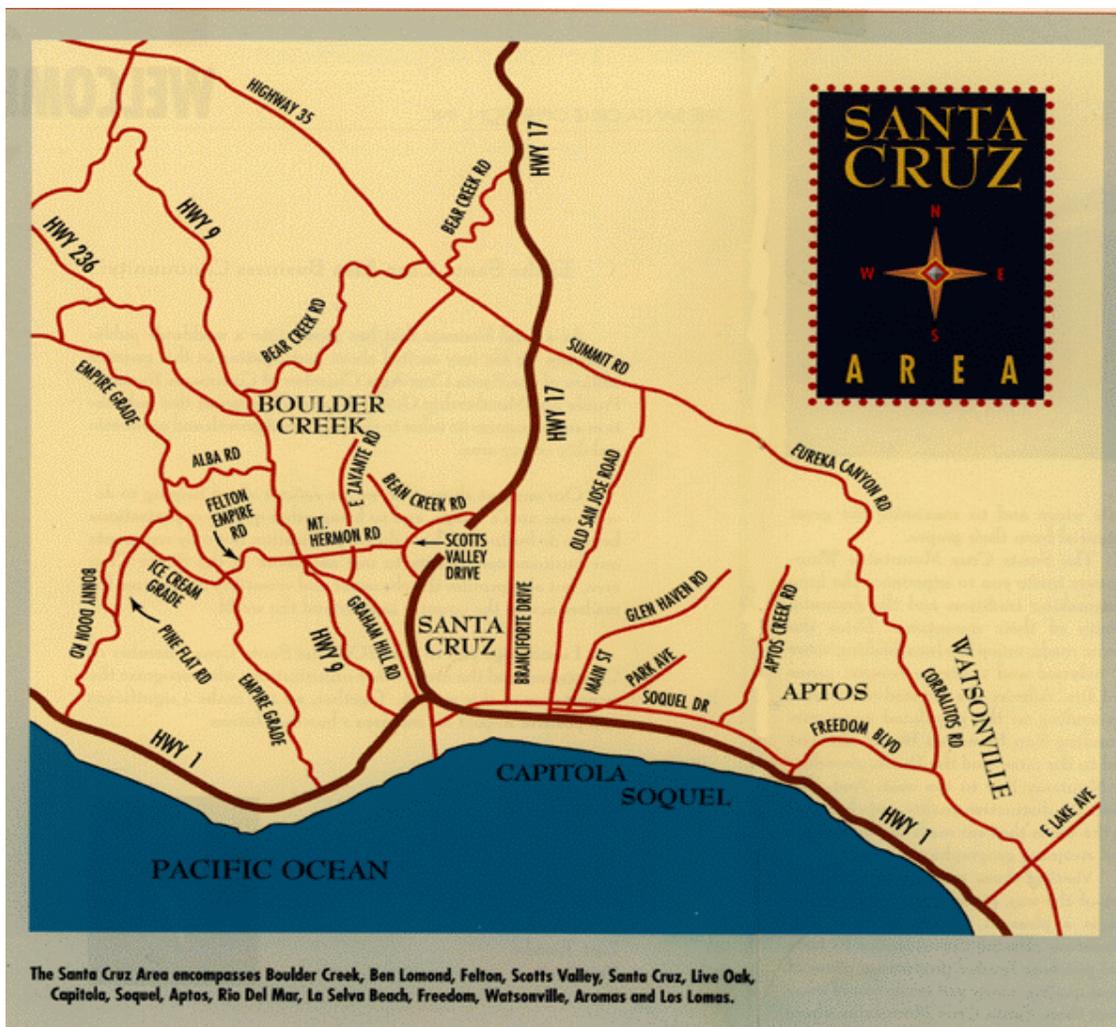


UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN FRANCISCO
CHILD SERVICES RESEARCH GROUP (CSRG)

EVALUATION OF TWO THERAPEUTIC PROGRAMS FOR
JUVENILE COURT WARDS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

COMMUNITY-BASED (GROW) AND DAY TREATMENT (PARK)



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Youth who commit criminal offenses typically receive attention not only from the justice system, but also from other human service systems, including mental health (Rosenblatt, Rosenblatt, & Biggs, 2000), substance abuse, and social welfare. Significant numbers of youth in California who are wards of the court in California are placed into the residential care system at a significant cost (Rosenblatt et al., 2001) and often with unknown outcomes. For over a decade, Santa Cruz County, California, has engaged in a constant and ever evolving reform process designed to better integrate and coordinate services across child serving agencies for youth who are wards of the court. The Board of Corrections Challenge Grant funded program in Santa Cruz County, California, grew out of these experiences.

Santa Cruz County was already avoiding long-term placements in residential care for Wards with one short-term residential program and one case management based community program (termed GROW). Santa Cruz applied for the Challenge Grant to create a day treatment program for youth (Placement Alternatives Resources for Kids, PARK), as a way of completing the continuum of services for Wards who were at imminent risk for out of home placement. With the establishment of PARK, and the continued existence of GROW, Santa Cruz County created a set of alternatives for all wards at the highest levels of risk within the county.

This scenario, described in more depth later in this report, drove the evaluation approach used for this project. Santa Cruz was able to continue one program that had already been considered successful, while creating a new program that they hoped would be equally or differentially successful. At the same time, all wards in the County eligible for this level of service were assigned to one or the other of these two programs. Consequently, the approach taken to the evaluation had two fundamental choices: 1) Conduct a comparison of GROW and PARK; or 2) Conduct a comparison of PARK with some other program or programs in the County that served a very different population of youth.

An evaluation approach that compared GROW and PARK had the advantages of comparing two programs designed to accomplish similar goals with a highly comparable set of youth. The willingness of Santa Cruz county to use a randomization process for the evaluation permitted the highest level of equivalence between those youth served in GROW and those served in PARK. The primary disadvantage of this approach was that GROW constituted a comparison program that was not only a “no or minimal” treatment approach, but was actually innovative and successful. However, there were no other relevant comparisons for PARK in Santa Cruz county,

the youth served by probation outside of GROW and PARK consisted of a totally different population, and going outside the County was not an option for logistical, monetary, and methodological reasons.

For these reasons, the study was designed as a randomized comparison between a case management approach (GROW) and a day treatment approach (PARK) to serving wards at imminent risk of out of home placement. It was not expected that one program would be superior in all domains to the other. In actuality, such an expectation may have created ethical problems for the use of randomization. It was, however, expected that the fundamental differences between a day treatment program and a case management program might impact differentially on the outcomes achieved.

These considerations made it especially essential that a wide range of outcomes be assessed beyond probation related outcomes such as juvenile justice recidivism. PARK, for example, contained an on-site classroom for the youth served, and it was consequently expected that PARK might have improved educational outcomes compared to GROW. Both PARK and GROW either provided or brokered mental health and substance abuse services, requiring that those domains be assessed. This report provides outcomes related to juvenile justice, mental health, and substance abuse service system goals. Such an approach complicates the determination of outcomes and adds significant expense to the process, however differences between the two programs would not have been obtained without a multi-dimensional, multi-perspective approach.

Although randomized designs are most commonly used to test hypotheses or as endpoints for the development of interventions, such designs can also be used to help generate further hypotheses or guide program development (e.g. Sechrest & Rosenblatt, 1987). In the case of Santa Cruz, there was really no clear reason why the vast majority of eligible youth would be referred to PARK or to GROW, making randomization a reasonable and ethical way of making such decisions; though those rare youth who either strongly preferred one program over another, or who were judged to be especially suited to a particular program were excluded from randomization and not included in the study.

In the end, the study was designed more as an effort at knowledge generation and hypothesis generation than hypothesis testing. There was simply no logical way, without conducting the study, to make clear a-priori assumptions regarding the ultimate outcomes of these service system reforms. Such a non-traditional approach was mandated by the circumstances in Santa Cruz

County and by broader systemic and programmatic goals. . At the inception of the Challenge Grant Process in Santa Cruz, it was felt that this approach had the highest probability of producing usable results when compared to the alternatives. In the end, a rich data and unique data set was collected that will yield information of value. This report represents the first summary of the results obtained by the evaluation of the Board of Corrections Challenge grant in Santa Cruz County.

Background

Needs Assessment for Santa Cruz County

Santa Cruz County, a suburban jurisdiction with a 1997 population of approximately 240,000, is primarily a semi-rural and agricultural community. There are four population centers in the cities of Santa Cruz, Watsonville, Scott's Valley, and Capitola. Operating under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court, the Juvenile Division of the County Probation Department serves the population of youth who are "at risk", or have committed a law violation. By 1998, the "at risk" population was determined to be 26,818 and, based on Department of Finance estimates was expected to grow 44% by 2015.

In 1997, a total of 2,774 juveniles were arrested by local law enforcement agencies, the largest number of yearly arrests recorded over the previous decade. Between 1984 and 1997 juvenile arrests increased 39%, with the most significant increases occurring from 1991 to 1997. Over the same time period, the largest increase in juvenile offenses involved felony arrests, showing an overall increase of 63.9%, compared to a 31.5% increase in misdemeanor arrests. An analysis of changes in the number of juvenile arrests by offense category showed that arrests involving crimes of violence and weapons experienced the greatest growth over the period from 1984-1997, representing a 97.4% increase when compared to pre 1987 data. On a yearly average, 460 youth were being referred to the Probation Department as a result of these serious offenses. This special population of serious and violent juvenile offenders represented a significant concern to the safety of the public and required a response from the Juvenile Court and the Probation Department.

Development of the Project Design

Santa Cruz County experienced an increase in the average daily population of detained youth in its Juvenile Hall. Between 1988 and 1998 the Juvenile Hall population increased by 78%. The 1998 average daily population was 57 detainees, exceeding the facility's capacity of 42. An analysis of the increase of juvenile detainees found that the most significant growth occurred in the population of youth detained post-disposition. During the period from 1993 through 1998, this group of detained juveniles grew from 28% to 50%, contributing significantly to the juvenile hall overcrowding situation. The County does not operate a ranch/camp or court commitment facility, instead relying on the availability of costly group homes, both in and out of county. The limited resources available for this population of youth detained post-disposition and/or requiring out of home placement was straining the ability of the local juvenile justice system to meet the complex needs of these minors.

Concurrently, the Probation Department was operating with juvenile caseloads that were considered to be unacceptably high. A survey of County school-age youth regarding alcohol/drug use and perceptions, coupled with a 130% increase in alcohol/drug crimes during the eight year period 1990-1998, demonstrated a major youth substance abuse problem, in Santa Cruz County, that outpaced the statewide average. With juvenile caseloads numbering over 100 wards per officer, it was determined that there was a need to expand the continuum of services, in order to better serve the high need multiple offender, with drug and alcohol problems and address the need for alternatives to out of home placement.

In response to the need to develop a program to better serve this population of juvenile offenders, Santa Cruz County was awarded funding under the State Board of Corrections Juvenile Crime Enforcement and Accountability Challenge II Grant Program. The design of the program, aptly named Placement Alternative Resources for Kids, or PARK, intended to enhance the existing continuum of services and sanctions available to judges and Probation Officers, and serve as a new resource to address pressing social, family, treatment and behavioral needs of high risk, serious and chronic juvenile offenders through a more economically operated and less restrictive community based-program setting. The program model sought to implement an effective Day Treatment strategy that combined accountability and sanctions with increasingly intensive community-based public and private intervention and counseling services. Considering that there are population

centers at both the north end of the County and at the south end of the County, it was decided that two Day Treatment centers would be necessary. One was established in the city of Watsonville (Luna PARK) and the other located in the city of Santa Cruz (Sequoia PARK).

Description of the Program

Project Goals and Objectives

The goal of the PARK Program was to minimize the incidence and impact of crime in the community. The program pursued this goal by creating a continuum of services and sanctions that responded to offender needs while providing high intensity supervision, tracking, and control. The operational objectives of the program were to:

Implement a model community-based correctional program that provides counseling, education, job-vocational skills enhancements and independent living skills, based on individual assessments, case management practices, and intensive monitoring/supervision of offenders.

- To provide detention and placement alternatives for youthful offenders.
- To provide new sanctioning guidelines which emphasize community supervision and monitoring options for youthful offenders.
- To establish an integrated service delivery system with Children's Mental Health, Education and experienced community organizations, who provide specialized counseling, treatment, vocational and other interventions for youthful offenders.

The project design was based on the California Children's System of Care and endeavored to create a service delivery system that was community-based, comprehensive and distinguished by full agency partners, serving children and families who were at risk of separation due to Court ordered out-of-home placement. Toward that end, the PARK program operated under the following mission statement:

“PARK develops and encourages the strengths of everyone involved in our program. We create opportunities for youth to establish healthy daily routines, make amends to victims, to develop social and job skills and contribute to the well being of family, school and a safe community. Working in partnership with families, we provide a safe and sober environment where all are respected for their unique qualities and are encouraged to practice personal accountability, honesty, caring and self-respect.”

The project undertook a scientifically validated comparison of two distinct treatment/supervision modalities for the chronic, serious offender. This study allows for an outcome comparison of a site-based, intensive day treatment model (PARK) versus a non-sited, community supervision/family preservation model (GROW). The findings aim to demonstrate the degree to which integrated, interagency treatment and supervision projects can succeed when delivered in a centralized versus a diffused, non-site specific approach.

Clients Served

The program limited the population of youthful offenders served to those who were fourteen to seventeen years of age and were at imminent risk of out-of-home placement. Additional basic eligibility requirements included that the youth presented with at least two of the following risk factors:

- Family Issues: lack of supervision, control, criminal family influence, family violence, home factors.
- School Problems: attendance, academic, and behavior problems.
- Substance Abuse: pattern of alcohol and/or drug use.
- Delinquency Patterns: gang identification, theft, runaway and delinquent pattern.

Crimes of violence were not a barrier to admission, however an educational determination of Seriously Emotionally Disturbed (SED) was a disqualifier.

Program assignment was made only after a judicial determination that the program would be in the best interest of the individual minor, and the Court made an order for Placement Prevention Services.

Program Components

Screening

A two level screening process was used to move cases toward program referral. The first level of screening occurred when a Field Services Probation Officer identified a case that could elicit an out-of-home placement recommendation at the time of disposition. Using an initial screening instrument (At-Risk Assessment Checklist), the Probation Officer would confer with their supervisor and make a determination if the case should be moved on to the Placement Screening Committee for a multi-agency screening process and departmental recommendation. The Placement Screening Committee (comprised of Supervisors from the Probation Placement Unit and Family Preservation Unit, Clinical Supervisors from Children's Mental and community based providers) evaluated the case based upon standardized criteria, which weighed the child and family's strengths and risks in multiple domains (see Placement Screening Referral Form). This committee had the authority to direct a Probation Department recommendation for disposition at all levels of sanctioning, with the exception of ranch/camp or C.Y.A. placement. If the Placement Screening Committee determined that a case was appropriate for Placement Prevention Services at either the PARK Program, or in the comparison program, the Probation Officer would be directed to make that recommendation to the Court at the time of disposition.

Referral

In all cases where the Court made an order for Placement Prevention Services, a Placement Assessment Conferencing Team (P.A.C.T.) was scheduled as soon as possible, following the Court hearing. The P.A.C.T. was comprised of the child and family (parent, guardian, extended family member if available), Probation Officer, Mental Health Clinician and support persons, as appropriate. The goals for the P.A.C.T. meeting was to gain the family's support for Placement Prevention Services, explain the nature for the project, random assignment and differences in the two service delivery models, complete a strengths/needs assessment and prepare a preliminary case plan. In cases where families were willing to consent to participate in the research, a true random assignment occurred. In cases where families were unwilling to sign the required human subjects consent forms, a service delivery

assignment was made to best match the child/family needs. These cases were excluded from the research.

Random Assignment

The program evaluators, at the University of California San Francisco's Child Services Research Group, designed the methodology for true random assignment. The protocol is further described in a later section of this report.

Assessment

A comprehensive assessment, leading to case planning was performed within weeks of program entry. Assessments covered areas of psychological functioning, family and social functioning, alcohol and drug use, educational attainment and review of previous casework and reports. A facilitated family conference was conducted to further the assessment and involve the child and family in the case planning process. An effort was made to engage all system and family stakeholders in this conference, with the goal of the conference being to develop a mutually agreeable plan for services that addressed the unique needs of each child and family.

Treatment Program

In all cases assigned to the PARK Program, site based day-treatment was the primary component of service. A structured daily schedule combined the elements of on-site classroom education and tutoring, individual, group and family counseling, vocational assessment and training, substance abuse education and treatment, acupuncture detoxification services, community service, probation supervision, and recreational activities, were applied. Additionally, families participated in parenting and multi-family groups, recreation activities and on site community/social gatherings. The minimum amount of time required to complete the site-based portion of the program was originally set at six months. This was later modified to three months.

Follow-Up

Upon completion of the site-based segment of the program, PARK Program youth were enrolled in a three-month aftercare period. During this phase of services, youth continued to receive probation supervision services from a PARK program Probation Officer. Mental health services were offered through the outpatient unit of Children's Mental Health. This resulted in a change in primary therapist, decrease in the frequency of contacts and a

focus on transition back into the community and more mainstream educational placement.

Service Providers

Mental Health

Children's Mental Health, in an intensive day treatment format, provided comprehensive clinical services, including counseling and therapy. This included individual, family and group counseling, crisis intervention, home visits and advocacy in court. Selected families received parenting groups and education on coping with substance abusing, delinquent teens. Additionally, program therapists participated in multi-disciplinary meetings and planning sessions and provided supervision of the program youth in the milieu.

Probation

Probation Officers and Probation Aides provided daily supervision and programming at the day treatment centers. This included support for the classroom teacher, facilitating victim awareness curriculum, cognitive behavioral curriculum, scheduling program activities, leading process groups and participating in program activities with program youth and their families. Additionally, probation staff provided comprehensive casework services, which included drug testing, preparing violations and court reports, supervision of program participants in the community and at work, home visits, referral and linkage, transportation and job readiness training and placement.

Santa Cruz County Office of Education

The Santa Cruz County Office of Education provided equipment, furnishings and a classroom teacher at each program site. All students underwent a comprehensive educational assessment. A curriculum of English, Mathematics, Social Science and other courses, as required by the state of California were provided on-site. Smaller instructional groups were separated from the core class for training in computer skills, software usage and individualized tutoring. Additionally, contract specialists from the County Office of Education facilitated pre-vocational assessment, training and placement.

Youth Services

As a contract service provider, Youth Services, a division of the Santa Cruz Community Counseling Center, provided substance abuse assessment, counseling and educational groups, access to twelve-step meetings, recreation and cultural enrichment programming. Youth Services staff participated in case planning and multi-disciplinary meetings and assisted with coordinating after-care activities.

Independent Service Contractors

Art Therapy

Program participants were engaged in a variety of artistic activities, as part of the structured day-treatment environment. Group sessions with a contracted professional artist occurred twice weekly and included painting, sculpture and clay-mation video production. Students were taught to evaluate their work, develop technique and use self-expression as a motivation for their work.

Acupuncture

Two group-needling sessions were conducted weekly, to assist with detoxification from substance abuse, improving concentration, teaching relaxation and promoting alternative health practices.

Cooking/Nutrition Education

By combining the services of a cook and program staff, program participants learned menu planning, food purchasing, nutritional evaluation and food preparation skills. Program youth assisted in the meal preparation on a daily basis, within a rotating schedule.

University of California at San Francisco Child Services Research Group

Research design, data collection, monitoring, consultation and evaluation services were provided through a single contractor. These services included participation in monthly meetings, preparing reports, attending conferences, as well as a trouble shooting evaluation processes.

Planned Parenthood

Program participants received training in birth control, safe sex, parenting and risk reduction. These four session programs were repeated twice each school semester.

Data Collection

Contracted data collection specialists worked in cooperation with the County Office of Education to compile and submit data, relevant to educational outcomes.

UC Interns

Community Studies students from the University of California at Santa Cruz tutored program participants three days each week, during school hours. These students also participated as mentors and engaged program youth in recreational activities.

Project Implementation

Year One

The primary focus during the program's first year was the development and implementation of a program structure, including guidelines, policies, participant expectations and the flow of services. Forms were refined, a participant handbook and brochure were written, meeting schedules adopted, procedures modified and infrastructure needs addressed (logistics concerning staff scheduling, floor coverage, crisis/emergency response etc.).

Furnishings and equipment were purchased. Both sites were decorated with an eye toward creating a stimulating and culturally appropriate environment. Staff was hired and trained. A framework for staff development was established. This included developing a program mission statement and training in Strength-Based Assessment/Practices and Balanced and Restored Justice.

As program participants began receiving services, opportunities for new programming elements became apparent. A multi-family counseling group was instituted, acupuncture for the treatment of substance abuse was offered, significant partnerships with local employers were pursued, as well as options to move forward with art therapy programming, dance and health/sex education. A pilot population moved through the program, receiving services, while approval for the random assignment and human subjects review protocol was in process.

Year Two

At the start of the second year the issues of a low program census required attention. A thorough analysis of the referral, assessment and program selection methods throughout the Probation Department's juvenile division was conducted. Inconsistencies were identified and remedied in the referral and assessment processes. All cases eligible for specialized services (both treatment and enforcement) were funneled through the Placement Screening Committee, where a standard risk/needs/strengths instrument helped to inform committee members regarding placement decisions. General Supervision caseloads were closely examined and clients with marginal compliance with probation terms were pre-screened by the committee. In a number of cases, this resulted in an accelerated intervention and referral for placement prevention services at the time of probation violation. Two additional systemic adjustments, which were found to be helpful in increasing the program census were: 1) the referral of youth exiting 24 hour placement or ranch/camp placement for placement prevention assessment by the Placement Screening Committee, and 2) the adjustment of the ratio of cases assigned to the PARK Program (study group) versus the GROW Program (control group) from 1:1 to 2:1 respectively.

Recruitment and retention of qualified staff presented as a major issue in several Santa Cruz County departments. Both the Probation Department and Children's Mental Health were challenged by these conditions. As a result, the PARK Program experienced staff turnover, leaving positions difficult to fill.

A comprehensive "level" system, which defined goals, measured participant achievement and determined privileges, was developed as a program refinement. The level system was cognitively based and its design was influenced by a similar system in place in Orange County. This system provided youth with concrete feedback, on a daily basis, while encouraging progress along a continuum over time.

New program services which were made available to program participants during year two included acupuncture for the treatment of substance abuse, art programming, diversity education, competitive sports (softball, soccer, volleyball and basketball), safe sex and health education and a pilot nutrition program. Providing incentives for program participation and the celebration of success became an important element to the ongoing engagement of the young participants. Incentives and rewards took many forms, but always included the input of the young people being honored.

Both program sites maintained high standards of service delivery. A solid daily schedule was reinforced by the addition of “staff huddles” and “morning check-ins” at each site. This helped improve staff to student communication in such important areas as: emerging issues in the therapeutic milieu, daily expectations, staff availability, student concerns during non-program hours and event planning. It was learned that consistency in carrying these meetings out was often more important than the content discussed in the meeting itself.

Collaboration with key partners and contractors continued and was an important priority within the PARK Program. Contract monitoring meetings were held regularly and weekly Multi-disciplinary team meeting helped to ensure that planning and case review processes were inclusive. Cross-training staff was emphasized, as efforts to increase their knowledge of Wraparound and Balanced and Restorative Justice included: circulating literature among staff, conducting topical staff training retreats and selecting key staff to attend specific workshops, to increase practitioner skills in both of these areas.

Midway through the second year of operation, the PARK Program census continued to be a major concern. Although the two primary interventions, discussed previously implemented (1. the referral of youth exiting 24 hour placement or ranch/camp placement for placement prevention assessment by the Placement Screening Committee, and 2. the adjustment of the ratio of cases assigned to the PARK Program [study group] versus the GROW Program [control group] from 1:1 to 2:1 respectively.) were considered to have created growth, additional problems were identified and remedied in the referral process. A duplicative assessment process was replaced with a Risk Assessment Checklist, enabling probation officers to make a direct referral for a Placement Assessment Conference Team meeting, when an appropriate client was identified. By effectively utilizing this instrument, the placement screening process was bypassed and appropriate cases were brought to services more rapidly.

Year Three

During the third year of the program’s operation, an agreement was made to revise the treatment group and comparison group sizes. The treatment group was adjusted downward to 130 participants and the comparison group population was resized to 91. Consultation with the program evaluator at Child Services Research Group confirmed these to be viable population sizes to maintain the quality of the research. This agreement was a contingency of funding for a fourth year of program services.

Strength Based and Restorative Justice philosophies became operationalized within daily interventions as well as serving as a foundation for agency values. Restorative Conferencing was used as a primary tool for resolving disputes in the milieu. The notion of addressing “harm done” assumed priority over handling rule violations. A major emphasis was placed on the development of functional relationships with family, peers, community, as well as staff. Case discussions and intervention planning processes included an evaluation of assets. As unique skills, interests or knowledge were identified, they were used as touchstones for the development of case plans, in the belief that they could encourage a more pro-social peer association.

A refinement of the program occurred in the third year and involved an increased level of student participation in the planning and performance of activities. The students at both program sites, under the mentorship of staff, developed a process for presenting ideas for program modifications and special events. This process included specific steps for researching an idea, evaluating its impact and making a presentation at an all staff (multi-disciplinary team) meeting. This process led to some changes in the program schedule, level system, and academic program and served as the motivation for the development of a number of program activities. This informal youth led process was encouraged by staff and perceived as an empowering and legitimizing experience for all involved.

Another area of increased emphasis in year three was concerning parent involvement. A criticism of the early program model was that while parents played a role in therapeutic processes, they were virtually uninvolved in other aspects of programming. In an effort to increase parent involvement, parents were invited to a “back to school night”, where they were introduced to options, which were available to them, whereby they could participate in program activities. Several parents offered their involvement, the result being the enrichment of the nutrition program, fitness training and dynamically increased support for special program events (e.g. family “pot luck” dinners, school and holiday events).

The staff and students at both sites were affected by the death of a female student, during non-program hours prior to the Christmas holiday in 2001. Rapid communication and coordination of debriefing sessions, as well as the involvement of the girl’s family helped the entire PARK community move through their grief and towards healing. The combined efforts of all disciplines merits praise for their collaboration and mindfulness of the best interests of the PARK Program students, during this difficult time.

Although there were subtle differences in the structure of the programming at each site, great effort was made to ensure that services delivered were similar and complimentary. Daily routines, addressed the distinct needs of each unique group. The north county site had a more ethnically balanced population, while the south county population was overwhelmingly Latino. This required staff to respond in a culturally appropriate manner at each site.

The PARK Program became more institutionalized within the continuum of juvenile services in Santa Cruz County, by the third year of operation. PARK Program staff held seats at various planning and policy making tables. The PARK Program was represented at the Juvenile Hall Overcrowding Task Force, The Children's Mental Health System Of Care Steering Committee, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded Reclaiming Futures Steering Committee, the Law Enforcement Coordinating Council, as well as several boards of directors of local community based agencies. This has helped convey the importance of sustaining the important services offered at the PARK Program, beyond the expiration of the grant. It has also allowed the program to offer a site where other service providers have been able to stage programs for the benefit of both PARK Program participants and the greater community.

An analysis of the PARK Program's budget revealed that savings realized over the first three years of the program's existence would allow for continued operation through the first quarter of fiscal year 2002/2003. In planning for the best use of remaining funds, it was decided that a focus would be on locating ongoing funding to keep the Luna site operational, while working toward the closure of the Sequoia site. Census and average daily attendance data revealed that the South County (Luna) facility was experiencing greater success. Additional factors considered in this decision, included the historical census counts at each facility, staff's perceptions regarding the effectiveness of services at each site, the location and accessibility of each site, the planned distribution of discharge over time and the cost of maintaining each facility.

The decision to close the north county facility resulted in some students not being able to complete the intervention period prior to the planned closing date. These students were placed on an accelerated trajectory, in an effort to maximize the benefits to them, of the program services. Those who qualified were transitioned as graduates, while others were matched with the appropriate existing probation supervision caseloads. Families and students were involved in transition planning and follow-up services, to help minimize negative effects.

There were some unanticipated costs associated with an accelerated program closure at the north county facility. The immediate need to relocate fixed assets, provide for storage and prepare the physical plant for turnover created expenses which would have been managed differently, had fourth year funding not been eliminated. Nevertheless, this facility was successfully closed on September 30, 2002.

The south county facility continued to accept referrals, however enrollment into the research project ceased in October 2002. This was because the program needed to be responsive to the possibility of a January 1, 2003 closure, due to expired funding. In consideration of this, true site-based day treatment ended in the first week of December 2002. At that time the service delivery pattern was altered to align more closely with the comparison group, while the comparison group adapted to align more closely with a Wraparound approach. The on-site County Office of Education School, Luna Academy, remained open. The class size was increased to include students from a local residential substance abuse treatment center. PARK students continued to attend school at Luna Academy, and this transition continues to work and be very well managed.

Santa Cruz County Children's Mental Health agreed to discontinue billing the Challenge Grant for clinical services, in October 2002, in an effort to stretch available funding as far as possible. Their ability to alter their MediCal billing under E.P.S.D.T. allowed for the continuation of clinical services for students at the south county facility. However, this formula funded only one clinician. All aftercare services were directed to the out patient counseling unit. Independent services contracts for acupuncture, recreational services and drug and alcohol counseling were restructured and ultimately terminated, by the end of December 2002.

Standard Probation Services

The G.R.O.W. Program served as the comparison group and was comprised of seriously delinquent youth presenting with comparable risk factors. This group consisted of "wards" of the juvenile court, who were also deemed to be "at imminent risk for out-of-home placement". Intensive Probation Supervision Services were applied to this group, in an out-patient setting and at diffuse locations throughout the community. Probation Officers worked as part of a multi-disciplinary team under a System of Care philosophy, along with workers from County Mental Health, a community-based counseling provider, law enforcement agencies and the County Office of Education.

G.R.O.W. Program youth were involved in alternative education programs at various sites in the county, including programs of independent studies. This population received face-to-face contact with their probation officer a minimum of twice each week. More frequent contacts were the norm. Probation officers provided the full range of probation and court services, which included monitoring compliance with Court orders, individual and group meetings with the youth and family, in-home contact, participation in Family Conferences, assessment, case plan development and review, coordination with partner agencies, participation in therapeutic and recreational activities, developing family resources and follow-up services.

Hypothesis Testing

Purpose of Study and Statement of Hypotheses

The purpose of this study was to examine outcomes of juvenile offenders who are at imminent risk of out-of-home placement served by either (a) a newly implemented intensive day treatment program, the Probation Placement Alternative Resources for Kids Day Treatment Program (PARK) or (b) the family preservation (GROW) program, the existing placement prevention program in the county. We examined how juvenile justice indices, educational achievement, and functional status compared for youthful offenders in the PARK project versus the comparison GROW program.

This study provided a unique, effective, scientifically validated comparison of two distinct treatment/supervision modalities for the chronic, serious offender. The findings demonstrate the degree to which integrated, interagency treatment and supervision projects can succeed when delivered in a centralized locale versus a diffused, non-site specific approach in Santa Cruz County.

Background and Approach to Research

Overview of the Research Design

This research project involved an experimental design with random assignment to treatment and comparison groups. Youthful offenders who voluntarily assented to participate in the study were randomly assigned to either the PARK program or the GROW program. All youth received at least the current standard of care in Santa Cruz County. Services were not denied

to any youth as a consequence of the randomization procedure. A core instrumentation package was initially administered to all children enrolled in the study and their families. Follow-up data were collected at six and twelve months post-intake. The design was therefore a 2 (PARK, GROW) by 3 (baseline, 6 month, and 12 month follow-up) multivariate repeated measures design.

Methods

Participants

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Target participants included court wards between the ages of 14-17 who had multiple referrals and were at imminent risk of out-of-home placement. Crimes of violence were not necessarily a barrier to admission. Participants had at least two of the following risk factors: (a) Family Issues: lack of supervision, control, criminal family influence, family violence, home factors; (b) School problems: attendance, academic, and behavior problems; (c) Substance Abuse: pattern of alcohol and/or drug use; and (d) Delinquency Patterns: gang identification, theft, runaway, and delinquent pattern.

Youth who met the above and following criteria were randomly assigned to either the PARK program or the GROW program: (a) risk of out-of-home placement; (b) not dangerous to self or others; and (c) willingness to voluntarily consent to participation in the research demonstration.

SUBJECT RECRUITMENT

Initial Contact Method

After a court determination that the minor was at imminent risk of out-of-home placement, a placement review committee made referrals to the study. Eligibility was established only after a judicial determination that a placement prevention program would be in the best interest of the individual minor. Probation officers then requested consent from the court (the legally authorized representative of the youth), parent (if available) and child to be contacted by the UCSF research team for participation in the study.

Willingness to participate by the parent/caretaker (if possible) and the eligible adolescent was determined during a phone call or if possible in a service program setting. If they were willing to participate, a letter was given

explaining the project further. The letter explained the purpose of the study, the burden of participation, safeguards of confidentiality and privacy, and the availability of the investigators to answer questions. If willing to continue, participants returned an assent post card and then were contacted for scheduling an interview. The probation officer arranged a time for an assessment and interview with the child and parent/caretaker. Prospective participants could choose not to participate without compromising ongoing care. Youth who did not wish to participate in the study were placed in the Family Preservation Program (the standard of care in Santa Cruz for this population) and were not tracked by the research evaluation team. No youth was denied services due to the randomization procedure. All youth received at least the current standard of care in Santa Cruz County.

CONSENT PROCESS AND DOCUMENTATION

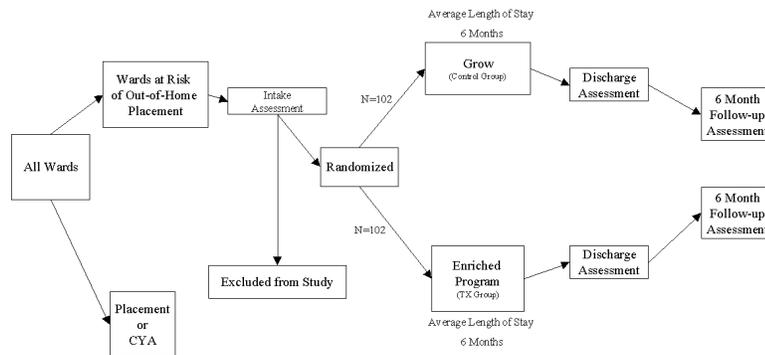
Written permission to participate was obtained using UCSF CHR approved consent forms. Because the youth were all wards of the court, the judge, who was the legally authorized representative of the youth, was required to consent to participation using the UCSF CHR approved consent form. Written permission to participate was then also obtained on the UCSF CHR approved consent form from parents/caretakers at the time of the interview. Written assent using a separate simplified UCSF CHR approved assent was obtained from the minor. Consent and assent forms are stored separately in a locked file.

PROCEDURES

Once informed consent was obtained, the interviewer either administered the tools in the home of the child or in a county facility, depending on the wishes of the child and family. Participants were free to adjourn an interview session or discontinue participation at any point. After assessment, random assignment was made to PARK or the existing GROW program, which served as the comparison group.

Youth were enrolled in the second half of the first year and continued until the end of the second year, encompassing 17 total months. This allowed for all youth to be eligible for the full data collection cycle of intake, six-month,

Figure 1
Santa Cruz County
Flow of Youth Through Evaluation Process



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and 12-months post intake follow-up.

After the initial interview, quarterly contact was attempted with the families in order to assure optimal tracking of the location of the family for follow-up purposes. This was accomplished via mail contact. Youth were interviewed at 6 and 12 months post intake.

UCSF staff and trained Santa Cruz county probation officers and caseworkers collected original data from youth and caretakers. Standard demographic information was obtained from the interviews as well as from the mental health information systems.

The UCSF evaluation team collected data on the following secondary indicators at the individual and program level: 1) information on school achievement and attendance 2) data on the population, poverty, health status, and demographics of the county as indicators of need for services 3) data on use of services by ethnicity, age, and social class 4) descriptive data on the implementation of the PARK and GROW program, and 5) arrest, probation completion, recidivism, and sustained counts. In addition, the following qualitative data elements were collected from staff in the PARK and GROW programs: 1) Organizational Culture Survey, 2) Organizational

Climate Survey, 3) Key informant interview including program processes, procedures, strengths, challenges, and recommendations.

Crossover between youth assigned to the Family Preservation program and youth assigned to the Enriched program was strictly monitored. The intervention of interest consists of a “value added” package layered on top of existing standard practice. Youth, however, who were assigned to the standard practice condition were not eligible for the Enriched program services. Enrollments and services provided by Enriched program team members were strictly monitored to assure that such crossover did not occur. The service system fully understood this aspect of the design.

Finally, the experimental design did not deny treatment to youth who would have otherwise received care. All youth assessed as needing care received exactly the same services as they would have without this grant. Youth therefore received either the prevailing practice standard or the Enriched model intervention. Not all youth of relatively equal levels of need could possibly have received the Enriched Model intervention so randomization was as reasonable a means as any to determine who did and did not receive this treatment package.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

The questionnaire forms and medical data extraction forms were kept confidential, according to standard medical practice. All response forms were number coded for anonymity. Identity of participants was cross coded and held in separate locked files along with consent and assent forms at all times. Only the principle investigator (PI) and the PI’s research associates had access to these locked files. At the conclusion of this study, all identifying data will be destroyed. No identifying data will be included in any published report of the research findings.

CORE INSTRUMENTS

Parents and children in the study group were interviewed in person using structured questionnaires. Our choice of outcome measures followed a set of domains established by Rosenblatt & Attkisson (1993) for assessing outcomes. The schema is guiding outcome development efforts for children’s services throughout California. The model proposed four domains (*What is measured*), five respondent types (*Who measures*) and four contexts of measurement (*Where is measurement focused*). Respondent types included the client, the family, the clinician, and the scientist. Social contexts included the individual, the family, work/school, and the broader community. Domains

of measurement included *clinical and functional status, life satisfaction and fulfillment, and safety and welfare*. The core assessment protocol was designed to tap as many dimensions as feasible from a wide range of perspectives across many social contexts.

Child and Family Characteristics and Resources: Demographic, Risk, and Protective Factors.

A background and risk factor interview was used to inquire about the demographic and family (parental) background, current family composition and structure, residential history, education, health, abuse, neglect and criminal victimization.

Clinical and Functional Status Outcome Domains

Parent Perspective. The *Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL)* is an established measure in child and adolescent mental health and provides data on social competencies (functional status) across a range of social contexts (school, home, community) and syndrome scales (clinical status) from the perspective of the parent (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1983, 1986; Achenbach, McConaughy, & Howell, 1987).

Child Perspective. Children completed the *Youth Self-Report (YSR)* and the *CSQ*. The YSR is an established measure in child and adolescent mental health, which provides data on social competencies (functional status) across a range of social contexts (school, home, community) and syndrome scales (clinical status) from the perspective of the child (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1983, 1986; Achenbach, McConaughy, & Howell, 1987).

The *Client Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ)* is a widely used measure of unitary general satisfaction (Attkisson & Greenfield, 1994; Attkisson & Pascoe, 1983) with services received by individuals and families.

Clinician Perspective. The *CAFAS* (Hodges, 1994) is a clinician rating scale regarding the child's functioning in the domains of: Role Performance (including school/work, home, and community); Thinking, Behavior Toward Others; Moods/Self Harm (including moods/emotions and self-harmful behavior); and substance Use. The CAFAS is being used in a number of major children's services research and evaluation efforts including the Fort Bragg study (Bickman et al., 1994) and the national evaluation of the Center for Mental Health Services Children's Mental Health Initiative (McCormick, 1994).

Juvenile Justice Outcomes

Measures of safety and welfare included tallies of juvenile justice arrests, sustained counts, type (e.g. property) and severity (e.g. felony) of sustained counts, and dispositions obtained from juvenile justice court records.

Educational Attainment and Attendance

We collected data on school attendance and school performance as reflected in grades, number of expulsions and suspensions, and special education status (e.g. Rosenblatt & Attkisson, 1997).

Substance Use.

Frequency and type of substance used was assessed using the Addiction Severity Index (ASI, McLellan, O'Brien, & Woody, 1980).

Placement and Permanency

Stability of living environments was assessed using a version of the Residential Living Environments and Placement Stability Scale ROLES developed by Hawkins et al. (1992) that is slightly modified for California.

Client Satisfaction

Satisfaction with services is an important component of life satisfaction and fulfillment for children and their families. The Mental Health System Improvement Program's (MHSIP) satisfaction survey was used.

Analytic Strategy

The most fundamental analytic question is whether the Enriched Model is more cost effective than the Standard Care approach. The analytic questions posed by this study include: (1) What were the outcomes and correlates of care?

Analysis of Outcome.

The essential components of multiple comparisons and repeated measures designs create a data set that is complex, containing a great amount of information of both a cross-sectional and longitudinal nature. A significant reason for our inclusion of three data collection waves was to create the

capacity to utilize multi-wave analytic strategies (see, for example, Kessler & Greenberg, 1981; Rogosa, Brandt, & Zimoski, 1982; Gibbons, Hedecker, Elkin, & Waternaux, 1993). However, the programs were not funded and in operation long enough to obtain a sufficient sample size to conduct such sophisticated analytic strategies. We consequently relied on more fundamental analytic strategies for this report

Descriptive Analysis

Age, gender, and ethnicity data were collected at the point of intake into the program. Juvenile offense history was collected both by the caseworker and through court records prior to the program and arrest and petition count rates, court filings, and adjudications were tracked during and after the program. Selected risk factor data was collected regarding the background and history of the youth and their family. Data included information on: family composition, history of out-of-home-placement, history of abuse and neglect, history of violence, family criminal involvement, substance use, special education status, socio-economic status, age, gender, and ethnicity. Descriptive analyses were used to describe and compare youth in the treatment and comparison groups.

Results

The following sections describe youth in the study at intake to the programs, and compare applicable measures at intake, 6 months and 12 months post intake. Measures will be reported within demographic, alcohol and drug, education, juvenile justice, and mental health domains. The first focus will examine intake measures in each domain to obtain a baseline. Differences in PARK and GROW will be noted when present. A second focus be to compare intake with 6 and 12-month measures. In general, percent missing will be noted when greater than 20% in a follow-up assessment, otherwise it will be assumed that the data is still representative of the total observations reported.

Demographics

The study examined baseline measures for 123 youth participating in the PARK (n= 70) and GROW (n=53) programs. Due to the random selection process of juvenile offenders into the PARK or GROW program, demographic characteristics should be similar for both programs. Preliminary examination of baseline data indicates no statistically significant differences between the

PARK and GROW groups, however relevant trends will be highlighted where appropriate.

Table 1 Age at Admission

	PARK	GROW
15-16	61.4% (n=43)	47.1% (n=25)
17-18	32.8% (n=23)	43.3% (n=23)

Fifty-five percent of youth were 15 to 16 years of age at program admission. PARK youth were slightly younger than GROW youth. Sixty-one percent of PARK youth were 15 to 16 and 33% were 17-18 years old compared with 47% and 43% for GROW respectively.

At admission to the programs, the average age of youth was 15.9 years of age, with PARK youth being 15.8 and GROW youth being 16.1 years of age. The average age at exit from the programs was 16.5 with PARK youth exiting at 16.6 and GROW at 16.4 years of age.

Figure 1 Age at Intake and Exit

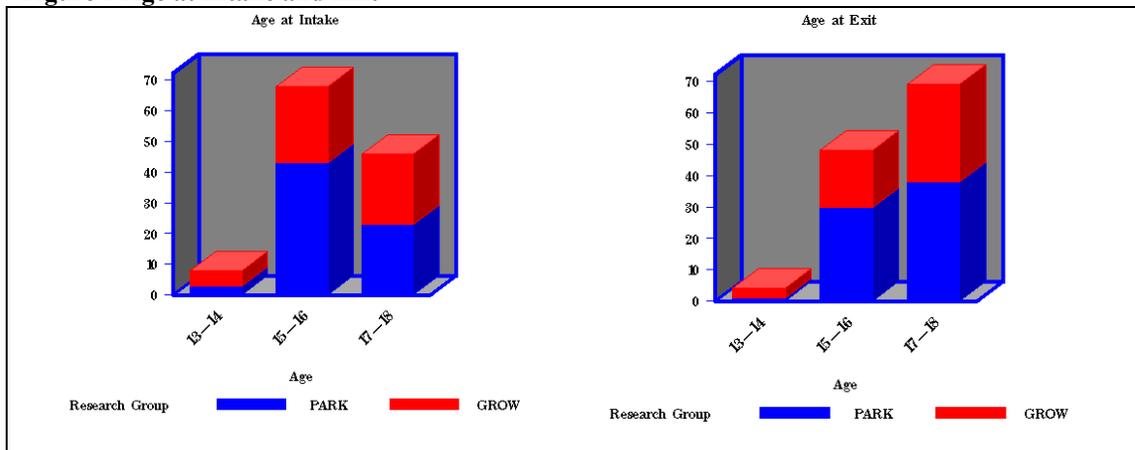
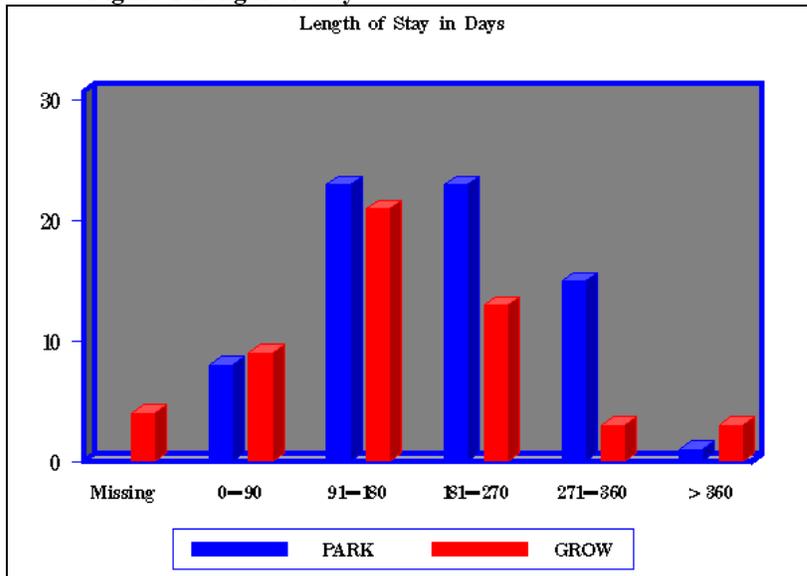
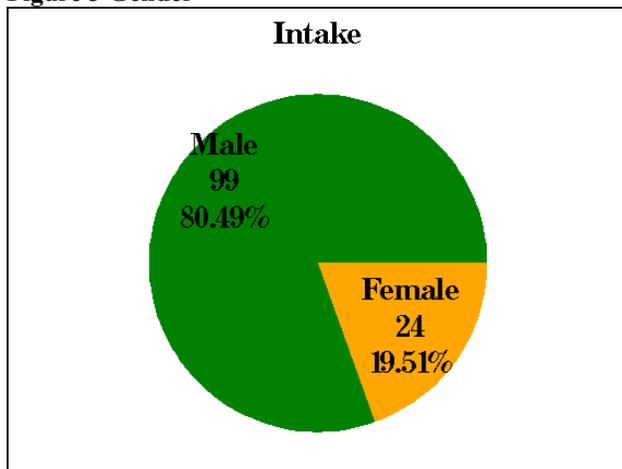


Figure 2 Length of Stay



The average length of stay in the program was 188 days (SD=89) with PARK youth staying an average of 197 days and GROW youth an average of 174.

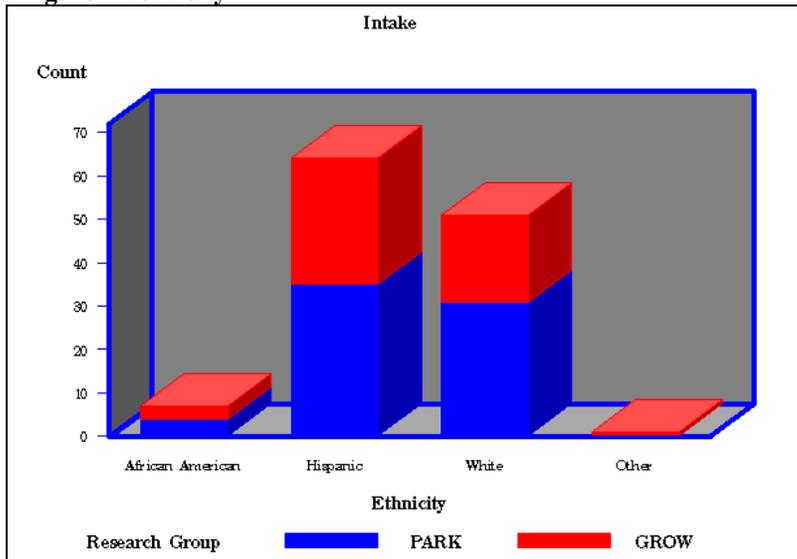
Figure 3 Gender



The gender distributions among the PARK and GROW programs were similar PARK had 80% male and 20% female, whereas GROW had 81% male and 19% female.

In terms of ethnicity, Latino youth made up 50% (n=62) of the population, followed by 44% white, 5.6% African American, and less than 1% other ethnicities. The PARK program consisted of 50% Hispanic and 44.2% Caucasian youth, whereas 54.7% of GROW participants were Hispanic and 37.7% Caucasian. African American and Other ethnicity made up 5.7% of participant ethnicities in the PARK program and 7.4% in GROW.

Figure 4 Ethnicity



Seventy percent of youth (n=86) were reported to have English as their primary language followed by 29% (n=36) reporting Spanish. Most youth reported a father (42.2%, n=52) or Mother (34.9%, n=43) as their primary caregiver, followed by Step Parent (13%, n=16), and friend (5.6%, n=7). A greater proportion of youth at PARK identified a father as the primary caregiver (51.4%) compared to GROW (30.1%). In contrast, GROW youth more often reported a Mother as primary caregiver (47.1%) than did PARK youth (34.9%).

Table 2 Primary Care Giver

Primary Caregiver	PARK	GROW
Father	51.4% (n=36)	30.1% (n=16)
Mother	25.7% (n=18)	47.1% (n=25)

The majority of youth (89%, n=110) also reported living with a biologically related caregiver. Twenty four percent of respondents were missing a response to number of siblings at home, but 30.8% (n=38) reported a single sibling at home, 19.5% (n=24) reported two siblings, and 14.6% (n=18) reported three siblings at home. Seventy-three percent of youth reported no changes in residence, with 16.1% reporting one change, and 9.7% reporting two or more changes.

Table 3 shows participants' current living situation. At intake the majority of the youth lived in a parent's home (84% of PARK, and 92% of GROW). At six months the number of youth living in a parent's home dipped for both PARK and GROW, with 63% and 41% respectfully. A small percentage of both PARK and GROW youth were homeless during the twelve month study.

Table 3 Current Living Situation

	Intake		6 months		12 months	
	PARK (n = 69)	GROW (n = 50)	PARK (n =46)	GROW (n = 42)	PARK (n = 70)	GROW (n =53)
Current Living Situation	%	%	%	%	%	%
Independent, living with a friend	1.4	0	0	2.4	0	0
Parent's Home	84.1	92.0	63.0	40.5	64.3	45.2
Adoptive/Relative/ Friend's Home	11.6	6.0	17.4	7.1	0	3.2
Group Home (Level 1-12)	0	0	6.5	11.9	17.9	25.8
Group Home (Level 13-14)	0	0	0	4.8	0	0
Redwoods	0	2.0	2.2	11.9	3.6	0
Juvenile Detention Center	0	0	4.3	16.7	10.7	19.4
Jail/CYA	0	0	0	2.4	0	0
Homeless	2.9	0	6.5	2.4	3.6	6.5

The percentage of youth living in group homes and the juvenile detention center went from zero for both PARK and GROW, and increased both during the first and second six-month periods. By the twelve-month evaluation 18% of PARK youth and 26% of GROW youth were living in Group Home (Level 1-12), and 11% of PARK youth and 19% of GROW youth living in the Juvenile Detention Center. One possible explanation of this trend can be attributed to the fact that the intensity of services had been decreased for both groups by the time of the twelve-month follow-up. The high percentage of Juvenile Detention Center placements could speak to either a return to criminal behaviors among this population, or the fact that many of them had escalated to out-of-home placement by this point and were detained awaiting a new placement. In either event, the lower rates of out-of-home placement for the PARK program, though a favorable outcome for PRAK as compared to the GROW program, is not easily explainable.

Thirty-one percent of youth did not report their gross annual family-income. However, 78% report annual income lower than \$35,000.

Figure 5 Gross Family Income

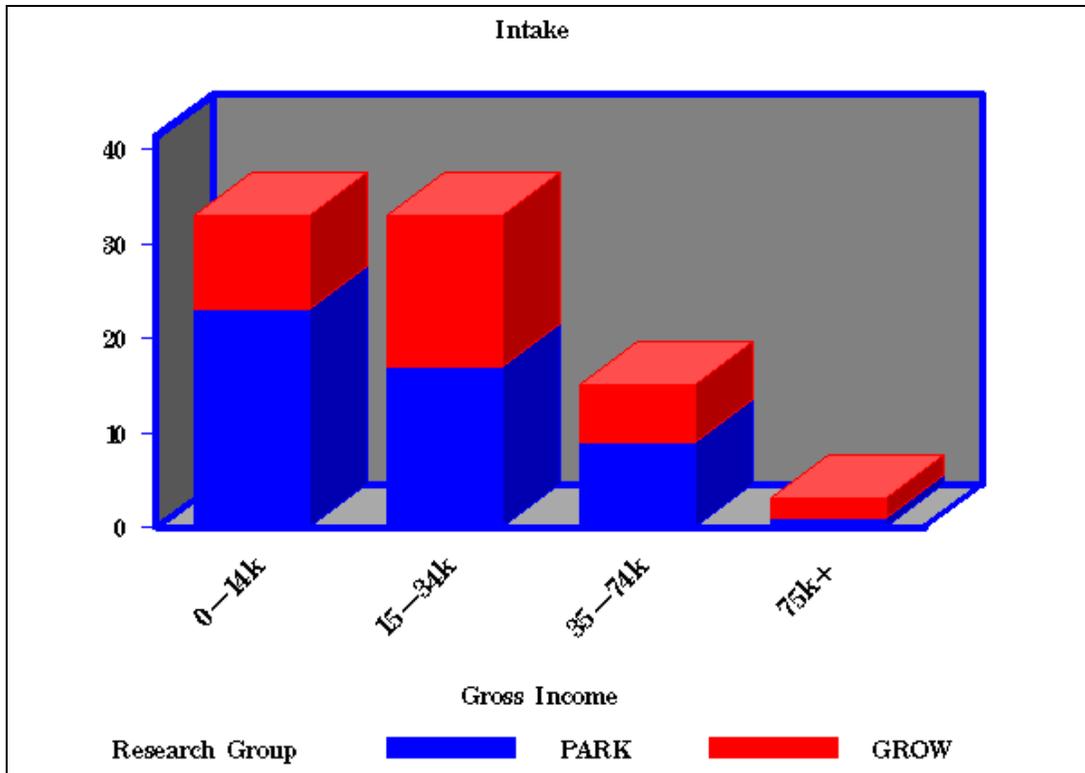


Table 4 Parent Education

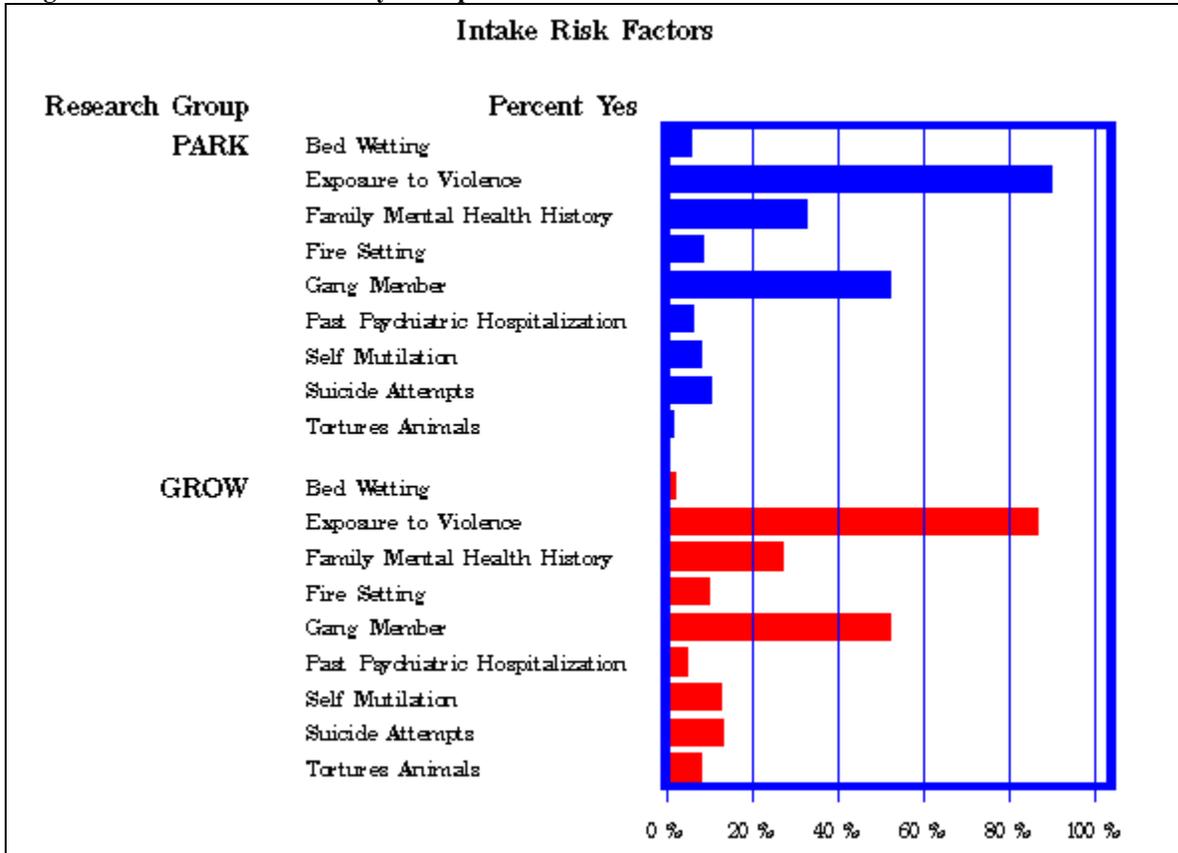
Caregiver School Completed	PAK	GROW
Grade School	27.1% (n=19)	30.1% (n=16)
Some High School	15.7% (n=11)	16.9% (n=9)
High School	22.8% (n=16)	22.6% (n=12)

Overall, 30% of caregivers (n= 35) were reported to have completed grade school, 23% completed high school, 39% completed at least some high school, and 19% completed at least some college.

Youth in PAK and GROW demonstrated similar levels of exposure to or involvement with some of the family-related risk factors. Eighty-eight percent of youth have been exposed to violence (90% PAK, 86% GROW). Thirty percent of youth were reported to have family histories of mental health needs (32% of PAK youth, 27% of GROW). Nine percent of youth were reported to have set fires, while 52% of youth in both PAK and GROW were reported gang members. Very few youth were reported to have past

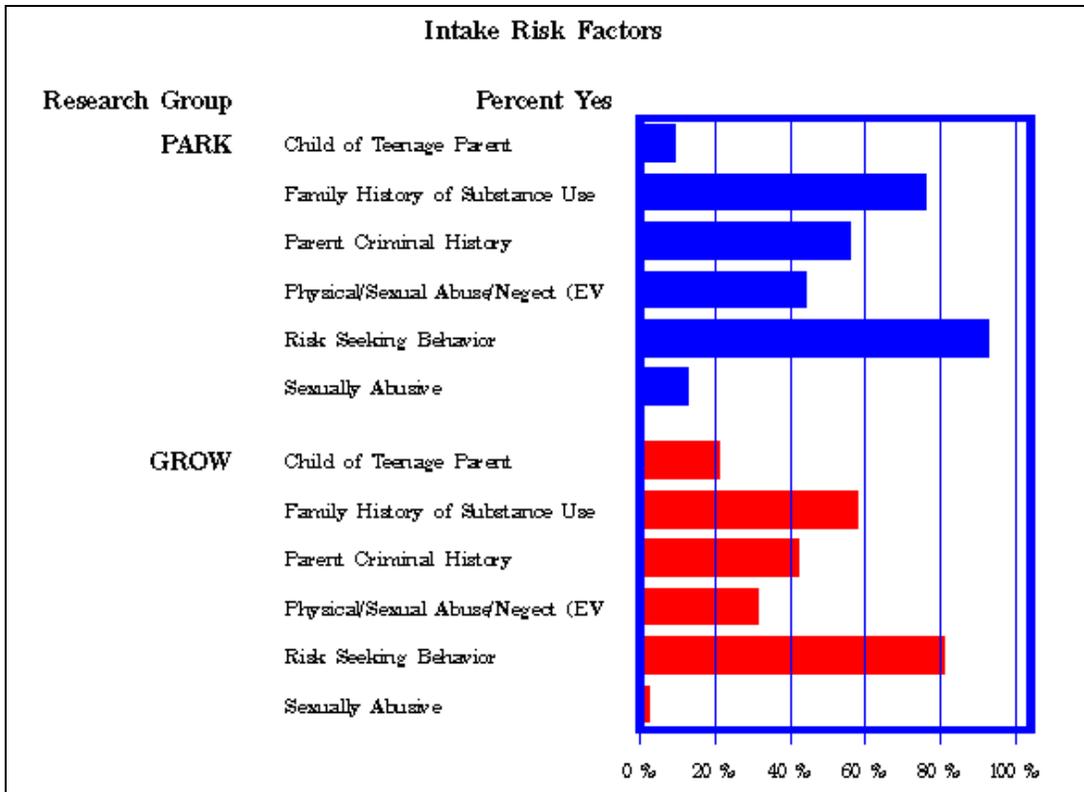
psychiatric hospitalizations, bedwetting, or to have tortured animals (less than 5%). Overall, 11.5% of youth reported suicide attempts (11% PARK, 13% GROW).

Figure 6 Risk Factors Similar by Group



Youth in the programs showed greater absolute differences on several other risk factors. Twelve percent of youth have teen-age parents with 9% for PARK and 20% for GROW. Fifty percent of youth had parents with criminal histories, where 56% of PARK youth and 42% of GROW youth had parents with criminal histories. Overall, 38% of youth had suffered neglect, (PARK 44% and GROW 31%). Very few youth reported engaging in sexual abusive behavior towards others. PARK and GROW youth also showed absolute differences in family history of substance abuse (PARK 76%, and GROW 58%). Eighty-seven percent of youth have demonstrated risk-seeking behaviors (PARK 92% and GROW 80%).

Figure 7 Risk Factors Less Similar by Group



Five percent of youth were reported to have tortured animals, while 80% of youth have demonstrated violent or aggressive behavior toward others (PARK 86%, GROW, 71%).

Typical Youth
Male (80%)
Latino (52%) or White (41%)
Household income less than \$34,000 per year (53%)
Parents have High School education or below (67%)
Parent has past criminal History (41%)
Youth exposed to violence (73%)
Youth exhibited past violent or aggressive behavior (72%)

Currently a gang member (50%)

History of risk seeking behaviors (82%)

Family History of Substance Use (54%)

First alcoholic drink at or before 12 years of age (49%)

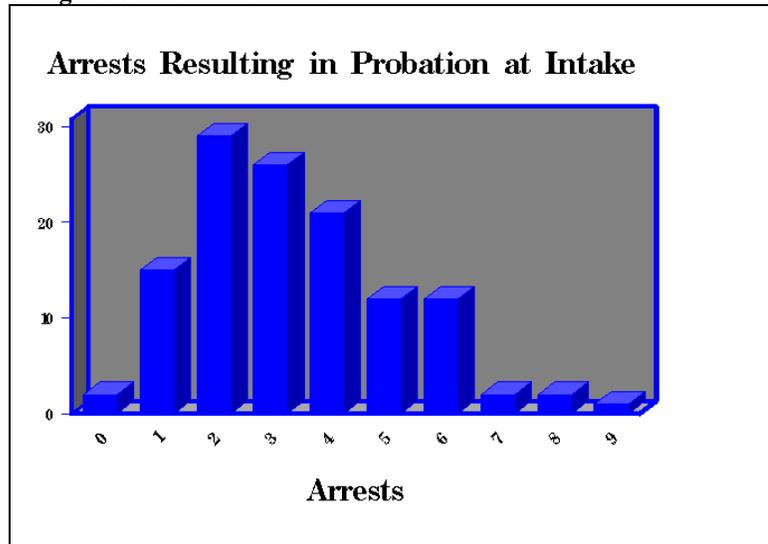
High rate of cannabis use (83%) with many using the drug 5 or more times (63%)

The typical youth in the study was male (81%), Latino (51%) or White (41%), and was between 15 and 16 years of age (55%). Most youth lived with their biological (89%) father or mother (75%) and one to two siblings (20%, 24% missing), and spoke English as their primary language (70%). The typical household income was less than \$34,000 per year (53%, 32% missing). Sixty seven percent of parents had completed no more than grade school (28%), some high school classes (16%), or high school (23%).

Most youth did not live with individuals on parole (77%). Forty-six percent of youth reported running away from home. Forty-nine percent of youth reported having their first alcoholic drink at or before 12 years of age. Youth most commonly reported having a drink once per month to once per week (18%), where 44% of youth reported drinking less frequently, and 31% more frequently. When youth did drink, 34% of youth reported most commonly having 10 or more drinks, with 12% having 10-15, 12% having 15 to 20, and 10% having more than 20 (47% missing). Youth typically reported first using drugs between 11 and 12 years of age (40%), while 89% reported using drugs by age 14. The typical youth used Cannabis (82%) with 24% using the drug 5 or more times, and 38% using more than 20 times. Fewer youth reported using amphetamines (27%), barbiturates (12%), cocaine (34%), opiates (24%), PCP (4%), hallucinogen (30%), inhalants (14%), or other drugs (19%). Fifty-nine percent of youth reported using 2 or more drugs. Youth most commonly reported using their favored drug 1 to 4 times per week. Half of the youth reported being a current gang member (50%), whereas 46% of youth reported no gang affiliation.

Juvenile Justice

Figure 8 Arrests at Intake



All youth entering the programs were wards of the court. Eighty-six percent of youth at program intake had two or more arrests resulting in referral to probation. The average number of arrests at intake was 3.33 (SD=1.79) with 3.44 for PARK and 3.17 for GROW.

Table 5 Recidivism Rates

	0 to 6 months		6 to 12 months		0 to 12 months	
	PARK (n =70)	GROW (n =53)	PARK (n =70)	GROW (n =53)	PARK (n =70)	GROW (n =53)
Recidivism Rates	%	%	%	%	%	%
All Sustained Counts	81.4	81.1	62.9	66.0	87.1	86.7
All Sustained Count Excluding Technical Violations	44.3	50.9	40.0	34.0	61.4	62.2
Sustained Misdemeanors Counts	42.9	47.2	35.7	26.4	58.5	58.4
Sustained Felonies Counts	2.9	18.9	5.7	7.6	7.1	20.7

Table 5 shows the rates of recidivism where a recidivating participant is one who has received at least a single sustained count. Considering all counts, 81% of youth had at least a single sustained count at six months after entering the program. Sixty-two and 66% of youth in PARK and GROW respectively had at least one sustained count between 6 and 12 months after program entry. The rates of recidivism between intake and six months are

noticeably higher when all counts are considered because youth often receive technical violations at higher rates while participating in the programs. Many of these violations may result from staff efforts to correct aberrant behavior within the context of the program, rather than behavior that necessarily deserves the adjudicative actions that placed the youth on probation. The second row in the table shows recidivism rates for all counts with the technical counts removed.

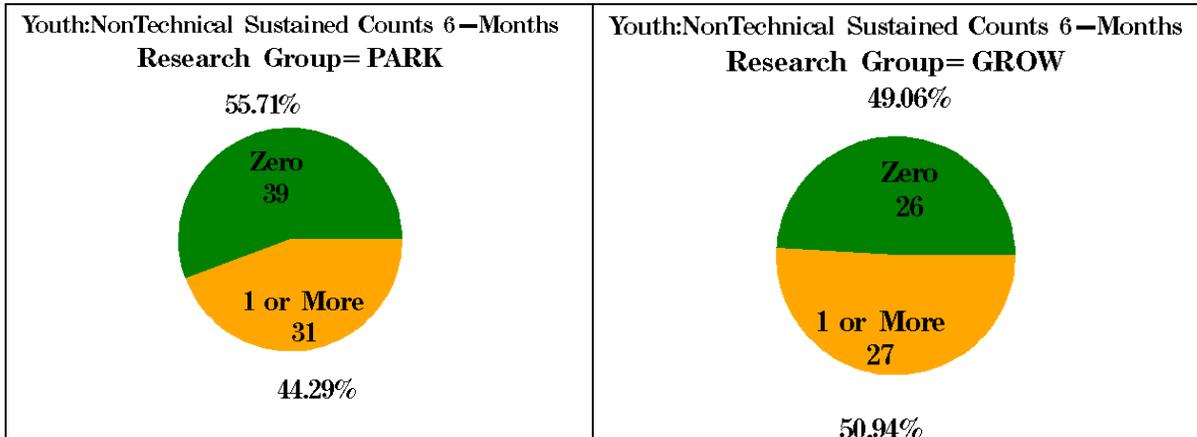
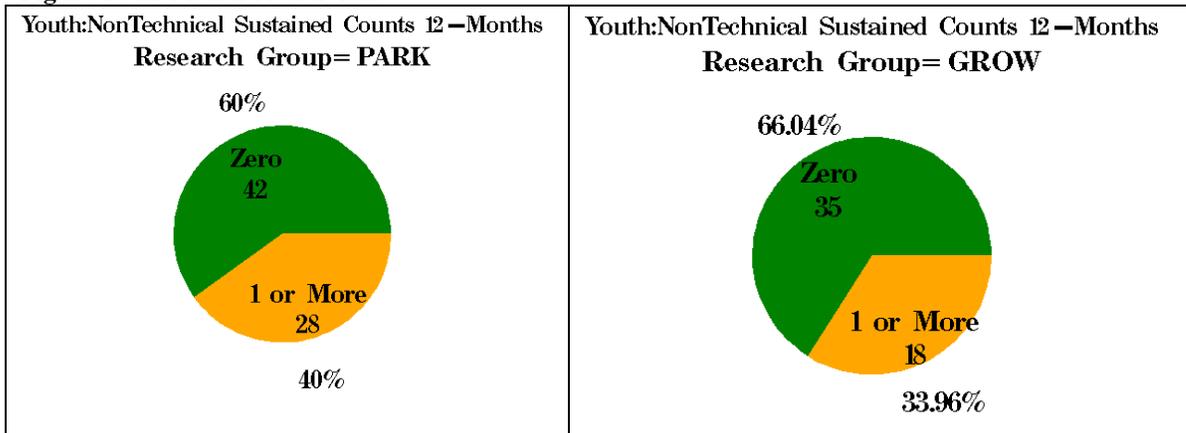


Figure 9 6-Month Recidivism

Forty-four percent of PAK and 51% of GROW participants had sustained counts for behavior creating non-technical statutory or criminal violations.

Figure 10 12-Month Recidivism



During the second six-month period GROW participants showed the greatest decrease in sustained non-technical violations moving from 51 to 34%. PAK participants decreased from 44 to 40%.

Sustained misdemeanor counts are much more common than felonies. Forty-three percent of PAK and 47% of GROW participants had sustained misdemeanor counts within the first 6 months after program entry.

Progressively fewer participants had sustained misdemeanor counts during the second six months (PARK 36%, GROW 26%). GROW showed the greatest decrease with slightly over a 20% decline in the number of sustained misdemeanor counts.

Youth received relatively fewer sustained felony counts. Nearly 3% of PARK youth had sustained felony counts at the six-month evaluation, which increased to almost 6% at the 12-month follow-up. GROW youth showed a different pattern with a relatively high rate of sustained felony counts during the first six months (18%) and a decrease to nearly 8% at 12 months. The felony rates should be cautiously interpreted because eligible felonies may be more often plead to misdemeanors while youth are involved in programs, thus PARK may show an abnormally low rate during the first 6 months.

Overall, the most common sustained counts at intake were misdemeanor probation violations. The next most common categories were property and drug offenses. “*Other offenses*” were mostly traffic violations and may also include weapon violations.

The profile of total sustained counts from intake to 6-months shows a shift from misdemeanor probation violations to more technical and new offense probation violations. As mentioned, this activity is viewed as mostly a corrective action and necessary for discipline in the program. The profile of total sustained counts from 6 to 12 months shows a similar shift from misdemeanors to technical and new offense probation violations, as well as an overall reduction in sustained counts.

Table 6 Sustained Counts

Type of Offense	Misdemeanors		Felonies		Technical		PVs New Offense	
	PARK ^a	GROW ^b	PARK	GROW	PARK	GROW	PARK	GROW
Intake								
Violent Offense	15	9	1	4	0	0	3	0
Property Offense	76	57	1	13	0	0	6	11
Drug Offense	33	27	0	3	0	0	7	3
Sex Offense	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Offense	140	82	0	0	0	0	25	20
Probation	199	93	0	0	3	14	0	3
Violation								
0 to 6 Months								
Violent Offense	4	3	2	0	0	0	1	0
Property Offense	12	6	0	6	0	0	0	5
Drug Offense	7	7	0	5	0	0	5	7
Sex Offense	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Offense	4	7	0	0	2	0	0	1
Probation	37	24	0	0	64	25	19	26

Violation								
6 to 12 Months								
Violent Offense	2	5	2	1	0	0	0	3
Property Offense	9	5	2	3	0	0	0	9
Drug Offense	6	5	0	1	0	0	0	6
Sex Offense	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Offense	11	5	0	1	0	0	4	4
Probation	33	4	1	0	30	27	15	24
Violation								

^a n = 70. ^b n = 53. Note: this table displays total counts and does not take into account differences in the size of each group. Given the unequal group sizes, higher numbers were expected for the PARK group.

Table 7 shows the average number of sustained counts per participant at intake, intake to 6-months, and 6-months to 12-months. The counts at intake are the average number of all prior counts had by participants. As an absolute measure PARK youth entered the program with a higher average number of sustained counts. Comparing the first and second six-month periods, youth on average showed a decrease in the number of sustained counts.

Table 7 Mean Sustained Counts

	Intake		6 Months		12 Month	
	PARK (n =70)	GROW (n =53)	PARK (n =69)	GROW (n =53)	PARK (n =70)	GROW (n = 51)
All Counts						
M	7.29	6.40	2.28	2.30	1.66	2.02
Range	0-30	1-22	0-9	0-8	0-8	0-13
Counts (excluding technicals)						
M	6.70	5.43	0.96	1.09	0.96	0.59
Range	0-30	1-15	0-5	0-5	0-8	0-3
Misdemeanors						
M	6.63	5.06	0.93	0.89	0.89	0.47
Range	0-30	0-15	0-5	0-4	0-8	0-3
Felonies						
M	0.03	0.38	0.03	0.21	0.07	0.12
Range	0-1	0-3	0-1	0-2	0-2	0-3

Alcohol and Drug

At intake, a large percentage of participants entering the programs were reported to use drugs (PARK=92%, GROW=82%).

At intake, it was most common for PARK youth to use a single drug (34%) while GROW youth often used 2 drugs (40%), however a larger percent of PARK youth used 3 or more drugs (47%) than did GROW youth (23%).

There was little decrease in the percent of youth who used at least one drug over the course of the study. The exception was a relatively large decrease in the percent of GROW youth using drugs during the 6 to 12 month period when compared with earlier periods. GROW youth showed a 31% decrease from 85% 0-6 months to 54% 6-12 months. This result should be viewed cautiously though given that about two-thirds of the youth at intake in both groups are missing data at the 6-12 month period.

Table 8 Substance Use and Multiple Drug Use

	Intake		0 to 6 months		6 to 12 months		0 to 12 months	
	Park N=68	Grow N=52	Park N=46	Grow N=33	Park N=26	Grow N=26	Park	Grow
Substance Use	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
% Reported Drug Use	92.6	88.5	87.0	84.8	88.5	53.8	87.7	62.9
Number of Drugs Reported								
0	7.4	11.5	13.0	15.2	11.5	46.2	12.24	23.08
1	33.8	25.0	34.8	39.4	34.6	19.2	24.49	28.21
2	11.8	40.4	21.7	12.1	26.9	15.4	24.49	12.82
3	25.0	11.5	17.4	18.2	11.5	11.5	18.37	17.95
> 4	22.1	11.5	13.0	15.2	15.4	7.7	20.41	17.95

Youth often report that they would like to have more friends who do not use drugs, yet programs by their nature bring together many youth who use drugs. Through affiliation in the programs alone it might be expected that some youth would experiment with drugs that are new to them but favored by other youth, even while decreasing or stopping the drug(s) that they used before. Table 9 is an attempt to measure changing drug use in more detail.

Table 9 shows the percent of youth with each type of change in drug use from intake to 6-months where only youth with valid data at both time points were included.

Table 9 Percent of Youth with Change Intake to 6 Months

Percent of Youth:	New Starters	Never Used	Stopped	Decrease	Increase
Drugs					
Amphetamines (n=78)	20.5	53.0	20.5	2.5	3.8
Cannabis (n=57)	14.0	12.3	28.1	24.6	21.1
Inhalants	13.9	73.4	8.9	3.8	0.0
Hallucinogens	11.4	68.3	16.5	1.3	2.5
Other	6.3	84.8	6.3	2.5	0.0
Barbiturates	6.3	82.3	10.1	1.2	0.0
Cocaine	6.3	67.1	22.8	2.5	1.7
Opioids	5.1	69.6	8.9	5.1	11.4
PCP	2.5	96.0	1.3	0.0	0.0

The second column shows percent of youth who did not use a drug at intake yet started to use the drug during the 6-month period while the third column shows the percent of youth who never used the drug. The next 3 columns shows the percent of youth who used the drug at intake and either stopped, decreased or increased use. The greatest rates of new use were found for amphetamines, cannabis, inhalants, and hallucinogens where 20% of youth used amphetamines and 11% used hallucinogens. These drugs also consistently have higher rates of stopping drug use than starting it. The exceptions are inhalant use where 14% of youth started and 10% stopped and amphetamine use where 20% of youth both started and stopped its use. Cocaine use shows the greatest rate of stopping drug use relative to new starts with 23% of youth stopping its use and only 6% starting.

Education

Table 10 shows the average grade level completed by participants at intake, 6-months, and 12-months. The largest number of PARK and GROW youth entered the program having completed 9th grade. GROW had two participants in 7th grade, while PARK had none.

Table 10 Grade Equivalent Test Scores

Highest Grade Completed	Intake		6 Months		12 Month	
	PARK (n =67)	GROW (n =48)	PARK (n =65)	GROW (n =48)	PARK (n =52)	GROW (n =38)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
7 th	--	4.1	--	6.2	--	2.6

8 th		(n=2)		(n=3)		(n=1)
	28.3	27.0	20.0	6.2	1.9	5.2
9 th	(n=19)	(n=13)	(n=13)	(n=3)	(n=1)	(n=2)
	43.2	37.5	27.6	29.1	30.7	21.0
10 th	(n=29)	(n=18)	(n=18)	(n=14)	(n=16)	(n=8)
	22.3	27.0	33.8	43.7	34.6	42.1
11 th	(n=15)	(n=13)	(n=22)	(n=21)	(n=18)	(n=16)
	5.9	4.1	18.4	12.5	32.6	23.6
12 th	(n=4)	(n=2)	(n=12)	(n=6)	(n=7)	(n=9)
	--	--	--	2.0	--	5.2
				(n=1)		(n=2)

Table 11 shows the mean school absences at intake, intake to 6-months, and 6-months to 12-months. Comparing the first and second six-month periods youth on average showed a decrease in the number of school absences, with the most remarkable decrease taking place during the first six-month period.

Table 11 Absences

	Intake		6 Months		12 Month	
	PARK (n =63)	GROW (n =49)	PARK (n =65)	GROW (n =46)	PARK (n =54)	GROW (n = 36)
Absences						
<u>M</u>	26.60	17.90	9.14	10.60	7.39	7.00
<u>SD</u>	21.10	15.60	9.23	11.80	7.62	6.95

Table 12 shows the grade equivalent scores from the Test of Basic Education (TABE) for PARK and GROW at intake, six, and 12 months. The TABE assesses basic reading, mathematics, and language skills usually learned in Grades 1-12.

Table 12 TABE Scores

TABE Scores									
	Math			Language			Reading		
	M	SD	n	M	SD	N	M	SD	n
Intake									
PARK	6.8	2.7	45	5.7	3.5	41	7.6	3.0	44
GROW	6.0	2.8	22	4.4	2.7	19	6.5	2.5	23
6 Months									
PARK	6.5	2.6	43	5.8	2.8	32	7.1	3.4	46
GROW	5.5	2.3	26	5.1	3.3	18	6.4	2.5	26
12 Months									
PARK	6.7	2.4	31	4.9	2.5	25	7.5	3.0	31
GROW	5.7	1.9	18	3.3	1.8	10	6.9	2.9	20

Although not statistically significant, possibly due to the relatively small sample size, there are some interesting differences between groups. PARK youth consistently scored higher than GROW youth on all measures. At intake, PARK youth performed one grade level higher in reading (PARK = 7.6, GROW = 6.5). Likewise, at the six-month assessment PARK scored a grade level higher than GROW in math (PARK = 6.5, GROW = 5.5), and half a grade higher in language (PARK = 5.8, GROW = 5.1) and reading (PARK = 7.1, GROW = 6.4). Finally at twelve months, PARK youth continued to perform one grade level higher than GROW youth in math (PARK = 6.7, GROW = 5.7) and over one grade level higher than GROW in language (PARK = 4.9, GROW = 3.3). Both PARK and GROW youth show a decrease in performance in language.

While these results indicate possible differences between PARK and GROW, data should be interpreted with caution for several reasons. First, test scores were only available for a small subset of youth in the programs making it difficult to generalize to each group as a whole. Second, while every effort was made to collect test data at intake, 6, and 12 months, there are real world limitations to when tests were administered and completed. Thus, test data was recorded when available and as close as possible to study time points. As a result, participants took tests at different times of the year, under different settings, and using different test versions, which drastically restricts comparisons across groups. Future research including school achievement test data or standard scores may help to further examine possible differences between youth in various treatment programs.

Mental Health

The importance of several outcome measures including juvenile justice indicators and family risk factors have been discussed above. Another critical aspect of any intervention program is the resulting impact on the clinical and functional status of participating youth. Information regarding the clinical and functional status of the study participants was gathered from three different sources (i.e., youth, caregivers, clinicians) using the following measures; the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL), the Youth Self-Report (YSR), and the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS).

Tables 13 displays results from the CBCL over time for those caregivers who completed measures at: i) intake **and** 6 months, and ii) intake **and** 12 months. Thus, information in Table 13 is presented as two sets of paired responses (i.e., the same respondents completed both forms) in order to examine change over time.

At intake, parents and caregivers from the PARK program rated youth in the clinical range (64 and above) on the Externalizing Scale of the CBCL. Parents and caregivers from the GROW program rated youth within the borderline clinical range (60-63) as somewhat higher on the Externalizing Scale of the CBCL. Similar caregiver response patterns across the PARK and GROW programs is evident at all three time points.

Table 14 shows the Youth Self-Report. At intake, youth described themselves within the normal range in every area with no significant differences between the PARK and GROW youth. Similar to caregiver response patterns on the

CBCL, youth from both groups tended to rate themselves somewhat higher on the Externalizing Scale, with scores falling into the clinical range at intake. Youth from both programs endorsed similar profiles suggesting very little differences by group across each time point. Interestingly, youth did not rate themselves as having significant problems at the 12 months follow-up.

Table 13 Total CBCL Scale Scores: Intake, 6 and 12 Months

Paired Participants	CBCL Externalizing		CBCL Internalizing		CBCL Total Problems	
	PARK (n=37)	GROW (n=23)	PARK (n=37)	GROW (n=23)	PARK (n=37)	GROW (n=23)
Intake						
M	64.8	62.6	57.5	55.8	61.5	59.2
SD	11.4	9.7	10.9	9.4	10.5	8.7
6 Months						
M	63.3	58.3	54.8	52.2	59.9	56.4
SD	11.5	12.1	10.7	8.2	11.5	9.6
Paired	(n=23)	(n=16)	(n=23)	(n=16)	(n=23)	(n=16)
Intake						
M	65.4	63.5	58.6	58.8	62.2	59.8
SD	10.8	9.3	10.2	13.3	9.8	10.0
12 Months						
M	59.9	60.0	54.4	51.2	57.1	57.1
SD	12.8	14.0	12.4	12.3	13.3	12.4

Note. CBCL = Child Behavior Checklist (Achenbach, 1991); Youth Self-Report (Achenbach, 1991); CAFAS = Child and Adolescent Scale (Hodges, 1990). * Values are based on T-Scores.

Table 14 Youth Self Report Scores: Intake, 6 and 12 Months

Paired Participants	YSR Externalizing		YSR Internalizing		YSR Total Problems	
	PARK (n=42)	GROW (n=29)	PARK (n=42)	GROW (n=29)	PARK (n=42)	GROW (n=29)
Intake						
M	61.0	57.8	51.4	51.3	56.3	54.8
SD	12.7	10.1	12.2	12.0	12.8	10.6
6 Months						
M	59.3	56.8	50.0	50.4	54.6	53.3
SD	12.3	12.8	11.6	11.7	11.9	12.5
Paired	(n=22)	(n=19)	(n=22)	(n=19)	(n=22)	(n=19)
Intake						
M	60.4	55.7	51.7	47.9	55.9	51.9
SD	13.0	11.9	11.0	11.5	12.8	11.3

12 Months						
M	57.3	62.1	48.2	50.6	52.4	56.1
SD	12.6	12.6	8.3	11.6	9.2	13.0

Table 15 CAFAS Total Scale Scores: Intake to Six Months

	CAFAS Total Scale Score	
	PARK (n=43)	GROW (n=38)
Intake		
M	118.6	95.3
SD	33.9	48.8
6 Months		
M	86.5	85.0
SD	41.1	60.9

Clinicians from the PARK and GROW programs rated youth, on average, in the clinical range (70 and above) on the CAFAS Total Scale (see Tables 15 and 16). Clinicians from the PARK program rated youth significantly higher at intake compared to clinicians from the GROW program.

Table 16 Significant Group Differences on the CAFAS Subscales

Subscale	Park			Grow		
	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
Intake						
School/Work	68	21.62	10.02	52	12.50	11.69
Home	68	20.59	8.79	52	12.50	11.69
Community	68	23.09	6.75	52	20.36	5.59
Behavior Towards Others	68	16.47	8.06	52	12.12	9.57
6 months						
Self-Harm	45	1.33	4.57	39	4.87	9.70
12 months						
Moods/Emotions	29	12.41	6.89	28	5.71	8.36
Substance Use	29	20.69	10.33	28	14.29	12.00

An examination of the sub-scales from the CAFAS provides a more detailed understanding of the results. As seen in Table 16, at intake, clinicians from the PARK program consistently rated youth as having more problems on all the subscales with significant differences between groups on the School/Work, Home, Behavior Towards Others, Community, and Substance Use subscales. At the six-month evaluation, youth from both programs

received similar clinician ratings with one exception, such that, clinicians from GROW reported significantly higher scores on the Self-Harm subscale of the CAFAS. This difference, however, was not evident at any other time point.

Table 17 CAFAS Total

	CAFAS Total Scale Score	
	PARK (n=28)	GROW (n=28)
Intake		
M	121.8	106.4
SD	33.3	48.3
12 Months		
M	101.4	80.7
SD	36.6	47.9

As noted above, differences between clinician ratings by program were much less evident at the six-month evaluation. Follow-up ratings at 12-months reveal higher scores for youth from the PARK program compared to clinician ratings of youth from GROW. This may be explained, in part, by the significantly higher scores given by clinicians from the PARK program on the Substance Use and Moods/Emotions subscales of the CAFAS at the 12-month follow-up evaluation. These differences by group may also be influenced by the unique characteristics of the programs. Given the structure of the PARK program, for example, clinicians may have had more access to information about substance use and could more readily comment on such areas as home life, moods, and emotions.

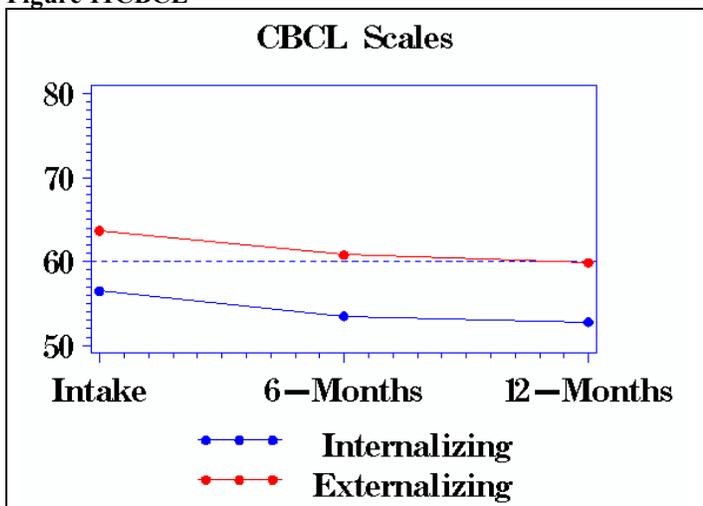
Repeated Measures Results

A series of 2 x 2 mixed design ANOVAs were conducted to examine the effects of group (PARK vs. GROW) and time (intake to 6 months *and* intake to 12 months) on CBCL, YSR, and CAFAS scores. Given the relatively small participants in each group and exploratory nature of this design, analyses were run separately for each mental health measure. While this increases the risk of Type I error, it is essential to examine any possible findings as preliminary evidence of group differences and to provide insight into possible changes over time.

Child Behavior Checklist

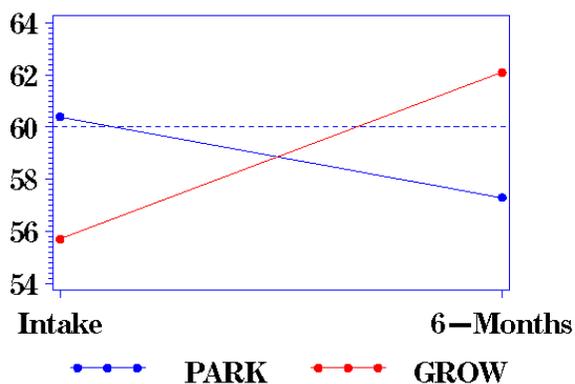
The main effect for Time (intake to 6 months) was significant for the CBCL Externalizing Scale ($F(1, 59) = 5.92, p < .05$) and Internalizing Scale ($F(1, 59) = 5.01, p < .05$).

Figure 11CBCL



These results suggest that, in general, caregivers endorsed fewer problems on the Externalizing and Internalizing Scales for youth at the six-month follow-up compared to intake. Results of the intake to 12-month period revealed significant main effects for Time for the Total Problem Scale ($F(1, 37) = 4.95, p < .05$) and the Externalizing Scale ($F(1, 37) = 8.23, p < .01$). Thus, caregivers continued to report fewer externalizing problems at the 12-month ($M= 59.9$) follow-up compared to intake ($M=64.5$).

Youth Self Report: Externalizing Scale



Youth Self-Report

Results indicate a significant Time X Group interaction for the YSR Total Problem Scale ($F(1, 39) = 5.38, p > .03$) and for the YSR Externalizing Scale ($F(1, 39) = 7.29, p < .02$) from intake to 12 months. This significant interaction highlights changes by group over time

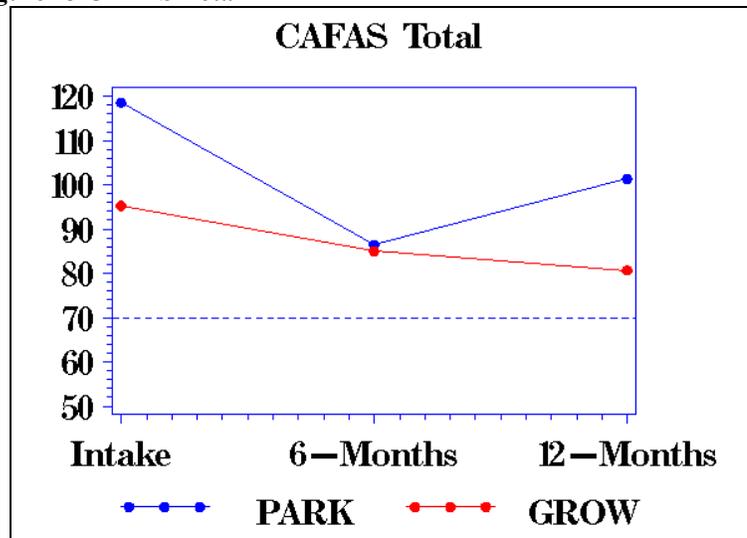
Figure 12 YSR Externalizing Scale Interaction

At intake, youth from the PARK program reported greater externalizing problems ($M = 60.4$) compared to youth from GROW ($M = 55.7$). At the 12 months follow-up, PARK youth reported significantly fewer externalizing problems ($M = 57.3$) compared to youth enrolled in the GROW program ($M = 62.1$).

CAFAS

ANOVA results indicate a significant main effect for Group ($F(1, 54) = 3.82, p < .05$) at intake to 12 months, such that, regardless of time PARK clinicians tended to rate youth with more problems overall compared to GROW clinicians. A similar pattern of findings for the period from intake to 6 months ($F(1, 79) = 3.48, p = .06$) was also evident.

Figure 13 CAFAS Total



Significant main effects for time were also found from intake to six months ($F(1, 79) = 13.12, p < .01$) and from intake to 12 months ($F(1, 54) = 12.88, p < .01$) suggesting that, in general, clinicians rated youth as having fewer problems over time. It is important to note that despite improved scores, clinicians continued to rate youth within the clinical range over time.

Reliable Change Index

The current design for this study allows for analysis of change over time (i.e., intake, 6 months, 12 months). In order to examine change over time in the clinical and functional status measures three categories of change were determined: 1) positive change; 2) no change, and 3) negative change. The reliable change index (RCI; Jacobson, & Truax, 1991) was used to assign youth to these three categories. The RCI provides a basis for classifying

individual cases as having changed in a statistically reliable sense. The index allows for an accounting of the error of measurement when analyzing change over time. Reliable change is reported when the magnitude of change sufficiently exceeds the random fluctuation associated with measurement error. The RCI does not provide information regarding the clinical significance of change.

Caregiver responses on the Externalizing Scale of the CBCL indicated positive change or improvement from intake to six months for 18.9% of youth in the PARK program, and 29.2% of youth enrolled in GROW. While the majority of caregivers indicated no change, 13.5% of respondents from the PARK program indicated negative change as measured by increased Externalizing Scale scores on the CBCL. In terms of the overall Total Problems Scores, while the majority of caregivers indicated no change from intake to six months, 18.9% and 26.1% endorsed profiles suggesting positive change from the PARK and GROW programs respectively.

Table 18 Reliable Change Index for CBCL: Intake to Six Months

	CBCL Externalizing		CBCL Internalizing		CBCL Total Problems	
	PARK (n=37)	GROW (n = 24)	PARK (n=37)	GROW (n=23)	PARK (n=37)	GROW (n=23)
Intake to 6 Months	%	%	%	%	%	%
Positive Change	18.9	29.2	18.9	21.7	18.9	26.1
No Reliable Change	67.6	70.8	73.0	73.9	70.3	60.9
Negative Change	13.5	--	8.1	4.3	10.8	13.0

Youth responses on the Externalizing Scale of the CBCL indicated positive change or improvement from intake to six months for 16.7% of youth in the PARK program, and 24.1% of youth enrolled in GROW. Similar to findings on the CBCL, the majority of youth indicated no change. Interestingly, a larger percent of youth compared to caregivers indicated a negative change over time as measured by increased Externalizing Scale scores on the YSR. Specifically, 14.3% and 31% from PARK and GROW respectively endorsed profiles indicative of more problems with externalizing behaviors. In terms of the overall Total Problems Scores, 9.5% from PARK and 10.3% from GROW indicated positive change from intake to six months with very few youth indicating greater problems over time.

Table 19 Reliable Change Index for YSR: Intake to Six Months

	YSR Externalizing		YSR Internalizing		YSR Total Problems	
	PARK (n=42)	GROW (n = 29)	PARK (n=42)	GROW (n= 30)	PARK (n=42)	GROW (n=29)
Intake to 6 Months	%	%	%	%	%	%

Positive Change	16.7	24.1	14.3	10.0	9.5	10.3
No Reliable Change	69.0	44.8	81.0	86.7	88.1	82.8
Negative Change	14.3	31.0	4.8	3.3	2.4	6.9

Table 20 Reliable Change Index for CAFAS: Intake to Six Months

CAFAS	PARK (n = 43)	GROW (n = 38)
	%	%
Intake to 6 Months		
Positive Change	62.8	36.8
No Reliable Change	27.9	42.1
Negative Change	9.3	21.1

Clinicians from the PARK program tended to indicate more positive change over (62.8% positive change) time compared to clinicians from GROW (36.8% positive change). Additionally, more clinicians (21.1%) from the GROW program indicated negative change compared to PARK clinicians (9.3%) at the six-month follow-up evaluation.

Youth were asked to complete the Client Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ-8) at six and twelve months after entry into either program. The CSQ is a self-report measure of general satisfaction with services provided. Table 21 displays the overall total scores from those participants who completed the measure at the specified time points. Total scores can range from 0 to 32, with higher scores indicating greater satisfaction with services. In general, youth from both programs indicated a reasonable level of satisfaction suggesting that participants were *mostly satisfied* with services. It is important to interpret this data with caution given the relatively few number of completed forms and possible extraneous factors that may influence the outcome (e.g., gender, age, specific services offered to each individual, length of stay).

Table 21 Client Satisfaction Questionnaire Intake and 6-Months

	CSQ Total Score	
	PARK (n=19)	GROW (n=15)
6 Months		
M	26.6	25.2
Item M (1-4 scale)	3.33	3.15
SD	4.8	5.6
12 Months		

M	27.1	23.7
Item M (1-4 scale)	3.39	2.96
SD	4.2	5.3

Comparing PARK North and South

The PARK program was implemented in two locations within Santa Cruz County. PARK youth as a whole showed few if any substantial differences from GROW youth on their rates of recidivism. Youth in the Northern PARK Program (Sequoia) youth show considerable variation from youth in the Southern PARK program (Luna).. The following table compares the recidivism rates for youth in PARK North and PARK South. Examining rates for all sustained counts removing technical violations, youth in PARK South show a 48% recidivism rate compared with 73% for PARK North. PARK south consistently show lower recidivism rates over the time periods, with the exception of an increased rate of new felony counts, however the number of youth in that category is very small.

Table 22 Recidivism on Sustained Counts by PARK Site

All Youth in PARK	0 to 6 months		6 to 12 months		0 to 12 months	
	PARK North (n =37)	PARK South (n =33)	PARK North (n =37)	PARK South (n =33)	PARK North (n =37)	PARK South (n =33)
Recidivism Rates	%	%	%	%	%	%
All Sustained Counts	89.19	72.73	72.97	51.52	89.19	84.85
All Sustained Count Excluding Technical Violations	56.76	30.30	48.65	30.30	72.97	48.48
Sustained Misdemeanors Counts	56.76	27.27	48.65	21.21	72.97	42.42
Sustained Felonies Counts	2.70	3.03	0.00	12.12	2.70	12.12

When PARK youth are aggregated into a single group, the recidivism rates are comparable to GROW youth, however PARK South youth show a dramatically lower rates when separated from the rest of PARK. PARK South youth may be different from PARK North youth on many characteristics, as random assignment to a particular PARK site was not part of the methodology for this study. Due to its location in Watsonville south of Santa Cruz City, PARK South served a high percentage of Latino youth, thus one explanation for differences between North and South might be ethnicity. That is, Latino youth might have lower recidivism rates no matter what program they attended. The following table shows the recidivism rates for

Latino and White youth (other ethnic groups were too small in number to examine).

Latino youth showed lower recidivism rates, however the rates for all sustained counts excluding technical violations were negligible at 6 months, and between 10 and 14 percent lower at 12 months and during the whole intake to 12-month period. This lower recidivism rate for Latino youth is only about half the difference in rate between PARK North and PARK South as a whole.

Table 23 Recidivism on Sustained Counts by Ethnicity

All Youth by Ethnicity	0 to 6		6 to 12		0 to 12	
	White (n =51)	Latino (n =64)	White (n =51)	Latino (n =64)	White (n =51)	Latino (n =64)
Recidivism Rates	%	%	%	%	%	%
All Sustained Counts	82.4	79.7	64.7	60.9	84.3	89.1
All Sustained Count Excluding Technical Violations	47.1	43.7	43.1	32.8	68.6	54.7
Sustained Misdemeanors Counts	47.1	39.1	41.2	25.0	68.6	48.4
Sustained Felonies Counts	5.8	10.9	2.0	9.4	5.9	17.2

It seems clear that the differences in PARK North and South are not fully explained by a greater number of Latino youth with lower recidivism rates at PARK South. There is however evidence gathered in interviews with the staff at PARK that lends credence to why Latino youth at PARK south might have better outcomes:

- The north county site had a more ethnically balanced population, while the south county population was overwhelmingly Latino.
- Latino youth in Watsonville were more receptive to day treatment than were the Anglo youth in North County.
- The cultural emphasis on relationships, families and respect for authority contributed to the Latino youth bonding with the Luna PARK site and staff.

Staffing at the Luna PARK site included several individuals who were bi-cultural and competent in working with Latino families. The similarity in culture and language facilitated trust, genuine rapport building and a general sense of ease among clients assigned to the PARK program.

The following table is used to further explore the effect of program and ethnicity on recidivism. The recidivism rates on sustained counts with technical violations removed for Latino and White youth are presented for youth within each of the programs. Recidivism rates are consistently lower for youth at PARK South with the exception of Latino youth at GROW having a slightly better rate at 6 to 12 months (30% vs. 28%). A small number of Latino youth at PARK north are clearly showing much higher rates of recidivism and a group of Anglo youth are showing similar high rates at GROW, however youth at PARK South are showing low rates regardless of ethnicity.

Table 24 Recidivism on Sustained Counts by Program and Ethnicity

Recidivism Rates	0 to 6 Months		6 to 12 Months		0 to 12 Months	
	White (n =29)	Latino (n =20)	White (n =29)	Latino (n =20)	White (n =29)	Latino (n =20)
Programs	%	%	%	%	%	%
PARK South	16.7 (n=6)	33.3 (n=27)	33.3 (n=6)	29.6 (n=27)	50.0 (n=6)	48.15 (n=27)
PARK North	44.0 (n=25)	87.5 (n=8)	44.0 (n=25)	62.5 (n=8)	68.0 (n=25)	87.5 (n=8)
GROW	60.0 (n=29)	41.4 (n=20)	45.0 (n=29)	27.6 (n=20)	75.0 (n=29)	51.7 (n=20)

An examination of the CBCL, YSR, and CAFAS scores by PARK South and PARK North reveals interesting differences by site (See Table 25). The mean differences suggests that youth enrolled in the PARK North program exhibited more mental health problems as measured by the CBCL and YSR, particularly on the Externalizing Scales.

Table 25 CBCL, YSR, and CAFAS by Park Site

T Scores	Park North			Park South		
	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
CBCL						
Total Problem	34	65.4	8.4	28	56.7	9.3
Internal	34	60.0	10.6	28	53.4	10.1
External	34	69.3	8.9	28	59.7	10.0
YSR						
Total Problem	35	59.1	11.4	30	50.6	11.0
Internal	35	53.2	10.3	30	46.5	11.0
External	35	63.9	12.6	30	56.0	11.0
CAFAS						

Total	36	123.1	38.0	32	120.9	37.1
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A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine if significant differences existed between the PARK South and PARK North youth on the CBCL, YSR, and CAFAS. MANOVA results revealed significant main effects for group on the CBCL ($F(3, 58) = 5.34, p < .05$) and YSR ($F(3, 61) = 3.10, p < .05$). Examining the univariate analyses, caregivers of youth enrolled in PARK North reported significantly higher Internalizing, Externalizing, and Total Problem Scale scores compared to caregivers of youth from the PARK South site. Similarly, youth in the PARK North site rated themselves as significantly higher on the Internalizing, Externalizing, and Total Problem Scales compared to youth enrolled in PARK South. Despite significant differences on the caregiver and youth self-reports, clinician ratings on the CAFAS did not vary by PARK site.

Process Evaluation: Activities and Findings

Purpose

Given the nature of this study design, it was necessary to assess both the PARK and GROW programs in detail and to assure that the strength and integrity of the interventions were intact. A failure to assess the strength and integrity of the intervention can lead to misleading conclusions regarding program effectiveness (e.g. Sechrest & Rosenblatt, 1987). In October 2002, a qualitative assessment, consisting of key informant interviews, was conducted to supplement the quantitative research. The purpose of the qualitative interviews was threefold: 1) to fill in the gaps, 2) to capture program strengths, and 3) to document lessons learned. The quantitative data tells part of the story of what happens to the youth prior to and post program entry.

The qualitative interviews allowed the staff and administrators from the PARK and GROW programs an opportunity to discuss what they felt contributed to the success of youth. The data on implementation collected through site visits included information on: the target population, entry and access into the system, service components, system staffing, system collaboration, and client-service integration. Lastly, the assessment served to record lessons learned for Santa Cruz County in an effort to aid decision makers in future program planning.

In addition to quantitative outcome measures and qualitative descriptions of program strengths and challenges, it is also important to examine the organizational culture and climate as contributing to the overall success and limitations of existing service delivery. A brief description of these variables will be discussed.

Organizational culture has been defined as the “norms, values, basic assumptions, and shared meanings that guide work in a particular organization and are taught to new members” (p 95, Hemmelgarn, Glisson, & Dukes, 2001). Several researchers suggest that organizational culture influences many aspects of the workplace including quality of care and job turnover (e.g., Hemmelgarn, Glisson, & Dukes, 2001; Kopelman, Brief, & Guzzo, 1990).

Hemmelgarn and colleagues (2001) explain that *organizational climate* refers to the way people perceive their work environment. These perceptions likely contribute to an individual's attitudes about work and to actual job performance (Hemmelgarn, Glisson, & Dukes, 2001). For example, Glisson and Hemmelgarn (1998) conducted a large-scale analysis of public children's service agencies and found that specific organizational climate variables (low conflict and high cooperation, role clarity, and personalization) was significantly associated with improved children's psychosocial functioning. Additionally, two dimensions of organizational climate (low levels of depersonalization and emotional exhaustion) predicted better work performance in a study of children's service systems (Glisson and Hemmelgarn, 1998).

"The nature of this work requires staff members to provide services to children and families who are at risk of a variety of physical and psychosocial problems. Because the effectiveness of these services depends heavily on the relationship formed between service providers and the people who receive the services, the attitudes of the service providers play an especially important role in the outcomes of services" (Glisson and Hemmelgarn, p. 404).

Given the possible link between organizational climate and culture and program effectiveness, we examined staff responses on the Children's Services Organizational Climate and Culture Surveys (2000). Identifying specific organizational culture and climate variables that may enhance or impede the goals of an organization may be a cost effective and efficient way to improve program development, structure, and ultimately clinical outcomes.

Sample

Interviews and Organizational Surveys

Participants were 22 Park and Grow staff members (female = 12, male = 10) including a Program Director (N=1), Probation Officers (N=6), Probation Supervisors (N= 2), Clinicians (N= 7), Clinical Supervisors (N=3), Contractors (2), and a teacher (N=1). The staff members represented a range of agencies including Santa Cruz County Mental Health (n=6), Santa Cruz County

Department of Probation (n = 9), Contractors (n=2), County Office of Education (n=1), and Youth Services (n=2).

Each participant completed the interview process conducted by UCSF evaluators. Purposive sampling methods were used, selecting key informants who have worked within either or both programs for six months or longer.

The staff members from the Park (n=16) and GROW (n=6) programs also completed the Organizational Climate and Culture forms (2000). These closed-ended questionnaires were used to complement the open-ended informant interviews so that a quantitative analysis of responses could be examined as a tool to identify differences in the practices and attitudes of staff members across programs.

While every effort was made to obtain perspectives from such a range of staff members, the relatively small number of surveys does not allow for extensive quantitative analyses comparing the Park and Grow programs. The data collected, however, does provide important insight into characteristics of each group and is described below.

Measures

STAFF QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

Key Informant Interviews

Staff who participated in key informant interviews were asked questions by UCSF staff regarding program processes, procedures, strengths, challenges, and recommendations for future program planning. UCSF staff used either Exhibit A or Exhibit B, created specifically for the qualitative assessment, which outline selected program objectives, processes and activities in the PARK and GROW programs. Additionally, Interview Guidelines were used, also developed by UCSF specifically for the qualitative assessment, to provide structure throughout the interview process. The guidelines contain three levels of inquiry: feasibility, description and quality, which were used to discuss the objectives, processes and activities described in Exhibits A and B.

Organizational Surveys

The Organizational Culture and Climate Surveys from the University of Tennessee Children's Mental Health Services Research Center were

developed by Charles Glisson (2000). The culture survey asks staff working in children's mental health service organizations to answer questions on the role of motivation, consensus, conformity, superiority, support, adversity, precision, control and individualism within their organization. The climate survey contains questions on staff's perceptions of their role within the organization including depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, fairness, growth and advancement potential, hierarchy of authority, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, personal accomplishment, role clarity, cooperation, and formalization.

Procedure

The qualitative assessment consisted of key informant interviews with staff from the PARK and GROW programs. All interviews were conducted in-person using the classic dyad, one interviewer and one respondent, with the exception of one interview, which had two respondents. Interviews were semi-structured, adhering to an outline to help guide interviews but remained flexible in adapting questions to each respondent.

Staff from Santa Cruz County Departments of Probation, Children's Mental Health, and Office of Education were contacted by UCSF to solicit voluntary participation in the qualitative portion of the evaluation. Staff could choose not to participate without compromising their position within their agency. If a staff member agreed to participate, a consent form for the survey and interview were provided to further explain the purpose of the qualitative portion of the study.

Once informed consent was obtained, the Organizational Culture and Climate Surveys were mailed to participants, and returned to UCSF via pre-metered envelopes. Each survey took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Key informant interviews were set up either in person or on the phone. Interviews in person were held at a location convenient for staff members. Interviews lasted approximately one hour. The qualitative assessment was a one-time data collection procedure.

Results

This section will cover three areas where substantive responses were provided across all respondents: program strengths, challenges, and recommendations.

Site-Based Program (Park)

Strengths

One of the primary differences between the PARK and GROW programs is the site-based nature of PARK.

What are the strengths of a site-based day treatment program?

- ◆ Physical Site
- ◆ Communication with Multi-Disciplinary Team
- ◆ Safe Environment
- ◆ Structure
- ◆ Probation Contact
- ◆ School on Site
- ◆ Sharing Meals

As a day treatment program, youth check in at a site, in either North County or South County, every weekday morning. Each site is equipped with staff offices for the Program Director, Probation Officers, Clinicians and Supervisors. Both sites have recreational equipment including pool tables, bicycles, and weight room

equipment. There is a designated classroom space in each facility, as well as a kitchen and dining area. The presence of a site provided a headquarters for parents, youth and staff in the PARK program. All participants and families knew where they could find a Probation Officer or Clinician when problems arose. Parents knew where their kids were during the day and then kids had a safe place to go each day to learn and play.

Communication between interagency staff from Probation, Children's Mental Health, and the County Office of Education was made easy due to their collocation at a physical site. Staff were able to share information easily regarding the youth's progress toward their treatment goals. Interagency meetings were easy to coordinate and facilitate because all staff worked at the PARK site and shared office space.

The physical PARK sites also provided a safe environment for the youth in these programs. The site provided a place for them to go each day where they had Probation Officers, Clinicians, and other recreation and vocational staff who invested in them and in their success. The youth in the PARK program also had a place for recreation, to hang out in a supervised environment, and were provided daily meals.

The site-based PARK program provided structure and routine for youth. Each day youth were required to check-in to the program by a certain time. School hours took place at the same time each day, and recreation and extracurricular activities were facilitated after school hours. The routine provided stability, consistency and structure for the program youth.

Each PARK site was staffed with Probation Officers, Clinicians and Supervisors at all times. This facilitated intense contact between juvenile probationers and Probation Officers. In a general supervision caseload, a P.O. might have contact with a youth one to two times per week. At PARK, probation had a presence in the everyday lives of the youth.

The site enabled the County Office of Education to set up a classroom at each PARK facility. The on-site school allowed for easy transitions from school to program activities. The location of the school also provided opportunities for the program goals to be incorporated into the classroom curriculum.

The kitchen and dining facilities located at each PARK site created an exceptional program environment. The ritual allowed staff and youth to interact on a unique level and created a family-like environment. The majority of staff interviewed agreed that the presence of a kitchen was an asset to the program. The behavior of the youth was at its best when staff and youth were preparing and eating meals together.

Challenges

What are the challenges of a site-based day treatment program?

- ◆ Motivation
- ◆ Networking
- ◆ Appropriate Staff
- ◆ Role of Staff
- ◆ Family Involvement
- ◆ Programming

The PARK day treatment program was defined by its relationship and family-oriented environment. At times, this environment allowed probationers to become too comfortable and to lose motivation towards the program goals. Although the relationships formed between the youth and staff were an integral part of the program, this atmosphere needed to be balanced with a concrete plan to motivate youth towards the probation terms and goals.

Networking became a problem in the PARK program because of its site-based nature. The structure of the program brought probationers together and facilitated networking between them.

One Probation Officer reported that some youth were court ordered not to be near one another and yet they were both assigned to the PARK program where they spent all day together. The site-based program structure allowed older, more sophisticated, offenders to mix with younger, less sophisticated offenders.

The day treatment milieu that the PARK program espoused was unique from other Probation and Mental Health agency positions in that staff were with the youth all day, everyday. Respondents reported that it was difficult to find staff that were interested in working in this type of environment. Moreover, it was difficult to find staff that were skilled at working in this type of environment.

A challenge that was reported in almost every interview, across all agencies, was the role of Probation and Mental Health staff. Through the interview

process, it became clear that the PARK program necessitated that Probation Officers at times act like counselors and that Clinicians at time act like Probation Officers. Clinicians found themselves in the role of enforcer and many reported that they found this confusing for them and the youth. In a therapy session, they worked to establish a confidential relationship and yet during break youth would worry about being written up by their clinician.

Although family involvement was a major program component when PARK was conceived and implemented, staff reported that family involvement was low. Reasons for the low levels of family involvement included the site-based model. Because staff were an integral part of the daily operations at the PARK sites, there was not time to make home visits outside of or during program hours.

The implementation of a day treatment program requires an enormous expenditure of time, energy and resources. The PARK sites, in addition to school activities, hosted counseling sessions, meals, recreation, vocational skills, and supervision daily. These activities require a lot of staff, forethought and planning, and a variety of resources. In all of these ways, a day treatment program is costly.

What are some recommendations for a site-based day treatment program?

- ◆ Criteria for Entry
- ◆ Groups
- ◆ Staffing
- ◆ Define Roles
- ◆ Implement Level System
- ◆ Parent Involvement

Recommendations

During the interview process, as staff discussed some of the program challenges, many also gave recommendations to ameliorate these challenges. As a solution to the networking problem between probationers, one staff suggested changing the criteria for program entry. If some youth who were nearly off probation were allowed into the program, they would be able to serve as a positive role model for other youth.

Division of youth into groups may also be a way to decrease or eliminate networking. Youth could be split into groups of early, less sophisticated, and more sophisticated offenders. Staff mentioned some practices, which were already in place to cut down on networking outside of the program. These included staggered release time from program activities, dismissing older youth first, and then younger youth at a later interval. In addition, the PARK program had also initiated a vanpool, which dropped kids off at home or at another supervised location after the scheduled program day.

Dividing the youth into groups was also suggested as a way to provide better services. Youth separated into groups of boys and girls would allow for gender-specific services. Youth would be brought together for recreation and social activities, while school, group therapy and probation services would be delivered separately.

The issue of staffing, finding both skilled and willing staff, is especially important in a day treatment program. Staff should be chosen strategically for their desire to work in a day treatment milieu, their skill in working in this type of environment, and/or a specialization in a particular area, such as substance abuse.

The majority of respondents agreed that defining the roles and expectations of interagency staff members is crucial. It isn't clear from the interview process whether Probation and Mental Health roles should be distinct or blurred, but the need to communicate the expectations to the group is vital.

To address the challenge of motivating the youth toward probation and program goals, staff recommended that a level system be implemented in the program structure. The system would award privileges and greater freedoms to youth as they met probation goals, keeping them motivated to complete their terms.

Suggestions made by staff to increase the level of parent involvement in the PARK program included parent-to-parent mentoring and inclusion of family members in therapeutic substance abuse groups. As youth and families enter the program, a current program parent could mentor the newer member. The mentoring program would facilitate contact between parents to provide support for one another. Additionally, as many family members also report having substance abuse issues, therapy groups hosted at the PARK site could be extended to include these members.

Community-based Program (GROW)

Strengths

The GROW program is a collaborative, community-based program between Juvenile Probation, Children's Mental health and Youth Services. The goal of the GROW program is to maintain and re-connect youth who are receiving probation services with their families or caretakers. GROW provides services to these youth and family, including individual and family counseling, probation services, substance abuse, job, educational and recreational services. All services are out-patient and are provided within the community and with community partners.

What are the strengths of a community-based, family preservation program?

- ◆ Multi-Disciplinary Team
- ◆ Real-Life Setting
- ◆ Level System
- ◆ School Partner
- ◆ One-on-One
- ◆ Flexibility
- ◆ Transition to After Care

One strength of the GROW program is its interagency nature. Probation, Children's Mental Health and Youth Services staff all work at one location. Although services are provided in the community, staff are concentrated at one office, which facilitates communication between the

agencies regarding program participants. In addition, youth and family receive multiple services upon entry into a single probation program.

The community-based model provides a real-world setting where youth have to make choices to abide by program requirements. Unlike the site-based program, which provides a great deal of structure for youth, GROW participants must learn to manage the program, contacting their Probation Officer, meeting with their Clinician, attending school, and manage their free time. As participants must learn how to manage their time in order to succeed in the program, these skills carry over once the program is complete and are able to transition easily out of the program.

The structure of GROW is such that a level system is in place for participants who consistently meet probation goals. As a participant meets program milestones, they are awarded more free time, providing them with motivation to move through and complete the program.

Although the GROW program does not have on-site education, the Probation Officers and Clinicians have developed very strong ties with local schools. Teachers and Administrators at the schools are extremely cooperative in sharing information with GROW staff and in working together to support the youth.

As GROW staff delivers services within the community, services are delivered to youth one-on-one. The contact between Probation and the youth and Mental Health and the youth is highly individualized. Staff members were able to focus on the needs of a particular youth and devote the time they spend to that youth alone.

The structure of GROW offers flexibility in designing treatment plans for each youth. Because it is a community-based program, youth can access the services that are appropriate to their specific needs and the relationships they form with community partners can continue after the program completion.

Transition to aftercare is easy because the program takes place in a real-world setting and because services are community-based. Whilst a day treatment milieu is more intense during the program, the separation from a day treatment program is more severe. The nature of GROW allows for the youth to transition easily to other community services or out of treatment all together.

Challenges

One challenge of the community-based GROW program is that many youth simply need more structure and regimen than it provides. Although many youth are likely to learn time management skills through this type of program, those who cannot succeed without more structure will fail.

What are the challenges of community-based program?

- ◆ Structure
- ◆ Contact with Youth
- ◆ Coordination of a Multi-Disciplinary Team
- ◆ Resources
- ◆ Resources
- ◆ Resources

On the same note, because services are delivered in a community, versus site-based setting, contact between the youth and probation and the youth and mental health is not nearly as intense. Probation Officers and Clinicians see the youth one, maybe two times per week. Services delivered in a community-based environment are not as intense as those delivered in a day treatment environment.

Logistically, as there is not one site where all services and contact takes place, it takes more effort to schedule and plan meetings and services. Probation Officers, Clinicians, parents and youth have to work together to coordinate and schedule meetings and activities. Coordination of the multi-disciplinary team for program activities is more difficult in a community-based than in a site-based program.

The remainder of the challenges identified in the GROW program stem from a lack of resources. The program is understaffed and needs at least one additional Probation Officer. Probation has undertaken large caseloads and are unable to focus on collaborating with Mental Health.

Because the nature of the program is to provide services in the community and does not have a site where all services take place, there is a need for general funds to provide family nights, outings and recreation. Clinicians need funds to take their clients out to lunch, for an ice cream or for recreational activities. Due to the lack of resources and funds, clinicians have an increasingly difficult time with reimbursement procedures.

An additional challenge related to resources is the money allocated for clinician salaries. The lower level pay for clinicians at GROW does is one factor that may impact provision of treatment as well as climate of the work environment. Additional monies need to be provided for clinical salaries in

order to recruit qualified clinicians or to provide extensive training for existing clinicians.

Recommendations

To address the issue of structure in the GROW program, the design of a weekly schedule was recommended. Probation Officers and youth would schedule all activities and free time at the beginning of each week or month to provide more structure and monitor youth's progress toward probation goals. Probation Officers would check in with youth and observe adherence to the weekly/monthly schedule.

What are some recommendations for a community-based program?

- ◆ Weekly Schedule
- ◆ Using P.A.C.T.
- ◆ Additional Probation Officer
- ◆ Probation/Mental Health Collaboration
- ◆ Funding Sources

In addition, the P.A.C.T. committee is a great resource to help determine which youth are likely to succeed in a community-based, less structured setting. The P.A.C.T. committee stands for Placement & Alternative Conference Team and marks the beginning of the placement process. A Probation Officer refers a case to the committee if a youth qualifies for placement into a diversion program. The family and youth are brought into the process and the committee conducts a needs assessment. The assessment results in placement into either the PARK or GROW program. If the committee could determine the level of structure needed during the assessment, the P.A.C.T. could help determine in which program the youth is more likely to succeed. Youth who can handle the freedom and the time management skills necessary to navigate the community-based program, or who are succeeding in public schools, should be referred to GROW. Those in need of more intense supervision and probation services should be referred to PARK, or another day treatment program.

An additional Probation Officer in the GROW program would provide more opportunity for Probation and Mental Health to collaborate and communicate, and would lighten the caseload for current Probation Officers.

Additional funding would also allow for more staff, would attract highly trained staff, and would provide more activities and services for youth and families in the GROW program.

Future Program Planning

Based on the interviews with program staff, we want to highlight a few considerations for future program planning in Santa Cruz County. First, creating a profile of a successful PARK and GROW youth would be an invaluable tool in assessing which program best suits a youth. The profile would act as a general guide in P.A.C.T. meetings and would aid in the referral process.

Considerations for Future Program Planning in Santa Cruz County

- ◆ PARK/GROW Profile
- ◆ Early vs. Sophisticated Offender
- ◆ Using P.A.C.T.
- ◆ Substance Abuse Treatment

Secondly, the issue of early versus sophisticated offender warrants consideration by the county when making decisions about existing or new programs. The problem of networking between probationers can curb progress

in the programs. Strategies to minimize or eliminate the effects of networking between the youth should be implemented in the day-treatment program structures.

Thirdly, using P.A.C.T. as a tool to assess the needs of the youth and families to steer them toward the most appropriate services would be beneficial. The P.A.C.T. committee should not only be useful in determining whether youth are enrolled in PARK or GROW, but should be used to select a wide variety of services for families. Some youth may not be appropriate for either program and need a referral to another community service (i.e. Psychiatric care, substance abuse treatment, etc.). The P.A.C.T. already has a structure in place in the community but should be used consistently to assess the needs of interagency clients.

Lastly, in all interviews, the lack of substance abuse treatment options in the county was addressed. Clinicians commented that youth often entered the programs who needed much more intense substance abuse treatment than either PARK or GROW could provide. One respondent mentioned the need for a detoxification facility within the county. We recommend that the county consider the need for such services as they continue to modify and improve services for juvenile offenders.

In conclusion, we would like to state that Santa Cruz County has a long and successful history of Probation and Mental Health collaboration. It is also clear that the county is invested in evaluation and research and in using findings to make decisions. During our interviews staff asked when the study results would be published, as they are eager to use them to improve services. These in themselves are findings and we want to encourage Santa Cruz County in its use of interagency collaboration and research to improve services to youth.

Organizational Climate and Culture

Tables 26 and 27 exhibit means and standard deviations of each subscale for the Organizational Climate and Culture Surveys. Items are rated on a five-point likert scale, with higher numbers corresponding to more positive perceptions.

Table 26 Organizational Climate by Group

	PARK (n=16)		GROW (n=6)		Total (n=22)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Climate Scale						
Depersonalization	1.43	.47	1.53	.50	1.45	.47
Emotional Exhaustion	1.79	.82	2.17	1.04	1.89	.87
Fairness	3.32	.58	3.00	.87	3.23	.67
Growth and Advancement	2.54	.83	2.30	.75	2.47	.80
Hierarchy of Authority	2.82	.75	2.93	.58	2.85	.69
Job Satisfaction	3.59	.65	3.27	.66	3.50	.65
Organizational Commitment	3.76	.78	3.54	.89	3.70	.79
Personal Accomplishment	3.95	.64	3.58	.57	3.85	.63
Role Clarity	3.19	.72	3.43	.40	3.25	.65
Role Conflict	2.26	.69	2.14	.64	2.23	.67
Role Overload	2.72	.62	2.60	.56	2.69	.59
Routinization	3.74	.61	3.33	.35	3.63	.57
Cooperation	3.48	.59	3.54	.46	3.50	.55
Formalization	2.47	.59	2.84	.54	2.57	.59
Anger Hostility	2.08	.70	2.15	.43	2.10	.63
Achievement Striving	3.89	.42	3.61	.35	3.81	.41

One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) tests were conducted to examine possible group differences by group on the subscales of the Organizational Culture and Climate surveys. ANOVA results reveal no significant differences by group on responses for these measures suggesting that staff members from PARK and GROW perceive their work environment and describe the way things are done in similar ways.

Table 27 Organizational Culture

	PARK (n=16)		GROW (n=5)		Total (n=22)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Culture Scale						
Motivation	3.94	.85	3.66	.41	3.87	.77
Interpersonal	4.23	.77	4.31	.57	4.25	.71
Consensus	2.30	.60	2.12	.34	2.26	.54
Service	4.29	.85	4.38	.41	4.31	.76
Evasion	1.67	.68	1.49	.06	1.62	.59
Conformity	2.24	.55	2.02	.28	2.19	.50
Superiority	1.48	.52	1.38	.15	1.45	.46
Subservient	2.04	.75	2.05	.60	2.05	.70
Supportive	4.31	.82	4.31	.37	4.31	.73
Adversarial	1.81	.51	1.70	.25	1.79	.46
Precision	2.23	.35	2.07	.38	2.19	.35
Control	2.43	.44	2.10	.75	2.35	.53
Individualistic	3.77	.63	3.68	.50	3.75	.59

In terms of the Organizational Climate Survey, staff members endorsed relatively lower scores on items reflecting Emotional Exhaustion (M = 1.89), Depersonalization (M = 1.45), and Role Conflict (M = 2.23). Together these scales have been aggregated to reflect the overall *psychological climate* of the workplace, and lower scores have been linked to better quality and outcomes in child welfare and juvenile justice organizations (Glisson, & Hemmelgarn, 1998). Additionally, staff members as a whole reported positive perceptions regarding Job Satisfaction (M = 3.50), Organizational Commitment (M =

3.70), Personal Accomplishment (M = 3.85), and Achievement Striving (M = 3.81). These relatively higher scores indicate a general sense of positive work attitudes, personal commitment to the organization, and satisfaction with the job.

Regarding the Culture Survey, staff members as a whole generally reported positive perceptions with the highest mean scores on the Interpersonal (M = 4.25), Service (M = 4.31), and Supportive (M = 4.31) subscales. These scales tend to reflect agreed upon normative beliefs such as the importance of quality care, interpersonal and communication skills among staff, emphasis on the needs of clients, and showing concern for the needs of others. In contrast, staff members endorsed the opposite pattern on the Evasion (M = 1.62), Superiority (M = 1.45), and Adversarial (M = 1.79) subscales. These lower scores reflect an environment that promotes teamwork and importance of group goals over an evasive, defensive, individualistic, and adversarial work setting.

Summary and Conclusions

Summary of Findings

This study produced a multitude of results from a variety of perspectives, creating a complex set of findings. The findings can, however, be sorted into three key domains: 1) Descriptions of the youth served; 2) The outcomes of the services provided; and 3) Descriptions of the services provided.

It is essential, however, to understand that these findings derive from two creative and innovative programs, neither of which represents “services as usual” approaches. For many of the outcomes, there is congruence between PARK and GROW. This could mistakenly be viewed as meaning that PARK is producing outcomes equivalent to a services as usual approach. This is not necessarily the case. GROW, an established and valued program in Santa Cruz County, could easily be viewed as the standard or benchmark to which the PARK program would aspire.

Characteristics of the Youth Served:

Randomization was highly effective in equally distributing the characteristics of the youth served to PARK and GROW. There are extremely few differences

between the two programs with regard to the characteristics of the youth served at intake. In both programs, the youth served face an extremely wide and deep range of challenges across all domains of their lives. Youth in both groups were exposed to a wide range of risk factors, including exposure to violence (over 80% of the youth), being a member of a gang (over 40%), having a family history of mental health (over 25%), a family history of substance abuse (60%), being a victim of physical or sexual abuse (over 25%), having a parent with a criminal history (close to 60%), and a history of risk seeking behavior (close to 80%).

Outcomes over time

The outcomes of the youth served include outcomes pertaining to Juvenile Justice, Mental Health, Education, and Satisfaction. In addition to comparisons between PARK and GROW, comparisons were also made between the North Park Program (Sequoia PARK), the South PARK Program (Luna PARK) and GROW. Highlights of these findings are presented below:

Juvenile Justice

The recidivism rates were generally comparable between PARK and GROW. Overall recidivism rates for all sustained changes, including technical violations, ran at approximately 80% at six months post-intake, at 60-66% at 12 months, and with an overall rate of 87% from intake to 12 months. It is, however, critical to exclude technical violations from the rates as these violations are direct consequences of the intense monitoring the youth receive from probation while in these programs. When technical violations are excluded, the recidivism rates drop to 44% for PARK and 51% for GROW at 6 months post-intake, 40% for PARK and 34% for GROW at 12 months, and right at 61 to 62% from intake to 12 months for both programs. GROW showed slightly more sustained Felony counts at 6 months, PARK had slightly more sustained Misdemeanor counts. In addition, the mean number of sustained counts dropped dramatically over time for both programs, from five to six at intake to fewer than one at six and twelve months.

The results from out-of-home placements show differences between PARK and GROW, with fewer youth residing out-of-home in PARK compared to GROW at six and twelve months. At six months the number of youth living in a parent's home dipped for both PARK and GROW, with 63% and 41% respectfully. By the twelve-month evaluation 18% of PARK youth and 26% of GROW youth were living in Group Homes (Level 1-12), and 11% of PARK youth and 19% of GROW youth living in the Juvenile Detention Center.

Alcohol and Drug

Substance use was a significant problem for the youth served in both GROW and PARK. Approximately 90% of the youth in GROW and PARK used one or more substances at intake. The majority of the youth used more than one substance, and between 10 to 20% of the youth reported using four or more substances. Substance use rates did not drop significantly overtime in PARK, remaining in the high 80% range. The rate did, however, drop in GROW to 54% during the six to 12 month post-intake period and 63% from zero to 12 months.

Education

Standardized educational tests show little change in grade level equivalence for both PARK and GROW. The youth in both programs performed essentially equally, maintaining their grade level over the course of six and 12-month follow-ups.

Mental Health

The patterns of results for mental health related outcomes were complex. On the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL), which assesses caregiver perspectives on the youth served, the youth in GROW showed a decrease in externalizing symptoms from intake to six months, whereas the youth in PARK did not show a similar decrease. This was not statistically significant, however. There were no differences on the internalizing sub-scale or on the total problems scale where both programs showed decreases at six months. On the Youth Self Report, a measure taken from the perspective of the youth enrolled in the programs, there were small or few changes from intake to six months in both programs. At 12 months, however, the youth in GROW perceived themselves as doing worse whereas the youth in PARK perceived themselves as doing better on the internalizing, externalizing, and total problem scales. On a clinician rating scale (the CAFAS), youth in PARK were rated as having more problems at intake, and improving to roughly the same level as the youth at six months in GROW. However, the magnitude of positive change in PARK was greater because of the higher scores at intake. Client satisfaction was rated as high to moderate in both programs at six and twelve months, with no differences between the two programs.

North (Sequoia) PARK and South (Luna PARK) Comparisons

In this study, youth were randomly assigned to either PARK or GROW. However, youth were assigned to one of two PARK programs based largely on whether the youth resided in the southern or northern portion of Santa Cruz

County. When Sequoia PARK is compared to Luna PARK, important differences emerge. Sequoia PARK has a much higher recidivism rate for sustained counts (excluding technical violations) than Luna PARK. The lack of differences on recidivism indicators between PARK and GROW is due to relatively higher recidivism rates in Sequoia PARK combined with relatively lower rates in Luna PARK.

The youth in Luna PARK are, however, not comparable to the youth in Sequoia PARK. With regard to ethnicity, Luna Park served a primarily Latino population whereas Sequoia PARK served a primarily Anglo population. Analyses indicated, however, that ethnicity does not seem to determine the differences between the two PARK programs. Additional analyses revealed that youth enrolled in Sequoia PARK had substantially higher levels of mental health related needs as measured on caregiver and youth rating scales than Luna PARK or than GROW. It is possible that the higher recidivism rate for Sequoia PARK is linked to these higher rates of mental health needs.

Process evaluation

A process evaluation described both the GROW and PARK programs and a well respected measure of organizational culture and climate was administered to the staff of both programs. Strengths of the PARK approach included: a physical site, communication with a multi-disciplinary team, a safe environment, structure, probation contact, an on-site school, and sharing of meals. Challenges for PARK included: motivation of staff, networking, appropriate staffing patterns, the changing role definitions of staff, family involvement, and appropriate programming. Strengths of GROW included: a multi-disciplinary team, a real life setting, a level system in place, school partners, one-on-one contact, flexibility and the transition to after care. The challenges for GROW included: Structure, contact with youth, coordinating the multi-disciplinary team, and resources. Both PARK and GROW scored comparably on measures of organizational culture and climate.

A consolidated summary of the results:

The results from this evaluation are quite complex and can be difficult to navigate. Tables 28-31 presents an overall summary of the results across PARK and GROW.

Table 28 Profile of Demographic Findings

Basic	PARK	GROW
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Length of stay	Slightly longer (M = 197)	(M = 174)
Gender	Similar	Similar
Ethnicity	Similar	Similar
Current Living Situation		More youth in detention centers and group homes at 6 and 12 months

The tables demonstrate overall trends in the results. Both PARK and GROW generally show positive results across domains, with youth improving on all most if not all major indicators. PARK demonstrates more positive findings on out-of-home placements over time (fewer than GROW), on educational achievement, and on the Youth and Caseworker reports of mental health and functional status. GROW demonstrates more positive findings on re-arrests for non-technical violations (slightly lower recidivism than PARK), on the Parent report of mental health and functional status (The CBCL, more positive change over time than PARK). Other results were more mixed, with one program appearing more positive at the six or 12-month intervals.

Table 29 Profile of Juvenile Justice Findings

Juvenile Justice	PARK	GROW
Recidivism INTAKE: All Sustained Counts Excluding Technical Violations		Higher
Recidivism 6 MONTHS: All Sustained Count Excluding Technical Violations	Higher	Much larger relative decrease in counts over time at 6 months
Recidivism INTAKE: Sustained Misdemeanors Counts		Higher
Recidivism 6 MONTHS: Sustained Misdemeanors Counts	Higher	Larger relative decrease in counts over time
Recidivism INTAKE: Sustained Felonies Counts		Higher
Recidivism 6 MONTHS: Sustained Felonies Counts		Slightly Higher
Recidivism 12 MONTHS: Sustained Felonies		Higher
INTAKE Sustained Counts excluding techs	Higher	

INTAKE Misdemeanors	Higher	
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Table 30 Profile of Alcohol and Drug Findings

Alcohol and Drug	PARK	GROW
Drug Use: Intake	Report more drug use overall. Greater % use 3 or more drugs	Greater % reported using 2 drugs
Drug Use: 6 months	Trend toward slightly less drug use	
Drug Use: 12 months		Trend toward less drug use over time

Table 31 Profile of Education and Mental Health Findings

Education and Mental Health	PARK	GROW
Education	Better TABE grade equivalent scores at all time points	
CBCL Externalizing	Larger decrease from 0 to 12 months. Greater % of negative change over time	Larger decrease from 0 to 6 months. Greater % of positive change over time
CBCL Total Problem		Better at 0 and 6 months
YSR	Better scores over time	Worse scores over time
CAFAS	Higher clinician ratings	

The strengths of PARK appear to be around out-of-home placement reductions, educational status, and youth and clinician reports of functional status. The strengths of GROW appear to center on recidivism (though only slightly) and parent reports of functional status. There were, in short, differential outcomes depending on the program.

Importantly, the two PARK programs (Luna and Sequoia) varied significantly with respect to juvenile justice related outcomes such as sustained counts for non-technical violations. Luna PARK had substantially lower rates of recidivism than Sequoia PARK or than GROW. In addition, youth Sequoia PARK had significantly higher levels of mental health need than youth in Luna PARK or in GROW.

Limitations

There were two primary limitations to the findings presented in this project: 1) the lack of a “no treatment” or “services as usual” control; and 2) attrition on mental health and education measures. The lack of a “services as usual” control was predicated by the reality of the service system design in Santa Cruz County. It would be useful to compare the youth served in GROW and PARK with a comparable group of youth who eventually received placement, but such a group did not exist within that County. Consequently, two innovative programs were compared. Attrition varied by measure, but was largely a consequence of having caseworkers function as data collectors for this project due to resource constraints. Extensive effort was made to improve attrition rates, and follow-up is reasonable at six -month intervals, but drops significantly to the twelve-month interval.

Recommendations for Future Research

There are a number of potential directions for future research. The first steps will be to more fully explore the data and results obtained in this study. Additional, multivariate models will be created to examine predictors of key outcomes, especially juvenile justice recidivism. The relationships between outcomes and mental health needs at intake, ethnicity, and the Luna PARK, Sequoia PARK, and GROW programs will constitute a central focus of these analyses. Other topics that will be explored include the interrelationships between varying measures and the linkages between demographic and risk factors and outcome indicators. Additional information may be collected from Santa Cruz County Probation to further explicate differences, including qualitative and quantitative data on the nature of the services received and on longer-term follow-ups.

The most obvious methodological improvements would be to conduct a study where youth in placement are compared to youth in programs such as PARK

or GROW. Additional effort can also be made to obtain comparison data from other sites or other counties. The probation department continues to evolve in Santa Cruz County, and research is ongoing that may help to further elucidate the trajectories of the youth served in that system more broadly.

Discussion

What Worked

It is believed that the Luna PARK site, which was located in Watsonville, was successful in that it addressed and sometimes met some of the socio-economic needs of the youth it served. The Watsonville site served a high percentage of Latino youth, many of whom come from impoverished backgrounds and whose families were struggling to make ends meet. Additionally, they possessed very few resources. Many of the parents worked in the lowest wage-paying sector of the economy: the agricultural industry, canneries, and a variety of jobs involving manual labor. These jobs are often seasonal. To make ends meet, the parents of those youth at Luna PARK worked long hours, often not arriving home until the evening. The high risk youth we served, already facing many disadvantages, were often left unsupervised and free to meet their strong needs for social bonding. Truancy, involvement with anti-social peers, lack of pro social activities and a lack of resources led these youth down a path of increasing criminality and escalation in the justice system.

Culture became an important issue to address. Day treatment provided a family like environment at Watsonville and Santa Cruz. It appears that the Latino youth in Watsonville were more receptive to day treatment than were the Anglo youth in North County. It is possible that the cultural emphasis on relationships, families and respect for authority contributed to the Latino youth bonding with the Luna PARK site and staff.

Luna PARK, by nature and because of its cultural sensitivity, was able to confront many of the above issues. The extended day treatment program provided many structured activities throughout the day, occupying much of the youth's time that was previously occupied with delinquent activities. Staffing at the Luna PARK site included several individuals who were bi-cultural and competent in working with Latino families. The similarity in culture and language facilitated trust, genuine rapport building and a general sense of ease among clients assigned to the PARK program.

The lack of resources inhibited families from having their children participate in a number of recreational activities. Luna and Sequoia PARK were able to expose many of these youth to activities that were previously not accessible to them. Youth were grateful for these experiences and still recall those experiences. These included camping, hiking, trips to San Francisco, bike rides and many other activities with cost usually associated with them.

There were many days at PARK where youth stayed around long after the end of the DAY treatment day. Youth seemed to enjoy staying at the site and were not necessarily in a hurry to get home. This quickly indicated to staff that many of the youth had little to go home to and preferred the human connections and recreational opportunities at PARK. PARK offered a family-like environment for youth where they felt nurtured, cared for and appreciated. This may have been Luna PARK's greatest legacy.

Having a school on site, which provided students with individualized attention, (due to smaller classroom size) had successful outcomes, which were not necessarily related to outstanding academic achievement, but nonetheless important. Firstly, students came to school each and every day. If not PARK staff would pick them up. It became a challenge for students to be truant and they eventually realized showing up to school on a daily basis was a better option than facing consequences of a probation officer. Once in school, the students could be lead back into an academic routine that would eventually prepare them for mainstream education. Many of the counselors at Luna PARK specialized in getting kids back into the school system that they had once been banned from.

What Didn't Work

Staff assigned to work in day treatment programs should be selected because they have an interest in working with youth on a daily basis. This is essential. There were several probation and mental health staff who had little interest in spending 8 hours a day, 5 days a week with youth. The routine for most probation officers is to have sporadic contact with youth throughout the day. At PARK, youth and staff mingled all day. Staff unfamiliar or unskilled in setting limits, creating boundaries and who lacked an understanding of normal adolescent behavior did not do well at PARK. Staff lacking a fundamental knowledge of child development and ability to differentiate between normal and abnormal adolescent behavior quickly "burned out" at PARK. These staff were usually toxic to the environment and

undermined the very basic principles upon which the program was founded on.

As with any program, which deals with youth in an environment that resembles a family, staff needs to have consensus on their roles, rules, consequences and boundaries. When there is not an agreed upon commitment to adhere to standards of conduct that have been developed through consensus, staff will fracture off and do things the way they think works best. Division, with respect to how to handle difficult situations, undermines the authority and credibility of the program. Depending on which staff was assigned to the program, and their willingness to work together, the teamwork approach vacillated between unity and fragmentation.

Finally, the high levels of mental health need in the youth served in Sequoia PARK likely created a considerable challenges to achieving positive outcomes in that program. Though mental health services were available on-site, the level of need was extremely high and likely posed special challenges to the operation of the program, to the social environment of the program, and to the collaborative efforts between mental health and probation. It is not clear whether youth with such high levels of mental health need are well served in this type of setting, or whether other environments are better suited to providing effective services.

Problems Encountered

It is generally recognized that working in a site based therapeutic milieu carries a higher than average rate of staff “burnout.” This occupational hazard continued to present challenges to the PARK Program’s process of implementation. Training new staff was time consuming and interfered with certain aspects of service delivery. The therapeutic milieu was affected by the loss of familiar staff and the introduction of new personalities and styles. The problem of staff turnover was exacerbated by a high cost of living in our County, vis à vis public sector wages. The repeal of a countywide utility tax and the uncertainty of the State budget placed Santa Cruz County in a financial position where hiring limitations were placed on all county departments. As a result, both program sites operated with reduced staffing. The Probation Department was unable to hire Probation Assistants for each site and the Mental Health Department was unable to fill vacant Clinical positions. As a result, programming on Saturday mornings was suspended in order to preserve the integrity of programming during the week. In consideration of the low staffing levels, extra help employees were used

whenever possible, to provide adequate supervision of the therapeutic milieu. Existing clinical staff was impacted under these circumstances, in that they carried a maximum number of cases during the intervention period.

The difficulty with creating an environment with openness about acting out one's feelings, in the context of Day Treatment, is that it disrupts others and engages them in a battle against each other and staff. It was commonly held, among the staff at the north county site (Sequoia) that the teens participating in the program had more severe mental health needs than the youth at the south county facility. An emphasis on individuality, self-expression and willingness to confront others often took staff aback at the site in the north county facility. Such incidents occurred frequently at that site and often sidetracked the goals and objectives of the program.

Future Plans for the Project

The south county (Luna) facility will remain open providing continued funding can be secured. Santa Cruz County has submitted a plan for Wraparound services under S.B. 163. If accepted and implemented, this will permit the Luna facility to operate as a co-located hub for intensive family preservation services for a population of juvenile offenders who are at imminent risk for out of home placement. Similar to the PARK Program participants, this population will consist of serious juvenile offenders who present risk in multiple domains. Although an on-grounds classroom will remain, the service delivery pattern will not be site-based day-treatment. Instead, a true Wraparound model will be implemented, where children and families will be more engaged in the development of case plans, treatment and services. Additionally, natural helpers will be used to support the vital needs of the family and short-term placement for stabilization will be available when necessary. The teens served at the Luna center will receive the enhanced after-care services available through the Los Puentes Program and will interact with the Reclaiming Futures juvenile justice system reform effort. It is hoped that the successful implementation of Wraparound, under S.B. 163 will allow the Probation Department to reorganize its placement and placement prevention units, allowing for greater continuity in services and closer scrutiny over placement decisions.

Recommendations for Other Counties

Site Selection

It would be important for anyone choosing to start a day treatment program to pay attention to location, demographics and culture of the population served. In regards to site location, youth should be provided with enough space to allow for healthy physical activities. Ideally the site would have quick access to a sports field or basketball court, etc. If no outdoor recreational areas were in the immediate vicinity, close proximity to a local park would also work. The site selection should be made after carefully checking out who the neighbors are in the area. Some areas are more tolerant than others in having at-risk youth share the neighborhood.

Working With Partner Agencies

All agencies involved in the project should be willing to work together, understand each others goals and objectives, and also develop a joint set of goals and objectives. When School staff, counseling staff and probation staff are housed under the same roof, they need to operate singularly as opposed to distinct entities. Problems occur when the school wants to regulate the classroom in a way that differs from they way the milieu is run. Staff must all agree on common rules and standards as well as underlying philosophies. To this end, regular meetings must be held, differences worked out and agreements made. When one of the partners does not want to follow along, the program suffers and ultimately the youth are underserved.

Leadership in the programs should be strong. Strong leadership translates into unified staff that believes in the message from their leader. The leaders of the partner agencies should work together to develop training plans for their staff which teach the value of working together and also teach the models which the program plans to follow. Clearly, strong levels of interagency collaboration are necessary, especially given the indications from this evaluation that high levels of mental health need may pose special challenges to obtaining positive outcomes regarding juvenile justice recidivism.

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