



**Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force  
Projections**

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## Agenda

- Welcome (Co-chairs)
- Care, Not Control coalition
- Dr. Edward Mulvey
- Policy impact projections (Justine Fowler)
- Discussion of proposed changes to subgroup recommendations
- Next steps (Co-chairs)

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**Desistance from Crime, Institutional  
Stays, and Development in Justice-  
involved Adolescents**

Edward P. Mulvey, PhD  
Professor of Psychiatry Emeritus  
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

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*The Current  
Juvenile Justice Context*

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## Developmental Science and Juvenile Justice

Neuroscience + Behavioral science



View of an extended period of adolescence

- Recognition by the U.S. Supreme Court
- Policy and Practice Trends
  - Statutory changes in age boundaries for jurisdiction and services
  - Reduced number of adolescents entering the “front door” of the juvenile justice system.
  - Reduced reliance on institutional care
  - Promotion of interventions that promote developmental progress

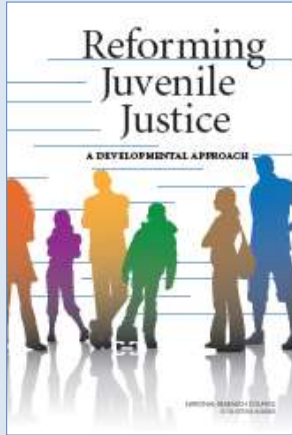
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## National Academy of Sciences



- Chartered by Congress in 1863
- Purpose: To advise the government and the nation on critical national issues through objective, scientific, and evidence-based research and analysis
- Designed to be independent, balanced, and objective; not an agency of the federal government

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National Academy of Sciences  
*Reforming Juvenile Justice:  
A Developmental Approach*

**Committee Charge:** To assess the implications of advances in behavioral and neuroscience research for the field of juvenile justice and the implications of such knowledge for juvenile justice reform.

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## National Academy of Sciences Panel on Juvenile Justice: Findings

- Adolescents differ from adults and/or children in three important ways:
  - lack mature capacity for *self-regulation* in emotionally charged contexts
  - have a *heightened sensitivity* to proximal influences such as peer pressure and immediate incentives
  - show less ability to make judgments and decisions that require *future orientation*
  
- Behavioral findings line up with biological findings

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## Major Conclusions

- **Being held accountable for wrongdoing and accepting responsibility in a fair process (perceived and real) promotes healthy moral development and legal socialization.**
- **Predominantly punitive policies and programs do not foster prosocial development or reduce recidivism.**

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## Major Conclusions (cont.)

- **No convincing evidence that confinement of juvenile offenders beyond a minimum amount required to provide intense services reduces likelihood of subsequent offending.**
- **Patterns of racial disparities impede efforts to provide equitable services and contribute to perceptions of unfairness.**

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## Proposed Goals of the Juvenile Justice System

Promoting Accountability

Ensuring Fairness

Preventing Re-offending

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**Multi-site study that follows 1,354 serious adolescent offenders as they make the transition from adolescence into early adulthood through regular interviews over a seven year period.**

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## Supporters

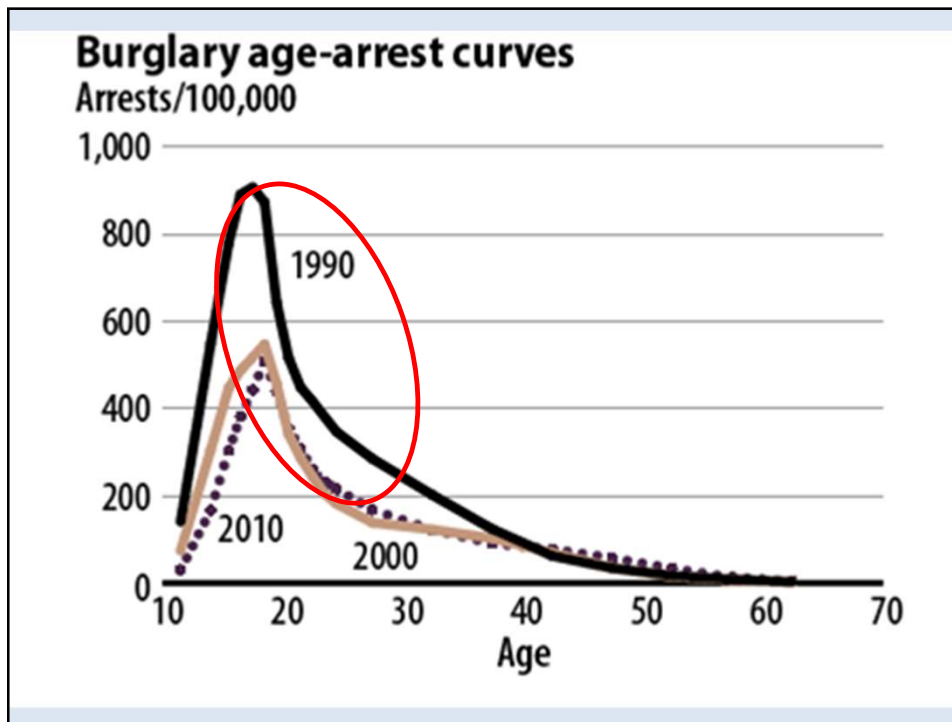
- Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention
- National Institute of Justice
- John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
- National Institute on Drug Abuse
- Pennsylvania Commission on Crime & Delinquency
- Arizona Governor's Justice Commission
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- William Penn Foundation
- William T. Grant Foundation

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## Working Group Members

- Edward Mulvey
- Laurence Steinberg
- Elizabeth Cauffman
- Laurie Chassin
- George Knight
- Carol Schubert
- Sandra Losoya
- Robert Brame
- Jeffrey Fagan
- Alex Piquero

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## Study Design

- Two sites: Philadelphia and Phoenix
- Enroll serious adolescent offenders
  - 1,354 felony offenders, aged 14 -18
  - Females and adult transfer cases
- Regular interviews over seven years
  - Initial interviews
  - Time point interviews (background characteristics, psychological mediators, family context, relationships, community context, life changes)
  - Release interviews
- Other sources of information
  - Collateral interviews
  - Official records

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## Factors Examined

Background characteristics

Psychological change

Social context changes

Sanctions/Interventions

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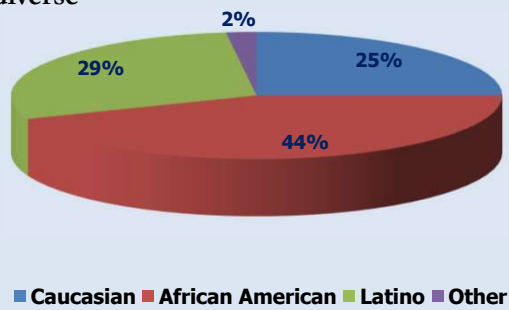
## Living Situation Calendar

	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6
Subject 1	900 West Huntington	St Gabe's Hall	900 West Huntington	St Gabe's Hall	Vision Quest	Youth Forestry Camp
Subject 2	2429 W. Augusta	Madison Street Jail	1808 S. Wilmot	1808 S. Wilmot	1808 S. Wilmot	Tucson Prison
Subject 3	5050 Master	4th and Norris	4th and Norris	4th and Norris	House of Corrections	House of Corrections

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## Who Are These Adolescents?

- At Enrollment
  - 16 years old on average
  - 86% males
  - Average of two prior court appearances
    - ✓ 32% had no prior petitions to court
    - ✓ Most of priors were for a person crime
- Ethnically diverse

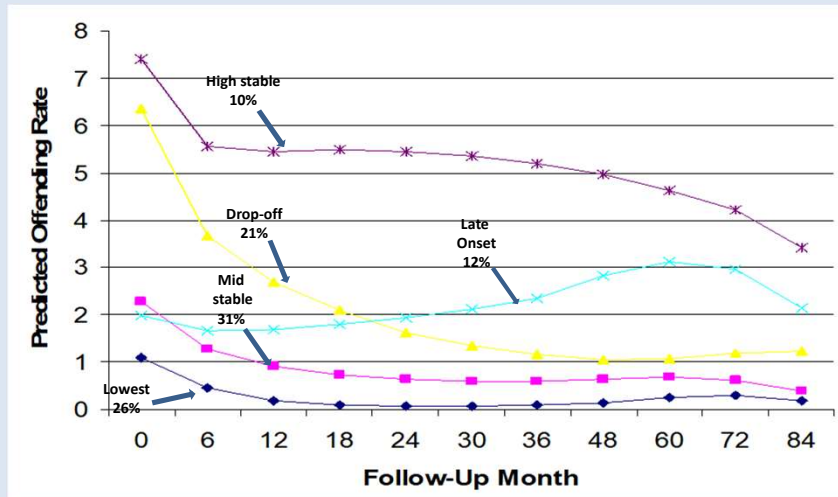


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*“Desistance from crime” is  
a real phenomenon*

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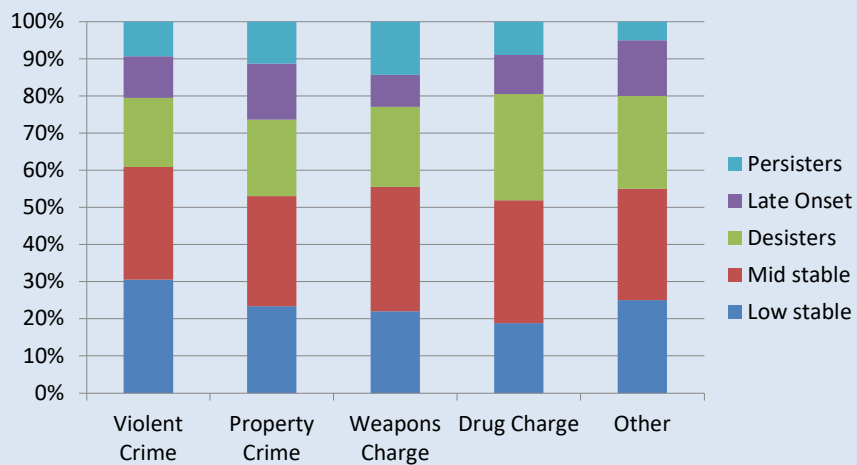
## Trajectories of Self-Reported Offending Over Interview Waves (controlling for time on the street)



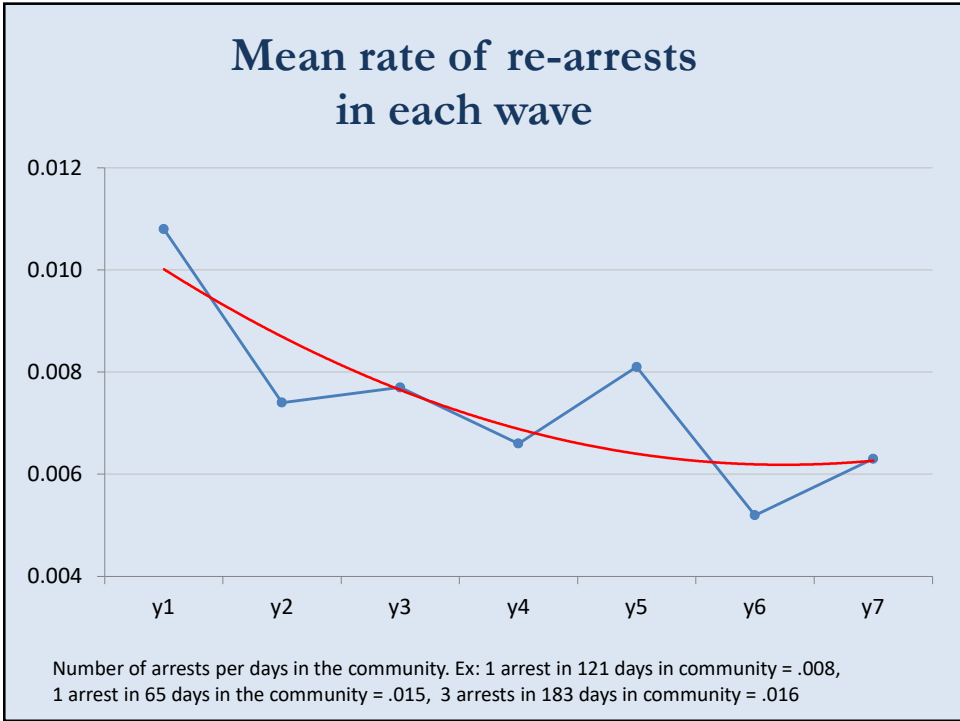
Mulvey, EP, et al. (2010). Longitudinal offending trajectories among serious, youthful offenders. *Development and Psychopathology*, 22, 453-475.

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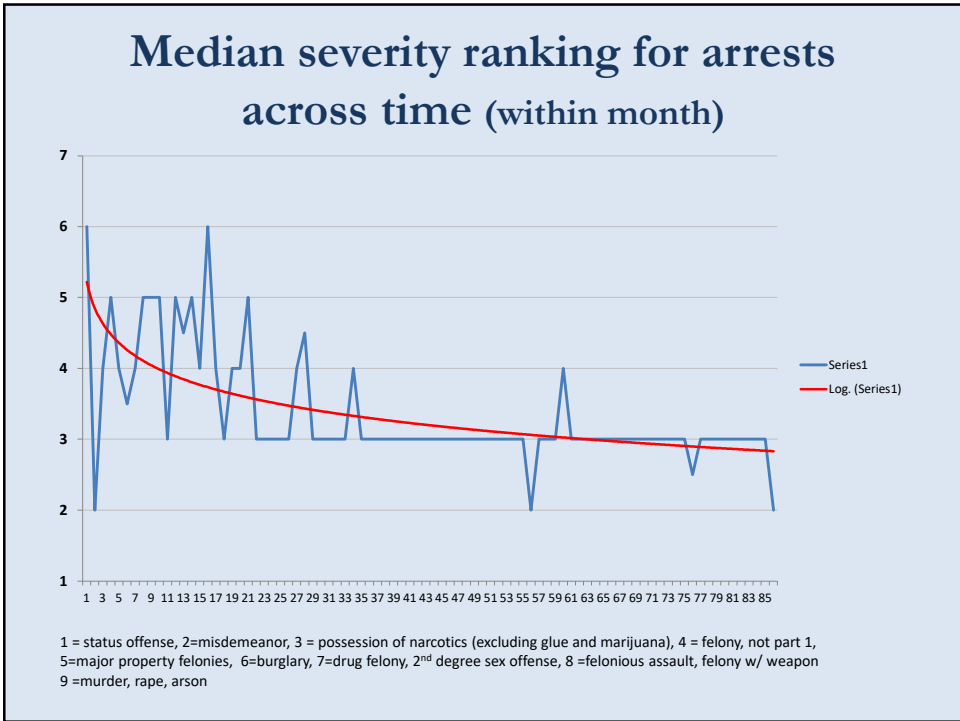
## Proportion of Each Offending Pattern Group by Crime Type



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## Patterns of Offending

- **Finding:** Adolescents who have committed serious offenses are not necessarily on track for adult criminal careers.
- Even among those who have committed serious offenses,
  - there is considerable variability
  - the pattern is reduced offending
  - there is “plasticity”

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*Institutional stays don't do much, if anything, to reduce criminal offending*

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## Patterns of Institutional Placement

- About 50% of the Pathways adolescents have a juvenile institutional stay; on average 2-3 stays
- About 75% of the sample have an adult institutional stay; on average about 5 stays
- Sample spent 37% of their seven-year follow-up period in institutional placement
  - 42 % of juvenile time in placement
  - 30 % of adult time in placement

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## Question 1:

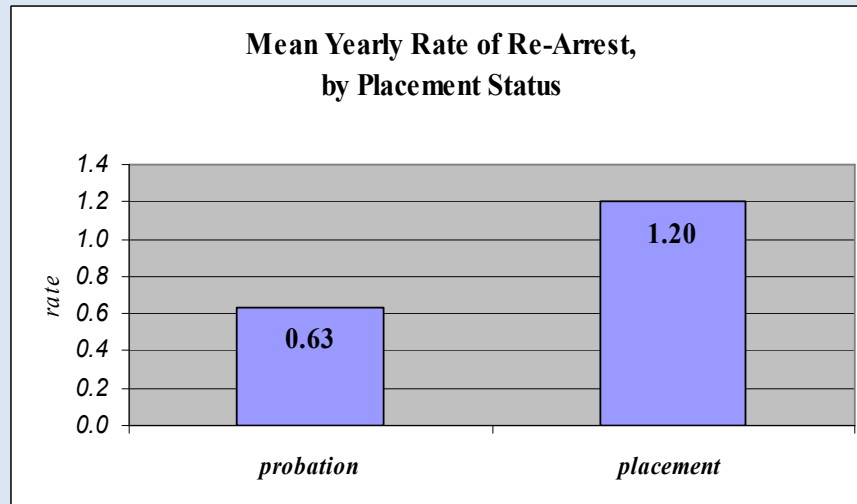
*Does institutional placement reduce or increase offending?*

Loughran, et al., (2009). Estimating a dose-response relationship between length of stay and future recidivism in serious juvenile offenders. *Criminology* 47, 699-740.

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## Probation vs. Placement

*Unadjusted comparison of re-arrest rate*



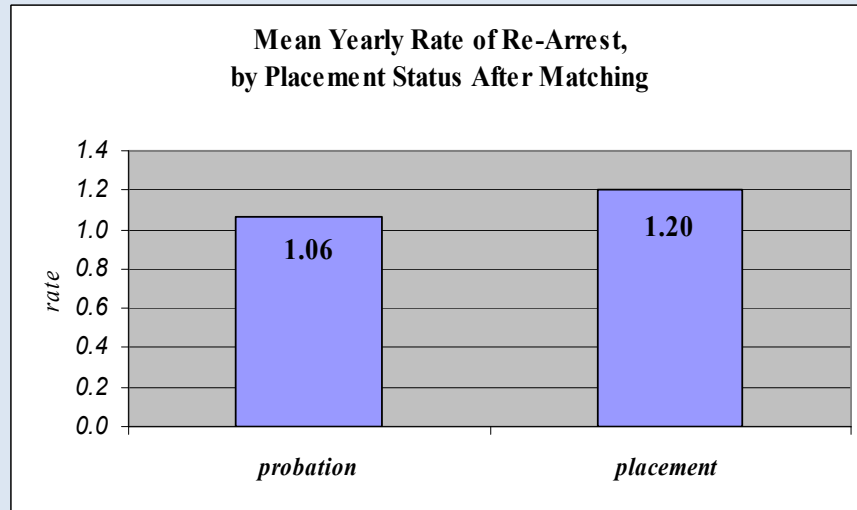
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## Propensity Score Matching

- **Two step process:**
  - A propensity score is calculated for each case. It is the predicted probability that you get placed given all of the background characteristics considered
  - Take each placed case and match it to one or more probation case with similar propensity score
- We then can look to see if the placed group looks similar to the matched probation group on a variety of characteristics that might affect the outcome
- If the groups look alike, we can attribute any difference in the outcomes to the fact that they were placed

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## Treatment Effect of Placement *Matched Groups*



No significant differences between groups in rate of re-arrest

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## Question 2:

*Do longer stays in institutional placement reduce reoffending?*

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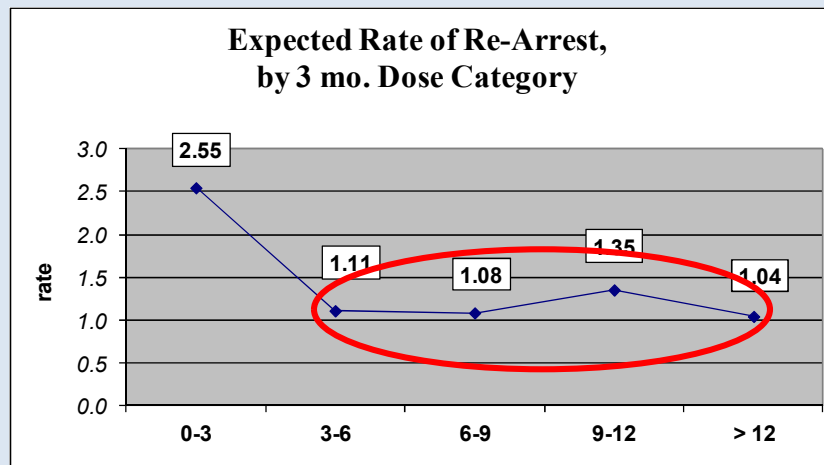


## Approach

- Length of stay is broken up into discrete “doses”
- Methods to get similar cases across different levels of the “dose”
  - 65 of 66 variables show no difference among the groups, meaning we can rule them out as causes of differences in outcomes
- *Response Curve* is estimated

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## Effect of Length of Stay on Re-Arrest



**Finding:** For intermediate lengths of stay (i.e., 3-13 months), there appears to be no marginal benefit in terms of re-arrest for longer lengths of stay.

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## Findings

- Overall, *no effect* of placement on rate of re-arrest (if anything, it may increase re-arrest)
- For intermediate lengths of stay (i.e., 3-13 months), there appears to be *little or no marginal benefit* for longer lengths of stay

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*Perceptions of the  
institutional environment  
do have an association with  
later recidivism*

Schubert, C et al., (2012). Perceptions of institutional experience and community outcomes for serious adolescent offenders. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 39, 1, 71-93.

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## Do Institutional Environments Matter?

### *Approach*

- **Examine release interviews**
- **Data:**
  - Adolescent reports about a particular institutional experience
  - n = 1,158 interviews
- **Calculate eight dimensions of the institutional stay**

-Safety	-Institutional Order
-Harshness	-Caring Adult
-Fairness	-Antisocial Peers
-Services	-Re-entry Planning
- **Control for risk factors related to offending**
- **Assess if differences in these dimensions relate to subsequent community outcomes in year after release**
  - System involvement
  - Self-reported antisocial activity

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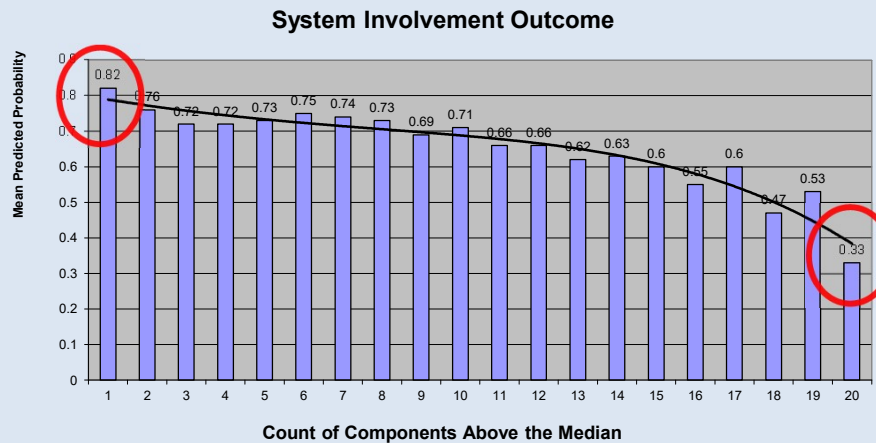
## Do Institutional Environments Matter?

### *Findings*

- **Certain dimensions matter for certain outcomes**
  - Services and re-entry planning significantly reduce the chances of later systems involvement.
  - Low harshness, fewer antisocial peers, and high institutional order decrease the probability of self-reported antisocial activity
- **These relationships don't differ by facility type**

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## Is a Generally More Positive Institutional Experience Related to Better Outcomes?



Even after controlling for background characteristics, there is a 35%-49% reduction in the probability of system involvement in the next year

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## Implications

- Awareness of how practices promote or degrade a sense of fairness
- Periodic assessments of institutional environment from departing residents

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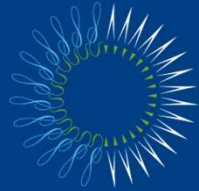
**THANK YOU!**

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THE  
**PEW**  
CHARITABLE TRUSTS

## Policy Impact Projections

Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force  
February 24, 2021

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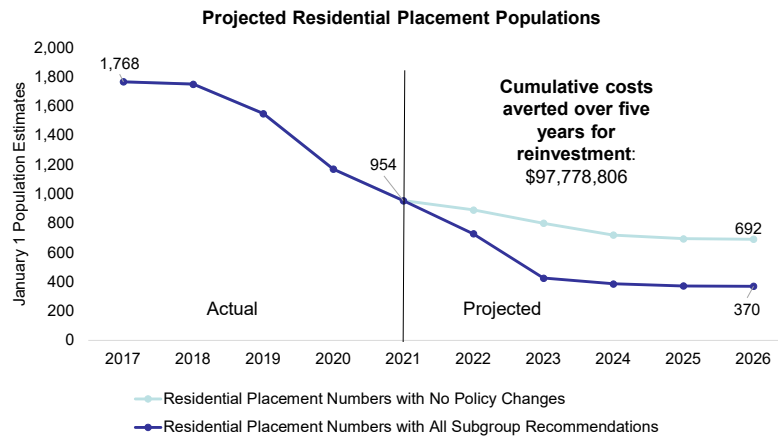
### Methodology

- Developed baseline projections if nothing changes
- Determined impacts to that baseline if policy recommendations are enacted as is
- Calculated averted costs available for re-investment

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Policy recommendations are expected to reduce the residential placement population 47% by 2026, freeing up over \$97 million for reinvestment



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## Next Steps

- Task Force meetings:
  - Possible next meeting: Wednesday, March 10, 2021, 3 - 5 p.m.
  - Wednesday, March 17, 2021, 3 - 5 p.m.

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# Contact Information

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