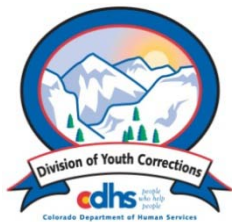


Recidivism Evaluation of Committed Youth Discharged in Fiscal Year 2008–09



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

Working with Colorado Communities to Achieve Justice

January 1, 2011

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

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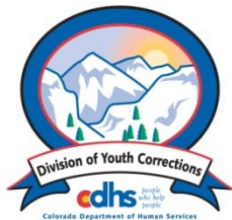
**Colorado Department of Human Services
Division of Youth Corrections**



January 1, 2011

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

Recidivism Evaluation of Committed Youth Discharged in Fiscal Year 2008–09



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Working with Colorado Communities to Achieve Justice

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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 two separate Legislative mandates:

- 1) Legislative Request for Information (RFI) 33
- 2) Section 19-2-411.5, C.R.S., the legislation authorizing the construction and operation of the Ridge View Youth Services Center

The response to these separate Legislative mandates are combined due to the similar nature of the requested information.

The Recidivism Measure

Recidivism is a measure that is often used 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, as such 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 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.

The findings contained in this report are based on an evaluation of eight-hundred fifty-eight (858) youth discharged during FY 2008-09. 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.

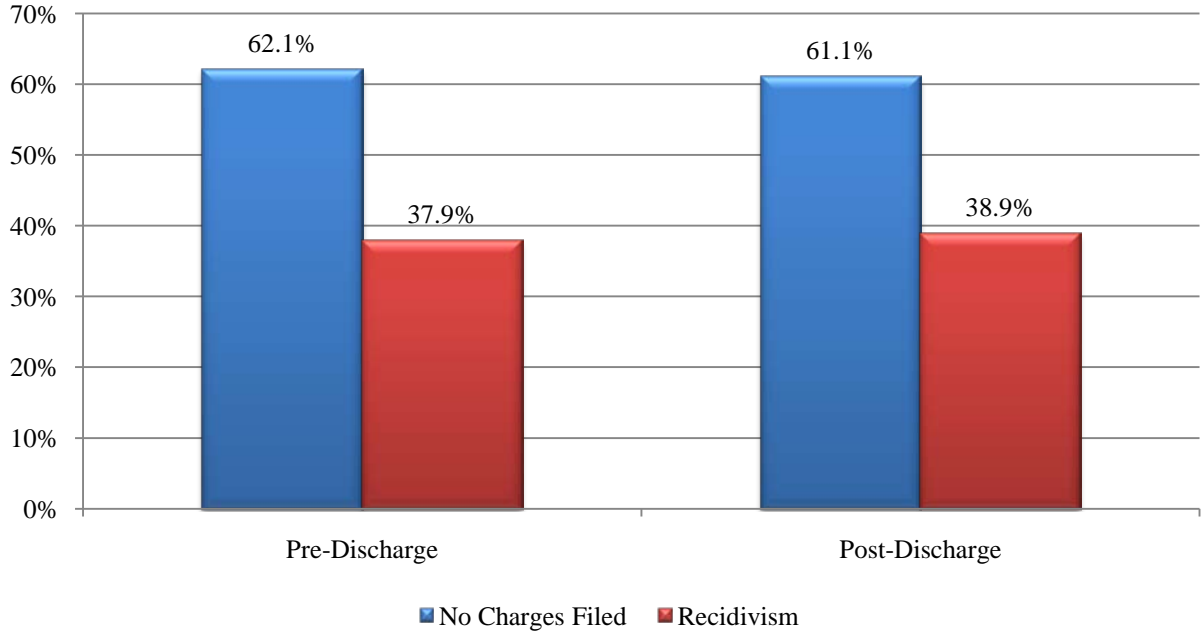
Like all recidivism studies, NYC’s evaluation is retrospective in nature. Each year the recidivism study examines and reports on the re-offending behaviors of youth who discharged from NYC in the State fiscal year two years before the report date. This delay in data reporting is because the agreed upon definition of recidivism requires a twelve-month follow-up period to complete the post-discharge recidivism analysis. Youth who discharge near the end of the fiscal year under evaluation (June 30, 2009) receive the same follow-up time as youth discharged earlier in the year, therefore NYC needed to wait until June 30, 2010 to collect filing data on this discharge cohort.

As previously mentioned, the census for this year’s report includes 858 youth discharged from NYC between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009. The current report analyzes pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates using a number of demographic and risk factors that can predict the likelihood of re-offending for the entire discharge census (n=858) and a sub-group of clients who were placed at the Ridge View Youth Services Center during their commitment stay (n=314).

DYC Recidivism Results

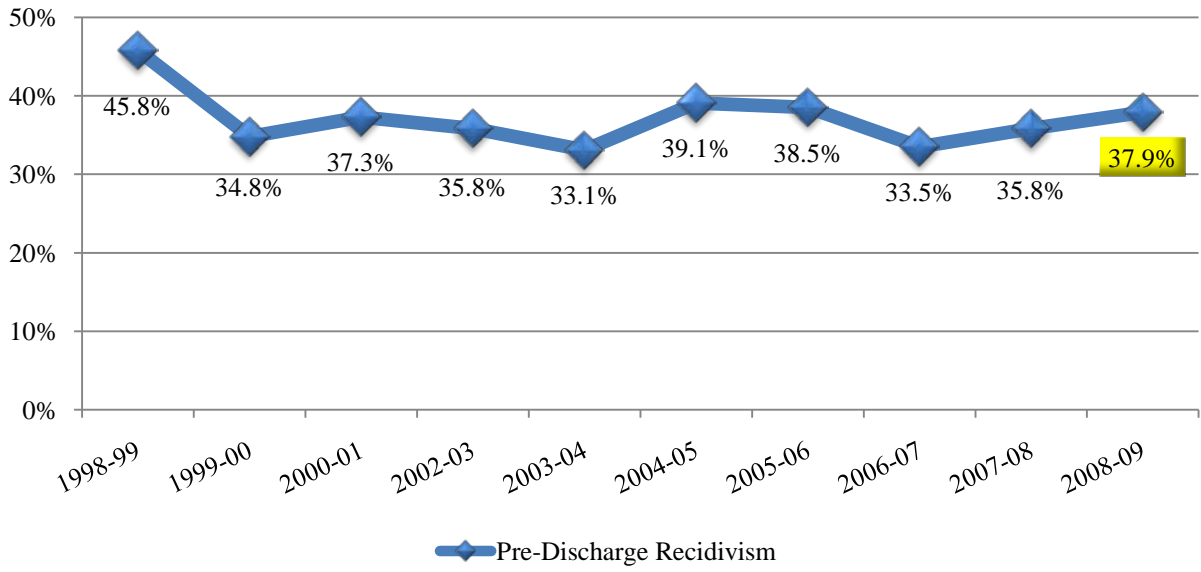
- ◆ Thirty-eight percent (37.9%) of youth discharged in FY 2008-09 received a new felony or misdemeanor filing prior to discharge (pre-discharge recidivism).
- ◆ Thirty-nine percent (38.9%) of youth discharged in FY 2008-09 received a new felony or misdemeanor filing within one year following discharge from the Division (post-discharge recidivism).

Recidivism Rates



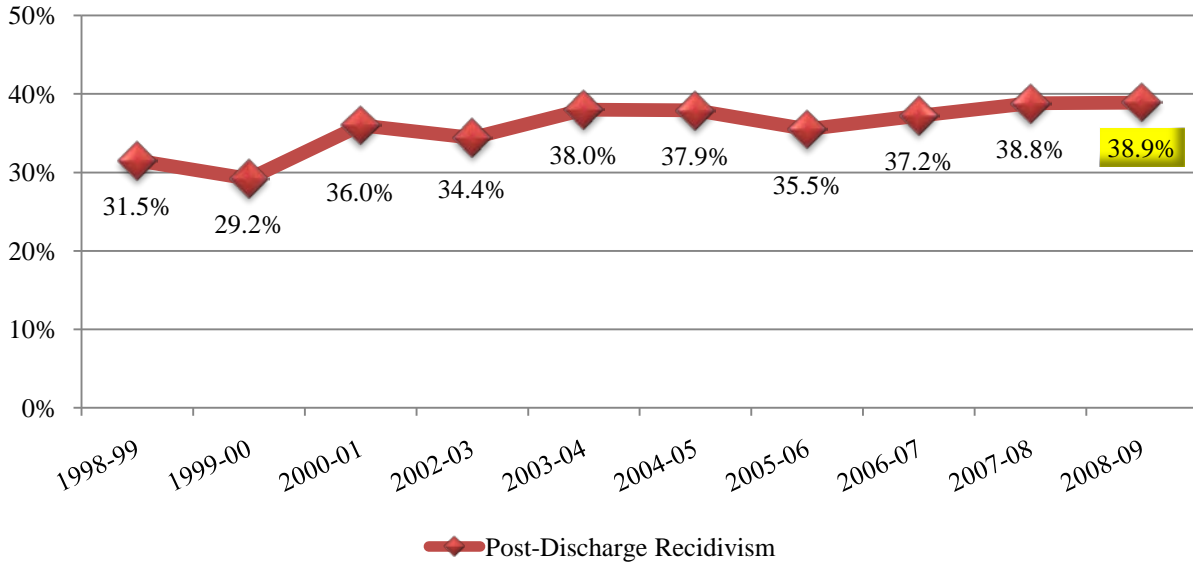
- ◆ Over the past three evaluations there has been a slight increase in pre-discharge recidivism rates. Changes across fiscal years, however, are not statistically significant.

Pre-Discharge Recidivism Rates FY 1998-99 through FY 2008-09



- ◆ Post-discharge recidivism rates have been fairly stable over the past 8 years. Changes across fiscal years are not statistically significant.

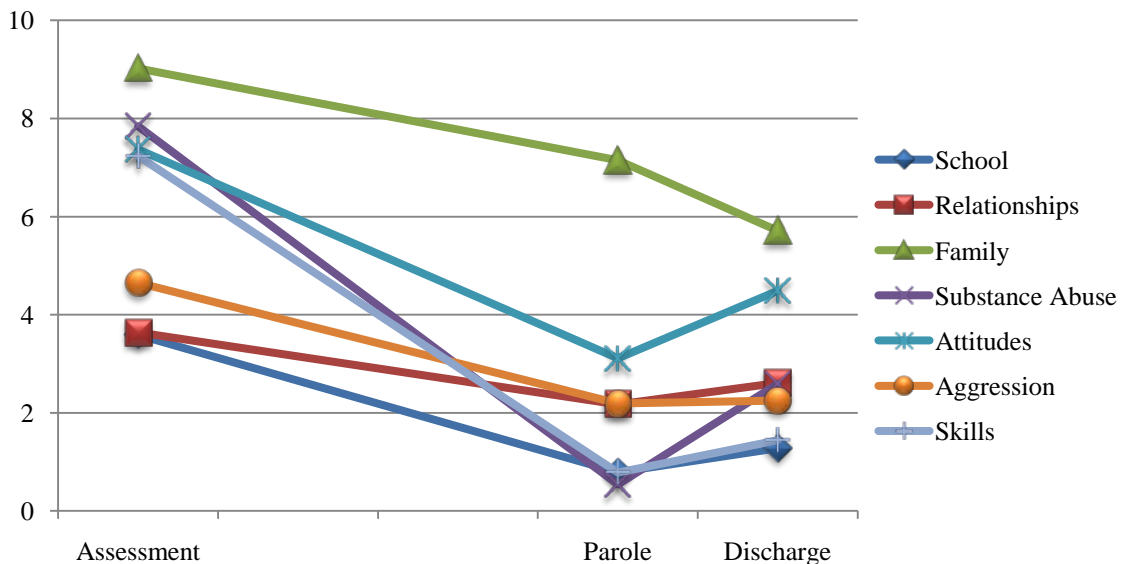
Post-Discharge Recidivism Rates FY 1998-99 through FY 2008-09



- ◆ Although recidivism rates have not changed significantly, analysis of offense type indicates a reduction in criminal behavior severity (either no recidivism or less serious criminal activity) for over 75% of youth discharged, when comparing their initial commitment offense to any re-offense that occurred in the first twelve months following discharge. So, in this sense, the vast majority of youth discharged are showing reduced risk to public safety.
- ◆ Sixty-three percent (62.8%) of pre-discharge recidivists received at least one criminal (adult) filing during their commitment, and 37.2% received only delinquency (juvenile) filings. Seventy-one percent of youth (n=125) who received a new juvenile filing prior to discharge were re-committed (or received a new commitment) to NYC.
- ◆ Eighty-eight percent (87.7%) of post-discharge recidivism filings were for criminal (adult) offenses; adult offenders, if found guilty, would likely receive an adult probation, community corrections, or Department of Corrections sentence. Twenty three youth filed upon as juveniles in the year after discharge were re-sentenced to a new NYC commitment.

- ◆ Female offenders discharged in FY 2008-09 received fewer pre-discharge (26.5%) and post-discharge (20.4%) filings than males discharged in that same year (39.3% pre-discharge, 41.3% post-discharge).
- ◆ Prior to discharge, fewer White youth received new filings (30.4%) than African-American (42.0%) or Hispanic (44.3%) clients. African-American and Hispanic youth had significantly fewer new filings while in residential treatment programs, however rates of recidivism on non-residential parole status were higher for these two groups.
- ◆ Three Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment (CJRA) domain risk scores were correlated with pre-discharge recidivism. Higher scores, at initial assessment, in the Relationships, Attitudes and Behaviors, and Skills scales indicated higher rates of offending prior to discharge.
- ◆ CJRA risk assessments conducted at the time of discharge also predicted future criminal behavior. Higher risk scores on 10 of the thirteen risk scales analyzed were correlated with higher rates of post-discharge recidivism. The following chart shows marked decreases in risk scores from assessment to discharge. If risk scores are as predictive as seen in the CJRA domain analyses, then these decreases in risk could provide evidence that with no treatment, recidivism rates would likely be much higher.

Change in Domain Risk Scores: Assessment to Discharge



- ◆ Youth who received a new filing during their commitment were younger at the time of their first adjudication and had more prior adjudications than youth who did not re-offend prior to discharge.
- ◆ Having more prior DYC detention admissions was predictive of a youth receiving a new post-discharge filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense.
- ◆ Other measures of prior system involvement were not significantly correlated with pre-discharge or post-discharge recidivism rates (i.e., prior out of home placements).
- ◆ Youth committed for sex offenses received fewer filings than youth committed for other types of offenses both prior to discharge (27.1%) and within one year following discharge (29.5%).
- ◆ Less than six percent of recidivist activity perpetrated by clients committed to the Division for a sexual offense were also sex offenses (both pre-discharge and post-discharge), and “failure to register as a sex offender” (55.3%) was the most common post-discharge offense committed by these youth.
- ◆ Youth who were assessed as having *Severe* mental health issues had higher rates of pre-discharge filings (56.9%) than youth assessed at the *High-Moderate* level (42.9%) or *Low to None* level (33.9%).
- ◆ Escapes and re-commitments were both correlated with higher levels of post-discharge recidivism.
- ◆ Over two thirds of clients who re-offended in residential treatment placements committed their new offenses in contract placements. Contract placements are less secure than State-operated secure facilities and often community-based, therefore, youth have more opportunity for criminal or delinquent activity in these types of programs.
- ◆ Clients who were successful on non-residential parole status re-offended at lower rates following discharge than youth who were unsuccessful during parole.

- ◆ Similarly, lower rates of recidivism were found for youth who were employed or enrolled in school at the time of discharge when compared to those youth with no job or school involvement.
- ◆ Youth in the FY 2008-09 discharge cohort who received a new filing during their commitment also recidivated more often following discharge (46.8%) when compared with youth who did not re-offend prior to discharge (34.1%).

Ridge View Youth Services Center (RVYSC) Recidivism Results

This year's Ridge View sample consisted of a subset of 314 males from the larger cohort (n=858) discharged from the Division of Youth Corrections in FY 2008-09 who spent at least 90 days at the Ridge View Youth Services Center (RVYSC) during their residential commitment. Ridge View recidivism rates were compared with the recidivism rates of all other males (n=446) discharged from DYC.

- ◆ More Ridge View youth were committed for property offenses (54.4%) than other DYC males (37.0%). Juvenile justice research has shown that property offenders recidivate at higher rates than youth who commit person offenses¹.
- ◆ The Ridge View group also had significantly more prior adjudications and detention admissions than youth in the comparison group, which indicates an increased amount of prior system involvement for RVYSC youth.
- ◆ Youth in the RVYSC sample had similar rates of pre-discharge recidivism (40.4%) than other DYC males (38.6%). The same is true for post-discharge recidivism rates, with RVYSC's rate equaling 43.6% and other DYC males at 39.7%. While Ridge View's recidivism rates are slightly higher in each category, these results are not statistically significant.
- ◆ The pre-discharge recidivism rate for Ridge View youth was 40.4%.
- ◆ The post-discharge recidivism rate for Ridge View youth was 43.6%.
- ◆ Youth who successfully completed the treatment programming offered by the Ridge View facility received fewer new filings prior to their discharge from

¹ Howell, James C. (2003). Preventing & Reducing Juvenile Delinquency: A Comprehensive Framework; pg 61. Sage Publications.

the Division of Youth Corrections (35.9%) than youth who did not complete the program (58.0%). Nearly half (47.1%) of the pre-discharge recidivists who did not complete the program re-offended prior to leaving RYYS.

QUICK REFERENCE TABLES

Pre-Discharge Cohort Comparison

	Pre-Discharge Recidivism FY 2007-08 Discharges	Pre-Discharge Recidivism FY 2008-09 Discharges	Direction
Overall Recidivism Rate (Figure 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 35.8% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 37.9% 	+2.1
Most Serious Felony Filing Type (Table 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person: 16.8% Property: 17.1% Drug: 6.5% Weapon: 0.3% Escape: 18.5% Identity: 2.6% Sex Registration: 1.8% Other: 2.1% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person: 25.5% Property: 16.6% Drug: 5.2% Weapon: 0.6% Escape: 15.7% Identity: 2.8% Sex Registration: 1.8% Other: 2.2% 	+8.7 -0.5 -1.3 +0.3 -2.8 +0.2 -- +0.1
Most Serious Misdemeanor Filing Type (Table 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person: 12.6% Property: 5.9% Drug: 0.9% Weapon: 2.1% Escape: 1.8% Identity: 0.9% Sex Registration: 0.6% DWI/DUI: 3.2% Obstruction: 2.1% Protection Order: 0.6% Other: 3.8% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person: 8.9% Property: 4.9% Drug: 0.0% Weapon: 1.5% Escape: 2.2% Identity: 1.2% Sex Registration: 1.8% DWI/DUI: 0.3% Obstruction: 2.8% Protection Order: 2.5% Other: 3.4% 	-3.7 -1.0 -0.9 -0.6 +0.4 +0.3 +1.2 -2.9 +0.7 +1.9 -0.4
Type of Filing (All Charges) (Table 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminal: 49.7% Delinquency: 32.9% Both: 17.4% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminal: 45.8% Delinquency: 37.2% Both: 16.9% 	-3.9 +4.3 -0.5
Finding For Any Felony or Misdemeanor Filing (Table 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guilty: 84.1% Deferred: 5.0% No Finding of Guilt: 9.7% Other: 1.2% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guilty: 86.2% Deferred: 4.9% No Finding of Guilt: 7.4% Other: 1.5% 	+2.1 -0.1 -2.3 +0.3
Gender (Figure 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Male: 36.0% Female: 34.6% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Male: 39.3% * Female: 26.5% 	+3.3 -8.1
Ethnicity (Figure 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African-American: 37.2% Hispanic: 35.1% White: 35.2% Other: 43.3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African-American: 42.0% * Hispanic: 44.3% * White: 30.4% Other: 32.3% 	+4.8 +9.2 -4.8 -11.0
DYC Management Region (Figure 13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central: 34.8% * Northeast: 36.8% Southern: 37.0% Western: 35.2% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central: 38.3% Northeast: 41.2% Southern: 37.4% Western: 28.4% 	+3.5 +4.4 +0.4 -6.8
CJRA Criminal History: Static Risk (Figure 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low: N/A Moderate: N/A High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low: 0.0% Moderate: 26.0% High: 30.5% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA School: Static Risk (Figure 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low: N/A Moderate: N/A High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low: 25.1% Moderate: 32.0% High: 29.1% 	N/A N/A N/A

Yellow highlight and/or star indicates group differences are statistically significant for that particular study

Pre-Discharge Cohort Comparison (continued)

	Pre-Discharge Recidivism FY 2007-08 Discharges	Pre-Discharge Recidivism FY 2008-09 Discharges	Direction
CJRA School: Dynamic Risk (Figure 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 27.7% • Moderate: 25.0% • High: 27.2% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Relationships: Static Risk (Figure 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 0.0% • Moderate: 23.8% • High: 33.7% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Relationships: Dynamic Risk (Figure 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 0.0% • Moderate: 23.3% • High: 30.7% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Family: Static Risk (Figure 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 28.3% • Moderate: 25.3% • High: 30.4% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Family: Dynamic Risk (Figure 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 23.1% • Moderate: 29.5% • High: 26.9% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Substance Abuse: Static Risk (Figure 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 32.2% • Moderate: 35.7% • High: 26.9% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Substance Abuse: Dynamic Risk (Figure 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 28.5% • Moderate: 28.4% • High: 28.8% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Mental Health: Dynamic Risk (Figure 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 30.1% • Moderate: 24.5% • High: 27.9% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Attitudes and Behaviors: Dynamic Risk (Figure 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 6.7% • Moderate: 17.9% • High: 30.5% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Aggression: Dynamic Risk (Figure 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 20.0% • Moderate: 25.9% • High: 30.5% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Skills: Dynamic Risk (Figure 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 25.5% • Moderate: 12.8% • High: 30.9% 	N/A N/A N/A
Number of Detention Admissions (Figure 18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero to Two: 29.4% • Three or More: 38.2% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero to Two: 32.2% • Three or More: 39.8% 	+2.8 +1.6
Number of Prior Adjudications (Figure 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None: 32.0% • One: 31.9% • Two or more: 41.3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None: 31.8% • One: 35.5% • Two or more: 43.3% 	-0.2 +3.6 +2.0
Age at First Adjudication (Figure 20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14.3 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14.0 years 	-0.3

Yellow highlight and/or star indicates group differences are statistically significant for that particular study

Pre-Discharge Cohort Comparison (continued)

	Pre-Discharge Recidivism FY 2007-08 Discharges	Pre-Discharge Recidivism FY 2008-09 Discharges	Direction
Sex Offender Status (Figure 21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sex Offender: 30.1% Non-Sex Offender: 36.6% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sex Offender: 27.1% * Non-Sex Offender: 39.8% 	-3.0 +3.2
Mental Health Need for Treatment (Figure 23)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low to None: 34.5% High-Moderate: 36.8% Severe: 39.5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low to None: 33.9% High-Moderate: 42.9% * Severe: 56.9% 	-0.6 +6.1 +17.4
DYC Escape (Figure 24)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes: 50.7% * No: 22.6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes: 51.0% * No: 24.3% 	+0.3 +1.7
Number of Re-Commitments (Figure 27)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None: 27.2% One: 59.4% * Two or More: 89.6% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None: 27.7% One: 71.1% * Two or More: 81.0% 	+0.5 +11.7 -8.6

Post-Discharge Cohort Comparison

	Post-Discharge Recidivism FY 2007-08 Discharges	Post-Discharge Recidivism FY 2008-09 Discharges	Direction
Overall Recidivism Rate (Figure 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 38.8% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 38.9% 	+0.1
Most Serious Felony Filing Type (Table 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person: 23.3% Property: 24.1% Drug: 6.5% Weapon: 2.7% Escape: 0.8% Identity: 4.6% Sex Registration: 1.9% Other: 4.3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person: 23.1% Property: 26.9% Drug: 8.1% Weapon: 1.2% Escape: 2.4% Identity: 2.4% Sex Registration: 3.3% Other: 3.3% 	-0.2 +2.8 +1.6 -1.5 +1.6 -2.2 +1.4 -1.0
Most Serious Misdemeanor Filing Type (Table 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person: 10.6% Property: 5.7% Drug: 1.4% Weapon: 1.4% Escape: 0.0% Identity: 0.5% Sex Registration: 1.4% DWI/DUI: 1.9% Obstruction: 0.8% Protection Order: 1.9% Other: 6.2% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person: 9.3% Property: 6.3% Drug: 0.6% Weapon: 0.6% Escape: 0.0% Identity: 0.3% Sex Registration: 2.1% DWI/DUI: 3.3% Obstruction: 2.4% Protection Order: 1.5% Other: 3.0% 	-1.3 +0.6 -0.8 -0.8 -- -0.2 +0.7 +1.4 +1.6 -0.4 -3.2
Type of Filing (All Charges) (Table 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminal: 79.9% Delinquency: 15.7% Both 4.3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminal: 84.7% Delinquency: 12.3% Both 3.0% 	+4.8 -3.4 -1.3
Finding For Any Felony or Misdemeanor Filing (Table 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guilty: 78.3% Deferred: 7.1% No Finding of Guilt: 11.1% Other: 3.4% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guilty: 79.0% Deferred: 6.0% No Finding of Guilt: 9.3% Other: 5.7% 	+0.7 -1.1 -1.8 +2.3

Yellow highlight and/or star indicates group differences are statistically significant for that particular study

Post-Discharge Cohort Comparison (continued)

	Pre-Discharge Recidivism FY 2007-08 Discharges	Pre-Discharge Recidivism FY 2008-09 Discharges	Direction
Gender (Figure 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male: 41.5% * • Female: 22.3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male: 41.3% * • Female: 20.4% 	-0.2 -1.9
Ethnicity (Figure 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African-American: 35.5% • Hispanic: 44.2% • White: 36.2% • Other: 33.3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African-American: 37.0% • Hispanic: 41.8% • White: 37.4% • Other: 35.5% 	+1.5 -2.4 +1.2 +2.2
DYC Management Region (Figure 13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central: 36.5% • Northeast: 40.7% • Southern: 40.8% • Western: 39.8% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central: 34.5% • Northeast: 42.0% • Southern: 42.3% • Western: 40.9% 	-2.0 +1.3 +1.5 +1.1
CJRA Criminal History: Static Risk (Figure 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 30.8% • Moderate: 21.1% * • High: 40.8% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA School: Static Risk (Figure 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 32.7% • Moderate: 40.1% * • High: 43.8% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA School: Dynamic Risk (Figure 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 28.9% • Moderate: 36.4% * • High: 48.4% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Relationships: Static Risk (Figure 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 0.0% • Moderate: 23.8% * • High: 33.7% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Relationships: Dynamic Risk (Figure 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 18.8% • Moderate: 35.8% * • High: 45.6% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Family: Static Risk (Figure 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 34.0% • Moderate: 36.0% • High: 40.0% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Family: Dynamic Risk (Figure 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 28.3% • Moderate: 41.0% * • High: 44.4% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Substance Abuse: Static Risk (Figure 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 36.4% • Moderate: 39.1% • High: 39.0% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Substance Abuse: Dynamic Risk (Figure 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 36.0% • Moderate: 51.9% * • High: 41.1% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Mental Health: Dynamic Risk (Figure 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 37.8% • Moderate: 35.3% • High: 55.9% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Attitudes and Behaviors: Dynamic Risk (Figure 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 31.0% • Moderate: 38.2% * • High: 44.2% 	N/A N/A N/A

Yellow highlight and/or star indicates group differences are statistically significant for that particular study

Post-Discharge Cohort Comparison (continued)

	Post-Discharge Recidivism FY 2007-08 Discharges	Post-Discharge Recidivism FY 2008-09 Discharges	<i>Direction</i>
CJRA Aggression: Dynamic Risk (Figure 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 32.8% • Moderate: 38.7% • High: 43.1% 	N/A N/A N/A
CJRA Skills: Dynamic Risk (Figure 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: N/A • Moderate: N/A • High: N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low: 35.2% • Moderate: 41.8% • High: 47.4% 	N/A N/A N/A
Number of Detention Admissions (Figure 18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero to Two: 30.9% • Three or More: 41.9% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero to Two: 29.4% • Three or More: 42.1% 	-1.5 +0.2
Number of Prior Adjudications (Figure 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None: 29.5% • One: 36.1% • Two or more: 47.5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None: 36.4% • One: 37.7% • Two or more: 41.4% 	+6.9 +1.6 -6.1
Age at First Adjudication (Figure 20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14.1 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14.3 years 	+0.2
Sex Offender Status (Figure 21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex Offender: 32.5% • Non-Sex Offender: 39.8% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex Offender: 29.5% • Non-Sex Offender: 40.6% 	-3.0 +0.8
Mental Health Need for Treatment (Figure 23)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low to None: 38.5% • High-Moderate: 39.7% • Severe: 37.0% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low to None: 37.3% • High-Moderate: 43.8% • Severe: 36.9% 	-1.2 +4.1 -0.1
Any DYC Escape (Figure 24)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: 45.5% • No: 32.9% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: 43.4% • No: 34.3% 	-2.1 +1.4
Number of Re- Commitments (Figure 27)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None: 36.7% • One: 47.5% • Two or More: 43.8% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None: 36.0% • One: 50.3% • Two or More: 45.2% 	-0.7 +2.8 +1.4
Parole Adjustment at Discharge (Figure 30)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful: 37.0% • Unsuccessful: 44.1% • No Parole: 31.9% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful: 32.7% • Unsuccessful: 48.2% • No Parole: 35.4% 	-4.3 +4.1 +3.5
Job/School Status at Discharge (Figure 31)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not Employed or Attending School: 42.9% • Employed or in School at Time of Discharge: 37.4% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not Employed or Attending School: 47.6% • Employed or in School at Time of Discharge: 35.3% 	+4.7 -2.1

Yellow highlight and/or star indicates group differences are statistically significant for that particular study

Ridge View Section Results

	Ridge View	Other NYC Males
Pre-Discharge Recidivism (Figure 36)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40.4% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 38.6%
Post-Discharge Recidivism (Figure 36)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 43.6% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 39.7%
Ethnicity (Table 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African-American: 23.2% Hispanic: 43.9 % * White: 30.3% Other: 2.5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African-American: 17.0% Hispanic: 33.9% * White: 45.1% Other: 4.0%
Age at Commitment (Page 52)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16.7 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16.5 years
Commitment Offense (Figure 33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person: 33.3% Property: 54.4% * Other: 12.3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person: 54.6% Property: 37.0% * Other: 8.5%
Number of Prior Adjudications (Figure 34)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None: 15.3% One: 33.4% * Two or more: 51.3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None: 31.4% One: 30.5% * Two or more: 38.1%
Number of Detention Admissions (Figure 35)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero to Two: 22.3% * Three or More: 77.7% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero to Two: 30.7% * Three or More: 69.3%
	Ridge View Pre-Discharge Recidivism	Ridge View Post-Discharge Recidivism
Ethnicity (Figure 37)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African-American: 42.5% Hispanic: 47.8% * White: 26.3% Other: 62.5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African-American: 41.1% Hispanic: 42.0% White: 49.5% Other: 25.0%
DYC Management Region (Figure 38)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central: 36.8% Northeast: 48.5% Southern: 42.4% Western: 19.0% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central: 31.6% Northeast: 54.5% * Southern: 45.8% Western: 61.9%
Any NYC Escape (Figure 39)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes: 53.9% * No: 27.8% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes: 49.3% * No: 38.3%
Re-Commitments (Figure 40)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None: 31.9% One or More: 64.6% * Two or More: 71.4% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None: 40.9% One: 50.8% Two or more: 57.1%
Prior Commitments (Figure 41)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None: 39.0% One or More: 63.2% * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None: 43.4% One or More: 47.4%
Completion Status (Figure 42)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed: 35.9% * Did not Complete: 58.0% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed: 42.5% Did not Complete: 50.0%

Yellow highlight and/or star 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 two separate Legislative mandates:

- 3) Legislative Request for Information (RFI) 33
- 4) Section 19-2-411.5, C.R.S., the legislation authorizing the construction and operation of the Ridge View Youth Services Center

The first section of this report, “DYC Recidivism Rates for Youth Discharged,” is submitted in partial response to RFI 33². Section One 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 discharged from a DYC commitment sentence (post-discharge recidivism). 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 service, and recidivism data per placement.

The Division does not typically report recidivism rates by placement, as youth committed to DYC experience multiple residential placements throughout their commitment that may influence future behavior; however the Ridge View Youth Services Center (RVYSC) is an exception because it was designed as a unique treatment option for eligible youth and is intended as the primary placement option for many clients³. Since youth who are placed in the Ridge View facility tend to have fewer subsequent placements that could influence re-offending

² The Division’s annual Management Reference Manual includes data on the number of juveniles served and length of service data, while this report focuses on recidivism data.

³ Reference page 47 of this report which describes current methodological challenges of this program-specific RFI.

behaviors, it is more appropriate to report outcome measures for RVYSC that may not be as meaningful if the analysis were conducted for other DYC treatment programs or facilities⁴.

Section Two, “Ridge View Recidivism,” is intended to serve as DYC’s annual response to the legislation authorizing the construction and operation of the RVYSC facility⁵. 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.

The Ridge View Recidivism analysis examines recidivism rates for youth in the overall discharge cohort who were eligible for, and placed at, RVYSC during their commitment. To ensure consistency in how the Division reports recidivism data, this section of the report is prepared using the same standardized definitions of recidivism as used in Section One.

The Recidivism Measure

Recidivism is used as an overall outcome measure for DYC commitment programs. This report is intended to evaluate recidivism results for all youth discharged from DYC during Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09. Like all recidivism studies, DYC’s evaluation is retrospective in nature. Each year the recidivism study examines and reports on the re-offending behaviors of youth who discharged from DYC in the State fiscal year two years before the report date. This delay in data reporting is because the Division requires a twelve month follow-up period to collect recidivism data for all youth in order to complete the post-discharge recidivism analysis. Youth who discharge near the end of the fiscal year under evaluation (June 30, 2009) receive the same

⁴ 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.

⁵ Section 19-2-411.5, C.R.S.

follow-up time as youth discharged earlier in the year; therefore DYC needed to wait until June 30, 2010 to collect filing data on this discharge cohort. For the current study, the sample includes all 858 youth who discharged from a commitment sentence to the Division of Youth Corrections in Fiscal Year 2008-2009.

This report is the twelfth to apply the following definitions of recidivism to committed youth served by the Division. 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.

Recidivism is an amorphous concept. In the absence of a standardized definition of recidivism both in Colorado and nationwide, meaningful comparison across states and agencies is simply not possible. Recidivism outcomes cannot be compared in a meaningful way 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 analysis. While the recidivism definitions previously outlined may be somewhat standardized for the State of Colorado, Colorado is currently one of only two states in the United States of America that uses District Attorney filings as a measure of juvenile recidivism⁶.

Colorado's definition of recidivism (new court filing) is shared by only one other state in the U.S.A. Maryland's Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) uses re-referral (along with arrest and re-conviction) to define recidivism, according to their most recent 2009 Statistical Report, which is technically the same as a court filing. Therefore it is not possible to directly compare recidivism rates from DYC to most 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 before drawing conclusions. The efforts taken to establish

⁶ Maryland Department of Juvenile Services, Annual Statistical Report (Fiscal Year 2009).

a common definition of recidivism in Colorado are outlined in Appendix A of this report, where definitional and methodological issues are both addressed in more detail.

Study Methodology

Understanding the study methodology used is critical for accurate interpretation of recidivism rates. Since recidivism is defined for both the pre-discharge and post-discharge analyses as “a filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense,” the Division relied upon the Judicial Branch’s Management Information System⁷ 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 measures⁸. Traffic, municipal, status, and petty offenses are excluded from this recidivism evaluation.

At DYC’s request the Colorado Judicial Department prepared a data file containing all filings that occurred between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2010, for all persons under 25 years of age. Filing data is requested as early as July 1, 2003 (five years prior to the first possible discharges) to allow for the detection of each youth’s commitment charge. By capturing the committing offense, DYC was able to better ensure that an appropriate match was being made between the DYC commitment records and the Judicial Department’s filing records.

The data received from Judicial was matched to DYC records using a high-level match of youths’ 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 Colorado State Courts – Data Access⁹ system for aliases, etc. Any method to match files is limited by data entry errors, spelling differences, and

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

⁸ 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 total 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 and felony filings.

⁹ In prior years the Lexis Nexus Courtlink database was used in the data verification and matching process. In FY 2009-10, the Colorado Judicial Department transferred data access to their own system.

multiple aliases. Efforts were made to minimize errors through meticulous spot-checking and manual reviews of cases.

The matched file was used to evaluate pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates on all 858 youth discharged from DYC in FY 2008-09. This is the seventh report to include both pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates from the same client census¹⁰.

¹⁰ Six years ago, the Division modified the sampling methodology for this annual recidivism report. Previously, 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.

SECTION ONE: DYC Recidivism Rates for Youth Discharged

The findings contained in this report are based on an evaluation of eight hundred fifty eight (858) youth discharged from the Division of Youth Corrections (DYC) between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009. 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 2008-2009

As indicated in Figure 1, of the 858 youth discharged during the fiscal year, 325 (37.9%) had a new felony or misdemeanor offense filed prior to leaving DYC’s supervision. Sixty-two percent (n=533) of the discharge cohort did not receive any new filings.

Figure 1: Pre-Discharge Recidivism

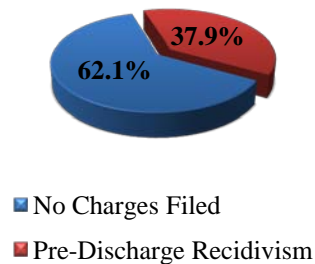
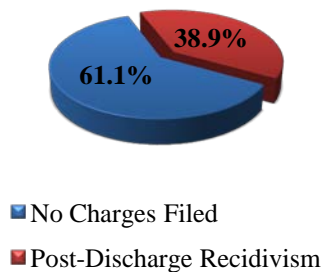


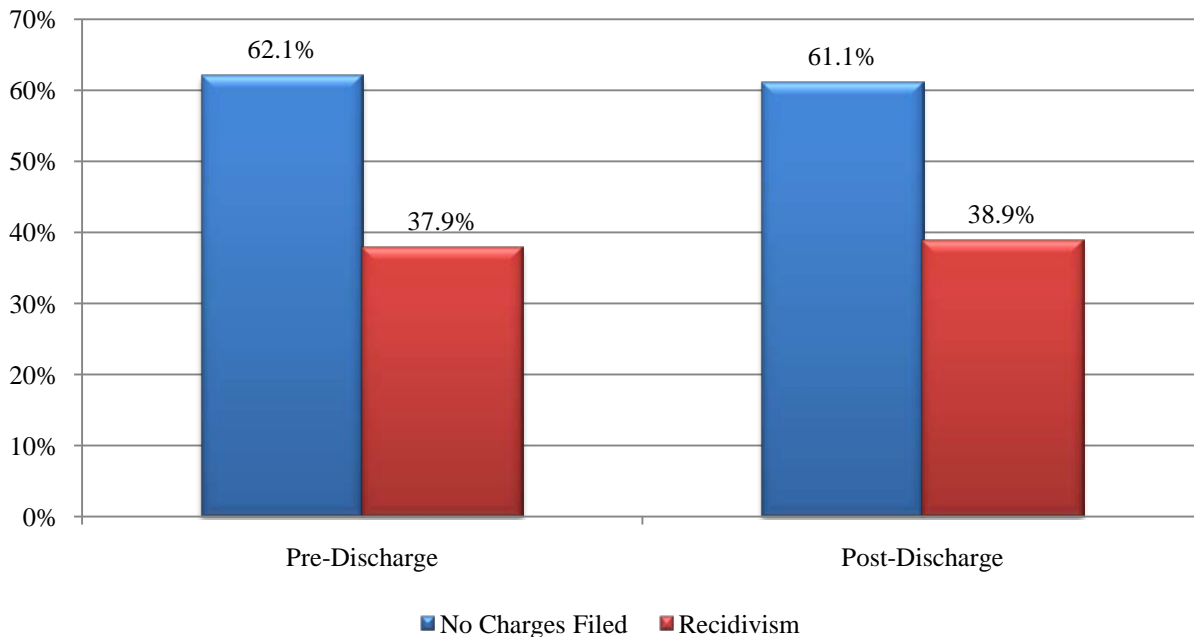
Figure 2: Post-Discharge Recidivism



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 youth in the discharge cohort. Figure 2 shows the post-discharge recidivism rate. Thirty-nine percent of the youth discharged in FY 2008-09 (n=334) received a new filing within one year.

It is possible for youth to be represented in both the pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism categories, meaning that the same youth could have committed an offense before being discharged from NYC as well as after their discharge date (see Table 4, pg. 43)¹¹.

Figure 3: Recidivism Rates



Trends in Recidivism

The following charts outline trends in recidivism rates for the past ten NYC recidivism studies¹². 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 NYC 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.

¹¹ Forty-seven percent (46.8%) of youth discharged in FY 2008-09 who received a pre-discharge filing also received a new filing within one year following discharge compared with only 34.1% of youth that did not re-offend during their commitment. (Chi-Square=13.531, p<0.01.)

¹² There was no FY 2001-02 discharge cohort evaluation because of a shift in study methodology to examine pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates from the same sample and increase focus on more current recidivism data.

Figure 4 shows the pre-discharge recidivism rates since FY 1998-1999. The pre-discharge recidivism rate reported in the current report (37.9%) shows a slight increase over the previous discharge cohort.

**Figure 4:
Pre-Discharge Recidivism Rates FY 1998-99 through FY 2008-09**

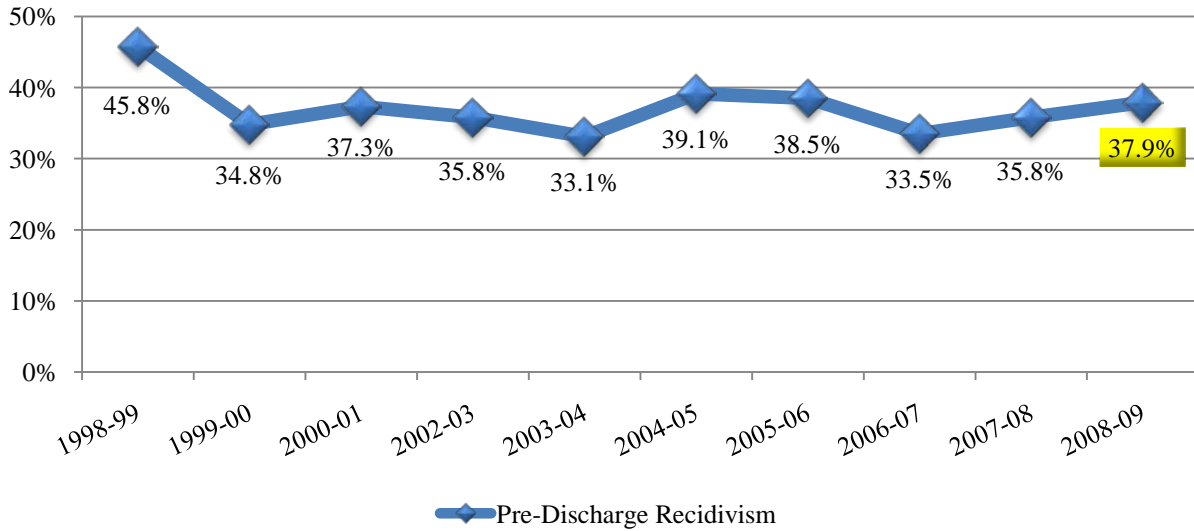
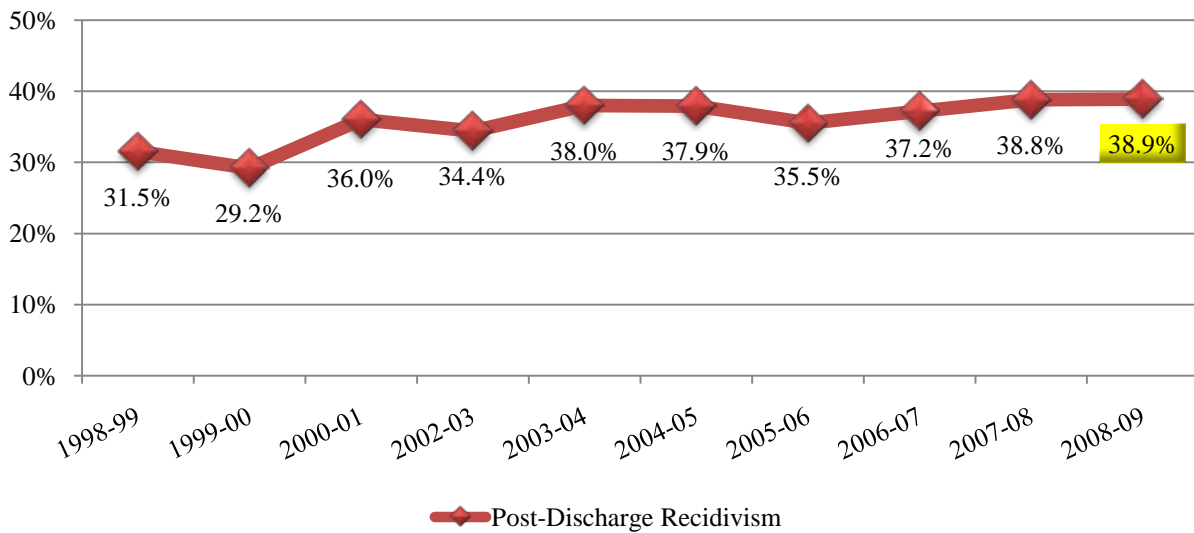


Figure 5 depicts post-discharge recidivism trends for the past ten years. Although recidivism rates for both pre-discharge and post-discharge have shown a slight upward trend over the past few discharge cohorts, differences across years are not statistically significant.

**Figure 5:
Post-Discharge Recidivism Rates FY 1998-99 through FY 2008-09**



Recidivism Charges Filed

The following table shows the breakdown of filings received prior to discharge and within one year following discharge from the Division of Youth Corrections. Youth often receive multiple charges (even for one incident) when filed upon. The data presented in Table 1 identifies the *most serious* offense each youth was charged with as a measure of the overall severity of recidivist acts that occurred with this cohort.

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	83	25.5%	77	23.1%
Property Felony	54	16.6%	90	26.9%
Drug Felony	17	5.2%	27	8.1%
Weapon Felony	2	0.6%	4	1.2%
Escape Felony ¹³	51	15.7%	8	2.4%
Identity Felony	9	2.8%	8	2.4%
Sex Registration Felony	6	1.8%	11	3.3%
Other ¹⁴ Felony	7	2.2%	11	3.3%
Total Felony Filings	229	70.5%	236	70.7%
Person Misdemeanor	29	8.9%	31	9.3%
Property Misdemeanor	16	4.9%	21	6.3%
Drug Misdemeanor	0	0.0%	2	0.6%
Weapon Misdemeanor	5	1.5%	2	0.6%
Escape Misdemeanor	7	2.2%	0	0.0%
Identity Misdemeanor	4	1.2%	1	0.3%
Sex Registration Misdemeanor	6	1.8%	7	2.1%
DWI/DUI Misdemeanor	1	0.3%	11	3.3%
Obstruction Misdemeanor	9	2.8%	8	2.4%
Protection Order Misdemeanor	8	2.5%	5	1.5%
Other ¹¹ Misdemeanor	11	3.4%	10	3.0%
Total Misdemeanor Filings	96	29.5%	98	29.3%
Total Filings	325	100%	334	100%

¹³ Youth can receive a new commitment from a pre-discharge offense if the adjudication and sentencing occurs following discharge.

¹⁴ Other offenses include misdemeanor traffic offenses, underage alcohol citations, and other miscellaneous offenses.

The majority of pre-discharge (70.5%) and post-discharge filings (70.7%) were for felony offenses. This is not surprising, given that all of the youth in this sample have already penetrated far enough into the Colorado juvenile justice system to be committed to the Division of Youth Corrections for a juvenile offense (see Figure 8, pg. 15). District Attorneys 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 for similar crimes committed by persons *without* previous criminal histories¹⁵.

The preceding table highlights the “types” of charges for which clients received new filings. Over the past few years there has been a noticeable increase in the percentage of youth filed on for offenses that were traditionally considered to be “other” offenses¹⁶. 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 ago¹⁷. Further investigation revealed increases in specific offenses or offense types, thereby identifying new categories that could be broken out for offenses that have traditionally fallen into the “Other” category.

To better illustrate the types of offenses for which youth are receiving new charges, new categories were introduced in the three most recent recidivism studies released by DYC. These include escape charges, filings for identity theft or fraud, DWI, obstruction of justice, resisting arrest, and violations of protection orders issued by the court. Increased filings for offenses other than the four main categories reported in the past (person, property, drug and weapon) may result in both an increase in recidivism, as well as increases in the number of miscellaneous other offenses.

¹⁵ Gottfredson, Michael R., & Gottfredson, Don M., 1987. *Decision Making in Criminal Justice: Toward the Rational Exercise of Discretion*. Law, Society, and Policy, Volume 3.

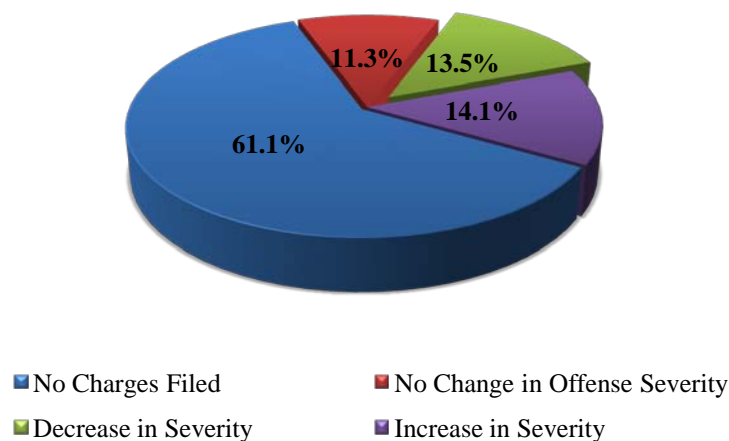
¹⁶ Prior to 2009 the DYC recidivism study reported charge types in five main offense categories: *Person, Property, Drug, Weapon, and Other*.

¹⁷ Section 18-3-412.5, Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.)

It is important to note that not all re-offending behaviors are alike. Although all of the offense types identified in Table 1 are by definition recidivist acts, there are levels of severity involved. For example, a few youth in this study are defined as re-offenders for seemingly trivial offenses. The most serious offense for one youth in this sample, identified as a pre-discharge recidivist, was a misdemeanor “fishing without a license” offense. Similarly, one youth in the post-discharge sample was included for a misdemeanor “dog at large” offense. While the definition of recidivism does not differentiate between these types of “other misdemeanors” acts and a felony violent person offense, a youth whose most serious criminal activity in the year following discharge from NYC is a misdemeanor “dog at large” offense is a much different concern than a youth with multiple assault filings.

Reducing the amount of recidivism is an important outcome measure for the Division of Youth Corrections. It is expected that youth who are committed to NYC will be treated according to the criminogenic needs each youth presents in an effort to reduce the likelihood of that youth re-offending in the future. However, in light of the understanding that recidivism rates have not changed significantly in the past 10 years, it is important to also consider intermediate outcome measures when evaluating the effectiveness of the Division’s treatment programs. The following analysis examines the most serious offense type reported at commitment and compares it to the most serious offense committed within one year following discharge.

Figure 6: Post-Discharge Offense Severity



All of the 858 clients discharged from the Division of Youth Corrections were originally sentenced to DYC for treatment following a felony or misdemeanor adjudication. Figure 6 examines how these same youth, all of whom committed a serious delinquent act prior to commitment, responded to treatment in the year following discharge from the Division¹⁸. As previously noted, 61% did not receive any new charges in the twelve months following discharge. Another 13.5% of youth re-offended with a lower severity of offense than the offense which they were originally adjudicated for. Overall, the Division was successful in reducing the severity of criminal behavior for 75% of youth discharged in FY 2008-09¹⁹.

Type of Filings

The type of filing (adult criminal filings versus juvenile delinquency filings) received by youth who re-offended prior to discharge and within one year following discharge is presented in Table 2. Delinquency charges are filings for offenses committed by youth under the age of 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. All charges filed were included in this analysis²⁰.

Table 2: Type of Filing (Any Charge Filed)

Type of Filing	Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Criminal (Adult)	149	45.9%	283	84.7%
Delinquency (Juvenile)	121	37.2%	41	12.3%
Both Adult and Juvenile Filings	55	16.9%	10	3.0%
Total	325	100.0%	334	100.0%

¹⁸ Offense severity is measured by comparing each youth’s committing offense with their most serious recidivist act. For example if a youth is committed for a felony offense and re-offends with a misdemeanor offense, they are considered to have decreased the severity of their criminal behavior. Similarly a violent or weapon offense was considered more serious than a property or drug offense.

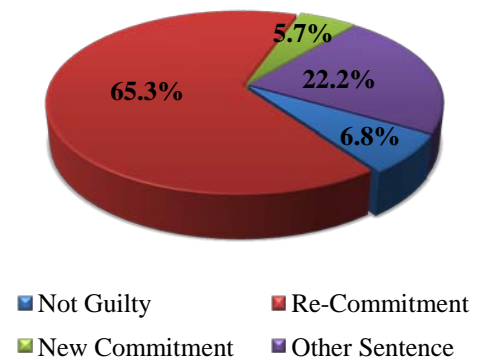
¹⁹ The remaining twenty-five percent either had no change in offense severity (11.3%) or exhibited more serious criminal behaviors following discharge (14.1%).

²⁰ If a youth received multiple new filings either during commitment or during the follow-up time period after discharge, a youth could receive both a new delinquency filing and a new adult filing depending upon the youth’s age at the time the offense occurred.

Sixty-three percent (62.8%) of pre-discharge recidivists received at least one adult filing during their commitment (combining the first and third categories in Table 2). An even greater percentage of post discharge filings (87.7%) were adult criminal charges. This is not surprising considering that the decision to file on an offender as an adult or juvenile is primarily dependent on the age of the offender. However, it is important to note that the majority of youth in this cohort who re-offended, either during their commitment or within one year of discharge from DYC, would be sentenced as adults (therefore ineligible to be re-committed to DYC) and given adult probation or Department of Corrections sentences if found guilty.

Of the 176 youth who received a filing for a new juvenile offense prior to discharge, seventy-one percent (n=125) were sentenced to a new or a re-commitment²¹ with the Division of Youth Corrections (see Figure 7). Only 51 youth received a new juvenile filing following discharge, and 45% of those youth (n=23) were sentenced to a new DYC commitment²² as a result.

Figure 7: Pre-Discharge Recidivism: Juvenile Sentencing



A few state juvenile justice agencies in the United States define recidivism as a return to the same agency. If those standards were applied to the Division of Youth Corrections, the recidivism rates for Colorado Juveniles would be 14.6% (pre-discharge) and 2.7% (post-discharge).

Filing v. Finding

It is important to realize that not all charges that a youth receives result in a guilty finding. Table 3

If the DYC definition of recidivism only included guilty findings, the recidivism rates for both pre-discharge and post-discharge would be:
34.5% - pre-discharge
33.1% - post-discharge

²¹ A re-commitment is a new commitment sentence imposed upon a youth currently serving a commitment sentence with DYC. Re-commitments can either be concurrent or consecutive with the current sentence. A new commitment occurs only after a youth has discharged from the previous commitment.

²² Youth can receive a new commitment from a pre-discharge offense if the adjudication and sentencing occurs following discharge.

illustrates this concept, and provides disposition data of the charges for which youth received filings.

Table 3 shows that 91.1% of youth were either found guilty of, or received a deferred sentence, for at least one charge prior to discharge. Similarly, eighty-five percent (85.0%) of the post-discharge cohort were found guilty of or received a deferred sentence for at least one offense.

Table 3: Disposition on Any Charge Filed

Finding	Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Guilty ²³	280	86.2%	264	79.0%
Deferred	16	4.9%	20	6.0%
No Finding of Guilt ²⁴	24	7.4%	31	9.3%
Unknown ²⁵	5	1.5%	19	5.7%
Total	325	100.0%	334	100.0%

Many states define recidivism as a re-adjudication (juvenile) or re-conviction (adult). If the DYC definition of recidivism were made more consistent with these states' juvenile justice agencies definitions, to only include guilty findings²⁶, the recidivism rates for both pre-discharge and post-discharge would be lower than stated in this report (*34.5% for pre-discharge, and 33.1% for post-discharge recidivism*). This, once again, illustrates the need to use common definitions of recidivism when comparing Colorado recidivism rates to other states, or even across Colorado State agencies.

Figure 8 helps to illustrate why recidivism rates vary based on the definition of recidivism and why differing rates cannot be easily compared. This figure depicts Colorado's juvenile justice filtering process that takes place when a youth's delinquent or criminal behavior is brought to the attention of the justice system. Those states or agencies that use re-arrests to represent recidivism

²³ Guilty includes guilty and guilty of a lesser charge.

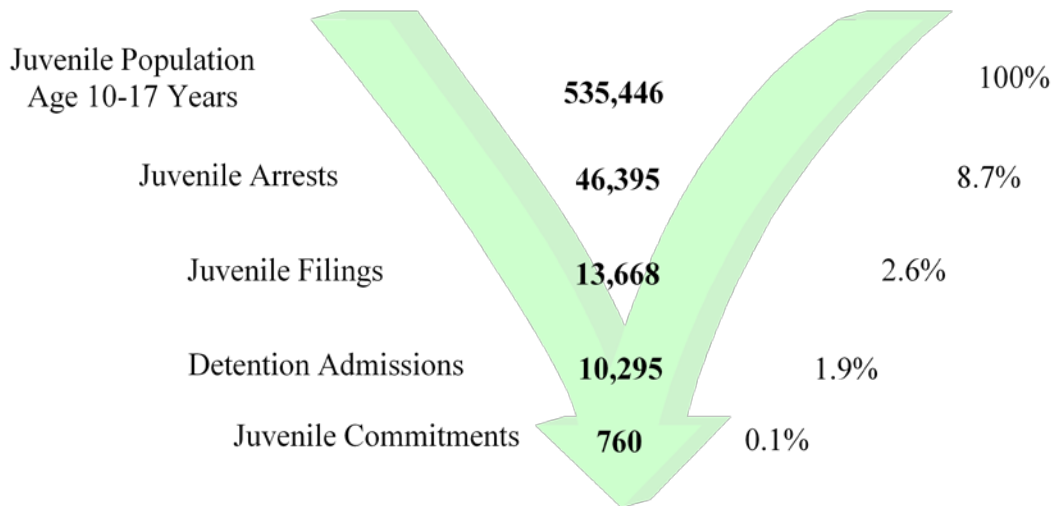
²⁴ No finding of guilt includes acquitted, charges dismissed, a plea of Nolo contendere, or a not guilty finding.

²⁵ Unknown includes those cases that are still open at the time of this printing.

²⁶ Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, DJJ Research Quarterly, Volume III, April 2005.

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

**Figure 8: Juvenile Justice Filtering Process to Commitment
FY 2008-09**



Demographics

The following demographic data is presented to illustrate differences in recidivism rates by gender, ethnicity, and DYC management region. Throughout this report a finding followed by “**” indicates a statistically significant difference between groups. In this year’s report recidivism results are presented graphically for the first time. Recidivism results are presented in tabular format similar to prior reports in Appendix C.

Males discharged in FY 2008-09 had significantly higher rates of pre and post-discharge recidivism, compared with females.

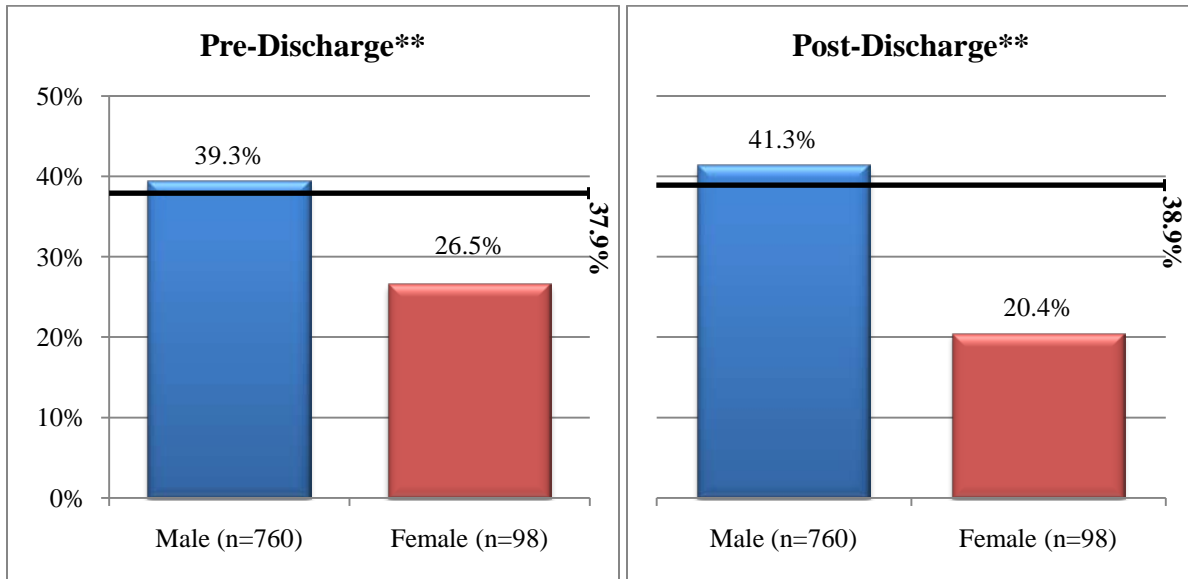
Primary ethnicity was also significantly correlated with pre-discharge recidivism rates for this cohort.

Gender

Historically, males discharged from the Division of Youth Corrections have been more likely than females to receive a new filing for an offense. Figure 9 shows a breakdown of recidivism

results by gender. Gender is a commonly known risk factor for delinquency, where males are significantly more likely than females to be involved in delinquent activities²⁷.

Figure 9: Recidivism Rates by Gender



**Chi-Square=6.055, p<0.05

**Chi-Square=15.961, p<0.01

Eighty-nine percent (N=760) of the FY 2008-09-discharge cohort was male and 11% (n=98) was female. Males (39.3%) had significantly higher rates of new filings for felony or misdemeanor offenses prior to discharge than females (26.5%) as well as during the year following discharge from the Division (males - 41.3%, females - 20.4%).

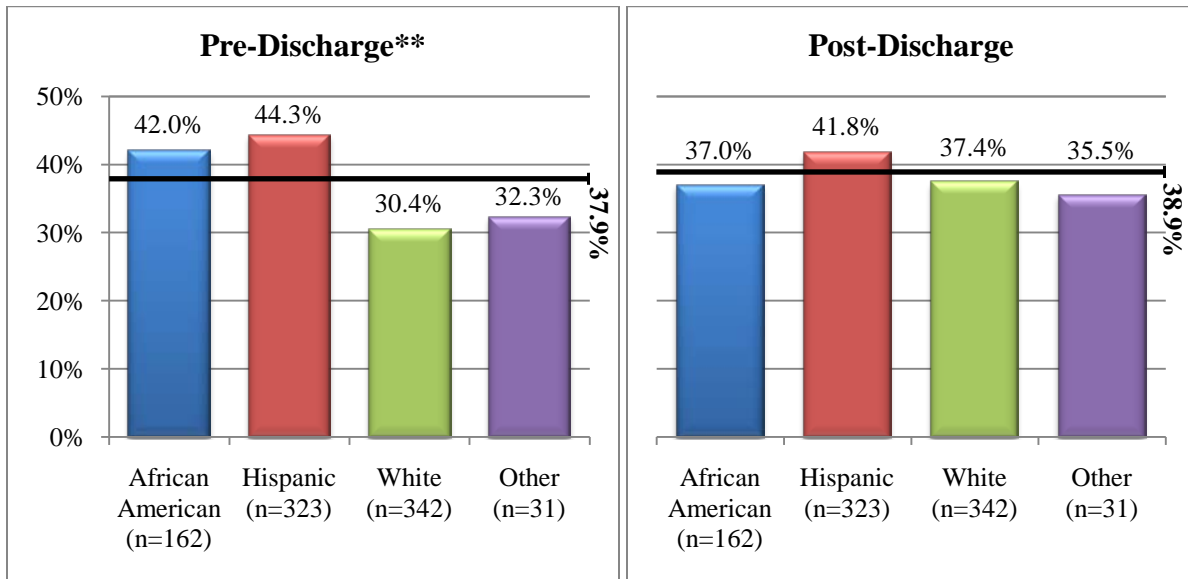
The black line running through these charts represents the average recidivism rate for the entire FY 2008-09 discharge cohort. As shown in Figure 9, the pre-discharge and post-discharge rates for males are only slightly higher than the average recidivism rate for the entire cohort, while recidivism rates for females is significantly below the line. This helps to illustrate how a larger group will have more effect on the average recidivism rate than a smaller group.

²⁷ Liu, X. & H.B. Kaplan (1999). *Explaining the Gender Differences in Adolescent Delinquent Behavior: A Longitudinal Test of Mediating Mechanisms*. *Criminology* 37:195-215.

Primary Ethnicity

Figure 10 shows differences in recidivism rates by primary ethnicity. The “other” category includes Native-American and Asian-American youth, as well as multi-racial youth and those 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 independently to make valid statistical comparisons²⁸.

Figure 10: Recidivism Rates by Primary Ethnicity



**Chi-Square=15.292, p<0.01

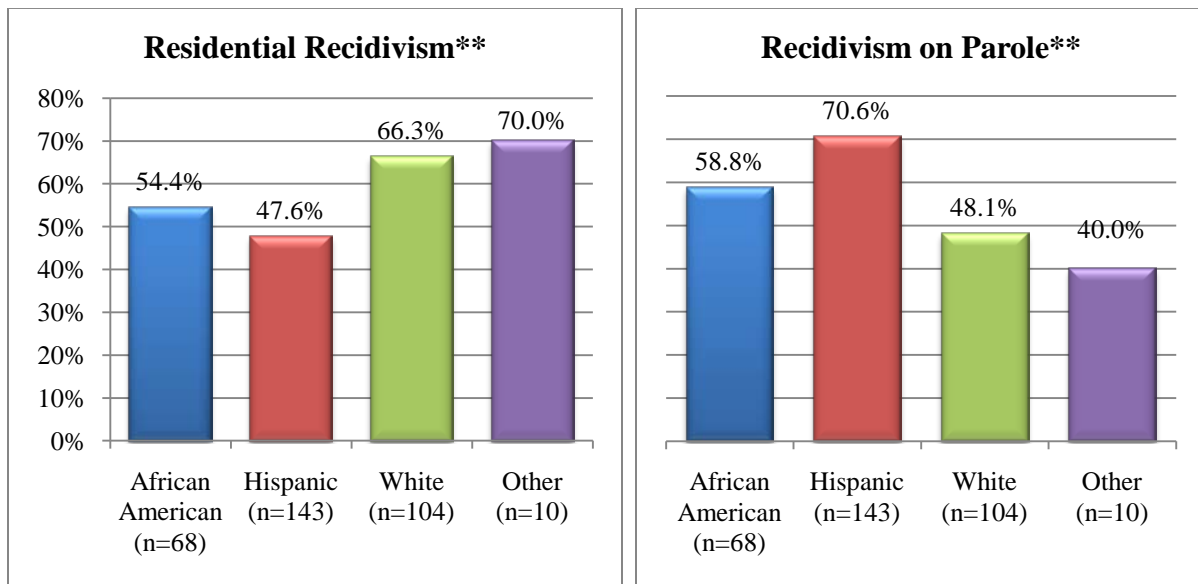
White youth and youth in the “Other” category received significantly fewer filings for new felony or misdemeanor offenses prior to discharge (30.4%, and 32.3% respectively) than African-American (42.0%) or Hispanic (44.3%) youth in this discharge cohort. Results for the youth in the “other” category should be interpreted cautiously because of the small census size (n=31).

This finding is concerning for the Division, because it could potentially reflect some biases within the juvenile justice system. While the Division of Youth Corrections does not make the

²⁸ 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 because of chance) when group sizes are small.

ultimate decision on whether to file charges against a youth who re-offends prior to discharge there are often decisions made either by client managers or treatment providers to initiate contact with police regarding incidents that occur in treatment facilities. Interestingly, although placement analysis of pre-discharge offenses did find statistically significant differences in the placement of offense, the results do not support the implied bias on the residential side of the system (see Figure 11). African-American youth (54.4%) and Hispanic youth (47.6%) received proportionately fewer filings in residential placements than White youth (66.3%) and youth in the “Other” category (70.0%).

Figure 11: Pre-Discharge Recidivism Placement Type by Primary Ethnicity²⁹



**Chi-Square=9.498, p<0.05

**Chi-Square=14.598, p<0.01

Figure 11 shows that while White youth had significantly lower overall pre-discharge recidivism rates than African-American or Hispanic youth, they were also more often referred to the authorities while in residential placement. In other words, the difference in recidivism rates seems to occur when the youth are on parole. African-American and Hispanic youth have significantly higher pre-discharge recidivism rates while on parole status, when compared with White youth and youth in the “Other” ethnicity category. While this could still potentially be

²⁹ Percentages do not add up to 100% because some youth committed offenses on both residential and non-residential parole status.

caused by some bias in the juvenile justice system, the Division has less influence on initiating contact with police or bringing charges to the District Attorney’s office while youth are in the community on non-residential parole status. It is recommended that the Division carefully examine practices within facilities and regional offices to identify and eliminate potential racial bias in treatment and sanctioning activities.

DYC Management Region

The Division of Youth Corrections has a regionally-based management structure, operating from four management regions in the State, as depicted in Figure 12. 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 major county of Mesa.

Figure 12: DYC Region Structure

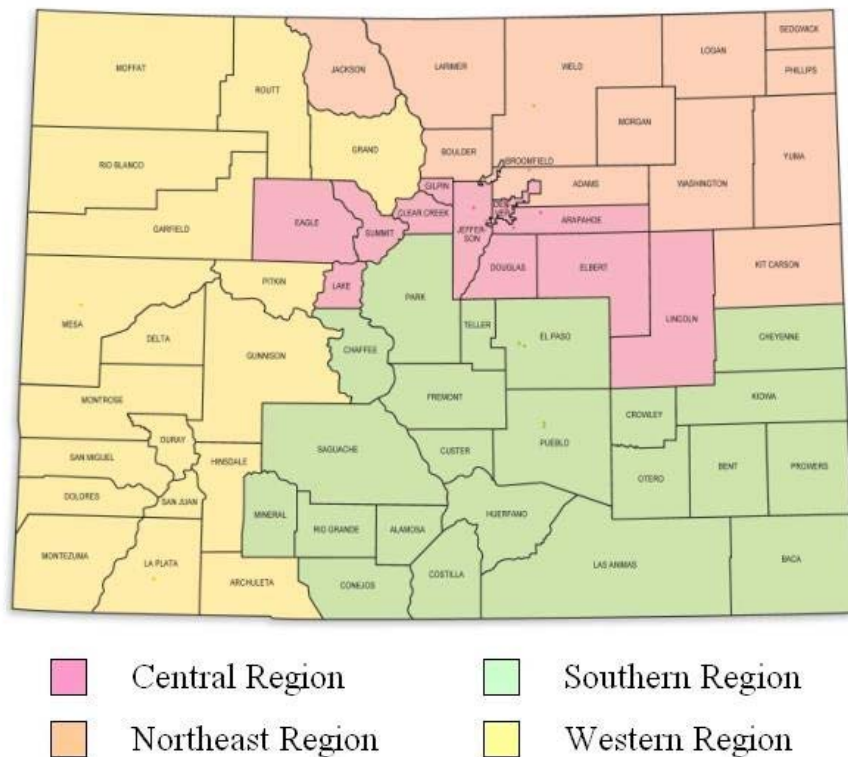


Figure 13: Recidivism Rates by DYC Management Region

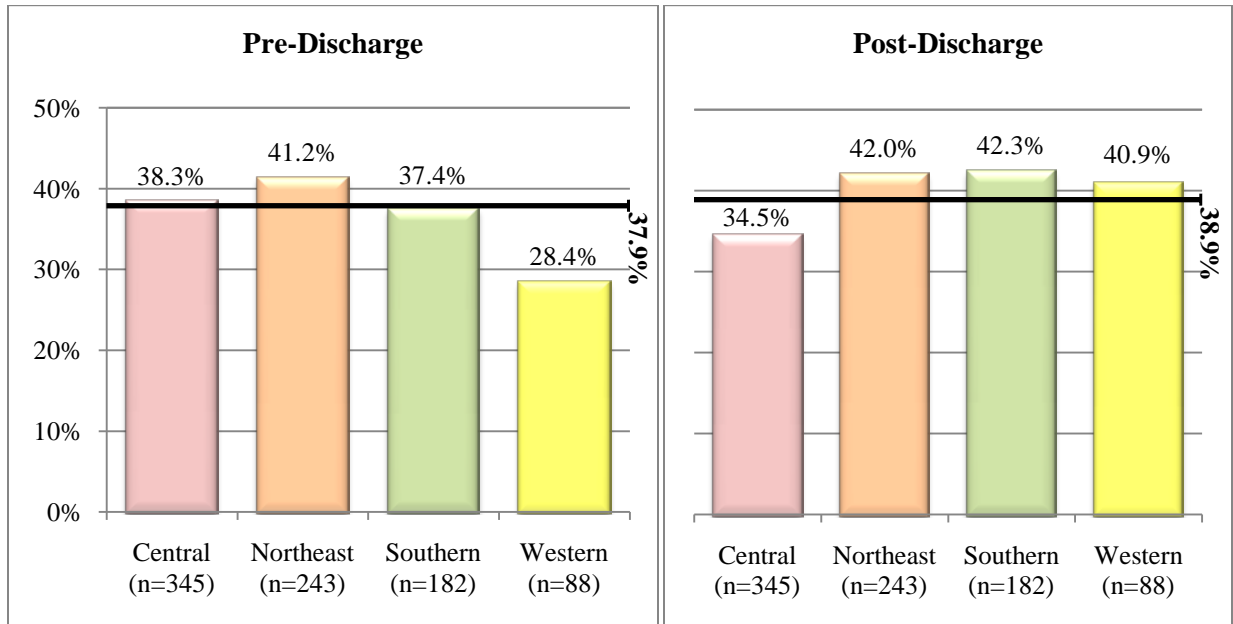


Figure 13 shows a breakdown of recidivism rates by DYC Management Region. There were no statistically meaningful differences noted in rates by DYC Management Region.

Risk of Re-Offending

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 or herself (i.e. suicide risk) and the community (i.e. public safety).

Juvenile justice organizations often depend on risk assessment instruments to appropriately assess the likelihood of recidivism and to aid in the case planning process. The Division of Youth Corrections is continuing 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. As part of that project, the Division introduced the Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment Instrument (CJRA) in June 2006. This recidivism study analyzes CJRA risk scores and assesses how well they predict future criminal behavior (i.e. recidivism) and also examines a number of factors that have traditionally been shown to increase the risk of re-offending, most of which are indicators of previous system involvement.

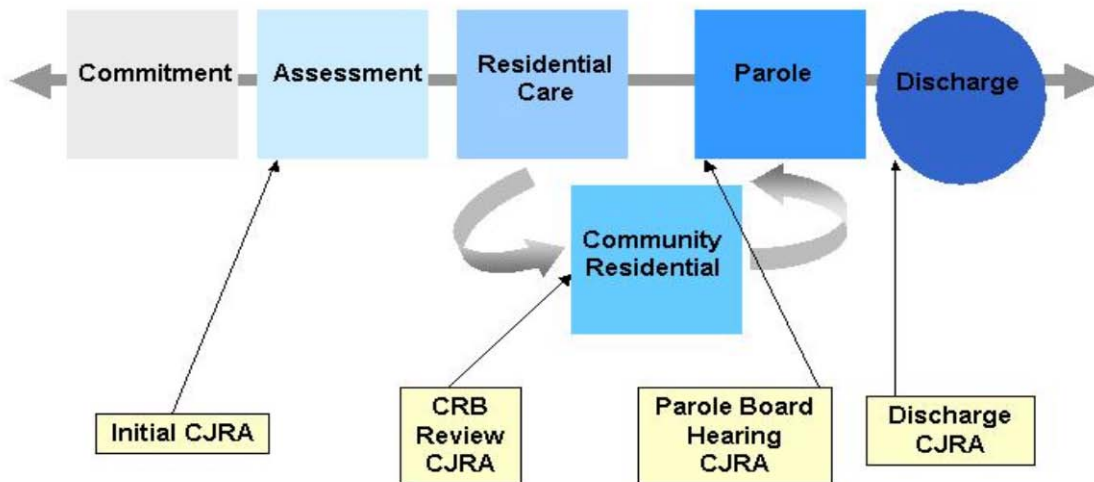
Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment

Effective June 2006, every youth committed to the Division of Youth Corrections is assessed for criminogenic risk, needs, and protective factors both from a static³⁰ and dynamic³¹ perspective. The CJRA replaced the Colorado Young Offender - Level of Service Inventory (CYO-LSI) that DYC had used for over a decade.

CJRA domain risk scores predicted post-discharge recidivism rates with greater consistency than pre-discharge recidivism. Youth with higher scores at discharge re-offended more often than youth who scored lower on the discharge CJRA risk scales.

Figure 14:

CJRA Assessment/Re-Assessment Points



*CJRA re-assessments are also mandated when a placement transition occurs, when LOS is reconsidered, and at staff discretion.

The CJRA is used to periodically reassess risk of recidivism at specified points in time during commitment. Re-assessment of risk and protective factors at critical junctures during a youth's commitment sentence allows client managers to accurately assess risk of recidivism and base

³⁰ Static risk is based on historical data and cannot be improved with treatment.

³¹ Dynamic risk is based on a youth's current living and social factors and can be targeted by treatment goals during commitment to reduce risk.

treatment decisions on the youth's current needs instead of static historical factors. Figure 14 graphically depicts the initial and major re-assessment time frames required by DYC policy³².

The following analysis will examine CJRA risk scores at two points in time: initial assessment, and prior to discharge. Youth who were committed to the Division of Youth Corrections prior to July 1, 2006 will not be included in the analysis of pre-discharge recidivism rates because the CJRA was not implemented until June 2006. Just over two-thirds (68.0%) of the current discharge cohort were committed after the implementation of the CJRA, and were given a CJRA assessment within 90 days of commitment.

Research has established and reaffirmed that there are a number of factors that strongly correlate with persistent and/or chronic delinquent behaviors. These criminogenic risk factors consist of a host of social, environmental, ecological, psychological and gender-based influences. 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.). Dynamic risk scores are changeable through a targeted treatment plan and include scales where risk scores can be mitigated through treatment that directly addresses a youth's criminogenic needs. 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 corresponding reduction in delinquent behaviors. The Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment is rooted in the following 12 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
11. Aggression
12. Skills

³² This policy (DYC Policy 21.4) is currently under review.

The CJRA and Pre-Discharge Recidivism

During a youth's commitment assessment period DYC assessment staff conduct an initial CJRA to determine each youth's level of criminogenic need and risk for re-offense. These assessments are used to guide the decision making process for treatment plans and level of security needed to ensure community safety during the first six months of commitment.

Nine of the twelve domains listed on the previous page have risk scales associated with them³³. Many of the scales have both a static risk score (based on historical risk factors which are not changeable) and a dynamic risk score (based on the youth's attitudes or current behaviors and social attachments that the youth is involved with). Figure 15 shows pre-discharge recidivism outcomes for youth by each CJRA domain³⁴.

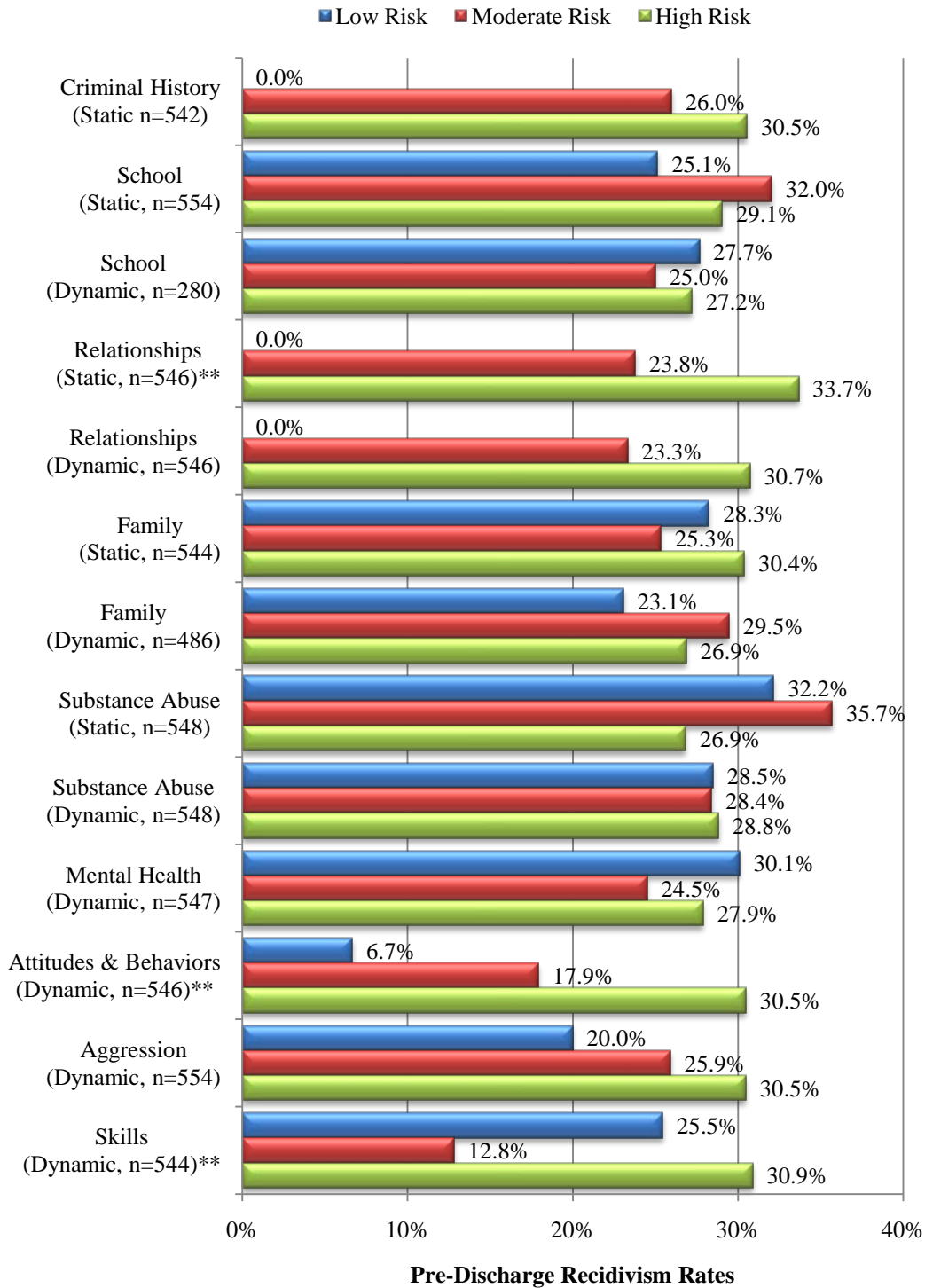
Only three CJRA domains were significantly correlated with pre-discharge recidivism (see Figure 15). The Relationships (static risk), Attitudes and Behaviors (dynamic risk), and Skills (dynamic risk) scales were predictive of pre-discharge recidivism.

The Relationships domain interprets a youth's peer relationships. There were very few youth who scored low risk on the Relationships static risk scale (n=5). This is not surprising because all of the youth in this sample have already been adjudicated delinquent by the State of Colorado. Peer relationships are the primary focus of this domain and delinquent youth have a tendency to be friends with other delinquent youth. Youth who scored moderate risk in this domain (n=244) had lower rates of pre-discharge recidivism (23.8%) than youth who had a high risk score in this domain (33.7%, n=297).

³³ The Gender, Use of Free Time, and Employment scales are not scored because there is little variance in scores. For example, the Employment Domain Risk score has a maximum of two (2) points with little variability in risk. Gender risk is scored (male=1, female=0), and Use of Free Time has no risk score calculated at all.

³⁴ Scores on each domain are grouped by "High," "Moderate," and "Low" risk for re-offense based on validation studies conducted on juvenile probation clients in Washington State. (Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2004; Assessing Risk for Re-Offense & Validating the Washington State Juvenile Court Assessment).

Figure 15: Pre-Discharge Recidivism Rates by Initial CJRA Domain Risk Scores



**Relationships Static Risk: Chi-Square=8.439, p<0.05 (n=546, missing=38)

**Attitudes Dynamic Risk: Chi-Square=6.483, p<0.05 (n=546, missing=38)

**Skills Dynamic Risk: Chi-Square=6.068, p<0.05 (n=544, missing=40)

The Attitudes and Behaviors domain assesses a youth's attitude toward anti-social behaviors, such as whether they believe that laws and mores of society apply to them personally. Because attitudes can be changed, this is a dynamic risk scale. The vast majority of the youth in this sample (90.1%, n=492) had high risk scores on this scale. Regardless of the lack of variability in risk scores for this domain, recidivism rates got progressively higher for youth as risk on this scale increased.

The Skills domain was the last domain that demonstrated a significant correlation with pre-discharge recidivism. This domain appraises a youth's ability to resolve difficult situations without resorting to criminal behavior, including areas such as anger management skills, impulse control, and dealing with emotions. As with Attitudes and Behaviors, the majority of youth (82.7%, n=450) scored in the high range for this scale. Youth who scored in the moderate range had the lowest rate of filings prior to discharge (12.8%) compared with 30.9 % for youth who scored high on this dynamic risk scale.

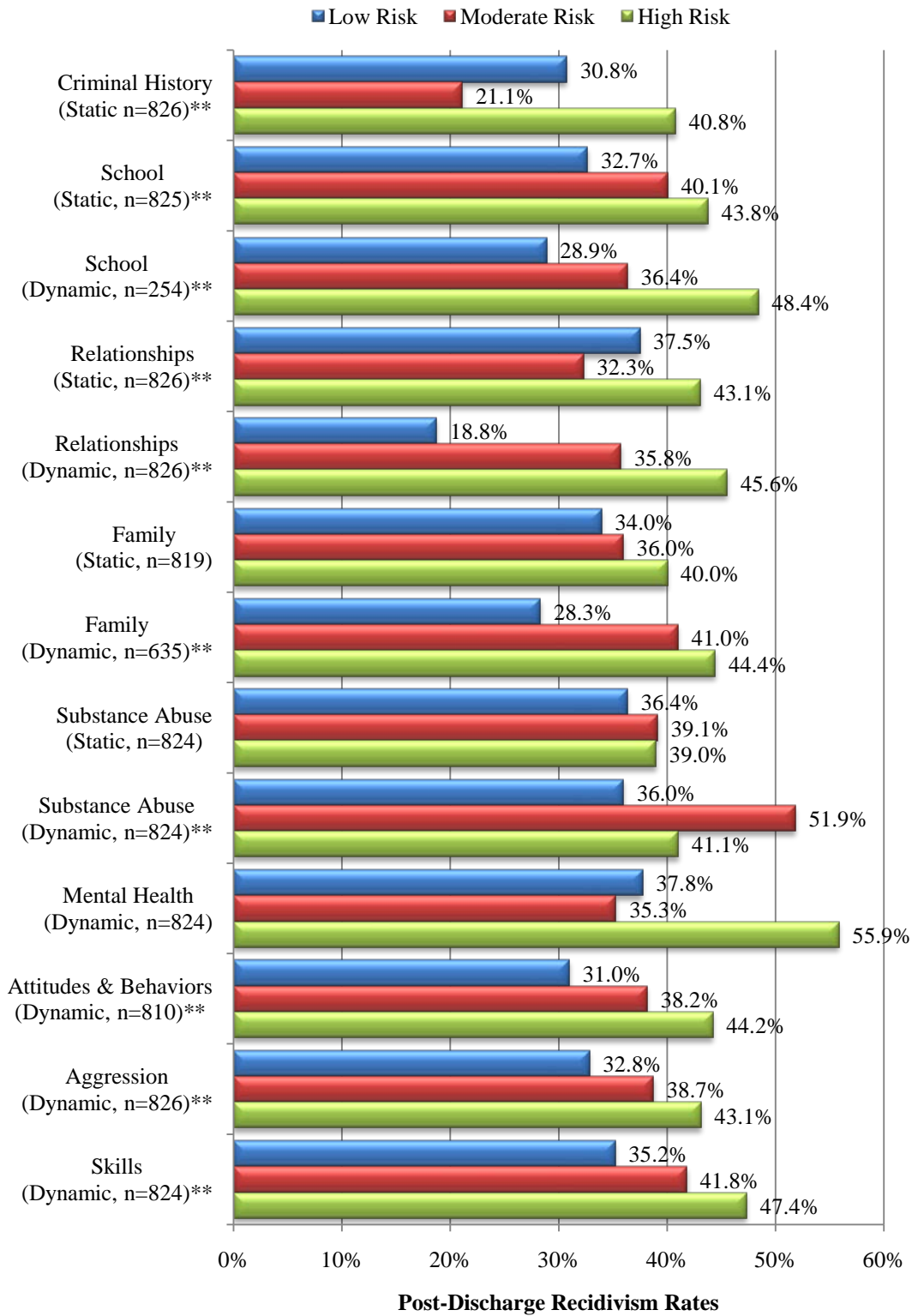
The CJRA and Post-Discharge Recidivism

Youth committed to NYC are re-assessed using the CJRA at specified points in time during their commitment (see Figure 14, page 21). Additionally, when youth are discharged from parole following a commitment sentence they are re-assessed one last time. While CJRAs administered during commitment are used to modify treatment plans and monitor readiness for a youth to step-down to lower-security treatment programs, the discharge CJRA is used by the Division to measure risk reduction and treatment gains that were achieved during the youth's commitment. Figure 16 shows post-discharge recidivism outcomes for youth by each CJRA domain.

Almost all of the youth in this discharge sample received a CJRA re-assessment within 90 days of their discharge date (n=827, 96.4%)³⁵. Post-discharge recidivism rates varied significantly with ten of the thirteen risk scales analyzed.

³⁵ Some reasons why a discharge CJRA could not be completed on a youth include youth who were under adult corrections supervision, youth institutionalized for a mental health condition, or deported youth.

Figure 16: Post-Discharge Recidivism Rates by Discharge CJRA Domain Scores



**Significance scores are included in the tables in Appendix B.

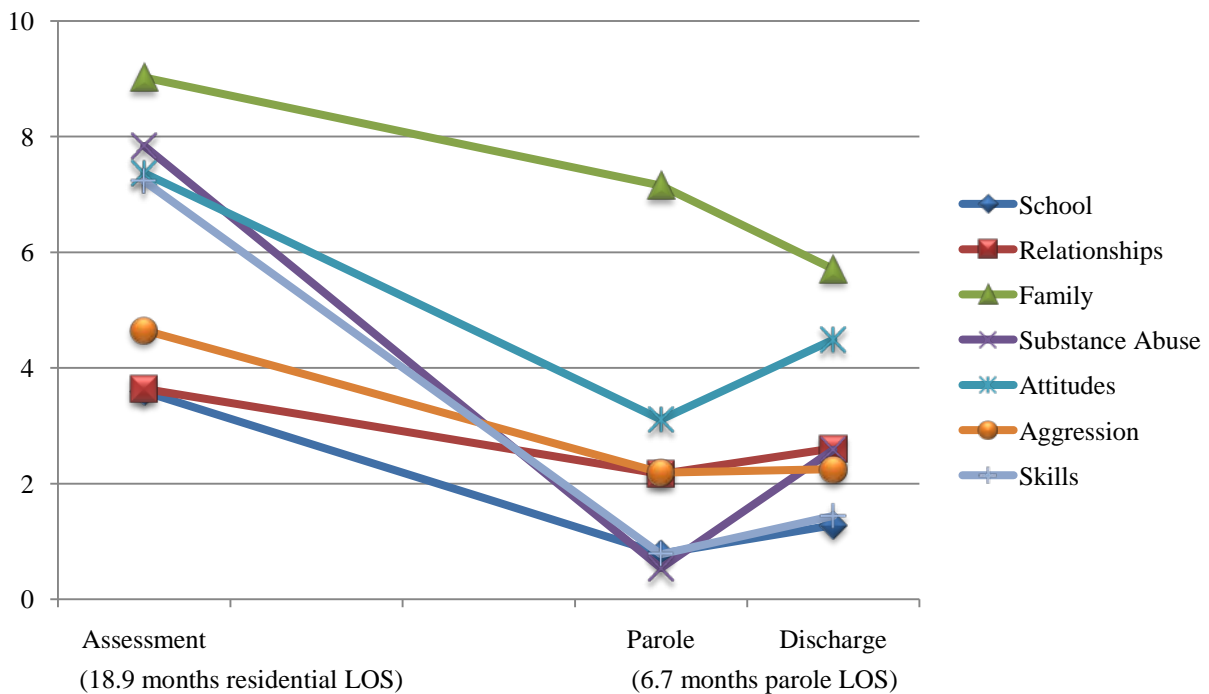
Three static risk scales were positively correlated with recidivism within one year following discharge from DYC. Static risk scales are domains that are based on historical data which cannot be improved with treatment. The Criminal History scale consists of a number of traditional risk factors for recidivism including age at first adjudication and prior history with juvenile justice agencies. Youth who scored high on this scale had higher rates of post-discharge recidivism (40.8%) than youth who scored low (30.8%) or moderate risk (21.1%) on this scale. Similar patterns were noted for the static risk scales for School and Relationships. Youth who scored higher on these two risk scales received more filings in the twelve months following discharge than did youth who scored low or moderate (see Figure 16).

Dynamic risk factors are based on a youth's current circumstances and can be targeted by treatment goals during commitment. Nearly all dynamic risk scales, with the exception of Mental Health (no significant difference in recidivism), were correlated with post-discharge recidivism rates. Higher dynamic risk scores on the School, Relationships, Family, Attitudes and Behaviors, Aggression, and Skills scales indicated higher instances of post-discharge re-offending (see Figure 16). The Substance Abuse scale was also correlated with post-discharge recidivism, however the relationship was in an unexpected direction. Youth who scored in the moderate risk range on the Substance Abuse scale re-offended at the highest level (51.9%) when compared with youth who scored low (36.0%) or high (41.1%) on this scale. Overall, the predictive nature of these dynamic risk factors is an encouraging sign for DYC treatment providers. As providers target a youth's individual criminogenic needs during treatment they are hopefully reducing a youth's risk in these specific areas. If through treatment, providers are able to reduce a youth's risk level in the Relationships scale, for instance, that youth will be significantly less likely to re-offend after being discharged from their commitment sentence.

Figure 17 shows the reduction in dynamic risk scores for this discharge cohort by domain. The first point on the graph is the risk score at the time of assessment. The second data point is the average CJRA domain score when clients are released from residential treatment and begin transitioning back to the community on non-residential parole status. While on parole, youth receive some continuing level of services as indicated by their CJRA domain scores, however treatment services are less intense from the time they go on parole status until discharge (the

third point on the chart). Parole is a period of transition and maintenance of treatment effects . During parole youth are often living independently or with family and have varying level of contact with their DYC client managers. For this reason it is anticipated that risk scores will be slightly higher at discharge than when youth leave intense residential treatment services as youth on parole are back in the community with fewer available services and lower levels of supervision.

Figure 17: Change in Domain Risk Scores: Assessment to Discharge



If treatment had not reduced this discharge cohort’s average risk levels as notably as is seen in Figure 17, the previous analysis suggests that these youth might have experienced much higher levels of post-discharge recidivism.

Prior “System” Involvement

Although the CJRA’s Criminal History scale covers several different measures of “prior system involvement,” a number of individual indicators have been found to be highly predictive of pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism in prior reports. Therefore, recidivism rates are compared for the following measures of prior system involvement: number of prior out-of-home

placements, number of prior detention admissions, number of prior adjudications, age at first adjudication, and number of prior commitment. It is anticipated that youth with more prior system involvement will have higher rates of re-offending. Juvenile justice research supports this hypothesis, stating that youth with a history of delinquent activity show an elevated risk of future offending (Andrews and Bonta, p. 165)³⁶.

Individual indicators of prior system involvement were not as predictive as they had been in prior studies.

Prior adjudications and age at first adjudication were both correlated with pre-discharge recidivism.

Prior detention admissions were correlated with higher incidences of post-discharge recidivism.

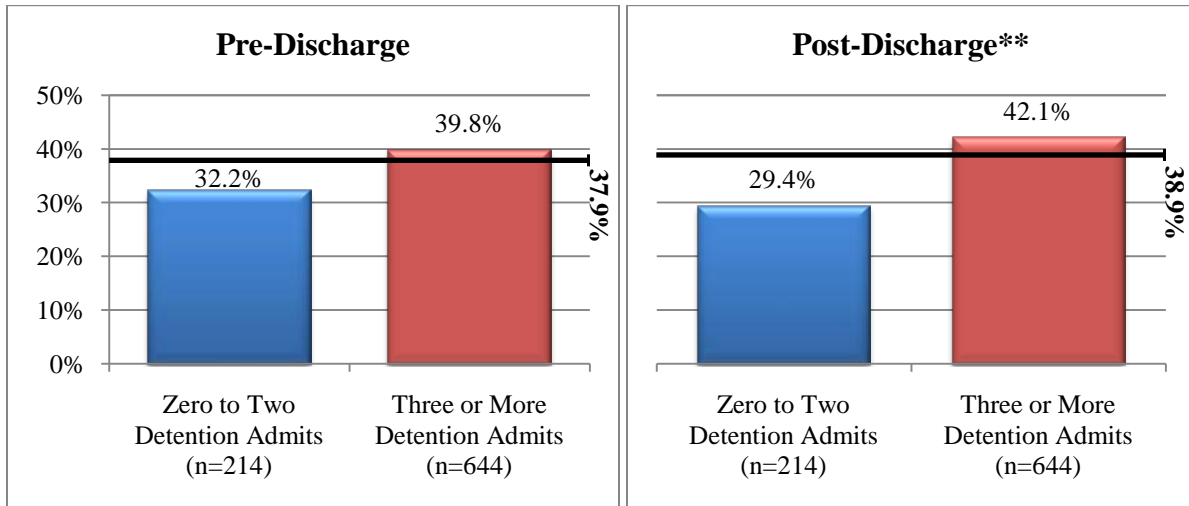
Prior Out-of-Home Placements can include inpatient mental health or substance abuse treatment facilities, Child Welfare placements, as well as any prior NYC placements. There were no differences in recidivism rates (pre-discharge or post-discharge) by number of prior placements.

Prior Detention Admissions for this discharge cohort ranged from zero up to eighteen for a single youth. On average, all committed youth discharged in FY 2008-09 had 4.5 detention admissions prior to their commitment. Breaking the data down into categories of youth with relatively low (zero to two prior detention admissions) and high (three or more prior detention admissions) levels of prior involvement with the Division of Youth Corrections, the results did show significant differences in post-discharge recidivism rates (see Figure 18 on the following page).

Youth with three or more detention admissions received more filings for felony or misdemeanor within one year following discharge (42.1%), when compared to youth with less than three prior detention admissions (29.4%).

³⁶ Andrews, D.A., and Bonta, J. (1994). *The Psychology of Criminal Conduct*. Cincinnati, OH: Anderson Publishing.

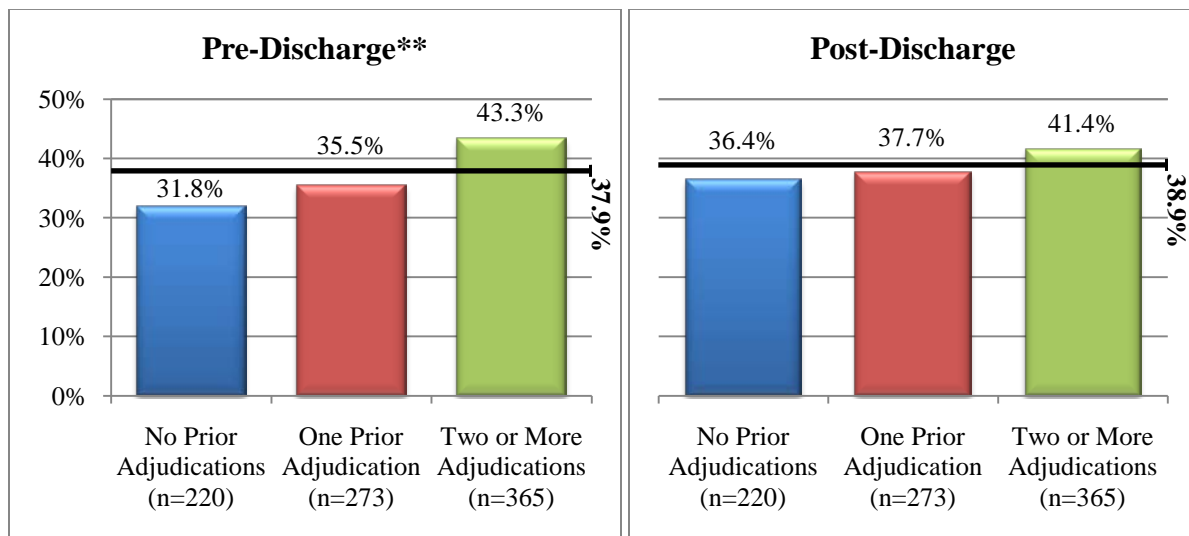
Figure 18: Recidivism Rates by Prior Detention Admissions



** Chi-Square=10.797, p<0.01

Prior Adjudications is also a measure of prior involvement in the juvenile justice system, and as such, it is predicted that youth with more prior adjudications would have higher recidivism rates. An examination of pre-discharge recidivism rates found that youth who received a new filing, on average, had more prior adjudications than youth who did not recidivate³⁷. The number of prior adjudications was not significantly different for post-discharge recidivists.

Figure 19: Recidivism Rates by Number of Prior Adjudications



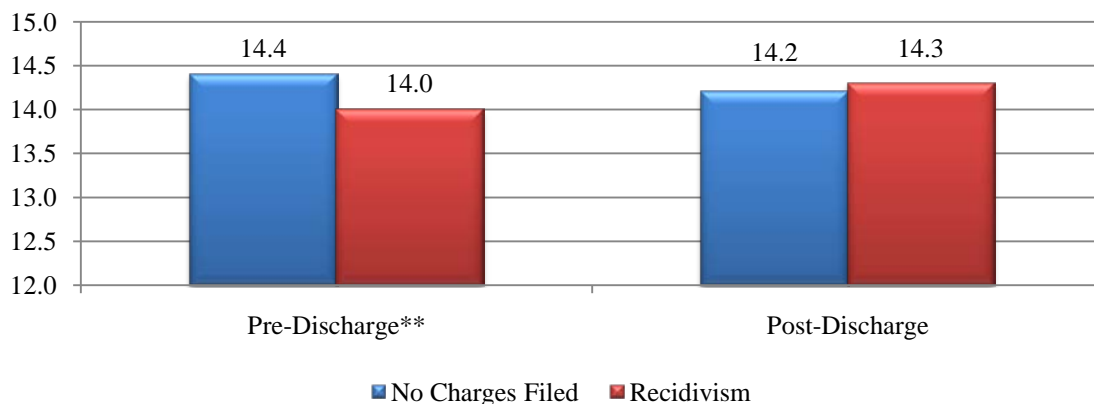
**Chi-Square=8.612, p<0.05

³⁷ Pre-Discharge: F=4.101, p<0.05.

Figure 19 shows pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates by the number of prior adjudications for youth discharged in FY 2008-09. Forty-three (42.5%) 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 pre-discharge recidivism (43.3%) than youth with zero or one prior adjudication.

Associated with number of prior adjudications is another primary risk factor for recidivism - *Age at 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 system³⁸. The average client age at first adjudication coupled with recidivism outcomes are shown in Figure 20.

Figure 20: Age at First Adjudication



**Pre-Discharge; F=8.654, p<0.01 (n=857, missing=1)

Although the age differences for youth who received a new pre-discharge filing and those who did not were small, they were statistically significant. There was no significant difference in age at first adjudication for youth who received a new post-discharge filing.

Prior Commitments, one last indicator of prior juvenile justice involvement, was also analyzed for this recidivism evaluation. A commitment to DYC represents the furthest potential penetration into the juvenile justice system that youth in this study might have encountered prior

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

to their current commitment. Very few (n=49) of the youth in this discharge cohort were committed to the Division of Youth Corrections prior to the commitment examined for this study, and there were no significant differences in recidivism rates by prior commitments.

From a treatment perspective these measures of prior system involvement are static indicators of risk that will not change in a beneficial way to impact risk reduction. Risk factors based on criminal history can only get worse. Therefore, it is imperative that the Division continues to move in the direction of targeting dynamic, or variable, factors of risk when making treatment decisions for youth. Additionally, protective factors may be targeted through treatment in an attempt to mitigate the risk of static factors. The Division's Continuum of Care helps focus treatment, specifically transitional services, towards these particular goals. This approach, if effective, may begin to positively impact recidivism rates for future discharge cohorts.

Special Populations

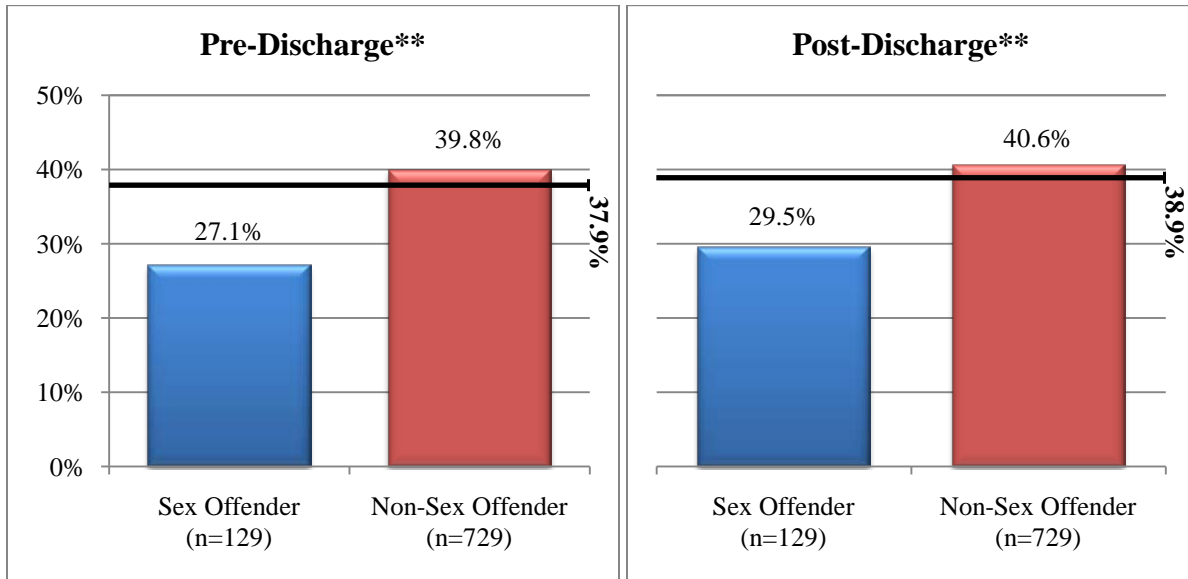
The Division is responsible for treating a number of youth with special needs. Included in these special needs groups are youth receiving treatment for sex offense-specific issues, substance abuse issues, and mental health issues. Although recidivism analyses on each of these subpopulations was conducted there were no differences in recidivism rates for youth whose clinical assessment showed a need for substance abuse treatment services compared with those who did not. The other two special populations did experience significant differences in recidivism rates as the following analyses show.

Sex offenders received fewer filings for new offenses prior to discharge and within one year following discharge when compared with youth committed to NYC for other offense types.

Youth Receiving Sex Offense-Specific Treatment

The Division of Youth Corrections discharged 129 clients who received sex offense-specific treatment during commitment. Clients can receive treatment from NYC if they were adjudicated for a sexual offense, adjudicated for an offense that is non-sexual in nature, but was committed at the same time as a sex offense, or with the intention to commit a sex offense, or if the client or client's guardian request sex offense specific treatment services.

Figure 21: Recidivism Rates of Youth Receiving Sex Offense-Specific Treatment



**Chi-Square= 7.452, p<0.01

**Chi-Square=5.728, p<0.05

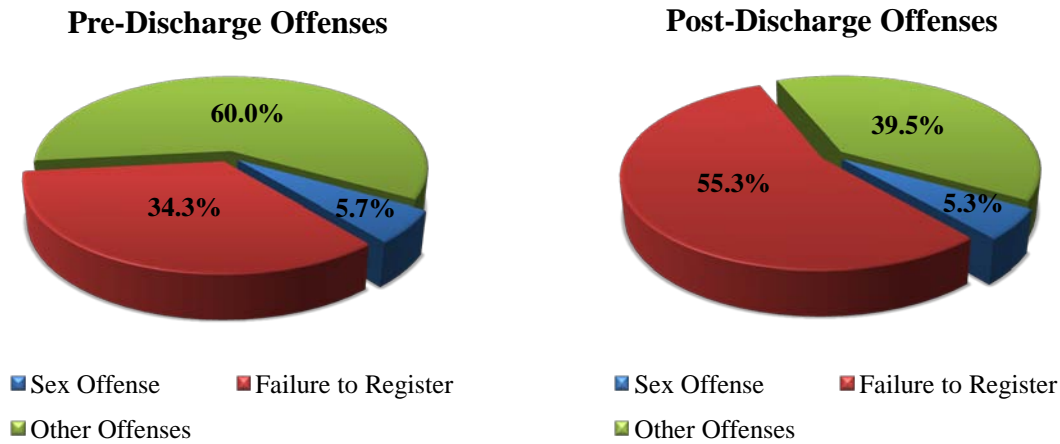
Figure 21 shows that youth receiving sex offense-specific treatment in this discharge cohort recidivated at much lower rates than other youth both during their commitment and in the year following discharge from NYC. Prior to discharge 27.1% (n=35) of youth receiving sex offense-specific treatment received a new filing for a misdemeanor or felony offense compared with 39.8% of youth who did not receive sex offender treatment services. Similarly, only 29.5% of clients receiving sex offense-specific treatment (n=38) re-offended within a year following treatment.

Because of the heinous nature of sex offenses, one primary concern with this population is not only a matter of overall rates of re-offense, but whether these youth recidivate with similar types of offenses (sexual offenses). Figure 22 shows that the majority of youth who do re-offend do not do so with another sex offense (6% pre-discharge and 5% post-discharge).

Over one third (34.3%) pre-discharge offenses and more than half (55.3%) of the post-discharge offenses for youth who received sex offense-specific treatment during their commitment involve a failure to register as a sex offender filing. Although the laws on sex offender registration are intended to inform and protect the community, they may also have the unintended consequence

of increasing recidivism rates among a specific subset of juveniles. Even with recidivism rates that are inflated by failure to register charges, juveniles receiving sex offense treatment still exhibited significantly lower pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates than youth committed for other types of offenses.

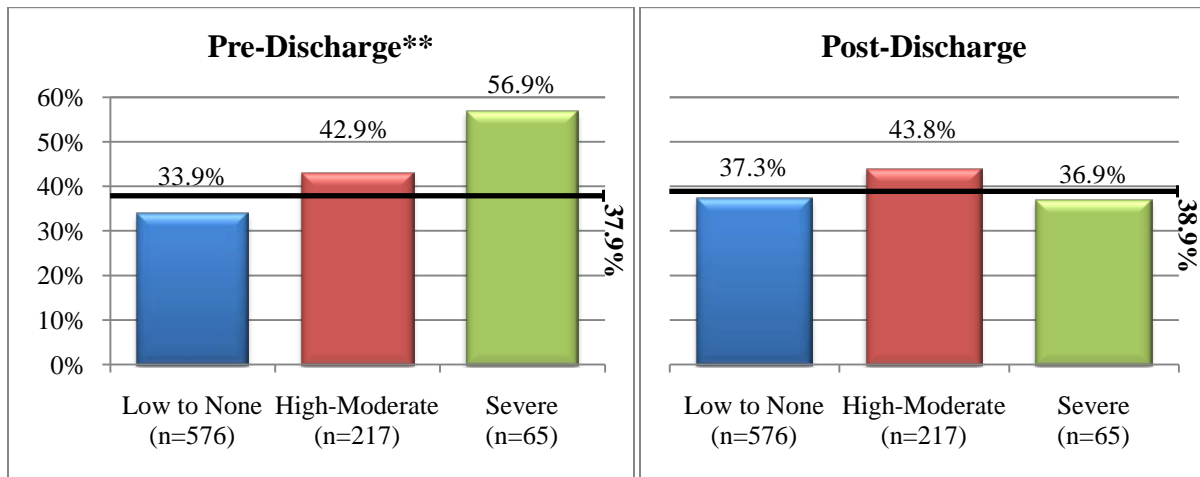
Figure 22: Offense Type – Youth Receiving Sex Offense-Specific Treatment



Mental Health Needs

The Division of Youth Corrections assesses mental health need for treatment using the Colorado Client Assessment Record (CCAR) instrument.

Figure 23: Recidivism by Mental Health Needs



**Chi-Square= 16.269, p<0.01

Almost one third of this discharge cohort was assessed by the CCAR with high moderate or severe mental health needs. Youth with severe mental health treatment needs received new pre-discharge filings at a higher rate (56.9%) than youth with low or high-moderate needs. Post-discharge rates of re-offending were not statistically different by mental health need. Research has shown that a large percentage of youth enter the juvenile justice with undiagnosed mental health issues³⁹. Clinical services provided during treatment may have helped with accurate diagnosis and effective treatment, thereby mitigating some of the mental health problems of clients discharged in FY 2008-09.

Commitment

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

Escapes from placement and re-commitments to NYC were correlated with higher rates of pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism.

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.

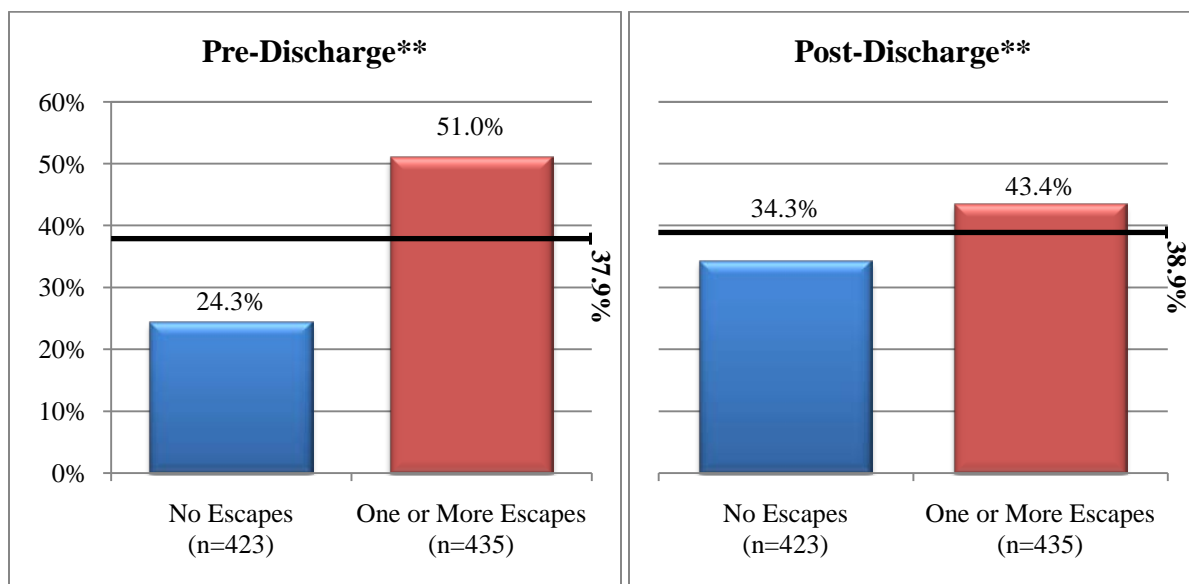
The Division tracks the number of times a youth escapes from residential placement. The term "escape," however, rarely means an escape from a secure placement. In fact, NYC policy defines an escape as a juvenile who has left a facility's custody without authorization, *or* a juvenile who has not returned to a facility within four hours of the prescribed time from any *authorized leave* (i.e., work passes, court appointments, home visits, etc.).

³⁹ Shufelt, J.S. & Cocozza, J.C. (2006) Youth with Mental Health Disorders in the Juvenile Justice System: Results from a Multi-State, Multi-System Prevalence Study. Delmar, New York: National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice.

Youth with more escapes, as defined by DYC policy, received more new filings for a felony or misdemeanor offenses, both prior to discharge from DYC⁴⁰ and within one year following discharge from the Division⁴¹.

Figure 24 shows recidivism rates for youth who have any escape compared with those youth who have no escapes. Forty-seven percent of all youth in this discharge cohort have at least one escape from a DYC placement. Those youth re-offended more often prior to discharge (51.0%), as well as within one year following discharge (43.4%), than youth with no escapes.

Figure 24: Recidivism Rates by DYC Escape



** Chi-Square=64.897, p<0.01

**Chi-Square=7.584, p<0.01

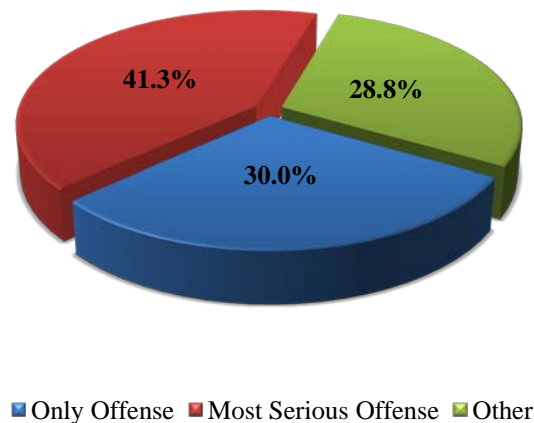
Pre-discharge recidivism rates were investigated further with regard to this issue, because youth who escape from placement can be charged with an “escape” offense that may be their only pre-discharge filing; this simply means that many youth were potentially deemed pre-discharge recidivists *because* they escaped, not because a previous escape made them *more likely* to commit another offense during commitment.

⁴⁰ Pre-discharge (F=61.770, p<0.01)

⁴¹ Post-discharge (F=15.360, p<0.01)

Two hundred twenty six (226) youth with a DYC escape received a new filing prior to discharge (51.0%). Only eighty (35.4%) received a filing for an escape charge. Seventy-one percent (71.3%) of those youth received their *only* or their *most serious* pre-discharge filing for their escape offense (n=24 and n=33 respectively). In other words, youth who escaped and were filed upon for an escape were likely to have had that escape charge be either their only or their most serious pre-discharge offense (see Figure 25).

Figure 25: Pre-Discharge Escape Filings
(n=80)



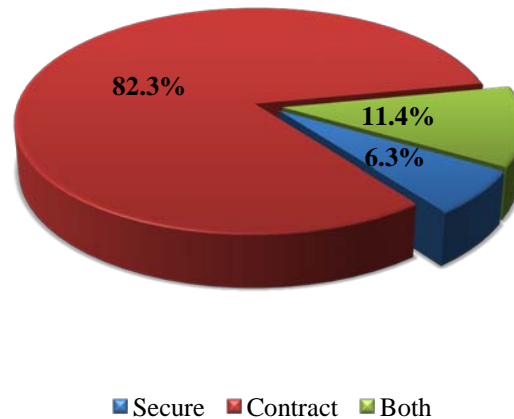
It is important to emphasize that not all youth who are reported as escapees are filed upon, and there are several explanations as to why this is the case. First, many escapes are simply youth who returned to the treatment program on their own, yet still long enough after their prescribed return time 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 have some discretion in regards to filing charges against youth in their jurisdiction.

The majority of youth who did have escape charges filed during their commitment received their filings for escaping from a DYC contract, or non-secure, facility (82.3%, see Figure 26). Six

percent of youth with an escape filing escaped from a DYC secure facility and 11.4% had escapes from both types of facilities.

Figure 26: Pre-Discharge Escapes by Type of Residential Placement

(n=79, missing=1⁴²)



Number of Re-Commitments

DYC also tracks the number of times a committed youth receives an additional commitment sentence while still fulfilling a current sentence to DYC. Since all re-commitments are the product of another charge being filed against the youth, either before⁴³ or during their commitment, it is anticipated that re-committed youth will have much higher rates of pre-discharge recidivism than youth that have no re-commitments.

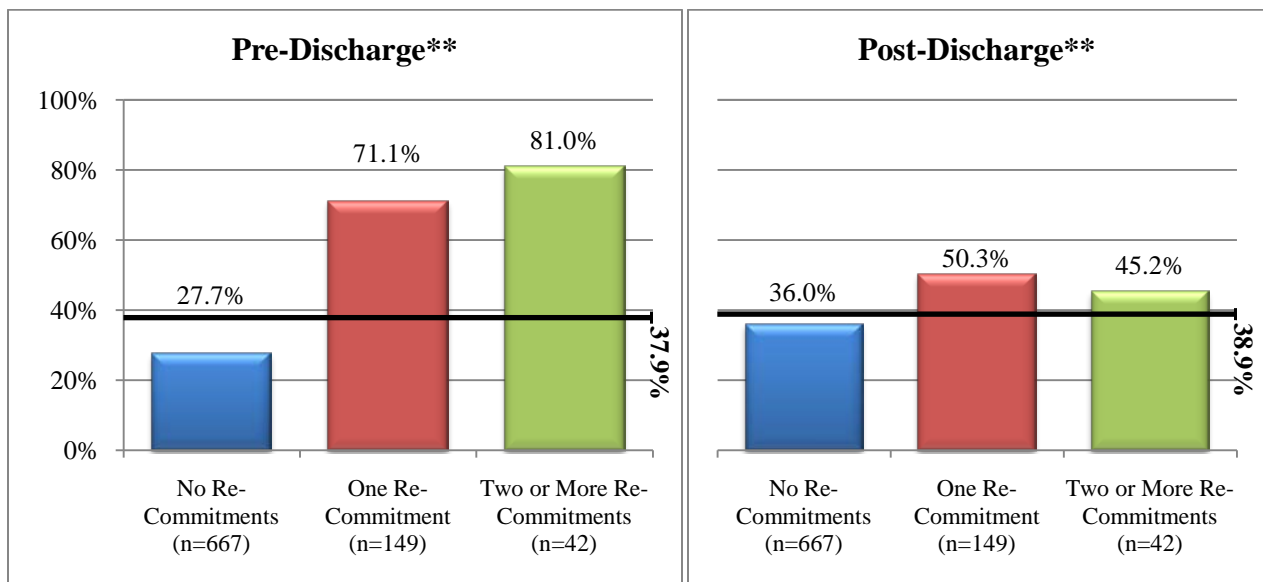
Figure 27 displays the rate of recidivism by the number of re-commitments. The majority of youth in the FY 2008-09 discharge cohort did not receive a re-commitment sentence (77.7%, n=667). Nonetheless, the pre-discharge recidivism rates, as anticipated, are significantly higher for re-committed youth than the rate for youth that do not have any re-commitments.

⁴² One youth was not in a DYC placement at the time of his escape. That youth was being held in a local Jail, prior to his first DYC placement, waiting to be transferred to a DYC assessment center.

⁴³ A youth could receive a re-commitment for an offense that occurred prior to their current commitment date. A re-commitment occurs whenever a youth currently serving a commitment sentence is committed to DYC for another offense, regardless of the date of the offense.

Most youth who receive a re-commitment do so because of charges filed against them for an offense that occurred during commitment. This explains the extremely high percentage of recidivism among these youth. As shown in Figure 27, almost all of the youth with two or more re-commitments (81.0%) have charges filed against them for a felony or misdemeanor offense prior to their discharge date. The reason why this percentage is not 100% is because of the fact that a youth could receive re-commitments for offenses that occurred *prior* to their current commitment date; therefore, it would not count as a pre-discharge recidivist act.

Figure 27: Recidivism Rates by Number of Re-Commitments



**Chi-Square=132.333, p<0.01

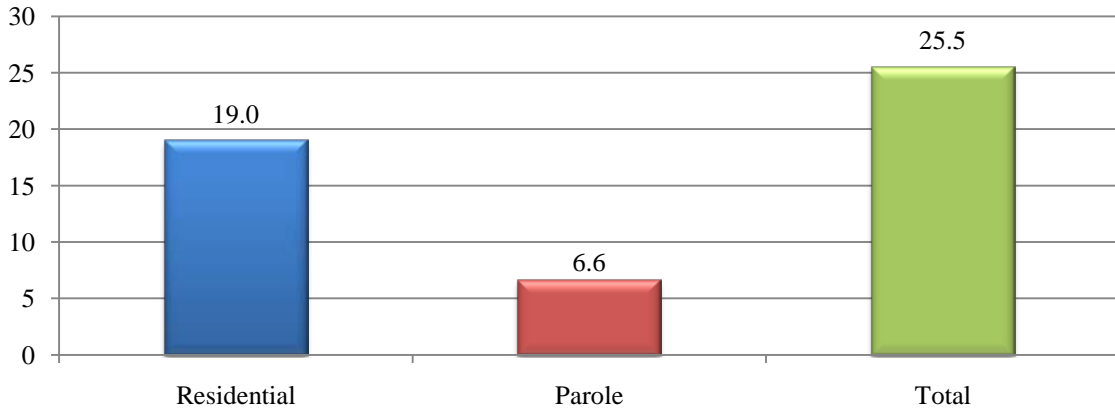
**Chi-Square=11.294, p<0.01

A re-commitment also predicted that a youth would receive a filing for a new offense within one year following discharge. Thirty-six percent of youth who did not have any re-commitments received a filing for a new offense within one year of discharge compared with 50.3% of youth with one re-commitment and 45.2% of youth with more than one re-commitment. Although these differences are not as pronounced as the pre-discharge recidivism rates, they are not surprising, since re-commitment indicates that most of these youth have continued to commit criminal or delinquent activities even during their commitment sentence to the Division of Youth Corrections.

Recidivism in Residential Placement

The majority of a youth's treatment plan is carried out in State-operated secure or contract residential placements. Length of service (LOS) for the entire discharge cohort, broken down by residential, parole and total⁴⁴, is shown in Figure 28.

Figure 28: Length of Service in Months (FY 2008-09)



Most youth sentenced to NYC commitment receive a non-mandatory sentence length that varies from zero to twenty four months. Youth with non-mandatory sentences may be referred to Juvenile Parole Board for consideration of parole prior to serving their maximum sentence length. Seventy-one percent (70.9%) of the youth discharged in FY 2008-09 were committed under non-mandatory sentences (n=608). Conversely, there were 250 youth in this discharge cohort required to serve a minimum length of service (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 aggravated juvenile offenders (n=3). There were no significant differences in rates of pre-discharge or post-discharge recidivism by sentence type for this discharge cohort.

For youth discharged in FY 2008-09, pre-discharge recidivism was correlated with longer lengths of service in residential placements. Youth who received a new filing during their

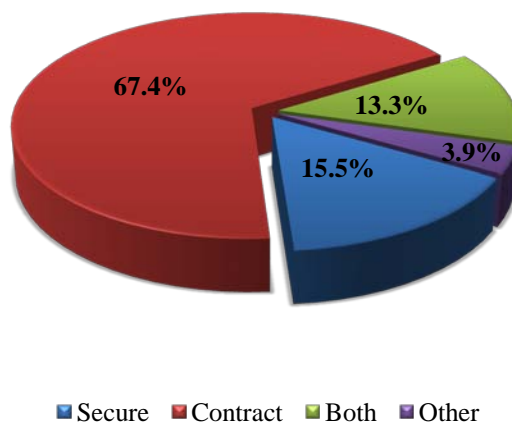
⁴⁴ Total LOS will not equal the sum of residential and parole LOS because there are a small number of paroled youth who are regressed back to a residential treatment placement for violations of the terms of parole or for committing a new felony or misdemeanor delinquent act.

commitment (pre-discharge recidivism) had an average of twenty-two (22.1) months in residential placement, compared with 17.1 months for youth who did not recidivate⁴⁵. While residential length of service was higher for youth who received a new filing post-discharge (19.4 months) than for those youth who did not (18.8 months) the difference was not statistically significant.

It is difficult to infer causality between pre-discharge recidivism and length of service, because a new filing on residential status or on parole could result in a youth having their parole status revoked or result in a re-commitment, either of which is likely to result in a longer residential LOS.

Of the 325 youth who re-offended during their commitment to DYC, 55.7% (n=181) committed at least one offense while in a residential placement⁴⁶. The majority of these offenses occurred in contract placements (see Figure 29).

Figure 29: Pre-Discharge Recidivism in Residential Placements
(n=181)



Sixty-seven percent (67.4%) of youth who received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense while in residential placement re-offended only in contract treatment placements. With

⁴⁵ $F=77.773, p<0.01$

⁴⁶ Other placements primarily include adult correctional facilities or County Jail. If a youth committed an offense while on escape status from a DYC placement, the type of facility the youth escaped from is captured in this chart.

few exceptions, contract placements are less secure than state-operated secure placements and have fewer physical security devices, relying on 24-hour supervision by facility staff to maintain compliance with treatment program regulations, including retaining custody of the youth. Therefore, clients have more opportunity to commit a new delinquent or criminal act while in a contract treatment facility than in a more secure environment.

Parole: Transitioning Back to the Community

All 858 youth in this discharge cohort were required to serve at least six months of parole under mandatory parole statutes. As seen in Figure 28 (page 40), clients in this discharge cohort spent an average of 6.6 months on parole status. Youth who received a new filing for a pre-discharge offense had a longer parole length of service (7.0 months) than youth who did not re-offend (6.4 months)⁴⁷.

Youth who successfully completed their parole requirements and who were either employed or in school at the time of discharge had lower rates of re-offense in the first twelve months following discharge from NYC.

Although youth spent an average of only 6.6 months on parole, compared with 19.0 months in residential treatment, 57.8% of youth who received a new filing during their sentence committed at least one of their offenses while on parole status⁴⁸. During parole, youth are often living independently or with family and have varying level of contact with their NYC client managers. Youth have more opportunity to re-offend during parole and so it is not unexpected that more re-offending behaviors may occur in a relatively short period of time.

Parole Adjustment (Post-Discharge Only)

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

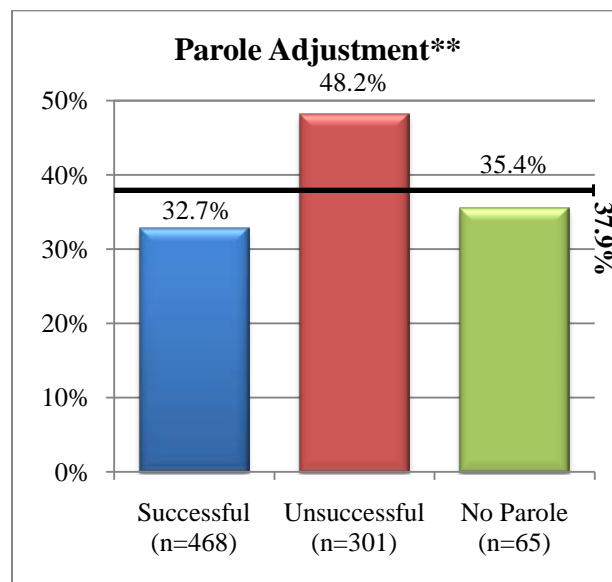
⁴⁷ F=5.100, p<0.05

⁴⁸ Some youth committed offenses on both residential and parole status, therefore the sum of youth who re-offended while in a residential placement and youth who re-offended on parole will add up to more than 100%.

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.

Figure 30 shows post-discharge recidivism rates⁴⁹ by parole adjustment rating at the time of discharge from the Division of Youth Corrections. Youth with unsuccessful parole adjustments re-offended at a higher rate (48.2%) than youth who were successful on parole (32.7%). There were a small number of youth who never were placed on parole status (n=65). These youth were under adult court authority, turned 21 years of age, or had their sentences terminated by the Court prior to being granted parole status.

Figure 30: Post-Discharge Recidivism by Parole Adjustment



**Chi-Square=18.829, p<0.01 (n=834, missing=24)

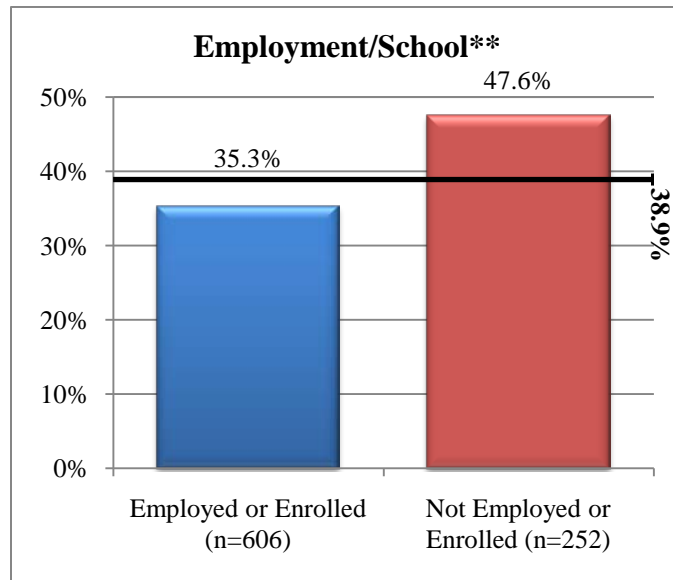
Employment/School Status (Post-Discharge Only)

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. Gainful employment and school enrollment are an indication of “buying into” a pro-social lifestyle, therefore it is projected that youth who were enrolled in school or employed at

⁴⁹ Pre-discharge recidivism rates were not analyzed for this factor because parole adjustments are not available until a youth is discharged from DYC, therefore having no bearing on pre-discharge recidivism.

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 rates⁵⁰ are shown in Figure 31 below, and the results validate this hypothesis.

Figure 31: Post-Discharge Recidivism by Employment/School Status



**Chi-square=11.337, p<0.01

Comparison of Pre-Discharge and Post-Discharge Recidivism Rates

Table 4 compares post-discharge recidivism rates by whether a youth received a new filing for a felony or misdemeanor offense during their commitment (pre-discharge recidivism).

Table 4: Post-Discharge Recidivism by Pre-Discharge Recidivism

Pre-Discharge Recidivism**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Pre-Discharge Recidivism	351	65.9%	182	34.1%	533	62.1%
Pre-Discharge Recidivism	173	53.2%	152	46.8%	325	37.9%
Total	524	61.1%	334	38.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square=13.531, p<0.01

⁵⁰ 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.

Significantly more youth in the FY 2008-09 discharge cohort who received a new filing during their commitment recidivated following discharge than youth who did not re-offend prior to discharge. While this is not surprising, it is interesting to note that 53.2% of the youth who received a filing for a new offense during commitment *did not* receive a new filing within a year following discharge. Therefore, a youth's success post-discharge is not always negatively influenced by a pre-discharge recidivist act.

The results in Table 4 may simply reflect the increased supervision (and chance of getting caught) a youth receives while in residential placement and on parole. Or it could be an artifact of successful treatment and reintegration back into the community. In other words, one possible explanation for youth who re-offend while under supervision and who do not recidivate following discharge is the influence of case planning 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.

On the other hand, clients who did receive a new filing prior to discharge were more often incarcerated in an adult correctional placement at the time of discharge (28.2%) than youth with no pre-discharge filing (2.5%)⁵¹. Youth who are under adult court authority (Department of Corrections) at the time of discharge will probably have less opportunity to re-offend in the year following discharge from NYC because they were found guilty of an adult offense that occurred prior to discharge and therefore remain incarcerated following NYC discharge⁵².

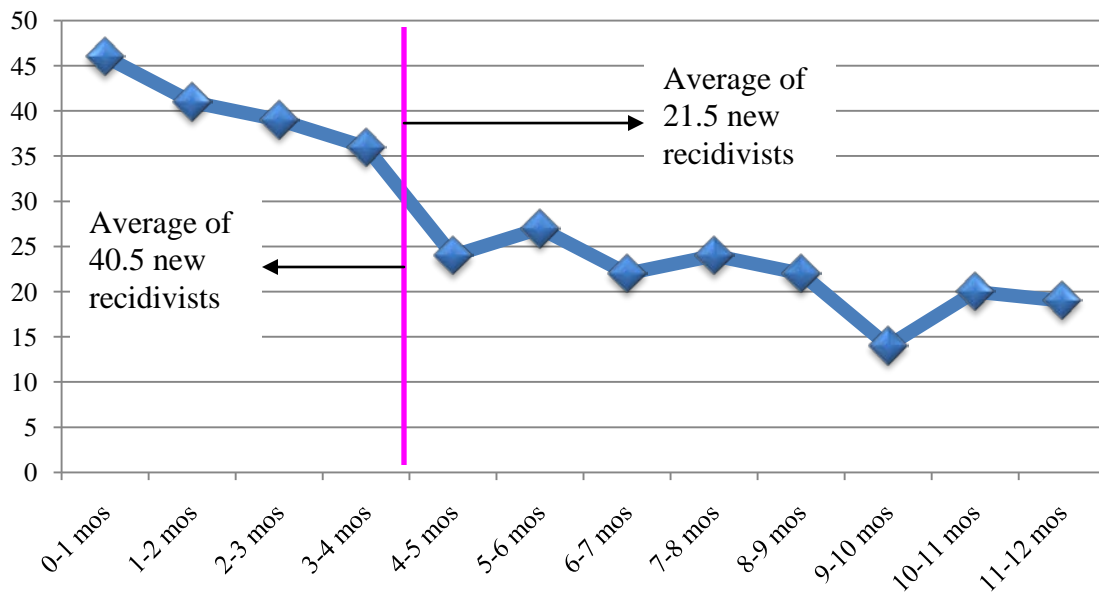
Time to First Post-Discharge Offense

Figure 32 shows the actual number of youth who recidivated each month after discharge. For the first four months, an average of 41 youth re-offended each month, compared with an average of only 22 during the last eight months of the follow-up period.

⁵¹ Chi-Square=119.571, p<0.01.

⁵² A youth who is found guilty of an adult offense will often be transferred from the custody of the Division of Youth Corrections directly to an adult facility (jail, correctional institution, etc.).

Figure 32: Number of New Recidivists by Month



The transition back into the community can be a tumultuous time for many youth. Discharged youth are often 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 and continue receiving similar services to help reduce the likelihood of committing a new offense during those first few months after discharge, many of these youth might not ever commit another offense. The Continuum of Care helps target the needs of transitioning youth; however, providers are not always available in a youth’s community to assist in these efforts.

Figure 32 indicates that more youth are apt to re-offend in the first four months following discharge. If a youth can be successful during the initial months following discharge from the Division, they are more likely to succeed in the following months as well.

SECTION TWO: Ridge View Recidivism

The Ridge View Sample:

This section of the report looks at recidivism rates for 314 males who were placed at the Ridge View Youth Services Center for at least a 90-day length of service and who discharged in FY 2008-09.

Most youth committed to NYC experience multiple placements throughout their commitment sentence. Therefore, collection of recidivism outcomes is not generally useful in measuring the performance of individual programs. However, the Ridge View Youth Services Center was initially designed to be a unique treatment option for eligible youth.

The Ridge View program was originally 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 service in their initial placement and are often paroled directly from Ridge View to the community. Since the clients placed at the Ridge View facility tend to have fewer placements that could influence re-offending behaviors it is more appropriate to report outcome measures for this facility that may not be as meaningful if the analyses were conducted for other NYC treatment programs. The Division's annual recidivism report does not report on outcomes for any other individual programs or facilities.

Although RVYSC was originally designed to be a youth's primary placement, this is not always the case. On average the youth in the current Ridge View cohort spent 4.6 months in other residential placements during their commitment. Nearly thirty percent (29.6%) of the youth in the RVYSC cohort spent more than six months receiving residential treatment services from other providers. Often times these are youth who have failed in other residential treatment places, or who failed at RVYSC, and were subsequently placed in other treatment options. As RVYSC evolves into more of a typical placement option for NYC youth, or a secondary treatment option for those who fail in other treatment options, this analysis of the Ridge View facility's recidivism rates will become less meaningful.

Methodological Challenges

Previous studies have analyzed rates of recidivism between youth placed at the Ridgeview Youth Services Center (RVYSC) and an "Other NYC Male" comparison cohort. Comparing rates of recidivism between these groups seemed reasonable and appropriate because these groups were

believed to be relatively distinct with a high level of homogeneity. The method for determining which youth were contained in the RYVSC cohort was simply whether a youth had a Length of Service (LOS) at RYVSC greater than ninety (90) days. All other youth who had not met this LOS criteria were placed in the “DYC Other Male” cohort.

For several years, the aforementioned method for determining which youth fell into the RYVSC cohort appeared methodologically defensible. Particularly, when this facility first started operations, most youth placed at RYVSC spent the vast majority of their residential commitment period exclusively at this facility or at another Rite of Passage (ROP) operated facility. Additionally, RYVSC was often the first placement for the youth and subsequent placements were typically the result of a commission of a new offense. There was even a period of time in which the Division instituted a “Fast Track” program, where committed youth were immediately placed at RYVSC upon commitment. Under “Fast Track”, instead of assessing youth at one of the Regional Assessment Centers, youth were screened for appropriateness at detention facilities and sent to RYVSC for assessment. Under this program, RYVSC was the only committed residential program some youth ever experienced.

However, as previously mentioned in this report, the use of RYVSC has been evolving. Instead of the original design as being a youth’s primary placement, RYVSC is becoming more like other DYC contract placements in that youth who fail in other placements are now being referred to this program. Utilizing RYVSC in this fashion seems consistent with the Division’s Key Strategy of “The Right Service at the Right Time”; as well as the Division’s continuing commitment to the Continuum of Care Initiative. Although, there still remains a number of youth whose commitment is still exclusive to RYVSC, it is those youth who do not meet this traditional standard that presents some methodical challenges for the purpose of this recidivism study.

In this year’s recidivism study, a methodical issue was identified that impacts how the cohort samples were constructed. There were thirty-two (32) youth who met the traditional criteria for being considered a RYVSC youth (i.e., LOS greater than 90 days at RYVSC), but had committed a pre-discharge recidivist act (i.e., had a new misdemeanor or felony filing) before

entering the program. From a common sense perspective, it seemed inappropriate to attach these pre-discharge recidivists to the RYVSC program. For these youth, it seemed more appropriate to attach them to the “Other DYC Male” cohort because the offenses occurred prior to starting the RYVSC program. However, under further investigation, it was determined that eleven (11) of these thirty-two (32) youth also had an additional misdemeanor or felony filing after their RYVSC admission date. In an attempt to keep sample constructions consistent with previous recidivism studies, as well as to address some illogical nuances, there was a methodical determination to associate twenty-one (21) of these pre-discharge recidivists to the “Other DYC Male” cohort, because no additional recidivist acts were discovered with these youth. The remaining eleven (11) youth who entered RYVSC with a previous pre-discharge recidivist act, but also had an additional pre-discharge recidivist act later on, were associated with the RYVSC cohort.

Because of the evolving nature of how the RYVSC program is being utilized as a resource within DYC, there is a need to evaluate how cohorts/samples can be accurately and meaningfully constructed. Prior to the publication of next year’s recidivism study, the Division will collaborate with Rite of Passage (ROP) and other needed stakeholders to determine if and how research protocols need to be amended to account for these operational changes.

The Ridge View Program⁵³

This section of the report examines the cohort of RYVSC (314) youth, provides a program description of Ridge View, and compares the Ridge View group with all other males from the FY 2008-09 discharge cohort. Additionally, some recidivism outcome measures will be reported for the youth who were attached to the Ridge View Youth Services Center sub-group.

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 modified positive peer culture⁵⁴. This framework recognizes the strengths and potential of all youth in the program, and

⁵³ For a more historical description of the Ridge View Program, please reference Appendix D of this report.

⁵⁴ As the body of juvenile justice research supporting skill development has grown since 2001, ROP has modified the original peer culture environment.

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 positive 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, as well as 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.

Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT)

In December of 2006 ROP began developing an integrated assessment and case plan process to be highly compatible with DYC's Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment (CJRA) tool. The Positive Achievement Change Tool process was fully implemented with reassessments, final assessments, and case plans by May of 2008, and similar to the CJRA, was based on the Washington State Juvenile Court Assessment (WSJCA) instrument.

The PACT is a validated 126-item assessment tool that measures factors highly related to criminal behavior, very similar to DYC's CJRA tool. Once a student is accepted to Ridge View, CJRA data is fed into ROP's Positive Achievement Change Tool, which results in a Measured Achievement Plan; a prioritized set of risk factors shown by research to be predictive of recidivism. This plan guides ROP case managers to specifically target the highest risk factors with ROP's evidence-based programming while youth are in the Ridge View facility.

By prescriptively targeting high-risk areas through the CJRA-PACT system, with evidence based Cognitive Behavioral Training (CBT), ROP staff can hone in on individual issues more effectively. ROP provides an array of CBT curriculum including Pathways for Self Discovery, Thinking for a Change, Aggression Replacement Training, Restorative Solutions and Active Parenting to optimize individual counseling in order to lower associated risks.

A common theme running through the CBT curricula is “Social Skill” development. In 2008, ROP began a program overhaul based on Social Learning Theory which places more emphasis on targeted social skill acquisition, shown through research to be critical in reducing recidivism. As the body of juvenile justice research supporting skill development has grown since 2001, ROP has modified the original peer culture environment. By incorporating social learning concepts into all aspects of programming including orientation, education, student interaction and daily meetings, the Ridge View program has evolved from a positive peer culture system to a social learning model.

Family Integration

There is also a main 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, and 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 the program. In addition, family members are encouraged to attend monthly staffing reviews of 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, and focuses on youth and their families.

The VALIDATE Model

Another core component of individual youth case plans is the VALIDATE model, with each letter representing an area every student must work on.

V	- Vocational Training
A	- Athletics
L	- Life Skills
I	- Individual Graduation Plan
D	- Demonstrated Behavioral Changes
A	- Aftercare
T	- Treatment
E	- 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 RAMS (Respect, Attitude, Motivation and Spirit) 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 step-down community placements, while others remain at Ridge View until parole, or until another placement is arranged.

Mount Evans Qualifying House (Q-House)

In August 2006, Rite of Passage (ROP) opened a 15-bed group home in Idaho Springs, licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services as a Residential Child Care Facility (RCCF). The students selected to step-down to ROP’s Q-House are considered part of Ridge View’s “transition” program and are comprised of highly screened graduates of Ridge View Youth Services Center. In addition to Ridge View’s own requirements to be a Qualifying House (Q-House) resident, Clear Creek County maintains a Community Review Board (CRB) that ensures youth are appropriate for this placement from a community perspective. The key characteristics for referral are a lack of appropriate community support and youth who are targeted to be living independently from family or friends while on parole and after discharge.

Q-House students work full time, attend college classes online, perform community service, and participate in the recreational activities Clear Creek County has to offer. Each day ROP staff accompanies students to the workplace or to participate in community service activities. For successful community transitions, Q-House student goals include earning money to repay restitution, saving for independent living and providing meaningful public service.

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 One: “NYC Recidivism Rates for Youth Discharged.” Youth were selected to the Ridge View cohort if they were discharged from NYC during the State FY 2008-09 and had at least a 90-day length of service (LOS) at Ridge View Youth Services Center during their commitment.

Youth in the Ridge View sample committed more property offenses, and have more prior juvenile justice system involvement than other NYC males discharged in FY 2008-09.

The RYVSC group consists of 314 males discharged from the Division of Youth Corrections during FY 2008-09. This section compares youth in the Ridge View discharge cohort with all of the other males discharged from NYC during the same fiscal year that did not attend RYVSC or spent less than 90 days at the facility (n=446). These two groups are compared on a myriad of demographic characteristics as well as risk factors for re-offending.

Ethnicity

Table 5 shows differences in the ethnic distribution of Ridge View males and all other NYC males. There were higher rates of minority populations in the Ridge View group when compared with other NYC males. Recidivism analyses on ethnicity showed lower rates of re-offending for Anglo-American youth in the full discharge cohort therefore it is possible that there will be higher rates of re-offending for the RYVSC cohort, based on that finding.

Table 5: Ethnic Differences between Ridge View and Other DYC Males

Ethnicity**	Ridge View Youth Percent	DYC Males Percent	TOTAL
African-American	23.2%	17.0%	149
Hispanic	43.9%	33.9%	289
White	30.3%	45.1%	296
Other ⁵⁵	2.5%	4.0%	26
Total	N=314	N=446	760

**Chi-Square=20.132, p<0.01

Age at Commitment

The average age at the time of commitment for youth placed at Ridge View (16.7) and other DYC males (16.5) was not significantly different. The majority of youth were 16 (29.3%) or 17 (41.1%) years of age at the time of first placement in the Ridge View program. Table 6 shows the distribution of these youth by age at time of placement.

Table 6: Age at Placement in Ridge View⁵⁶

Age	Number Placed	Percent
14	17	5.4%
15	46	14.6%
16	92	29.3%
17	129	41.1%
18	28	8.9%
19	2	0.6%
Total	314	100%

Offense Types

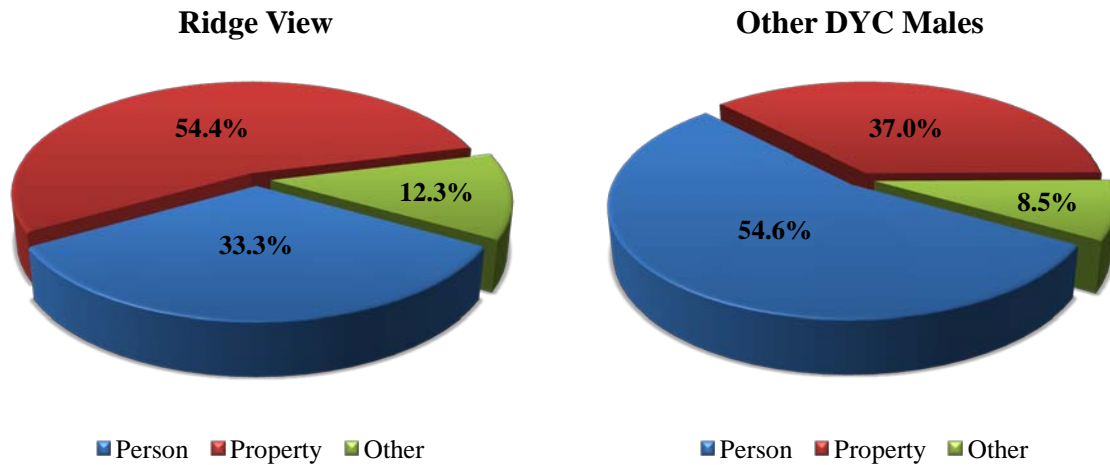
Eligibility restrictions, based on type of offense and other factors related to youths’ risk and need levels, could potentially lead to differences between youth placed in the Ridge View facility and the overall DYC male population.

⁵⁵ 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.

⁵⁶ 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 DYC males.

As Figure 33 indicates, over half of the Ridge View sample (54.4%) was committed for property offenses, compared with 37.0% of other NYC males. Similarly only 33.3% of males placed at Ridge View were committed for person offenses compared with 54.6% of other NYC males.

Figure 33: Type of Offense



The differences in types of offenses were statistically significant⁵⁷. Since property offenders tend to recidivate at higher rates than other offenders⁵⁸, it would be assumed, given these results, that youth in the Ridge View sample might have a higher risk for re-offending than other NYC males. However, in this year’s recidivism analysis, rates of re-offending were not correlated with offense type.

Prior “System” Involvement

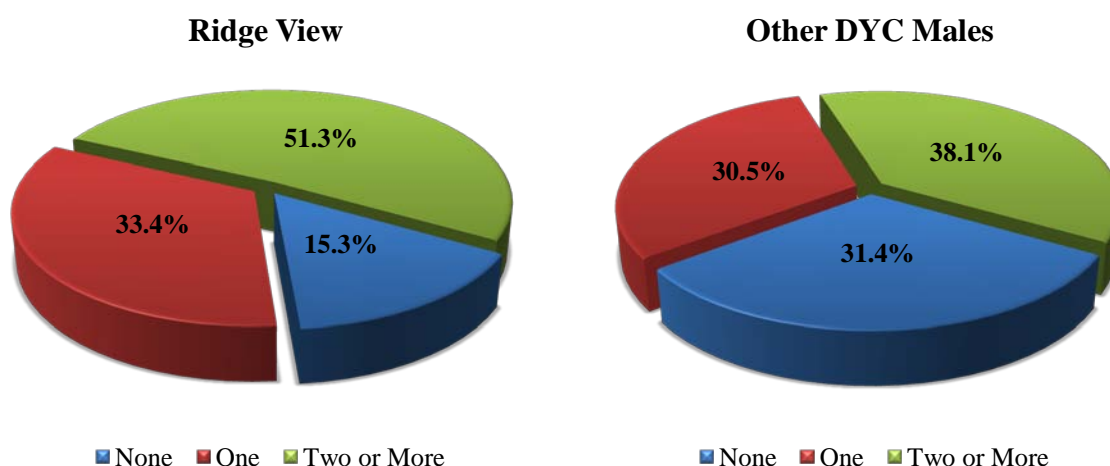
Another estimation of risk of recidivism is prior involvement in the juvenile justice system. Figure 34 shows a significantly higher proportion of youth in the Ridge View cohort with two or more prior adjudications than the remaining NYC male population⁵⁹, indicating an elevated risk for recidivism. Prior adjudications were positively correlated with pre-discharge recidivism in the larger discharge cohort.

⁵⁷ Chi-Square=30.713, p<0.01

⁵⁸ Howell, James C. (2003). Preventing & Reducing Juvenile Delinquency: A Comprehensive Framework; pg 61. Sage Publications.

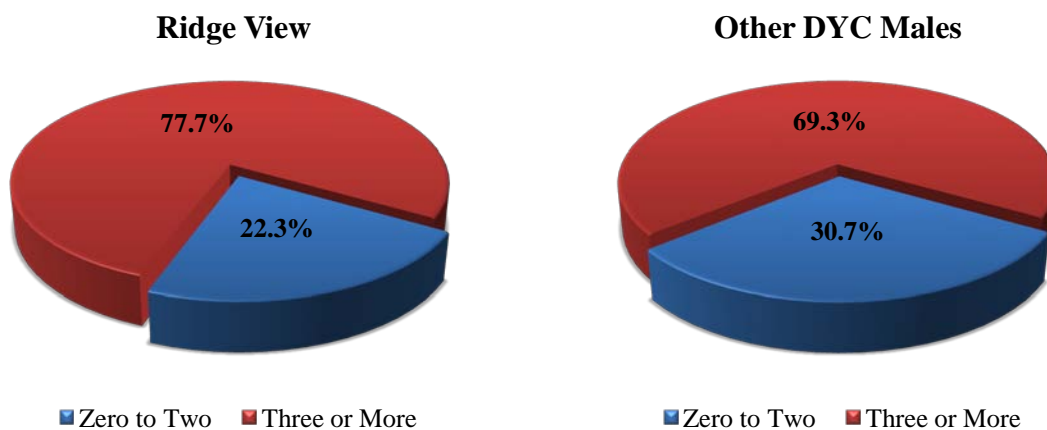
⁵⁹ Chi-Square=27.146, p<0.01

Figure 34: Number of Prior Adjudications



Similarly, a comparison of the number of prior detention admissions between groups (see Figure 35) shows a statistically significant difference in the percentage of Ridge View males with three or more prior detention admissions (77.7%), when compared to other NYC males (69.3%)⁶⁰.

Figure 35: Number of Prior Detention Admissions



Length of Service (LOS)

There were no significant differences in LOS (total, residential, or parole) when comparing the Ridge View sample with other males committed to NYC. Total commitment length of service

⁶⁰ Chi-Square=6.599, p<0.05

includes time spent in a residential placement and time spent under parole supervision. Although LOS differences were not found to be significant, there were differences between groups in the types of commitment sentences received⁶¹. Ridge View youth had a higher percentage of youth with mandatory commitment sentences and none of the youth in the Ridge View cohort were sentenced as aggravated offenders. Since sentence type was not found to be a significant predictor of recidivism rates in the full discharge cohort, no impact on RYVSC recidivism is anticipated.

All youth in these two cohorts 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 similar for the Ridge View sample (6.4 months) when compared with other NYC males (6.7 months).

Ridge View Recidivism Results

This section reports recidivism and other outcome information for the 314 youth discharged from the Division of Youth Corrections between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009, who were placed at Ridge View Youth Services Center (RYVSC) for more than 90 days during their commitment to the Division.

<p><u>Ridge View Recidivism</u></p> <p>Pre-Discharge: 40.4%</p> <p>Post-Discharge: 43.6%</p>

The Ridge View cohort is compared with all other males discharged from NYC during this same time period who did not spend time at RYVSC (n=446). 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.

⁶¹ Chi-Square=22.949, p<0.01

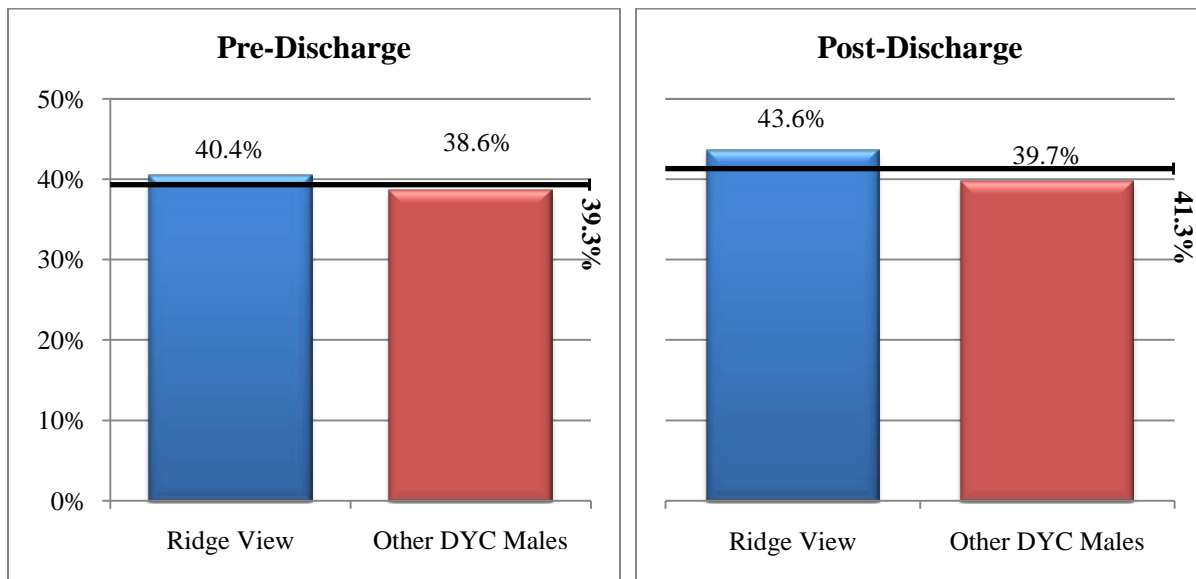
Pre-Discharge Recidivism: A filing for a new felony or misdemeanor offense that occurred prior to discharge (while the youth is under DYC supervision) from the Division of Youth Corrections.

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.

Figure 36 shows the pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates for the Ridge View sample and other DYC males.

Ridge View youth had similar rates of recidivism during commitment when compared with other DYC males. Of the 314 youth in the RVYSC group, 40.4% had a new misdemeanor or felony offense filed prior to discharge. In comparison, 38.6% of other DYC males discharged in FY 2008-09 received a new filing during their commitment. Statistically, these differences are not significant. Post-discharge recidivism rates for RVYSC youth (43.6%) were also statistically comparable to the post-discharge rates for other males discharged during the same fiscal year (39.7%).

Figure 36: Recidivism Rates - RVYSC and RV Comparison Group

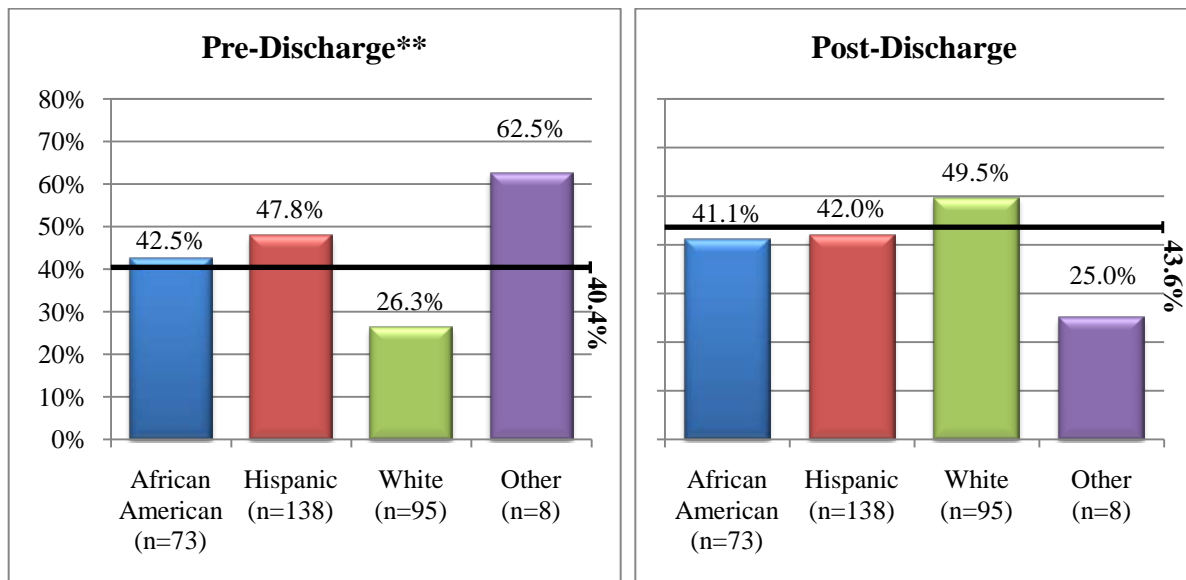


The following sub-sections will show analyses of the Ridge View cohort’s recidivism rates by specific demographic and risk factors. Throughout this report a finding followed by “***” indicates a statistically significant difference between groups.

Ethnicity

Figure 37 shows differences in recidivism rates for the Ridge View cohort by primary ethnicity. The “other” category includes Native-American and Asian-American youth, as well as multi-racial youth and those 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 independently to make valid statistical comparisons⁶².

Figure 37: Ridge View Recidivism Rates by Primary Ethnicity



**Chi-Square=12.734, p<0.05

The results of this analysis mirror the findings from the larger discharge cohort. White youth placed at RCYSC received significantly fewer filings for new felony or misdemeanor offenses prior to discharge (26.3%) than African-American (42.5%), Hispanic (47.8%) or youth in the “Other” category (62.5%). Results for the youth in the “other” category should be interpreted

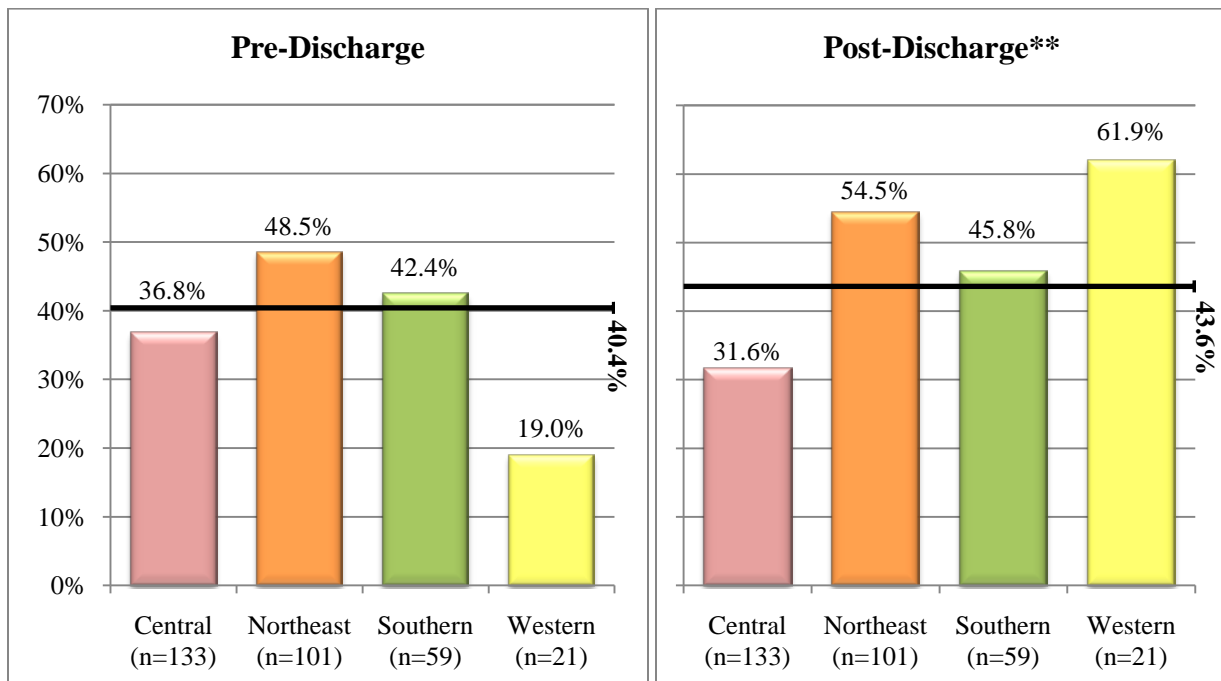
⁶² Statistical significance between groups is a calculation that is based on the number of cases in each group as well as the differences between groups; therefore it takes a larger relative difference to be a significant finding (not because of chance) when group sizes are small.

cautiously because of the small census size (n=8). There were no significant differences in post-discharge recidivism rates for the Ridge View sample.

DYC Management Region

DYC has a regionally based management structure, operating from four management regions in the State (see Figure 12, pg. 19) 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 major 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. Figure 38 shows a breakdown of new offenses during and after commitment by DYC management region.

Figure 38: Ridge View Recidivism Rates by DYC Management Region



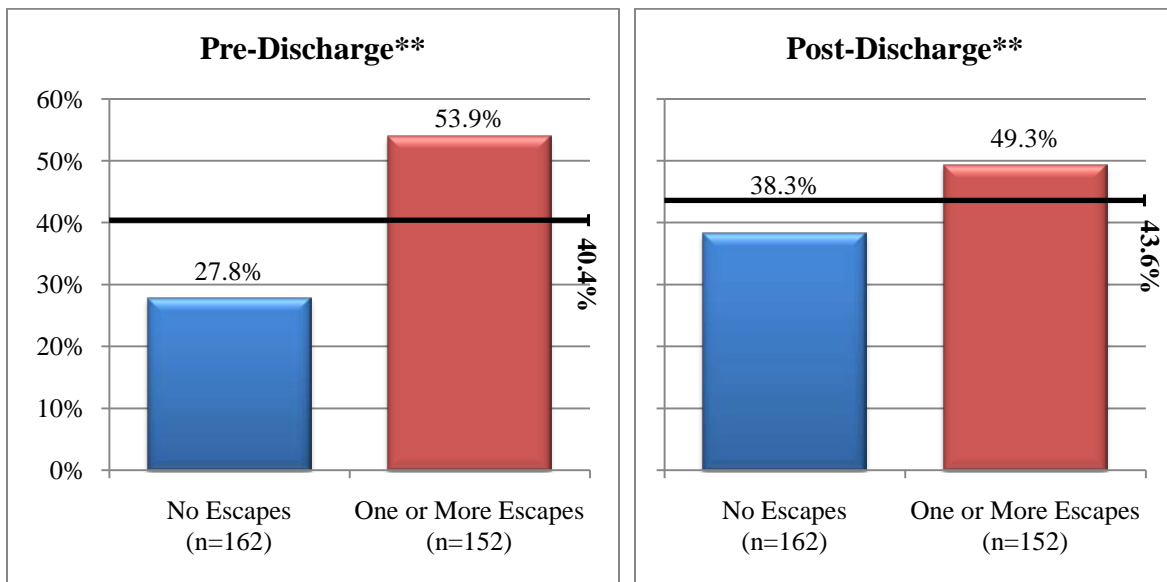
** Chi-Square=15.627, p<0.01

Youth placed at the Ridge View Youth Services Center from the Central Region received fewer filings in the twelve months following discharge (31.6%) than did youth from the other three regions. Although the Western Region had the lowest rate of pre-discharge recidivism (19.0%) the differences were not statistically significant. 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 as they are with the Western Region.

Number of Escapes

The Division of Youth Corrections tracks the number of times a youth escapes from residential placement. 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 received more new filings for felony or misdemeanor offenses prior to discharge from DYC⁶³ and within one year following discharge⁶⁴.

Figure 39: Ridge View Recidivism Rates by DYC Escape



**Chi-Square=22.297, p<0.01

**Chi-Square=3.908, p<0.05

⁶³ F=28.556, p<0.01

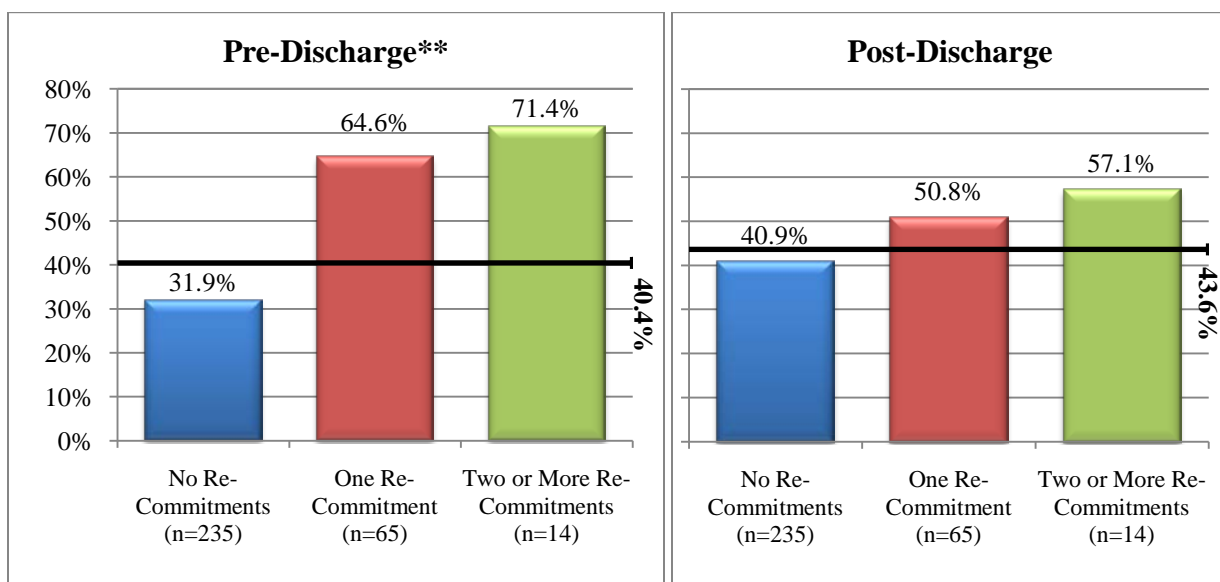
⁶⁴ F=6.115, p<0.05

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 inflate the pre-discharge recidivism rates for youth who escape from RVYSC when compared with other DYC males who might have escapes in other jurisdictions. Not all escapes will result in a pre-discharge filing. Youth may have escapes from facilities other than Ridge View, or they may have returned of their own accord from an authorized absence after the allotted time, but prior to charges being filed.

Number of Re-Commitments

DYC also tracks the number of times a committed youth receives an additional commitment sentence while they are currently fulfilling a sentence to DYC. Figure 40 displays the rate of recidivism by the number of re-commitments.

Figure 40: Ridge View Recidivism Rates by Number of Re-Commitments



**Chi-Square=28.444, p<0.01

The majority of youth in the Ridge View sample never receive a re-commitment sentence (74.8%). Nonetheless, the pre-discharge recidivism rate is much higher for re-committed youth than the rate for youth that do not have any re-commitments⁶⁵. Most of the youth with multiple

⁶⁵ All re-commitments are the product of another charge being filed against the youth, either before (for an offense that occurred prior to their current commitment date) or during their commitment.

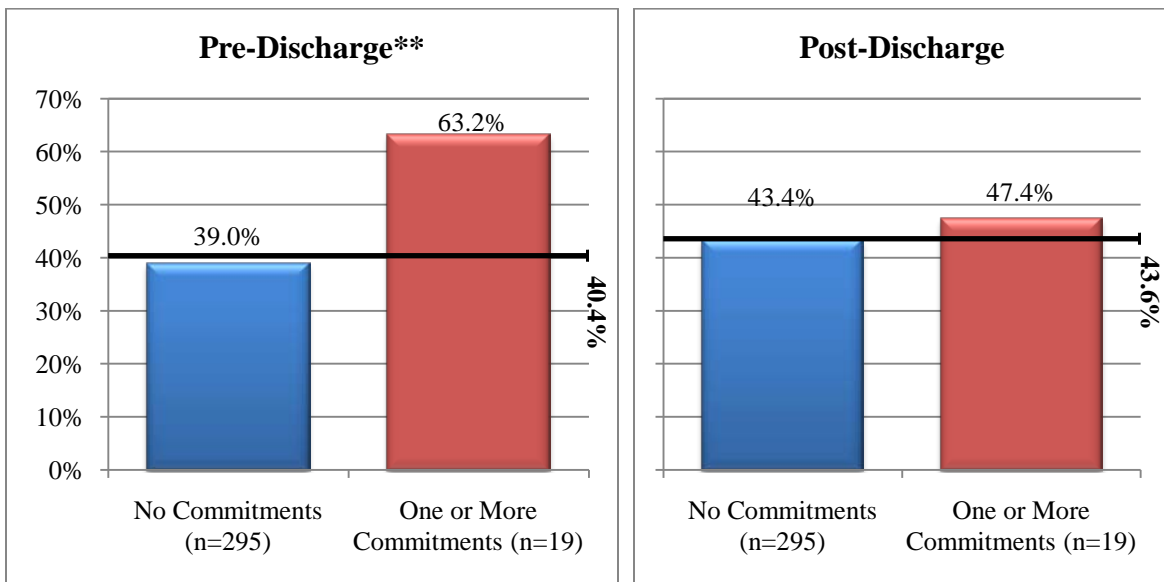
re-commitments (71.4%) and one re-commitment (64.6%) received a new filing during their commitment, compared with only 31.9% of those who did not receive any re-commitment sentences. Post-discharge recidivism results were not statistically significant.

Risk of Recidivism – Prior “System” Involvement

Prior Commitments - 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 predictive of the risk to re-offend.

Prior DYC commitments, one indicator of prior system involvement, were predictive of pre-discharge recidivism for the RVYSC youth. Figure 41 shows Ridge View recidivism rates by prior commitments.

Figure 41: Ridge View Recidivism by Prior Commitments



**Chi-Square=4.331, p<0.05

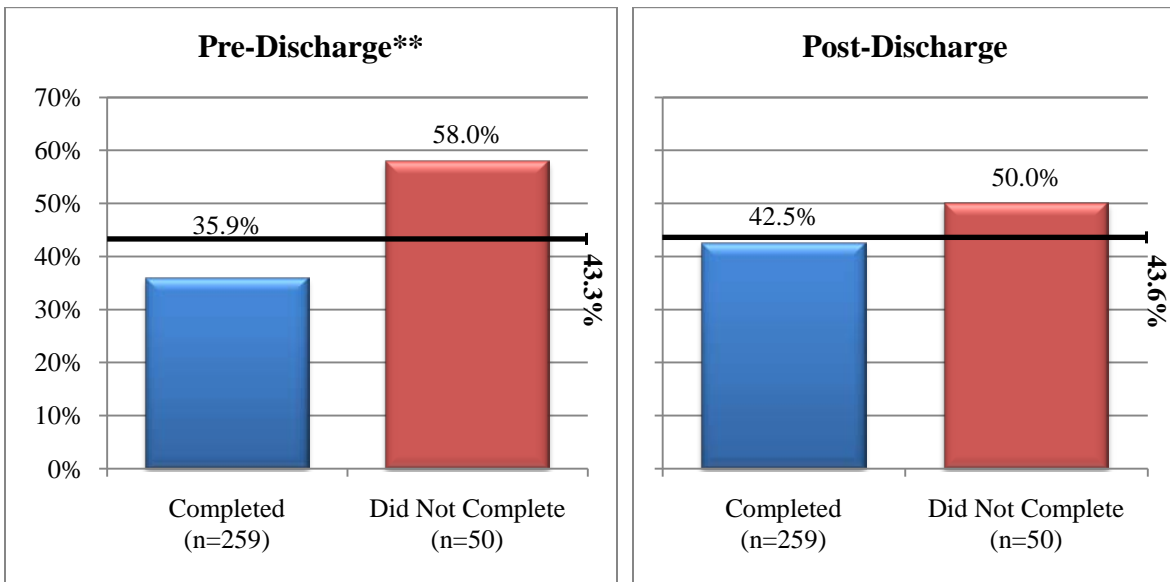
Having been committed prior was the only measure of “system involvement” that was significantly correlated with recidivism rates for the Ridge View sample. Other traditional risk factors in this area, including *prior detention admissions*, *prior adjudications*, and *prior out-of-*

*home placements*⁶⁶ were not significantly correlated with either pre-discharge or post-discharge recidivism for this cohort. This lack of findings may indicate some level of treatments success. Services provided in treatment are intended to reduce a youth’s level of risk, or to provide a youth with skills that mitigate risk in some way. Effective, targeted treatment may reduce recidivism in youth who are more likely to re-offend without services.

Ridge View Completion

In order for this cohort of youth to officially graduate from the Ridge View program, each of the components of the VALIDATE model (see page 50) must be completed, and the youth’s peer group and staff must formally agree that the youth has fulfilled all of the graduation requirements. If a youth completes all program requirements, but has not achieved RAM status or validation by staff and his peer group, that youth is considered to have completed the program, but not graduated from RVYSC.

Figure 42: Ridge View Recidivism by Successful Completion of the Ridge View Program



**Chi-Square=15.974, p<0.01 (n=309, missing=5)

(n=309, missing=5)

⁶⁶ Prior out-of-home placements can include inpatient mental health or substance abuse treatment facilities, Child Welfare placements, as well as any prior DYC placements.

Figure 42 shows the differences in pre-discharge and post-discharge recidivism rates for youth that successfully *completed* the Ridge View Youth Services Center program, compared with youth who left for other reasons⁶⁷.

Youth who completed Ridge View Youth Services Center programming received fewer new filings for recidivist acts prior to discharge (35.9%) than youth who attended RVYSC, but did not fully complete the program (58.0%). Pre-discharge differences in recidivism rates by completion status were statistically significant. Further analysis shows that 47.1% of the Ridge View pre-discharge recidivists who did not complete the program (n=16) re-offended prior to leaving the Ridge View facility. These findings indicate that recidivism may be the underlying cause of program failure, rather than the reverse.

Due to the previously described methodological challenges that stem from the evolving nature of how the RVYSC program is being utilized by DYC, there is a need to properly determine how the cohorts in this section of the report can be accurately and meaningfully constructed. The Division has committed to collaborating with Rite of Passage (ROP) and other needed stakeholders to determine potential methodological changes that will account for the operational changes that have occurred.

⁶⁷ 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 complete the program to be unsuccessful.

APPENDIX A - Limitations of Recidivism Research

The Definition of Recidivism Varies in Colorado and 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 history surrounding the establishment of a common definition of recidivism in Colorado, and also the varied definitions of recidivism existing across the nation will be discussed.

Efforts to Establish 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.

Recidivism Definition Components

Before describing in-depth the definitional differences in recidivism 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 re-commitment. 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)⁶⁸, 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, *re-incarceration* (41%), *re-arrest* (33%), and *re-commitment* (11%). The least common definitions include *re-referral* or *new filing* (used by Maryland and

⁶⁸ Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, DJJ Research Quarterly, Volume III, April 2005

Colorado), and *reconviction* and *return to custody or supervision* (used by Louisiana). Eight states do not restrict themselves to one measure of recidivism, but instead report on two or more of the measures mentioned above.

Methodological Issues

Population Shifts

In the juvenile justice system, the concept of risk is invariably connected to the probability of re-offending; as such, an “at-risk youth” is a youth who presents a greater than average chance of committing a criminal act. If a juvenile justice agency suddenly realizes a significant realignment of the risk potential of its population, then that realignment can result in differing recidivism rates when all other factors are held constant. For example, if a certain juvenile justice program or project is eliminated because of budget constraints, then youth who would have been directed to that program are then re-directed to other programs. This process, which most often directs youth deeper into the juvenile justice system, has occurred in Colorado. For example, the Community Accountability Program, as well as other programs designed to intervene with youth at earlier stages of the juvenile justice system, have been eliminated or seriously impacted because of State budget cuts. These programs were designed to provide alternatives to 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 systems⁶⁹. 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 systems⁷⁰.

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 publication⁷¹. In those cases, there may not be a finding for any of the charges filed against those youth.

Policy Variations

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

⁶⁹ 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).

⁷⁰ Conversely, less than accurate information systems may net lower recidivism rates because of errors associated with data entry or software inconsistencies.

⁷¹ 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.

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 – Historical Data Tables

Recidivism Rates by Gender

Gender**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Male	461	60.7%	299	39.3%	760	88.6%
Female	72	73.5%	26	26.5%	98	11.4%
Total	533	62.1%	325	37.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square⁷²=6.055, p<0.05

Gender**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Male	446	58.7%	314	41.3%	760	88.6%
Female	78	79.6%	20	20.4%	98	11.4%
Total	524	61.1%	334	38.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square=15.961, p<0.01.

Recidivism Rates by Primary Ethnicity

Ethnicity**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
African-American	94	58.0%	68	42.0%	162	18.9%
Hispanic	180	55.7%	143	44.3%	323	37.6%
White	238	69.6%	104	30.4%	342	39.9%
Other	21	67.7%	10	32.3%	31	3.6%
Total	533	62.1%	325	37.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square=15.292, p<0.01

Ethnicity	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
African-American	102	63.0%	60	37.0%	162	18.9%
Hispanic	188	58.2%	135	41.8%	323	37.6%
White	214	62.6%	128	37.4%	342	39.9%
Other	20	64.5%	11	35.5%	31	3.6%
Total	524	61.1%	334	38.9%	858	100%

⁷² See Appendix B for an explanation of statistical measures used in this report.

Recidivism Rates by DYC Management Region

Region	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Central	213	61.7%	132	38.3%	345	40.2%
Northeast	143	58.8%	100	41.2%	243	28.3%
Southern	114	62.6%	68	37.4%	182	21.2%
Western	63	71.6%	25	28.4%	88	10.3%
Total	533	62.1%	325	37.9%	858	100%

Region	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Central	226	65.5%	119	34.5%	345	40.2%
Northeast	141	58.0%	102	42.0%	243	28.3%
Southern	105	57.7%	77	42.3%	182	21.2%
Western	52	59.1%	36	40.9%	88	10.3%
Total	524	61.1%	334	38.9%	858	100%

Pre-Discharge Recidivism Rates by Initial CJRA (Assessment) Risk Domains

Criminal History	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	10	100.0%	0	0.0%	10	1.8%
Moderate	57	74.0%	20	26.0%	77	14.1%
High	316	69.5%	139	30.5%	455	83.3%
Total	383	70.7%	159	29.3%	542	100%

(n=542, missing=42)

School (Static)	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	131	74.9%	44	25.1%	175	32.1%
Moderate	157	68.0%	74	32.0%	231	42.3%
High	105	70.9%	43	29.1%	148	27.1%
Total	393	70.9%	161	29.1%	554	100%

(n=554, missing=30)

**Pre-Discharge Recidivism Rates by
Initial CJRA (Assessment) Risk Domains**
(continued)

School (Dynamic)	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	34	72.3%	13	27.7%	47	8.6%
Moderate	48	75.0%	16	25.0%	64	11.7%
High	123	72.8%	46	27.2%	169	31.0%
Total	205	73.2%	75	26.8%	280	100%
(n=280, missing=304)						
Relationships (Static)**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	5	100.0%	0	0.0%	5	0.9%
Moderate	186	76.2%	58	23.8%	244	44.7%
High	197	66.3%	100	33.7%	297	54.4%
Total	388	71.1%	158	28.9%	546	100%
**Chi-Square=8.439, p<0.05 (n=546, missing=38)						
Relationships (Dynamic)	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	3	0.5%
Moderate	92	76.7%	28	23.3%	120	22.0%
High	293	69.3%	130	30.7%	423	77.5%
Total	388	71.1%	158	28.9%	546	100%
(n=546, missing=38)						
Family (Static)	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	33	71.7%	13	28.3%	46	8.4%
Moderate	109	74.7%	37	25.3%	146	26.7%
High	245	69.6%	107	30.4%	352	64.5%
Total	387	71.1%	157	28.9%	544	100%
(n=544, missing=40)						
Family (Dynamic)	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	40	76.9%	12	23.1%	52	9.5%
Moderate	91	70.5%	38	29.5%	129	23.6%
High	223	73.1%	82	26.9%	305	55.9%
Total	354	72.8%	132	27.2%	486	100%
(n=486, missing=98)						

**Pre-Discharge Recidivism Rates by
Initial CJRA (Assessment) Risk Domains**
(continued)

Substance Abuse (Static)	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	78	67.8%	37	32.2%	115	21.1%
Moderate	27	64.3%	15	35.7%	42	7.7%
High	286	73.1%	105	26.9%	391	71.6%
Total	391	71.4%	157	28.6%	548	100%
(n=548, missing=36)						
Substance Abuse (Dynamic)	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	123	71.5%	49	28.5%	172	31.5%
Moderate	63	71.6%	25	28.4%	88	16.1%
High	205	71.2%	83	28.8%	288	52.7%
Total	391	71.4%	157	28.6%	548	100%
(n=548, missing=36)						
Mental Health (Dynamic)	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	281	69.9%	121	30.1%	402	73.6%
Moderate	77	75.5%	25	24.5%	102	18.7%
High	31	72.1%	12	27.9%	43	7.9%
Total	389	71.1%	158	28.9%	547	100%
(n=547, missing=37)						
Attitudes (Dynamic)**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	14	93.3%	1	6.7%	15	2.7%
Moderate	32	82.1%	7	17.9%	39	7.1%
High	342	69.5%	150	30.5%	492	90.1%
Total	388	71.1%	158	28.9%	546	100%
**Chi-Square=6.483, p<0.05 (n=546, missing=38)						
Aggression (Dynamic)	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	32	80.0%	8	20.0%	40	7.3%
Moderate	60	74.1%	21	25.9%	81	14.8%
High	301	69.5%	132	30.5%	433	79.3%
Total	393	70.9%	161	29.1%	554	100%
(n=554, missing=30)						

**Pre-Discharge Recidivism Rates by
Initial CJRA (Assessment) Risk Domains**
(continued)

Skills (Dynamic)**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	41	74.5%	14	25.5%	55	10.1%
Moderate	34	87.2%	5	12.8%	39	7.1%
High	311	69.1%	139	30.9%	450	82.4%
Total	386	71.0%	158	29.0%	544	100%

**Chi-Square=6.068, p<0.05 (n=544, missing=40)

**Post-Discharge Recidivism Rates by
Discharge CJRA Risk Domains**

Criminal History**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	9	69.2%	4	30.8%	13	2.4%
Moderate	71	78.9%	19	21.1%	90	16.5%
High	428	59.2%	295	40.8%	723	132.4%
Total	508	61.5%	318	38.5%	826	100%

**Chi-Square=13.440, p<0.01 (n=826, missing=1)

School (Static)**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	200	67.3%	97	32.7%	297	54.4%
Moderate	181	59.9%	121	40.1%	302	55.3%
High	127	56.2%	99	43.8%	226	41.4%
Total	508	61.6%	317	38.4%	825	100%

**Chi-Square=7.281, p<0.05 (n=825, missing=2)

School (Dynamic)**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	96	71.1%	39	28.9%	135	24.7%
Moderate	35	63.6%	20	36.4%	55	10.1%
High	33	51.6%	31	48.4%	64	11.7%
Total	164	64.6%	90	35.4%	254	100%

**Chi-Square=7.279, p<0.05 (n=254, missing=573)

**Post-Discharge Recidivism Rates by
Discharge CJRA Risk Domains**
(continued)

Relationships (Static)**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	5	100.0%	0	0.0%	5	0.9%
Moderate	186	76.2%	58	23.8%	244	44.7%
High	197	66.3%	100	33.7%	297	54.4%
Total	388	71.1%	158	28.9%	546	100%

**Chi-Square=9.865, p<0.01 (n=826, missing=1)

Relationships (Dynamic)**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	65	81.3%	15	18.8%	80	14.7%
Moderate	248	64.2%	138	35.8%	386	70.7%
High	196	54.4%	164	45.6%	360	65.9%
Total	509	61.6%	317	38.4%	826	100%

**Chi-Square=22.001, p<0.01 (n=826, missing=1)

Family (Static)	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	35	66.0%	18	34.0%	53	9.7%
Moderate	121	64.0%	68	36.0%	189	34.6%
High	346	60.0%	231	40.0%	577	105.7%
Total	502	61.3%	317	38.7%	819	100%

(n=819, missing=8)

Family (Dynamic)**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	157	71.7%	62	28.3%	219	40.1%
Moderate	102	59.0%	71	41.0%	173	31.7%
High	135	55.6%	108	44.4%	243	44.5%
Total	394	62.0%	241	38.0%	635	100%

**Chi-Square=13.695, p<0.01 (n=635, missing=192)

Substance Abuse (Static)	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	105	63.6%	60	36.4%	165	30.2%
Moderate	56	60.9%	36	39.1%	92	16.8%
High	346	61.0%	221	39.0%	567	103.8%
Total	507	61.5%	317	38.5%	824	100%

(n=824, missing=3)

**Post-Discharge Recidivism Rates by
Discharge CJRA Risk Domains**
(continued)

Substance Abuse (Dynamic)**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	379	64.0%	213	36.0%	592	108.4%
Moderate	39	48.1%	42	51.9%	81	14.8%
High	89	58.9%	62	41.1%	151	27.7%
Total	507	61.5%	317	38.5%	824	100%

**Chi-Square=8.107, p<0.05 (n=824, missing=3)

Mental Health (Dynamic)	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	460	62.2%	279	37.8%	739	135.3%
Moderate	33	64.7%	18	35.3%	51	9.3%
High	15	44.1%	19	55.9%	34	6.2%
Total	508	61.7%	316	38.3%	824	100%

(n=824, missing=3)

Attitudes (Dynamic)**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	205	69.0%	92	31.0%	297	54.4%
Moderate	81	61.8%	50	38.2%	131	24.0%
High	213	55.8%	169	44.2%	382	70.0%
Total	499	61.6%	311	38.4%	810	100%

**Chi-Square=12.432, p<0.01 (n=810, missing=17)

Aggression (Dynamic)**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	184	67.2%	90	32.8%	274	50.2%
Moderate	155	61.3%	98	38.7%	253	46.3%
High	170	56.9%	129	43.1%	299	54.8%
Total	509	61.6%	317	38.4%	826	100%

**Chi-Square=6.430, p<0.05 (n=826, missing=1)

Skills (Dynamic)**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low	364	64.8%	198	35.2%	562	102.9%
Moderate	64	58.2%	46	41.8%	110	20.1%
High	80	52.6%	72	47.4%	152	27.8%
Total	508	61.7%	316	38.3%	824	100%

**Chi-Square=8.100, p<0.05 (n=824, missing=3)

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	145	67.8%	69	32.2%	214	24.9%
Three or More	388	60.2%	256	39.8%	644	75.1%
Total	533	62.1%	325	37.9%	858	100%

Number of Prior Detention Admissions**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Zero to Two	151	70.6%	63	29.4%	214	24.9%
Three or More	373	57.9%	271	42.1%	644	75.1%
Total	524	61.1%	334	38.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square=10.797, p<0.01

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	150	68.2%	70	31.8%	220	25.6%
One	176	64.5%	97	35.5%	273	31.8%
Two or More	207	56.7%	158	43.3%	365	42.5%
Total	533	62.1%	325	37.9%	858	100%

Number of Prior Adjudications	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	140	63.6%	80	36.4%	220	25.6%
One	170	62.3%	103	37.7%	273	31.8%
Two or More	214	58.6%	151	41.4%	365	42.5%
Total	524	61.1%	334	38.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square=8.612, p<0.05

Recidivism by Sex Offender Status

S.O. Status**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Sex Offender	94	72.9%	35	27.1%	129	15.0%
Non-Sex Offender	439	60.2%	290	39.8%	729	85.0%
Total	533	62.1%	325	37.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square=7.452, p<0.01

S.O. Status**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Sex Offender	91	70.5%	38	29.5%	129	15.0%
Non-Sex Offender	433	59.4%	296	40.6%	729	85.0%
Total	524	61.1%	334	38.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square=5.728, p<0.05

Recidivism by Mental Health Needs

MH Need for Treatment**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low to None	381	66.1%	195	33.9%	576	67.1%
High-Moderate	124	57.1%	93	42.9%	217	25.3%
Severe	28	43.1%	37	56.9%	65	7.6%
Total	533	62.1%	325	37.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square=16.269, p<0.01

MH Need for Treatment	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Low to None	361	62.7%	215	37.3%	576	67.1%
High-Moderate	122	56.2%	95	43.8%	217	25.3%
Severe	41	63.1%	24	36.9%	65	7.6%
Total	524	61.1%	334	38.9%	858	100%

Recidivism Rates by DYC Escape

Any DYC Escape**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	320	75.7%	103	24.3%	423	49.3%
Yes	213	49.0%	222	51.0%	435	50.7%
Total	533	62.1%	325	37.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square=64.897, p<0.01

Any DYC Escape**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	278	65.7%	145	34.3%	423	49.3%
Yes	246	56.6%	189	43.4%	435	50.7%
Total	524	61.1%	334	38.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square=7.584, p<0.01

Recidivism Rates by Number of Re-commitments

Number of Re-commitments**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	482	72.3	185	27.7%	667	77.7%
One	43	28.9%	106	71.1%	149	17.4%
Two or More	8	19.0%	34	81.0%	42	4.9%
Total	533	62.1%	325	37.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square=132.333, p<0.01

Number of Re-commitments**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	427	64.0%	240	36.0%	667	77.7%
One	74	49.7%	75	50.3%	149	17.4%
Two or More	23	54.8%	19	45.2%	42	4.9%
Total	524	61.1%	334	38.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square=11.294, p<0.01

Post-Discharge Recidivism by Parole Adjustment

Parole Adjustment**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Successful	315	67.3%	153	32.7%	468	56.1%
Unsuccessful	156	51.8%	145	48.2%	301	36.1%
No Parole	42	64.6%	23	35.4%	65	7.8%
Total	513	61.5%	321	38.5%	834	100%

**Chi-Square=18.829, p<0.01 (n=834, missing=24)

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	392	64.7%	214	35.3%	606	70.6%
Not Employed or Enrolled	132	52.4%	120	47.6%	252	29.4%
Total	524	61.1%	334	38.9%	858	100%

**Chi-square=11.337, p<0.01

Post-Discharge Recidivism by Pre-Discharge Recidivism

Pre-Discharge Recidivism**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Pre-Discharge Recidivism	351	65.9%	182	34.1%	533	62.1%
Pre-Discharge Recidivism	173	53.2%	152	46.8%	325	37.9%
Total	524	61.1%	334	38.9%	858	100%

**Chi-Square=13.531, p<0.01

Recidivism Rates: RVYSC and RV Comparison Group

	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ridge View	187	59.6%	127	40.4%	314	41.3%
Other DYC Males	274	61.4%	172	38.6%	446	58.7%
Total	461	60.7%	299	39.3%	760	100%

	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ridge View	177	54.4%	137	43.6%	314	41.3%
Other DYC Males	269	60.3%	177	39.7%	446	58.7%
Total	446	58.7%	314	41.3%	760	100%

Ridge View Recidivism Rates by Primary Ethnicity

Ethnicity**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
African American	42	55.3%	31	42.5%	73	22.7%
Hispanic	72	49.7%	66	47.8%	138	43.3%
White	70	67.3%	25	26.3%	95	31.0%
Other	3	30.0%	5	62.5%	8	3.0%
Total	187	59.6%	127	40.4%	314	100%

**Chi-Square=12.734, p<0.05

Ethnicity	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
African American	43	56.6%	30	41.1%	73	22.7%
Hispanic	80	57.9%	58	42.0%	138	43.3%
White	48	51.9%	47	49.5%	95	31.0%
Other	6	70.0%	2	25.0%	8	3.0%
Total	177	56.4%	137	43.6%	314	100%

Ridge View Recidivism Rates by DYC Management Region

Region	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Central	84	63.2%	49	36.8%	133	42.4%
Northeast	52	51.5%	49	48.5%	101	32.2%
Southern	34	57.6%	25	42.4%	59	18.8%
Western	17	81.0%	4	19.0%	21	6.7%
Total	187	59.6%	127	40.4%	314	100%

Region**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Central	91	68.4%	42	31.6%	133	42.4%
Northeast	46	45.5%	55	54.5%	101	32.2%
Southern	32	54.2%	27	45.8%	59	18.8%
Western	8	38.1%	13	61.9%	21	6.7%
Total	177	56.4%	137	43.6%	314	100%

**Chi-Square=15.627, p<0.01

Ridge View Recidivism Rates by DYC Escape

Any DYC Escape**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Escapes	117	70.1%	45	27.8%	162	51.6%
One or More Escapes	70	41.7%	82	53.9%	152	48.4%
Total	187	59.6%	127	40.4%	314	100%

**Chi-Square=22.297, p<0.01

Any DYC Escape**	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Escapes	100	61.7%	62	38.3%	162	51.6%
One or More Escapes	77	50.7%	75	49.3%	152	48.4%
Total	177	56.4%	137	43.6%	314	100%

**Chi-Square=3.908, p<0.05

Ridge View Recidivism Rates by Number of Re-commitments

Number of Re-commitments**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Re-Commitments	160	65.8%	75	31.9%	235	74.8%
One Re-Commitment	23	29.9%	42	64.6%	65	20.7%
Two or More Re-Commitments	4	26.7%	10	71.4%	14	4.5%
Total	187	59.6%	127	40.4%	314	100%

**Chi-Square=28.444 p<0.01

Number of Re-commitments	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Re-Commitments	139	59.1%	96	40.9%	235	74.8%
One Re-Commitment	32	49.2%	33	50.8%	65	20.7%
Two or More Re-Commitments	6	42.9%	8	57.1%	14	4.5%
Total	177	56.4%	137	43.6%	314	100%

Ridge View Recidivism by Prior Commitments

Number of Prior Commitments**	No Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Pre-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Commitments	180	61.0%	115	39.0%	295	93.9%
One or More Commitments	7	36.8%	12	63.2%	19	6.1%
Total	187	59.6%	127	40.4%	314	100%

**Chi-Square=4.331, p<0.05

Number of Prior Commitments	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Commitments	167	56.6%	128	43.4%	295	93.9%
One or More Commitments	10	52.6%	9	47.4%	19	6.1%
Total	177	56.4%	137	43.6%	314	100%

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
Completed	166	64.1%	93	35.9%	259	83.8%
Did Not Complete	21	42.0%	29	58.0%	50	16.2%
Total	187	60.5%	122	39.5%	309	100%

**Chi-Square=15.974, p<0.01 (n=309, missing=5)

Completion Status	No Post-Discharge Recidivism		Post-Discharge Recidivism		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Completed	149	57.5%	110	42.5%	259	83.8%
Did Not Complete	25	50.0%	25	50.0%	50	16.2%
Total	174	56.4%	135	43.6%	309	100%

(n=309, missing=5)

APPENDIX D – Ridge View 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. DYC determined that the target population for such a facility would be best managed in the previously described staff-supervised environment. The primary goals stated in the original project description were “gaining control of anti-social behavior, developing new pro-social behavior, and assuring the development of academic, vocational, social and life skills in committed youth.”

The size of the facility, up to 500 beds, dictated that the program would have to serve a large proportion of the youth being committed to DYC. For this reason, the original concept of the facility called for the design of a campus and a program for male committed youth, representing a moderate level security risk, when compared to the DYC male population as a whole. As a result, it was acknowledged that the program would not be appropriate for all DYC youth; particularly those requiring treatment for sexual offenses, severe mental health needs, or those requiring a more secure placement⁷³.

The authorizing legislation specified that DYC 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

⁷³ 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.

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.