

JUVENILE RECIDIVISM STUDY:

FY 2020
SAMPLE

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FY 2020

JUVENILE EXIT SAMPLE

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ACRONYMS

CCH	Computerized Criminal History
DJJDP	Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
FY	Fiscal Year
G.S.	General Statute
JCPC	Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils
JJ	Juvenile Justice
JJRA	Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act
NC-JOIN	North Carolina Juvenile Online Information Network
PRS	Post-Release Supervision
RtA	Raise the Age
RNA	Risk and Needs Assessment
SBI	State Bureau of Investigation
SBO	School-Based Offense
SRO	School Resource Officer
S.L.	Session Law
YASI	Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument
YDC	Youth Development Center

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

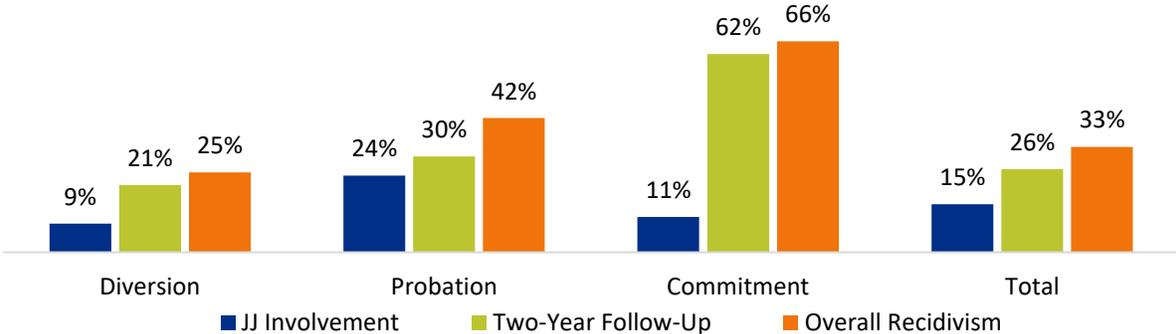
During the 2005 Session, the North Carolina General Assembly amended Chapter 164 of the General Statutes to direct the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission (Sentencing Commission) to conduct biennial juvenile recidivism studies on adjudicated youth in the state. The 2023 report, which marks the ninth biennial report, employed the same methodology as the 2019 and 2021 reports by using an exit sample and tracking juveniles for recidivism (i.e., delinquent complaints and/or adult arrests) during their juvenile justice involvement, in addition to the fixed two-year follow-up from their sample exit. While Raise the Age (RtA) and the COVID-19 pandemic had limited impacts on the FY 2020 sample itself, the pandemic had a demonstrated impact on recidivism during follow-up.

The Executive Summary highlights the key findings and conclusions from the 2023 report.

FY 2020 JUVENILE RECIDIVISM EXIT SAMPLE

- The 5,822 juveniles in the sample were brought to the attention of the juvenile justice system with at least one delinquent complaint and exited the system in FY 2020 following diversion (n=3,305), probation (n=2,323), or commitment to a Youth Development Center (YDC) (n=194).
- The vast majority (80%) of juveniles had a misdemeanor as their most serious charged offense although there were variations by group (91% of diverted juveniles, 71% of the probation group, and 8% of the commitment group).
- Diverted juveniles were assessed at lower risk and needs levels than adjudicated juveniles. Recidivism rates increased progressively as risk and needs levels increased.
- Overall, 15% had recidivism during juvenile justice involvement, 26% during the two-year follow-up, and 33% during either time period (see Figure 1). Recidivism rates generally increased as the level of juvenile justice involvement increased.

Figure 1
Recidivism Rates for North Carolina’s Diverted and Adjudicated Juveniles

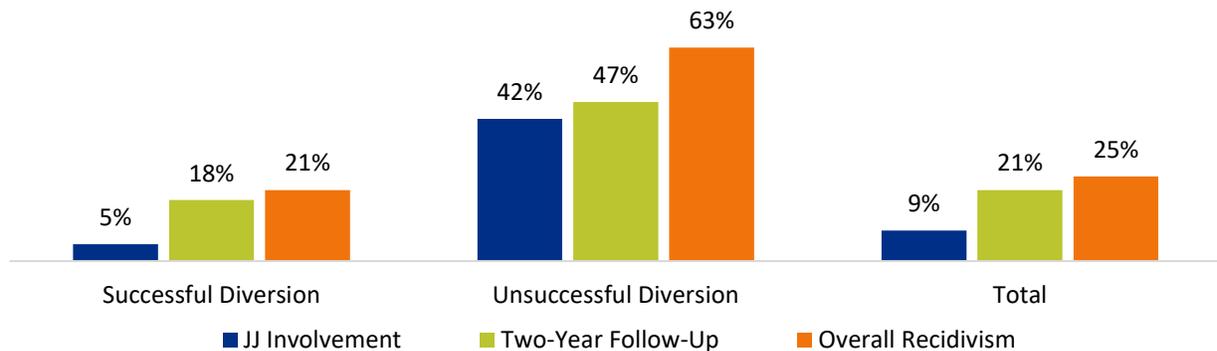


SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

DIVERTED JUVENILES

- Of the 3,305 juveniles who exited diversion in FY 2020, most (90%) successfully completed their diversion plan or contract. Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion (10%) had their complaint filed as a petition in juvenile court.
- Overall, 83% of diverted juveniles had no prior complaints; a higher percentage of juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had prior complaints. Juveniles with at least one prior complaint had higher recidivism rates than those with no prior complaints. Irrespective of their prior involvement with the juvenile justice system, juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had higher recidivism rates than juveniles with a successful diversion.
- Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion tended to have more risk factors (e.g., running away, school behavior problems) and needs identified (e.g., mental health, history of victimization) than juveniles with a successful diversion. Correspondingly, a greater proportion of juveniles with a successful diversion were assessed as low risk and as low needs.
- Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had much higher recidivism rates during the follow-up periods (see Figure 2). The higher recidivism rates for juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion are not unexpected given their higher levels of risk and needs.

Figure 2
Recidivism Rates for Diverted Juveniles



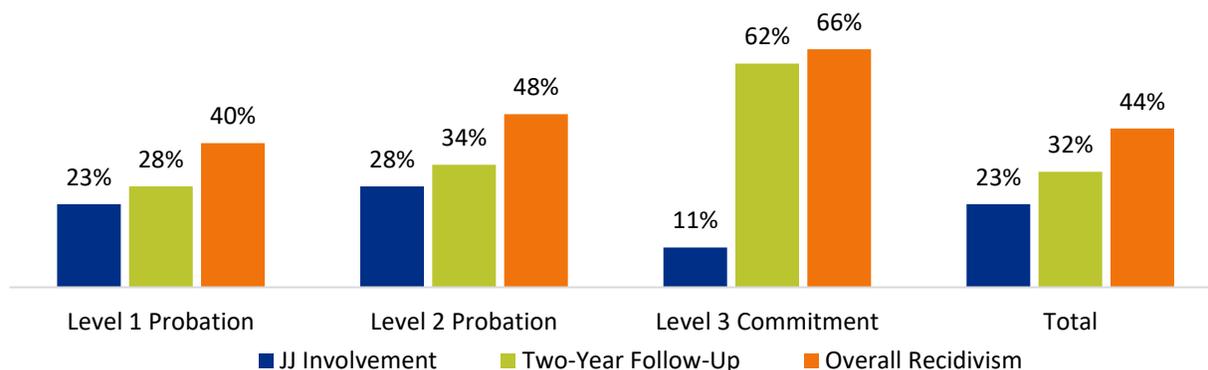
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

ADJUDICATED JUVENILES

- Of the 2,517 juveniles adjudicated delinquent, 2,323 exited supervised probation (1,787 with a Level 1 and 536 with a Level 2 disposition) and 194 exited a YDC facility (Level 3 disposition) in FY 2020.
- As the seriousness of the juvenile's disposition increased, the percentage of males, Black juveniles, and older juveniles increased. Prior contacts with the juvenile justice system, along with risk and needs levels, also increased. These characteristics were likely linked to higher recidivism rates.
- Most juveniles with a Level 1 disposition had a misdemeanor as their most serious adjudicated offense (93%), while over half of the Level 2 disposition group (61%) and most of the Level 3 commitment group (91%) had a felony as their most serious offense.
- The majority of juveniles on probation exited while on standard supervision (73%). Juveniles in the commitment group entered a YDC most frequently due to a new crime (51%), while few juveniles entered a YDC due to revocation of post-release supervision (8%).

- As shown in Figure 3, juveniles with Level 2 probation had the highest recidivism rates during juvenile justice involvement; committed juveniles had the lowest rates during this time period likely due to their confinement. Committed juveniles had the highest recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up, followed by juveniles in the Level 2 and Level 1 probation groups respectively.

Figure 3
Recidivism Rates for Adjudicated Juveniles



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

CONCLUSIONS

- Overall, the sample size decreased 26% from the FY 2016 to the FY 2020 sample. The internal sample composition, which is important to consider as context for changes in recidivism rates, has also shifted. The proportion of juveniles in the diversion group has increased over this period (from 52% to 57%), while the proportion of juveniles in the probation group has decreased (from 45% to 40%). The proportion of committed juveniles has remained about the same.
- The lowest levels of recidivism corresponded to the least invasive systemic responses of the juvenile justice system, particularly by intervening with youth short of adjudication. These findings suggest that the most efficient investment of sufficient resources is in the community.
- A direct relationship was observed between the juveniles' assessed risk and needs and their recidivism, with recidivism generally increasing as risk and needs levels increased. In January 2021, the Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (DJJDP) implemented a new risk and needs assessment tool; future studies will examine how the more individualized planning under the new (and more powerful) tool relates to recidivism rates.
- While RtA went into effect and the onset of the pandemic occurred during the FY 2020 sample timeframe, both had limited effects on the sample. RtA impacted the system in which recidivism was captured during follow-up, with most recidivist behavior captured in the juvenile system instead of the adult criminal justice system unlike previous studies. The pandemic had a considerable effect on recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up; recidivism rates decreased from 31% for the FY 2018 sample to 26% for the FY 2020 sample.

The Sentencing Commission looks forward to working collaboratively with the DJJDP to further understand the factors contributing to juvenile recidivism in North Carolina, and combining any lessons learned to make improvements to the juvenile justice system in North Carolina. Future reports will be able to examine the effect of RtA on recidivism, as well as the recovery of the system (in terms of any potential changes in recidivism) from the pandemic.

CHAPTER ONE

JUVENILE RECIDIVISM STUDY DIRECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

In the 2005 Session of the North Carolina General Assembly, the legislature amended Chapter 164 of the General Statutes to direct the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission (hereinafter referred to as the Sentencing Commission) to conduct biennial juvenile recidivism studies on adjudicated youth in the state:

§ 164-48. Biennial report on juvenile recidivism.¹

The Judicial Department, through the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, shall conduct biennial recidivism studies of juveniles in North Carolina. Each study shall be based on a sample of juveniles adjudicated delinquent and document subsequent involvement in both the juvenile justice system and criminal justice system for at least two years following the sample adjudication. All State agencies shall provide data as requested by the Sentencing Commission.

The Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission shall report the results of the first recidivism study to the Chairs of the Senate and House of Representatives Appropriation Committees and the Chairs of the Senate and House of Representatives Appropriation Subcommittees on Justice and Public Safety by May 1, 2007, and future reports shall be made by May 1 of each odd-numbered year.

This is the Sentencing Commission's ninth biennial report on juvenile recidivism, submitted to the General Assembly on May 1, 2023, and focuses on a cohort of juveniles exiting North Carolina's juvenile justice system from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 by their level of involvement.

THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

In order to provide context for this study, the following sections describe the juvenile justice system, starting with eligibility (i.e., jurisdiction) and the processing of juveniles within the system.

Juvenile Jurisdiction

Prior to the North Carolina General Assembly's passage of the Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act (JJRA) in 2017, the age of juvenile jurisdiction was under 16 years.² The JJRA increased the age of juvenile jurisdiction so that most 16- and 17-year-olds facing criminal charges may have their cases disposed

¹ N.C. Gen. Stat. (hereinafter G.S.) 164-48 (2020).

² North Carolina Session Law (hereinafter S.L.) 2017-57, s. 16D.4. Additional information can be found at: https://www.nccourts.gov/assets/inline-files/JuvenileReinvestmentFactSheet_05012017.pdf.

through the juvenile justice system rather than the adult criminal justice system.³ Raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction (RtA) increased the number of youth in the juvenile justice system by adding a new population of 16- and 17-year-olds and by extending the number of years available for youth to be under jurisdiction of the system.

For this report, juveniles are considered to be under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court if they have had no prior convictions and are at least six years old⁴ but not older than 17 years⁵ at the time that they are alleged to have committed an offense. However, juveniles who are at least 13 years and are alleged to have committed a felony may be transferred into superior court and tried as adults. Juveniles who are at least 13 years and are alleged to have committed a Class A felony must be transferred to superior court if probable cause is found in juvenile court. Juveniles who are aged 16 or 17 years and are alleged to have committed a Class A through Class G felony must be transferred to superior court. Juveniles who are alleged to have committed and are subsequently adjudicated for an offense are processed by, supervised by, and committed to the Department of Public Safety's Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (DJJDP).

Intake Process

All juveniles enter the juvenile justice system by having a formal complaint lodged by a law enforcement officer or a private citizen. There are two types of complaints – the delinquency complaint alleges that a juvenile committed a criminal offense, while the undisciplined complaint alleges noncriminal behavior (e.g., running away, unlawful absences from school, incorrigible behavior within the home). For purposes of this study, only juveniles who had a delinquency complaint are discussed.

Any juvenile who is subject to a delinquency complaint must go through the intake process for the complaint to be screened and evaluated by a juvenile justice court counselor. The court counselor has up to 30 days to determine if a complaint should be handled outside the court or if a complaint should be filed as a petition and set for a hearing before a juvenile court judge. The length and extent of the intake process is based primarily on whether a juvenile is alleged to have committed one of the most serious, statutorily defined group of offenses (i.e., nondivertible offenses⁶) and/or whether a juvenile is confined in a detention center. During the intake phase, a court counselor conducts interviews with the juvenile, the parent, guardian, or custodian legally responsible for the juvenile, and other individuals who might have relevant information about the juvenile. Beginning in 2006, a risk and needs assessment (RNA) was incorporated into the intake process for use in the initial decision to approve or not approve a complaint for filing, as well as for use at disposition. These assessments contain information pertaining to the juvenile's social, medical, psychiatric, psychological, and educational history, as well as factors

³ In addition, the JJRA includes other provisions intended to affect who comes in contact with the juvenile justice system, such as school-justice partnerships designed to reduce school-based referrals to juvenile courts and juvenile justice training for law enforcement officers. See S.L. 2017-57, s. 16D.4.(aa) and (bb).

⁴ In 2021, the General Assembly amended various statutes to raise the minimum age of juvenile jurisdiction from 6 years to 10 years. The result of this legislation is that juveniles aged 6-7 years will not be subject to delinquency proceedings, with some exceptions for juveniles aged 8-9 years who committed a Class A through Class G felony offense and had previously been adjudicated delinquent. S.L. 2021-123.

⁵ Juveniles who are aged 16 or 17 and who commit a violation of the motor vehicle laws under Chapter 20 of the General Statutes are excluded from juvenile court jurisdiction.

⁶ Nondivertible offenses are defined in G.S. 7B-1701 as murder, first- or second-degree rape, first- or second-degree sexual offense, arson, felony drug offense under Article 5 of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes, 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.

indicating the probability of the juvenile engaging in future delinquency.⁷ (See Appendix A.) Upon reviewing the information gathered during the evaluation, the court counselor determines if the complaint should be closed, diverted, or approved for filing as a petition and brought before the court.

If the court counselor decides that a case does not require further action, either by some form of follow-up by a court counselor or through a court hearing, the case is deemed closed. The juveniles in closed cases are typically less problematic and generally have little, if any, history of delinquent behavior. Closed cases constitute the lowest point of involvement in the juvenile justice system.

When a court counselor determines that a juvenile's case should not be brought to court, but that the juvenile is in need of follow-up and referral to a community-based resource (e.g., restitution, clinical treatment), the counselor can then divert the juvenile pursuant to a diversion plan that is developed in conjunction with the juvenile and the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian. If a more formal diversion plan is needed, the court counselor, juvenile, and juvenile's responsible party enter into a diversion contract. Both the plan and the contract are in effect for up to six months, during which time a court counselor conducts periodic reviews to ensure the compliance of the juvenile and their parent, guardian, or custodian. Compliance with the recommendations of the plan or contract results in the finalization of the juvenile's diversion. If the parties fail to comply, the counselor may reevaluate the decision to divert and subsequently file the complaint as a petition in juvenile court. If a court counselor concludes, at any point in the intake process, that the juvenile would be best served by referring the case to court, the counselor can authorize the filing of the complaint as a petition and schedule it for a hearing before a juvenile court judge.

Pre-Dispositional Hearings

Probable Cause Hearing⁸

Probable cause hearings are held for all felony petitions in which the juvenile was at least 13 years old at the time of the alleged offense. During these hearings, the district attorney's office must present sufficient evidence to the court that shows there is probable cause to believe that the alleged offense was committed by the juvenile in question. If probable cause is not found, the court may either dismiss the proceeding or find probable cause that the juvenile committed a lesser included offense (e.g., a misdemeanor) and proceed to the adjudicatory hearing, which can immediately follow the probable cause hearing or be set for another date. If probable cause is found and transfer to superior court is not statutorily required (e.g., non-Class A felonies), the court may proceed to a transfer hearing, which can occur on the same day.

Transfer Hearing

At the transfer hearing, the court considers a number of factors in reaching a decision on whether the juvenile's case will be transferred to superior court. If the case is transferred, the juvenile is tried as an adult and is subject to the adult sentencing options. If the judge retains juvenile court jurisdiction and

⁷ The DJJDP implemented a new risk and needs assessment tool, the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI), effective January 1, 2021.

⁸ Prior to a probable cause hearing, a juvenile with a felony petition is scheduled for a first appearance hearing during which a judge determines whether the juvenile has an attorney and provides the juvenile and parent or responsible party with information pertaining to the allegation and future hearings.

does not transfer the juvenile to superior court, the case then proceeds to the adjudicatory hearing, which can immediately follow the transfer hearing or be set for a later date.

Adjudicatory Hearing

The adjudicatory hearing allows for the court to hear evidence from the district attorney, the juvenile's attorney, and their witnesses in order to make a determination of whether or not the juvenile committed the act(s) alleged in the petition(s). If the court finds that the allegations in the petition have not been proven "beyond a reasonable doubt," the petition is dismissed and the matter is closed. If the court finds that the allegations have been proven, the juvenile is adjudicated delinquent and the court proceeds to the dispositional hearing.

Dispositional Hearing

Overview of the Process

At the dispositional hearing, which may or may not occur on the same date as the adjudicatory hearing, the court decides the sanctions, services, and conditions that will be ordered for the juvenile as a result of the adjudicated offense(s). G.S. 7B-2500 states that the purposes of a disposition are "to design an appropriate plan to meet the needs of the juvenile and to achieve the objectives of the State in exercising jurisdiction, including the protection of the public."

In most cases, juvenile court judges use the predisposition report, which is prepared by the court counselor's office, in developing a disposition. One of the components of the predispositional report is the juvenile's completed RNA.

The court's selection of dispositional alternatives is governed by statute through a graduated sanctions chart that classifies juvenile offenders according to the seriousness of their adjudicated offense (vertical axis) and the degree and extent of their delinquent history (horizontal axis). (See Appendix B for more detailed information.)

Dispositional Alternatives⁹

After reviewing the information provided by the court counselor's office, juvenile court judges have three dispositional levels available to them in which to dispose the juvenile's case – a Level 1 or community disposition, a Level 2 or intermediate disposition, and a Level 3 or commitment disposition. It is noteworthy that many of the community-based programs for adjudicated youth who can receive a Level 1 or 2 disposition are funded through Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) allocations.¹⁰

A Level 1 or community disposition offers the court less restrictive dispositional alternatives such as probation, community-based programs, nonresidential and residential treatment programs, community service (up to 100 hours), restitution (up to \$500), and sanctions that place specific limitations on a juvenile (e.g., curfew, no association with specified persons, not be in specified places). A Level 1

⁹ Appendix C contains a complete list of dispositional alternatives for all three levels.

¹⁰ The Sentencing Commission also has a mandate to evaluate the effectiveness of JCPC programs. See <https://www.nccourts.gov/documents/publications/effectiveness-of-juvenile-crime-prevention-council-jcpc-programs> for these reports.

disposition may also include intermittent confinement in a detention center for up to five 24-hour periods.¹¹

A Level 2 or intermediate disposition is generally more restrictive than a Level 1 disposition. Level 2 dispositional alternatives include options such as intensive probation, group home placements (e.g., multipurpose group homes), regimented training programs, and house arrest. For a Level 2 disposition, a juvenile can be ordered to make restitution that is in excess of \$500 or perform up to 200 hours of community service. The court can also utilize any Level 1 dispositional option for a juvenile adjudicated at Level 2. Several Level 2 options that offer a more restrictive environment for adjudicated juveniles are available for Level 1 dispositions as well. Wilderness programs serve juveniles with behavioral problems in a year-round, residential therapeutic environment.¹² Supervised day programs, which allow a juvenile to remain in the community through a highly structured program of services, also represent an alternative that is available at both Level 1 and Level 2 dispositional levels. In addition, the court can impose confinement in a detention center on an intermittent basis for up to fourteen 24-hour periods.

A Level 3 or commitment disposition provides the most restrictive sanction available to a juvenile court judge – commitment to the DJJDP for placement in a Youth Development Center (YDC). A YDC, as defined in G.S. 7B-1501(29), is “a secure residential facility authorized to provide long-term treatment, education, and rehabilitative services for delinquent juveniles committed by the court to the Division [DJJDP].” Unless a youth is under the age of 10, a court exercising jurisdiction over a juvenile for whom a Level 3 disposition is authorized must commit the juvenile to the DJJDP for placement in a YDC.¹³ However, G.S. 7B-2513(e) states that the DJJDP, following assessment of a juvenile, may provide commitment services to the juvenile in a program not located in a YDC or detention facility (i.e., community placement). Another exception gives the court discretion to impose a Level 2 disposition rather than a Level 3 disposition if the court makes written findings that substantiate extraordinary needs on the part of the juvenile in question. The length of a juvenile’s commitment must be at least six months; however, there are statutory provisions for extended jurisdiction for committed youth.¹⁴ Upon completion of their term of commitment, juveniles are subject to a minimum of 90 days of post-release supervision (PRS). The DJJDP currently houses approximately 180 committed juveniles in four YDCs.

DEFINING RECIDIVISM

There is no single official definition of recidivism. Researchers have used a variety of definitions and measurements for juvenile recidivism. Some define recidivism using only data from the juvenile justice system (i.e., complaints, adjudications, commitments), while other researchers expand recidivism to include the adult criminal justice system (i.e., arrests, convictions, incarcerations). Therefore, in comparing recidivism of various groups of juveniles, readers are well advised to be sure that the same

¹¹ Detention centers are facilities that are approved to provide secure, temporary confinement and care for juveniles who meet statutorily defined criteria. In addition to utilizing a detention placement as a dispositional alternative, juveniles can also be detained by the court pending their adjudicatory or dispositional hearing, or their adult hearing following the transfer of the case from juvenile court. Because of the short-term nature of detention, programs and services offered in these centers are limited.

¹² Wilderness camps serve a diverse group of juveniles, including those displaying problematic behavior who are not court-involved.

¹³ Pursuant to G.S. 7B-2508(d), a court may impose a Level 3 disposition (commitment to a YDC) in lieu of a Level 2 disposition if the juvenile has previously received a Level 3 disposition in a prior juvenile action. Additionally, G.S. 7B-2508(g) allows for juveniles who have been adjudicated of a minor offense to be committed to a YDC if the juvenile has been adjudicated of four or more prior offenses.

¹⁴ G.S. 7B-2513(a).

definitions and measurements are used for all groups. Official records from police, courts, and juvenile justice agencies are the source of most research on juvenile recidivism. For juveniles involved in a recidivism study, different types of records will indicate different rates of recidivism.

The Sentencing Commission tracks recidivism in both the juvenile justice system and the adult criminal justice system. The primary outcome measure of recidivism was defined as having either a delinquent juvenile complaint and/or an adult arrest and included a measure of offense seriousness (i.e., felony or misdemeanor). Although the juvenile complaint and/or adult arrest had to occur within the follow-up periods examined (i.e., juvenile justice involvement or two-year follow-up period), the date the alleged offense occurred could have been prior to the start of follow-up.¹⁵ Additional measures of recidivism included the offense severity of recidivist events (i.e., felony or misdemeanor), as well as adjudications and convictions (see Appendix F). Data on infractions, local ordinances, process offenses, and misdemeanor traffic offenses were excluded from all recidivism measures. Table 1.1 summarizes the recidivism measures.

**Table 1.1
Recidivism Defined**

Recidivism	Definition	Data Source
• Juvenile Complaint	• Subsequent offense referred to juvenile justice	• Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
• Adult Arrest	• Fingerprinted arrest in NC that occurred after juvenile reached the age of criminal majority	• State Bureau of Investigation
• Juvenile Adjudication	• Subsequent adjudication in juvenile justice system	• Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
• Adult Conviction	• Conviction resulting from fingerprinted arrest	• State Bureau of Investigation

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This is the third biennial report to employ a different methodology than previous reports. The current research approach included:

- Using an exit sample of juveniles following their juvenile justice (JJ) involvement with a delinquent complaint that was either diverted from the court, adjudicated with a Level 1 or 2 disposition and placed on probation, or adjudicated with a Level 3 commitment in a fiscal year,
- Tracking those juveniles during their sample involvement with the juvenile justice system and for a fixed two-year follow-up period following their sample involvement exit, and
- Defining recidivism as all subsequent delinquent complaints and adult arrests during each independent time period examined.

¹⁵ The term “recidivism” in this report refers to having a subsequent delinquent juvenile complaint, an adult arrest, or both during the follow-up periods examined. Whether a juvenile had one or more subsequent complaints and/or adult arrests, the juvenile will be counted as a recidivist. In calculating total number of recidivist events, only one complaint and only one adult arrest were counted per day if multiple complaints or arrests occurred on the same day. The same methodology was also employed for recidivist adjudications and/or convictions.

The current methodology allows juveniles to be tracked both during and *following* their involvement with the juvenile justice system. This allows for greater examination of the timing of recidivism – did it occur while a juvenile was involved with the system (e.g., under supervision) or did it occur following his or her exit from involvement with the juvenile justice system? Differences that exist between recidivism that occurs during involvement compared to after involvement can also be examined. Most importantly, the ability to control for the order and timing of recidivist events allows for greater understanding of the effect of the totality of system involvement (i.e., all interventions and programs) on recidivism.

With the incorporation of this methodology, direct comparisons between the recidivism rates presented in this report and the two prior reports published in 2019 and 2021 can be made. However, direct comparisons between recidivism rates cannot be made with reports prior to the 2019 report due to the differences in sample selection and time periods studied (see Figure 1.1 for a comparison of the different methodologies).

Figure 1.1
A Timeline Comparison of Juvenile Entry and Exit Samples

Juvenile Entry Sample			
JJ Entry (varied period)		JJ Exit*	
Recidivism			
Follow-Up Begins (3-year fixed period)		Follow-Up Ends	
Juvenile Exit Sample			
JJ Entry (varied period)		JJ Exit	
Recidivism		Recidivism	
Follow-Up Begins (2-year fixed period)		Follow-Up Ends	

*JJ exit typically occurred prior to the end of the three-year follow-up.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

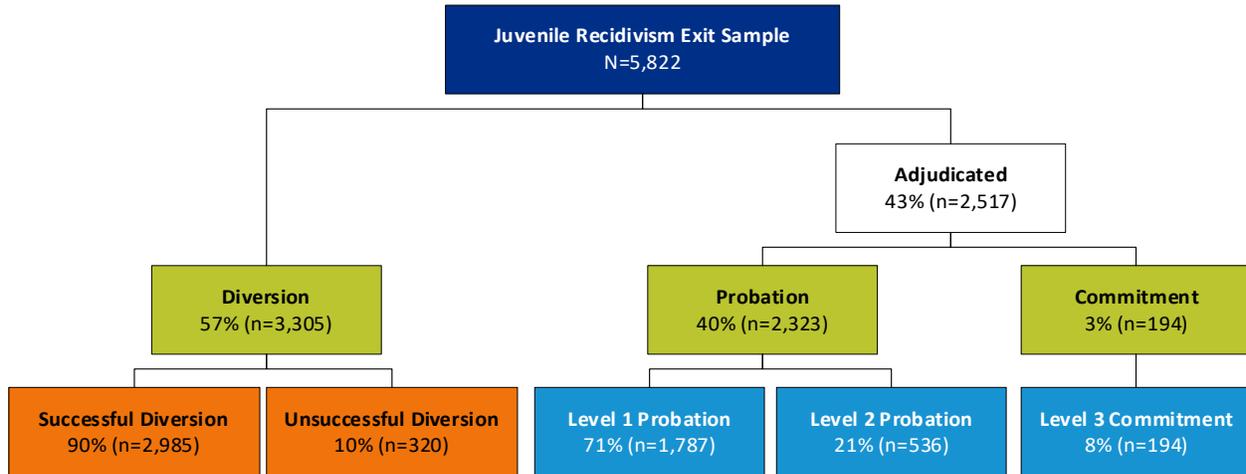
Sample

The sample includes 5,822 juveniles identified in DJJDP’s automated juvenile justice database who exited the juvenile justice system in FY 2020 following diversion for a delinquent complaint (n=3,305) or, for those adjudicated delinquent and with a disposition imposed, following probation in the community (n=2,323) or commitment in a YDC facility (n=194).^{16,17} (See Figure 1.2.) If more than one exit occurred during the fiscal year, the juvenile was assigned to one of these groups based on the most serious event, as ranked from YDC commitment (most serious) to probation disposition to diversion (least serious). Juveniles whose case was closed at intake or whose case was dismissed either prior to or at the adjudicatory hearing were examined separately from the FY 2020 sample. (See Appendix D for summarized information about these two groups of juveniles.)

¹⁶ Juveniles whose most serious alleged complaint was for an infraction, local ordinance violation, or misdemeanor traffic offense were excluded from the sample.

¹⁷ If the court finds that a juvenile has violated the conditions of probation, the court may order a new disposition at the next higher level on the disposition chart, including Level 3 commitment (G.S. 7B-2510). If the court determines that a juvenile has violated the terms of PRS, the court may revoke PRS and impose an indefinite term of at least 90 days (G.S. 7B-2516).

Figure 1.2
FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Measuring Recidivism

With an exit sample, a juvenile’s delinquent and/or criminal behavior (i.e., recidivism) can be examined during their involvement with the juvenile justice system separately from the two-year follow-up period. The two-year follow-up is a fixed period calculated individually for each juvenile following exit, while the juvenile’s involvement with the juvenile justice system varies individually and between groups. Table 1.2 provides a summary of the three groups and the *start* of the recidivism period examined during juvenile justice involvement and during the two-year follow-up.

Table 1.2
FY 2020 Exit Sample Descriptions and Recidivism Time Periods

Level of Involvement	Description	Start of Recidivism Period	
		JJ Involvement (JJ Entry)	Two-Year Follow-Up (JJ Exit)
• Diversion	• Juveniles whose diversion plan or contract ended in FY	• Start date of diversion plan/contract	• One day after diversion exit date
• Probation	• Juveniles exiting probation in FY	• Disposition date (i.e., probation start date)	• One day after probation exit date
• Commitment	• Juveniles released from a YDC facility in FY after commitment ordered due to a new offense, violation of probation, or revocation of PRS	• Disposition date (i.e., commitment date)	• One day after commitment release date

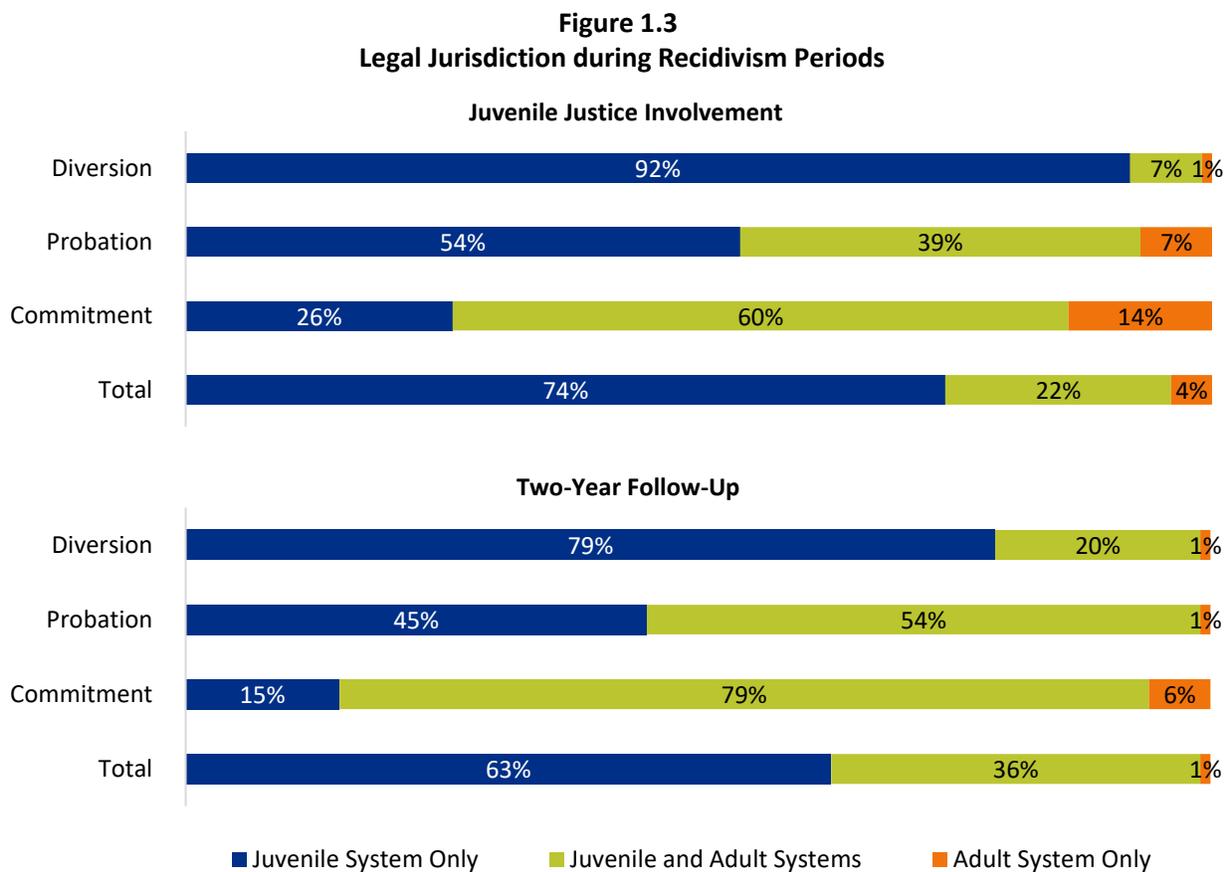
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

The time period available for recidivism during juvenile justice involvement varied widely between the three groups. As expected, juveniles who were diverted had a shorter time period of involvement with the juvenile justice system (an average of 4 months) than juveniles who were adjudicated and disposed (an average of 12 months for juveniles supervised on probation and an average of 14 months for

juveniles committed to a YDC). The two-year follow-up period for recidivism started one day following exit from the juvenile justice involvement period for all three groups. A fixed follow-up period was used in an attempt to obtain the same “window of opportunity” for each juvenile to reoffend. However, for both time periods examined, the window of opportunity to reoffend may vary if confinement occurred during follow-up (i.e., admission to a detention center, commitment to a YDC, confinement in local jail or in prison).

Recidivism and Jurisdiction

As described above, recidivism for each juvenile in the sample was examined during their involvement with the juvenile justice system and for a fixed two-year follow-up period from their exit. As shown in Figure 1.3, depending on the juvenile’s age during the time periods examined, recidivism was tracked in the juvenile justice system, criminal justice system, or both.



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Jurisdiction during Juvenile Justice Involvement

Seventy-four percent (74%) of juveniles had their juvenile justice involvement recidivism tracked solely in the juvenile justice system. Conversely, 4% were tracked solely in the criminal justice system and the remaining 22% were tracked in both the juvenile justice system and the criminal justice system. Committed juveniles were the oldest juveniles in the sample, and, as a result, accounted for the largest

percentage tracked solely in the criminal justice system (14%). Diverted juveniles were the youngest and represented the largest percentage tracked solely in the juvenile justice system (92%).

Jurisdiction during Two-Year Follow-Up

Most juveniles (63%) were under juvenile jurisdiction only during their two-year follow-up with an additional 36% tracked in both systems. A very small percentage (1%) were only under adult jurisdiction. The diversion group had the highest percentage tracked under the juvenile system only (79%) compared to the probation and commitment groups (45% and 15% respectively).

Data Sources

The following automated data sources were used to provide comprehensive information for the juvenile recidivism exit sample:

- North Carolina Juvenile Online Information Network (NC-JOIN), DJJDP’s management information system for juvenile justice, contains data on all juveniles brought to court with delinquent and undisciplined complaints received in a juvenile court counselor office. This database was used to provide information on demographic and social history; risk and needs of the juvenile; delinquent offense and disposition; and prior, current, and subsequent involvement in the juvenile justice system.
- The North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation’s (SBI) Computerized Criminal History (CCH) system was used to provide information on fingerprinted adult arrests and convictions. All felony arrests and certain misdemeanor arrests are fingerprinted (G.S. 15A-502).

A case profile was constructed for each juvenile based on the data obtained from NC-JOIN and CCH. The final data set for this study consists of nearly 300 items of information (or variables) for the sample of 5,822 juveniles exiting the juvenile justice system between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020 and followed during their juvenile justice involvement and for two years after this involvement.¹⁸

COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 had immediate effects on the juvenile justice system. In response to the public health crisis, many juvenile justice processes were temporarily halted, dramatically slowed, or altered to accommodate emergency directives put in place by the Governor and Chief Justice. In addition, schools were initially closed and then shifted to virtual learning in response to emergency directives. The pandemic affected 33% of the FY 2020 sample during the last months of the fiscal year – specifically juveniles exiting the juvenile justice system between March 2020 to June 30, 2020. The pandemic also affected most of the follow-up period. The individually calculated two-year fixed follow-up period ranged from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2022, with the pandemic beginning in March 2020. The number of follow-up months affected by the pandemic varied based on when a juvenile began their follow-up period, ranging from an impact of 16 months to 24 months. These differences in months of follow-up affected by the pandemic prompted further examination to explore the impact on juvenile justice outcomes for the FY 2020 sample, which are discussed in Chapter Five. Future reports will offer additional opportunities to examine the pandemic’s effect on recidivism rates.

¹⁸ Definitions for primary analysis variables and key terms are provided in Appendix E.

ANALYSIS AND REPORT OUTLINE

This report marks the ninth biennial report on statewide rates of juvenile recidivism and continues the methodology implemented in the 2019 report. The study follows a sample of 5,822 juveniles who *exited the juvenile justice system* in FY 2020 to determine whether subsequent involvement in either the juvenile justice system and/or criminal justice system (i.e., recidivism) occurred.

Chapter Two provides a statistical profile of the three groups comprising the FY 2020 sample (including personal characteristics, delinquency history, most serious charged offense, and RNA) and includes a summary of their subsequent involvement in the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems. The analyses in this chapter provide information on the sample as a whole and also offer a comparative look at the characteristics and recidivism of juveniles in each of the three groups.

Chapter Three offers a more detailed examination of juveniles with a diversion plan or contract. The chapter focuses on a comparison of juveniles with a successful diversion to those with an unsuccessful diversion as defined by post-diversion approval for court. An overall profile of the two groups and their subsequent recidivism is provided.

Chapter Four provides a further examination of juveniles adjudicated delinquent and placed in one of the three dispositional levels, focusing on juveniles exiting from probation with either a Level 1 or 2 disposition and juveniles exiting a YDC commitment (e.g., Level 3 disposition). The chapter offers a descriptive comparison of the groups in terms of their personal characteristics and delinquency history, as well as their recidivism.

Finally, Chapter Five summarizes the findings of the report and offers some policy implications and conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO

FY 2020 JUVENILE RECIDIVISM EXIT SAMPLE

Chapter Two profiles a cohort of juveniles exiting North Carolina’s juvenile justice system from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 by their level of involvement. As specified in the legislative mandate, this cohort includes juveniles adjudicated delinquent; however, a significant portion of juveniles are diverted from juvenile court. These diverted juveniles are also included as part of the cohort studied to provide a more complete examination of how the juvenile justice system handles juveniles brought to its attention due to delinquent behavior. This chapter describes the sample selection process and provides a statistical profile of the sample that includes personal characteristics, prior contacts with the juvenile system, most serious charged offense, and RNA. Juvenile justice and criminal justice outcomes for the sample during their juvenile justice involvement and during a two-year follow-up period are also examined, with a focus on subsequent complaints and/or adult arrests by level of involvement, personal characteristics, most serious charged offense, and additional outcomes (e.g., confinement, juvenile transfers to superior court).

STATISTICAL PROFILE

All of the 5,822 juveniles studied in the sample were brought to the attention of the juvenile justice system with at least one delinquent complaint. They exited the system in FY 2020 from one of three levels of involvement examined – diversion (n=3,305), probation (n=2,323), and commitment to a YDC facility (n=194). For the diversion group, the court counselor determined that the juvenile’s case be diverted from court, while the court counselor determined it was in the best interest of the juvenile in the probation and commitment groups to file a petition for court. Those juveniles had their delinquent complaint(s) adjudicated and disposed in juvenile court, and were either supervised in the community with a Level 1 or Level 2 disposition (i.e., probation) or placed in confinement with a Level 3 disposition (i.e., commitment). If the juvenile had more than one exit within the fiscal year, the juvenile was assigned to a group based on the most serious event, as determined by the level of involvement in the system from diversion (least serious) to probation to commitment (most serious). Chapter Two focuses on the placement of juveniles into these three groups and the overall sample. While these groups will be compared throughout this chapter, it should be noted that some results should be interpreted with caution due to the small number of juveniles in the commitment group (3% of the sample).

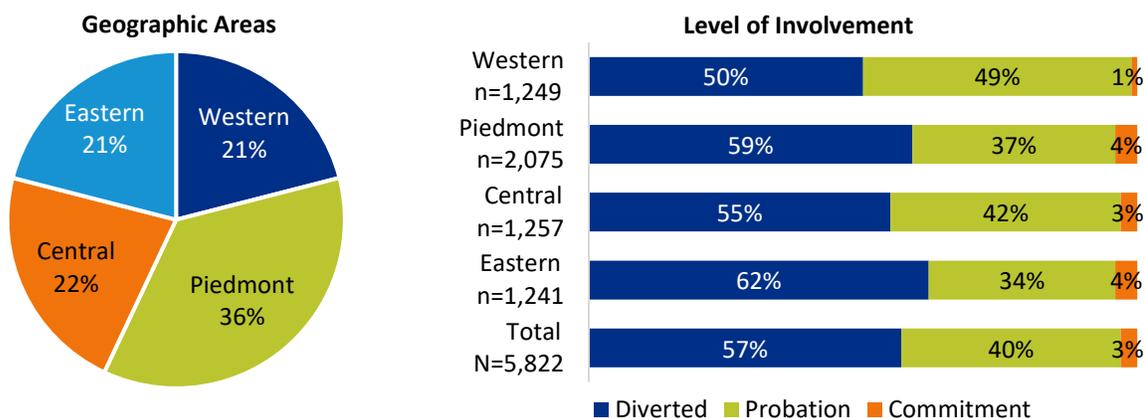
Geographic Areas

Figure 2.1 examines the distribution of the FY 2020 sample by the four geographic areas of the state – Western, Piedmont, Central, and Eastern.¹⁹ The highest proportion of the sample exited from the juvenile justice system in the Piedmont area (36%), with juveniles exiting from the remaining three areas close to the same proportion (21% to 22%). Irrespective of area, the majority of juveniles were in the diversion group and the fewest were in the commitment group (57% and 3% respectively). The Western

¹⁹ See Appendix F, Table F.1 for the distribution by geographic areas, districts, and counties. For a detailed map of the four areas, the districts, and the specific counties within those areas, see the DJJDP’s *Annual Report 2021* <https://www.ncdps.gov/media/11070/open>.

area was more evenly split between the diversion and probation groups (50% and 49% respectively), while the Eastern area had the largest percentage of juveniles in the diversion group and the smallest percentage in the probation group (62% and 34% respectively).

Figure 2.1
Geographic Areas



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Personal Characteristics

Table 2.1 examines personal characteristics by level of involvement. Overall, 73% of juveniles were male; the committed group had the highest percentage at 92%. Forty-three percent (43%) of the juveniles in the sample were Black, 40% were White, 12% were Hispanic, and 5% were identified as other or unknown.²⁰ Juveniles in the commitment group also had the highest percentage of Black juveniles (72%) compared to the diversion and probation groups (41% and 43% respectively). Over half of the juveniles (56%) were 14 or 15 years old at time of offense. The diversion group had a higher proportion of juveniles 11 years or younger and a lower proportion of juveniles 14 years or older compared to the other two groups. However, 7% of the diversion group were 16-17 years old at the time of offense – a direct result of RtA. Figure 2.2 illustrates how juveniles aged during their juvenile justice involvement. A higher percentage of juveniles were 16 years or older at exit (34%) compared to age at entry (12%).²¹

²⁰ Due to low percentages, American Indian, Asian, and multiracial juveniles were combined with other/unknown into one category.

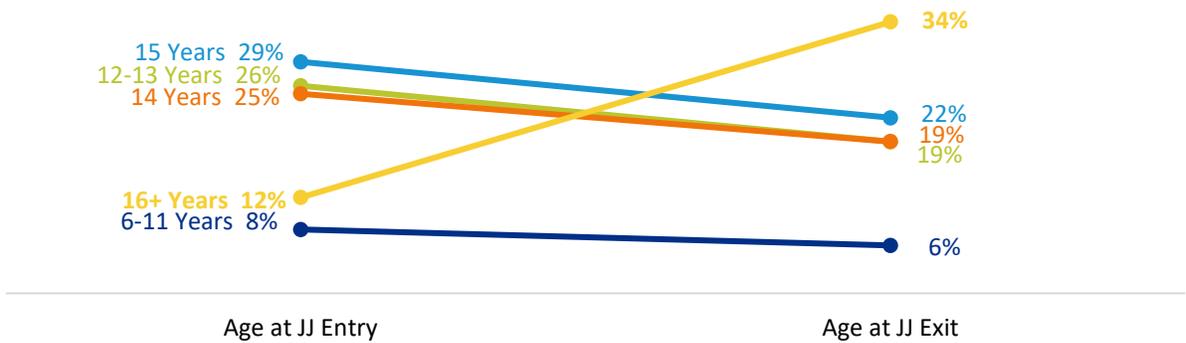
²¹ See Table F.3 in Appendix F for the distribution of juvenile age at entry and exit for the individual groups.

Table 2.1
Personal Characteristics

Personal Characteristics	Diversion	Probation	Commitment	Total
	n=3,305 %	n=2,323 %	n=194 %	N=5,822 %
Gender	%	%	%	%
Male	71	76	92	73
Female	29	24	8	27
Race/Ethnicity	%	%	%	%
White	41	41	19	40
Black	41	43	72	43
Hispanic	13	10	7	12
Other/Unknown	5	6	2	5
Age at Offense	%	%	%	%
6-11 Years	13	6	1	10
12-13 Years	33	26	20	30
14 Years	23	30	34	26
15 Years	24	38	45	30
16-17 Years	7	<1	--	4
Age at:	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.
Offense	14	14	14	14
JJ Entry	14	14	15	14
JJ Exit	14	15	16	15

Note: There were 2 juveniles in the probation group that were 16 or 17 years old at time of offense.
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Figure 2.2
Age during Juvenile Justice Involvement



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Prior Juvenile Justice Contacts

It is important to look at whether juveniles in the sample had contact with the juvenile justice system prior to their entry into the sample to gain an understanding of frequency of interaction with the

system. Figure 2.3 provides the percentage of juveniles with prior juvenile justice contacts by level of involvement. Overall, 32% of the sample had at least one delinquent complaint prior to sample entry. As expected, juveniles diverted from court had a lower percentage with a prior complaint (17%) than juveniles who were adjudicated and disposed (50% for probation and 95% for commitment). Nine percent (9%) of juveniles had at least one prior adjudication and 11% had a prior confinement.²² For all measures of prior juvenile justice contacts examined, the deeper the juvenile’s involvement with the system the more prior contacts the juvenile had.

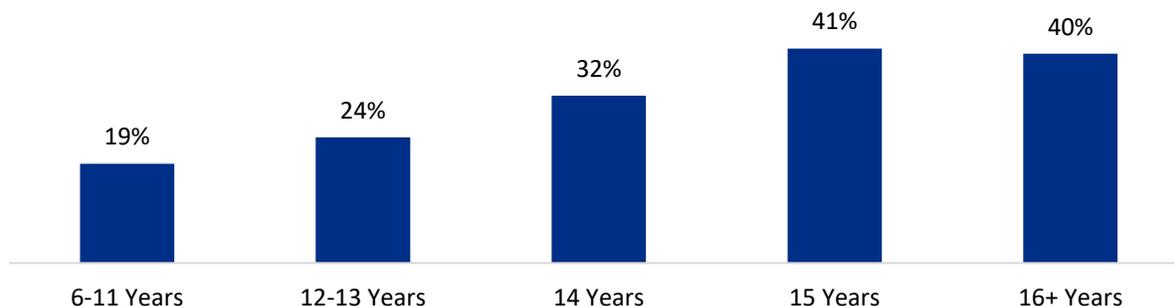
Figure 2.3
Prior Juvenile Justice Contacts

Diversion	Probation	Commitment	Total
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •17% prior complaint •2% prior adjudication •<1% prior confinement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •50% prior complaint •14% prior adjudication •19% prior confinement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •95% prior complaint •82% prior adjudication •96% prior confinement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •32% prior complaint •9% prior adjudication •11% prior confinement

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

To examine the relationship between age and prior juvenile justice contacts, Figure 2.4 shows the percentage of juveniles with at least one prior contact by age at juvenile justice entry (i.e., start of diversion plan/contract or date of the dispositional hearing). Generally, the percentage of juveniles with at least one prior complaint increased as age increased.

Figure 2.4
Prior Complaints by Age at Juvenile Justice Entry



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

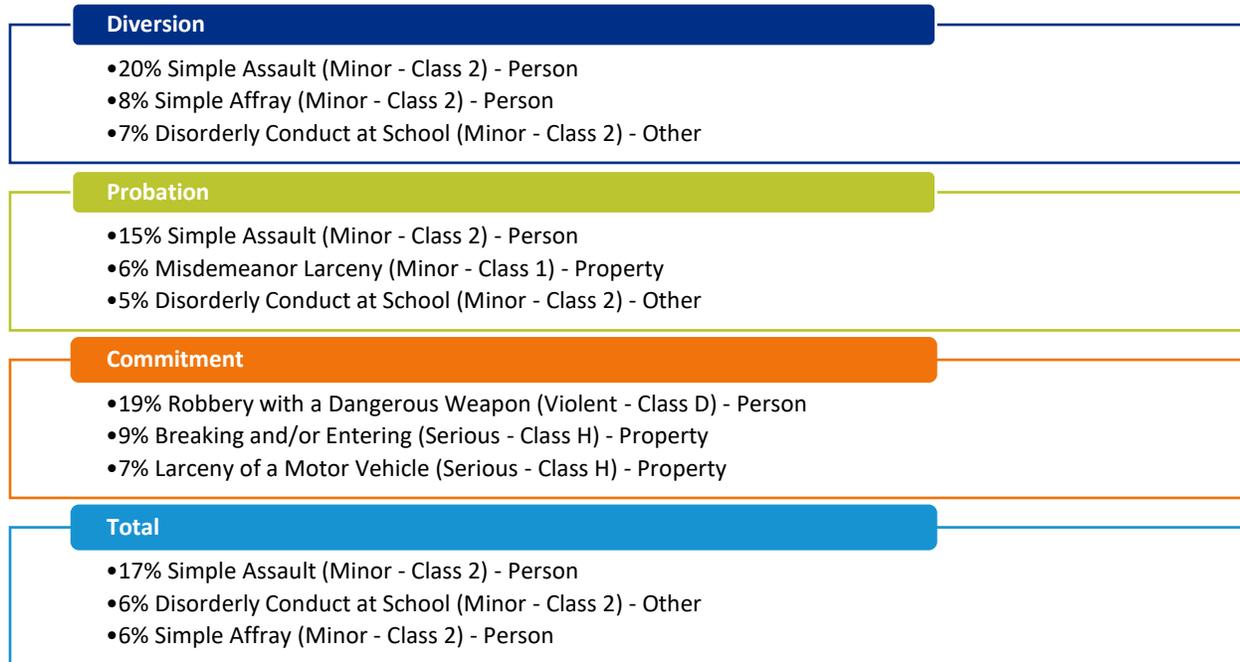
Of the 1,887 juveniles with at least one prior complaint, most were in the probation group (61%). Examination of the most serious prior offense indicated 75% of juveniles had a misdemeanor offense as their most serious prior complaint. The diversion group had a higher percentage of misdemeanor offenses (89%) as their most serious prior complaint compared to the probation and commitment groups (76% and 23% respectively). Juveniles in the commitment group had the highest percentage with a felony as their most serious prior complaint (77%).

²² A prior confinement could be a detention center admission or a YDC commitment or both. Generally, juveniles who had a YDC commitment also had a detention center admission.

Charged Offense

The most serious charged offense is defined as the most serious offense alleged in the complaint (hereinafter referred to as charged offense).²³ Figure 2.5 provides the most common offenses for juveniles in the sample. The top 3 offenses accounted for 29% of charged offenses for the sample, all of which are misdemeanors. The diversion and probation groups also had misdemeanors as their top 3 offenses, while the commitment group had all felonies.

Figure 2.5
Top 3 Charged Offenses



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table 2.2 provides a comparison between the groups with respect to offense profile. Overall, the majority of the 5,822 juveniles (80%) had a misdemeanor as their most serious charged offense. Nearly all (91%) of the diversion group and nearly three-fourths (71%) of the probation group had a misdemeanor offense compared to only 8% of the commitment group. Thirty-six percent (36%) of juveniles in the commitment group had a Violent offense (Class A through Class E felonies).²⁴ While about one-third (34%) of the probation group and two-thirds (63%) of the commitment group had a Serious offense (Class F through Class I felonies, Class A1 misdemeanors), only 16% of the diversion group had a Serious offense.²⁵

²³ See Chapter Four for the adjudicated offense classification for juveniles in the probation and commitment groups.

²⁴ See Chapter One and Appendix B for a discussion of offense classification for the Juvenile Disposition Chart.

²⁵ Of the 529 Serious offenses for the diversion group, 238 (or 45%) were for Class A1 misdemeanors. For the probation and commitment groups, 28% and 10%, respectively, of the Serious offenses were for Class A1 misdemeanors.

**Table 2.2
Charged Offense**

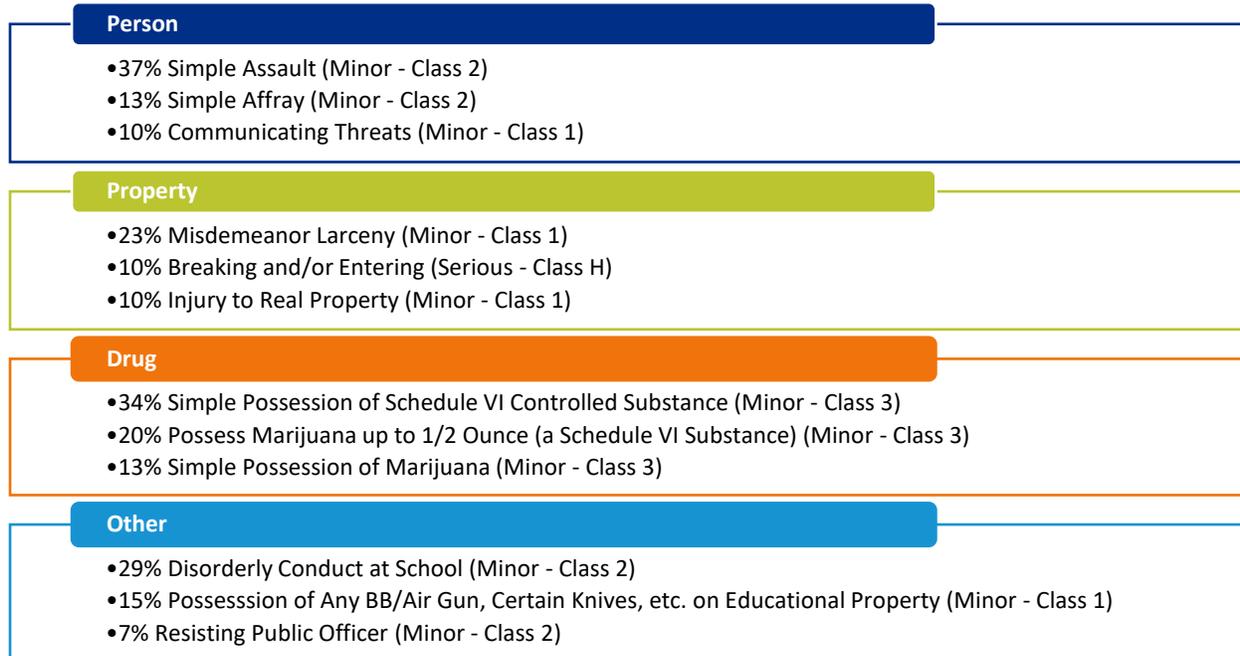
Charged Offense	Diversion n=3,305 %	Probation n=2,323 %	Commitment n=194 %	Total N=5,822 %
Offense Type				
Felony	9	29	92	20
Misdemeanor	91	71	8	80
Offense Classification				
Violent				
Class A-E Felonies	<1	5	36	3
Serious				
Class F-I Felonies	16	34	63	25
Class A1 Misdemeanor				
Minor				
Class 1-3 Misdemeanors	84	61	1	72
Offense Category				
Person	47	44	52	46
Property	20	30	45	25
Drug	9	9	<1	8
Other	24	17	3	21
School-Based Offense				
No	29	51	90	40
Yes	71	49	10	60
School Resource Officer				
No	10	15	53	12
Yes	90	85	47	88

Note: There were 3 diverted juveniles charged with a Class C, D, and E offense (a Violent offense).
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Charged offenses were also grouped into four offense categories: person, property, drug, and other.²⁶ Overall, the most common type of offense, regardless of whether it was a felony or misdemeanor, was person (46%), followed by property (25%), other (21%), and drug (8%). (See Table 2.2.) Figure 2.6 provides the top 3 offense by each offense category. Of the person offenses, most (82%) were for a misdemeanor offense. The top person offenses were simple assault and simple affray. Most of the property offenses (61%) were misdemeanors. The top property offenses were misdemeanor larceny and felony breaking and/or entering. With 89% of drug offenses being misdemeanors, the most common offenses were simple possession of Schedule VI controlled substance and possess marijuana up to ½ ounce (a Schedule VI substance). Almost all (94%) of the offenses categorized as other were misdemeanors. The most common offenses in the other category were disorderly conduct at school and possession of any BB/air gun, certain knives, brass knuckles, razors/blades, etc.

²⁶ A person offense is defined as an offense involving force or threat of force. A property offense is defined as a violation of criminal laws pertaining to property. A drug offense is defined as a violation of laws pertaining to controlled substances. Offenses categorized as other include those that do not fall into one of the previous three categories.

Figure 2.6
Top 3 Charged Offenses by Offense Category



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Overall, 60% of juveniles had a school-based offense (SBO).^{27,28} The majority of juveniles with diversion (71%) had an SBO, while less than half of juveniles with probation (49%) had an SBO. Juveniles in the commitment group had the fewest SBOs (10%). As juveniles aged, SBOs decreased (from 71% for 6-11 years to 42% for 16-17 years). Of the 3,521 juveniles with an SBO, 88% were referred to the juvenile system by a law enforcement officer functioning as a School Resource Officer (SRO). Examination of these SBOs by groups found that 90% of complaints for the diversion group, 85% for the probation group, and 47% for the commitment group were referred by an SRO.

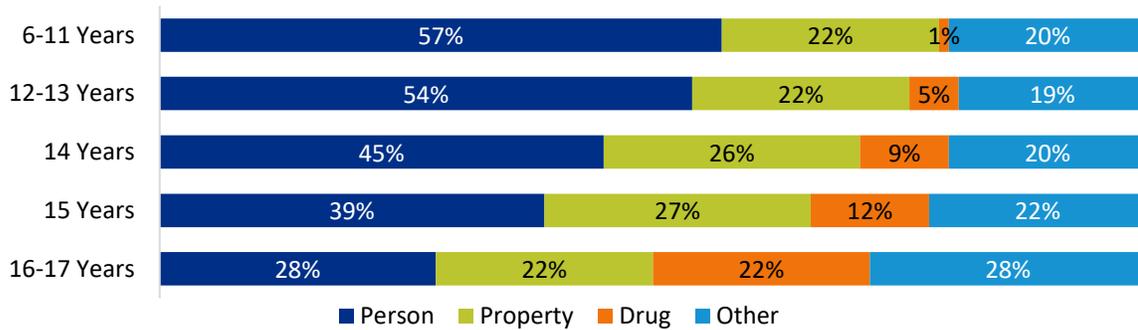
Offense Category and Age at Offense

Figure 2.7 contains information on age at offense in relation to the type of crime for the charged offense. As the age increased, the distribution of charged offense types shifted. Person offenses decreased as age increased – 57% for juveniles aged 6-11 years compared to 28% for juveniles aged 16-17 years. Conversely, drug offenses increased as age increased (1% to 22%).

²⁷ A school-based offense is an offense that occurs on school grounds, school property (e.g., buses), at a school bus stop, or at an off-campus school-sanctioned event (e.g., field trips, athletic competitions) or whose victim is a school (such as a false bomb report). School includes any public or private institution providing elementary (grades K-8), secondary (grades 9-12), or post-secondary (e.g., community college, trade school, college) education, but excludes home schools, preschools, and daycares.

²⁸ See also the Sentencing Commission's special report on school-based offenses and juvenile recidivism for the FY 2018 juvenile recidivism sample (https://www.nccourts.gov/assets/documents/publications/SPAC-2021-SBO-Special-Report-Web_0.pdf?VersionId=vcRJtzf.54b2A3LOju7hsQ3oOTyBFgl.).

Figure 2.7
Offense Category of Charged Offense by Age at Offense



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Risk and Needs Assessments

During intake, DJJDP staff administers an RNA to all juveniles to assess the risk of future delinquency and to determine the individual needs of the juvenile.²⁹ Table 2.3 lists select results of the assessments for the three groups and for the sample as a whole. Most notable among the risk factors, 88% of juveniles had school behavior problems, 34% had at least one prior intake referral, 16% had their first referral before age 12, and 13% had parents/guardians who were unwilling or unable to provide parental supervision. The commitment group had more risk factors than the other two groups, while the probation group had more risk factors than the diversion group. This finding was repeated in the average risk scores by groups – the commitment group’s risk score (17) was 4 times greater than the diversion group’s risk score (4) and over 2 times greater than the probation group’s risk score (8). These findings are not surprising given the deeper involvement with the juvenile system of the commitment and probation groups.

The needs assessment revealed that very few juveniles had basic needs that were not being met (1%). (See Table 2.3.) For three-fourths of the juveniles, mental health care was indicated as a need (74%). Problems related to homelife were evident, with 44% of juveniles having criminality in their family, 20% experiencing conflict in the home, and 21% having some history of victimization. As seen with the risk indicators, the commitment group had more needs than the other two groups and the probation group had more needs than the diversion group. Again, these findings are also shown by the average needs scores. The commitment group’s average needs score (20) was over 2 times higher than the diversion group’s needs score (8) and 1.5 times higher than the probation group’s needs score (14).

Combining select risk and needs indicators, 33% of juveniles had substance use problems and 62% had negative peer relationships. Overall, a very small percentage of the sample (5%) reported some type of gang affiliation; however, just under half (46%) of the commitment group reported some type of gang

²⁹ See Appendix A for a copy of the North Carolina Assessment of Juvenile Risk of Future Offending and the North Carolina Assessment of Juvenile Needs instruments and for information on the number and percentage of juveniles with a risk and needs assessment for the sample. Overall, risk assessments were completed within 6 days on average, while the needs assessment was completed within 7 days on average. The risk and needs findings in this report only include the juveniles who had both the risk portion and the needs portion of the RNA completed; only 7 juveniles in the diversion group and 1 juvenile in the probation group did not have both assessments completed. See Table A.1 for more details of the completion and average time to RNA.

affiliation. As with the individual risk and needs indicators, similar patterns between the groups (with the commitment group having the highest proportion) were found for these combined measures.

Table 2.3
Select Risk and Needs Indicators

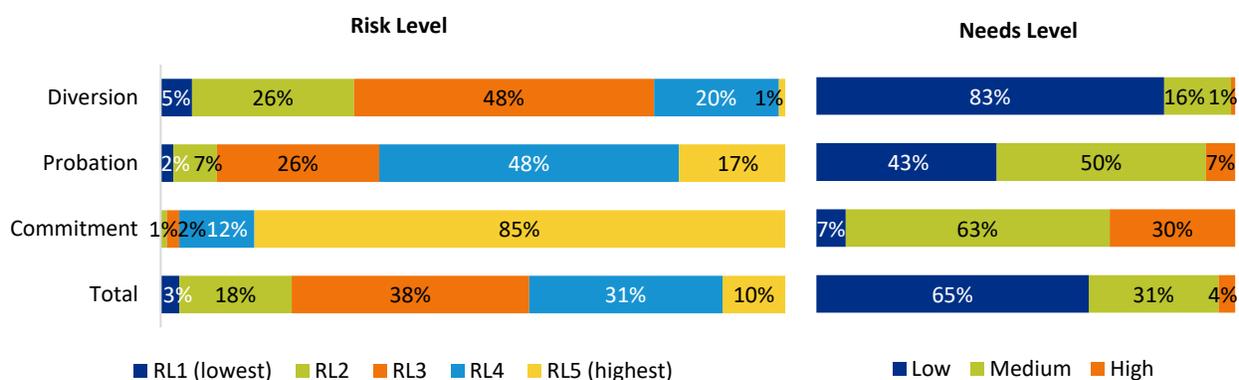
Risk and Needs Indicators	Diversion n=3,298	Probation n=2,322	Commitment n=194	Total N=5,814
Risk Assessment	%	%	%	%
First Referral Before Age 12	16	15	23	16
Prior Intake Referrals	16	53	93	34
Prior Adjudications	2	29	88	16
Prior Assaults	7	24	60	16
Had Run Away	5	18	58	12
Had School Behavior Problems	85	92	96	88
Parents/Guardians Unwilling/Unable to Provide Parental Supervision	4	22	56	13
Risk Score (0-30 points) Avg.	4	8	17	6
Needs Assessment	%	%	%	%
Functioning Below Academic Grade Level	5	12	20	9
Juvenile Parent Status (i.e., is a parent)	<1	1	3	1
History of Victimization	15	28	35	21
Risky Sexual Behavior	2	12	18	6
Need for Mental Health Care Indicated	64	87	95	74
Basic Needs Are Not Being Met	<1	1	5	1
Impaired Functioning (i.e., medical, dental, health/hygiene)	<1	1	2	1
Conflict in the Home	11	31	53	20
Parent, Guardian, or Custodian has Disabilities	2	5	9	4
One or More Members of Household have Substance Use Problems	7	15	23	10
Indication of Family Member's Involvement in Criminal Activity	36	53	74	44
Needs Score (0-51 points) Avg.	8	14	20	11
Combined Risk and Needs Indicators	%	%	%	%
Substance Use	22	45	73	33
Gang Affiliation	1	7	46	5
Negative Peer Relationships	49	77	95	62

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Using the assessment instruments, separate risk and needs scores were computed for each juvenile, placing the juvenile in one of five levels of risk from RL1 (lowest risk) to RL5 (highest risk) and into low, medium, or high level for needs. Figure 2.8 shows the risk levels for each group and for the entire sample. Overall, the fewest juveniles were assessed at the extreme ends of the risk levels – 3% at RL1 and 10% at RL5. As expected, risk level increased as the level of juvenile justice involvement increased. Fewer juveniles in the diversion group were assessed at the higher risk levels (21% for RL4 and RL5) compared to juveniles in the probation group (65% for RL4 and RL5) and the commitment group (97% for RL4 and RL5). Conversely, more juveniles in the diversion group were assessed at the lower risk levels (31% for RL1 and RL2) compared to the other groups (9% for RL1 and RL2 for the probation group and 1% for the commitment group).

Figure 2.8 also shows the needs levels for each group and for the entire sample. Overall, there were few juveniles who were high needs (4%) and most were low needs (65%). The majority of juveniles in the diversion group (83%) were assessed as low needs, while less than half (43%) of the probation group and only 7% of the commitment group were assessed as low needs. Juveniles in the commitment group had the highest percentage of juveniles assessed as high needs (30%).

Figure 2.8
Risk and Needs Assessments

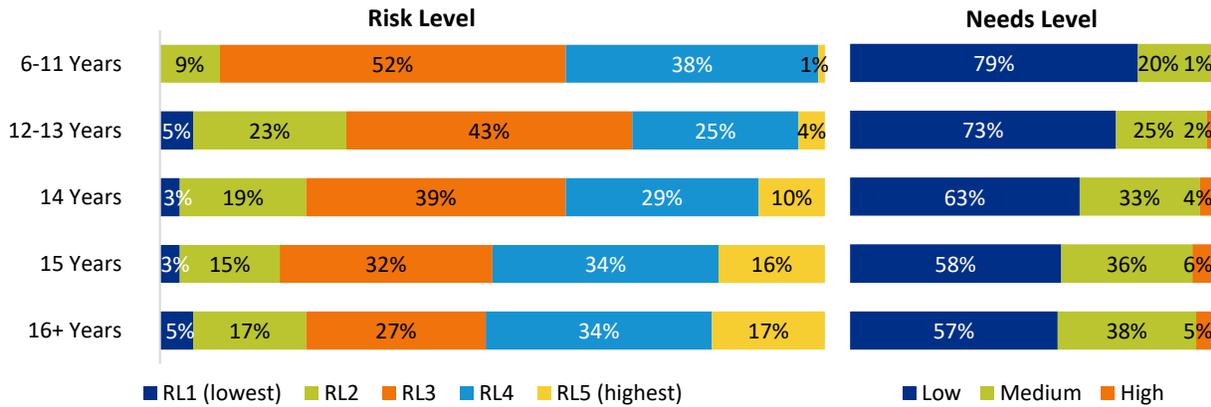


SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Risk/Needs Levels and Age at Juvenile Justice Entry

Examination of RNA levels by age at juvenile justice entry revealed differences in age and levels of RNA (see Figure 2.9). The youngest juveniles were assessed primarily at RL3 and RL4 (90% of juveniles aged 6-11). As age increased, a higher percentage of juveniles were assessed at the highest risk level (RL5). This is not surprising as the risk assessment includes items that take into account prior contact with the juvenile system as part of the assessment. Based on needs level, most of the younger juveniles (79%) were assessed as low needs, but the percentage of juveniles assessed as low needs decreased as age increased (to 57% at 16 years and older).

Figure 2.9
Risk and Needs Levels by Age at Juvenile Justice Entry



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Length of Juvenile Justice Involvement

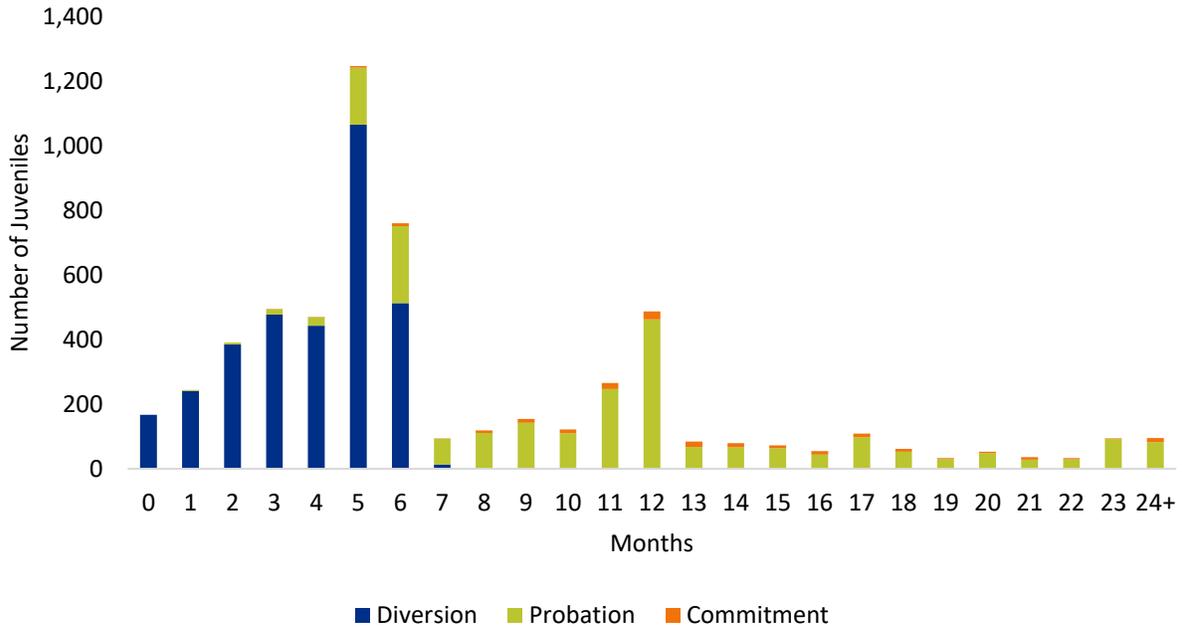
Table 2.4 and Figure 2.10 provide information on the length of involvement, which reflects juvenile justice practices and policies and is associated with the seriousness of the charged offense. Consequently, the length of involvement increased across the three groups – the diversion group spent the least amount of time, on average, in the system compared to the probation and commitment groups (4, 12, and 14 months respectively).

Table 2.4
Length of Juvenile Justice Involvement

	Diversion n=3,305	Probation n=2,323	Commitment n=194	Total N=5,822
Length of JJ Involvement	%	%	%	%
0-3 Months	38	1	1	22
4-6 Months	61	19	8	43
7-12 Months	1	50	39	21
13-24 Months	--	29	48	13
25+ Months	--	1	4	1
Overall Average in Months	4	12	14	7

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

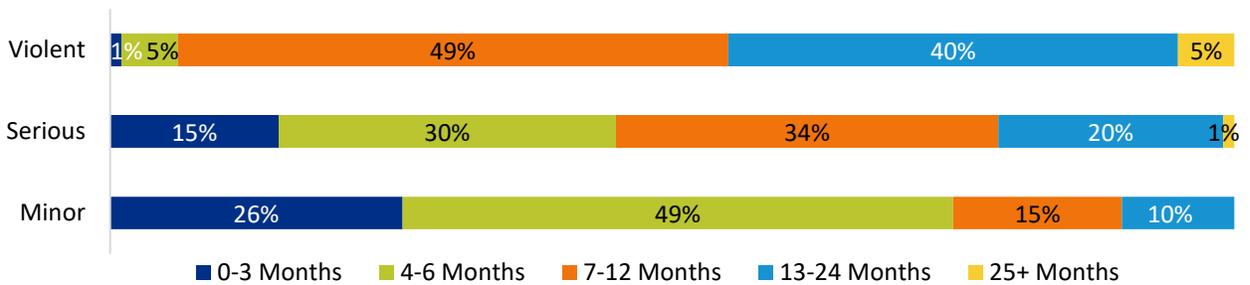
Figure 2.10
Number of Juveniles by Length of Juvenile Justice Involvement



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Figure 2.11 examines the length of involvement by offense classification for the sample as a whole. Juveniles with a Violent offense spent the longest amount of time in the juvenile justice system (94% at 7 months or more) compared to the juveniles with a Serious offense (55% at 7 months or more). Juveniles with a Minor offense spent the least amount of time in the juvenile justice system (75% at 6 months or less).

Figure 2.11
Length of Juvenile Justice Involvement by Charged Offense



Note: The 25+ months category represents 35 juveniles – 9 with Violent offenses, 13 with Serious Offenses, and 13 with Minor offenses. Thirteen (13) juveniles with a Minor offense represent <1% and were excluded.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

JUVENILE AND ADULT RECIDIVISM

Subsequent complaints were used as the primary measure for juvenile recidivism, supplemented with information on subsequent adjudications. Fingerprinted arrests were used as the primary measure for adult recidivism, supplemented with information on convictions. A combined measure of subsequent

juvenile complaints and/or adult arrests was compiled to indicate any recidivist involvement in either system.³⁰ Recidivism rates are only reported when there are 25 or more juveniles in a specific category.

Recidivism during Juvenile Justice Involvement

As discussed in Chapter One, recidivism rates are examined at two points in time – during juvenile justice involvement and during the two-year follow-up. Table 2.5 contains information on recidivism rates during juvenile justice involvement. Overall, 15% of juveniles had a delinquent complaint and/or an adult arrest during their juvenile justice involvement. Juveniles on probation had the highest recidivism rate at 24% followed by juveniles in the commitment group at 11%. Juveniles in the diversion group had the lowest recidivism rates at 9%. The low recidivism rates for the commitment group are not unexpected since they were confined in a YDC facility with minimal opportunity to recidivate during that time period.

For juveniles with any recidivism, the first event occurred an average of 3 months after sample entry. The diversion group tended to recidivate somewhat earlier than the other groups at 2 months compared to probation and commitment groups at 4 months. However, this is likely related to the diversion group’s shorter length of involvement (an average of 4 months) compared to the other groups (12 months for probation and 14 months for commitment). Overall, 65% had a misdemeanor as their most serious recidivist offense. The diversion group was more likely to have a misdemeanor as their most serious recidivist offense (77%) compared to the probation group (59%). While a small portion of the commitment group had a recidivist event while committed in a YDC facility (11%), they were less likely to have a misdemeanor (45%) as their most serious recidivist event compared to the other two groups.

Table 2.5
Recidivism Rates: Juvenile Justice Involvement

Level of Involvement	N	Any Recidivism		Average Months to Recidivism	Most Serious Recidivist Offense	
		#	%		Felony %	Misdemeanor %
Diversion	3,305	284	9	2	23	77
Probation	2,323	558	24	4	41	59
Commitment	194	22	11	4	55	45
Total	5,822	864	15	3	35	65

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Juveniles aged 14 and 15 at juvenile justice entry had the highest recidivism rates during their juvenile justice involvement (18% and 17% respectively) compared to the other age groupings (see Figure 2.12). Juveniles in the diversion group had little variation between the different ages (ranging from 7% to 10%), while oldest juveniles in the commitment group had the highest recidivism rates compared to the younger age groupings. The probationers aged 14 and 15 years had the highest recidivism rates (30% and 26% respectively), while the oldest age group (i.e., 16 years and older) had the lowest recidivism rates (16%).

³⁰ The primary recidivism measure was supplemented by a similar measure for subsequent juvenile adjudications and/or adult convictions. See Chapter One for details on this recidivism measure and Appendix F for data (Tables F.8-F.10).

Figure 2.12
Recidivism Rates by Age at Juvenile Justice Entry: Juvenile Justice Involvement



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Recidivism during Two-Year Follow-Up

Table 2.6 examines recidivism rates by level of involvement during the one-year and two-year follow-up periods. Overall, 17% of the sample had at least one subsequent delinquent complaint and/or arrest during the one-year follow-up and 26% during the two-year follow-up. Juveniles in the commitment group had higher recidivism rates during the follow-up period compared to juveniles in the diversion and probation groups. It should be noted that 98% of the juveniles exiting from a YDC facility (i.e., commitment group) were supervised on PRS for the first 90-days of their release.

Table 2.6
Recidivism Rates: Two-Year Follow-Up

Level of Involvement	N	Average Months to Recidivism	# of Juveniles with Any Recidivism	Total # Recidivist Events	One-Year Follow-Up %	Two-Year Follow-Up %
Diversion	3,305	9	687	1,396	13	21
Probation	2,323	9	689	1,475	20	30
Commitment	194	7	121	361	52	62
Total	5,822	9	1,497	3,232	17	26

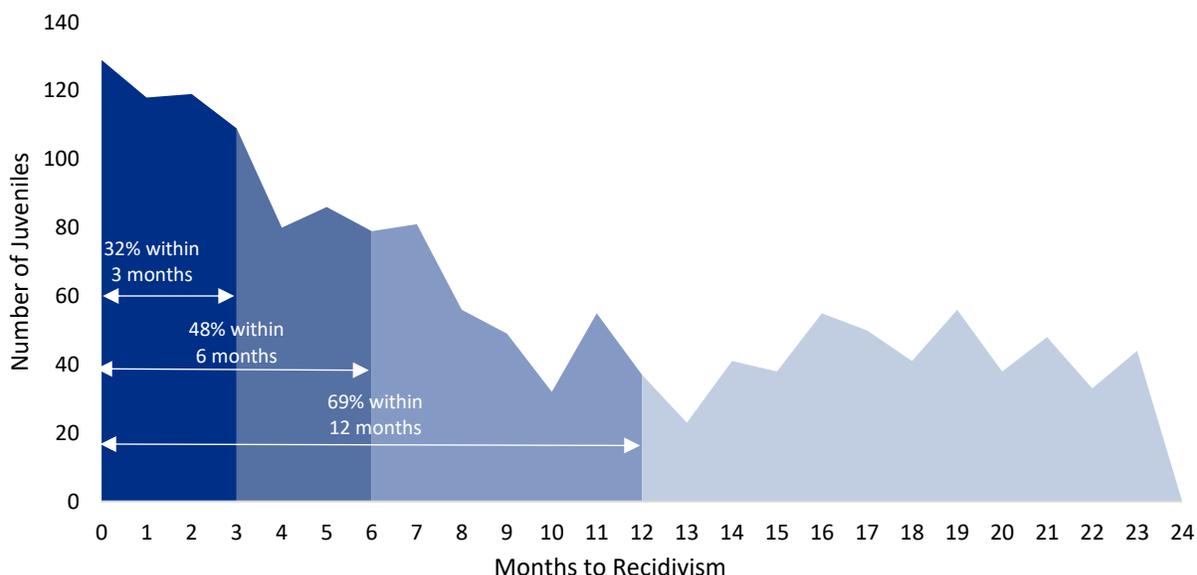
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table 2.6 also provides information on the total number of recidivist events for juveniles who had a subsequent juvenile complaint, an adult arrest, or both during the follow-up period. The 1,497 juveniles with any recidivism accounted for a total of 3,232 recidivist events. The probation group accounted for the highest volume of subsequent complaints and/or adult arrests at 1,475, followed closely by the diversion group at 1,396. For juveniles with recidivism, the average number of recidivist events was 2. The juveniles in the commitment group had a higher average number of recidivist events at 3, while the other two groups averaged 2.

For those juveniles with at least one subsequent delinquent complaint and/or arrest, the first recidivist event occurred an average of 9 months after the beginning of their follow-up (see Table 2.6). The

commitment group tended to recidivate somewhat earlier (an average of 7 months) than the probation or diversion groups (an average of 9 months each). Of the juveniles with recidivism, 32% recidivated within 3 months, 48% within 6 months, and 69% within 12 months (see Figure 2.13).

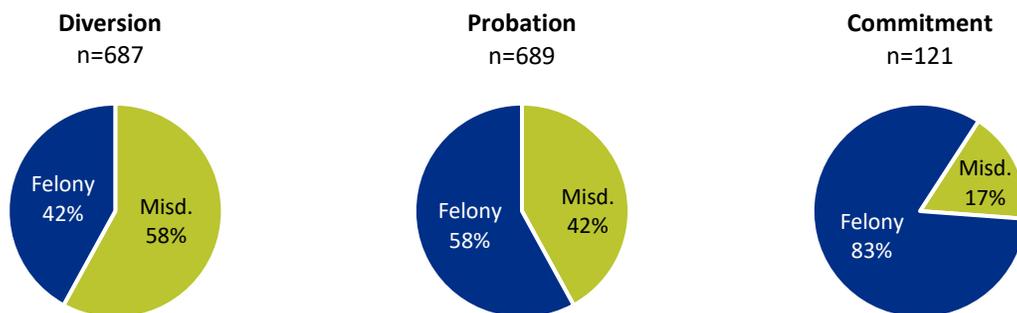
Figure 2.13
Months to First Recidivist Event for Juveniles with Recidivism



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Overall, 52% had a felony as their most serious recidivist offense. Figure 2.14 examines the most serious recidivist offense by group. Juveniles in the diversion group were less likely to have a felony as their most serious recidivist offense (42%) compared to juveniles in the probation and commitment groups (58% and 83% respectively).

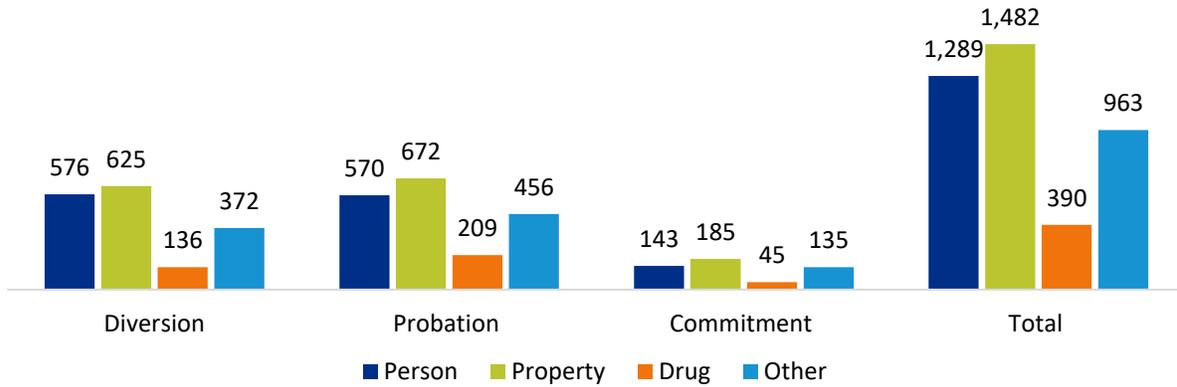
Figure 2.14
Most Serious Recidivist Event by Offense Type for Juveniles with Recidivism: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Recidivist events were also categorized based on offense category, as shown in Figure 2.15. Property and person offenses comprised the largest volume of recidivist events for the entire sample and for the three groups, while drug offenses comprised the lowest volume of recidivist events.

Figure 2.15
Number of Recidivist Events by Offense Category for Juveniles with Recidivism: Two-Year Follow-Up



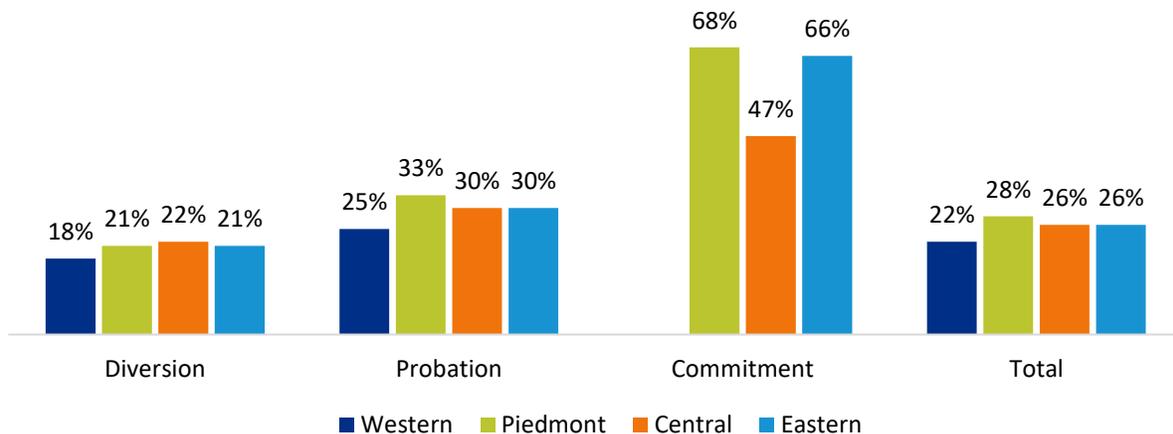
Note: Multiple offense categories may be linked to a recidivist event. As a result, the number of recidivist events by offense category cannot be added together to equal the total number of recidivist events.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Geographic Areas and Recidivism

Recidivism rates by geographic areas during the two-year follow-up are shown in Figure 2.16. Overall, juveniles in the Western area had the lowest recidivism rates, while juveniles in the Piedmont area had the highest (22% and 28% respectively). The diversion and probation groups in the Western area also had the lowest recidivism rates compared to the other three areas for those groups. Juveniles in the commitment group from the Central area had the lowest recidivism rates (47%) compared to the recidivism rates of juveniles in the Piedmont and Eastern areas (68% and 66% respectively).

Figure 2.16
Recidivism Rates by Geographic Areas: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Personal Characteristics and Recidivism

Table 2.7 provides recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up by personal characteristics: gender, race, and age. Overall, males had higher recidivism rates than females (28% and 18% respectively). Black juveniles had the highest recidivism rates at 34%, followed by juveniles in the other or unknown category (26%), Hispanic juveniles (21%), and White juveniles (18%). Overall, juveniles in the 12-15 age categories had the highest recidivism rates when examined by age at offense. For the diversion group, juveniles in the 12-15 age categories also had the highest recidivism rates, while there were no differences in recidivism rates by age at offense for the probationers. Juveniles in the commitment group who were in the 12-14 age categories had the highest recidivism rates.

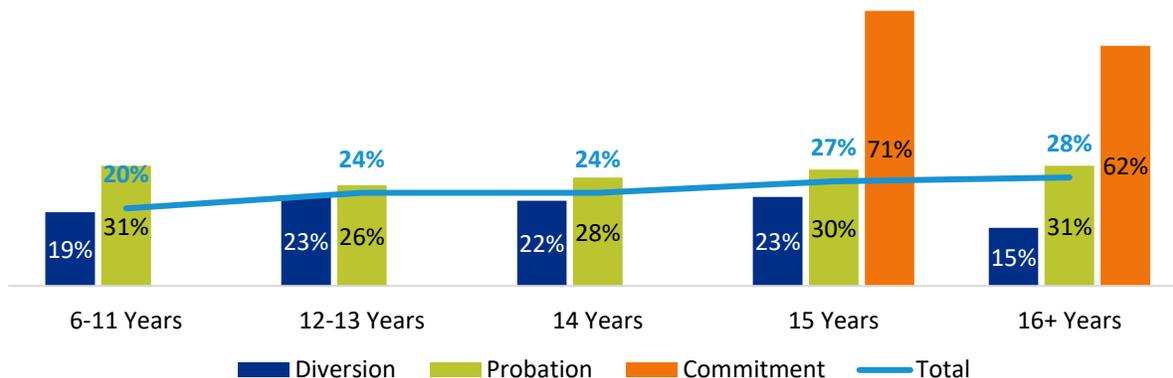
Table 2.7
Recidivism Rates by Personal Characteristics: Two-Year Follow-Up

Personal Characteristics	N	Diversion n=3,305 %	Probation n=2,323 %	Commitment n=194 %	Total N=5,822 %
Gender					
Male	4,275	23	32	65	28
Female	1,547	17	21	31	18
Race/Ethnicity					
White	2,342	15	22	32	18
Black	2,492	28	37	69	34
Hispanic	676	17	26	--	21
Other/Unknown	312	20	33	--	26
Age at Offense					
6-11 Years	575	19	29	--	21
12-13 Years	1,723	23	30	67	27
14 Years	1,538	21	31	65	27
15 Years	1,742	20	29	60	26
16-17 Years	244	14	--	--	14
Total	5,822	21	30	62	26

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Figure 2.17 examines recidivism rates by age at juvenile justice exit during the two-year follow-up. The diversion group in the 12-15 age categories had the highest recidivism rates. Probationers who exited at 12-13 years had the lowest recidivism rates. Eighty-one percent (81%) of the commitment group had turned 16 years at the time they exited a YDC (see Table E.3 in Appendix E). The commitment group had the highest recidivism rates of all juveniles who were 15 years or older at their juvenile justice exit during the two-year follow-up.

Figure 2.17
Recidivism Rates by Age at Juvenile Justice Exit: Two-Year Follow-Up

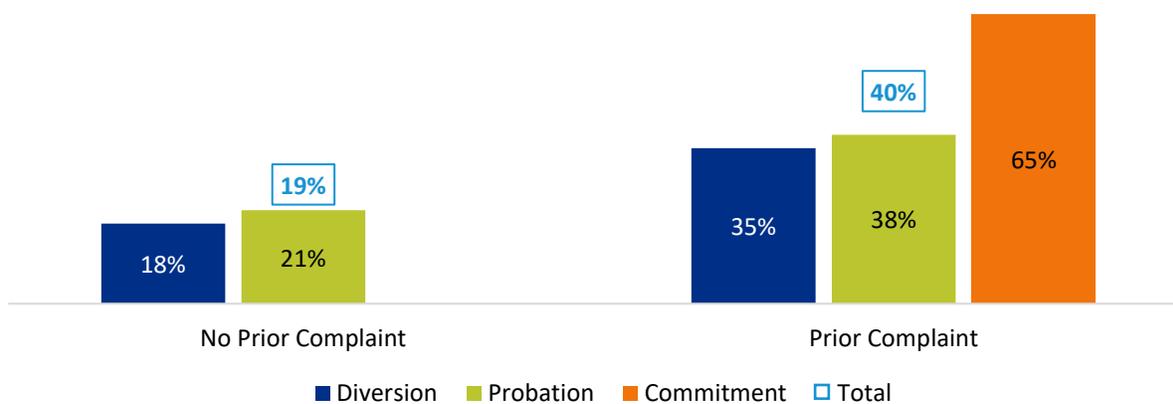


SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Prior Complaints and Recidivism

Overall, 32% (n=1,887) of juveniles had at least one prior delinquent complaint before entry into the sample (see Figure 2.3). Figure 2.18 examines recidivism rates for juveniles with at least one prior complaint in comparison to juveniles with no prior complaint before sample entry. Forty percent (40%) of juveniles with at least one prior complaint had a subsequent complaint and/or adult arrest compared to 19% of juveniles with no prior complaint, with similar findings for the diversion and probation groups. Juveniles in the commitment group who had prior complaints had substantially higher recidivism rates than the other two groups.³¹

Figure 2.18
Recidivism Rates by Prior Complaints: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Charged Offense and Recidivism

In Table 2.8, recidivism rates are examined by the most serious charged offense and by level of involvement. Overall, juveniles with a felony offense had higher recidivism rates compared to juveniles

³¹ Ten (10) juveniles in the commitment group had no prior complaint; too few to report meaningful recidivism rates.

with a misdemeanor offense (34% and 24% respectively). There were slight differences in recidivism rates based on offense type for juveniles in the diversion and probation groups. In examining recidivism rates by offense classification, overall, the more serious the offense the higher the recidivism rates. Juveniles with a Violent offense had the highest recidivism rates (35%), followed by those with a Serious offense (30%). Juveniles with a Minor offense had the lowest recidivism rates (24%). The recidivism rates for juveniles with a Serious or Minor offense were similar for both the diversion and probation groups. Juveniles in the probation group with a Violent offense had the lowest recidivism rates. For the commitment group, juveniles with a Serious offense had higher recidivism rates than juveniles with a Violent offense.

Overall, juveniles with property offenses had the highest recidivism rates compared to the other three offense categories and represented the highest recidivism rates for all three groups. Except for the commitment group, few differences were found in recidivism rates for juveniles with a person, drug, or other offense.

Table 2.8
Recidivism Rates by Charged Offense: Two-Year Follow-Up

Charged Offense	N	Diversion n=3,305 %	Probation n=2,323 %	Commitment n=194 %	Total N=5,822 %
Offense Type					
Felony	1,156	19	32	64	34
Misdemeanor	4,666	21	29	--	24
Offense Classification					
Violent	192	--	24	57	35
Class A-E Felonies					
Serious	1,438	20	31	66	30
Class F-I Felonies					
Class A1 Misdemeanor					
Minor	4,192	21	29	--	24
Class 1-3 Misdemeanors					
Offense Category					
Person	2,684	19	27	56	23
Property	1,434	24	35	68	32
Drug	498	22	27	--	25
Other	1,206	21	29	--	24
School-Based Offense					
No	2,301	25	32	64	32
Yes	3,521	19	27	--	22
School Resource Officer					
No	424	24	20	--	23
Yes	3,097	19	28	--	22
Total	5,822	21	30	62	26

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

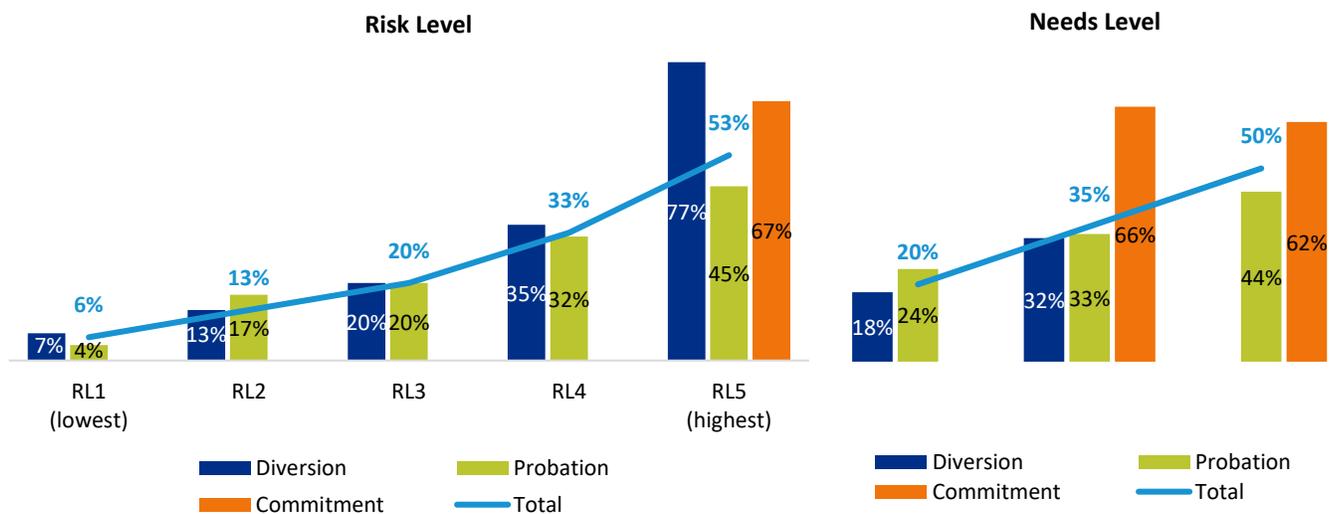
Juveniles in the diversion and probation groups had lower recidivism rates if their offense was an SBO compared to those whose offenses were non-SBO. This finding held for the entire sample. Eighty-eight

percent (88%) of juveniles with an SBO were referred to the juvenile system by a law enforcement officer functioning as an SRO (see Table 2.2). Overall, recidivism rates were similar for juveniles whose offense was referred to an SRO compared to those juveniles whose offense was a non-SRO referral (22% and 23% respectively). For the diversion group, juveniles with a non-SRO referral had higher recidivism rates compared to those with SRO referrals. For the probation group, the reverse finding was true. Juveniles with an SRO referral had higher recidivism rates compared to juveniles with a non-SRO referral.

Risk and Needs Assessments and Recidivism

As shown previously (see Figure 2.8), the majority of juveniles were assessed in the middle three risk levels (87%) and most juveniles were assessed as low needs (65%). Figure 2.19 explores the relationship between risk and needs levels and recidivism rates. As expected, RL1 (lowest risk) juveniles had the lowest recidivism rates (6%) compared to RL5 (highest risk) juveniles (53%), with an incremental, stair-step progression of recidivism rates between the middle three risk levels (RL2 to RL4). Similar patterns in recidivism rates were found when examining the relationship between needs level and subsequent complaints and/or adult arrests.

Figure 2.19
Recidivism Rates by Risk and Needs Levels: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Information on recidivism rates and combined indicators from the RNA tools – substance use, gang affiliation (whether as a gang member or as an associate of a gang member), and peer relationships – is provided in Table 2.9. Juveniles with substance use, gang affiliation, and negative peer influence had higher recidivism rates (35%, 60%, and 31% respectively) compared to their counterparts (no substance use, no gang affiliation, and positive peer influence). Similar results were found when examined by level of involvement.

Table 2.9
Recidivism Rates by Risk and Needs Indicators: Two-Year Follow-Up

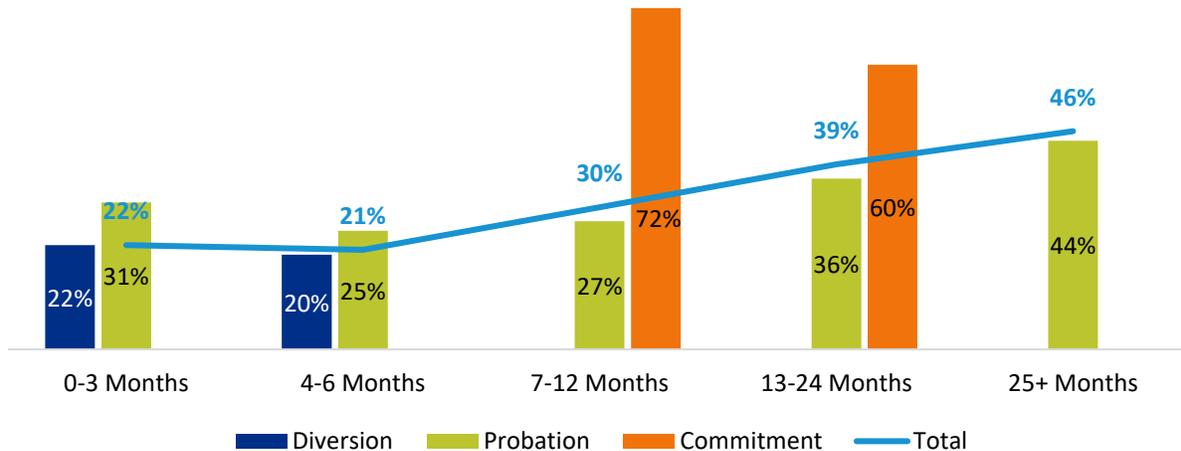
Risk and Needs Indicators	N	Diversion n=3,298 %	Probation n=2,322 %	Commitment n=194 %	Total N=5,814 %
Substance Use					
No	3,883	19	24	49	21
Yes	1,931	28	36	67	35
Gang Affiliation					
No	5,506	20	28	52	24
Yes	308	54	55	74	60
Peer Relationships					
Positive	2,215	16	22	--	18
Negative	3,599	26	32	64	31
Total	5,814	21	30	62	26

Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Length of Juvenile Justice Involvement and Recidivism

Generally, recidivism rates increased the longer juveniles were involved with the juvenile justice system (see Figure 2.20); however, this pattern did not hold once specific groups were examined. The diversion group, who had the shortest average length of involvement (4 months), had minimal differences in recidivism rates by length of involvement. For the probation group who averaged 12 months of juvenile justice involvement, juveniles with a length of stay 3 months or less had higher recidivism rates compared to probationers on supervision between 4 and 12 months. For the commitment group, recidivism rates were highest for those juveniles who were committed to a YDC for 12 months or less, while recidivism rates were lower for juveniles committed to a YDC for 13 months or more.

Figure 2.20
Recidivism Rates by Length of Juvenile Justice Involvement: Two-Year Follow-Up



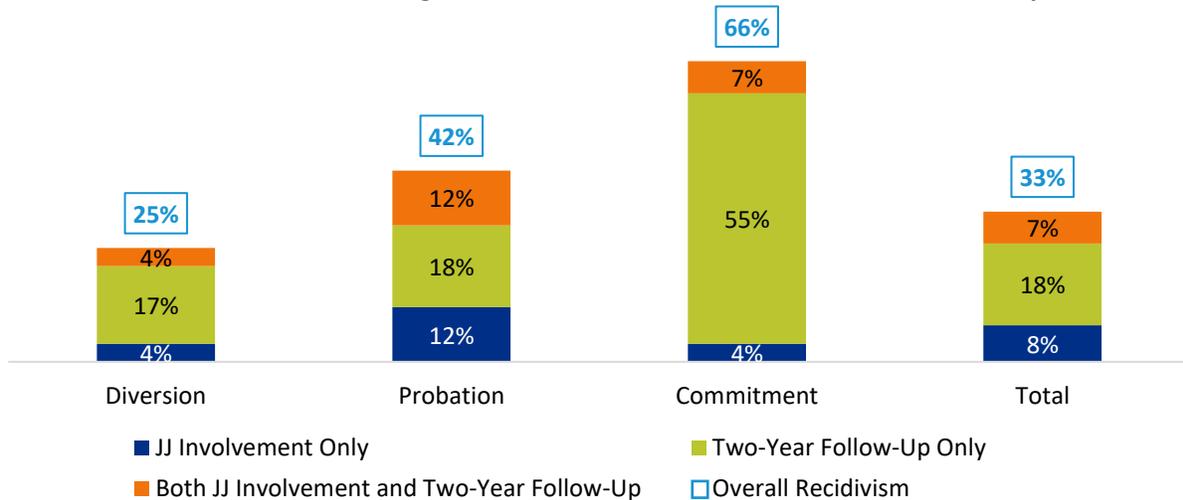
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Overall Recidivism during Juvenile Justice Involvement and Two-Year Follow-Up

Figure 2.21 combines the recidivism rates during the time periods shown in Tables 2.5 and 2.6 to examine when recidivist activity occurred – during juvenile justice involvement only, the two-year follow-up only, or whether the juvenile recidivated in both time periods. The overall recidivism rates were computed by adding together the rates for juveniles with recidivism during juvenile justice involvement only, during two-year follow-up only, and during both time periods.

Overall, about half of juveniles with any recidivism recidivated during the two-year follow-up (18% of the 33% overall recidivism rate). Nearly equal numbers of juveniles recidivated either during their juvenile justice involvement only or during both time periods (8% and 7% respectively). Juveniles in the diversion and commitment groups had most of their juvenile complaints and/or adult arrests during the two-year follow-up (17% of the 25% overall recidivism rate for the diversion group and 55% of the 66% overall recidivism rate for the commitment group). Compared to the diversion and commitment groups, juveniles in the probation group had a higher percentage of juveniles who were more likely to recidivate during their juvenile justice involvement only and during both recidivism periods (12% each).

Figure 2.21
Overall Recidivism Rates during Juvenile Justice Involvement, Two-Year Follow-Up, or Both



Note: The overall recidivism rates were computed by adding together the rates for juveniles with recidivism during juvenile justice involvement only, during two-year follow-up only, and during both time periods.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

ADDITIONAL OUTCOMES

Confinement to a Detention Center and/or a YDC

Admission to a detention center can occur while a juvenile awaits adjudication and disposition, or it may be imposed as a condition of probation.³² Of the entire sample, 459 juveniles (8%) had at least one admission to a detention center during the two-year follow-up – 168 juveniles in the diversion group, 211 in the probation group, and 80 in the commitment group.

³² Detention admissions during juvenile justice involvement are examined further in Chapter Four.

Commitment to a YDC is the most serious sanction available in the juvenile justice system for juveniles who are adjudicated delinquent. Of the juveniles in the sample, 67 juveniles had one or more commitments to a YDC during the two-year follow-up. A YDC commitment during follow-up was not linked to the sample event and could have resulted either from a delinquent complaint during the sample juvenile justice involvement or from a delinquent complaint that occurred during the follow-up period. The groups were similar in the number of juveniles committed to a YDC during the two-year follow-up. The commitment group had the most juveniles with a YDC commitment (26 juveniles) compared to the diversion group (17 juveniles) and the probation group (24 juveniles).

Examining a sample of juveniles as they exit the juvenile system reduces the likelihood of occurrence for detention admissions and YDC commitments during the follow-up period, as juveniles age out of the juvenile system. A more complete analysis of their confinement during two-year follow-up would include adult confinement (e.g., local jails³³ and state prisons).

Juvenile Transfers to Superior Court

As mentioned in Chapter One, juveniles alleged to be delinquent with a felony offense may be transferred to superior court for trial as adults under certain circumstances. There were 107 juveniles who were transferred to adult court during the two-year follow-up period. The probation group had the highest number of juveniles transferred at 52, followed by the commitment group at 33. The diversion group had 22 juveniles who were transferred to adult court. Eighty-seven percent (87%) of the juveniles transferred had a Violent offense as their worst offense transferred, with the remaining offenses being Serious offenses. All offenses transferred were felonies. The most common classes transferred were Class D (36%) and Class A (16%). The average time to transfer was 12 months. No information is available about findings of guilt or innocence, or dispositions in those proceedings.

SUMMARY

Chapter Two examined the FY 2020 juvenile exit sample by three levels of juvenile justice involvement (i.e., diversion, probation, YDC commitment) and as a whole. A statistical profile of the juveniles was provided and included a description of their prior, current, and recidivist contacts with the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems. Two points of time were examined for recidivism – during juvenile justice involvement and during the two-year follow-up period, as well as an overall recidivism rate. Recidivism was defined as having a juvenile complaint and/or arrest during the time periods examined.

Across all geographic areas, the majority of juveniles were in the diverted group, ranging from a low of 50% for the Western area to a high of 62% for the Eastern area. The Western area had the highest percentage in the probation group (49%), while the Eastern area had the lowest (34%). Only 3% of the sample were in the commitment group and that percentage ranged from a low of 1% to a high of 4% across the four areas. Juveniles from the Piedmont area had the highest recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up, while juveniles from the Western area had the lowest.

As the seriousness of level of involvement increased (i.e., from diversion to probation to commitment), the percentage of males, Black juveniles, and older juveniles increased. Juveniles with these personal characteristics (i.e., male, Black juveniles) also had higher recidivism rates during the two-year follow-

³³ North Carolina does not have a statewide, automated system for jail data.

up. Overall, recidivism rates gradually increased by age at exit; however, no pattern emerged by level of involvement based on age at exit.

Three measures were used to examine prior contacts with the juvenile justice system – prior complaints, adjudications, and confinement (i.e., detention admission and/or YDC commitment). As the seriousness of level of involvement increased, prior contact with the juvenile justice system increased for all measures. The percentage of juveniles with prior contacts increased with age, overall and for each group. Juveniles with prior contacts with the juvenile justice system also had higher recidivism rates for all three groups during the two-year follow-up.

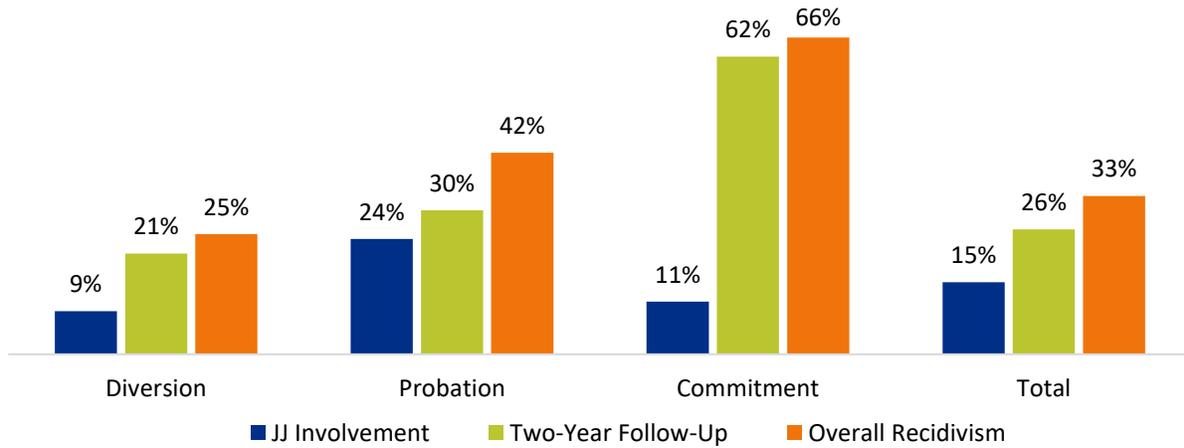
Most juveniles (80%) had a misdemeanor as their most serious charged offense, with the commitment group having the highest percentage with a felony offense (92%). Only the probation and commitment groups had any Violent offenses as their most serious charged offense based on statute. Person offenses were the most common type of offenses for all three groups. Overall, juveniles with a felony offense, a Violent offense classification, a property offense, or a non-SBO offense had higher recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up when compared to their counterparts (a misdemeanor offense, a Serious or Minor offense, a non-property offense, or an SBO offense). No clear pattern in recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up was found by charged offense for the three groups.

Most juveniles who exited from a YDC facility in FY 2020 were assessed in the higher risk levels and had higher needs compared to juveniles who exited from probation or diversion. An incremental increase in recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up was found by risk level and needs level (from lowest to highest) for all three groups.

The amount of time juveniles spent in the juvenile justice system increased as the seriousness of level of involvement increased. Diverted juveniles spent the least amount of time in the juvenile system (an average of 4 months), while juveniles who were committed to a YDC spent the most time (14 months). Overall, recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up increased as the length of involvement increased. Differences in recidivism rates and length of involvement were found between the three groups; however, additional data (e.g., exit reasons for the probation group) are needed to fully understand the relationship between the length of juvenile justice involvement and recidivism.

Figure 2.22 summarizes the sample's recidivism rates for the time periods examined. Juveniles in the diverted group had the lowest recidivism rates during their juvenile justice involvement, closely followed by the commitment group due to their confinement in a YDC facility. Juveniles on probation had the highest recidivism rates during their juvenile justice involvement (i.e., probation supervision). During the two-year follow-up period, the diversion group had the lowest recidivism rates. Recidivism rates increased as level of juvenile justice involvement increased – juveniles in the commitment group had the highest recidivism rates of the three groups during the two-year follow-up. This stair-step pattern of higher recidivism rates as level of involvement increased was also found for overall recidivism rates – juveniles with the least juvenile justice involvement had the lowest overall recidivism rates (25% for the diversion group), while juveniles with more juvenile justice involvement had the highest overall recidivism rates (42% for the probation group and 66% for the commitment group).

Figure 2.22
Recidivism Rates for FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

As described in this chapter, juveniles with the least amount of contact with the juvenile justice system had the lowest recidivism rates, while juveniles with the most contact had the highest recidivism rates. Differences within these groups are examined in more detail in Chapter Three for the diversion group by successful or unsuccessful completion and in Chapter Four for the probation and commitment groups by disposition (i.e., Levels 1 or 2 for the probation group and Level 3 for the commitment group).

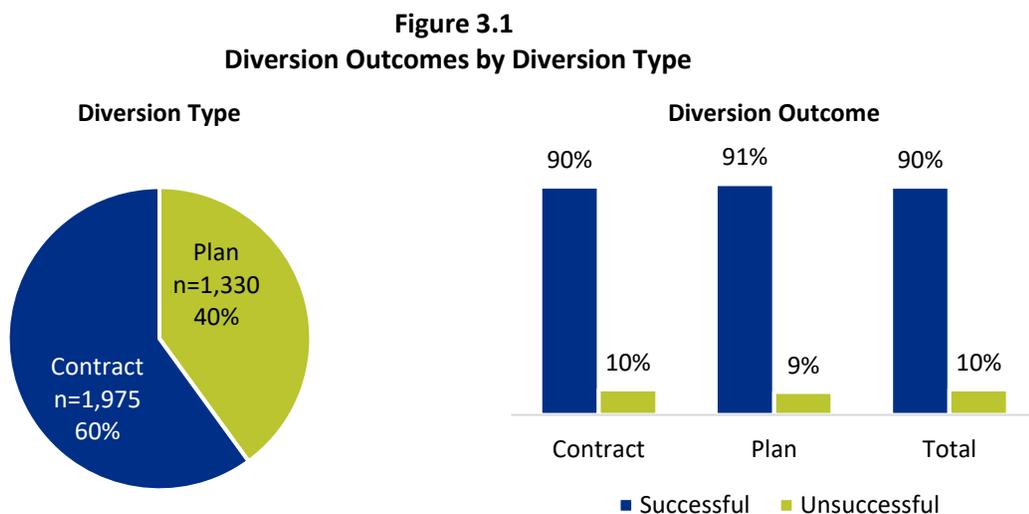
CHAPTER THREE

DIVERTED JUVENILES

This chapter focuses on the 3,305 juveniles who exited diversion in FY 2020. As described in Chapter One, diversion is used when a court counselor determines that a case should not be brought to court, but that a juvenile is in need of follow-up and referral to a community-based resource. Juveniles are either diverted pursuant to a diversion plan (less formal) or a diversion contract (more formal). Compliance with the plan or contract results in finalization of the juvenile’s diversion with no petition filed for their complaint, while noncompliance could later result in the filing of the complaint as a petition in juvenile court. For this analysis, these outcomes are defined as successful diversion and unsuccessful diversion, respectively, and are used as a comparison throughout the chapter when providing a description of FY 2020 diversion exits and their prior, current, and recidivist involvement in the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems.

STATISTICAL PROFILE

As shown in Figure 3.1, most juveniles exited diversion in FY 2020 with a contract (60%) and the remainder with a plan (40%). Most juveniles successfully completed their plan (91%) or contract (90%). Juveniles have up to 6 months to complete the terms of their diversion plan or contract.³⁴ Juveniles with a successful diversion (n=2,985) averaged 4 months to completion, while those with an unsuccessful diversion (n=320) averaged 3 months before exiting due to noncompliance.

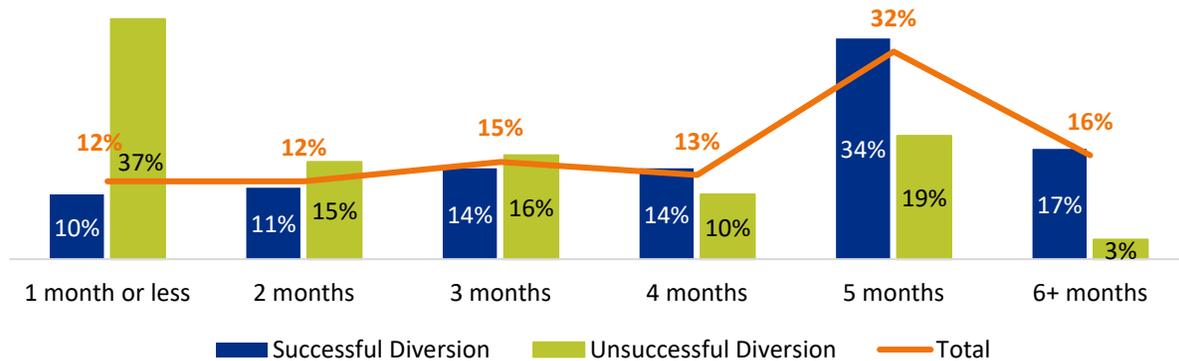


SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

³⁴ The length of juvenile justice involvement (i.e., time between the start and end of the diversion period) was greater than 6 months for 14 juveniles in the successful diversion group.

As shown in Figure 3.2, 52% of juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion failed to comply with the diversion terms within the first 2 months. Conversely, almost half (48%) of juveniles with a successful diversion completed the terms of their diversion within 4 or 5 months.

Figure 3.2
Length of Juvenile Justice Involvement

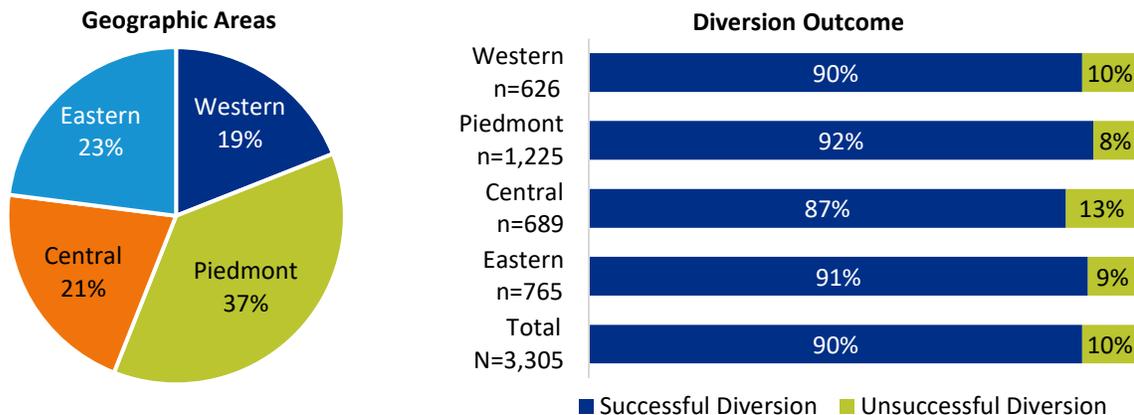


SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Geographic Areas

Figure 3.3 examines the distribution of the diversion group by the four geographic areas of the state – Western, Piedmont, Central, and Eastern. The highest proportion of juveniles exited from their diversion in the Piedmont area (37%); the lowest proportion exited from their diversion in the Western area (19%). The Central area had a lower percentage of juveniles with a successful diversion (87%) compared to the remaining three areas (Piedmont at 92%, Eastern at 91%, and Western at 90%). Conversely, juveniles from the Central area had the highest percentage of unsuccessful diversion at 13%, while the Piedmont area had the lowest percentage at 8%.

Figure 3.3
Geographic Areas



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Personal Characteristics

More male juveniles had a successful diversion as compared to those with an unsuccessful diversion (71% and 66% respectively). (See Table 3.1.) White juveniles represented the highest percentage with a successful diversion, with Black juveniles a close second (42% and 40% respectively).³⁵ Black juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion represented almost half of the sample (47%). There were few differences in age at juvenile justice entry based on diversion success – each group entered with an average age of 14 years.

Table 3.1
Personal Characteristics

Personal Characteristics	Successful Diversion n=2,985	Unsuccessful Diversion n=320	Total N=3,305
Gender	%	%	%
Male	71	66	71
Female	29	34	29
Race/Ethnicity	%	%	%
White	42	36	41
Black	40	47	41
Hispanic	13	10	13
Other/Unknown	5	7	5
Age at Offense	%	%	%
6-11 Years	13	12	13
12-13 Years	33	30	32
14 Years	23	26	23
15 Years	24	23	24
16-17 Years	7	8	7
Age at:	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.
Offense	14	14	14
JJ Entry	14	14	14
JJ Exit	14	14	14

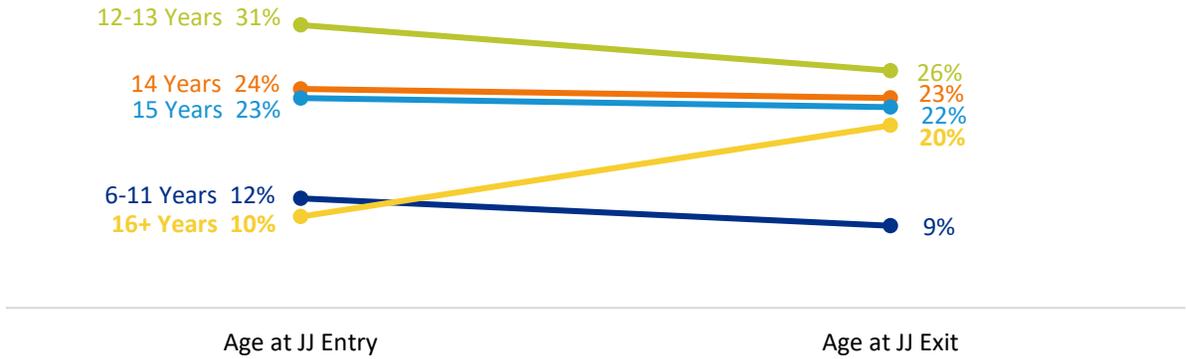
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Figure 3.4 illustrates how juveniles aged during their time on a diversion plan or contract. A higher percentage of juveniles were 16 or older at exit (20%) compared to age at entry (10%), while a lower percentage were 12-13 years of age at exit (26% compared to 31% at entry).³⁶

³⁵ Due to low percentages, American Indian, Asian, and multiracial juveniles were combined with other/unknown into one category.

³⁶ See Table F.4 in Appendix F for the distribution of juvenile age at entry and exit for successful and unsuccessful diversion.

Figure 3.4
Age of Diverted Juveniles during Juvenile Justice Involvement

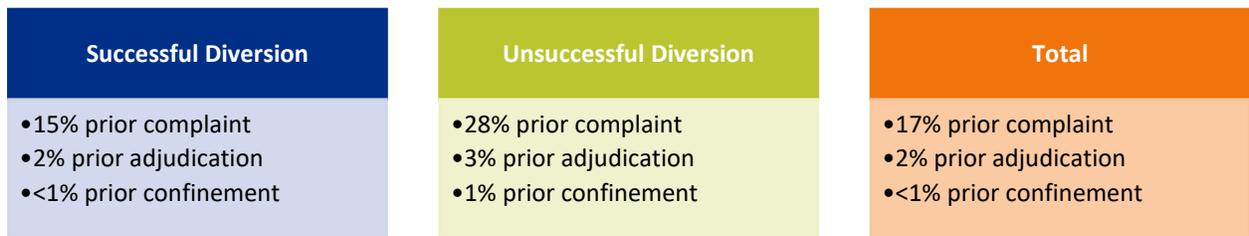


SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Prior Juvenile Justice Contacts

In order to gain an understanding of frequency of interaction with the system, information on prior juvenile justice contacts is provided in Figure 3.5. A higher percentage of juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had prior complaints when compared to juveniles with a successful diversion. However, it is important to note that most diverted juveniles did not have prior contacts with the juvenile justice system. Overall, 83% of diverted juveniles had no prior complaints. There were few differences in prior adjudication and confinement between the groups; very few had prior adjudications (2%) or prior confinements (<1%).³⁷

Figure 3.5
Prior Juvenile Justice Contacts

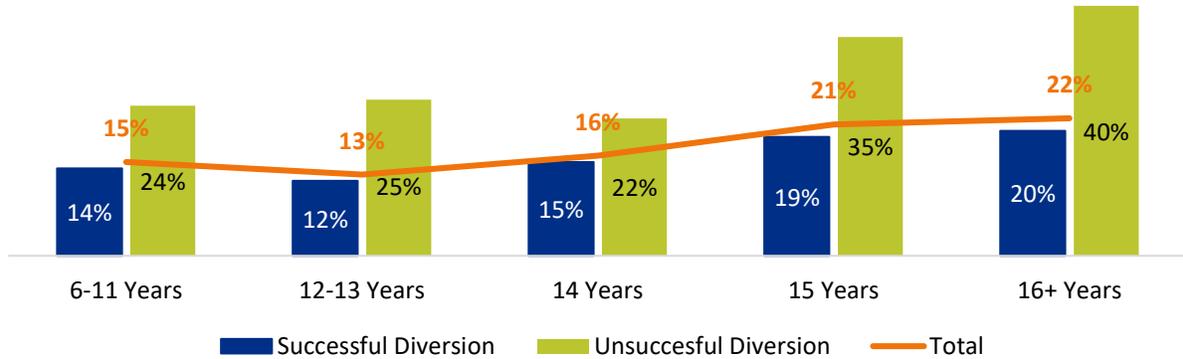


SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Figure 3.6 examines prior complaints by age at juvenile justice entry. Generally, the percentage of juveniles with prior complaints increased as their age at entry increased. Overall, juveniles aged 16 and older had the highest percentage with at least one prior complaint (22%).

³⁷ A prior confinement could be a detention center admission or a YDC commitment or both. Generally, juveniles who had a YDC commitment also had a detention center admission.

Figure 3.6
Prior Complaints by Age at Juvenile Justice Entry



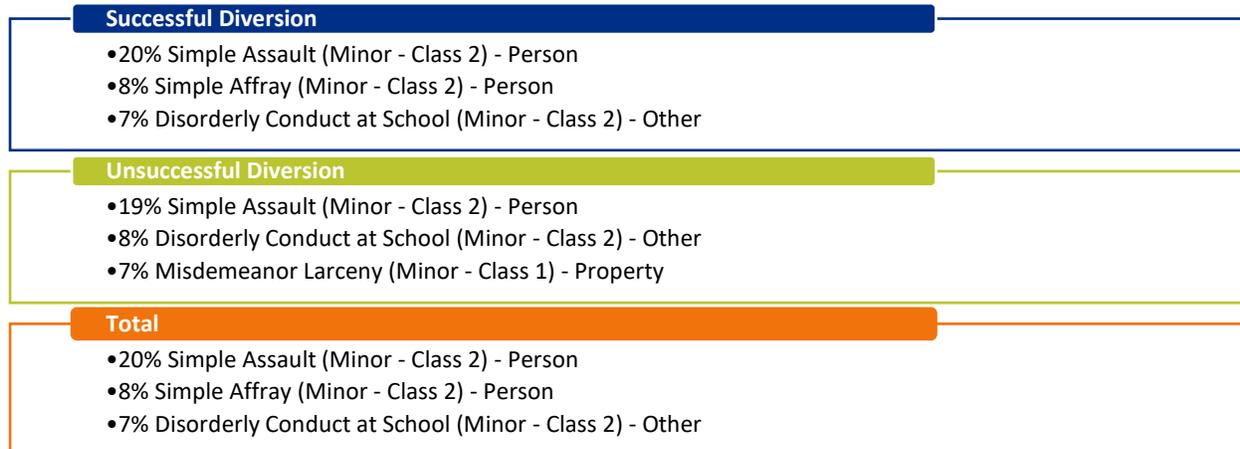
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Examination of most serious prior offense indicated that 89% had a misdemeanor offense as the most serious prior complaint. Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had a slightly higher percentage of misdemeanor offenses (91%) as their most serious prior complaint compared to those with a successful diversion (89%).

Charged Offense

Figure 3.7 provides the most common offenses for the diverted group, all of which are misdemeanors. The top 3 offenses accounted for 35% of delinquent complaints for the diverted group. The top offense for both groups was simple assault, a misdemeanor. Juveniles with a successful diversion had another person offense, simple affray in the top 3, while juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had a property offense, misdemeanor larceny, in the top 3.

Figure 3.7
Top 3 Charged Offenses



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table 3.2 provides a comparison of the groups with respect to their offense profile. Very few differences were found between juveniles with a successful diversion and juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion. Nearly all juveniles in the diverted group had a misdemeanor as their most serious charged offense (91%). Sixteen percent (16%) of the diversion group were alleged to have committed a Serious offense (Class F through I felonies and Class A1 misdemeanors) for all diverted juveniles. These findings reflect both legal restrictions and court counselor considerations for seeking diversion for juveniles with less serious offenses (especially misdemeanors). Nondivertible and other serious felonies typically result in the filing of a petition.

Offenses were also grouped into four offense categories: person, property, drug, and other. Juveniles with a successful diversion had a lower percentage of property offenses and a higher percentage of person offenses than juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion. Of the person offenses, only 134 of the 1,560 offenses were for a felony offense. Figure 3.8 provides the top 3 offenses for each category.

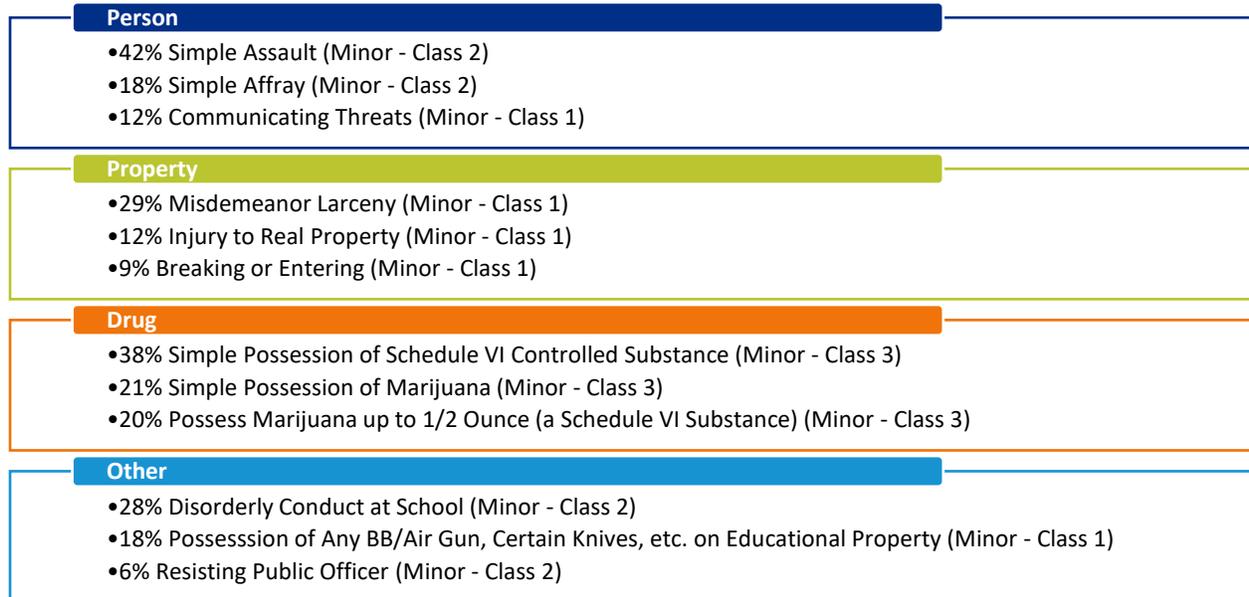
Table 3.2
Charged Offense

Charged Offense	Successful Diversion n=2,985 %	Unsuccessful Diversion n=320 %	Total N=3,305 %
Offense Type			
Felony	9	8	9
Misdemeanor	91	92	91
Offense Classification			
Violent			
Class A-E Felonies	<1	--	<1
Serious			
Class F-I Felonies	16	14	16
Class A1 Misdemeanors			
Minor			
Class 1-3 Misdemeanors	84	86	84
Offense Category			
Person	48	40	47
Property	19	28	20
Drug	9	8	9
Other	24	24	24
School-Based Offense			
No	28	41	29
Yes	72	59	71
School Resource Officer			
No	10	10	10
Yes	90	90	90

Note: Three (3) juveniles were alleged to have committed a Violent offense (Class A through Class E felony).

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Figure 3.8
Top 3 Charged Offenses by Offense Category



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Over two-thirds of diverted juveniles had an SBO (see Table 3.2). Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion were less likely to have an SBO than juveniles with a successful diversion (59% and 72% respectively). Of the SBOs, most complaints (90%) were referred by a law enforcement officer functioning as an SRO, with no variation between the two groups.

Risk and Needs Assessments

Court counselors administer an RNA to all juveniles to assess the risk of future delinquency and to determine the individual needs of the juvenile during the intake process.³⁸ Table 3.3 lists select results of the assessments for diverted juveniles. Generally, juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had more risk factors than juveniles with a successful diversion, with the largest differences between the groups found for criminality among family members and a greater need for mental health care. Although juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had a higher percentage with prior intake referrals (26% compared to 15%), both groups were similar in the percentage who had their first juvenile justice referral before age 12 (18% for unsuccessful diversion compared to 16% for successful diversion).

Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion also tended to have more needs than those with a successful diversion, particularly relating to a need for mental health indicated (75%), conflict in the home (20%), and history of victimization (24%). For combined risk and needs indicators, the unsuccessful diversion

³⁸ See Appendix A for a copy of the North Carolina Assessment of Juvenile Risk of Future Offending and the North Carolina Assessment of Juvenile Needs instruments and for information on the number and percentage of juveniles with a risk and needs assessment for the sample. Nearly all (99%) diverted juveniles with an RNA had their assessment completed within 30 days. Overall, RNAs were completed within 3 days on average of the complaint received date. The risk and needs findings in this report only include the juveniles who had both the risk portion and the needs portion of the RNA completed. Only 7 juveniles did not have both a risk and needs assessment and are excluded from the RNA data provided.

group had a higher percentage of juveniles with substance use and negative peer relationships (36% and 60% respectively) compared to the successful diversion group (21% and 48% respectively).

Table 3.3
Select Risk and Needs Indicators

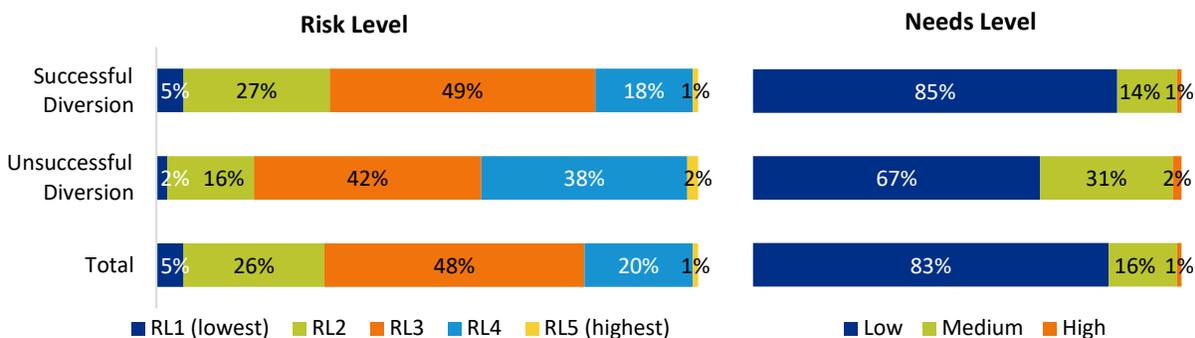
Risk and Needs Indicators	Successful Diversion n=2,979 %	Unsuccessful Diversion n=319 %	Total N=3,298 %
Risk Assessment			
First Referral Before Age 12	16	18	16
Prior Intake Referrals	15	26	16
Prior Adjudications	2	3	2
Prior Assaults	7	10	7
Had Run Away	4	13	5
Had School Behavior Problems	84	90	85
Parents/Guardians Unwilling/Unable to Provide Parental Supervision	3	8	4
Risk Score (0-31 points) Avg.	4	5	4
Needs Assessment			
Functioning Below Academic Grade Level	5	8	5
Juvenile Parent Status (i.e., is a parent)	<1	<1	<1
History of Victimization	14	24	15
Risky Sexual Behavior	2	3	2
Need for Mental Health Care Indicated	63	75	64
Basic Needs Are Not Being Met	<1	--	<1
Impaired Functioning (i.e., medical, dental, health/hygiene)	1	<1	<1
Conflict in the Home	10	20	11
Parent, Guardian, or Custodian has Disabilities	2	3	2
One or More Members of Household have Substance Use Problems	6	13	7
Indication of Family Member's Involvement in Criminal Activity	34	49	36
Needs Score (0-51 points) Avg.	8	11	8
Combined Risk and Needs Indicators			
Substance Use	21	36	22
Gang Affiliation	1	4	1
Negative Peer Relationships	48	60	49

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Using the assessment instruments, separate risk and needs scores were computed for each juvenile, placing the juvenile in one of five levels of risk from RL1 (lowest risk) to RL5 (highest risk) and a low, medium, or high level for needs. The average risk score and needs score for each group is provided in Table 3.3. Figure 3.9 shows the risk levels for the successful and unsuccessful diversion groups and for diverted juveniles overall. A lower percentage of juveniles with successful diversions were assessed at the higher risk levels (19% for RL4 and RL5) compared to juveniles with unsuccessful diversions (40% for

RL4 and RL5). Conversely, a higher percentage of juveniles with successful diversions were assessed at the lower risk levels (32% for RL1 and RL2) compared to juveniles with unsuccessful diversions (18% for RL1 and RL2). Figure 3.9 also includes the distribution of the groups by needs levels. Although the majority of juveniles were assessed as low needs for both groups, the percentage of low needs juveniles in the successful diversion group was much higher (85%) than that of the unsuccessful diversion group (67%). One percent (1%) of juveniles were assessed as high needs (14 juveniles in the successful diversion group and 7 in the unsuccessful diversion group).

Figure 3.9
Risk and Needs Assessments



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

JUVENILE AND ADULT RECIDIVISM

As described in Chapter One, juveniles in the sample were tracked during their juvenile justice involvement and for a fixed two-year follow-up period from their sample involvement exit to determine whether subsequent involvement with the juvenile justice or adult criminal justice systems occurred. A combined measure of subsequent juvenile complaints and/or adult arrests was compiled to indicate any recidivist involvement in either system (i.e., “recidivism”). Recidivism rates are only reported when there are 25 or more juveniles in a specific category.

Recidivism during Juvenile Justice Involvement

While Table 3.4 provides recidivism rates for diverted juveniles during their juvenile justice involvement (i.e., between the time they entered and exited diversion), it should be noted that diverted juveniles had a relatively short length of time in the system (an average of 4 months) in which to recidivate. Overall, 9% of diverted juveniles had a subsequent complaint or arrest during their juvenile justice involvement. Very few juveniles in the successful diversion group (5%) had a subsequent complaint or arrest during this time period. Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had a substantially higher recidivism rate during juvenile justice involvement (42%). Although they are likely related, no data are available to determine whether their recidivism was the reason for their unsuccessful diversion.

For juveniles with at least one delinquent complaint and/or arrest, the first recidivist event occurred an average of 2 months after the beginning of the diversion period. Overall, 77% had a misdemeanor as their most serious recidivist offense. Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion were more likely to have a

felony as their recidivist event compared to juveniles with a successful diversion during their juvenile justice involvement (31% and 16% respectively).

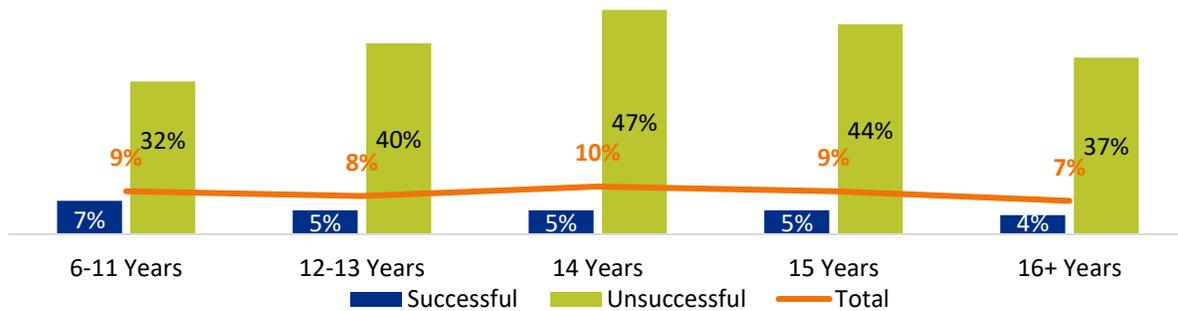
Table 3.4
Recidivism Rates: Juvenile Justice Involvement

Diversion Outcome	N	Any Recidivism		Average Months to Recidivism	Most Serious Recidivist Offense	
		#	%		Felony %	Misdemeanor %
Successful	2,985	150	5	2	16	84
Unsuccessful	320	134	42	2	31	69
Total	3,305	284	9	2	23	77

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Figure 3.10 provides recidivism rates by age at juvenile justice entry during juvenile justice involvement. Recidivism rates overall and for juveniles in the successful group were similar by age at entry (ranging from 7% to 10% overall and 4% to 7% for successful diversion). Juveniles who were 14 years of age at entry with an unsuccessful diversion had the highest recidivism rates at 47%, while the youngest juveniles (6-11 years) had the lowest at 32%.

Figure 3.10
Recidivism Rates by Age at Juvenile Justice Entry: Juvenile Justice Involvement



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Recidivism during Two-Year Follow-Up Period

Table 3.5 examines recidivism rates for diverted juveniles for the one-year and two-year follow-up. Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had substantially higher recidivism rates (more than twice as high) for the one-year and two-year follow-up periods (35% and 47% respectively) compared to juveniles with a successful diversion (11% and 18% respectively). These findings are not unexpected given that juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had higher risk and needs compared to juveniles with a successful diversion.

**Table 3.5
Recidivism Rates: Two-Year Follow-Up**

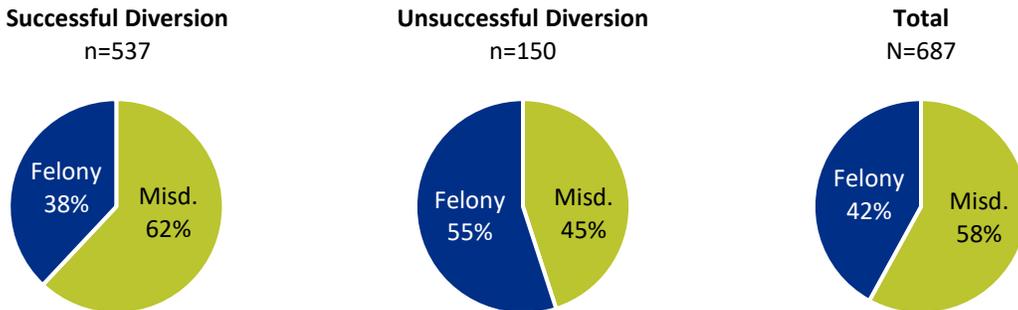
Diversion Outcome	N	Average Months to Recidivism	# of Juveniles with Any Recidivism	Total # Recidivist Events	One-Year Follow-Up %	Two-Year Follow-Up %
Successful	2,985	10	537	974	11	18
Unsuccessful	320	7	150	422	35	47
Total	3,305	9	687	1,396	13	21

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

For juveniles with at least one subsequent delinquent complaint and/or arrest, the first recidivist event occurred an average of 9 months after the beginning of follow-up. The timing of the first recidivist event was longer for juveniles with a successful diversion (10 months) compared to those with an unsuccessful diversion (7 months). Of juveniles in the successful diversion group with a recidivist event, 28% had a subsequent delinquent complaint and/or arrest within 3 months compared to 51% for the unsuccessful group. Within 12 months, the percentage had increased to 62% of the juveniles with a successful diversion and 76% with an unsuccessful diversion.

Overall, 58% had a misdemeanor as their most serious recidivist offense (see Figure 3.11). Sixty-two percent (62%) of juveniles with a successful diversion had a misdemeanor as their most serious recidivist offense compared to 45% of the unsuccessful diversion group.

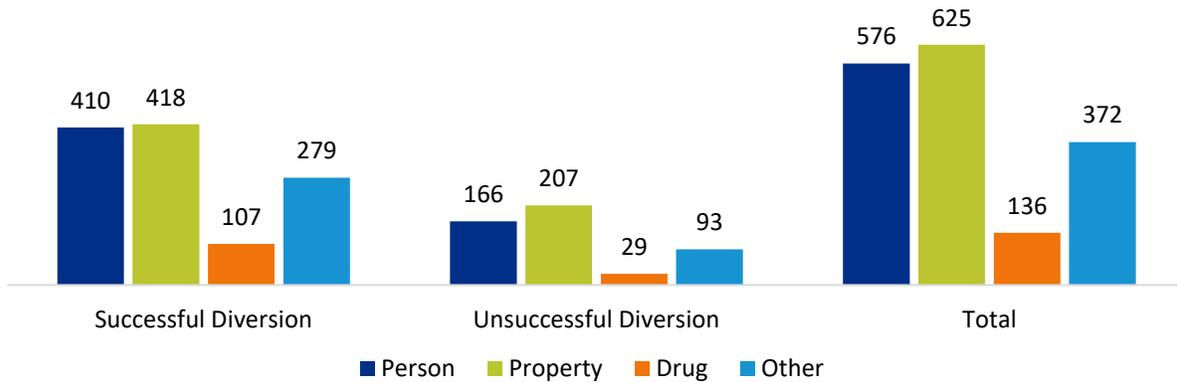
**Figure 3.11
Most Serious Recidivist Event by Offense Type for Juveniles with Recidivism: Two-Year Follow-Up**



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

The 687 juveniles with any recidivism accounted for a total of 1,396 recidivist events. Consistent with their larger number, juveniles with a successful diversion accounted for the highest volume of subsequent complaints and/or adult arrests at 974. Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion averaged slightly more recidivist events (3) compared to the successful diversion group (2). Information on the volume of recidivist events by offense category is provided in Figure 3.12. Property and person offenses comprised the largest volume of recidivist events for diverted juveniles overall and for the juveniles who were successful or unsuccessful in their diversion, while drug offenses comprised the lowest volume of recidivist events.

Figure 3.12
Number of Recidivist Events by Offense Category for Juveniles with Recidivism: Two-Year Follow-Up



Note: Multiple offense categories may be linked to a recidivist event. As a result, the number of recidivist events by offense category cannot be added together to equal the total number of recidivist events.

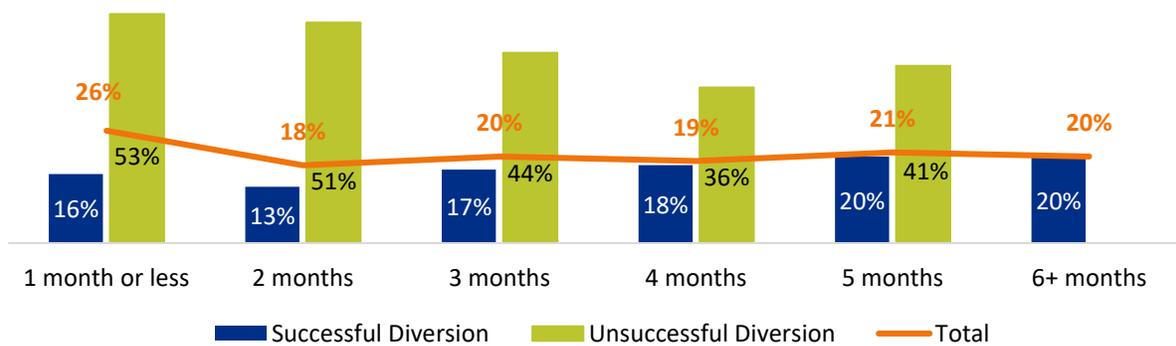
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Diversion Profile and Recidivism

Little difference was found in recidivism rates between juveniles with a diversion contract and juveniles with a diversion plan. Of juveniles with a diversion contract, 13% had a subsequent complaint and/or adult arrest during the one-year follow-up and 21% during the two-year follow-up compared to juveniles with a diversion plan at 12% and 21% respectively.

Figure 3.13 examines recidivism rates by the average length of time on diversion. Overall, juveniles who had a shorter period of diversion (1 month or less) had the highest recidivism rates (26%) compared to the remaining 5 months. Not surprising, juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had the highest recidivism rates for each month examined compared to juveniles with a successful diversion. Recidivism rates decreased for the unsuccessful group the longer juveniles were involved with their diversion plan or contract, while recidivism rates for juveniles in the successful group increased the longer juveniles were on diversion (after the initial month).

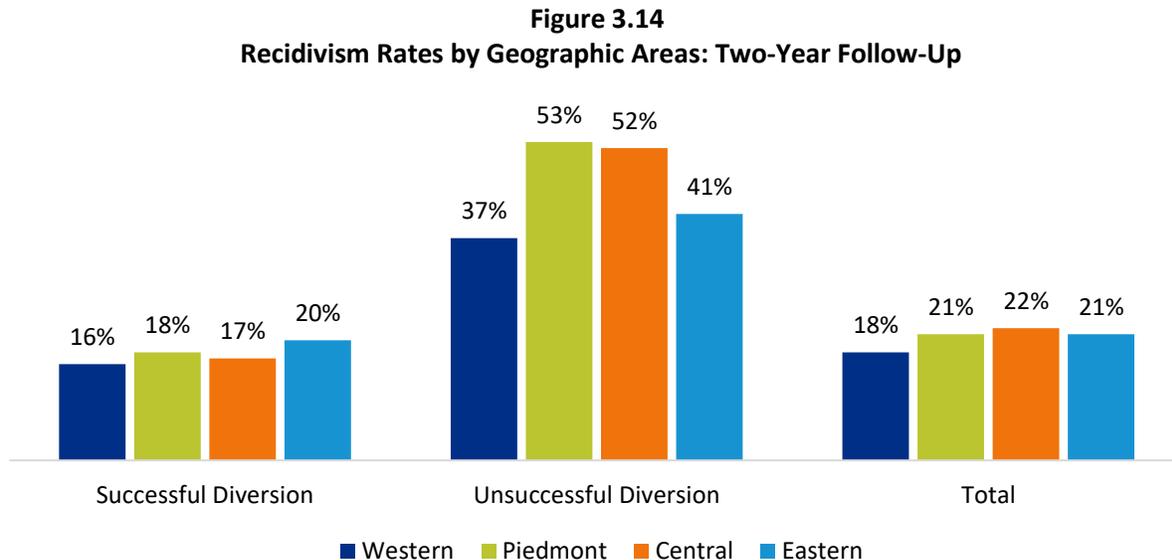
Figure 3.13
Recidivism Rates by Length of Juvenile Justice Involvement: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Geographic Areas and Recidivism

Overall, diverted juveniles from the Western part of the state had the lowest recidivism rates (18%) compared to the other three areas (21% for Piedmont, 22% for Central, and 21% for Eastern) (see Figure 3.14). Juveniles with a successful diversion from the Eastern area had the highest recidivism rates (20%), while juveniles from the remaining areas had very similar rates (ranging from 16% to 18%). Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion from the Piedmont and Central areas had the highest recidivism rates (53% and 52% respectively) compared to the remaining areas (41% for the Eastern and 37% for the Western).



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Personal Characteristics and Recidivism

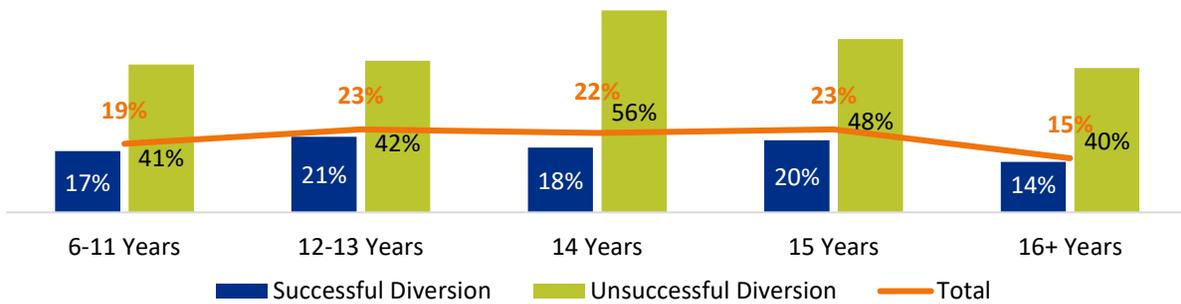
Recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up by personal characteristics are examined in Table 3.6 and Figure 3.15. Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had higher recidivism rates than those with a successful diversion for all categories of personal characteristics examined. Consistent patterns were found when examining recidivism rates by personal characteristics for the two groups. Males were more likely to recidivate than females. Black juveniles had the highest recidivism rates compared to the other racial categories. Juveniles aged 12-13 in both the overall and the successful group had the highest recidivism rates, with recidivism rates generally declining for juveniles in the oldest age categories. However, recidivism rates by age for juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion differed from that pattern with fairly similar rates across all ages except for juveniles aged 6-11 (the lowest at 36%).

Table 3.6
Recidivism Rates by Personal Characteristics: Two-Year Follow-Up

Personal Characteristics	N	Successful Diversion	Unsuccessful Diversion	Total
		n=2,985 %	n=320 %	N=3,305 %
Gender				
Male	2,330	20	53	23
Female	975	14	35	17
Race/Ethnicity				
White	1,363	13	37	15
Black	1,348	25	56	28
Hispanic	419	14	44	17
Other/Unknown	175	17	--	20
Age at Offense				
6-11 Years	437	17	36	19
12-13 Years	1,073	21	49	23
14 Years	771	18	46	21
15 Years	782	17	49	20
16-17 Years	242	10	48	14
Total	3,305	18	47	21

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Figure 3.15
Recidivism Rates by Age at Juvenile Justice Exit: Two-Year Follow-Up



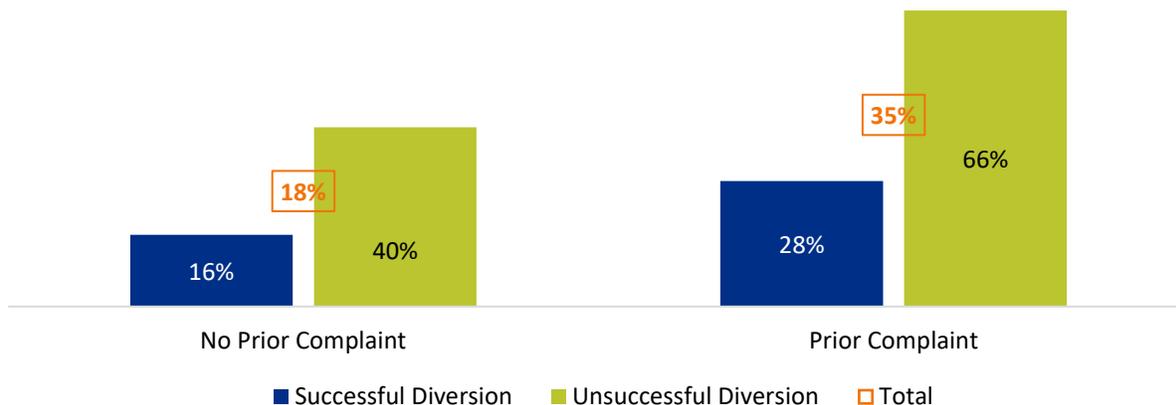
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Prior Complaints and Recidivism

As shown earlier (see Figure 3.5), 17% of diverted juveniles had at least one prior complaint – 17% of juveniles with a successful diversion and 21% of juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion. Figure 3.16 examines the linkage between prior involvement with the juvenile justice system and recidivism. Overall, juveniles with a prior complaint had higher recidivism rates than those with no prior complaint (35% and 18% respectively). Juveniles with a successful diversion and juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had higher recidivism rates if they had a prior complaint compared to their counterparts without a prior complaint. Often differences in recidivism rates between groups are minimized when

prior juvenile justice involvement is taken into account; however, irrespective of their prior involvement with the juvenile justice system, juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had higher recidivism rates than juveniles with a successful diversion.

Figure 3.16
Recidivism Rates by Prior Complaints: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Charged Offense and Recidivism

In Table 3.7, recidivism rates are examined by characteristics of the charged offense (e.g., offense classification and category). Recidivism rates for the unsuccessful diversion group were consistently higher than those of the successful diversion group when examining recidivism by offense characteristics. For the unsuccessful diversion group, juveniles had higher recidivism rates if they had a misdemeanor, a Minor offense, a drug offense, or a non-SBO compared to their counterparts in those categories. For the successful diversion group, there were few differences in recidivism rates by charged offense.

Table 3.7
Recidivism Rates by Charged Offense: Two-Year Follow-Up

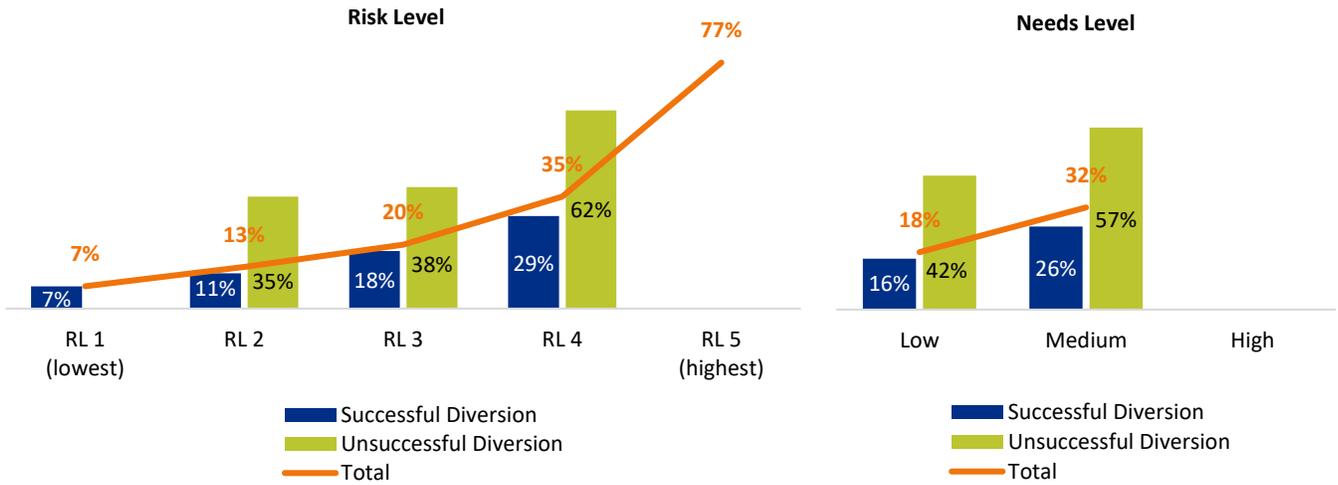
Charged Offense	N	Successful Diversion n=2,985 %	Unsuccessful Diversion n=320 %	Total N=3,305 %
Offense Type				
Felony	294	18	37	19
Misdemeanor	3,011	18	48	21
Offense Classification				
Violent				
Class A-E Felonies	3	--	--	--
Serious				
Class F-I Felonies	529	18	43	20
Class A1 Misdemeanors				
Minor				
Class 1-3 Misdemeanors	2,773	18	47	21
Offense Category				
Person	1,560	17	43	19
Property	658	21	43	24
Drug	293	18	62	22
Other	794	17	53	21
School-Based Offense				
No	952	21	50	25
Yes	2,353	17	45	19
School Resource Officer				
No	244	20	--	24
Yes	2,109	17	42	19
Total	3,305	18	47	21

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Risk and Needs Assessments and Recidivism

As shown earlier (see Figure 3.9), a higher percentage of juveniles with successful diversions were assessed at the lower risk levels (32% for RL1 and RL2) compared to juveniles with unsuccessful diversions (18% for RL1 and RL2). The majority of juveniles in both groups were assessed as low needs, although the percentage of low needs juveniles in the successful diversion group was much higher (85%) than that of the unsuccessful diversion group (67%). Figure 3.17 explores the relationship between risk and needs levels and recidivism rates. As expected, juveniles assessed as lower risk had the lowest recidivism rates compared to juveniles in the higher risk levels. Recidivism rates generally increased in an incremental, stair-step progression from RL1 to RL5. Regardless of risk level, juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had substantially higher recidivism rates than those with a successful diversion. Similar patterns in recidivism rates were seen when examining the relationship between juveniles with low needs and juveniles with medium needs. Recidivism rates for juveniles with high needs were not reported due to the small number of juveniles (n=21) in this category.

Figure 3.17
Recidivism Rates by Risk and Needs Levels: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Information on recidivism rates and combined indicators from the risk and needs assessment tools – substance use, gang affiliation (whether as a gang member or as an associate of a gang member), and peer relationships – is provided in Table 3.8. Juveniles with substance use, gang affiliation, and negative peer influence had higher recidivism rates compared to their counterparts (no substance use, no gang affiliation, and positive peer influence). Recidivism rates for the unsuccessful diversion group were consistently higher than those of the successful diversion group when examining recidivism by risk and needs indicators.

Table 3.8
Recidivism Rates by Combined Risk and Needs Indicators: Two-Year Follow-Up

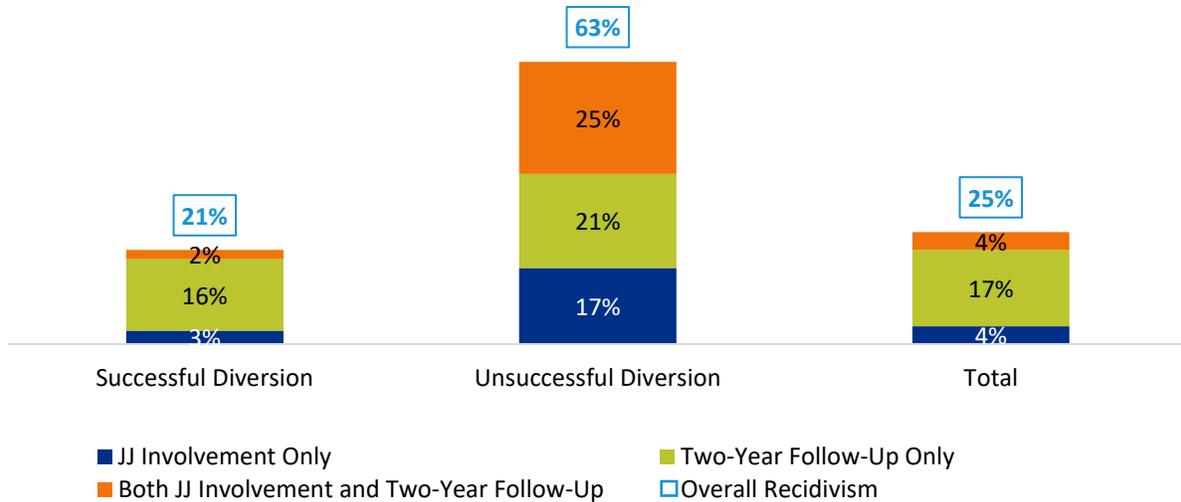
Risk and Needs Indicators	N	Successful Diversion	Unsuccessful Diversion	Total
		n=2,979 %	n=319 %	N=3,298 %
Substance Use				
No	2,558	17	40	19
Yes	740	23	59	28
Gang Affiliation				
No	3,252	18	46	20
Yes	46	47	--	54
Peer Relationships				
Positive	1,675	14	40	16
Negative	1,623	22	52	26
Total	3,298	18	47	21

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Overall Recidivism during Juvenile Justice Involvement and Two-Year Follow-Up

Figure 3.18 combines recidivism rates during the two time periods discussed in Tables 3.4 and 3.5 to examine when recidivist activity occurred – during juvenile justice involvement only, during the two-year follow-up only, or during both time periods. The majority of juveniles with a successful diversion had recidivism only during the two-year follow-up period, accounting for 16% of their overall recidivism rate of 21%; the remaining 5% of their overall recidivism rate was accounted for by juveniles who had recidivism only during their juvenile justice involvement (3%) or who had recidivism during both time periods (2%). Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had a much higher overall recidivism rate (63%), with the majority having recidivism during both time periods (25%) or only during the two-year follow-up (21%).

Figure 3.18
Overall Recidivism Rates during Juvenile Justice Involvement, Two-Year Follow-Up, or Both



Note: The overall recidivism rates were computed by adding together the rates for juveniles with recidivism during juvenile justice involvement only, during two-year follow-up only, and during both time periods.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

SUMMARY

Chapter Three provided a statistical profile of juveniles who exited diversion in FY 2020 and included an examination of their prior, current, and recidivist involvement in the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems. The chapter focused on a comparison of juveniles who successfully completed their diversion plan or contract (successful diversion) with juveniles who did not comply with their diversion terms and had their original complaint filed as a petition in juvenile court (unsuccessful diversion). For recidivism, juveniles were tracked during two periods – during their juvenile justice involvement and during a fixed two-year period following their sample involvement exit. Recidivism was defined as having a juvenile complaint and/or adult arrest during each independent time period examined.

Most juveniles successfully completed diversion – ranging from 87% of juveniles in the Central area to 92% in the Piedmont area. Juveniles with a successful diversion in the Western area had the lowest recidivism rates, while juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion in the Piedmont and Central areas had the highest recidivism rates.

A higher percentage of diverted juveniles (60%) had a diversion contract (more formal) compared to juveniles with a diversion plan (less formal). A similar percentage of juveniles with a diversion contract or a diversion plan successfully completed their diversion terms (90% and 91% respectively). Recidivism rates were the same for juveniles with a diversion contract and juveniles with a diversion plan (21% each).

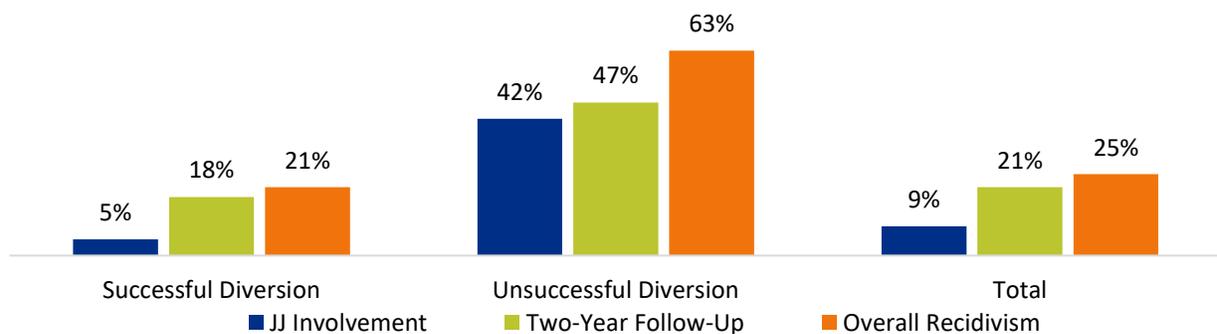
Juveniles with a successful diversion had a higher percentage of males and White juveniles compared to juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion; however, age was similar between the two groups. While a higher percentage of juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had prior juvenile justice contacts, the two groups were similar in terms of offense profile. Nearly all juveniles in each group had a misdemeanor as their most serious charged offense. Recidivism rates for juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion were higher across all characteristics examined.

Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion tended to have more risk factors (e.g., running away, school behavior problems) and needs identified (e.g., mental health, family member criminal involvement) than juveniles with a successful diversion. As a result, a higher proportion of juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion were assessed in the highest risk levels and, conversely, a higher proportion of juveniles with a successful diversion were assessed in the lowest risk levels. Although the majority of juveniles in each group were assessed as low needs, a higher proportion of juveniles with a successful diversion were low needs compared to those with an unsuccessful diversion. Recidivism rates increased as risk and needs levels increased, with those at the highest risk and needs levels having the highest recidivism rates.

As shown in Figure 3.19, juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had much higher recidivism rates during the follow-up periods examined – 42% with recidivism during their juvenile justice involvement and 47% with recidivism during the two-year follow-up period. These findings also held when examining overall recidivism that included recidivism during both time periods.

The higher recidivism rates for juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion during both time periods examined are not unexpected due to their higher levels of risk and needs. Notably, it is possible that recidivism during juvenile justice involvement contributes to unsuccessful diversion; however, this currently cannot be determined because no exit reason for unsuccessful diversion is captured in NC-JOIN.

Figure 3.19
Recidivism Rates for FY 2020 Diverted Juveniles



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

CHAPTER FOUR ADJUDICATED JUVENILES

In accordance with the Sentencing Commission’s legislative mandate to study adjudicated juveniles, this chapter focuses on 2,517 juveniles adjudicated delinquent by their disposition levels (hereinafter referred to as adjudicated juveniles). The adjudicated juveniles were comprised of 2,323 juveniles who exited supervised probation and 194 juveniles who exited a YDC facility in FY 2020. Juveniles who exited probation had supervised probation imposed as part of their Level 1 (community) or Level 2 (intermediate) disposition. Juveniles who exited a YDC facility in FY 2020 had a Level 3 (YDC commitment) disposition imposed resulting from a new crime, a violation of their probation, or a revocation of their PRS. While these three groups will be compared throughout this chapter, it should be noted that some results should be interpreted with caution due to the small number of juveniles in the Level 3 group.

Adjudicated Juveniles N=2,517	92% Levels 1 and 2 Probation (n=2,323)	77% Level 1 Probation (n=1,787)
		23% Level 2 Probation (n=536)
	8% Level 3 Commitment (n=194)	

STATISTICAL PROFILE

As discussed in Chapter One, a Level 1 or community disposition offers the court less restrictive dispositional alternatives such as probation, community-based programs, nonresidential and residential treatment programs, community service (up to 100 hours), restitution (up to \$500), and sanctions that place specific limitations on a juvenile (e.g., curfew, no association with specified persons, not be in specified places). A Level 2 or intermediate disposition is generally more restrictive than a Level 1 disposition. Level 2 dispositional alternatives include options such as intensive probation, group home placements (e.g., multipurpose group homes), regimented training programs, and house arrest. The court can also utilize any Level 1 dispositional option for a juvenile adjudicated at Level 2. Several Level 2 options that offer a more restrictive environment for adjudicated juveniles are available for Level 1 dispositions as well (see Chapter One for further details).

While there are five types of supervision statutorily authorized for juveniles who come to the attention of the juvenile justice system,³⁹ this report focuses on one type: probation imposed as a dispositional option for adjudicated delinquent offenses (i.e., probation group). Juveniles are ordered by the court to be placed on probation for a period not to exceed one year from the date entered. The court may extend probation for an additional period of one year after notice and a hearing.⁴⁰

The juveniles placed on probation were supervised under the policies and procedures in effect during FY 2020.⁴¹ Once a juvenile is placed on probation, the role of the court counselor is to ensure the juvenile’s

³⁹ The five types of supervision are (1) dispositional alternatives for undisciplined juveniles (G.S. 7B-2503), (2) conditions of protective supervision for undisciplined juveniles (G.S. 7B-2504), (3) dispositional alternatives for delinquent juveniles (G.S. 7B-2506), (4) commitment of delinquent juvenile to Department (G.S. 7B-2513(j)), and (5) post-release supervision (G.S. 7B-2514).

⁴⁰ G.S. 7B-2510(c).

⁴¹ Effective December 2018, the DJJDP implemented new case management supervision criteria that assign a case management level to all juveniles receiving services (i.e., diversion) and court-ordered supervision based on the juvenile’s risk and needs level

compliance with the court’s recommendations and sanctions and, equally important, to address the juvenile’s needs – while protecting the public’s safety. A juvenile is placed on one of four levels of supervision: Low, Standard, Enhanced, or High/Intensive.⁴² The levels of supervision primarily indicate the frequency of contact a juvenile’s individual circumstances warrant, with Low being the lowest level and High/Intensive being the highest. While this report focused on court-ordered probation as a dispositional alternative, the juvenile court judge usually orders other alternatives in addition to probation.

A Level 3 or YDC commitment is the most restrictive disposition available to the judge. Juveniles placed in a YDC are primarily those who have been adjudicated delinquent for a Violent or Serious offense or those with higher delinquency history levels. Juveniles can also be committed to a YDC following a probation violation or PRS violation. Juveniles with a Level 3 disposition are committed for a minimum of 6 months and receive 3 months of PRS following their release. The length of stay beyond the initial 6 months is determined by the DJJDP based on the needs of the juvenile while committed. For the FY 2020 sample, juveniles must be at least 10 years old in order to be placed in a YDC and can remain in a YDC until they are 18 years old, and in some cases until the age of 21.⁴³

All juveniles in a YDC receive core treatment and programming services in order to craft an individualized service plan for each youth to identify goals, the means to achieve them, and the ways to measure progress toward goal attainment. These include treatment programming and various services (i.e., education, nutrition, health, mental health, substance use, chaplaincy, and recreation). These services are based on a cognitive-behavioral treatment approach, using strength-based rewards and consequences – rather than punishment and sanctions – to address the juvenile’s behavior. Information was unavailable about the juvenile’s core treatment and programming services received while confined in a YDC facility for the sample studied.

Geographic Areas

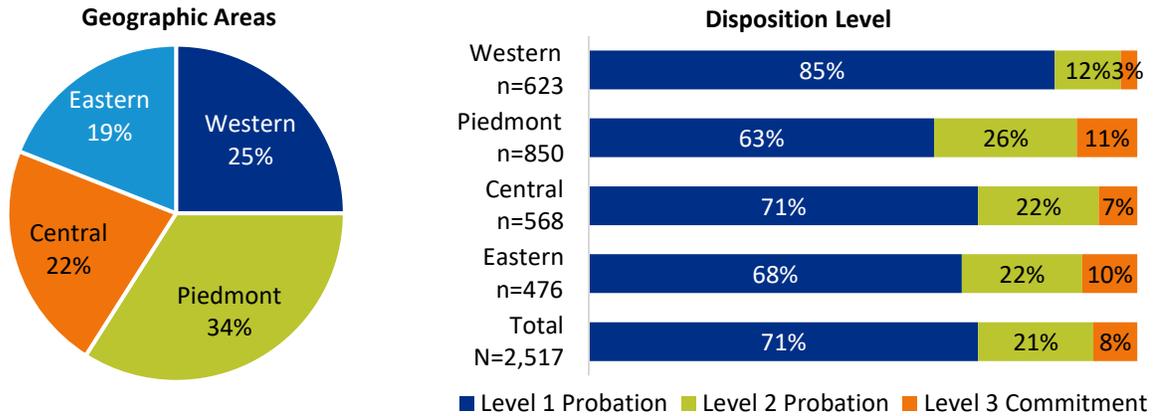
Figure 4.1 examines the distribution of the FY 2020 sample by the four geographic areas of the state – Western, Piedmont, Central, and Eastern. The highest proportion of adjudicated juveniles exited the juvenile justice system in the Piedmont area (34%); the lowest proportion exited from the Eastern area (19%). Irrespective of area, the majority of juveniles were in the Level 1 probation group (71%) and the fewest were in the Level 3 commitment group (8%). The Western area had the highest percentage of Level 1 probationers (85%) compared to the other three areas (63% for Piedmont, 71% for Central, and 68% for Eastern). The Piedmont and Eastern areas had the highest percentage of juveniles in the Level 3 commitment group (11% and 10% respectively) compared to the remaining two areas (3% for Western and 7% for Central). The Western area had the lowest percentage of juveniles with a Level 2 probation (12%).

and other available information. Some juveniles may have been supervised under the previous supervision criteria (Modified, Standard, Intensive) at the early part of their supervision.

⁴² See Appendix G for the Court Services Case Management Standards Chart.

⁴³ See Chapter One for description and timing of the JJRA that increased the age of juvenile jurisdiction.

Figure 4.1
Geographic Areas



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Personal Characteristics

Table 4.1 and Figure 4.2 examine the personal characteristics for each of the three disposition levels. There were more males than females in each of the disposition levels; however, the percentage of males increased as the seriousness of the disposition increased. Overall, almost half of the juveniles were Black (46%). Examination of race by disposition level showed a pattern similar to gender – the percentage of Black juveniles increased as the seriousness of the disposition increased.⁴⁴ There was no difference between the groups for average age at offense (14 years for all three groups). However, distribution by age showed that the Level 1 group had a higher percentage of juveniles (34%) who were aged 13 or younger compared to the other two groups (27% for the Level 2 group and 21% for the Level 3 group).

Figure 4.2 provides a comparison of the distribution of age at JJ entry and age at JJ exit for adjudicated juveniles.⁴⁵ The largest increase was found for juveniles aged 16 years or more, with an increase from 15% at entry to 54% at exit. Not surprisingly, the largest decreases from entry to exit were for juveniles aged 15 and 14 as they aged into the oldest group.

⁴⁴ Due to low percentages, American Indian, Asian, and multiracial juveniles were combined with other/unknown into one category.

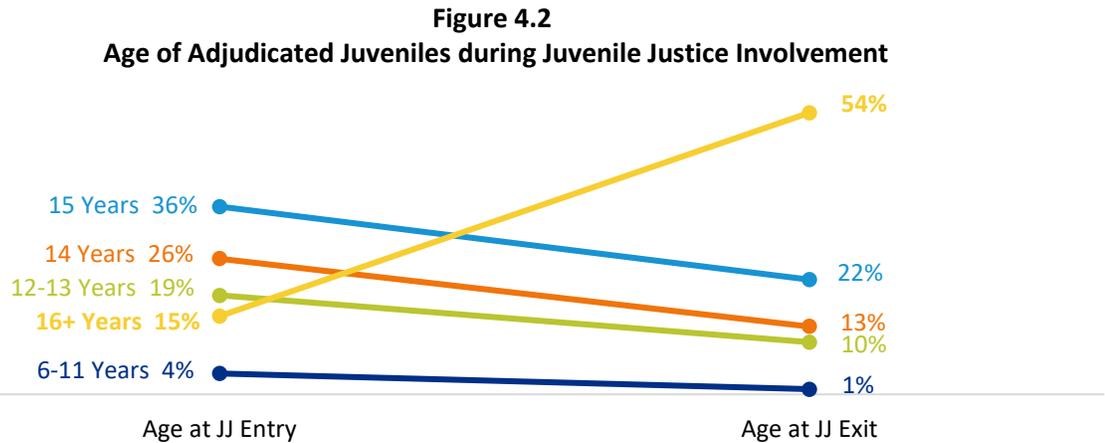
⁴⁵ See Table F.3 in Appendix F for the distribution of juvenile age at entry and exit by disposition level.

Table 4.1
Personal Characteristics

Personal Characteristics	Level 1 Probation n=1,787	Level 2 Probation n=536	Level 3 Commitment n=194	Total N=2,517
Gender	%	%	%	%
Male	73	85	92	77
Female	27	15	8	23
Race/Ethnicity	%	%	%	%
White	43	33	19	39
Black	41	52	72	46
Hispanic	10	11	7	10
Other/Unknown	6	4	2	5
Age at Offense	%	%	%	%
6-11 Years	7	3	1	6
12-13 Years	27	24	20	26
14 Years	30	32	34	30
15 Years	36	41	45	38
16-17 Years	<1	--	--	<1
Age at:	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.
Offense	14	14	14	14
JJ Entry	14	15	15	14
JJ Exit	15	16	16	15

Note: There were two (2) juveniles aged 16-17 at offense with a Level 1 disposition.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Prior Juvenile Justice Contacts

As mentioned in previous chapters, it is important to examine whether or not juveniles had contact with the juvenile justice system prior to their probation entry or YDC commitment to gain an understanding of frequency of interaction with the system. As discussed in Chapter Two, juveniles in the probation and YDC groups had more contacts with the juvenile justice system than juveniles with a diversion plan or contract. When examined by disposition level, juveniles with a Level 1 disposition had the fewest prior contacts compared to those juveniles with a Level 2 probation disposition or Level 3 commitment (see Figure 4.3).⁴⁶

Figure 4.3
Prior Juvenile Justice Contacts

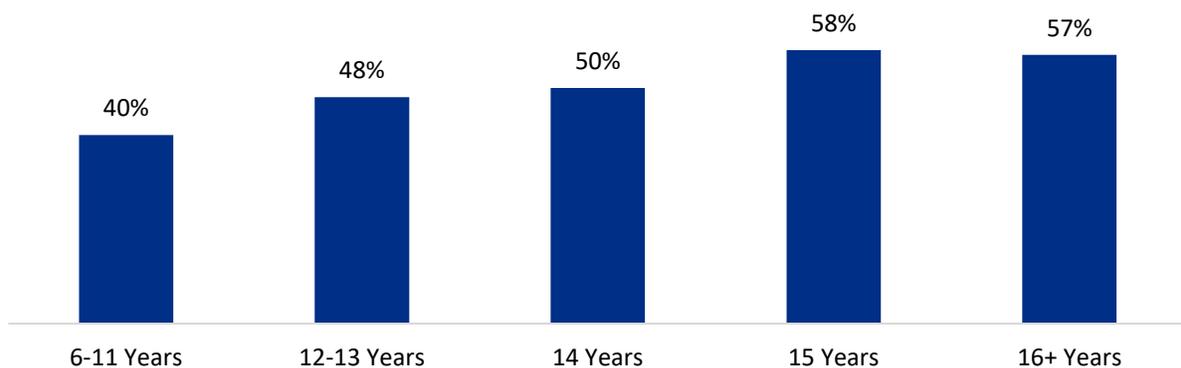
Level 1 Probation	Level 2 Probation	Level 3 Commitment	Total
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •45% prior complaint •7% prior adjudication •11% prior confinement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •66% prior complaint •38% prior adjudication •45% prior confinement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •95% prior complaint •82% prior adjudication •96% prior confinement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •53% prior complaint •20% prior adjudication •25% prior confinement

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Nearly one-third (31%) of juveniles had a felony offense as their most serious prior complaint. Juveniles with a Level 3 commitment had a higher percentage of felony offenses (77%) as their most serious prior complaint compared to those with a Level 1 or Level 2 probation (16% and 42% respectively).

Figure 4.4 shows the percentage of juveniles with at least one prior contact by age at juvenile justice entry (i.e., date of the dispositional hearing). Generally, the percentage of juveniles with at least one prior complaint increased as age increased, leveling off at ages 15 and 16 or more years.

Figure 4.4
Prior Complaints by Age at Juvenile Justice Entry for Adjudicated Juveniles



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

⁴⁶ A prior confinement could be a detention center admission or a YDC commitment or both. Generally, juveniles who had a YDC commitment also had a detention center admission.

Adjudicated Offense

The court orders sanctions, services, and conditions for juveniles based on the offense classification of their adjudicated offense(s) and their delinquency history. Table 4.2 examines the relationship of the offense classification of the most serious *charged* offense compared to the most serious *adjudicated* offense. Overall, 8% of juveniles were *charged* with a Violent offense, while 5% were *adjudicated* of a Violent offense. Thirty-six percent (36%) of juveniles were *charged* with a Serious offense, while 28% were *adjudicated* of a Serious offense. Finally, 56% of juveniles were *charged* with a Minor offense compared to 67% of juveniles *adjudicated* of a Minor offense. As indicated in the shaded cells, the majority of juveniles were *adjudicated* of an offense within the same offense classification as initially *charged*; for example, over two-thirds (69%) of juveniles *charged* with a Violent offense were *adjudicated* of a Violent offense.

Table 4.2
Charged Offense by Adjudicated Offense

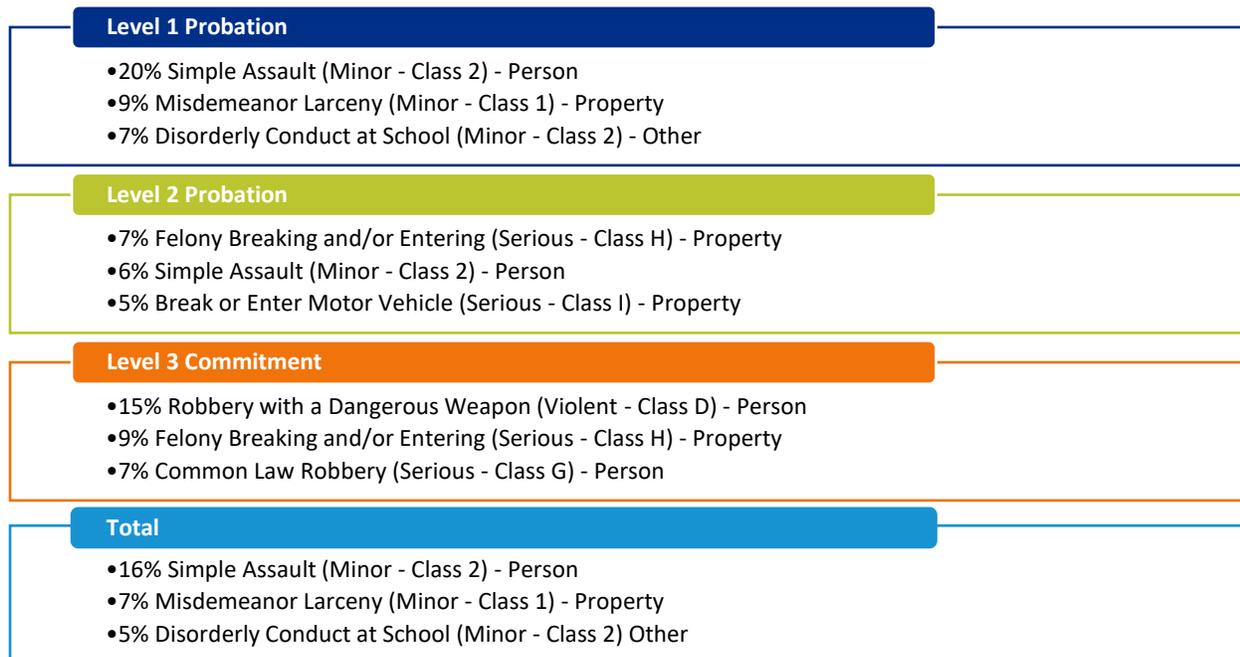
Charged Offense Classification	N	Adjudicated Offense Classification			Total N=2,517 %
		Violent n=130 %	Serious n=715 %	Minor n=1,672 %	
Violent Class A-E Felonies	189	69	24	7	8
Serious Class F-I Felonies Class A1 Misdemeanor	909	--	74	26	36
Minor Class 1-3 Misdemeanors	1,419	--	--	100	56
Total	2,517	5	28	67	100

Note: The shaded cells indicate the percentage of juveniles who were charged with and adjudicated of an offense within the same offense classification.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Figure 4.5 compares the most common adjudicated offenses for the three disposition levels. The top 3 offenses were all misdemeanors for juveniles who exited probation with a Level 1 disposition and accounted for 36% of their adjudications. Juveniles with a Level 3 commitment had felonies as their top 3 adjudicated offenses (which comprised 31% of their adjudicated offenses), while juveniles with Level 2 probation were adjudicated of a mix of both felonies and misdemeanors as their top 3 offenses (which accounted for 18% of their adjudicated offenses).

**Figure 4.5
Top 3 Adjudicated Offenses**



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table 4.3 summarizes the offense profile for the three groups. The findings reflect both legal restrictions and court counselor considerations for nondivertible and other serious felonies resulting in deeper involvement and more serious dispositions imposed in the juvenile justice system. Most juveniles with a Level 1 disposition (93%) had a misdemeanor as their most serious adjudicated offense. Juveniles with a more serious disposition (i.e., Levels 2 and 3) were more frequently adjudicated of a felony offense (61% and 91% respectively). Juveniles with a Level 3 commitment were more likely to have a Violent offense compared to the Level 2 probation group (30% and 13% respectively). The majority of the Level 2 probation and Level 3 commitment groups were adjudicated of a Serious offense (62% and 68% respectively) compared to a much lower percentage of the Level 1 probation group (14%).⁴⁷ Juveniles with a Level 1 disposition were more likely to have been charged with an SBO compared to juveniles with a Level 2 or Level 3 disposition. Of juveniles with an SBO, 86% of Level 1 and 81% of Level 2 probationers were referred to the juvenile system by a law enforcement officer functioning as an SRO; less than half (47%) of the Level 3 commitment group had an SRO referral.

⁴⁷ See Chapter One and Appendix B for a discussion of offense classifications in the Juvenile Disposition Chart. Of the 251 Serious offenses for the Level 1 probation group, 121 (or 48%) were Class A1. For the Level 2 probation and Level 3 commitment groups, 23% and 10%, respectively, of the Serious offenses were for Class A1 misdemeanors.

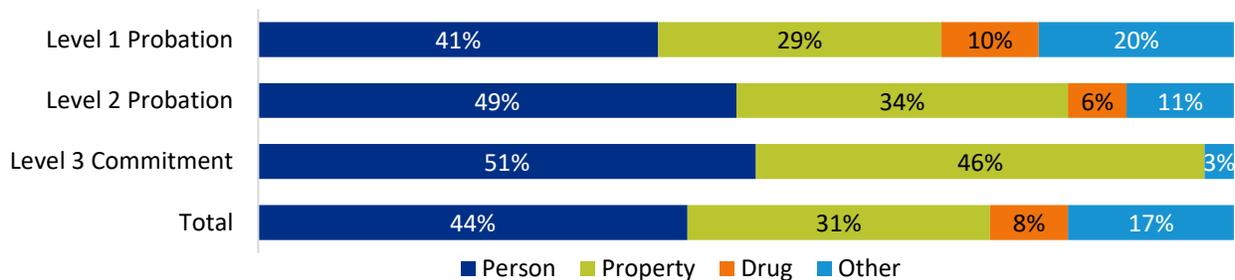
**Table 4.3
Adjudicated Offense**

Adjudicated Offense	Level 1 Probation	Level 2 Probation	Level 3 Commitment	Total
	n=1,787 %	n=536 %	n=194 %	N=2,517 %
Offense Type				
Felony	7	61	91	25
Misdemeanor	93	39	9	75
Offense Classification				
Violent				
Class A-E Felonies	<1	13	30	5
Serious				
Class F-I Felonies	14	62	68	28
Class A1 Misdemeanor				
Minor				
Class 1-3 Misdemeanors	86	25	2	67
School-Based Offense				
No	45	68	90	54
Yes	55	32	10	46
School Resource Officer				
No	14	19	53	15
Yes	86	81	47	85

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Adjudicated offenses were grouped into four offense categories: person, property, drug, and other.⁴⁸ Juveniles with a Level 2 or 3 disposition had a higher percentage of person and property offenses as their most serious adjudicated offense than the Level 1 probation group, while the Level 1 group had more drug and other types of offenses (see Figure 4.6). Only 24% of the 1,105 person offenses were for a felony offense.⁴⁹ The Level 3 commitment group had a higher percentage of juveniles (46%) with a property offense as their most serious offense compared to juveniles who exited probation (29% for Level 1 and 34% for Level 2). Figure 4.7 provides the top 3 offenses for each offense category.

**Figure 4.6
Offense Category of the Adjudicated Offense**

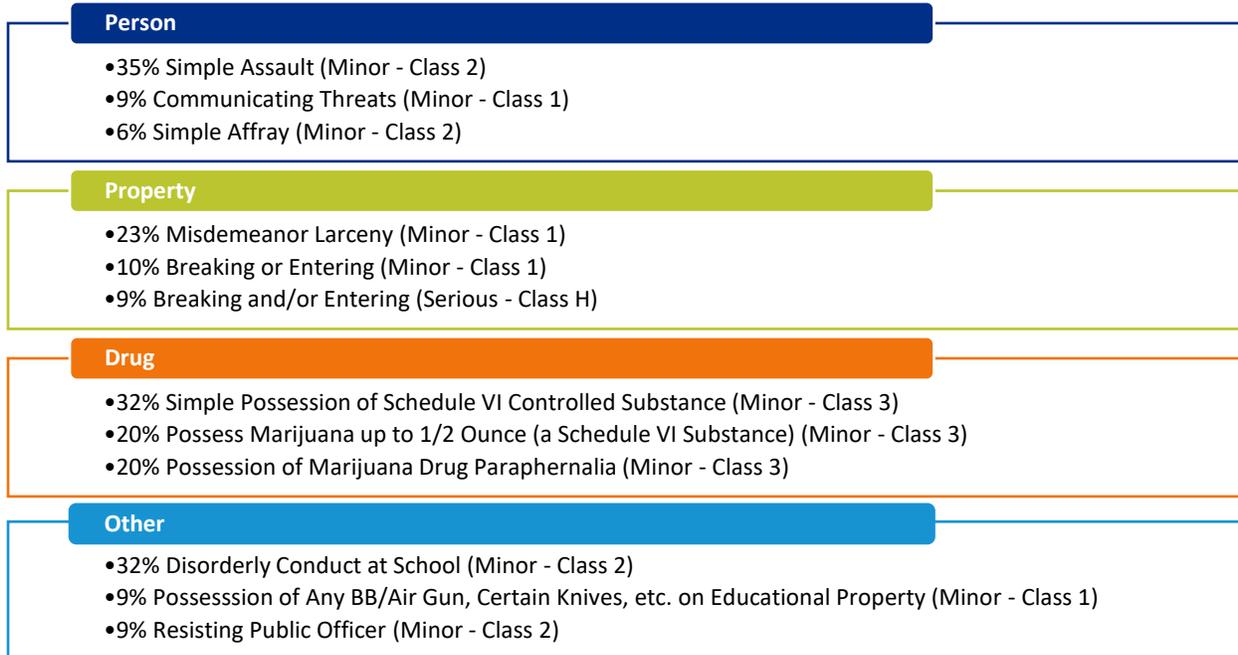


SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

⁴⁸ See Chapter Two for offense category definitions.

⁴⁹ Of the 266 felony person offenses, 44 were for Level 1 probation, 139 for Level 2 probation, and 83 for Level 3 commitment.

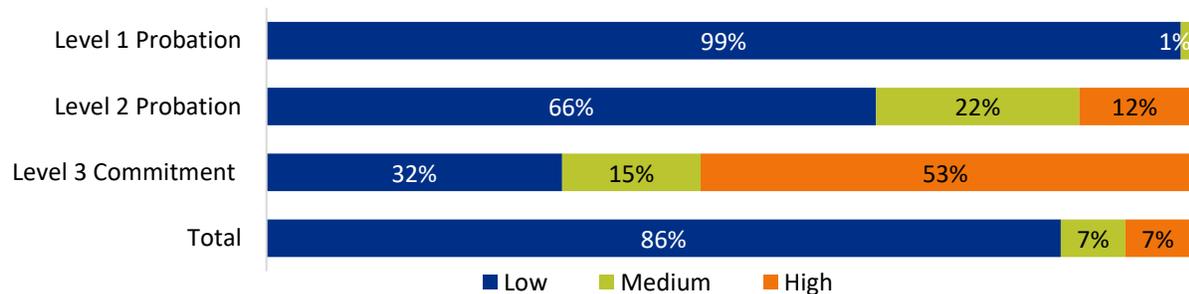
**Figure 4.7
Top 3 Adjudicated Offenses by Offense Category**



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Judges use delinquency history to determine the appropriate disposition for the juvenile along with the seriousness of the adjudicated offense. Figure 4.8 shows that most juveniles adjudicated and disposed had Low delinquency history (86%); however, that percentage is slightly skewed by the large number of juveniles with a Level 1 disposition whose delinquency history was almost all Low (99%). Consistent with the juvenile dispositional chart, juveniles with a Level 2 or Level 3 disposition had a higher percentage in the High delinquency history level (12% and 53% respectively) compared to juveniles in the Level 1 group (n=4 or less than 1%).

**Figure 4.8
Delinquency History Level**



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Risk and Needs Assessments

During the intake process, court counselors administer an RNA to all juveniles to assess the risk of future delinquency and to determine the individual needs of the juvenile.⁵⁰ Table 4.4 lists select results of the assessments for the three groups.

Table 4.4
Select Risk and Needs Indicators

Risk and Needs Indicators	Level 1 Probation n=1,786	Level 2 Probation n=536	Level 3 Commitment n=194	Total N=2,516
Risk Assessment	%	%	%	%
First Referral Before Age 12	14	17	23	16
Prior Intake Referrals	49	69	93	56
Prior Adjudications	23	49	88	34
Prior Assaults	21	36	60	27
Had Run Away	16	23	58	21
Had School Behavior Problems	92	92	96	92
Parents/Guardians Unwilling/Unable to Provide Parental Supervision	20	29	56	25
Risk Score (0-30 points) Avg.	7	10	17	9
Needs Assessment	%	%	%	%
Functioning Below Academic Grade Level	12	15	20	13
Juvenile Parent Status (i.e., is a parent)	<1	1	3	1
History of Victimization	28	29	35	29
Risky Sexual Behavior	9	19	18	12
Need for Mental Health Care Indicated	86	92	95	88
Basic Needs Are Not Being Met	1	1	5	1
Impaired Functioning (i.e., medical, dental, health/hygiene)	1	1	2	1
Conflict in the Home	31	33	53	33
Parent, Guardian, or Custodian has Disabilities	5	6	9	6
One or More Members of Household have Substance Use Problems	15	14	23	15
Indication of Family Member's Involvement in Criminal Activity	52	57	74	55
Needs Score (0-51 points) Avg.	13	15	20	14
Combined Risk and Needs Indicators	%	%	%	%
Substance Use	43	52	73	47
Gang Affiliation	6	14	46	10
Negative Peer Relationships	76	82	95	79

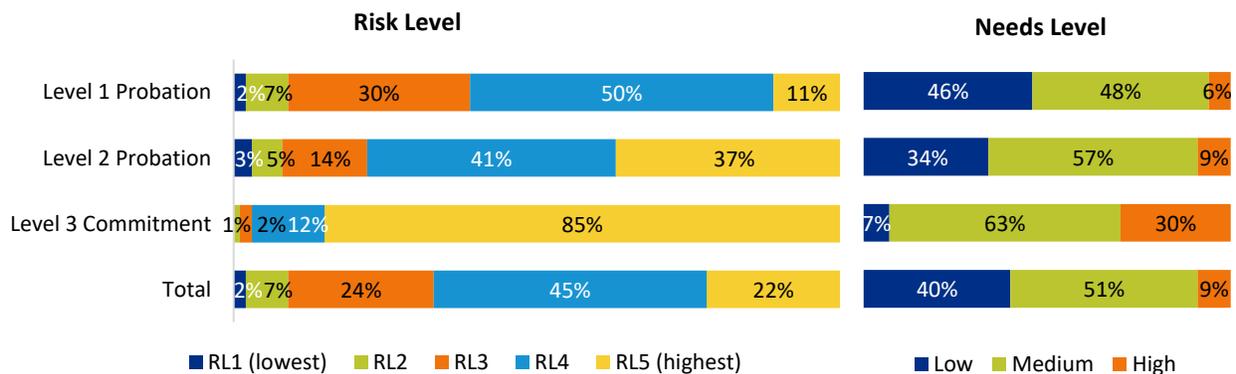
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

⁵⁰ See Appendix A for a copy of the North Carolina Assessment of Juvenile Risk of Future Offending and the North Carolina Assessment of Juvenile Needs instruments and for information on the number and percentage of juveniles with a risk and needs assessment for the sample. On average, adjudicated juveniles completed their risk assessment within 11 days and their needs assessment within 12 days. The risk and needs findings in this report only include the juveniles who had both the risk portion and the needs portion of the RNA completed. Only 1 juvenile did not have both a risk and needs assessment and was excluded from the RNA data reported.

In general, as the seriousness of the disposition level increased so did the risk factors that juveniles had. As to be expected, juveniles in the Level 3 commitment group had the highest percentages for the risk indicators (e.g., prior intake referrals, prior adjudications), while juveniles with a Level 1 disposition had the lowest percentages. Regardless of disposition, nearly all juveniles (92% overall) had school behavior problems. As seen with risk indicators, the Level 3 commitment group had more needs than the other two groups. Of note, juveniles with a Level 3 commitment had a higher percentage of needs indicators that involved family problems compared to the other two disposition levels. Specifically, 74% indicated that some family members were involved in criminal activity, 53% had conflict in the home, and 23% had one or more members in the household with substance use problems. Combining risk and needs indicators, the Level 3 commitment group had a higher percentage of juveniles with substance use, gang affiliation, and negative peer relationships compared to juveniles in the two probation groups.

Using the assessment instruments, separate risk and needs scores were computed for each juvenile. The average risk score increased as the seriousness of the disposition level increased (7 for Level 1 probation, 10 for Level 2 probation, and 17 for Level 3 commitment). (See Table 4.4.) Based on their individual scores, juveniles were placed in one of five levels of risk from RL1 (lowest risk) to RL5 (highest risk) and a low, medium, or high level for needs. Figure 4.9 shows the risk levels for all three disposition groups and as a whole. The distribution of the groups by risk level was consistent with the pattern in average risk scores. A higher percentage in the Level 1 probation group were assessed at the higher risk levels (61% for RL4 and RL5), while most juveniles with a Level 3 commitment (97%) were assessed at the highest levels of risk (i.e., RL4 and RL5). Figure 4.9 also provides the needs level distribution. The same stair-step progression was found – a higher percentage of juveniles in the Level 3 commitment group were assessed with high needs (30%) compared to the Level 1 and Level 2 probation groups (6% and 9% respectively).

Figure 4.9
Risk and Needs Assessments



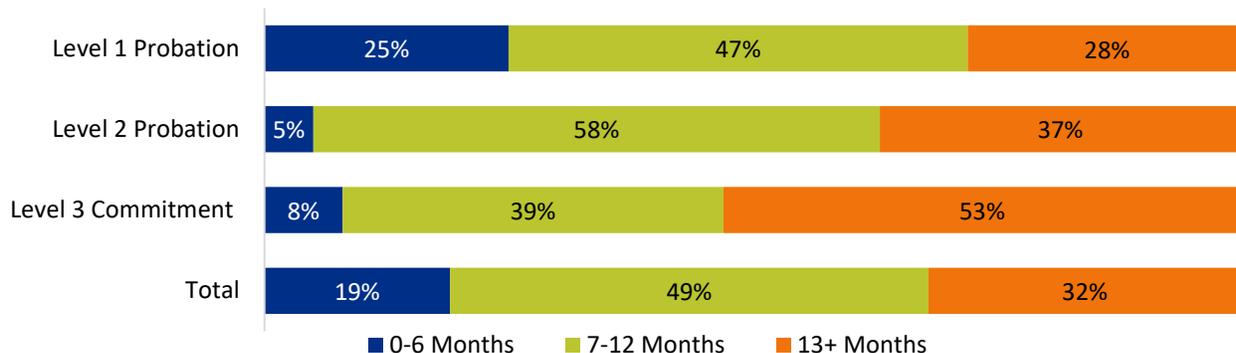
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Juvenile Justice Involvement Profile

This section presents information about the adjudicated juveniles and their involvement with the juvenile system – length of involvement for all three groups, probation supervision level and detention admissions for the Level 1 and Level 2 probation groups, and YDC entry and commitment types for the commitment group. On average, juveniles in the Level 1 probation group had the shortest involvement with the juvenile justice system (11 months) compared to the Level 2 probation and Level 3

commitment groups (each at 14 months). However, a higher percentage of juveniles with a Level 3 commitment spent 13 or more months in confinement (53%) compared to Level 1 and Level 2 groups on probation (28% and 37% respectively). (See Figure 4.10.)

Figure 4.10
Length of Juvenile Justice Involvement



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Probation Supervision

Table 4.5 provides additional information on supervision level at juvenile justice exit and if the probation group had an admission to a detention facility due to intermittent confinement during their juvenile justice involvement. Most juveniles (73%) on court-ordered probation exited probation while on Standard supervision. A higher percentage of juveniles with a Level 1 disposition exited while on Standard supervision compared to Level 2 (74% and 68% respectively). Conversely, a higher percentage of juveniles with a Level 2 disposition exited probation on High/Intensive probation (4%) or Enhanced probation (21%) compared to the Level 1 group (2% and 15% respectively). During juvenile justice involvement, 22% of juveniles had an admission to a detention center. A higher percentage of juveniles with a Level 2 disposition had a detention admission compared to juveniles with a Level 1 disposition. These detention admissions could have been due to a new complaint or failure to appear, among other reasons. However, a portion were due to intermittent confinement – a sanction available for noncompliance with the conditions of probation.⁵¹ Again, a slightly higher percentage of juveniles with a Level 2 disposition had a detention admission due to intermittent confinement compared to juveniles with a Level 1 disposition (16% and 12% respectively).

⁵¹ As mentioned in Chapter One, a Level 1 disposition may also include intermittent confinement in a detention center for up to five 24-hour periods, while the court can impose confinement on an intermittent basis for up to fourteen 24-hour periods for juveniles with a Level 2 disposition.

**Table 4.5
Level 1 and Level 2 Probation Profile**

	Level 1 Probation n=1,776 %	Level 2 Probation n=530 %	Total N=2,306 %
Supervision Level at JJ Exit			
High/Intensive	2	4	2
Enhanced	15	21	16
Standard	74	68	73
Low	9	7	9
Any Detention Admission	20	28	22
Detention Admission due to Intermittent Confinement	12	16	13

Note: Findings exclude 17 juveniles who were supervised out of state for a portion or all of their supervision.
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

YDC Commitment

Descriptive information was also available for the Level 3 commitment group – specifically, the type of YDC entry, the commitment type, and if they were released from a YDC onto PRS. Juveniles may enter a YDC due to adjudication of a new crime, violation of probation, or revocation of PRS. More juveniles entered a YDC due to a new crime compared to juveniles who entered due to a violation of probation (51% and 41% respectively), while few entered due to a revocation of PRS (8%). (See Figure 4.11.) Juveniles who entered a YDC due to a new crime spent the longest time in a YDC on average (15 months) compared to those who entered due to a probation violation (14 months) or due to a PRS revocation (8 months). For most of the Level 3 commitment group (90%), it was their first YDC commitment. Almost all juveniles with a Level 3 commitment (98%) were placed on PRS upon release from a YDC. Twelve percent (12%) of the 191 juveniles placed on PRS violated conditions of their supervision and had their PRS revoked during the two-year follow-up period.

**Figure 4.11
Level 3 Commitment Profile**

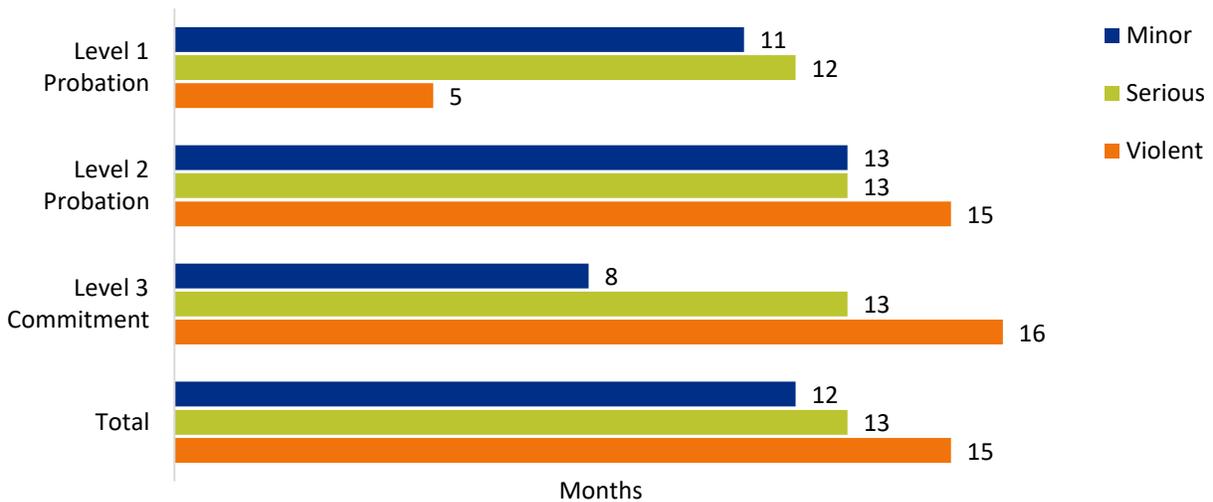


SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Length of Juvenile Justice Involvement and Adjudicated Offense Classification

The length of involvement reflected juvenile justice practices and policies – the Level 1 probation group spent the least amount of time, on average, in the system (72% at 12 months or less) compared to the Level 2 probation and Level 3 commitment groups (63% and 47% at 12 months or less respectively) (see Figure 4.10). As shown in Figure 4.12, length of involvement increased based on the seriousness of the adjudicated offense for each group.

Figure 4.12
Average Length of Juvenile Justice Involvement by Adjudicated Offense Classification



Note: One (1) juvenile with a Level 1 Probation disposition had a Violent offense.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

JUVENILE AND ADULT RECIDIVISM

Subsequent complaints were used as the primary measure for juvenile recidivism, supplemented with information on adjudications that resulted from those recidivist complaints. Arrests were used as the primary measure for adult recidivism, supplemented with information on convictions. A combined measure of subsequent juvenile complaints and/or adult arrests was compiled to indicate any recidivist involvement in either system. Recidivism rates are only reported when there are 25 or more juveniles in a specific category.

Recidivism during Juvenile Justice Involvement

As discussed in Chapter One, recidivism rates are examined at two points in time – during juvenile justice involvement and during the two-year follow-up. Table 4.6 contains information on recidivism rates during juvenile justice involvement. Overall, 23% of juveniles had a delinquent complaint and/or an adult arrest during this time period. Juveniles with Level 2 probation had the highest recidivism rate at 28% compared to 23% of juveniles with Level 1 probation. Not surprisingly, juveniles in the commitment group had the lowest recidivism rates at 11% since they were confined in a YDC facility and had the least opportunity to recidivate.

Among juveniles who recidivated, the first event occurred an average of 4 months after the start of their probation supervision or YDC commitment. The Level 1 and Level 3 disposition groups had their first recidivist event at 4 months, while juveniles with a Level 2 probation had their first recidivist event at 5 months on average. Overall, 59% had a misdemeanor as their most serious recidivist offense. A larger percentage of Level 1 probationers had a misdemeanor as their most serious recidivist offense (62%) compared to the other two groups (Level 2 probation with 51% and Level 3 commitment with 45%).

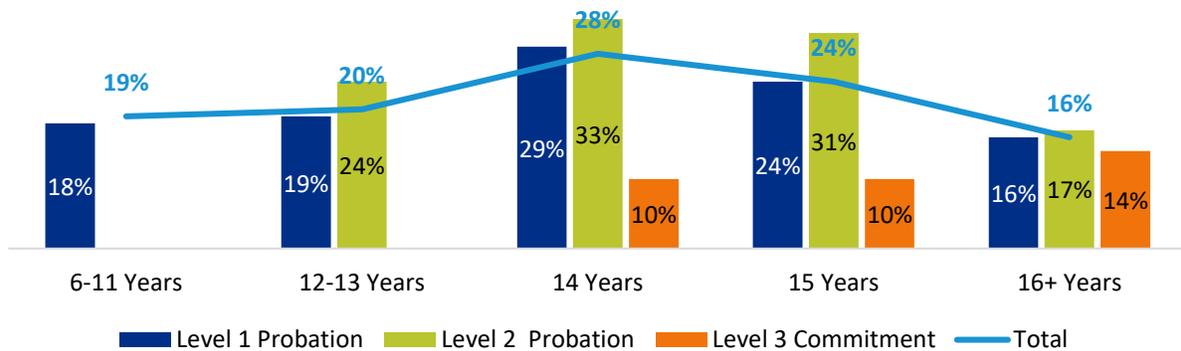
Table 4.6
Recidivism Rates: Juvenile Justice Involvement

Disposition Level	N	Any Recidivism		Average Months to Recidivism	Most Serious Recidivist Offense	
		#	%		Felony %	Misdemeanor %
Level 1 Probation	1,787	409	23	4	38	62
Level 2 Probation	536	149	28	5	49	51
Level 3 Commitment	194	22	11	4	55	45
Total	2,517	580	23	4	41	59

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Overall, juveniles aged 14 and 15 at juvenile justice entry had the highest recidivism rates during their juvenile justice involvement (28% and 24% respectively) compared to the other age groups (see Figure 4.13). Juveniles aged 16 or older had the lowest recidivism rates. Level 2 probationers had higher recidivism rates compared to Level 1 in all age categories, while the Level 3 commitment group had the lowest recidivism rates. As mentioned previously, the lower recidivism rates for the Level 3 group were due to their confinement in a YDC facility and the lack of opportunity to recidivate.

Figure 4.13
Recidivism Rates by Age at Juvenile Justice Entry: Juvenile Justice Involvement



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Recidivism during Two-Year Follow-Up

Table 4.7 provides overall recidivism rates by disposition level for the one-year and two-year follow-up periods. Juveniles with a Level 3 commitment had higher recidivism rates than juveniles with Level 1 or Level 2 probation. Juveniles with a Level 2 disposition had higher recidivism rates than juveniles with a Level 1 disposition during the one-year follow-up (25% and 18% respectively) and the two-year follow-up (34% and 28% respectively).

Information on the total number of recidivist events for those juveniles who had a subsequent juvenile complaint, an adult arrest, or both during the follow-up period is also provided in Table 4.7. The 810 juveniles with any recidivism accounted for a total of 2,264 recidivist events, an average of 2 recidivist events per juvenile. Although juveniles in the Level 1 probation group were less likely to have a recidivist

complaint and/or arrest than juveniles with a Level 3 commitment, they accounted for a higher volume of recidivist events due to their larger sample size. Juveniles with Level 1 or Level 2 probation had an average of 2 recidivist events compared to juveniles with a Level 3 commitment who averaged 3 recidivist events during the two-year follow-up.

For those juveniles with at least one subsequent delinquent complaint and/or arrest, the first recidivist event occurred an average of 8 months after the beginning of the follow-up period. Juveniles in the Level 3 group recidivated 1-2 months earlier at 7 months compared to juveniles in the Level 2 group at 8 months and the Level 1 group at 9 months. Of the 810 juveniles with a recidivist event, 30% recidivated within 3 months, 49% within 6 months, and 72% within 12 months.

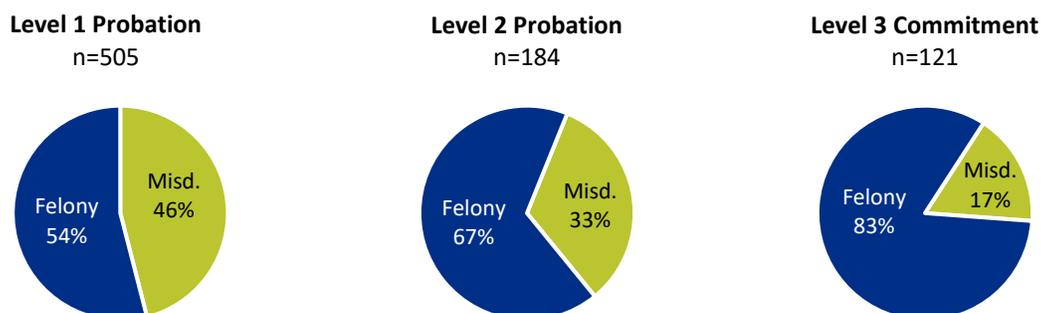
Table 4.7
Recidivism Rates: Two-Year Follow-Up

Disposition Level	N	Average Months to Recidivism	# of Juveniles with Any Recidivism	Total # Recidivist Events	One-Year Follow-Up %	Two-Year Follow-Up %
Level 1 Probation	1,787	9	505	1,056	18	28
Level 2 Probation	536	8	184	419	25	34
Level 3 Commitment	194	7	121	361	52	62
Total	2,517	8	810	1,836	23	32

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Overall, 61% of the adjudicated juveniles had a felony as their most serious recidivist offense. Figure 4.14 shows the most serious recidivist offense by disposition group. Juveniles in the Level 1 group were less likely to have a felony as their most serious recidivist offense (54%) compared to juveniles in the Level 2 and Level 3 groups (67% and 83% respectively).

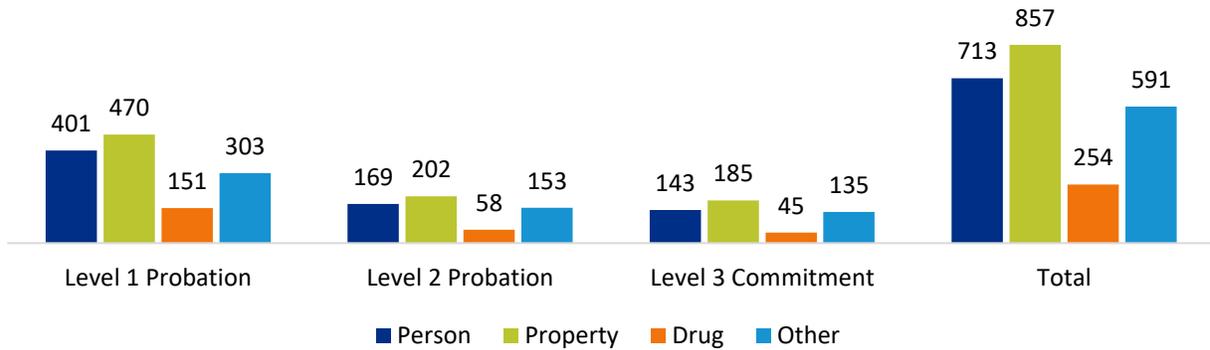
Figure 4.14
Most Serious Recidivist Event by Offense Type for Juveniles with Recidivism: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Recidivist events were also categorized based on offense category, as shown in Figure 4.15. Juveniles in all three groups were more likely to have a recidivist complaint/arrest for property and person offenses as compared to other offense types. Property and person offenses comprised the largest volume of recidivist events for adjudicated juveniles overall and by disposition level, while drug offenses comprised the lowest volume of events.

Figure 4.15
Number of Recidivist Events by Offense Category for Juveniles with Recidivism: Two-Year Follow-Up



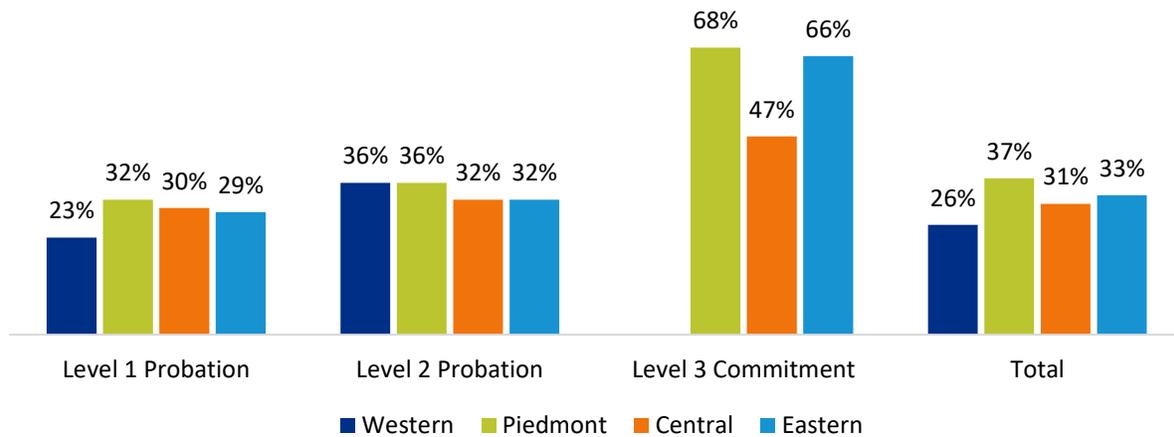
Note: Multiple offense categories may be linked to a recidivist event. As a result, the number of recidivist events by offense category cannot be added together to equal the total number of recidivist events.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Geographic Areas and Recidivism

Recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up by geographic areas are shown in Figure 4.16. Overall, juveniles in the Western area had the lowest recidivism rates, while juveniles in the Piedmont area had the highest (26% and 37% respectively). The Level 1 probation group in the Western area had the lowest recidivism rates (23%), while the remaining three areas had similar recidivism rates (29% to 32%). For Level 2 probationers, the Western and Piedmont areas had the slightly higher recidivism rates (36% each) compared to the Central and Eastern areas with slightly lower recidivism rates (32% each). Finally, juveniles in the Level 3 commitment group in the Central area had the lowest recidivism rates as compared to the other geographic areas.

Figure 4.16
Recidivism Rates by Geographic Areas: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Personal Characteristics and Recidivism

Recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up by personal characteristics are examined in Table 4.8. In general, juveniles with a Level 3 commitment had higher recidivism rates than juveniles with a Level 1 or Level 2 probation disposition for all categories of personal characteristics examined. Similar patterns of recidivism rates emerged by personal characteristics within each group. Males were more likely to recidivate than females. Black juveniles had the highest recidivism rates compared to the other racial categories for juveniles with Level 1 and Level 2 probation.

No pattern across disposition levels was found when examining recidivism rates by age at offense. Within each disposition level, different age groups had the highest or lowest recidivism rates. For the Level 1 probation group, juveniles who were 15 years old at offense had the lowest rates. Juveniles aged 15 in the Level 2 probation group had the highest recidivism rates within that group. Meanwhile, juveniles aged 12-13 in the Level 3 group had the highest recidivism rates.

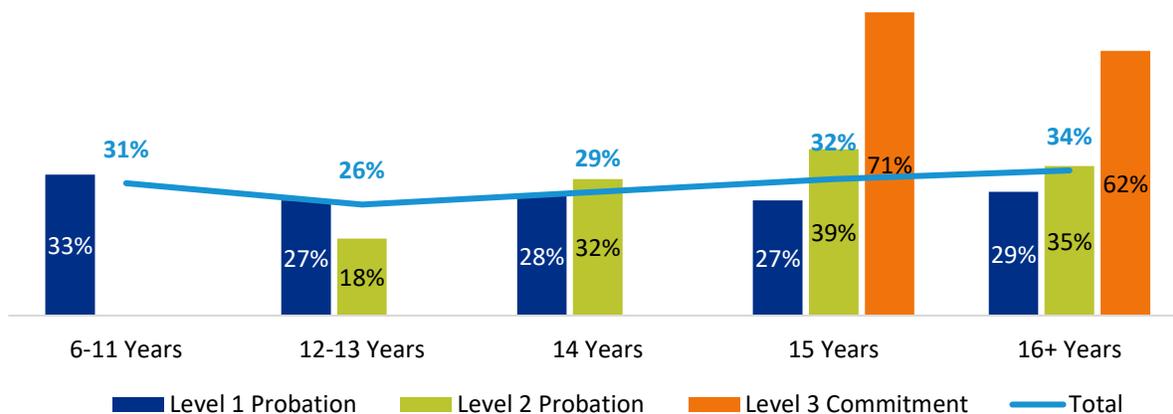
Table 4.8
Recidivism Rates by Personal Characteristics: Two-Year Follow-Up

Personal Characteristics	N	Level 1 Probation n=1,787 %	Level 2 Probation n=536 %	Level 3 Commitment n=194 %	Total N=2,517 %
Gender					
Male	1,945	31	36	65	35
Female	572	20	27	--	21
Race/Ethnicity					
White	979	22	24	32	22
Black	1,144	36	40	69	41
Hispanic	257	23	35	--	28
Other/Unknown	137	32	--	--	34
Age at Offense					
6-11 Years	138	30	--	--	28
12-13 Years	650	28	35	67	32
14 Years	767	30	32	65	34
15 Years	960	26	36	60	32
16-17 Years	2	--	--	--	--
Total	2,517	28	34	62	32

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Figure 4.17 examines recidivism rates by age at juvenile justice exit during the two-year follow-up. The highest recidivism rates for Level 1 probationers were for the youngest juveniles (age 6-11), while the highest rates for the other two groups were for juveniles aged 15.

Figure 4.17
Recidivism Rates by Age at Juvenile Justice Exit: Two-Year Follow-Up

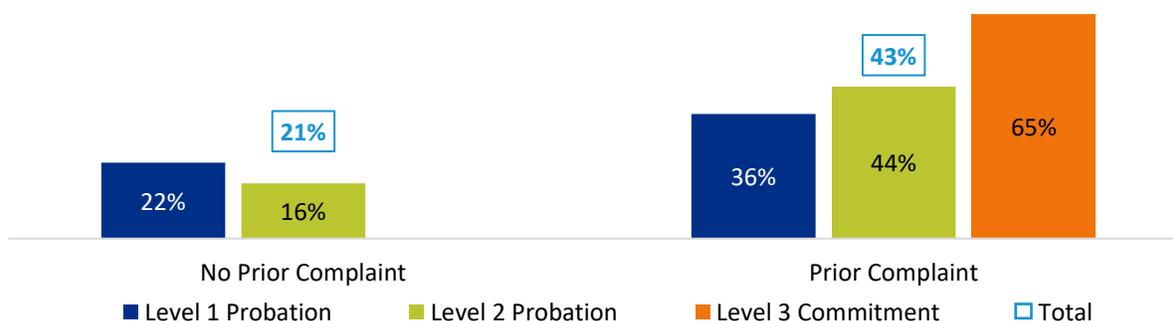


SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Prior Juvenile Justice Complaints and Recidivism

Overall, 58% of adjudicated juveniles had at least one prior delinquent complaint before probation entry or YDC commitment (see Figure 4.3). Figure 4.18 examines recidivism rates for juveniles with at least one prior complaint in comparison to juveniles with no prior complaint before probation entry or YDC admission. Overall, juveniles with a prior complaint had higher recidivism rates than those with no prior complaint (43% and 21% respectively). This pattern held when examining recidivism by disposition level.

Figure 4.18
Recidivism Rates by Prior Complaints: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Adjudicated Offense, Delinquency History, and Recidivism

In Table 4.9, recidivism rates are examined by characteristics of the most serious adjudicated offense. Juveniles with a felony offense had higher recidivism rates than juveniles with a misdemeanor offense. Overall, juveniles adjudicated of a Violent or Serious offense had higher recidivism rates than juveniles adjudicated of a Minor offense. However, that pattern did not hold when each disposition level was examined. Average risk scores by offense classification provide insight into these findings. Juveniles in the Level 1 probation group had an average risk score of 7 for Serious and Minor offense classifications –

recidivism rates were also similar for these groups of juveniles (30% for Serious offenses and 28% for Minor offenses). Risk scores for juveniles in the Level 2 probation group ranged from a low of 7 for juveniles with a Violent offense to 10 points for juveniles with a Serious offense to a high of 13 points for juveniles with a Minor offense. For the Level 2 probation group, recidivism rates increased as the average risk score associated with the adjudicated offense increased. The remaining group, Level 3 commitments, had an average risk score of 16 points for juveniles adjudicated of a Violent offense and 18 points for juveniles adjudicated of a Serious offense. Similar to the Level 2 probation group, recidivism rates for the Level 3 commitment group increased as the average risk score associated with the adjudicated offense increased.

Juveniles with a person offense had the lowest recidivism rates for all groups compared to the other offense categories. Juveniles with Level 1 and Level 2 probation dispositions who had an SBO for their charged offense had lower recidivism rates than those who did not have an SBO; however, they had higher recidivism rates if the offense was an SRO referral.

Table 4.9
Recidivism Rates by Adjudicated Offense: Two-Year Follow-Up

Adjudicated Offense	N	Level 1 Probation n=1,787 %	Level 2 Probation n=536 %	Level 3 Commitment n=194 %	Total N=2,517 %
Offense Type					
Felony	634	33	32	64	41
Misdemeanor	1,883	28	38	--	29
Offense Classification					
Violent					
Class A-E Felonies	130	--	21	54	36
Serious					
Class F-I Felonies	715	30	33	67	38
Class A1 Misdemeanor					
Minor					
Class 1-3 Misdemeanors	1,672	28	45	--	29
Offense Category					
Person	1,105	25	30	56	29
Property	786	34	38	68	39
Drug	208	26	35	--	28
Other	418	27	43	--	30
School-Based Offense					
No	1,349	31	35	64	37
Yes	1,168	26	33	--	27
School Resource Officer					
No	180	19	24	--	21
Yes	988	27	35	--	28
Total	2,517	28	34	62	32

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table 4.10 provides recidivism rates by the intersection of adjudicated offense classification and delinquency history level.⁵² In general, findings indicated that recidivism rates increased as delinquency history level increased. Recidivism rates were lowest for juveniles adjudicated of a Violent offense who had a low delinquency history level (24%) and highest for juveniles adjudicated of a Serious offense who had a high delinquency history (64%).

Table 4.10
Recidivism Rates by the Juvenile Disposition Chart: Two-Year Follow-Up

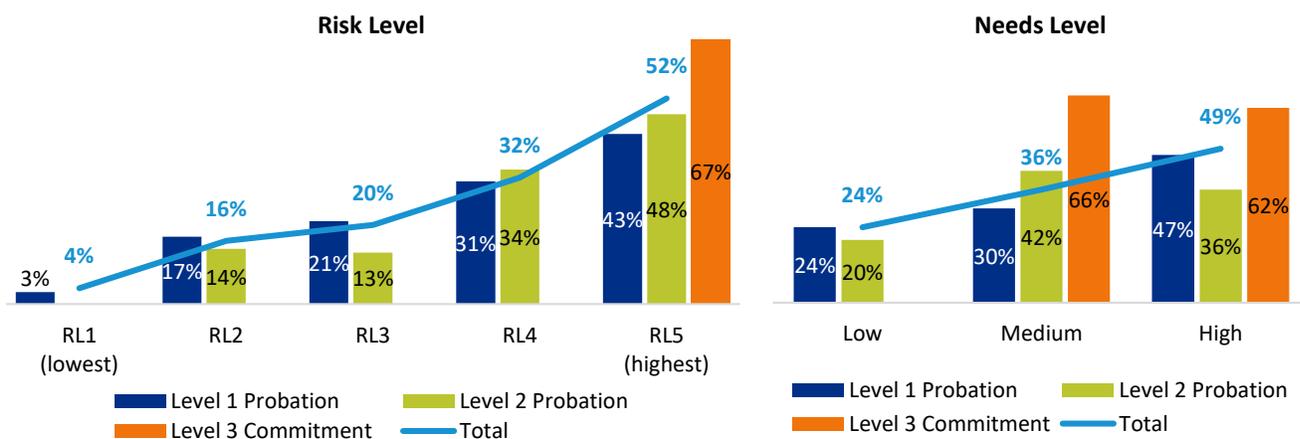
Adjudicated Offense Classification	N	Delinquency History Level			Total N=2,517 %
		Low n=2,178 %	Medium n=169 %	High n=170 %	
Violent	130	24	--	--	36
Serious	715	34	37	64	38
Minor	1,672	28	44	40	29
Total	2,517	29	43	58	32

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Risk and Needs Assessments and Recidivism

Figure 4.19 explores the relationship between juveniles' risk and needs levels and recidivism rates. As expected, RL1 (lowest risk) juveniles had the lowest recidivism rates compared to RL5 (highest risk) juveniles, with an incremental, stair-step progression of recidivism rates between the middle three risk levels (RL2 to RL4). Similar findings were seen when examining the relationship between needs level and recidivism rates. Recidivism rates for juveniles with a Level 1 or a Level 2 probation disposition were similar to risk level when examining recidivism rates by needs level – an incremental, stair-step progression of recidivism rates as needs level increased.

Figure 4.19
Recidivism Rates by Risk and Needs Levels: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

⁵² See Table F.9 in Appendix F for the number of juveniles at each intersection of adjudicated offense classification and delinquency history level.

Recidivism rates by combined indicators from the risk and needs assessment tools – substance use, gang affiliation (whether as a gang member or as an associate of a gang member), and peer relationships – are included in Table 4.11. Juveniles with substance use, gang affiliation, and negative peer influence generally had higher recidivism rates compared to their counterparts (no substance use, no gang affiliation, and positive peer influence). Similar recidivism rates were found for juveniles with a Level 1 or 2 probation disposition whose combined risk and need measures indicated substance use and negative peer relationships.

Table 4.11
Recidivism Rates by Risk and Needs Indicators: Two-Year Follow-Up

Risk and Needs Indicators	N	Level 1 Probation n=1,786 %	Level 2 Probation n=536 %	Level 3 Commitment n=194 %	Total N=2,516 %
Substance Use					
No	1,325	24	27	49	25
Yes	1,191	34	41	67	40
Gang Affiliation					
No	2,254	27	31	52	29
Yes	262	55	55	74	61
Peer Relationships					
Positive	540	23	19	--	22
Negative	1,976	30	38	64	35
Total	2,516	28	34	62	32

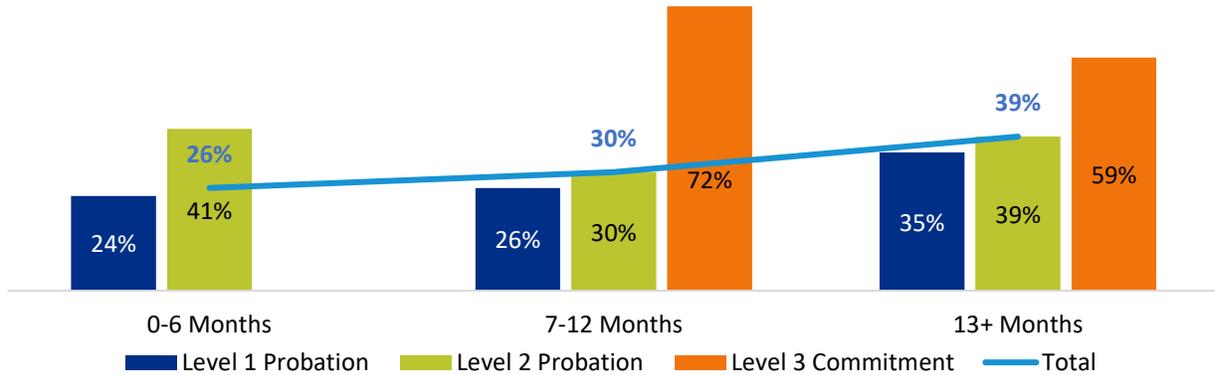
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Juvenile Justice Involvement Profiles and Recidivism

Probation Supervision and Recidivism

Figure 4.20 provides recidivism rates by length of probation supervision for the Level 1 and Level 2 probation groups and by length of confinement for the Level 3 commitment group. Overall, and for juveniles with a Level 1 probation disposition, recidivism rates increased as length of involvement increased. However, juveniles with a shorter length of involvement (6 months or less) in the Level 2 probation group had the highest recidivism rates. Recidivism rates for juveniles with a Level 3 commitment were highest for juveniles committed to a shorter YDC confinement (7 to 12 months) and highest for those who were confined 13 months or more.

Figure 4.20
Recidivism Rates by Length of Juvenile Justice Involvement: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Overall, recidivism rates increased as intensity of supervision level increased. Juveniles who exited probation on High/Intensive supervision had the highest recidivism rates (52%) compared to juveniles who exited probation on less intensive supervision. (See Table 4.12.) The Level 2 probation group had higher recidivism rates compared to Level 1 probationers regardless of supervision level.

Juveniles who had a detention admission during juvenile justice involvement had higher recidivism rates than those who did not have a detention admission. Juveniles in the Level 2 probation group with a detention admission had higher recidivism rates compared to juveniles in the Level 1 group with a detention admission (51% and 41% respectively).

Table 4.12
Recidivism Rates by Level 1 and Level 2 Probation Profile: Two-Year Follow-Up

	N	Level 1 Probation n=1,776	Level 2 Probation n=530	Total N=2,306
Supervision Level at JJ Exit		%	%	%
High/Intensive	60	43	--	52
Enhanced	364	31	44	35
Standard	1,682	28	30	29
Low	200	22	34	24
Any Detention Admission				
No	1,708	26	29	26
Yes	468	41	51	44
Total	2,306	28	35	30

Note: Findings exclude 17 juveniles who were supervised out of state for all or a portion of their court-ordered supervision.

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

YDC Commitment and Recidivism

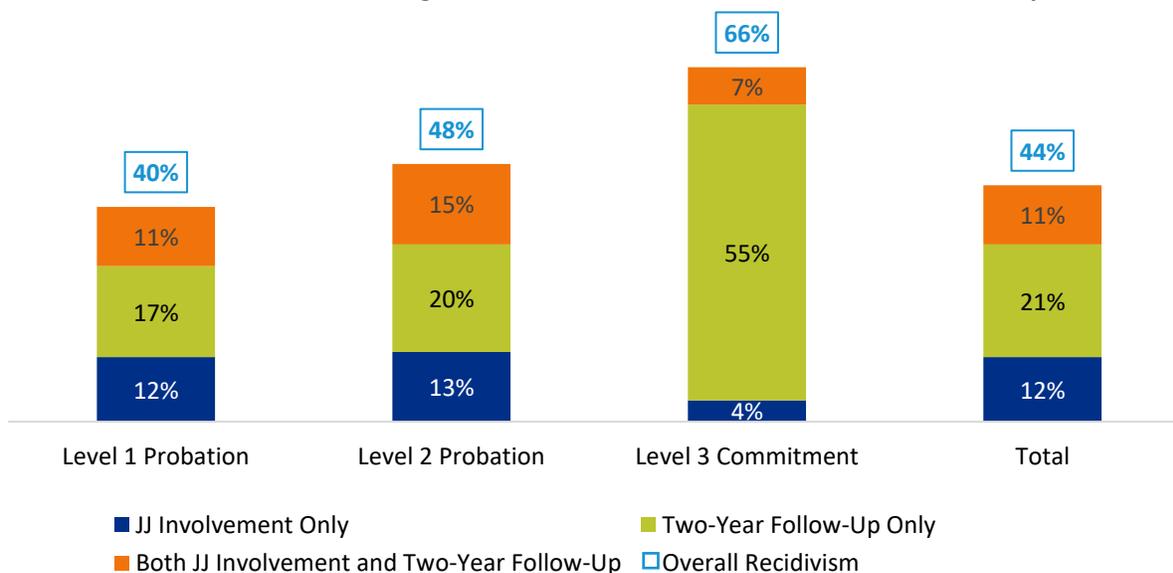
Juveniles with a Level 3 commitment who entered a YDC following adjudication for a new crime had lower recidivism rates compared to juveniles who entered a following a violation of their probation (58%

and 69% respectively). Recidivism rates by YDC commitment type (i.e., new commitment, recommitment, or PRS revocation) were not examined since most juveniles with a Level 3 commitment entered YDC due to a new YDC commitment (90%).

Overall Recidivism during Juvenile Justice Involvement and Two-Year Follow-Up

Figure 4.21 combines the recidivism rates during the time periods discussed in Tables 4.6 and 4.7 to examine when recidivist activity occurred – during juvenile justice involvement only, the two-year follow-up only, or whether the juvenile recidivated in both time periods. Overall, about half of juveniles with any recidivism recidivated during the two-year follow-up, accounting for 21% of the 44% overall recidivism rate. Nearly equal numbers of juveniles recidivated either during juvenile justice involvement only or during both time periods (12% and 11% respectively). Juveniles in the Level 3 commitment group recidivated primarily during the two-year follow-up (55% of the 66% overall recidivism rate for the committed juveniles). Juveniles in the Level 1 and 2 probation groups were more likely to have recidivated during the two-year follow-up. For Level 1 and Level 2 probationers, the differences between the time periods were not as pronounced compared to the Level 3 commitment group.

Figure 4.21
Overall Recidivism Rates during Juvenile Justice Involvement, Two-Year Follow-Up, or Both



Note: The overall recidivism rates were computed by adding together the rates for juveniles with recidivism during juvenile justice involvement only, during two-year follow-up only, and during both time periods.
SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

SUMMARY

Chapter Four examined the adjudicated juveniles who exited the juvenile justice system in FY 2020 with a Level 1 or Level 2 probation disposition or a Level 3 commitment to a YDC facility and compared the three groups. A statistical profile was provided and included personal characteristics and prior, current, and recidivist contacts with the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems. Two points of time were examined for recidivism – during juvenile justice involvement and during the two-year follow-up period,

as well as an overall recidivism rate. Recidivism was defined as having a juvenile complaint and/or arrest during the time periods examined.

Across all geographic areas, the majority of juveniles were in the Level 1 probation group, ranging from a low of 63% for the Piedmont area to a high of 85% for the Western area. The Piedmont area had the highest percentage in the Level 2 and Level 3 groups (26% and 11% respectively). The Western area had the lowest percentage in the commitment group (3%). Juveniles in the Piedmont area had the highest recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up overall and by disposition level.

As the seriousness of the disposition imposed increased (i.e., from Level 1 probation to Level 2 probation to Level 3 commitment), the percentage of males, Black juveniles, and older juveniles increased. Juveniles with these personal characteristics (i.e., male, Black juveniles) also had higher recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up

Three measures were used to examine prior contacts with the juvenile justice system – prior complaints, adjudications, and confinement (i.e., detention admission and/or YDC commitment). As the seriousness of the disposition increased, prior contact with the juvenile justice system for all measures also increased. Juveniles with prior contacts with the juvenile justice system also had higher recidivism rates for all three groups during the two-year follow-up.

Most adjudicated juveniles (75%) had a misdemeanor as their most serious adjudicated offense; however, the majority of the Level 3 commitment group had a felony as their most serious adjudicated offense (91%). Of those juveniles adjudicated of a Violent offense, most were in the Level 2 probation or Level 3 commitment groups. Juveniles in the Level 2 probation and Level 3 commitment groups had more person and property offenses than juveniles with a Level 1 probation disposition. Generally, juveniles with more serious offenses (based on offense type and offense classification) had higher recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up.

As the seriousness of the disposition increased, the percentage of juveniles assessed in the higher risk and higher needs levels increased. An incremental increase in recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up was found for all groups by risk level and needs level (from lowest to highest).

The Level 2 probation and Level 3 commitment groups spent the longest time in the juvenile justice system (an average of 14 months), followed by the Level 1 probation group (11 months). Juveniles with 12 months or less of juvenile justice involvement had lower recidivism rates compared to juveniles with 13 months or more.

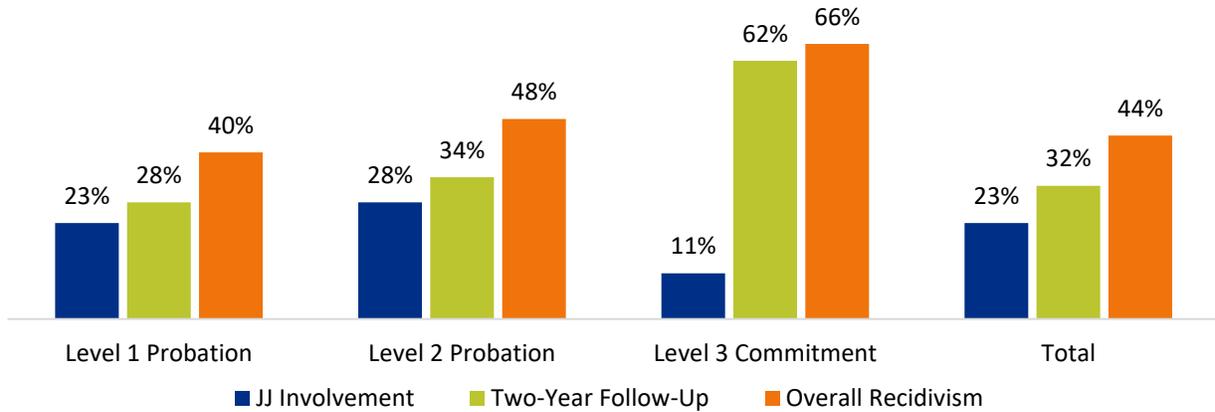
For the probation group, most (73%) were supervised under standard supervision. Examination of recidivism rates by supervision level found juveniles under High/Intensive supervision – the highest level of supervision – had the highest recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up compared to the other three levels of supervision – Enhanced, Standard and Low (lowest level).

Most Level 3 commitment juveniles (90%) entered a YDC as a first commitment. Just over half (51%) entered a YDC due to a new crime, 41% entered due to a violation of probation (41%), and the remainder (8%) entered due to a revocation of PRS.

Figure 4.22 summarizes recidivism rates during both follow-up periods and provides a measure of overall recidivism. Juveniles with Level 2 probation had higher recidivism rates during their juvenile

justice involvement (i.e., probation supervision), while committed juveniles had the lowest recidivism rates due to their confinement in a YDC facility during that time period. Recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up period and the overall recidivism increased as the seriousness of the disposition increased. The Level 3 commitment group had the highest recidivism rates, followed by the Level 2 probation group; the Level 1 probation group had the lowest recidivism rates.

Figure 4.22
Recidivism Rates for FY 2020 Adjudicated Juveniles



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

A limitation in the examination of adjudicated juveniles by their disposition level is the lack of data to fully examine supervision and YDC confinement periods. For those juveniles placed on supervised probation, the programs and services provided to the juvenile, the types of violations and responses to those violations, and the reason(s) the juvenile exited probation (e.g., successful completion, aged out, violation of probation) would be informative in understanding the findings further. Information about core treatment and programming services received while confined in a YDC facility would contribute to a more complete understanding of recidivism rates for committed juveniles.

CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSIONS

During the 2005 Session, the North Carolina General Assembly expanded the Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission’s mandate to include the preparation of biennial reports on statewide rates of juvenile recidivism. (S.L. 2005-276, Section 14.19.) This marks the ninth biennial report, submitted to the legislature on May 1, 2023. This year’s report continues the use of an exit sample methodology, first employed in the 2019 report,⁵³ which allows recidivism for juveniles to be tracked during two distinct periods of time – during their juvenile justice involvement and for a fixed two-year follow-up from their sample involvement exit. Recidivism was defined broadly to include all delinquent complaints and adult arrests.

The study followed a sample of 5,822 juveniles who were brought to the attention of the court with a delinquent complaint and exited the juvenile justice system between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020. Of particular note for this sample, are the potential effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of RtA (beginning December 1, 2019), both of which primarily affected the follow up period (discussed below).

SUMMARY

In line with the decisions made within the juvenile justice system, the 5,822 juveniles in the FY 2020 exit sample were categorized into one of three groups – diversion (57%), probation (40%), or commitment (3%). The legislative mandate specifies that juveniles adjudicated delinquent be studied; the probation and commitment groups represent those juveniles. In addition to the adjudicated group, examination of juveniles whose delinquent complaints were diverted from court (i.e., the diversion group) offered a more complete look at how the juvenile justice system handles delinquent behavior.

Altogether, nearly three-fourths of the sample (73%) were male and Black juveniles comprised 43% of the sample. Overall, the average age at the time of offense was 14 years old. Juveniles in the sample were largely charged with misdemeanors (80%); very few (only 3%) were charged with a violent delinquent act. Almost one-third (32%) of juveniles had at least one prior delinquent complaint. On average, juveniles spent 7 months involved with the juvenile justice system – less time for diverted juveniles (4 months) and more time for adjudicated juveniles (12 months for juveniles who exited probation and 14 months for juveniles released from a YDC facility).

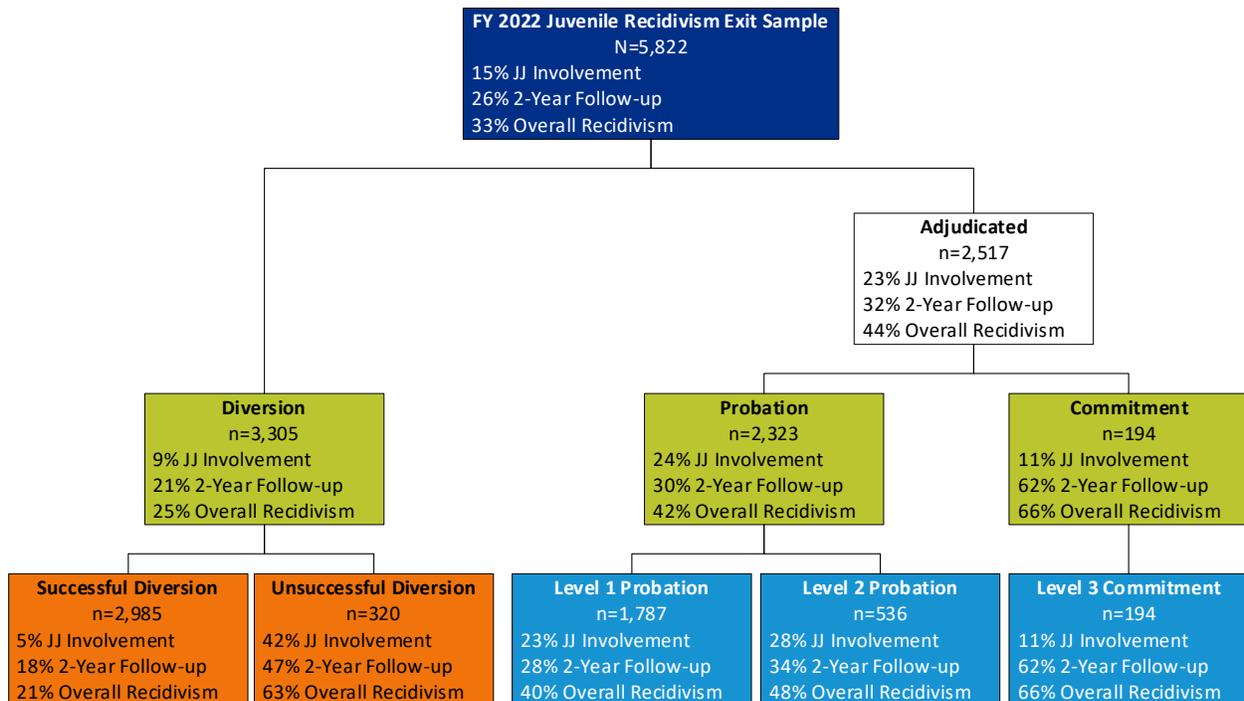
Diverted juveniles had the lowest recidivism rates during their juvenile justice involvement (9%). (See Figure 5.1.) The commitment group also had low recidivism rates during juvenile justice involvement (11%), but this was due to their confinement in a YDC facility. Juveniles on probation had the highest recidivism rates during their juvenile justice involvement (24%).

⁵³ Comparisons between the recidivism rates presented in this report and the 2019 and 2021 reports can be made; however, comparisons to reports published prior to 2019 cannot be made due to the differences in sample selection and time periods studied.

Recidivism during the two-year follow-up period revealed a clear relationship between the level of involvement with the juvenile justice system and likelihood of recidivating. Recidivism rates ranged from 21% for diverted juveniles (least serious) to 30% for juveniles placed on probation to 62% for committed juveniles (most serious).

Generally, overall recidivism (i.e., recidivism during juvenile justice involvement and/or two-year follow-up) reflected similar patterns to recidivism during the two-year follow-up; the deeper the involvement of the youth in the juvenile justice system, the higher the rates of recidivism (25% for the diversion group, 42% for the probation group, and 66% for the commitment group). All three groups were more likely to recidivate during the two-year follow-up compared to during juvenile justice involvement, but with some variation. Juveniles in the probation group had more similar rates between the two time periods (24% during juvenile justice involvement and 30% during two-year follow-up).

Figure 5.1
Recidivism Rates for North Carolina’s Diverted and Adjudicated Juveniles



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Diverted Juveniles

For diverted juveniles, this report explored the differences between juveniles who completed their diversion from juvenile court successfully compared to those who did not successfully complete. While smaller in number compared to the successful diversion group (n=2,985), juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion (n=320) tended to have more risk factors and needs identified than juveniles with a successful diversion. Juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion had much higher recidivism rates during each of the follow-up periods examined (see Figure 5.1). The higher recidivism rates for juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion were not surprising due to their higher levels of risk and needs. In addition, it is possible recidivism that occurred during their juvenile justice involvement was a contributing reason for

their unsuccessful diversion; however, this currently cannot be determined because no exit reason for unsuccessful diversion is captured in NC-JOIN.

Adjudicated Juveniles

Adjudicated juveniles were examined by disposition level imposed – Level 1 probation, Level 2 probation, and Level 3 commitment. As the seriousness of the disposition increased, the percentage of juveniles who were male, Black, adjudicated with a felony, and assessed as higher risk and/or with greater needs also increased. Juveniles with Level 2 probation had higher recidivism rates during juvenile justice involvement, while juveniles with a Level 3 commitment had the highest recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up (see Figure 5.1).

For the probation group, most (73%) were supervised under standard supervision. Examination of recidivism rates by supervision level found juveniles under high/intensive supervision – the highest level of supervision requiring the most contacts – had the highest recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up compared to the other three levels of supervision – enhanced, standard, and low (lowest level).

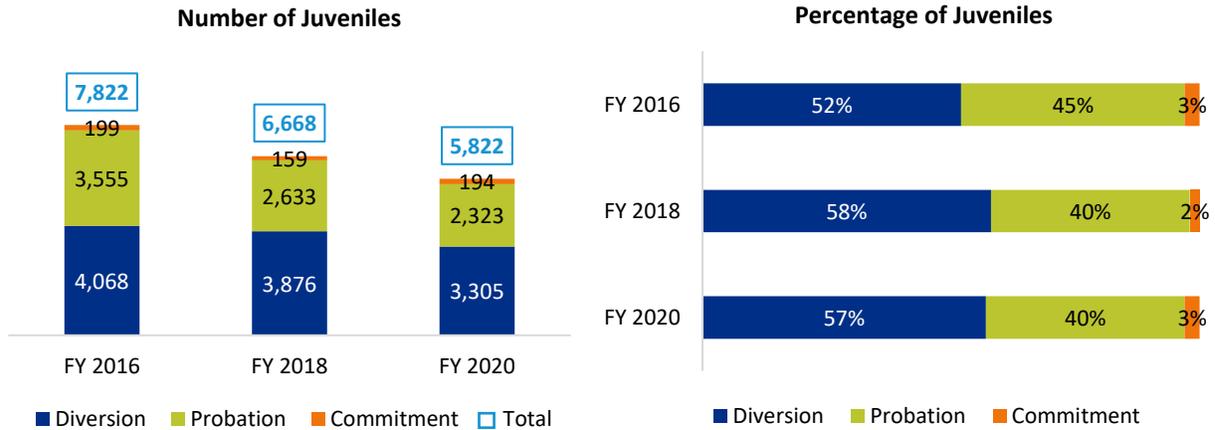
While the commitment group had higher recidivism rates than the probation group, it is important to note that juveniles in the commitment group were assessed with the highest risk and the greatest need of these two groups. The commitment group was more complex in terms of personal needs (e.g., mental health, school problems, substance use, gang affiliation) and home environment (e.g., juveniles with conflict in the home, household members with substance use problems, family members involved in criminal activity). As a result, it is not surprising that the commitment group, with the magnitude and nature of needs identified in addition to having a high level of risk, would have higher recidivism rates.

TRENDS

Figure 5.2 provides a comparison of the volume and internal sample composition over the past three studies. Overall, there was a 26% decrease in sample size from FY 2016 sample compared to FY 2020 sample. The probation group had the largest decrease in size (35%) followed by the diversion group (19%), while the commitment group had the smallest decrease in sample size (3%). The commitment group is subject to large percentage fluctuations due to its small sample size but the number of juveniles in the commitment group was nearly the same for the FY 2016 and FY 2020 samples.

The internal sample composition, which is important to consider as context for changes in recidivism rates, has shifted over the past three studies (see also Figure 5.2). The proportion of juveniles in the diversion group has increased over this period (from 52% to 57%), while the proportion of juveniles in the probation group has decreased (from 45% to 40%). The proportion of committed juveniles has remained about the same.

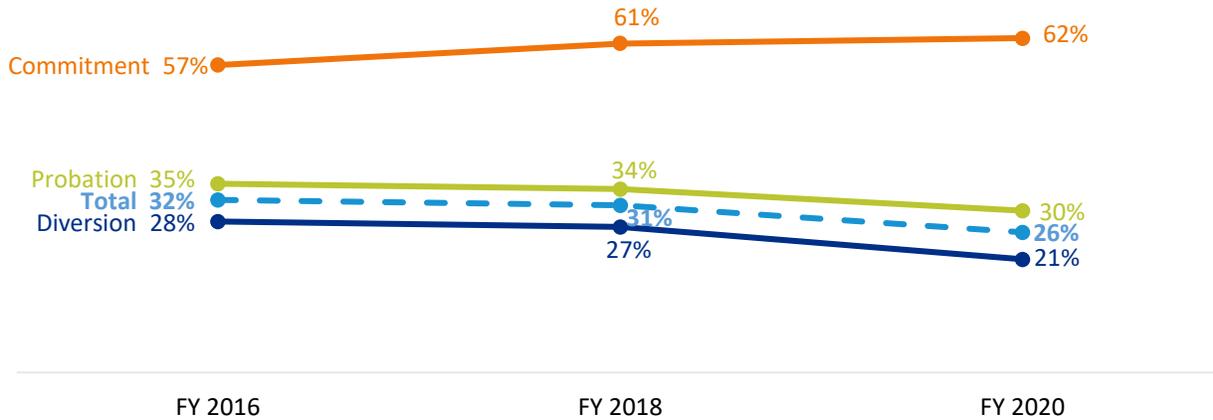
Figure 5.2
North Carolina Juveniles: A Comparison of FY 2016, FY 2018, and FY 2020 Samples



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2016 – FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Samples

Recidivism rates during the two-year follow-up were remarkably similar for the FY 2016 and FY 2018 samples (see Figure 5.3), with 1 percentage point decreases in rates for each group except for the commitment group.⁵⁴ For the FY 2020 sample, recidivism rates were lower than for the previous two samples with, again, the exception of the commitment group (discussed below). Recidivism rates across all three samples increased by seriousness of level of involvement, with the diversion group having the lowest recidivism rates and the commitment group having the highest recidivism rates.

Figure 5.3
Recidivism Rates for North Carolina Juveniles by Sample Year: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2016 – FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Samples

⁵⁴ The small numbers in the commitment group should be taken into consideration when examining changes in recidivism rates. For the FY 2020 commitment group, 121 juveniles had a recidivist event during the two-year follow-up. If only 10 fewer juveniles had committed a delinquent complaint and/or an adult arrest (n=111), the recidivism rates for the two samples would have been the same as FY 2016 (57%).

CONCLUSIONS

The study's key finding that recidivism corresponded with the juvenile's level of involvement in the juvenile justice system could have bearing on policy-related issues for juvenile justice. The analyses in this report revealed that the lowest levels of recidivism corresponded to the least invasive systemic responses of the juvenile justice system, particularly by intervening with youth short of adjudication. It is important to recognize that there are several possible explanations for this. While the depth of the system's response may contribute to a juvenile's probability of reoffending, another possibility is that the system's increasingly invasive, restrictive response is elicited by the most troubled youth affected by family dynamics, psychological issues, and school problems. The explanation to recidivistic behavior, more likely, lies in some interaction of all of these factors. Whatever the reason for the relationship between deeper involvement in the juvenile justice system and recidivism, this report and past report findings indicate the most efficient and effective investment of sufficient resources is in the community, at the front-end of the juvenile justice system. Community resources are more easily accessible to juveniles and their families and have a proven track record of successfully intervening with the complex issues associated with delinquent youth. More intensive resources (e.g., commitment to a YDC facility) should be reserved for juveniles with the more serious offenses (e.g., Violent or Serious), higher delinquency histories, and highest assessed risk and used only when all other options are exhausted. As shown by the very small percentage of the sample and low number of juveniles in the commitment group in the past three studies, the DJJDP uses this resource sparingly. The profile of these youth, as described above, suggests this type of intervention may be necessary for the complexity of needs these juveniles have, as well as due to their risk and the seriousness of their offense.

A direct relationship was also observed between juveniles' assessed risk and needs and their recidivism. Generally, as risk and needs levels increased, so did recidivism rates. The accurate identification of needs is of great importance to juveniles and the juvenile justice system. While needs levels should not be used to predict recidivism, an accurate assessment of needs is an essential component in identifying the proper treatment programs and determining whether the programs are targeting the appropriate juveniles for services. With the majority of juveniles assessed as low needs, findings from previous reports indicated the needs levels may not be accurately reflecting the true level of needs of juveniles involved with the system and should be revisited. This, in addition to the new population of 16- and 17-year-olds moving to the juvenile justice system under the JJRA, prompted the DJJDP to implement a new risk and needs assessment tool, the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI), effective January 1, 2021. The YASI focuses on the strengths and protective factors of the juvenile by developing an individualized service plan that allows for continued assessment of the juvenile while receiving services under the DJJDP. While the juveniles in this report were assessed under the old RNA, juveniles in future recidivism studies will be assessed using the YASI allowing for the examination of how the more individualized planning under the new (and more powerful) tool relates to recidivism rates.

Impact of Raise the Age

The passage of the JJRA raised the age of juvenile jurisdiction by adding a new population of 16- and 17-year-olds and by extending the number of years available for youth to be under the jurisdiction of the system. While RtA went into effect during the FY 2020 sample timeframe, very few juveniles from this new population were in the sample (4%) with it being an exit sample. Consequently, it is not possible to determine the effect of RtA on recidivism using the FY 2020 sample. However, the extension of juvenile jurisdiction under RtA did impact the system in which recidivism was captured for the FY 2020 sample,

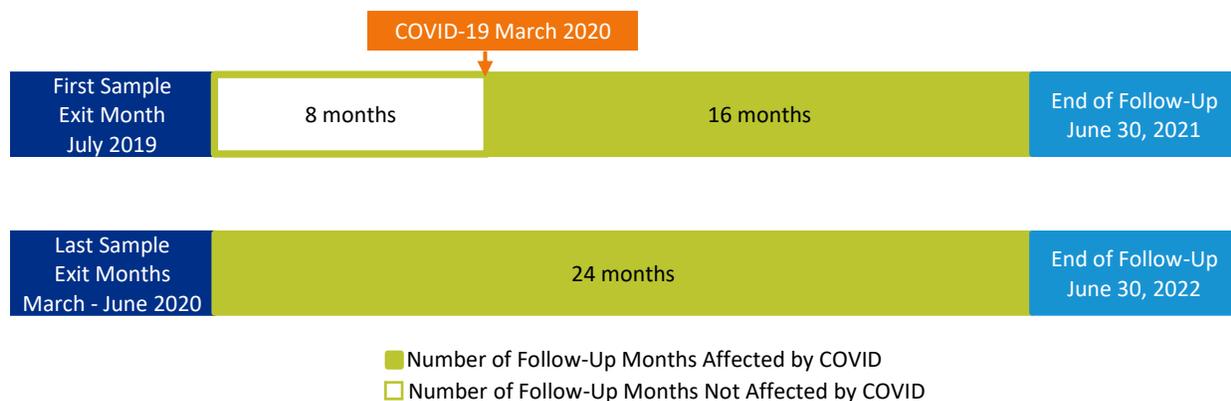
with most recidivist behavior captured in the juvenile system instead of the adult criminal justice system unlike previous samples. The COVID-19 pandemic (described below) had a much more dramatic effect on the system, particularly during the follow-up period.

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

As described in Chapter One, the COVID-19 pandemic, which began in March 2020, had significant effects on the juvenile justice system and processes, including (but not limited to) changes to schools (closures and/or virtual learning) and court operations (reduced court sessions) and community supervision (increased use of electronic monitoring). While the pandemic affected the FY 2020 sample with its onset occurring during the last quarter of FY 2020 (i.e., March through June 2020), it had a limited effect since the sample is based on exits and not admissions. The admission event for most juveniles in the FY 2020 exit sample occurred prior to the start of the pandemic (97%).

However, the pandemic was an important factor for consideration when examining recidivism during the two time periods examined – during juvenile justice involvement and during the two-year follow-up period. The pandemic had a larger impact on the two-year follow-up period than on the juvenile justice involvement period, with most (67%) having a portion of the two-year follow-up period and 33% having *all* of the two-year follow-up period occurring during the pandemic. The number of months affected by the pandemic during the two-year follow-up period varied based on when a juvenile exited the sample, ranging from 16 to 24 months (see Figure 5.4).

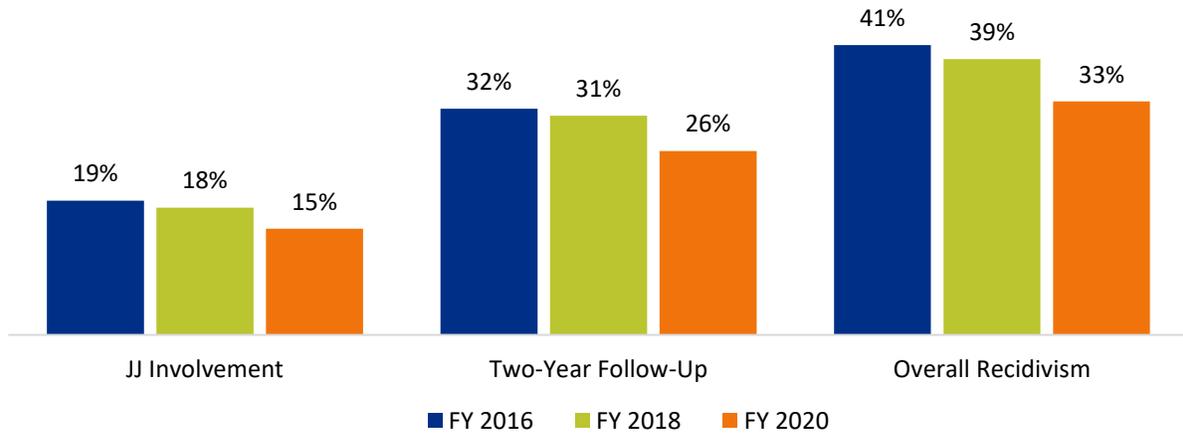
Figure 5.4
Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Two-Year Follow-Up Period by Sample Exit Month



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Recidivism rates for the previous two samples were compared to the FY 2020 sample to examine the effect of the pandemic on outcomes (see Figure 5.5). Overall recidivism decreased for each sample from FY 2016 to FY 2020, as did recidivism during juvenile justice involvement and the two-year follow-up. Recidivism rates decreased by 1 to 2 percentage points from the FY 2016 to the FY 2018 sample; the largest decreases, ranging from 3 to 6 percentage points, occurred from the FY 2018 to the FY 2020 sample.

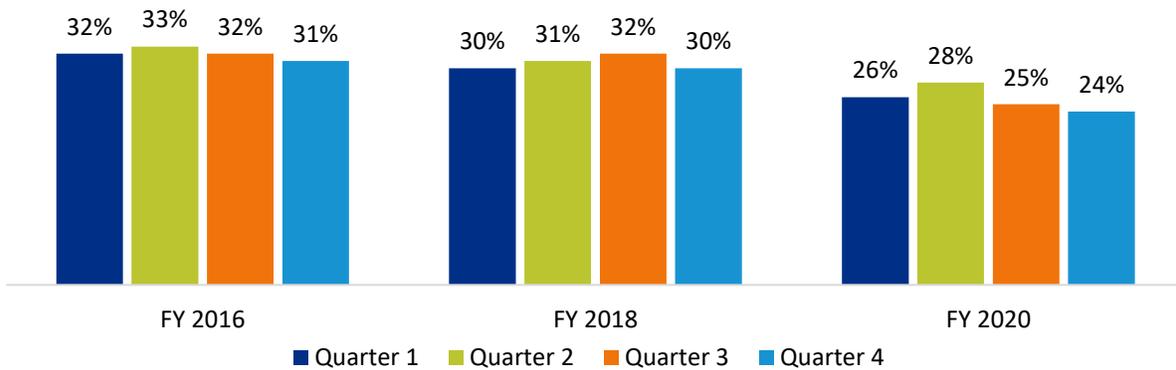
Figure 5.5
Recidivism Rates for North Carolina Juveniles by Sample Year



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2016 – FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Samples

Recidivism rates for the three samples were then compared based on the quarter (Q) in which juveniles exited their respective sample (see Figure 5.6).⁵⁵ Although the differences were small, a noticeable pattern across quarters was observed for the three samples with Q4 having the lowest rates of recidivism and Q2 or Q3 having higher rates. Also noticeable are the lower rates for *each* quarter for the current sample, an indication of the effect of the pandemic during the two-year follow-up period for the large majority of juveniles studied.

Figure 5.6
Recidivism Rates by Sample Exit Quarter: Two-Year Follow-Up



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2016 – FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Samples

⁵⁵ For FY 2016, the quarters are defined as follows: Q1 covers July to September 2015, Q2 covers October to December 2015, Q3 covers January to March 2016, and Q4 covers April to June 2016. For FY 2018, the quarters are defined as follows: Q1 covers July to September 2017, Q2 covers October to December 2017, Q3 covers January to March 2018, and Q4 covers April to June 2018. For FY 2020, the quarters are defined as follows: Q1 covers July to September 2019, Q2 covers October to December 2019, Q3 covers January to March 2020, and Q4 covers April to June 2020.

Future reports will be able to examine the effect of RtA on recidivism, as well as the recovery of the system (in terms of any potential changes in recidivism) from the pandemic. Additional data for the three groups – diversion, probation, and commitment – would enhance the analysis and findings and should also be considered for future studies:

- Inclusion of a diversion exit reason in NC-JOIN, would allow a closer examination of juveniles with an unsuccessful diversion by risk and needs and provide useful insight in appropriate targeting of resources for these juveniles diverted from juvenile court.
- Information about programs and services provided to juveniles on probation, the types of violations and responses to those violations, and the reason(s) the juvenile exited probation (e.g., successful completion, aged out, violation of probation) in order to better understand the findings for juveniles who exited probation (particularly relating to supervision level and to timing of recidivism).
- Information about core treatment and programming services received while confined in a YDC facility would contribute to the understanding of committed juveniles' behavior while confined and their outcomes (i.e., recidivism) upon their release.
- Finally, the inclusion of these data may provide insight to the optimal length of juvenile justice involvement for adjudicated juveniles.

The Sentencing Commission looks forward to working collaboratively with the DJJDP to further understand the factors contributing to juvenile recidivism in North Carolina, and combining any lessons learned to make improvements to the juvenile justice system in North Carolina.

APPENDIX A

RISK AND NEEDS

RISK ASSESSMENT

NORTH CAROLINA ASSESSMENT OF JUVENILE RISK OF FUTURE OFFENDING

Juvenile Name (F, M, L)		DOB:
SS#:	County of Residence:	
Juvenile Race: <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-racial <input type="checkbox"/> Other		
Juvenile Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		
Date Assessment Completed:	Completed by:	

Instructions: Complete each assessment item R1 to R9 using the best available information. Circle the numeric score associated with each item response and enter it on the line to the right of the item. Total the item scores to determine the level of risk and check the appropriate risk level in R10. Identify the most serious current offense in R11. Assessment items R1-R5 are historical in nature and should be answered based on the juvenile's lifetime. Items R6 and R7 should be evaluated over the 12 months prior to the assessment. R7-R9 should be evaluated as of the time of the assessment. Use the Comments section at the end as needed for additional information or clarification.

- R1. Age when first delinquent offense alleged in a complaint:** Circle appropriate score and enter the actual age. **Score**
- | | |
|--|---|
| a. Age 12 or over or no delinquent complaint | 0 |
| b. Under age 12 | 2 |
| Actual age: | |
- R2. Number of undisciplined or delinquent referrals to Intake** (Referrals are instances of complaints coming through the Intake process. A referral may include multiple complaints; for example, breaking or entering and larceny, or multiple larcenies or other offenses that occur at one time.)
- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| a. Current referral only | 0 |
| b. 1 Prior referral | 1 |
| c. 2-3 Prior referrals | 2 |
| d. 4+ Prior referrals | 3 |
- R3. Most serious prior adjudication(s).** Enter the actual number of prior adjudications for each class of offense shown in b through e then circle the score for **only the most serious** offense for which there has been a prior adjudication. **The maximum possible score for this item is 4.**
- | | | |
|--|---------------------|---|
| a. No Prior Adjudications | | 0 |
| b. Prior Undisciplined | # of adjudications: | 1 |
| c. Prior Class 1-3 misdemeanors | # of adjudications: | 2 |
| d. Prior Class F-I felonies or A1 misdemeanors | # of adjudications: | 3 |
| e. Prior Class A-E felonies | # of adjudications: | 4 |
- R4. Prior Assaults:** "Assault" is defined as any assaultive behavior, whether physical or sexual, with or without a weapon as evidenced by a prior delinquent complaint. Record the number of complaints for each assault category shown. Then circle the score for the assault category with the highest numerical score. **The maximum possible score for this item is 5.**
- | | | |
|---|------------------|---|
| a. No assaults | | 0 |
| b. Involvement in an affray | # of complaints: | 1 |
| c. Yes, without a weapon | # of complaints: | 2 |
| d. Yes, without a weapon, inflicting serious injury | # of complaints: | 3 |
| e. Yes, with a weapon | # of complaints: | 4 |
| f. Yes, with a weapon inflicting serious injury | # of complaints: | 5 |
- R5. Runaways (from home or placement):** "Runaway" is defined as absconding from home or any placement and not voluntarily returning within twenty-four (24) hours as evidenced by a complaint, motion for review, or from reliable information. Circle appropriate score.
- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| a. No | 0 |
| b. Yes | 2 |
| Actual number of runaway incidents | |
- R6. Known use of alcohol or illegal drugs during past 12 months:** Do not include tobacco in scoring this item. Circle appropriate score.
- | | |
|--|---|
| a. No known substance use | 0 |
| b. Some substance use, need for further assessment | 1 |
| c. Substance abuse, assessment and/or treatment needed | 3 |

R7. School behavior problems during the prior 12 months: Circle appropriate score.

a. No problems (Enrolled, attending regularly)	0
b. Minor problems (attending with problems handled by teacher/school personnel, or 1-3 unexcused absences/truancy)	1
c. Moderate problems (4 to 10 unexcused absences /truancy, or 1 or more in-school suspensions or 1 short-term suspension – up to 10 days)	2
d. Serious problems (more than 1 short-term suspension, or 1 or more long-term suspension, or more than 10 unexcused absences or expelled/dropped out)	3

R8. Peer relationships: Circle appropriate score. Put check in the line following appropriate information.

a. Peers usually provide good support and influence	0
b. Youth is rejected by pro-social peers _____, or youth sometimes associates with others who have been involved in delinquent/criminal activity but is not primary peer group _____	1
c. Youth regularly associates with others who are involved in delinquent/criminal activity	3
d. Youth is a gang member _____ or associates with a gang _____	5

R9. Parental supervision: (Score the current responsible parental authority) Circle appropriate score.

a. Parent, guardian or custodian willing and able to supervise	0
b. Parent, guardian or custodian willing but unable to supervise	2
c. Parent, guardian or custodian unwilling to supervise	3

R10.

TOTAL RISK SCORE	
-------------------------	--

Check Risk Level: RL1-lowest risk (0) RL2 (1-2) RL3 (3-5)
 RL4 (6-12) RL5-highest risk (13-30)

R11. Completed before or after adjudication: (check) before _____ after _____

Most serious offense alleged /adjudicated in current complaint/petition	
	Statute number
Class offense: <input type="checkbox"/> A-E Felony <input type="checkbox"/> F-I Felony, A1 Misdemeanor <input type="checkbox"/> Class 1-3 Misdemeanor <input type="checkbox"/> Undisciplined	

Note: Risk level is to be considered along with the current offense.

COMMENTS:

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

NORTH CAROLINA ASSESSMENT OF JUVENILE NEEDS

Juvenile Name (F, M, L)		DOB:
SS#:	County of Residence:	
Juvenile Race: <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-racial <input type="checkbox"/> Other		
Juvenile Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		
Date Assessment Completed:	Completed by:	

Instructions: Complete each needs assessment item using the best available information. Circle the score associated with the most appropriate item choice and enter the number on the line to the left of the item. Items that are of a current nature should be considered as of the time of the assessment unless a time period for consideration is noted. Assessment items that are historical in nature (Y6 and F5) should be answered based on the juvenile or family member's lifetime. Total the points for all items to determine the total need score and then check the appropriate needs level (low, medium or high). Complete the information source checklist. Finally, identify at least three priority needs for constructing a case plan and appropriate service interventions. Give additional information as needed in the Comments section.

YOUTH NEEDS Score

Y1. Peer Relationships

- _____ 0 a. Peers usually provide good support and influence.
 2 b. Youth is rejected by pro-social peers.
 3 c. Youth sometimes associates with others who have been involved in delinquent/criminal activity but this is not a primary peer group.
 4 d. Youth regularly associates with others who are involved in delinquent/criminal activity.
 5 e. Youth is a gang member ____ or associates with a gang ____.
 Name of gang _____

Y2. School Behavior/Adjustment

- _____ 0 a. No problems. Youth is attending regularly ____, graduated ____, or has GED ____.
 1 b. Minor problems. Work effort ____, or disciplinary problems ____ that were handled by classroom teacher/school personnel or 1-3 unexcused absences/truancy ____.
 3 c. Moderate problems. Youth has 4 to 10 unexcused absences ____, or received 1 or more in-school suspensions ____, or 1 short-term suspension (i.e. less than 10 days) ____.
 4 d. Serious problems. Youth has dropped out of school ____, or been expelled ____, or received more than one short-term suspension ____, or one long-term suspension (10 days or more) ____, or has more than 10 unexcused absences ____.

Y3. General Academic Functioning

- _____ 0 a. Generally functioning above or at grade level ____, or is placed in appropriate Exceptional Children's program ____.
 3 b. Generally functioning below grade level. Needs an educational evaluation ____, or has identified Exceptional Children's needs that are unserved ____.

Check Assessed Exceptional Children's needs: Autism ____, Behaviorally Emotionally Disabled ____, Deaf/Blind ____, Gifted/Talented ____, Hearing Impaired ____, Mentally Disabled ____, Multi-handicapped ____, Orthopedically Impaired ____, Other Health Impaired ____, Pregnant Student ____, Specific Learning Disabled ____, Speech/Language Impaired ____, Traumatic Brain Injury ____, Visually Impaired ____

Y4. Substance Abuse Within Past 12 months (Do not consider tobacco in this item.)

- _____ 0 a. No known substance use.
 1 b. Some substance use, need for further assessment.
 3 c. Substance abuse, assessment and/or treatment needed.
Check all that apply: Denial ____ Refusal of treatment ____
 Unmet need for treatment ____ Prior treatment failures ____ Currently in treatment ____
Describe substance abuse noted above by type: (check all that apply, leave blank if none)
 Cocaine ____ Amphetamines ____ Opiates ____ Inhalants ____
 Alcohol ____ Cannabinoids ____ Other _____

_____ **Y5. Juvenile Parent Status**

- 0 a. Juvenile is not a parent.
- 1 b. Juvenile is a parent, but does *not* have custody of child.
- 2 c. Juvenile is a parent ____ or an expectant parent ____ but has adequate childcare support.
- 4 d. Juvenile is a parent ____ or an expectant parent ____ but inadequate childcare support. Number of children _____

_____ **Y6. History of Victimization by Caregiver or Others**

- 0 a. No history or evidence of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect or other criminal victimization.
- 2 b. Victimization with appropriate support. History or evidence of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect or other criminal victimization with appropriate response to protect against subsequent victimization.
- 3 c. Victimization without support. One or more incidents of victimization; failure to protect against subsequent victimization.

Check all that apply to the youth: physical abuse ____, sexual abuse ____, emotional abuse ____, neglect ____, criminal victimization ____, other _____

_____ **Y7. Sexual Behavior During Past 12 Months**

- 0 a. No apparent problem.
- 2 b. Behavior that needs further assessment such as use of pornography ____, obscene phone calls ____, voyeurism ____, uses sexually explicit language or gestures ____ or other _____.
- 3 c. Engages in sexual practices that are potentially dangerous to self or others ____.
- 4 d. Youth's sexual adjustment/behavior results in victimization of others _____. May use sexual expression/behavior to attain power and control over others _____.

_____ **Y8. Mental Health**

- 0 a. No need for mental health care indicated.
- 1 b. Has mental health needs that are being addressed.
- 3 c. Behavior indicates a need for additional mental health assessment ____ or treatment _____.

Check all behaviors that apply:

Withdrawn ____ Self mutilation ____ Sad ____ Runs away ____
Confused ____ Hallucinations ____ Anxious ____ Fights ____
Sleep problems ____ Eating problems ____ Angry ____ Restless ____
Risk-taking/impulsive ____ Other _____
Diagnosis (from MH professional) _____

_____ **Y9. Basic Physical Needs/Independent Living**

- 0 a. Youth is living with parents, guardian or custodian. Basic needs for food, shelter and protection are met.
- 1 b. Youth is in temporary residential care or shelter ____ or living independently with basic needs for food, shelter and protection being met _____.
- 2 c. Youth is living with parents, guardian or custodian. Basic needs are not being met. Food needs not met ____, shelter needs not met ____, protection needs not met ____.
- 3 d. Youth is living independently. Basic needs are not being met. Food needs not met ____, shelter needs not met ____, protection needs not met ____.

_____ **Y10. Health & Hygiene (exclude Mental Health Conditions)**

- 0 a. No apparent problem.
- 1 b. Youth has medical, ____ dental ____, health/ hygiene education ____ needs which do not impair functioning. **Youth uses tobacco products** ____.
- 2 c. Youth has physical handicap ____ or chronic illness ____ that limits functioning and the condition is being treated.
- 3 d. Youth has physical handicap ____ or chronic illness ____ that limits functioning and the condition is not being treated. Youth does not comply with prescribed medication ____ or has an unmet need for prescribed medication _____.

Juvenile Name (F, M, L) _____ DOB: _____

FAMILY NEEDS: Answer the following questions about the juvenile's primary family. The primary family is the juvenile's natural family or the family unit that the juvenile is living with on a permanent basis. If the juvenile is placed away from home, the questions should be answered about the "family" to which the juvenile will be returning. Make any needed clarifying comments in the comment section.

_____ **F1. Conflict in the Home Within Past 12 Months**

- 0 a. The home environment is relatively supportive; there are no problems that require outside intervention.
- 2 b. Marital or domestic discord resulting in emotional or physical conflict (without serious injury) with spouse, partner, and/or child(ren) _____. Family members avoid contact with each other _____.
- 4 c. Domestic violence resulting in injury or the involvement of law enforcement and/or domestic violence programs _____. Restraining orders/criminal complaints _____ substantiated abuse _____.
- Check if there is a history of domestic discord _____ or domestic violence _____.

_____ **F2. Supervision Skills**

- 0 a. Adequate skills. Parent makes rules for youth and generally enforces them; parent attempts to keep track of the child's activities and uses discipline when needed; youth respects parent for the most part.
- 2 b. Marginal skills. Parent may make rules, but has difficulty enforcing them _____ or youth often engages in inappropriate activities without parent's knowledge _____ or parent does not react with necessary sanctions when rules are broken _____ or parents say they are having difficulty controlling the juvenile _____.
- 4 c. Inadequate. Parent supports juvenile's delinquency/independence or excuses it _____ or parent refuses responsibility for youth _____ or abandons youth _____.

_____ **F3. Disabilities of Parent, Guardian or Custodian**

- 0 a. Parent, guardian or custodian has no known disabilities that interfere with parenting.
- 2 b. Parent, guardian or custodian's ability to provide for youth is impaired by serious mental health disorder _____ or a serious health problem _____ or other disability _____.

_____ **F4. Substance Abuse Within the Past 3 Years By Household Members (Do not include juvenile.)**

- 0 a. No evidence of alcohol or drug abuse.
- 3 b. One or more household members abuse alcohol or drugs.
- Indicate all that apply: Parent is abuser _____ Sibling is abuser _____
Other household member is abuser _____ Unmet need for treatment _____ Denial _____
Refusal of treatment _____ Prior treatment failures _____ Job loss _____
DWI _____ Other conflict with the law _____ Abusive/destructive behavior _____
- Describe substance use/abuse noted above by type (check all that apply, leave blank if none)
- | | | |
|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Cocaine _____ | Amphetamines _____ | Opiates _____ |
| Alcohol _____ | Cannabinoids _____ | Other _____ |

_____ **F5. Family Criminality**

- 0 a. No family member (including siblings) has been convicted/adjudicated for criminal acts.
- 1 b. Parents, guardian or custodian and/or siblings have record of convictions/adjudications. Parent, guardian or custodian conviction _____ Sibling conviction/adjudication _____
- 3 c. Parent, guardian or custodian and/or siblings are currently incarcerated, or are on probation or parole (give relationship and status) _____ or are known gang members _____.

Total Needs Score

Check Needs Level: Low (0-12) Medium (13-22) High (23+)

Sources of information: Check all that apply

Juvenile _____	Mother _____	Father _____	Other Caregiver _____
Sibling _____	Other relative _____	School _____	Victim _____
Neighbor _____	Law Enforcement _____	DSS _____	Mental Health _____
Others _____	_____	_____	_____

ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS COMMENTS:

**ASSESSMENT OF JUVENILE RISK OF FUTURE OFFENDING and
ASSESSMENT OF JUVENILE NEEDS
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION**

Juvenile Name (F, M, L)	
SS#:	DOB:
Date of Assessment and Recommendation	

Total Risk Score _____ RL1-lowest risk (0) RL2 (1-2) RL3 (3-5)
 RL4 (6-12) RL5-highest risk (13-30)

Total Needs Score _____ Low Needs (0-12) Medium Needs (13-22) High Needs (23+)

After completing each Needs Assessment item, review the findings and determine the youth's priority needs i.e., those behaviors which must be addressed by service interventions to deter future delinquent behavior. Then enter the priority needs in the boxes below (enter the priority needs item reference; i.e., Y1 , Y2 or F3, etc.) and briefly describe the service intervention recommended. The Needs Assessment plus the Risk Assessment provide the basic information for constructing the case plan.

Priority Needs	Services Recommended
1.	
2.	
3.	
Other:	

Comments:

Table A.1
Juveniles with Risk and/or Needs Assessments by Level of Involvement

Level of Involvement	N	Avg. Days to Complete:		No Risk or Needs		Risk Only		Needs Only		Both Risk and Needs	
		Risk	Needs	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Diversion	3,305	3	3	6	0.2	1	0.0	0	--	3,298	99.8
Probation	2,323	12	12	1	0.0	0	--	0	--	2,322	100.0
Commitment	194	11	11	0	--	0	--	0	--	194	100.0
Total	5,822	6	7	7	0.1	1	0.0	0	--	5,822	99.9

Note: Generally, risk and/or needs assessments were counted if the assessment was completed within a year of the date the sample entry event (i.e., diversion start date or dispositional hearing date).

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

APPENDIX B

JUVENILE DISPOSITION CHART

Juvenile Disposition Chart

Offense Classification	Delinquency History Level		
	Low 0-1 point	Medium 2-3 points	High 4 or more points
Violent Class A-E felonies	Level 2 or 3	Level 3	Level 3
Serious Class F-I felonies Class A1 misdemeanors	Level 1 or 2	Level 2	Level 2 or 3
Minor Class 1-3 misdemeanors	Level 1	Level 1 or 2	Level 2

Offense Classification (G.S. 7B-2508)

Violent – Adjudication of a Class A through E felony offense.

Serious – Adjudication of a Class F through I felony offense or a Class A1 misdemeanor.

Minor – Adjudication of a Class 1, 2, or 3 misdemeanor.

Delinquency History Levels (G.S. 7B-2507(c))

Points

For each prior adjudication of a Class A through E felony offense, 4 points.

For each prior adjudication of a Class F through I felony offense or a Class A1 misdemeanor offense, 2 points.

For each prior adjudication of a Class 1, 2, or 3 misdemeanor, 1 point.

If the juvenile was on probation at the time of the offense, 2 points.

Levels

Low – No more than 1 point.

Medium – At least 2, but not more than 3 points.

High – At least 4 points.

APPENDIX C

DISPOSITIONAL ALTERNATIVES

**Dispositional Alternatives for Delinquent Juveniles
(G.S. 7B-2502 and G.S. 7B-2506)**

Level 1 Community	Level 2 Intermediate	Level 3 Commitment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive substance abuse treatment program • Excuse from school attendance • Residential treatment program • In-home supervision • Community-based program • Custody • Restitution up to \$500 • Nonresidential treatment program • Not associate with specified persons • Community service up to 100 hours • Victim-offender reconciliation • Probation • No driver's license • Intermittent confinement up to 5 days • Fine • Not be in specified places • Curfew • Wilderness program • Supervised day program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive substance abuse treatment program • Residential treatment program • Intensive nonresidential treatment program • Wilderness program • Group home placement • Intensive probation • Supervised day program • Regimented training program • House arrest with/without electronic monitoring • Suspension of more severe disposition w/conditions • Intermittent confinement up to 14 days • Multipurpose group home • Restitution over \$500 • Community service up to 200 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 month minimum confinement • Minimum 90 day post-release supervision

APPENDIX D

FY 2020 CLOSED AND DISMISSED JUVENILES

Table D.1
Profile of FY 2020 Closed and Dismissed Juveniles

		Closed N=2,987	Dismissed N=1,052
Personal Characteristics			
Male	%	68	73
Race/Ethnicity			
White	%	29	34
Black	%	56	52
Hispanic	%	10	9
Other/Unknown	%	5	5
Age at Offense	Avg.	14	14
Age at JJ Entry	Avg.	14	14
Age at JJ Exit	Avg.	14	14
Prior Juvenile Justice Contacts			
Prior Complaint	%	23	33
Prior Adjudication	%	9	12
Prior Confinement	%	6	8
Most Serious Charged Offense			
Offense Type			
Misdemeanor	%	91	67
Offense Classification			
Violent (Class A - E Felony)	%	<1	8
Serious (Class F - I Felony, Class A1 Misd.)	%	15	34
Minor (Class 1 - 3 Misdemeanor)	%	85	58
Crime Category			
Person	%	45	48
Property	%	26	29
Drug	%	8	8
Other	%	21	15
School-Based Offense	%	53	45
Risk Assessment			
Risk Assessment Completed	%	80	92
Risk Level			
RL1 (lowest)	%	11	7
RL2	%	27	18
RL3	%	35	31
RL4	%	19	32
RL5 (highest)	%	7	12
Risk Score (0-30 points)	Avg.	5	7
Needs Assessment			
Needs Assessment Completed	%	80	91
Needs Level			
Low	%	82	63
Medium	%	17	31
High	%	1	6
Needs Score (0-51 points)	Avg.	6	11
Juvenile Justice Involvement			
Length of JJ Involvement (months)	Avg.	0	5
Recidivism Rates during JJ Involvement	%	2	13

continued

Table D.1
Profile of FY 2020 Closed and Dismissed Juveniles

		Closed N=2,987	Dismissed N=1,052
Recidivism Rates: Two-Year Follow-Up			
One-Year Follow-Up	%	18	18
Two-Year Follow-up	%	26	26
Months to First Recidivist Event	Avg.	8	8
Number of Recidivist Events	Avg.	2	3
By Personal Characteristics			
Gender			
Male	%	30	28
Female	%	18	20
Race/Ethnicity			
White	%	16	20
Black	%	32	31
Hispanic	%	21	20
Other	%	26	27
By Prior Complaint			
No Prior Complaint	%	18	19
Prior Complaint	%	53	41
By Most Serious Charged Offense			
Offense Type			
Felony	%	39	32
Misdemeanor	%	25	23
Offense Classification			
Violent (Class A - E Felony)	%	--	26
Serious (Class F - I Felony, Class A1 Misd.)	%	34	30
Minor (Class 1 - 3 Misdemeanor)	%	25	24
Crime Category			
Person	%	22	20
Property	%	35	36
Drug	%	28	21
Other	%	24	28
School-Based Offense	%		
No	%	33	32
Yes	%	20	18
By Risk/Needs Assessments			
Risk Level			
RL1 (lowest)	%	12	13
RL2	%	14	16
RL3	%	23	22
RL4	%	52	32
RL5 (highest)	%	80	58
Needs Level			
Low	%	22	21
Medium	%	59	39
High	%	74	48
Summary of Recidivism Rates			
During Juvenile Justice Involvement (JJI)	%	2	13
During Two-Year Follow-Up	%	26	26
Overall Recidivism: JJI and/or 2-Yr Follow-Up	%	27	33

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

APPENDIX E

GLOSSARY OF MAJOR TERMS AND VARIABLES

GLOSSARY OF MAJOR TERMS AND VARIABLES⁵⁶

Adjudicated Juveniles: A juvenile who has been found, beyond a reasonable doubt, by a judge in juvenile court to have committed a violation of criminal law. For this study, adjudicated juveniles refer to youth with a probation disposition imposed (Level 1 or Level 2 probation) or youth who received a Level 3 commitment.

Adjudicated Offense: The offense the juvenile has been found to have committed by a judge. Analysis provided on adjudicated offenses in Chapter Four.

Adjudication: An adjudication is a finding by a judge, following an adjudicatory hearing, that a juvenile committed a delinquent act or is undisciplined. This report only includes delinquent adjudications. Data on infractions, local ordinances, process offenses (e.g., curfew violation, probation violation, failure to appear), and misdemeanor traffic offenses were excluded. Adjudications were examined during the following time periods: prior, current (probation and commitment groups only), and recidivism. Adjudications and adult convictions were combined to create a secondary recidivism measure.

Age: Age in years as measured at different time periods during juvenile justice involvement. Age was reported as mean or categorized by the following groups: 6-11, 12-13, 14, 15, 16-17 or 16+.

- **Age at JJ Entry:** The age of the juvenile at the start of the diversion plan/contract or at the date of the dispositional hearing for juveniles in the probation and commitment groups.
- **Age at JJ Exit:** The age of the juvenile at exit from juvenile justice involvement (i.e., diversion plan/contract ended, probation supervision ended, or released from a YDC facility), which is also the start of the two-year follow-up period.
- **Age at Offense:** The age of the juvenile at the time the alleged charged offense occurred.

Arrest: A record of a fingerprinted arrest in North Carolina that occurred after a juvenile reached the age of criminal majority. Data on infractions, local ordinances, process offenses (e.g., curfew violation, probation violation, failure to appear), and misdemeanor traffic offenses were excluded. An arrest for which an offender was not fingerprinted (e.g., a misdemeanor offense for which fingerprinting is not required), indictment without an arrest, or failure to find a match for an offender in the SBI's CCH database results in the lack of an arrest record. The lack of an arrest record was interpreted as the lack of an arrest. Adult arrests and delinquent complaints were combined to create the primary recidivism measure and were tracked during the follow-up periods.

Complaint (Juvenile): A formal complaint lodged by a law enforcement officer or private citizen to the DJJDP. This study only included delinquent complaints. Data on infractions, local ordinances, process offenses (e.g., curfew violation, probation violation, failure to appear), and misdemeanor traffic offenses were excluded. Complaints were examined during the following time periods: prior, current (i.e., the complaint that placed the juvenile in the sample), and recidivism. Delinquent complaints and adult arrests were combined to create the primary recidivism measure and were tracked during the follow-up periods.

⁵⁶ The DJJDP's web page (see <https://www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/juvenile-justice/juvenile-justice-terminology#Commitment-1746>) was accessed to define several of the terms included in the glossary.

Computerized Criminal History (CCH) System: The management information system containing information on all fingerprinted arrests and convictions of adults (and juveniles waived to adult jurisdiction) from North Carolina law enforcement agencies and courts as maintained by the SBI. It is the source of all recidivist arrest and conviction information for the sample.

Conviction (Adult): A conviction for an offense in the North Carolina adult court system that occurred after a juvenile reached the age of criminal majority. Data on infractions, local ordinances, process offenses (e.g., curfew violation, probation violation, failure to appear), and misdemeanor traffic offenses were excluded. Adult convictions and juvenile adjudications were combined to create a secondary recidivism measure and were tracked during the follow-up periods.

Detention Center: Juvenile detention centers are secure facilities that temporarily house youth alleged to have committed a delinquent act or to be a runaway. Youth are generally placed in a juvenile detention center while awaiting a court hearing, or until another placement can be found, either in a community-based program or service or in a Youth Development Center. Because of the short-term nature of detention, programs and services offered in these centers are limited.

Disposition Level: Juvenile court judges have three dispositional levels available in which to dispose the juvenile's case: a Level 1 or community disposition, a Level 2 or intermediate disposition, and a Level 3 or commitment disposition. Chapter Four uses disposition level to compare the three levels by demographic information and recidivism. Also see Level 1 Probation, Level 2 Probation, and Level 3 Commitment.

- **Level 1:** A Level 1 or community disposition offers the court less restrictive dispositional alternatives such as probation, community-based programs, nonresidential and residential treatment programs, community service (up to 100 hours), restitution (up to \$500), and sanctions that place specific limitations on a juvenile (e.g., curfew, no association with specified persons, not be in specified places).
- **Level 2:** A Level 2 or intermediate disposition is generally more restrictive than a Level 1 disposition. Level 2 dispositional alternatives include options such as intensive probation, group home placements (e.g., multipurpose group homes), regimented training programs, and house arrest. For a Level 2 disposition, a juvenile can be ordered to make restitution that is in excess of \$500 or perform up to 200 hours of community service.
- **Level 3:** A Level 3 or commitment disposition provides the most restrictive sanction to a juvenile court judge – commitment to the DJJDP for placement in a Youth Development Center (YDC).

Diversion: At the completion of an intake evaluation, if there is need for referral (e.g., restitution, clinical treatment) and follow-up, which may be accomplished without court intervention, the court counselor may retain the complaint and develop a diversion plan with the juvenile and their responsible party (i.e., parent, guardian, or custodian). This process diverts the juvenile from court while still holding the child and family accountable through a plan or contract. Both the plan and the contract are in effect for up to six months, during which time a court counselor conducts periodic reviews to ensure the compliance. A diversion plan is less formal than a diversion contract.

Diversion Outcome: Diversion outcome is classified as successful or unsuccessful. A diversion outcome is determined within a 6-month timeframe. The diversion outcome depends on whether juveniles

complete the terms of their diversion plan or contract. Chapter Three uses diversion outcome as a comparison for diverted juveniles and their statistical profile and recidivism.

- **Successful Diversion:** Juveniles have up to 6 months to complete the terms of their diversion plan or contract. A completed plan or contract within 6 months is a successful diversion. Compliance with the recommendations of the plan or contract results in the finalization of the juvenile's diversion.
- **Unsuccessful Diversion:** Unsuccessful diversion is a result of exiting due to noncompliance. If the parties fail to comply, the counselor may reevaluate the decision to divert and subsequently file the complaint as a petition in juvenile court. Noncompliance with the terms of diversion may result in a petition filed in juvenile court.

Follow-Up Periods: Two time periods tracked recidivist events: during juvenile justice involvement which varied for each juvenile and during a fixed period after exiting the juvenile justice system. Depending on the age of the juvenile, the juvenile may be tracked in the juvenile justice system, adult criminal justice system, or both systems.

- **Juvenile Justice Involvement:** A varied period of time calculated individually for each juvenile from their entry to their exit from the juvenile justice system for the event that placed the juvenile in the sample.
- **One-Year Follow-up:** A fixed period of time (one year) calculated individually for each juvenile one day after their exit from the juvenile justice system.
- **Two-Year Follow-up:** A fixed period of time (two years) calculated individually for each juvenile one day after their exit from the juvenile justice system.

Geographic Area: The four geographic areas of the state – Western, Piedmont, Central, and Eastern. See DJJDP's 2021 Juvenile Justice Annual Report located at <https://www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/juvenile-justice/juvenile-court-services> for a map of the areas, districts, and counties.

Juvenile Justice Involvement: Juvenile justice involvement refers to the time between the entry and exit of diversion, probation, or commitment to a YDC. Juvenile complaints and/or adult arrests tracked during this period are referred to as recidivism. Also see Follow-Up Periods.

- **Length of Juvenile Justice Involvement:** Length of involvement varied by juvenile. The length was averaged and classified into categories for the entire sample, diverted juveniles, and adjudicated juveniles.

Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act (JJRA): The JJRA, which went into effect December 1, 2019, increased the age of juvenile jurisdiction so that most 16- and 17-year-olds facing criminal charges may have their cases disposed through the juvenile justice system rather than the adult criminal justice system. In addition, the JJRA includes other provisions intended to affect who comes in contact with the juvenile justice system, such as school-justice partnerships designed to reduce school-based referrals to juvenile courts and juvenile justice training for law enforcement officers. Also see Raise the Age (RtA).

Legal Jurisdiction: The system(s) (i.e., juvenile justice system and adult criminal justice system) in which a juvenile's recidivism is tracked during follow-up, depending on the age of the juvenile.

- **Juvenile System Only:** Juveniles who were tracked in only the juvenile system for recidivism based on their age. Juveniles are considered to be under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court if they have had no prior convictions and are not older than 17 years at the time that they are alleged to have committed an offense.
- **Juvenile and Adult Systems:** Juveniles who were tracked in both the juvenile and adult systems for recidivism based on their age.
- **Adult System Only:** Juveniles who were tracked solely in the adult system for recidivism based on their age. Juveniles are considered under the jurisdiction of the adult system if they are a certain age and committed a specific offense (e.g., at least 13 and alleged to have committed a Class A felony, 16 or 17 and alleged to have committed a Class A through Class G felony) or individuals above the age of 18.

Level 1 Probation: Term used in Chapter Four to compare adjudicated juveniles: a Level 1 or community disposition that included probation. Also see Disposition Level.

Level 2 Probation: Term used in Chapter Four to compare adjudicated juveniles: a Level 2 or intermediate disposition that included probation. Also see Disposition Level.

Level 3 Commitment: Term used in Chapter Four to compare adjudicated juveniles: a Level 3 or commitment to the DJJDP for placement in a Youth Development Center (YDC). Also see Disposition Level.

NC Juvenile Online Information Network (NC-JOIN): DJJDP's management information system for juvenile justice, which contains data on all juveniles brought to court with delinquent and undisciplined complaints received in a juvenile court counselor office. This database was used to provide information on the sample's prior, current, and subsequent involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Offense Category: Offenses were broadly classified into the following categories: person, property, drug, and other. Each offense category may consist of both felony and misdemeanor offenses.

- **Person:** An offense against the person involving force or threat of force. Most common examples of person offenses for juveniles are simple assault, simple affray, and communicating threats.
- **Property:** Violation of criminal laws pertaining to property. Most common examples of property offenses for juveniles are misdemeanor larceny, breaking and/or entering, and injury to real property.
- **Drug:** Violation of laws pertaining to controlled substances. Most common examples of drug offenses for juveniles are simple possession of Schedule IV controlled substances and possess marijuana up to ½ ounce.

- **Other:** An offense not categorized as a person, property, or drug offense. Most common examples of other offenses for juveniles include disorderly conduct at school and resisting public officer.

Offense Classification: The juvenile justice system adjudicated offense classification, which contains three classifications – Violent (e.g., Class A through Class E felonies), Serious (e.g., Class F through Class I felonies and Class A1 misdemeanors), and Minor (e.g., Class 1 through Class 3 misdemeanors).

Offense Type: The seriousness of the offense for complaints and/or arrests were broadly classified into two categories: felony and misdemeanor.

Overall Recidivism: Overall recidivism refers to combining recidivism that occurred during juvenile justice involvement with recidivism in the two-year follow-up to account for recidivism across both time periods. Overall recidivism rates were computed by adding together the rates for juveniles with recidivism during juvenile justice involvement only, during two-year follow-up only, and during both time periods.

Post-Release Supervision (PRS): A type of juvenile court supervision that begins following a juvenile’s release from a YDC. This supervision lasts a minimum of 90 days and up to 1 year, based on the juvenile’s specific PRS plan.

Probation: The status of a juvenile who has been adjudicated delinquent, is subject to specified conditions under the supervision of a juvenile court counselor, and may be returned to the court for violation of those conditions during the period of probation. Juveniles are ordered by the court to be placed on probation for a period not to exceed one year from the date entered. The court may extend probation for an additional period of one year after notice and a hearing. Supervised community probation is often used as alternative to placing a juvenile in a YDC or a detention center. Also see Supervision Level.

Race/Ethnicity: Race/ethnicity of the juvenile (i.e., White, Black, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Asian, two or more races, or unknown). Generally, race/ethnicity was categorized as White, Black, Hispanic, and other/unknown for this study.

Raise the Age (RtA): Raise the Age is a term commonly used to describe the increased age of juvenile jurisdiction that went into effect with the Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act – most 16- and 17-year-olds facing criminal charges may have their cases disposed through the juvenile justice system rather than the adult criminal justice system. The increase in the age of juvenile jurisdiction applies to 16- and 17-year-olds at the time of their alleged offense who have no prior adult convictions. Juveniles charged with Class A through Class G felonies are transferred to adult court, while juveniles charged with Class H or Class I felonies or non-motor vehicle misdemeanors may remain in juvenile court (motor vehicle offenses are excluded). This change in jurisdiction applies to offenses committed on or after December 1, 2019. Also see Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act (JJRA).

Recidivism: In general, the reoccurrence of delinquent or criminal activity. In this study, recidivism was defined in terms of contacts with the North Carolina juvenile justice and/or adult criminal justice system, with the primary measure defined as having either a delinquent juvenile complaint and/or an adult arrest during the follow-up periods examined. Additional measures of recidivism included adjudications

and convictions. Data on infractions, local ordinances, process offenses, and misdemeanor traffic offenses were excluded from all recidivism measures.

- **Total Number of Recidivist Events:** The total number of recidivist events for those juveniles who had a subsequent juvenile complaint, an adult arrest, or both during the follow-up period. In calculating total number of recidivist events, only one subsequent complaint or adult arrest was counted per day if multiple complaints or arrests occurred on the same day. This also applies to recidivist events for subsequent adjudications and/or convictions.
- **Months to Recidivism:** The number of months (typically reported as an average) from sample entry to several events tracked during the follow-up periods examined. Each measure must occur during the follow-up period and is based on the first date the specific event occurred. The number of months to each measure is calculated separately.

Risk and Needs Assessment (RNA): An assessment administered by the DJJDP staff to all juveniles during intake to assess the risk of future delinquency and to determine the individual needs of the juvenile.

- **Risk Level:** A risk score is computed for each juvenile, which is used to place the juvenile in one of five levels of risk from RL1 (lowest risk) to RL5 (highest risk).
- **Needs Level:** A needs score is computed for each juvenile, which is used to place the juvenile into one of three levels of need (low, medium, or high) to indicate the current needs of the juvenile.

Sample: Juveniles who exited the juvenile justice system between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020 following diversion for a delinquent complaint or, for those adjudicated delinquent and with a disposition imposed, following probation in the community or commitment in a YDC facility. The sample groups are described as follows:

- **Diversion Group:** A diversion is the referral of a juvenile to a community-based program or service, prior to the filing of a juvenile petition, which provides an alternative to court. Juveniles are either diverted pursuant to a diversion plan (less formal) or a diversion contract (more formal). Compliance with the plan or contract results in finalization of the juvenile's diversion with no petition filed for their complaint, while noncompliance could later result in the filing of the complaint as a petition in juvenile court. For this sample, diversion refers to juveniles whose diversion plan or contract ended in FY 2020. *See also* Diversion.
- **Probation Group:** Probation is a dispositional alternative for delinquent juveniles that requires the juvenile to be supervised by a juvenile court counselor and follow specific terms or conditions ordered by the court. Juveniles who exited probation had supervised probation imposed as part of their Level 1 (community) or Level 2 (intermediate) disposition. For this sample, probation refers to juveniles who exited probation in FY 2020.
- **Commitment Group:** Commitment is a dispositional option for delinquent juveniles that requires a juvenile to be committed to a Youth Development Center (YDC). For this sample,

commitment refers to juveniles released from a YDC facility in FY 2020 after commitment ordered due to a new offense, violation of probation, or revocation of PRS.

School Resource Officer (SRO): As defined by the NC Department of Public Instruction, a school resource officer is “a certified law enforcement officer who is permanently assigned to provide coverage to a school or a set of schools.”⁵⁷ For purposes of this report, the complaint was an SRO referral if the complaint was referred to the DJJDP by a law enforcement officer functioning as an SRO.

School-Based Offense (SBO): A school-based offense is an offense that occurs on school grounds, school property (e.g., buses), at a school bus stop, or at an off-campus school-sanctioned event (e.g., field trips, athletic competitions) or whose victim is a school (such as a false bomb report). School includes any public or private institution providing elementary (grades K-8), secondary (grades 9-12), or post-secondary (e.g., community college, trade school, college) education, but excludes home schools, preschools, and daycares.

Sex: Sex of the juvenile (i.e., male or female designation).

Supervision Level: A juvenile is placed on one of four levels of supervision: Low, Standard, Enhanced, or High/Intensive. The levels of supervision primarily indicate the frequency of contact a juvenile’s individual circumstances warrant, with Low requiring the fewest contacts and High/Intensive requiring the most contacts. Also see Probation.

YDC Commitment Type: Commitment type indicates if the juvenile had previous YDC commitments categorized broadly into three categories – new commitment (e.g., first YDC commitment), recommitment (e.g., prior YDC commitments due to an adjudication of a new offense or violation of probation), and PRS revocation (e.g., post-release supervision decision for noncompliance upon release from a YDC).

YDC Entry Type: The reason for which a juvenile entered a YDC facility categorized broadly into three categories – adjudication of a new offense, violation of probation, and PRS revocation.

Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI): A risk and needs assessment tool used by the DJJDP that was implemented on January 1, 2021. The YASI was implemented after the FY 2020 exit sample and will be examined in future reports.

Youth Development Center (YDC): YDC is a secure residential facility that provides long-term treatment, education, and rehabilitative services for delinquent juveniles committed by the court to the DJJDP. This type of commitment is the most restrictive, intensive dispositional option available to the juvenile courts in North Carolina. The structure of the juvenile code limits this disposition to those juveniles who have been adjudicated for violent or serious offenses or who have a lengthy delinquency history.

⁵⁷ See <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/district-operations/center-safer-schools/school-resource-officers> for the definition and additional information about SROs in North Carolina schools.

APPENDIX F

ADDITIONAL TABLES

GEOGRAPHIC TABLES

Table F.1
Distribution of Juveniles by Geographic Area/District

Juvenile Justice Area/District/County	Total N	Diversion #	Probation #	Commitment #
Eastern Area	1,241	765	429	47
District 1: Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Pasquotank, Perquimans Counties	159	132	25	2
District 2: Beaufort, Hyde, Martin, Tyrrell, Washington Counties	144	104	36	4
District 3: Carteret, Craven, Pamlico, Pitt* Counties	333	214	104	15
District 4: Duplin, Jones, Onslow, Sampson Counties	188	99	81	8
District 5: New Hanover,* Pender Counties	134	77	54	3
District 6: Bertie, Halifax, Hertford, Northampton Counties	82	50	28	4
District 7: Edgecombe, Nash, Wilson Counties	128	57	65	6
District 8: Greene, Lenoir, Wayne Counties	73	32	36	5
Central Area	1,257	689	530	38
District 9: Caswell, Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance, Warren Counties	100	38	60	2
District 10: Wake County*	265	166	94	5
District 11: Harnett, Johnston, Lee Counties	196	104	89	3
District 12: Cumberland County*	167	65	83	19
District 13: Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus Counties	92	56	36	0
District 14: Durham County*	54	26	24	4
District 15: Alamance, Chatham, Orange Counties	253	161	89	3
District 16: Hoke, Robeson, Scotland Counties	130	73	55	2
Piedmont Area	2,075	1,225	757	93
District 17: Rockingham, Stokes, Surry Counties	228	152	69	7
District 18: Guilford County*	327	198	110	19
District 19: Cabarrus,* Montgomery, Moore, Randolph, Rowan Counties	257	114	137	6
District 20: Anson, Richmond, Stanly, Union Counties	309	206	87	16
District 21: Forsyth County*	131	68	59	4
District 22: Alexander, Davidson, Davie, Iredell Counties	554	369	172	13
District 26: Mecklenburg County*	269	118	123	28
Western Area	1,249	626	607	16
District 23: Alleghany, Ashe, Wilkes, Yadkin Counties	139	25	110	4
District 24: Avery, Madison, Mitchell, Watauga, Yancey Counties	86	50	36	0
District 25: Burke, Caldwell, Catawba Counties	271	116	150	5
District 27: Cleveland, Gaston,* Lincoln Counties	207	95	109	3
District 28: Buncombe County*	156	106	49	1
District 29: Henderson, McDowell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania Counties	269	152	114	3
District 30: Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain Counties	121	82	39	0
Statewide	5,822	3,305	2,323	194

Note: Urban counties are indicated by asterisk (*) based on the criteria that 75% of the population lived in an urban area as defined by the 2010 US Census. See [Demographics Reports](#) from [AccessNC Dashboard](#), published May 2022 by the North Carolina Department of Commerce's Labor and Economic Analysis Division.

Source: NC Department of Commerce; and NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Sample

Table F.2
Recidivism Rates by Geographic Area/District: Two-Year Follow-Up

Juvenile Justice Area/District/County	Total N=5,822 %	Diversion n=3,305 %	Probation n=2,323 %	Commitment n=194 %
Eastern Area	26	21	30	66
District 1: Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Pasquotank, Perquimans Counties	18	15	28	--
District 2: Beaufort, Hyde, Martin, Tyrrell, Washington Counties	20	18	25	--
District 3: Carteret, Craven, Pamlico, Pitt* Counties	30	25	34	--
District 4: Duplin, Jones, Onslow, Sampson Counties	21	14	26	--
District 5: New Hanover,* Pender Counties	22	19	24	--
District 6: Bertie, Halifax, Hertford, Northampton Counties	32	30	29	--
District 7: Edgecombe, Nash, Wilson Counties	36	33	35	--
District 8: Greene, Lenoir, Wayne Counties	30	25	33	--
Central Area	26	22	30	47
District 9: Caswell, Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance, Warren Counties	31	24	33	--
District 10: Wake County*	32	27	36	--
District 11: Harnett, Johnston, Lee Counties	25	19	31	--
District 12: Cumberland County*	23	22	24	--
District 13: Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus Counties	23	14	36	--
District 14: Durham County*	43	38	--	--
District 15: Alamance, Chatham, Orange Counties	20	17	26	--
District 16: Hoke, Robeson, Scotland Counties	22	22	22	--
Piedmont Area	28	21	33	68
District 17: Rockingham, Stokes, Surry Counties	24	21	25	--
District 18: Guilford County*	30	22	38	--
District 19: Cabarrus,* Montgomery, Moore, Randolph, Rowan Counties	26	18	31	--
District 20: Anson, Richmond, Stanly, Union Counties	23	17	28	--
District 21: Forsyth County*	37	29	42	--
District 22: Alexander, Davidson, Davie, Iredell Counties	20	17	24	--
District 26: Mecklenburg County*	45	38	47	61
Western Area	22	18	25	--
District 23: Alleghany, Ashe, Wilkes, Yadkin Counties	26	8	28	--
District 24: Avery, Madison, Mitchell, Watauga, Yancey Counties	19	16	22	--
District 25: Burke, Caldwell, Catawba Counties	17	15	17	--
District 27: Cleveland, Gaston,* Lincoln Counties	26	17	32	--
District 28: Buncombe County*	27	28	24	--
District 29: Henderson, McDowell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania Counties	22	16	29	--
District 30: Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain Counties	18	21	13	--
Statewide	26	21	30	62

Note: Urban counties are indicated by asterisk (*) based on the criteria that 75% of the population lived in an urban area as defined by the 2010 US Census. See [Demographics Reports](#) from [AccessNC Dashboard](#), published May 2022 by the North Carolina Department of Commerce's Labor and Economic Analysis Division.

Source: NC Department of Commerce; and NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Sample

AGE AT JUVENILE JUSTICE ENTRY/EXIT

Table F.3
Age at Juvenile Justice Entry and Exit for the FY 2020 Sample

	Diversion n=3,305 %	Probation n=2,323 %	Commitment n=194 %	Total N=5,822 %
Age at JJ Entry				
6-11 Years	12	4	--	8
12-13 Years	31	20	6	26
14 Years	24	26	22	25
15 Years	23	36	42	29
16+ Years	10	14	30	12
Age at JJ Exit				
6-11 Years	9	1	--	6
12-13 Years	26	10	1	19
14 Years	23	14	4	19
15 Years	22	23	14	22
16+ Years	19	52	81	34

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table F.4
Age at Juvenile Justice Entry and Exit for the Diversion Juveniles

Personal Characteristics	Successful Diversion n=2,985 %	Unsuccessful Diversion n=320 %	Total N=3,305 %
Age at JJ Entry			
6-11 Years	12	11	12
12-13 Years	32	28	31
14 Years	23	27	24
15 Years	23	25	23
16+ Years	10	9	10
Age at JJ Exit			
6-11 Years	9	9	9
12-13 Years	26	27	26
14 Years	23	26	23
15 Years	22	25	22
16+ Years	20	13	20

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table F.5
Age at Juvenile Justice Entry and Exit for the Adjudicated Juveniles

Personal Characteristics	Level 1 Probation n=1,787	Level 2 Probation n=536	Level 3 Commitment n=194	Total N=2,517
Age at JJ Entry	%	%	%	%
6-11 Years	5	1	--	4
12-13 Years	21	17	6	19
14 Years	26	25	22	26
15 Years	35	40	42	36
16+ Years	13	17	30	15
Age at JJ Exit	%	%	%	%
6-11 Years	2	<1	--	1
12-13 Years	12	5	1	10
14 Years	14	10	4	13
15 Years	24	22	14	22
16+ Years	48	63	81	54

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

JUVENILE COMPLAINTS AND ADULT ARRESTS

Table F.6
Recidivism Rates for Juvenile Complaints and Adult Arrests: JJ Involvement

	Juvenile Complaint		Adult Arrest		Recidivism Complaint and/or Arrest	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Diversion	3,263	8	277	3	3,305	9
Probation	2,168	21	1,070	13	2,323	24
Commitment	166	9	144	4	194	11
Total	5,597	13	1,491	10	5,822	15

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table F.7
Recidivism Rates for Juvenile Complaints and Adult Arrests: Two-Year Follow-Up

	Juvenile Complaint		Adult Arrest		Recidivism Complaint and/or Arrest	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Diversion	3,271	20	715	5	3,305	21
Probation	2,295	25	1,278	16	2,323	30
Commitment	182	54	166	33	194	62
Total	5,748	23	2,14	14	5,822	26

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table F.8
Recidivism Rates for Juvenile Complaints and Adult Arrests by Jurisdiction: Juvenile Justice Involvement

	N	Juvenile System Only n=4,331 %	Juvenile and Adult Systems n=1,266 %	Adult System Only n=225 %	Recidivism Complaint and/or Arrest N=5,822 %
Diversion	3,305	9	6	2	9
Probation	2,323	19	32	16	24
Commitment	194	14	8	21	11
Total	5,822	12	25	14	15

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table F.9
Recidivism Rates for Juvenile Complaints and Adult Arrests by Jurisdiction: Two-Year Follow-Up

	N	Juvenile System Only n=3,680 %	Juvenile and Adult Systems n=2,068 %	Adult System Only n=74 %	Recidivism Complaint and/or Arrest N=5,822 %
Diversion	3,305	22	16	6	21
Probation	2,323	29	30	18	30
Commitment	194	66	63	--	62
Total	5,822	24	28	16	26

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

JUVENILE ADJUDICATIONS AND ADULT CONVICTIONS

Table F.10

Recidivism Rates for Juvenile Adjudications and Adult Convictions: Juvenile Justice Involvement

Level of Involvement	N	Any Recidivism		Average Months to Recidivism
		#	%	
Diversion	3,305	3	<1%	4
Successful	2,985	2	<1%	5
Unsuccessful	320	1	<1%	3
Probation	2,323	301	13	6
Level 1 Probation	1,787	216	12	6
Level 2 Probation	536	85	16	6
Commitment	194	25	13	2
Total	5,822	329	6	6

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table F.11

Recidivism Rates for Juvenile Adjudications and Adult Convictions: Two-Year Follow-Up

Level of Involvement	N	Average Months to Recidivism	# of Juveniles with Any Recidivism	Total # Recidivist Events	One-Year Follow-up	Two-Year Follow-up
					%	%
Diversion	3,305	8	414	532	9	13
Successful	2,985	12	205	241	4	7
Unsuccessful	320	4	209	291	61	65
Probation	2,323	11	358	457	8	15
Level 1 Probation	1,787	11	264	333	8	15
Level 2 Probation	536	10	94	124	10	18
Commitment (Level 3)	194	12	49	58	14	25
Total	5,822	9	821	1,047	9	14

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table F.12
Recidivism Rates for Juvenile Adjudications and Adult Convictions: Juvenile Justice Involvement

	Juvenile Adjudication		Adult Conviction		Adjudication and/or Conviction	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Diversion	3,263	<1	277	--	3,305	<1
Probation	2,171	13	1,070	2	2,323	13
Commitment	167	13	144	3	194	13
Total	5,601	6	1,491	2	5,822	6

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table F.13
Recidivism Rates for Juvenile Adjudications and Adult Convictions: Two-Year Follow-Up

	Juvenile Adjudication		Adult Conviction		Adjudication and/or Conviction	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Diversion	3,271	12	708	1	3,305	13
Probation	2,295	13	1,269	6	2,323	15
Commitment	182	19	165	10	194	25
Total	5,748	13	2,142	4	5,822	14

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table F.14
Recidivism Rates for Juvenile Adjudications and Adult Convictions by Jurisdiction: Juvenile Justice Involvement

	N	Juvenile System Only n=4,331 %	Juvenile and Adult Systems n=1,266 %	Adult System Only n=225 %	Adjudication and/or Conviction N=5,822 %
Diversion	3,305	<1	--	--	<1
Probation	2,323	11	17	5	13
Commitment	194	20	9	18	13
Total	5,822	4	13	5	6

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

Table F.15
Recidivism Rates for Juvenile Adjudications and Adult Convictions by Jurisdiction: Two-Year Follow-Up

	N	Juvenile System Only n=3,680 %	Juvenile and Adult Systems n=2,068 %	Adult System Only n=74 %	Adjudication and/or Conviction N=5,822 %
Diversion	3,305	14	9	3	13
Probation	2,323	17	14	14	15
Commitment	194	38	23	--	25
Total	5,822	15	13	11	14

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

ADJUDICATED JUVENILES

Table F.16
Number of Adjudicated Juveniles by Adjudicated Offense Classification and Delinquency History Level

Adjudicated Offense Classification	Delinquency History Level			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Violent Class A-E Felonies	94	13	23	130
Serious Class F-I Felonies Class A1 Misdemeanor	550	62	100	715
Minor Class 1-3 Misdemeanors	1,534	91	47	1,672
Total	2,178	169	170	2,517

SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2020 Juvenile Recidivism Exit Sample

APPENDIX G

SUPERVISION LEVELS: MANAGEMENT STANDARDS CHART



Court Services Case Management Standards Chart

**Note: Each juvenile should be evaluated individually.
This chart represents the most common situations.**

Case Management Levels	Low	Standard	Enhanced	High/Intensive
Maximum Caseload #	40	30	20	10
Minimum time spent working on behalf of youth & family (week/month)	45 minutes/3 hours	1 hour/4 hours	1.5 hours/6 hours	3 hours/12 hours
Typical Risk Level	R1-R2	R2-R3	R3-R4	R4-R5
Typical Needs Level	Low	Low-Medium	Medium-High	Medium-High

Initial Case Management Standards

Felony School Notification	Before school starts next day (V)/5 days (W)	Before school starts next day (V)/5 days (W)	Before school starts next day (V)/5 days (W)	Before start school next day (V)/5 days (W)
Deliver & Review Conditions/Expectations (Court Supervision Only)	W/in 14 calendar days	W/in 14 calendar days	W/in 14 calendar days	W/in 7 calendar days
Make Referrals & Program Assignment	W/in 10 calendar days	W/in 10 calendar days	W/in 10 calendar days	W/in 7 calendar days
Court F/F Contact (Juvenile)	Immediately after court	Immediately after court	Immediately after court	Immediately after court
Court F/F Contact (Parent)	Immediately after court	Immediately after court	Immediately after court	Immediately after court
Juvenile Contact (Phone)	W/in 10 calendar days	Based on Case Staffing	Based on Case Staffing	Based on Case Staffing
Parent Contact (Phone)	W/in 10 calendar days	Based on Case Staffing	Based on Case Staffing	Based on Case Staffing
Juvenile Contact (F/F)	W/in 30 days	W/in 14 calendar days	W/in 14 calendar days	W/in 7 calendar days
Parent Contact (F/F)	W/in 30 days	W/in 14 calendar days	W/in 14 calendar days	W/in 7 calendar days
Home Visit (HV)	W/in 30 days	W/in 14 calendar days	W/in 14 calendar days	W/in 7 calendar days
After school hours/weekend (F/F)	-----	Based on Case Staffing	W/in 14 calendar days	W/in 7 calendar days
Collateral Contact	W/in 10 calendar days	W/in 10 calendar days	W/in 10 calendar days	W/in 7 calendar days
YDC Social Worker*	--	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 30 calendar days**
Service Planning Meeting*	--	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 30 calendar days**
Juvenile Family Datasheet (JFDS)	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 14 calendar days
Risk & Needs and Summary (unless completed within the last 30 calendar days)	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 5 calendar days
Initial Service Plan (ISP)	--	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 10 calendar days
File Review	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 30 calendar days	W/in 10 calendar days

Continuous Case Management Standards				
Felony School Notification (FSN)	Before school starts next day (V)/5 days (W)	Before school starts next day (V)/5 days (W)	Before school starts next day (V)/5 days (W)	Before start school next day (V)/5 days (W)
Juvenile Contact (Phone)	1 every 30 calendar days	Based on Case Staffing	Based on Case Staffing	Based on Case Staffing
Parent Contact (Phone)	1 every 30 calendar days	Based on Case Staffing	Based on Case Staffing	Based on Case Staffing
Juvenile Contact (F/F)	Based on Case Staffing	1 every 30 calendar days	1 every 30 calendar days	1 every 7 calendar days
Parent Contact (F/F)	Based on Case Staffing	1 every 60 calendar days	1 every 30 calendar days	1 every 14 calendar days
Home Visit (HV)	Based on Case Staffing	1 every 60 calendar days	1 every 30 calendar days	1 every 14 calendar days
After school hours/weekend	--	Based on Case Staffing	1 every 60 calendar days	1 every 30 calendar days
Collateral Contact (Phone or F/F)	1 every 30 calendar days	1 every 30 calendar days	1 every 30 calendar days	1 every 30 calendar days
Updated JFDS	As information changes	As information changes	As information changes	As information changes
Program Assignment Updates	As information changes	As information changes	As information changes	As information changes
Risk & Needs and Summary (Update)	Every 90 calendar days	Every 90 calendar days	Every 90 calendar days	Every 30 calendar days
Updated Service Plan (USP)	Every 90 calendar days	Every 90 calendar days	Every 90 calendar days	Every 30 calendar days
File Review	Every 30 calendar days	Every 90 calendar days	Every 30 calendar days	Every 30 calendar days
YDC Social Worker	--	Every 30 calendar days	Every 30 calendar days	Every 30 calendar days
Service Planning/CFT Meeting	--	Every 30 calendar days	Every 30 calendar days	Every 30 calendar days
NC-JOIN Case Note Entry	W/in 5 business days	W/in 5 business days	W/in 5 business days	W/in 5 business days
Termination Review	30 days prior to term	30 days prior to term	30 days prior to term	30 days prior to term

*Upon commitment
**Community Placement only