

PROBLEM-SOLVING PARTNERSHIP  
PROGRESS REPORT, QUARTER 7  
APRIL 1, 2010- JUNE 30, 2010  
GRANT NUMBER 2009-PSP-00029

**1. Project Implementation:**

Our specific program objectives include:

- A) Reducing recidivism by improving strengths and reducing risk/needs of juvenile offenders transitioning to their home communities by incorporating a three phase design to ensure continuity in services from placement to the community.
- B) Strengthening families of youthful offenders to facilitate youth adjustment and transition to the community.
- C) Improving collaboration, coordination, and access to community resources for high risk youth and their families.

\*Please see attached report from the Department of Criminal Justice and Political Science, North Dakota State University describing this quarter's activities.

**2. Staffing:**

No new staff was hired during this quarter and there are no current vacancies.

**3. Project Outcomes:**

The attached evaluation report addresses the specific identified program outcomes including intermediate outcomes and in-program recidivism. During this quarter we continue to increase collaboration between systems in Clay County by implementing a family strengthening component to the Reentry Services Project. We are collaborating with Clay County Social Services and local mental health agencies to complete a strength-based family assessment on the youth of families referred to the program, if appropriate. Implementing a family strengthening component to the program has generated positive changes in both clients and their families, both as individuals and a family unit. The family assessment component has been utilized by approximately 30% of families. Family participation in RSP activities in the community continues to be emphasized and supported by providing mentoring, transportation and financial support for these activities.

The two family therapists that are assigned to the Reentry Services Project were invited and are participating in the Reentry Services work group that meets bi-monthly to review program objectives and share information on youth opportunities and programs in the area. The workgroup consists of numerous community partners who are involved in youth issues, thereby increasing collaboration across systems. The family therapists also meet monthly with the juvenile probation agents, the Reentry staff and the program administrator to review cases and provide updates.

The joint Restorative Justice/Reentry Services Project Advisory Board met on May 6, 2010 and is scheduled to meet again on August 7, 2010. The Advisory Board consists of 30-35 community partners. These partners represent the county commission, law enforcement, schools, Mental Health agencies, Social Services, MN CEP, corrections, County Attorney's office, parents, youth agencies and the Clay County Collaborative. The committee meets quarterly in an effort to increase the community's awareness of youth issues and increase the community's role in affecting positive change for youth and their families. In 2009, a PATH foster parent and a staff member of a local faith-based organization joined this group and have provided valuable parental and faith-based input. A result of the formation of these strong partnerships has been solid community support for the RSP, a construction of open, routine communication among agencies and the willingness of the Clay County Collaborative to continue to provide financial support for the RSP in the upcoming fiscal year.

The two staff employed by the program work on a daily basis with community agencies to increase community awareness of the issues facing youth who are returning to the community from out of home placement. Examples include being a part of wraparound teams, working with a homeless youth steering committee to address the needs of homeless youth in the community, working with cultural groups to increase opportunities for youth in the community, working with community members to increase job opportunities for youth, presenting and having group discussions on youth issues at the local alternative school, etc.

Through the program youth are provided the opportunity to restore the harm they have caused to the community and victims of their crimes by completing community work service, writing letters of apology, etc. under the direction of the Reentry staff and/or a local law enforcement officer. Youth are also given the opportunity to participate in a Restorative Justice process, coordinated by the Clay County Restorative Justice coordinator.

#### **4. Feedback:**

The following feedback was received from youth and parents surveys this quarter. The feedback will be used to make improvements to the program, or build on strengths, as indicated.

#### **Youth (n=2)**

*In what ways was the Reentry Services Project helpful to you?*

- Having something to do almost every week.
- IDK

*In what ways was the program disappointing?*

- Nothing
- IDK

## **Parent/Guardian (n=3)**

*In what ways was the Reentry Services Project helpful to you?*

- The help he gave my son, very accessible if a problem arose and I needed advice.
- Yes -- it was wonderful to have a break and to know that he had another positive role model.

*In what ways was the Reentry Services Project helpful to your child?*

- Gave someone for my child to talk to, ho him out in community, and helped me make sure he was doing community service.
- *TC NAME REMOVED* was a positive role model for him -- got him out of the house doing activities that were geared toward his interests
- Very helpful. Child wasn't.

*Could the RSP do anything that would have been more helpful for you?*

- No
- Not that I can think of.

*Could the RSP do anything that would have been more helpful for your child?*

- No
- Not that I can think of.

### **5. Illustration:** (submitted by Sally Dandurand, Transitional Coordinator)

During this quarter I located a Native American class through the Moorhead Public School District's Indian Education program that taught boys how to make dancing outfits. My client participated in the class and created his first Grass Dancing outfit. I brought the client to the 10 week class and also participated in the process. My client completed 80% of the outfit by himself. He designed the exterior by choosing his colors and creating his symbol. He also prepared the fringes; completed stencils on the outfit (that he had drawn,) hand sewed the medicine pouch, and painted the design onto his outfit. My client also learned a lot about the meaning behind the outfit while watching movies during class. Due to the success and awesome participation by my client I brought him, along with another client and the Indian Ed program teachers, to my client's first Pow Wow. He wanted to dance in the outfit he did such an amazing job creating and was so proud of. At the Pow Wow I was able to reward my client with ankle bells that are worn by the dancers. It was an exciting experience for him and an inspiration for the other client I had brought along. We also attended the Native American Graduation Ceremony sponsored by the Fargo/Moorhead Indian Education programs. The Indian Ed teachers wanted to display the Grass Dancing outfit my client had completed to inspire younger children. My client was so proud of his accomplishments; he too wanted to share his experiences with everyone. This whole experience was a self-esteem builder for my client along with new knowledge of his Native American culture. Another class starts this fall and I hope to encourage more clients to participate and create their very own dancing attire also. (See attached picture)

**6. Barriers:** (submitted by Michael McMullen, Transitional Coordinator)

Working with adolescents during the summer months becomes difficult due to a number of different factors. We see a change in behaviors with the weather. Not having any real schedule or a lack of supervision. Finally, the holiday and weekends are prime time for celebrating which help many clients stay in trouble.

During the summer, many people are chomping at the bit to get outside by a pool or lake: our clients are no different. Getting a meeting set during these days can be difficult because they are in a hurry to be with their friends and out of the sticky house. Many times these behaviors are encouraged, so long as they are staying out of trouble. Then trying to get in contact with our clients can become difficult because they have no schedule or time frame.

During the school year we can meet with a client at school or shortly after because they have the schedule set. During the summer months, unless they have a job, the client gets to choose what and when they are active. Many times trying to get in touch with clients before one o'clock is met with multiple messages left on cell phones. Clients talk about staying up all hours playing video games or "hanging out" with friends. They see this as their free time, and should not have to be bothered. Along with not having a schedule many times they don't have real supervision during the summer.

Many parents have to work, and are not able to be home with their teens. While most are able to be alone, some would benefit from a "sitter" for a few hours every day. At times, some clients seem perfectly able to stay hidden from the world and only emerge at dusk so they can meet with their peers. Some parents are okay with this behavior stating that "their child is only young once". They also seem to turn a blind eye to the partying the child is doing when they are out with their peers.

Many clients will talk about drinking or being at parties throughout the summer. They brag about smoking marijuana or being able to drink a lot of alcohol. They even talk about being able to take part in these at risk behaviors with their parents because they were having a celebration.

Sometimes the client is able to stay out of trouble. There aren't negative reports and the parents agree that they are staying out of trouble. They don't understand why the client only seems to get in trouble at school. It becomes difficult to explain that anyone can stay out of trouble when no one expects anything from you. However, summer ends like adolescence and we all have to grow up at some point.

**7. Evaluation:**

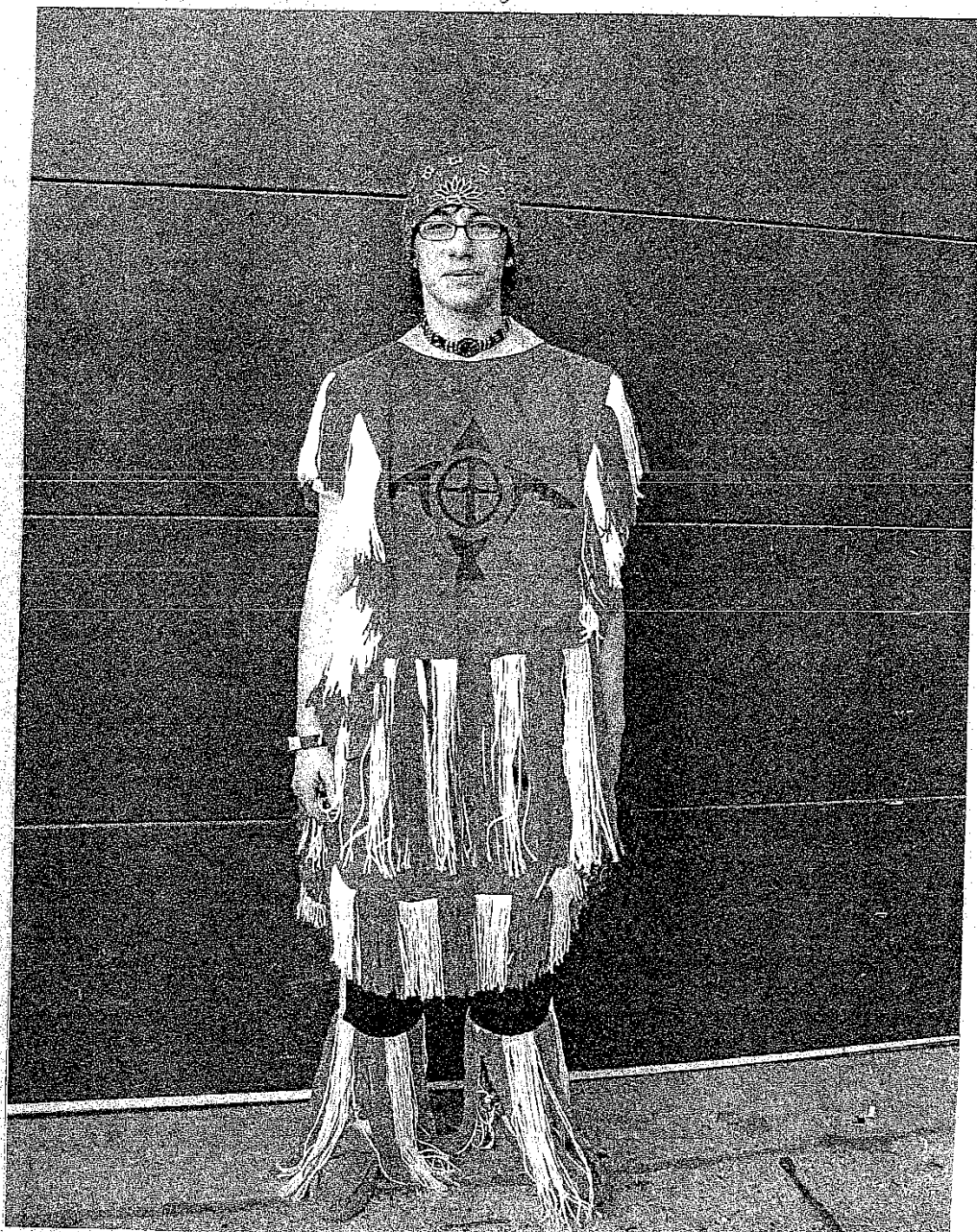
See attached evaluation report from the Department of Criminal Justice and Political Science, North Dakota State University.

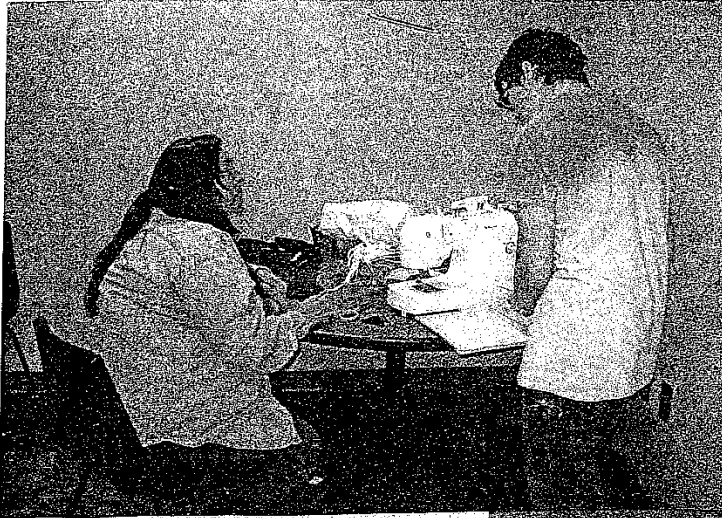
**8. Revisions Necessary:**

None

Matthew's completed  
Grass Dancing Outfit

2010



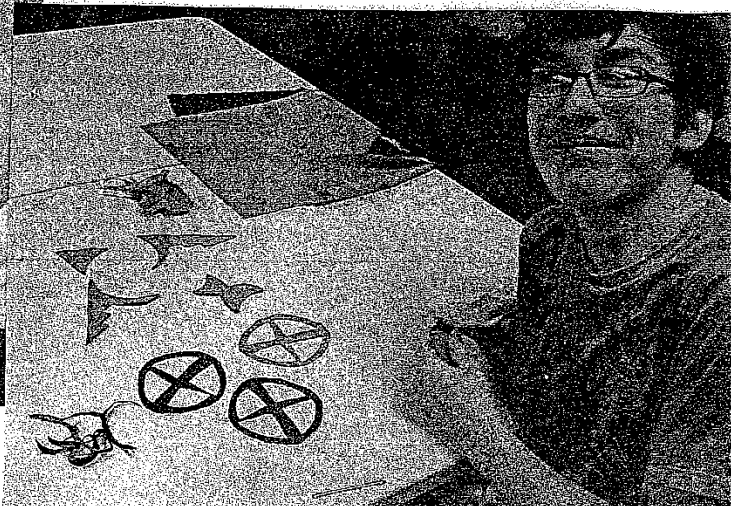


2010  
The  
Process  
of  
Creating his  
Grass Dancing Outfit

Completed fringe  
tied by Matthew -  
one piece at a time →



Matthew showing his  
Creativity ☺



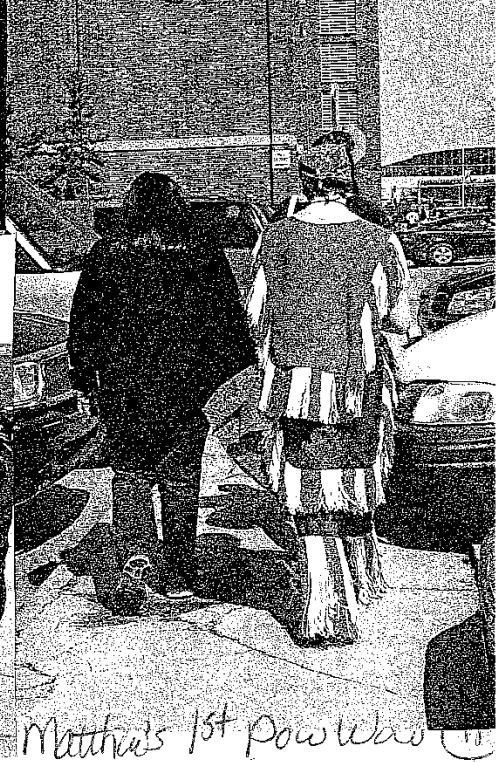


↓ Medicine Bag





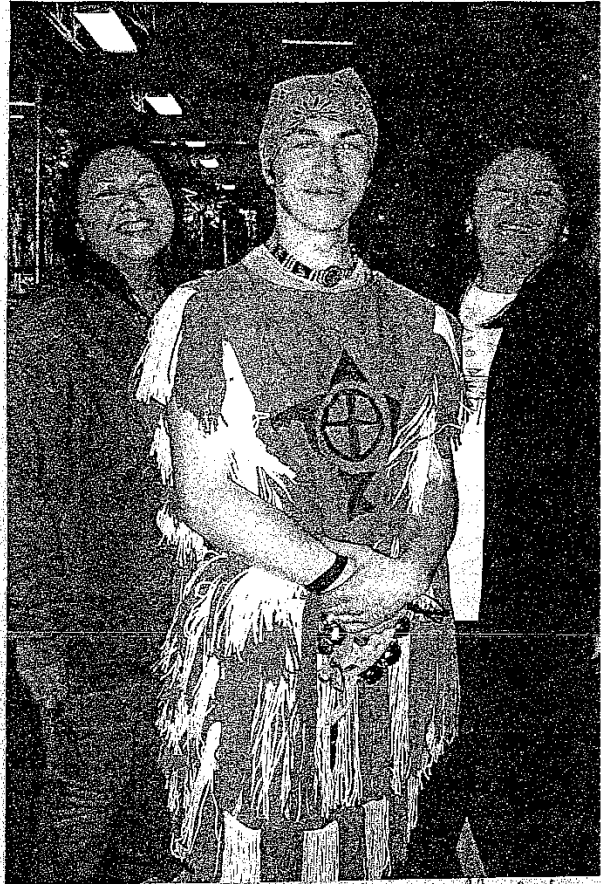
Preparing for the PowWow



Matthew's 1st PowWow



Enjoying Indian Tacos while nervously waiting to participate in his first Powwow dance!!!



Bea & Donnae with Matthew



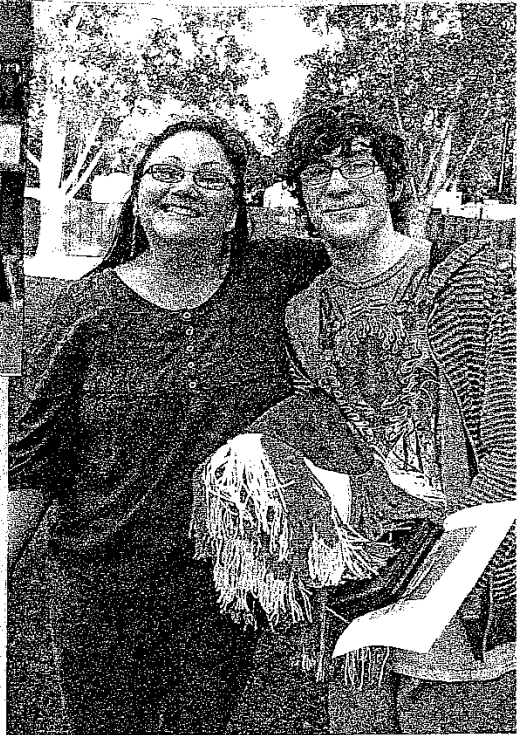
Matthew  
Jaz  
&  
me ☺



Going back home  
after an exciting  
and busy day  
at the Powwow.



Native American Graduation  
Ceremony - May 2010



# **Reentry Services Project:**

Report to the

**Minnesota Department of Public Safety  
and the  
Joint Advisory Committee for the Restorative Justice Program &  
Re-entry Services Project**



July 2010

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Thomas D. McDonald

Department of Criminal Justice and Political Science  
North Dakota State University



**Reentry Services Project:  
Report to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety and the Joint  
Advisory Committee for the Restorative Justice Program & Reentry  
Services Project, July 2010**

The Reentry Services Project (RSP) in Clay County, MN began in July 2003 and continues today with funding from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety and the Clay County Joint Powers Collaborative. The program aims to improve public safety by assisting youthful offenders in successful community reentry following out-of-home placement. Two Transitional Coordinators (TCs) work with juvenile Probation Officers (POs) and community-based service providers to identify client specific needs and employ comprehensive case management services. The program seeks to improve public safety by preparing incarcerated juvenile offenders for successful reentry from criminal justice placements to communities. Specific program objectives include:

- 1) reducing recidivism by improving strengths and reducing risk/needs of juvenile offenders transitioning to their home communities by incorporating a three phase design to ensure continuity in services from placement to the community,
- 2) strengthening families of youthful offenders in order to facilitate youth adjustment and transition to the community, and
- 3) improving collaboration, coordination, and access to community resources for high risk youth and their families.

The RSP is designed to begin at upon entry to the placement facility and to continue for approximately six months following release to the community. As of June 30, 2010 the Reentry Services Project had 166 closed and coded case files. An additional 15 cases are currently active and 28 youth have been served more than once by the program.

During the most recent quarter (April 1 to June 30, 2010) a total of 20 youth were served by the program. Five cases were closed during this period, while 15 remain open. This report includes detailed information on the five cases closed during between April 1, 2010 and June 30, 2010.

**I. Sociodemographic Profile**

Upon release back to the community, the average age of the five clients was 15.7 years. Four of these clients (80%) were male; one (20%) was female. Forty percent (2) were White (non-Hispanic), one (20%) was Black, one (20%) was Native American, and one (20%) was Hispanic.

On average, these clients had 3 prior official contacts including an average of 3 charges prior to their most recent out of home placement. Three clients (30%) had a prior felony charge; two (40%) had prior persons charges (e.g. misdemeanor or felony assault). On average the clients spent 9 months on probation prior to returning to the community after their most recent placement (range 4-18 months). Three of the clients (60%) were on indefinite probation. Four (80%) were on moderate supervision and one (20%) was on maximum supervision.

The clients experienced an average of 2.6 out-of-home placements (0.8 prior long-term – 30 days or more) and had spent on average 70 days in out-of-home placement (all in restrictive placement) upon entering the Reentry Services Project.

Three clients’ most recent charge was a felony offense; forty percent (2) of these clients’ most recent charge was a misdemeanor. Two clients’ (40%) most recent charge was a persons offense; two clients’ (40%) most recent charge was a property offense (e.g., theft, property damage), and one (20%) client’s most recent charge was related to illegal drugs. The clients’ most recent placement averaged 61 days (all in restrictive placement) and was most commonly a detention center (60%); one client spent time in a treatment facility (20%), and one client (20%) was released from an unspecified placement in another state.

Eighty percent of these clients (4) had a history of school problems. Sixty percent (3) had a history of substance abuse and sixty percent (3) had a history of mental health problems. Two clients (40%) had a history of violence (e.g., persons charge, fighting). Four clients (80%) had a history of multiple risk factors (two or more of violence, substance abuse, school, or mental health problems). One client (20%) experienced all four problems.

*Initial YLS/CMI Scores*

RSP clients are assessed regularly using the YLS/CMI diagnostic instrument. Table 1 provides the average YLS/CMI score for youth upon return to the community (N=5).

Table 1. YLS/CMI Scores upon Return to the Community			
Domain	Average Score	Risk Level (associated with Average Score)	Percent of clients with strength identified
Prior / Current Offenses	1.8	Moderate	N/A
Family / Parenting	2.0	Low	20%
Education / Employment	3.6	Moderate*	20%
Peer Relations	3.2	Moderate*	0%
Substance Abuse	1.6	Moderate	20%
Leisure / Recreation	2.0	High*	40%
Personality / Behavior	3.2	Moderate	20%
Attitudes / Orientation	2.0	Moderate	0%
Overall	19.4	Moderate	Average 1.2 per client
*Leisure / recreation scores reflected “high” risk/need. The other domains closest to scoring in the “high” range were education / employment and peer relations.			

**II. Program Activities**

*Case Planning*

Transitional case plans were created for each of these clients. These plans included goals and tasks in three general categories (competency development, restorative accountability, and community safety). Case plans were examined to determine the average number of goals and tasks assigned in each of these categories and the distribution of tasks in each of the domains identified in YLS/CMI assessments. Table 2 provides the average number of goals and tasks

assigned to clients in the domains of competency development, restorative accountability, and community safety.

Case Plan Area	Average Number of Goals Assigned (range)	Average Number of Tasks Assigned (range)
Competency Development	7.8 (6 – 10)	57.2 (40 – 76)
Restorative Accountability	1.4 (1 – 3)	6.4 (4 – 14)
Community Safety	1.4 (0 – 3)	4.2 (0 – 9)
All	10.6 per client	67.8 per client

The following figures indicate the proportion of clients who were assigned at least one task by YLS/CMI domain (Figure 1) and the breakdown of all assigned tasks by domain (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Percent of Clients Assigned Tasks by Domain

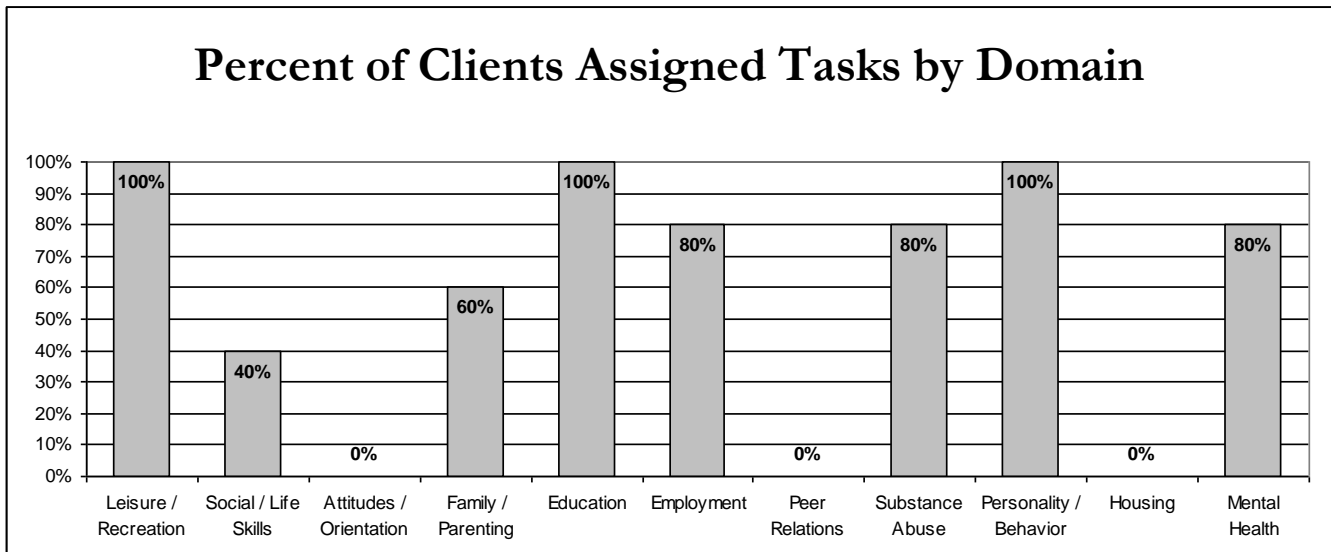
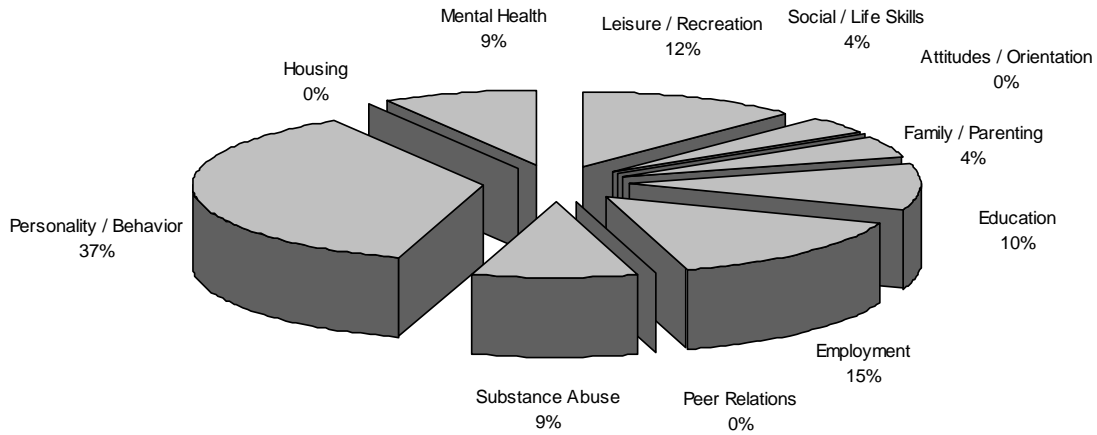


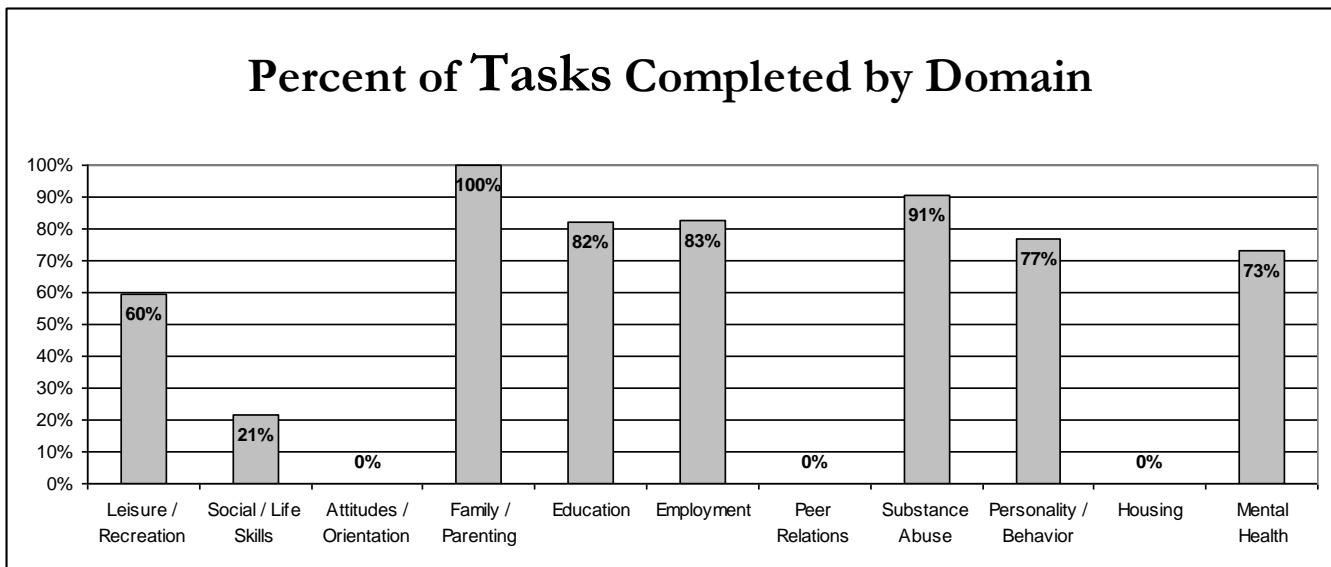
Figure 2. Transitional Case Plan Tasks by Domain

## Transitional Case Plan Tasks by Domain



Seventy-six percent of clients' case plan tasks were completed upon exit from the Reentry Services Project (262 of 345 tasks assigned). The remaining tasks (24%) were not completed during program participation. Figure 3 provides a breakdown of task completion rates by domain.

Figure 3. Percent of Tasks Complete by Domain



The majority of tasks assigned were in the areas of personality / behavior, leisure / recreation, employment, and education (see Figure 2.). Task completion rates in these domains were 77 percent, 60 percent, 83 percent, and 82 percent respectively (see Figure 3).

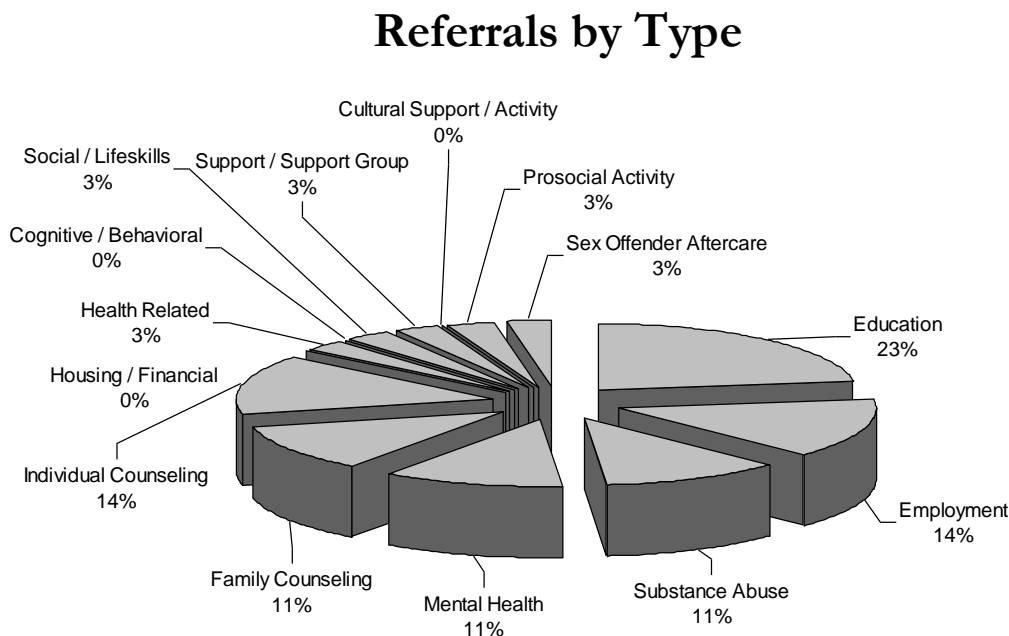
*Referrals / Services*

All of these clients (5 of 5) received at least one service-related referral. A total of 35 referrals were made for these clients (an average of 7 per client). Figure 4 depicts the proportion of clients referred to various types of services and Figure 5 examines referrals to services by type.

Figure 4. Percent of All Clients Referred to Services

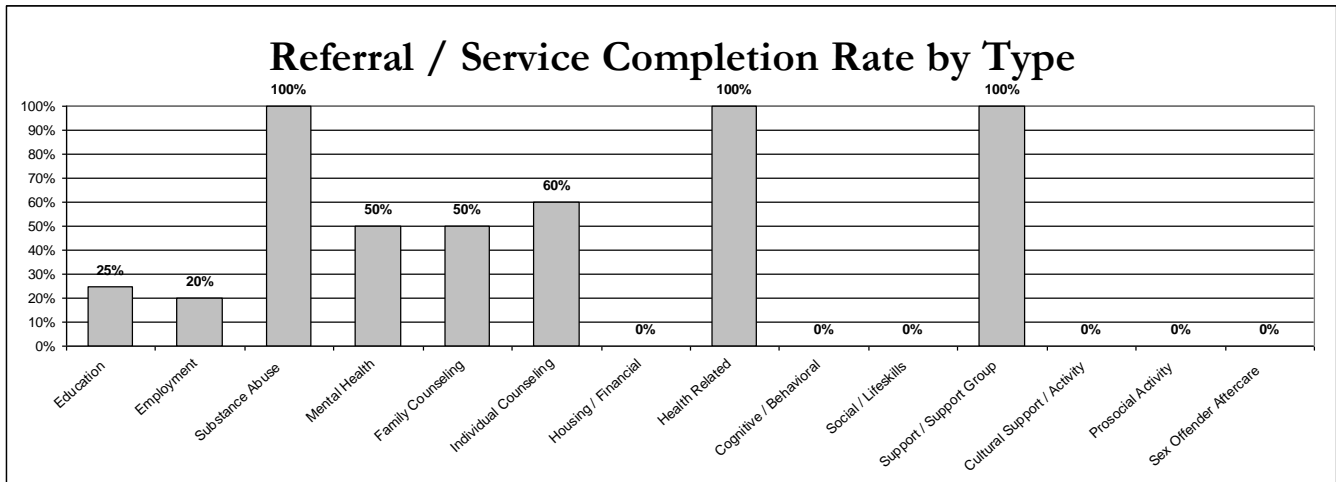


Figure 5. Referrals by Type of Service



Eighty percent of referrals (28 of 35) resulted in at least some service to the client (i.e., at least one counseling session or assessment). Forty-six percent of referrals (16) were considered “complete” or “ongoing” at the end of the clients’ participation in the program (average 3.2 per client). A breakdown of completion rate (proportion of referrals complete or ongoing at the end of RSP participation) by referral type is provided in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Referral / Service Completion Rate by Type of Service



*Other Program Activities*

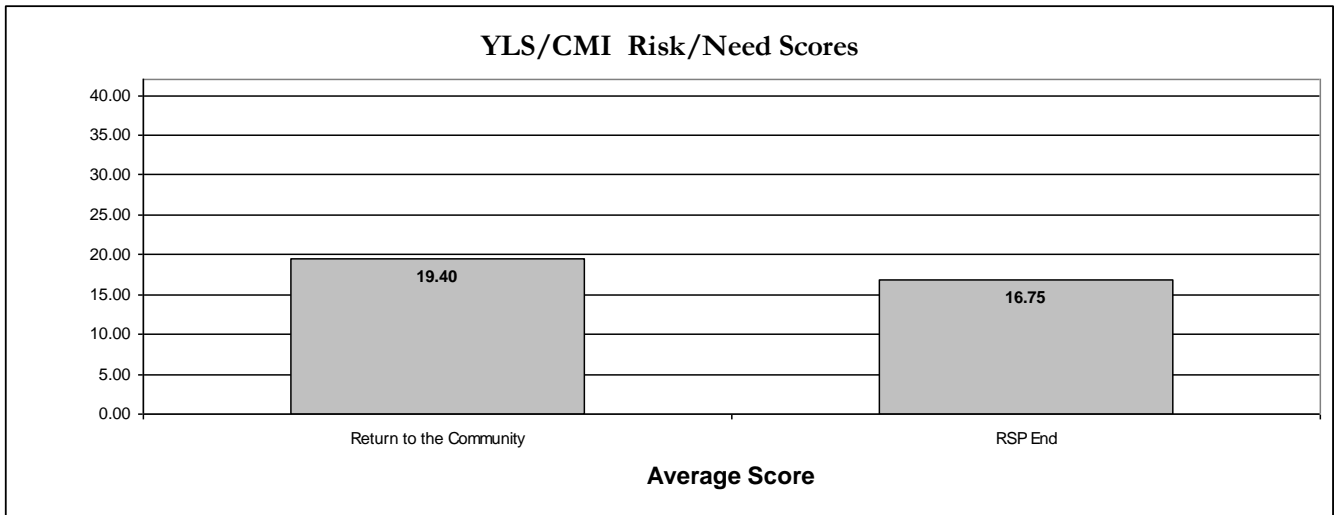
The five clients spent an average of 7.8 months in the Reentry Services Program (range 3 to 16 months). During this time Transitional Coordinators averaged 27 contacts with clients, 12 parent contacts, and 4 agency partner contacts. Probation Officers averaged 13 contacts with clients, 16 parent contacts, and 20 agency partner contacts. On average, Transitional Coordinators spent 45 hours with each client during program participation.

**III. Intermediate Outcomes**

Two clients (40%) were subjected to urinalysis testing during program participation; both of those clients were tested two or more times. One of the tested clients (50%) had no positive drug tests; one client (50%) had a single positive test.

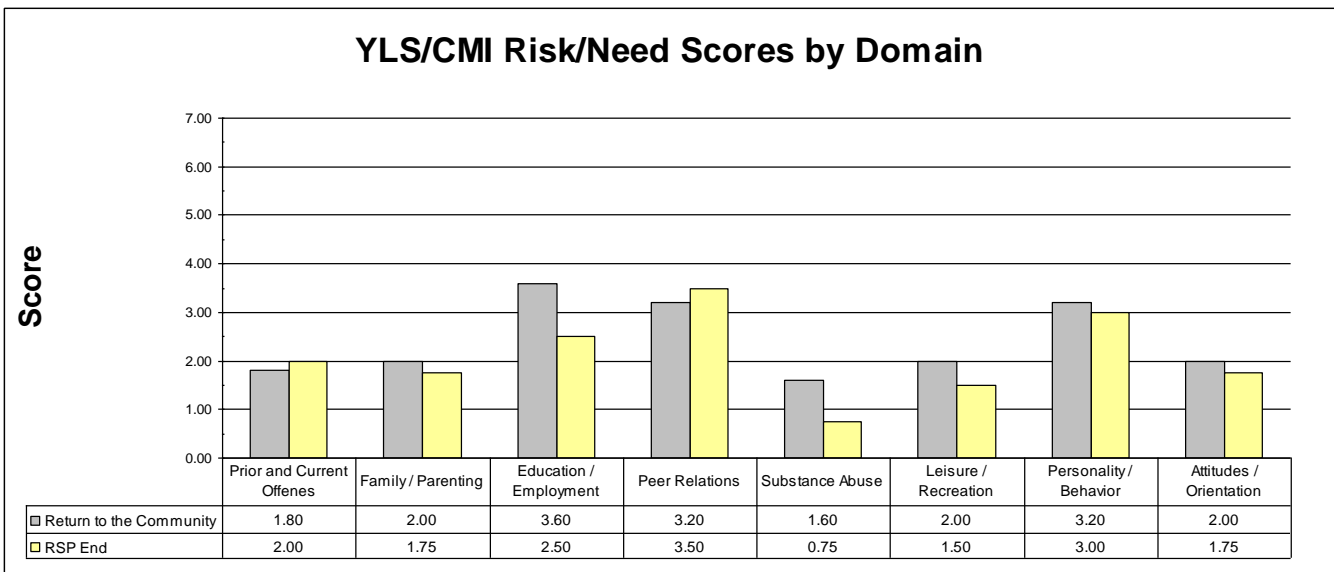
In order to examine changes in YLS/CMI risk/need and strengths scores during the period of program participation, the researchers isolated assessments occurring at two points: a) upon return to the community, and; b) upon program completion. Changes in risk/need score over time are depicted in Figure 7 (see below).

Figure 7. YLS/CMI Risk/Need Scores



Overall risk/needs scores declined 14 percent from return to the community (19.40) to the end of RSP participation (16.75). Changes in risk/need score by domain are presented in Figure 8 and Table 3 (see below).

Figure 8. YLS/CMI Risk/Need Scores by Domain



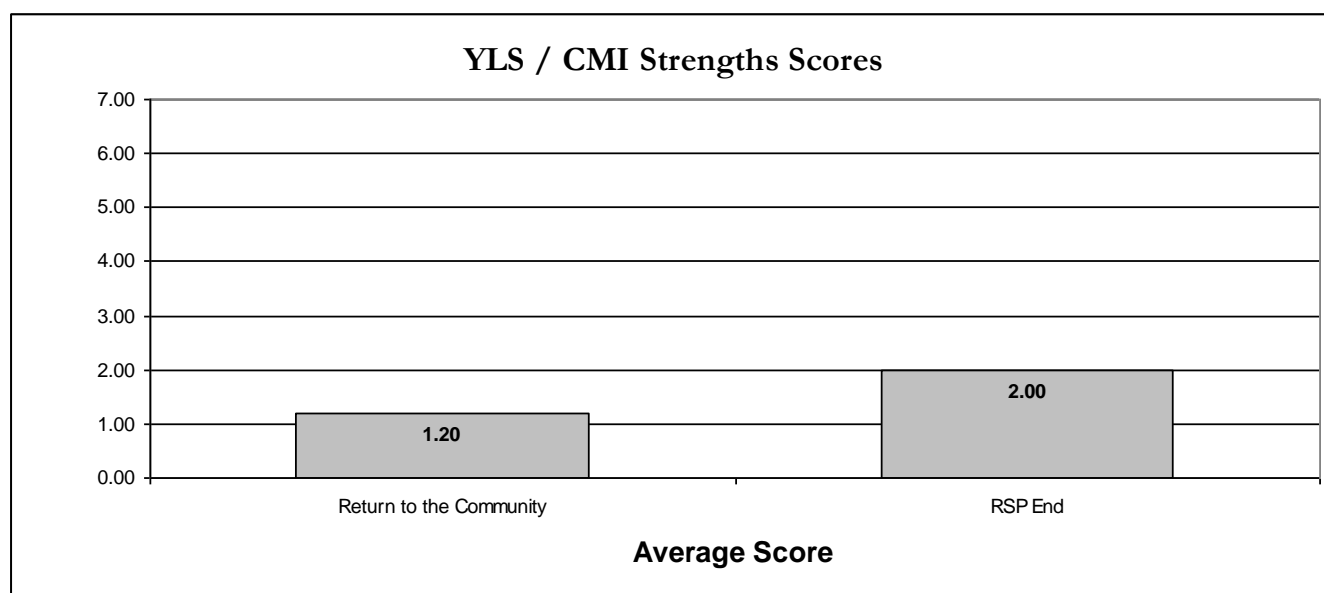
Domain	% change from Return to Program End
Prior / Current Offenses	11%
Family / Parenting	-13%
Education / Employment*	-31%
Peer Relations*	9%
Substance Abuse	-53%
Leisure / Recreation*	-25%
Personality / Behavior	-6%
Attitudes / Orientation	-13%
Overall	-14%

\* Leisure / recreation ranked “high” on the initial / intake YLS/CMI; education / employment and peer relations were domains closest to ranking “high” on the initial / intake YLS/CMI.

Clients experienced reductions in risk/need in six of eight domains. Risk/need reductions were greatest in the domains of substance abuse (a 53% reduction in risk/need), education / employment (31%), and leisure / recreation (25%). Risk/need scores increased in the domains of prior / current offenses (an 11% increase in risk/need) and peer relations (a 9% increase).

Changes in strengths score over time are depicted in Figure 9.

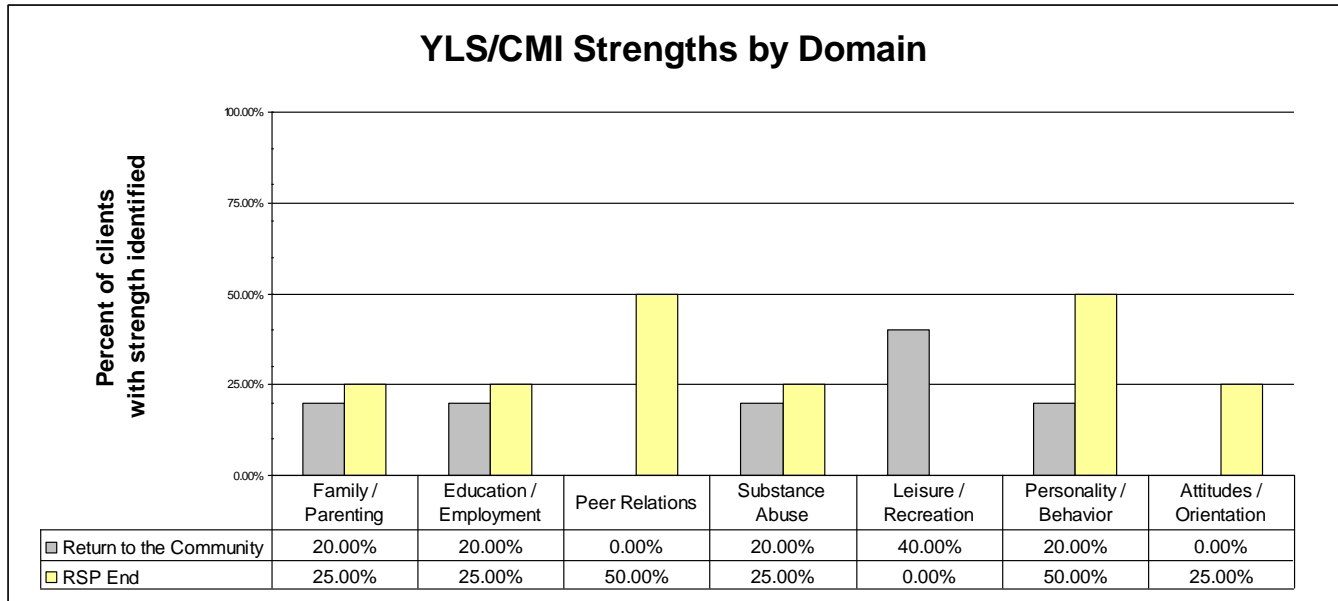
Figure 9. YLS/CMI Strengths Scores



Average strengths scores increased 67 percent from the return to the community (average 1.2 strengths identified) to the end of program participation (average 2 strengths identified). Figure

10 depicts changes in the proportion of clients with a strength identified in each domain over time.

Figure 10. YLS/CMI Strengths by Domain



#### **IV. In-Program Recidivism**

Forty percent of these clients (2 of 5) experienced no probation violations while participating in the Reentry Services Project. One client (20%) experienced a single probation violation; two clients (40%) experienced more than one probation violation.

Eighty percent of clients (4 of 5) experienced no new charges during program participation. One client experienced several new official contacts, the most serious of which was a gross misdemeanor property charge.

Two clients (40%) experienced new out-of-home placements while participating in the program; three clients experienced more than one placement during program participation. A total of 8 placements were incurred by these three clients; only two placements were long term (more than 30 days). Clients spent a total of 89 days in short term out-of-home placements which began while the client was participating in the program and a total of 209 days in long-term placements (30 days or more) which began while the client was participating in the program. All of this time was spent in restrictive out-of-home placement.

Seventy-five percent of the out-of-home placements (6 of 8) were the result of technical probation violations; the remainder was for new charges (1) and unknown reasons (1).

#### **V. Other Client Achievements and Participation**

While participating in the program...

- Four clients (80%) attended education services regularly while participating in the program; one client (20%) attended education services sporadically.
- One client was homeless during program participation; that same client was homeless upon program completion. Eighty percent of the clients (4) had a stable residence while participating in the program.
- Transitional Coordinators reported that employment was appropriate for three of these clients. All of those clients searched for a job while participating in the program; 67 percent (2) were employed at sometime during program participation. One client (33%) had stable employment while participating in the program. None of the clients were employed upon program completion.
- Three of the clients (60%) were “clean” upon program completion. Transitional Coordinators reported that one of the three clients with a history of substance abuse was in need of treatment services during program participation; that client regularly participated in treatment while participating in the program.
- Transitional Coordinators indicated that three clients were in need of mental health services while participating in the program (two of these three had a history of mental health problems). Two of the three clients received mental health services and complied with mental health recommendations.
- Two clients’ families (40%) participated in at least one outing or activity.
- Eighty percent of clients’ families were involved in services (4 of 5).
- One minority client participated in culturally specific services.
- One female client participated in gender specific services.
- None of these clients participated in Restorative Justice while involved with the RSP.
- All of these clients received one-on-one cognitive-behavioral sessions with their Transitional Coordinator.
- Three families (60%) received an individualized packet of information about services available in the community.
- A family assessment was completed with two families (40%). One family had been assessed previously. Two families (20%) received in home services.

## **VI. Summary**

The results of this quarterly report mirror earlier reports which have indicated that the program provides increased contact with clients, their parents, and agency partners. The data reported here indicate that the contacts provided by Transitional Coordinators represent a 200 percent increase contacts with clients, a 200 percent increase in parent contacts, and a 20 percent increase in contact with agency partners when compared to Probation Officer contacts. In addition, program staff continues to develop and implement case specific plans in collaboration with local service agencies. All clients received at least one transitional case plan task in the domains of leisure / recreation, education, and personality / behavior. Most received at least one task in the domain of family / parenting, employment, substance abuse, and mental health (Figure 1). The most common domains for task assignment were personality / behavior (37% of all assigned tasks), employment (15% of assigned tasks), and leisure / recreation (12% of assigned tasks) (Figure 2). Compliance with transitional case plan tasks in the most common areas of task assignment ranged from 83 percent (employment) to 60 percent (leisure / recreation) (Figure 3).

All clients were referred to education related services; most were referred to services in the employment, mental health, family counseling, and individual counseling domains (Figure 4). The most common domains for service referral were education (23% of all referrals), employment (14%), and individual counseling (14%) (Figure 5). Completion rates for referrals in these domains ranged from 60 percent (individual counseling) to 20 percent (employment) (Figure 6).

Data regarding client achievements indicate that clients served by the program experienced a number of positive changes in social factors related to reducing the probability of reoffending, especially education, substance abuse, mental health, and employment. Average YLS/CMI risk/need scores declined 14 percent from return to the community to program end, with the greatest reductions occurring in the domains of substance abuse, education / employment, and leisure / recreation (Table 3). Strengths scores increased 67 percent during this same period.

This group of clients completed the program largely without incident. While most clients experienced technical violations only one client experienced a new official contact during the period of program participation.

In summary, data reveal that the Clay County RSP program continues to deliver a range of program services which are beneficial to youth, their families, and the larger community. Outputs observed are consistent with earlier summative reports which indicated positive benefits of program participation.