

**Reinventing Juvenile Justice: Examining the Effectiveness of the Targeted
RECLAIM Initiative**

A Dissertation Submitted to the:
Division of Research and Advanced Studies
of the University of Cincinnati

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTORATE OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.)

In the School of Criminal Justice
of the College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services

March 14, 2016

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ABSTRACT

The juvenile justice system has had a place in America since the late 19th century. While the goal has always been to reform wayward youth, the system has implemented various strategies over the years. During a growing movement in the 80s to “get tough” on crime, the country relied heavily on state run institutions and experienced a steady rise in the number of incarcerated youth. Ohio was no exception to this “get tough” movement, with thousands of youth in the custody of the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) by the mid-90s.

Ohio’s response to the mass incarceration of youth ultimately led to a unique large-scale reform movement. This movement included initiatives that ranged from providing incentives to local courts to serve youth locally, creating and implementing a standardized risk assessment tool, and providing evidence-based services for youth. Among these reform initiatives, was Targeted RECLAIM; the focus of this study. The goal of Targeted RECLAIM was to further reduce admissions to DYS by providing juveniles with evidence-based services in their local community as alternatives to incarceration. Targeted RECLAIM initially targeted the six largest counties in Ohio, but since expanded to now include 15 counties across the state of Ohio.

This study examined whether Targeted RECLAIM has been successful in reducing commitments to DYS and ultimately diverting youth from state institutions. The data revealed that Targeted RECLAIM appeared to have an effect on the number of youth committed to DYS and moreover, that youth could be effectively diverted without compromising public safety. The study also determined that the diverted youth were not simply being placed in a CCF or waived to the adult system as a way to undermine the goal of Targeted RECLAIM. Finally, conclusions were drawn so that the results might inform juvenile justice systems on how to work towards ending the problem of mass incarceration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When I think of the number of people I would like to acknowledge, I panic a bit about how much space I have. First, I must thank Dr. Latessa. You are without a doubt the voice of sanity and simplicity that I needed throughout this process. Thank you for your guidance and patience as I tackled each chapter and for never letting me forget what matters most—a finished dissertation. Most importantly, thank you for helping me see the greater picture of life and how a working mom can have a family, career, and a finished dissertation.

I also need to thank Dr. Cullen for always being there when I needed encouragement. Graduate school is challenging in and of itself; throw in a few curve balls, and it can become unwieldy. I thank you for being a voice of reason and never hesitating to help me see the different (and best) options. I appreciate all your gems of wisdom that you have shared with me over the years. I must also thank Dr. Smith. I am not sure I would be where I am today if it were not for your mentorship over the years. My thanks extends beyond this dissertation experience for your teaching, sharing, guiding, encouraging and supporting me has given me the strength to believe in myself. Finally, many thanks goes to you, Dr. Moon, for your willingness to serve on my committee—even after hitting a deer on the way to my prospectus defense!

I would be remiss if I did not thank my colleagues and UCCI family. The unwavering support and encouragement is more than one can ask for. Jennifer Scott and Maggie Schweitzer, thank you for being my sounding board in moments of despair, my mind when I lost it, and my face when I couldn't show mine. Thank you Jodi Sleyo for so much over the past 15 plus years; from shaping my career when I was a young undergraduate to being an amazing friend to being a talented colleague I am thankful to partner with daily. I would also like to thank Cecilia Chouhy and Dr. Sullivan for their statistical advice and tutelage of STATA. I am forever indebted to the

hours spent answering my questions and looking at data. I also owe Emily Henkle for her devotion to data entry and her attention to detail.

I would also like to thank the many staff at the Ohio Department of Youth Services: Ryan Gies, Tony Panzino, James Hearn, Bruce Sowards, and the countless others that I have worked with since the inception of Targeted RECLAIM. A special thanks goes to Linda Modry for her phone interview and to Ryan Gies for not only the interview, but for entertaining all my questions and requests, and Tony Panzino for his unwavering support.

Finally, words cannot begin to express the gratitude that I have for my husband, my two boys, and our families. First, to my husband: thank you for never losing faith in me. I know this road has been long and challenging, and I thank you for sticking with me. I remember being in the kitchen, both of us preparing dinner, and looking each other in the eyes saying, “Yes, let’s do the Ph.D. program”. While there have been times since then that we both must have thought we were crazy that night, your support is what got me through this program. Your belief in me is all I really need to succeed. I also want to thank Mom, Dad, and Teri, for never losing faith in me. I am forever indebted for the days and days and days of watching our children so that I may write this dissertation. They say it takes a village to raise a child- I am just glad you are my village. I owe you, mom, a special thanks for picking me up every time I fell. And Dad, thank you for reminding me of the importance of determination and making a commitment. Never will I falter. I only hope I can share with my children all that you have shared with me over the years. Thank you Teri for always giving just the right amount of support. I want to thank Lucas and Jacob for being patient with me as I worked on the weekends to finish the program. You boys have taught me so much in such a few short years. I cannot wait to keep learning and growing with you! Here’s to you my loves!

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CHAPTER 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many states are recognizing the challenges and consequences of relying on the use of incarceration to address juvenile delinquency (Sedlak & McPherson 2010). As researchers are starting to draw pointed attention to the low returns on public safety (Lin, 2006; Loughran et al., 2009), the detrimental effects on developmental outcomes (Mulvey & Schubert, 2011; Scott & Steinberg, 2008), the increased resources needed to allow the system and community to address the strains of reentry more often (Mears & Travis 2004; Sullivan 2004), as well as the high financial cost compared to other juvenile justice sanctions (Justice Policy Institute 2008; Mendel 2011) the juvenile justice system is seeing a shift in focus.

The field is considering the research and accepting that youth are better served in the community with proven approaches. For example, several states have created incentives for local courts to rely less on incarceration and more on community-based services to serve juvenile justice involved youth. Ohio, New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin are a few of the first states to provide incentives to local courts in an effort to decrease the overall reliance on incarceration (Butts & Evans, 2011). However, the effectiveness of these initiatives and the programs developed through these initiatives are less known. In order to impact juvenile justice reform at a state and national level, these initiatives should be rigorously examined to provide roadmaps for future planning and the betterment of society and its youth.

This study will attempt to carefully analyze Ohio's attempt to redefine juvenile justice within the state. This chapter will provide an overview of the juvenile justice system with a focus on the state of Ohio from the 1800s to present day. Particular focus will be placed on two state

level initiatives aimed at reducing the reliance on the state facilities to serve youth adjudicated delinquent. Finally, an introduction to the proposed study will be provided.

THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

History of Juvenile Justice

In early America, youth who committed criminal acts were often beaten, shamed, or locked up in the very same manner as adults and housed in the very same places (Weiss, 2013). It wasn't long before these institutions became places of abuse rather than reformation and society began to notice the failures of this system. As a result, in 1825, the first juvenile institution was created to provide a better chance of rehabilitating America's youth. Known as a house of refuge, the goal was to transform wayward youth into prosocial individuals by focusing on education, work, skill training, and discipline within an environment similar to a family (Bartollas & Miller, 2005).

America quickly saw a rise in the juvenile houses of refuge and the later known reformatories. These new institutions not only removed wayward children from the streets, but more importantly they provided separate housing and treatment for youth. Not long after rising in popularity, however, the institutions became plagued with abuse, extremely long sentences, and overcrowded environments. For example, discipline within the facilities was often very severe and included whipping, along with the ball and chain (Rothman, 1971). The rules were so strict they often resembled more of a military environment than the family environment they were designed to mimic (Empey, 1982; Bartollas & Miller, 2005). Eventually reformatories were attacked for replacing the goals of treatment and reform with punishment and control (Empey, 1982).

At the same time the reformatories were coming under attack at the end of the 19th century the progressive movement was taking hold across the United States. The progressive movement enhanced the power and control of the government so that it could solve the problems faced by the new industrialism of America (Cullen & Gilbert, 2013). Within the criminal justice system, the progressive movement was led by a group of reformists who were driven by the rehabilitative ideal that criminal justice professionals were expected to offer the right type and amount of treatment to each individual offender with the intent to reform him or her (Rothman, 1971). This ideology led to many reforms across the juvenile justice system, with one of the most notable being the establishment of the juvenile court. The juvenile court not only allowed for the separate treatment of juveniles, but it also provided a separate system of processing with a mission very different than that of the adult system. The newly established juvenile court focused on treating each unique youth to ensure reform. Established under the guise of *parens patriae*, the juvenile court allowed for considerable discretion in the treatment and supervision of youthful offenders (Cullen & Gilbert, 1982). This resulted in juvenile court judges having substantial discretion in the sentencing of youth to provide the best level of care necessary for rehabilitation.

Despite this increased discretion, the popularity of juvenile institutions did not wane. Believing placement in an institution was still a viable choice for the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents, reformatories were once again a sentencing option, often relabeled as training schools. Under the guise of maintaining the family-like environment, the goal of the training school was to rehabilitate the youth by providing skills in specific trades by *training* them in agriculture, printing, and carpentry (Rothman, 1971). Regrettably, the training school soon became much like their predecessor. They too failed to mimic the home-like environment or provide quality education and training. Rather, these schools were filled with abuse and harsh

punishments in an overcrowded space (Rothman, 1980).

Changing the Face of Juvenile Justice

For many years the juvenile justice system operated as outlined above without much attention. The juvenile court purportedly treated youth according to their unique needs using the best available methods, while society believed the system was helping America's wayward youth. It wasn't until the late 1960s and early 70s that attention was again paid to the juvenile justice system. At this time, America was experiencing turmoil with citizens doubting the government's ability to solve the problems of society's members. There was a notable change in societal morals and the sociopolitical context; ultimately faith in the government was lost. Both the criminal and juvenile justice systems were attacked for abusing their discretion and failing to rehabilitate offenders (Cullen & Gilbert, 1982). Many American's believed system officials were providing unnecessary and often coercive punishment and therefore, argued for less discretion in an effort to increase fairness (Cullen & Gilbert, 1982). Others believed quite the opposite; that the system's officials were too soft on crime and were treating offenders too leniently (Cullen & Gilbert, 1982). Supporting the claim that the system was failing to rehabilitate offenders, Robert Martinson concluded that "*with few and isolated exceptions*" nothing works to rehabilitate offenders (1974, p.25, emphasis in original). This conclusion helped fuel the argument supporting a more punitive response to crime and delinquency with new limitations placed on discretion.

The discretion granted criminal and juvenile justice officials was limited and a shift across the two systems appeared. A new, "get tough" ideology began to lead decision-making. Based on a theory of deterrence, the belief was that offenders would be deterred from crime if the costs of punishment for the criminal or delinquent act were high enough (Cullen, Pratt,

Miceli, & Moon, 2002). Little attention was given to rehabilitation within this “get tough” ideology; rather the emphasis was placed on punishment and the threat of punishment. Juvenile courts across the country replaced their treatment-orientated programs with ones that were designed to place significant restrictions on youth and/or scare them out of crime. For example, intermediate sanctions were developed as a means to provide a punishment that was tougher than probation but not as tough as prison (Petersilia, 1998). An intermediate sanction that became popular quickly was that of intensive supervision programs (ISPs). ISPs were programs that provided community supervision to offenders at a greater intensity than regular supervision. In particular, offenders were seen by their supervision officer more frequently, were often confined to their home, and subject to random drug tests (Lipsey & Cullen, 2007). Other intermediate sanctions, such as boot camps and scared straight programs provided short-term incarceration. Boot camps were modeled after basic training camp in the military including both intense structure and tough physical training, whereas scared straight programs showed youth the cruel life inmates lived inside the walls of adult institutions (MacKenzie, Wilson, & Kider, 2001; Lipsey & Cullen, 2007).

Certainly intermediate sanctions, boot camps, and scared straight programs became the accepted approach to punishing juvenile delinquents, but the “get tough” era also placed a heavy reliance on incarceration as a primary means to deal with delinquent youth. For example, approximately 16 states modified or added mandatory minimum periods of confinement for violent or serious offenders (Snyder & Sikmund, 1999). Furthermore, the “get tough” model penetrated deep into both the criminal and juvenile justice systems. Across the country states expanded the ability of juvenile courts to transfer youth to adult court, established minimum sentences based on the offense and not the offender, and increased available funds for

incarceration over community-based services (Bartollas & Miller, 2005; Weiss, 2013).

JUVENILE JUSTICE IN OHIO

The State of Ohio was no exception to the “get tough” movement and during this time the State created its own share of punitive policies and programs. For example, a boot camp was opened in Cleveland, Ohio in 1992 at the Cuyahoga County Youth Development Center¹. The hallmark of the program was the military-like discipline and structure in a residential setting followed by supervised aftercare in the community (Felker & Bourque, 1996). DYS also opened 12 community corrections facilities (CCFs) across the state to meet the community’s public safety needs, as well as ease DYS facility overcrowding and associated costs. Ten of the twelve CCFs are locked facilities that serve moderate and high risk youth who would otherwise be placed at DYS. Finally, the Ohio legislative body passed several laws that were similar to practices found in the adult system. For example, youth were sentenced to DYS for a pre-determined minimum sentence. Laws were created to hold serious youthful offenders and youth with gun charges accountable with additional time (either in the juvenile or adult system). Likewise, youth could receive a blended sentence and be transferred to the adult system upon completion of their juvenile sentence.

The impact of the “get tough” era was immense. The get-tough era led to an incredible number of youth incarcerated across the United States and Ohio in particular. For example, by 1997, 368 juveniles were in custody for every 100,000 youth in the United States (Snyder & Sikmund, 1999). In Ohio specifically, almost 4000 youth were being held in a public facility such as a juvenile correctional institution operated by the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) (Snyder & Sikmund, 1999). By the end of the 1990s, America and most certainly Ohio,

¹ The Cuyahoga County Youth Development Center was closed in 2008.

was facing the mass incarceration of youth.

Ohio's response to the increasing number of youth incarcerated in state run facilities ultimately led to a unique large-scale reform movement. First, in 1993, the State of Ohio passed a House Bill, the Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors (RECLAIM Ohio) that encouraged local courts to develop the capacity to offer a range of community-based services to juvenile delinquents in the community rather than committing them to DYS (Miller & Liotta, 2001). Specifically, RECLAIM Ohio provided funding opportunities to counties to serve those delinquents adjudicated for less serious felonies in the community and reserve state institutions for more serious youthful offenders.

Over the years, RECLAIM Ohio has demonstrated on-going success in achieving its two main goals: 1) to reduce commitments to DYS, and 2) to help counties increase the number of available local programs to meet the needs of juvenile justice youth (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005). For example, since RECLAIM began statewide in 1995, DYS felony admissions have generally declined year after year.² Likewise, in 1996 the majority of the Ohio courts were able to increase the number of community-based options for their youth within one year of participation (Latessa, Turner, Moon, & Applegate, 1998). Finally, in 2014, a research study demonstrated that RECLAIM programs were effective in reducing the recidivism rates of participants who successfully completed a RECLAIM program (Latessa, Lovins, & Lux, 2014).

Despite the success of RECLAIM Ohio, it is not a panacea. First, because RECLAIM was awarded to all 88 Ohio counties there were financial limitations. So much so that the funding formula has been changed over time to adjust for decreases in available funds. Related, the courts can use the money to provide services to *any* youth. Third, there were no requirements

² There are some years (2001 and 2007, in particular) that saw an increase in felony admissions from the year before. See the Results section of the current study for more details.

set around program quality. In an effort to reach everyone with RECLAIM dollars, counties have often inadvertently failed to prioritize the development and implementation of sound programming for youth most in need of services.

Learning from RECLAIM and responding to a class action lawsuit brought against DYS in 2001, DYS identified five major strategies to reform juvenile justice in Ohio. The first involved the development and implementation of the Ohio Youth Assessment System (OYAS) (Latessa, Lovins, & Ostrowski, 2009) to better assess and place youth in appropriate treatment options. The second strategy focused on converting the CCFs to a cognitive-behavioral treatment model. The third strategy established five pilot counties to participate in the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) in an effort to prevent youth from deeper system involvement. The fourth strategy called for the continued investment in a behavioral health initiative already available to some counties. The fifth and final strategy created Targeted RECLAIM as another means to divert youth from DYS.

TARGETED RECLAIM

Targeted RECLAIM sought to increase funding to certain local juvenile courts to support the development of evidence based programming in the community. Building upon RECLAIM's success, Targeted RECLAIM was developed as a vehicle to specifically reinvest a proportion of the resources allocated for juvenile commitments to community-based interventions in Ohio's six most populous counties. The goal of Targeted RECLAIM was to further reduce the number of admissions from the identified counties by providing juveniles with evidence-based services in their local community as alternatives to incarceration. These funds were required to be used for the development of new programs, the expansion or improvement of existing programs, and the establishment of contracts with service providers to keep less serious youthful offenders in

the community. The major differences between Targeted RECLAIM and RECLAIM were around the programming requirements and commitments to DYS. Specifically, Targeted RECLAIM funds were required to be spent on evidence-based programming with a strong quality assurance component to ensure program integrity. Counties were also required to reduce commitments to DYS by specific percentages.

Targeted RECLAIM initially targeted the six largest counties in Ohio, but has since been expanded to now include 15 counties across the state of Ohio. Preliminary evaluations of Targeted RECLAIM showed promising effects (Labrecque & Schweitzer, 2012, 2013; Lovins, 2011; Spiegel, Schweitzer, & Latessa, 2015). First, since its inception the DYS population has continued to decrease and the number of youth served in their local communities continues to increase. Second, preliminary outcome evaluations suggest that Targeted RECLAIM is an effective mechanism to improve public safety.

CURRENT STUDY

Given the unique nature of this wide-scale reform movement, this dissertation will examine Targeted RECLAIM more closely. First, this dissertation will determine if Targeted RECLAIM has been successful in reducing commitments to DYS by examining juvenile population size, yearly adjudications, and admissions to DYS and CCFs, as well as average length of stay among DYS youth and youth transfers to adult court. Second, this dissertation will determine if the youth served in Targeted RECLAIM are actually diverted by examining if the Targeted RECLAIM programs are effective in reducing recidivism.

It is important to note that Ohio was one of the early adopters of justice reinvestment strategies recognizing the need to reinvest monies previously allocated for institutions to the community. It allows institutional capacity to be reserved for more serious offenders while at the

same time encouraging the local courts to serve youth in their communities. Moreover, it requires the use of evidence-based practices by the local courts with the intention of reducing the youths' risk to reoffend. Toward this end, it should appeal to both conservatives and liberals alike. The financial incentives coupled with public safety are noted potential benefits of Targeted RECLAIM. If successful, Targeted RECLAIM can serve as a model for juvenile justice reform across the United States. This dissertation will serve to determine whether or not Targeted RECLAIM is a viable and worthwhile juvenile justice reform effort.

In order to provide the background and rationale for Targeted RECLAIM, this dissertation begins with a review of the history of juvenile justice. Chapter 2 discusses the origins of juvenile incarceration and the various efforts to constantly reform the institutions to better achieve the goal of rehabilitating troubled youth into prosocial individuals. The challenges juvenile institutions faced including crowding, harsh discipline and severe punishments are reviewed as well as the progressive movement's efforts to refocus on the rehabilitative ideal. The rehabilitative ideal brought about the development of probation, parole, indeterminate sentencing, and not surprisingly the juvenile court; all of which emphasized open-ended and flexible policies to rehabilitate the offender.

The rehabilitative ideal and even the use of incarceration as a means to treat juvenile delinquency remained popular until the 1960s and 1970s. Therefore, Chapter 2 also describes the change in the American society and its beliefs about the criminal and juvenile justice systems. Specifically, concerns raised by both the liberals and conservatives alike are reviewed along with research shedding light on the idea that treatment may not work. With doubt raised, America shifted away from rehabilitation and took a "get tough" stance on crime. This movement and related consequences are reviewed before addressing the specifics of the "get tough" movement

in Ohio. The remainder of Chapter 2 focuses on Ohio's reaction to the failure of the "get tough" movement. Several state-led initiatives are described with a particular focus on RECLAIM Ohio and Targeted RECLAIM.

Chapter 3 will discuss the research questions to be addressed and the methods by which they will be analyzed. Chapter 4 will then present the research findings of the analyses. Finally, Chapter 5 will provide a discussion of the findings as well as policy implications and future recommendations for Targeted RECLAIM.

CHAPTER 2

REINVENTING JUVENILE JUSTICE

Most Americans believe that offenders, especially juvenile offenders, should be reformed rather than punished (Applegate, Cullen, & Fisher, 1997; Cullen, Fisher, & Applegate, 2000; de Toqueville, 1970). Evidence of this ideology is found in the early penitentiaries where some argued that the intent of prison was to reform the criminal and protect society (Brockway, 1871; Cullen & Gilbert, 2013). With the advent of the juvenile court in 1899, this idea of reforming offenders, in this case juvenile offenders, was reinforced. It wasn't until the 1970s that America began to question the ability to rehabilitate offenders. With doubt established, many began to consider the role of the juvenile justice system as one to simply protect society rather than reform youthful offenders.

This chapter will provide the background on juvenile justice in America as well as Ohio, along with several reform efforts, including Targeted RECLAIM, which aimed to improve the juvenile justice system across the state. In particular, this chapter will speak to the origin of juvenile incarceration and its various reform efforts, the progressive movement and the development of the juvenile court, and the attack on rehabilitation and the resulting "get tough" movement. Ohio's experience with the "get tough" movement is described along with its attendant consequences. Finally, Ohio's efforts to change the footprints of the State's juvenile justice system are described with a focus on RECLAIM Ohio and Targeted RECLAIM.

ORIGINS OF JUVENILE INCARCERATION

In early America, youth who committed criminal acts were treated as small adults and

often beaten, shamed, or locked up in the very same manner as adults and housed in the very same places (Weiss, 2013). It wasn't long before these institutions became places of abuse rather than reformation and society began to notice the failures of this system. As a result, in 1825, the first juvenile institution was created by a group of reformers known as the "child savers" (Weiss, 2013). The child savers saw delinquency to be the result of poor parental guidance and poverty, and believed that the government should take control of the problems of youth. Using their influence, the New York House of Refuge was opened. This program was the government's attempt to control problem youth by transforming them into middle class citizens, but more importantly, prosocial individuals (Moon, 1996). By providing an environment similar to a middle class family, the houses of refuge were designed to focus on education, work, skill training, and discipline (Empey, 1982). Creating a family-like environment, the model attempted to provide the order, discipline, and care found in good family homes (Bartollas & Miller, 2005).

The model was soon replicated, and the houses of refuge were seen as a viable option to save "problem" children. First, they provided a separate facility for juveniles. They also removed children from the streets and accepted all types of children in need of help, including runaways, vagrants, orphans, neglected, and delinquent children (Empey, 1982). Even though this reform was popular there were still concerns. For example, youth discipline was often severe and included whipping, solitary confinement, and the ball and chain (Rothman, 1971). A family model was not present in many of the houses; rather a military model with strict rules, regimes, and punishments was prevalent (Bartollas & Miller, 2005; Empey, 1982). Keeping youth incarcerated for an average of one to two years, the houses of refuge were also criticized for replacing their goals of treatment and reform with punishment and control (Empey, 1982). In particular, critics argued that the houses of refuge were more custodial than rehabilitative,

followed a military model over a family model, and administered too harsh of punishments in a very overcrowded environment (Empey, 1982; Rothman, 1971).

By the mid-19th century, new reformers proposed a different approach to the treatment and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders - one that *actually* removed youth from the problem areas (the cities) and placed them in an environment that mimicked a family setting (Platt, 1977).

These “reformatories” as they soon became known shared many of the same original goals as the houses of refuge. They aimed to separate youth from adult offenders, remove them from their problematic environment, provide schooling, religious and moral training, administer military type discipline, and confine troubled youth for an indeterminate amount of time to ensure rehabilitation (Platt, 1977). However, unlike the houses of refuge, reformatories were to be located in rural areas, house youth in small cottages, and focus primarily on education.

Unfortunately, by the end of the century, these reformatories were also criticized for being overcrowded “warehouses” that were failing to reform troubled youth into prosocial citizens (Bartollas & Miller, 2005; Empey, 1982; Mennel, 1973).

Progressive Movement

At the same time the reformatories were coming under attack at the end of the 19th century the progressive movement was taking hold across the United States. The progressive movement in the broadest sense was a period of social activism and political reform. It was a movement in which power was entrusted to the government to care for and protect all of society (Cullen & Gilbert, 2013). At the heart of the movement, the focus was placed on the individual as the problem rather than the environment, and laws were established to allow the government to *solve* the problems offenders faced in the new industrial society.

Within the criminal justice system, the progressive movement was led by a group of reformists who were driven by the rehabilitative ideal that each individual has a unique set of needs that lead to their involvement in the criminal justice system (Rothman, 1980). Furthermore, to reform an individual, he or she should be treated based on those unique needs (Rothman, 1980). Taking a positivist school approach, the factors leading to criminal behavior were to be investigated and identified (Cullen & Gilbert, 2013). In both the adult and juvenile justice arenas, this ideology pushed forward the notion of individualized treatment (Rothman, 1980). Individualized treatment, to be determined and delivered on a case-by-case basis, meant that criminal and juvenile justice professionals were expected to offer the right type and amount of treatment to each individual offender with the intent to reform him or her. Thus, court and correctional officials received “unfettered power” to determine how best to *treat* each individual offender (Cullen, 2012, p. 96).

The rehabilitative ideal was designed to change the offender, reduce recidivism, and ultimately increase public safety (Rothman, 1980). Therefore, sentences were based on the offender and not the offense, were indeterminate in nature, and often involved a community-based alternative to prison (Cullen & Gilbert, 1982). To this end, the rehabilitative ideal brought about the development of probation, parole, indeterminate sentencing, and not surprisingly the juvenile court; all of which emphasized open-ended and flexible policies to rehabilitate the offender. For example, while juveniles had been housed separately from adults for quite a while, the juvenile court granted youth an entirely different system of processing with a completely different mission (Feld, 1988). Under the guise of *parens patriae*, juvenile courts emphasized considerable discretion in the treatment and supervision of youthful offenders to allow for the best interest of each youth to be served. The court often served as an alternative to the family,

assuming parental responsibility and attempting to give youth the proper family environment necessary for rehabilitation. Thus, the judge was given the discretion to determine the best sentence for each juvenile, including whether or not to incarcerate (Bartollas & Miller, 2005).

The first juvenile court opened in Cook County, Illinois in 1899. Grounded in the belief that children are different from adults, and juvenile delinquents are different from adult criminals, the court acted under the principal that society should not only protect these youth but also invest in their future (Weiss, 2013). The purpose of the court was to treat delinquent, dependent and neglected, and status offenders based on their unique needs (Bartollas & Miller, 2005). By 1925, all but two states had a separate juvenile justice system for children that congruent with the rehabilitative ideal, focused on the youth instead of solely on the crime; and on rehabilitation, not punishment (Weiss, 2013).

As true of the first juvenile court, but also the courts that followed, the use of incarceration as a means to treat juvenile delinquency remained a viable option (Moon, 1996; Rothman, 1980). To rehabilitate the youth who failed on probation or who did not hail from a good home life, progressives believed the institution could be beneficial. However, calls were made to transform the once popular reformatories into training schools and focus on developing youth skills in specific trades such as agriculture, printing, and carpentry (Rothman, 1980). Recognizing the importance of family in a child's life, these training schools would again resemble the family-like environment through cottages and place an emphasis on religion (Rothman, 1980).

Not surprisingly, the training schools soon became much like their predecessors. They were overcrowded, failed to mimic the home-like environment or provide quality education and/or training in a trade, and were filled with physical and sexual abuse (Rothman, 1980).

Furthermore, punishments inside the institutions were again too severe and could involve corporal punishment (Rothman, 1980).

The Attacks on Rehabilitation

Despite the failure of the training schools, the progressive movement held steadfast in the belief that the juvenile court should serve as a benevolent treatment agency where discretionary decision-making reigned. It wasn't until the 1960s and 1970s, that ideas began to change and the progressive movement started to lose momentum. It was then that Americans experienced a change in societal morals and values alongside changes in the sociopolitical context and increased crimes rates. Taken together these influences prompted America's attack on the rehabilitative ideal (Rothman, 1980). As a country, the United States experienced substantial social resistance and change during the 1960s and 1970s. For example, the country experienced the Civil Rights movement, the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, as well as urban riots, protests against the Vietnam War, and the Watergate scandal - all of which were examples of the frequent civil disobedience Americans demonstrated against the authorities of the time (Cullen & Gilbert, 1982). This turmoil influenced not only the social system as a whole, but also the criminal and juvenile justice systems. Americans began to question the government's ability to address problems in people's lives. Not being immune to this chaos and disorder, many correctional institutions experienced prisoner riots, with the most famous being Attica and the New Mexico State Penitentiary.

The Progressive Era of the early 1900s came under attack by liberals and conservatives alike. Both believed the court and correctional officials abused the discretion given to them under the rehabilitative ideal and argued for punishment to be more just (Cullen, 2012). Liberals contended that the system was victimizing the very offenders it was designed to treat, reform,

and help (Cullen & Gilbert, 1982). They maintained that criminal and juvenile justice professionals could and were providing unnecessary, additional and therefore coercive punishment. Liberals ultimately argued for less discretion, in an effort to increase fairness, through determinate sentencing.

Not unlike the liberals, the conservatives also argued for less discretion among criminal and juvenile justice professionals, but for very different reasons. The conservatives believed that the criminal justice system was coddling offenders and treating them too leniently (Cullen & Gilbert, 1982). The conservatives believed that punishment should also be just; however, they argued for a punitive model of criminal justice suggesting that the rehabilitative ideal failed and the only answer was to increase the costs of engaging in criminal conduct.

In addition to the arguments for less discretion within the criminal and juvenile justice systems, in the late 1970s, Lipton, Martinson and Wilks (1975) conducted a narrative review of the correctional treatment literature. They reviewed 231 evaluations of rehabilitation programs and examined a variety of outcomes including recidivism. In an early publication, Robert Martinson (1974) concluded that “*with few and isolated exceptions*” there does not appear to be any effective correctional treatment programs available (p. 25, emphasis in original).

Conservatives, liberals and criminologists alike quickly and widely accepted this critical claim that “nothing works” (Martinson, 1974, p. 48). All parties had no problem accepting this conclusion as it fit with the overall belief that the criminal justice system, including the juvenile justice system, had failed to rehabilitate the offenders under its supervision. Martinson’s (1974) publication and overall conclusion only served to reinforce the increasingly common view that the rehabilitative ideal failed (Cullen & Gilbert, 1982).

The final spark that ignited a change in the treatment of juvenile delinquents occurred during the 1980s. During the 1980s, there was an unmistakable rise in violent crime rates among juveniles that lasted until the mid-nineties (Weiss, 2013). There was a belief that violent and repeat offenders were not being adequately addressed within the system (Krisberg, Schwartz, Litsky, & Austin, 1986). Some criminologists even suggested that America was facing a new breed of “super-predators” that if not dealt with would only become worse (DiIulio, 1995). Coupled with doubts about the government’s ability to handle offenders, even juvenile ones, Americans in the 80s became increasingly concerned and argued for a more punitive approach to juvenile justice.

THE “GET TOUGH” ERA

Ultimately, the public, liberals and conservatives alike, agreed that the system needed to restrict the discretion that was so integral to the provision of treatment during the progressive era (Cullen & Gilbert, 2013). This more punitive approach called for the juvenile justice system to stop investing in rehabilitation and focus on programs that dole out punishment. Thus, the strategy du jour became a “get tough” model. The overarching ideology of the “get tough” model was based on a theory of deterrence in that offenders will be deterred by the threat of punishment (Cullen, Pratt, Miceli, & Moon, 2002). Deterrence-based approaches are driven by rational choice theory which states that increasing the costs of punishment for criminal behavior will decrease the likelihood of individuals engaging in criminal behavior (Cullen, Wright, & Applegate, 1996). Individual offenders will be deterred from future criminal behavior (specific deterrence) and in general, members of society will be deterred from future criminal behavior for fear of the punishment that someone else received (general deterrence).

Responses to juvenile delinquency during the “get tough” era were based on the premise that offenders were rational and that by increasing the punishment crime could be reduced (Cullen et al., 2002). For example, many states and legislatures (1) expanded the ability of juvenile courts to transfer youth to adult courts; (2) gave prosecutors the power to charge youth as adults; (3) changed sentencing laws so that youth had to serve mandatory minimum sentences based on the offense and not the offender; (4) offered funding support to programs that provided confinement rather than community-based services; and (5) allowed for adults and juveniles to be incarcerated in the same institution (Bartollas & Miller, 2005; Weiss, 2013). Overall, policies and practices were developed to increase the punishment of and control and supervision over juvenile offenders.

Juvenile courts replaced their treatment-orientated programs with punishment driven programs. In particular, these programs were designed to place significant restrictions (costs of crime) on the youth. Many of the popular punishments of the time were referred to as “intermediate sanction” programs because they provided a sanction that was tougher than probation (seen as a slap on the wrist) but not as stringent as prison (Cullen, Blevins, Trager, & Gendreau, 2005; Petersilia, 1998). For example, electronic monitoring, house arrest, day reporting centers, boot camps, intensive supervision, and fines were popular mid-level sanctions falling between regular probation and prison (Tonry, 1997).

Intensive supervision programs (ISPs) were some of the most notable “get tough” strategies. ISPs were programs that placed parolees or probationers on a small caseload where they were often confined to their home, subject to random drug tests, responsible for meeting with their parole/probation officer (PO) through both random and scheduled visits, in addition to a litany of court orders that required adherence. Failing to adhere to their court orders, not

meeting with their PO, or violating the law would result in revocation or incarceration (Lipsey & Cullen, 2007).

Another very popular deterrence-based model aimed to not only deter criminal and delinquent behavior, but also reform youthful offenders. This model has been described as a “tough love approach” and was often seen in shock incarceration programs such as boot camp and scared straight programs (Lipsey & Cullen, 2007, p. 300). Boot camps were short-term incarceration programs modeled after basic training camp in the military (MacKenzie, Wilson, & Kider, 2001). Boot camps offered a highly structured environment filled with physical training, hard labor, and sometimes treatment services or educational/vocational training. Scared straight programs on the other hand, provided youth with a short stay in an adult institution and aimed to scare them out of engaging in future delinquency. The major tactic employed by scared straight programs was a visit to an adult prison where youth hear about the cruel life inmates live inside the walls of prison. According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2011), the programs typically involved an institution tour, living the life of a prisoner, confrontation by inmates, and counseling.

The 1999 National Report on juvenile offenders and victims highlights several consequences of the get tough era. First, approximately 16 states modified or added mandatory minimum periods of confinement for violent or serious juvenile offenders, while 17 states increased the maximum age by which the juvenile court had jurisdiction over a juvenile offender (Snyder & Sikmund, 1999). Both of these laws increased the juvenile justice system’s control over juvenile offenders and often increased the possibility of punishment. Another significant result of the get tough era was the development of blended sentences in which states could impose a sentence that included both a juvenile and adult court sanction (Snyder & Sikmund,

1999). Typically, the adult court sanction was suspended unless the juvenile failed to adhere to the juvenile court sanction. Blended sentences were available in 20 states by the end of 1997 (Snyder & Sikmund, 1999).

Ultimately the get tough era led to an incredible number of youth incarcerated across the United States. By 1997, 368 juveniles were in custody for every 100,000 youth (Snyder & Sikmund, 1999). Moreover, many of these juveniles were being held in overcrowded juvenile facilities (Snyder & Sikmund, 1999). For example, from 1991 to 1995, the number of residents placed in an overcrowded facility increased more than 55%. For those youth held in an adult jail, from 1994 to 1997 the totals grew 35 percent (Snyder & Sikmund, 1999). Unfortunately the State of Ohio was no exception to the get tough era and the mass incarceration of youth.

Getting Tough on Juvenile Delinquency in Ohio

Like many states during the “get tough” era, Ohio relied on the use of intermediate sanctions, incarceration, and other punitive measures to address juvenile delinquency. Various sentencing options were explored to “get tough” on more serious offenders; some of which moved the juvenile justice system more toward adult laws and practices. For example, through House Bill 440 in 1981, minimum sentences were set by the Ohio legislature to prevent youth from being released from DYS after 30 days, thus inhibiting DYS from serving as a revolving door for youthful offenders. For serious juvenile offenders there would be a minimum sentence of 6 months (felony III and IV) or one year (felony I or II) under HB 440 (Radcliff, 1982). Through the same bill, legislation required that DYS admit only felony adjudications; no more misdemeanants or status offenders could be committed to DYS (Radcliff, 1982). This meant that the local communities were now responsible for the treatment and punishment of unruly and misdemeanor youth. With this change, Linda Modry, a now retired DYS official, recalled that

various “enhancement” legislation was enacted to “get tough” on delinquent youth (personal communication, December 29, 2014). For example, if a youth placed at a community-based program ran away from the facility or tried to escape, s/he could then be placed at DYS, even if s/he was originally adjudicated of a misdemeanor charge.

Likewise, in Senate Bill 179 the Serious Youthful Offender category, courts were granted the right to identify high-risk youth for a blended sentence, which splits a youth’s sentence between the juvenile and adult systems. More enhancement legislation came through the Juvenile Crime Bill, which was passed in 1995, and effective January 1, 1996. Allowing for a variety of “get tough” responses to juvenile delinquency, the bill added minimum sentences for gun specifications (an additional 1-3 years sentence to DYS), expanded the list of public safety beds, and allowed judges to order commitments consecutively or concurrently (L. Modry, personal communication, December 29, 2014; R. Gies, personal communication, January 20, 2015). This bill also allowed youth, as young as 14, to be transferred to the adult system where s/he could then be indicted and tried as an adult (O.R.C Tit. XXI, Sec. 2151.26).

While legislation was driving Ohio’s get tough practices most relevant to the use of DYS, the Ohio legislative also supported the use of incarceration in a setting closer to home. In 1991 the Ohio General Assembly authorized the development of community correctional facilities (CCFs) through Senate Bill 351 to provide juvenile courts with a dispositional alternative when committing youth adjudicated of a felony offense. These facilities were spread across the state to allow juvenile courts access to additional bed space for felony level youth in a restrictive setting that was not DYS. The first CCF was opened in 1992 and today there are 12 CCFs across the state, with all but two being locked facilities (Celeste, 2015).

Also developed during the early 90s, was Ohio’s first boot camp for juvenile offenders.

Opening in 1992 in Cleveland, Ohio, the boot camp combined military discipline and treatment with physical conditioning, rehabilitation and follow-up services (Felker & Bourque, 1996). Youth participated in a 3-month residential program followed by a 6-9 month period of community supervision. The boot camp was designed to accept youth who would otherwise be placed at DYS or the local CCF and added to the inventory of available intermediate sanctions across the state.

Finally, it should be noted that Ohio supported the use of many intermediate sanctions during this era as a means to provide low-cost community based alternatives to incarceration. Other examples include restitution, intensive supervision, and home detention/house arrest (Boggs, 1989). As noted in a report to the Ohio House of Representatives, the core component of intensive supervision probation was the daily face-to-face and phone contact between the youth and probation officer and the four phases that last between 8.5 and 14 months (Boggs, 1989). Any failure to comply while on intensive supervision could result in an institutional placement. Home detention, on the other hand, required that the youth be home at the times established by the court. Typically, youth were allowed to attend school or treatment, but must otherwise be home. Officers then monitor the youth 7 days a week and 24 hours a day to ensure compliance (Boggs, 1989). The supervision was very much random, encouraging the youth to be prepared for a visit or phone call at any time throughout any given day. Finally, a clear sign of the “get tough” response to juvenile delinquency can be found in the Report of the House Select Committee on Child Abuse and Juvenile Justice (1989) when describing effective intermediate sanctions. The report, pulling from an article in the Cleveland Plain Dealer (1987), finds the “essential components of a properly designed home detention program” to include “(1) aggressive, random monitoring of all youths placed on home detention, (2) a low ratio of youths

to caseworkers to facilitate close monitoring, (3) a willingness to return to secure detention those youth who are charged with new offenses or violate their behavioral contracts, and (4) limitation of the program to those charged with non-violent felonies and status offenses only” (Boggs, 1989, p. 2:9). In true “get tough” fashion, the program focused on control, monitoring, and the threat of punishment to deter future offending.

Unfortunately, by 1997, Ohio had 4,318 youth in custody, which translated to 332 juveniles in custody per 100,000 youth (Snyder & Sikmund, 1999). Of the 4,318 youth in custody, 91 percent were held in a public facility such as a juvenile correctional institution operated by DYS (Snyder & Sikmund, 1999). Daily DYS population counts were upwards of 2500 to 2600 youth and facilities were operating at 180 percent over capacity (OJJDP, 2011; R. Gies, personal communication, August 21, 2014). In fact, in 1991, Ohio was second only to California in the number of youth held in juvenile correctional facilities (League of Women Voters, 1994).

Even with an ever-increasing number of youth in placement across the state, emphasis was placed on the punishment of youth through DYS (Radcliffe, 1982). Additional facilities were built so that by 1997 DYS was operating 12 state run institutional facilities and 9 CCFs, many of which were very much overcapacity (L. Modry, personal communication, December 29, 2014; R. Gies, personal communication, January 20, 2015). With overcrowded facilities, DYS administration and the Ohio community saw an increase in staff and youth injuries, some of which were quite severe; a lack of services - treatment, mental health, health, dental, etc. - for youth, and in the eyes of Linda Modry: dangerously overcrowded facilities that were not safe for anyone who entered (personal communication, December 29, 2014). In a report of the Ohio House Select Committee on Child Abuse and Juvenile Justice (1989), conditions at DYS were

described as:

...inadequate sanitary facilities, such as one poor working shower for 40 youngsters...youth sitting mute in early afternoon watching a broken television because there are too many kids and not enough teachers, classroom space or staff to provide schooling or other programming...youth locked in cells which are difficult for staff to unlock quickly yet without a sprinkler system in the cell block area, conditions are ripe for a disastrous fire...only eight hours of psychiatric treatment per week available...in one institution that houses more than 140 seriously emotionally disturbed youth.

(Original emphasis, p.2:3).

At the same time, the juvenile courts and DYS were constantly at odds over budgets and which youth should be committed to DYS (OJJDP, 2011). Tension between the local courts and DYS were mounting, while at the same time DYS facilities were dangerously overcrowded with no end to the population increase in sight.

REFORM IN OHIO: THE RECLAIM INITIATIVE

Overview of RECLAIM Ohio

With overcrowded and unsafe conditions, pressure was brought upon DYS to take action. Even worse, researchers at DYS forecasted the daily population would continue to climb over the next several years (R. Gies, personal communication, August 21, 2014). To this degree, the state recognized that they were simply warehousing youth and unable to provide quality services. Reflecting on their mission, “to improve Ohio's future by habilitating youth and empowering families and communities”, DYS acknowledged the need to change the way delinquent youth were served within the state (Ohio Department of Youth Services (a), 2014). Therefore, to address the high levels of recidivism, high levels of institutional violence, the inconsistencies in

admission to and release from DYS, as well as the need for expanded community capacity and sentencing options, DYS began identifying initiatives that would soon change the footprints of the juvenile justice system in Ohio.

In 1993, with support from the governor and other Ohio legislators, the State of Ohio passed House Bill 152, which encouraged local courts to develop the capacity to offer a range of community-based services to juvenile delinquents in the community rather than committing them to DYS (Miller & Liotta, 2001). The intent of this House Bill, the Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors (RECLAIM) Ohio, was to create opportunities for counties to serve those delinquents adjudicated for less serious felonies in the community and reserve state institutions for more serious youthful offenders. Thus, RECLAIM Ohio has at its heart two main goals: 1) to reduce commitments to DYS and 2) to help counties increase the number of available local programs to meet the needs of juvenile justice youth (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005). To achieve these goals, RECLAIM is designed to empower counties to serve youth in the community by allocating money to each county for local programs and allowing the county to choose whether each youth should be treated locally or sent to DYS.

Funding RECLAIM Ohio

Placing the power directly within the county was in direct contrast to the previous practice in the State of Ohio. Creating a fundamental shift, each county, as a result of RECLAIM Ohio, is now required to consider the costs associated with placing a youth at DYS as placement reduces the money the court can earn from the state. Prior practice allowed counties to send youth to DYS free of charge, thus giving the courts a fiscal incentive to commit youth to DYS. RECLAIM Ohio shifts the focus and now gives counties a fiscal incentive to serve youth locally.

While the formula has changed slightly since the inception of RECLAIM, the juvenile court yearly allocations are determined in large part by each county's average number of felony adjudications. Under the RECLAIM formula, each court is given a number of "credits" based on their average number of youth adjudicated for felony offenses. Those credits are reduced by one credit for each chargeable DYS bed day used during the previous year and 2/3 credit for each chargeable community corrections facility bed day used during the previous year (Department of Youth Services (b), 2014). Importantly, DYS still sets aside funds for public safety beds to enable all counties to commit their most serious offenders without penalty. Public safety beds are defined in the Ohio Revised Code section 52139.01(A)(13) as all Category One and Two offenses except for Aggravated Robbery and Aggravated Burglary; Complicity to all of the Category One and Two offenses except Aggravated Burglary and Aggravated Robbery; 3-year gun specification for all Category One and Two offenses except Aggravated Burglary; in the case of a 3-year gun specification for Aggravated Robbery, only the gun specification is a public safety bed, not the Aggravated Robbery offense itself; Youth serving discipline time; Youth serving more than 90 days on a parole revocation following supervised release from DYS, unless the underlying offense was a public safety bed; youth from counties which adjudicate less than one-tenth of one percent of the total number of youth adjudicated for felony offenses statewide (Department of Youth Services(b), 2014). Each court's percentage of the remaining credits statewide translates into that court's percentage of the total RECLAIM funds they receive for the year (R. Gies, personal communication, August 21, 2014). For example,

Example County's average number of felony adjudications: 25 (Statewide: 7,000)

Example County's number of charged bed day credits: 1,000 (Statewide: 350,000)

$(350,000 / 7,000) * 25 * 1.5 = 1,875$ credits

1,875 - 1,000 = 875 credits remaining

875 / statewide number of credits remaining (i.e. 115,000) = .00761

0.00761 * total funds available (i.e. \$30,600,000) = \$232,866

The funds received through RECLAIM can be used for a vast array of treatment, intervention, diversion, and prevention programs (Department of Youth Services (b), 2014). The funds, however, cannot be used to build new facilities, renovate existing facilities, or replace current local funds (Department of Youth Services (b), 2014). Examples of funded programs include day treatment, alternative schools, intensive probation, electronic monitoring, mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment, diversion, restitution, community service and work detail, sex offender treatment, and residential treatment (Department of Youth Services (b), 2014; Miller & Liotta, 2001). Through RECLAIM, these services can be provided to any juvenile deemed by the court as appropriate for the service. There is no oversight or approval process in place to monitor the youth served by RECLAIM programs or the programs themselves. This means that there are also no requirements for evidence-based programming or adherence to the principles of effective correctional programming.³

The Impact of RECLAIM Ohio

In 1994, DYS implemented RECLAIM in nine pilot counties around the state: Clermont, Delaware, Erie, Gallia, Hocking, Licking, Mercer, Summit, and Van Wert (Department of Youth Services (b), 2014). The pilot counties were selected based on their proposals and projected reduction in commitments to DYS. Results of the pilot demonstrated some successes (Moon, 1996). Specifically, the pilot study found that counties were reserving placement in DYS for the most severe offenders and serving lower level felony youth in the community. Likewise, the pilot

³ See Andrews & Bonta (2010) for a detailed review of the principles of effective intervention.

study found that the number of available local programs for youth increased within the pilot counties. Finally, while the study did not demonstrate a significant difference in commitments between RECLAIM counties and non-RECLAIM counties, the RECLAIM counties did show a decrease in overall commitments to DYS, whereas the non-RECLAIM counties showed little change. Specifically, the pilot counties were able to reduce commitments to DYS facilities by approximately 43 percent in comparison to what would be projected (Moon, 1996). In addition, the pilot counties were able to increase or expand the number of community-based services available to youth (Moon, 1996). With these promising findings in mind, RECLAIM Ohio was implemented statewide in 1995, and became the start of a unique partnership between the state system and local courts.

Recognizing the potential magnitude of this reform effort, in 1996 DYS awarded the University of Cincinnati (UC) a grant to evaluate the statewide implementation of the RECLAIM Ohio Initiative. This early evaluation found that the majority of courts (70 percent for urban; 52 percent for medium; 42 percent for small; and 46 percent for rural counties) were able to increase the number of community-based options for their youth (Latessa, Turner, Moon, & Applegate, 1998). The most popular options included intensive probation, out of home placement, substance abuse services, and monitoring services (Latessa et al., 1998). Despite finding that 53 percent of respondents reported adding new programs or new providers, and 33 percent expanded existing programs, “80 percent of the respondents from the urban, medium, and rural counties and 70 percent from the small counties indicated a need to provide even more programs to target the needs of more youth” (Latessa et al., 1998), pg. 30).

To help determine the impact of RECLAIM Ohio on future juvenile justice involvement, this study also examined the recidivism rates of juveniles who participated in RECLAIM

programs. This study found that 30.3 percent of releases experienced some type of contact with the juvenile justice system within three months of their release from a RECLAIM program (Latessa et al., 1998). Using a longer follow-up period with a subsample of juveniles, the study found that 53.7 percent of the youth experienced some type of contact with the juvenile justice system. Finally, the study found that RECLAIM Ohio reduced the number of youth committed to DYS institutions across pilot and non-pilot counties (Latessa et al., 1998).

In 2004, researchers from the UC started an in-depth evaluation of the impact of RECLAIM funded programs on the recidivism rates of youth. The evaluation included 14,496 youth, a follow-up period of 2.5 to 3.5 years, and measures from both the adult and juvenile systems as well as an examination of the program characteristics most related to the recidivism of youth (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005). Furthermore, the study compared recidivism rates for juveniles participating in RECLAIM funded programs to the recidivism rates of juveniles sentenced to a community corrections facility (CCF), or DYS facility. Findings from this study demonstrated that RECLAIM programs were effective in reducing the recidivism rates of low to moderate risk youthful offenders and that certain programs were more effective than others (failure rates ranged from 0 to 45%, 0 to 33%, and 0 to 51% for adjudications/convictions, commitments, and any indicator respectively) (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005). Moreover, findings showed that low and moderate risk youth had better outcomes when served by RECLAIM programs instead of a CCF or DYS. A closer examination of 72 RECLAIM programs showed that programs that operated in accordance with the principles of effective correctional programming had lower predicted program failure rates than programs that did not (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005).

In 2011, DYS partnered again with the UC to evaluate RECLAIM funded programs, including an evaluation of recidivism rates of the youth served by such programs. Much like the previous study by UC, the current study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the recidivism rate of youth served by RECLAIM funded programs?
2. What is the recidivism rate of youth served by CCFs?
3. What is the recidivism rate of youth sent to a DYS facility?
4. Are there differences in recidivism rates between the different types of RECLAIM programs?
5. Do the programs and facilities have different recidivism rates by youth risk level?

However, this study had three improvements over the previous study. First, in 2011, Ohio implemented a statewide risk assessment system, the Ohio Youth Assessment System (OYAS) (Latessa, Lovins, & Ostrowski, 2009) which allowed for a common measure of risk to be used across settings. Second, the use of the Evidence-Based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) ©⁴ allowed for a careful examination of the services offered by the programs most served by RECLAIM funding. And third, rudimentary measures of dosage were collected and used to determine the benefit of a higher dosage of services across risk levels. A total of 10,679 youth were included in the sample and the average follow-up period was slightly less than two years (Latessa, Lovins, & Lux, 2014). Recidivism was defined as new felony adjudication or a commitment to DYS or the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC).

Based on results from the OYAS, the study found that mostly lower-risk youth were served by RECLAIM programs (approximately 81% were low and moderate risk) compared to the CCFs or DYS facilities that served mostly moderate or high risk (approximately 71% and

⁴ The Evidence-Based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) is a tool developed by the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI) for assessing correctional intervention programs.

89%, respectively) youth. Regardless of risk level, however, this study found that RECLAIM programs were effective in reducing the recidivism rates of participants who successfully completed a RECLAIM program (Latessa, et al., 2014). Furthermore, recidivism results across risk level indicated that low risk youth performed better when served in the community by RECLAIM programs, compared to low risk youth released from CCFs and DYS facilities (Latessa et al., 2014). Similarly, moderate and high risk youth who remained in the community reoffended at significantly lower rates than those placed in CCFs or DYS facilities (Latessa et al., 2014). When examining the dosage of treatment, low and moderate risk youth were more successful with less programming, but high risk youth were more successful with more programming.

Benefits and Limits of RECLAIM

It appears as though RECLAIM Ohio is meeting its two initial goals to reduce commitments to DYS and help counties increase the number of available local programs to meet the needs of juvenile justice youth. From fiscal year 1994 (same year RECLAIM was implemented) to fiscal year 2007, admissions to DYS decreased from 3600 to approximately 1800 youth (Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2008). This translates into twice as many youth now being kept in their home communities. As shown above, RECLAIM Ohio has also resulted in more available options for youth within the criminal justice system and better-suited community options (Latessa et al., 1998). Noteworthy, Ryan Gies, Deputy Director, Courts and Community Services, for DYS reported that as of 2014, RECLAIM Ohio funded over 600 programs per year across all 88 counties. Third, there is the potential for cost savings when youth are served in community-based programs compared to state institutions. In early 2015, it was estimated that cost savings ranged from \$13.60 to \$57.51 for every dollar spent on RECLAIM programming

instead of a placement in a CCF or DYS facility (Latessa, Lovins, & Lux, 2015). Fourth and finally, RECLAIM has resulted in a strong partnership between the state and local county and community agencies. This partnership has allowed for trainings at the local and state level, development and use of a structured and validated risk assessment system across the state, and smaller parole caseloads.

While RECLAIM has garnered recognition and demonstrated remarkable benefits, there are some important limitations that should be noted as well. First, RECLAIM does not provide the state or counties with the requirement to ensure programs offered are credible programs (i.e. designed to reduce recidivism). The above research on RECLAIM showed that programs that are credible (adhere to principles of effective intervention) are more effective than programs that do not (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005). Second, specific assessment tools were not required to determine which youth might benefit from identified interventions (Celeste, 2015). Third, all 88 counties are eligible to participate in RECLAIM. Related, the fiscal reality is that there is only so much money available to incentivize courts. As seen in fiscal year 2004-2005, fiscal constraints required DYS to restructure the RECLAIM funding formula so that the infrastructure costs for the courts, community corrections facilities and institutions were stable. As one might imagine, the challenge was to maintain funding for all of these entities consistent with recent fiscal years, while retaining incentives similar to those already in place for the courts.

EXPANDING REFORM EFFORTS ACROSS THE SYSTEM

Despite RECLAIM Ohio's effort to bring about a new evolution in service delivery (Ohio, Sharing Responsibility, ND), DYS still faced challenges. In addition to the limitations of RECLAIM, in 2004, an action was filed against Thomas Stickrath, Director of DYS, alleging a system-wide failure regarding the conditions of confinement within facilities operated by DYS.

In 2007, this became a class action lawsuit against DYS resulting in a formal fact finding examination and several informal negotiations between the parties to reach agreement on the procedures and criteria necessary for the delivery of constitutionally and legally adequate services (*S.H. v. Stickrath, 2008*). It was May 2008, when the *S.H. v. Stickrath* settlement was signed requiring several changes to the manner in which juvenile delinquents in the state of Ohio were managed (R. Gies, personal communication, August 21, 2014; *S.H. v. Stickrath, 2010*).

While the overall goal of the settlement was to improve the conditions of confinement within DYS facilities, the stipulations applied to a comprehensive continuum of care. For example, emphasis was placed on providing quality evidence-based interventions in the least restrictive setting, using standardized and validated instruments to measure risk and need levels of youth, engaging families, and developing staff knowledge and skills around effective correctional interventions for youth (*S.H. v. Stickrath, 2008*). DYS identified five major strategies to address these stipulations. The first involved the development and implementation of the Ohio Youth Assessment System (OYAS) (Latessa, Lovins, & Ostrowski, 2009) to better assess and place youth in appropriate treatment options. The second strategy focused on converting the CCFs to a cognitive-behavioral treatment model. The third strategy established five pilot counties to participate in the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) in an effort to prevent youth from deeper system involvement. The fourth strategy called for the continued investment in a behavioral health initiative already available to some counties. The fifth and final strategy created Targeted RECLAIM as another means to divert youth from DYS. Each of these initiatives is described below with a particular focus on Targeted RECLAIM.

It is important to note that participation in any of these initiatives is not mutually exclusive. This means that a county is able to partake in more than one initiative at a time, and in

fact, as highlighted below in Figure 2.1, many do. Figure 2.1 for example, shows that Lorain County is both a Targeted RECLAIM and BHJJ county, and Stark County is a Targeted RECLAIM county with both a CCF and DYS facility within its county lines. Furthermore, this means that a youth may be served through multiple initiatives. For example, a youth may participate in services that are funded through both Targeted RECLAIM and BHJJ funds, while another youth may receive BHJJ services upon release from a local CCF. A combination of services is not uncommon.

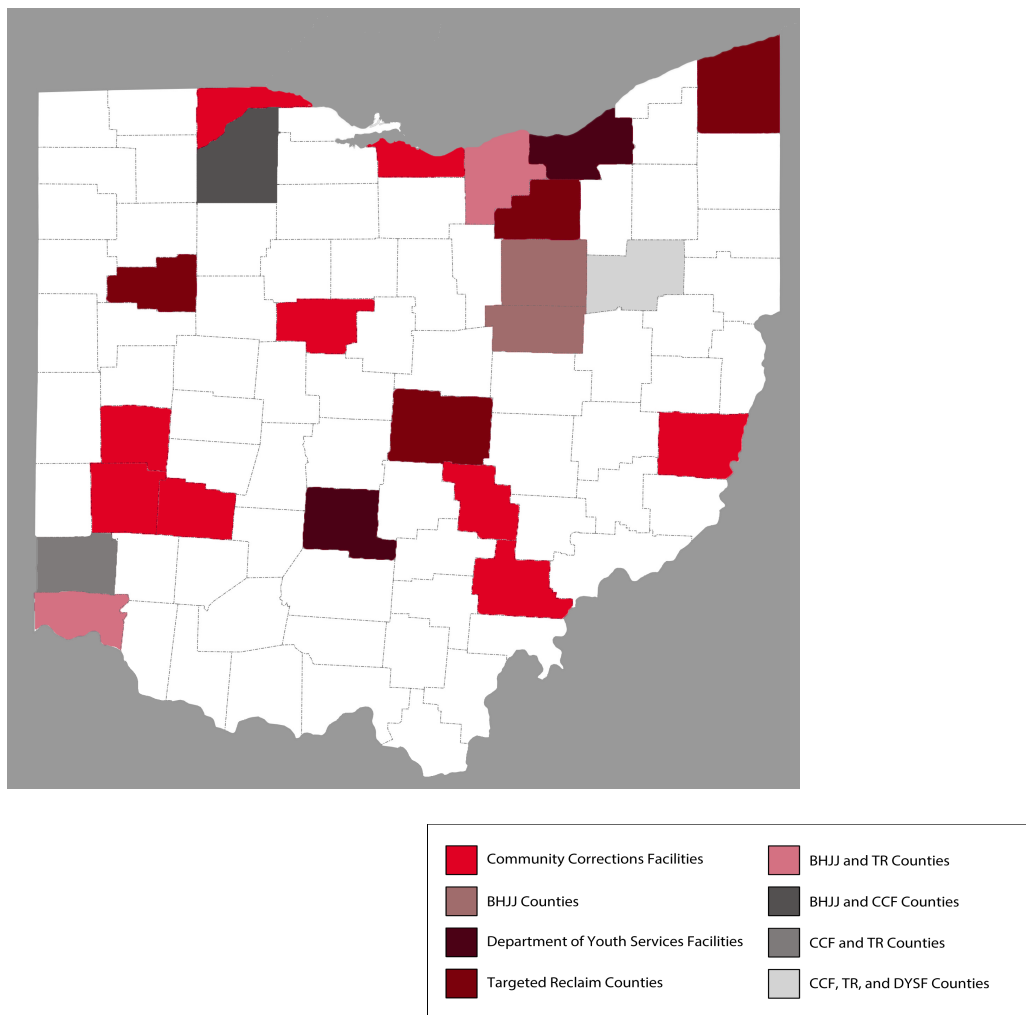


Figure 2.1
Map of CCFs, DYS facilities, and other DYS funded specialized programs

The OYAS

Fortunately, DYS was already in partnership with the University of Cincinnati to develop a standardized system of assessment tools for youth in the juvenile justice system – the OYAS (Latessa, Lovins, & Ostrowski, 2009). The OYAS addresses the needs of youth across multiple stages of the juvenile justice system and includes 5 different tools: (1) a diversion tool, (2) a detention tool, (3) a disposition tool, (4) a residential tool, and (5) a reentry tool. Each tool is used at the appropriate stage to assess the criminogenic needs⁵ of the youth at that stage and to help guide decisions for appropriate interventions. The use of these tools, implemented in 2009, allowed agencies serving delinquent youth to identify the most appropriate service in the least restrictive setting. By 2012, 79 of the 88 juvenile courts had implemented the OYAS along with DYS resulting in a statewide mechanism to make decisions about the youth “throughout the continuum using an objective, research-based, Ohio-indigenous set of tools” (Latessa, 2012).

CCF Conversion Project

To improve the quality of treatment, DYS supported the implementation of cognitive-behavioral interventions across community-based programs, including the CCFs (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Landenberger & Lipsey, 2005; Lipsey, 2009; & Pearson, Lipton, Cleland, & Yee, 2002). In 2009, DYS committed to funding the CCF Conversion Project, which aimed to redesign all 12 CCFs across the state to reduce the length of stay, increase their capacity to serve youth, and intensify the treatment provided (Latessa, 2012). By 2014 all 12 CCF’s completed a thorough redesign process to allow for the implementation of a cognitive-behavioral program model for moderate to high risk youth in each community facility. As part of their commitment, DYS funds on-going efforts to ensure a strong continuous quality improvement process and

⁵ Criminogenic needs are those needs that through research have been shown to be highly correlated with future reoffending (see e.g., Andrews and Bonta 2010).

adherence to evidence-based practices. In 2009, DYS also committed to creating regional cognitive-behavioral treatment centers in an effort to provide treatment to higher risk youth close to home (Latessa, 2012). Two regional centers were developed – one in Franklin County and one in Cuyahoga County- but only the Cuyahoga Center remains open today. These two initiatives together aimed to provide quality evidence-based interventions in the least restrictive setting while also developing staff knowledge and skills around effective correctional interventions for youth.

Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative

Consistent with the reform efforts of DYS to provide a comprehensive community-based service delivery system, the State also supported the implementation of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) in five of the largest counties (Cuyahoga, Franklin, Lucas, Montgomery, and Summit) (Department of Youth Services(c), 2015) in 2010. The Annie Casey Foundation established the JDAI in the early 90s in an attempt to reduce the reliance on the use of detention for court-involved youth (Juvenile Justice, 2015). Recognizing that placement in a locked detention center can increase the chances of adjudication as well as commitment to another secure facility (Fazal, 2014); the JDAI can be an effective means to reduce the daily detention population across these five participating counties. The JDAI model adheres to 8 core strategies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of juvenile detention. The Annie E. Casey Foundation (Juvenile Justice, 2015) describes these strategies as:

- Promoting collaboration between juvenile court officials, probation agencies, prosecutors, defense attorneys, schools, community organizations and advocates;
- Using rigorous data collection and analysis to guide decision making;

- Utilizing objective admissions criteria and risk assessment instruments to replace subjective decision-making processes to determine whether youth should be placed into secure detention facilities;
- Implementing new or expanded alternatives to detention programs- i.e. day and evening reporting centers, home confinement and shelter care;
- Instituting case processing reforms to expedite the flow of cases through the system;
- Reducing the number of youth detained for probation rule violations or failing to appear in courts, and the number held in detention awaiting transfer to a residential facility;
- Combatting racial and ethnic disparities by examining data to identify policies and practices that may disadvantage youth of color at various stages of the process, and pursuing strategies to ensure a more level playing field for youth regardless of race or ethnicity; and
- Monitoring and improving conditions of confinement in detention facilities.

To implement these strategies the Foundation provides technical assistance, training, and practice guidelines along with assessment and planning tools to the local site (Juvenile Justice, 2015).

Behavioral Health Juvenile Justice Initiative

There was also a focus placed on behavioral health/juvenile justice related youth and how best to serve them. In 2005, through a collaboration with the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS), DYS allocated new resources to develop Ohio's Behavioral Health Juvenile Justice (BHJJ) program as a means to divert juvenile justice involved youth with behavioral health issues (Kretschmar, Butcher, Flannery, & Singer, 2014). The program provided evidence-based behavioral health treatment in the community. While the BHJJ

program originally began as the Ohio Juvenile Offenders Project (JOP) which was created to identify, describe, and provide mental health treatment to juvenile offenders with significant mental health needs, it has since expanded and now aims to “divert juvenile justice involved youth with mental health or substance use issues from detention and into community and evidence-based treatment” (Kretschmar, et al., 2014, p. 4). Consistent with the other efforts regarding assessment and treatment of youth involved in the Ohio juvenile justice system, the “intent of the BHJJ project was to transform the local system’s ability to identify, assess, evaluate, and treat multi-need youth and their families and to identify effective programs, practices, and policies” (Kretschmar, et al., 2014, p. 4). Therefore, DYS identified several common elements of the BHJJ projects including:

- A partnership between the Juvenile Court and the Alcohol, Drug Addiction & Mental Health Services Board;
- Effective models of assessment, treatment planning, and family-focused community-based evidence-based practices;
- The pursuit of first and third party reimbursement, including Medicaid;
- Assessing youth using the Ohio Youth Assessment System (OYAS);
- Participation in an extensive evaluation by Case Western Reserve University; and
- The identification and diversion from DYS and the juvenile justice system of serious juvenile offenders with serious behavioral health needs and a commitment to maintain DYS admissions at FY 2014 levels.

The local courts are able to use BHJJ as a diversion from DYS, local incarceration (i.e., CCF), or even from formal processing (Kretschmar, et al., 2014). Regardless of the reason, the

BHJJ services offered must be evidence-based or evidence-informed treatment models. These can include:

- *Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)*; (Henggeler & Borduin, 1990)
- *Functional Family Therapy, (FFT)*;
- *Integrated Co-Occurring Treatment (ICT)*;
- *Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)*;
- *Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)*;
- *Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA)*;
- *Transition to Independence Process (TIP)*; and
- *Multi-Dimensional Family Therapy (MDFT)*.

The projects serve youth ages 10-18 with a current DSM diagnosis and substantial impairment in behavioral, cognitive and/or affective domains.

The first pilot of the BHJJ program occurred in 2005 with Cuyahoga County, Lorain County, and a collaborative of Southwest Ohio counties including Hamilton, Warren, Clermont, and Butler Counties and was considered a success because the number of youth with behavioral health issues committed to the DYS was reduced (Flannery, McTaggart, Buckeye, & Singer, 2002). After an initial expansion in 2006, BHJJ funding was awarded to the six largest counties (Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Lucas, Montgomery, and Summit) in 2009 (J. Spears, personal communication, February, 25, 2015). In FY 2014, BHJJ was expanded again to include Lorain County, Wood County, and two collaborative BHJJ projects with Trumbull and Mahoning Counties, and Wayne and Holmes Counties. Table 2.1 describes the counties participating in BHJJ programming across the State of Ohio as of 2015.

Table 2.1

BHJJ funded programs across the State of Ohio by County for 2015

County	Program	Start Date
Cuyahoga	MST, ICT, ACT, Crisis Stabilization, Brief Residential Services	2006
Franklin	Assessment, Care Coordination	2006
Hamilton	FFT, ACT, A-CRA,	2006
Holmes	MST	2014
Lorain	ICT	2014
Lucas	Screening, Assessment, MST, High Fidelity Wrap-Around	2010
Mahoning	MST, TIP	2014
Montgomery	FFT with CM	2006
Summit	ICT, TF-CBT, Mental Health Court Reviews	2010
Trumbull	MST, TIP	2014
Wayne	MST	2014
Wood	FFT, Sequential Intercept Model	2014

ADVANCING WHAT WORKS: TARGETED RECLAIM

The fifth and final strategy identified by DYS leadership and court monitors, depicted their understanding that a bigger change in the way DYS did business was necessary in order to truly meet the stipulations set forth by the court. This approach sought to increase the funding to the local courts with the goal of financing evidence based programming in the community. It was hoped that such an initiative would not only provide services to youth in the community, but also reduce commitments to DYS. This initiative, later to become known as Targeted RECLAIM, was born out of a strong partnership among and commitment by the courts and DYS to the youth of Ohio (R. Gies, personal communication, August 21, 2014).

Overview of Targeted RECLAIM

Designed as a means to address some of the recommendations outlined in the Stickrath settlement (2008) as well as the limitations of RECLAIM, Targeted RECLAIM was a strategy

developed to provide funding over and above RECLAIM dollars to select counties in an effort to continue reducing commitments to DYS. Purposely, it was developed in 2009 as a vehicle to reinvest a proportion of the resources allocated for juvenile commitments to community-based intervention. Therefore, the goal of Targeted RECLAIM is to further reduce the number of admissions from the participating counties by providing juveniles with evidence-based services in their local community as alternatives to incarceration (National Center for Justice Planning, 2012). While Targeted RECLAIM builds off of the RECLAIM initiative, there are several key differences. The counties must:

- Submit a proposal to DYS seeking approval for Targeted RECLAIM funding;
- Commit to maintain or further reduce DYS admissions from previous year;
- Use the money to fund programs that are either model or evidence-based;
- Serve only felony youth that would otherwise be committed to DYS with the Targeted RECLAIM funds;
- Assess all program youth using the OYAS; and
- Participate in on-going quality assurance activities with a research partner

Therefore, through Targeted RECLAIM counties are required to commit to specific reductions in the number of youth sentenced to DYS for the participating year. Each county submitting a proposal to receive Targeted RECLAIM funds must therefore, identify a specific reductions in commitments for the upcoming fiscal year. For example, during the first year, one participating county projected a 10 percent reduction in commitments to DYS whereas another committed to a 40 percent reduction.

However, much like RECLAIM Ohio, Targeted RECLAIM gives these counties a fiscal incentive to serve youth locally by requiring counties to commit to obtaining targeted reductions

in DYS admissions. Overall, the same financial formula as RECLAIM applies to Targeted RECLAIM; however, with Targeted RECLAIM there is the additional requirement of meeting the targeted reductions (ODYS website, [www.http://www.dys.ohio.gov/dnn/Community/RECLAIMOhio/tabid/131/Default.aspx](http://www.dys.ohio.gov/dnn/Community/RECLAIMOhio/tabid/131/Default.aspx) September 1, 2014). Credits are allocated to each court based on the average number of youth adjudicated for felony offenses and each chargeable DYS and community corrections facility bed day used during the previous year. It is important to note that a court's funding is not reduced as a result of youth in public safety beds, which are defined in Ohio Revised Code section 5139.01(A)(13) (DYS website, [www. http://www.dys.ohio.gov/dnn/Community/RECLAIMOhio/tabid/131/Default.aspx](http://www.dys.ohio.gov/dnn/Community/RECLAIMOhio/tabid/131/Default.aspx) September 1, 2014).

Implementing the Targeted RECLAIM Initiative

The Targeted RECLAIM initiative requires counties to deliver evidence-based programming in the community to felony level youth who would otherwise be committed to DYS. There is a strong emphasis placed on adherence to the principles of effective intervention in the community programs (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Gendreau, 1996, Hoge at al., 1990). The three main principles of effective intervention state that the criminogenic needs of higher risk youthful offenders should be targeted using cognitive-behavioral interventions in a way that is generally responsive to each youth (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Gendreau, 1996; Hoge at al., 1990). Therefore, the programs funded with Targeted RECLAIM dollars are required to target moderate and high risk youth, offer services that focus on criminogenic needs (e.g., antisocial attitudes, values and beliefs; antisocial peers, and antisocial personality characteristics) using cognitive-behavioral and social learning theory techniques. Ultimately, counties are allowed to select the specific evidence-based programming that matches the needs of the youth in their communities. Likewise, counties are also able to choose to implement the programming in a

residential program, an outpatient program, or within their probation department. The list below provides example programs and services funded with Targeted RECLAIM dollars.

- *Thinking for a Change (T4C)* (Bush, Glick, & Taymans, 1997);
- *Aggression Replacement Training (ART)* (Goldstein, Glick, & Gibbs, 1998);
- *Pathways to Self-Discovery and Change* (Milkman & Wanberg, 2012);
- *Effective Practices in Community Supervision Model (EPICS)* (Smith, Schweitzer, Labrecque, & Latessa, 2012);
- *Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)* (Henggeler & Borduin, 1990)

Targeted RECLAIM initially targeted the six largest counties in Ohio (Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Lucas, Montgomery, and Summit), which collectively committed the majority of youth to the state institutions (who were then responsible for 63% of DYS admissions) (National Center for Justice Planning, 2012). For the initial Targeted RECLAIM year, the targeted reduction in commitment goals for these six counties ranged from 10% to 40%, with an average reduction goal of 19% (National Center for Justice Planning, 2012). The courts implemented a variety of evidence-based approaches with the Targeted RECLAIM funds.

In 2012, Targeted RECLAIM was expanded to include eight more counties (Allen, Ashtabula, Licking, Lorain, Mahoning, Medina, Stark, and Trumbull) and in 2013, Butler County was added. Thus, Targeted RECLAIM now includes 15 Ohio counties. All 15 counties must commit to specific reductions or stability in commitments to DYS as well as the provision of evidence-based community programming to youth who would have otherwise been placed at DYS. Table 2 describes each county's evidence-based programming and the setting within which they offer the programming for fiscal year 2015.

Table 2.2

Targeted RECLAIM Funded Programs across the State of Ohio by County for Fiscal Year 2015

County	Program	Date Started	Setting
Allen	CBT	2012	Residential
Ashtabula	EPICS, T4C, ART	2012	Community
Butler	T4C	2013	Community
Cuyahoga	CBT	2011	Residential
	EPICS, MST	2011, 2009	Community
Franklin	EPICS, MST	2009	Community
Hamilton*	CBT	2015	Community
	T4C, ART®, Pathways,	2009	Residential
	CBT		
Licking	EPICS, Family EPICS	2012	Community
Lorain	MST	2012	Community
	T4C, ART	2013	Community
Lucas	EPICS	2012	Community
	CBT	2012	Residential
Mahoning	T4C, Wraparound	2012	Community
Medina	MST	2012	Community
Montgomery**	ART®, Sex Offender	2009, 2011	Residential
Stark	EPICS, T4C	2012	Community
Summit**	T4C	2009, 2011	Community & Residential
Trumbull	T4C, Wraparound	2012	Community

*Hamilton County serves youth through Rite of Passage, Hillcrest School as well as Lighthouse Youth Services, Paint Creek residential facilities.

**Montgomery and Summit Counties offer structured cognitive-behavioral group sessions to youth sentenced to a short sentence (approximately 90 days) in detention.

A Unique Collaboration

DYS recognized that the delivery of effective correctional programming is contingent upon the establishment of on-going fidelity monitoring processes and has therefore made program integrity a critical and distinguishing component of Targeted RECLAIM as well as the BHJJ initiative (Lipsey, 1992; Lipsey & Wilson, 1998; Lowenkamp, Latessa, & Smith, 2006). Through collaboration with two local universities, DYS, and the courts, the statewide initiatives

work to ensure the delivery of quality community based interventions. The continuous quality improvement process is described in detail below.

First, participation in either Targeted RECLAIM or BHJJ requires the county to partner with either the University of Cincinnati or the Case Western Reserve University (previously with Kent State University). Each university provides consultation regarding services including program development, training, implementation support, and on-going fidelity monitoring. The universities are responsible for vetting county proposals, training and coaching program staff, developing performance measures, and collecting, entering, and analyzing data to support both process and outcome evaluations. Second, quarterly meetings are held between DYS, county representatives, and both universities. The initial purpose of these meetings was to track progress toward commitment goals and monitor the implementation of programs in the community. However, as the project has progressed, it was clear to all parties involved that the meetings are an opportunity for the sharing of ideas, cross-training, problem-solving, and brainstorming among attendees (R. Gies, personal communication, August 21, 2014). Third, at least bi-annual program implementation meetings are held with each participating site in the community and the appropriate university to review any changes that have been piloted and on-going programming, as well as to continue to offer suggestions around effective implementation of the program model, specific measures of change, and internal quality assurance. This meeting is designed to problem-solve issues around program implementation with those responsible for delivering the program. Fourth, measures of change are also provided to each county to measure the impact of programming on specific intermediate measures. For example, county's that offer *Thinking for a Change* administer the *Criminal Sentiment Scale-Modified (CSS-M)* to measure criminal attitudes pre and post participation in the group (Simourd, 1997). These measures are to be used

to determine youth progress as well as overall aggregate level information for DYS and the local courts. Fifth and finally, coaching occurs on a regular basis for each program. Coaching efforts can include group and general programming observation with feedback to staff regarding fidelity to the curriculum and group processes, co-facilitation of groups, listening to contact sessions and coding for adherence to model and related skills, refresher trainings, booster sessions, identification of and problem-solving around implementation barriers and program model where applicable. Structured feedback forms are completed and reviewed with staff as part of the process. It is through this collaboration and focus on quality implementation that Targeted RECLAIM and BHJJ supports the delivery of quality community based interventions.

Preliminary Research

As part of Targeted RECLAIM, DYS partnered with UC to monitor the goal of the initiative. Recall, the goal of Targeted RECLAIM is to further reduce the number of admissions from the identified counties by providing juveniles with evidence-based services in their local community as alternatives to incarceration (National Center for Justice Planning, 2012). Three preliminary studies have been conducted to date providing early evidence that Targeted RECLAIM might be a reform effort worth examining more carefully.

The three preliminary studies have suggested that Targeted RECLAIM is effective in reducing the risk of recidivism of the participating youth (Lovins, 2011; Labrecque & Schweitzer, 2012, 2013). The first outcome study included youth served through Targeted RECLAIM funds from 2009 through August 2010 and youth released from DYS during 2008 (Lovins, 2011). The overall results were positive for Targeted RECLAIM suggesting that of the 374 youth included in the treatment and matched comparison groups, 10 youth in the treatment group were committed to DYS or to the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction

(DRC), whereas 32 youth in the comparison group were returned to DYS or committed to DRC. This resulted in a significant difference.

The second outcome study examined youth served through Targeted RECLAIM during January 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012 ($n = 239$). Improving upon the preliminary outcome study of 2011, the evaluation employed an untreated control group design with dependent pretest and posttest samples. To create the comparison group, each Targeted RECLAIM youth in the study was matched to a youth released from the DYS custody during the same time period on the variables of sex, race, risk level, county of conviction, and time at risk. The dependent variable was again incarceration and defined as any commitment to DYS or a sentence to DRC custody during the follow-up period. Of the 478 youth included in the treatment and comparison groups, 25.1% of the DYS sample was incarcerated during the follow-up period compared to only 10.5% of the Targeted RECLAIM youth (Labrecque & Schweitzer, 2012). This means youth in the DYS sample were 2.4 times more likely to be incarcerated during the follow-up compared to the Targeted RECLAIM youth (Labrecque & Schweitzer, 2012). Decreases were also noted for youth of all risk levels. Specifically, the findings suggested low-risk DYS offenders were 3.56 times more likely to be incarcerated than the low-risk Targeted RECLAIM offenders, moderate-risk DYS offenders were 2.43 times more likely, and high-risk DYS offenders were 2.17 times more likely.

The most recent outcome evaluation examined youth during calendar year 2012 and found favorable results for youth receiving Targeted RECLAIM services in the community across all risk levels (Labrecque & Schweitzer, 2013). Controlling for time at risk as well as matching on key demographics (sex, race, and risk level), 14.5% of the DYS sample was incarcerated during the follow-up compared to only 5.3% of the Targeted RECLAIM youth ($n =$

1460). Exploring Targeted RECLAIM further, the 2013 outcome study also attempted to provide evidence around which programs were most effective for youth of various risk levels by examining specific Targeted RECLAIM funded programs. The researchers grouped each service into one of three general types: residential programs, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) programs in the community, and family interventions in the community (Labrecque & Schweitzer, 2013). In general, the residential programs offered more intensive services (in terms of dosage and number of services offered) and were designed to target higher risk offenders compared to the other options. The CBT community based programs included T4C, ART, and EPICS, whereas the family interventions group included MST and High-fidelity wraparound (Labrecque & Schweitzer, 2013). Although most of the services (i.e., residential, CBT community, family interventions) had reduced levels of incarceration across all three of the risk levels, low-risk offenders in the residential programs had worse outcomes (4.7% increase in recidivism) compared to the matched DYS releases (Labrecque & Schweitzer, 2013) suggesting the need to keep low risk youth out of the more intensive services. Moreover, CBT services in the community (i.e., T4C, ART, EPICS) produced the best results with moderate- and high-risk offenders (Labrecque & Schweitzer, 2013).

The above preliminary studies suggest that youth can be effectively treated in the community so that DYS can reserve its institutions for higher risk youth without compromising public safety. However, each of these studies bears substantial methodological limitations. The first study suffered from a small sample size and potential problems associated with tracking the control and treatment group youth during different periods of time. Likewise, the change in DYS population between 2009 and 2010 could not be controlled for nor could time at risk; therefore, both may be a confounding variable. While the second study made improvements, youth were

not able to be matched one for one on key characteristics. Related, in the third study youth were matched one for one on key characteristics, but youth from the DYS sample were used more than once to create a one for one match with the Targeted RECLAIM sample. Finally, all three studies used relatively short follow-up periods (most recent study only followed youth for one year). The limitations of these studies therefore, suggest the need for a more complete picture.

CURRENT STUDY

Having the opportunity to more fully evaluate this unique reform movement across the state of Ohio as well as the real world implementation of evidence based practices; this study plans to fill several gaps in the existing knowledge. First, this study will carefully examine yearly adjudications and commitments as well as juvenile population numbers in the state of Ohio to determine the impact Targeted RECLAIM has had on commitments to DYS. Second, this study will determine if the youth served in Targeted RECLAIM are diverted youth; those who would otherwise have been placed at DYS if it were not for Targeted RECLAIM. Thus, the risk level of youth will be scrutinized to determine if Targeted RECLAIM youth are in large part moderate- to high-risk youth with felony adjudications and appropriately diverted youth. Additionally, to further examine the ability of Targeted RECLAIM to divert youth from DYS, the recidivism rates of Targeted RECLAIM youth will be compared to a matched sample of DYS youth over a 27-month period. By expanding the follow-up period of previous studies and the sample by including all youth who participated in Targeted RECLAIM between 2009 and 2012, this will shed light on how well Targeted RECLAIM can divert youth over time.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of the Ohio Targeted RECLAIM initiative. Prior research on the State's reform efforts including RECLAIM and others, have shown that youth can be effectively treated in the community without sacrificing public safety. Moreover, the studies have shown that through local court incentives, the state institutions can be reserved for higher risk offenders. To examine the effects of Targeted RECLAIM more specifically, this study addressed two questions: (1) has Targeted RECLAIM been successful in reducing commitments to DYS?; and (2) are Targeted RECLAIM programs effective in reducing recidivism and ultimately diverting youth from DYS.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

In order to address the first research question; whether or not Targeted RECLAIM has been successful in reducing commitments to DYS, an analysis of trends over time was conducted. The first step involved examining admissions to DYS for all 88 counties in Ohio. The number of youth admitted by Targeted RECLAIM counties and non-Targeted RECLAIM counties were then examined and compared. Comparisons were further made between the Targeted RECLAIM and Expanded Targeted RECLAIM counties. Next, DYS yearly commitment rates for Targeted RECLAIM (between 2006 and 2014) and Expanded Targeted RECLAIM (2011-2014) counties were examined before and during the years of participation. Commitment rates were calculated by dividing the number of youth admitted to DYS for the fiscal year by the number of youth adjudicated of a felony level offense during the same year and then multiplied by 100.

Comparing commitment rates highlighted differences in commitments between the Targeted RECLAIM counties and non-Targeted RECLAIM counties after the inception of Targeted RECLAIM; however, these data did not give the full picture. Therefore, it was also important to examine the number of felony level adjudications, the number of juvenile transfers to adult court and the number of youth sentenced to a local CCF across the counties to determine if there was a similar change occurring.

While commitment rates were declining, it was important to determine if the pool of eligible youth was also declining. To determine if that was the case, felony level adjudication data was examined before, during, and after the start of Targeted RECLAIM. The sheer number of youth adjudicated by Targeted RECLAIM participation type (Targeted RECLAIM county, Expanded Targeted RECLAIM county, and Non-Targeted RECLAIM county) as well as the average percentage change in adjudications by year and participation type was compared. Then, the average change in the number of commitments were compared between participating and nonparticipating counties for fiscal years 2006 through 2014 noting the inception of Targeted RECLAIM in fiscal year 2010 and the expansion in fiscal year 2012.

With the pool of eligible youth not changing much, it was important to examine whether or not counties were avoiding placing youth at DYS by waiving them to adult court or placing them within a local CCF. Yearly CCF admission data as well as bind over data for counties was examined and an analysis of trends was conducted. Data was examined by participation type, Targeted RECLAIM, Expanded Targeted RECLAIM, and nonparticipating to determine the general trend of each group.

Additionally, the overall population of juveniles in the state of Ohio was examined to be sure that the decreases noted in the above analyses of trends were not due to a decline in the

number of youth ages 10-19 in the state. The population of juveniles in Targeted RECLAIM, Expanded Targeted RECLAIM, and Non-Targeted RECLAIM counties between 2007 and 2014 was compared. These data were gathered from the United States Census Bureau.

Commitment data, adjudication data, CCF admissions, and youth waiver data were collected from the Ohio DYS. Commitment data was obtained from the yearly Statewide Felony Adjudications and Commitments 1997-2014 report from DYS. Data gathered from DYS for adjudications was obtained from the DYS Monthly Statistical Report of Youth Adjudicated for Felony Offenses submitted by the 88 county juvenile courts as well as the DYS youth database. This report profiles the youth adjudicated in Ohio's juvenile courts, excluding revocations. In this report, each youth is counted once per year per adjudicating county, regardless of the number of adjudications or DYS felony commitments. Since a youth may be committed to a DYS facility at a later date than their adjudication, adjudications and DYS felony commitments are counted separately in the fiscal year in which they occurred. The CCF admission data was gathered from an internal DYS tracking spreadsheet. This report provides the number of admissions for all 88 counties to a CCF for each fiscal year beginning in FY93. The transfer to adult court data was created with data obtained from the DYS List of Youth Transferred to Adult Court reports submitted monthly to the Department of Youth Services by the 88 county juvenile courts. This report profiles the youth transferred to Ohio's adult courts. In this report, each youth is counted once per year per transferring county, regardless of the number of transfers for an individual youth.

Finally, it was important to examine the length of stay for youth released from DYS between 2006 and 2014 to determine if, while youth were being placed less, they were confined for longer lengths of time. This data was gathered from DYS and reported as average months of

stay. To examine this data, an analysis of trends was conducted on the average length of stay for DYS youth during years 2006 through 2014. This, with the data described above, will thoroughly address whether or not Targeted RECLAIM has been successful in reducing commitments to DYS.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

In order to answer the second research question, *are Targeted RECLAIM programs effective at diverting youth from DYS?*, several different data were examined. First, basic demographic data, including data that identified the risk level and offense severity of the youth receiving Targeted RECLAIM services were analyzed to determine if the appropriate youth were initially diverted from DYS. Recognizing that counties are faced with a difficult placement decision when youth who are otherwise low risk (per a standardized risk assessment tool such as the OYAS) commit a high level felony, data were examined to determine if low risk youth were being placed into Targeted RECLAIM programs in lieu of DYS, not because of risk level, but because of offense severity. This will shed light on whether Targeted RECLAIM is having any unintended consequences such as net-widening by placing more low risk youth into services designed for moderate and high risk youth.

To thoroughly examine if the Targeted RECLAIM initiative is effective at diverting youth from DYS, this study also examined if youth were not only initially diverted from DYS, but were diverted from incarceration over time. A quasi-experimental design was used to compare youth diverted to Targeted RECLAIM to those youth exiting a DYS institution during the same time period to determine if the Targeted RECLAIM programs are effective in reducing recidivism and ultimately diverting youth from DYS as well as the adult system, DRC. The comparison group, DYS youth, was selected because Targeted RECLAIM is an initiative

designed to divert youth otherwise appropriate for DYS to local services offered in their home community. Thus, it is quite possible that if it were not for Targeted RECLAIM those youth might otherwise be placed at DYS.

Sample and Matching

In order to determine if the appropriate youth were being diverted and if they were staying out of DYS/DRC a quasi-experimental design was utilized. Youth were identified through the annual reports the participating counties submitted to DYS and the University of Cincinnati. For the quasi-experimental study, the experimental group was the Targeted RECLAIM group and included youth served by Targeted RECLAIM between calendar years 2009 and 2012. The 15 participating counties were combined into one group: Targeted RECLAIM. The comparison group sample included youth released from a DYS institution between 2009 and 2012 and was collected from DYS. Youth were limited to four years for this portion of the study to allow for a longer follow-up period of 27 months. The youth from the Target RECLAIM and DYS groups were matched on key characteristics of sex, race, age, county, and risk level using nearest neighbor propensity score matching with replacement (PSM)⁶. This method was selected because it allowed for participants to be matched on a single propensity score and alleviated the challenge of matching based on multiple covariates (Guo & Fraser, 2015).

Variables

There are a variety of data elements necessary to determine if the Targeted RECLAIM programs are effective in diverting youth from DYS. These data elements are described below.

Background Characteristics. First, key demographics and background factors were

⁶ Nearest neighbor PSM with replacement was selected because while it may increase variance, it keeps the bias low and is the most common approach (Grilli & Rampichini, 2011).

collected to describe the samples and then match them on key characteristics. Therefore, from DYS and the county level reports, age, sex, race, risk level, offense severity, referring county, and completion status (successful or unsuccessful) was collected. For the purpose of this study, age was measured at the time of admission to DYS or Targeted RECLAIM, sex was classified as male or female, and race was defined as white or non-white. The risk level of each youth in the sample was collected from the county level reports, the Ohio Youth Risk Assessment System (OYAS) Database, and the Ohio Department of Youth Services.⁷ The OYAS database houses the risk assessment data for youth served by the juvenile justice system across the state of Ohio beginning in year 2009. The OYAS is the risk/need assessment tool required by the State to assess eligibility for placement into Targeted RECLAIM. The OYAS offers juvenile justice actors the ability to assess youth at various decision points across the juvenile justice system and is comprised of the 5 tools listed in Chapter 2. Not all youth were assessed with the OYAS as some counties used a short standardized Risk/Need tool and the 2009-2010 DYS comparison sample youth were assessed with the Youthful Level of Service Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI).

The risk level was defined as low or high (regardless of which tool was used) because when data was examined it was clear there were only two groups of youth. Therefore, the risk levels of the samples were collapsed so that low risk youth remained in the low risk category but moderate and high-risk youth were combined into one category (high-risk). This method was chosen due to the fact that youth across the samples were assessed with several different risk tools within the OYAS suite as well as the YLS/CMI and the general risk/need tool. It was not feasible to use the actual raw scores because each tool has different items, scoring, and cut-off levels. Furthermore, the counties made their program placement decisions based on the risk level

⁷ Appendix A provides a table of the frequencies of each tool used to assess risk in both samples.

and not the raw assessment score; making the risk level more meaningful in these analyses.

The offense severity of each youth in the Targeted RECLAIM sample for calendar years 2009-2013 were gathered from the local participating counties.⁸ Offense severity was defined as unruly, misdemeanor, or felony. The referring county was defined as the county where the youth was charged and adjudicated on the instant offense as was collected from the county level reports as well as DYS. Finally, the completion status type was defined as a successful or unsuccessful termination from a Targeted RECLAIM program and was collected from county level reports.

Recidivism. Recidivism is the outcome of interest in this study and is defined here as any incarceration to DYS or DRC during the follow-up period. This definition was selected because one of the major purposes of Targeted RECLAIM is to reduce the number of incarcerations in the juvenile and adult prison systems. Follow up commenced the day a youth was placed in a Targeted RECLAIM program or released from DYS. This gave a range in follow-up between 2.3-4.3 years; with no less than a 27-month follow-up for any youth in the sample. Time at risk was controlled for in the above analyses by limiting the follow-up period to 2.3 years (27 months) for all youth.

Propensity Score Matching and Analyses. To compare these two groups, the first step involved compiling the complete sample for each group from the data sources noted above. First, the county level reports were used to develop a list of Targeted RECLAIM youth for each county. Those lists were then returned to the respective county for confirmation. A county representative confirmed each youth and their key characteristics, adding or deleting any youth as necessary. Once completed, the final list was sent back to UC. The DYS sample was obtained from DYS. The OYAS risk level was then confirmed through the OYAS automated database or

⁸ Data were not originally collected as part of the Targeted RECLAIM data collection protocol between the counties, DYS, and partnering universities for CY2011. Data was requested from counties after the fact; however, 202 cases remain missing.

DYS (for control group youth). The risk level was collected from the risk assessment conducted closest to the date of admission (whether to DYS or a Targeted Program). Risk levels determined by the YLS/CMI or the Risk Need tool were unable to be double-checked. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the full sample including the overall risk level, offense severity⁹, age, sex, race, and referring county for each youth. Completion status was included for the Targeted RECLAIM sample.

The second step involved matching the samples on the key characteristics of age, sex, race, referring county, and risk level. As noted above, nearest neighbor propensity score matching with replacement was used as it allowed for participants to be matched on a single propensity score and alleviated the challenge of matching based on multiple covariates (Guo & Fraser, 2015). Furthermore, PSM attempts to reduce the bias that can be the result of confounding variables such as risk, sex, age, and race. To alleviate this possibility, PSM creates a sample of treated units that is comparable on key covariates to a sample that did not receive treatment (Grilli & Rampichini, 2011). In this way, a propensity score is estimated to consider the probability of being treated given an observed key characteristic(s). Observations with the same (or nearest) propensity score are therefore considered to be on average observationally identical (Grilli & Rampichini, 2011). In this case, the key characteristics, covariates, were risk, age, sex, race, and referring county. STATA® 14 .1 was used to conduct the PSM and create two groups that are of similar age, sex, race, risk level and referring county. To match on referring county each of the original, big 6 counties, remained a separate category, but the smaller counties were combined into one category. For example, Targeted RECLAIM youth in Cuyahoga County were matched to youth from Cuyahoga County who were placed in DYS. However, a Targeted RECLAIM youth from Lorain County could have been matched to any of the Expanded

⁹ Offense Severity is only provided for the Targeted RECLAIM sample.

Targeted RECLAIM counties and not necessarily a Lorain youth. In this way, a propensity score was estimated that statistically balanced the covariates between the Targeted RECLAIM and DYS youth. To check the balancing property of the estimated propensity score, the means for the experimental and control groups were compared for all covariates. The t tests and abs(bias) showed that the means were not statistically significant from zero and there was no evidence of bias between the two samples indicating the two groups. Subsamples were then matched using single nearest-neighbor matching with replacement so that a DYS youth could be matched to more than one Targeted Reclaim youth¹⁰. As a result, each Targeted RECLAIM youth was matched with a DYS youth who had the closest propensity score. This method of matching with replacement was selected because it minimizes bias across samples despite having the potential to increase variance.

Once the samples were matched, the third step involved using STATA 14.1® to compare the recidivism rates of the treated and matched comparison groups to determine if participating in a Targeted RECLAIM service influences the likelihood for incarceration. To do this the number of incarcerations (to either DYS or DRC) among Targeted RECLAIM youth were compared to the number of incarcerations (to either DYS or DRC) among DYS youth. The percentage of youth who were incarcerated was calculated for each group and then chi-square analyses were conducted to determine if the incarcerations were significantly different between groups. Once the overall comparisons were made, the same procedure was followed to examine any incarcerations among the low- and high-risk youth separately.

To explore the difference in recidivism between the Targeted RECLAIM and DYS youth more thoroughly, odds ratios for low- and high-risk youth were calculated using STATA 14.1®.

¹⁰ Recall that this procedure was selected because while it may increase variance, it keeps the bias low and is the most common approach (Grilli & Rampichini, 2011).

The odds ratio determined how much more or less likely a low- or high-risk youth was to be committed to DYS/DRC based on their participation in Targeted RECLAIM programming (or not) (Norusis (2008). Finally, using STATA 14.1® the average treatment effect was calculated to determine the expected effect on recidivism if youth in the juvenile justice population were randomly assigned to Targeted RECLAIM. In this way, the average treatment effect provided the overall effect that Targeted RECLAIM had on recidivism (any incarceration to DYS/DRC) and its ability to keep youth out of DYS and DRC.

In summary, the methodology outlined above provides the State of Ohio as well as other interested stakeholders, insight into the answer to the empirical question: is Targeted RECLAIM an effective strategy to reduce commitments and divert youth to their own local communities? Carefully examining these two research questions and adding to the empirical basis of Targeted RECLAIM will highlight the value of Targeted RECLAIM to the juvenile justice system.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter will present the results of the two identified research questions. Each question will be restated and the findings will be presented. Following the presentation of the results will be a summary of the main findings.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

To answer the first research question, *has Targeted RECLAIM been successful in reducing commitments to DYS?*, a variety of data were examined, including admissions to DYS, felony adjudications, waivers to adult court, CCF placements, and the overall juvenile population in Ohio.

Admissions to DYS

First, admissions to DYS were examined for each county. Figure 4.1 shows the trends in the number of admissions to DYS for all 88 counties between July 1, 2005 and June 31, 2014. Total admissions increased between FY06 and FY07, but declined every year thereafter reaching a low of 439 in FY14.

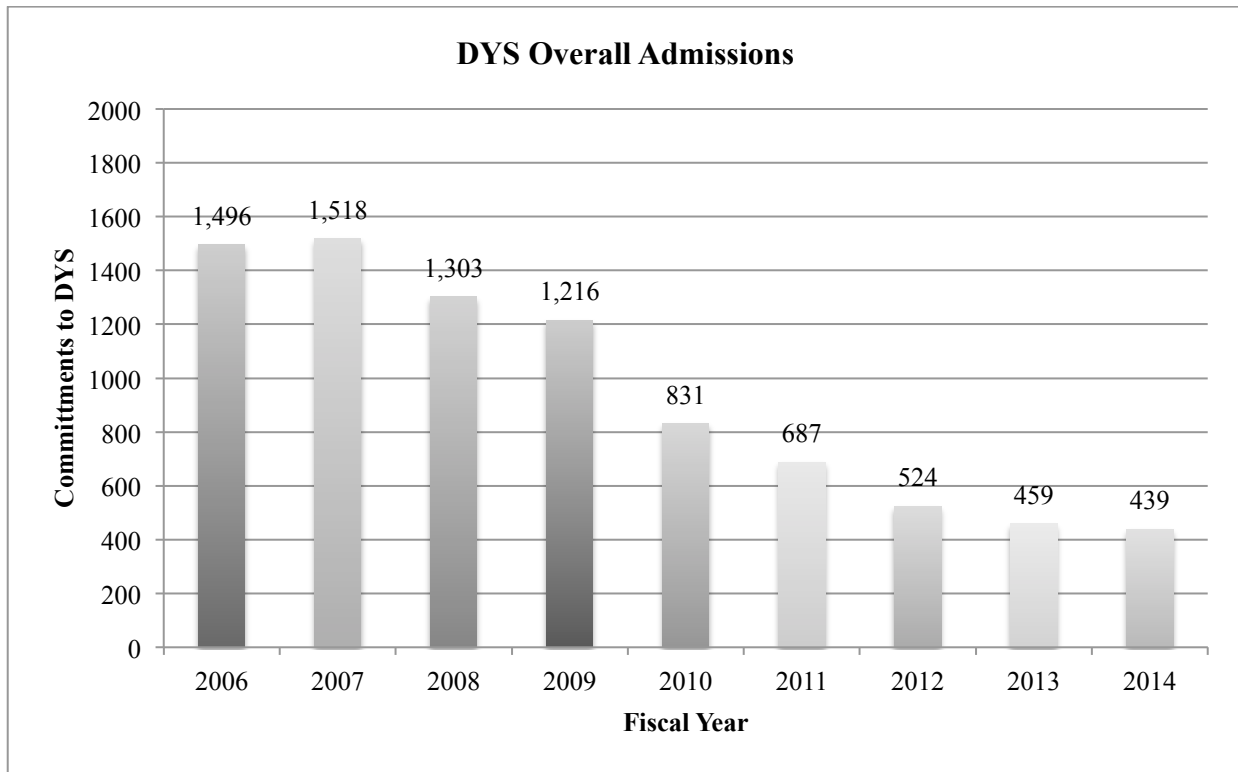


Figure 4.1
DYS Overall Admissions

Figure 4.2 compares the trends in the number of admissions for all counties, Targeted RECLAIM counties, and non-Targeted RECLAIM counties for FY06 through FY14. As can be seen from this figure, Targeted RECLAIM counties decreased the number of overall commitments during the first two years of Targeted RECLAIM (FY10, 657 youth and FY11, 540 youth). With the addition of 8 other Targeted RECLAIM counties, the admissions still remained relatively low (412 youth) and continued to decrease in FY13 with the addition of one more county and again FY14 (309 and 334). The nonparticipating counties generally decreased as well between FY06 and FY14; however, there was a slight increase during fiscal years 2012 and 2013 (112 and 150) before decreasing again in FY2014 (105 youth). While a general downward trend for both Targeted RECLAIM counties and non-Targeted RECLAIM counties was found, in FY10 when Targeted RECLAIM was initiated, the Targeted RECLAIM counties showed a 34.0

percent decrease whereas the other nonparticipating counties showed a 20.9 percent increase in admissions.

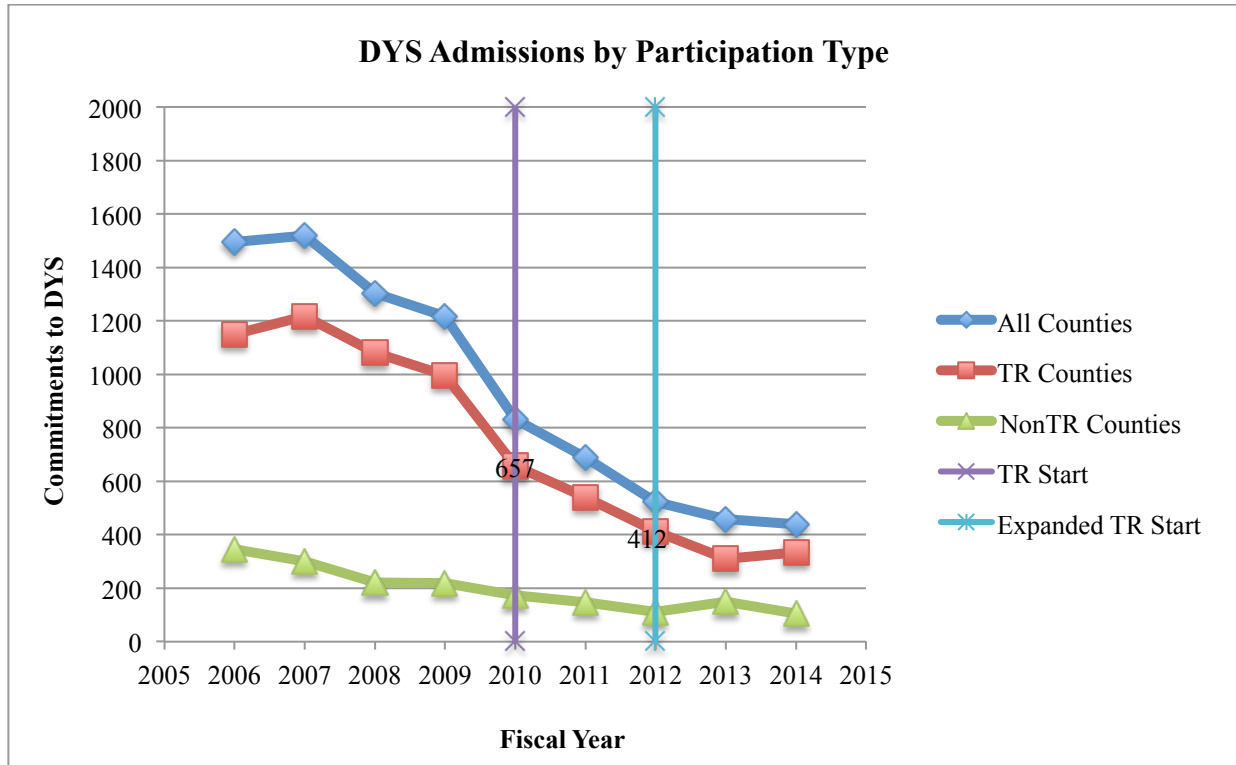


Figure 4.2
DYS Admissions by Participation Type

As noted in Chapter 2, Targeted RECLAIM was first initiated with the six largest counties in the state of Ohio because these six counties were responsible for committing the most youth to DHS during FY09. After enrolling in Targeted RECLAIM, these counties generally decreased their admissions year after year. Figure 4.3 shows the number of DHS admissions for each initial Targeted RECLAIM county from FY06 through FY14. Between years FY06 and FY09 these counties experienced ups and downs in their commitments to DHS. After FY10, the first year of Targeted RECLAIM participation, however, each of the counties decreased the number of youth they committed to DHS. Moreover, between FY10 and FY13, all but Lucas

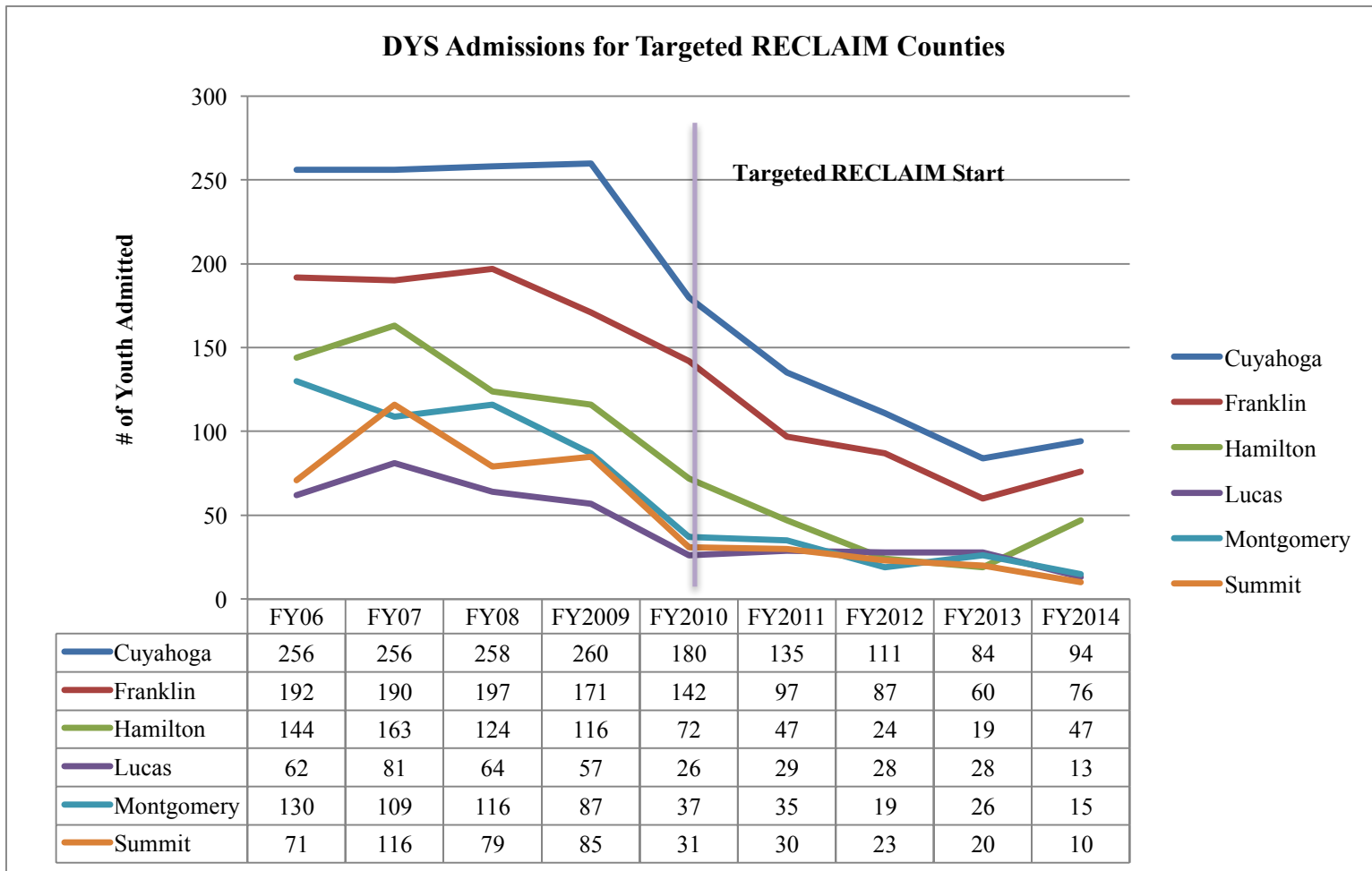


Figure 4.3
DYS Admissions for Targeted RCLAIM Counties

County in FY11 (29 youth) and Montgomery County in FY13 (26 youth) decreased their admissions. Finally, in FY14, three counties including Cuyahoga (94 youth), Franklin (76 youth), and Hamilton (47 youth) increased their commitment total while Lucas (13 youth), Montgomery (15 youth), and Summit (10 youth) counties decreased their commitment totals.

Figure 4.4 shows the admissions for the Expanded Targeted RECLAIM counties between fiscal years 2006 through 2014. These data show that the admissions for the additional counties were generally inconsistent prior to the start of Expanded Targeted RECLAIM in FY12. After inception of Expanded Targeted RECLAIM, the majority of the counties decreased their admissions. Noting that Butler County did not begin participating in Targeted RECLAIM until FY13, they demonstrated a decrease in admissions during that first year (FY12 with 11 admissions and FY13 with 5 admissions). Also in the first year of participating, Lorain (increased by 6 youth) and Trumbull (increased by 1 youth) counties both increased their admissions to DYS. However, after three full years of participation, all the Expanded Targeted RECLAIM counties had reduced the number of youth they annually committed to DYS. For example, Ashtabula decreased their commitments from 37 youth in FY11 to 6 youth in FY14, an 83.8% reduction.

The trends highlighted in Figures 4.3 and 4.4 show a decrease in youth commitments, especially after the inception of Targeted RECLAIM; however, these data do not give the full picture. It is also necessary to look at the overall commitment rates by participation in Targeted RECLAIM. In this way, the overall commitments rates per 100 youth were calculated for each Targeted RECLAIM county as well as for each participation group (Targeted, Expanded, and nonparticipating). Figure 4.5 shows the commitment rates per 100 youth for the initial Targeted RECLAIM counties. Notably, after the first year of Targeted RECLAIM (FY10), each county

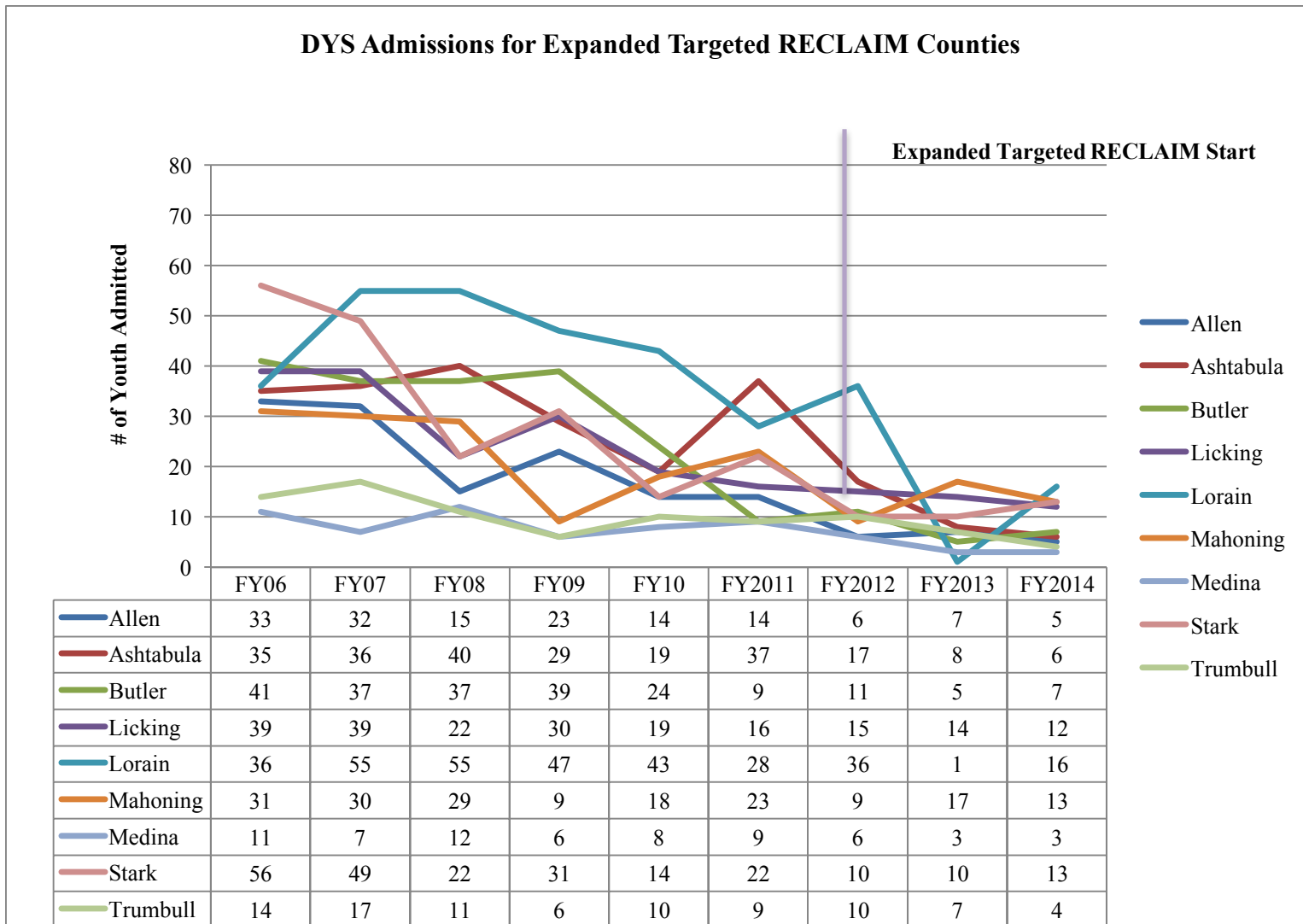


Figure 4.4
DYS Admissions for Expanded Targeted RECLAIM

showed a substantial decrease in the rate that they placed youth in DYS. This trend held in five of the six counties during the second year of participation. Notably, Lucas County appears to increase their commitment rates ever so slightly each year after joining Targeted RECLAIM until FY14 when the rate decreases substantially. Excluding Lucas County, all but one of the counties decreased again in FY12 when Cuyahoga saw a very slight increase (14.8 to 15.0) in the rate in which youth were committed to DYS. The same trend was found in FY13 when all the counties but Montgomery County (increased from 5.9 to 7.9). In FY14, the majority of the counties again decreased their rates. However it should be noted that Franklin and Hamilton's rates increased (12.1 to 16.4 and 4.8 to 11.2 respectively). Despite these variations, these data

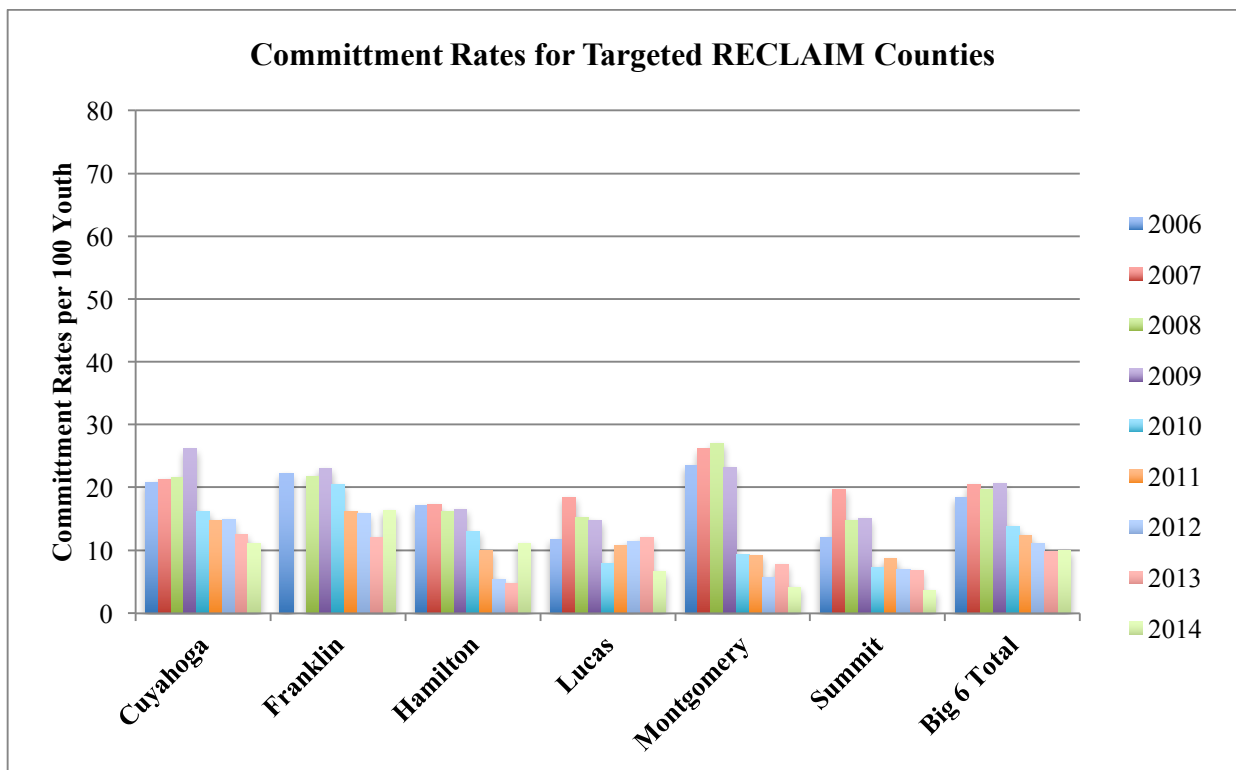


Figure 4.5
Commitment Rates for Targeted RECLAIM Counties

show that all six counties decreased their commitment rates from the onset of participation in Targeted RECLAIM. Specifically, the Targeted RECLAIM cohort reduced their rate of commitment from 20.7 in FY09 to 10.1 in FY14.

Figure 4.6 shows the commitment rates of the Expanded Targeted RECLAIM group and highlights the finding that these counties show a slightly different trend than the initial Targeted RECLAIM cohort. Specifically, the Expanded Targeted RECLAIM participating counties show an overall initial decrease in commitment rates after joining the initiative (in FY12 for all counties except Butler which joined in FY13), but then an increase in the years to follow (FY13 and FY14). Despite this increase in commitment rates for the counties combined, there are worthy changes to highlight among counties. For example and most notable, Ashtabula County decreased their commitment rate from 75.5 in FY2011 to 28.8 in FY12 after the first year of participation and then to 18.2 in FY14. Medina, Stark, and Trumbull counties also demonstrated decreases in commitment rates after joining Targeted RECLAIM. Allen, Butler, Licking, and Lorain counties showed variation in commitment rates over the years, but have an overall decline between FY11 and FY14. Finally, while Mahoning County initially decreased their commitment rate after one year of participation, the rates increased each year after (FY13 at 13.6 and FY14 at 15.7).

While the data show that admissions and commitment rates were generally on a decline, it was also important to examine the number of youth adjudicated of a felony level offense, the number of youth waived to adult court or placed in a CCF, as well as the overall number of juveniles in the state to determine if a similar change was occurring, and therefore contributing to the decrease in overall DYS commitments.

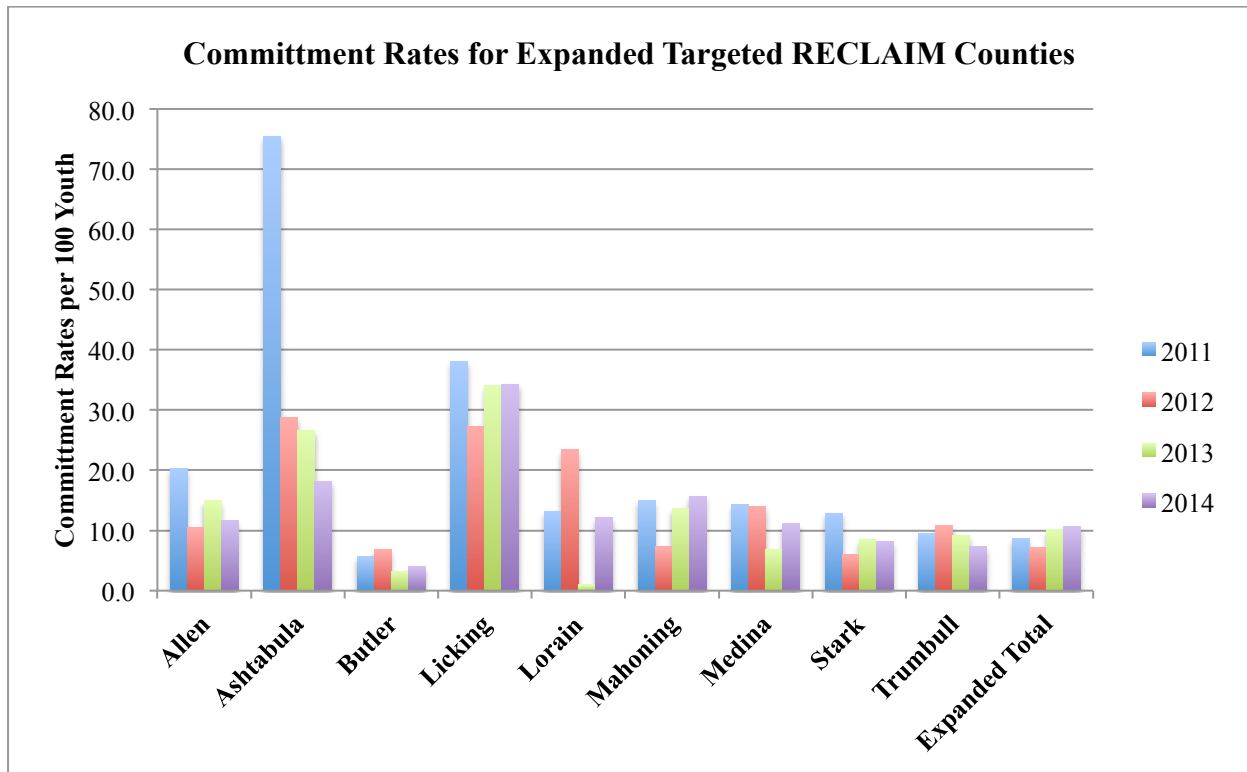


Figure 4.6
Expanded Targeted RECLAIM Commitment Rates

Youth Adjudicated for Felonies

In the state of Ohio, legislation during the early 80s dictated that misdemeanants and status offenders be served in the community and placement in DYS be reserved for only those youth adjudicated of a felony level offense (Radcliff, 1982). Thus, examining the number of youth adjudication before, during, and after the start of Targeted RECLAIM can provide a good indication of the pool of youth eligible for placement in DYS. Figure 4.7 shows the number of youth adjudicated for felony level offenses across participation in Targeted RECLAIM for all 88 counties between fiscal years 2006 and 2014. These data show that regardless of their participation type, felony level adjudications were decreasing since FY06. However, there are some variations across groups and years. Notably, in the Targeted RECLAIM counties the

number of youth adjudications decreased from 4587 to 2523 over the 9-year span, but did slightly increase (2401 adjudications to 2523 adjudications) between FY13 and FY14. The Expanded Targeted RECLAIM group experienced a less drastic decrease (1617 to 744 adjudications) with a leveling off in recent years. Finally, the non-Targeted RECLAIM counties continually declined with an overall decrease from 2886 adjudications to 1407 adjudications over the years.

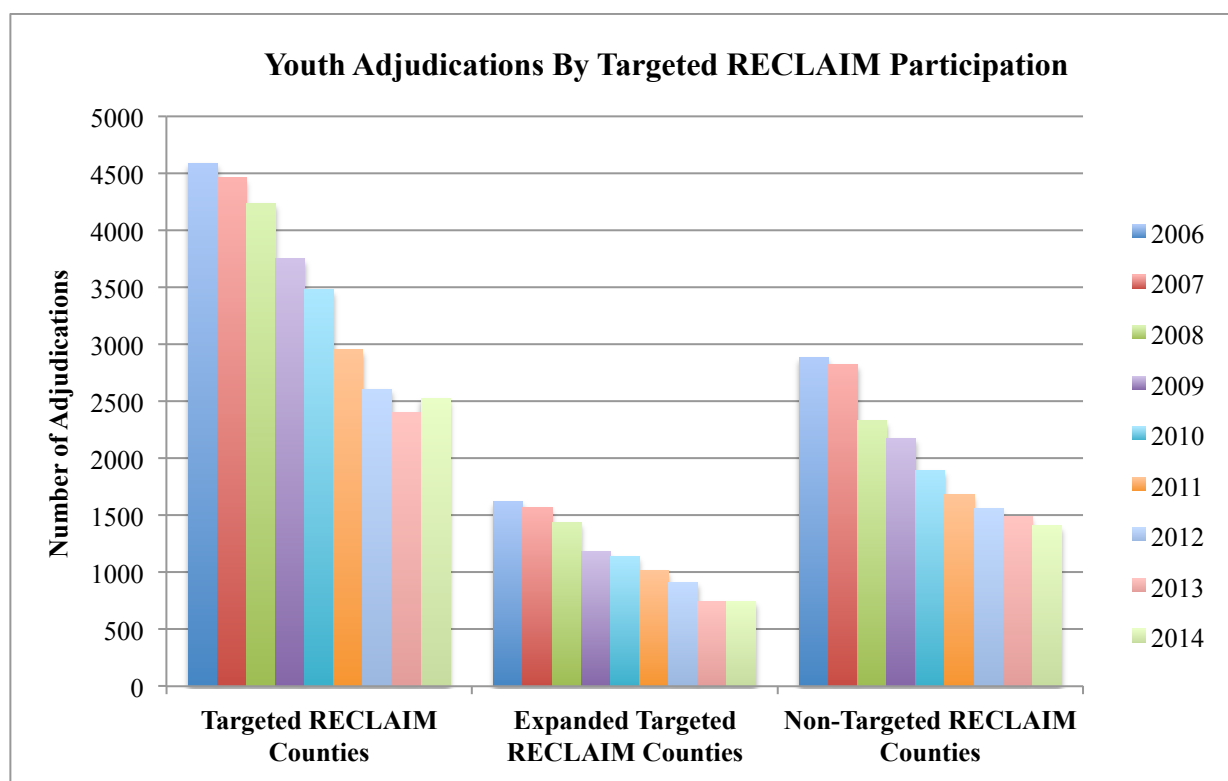


Figure 4.7
Youth Adjudications by Targeted RECLAIM Participation

Exploring felony level adjudications along with commitments to DYS across the counties further, Table 4.1 compares the average percentage change in adjudications and commitments to DYS for Targeted RECLAIM and non-Targeted RECLAIM counties for fiscal years 2006 through 2014. Table 4.3 shows that there has been a general decline in both the number of youth

adjudicated of a felony offense and the number of youth committed to DYS between FY06 and FY14. However, a careful examination of this table reveals additional findings. First, at the onset of Targeted RECLAIM, the initial six counties only adjudicated 7.2 percent less youth than the year before, but reduced commitments by an average of 37.1 percent. Likewise, overall for the initial Targeted RECLAIM counties, while their adjudications decreased by 45.0 percent, their commitments reduced by 70.2 percent between FY06 and FY14. A similar trend is found when examining the Expanded Targeted RECLAIM counties. In this way, between FY11 and FY12, the number of youth adjudicated within all nine counties decreased by 10.1 percent whereas the commitments decreased by 28.1 percent. A similar trend is found between FY12 and FY13, whereas between FY13 and F14 these counties increased commitments by 9.7 percent while the number of youth adjudicated did not change. Much like Targeted RECLAIM, the Expanded Counties decreased their commitments to DYS by 73.3 percent between FY06 and FY14 while only decreasing the adjudications by 45.0 percent. Both the findings of the Targeted RECLAIM and Expanded Targeted RECLAIM groups follow the general trend of the non-participating counties. Among the other 73 counties, both commitments and adjudications declined between FY06 (12.8, 2.1 respectively) and FY14 (69.6, 51.2 respectively).

Table 4.1

Average Percentage Change in Number of Felony Youth Adjudications and Youth Committed to DYS by Fiscal Year and Participation Type

Group	Average Percentage Change								
	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2006-2014
Targeted RECLAIM									
Commitments	-7.0	-9.4	-7.4	-37.1	-23.6	-21.7	-18.8	-7.6	-70.2
Adjudications	-2.8	-5.0	-11.5	-7.2	-15.1	-11.8	-7.8	+5.1	-45.0
Expanded Targeted RECLAIM									
Commitments	+2.0	-19.5	-9.5	-23.2	-1.2	-28.1	-40.0	+9.7	-73.3
Adjudications	-3.0	-8.7	-17.7	-3.6	-10.6	-10.1	-18.5	0.0	-54.0
Non-Targeted RECLAIM									
Commitments	-12.8	-26.2	-9.0	-20.9	-15.5	-23.8	+33.9	-30.0	-69.6
Adjudications	-2.1	-17.6	-6.6	-12.9	-11.0	-7.7	-4.2	-5.6	-51.2

CCF Placements

In the state of Ohio, DYS is not the only placement option for youth who are moderate to high risk to reoffend with a felony level adjudication. The local courts have the option to place a youth at one of the 12 community correctional facilities across the state. Therefore, as part of this study, it was also important to examine the yearly admission data for the CCFs to determine if local courts were simply placing youth at a locally run CCF instead of DYS or a Targeted RECLAIM program. Figure 4.8 shows that CCF admissions have ranged from as high as 578 youth a year to as low as 455 youth between FY06 and FY14. FY12 saw the greatest number of admissions, whereas FY14 saw the least.

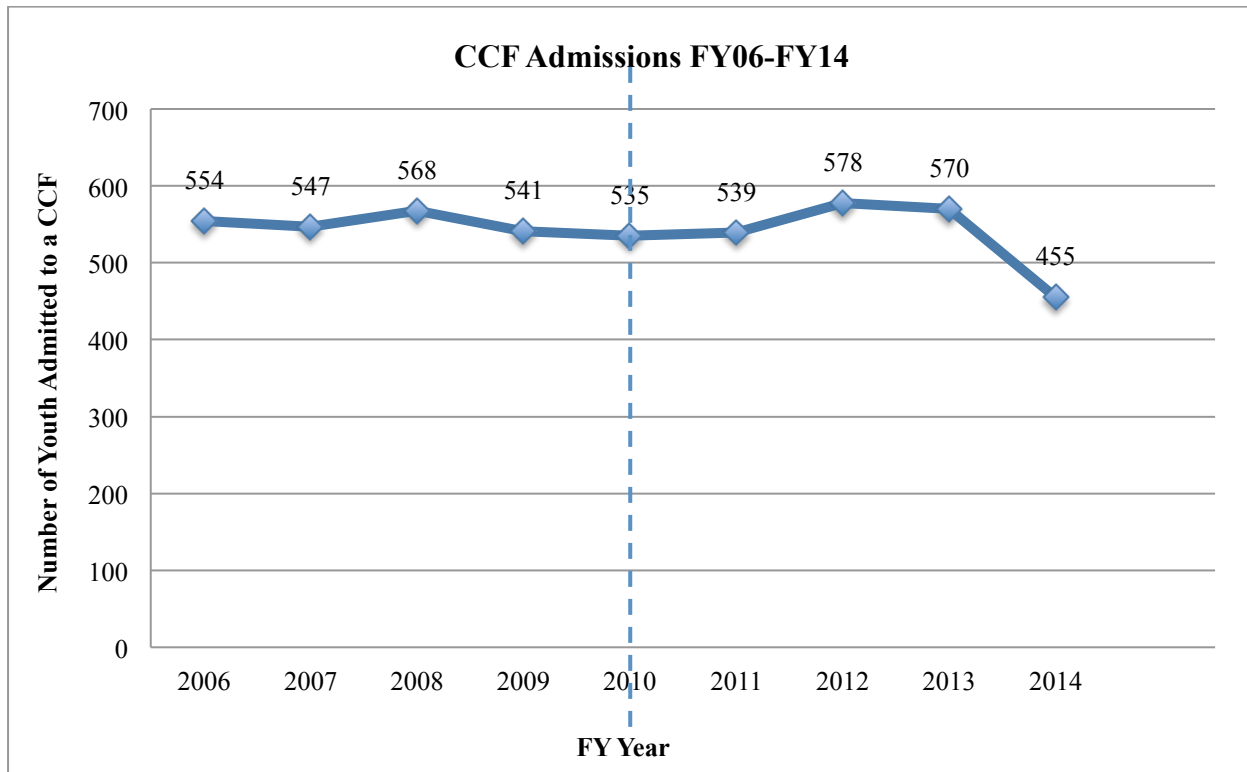


Figure 4.8
CCF Admissions for Fiscal Years 2006-2014

Table 4.2 shows that while the majority of the Targeted RECLAIM counties did not consistently rely on placement in a CCF as an alternative to DYS, those that did saw an uptake in the first year after enrolling in Targeted RECLAIM. Interestingly, Cuyahoga County did not historically rely on CCF placements as a mean to address juvenile delinquency until FY10 likely because they could place youth at the Cuyahoga County Youth Development Center until it closed in 2007. Overall, Targeted RECLAIM counties increased their CCF placements during fiscal years 2010-2012 after the initiation of Targeted RECLAIM before decreasing in fiscal years 2013 and 2014.

Table 4.2
CCF Admissions for Targeted RECLAIM Counties

County	Fiscal Year								
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Cuyahoga	0	0	0	0	6	31	20	29	37
Franklin	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hamilton	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	4	5
Lucas	45	41	36	54	71	73	55	51	38
Montgomery	78	73	81	77	78	78	142	99	55
Summit	0	0	1	13	16	6	6	9	11
Total	124	116	120	144	171	189	224	192	146

*FY12 Montgomery County admissions include 82 admissions to CAS short-term corrections placement

*FY13 Montgomery County admissions include 42 admissions to CAS short-term corrections placement

When only examining the Expanded Targeted RECLAIM counties in Table 4.3, a similar trend was found in that not all counties relied on CCF placements for youth. However, of those that did, placements generally increased between FY11 and the first year of participation, FY12. Overall, the Expanded RECLAIM counties increased in FY12 and FY13, but decreased again in FY14.

Table 4.3
CCF Admissions for Expanded Targeted RECLAIM Counties

County	Fiscal Year						
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Allen	14	11	8	8	12	7	3
Ashtabula	1	0	0	0	6	5	3
Butler	78	64	54	52	51	57	42
Licking	12	16	12	13	16	15	10
Lorain	5	4	5	5	8	6	4
Mahoning	1	0	0	0	7	18	16
Medina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stark	28	19	13	18	15	12	11
Trumbull	0	0	0	0	0	1	6
Total	139	114	92	96	115	121	95

Finally, the average percentage change in CCF admissions by fiscal year for each level of participation in Targeted RECLAIM was examined. Table 4.4 shows that the Targeted RECLAIM counties increased their admissions during the two initial years of participation in Targeted RECLAIM before decreasing again in later years. Further, the Expanded Targeted RECLAIM counties increased the CCF admissions during the first year of participation but decreased the very next year. Finally, the nonparticipating counties appeared to fluctuate between increases and decreases in their CCF admissions over the same time period.

Table 4.4

Average Percentage Change in CCF Admissions by Fiscal Year and Participation Type

Group	Average Percentage Change				
	2009-2010 (%)	2010-2011 (%)	2011-2012 (%)	2012-2013 (%)	2013-2014 (%)
Targeted RECLAIM Counties	+18.8	+10.5	+18.5	-14.3	-24.0
Expanded Counties				+5.2	-11.8
Nonparticipating counties	+3.9	-6.6	-5.9	+7.5	-16.7

Waivers to Adult Court

Given that the Ohio law allows youth convicted of any felony to be eligible for bind over to adult court (discretionary waiver) or youth who commit murder, rape, robbery, aggravated arson or burglary so long as they meet the statutory requirements to be bound over (mandatory waiver), it is important to assess if counties were “beating” Targeted RECLAIM by simply shifting youth from the juvenile system to the adult system (O.R.C Tit. XXI, Sec. 2151.26). Therefore, it was necessary to examine the number of youth waivers to the adult criminal justice system. Figure 4.9 shows the number of youth transferred to adult court for all 88 counties in Ohio between fiscal years 2004 and 2014. These data show a general downward trend across all counties. Targeted RECLAIM counties showed the greatest number of youth transfers each year; however between FY09 (300 transfers) and FY10 (211 transfers) and then again between FY11 (220 transfers) and FY12 (158 transfers) there were notable decreases. The trend held for the Targeted RECLAIM counties in FY13 (126 transfers) and FY14 (117 transfers). The Expanded Targeted RECLAIM counties generally waived the fewest amount of youth to the adult court with an all-time low of 14 transfers in FY14. The non-Targeted RECLAIM counties showed a general trend of small increases and decreases in waivers until FY09 and FY10 when the number of youth transfers increases to 62 in both fiscal years. For the nonparticipating counties, the

number of waivers then decreased substantially in FYII, and continued decreasing until FY14 (27 transfers) when again, an increase occurred.

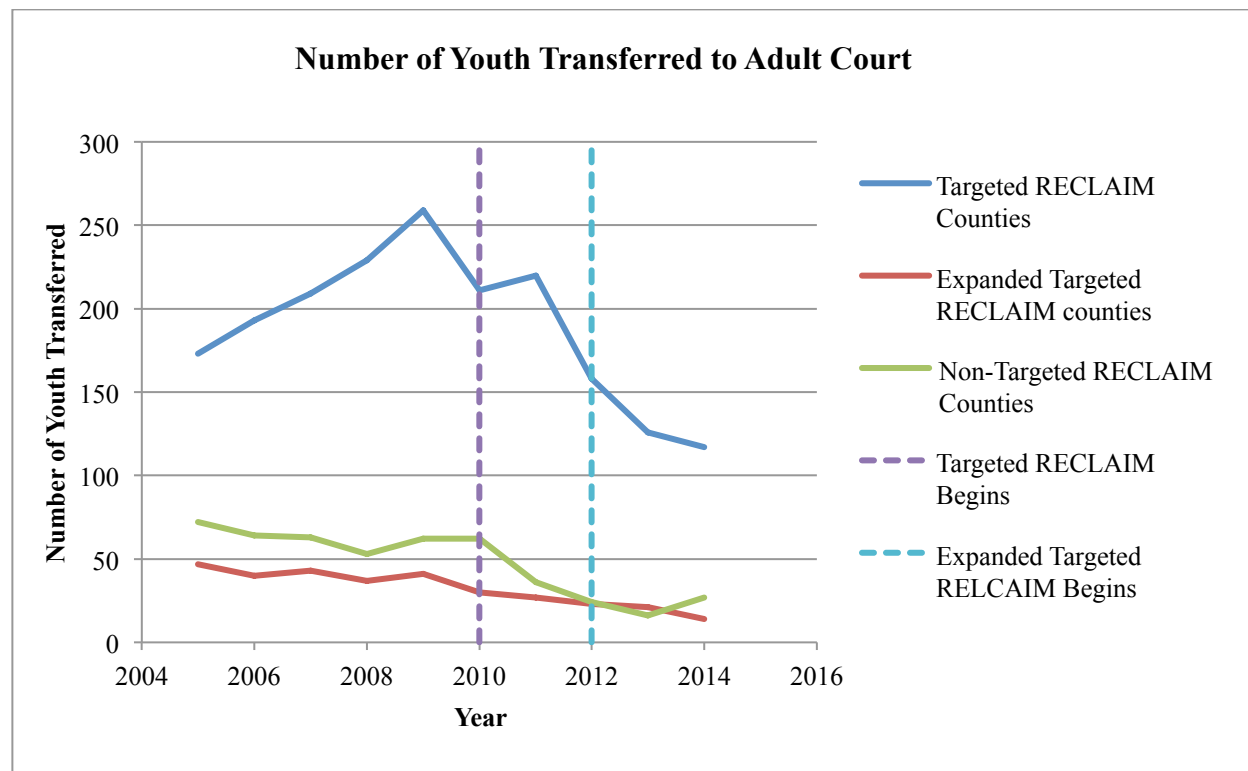


Figure 4.9
Juvenile Transfers to Adult Court

Population of Youth in Ohio

Noting the general decreases in adjudications, placements in a CCF, and waivers to adult court in conjunction with the overall reduced admissions to DYS across the counties, it was important to consider the population of juveniles in the state. It could be that the decreases noted were due to a decline in the number of youth ages 10-19 in the state of Ohio. Figure 4.10 shows the population of juveniles between the ages of 10 and 19 for fiscal years 2007 through 2014. As can be seen from the chart, these data show that the number of youth in this age range has been fairly consistent over the years. There is evidence of a slight increase each year between 2008

and 2010 and then a decrease from 2010 through 2011 before rising slightly in 2012 and again in 2013 for the non-Targeted RECLAIM counties; whereas the Expanded Targeted RECLAIM counties show a very slow decline after 2009 until 2013 when the number of juveniles increased. Finally, Targeted RECLAIM counties experienced a slight increase in juveniles ages 10-19 between 2007 and 2010 and then again between 2011-2013.

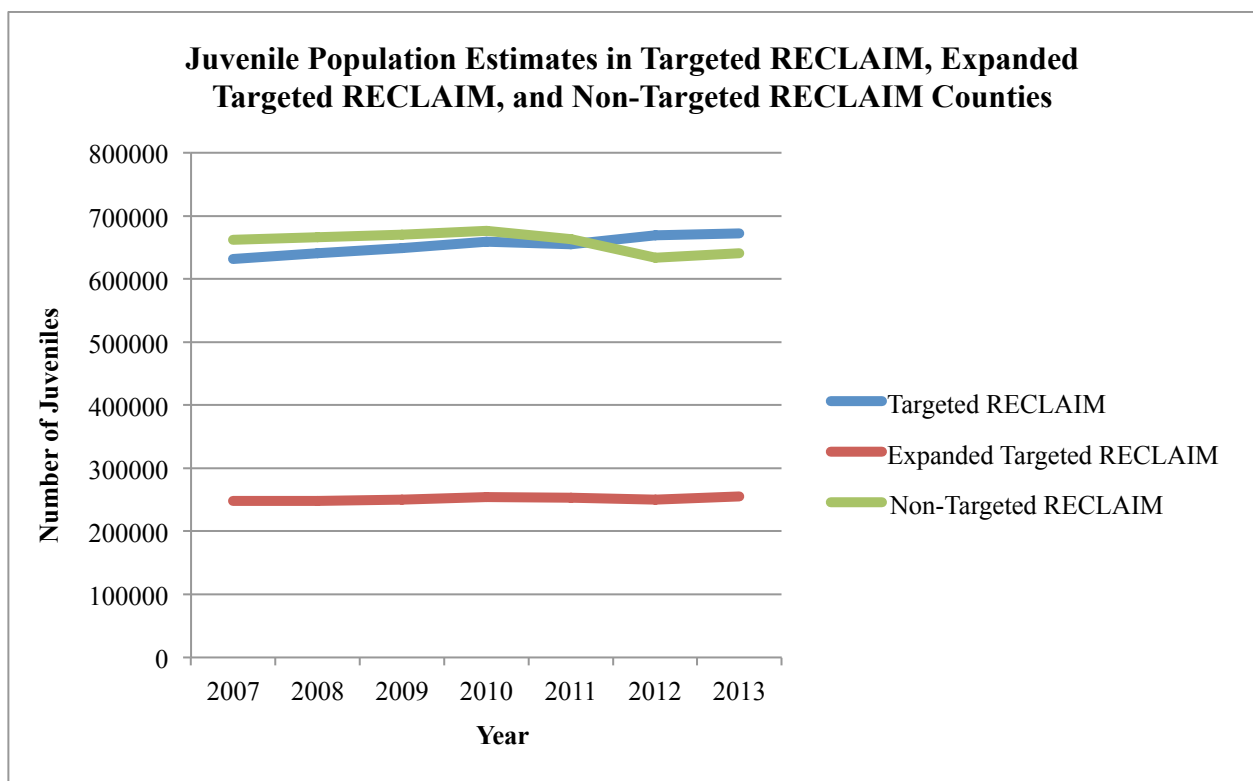


Figure 4.10
Population of Juveniles in Targeted RECLAIM and Non-Targeted RECLAIM Counties

Length of Stay

When considering any new initiative it is important to assess for and minimize any unintended consequences. Therefore, it was important to examine the length of stay for youth released from DYS between fiscal years 2006 and 2014. Examining this data assesses whether or

not youth, while being placed less, were being confined for longer lengths of time. Figure 4.11 shows that this is not the case; the average length of stay between FY06 and FY14 was fairly consistent at an average 11.68 months (10.9-12.6). In FY10, the year immediately following the inception of Targeted RECLAIM, the length of stay increased slightly to an average 11.8 months, and then increased again in FY11 to an average of 12.6 months. Between fiscal years 2012 and 2013, the average length of stay remained fairly stable at 11.8 and 12.2 months even with the increase in 9 additional Targeted RECLAIM counties. In FY14, the average length of stay decreased by a little more than 1 month (1.3) and then increased again in FY15 by almost 2 months for an average length of stay of 12.6 months.

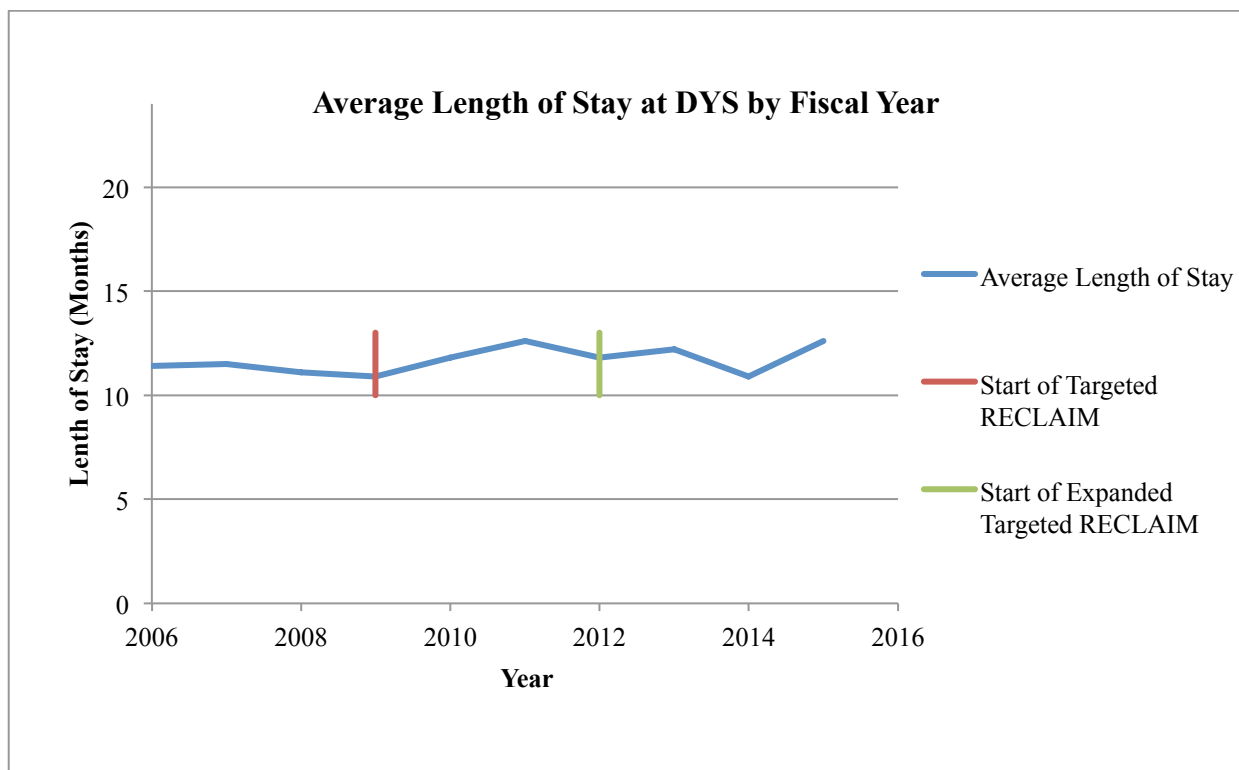


Figure 4.11
Average Length of Stay at DYS by Fiscal Year

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

To answer the second research question, *are Targeted RECLAIM programs effective at diverting youth from DYS?*, several different steps were taken to assess Targeted RECLAIM's ability to divert youth from DYS initially (through initial placement decisions) and overtime (recidivism reduction). First, the demographics of the Targeted RECLAIM youth were analyzed to provide a clear picture of the type of youth being served by Targeted RECLAIM services during 2009 through 2013. This included a careful look at the risk level and offense severity of each youth. Related, the data were examined to determine if Targeted RECLAIM resulted in net-widening by placing youth into services that were not appropriate based upon their risk and needs. Second, a quasi-experimental design was used to compare youth diverted to Targeted RECLAIM during 2009-2012 to those youth exiting a DYS institution during the same time period to determine if the Targeted RECLAIM programs were effective in reducing recidivism and ultimately diverting youth from DYS over time.

A Snapshot of the Targeted RECLAIM Youth

Table 4. 5 shows that the majority of the Targeted RECLAIM sample was comprised of boys of color (91.1% and 66.6% respectively). Girls accounted for only 8.9 percent of the sample. Youth participating in Targeted RECLAIM services ranged between 10 years of age to 22 years with the average age of 15.8 years old. The majority of youth was adjudicated for a felony offense (79.8% of the youth) and was of moderate (43.1%) to high (36.4%) risk as measured by the OYAS. On the other hand, less than one third of the Targeted RECLAIM sample was adjudicated of an unruly (2.2%) or misdemeanor (17.8%) charge. The table also provides a summary of the number of youth served by each county through Targeted RECLAIM.

Table 4.5

Characteristics of Youth Served through Targeted RECLAIM between 2009 and 2013

Characteristic	N	%
Male	1539	91.1
Average Age	15.8 (SD .034)	
Non-White ¹¹	1123	66.6
Risk Level ¹²		
Low	336	20.4
Moderate	709	43.1
High	599	36.4
Offense Severity ¹³		
Unruly	34	2.2
Misdemeanor	278	17.8
Felony ¹⁴	1249	79.8
1	125	8.1
2	268	17.3
3	318	20.5
4	295	19.0
5	226	14.6
Violation of Court Order	2	.1
Record Sealed	4	.2
County		
Allen	37	2.2
Ashtabula	150	8.9
Cuyahoga	227	13.4
Franklin	261	15.4
Hamilton	118	7.0
Licking	64	3.8
Lorain	98	5.8
Lucas	120	7.1
Mahoning	38	2.2
Medina	20	1.2
Montgomery	181	10.7

¹¹ Race for five youth was missing from the analyses.

¹² Forty-six youth (2.7%) were missing risk levels and therefore were excluded from these analyses.

¹³ Counties were not required to submit offense severity data during CY2011. Efforts were made to obtain as much of the missing data as possible; however, several cases were still missing. Overall the years, 125 (7.4%) cases were missing offense severity data.

¹⁴ As part of the missing offense severity data, 139 cases (8.2%) were missing felony level data.

Table 4.5

Characteristics of Youth Served through Targeted RECLAIM between 2009 and 2013

Characteristic	N	%
Stark	41	2.4
Summit	280	16.6
Trumbull	55	3.3
TR Completion Status ¹⁵		
Successful	1051	70.3
Unsuccessful	331	22.1
Neutral	114	7.6
Total Number of Youth	1734	

Summit County served the greatest number of youth (280) through Targeted RECLAIM services between 2009 and 2013, with Franklin (261) and Cuyahoga (227) counties not far behind. Medina County served the least number of youth (20), but notably did not begin participation until 2012. It follows then that the majority of the Targeted RECLAIM sample is comprised of youth from Summit, Franklin, and Cuyahoga counties. Finally, more than half of the sample (70.3 percent) successfully completed their Targeted RECLAIM program.

Initial Diversion through Targeted RECLAIM

While it is notable that youth were diverted from DYS since the inception of Targeted RECLAIM, it is also important to make sure the appropriate youth were placed into Targeted RECLAM services. The risk principle is clear that higher risk youth should be the target of interventions (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). However, risk level is not the only factor judges consider when sentencing youth. In fact, offense severity is often a critical factor in sentencing

¹⁵ Efforts were made to obtain as much of the missing successful completion data as possible; however, 194 (11.5%) cases are missing completion status data.

decisions, as the judiciary has to balance public perception, public safety, and the best interests of the child and family. Juvenile court staff are then often faced with difficult placement decisions when youth who are otherwise low risk (per the OYAS or another standardized risk assessment tool) commit a high level felony.

In this way, the offense severity of the Targeted RECLAIM youth identified as low risk to reoffend was examined. Table 4.6 shows there were 345 low risk youth in the Targeted RECLAIM sample of which 331 had offense severity information. Of those youth, 64.3 percent had a felony adjudication and another 31.3 percent had an unruly or misdemeanor charge.

Table 4.6
Initial Offense Levels of Low-Risk Targeted RECLAIM Youth¹⁶

Level of Initial Offense	N	Percent
Unruly	15	4.6
Misdemeanor	90	27.8
Felony	218	67.3
Record Sealed	1	.3
Total	324	

Examining the felony level offenses of the Targeted RECLAIM youth a little more closely, Table 4.7 reveals that 6.7 percent of the youth were adjudicated of a level 1 felony, 11.0 percent of a level 2, 16.5 percent of a level 3, 16.8 percent of a level 4, and 13 percent of the cases were adjudicated of a level 5 offense. Thus, the majority of the low risk youth who were diverted to Targeted RECLAIM services were adjudicated of a felony level offense (64.3%), with the greatest percentage of cases being either a level 3 or 4 offense.

¹⁶ As noted previously, there is missing offense severity data throughout the sample. In this case, only 3.6% (12 cases) of the data was missing and excluded from the analyses.

Table 4.7
 Felony Levels of Low-Risk Targeted RECLAIM Youth

Felony Level	N	Percent
1	23	7.1
2	38	11.7
3	57	17.6
4	57	17.6
5	42	13.0
Total	324	

While the vast majority of youth served in Targeted RECLAIM were moderate or high risk it is also important to point out that a third of the sample was still relatively non-serious, low risk youth. This means courts were placing youth into Targeted RECLAIM programs who did not meet the eligibility criteria (moderate to high risk to reoffend felony offenders). Exploring this further, data revealed that these low level youth were mainly placed into Targeted RECLAIM from Ashtabula County (60 youth) and Lorain and Licking Counties (22 and 10 youth respectively). Collectively they accounted for 28.4 percent of the low risk risk/non-serious youth.

Long Term Impact of Targeted RECLAIM

Once it was determined that youth were being diverted from DYS to Targeted RECLAIM, it was necessary to then explore the ability of Targeted RECLAIM to keep youth out of DYS. Therefore, a quasi-experimental design was used to compare youth diverted to Targeted RECLAIM between 2009 and 2012 to those youth exiting a DYS institution during the same time period to determine if the Targeted RECLAIM programs are effective in reducing

recidivism and ultimately diverting youth from DYS. The sample was limited to 2009-2012 youth to allow for a longer follow-up period than previous studies and ultimately examine the long-term impact of Targeted RECLAIM services. Recall, the comparison group, DYS youth, was selected because Targeted RECLAIM is an initiative designed to divert youth otherwise appropriate for DYS to local services offered in their home community. Thus, it is quite possible that if it were not for Targeted RECLAIM those youth might otherwise be placed at DYS.

Sample Description

The Targeted RECLAIM sample included all youth participating in Targeted RECLAIM services between 2009 and 2012 whereas the DYS matched comparison sample was derived from all youth released from DYS between 2009 and 2012. Table 4.8 compares the two samples both before and after matching and provides the bias statistics of the differences in the characteristics for the matched and unmatched samples. The table shows that the unmatched samples were significantly different on the majority of the covariates. Specifically, the higher risk older (17 to 18 and 19+) youth were more likely to be included in the DYS sample, whereas younger lower risk youth were more likely to receive Targeted RECLAIM services. The table also shows that youth from Cuyahoga and Hamilton were more likely to be placed at DYS than in Targeted RECLAIM programming. On the other hand, the table shows that youth from Lucas, Montgomery, and Summit counties were more likely to be placed in a Targeted RECLAIM program over DYS. However, once youth were matched¹⁷, the two samples were not significantly different on any of these covariates suggesting that the samples are similar. Upon further examination of the table, the bias statistics for each covariate among the matched samples fall within the suggested range of 0 to 5 percent, although statistic for risk level is slightly higher

¹⁷Recall youth were matched using nearest neighbor PSM with replacement because while it may increase variance, it keeps the bias low and is the most common approach (Grilli & Rampichini, 2011).

Table 4.8
Bias Statistics for Matched and Unmatched Samples

Characteristic	Mean		Bias		t-test
	Treated	Control	% Bias	% Reduction	<i>p</i>
Male					
Unmatched	.92	.94	-5.1		.143
Matched	.92	.93	-1.1	79.0	.808
Non-White					
Unmatched	.71	.74	-5.9		.093
Matched	.71	.70	1.2	79.3	.778
Risk Level ¹⁸					
Unmatched	.81	.77	11.4		.002*
Matched	.81	.84	-5.7	50.6	.158
Age					
≤ 14 years					
Unmatched	.15	.05	33.0		.000**
Matched	.15	.14	1.8	94.4	.717
15-16 years					
Unmatched	.47	.28	40.4		.000**
Matched	.47	.46	1.4	96.7	.764
17-18 years					
Unmatched	.37	.43	-12.5		.001**
Matched	.37	.39	-2.4	80.5	.566
≥ 19 years					
Unmatched	.01	.23	-75.3		.000**
Matched	.01	.01	0.0	100.00	1.00
Cuyahoga					
Unmatched	.13	.26	-31.5		.000**
Matched	.13	.13	0.7	97.8	.850

¹⁸ When the risk levels were initially examined, it was apparent that there were only two risk groups. This is likely due to the fact that 7 different risk assessment tools were used to assess the Targeted RECLAIM youth and 6 different risk assessment tools were used to assess the DYS youth. Given that each tool has different scoring and different cut off levels it was not feasible to look at the raw scores. Therefore, two groups were created by combining moderate- and high-risk youth into one group and keeping low-risk youth separate in the second group.

Table 4.8
Bias Statistics for Matched and Unmatched Samples

Characteristic	Mean		Bias		t-test
	Treated	Control	% Bias	% Reduction	<i>p</i>
Franklin					
Unmatched	.20	.20	0.1		.974
Matched	.20	.19	2.3	-1880.0	.587
Hamilton					
Unmatched	.07	.12	-18.8		.000**
Matched	.07	.07	-0.3	98.3	.931
Lucas					
Unmatched	.10	.06	15.0		.000**
Matched	.10	.10	-1.0	93.2	.831
Montgomery					
Unmatched	.13	.07	18.3		.000**
Matched	.13	.13	-2.2	88.2	.655
Summit					
Unmatched	.19	.09	28.8		.000**
Matched	.19	.19	-1.9	93.4	.702
Expanded					
Unmatched	.19	.21	-3.9		.272
Matched	.19	.19	1.1	70.9	.786

at-5.7 percent. Despite the percent bias for risk level of the matched samples falling slightly above the suggested threshold, the difference of means test showed that the means of the DYS and Targeted RECLAIM matched groups were not statistically significant from zero.

Table 4.9 presents the descriptive statistics for the 2009 through 2012 Targeted RECLAIM and DYS-matched samples. In an effort to minimize bias, propensity score matching with replacement was used to match youth on sex, race, age, risk level, and referring/service

county making the characteristics similar across both groups. As such, both samples were mostly comprised of male youth of color (approximately 92% and 70% respectively), 15 to 16 years of age (47%) and of high risk to reoffend (approximately 82.0%).

Table 4.9
Descriptive Statistics for Targeted RECLAIM & DYS-Matched Samples

Characteristic	Targeted RECLAIM (N = 1090)		DYS (N = 1090)	
	n	%	n	%
Male	1006	92.3	1009	92.6
Non-White	773	70.9	767	70.4
Risk Level ¹⁹				
Low-Risk	202	18.5	177	16.2
High-Risk	888	81.5	913	83.8
Age				
14 years or younger	164	15.1	158	14.5
15 to 16 years	513	47.1	506	46.4
17 to 18 years	407	37.3	420	38.5
19 years or older	6	.55	6	.55

Figure 4.11 compares the overall incarceration rates of the Targeted RECLAIM and DYS-matched youth. As shown, 31.6 percent of the DYS sample was incarcerated during the follow-up period compared to an estimated 18.2 percent of the Targeted RECLAIM sample.

¹⁹ When the risk levels were initially examined, it was apparent that there were only two risk groups. This is likely due to the fact that 7 different risk assessment tools were used to assess the Targeted RECLAIM youth and 6 different risk assessment tools were used to assess the DYS youth. Given that each tool has different scoring and different cut off levels it was not feasible to look at the raw scores. Therefore, two groups were created by combining moderate- and high-risk youth into one group and keeping low-risk youth separate in the second group.

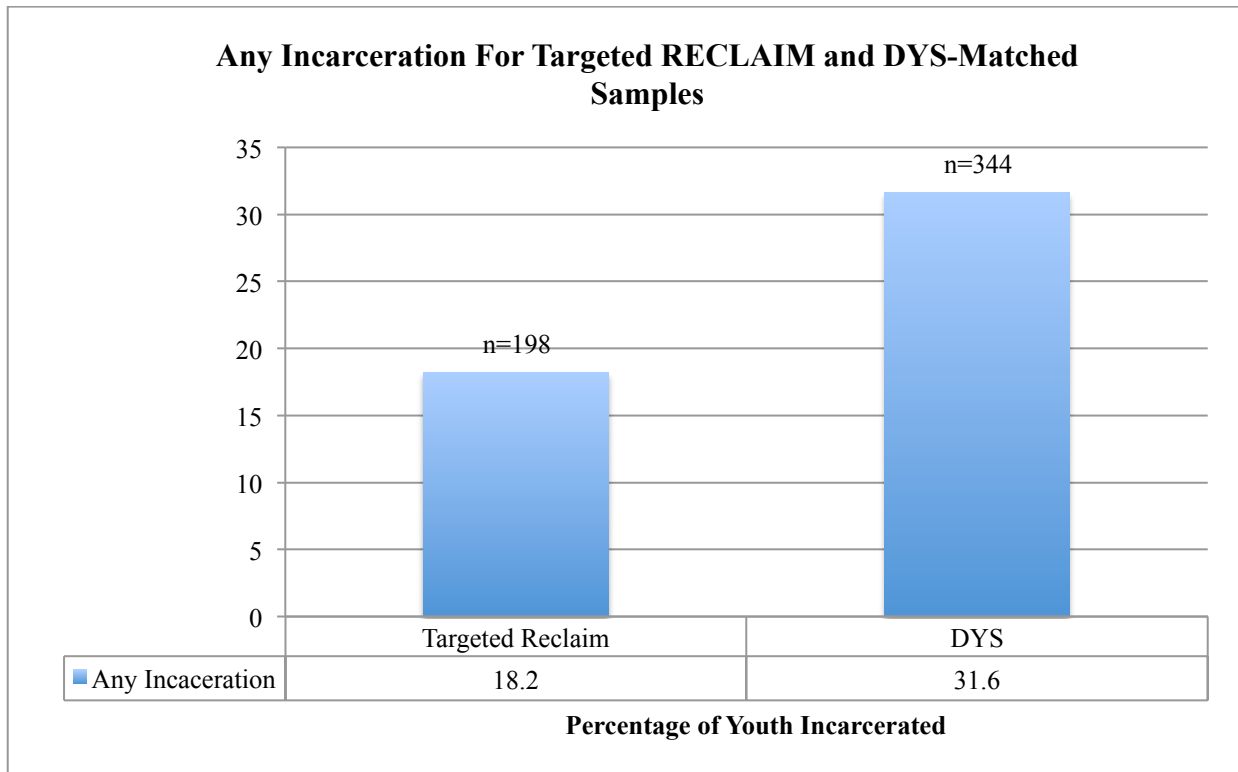


Figure 4.11
Any Incarceration for Targeted RECLAIM & DYS-Matched Samples

Figure 4.12 then compares the incarceration rates of the Targeted RECLAIM and DYS-matched samples across two risk levels. For both risk groups, DYS youth recidivated at higher rates than similar youth in Targeted RECLAIM. Specifically, among low-risk youth, 36.7 percent of the DYS youth was incarcerated during the follow-up period, compared to only 14.4 percent of the Targeted RECLAIM group. Similarly, 30.6 percent of the high-risk DYS youth were incarcerated compared to only 19 percent of the Targeted RECLAIM sample. Figure 4.11 along with this figure show that overall the Targeted RECLAIM youth were incarcerated less than the similarly matched DYS youth (13.4% difference).

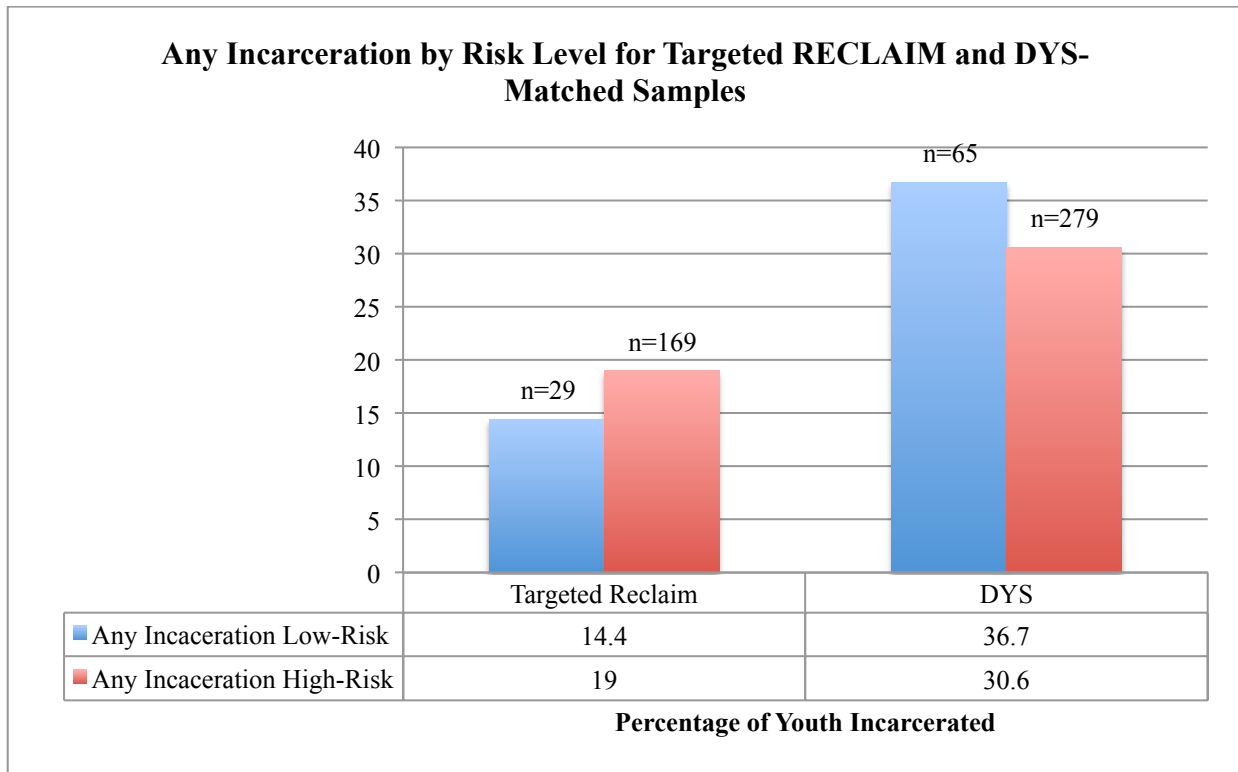


Figure 4.12

Any Incarceration for Targeted RECLAIM & DYS-Matched Samples by Risk Level²⁰

Table 4.10 examines the odds of incarceration by risk level for the two samples. Specifically, low-risk youth are approximately twice as likely to be incarcerated in the DYS sample than in the Targeted RECLAIM sample. This is consistent with the risk principle and illustrates the harm that can occur when low risk youth are exposed to high-risk youth. High-risk youth in the DYS group are approximately one and a half times more likely to be incarcerated than youth in the Targeted RECLAIM group.

²⁰ Frequencies were based on weighted estimates.

Table 4.10
Odds Ratios for Any Incarceration by Risk Level

Risk Level	Odds Ratio
Low-Risk	2.35
High-Risk	1.61

Providing more evidence that Targeted RECLAIM services are effective at diverting youth from DYS/DRC, the results in Table 4.11 indicate that Targeted RECLAIM youth had 12.7 percent less incarcerations overall during the 27 month follow-up period compared to DYS youth. The average treatment effect supports the above findings that there is a benefit to participating in Targeted RECLAIM services.

Table 4.11
The Average Treatment Effect of Targeted RECLAIM

	ATE	Confidence Interval
Any Incarceration	-.127	-.228 to -.170

SUMMARY

The first part of this chapter examined yearly admissions to DYS as well as the commitment rates, number of felony adjudications, wavers to adult courts, placements in CCFs, and the overall juvenile population in Ohio over a span of approximately 8 years in an effort to determine whether or not Targeted RECLAIM has been successful in reducing commitments to

DYS. The data show quite clearly that admissions to DYS have decreased since the inception of Targeted RECLAIM and most notably for counties participating in the Targeted RECLAIM initiative. For example, commitment rates decreased for almost all Targeted RECLAIM counties each year after their initial enrollment in the initiative (except 2014 for the original Targeted RECLAIM group of 6 counties and a few of the Expanded Targeted RECLAIM counties). At the same time, the data showed that while the overall juvenile population remained relatively stable, the number of felony adjudications as well as bind-overs were on a downward trend much like commitments to DYS were. Furthermore, there were no significant increases in overall admissions to local CCFs. It was also important to consider if those youth who were placed at DYS during that time were being confined for longer periods of time. The results demonstrated that the average length of stay before and after the inception of Targeted RECLAIM remained fairly consistent.

With fewer youth being placed at DYS, it was important to consider if Targeted RECLAIM was diverting youth from placement both initially and over time. This meant that youth served by Targeted RECLAIM should have been of moderate to high risk to reoffend and adjudicated on a felony. Results showed that over 75% of youth diverted to Target RECLAIM were moderate- and high-risk felony level youth, and of those low risk youth approximately 48 percent were adjudicated on a serious felony (felony level 3 or higher). However, the data also revealed that several counties were widening the net a bit by placing low-risk, misdemeanor and unruly youth into programs. Finally, the last next set of analyses determined that Targeted RECLAIM is effective in reducing the recidivism of youth and ultimately diverting youth from DYS over time.

In the next chapter, the results are discussed in light of the study's two research questions. Conclusions are drawn so that the results can inform other juvenile justice systems and professionals. Limitations of the study are described and recommendations for future research are shared.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine a juvenile justice reform effort in the state of Ohio known as Targeted RECLAIM. Targeted RECLAIM was initiated in response to the state's difficulty managing the ever-increasing number of youth in their custody. Much like the rest of the country during the 80s and 90s, Ohio's juvenile justice system became increasingly more punitive. However, more recently Ohio and others have taken a hard look at reforming the system. Over the years Ohio has initiated various reform efforts, including the focus of this study, Targeted RECLAIM, in an effort to generate statewide transformation of their juvenile justice system.

With admission rates skyrocketing into the mid-1990s, DYS began a mission of reform to establish policies and practices that support the notion that youth are better served in the community with proven approaches. The first of these initiatives, RECLAIM Ohio was designed specifically to reduce commitments to DYS and help counties increase the number of available local programs to meet the needs of juvenile justice youth (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005). On-going evaluations of RECLAIM Ohio consistently found that RECLAIM has allowed more youth to be served locally (Latessa, Lovins, & Lux, 2015; Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2008; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005).

Second, the state developed and adopted the OYAS providing a statewide mechanism to make evidence-based placement decisions about youth (Latessa, 2012). Third, between 2009 and 2014, DYS provided support to the 12 local CCFs to allow for the implementation of cognitive-behavioral programs for moderate- to high-risk youth. This allowed the courts to serve approximately 500 plus higher risk youth each year in the community with evidence-based

services. Fourth, five counties in the state committed to reducing their reliance on the use of detention services through JDAI (Juvenile Justice, 2015). Recognizing that placement in a locked detention center can increase the chances of adjudication as well as commitment to another secure facility; the state pledged their support to these counties' (Fazal, 2014). The fifth initiative, BHJJ, was established to divert juvenile justice involved youth with behavioral health issues to evidence-based behavioral health treatment in the community (Kretschmar, et al., 2014).

Finally, a sixth initiative revisited the RECLAIM model. Thus, Targeted RECLAIM, was designed to increase funding to certain local juvenile courts in an effort to not only further reduce the number of admissions from the identified counties, but to also provide youth with evidence-based services in their local community. By 2013, 15 counties were receiving Targeted RECLAIM funding and serving more youth locally with a variety of alternatives to incarceration.

While these initiatives have undeniably created a reform movement that has changed the footprint of juvenile justice in Ohio, the focus of this study was to assess the effects of Targeted RECLAIM on diverting youth from DYS and the likelihood of later incarceration. In order to examine Targeted RECLAIM a variety of data sources were reviewed including yearly admissions to DYS, length of stay at DYS, commitment rates, felony adjudications, juvenile bind overs, admissions to CCFs, and the overall population of juveniles in the state of Ohio. Finally, subsequent incarcerations to DYS and DRC were examined for those youth participating in Targeted RECLAIM programs as well as a comparison group of similarly matched DYS youth.

LIMITATIONS

Before drawing any conclusions, it is necessary to note that there are several limitations to this study. First, the Targeted RECLAIM initiative as well as this study was specific to a sample of juvenile offenders in the state of Ohio, and therefore the results may not generalize fully to other states. Second, while this study did examine the state-funded residential programs (CCFs), it was not possible to determine if youth were being placed out-of-state or in other residential programs.

Third, the comparison group was comprised of youth released from DYS custody. It is unknown whether the same or even better results could have been achieved through less restrictive options, such as probation only, no formal intervention, or placement at a CCF. Fourth, because the Targeted RECLAIM youth were matched to DYS youth on only five variables, there could be unobserved group differences influencing both placement into Targeted RECLAIM as well as the results. Likewise, youth could not be matched perfectly on the county covariate thus increasing the changes for unobserved group differences to be at work again.

Fifth, this study relied on incarceration to DYS or DRC as the outcome of interest. This is a conservative measure of recidivism and does not provide a comprehensive examination of Targeted RECLAIM on youth reoffending. Finally, the study was unable to examine which mode of treatment provided through Targeted RECLAIM was the most effective strategy for reducing recidivism.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite these limitations, the following conclusions may be drawn from this study. First, admissions to DYS have been on the decline, as have felony adjudications all across the state. The data showed that regardless of a county's participation in Targeted RECLAIM, felony-level

adjudications were on the decline well before the inception of Targeted RECLAIM. However, since the inception of Targeted RECLAIM, participating counties have demonstrated a fairly consistent decrease in commitments. While this is truer for the initial six counties, a few of the expanded counties followed the same trend. Notably, Ashtabula County decreased their commitment rate from 75.5 to 18.2 within just two years of participating in Targeted RECLAIM. Furthermore, it does not appear that youth were simply being waived to the adult system or placed in a CCF in lieu of DYS. Importantly, many Targeted RECLAIM counties saw a continued decline in transfers to adult court once enrolling in Targeted RECLAIM. Furthermore, the general trend in CCF admissions did not seem to be affected by Targeted RECLAIM participation. Finally, the data showed that the average juvenile population of 10 to 19 year olds in the state did not increase or decrease substantially and therefore did not contribute to the reduced commitments to DYS during the time period in question.

With felony adjudications and admissions already on the decline, likely due to RECLAIM, the use of the OYAS, as well as other initiatives like JDAI and BHJJ, it is noteworthy that Targeted RECLAIM appeared to have an appreciable effect on the number of youth placed in DYS. During this period of reform, DYS downsized from operating 12 institutions at or above capacity, to operating only three DYS institutions today. Most recently, DYS has the lowest daily population counts seen in decades, averaging around 450 youth a day. At the same time, the number of youth being served in the community has risen. During the first year of Targeted RECLAIM, slightly more than 300 youth were served in the community through the initiative; whereas upwards of 750 youth were served during calendar year 2012. Much like RECLAIM, Targeted RECLAIM has shown that if incentives and resources are provided to local juvenile courts, they can in turn develop alternatives to state commitment. By

putting “a price on justice” DYS has found a way to transform juvenile justice across the state (Jonson, Eck, & Cullen, 2015, p. 453).

As part of the transformation process, DYS directly incentivized counties financially and indirectly incentivized them with the ability to establish quality evidence-based programming. As noted previously, Targeted RECLAIM requires counties to provide evidence-based services with on-going implementation support through a quality assurance partner. This incentive is greater than simply financial support. It includes the connection to an expert that can coach and guide the implementation of the evidence-based intervention, thus ensuring that the best care is being provided to youth. In this way, the initiative ensures that the services are targeting major criminogenic needs using cognitive-behavioral interventions in the community. Moreover, the incentives provide the counties with quality programming that they might not have been able to otherwise offer.

The data showed that by providing these evidence-based services, Targeted RECLAIM could effectively divert youth from DYS without risking public safety. Thus, youth who received Targeted RECLAIM services had lower recidivism rates than similar youth who were placed in DYS. This finding held for youth of all risk levels and suggests that keeping youth out of DYS might be the best way to manage juvenile delinquency. As researchers have suggested before, incarcerating youth can result in more harm than good (Mulvey & Schubert, 2011; Scott & Steinberg, 2008). For example, when youth enter DYS, they enter a “prison community” (Clemmer, 1940) in that they interact with other prisoners, suffer the pains of imprisonment (Sykes, 1958), lose contact with prosocial community ties, and face being labeled as a juvenile delinquent (Cullen, Jonson, and Nagin, 2011). These experiences interact to influence a youth’s attitudes, values, and beliefs, especially those about their peers, the conventional

lifestyle, and toward crime and violence resulting often times in a more criminal orientation upon release (Cullen, Jonson, and Nagin, 2011). These experiences also interact and result in detrimental effects on youth's developmental outcomes (Mulvey & Schubert, 2011; Scott & Steinberg, 2008).

While keeping youth out of DYS and in the community is probably a contributing factor to the results, the findings also demonstrated that participation in Targeted RECLAIM decreased a youth's chances of being reincarcerated, thus suggesting an added benefit of participating in evidenced-based programming. This finding is not surprising given the vast amount of research that has demonstrated with remarkable consistency the effectiveness of correctional programs when they adhere to the risk-need-responsivity principles (Smith, Swartz, & Gendreau, 2009). Therefore, Targeted RECLAIM has created a mechanism by which counties can provide quality programming to the youth most in need and impact directly the youths' risk to reoffend.

Additionally, this finding suggests that not only was the public spared more delinquent activity as a result of Targeted RECLAIM, but that taxpayers saved money as well. By investing in local alternatives to incarceration, taxpayer dollars were both invested back into the local community and saved by decreasing placements to DYS. Thus, the current study finds support for the notion that "if states are to incarcerate less, that choice must be strongly incentivized" (Cullen, Johnson, and Nagin, 2011, p.453).

Research from this study also demonstrated that, as is consistent with prior research, the placement of low-risk youth at DYS had an iatrogenic effect. For example, low-risk DYS youth failed at a higher rate (36.7%) than high-risk DYS youth (30.6%) and Targeted RECLAIM youth (low-risk, 14.4%; high-risk, 19.0%). With low-risk youth twice as likely to be incarcerated in the DYS group, it is clear that placing low-risk youth in DYS is not an effective strategy. Much like

others who have studied the iatrogenic effects of prison, this study supports the growing body of research that indicates, “*prisons do not reduce recidivism more than noncustodial sanctions*” (Cullen et al., 2011, p. 50S, emphasis in original).

While lower risk Targeted RECLAIM youth were incarcerated in DYS or DRC at a slightly higher rate than one might expect (14 percent), programming in the community clearly did better than placement in a DYS institution. This finding is even more notable when considering that 20 percent of all Targeted RECLAIM youth were low risk. Moreover, of the low-risk youth, almost one third of them were low-level offenders adjudicated of an unruly or misdemeanor offense. These findings suggest that counties might be placing youth into Targeted RECLAIM programs rather than less intensive alternatives. Targeted RECLAIM is designed for moderate- to high-risk youth and the data suggest that, while a Targeted RECLAIM service is still more beneficial than placement at DYS, low-risk youth might be better served elsewhere.

Overall, the findings of this study show that it is possible for a state to incentivize counties to incarcerate less. Given that researchers are now urging states to “turn a ship around that has been on the same course for roughly four decades,” this study supports this call for action (Jonson et al., 2015, p.473). Targeted RECLAIM has contributed to the incarceration of fewer youth in state-run institutions. Furthermore, Targeted RECLAIM has resulted in the implementation of quality evidence-based programs close to the youth’s home. Therefore, the public can have a measure of confidence that the needs of juvenile justice-involved youth are being adequately addressed, despite the decreased reliance on incarceration and without compromising safety.

It is likely that these findings are the result of several different but related working parts. First, Targeted RECLAIM was established through collaboration among the juvenile justice

actors across the state. This commitment to problem-solving and seeking solutions collaboratively was evident from the beginning of the initiative when DYS met with the six counties sending the most youngsters to DYS to explore Targeted RECLAIM as a potential framework to reduce their reliance on placing youth in DYS. Part of the success is also due to this group committing to both a reduction in commitments and to an increase in the development and sustainability of local alternatives. This commitment continues today with quarterly meetings between DYS, university partners, and key county staff, as well as through on-going program implementation meetings.

Second, Targeted RECLAIM requires each participating county to commit to implementing evidence-based programs through the initiative. In this way, programs not only select an intervention that has a strong theoretical and empirical base to it, but they also commit to only placing youth in the program who are most appropriate, thus adhering to the principles of effective intervention. Furthermore, counties receive on-going implementation support through coaching with feedback, problem-solving implementation barriers, and refresher trainings. Third, the development and the implementation of the OYAS have resulted in a common language for counties and the state to use when communicating about a youth's risk and needs. This has aided the counties in identifying the youth most appropriate for DYS and those youth who might best be served locally in the community.

Fourth and finally, a critical component of Targeted RECLAIM lies within the local county judges—for it is they who have the discretion to commit a youth to DYS or to a service provided locally. Through collaboration with local court staff the judges participating in Targeted RECLAIM have shown the commitment to the ideology that youth can be served effectively close to home.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The success of Targeted RECLAIM is evident in this study. Participation in Targeted RECLAIM not only reduced commitments to DYS, but also effectively diverted youth without compromising public safety. Thus, Targeted RECLAIM proved to be able to create effective local alternatives to state commitment. It follows that the Targeted RECLAIM initiative can serve as a roadmap for other state's looking develop alternatives to incarceration. Importantly, however, Targeted RECLAIM is not the only option for incentivizing counties nor is it the perfect model. Therefore, the findings of this study also lend themselves to a set of recommendations that the state can consider as they continue to build on the initial success of RECLAIM, the OYAS, and Targeted RECLAIM. In this way, the following recommendations are provided in an effort to continue to improve the lives of youth in the state of Ohio.

1. *The state should require evidence-based practices within RECLAIM funded programs.* Based upon the results of this study as well as the preliminary Targeted RECLAIM and previous RECLAIM studies, the state should consider expanding evidence-based practices and programs to other RECLAIM programs. Moving RECLAIM funded programs toward this requirement would likely improve the outcomes of youthful offenders in the state of Ohio above and beyond their current impact.
2. *The state should expand the requirement of fidelity monitoring to other RECLAIM funded programs.* Much like the Targeted RECLAIM quality assurance process, RECLAIM providers would likely improve their outcomes by monitoring the delivery of evidence-based practices within the agency. While fidelity monitoring services can be provided through internal agency staff, RECLAIM funded

programs should consider partnering with a local university to provide initial support in the design and implementation of a quality assurance process.

3. *The state should tie the allocation of funding for those local courts participating in RECLAIM and Targeted RECLAIM to compliance with on-going quality improvement protocols.* As part of Targeted RECLAIM, the local courts are expected to participate in on-going quality assurance activities. However, the variation with which courts participate is notable. To improve program fidelity and successful program and participant outcomes, DYS should prioritize the allocation of funding to those courts that demonstrate a commitment to monitoring fidelity. This would include programs administering pre- and post-tests, observing direct service delivery and providing feedback, administering participant and family satisfaction surveys, and participating in evaluation efforts led by the external quality assurance partners.
4. *Efforts should be made to continue to provide new and on-going training opportunities for RECLAIM and Targeted RECLAIM staff.* To help maintain fidelity to the program, staff must be trained in the program elements. New staff should receive training upon hiring, but veteran staff should receive on-going refresher trainings on key service delivery skills as well. For example, staff that is hired to facilitate *Thinking for a Change* groups should be formally trained in the curriculum as well as the theory underlying the curriculum. Additionally, staff who have been facilitating *Thinking for a Change* for some time, should receive booster trainings on topics such as effective group management skills, teaching

skills in a structured manner, individualizing thinking reports, increasing participant motivation for change, and so on.

5. *Likewise, all staff should be trained in core correctional practices.* Research in the field of corrections suggests that when staff working with justice-involved individuals embody a core set of skills, the program participants' success rates are higher. These core correctional practices include proficiencies such as relationship skills, prosocial modeling, effective reinforcement, and structured skill building²¹. Enhancing these skills within both RECLAIM and Targeted RECLAIM staff will likely only add to the success of these initiatives.
6. *Monitor closely the placement of low risk, non-serious youth in Targeted RECLAIM and other RECLAIM programs designed for moderate- to high-risk offenders.* This study as well as previous research highlights the importance of not over treating low risk youth. The state, quality assurance partners, and local courts should work together to monitor the placement of low risk non-serious youth into programming designed for moderate- to high-risk youth. At a minimum, this should include tracking data on youth admitted into programs and providing regular reports to key decision makers.
7. *Related, the partners should identify appropriate alternatives to Targeted RECLAIM programming for low risk youth.* Diversion programs and other community based alternatives for low risk youth should be developed to better allow Targeted RECLAIM to be reserved for those youth most appropriate for the program. Furthermore, separating services by risk and not over-treating low risk youth should lead to better outcomes for those youth.

²¹ See Andrews and Kiessling, 1980.

8. *Administer the OYAS prior to program placement.* To determine the most appropriate service(s) for each youth, the appropriate OYAS tool should be administered prior to disposition. If multiple OYAS scores are available for the youth, the most comprehensive tool closest to the date of decision-making should occur. If the most recent OYAS score is more than 12 months old, a new OYAS assessment should be completed.

The question that remains, however is, *how far can the success of Targeted RECLAIM go?* With the recommendations above, DYS and the local courts are in a position to work collaboratively to continue to enhance the initial success of the initiative. However, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of Targeted RECLAIM a few recommendations for future research are provided below.

1. First, DYS should continue to partner with evaluators to examine the effectiveness of Targeted RECLAIM.
2. Related, as part of the evaluation efforts the specific types of treatment available through Targeted RECLAIM should be examined to help identify the interventions that are more (or less) effective as well as inform decision makers as to which youth will benefit the most from which intervention(s).
3. Likewise, future studies should also examine if those counties that are using primarily community based outpatient programs are more effective than those that are using residential or more restrictive placements. Examining the setting in which the treatment is delivered can help identify which youth benefit from more (or less) restrictive treatment settings.

4. Future studies should also explore various comparison groups such as probation, CCF placement, or no formal intervention. The current research on Targeted RECLAIM does not shed light on whether or not better results could have been achieved through the application of these less punitive options. To better understand which policies lead to the best reductions in recidivism, alternative comparison groups should be examined.
5. Additional research efforts should attempt to match each youth on as many covariates as possible to account for potential differences between the groups. This should include matching youth exactly on their referring county as well as considering other factors such as criminal history, offense severity to name a few.
6. Future evaluations should include other definitions of recidivism, such as felony adjudications in order to provide a more comprehensive examination of the effectiveness of Targeted RECLAIM. With additional outcome measures future research will help determine the ability of Targeted RECLAIM to reduce a youth's risk of being re-arrested or adjudicated of a new crime.
7. Finally, future studies should specifically examine the role (if any) fidelity to the program plays in terms of program success. Other research in the field of corrections has suggested that adherence to the program model is directly related to positive outcomes. Research should examine if adherence to the model among Targeted RECLAIM sites distinguishes between effective and ineffective programs.

While there are still many questions that remain regarding the effectiveness of Targeted RECLAIM, this study showed that the initiative met its goal of reducing commitments to DYS

by increasing evidence-based alternatives. Like other juvenile justice reinvestment strategies, Targeted RECLAIM should remain a topic of subsequent empirical analysis. Having a comprehensive picture of the impact of Targeted RECLAIM will continue to help the state and local courts refine the juvenile justice system in the state of Ohio. Moreover, such results will influence other states that are considering different ways to reserve institutional capacity for more serious youthful offenders and create alternatives to incarceration in the local community.

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APPENDIX A

Frequency of Risk Tools for 2009 through 2012 Targeted RECLAIM & DYS Samples

Characteristic	Targeted RECLAIM ²² (N = 1142)		DYS ²³ (N = 2939)	
	n	%	n	%
Detention	39	4.2	15	.6
Dispositional	592	63.9	63	2.6
Diversion	5	.5	0	0
Reentry	23	2.5	71	2.9
Residential	170	18.3	142	5.9
Risk/Need	98	10.6	135	5.6
Youth Level of Service	0	0	1997	82.4

²² Of the Targeted RECLAIM youth, 215 were missing risk tool type.

²³ Of the DYS youth, 516 were missing risk tool type.