

An Exploratory Statewide Analysis of Serious, Violent, and Chronic Offenders among Delinquent Youth in Pennsylvania

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Introduction

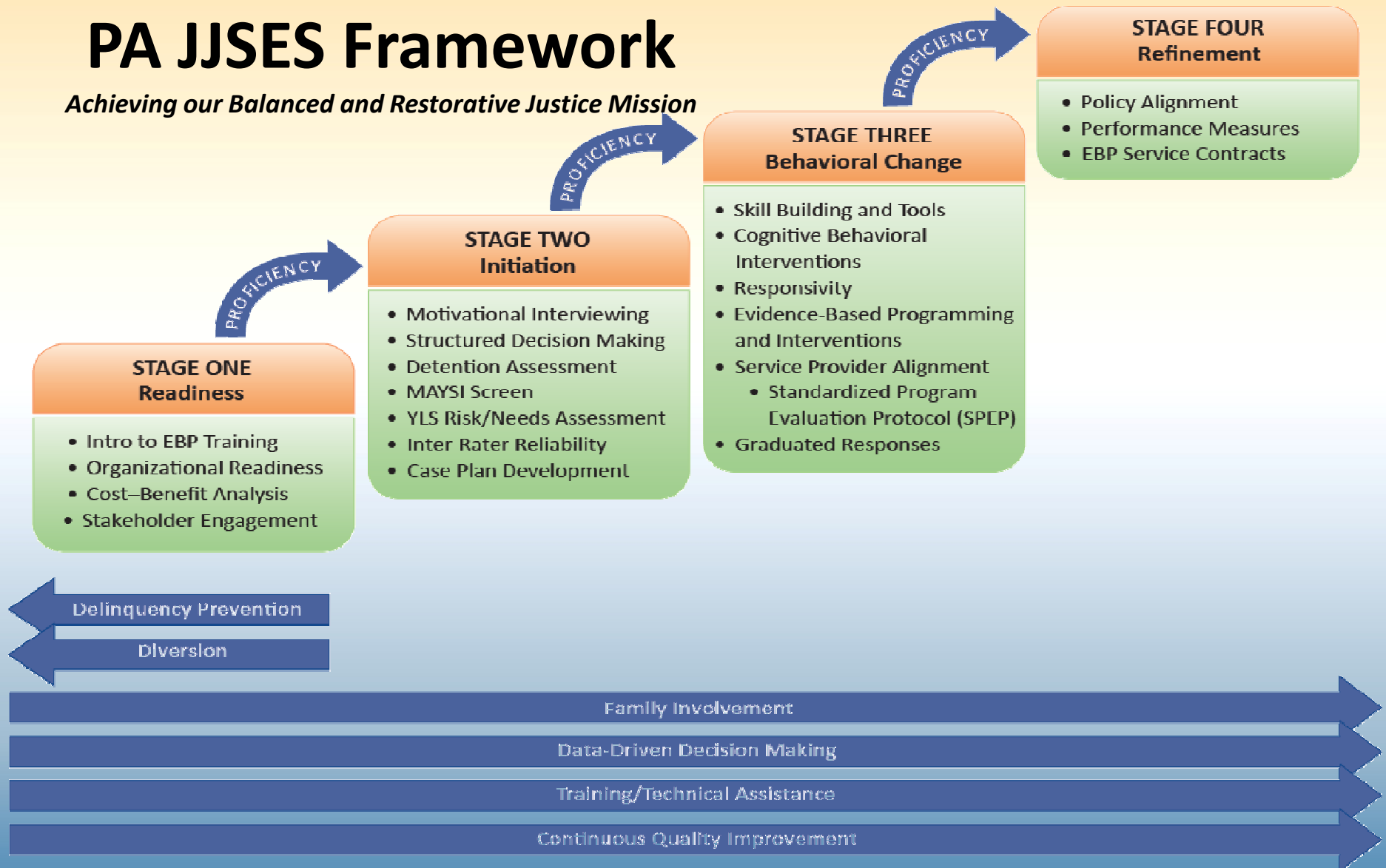
Background

- Participation in Juvenile Justice System Improvement Project (JJSIP)
- Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES)
Mission Statement (2009):
 - Employ evidence-based practices, with fidelity, at every stage of the juvenile justice process;
 - Collect and analyze the data necessary to measure the results of these efforts; and, with this knowledge,
 - Striving to continuously improve the quality of our decisions, services and programs

Introduction (Continued)

PA JJSES Framework

Achieving our Balanced and Restorative Justice Mission



Introduction (Continued)

PA Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES)

- **Stage 2:** Youth Level of Service (YLS) Risk/Needs Assessment
 - 1.) Identify low, moderate, high, and very high youth
 - 2.) Identify juveniles' top criminogenic needs
 - * Personality/Behavior
 - * Attitudes/ Orientations
 - * Family/Parenting
 - * Peers
 - * Leisure and Recreation
 - * Education Employment
 - * Substance Abuse
 - * Prior and Current Offenses
- Perfect time to do a statewide Serious, Violent, and/or Chronic offender analysis in PA.
- Need recidivism benchmark to examine impact of the JJSES

Methodology

- Identified and tracked all juveniles whose supervision was terminated from a juvenile probation department in Pennsylvania in the years 2007, 2008, or 2009 (N= 55,938).
- Once juveniles with case closures identified, looked back in offending histories to determine who met the definition of SVC offenders.
- Juvenile court information, including identifying SVC offenders and juvenile recidivism information, was retrieved from the Pennsylvania Juvenile Case Management System, or PaJCMS.
- Criminal court information provided by Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (through the Common Pleas Case Management System, or CPCMS).
- Unfortunately, no YLS or risk assessment data prior to 2010.

Research Questions

- 1.) What was the prevalence of serious, violent, and/or chronic offenders among all juveniles with cases closed in 2007, 2008, or 2009?
- 2.) What were the recidivism rates of juveniles who were identified as serious, violent, and/or chronic offenders, and how does this compare to youth who were non-serious, non-violent, and non-chronic offenders?
- 3.) How do serious, violent, and/or chronic offenders differ from non-serious, non-violent, and non-chronic offenders in terms of demographic information?
- 4.) What was the prevalence of child offenders among all juveniles with cases closed in 2007, 2008, or 2009, and what were their recidivism rates?
- 5.) Were child offenders more likely to be serious, violent, and/or chronic offenders than non-child offenders?

Definitions

- Recidivism: A subsequent delinquency adjudication or conviction in criminal court for a felony or misdemeanor offense within two years of case closure.
- Serious Offender: a juvenile who has been adjudicated delinquent at any point in his or her juvenile offending history for one of the following offenses: burglary, theft (felonies only), arson, drug trafficking (manufacture/deliver/possession with intent to deliver), and extortion (theft by extortion).
- Violent Offender: a juvenile who has been adjudicated delinquent at any point in his or her juvenile offending history for one of the following offenses: homicide or non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, kidnapping, and select firearms/weapons offenses.
- Chronic Offender: a juvenile who has four or more previous written allegations (referrals) for separate incidents that occurred prior to the date of the 2007, 2008, or 2009 case closure.
- Child Offender: a juvenile who was under the age of 13 as of the date of his or her first adjudication of delinquency.

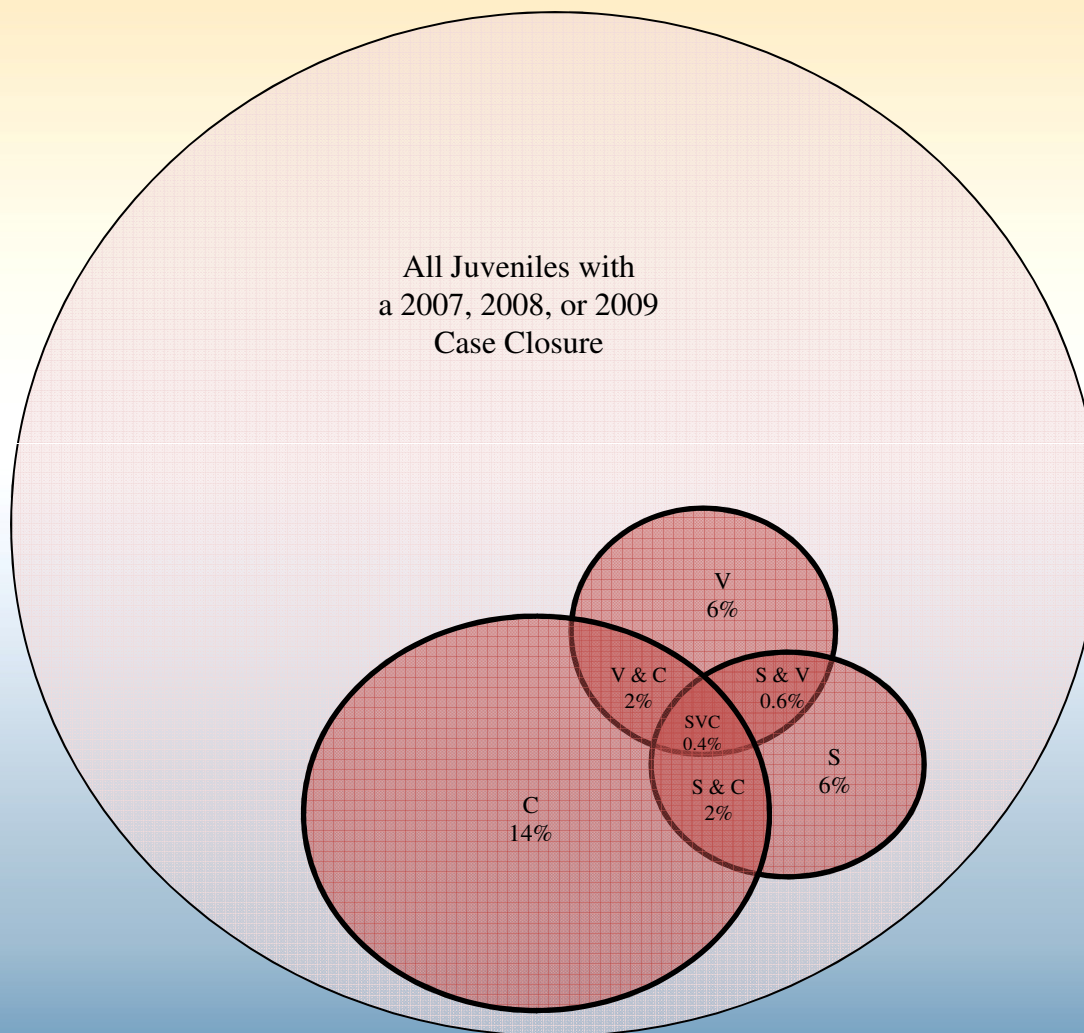
Prevalence of Serious, Violent, and/or Chronic Offenders in Pennsylvania

Serious, Violent, and/or Chronic Offenders: Non-Mutually Exclusive Groups
 Juveniles with Cases Closed in 2007, 2008, or 2009 in Pennsylvania

| Type of Offender | Number of Juveniles Who Fit Categorization | Number of Juveniles with Case Closure | Percentage of 2007, 2008, and 2009 Case Closure Population (Prevalence) | Recidivism Rate |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| No Serious, Violent, or Chronic Classification | 44,470 | 55,938 | 79% | 18% |
| Serious Offender | 3,213 | 55,938 | 6% | 37% |
| Violent Offender | 3,200 | 55,938 | 6% | 36% |
| Chronic Offender | 7,600 | 55,938 | 14% | 41% |
| Serious and Violent | 319 | 55,938 | 0.6% | 46% |
| Serious and Chronic | 1,202 | 55,938 | 2% | 50% |
| Violent and Chronic | 1,224 | 55,938 | 2% | 47% |
| Serious, Violent, and Chronic (SVC) | 200 | 55,938 | 0.4% | 55% |

- 10% of serious offenders were violent offenders, and 10% of violent offenders were serious offenders.
- 37% of serious offenders were chronic offenders, and 16% of chronic offenders were serious offenders.
- 38% of violent offenders were chronic offenders, and 16% of chronic offenders were violent offenders.

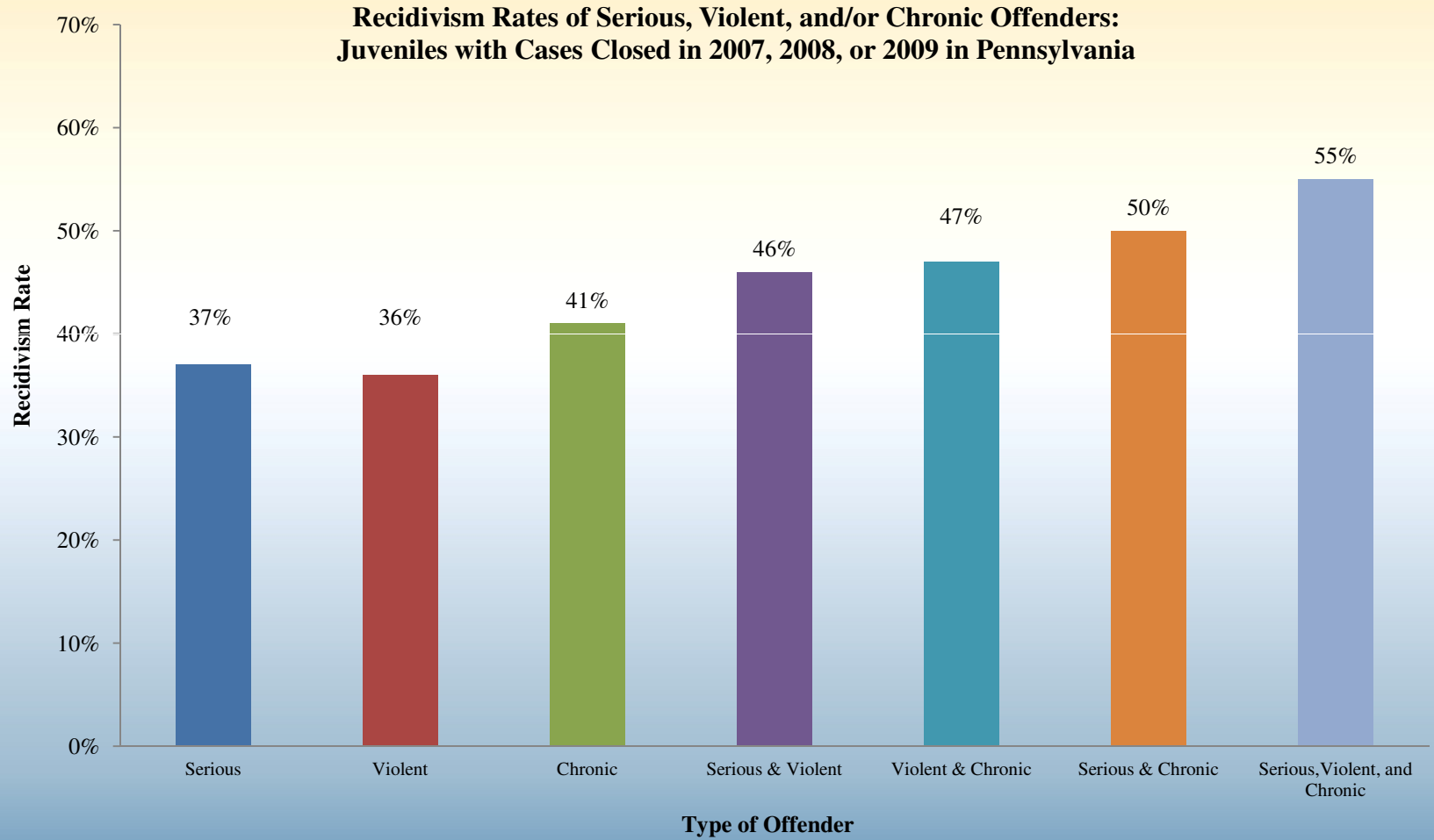
Serious, Violent, and/or Chronic Offenders in Pennsylvania



Key

S= Serious
V= Violent
C= Chronic
S & V= Serious and Violent
S & C= Chronic and Serious
V & C= Violent and Chronic
SVC= Serious, Violent, and Chronic

Serious, Violent, and/or Chronic Offenders in Pennsylvania (Continued)



Serious, Violent, and/or Chronic Offenders: Demographic Information

Serious, Violent, and Chronic Offenders: Demographic Information:
Juveniles with Cases Closed in 2007, 2008, or 2009 in Pennsylvania

| Offender Type | Gender | Race | Family Status |
|--|--|--|---|
| Juveniles with NO SVC Classifications (N=44,470) | 71% (N=31,286) Male 29% (N=12,474) Female | 68% (N=29,745) White 31% (N=13,637) Black 1% (N=221) Asian | 37% (N=14,478) Parents Never Married 30% (N=11,491) Parents Separated/Divorced 27% (N=10,561) Married 6% (N=2,180) One/Both Parents Deceased |
| Serious Offenders (N=3,213) | 93% (N=2,950) Male 7% (N=230) Female | 66% (N=2,102) White 33% (N=1,037) Black 1% (N=24) Asian | 41% (N=1,154) Parents Never Married 29% (N=835) Parents Separated/Divorced 24% (N=684) Married 6% (N=168) One/Both Parents Deceased |
| Violent Offenders (N=3,200) | 87% (N=2,781) Male 13% (N=403) Female | 36% (N=1,133) White 64% (N=2,206) Black <1% (N=17) Asian | 57% (N=1,622) Parents Never Married 21% (N=588) Parents Separated/Divorced 15% (N=439) Married 7% (N=206) One/Both Parents Deceased |
| Chronic Offenders (N=7,600) | 85% (N=6,441) Male 15% (N=1,142) Female | 56% (N=4,177) White 44% (N=3,325) Black <1% (N=18) Asian | 49% (N=3,125) Parents Never Married 28% (N=1,777) Parents Separated/Divorced 17% (N=1,069) Married 6% (N=397) One/Both Parents Deceased |
| Serious, Violent, and Chronic Offenders (SVC) (N=200) | 97% (N=194) Male 3% (N=6) Female | 47% (N=93) White 53% (N=104) Black | 56% (N=97) Parents Never Married 25% (N=43) Parents Separated/Divorced 13% (N=22) Married 6% (N=10) One/Both Parents Deceased |

Serious, Violent, and/or Chronic Offenders: Demographic Information (Continued)

- In comparison to the population of juveniles with cases closed in 2007, 2008, or 2009 with NO SVC classifications:
 - Males were over-represented in all four offender categories: 1.) **serious**; 2.) **violent**; 3.) **chronic**, and 4.) **SVC offenders**.
 - Black juveniles were over-represented as: 1.) **violent offenders**, 2.) **chronic offenders**, and 3.) **SVC offenders**.
 - Juveniles whose parents were *never married* were over-represented as: 1.) **violent offenders**, 2.) **chronic offenders**, and 3.) **SVC offenders**.
 - Juveniles whose parents were *married* were under-represented as: 1.) **violent offenders**, 2.) **chronic offenders**, and 3.) **SVC offenders**.

Serious, Violent, and/or Chronic Offenders: Offending History

- In comparison to the population of juveniles with cases closed in 2007, 2008, or 2009 with NO SVC classifications:
 - **Serious, Violent, Chronic, and SVC offenders** averaged *more referrals* and were younger at the time of their *first referral* to a juvenile probation department.
 - Only **SVC offenders** were younger at the time of their *first adjudication of delinquency*.

| Serious, Violent, and Chronic Offenders: Offending History: Juveniles with Cases Closed in 2007, 2008, or 2009 in Pennsylvania | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Offender Type | Average Number of Referrals | Age at First Referral (in years) | Age at First Adjudication of Delinquency (in years) |
| Juveniles with NO SVC Classifications (N=44,470) | 1 | 15 | 15 |
| Serious (N=3,213) | 3 | 14 | 15 |
| Violent (N=3,200) | 3 | 14 | 15 |
| Chronic (N=7,600) | 5 | 13 | 15 |
| Serious, Violent, and Chronic (SVC) (N=200) | 7 | 13 | 14 |

Child Offenders in Pennsylvania: Juveniles with Cases Closed in 2007, 2008, or 2009

- 3% of **ALL** juveniles with a 2007, 2008, or 2009 case closure were child offenders.
- 33% of child offenders were recidivists.

| Prevalence of Child Offenders in Pennsylvania: Juveniles with Cases Closed in 2007, 2008, or 2009 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|---|--|---------------------------|---|--|---------------------------|---|--|---------------------------|---|--|
| | 2007 | | | 2008 | | | 2009 | | | Three-Year Total | | |
| Child Offenders | Number of Child Offenders | Total Number of Juveniles in Population | Percent of Population Who Were Child Offenders | Number of Child Offenders | Total Number of Juveniles in Population | Percent of Population Who Were Child Offenders | Number of Child Offenders | Total Number of Juveniles in Population | Percent of Population Who Were Child Offenders | Number of Child Offenders | Total Number of Juveniles in Population | Percent of Population Who Were Child Offenders |
| Recidivists | 109 | 3,825 | 3% | 180 | 4,087 | 4% | 184 | 4,206 | 4% | 473 | 12,118 | 4% |
| Non-Recidivists | 268 | 15,047 | 2% | 339 | 14,540 | 2% | 369 | 14,233 | 3% | 976 | 43,820 | 2% |
| Total of Combined Populations | 377 | 18,872 | 2% | 519 | 18,627 | 3% | 553 | 18,439 | 3% | 1,449 | 55,938 | 3% |
| Recidivism Rate | 29% | | | 35% | | | 33% | | | 33% | | |

Offending Career Paths of Child Offenders in Pennsylvania

- Child offenders were serious, violent, and/or chronic offenders at higher rates compared to their non-child offender counterparts.

| Offending Career Paths of Child Offenders: Juveniles with Cases Closed in 2007, 2008, or 2009 in Pennsylvania | | |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Offender Type | Child Offender (N=1,449) | Non-Child Offender (N=54,489) |
| At Least One SVC Classification | 50% | 20% |
| Serious Offender | 16% | 5% |
| Violent Offender | 17% | 5% |
| Chronic Offender | 37% | 13% |
| Serious, Violent, and Chronic (SVC) Offender | 2% | 0.3% |

Discussion

- Serious, violent, and/or chronic offenders are NOT very prevalent among juvenile delinquents in Pennsylvania; however, they have very high recidivism rates.
- Males juveniles, black juveniles, and juveniles whose parents were never married were over-represented in the serious, violent, and/or chronic offender populations.
- Serious, violent, and/or chronic offenders averaged more referrals than their non-serious, non-violent, and non-chronic counterparts. They also were younger at the time of their first referral to a probation department.
- Child offenders are NOT very prevalent among juvenile delinquents in Pennsylvania; however, they have very high recidivism rates.
- Child offenders were much more likely to be serious, violent, and/or chronic offenders than their non-child counterparts.

Conclusion

Limitations

- Record expungement practices in Pennsylvania
- Only utilized Pennsylvania-specific case management systems
- No risk assessment scores

Next Steps/Policy Implications

- Five counties (Allegheny, Berks, Bucks, Dauphin, Lehigh) piloting serious, violent, and/or chronic offender report through Pennsylvania Juvenile Case Management System (PaJCMS).
- Possible policy outcomes:
 - SVC Offender status is shared with judge as supplement to YLS
 - SVC Offender juvenile probation caseloads
 - Child Offender/youthful offender juvenile probation caseloads
- Incorporate YLS information in analyses.