

North Carolina
Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission

**JUVENILE-TO-ADULT
COMPREHENSIVE CRIMINAL HISTORY STUDY**

PHASE TWO

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND SAMPLE PROFILE

Introduction

In 2004, the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission published the first phase of its Juvenile-to-Adult Comprehensive Criminal History Study with assistance from the State's Criminal Justice Information Network and the Governor's Crime Commission. The study developed a model constructing individual offender-based criminal histories starting at the point of a juvenile's first involvement in the juvenile justice system and followed by any subsequent involvement in either the juvenile or the adult criminal justice system.¹ In addition to demonstrating the feasibility of linking information between the two systems, the study also identified some of the early correlates of recidivism as it tracked a sample cohort of juveniles for approximately six years into their early adulthood.

The plan for the second phase of this study was to follow the initial cohort for an additional period of three years for the purposes of:

1. exploring socio-economic and juvenile justice program participation information and its correlation with adult recidivism, and
2. assessing the cohort's recidivism and criminal justice involvement in their young adult years.

Efforts were made to locate and access data sources containing socio-economic and juvenile justice program participation information for the study cohort and merge relevant data into the comprehensive database created in Phase I of the Juvenile-to-Adult Comprehensive Criminal History Study. Court and programmatic data did not contain socio-economic information and relevant programmatic variables with identifying information allowing linkage with the comprehensive database were limited to training school commitments. Therefore, this report focuses primarily on the recidivism of the cohort.

The Juvenile Justice Process

Since the study tracks the cohort beginning with their juvenile court involvement, a short overview of the juvenile justice system provides an understanding of the process which led to their inclusion in this sample. The Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1998 brought about major revisions to the juvenile laws in North Carolina two years after the study group was first processed in the juvenile court. Consequently, the entire sample was initially under the pre-Reform juvenile laws, and a large number of the cohort had "aged out" of the juvenile system by the time the new juvenile code was enacted on July 1, 1999. The younger juveniles in the

¹ In North Carolina, a delinquent juvenile is defined as "any juvenile who, while less than 16 years of age but at least 6 years of age, commits a crime or infraction under State law or under an ordinance of local government, including violation of the motor vehicle laws." (N.C.G.S. 7B-1501(7))

sample who were still under the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system at that time were affected by the new laws if they engaged in further delinquent acts. Some of the significant changes that resulted from the Reform included the establishment of a single, cabinet-level agency (Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention -- DJJDP) to coordinate and administer the juvenile justice system; the opportunity for a more structured follow-up of juveniles by court counselors during the intake process; the creation of a dispositional chart for use with juveniles adjudicated delinquent; and a more selective use of the most restrictive sanction (*i.e.*, training schools²) by the juvenile court judges.

Each of the judicial districts in North Carolina operates a juvenile court that is a part of the district court. Also, within each district is a juvenile court counselors office which processes complaints against juveniles through diversion from or referral to court and supervises juveniles who are placed on probation by the court. The juvenile justice process is initiated by the lodging of a complaint against a juvenile between the ages of six and sixteen by a law enforcement officer or private citizen. There are two types of complaints—the delinquent complaint alleges that a juvenile committed a criminal offense, while the undisciplined complaint alleges non-criminal behavior or status offenses. The delinquent complaint was used in this study and will be highlighted in this discussion.

With the exception of special cases,³ every delinquent complaint follows a statutorily specified intake process consisting of a court counselor's evaluation of the case through interviews with the juvenile, the person(s) legally responsible for the juvenile, and any other relevant parties. Following this, the court counselor reviews the information that has been gathered and makes a determination of whether or not the complaint should be closed without further action, diverted from court with a referral to a community-based resource and a time-limited follow-up by a court counselor, or referred to court. If the third option is chosen, the complaint is filed as a petition with the clerk of court's office and the case is subsequently scheduled for a court hearing. The juveniles included in the sample were in the category of those who had a petition filed with the court.

If the determination is made that the petition is to be heard in juvenile court, a two-part hearing follows therein.⁴ The first part is known as the adjudicatory hearing which allows for the judge to hear evidence in order to make a determination of whether or not the juvenile committed the act alleged in the petition. If the court finds that the allegation has been proven “beyond a

² Following various revisions implemented after the Reform, training schools were renamed Youth Development Centers (YDCs).

³ For juveniles charged with a non-divertible offense, the intake process is waived and the complaint is automatically filed for a court hearing. Non-divertible offenses are defined in G.S. § 7B-1701 as murder, first- or second-degree rape, first- or second-degree sexual offense, arson, felony drug offenses under Article 5 of G.S. Chapter 90, first-degree burglary, crime against nature, or a felony involving the willful infliction of serious bodily injury or which was committed by use of a deadly weapon.

⁴ In the event that the juvenile is alleged to have committed a felony offense and is at least 13 years old, the judge decides whether or not the juvenile's case will remain in juvenile court or be transferred to Superior Court. The court has the discretionary power to transfer all felonies with the exception of a Class A felony, which constitutes a mandatory transfer to Superior Court for those juveniles who are 13 years old or older.

reasonable doubt,” then the juvenile is adjudicated delinquent (*i.e.*, found guilty) and the court proceeds to the second stage of the hearing known as the dispositional hearing.

The dispositional hearing marks the part of the process in which the court decides the sanctions, services, and conditions that will be ordered for the juvenile as a result of the adjudicated offenses. A predisposition report prepared by a court counselor is often given to the judge in order to offer information and recommendations that may assist in formulating a disposition for the juvenile.

In fashioning a disposition to fit the needs of a particular juvenile, a judge has an array of programs and services from which to select, ranging from community-based alternatives to more restrictive sanctions designed to place the juvenile away from the community and in a secure setting for a period of time. Since the overwhelming majority of juveniles served by the juvenile justice system remain in the community, programming based in the communities focuses on prevention and rehabilitation and has been a hallmark of the juvenile justice system for over thirty years.

Detention centers and training schools represent the most restrictive sanctions available within the juvenile court system. Detention centers provide secure, temporary confinement and care for juveniles who meet statutorily defined criteria. A judge can order the placement of juveniles into detention while they are awaiting their adjudicatory or dispositional hearing, following their dispositional hearing, or as a condition of probation. Training schools are the most restrictive, long-term dispositional alternative that is available to a juvenile court judge. Only juveniles who are adjudicated delinquent and are at least ten years old may be committed to one of the five training schools in the state.

It should be noted that prior to the Reform and during the timeframe when the majority of this sample was involved with the juvenile court, a significant number of juveniles were being committed to training school, including juveniles adjudicated for a misdemeanor and/or juveniles with a low delinquency history. Judges ordered commitments that had an indefinite length as well as definite commitments. The Reform Act created a two-dimensional chart, modeled somewhat after the adult sentencing grid, whereby dispositional alternatives for a particular juvenile were identified based on the juvenile’s current offense and delinquency history. As a result, judges were limited as to which juveniles could be committed to training schools (*e.g.*, misdemeanants cannot receive a commitment) and the commitment rate decreased dramatically after 1998.⁵

The Criminal Justice Process

As noted earlier, one of the unique elements of this study is the long follow-up period used to track juveniles from their first delinquent involvement into their later juvenile and adult criminal involvement. In order to better understand the adult system into which the cohort transitioned during the follow-up, a brief description of the system is provided. In North Carolina, when persons reach the age of 16, they are considered to be adults for criminal

⁵ North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *2006 Annual Report*, Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Research and Planning Division, 2007.

purposes and are processed through the adult criminal justice system. The terminology is different between the juvenile and criminal justice systems, but cases in both systems follow a similar pattern in their respective processes. As the delinquent cases go from complaint to petition to adjudication to disposition in the juvenile system, so the criminal cases move from arrest to charge to conviction to sentence in the adult system. Aside from this, there are more differences than similarities between the juvenile justice process and the criminal justice process.

At the front-end of the adult system, there is nothing comparable to the intake component of the juvenile system where a case can be diverted before it reaches the stage of a formal court hearing. Consequently, there is no comparable role in the criminal justice system with the options of a court counselor in evaluating and determining cases that could more appropriately be diverted to a community-based resource in lieu of being referred to court. The aspect of diversion in the juvenile system illustrates the importance of rehabilitation in the processing of juvenile cases. On the other hand, the adult system has an entirely different focus which highlights public safety and the moving of cases toward a court hearing. While the court counselor is the pivotal person in the initial stages of the juvenile justice process, the district attorney is the force behind the major decisions in the criminal justice process. The selection of a charge, the dismissal of a charge, and the negotiation of a plea are all parts of a district attorney's discretionary realm, any of which can significantly impact the final outcome of a case.

Unlike the juvenile court, adult criminal matters are heard in one of two types of courts. District courts primarily preside over misdemeanors, and superior courts hear felony cases. In the criminal justice process, adults are entitled to two rights that are not available to juveniles. Adults have the right to a pretrial process, which includes the right to bail. Also, in superior court cases, defendants have the right to a trial by jury, although it should be noted that there are few jury trials in the state.

Following a trial, a judge or a jury either convicts the defendant of the charge (or lesser included charges) or finds the defendant innocent of the charge. If convicted, offenders enter the sentencing phase of the process. The judge uses a punishment grid as a guide in forming the sentence. In the adult system, there are two separate punishment charts -- one for misdemeanor sentencing and one for felony sentencing -- that have a similar format. As previously noted, the two variables that form the basis for these adult grids are also featured in the juvenile disposition chart although the adult felony punishment chart is more complex than the juvenile chart. The offense class, ranking from most to least serious, constitutes the vertical axis. A defendant's prior record/conviction level is shown by the horizontal axis. Within the two axes are a number of grid cells which contain the type of sentence (*i.e.*, active, intermediate, community), as well as the length of the sentence.

If the court imposes an active sentence, the offender is required to serve a term of incarceration in a prison or jail. Unlike some of the juvenile commitments to training school, all of the sentence lengths are determinant, and the offender must serve at least 100% of the minimum sentence. Under Structured Sentencing, prison resources are reserved for the most serious offenders. After an active punishment, intermediate sanctions are the most restrictive and can involve a period of incarceration (either active or suspended) coupled with a supervised probationary term and at least one special condition (*e.g.*, electronic house arrest). Community

punishments, the least restrictive sanctions, include a suspended period of incarceration and are community-based. Even though a significant number of offenders are placed on probation and in other community-based alternatives, the criminal court places less emphasis on family, rehabilitation, and treatment issues in sentencing adults than the juvenile court does in its disposition of juveniles. The adult system, as a whole, is a more punitive system that has a larger percentage of offenders serving an active sentence.

Study Methodology

Phase II of the study utilized the same cohort of 2,062 subjects studied in Phase I whose first delinquent petition was filed with the juvenile court in 1997. The sample was drawn from six of North Carolina's 39 judicial districts (comprised of seven counties), selected from urban and rural counties and different regions of the state and representing a majority of the first-petitioned juvenile offenders in 1997.⁶

Information was collected from hard-copy court files on all first petitions filed in CY 1997, supplemented with any subsequent petitions, adjudications and dispositions incurred by the subjects during their juvenile years. The database created from the juvenile information was then matched into the Department of Justice's (DOJ) database to provide information on adult arrests and convictions to track any possible criminal involvement of the sample subjects past their 16th birthday.⁷

Juveniles from the six judicial districts were included in the cohort if their first delinquent petition was filed between January 1 and December 31, 1997. The Sentencing Commission's 2004 Juvenile-to-Adult Comprehensive Criminal History Study followed the cohorts from their first petition in 1997 to April 2003, for a period ranging from 64 to 76 months. All but 212 of the original 2,062 juveniles in the cohort had reached their 16th birthday by the cutoff date of April 2003 and were considered adults for all criminal matters.

With a second grant from the Governor's Crime Commission,⁸ the follow-up for the sample was extended by three years, to June 2006. The result was a unique opportunity to learn about the juvenile and young adult recidivism of a first-delinquent cohort by tracking their involvement in both systems over a period of eight to nine years (102-114 months).

The primary definition of recidivism involved subsequent juvenile petitions and adult arrests. Information was also collected on juvenile adjudications and adult convictions as secondary measures of recidivism.

⁶ The counties included in the study were: Forsyth, Guilford, Harnett, Johnston, Mecklenburg, Onslow, and Wake.

⁷ In addition to juvenile court files and DOJ's dataset on fingerprinted arrests, the Administrative Office of the Court's Automated Criminal Information System (ACIS) on adult charges and sentences was also utilized.

⁸ North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission, 2005 grant no. 110-1-04-010-AK-239, Juvenile-to-Adult Comprehensive Criminal History II.

Cohort Profile and Updated Cohort Juvenile Recidivism

The following sections, which provide a profile of the 2,062 sample subjects and describe their involvement and recidivism in their juvenile years, include additional information collected in phase II on 212 subjects who had not yet reached age 16 at the end of the Phase I follow-up (April 2003).

The demographic profile of the sample of juveniles with their first delinquent petition filed in CY 1997 is presented in Table 1.1. The majority of the subjects were male (74.2%), and black (58.5%). The youngest age at first offense was 6 years and the average age was 13.5, with a third of the group being 15 years or older.

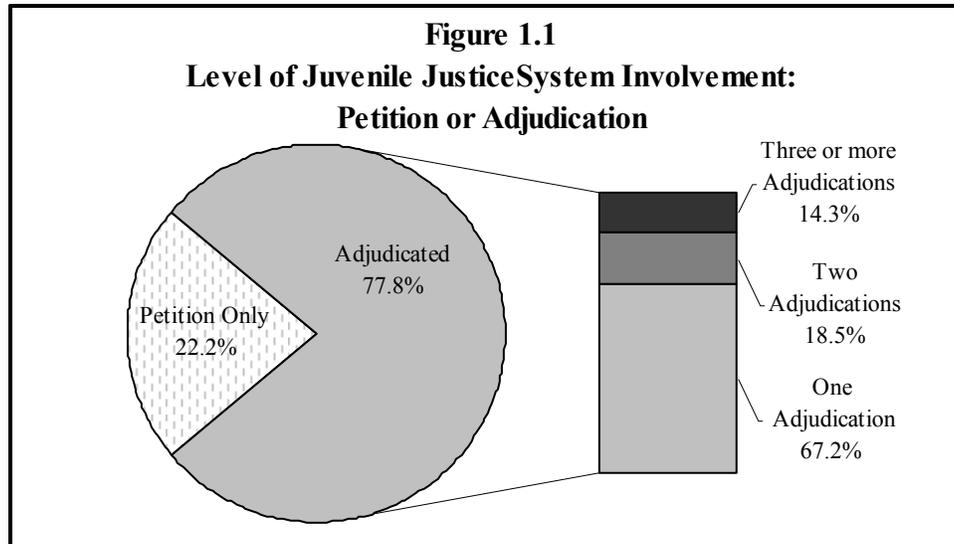
Table 1.1
Demographic Profile of Juveniles
With First Delinquent Petition Filed in 1997

Demographic Variables	Percent
Gender	
Male	74.2
Female	25.8
Race	
Black	58.5
Non-Black	41.5
Age at First Offense	
6-11 years old	10.1
12 years old	11.9
13 years old	18.5
14 years old	26.4
15 years or older	33.1
Total	2,062 (100.0)

Note: There were 14 cases with missing data for race and 3 cases with missing data for age.
Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

There was some variation in level of involvement in the juvenile justice system among the 2,062 cohort juveniles. Figure 1.1 shows that 22% of the juveniles had one or more petitions filed but no adjudication during their juvenile years.⁹ Of the 1,605 adjudicated juveniles in the sample, 67% had only one adjudication, 19% had two adjudications, and the remaining 14% had three or more adjudications.

⁹ Court records did not indicate any further action, short of adjudication, that might have been taken in these cases, e.g., dismissal.



Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

The seriousness of the offenses committed by the cohort of juveniles is depicted in Table 1.2. The most serious charge in both the majority of petitions and adjudications was a misdemeanor -- 57% and 67%, respectively -- with the largest proportion being for minor offenses. It should be noted that, while felony petitions have a higher probability of further court action than misdemeanor petitions, charges may be reduced from felonies to misdemeanors in the plea and adjudication process. This might explain the proportionately larger rate of felony charges at petition (42.6%) compared to their rate at adjudication (32.8%).

Table 1.2
Most Serious Offense for Petitions and Adjudications

Type of Most Serious Offense	Percent of Petitions	Percent of Adjudications
Violent Felony (Class B1-E)	7.5	4.4
Serious Felony (Class F-I)	35.1	28.4
Serious Misdemeanor (Class A1)	9.4	6.8
Minor Misdemeanor (Class 1-3)	48.0	60.4
Total	2,062 (100.0)	1,605 (100.0)

Note: There were 3 Class A petitions transferred to superior court for prosecution as adults.
Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

The deepest level of involvement in the juvenile system for the sample cohort was commitment to a training school following adjudication. Of the 1,605 adjudicated juveniles, 230 or 14.3% were committed to a training school at some point during their time in the juvenile system. The majority of juveniles committed to a training school were male (83.5%), black

(70.6%), and had a felony as the most serious offense (52.6%). (See Table 1.3.) The majority of commitments were for serious non-violent felonies (45.2%) or minor misdemeanors (38.6%). The most frequent offense classes were Class H felonies (32.0%), Class 1 misdemeanors (20.2%) and Class 2 misdemeanors (15.8%).

Table 1.3
Profile of Juveniles Committed to Training School

Training School Commitments	Percent
Gender	
Male	83.5
Female	16.5
Race	
Black	70.6
Non-Black	29.4
Type of Offense	
Violent Felony (Class B1-E)	7.4
Serious Felony (Class F-I)	45.2
Serious Misdemeanor (Class A1)	8.8
Minor Misdemeanor (Class 1-3)	38.6
Total	230 (100.0)

Note: There were 2 cases with missing data for race and 2 cases with missing data for offense class.

Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Prior to the analysis of adult recidivism in the following chapters, updated juvenile recidivism rates are presented for the 1997 cohort. Because 212 of the cohort subjects were not 16 years old yet at the end of Phase I, each had the opportunity to engage in additional juvenile delinquent behavior during the Phase II follow-up. Consequently, juvenile recidivism rates increased slightly from Phase I to Phase II, and the final juvenile recidivism rates for the entire sample are presented below:¹⁰

Juveniles with one or more subsequent petitions	32.5% (670 of 2,062)
Juveniles with one or more subsequent adjudications	32.9% (526 of 1,605)

¹⁰ The last of the 1997 cohort of first-offender juveniles turned 16 years old in February 2006.

A more detailed description of the methodology and the juvenile cohort is provided in Chapters Two and Three of the Sentencing Commission's 2004 Juvenile-to-Adult Comprehensive Criminal History Study.

The following chapter describes the adult criminal involvement of the cohort, including the volume and type of their arrests through June 2006. Chapter Three limits the sample to cohort subjects who were arrested and examines convictions and sentence type. Chapter Four investigates the crimes of the cohort and utilizes multivariate techniques to assess the relationship between recidivism and demographic and juvenile justice variables. Chapter Four ends with a summary of main findings and conclusions regarding juvenile to adult recidivism in North Carolina.

Chapter One Findings	
Study purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ This study examines recidivism of a first-delinquent cohort using a nine year follow-up period that began at first juvenile delinquent petition in 1997, following each cohort member into young adulthood.
Cohort	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ The cohort consisted of 2,062 subjects who were an average of 13.5 years old, 74% male; and 59% black.
Juvenile justice involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ The majority (57.4%) of juveniles had a misdemeanor as their most serious charge at petition. Conversely, a little over one third had a serious felony and 7.5% had a violent felony as their most serious charge at petition.▶ Of the 2,062 cohort subject, 22% (457) only had a petition and 78% (1,605) had one or more adjudications. Of those who were adjudicated, 14.3% (230) were committed to training school.
Juvenile recidivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Re-petition: One-third of the cohort had one or more subsequent petitions filed with a re-petition rate of 33%.▶ Re-adjudication: Of the 1,605 subjects who were adjudicated, 526 had a subsequent adjudication with a re-adjudication rate of 33%.

CHAPTER TWO

ADULT COHORT ARRESTS

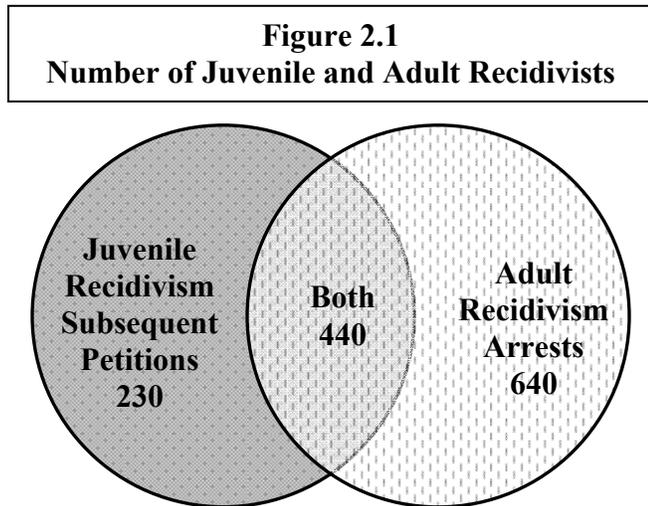
The primary focus of this study (Phase II) was to examine the adult recidivism of the cohort, with recidivism defined as fingerprinted arrests for offenses committed after the subjects' 16th birthday. (Note: juvenile arrests were not counted in this definition.)

At the time of their first petition in 1997, the average age of the juvenile cohort was 13.5 years; by the end of the extended follow-up period in June 2006, the entire cohort was in their young adult years. On average, subjects were at risk of adult arrest for 7.2 years, with the individual window of opportunity in the adult system ranging from 4 to 114 months, depending on the subject's age at entry into the study. This overall window of opportunity might have been shorter in reality for some since any time spent committed or incarcerated is not accounted for in this analysis.

Adult Arrests

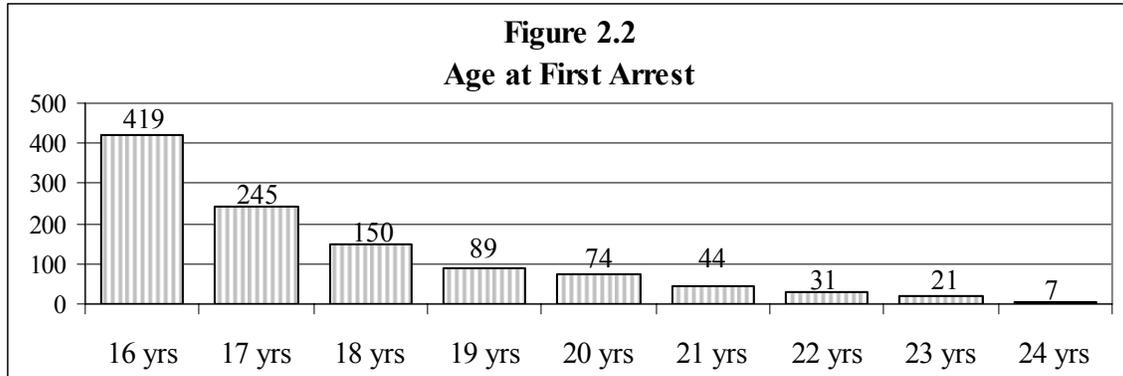
More than half (52.4%, n=1,080) of the cohort subjects had at least one adult arrest, with an average time of 25 months to first arrest. This 52.4% arrest rate represents an 8.1% increase in recidivism from the original 44.3% arrest rate for the cohort in April 2003 (the end of the first follow-up period).

Overall there were 1,310 (63.5%) cohort subjects that had either subsequent petitions and/or adult arrests, with the remaining 752 (36.5%) having no additional criminal involvement. Figure 2.1 depicts the type of criminal activity of the cohort through June 2006. Of those with recidivist activity, 230 (17.5%) had only a subsequent juvenile petition and 640 (48.9%) had only adult arrests. The remaining 440 (33.6%) were both juvenile and adult recidivists.



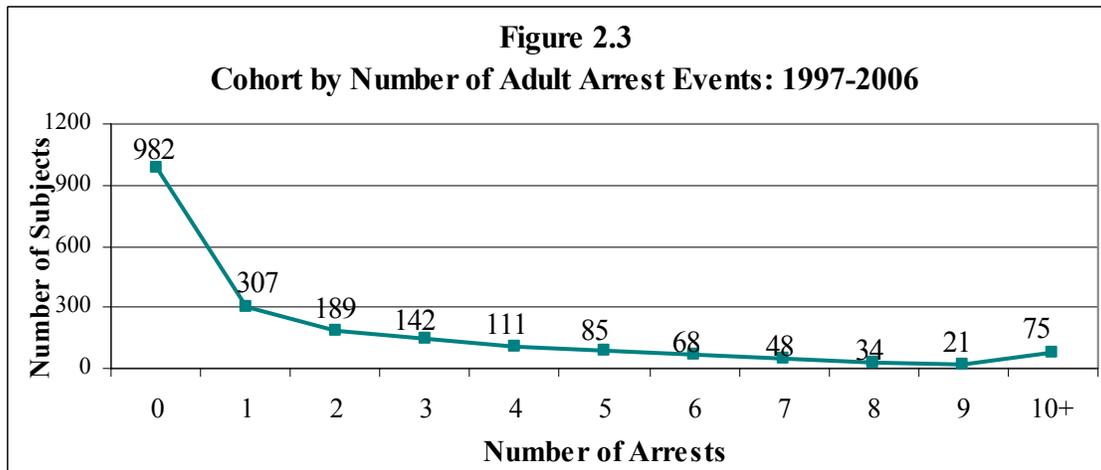
Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Figure 2.2 shows the distribution of age at first arrest for the 1,080 subjects who had at least one arrest during the follow-up period. The majority of subjects were 16 (39%), 17 (23%), or 18 (14%) at the time of their first adult arrest. This indicates that for those who were arrested, the arrest typically occurred within the first two years of adult jurisdiction, with little to no crime-free period between their involvement in the juvenile justice and adult criminal justice systems.



Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Figure 2.3 displays the number of arrests during the follow-up period. Adult arrest events are counted by date, meaning that all arrests that occurred on the same date are counted as one arrest event. Of the 2,062 subjects, 982 had no adult arrests during the follow up period. Of the 1,080 with an arrest, 28.4% (n=307) had only one arrest and 17.5% (n=189) had two arrests. In contrast, 30.7% (n=331) were arrested five or more times during the follow-up period with one subject being arrested 29 times.



Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

As Table 2.1 details, arrest rates were higher for males, blacks, and subjects who were 13 and older at their first juvenile petition. A subject's juvenile record also affected the probability of adult recidivism. Those who had at least one felony petition as a juvenile were considerably more likely to be arrested as adults than those who only had misdemeanor petition(s) – 57.2% compared to 48.8%, respectively. A clear difference also emerged based on a subject's level of involvement in the juvenile justice system: the rate of arrest increased from 39.0% for those with a single petition to 54.3% for those with an adjudication (without commitment) to 67.8% for those with a training school commitment. Finally, those with a record of subsequent juvenile petitions had adult arrests at a much higher rate (65.7%), compared to those with no subsequent petitions beyond the one placing them in the sample (46.0%).

Table 2.1
Arrest Rates by Demographic and Juvenile Justice Variables

Demographic Variables	Adult Arrest		Total
	Yes	No	
Age at First Petition			
12 and under	48.2	51.8	21.9 (452)
13 and older	53.5	46.5	78.1 (1,610)
Gender			
Male	58.0	42.0	74.2 (1,529)
Female	36.4	63.6	25.8 (533)
Race			
Black	59.5	40.5	58.5 (1,199)
Non-Black	42.3	57.7	41.5 (849)
Juvenile Justice Variables	Adult Arrest		Total
	Yes	No	
Most Serious Petition Type			
Felony	57.2	42.8	42.7 (880)
Misdemeanor	48.8	51.2	57.3 (1,182)
Level of Juvenile System Involvement			
First Petition Only	39.0	61.0	22.2 (457)
Adjudication	54.3	45.7	66.7 (1,375)
Commitment to Training School	67.8	32.2	11.1 (230)
Juvenile Recidivism			
Subsequent Petition	65.7	34.3	32.5 (670)
No Subsequent Petition	46.0	54.0	67.5 (1,392)
Total	52.4 (1,080)	47.6 (982)	100.0 (2,062)

Note: Totals may vary slightly due to the deletion of cases with missing variables from individual analyses.
Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Table 2.2 goes one step further by examining the number of recidivist arrests. While 52.4% of the subjects were recidivists as defined by one or more adult arrest, 14.9% had only one arrest, 16.1% had 2 or 3 arrests, and 21.4% had four or more arrests, pointing to a relatively rapid accumulation of criminal record within the early years of adulthood.

Table 2.2
Number of Adult Arrests by Demographic and Juvenile Justice Variables

Demographic Variables	Number of Adult Arrests				Total
	0	1	2-3	4 or more	
Age at First Petition					
12 and under	51.8	17.5	11.9	18.8	21.9 (452)
13 and older	46.5	14.2	17.2	22.1	78.1 (1,610)
Gender					
Male	42.0	14.4	16.9	26.7	74.2 (1,529)
Female	63.6	16.3	13.7	6.4	25.8 (533)
Race					
Black	40.5	13.8	17.9	27.8	58.5 (1,199)
Non-Black	57.7	16.5	13.3	12.5	41.5 (849)
Juvenile Justice Variables	Number of Adult Arrests				Total
	0	1	2-3	4 or more	
Most Serious Petition Type					
Felony	42.8	12.8	16.1	28.3	42.7 (880)
Misdemeanor	51.2	16.4	16.1	16.3	57.3 (1,182)
Level of Juvenile System Involvement					
First Petition Only	61.1	13.8	14.4	10.7	22.2 (457)
Adjudication	45.8	15.6	16.3	22.3	66.7 (1,375)
Commitment to Training School	32.2	12.6	17.8	37.4	11.1 (230)
Juvenile Recidivism					
Subsequent Petition	34.3	14.2	16.6	34.9	32.5 (670)
No Subsequent Petition	54.0	15.2	15.8	15.0	67.5 (1,392)
Total	47.6 (982)	14.9 (307)	16.1 (331)	21.4 (442)	100.0 (2,062)

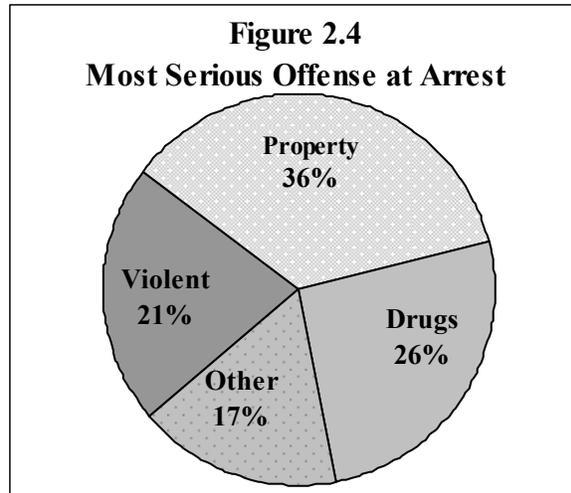
Note: Totals may vary slightly due to the deletion of cases with missing variables from individual analyses.
Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

The rate of multiple arrests varied by subgroups; female offenders were the lowest at 6.4% with four or more adult arrests, followed by non-blacks (12.5%), and subjects 12 and under at their first petition (18.8%). Based on their juvenile justice factors, subjects less likely to have four or more adult arrests were those with the lowest level of involvement in the juvenile justice at 10.7%, followed by those with no subsequent petitions (15.0%), and no felony petitions (16.3%). The highest rates of offenders with four or more arrests were those who were juvenile recidivists (34.9%), and those committed to a training school (37.4%). This last figure is especially high when considering the time many committed youth serve beyond age 16, thereby reducing their window of opportunity to be arrested as adults.

Following a look at the occurrence and incidence of adult recidivism, the next figure and two tables examine the seriousness of recidivistic behavior, defined as the single most serious charge throughout a subject's arrest history. The analysis in this section is based on the 1,080 subjects with one or more adult arrests.

Figure 2.4 displays the most serious arrest offense type (independent of whether a felony or misdemeanor) for subjects who were arrested during the follow-up period. The most common arrest type was property offenses with 36% or 351 subjects falling into this category. About 26% (255) had a drug offense and about 21% (209) had a violent offense as their most serious arrest.

As shown in Tables 2.3 and 2.4, 58.2% percent of the recidivists had at least one felony arrest, while the other 41.8% had misdemeanors as their most serious arrest. These two tables also describe whether a recidivist's most serious offense at arrest, within the felony/misdemeanor distinction, was for a violent, property, drug, or other type offense. The most frequent arrest offense type was for property felonies (24.5%), followed by drug felonies (19.4%) and violent misdemeanors (13.4%).



Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Table 2.3 also portrays the relationship between demographic characteristics and the most serious arrest offense within the broader felony/misdemeanor categories. Those 12 and younger at their first juvenile petition were 8% more likely to have an adult felony arrest than those 13 and older (64.4% versus 56.5%). Compared to females, males were more likely to have felony arrests by a wide margin (61.7% versus 42.1%). Race seemed to make no measurable difference in the rate of adult felony arrests. Within the most serious offense category – violent felonies – the greatest gap seemed to be between males (9.0%) and females (3.4%). Non-black offenders were more likely to be arrested for property felonies (31.8% compared to 21.1% for black offenders), while black offenders were more likely to be arrested for drug felonies (21.3% compared to 14.9% for non-blacks). Property felonies were proportionately more likely to be committed by non-black offenders (31.8% compared to 21.1% for black offenders), while drug felonies were more often charged to male offenders (20.8% compared to 12.9% for female offenders) and to blacks (21.3% compared to 14.9% for non-blacks).

Table 2.4 looks at the variations in the most serious arrest offense by juvenile justice variables. The highest rate of felony arrests was for those with a felony as their most serious juvenile petition, and those with a training school commitment (69% for both subgroups). Subjects with a misdemeanor as their most serious juvenile petition were also the most likely to have a misdemeanor as their most serious adult arrest

(50.9%). Those having a felony as their most serious juvenile petition, and those with no adjudications, were proportionately more likely to have a felony arrest for violent crimes.

Arrest records for 702 of the 773 subjects with two or more adult arrests included information on the most serious offense at their first arrest, as well as the most serious offense for which they arrested at any time during the follow-up period. The diagonal line of shaded cells in Table 2.5 shows the percentage of offenders whose first offense and most serious offense were in the same category. (This would also include cases where a subject's first offense was the most serious offense.) Numbers below the diagonal line of shaded cells represent the offenders whose crimes have become more serious from their first to their subsequent arrest(s). For example, while half (49.7%) of those charged with a felony drug offense at their first arrest had a felony drug offense also as their most serious arrest, the other half had a more serious subsequent arrest for a violent felony (31%) or property felony (19.3%). Overall, 410, or 58%, of the 702 recidivists with two or more arrests had an increase in their offense seriousness from their first to their subsequent arrests.

Table 2.3
Offense Type at Adult Arrest by Demographic Variables

Demographic Variables	Offense Type at Adult Arrest								Total	
	Violent		Property		Drugs		Other		Felony	Misd.
	Felony	Misd.	Felony	Misd.	Felony	Misd.	Felony	Misd.		
Age at First Petition										
12 and Under	11.5	12.0	25.0	11.5	18.8	3.9	9.1	8.2	64.4 (134)	35.6 (74)
13 and Older	7.1	13.7	24.4	11.0	19.5	7.6	5.5	11.2	56.5 (440)	43.5 (339)
Gender										
Male	9.0	12.4	25.0	9.0	20.8	7.2	6.8	9.8	61.7 (499)	38.3 (310)
Female	3.4	18.0	21.9	20.8	12.9	5.1	3.9	14.0	42.1 (75)	57.9 (103)
Race										
Black	8.2	13.2	21.1	10.9	21.3	6.2	6.8	12.3	57.4 (378)	42.6 (281)
Non-Black	7.2	14.0	31.8	11.8	14.9	8.1	5.0	7.2	58.9 (189)	41.1 (132)
Total	7.9 (77)	13.5 (132)	24.6 (241)	11.2 (110)	19.2 (188)	6.8 (67)	6.2 (61)	10.6 (104)	58.2 (574)	41.8 (413)

Note: Offense type is based on most serious offense charged at any of the arrest events. Of the 1,080 subjects with an adult arrest, 93 were excluded due to missing information on offense type at arrest.

Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Table 2.4
Offense Type at Adult Arrest by Juvenile Justice Variables

Juvenile Justice Variables	Offense Type at Adult Arrest								Total	
	Violent		Property		Drugs		Other			
	Felony	Misd.	Felony	Misd.	Felony	Misd.	Felony	Misd.	Felony	Misd.
Offense Type at Juvenile Petition										
Felony	9.7	10.6	29.4	8.4	22.6	4.8	7.0	7.5	68.8 (313)	31.2 (142)
Misdemeanor	6.6	15.8	20.3	13.5	16.5	8.5	5.6	13.2	49.1 (261)	50.9 (271)
Level of Juvenile Justice Involvement										
1 st Petition Only	10.4	11.0	26.6	5.8	20.8	6.5	4.6	14.3	62.3 (96)	37.3 (58)
Adjudication	7.5	14.5	23.5	13.1	18.1	6.5	5.8	11.0	54.9 (379)	45.1 (311)
Training School	7.7	10.5	27.2	7.7	23.8	8.4	10.5	4.2	69.2 (99)	30.8 (44)
Juvenile Recidivism										
Yes	9.0	12.6	23.5	12.9	19.7	6.3	8.2	7.8	60.4 (249)	39.6 (163)
No	7.3	13.9	25.2	9.9	19.1	7.2	4.9	12.5	56.5 (325)	43.5 (250)
Total	7.9 (77)	13.5 (132)	24.6 (241)	11.2 (110)	19.2 (188)	6.8 (67)	6.2 (61)	10.6 (104)	58.2 (574)	41.8 (413)

Note: Offense type is based on most serious offense charged at any of the arrest events. Of the 1,080 subjects with an adult arrest, 93 were excluded due to missing information on offense type at arrest.

Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Table 2.5
Most Serious Offense Type at Adult Arrest

Most Serious Offense Type at First Arrest		Most Serious Offense Type at Any Arrest								Total
		Felony				Misdemeanor				
		Violent	Property	Drugs	Other	Violent	Property	Drugs	Other	
Felony	Violent	100.0								6.8 (48)
	Property	34.4	65.6							26.5 (186)
	Drugs	31.0	19.3	49.7						20.7 (145)
	Other	39.6	22.9	18.8	18.7					6.8 (48)
Misd.	Violent	33.3	23.8	11.9	3.6	27.4				12.0 (84)
	Property	21.3	24.0	18.7	5.3	16.0	14.7			10.7 (75)
	Drugs	24.4	26.8	24.4	2.4	7.3	4.9	9.8		5.8 (41)
	Other	30.7	17.3	25.3	2.7	13.3	2.7	4.0	4.0	10.7 (75)
Total		36.0 (253)	31.8 (223)	19.1 (134)	2.7 (19)	6.8 (48)	2.1 (15)	1.0 (7)	0.5 (3)	100.0 (702)

Note: Offense type is based on the most serious offense charged at any of the arrest events. The table includes the 702 sample subjects with two or more adult arrests with information on most serious offense type.

Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Chapter Two Findings

Adult arrests – Incidence and frequency:

- ▶ Of the 2,062 study subjects, 48% had no adult arrests; 52% had one or more adult arrests.
- ▶ The average time to first adult arrest was 25 months.
- ▶ Arrest rates were higher for subjects who:
 - were 13 and older at first petition, male, black,
 - had a felony petition, adjudication, training school commitment or
 - had a subsequent juvenile petition (juvenile recidivism).
- ▶ The highest arrest rate was for those committed to training school as juveniles at 68%.
- ▶ The lowest arrest rate was for females at 36%.

Adult arrests – Most serious offense at arrest:

- ▶ Of all subjects with an adult arrest, 58% had a felony offense and 42% had a misdemeanor offense as their most serious offense at arrest during the follow-up period.
- ▶ The most serious types of offense for arrests were: 21% violent offenses; 36% property offenses; 26% drug offenses; 17% other offenses.

Subjects with two or more adult arrests – 39% (773)

- ▶ The majority (58%) of those with two or more arrests had a subsequent arrest more serious than their first arrest.

CHAPTER THREE

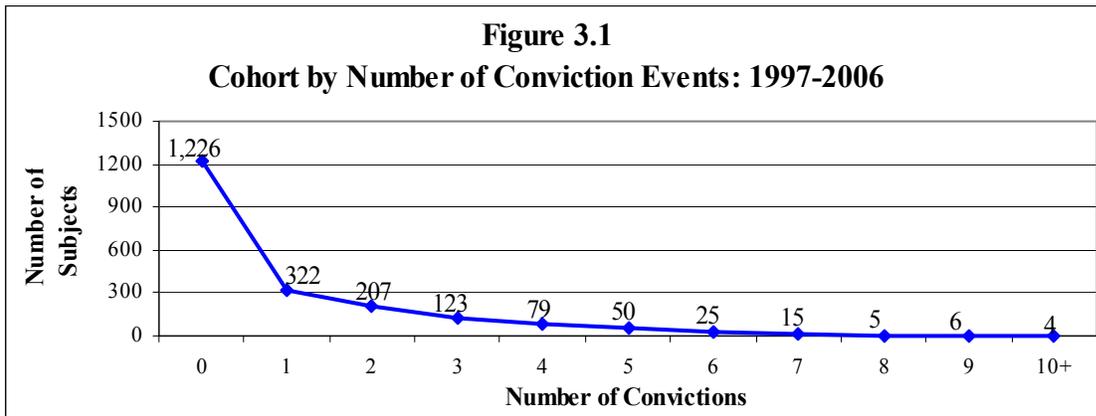
ADULT COHORT CONVICTIONS

As noted in Chapter One, the final rate of juvenile recidivism for the cohort was 32.9%, measured as re-adjudication for the 1,605 subjects who had at least one adjudication. This chapter presents information on adult recidivism for the cohort, with recidivism defined as criminal convictions accrued by the subjects as they entered their adult (over-16) years. A conviction event is comprised of all offenses for which an offender is convicted on a given day of court and is characterized by the most serious convicted offense.

Adult Convictions

Overall, 836 of the 2,062 subjects (or 40.5%), had one or more convictions between their 16th birthday and the end of the follow-up period. The 836 convicted offenders represented 77% of those with one or more arrest. In this context it should be noted that while different factors might come into play at the trial and conviction level, the probability of conviction is, by definition, dependent on having an arrest, and on the factors correlated with the probability of an arrest.

Of the 2,062 cohort subjects, 1,226 (59.5%) had no adult convictions during the follow-up period. As displayed in Figure 3.1, 322 (15.6%) had one conviction, with a declining number of subjects having multiple convictions, including 15 subjects (less than 1%) who had as many as eight or more convictions.



Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Similar to the findings in Chapter Two regarding arrests (*see* Table 2.1), males, blacks, and those 13 and older at first petition were also more likely to have a conviction than females, non-blacks and subjects younger than 13 at first petition (*see* Table 3.1). Equally consistent was the direction of findings regarding the juvenile history of subjects. Having an adult conviction was more likely for those with a juvenile petition for a felony versus a misdemeanor (47.4% and 35.5%, respectively); for juvenile recidivists (53.7% versus 34.2% for non-recidivists); and for

those with deeper involvement in the juvenile system (27.1% for those with a first petition only, 42.0% for those adjudicated, and 58.3% for those committed to training school).

Table 3.1
Conviction Rates by Demographic and Juvenile Justice Variables

Demographic Variables	Adult Conviction		Total
	Yes	No	
Age			
12 and under	34.7	65.3	21.9 (452)
13 and older	42.2	57.8	78.1 (1,610)
Gender			
Male	47.0	53.0	74.2 (1,529)
Female	22.0	78.0	25.8 (533)
Race			
Black	47.7	52.3	58.5 (1,199)
Non-Black	30.2	69.8	41.5 (849)
Juvenile Justice Variables	Adult Conviction		Total
	Yes	No	
Most Serious Petition Type			
Felony	47.4	52.6	42.7 (880)
Misdemeanor	35.5	64.5	57.3 (1,182)
Level of Juvenile System Involvement			
First Petition Only	27.1	72.9	22.2 (457)
Adjudication	42.0	58.0	66.7 (1,375)
Commitment to Training School	58.3	41.7	11.1 (230)
Juvenile Recidivism			
Subsequent Petition	53.7	46.3	32.5 (670)
No Subsequent Petition	34.2	65.8	67.5 (1,392)
Total	40.5 (836)	59.5 (1,226)	100.0 (2,062)

Note: Totals may vary slightly due to the deletion of cases with missing variables from individual analyses.
Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Table 3.2 examines the relationship between a set of demographic and juvenile justice factors and multiple convictions. Consistent with the findings on multiple arrests (*see* Table 2.2 in Chapter Two), males, blacks, and subjects 13 and older at first petition were more likely to have multiple convictions than females, non-blacks, and subjects 12 and under at first petition. Similarly, being a juvenile recidivist (*i.e.*, having at least one felony petition), and being adjudicated or committed to a training school also showed a clear relationship with higher rates of multiple convictions. The most likely subgroups to have multiple convictions (4 or more)

were those committed to training school as juveniles (15.7%), and those who were juvenile recidivists (14.0%); the least likely were females (1.5%) and non-blacks (4.7%).

Table 3.2
Number of Adult Convictions by Demographic and Juvenile Justice Variables

Demographic Variables	Number of Adult Convictions				Total
	0	1	2-3	4 or more	
Age					
12 and under	65.3	15.5	13.2	6.0	21.9 (452)
13 and older	57.8	15.7	16.8	9.7	78.1 (1,610)
Gender					
Male	53.0	16.4	19.1	11.5	74.2 (1,529)
Female	78.1	13.3	7.1	1.5	25.8 (533)
Race					
Black	52.3	16.8	18.9	12.0	58.5 (1,199)
Non-Black	69.9	13.5	11.9	4.7	41.5 (849)
Juvenile Justice Variables	Number of Adult Convictions				Total
	0	1	2-3	4 or more	
Most Serious Petition Type					
Felony	52.6	14.8	21.2	11.4	42.7 (880)
Misdemeanor	64.6	16.2	12.1	7.1	57.3 (1,182)
Level of Juvenile System Involvement					
First Petition Only	72.9	13.1	10.1	3.9	22.2 (457)
Adjudication	58.0	16.1	16.5	9.4	66.7 (1,375)
Commitment to Training School	41.7	17.8	24.8	15.7	11.1 (230)
Juvenile Recidivism					
Subsequent Petition	46.3	16.0	23.7	14.0	32.5 (670)
No Subsequent Petition	65.8	15.4	12.3	6.5	67.5 (1,392)
Total	59.5 (1,226)	15.6 (322)	16.0 (330)	8.9 (184)	100.0 (2,062)

Note: Totals may vary slightly due to the deletion of cases with missing variables from individual analyses.
Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Table 3.3 presents the most serious offense at any conviction for the 827 convicted subjects and compares it to their most serious charge at any of their arrests. Eighty-eight percent of the convicted subjects had a felony as their most serious arrest, compared to 65.0% ending with a felony as their most serious conviction. (Note that arrest and conviction were not necessarily for the same event.) The reductions from most serious felony arrest to most serious felony conviction appear greatest in the violent and property categories – from 33.6% to 19.6%, and from 32.2% to 21.9%, respectively. The considerable downward shift in the rate of felony

charges from arrest to conviction is a by-product of the plea process, with offenders pleading down to lesser felonies or to misdemeanors.¹¹ This fact of the criminal court process is also demonstrated in the reverse shift for misdemeanors: while only 11.8% of the 827 convicted subjects had a misdemeanor as their most serious offense at arrest, the percentage increased to 35.0% at conviction, with the biggest gain in the misdemeanor property category (from 2.8% to 12.8%).

Table 3.3
Most Serious Offense at Adult Arrest and Conviction
For Convicted Subjects Only

Most Serious Offense	At Arrest	At Conviction
Felony		
Violent	33.6	19.6
Property	32.2	21.9
Drug	19.3	20.7
Other	3.1	2.8
Subtotal	88.2 (730)	65.0 (537)
Misdemeanor		
Violent	5.7	8.1
Property	2.8	12.8
Drug	2.2	8.6
Other	1.1	5.5
Subtotal	11.8 (97)	35.0 (290)
Total	100.0 (827)	100.0 (827)

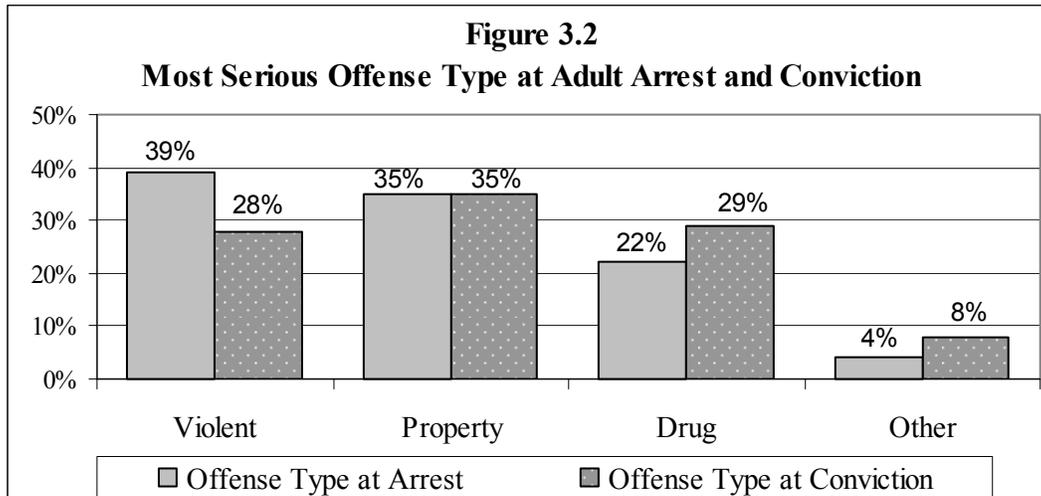
Note: There were 9 cases with missing data for most serious arrest type.

Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Figure 3.2 compares offenses for the 827 convicted subjects at arrest and conviction by type, independent of whether they were felonies or misdemeanors. The biggest shift from arrest to conviction is in violent offenses, reduced from 39% to 28% of the most serious charges. The property offenses category remained the same at 35%, while the rate of drugs and “other”

¹¹ Some reductions might also occur in jury trials, but their numbers would be minimal due to the fact that only about 2% of the felony cases are found guilty by a jury, with 98% of the felony cases pleading guilty without a trial. See the NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission’s annually published Structured Sentencing Statistical Report for Felonies and Misdemeanors.

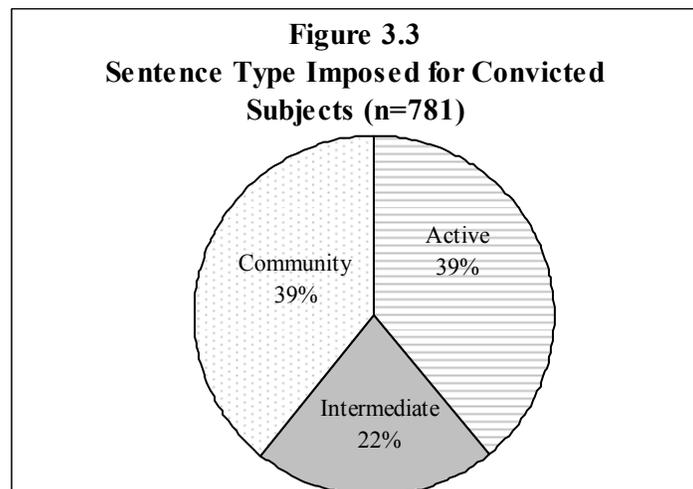
offenses increased from arrest to conviction. Combining the findings from Table 3.3 and Figure 3.2, it seems that the downward shifts during the plea process are twofold: within the same offense type from higher to lesser felonies and to misdemeanors; from more to less serious offense types; or both. Any combination of these bargains in offense charges would, in most cases, also carry over into the type and length of sentence imposed on a convicted offender.



Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

The type of most serious sentence imposed on the convicted offenders in the sample is displayed in Figure 3.3. Thirty-nine percent were sentenced to an active prison or jail sentence.¹² The other 61% had their active sentences suspended, with either conditions of intermediate (22.0%) or community (39.2%) sanctions.¹³

The probability of an active sentence increased by offenders' level of earlier involvement in the juvenile justice system from 32.7%



Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

For those with a petition only to 54.4% for those with a training school commitment (*see* Table 3.4). Juvenile recidivists (*i.e.*, those with a subsequent petition) were 19.0% more likely to have a prison or jail sentence than those with no juvenile recidivism (49.6% compared to 30.6%).

¹² Under North Carolina's Structured Sentencing laws, active sentences for felonies range from 3 months to life and must be served in a state prison facility. Active sentences for misdemeanors range from 1 to 150 days; with sentences 90 days and shorter to be served in county jails, sentences 91 days and longer to be served in state prisons.

¹³ Both forms of punishment are supervised probation in the community, with additional and more constraining conditions imposed on offenders sentenced to intermediate sanctions.

Finally, there was a direct relationship between type of conviction and sentence: in 47.6% of the cases having a felony conviction led to an active prison sentence; having a misdemeanor conviction only resulted in an active sentence (to jail, in most cases) in 19.1% of the cases. Misdemeanants as a group were the least likely to receive not only an active sentence, but also an intermediate sentence (0.8%), with the majority placed on community probation (80.1%).

Table 3.4
Sentence Type by Juvenile and Criminal Justice Variables

Juvenile Justice Variables	Sentence Type			Total
	Active	Intermediate	Community	
Level of Juvenile System Involvement				
First Petition Only	32.7	23.9	43.4	14.5 (113)
Adjudication	36.4	21.4	42.2	69.3 (541)
Commitment to Training School	54.4	22.8	22.8	16.2 (127)
Juvenile Recidivism				
Subsequent Petition	49.6	22.8	27.6	43.1 (444)
No Subsequent Petition	30.6	21.4	48.0	56.9 (337)
Most Serious Conviction				
Felony	47.6	31.5	20.9	69.1 (540)
Misdemeanor	19.1	0.8	80.1	30.9 (241)
Total	38.8 (303)	22.0 (172)	39.2 (306)	100.0 (781)

Note: There were 55 cases with missing data for sentence type.

Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Chapter Three Findings

Adult convictions – Incidence and frequency

- ▶ Of the 2,062 study subjects, 60% had no adult convictions and 40% had one or more adult convictions.
- ▶ Conviction rates were higher for subjects who:
 - were 13 and older at first petition, male, black,
 - had a felony petition, adjudication, training school commitment, or
 - had a subsequent juvenile petition (juvenile recidivism).
- ▶ The highest conviction rate was for those committed to training school as juveniles at 58%.
- ▶ The lowest conviction rate was for females at 22%.

Adult convictions – Most serious offense at conviction

- ▶ Of all subjects with an adult conviction, 65% had a felony offense and 35% had a misdemeanor offense as their most serious offense at conviction during the follow-up period.
- ▶ The most common type of offense was property followed by drug, violent, and “other” offenses.

Plea reductions from arrest to conviction

- ▶ The largest reduction in the most serious offense charged from arrest to conviction was noted in violent offenses with a reduction of 11%.

Sentences imposed

- ▶ With regard to punishment imposed, 39% received an active sentence (prison or jail), 22% received intermediate punishment, and 39% received a community punishment.

CHAPTER FOUR

COHORT CRIMES AND CORRELATES

Slightly more than half (52.4%) of the original 1997 first-delinquency cohort had at least one recidivistic arrest by the end of the follow-up period in 2006. Compared to the entire sample, higher percentages of adult recidivists were male, black, had subsequent petitions, had a felony petition, were adjudicated in juvenile court, and committed to a training school. The first section of this chapter examines the combined effect of these factors on the probability of recidivism, using multivariate statistical techniques. The second section analyzes the volume and type of crimes charged to the cohort as a whole from 1997 through 2006. The chapter closes with some summary findings and conclusions about the sample as it has transitioned from juvenile delinquency to adult criminality over the nine-year period of the study.

Multivariate Analysis: Correlates of Recidivism

Previous chapters presented juvenile and adult recidivism rates for the sample, and provided a first look at variations in those rates by certain characteristics of the offense, the juveniles themselves, and the systemic factors related to their cases. This section utilizes a multivariate modeling technique – logistic regression – to estimate the association of each of these factors (or independent variables) with the outcome measure of recidivism (the dependent variable), while controlling for the other variables included in the model.¹⁴

Separate models were tested to determine how a set of independent variables was related to the probability of certain criminal outcomes, such as adult arrest. It should be noted that while the effects reported in this analysis may reveal the *existence of a relationship* between an independent variable such as gender and a dependent (outcome) variable such as adult arrest, it does not necessarily imply a *causal relationship* between gender and arrest.

Outcome Measures (Dependent Variables) Modeled

- Adult arrest
- Adult arrest with at least one felony charge
- Conviction among offenders with adult arrests
- Active sentence for offenders with an adult conviction

¹⁴ Logistic regression involves using the logit (*i.e.*, the logarithm of the odds) of an outcome occurring, an analysis most appropriate for regression models with a dichotomous dependent variable, such as Yes/No for any rearrest. Logistic model coefficients were converted into "effects" that indicate the estimated percentage increase or decrease in the probability of an outcome occurring in association with each independent variable for the average offender.

Independent Variables

Demographic variables available for the sample were age, gender and race. The criminogenic factors included in the models were age at first petition, amount of time in the adult system, felony/misdemeanor charge at petition, most serious level of involvement in the juvenile justice system, whether there were subsequent juvenile petitions, and if there was an adjudication for a sex offense.

Findings

Table 4.1 displays the estimated effects of the independent variables in each model on the outcome measure modeled. The effects listed need to be interpreted based on the following criteria: whether the effect of the variable is statistically significant (*i.e.*, with a relationship not likely to be the result of random chance) and, if so, the direction and magnitude of the variable's effect on the outcome.

Model 1 is the base model to estimate the contribution of all available factors to the recidivism (adult arrest) of the entire sample. The average probability of recidivism was 52.4%. Being a male, for example, enhanced the probability of recidivism by 20.2% over that of being a female; black juveniles were 17.5% more likely to recidivate than non-black juveniles. The time subjects spent in the adult system was included in the model as a control. This is defined as the number of years past their sixteenth birthday and, not surprisingly, those with more time in the adult system were more likely to have an adult arrest.

There were also effects on recidivism found among the juvenile justice variables included in Model 1. Although whether the initial petition was a felony was not statistically significant in this model, the effect of the level of system involvement was sizeable and significant. Those with only a petition were used as the reference category for this variable. It was found that juveniles with an adjudication but not committed to training school were 11.3% more likely to recidivate than those with only a petition, and adjudicated and committed juveniles were 16.8% more likely to recidivate than those with only a petition.

Other juvenile factors resulted in varying effects. A record of juvenile recidivism increased the chance of adult arrest by 14.6%. An order for substance abuse treatment while in the juvenile justice system also increased the likelihood of a future adult arrest by 5.8%. Restitution by the juvenile was found to decrease the chance of recidivism during the shorter follow-up in Phase I of this study, but was not statistically significant in current models. The only factor that was found to show a decreased probability for adult recidivism was for the juveniles to have an adjudication for a sex offense.

Model 2 narrowed the question somewhat by estimating the probability for adult felony recidivism only (average probability of felony recidivism of 40.8%). Overall, the effects found were similar in direction to those in Model 1, with some changes in magnitude. The most noteworthy change from Model 1 was that having a felony petition increased the chance of a felony adult arrest by 5.9%, where it was not statistically significant in the previous model. Also,

the effect of being male increased to 27.5%, and the effect of being committed to a training school increased slightly while the effect of adjudication without training school decreased.

Table 4.1
Effect of Demographic and Criminal Justice Factors on Adult Recidivism

Independent Variables	Model 1: Arrest (52.4%)	Model 2: Felony Arrest (40.8%)	Model 3: Conviction (77.2%)	Model 4: Active Sentence (38.7%)
<i>Observations in Model</i>	2,045	2,045	1,071	772
<i>Demographic Variables</i>				
Under 13 at 1 st Petition	<i>NS</i>	<i>NS</i>	<i>NS</i>	<i>NS</i>
Male	20.2%	27.5%	12.9%	14.5%
Black	17.5%	17.9%	8.5%	16.4%
More Time in Adult System	4.5%	3.9%	<i>NS</i>	<i>NS</i>
<i>Juvenile Justice Variables</i>				
Felony Petition	<i>NS</i>	5.9%	<i>NS</i>	11.6%
Level of Involvement in the Juvenile System				
Petition Only	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Adjudication: No Training School	11.3%	7.6%	<i>NS</i>	<i>NS</i>
Adjudication: With Training School	16.8%	17.3%	10.3%	<i>NS</i>
Sex Offender Adjudication	-36.0%	-28.2%	<i>NS</i>	<i>NS</i>
Juvenile Recidivism: Subsequent Petition	14.6%	11.4%	<i>NS</i>	11.4%
Restitution	<i>NS</i>	<i>NS</i>	<i>NS</i>	<i>NS</i>
Substance Abuse Treatment	5.8%	7.1%	<i>NS</i>	<i>NS</i>

Note: Model 3 includes only offenders who had an arrest; Model 4 includes only offenders who were convicted. Cases with missing values for any of the independent variables were excluded from all four models.
Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

The observations in Model 3 were limited to those subjects who had an arrest, in order to examine the factors affecting conviction. Of those with an adult arrest, 77.2% had at least one conviction. Only three factors in the model had a statistically significant effect on conviction. Being male had the largest effect, with 12.9% more likely than females to be convicted; being committed to training school increased the chance of conviction; and blacks were more likely than non-blacks to be convicted.

The final model (Model 4) was limited to include only subjects who had a conviction, to determine factors correlated with receiving an active sentence. Gender and race remained significant as in all of the previous models. Two juvenile justice factors had an effect as well: having an initial felony petition, and having a subsequent petition, each increased the chance of an active sentence.

It should be noted, especially regarding convictions and active sentences, that many of the factors impacting the probability to get a conviction and a prison sentence are systemic (*e.g.*, criminal court practices, sentencing laws, correctional resources), factors that were not included in the models due to lack of information.

Cohort Crimes

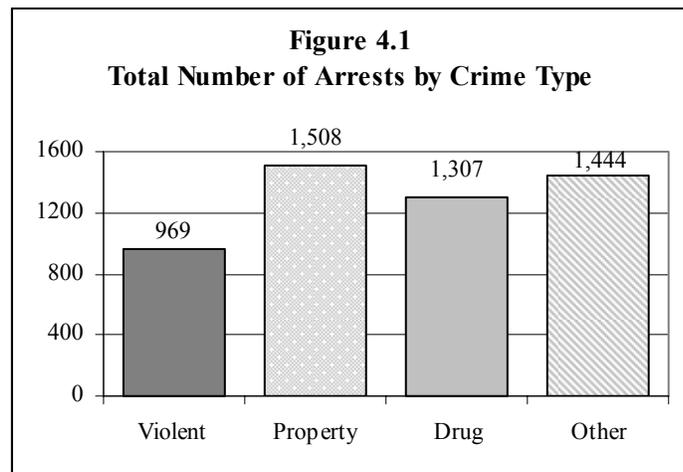
The previous section examined individual level factors and how each was related to a subject's probability of recidivating as an adult. This section utilizes a more macro approach to examine the number of cohort members involved in crime and the volume of crimes they were charged with or convicted of during the study period. As study findings indicated, not all subjects recidivated; therefore, only a portion of the cohort was responsible for the number of crimes committed by the cohort. Table 4.2 highlights the number of subjects who recidivated and the overall number of petition/arrest events they experienced during the follow-up period. As previously noted, if more than one petition or arrest occurred on the same day, only one was counted. Of the 2,062 subjects, 670 or 32.5% of the cohort had a subsequent petition and were accountable for 1,207 petitions filed during the study period. Turning to adult arrests, 1,080 subjects or 52.4% of the cohort were arrested during the follow-up period and on average were charged with 3.8 arrest events for a total of 4,149 arrests. Looking at juvenile and adult recidivism combined, 1,310 subjects experienced either a petition or an adult arrest during the study period. On average these subjects, constituting 64% of the cohort, were responsible for 4.1 petition or arrest events for a total of 5,356 combined recidivist events.

Table 4.2
Number of Subjects and Petition/Arrest Events: 1997-2006

Recidivism Event	Number of Subjects	Overall Number of Events	Average Number of Events
Petitions	670	1,207	1.8
Arrests	1,080	4,149	3.8
Petitions and/or Arrests	1,310	5,356	4.1

Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Figure 4.1 provides information on the actual number of arrests for those who were arrested during the follow-up period, as well as the types of crimes for which they were arrested. (Note: Because the focus in this figure is on volume, arrests are not limited to one per day per subject as in Table 4.2.) The 1,080 subjects who were arrested during the follow-up period accounted for a total of 5,228 arrests, with 969 arrests for violent offenses, 1,508 arrests for property offenses, 1,307 arrests for drug offenses, and 1,444 arrests for other offenses.



Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Table 4.3 highlights the number of subjects who recidivated and the overall number of adjudication/conviction events they experienced during the follow-up period. Of the 2,062 subjects, 526 subjects or 25.5% of the cohort was adjudicated delinquent and they experienced a total of 982 adjudications or an average of 1.9 adjudications each during the follow-up period. Looking at adult convictions, 836 or 40.5% of the cohort was convicted during the follow-up period and on average was convicted 2.5 times for a total of 2,068 convictions. When examining adjudications and convictions, 1,068 subjects (51.8% of the cohort) experienced either one or the other during the study period. On average, subjects were adjudicated or convicted 2.9 times for a total of 3,050 adjudication and conviction events.

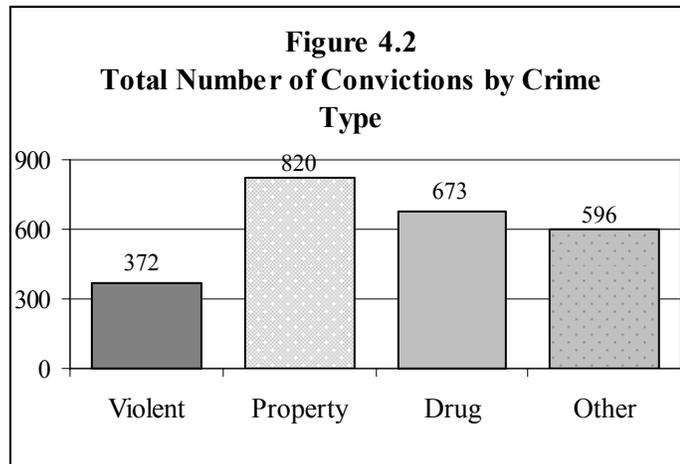
Table 4.3
Number of Subjects and Adjudications/Convictions Events: 1997-2006

Recidivism Event	Number of Subjects	Overall Number of Events	Average Number of Events
Adjudications	526	982	1.9
Convictions	836	2,068	2.5
Adjudications and/or Convictions	1,068	3,050	2.9

Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Figure 4.2 provides information on the actual number of convictions for those who were convicted during the follow-up period, as well as the types of crimes for which they were convicted. (Note: Because the focus in this figure is on volume, convictions are not limited to one per day per subject as in Table 4.3.) The 836 subjects who were convicted during the follow-up period accounted for a total of 2,461 convictions with 372 convictions for violent offenses, 820 convictions for property offenses, 673 convictions for drug offenses, and 596 convictions for other offenses.

In summary, this study highlights the early criminal careers of first time juvenile offenders as it follows them for nine years – from first petition into their young adult years. Findings indicate that over half of the cohort remained involved in crime during their young adult years: 64% of cohort members experienced an average of 4.1 petitions and/or arrests and 52% were adjudicated and/or convicted an average of 2.9 times.



Source: 2006 Comprehensive Criminal History Dataset

Chapter Four Findings

Correlates of Recidivism – Multivariate analysis modeled four outcomes: any arrest, felony arrest, conviction for arrested offenders, and active sentences for convicted offenders. Independent variables included demographic and juvenile justice variables. Among the significant findings:

- ▶ Males were significantly more likely than females to have an adult arrest, an adult felony arrest, a conviction, and receive an active sentence to prison or jail.
- ▶ Being black as compared to non-black was associated with a higher probability of having an adult arrest, an adult felony arrest, a conviction, and receiving an active sentence to prison or jail.
- ▶ Being committed to a training school as a juvenile was associated with a higher probability of having an adult arrest, an adult felony arrest, and a conviction than those not committed to training school.
- ▶ Being a juvenile recidivist was associated with a higher probability of having an adult arrest and an adult felony arrest as compared to non-juvenile recidivists.

Cohort Crimes

- ▶ Juvenile recidivism (subsequent petition): 670 of the 2,062 subjects accounted for the 1,207 petition events of the cohort.
- ▶ Adult recidivism (a fingerprinted adult arrest): 1,080 of the 2,062 subjects accounted for 4,149 arrest events of the cohort, accounting for 5,228 arrests.
- ▶ Overall recidivism (a subsequent juvenile petition and/or a fingerprinted arrest): 1,310 of the 2,062 cohort subjects accounted for the 5,356 combined recidivism events of the cohort.
- ▶ A similar analysis for adjudications/convictions revealed that 526 of the 2,062 cohort subjects accounted for 982 adjudication events; 836 cohort members accounted for 2,068 conviction events; and 1,068 cohort subjects accounted for 3,050 combined adjudication/conviction events of the cohort resulting in 2,461 convictions.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

Phase Two of the Juvenile-to-Adult Comprehensive Criminal History Study utilized the same cohort of 2,062 subjects studied in Phase I, whose first delinquent petition was filed with the juvenile court in 1997. Phase II of the study extended the follow-up period by three years, resulting in a unique opportunity to learn about the juvenile and adult recidivism of the cohort by tracking their involvement in the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems over a period of 102-114 months.

Information was collected from hard-copy court files on all first petitions in CY 1997 as well as subsequent petitions, adjudications, and dispositions incurred by the subjects during their juvenile years. The database created from the juvenile data was then matched into the Department of Justice's information system on adult arrests and convictions to track any criminal involvement of cohort subjects past their 16th birthday.

The primary definition of juvenile recidivism was having a subsequent petition; however, data were also collected on adjudications and training school commitments. The main definition of adult recidivism was having an adult arrest. Secondary measures of adult recidivism included convictions and sentences imposed.

The majority of the cohort was male (74%) and black (59%). The youngest age at first offense was 6 years and the average age of the cohort was 13.5 years. There was some variation in level of involvement in the juvenile justice system among subjects. Close to one-quarter of the subjects (457) had juvenile petitions but no adjudications, more than three-quarters of the subjects (1,605) had one or more juvenile adjudications, and about one-tenth of the subjects (230) had one or more commitments to a training school. In the majority of the cases, minor misdemeanors were the most serious offense the cohort was petitioned for in juvenile court.

All cohort subjects were adults by the end of the follow-up period and final juvenile recidivism rates are reported. During their remaining follow-up period to age 16, one-third of the 2,062 subjects had one or more recidivist petitions in juvenile court subsequent to their initial petition. Further, of the 1,605 adjudicated juveniles, 526 or 33% had one or more subsequent adjudications during the follow-up period.

With the extended period of follow-up from 1997 to 2006, cohort subjects were under adult criminal jurisdiction for an average of seven years. During their years as adults, slightly more than half of the 2,062 subjects (52%) were arrested at least once with the majority of first adult arrests occurring within two years of their 16th birthday. Arrest rates were higher for subjects who were 13 or older at first petition, male, black, had a felony petition, adjudication, training school commitment, or a subsequent juvenile petition. When looking at level of involvement in the juvenile justice system, subjects with the deepest level of involvement – commitment to training school – had the highest arrest rate, 68%.

Looking at the most serious offense type at arrest for subjects who were arrested during the follow-up period, 36% were charged with a property offense; 26% were charged with a drug offense; 21% were charged with a violent offense; and 17% were charged with an “other” offense. Making a further distinction between felony and misdemeanor arrests, 58% of subjects with an arrest had at least one felony arrest, most often for property and drug offenses. The remaining 42% had a misdemeanor arrest as their most serious arrest, with a slightly larger percentage being for violent offenses than property or “other” offenses.

Forty percent of the cohort had one or more adult convictions during the follow-up period. Similar to arrest rates, conviction rates were higher for subjects who were 13 or older at first petition, male, black, had a felony petition, adjudication, training school commitment, or a subsequent juvenile petition. With regard to level of involvement in the system, subjects with a training school commitment experienced the highest conviction rate, 58%. Of those with a conviction, 39% were sentenced to a prison term as their most serious disposition, while 39% received an intermediate punishment and 22% were placed on community punishment as their most serious sentence.

Overall, 36% or 752 of the original 2,062 cohort subjects had no additional involvement with the juvenile or adult criminal justice systems in the nine years following their first petition. The other 64%, or 1,310 of the cohort subjects, had either subsequent juvenile petitions only (230 subjects), adult arrests only (640 subjects), or both (440 subjects). The 670 subjects with subsequent juvenile petitions accounted for 1,207 delinquent events and the 1,080 subjects with adult arrests accounted for 4,149 crime events, for a combined cohort total of 5,356 recidivism events between 1997 and 2006.

Many important factors relating to the subjects' personal characteristics, family, school, social history, and treatment experiences in the juvenile system were not available for inclusion in this study. Multivariate analysis nevertheless identified some clear correlates of recidivism, based on the information that was available on the cohort subjects. Two demographic factors – being male and being black – were found to significantly increase the likelihood of an adult arrest, an adult felony arrest, and a prison or jail sentence while controlling for other demographic and juvenile justice variables. Deeper involvement in the juvenile justice system in general, and two systemic factors in particular – being a juvenile recidivist, and having been committed to a training school – similarly raised the probability of adult recidivism net of controls for demographic and other juvenile justice variables.

The report summarized here raises some additional questions, indicates the need for further research, and points to some findings with policy relevance for North Carolina's youth.

- An extended list of relevant factors needs to be added to any future study of juvenile recidivism to include family history and involvement, socioeconomic status, educational components, peers, school behavior, and medical and mental health status. Systemic variables need to be further elaborated for each level of the juvenile's involvement, to present the options and services available at points starting from early prevention and intervention to diversion, adjudication, and community placement versus commitment to detention centers or training schools. NC-JOIN, a more complete and automated data

system maintained by the DJJDP, should make many, if not all, of these factors available for future research, to answer questions about the impact of social, systemic, and programmatic components on recidivism.

- The Juvenile-to-Adult Comprehensive Criminal History Study demonstrated not only the need to understand recidivism as a continuum of criminal involvement from a person's juvenile to adult years, but proved the feasibility to study it through linking data from the two systems. Not coincidentally, the North Carolina General Assembly in 2005 directed the Sentencing Commission to conduct biennial studies of juvenile recidivism, bridging the criminal involvement of youth from the juvenile to the adult system. The first of these reports was submitted to the Legislature in May 2007.
- The information collected for this study on the sample of 2,062 subjects can be viewed as a long-term research investment, allowing for periodic follow-ups of the cohort's further criminal involvement. Studies of this kind are rare on the national and state level, and provide a unique opportunity to depict, long term, the continuing delinquent-criminal careers of cohort subjects.
- Findings on the correlates of recidivism point to at least three policy-relevant areas. One area involves the interaction of age, gender and race with factors of family, school and socioeconomic status as they affect crime. This issue is outside the direct control of the juvenile justice system, and would require a broader and concerted societal effort to be addressed effectively. The second area is the criminogenic effect that system involvement in itself has on juveniles. Policy makers could study ways to minimize this effect by committing resources to prevention, early intervention, diversion and, for adjudicated youth, community services instead of commitment. Finally, there is growing evidence that some programs and services, at any level of intervention, are more effective than others in preventing recidivism. Programmatic cost-benefit analyses could assist policy makers in their program selections and funding decisions.
- As North Carolina revisits the age of adult jurisdiction (New York is the only other that has 16 as the beginning of adult jurisdiction), information in this report could provide some insights regarding the criminal activity of a cohort of petitioned juvenile delinquents in their critical sixteenth and seventeenth years, currently falling under the purview of the adult criminal justice system.