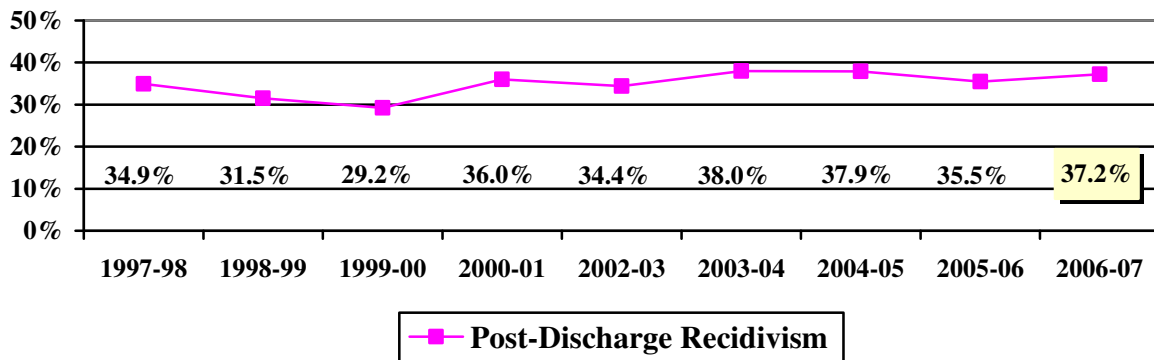
The lower pre-discharge recidivism rates evidenced by this year's discharge cohort are not surprising given that the FY 2006-07 discharge cohort is also the first sample to have received transition services provided by the Division's Continuum of Care (CoC) Initiative. As reported in the FY 2006-07 CoC Annual Report<sup>10</sup> the pre-discharge recidivism rate for youth receiving CoC services was significantly lower than for youth in a comparison group discharged in the year prior to the implementation of the initiative (FY 2004-05). The 29.9% pre-discharge recidivism rate reported for the FY 2006-07 Continuum of Care discharge cohort represents over two-thirds (68%) of the entire FY 2006-07 discharge cohort.

<sup>9</sup> There was no FY 2001-02 discharge cohort because of a shift in study methodology to study pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates from the same discharge sample and increase focus on more current recidivism data.

<sup>10</sup> Tri-West Group. (2007). *Continuum of Care Initiative Evaluation Annual Report: Fiscal Year 2006-07*.

Figure 5 illustrates post-discharge recidivism trends. Post-discharge recidivism rates have remained fairly stable over the last four discharge cohorts. Recidivism rates have remained between 36% and 38% since FY 2003-04.

**Figure 5:  
Post-Discharge Recidivism Rates FY 1997-98 through FY 2006-07**



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 to State and Federal statutes and changes in Division and State juvenile justice policy, practice, and funding make it difficult to attribute change in recidivism rates to any specific cause. See Appendix A for further discussion of this topic.

### ***Recidivism Charges Filed***

The ‘types’ of charges for which youth receive new filings are presented over the next few pages. Prior reports have looked at charge types in five main offense categories; *Person, Property, Drug, Weapon, and Other*. 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, changes in the justice system, and potentially stricter enforcement of certain offenses. For example, the legislation requiring the registration of sex-offenders was amended a few years ago<sup>11</sup>. This has resulted in both an increase in recidivism, and increases in the number of miscellaneous other offenses. In addition, Division staff has noticed an increase in identity theft, criminal impersonation and other

<sup>11</sup> Section 18-3-412.5, Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.)

similar offenses. Similarly, higher numbers of youth in the census have been filed on for DWI/DUI charges over the past few years. Whether this is a result of more officers on the street, tougher enforcement, or more youth driving under the influence, the increase in DWI/DUI, identity offense, and sex offender registration filings have increased the percentage of ‘other’ offenses significantly. Therefore, this year’s study has broken out filings for these offenses, as well as escape filings, to better illustrate the types of offenses for which youth are receiving new charges.

**Table 1: Most Serious Filing (Offense Type)**

Offense	Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism	
	Number	Percent of Total Filings	Number	Percent of Total Filings
Person Felony	54	17.1%	68	19.4%
Property Felony	63	19.9%	92	26.2%
Drug Felony	21	6.6%	26	7.4%
Weapon Felony	3	0.9%	9	2.6%
Escape Felony	60	19.0%	7	2.0%
Identity Felony	10	3.2%	14	4.0%
Sex Registration Felony	3	0.9%	8	2.3%
Other <sup>12</sup> Felony	5	1.6%	7	2.0%
<b>Total Felony Filings</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>69.3%</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>65.8%</b>
Person Misdemeanor	44	13.9%	26	7.4%
Property Misdemeanor	14	4.4%	32	9.1%
Drug Misdemeanor	0	--	1	0.3%
Weapon Misdemeanor	2	0.6%	6	1.7%
Escape Misdemeanor	13	4.1%	0	--
Identity Misdemeanor	5	1.6%	4	1.1%
Sex Registration Misdemeanor	1	0.3%	9	2.6%
DWI/DUI Misdemeanor	5	1.6%	11	3.1%
Other <sup>12</sup> Misdemeanor	13	4.1%	31	8.8%
<b>Total Misdemeanor Filings</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>30.7%</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>34.2%</b>
<b>Recidivism Totals</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>12</sup> Other offenses include Restraining Order/Protection Order violations, Obstructing an Officer, Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor, misdemeanor traffic offenses, and other miscellaneous offenses.

Table 1 shows the breakdown of filings received prior to discharge and within one year following discharge from the Division of Youth Corrections. Youth are likely to receive multiple charges (even for one incident) when filed upon. The data presented in this section on charges filed identifies the most serious offense each youth was charged with.

The majority of pre-discharge (69.3%) and post-discharge filings (65.8%) were for felony offenses. This is not surprising, given that all of the youth in this sample have previously penetrated far enough into the Colorado juvenile justice system to previously be committed to the Division of Youth Corrections for a juvenile offense (see Figure 6, pg. 16)<sup>13</sup>.

Table 2 shows the breakdown of pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism filings by adult criminal charges versus juvenile delinquency charges. Delinquency charges are filings for offenses committed by a youthful offender (under age 18), while criminal charges are charges committed by persons over the age of 18 or more serious offenses where a juvenile could be filed upon as an adult.

**Table 2: Type of Filing (Most Serious Charge Filed)**

Type of Filing	Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Criminal (Adult)	161	50.9%	290	82.6%
Delinquency (Juvenile)	155	49.1%	61	17.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Offenses that were filed on youth prior to their discharge from the Division of Youth Corrections were split evenly between criminal filings (51%) and delinquency filings (49%). Post-discharge filings on the other hand were mostly criminal filings (83%). Therefore, the majority of youth who re-offended within on year of discharge from DYC

<sup>13</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.

would be sentenced as adults and given adult probation or Department of Corrections sentences if they were found guilty.

***Filing v. Finding***

It is important to realize that not all charges that a youth receives result in a guilty finding. Table 3 illustrates this concept; looking at the disposition of the most serious charges for which a youth received a filing.

**Table 3: Disposition on *Most Serious Charge* Filed**

<b>Finding</b>	<b>Pre-Discharge Recidivism</b>		<b>Post-Discharge Recidivism</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Guilty <sup>14</sup>	173	54.7%	150	42.7%
Deferred	10	3.2%	24	6.8%
No Finding of Guilt <sup>15</sup>	128	40.5%	156	44.4%
Unknown <sup>16</sup>	5	1.6%	21	6.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Just over half (55%) of the youth in the study were found guilty of the most serious offense they were charged with prior to discharge from the Division of Youth Corrections, and only 43% of youth who received charges within one year following discharge were found guilty of their most serious offense. The majority of recidivating youth in the sample received filings on multiple charges. Although many recidivists were not found guilty of their most serious charge, Table 4 shows that over 90% of youth were either found guilty or received a deferred sentence for at least one charge prior to discharge. Eighty-six percent (85.5%) of the post-discharge cohort were found guilty or received a deferred sentence for at least one offense.

<sup>14</sup> Guilty includes guilty and guilty of a lesser charge.

<sup>15</sup> No finding of guilt includes not guilty, acquitted, charges dismissed, a plea of Nolo contendere, or a not guilty finding.

<sup>16</sup> Unknown includes those cases that are still open at the time of this printing.



**Table 4: Disposition on Any Misdemeanor or Felony Charge Filed**

Finding	Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Guilty <sup>17</sup>	277	87.7%	275	78.3%
Deferred	10	3.2%	25	7.1%
No Finding of Guilt <sup>18</sup>	27	8.5%	39	11.1%
Unknown <sup>19</sup>	2	0.6%	12	3.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Technical 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 overcome limitations on the ability to track case findings over the past few studies. However, there are still some instances where youth, especially those discharged near the end of the State fiscal year, will still have open cases at the time of report publication<sup>20</sup>. In those cases, there may not be a finding for any of the charges filed against those youth.

If the Colorado or DYC definition of recidivism were made more restrictive, to only include guilty findings (some states' agencies restrict recidivism to a reconviction or even a return to the same correctional agency), the recidivism rates for both pre-discharge and post-discharge using this study sample would be lower than reported (*30.3% for pre-discharge, and 30.8% for post-discharge recidivism*). This illustrates the need to use common definitions of recidivism when comparing Colorado recidivism rates to other states or even across Colorado State agencies.

Figure 6, helps to illustrate why recidivism rates vary based on the definition of recidivism and why differing rates cannot necessarily be easily compared. 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

<sup>17</sup> Guilty includes guilty and guilty of a lesser charge.

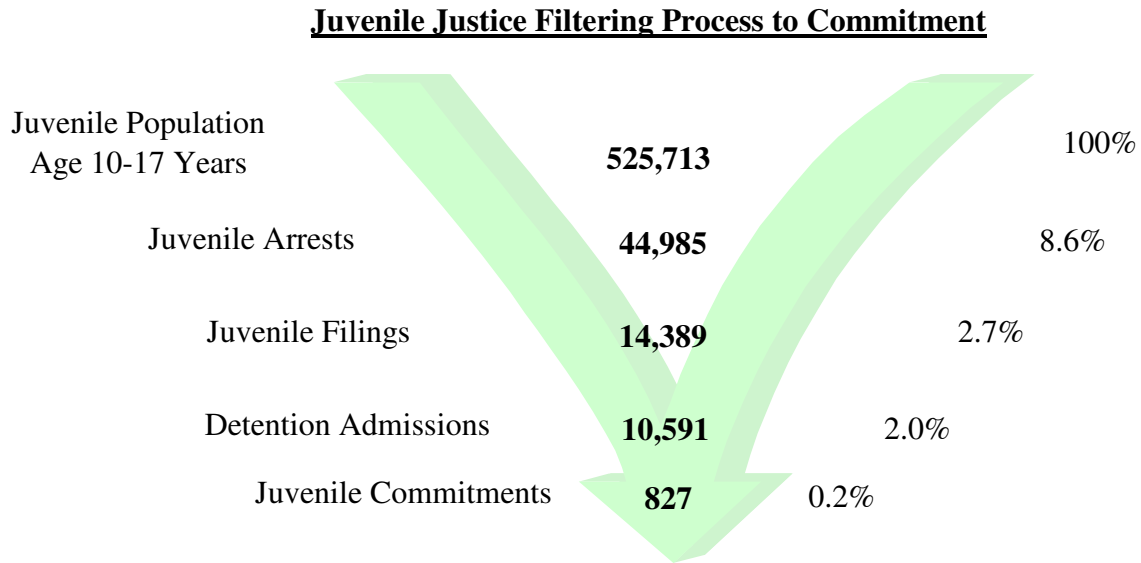
<sup>18</sup> No finding of guilt includes not guilty, acquitted, charges dismissed, a plea of Nolo contendere, or a not guilty finding.

<sup>19</sup> Unknown includes those cases that are still open at the time of this printing.

<sup>20</sup> Scenarios in which case findings can be delayed include high-profile cases or defendants, filings on more serious charges, or if the youth has failed to appear for his or her court date.

states or agencies that use re-arrest to represent recidivism will have higher recidivism rates than Colorado, which used new filings to represent recidivism. Each stage of the justice system filters out more and more youth, therefore agencies that use reconviction, re-incarceration, or recommitment will have lower recidivism rates than agencies that utilize re-arrest, or new filing. For these reasons, it is imperative that system penetration be investigated when recidivism rates are compared.

**Figure 6:  
Fiscal Year 2006-07**



## Demographics

The following demographic data is presented to illustrate differences in recidivism rates by gender, ethnicity, and NYC management region. Recidivism results in this section are presented with pre-discharge recidivism results (filings for a new felony or misdemeanor offense during commitment or parole) in the top half of each table, and post-discharge recidivism results (filings for a new felony or misdemeanor offense within one year following discharge) in the bottom half. Throughout this report a finding followed by ‘\*\*’ indicates a statistically significant difference between groups.

### Gender

Over the last several years the Division has made efforts to increase the quantity and quality of female-responsive treatment options. With the increasing female committed population<sup>21</sup>, NYC recognizes the need to continue to enhance services in this area. Table 5 shows a breakdown of recidivism results by gender.

**Males discharged in FY 2006-07 had a more than 40% rate of post-discharge recidivism, compared with only 17% for females.**

**Table 5: Recidivism Rates by Gender**

Gender	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Male	533	66.4%	270	33.6%	803	85.1%
Female	95	67.4%	46	32.6%	141	14.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>33.5%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>
Gender**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Male	476	59.3%	327	40.7%	803	85.1%
Female	117	83.0%	24	17.0%	141	14.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>62.8%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>37.2%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square<sup>22</sup>=27.840, p<0.01.

<sup>21</sup> There was a 176% growth rate in the female committed population from FY 1996-97 to FY 2006-07.

<sup>22</sup> See Appendix B for an explanation of statistical measures used in this report.

Eighty-five percent of the FY 2006-07 discharge cohort was male and 15% was female. Males (40.7%) were significantly more likely to receive a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense within one year following discharge than females (17.0%). Post-discharge recidivism rates for female offenders (17.0%) were lower than reported in the past three years. Surprisingly, pre-discharge recidivism rates were not statistically different by gender.

At the time of commitment to the Division of Youth Corrections, all youth are evaluated for risk of recidivism during a thorough assessment process. Youth in this discharge cohort were all initially evaluated for risk of re-offending using the Colorado Youth Offender Level of Service Inventory (CYO-LSI). The CYO-LSI is an 84-item risk assessment instrument with the following cut-point scores designating risk level for re-offending:

**Table 6: CYO-LSI Scoring Cut-Points**

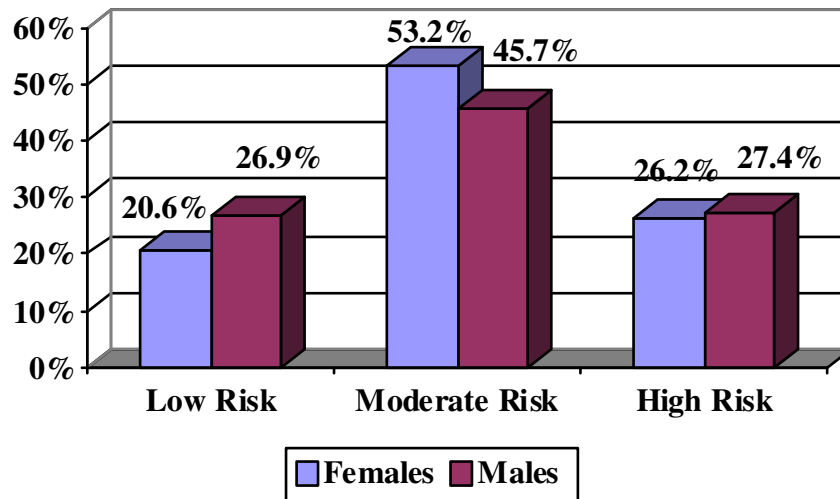
<b>Risk Category</b>	<b>CYO-LSI Score</b>
Low Risk	0 to 30
Medium Risk	31 to 41
High Risk	42 to 84

In June of 2006, the Division of Youth Corrections replaced the CYO-LSI with a more advanced risk assessment instrument. The Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment Instrument (CJRA) is a fourth generation risk instrument developed by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP). This instrument measures criminogenic risk, needs, and protective factors from a static and dynamic perspective. While the CYO-LSI has been a reliable predictor for risk of re-offense for youth committed in Colorado, the CJRA also incorporates dynamic risk and protective factor scales that are valuable when developing case plans and referring youth to specific residential placements.

For the FY 2006-07 discharge cohort, only a small number of youth (n=5) were committed after the CJRA was implemented<sup>23</sup>. Therefore, any discussion of risk, or levels of risk of re-offending in this recidivism evaluation will reference scores to the CYO-LSI.

Figure 7 shows the differences in CYO-LSI risk of re-offense by gender. Surprisingly, there were no statistically significant differences in risk for re-offending by gender groups.

**Figure 7: Risk of Re-Offending by Gender (CYO-LSI)**



Slightly more males in the discharge group were scored at a high risk for recidivism at the time of commitment (27.4%) when compared with the females. Over half of the females in the sample (53.2%) scored in the moderate range for risk of re-offending. This finding helps explain the lack of significant differences in pre-discharge recidivism rates. The differences noted in the post-discharge recidivism rates (males, 41%; females, 17%) could be partially explained by the emphasis the Division has placed on more appropriate and effective treatment strategies for female offenders over the past several years.

<sup>23</sup> These five youth do not have a CYO-LSI recorded in TRAILS and therefore are not included in any risk analyses conducted for this report.

**Primary Ethnicity**

Table 7 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 ‘unable to be determined.’ 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 7: Recidivism Rates by Primary Ethnicity**

Ethnicity	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
African-American	95	64.6%	52	35.4%	147	15.6%
Hispanic	224	66.9%	111	33.1%	335	35.5%
White	294	67.0%	145	33.0%	439	46.5%
Other	15	65.2%	8	34.8%	23	2.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>33.5%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>

Ethnicity	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
African-American	87	59.2%	60	40.8%	147	15.6%
Hispanic	203	60.6%	132	39.4%	335	35.5%
White	286	65.1%	153	34.9%	439	46.5%
Other	17	73.9%	6	26.1%	23	2.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>62.8%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>37.2%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>

There were no statistically significant differences by ethnicity<sup>24</sup>. Pre-discharge recidivism results show all four groups with similar rates of recidivism (33.0% to 35.4%). While some small differences are noted in the post-discharge recidivism findings (African-American youth had slightly higher recidivism rates than other ethnic groups and the youth categorized as ‘other’ had the lowest recidivism rates), these results were not statistically significant. Results for the youth in the ‘other’ category should be interpreted cautiously because of the small census size (n=23).

<sup>24</sup> No risk analysis was done on this population because there was no statistically significant difference found in the recidivism analyses.

When comparing recidivism rates between all ethnic minorities and white youth in the sample, there were also no significant differences found in either pre-discharge or post-discharge recidivism rates. The juvenile justice system has been working on addressing the issue of minority over-representation, also referred to as disproportionate minority confinement. The small differences in recidivism results presented in this section are likely an artifact of local policy and practice, not actual differences in rates of re-offense.

***DYC Management Region***

The Division of Youth Corrections has a regionally based management structure, operating from four management regions in the state. The Central Region 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 county of Mesa.

**Figure 8: DYC Management Structure**

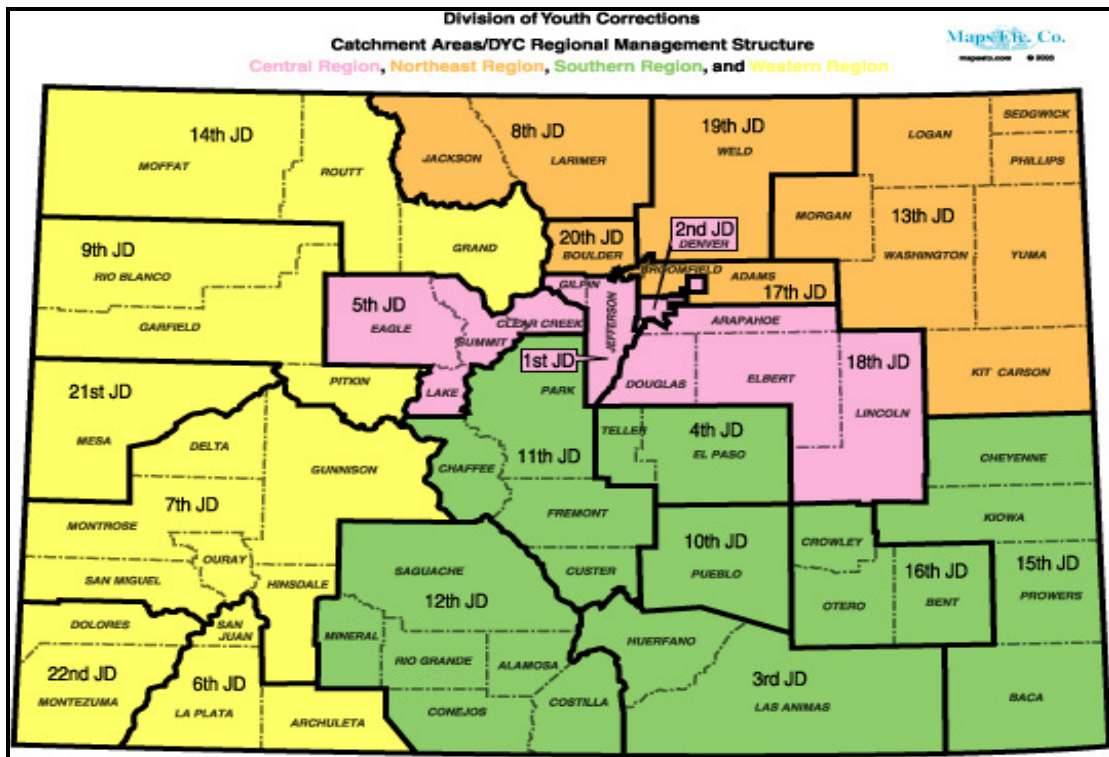


Table 7 shows a breakdown of new offenses filed by DYC management region.

**Table 8: Recidivism Rates by DYC Management Region**

Region**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Central	280	68.0%	132	32.0%	412	43.6%
Northeast	179	69.6%	78	30.4%	257	27.2%
Southern	95	56.2%	74	43.8%	169	17.9%
Western	74	69.8%	32	30.2%	106	11.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>33.5%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=10.092, p<0.05.

Region**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Central	284	68.9%	128	31.1%	412	43.6%
Northeast	141	54.9%	116	45.1%	257	27.2%
Southern	110	65.1%	59	34.9%	169	17.9%
Western	58	54.7%	48	45.3%	106	11.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>62.8%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>37.2%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=16.907, p<0.01.

Overall differences in recidivism rates between regions did show statistically significant results. The Western and Northeast Regions had the lowest levels of pre-discharge recidivism for FY 2006-07 (30%), while the highest percentage of youth who received a new pre-discharge filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense was found in the Southern Region (44%). The two regions that experienced the lowest levels of pre-discharge recidivism had the highest levels of post-discharge recidivism. The Central Region (31%) had the lowest rate of post-discharge recidivism, compared with 35% in the Southern Region and 45% in both the Northeast and Western regions.

**Post-discharge recidivism rates were highest for youth discharged from the Northeast and Western regions (45%).**

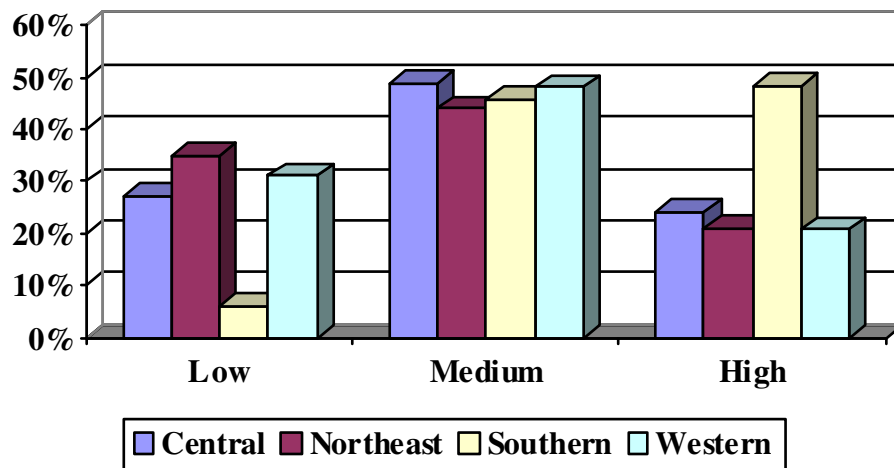
There are a number of potential reasons why regional rates might differ from one another. Enforcement practices could be different and the decision to file on a particular offense is a discretionary practice by District Attorneys that could vary across the state. The amount



of delinquent or criminal activity that may be accepted or tolerated in a given community may also differ across regions. Additionally, there might be more treatment options or resources available to clients in highly populated areas like the Central Region that are not as readily available to the other regions.

A comparison of risk scores (see figure 9) by region illustrates that the Southern Region has the highest percentage of youth at a high risk for re-offending, compared with the other three DYC management regions. Almost half of the youth discharged from the Southern Region (48.5%) scored high on the CYO-LSI. The Northeast and Western Regions both had 21% of their sample with high risk scores on this instrument and 24% of the Central Region discharges for this fiscal year were high-risk. Looking across all regions, the risk level differences were found to be significant (Chi-Square=71.470,  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Figure 9: Risk of Re-Offending by Region (CYO-LSI)**



As seen with the risk analysis by DYC management region, the CYO-LSI is fairly accurate at predicting pre-discharge recidivism, but post-discharge recidivism rates do not follow the same patterns. This could very well be an indicator of risk mitigation as a result of the treatment these youth received while committed to DYC. It is expected that these services will ameliorate risk factors and augment protective factors, therefore the

probability of re-offense will likely be somewhat different for a youth upon discharge as compared to when that youth was originally committed. DYC anticipates that the conversion to the recently adopted Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment (CJRA) instrument will allow the Division to effectively track changes in risk for individual youth and provide a more accurate assessment of the risk for re-offending for comparison with post-discharge recidivism results in future studies<sup>25</sup>.

## Commitment

Commitment data presented in this section highlight differences in recidivism rates by various indicators of successful treatment during a youth's commitment sentence.

### *Number of Escapes*

**Escape:**

A juvenile who has left a facility's custody without proper authorization;  
or

A juvenile who has not returned to a facility within 4 hours of the prescribed time from any authorized leave.

The DYC TRAILS database tracks the number of times a youth escapes from residential placement. The term 'escape,' however, rarely means an escape from a secure placement. In fact, DYC policy defines an escape as a juvenile who has left a facility's custody without authorization, *or*

a juvenile who has not returned to a facility within four hours of the prescribed time from any *authorized leave* (i.e., work passes, court appointments, home visits, etc.). Youth with more escapes were more likely to have received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense both prior to discharge from DYC<sup>26</sup> and within one year following discharge from the Division<sup>27</sup>.

Pre-discharge recidivism rates were investigated further because youth who escape from placement are often charged with an 'escape' offense that may be their only pre-

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<sup>25</sup> In June of 2006, the Division of Youth Corrections replaced the CYO-LSI with the Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment Instrument (CJRA). This instrument measures criminogenic risk, needs, and protective factors from a static and dynamic perspective and is re-administered at various times throughout a youth's commitment to aid with case planning and administration of the most appropriate treatment strategies.

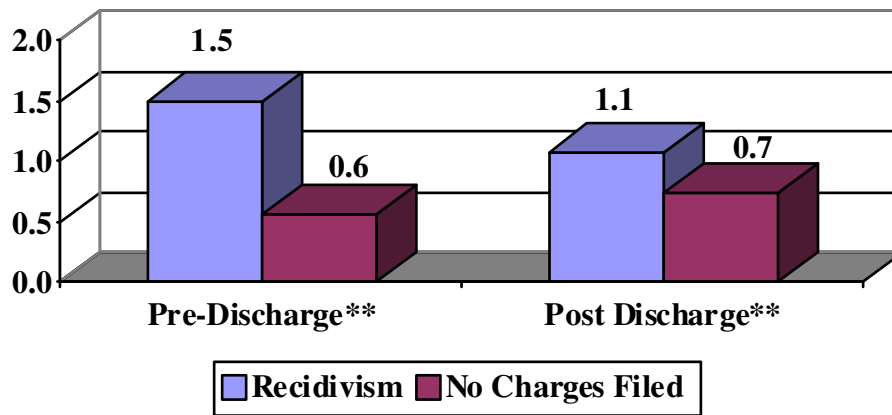
<sup>26</sup> Pre-discharge (F=142.683, p<0.01)

<sup>27</sup> Post-discharge (F=15.145, p<0.01)

discharge filing. Of the 222 pre-discharge recidivists having escaped one or more times, 42% (n=94) had pre-discharge filings for an escape. Not all youth who are reported as escapees are filed upon, and there are several explanations as to why this is the case. First, 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 DYC policy. Second, many youth on deferred sentences are filed on for the deferred offense, not the most recent escape. Third, there may be other charge types or codes used by the Judicial Department in lieu of technical ‘escape’ charges. Additionally, local district attorneys likely have some discretion in regards to filings charges against youth in their jurisdiction.

Although both analyses produced significant differences, the relationship was more pronounced for the pre-discharge recidivists (see figure10). Youth who received a filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense prior to discharge had on average, one additional escape recorded during their commitment.

**Figure 10: Average Number of Escapes**



\*\*Pre-Discharge: F=142.683, p<0.01;  
 Post-Discharge; F=15.267, p<0.01

### *Number of Recommitments*

The DYC TRAILS data system also tracks the number of times a committed youth receives an additional commitment sentence while they are still fulfilling a sentence to DYC. Since all recommitments are the product of another charge being filed against the youth, either before<sup>28</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.

**Table 9: Recidivism Rates by Number of Recommitments**

Number of Recommitments**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	567	77.9%	161	22.1%	728	77.1%
One	58	34.3%	111	65.7%	169	17.9%
Two or More	3	6.4%	44	93.6%	47	5.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>33.5%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=197.237, p<0.01

Number of Recommitments**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	474	65.1%	254	34.9%	728	77.1%
One	94	55.6%	75	44.4%	169	17.9%
Two or More	25	53.2%	22	46.8%	47	5.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>62.8%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>37.2%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=7.249, p<0.05

Table 9 displays the rate of recidivism by the number of recommitments. The majority of youth in the FY 2006-07 discharge cohort did not receive a recommitment sentence (77.1%). Nonetheless, the pre-discharge recidivism rates are much higher for recommitted youth than the rate for youth that do not have any recommitments. The fact that most youth who receive a recommitment do so because of charges filed against them for offenses committed during their commitment explains the extremely high percentage of recidivism among these youth. As shown in the table above, almost all of the youth

<sup>28</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 DYC for another offense, regardless of the date of the offense.

with two or more recommitments (93.6%) have charges filed against them for a felony or misdemeanor offense prior to their discharge date.

A recommitment also increased the likelihood that a youth would receive a filing for a new offense within one year following discharge. Thirty-five percent of youth who did not have any recommitments received a filing for a new offense within one year of discharge compared with 44.4% of youth with one recommitment and 46.8% of youth with more than one recommitment. Although these differences are not as pronounced as with the pre-discharge recidivism rates, they are not surprising, since these youth have continued to commit criminal or delinquent activities even during their commitment to the Division of Youth Corrections.

### ***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. Three-quarters (74.6%) of the youth discharged in FY 2006-07 were committed under non-mandatory sentences (n=704). Conversely there were 240 youth in this discharge cohort required to serve a minimum length of stay (LOS) in residential treatment as determined by the court (i.e. mandatory sentences). In rare instances, the minimum LOS could be up to a seven-year commitment sentence for those youth adjudicated as an aggravated juvenile offender.

Youth serving mandatory sentences have a significantly longer total length of stay (average of 28.0 months, including residential placement and parole supervision) than youth serving non-mandatory sentences (average of 25.2 months)<sup>29</sup>. Longer lengths of stay for youth serving mandatory sentences lead to expectations of higher rates of pre-discharge recidivism, because these youth have had a longer amount of time in which to receive a new filing prior to discharge. However, there were no statistically significant

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<sup>29</sup> F=14.431, p<0.01

differences found in the recidivism rates (pre-discharge or post-discharge) when these two groups were compared.

**Figure 11: LOS in Months by Sentence Type**

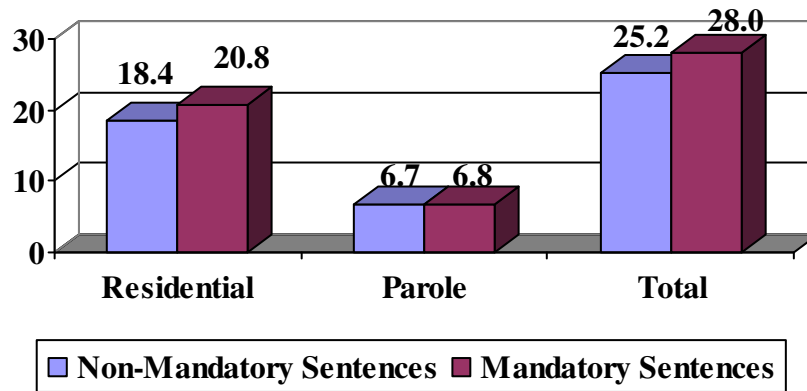


Figure 11 shows the differences in LOS between mandatory and non-mandatory sentenced youth. The average length of stay on parole supervision for these youth was 6.7 months (non-mandatory sentences) and 6.8 months (mandatory sentences). This means that almost the entirety of the difference (2.8 months) in total length of stay for these youth was in residential placement (20.8 months for mandatory sentences and 18.4 months for non-mandatory sentences).

### **Parole: Transitioning Back to the Community**

Parole data presented in this section examine the recidivist acts that occur when youth are on parole status (pre-discharge recidivism). This includes a breakdown of pre-discharge recidivism into recidivist activities that occurred during residential placement compared with recidivism that occurred while the youth was under parole supervision. It also includes a breakdown of the placement status of youth on parole; was a youth residing in a DYC facility or community treatment center (residential placement), or were they on non-residential status back in their home communities (either with family or a guardian, or on their own). This section also includes an analysis of the time to first offense after youth began parole.

Finally, 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 supervision.

***Mandatory Parole***

All 944 youth in this discharge cohort were required to serve at least 6 months of parole under mandatory parole legislation. Prior discharge cohorts, however, were subject to longer mandatory parole periods, ranging from 9 to 12 months. The average LOS on parole for this year’s discharge sample was 6.8 months.

Fifty-five percent 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 (see Table 10) Forty-three percent (n=136) of pre-discharge recidivists committed all of their new offenses while on parole status, while another 12% were filed upon for multiple offenses that occurred while the youth was in residential placement and while the youth was on parole status. In comparison, 57% of pre-discharge recidivists committed at least one of their offenses in a residential placement<sup>30</sup>. There was no difference in placement status (residential commitment versus parole) for this group of pre-discharge recidivists.

**Table 10: Type of Pre-Discharge Recidivism**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
New Offenses in Residential Commitment Only <sup>31</sup>	143	45.3%
New Offenses on Parole Only	136	43.0%
New Offenses in Residential Commitment and Parole	37	11.7%
<b>Pre-Discharge Recidivism Totals</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>100%</b>

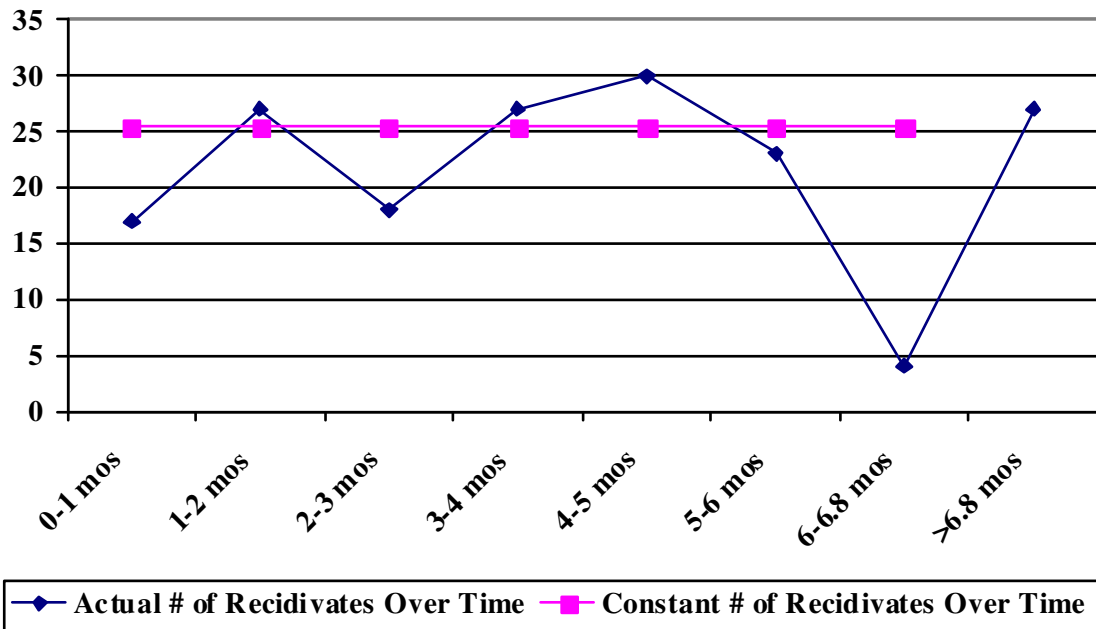
<sup>30</sup> Note that the third category (New Offenses, in Residential Placement and on Parole) is counted for both sections since these youth committed offenses while on both statuses.

<sup>31</sup>The residential commitment category includes 18 youth who did not parole, but were discharged directly to adult correctional facilities, turned 21, or escaped prior to being placed on parole.

### *Time to First Parole Offense*

Also important to investigate is the length of time between parole start-date and first parole offense. Looking at all pre-discharge recidivists who received a new filing while on parole (includes the 37 youth who received a new filing during residential commitment as well as while on parole status), Figure 12 displays the length of time to first parole offense (n=173). The pink line represents a constant rate of recidivist activity if the same number of youth in the discharge cohort committed became a new pre-discharge recidivist every month. Since the average LOS for parole is 6.8 months it would be expected that approximately 25.4 youth would recidivate each month if there was an even distribution over time. As seen in Figure 12, this is largely the case.

**Figure 12: Time to First Parole Offense**



While there are some outliers (fewer youths committed their first offense in months one and three of parole), for the most part the data points are grouped fairly close to the constant rate line for four of the first 6 months. This data indicates that fewer youth committed new offenses as they near the end of their parole. Only four youth committed their first pre-discharge offense between six months and the end of an average length of



stay on parole (6.8 months) compared to an average of over 25 new offenses filed for an typical month on parole.

Over the last four years the Division has prioritized the delivery of transition services for youth back into the community from a more restrictive residential setting and increased the amount of resources available to youth on parole. In Fiscal Year 2006-07 the State Legislature allowed DYC some flexibility to spend up to 15% of its residential funding on transition services for youth returning to the community. This effort is known as the Continuum of Care Initiative. The Division identified a sample of youth who could potentially benefit from increased services on parole, targeting factors identified by the Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment as potential criminogenic risks, and began utilizing the funding flexibility allowed by the Legislature to increase transition services to these youth. Pre-discharge recidivism results for the sample of youth who received Continuum of Care funding were lower than for youth who did not receive these services (29.9% of youth receiving Continuum of Care funding re-offended prior to discharge). At this time, post-discharge recidivism results are not available for this sub-sample of youth. For more details on the Continuum of Care Initiative, see the report released to the Legislature on November 1, 2008<sup>32</sup>.

### ***Parole Adjustment (Post-Discharge Only)***

When a youth is discharged from DYC they receive a parole adjustment rating. This rating is used to describe a youth's performance while on parole, transitioning back into the community. It is used as an outcome measure for DYC that reflects the youth's ability to adapt to life in a community setting (as opposed to a restrictive/structured residential placement). 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 were unsuccessful while under parole supervision.

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<sup>32</sup> Tri-West Group. (2008). *Continuum of Care Initiative Evaluation Annual Report: Fiscal Year 2007-08*.

Table 11 shows post-discharge recidivism rates<sup>33</sup> by parole adjustment rating at the time of discharge from the Division of Youth Corrections. Although the slight differences in recidivism rates are in the expected direction, these results were not statistically significant.

**Table 11: Post-Discharge Recidivism by Parole Adjustment**

Parole Adjustment	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Successful	414	64.1%	232	35.9%	646	68.9%
Unsuccessful	164	60.1%	109	39.9%	273	29.1%
No Parole	10	55.6%	8	44.4%	18	1.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>62.8%</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>37.2%</b>	<b>937</b>	<b>100%</b>

(n=937, missing=7)

***Job/School Status (Post-Discharge Only)***

This study also investigated recidivism rates for youth who 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 DYC would have lower rates of recidivism than youth that were not enrolled in school or employed. Post-discharge recidivism rates<sup>34</sup> are shown in Table 12 below.

**Table 12: Post-Discharge Recidivism by Job/School Status**

Job/School Status**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Employed or Enrolled	448	64.7%	244	35.3%	692	76.4%
Not Employed or Enrolled	119	55.6%	95	44.4%	214	23.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>567</b>	<b>62.6%</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>37.4%</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=5.438, p<0.05; (n=906, missing=38)

<sup>33</sup> Pre-discharge recidivism rates were not analyzed for this factor because parole adjustments are not available until a youth is discharged from DYC.

<sup>34</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.

Youth who were employed or enrolled in school at the time of discharge had lower rates of post discharge recidivism (35%) compared to youth that were unemployed and not attending school (44%).

Youth who were employed or enrolled in school at the time of discharge were less likely to receive a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense within one year of discharge (35.3%), when compared with youth that were not in school or employed (44.4%). Gainful employment and

school enrollment are an indication of ‘buying into’ a pro-social lifestyle. While this is only one element of a pro-social lifestyle, over the years it has proven to be a reliable predictor for post-discharge recidivism. The Division targets dynamic (changeable) protective factors such as employment and school enrollment in an attempt to mitigate a youth’s risk of re-offending after they leave the Division’s supervision.

**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 or herself (i.e. suicide risk) and the community (i.e. public safety). This recidivism study examined a number of factors that have traditionally been shown to increase the risk of re-offending. These factors include: number of prior out-of-home placements, number of prior detention admissions, number of prior adjudications, age at first adjudication, number of prior commitments, age at commitment, and risk scores for re-offending.

This section will show the significant findings for the risk factors studied, when looking at differing rates of pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism.

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

Out-of-home placements can include inpatient mental health or substance abuse treatment facilities, 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 of discharge.

In this year’s study, analyses of variance (ANOVA<sup>35</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 (2.9) as compared with youth that did not receive a new filing (1.8 prior placements)<sup>36</sup>. Post-discharge recidivism differences were not statistically significant for prior-out-of-home placements.

**Table 13: Recidivism Rates by Number of Prior Out-of-Home Placements**

Number of Prior Out-Of-Home Placements**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	205	74.3%	71	25.7%	276	29.2%
One or More	423	63.3%	245	36.7%	668	70.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>33.5%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>
**Chi-Square=10.127, p<0.01						
Number of Prior Out-Of-Home Placements	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	185	67.0%	91	33.0%	276	29.2%
One or More	408	61.1%	260	38.9%	668	70.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>62.8%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>37.2%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>

A categorical breakdown of recidivism rates by the number of prior out-of-home placements (see Table 13) shows that having one or more prior out-of-home placements increases the likelihood of recidivism prior to discharge for youth in this census. Youth with one or more prior placements received a filing for a new offense during their commitment 36.7% of the time, compared with 25.7% for youth with no prior placements. There was no significant change in post-discharge recidivism rates by number of prior placements.

<sup>35</sup> See the Appendix for an explanation of statistical measures used in this report.

<sup>36</sup> F=29.168, p<0.01.

***Prior Detention Admissions***

The number of detention admissions prior to commitment for this discharge cohort ranged from zero up to one youth with eighty-five prior detention admissions. On average, all committed youth discharged in FY 2006-07 had 4.4 detention admissions prior to their commitment. Statistically, youth who received a filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense prior to discharge were more likely to also have had more detention admissions than youth who did not recidivate during their commitment<sup>37</sup>. Youth who received a new filing within one year following their discharge date had slightly more detention admissions than youth who did not recidivate (4.6 prior admissions compared with 4.3 prior admissions), however, this difference was not statistically significant.

Breaking the data down into categories of youth with a relatively low level of prior involvement with the Division of Youth Corrections (zero to two prior detention admissions) and youth with more of a history with DYC (three or more prior detention admissions) did show significant differences in recidivism rates for both pre-discharge and post-discharge measures (see Table 14).

**Table 14: Recidivism Rates by Prior Detention Admissions**

Number of Prior Detention Admissions**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Zero to Two	181	75.4%	59	24.6%	240	25.4%
Three or More	447	63.5%	257	36.5%	704	74.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>33.5%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>
**Chi-Square=10.983, p<0.01						
Number of Prior Detention Admissions**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Zero to Two	171	71.3%	69	28.8%	240	25.4%
Three or More	422	59.9%	282	40.1%	704	74.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>62.8%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>37.2%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=9.318, p<0.01

<sup>37</sup> F=11.092, p<0.01.

Youth with three or more detention admissions were more likely to receive a filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense both prior to discharge (36.5%) and within one year following discharge (40.1%), when compared to youth with less than three prior detention admissions (24.6% pre-discharge, and 28.8% post-discharge).

### ***Prior Adjudications***

Since the number of prior adjudications is another measure of prior involvement in the juvenile justice system, it is expected that youth with more prior adjudications would have higher recidivism rates. Juvenile justice research supports this expectation, stating that youth with a history of delinquent activity show an elevated risk of future offending (Andrews and Bonta, p. 165)<sup>38</sup>. This expectation proved true for both pre-discharge and post-discharge analyses; in both cases youth who received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense, on average, had more prior adjudications than youth who did not recidivate<sup>39</sup>.

**Table 15: Recidivism Rates by Number of Prior Adjudications**

Number of Prior Adjudications**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	194	72.1%	75	27.9%	269	28.5%
One	207	69.2%	92	30.8%	299	31.7%
Two or More	227	60.4%	149	39.6%	376	39.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>33.5%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=11.155, p<0.01

Number of Prior Adjudications**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	185	68.8%	84	31.2%	269	28.5%
One	206	68.9%	93	31.1%	299	31.7%
Two or More	202	53.7%	174	46.3%	376	39.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>62.8%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>37.2%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=22.129, p<0.01

<sup>38</sup> Andrews, D.A., and Bonta, J. (1994). *The Psychology of Criminal Conduct*. Cincinnati, OH: Anderson Publishing.

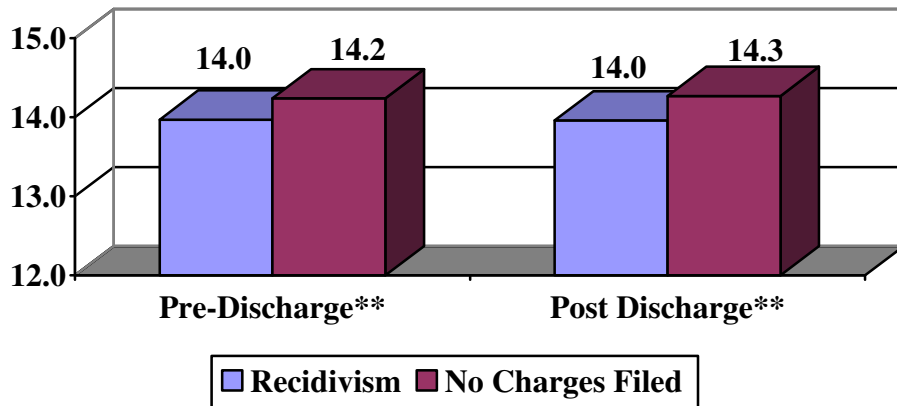
<sup>39</sup> Pre-Discharge: F=9.565, p<0.01; Post-Discharge: F=13.619, p<0.01.

Table 15 shows pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates by the number of prior adjudications for youth discharged in FY 2006-07. Forty percent of the youth in this study had two or more delinquency adjudications prior to their commitment to the Division of Youth Corrections. Youth with two or more prior adjudications had significantly higher rates of recidivism (39.6% pre-discharge, and 46.3% post-discharge) than youth with zero or one prior adjudication.

***Age at First Adjudication***

Another primary risk factor associated with recidivism is the age at the time of a 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>40</sup>. The average age at time of first adjudication by pre-discharge recidivism and post-discharge recidivism is shown in Figure 13. Although the differences in age for youth who received a new filing and those who did not were small for both type of recidivism, the differences were statistically significant<sup>41</sup>.

**Figure 13: Age at First Adjudication**



\*\*Pre-Discharge: F=4.481, p<0.05;  
 Post-Discharge; F=6.031, p<0.05

<sup>40</sup> Andrews, D.A., and Bonta, J. (1994). *The Psychology of Criminal Conduct*. Cincinnati, OH: Anderson Publishing.

<sup>41</sup> Pre-Discharge: F=4.481, p<0.05; Post-Discharge: F=6.393, p<0.05.

**Prior Commitments**

One last indicator of prior juvenile justice involvement analyzed for this recidivism evaluation was the number of prior commitment sentences to DYC. Previously, this report has analyzed number of prior detention admissions and number of prior adjudications. A commitment to DYC represents the furthest potential penetration into the juvenile justice system that youth in this study might have encountered prior to their current commitment. Table 16 shows the breakdown of pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates by youth who have previously been committed to the Division of Youth Corrections.

**Table 16: Recidivism Rates by Prior Commitments**

Number of Prior Commitments**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	613	67.4%	296	32.6%	909	96.3%
One or More	15	42.9%	20	57.1%	35	3.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>33.5%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>
**Chi-Square=8.043, p<0.01						
Number of Prior Commitments	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	576	63.4%	333	36.6%	909	96.3%
One or More	17	48.6%	18	51.4%	35	3.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>62.8%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>37.2%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>

The data in Table 16 show that very few (n=35) of the youth in this discharge cohort were committed to the Division of Youth Corrections prior to the commitment that resulted in their inclusion in this study. Notwithstanding the small numbers,<sup>42</sup> youth who were committed to DYC previously were more likely to receive a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense prior to discharge (57.1%) when compared with those youth who were not committed previously (32.6%). Although the difference in post-discharge

<sup>42</sup> Statistical significance between groups is a calculation that is based on the number of cases in each group as well as the differences between groups; therefore it takes a larger relative difference to be a significant finding (not due to chance) when group sizes are small.



recidivism rates seems rather large, those results were not statistically significant, because of the small number of youth in the ‘One or More’ group.

**Assessed Risk Score (CYO-LSI)**

The Colorado Young Offender – Level of Supervision Inventory (CYO-LSI) is one of many assessment instruments used at the time of commitment to the Division. The CYO-LSI risk score is a composite score (see Table 6, pg. 18) used to assess risk of future offending. Therefore, it is expected that youth who score high on the CYO-LSI will have higher rates of recidivism than youth who score low.

**Table 17: Recidivism Rates by Assessed Risk Score (CYO-LSI)**

Risk of Re-offending**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	188	78.3%	52	21.7%	240	25.6%
Medium	293	66.3%	149	33.7%	442	47.1%
High	142	55.3%	115	44.7%	257	27.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>66.3%</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>33.7%</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=29.611, p<0.01, (n=939, missing=5)

Risk of Re-offending**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	164	68.3%	76	31.7%	240	25.6%
Medium	287	64.9%	155	35.1%	442	47.1%
High	138	53.7%	119	46.3%	257	27.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>62.7%</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>37.3%</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=13.110, p<0.01, (n=939, missing=5)

Table 17 shows recidivism rates by assessed risk level. As expected, recidivism rates are highest for youth with a higher risk score on the CYO-LSI. These results were statistically significant.

Starting this fiscal year (FY 2006-07), the Division of Youth Corrections adopted a more advanced, fourth generation risk assessment to assess criminogenic risk and need of DYC youth. As of July 1, 2006 the CYO-LSI risk assessment was discontinued, and the CJRA (Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment) replaced it. While the CYO-LSI instrument

consistently and accurately predicted risk for re-offense, the CJRA will be able to mimic these achievements and provide DYC with more data to target specific risk and protective factors, case plan more effectively, and show youth progress over the course of their commitment. Almost all of the youth in this recidivism study received the CYO-LSI assessment at the start of their commitment<sup>43</sup>, and only a small number were ever reassessed with the CJRA instrument, therefore risk assessment using the CJRA is not available with this discharge cohort, however, future recidivism studies will look at a youths' risk for re-offense as assessed by the new CJRA.

### 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 18.

**Table 18: Post-Discharge Recidivism by Pre-Discharge Recidivism**

	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Pre-Discharge Recidivism	402	64.0%	226	36.0%	628	66.5%
Pre-Discharge Recidivism	191	60.4%	125	39.6%	316	33.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>62.8%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>37.2%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>100%</b>

For the first time since this analysis has been available to the Division, there is no significant difference in post-discharge recidivism rates for youth who received a filing for a new offense during their commitment compared with those who did not recidivate prior to discharge. These findings, although surprising, are not necessarily unwelcome. While the results may be an artifact of the increased supervision that a youth receives while in residential placement and on parole, it might also reflect the successful treatment and reintegration back into the community of youth who had previously been filed upon

<sup>43</sup> Five youth in the sample were committed after the CJRA was implemented and were assessed using that instrument. Those youth are not included in any risk assessment analyses conducted for this study.

for a pre-discharge offense. One possible explanation is the influence of case planning

**Receiving a pre-discharge filing was not found to be a predictor of post-discharge recidivism with this discharge cohort, potentially indicating a certain degree of success in the treatment practices employed by NYC.**

and the provision of appropriate surveillance, treatment, and family 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.

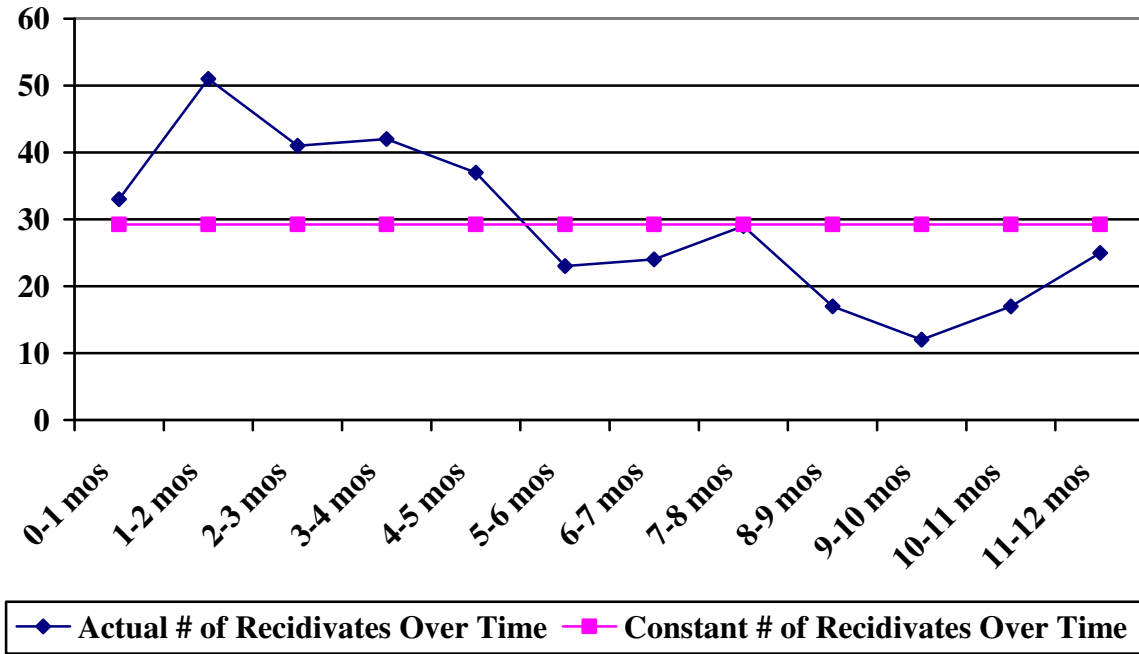
Over the last three years the Division has undertaken a system-wide improvement initiative. The Continuum of Care (CoC) Initiative began in FY 2005-06 and is based on using effective juvenile justice strategies and principles founded on empirical research studies. As a part of this initiative the Division introduced the Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment instrument and has been using the results to more effectively case plan treatment strategies for youth, emphasizing providing the ‘right services at the right time.’ One emphasis of ‘right services at the right time’ includes targeting treatment resources to those youth with the highest need for treatment. This would undoubtedly include youth who have received new charges during their commitment sentence. This FY 2006-07 discharge cohort is the first sample of discharged youth affected by increased transition services provided by the Continuum of Care Initiative. It is not surprising that an effort to allocate resources towards more effective and appropriate strategies for reducing the risk youth committed to NYC pose to the community may have also reduced the likelihood of post-discharge recidivism for those youth who have demonstrated elevated risk of re-offense during their commitment.

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

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 14 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 (pink line). If youth were to recidivate at a constant rate, approximately 29 youth would re-offend each month. In actuality, more

youth re-offended within the first five months following discharge than in the last seven months.

**Figure 14: Time to First Post-Discharge Offense**



As seen in Figure 14, youth that failed (received a filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense) did so disproportionately during the first five months following discharge. The transition back into the community can be a tumultuous time for many youth. Youth are returning to a community with little to no service availability, after spending more than two years on average receiving a steady dose of treatment services. If the Division is able to more effectively transition youth and refer them to providers in the community where they could access similar services to help reduce the likelihood of committing a new offense during those first few months after release, many of these youth might not ever commit another offense. The Continuum of Care Initiative has begun to target the needs of transitioning youth, however providers are not always available in a youth's community to assist in these efforts. At this time there are no post-discharge recidivism outcomes available specifically for youth who received enhanced transition services

through the Continuum of Care Initiative, but pre-discharge recidivism rates for these youth were significantly lower than for youth who did not receive these services<sup>44</sup>.

The average amount of time following the discharge date to the first post-discharge filing was 4.9 months (150 days). Last year's cohort of recidivists averaged 5.9 months (178 days) to their first new filing.

### **Special Populations**

The Division of Youth Corrections is responsible for treating a number of special populations. Increasing numbers of youth with special treatment needs, including sex offenders, substance abusers, and youth with severe mental health issues are committed to the Division each year. Recidivism analyses on these three sub-groups of youth did not show any significant differences in pre-discharge or post-discharge recidivism rates in this year's analysis.

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<sup>44</sup> Tri-West Group. (2008). *Continuum of Care Initiative Evaluation Annual Report: Fiscal Year 2007-08*.

## **SECTION 2: Ridge View Recidivism Rates for Youth Discharged**

Ridge View Youth Services Center is a unique treatment option for eligible youth. 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. Aside from this exception, most youth committed to DYC experience multiple placements throughout their commitment. Therefore, collection of recidivism outcomes is not generally useful in measuring the performance of individual programs. However, 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. The Division's annual recidivism report does not report on outcomes for any other individual programs or facilities.

This next section will look at a sub-group of youth that were discharged from the Division in FY 2006-07. 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. This section will provide a program description for Ridge View and also compare the Ridge View group with all other males from the FY 2006-07 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.

### **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 for youth management and a staff-supervised environment for security, rather than a traditional fenced-in, secure

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. NYC 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 NYC. 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 NYC male population as a whole. As a result, it was acknowledged that the program would not be appropriate for all NYC youth; particularly those requiring treatment for sexual offenses, severe mental health needs, or those requiring a more secure placement<sup>45</sup>.

The authorizing legislation specified that NYC use 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.

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<sup>45</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 certain youth with substance abuse needs.

## **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 in FY 2006-07 was 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 community placements, while others remain at Ridge View until parole, or until another placement is made.

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

The cohort of Ridge View youth studied in this section is a sub-set of the entire discharge population studied in Section 1: NYC Recidivism Rates. Youth were selected to the Ridge View cohort if they were discharged from NYC during the State FY 2006-07 and

had at least a 90-day length of stay (LOS) at Ridge View Youth Services Center during their commitment. The RYVSC group consists of 332 males discharged from the Division of Youth Corrections during FY 2006-07.

This section compares youth in the Ridge View discharge cohort with all of the other males discharged from DYC during the same fiscal year that did not attend RYVSC or spent less than 90 days at the facility (n=471). These two groups are compared on a myriad of demographic characteristics as well as on some risk factors for re-offending.

***Ethnicity***

Table 19 shows differences in the ethnic distribution of youth discharged from the Division during FY 2006-07 who were served by the Ridge View program and all other males discharged during the same time period.

**Table 19: Ethnic Differences between Ridge View and Other DYC Males**

<b>Ethnicity**</b>	<b>Ridge View Youth Percent</b>	<b>DYC Males Percent</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
African-American	20.5%	12.3%	126
Hispanic	41.3%	33.5%	295
White	36.1%	51.6%	363
Other <sup>46</sup>	2.1%	2.5%	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>N=332</b>	<b>N=471</b>	<b>803</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=21.877, p<0.01

There were higher rates of minority populations in the Ridge View group when compared with other DYC males. Although these results are statistically significant, there were no differences in pre-discharge or post-discharge recidivism rates attributed to ethnicity in the larger census of all youth discharged in FY 2006-07. Therefore this finding is not expected to influence the comparison of recidivism rates between the Ridge View group and other DYC males<sup>47</sup>.

<sup>46</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.

<sup>47</sup> As expected, there were no significant recidivism rate differences by ethnic group for either sub-sample of youth.

### ***Age at Commitment***

The average age at the time of commitment for youth placed at Ridge View was 16.6 years. This is slightly older (but not a statistically significant difference) than the average age at commitment for other NYC males (16.4 years). The average age at the time a youth was placed at the Ridge View Youth Services Center was slightly older than at the time of commitment at 16.8 years (about 2 and a half months overall difference). 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.

The majority of youth were 16 (31.3%) or 17 (40.4%) years of age at the time of first placement in Ridge View Youth Services Center. Table 20 shows the distribution of these youth by age at time of placement.

**Table 20: Age at Placement in Ridge View<sup>48</sup>**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number Placed</b>	<b>Percent</b>
14	14	4.2%
15	58	17.5%
16	104	31.3%
17	134	40.4%
18	20	6.0%
19	2	0.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100%</b>

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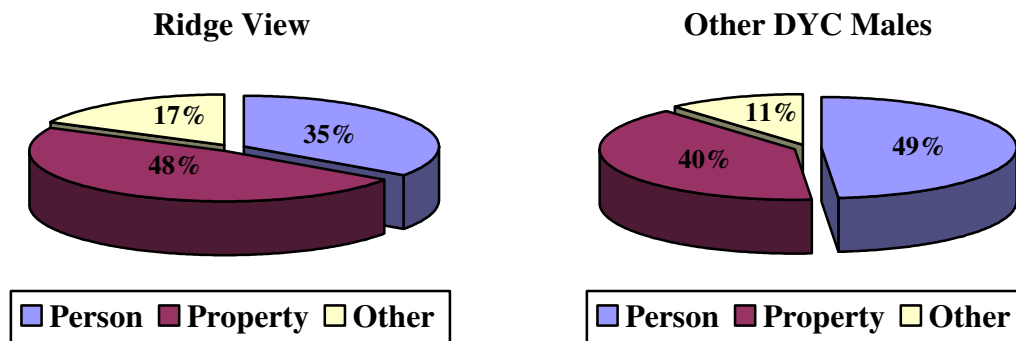
<sup>48</sup> Represents age at time of placement in Ridge View, rather than age at the time of commitment. Because of the delay between commitment and placement, no comparison can be made with age at commitment for other NYC males.

### ***Offense Types***

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 the Ridge View facility and the overall DYC male population.

As Figure 16 indicates, almost half of the Ridge View sample (47.9%) was committed for property offenses, compared with 39.9% of other DYC males. Similarly only 34.6% of males placed at Ridge View were committed for person offenses compared with 48.6% of other DYC males.

**Figure 16: Type of Offense**



The differences in types of offenses noted in the preceding graphics were statistically significant (Chi-Square=16.788,  $p < 0.01$ ). Since property offenders tend to recidivate at higher rates than other offenders it would be expected given these results that youth in the Ridge View sample might have a higher risk for re-offending than other DYC males.

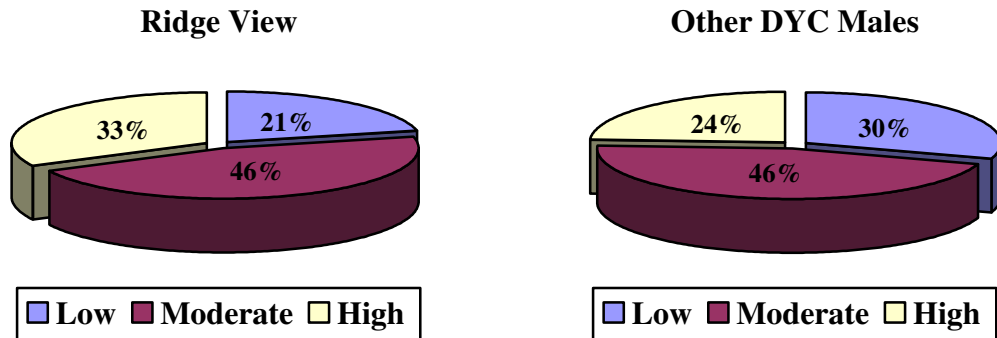
### ***Risk of Recidivism***

All youth committed to the Division of Youth Corrections are assessed for risk of recidivism at the time of commitment. Looking at the results from the risk assessment used by DYC to initially assess all youth for risk of recidivism, the CYO-LSI<sup>49</sup>, a statistically significant difference did result when comparing Ridge View youth with

<sup>49</sup> The CJRA was implemented in June 2006. Very few youth discharged in FY 2006-07 would have been eligible to receive an assessment using the CJRA (N=5), therefore all risk analyses are based on risk scores from the CYO-LSI, the instrument the CJRA replaced.

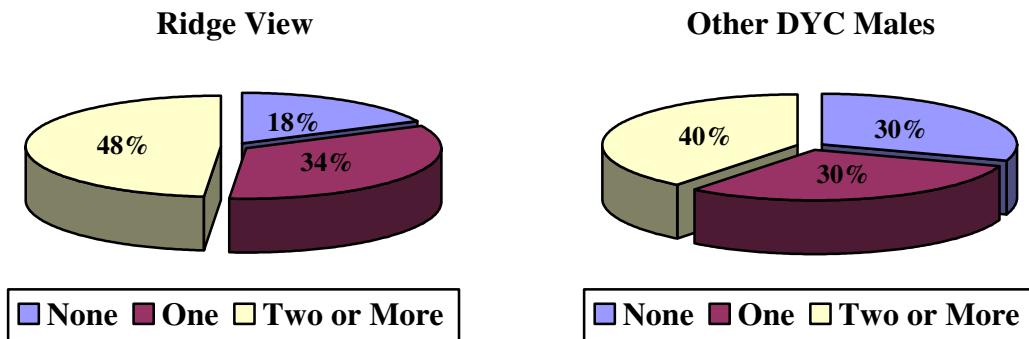
other DYC males discharged in FY 2006-07 (Chi-Square=10.573,  $p < 0.01$ ). As seen in Figure 17 there was proportionately more youth at a high risk for re-offending, and conversely fewer low risk youth, in the Ridge View sample than in the comparison group.

**Figure 17: CYO-LSI Risk Scores**



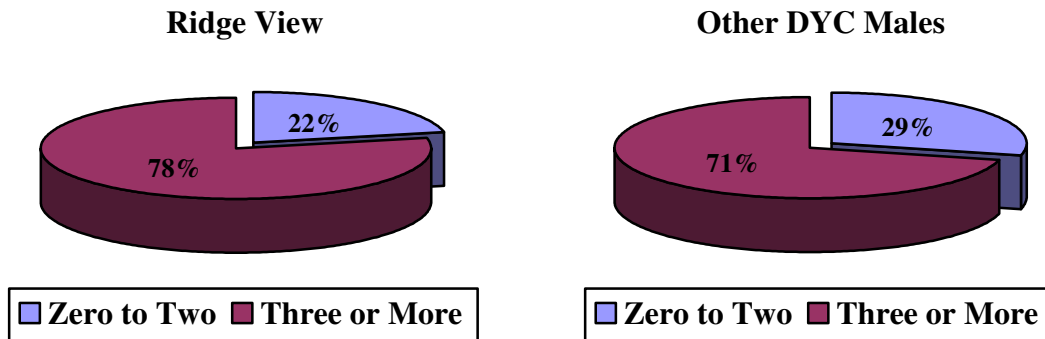
Another estimation of risk of recidivism is prior involvement in the juvenile justice system. Figure 18 shows a significantly higher proportion of youth in the Ridge View cohort with two or more prior adjudications than the remaining DYC male population (Chi-Square=16.715,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating an elevated risk for recidivism.

**Figure 18: Number of Prior Adjudications**



Similarly, a comparison of the number of prior detention admissions between groups (see Figure 19) shows a smaller, but still statistically significant difference in the percentage of Ridge View males with more than two prior detention admissions (78.3%), when compared to other DYC males (71.1%)<sup>50</sup>.

**Figure 19: Number of Prior Detention Admissions**



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

Youth in this discharge cohort, placed at RYVSC, had a slightly shorter average total commitment LOS (26.1 months) than other DYC males (26.5 months). Total commitment length of stay includes time spent in a residential placement and time spent under parole supervision. Differences in total commitment length of stay were not statistically significant. Although LOS differences were not found to be significant there were differences between groups in the types of commitment sentences received. Other DYC males had a higher percentage of youth with non-mandatory commitment sentences and none of the youth in the Ridge View cohort were sentenced as aggravated offenders. Aggravated juvenile offenders receive mandatory sentencing guidelines requiring up to a seven-year minimum commitment to the Division of Youth Corrections.

All youth in these groups were subject to the mandatory parole statutes and would have been required to spend a minimum of 6 months on parole status, in the community, prior to discharge from the Division. Time spent under parole supervision was found to be

<sup>50</sup> Chi-Square=4.874, p<0.05.

significantly lower for the Ridge View group (6.5 months) compared with other NYC males (7.1 months)<sup>51</sup>.

### **Ridge View Recidivism Results**

This section reports recidivism and other outcome information for the 332 youth discharged from the Division of Youth Corrections between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007, who were placed at Ridge View Youth Services Center (RVYSC) during their commitment to the Division. The Ridge View cohort is compared with all other males discharged from NYC during this same time period who did not spend time at RVYSC (n=471). 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 NYC.

**Pre-Discharge Recidivism:** A filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense that occurred prior to discharge (while the youth is under NYC supervision) 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.

The comparison of groups, Ridge View youth and all other NYC males discharged in FY 2006-07, suggests that recidivism rates will be higher for the Ridge View sample. Ridge View youth scored higher on almost all of the risk of recidivism factors (offense type, risk scores, and prior involvement in the juvenile justice system) than the comparison group.

Table 21 show the pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates for the Ridge View sample and other NYC males discharged in FY 2006-07.

#### **Ridge View Recidivism**

**Pre-Discharge: 34.9%**  
**Post-Discharge: 41.3%**

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<sup>51</sup> F=4.182, p<0.05.

**Table 21: Recidivism Rates RVYSC and RV Comparison Group**

	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ridge View	216	65.1%	116	34.9%	332	41.3%
Other DYC Males	317	67.3%	154	32.7%	471	58.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>66.4%</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>33.6%</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>100%</b>

	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ridge View	195	58.7%	137	41.3%	332	41.3%
Other DYC Males	281	59.7%	190	40.3%	471	58.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>59.3%</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>40.7%</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>100%</b>

Although the results are in the expected direction, Ridge View youth had slightly higher rates of recidivism before discharge and within one year following discharge, there was no statistically significant difference in recidivism rates by group. Of the 332 youth in the RVYSC group, 34.9% had a new misdemeanor or felony offense filed prior to discharge. In comparison, 32.7% of other DYC males discharged in FY 2006-07 received a new filing during their commitment. Youth in the Ridge View sample also had a slightly higher rate of post-discharge recidivism (41.3%), compared with other males discharged during the same fiscal year (40.3%).

The lack of a statistically significant difference is an interesting finding in and of itself. As seen in the comparison of risk factors for these two samples, Ridge View youth had significantly higher risk for re-offense when compared to the other DYC males discharged in FY 2006-07. The only significant finding that suggested that the Ridge View sample might exhibit lower recidivism rates (and only for pre-discharge) was the comparison of length of stay. The current finding of no difference in rates implies that the treatment received by this cohort was at least slightly responsible for mitigating the differences assessed in risk of recidivism at the time of commitment.



The following sub-sections will show analyses of the Ridge View cohort’s recidivism rates by specific demographic and risk factors. Throughout this report a finding followed by ‘\*\*’ indicates a statistically significant difference between groups.

***DYC Management Region***

DYC has a regionally based management structure, operating from four management regions in the State (see Figure 8, pg. 21) The Central Region 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 county of Mesa. Unlike most DYC placements, which are generally contracted separately for each management region, Ridge View Youth Services Center treats clients from all four regions. Table 22 shows a breakdown of new offenses during and after commitment by DYC management region.

**Table 22: Ridge View Recidivism Rates by DYC Management Region**

Region	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Central	109	69.0%	49	31.0%	158	47.6%
Northeast	50	62.5%	30	37.5%	80	24.1%
Southern	35	57.4%	26	42.6%	61	18.4%
Western	22	66.7%	11	33.3%	33	9.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>65.1%</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>34.9%</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100%</b>

Region**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Central	104	65.8%	54	34.2%	158	47.6%
Northeast	37	46.3%	43	53.8%	80	24.1%
Southern	39	63.9%	22	36.1%	61	18.4%
Western	15	45.5%	18	54.5%	33	9.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>58.7%</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>41.3%</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=11.502, p<0.01

Many of the results of this and the following analyses mirror the results of the primary recidivism study. The highest levels of pre-discharge recidivism rates for the Ridge View sample are found in the Southern Region (42.6%), and the lowest rates are in the Central Region, (31.0%). Differences in pre-discharge recidivism were not statistically significant. However differences in the post-discharge recidivism analysis were significant. Similar to the overall discharge cohort's results, the Northeast Region (53.8%) and the Western Region (54.5%) had significantly higher rates of recidivism for the Ridge View youth from their regions when compared with the Central and Southern Regions (34.2%, and 36.1% respectively).

As noted in the main study, there are many reasons why recidivism rates could vary by region, including law enforcement and filing practices, and availability of treatment options. However, when more than half of the Ridge View youth in the Northeast and Western regions are re-offending within one year of their discharge date, it implies that the youth in this sample are not being successfully reintegrated into the community in these regions. The Ridge View facility is one of the few NYC treatment options that regularly serve youth from all four NYC management regions. Transitioning services are essential in the successful reintegration of youth into the community and these recidivism results may indicate a need for more transitional resources to be allocated for Ridge View youth returning to the Northeast and Western regions.

Reallocating or enhancing services for these youth's transition needs may also help to reduce the Division's overall recidivism rates. This year's Ridge View cohort represents 35% of all youth discharged from NYC in FY 2006-07. Obviously, the outcome results of such a large sub-sample of youth from this year's study would influence the overall recidivism rates for the Division. If more effective transitional services for Ridge View youth in the Northeast and Western Regions were able to reduce recidivism in those two geographic areas, the overall recidivism rates would also be positively impacted.

### ***Number of Escapes***

The DYC TRAILS database tracks the number of times a youth escapes from residential placement. DYC policy defines an escape 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. 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>52</sup>. This relationship did not hold true for 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 inflate the pre-discharge recidivism rates for youth who escape from RYVSC when compared with other DYC males who might have escapes in other jurisdictions.

### ***Number of Recommitments***

The DYC TRAILS data system also tracks the number of times a committed youth receives an additional commitment sentence while they are still fulfilling a sentence to DYC. Since all recommitments are the product of another charge being filed against the youth, either before<sup>53</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. Table 23 displays the rate of recidivism by the number of recommitments.

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<sup>52</sup> F=53.126, p<0.01

<sup>53</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 DYC for another offense, regardless of the date of the offense.

**Table 23: Ridge View Recidivism Rates by Number of Recomitments**

Number of Recomitments**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	192	73.6%	69	26.4%	261	78.6%
One	22	37.3%	37	62.7%	59	17.8%
Two or More	2	16.7%	10	83.3%	12	3.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>65.1%</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>34.9%</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100%</b>
**Chi-Square=40.683, p<0.01						
Number of Recomitments	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	160	61.3%	101	38.7%	261	78.6%
One	29	49.2%	30	50.8%	59	17.8%
Two or More	6	50.0%	6	50.0%	12	3.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>58.7%</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>41.3%</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100%</b>

The majority of youth in the Ridge View sample never receive a recommitment sentence (78.6%). Nonetheless, the pre-discharge recidivism rate is much higher for recommitment youth than the rate for youth that do not have any recommitments. Two-thirds (66.2%) of all youth who were recommitment also received a new filing prior to discharge, compared with only 26.4% of those who did not receive a recommitment sentence. Although the pattern of increased recidivism rates holds true for post-discharge as well, those results were not statistically significant.

***Risk of Recidivism - Prior Out-of-Home Placements***

During the first thirty days of commitment to DYC, 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 recidivism study examined a number of factors that have traditionally been shown to increase the risk of re-offending. These factors include: number of prior out-of-home placements, number of prior detentions, number of prior adjudications, age at first adjudication, number of prior commitments, age at commitment, and risk scores for re-offending.

Out-of-home placements can include inpatient mental health or substance abuse treatment facilities, Child Welfare placements, as well as any prior NYC placements. Table 24 shows Ridge View recidivism rates by number of prior out-of-home placements.

**Table 24: Ridge View Recidivism by Prior Out-Of-Home Placements**

Number of Prior Out-Of-Home Placements	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	81	71.1%	33	28.9%	114	34.3%
One or More	135	61.9%	83	38.1%	218	65.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>65.1%</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>34.9%</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100%</b>

Number of Prior Out-Of-Home Placements**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	80	70.2%	34	29.8%	114	34.3%
One or More	115	52.8%	103	47.2%	218	65.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>58.7%</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>41.3%</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=8.670, p<0.01

Pre-discharge recidivism differences were not statistically significant, however, post discharge results show that Ridge View youth with any out-of-home placements prior to this commitment (47.2%) were more likely to receive a new filing within one year of discharge than youth with no prior out-of-home placements (29.8%).

***Risk of Recidivism - Prior Adjudications***

Prior adjudications is the only measure of prior involvement in the juvenile justice system, which had any effect on recidivism rates for this year’s Ridge View cohort, and only for pre-discharge recidivism (see Table 25).

**Table 25: Ridge View Recidivism by Prior Adjudications**

Number of Prior Adjudications**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	30	50.8%	29	49.2%	59	17.8%
One	85	75.9%	27	24.1%	112	33.7%
Two or More	101	62.7%	60	37.3%	161	48.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>65.1%</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>34.9%</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100%</b>
**Chi-Square=11.408, p<0.01						
Number of Prior Adjudications	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	34	57.6%	25	42.4%	59	17.8%
One	73	65.2%	39	34.8%	112	33.7%
Two or More	88	54.7%	73	45.3%	161	48.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>58.7%</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>41.3%</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100%</b>

It is expected that youth with more prior adjudications would have higher recidivism rates, however, the opposite was true for pre-discharge recidivism among this group of Ridge View youth. Almost half (49.2%) of the youth with no prior adjudications received a new filing for an offense that occurred during their commitment, compared with 24.1% of the youth with only 1 prior adjudication and 37.3% of the youth with multiple prior adjudications. Results for recidivism by prior adjudication for the Ridge View cohort should be interpreted cautiously because of the small number of youth with no prior adjudications (n=59).

The fact that prior adjudications and prior out-of-home placements were the only risk factors that evidenced differences in the Ridge View sample’s recidivism rates (and not necessarily in the expected direction) could indicate some level of treatment success. Although the youth in the Ridge View group scored significantly higher on all of the risk

factors analyzed when compared with other DYC males (and did have slightly higher overall recidivism rates) these factors were no longer influential in determining risk of recidivism for the Ridge View cohort. These findings suggest that there have been some intervening measures (treatment) during commitment that have kept these youth from receiving a new filing during commitment or within one year following commitment, regardless of their presenting level of risk at the time of commitment.

***Community Reintegration (Post-Discharge Only)***

When a youth is discharged from DYC, the Division records whether the youth was successful on parole and whether the youth has a job or is enrolled in school at the time of discharge. This year’s primary discharge cohort did not report any differences in recidivism rate by successful parole adjustment and the Ridge View sample mirrors those findings. However, post-discharge recidivism rates were affected by whether a youth was employed or enrolled in school at the time of discharge (see Table 26).

**Table 26: Ridge View Post-Discharge Recidivism by Job/School Status**

Job/School Status**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Employed or Enrolled	154	62.3%	93	37.7%	247	76.9%
Not Employed or Enrolled	35	47.3%	39	52.7%	74	23.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>58.7%</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>41.3%</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=4.724, p<0.05

Over half of the youth in the Ridge View sample who were not employed or enrolled in school received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense within one year following their discharge from the Division of Youth Corrections (52.7%). Youth who did have a job or were attending school at the time of discharge were less likely to receive a new filing (37.7%).

***Ridge View Graduation***

In order to officially graduate from the Ridge View program, each of the components of the VALIDATE model (see Figure 15, pg. 47) 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 RAM status for four consecutive months, he officially validates the program and participates in a graduation ceremony.

Table 27 shows the differences in pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates for youth that successfully completed (graduated from) the Ridge View Youth Services Center program, compared with youth who left for other reasons<sup>54</sup>.

**Table 27: Ridge View Recidivism by Successful Completion of the Ridge View Program**

Completion Status**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Graduated	200	67.1%	98	32.9%	298	89.8%
Did Not Graduate	16	47.1%	18	52.9%	34	10.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>65.1%</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>34.9%</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100%</b>
**Chi-Square=4.554, p<0.05						
Completion Status	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Number	Number	Percent
Graduated	176	59.1%	122	40.9%	298	89.8%
Did Not Graduate	19	55.9%	15	44.1%	34	10.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>58.7%</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>41.3%</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100%</b>

Youth that graduated from Ridge View were less likely to receive a new filing for a recidivist act prior to discharge (32.9%) than youth who did not fully complete the program (52.9%). Pre-discharge differences in recidivism rates by graduation status were statistically significant, however the slight differences in post-discharge recidivism were

<sup>54</sup> Youth who did not graduate may have completed the program, but did not fulfill all of 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.

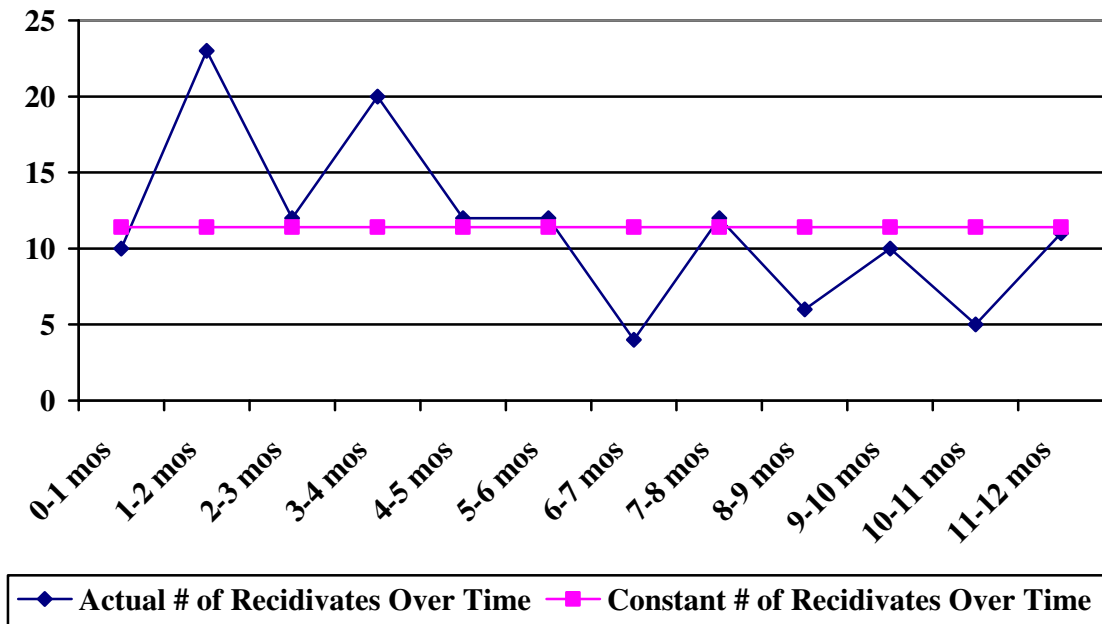


not. Although encouraging, these recidivism results should be interpreted cautiously because of the small number of youth who did not successfully complete the Ridge View program (n=34).

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

Looking at time to first offense it is clear that youth in the Ridge View sample exhibited similar post-discharge recidivism patterns as youth in the main recidivism study. The average amount of time for Ridge View youth who recidivated within one year of their discharge date was 5.1 months, compared with 5.0 months for the main recidivism sample. Figure 20 shows the actual number of youth who recidivated each month after discharge, and a depiction of what a constant rate of recidivism would look like.

**Figure 20: Time to First Post-Discharge Offense (Ridge View)**



Youth in the Ridge View sample had higher incidents of recidivism in months 2 and 4 following discharge, when compared with the constant rate of re-offending. Otherwise the first 6 months following discharge closely mirrored the constant rate, and then were mostly lower from months 7 through 12.

## SECTION 3

### 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>55</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 the 2008-09 Legislative Request for Information (RFI) 44, which states:

*The Department is requested to provide a report to the Joint Budget Committee on January 1, 2009 that 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>55</sup> Zhang, Wiczorek, 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)).

## **Background**

Youth newly committed to the Division of Youth Corrections (DYC) are placed at one of the four DYC Assessment Centers across Colorado, and in compliance with the Colorado Children's Code (19-2-922, C.R.S.), receive a comprehensive evaluation necessary to begin initial understanding of the youth's needs regarding placement and treatment.

Screening for substance abuse is conducted on all youth as part of the overall assessment process. The Substance Use Survey (SUS) provides ratings on specific scales across drug use involvement, disruption, and mental health adjustment. Particularly important are the involvement and disruption scale scores that are used to determine level of treatment. The Involvement scale measures the lifetime use pattern of 19 different drugs (including alcohol). Disruption is considered the best measure of drug abuse and dependence. These scales provide the clinician with the ability to discern the degree of severity of the individual's drug-use pattern.

The evaluator, a Certified Addiction Counselor (CAC II or CAC III) is responsible for scoring and interpreting the results and determining if the youth falls into one of three categories: **Prevention, Intervention, or Treatment level**. This is accomplished by evaluating the responses on drug use involvement, drug use disruption, and psychological problems. The overall score, completed by the clinician, indicates level of treatment. Low scores indicate *Prevention level*; medium scores indicate *Intervention level*; and higher scores are reflective of *Treatment level* needs.

The Adolescent Self-Assessment Profile (ASAP) is administered to youth who meet the *Treatment level* criteria. This is a self-report, multivariate instrument that scores the major risk and problem areas caused by substance abuse in the youth's life. The scales are similar to the Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment in that they measure risks associated with family, peer involvement, school adjustment problems, attitude, anti-social behavior, psychological issues and more specific scales related to substance abuse. Treatment planning related issues can be extrapolated from this data.

**Prevention level services** are for individuals who have not established a pattern of drug or alcohol use, or who may indicate an increased risk for developing a use or abuse pattern. Prevention strategies should be multi-faceted and include community involvement, family, peers and the individual. There is no prescribed level of intensity for prevention services. The more comprehensive the exposure is to multi-media and multi-modal curriculum, based on the holistic wellness model, the better.

The goal in serving *Prevention level* youth is to maintain and strengthen the resiliency and protective factors in the youth's life. Helpful interventions include encouraging family visits, physical exercise, sports, health classes related to healthy sexuality, and skill building classes based on the Cognitive Behavioral Treatment model. Skills taught and incorporated into all daily activities should focus on communication skills, problem solving, and decision-making.

**Intervention level** youth are referred to a level of service for individuals who have established some pattern of use, but who do not indicate signs and symptoms of drug/alcohol disruption. *Intervention level* treatment planning is aimed at moving the youth toward the healthy, protective factors in his/her life, and away from the perils of high-risk substance abuse behaviors and attitudes. These youth are at risk due to environmental factors, (i.e., family or gang) and/or genetic predisposition to abuse of substances. During individual treatment planning and family therapy, youth are encouraged to discuss feelings related to substance abuse in their own family and their choices and limitations within the family environment. Mental health, gang related issues, parenting skills, and healthy sexuality are some of the related issues addressed on an individual basis and during group treatment. Cognitive behavioral treatment and motivational groups are used for both *Intervention* and *Treatment level* youth.

**Treatment level** services are for individuals whose substance use pattern has begun to cause disruptive effects on life functioning. The pattern of use is clear and there are identifiable symptoms resulting from this use pattern. The goal of individualized treatment is to assist the youth in gaining skills necessary to combat substance abuse

behaviors and identify the relationship between substance abuse and criminal conduct. Youth are referred for groups that use curriculum written specifically for this population utilizing the cognitive behavioral treatment approach. Transition services focus on relapse prevention, community support systems, aftercare classes, and a specific transition plan to support the youth during parole.

**Treatment Intensity:** For purposes of developing analytical units for this report, the Division developed three general categories that were based on clinical practice and judgment.

**Low Intensity of Treatment Services:** Low level of services is defined as the client receiving up to four sessions of treatment services monthly.

**Moderate Intensity of Treatment Services:** This level is defined as those youth receiving from 5-10 sessions monthly.

**High Intensity of Treatment Services:** High Intensity of treatment is defined as those receiving 11 or more sessions monthly.

Substance abusing youth in the NYC system receive a range of services beyond the specific substance abuse data that was collected for this report. An example of this is the *Thinking for a Change* (National Institute of Corrections) cognitive behavioral curriculum, offered to all youth in the facilities. This curriculum is provided through a large number of staff including educators, line staff, and youth counselors. Other services youth receive but not collected in this data are gang awareness, psycho-education, parenting, healthy sexuality, grief and loss, economic literacy, trauma treatment services, and the daily skills utilizing role-playing. Where appropriate, youth are also receiving sex offender services and mental health treatment. Informal individual sessions occur between line staff and youth throughout the day but are often not documented as treatment at all.

**Substance Abuse Services Funding State Fiscal Year 2006-07**

Prior to the General Assembly approving the Division’s decision item to add clinical staff to its State Secure facilities, the overwhelming funding source for the provision of substance abuse services came from Federal grant dollars. Beginning in July 2006, the Division of Youth Corrections began the hiring and implementation process for the decision item that brought twenty-nine new clinical positions to the Division of Youth Corrections. Therefore, in FY 2006-07 each State-owned and operated facility was enriched with dedicated substance abuse clinicians who were licensed, master level staff providing substance abuse treatment services.

As seen in Table 28, the Division does also receive outside funding from two sources for substance abuse treatment services. A Federal grant and an inter-agency agreement with the former Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division, now the Division of Behavioral Health, are directed specifically toward substance abuse treatment.

**Table 28: Funding for Substance Abuse Treatment**

<b>Source of Funding</b>	<b>FY 2003-04</b>	<b>FY 2004-05</b>	<b>FY2005-06</b>	<b>FY2006-07</b>
<b>CDHS-ADAD/DBH</b>	\$49,900	\$49,000	\$49,000	\$49,000
<b>Bureau of Justice Administration- Residential Substance abuse Treatment and Transition (RSAT)</b>	\$402,652	\$0.00	\$131,671.00	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$452,552</b>	<b>\$49,000</b>	<b>\$181,571</b>	<b>\$99,000</b>

As indicated in the above table, the Federal grant dollars targeting substance abuse treatment have been greatly reduced over the past four years. These funds available through the RSAT grant in FY 2006-07 made it possible to treat only ten female

offenders with severe substance abuse needs residing at the Betty K. Marler Youth Services Center.

In FY 2006-07 the ADAD funding continues to be utilized to contract with outside community providers to enter State-operated facilities and provide transition group services to youth. In many cases, upon release to parole status the youth are linked with the same agency or provider to continue transition and community reintegration.

### **Criminogenic Risk Factors**

The Division of Youth Corrections has embarked upon an initiative to redesign its assessment and classification services, with the goal of developing a comprehensive, state-of-the-art assessment, diagnostic and classification system that is founded in evidence-based theory and principles.

Effective June 2006, every youth committed to the Division of Youth Corrections was assessed for actuarial risk using the Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment Instrument (CJRA). The CJRA is a fourth-generation risk instrument that was developed by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP). This instrument measures criminogenic risk, needs, and protective factors both from a static and dynamic perspective. The CJRA replaces the Colorado Young Offender - Level of Service Inventory (CYO-LSI) that DYC has used for over a decade. Unlike the CYO-LSI, the CJRA also incorporates protective factor scales that are valuable when developing case-plans and referring youth to specific residential treatment placements. Additionally, the CJRA has a built-in pre-screen, which is a 27-item questionnaire that can be quickly used to make screening decisions.

Since the CJRA was not in place at the time most of the youth in the FY 2006-07 discharge cohort were committed<sup>56</sup> any analyses of risk or levels of risk in this study will be in reference to the scores generated from the CYO-LSI. The CYO-LSI is an 84-item

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<sup>56</sup> Only 5 youth in this discharge sample were committed after the implementation of the CJRA in June 2006, therefore risk assessment analyses in this study will use results from the CYO-LSI.

risk assessment instrument with the following cut-point scores designating risk level for re-offending:

**Table 29: CYO-LSI Scoring Cut-Points**

<b>Risk Category</b>	<b>CYO-LSI Score</b>
Low Risk	0 to 30
Medium Risk	31 to 41
High Risk	42 to 84

### **Sampling Protocols**

One of the significant challenges in responding to this request for information is that the Division’s information management system (TRAILS) only collects substance abuse treatment data while the youth resides in one of the eleven State-secure facilities. The TRAILS system is currently not designed to track those substance abuse treatment services that a youth receives while residing in a contract placement. Moreover, the TRAILS system does not have a ready mechanism for tracking those community based treatment services that a youth receives while on parole.

This report will track a cohort of youth from all of the FY 2006-07 discharges who received treatment services tracked in the TRAILS system (services offered in State-secure facilities). One limitation of relying on these treatment data records is that youth committed to the Division of Youth Corrections typically serve a not insignificant proportion of their residential stay in less secure contract placements. In fact it is the intent of the Continuum of Care initiative that the Division more effectively transition youth out of the more costly State-secure placements into appropriate less restrictive community based settings. For purposes of this analysis, the Division has developed length of stay (LOS) criteria for designating whether a youth had spent enough time in a State-secure placement for that placement to have had the opportunity to provide significant substance abuse treatment services to that individual. The length of time



deemed necessary to receive treatment services in an adequate amount was at least six months in a State-secure placement.

### **Description of Substance Abuse Sample**

In FY 2006-07, DYC had a total discharge cohort of 944 youth. Of this discharged cohort, 817 youth were assessed as having either *Intervention* or *Treatment* level substance abuse treatment needs (86.8%). Narrowing the sample to only those youth with *Intervention* or *Treatment* level needs, 28.5% of these youth met the aforementioned criteria of spending at least six months in a State-secure placement (n=233). At the time of commitment 30.9% of this sub-population were identified as being *Intervention* level, while 69.1% were assessed at the more intensive *Treatment* level (n=161). The *Prevention* level youth were removed from the sample so that a ‘pure treatment’ group could be created for purposes of these analyses.

Of the 233 youth identified for this ‘pure-treatment’ cohort, clinical data records show that 28.8% did not receive any substance abuse treatment services while placed in State-secure residential placement (n=67). This is not to suggest that no substance abuse services were provided to these youth during their commitment<sup>57</sup>. At a minimum, all youth committed to DYC are given a substance abuse assessment and/or evaluation. These youth may have had other safety or treatment needs that were more severe and mandated that substance abuse treatment services be relegated a lower priority than services to treat those other presenting issues. Furthermore it is possible that many of these youth received a notable amount of substance abuse services in contract placements following their residential stay in a State-secure placement and therefore were not able to be counted among this State-secure treatment cohort.

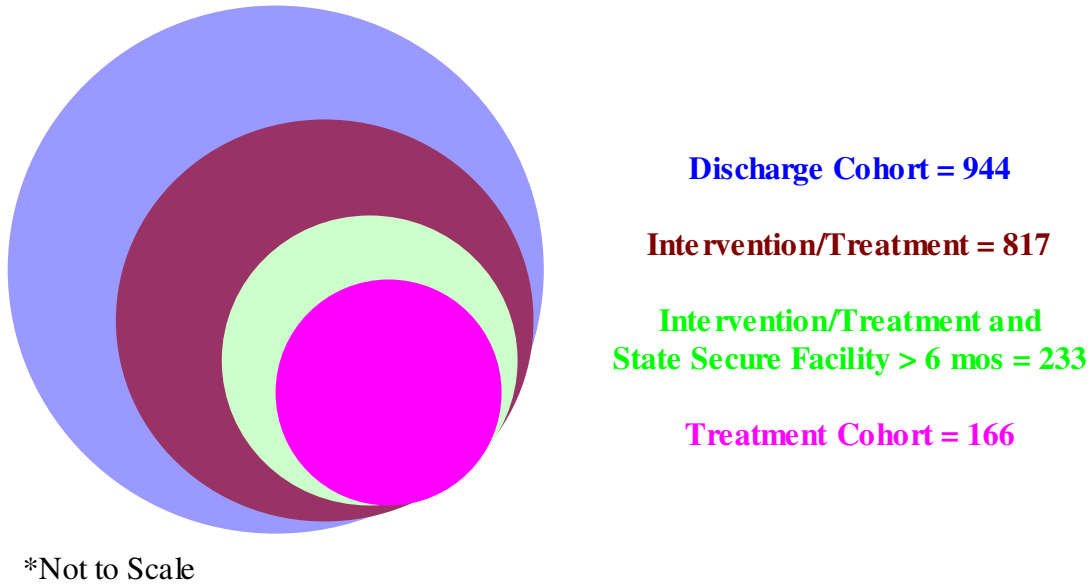
Overall, 166 youth met the sample criteria of being assessed with *Treatment* or *Intervention* level substance abuse needs, had at least one 6 month or longer placement in

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<sup>57</sup> Specifically, it is important to note that there were Treatment level youth who received substance abuse services, but were not included in the data set because they did not meet the standard of receiving a continuous dose of treatment for at least six months in one facility.

a State-secure residential facility and received clinical substance abuse treatment while at that facility.

**Figure 21: Description of Substance Abuse Cohort\***



***Treatment Intensity***

Of the 166 youth in the substance abuse treatment cohort, records indicate that 42.8% received a *Low* level of treatment (n=71), 50.6% received a *Moderate* level of treatment (n=84), and 11 youth (6.6%) received the most intensive *High* level of treatment as described earlier in this section. For purposes of analysis, service intensity was analyzed according to the youths’ levels of assessed substance abuse treatment needs (see Table 30)

**Table 30: Service Intensity by Treatment Level**

Service Intensity**	Intervention		Treatment		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	28	62.2%	43	35.5%	71	42.8%
Moderate	16	35.6%	68	56.2%	84	50.6%
High	1	2.2%	10	8.3%	11	6.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>27.1%</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>72.9%</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*\*Chi-Square=10.030, p<0.01

The majority of youth in the substance abuse treatment cohort were *Treatment Level* youth (72.9%). Significantly more services were provided to *Treatment Level* youth. As expected, most of the high intensity treatment (more than 10 sessions per month) was given to *Treatment Level* youth (over 90% of all youth who received a high intensity of services). Only one *Intervention* level youth received more than 10 sessions of treatment per month.

Sixty-five percent of the Treatment level youth received at least a moderate level of substance abuse treatment, compared with only 37.8% of *Intervention Level* youth. 10 of those youth (8.3%) received a high intensity of services, or more than 10 sessions per month. This is a reversal of last year's results which indicated that more *Intervention* level youth were receiving substance abuse services in State-secure placements, and may indicate that as more experienced and qualified clinical treatment staff were added to State facilities in FY 2006-07, services were more appropriately disseminated to the youth needing them most.

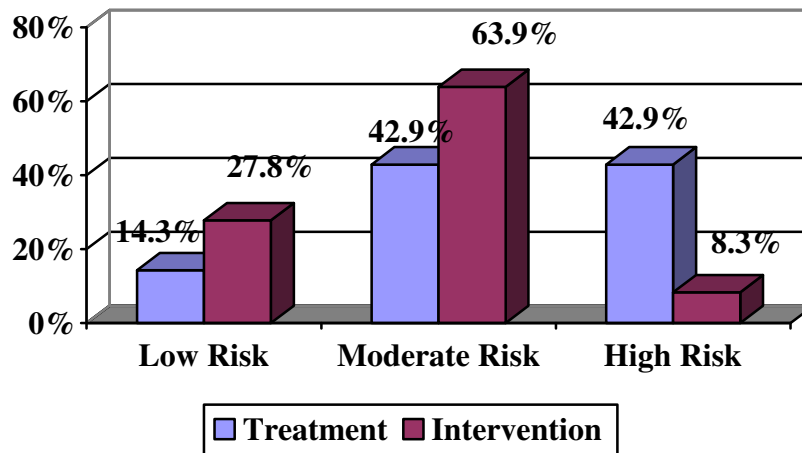
### ***Risk of Recidivism***

In addition to evaluating treatment level and service intensity, the Division also sought to account for the influence of overall risk of recidivism. Although research has long established a link between substance abuse and delinquency, there are a number of other factors that either aggravate or mitigate a youth's overall probability for re-offending. The existence of a substance abuse problem alone is not sufficient to predict recidivism.

Predicting risk is a complicated process involving a myriad of factors. Factors (other than substance abuse) include: criminal history, school attendance and achievement, use of free time, employment, relationships, living arrangements, mental health, attitudes and behaviors, and skills. There are youth in the system that possess serious substance abuse problems, yet do not present a high probability of re-offending. Likewise, there are youth with no indication of substance abuse problems who present a serious public safety concern. The key connection is the extent that substance abuse was evident or was a contributing factor when the delinquent act occurred.

Figure 22 shows the risk level (as determined by the CYO-LSI) compared by treatment need to all 233 *Treatment* or *Intervention* level youth who had at least one State-secure placement of at least 6 months.

**Figure 22: Risk of Re-Offending by Treatment Need (CYO-LSI)**

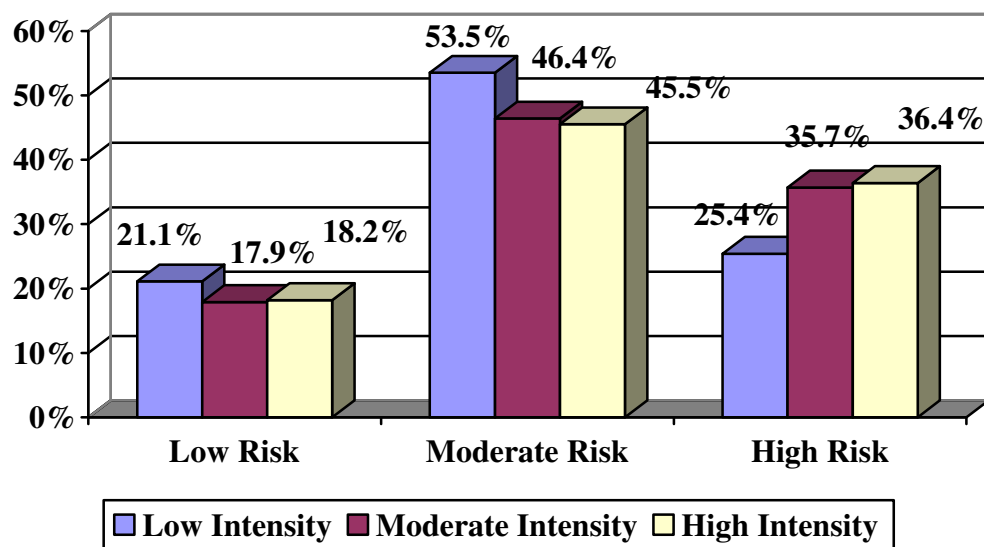


As seen in the preceding figure, *Treatment* level youth in this sample are at a higher risk for re-offending after examining all criminogenic factors available to the CYO-LSI instrument<sup>58</sup>. Therefore, the success of substance abuse treatment alone will not necessarily mitigate all of the risk factor present for these youth and it is expected that these youth will recidivate at a higher level than the *Intervention* level youth.

Additionally, the Division looked at risk for recidivism, compared by the level of substance abuse services provided while in secure placement (see figure 23). There were no significant differences in risk level by the level of service intensity.

<sup>58</sup> Chi-Square=27.788, p<0.01

**Figure 23: Risk of Re-Offending by Treatment Need (CYO-LSI)**



### **Recidivism Rates for Substance Abuse Treatment Cohort**

Youth who spent more than 6 months in a State-secure facility (45.1%) were more likely to re-offend prior to their discharge date than youth who did not spend at least 6 months in a facility (29.7%)<sup>59</sup>. There were no differences in post-discharge recidivism rates compared to the larger discharge cohort studied in section 1 of this report. One potential explanation for this finding is that youth residing in State-secure facilities are typically those youth who have been deemed either by the Courts or the Division as presenting a greater risk to public safety. State Secure beds represent the “deepest-end” bed for the Division. These beds are typically reserved for those youth who have already failed in a community placement or who’s determined risk would not permit a community placement. A higher pre-discharge recidivism rate may also be indicative of the cause for the youth’s secure placement. Additionally, youth who fail in a community placement are often transferred to a State-secure bed following the transgression. It could have been that the pre-recidivist act occurred prior to the youth placement in a secure bed<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>59</sup> Chi-Square=17.975, p<0.01.

<sup>60</sup> Because of the complicated task of determining the temporal ordering of recidivism events and youth placements, this type of cause-effect analysis is not available in this report.

This section compares pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates for Intervention and Treatment level youth who were held in a State-secure facility for at least 6 months and received substance abuse treatment to youth who spent at least six months in a secure facility and did not receive any substance abuse treatment. Youth who were not eligible for the treatment cohort (did not have at least six

**Pre-Discharge Recidivism:** A filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense that occurred prior to discharge (while the youth is under DYC supervision) 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.

months in a State-secure placement) are not included in this analysis. Table 31 shows the overall recidivism rates for the State-secure cohort, comparing those youth who received substance abuse treatment while in a State-secure facility, and those who did not receive treatment in a State-secure facility.

**Table 31: State-Secure Cohort Recidivism Rates**

Substance Abuse Treatment**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Treatment	99	59.6%	67	40.4%	166	71.2%
No Treatment	29	43.3%	38	56.7%	67	28.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>54.9%</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>45.1%</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>100%</b>
Chi-Square=4.518, p<0.05						
Substance Abuse Treatment	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Treatment	98	59.0%	68	41.0%	166	71.2%
No Treatment	39	58.2%	28	41.8%	67	28.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>58.8%</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>41.2%</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>100%</b>

Youth in the treatment cohort were significantly less likely to receive a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense during their commitment (see Table 31). Forty percent of the youth who spent more than 6 months in a State-secure facility and received substance

abuse treatment received a new filing prior to discharge compared with 56.7% who did not receive any substance abuse treatment. There were no differences between groups in the post-discharge recidivism analysis.

Interestingly, although the secure treatment cohort evidenced statistically significant differences with pre-discharge recidivism when compared to the non-treatment cohort, these statistical differences seem to disappear when measuring post-discharge recidivism. One possible explanation is that those youth who spend a larger proportion of their commitment stay in a State-secure placement may initially present elevated levels of risk, but through the provision of treatment services, their risk levels are reduced to what might be expected from the population as a whole.

***Recidivism by Treatment Need and Intensity of Service***

Overall, this report did not generate statistically significant differences in levels of re-offending, relating to need for treatment. Table 32 shows pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates<sup>61</sup> by substance abuse need for treatment levels.

**Table 32: Recidivism Rates by Substance Abuse Need for Treatment**

Need for SA Treatment	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Prevention	88	71.0%	36	29.0%	124	13.2%
Intervention	156	64.5%	86	35.5%	242	25.7%
Treatment	381	66.3%	194	33.7%	575	61.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>66.4%</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>33.6%</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>100%</b>

(n=941, missing=3)

Need for SA Treatment	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Prevention	82	66.1%	42	33.9%	124	13.2%
Intervention	163	67.4%	79	32.6%	242	25.7%
Treatment	345	60.0%	230	40.0%	575	61.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>62.7%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>37.3%</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>100%</b>

(n=941, missing=3)

<sup>61</sup> Includes the entire discharge cohort

Results of these analyses are not statistically significant. Statistically youth assessed at the prevention, intervention, and treatment level for substance abuse treatment need were equally likely to receive a new filing for an offense, both prior to discharge and within one year following discharge.

Table 33 shows the recidivism rates of the Treatment cohort by levels of service intensity. A low service intensity is indicative of less than five treatment sessions per month compared with five to ten sessions for youth receiving moderate treatment service intensity and more than ten sessions per month for the high level.

**Table 33: Recidivism Rates by Treatment Service Intensity**

Service Intensity	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	40	56.3%	31	43.7%	71	42.8%
Moderate	52	61.9%	32	38.1%	84	50.6%
High	7	63.6%	4	36.4%	11	6.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>59.6%</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>40.4%</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>100%</b>

Service Intensity	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	40	56.3%	31	43.7%	71	42.8%
Moderate	50	59.5%	34	40.5%	84	50.6%
High	7	63.6%	4	36.4%	11	6.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>58.4%</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>41.6%</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>100%</b>

These results should be interpreted cautiously because of the small number of youth in the high service intensity group (n=11). There were no differences in recidivism rates when comparing the amount of treatment given to youth in State-secure facilities. Although the slight differences noted in Table 33 are in the expected direction (assuming equal risk for factors other than substance abuse need, youth who received larger doses of treatment had slightly lower recidivism rates) analyzing recidivism rates by level of service intensity is a confounding research endeavor. The difficulty stems from the highly touted “best practice” of directing the most intensive treatment services to the greatest at-



risk population. If a high-risk youth is later found to have committed a recidivist act, is this act presumed to be the result of poor or inadequate treatment, or a predictable outcome given the abundant and demonstrable evidence that the youth would likely re-offend.

## **DISCUSSION and CONCLUSIONS**

Before discussing the results presented within this report it is important to understand 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 underlying assumptions. A marked departure from any of these assumptions will result in outcome measures that are significantly disparate. Appendix A includes a discussion of those assumptions that have the greatest potential for influencing recidivism rates.

### **DYC Recidivism**

There were 944 youth discharged in FY 2006-07 from the Division of Youth Corrections. Overall, three hundred sixteen (33.5%) of those youth received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense that occurred prior to discharge from the Division, and three hundred fifty-one (37.2%) received a new filing for an offense within one year after their discharge from DYC.

Pre-discharge recidivism rates (filings for offenses that occurred during a youth's commitment or parole sentence) have fluctuated between 33% and 39% for the past 5 years<sup>62</sup>. This year's pre-discharge recidivism rate (33.5%) is the second lowest in the past five years (33.1% for youth discharged in FY 2003-04).

Over the past five discharge cohorts, post-discharge recidivism rates (filings for offenses that occurred within one year following discharge from DYC supervision) have ranged from a low of 34.4% in FY 2002-03 to a high of 38.0% in FY 2002-03. This year's post-discharge recidivism rate of 37.2% is higher than recidivism rates for the FY 2002-03 (34.4%) and FY2005-06 (35.5%) samples and lower than the rates for youth discharged in FY 2003-04 (38.0%) and FY2004-05 (37.9%).

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<sup>62</sup> This is the fifth annual recidivism study since the change in sample selection to select pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism samples from the same discharge cohort. Earlier studies selected pre-discharge cohorts independently from the post-discharge cohorts.

### ***DYC Recidivism - Demographic Differences***

The only statistically significant differences found in pre-discharge recidivism rates were by DYC management region. The Western and Northeast regions both boasted recidivism rates of just more than 30%, compared with 32% in the Central Region, and a high of almost 44% in the Southern Region. There are a number of potential reasons why regional rates might differ including differences in law enforcement and District Attorney filing practices across the State. Risk scores, as calculated by the Colorado Youth Offender – Level of Service Inventory (CYO-LSI)<sup>63</sup>, were also highest in the Southern Region, meaning that youth committed in that region were expected to show higher levels of recidivist activity, based on their past history and experiences.

Post-discharge recidivism results differed by gender and DYC management region. Historically, males have demonstrated both higher levels of risk for re-offending as well as higher rates of recidivism than females. This year's cohort did not show any difference in risk level, however males were still more likely to commit a new offense within one year after discharge (40.7%) than females (17.0%). These differences may be partially explained by the emphasis the Division has placed on more appropriate and effective treatment strategies for female offenders over the past several years.

Regionally, youth in the Northeast and Western regions were more likely to recidivate than youth in the Central and Southern regions. Over forty-five percent of youth in the Northeast and Western regions received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor within one year after discharge, compared with 34.9% of youth in the Southern Region, and 31.1% of youth in the Central Region. As noted previously, there are a number of reasons why regional differences in recidivism rates may be observed, however the high rates of recidivism seen in the Northeast and Western Regions are disturbing. The youth committed in these two regions actually had lower risk scores than the Southern region and scored comparably with the Central Region. Higher rates of recidivism could reflect some deficiencies in the re-integration services being provided in those regions. As

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<sup>63</sup> The Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment (CJRA) instrument replaced the CYO-LSI in June 2006. See Appendix C for a discussion on risk assessment and the implementation of the CJRA.

regional results are also potentially influenced by specific subgroups it is possible that these high rates of post-discharge recidivism are being driven by youth from the Ridge View Youth Services Center (35% of the total discharge cohort) who may not be receiving an appropriate level of transitioning services when they return to the community in their home regions. The Ridge View facility is one of the few NYC treatment options that regularly serve youth from all four NYC management regions. Working to mitigate the high rates of post-discharge recidivism for this large sub-sample of youth by enhancing transitional services could potentially influence recidivism results for the entire discharge cohort.

### ***NYC Recidivism – Commitment & Parole***

This recidivism study examined a number of indicators of a successful commitment sentence. Recidivism rates, both pre-discharge and post-discharge, were higher for youths with escapes or a recommitment while under NYC supervision. Instinctively this makes sense, especially for offenses filed upon during commitment (pre-discharge), because escapes are often filed upon as a separate charge, and a recommitment is always the result of a new charge filed for an offense that occurred either during or before the youth's commitment. Post-discharge rates are also expected to be higher for these youth because they have continued to commit delinquent acts while under the supervision of the Division.

Post-discharge recidivism rates were also analyzed by two factors indicating the level of success during youths' time on parole supervision and their successful re-integration into their communities. While there were no statistically significant differences found by the parole adjustment rating received by youth at the end of their parole supervision, youth who were gainfully employed or attending school were less likely to receive a new filing within one year following discharge (35.3%) when compared with youth who were not working or enrolled in school (44.4%).

### ***NYC Recidivism – Criminogenic Risk Factors For Re-Offending***

The Division tracks a number of factors relating to a youth's risk for re-offending. This study found that youth with more prior out-of-home placements, more prior detention admissions, more prior adjudications, youth who were younger at the time of their first

adjudication, youth who had previously been committed to the Division of Youth Corrections, and youth who scored higher on the CYO-LSI risk assessment instrument were more likely to receive a new filing during their commitment sentence (pre-discharge recidivism). Post-discharge recidivism rates were also significantly different for all of the above criminogenic risk factors with the exceptions of prior-out of home placements, and prior DYC commitments. All of these factors are expected to increase the risk of re-offending as all, except prior-out-of-home placements, are measures of prior involvement in delinquent activities.

### **Ridge View Recidivism**

The Ridge View Youth Services Center (RVYSC) is a unique treatment option for eligible males within the DYC continuum of treatment options. Unlike other DYC residential treatment options, the Ridge View program is intended as the primary placement option for eligible youth. Youth at the RVYSC facility tend to have longer lengths of stay in their initial placement (Ridge View) and are often paroled directly from the facility to the community.

Section Two identified three hundred, thirty-two youth who spent at least 90 days in the Ridge View Youth Services Center (the Ridge View sample) and who discharged from DYC during FY 2006-07. Thirty-five percent (n=116) of the Ridge View sample received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense during their commitment (pre-discharge recidivism), and 41.3% received a new filing within one year after discharge (post-discharge recidivism).

These rates were similar to the rates of recidivism displayed by other DYC males (n=471) discharged in FY 2006-07. There were a number of differences discovered in risk factors for recidivism when comparing the Ridge View sample and other DYC males discharged in the same fiscal year. Ridge View youth had more prior adjudications, more detention admissions, and more property offenders than the comparison group. The Ridge View sample also scored higher on the CYO-LSI risk assessment instrument with more RVYSC youth at a high risk for re-offending than in the comparison sample. Given these

risk assessment differences between the two groups it would be expected that Ridge View youth would also have higher recidivism rates than the comparison sample. While pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates were slightly higher than those of other DYC males, the results were not statistically significant. This finding implies that the treatment received by this cohort was at least somewhat responsible for mitigating the differences identified in risk of recidivism at the time of commitment to the Division.

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

The juvenile justice research community has long accepted that a relationship exists between substance abuse and delinquency. 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, however, the need for substance abuse services outstrips the resources available for this effort. As a result, juvenile justice agencies are required to ration the finite resources available; dedicating limited resources to those youth who evidence the highest need. This rationing process has led policy makers in Colorado to question the success rates for youth who undergo substance abuse treatment compared to those youth who do not receive these services.

At the request of the Legislature, the Division of Youth Corrections identified a ‘secure cohort’ of 233 youth who were assessed as needing ‘Intervention’ or ‘Treatment’ level substance abuse services and spent at least 6 months in a secure State-operated facility<sup>64</sup>. Of these 233 youth, 67 (28.8%) did not receive any substance abuse treatment services while placed in the State-secure residential treatment facility. These youth may have had other safety or treatment needs that were more severe and mandated that substance abuse treatment services be relegated a lower priority than services to treat these other presenting issues. Furthermore, it is possible that many of these youth received a notable amount of treatment services for their substance abuse problem in contract placements following their stay in a State-secure residential placement, and were therefore not

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<sup>64</sup> Treatment services received by youth in DYC Contract facilities are not input into the DYC TRAILS database; therefore the analyses undertaken for this report only include treatment data for State-secure residential placements.

eligible to be included in the secure treatment cohort. One hundred sixty-six youth met the complete sample criteria of being included in the ‘secure cohort’ and receiving clinical substance abuse treatment services during their placement in that State-secure facility (secure treatment cohort).

Youth in the secure cohort who received substance abuse treatment services (n=166) were significantly less likely to receive a new filing for an offense that occurred prior to discharge (pre-discharge recidivism, 40.4%) than youth in the secure cohort who did not receive substance abuse treatment (56.7%). There were no differences in recidivism rates within one year after these youth were discharged from NYC. There were also no differences in recidivism rates for those youth who did receive treatment services when controlling for the amount of treatment received, although the group sizes were small, especially for youth in the ‘high’ level of treatment group.

The scope and design of this research study is sufficient to address the questions posed by the Legislature:

*The Department is requested to provide a report to the Joint Budget Committee on January 1, 2009 that tracks and compares recidivism rates between those juveniles receiving drug and alcohol treatment and those not receiving treatment, while sentenced to commitment*

However, if the intent of the Legislature is that the Division move beyond a reporting function more towards a cause-and-effect approach, then a more sophisticated research design will be necessary. Given the Division’s mandate to treat all youth who present substance abuse needs, it may not be possible to establish a strict control group. However, it is possible, through the use of complicated sampling procedures and matched-group pairings to arrive at quasi-experimental groupings that may assist in making a causal connection between the provision of substance abuse treatment services

and reduced recidivism. Moving towards this type of research design will also involve a greater dedication of research/evaluation resources.

Additionally, the Division would need to augment and enhance the TRAILS data system to allow for a more comprehensive collection of substance abuse data. Although there are a number of endemic challenges associated with the collection and storage of private substance abuse data (i.e., Privacy Laws, HIPAA mandates, 42 C.F.R., etc.), it is recommended that the Division continue to make gains in this area because of the associated value of using this type of data for programming and treatment.







## **APPENDIX A - Limitations of Recidivism Research**

### **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 re-referral, re-arrest, a new charge, a new filing, reconviction, reconviction and return to custody or supervision, re-incarceration, 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>65</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%), re-arrest (33%), and recommitment (11%). The least common definitions include re-referral, 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.

### **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

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<sup>65</sup> Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, DJJ Research Quarterly, Volume III, April 2005

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 DYC detention and commitment sentences. The lack of capacity for delinquent youth in a community placement drives these youth into the DYC 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>66</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>67</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

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<sup>66</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>67</sup> Conversely, less than accurate information systems may net lower recidivism rates because of errors associated with data entry or software inconsistencies.

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. 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.

## **APPENDIX B – Statistical Measures**

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.



## **APPENDIX C – CJRA: The Next Generation of Assessment**

Research has established and reaffirmed that there are a number of factors that strongly correlate to persistent and/or chronic delinquent behaviors. These criminogenic risk factors consist of a host of social, environmental, ecological, psychological and gender-based influences. The Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment is rooted in the following 11 criminogenic domains: 1) Criminal History; 2) Gender; 3) School; 4) Use of Free Time; 5) Employment; 6) Relationships; 7) Living Arrangements; 8) Substance Abuse; 9) Mental Health; 10) Attitudes and Behaviors; and 11) Skills.

Although a number of criminogenic risk factors are static and not amendable to treatment interventions (Gender, Criminal History, etc.), the vast majority of these factors are dynamic in nature (Mental Health, Substance Abuse, etc.). These more dynamic risk factors are relevant to prevention and rehabilitation in that they suggest promising intermediate objectives of programming, which when achieved should be followed by a concomitant reduction in delinquent behaviors. The following therapeutic targets (or immediate objectives) have been linked (through a meta-analysis of various research studies) to reduced recidivism<sup>68</sup>:

1. Changing Anti-Social Attitudes, Feelings, and Peer Associations
2. Familial Communication, Monitoring, and Supervision
3. Child Protection
4. Identification/Association with Pro-Social Role-Models
5. Increasing Cognitive Skills (Self-Control, Self-Management, Problem-Solving, Recognizing Risky Situations, etc.)
6. Replacing the skills of lying, stealing and aggression with pro-social alternatives
7. Reducing Chemical Dependency
8. Shifting internal reward structures towards non-criminal alternatives

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<sup>68</sup> Andrews, D.A., Zinger, I., Hoge, R.D., Bonta, J., Gendreau, P., & Cullen, F.T. (1990). Does Correctional Treatment Work? A psychologically informed meta-analysis, *Criminology*, 28, 369-404.

9. Providing the chronically psychiatrically troubled with a low-pressure, sheltered living arrangement.
10. Addressing client motivation and background stressors
11. Developing individualized case plans that address other attributes associated with delinquent conduct.

### **Traditional (Static) Risk Factors and Their Ability to Predict Recidivism**

The risk factors that have traditionally and consistently been shown to increase the likelihood of re-offending (number of prior out-of-home placements, number of prior adjudications, number of prior detention admissions, and age at first adjudication) are static factors. All of these factors were analyzed in this report, and for the most part, they do significantly predict the likelihood of re-offending. For pre-discharge, the risk factors shown to impact recidivism were prior out-of-home placements, prior detention admissions, prior adjudications, age at first adjudication, and prior commitments. For post-discharge, the risk factors shown to impact recidivism were gender, prior detention admissions, prior adjudications, and age at first adjudication.

Because most of the traditional 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 for NYC youth.

### **Other Factors and Their Ability to Predict Recidivism**

Also analyzed, in conjunction with the traditional (static) risk factors, were other factors that tend to impact recidivism rates. Many of these other factors are dynamic in nature and are targeted by the Division. These factors analyzed include risk score (CYO-LSI), original commitment offense, ethnicity, NYC management region, substance abuse level, number of escapes, number of recommitments, employment/school status at discharge, parole adjustment at discharge, and sex offender status. In addition, pre-discharge recidivism was investigated for its impact on post-discharge recidivism. Looking at pre-discharge recidivism, analyses show that NYC management region, number of escapes, recommitments, and CYO-LSI risk level all had a significant impact on rates. Looking at

post-discharge recidivism, the factors shown to impact rates were DYC management region, escapes, recommitments, employment/school status, and CYO-LSI risk level.





