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RECIDIVISM:

*An Analysis of Division of
Juvenile Rehabilitation Clients
Released from Residential Status in 1982*

August 1987

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Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation

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RECIDIVISM:

AN ANALYSIS OF DIVISION OF JUVENILE REHABILITATION
CLIENTS RELEASED FROM RESIDENTIAL STATUS IN 1982

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Executive Summary

This report examines recidivism, or reoffending, among 985 youths released from Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation (DJR) residential programs in 1982. In this report, reoffenses include those offenses for which the client was reconvicted during a set follow-up period after release. Two follow-up periods were analyzed: 1) an approximately six-month period (i.e., the average length of parole) immediately following release from residential care, and 2) a full three-year period following release.

Results of the analysis of recidivism "during parole" (i.e., the six months after release) indicated that 39% of the 694 youths who were assigned to parole in 1982 reoffended during their stay on parole. Only 25% of the 291 youths who were directly discharged from DJR in 1982 reoffended during the six-month period after release. The analysis indicated that youths with extensive prior criminal records, males, older youths, and parolees were most likely to reoffend during the six-month follow-up period.

Results of the analysis of "three-year post-release recidivism" indicated that 63% of the youths reoffended. The analysis indicated that older youths, youths with extensive prior criminal records, males, and parolees were also most likely to reoffend during the three-year post-release period.

The finding that recidivism was more likely among parolees has important program implications. The analysis indicated that, even after controlling for possible differences (e.g., age, prior record) between parolees and directly discharged youths, parolees recidivated more often. However, several potential problems with this analysis are described in the report (e.g., the parole population may have had some additional, unmeasured characteristics that were related to recidivism). In addition, older clients and clients with no criminal record, when assigned to parole, actually reoffended less than similar youths who were directly discharged--suggesting that parole may be effective for certain subpopulations.

Two recommendations are proposed in this report. First, consideration might be given to placing offenders in higher security settings based on the factors found to be predictive of recidivism in this report. This report's findings provide evidence that younger clients and youths with several prior offenses are especially prone to reoffending and might be more appropriately placed in a more secure setting in certain circumstances. Second, further study is needed to assess the effectiveness of parole. This study suggests that parole had little positive impact on recidivism; however, a more comprehensive study, that includes random assignment of offenders to parole or direct discharge, would be more conclusive.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation's (DJR) mission statement states that DJR will "protect the public and eliminate repetitive criminal behavior" (Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation, Strategic Plan, 1983-1989, Department of Social and Health Services, State of Washington). A primary focus of DJR, then, is the extent to which recidivism, or criminal behavior after program termination, can be reduced. The following report presents an analysis of recidivism among DJR clients after their release from residential status in 1982. The purposes of the report are to improve the available information regarding the long-term success of DJR clients, and to provide a better framework for DJR to identify and impact high risk offenders.

Four sections follow in this report: a description of the methodology used in the study, findings from an analysis of recidivism during the youth's first six months after release from residential status, findings from an analysis of recidivism over a full three-year period after the youth's release, and a summary and conclusions.

II. METHODOLOGY

Recidivism is the extent to which individuals released from a rehabilitation program relapse, i.e. continue with problem behavior. In assessing DJR clients, recidivism is the extent to which clients reoffend after release from residential care. Measures of recidivism are developed by tracking reoffenses over a specific follow-up period that begins with the youth's release. Two follow-up periods were analyzed for this report: 1) "during-parole", or the approximately six-month period (i.e., the average length of parole supervision) immediately following release, and 2) a full three-year period following release.

In this study, recidivism includes all subsequent offenses for which the youth was adjudicated, i.e., convicted. Other recidivism studies have examined the much broader category of rearrests. That measure, however, can include offenses of which the offender was not guilty; therefore, that measure was rejected for use in this study. Previous DJR studies have examined rates of recommitment (i.e., return to a DJR facility after a reoffense). That measure is not as useful as reconviction because it ignores subsequent juvenile crimes that did not lead to a recommitment, and all subsequent adult crimes.

The majority of DJR clients are assigned to parole after release from residential care. For those youths, "during-parole" recidivism includes reoffenses between assignment to parole and release from parole. A comparable measure of during-parole recidivism was calculated for those youths who were directly

discharged from residential care (and received no parole services). Their reoffenses were tracked between residential release and 176 days later--the average length of stay on parole.

The measure of three-year post-release recidivism includes offenses between residential release and the same date three years later. The data collection for this study occurred more than three years after the final youth was released, allowing all youths in the study to be "at risk" for the full three-year period.

The population analyzed in this study includes virtually all youths released from residential status in 1982. Youths admitted for diagnostic purposes only, and youths from out of state, were excluded from the study group. A total of 985 youths were included in the study. In the analysis of recidivism during parole, the 694 youths who were paroled (as opposed to the 291 youths who were directly discharged) were examined.

A rate of recidivism is presented in this report that represents the percentage of youths with at least one adjudicated offense during the post-release period. In addition, a more comprehensive indicator of recidivism was also calculated--recidivism scores, combining the seriousness of all offenses during the post-release period. Each reoffense during the post-release period was assigned a numerical score according to its seriousness. Table 1 provides each of the offense classes used in the Washington State juvenile sentencing system, the numerical value assigned to each class for this study, and example offenses for each offense class.

Table 1: Washington State Juvenile Offense Classes,
Numerical Values Awarded for this Study, and Example Offenses

| <u>Washington State Juvenile Offense Class</u> | <u>Seriousness Score Assigned for this Study</u> | <u>Example Offenses</u> |
|--|--|-------------------------|
| A+ | 9 | Murder 1, Murder 2 |
| A | 8 | Assault 1, Rape 1 |
| B+ | 7 | Assault 2, Robbery 2 |
| B | 6 | Arson 2, Burglary 2 |
| C+ | 5 | Assault 3, Rape 3 |
| C | 4 | Escape 1, Theft 2 |
| D+ | 3 | Simple Assault |
| D | 2 | Escape 3, Theft 3 |
| E | 1 | Possession of Alcohol |

A youth who committed three "E" offenses and a "D" offense during the post-release period would have a recidivism score of 5. Greater recidivism scores, of course, indicate greater recidivism, both in terms of frequency and seriousness. As an example, a score of 5 indicates that the youth was convicted for approximately four "E" offenses, or two "D" offenses, or one "C" offense, more than a youth with a recidivism score of 1 during the study period.

Data sources for the offense information in this study included the Washington State Administrator for the Court's Juvenile Information System (JUVIS), King County's juvenile offense information system, and the Washington State Patrol data bank on convicted crimes. (The Washington State Patrol data were collected to assure that crimes committed past the age of 18 were also counted.) The offense data were then combined with descriptive data from DJR's client tracking system.

III. RECIDIVISM DURING THE YOUTH'S STAY ON PAROLE

Recidivism during the youth's stay on parole was measured for two reasons: 1) to better determine which client characteristics are associated with reoffending during parole so that higher risk offenders can be identified, and 2) to compare the effectiveness of the two options for releasing clients, parole and direct discharge, in terms of their impact on recidivism.

Table 2 presents recidivism rates and recidivism scores, across several client characteristics, for the 694 youths assigned to parole in 1982. The far right column states whether the differences in recidivism scores, for each of the characteristics, were statistically significant, i.e., there was a less than 5% probability that the differences were due to random chance. A "yes" in this column indicates that the differences in recidivism scores were large enough to be statistically significant; the characteristic was likely related to during-parole recidivism. A "no" indicates that the differences in recidivism scores were likely due to random chance.

Table 2: During-Parole Recidivism Rates and
Recidivism Scores of Youths Released in 1982,
by Various Client Characteristics

| <u>Client Characteristic</u> | <u>% Who Reoffended</u> | <u>Average Recidivism Score</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>Statistically Significant Difference?</u> |
|---|-----------------------------|---|----------|--|
| Total Population | 38.9% | 3.7 | 694 | |
| Male | 40.1% | 3.9 | 651 | |
| Female | 20.9% | 1.7 | 43 | yes |
| Non-White | 39.7% | 4.2 | 146 | |
| White | 38.7% | 3.5 | 548 | no |
| 10-15 Years Old | 45.2% | 4.1 | 228 | |
| 16-17 Years Old | 39.4% | 4.0 | 373 | |
| 18-20 Years Old | 21.5% | 0.9 | 93 | yes |
| No Offense Prior to Committing Offense | 16.4% | 1.2 | 73 | |
| 1-3 Prior Offenses | 31.9% | 3.1 | 229 | |
| 4-7 Prior Offenses | 43.3% | 4.2 | 275 | |
| 8 or More Prior Offenses | 56.4% | 5.1 | 117 | yes |
| Violent Offenses | 28.0% | 3.0 | 207 | |
| Murder | 0.0% | 0.0 | 2 | |
| Rape | 41.7% | 2.6 | 12 | |
| Other Sex Offense | 28.0% | 3.0 | 50 | |
| Robbery | 22.2% | 3.1 | 54 | |
| Assault | 34.5% | 2.9 | 58 | |
| Other Violent | 22.6% | 3.2 | 31 | |
| Property Offenses | 43.5% | 3.9 | 416 | |
| Burglary | 42.4% | 3.6 | 288 | |
| Motor Vehicle Theft | 38.8% | 2.8 | 49 | |
| Other Property | 50.6% | 5.4 | 79 | |
| Other Offenses | 42.9% | 4.5 | 70 | |
| Drug Offense | 50.0% | 1.5 | 2 | |
| Escape | 50.0% | 6.0 | 50 | |
| Other Offense | 22.2% | 0.7 | 18 | no |
| A+,A Committing Offense | 15.2% | 1.7 | 33 | |
| B+,B Committing Offense | 37.0% | 3.4 | 438 | |
| C+,C Committing Offense | 49.7% | 4.7 | 161 | |
| D+,D,E Committing Offense | 37.1% | 3.7 | 62 | no |
| 0-109 Points | 42.5% | 4.0 | 214 | |
| 110-150 Points | 39.9% | 3.9 | 238 | |
| 151 or More Points | 34.9% | 3.2 | 241 | no |

Table 2: During-Parole Recidivism Rates and
Recidivism Scores of Youths Released in 1982,
by Various Client Characteristics (Continued)

| <u>Client Characteristic</u> | <u>% Who Reoffended</u> | <u>Average Recidivism Score</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>Statistically Significant Difference?</u> |
|--|-----------------------------|---|----------|--|
| Paroled from a 1st Commitment | 37.0% | 3.5 | 549 | |
| Paroled from a Recommitment | 46.2% | 4.3 | 145 | no |
| Standard Range Sentence | 40.6% | 4.1 | 362 | |
| Manifest Injustice Sentence | 36.0% | 2.9 | 292 | |
| Detention Sentence | 40.5% | 4.5 | 37 | no |
| Serious or Restricted Offender | 30.4% | 3.2 | 135 | |
| Unrestricted Offender | 41.2% | 3.8 | 549 | no |
| Released from an Institution | 42.8% | 4.3 | 460 | |
| Released from a Group Home | 31.2% | 2.3 | 234 | yes |
| Institutional Stay of 3 Months or Less | 42.6% | 4.9 | 188 | |
| Institutional Stay of 3-6 Months | 43.4% | 3.7 | 196 | |
| Institutional Stay of 6-12 Months | 37.4% | 3.1 | 219 | |
| Institutional Stay of More than 12 Months | 25.3% | 2.4 | 91 | yes |

Several of the variables analyzed in table 2 were related to the youth's recidivism score. Males, younger clients, youths with greater criminal records, youths released from an institution, and youths with shorter lengths of stay had higher recidivism scores than youths without those characteristics. Differences in recidivism scores for other client characteristics were not significantly different.

Type of Reoffense During Parole

Table 3 presents a distribution of the most serious offenses for which the 1982 parolees were reconvicted. The table only includes the single most serious offense for which the individual reoffenders were reconvicted.

Table 3: Most Serious Reoffense of Youths
Paroled in 1982 Who Reoffended While on Parole

| <u>Most Serious Reoffense</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> |
|-------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Violent Offenses | 61 | 18.3% |
| Murder | 1 | 0.3% |
| Rape | 0 | 0.0% |
| Other Sex Offense | 8 | 2.4% |
| Robbery | 9 | 2.7% |
| Assault | 34 | 10.2% |
| Other Violent Offense | 9 | 2.7% |
| Property Offenses | 207 | 62.2% |
| Burglary | 90 | 27.1% |
| Motor Vehicle Theft | 18 | 5.4% |
| Other Property Offense | 99 | 29.7% |
| Other Offenses | 65 | 19.5% |
| Drug Offense | 37 | 11.1% |
| Escape | 5 | 1.5% |
| Other | 23 | 6.9% |
| All Offenses | 333 | 100.0% |

The data in table 3 indicate that the various property offenses were the most frequent type of reoffense during parole. Drug offenses (despite the fact that less than 1% of the parolees were committed for a drug offense) and assaults were also relatively frequent reoffenses.

Recidivism Among Parolees Compared to Youths Directly Discharged

Table 4 presents rates of recidivism and recidivism scores for youths paroled and directly discharged in 1982. Because the average parole length of stay for parolees was 176 days, recidivism was counted over the initial 176 day period after release for the directly discharged youths.

Table 4: During-Parole Recidivism Rates and
Recidivism Scores of Youths Paroled in 1982,
Compared to Youths Directly Discharged in 1982

| <u>Type of Release</u> | <u>% Who Reoffended</u> | <u>Average Recidivism Score</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>Statistically Significant Difference?</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|---|----------|--|
| Parole | 38.9% | 3.7 | 694 | |
| Direct Discharge | 25.1% | 1.9 | 291 | yes |

The results in table 4 indicate that parolees were considerably more likely to reoffend during the six month period following release from residential status. Where the directly discharged youths were reconvicted, on the average, for one "D" offense, youths on parole status were reconvicted for approximately one "C" offense, or two "D" offenses.

It should be noted, however, that the youths who were assigned to parole may have been different than the youths who were directly discharged. Youths may, in some cases, be directly discharged because they are considered a low risk to reoffend. It is possible that youths that were assigned to parole had characteristics that were related to a higher risk to reoffend, e.g. they tended to be younger than the youths directly discharged. In addition, an unknown (but probably very small) number of the directly discharged youths were released as adults to the Department of Corrections, and were therefore incarcerated during a portion of the follow-up period.

Ideally, youths should be randomly assigned to either parole or direct discharge to assure a completely unbiased comparison of the two release options; however, the following section on multivariate analysis examines the impact of assignment to parole on recidivism controlling for such variables as the youth's age and prior criminal history.

Multivariate Analysis of During-Parole Recidivism

Multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the independent effects of the variables analyzed in table 2 (and parole versus direct discharge) on recidivism, controlling for each of the other variables in the analysis. For example, it is possible that a certain subpopulation, e.g., parolees, only appeared more likely to recidivate because that population included youths who had a characteristic that was independently related to recidivism, e.g. they were younger. Regression analysis can determine if assignment to parole was actually related to greater recidivism, controlling for differences in age and other variables in the analysis.

Table 5 presents the results of the regression analysis. The table provides two pieces of information: 1) the percent, out of 100%, that the variable was able to predict the youth's recidivism score, and 2) the degree that changes in the variable incremented the recidivism score. For example, the fact that a youth was male translates to an independent increase in the recidivism score of 2.1 units--the equivalent of two "E" offenses. Stated differently, males committed the equivalent of two additional "E" offenses while on parole, after controlling for all additional variables in the analysis. All variables which were significantly related to recidivism, after controlling for other variables in the analysis, are included in the table.

Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis: Factors that Significantly Predict Recidivism During the Six-Month Period After Release

| <u>Factor</u> | <u>Percent Factor Predicts Recidivism</u> | <u>Degree One Unit of Factor Changes Recidivism Score</u> |
|--|---|---|
| Number of Prior Offenses | 1.6% | 0.3 |
| Age of the Youth | 1.4% | -0.5 |
| Whether the Youth was Assigned to Parole | .7% | 1.3 |
| Sex of the Youth (Female=0; Male=1) | .5% | 2.1 |

The results in table 5 indicate that four variables had a significant, albeit relatively small, impact on a youth's chances of reoffending while on parole. The youth's prior criminal history had the most impact on during-parole recidivism. In general, for every three additional prior offenses, the youth's recidivism score increased by one (or the equivalent of one "E" offense).

Younger releasees were more likely to reoffend. For example, the average recidivism score was approximately two units (or one "D" offense) higher for 14 year olds as compared to 18 year olds.

Parolees were still significantly more likely to reoffend during the period of parole than directly discharged youths, even after controlling for other variables in the analysis. Differences in recidivism between parolees and directly discharged youths decreased after controlling for age and prior record, yet there was still some unmeasured reason for parolees reoffending more often.

One possible explanation is that the DJR parole program was having no positive rehabilitative impact on its clients at the time of this study. A committee of DJR and county staff was formed in 1983 to specifically address concerns that parole may be ineffective. The committee developed a new model of parole designed to impact recidivism. The model requires clients who score higher on a risk assessment tool (based in large part on the youth's age and prior offense record) to receive more intense services. The model is expected to be implemented in the near future.

On the other hand, parolees may be more prone to rearrest simply because they have a higher profile during their stay on parole than directly discharged youths. Parole counselors closely monitor the parolee's activities, and are often in a position to detect criminal behavior that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Another possible explanation is that staff are able to assign youths to parole based on risk factors that were not measured in this study, such as likelihood of returning to school or full-time employment, or stability of family environment. Youths assigned to parole may be a higher risk to reoffend based on factors beyond age and prior record. The plausibility of this explanation is somewhat diminished by the fact that previous research on risk assessment has found very little accuracy among clinical assessments of risk; age and prior record are consistently the two factors that best predict recidivism.

An additional consideration, when comparing parolees and directly discharged youths, is the placement of directly discharged youths on court-ordered community supervision (i.e., probation) after release from DJR supervision. In some counties, the juvenile court judge routinely orders community supervision following the youth's release. Post-release community supervision typically provides a level of supervision similar to that provided by parole, and is often greater in length. Parole is therefore bypassed for these youths. Direct discharge of a youth, then, does not necessarily imply that the youth receives no services. The finding that directly discharged youths reoffended less often than paroled youths may actually indicate that post-release community supervision was more effective than parole. (Unfortunately, the information available for this analysis did not indicate whether specific directly discharged youths were assigned to community supervision or not.)

The youth's sex was also related to during-parole recidivism. Males, on the average, had a recidivism score of 2.1 units, or slightly more than one "D" offense, greater than females.

IV. RECIDIVISM DURING THE THREE YEARS AFTER THE YOUTH'S RELEASE FROM RESIDENTIAL STATUS

DJR clients released in 1982 were reconvicted for 3,350 new offenses during the three-year period that followed their release from residential care. Less than 10% of the 1982 clients were accountable for almost half (46%) of the reoffenses. Of the 3,350 new crimes, approximately 700 were violent.

Table 6 presents recidivism rates and recidivism scores for youths released in 1982 for the three-year period following release. The right hand column indicates whether the recidivism scores were significantly different for each characteristic.

Table 6: Recidivism Rates and Recidivism Score
of Youths Released in 1982 During the 3 Years
After Release, by Various Client Characteristics

| <u>Client Characteristic</u> | <u>% Who Reoffended</u> | <u>Average Recidivism Score</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>Statistically Significant Difference?</u> |
|---|-----------------------------|---|----------|--|
| Total Population | 62.7% | 11.4 | 985 | |
| Male | 64.3% | 11.8 | 930 | |
| Female | 36.3% | 3.4 | 55 | yes |
| Non-White | 64.1% | 11.8 | 198 | |
| White | 62.4% | 11.2 | 787 | no |
| 10-15 Years Old | 72.4% | 19.4 | 275 | |
| 16-17 Years Old | 66.5% | 10.2 | 477 | |
| 18-20 Years Old | 43.8% | 4.2 | 233 | yes |
| No Offense Prior to Committing Offense | 37.6% | 3.9 | 101 | |
| 1-3 Prior Offenses | 57.6% | 10.3 | 321 | |
| 4-7 Prior Offenses | 68.5% | 12.9 | 387 | |
| 8 or More Prior Offense | 73.9% | 14.1 | 176 | yes |
| Violent Offenses | 47.6% | 7.6 | 288 | |
| Murder | 0.0% | 0.0 | 5 | |
| Rape | 57.1% | 6.8 | 14 | |
| Other Sex Offense | 44.4% | 6.7 | 63 | |
| Robbery | 39.8% | 5.9 | 88 | |
| Assault | 57.9% | 9.6 | 76 | |
| Other Violent | 52.4% | 9.9 | 42 | |
| Property Offenses | 69.8% | 12.9 | 583 | |
| Burglary | 69.9% | 12.8 | 385 | |
| Motor Vehicle Theft | 63.6% | 12.5 | 77 | |
| Other Property | 73.6% | 13.2 | 121 | |
| Other Offenses | 64.6% | 12.3 | 113 | |
| Drug Offense | 50.0% | 6.1 | 8 | |
| Escape | 70.7% | 14.3 | 82 | |
| Other Offense | 47.8% | 11.3 | 23 | yes |
| A+,A Committing Offense | 25.5% | 3.3 | 55 | |
| B+,B Committing Offense | 62.8% | 10.9 | 589 | |
| C+,C Committing Offense | 66.3% | 12.7 | 255 | |
| D+,D,E Committing Offense | 75.6% | 15.2 | 86 | yes |
| 0-109 Points | 70.4% | 13.9 | 304 | |
| 110-150 Points | 61.9% | 11.2 | 318 | |
| 151 or More Points | 57.2% | 9.3 | 362 | yes |

Table 6: Recidivism Rates and Recidivism Score
of Youths Released in 1982 During the 3 Years
After Release, by Various Client Characteristics (Continued)

| <u>Client Characteristic</u> | <u>% Who Reoffended</u> | <u>Average Recidivism Score</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>Statistically Significant Difference?</u> |
|--|-----------------------------|---|----------|--|
| Released from a 1st Commitment | 61.5% | 11.3 | 746 | |
| Released from a Recommitment | 66.5% | 11.4 | 239 | no |
| Standard Range Sentence | 63.6% | 11.0 | 511 | |
| Manifest Injustice Sentence | 62.1% | 11.6 | 422 | |
| Detention Sentence | 57.8% | 11.0 | 45 | no |
| Serious or Restricted Offender | 45.9% | 7.7 | 196 | |
| Unrestricted Offender | 67.3% | 12.4 | 774 | yes |
| Released from an Institution | 64.4% | 11.6 | 679 | |
| Released from a Group Home | 59.2% | 10.7 | 306 | no |
| Institutional Stay of 3 Months or Less | 65.8% | 13.3 | 257 | |
| Institutional Stay of 3-6 Months | 68.6% | 11.3 | 277 | |
| Institutional Stay of 6-12 Months | 60.0% | 11.6 | 295 | |
| Institutional Stay of More than 12 Months | 52.6% | 7.7 | 156 | yes |
| Paroled | 67.4% | 12.9 | 694 | |
| Directly Discharged | 51.5% | 7.5 | 291 | yes |
| Parole Stay of 3 Months or Less | 76.2% | 16.4 | 105 | |
| Parole Stay of 3-6 Months | 69.2% | 13.5 | 334 | |
| Parole Stay of 6-12 Months | 60.6% | 10.4 | 213 | |
| Parole Stay of More than 12 Months | 66.7% | 8.1 | 42 | yes |

As in the analysis of during-parole recidivism, several client characteristics were related to higher recidivism scores: sex, age, prior record, type and class of committing offense, whether the youth was a serious offender, the number of points the youth had, the youth's length of stay in residence, whether the youth was assigned to parole, and length of stay on parole.

Type of Reoffenses During Three Years After Release

Table 7 presents the distribution of most serious reoffense among reoffending clients by the most serious offense for which they were committed. The table includes only the most serious offense for which the youth was reconvicted.

The data in table 7 suggest that the offenders did not necessarily specialize in a single crime. In general, youths were reconvicted for the same crime for which they were committed more often than any other specific crime; however, youths in the various crime categories were never reconvicted for the same crime exclusively, or even a majority of the time. None of the rapists, for example, were even reconvicted for a sex offense.

Table 8 combines offenses into more general types of crimes. The table addresses whether offenders were more likely to reoffend with the same general type of crime.

Table 8: Type of Most Serious Reoffense Among
Youths Reoffending Within 3 Years of Release,
by Type of Most Serious Committing Offense

| <u>Type of Committing Offense</u> | <u>Type of Reoffense</u> | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | <u>Violent</u> | <u>Property</u> | <u>Other</u> |
| Violent | 30.4%(41) | 52.6%(71) | 17.0%(23) |
| Property | 17.1%(69) | 66.3%(268) | 16.6%(67) |
| Other | 23.3%(17) | 66.4%(47) | 12.3%(9) |
| Total | 20.8%(127) | 63.1%(386) | 16.2%(99) |

Chi-Square=12.7; $p < .05$

Table 8 indicates there was a small, but statistically significant, relationship between the type of crime for which the youth was committed, and the type of crime for which the youth was reconvicted. For example, youths committed for a violent offense were more likely to be reconvicted for a violent offense than youths committed for a non-violent offense. Yet, in general, table 8 suggests specialization was not the rule among reoffending DJR clients.

Table 7: Most Serious Reoffense Among Youths Reoffending Within 36 Months of Release, By Most Serious Committing Offense

| Most Serious Committing Offense | Most Serious Re-Offense | | | | | | | | | | | | Total Youths With This Offense |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------|----------------------|----------|-----------|------------------|------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|---|
| | Murder | Rape | Other Sex Offense | Robbery | Assault | Other Violent | Burglary | Motor Veh. Theft | Other Property | Drug | Escape | Other | |
| Murder | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Rape | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12.5%(1) | 50.0%(4) | 0 | 37.5%(3) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 |
| Other Sex Offense | 0 | 0 | 17.9%(5) | 7.1%(2) | 3.6%(1) | 0 | 28.6%(8) | 0 | 21.4%(6) | 7.1%(2) | 3.6%(1) | 10.7%(3) | 63 |
| Robbery | 0 | 0 | 5.9%(2) | 8.8%(3) | 14.7%(5) | 8.8%(3) | 20.6%(7) | 2.9%(1) | 11.8%(4) | 14.7%(5) | 0 | 11.8%(4) | 88 |
| Assault | 0 | 0 | 2.3%(1) | 4.5%(2) | 22.7%(10) | 2.3%(1) | 20.5%(9) | 9.1%(4) | 27.3%(12) | 4.5%(2) | 0 | 6.8%(3) | 76 |
| Other Violent | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9.5%(2) | 4.8%(1) | 9.5%(2) | 28.6%(6) | 4.8%(1) | 28.6%(6) | 4.8%(1) | 9.5%(2) | 0 | 42 |
| Burglary | 0.4%(1) | 0.4%(1) | 1.9%(3) | 4.5%(12) | 6.4%(17) | 3.4%(9) | 44.7%(119) | 4.1%(11) | 19.5%(52) | 7.9%(21) | 2.3%(6) | 4.5%(12) | 385 |
| Motor Veh. Theft | 0 | 0 | 2.0%(1) | 0 | 10.2%(5) | 0 | 42.9%(21) | 8.2%(4) | 8.2%(4) | 10.2%(5) | 14.3%(7) | 4.1%(2) | 77 |
| Other Property | 0 | 0 | 1.1%(1) | 6.7%(6) | 10.1%(9) | 2.2%(2) | 27.0%(24) | 3.4%(3) | 33.7%(30) | 9.0%(8) | 2.2%(2) | 4.5%(4) | 121 |
| Drug | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25.0%(1) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25.0%(1) | 0 | 50.0%(2) | 0 | 8 |
| Escape | 1.7%(1) | 0 | 1.7%(1) | 3.4%(2) | 10.3%(6) | 5.2%(3) | 39.7%(23) | 8.6%(5) | 20.7%(12) | 5.2%(3) | 0 | 3.4%(2) | 82 |
| Other | 0 | 0 | 9.1%(1) | 9.1%(1) | 9.1%(1) | 0 | 36.4%(4) | 9.1%(1) | 9.1%(1) | 9.1%(1) | 0 | 9.1%(1) | 23 |
| Total | 0.3%(2) | 0.2%(1) | 2.8%(17) | 4.9%(30) | 9.2%(56) | 3.4%(21) | 36.8%(225) | 4.9%(30) | 21.4%(131) | 7.8%(48) | 3.3%(20) | 5.1%(31) | 985 |

Multivariate Analysis of Three-Year Post-Release Recidivism

A multiple regression analysis was also performed on recidivism during the three-year follow-up period. The results of that analysis are presented in table 9. Again, only those variables that were significantly related to recidivism, after controlling for all variables in the analysis, are listed.

Table 9: Multiple Regression Analysis:
Factors that Significantly Predict
Three-Year Post-Release Recidivism

| <u>Factor</u> | <u>Percent Factor Predicts Recidivism</u> | <u>Degree One Unit of Factor Changes Recidivism Score</u> |
|---|---|---|
| Age of the Youth | 10.5% | -3.6 |
| Number of Prior Offenses | 2.5% | 1.0 |
| Sex of the Youth (Female=0; Male=1) | 2.0% | 10.0 |
| Whether the Youth was Assigned to Parole | .4% | 2.3 |

The same variables that were related to during-parole recidivism, age, prior record, sex, and type of release, were also related to recidivism for the full three-year follow-up period. Each of these variables are examined in more detail in the following sections.

Recidivism and Age

The age of the client at release had a considerable impact on the youth's recidivism score. Youths that were 14, for example, generally had scores that were 7 units greater--the equivalent of an additional B+ offense during the three-year period--than youths that were 16. To demonstrate the consistency with which age impacts recidivism throughout the three-year follow-up period, figure 1 is presented to show cumulative recidivism scores for the age groups of 10-15, 16-17, and 18-20 at six month intervals.

FIGURE 1: Cumulative Recidivism Scores for Six-Month Intervals by Age at Release

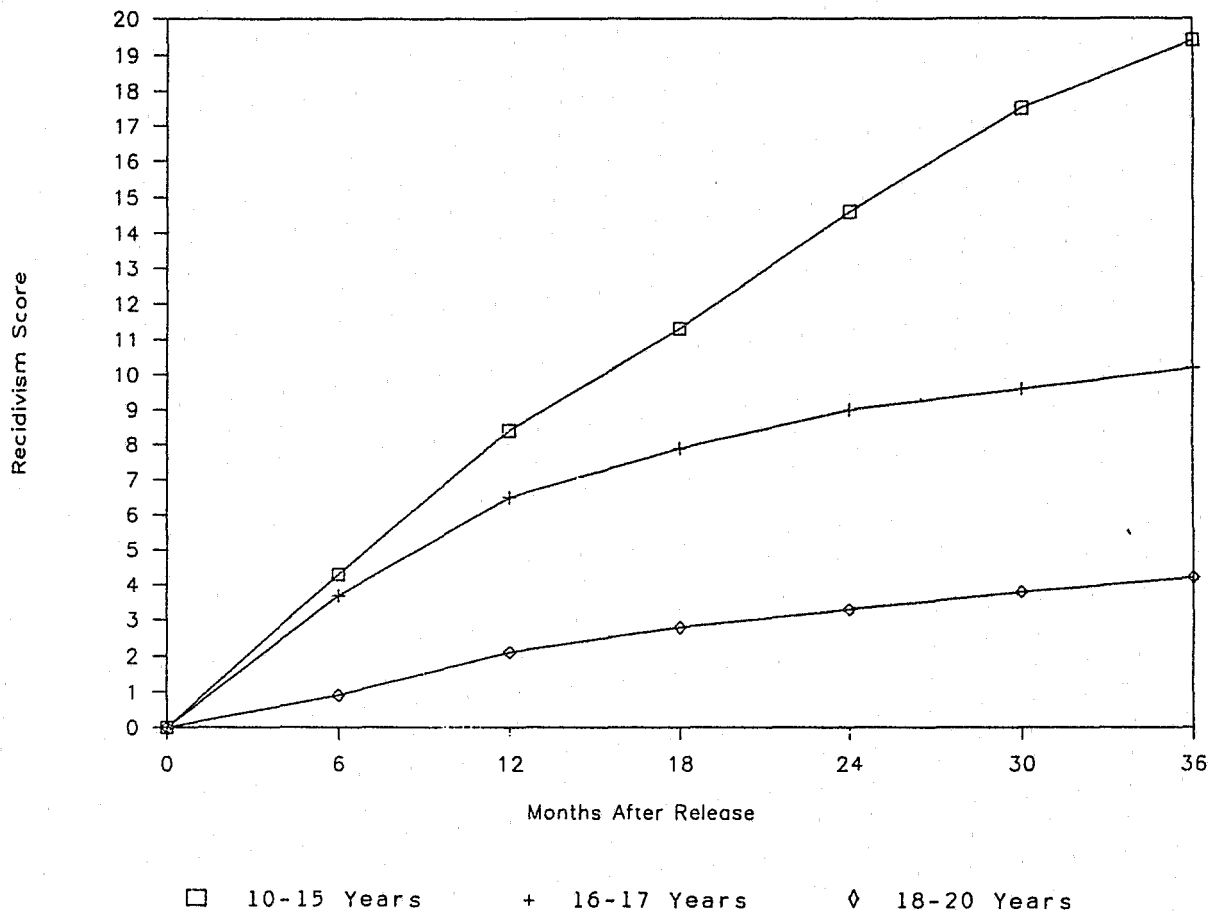


Figure 1 shows that the youngest group, the 10-15 year olds, demonstrated an increasingly higher recidivism score during the follow-up period. The cumulative score for these offenders increased throughout the three-year period, while the cumulative score for the 18-20 year group virtually leveled out during the later months of the three-year period.

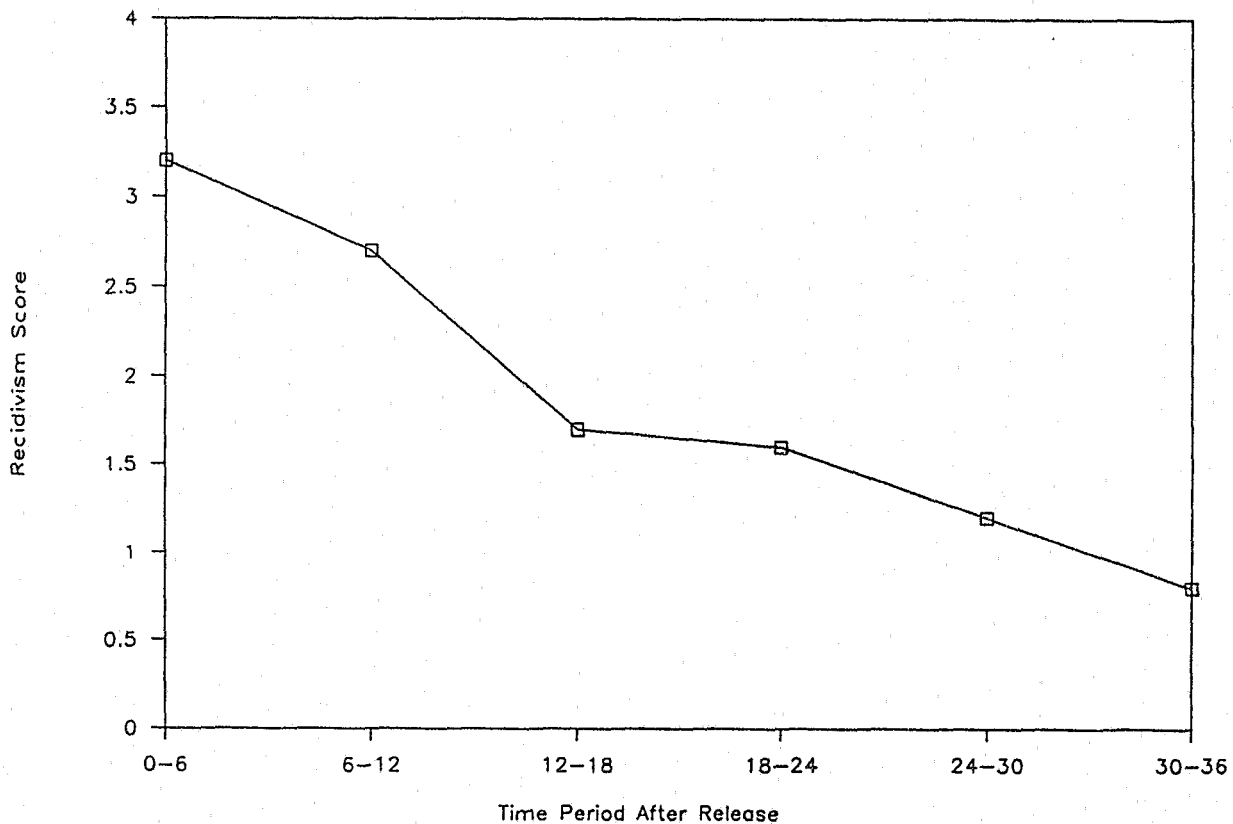
Table 10 examines, in greater detail, the degree with which reoffending begins to decrease, during the later months of the three-year follow-up period. Both the rate of recidivism and the recidivism score were recalculated to include only reoffenses occurring within each of the six-month periods during the full three-year follow-up period.

Table 10: Recidivism Rates and Recidivism Scores
During Six-Month Periods After Release

| <u>Months</u> <u>After Release</u> | <u>% Who</u> <u>Reoffended</u> <u>During Period</u> | <u>Recidivism</u> <u>Score</u> <u>During Period</u> |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| 0 to 6 Months | 37.1% | 3.2 |
| 6 to 12 Months | 30.9% | 2.7 |
| 12 to 18 Months | 22.9% | 1.7 |
| 18 to 24 Months | 21.0% | 1.6 |
| 24 to 30 Months | 16.3% | 1.2 |
| 30 to 36 Months | 12.3% | 0.8 |

Table 10 shows how recidivism declined rapidly during the later months of the three-year post-release period. By the final six-month period, the average recidivism score of the offender was 75% less than the average score for the first six months of the post-release period. Figure 2 presents graphically the decline of six-month recidivism scores over the duration of the three-year period.

FIGURE 2: Recidivism Scores Within Six-Month Time Periods
After Release from Residential Status

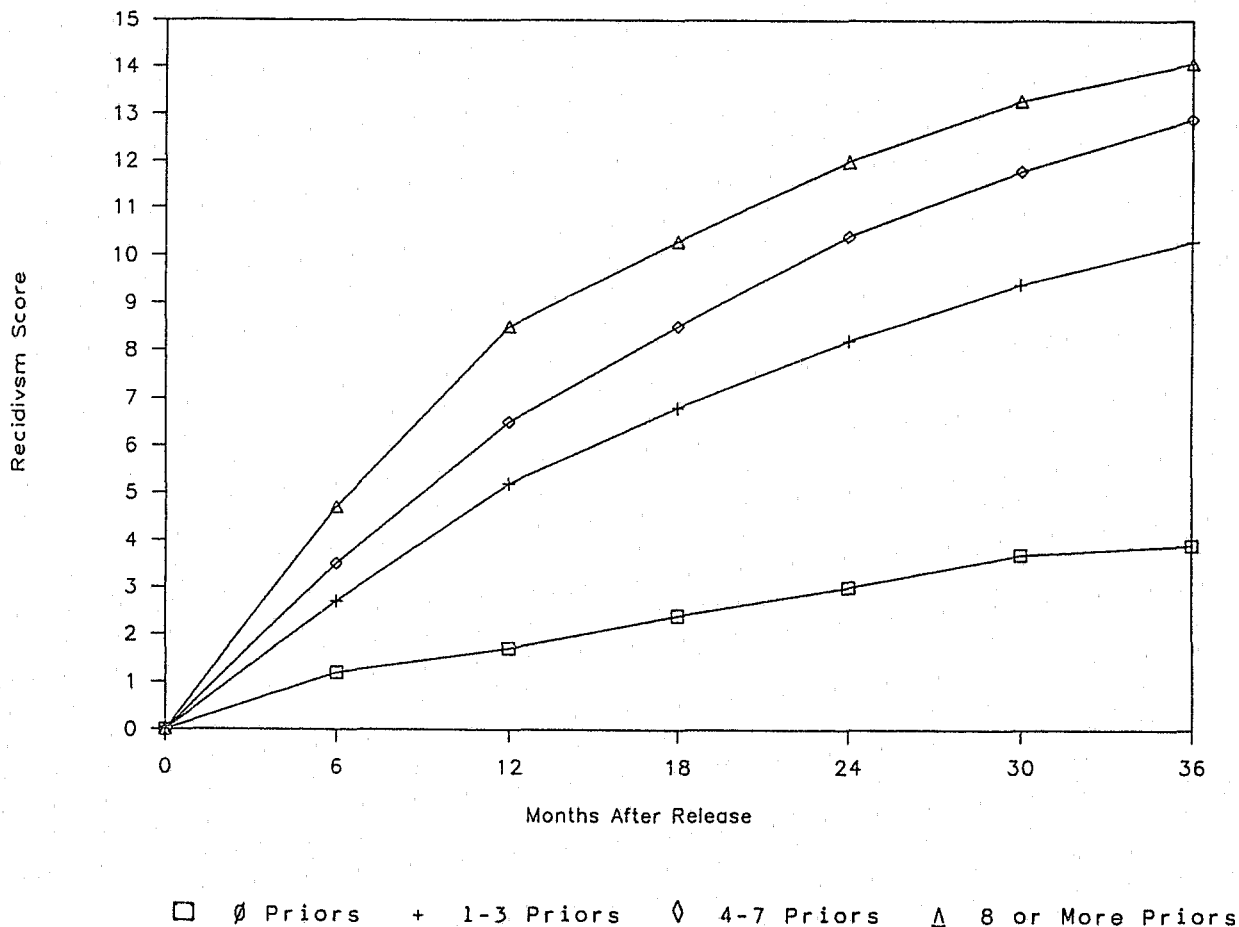


These findings provide strong evidence for a "maturation effect". Many DJR clients apparently "grow out" of delinquent behavior as they grow older. Factors that were not measured for this report, such as whether the youth received a diploma or found full-time employment, may account for the better performance of older youths. On the other hand, older youths may simply lose interest in criminal behavior as they mature.

Recidivism and Prior Record

The analysis indicated that the youth's prior criminal history had the second largest impact on the youth's three-year post-release recidivism score. For each additional prior offense, the youth's recidivism score increased by approximately one, or an "E" offense. For example, a youth with 8 prior offenses had, on the average, a recidivism score 8 units (e.g., one "A" offense) higher than a youth with no prior offenses. Figure 3 shows cumulative recidivism scores for youths with no prior offenses, 1 to 3 priors, 4 to 7 priors, and 8 or more priors across six-month intervals during the three-year follow-up period.

FIGURE 3: Cumulative Recidivism Scores for Six-Month Intervals by Number of Prior Offenses

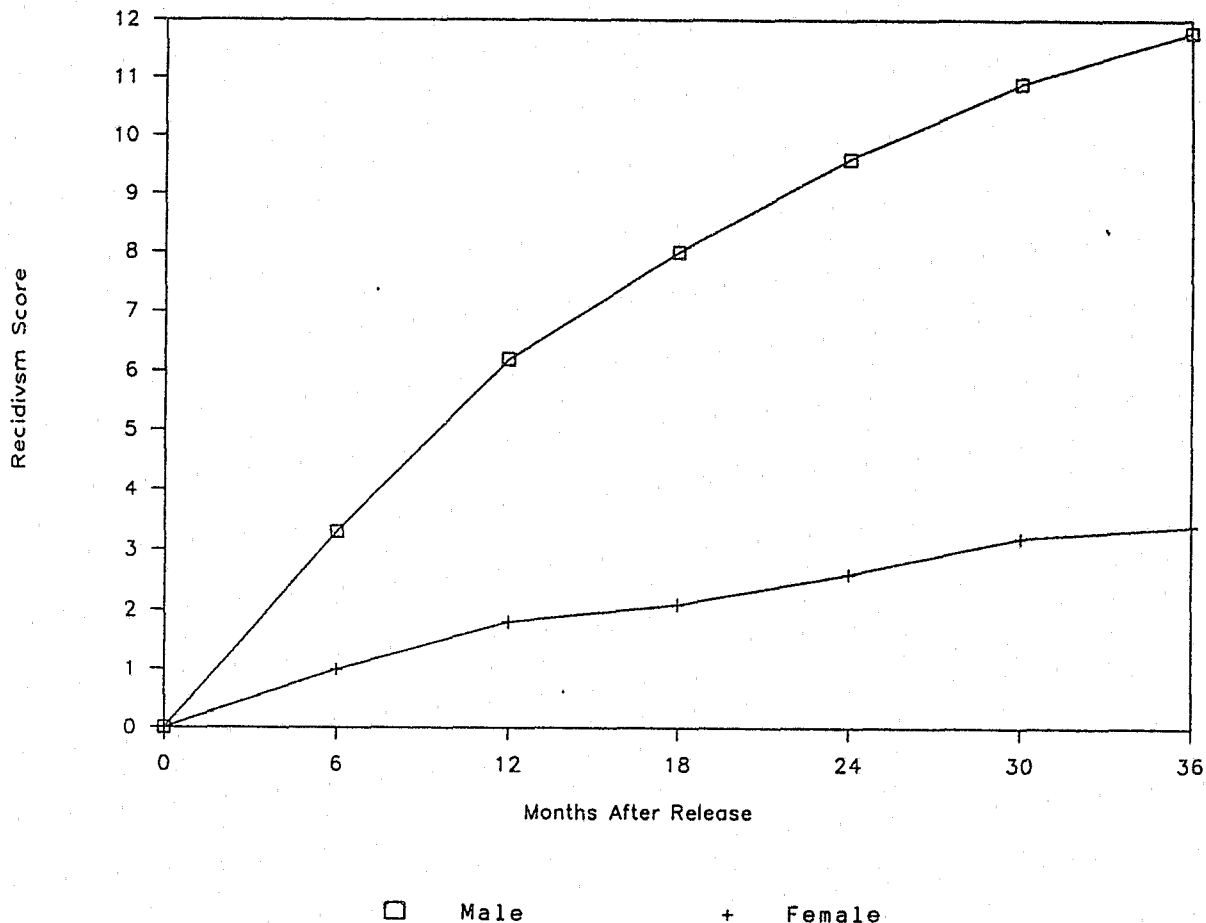


Recidivism and Sex Of Youth

Even after controlling for other variables in the analysis, the fact that a youth was male added 10 units to that youth's three-year recidivism score. Recidivism among females with prior offenses was actually lower than recidivism among males with no priors.

Figure 4 shows cumulative recidivism scores for males and females across six-month intervals.

FIGURE 4: Cumulative Recidivism Scores for Six-Month Intervals by Sex of Client



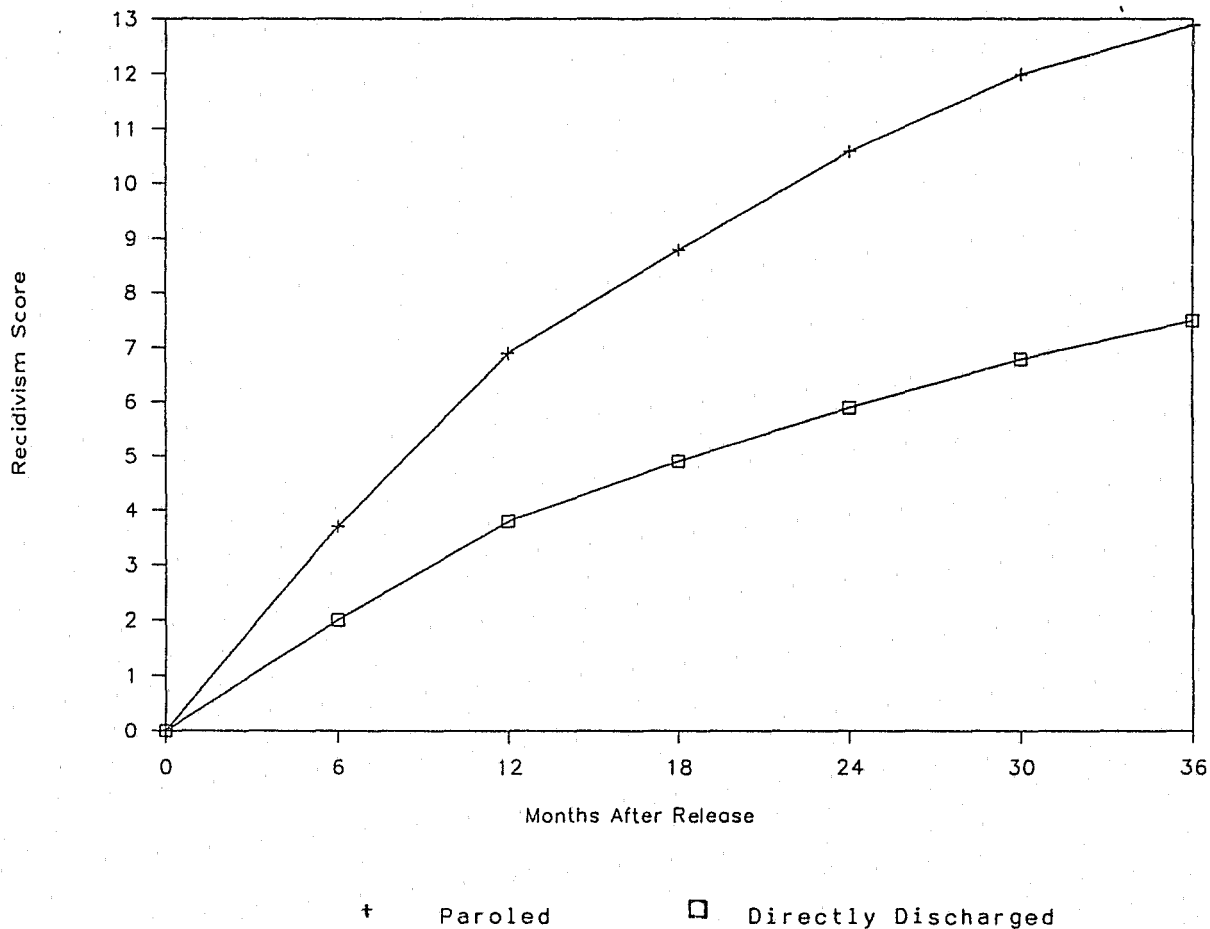
Recidivism and Type of Release

Paroled youths, on the average, had a three-year recidivism score 2.3 units greater than directly discharged youths. During the follow-up period, the typical parolee was convicted of at least two additional "E" offenses, or one "D" offense as compared to the typical youth who was directly discharged.

(As stated earlier, the increased monitoring to which parolees are subjected during their stay on parole may have lead to an inflated parole recidivism score. This effect may have also had a slight impact on the three-year score since the period of parole was included in the three-year period. To avoid this problem, a three-year post-parole recidivism score was also calculated and analyzed. The results were identical to the three-year post-release analysis; parolees were still more likely to reoffend during the three-year period than directly discharged youths.)

Figure 5 shows cumulative recidivism scores for paroled youths and directly discharged youths across six-month intervals.

FIGURE 5: Cumulative Recidivism Scores for Six-Month Intervals by Type of Release



An additional analysis of recidivism among parolees and directly discharged youths revealed some interesting findings. Assignment to parole appeared to impact offenders with different ages and prior records in distinct ways. Table 11 presents recidivism rates and scores for parolees and directly discharged youths across three age groups: 10-15, 16-17, and 18-20. Table 12 presents similar data across four groups based on prior record: no priors, 1 to 3 priors, 4 to 7 priors, and 8 or more priors.

Table 11: Recidivism Rates and Recidivism Scores During Three Years After Release by Type of Release by Age at Release

| <u>Type of Release</u> | <u>Age at Release</u> | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | <u>10-15</u> | | <u>16-17</u> | | <u>18-20</u> | |
| | <u>Rate</u> | <u>Score</u> | <u>Rate</u> | <u>Score</u> | <u>Rate</u> | <u>Score</u> |
| Parole | 74.6% | 20.3 | 69.8% | 10.8 | 40.9% | 3.5 |
| Direct Discharge | 61.7% | 14.7 | 54.8% | 8.1 | 45.7% | 4.6 |

Table 12: Recidivism Rates and Recidivism Scores During Three Years After Release by Type of Release by Number of Priors

| <u>Type of Release</u> | <u>Number of Priors</u> | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| | <u>0</u> | | <u>1-3</u> | | <u>4-7</u> | | <u>8+</u> | |
| | <u>Rate</u> | <u>Score</u> | <u>Rate</u> | <u>Score</u> | <u>Rate</u> | <u>Score</u> | <u>Rate</u> | <u>Score</u> |
| Parole | 35.6% | 3.5 | 59.0% | 11.5 | 75.6% | 14.8 | 84.5% | 17.1 |
| Direct Discharge | 42.9% | 4.8 | 54.3% | 7.1 | 50.9% | 8.1 | 52.5% | 8.3 |

The results in tables 11 and 12 confirm that, at least among younger clients and clients with prior records, there was considerably more recidivism among parolees than directly discharged clients. However, the results also indicate that older clients actually reoffended less often if paroled as opposed to directly discharged. Similarly, the results in table 12 indicate that youths with no prior offenses reoffended to a lesser degree if assigned to parole. Though the results for the overall DJR parole population were not very positive, these data indicate that parole was actually more effective (than direct discharge) for older clients and clients without a criminal history.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Multiple regression analysis indicated that four variables were significantly, though not strongly, related to "during-parole" recidivism (i.e., reoffenses during the six-month period following the youth's release from residential care): the youth's age, the youth's prior criminal history, the youth's sex, and whether the youth was assigned to parole (as opposed to directly discharged). Stated differently, younger clients, youths with more prior offenses, males, and parolees were more likely to reoffend during the first six months after release.

Multiple regression analysis indicated that the same four variables that were significantly related to during-parole recidivism, were also related to recidivism during the three year period after their release from residential care: the youth's age, the youth's prior criminal history, the youth's sex, and whether the youth was assigned to parole (as opposed to directly discharged).

Age, prior criminal record, and sex of the client were each at least moderately related to reoffending during the three-year follow-up period. These three variables appear to be the best available predictors of a youth's risk to reoffend. Consideration might be given to making placement decisions based on these variables. Younger clients, youths with extensive prior records, and males were especially likely to reoffend--higher security placements may be more appropriate for youths with those characteristics in certain instances.

Assignment to parole was not very strongly related to recidivism; however, this section of the analysis has important implications for programming. Though reducing recidivism is one of many goals of parole (besides meeting the basic needs of clients and holding clients accountable for their crimes), it is a primary goal of the program. The results of this study suggest that parole was unable to impact recidivism.

However, several concerns with the analysis of parole were noted in the report. First, there is the possibility that activities of parolees were more noticed (and more subject to criminal prosecution) because the parolees were closely monitored. Second, the paroled offenders might have been different than the directly discharged youths beyond the factors (e.g., age, prior criminal history) statistically controlled in this analysis. Finally, many of the youths who were directly discharged may have been assigned to community supervision--potentially biasing the analysis of parole supervision (versus no parole supervision).

The results of this analysis leave enough doubt that further study of the impact of parole is recommended. Ideally, more detailed information on offenses occurring during parole would be

gathered in a re-analysis. Offenses that were likely generated solely because of the youth's assignment to parole (e.g., offenses brought to the court's attention by the parole counselor) could then be excluded in the count of reoffenses.

In addition, youths would be randomly assigned to either parole or direct discharge in an ideal research design. Random assignment would permit unbiased comparison of parolees and directly discharged youths such that unmeasured differences between the two groups would no longer be a concern. A more scientific study of parole could then determine if the benefits of parole equal or exceed the costs of parole.