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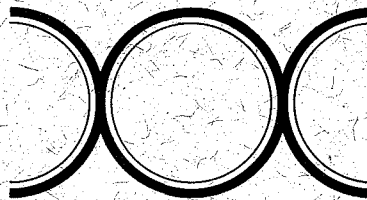
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Minnesota Department of Corrections



1999 Performance Report: Juvenile Recidivism in Minnesota

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1999 Performance Report: Juvenile Recidivism in Minnesota

March 2000

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Executive Summary

Juvenile Recidivism in Minnesota

This report fulfills a 1999 legislative mandate by presenting baseline research on juvenile recidivism. This study is based upon the analysis of juvenile records from multiple sources, including Department of Corrections (DOC) files; Bureau of Criminal Apprehension records; Department of Children, Families, and Learning case files; and probation/parole officer surveys.

The data was collected on 200 juvenile offenders from the Red Wing (both Prepare and non-Prepare programs), Thistledeew, and Sauk Centre facilities who were tracked from their release in 1997 or 1998 through November of 1999. The data included juvenile demographics, correctional programming, post-release education and housing, and recidivism information. The goal of the study, to analyze the effect of juvenile correctional programming on youth recidivism, was not realized due to extensive gaps in the data available on any given variable. However, descriptive statistics were calculated and bivariate relationships were explored. These analyses provide the DOC and the state legislature with a "first glance" at juvenile recidivism in Minnesota. After release:

- Forty-three percent of **Red Wing's Prepare** juveniles were rearrested, and 21 percent of them were readjudicated one year post-release. **Red Wing's non-Prepare** youth were rearrested/readjudicated at 59 and 37 percent, respectively, at the one-year mark. These numbers increased to 73 percent rearrest and 53 percent readjudicated at the two-year mark.
- **Thistledeew's 1998 cohort** had a 36 percent rearrest rate and a 17 percent readjudication rate. The **1997 cohort** had a 65 percent rearrest rate and a 53 percent readjudication rate (two years post release).
- **Sauk Centre's girls** also recidivated at a lower rate after two years than did either Red Wing or Thistledeew's boys. The 1997 cohort had a 50 percent rearrest rate and a 45 percent readjudication rate.

While these results are provocative, they must be interpreted with caution. The lack of reliable data on juvenile offenders, both pre- and post-release, makes it difficult to produce reliable research results. Future studies will need access to a greater amount of data with which to analyze the efficacy of correctional programs.

Introduction

This report is submitted to the legislature in fulfillment of a directive to analyze recidivism rates for correctional programs. A legislative report on adult recidivism was completed in December 1999. This report focuses on juvenile returns to the correctional system.

There are few existing state studies of juvenile correctional programs. Three research efforts have been directed at analyzing either overall trends in juvenile crime (Schoen et al, 1999) or the recidivism of juveniles released from Minnesota correctional and residential treatment programs (see Minnesota Office of the Legislative Auditor, 1995; and Wilder Research Center, 1997 accordingly). While these reports provide valuable information about both onset and repeat criminal behavior among youth in Minnesota, they do not provide a complete or necessarily recent picture of what juvenile recidivism looks like, or what may be done to prevent it.

Using recent data from the Bureau of Apprehension; the DOC; and the Department of Children, Families, and Learning, this study provides a more recent picture of what happens to juveniles released from DOC facilities. The sample includes boys released from the Red Wing correctional facility in 1997 and 1998, boys released from Thistledeew Camp in 1997 and 1998, and girls released from the Sauk Centre correctional facility in 1997.¹ The subjects were followed from release through November 1999; depending on their release date, the follow-up period ranged from a period of one year to over two years. From this data, demographic information was analyzed and arrest, adjudication, and placement rates were calculated for the juveniles from each facility. This report serves as an important baseline for future research into recidivism and correctional programming for juveniles in Minnesota.

The remainder of this report is composed of multiple chapters. First, the literature review briefly describes what other states have done to better understand the recidivism of juveniles released from their correctional systems. Second, the methods used to conduct this research project are discussed, including sampling procedures, data collection efforts, and a description of each program included in the analysis. Third, the results of the data analysis are reported. Last, these results are discussed for their importance to both our current understanding of juvenile recidivism specifically, and to future research on juvenile issues generally.

¹ The Sauk Centre facility closed in 1999.

Literature Review

State research on the topic of juvenile recidivism is scarce. Of those research reports available, few focus on rates of juvenile recidivism after release from secure correctional facilities. Fewer still attempt to connect the programming received to juveniles' success outside the institution walls. The literature reviewed here represents the research most relevant to this study of juvenile recidivism.

Trends in Juvenile Recidivism

The Bureau of Data and Research (BDR) contacted all United States juvenile justice agencies to update and clarify juvenile recidivism information from previous BDR surveys (1999). They then compared recidivism rates across agencies, based on similarities in definitions of recidivism, the types and levels of offense, the length of follow-up period, and the range of age group. This comparison revealed a significant variation in information from state to state by juvenile characteristics, the programs and services available (and applied), criminal history and severity information, and the length of the follow-up period.

The juvenile populations studied by each state varied widely. Some states studied all juvenile offenders released from state facilities or programs, while others tracked specific populations. Some states included a broad range of arrest and referral criteria, while others only tracked the information on offenders arrested for felony-level offenses. Age range criteria also was affected, as some states directed juveniles age 16 or older to adult courts and others made referrals for juveniles age 17 and older.

Twenty states provided information on juvenile recidivism. Sixteen states tracked all juveniles released from juvenile justice programs; four states tracked subsequent offenses of first-time offenders. The follow-up period for all studies ranged from three months to 11 years. In many instances, adult arrest and conviction information was included in the data. In addition, two states conducted program effectiveness studies. All are reviewed below. Please note that juvenile recidivism rates from other states are illustrative and should not be used for comparison to the Minnesota rates presented in this report. To do a true comparison of recidivism rates, the populations studied need to be similar along the variables of age, gender, number of prior arrests, number of prior adjudications, number of prior treatments, and severity of the adjudicated offense. In Minnesota in 1997, 0.5 percent of all arrested juveniles were placed in a state-run correctional facility. Minnesota places only juveniles with serious offenses.

Re-Referral or Arrested Following Release from Juvenile Placement

The majority of studies conducted by the states involved tracking juvenile offenders after release from a juvenile justice program. Thirty-five percent of juveniles released from Oregon facilities were rearrested or referred back as juveniles. Michigan reported 35 percent recidivism within 24 months of release. Only juveniles convicted of a felony-level offense were included in the Michigan analysis. Texas and Florida reported 47 and 63 percent recidivism respectively for juveniles who were referred back or rearrested within 12 months of release. Nine months following release from Ohio programs, 46

percent of all juveniles were referred back or rearrested. New York experienced 69 percent recidivism within 30 months following release, Maryland 77 percent (18-30 months), and California 76 percent (42 months). Results indicated the more time had elapsed from release, the more likely a referral or rearrest occurred.

Readjudication or Conviction Following Release from Juvenile Placement

Five states produced recidivism rates for juveniles adjudicated or convicted following release from a juvenile justice program. Colorado, Florida and Washington indicated recidivism rates of 35, 46, and 59 percent respectively for the 12-month period following release from their facilities. Maryland tracked juveniles between 18 and 30 months, which resulted in a finding of 49 percent. New York tracked their juvenile population for 30 months and determined that they were convicted or adjudicated at a rate of 60 percent. The State of Washington continued to track releases from Juvenile Justice Programs for six years after discharge. They found that the majority of new criminal behavior occurred within the first year following release from a juvenile justice program; however, *re-adjudications or convictions for any offense* continued to increase after the first year by up to 35 percent at the six year mark.

State of Washington Program Effectiveness Study

A Washington State study analyzed 11 programs that served juvenile offenders and determined that nine of the programs effectively reduced recidivism. Of these programs, one promoted home-based intervention and focused on identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the juvenile, family, and other social systems. The program provided parents with resources and strategies to improve parenting skills and techniques to positively impact the juvenile offender. Another successful home-based program focused on improving family problem-solving skills and interactions among family members. In another program, chronic juvenile offenders were placed with trained foster parents and provided with other treatment and probation services. Early intervention for first-time offenders involving behavioral contracts and child advocacy was another successful approach used. In rural areas, improved coordination and delivery of available services to first-time offenders were found to reduce recidivism. Another successful program connected first-time offenders with community accountability boards to meet shortly after commission of the offense and discuss the effects the offender's crime on the community.

Specialized Treatment vs. General Treatment in Texas

A Texas study provided evidence that specialized treatment programs for specific offenders assessed as having a high need for treatment reduced recidivism rates. Four specialized treatment programs were evaluated – capital offenders (murder, attempted murder, and other violent offenses), sex offenders, chemically dependent youths, and emotionally disturbed youths. Due to funding limitations, only a portion of offenders deemed most needful were assigned to specialized treatment. Those not offered specialized treatments were assigned to the control group and received basic treatment programming.

The average length of stay in the capital offenders specialized treatment program was eight months. One year following release from the specialized program, only 5.6 percent of offenders were rearrested for a violent offense and 12.9 percent were reincarcerated for any offense. Over 11 percent of offenders who received basic treatment were rearrested for a violent offense and 19.9 percent were reincarcerated for any offense within the same period.

There were no rearrests for violent sex offenses within the first 12 months following release of sex offenders who participated in specialized treatment programming and completed at least 12 months of treatment. Only two percent were rearrested for violent sex offenses three years following release. Only 0.2 percent of offenders who participated in basic treatment were rearrested for a violent sex offense within one year following release and 4.7 percent were rearrested within three years of release.

More than 28 percent of emotionally disturbed offenders who participated in specialized treatment for a minimum of nine months in a secure program were reincarcerated for any offense within one year following release; 6.8 percent were reincarcerated for any violent offense. Offenders who received basic treatment within a secure facility were reincarcerated at a rate of 28.6 percent for any offense and 10.7 percent for any violent offense. Emotionally disturbed offenders who participated in specialized programming in a non-secure environment were reincarcerated within one year at a rate of 18.7 percent as compared to 29.5 percent for offenders who received basic treatment programming.

Offenders who participated in specialized chemical dependency treatment in a secure program were reincarcerated at a rate of 50.3 percent three years following release from the facility and returned at a rate of 46.5 percent from non-secure programs. Within three years following release, offenders who received basic programming from secure facilities returned at a rate of 56.6 percent as compared to 52.4 percent from non-secure facilities. Offenders who completed specialized chemical dependency programming in a non-secure environment were rearrested at a rate of 31.1 percent and were reincarcerated within at a rate of 27 percent within one year of release. Offenders who received basic treatment programming in a non-secure environment were rearrested at a rate of 38.1 percent and were reincarcerated at a rate of 34 percent within one year of release.

It was determined by the Texas study that overall rearrest rates dropped 12 percent (from 59.3 percent in 1994 to 47 percent in 1998) as a result of the application of specialized treatment programming. Violent offenses dropped from 17.4 to 9.1 percent. One-year reincarceration rates for any offense dropped from 35.3 percent in 1994 to 28.4 percent in 1998, while three-year rates for any offense dropped five percent.

Minnesota's Juvenile Recidivism Rates

An overall picture of juvenile crime rates for Minnesota youth can be found in research by Schoen et.al (1999). Juvenile arrest rates in Minnesota have increased at a significantly faster rate than have national rates for the years 1993 through 1997 (53% increase in Minnesota compared to 14% nationally). The arrest rates include status crimes, Part 1 crimes, and Part 2 crimes. A third of the juvenile arrests are for the more

serious Part 2 crimes. The authors note that the increase in the juvenile arrest rate in Minnesota can be partially accounted for by law enforcement's more strenuous response to offending behavior, particularly for less serious offenses.² Next, the seriousness of offense is greater for boys than for girls: 43 percent of Minnesota's juvenile males were convicted of a felony-level offense, as compared to 20 percent of Minnesota's juvenile girls.

Research on Correctional Facilities

More specific to the needs of this study, two research reports analyze juvenile recidivism rates for youths released from correctional facilities. The first of these was conducted by the North Dakota Division of Juvenile Services, which followed 324 juveniles (84% of whom were boys) released from their state correctional facilities between September 1, 1993, and February 28, 1995. During a one-year follow-up period, 20.4 percent of the juvenile offenders were reconvicted. Moreover, property offenders recidivated at a higher rate (21.8%) than did person offenders (14.9%) (Tjaden 1996).

The second study, conducted by the Minnesota Office of the Legislative Auditor (1995), examined recidivism rates for juveniles released from four state-run facilities: Sauk Centre, Red Wing, Thistledeew Camp, and St. Cloud.³ Additionally, recidivism rates were calculated for four programs that received the largest number of court-ordered out-of-home placements: Hennepin County Home School, Boys Totem Town, Woodland Hills, and St. Croix Camp. For the purposes of this review, only the results for the state correctional facilities will be discussed.

Of the 141 boys released from *Red Wing* in 1991:

- seventy-one percent were petitioned or arrested and 62 percent were adjudicated delinquent or convicted as an adult within two years;
- these juveniles were petitioned or arrested for property crimes most often (52 percent), followed by other crimes (37 percent) and person crimes (32 percent); and
- the average number of offenses per offender prior to placement was 12.8.

Of the 172 males released from *Thistledeew Camp* in 1991:

- over half (53%) were petitioned or arrested and 38 percent were adjudicated delinquent or convicted as an adult within two years;
- these juveniles were petitioned or arrested for property crimes most often (42%), followed by other crimes (27%) and person crimes (19%); and
- Thistledeew releasees had an average of 5.6 offenses prior to placement.

Sauk Centre released only 11 girls in 1991. Of these:

² This rise in the arrest rate should be kept in mind when interpreting the results of this report.

³ The Auditor's study looked at juveniles certified as adults housed at St. Cloud.

- forty-six percent were petitioned or arrested and 27 percent were adjudicated delinquent or convicted as an adult within two years;
- the releasees were arrested for property crimes most often (46%), followed by person crimes (9%) and other crimes (9%); and
- the average number of offenses prior to placement was 8.8.

Program Descriptions

Red Wing

Constructed in 1889, this is a fenced facility for juvenile offenders. Juvenile offenders at Red Wing are committed to the commissioner of corrections by juvenile courts. Detention and predisposition evaluation services are also available to the courts. On July 1, 1999, the facility had a population of 134 juvenile offenders.

All juvenile residents participate in the facility's Equip Program, which is designed to teach residents to think and act responsibly through a peer-helping process. Its curriculum includes principles for daily living, cognitive restructuring, anger management, moral reasoning, and social skills development. Equip emphasizes responsible decision-making. Individual and special needs counseling are also available.

Educational instruction is provided in an individualized manner due to the wide range of student educational levels. This individualized approach uses computer-programmed learning materials and many audio-visual resources. Students earn academic credit when course requirements are met. A number of students earn high school diplomas or successfully complete high school equivalency examinations. In addition to basic courses, instruction is available in remedial reading and mathematics, critical thinking skills, social and problem-solving skills, driver education, art, and physical education. Students also have access to a media center for reading and research.

Serious and chronic offenders are assigned to the facility's Prepare Program. Prepare is a longer-term program that includes a minimum length of stay of nine months at the facility followed by a three-month community residential transition phase. Residents assigned to Prepare participate in a school-to-work academic/vocational program designed to provide them with academic and work-related skills. Prepare emphasizes enhanced vocational training offered in printing, food service, graphic arts, and building trades. Additional activities include career exploration, independent living skills, and work skill preparation.

Residents assigned to the facility's Prepare program participate in a school-to-work program with academic and vocational components. Vocational training is offered in printing, auto mechanics, food service, graphic arts, and building trades. Additional activities include career exploration, independent living skills and work skills preparation. The Prepare school-to-work program is a collaborative effort between the facility and community-based service providers.

Substance abuse programming is integrated into Red Wing's overall offender programming. When substance abuse issues are identified through a screening, residents in need receive individualized services. Community AA/NA support groups are also offered to all residents.

Prepare residents identified as chemically dependent are assessed to determine if they should enter an intensive treatment program called Residential Substance Abuse Treatment. This program offers individual counseling, treatment planning, recovery

options, relapse prevention, family conferencing and community transitional services. Treatment is provided in a separate living unit with a 30-resident capacity.

The sex offender treatment program, formerly housed at Sauk Centre, is now at Red Wing. This is a 30-bed residential program for adjudicated male sex offenders. Programming is based on a group model that integrates critical thinking skill training, individual counseling and psychological education. Psychological education involves elements such as victim awareness, offense prevention, cycle of abuse, grief and loss, social skills development and human sexuality education.

Thistledew Camp

Thistledew Camp is available for use on a per diem basis by all Minnesota juvenile county courts, and provides court and social service agencies with an alternative residential program. Average daily population for fiscal year 1999 was 53.

Thistledew provides educational resources for youths at all ability levels. Additionally, all students are involved in work projects at least 10 hours per week. Various public projects also provide a sense of responsibility and allow students to work off community service hours or earn money towards restitution.

Thistledew offers a three-week program and a three-month program; each is designed to build confidence in males between 13 and 17 years old. These programs serve as a treatment resource for boys who have experienced failure in the home, the school and the community.

Wilderness Endeavors – three-week program

This is a year-round adventure therapy program. The purpose of this 21-day program is to provide students with a safe but challenging environment in which to discover and develop tools for change and personal growth. Wilderness activities, such as backpacking, canoeing and cross-country skiing are used, along with a four-day solo, rock climbing, a teams course, and a high ropes course. These activities challenge students mentally and physically, and force them out of their “comfort zone” to enhance personal growth. A therapy component helps students process their experiences and transfer them to real-life situations. This component includes daily check-ins, journal writing, activity debriefings, as well as daily themes and tasks associated with wilderness programming. Students receive one full year of school credit in experiential education as well as one full year in physical education.

Three-month program

A student’s needs and interests are met through involvement in group living, school, work, special classes, and recreational activities. A student’s success is measured through a comprehensive points system included in all areas of the program. Daily

scoring provides opportunities for both rewards and consequences. A sense of responsibility is encouraged through a fair and reasonable system of accountability.

Thistledeew Camp provides educational programming for youth at all ability levels. All classroom teachers are certified special education teachers with certification in learning disabilities or emotional/behavior disorders (most Thistledeew students have special needs). Some students prepare for high school equivalency exams while others continue with coursework required by their home school. Class sizes are small, and extensive individual help is available. Educational opportunities also include electives such as wood shop, photography, silk-screening, food services, and vocational exploration. Work experiences include timber stand improvement, grounds work, building maintenance and slabwood bundling. Each student works at least 10 hours a week.

The last three weeks of the three-month program are dedicated to Challenge, the camp's high-adventure wilderness program that stresses self-confidence, leadership abilities, and the importance of teamwork. Initially students are involved in team building through a teams course and a high ropes course. Also included is a day of wilderness travel techniques and rock climbing. The next step is a solo camping experience in an isolated area for three days and nights, where students learn problem solving and self-reliance. The third phase is a rugged trek in the wilderness, which builds individual confidence and teaches teamwork and responsibility. Staff use adventure therapy methodologies including check-ins, journal writing, themes, tasks and daily processing to help the student transfer what he learned to real-life situations.

Thistledeew also operates an aftercare component as a pilot program for the counties of northern Minnesota. An aftercare caseworker meets with the family shortly after the student's arrival at camp. Involvement is continued for about three months beyond graduation. The goal of aftercare is successful reunification and reintegration in the school and the community.

Sauk Centre

The Sauk Centre facility, which closed in 1999, housed both males and females. Programming for girls was based on a peer group treatment model using positive peer culture. Program goals were: holding residents accountable for their behavior, having them evaluate their behavior's effect on others, and actively involving them in resolution of problems that impact them and other residents. Upon admission, each resident was classified and assigned to a peer group. Classification included a review of the resident's commitment offense, age, maturity level, academic functioning and sophistication level.

Methodology

Program staff from the MCF-Red Wing, Thistledeew Camp, and Juvenile Services central office staff met with staff from the Research and Evaluation Unit to determine the data needed to complete the study. Information regarding the juveniles' experience while at the residential facility was collected, including data regarding education, treatment programming, and demographics. To gather recidivism data, a variety of avenues were explored. The Supreme Court keeps data on juvenile offenses, but this data was not used because it is kept on a county by county basis. To collect information from the Supreme Court, each of the 87 county files would have to be searched to determine if a juvenile had been rearrested in Minnesota. Also eliminated as a source of juvenile data was the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA), which maintains a database for juvenile offenders. This database was deemed unreliable as a source of recidivism information because the BCA frequently does not receive fingerprints for juveniles. Without a fingerprint, an offense does not get recorded in the database.

It was determined that the best method for data collection was to survey the parole and probation officers assigned to work with the juveniles following their release from the correctional facility. A 25 percent random sample of youth released from Red Wing in 1997 and from Thistledeew Camp in 1997 and 1998 was selected. All girls released from Sauk Centre in 1997, and all boys who participated in the Prepare program who were released from Red Wing in 1998, are included in the study. Overall, data was collected on a total of 200 juveniles.

After the sample selection was completed (September of 1999), a cover letter from Commissioner Ramstad Hvass and a questionnaire were sent to the subjects' parole and probation officers. The questionnaire asked for the juvenile's post-release experiences in the areas of continued education, residential placement, job history, and further criminal activity. Probation officers were asked to provide the date and type of any arrest, date and type of any adjudication, and the date of any technical violations. Paper file searches for youth released from Red Wing or Sauk Centre were also conducted.³ A search of the adult BCA database was also conducted to determine if any of the juveniles had been charged as an adult for a post-release offense.

In addition to rearrest and readjudication rates by the five groups of juveniles, the researchers intended to determine whether continued education, stable home life, and stable employment had an impact on recidivism rates. These analyses were not completed because the vast majority of juveniles in this study were very transient in their schooling and in residences. Employment information was scarce and therefore not included in this report. As such, the findings of this report are descriptive – they tell 'what' but do not explain 'why.'

Questionnaire data was collected from probation officers for all but one of the Sauk Centre girls (a 95 percent return rate). The data on Red Wing 1997 boys and Red Wing

³ Probation officers complete a progress report every six months for these juveniles until the juvenile is discharged from probation. These files are kept at the facility.

Prepare 1998 boys was primarily collected from facility files due to the poor quality of data returned from these subjects' probation officers. Last, questionnaires were received for 40 of the 45 1997 Thistledeew boys (an 89 percent return rate) and for 42 of 46 of the 1998 Thistledeew boys (a 91 percent return rate).

Research Findings

Sauk Centre Girls

Twenty girls were released from Sauk Centre in 1997. All of the girls were included in the study. Eleven of the 20 girls were Caucasian. See Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Race-Sauk Centre

Group	Number	Percent
Caucasian	11	55
African American	1	5
American Indian	5	25
Hispanic	1	5
Unknown	2	10
Total	20	100

The average age at admission was 16.3 years; the youngest girl was 14.4 and the oldest was 18.3 years old.

Three of the juveniles (15%) had children of their own.

The average length of stay at Sauk Centre was 6.1 months, with a range from 1.4 to 14.6 months.

Half of the girls were committed for person crimes, nine were committed for property crimes, and one was committed for another offense.

Girls entered Sauk Centre with a number of prior adjudications. Information was available for 18 of the 20 juveniles. The average number of prior adjudications was 7.2, with a range of one prior (two girls) to 18 priors (one girl).

Six of the juveniles received special education services while at Sauk Centre, four had an emotional/behavioral disorder, and two had a learning disability. Three (15%) of the girls completed a GED (general education diploma) while residing at the correctional facility. None of the girls obtained a high school diploma during their stay. One girl participated in work readiness programming. Two of the girls received chemical dependency treatment while at Sauk Centre, and none of them participated in sex offender treatment.

At admission the average math grade level was 7.6; at release, this level was 8.7. Grade level was determined via the administration of the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education). Average reading grade level at admission was 8.2; at release, this level was 9.4. See Table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2: TABE Scores-Sauk Centre

Grade Level	Math		Reading	
	Admission	Release	Admission	Release
3	0	0	1	0
4	2	0	0	0
5	3	1	1	1
6	5	3	4	3
7	2	4	6	1
8	3	4	2	2
9	2	1	2	5
10	1	1	1	1
11	0	2	0	0
12	2	2	3	5
Total	20	18	20	18

Upon release, 45 percent (9) of the girls moved home, and another 20 percent (4) went to a residential facility.

Since their release from Sauk Centre in 1997, the girls have lived in many places. The average number of placements is 7.1 residences. One girl has had 17 residences. See Table 5.3 below.

Table 5.3: Placement after Release-Sauk Centre

Type of Residence	Initial Placement		Total Placements	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Home Placement	9	45	28	23
Group Home	2	10	9	8
Foster Home	3	15	7	6
Residential Facility	4	20	44	37
Independent	0	0	3	2
Other	1	5	3	2
Prison/Jail	0	0	2	2
Juvenile Center	0	0	10	8
Shelter	0	0	0	0
Fugitive	0	0	14	12
Unknown	1	5	0	0
Total	20	100	120	100

After release, eight of the girls enrolled in high school and four girls enrolled at an area learning center. See Table 5.4 below.

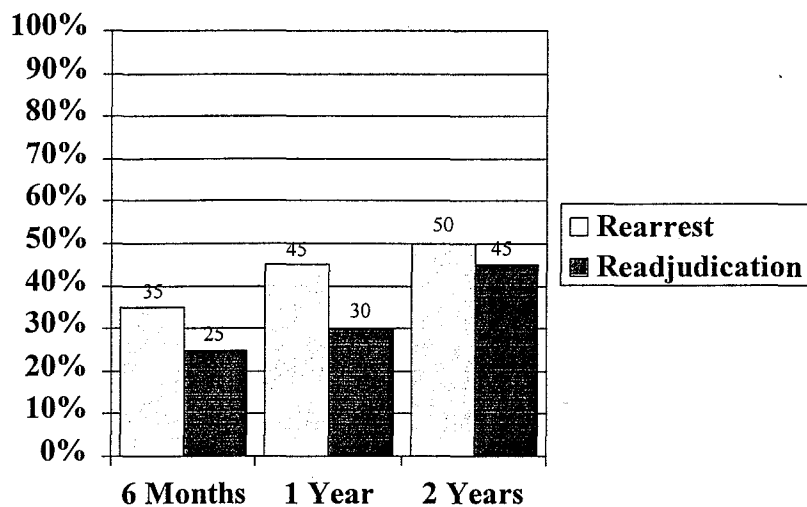
Table 5.4: School Enrollment after Release-Sauk Centre

Type of School	Initial School		Total Schools	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Junior High	0	0	1	2
High School	8	40	14	27
Technical/Vocational	0	0	0	0
College	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	2	4
Special Education Co-op.	3	15	6	12
Correctional	0	0	3	6
Area Learning Center	4	20	18	35
Treatment Center	1	5	5	10
Alternative School	2	10	2	4
Not in School	2	10	0	0
Total	20	100	51	100

A search of the database kept by the Department of Children Families, and Learning revealed that since release, 11 of the girls have dropped out of school, six have completed a GED, two have graduated from high school, and one is still enrolled in school full-time.

Fifty percent (10) of these juveniles were arrested after their release. Five of the girls were arrested for a person offense, one for other offenses, two for a property offense, and three for a drug offense. None of the girls were tried as an adult for any of their new offenses. Regarding a technical violation of the conditions of their parole, 12 of the girls had at least one technical violation. See Graph 5.1 below.

Graph 5.1: Rearrest and Readjudication Rate-Sauk Centre-1997



Thistledeew

Juveniles released from the three-month program in 1997 and 1998 are a part of the following findings. The majority of the Thistledeew sample is Caucasian (73% 1997, 62% 1998). The percentage of American Indian residents doubled from 1997 to 1998 (7% 1997, 14% 1998). See Table 5.5 below.

Table 5.5: Race-Thistledeew

Group	1997		1998	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Caucasian	29	73	26	62
African American	3	7	4	10
American Indian	3	7	6	14
Hispanic	4	10	4	10
Asian	1	3	1	2
Unknown	0	0	1	2
Total	40	100	42	100

The age range for boys admitted to Thistledeew in 1997 was 14 to 18 years. In 1998 it was 13 to 18 years. The average age for both years was 16.

None of the youth had children of their own.

The average length of stay was 3.4 months.

Most of the boys were admitted to Thistledeew for property offenses (50% 1997, 45% 1998). See Table 5.6 below.

Table 5.6: Admitting Offense Category-Thistledeew

Offense	1997		1998	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Person	9	22.5	10	24
Property	20	50.0	19	45
Drug	2	5.0	4	10
Other	9	22.5	9	21
Total	40	100.0	42	100

In 1997, 55 percent (22) of the boys were under an individual education plan (IEP) and received special education. Three of the boys were learning disabled (LD) and 19 had an emotional or behavioral disorder (EBD). The percentage of special education students dropped by 19% in 1998 (15 boys were under an individual education plan). Two of the boys were LD, and 13 were EBD.

A third (13) of the Thistledeew residents earned a GED while at the facility in 1997, and 31 percent of the residents earned one in 1998. None of the boys earned a high school diploma while at camp. Since work readiness programming is part of the Thistledeew experience, all but one of the 1997 boys (and all of the boys in 1998) participated in work readiness.

During their three-month stay, residents earned up to four educational credits to be transferred to their home school upon return. See Table 5.7 below.

Table 5.7: Credits Earned at Thistledeew

Credits	1997		1998	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0	15	38	13	31
1	0	0	1	2
2	8	20	7	17
3	12	30	14	33
4	5	12	7	17
Total	40	100	42	100

The 1997 average math grade level at admission was 8.2, and at release was 9.3, a one-year increase in three months. The average admission reading grade level was 9.1, and 9.6 at release. See Table 5.8 below.

Table 5.8: TABE Scores-Thistledeew-1997

Grade Level	Math		Reading	
	Admission	Release	Admission	Release
2	2	0	0	0
3	1	0	0	1
4	0	2	3	0
5	3	1	3	2
6	3	3	5	5
7	6	2	2	4
8	8	7	5	0
9	7	6	3	3
10	0	3	0	2
11	1	1	2	6
12	9	14	17	16
Total	40	39	40	39

The average 1998 TABE math grade level at admission was 8.4; at release this grade level was 9.5. The reading level average was grade 9.4 at admission; at release this grade level was 9.8. See Table 5.9 below.

Table 5.9: TABE Scores-Thistledeew-1998

Grade Level	Math		Reading	
	Admission	Release	Admission	Release
2	1	0	1	1
3	1	0	4	0
4	0	2	0	2
5	3	1	1	1
6	4	3	1	3
7	6	2	2	3
8	7	5	5	2
9	6	9	5	7
10	3	2	2	2
11	0	1	6	5
12	10	16	14	15
Total	41	41	41	41

Just over three-quarters (77%) of the 1997 boys moved home after they left Thistledeew. In the two years since their release, the average number of residential placements is 2.6. See Table 5.10 below.

Table 5.10: Placement After Release-Thistledeew-1997

Type of Residence	Initial Placement		Total Placements	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Home Placement	31	77	45	45
Group Home	3	8	11	11
Foster Home	2	5	3	3
Residential Facility	0	0	21	21
Independent	0	0	5	5
Other	0	0	0	0
Prison/Jail	0	0	8	8
Juvenile Center	2	5	6	6
Shelter	0	0	0	0
Fugitive	0	0	1	1
Unknown	2	5	0	0
Total	40	100	100	100

Eighty-four percent of the 1998 boys had a home placement upon release. In the one year since their release, the average number of different residences is 1.9. See Table 5.11 below.

Table 5.11: Placement After Release-Thistledeew-1998

Type of Residence	Initial Placement		Total Placements	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Home Placement	35	84	42	55
Group Home	1	2	6	8
Foster Home	0	0	0	0
Residential Facility	2	5	8	11
Independent	0	0	5	7
Other	1	2	1	1
Prison/Jail	0	0	0	0
Juvenile Center	0	0	7	9
Shelter	1	2	1	1
Fugitive	0	0	6	8
Unknown	2	5	0	0
Total	42	100	76	100

Twenty percent of the boys (8) entered high school, and fifteen percent (6) attended a special education cooperative after leaving the camp. See Table 5.12 below.

Table 5.12: School Enrollment After Release-Thistledeew-1997

Type of School	Initial School		Total Schools	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Junior High	4	10	5	4
High School	8	20	35	30
Technical/Vocational	1	2	1	1
College	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
Special Education Co-op.	6	15	19	16
Correctional	1	2	15	13
Area Learning Center	5	13	32	28
Treatment Center	3	8	7	6
Alternative School	1	2	2	2
Not In School/Unknown	11	28	0	0
Total	40	100	116	100

Since leaving Thistledeew, just over half (52%) of the boys have dropped out of school. See Table 5.13 below.

Table 5.13: Educational Status 2 Years After Release-Thistledeew-1997

Status	Number	Percent
Enrolled Full-Time	3	8
Enrolled Part-Time	1	3
Graduated	4	10
GED	11	27
Drop Out	21	52
Total	40	100

After release, 12 of the 1998 boys enrolled in high school. Thirteen of the boys did not reenroll in school, but did earn a GED while at Thistledeew. See Table 5.14 below.

Table 5.14: School Enrollment After Release-Thistledeew-1998

Type of School	Initial School		Total Schools	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Junior High	2	5	2	3
High School	12	29	26	33
Technical/Vocational	1	2	1	1
College	1	2	1	1
Other	0	0	0	0
Special Education Co-op.	7	17	13	17
Correctional	2	5	13	17
Area Learning Center	1	2	14	18
Treatment Center	3	7	6	7
Alternative School	0	0	2	3
Not In School	13	31	0	0
Total	42	100	78	100

Since leaving Thistledeew, over half (55%) of the boys have dropped out of school. See Table 5.15 below.

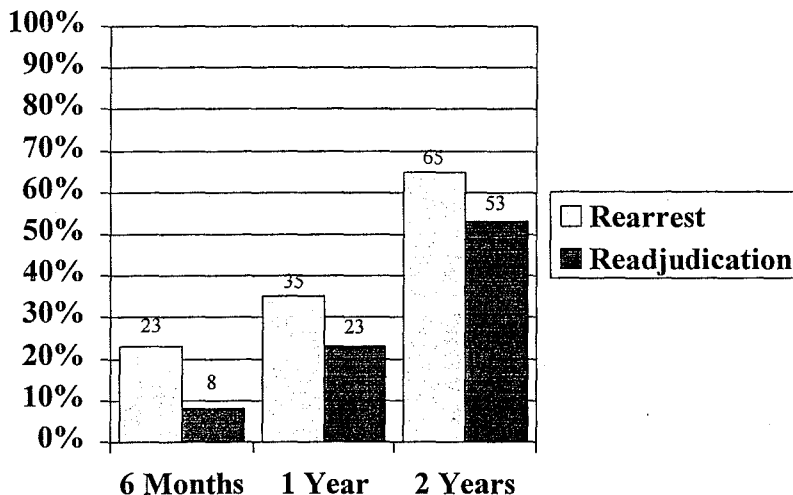
Table 5.15: Educational Status 1 Year After Release-Thistledeew-1998

Status	Number	Percent
Enrolled Full-Time	5	12
Enrolled Part-Time	0	0
Graduated	1	2
GED	13	31
Drop Out	23	55
Total	42	100

Twenty-six (65%) of the 1997 boys have been rearrested since they left Thistledeew Camp. Sixteen were arrested for a property offense, three were arrested for other crimes, three were arrested for drug offenses, and three were arrested for a person offense. One

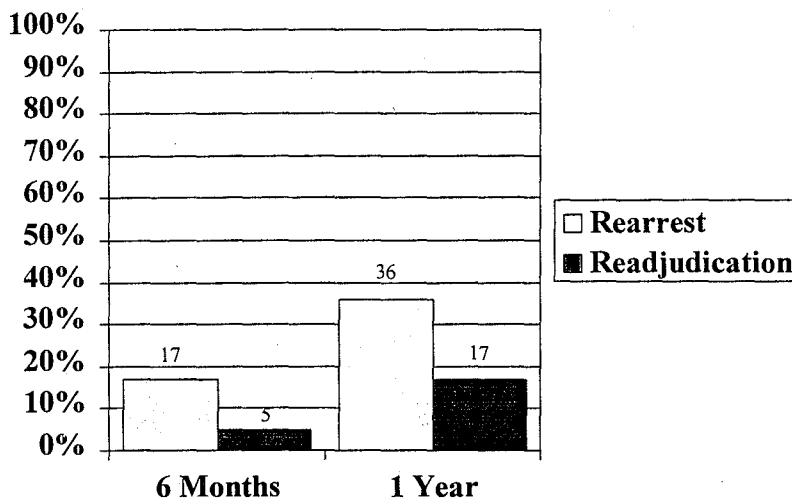
of the juveniles has been charged as an adult for one rearrest. Another youth has been charged as an adult for two different arrests. Three of the boys had a technical violation. See Graph 5.2 below.

Graph 5.2: Rearrest and Readjudication Rate-Thistledeew-1997



Fifteen (36%) of the boys who left Thistledeew in 1998 were rearrested within one year after release. One of the boys was rearrested and charged as an adult. None of the boys had a technical violation. Of the 15 boys who were rearrested, seven were for property offenses, three were for a person offense, two were for a drug offense, and two were for another type of crime. See Graph 5.3 below.

Graph 5.3: Rearrest and Readjudication Rate-Thistledeew-1998



Red Wing-1997⁵

Twenty-five percent of the juveniles released from Red Wing in 1997 were randomly selected to be a part of this study. Fifty-one boys are a part of this analysis. Caucasians and African Americans make up 82 percent of the group (47% Caucasian, 35% African American). See Table 5.16 below.

Table 5.16: Race-Red Wing-1997

Group	Number	Percent
Caucasian	24	47
African American	18	35
American Indian	3	6
Hispanic	1	2
Unknown	5	10
Total	51	100

Fourteen to nineteen is the age range of juveniles admitted to Red Wing, with an average age at admission of 17.2 years.

Eight (16%) of the boys had children of their own when they entered Red Wing.

The average length of stay at Red Wing was 6.3 months, with a range of 0.4 months to 40.6 months.

Close to 60 percent (30) of the 1997 Red Wing boys were originally admitted for property crimes, while 18 percent were admitted for person offenses, 18 percent were admitted for other offenses, and six percent were admitted for drug offenses.

The average number of prior adjudications is 6.5. Two boys had no previous adjudications, and one juvenile had 18 priors.

Thirty-seven percent (19) of the 1997 boys had an IEP. Seven boys were EBD, six were LD, and six were both LD and EBD.

Seven of the 51 boys earned a GED while at Red Wing, and one youth participated in work readiness programming. During their correctional residence, 1997 boys earned from zero to 6.25 school credits, with an average of 2.7 credits. See Table 5.17 below.

⁵ The subjects from Red Wing were analyzed separately by year of release because the facility's programming changed in 1998. The results for the boys who went through Red Wing's Prepare Program are discussed starting on page 27 of this report.

Table 5.17: Credits Earned-Red Wing-1997

Credits	Number	Percent
0-1	6	12
1-2	8	16
2-3	14	27
3-4	12	23
4-5	7	14
5-6	1	2
6-7	3	6
Total	51	100

The average math grade level at admission was 6.4. Only 19 of the 51 youth took the math or reading portion of the TABE prior to release. The average reading grade level at admission was 7.1. See Table 5.18 below.

Table 5.18: TABE Scores-Red Wing-1997

Grade Level	Math		Reading	
	Admission	Release	Admission	Release
1	1	0	0	0
2	3	1	3	2
3	5	0	4	0
4	5	5	4	1
5	7	2	7	4
6	6	2	6	2
7	3	5	5	4
8	6	0	4	3
9	5	1	6	2
10	6	1	6	1
11	0	1	1	0
12	0	1	1	2
Total	47	19	47	21

Three of the juveniles participated in chemical dependency treatment, and one person was in sex offender treatment.

After release, the majority (57%) of the 1997 juveniles moved home. The boys have been transient in the two years since their release. The average number of placements is 4.5. See Table 5.19 below.

Table 5.19: Placement After Release-Red Wing-1997

Type of Residence	Initial Placement		Total Placements	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Home Placement	29	57	72	31
Group Home	4	8	11	5
Foster Home	3	6	5	2
Residential Facility	9	17	51	22
Independent	3	6	9	4
Other	1	2	12	5
Jail/Prison	2	4	25	11
Juvenile Center	0	0	20	9
Shelter	0	0	0	0
Fugitive	0	0	25	11
Unknown	0	0	0	0
Total	51	100	230	100

Following release close to half (47%) of the boys do not reenroll in school. A review of MDCFL data reveals that at the end of two years, 57 percent of the boys had dropped out of school, and 29 percent had completed a GED. See Table 5.20 and Table 5.21 below.

Table 5.20: School Enrollment After Release-Red Wing-1997

Type of School	Initial School		Total Schools	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Junior High	0	0	0	0
High School	12	23	21	36
Technical/Vocational	0	0	0	0
College	0	0	0	0
Other	1	2	1	2
Special Education Co-op.	3	6	7	12
Correctional	6	12	15	26
Area Learning Center	4	8	11	19
Treatment Center	1	2	2	3
Alternative School	0	0	1	2
Not In School	24	47	0	0
Total	51	100	58	100

Table 5.21: Educational Status 2 Years After Release-Red Wing-1997

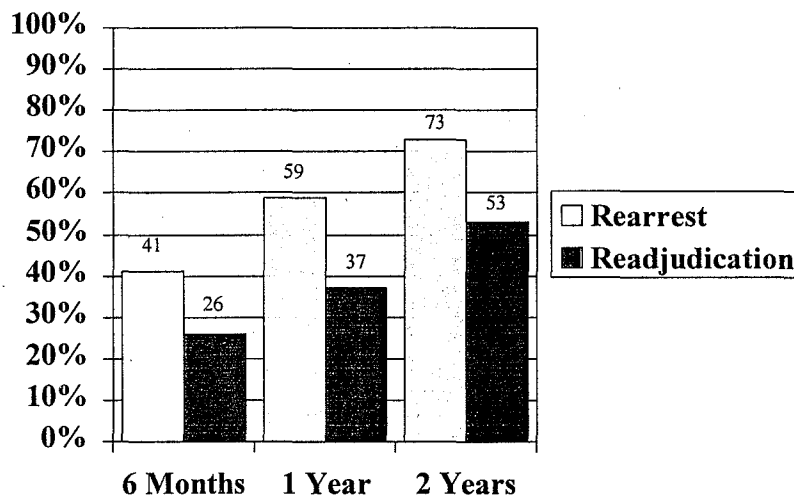
Status	Number	Percent
Enrolled Full-Time	3	6
Enrolled Part-Time	0	0
Graduated	4	8
GED	15	29
Drop Out	29	57
Total	51	100

Almost three-quarters (38) of the 1997 juveniles have been rearrested since their release. Three of the youth have been arrested and charged as an adult, and two boys have had two arrests that were adult charges. Most of the boys (55%) have had a technical violation. Property crimes is the offense category with the largest number of rearrests. See Table 5.22 and Graph 5.4 below.

Table 5.22: Rearrest Offense Category-1997

Category	Number	Percent
Person	8	21
Property	19	50
Drug	4	11
Other	7	18
Total	38	100

Graph 5.4: Rearrest and Readjudication Rate-Red Wing-1997



Red Wing's Prepare Participants-1998

All of the participants in the Prepare program for 1998 (47) are a part of this study. Caucasians and African Americans make up 77 percent of the population. See Table 5.23 below.

Table 5.23: Race-Prepare-1998

Group	Number	Percent
Caucasian	22	47
African American	14	30
American Indian	4	8
Hispanic	4	8
Asian	0	0
Unknown	3	7
Total	47	100

The age range at time of admission was from 14.5 to 19.0 years of age. The average age at admission was 16.8 years. Six (13%) of the boys had children. The length of stay at Red Wing has a 30-month range, from 7.7 to 37.5 months. The average length of stay is 12.8 months.

The largest number (20) of Prepare youth came to Red Wing on a person offense. See Table 5.24 below.

Table 5.24: Admitting Offense Category-Prepare-1998

Category	Number	Percent
Person	20	43
Property	18	38
Drug	1	2
Other	1	2
Unknown	7	15
Total	47	100

All but two of the Prepare participants had prior adjudications before their commitment to the Red Wing facility. The range was from zero to 16 prior adjudications with an average of 7.1 prior adjudications.

One-quarter (12) of the boys had an IEP. Nine were EBD, two LD, and one boy was both EBD and LD.

Close to a third (16) of the Prepare participants obtained a GED while at Red Wing. Six of the boys (13%) earned a high school diploma during their residency. Twenty of the 47 boys (43%) were in the work readiness program. The average number of educational credits earned while at Red Wing was 6.3 with a range of 2.25 to 14.

The average grade level on the math portion of the TABE is seventh grade. Less than half of the Prepare residents took the TABE prior to release, so a release grade level average was not computed. The average reading grade level was seventh grade-seventh month at admission. See Table 5.25 below.

Table 5.25: TABE Scores-Prepare-1998

Grade Level	Math		Reading	
	Admission	Release	Admission	Release
1	0	0	0	0
2	2	2	2	1
3	6	1	1	0
4	3	2	4	2
5	7	4	7	3
6	9	3	9	1
7	2	2	3	6
8	3	2	5	2
9	4	1	4	5
10	4	2	5	1
11	4	0	1	1
12	2	1	5	2
Total	46	20	46	24

Thirty-six percent (17) of the Prepare youth received chemical dependency treatment while at Red Wing. None of the boys participated in sex offender treatment.

A majority (64%) of the juveniles who participated in Prepare and were released in 1998 lived in a group home upon release. The average number of placements since release is high, 4.6 placements. The Prepare juveniles are moving every four to five months. See Table 5.26 below.

Table 5.26: Placement after Release-Prepare-1998

Type of Residence	Initial Placement		Total Placements	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Home Placement	5	11	32	14
Group Home	30	64	59	27
Foster Home	6	13	8	4
Residential Facility	5	10	50	23
Independent	0	0	12	6
Other	1	2	12	6
Jail/Prison	0	0	24	11
Juvenile Center	0	0	2	1
Shelter	0	0	0	0
Fugitive	0	0	18	8
Unknown	0	0	0	0
Total	47	100	217	100

More than half (53%) of the Prepare residents did not reenroll in school upon their 1998 release. During the one to two years following their release, 34 percent of the boys earned a GED. See Tables 5.27 and 5.28 below.

Table 5.27: School Enrollment after Release-Prepare-1998

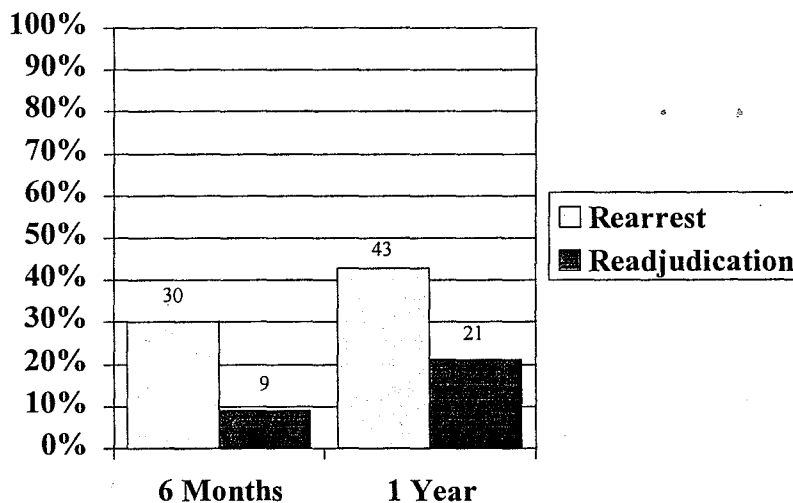
Type of School	Initial School		Total Schools	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Junior High	0	0	0	0
High School	1	2	5	12
Technical/Vocational	2	4	2	5
College	2	4	2	5
Other	0	0	0	0
Special Education Co-op.	0	0	3	7
Correctional	2	4	7	16
Area Learning Center	4	9	10	23
Treatment Center	9	20	9	20
Alternative School	2	4	5	12
Not In School	24	53	0	0
Total	46	100	43	100

Table 5.28: Educational Status 1 Year After Release-Prepare –1998

Status	Number	Percent
Enrolled Full-Time	3	6
Enrolled Part-Time	4	9
Graduated	1	2
GED	16	34
Drop Out	23	49
Total	47	100

One year post-release, 43 percent (21) of the Prepare juveniles were rearrested. Eight were arrested for a property offense, five were arrested for a person offense, five were arrested for other offenses, and three were arrested on a drug offense. Eight of the juveniles have been arrested and charged as an adult, and one boy has two adult charges. Forty percent (19) of the Prepare youth have been returned to Red Wing on a technical violation. See Graph 5.5 below.

Graph 5.5: Rearrest and Readjudication Rate-Prepare-1998



Discussion and Conclusion

The results of this study are important baseline numbers from which to build programs and develop further research. However, the results must be interpreted with caution. One of the most pressing problems affecting this study was the lack of accurate and reliable data. The data available on juvenile offenders in the state of Minnesota is incomplete at best. As was noted in earlier sections of this report, much of the data needed to conduct the original analysis was unavailable to the researchers. Further, the data received from the probation and parole officers surveyed for this study was not always complete. When compared to the information found in program files, the information included on the probation officer questionnaires often portrayed only a portion of the juvenile's post-release history. The limitations of the data can also be extended to the quantity and quality of data on prior and post-release adjudications, which are necessarily limited by the types and availability of records from county and state agencies. Only by implementing significant changes to the way data is collected, recorded, and stored will future studies be able to avoid the pitfalls of inaccurate and missing data. Accordingly, an increase in available data may raise the recidivism rates of juveniles because additional information on violations, arrests, adjudications, and placements will be available.⁵ Thus, this report can only serve as a description (not an explanation) of juvenile recidivism. It is important to note that Minnesota is not alone in its struggle to compile data on juvenile offenders—the issue of poor juvenile data seems to be a nationwide problem.

Ideally, the next study of recidivism for Minnesota's juveniles will include an entire cohort of juvenile offenders released during a given time period. This method of selecting a sample will increase the number of subjects analyzed and will better capture what individual and treatment factors influence recidivism. More specifically, risk factors, programming, and aftercare should all be considered in an analysis of youth recidivism rates. Because aftercare is now being implemented for Prepare youth, its effects on youth returns to the system should be carefully scrutinized.

Additionally, it is very important for future studies to account for the phenomenon of "aging-out" of crime. As is noted in criminological literature, many youths involved in criminal behavior eventually "age out" to lead law-abiding lives. By following released juveniles for longer periods of time, it is possible to assess not only which youth are at risk for criminal careers, but how correctional programming and aftercare may decrease this risk. Further, those juveniles who demonstrate lower risk may be better identified, and programming may be better tailored to their needs. A longitudinal study is ideal to accomplish this goal.

Overall, this study serves as a "first glance" at youth recidivism. While this glance does not explain how or why delinquent youth return to the correctional system after release, it provides a valuable baseline from which to improve services and research.

⁵ This increase *would not reflect* an actual rise in youth recidivism; instead, it would reflect an increase in the number of violations and arrests/adjudications/placements recorded for each juvenile.

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