

FINAL REPORT

Evaluation of the Youth Care System Implemented at Swanson Correctional Center for Youth – Monroe Monroe, Louisiana

Submitted to Dr. Barry Glick, Ph.D., NCC, ACS, Chief Operations Officer;
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Youth Care System was implemented by the Louisiana Office of Youth Development in Swanson Correctional Center in Monroe, Louisiana. The YCS is a behavior management system designed and developed by Dr. Barry Glick under contract with the Department's Office of Youth Development. The YCS provides staff a model in which they interact with youth based on three criteria: 1) the situation, 2) the youth's stage of adolescent development, and 3) the youth's level of developmental maturity. The YCS affords staff the opportunity to manage behavior more effectively so as to create an environment where appropriate programs and services such as cognitive behavioral interventions like cognitive restructuring and skill development may be used.

The evaluation of the Youth Care System implemented at Swanson – Monroe began in September 2002 and ended in August 2003. This report reflects intake and termination data collected from the youth and staff participating in the evaluation.

This project used a nonequivalent comparison group design to estimate the impact of the Youth Care System. The site chose two dormitories in which to implement the Youth Care System for evaluation – Redbud and Holly C. These two dormitories held approximately 70 youth. The site also chose two dormitories in which the Youth Care System was not implemented – Holly A and Holly B. These dormitories also held approximately 70 youth.

A pre and post-test design was used to determine if the Youth Care System changed the antisocial attitudes and cognitive distortions of the youth. Furthermore, a pre and post-test design was used to determine if the system changed the attitudes of the staff concerning the

environment, their employment, and their attitudes concerning the interactions with the youth. The following specific research questions and results include:

What were the characteristics of the youth participating in the Youth Care System evaluation?

- The typical youth in the Youth Care System at Swanson – Monroe was African American, 16 years of age and medium security custody level whereas the typical youth in the comparison group was African American, age 16 years of age, and minimum security.
- The Youth Care System, which is a behavior management system, is appropriate for the youth that participated in the evaluation. Pre-test data reveal the youth had cognitive distortions, antisocial attitudes, beliefs, and values as measured by several assessment instruments. Moreover, these antisocial attitudes may manifest themselves in the form of antisocial behavior.
- There were some statistically significant differences between the treatment group and the comparison group. Specifically, the treatment group held significantly higher levels of cognitive distortions (e.g., self-centeredness, assuming the worst, oppositional-defiance, physical aggression, and stealing), antisocial attitudes about the law, and higher levels of identification with criminal others.
- Concerning the correctional environment, the treatment group held lower perceptions of the correctional environment on the following components: structure, activity, and freedom.

What were the characteristics of the staff participating in the Youth Care System evaluation?

- The typical staff member at the facility was African American, male, and 38 years of age. The majority of the participants were correctional officers (79.9%), have been at their current facility for approximately 3½ years with an average of 4½ years in the corrections field.
- An assessment of the primary and secondary leadership styles revealed that the majority of the staff's primary leadership was coaching (34.6%), followed by directing (30.4%), participating (19.6%), and delegating (15.4%). The majority of the staff's secondary style was directing (38.3%), followed by coaching (29.1%), participating (23.8%), and delegating (8.7%).
- Staff placed a great emphasis on many daily activities including: creating conditions to prevent escape, ensuring that procedures and rules are followed by staff and youth, creating protective conditions for youth, and providing activities to keep youth busy. In addition, staff believed that the institution was very successful at meeting its goals

of: following legally mandated procedures, preventing escapes, helping youth learn new skills, and helping youth cope with the conditions of confinement.

- The staff strongly agreed that rehabilitation programs have an important place in the institution. Furthermore, a large percentage (42.9%) of the staff indicated that rehabilitation was the most important goal of the prison system.
- The majority of staff appeared to be somewhat satisfied with their job, would keep the job they have, and would decide without hesitation to take the same job at the time 1 measure.

Were staff members knowledgeable of the Youth Care System and did they implement the system effectively and efficiently?

- The research team conducted two site visits for the University. The first visit conducted in August 2002 was to introduce the staff to the evaluation process. The second site visit occurred in December 2002. During this site visit, staff members and youth were interviewed to assess the implementation of the Youth Care System.
- The following were strengths found during the second site visit: youth wore different colored shirts to identify their stage of development; a stage review hearing was conducted at least every 90 days with some occurring before this time frame; most staff are correctly using the Behavior Improvement Plans and explaining these plans to the youth upon their issuance, Youth Performance Reports are being completed; most staff have received training in the Youth Care System; staff were able to explain how they interact with youth depending on his stage of development; the facility was using the appropriate privileges based on the youth's stage; and there were no concerns about the old system being replaced with the Youth Care System.
- During the site visit, there were also some concerns. Initially, the counselors were not present during the stage review hearings. However, this situation has been remedied and the counselors are present at the hearings and act as spokespersons for the youth. Second, the Mentor Program has not been implemented at the facility. Last, some staff voiced concerns about the cognitive ability and reading levels of the youth and whether they will be able to understand the Youth Care System. However, the percentage of the youth population that have trouble reading and understanding the Youth Care System was noted to be low.

What were the rates of phase advancement through the Youth Care System? Does participation in the Youth Care System reduce the number of disciplinary infractions?

- Based on the service tracking data, the youth were progressing through the stages of development. Sixty-two percent of the youth progressed at least one stage during the evaluation period. Furthermore, it appeared that the percentage of youth in the emerging stage began to decrease while the percentage of youth in the transformation

and citizen stages began to increase during the evaluation period. However, 10 youth (10%) regressed at least one stage.

- There were statistically significant differences between the treatment and comparison groups on the number of infractions. The number of disciplinary infractions for the treatment youth ranged from zero to 62 incidents with an average of 11.05 infractions whereas the number of tickets for the comparison group ranged from zero to 55 infractions with an average of 9.72 infractions.¹
- Paired samples t-tests were conducted to compare the number of disciplinary infractions that occurred during the first and last three months in the Youth Care System. The results indicated that the number of infractions increased for both the treatment group (O =1.94 to O = 2.24) and the comparison group (O =1.47 to O = 1.71). However, the increase was not statistically significant.

What were the changes in the juveniles' cognitive distortions, criminal sentiments, irrational beliefs, and perceptions of the correctional environment? Did participation in the Youth Care System affect the attitudes of the staff?

- Independent samples t-tests were conducted on all post-test data for the treatment and comparison youth. There were no statistically significant differences between the groups on cognitive distortions and criminal sentiments. Concerning the irrational beliefs, there was only one statistically significant difference – the treatment group had a lower irrational fear belief than the comparison group. Tests conducted on the *Prison Environment Inventory* indicated that the comparison group held more favorable perceptions of the correctional environment for the social and privacy; thus, indicating that these youth reported more opportunities for socializing and felt a greater degree of privacy than the treatment group.² The difference between the groups may be due to the fact that staff was more careful in their supervision of the youth in the Youth Care System.
- Paired samples t-tests were conducted on all the assessment instruments for the treatment and comparison groups. There were no statistically significant differences within the two groups for the cognitive distortion scales and the irrational beliefs scales. Concerning the criminal sentiments, there was only one statistically significant relationship. There was a reduction in the court scale for the treatment group indicating a decrease in the prosocial attitudes for the courts. For the *Prison Environment Inventory*, there were some significant changes. Specifically, the treatment indicated an increase in their perceptions of freedom whereas the comparison group indicated an increase in their perceptions of emotional feedback, socializing, and support within Swanson – Monroe.

¹ The difference between the treatment and comparison group may be due to an increase in monitoring for the youth participating in the Youth Care System.

² The time 2 score for the social and privacy scales increased; however, the increase was not statistically significant.

- There were statistically significant differences between the time 1 and time 2 scores for some items in the *Staff Survey*. First, the emphasis on providing programs to learn new skills decreased from the administration of the pre and post-test. Second, the perceptions regarding the institution's ability to prevent escapes, punish youth for crimes that caused their incarceration, and deterring youth from committing crimes on the street decreased at the end of the evaluation. Even though these scales resulted in a significant decrease, it should be noted that the initial scores of these items were very high.³
- When examining staff's attitudes and perceptions, there were three statistically significant relationships. The post-test scores revealed that staff were more likely to agree that they feel that the control of the institution was out of their hands, that correctional officers should be more sensitive in providing for youth's daily needs, and conditions should be harsher to deter youth from future crime. Furthermore, the reported percentage of youth who will be deterred or scared straight by their prison experiment was reduced at the time 2 measure.
- There were some changes in the staff's perceptions of the correctional environment. Specifically, with the exception of the social and privacy, the quality of the correctional environment increased. Furthermore, the emotional feedback, activity, safety, freedom, and supportiveness of the environment significantly increased.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the site visit, the following recommendations can be made:

- Swanson Correctional Center for Youth – Monroe should implement the mentoring component of the Youth Care System in which staff members will work closely with youth to reinforce prosocial attitudes and behaviors. Research has shown that prosocial skills are more likely to be learned when they are consistently reinforced.
- Staff members at Swanson – Monroe should make certain that the youth have the ability to read and understand the Youth Care System manual and have the cognitive ability to participate in the Youth Care System.

Based on the data from the pre and post-tests, the following recommendations are made for Swanson Correctional Center for Youth – Monroe.

- The Youth Care System has been shown to reduce the number of disciplinary infractions for juveniles in an institution (see Pealer & Latessa, 2003). However, the data from Swanson – Monroe indicated that the number of disciplinary infractions increased during the evaluation. Furthermore, the pre and post-test data revealed that

³ The decrease in the scores for these scales may be due to chance since the initial scores were extremely high.

there were few improvements for the youth participating in the Youth Care System. There is strong indication that the implementation of the YCS may have been compromised. Both our own site visits as well as those of the Department's, raised issues with staff following YCS procedures. Further, at least initially, essential staff such as case managers and program managers were not involved in critical YCS functions including but not limited to case reviews, continuing staff supervision and training specific to the YCS, and on-site system implementation. Therefore, Swanson Correctional Center – Monroe should examine the fidelity of the implementation of the Youth Care System.

- After an examination into the implementation of the Youth Care System is finished and changes are made where necessary, Swanson Correctional Center for Youth – Monroe should continue to implement the Youth Care System for a number of reasons. First, the evaluation of the Youth Care System occurred at its implementation in the facility. Research has shown that programs are more effective once they have become stable (after a period of two years). Accordingly, it may be that youth's perceptions did not significantly change for the better because the program was still experiencing "growing pains" and staff were still being trained on the Youth Care System. Second, there were some significant improvements in the staff members' perceptions of the correctional environment during the evaluation period indicating that the Youth Care System created a better environment for the youth. Third, there was a change in leadership at the institution that certainly impacted the continuity of YCS implementation. Finally, there is indication that the YCS may have been compromised by integrating token economy, behavior modification processes with it.
- Swanson Correctional Center for Youth – Monroe should continue to collect data regarding the effectiveness of the Youth Care System. The intake and exit packets for the youth and staff should be collected at intake and termination from the facility. This evaluation compared youth who were participating in the Youth Care System with youth who were not participating. One reason for the lack of significant findings between the two groups on the post-test measures may be that

the comparison youth were being treated as if they were part of the Youth Care System.⁴ Thus, the facility should continue to collect data and review the findings once all youth are participating in the Youth Care System.

- Last, it is not surprising that the attitudinal scales (*How I Think Questionnaire*, *Beliefs Inventory*, and *Criminal Sentiments*) did not show much change given that the Youth Care System is not designed as a treatment program, but rather a behavior management system. What the results from the instruments show is that these youth are antisocial and have distorted thinking. Given this fact, improvements in staff

⁴ Staff at Swanson Correctional Center – Monroe was trained in the Youth Care System regardless of whether they were working with the dorms participating in the evaluation. Without insuring that only the staff who supervised the YCS evaluation cohort used the YCS procedures, there is strong indication that the YCS procedures were used throughout the institution, thus confounding the research data.

attitudes on some key factors (especially their perception of the prison environment) and the fact that some of the indicators are moving in the predicted direction indicates that the Youth Care System is doing what it suppose to – *improving the management of behavior in the facility*. Once the Youth Care System is stable, the facility should begin to implement structured cognitive behavioral treatment interventions (*Thinking for a Change, Aggression Replacement Therapy, or Corrective Thinking*) to target antisocial thinking and behaviors.

EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH CARE SYSTEM

The Youth Care System was implemented by the Louisiana Office of Youth Development in Swanson Correctional Center in Monroe, Louisiana. The YCS is a behavior management system designed and developed by Dr. Barry Glick under contract with the Department of Louisiana's Office of Youth Development. The YCS provides staff a model in which they interact with youth based on three criteria: 1) the situation, 2) the youth's stage of adolescent development, and 3) the youth's level of developmental maturity. The YCS affords staff the opportunity to manage behavior more effectively so as to create an environment where appropriate programs and services such as cognitive behavioral interventions like cognitive restructuring and skill development may be used.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The evaluation of the YCS implemented at Swanson Correctional Center – Monroe will address the following questions:

- **What were the characteristics of the youth and the staff participating in the Youth Care System evaluation?**
- **Were staff members knowledgeable of the Youth Care System and did they implement the system effectively and efficiently?**
- **What were the rates of phase advancement through the Youth Care System from September through August?**
- **Does participation in the Youth Care System reduce the number of disciplinary infractions?**
- **What were the changes in the juveniles' cognitive distortions, criminal sentiments, perceptions of correctional environment, and irrational beliefs?**
- **What were the changes in the staffs' perceptions of correctional environment and beliefs?**

METHODS

Research Design

This project used a nonequivalent comparison group design to estimate the impact of the Youth Care System. The site chose two dormitories in which to implement the Youth Care System for evaluation – Redbud and Holly C. These two dormitories held approximately 70 youth. The site also chose two dormitories in which the Youth Care System was not implemented – Holly A and Holly B. These dormitories also held approximately 70 youth. The case managers at Swanson Correctional Center – Monroe gathered data for the Youth Care System evaluation. The case managers were responsible for collecting intake, assessments, and termination information on all youth in the four dormitories. In addition, data concerning the youth’s behavior while in the dormitories were also gathered to determine if the Youth Care System was successful in reducing the number of disciplinary infractions. A youth intake packet was developed which contained all the assessments that case managers were to give to the youth during the initial assessment (see Appendix A). The youth were to complete the packet of assessments within one week. The case managers were to gather the packets and then send them to the research team for scoring.

Assessment data were also gathered from all staff members in the four dormitories to determine if they understood the system and if their attitudes/environment had changed as a result of the Youth Care System. Again, a staff intake packet was developed which contains a copy of all the initial assessments for the staff (see Appendix A). The staff was to complete the packet and return it to the program manager who then sent the packets to the evaluators for scoring.

The final set of data was gathered by staff from the University of Cincinnati. This data examined whether staff efficiently implemented the system. To determine if the Youth Care System was implemented as designed, University staff interviewed both staff and youth. In addition, both staff and youth were interviewed to determine their attitudes regarding the Youth Care System.

A pre and post-test design was used to determine if the Youth Care System changed the antisocial attitudes and cognitive distortions of the youth. Furthermore, a pre and post-test design was used to determine if the system changed the attitudes of the staff concerning the environment, their employment, and their attitudes concerning the interactions with the youth. The post-tests were conducted on all youth who participated in the Youth Care System evaluation in the dormitories, and all on staff.

Assessment Instruments. The following assessment instruments were used in evaluating the Youth Care System: *Beliefs Inventory*, *How I Think Questionnaire*, *Criminal Sentiments Scale*, and the *Prison Environment Inventory*. Pre and post-test measures were gathered from all youth in the four dormitories to determine the effectiveness of the Youth Care System in reducing antisocial attitudes and behavior.

The *Beliefs Inventory* is designed to measure the youth's irrational beliefs such as: absolute necessity for approval from peers, family, and friend's; unfailing competent and being almost perfect; certain people are villainous, evil, and wicked; and it is horrible when things are not the way you would like them to be.

The *How I Think Questionnaire* is designed to measure the youth's cognitive distortions. There are 4 behavioral referent scales, which examine the tendency toward antisocial behavior and 4 cognitive distortion scales, which examine antisocial attitudes and

thought patterns. The behavioral referents are oppositional defiance, physical aggression, lying, and stealing. The cognitive distortions are self-centeredness, blaming others, minimizing, and assuming the worst.

The *Criminal Sentiments* scale is used to assess the youth's antisocial attitudes in the following categories: attitudes towards laws, courts, and police; tolerance for law violation; and identification with criminal others.

The *Prison Environment Inventory* was developed to measure the correctional climate of the housing unit. Pre and post-test measures on this instrument demonstrate if the Youth Care System increased or decreased the youth's perceptions of structure, emotional feedback, activities, safety, freedom, support, and privacy within the institution.

Each month case managers were to complete the service tracking form, which was developed to determine the number of stages youth progress through during the evaluation period. Furthermore, data was gathered as to their length of time at each stage.

In addition to youth, staff at Swanson Correctional Center – Monroe was also surveyed. The following instruments were used to assess staff members: a *Staff Survey*, the *Prison Environment Inventory*, and the *Staff Leadership Questionnaire*. Pre and post-test measures were given to all staff members working in the four dorms and to staff members throughout the institution that were trained in the Youth Care System

The *Staff Survey* was used to measure the correctional officers or staff members' perceptions of the housing unit in which they work. In addition, it also examined attitudes concerning the philosophy of punishment.

The *Prison Environment Inventory* was a survey that measured what it was like to work in the housing unit. This instrument measured the following items: structure, emotional feedback, activities, safety, freedom, support, and privacy within the institution.

The *Staff Leadership Questionnaire* was designed to assess the leadership style interventions of the staff. This instrument allowed staff members to identify their primary and secondary leadership style. There are 4 types of styles in which to interact with the youth: directing, coaching, participating, and delegating.

Treatment Group

Swanson Correctional Center for Youth – Monroe is a secure facility for juvenile male offenders. The Youth Care System was implemented at Swanson – Monroe in September 2002. For purposes of the evaluation period, the facility piloted the Youth Care System in two dormitories – Redbud and Holly C. These dormitories were chosen for structural logistic purposes to try and keep the youth participating in the Youth Care System separate from the other youth in the facility.

Comparison Group

There were two dormitories that were used as comparison dormitories for the evaluation of the Youth Care System at Swanson – Monroe. The administrators at the facility chose Holly A and Holly B as the comparison dormitories.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE YOUTH CARE SYSTEM

There have been two site visits conducted by the research team from the University of Cincinnati. The first visit occurred in August 2002 to introduce the staff to the evaluation process, explain the process, and answer any questions concerning the evaluation. The

second site visit was conducted December 2002. During this site visit, staff and youth were interviewed to assess issues related to the implementation of the Youth Care System.

Strengths

The second site visit to Swanson – Monroe was for the purpose of evaluating the implementation of the Youth Care System. There were many aspects of YCS that were implemented successfully. One aspect of YCS was the identification of the youths' stages of development through the wearing of different color t-shirts. Youth in the lowest developmental stage – emerging – wore orange colored shirts. Youth in the adaptation stage wore yellow shirts. Those in the transformation stage wore green shirts and when youth achieved the highest stage – citizen – will wear burgundy colored shirts. Both staff and youth reported that when the youth progressed to the next level, he was given his new colored t-shirt.

Another aspect of the Youth Care System was the use of a stage review hearing. These meetings are conducted at least every 90 days for each youth. The stage review hearing is a formal meeting with the youth and staff representatives from each area of the facility to review the progress of the youth.⁵ The counselor acts as the spokesperson for the youth and reviews the Youth Performance Report, Behavior Management Report, disciplinary tickets (JR-2's), and any other information about the youth's behavior. The information gathered for this meeting helps to determine if the youth will progress to the next stage. The decision to progress the youth to the next stage must be a unanimous vote from each member present.

⁵ During the first stage review hearings, the counselors were not present. This problem has since been remedied and the counselors are present at the stage review hearings and act as spokespersons for the youth.

At the stage review hearing, the youth must demonstrate certain skills associated with their stage of maturity development. The demonstration of the skill is to show its mastery for responsible behavior before moving on to more advanced skills. The youth may be asked questions pertaining to the skill, may be asked to demonstrate a skill, and/or input from the staff present may be used to determine if the youth is using the skill in the institution.

An important part of the Youth Care System is the use of Behavior Improvement Plans (BIPS). Staff either write the BIPS for youth at the lower stages of the YCS, or coach the youth, participate with the youth, or delegate to the youth the task to complete the BIPS. The plan briefly identifies the situation (positive or negative), details the specific behavior that needs to be improved or is demonstrated competently, and provides strategies as to how to correct and/or improve the behavior. It appears that staff is writing the Behavior Improvement Plans to allow the youth to correct their behavior instead of issuing a ticket which would result in punishment.⁶ After the youth has been issued the Behavior Improvement Plan, staff take the time to sit with the youth and explain why the plan was written and what action, if necessary, the youth needs to take to correct the behavior.

As previously mentioned, a stage review meeting is conducted every 90 days. At this forum a youth may or may not advance to the next stage. If the youth does not advance to the next stage in the Youth Care System, a Behavior Improvement Plan is to be written. Staff and youth reported that these plans are written when a youth does not advance. The Behavior Improvement Plan will outline what behaviors the youth needs to work on to advance to the next stage. If the behavior can be corrected within a couple of weeks, a new stage review hearing is conducted.

⁶ Staff will issue a Behavior Improvement Plan and a ticket (JR-2) if the infraction is a major incident.

In addition to the Behavior Improvement Plan, staff also completed a Youth Performance Report biweekly. This report is completed by staff in each area such as – treatment, education, security, and recreation. The report is stage-specific in which items are related to the behaviors that the youth should demonstrate. Staff rates the youth as consistently using the behavior, sometimes using the behavior, or never demonstrating the behavior.

At the time of the assessment, most staff had been trained in the Youth Care System. The training was evident in how the staff interacts with the youth depending on his stage of development. For example, staff reported constantly having to monitoring the emerging youth, as they need very detailed direction. Youth in the adaptation stage require less monitoring as they are able to understand direction. Youth in this stage are beginning to show the signs of changing their antisocial behavior. Staff reported that the youth in transformation stage have the ability to work on his own, as he will accept direction. Furthermore, staff reported that the transformation youth are more mature. In addition to describing how to interact with the youth in each stage, staff was able to describe the behaviors of the youth in each stage. For example, youth in the emerging stage are very immature and may be disobedient. Youth in the adaptation stage are described as taking more personal responsibility whereas youth in the transformation stage have assumed a leadership role and are the most responsible of the three stages.⁷

Research has shown that privileges are powerful behavioral reinforcement techniques. Accordingly, the Youth Care System has privileges associated with the different stages of development. The staff members at Swanson – Monroe has implemented the privileges for

⁷ At the time of the interviews, there were no youth in the citizen stage and staff did not report on how these youth would behave.

the youth. For example, there are different bed times for youth depending on their stage of development. In addition, youth may receive movie nights, phone calls, and time in the game room depending on their stage of development. Furthermore, both staff and youth reported that all privileges are given to the youth depending on his stage of development.

The staff should also be commended on the smooth transition from the old system to the Youth Care System. The staff received the proper training in the Youth Care System and then chose to implement the system in certain areas of the facility. Indeed, the pilot of the system in the two dormitories allowed the smooth transition for the removal of the old system to the new Youth Care System. As a result, neither staff nor youth reported any problems with having components of the old system still being operated.

Areas for Improvement

There were two areas of improvement concerning the implementation of the Youth Care System. First, Swanson – Monroe had not implemented a mentor program at the time of the assessment. This component uses correctional officers, teachers, administrators, managers, or support staff members who work closely with the youth to reinforce what he is learning.

The second area of concern was the youth's cognitive level and their ability to understand the Youth Care System. Some staff expressed concerns that the system was too cognitive for the youth. Other staff reported concerns about the reading level of the youth and their ability to read the Youth Care manual.⁸

⁸ While staff noted that the reading and cognitive levels of the youth were of some concern, the actual percentage of youth who had a problem reading and understanding the Youth Care System was reported to be low. Furthermore, it should be noted that the YCS is written at a sixth grade level. Thus, Swanson – Monroe should develop a mentoring and tutoring system to assist those youth who have trouble understanding the YCS.

RESULTS

Youth Characteristics

This section will focus on the background characteristics for the youth and staff participating in the Youth Care System and will answer the following research question:

- *What were the characteristics of the youth and the staff participating in the Youth Care System evaluation?*

Table 1 reports the demographic characteristics of the youth in the Youth Care System evaluation. During the evaluation period, there were 92 youth in the treatment dormitories and 103 youth in the comparison dormitories. The majority of youth in both groups were nonwhite (88.3% of the treatment group and 69.8% of the comparison group); however, a chi-square test indicated that there was a significant difference between the groups. A larger portion of the youth in the comparison group was white (30.2% versus 11.7%).

When comparing the ages of the youth in the groups, a difference of means test revealed no significant differences. The youth in the comparison group (16.60 years of age) was slightly older than youth in the treatment group (16.29 years of age). Swanson – Monroe incorporates a classification system – minimum, medium, and maximum. Chi-square analysis revealed significant differences between the groups. More youth in the comparison group was classified as minimum security (54%) whereas more youth in the treatment group was classified as medium security (55%).

Pretest Data for the Youth

The youth were assessed using four different assessment instruments: the *How I Think Questionnaire*, the *Criminal Sentiments Scale*, the *Prison Environment Inventory*, and the *Beliefs Inventory*.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Youth*

Characteristic	Treatment Youth		Comparison Youth	
	N	%	N	%
Race:				
White	7	11.7	19	30.2
Nonwhite	53	88.3	44	69.8
$\chi^2 = 7.51; p = .023$				
Age:				
14	7	8.0	11	11.1
15	13	14.8	17	17.2
16	33	37.5	25	25.3
17	24	27.3	21	21.2
18	7	8.0	10	10.1
19	1	1.1	8	8.1
20	3	3.4	4	4.0
21	0	0.0	1	1.0
22	0	0.0	2	2.0
$t = -1.32; p = .188$		Mean = 16.29	Mean = 16.60	
Security Level:				
Minimum	15	25.0	34	54.0
Medium	33	55.0	21	33.3
Maximum	12	20.0	8	12.7
$\chi^2 = 10.77; p = .005$				

* Ns may not equal the total due to missing data between the two groups.

How I Think Questionnaire. The *How I Think Questionnaire* measures cognitive distortions. Cognitive distortions are inaccurate ways of attending to or conferring meaning upon experiences (Barriga, Gibbs, Potter, & Liau, 1999). Research has indicated that cognitive distortions may contribute to antisocial or criminal behavior (Yochelson and Samenow, 1976). Four self-serving cognitive distortions were examined: self-centered (according such status to one's own views that the opinions of others are not considered), blaming others (misattributing blame to outside sources), minimizing/mislabeling (believing that antisocial behavior is acceptable, admirable, or causes no real harm), and assuming the

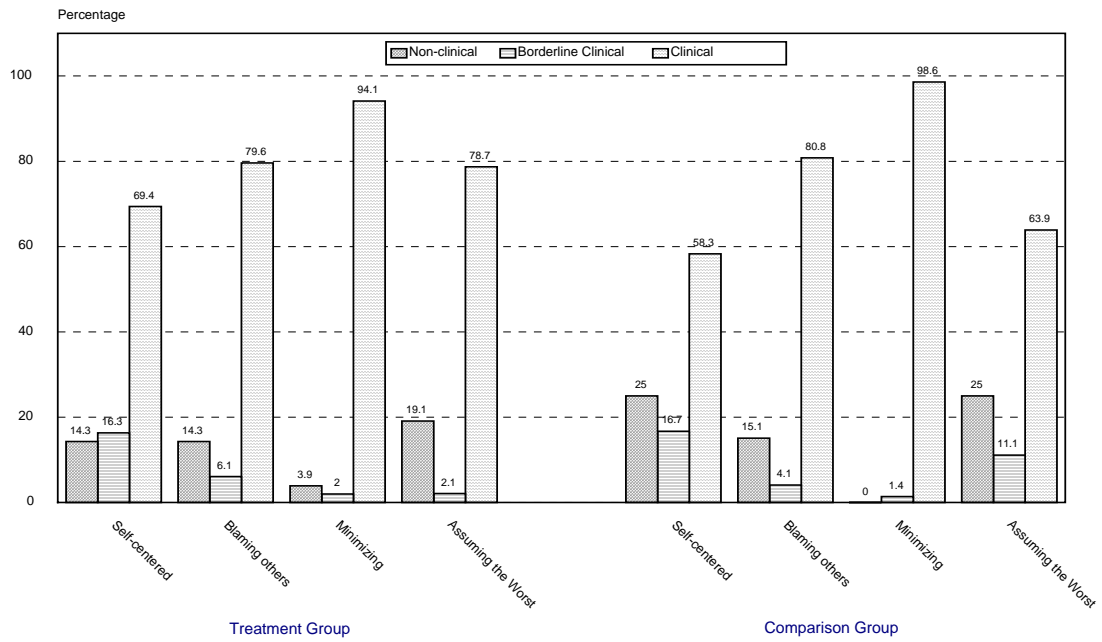
worst (assuming that improvement is impossible, or considering a worst case scenario). The *How I Think Questionnaire* also depicts four behavioral referents scales that are manifested from the cognitive distortions: opposition/defiance, physical aggression, lying, and stealing. From these subscales, three summary scores can be computed. The overt scale is computed by averaging the opposition/defiance and physical aggression means. The covert scale is computed by averaging the lying and stealing means. The overall *How I Think* score is computed by averaging the means of all eight subscales. Higher scores indicate higher levels of cognitive distortions.

The *How I Think Questionnaire* was administered to 162 youth at Swanson – Monroe (70 youth in the treatment group and 92 youth in the comparison group). The questionnaire has an anomalous responding scale to determine the truthfulness of answers. Scores greater than 4.25 are invalid and cannot be used in data analysis. Scores greater than 4.0 but less than or equal to 4.25 are considered “suspect” and should be interpreted with caution. After removing the invalid cases (34 cases total – 16 from the treatment group and 18 from the comparison group), there were 128 cases that were available for analysis of which 12 cases were considered “suspect” (1 case from the treatment group and 11 cases from the comparison group). The following analysis includes the suspect cases.⁹

One way to analyze the scales of the *How I Think Questionnaire* is to determine which of the three ranges (non-clinical, borderline-clinical, clinical) the score falls into. The ranges on the eight subscales can be used to provide a fine-grained analysis of the Youth Care System program participants. As Figure 1 reveals, the majority of youth in both groups scored in the “clinical” range for the four cognitive distortions – self-centeredness (69.4%

⁹ Figure B1 through B3 in Appendix B provides the analysis for the treatment and comparison groups without the suspect cases.

Figure 1: Cognitive Distortion Scales for the *How I Think* Questionnaire



*Youth scoring 4.25 or lower on the Anomalous Response Scale within. Higher scores indicate a problem in the cognitive distortion measured.

Youth were placed in the classifications based on which third of the scale their scores fell within.

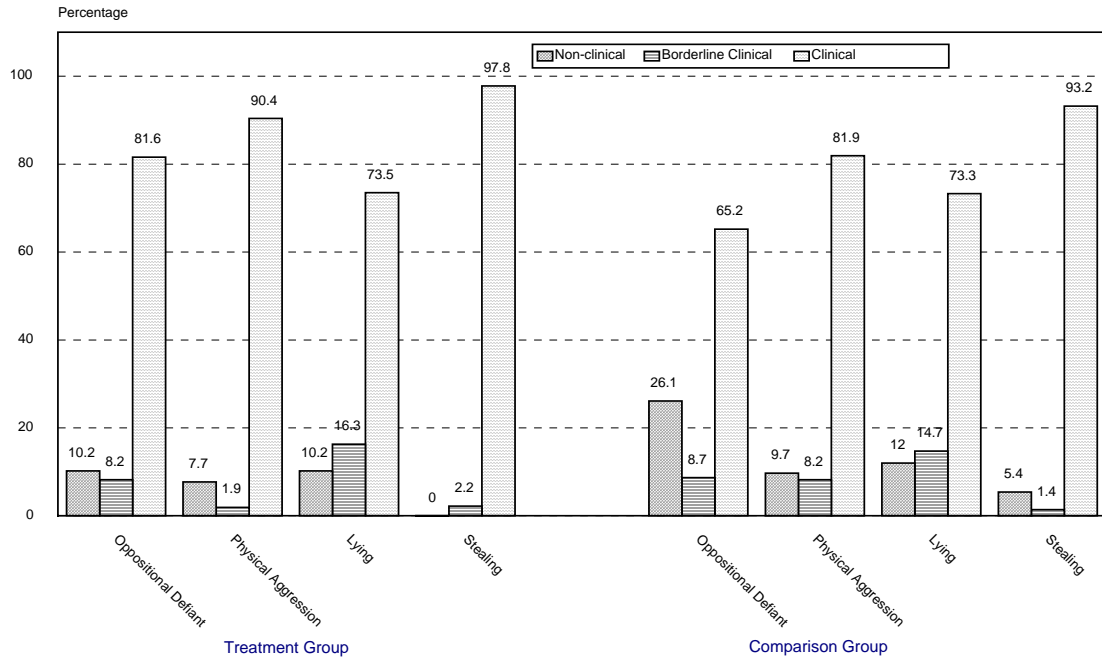
and 58.3%), blaming others (79.6% and 80.8%), minimizing (94.1% and 98.6%), and assuming the worst (78.7% and 63.9%). Accordingly, these youth are described as having a strong egocentric bias and a need for treatment that addresses their externalization and minimizing the consequences of their behavior.

Figure 2 shows the behavioral referent scales. Again, the majority of youth in both groups scored in the “clinical” range for the four behavioral referent scales. Approximately 82 percent of the treatment group and 65 percent of the comparison group scored in the “clinical” range on the oppositional defiant scale whereas 90.4 percent of the treatment group and 81.9 percent of the comparison group scored in the “clinical” range on the physical aggression scale. An almost equal percentage of youth scored in the “clinical” range for the lying (73.5% and 73.3%) and the stealing (97.8% and 93.2%) scales. Therefore, not only does a large portion of both groups have cognitive distortions, the distortions are so engrained that they may result in antisocial behaviors.

Figure 3 reports the results for the overt, covert, and overall *How I Think* scales. For the covert scale, a large portion of the treatment group (43.2%) was classified as “clinical” whereas a large portion of the comparison group (39.2%) was classified as “non-clinical.” For the overt scale, a large majority of both groups were classified as “clinical” (87.5% of the treatment group and 77.6% of the comparison group). For the overall *How I Think* scale, 97.6 percent of the treatment group and 86.6 percent of the comparison group was classified as “clinical.”

To determine if there were significant differences between the groups, independent sample t-tests were conducted. Table 2 reports the results of the difference of means test for those cases, which include suspect scores. Significant relationships were found with two

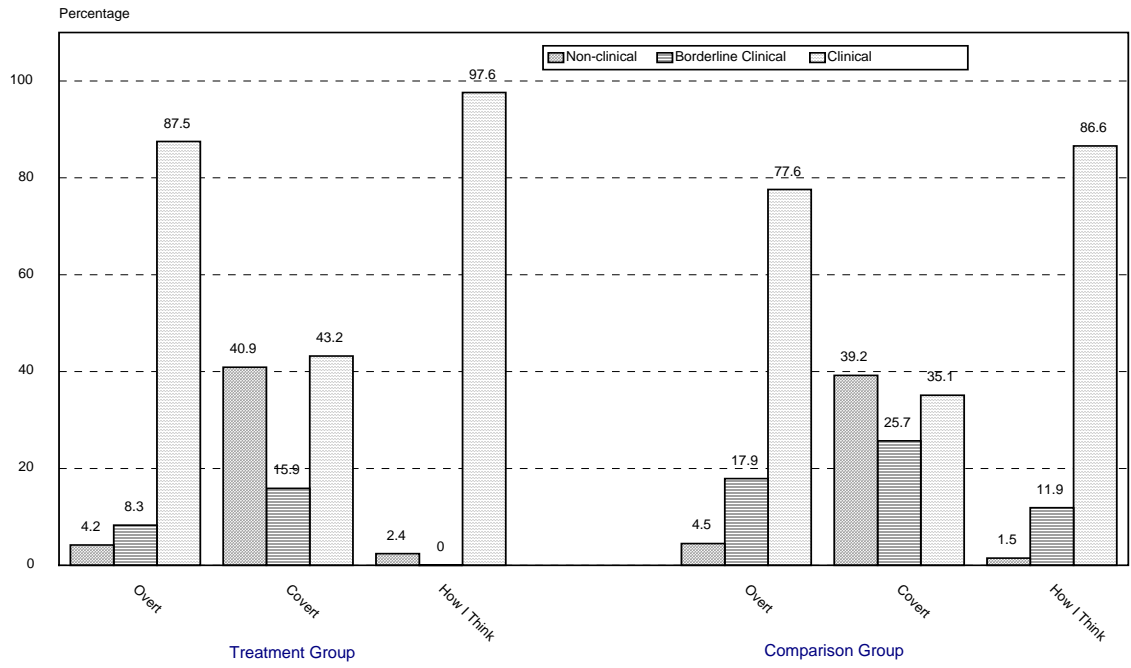
Figure 2: Behavioral Referent Scales for the *How I Think* Questionnaire



*Youth scoring 4.25 or lower on the Anomalous Response Scale within. Higher scores indicate a problem in the cognitive distortion measured.

Youth were placed in the classifications based on which third of the scale their scores fell within.

Figure 3: Summary Scales for the *How I Think* Questionnaire



*Youth scoring 4.25 or lower on the Anomalous Response Scale within. Higher scores indicate a problem in the cognitive distortion measured.

Youth were placed in the classifications based on which third of the scale their scores fell within.

Table 2: Independent Sample t-tests on *How I Think Questionnaire**

Scale	No. of Pairs	Treatment Mean	No. of Pairs	Comparison Mean	t-value	Sig.
Cognitive Distortions						
Self-centered (range 0-6)	49	3.75	72	3.39	2.479	.015
Blaming Others (range 0-6)	49	3.76	73	3.53	1.873	.097
Minimizing/Mislabeling (range 0-6)	51	4.16	73	4.25	-0.751	.454
Assuming the Worst (range 0-6)	47	3.70	72	3.23	2.896	.005
Behavioral Referents						
Opposition-Defiance (range 0-6)	49	3.83	69	3.50	2.440	.016
Physical Aggression (range 0-6)	52	3.90	72	3.62	2.115	.037
Lying (range 0-6)	49	3.93	75	3.81	0.887	.377
Stealing (range 0-6)	45	3.76	74	3.48	2.209	.029
Summary Scores						
Covert (range 1-6)	44	2.94	74	2.77	1.857	.066
Overt (range 1-6)	48	3.87	67	3.56	2.456	.016
<i>How I Think</i> (range 1-6)	41	3.90	67	3.60	2.436	.017

* Include the suspect cases

cognitive distortions – self-centeredness and assuming the worst. Youth in the treatment group were more likely to possess higher levels of these cognitive distortions than youth in

the comparison group. There were three behavioral referents that had significant relationships – oppositional defiance, physical aggression, and stealing. Again, youth in the treatment group was significantly more likely to report these antisocial behaviors than youth in the comparison group. The final analyses examined the summary scores for the *How I Think Questionnaire*. There were significant differences between the groups for all three summary scales. The treatment group scored significantly higher on the covert, overt, and overall *How I Think* scales.

The above analyses contained cases, which were considered suspect (e.g., indicating that the youth may not have been truthful in answering the questions). Table 3 reveals the analyses of the *How I Think Questionnaire* with the suspect cases removed. With the exception of the minimizing scale, youth in the treatment group was more likely to have higher cognitive distortions and behavioral referents than youth in the comparison; however, the difference was only significant in two relationships. Youth in the treatment group was significantly more likely to report higher levels of self-centeredness and assuming the worst than youth in the comparison group. Thus, the youth in the treatment group had higher levels of cognitive distortions than youth in the comparison group.

Criminal Sentiments Scale. Another instrument that measures antisocial attitudes is the *Criminal Sentiment Scale*. This instrument has 5 subscales – law (all laws deserve our respect), court (a jury can not be fixed), police (the police are honest), tolerance for law violation (a hungry man has the right to steal), and identification with criminal others (I'm more like a professional criminal than the people who break the law now and then). These scales are scored so that the higher the score the more favorable the attitudes for the law, court, police or the more favorable attitude for law violations and identification with criminal

Table 3: Independent Sample t-tests on *How I Think Questionnaire**

Scale	No. of Pairs	Treatment Mean	No. of Pairs	Comparison Mean	t-value	Sig.
Cognitive Distortions						
Self-centered (range 0-6)	49	3.75	63	3.45	2.040	.044
Blaming Others (range 0-6)	49	3.76	64	3.60	1.227	.222
Minimizing/Mislabeling (range 0-6)	51	4.16	64	4.24	-.626	.532
Assuming the Worst (range 0-6)	47	3.70	63	3.33	2.252	.026
Behavioral Referents						
Opposition-Defiance (range 0-6)	49	3.83	60	3.57	1.843	.068
Physical Aggression (range 0-6)	52	3.90	63	3.66	1.660	.100
Lying (range 0-6)	49	3.93	66	3.85	0.549	.584
Stealing (range 0-6)	45	3.76	65	3.53	1.770	.080
Summary Scores						
Covert (range 1-6)	44	2.94	65	2.80	1.451	.150
Overt (range 1-6)	48	3.87	58	3.62	1.867	.065
<i>How I Think</i> (range 1-6)	41	3.90	58	3.65	1.910	.059

* Does not include the suspect cases

others. To determine the overall *Criminal Sentiments Scale*, the tolerance for law violation and identification with criminal others are added together to form one scale, which is then

subtracted from a scale that combines the law, courts, police subscales. The overall scale is computed so that the higher the score, the lower the antisocial attitudes (i.e., criminal sentiments).

Table 4 reports the difference of means tests that were conducted on the *Criminal Sentiments Scale*.¹⁰ While the comparison group held more favorable attitudes concerning the law, court, and police, the only significant difference was with the law subcomponent. That is, the comparison group held significantly more prosocial attitudes for the law. For the tolerance for law violations and the identification with criminal others, the treatment group held more antisocial attitudes meaning that the treatment group was more tolerable of law violations and identified more with criminal others. However, of these two scales, the difference between the groups was only statistically significant for one – identification with criminal others. The treatment group was significantly more likely to identify with criminal others than the comparison group. Thus, before participation in the YCS, these youth held more antisocial attitudes than youth who were not going to participate in the YCS. For the overall *Criminal Sentiments Scale*, the comparison group had a higher score indicating lower criminal sentiments; however, the difference was not statistically significant.

The Prison Environment Inventory. The *Prison Environment Inventory* (Wright, 1985) was used to assess the correctional climate (i.e., what it is like to live) at Swanson Correctional Center for Youth – Monroe. The instrument examines eight environmental issues – structure, emotional feedback, activity, safety, freedom, social, support, and privacy. For example, youth were asked questions such as: “youth know the rules” (structure); “the correctional officers tell the youth when they do well” (emotional feedback); “there is at least

¹⁰ Table B1 in Appendix B reports the descriptive statistics for the *Criminal Sentiments Scale* for the treatment and comparison groups.

Table 4: Independent Sample t-test on the *Criminal Sentiments Scale*

Scale	No. of Pairs	Treatment Mean	No. of Pairs	Comparison Mean	t-value	Sig.
Law (range 10-50)	70	32.14	90	34.10	-2.038	.043
Court (range 8-40)	68	23.91	90	24.12	-0.290	.772
Police (range 7-35)	69	21.64	90	22.27	-0.835	.405
Tolerance for Law Violation (range 10-50)	66	28.74	88	27.83	0.986	.326
Identification with Criminal Others (range 6-30)	68	18.24	91	16.82	2.608	.010
<i>Criminal Sentiments Scale</i> (range -55 to 109)	60	30.00	80	35.66	-1.887	.061

Ns may not equal to the total for each group due to missing data on the individual items on the instrument

one movie each week” (activity); “a youth is sexually attacked on this unit” (safety); “youth practice whatever religion that want” (freedom); “youth spend several hours each day talking with friends” (social); “prison officials help youth with problems” (support); and “youth stay in their cells if they want” (privacy). The 80-item version was given to the youth participating in the Youth Care System evaluation. The instrument was coded so that higher scores reflect a higher quality of correctional climate.

Table 5 reports the results of the *Prison Environment Inventory*.¹¹ With the exception of emotional feedback and privacy, the comparison group reported a higher quality

¹¹ Table B2 in Appendix B reports the descriptive statistics for the *Prison Environment Inventory* for the treatment and comparison groups.

Table 5: Independent Sample t-test on the *Prison Environment Inventory*

Scale	No. of Pairs	Treatment Mean	No. of Pairs	Comparison Mean	t-value	Sig.
Structure (range 9-36)	68	24.91	92	26.73	-2.018	.045
Emotional Feedback (range 10-40)	67	24.73	91	24.01	1.063	.289
Activity (range 10-40)	68	25.91	91	27.68	-2.141	.034
Safety (range 10-40)	68	27.79	88	28.00	-0.258	.797
Freedom (range 10-40)	67	23.54	92	25.00	-2.117	.036
Social (range 10-40)	70	25.86	89	26.54	-0.972	.333
Support (range 11-44)	68	29.09	90	29.91	-1.048	.296
Privacy (range 10-40)	68	23.34	90	22.54	1.178	.241

Ns do not equal to the total for each group because of missing data

correctional climate. Specifically, the comparison group reported that there were more structure, activity, freedom, support, and socializing in their dormitories. In addition, the comparison group reported higher levels of safety than the treatment group. Of these relationships, there were three statistically significant differences. The comparison group reported significantly higher levels of structure, activity, and freedom than the treatment group.

Beliefs Inventory. The *Beliefs Inventory* was used to measure 10 irrational beliefs such as “It is an absolute necessity for an adult to have love and approval from peers, family, and friends” (approval); “you must be unfailingly competent and almost perfect in all you undertake” (perfection); “certain people are evil, wicked, and villainous, and should be punished” (evil); “it is horrible when things are not the way you would like them to be” (horrible); “external events cause most human misery – people simply react as events trigger their emotions” (emotionality); “you should feel fear or anxiety about anything that is unknown, uncertain or potentially dangerous” (fear); “it is easier to avoid than to face life difficulties and responsibilities” (avoidance); “you need something other or stronger or greater than yourself to rely on” (reliance); “the past has a lot to do with determining the present” (past-oriented); and “happiness can be achieved by inaction, passivity, and endless leisure” (lazy). This 100-item questionnaire is scored so that higher scores reflect higher irrational beliefs.

The results from the independent samples t-tests are reported in Table 6.¹² A review of the table reveals that there were no statistically significant differences between the groups. However, the treatment group scored higher on the evil, emotional, reliance, and lazy scales indicating that these youth had irrational beliefs consisting of: “believing people are evil and should be punished; external events cause most human misery – people simply react as events trigger their emotions; you need something other or stronger or greater than yourself to rely on; and happiness can be achieved by inaction, passivity, and endless leisure.” The comparison group scored higher on the following irrational beliefs – approval, horrible, fear, avoidance, and past-oriented – indicating that these youth believed: “it is an absolute

¹² Table B3 in Appendix B reports the descriptive statistics for the Beliefs Inventory for the treatment and comparison group.

Table 6: Independent Sample t-test on the *Beliefs Inventory Scales*

Scale	No. of Pairs	Treatment Mean	No. of Pairs	Comparison Mean	t-value	Sig.
Approval (range 0-10)	64	4.18	86	4.20	-0.071	.944
Perfection (range 0-10)	61	4.41	89	4.41	-0.021	.983
Evil (range 0-10)	63	5.21	89	4.97	0.773	.441
Horrible (range 0-10)	63	4.48	90	4.71	-0.973	.332
Emotionality (range 0-10)	64	4.47	89	3.92	1.900	.059
Fear (range 0-10)	66	5.09	88	5.15	-0.242	.809
Avoidance (range 0-10)	63	4.49	89	4.75	-1.150	.252
Reliance (range 0-10)	61	5.34	89	5.24	0.385	.701
Past-oriented (range 0-10)	63	4.52	90	4.76	-0.805	.422
Lazy (range 0-10)	63	5.23	86	4.87	1.458	.147

necessity for an adult to have love and approval from peers, family, and friends; it is horrible when things are not the way you would like them to be; you should feel fear or anxiety about anything that is unknown, uncertain, or potentially dangerous; it is easier to avoid than to face life difficulties and responsibilities; and the past has a lot to do with determining the present.”

Staff Characteristics

Demographic and Employment Information. Information was also gathered from staff members at Swanson – Monroe. Staff was given a correctional officer survey that assessed attitudes and collected demographic information. Table 7 reports the demographic information for the staff members. The majority of the staff members were males (59.6%) and African American (78.0%). A large percentage (57.8%) of the employees were age 40 or younger with the average age being 37.99 years.

Data concerning the job position and stability of the staff members were available for 214 staff (Table 8). The majority of the staff members were correctional officers (79.1%) followed by treatment staff (i.e., counselors), general services (i.e., administrative assistants), and educational staff. Approximately 81 percent of the staff had been at Swanson – Monroe for 5 years or less with the average amount of years at Swanson – Monroe being 3.55 years. The average number of years in the corrections field was slightly higher with the average number of years being 4.45.

Staff Leadership Assessment. The Youth Care System is a behavior management system in which staff uses four different types of leadership to interact with the youth depending on the youth's competence and commitment levels. Characteristics of the "coaching" style include: being directive (specifically telling youth what to do, when to do it, and how to do it) and highly supportive behavior by explaining the decisions that are made to the youth and asking for suggestions from the youth while continuing to monitor the tasks. In addition, staff assist youth by offering them advice, feedback, and support. Staff who were classified as "directing" have the following characteristics: using high directive and low supportive behavior by maintaining external control through very direct instruction

Table 7: Demographic Information for Staff

	N	Percentage
Race:		
White	41	19.2
African American	166	78.0
Other	6	2.8
Gender:		
Male	130	59.6
Female	88	40.4
Age:		
Less than 25	17	8.1
25 – 30	54	25.8
31 – 35	31	14.8
36 – 40	19	9.1
41 – 45	28	13.4
46 – 50	35	16.7
51 – 55	12	5.7
Over 55	13	6.2
Mean = 37.99		

without yelling, making sure that youth understand the instructions, and closely supervising the tasks. Characteristics of the “participation” style include: high supportive and low directive behavior through making decisions together with the youth, and encouraging youth to set their own goals and make plans for the future. Leadership style that uses low supportive and low directive behavior is classified as “delegation.” This type of style allows youth to take the initiative and achieve tasks independently.

Figure 4 reveals the primary staff leadership styles for staff members at Swanson – Monroe. More staff had the “coaching” leadership style (34.6%) followed by “directing” (30.4%), “participating” (19.6%), and “delegator” (15.4%). In addition to the primary style, staff may also have a secondary style (Figure 5). Thirty-eight percent of the staff had a

Table 8: Employment Information for Staff

	N	Percentage
Job Position		
General Services	13	6.1
Education	7	3.3
Treatment	23	10.7
Correctional Officers	171	79.9
Years at Current Institution:		
Less than 1 year	88	40.4
1 year to 5 years	90	41.3
6 years to 10 years	15	6.9
More than 10 years	25	11.4
Mean = 3.55		
Years in Corrections		
Less than 1 year	68	31.2
1 year to 5 years	94	43.1
6 years to 10 years	25	11.5
More than 10 years	31	14.2
Mean = 4.45		

“directing” leadership style, 29.1 percent of the staff had a “coaching” style, 23.8 percent had a “participating” style, and 8.7 percent had a “delegator” style.

Pretest Data for the Staff

As with the youth, staff members at Swanson – Monroe were given intake packets at the beginning of the evaluation period or at the beginning of their employment with the facility. The packet contained three assessment instruments – *Staff Survey*, *Prison Environment Inventory*, and the *Leadership Survey*.

Staff Survey. The *Staff Survey* was developed by the University of Cincinnati to measure staff members’ attitudes concerning the emphasis of daily activities, success at achieving institutional goals, general attitudes concerning other staff and youth, and staffs’ feelings toward their jobs. Table 9 reports the perceptions concerning the degree of emphasis

Figure 4: Primary Staff Leadership Style

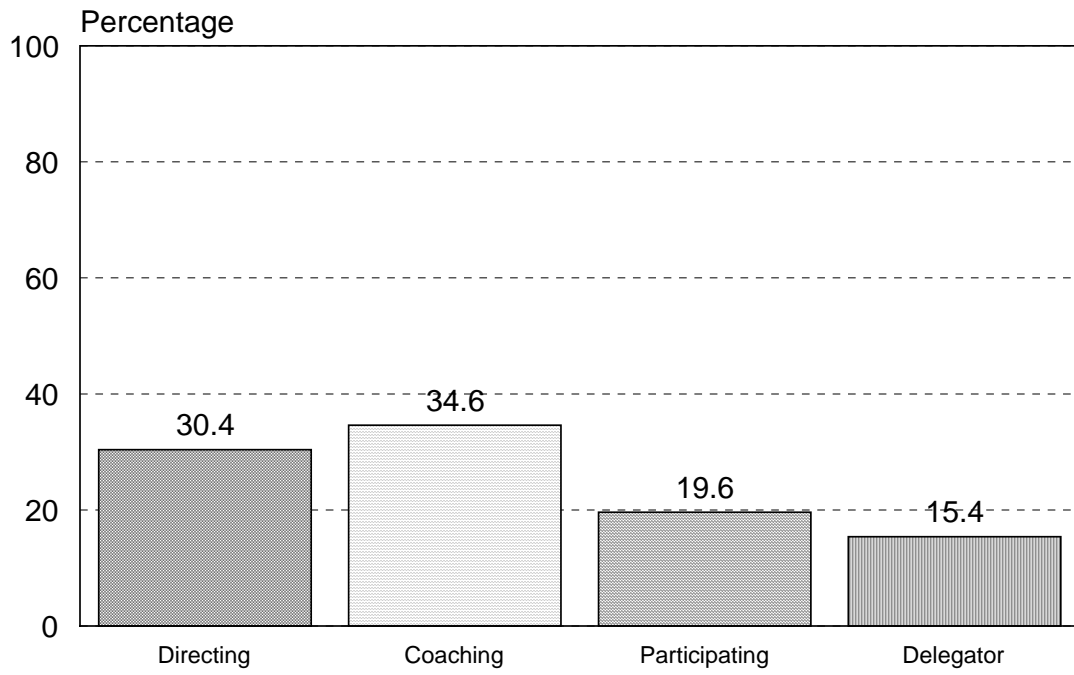


Figure 5: Secondary Staff Leadership Style

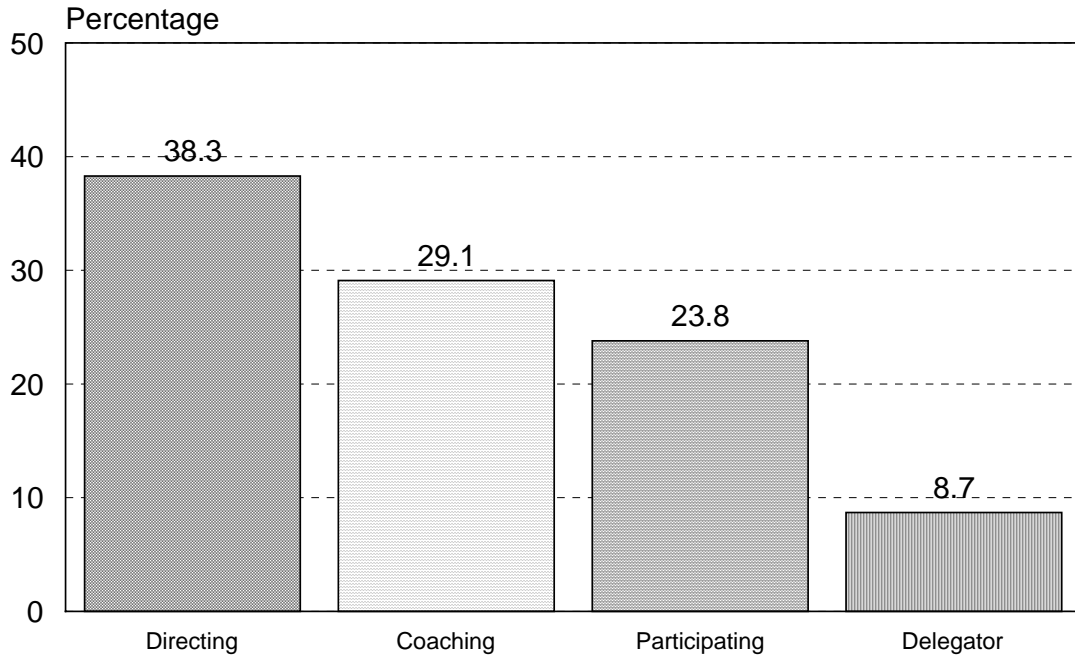


Table 9: Staff Perceptions of Daily Activities

Activity*	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Provide programs to learn new skills	224	1.00	10.00	7.80	1.99
Create protective conditions for youth	225	1.00	10.00	7.96	2.03
Provide activities to keep busy	224	1.00	10.00	7.85	2.02
Create conditions to prevent escape	225	1.00	10.00	8.48	2.12
Provide adequate space and services to youth	225	1.00	10.00	7.89	2.18
Ensure that procedures and rules are followed by youth	225	1.00	10.00	8.22	1.70
Ensure that procedures and rules are followed by staff	226	1.00	10.00	8.37	1.87
Prevent the flow of contraband into the prison	225	1.00	10.00	7.45	2.59
Prevent the flow of contraband within the prison	226	1.00	10.00	7.50	2.48

*coded so that 1 equals “none” to 10 equals “very great emphasis”

they give to day-to-day operations. Staff was asked to rate each item on a 10-point scale ranging from “none” to “very great.”¹³ Examining the nine different activities, it was revealed that the staff places a great amount of emphasis on these activities. However, staff placed the most emphasis on the following: creating conditions to prevent escape (O = 8.48); ensuring that procedures and rules are followed by staff (O = 8.37); ensuring that procedures and rules are followed by youth (O = 8.22); and creating protective conditions for youth (O = 7.96). The item, which had the least amount of emphasis, was preventing the flow of contraband into the prison (O = 7.45).

Aside from asking about the emphasis staff place on activities, the survey also asked about the institutional success at achieving its goals (Table 10). Respondents were asked to

¹³ Items were coded so that the higher scores indicate a higher emphasis for the daily activities.

Table 10: Staff Perceptions of Institutional Success in Achieving Goals

Activity*	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Preventing escapes	225	1.00	10.00	8.88	1.49
Preventing the flow of contraband into the prison	226	1.00	10.00	7.17	2.24
Preventing the flow of contraband within the prison	226	1.00	10.00	7.15	2.23
Helping youth learn new skills	225	1.00	10.00	8.16	1.86
Protecting weaker youth from stronger youth	225	1.00	10.00	7.94	1.76
Following legally mandated procedures	227	1.00	10.00	8.46	1.69
Punishing youth for the crimes that caused their incarceration	217	1.00	10.00	6.24	2.86
Providing youth with activities to occupy their time	227	1.00	10.00	7.91	1.95
Helping youth cope with the conditions of confinement	227	1.00	10.00	7.89	1.82
Detering youth from committing crimes on the street in the future	226	1.00	10.00	7.31	2.13

* coded so that 1 equals “not successful” and 10 equals “totally successful”

rate the successes on a scale of 1 (not successful) to 10 (totally successful). Staff perceived that the Swanson – Monroe was most successful in preventing escapes ($O = 8.88$) followed by following legally mandated procedures ($O = 8.46$), and helping youth learn new skills ($O = 8.16$). In addition, staff perceived the institution was least successful in punishing youth for the crimes that caused their incarceration ($O = 6.24$) and preventing the flow of contraband within and into the prison ($O = 7.15$ and $O = 7.17$, respectively). Thus, it appears that the facility is not only successful in preventing escapes but it is also successful in rehabilitating the youth by helping youth learn new skills.

The *Staff Survey* also included questions concerning the staff's attitudes and perceptions of other staff and the institution (Table 11). Staff was asked to respond to each item by determining if they "very strongly agree," "strongly agree," "agree," "neither agree or disagree," "disagree," "strongly disagree," or "very strongly disagree." The items were coded so that the higher the score, the more likely the staff disagreed with the item. Staff strongly agreed with the following statements: "rehabilitation programs have an important place in my institution (O = 2.66);" "correctional officers should have a say in determining procedures designed to implement institutional policy (O = 2.75);" and "correctional officers should have more opportunities to give input into the design of institutional procedures (O = 2.83)." Staff agreed with these statements: "the location of the facility makes it easy for family members to visit youth (O = 3.28);" "we need to provide more activities to occupy the youth's time (O = 3.35);" "conditions at my institution are such that when youth leave, they do so with a positive outlook towards their lives (O = 3.48);" "control of the institution should be left to institutional administrators and not the court (O = 3.60);" "I want correctional officers at my institution to be more sensitive to providing for youth's daily needs than they are now (O = 3.70);" and "conditions at my institution should be harsher to deter youth from future crime (O = 3.83)." In addition, the staff members were undecided about the following statements: "providing for the rights of youth in disciplinary matters has a negative impact on discipline at my institution (O = 4.34);" "youth do not have enough say in determining procedures designed to implement institutional policy (O = 4.38);" "youth do not have enough opportunities to give me their ideas about institutional problems (O = 4.57);" and "I often feel that the control of the institution is slipping out of my hands (O = 4.93)."

Table 11: Staff Attitudes and Perceptions

Activity*	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
I often feel that the control of the institution is slipping out of my hands.	222	1.00	7.00	4.93	1.78
I want correctional officers at my institution to be more sensitive to providing for youth's daily needs than they are now.	223	1.00	7.00	3.70	1.73
Control of correctional institutions should be left to institutional administrators and not the courts.	223	1.00	7.00	3.60	1.98
Rehabilitation programs have an important place in my institution.	224	1.00	7.00	2.66	1.89
Generally speaking, correctional officers should have a say in determining procedures designed to implement institutional policy.	225	1.00	7.00	2.75	1.76
Generally speaking, youth do not have enough say in determining procedures designed to implement institutional policy.	222	1.00	7.00	4.38	1.79
Conditions at my institution should be harsher to deter youth from future crime.	225	1.00	7.00	3.83	1.82
Correctional officers should have more opportunities to give input into the design of institutional procedures.	225	1.00	7.00	2.83	1.70
The location of my facility makes it easy for family members to visit youth.	222	1.00	7.00	3.28	1.55
We need to provide more activities to occupy the youth's time.	224	1.00	7.00	3.35	1.68
Youth do not have enough opportunities to give me their ideas about institutional problems.	225	1.00	7.00	4.57	1.53
Carefully providing for the rights of the youth in disciplinary matters has a negative impact on discipline at my institution.	224	1.00	7.00	4.34	1.63
Conditions at my institution are such that when youth leave, they do so with a positive outlook towards their lives.	223	1.00	7.00	3.48	1.48

* coded so that 1 equals "very strongly agree" and 7 equals "very strongly disagree"

In addition to asking staff about the above perceptions, staff was also asked about the goals of the prison system – retribution, rehabilitation, incapacitation, and deterrence. Figure 6 shows the Swanson – Monroe staff’s perceptions of the goals of the prison system. Approximately 43 percent of the staff reported that rehabilitation was the most important goal, followed by incapacitation (37.5%), deterrence (27.2%), and retribution (9.4%). The second most important goal was deterrence (30.4%) followed closely by rehabilitation (29.9%). Furthermore, the majority of the staff (52.7%) reported that retribution was the least important goal of the prison system.

Another set of questions, asked the staff about the youth population within the institution. Of concern was that staff reported that almost half of the population (46.9%) will recidivate and come back to prison and one-third of the youth could be called chronic troublemakers (Table 12). However, staff reported that 36 percent of the youth would be rehabilitated because of his participation in the prison treatment program.

In addition to asking questions about perceptions of and attitudes about the institution, the institutional population, and other staff, staff members were surveyed concerning their feelings about their jobs. A perusal of Table 13 reveals that the majority of the staff (94.2%) was at least somewhat satisfied with their job. Furthermore, 62.2 percent of the staff would keep the same job they have and 68.9 percent of the staff would decide without hesitation to take the same job. In addition, it appears that most staff has the kind of job they wanted.

Prison Environment Inventory. The staff members were also given the *Prison Environment Inventory* to obtain their perceptions of the correctional environment. This

Figure 6: Goals of the Prison System

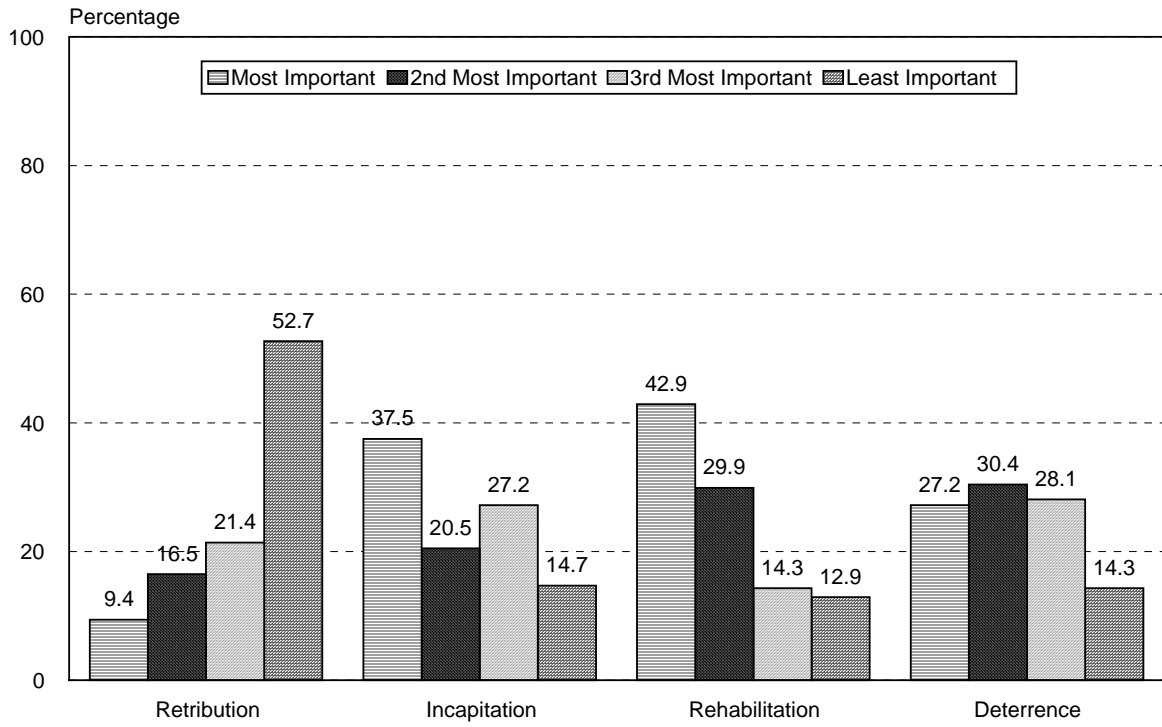


Table 12: Staff Perceptions of Institutional Population

Percentage of Youth	N	Min.	Max.	Mean %	SD
Are dangerously violent and should not be released into society	217	0.00	100.00	29.06	28.25
Will be rehabilitates because of their participation in prison treatment programs	219	0.00	100.00	36.07	24.41
Will be deterred or scared straight by their prison experiment	218	0.00	100.00	28.37	26.59
Will recidivate and come back to prison	218	0.00	100.00	46.98	26.81
Need to be protected from other youth	219	0.00	100.00	25.24	21.92
Might be called chronic trouble makers	219	0.00	100.00	33.68	24.14
Average daily population at your institution	203	5.00	515.00	300.07	88.28

instrument measures eight environmental factors – structure, emotional feedback, activity, safety, freedom, social, support, and privacy. Staff was asked to respond to each question using the following response set: never, seldom, often, and always.¹⁴ Intake information was available for 229 staff. Table 14 reveals that the staff felt that Swanson – Monroe had a great deal of structure, provide emotional feedback to the youth, provided activities for the youth, was safe, and provided support to the youth. However, the facility may be lacking in providing freedom to the youth, providing socializing experiences, and privacy to the youth.

Differences Between Staff and Youth Perceptions of the Correctional Environment

To determine if there were significant differences between the staff and youth's perceptions of the correctional environment, an independent samples t-test was conducted for

¹⁴ The scales were coded so that higher scores reflect a higher quality of correctional climate. To assess the correctional climate, the mean was compared to the median from the range. Thus, if the mean was higher than the median, the staff believed that the correctional climate was of a higher quality on that factor.

Table 13: Staff Perceptions/Feelings Toward Their Jobs

Item	N	Percentage
<i>All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with your job:</i>		
Very satisfied	93	41.5
Somewhat satisfied	118	52.7
Not too satisfied	13	5.8
Not satisfied at all	0	0.0
<i>With regard to the kind of job you'd most like to have: If you were free to go into any kind of job you wanted, what would your choice be:</i>		
I would keep the job I now have	138	62.2
I would want to retire and not work at all	39	17.6
I would prefer some other job to the job I now have	45	20.3
<i>Knowing what you know now, if you had to decide all over again whether to take the job you now have what would you decide:</i>		
I would decide without hesitation to take the same job	153	68.9
I would have some second thoughts about taking my job	58	26.1
I would decide definitely not to take the same job	11	5.0
<i>In general, how well would you say that your job measures up to the sort of job you wanted when you took it:</i>		
My job is very much like the job I wanted	90	40.7
My job is somewhat like the job I wanted	101	45.7
My job is not very much like the job I wanted	30	13.6

each scale.¹⁵ Table 15 reports the results from these tests. There were statistically significant differences between the staff's and youth's perceptions for all the scales except the social scale. Specifically, the staff reported higher qualities of the prison environment for the following attributes: structure, emotional feedback, activity, safety, supportiveness, and privacy. However, the youth reported that the correctional environment had a higher level of freedom ($O = 24.37$ versus $O = 22.16$).¹⁶

¹⁵ T-tests were conducted on all intakes for staff and all youth (even if there were no exit surveys).

¹⁶ Independent samples t-tests were computed to compare the staff's perceptions with the youth participating in the Youth Care System. Table B4 in Appendix B reveals that the results were similar. The youth reported a significantly higher level of freedom while staff members reported higher levels of structure, emotional feedback, activities, safety, and support. Staff also reported higher levels of socializing and privacy; however, the differences were not statistically significant.

Table 14: Prison Environment Inventory (Staff Perceptions)

Scale	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Structure (range 9-36)	200	19.00	36.00	30.31	3.52
Emotional Feedback (range 10-40)	202	20.00	35.00	27.90	3.13
Activity (range 10-40)	193	21.00	38.00	29.75	3.34
Safety (range 10-40)	193	20.00	38.00	30.11	3.52
Freedom (range 10-40)	196	15.00	31.00	22.16	3.33
Social (range 10-40)	201	19.00	34.00	26.79	2.95
Support (range 11-44)	202	23.00	43.00	33.28	3.58
Privacy (range 10-40)	198	15.00	32.00	23.91	3.21

Programming Considerations

Evaluations are enhanced when the researcher is able to determine what happened to the participant while under supervision. This may include documenting whether the individual moved to different phases based on progress. The purpose of this section is to identify rates of advancement in the Youth Care System, and to determine if participation in the Youth Care System resulted in a change in disciplinary infractions. The specific research question addressed was:

- *What were the rates of phase advancement through the Youth Care System from September through August?*

Table 15: Independent Samples t-tests on the Prison Environment Inventory (Staff and Youth Perceptions at Intake)

Scale	No. of Staff Pairs	Staff Mean	No. of Youth Pairs	Youth* Mean	t-value	Sig.
Structure (range 9-36)	200	30.31	163	25.93	-8.998	.000
Emotional Feedback (range 10-40)	202	27.90	161	24.28	-9.445	.000
Activity (range 10-40)	193	29.75	162	26.84	-6.346	.000
Safety (range 10-40)	193	30.10	158	27.89	-4.924	.000
Freedom (range 10-40)	196	22.16	162	24.37	5.469	.000
Social (range 10-40)	201	26.79	162	26.18	-1.556	.118
Support (range 11-44)	202	33.23	161	29.50	-8.406	.000
Privacy (range 10-40)	198	23.91	161	22.81	-2.807	.005

* Includes all youth

- *Does participation in the Youth Care System reduce the number of disciplinary infractions?*

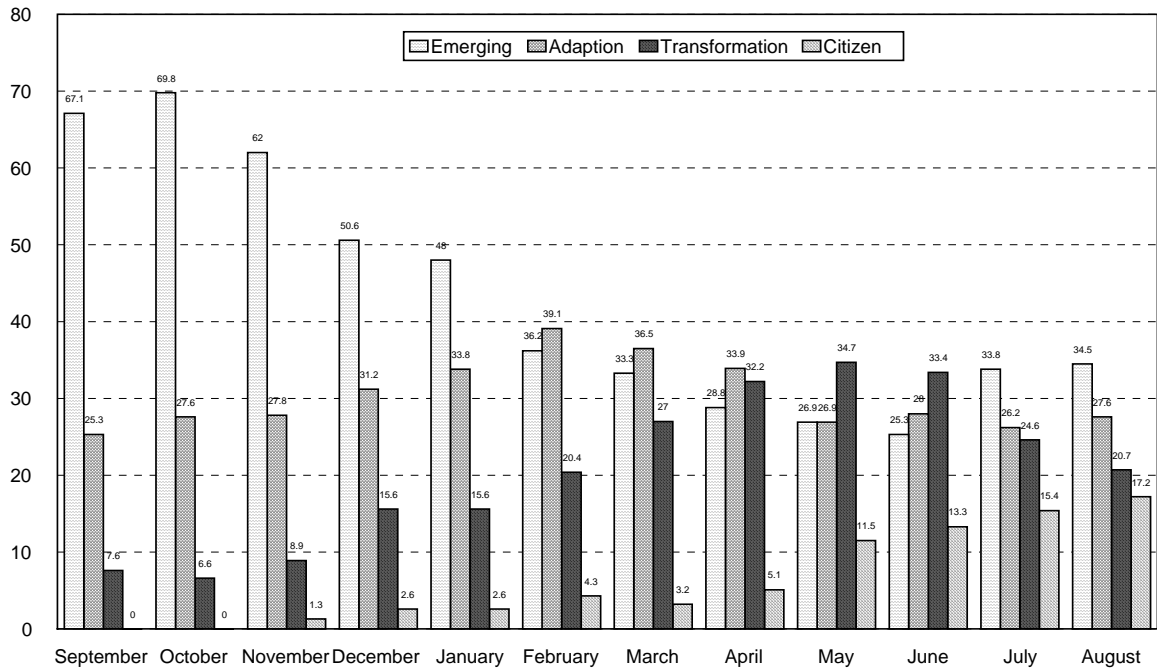
Service Tracking. Staff that work with the Youth Care System must classify youth based on their developmental level as defined by their competence (the youth's task knowledge and skills) and commitment (the youth's motivation and/or confidence or willingness to get the task done). There are four different stages that youth may be placed:

emerging, adaptation, transformation, and citizen. The emerging youth has low commitment and low competence. They are unwilling to participate in programs, their only plan for the future is to “get out of here”, see no need to change, and possess little self-confidence. The adaptation youth has low commitment and some competence. He has begun to accept his placement into the facility, has participated in some programs, knows the rules of the facility, but has not yet formulated plans for the future. The transformation youth has variable commitment and high competence. These youth have some investment into programming, is working on personal goals, and has acquired skills but does not know how to generalize these to different situations. Youth in the citizen stage have demonstrated high commitment and high competence. They are fully invested in their program, have realized the harm of their behavior and expressed remorse, have strong social skills, and are competent in their abilities.

Stages of development data were available for 76 youth (82.6%). Figure 7 shows the percentage of youth in each stage of development during the evaluation period (September 2002 through August 2003). From September to January, a large percentage of youth were classified in the lowest stage of development – emerging. The percentages ranged from a low of 48 percent in January to a high of 69.8 percent in April. While the percentage of youth in the emerging stage of development decreased by 32.6 percent throughout the evaluation period, the percentage of youth in the adaptation, transformation, and citizen stages of development increased. For example, the percentage of youth in the citizen stage steadily increased throughout the evaluation period to a high of 17.2 percent in August.

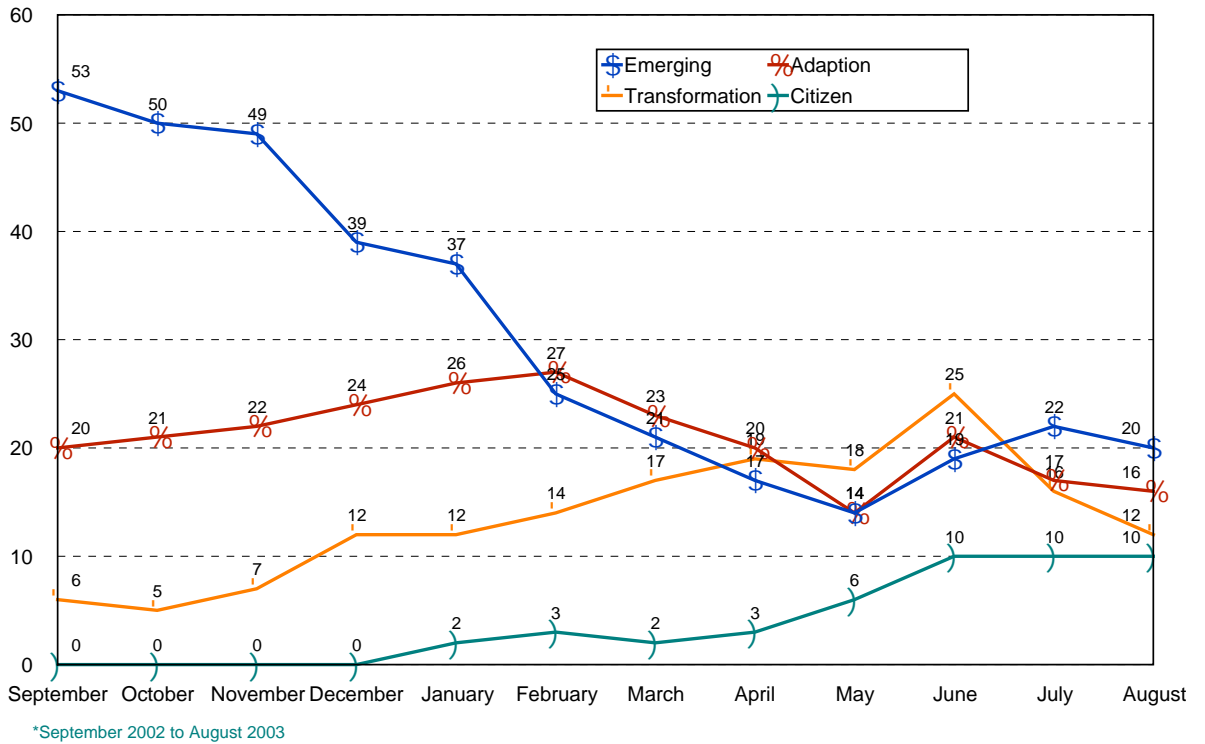
Figure 8 shows the actual number of youth in the evaluation period. For youth in the emerging stage, there was a steady decrease from September to May. Beginning in June the

Figure 7: Movement Throughout the Youth Care Stages*



* Percentage of youth in each stage at the first of the month

Figure 8: Number of Youth in Each Stage*



number of youth in the emerging stage began to increase slightly. For youth in the adaptation stage, the number of youth increased from September to February with a high of 27 youth in February and then began to decrease to a low of 14 youth in May. For the transformation stage, there was a steady increase in the number of youth from September to June. From June to August, there was a decrease in the number of youth in the transformation stage. There were no youth in the citizen stage (the highest stage of development) during the first four months of the evaluation. However, beginning in January, there was an increase in the number of youth in the citizen stage with the largest number of youth (10 juveniles) occurring in the last three months of the evaluation.

While the above figures reveal the number of individuals in each stage at each month, Table 16 reports how many youth actually progressed into another stage during the evaluation period. Sixty-two percent of the youth participating in the Youth Care System progressed at least one level during the evaluation period. However, approximately 11 percent of the youth were reduced at least one level during their time in the Youth Care System.¹⁷

Disciplinary Infractions. The number of disciplinary infractions was examined to determine if the Youth Care System was effective in reducing the number of incident reports. Table 17 reveals the number of disciplinary infractions for the treatment and comparison groups during the evaluation period. Data were available for 92 youth in the treatment group and 103 youth in the comparison group. Approximately 14 percent of the youth in the treatment group and 15.5 percent of the youth in the comparison group did not receive

¹⁷ It should be noted that the Youth Care System strongly discourages regression in stages. If the youth is regressed during his stay at the facility, the policy of the YCS is that each regression should be approved by administration. It is not clear the reasons for the regression in the stages. One possible explanation may errors in data collection as most of the service tracking information was sent at the end of the evaluation period instead of monthly. Thus, there was more room for discrepancies when reviewing the youth's files.

Table 16: Information Regarding Youth’s Progression and Regression in the Youth Care System

	N	Percentage
Progress:		
Yes	57	62.0
No	35	18.0
Regress:		
Yes	10	10.9
No	82	89.1

any infractions during the evaluation period. For the treatment group, the total number of infractions ranged from 0 to 62 infractions for the time period whereas the total number of infractions ranged from 0 to 34. When examining the number of guilty infractions, the majority of the treatment youth were found guilty for at least 6 infractions or less with the average number of guilty infractions being 9.72 infractions. For the comparison group, the majority of youth were found guilty of 1 to 10 infractions with the average number of infractions being 5.33 infractions.

To determine if there were significant differences between the two groups in the number of infractions during the evaluation period, an independent samples t-test was conducted. Table 18 reveals that there were significant differences between the groups on the number of disciplinary infractions. Specifically, the treatment group had more disciplinary infractions during the evaluation period ($M = 11.05$ versus $M = 7.15$). Furthermore, the treatment group, on average, had more violations in which the youth were found guilty ($M = 9.72$ versus $M = 5.33$). Lastly, the comparison group had more violations in which they were found not guilty ($M = 1.82$ versus $M = 1.33$). The reason for the differences in the number of infractions between the groups may be due to the more careful supervision

Table 17: Disciplinary Infractions

Infractions	Treatment Youth						Comparison Youth					
	Total Violations		Guilty Violations		Not Guilty Violations		Total Violations		Guilty Violations		Not Guilty Violations	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	13	14.1	17	18.5	37	40.2	16	15.5	30	29.1	31	30.1
1-2	7	7.6	8	8.7	41	44.6	17	16.5	24	23.3	39	37.9
3-5	14	15.2	16	17.4	10	10.9	26	25.2	20	19.4	29	28.2
6-10	18	19.6	13	14.1	4	4.3	19	18.4	11	10.7	4	3.9
11-15	12	13.0	15	16.3	0	0.0	12	11.7	6	5.8	0	0.0
16-20	14	15.2	11	12.0	0	0.0	3	2.9	4	3.9	0	0.0
21-25	6	6.5	6	6.5	0	0.0	5	4.9	5	4.9	0	0.0
26-30	4	4.3	3	3.3	0	0.0	3	2.9	3	2.9	0	0.0
Over 30	4	4.3	3	3.3	0	0.0	2	1.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Range 0 – 62 O = 11.05		Range = 0 – 55 O = 9.72		Range = 0 – 7 O = 1.33		Range = 0 – 34 O = 7.15		Range = 0 – 30 O = 5.33		Range = 0 – 8 O = 1.82	

Table 18: Independent Samples t-test for Disciplinary Infractions

Item	No. of Pairs	Treatment Mean	No. of Pairs	Comparison Mean	t-value	Sig.
All infractions	92	11.05	103	7.15	2.992	.003
Guilty infractions	92	9.72	103	5.33	3.554	.000
Not guilty infractions	92	1.33	103	1.82	-2.029	.044

from the staff for those youth participating in the Youth Care System. Thus, these youth may have been more likely to receive infractions because of the increase in supervision.

To examine the within group differences for the treatment group, paired sample t-tests were conducted. The number of disciplinary infractions was computed for each youth in the treatment group for the first three months and the last three months they were in the program. As shown in Table 19, the average number of infractions for the first 3 months was 1.94 whereas the average number of infractions for the last 3 months was 2.24 infractions. While the number of infractions increased for the last three months, the increase was not statistically significant.

Intermediate Outcomes

Intermediate outcomes are the effects that are attained through receiving the planned intervention (i.e., Youth Care System) such as reducing the juvenile's irrational beliefs, cognitive distortions, and criminal sentiments. The results were obtained by comparing pre and post-test data from the four different assessment instruments that were used. The specific research questions addressed were:

- *What were the changes in the juveniles' cognitive distortions, criminal sentiments, perceptions of the correctional climate, and irrational beliefs?*

Table 19: Paired Sample t-tests for Disciplinary Infractions

	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.
Disciplinary Infractions	71	1.94	2.24	-0.731	.467

- *What were the changes in the staff's attitudes and perceptions as a result of participation in the Youth Care System?*

Cognitive Distortions. The *How I Think Questionnaire* measured juveniles' cognitive distortions such as self-centeredness, blaming others, minimizing behavior, and assuming the worst. The questionnaire was administered at either the beginning of the evaluation of the Youth Care System or when juveniles were placed into one of the four dormitories. The instrument was administered to 168 youth at intake (72 treatment youth and 96 comparison youth) and to 55 youth at the end of the evaluation period or termination from the dormitories (21 treatment youth and 34 comparison youth). As previously mentioned, the *How I Think Questionnaire* has an anomalous response scale that indicates untruthful answering by the individual. Scores greater than 4.25 are not to be included in the analysis and were removed. Therefore, the maximum number of cases available to compare time 1 and time 2 scores for the treatment group was 11 and for the comparison group was 25.

According to Barriga et al. (1999), higher scores on the scales indicate higher levels of cognitive distortions and are associated with criminogenic behavior. Thus, participation in programming should reduce the likelihood of cognitive distortions. For the treatment group, a comparison of means tests between all time 1 and time 2 scores (i.e., including the suspect cases) on the *How I Think Questionnaire* reveals that with the exception of the minimizing, assuming the worst, and overt scales, the time 2 scores increased; however, these increases were not statistically significant (Table 20). For the comparison group, with the exception of

Table 20: Paired Samples t-tests on the Posttests *How I Think Questionnaire**

Scale	Treatment Group					Comparison Group				
	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.
Cognitive Distortions										
Self-centered (range 0-6)	7	3.46	3.78	-0.798	.455	20	3.58	3.68	-0.566	.578
Blaming Others (range 0-6)	10	3.65	4.06	-1.522	.162	23	3.81	3.90	-0.581	.567
Minimizing/Mislabeling (range 0-6)	10	4.06	4.01	-1.437	.185	21	4.35	4.40	-0.325	.748
Assuming the Worst (range 0-6)	9	4.03	3.67	0.742	.479	24	3.57	3.54	0.209	.836
Behavioral Referents										
Opposition-Defiance (range 0-6)	9	3.94	3.92	0.067	.948	19	3.81	3.89	-0.576	.572
Physical Aggression (range 0-6)	11	3.84	3.81	0.079	.939	22	3.80	3.84	-0.313	.758
Lying (range 0-6)	8	3.77	4.13	-0.983	.359	25	4.04	4.06	-0.129	.898
Stealing (range 0-6)	8	3.75	3.96	-0.608	.563	21	3.71	3.73	-0.073	.943
Summary Scores										
Covert (range 1-6)	7	2.80	3.13	-1.173	.285	21	2.95	2.91	0.449	.658
Overt (range 1-6)	9	3.93	3.84	0.297	.774	17	3.81	3.88	-0.677	.508
How I Think (range 1-6)	6	3.69	4.18	-1.462	.204	16	3.86	3.90	-0.523	.608

* Includes the scores that may be considered “suspect.”

the covert scale, the cognitive distortions, behavioral referents, and summary scales either increased or did not change from the pretest to the posttest. Again, these differences were not statistically significant.

Even though there were not statistically significant differences within the groups on the *How I Think Questionnaire*, there may be significant differences between the groups on the posttests *How I Think Questionnaire*. Table 21 shows the results of the independent samples t-tests that were conducted. With the exception of the assuming the worst scale, the comparison group scored lower on the cognitive distortions, behavioral referents, and summary scales for the *How I Think* though the difference did not approach statistical significance. Thus, while not statistically significant, the comparison group reported lower levels of cognitive distortions and behaviors that may result from these distortions at the time 2 measure.

Criminal Sentiments. To determine if the Youth Care System influenced the youths' attitudes regarding legal matters, police matters, a tolerance for violating laws, and identification with criminals, the *Criminal Sentiments Scale* was administered at intake and termination from Swanson – Monroe. For the treatment group, there were 72 valid intake assessments and 21 valid termination assessments. The comparison group had 93 intake assessments and 34 termination assessments. The instrument was coded so that participation in the Youth Care System should have resulted in an increase in the following subscales: law, court, police, and the overall *Criminal Sentiments Scale* (coded so that higher scores represent prosocial attitudes) and a decrease in the tolerance for law violation and identification with criminal others scales (coded so that higher scores represent antisocial attitudes).

Table 21: Independent Samples t-tests on the Posttests *How I Think Questionnaire**

Scale	No. of Pairs	Treatment Mean	No. of Pairs	Comparison Mean	t-value	Sig.
Cognitive Distortions						
Self-centered (range 0-6)	10	3.67	21	3.61	0.177	.861
Blaming Others (range 0-6)	10	4.06	24	3.88	0.556	.582
Minimizing/Mislabeling (range 0-6)	11	4.45	23	4.35	0.374	.711
Assuming the Worst (range 0-6)	11	3.54	25	3.57	-0.098	.923
Behavioral Referents						
Opposition-Defiance (range 0-6)	11	3.98	24	3.85	0.540	.593
Physical Aggression (range 0-6)	11	3.81	23	3.81	-0.031	.975
Lying (range 0-6)	10	4.15	25	4.06	0.297	.768
Stealing (range 0-6)	11	3.82	21	3.73	0.356	.724
Summary Scores						
Covert (range 1-6)	10	3.02	21	2.91	0.580	.566
Overt (range 1-6)	11	3.90	22	3.82	0.316	.754
<i>How I Think</i> (range 1-6)	10	3.95	19	3.81	0.525	.604

* Includes the scores that may be considered “suspect.”

Table 22 reports the results of the paired sample t-tests that were conducted to determine if participation in the Youth Care System resulted in a change in the criminal sentiments. With the exception of the court and overall *Criminal Sentiments* scales, the time 2 score was in the predicted direction for the treatment group. Thus, the Youth Care participants had more prosocial attitudes concerning the legal matters and police matters and less tolerable attitudes for law violations and identification with criminals. However, there was only one statistically significant relationship found for the treatment group. The time 2 measure for the court scale was significantly lower indicating that the attitudes concerning the courts became more antisocial at the time 2 measure.

Table 22 also reveals the results of the difference of means tests for the comparison group. The time 2 measure for the following scales increased: law, police, identification with criminal others, and overall *Criminal Sentiments Scale*. Thus, the youth in the comparison group had more prosocial attitudes for the law, police, and overall criminal sentiments, and more antisocial attitudes concerning the courts and tolerance for law violations. However, these differences were not statistically significant.

Independent samples t-tests were computed to determine if there were significant differences between the groups on the time 2 measure of the *Criminal Sentiments Scale* (Table 23). A perusal of the Table indicates that the comparison group had higher (e.g., more prosocial attitudes) time 2 scores for the following scales: law, court, police, and overall *Criminal Sentiments Scale*; however, the differences were did not reach statistical significance. Furthermore, the comparison group was more likely to report identifying with criminal others at the time 2 measure; yet, the differences were not significant.

Table 22: Paired Samples t-tests on the *Criminal Sentiments Scale*

Scale	Treatment Group					Comparison Group				
	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.
Law (range 10-50)	13	30.31	30.92	-0.342	.738	26	33.00	33.46	-0.338	.738
Court (range 8-40)	14	24.71	21.86	2.272	.041	29	24.41	23.76	0.753	.458
Police (range 7-35)	13	21.92	22.85	-0.579	.573	30	22.40	22.57	-0.179	.859
Tolerance for Law Violation (range 10-50)	12	29.93	29.25	0.250	.807	29	28.59	27.97	0.759	.454
Identification with Criminal Others (range 6-30)	15	18.20	16.87	1.136	.275	32	17.59	18.13	-0.717	.478
<i>Criminal Sentiments Scale</i> (range -55 to 109)	9	31.22	29.00	0.478	.645	23	33.43	34.52	-0.307	.761

Table 23: Independent Samples t-tests on the Posttest *Criminal Sentiments Scale*

Scale	No. of Pairs	Treatment Mean	No. of Pairs	Comparison Mean	t-value	Sig.
Law (range 10-50)	17	30.76	29	33.07	-1.339	.188
Court (range 8-40)	18	21.50	33	23.64	-1.713	.093
Police (range 7-35)	18	21.50	33	22.03	-0.373	.711
Tolerance for Law Violation (range 10-50)	16	28.69	33	28.24	0.317	.753
Identification with Criminal Others (range 6-30)	19	16.95	34	18.00	-1.154	.254
<i>Criminal Sentiments Scale</i> (range -55 to 109)	14	26.29	28	32.25	-1.191	.241

Prison Environment Inventory. To determine if the correctional climate was significantly changed due to the implementation of the Youth Care System, pre and posttest data were examined. Intake data were available for 72 treatment youth and 93 comparison youth. Exit data were available for 18 treatment youth and 34 comparison youth. Participation in the Youth Care System should have resulted in an increase in the time 2 measure (Table 24). An examination of the within-group differences for the treatment group revealed one scale in the opposition direction – safety (the perception of safety of the environment diminished at the posttest measure). However; the difference was not statistically significant. Of the remaining relationships, there was one statistically significant

Table 24: Paired Sample t-tests on the Post-test *Prison Environment Inventory* (Youth Perceptions)

Scale	Treatment Group					Comparison Group				
	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.
Structure (range 9-36)	11	22.91	25.64	-1.495	.166	29	25.93	27.28	-1.210	.236
Emotional Feedback (range 10-40)	13	23.31	25.53	-1.635	.128	29	24.97	27.28	-2.627	.014
Activity (range 10-40)	14	25.78	29.07	-2.608	.022	30	27.57	27.70	-0.118	.907
Safety (range 10-40)	13	26.92	26.77	0.137	.893	26	26.61	27.73	-0.935	.360
Freedom (range 10-40)	14	22.43	25.14	-2.453	.029	27	25.48	25.81	-0.280	.782
Social (range 10-40)	14	26.64	26.86	-0.186	.856	26	26.12	28.65	-2.594	.016
Support (range 11-44)	14	27.07	29.93	-1.963	.071	30	29.20	31.00	-2.148	.040
Privacy (range 10-40)	12	22.75	23.25	-0.321	.754	26	24.50	25.53	-1.233	.220

difference. The time 2 measure for the freedom scale was significantly greater than the time 1 score indicating that the participants believed they had more freedom in their correctional environment.

Table 24 also reports the within-group differences for the comparison group. There were three significant relationships for this group. The time 2 score for the emotional feedback, social, and support scales were significantly greater than the time 1 measure. Specifically, the youth reported that they had more correctional officer feedback, that they have more time to spend with friends, and that they have more help with their problems.

Between group differences were also computed to examine the relationship between the Youth Care System and the correctional environment. A perusal of Table 25 reveals that the treatment group reported higher scores for the activity scale whereas the comparison group reported greater scores for the structure, emotional feedback, safety, freedom, social, support, and privacy scales. Of these components, there were two statistically significant relationships. The comparison group had higher time 2 scores for the social and privacy scales, thus indicating a greater opportunity for socializing and a greater feeling of privacy. While these results may seem counterintuitive of the YCS, the results are showing that the Youth Care System staff is more watchful of the youth and is managing the behavior of the youth which resulted in these youth feeling as if they have less privacy and opportunities for socializing.

Beliefs Inventory. The *Beliefs Inventory* was used to measure the youths' irrational beliefs such as an irrational need for approval, a need to be perfect, irrational emotions, irrational avoidance, fear, and an over-reliance on others. It was theorized that participation in the Youth Care System would reduce the irrational beliefs (e.g., time 2 score would be less

Table 25: Independent Samples t-test for the Posttest *Prison Environment Inventory*

Scale	No. of Pairs	Treatment Mean	No. of Pairs	Comparison Mean	t-value	Sig.
Structure (range 9-36)	13	25.62	30	27.36	-0.982	.332
Emotional Feedback (range 10-40)	16	25.75	31	27.16	-1.152	.256
Activity (range 10-40)	17	29.06	31	27.61	1.214	.231
Safety (range 10-40)	16	27.69	27	27.89	-0.107	.915
Freedom (range 10-40)	17	25.53	28	25.86	-0.289	.774
Social (range 10-40)	17	26.47	27	28.70	-2.180	.035
Support (range 11-44)	17	30.24	31	30.97	-0.536	.595
Privacy (range 10-40)	15	22.87	28	25.32	-2.099	.042

than the time 1 score). Intake data were available for 72 youth in the treatment group and 93 youth in the comparison group whereas termination data were available for 23 youth in the treatment group and 34 youth in the comparison group.

To determine if participation in the Youth Care System resulted in a decrease in the irrational beliefs, paired sample t-tests were conducted. Table 26 reports the results of the difference of means tests. Five scales were in the predicted direction for the treatment group – approval, evil, fear, reliance, and lazy. Thus, participation in the Youth Care System

Table 26: Paired Sample t-tests on the Posttest Beliefs Inventory

Scale	Treatment					Comparison				
	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.
Approval (range 0-10)	12	4.17	3.58	0.978	.349	28	4.71	4.85	-0.375	.710
Perfection (range 0-10)	13	4.69	5.15	-0.920	.376	27	4.63	4.56	0.179	.859
Evil (range 0-10)	13	5.62	5.23	0.768	.457	27	5.11	5.74	-1.910	.067
Horrible (range 0-10)	14	4.50	5.07	-1.260	.230	26	4.85	4.46	1.244	.225
Emotionality (range 0-10)	14	4.36	4.42	-0.111	.913	28	4.14	4.17	-0.107	.916
Fear (range 0-10)	14	5.00	4.50	0.890	.390	29	5.21	5.79	-1.615	.118
Avoidance (range 0-10)	15	4.60	4.60	.000	.999	27	4.56	4.70	-0.402	.691
Reliance (range 0-10)	13	6.07	5.31	0.989	.342	29	5.34	5.28	0.254	.801
Past-oriented (range 0-10)	14	4.43	4.64	-0.467	.648	28	5.32	4.92	0.967	.342
Lazy (range 0-10)	12	5.25	5.00	0.383	.709	26	4.88	5.38	-1.830	.079

resulted in a decrease in these irrational beliefs; however, the reductions were not statistically significant. For the comparison group, there were four reductions in irrational beliefs. Specifically, the time 2 score was lower for the perfection, horrible, reliance, and past-oriented scales. Again, the differences were not statistically significant.

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to examine the between group differences for the *Beliefs Inventory* (Table 27). There was one statistically significant relationship. The treatment group reported a lower mean for the fear irrational belief than the comparison group. For the remaining scales, the treatment group reported lower irrational beliefs on five scales. Specifically, the treatment group had lower time 2 scores for the approval, evil, reliance, past-oriented, and lazy scales. Thus, the treatment youth reported lower levels of the following beliefs: “absolute necessity for approval; a belief that people are evil and should be punished; a belief that one needs something stronger or powerful to rely on; a belief that the past has something to do with the future; and a belief that happiness is achieved through inaction or laziness.” Thus when compared to youth who did not participate in the Youth Care System, the youth who participated in YCS reported lower levels of irrational beliefs on a number of items.

Staff Attitudes and Perceptions

Staff Survey. Paired sample t-tests were conducted to determine if the staff perceptions of daily activities changed due to the implementation of the Youth Care System. Exit data were available for 125 staff.¹⁸ There was one statistically significant relationship

¹⁸ While exit data were available for 125 staff, the number of useable post-test data varied for the following reasons: 1) staff completed the intake packets but refused or did not complete the exit packets; 2) staff refused or did not complete the intake packets and therefore, the exit packets were unusable; 3) staff did not provide a name with either the intake or exit packet and therefore, the packets could not be matched; and 4) staff left the institution without completing the exit packet.

Table 27: Independent Samples t-tests on the Posttest *Beliefs Inventory*

Scale	No. of Pairs	Treatment Mean	No. of Pairs	Comparison Mean	t-value	Sig.
Approval (range 0-10)	14	3.76	33	4.88	-1.873	.067
Perfection (range 0-10)	19	4.74	31	4.55	0.364	.717
Evil (range 0-10)	17	5.35	31	5.68	-0.643	.523
Horrible (range 0-10)	19	4.84	30	4.40	1.015	.315
Emotionality (range 0-10)	18	4.17	32	4.16	0.023	.981
Fear (range 0-10)	19	4.63	32	5.72	-2.390	.021
Avoidance (range 0-10)	19	4.95	32	4.72	0.478	.635
Reliance (range 0-10)	19	4.79	33	5.33	-1.127	.265
Past-oriented (range 0-10)	19	4.53	31	4.87	-0.741	.462
Lazy (range 0-10)	19	5.26	29	5.31	-0.107	.915

from the administration of the pre-tests and post-tests (Table 28). The time 2 mean significantly decreased for the item: providing programs to learn new skills. For the other items, with the exception of the items – providing activities to keep busy and provide adequate space and services to the youth – the time 2 score decreased. However, it should be noted that the pre-test scores were very high creating an unusually high baseline for comparison, reducing the likelihood to achieve significant differences between pre and post-

Table 28: Paired Sample t-tests on the Staff Perceptions of Daily Activities, Time 1 – Time 2

Activity*	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.
Provide programs to learn new skills	121	7.93	7.23	2.998	.003
Create protective conditions for youth	121	8.00	7.79	0.796	.428
Provide activities to keep busy	122	7.80	7.87	-0.291	.772
Create conditions to prevent escape	122	8.52	8.33	0.780	.437
Provide adequate space and services to youth	122	7.87	8.10	-0.980	.329
Ensure that procedures and rules are followed by youth	122	8.14	7.75	1.624	.107
Ensure that procedures and rules are followed by staff	122	8.30	8.08	0.937	.351
Prevent the flow of contraband into the prison	123	7.30	7.24	0.228	.820
Prevent the flow of contraband within the prison	121	7.41	7.19	0.811	.419

* coded so that 1 equals “no emphasis” and 10 equal “very great emphasis”

testing. Furthermore, both the pre and posttest scores indicate that the staff placed a great deal of emphasis on the institution’s daily activities.

Table 29 reports the results of the difference of means tests to determine if there were significant differences on the staff’s perceptions of institutional success in achieving goals. There were three statistically significant relationships. Staff reported that the institution’s success in preventing escapes, punishing youth for the crimes that caused their incarceration, and deterring youth from committing crimes on the street in the future was significantly lower at the time 2 measure. Furthermore, with the exception of providing

Table 29: Paired Sample t-tests on the Staff Perceptions of Institutional Success in Achieving Goals, Time 1 – Time 2

Activity*	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.
Preventing escapes	122	9.04	8.42	-3.910	.000
Preventing the flow of contraband into the prison	123	7.04	6.85	0.944	.347
Preventing the flow of contraband within the prison	123	6.99	6.75	1.132	.260
Helping youth learn new skills	123	8.28	8.09	1.051	.295
Protecting weaker youth from stronger youth	121	8.06	8.00	0.394	.694
Following legally mandated procedures	121	8.54	8.39	0.742	.459
Punishing youth for the crimes that caused their incarceration	109	5.84	4.42	-4.079	.000
Providing youth with activities to occupy their time	122	7.83	8.10	1.506	.135
Helping youth cope with the conditions of confinement	122	8.00	7.83	0.978	.330
Deterring youth from committing crimes on the street in the future	122	7.41	6.85	-2.570	.011

* coded so that 1 equals “not successful” and 10 equals “totally successful”

youth with activities to occupy their time, the time 2 score was lower for the remaining items; however, the difference was not statistically significant.

Paired sample t-tests were conducted to examine the differences between the pre and post-tests for the staff attitudes and perceptions concerning the institution and other staff (Table 30). The time 2 mean was significantly lower for three items. Specifically, the staff were more likely to agree with the following items: “I often feel that the control of the institution is slipping out of my hands;” “I want correctional officers at my institution to be

Table 30: Paired Sample t-tests on the Staff Attitudes and Perceptions, Time 1 – Time 2

Activity*	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.
I often feel that the control of the institution is slipping out of my hands.	121	4.85	4.14	3.760	.000
I want correctional officers at my institution to be more sensitive to providing for youth's daily needs than they are now.	122	3.76	3.36	2.056	.042
Control of correctional institutions should be left to institutional administrators and not the courts.	122	3.60	3.17	1.796	.075
Rehabilitation programs have an important place in my institution.	123	2.61	2.59	0.124	.902
Generally speaking, correctional officers should have a say in determining procedures designed to implement institutional policy.	123	2.46	2.53	-0.392	.696
Generally speaking, youth do not have enough say in determining procedures designed to implement institutional policy.	120	4.30	4.46	-0.802	.424
Conditions at my institution should be harsher to deter youth from future crime.	121	3.83	3.42	2.024	.045
Correctional officers should have more opportunities to give input into the design of institutional procedures.	120	2.36	2.46	-0.701	.485
The location of my facility makes it easy for family members to visit youth.	118	3.22	3.20	0.108	.914
We need to provide more activities to occupy the youth's time.	120	3.33	3.08	1.453	.149
Youth do not have enough opportunities to give me their ideas about institutional problems.	121	4.69	4.76	-0.359	.720
Carefully providing for the rights of the youth in disciplinary matters has a negative impact on discipline at my institution.	119	4.37	4.54	-0.912	.364
Conditions at my institution are such that when youth leave, they do so with a positive outlook towards their lives.	121	3.45	3.61	-1.008	.316

* coded so that 1 equals "very strongly agree" and 7 equals "very strongly disagree"

more sensitive to providing for youth's daily needs than they are now;" and "Conditions at my institution should be harsher to deter youth from future crime."

Staff was questioned concerning their perceptions of the institutional population (Table 31). The time 2 average percentage was lower for the following items: "are dangerously violent and should not be released into society;" "will be rehabilitated because of their participation in prison treatment programs;" "will recidivate and come back to prison;" and "might be called chronic trouble makers." However, these time 2 scores were not significantly lower. Thus, while not statistically significant, the staff believed that the youth in their facility were not as dangerous at the time 2 period and would not be as likely to recidivate and come back to prison at the end of the evaluation period. Concerning the institutional population, there was one statistically significant relationship. Staff reported that the average percentage of youth who would be deterred or scared straight was significantly lower at the time 2 measure ($O_1 = 25.15$ and $O_2 = 19.23$).

Table 32 shows the results of the pre and post-test scores for the staff's feelings toward their jobs. Chi-square tests reveal that there were significant differences between the categories concerning their level of satisfaction with the job. Concerning the satisfaction levels with the job, it appeared that there was an increase in dissatisfaction with their job. For example, 15.2 percent of the staff reported that they were not satisfied with their job at the time 2 measure compared to only 5.8 percent of the staff being not satisfied at the time 1 measure. Furthermore, there was an increase in the percentage of staff members who reported that they would prefer some other job at the time 2 measure (from 20.3% to 31.2%).

Table 31: Paired Sample t-tests on the Staff Perceptions of Institutional Population, Time 1 – Time 2

Percentage of Youth	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.
Are dangerously violent and should not be released into society	115	28.28	24.71	1.269	.207
Will be rehabilitated because of their participation in prison treatment programs	116	37.30	32.74	1.552	.123
Will be deterred or scared straight by their prison experiment	114	25.15	19.23	2.662	.009
Will recidivate and come back to prison	113	48.75	45.45	1.109	.270
Need to be protected from other youth	118	22.36	23.37	-0.348	.729
Might be called chronic trouble makers	115	32.83	29.17	1.522	.131

Staff was also asked to decide if they would take the same job all over again. Again, there was a 14 percent reduction in the number of staff who reported that they would decide without hesitation to take the same job. Last, it does not appear that the job positions are what the staff members expected. For example, 30.1 percent of the staff reported that “my job is very much like I wanted” at the end of the evaluation period compared to 40.7 percent of the staff at the beginning of the evaluation period.

Prison Environment Inventory. Staff were administered the *Prison Environment Inventory* at intake and termination of their employment/evaluation period. To determine if the Youth Care System changed the correctional environment, paired sample t-tests were conducted. Theoretically, the Youth Care System should increase the quality of the correctional environment. A difference of means test revealed that with the exception of the social and privacy environmental factors, the quality of the correctional

Table 32: Staff Perceptions/Feelings Toward Their Jobs, Time 1 – Time 2

Item	Time 1 Mean		Time 2 Mean	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with your job:				
Very satisfied	93	41.5	38	30.4
Somewhat satisfied	118	52.7	68	54.4
Not too satisfied	13	5.8	18	14.4
Not satisfied at all	0	0.0	1	0.8
$\chi^2 = 17.07$; $p = .009$				
With regard to the kind of job you'd most like to have: If you were free to go into any kind of job you wanted, what would your choice be:				
I would keep the job I now have	138	62.2	67	53.6
I would want to retire and not work at all	39	17.6	19	15.2
I would prefer some other job to the job I now have	45	20.3	39	31.2
$\chi^2 = 32.46$; $p = .000$				
Knowing what you know now, if you had to decide all over again whether to take the job you now have what would you decide:				
I would decide without hesitation to take the same job	153	68.9	68	54.8
I would have some second thoughts about taking my job	58	26.1	43	34.7
I would decide definitely not to take the same job	11	5.0	13	10.5
$\chi^2 = 32.58$; $p = .000$				
In general, how well would you say that your job measures up to the sort of job you wanted when you took it:				
My job is very much like the job I wanted	90	40.7	37	30.1
My job is somewhat like the job I wanted	101	45.7	68	55.3
My job is not very much like the job I wanted	30	13.6	18	14.6
$\chi^2 = 11.83$; $p = .019$				

correctional environment increased (Table 33). Specifically, the time 2 means were significantly higher for the emotional feedback, activity, safety, freedom, and support environmental factors. Thus, the Youth Care System resulted in more emotional feedback and increased the activity, safety, freedom, and support within the facility.

Differences Between Staff and Youth Perceptions of the Correctional Environment At Termination

To determine if there a difference between the youths' and staff members' perceptions of the correctional environment at the end of the evaluation period, independent samples t-tests were conducted on all exit surveys¹⁹. Table 34 reports the results of these tests. With the exception of the social and privacy scales, there were statistically significant differences on the environment scales. Specifically, the staff members felt that the correctional environment provider a higher quality of structure, emotional feedback, activities, safety, and support. However, the youth reported that the correctional environment provided a higher level of freedom.

CONCLUSIONS

This evaluation of the Youth Care System implemented at Swanson Correctional Center for Youth – Monroe was conducted over a period of twelve months. Based on the data collected throughout the evaluation, the following conclusions are reached:

- The typical youth in the Youth Care System at Swanson – Monroe was African American, 16 years of age and medium security custody level whereas the typical youth in the comparison group was nonwhite, age 16 years of age, and minimum security.

¹⁹ Independent samples t-tests were computed to compare the staff's perceptions with the youth participating in the Youth Care System. Table B5 in Appendix B reveals that the results were similar. The youth reported a significantly higher level of freedom while staff members reported higher levels of structure, emotional feedback, activities, safety, and support. Staff also reported higher levels of socializing and privacy; however, the differences were not statistically significant.

Table 33: Paired Sample t-tests on the Prison Environment Instrument, Time 1 – Time 2 (Staff Perceptions)

Scale	No. of Pairs	Time 1 Mean	Time 2 Mean	t-value	Sig.
Structure (range 9-36)	99	30.06	30.43	-1.082	.282
Emotional Feedback (range 10-40)	99	27.96	28.80	-2.712	.008
Activity (range 10-40)	90	29.92	30.87	-2.375	.020
Safety (range 10-40)	92	30.14	31.83	-4.403	.000
Freedom (range 10-40)	96	22.47	23.46	-2.778	.007
Social (range 10-40)	92	27.42	27.09	0.951	.344
Support (range 11-44)	100	33.51	34.40	-2.310	.023
Privacy (range 10-40)	89	24.21	24.08	0.329	.743

- The Youth Care System, which is a behavior management system, is appropriate for the youth that participated in the evaluation. Pre-test data reveal the youth had cognitive distortions, antisocial attitudes, beliefs, and values as measured by several assessment instruments. Moreover, these antisocial attitudes may manifest themselves in the form of antisocial behavior.
- There were some statistically significant differences between the treatment group and the comparison group. Specifically, the treatment group held significantly higher levels of cognitive distortions (e.g., self-centeredness, assuming the worst, oppositional-defiance, physical aggression, and stealing), antisocial attitudes about the law, and higher levels of identification with criminal others.

Table 34: Independent Samples t-tests on the Prison Environment Inventory (Staff and Youth Perceptions at Exit)

Scale	No. of Staff Pairs	Staff Mean	No. of Youth Pairs	Youth* Mean	t-value	Sig.
Structure (range 9-36)	113	30.43	43	26.84	-5.210	.000
Emotional Feedback (range 10-40)	110	28.73	47	26.68	-3.641	.000
Activity (range 10-40)	107	30.76	48	28.13	-4.448	.000
Safety (range 10-40)	108	31.61	43	27.81	-4.780	.000
Freedom (range 10-40)	111	23.64	45	25.73	3.666	.000
Social (range 10-40)	104	27.35	44	27.84	0.899	.370
Support (range 11-44)	112	34.32	48	30.71	-5.532	.000
Privacy (range 10-40)	101	24.15	43	24.47	0.543	.588

* Includes all youth

- Concerning the correctional environment, the treatment group held lower perceptions of the correctional environment on the following components: structure, activity, and freedom.
- There were statistically significant differences between the treatment and comparison groups on the number of infractions. The number of disciplinary infractions for the treatment youth ranged from zero to 62 incidents with an average of 11.05 infractions whereas the number of tickets for the comparison group ranged from zero to 55 infractions with an average of 9.72 infractions. The difference in the number of disciplinary infractions may be due to the increased supervision for the youth participating in the YCS.

- Based on the service tracking data, the youth were progressing through the stages of development. Sixty-two percent of the youth progressed at least one stage during the evaluation period. Furthermore, it appeared that the percentage of youth in the emerging stage began to decrease while the percentage of youth in the transformation and citizen stages began to increase during the evaluation period. However, 10 percent of the youth regressed at least one stage.
- Independent samples t-tests were conducted on all post-test data for the treatment and comparison youth. There were no statistically significant differences between the groups on cognitive distortions and criminal sentiments. Concerning the irrational beliefs, there was only one statistically significant difference – the treatment group had a lower irrational fear belief than the comparison group. Tests conducted on the *Prison Environment Inventory* indicated that the comparison group held more favorable perceptions of the correctional environment for the social and privacy
- Paired samples t-tests were conducted on all the assessment instruments for the treatment and comparison groups. There were no statistically significant differences within the two groups for the cognitive distortion scales and the irrational beliefs scales. Concerning the criminal sentiments, there was only one statistically significant relationship. There was a reduction in the court scale for the treatment group indicating a decrease in the prosocial attitudes for the courts. For the *Prison Environment Inventory*, there were some significant changes. Specifically, the treatment indicated an increase in their perceptions of freedom whereas the comparison group indicated an increase in their perceptions of emotional feedback, socializing, and support within Swanson – Monroe.

The following conclusions are reached concerning the staff at Swanson Correctional

Center for Youth:

- The typical staff member at the facility was African American, male, and 38 years of age. The majority of the participants were correctional officers (79.9%), have been at their current facility for approximately 3½ years with an average of 4½ years in the corrections field.
- An assessment of the primary and secondary leadership styles revealed that the majority of the staff's primary leadership was coaching (34.6%), followed by directing (30.4%), participating (19.6%), and delegating (15.4%). The majority of the staff's secondary style was directing (38.3%), followed by coaching (29.1%), participating (23.8%), and delegating (8.7%).
- Staff placed a great emphasis on many daily activities including: creating conditions to prevent escape, ensuring that procedures and rules are followed by staff and youth, creating protective conditions for youth, and providing activities to keep youth busy. In addition, staff believed that the institution was very successful at meeting its goals

of: following legally mandated procedures, preventing escapes, helping youth learn new skills, and helping youth cope with the conditions of confinement.

- The staff strongly agreed that rehabilitation programs have an important place in the institution. Furthermore, a large percentage (42.9%) of the staff indicated that rehabilitation was the most important goal of the prison system.
- The majority of staff appeared to be somewhat satisfied with their job, would keep the job they have, and would decide without hesitation to take the same job at the time 1 measure.
- There were statistically significant differences between the time 1 and time 2 scores for some items in the *Staff Survey*. First, the emphasis on providing programs to learn new skills decreased from the administration of the pre and post-test. Second, the perceptions regarding the institution's ability to prevent escapes, punish youth for crimes that caused their incarceration, and deterring youth from committing crimes on the street decreased at the end of the evaluation. Even though these scales resulted in a significant decrease, it should be noted that the initial scores of these items were very high.
- When examining staff's attitudes and perceptions, there were three statistically significant relationships. The post-test scores revealed that staff were more likely to agree that they feel that the control of the institution was out of their hands, that correctional officers should be more sensitive to providing for youth's daily needs, and conditions should be harsher to deter youth from future crime. Furthermore, the reported percentage of youth who will be deterred or scared straight by their prison experiment was reduced at the time 2 measure.
- There were some changes in the staff's perceptions of the correctional environment. Specifically, with the exception of the social and privacy, the quality of the correctional environment increased. Furthermore, the emotional feedback, activity, safety, freedom, and supportiveness of the environment significantly increased.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the site visit, the following recommendations can be made:

- Swanson Correctional Center for Youth – Monroe should implement a mentoring system in which staff members will work closely with youth to reinforce prosocial attitudes and behaviors.
- Staff members at Swanson – Monroe should make certain that the youth have the ability to read and understand the Youth Care System manual and have the cognitive ability to participate in the Youth Care System.

- Administrators, Middle Managers, and Supervisors should be proactively involved with the implementation of the Youth Care System that includes but not limited to: onsite regular monitoring and auditing of staff and youth YCS activities and interactions; case record review; staff observation with constructive feedback on system techniques and strategies; direct written evaluation and supervisory comments for staff and youth.

Based on the data from the pre and post-tests, the following recommendations are made for Swanson Correctional Center for Youth – Monroe.

- The Youth Care System has been shown to reduce the number of disciplinary infractions for juveniles in an institution. However, the data from Swanson – Monroe indicated that the number of disciplinary infractions increased during the evaluation. Furthermore, the pre and post-test data revealed that there were few improvements for the youth participating in the Youth Care System. It seems highly probably that the YCS system was not implemented as designed and as policy/procedures required. Therefore, Swanson Correctional Center – Monroe should examine the fidelity of the implementation of the Youth Care System and insure that it is administered and implemented with integrity.
- After an examination into the implementation of the Youth Care System is finished and changes are made where necessary, Swanson Correctional Center for Youth – Monroe should continue the Youth Care System in the original dormitories and expand the YCS to the entire facility for a number of reasons. First, the evaluation of the Youth Care System occurred at its implementation in the facility. Research has shown that programs are more effective once they have become stable (after a period of two years). Accordingly, it may be that youth's perceptions did not significantly change for the better because the program was still experiencing growing pains and staff were still being trained on the Youth Care System. Second, there were some significant improvements in the staff members' perceptions of the correctional environment during the evaluation period indicating that the Youth Care System created a better environment for the youth. Third, there was a change in the leadership of the institution during the program evaluation period, during which transition routine program operations were disrupted.
- Swanson Correctional Center for Youth – Monroe should continue to collect data regarding the effectiveness of the Youth Care System. The intake and exit packets for the youth and staff should be collected at intake and termination from the facility. This evaluation compared youth who were participating in the Youth Care System with youth who were not participating. One reason for the lack of significant findings between the two groups on the post-test measures may be that the comparison youth were being treated as if they were part of the Youth Care System.²⁰ Thus, the facility

²⁰ Staff at Swanson Correctional Center – Monroe were trained in the Youth Care System regardless of whether they were working with the dorms participating in the evaluation.

should continue to collect data and review the findings once all youth are participating in the Youth Care System.

- Statistical tests indicated few significant differences between the comparison group and the treatment group on a number of attitudinal and behavioral items. During the evaluation, there were some conversations about expanding the Youth Care System to the entire facility. The facility was advised against this expansion due to the spurious effects it would have on the evaluation. However, it may be that many staff who worked with the comparison youth did in fact use their training in the Youth Care System to interact with the youth. Thus, the YCS may have been implemented beyond the original scope of the research design. Accordingly, it would be advantageous for the facility to expand the YCS and evaluate the full implementation of the Youth Care System within the entire compound of Swanson –Monroe.
- Last, it is not surprising that the attitudinal scales (*How I Think Questionnaire*, *Beliefs Inventory*, and *Criminal Sentiments*) did not show much change given that the Youth Care System is not a treatment program. What the results from the instruments show is that these youth are antisocial and have distorted thinking. Given this fact, improvements in staff attitudes on some key factors (especially their perception of the prison environment) and the fact that some of the indicators are moving in the predicted direction indicates that the Youth Care System is doing what it suppose to – *improving the management of behavior in the facility*. Once the Youth Care System is stable, the facility should begin to implement structured cognitive behavioral treatment interventions (*Thinking for a Change*, *Aggression Replacement Therapy*, or *Corrective Thinking*) to target antisocial thinking.

Appendix A

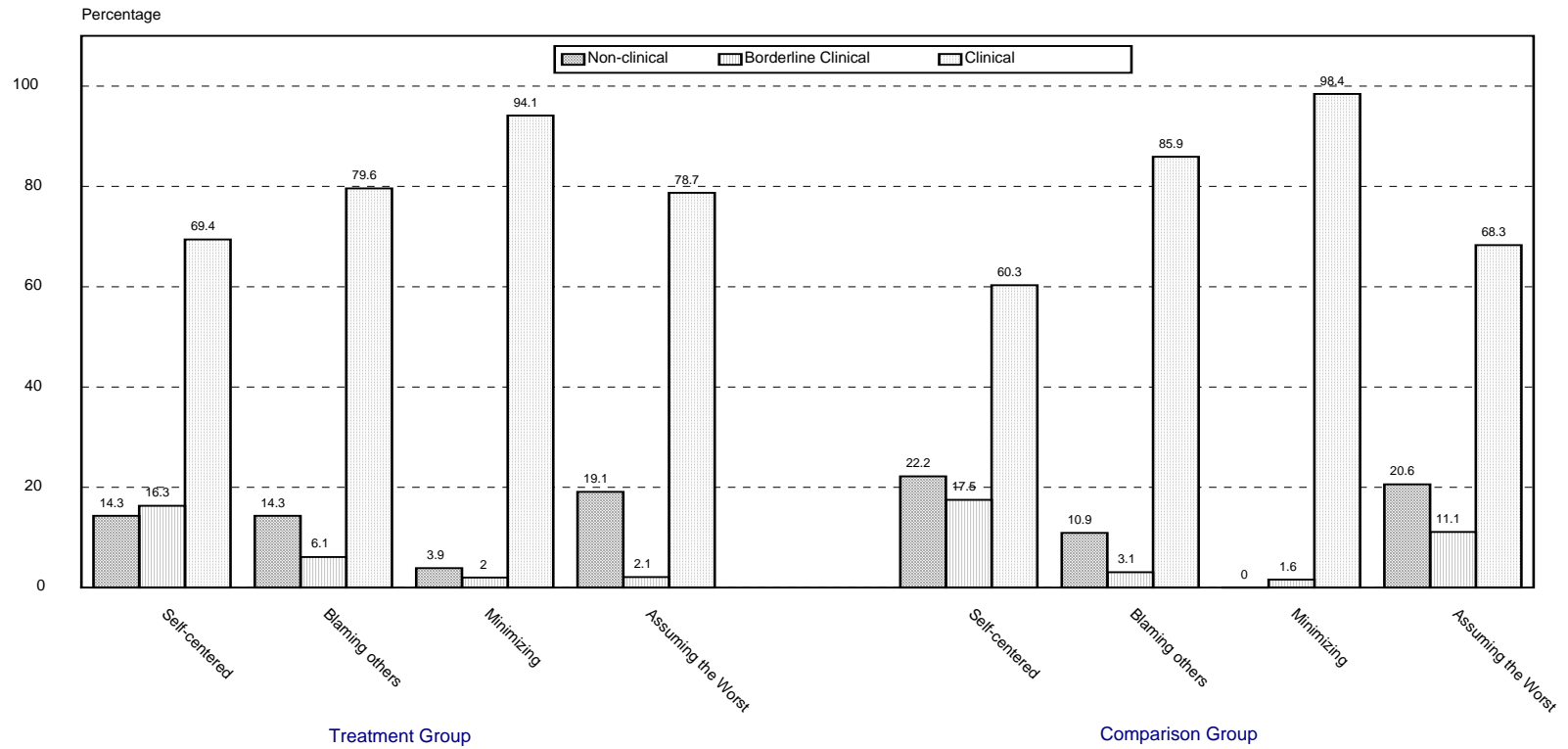
Data Collection Instruments

Appendix B

Tables

Figure B1: Cognitive Distortion Scales for the

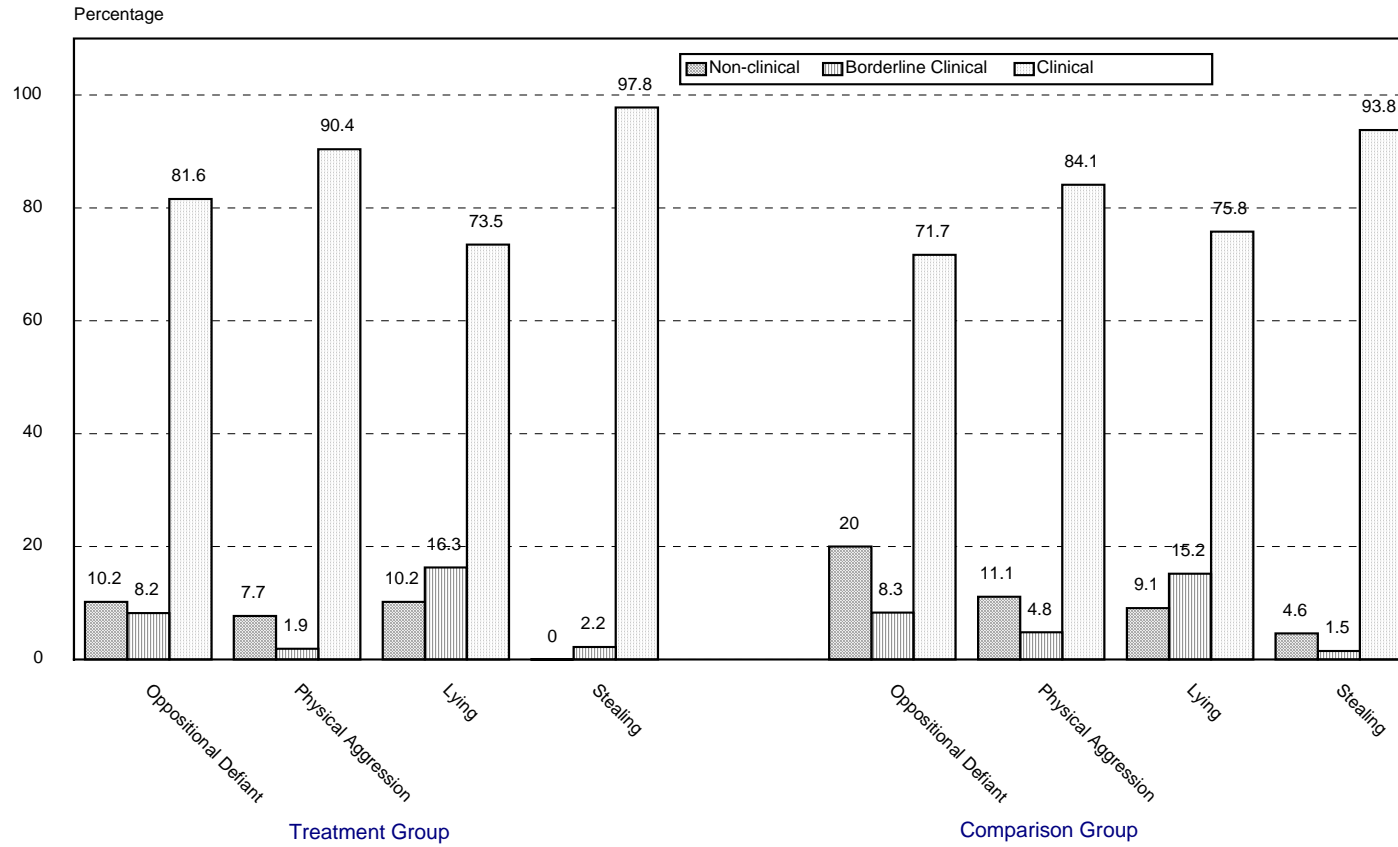
How I Think Questionnaire



*Youth scoring 4.00 or lower on the Anomalous Response Scale. within. Higher scores indicate a problem in the cognitive distortion measured.

Youth were placed in the classifications based on which third of the scale their scores fell

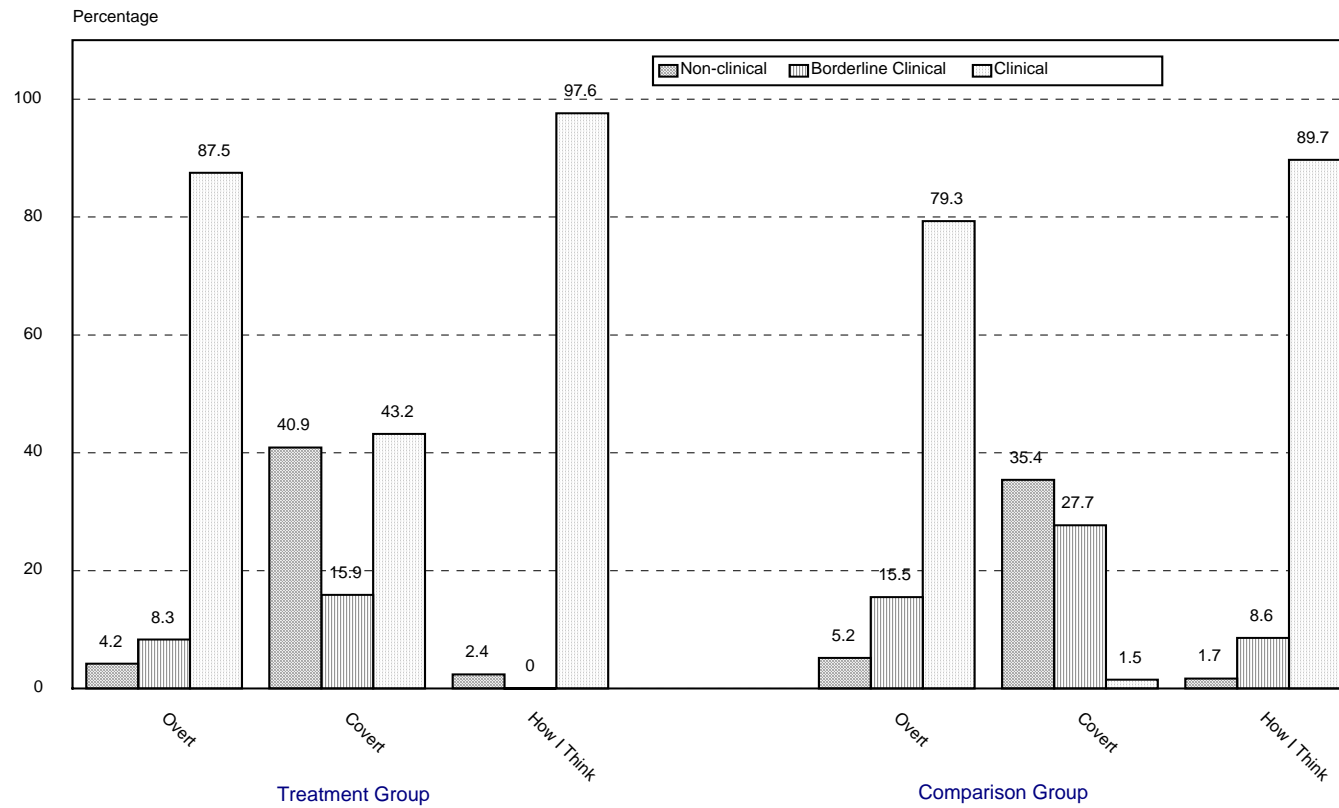
Figure B2: Behavioral Referent Scales for the *How I Think* Questionnaire



*Youth scoring 4.00 or lower on the Anomalous Response Scale. within. Higher scores indicate a problem in the cognitive distortion measured.

Youth were placed in the classifications based on which third of the scale their scores fell

Figure B3: Summary Scales for the *How I Think* Questionnaire



*Youth scoring 4.00 or lower on the Anomalous Response Scale.

within. Higher scores indicate a problem in the cognitive distortion measured.

Youth were placed in the classifications based on which third of the scale their scores fell

Table B1: Descriptive Statistics for the *Criminal Sentiments Scale*

Scale	N	Treatment				Comparison				
		Min.	Max.	Mean	SD	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Law (range 10-50)	70	13.00	46.00	32.14	6.45	90	21.00	50.00	34.10	5.67
Court (range 8-40)	68	8.00	36.00	23.91	4.66	90	14.00	37.00	24.12	4.40
Police (range 7-35)	69	7.00	35.00	21.64	4.89	90	11.00	33.00	22.27	4.57
Tolerance for Law Violation (range 10-50)	66	18.00	45.00	28.74	5.70	88	10.00	42.00	27.83	5.67
Identification with Criminal Others (range 6-30)	68	10.00	30.00	18.24	3.29	91	10.00	26.00	16.82	3.44
Criminal Sentiments Scale (range -55 to 109)	60	-47.00	76.00	30.00	18.88	80	7.00	86.00	35.66	16.54

To determine a baseline for the intake scores, the median was computed from the ranges and then the mean for each scale was examined to determine if the mean was above or below the median score. Accordingly, if the mean fell above the median score it represented more positive attitudes for the law, court, police, and overall *Criminal Sentiments* scale; if the mean fell below the median, it represented more antisocial attitudes for the tolerance for law violations and identification with criminal others.

Table B2: Descriptive Statistics for the *Prison Environment Inventory*

Scale	Treatment						Comparison					
	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	SD	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	SD
Structure (range 9-36)	68	11.00	35.00	24.91	25.5	6.11	92	12.00	36.00	26.73	27.00	5.25
Emotional Feedback (range 10-40)	67	15.00	37.00	24.73	25.00	4.36	91	14.00	34.00	24.01	24.00	4.09
Activity (range 10-40)	68	13.00	39.00	25.91	26.00	5.45	91	13.00	38.00	27.68	28.00	4.93
Safety (range 10-40)	68	16.00	39.00	27.79	27.50	5.19	88	13.00	38.00	28.00	28.00	4.76
Freedom (range 10-40)	67	13.00	31.00	23.54	24.00	4.21	92	13.00	37.00	25.00	25.00	4.38
Social (range 10-40)	70	15.00	35.00	25.86	26.00	4.55	89	16.00	35.00	26.54	27.00	4.27
Support (range 11-44)	68	18.00	41.00	29.09	29.50	5.33	90	20.00	41.00	29.91	29.50	4.53
Privacy (range 10-40)	68	14.00	32.00	23.34	24.00	4.09	90	13.00	33.00	22.54	23.00	4.27

Ns do not equal to the total for each group because of missing data

To assess the correctional climate for the intake data, the mean was compared to the median from the range. Thus, if the mean was higher than the median, the youth believed that the correctional climate was of a higher quality on that factor.

Table B3: Descriptive Statistics for the *Beliefs Inventory* Scales

Scale	Treatment						Comparison					
	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	SD	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	SD
Approval (range 0-10)	64	0.00	8.00	4.18	4.00	1.82	86	0.00	8.00	4.20	4.00	1.90
Perfection (range 0-10)	61	1.00	8.00	4.41	4.00	1.56	89	0.00	8.00	4.41	4.00	1.74
Evil (range 0-10)	63	1.00	10.00	5.21	5.00	1.96	89	1.00	9.00	4.97	5.00	1.81
Horrible (range 0-10)	63	2.00	7.00	4.48	4.00	1.31	90	2.00	9.00	4.71	5.00	1.57
Emotionality (range 0-10)	64	1.00	8.00	4.47	4.00	1.63	89	1.00	9.00	3.92	4.00	1.84
Fear (range 0-10)	66	1.00	9.00	5.09	5.00	1.66	88	1.00	9.00	5.15	5.00	1.78
Avoidance (range 0-10)	63	1.00	7.00	4.49	5.00	1.37	89	2.00	8.00	4.75	5.00	1.38
Reliance (range 0-10)	61	0.00	9.00	5.34	5.00	1.71	89	1.00	9.00	5.24	5.00	1.38
Past-oriented (range 0-10)	63	0.00	8.00	4.52	4.00	1.72	90	1.00	8.00	4.76	5.00	1.78
Lazy (range 0-10)	63	2.00	8.00	5.23	5.00	1.38	86	1.00	8.00	4.87	5.00	1.61

To examine the *Beliefs Inventory*, the average was compared to the median of the range and if the mean was above the median, there were higher irrational beliefs.

Table B4: Independent Samples t-tests on the Prison Environment Inventory, Time 1 – Time 2 (Staff and Youth Perceptions at Intake)

Scale	No. of Staff Pairs	Staff Mean	No. of Youth Pairs	Youth* Mean	t-value	Sig.
Structure (range 9-36)	200	30.31	68	24.91	-8.907	.000
Emotional Feedback (range 10-40)	202	27.90	67	24.73	-6.464	.000
Activity (range 10-40)	193	29.75	68	25.91	-6.807	.000
Safety (range 10-40)	193	30.10	68	27.94	-4.084	.000
Freedom (range 10-40)	196	22.16	67	23.54	2.726	.007
Social (range 10-40)	201	26.79	70	25.86	-1.950	.052
Support (range 11-44)	202	33.23	68	29.09	-7.234	.000
Privacy (range 10-40)	198	23.91	68	23.34	-1.186	.237

* Youth participating in the Youth Care System

Table B5: Independent Samples t-tests on the Prison Environment Inventory, Time 1 – Time 2 (Staff and Youth Perceptions at Exit)

Scale	No. of Staff Pairs	Staff Mean	No. of Youth Pairs	Youth* Mean	t-value	Sig.
Structure (range 9-36)	113	30.43	13	25.62	-4.898	.000
Emotional Feedback (range 10-40)	110	28.73	16	25.75	-3.685	.000
Activity (range 10-40)	107	30.76	17	29.06	-2.089	.039
Safety (range 10-40)	108	31.61	16	27.69	-3.615	.000
Freedom (range 10-40)	111	23.64	17	25.53	2.271	.025
Social (range 10-40)	104	27.35	17	26.47	-1.162	.248
Support (range 11-44)	112	34.32	17	30.24	-4.466	.000
Privacy (range 10-40)	101	24.15	15	22.87	-1.484	.141

* Youth Participating in the Youth Care System