

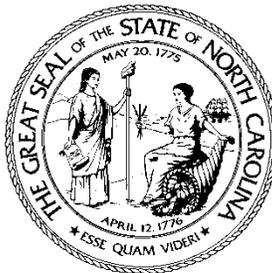
*North Carolina*  
*Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission*

**Effectiveness of  
Programs Funded by Juvenile  
Crime Prevention Councils**

*Prepared By*

*Amy Craddock, Ph.D.*

*Ginny Hevener*



*Submitted Pursuant to G.S. § 164-49*  
*May 1, 2013*



# Effectiveness of Programs Funded by Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils



**North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission**

**P.O. Box 2448  
Raleigh, NC 27602  
(919) 890-1470**

**<http://www.nccourts.org/Courts/CRS/Councils/spac>**

**The Honorable W. Erwin Spainhour**  
*Chairman*

**Susan Katzenelson**  
*Executive Director*



**NC SENTENCING AND POLICY ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MEMBERSHIP**

**Hon. W. Erwin Spainhour, Chairman**  
*Superior Court Judge*

**Hon. Charles E. Brown**  
*NC District Court Judges' Association*

**William P. Hart**  
*NC Attorney General's Office*

**Hon. Harry Brown**  
*State Senator*

**Hon. Jeff Hunt**  
*NC Conference of District Attorneys*

**Paul Butler**  
*NC Post-Release Supervision & Parole  
Commission*

**Dr. Robin Jenkins**  
*NC Department of Public Safety*

**Sheriff James E. Clemmons, Jr.**  
*NC Sheriffs' Association*

**Iiona Kusa**  
*NC Victim Assistance Network*

**Christopher Clifton**  
*NC Bar Association*

**Hon. Floyd B. McKissick, Jr.**  
*State Senator*

**Chief Scott Cunningham**  
*NC Association of Chiefs of Police*

**Dr. Harvey Lee McMurray**  
*Academic Member*

**Hon. Warren Daniel**  
*State Senator*

**Luther T. Moore**  
*Lieutenant Governor's Appointee*

**Hon. N. Leo Daughtry**  
*State Representative*

**Hon. Fred G. Morrison, Jr.**  
*Justice Fellowship*

**Louise Davis**  
*NC Community Sentencing Association*

**Sandy Pearce**  
*Private Citizen, Governor's Appointee*

**Hon. Richard A. Elmore**  
*NC Court of Appeals*

**Hon. June Ray**  
*NC Association of Clerks of Superior Court*

**Hon. Robert C. Ervin**  
*NC Conference of Superior Court Judges*

**Billy J. Sanders**  
*Commission Chairman's Appointee*

**Hon. John Faircloth**  
*State Representative*

**Thomas Thompson**  
*NC Association of County Commissioners*

**Christopher Fialko**  
*NC Advocates for Justice*

**Vacant**  
*NC Retail Merchants' Association*

**Vacant**  
*State Representative*

**NC SENTENCING AND POLICY ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**STAFF**

---

---

**Susan Katzenelson**  
*Executive Director*

**John Madler**  
*Associate Director for Policy, Staff Attorney*

**Ginny Hevener**  
*Associate Director for Research*

**Tamara Flinchum**  
*Senior Research & Policy Associate*

**Amy Craddock, Ph.D.**  
*Research & Policy Associate*

**Michelle Hall**  
*Research & Policy Associate*

**Sara Perdue**  
*Research & Policy Associate*

**Vicky Etheridge**  
*Administrative Assistant*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. STUDY DIRECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY.....	1
Introduction.....	1
History of Community-Based Programming Prior to JCPC.....	1
Establishment and Development of JCPCs .....	2
The JCPC Process: Planning, Funding, and Monitoring .....	3
Planning and Funding .....	3
Monitoring and Evaluation .....	4
Description of the JCPC Population and Programs .....	5
Research Design and Methodology .....	7
Sample Selection.....	7
Study Period and Measures.....	7
Data Sources .....	8
Analysis and Report Outline.....	8
II. STATISTICAL PROFILE OF JCPC PROGRAMS AND PARTICIPANTS .....	9
Characteristics of FY 2008/09 Programs and Program Admissions .....	9
<i>Figure 2.1 Legal Status of JCPC Program Participants</i> .....	10
<i>Table 2.1 JCPC Programs and Participants</i> .....	11
<i>Figure 2.2 Program Assignment by Legal Status of JCPC Participants</i> .....	12
Personal Characteristics of Participants.....	12
<i>Table 2.2 Demographic Profile of JCPC Participants by Legal Status</i> .....	13
<i>Figure 2.3 Age Distribution of JCPC Participants by Legal Status</i> .....	14
Referral Reason and Referral Source.....	15
Problems in the Year before JCPC Program Admission .....	15
<i>Table 2.3 Referral Reason and Referral Source by Legal Status of JCPC Participants</i> .	16
Summary .....	17
III. RECIDIVISM OF JCPC PARTICIPANTS.....	18
Outcome Measures .....	18
Follow-up Period .....	19
<i>Figure 3.1 Average Number of Follow-up Months for JCPC Participants under Juvenile and Adult Jurisdiction</i> .....	20
Juvenile and Adult Recidivism .....	21
Recidivism Rates .....	21
<i>Table 3.1 Recidivism of JCPC Participants by Legal Status</i> .....	21
<i>Table 3.2 Recidivism of JCPC Participants by Personal Characteristics and Legal Status</i> .....	22
Time to First Recidivist Event .....	22
<i>Table 3.3 Average Time to First Recidivist Event for JCPC Participants by Legal Status</i> .....	23
<i>Figure 3.2 Survival Distribution of Time to First Recidivist Event</i> .....	24
Recidivist Offenses .....	24

<i>Table 3.4 First Recidivist Offense and Most Serious Recidivist Offense for JCPC Participants by Legal Status</i> .....	25
Juvenile Adjudications and Adult Convictions.....	25
<i>Table 3.5 Number and Percentage of JCPC Participants with Subsequent Juvenile Adjudication or Adult Conviction by Legal Status</i> .....	25
Detention Admissions and YDC Commitments .....	26
Transfers to Superior Court .....	26
<i>Table 3.6 Number and Percentage of JCPC Participants with Subsequent Juvenile Detention Admission or YDC Commitment by Legal Status</i> .....	26
Adult Recidivism among Juvenile Recidivists .....	26
<i>Table 3.7 Percentage of JCPC Participants with Adult Arrests by Juvenile Recidivism and Legal Status</i> .....	27
<i>Table 3.8 Percentage of JCPC Participants with Adult Arrests by Juvenile Confinement and Legal Status</i> .....	28
Program Participation Outcomes .....	28
Program Completion.....	28
<i>Table 3.9 Reason for Termination by Legal Status</i> .....	29
<i>Table 3.10 Program Completion by JCPC Program Category and Legal Status</i> .....	30
Recidivism by Program Characteristics.....	30
<i>Table 3.11 Recidivism of JCPC Participants by Program Type</i> .....	31
Summary .....	31
General Recidivism Characteristics.....	31
Characteristics of Recidivist Events .....	32
 IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS .....	 33
Summary of Findings.....	33
<i>Figure 4.1 Three-Year Recidivism Rates for JCPC Participants by Legal Status</i> .....	34
Suitability of Existing Data for Studying Program Effectiveness .....	34
<i>Figure 4.2 Recidivism Rates for JCPC Program Categories by Legal Status</i> .....	35
Conclusions.....	36
 APPENDIX A: JCPC SERVICE COMPONENTS.....	 37
APPENDIX B: RECIDIVISM OF JCPC PARTICIPANTS BY PROGRAM TYPE.....	41
<i>Table B.1 Recidivism of JCPC Participants by Program Type</i> .....	42

## CHAPTER ONE

### STUDY DIRECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

#### *Introduction*

The Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1998 specified that only effective Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) programs should receive state funding.<sup>1</sup> In the 2007 Session of the General Assembly, the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission was mandated to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of measuring the effectiveness of JCPC programs (G.S. § 164-49). The JCPC Feasibility Study, which was submitted to the General Assembly on May 1, 2009, recommended an exploratory study to evaluate the relationship between JCPC participants' characteristics, program participation, and subsequent juvenile and adult justice system contacts.

As a result of the feasibility study, the Sentencing Commission was directed during the 2009 Session of the General Assembly to prepare biennial reports on the effectiveness of programs receiving JCPC funds (G.S. § 164-49):

**SECTION 15.17J.** The Judicial Department, through the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Commission, shall conduct biennial studies on the effectiveness of programs receiving Juvenile Crime Prevention Council grant funding in North Carolina. Each study shall be based upon a sample of juveniles admitted to programs funded with JCPC grants and document subsequent involvement in both the juvenile justice system and criminal justice system for at least two years following the sample admittance. All State agencies shall provide data as requested by the Commission.

The Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission shall report the results of the first effectiveness study to the Chairs of the Senate and House of Representatives Appropriations Committees and the Chairs of the Senate and House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittees on Justice and Public Safety by May 1, 2011, and future reports shall be made by May 1 of each odd-numbered year.

The first report was delivered to the General Assembly on May 1, 2011. This study, based on Fiscal Year 2008/09 admissions to JCPC programs, is the second biennial report prepared by the Sentencing Commission in compliance with the above-cited legislative directive.

#### *History of Community-Based Programming Prior to JCPC*

Before 1975, community-based programming for youth involved in the juvenile justice system or those who were presenting school- or home-based problems was limited and was not organized systematically. In 1975, the General Assembly passed legislation establishing a framework for community-based programs referred to as "Community-Based Alternatives (CBA)." Administration for CBA was housed under the Department of Health and Human

---

<sup>1</sup> G.S. § 143B-1104(a)(1).

Services in its Division of Youth Services (DYS), which also provided oversight for the confinement facilities for court-involved youth (*i.e.*, training schools and detention centers). This marked the first major effort at the state level to bring about a more structured approach to establishing and maintaining programs in local communities for court-involved juveniles or youth who were “at risk” by their behavior to become involved in the juvenile justice system. CBA also marked the beginning of a new approach, with the state and counties partnering in their efforts to create resources specific to the particular needs of a county. The process for CBA funding involved the county submission of funding proposals for programs in their respective locales to the state-level CBA office. Funding for approved proposals was disbursed to counties, which then provided oversight of their respective CBA programs through local advisory councils known as Youth Services Advisory Councils. These Councils, composed of community leaders and representatives from youth-related and law enforcement agencies, had the primary responsibilities of planning and overseeing CBA-funded programs. CBA operated in this manner, with few changes, for over 25 years.

### ***Establishment and Development of JCPCs***

The Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1998 brought about the next change in community programming, which culminated in the system that currently exists. As a result of this legislation, the two entities housing the majority of services for delinquent and undisciplined juveniles in the state, the aforementioned DHS and the Juvenile Services Division within the Administrative Office of the Courts, were combined to create a single cabinet-level agency, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (which, in 2000, became the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention – DJJDP). Through this consolidation of services, the Department was authorized to coordinate and administer all services associated with the juvenile justice system, including community-based programming. With DJJDP assuming more of a leadership and oversight role than had previously existed under DHS, operations for programming became more centralized. With the 2012 reorganization of the Department of Public Safety (DPS), the responsibilities of the DJJDP were assumed by the DPS’s Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).

Community-based programming was redefined and expanded statutorily by the reform. The previous legislative intent of community programming directed that program services be targeted at court-involved juveniles (*i.e.*, delinquent and undisciplined youth), and especially those who were in jeopardy of being committed to training school. With the enactment of the new juvenile laws, the intent of the General Assembly for community-based services went beyond the previous mandate of targeting court-involved youth by adding juveniles who are at risk for delinquency. This intent, reflected in G.S. § 143B-845, states the following:

It is the intent of the General Assembly to prevent juveniles who are at risk from becoming delinquent. The primary intent of this Part is to develop community-based alternatives to youth development centers and to provide community-based delinquency, substance abuse, and gang prevention strategies and programs. Additionally, it is the intent of the General Assembly to provide noninstitutional dispositional alternatives that will protect the community and the juveniles.

The new laws retained local advisory councils but changed the name to Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils. Statutory adjustments gave the councils a more structured process for member appointments and extended their powers and duties. Each JCPC is capped at 26 members, all of whom are to be appointed by the local board of county commissioners. The membership composition of the JCPC is legislatively mandated, and specifies representatives from local government entities (*e.g.*, schools, social services), courts, law enforcement, faith community, business community, nonprofit agency, as well as private adult and youth citizens.

In general, the statutorily defined primary powers and duties of JCPCs are tri-fold. First, each council must go through an annual planning process in order to produce a plan of action for the expenditure of JCPC funds.<sup>2</sup> Second, it is the responsibility of each county council to ensure that appropriate intermediate dispositional sanctions are available and that funding is prioritized for adjudicated youth receiving Level 1 and Level 2 dispositions.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, these dispositional options must meet minimum standards adopted by DJJ.<sup>4</sup> Third, JCPCs are charged with fulfilling other specified duties on an ongoing basis.<sup>5</sup>

The position of specialist/area consultant, which existed in the former community programming system, was retained within the DJJ to serve as a liaison between the Division and JCPCs by providing monitoring of funded programs and technical assistance to local councils.

### ***The JCPC Process: Planning, Funding, and Monitoring***

#### **Planning and Funding**

Each of North Carolina's 100 counties has a JCPC. On an annual basis, each council is responsible for determining, planning, and developing services that are needed within its local community to address and prevent juvenile delinquency. This process ultimately results in the programs to be funded in the county for that year. All counties receive a legislative allocation which consists of the same across-the-board base allocation coupled with an allocation that is proportionate to the population of youth aged 10-17 in the county. The DJJ administers the funding for JCPC programs. Additionally, counties must provide a local cash and/or in-kind match of 10%, 20%, or 30%, depending on the poverty level of the county. In general, councils begin the annual planning process by studying data related to the risk and needs of juveniles in their counties. For this task, a JCPC relies on information from the risk and needs assessments completed on all juveniles who have received a complaint in the local juvenile court.<sup>6</sup> Based on

---

<sup>2</sup> G.S. § 143B-851 (a).

<sup>3</sup> Most youth adjudicated delinquent for misdemeanors and youth with no previous delinquency history adjudicated for Class F-I felonies typically receive Level 1 dispositions. Youth with no previous delinquency history adjudicated for more Class F-I felonies or youth with more extensive delinquency histories typically receive Level 2 dispositions. Youth adjudicated for more serious felonies or those with an extensive delinquency history who have been adjudicated for any felony may receive a Level 3 disposition, which typically consists of commitment to a Youth Development Center (YDC).

<sup>4</sup> G.S. § 143B-851 (b).

<sup>5</sup> G.S. § 143B-851 (c).

<sup>6</sup> Beginning in 2006, the risk and needs assessments were incorporated into the intake component of the juvenile justice process for use in making the intake decision of whether or not a juvenile's case would be diverted from or referred to juvenile court. Previously, assessments were completed only for juveniles whose complaint was filed as a

this information, a JCPC can identify and prioritize the resources needed to serve juveniles in their county who are court-involved and those who are at risk to become involved in the juvenile justice system. To identify any gaps in programming, the JCPC compared services that are needed to ones that are currently in operation in the particular county.

Once this annual plan has been developed, requests for proposals for programs to address the defined needs are solicited. The council reviews all incoming proposals, approving those that are qualified and meet the identified resource needs. Upon selecting programs to receive funding in view of the county's predetermined allocation, the funding recommendations and the plan for the upcoming year are subsequently submitted for approval to the board of county commissioners. Finally, the JCPC plan and the certification that the recommended programs have met DJJ standards are forwarded to the DJJ for approval.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Once a JCPC receives confirmation from DJJ of its funding and funded programs have begun operating, a council commences its process of monitoring and evaluating the performance of programs and managing of funds over the course of the year. As noted in DJJ policies, the monitoring and evaluation is a shared responsibility between the JCPCs and the Division, with each program type having its own set procedures for this purpose. Each JCPC appoints a monitoring committee that is charged with making on-site, annual visits to each funded program to review program compliance with the current program agreement. The monitoring committee reports its findings back to the council, and this information is used in making recommendations for continued funding for programs.

DJJ plays a role in monitoring the JCPC programs and in providing technical assistance and training to local councils through the work of the specialists/area consultants. Currently, there are ten specialists/area consultants who are assigned to various counties in the Eastern, Central, Piedmont, and Western regions of the state. DJJ policy states that specialists/area consultants are responsible for monitoring the compliance with provisions of the contractual agreement between the program and the Department for both newly funded and existing JCPC programs. For new programs, specialists/area consultants provide orientation training, review program implementation, offer technical assistance through on-site visit(s), and review compliance with program-specific standards of operation within the program's first year of JCPC funding. For existing programs, specialists/area consultants continue to offer technical support and to review program compliance with the standards set by DJJ. Specialists/area consultants make on-site visits to existing programs at least every three years at which time a lengthy monitoring review report is completed. At any time that a specialist/area consultant determines that a program has violated standards set by DJJ, the Division has policies that dictate corrective actions to be used in addressing said violations.

---

petition and scheduled for a court hearing. This standard state-wide assessment is not available for at-risk youth, however. Therefore, assessment results are not included in the JCPC effectiveness study.

## ***Description of the JCPC Population and Programs***

As previously noted, the language in the statutes governing JCPCs defines the population of juveniles to be served by JCPC programs. The majority of JCPC participants fall into one of two categories. The first category, which constitutes the larger portion of juveniles served by JCPC programs, are youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system at some level. This group includes juveniles who have received a delinquent or undisciplined complaint<sup>7</sup> that resulted in either a diversion from court or a decision to refer the case for a juvenile court hearing. The second category consists of youth who are displaying behaviors that place them “at risk” for involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Youths who are referred to JCPC programs are typically between the ages of 6 and 17, but programs can serve youth over 17 and as young as 5. Priority for JCPC services is given to juveniles who are involved in the juvenile justice system. The majority of referrals originate from juvenile court and school personnel, but referral sources can also include parents and law enforcement. Juveniles can be referred to and participate in more than one community-based program at a time.

During FY 2011/12, nearly 600 JCPC programs were funded in counties across the state. Listed below are the six broad groups into which each program-based service is categorized. All funded JCPC program services must meet DJJ minimum standards for their design, implementation, and operation. (*See Appendix A for a more detailed description of individual program services.*)

Residential Services: Programs where services are delivered in a residential setting.

- Group Home Care
- Temporary Shelter Care
- Runaway Shelter Care
- Specialized Foster Care
- Temporary Foster Care

Clinical Treatment: Programs that offer professional help to a juvenile and/or the juvenile’s family to solve problems through goal directed planning. Treatment may include individual, group, family counseling or a combination. It may have a particular focus such as sex offender treatment or substance abuse treatment. Services may be community- or home-based.

- Counseling
- Crisis Counseling<sup>8</sup>
- Sex Offender Treatment
- Psycho-Educational Supportive Counseling<sup>9</sup>
- Home-Based Family Counseling

---

<sup>7</sup> Delinquent complaints include criminal actions or infractions under State law or under an ordinance of local government, including violation of motor vehicle laws.

<sup>8</sup> No longer a JCPC program component, but existed in FY 2008/09 (when data were collected for the current study).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

Assessment: Programs that offer one or more particular evaluation or assessment services to provide diagnosis and treatment intervention recommendations for youth. Psychological assessments can assist court counselors and judges in recommending the most appropriate consequences and treatment for court-involved youth.

- Psychological Assessment
- Clinical Evaluation<sup>10</sup>

Restorative Services: Programs that offer immediate and short-term involvement with juveniles to focus on negative and/or offending behaviors with the aim of resolution of the presenting problem and extinction of the behavior.

- Mediation/Conflict Resolution
- Restitution/Community Service
- Teen Court

Structured Activities: Programs that offer skill-building activities in a non-residential setting. Programs may offer these skills to juveniles and/or their parents for the purpose of enhancing personal enrichment, skills, or abilities in a particular area.

- Mentoring
- Interpersonal Skill Building
- Parent/Family Skill Building
- Experiential Skill Building
- Tutoring/Academic Enhancement
- Vocational Development
- Life Skills Training<sup>11</sup>
- Guided Growth<sup>12</sup>
- Prevention Services<sup>13</sup>
- Re-Entry Services<sup>14</sup>

Community Day Programs: A multi-component, community-based, non-residential program structure that provides closely supervised intervention and prevention services for delinquent, undisciplined, intake diverted, and at-risk youth.

- Juvenile Structured Day Programs

During FY 2011/12, there were 29,027 admissions to JCPC programs. The largest numbers of admissions were to programs having the components of restorative services and structured activities.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Based on information extracted from the DPS's *Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Report*, October 1, 2012.

## ***Research Design and Methodology***

This section describes the sample selected, the outcomes measured, and the data sources used in the study.

### **Sample Selection**

The overall study sample included all 18,736 youth admitted to at least one JCPC program from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009 (FY 2008/09). Juveniles who participated in JCPC programs fell into two major categories: (1) youth at risk of becoming involved in delinquent behavior and (2) youth who have had formal contact with the juvenile justice system through a diversion from court, court referral, or other court action. During FY 2008/09, JCPC programs had a total of 24,692 admissions to 588 programs. The final study sample consisted of 18,736 sample participants in 566 programs. For participants with multiple admissions, the earliest admission during FY 2008/09 was selected for the study.<sup>16</sup>

### **Study Period and Measures**

Recidivism was the primary outcome measure in the study.<sup>17</sup> JCPC participants were followed for three years after JCPC admission to obtain recidivism information for this entire follow-up period.<sup>18</sup> The examination of recidivism was not limited to juvenile delinquency, but also included adult criminal behavior because many of the JCPC participants turned 16 during the follow-up period.<sup>19</sup> In addition, the JCPC programs serve youth who are over 16, and thus would have adult recidivism only.

The primary recidivism measures were complaints (for juveniles) and arrests (for adults). For the recidivism analysis, a complaint is defined as a formal allegation to the juvenile court that a juvenile (between the ages of 6 and 15) has committed a crime. An arrest is defined as the physical taking into custody of an individual by law enforcement and the obtaining of fingerprints, based on probable cause to believe that the person has committed the crime for which he or she is arrested; arrests apply only to persons under the jurisdiction of the adult criminal justice system.

---

<sup>16</sup> The report uses the term “admissions” to refer to the youth who are included in the study only. Each youth has one admission in the study. The admission included for a youth is either the only JCPC admission or the earliest admission during the year (for those with multiple admissions). After deleting multiple programs admissions to select the first admission during the year, the final sample contained 566 programs rather than the original 588 programs. Exclusion of these 22 programs was not based on characteristics of the programs themselves, but was based merely on the fact that deletion of multiple admissions for the same youth caused these programs no longer to be represented in the final sample. Appendix B of the Sentencing Commission’s FY 2006/07 *Effectiveness of Programs Funded by Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils* (May 1, 2011) provides additional information about the process of selecting the sample admission.

<sup>17</sup> Some youth served by JCPC programs have not had formal contact with the juvenile justice system. A subsequent delinquency complaint, therefore, would be a first instance of contact with the juvenile justice system, rather than a recidivist complaint. To simplify terminology in this document, however, all juvenile justice and adult criminal justice system contacts after JCPC admission are referred to as “recidivism.”

<sup>18</sup> JCPC programs address areas such as educational achievement, employment, mental health, substance abuse, family relationships, school behavior, and behavior in the community. While outcomes in these areas are clearly important, their examination was outside the scope and resources of this study.

<sup>19</sup> Note that in North Carolina adult criminal jurisdiction starts when a youth reaches age 16.

To examine recidivism further, data were collected on juvenile adjudications, detention admissions, commitments to DJJ for Youth Development Center (YDC) placement, and adult convictions subsequent to JCPC admission. Select independent variables were examined to determine whether any individual characteristics were related to recidivism.

### Data Sources

Three administrative record systems provided data for this project. It is important to point out that these systems do not exist primarily for the purpose of conducting research, and, as such, each has strengths and presents challenges.

*JCPC Participation.* Data on JCPC participation came from the JCPC Client Tracking System (CTS). The CTS is a computerized database maintained by each program. It contains information about participants and program characteristics.

*Recidivism.* The North Carolina Juvenile Online Information Network (NC-JOIN), the DJJ's management information system, includes information on all juveniles with a complaint received in a juvenile court counseling office. This database provided information about subsequent complaints (and other juvenile court actions) for members of the JCPC sample who had a match in NC-JOIN.

The North Carolina Department of Justice's (DOJ) computerized criminal history (CCH) database includes information on fingerprinted adult arrests and convictions. It provided information on subsequent criminal justice system involvement for members of the JCPC sample who had a match in this system.<sup>20</sup>

### ***Analysis and Report Outline***

Chapter Two describes the characteristics of the programs in the study as well as the sample of clients and their participation in the JCPC programs.

Chapter Three examines juvenile and adult recidivism for the JCPC participants. It presents information on recidivism in relation to personal characteristics of the participants and general program categories.

Finally, Chapter Four presents the study's conclusions and makes recommendations for future examination of JCPC program effectiveness.

---

<sup>20</sup> The matching process was key to the quality of recidivism data. It also presented the most significant challenges, due to the lack of unique person identifiers across any two of these three data systems. (*e.g.*, the CTS has no identifier in common with NC-JOIN; NC-JOIN has no identifier in common with DOJ). Moreover, the CTS has no unique person identifier within a single program or across JCPC programs. Even so, a near-perfect match was achieved between CTS and NC-JOIN for court-involved participants, although this result required making case-by-case decisions for about 25% of these participants. (A match is not necessarily expected between CTS and NC-JOIN for at-risk youth, so this match was not examined for completeness.)

## CHAPTER TWO

### STATISTICAL PROFILE OF JCPC PROGRAMS AND PARTICIPANTS

#### *Characteristics of FY 2008/09 Programs and Program Admissions*

The analysis in this chapter used a participant-based sample, reflecting the earliest JCPC admission of 18,736 juveniles during FY 2008/09. Most of the tables in the report pertaining to JCPC participants present information for the sample as a whole, and by the participant's legal status as at-risk or court-involved. Of the 18,736 participants, 8,489 (45.3%) were identified as at-risk and 10,247 (54.7%) were identified as court-involved. As discussed in Chapter One, the study is based on the first JCPC program admission that occurred during FY 2008/09. Seventy-eight percent of participants had only one admission during the year. In addition, the majority of participants (86.8%) reported having no prior JCPC admissions (83.8% for court-involved and 90.3% for at-risk).

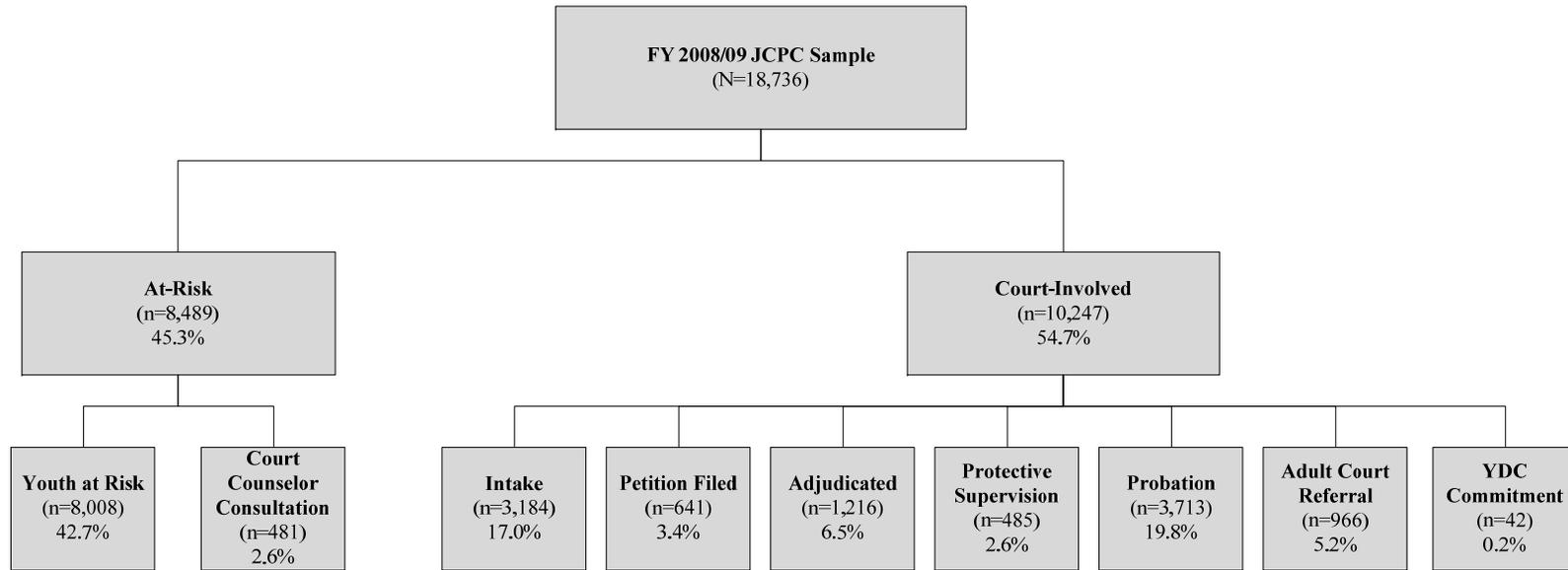
Figure 2.1 divides each admission category into subgroups based on the participant's legal status. Definitions of each legal status appear below the figure. By definition, at-risk youth have had no formal contact with the juvenile justice system in the twelve months before JCPC admission, but 2.6% have had informal contact with a juvenile court counselor. Of court-involved youth, 19.8% were on juvenile probation at the time of JCPC program referral, followed closely by youth referred at juvenile court intake (17.0%). About 5% of JCPC participants were referred by the adult court system, primarily through the teen court program.

JCPC programs are organized into six major categories, most of which include subcategories of program types. Table 2.1 presents information on the major categories and specific types of the 566 JCPC programs studied, as well as the number of participants admitted to each. The numbers in the shaded rows are subtotals for each major program category. Percentages in shaded rows are the proportion of total programs or the proportion of admissions represented by the program category. For example, there were 102 clinical programs in the study, comprising 18.0% of the total 566 programs; 66 of the clinical programs were counseling programs.<sup>21</sup> The restorative program category comprised 30.6%, or 173, of the 566 programs serving the sample youth, followed by structured activity programs (25.8%). The least common category was the community day program (4.9% or 28 programs). Restorative programs had the largest proportion of admissions with 46.2%, while residential and evaluation/assessment programs had the smallest proportion of admissions (4.2% each). Overall, restitution programs were the most common program type (102 programs) and admitted the most participants (4,363).

---

<sup>21</sup> Counseling programs included individual, group, and family counseling. Home-based family counseling and psycho-educational supportive counseling are in separate categories.

**Figure 2.1**  
**Legal Status of JCPC Program Participants**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

**At-Risk**

**Youth At-Risk:** Youth who exhibit problematic behavior within the home, school, and/or community, which indicate a strong likelihood of court involvement.

**Court Counselor Consultation:** Parents or other interested parties of an at-risk youth who informally consult with a juvenile court counselor regarding possible courses of action to pursue in response to the youth's negative behavior. A consultation stops short of the formal action of bringing a delinquent or undisciplined complaint against a juvenile.

**Court Involved**

**Intake:** The formal process of a juvenile court counselor screening and evaluating a complaint alleging that a juvenile is delinquent or undisciplined in order to determine whether the complaint should be closed without further action or diverted from court to a community-based resource.

**Petition Filed:** The determination by a juvenile court counselor during the intake process that a complaint should be filed as a petition and scheduled for a court hearing.

**Adjudicated:** The finding by a judge during a court hearing that the allegation in a delinquent petition has been proved beyond a reasonable doubt. In a case involving an undisciplined petition, the allegation must be proved by clear and convincing evidence.

**Protective Supervision:** The status of a juvenile who has been adjudicated undisciplined and is under the supervision of a juvenile court counselor.

**Probation:** The status of a juvenile who has been adjudicated delinquent and is subject to specified conditions under the supervision of a juvenile court counselor. The juvenile may be returned to the court for violation of those conditions during the term of probation. (Includes post-release supervision after discharge from YDC.)

**Adult Court Referral:** Youth under the jurisdiction of either District Court or Superior Court who are referred to a JCPC program.

**YDC Commitment:** The most restrictive dispositional alternative available. Commitment to a YDC, a secure residential facility authorized to provide long-term treatment, education, and rehabilitative services for delinquent juveniles, is available to the court for any juvenile who is at least 10 years old and subject to a Level 3 (YDC commitment) disposition.

**Table 2.1**  
**JCPC Programs and Participants**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

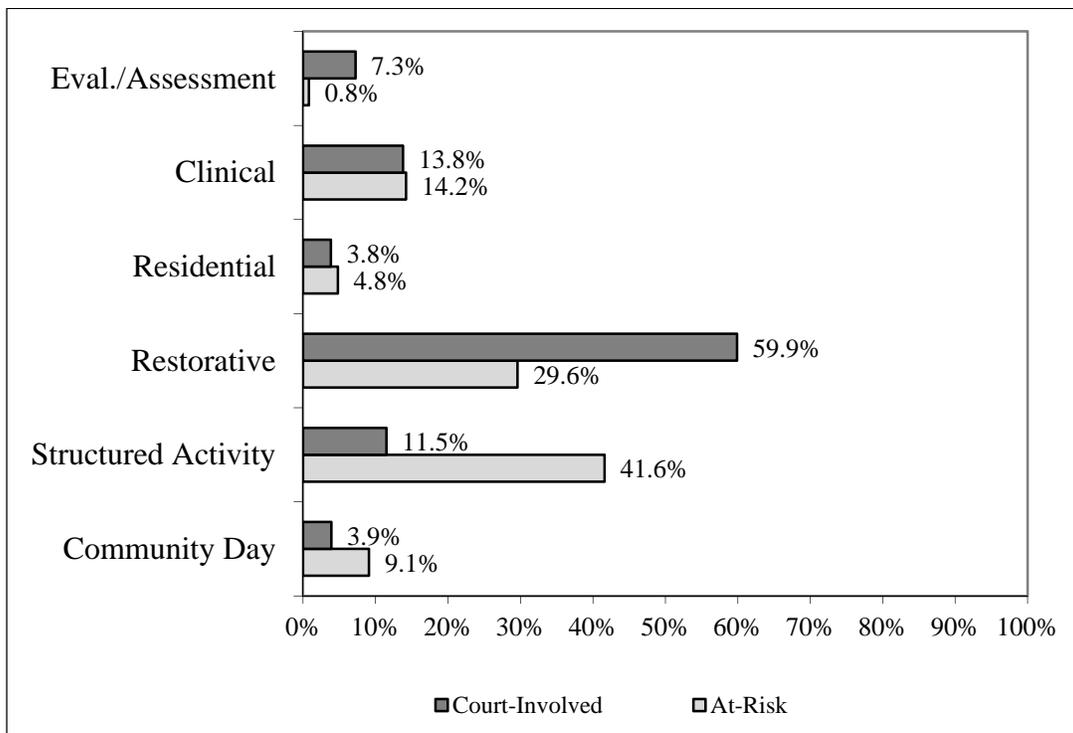
Program Type	Programs		Participants Admitted	
	n	%	n	%
<b>Evaluation/Assessment</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>4.2</b>
Psychological Assessments	57	10.1	783	4.2
<b>Clinical</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>2,626</b>	<b>14.0</b>
Counseling	66	11.7	2,188	11.7
Home Based Family Counseling	26	4.6	354	1.9
Psycho-Educational Supportive Counseling	1	0.2	31	0.2
Sex Offender Treatment	9	1.6	53	0.3
<b>Residential</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>4.2</b>
Group Home Care	13	2.3	77	0.4
Runaway Shelter Care	2	0.4	208	1.1
Specialized Foster Care	1	0.2	12	0.1
Temporary Foster Care	1	0.2	1	0.0
Temporary Shelter Care	43	7.6	495	2.6
<b>Restorative</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>8,652</b>	<b>46.2</b>
Mediation/Conflict Resolution	31	5.5	1,487	7.9
Restitution	102	18.0	4,363	23.3
Teen Court	40	7.1	2,802	15.0
<b>Structured Activity</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>25.8</b>	<b>4,706</b>	<b>25.1</b>
Experiential Skill Building	4	0.7	43	0.2
Guided Growth Program	5	0.9	121	0.6
Interpersonal Skill Building	64	11.3	2,385	12.7
Life Skills Training	2	0.4	20	0.1
Mentoring	13	2.3	204	1.1
Parent/Family Skill Building	31	5.5	604	3.2
Prevention Services	3	0.5	566	3.0
Tutoring/Academic Enhancement	22	3.9	647	3.5
Vocational Development	2	0.4	116	0.6
<b>Community Day Program</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>1,176</b>	<b>6.3</b>
Juvenile Structured Day	28	4.9	1,176	6.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>18,736</b>	<b>100.0</b>

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

Figure 2.2 contains program assignment categories for participants by legal status. Restorative services accounted for 59.9% of all program admissions for court-involved youth, followed by clinical services (13.8%). Structured activity programs accounted for another 11.5% of admissions, while the other program categories had less than 10% each.

At-risk youth were most likely to participate in structured activity programs (41.6%). Just under 30% were in restorative programs. They participated in clinical programs at a similar rate to court-involved youth (14.2% and 13.8% respectively). The remainder of the program categories accounted for less than 10% each of admissions of at-risk youth.

**Figure 2.2**  
**Program Assignment by Legal Status of JCPC Participants**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

***Personal Characteristics of Participants***

Table 2.2 contains information describing the demographic characteristics of the FY 2008/09 sample by legal status. Overall, 64.9% of the participants were male – 70.6% of the court-involved participants compared to 58.0% of the at-risk participants. Almost 47% of the participants were black, 39.9% were white (who were not identified as Hispanic), 7.7% were Hispanic (of any race), and 5.7% were identified as other. The breakdown of race/ethnicity was very similar for the at-risk and court-involved groups.

**Table 2.2**  
**Demographic Profile of JCPC Participants by Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

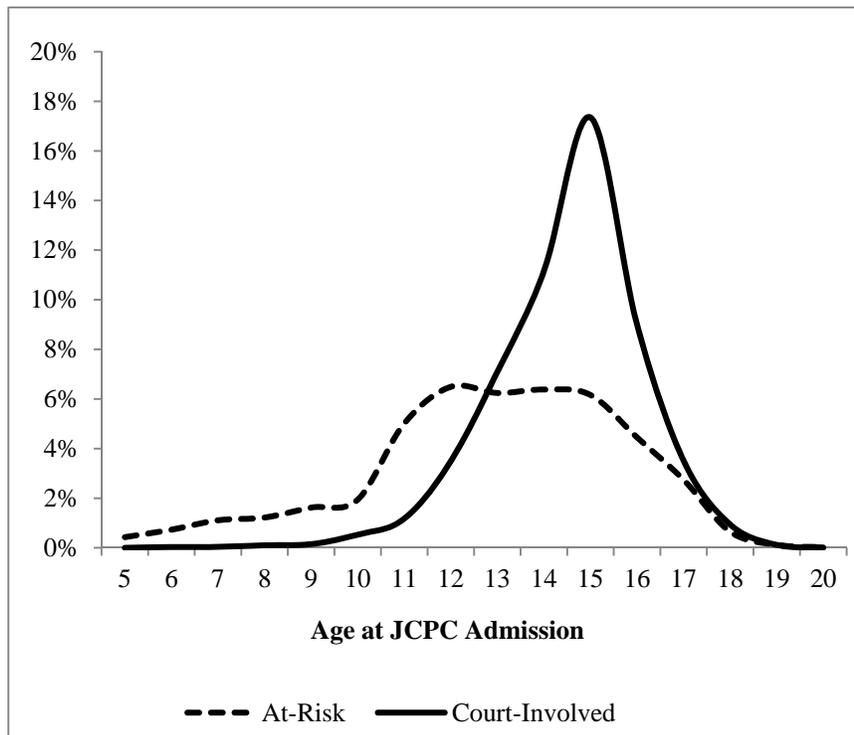
Demographic Profile	At-Risk		Court-Involved		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	4,920	58.0	7,232	70.6	12,252	64.9
Female	3,569	42.0	3,015	29.4	6,584	35.1
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>						
Black	3,993	47.0	4,756	46.4	8,749	46.7
White <sup>a</sup>	3,250	38.3	4,225	41.2	7,475	39.9
Hispanic	783	9.2	663	6.5	1,446	7.7
Other	463	5.5	603	5.9	1,066	5.7
<b>Age at Admission</b>						
10 and Younger	1,320	15.5	159	1.6	1,479	7.9
11-13	3,324	39.2	2,203	21.5	5,527	29.5
14	1,195	14.1	2,090	20.4	3,285	17.6
15	1,155	13.6	3,250	31.7	4,405	23.5
16 and Older	1,495	17.6	2,545	24.8	4,040	21.6
<b>Living Arrangements</b>						
Both Parents	2,553	30.1	2,088	20.4	4,641	24.8
Parent & Stepparent	811	9.6	1,185	11.5	1,996	10.7
Single Parent	3,663	43.1	5,315	51.9	8,978	47.9
Other Relative/Friends	634	7.5	901	8.8	1,535	8.2
Out of Home Placement	252	3.0	593	5.8	845	4.5
Other	576	6.7	165	1.6	741	3.9
<b>School Status</b>						
Enrolled	8,231	97.0	9,667	94.3	17,898	95.5
Dropped Out	98	1.2	158	1.5	256	1.4
Expelled or Long-Term Suspension	157	1.8	407	4.0	564	3.0
Graduated	3	0.0	15	0.1	18	0.1

<sup>a</sup> This category consists of participants who were white, but who were not identified as Hispanic.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

Court-involved youth were concentrated in the 15 year-old age group (31.7%), while at-risk youth were more likely to be in the 11-13 year-old age group (39.2%). Figure 2.3 presents the age of JCPC admissions by legal status. The average age at JCPC admission for all participants was 13.8 years, with a range of 5 to 20 years.<sup>22</sup> At-risk youth were younger at admission than court-involved youth (12.9 years compared to 14.5 years). About half of the admissions for court-involved youth were concentrated within the 14-15 age range, while half of the admissions of at-risk youth were concentrated in the 11-15 age group.

**Figure 2.3**  
**Age Distribution of JCPC Participants by Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

As shown in Table 2.2, 47.9% of the participants lived with a single parent, but a somewhat larger percentage of court-involved youth (51.9%) lived with a single parent than did at-risk youth (43.1%). About 25% of participants lived with both parents.

<sup>22</sup> Although JCPC programs primarily serve youth aged 6-17, some programs serve youth outside that age range.

Almost all JCPC program participants (95.5%) were enrolled in a school or were being home-schooled at the time of admission to the JCPC program.<sup>23</sup> A small percentage either had been either expelled or were on long-term suspension (3.0%) or had dropped out (1.4%) at the time of admission. A slightly higher percentage of court-involved youth experienced these events.

### ***Referral Reason and Referral Source***

Nearly 63% of the sample was referred to a JCPC program for behavior indicative of delinquent or criminal activity<sup>24</sup> (see Table 2.3). Undisciplined behavior accounted for 17.9% of referrals, while behavior or situations identified as “other” comprised 19.5% of referrals. A greater proportion of referrals of court-involved youth than at-risk youth were based on delinquent or criminal behavior (86.8% compared to 33.4%). Similarly, referrals based on situations that do not rise to the level of possible delinquent activity were more common among at-risk youth than court-involved youth (25.1% compared to 12.0%), as were other referral reasons (41.5% compared to 1.2%).

In addition, Table 2.3 also shows that just under half of all participants were referred to a JCPC program by the DJJ (49.3%). The second most common source was the school system, which referred 27.4% of youth. The leading referral source for at-risk youth was the school (58.2%), while, as expected, the leading referral source for court-involved youth was the DJJ (85.6%). Almost all of the DJJ referrals for court-involved youth came from the juvenile court, but a few came from a detention center or YDC.

### ***Problems in the Year before JCPC Program Admission***

The CTS includes information for all participants on problems in school and incidents of running away in the year before entering the JCPC program. Overall, about 40% experienced school problems and 6.6% were involved in incidents of running away. Court-involved participants were more likely than at-risk participants to have experienced these problems. Just over 26% of at-risk youth had problems in school in the year prior to JCPC admission, compared to 52.5% of court-involved youth. Similarly, a higher percentage of court-involved youth had runaway episodes (9.4%) compared to at-risk youth (3.3%).

---

<sup>23</sup> If the JCPC admission occurred during the summer months, JCPC program staff recorded the participant’s school status at the end of the previous school year.

<sup>24</sup> Referrals to JCPC programs for delinquent or criminal behavior do not necessarily imply that the behavior resulted in the filing of a complaint with the juvenile court or an arrest (for youths 16 and older).

**Table 2.3**  
**Referral Reason and Referral Source by Legal Status of JCPC Participants**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

JCPC Participant Referral	At-Risk		Court-Involved		Total	
<i>Referral Reason</i>	n	%	n	%	N	%
<b>Delinquent or Criminal Behavior</b>	<b>2,829</b>	<b>33.4</b>	<b>8,893</b>	<b>86.8</b>	<b>11,722</b>	<b>62.6</b>
Person	506	6.0	3,702	36.1	4,208	22.5
Property	1,339	15.8	3,153	30.8	4,492	24.0
Victimless	984	11.6	2,038	19.9	3,022	16.1
<b>Undisciplined Behavior</b>	<b>2,137</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>1,229</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>3,366</b>	<b>17.9</b>
Runaway	76	0.9	136	1.3	212	1.1
Truancy	377	4.4	303	3.0	680	3.6
Ungovernable	1,398	16.4	771	7.5	2,169	11.6
Neglected, Abused, Dependent	286	3.4	19	0.2	305	1.6
<b>Other</b>	<b>3,523</b>	<b>41.5</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>3,648</b>	<b>19.5</b>
<i>Referral Source<sup>a</sup></i>	n	%	n	%	N	%
<b>DJJ</b>	458	5.4	8,775	85.6	9,233	49.3
<b>DHHS<sup>b</sup></b>	649	7.7	109	1.1	758	4.0
<b>School</b>	4,944	58.2	186	1.8	5130	27.4
<b>Law Enforcement</b>	688	8.1	763	7.5	1451	7.7
<b>Parent/Guardian</b>	1,118	13.2	59	0.6	1177	6.3
<b>Self/Other</b>	631	7.4	354	3.4	985	5.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,489</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>10,247</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>18,736</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>a</sup> Note: There were 2 observations with missing data for referral source (1 at-risk and 1 court-involved).

<sup>b</sup> The DHHS source primarily consists of referrals from the Division of Social Services (DSS) and mental health agencies.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

## *Summary*

- The JCPC participant sample consisted of 18,736 youth admitted to JCPC programs during FY 2008/09 – 45.3% were identified as at-risk and 54.7% as court-involved.
- The 18,736 youth in the sample participated in 566 JCPC programs, including evaluation/assessment, residential, restorative, structured activity, and community day programs. Restorative programs were the most common program type and had the largest number of participants.
- Programs served youth from age 5 through 20. The average age at admission was 13.8 years. On average, at-risk youth were younger at admission than court-involved youth. Almost 65% of participants were male and about half were black. Almost all were enrolled in school and lived at home. About half lived with a single parent.
- Overall, an allegation of delinquent or criminal behavior was the primary reason (62.6%) for referral to a JCPC program, but more so for court-involved youth than at-risk youth (86.8% and 33.4% respectively). About 25% of at-risk participants were referred to programs as a result of undisciplined behavior. School problems and running away in the year prior to admissions were also considerably more common among court-involved youth.
- Almost half of the entire sample was referred to JCPC programs by the DJJ; another 27.4% were referred by the schools. About 58% of the at-risk youth were referred to JCPC programs by the school and 85.6% of court-involved participants were referred by the DJJ.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RECIDIVISM OF JCPC PARTICIPANTS

This chapter presents a descriptive analysis of recidivism for JCPC program participants. It describes juvenile and adult recidivism in relation to personal characteristics of participants, their program participation, and the characteristics of the programs themselves. As discussed in Chapter One, all participants admitted to JCPC programs in FY 2008/09 are included in the study, for a total sample size of 18,736. The examination of recidivism, however, excluded court-involved juveniles in the study sample aged 6-15 who could not be matched with the NC-JOIN system.

In general, it is reasonable to conclude that the lack of a delinquency complaint record in NC-JOIN for a given individual indicates that the individual, in fact, had no delinquent complaints. This conclusion is not valid for all court-involved youth, however. All 7,702 court-involved JCPC participants aged 6-15 have an NC-JOIN record, but information present in the CTS was sufficient to match 96.5% (7,434) of them with the NC-JOIN system. The juvenile and adult recidivism analysis excluded the 268 court-involved participants who could not be matched with NC-JOIN. They were excluded from the analysis of adult recidivism because the lack of an NC-JOIN record makes it impossible to calculate their overall recidivism rate. In sum, the recidivism analysis included 18,468 participants, or 98.6% of the JCPC sample.<sup>25</sup>

#### *Outcome Measures*

The primary measures of recidivism were juvenile delinquency complaints and adult fingerprinted arrests within three years after JCPC admission. Other measures of juvenile recidivism included adjudications of delinquency, detention admissions, and YDC commitments.<sup>26</sup> Criminal court convictions were an additional measure of adult recidivism. Program completion was addressed as an interim measure of a successful JCPC outcome.

Specifically, the analysis of juvenile recidivism included all complaints filed with the juvenile court for alleged delinquent behavior.<sup>27</sup> The analysis of adult recidivism included felony and misdemeanor arrests for which individuals were fingerprinted.<sup>28</sup> The analysis of juvenile and

---

<sup>25</sup> To ascertain whether an individual had a valid match in NC-JOIN, DJJ staff examined all types of records in the system. All participants who could be matched with NC-JOIN were included in the analysis, regardless of the type of NC-JOIN record located. If an individual who matched to a non-delinquency record had no delinquency complaint records, it was reasonable to conclude that the individual actually had no delinquency complaints. Such individuals were included in the recidivism analysis. The inability to match the 268 court-involved participants aged 6-15 with their NC-JOIN record(s) most likely indicates a problem with the identifying data in the CTS. It does not indicate that the participant had no delinquency complaints. It is unlikely that the inability to match these JCPC participants affected the results of the recidivism analysis.

<sup>26</sup> Youth are committed to the DJJ for placement in a YDC facility or in a community setting. The report uses the term "YDC commitment" to refer to all types of YDC placements.

<sup>27</sup> The first recidivism complaint or arrest may pertain to the behavior that was the basis for the JCPC referral (for court-involved youth). The CTS, however, does not identify the specific complaint or arrest on which the referral was based.

<sup>28</sup> Law enforcement agencies are required to fingerprint individuals arrested for felonies (N.C.G.S. 15A-502). Most agencies also typically fingerprint individuals arrested for misdemeanors.

adult recidivism excluded infractions, local ordinances, and most traffic offenses (except for several serious traffic offenses such as death by motor vehicle). To be included in the analysis, a recidivist complaint or arrest had to occur during the follow-up period (*i.e.*, within three years after JCPC admission), but the offense that led to the recidivist complaint or arrest could have occurred before JCPC admission.<sup>29</sup>

“Overall recidivism” is a composite measure presented along with the number and proportion of complaints and arrests. This measure signifies the occurrence of at least one recidivist event – juvenile complaint, adult arrest, or both. As with the analyses discussed in Chapter Two, the recidivism analysis presents most results for the sample as a whole and separately by legal status (at-risk or court-involved).

Analysis of recidivism was limited to presentation of descriptive statistics examining two or three factors (variables), such as recidivism by age and legal status. Statistical analyses were conducted to determine the significance and strength of the relationship between independent variables (such as demographic characteristics, program category and type, and prior complaints) and the dependent variable (recidivism). Because the sample was very large, the relationships were statistically significant. The strengths of the associations, however, were weak, indicating that the relationships were not substantively meaningful. The study did not pursue multivariate analysis techniques because too few variables with sufficient data existed to support such an analysis. Therefore, inferences about program effectiveness should not be drawn from any of the analyses presented here.

### ***Follow-up Period***

The study followed all participants for three years after admission to the JCPC program to determine whether they had subsequent contact with the juvenile justice or criminal justice systems. Given that the age of adult jurisdiction in North Carolina is 16 years and that JCPC programs in the study served individuals from age 5 through 20, a large proportion of program participants reached the age of adult criminal responsibility either before entering the program or during the follow-up period.

During the three-year follow-up period, the amount of time spent after JCPC admission but before reaching age 16 is the time under juvenile system jurisdiction. As such, this is the only period during which the individual is eligible to receive a delinquency complaint or have other juvenile court involvement. Similarly, the amount of time spent during the follow-up period after turning 16 is the time under adult system jurisdiction and is the only period in which an adult arrest or conviction can occur.<sup>30</sup>

---

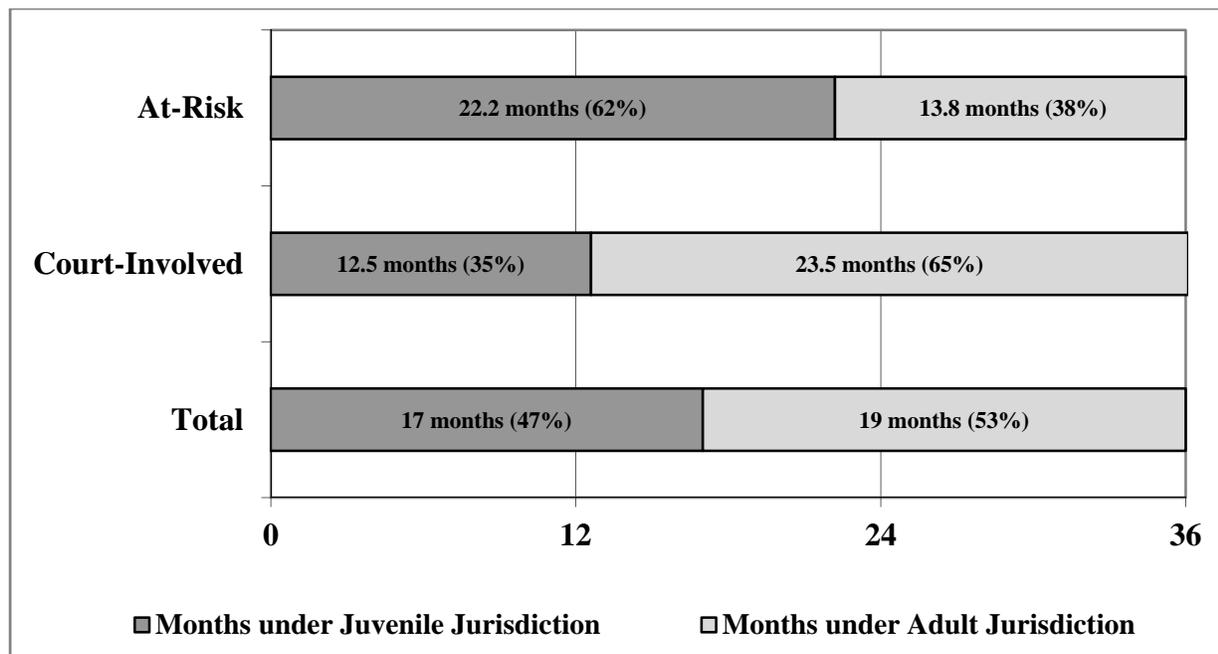
<sup>29</sup> Recidivism is defined in terms of the date of the first complaint or arrest after JCPC admission. By definition, the alleged behavior that led to the official contact preceded the contact. It is, therefore, possible that the date of the alleged behavior came before JCPC admission, but the complaint/arrest came after JCPC admission.

<sup>30</sup> Typically, these time periods are referred to as “time at risk” (and are referred to this way in other Sentencing Commission recidivism reports). Given that “at-risk” has a different meaning for JCPC participants, this report uses the terms presented here to avoid confusion. In addition, although all participants were followed for three years, some may have been confined during part or all of that time. Periods of confinement are often excluded from calculation of recidivism rates, but it was not possible to do so in this study. Confinement may have been in

Just over half of the participants (54%) spent at least a portion of the follow-up period in both the juvenile and adult systems, while 24% spent the entire time in the juvenile follow-up period. Almost 22% spent the entire time in the adult follow-up period, because they were 16 or older when admitted to the JCPC program.

Figure 3.1 illustrates the time spent under juvenile and adult jurisdiction. Overall, youth spent about half of their follow-up period under juvenile court jurisdiction and about half under adult jurisdiction (47% and 53% respectively). At-risk youth spent 62% (22.2 months) of the follow-up period under the juvenile jurisdiction, whereas court-involved youth spent an average of 35% (12.5 months) of their follow-up period under juvenile jurisdiction. This difference exists because at-risk youth tended to be younger at JCPC admission than court-involved youth.

**Figure 3.1**  
**Average Number of Follow-up Months for JCPC Participants under**  
**Juvenile and Adult Jurisdiction**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

detention facilities, YDCs, jails (either awaiting trial or upon conviction), or prison. Data was available for detention facilities and YDCs, but not for jails and prison.

## Juvenile and Adult Recidivism

### Recidivism Rates

Just over one-third of all JCPC participants had a recidivist event during the follow-up period.<sup>31</sup> In general, a larger proportion of court-involved youth than at-risk youth had a recidivist event (44.5% and 20.6% respectively). Table 3.1 shows that 26.9% of JCPC participants had a recidivist complaint and 22.1% had a recidivist arrest. Among at-risk participants, 17.1% had a recidivist complaint compared to 36.1% of court-involved youth. Among participants who had time at risk in the adult system, 14.1% of at-risk youth and 26.5% of court-involved participants were arrested during the follow-up period.

**Table 3.1**  
**Recidivism of JCPC Participants by Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

Legal Status	N	Juvenile Complaint		Adult Arrest		Overall Recidivism	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>At-Risk</b>	8,489	1,194	17.1	708	14.1	1,751	20.6
<b>Court-Involved</b>	9,979	2,676	36.1	2,386	26.5	4,438	44.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18,468</b>	<b>3,870</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>3,094</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>6,189</b>	<b>33.5</b>

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

As mentioned above, just over half of JCPC participants had follow-up time in both the juvenile and adult systems. Among those in this group who had recidivism, 19.1% (n=775) had both a recidivist complaint and a recidivist arrest.

As shown in Table 3.2, recidivism varied by sex, race/ethnicity, and age at JCPC admission. Males were almost twice as likely as females to have recidivism (39.7% compared to 22.1%). Both at-risk and court-involved males had much higher recidivism rates than females. White youth were somewhat less likely to have recidivism than youth in minority racial or ethnic groups (28.7% and 36.7% respectively).<sup>32</sup> This difference was more pronounced for court-

<sup>31</sup> Tables and discussions referring only to juvenile recidivism or only to adult recidivism state so specifically. Otherwise, the terms “recidivism” or “overall recidivism” refer to having a subsequent delinquent complaint (juvenile recidivism), an arrest (adult recidivism), or both. JCPC participants with one or more subsequent complaints and/or arrests are referred to as “recidivists.” As stated in Chapter One, the term recidivism is used to refer to subsequent juvenile or criminal justice system contacts by all JCPC participants, even if they had not yet had contact with the justice system at JCPC admission.

<sup>32</sup> Due to the small number of participants in several racial/ethnic groups, this characteristic was collapsed into two categories. “White” refers to white youths who were not identified in the CTS as Hispanic. If they were identified as Hispanic, they were included in the category of “other.” This category includes Asian, Hispanic (of any race), Black, Multiracial, Native American, Other, and Unknown.

involved participants than for at-risk participants. Overall, JCPC participants who were 14 years old at admission had the highest recidivism rate (41.9%). Court-involved 11-13 year olds had the highest recidivism rate among court-involved youth (54.1%), followed by those 14 years old (49.7%). At-risk 14-year-olds had the highest recidivism rate among at-risk youth (28.7%), followed closely by 15-year-olds (25.7%).

**Table 3.2**  
**Recidivism of JCPC Participants by Personal Characteristics and Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

Personal Characteristics	N	Percentage with Recidivism		
		At-Risk	Court-Involved	Total
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	11,967	25.3	49.8	39.7
Female	6,501	14.2	31.7	22.1
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
White, Non-Hispanic	7,380	16.7	38.2	28.7
Other	11,088	23.1	48.9	36.7
<b>Age at Admission</b>				
10 & younger	1,473	5.2	37.3	8.6
11-13	5,428	21.7	54.1	34.2
14	3,212	28.7	49.7	41.9
15	4,315	25.7	44.2	39.2
16 and older	4,040	21.5	33.2	28.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18,468</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>44.5</b>	<b>33.5</b>

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

#### Time to First Recidivist Event

For JCPC participants who had recidivism (n=6,189), the first recidivist event occurred an average of twelve months after JCPC admission. The period was somewhat shorter for court-involved participants (11.4 months) and longer for at-risk participants (13.6 months) (*see*

Table 3.3).<sup>33</sup> Table 3.3 also shows that the median time of occurrence of the first recidivist event was 9.1 months, almost three months earlier than the average.

**Table 3.3**  
**Average Time to First Recidivist Event for JCPC Participants by Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

Legal Status	N	Months to First Complaint		Months to First Adult Arrest		Months to First Recidivist Event	
		Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median
<b>At-Risk</b>	1,751	13.4	11.6	17.8	17.7	13.6	11.4
<b>Court-Involved</b>	4,438	10.0	7.0	16.6	15.9	11.4	8.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,189</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>9.1</b>

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

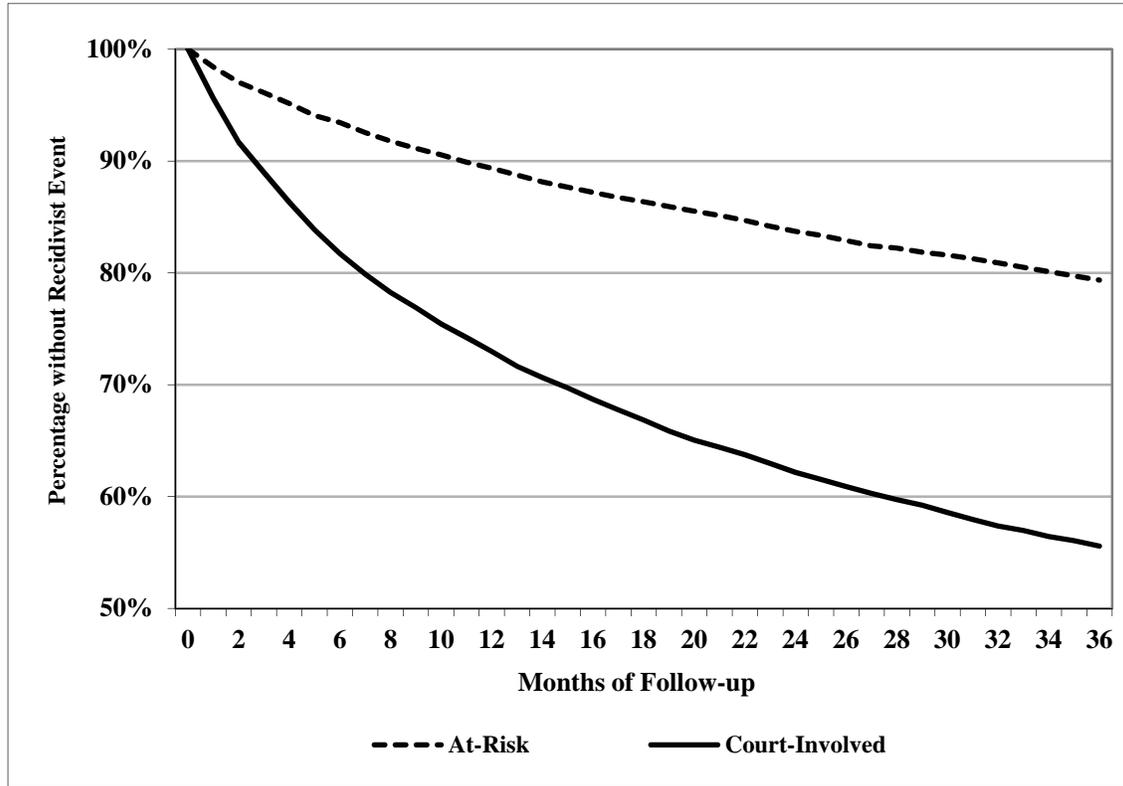
Event history (or “survival”) analysis provides additional information about the timing of recidivism. Figure 3.2 presents estimates of the timing of the first recidivist event by showing the percentage of participants who have not yet had their first recidivist event at each time point. The horizontal axis shows the number of months that have elapsed. The vertical axis shows the percentage of participants who have not had their first recidivist event (*i.e.*, the percentage “surviving”) at each month of the follow-up period. At the beginning of the graph, both groups are at 100%, indicating that no one has had recidivism at the beginning of the follow-up period. As the graph extends to the right, the lines go downward, showing that, over time, a smaller and smaller percentage “survived.” At the end of three years, the lines stop at the levels corresponding to the percentage who had not recidivated throughout the follow-up period (*i.e.*, who “survived” for the entire follow-up period) – 55.5% of court-involved youth and 79.4% of at-risk youth.<sup>34</sup>

Studies frequently show that recidivism is most likely to occur in the first year of a follow-up period. This was true for court-involved youth. Figure 3.2 shows that the lines begin to diverge very soon after JCPC admission, such that by six months into the follow-up period, 18% of court-involved youth have had their first recidivist event compared to 7% of at-risk youth. At 12 months, 27% of court-involved youth have had their first recidivist event compared to 11% of at-risk youth. Court-involved youth experienced their sharpest decline in survival rates between months one and six, suggesting that the first recidivist event was most likely to occur during this interval. Survival rates for at-risk participants, on the other hand, remained relatively constant throughout the follow-up period. This observation indicates that at-risk youth were not substantially more likely to have their first recidivist event during any particular part of the follow-up period compared to any other.

<sup>33</sup> Calculations of time to recidivism are weighted by time spent under juvenile jurisdiction and by time spent under adult jurisdiction for each participant.

<sup>34</sup> The percentage of youth without recidivism is calculated as 100% minus the percentage with recidivism shown in Table 3.1 (100 minus 44.5% for court-involved youth and 100 minus 20.6% for at-risk youth).

**Figure 3.2  
Survival Distribution of Time to First Recidivist Event  
FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

### Recidivist Offenses

Table 3.4 examines the first recidivist offense and the most serious recidivist offense for JCPC participants who recidivated during follow-up. In more than two-thirds of cases, the first recidivist offense was a misdemeanor. A larger proportion of at-risk youth (75.7%) had a misdemeanor as their first recidivist offense than did court-involved youth (69.8%). The most serious recidivist offense was a misdemeanor in a little more than half (54.1%) of the cases. A misdemeanor was more likely to be the most serious offense for at-risk youth (62.7%) than for court-involved youth (50.7%).

**Table 3.4**  
**First Recidivist Offense and Most Serious Recidivist Offense for JCPC Participants**  
**by Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

Legal Status	N	First Recidivist Offense		Most Serious Recidivist Offense	
		Misdemeanor n=4,422	Felony n=1,767	Misdemeanor n=3,346	Felony n=2,873
		%	%	%	%
<b>At-Risk</b>	1,751	75.7	24.3	62.7	37.3
<b>Court-Involved</b>	4,438	69.8	30.2	50.7	49.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,189</b>	<b>71.5</b>	<b>28.5</b>	<b>54.1</b>	<b>45.9</b>

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

Juvenile Adjudications and Adult Convictions

Overall, 19.7% of the youth had an adjudication or conviction during the follow-up period (*see* Table 3.5). About 19% of the sample under juvenile court jurisdiction had an adjudication of delinquency. Just over 9% of at-risk youth (9.3%) had an adjudication compared to 28.7% of court-involved youth. The table also shows that 9.7% of the sample under adult jurisdiction had a conviction (5.8% of at-risk youth and 12.2% of court-involved youth).

**Table 3.5**  
**Number and Percentage of JCPC Participants with Subsequent Juvenile Adjudication or**  
**Adult Conviction by Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

Legal Status	Juvenile Adjudication		Adult Conviction		Adjudication or Conviction	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>At-Risk</b>	651	9.3	289	5.8	866	10.2
<b>Court-Involved</b>	2,129	28.7	1,094	12.2	2,769	27.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,780</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>1,383</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>3,635</b>	<b>19.7</b>

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

## Detention Admissions and YDC Commitments

Table 3.6 provides information on juvenile detention admissions and YDC commitments for the 14,406 JCPC participants under juvenile court jurisdiction during follow-up. Overall, 15.3% had a detention admission. Court-involved participants were more likely than at-risk participants to have a detention admission (24.1% and 5.9% respectively). YDC commitments occurred for 1.9% of the JCPC participants. Again, court-involved youth were more likely to have a YDC commitment than at-risk youth (3.1% compared to 0.5%).<sup>35</sup>

## Transfers to Superior Court

Eight JCPC participants were transferred to Superior Court on the basis of a juvenile complaint. Three complaints were for first degree murder, three were for robbery with a dangerous weapon, one was for first degree rape of a child, and one was for possession of stolen goods/property.

**Table 3.6**  
**Number and Percentage of JCPC Participants with Subsequent Juvenile Detention Admission or YDC Commitment by Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

Legal Status	Total Number	Juvenile Detention Admission		YDC Commitment	
	N	n	%	n	%
<b>At-Risk</b>	6,988	412	5.9	38	0.5
<b>Court-Involved</b>	7,418	1,788	24.1	233	3.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14,406</b>	<b>2,200</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>1.9</b>

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

## ***Adult Recidivism among Juvenile Recidivists***

Criminological research frequently finds that past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior. Specifically, juvenile confinement often has been associated with adult criminality. With these findings in mind, it is possible that youth with juvenile recidivism may have a higher rate of adult criminality. To examine this proposition, the occurrence of an adult arrest was analyzed in terms of whether the youth had a recidivist complaint or a period of juvenile

<sup>35</sup> The percentage of participants with a YDC commitment is a percentage of the full sample with follow-up time in the juvenile justice system, rather than a percentage of those with a recidivist adjudication. This population base was used because adjudications were not associated with a specific complaint and YDC commitments were not associated with a specific adjudication. That is, the first recidivist adjudication may have occurred before the first recidivist complaint, or the first recidivist YDC commitment may have occurred before the first recidivist adjudication.

confinement.<sup>36</sup> The analysis was limited to the 9,963 JCPC participants who had follow-up time under both juvenile and adult jurisdiction. On average, participants had 21 months of follow-up time under adult jurisdiction and 15 months under juvenile jurisdiction. At-risk youth generally spent about the same amount of time under juvenile jurisdiction as adult jurisdiction (18 months), compared to court-involved youth, who spent about eight months longer under adult jurisdiction than under juvenile jurisdiction (22 and 14 months respectively). This difference exists because, on average, court-involved youth were older at admission than at-risk youth.

Tables 3.7 and 3.8 examine the relationship between indicators of juvenile recidivism and adult arrests for the 9,963 JCPC participants who divided their three-year follow-up period between the juvenile and adult systems. Table 3.7 shows that participants with a recidivist complaint were more likely to have an adult arrest than those with no recidivist complaint – 26.6% and 16.3% respectively. This finding held true for both groups, but the difference was more pronounced for at-risk than court-involved youth. Nearly 21% of at-risk participants with a complaint had an adult arrest, compared to 8.4% without a complaint, whereas almost 29% of court-involved participants with a complaint had an adult arrest, compared to 21.4% without a complaint.

**Table 3.7**  
**Percentage of JCPC Participants with Adult Arrests by Juvenile Recidivism**  
**and Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

Legal Status	Percentage with Adult Arrests					
	Participants with Complaint		Participants without Complaint		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>At-Risk</b>	151	20.5	235	8.4	386	11.0
<b>Court-Involved</b>	624	28.7	913	21.4	1,537	23.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>26.6</b>	<b>1,148</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>1,923</b>	<b>19.3</b>

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

Table 3.8 shows that participants committed to a detention center or YDC – whether originally in at-risk or court-involved status – were more likely to have an adult arrest compared to those not committed. Again, the differences were greater for at-risk than court-involved youth.

<sup>36</sup> Detention admissions and YDC commitments were combined into a single category of juvenile confinement because the number of JCPC participants committed to a YDC was too small to analyze separately.

**Table 3.8**  
**Percentage of JCPC Participants with Adult Arrests by Juvenile Confinement**  
**and Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

Legal Status	Percentage with Adult Arrests					
	Participants with Juvenile Confinement		Participants without Juvenile Confinement		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>At-Risk</b>	78	27.7	308	9.5	386	11.0
<b>Court-Involved</b>	509	33.1	1,028	21.0	1,537	23.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>1,336</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>1,923</b>	<b>19.3</b>

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

***Program Participation Outcomes***

Program Completion

A key component in any study of program effectiveness is examination of whether participants completed the program. Participants in evaluation/assessment programs were excluded from this analysis.<sup>37</sup> JCPC programs use two categories of program completion: (1) successful completion, which means the youth had a high level of participation and completed most of his/her goals; and (2) satisfactory completion, which means that the youth had an acceptable level of participation and met some of his/her goals. The analysis defined both of these categories as indicators of program completion. All other reasons for termination from the program indicate that the participant did not complete the program. Some of the reasons that a participant did not complete the program reflect negative behavior by the youth (*e.g.*, failure to comply with program rules), while others may reflect an administrative or other neutral reason for termination (*e.g.*, removed by parents). Overall, almost 80% of participants completed the program, with completion rates almost identical by legal status (*see* Table 3.9).

<sup>37</sup> Evaluation/assessments typically include no more than a few contacts with the participant and are not intended to provide preventive or treatment services. Rather, they provide information to the juvenile court for purposes of court processing, as well as recommendations for appropriate placements and services. Other program types (*e.g.*, temporary shelters) usually may not provide prevention or treatment services, but some of these programs may do so. Given this variation across programs, they were included in the analysis.

**Table 3.9**  
**Reason for Termination by Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

Termination Reason	At-Risk		Court-Involved		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
<b>Total Completion</b>	<b>6,512</b>	<b>81.4</b>	<b>7,092</b>	<b>78.6</b>	<b>13,604</b>	<b>79.9</b>
Successful completion	5,442	68.0	6,096	67.6	11,538	67.8
Satisfactory completion	1,070	13.4	996	11.0	2,066	12.1
<b>Total Non-Completion</b>	<b>1,489</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>1,926</b>	<b>21.4</b>	<b>3,415</b>	<b>20.1</b>
Unsuccessful completion	320	4.0	472	5.2	792	4.7
Did not participate/runaway	523	6.5	443	4.9	966	5.7
Removed by court	29	0.4	404	4.5	433	2.5
Removed by parents	290	3.6	196	2.2	486	2.9
Other reason	327	4.1	411	4.3	738	4.3

Note: There were 681 cases with missing termination reason.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

Table 3.10 shows completion rates varied by program category and legal status. In general, participants in restorative programs had the highest rate of completion (85.1%) while those in clinical programs had the lowest rate (61.8%). At-risk youth had higher completion rates than court-involved youth in all categories except for clinical programs. Completion rates for restorative programs were nearly identical between the two groups, however.

**Table 3.10**  
**Program Completion by JCPC Program Category and Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

Program Category	Percentage Completed					
	At-Risk		Court-Involved		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
<b>Clinical</b>	695	60.7	821	62.8	1,516	61.8
<b>Residential</b>	280	69.5	244	64.9	524	67.3
<b>Restorative</b>	2,099	85.4	4,975	85.0	7,074	85.1
<b>Structured Activity</b>	2,788	85.4	787	70.9	3,575	81.8
<b>Community Day Program</b>	650	85.8	265	68.0	915	79.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,512</b>	<b>81.1</b>	<b>7,092</b>	<b>78.5</b>	<b>13,604</b>	<b>79.7</b>

Note: There were 681 missing cases for program completion.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

Recidivism by Program Characteristics

Table 3.11 presents recidivism rates for the six JCPC program categories. It includes only program types with more than 50 sample participants.<sup>38</sup> (Program categories and types are described in Chapter One). Participants in the community day and residential programs had the highest recidivism rate among both at-risk and court-involved youth. Just over 58% of court-involved youth in community day programs and 55.0% of court-involved youth in residential programs recidivated, as did 39.3% of at-risk youth in community day programs and 39.8% of at-risk youth in residential programs.

It is crucial to point out that the examination of recidivism rates by program category alone provides no information about program effectiveness. The recidivism rate of a program is closely related to the type of services provided by the specific program and the risk and need level of the participants. Also, the broad program categories include programs with variation in their focus and the types of youth they serve. The available data could not support an analysis of these characteristics, however.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Appendix B presents information on recidivism by program type (for the 18 program types with more than 50 sample participants).

<sup>39</sup> Specifically, measures in the CTS pertaining to program activities and referrals to ancillary services were problematic and could not be used. Also, standardized statewide risk and needs assessments were available for court-involved youth only.

**Table 3.11**  
**Recidivism of JCPC Participants by Program Type**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

Program Category	Total Number in Program Category	Number and Percentage with Recidivism					
		At-Risk		Court-Involved		Total	
	N	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>Evaluation/Assessment</b>	768	15	23.4	350	49.7	365	47.5
<b>Clinical</b>	2,538	205	17.0	635	47.7	840	33.1
<b>Residential</b>	769	159	39.8	203	55.0	362	47.1
<b>Restorative</b>	8,512	564	22.5	2,463	41.0	3,027	35.6
<b>Structured Activity</b>	4,606	493	14.2	532	47.0	1,025	22.3
<b>Community Day Program</b>	1,168	304	39.3	230	58.2	534	45.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18,361</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>4,413</b>	<b>44.4</b>	<b>6,153</b>	<b>33.5</b>

Note: This table includes all program categories. Within each category, it includes program types with over 50 admissions. It includes 18 of the 23 program types and 557 of the 566 programs in the study.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

### *Summary*

The following section summarizes the major findings in Chapter Three.

#### General Recidivism Characteristics

- Overall, sample youth were under juvenile jurisdiction for the first half of the three-year follow-up period and under adult jurisdiction for the second half.
- Recidivism was defined as a juvenile complaint, adult arrest, or both, within the three years after admission to a JCPC program. Overall, 33.5% of the JCPC participants had a recidivist event – 20.6% of at-risk participants compared to 44.5% of court-involved participants. Almost 27% of the participants had a juvenile complaint, 22.1% had an adult arrest. Among recidivists with time in both the juvenile and adult systems, 19.1% had both a complaint and an arrest.
- Males were almost twice as likely as females to recidivate (39.7% compared to 22.1%). White/Non-Hispanic youth were less likely to recidivate than youth in other racial/ethnic groups (28.7% compared to 36.7%).

- In general, participants who were 14 years old at admission had the highest recidivism rate (41.9%).
- Slightly fewer than 20% of participants had an adjudication of juvenile delinquency; 9.3% of at-risk youth were adjudicated compared to 28.7% of court-involved youth.
- Approximately 15% of JCPC participants under juvenile court jurisdiction had a detention admission. Court-involved participants were more likely than at-risk participants to have a detention admission (24.1% and 5.9% respectively).
- A very small proportion of participants (1.9%) had a YDC commitment, 0.5% of at-risk youth compared to 3.1% of court-involved youth.
- Participants with a recidivist juvenile complaint or commitment (to a detention Center or YDC) were more likely to have an adult arrest than those without such juvenile justice system involvement.

#### Characteristics of Recidivist Events

- For participants who had recidivism, the first event occurred an average of 12.0 months after admission – 11.4 months after admission for court-involved youth and 13.6 months for at-risk youth.
- In just over 70% of cases, the first recidivist offense was a misdemeanor.
- In about 54% of the cases, a misdemeanor was the most serious recidivist offense. A misdemeanor was more likely to be the most serious offense for at-risk youth than for court-involved youth.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study represents the second biennial report on the effectiveness of programs receiving JCPC funds (Session Law 2009-451, Section 15.17J). Its major purpose was to analyze data and present results of the examination of recidivism outcomes for JCPC program participants.

#### *Summary of Findings*

The JCPC participant sample consisted of 18,736 youth, of whom 45.3% were at-risk and 54.7% were court-involved. They were admitted to 566 JCPC programs during FY 2008/09. The sample was followed for three years after JCPC admission to ascertain whether the participants had subsequent juvenile or criminal justice system involvement. The primary measure of recidivism was a new juvenile complaint, adult arrest, or both.

Overall, 33.5% of JCPC program participants had subsequent contact with either the juvenile or adult justice system within three years after program admission. Youth who were court-involved at admission had higher rates of recidivism than those who were at-risk (*see* Figure 4.1). This observation suggests that youth who have not come to the attention of the juvenile justice system may comprise a distinctly different group from those who have juvenile justice system involvement.<sup>40</sup>

The average age at JCPC admission for all participants was 13.8 years, with a range of 5 to 20 years. At-risk youth were younger at admission than court-involved youth by about 1.6 years. JCPC participants who were 14 years old at admission had the highest recidivism rate (41.9%), regardless of legal status. About 65% of the participants were male, and the proportion of males with subsequent justice system contact was almost twice as high as that of females (39.7% compared to 22.1%). Almost 40% of JCPC participants were white/non-Hispanic, while the remainder were members of a racial or ethnic minority group. Members of racial/ethnic minority groups had higher recidivism rates than white/non-Hispanic youth (36.7% compared to 28.7%). Almost 80% of participants completed their assigned program; the rates were slightly higher for at-risk than court-involved youth (81.4% compared to 78.6%).

The three-year recidivism rate for court-involved JCPC participants was quite similar to the rate for the FY 2008/09 juvenile recidivism sample.<sup>41</sup> Most of the court-involved juveniles in JCPC programs were also in the juvenile recidivism sample, however, so a direct comparison of

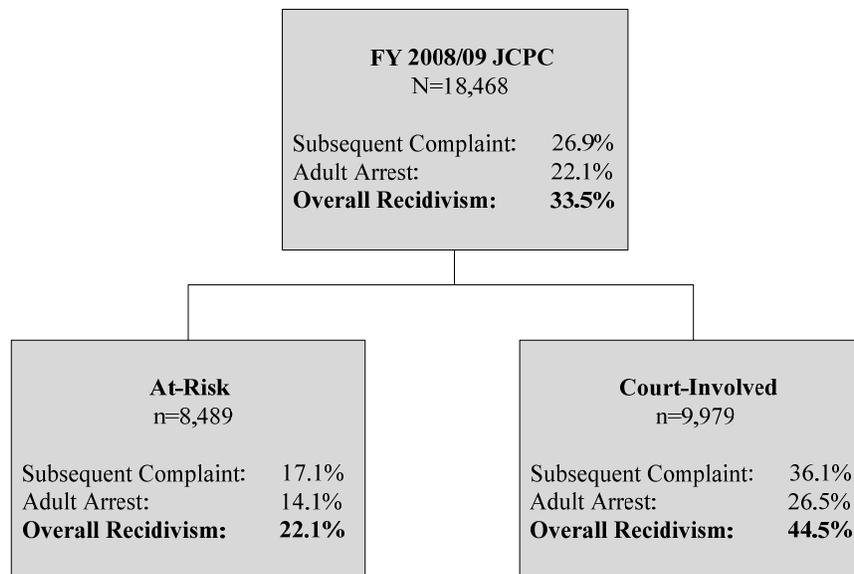
---

<sup>40</sup> This observation is suggestive rather than definitive because discretion exists in whether to treat delinquent or criminal behavior formally or informally. For example, a behavior may be referred to a court counselor in one community as a delinquency complaint (which would define the youth as court-involved), while the same behavior may be handled informally in another community (which would define the youth as at-risk).

<sup>41</sup> *Juvenile Recidivism Study: 2008/09 Juvenile Sample*, North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, May 2013.

the recidivism rates has little meaning.<sup>42</sup> It would be more appropriate to compare recidivism of court-involved JCPC participants to recidivism of the segment of the juvenile court population who did not receive JCPC services. Available data did not allow this comparison, however.

**Figure 4.1**  
**Three-Year Recidivism Rates for JCPC Participants by Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

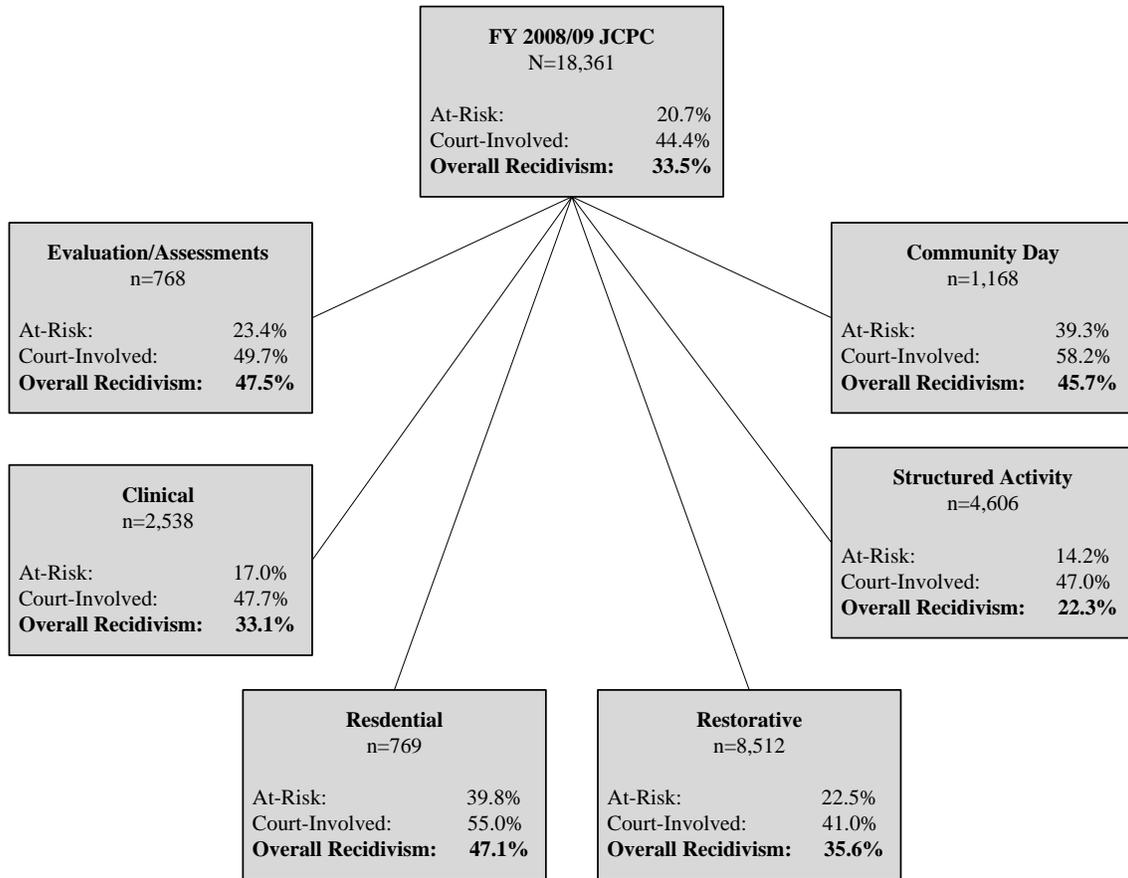
In addition to examining recidivism for the full sample, recidivism was also examined for the six JCPC program categories. This examination was limited to program types with over 50 admissions, and included a total of 18,361 of the 18,736 youth in the study. Figure 4.2 shows that although recidivism rates varied across the program categories, at-risk youth consistently had lower recidivism rates than court-involved youth.

***Suitability of Existing Data for Studying Program Effectiveness***

Several related elements in addressing the suitability of existing data for studying program effectiveness concern program participation. First, the length and intensity (frequency) of program participation are often important predictors of program outcomes, such as recidivism. In a large number of cases, data were missing or problematic for one or both of these measures. Another element is the existence of data on referral to ancillary services. This information is necessary to obtain a full picture of program participation, but the CTS response categories for this item rendered it not useful for the study.

<sup>42</sup> If this comparison is made, then to a large degree, JCPC participants literally are being compared to themselves. Similarly, comparing the recidivism rate for at-risk participants to the recidivism of the juvenile recidivism sample means that, in effect, at-risk participants are being compared to court-involved JCPC participants.

**Figure 4.2**  
**Recidivism Rates for JCPC Program Categories by Legal Status**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

In addition, the existence of risk and needs assessments is crucial to an examination of program effectiveness. According to DJJ policy, JCPCs are required to “[d]evelop strategies to intervene and appropriately respond to and treat the needs of juveniles at risk of delinquency through appropriate risk assessment instruments.”<sup>43</sup> Since all JCPCs do not use the same risk/needs assessment, it is not possible to examine whether youth are placed in programs that address their risk level and their service needs.<sup>44</sup>

A final data issue concerns the ability to identify and select a comparison (or control) group. The effectiveness of a program can best be assessed in comparison to some other alternative or standard. For example, an assessment may seek to determine whether JCPC program participation is more effective in preventing or reducing delinquency than no program

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.ncdps.gov/div/JJ/Policies/JCPC-0003.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> Court counselors administer a standard, statewide, risk and needs assessment to youth who are referred to them. By definition, this excludes at-risk youth. Therefore, a standard risk/needs assessment is available for less than half of the JCPC participants.

participation. Without a comparison group, it is not possible to draw conclusions about whether JCPC participation affects recidivism, or whether recidivism is related to other factors. Addressing such questions requires collecting complaint and arrest information from a comparison group that did not receive JCPC services. Such information was not available, so this study is limited to descriptive analysis of JCPC program outcomes.<sup>45</sup> Because it is unknown whether the outcomes observed were related to program participation, no conclusions can be drawn regarding program effectiveness.

### ***Conclusions***

This report examined recidivism outcomes for youth admitted to JCPC programs in FY 2008/09. Specifically, it discusses the results of a descriptive analysis of recidivism after JCPC admission. More detailed analysis must wait until changes to the capabilities of the CTS and improvements in its data quality are in place.<sup>46</sup> The Sentencing Commission and the DJJ should work together to develop a process to ensure that key elements are captured in the JCPC CTS, to the extent possible. Enhanced information would allow a more meaningful exploration of the link between program services, client characteristics, and reoffending.<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> NC-JOIN contains no information about JCPC program participation, so it is not possible to select a comparison group from this data source.

<sup>46</sup> During FY 2011/12, the DJJ implemented NC ALLIES (A Local Link to Improve Effective Services), a comprehensive on-line management information system for JCPCs. The CTS has been incorporated into NC ALLIES. A new procedure exists to facilitate the assignment of JCPC person identification numbers. The procedure is an improvement over the process used in the CTS before FY 2011/12, but does not guarantee creation of a unique person identifier. DJJ continues to work on creation of a unique person identifier for JCPC participants.

<sup>47</sup> The next report to be produced by the Sentencing Commission will be published in 2015; it will cover FY 2010/11 admissions and will not include the new information. Realistically, expanded data and collection effort will not be available until the 2017 report, covering JCPC admissions during FY 2012/13.

**APPENDIX A:**  
**JCPC SERVICE COMPONENTS**

Source: NC Department of Public Safety  
Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Report  
October 1, 2012

## JCPC SERVICE COMPONENTS

### *Components Providing Residential Services:*

- Group Home Care: Twenty-four hour care for a residential placement lasting six to eight months. The placement is therapeutic and may have a structured family-like environment for youth. Includes intervention with client's family during and after placement and targets a reduction in offending behavior and recidivism.
- Temporary Shelter Care: Group home care and shelter (up to 90 days) for juveniles who need to be temporarily removed from their homes during a family crisis.
- Runaway Shelter Care: Shelter care for juveniles who have run away from home, are homeless, or otherwise need short term care (10 days or less) while arrangements are made for their return home.
- Specialized Foster Care: Care for youth with serious behavioral or emotional problems through foster parents whose special training is designed to help them understand and provide needed support for children who are placed in their care.
- Temporary Foster Care: Short-term (up to 90 days) emergency foster care for diverted or adjudicated juveniles who need to be temporarily removed from their homes during a family crisis. Foster parents have been specially trained to understand and support the youth placed in their care.

### *Components Providing Clinical Treatment:*

- Counseling: Professional, clinical treatment with a licensed counselor or therapist. Counseling may be one-on-one (individual), family counseling, or group counseling. The focus of counseling is to resolve any of a range of problems including but not limited to interpersonal relationships, problem behavior, or substance abuse.
- Crisis Counseling: Short-term assistance to juveniles in immediate danger of physical or emotional injury by a helping professional either face-to-face or by phone.
- Sex Offender Treatment: Outpatient assessment and/or therapeutic services to juvenile offenders targeting inappropriate sexual conduct and offender behavior with a clear focus on rehabilitation and accountability of the offender. Practiced primarily in groups, the treatment has a family group component or focus, has designated follow-up procedures, and is generally legally mandated.
- Psycho-Educational Supportive Counseling: Provides education to help a juvenile better understand his current circumstances and brief interventions to encourage and support him to make more positive decisions.
- Home Based Family Counseling: Short term, intensive services focusing on family interactions/dynamics and their link to delinquent behavior. Involves the entire family and is typically conducted in the home. May also include the availability of a trained individual to respond by phone or in person to crises. The goal is to prevent delinquent and undisciplined behavior by enhancing family functioning and self-sufficiency.

### ***Components Providing Only Evaluation or Assessment:***

- **Psychological Assessment:** Psychological evaluation or assessments to help court counselors and judges recommend the most appropriate consequences and treatment for court involved youth.

### ***Restorative Components:***

- **Mediation/Conflict Resolution:** Provides a process for a juvenile and a victim to resolve a problem or a dispute outside of the formal court process. Mediators do not counsel or give advice but facilitate communication among parties as the parties work to reach their own decisions regarding resolution of their conflict. These components offer immediate and short-term involvement with youth to focus resolving negative and/or offending behaviors.
- **Restitution/Community Service:** Provides supervised worksites in which juveniles are held accountable for their actions that have affected the community and/or victim(s). Through supervised, assigned work, a juvenile earns credit towards payment of monetary compensation for victims (if required) and performs work for the benefit of the community as a consequence of his offense. Juveniles are supervised by adult staff or trained adult volunteers.
- **Teen Court:** Provides a diversion from juvenile court where trained adults and youth volunteers act as officials of the court to hear complaints. Recommended sanctions include but are not limited to community service and restitution (if applicable) for youth who have admitted committing minor delinquency and undisciplined complaints. Professional adult staff provides supervision of the court proceedings and any subsequent community service and/or restitution.

### ***Structured Activities Components:***

- **Mentoring:** Matches adult volunteers with delinquent or at-risk youth on a one-on-one basis. The mentor is an individual providing support, friendship, advice, and/or assistance to the juvenile. After recruitment, screening and training, the mentor spends time with the juvenile on a regular basis and engages in activities such as sports, movies, and helping with homework.
- **Interpersonal Skill Building:** Assists juveniles in developing the social skills required for an individual to interact in a positive way with others. The basis skill model begins with an individual's goals, progresses to how these goals should be translated into appropriate and effective social behaviors, and concludes with the impact of the behavior on the social environment. Typical training techniques are instruction, modeling of behavior, practice and rehearsal, feedback, and reinforcement. May also include training in a set of techniques, such as conflict resolution or decision making, that focus on how to effectively deal with specific types of problems or issues that an individual may confront in interacting with others.
- **Parent/Family Skill Building:** Assists parents/guardians with psychological, behavioral, emotional, or interpersonal issues faced by a parent(s) of a juvenile engaging in problem behaviors or delinquent acts. This component provides parenting skills development,

including communication and discipline techniques. May include sessions for parents only and/or sessions for parents and family members.

- Experiential Skill Building: Assists juveniles in developing needed skills through the use of outdoor adventures and physical activities or challenges to instruct, demonstrate, and allow the practice of effective interpersonal, problem solving, communication and similar skills to achieve the goals of increasing self-esteem, building interpersonal skills, and building pro-social behaviors.
- Tutoring/Academic Enhancement: Assists juveniles in understanding and completing schoolwork and/or classes. May assist juveniles and parents with study skills and structure for studying and completing academic assignments. May also provide trips designed to be an enrichment of or supplemental experience beyond the basic educational curriculum.
- Vocational Development: The overall emphasis focuses on preparing the juvenile to enter the work force by providing actual employment, job placement, non-paid work service (non-restitution based), job training, or career counseling. These programs provide training to juveniles in a specific vocation, career exploration or career counseling, and/or job readiness.
- Life Skills Training: Provides opportunities for juveniles to develop the necessary skills to effectively manage everyday living. This may include a wide range of issues such as general problem solving, social/moral reasoning, balancing responsibilities, how to deal with housing issues, time, and money management.
- Guided Growth: Interventions focus on interpersonal skill building, experiential skill building, vocational development, or life skills training. Components of this category are being reclassified to a more specific type.
- Prevention Services: Interventions provide a primary focus on preventing youth from becoming juvenile delinquents by providing counseling, interpersonal skill building, experiential skill building, vocational development, or life skills training. Components of this category are being reclassified to a more specific type.
- Re-Entry Services: Interventions to help juveniles returning to the community from residential placements cope with transition to their new setting. Components that provide this type of intervention are now classified as counseling or one of the skill building services.

### ***Community Day Programs:***

- Juvenile Structured Day: Provides a highly structured and supervised setting for juveniles who are short term or long-term suspended from school or are exhibiting behavior that might otherwise result in placement in detention. Typically, these components serve youth who are court-involved and referrals are made from juvenile court counselors. These components may operate on a full or partial day schedule. Interventions include individual and/or family counseling, substance abuse education/treatment, restitution/community service, tutoring, alternative education, vocational development and structured activities.

**APPENDIX B:**  
**RECIDIVISM OF JCPC PARTICIPANTS**  
**BY PROGRAM TYPE**

**Table B.1**  
**Recidivism of JCPC Participants by Program Type**  
**FY 2008/09 JCPC Admissions**

Program Type	Total Number in Program Type	Number and Percentage with Recidivism					
		At-Risk		Court-Involved		Total	
	N	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>Evaluation/Assessment</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>49.7</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>47.5</b>
Psychological Assessments	768	15	23.4	350	49.7	365	47.5
<b>Clinical</b>	<b>2,538</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>47.7</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>33.1</b>
Counseling	2,143	179	16.6	507	47.5	686	32.0
Home Based Family Counseling	344	25	21.0	121	53.8	146	42.4
Sex Offender Treatment	51	1	8.3	7	17.9	8	15.7
<b>Residential</b>	<b>769</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>39.8</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>55.0</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>47.1</b>
Group Home Care	76	10	37.0	29	59.2	39	51.3
Runaway Shelter Care	205	61	39.1	29	59.2	90	43.9
Temporary Shelter Care	488	88	40.6	145	53.5	233	47.7
<b>Restorative</b>	<b>8,512</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>2,463</b>	<b>41.0</b>	<b>3,027</b>	<b>35.6</b>
Mediation/Conflict	1,442	164	19.1	203	34.9	367	25.5
Restitution	4,310	73	26.1	1,889	46.9	1,962	45.5
Teen Court	2,760	327	23.9	371	26.7	698	25.3
<b>Structured Activity</b>	<b>4,606</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>47.0</b>	<b>1,025</b>	<b>22.3</b>
Guided Growth Program	118	12	17.6	21	42.0	33	28.0
Interpersonal Skill Building	2,365	245	13.6	258	46.2	503	21.3
Mentoring	203	26	15.9	14	35.9	40	19.7
Parent/Family Skill	596	64	19.8	122	44.7	186	31.2
Prevention Services	566	43	8.3	30	58.8	73	12.9
Tutoring/Academic	642	76	14.4	64	55.7	140	21.8
Vocational Development	116	27	38.6	23	50.0	50	43.1
<b>Community Day Program</b>	<b>1,168</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>39.3</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>58.2</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>45.7</b>
Juvenile Structured Day	1,168	304	39.3	230	58.2	534	45.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18,361</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>4,413</b>	<b>44.4</b>	<b>6,153</b>	<b>33.5</b>

Note: The table reflects results for program types with over 50 admissions. It includes 18 of the 23 program types and 557 of the 566 programs in the study; the 5 program types not included are experiential skill building, life skills training, psycho-educational/supportive counseling, specialized foster care, and temporary foster care.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2008/09 JCPC Sample

