

**EVALUATION OF THE RYSE PROGRAM
ALAMEDA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT**

**A REPORT PREPARED FOR
ALAMEDA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT**

December 14, 2001

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
R.Y.S.E. PROGRAM – ALAMEDA COUNTY

The Reaffirming Young Sister's Excellence (R.Y.S.E.) program was the Alameda County Probation Department's Female Continuum from July 1997 through June 2001, developed in response to the rising rates of female involvement in the justice system and the dearth of services for this population of girls in the county. Between 1982 and 1994, Alameda County witnessed a 9% increase in the crime rate among girls. While the vast majority of girls were arrested for non-violent offenses, Alameda County also witnessed an increasing number of girls arrested for violent crimes. Like most delinquent girls in Alameda County, participants in the R.Y.S.E. program mirrored many national trends, including a history of victimization, substance use, poor school attendance and performance, and the high incidence of minority over-representation.

The primary goal of the R.Y.S.E. program was to prevent girls whose cases had been adjudicated within the Alameda County juvenile court from returning to the juvenile justice system or entering the adult criminal justice system. A corollary goal was to promote the development of the girls' social, academic, and vocational competencies so that they could sustain crime-free and economically secure lifestyles. Additionally, since a significant number of girls in the juvenile justice system were already pregnant and/or parenting, the program sought to interrupt the intergenerational cycle of family fragmentation and delinquency through the provision of family-focused services.

The R.Y.S.E. program evaluation was divided into three analyses: a process evaluation, an impact evaluation, and a cost effectiveness analysis. An innovative program that included supervision as well as treatment interventions, some of which were instructed by deputy probation officers, R.Y.S.E. sought to impact the participants' rate of arrest, completion of

probation, completion of restitution and community-service requirements, recidivism, level of offending, improvement in school performance, and improvement along the major CASI subscales.

The intensive supervision model implemented by the program impacted several areas of female juvenile delinquent behavior. There were also a number of significant findings that could impact future gender-based services in Alameda County and jurisdictions across the county.

I. INTRODUCTION

Gender is a psychological and cultural term that refers to the meanings associated with being male or female in a particular culture. It differs from sex in that gender transcends the biological aspects of being female or male, instead describing the expectations for roles as defined by culture and socioeconomic status. These expectations present a variety of pressures for adolescent girls as they develop into womanhood.¹

Increasingly, gender-specific programming has gained national attention, particularly with the increase in the rate at which females are being identified as at-risk of entering or entering the criminal and juvenile justice system. Nationally, females comprise the fastest growing segment of the criminal justice system. In fact, the number of women entering prisons quadrupled between 1980 and 1994.² According to numerous studies conducted by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD), and pioneers such as Meda Chesney-Lind, Joanne Belknap, and others, many of these women experienced risk factors as youth, such as sexual and mental abuse, that exposed them to the cycle of violence and powerlessness early in life.

Like their older counterparts, girls represent the fastest growing segment of the juvenile justice system. While studies conducted since the 1970s show that the majority of girls are charged with less serious offenses (e.g., property, drug, and status offenses), the Violent Crime Index arrest rate for girls rose by 103% between 1981 and 1997.³ This, when compared to the 27% increase for boys during the same period, has made a significant case for the importance of implementing gender-based programming that is not only specific to, but *responsive* to, the needs of girls in the justice system. Researchers, policy-makers, and direct-service providers

¹ American Psychological Association Task Force on Adolescent Girls, "A New Look at Adolescent Girls: Strengths and Stresses," from Beyond Appearance: A New Look at Adolescent Girls, June 1999.

² Christine Schoefer, "Cry Out: Women Behind Bars," Yes! A Journal of Positive Futures, Fall 2000, p. 18.

have vigorously disputed the reasons for these sharp increases. One theory suggests that as a result of inadequate responses to the needs and risks of female offenders, many girls are being disproportionately referred to detention facilities relative to the seriousness of their offenses.⁴ The increasing number of girls involved in the juvenile justice system and the dearth of information on gender and culturally competent programs and services that meet their unique needs have prompted juvenile justice, public health, mental health, education, labor, corrections, and youth service professionals to revisit the developmental and societal factors that place girls at risk of delinquent behavior.⁵

Comprehensive programming is essential to adequately responding to the specific needs of girls entering and at risk of entering the juvenile justice system. While there is no single factor that contributes to their delinquency, girls are more likely than their male counterparts to report a history of physical, sexual, and emotional victimization, as well as drug abuse. Female and male juvenile offenders experience similar educational, familial, and economic problems; however, there are several gender-specific factors that exacerbate the problems that girls face, including teen pregnancy, adolescent motherhood, alternative lifestyles, and problems associated with the early onset of puberty.⁶

The racial disparities that plague the juvenile justice system as a whole are also prevalent among girls. In fact, the impact of race, culture, and economic status on the plight of girls in the justice system and their significance to the social, educational, political, and emotional habilitation/rehabilitation of girls in the system are major issues of concern. Nationally,

³ Leslie Acoca, "Investing in Girls: A 21st Century Strategy," Juvenile Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, October 1999, p. 3.

⁴ Girls, Inc. "Prevention and Parity: Girls in Juvenile Justice," Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1996.

⁵ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, "Program Announcement for the National Girls Institute," October 2, 2000.

⁶ Ibid.

approximately two-thirds of the girls in the juvenile justice system are people of color, primarily African American and Latina.⁷ Many of these girls are from populations with high incidences of victimization. For example, in 1999, African American girls were more likely than all other youth to be victims of violence. In fact, the violent victimization rate for African American female youth was almost double the rate for Caucasian female youth (112 vs. 60 per 1,000) and approximately 25% greater than the rate for African American males and Caucasian teens (88 per 1,000 each).⁸ Not only are many of these girls victims of gender-biases that permeate society; they are also subjected to the racial dynamics that often define and confine their ability to realize their true potential. For example, author Patrice Gaines writes:

"When you're a black child in America, your inclination is to feel powerless—and you will in fact lack power, unless someone intervenes to teach you how to possess it...Being a black girl-child meant I had about as much influence in the world as there was in my itty-bitty finger, or as much as I saw my mother hold in our family. I grabbed hold of these young men that other people called thugs, hustlers, or hoodlums. They were my power—and my freedom."⁹

This notion was also expressed by participants in the Alameda County female continuum, where one client in written testimonial, stated:

"When I came to this class I thought I would never quit smokin' weed. I felt powerless but didn't know until I learned what powerlessness was."

The specific sexual, physical, emotional, and substance abuse histories among girls make their need for gender-specific programming paramount with respect to adequate and appropriate rehabilitation. NCCD studies have confirmed the relationship between childhood abuse,

⁷ Leslie Acoca, "Investing in Girls: A 21st Century Strategy," *Juvenile Justice*, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, October 1999, p. 8.

⁸ Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999 National Crime Victimization Survey, November 2000.

⁹ Patrice Gaines, *Laughing in the Dark: From Colored Girl to Woman of Color—A Journey from Prison to Power*, Crown Publishers: New York, 1994, p. 2.

victimization, and subsequent involvement of women in the justice system. In a study conducted in 1995, 44% of women under correctional authority reported that they were physically or sexually assaulted at some time in their lives. Sixty-nine percent of those women who reported abuse declared that it happened to them before the age of 18.

A Chinese proverb says, "If you want to think a year ahead, plant a seed; if you want to think ten years ahead, plant a tree; but if you want to think a hundred years ahead, educate the people."¹⁰ Effective long-term planning is essential to adequately addressing the growing number of female juvenile offenders. While the number of female offenders continues to grow, the average response to the needs of the girls is simply to institute programs traditionally designed for boys and "paint them pink." The commitment to mend this lack of parity in programming for juvenile offenders led the Alameda County Probation Department to develop the Female Juvenile Offender Continuum, later renamed the Reaffirming Young Sister's Excellence (R.Y.S.E.) program. With escalating numbers of girls entering and remaining at high risk of entering the juvenile justice system, the Alameda County Probation Department seized the opportunity to introduce a program designed to address the growing and increasingly underserved young female offender population.

While the R.Y.S.E. program has grown, the original program design emerged from a two-year national search conducted by the Chief Probation Officer, Sylvia Johnson, and the Unit Supervisor of the Female Continuum, Bonita Vinson, which identified promising and effective programs for girls in and at-risk of entering the juvenile justice system. Among the programs that informed the Alameda County Continuum design were the Female Intervention Team in Baltimore, Maryland, the PACE Center for Girls in Jacksonville, Florida, and the Sistas'

¹⁰ Roland Gilbert and Cheo Tyehimba-Taylor, The Ghetto Solution, WRS Publishing: Texas, 1994, p. 172.

Program in Washington, DC. Each program provided R.Y.S.E. with effective intervention and program design strategies for girls. [See Appendix A for program descriptions.]

The primary goal of the R.Y.S.E. program was to prevent girls whose cases had been adjudicated within the Alameda County juvenile court from returning to the juvenile justice system or entering the adult criminal justice system. A corollary goal was to promote the development of the girls' social, academic and vocational competencies so that they could sustain crime-free and economically secure lifestyles. Additionally, since a significant number of girls in the juvenile justice system were already pregnant and/or parenting, the program sought to interrupt the intergenerational cycle of family fragmentation and delinquency through the provision of family-focused services.

II. METHODS

This evaluation is divided into three analyses: a Process Evaluation, an Impact Evaluation and a Cost Effectiveness Analysis. Below is a description of the conceptual framework behind the first two analyses and a detailed discussion of the data sources and analytical methods used.

A. Conceptual Framework for the Process Evaluation

NCCD used a heuristic model it developed to organize data collection and structure the analysis of complex programs. The five components of this analytic model include context, identification, intervention, linkages, and goals. By recording the circumstances in which major program elements change, the NCCD analytic approach helps to account for observed outcomes and also helps to develop a common language to discuss Challenge Grant components and issues.

Context

Context encompasses the set of environmental forces, organizational issues, and policy assumptions that conceptually define the mission and distinctive features of R.Y.S.E. The implementation of R.Y.S.E. was shaped by many contingencies, events, and external forces, as well as by explicit policy and program changes encouraged by the local planning committee, the Alameda County Probation Department, community-based organizations providing services, and others. Also considered were political forces, fiscal constraints, and organizational factors affecting the development of the R.Y.S.E. program.

Identification

Identification is the combination of techniques, procedures, and criteria used to identify, screen, assess, admit, refer to services, and terminate services to the youth.

Eligibility for participation in the evaluation study, either via the R.Y.S.E. program (experimental group) or the controlled comparison group included: 1) being a female age 12-17; 2) having no severe emotional problems as determined by an assessment done by the Youth Guidance Clinic; and, 3) having a court date for a pretrial hearing. Each girl's arrest needed to be followed by a charge filed by the District Attorney's office, and a court date must have been set to determine whether or not the girl would be held responsible for the charge (which is equivalent to determining guilt or innocence in adult court). Girls were placed in the experimental and comparison groups through a process of random selection. From the pool of eligible girls, the last digit of each girl's case identification number was used to determine whether she was placed in the experimental or comparison group. Each month, NCCD sent a memo to the R.Y.S.E. clerk identifying which digits were to be in the comparison group and

which digits were to be in the experimental group. No other criteria were used to assign eligible girls to the two groups.

Girls selected for the comparison group were to receive traditional probation services, including a monthly check-in and consultation with her assigned probation officer at the Probation Department, a reminder of community service and restitution orders, curfew orders, and updates regarding her compliance with the conditions of her probation. In contrast, girls selected for the experimental group were to receive home visits, specific case plan development including participation in R.Y.S.E interventions, concrete funds for emergency situations, and leadership opportunities. Both groups were to receive assessment via the Comprehensive Adolescent Severity Index (CASI), however, only the experimental group received programmatic therapy for the identified needs. Both groups were required to pay restitution to the victim if ordered, and both must complete community service. However, girls in the experimental group may have received assistance from their probation officers in identifying places to complete this portion of their case plan. Both were assigned a probation officer, however, the comparison group did not receive regular home visits, parental counseling, and consultation.

The size of the experimental group was proposed to exceed the comparison group by a ratio of approximately four to one (i.e., girls were four times more likely to be assigned to the R.Y.S.E. program rather than to the comparison group of girls receiving traditional probation services). The large size of the experimental group relative to the comparison group was developed to allow as many girls as possible the opportunity to benefit from the services available through the R.Y.S.E. continuum.

However, the original projections for the number of girls who might be eligible for the program were optimistic. There were some initial problems in achieving the sample size of participants, but with an extension to a fourth year of the program, NCCD increased the range of girls that were randomly assigned to the experimental group in an attempt to obtain the original sample sizes. Although the R.Y.S.E. program was eventually able to achieve and slightly surpass its projected participant number of 560, it took a year longer than had been planned. And in order to ensure that R.Y.S.E. received its expected number of participants, the ratio of girls assigned to the comparison group was decreased to 122, rather than the projected 150.

The process allowed for certain extenuating factors to override criteria for involvement in the experimental group. For example, in several cases, girls were assigned to the R.Y.S.E. program by the judge, and the parent objected. In one instance, a girl's cohort was assigned to the comparison group and the parent challenged the fairness of her daughter having to participate in the R.Y.S.E. interventions while the cohort did not. The judge agreed to remove the girl from the R.Y.S.E. program. In five cases, the judge ignored the R.Y.S.E. probation officer's recommendation in the dispositional report that the girl be assigned to the R.Y.S.E. program.

There were other early challenges to the process as well. For example, at the early stages of the random assignment, three girls had been assigned to the comparison group, but were then accidentally assigned to R.Y.S.E. deputies. Because the contact with these girls had been made, they were left in the R.Y.S.E. program.

Once selection of participants was made, the assigned probation officer administered the CASI to develop and recommend to the Court an individual case plan for treatment. The R.Y.S.E. probation officer wrote the dispositional report, which presented the court with the recommended options for treatment available through the Probation Department's Female

Continuum. If, after administration of the CASI, a girl were discovered to have a severe mental or emotional instability, another referral would be made. Ultimately, each final decision regarding the placement of a girl resided with the juvenile court judge.

Intervention

Intervention is the full range of programs utilized to meet the objectives of R.Y.S.E., i.e., the activities engaged in by the project to reduce recidivism, and enhance supervision and services.

Linkages

Linkages refers to the formal and informal relationships and agreements that hindered or helped the establishment and implementation of R.Y.S.E.. Linkages include cooperative and conflicting relationships among the lead implementing agency, law enforcement, prosecutors, public defenders, court officials, probation officers, youth service providers, parents, state or county juvenile justice officials, and community leaders.

Goals

Goals are the criteria for determining the effectiveness of the project as defined by the Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Council and R.Y.S.E. itself. The goals are discussed in the Impact Evaluation.

In the analysis of these components, NCCD looked for a high level of internal consistency among R.Y.S.E. program elements. For example, methods of client selection for various referrals (Identification) should be logically related to core assumptions about the

purposes of R.Y.S.E. (Context) and the services that are provided (Intervention). Contextual factors determine the agency's image in the community, which, in turn, affects client recruitment (Identification) and service (Intervention) strategies and cooperative agreements with other organizations (Linkages). Researchers note incongruities among the major program elements and, where applicable, probe the reasons for these apparent contradictions. Analysis of the forces leading to program elements being inconsistent or "out of sync" provided a powerful analytic tool to interpret the results of the impact evaluation.

B. Conceptual Framework for the Impact Evaluation

The hypotheses outlined by the Challenge Grant are tested using bivariate rigorous statistical analyses to determine the significance of the results. Where significance is not attained, trends are reported to give indicators of those areas where additional research or analyses can be focused.

Hypothesis Testing

R.Y.S.E. used an experimental design with random assignment of subjects to assign experimental and comparison groups. There are several important advantages to a random assignment design that makes it one of the highest standards sought in applied evaluation research. The random assignment design reduces the systematic errors associated with threats to internal and external validity. Therefore, random assignment increases confidence in interpreting results and outcomes of evaluation research.

Data Sources, Procedures, and Data Collection

NCCD engaged in a variety of data collection strategies to address the evaluation research questions, including interviews, focus groups, surveys, R.Y.S.E. utilization data, site visits, and observation. Subjects of interviews, focus groups, and surveys included stakeholders, probation officers, R.Y.S.E. staff, and clients. The hypothesis testing used the Common Data Elements (CDE), Alameda County Probation Department, and the Comprehensive Adolescent Severity Index (CASI) data. The discussion of R.Y.S.E. goals and the process evaluation use these data sources and others to the extent possible and appropriate. Data reported in this document reflect two levels of analyses conducted for the evaluation study. One analysis group includes all girls randomly assigned to the experimental and the comparison groups, excluding those who were dismissed at their disposition hearing (via placement, age 18 at disposition, deferred judgment, judicial decision, or a sustained 301 or 600 offense). The second analysis group included girls who had been on probation and participating in the R.Y.S.E. program, or the comparison group, for one year or more.

All data collected for the evaluation were stored on a file server at the offices of NCCD. Data were manipulated and saved using SPSS and Microsoft software. The NCCD file server was maintained and backed-up each business day onto tape media. The backup system captured data on a daily basis and was recycled at the end of the week. Access to files on the NCCD file server was password protected. All evaluation data was reported in the aggregate, and juveniles' names were used only to facilitate data collection.

Quantitative Data Sources. This evaluation relied on three sources of quantitative data: the Common Data Elements (CDE), Alameda County Probation Department (JUVIS and CORPUS), and the Comprehensive Adolescent Severity Index (CASI).

Common Data Elements

The Common Data Elements (CDE) are 118 questions designed by the Board of Corrections to collect information about Challenge Grant participants and evaluate program effectiveness. The variables can be divided into the following basic sections:

- Background variables (BOC questions 1-31): These questions ask about demographics, school performance, justice system involvement, and substance use at program entry.
- Tracking variables (BOC questions 32-55): These questions ask about various outcomes for the youth at program exit and at the end of the three follow-up periods. Outcomes include completion of program requirements, completion of conditions of probation, and subsequent delinquent behavior.
- Interventions and referrals (BOC questions 56-118): These questions ask about the types of services and contacts the client completed during the program intervention period.

From 1998 to the end of the program in 2001, NCCD interviewed probation officers monthly regarding each of the youth in their caseloads and entered the data onto a disk that then was merged into an SPSS file. These modifications allowed NCCD to capture all new cases, whether going to disposition and exiting, or remaining in the program. Where R.Y.S.E. cases were found to have missing Board of Corrections data, it was primarily a function of cases coming into the program and exiting soon after (i.e., case was dismissed, long-term placement in the California Youth Authority, or other disposition), generally between the monthly data collection dates.

A similar process was used for collecting data for girls on traditional probation (the comparison group). NCCD staff interviewed probation officers supervising comparison group members and the data was entered directly into the database. For the comparison group, missing Common Data Elements were also associated with the movement of a girl from a home supervision to placement or to a placement disposition. While every effort was made to make

data collection uniform for both the experimental and comparison groups, there was a greater lag between random assignment into the comparison group and locating the girl's probation officer when the girl was not assigned to R.Y.S.E.

Alameda County Probation Department

The Alameda County Probation Department provided NCCD monthly extracts from JUVIS, the management information system for juveniles, of the offense histories of youth in the study from which the arrest and sustained petition, completion of probation, and wardship status were taken during the intervention and the three follow-up periods (6 months, 12 months, or 18 months). The extracts were provided from September of 2000; prior to this, an NCCD staff member collected this information manually from a workstation located in the Probation Department. At the end of the study period, the Alameda County Probation Department provided complete offense histories for each youth in the study and the offense history for each individual in the CDE was verified. At the same time, the Probation Department provided an extract from CORPUS, the management information system for adult offenders, to identify offenses committed by study subjects that were being processed through the adult system.

Comprehensive Adolescent Severity Index (CASI)

The CASI is an assessment tool designed to measure youths' status on ten different scales. Those scales are: 1) education; 2) household members; 3) stressful life events; 4) legal issues; 5) use of substances; 6) health; 7) use of leisure time; 8) sexual behavior; 9) peer relationships; and, 10) mental health. The sexual behavior module was not administered. Like the

CDE, the CASI was recorded on a laptop computer, which then was analyzed by NCCD. Youths were to be given the CASIs at the beginning and end of the interventions.

For the experimental group, the CASI was administered by the youth's probation officer as part of the intake and information-collecting as early as possible within the probation officer-youth relationship. NCCD administered the CASI surveys to the comparison group. Generally, the CASIs were administered in probation offices, either at the community office or at the probation department, at libraries, or other environments that were quiet and allowed the youth to focus upon the questions in the survey. The youths' homes were generally too distracting, although some CASIs were administered there.

Qualitative Data Sources. A variety of other data collection strategies were employed to collect process evaluation data and round out our understanding of the hypothesis testing results. Data collection activities included interviews, focus groups, surveys, and review of written materials.

Interviews with Probation Officers

Probation officers in R.Y.S.E. were interviewed at the end of the first year, the third year and during the fourth year. The first year interview questions revolved around reasons for being in the program, time spent doing various tasks, and obstacles to implementation. The third year interview focused upon positive things that had occurred in the program to date, what did not work for them as probation officers in the program, the changes that would make the program work better, and examples of success stories among the youth. Questions asked in the fourth year were specific to what agencies and organizations were particularly helpful or a hindrance in obtaining the objectives of the R.Y.S.E. program.

Probation Officer Perceptions at Youth Exit

At the monthly meetings with probation officers at which the Common Data Elements were collected, as youths exited the program, probation officers completed a survey on each. The questions asked about progress in school, family interactions, individual growth, peer relations, attendance, and quality of participation in the program interventions.

Focus Group with Clients

To profile the experiences of youths that entered R.Y.S.E., NCCD conducted focus groups with youth as they were exiting the program. Probation officers asked the girls to participate in the focus group as one of the last stages of their time on probation. The protocol included an introductory script that all focus group leaders used to ensure consistency in procedures and covering of confidentiality issues. The focus group questions were designed to capture the girls' experiences in R.Y.S.E., the interventions they participated in, what was particularly useful, and what they had learned during their time in R.Y.S.E.

Exit Questionnaire from Clients

The last item in the focus groups was an exit questionnaire completed by each youth. The questions were an expansion of the items asked in the focus group and were intended to provide each participant the opportunity to express her own thoughts without the audience.

Community-Based Organizations

A focus group with service providers for the R.Y.S.E. program was held in July 2001 to collect information about the strengths and weaknesses of the R.Y.S.E. implementation. Questions were asked to reveal what did and did not work regarding working with the R.Y.S.E. population and the Probation Department.

Field Notes

During the time that the CDE collection process underwent improvement, data collection for the field notes—maintained by the probation officers—was also modified. Prior to October 1998, probation officers entered their notes into a computer file, but the process was found to be too time-consuming. The process was modified so that probation officers could maintain their own field books, code the entries, and then defer to a data entry clerk for tallying each category and entering that information into the database. In 1999, the process was further modified so that probation officers were responsible for coding their field notes and a data entry clerk was responsible for tallying them onto a pre-coded data collection form. The clerk entered the data into an Excel spreadsheet and electronically sent the documents to NCCD. The clerk also entered program participation data from the sign-in sheets of each program activity.

Attendance Sheets

The R.Y.S.E. program was particularly conscientious about maintaining attendance sheets at each of their programs. The attendance sheet included the intervention (e.g., Anger Management, Teen Girls Group, etc.), the date, and the signature of each of the Program clients. Originally, this data was to be entered into a database but turnover in clerks for the program

resulted in only a small portion of this data entered into the database. However, the binders containing the attendance sheets were used as needed in writing some portions of the final report.

Review of Written Materials

NCCD collected and reviewed program documentation including the Alameda County Local Action Plan, R.Y.S.E. planning materials, semi-annual reports, communication with the Board of Corrections, and communications and policy statements.

III. PROCESS EVALUATION

A. Context

In Alameda County, there was a steady decline in juvenile arrests from 1996 through 2000. In 1996, 8,358 juveniles per 100,000 were arrested. In 1997, the number decreased to 7,206, then decreased again to 6,316 in 1998. In 1999, the number of juveniles per 100,000 who were arrested decreased again to 6,008.

According to the Alameda County Juvenile Justice Local Plan of March 15, 1997, the overall county juvenile crime rate declined by 13% between 1982 and 1994. The decline resulted from a 20% decrease in the crime rate among boys; however, no such decline was present among the rate of female offending. In fact, during this same period, there was a 9% *increase* in the crime rate among girls. While the vast majority of girls were arrested for non-violent offenses, Alameda County also witnessed an increasing number of girls arrested for violent crimes.

Females comprised 26% of all juvenile felony arrestees in 1991 but nearly 30% by 2000. Similarly, they comprised 12% of juvenile misdemeanor arrestees but approximately 16% by 2000. Most of the increase occurred from the mid-1990's forward. (Figure 3-1).

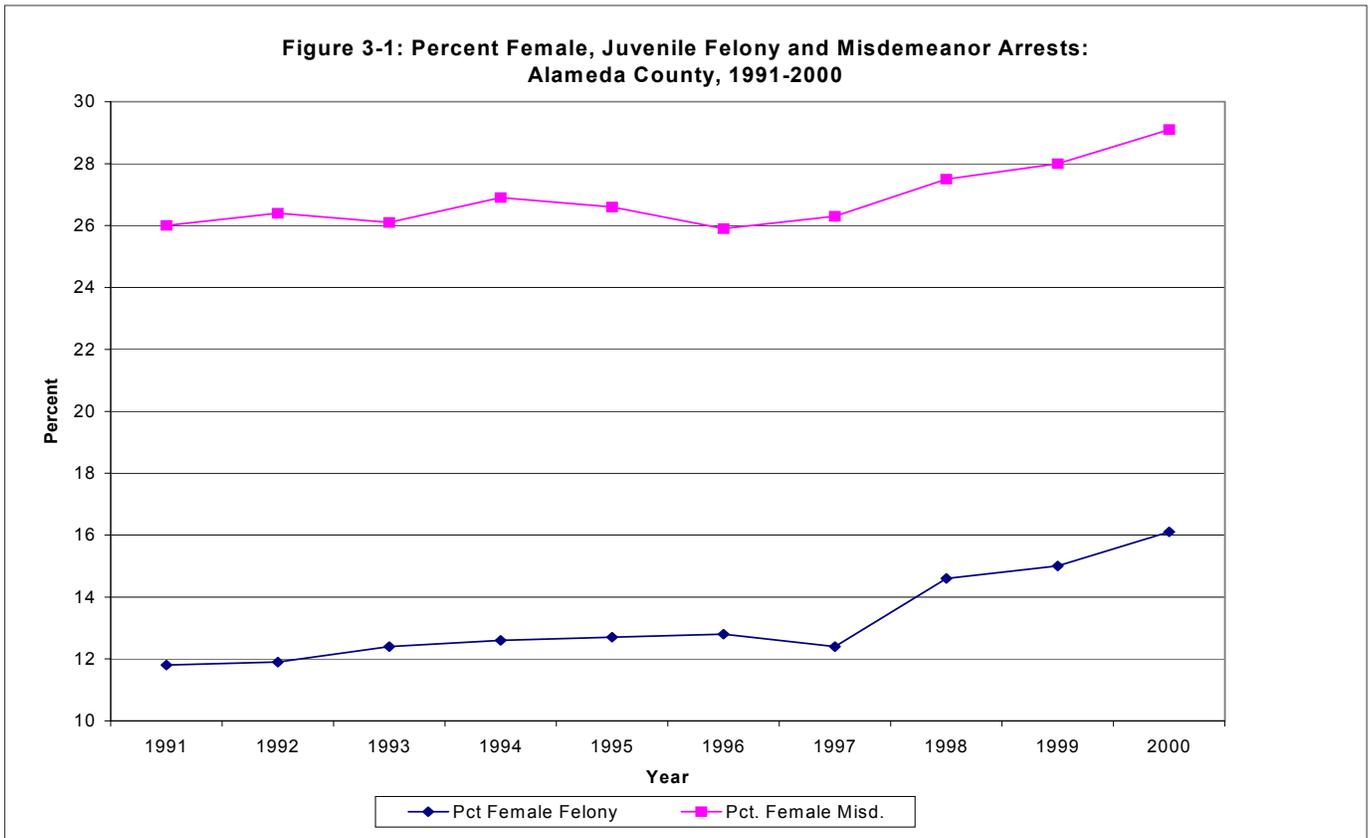
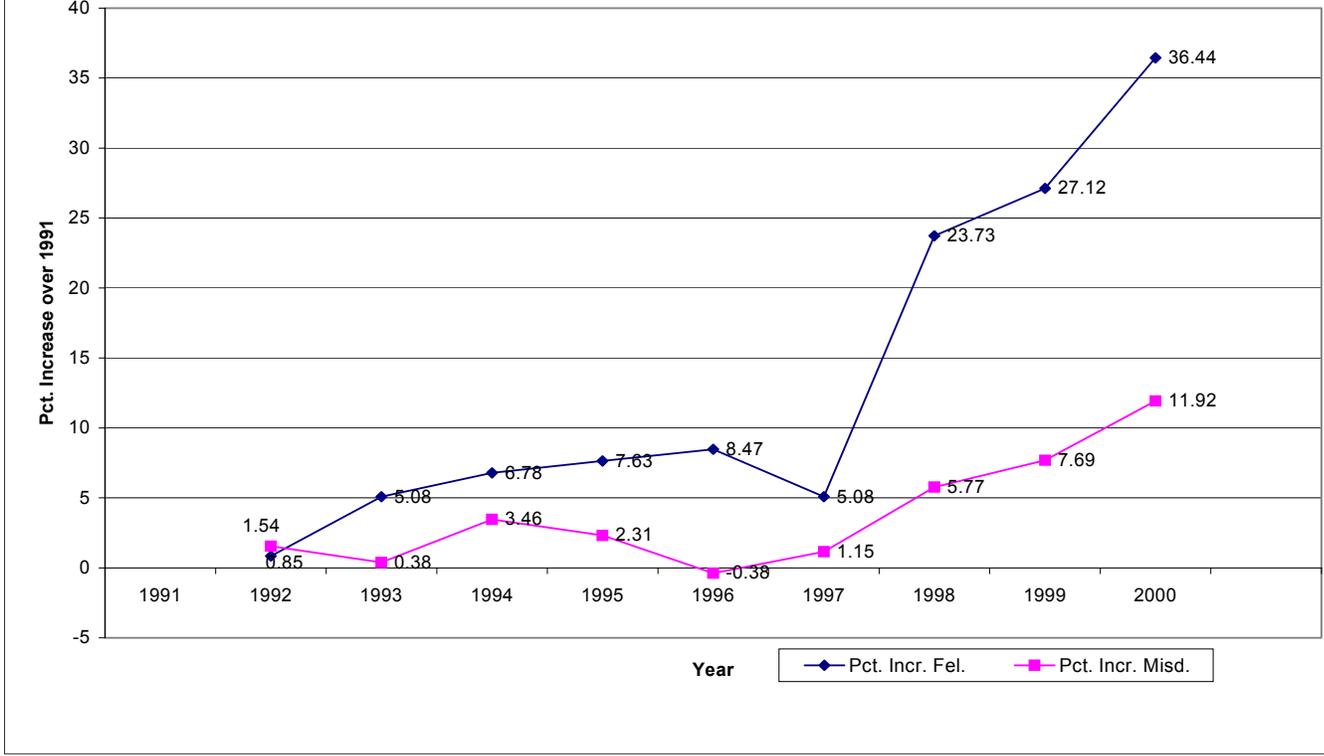


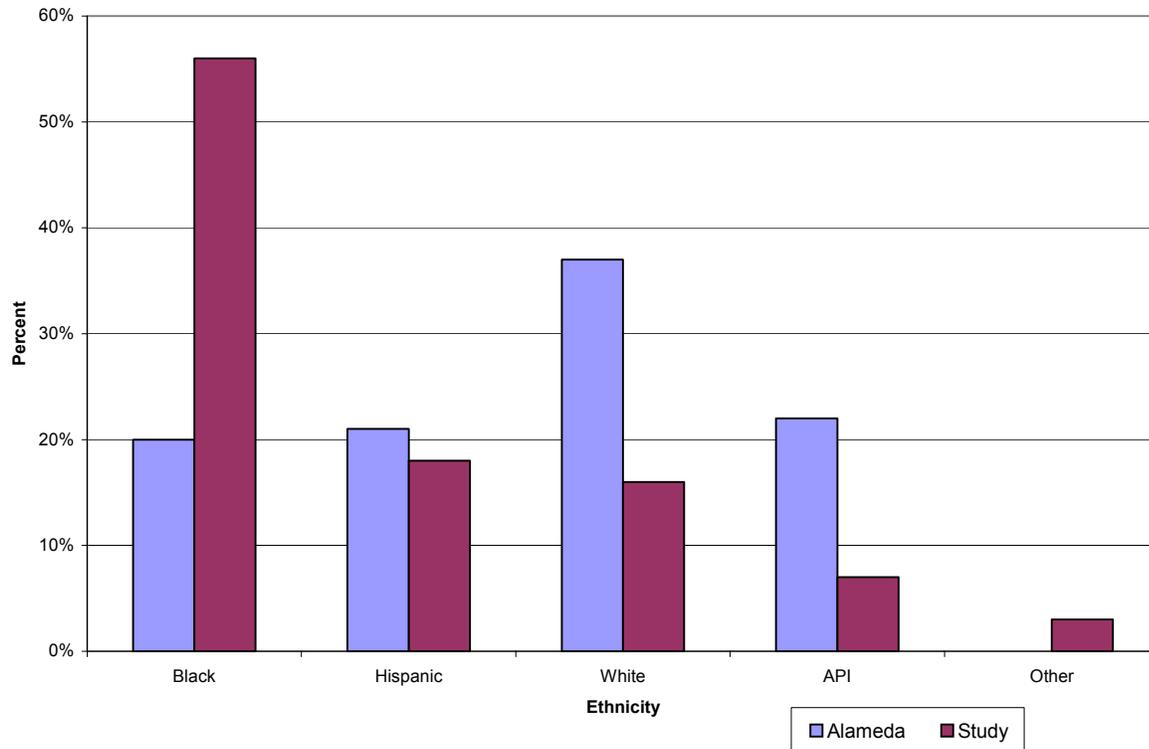
Figure 3-2 charts the percentage increase in female representation in each year compared the 1991 representation. It more clearly shows the rate of growth in female representation which is somewhat obscured in the previous figure. These figures say, among other things, that female representation in 2000 was 36% higher than it was in 1991 for felony arrests, and 12% higher for misdemeanor arrests. This narrowing of the gender gap, and the relative increases in felony arrests are quite large and suggest that the creation of a female-specific probation program in Alameda County was timely, indeed.

Figure 3-2: Percentage Increase in Female Representation Since 1991: Alameda County Felony and Misdemeanor Arrests, 1991-2000



Black/African American girls are over-represented in the Alameda County juvenile justice system, and because of the rate at which they are referred to the juvenile court, they are the only ethnic group to be over-represented in the study, vis-à-vis the local population. Figure 3-3 shows census estimates for the ethnic composition of Alameda County girls, age 12-17, as well as the ethnic distribution of girls in the R.Y.S.E. study. It shows that Black/African American girls comprise 20% of the population yet 56% of the study. Hispanic subjects are proportionally represented, and White and API subjects are well under-represented in the study.

Figure 3-3: Ethnic Composition of Alameda County Girls, 12-17 (2000 Estimates) and of the Girls in the R.Y.S.E. Study



Source for Alameda County Statistics: California Department of Finance (2001)

There were a number of specific challenges that laid the foundation for interventions offered through the R.Y.S.E. program (Figure 3-4). Nationally, childhood victimization, such as physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, in addition to poor school performance are correlated with lifelong health, learning, and behavioral disorders, including adolescent delinquency.¹¹

History of Abuse and Victimization. The CDE data showed that child abuse, as defined by mental, emotional, physical and sexual abuse, as well as neglect, affected 22% of the study participants. According to the CDE data, drug use/abuse emerged as an identifiable risk factor for girls in the experimental group as well as for girls in the comparison group. Among all study

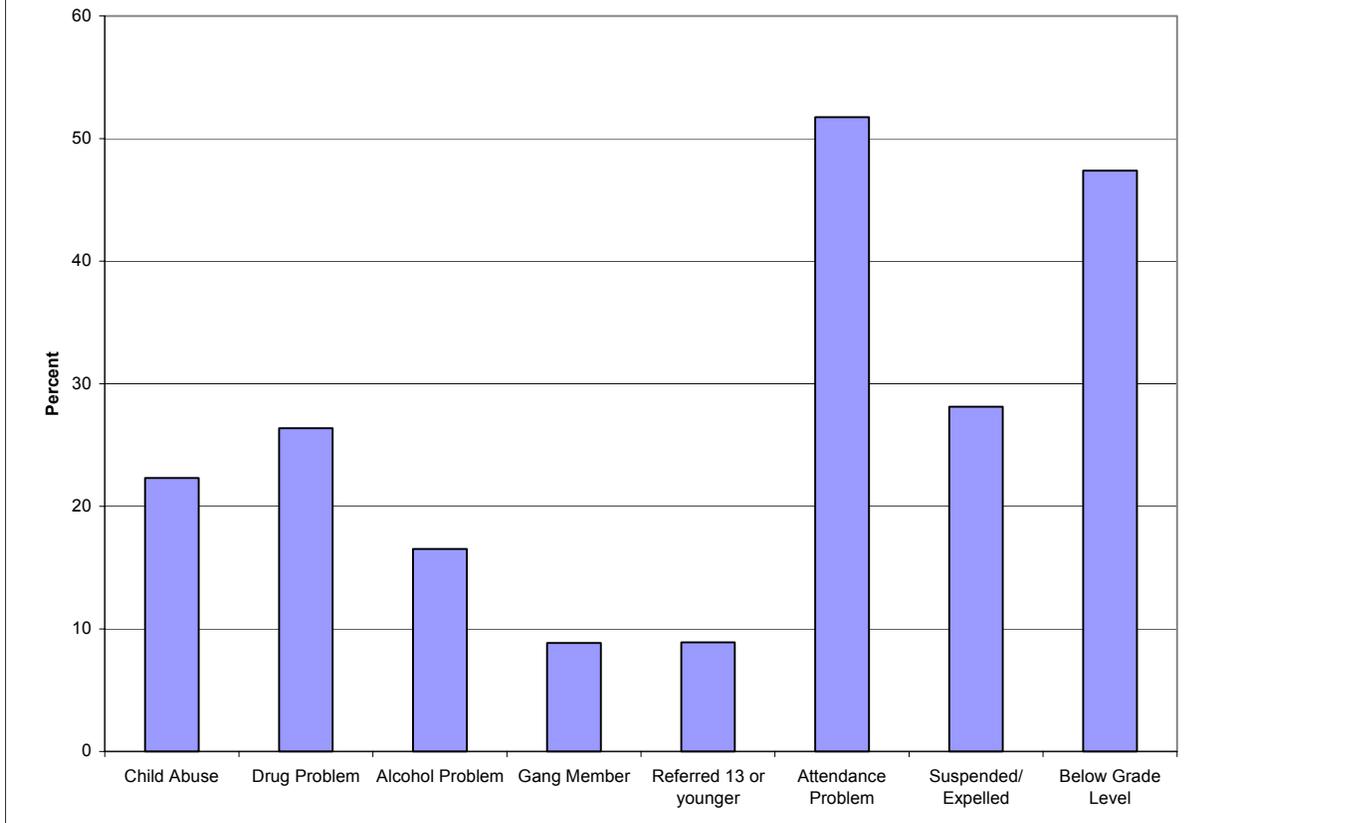
participants, 26% had known drug problems at program entry, and 17% had known alcohol abuse problems. CASI data mirrored these results closely.

School Performance. School performance was a significant risk factor in this Alameda juvenile probation cohort. Approximately half have reported school attendance issues, and approximately half are performing below grade level. Slightly more than 1/4 of the girls had been suspended or expelled in the year prior to program entry.

Criminal History. Only a small minority of study participants had known gang affiliations (9%). Similarly very few (9%) were referred to probation at a very young age, which is a risk factor for chronic criminality and delinquency.

¹¹ Leslie Acoca, "Defining the Time Bomb: Understanding and Meeting the Growing Health Care Needs of Incarcerated Women in America." *Crime and Delinquency* 44(1), pp. 49-69.

**Figure 3-4: Percentage of R.Y.S.E. Study Subjects with Selected Risk Factors
(N=690, Valid N = 515-653)**



B. Description of the Program

The R.Y.S.E. program was designed to provide a continuum of gender-specific and responsive services for female wards of the juvenile court. While inspired by the programs identified during the two-year search, the expertise and experience of Chief Probation Officer Sylvia Johnson and the members of the probation staff who were proficient in the area of young female offenders guided the unique service design of the Alameda County girls' continuum.

At the time that the R.Y.S.E. program was launched, several assumptions were incorporated into how the concept of a gender-specific program was to be operationalized. These notions were intended to enhance the relationship between the probation officer and the girl and to connect the program and girl to the community. The original design included:

- **Use of technology to allow quick access and for efficiency.** Technological innovations at the time included the use of 1) cellular telephones so probation officers could be

contacted when they were in the field and in the evening; and 2) laptop computers so that email, forms, and other paperwork that needed to be processed could be accessed in the field, at their community offices, or at home.

- **Community offices to allow each probation officer to be located within the girls' home community.** At the beginning of the program, probation officers were assigned to locate an office in the community where each could work—administering CASIs, meeting girls and/or parents as needed, processing paperwork—and possibly access services for the girls when it was appropriate. The original plan involved each probation officer being assigned to one specific geographical area (e.g., Fremont/Union City/Newark or Alameda/West Oakland) rather than to have girls from these regions travel outside of their home community for the majority of their probation services.
- **Administering the CASI was seen as a way for the probation officer and the girl to begin the process of establishing a rapport.** At the outset, the CASI was to be administered prior to the girl's dispositional hearing in order to use the information from the CASI in developing the girl's case plan that was incorporated into the dispositional report.
- **The probation officers were expected to pick up the girls and drive them to the various interventions assigned to them.** This would provide an opportunity to talk about issues in the girl's life on the way to and from the intervention. While not a component of the initial design, girls were also to be transported to interventions by a county van, providing additional support for probation officers.
- **The program provided service not only to the girl but also to their families and siblings as needed.** As a result, parenting education and support groups were organized, activities involving mothers and daughters were held, siblings were included in some activities and encouraged to attend the girls' graduation from the various interventions.
- **R.Y.S.E. participants would have one probation officer for the duration of the time on probation.** This was consistent with the theory that girls' lives revolve around relationships, and a significant and effective factor in the girls' lives could be their relationship with their probation officers.
- **Probation officers would teach or lead some of the interventions.** This was predicated upon the assumption that having her probation officer lead an intervention such as the life skills training (Sister Friends) would offer the girl and the probation officer the opportunity to see each other in a different context, to have another meaningful contact, and again to forge the relationship.
- **Probation officers would potentially provide 24-hour coverage for the girls in the program.** Either through a system of backups or by providing their cell phone numbers to the girls, discussions about coverage 24 hours a day and 7 days a week were held.

While not all of these assumptions were discussed exhaustively with the staff, they were important to the operational design that ultimately materialized into the R.Y.S.E. program. Some of these assumptions proved to be problematic for seamless implementation, however the specific impediments are discussed in the section of this report dealing with program implementation.

Personnel for the R.Y.S.E. program included one unit supervisor and nine probation officers. Also on staff was one full-time clerk. A secretary was shared with the Community Probation program. Other clerks assigned to the project were hired part-time. In 1998, when the program identified a need to provide transportation, one transportation provider was added to the program as a temporary and immediate solution. By 1999, two transportation workers were permanent members of the staff, providing transportation to all but two of the interventions (Teen Girls Group and Project ReConnect) available to girls in the program.

College interns were also an integral part of providing services for the program, supporting the probation officers by providing case management support, including assisting with telephone calls, following-up with participant compliance with case plans, producing R.Y.S.E. newsletters, coordinating volunteers, and administering intervention services for girls in the program. Thirteen interns were hired from local colleges and universities, including the University of California at Berkeley, California State University at Hayward, Mills College, and others. The initial internship program began in February 1998 and operated through September 1999. At that time, Alameda County's two Challenge Grant programs suffered from a confidential personnel issue that led to a temporary suspension of the internship program. This hiatus created a significant gap in the program for both groups. In addition to creating a gap in mentorship for the R.Y.S.E. participants, the suspension of intern assistance left probation

officers with gaps in caseload support. These gaps in services were recognized and a structured intern program was re-activated in December 2000, at which point new interns from local colleges were hired to support R.Y.S.E. probation officers and the program in general.

Case plan development and implementation was the focal point of the probation officer-R.Y.S.E. participant relationship. Case plans were developed to address the specific risk factors identified during the assessment process. In a number of cases, where necessary, individual case plans overrode the set R.Y.S.E. curriculum, so as to ensure the most appropriate series of interventions for each girl. There were a number of interventions that were a part of the traditional probation services and/or specific to the young women's individual case plans that were not included as a structured part of the R.Y.S.E. curriculum. Those interventions included such useful programs as community service, financial restitution, mental health counseling, English as a Second Language (ESL) education, tutoring, etc. These services, while integral to the holistic approach embraced by the R.Y.S.E. program, were not specific to R.Y.S.E., and could also be part of individual case plans for girls not affiliated with the program.

There were also notable exceptions to comparison group participation in treatment interventions, for instance, when the juvenile court mandated a young woman in the comparison group to receive treatment. In these cases, while the participant in the comparison group might have benefited from services such as anger management and counseling, these services were not administered by the agencies affiliated with the R.Y.S.E. program. In general, because girls in the comparison group only received formal treatment when mandated by the court, as opposed to the Probation Department creating interventions for these girls, they were assigned to interventions at a rate far below that of the R.Y.S.E. participants. For example, 240 girls in the R.Y.S.E. program were served by a life skills and transitions intervention, in contrast to only one

girl in the comparison group. When girls in the comparison group were assigned to long-term interventions, their rate of completion was generally lower than that of their R.Y.S.E. counterparts. For example, 92% of R.Y.S.E. participants successfully completed their anger management intervention, in contrast to only 33% of the comparison group.

R.Y.S.E.-specific programs were generally divided into two categories: 1) mandatory programs for all girls in the program; and, 2) services designed to sanction and/or treat case-specific needs. Where girls were excused from participating in these mandatory interventions, it was because they had demonstrated alternative needs in their individual case plans, which were determined at the discretion and approval of the probation officer.

Mandatory Program Components. The foundation of R.Y.S.E. program was the provision of life skill development interventions. While individual case plans were developed for each girl, participants in the R.Y.S.E. program began with a rehabilitation strategy that included **Sister Friends** and **Pregnancy Prevention**. Girls who were assigned to the **Teen Parenting** component were not enrolled in the requisite Pregnancy Prevention program. Early on, **Sports and Recreation** was a mandatory program, but it was later deactivated when staffing changes required it to be so. Other program components were added as the girls' needs were identified and appropriate community providers were identified and matched with participants.

Other Program Components. For several of the interventions, R.Y.S.E. probation officers were the instructors, charged with directly administering services to girls in the program. As discussed in the section of this report discussing the conceptual framework for the process evaluation, this was a major departure from traditional probation services. For other interventions, community-based providers were contracted to administer services to R.Y.S.E. participants. These included:

- Alameda County Public Health Department
- Bay Area Black Health Consortium / Family Life Resource Center
- Boys and Girls Club of America
- Girls, Inc. of Alameda County
- Independent Contractors/Specialists: Ms. Hanneke Hops, MFCC; Jessica Whitaker, Alameda County Guidance Clinic
- New Designs for Living Group Home
- Parental Stress Services, Inc.
- Project ReConnect, Inc.
- Thunder Road Drug Treatment

The R.Y.S.E. continuum was comprised of various interventions designed to provide a structure for a diverse group of girls, their various developmental stages, culture, and sexual orientation. While some programs were designed for the duration of the entire program, others were short-term and created based upon the interests and skills of interns. An example of one of the more innovative interventions available through the R.Y.S.E. program was the implementation of "special events," or opportunities that presented themselves in the community—and ultimately to R.Y.S.E. participants—that broadened the young women's intellectual, cultural, leadership, and social experiences. From January 1998 through June 2001, R.Y.S.E. participants benefited from these events, which included a mother/daughter tea during the holiday season at Dunsmuir House, Midnight Basketball, African American Women on Tour, a tour of the Teddy Bear Factory, gardening at a local community garden, the *Black Nativity* and other plays performed in the area, leadership conferences, and professional sporting events.

Some of the final special events included an Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug seminar in February 2001, and a Job Corps Tour in May 2001.

Each intervention had its own set of specific graduation criteria by which completion was measured. An overview of the interventions are noted in Table 3-1 and in Appendix B.

Table 3-1: R.Y.S.E. Interventions

Name	Duration of Sessions	Begin Date	End Date	Provider	Completion Rate
<i>Interventions</i>					<i>ALL</i>
Anger Management	12 weeks	January 1998	June 2001	Probation Department	88%
Concrete Funds	Indeterminate	January 1998	June 2001	Probation Department	97%
Crisis Intervention Home	96 hrs. / Indeterminate	July 1997	June 2001	New Designs for Living	94%
Drug Education Group	10 weeks	January 2000	June 2001	Thunder Road	Approx. 50%
Drug Treatment Group	14 weeks	January 2000	June 2001	Thunder Road	Approx. 53%
Family Education and Support Group	Ongoing	August 1997	June 2001	Family Life Resource Center/Parental Stress	Approx. 74%
Group Counseling	Indeterminate	1998	June 2001	Guidance Counselor	87%
Pregnancy Prevention	12 weeks	January 1998	June 2001	Girls, Inc.	85%
Project ReConnect	8 weeks	September 1999	June 2001	Project ReConnect, Inc.	49%
Public Health Medical Services	Indeterminate	May 1999	June 2001	Public Health Department	Approx. 89%
Sister Friends	12 weeks	September 1997	February 2001	Probation Department	80%
Teen Girls Group	10 weeks	Not Available	June 2001	Family Life Resource Center	61%
Teen Parent Group	18 weeks	December	June 2001	Girls, Inc.	88%

		1999			
<i>Short-Term Interventions</i>					
Career Readiness	Indeterminate	June 2000	December 2000	Boys & Girls Club of America	75%
Mentoring	Indeterminate	April 2001	June 2001	Girls, Inc.	82%
Sports/Recreation	Indeterminate	July 1997	December 1998	Probation Department	83%
Youth Leadership Programs	Indeterminate	May 1998	June 2001	Various Providers	83%

Each probation officer had a caseload that consisted of no more than 25 girls. It was the primary responsibility of this probation officer to design a case plan based upon a needs assessment and court order, and supervise individual case plan compliance, including completion of the assigned interventions available through the R.Y.S.E. program. It was also the probation officer's responsibility to monitor continuity between service levels and note where a client needed further development and/or where she had successfully graduated from an intervention. The process for monitoring accountability and feedback regarding program interventions was accomplished through regular interaction (once a week) between the R.Y.S.E. probation officer and the young female program participant. If there were issues that required follow-up, the project director conferred with the provider in question, and vice-versa. Girls in the program also took a tremendous amount of ownership regarding their experiences, reporting feedback during focus group interviews with NCCD and voluntarily reporting directly to their probation officers.

The process by which participants' needs were identified was modified shortly after the program began implementation. Initially, the Chief Probation Officer and Unit Supervisor, Bonita Vinson, identified R.Y.S.E. participants' service risks, needs, and individual circumstances. However, as probation officers completed more CASIs, the analyses identified

and confirmed specific issues that the probation officers were observing with their clients. At a retreat held in November 1998, among the areas identified was that girls were suffering from great losses without an opportunity to grieve, which later manifested through anger and violent behavior. It was also discovered at that time that R.Y.S.E. girls had a tremendous need for drug treatment, and that several of the girls in the program were already mothers, and therefore in need of specific programming to address being a teen mother. Each of these was addressed through the addition of interventions. Specifically, the counseling groups, the drug education and treatment program, and the teen parenting interventions were added in response to these program gaps, demonstrating the Probation Department's ability to process needs and meet them with particular interventions.

To best maximize R.Y.S.E. participants' access to their probation officers and to foster positive outcomes and interaction, interventions were scheduled in the late afternoon. A number of the programs were offered in the evenings, including Sister Friends, Project ReConnect, and Anger Management. In addition, probation officers were accessible via cellular phones for emergency situations. For example, if a girl were arrested, the intake officer at the Juvenile Detention Center (Juvenile Hall) would call the probation officer to alert them of the arrest. However, the intensely personal nature with which relationships were fostered between probation officers and their clients made informal communication, even without a formal emergency, possible for hours well beyond the average 8-hour workday.

Program Implementation. The success of the program's implementation was measured by how well girls completed their interventions and met the requirements of their individual case plans. With the evolution of the R.Y.S.E. program from Year One through Year Four, came several programming and staffing changes that impacted how smoothly the R.Y.S.E. program

was implemented. How accurately each intervention met the needs of each girl was also a factor in determining the success of the program. Many of the program's difficulties were due to the need for data regarding the risks of R.Y.S.E. girls, which were not identified until later in the program. Other challenges were a function of changing personnel and administrative responsibilities.

Staffing

The program began in 1997 with one unit supervisor and nine probation officers. While that remained relatively fixed, other staff members were introduced within the four-year duration of the R.Y.S.E. program. The table below indicates the date of staffing changes and the reason for that change.

Table 3-2: Staffing Changes

Name	Begin Date	End Date	Reason for Departure
B. Vinson, Unit Supervisor	July 1997	April 1999	Transferred to 1095 Program
D. Swanson, Unit Supervisor	May 1999	June 2001	End of Program
J. Knowles, DPO III	July 1997	October 1998	Transferred to Investigation Unit
K. Mar, DPO II	July 1997	April 1998	Promoted, Transferred to Placement Unit
P. Harrison, DPO III	July 1997	December 1999	Transferred to Court Officer
K. Ellison, DPO	July 1997	June 2001	End of Program
W. Stanford, DPO II	July 1997	June 2001	End of Program
T. Lockwood, DPO I	July 1997	June 2001	End of Program
H. Klassen, POD I	July 1997	June 2001	End of Program
H. Finnie, DPO II	July 1997	June 2001	End of Program
A. Luciano, DPO	December 1997	June 2001	End of Program
D. Doss, DPO III	May 1999	January 2000	Court Officer
A. Edwards, DPO	August 1998	February 2001	Transferred to Adult Services
L. Berg, DPO III	November 1997	December 1997	Transferred to Supervision Unit
P. Jones, DPO I	November 1998	June 2001	End of Program
W. Grimes, DPO III	September 1998	March 1999	Administrative Leave
J. Estrella, DPO I	February 2000	February 2001	Moved to San Diego
T. Terry, DPO II	October 2000	February 2001	Temporary Assignment

Not all staff changes noted above resulted in significant changes to program design, structure, or administration. However, there were a number of changes that posed considerable delays in services and/or program implementation, as reflected in Table 3-3.

Table 3-3: Impact of Staff Changes

Name/Position	Staff Replacement	Impact on Program
B. Vinson, Unit Supervisor	D. Swanson	A temporary supervision plan was implemented.
J. Knowles, DPO III	W. Grimes	No major impact on program implementation.
P. Harrison, DPO III	A. Edwards	R.Y.S.E. was no longer accepting placements. No major impact on program implementation.
Interns		Lack of caseload support for deputy probation officers. Lack of mentoring for girls.
K. Mar, DPO II	P. Jones	No major impact on program implementation.
W. Grimes, DPO	D. Doss	No major impact on program implementation.
D. Doss, DPO III	J. Estrella	No major impact on program implementation.
A. Edwards, DPO	None	Program was approaching completion. Caseloads were tapering. No major impact on program implementation.
L. Berg, DPO III	A. Luciano	Left before program implementation began. No major impact on program implementation.
J. Estrella, DPO I	None	Program was approaching completion. Caseloads were tapering. No major impact on program implementation.
T. Terry, DPO II	None	Stepped in for a DPO on maternity leave. Terry helped keep R.Y.S.E. program implementation intact.

As indicated above, a plan was implemented by the Probation Department's administration to ensure the continuation of services and supervision at the departure of Vinson from the program. Prior to Swanson's assignment to R.Y.S.E., Cholerton, Unit Supervisor of Community Probation, was temporarily responsible for handling any R.Y.S.E. matters requiring supervisory review and signature. In Cholerton's absence, requests were forwarded to an available supervisor in the Placement Unit. Finally, if no one was available there, R.Y.S.E.

deputy probation officers could refer matters to the Director of Juvenile Services, Donald Walker.

Program Linkages

To assist with the administration of interventions, linkages were made between community-based organizations and the Probation Department. Community-based service providers were identified through a telephone search for agencies that administered programs for girls. Through this search, it was discovered that few organizations in Alameda County provided gender-specific resources for girls. In fact, Girls, Inc. emerged as the only local provider of female-specific programs and services. As a result, the Alameda County Probation Department did not initiate a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Instead, it organized a series of monthly Providers Meetings designed to further identify agencies that could provide the appropriate services for girls in the program and, more broadly, for youth in the Probation Department. A non-competitive process allowed Bay Area community-based organizations a forum to provide information about the services available from each organization. From this process, the remainder of R.Y.S.E. service providers were selected for the program. Following the selection of each contractor, the Probation Department drafted a contract. If the contract amount was over \$50,000, the proposed arrangement was forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for approval. Each contractor was selected based upon their ability to adequately meet the needs of girls in the program in the most efficient, cost-effective, and professional manner.

Every effort was made to have these services available from the onset of the program, however a number of girls' needs were identified later in the program. For example, mentoring was identified as a needed service for girls mid-way through the program. On November 14, 2000, the Board of Supervisors approved a contract with Girls, Inc. for the mentoring program.

This program was ultimately implemented in April 2001. The need for a school liaison position was also identified, but an administrative decision was made that girls who require additional services to reintegrate them into the traditional school environment would receive those services through other agency resources. This decision was based on the fact that Alameda County has a plethora of resources (i.e., public schools) who specialize in educational services, and thus the Probation Department would not be responsible for administering services already available in the county.

Interagency Linkages

Throughout the duration of the project, there were a number of interagency relations that both facilitated and hindered program implementation. Qualities that facilitated timely and accurate implementation included flexibility, competency, responsiveness to R.Y.S.E. participant needs, and professionalism. Girls, Inc. was among the organizations that most notably demonstrated those qualities. This organization provided such interventions as Pregnancy Prevention, Teen Parenting, and Mentoring. Girls, Inc. was able to fill service needs as they were identified, and adapted their programs to suit the particular needs of R.Y.S.E. participants. The organization was open to ideas, adjusted their programs to fit the needs of the R.Y.S.E. program, maintained very positive attitudes with R.Y.S.E. participants, and welcomed R.Y.S.E. girls without question or judgment.

Parental Stress, the Bay Area Black Health Consortium, and the Boys and Girls Club of America were also extremely helpful to project implementation. Parental Stress was very accommodating and flexible. The Black Health Consortium, through the participation of Dr. Glenester Irvin, provided resources in the community, and referred girls and their families to

other services and programs. The Boys and Girls Club of America was very accommodating in terms of allowing usage of space and incorporating the girls into their existing activities.

Other agency links that aided with program implementation included: Code 33; Midnight basketball, which organized a special R.Y.S.E. team; Covenant House; Planned Parenthood; Health Initiatives for Youth; Alameda County Health Services Department; and a female gang prevention program run by Gilbert Martinez of the Integrated Community Counseling Services.

While no interagency partnership is without its share of obstacles, some of the established partnerships suffered from problematic circumstances that ultimately hindered the seamless provision of services to R.Y.S.E. participants. For example, the contract between the Alameda County Probation Department and Thunder Road—which administered drug awareness and drug treatment programs—took over one year to implement. Finding a location agreeable to both Thunder Road and the Probation Department where services were to be administered, and an initial gap in matching the expertise of Thunder Road staff with the needs of girls in the program contributed to early lapses in program implementation.

According to the January 1- June 30, 1998 Alameda County Probation Department's *Semi-Annual Report to the Board of Corrections*, a challenge affecting program implementation of the residential crisis home's services included legal contest regarding probation officer discretion. In 1998, the presiding juvenile court judge issued an order that allowed the deputy probation officer the discretion to provide the minor with a safe place in the community, while working through crisis situations, without going back to court. This service provided girls in the R.Y.S.E. program an alternative to running away from home or being detained in juvenile hall for a non-criminal matter.

The Alameda County Public Defender's Office challenged the Probation Department being given the discretion to send a minor to the crisis home without judicial review as was previously recommended. Because the R.Y.S.E. program was unconventional in a number of ways, interagency challenges like this one were prevalent throughout implementation. Ultimately, a recommendation was accepted that read as follows:

*It is recommended that the minor may be sent to the R.Y.S.E. Crisis Home not to exceed 96 continuous hours and for not more than an aggregate of thirty days during the period of probation, absent a review by the committing court.*¹²

Other hindrances to program implementation included the lack of initial cohesion among Probation Department staff regarding how to handle R.Y.S.E. girls with a placement order. Initially, there was a disagreement regarding whether the Placement Unit should handle all girls with a placement order—whether or not in the R.Y.S.E. program. This was directly related to the fact that while girls in small, local placements (i.e., 6-bed facilities) were still included, girls placed outside of Alameda County were ineligible for participation in the R.Y.S.E. program. Program implementation was also affected by unrealistic expectations set for girls in the Career Readiness intervention, provided by Girls, Inc., which caused the intervention to only last for one session. Instead of modifying the curriculum of this course to meet the needs of girls in the program, particularly as they related to basic education regarding working and obtaining a job, the provider wanted the girls to enter the course ready to seek employment. After this initial experience, only a small number of girls—those who were already prepared to look for a job—were referred. Ultimately, the service provider did not meet the needs of the population for this intervention.

¹² Alameda Probation Department, Board of Corrections Demonstration Grant Semi-Annual Report, January 1-June 30, 1998; p.8.

Regarding deputy probation officer responsibilities, an orientation was held at the inception of the program, as well as retreats during program operation, which discussed the program and what would be required of probation officers. However, according to many probation officers, they did not realize, upon being hired to the program the degree of difference between their job and that of other probation officers in the Department.

C. Critique of Approach to Process Evaluation

The process evaluation was designed to identify the major elements fundamental to how programs operate, and to help assess the impact of these programs. A positive aspect of the process evaluation was the opportunity to interact with R.Y.S.E. participants through exit focus groups. Also, meeting with several of the R.Y.S.E. deputy probation officers and several service providers allowed NCCD to record their feedback as a complement to the data. While the majority of the activities conducted by NCCD during the process evaluation were sound and of great value, there were a number of modifications that would have aided with implementation of the process. These include:

- **More interviews with staff.** NCCD's process evaluation could have benefited from an increased number of interviews with staff during the implementation of the R.Y.S.E. program. This would have provided NCCD with more opportunities to receive feedback regarding specific activities as they were occurring. However, more interviews would have imposed on the probation officers' already busy schedule, and NCCD chose to remain as non-intrusive as possible.
- **More direct observation of the interventions.** NCCD could have benefited from observing the interventions in order to assess the impact of the program, and the areas where interventions were most successful, and where they could have been improved. Again, the issue of intrusiveness was paramount to NCCD's lack of attendance at these meetings. A "new face" at a meeting could have caused disruption and/or changed the dynamics of the group. NCCD wished to respect the privacy of the issues being discussed by girls and service providers, minimize the likelihood that the girls would feel as though they were merely part of an experiment.

- **Data collection coding consistent with probation.** NCCD established a coding system for data that was inconsistent with existing probation codes. Probation officers expressed that if codes had been uniform, reporting for the evaluation study would have been easier. It is important to note that NCCD did solicit the input of probation officers early on regarding the coding system, however, no feedback was given until the system was already underway. Every effort was made to accommodate probation officer concerns; however all could not be met once the design was already in place.
- **CASI administered by one person.** Probation officer interviews revealed that having a central person, not necessarily a probation officer with a caseload to manage, would have improved standardization and accuracy of information collected for the evaluation study.

IV. IMPACT EVALUATION

The impact evaluation portion of this report seeks to analyze the extent to which the R.Y.S.E. clients were helped by the program in ways that were predicted by study hypotheses set forth at the beginning of program planning. This section begins by describing the data to be used in the analysis. The hypotheses and statistical results are presented in turn and where possible, additional analyses elaborate on the hypothesized relationships.

A. Data Description

The randomization process described in the process evaluation resulted in 690 cases being selected into the study - 567 were placed in the treatment group, and 123 were in the comparison, or control group. Once these cases were disposed (they were selected when a court date was set), 109 cases were not sent to probation. Their cases were either dismissed, given deferred entry of judgment, or the subjects were sent to placement. These cases could obviously not be part of the statistical analysis of program impact because those placed in the experimental group did not experience the program. Another 7 cases were dropped from the study because they turned 18 by their disposition date. Finally, the courts did not permit three eligible subjects from participating in the program. They were dropped as well. None of these 129 subjects received services. The base for the analyses that follow is, therefore, 571 cases. Seventy-nine percent (450) were selected into the treatment group and the remainder, 21%, were assigned to the comparison group.

One criterion for program participation was that the subject be between the ages of 12 and 17. In this study, 7% were 13 and younger, approximately one-third were 14 or 15, and the rest were 16 and over. Somewhat over 1/2 of study participants were Black or African American,

17% were Hispanic, 8% were Asian or Pacific Islander, and 15% were White. There were significant group differences by year of admission. Control group subjects were admitted to the study before the R.Y.S.E. program began delivering services and thus before they admitted treatment group subjects. Further, there was some year-to-year variation in program entry that probably reflects attempts to maintain the optimal number of girls participating in the program at any one time.

Table 4-1: Study Characteristics

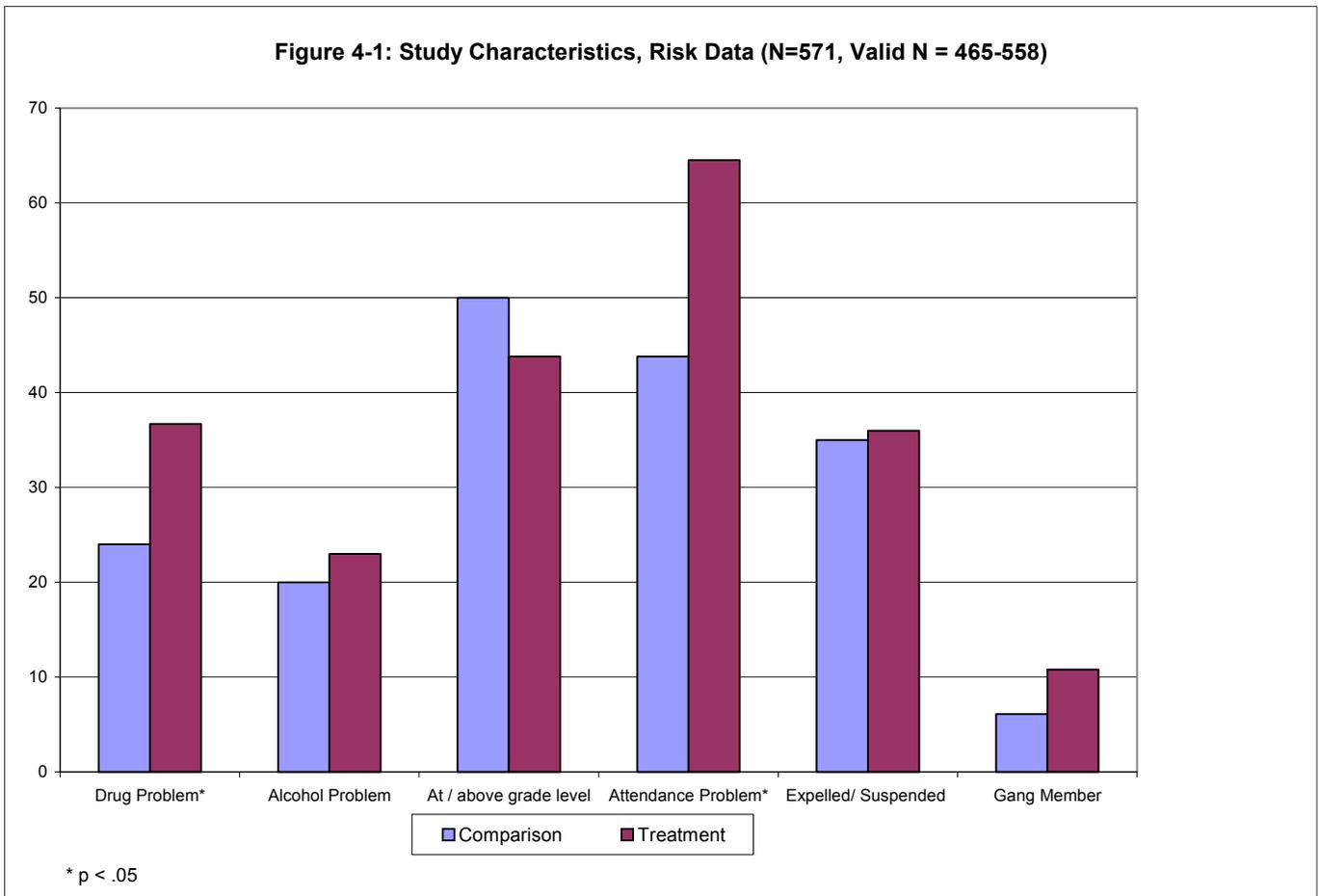
		Comparison		Treatment		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
Age	13 & under	9	7.4%	32	7.1%	41	7.2%
	14 & 15	42	34.7%	166	36.9%	208	36.4%
	16	21	17.4%	106	23.6%	127	22.2%
	17 & over	49	40.5%	146	32.4%	195	34.2%
Total		121	100.0%	450	100.0%	571	100.0%
Ethnicity	Black	68	56.2%	258	57.3%	326	57.1%
	Hispanic	16	13.2%	83	18.4%	99	17.3%
	API	11	9.1%	34	7.6%	45	7.9%
	White	22	18.2%	63	14.0%	85	14.9%
	Other	4	3.3%	12	2.7%	16	2.8%
Total		121	100.0%	450	100.0%	571	100.0%
Program Entry*	FY 1996	16	13.2%	3	.7%	19	3.3%
	FY 1997	17	14.0%	114	25.3%	131	22.9%
	FY 1998	60	49.6%	127	28.2%	187	32.7%
	FY 1999	22	18.2%	142	31.6%	164	28.7%
	FY 2000	6	5.0%	64	14.2%	70	12.3%
Total		121	100.0%	450	100.0%	571	100.0%

*p <.05

The treatment group was 50% more likely to have been flagged for having a drug problem at program entry. There were, however, no group differences in alcohol problems (22 % had one). Approximately one-half of the study participants were performing below grade level. Girls in the treatment group were significantly more likely to have a documented school attendance problem at program entry. These significant differences do not suggest that the process of random assignment went awry; rather, they reflect group differences in the time spent in ascertaining these initial data. R.Y.S.E. deputies conducted the investigations for these girls

and made recommendations to the judge about appropriate dispositions whereas the probation officers for the comparison group did not. In other words, the R.Y.S.E. probation officers knew their probationers at the start of the probationary period better than did the officers assigned to comparison group girls. R.Y.S.E. probation officers declined to answer some questions until they spent time with probationers on their caseloads.

Figure 4-1: Study Characteristics, Risk Data (N=571, Valid N = 465-558)



Over 75% of the study participants lived in a home with one or both natural parents (Table 4-2). Approximately 15% lived with relatives and not parents, and only 3.6% lived without relatives or family. Girls had an average of 1.3 siblings in their homes; the treatment group was significantly more likely to live in homes without their siblings. There were no other group difference in household composition. Girls in the treatment group were nearly three times more likely to have been abused in the home, according to official documentation and self-reports. Treatment group subjects were also significantly more likely to have children of their own. (Self-report data for may be more recent and complete for the treatment group.)

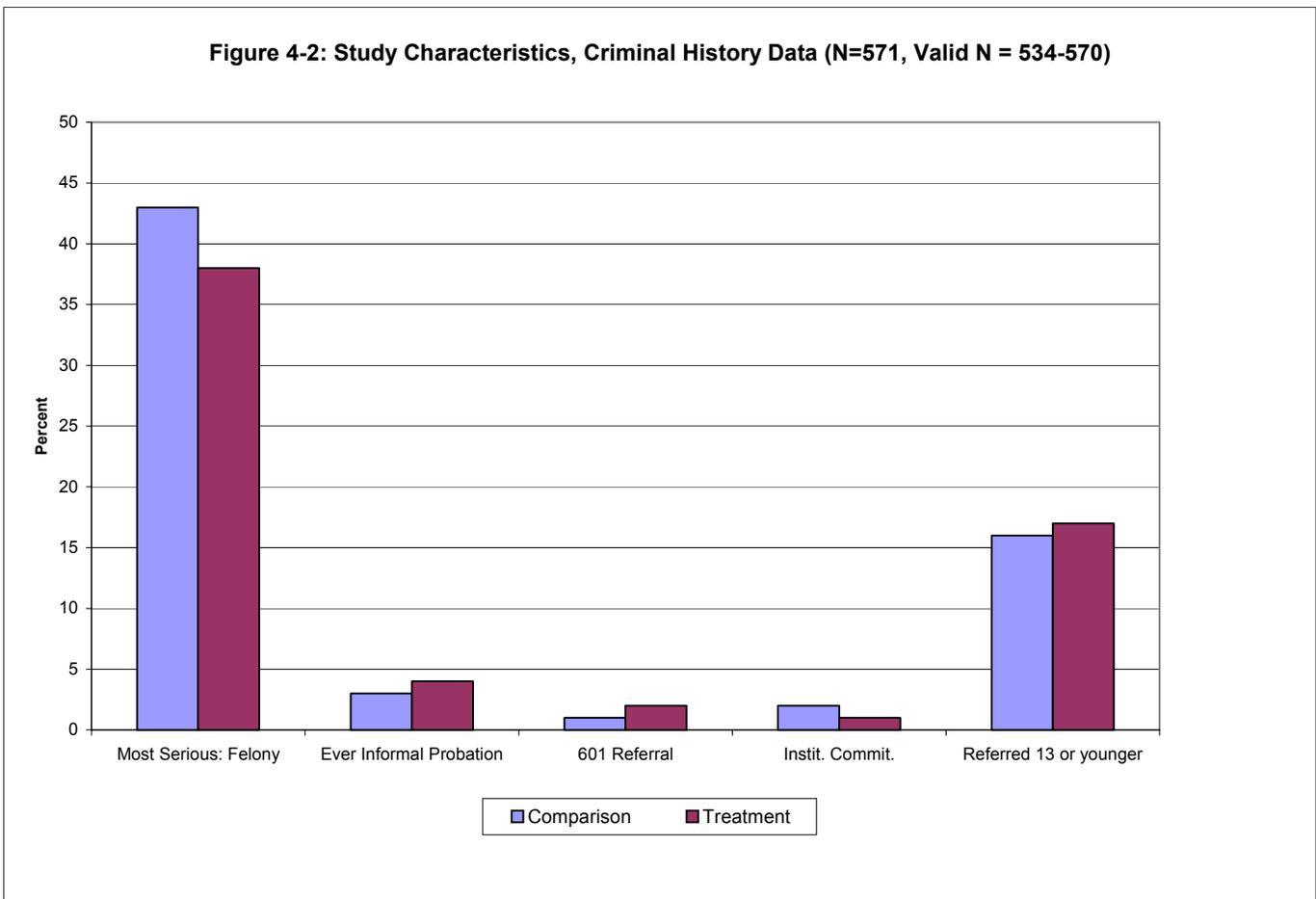
Table 4-2: Study Characteristics - Family Variables

		Comparison		Treatment		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
Primary Provider	Natural Parent(s)	96	79.3	368	81.8	464	81.3
	Step Parent(s)	1	.8%	1	.2%	2	.4%
	Foster Parent(s)	2	1.7%	2	.4%	4	.7%
	Relative	18	14.9%	66	14.6%	84	14.7%
	Other	4	3.3%	13	2.9%	17	3.0%
Total		121	100.0%	453	100.0%	571	100.0%
Siblings at home	0	55	45.8%	146	33.4%	201	36.1%
	1	22	18.3%	134	30.7%	156	28.0%
	2	15	12.5%	79	18.1%	94	16.9%
	3	18	15.0%	49	11.2%	67	12.0%
	4 or more	10	8.3%	29	6.6%	39	6.9%
Total		120	100.0%	437	100.0%	557	100.0%
Has Own Children*		12	11.9%	88	20.6%	100	18.9%
Total		101	100%	428	100%	529	100%
Child abuse reported / documented*		11	10.5%	116	28.0%	127	24.4%
Total		105	100.0%	415	100.0%	520	100.0%

*p. < .05

Figure 4-2 describes the subjects' criminal histories. These include both prior history and the charges that brought them into the study. Over one-third of the subjects had one sustained felony petition or more in their record at program entry and for approximately 60% of the participants, the most severe sustained petition was for a misdemeanor charge. (Recall that 601s

and probation violators were selected out of the study.) Very small numbers of subjects had ever had a 601 referral, been on informal probation, or had a previous institutional commitment. Finally, approximately 17% were first referred to probation at the age of 13 or younger. There were no significant differences in these variables by group assignment.



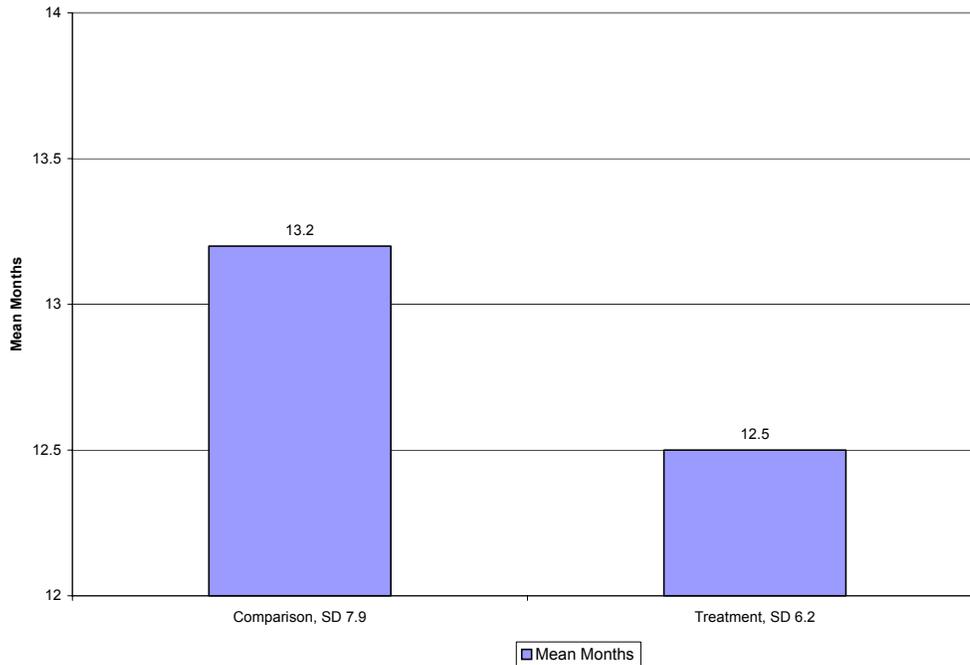
B. Study Hypotheses

Study hypotheses are derived from the central tenet of the R.Y.S.E. model. Youth who receive social services related to their personal and social needs, and who participate in a set of intense relationships that provide both social support and increased surveillance, will experience both short- and long-term successes. In the short-term, they are likely to fulfill the terms of their probation quickly because they both receive assistance in meeting those terms (e.g., encouragement and logistical support in completing court-ordered community service) and become less likely to derail their efforts to complete probation through committing probation violations and new offenses. Fittingly, the first study hypothesis posits that, generally, the group of youth that participated in R.Y.S.E. will be more successful than the group that received traditional probation.

H1a: The treatment group will complete probation during the intervention period at a higher rate than will the control group.

Indeed, the treatment group was more than 50% more likely to complete their probation during the intervention period than was the control group (Figure 4-3). Extending the measurement period by six months, through the first follow-up period, we see that the treatment group were still more likely to have completed probation, although the gap had narrowed considerably between the two groups. While the data collection period extended through an 18-month follow-up period, so few subjects completed probation after the six month follow-up period was concluded that data at those additional time periods did not alter the basic finding presented here.

Figure 4-4: Time Spent in the Program by Group Assignment



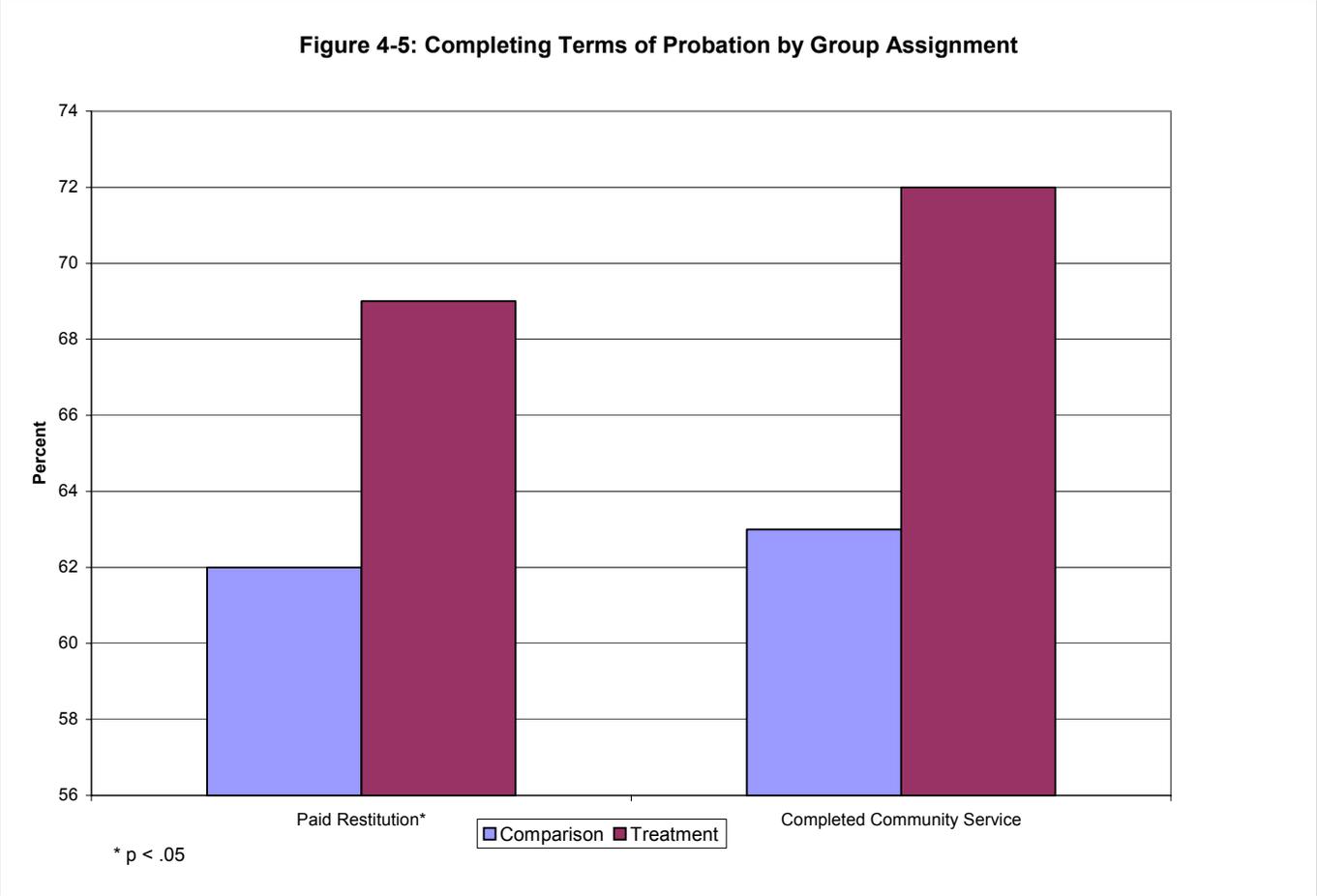
H1b: The treatment group will complete probation sooner than will the control group

The social support of the R.Y.S.E. program ought to help youthful offenders focus on their goals while on probation. While some of these goals may be educational, or related to other forms of social adjustment, certainly the case plan is significantly oriented towards seeing that the probationers meet their terms of probation. Thus, the speedier conclusion of probation is an outcome of a smooth, delinquency-free, probationary period. Moreover, to the extent that R.Y.S.E. depresses the likelihood of new arrests during intervention, treatment youth should be less likely to have their probation periods extended due to re-offending.

There is reason to equivocate on the proposed relationship, as reasonable counter-arguments exist. First, any weaknesses in the relationships proposed in the first hypothesis will be magnified in the relationship between length of stay and treatment group. Next, as discussed previously, program implementation deviated from the design element of a one-year

participation in the study. Some youth were not transferred out of the study after one year; this is particularly true during early implementation. To the extent that these delays were non-randomly distributed, it will dilute, neutralize, or reverse the hypothesized relationship. Finally, there are many reasons to keep a youth in probation beyond one year, and not all such reasons are recorded in the data. We can account for some length of intervention differences by examining the effect of new law violations and such, but the subjective impressions of probation officers and judges that a youthful offender in the treatment group may not be ready to be released will remain among the unmeasured influences that may compromise the hypothesized relationship.

Indeed, there are no gross group differences in length of time in the program (Figure 4-4). The treatment group spent an average of 12.5 months in the program, while the comparison group were in for 13 months and one week. Some experiences on probation lengthened or shortened time on probation by small amounts but no significant differences by group assignment were found. This lack of difference is an artifact of the research design which moved the treatment group out of the program after one year. For comparability, it truncated the probationary period for the comparison group after one year as well.



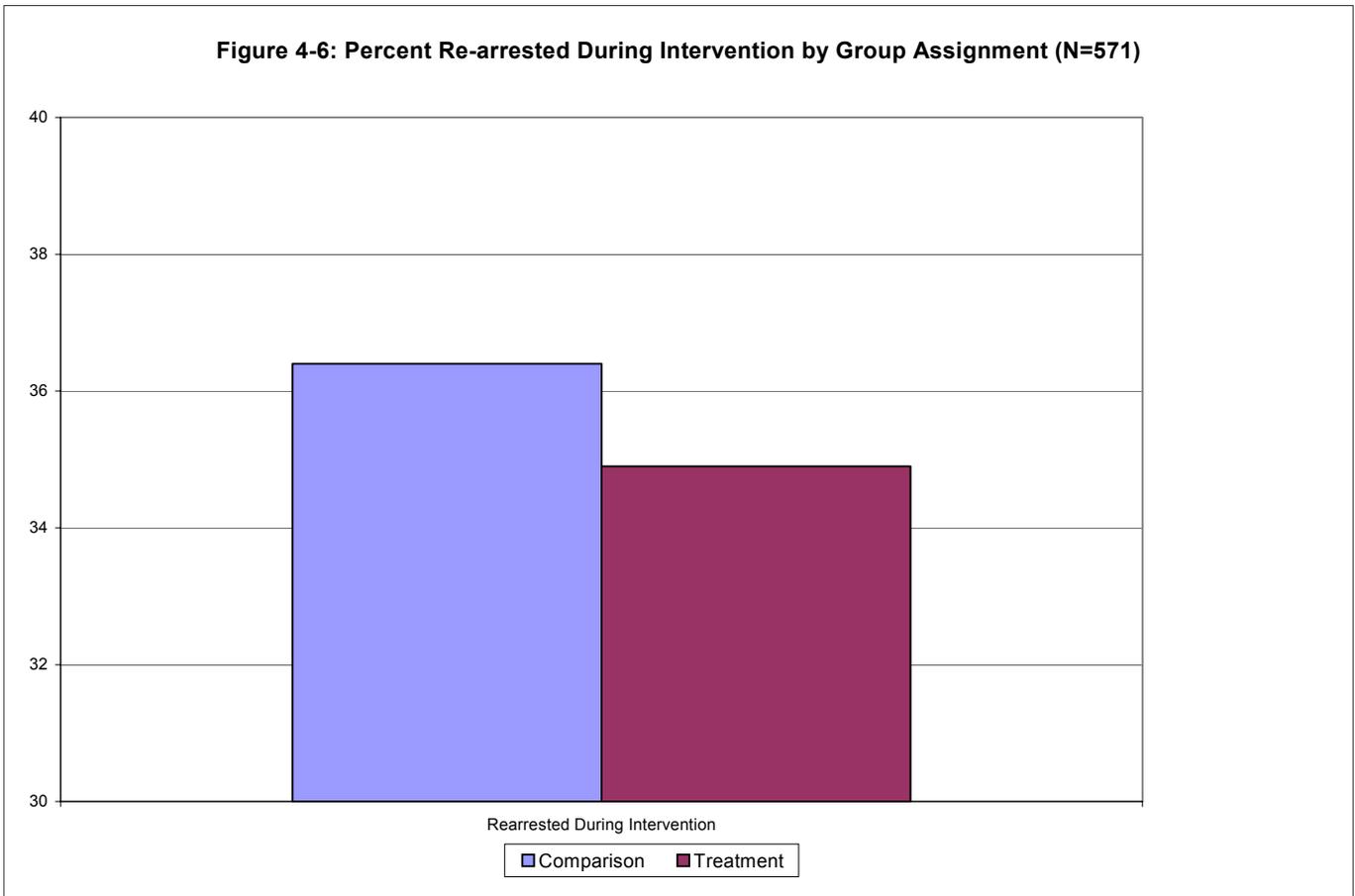
In order to successfully leave probation during the allotted time, youthful offenders must, minimally, fulfill some court-ordered conditions. Because treatment youth are likely to be embedded in structured and supportive environments, and, perhaps because they have improved, over the course of their time in R.Y.S.E., their ability to set and meet goals, they will be more likely to meet these requirements. The next set of hypotheses rely on these assumptions.

H2: The treatment group will complete restitution sooner than will the control group.

H3: The treatment group will complete court-ordered community service sooner than will the control group.

Girls in the treatment group were significantly more likely to have been assigned financial restitution and community service than the control group. Approximately 53% of the treatment group had restitution requirements, vs. 43% for the control group, and approximately 36% of the treatment group had community service requirements, vs. 18% for the control group.

As shown in Figure 4-5, among youth who had these requirements, those in the treatment group were significantly more likely to have met their restitution requirements during the intervention period. They were also somewhat more likely to have completed their work requirements, but the group difference was not significant.



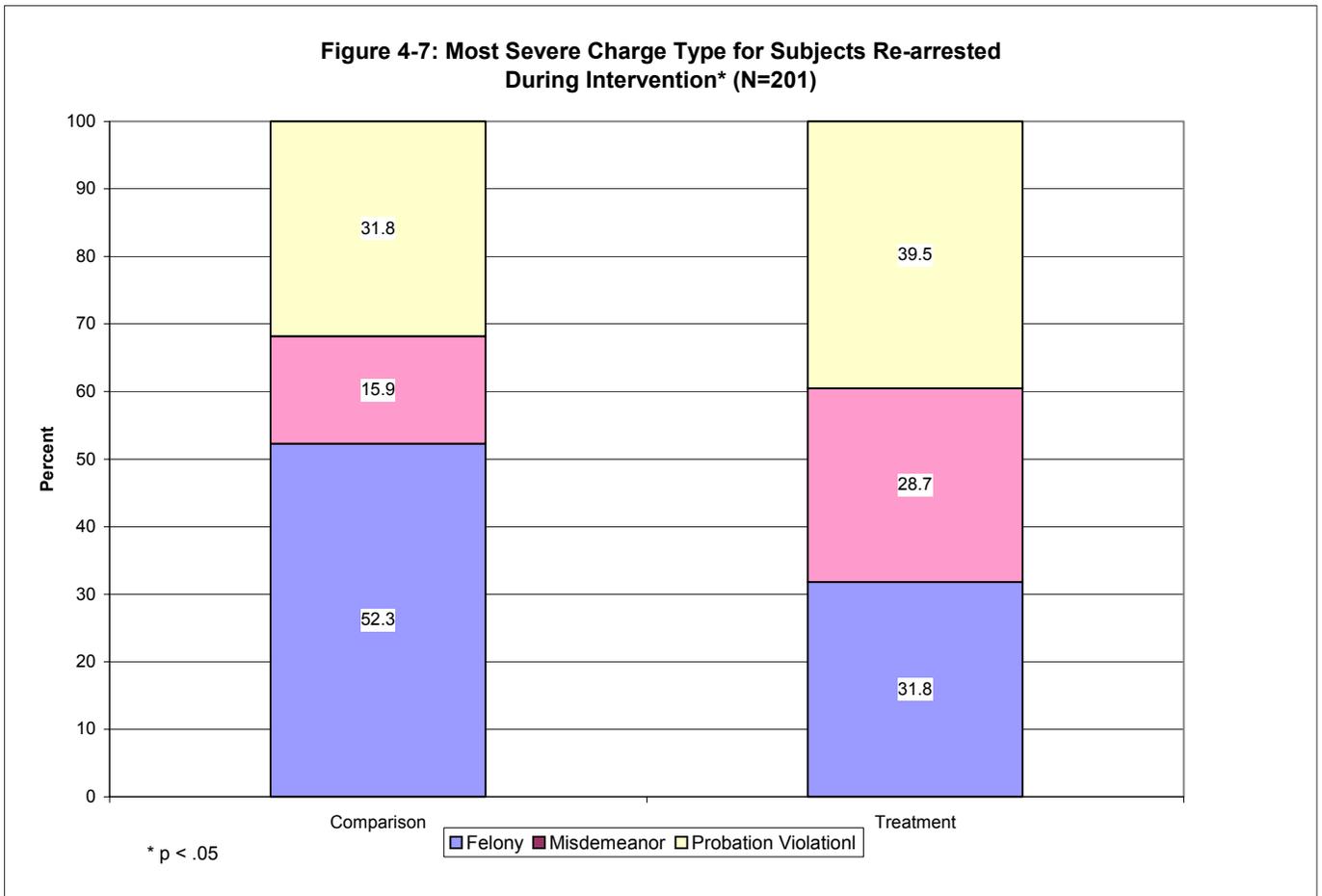
Recidivism is of obvious importance to the juvenile justice system, as it is both an indication of the possibility of prolonged criminal and delinquent involvement, and it is a strong measure of program success. A short-term measure, such as re-arrest during the intervention period, tells us whether the immediate effects of intensive supervision has a dampening effect on criminal activity. There are at least two mechanisms for such short-term effects. The first is that the supervision, per se, deters delinquent activity. The second is that the immediate effect may be the beginning of a long-lasting turn away from crime and delinquency. Effects that are found in the longer term shows that the impact of program participation is meaningful and more likely to endure.

For the analyses that follow, recidivism is measured in a number of ways. Subjects can be re-arrested during intervention, and during three 6-month follow-up periods. For the latter groups, only cases that have full follow-up data are included. For example, if there were 17 post-intervention months by the end of the data collection period (June 30, 2001), that case has valid information for the first and second month follow-up period only. To use re-arrest data for the third intervention period would create a downward bias in the recidivism analysis since those scoring 'no re-arrest' are missing one month's worth of opportunity to be re-arrested (in other words, 16.7% of their data is missing). For re-arrest during intervention, data are available for 574 subjects in the treatment and comparison groups, and for the 6-, 12-, and 18-month follow-up periods, the analysis will be limited to 427, 350, and 191 cases, respectively. Similar restrictions are, of course, imposed on analyses of sustained petitions, and the charge type and severity for the most severe arrest and petition charges during the follow-up periods. The analysis of recidivism over 18 months will be crude, since involved analyses will become

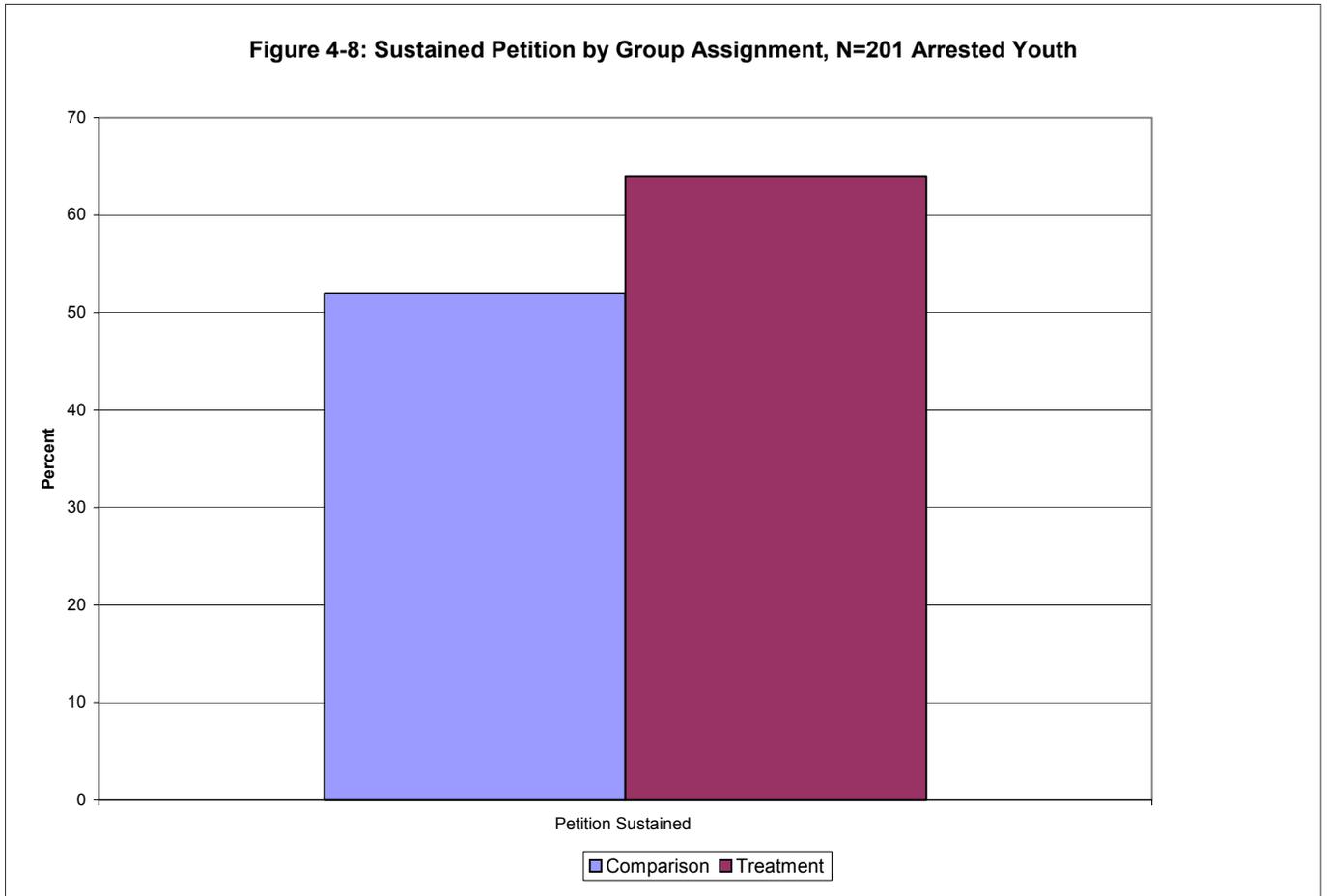
unreliable as Ns shrink. Because dates of re-arrest and incarceration were not gathered, a refined analysis that takes into account number of days at-risk for re-arrest is not possible.

H4. The treatment group will be re-arrested and reconvicted at a lower rate during the intervention period than will the control group.

During the intervention period, the treatment and comparison groups were equally likely to have been re-arrested; there were no significant group differences (Figure 4-6). However, that lack of difference reflects not program failure; rather, it is a side effect of a well-functioning program. R.Y.S.E. participants are, by design, under closer supervision than are girls on traditional probation, and lower-level transgressions which may escape the notice of regular



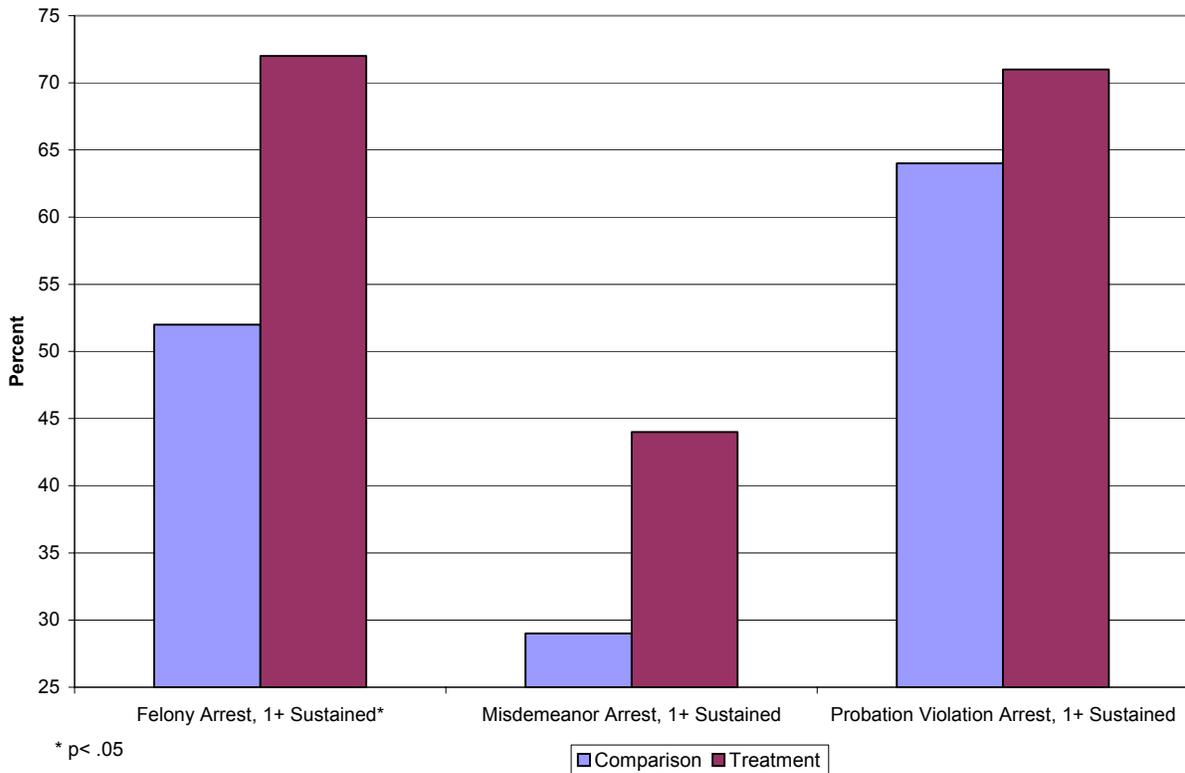
probation officers are seen and responded to by R.Y.S.E. officers. Thus, a larger share of the treatment group's arrests are for probation violations (40%) and misdemeanors (29%) than the comparison group (Figure 4-7).



Overall, approximately 6 in 10 subjects with a re-arrest during intervention had at least one sustained charge during that period (Figure 4-8). Contrary to study hypotheses, there is no relationship between group membership and sustaining arrest charges during the intervention period. Within categories of most severe arrest charge (which is not necessarily the charge upon which the petition was sustained) treatment group youth arrested on felonies were more likely to have sustained charges than comparable comparison group girls (Figure 4-9).



Figure 4-9: Percent Petition Sustained within Most Severe Arrest Charge During Intervention by Group Assignment (N=123, Petition Sustained)



H5. The treatment group will be re-arrested and reconvicted at a lower rate after the intervention period than will the control group.

H6. The experimental group will have less serious re-arrest charges during and after intervention than will the control group.

There are no gross group differences in the likelihood of being re-arrested after the intervention period was over (Table 4-3).¹³ Approximately 14% of subjects were re-arrested within 6 months of intervention completion -- there were no significant group differences. By month twelve, approximately 25% of the subjects were re-arrested; again, we see no group differences. Approximately 80% more girls were arrested by month twelve than were arrested by

month 6. Finally, 31% of study subjects were arrested at least once within 18 months of program completion. While there is no significant group difference in this measure, there is one bit of encouraging evidence available in this table. The rate of growth between follow-up periods 2 and 3 is 39% for the comparison group, but only 18% for the treatment group. That is to say, treatment girls who make it 12 months without being re-arrested are, by far, less likely to be re-arrested than similar girls in the comparison group.

The second half of this table shows that among the 59 girls who were re-arrested during the first 6 month period, only 15 had sustained petitions at that time. Small numbers prevent group differences from attaining significance. None of the arrests during follow-up 2 and follow-up 3 were sustained. No comments of substance can be made about portion of the recidivism hypotheses that involve sustained petitions.

Table 4-3: Re-arrest and Reconviction After Intervention by Group Assignment

Re-arrested	Comparison		Treatment		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Follow up 1	14	12.8%	45	14.1%	59	13.8%
Total	109	100%	318	100%	427	100%
Follow-up 1 & 2	23	24.0%	65	25.6%	88	25.1%
Total	96	100%	254	100%	350	100%
Follow-up 1, 2 & 3	16	33.3%	43	30.1%	59	30.9%
Total	48	100%	143	100%	191	100%
Petition Sustained						
Follow-up 1	2	14.3%	13	28.9%	15	25.4%
Total	14	100%	45	100%	59	100%

Table 4-4 shows that personal risk-related problems at program entry has an impact on recidivism (in this case, measured as re-arrest during the first two follow-up periods.). In the main, personal problems are over-represented among subjects who were re-arrested within one

¹³ That the N's for Follow-up 1 and Follow-up 3 are equivalent is a coincidence.

year of intervention completion. However, there is no consistent and meaningful gap between the treatment and comparison group in this regard.

Table 4-4: Personal Risk-Related Problems by Re-arrest (through the first and second follow-ups) by Group Assignment

	Comparison				Treatment			
	No		Yes		No		Yes	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Expelled, suspended past year	3	6.8%	5	20.0%	18	9.6%	19	19.8%
Total	44	100%	25	100%	188	100%	96	100%
School attendance problem	7	14.3%	5	13.5%	10	8.9%	33	16.9%
Total	49	100%	37	100%	112	100%	195	100%
Performing At/Above Grade Level	7	16.7%	5	11.6%	31	18.3%	12	9.0%
Total	42	100%	43	100%	169	100%	134	100%
Child Abuse Reported/ Documented	10	11.9%	2	20.0%	32	14.9%	10	12.7%
Total	84	100%	10	100%	215	100%	79	100%
Drug Problem	7	10.6%	4	18.2%	13	7.8%	20	23.3%
Total	66	100%	22	100%	167	100%	86	100%
Alcohol Problem	8	11.3%	2	11.1%	21	10.7%	12	20.7%
Total	71	100%	18	100%	196	100%	58	100%

As shown in Table 4-5, the treatment group was re-arrested on less severe charges than was the comparison group. During the post-intervention periods, however, there were no significant differences in most severe arrest charge (below). Between 1/4 and 1/3 of the most severe arrest charges during the three measurement periods were felony-level charges. Indeed, the treatment group was more slightly more likely to be arrested on these charges, but small Ns preclude statistical significance.

Table 4-5: Most Severe Re-arrest Charges by Group Assignment

	Charge	Comparison		Treatment		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
1 st follow up	Felony	3	21.4%	12	26.7%	15	25.4%
	Misdemeanor	3	21.4%	15	33.3%	18	30.5%
	Prob. Viol.	8	57.1%	18	40.0%	26	44.1%
Total		14	100.0%	45	100.0%	59	100.0%
2nd Follow-up	Felony	3	20.0%	13	33.3%	16	29.6%
	Misdemeanor	2	13.3%	10	25.6%	12	22.2%
	Prob. Viol.	10	66.7%	16	41.0%	26	48.1%
Total		15	100.0%	39	100.0%	54	100.0%
3rd Follow-up	Felony	3	30.0%	6	35.3%	9	33.3%
	Misdemeanor			3	17.6%	3	11.1%
	Prob. Viol.	7	70.0%	8	47.1%	15	55.6%
Total		10	100.0%	17	100.0%	27	100.0%

H7: The improvements in educational measures (e.g., attendance, achievement) will be greater for the treatment group than the experimental group.

Because of the sizable difficulties associated with collecting data from schools on subject's behavior and performance, the evaluation turned to data from the Comprehensive Adolescent Severity Index. As Hypothesis 8 will show, there were few significant group and period differences found among CASI subscales, including ones related to education.

H8: The treatment group will improve in their CASI scores to a greater extent than will the treatment group.

The CASI was administered to treatment and control group girls at program entry and again at program exit. There are, however, missing data points for the CASI. Out of 571 cases used for this impact analysis, staff obtained program-exit CASI surveys for 255 girls. By the end of intervention, there was improvement on approximately half the CASI scores. However, the comparison group seems to have improved more markedly than the treatment group.

NCCD staff administered CASIs to the control group and R.Y.S.E. probation officers administered CASIs to the treatment group. From a methodological standpoint, this did not work. Beyond the post-intervention group differences (displayed in Table 4-6) that are in the opposite direction of what was hypothesized, there are also a large number of group differences at program *entry* (not shown). Given that no analysis has turned up shortcomings in the randomization process, these differences must be attributed to interviewer effect.

Since Hypothesis 8 cannot be explored directly, analyses will turn to looking at within-group differences. We will ask how well the treatment group improved between program entry and program exit, and how well the comparison group improved. Because the ranges on the pre- and post-scales are somewhat different, scores have been normalized around a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. (In other words, z-scores were used.). Those data failed to demonstrate that there were more than a few improvements to the CASI scores; moreover, the treatment and control group improved equally well (data not shown).

The failure of the CASI analysis underscores a point that was raised under the critique section of the Process Evaluation. There, we advocated that CASI scores be administered by one person because over-burdened probation officers thought they were inconsistent in their interpretation of youth's answers. The foregoing analyses, however, do not show larger variances for treatment group scores than for comparison group scores (something one would expect if probation officers indeed had greater difficulty in giving the CASI survey to the treatment group than NCCD staff had giving the surveys to the comparison group). Rather, interviewer effect whereby probation officers were better acquainted with their clients than NCCD staff were with the comparison group girls that they interviewed caused, in all likelihood, the uninterpretable results.

Table 4-6: Mean Scores of CASI Scales at Program Exit by Group Assignment

Scale Description	Theoretical Range	Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Err. Mean	T-Stat.	Significance	Significant?	Better Group
Potential Suicide Risk	0-6	Treat.	169	0.63	1.02	0.08	5.02	0.00	Yes	Compar.
		Compar.	86	0.17	0.41	0.04				
Poor Impulse Control/ Experiences Violent Outbursts	0-3	Treat.	169	0.15	0.47	0.04	1.61	0.11	No	
		Compar.	86	0.07	0.30	0.03				
Dependence on drugs/alcohol	0-3	Treat.	169	0.04	0.23	0.02	1.42	0.16	No	
		Compar.	86	0.01	0.11	0.01				
Potential gang involvement	0-3	Treat.	169	0.22	0.47	0.04	-0.52	0.60	No	
		Compar.	86	0.27	0.68	0.07				
Experiences Domestic Violence	0-4	Treat.	169	0.19	0.57	0.04	1.79	0.07	No	
		Compar.	86	0.09	0.29	0.03				
Experiences Emotional Abuse	0-2	Treat.	169	0.23	0.52	0.04	2.56	0.01	Yes	Compar.
		Compar.	86	0.09	0.33	0.04				
Experiences Neglect	0-1	Treat.	169	0.03	0.17	0.01	2.26	0.02	Yes	Compar.
		Compar.	86	0.00	0.00	0.00				
Witnesses Violence	0-2	Treat.	169	0.08	0.33	0.03	0.18	0.86	No	
		Compar.	86	0.07	0.26	0.03				
Risk for Non-Completion of School	0-2	Treat.	169	0.22	0.44	0.03	1.31	0.19	No	
		Compar.	86	0.15	0.36	0.04				
No Positive Free Time Activities	0-9	Treat.	169	5.04	1.60	0.12	-1.10	0.27	No	
		Compar.	86	5.28	1.68	0.18				
Lack of Positive Support System	0-7	Treat.	169	1.46	1.25	0.10	4.49	0.00	Yes	Compar.
		Compar.	86	0.77	0.95	0.10				
Education Problems	0-3	Treat.	169	0.40	0.78	0.06	2.97	0.00	Yes	Compar.
		Compar.	86	0.14	0.58	0.06				
Poor Peer Relationships	0-6	Treat.	169	1.21	1.54	0.12	5.35	0.00	Yes	Compar.
		Compar.	86	0.42	0.83	0.09				
Hangs out with Problem Peers	0-4	Treat.	169	0.59	0.95	0.07	-3.24	0.00	Yes	Treat
		Compar.	86	1.10	1.30	0.14				
Family Has Problems with Limit Setting	0-3	Treat.	169	0.18	0.57	0.04	3.76	0.00	Yes	Compar.
		Compar.	86	0.01	0.11	0.01				
Experiences Internalizing Symptoms Indicative of Emotional Distress	0-6	Treat.	169	0.68	1.18	0.09	1.87	0.06	No	
		Compar.	86	0.41	1.07	0.12				
Experiences Externalizing Symptoms Indicative of Emotional Distress	0-5	Treat.	169	0.49	0.93	0.07	-0.21	0.84	No	
		Compar.	86	0.51	1.03	0.11				
Experiences Other Signs of Severe Emotional Distress	0-2	Treat.	169	0.11	0.35	0.03	0.42	0.67	No	
		Compar.	86	0.09	0.33	0.04				
Difficulty with Romantic Relationships	0-2	Treat.	169	0.08	0.29	0.02	3.46	0.00	Yes	Compar.
		Compar.	86	0.00	0.00	0.00				
Has access to Weapons	0-2	Treat.	169	0.02	0.15	0.01	-0.89	0.38	No	

Table 4-6: Mean Scores of CASI Scales at Program Exit by Group Assignment

Scale Description	Theoretical Range	Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Err. Mean	T-Stat.	Significance	Significant?	Better Group
		Compar.	86	0.05	0.21	0.02				
Engages in Positive Free Time Activities	0-7	Treat.	169	1.98	1.36	0.10	-4.37	0.00	Yes	Compar.
		Compar.	86	2.77	1.38	0.15				
Has a Support System Available	0-8	Treat.	169	5.89	1.88	0.14	-5.94	0.00	Yes	Compar.
		Compar.	86	7.09	1.31	0.14				
Has Aspirations/Hope for the Future	0-2	Treat.	169	1.76	0.46	0.04	2.75	0.01	Yes	Treat
		Compar.	86	1.58	0.50	0.05				

A. Other Project Goals

- 1. To prevent girls whose cases have been adjudicated within the Alameda juvenile court from returning to the juvenile justice system or entering the adult criminal justice system.**

The R.Y.S.E. project’s goal to impact future recidivism of girls into their adulthood was admirable but this goal was not realized. Perhaps the time frame of the R.Y.S.E. program was too short to measure whether the interventions offered during its four years of operation will have an effect on these girls into their adulthood, so as to impact whether or not they would enter the adult justice system. A longitudinal study would better measure the effect of interventions on life skill development and positive decision-making so that the girls who received treatment through R.Y.S.E. would be less inclined to recidivate once they become adults.

- 2. To promote the development of the girls’ social, academic, and vocational competencies so that they can sustain crime-free and economically secure lifestyles.**

Recidivism was related to poor school performance, child abuse, and drug use were noted as significant risk factors for all girls in the study.

While tutoring and counseling were offered to all girls in the program, and for some, academic coaching and tutoring were integrated into their individual case plans, there was no structured program that specifically addressed the girls' child abuse victimization and negative perception of and performance in school. In a 1998 NCCD study, it was found that girls appeared to perform better, academically, when placed in all-girl classrooms. Positive results were found in all-female educational programs such as heightened regard for math and science, increased risk taking, and increased confidence as a result of improved academic skill. There remains a debate regarding whether these results are attributed to same-gender environments or to practices that are conducive to a positive educational environment (e.g., small classes, intensive academic curricula, and controlled and disciplined environments).¹⁴ However, it remains an important issue for interventions seeking to positively impact female academic development and performance, particularly when the goal is to ultimately provide girls with enough options to deter them from crime-ridden futures.

The one program designed to address career training for girls was ended early on in the life of the project, creating very little subsequent opportunity for girls to develop their vocational competencies. There is no evidence to suggest that girls still were not able to acquire—through counseling and informal, yet positive, role modeling—the important skills associated with successful integration into the legitimate labor market. However, the relatively short duration of structured R.Y.S.E. interventions such as Career Readiness and Mentoring are not likely to be useful in impacting the true life-long readiness of these girls as they prepare to enter the workforce. Ultimately, in a four-year project such as R.Y.S.E. it is impossible to determine whether the skills acquired during their time on probation was enough to test this hypothesis'

¹⁴ Leslie Acoca and Kelly Dedel, the National Council on Crime And Delinquency, *No Place to Hide: Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Girls in the California Juvenile Justice System*, July 1998, p. 120.

assertion that an "economically secure lifestyle" would be sustained. A study with a longer time frame would be better suited to explore this hypothesis.

3. To interrupt the intergenerational cycle of family fragmentation and delinquency through the provision of family focused services.

The intergenerational cycle of family fragmentation and delinquency is what perpetuates the involvement of youth and their families in the justice system. The R.Y.S.E. program sought to interrupt this cycle through the provision of family-focused services, including teen parenting programs, counseling, and other interventions. As discussed earlier in this report, at the onset of the program, the concept of One Probation Officer to One R.Y.S.E. participant was paramount to delivering a foundation for continuity of services and family involvement. However, complications with getting the family involved in as substantive a way as needed when working with high risk populations, such as those who were in R.Y.S.E., created a vacuum in the Probation Department's ability to truly address family fragmentation. Specifically, because many parents felt that it was their child that was on probation and not themselves, they were less inclined to willingly participate in interventions that were designed to strengthen the family so as to prevent future delinquency. While these interventions were offered and completed at various rates, as discussed in previous sections, the greatest victory of the R.Y.S.E. program was in generating the interest and ability to correct the negative programming that many of these girls had internalized early on, as evidenced by the overall improvement in some of the risk factors identified through the CASI.

In written testimonial summarizing her experience at an African American Women on Tour workshop in 1998, one R.Y.S.E. participant stated:

"The tour encouraged me to do better with my attitude and negative thinking. This trip helped me understand myself and how to deal with certain situations."

Interventions such as Sister Friends and Peer and Family Counseling, which provided girls with opportunities to learn how to cultivate their basic life skills and personal development were important to strengthening one of the most essential elements to fostering empowerment. Among this population of girls, who in many cases had internalized cycles of dysfunction, it was important to teach them *how to be different* in order to *get different results* in their lives. For example, girls in the R.Y.S.E. program will always be exposed to the negative factors in this society that continue to make them at risk of re-entering the justice system, including unemployment, poverty, discrimination, and access to illicit substances, alcohol, weapons, etc. However, it is how they *respond* to these negative influences that will ultimately produce the interruption of the intergenerational cycle of family fragmentation and delinquency.

V. PROGRAM COSTS AND COST EFFECTIVENESS

The original projected costs of the Alameda County Challenge Grant were estimated to be \$5,026,127 for three years, \$1,675,375.60 each year. Under this budget, each of the 560 *projected* R.Y.S.E. participants was to receive approximately \$3,000 in services each year.

According to financial data available through the Alameda County Probation Department, the actual cost for the R.Y.S.E. program from July 1997 through June 2001 was \$5,282,629.51. Including the \$642, 699 of in-kind administrative costs, the total program cost increases to \$6,028,028.51 (Table 5-1). According to these figures, the Probation Department spent approximately \$1,507,007.13 each of the four years administering the R.Y.S.E program. This cost is below the original projections by \$168,368.57, making it possible for the program to operate for an additional year without additional funding.

Table 5-1: R.Y.S.E. Fiscal Overview

July 1, 1997 to June 30, 2001

	R.Y.S.E.	Adm. Overhead	Total
Salaries and Benefits			
Grant	\$951, 269.19		
Match	\$2, 075, 527.95		
Services & Supplies	\$589, 147.81		
Professional Services			
Grant	\$623, 707.69		
Match	\$6, 000.00		
CBO Contracts	\$1, 025, 477.87		
Administrative O/H in Kind		\$642, 699.50	
Fixed Assets	\$11, 499.00		
Other			
Grand Total	\$5, 282, 629.51	\$745, 399.00	\$6, 028, 028.51

As noted in previous sections, from July 1, 1997 through June 30, 2001, the R.Y.S.E. Program served 567 girls, while the number of girls receiving traditional probation through the comparison group was 123. Distributed evenly, the Probation Department spent \$10,631.44 per R.Y.S.E. participant.

The Probation Department used 19% of its project budget on community-based contracts, spending \$1,808.60 per R.Y.S.E. participant in interventions. Basic needs such as rent, utilities, and food, in addition to needs for special circumstances, including medical supplies and supplies for extracurricular activities were met through this intervention. From October 21, 1997 through June 30, 2001, a total of \$103,340.64 was spent for Concrete Funds.

Table 5-2: R.Y.S.E. Concrete Funds

10/21/97 - 6/30/98	\$14, 098.53
7/01/98 - 6/30/99	\$28, 350.50
7/01/99 - 6/30/00	\$25, 763.67
7/01/00 - 6/30/01	\$35, 127.94
Total Expenses	\$103, 340.64

As discussed in the intervention section and in Appendix B, Concrete Funds were an integral and innovative component of the R.Y.S.E. program. According to NCCD research, gender-specific services should not only be risk-focused and strength enhancing, but should also include a broad spectrum of supports that may not be considered "traditional justice system interventions."¹⁵

VI. CONCLUSIONS

There were a number of useful findings from the evaluation of the R.Y.S.E. program that not only impact the future of gender-specific programming in Alameda County, but that can affect the quality and quantity of research, policies, and programs addressing this population across the country. These findings include:

The R.Y.S.E. Program introduced an alternative way of responding to girls involved in the juvenile justice system.

- Caseloads were designed to be girls-only.
- Small caseloads consisted of 25 girls or less.
- Interventions were directed toward gender-specific needs (e.g., Pregnancy Prevention, Teen Parenting).
- Interventions were tailored to provide skills in everyday life (e.g., Life Skills, Anger Management).

The R.Y.S.E. Program found a dearth of services for girls, but identified and developed innovative and appropriate interventions during the course of the four-year program.

- Probation officers created and implemented Sister Friends, a 12-week course on Life Skills, as well as Anger Management and a number of short-term interventions.
- Girls, Inc. provided Pregnancy Prevention Courses and Teen Parenting, once it was discovered that approximately 10% of the girls at program entry were pregnant or mothers.
- The Probation Department provided much-needed concrete services for girls in the program so as to support their case plan compliance.

The R.Y.S.E. evaluation study identified the serious risk factors that affect female recidivists aged 12-17 in the Alameda County juvenile justice system.

¹⁵ Leslie Acoca and Kelly Dedel, the National Council on Crime And Delinquency, *No Place to Hide: Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Girls in the California Juvenile Justice System*, July 1998, p. 113.

- 61% of R.Y.S.E. participants exhibited a school attendance problem.
- 55% of R.Y.S.E. participants were performing below grade level.
- 36% of R.Y.S.E. participants had been expelled or suspended within the previous year.
- 24% of R.Y.S.E. participants experienced a history of child abuse.
- 34% had a documented or self-reported drug problem.
- 22% of R.Y.S.E. participants had a documented or self-reported alcohol problem.

The evaluation of the R.Y.S.E. program revealed that there were several areas of juvenile female delinquent behavior that were impacted by the intensive supervision model implemented by the program. In particular, the gender-specific continuum was more effective than traditional probation in getting girls to adhere to their probation, restitution and community service/work order requirements. Additionally, the continuum was effective in terms of beginning the process of addressing the risk factors, as measured by the CASI, that contribute to delinquent and criminal behavior. As reflected by the results of the hypotheses, the program was more successful in treating the behaviors of girls who were on probation for at least one year, particularly because of the nature of the risk factors plaguing this population of girls.

As per the results of the hypothesis testing, although there was no demonstrated effect of the interventions on re-arrest and recidivism, the severity of re-offending was less for the R.Y.S.E. girl. As found in the study, the population of girls who were more likely to recidivate were those experiencing poor school attendance and performance, those with significant histories of sexual and/or physical victimization and abuse, and those who used/abused drugs. Ongoing programs and interventions that affect these risk factors would have improved the effectiveness of the R.Y.S.E. program.

According to the Alameda County Probation Department, there are approximately 318 girls on formal probation in Alameda County each year. As a result of the successes and findings of the R.Y.S.E. program, there is now an evaluated model by which to develop and replicate appropriate responses for female juvenile delinquents receiving probation services. As of the writing of this report, the Board of Supervisors has agreed to fund another gender-specific service program administered by the Probation Department, which is a victory for the county and for the State of California.

Children Learn What They Live
By Dorothy Law Nolte

*If a child lives with criticism,
[S]he learns to condemn.*

*If a child lives with hostility,
[S]he learns to fight.*

*If a child lives with ridicule,
[S]he learns to be shy.*

*If a child lives with shame,
[S]he learns to feel guilty.*

*If a child lives with tolerance,
[S]he learns to be patient.*

*If a child lives with encouragement,
[S]he learns confidence.*

*If a child lives with praise,
[S]he learns to appreciate.*

*If a child lives with fairness,
[S]he learns justice.*

*If a child lives with security,
[S]he learns to have faith.*

*If a child lives with approval,
[S]he learns to like [her]/himself.*

*If a child lives with acceptance and friendship,
[S]he learns to find love in the world.¹⁶*

¹⁶ Dorothy Law Nolte, "Children Learn What They Live," in The Ghetto Solution by Roland Gilbert and Cheo Tyehimba-Taylor, WRS Publishing: Texas, 1994.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the previous sections of this report, data were analyzed and conclusions were made regarding the effectiveness of the Alameda County Probation Department's R.Y.S.E. program. Given the information about the specific risk factors for girls who participated in the study, especially those more likely to recidivate and be arrested for more serious offenses, and the guiding principles for effective gender-based programming that have been substantiated by NCCD research, recommendations are made below. Each recommendation includes a discussion of the basis for the recommendation, and where appropriate, a suggestion for further research, future program use, and a discussion regarding how these results might be applied to other locations.

Guiding Principles. NCCD research indicates that programs for girls must actively nurture the development of multiple competencies, particularly academic, vocational, and life management skills.¹⁷ The foundation for comprehensive gender-competent services includes: 1) creating a balance between risk-focused and strength-enhancing approaches; 2) focusing on the family; 3) attending to victimization issues; 4) providing safe environments; 5) promoting staff training and integrity; 6) being culturally responsive; 7) providing opportunities to build relationships; 8) including concrete supports; 9) providing developmentally appropriate interventions; 10) providing same-gender learning environments and small teacher-student ratios; 11) viewing services in the context of society; and 12) providing competency-based programming.¹⁸

¹⁷ Leslie Acoca and Kelly Dedel, the National Council on Crime And Delinquency, *No Place to Hide: Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Girls in the California Juvenile Justice System*, July 1998, p. 113.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 114-121.

Given these guiding principles, and in light of the findings discussed in previous sections of this report, NCCD suggests the following programmatic recommendations for the Alameda County Probation Department:

- **Additional Training for Probation Officers Regarding Sexual Assault/Abuse, Substance Abuse, and Physical Violence Programs.** According to CDE and CASI data, as well as unofficial reporting data received by R.Y.S.E. service providers, large numbers of R.Y.S.E. participants reported a history of sexual, substance, and physical abuse. Research has confirmed one of the greatest correlates of female delinquent behavior is a history of sexual and physical abuse. For example, because a history of sexual and physical abuse is widespread among female offenders, research has indicated that girls in secure residential facilities may feel re-victimized if asked to submit to strip searches, searches of their personal belongings, or pelvic examinations to determine the extent of their sexual activity.¹⁹ Greater awareness and knowledge of how to work with populations experiencing these risk factors, in addition to partnering with neighborhood-based organizations on these issues, could strengthen the effectiveness of probation officers in curbing delinquency among girls. This could be achieved through the inclusion of the sexual module when administering the CASI and in providing greater training for probation officers on how to effectively work with this population.
- **Vocational training.** According to a 1998 inventory of best practices compiled by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, effective programs encourage girls to explore and prepare for careers. Professional and technical training helps girls connect their interests, abilities, and skills with real-world job opportunities.²⁰ While career readiness was an early component of R.Y.S.E. interventions, it did not result in the placement of girls in employment to the degree originally intended. In order to interrupt the cycle of poverty and unemployment that may predispose many girls to juvenile offending, greater emphasis needs to be made on addressing basic job skill development among girls. It is therefore recommended that future interventions include vocational training for females that build upon the competencies of girls to empower them with the necessary skills to enter and sustain involvement in the professional labor market.
- **Community-based aftercare program as part of the continuum.** Aftercare is a major component of any effective and seamless continuum of services. According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, keys to aftercare are "graduated support" (a gradual withdrawal of services rather than an abrupt end) and long-term monitoring by an aftercare worker. These include a structured program for assisting with the successful return of girls to their communities through discussions, presentations, and counseling to prepare girls for re-entry. Recognizing that the R.Y.S.E. program made every effort to administer services in the girls' communities so as to emphasize the importance of dealing with girls on their "home turf," chances for successful re-entry are best when

¹⁹ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Guiding Principles for Promising Female Programming: An Inventory of Best Practices*, October 1998, p. 44.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 51.

aftercare includes placement in employment or an educational program, with ongoing links to appropriate social services, including health care, mental health services, and services that strengthen the family.²¹ Girls with histories of sexual abuse and/or substance abuse may also need intensive ongoing treatment. This level of aftercare was absent from the R.Y.S.E. program, but is necessary to assist girls with an appropriate transition from supervision to community involvement. Establishing a partnership with an appropriate neighborhood-based organization that could receive girls as they are released from supervision could strengthen girls' resistance to negative factors contributing to their delinquent and/or criminal behavior.

- **Parental support after completion of probation.** As part of its interventions, R.Y.S.E. provided several family and parental counseling services for the guardians of girls participating in the program. Parental support is essential to maintaining an environment for positive family development. A 1996 Girls, Inc. study on self-reported aggression showed that girls were more likely than their male counterparts to fight with a parent or sibling.²² As a component of a structured aftercare component, the establishment of an informal "troubleshooting" line of communication with the parents of girls who have been on probation could impact the rate of future parental and client accountability.
- **Mentoring.** Research on effective programs indicate that mentoring is essential to providing female offenders with same-gender role models who demonstrate the positive aspects of womanhood and counter negative or narrow messages about women, as well as provide girls with positive social skills.²³ The structured mentoring component of the R.Y.S.E. program was implemented too late in the program (April 2001) to significantly impact the girls on probation. An ongoing mentoring component could greatly improve the degree of positive interaction girls have with responsible adults.
- **School intervention services.** Poor school performance and attendance were major risk factors identified for girls who recidivated in this study. As discussed above, one of the guiding principles for gender-specific programs is the provision of same-gender learning environments and small teacher-student ratios. While there are other agencies in Alameda County which provide academic services for females, a structured school-based strategy to address poor school performance and reintegration of offenders into the educational system could greatly impact the level of subsequent re-offending among girls who receive services from the Alameda County Probation Department. Examples of dispositional alternatives for girls in the R.Y.S.E. age group (12-17) include *all-girls academic environments*, which build upon girls' academic and social skills, and *sober*

²¹ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Guiding Principles for Promising Female Programming: An Inventory of Best Practices*, October 1998, p. 55.

²² Institute for Urban and Minority Education: Teachers College, Columbia University, *Choice Briefs*, Number 1: 1999.

²³ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Guiding Principles for Promising Female Programming: An Inventory of Best Practices*, October 1998, p. 53.

classrooms, which provide girls with emotionally safe environments for girls to explore their personal histories and to facilitate their own recovery.²⁴

- **Greater Emphasis on Cultural Competencies of Interventions.** Female offenders receiving services from the Alameda County Probation Department, and in the R.Y.S.E. program, are overwhelmingly from communities of color. Incorporating diversity and culture were successfully accomplished by the R.Y.S.E. program, through the inclusion of cultural elements into the special events sponsored by the program, and in maintaining diversity among probation staff and among community-based service providers. However, this aspect of the program could have been strengthened by explicitly addressing and/or responding to specific cultural elements that might affect the successful completion of girls on probation and their risk of re-offending. For example, many cultures consider non-blood related individuals as "aunts" and "uncles." Future programs could benefit from services that included a component for extended family participation in rehabilitative services. Another example is that many of these girls are from communities that are heavily policed, which might have an impact on their likelihood of being re-arrested relative to their counterparts in other communities. Curriculum developed in partnership with law enforcement, or that programmatically fuses law enforcement with the efforts of the Probation Department, could have a positive effect on the over-representation of ethnic minorities under supervision. Future research, curricula, programs and interventions that consider these and other factors could positively impact girls by countering the negative stereotypes about the intersection of race, culture, and gender that some girls might have internalized—consciously and subconsciously.

In light of the findings and recommendations discussed above, NCCD suggests that other counties and jurisdictions interested in replicating the R.Y.S.E. model perform a careful evaluation of the population to be served so as to develop the most appropriate interventions for its female offenders. An initial planning process designed to address the specific risk factors of the girls to be served by the intervention or continuum could prevent problematic delays in the implementation of services and could strengthen the program's effectiveness regarding impacting recidivism. NCCD further recommends that the Alameda County Probation Department, as well as other jurisdictions interested in replicating this effort, secure appropriate

²⁴ Leslie Acoca and Kelly Dedel, the National Council on Crime And Delinquency, *No Place to Hide: Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Girls in the California Juvenile Justice System*, July 1998, p. 159-160.

service providers, and service locations, prior to program implementation in order to provide the most streamlined process possible.

The R.Y.S.E. program is one of the first female continuums to undergo a comprehensive evaluation to measure the effectiveness of program interventions and implementation. The implementation of each of these recommendations could have a significant impact on the type, intensity, and quality of gender-specific programs implemented regionally and nationally. In addition to programmatic suggestions, policy recommendations are important for continuing the process of strengthening and implementing quality gender-based services for girls in Alameda County. Historically, America has a history of social reform through the enactment of legislation that impact civil, employment, and educational rights. For example, Title IX (codified as 20 USC 1681-1683), the first comprehensive federal law to prohibit sex discrimination against students and employees in educational institutions, demonstrates the power of legislation. The statute reads:

*No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.*²⁵

Given this legacy, NCCD recommends that Alameda County and the State of California examine carefully the administrative and legislative policies that could significantly impact the development of an ongoing agenda to meet the needs of girls in the state's juvenile justice system. While several counties and cities in the State of California have begun the process of implementing gender-specific responses to juvenile offending, the state legislature should mandate the design, implementation, and evaluation of a statewide continuum of girl-specific and culturally-responsive and developmentally sequenced prevention, intervention, and sanctions

services.²⁶ This would not only recognize and support the ongoing efforts of jurisdictions that have been struggling to identify and implement appropriate services for this population. It would also recognize that the rise in female offending is not an isolated issue, and is therefore deserving of a coordinated, research-based, and timely response.

²⁵ Leslie Acoca, et al., *Educate or Incarcerate: Girls in the Florida and Duval County Juvenile Justice Systems*, National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 2000, p. 33.

²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 30.

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