

A Statewide Evaluation of the RECLAIM Ohio Initiative

Edward J. Latessa, Ph.D.
Principle Investigator
Division of Criminal Justice
University of Cincinnati

Michael G. Turner, M.S.
Project Director
Division of Criminal Justice
University of Cincinnati

Melissa M. Moon, Ph.D.
Research Associate
Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology
East Tennessee State University

Brandon K. Applegate, Ph.D.
Research Associate
Department of Criminal Justice and Legal Studies
University of Central Florida

March, 1998

This project was supported by Grant #95-JJ-SI1-0695, awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice through the Office of Criminal Justice Services. The Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, coordinates the activities of the following program offices and bureaus: Bureau of Justice Assistance, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office of Victims of Crime. Points of view

or opinions contained within this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
INTRODUCTION	1
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	2
Quantitative Approaches	3
Data Provided By The Ohio Department of Youth Services	3
Follow-Up Data	5
Qualitative Approaches	6
County Juvenile Court Personnel	7
Juvenile Justice Providers	9
FINDINGS	11
Research Question #1: Who participates in RECLAIM Ohio programs?	11
Research Question #2: What types of programs are being funded and how are they operated?	17
Allocations	17
Programs Offered and Youths Served	24
Other Programming Issues	30
Staffing	32
Research Question #3: How many minority youth are being served in RECLAIM Ohio programs?	34
Research Question #4: How many female youth are being served in RECLAIM Ohio programs?	40
Research Question #5: How often do youth successfully complete RECLAIM Ohio programs and what types of youth and programs are most successful?	44

	Page
Research Question #6: What is the recidivism rate for youths terminated from RECLAIM Ohio programs?	48
Standard Three-Month Follow-Up	48
Extended Follow-Up	53
Research Question #7: What impact does the RECLAIM Ohio initiative have on adjudications and commitments to DYS by juvenile courts?	59
Research Question #8: What impact does the RECLAIM Ohio initiative have on the use of community corrections facilities by juvenile courts?	66
Commitment Rates	66
Sentence Length	70
Research Question #9: What are the opinions of the courts and other county agencies regarding RECLAIM Ohio?	73
Criteria for Placing in a RECLAIM Program	74
Satisfaction with RECLAIM and DYS	75
Issues with Funding	79
Support for the Goals of RECLAIM	84
Research Question #10: What is the impact of the RECLAIM Ohio debiting process on other court decisions?	91
Quantitative Shifts	91
Qualitative Decision Making	97
Early Release	97
Public Safety Beds	99
Technical Violations	101
Bindovers	102
Effects of Substitute House Bill 1	102
Detention as Disposition	104
Unintended Consequences	106
Research Question #11: How does the RECLAIM Ohio process affect local resources, financially, and in terms of local agencies and services?	109
Awareness of RECLAIM	109
Level of Support for RECLAIM	110
Involvement with the Juvenile Court	111

Changes in the Number and Types of Referrals	112
Involvement with Family and Children First Council	112
	Page
Research Question #12: What effect has the RECLAIM Ohio initiative had on institutional populations and the ability of DYS to treat the youths in its care?	116
Level of Satisfaction of Counties of Institutional Services	117
Research Question #13: What effect has the RECLAIM Ohio initiative had on aftercare services and the number of youths on aftercare?	120
County Satisfaction with Parole and Suggested Changes	120
Number of Youths on Parole	121
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	123
Conclusions	123
Recommendations	126

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report is the product of the cooperation of a large number of people whose participation in the research process, and generosity with their time is greatly appreciated. We would like to thank these persons for their willingness to work with us in the preparation of this report. In particular, we wish to recognize the following people for their contributions:

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH SERVICES:

Director Geno Natalucci-Persichetti
Assistant Director Carol Rapp Zimmermann
Deputy Director W. C. Mullan
Deputy Director Joe Parrish
Deputy Director Ed Rhine
Deputy Director Cheri L. Walter

We would also like to thank Linda Modry, Subsidy Administrator, Ryan Gies, Assistant Subsidy Administrator, the staff of the DYS Subsidy Unit, and Anita Nehrkorn, Administrator at the Data Unit.

RECLAIM CONTACTS:

William R. Able, Nick Babb, Betty Hill Bahleda, Nancy Bailey, Rebecca A. Beckley, Kathy Kelly Beegan, Frances Beekman, John W. Berry, III, Betty Birkemeyer, Barbara Bodner, Douglas J. Brothers, Martina Brown, Linda Brunke, Clyde Burnett, Cindy Butzin, Anna M. Campbell, Angela Carder, Michael A. Casto, Kathryn A. Cecil, Steven Champagne, Doug Clark, Thomas Condon, William County, Jeff Craddock, Nancy Dyer, Renee Edel, Darin Elson, Joseph A. Float, Jr., Michael R. Geiger, Thomas Gelhausen, Michelle A. Groninger, Bob Gruber, Steve Hanson, Joyce Harris, Annette Haskins, Barbara Hedges, Nancy Hill, Rhonda D. Hixon, Andi Humphries, Sarah L. Imondi, Barbara Irelan, Richard Jacobs, Kathy J. Kahler, Barbara Koch, Susan Kunkle, Honorable, Thomas C. Lee, Connie Lowry, David Lubecky, David Lyons, Alice Mack, James Maderitz, Joy Marshall, Larry McCullough, Bill Meek, Susan Melvin, Stacey L. Miner, Chris Mitchell, Penny S. Morton, Christopher C. Mushett, Rhonda Neal, Deirdre Ollom, Anne O'Mara, Toni Pagano, Angela G. Patrick, M. Jane Pease, Debra Pitzer, Patricia Plank, Caroline Rankin, Ralph M. Ricci, Charles Roberts, Craig Rupp, Norman P. Shaw, Gregory A. Shrader, Marcia Stahl, Gary Stanforth, Robert Stiles, Donna J. Swaldo, Amy Swigart, Helen Swinghammer, Patrick Thomas, Forrest Michael Totman, Gary W. Yates, Terry Walton, Harriett Weeks, Sandra R. Wells, Joyce Woods, Kathy Yarnell, Dean Zwyer.

UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI:

Tyra Black, Jason Hannah, Jennifer Hartman, Alex Holsinger, David Hurley, Shelley Johnson, Colleen Kadleck, Sharon Levrant, Jeff Maahs, Shelli McDonough, Scott McKee, Heather McLaughlin, Ken Novak, Travis Pratt, Carrie Tishaus, Kristi Wahoff, and Melissa Winston.

We especially like to thank the individuals in counties who took the time to meet with us regarding their experience with RECLAIM Ohio:

Adams, Ashland, Athens, Auglaize, Belmont, Clermont, Cuyahoga, Delaware, Erie, Gallia, Greene, Guernsey, Hamilton, Highland, Hocking, Licking, Meigs, Mercer, Morgan, Muskingum, Summit, Union, Van Wert, Wayne, Wood.

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1.1 Distribution of RECLAIM Ohio Youth Demographic Characteristics: Part I	12
Table 1.2 RECLAIM Ohio Youth Demographic Characteristics: Part II	13
Table 1.3 Comparison of RECLAIM Ohio Youths Admitted in the Pilot Year with Youths Admitted in 1995 or 1996: Seriousness	15
Table 2.1 Funding Allocated to and Received, Youths Served, and Programs Offered by County Size: Urban Counties	18
Table 2.2 Funding Allocated to and Received, Youths Served, and Programs Offered by County Size: Medium Counties	19
Table 2.3 Funding Allocated to and Received, Youths Served, and Programs Offered by County Size: Small Counties	21
Table 2.4 Funding Allocated to and Received, Youths Served, and Programs Offered by County Size: Rural Counties	22
Table 2.5 Funding Allocated to and Received and Youths Served by County Size: Grand Totals	23
Table 2.6 How RECLAIM Ohio has Affected the Dispositional Options Available in the Courts: Nonpilot Counties	26
Table 2.7 The Extent to which the Courts Support the Philosophy of Providing Community-Based Services for Youths	26
Table 2.8 Number and Types of Programs Offered by Size of County	27
Table 2.9 Number of Youths Served in RECLAIM Ohio Programs by County Size	29
Table 2.10 Changes That Have Been Made to the Programs	31
Table 2.11 Reasons Why the Court Made Changes to Its Programs	31
Table 5.1 Reasons Youths were Terminated from RECLAIM Ohio Programs	44

	Page
Table 9.1	Type of Assessment Instrument Used by the Court 76
Table 9.2	Level of Satisfaction with RECLAIM Ohio 76
Table 9.3	The Favorableness of Certain Aspects of RECLAIM Ohio: All County Sizes 77
Table 9.4	Level of Communication Between DYS and the Courts 80
Table 9.5	Level of Satisfaction with the Technical Support from DYS 80
Table 9.6	Level of Satisfaction with the Following Aspects of RECLAIM Ohio 82
Table 9.7	Amount of Support for the Goals of RECLAIM Ohio 86
Table 10.1	Level of Importance of Criteria Used to Release a Youth Early from a DYS Institution 99
Table 10.2	Changes that have Occurred in Early Releases Since RECLAIM began in 1995 100
Table 10.3	To What Can the Changes in Early Releases be Attributed 100
Table 10.4	How Have the Changes in the Definition of Public Safety Beds Affected Your County? 101
Table 10.5	Changes in the Number of Technical Violations Being Filed 103
Table 10.6	To What Can the Changes in Bindovers Be Attributed 103
Table 10.7	How Has Substitute House Bill 1 Influenced How Prosecutors Charge Youth in Your County? 105
Table 11.1	Why the Agency Does Not Receive RECLAIM Funds 110
Table 11.2	Changes in the Number of Youth Being Referred from the Court 113
Table 11.3	Changes in the Types of Youth Being Referred from the Court 114

Table 13.1	County Level Satisfaction With Parole	121
------------	---	-----

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 3.1	Minority Representation in RECLAIM Ohio: Percent Non-White 36
Figure 3.2	Semi-Annual Non-White Commitment Rates and White Commitment Rates 38
Figure 4.1	Gender Representation in RECLAIM Ohio: Percent Female 41
Figure 4.2	Semi-Annual Male Commitment Rates and Female Commitment Rates 42
Figure 5.1	Differences in the Probability of Success: Seven Significant Predictors of Successful Completion of a RECLAIM Program 46
Figure 6.1	Percent of Youths Who had Contact with the Juvenile Justice System Following Release from RECLAIM Ohio: 3 Month Follow-Up 49
Figure 6.2	Percent of Youths Who were Committed to a State Institution (DYS or CCF) on Release or During the 3 Month Follow-Up Period 51
Figure 6.3	Differences in the Probability of Recidivism: Seven Significant Predictors of Recidivism Within Three Months After Release from a RECLAIM Program 52
Figure 6.4	Percent of Youths Who had Contact with the Juvenile Justice System Following Release from RECLAIM Ohio: Extended Follow-Up Sample 54
Figure 6.5	Percent of Youths Who were Committed to a State Institution (DYS or CCF) on Release or During the Extended Follow-Up Period 55
Figure 6.6	Differences in the Probability of Recidivism: Seven Significant Predictors of Recidivism During the Extended Follow-Up Period 56
Figure 7.1	Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Adjudications and Commitments: All Non-Pilot Counties 60
Figure 7.2	Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Adjudications and Commitments: Urban Non-Pilot Counties 62

Figure 7.3	Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Adjudications and Commitments: Medium Non-Pilot Counties	62
		Page
Figure 7.4	Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Adjudications and Commitments: Small Non-Pilot Counties	63
Figure 7.5	Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Adjudications and Commitments: Rural Non-Pilot Counties	63
Figure 7.6	Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Adjudications and Commitments: Pilot Counties	64
Figure 8.1	Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on CCF Commitments: All Non-Pilot Counties	67
Figure 8.2	Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on CCF Commitments: Pilot Counties	69
Figure 8.3	Annual CCF Commitment Rates by Felony level: Non-Pilot Counties	69
Figure 8.4	Annual CCF Commitment Rates by Felony level: Pilot Counties	70
Figure 8.5	Average Length of Confinement in Community Corrections Facilities: Pilot and Non-Pilot Counties	71
Figure 10.1	Annual Commitment Rates by Felony Level: Non-Pilot Counties	92
Figure 10.2	Annual Commitment Rates by Felony Level: Pilot Counties	92
Figure 10.3	Semi-Annual Commitments for Public Safety Offenses: Non-Pilot Counties	95
Figure 10.4	Semi-Annual Commitments for Public Safety Offenses: Pilot Counties	95
Figure 10.5	Semi-Annual Revocations as a Percent of Total Commitments	97
Figure 12.1	Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Institutional Populations	117
Figure 12.2	County Level Satisfaction With Institutional Programming	119

INTRODUCTION

In February 1996, the University of Cincinnati completed a report that presented the findings of the evaluation of the RECLAIM Ohio pilot project. Briefly, the primary goals of RECLAIM Ohio are 1) to empower local judges with more options and alternatives for the juvenile offender, and 2) to improve the Ohio Department of Youth Services' ability to treat offenders. Consistent with these goals, the Department also sought greater involvement of families in community-based programs and an increased ability to provide services to the youths in custody. The pilot phase, while only based on the assessment of nine counties in which the policy was implemented, was beneficial in that it provided initial insight into the potential advantages and problems that could occur if the policy were implemented on a statewide basis. Evaluation of the pilot phase suggested that the goals of RECLAIM Ohio were achieved. Specifically, the pilot counties were able to reduce commitments to DYS facilities by approximately 43 percent in comparison to what would be projected. In addition, the pilot counties were able to increase or expand the number of community-based services available to youths.

In January 1995, RECLAIM Ohio was fully implemented in each of the remaining 79 counties within the State of Ohio. Each county could not only capitalize on the financial incentives provided to them by the Ohio Department of Youth Services by deinstitutionalizing juvenile offenders, but also benefit from the expanded community-based alternatives. In September 1996, the Ohio Department of Youth Services awarded the University of Cincinnati a grant to evaluate the statewide implementation of the RECLAIM Ohio Initiative. As part of this evaluation, we assessed qualitative data collected through interviews and mail surveys. In addition, we analyzed quantitative data--that is, monthly data on commitments, bindovers, and adjudications--collected by the Ohio Department of Youth Services.

This is a report of the findings from the statewide implementation of RECLAIM Ohio. The first section outlines the research questions and the methods used to collect data for the qualitative and quantitative sections of the evaluation. The second section provides a response to each of the research questions and a bullet-point summary of those findings. In the final section, recommendations and conclusions are presented.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As outlined in the proposal, this report sets out to address the following thirteen research questions:

1. Who participates in RECLAIM Ohio programs?
2. What types of programs are being funded and how are they operated?
3. How many minority youth are being served in RECLAIM Ohio programs?
4. How many female youth are being served in RECLAIM Ohio programs?
5. How often do youth successfully complete RECLAIM Ohio programs and what types of youth and programs are most successful?
6. What is the recidivism rate for youth terminated from RECLAIM Ohio programs?
7. What impact does the RECLAIM Ohio initiative have on adjudications and commitments to DYS by juvenile courts?
8. What impact does the RECLAIM Ohio initiative have on the use of community corrections facilities by juvenile courts?
9. What are the opinions of the courts and other county agencies regarding RECLAIM Ohio?
10. What is the impact of the RECLAIM Ohio debiting process on other court decisions?
11. How does the RECLAIM Ohio process affect local resources, financially and in terms of local agencies and services?
12. What effect has the RECLAIM Ohio initiative had on institutional populations and the ability of DYS to treat the youths in its care?
13. What effect has the RECLAIM Ohio initiative had on parole services and the number of youths on parole?

The methodological approaches used to examine the research questions include:

Quantitative Approaches

The quantitative data used to assess the research questions involve two separate types: 1) data provided by DYS, and; 2) follow-up data provided by counties in which youth were served under RECLAIM Ohio. Data provided by DYS are primarily used to formulate a comprehensive understanding of the types of populations served by RECLAIM Ohio as well as to assess the overall cost/benefit analysis resulting from the policy implementation. Follow-up data were used to assess the extent to which different RECLAIM programs were successful in their efforts to prevent youth from recidivating. Each type of data is discussed more thoroughly.

Data Provided By The Ohio Department of Youth Services

The Management Information Systems (MIS) Unit of the Ohio Department of Youth Services provided the University of Cincinnati with computer readable data files covering various entities of the juvenile justice system. Much of these data were collected with specifically designed forms initially used for the RECLAIM Ohio pilot counties. The remaining data represented ongoing DYS tracking information collection efforts used for many previous years.

Since the inception of RECLAIM Ohio in 1994, each county is required to complete a tracking form on all individuals identified as RECLAIM youth.¹ This computer readable data file included over 15,000 youth served between the dates of January 1, 1994 and December 31, 1996. In addition to demographic and delinquency history information, the tracking database included dates of admission and release from each of the programs for which the youth were assigned.

¹ A 401 Tracking form is completed for all youth that have been admitted to a program supported, at least in part, by RECLAIM funds.

The MIS Unit of DYS additionally provided two computer readable data files of the youth who were committed to either a DYS institution or a Community Correctional Facility (CCF). Each of the files included data on youth admitted to either type of facility between the dates of January 1, 1990 and December 31, 1996. For the CCF database, information on the type of commitment, sentence type, Ohio Revised Code number, felony level, and the description and reason for release were additionally provided. Again, demographic and delinquency history information were included for both of the databases.

Computer readable data files containing felony adjudications were provided for the fiscal years of 1993 through 1996. Because computer readable data were not available for fiscal years 1991 and 1992, hard copies of felony adjudication reports were added to provide insight on those youth who received felony adjudications prior to fiscal year 1993.

A computer readable disk copy of an extract from the DYS database provided information on the admissions and releases from DYS institutions during the calendar years 1990 through December 31, 1996. Information on the type of commitment, sentence type, felony level, reason for release, and the Ohio Revised Code number were included for each youth. Computer readable data files of the youth bound over into the adult system were provided for the fiscal years 1994 through December 31, 1996. These data also included a list of youth who were previously committed to DYS and, with the exception of firearm usage, their committing offenses. An identifier symbolizing whether the youth was committed as an adult was not available. Monthly revocations, by calendar year between the dates of 1990 through 1995, were provided as a computer readable file. This information was also extracted from the DYS database.

Printouts were provided to indicate the average daily institutional populations (by month) of DYS institutions for the calendar years 1990 through 1995. Identical information was produced for CCF's for

the fiscal years of 1993 through 1996 only. Monthly total RECLAIM allocations to counties and the amounts actually dispersed were supplied in paper form for the calendar year of 1995. Specific information on the county programs that are funded by RECLAIM were also provided in paper form. This information identified the names and types of programs, the number of youths the programs were intended to serve, and the amount of money that were allocated to these program. This information was specifically extracted from each county's 1995 RECLAIM annual report. Twelve counties, however, did not submit an annual report, therefore the data were incomplete. Finally, the 1995 and 1996 per diem cost for incarceration in the DYS institutions and CCF's was provided. The number of youth on parole between 1990 and 1995 were provided by DYS, however, these data were unreliable, therefore not used in subsequent analyses.

Follow-up Data

Follow-up data on youth admitted to a RECLAIM Ohio programs were assessed for the pilot project as well as the present evaluation. The pilot project evaluation included the period January 1, to December 31, 1994. At the completion of the pilot project evaluation, 640 youth had not had subsequent contact with the juvenile justice system.² These youth served as the population for which follow-up data were requested from each pilot county.

For the present evaluation, a ten percent random sample was drawn from the 15,415 youth placed in the RECLAIM program. In total, 1,527 youth were selected to be assessed in the follow-up. In April of 1997, RECLAIM contacts in seventy-eight counties received letters requesting them to provide the desired follow-up data--from youths in the pilot project evaluation as well as the present statewide

² Contact was defined as an arrest for a new offense, a probation violation, an adjudication for a new offense, or an arrest as an adult after the youth's date of release from his/her RECLAIM program.

evaluation--and an individual form for each youth selected from their county. RECLAIM contacts in counties that had not returned the follow-up forms were phoned one month later. In total, 74 counties returned the follow-up forms which included assessments on 2,143 youths. Again, this figure reflects the total number of youths receiving follow-up assessments from the pilot as well as the present statewide evaluation.

The aforementioned data were sufficient to provide detailed responses to many of the fourteen research questions. Data assessing the attitudes of the individuals involved in the juvenile justice system were not provided, however, and therefore had to be collected. Survey instruments were constructed and used to gather information concerning respondents' specific attitudes towards RECLAIM Ohio.

Qualitative Approaches

The RECLAIM Ohio pilot project was beneficial in that it provided a starting point in which to construct the interview instruments as well as to identify the populations in which to assess. Two populations were identified as being necessary to survey: 1) county juvenile court personnel; and 2) juvenile justice providers.³ Each interview instrument was designed specifically for the population under analysis. Although a few of the questions were identical across instruments (i.e. what do you like most/least about RECLAIM Ohio), each instrument encompassed unique questions specific to their population. A draft of each survey instrument was reviewed by DYS staff and revisions were made accordingly. The instruments, sampling techniques, and response rates for each population are discussed.

County Juvenile Court Personnel

³ Institutional and parole personnel were also surveyed while central office staff were interviewed with regard to their views on RECLAIM Ohio. The results of these efforts are contained in a separate document.

Juvenile court personnel were interviewed face-to-face, received a telephone interview, or received a mail survey. No significant changes were made to the survey instrument despite the difference in survey methodology (i.e. face-to-face, telephone, mail). Juvenile court personnel received face-to-face interviews in twenty-five counties, whereas individuals in the remaining sixty-three counties received a mail survey. Those juvenile court personnel who were unavailable at the time research assistants from the University of Cincinnati were conducting the face-to-face interviews received a telephone interview.

Twenty-five counties were initially selected as the sites for the face-to-face interviews. Each of the nine pilot counties mandatorily received the face-to-face interviews.⁴ A stratified random sample of the remaining seventy-nine counties was utilized to determine the final sixteen counties in which individuals would be interviewed. Counties were divided into four strata based on a combination of their total population and population density.⁵

Two counties (Cuyahoga and Hamilton) were randomly selected from the large counties. Six counties (Athens, Belmont, Greene, Muskingum, Wayne, and Wood) were randomly selected from the medium counties. Four counties (Ashland, Auglaize, Highland, and Pickaway) were randomly selected from the small counties. Due to court reorganization experienced in Pickaway County, however, face-to-face interviews could not be completed. Guernsey County was randomly selected from the remaining small

⁴ The pilot counties included Clermont, Delaware, Erie, Gallia, Hocking, Licking, Mercer, Summit, and Van Wert.

⁵ Population figures from the 1990 U.S. Bureau of Census were used to classify the counties. Those counties with population densities greater than 500 per square mile were classified as “large” counties. Counties with population densities below 500 per square mile, but with populations being above the state median population of 54,930 were classified as “medium” counties. Counties with populations below the state median population of 54,930 but above 35,000 were classified as “small” counties. Finally, counties with a population of less than 35,000 individuals were classified as “rural” counties. These are the identical classifications used in the pilot phase of RECLAIM Ohio.

counties as the replacement county. Finally, four counties (Holmes, Meigs, Morgan, and Union) were randomly selected from the rural counties. Due to court reorganization experienced in Holmes County, however, face-to-face interviews could not be completed. Adams County was randomly selected from the remaining rural counties as the replacement county.

Thirteen research assistants were selected to conduct the face-to-face interviews. Each interviewer attended a three hour training session which provided information on the survey instrument, discussions of positions to be interviewed, and specificity of the data desired. A judgement sampling technique was used to determine the individuals to be interviewed. This methodology involves selecting individuals who are likely to be the most knowledgeable about the subject matter of interest. Each RECLAIM contact received a form that identified positions within the juvenile justice system that would be likely to have knowledge about RECLAIM Ohio. With the exception of a few of the larger counties, the interviews were scheduled to be completed in one day.

Survey instruments were pre-tested in Clermont County on December 2, 1996 to ensure that the questions were clear and comprehensible. Following minor revisions, juvenile court personnel in all but four of the counties were interviewed during the weeks of December 9, and December 16, 1996. Individuals in the remaining four counties were interviewed between January and March, 1997. In total, 140 face-to-face interviews were completed. Telephone interviews were completed on those juvenile court personnel that were not available to be interviewed on the dates that the teams of interviewers were present. In total, 23 telephone interviews were completed.

In January 1997, each of the RECLAIM contacts in the sixty-three counties not interviewed were contacted and faxed the form identifying positions we were interested in surveying. Again, we requested

name, address, and telephone numbers of all of the individuals. In total, we received 542 names of individuals from the sixty-three counties.

Questionnaires were distributed, with slight modifications, according to Dillman's (1978) "total design method." In February of 1997, we mailed each person a questionnaire, a letter introducing the survey and emphasizing the study's importance, and a postage-paid return envelope. A follow-up postcard reminding the respondents to complete the survey was mailed one week later. Three weeks after the initial mailing, we sent replacement questionnaires and a letter to each of the nonrespondents. After another four weeks, those who had not responded were contacted by telephone. Another questionnaire was distributed to those who indicated they would respond. Twenty-five questionnaires were returned because the respondent was no longer employed at the agency or the individual had no knowledge of RECLAIM Ohio. Of the remaining 517, 305 usable questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 59 percent.

Juvenile Justice Providers

Individuals identified as juvenile justice providers were interviewed in conjunction with the county juvenile court personnel. This group consisted of the chairs of the Family and Children First Councils, chairs of the Children Services Board, chairs of the Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services Board, and Chair of the Mental Health Board. Although these individuals were interviewed with a shorter survey instrument, their selection and completion were identical to the juvenile court personnel. In total, 46 face-to-face interviews and 19 telephone interviews of juvenile justice providers were completed.

Identical to the juvenile court personnel, the juvenile justice providers identified in the sixty-three counties that were not interviewed face-to-face received a survey instrument. Surveys were initially mailed in February 1997. Follow-up mailings occurred at the same time as those of the juvenile court personnel.

Fifteen questionnaires were returned because the respondents were no longer employed at the agencies or the individuals had no knowledge of RECLAIM Ohio. Of the remaining 132, 111 usable questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 84 percent.

FINDINGS

Research Question #1: Who participates in RECLAIM Ohio programs?

This section discusses the types of youths served by RECLAIM Ohio programs. Tables 1.1 and 1.2 provide the distribution of RECLAIM Youths on the following characteristics: sex, race, education, employment status, current offense level, felony degree, most serious prior adjudication, age at admission to RECLAIM, age at first adjudication, and number of prior adjudications. These variables are described for the 88 counties as a whole and separately for the urban, medium, small, and rural counties. In addition, we examine differences in the seriousness of youths served in the pilot year compared to program years 1995 and 1996.

Focusing first on the column in Table 1.1 that describes all of the counties reveals that RECLAIM Ohio programs served a largely invariant group of youths. Most of the youths were male, white, currently attending school, and unemployed (see Table 1.1). Although there was greater variation in the youths' current offense (approximately one-half had committed felonies), nearly three fourths of the youths who had been adjudicated for a felony offense had committed a less serious felony (third, fourth or fifth degree). Furthermore, as Table 1.2 shows, there was relatively little variation in the age or age at first adjudication of the youths served. Most youths were between 15 and 16 years old and were first adjudicated when they were 14.

Two characteristics, however, show greater diversity. The most serious prior adjudication for the youths included nearly equal percentages of felonies and misdemeanors, as well as unruly and traffic offenses. Finally, the number of prior adjudications varied widely. With a mean of 2.59, the number of

priors ranged from zero to over 25. These findings suggest that the criminal histories of RECLAIM Ohio youths cover a broad spectrum of seriousness.

Table 1.1. Distribution of RECLAIM Ohio Youth Demographic Characteristics: Part I

Variable Characteristic	All Counties	Urban Counties	Medium Counties	Small Counties	Rural Counties
Sex					
Male	79.0%	86.6%	74.8%	75.9%	74.9%
Female	21.0	13.4	25.2	24.1	25.1
Race					
Black	23.6%	49.7%	13.0%	5.5%	3.0%
White	72.5	44.1	84.5	90.6	93.5
Hispanic	2.5	3.8	1.2	3.5	2.8
Asian	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.3
Native American	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0
Other	1.2	2.0	1.0	0.4	0.3
Education					
In School	92.2%	88.6%	93.5%	94.6%	95.4%
Not in School	7.3	10.9	5.8	5.0	4.2
Graduated	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4
Employment Status					
Employed Full-Time	1.7%	2.3%	1.3%	2.2%	0.8%
Employed Part-Time	7.3	7.3	7.1	7.5	7.5
Not Employed	91.1	90.4	91.6	90.3	91.7
Current Offense					
Felony	48.9%	70.4%	38.8%	42.1%	29.9%
Misdemeanor	24.2	17.4	25.8	26.9	34.9
Unruly	14.3	4.0	19.0	20.5	21.2
Traffic	0.6	0.1	1.1	0.4	0.7
PV Felony	1.7	4.6	0.1	0.3	0.2
PV Misdemeanor	3.7	2.0	4.2	4.6	6.3
PV Unruly	6.6	1.5	11.0	5.2	6.8
Felony Degree*					
First	13.0%	14.1%	12.8%	7.6%	12.3%
Second	14.0	14.3	14.6	13.8	9.4
Third	24.4	29.3	20.7	17.2	16.1
Fourth	48.4	42.2	51.8	61.2	61.4
Fifth	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.9

* Includes only youths who were adjudicated for a felony.

Table 1.1. Distribution of RECLAIM Ohio Youth Demographic Characteristics: Part I
(continued)

Variable Characteristic	All Counties	Urban Counties	Medium Counties	Small Counties	Rural Counties
Most Serious Prior Adjudication					
Felony	23.7%	38.3%	18.2%	12.2%	12.2%
Misdemeanor	26.5	24.4	29.3	25.2	23.6
Unruly	13.0	4.1	17.3	17.2	18.6
Traffic	1.0	0.6	1.2	1.2	1.1
No Priors	35.8	32.5	34.0	44.2	44.5

Table 1.2. RECLAIM Ohio Youth Demographic Characteristics: Part II

Variable	All Counties	Urban Counties	Medium Counties	Small Counties	Rural Counties
Age					
Mean	15.62	15.66	15.64	15.41	15.61
Standard Deviation	1.60	1.53	1.59	1.76	1.67
Age at First Adjudication					
Mean	14.06	14.01	14.01	14.13	14.27
Standard Deviation	1.80	1.77	1.81	1.79	1.80
Number of Prior Adjudications					
Mean	2.59	2.66	3.01	1.81	1.52
Standard Deviation	3.61	3.41	4.10	2.76	2.34

Aside from these general descriptions, some differences can be noted between the youths served by counties of different sizes. The rural, small, and medium counties show striking similarities in the types of youths served, but the urban counties are distinct on several characteristics. First, the urban counties served a substantially larger percentage of minority youths than did the smaller counties. This result is not surprising given that Ohio's minority youth population is largely concentrated in the state's urban areas. Second, the percentage of youths not in school who were served by urban counties (10.9%) is nearly twice the percentage in the other counties. Third, over 70 percent of the urban youths were adjudicated for a felony offense. In contrast, less than 43 percent of the youths in other counties had committed a felony. Fourth, more than twice as many of the urban county juveniles had previously committed a felony compared to the youths served by the medium, small, or rural counties. In short, the urban counties appear to have served a somewhat more serious group of juveniles.

Turning to a comparison of youths admitted during the pilot year with youths admitted in 1995 or 1996, the figures in Table 1.3 suggest RECLAIM programs have shifted to less serious clientele. The average number of prior adjudications has decreased by approximately six percent. Somewhat more striking are the differences in the most serious prior adjudications. Compared to 1994, a smaller percentage of the youths admitted in 1995 and 1996 had previously committed a felony, and more of them had recorded an unruly offense as their most serious prior. The youths admitted in the pilot year also appear to be more serious offenders when their current offenses are examined. More than 72 percent of the pilot youths had committed a felony, compared to less than 43 percent of the youths admitted in subsequent years. This shift is mostly accounted for by increases in misdemeanants, unruly offenders, and unruly probation violators (see Table 1.3).

Table 1.3. Comparison of RECLAIM Ohio Youths Admitted in the Pilot Year with Youths Admitted in 1995 or 1996: Seriousness*

Characteristic	Pilot Year Admissions	Subsequent Admissions
Average age at first adjudication	14.04	14.06
Average number of prior adjudications	2.71	2.55
Most serious prior adjudication		
Felony	32.7%	21.3%
Misdemeanor	26.9%	26.4%
Unruly	6.6%	14.7%
Traffic	0.6%	1.1%
No priors	33.2%	36.5%
Current Offense		
Felony	72.1%	42.7%
Misdemeanor	15.8%	26.5%
Unruly	7.5%	16.1%
Traffic	0.3%	0.7%
PV Felony	1.4%	1.7%
PV Misdemeanor	2.0%	4.2%
PV Unruly	0.9%	8.1%
Felony Degree**		
First	12.1%	13.2%
Second	12.5%	14.6%
Third	28.8%	22.6%
Fourth	46.6%	49.3%
Fifth	0.0%	0.3%

* The number of cases summarized on each variable differs slightly because of missing information. These analyses, however, are based on approximately 3,200 youths admitted during the pilot year, and approximately 12,000 youths admitted in 1995 or 1996.

** Includes only those youths who were adjudicated for a felony (2,407 pilot youths and 5,382 youths admitted in 1995 or 1996).

The only indicator of seriousness that contradicts the trend toward less serious offenders is the felony degree of offenders whose current adjudication was for a felony offense. As shown in Table 1.3, slightly larger percentages of RECLAIM youths were adjudicated for first and second degree felonies in 1995 and 1996 than in 1994. These figures suggest that although the overall character of RECLAIM clients has trended toward less serious offenders, the felons served in these programs have become slightly more serious.

The results concerning what types of youths were served by RECLAIM Ohio can be summarized as follows:

- Overall, the counties served a variety of youths, including males, females, whites, non-whites, serious and less serious offenders.
- Despite this variety, the youths showed little diversity on several characteristics. Most of the youths who participated in RECLAIM Ohio were male, white, unemployed, attending school, and approximately 15 and one-half years old.
- Compared to the other counties, the urban counties tended to serve larger percentages of minority youths, youths not enrolled in school, juveniles adjudicated for felony offenses, and youths who had previously been adjudicated for a felony.
- Compared to the youths admitted during the pilot year, RECLAIM clients admitted during 1995 and 1996 are somewhat less serious offenders.

Research Question #2: What types of programs are being funded and how are they operated?

This question was addressed by using the data provided by the Department of Youth Services Subsidy Unit. These data were examined by both the individual county and county size. Due to the large number of counties, the findings will most often be discussed according to county size. To reiterate, the county sizes are as follows: urban (population densities greater than 500 per square mile); medium (population densities below 500 per square mile and a population greater than 54,930); small (population between 54,930 and 35,000); and rural (population less than 35,000).

Each county's annual allocation, amount and percent received, the types of programs and number of youth served are presented. Next, the types of programs offered and the number of youth served are examined by county size. Finally, two issues in staffing are discussed. Within these questions, quantitative and qualitative (from interviews) data are presented.

Allocations

Tables 2.1 through 2.4 present the 1995 figures for the amount of money each county was allocated for RECLAIM Ohio, the amount and percent actually received by the counties for local programming, the programs funded with RECLAIM dollars that were offered by the individual counties, and the number of youths served in local programs. The programs are indicated by number. The program categories are listed at the bottom of Table 2.1.

To make meaningful comparisons, these data were also examined by county size. The findings are presented in Table 2.5. The urban counties were allocated 73 percent (\$51,291,657) of the total amount budgeted for RECLAIM Ohio. The medium counties were allocated 19 percent

Table 2.1 Funding Allocated to and Received, Youths Served, and Programs Offered by County Size (1995): Urban Counties.

Urban	Amount Allocated	Amount Received	Percent Received	# Youths Served Locally Offered*	Programs
Butler	\$1,699,329	\$224,159	13.19%	360	3,4,5,6,7,10
Cuyahoga	17,626,376	3,272,895	18.57	297	2,6,7,10,17,18,29
Franklin	5,881,012	562,726	9.57	328	2,3,4,5,10,11,14,18,20
Hamilton	7,970,663	782,992	9.82	67	2,10,16,17
Lake	566,443	250,088	44.15	91	3,5,9,20
Lorain	2,163,432	1,176,849	54.40	244	2,3,17,22
Lucas	5,048,007	1,658,711	32.86	423	3,5,6,
Mahoning	1,178,106	0	0.00	12	2,3,18
Montgomery	3,727,100	88,739	2.38	19	3,5
Stark	1,349,467	205,631	15.24	18	3,7,17
Summit	4,081,722	1,979,760	48.50	315	2,3,4,5,6,9,17,18,21,28

*Program Number and Title

1	Program Administration	12	Family Reunification	22	Restitution/Community Service
2	Day Treatment	13	Independent Living	23	Clinical Assessments
3	Intensive Probation	14	Life Skills Training	24	Mental Health Counseling
4	Probation	15	Intervention Alternatives	25	Youth Intervention Groups
5	Service Enhancement		- Unrulies	26	Physical Stress Challenge
6	Aftercare/Parole Enhancement	16	Secure Home Detention	27	Conflict Mediation
7	Monitoring/Surveillance	17	Out of Home Placement	28	Advocacy
8	Vocational Training	18	Sex Offender	29	Mentors
9	Educational Services	19	Shoplifter	30	Violence Reduction
10	Wrap Around Services	20	Substance Abuse	31	Traffic Offender
11	Family Preservation	21	Recreation	32	Drug Testing

Table 2.2 Funding Allocated to and Received, Youths Served, and Programs Offered by County Size (1995): Medium Counties.

MEDIUM	Amount Allocated	Amount Received	Percent Received	#Youths Served Locally	Programs Offered
Allen	\$668,784	\$0	0.00%	44	25
Ashtabula	426,022	52,691	12.37	29	3,7,21,32
Athens	226,101	36,473	16.13	257	3,7,9
Belmont	161,841	15,943	9.85	46	20,26
Clark	652,124	0	0.00	32	2,17,18
Clermont	982,945	505,059	51.38	137	3,4,7,10,14,25
Columbiana	197,541	126,415	63.99	31	3,28
Delaware	245,141	216,934	88.49	34	3,6,10,20
Erie	499,803	235,390	47.10	178	2,3,4,7,10,11,15,17,24
Fairfield	497,423	215,867	43.40	156	9,17,20,25,32
Geauga	318,922	292,832	91.82	40	2,3,7,17,18
Greene	868,705	602,858	69.40	393	3,4,22
Hancock	326,062	39,727	12.18	7	17,32
Huron	183,261	67,785	36.99	517	17
Jefferson	226,101	117,463	51.95	82	3,9,28
Lawrence	285,602	147,524	51.65	44	3,20
Licking	559,303	216,300	38.67	244	2,3,11,20,23,25,32
Marion	466,483	427,108	91.56	1,000	3,7,9,10,11,14,18,20,21,22,32
Medina	402,222	39,035	9.70	61	3
Miami	216,581	0	0.00	7	2
Muskingum	290,362	67,511	23.25	11	3
Portage	406,982	149,502	36.73	39	3

Table 2.2 Continued...

MEDIUM	Amount Allocated	Amount Received	Percent Received	#Youths Served Locally	Programs Offered
Richland	756,844	188,608	24.92	94	3,9,11,16,20
Ross	297,502	178,358	59.95	71	4,17,20,22
Sandusky	309,402	56,323	18.20	38	3,17
Scioto	299,882	0	0.00	9	3,20,32
Seneca	404,602	235,971	58.32	15	11,17,20,32
Trumbull	821,104	53,450	6.51	11	15,17,18
Tuscarawas	354,622	99,083	27.94	20	3,18
Warren	445,062	327,913	73.68	18	3
Washington	180,881	39,817	22.01	3	10
Wayne	299,882	162,709	54.26	11	3
Wood	430,782	186,743	43.35	20	7,17

Table 2.3 Funding Allocated to and Received, Youths Served, and Programs Offered by County Size (1995): Small Counties.

Small	Amount Allocated	Amount Received	Percent Received	#Youths Served Locally	Programs Offered
Ashland	140,421	41,323	29.43	45	3,15
Auglaize	126,141	13,022	10.32	7	4,20
Champaign	133,281	74,138	55.63	10	3
Clinton	183,261	119,632	65.28	16	3,17,22,27
Coshocton	154,701	62,225	40.22	11	2
Crawford	159,461	61,919	38.83	66	17,20,21,32
Darke	211,821	104,910	49.53	2	2
Defiance	276,082	106,840	38.70	79	2,7,17,25
Fulton	104,721	6,055	5.78	2	12
Guernsey	173,741	0	0.00	133	2,3,7,22
Highland	168,981	11,228	6.64	11	3,22
Knox	199,921	55,444	27.73	146	3,11,13,14,15,17,20,32
Logan	223,721	88,040	39.35	66	3,5,6,7,17,20,22
Madison	173,741	27,561	15.86	19	3
Mercer	197,541	102,041	51.66	20	7,10,32
Ottawa	145,181	0	0.00	27	9
Pickaway	221,341	53,907	24.35	29	3,25,30
Preble	195,161	101,076	51.79	42	3,5
Shelby	304,642	33,038	10.84	10	2,17,32
Williams	230,861	80,746	34.98	11	3,17

Table 2.4 Funding Allocated to and Received, Youths Served, and Programs Offered by County Size (1995): Rural Counties.

Rural	Amount Allocated	Amount Received	Percent Received	#Youths Served Locally	Programs Offered
Adams	195,161	126,357	64.74	52	7,17
Brown	85,680	0	0.00	11	3,4,26
Carroll	40,460	40,460	100.00	59	4,11,20,23,24,25
Fayette	104,721	7,052	6.73	7	3,7
Gallia	95,201	57,919	60.84	23	4,10,20
Hardin	95,201	37,298	39.18	67	4,11,20,25
Harrison	30,940	30,940	100.00	34	26
Henry	218,961	27,227	12.43	**	**
Hocking	114,241	66,166	57.92	57	10
Holmes	90,440	90,440	100.00	7	3,4,5
Jackson	57,120	57,120	100.00	38	3,7,17,24
Meigs	123,761	42,352	34.22	45	7,17,20
Monroe	14,280	14,280	100.00	**	**
Morgan	42,840	42,840	100.00	50	7,16,20,26
Morrow	57,120	57,120	100.00	61	32
Noble	23,800	23,800	100.00	3	9
Paulding	95,201	31,054	32.62	42	4,22
Perry	149,941	28,617	19.09	12	16,24
Pike	78,540	0	0.00	**	**
Putnam	42,840	42,840	100.00	70	1,3,4,5,7,20,22
Union	147,561	112,417	76.18	47	3,7,17
Van Wert	197,541	109,835	55.60	93	3,4,9,11,15,18,20,21
Vinton	26,180	26,180	100.00	16	3
Wyandot	90,440	87,908	97.20	38	3,20,32

Table 2.5 Funding Allocated to and Received and Youths Served by County Size (1995): Grand Totals.

County Size	Amount Allocated	Amount Received	Percent Received	# Youths Served Locally
Urban	51,291,657	10,202,550	19.89	2174
Medium	13,708,876	5,101,392	37.21	3187
Small	3,724,722	1,143,145	30.69	752
Rural	2,218,171	1,160,222	52.31	832
Rural-2*	1,882,591	824,642	43.80	NA
State	70,943,426	17,607,309	24.82	6945

* Rural County totals excluding non-debited counties. These counties were not included because they received 100 percent of their allocation and they adjudicated less than one-tenth of one percent of all youths in Ohio.

(\$13,708,876), while the small and urban counties were allocated 5 percent (\$3,724,722) and 3 percent (\$2,218,171), respectively.

Even though the urban counties were allocated the greatest amount of money, they actually received the smallest proportion of their allocation. These urban counties were only able to retain about 20 percent of their original allocation for local programming, although this figure was only four percent below the state average. As a whole, the rural counties received slightly over half of their allocation (52.31 percent); although a portion of these counties were not debited. Despite the fact that the amount of money kept by the counties seems somewhat small (\$1,160,222), the rural counties were able to keep the greatest proportion of their original allocation when compared to all other sized counties. Alternatively, the medium counties were able to retain 37 percent (\$5,101,392) of their original allocation, while the small counties kept 31 percent or \$1,143,145.

A total of 6,945 youths were served in RECLAIM Ohio programs across the state during 1995. Although it might be expected that urban counties would serve the largest proportion of youths, the majority of youths were served by the medium counties (N=3,520). This can be attributed to the fact that there are a significantly higher number of counties that are classified as medium (N = 33) versus urban (N = 11). Despite this difference, the urban counties served 2,174 youths while the rural and small counties served 832 and 752 youths respectively. The following section will discuss the types of programs in which these RECLAIM Ohio youths were served.

Programs Offered and Youths Served

Each of the respondents were asked to what extent RECLAIM Ohio has affected the dispositional options available in their county. Table 2.6 shows that 70 percent of the urban counties indicated that they were able to increase the number of community-based options for their youths. Slightly over 50 percent of the medium-sized county respondents reported an increase in available options, while 40 percent indicated no change. Nearly 50 percent of the respondents from small counties reported that the options in their court remained the same after RECLAIM was implemented, while 42 percent reported an increase in options. Finally, 46 percent of the respondents reported an increase in dispositional options, while only 44 percent reported no change in options.

The respondents were also asked to what extent their court supports the philosophy of providing community-based services for youths. This question was important because varying levels of support may influence whether courts are committed to creating alternatives so that youths may be treated in the community rather than being sentenced to a DYS institution. According to Table 2.7, around 83 percent of the urban and the medium-sized counties reported that their courts were very supportive of providing

community-based alternatives for their youths. Seventy-seven percent of the respondents from rural counties were also very supportive of using community-based options for youths. For small counties, only 62 percent of the respondents reported that their courts supported providing community-based alternatives, while 34 percent were somewhat supportive of providing these types of services. In all counties, less than 5 percent of all respondents reported that their courts were not supportive of community-based alternatives. Considering the funding statistics reported earlier, there does not appear to be a relationship between the amount of funding that a county receives and their level of support for providing community-based services.

Table 2.8 indicates the number and types of programs offered by the counties. Overall, the most common types of programs utilized were intensive probation (N=50 counties), out-of-home placement (27), substance abuse services (24), and monitoring surveillance (21). With the addition of drug testing, these were also the most common programs employed by the medium-size counties. The most common programs utilized by the urban counties were the intensive probation, out-of home placement, day treatment, and service enhancement. The small counties most often chose intensive probation, out-of-home placement, and day treatment. Finally, the most common programs utilized by the rural counties were again intensive probation, substance abuse services, probation, and monitoring surveillance.

Table 2.6 How RECLAIM Ohio has Affected the Dispositional Options Available in the Courts: Nonpilot Counties.

County Size/Type	Increased	Stayed Same	Decreased
Urban	69.5%	25.8%	4.7%
Medium	52.3	40.0	7.7
Small	42.4	50.0	7.6
Rural	45.6	43.9	10.5

*The pilot counties were not asked to respond since they had already been asked this question in 1995 during the evaluation of the pilot phase of RECLAIM Ohio.

Table 2.7 The Extent to Which the Courts Support the Philosophy of Providing Community-Based Services for Youths.

County Size/Type	Very Supportive	Somewhat Supportive	Not Supportive
Urban	83.5%	15.8%	0.7%
Medium	83.0	15.7	1.3
Small	62.5	33.8	3.8
Rural	77.2	17.7	5.1
Pilot	95.0	5.0	0.0
Nonpilot	76.1	21.4	2.5

Table 2.8 Number and Types of Programs Offered by Size of County.

	Total*	Urban	Medium	Small	Rural
Characteristic					
Intensive Probation	50	9	21	11	9
Out of Home Placement	27	5	11	7	4
Substance Abuse	24	2	10	4	8
Monitoring/Surveillance	21	3	7	4	7
Day Treatment	16	6	5	5	0
Probation	16	3	4	1	8
Drug Testing	13	0	7	4	2
Wrap Around Services	12	4	5	1	2
Service Enhancement	10	6	0	2	2
Restitution/Community Serv.	10	1	3	4	2
Sex Offender	10	4	5	0	1
Educational Services	10	2	5	1	2
Family Preservation	10	1	5	1	3
Youth Intervention Groups	8	0	4	2	2
Aftercare/Parole Enhcmnt.	6	4	1	1	0
Intervention Altern.-Unrulies	5	0	2	2	1
Recreation	5	1	2	1	1
Mental Health Counseling	4	0	1	0	3
Physical Stress Challenge	4	0	1	0	3
Life Skills Training	4	1	2	1	0
Secure Home Detention	4	1	1	0	2
Advocacy	3	1	2	0	0
Clinical Assessments	2	0	1	0	1
Family Reunification	1	0	0	1	0
Independent Living	1	0	0	1	0
Conflict Mediation	1	0	0	1	0
Mentors	1	1	0	0	0
Violence Reduction	1	0	0	1	0
Total	85	11	33	20	21

* Programming information was not available for 3 rural counties.

Table 2.9 presents the number of youths served by each of the programs by the various sized counties. When programs were examined statewide, intensive probation was found to have served the greatest number of youths (N=1439). This finding was expected because it is the most common program employed. Fifty-four percent of these youths resided in medium-sized counties. Although out-of-home placement was the second most common program utilized, only 253 youths were served by this program in 1995. Nearly half resided in urban counties. Substance abuse services was the third most common program utilized and served 954 youths during 1995. The majority of youth (86 percent) in this program resided in medium, small, and rural counties while very few youths (N=18) lived in urban areas.

The number of youth served did not always coincide with the most commonly utilized programs. For example, although 10 counties offered a restitution/community service program, it was the third most common program in which youth were served. In 1995, 744 youths were placed in this program. Sixty-six percent of the youths who received this service resided in the medium-sized counties. In addition, probation also served a total of 679 youths. Youth that received this service most often resided in urban areas, followed by rural and medium-sized areas. Finally, although 10 counties had service enhancement options, 588 youth were provided this service. Nearly all (96 percent) of these youths resided in urban areas. This finding suggests that although service enhancement programs are utilized by relatively few counties, they serve a large number of youth.

Table 2.9 Number of Youths Served in RECLAIM Ohio Programs (1995-1996) by County Size.

Characteristic	Overall	Urban	Medium	Small	Rural
Intensive Probation	1439	301	773	239	126
Substance Abuse	954	4	817	59	74
Restitution/Community Serv.	744	127	491	76	50
Probation	679	348	135	2	194
Service Enhancement	588	562	7	17	2
Day Treatment	508	386	40	82	0
Drug Testing	495	0	320	88	87
Monitoring/Surveillance	389	18	125	132	114
Wrap Around Services	269	94	90	5	80
Out of Home Placement	253	124	41	33	55
Educational Services	186	7	139	27	13
Aftercare/Parole Enhance.	173	169	3	1	0
Advocacy	145	89	56	0	0
Family Preservation	123	20	78	2	23
Mental Health Counseling	119	0	88	0	31
Youth Intervention Groups	112	0	65	38	9
Physical Stress Challenge	70	0	5	0	65
Sex Offender	58	26	30	0	2
Clinical Assessments	42	0	41	0	1
Life Skills Training	41	15	21	5	0
Secure Home Detention	34	1	8	0	25
Recreation	29	1	11	10	7
Intervention Altern.-Unrulies	23	0	11	7	5
Mentors	14	14	0	0	0
Independent Living	4	0	0	4	0
Conflict Mediation	3	0	0	3	0
Family Reunification	2	0	0	2	0
Violence Reduction	1	0	0	1	0
Program Administration	1	0	0	0	1
Total # of Youths Served	6,945	2,174	3,187	752	832
Total # Youths Participating in programs*	7,498	2,306	3,395	833	964

*Since some youths may be placed in more than one program, the number of youths participating in the various programs exceed the total number served.

Other Programming Issues

County personnel were also asked if they made any changes to their programs after RECLAIM began and whether they see a need to add new programs or contract with additional private providers. Approximately 60 percent of the respondents from the urban, medium, and rural counties reported that they had made changes to their programs since RECLAIM began. Forty-nine percent of respondents from the small counties reported they had made changes. When asked what changes had been made, 53 percent of all respondents reported they had increased their services by either adding new programs or new private providers. Table 2.10 also shows that 33 percent indicated they had expanded existing programs by adding more money, serving more youth and increasing staff. When asked why the court made these changes, three answers appeared most often and are located in Table 2.11. They were: the court needed to offer the service (29 percent), the need to enhance parole services (25 percent), and they now had the money to change current programming (13 percent).

Approximately 80 percent of respondents from the urban, medium, and rural counties and 70 percent from the small counties indicated a need to provide even more programs to target the needs of more youth. With regards to the types of programs that personnel would like to see in their counties, the answers were quite diverse. A few responses were mentioned more frequently than others. The most common response (10 percent) was to add any program that would benefit the youth. This suggests that the majority of individuals did not have specific programs in mind but instead identified a need to add more services. Alternatively, some specific types of programs suggested were: educational (7 percent), chemical

dependency (7 percent), behavioral/mental problem services (6 percent), and parenting and family programs (5.5 percent).

Table 2.10 Changes That Have Been Made to the Programs.

Responses	(N)	Percent
Increased services/added new programs/new private providers	153	52.6
Expanded programs (more money, serve more kids, add staff)	96	33.0
Eliminated some programs/not serving as many kids	31	10.7
Changed service providers	8	2.7
New part-time staff	2	.7
Changed objectives/successful completion of program	1	.3

Table 2.11 Reasons Why the Court Made Changes to Its Programs.

Response	(N)	Percent
Need for the service	68	29.4
To enhance aftercare services	57	24.7
Have the money	29	12.6
Lack of funds	18	7.8
Track youth in community	12	5.2
Change in court philosophy	11	4.8
Reduce commitments	10	4.3
Put programs in workable area	5	2.2
Program not effective	4	1.7
Quality of provider not adequate	4	1.7
Earn Reclaim money	4	1.7
Restructure funding	3	1.3
Save money	2	.9
Reduce recidivism/prevention	2	.9
DYS commitments increased	1	.4

Respondents from urban (75 percent) counties were most likely to express the need to contract with more private providers followed by medium (58 percent), rural (52 percent), and small (47 percent). When asked to explain the need to contract with more providers, the two most common responses were: 1) they would be able to tailor programs for the youth, and 2) more counseling programs would be available. When asked about what programs needed to be added to target the needs of more youth, respondents' three most popular answers were: 1) educational programs; 2) chemical dependency programs; and, 3) programs to address behavioral and mental health problems.

Staffing

Respondents were asked whether their courts needed more staff due to RECLAIM Ohio. Sixty-one percent of the urban counties indicated that their courts needed more staff. Fifty-seven percent of the respondents from the medium and rural counties said they needed more staff, while only 44 percent of the small counties reported a need for more staff. When asked whether their courts had actually hired more staff, urban county respondents were most likely to have reported that they had hired more staff (58 percent). The medium-sized counties were the least likely to have hired more staff; 61 percent did not hire additional staff. Finally, only about half of the respondents from the rural counties and 42 percent from the small counties reported hiring more staff after RECLAIM began.

In summary:

- Seventy-three percent of the state's RECLAIM allocations to counties were allocated to the urban counties.
- The urban counties, on average, received the smallest proportion of their original allocation, while the rural counties received the most (due in part to non-debiting status).

- Respondents from urban and medium size counties reported the greatest amount of court support for community-based alternatives, followed by rural and small counties.
- Half of the youths served in local programs were from medium sized counties. Nearly one third of the youths served resided in urban areas.
- The most common programs utilized by the state were: intensive probation, out-of-home placement, substance abuse, and monitoring surveillance.
- Statewide the majority of youths were served in the following programs: intensive probation, substance abuse, restitution/community service, probation, and service enhancement programs.
- Between 49 and 62 percent of the respondents indicated that their courts had made changes to their programs since RECLAIM began.
- Slightly over 50 percent of all county respondents had increased their services by either adding new programs or new providers. The most common reasons for these changes were: a need for the service, to enhance aftercare, and that the courts now had the money to change programming.
- The most common programs counties would like to see implemented were: educational, chemical dependency, behavioral/mental health, and parenting and family programs.
- The urban county respondents were most likely to express a need to contract with private providers, followed by the medium, rural and small counties. By contracting with more providers the respondents said they would be able to tailor programs for each youth and more counseling programs would be available.

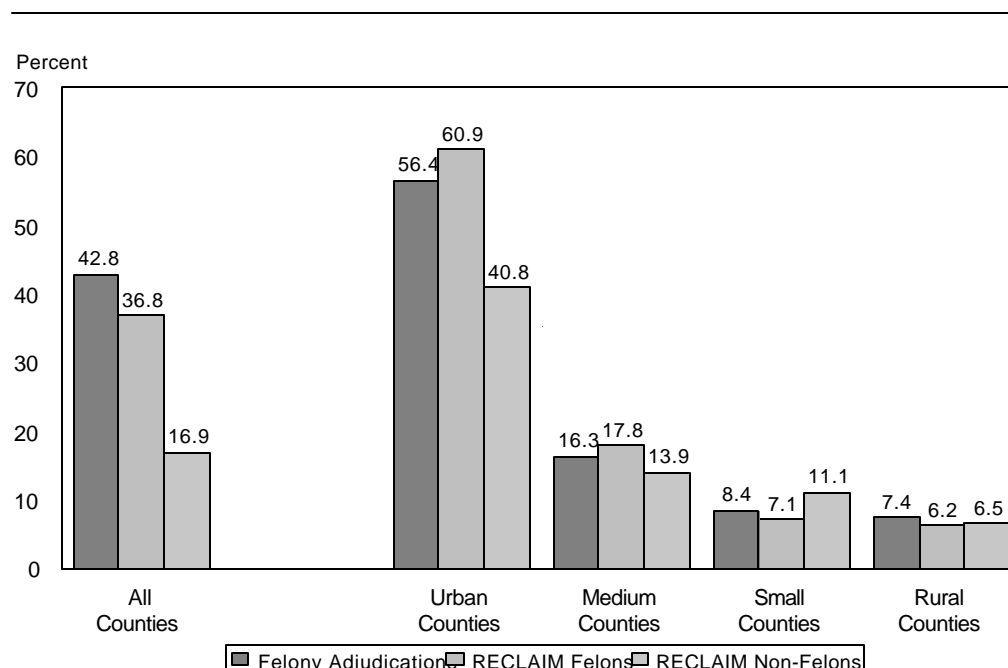
Research Question #3:**How many minority youth are being served in RECLAIM Ohio programs?**

An initial answer to this question can be obtained by simply reporting the number or percentage of minority youths in RECLAIM Ohio programs. This information was discussed in Question 1 (also see Table 1.1). For those readers seeking somewhat more detail on minority clients, additional data will be presented here. Figure 3.1 separates RECLAIM felons from non-felons and displays the percentages of non-white youths served for each group. A more comprehensive analysis of minority representation, however, requires more than a simple accounting of non-white youths served. To understand how the RECLAIM initiative affects the handling of minority juvenile offenders, we must consider two issues. First, we must consider whether the distribution of minorities served by RECLAIM programs is representative of the youths who might have been eligible for RECLAIM Ohio. In this regard, we will examine how the distribution of minority youths in RECLAIM programs compares to all adjudicated youths. Second, it is important to determine the extent to which minorities are being diverted from commitment to DYS. Each of these issues is considered below.

Because of the infrequency of non-black minorities, we dichotomized race into the categories “white” and “non-white” for all comparisons.⁶ Figure 3.1 shows the percentage of adjudicated felons who were non-white, the percentage of RECLAIM felons who were minorities, and the percentage of RECLAIM non-white, non-felons for all of the counties combined and separately for the urban, medium, small, and rural counties. The figures for youths who were adjudicated for less serious

⁶ The reader must keep in mind that even with the race categories collapsed, the number of non-white juveniles in most Ohio counties is quite small. Even in the urban counties, minorities typically comprise less than 20% of the youth (under 18) population.

Figure 3.1. Minority Representation in RECLAIM Ohio: Percent Non-White



offenses are included only for descriptive purposes. Overall, approximately 17 percent of the non-felons served by RECLAIM programs were non-white. Although in the urban counties larger percentages of the RECLAIM felons were minorities compared to the non-felons, in the other size counties, these percentages were quite similar.

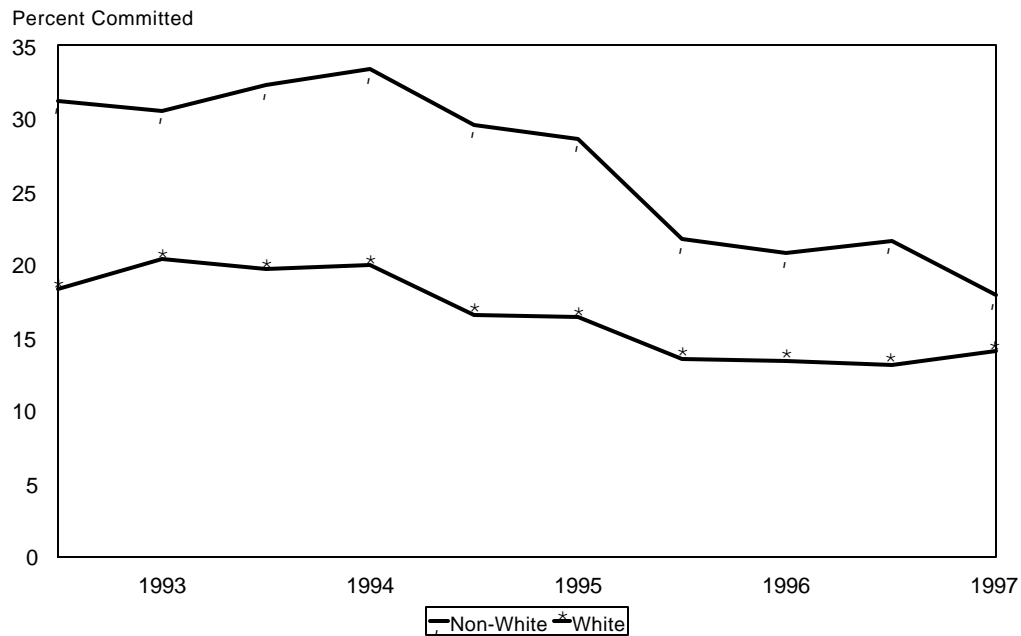
Unfortunately, data on youths who were adjudicated for misdemeanor, traffic, or unruly offenses but were not served by RECLAIM programs were not available. Still, by focusing on the felony offenders, we can make direct comparisons between those who were eligible for RECLAIM Ohio and those who were served by RECLAIM programs. As shown in Figure 3.1, the percentage of youths served by RECLAIM programs who were minorities largely reflects their distribution among all adjudicated felons.

Approximately the same percentage of RECLAIM Ohio youths and all adjudicated youths are minorities regardless of whether the counties are considered together or they are disaggregated by size. These similarities suggest that race is not considered by the counties in determining which youths should be placed in RECLAIM Ohio programs.

In addition to their representation among all adjudicated felons, we also examined the extent to which minorities are diverted from incarceration. Figure 3.2 shows the non-white and white felony commitment rates between July 1992 and June 1997. Non-white commitment rates were computed by dividing the number of non-white youths committed to a DYS facility by the number of non-white youths adjudicated for a felony. Similarly, white commitment rates were computed by dividing the number of white youths committed to DYS by the number of white youths adjudicated for a felony. These calculations were repeated for each six-month period between the second half of 1992 and the first half of 1997. Therefore, this graph allows us to compare the difference between white and non-white commitment rates both before and after the implementation of RECLAIM Ohio. In short, the figure indicates that the difference between non-white and white commitment rates has converged slightly across the included time period. Some notable fluctuations can be discerned. As Figure 3.2 shows, the difference between non-white and white commitment rates converged slightly between the last half of 1992 and the beginning of 1993. During 1993, however, this difference increased, peaking in 1994 with 1.65 non-white youths committed for every one white youth. The difference between white and non-white commitment rates then stabilized until the beginning of 1995, when RECLAIM Ohio was implemented. During 1995, 1996, and the first half of 1997, it appears that the ratio of minority to white commitment rates declined. By the end of this period, non-white youths were committed at a rate approximately 1.25 times that of white youths. This series of

observations is too short to draw any firm conclusions about the effects of RECLAIM Ohio on minority youths, but it appears that the rates of non-white and white commitments have converged slightly since RECLAIM's inception.

Figure 3.2. Semi-Annual Non-White Commitment Rates and White Commitment Rates



Our findings on the representation of minorities in RECLAIM Ohio programs can be summarized as follows:

- The percentage of felony RECLAIM Ohio clients who are minorities largely reflects the representation of minorities among all youths adjudicated for felonies. This finding holds regardless of county size.
- Race does not appear to be a consideration in determining placement into RECLAIM Ohio.
- It appears that RECLAIM Ohio may have encouraged a trend of convergence between the relative commitment rates for minorities and whites.

Research Question #4:**How many female youth are being served in RECLAIM Ohio programs?**

This question is identical to the question above except that it asks about the representation of females. Accordingly, the approach to this question will be the same. Data on female RECLAIM clients were initially explored in Question 1. Below, we first examine how the distribution of female youths in RECLAIM programs compares to all adjudicated youths. Second, we explore the extent to which females are being diverted from commitment to DYS.

Figure 4.1 shows the percentage of adjudicated felons who were female, the percentage of RECLAIM felons who were female, and the percentage of RECLAIM female non-felons for all of the counties combined and separately for the urban, medium, small, and rural counties. As with the analysis of race, data are presented for youths adjudicated for less serious offenses only for descriptive purposes. Overall, approximately 33 percent of the non-felons served by RECLAIM programs were female. Moreover, the percentage of female non-felons far exceeds the percentage of female felons in all of the county size groups (see Figure 4.1). This result would be expected since females typically are involved in less serious offending than males.

Beginning a more detailed examination of female representation, we compare female felons served by RECLAIM programs to female felons not placed in RECLAIM Ohio. As displayed in Figure 4.1, when all of the counties are combined the percentage of RECLAIM participants who were female is slightly smaller than the percentage of adjudicated felons who were female. Turning to the separate analyses by county size, a clear trend emerges. The urban counties under-represented females the most. This disparity decreases incrementally with decreases in county size; in rural counties the percentage of RECLAIM clients

who were female was actually higher than their representation among adjudicated felons. Notably, however, these differences are small; even the largest discrepancy in female representation is less than four percent.

The second issue that we examined was the extent to which females were diverted from incarceration. Figure 4.2 shows the difference in male and female felony commitment rates between July 1992 and June 1997. These rates were computed in the same manner as those presented above for minorities. Thus, we are able to compare the difference between male and female commitment rates both before and after the implementation of RECLAIM Ohio.

The figure indicates that the difference between male and female commitment rates has followed a course similar to the ratio of white to minority commitment rates. At the beginning of the period shown in Figure 4.2, males were committed to DYS institutions at a rate 2.2 times that of females. Excluding a spike in the female commitment rate in the first half of 1993, it appears that the difference between male and female commitment rates converged slightly until 1995. Since the implementation of RECLAIM Ohio, the ratio of male to female commitments appears to have stabilized. In the first half of 1997, male youths were committed to DYS institutions at a rate 1.7 times that of female youths. Given the somewhat erratic nature of female commitment rates and the fact that our observations cover only a fairly short time period both before and after the RECLAIM initiative was implemented, no firm conclusions should be drawn about the effects of RECLAIM Ohio on the commitment rates of female youths compared to male youths. The data suggest that RECLAIM may have had a slight stabilizing influence on the ratio of male to female commitment rates. Both before and after RECLAIM Ohio was implemented, however, the ratio of male to female commitment rates fluctuated between approximately 1.5 and 2.0.

Figure 4.1. Gender Representation in RECLAIM Ohio: Percent Female

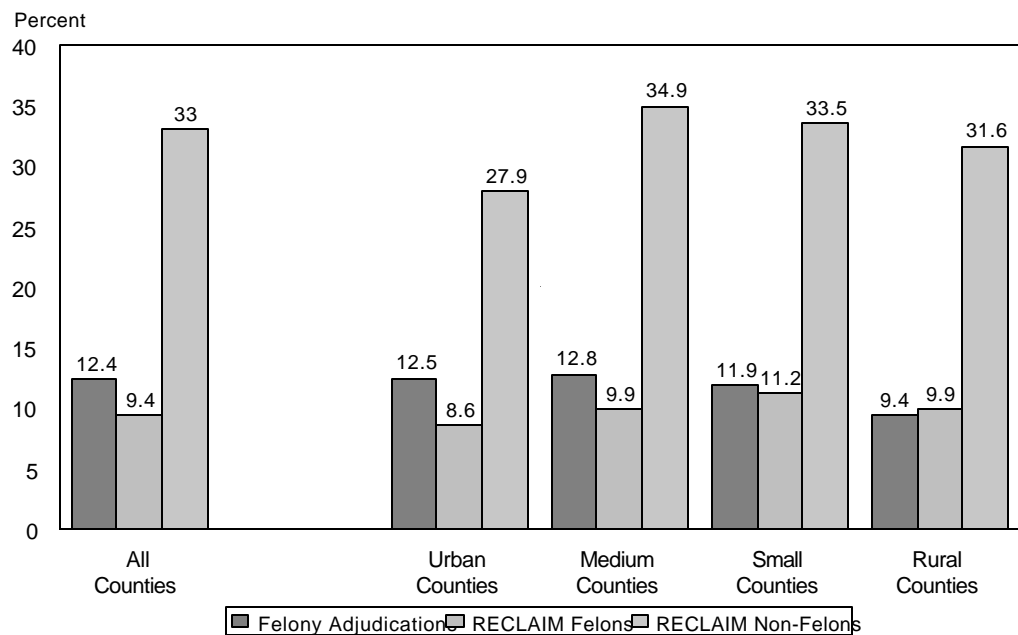
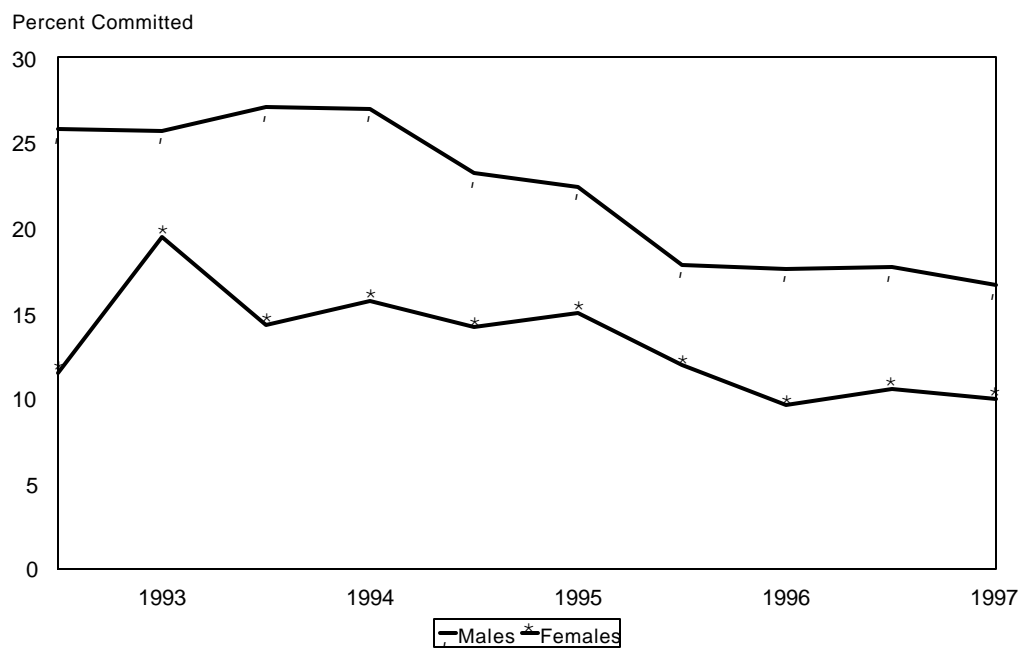


Figure 4.2. Semi-Annual Male Commitment Rates and Female Commitment Rates



Our findings regarding the representation of females in RECLAIM Ohio programs can be summarized as follows:

- Overall, females were slightly under-represented among RECLAIM clients.
- The discrepancy between all female felons and RECLAIM female felons was just under four percent in the urban counties. The under-representation of females in RECLAIM Ohio declined with decreases in county size.
- RECLAIM Ohio appears to have had little impact on the relative commitment rates for male and female youths.

Research Question #5: How often do youth successfully complete RECLAIM Ohio programs and what types of youth and programs are most successful?

The first part of this question is answered in a straightforward manner by presenting the percentage of youths who have completed RECLAIM Ohio programs successfully, for neutral reasons, or unsuccessfully. The second part requires a more detailed analysis. Indicators of the types of youths (age, race, sex, school attendance, employment status, age at first adjudication, number of prior adjudications, level of current offense) and types of projects (county size, number of programs attended, type of initial program, total number of days in programming) were entered into a logistic regression equation to identify which characteristics distinguished those who were successful from those who were unsuccessful. This procedure allowed us to examine simultaneously the effects of a youth's socio-demographic characteristics, criminal history, and the programs in which he or she participated. The results of this regression analysis are presented by discussing the percentage chances of a youth's success given particular characteristics.

The following analysis includes all youths who were admitted and released from RECLAIM Ohio programs since the initiative was implemented as a pilot program in 1994 through 1996. Including the pilot year and through 1996, reasons for release from RECLAIM Ohio programs were available for over 10,000 youths. Table 5.1 presents the reasons youths were released from programming. Over 73 percent of the youths were released because they successfully completed their RECLAIM assignment. Just over 21 percent were terminated unsuccessfully; most of these terminations were for a new adjudication or "negative behavior." Finally, approximately five percent of the youths were released for neutral reasons. Notably, the rate of successful terminations is 10

Table 5.1 Reasons Youths were Terminated from RECLAIM Ohio Programs.

Reason	Number	Percent
Successful	7534	73.4%
Neutral	554	5.4%
Moved Out of County	282	2.7
Youth Turned 18	221	2.2
Died	28	0.3
Other	23	0.2
Unsuccessful	2167	21.1%
Adjudicated for New Offense	784	7.6
Negative Behavior	625	6.1
Parole Violation	367	3.6
AWOL	208	2.0
Program Failure	111	1.1
Arrested as an Adult	41	0.4
Non-Attendance	31	0.3
Other	4	0.1%

Note: Table includes all youths served by a RECLAIM Ohio program since inception for whom a reason for termination was provided (n = 10,259).

percent higher than it was when the pilot evaluation was conducted, and the rate of unsuccessful terminations is down (from 28%).

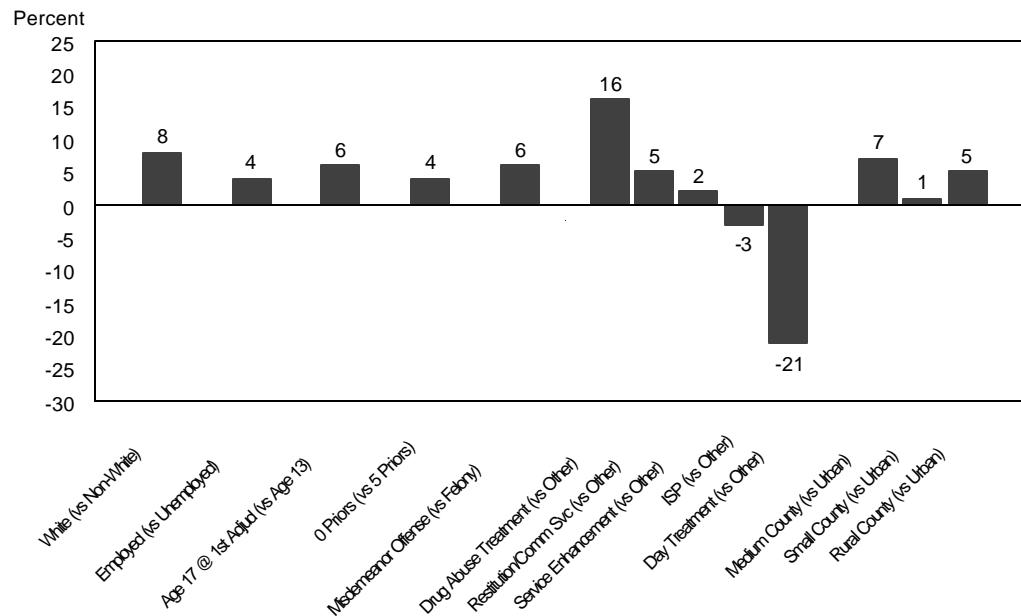
Turning to the question of what types of youths and programs are most successful, the logistic regression analysis identified seven characteristics that were significantly related to successful completion of RECLAIM Ohio programs: race, employment status, age at first adjudication, number of prior

adjudications, severity of offense, type of programming, and size of county.⁷ The difference in a youth's chances of successfully completing RECLAIM Ohio for each variable are presented in Figure 5.1. These coefficients were computed from the regression analysis; thus, they reflect percentage variations in the probability of success for each variable while holding all other variables constant.

As shown in the figure, the differences in the probability of success were fairly small for most of the variables. For example, youths from medium counties were only 7 percent more likely to succeed than youths from urban counties. The differences between the success rates for the remaining counties were even less pronounced. In addition, employed youths, those who had committed a misdemeanor, older youths, and those with no prior adjudications were only 4 to 6 percent more likely to succeed than their demographic opposites (see Figure 5.1). The largest effect among the subjects' personal characteristics was for race: White youths were 8 percent more likely to successfully complete RECLAIM Ohio than were Non-White youths. While the factor was statistically significant, 8 percent can hardly be considered a large difference. The only factor that revealed a more substantial impact on success rates was the type of program to which the youths were assigned. Figure 5 lists the five programs that were the most popular for youths who completed RECLAIM Ohio projects. The remaining programming options were used too infrequently to allow us to separate their effects. At the positive extreme, youths who participated in drug abuse treatment programs were notably more likely (by 16 percent) to succeed than those who were assigned to any of the other programs.

⁷ A relationship is said to be statistically significant if the observed difference in the criterion variable between groups is too large to be attributed to chance alone. Four additional variables were included in the analysis but were not significantly related to success: sex, age, school status, and length of time in RECLAIM programs.

Figure 5.1. Differences in the Probability of Success: Seven Significant Predictors of Successful Completion of a RECLAIM Program



Note: Probabilities were calculated from logistic regression coefficients. Age, sex, school status, and number of days in RECLAIM programming also were included in the analysis but were not significant predictors of successful completion.

Conversely, youths who participated in day treatment were substantially less likely (by 21 percent) to be successful than youths in the other programs. It is important to keep in mind that the effect of program type is independent of the other characteristics included in the analysis. That is, the participants of day treatment programs were less successful regardless of their criminal history, race, age, employment status, or current offense. This result is not surprising since day treatment programs (and to a lesser extent ISP) are designed to closely monitor the behavior of the participants. In this situation, any misbehavior among the youths is more likely to be detected than it would be for youths in other types of programs.

Despite the considerable differences observed in the probability of successful completion for different types of programs, it is important to recognize that even when all of the above variables are examined collectively, our ability to predict which youths will succeed in RECLAIM Ohio is improved by only 10

percent. Put another way, we are largely unable to explain why some youths succeed while other fail in RECLAIM Ohio programs with the data that are available.

In summary, our analyses revealed:

- Seventy-three percent of the youths successfully completed RECLAIM Ohio programs, compared to 21 percent who were unsuccessful.
- The rate of successful terminations is 10 percent higher than it was when the pilot evaluation was conducted, and the rate of unsuccessful terminations is down by 7 percent.
- The probability of successfully completing RECLAIM Ohio programs was significantly higher for youths who were white, employed, younger at their first adjudication, adjudicated for a misdemeanor, and those who had fewer prior adjudications.
- The differences in the probability of success were less than 9 percent for each of these variables.
- Sex, age, school status, and the length of time spent in RECLAIM Ohio were not significantly related to success.
- The only factor that revealed a more substantial impact on success rates was the type of program to which the youths were assigned. Youths who participated in drug abuse treatment were the most likely to succeed, whereas youths assigned to day treatment were the least likely to be released as successful.

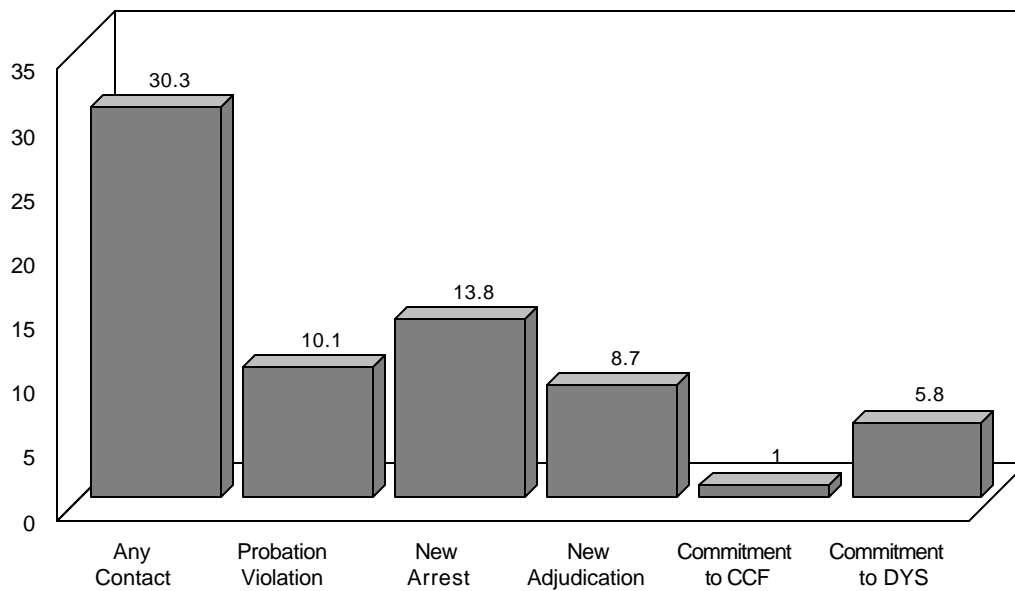
Research Question #6: What is the recidivism rate for youths terminated from RECLAIM Ohio programs?

The approach to this question is similar to that used to answer the above questions on successful completion of RECLAIM programs. In this case, however, our interest is in determining the impact of RECLAIM Ohio on future juvenile justice involvement, which will be defined by six separate criteria: any contact with the juvenile justice system, probation violation, rearrest, adjudication for a new offense, commitment to a community corrections facility (CCF), and commitment to a DYS institution. We begin our analysis of post-program success by examining the recidivism of all youths who have been released from RECLAIM Ohio programs and have been followed up after three months. This is the data collection period used by DYS to track all RECLAIM releases. In addition to this standard data, we also collected additional follow-up information on a randomly selected sample of youths released from RECLAIM Ohio programs. For each group, we present the percentage of youths who have had subsequent involvement with the juvenile justice system, and we examine the predictors of success.

Standard Three-Month Follow-Up

Figure 6.1 shows the percentage of clients who had contact with the juvenile justice system within three months following their release from RECLAIM Ohio. Overall, just over 30 percent of the youths had some type of contact within the follow-up period. The rates of subsequent contact for more specific criteria are substantially lower. In every case, reinvolverment was experienced by less than 15 percent of the youths. Perhaps most salient to the goals of RECLAIM Ohio are the percentages of youths who were subsequently committed to a DYS institution or a community corrections facility. Of all youths who were followed up three months after their release, less than

Figure 6.1. Percent of Youths Who had Contact with the Juvenile Justice System Following Release from RECLAIM Ohio: 3-Month Follow-Up



Notes: Includes all youths for whom 3-month follow-up information was available (n = 4922).
"New Arrest" includes new arrests as a juvenile (12.0%) and new arrests as an adult (1.8%).

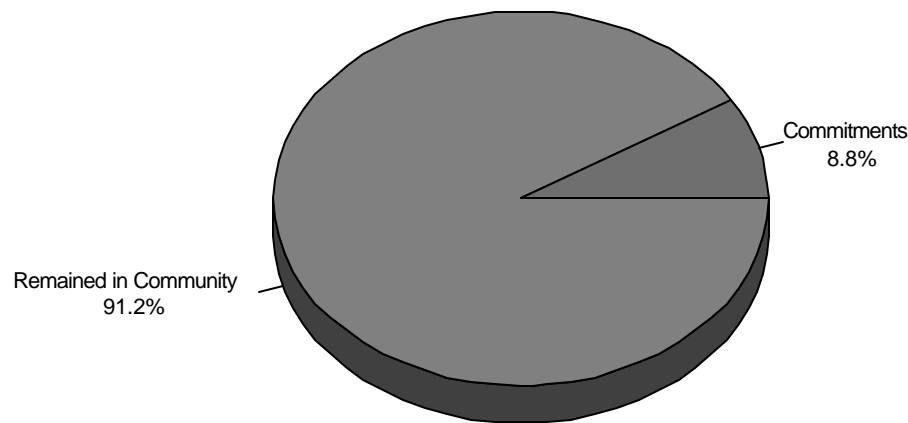
7 percent had been committed to either DYS or a CCF. Further, since RECLAIM seeks as one of its goals to decrease institutional populations, it is noteworthy that less than 9 percent of youths released from RECLAIM programs were committed to a state facility either upon their release from RECLAIM or during the standard follow-up period (see Figure 6.2).

Turning to the question of what types of youths and programs are most successful, the logistic regression analysis identified seven characteristics that were significantly related to whether a youth had any contact with the justice system within three months after completion of RECLAIM Ohio programs: sex, employment status, age, number of prior adjudications, number of days in the program, type of programming, and the number of programs to which a youth was assigned. For each variable, the difference in a youth's chances of recidivating is presented in Figure 6.3. These coefficients were computed from the regression analysis; thus, they reflect percentage variations in the probability of recidivism for each variable while holding all other variables constant.

As shown in the figure, the differences in the probability of recidivism were less than 10 percent for most of the variables. For example, male youths were more likely to have a subsequent contact than females but only by 6 percent. Similarly, there was only a 3 percent increase in the probability of recidivism for those who stayed in RECLAIM Ohio for 90 days compared to those who stayed in for 270 days. In other words, the length of a youth's sentence to RECLAIM significantly predicted recidivism, but it was not a major factor in determining who returned to crime. Unemployed youths and those first adjudicated at a younger age also were somewhat more likely to fail following release (see Figure 6.3).

Only three variables revealed a more substantial impact on recidivism. The type of programming to which a youth was assigned significantly influenced reoffending. Youths who were served on probation were 13 percent less likely to recidivate than youths who were served by other programs. Similarly, ISP clients and those placed in Restitution/Community Service programs were more successful than youths in other programs. Unfortunately, the remaining programming options were used too infrequently to allow us to separate their effects.

Figure 6.2. Percent of Youths Who were Committed to a State Institution (DYS or CCF) on Release or During the 3-Month Follow-Up Period

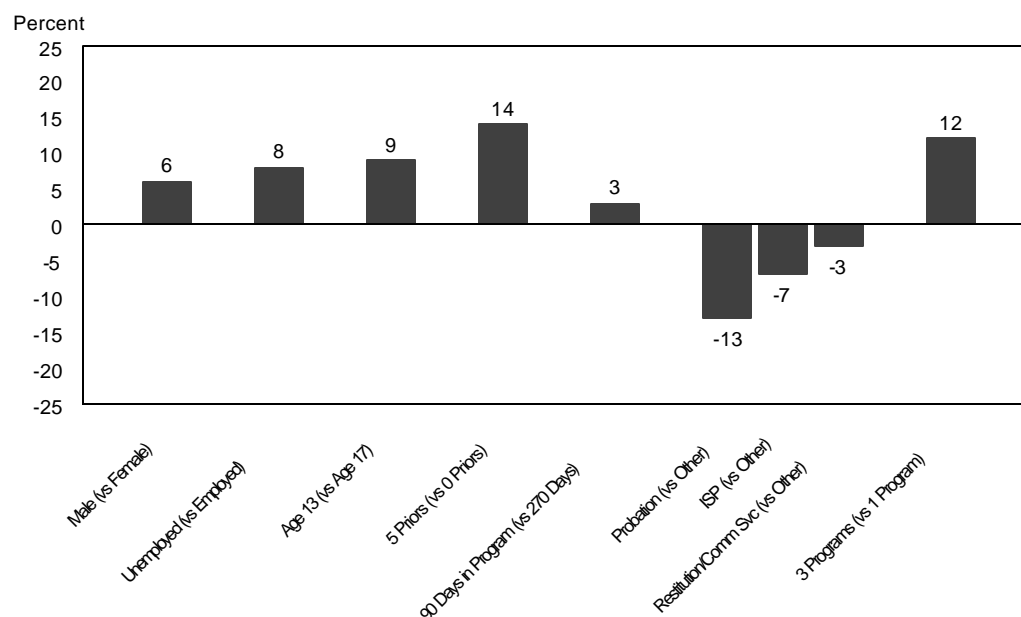


Notes: Includes all youths who had been released from all RECLAIM Ohio programs (n = 10,259).

In addition to the type of program into which youths were placed, the number of placements also influenced post-release criminal behavior. Youth who were served in multiple programs were less successful following release. This effect was incremental, with success rates among youths in two programs lower than success rates among youths served in a single program. As shown in Figure 6.3, youths who were assigned to three programs were 12 percent more likely to recidivate than those who had been assigned to only one program. Finally, the most influential variable was a youth's offense history. Youths who had a more extensive prior record of adjudications were more likely to recidivate. As an illustration, those with 5 prior adjudications were 14 percent less likely to avoid subsequent contact with the justice system than youths with no prior adjudications. In addition to the type of program into which youths were placed, the number of placements also influenced post-release criminal behavior. Youths who were served in multiple

programs were less successful following release. This effect was incremental, with success rates among youths in two programs lower than success rates among youths who were served in a single program. As shown in Figure 6.3, youths who were assigned to three programs were 12 percent more likely to recidivate than those who had been assigned to only one program. Finally, the most influential variable was a youth's offense history. Youths who had a more extensive prior record of adjudications were more likely to recidivate. As an illustration, those with 5 prior adjudications were 14 percent less likely to avoid subsequent contact with the justice system than youths with no prior adjudications.

Figure 6.3. Differences in the Probability of Recidivism: Seven Significant Predictors of Recidivism Within Three Months After Release from a RECLAIM Program



Note: Probabilities were calculated from logistic regression coefficients. Age at first adjudication, race, school status, and seriousness of offense also were included in the analysis but were not significant predictors of recidivism.

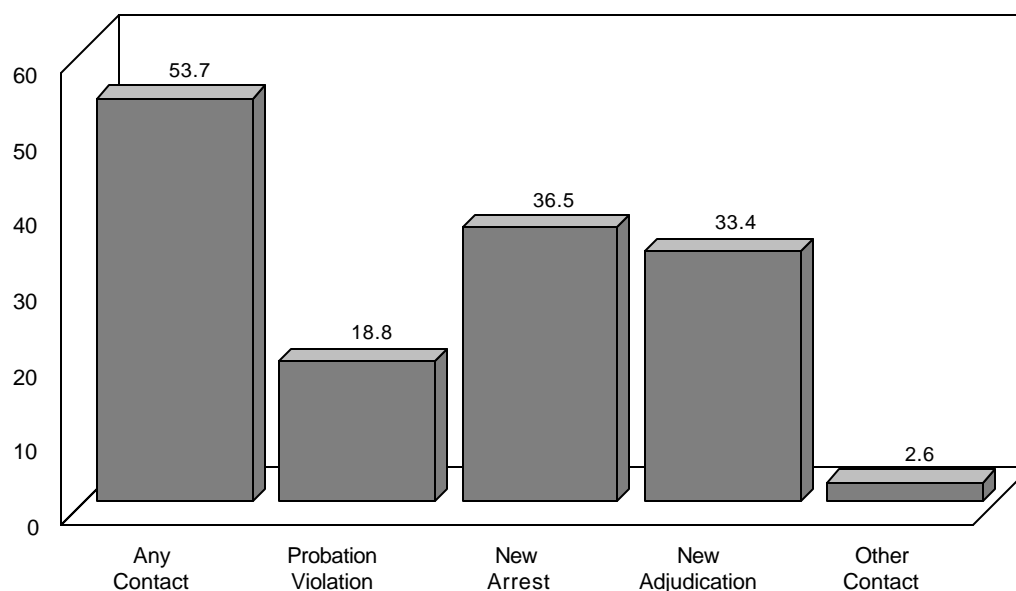
Despite these considerable differences in the probability of successful completion, it is important to recognize that even when all of the above variables are examined collectively, our ability to predict which youths will recidivate within three months after release from RECLAIM Ohio is improved by less than 9 percent. In other words, the available data largely fail to explain why some youths are more successful than others after being released from RECLAIM Ohio programs.

Extended Follow-Up

As mentioned above, we collected additional follow-up information on a sample of RECLAIM participants. This sample consisted of 1,051 pilot county youths and a randomly selected group of 1,527 non-pilot county youths. As discussed in the methodology section, data collection forms were mailed to each county requesting additional information on the selected youths. Data are available for analysis on 2,143 RECLAIM Ohio releases. The average follow-up period for the youths from the pilot project was 934 days while for the non-pilot youth follow-up period was 636 days.

Figure 6.4 shows the percentage of these clients who had contact with the juvenile justice system following their release from RECLAIM Ohio. The recidivism rates for this group are somewhat higher than those reported above. Overall, just under 54 percent of the youths had some type of contact within the follow-up period. Examining the more specific outcomes, approximately 19 percent of the youths violated their probation, about 36 percent were arrested (either as juveniles or as adults), about one-third were readjudicated, and just under 3 percent had some other type of contact with the justice system.

Figure 6.4. Percent of Youths Who had Contact with the Juvenile Justice System Following Release from RECLAIM Ohio: Extended Follow-Up Sample



Notes: Includes 2,143 youths who were released from RECLAIM Ohio and for whom additional follow-up information was available.
 "New Arrest" includes new arrests as a juvenile (33.3%) and new arrests as an adult (3.2%).

The logistic regression analysis of this extended follow-up group identified seven characteristics that were significantly related to whether a youth had any contact with the justice system after release from RECLAIM Ohio programs: sex, race, employment status, age at first adjudication, number of prior adjudications, type of programming, and county size. For each variable, the difference in a youth's chances of recidivating is presented in Figure 6.6. These coefficients were computed from the regression analysis; thus, they reflect percentage variations in the probability of recidivism for each variable while holding all other variables constant. As the figure shows, none of the contrasts can be considered large, but some are noteworthy. Males, those who were unemployed, and non-white youths each were approximately 10 percent more likely to recidivate than their demographic opposites. In addition, those who were first

adjudicated at a younger age were more likely to recidivate than those who were older when they were first processed through the juvenile justice system. As one example, Figure 6.5 shows that youths first adjudicated at 13 years old were 18 percent more likely to recidivate during the extended follow-up period than those first adjudicated when they were 17. The type of programming had a smaller impact on post-release behavior, with wrap-around and probation programs leading to lower recidivism than day treatment or other types of programs. County size had little influence on recidivism, but youths from small and medium counties were less likely to have contact with the justice system following their release than were youths from urban or rural counties. Finally, although the effect was small, youths who had fewer prior adjudications were actually more likely to recidivate in this long-term follow up. When all of the above variables are examined collectively, our ability to predict which youths will recidivate after release from RECLAIM Ohio is improved by approximately 6 percent, indicating that the available data provide little insight into variations in recidivism.

Figure 6.5. Percent of Youths Who were Committed to a State Institution (DYS or CCF) on Release or During the Extended Follow-Up Period

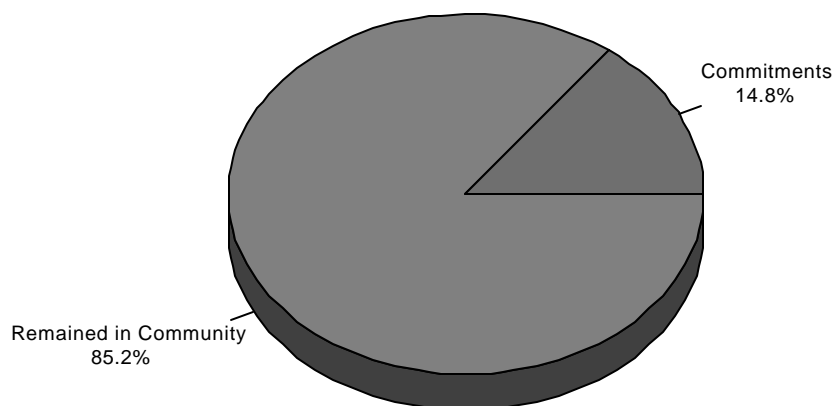
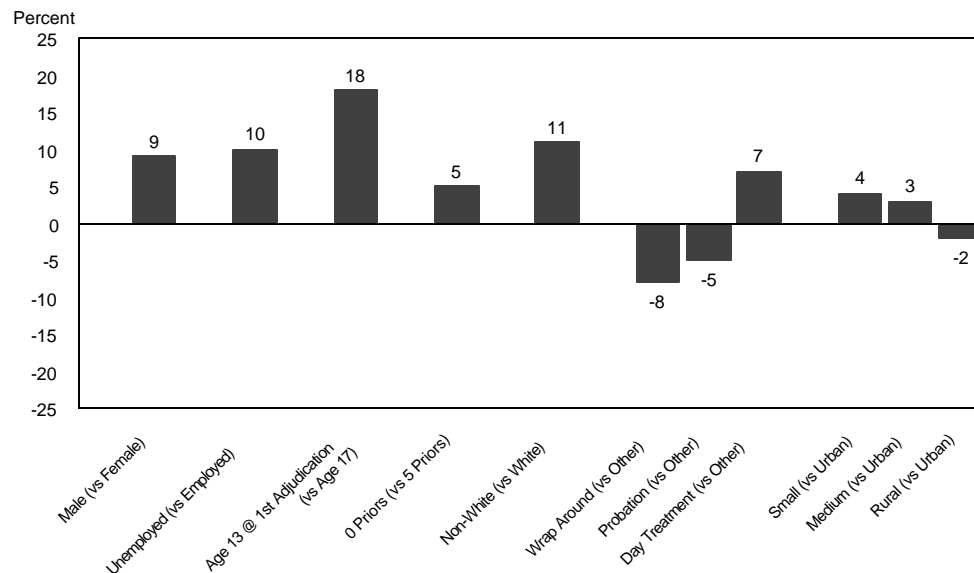


Figure 6.6. Differences in the Probability of Recidivism: Seven Significant Predictors of Recidivism During the Extended Follow-Up Period



Note: Probabilities were calculated from logistic regression coefficients. School status, the number of programs to which youths were assigned, and the seriousness of the offense also were included in the analysis but were not significant predictors of recidivism.

In summary:

- 30.3 percent of releases experienced some type of contact with the juvenile justice system within three months of their release from RECLAIM Ohio.
- 6.8 percent were committed to a community corrections facility or a DYS institution during this time.
- Overall, 91.2 percent of RECLAIM Ohio youths were not admitted to a state institution (DYS or CCF) either upon release from the program or during the three-month follow-up period.
- The contact rates for a sample of juveniles selected for additional follow-up were somewhat higher, with 53.7 percent experiencing some type of contact with the justice system following their release from RECLAIM Ohio.

- The probability of success within three months following release from RECLAIM Ohio programs was significantly higher for youths who were female, employed, older, had fewer prior adjudications, spent less time in programming, and were served by fewer RECLAIM programs.
- The type of RECLAIM programming also was significantly related to recidivism, with those in probation, ISP, or restitution/community service programs more likely to remain crime-free than those in other programs.
- The differences in the probability of recidivism were less than 10 percent for most of the variables.
- Race, age at first adjudication, school status, and the seriousness of the current offense were not significantly related to recidivism.
- Just under 54 percent of 2,143 youths who were selected for an extended follow-up analysis had some type of contact during the follow-up period.
- During the extended follow-up period, youths who were non-white, male, or unemployed were about 10 percent more likely to recidivate than their demographic opposites. Those who were younger when first adjudicated also were more likely to recidivate. Those with more prior adjudications were more likely to recidivate, but the effect was minimal.
- The extended follow-up also revealed that participants of wrap around and probation programs were slightly more successful and those in day treatment were slightly less successful than youths in other programs.
- Finally, small differences in success were observed for county size, with youths from small and medium counties more likely to recidivate than youths in urban or rural counties.

- School status, the seriousness of the current offense, and the number of programs to which youths were assigned were not significantly related to recidivism in the extended follow-up sample.

Research Question #7: What impact does the RECLAIM Ohio initiative have on adjudications and commitments to DYS by juvenile courts?

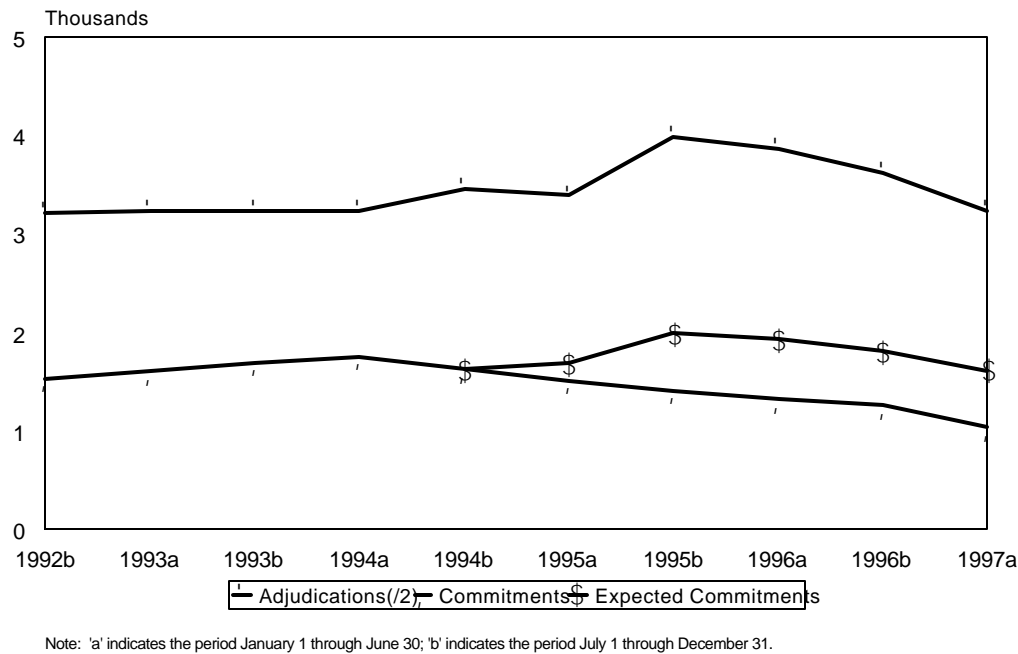
To answer how RECLAIM Ohio influences commitments, an analysis of their trends over time was conducted. Because the pilot counties began their experience with RECLAIM Ohio one year before the remaining counties, they are examined separately here. Several figures are provided to display adjudications, commitments, and expected commitments.⁸ Expected commitments are determined by averaging the commitment rate (number of commitments divided by number of adjudications) over the period before RECLAIM Ohio was implemented and multiplying it by the number of youths adjudicated after the program's implementation. Thus, the "expected commitments" are the number of youths who would have been committed had the counties sent the same proportion of youths to state institutions after RECLAIM began.

Figure 7.1 displays the semi-annual adjudications, commitments, and expected commitments for all of the non-pilot counties combined. Examination of this figure reveals that during 1992 and 1993, commitments and adjudications largely paralleled each other. In 1994, however, commitments began to decline while adjudications rose. Both adjudications and commitments declined steadily from 1995 through 1997. Although these trends began before RECLAIM Ohio was implemented in 1995, they persisted after the initiative was introduced.

Comparing the expected commitments with the actual commitments is, perhaps, more telling. Had the counties continued to commit youths to state institutions at the same rate following the implementation

⁸ In each figure, the number of adjudications has been divided by two so that they can be displayed on the same scale as commitments.

Figure 7.1. Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Adjudications and Commitments: All Non-Pilot Counties

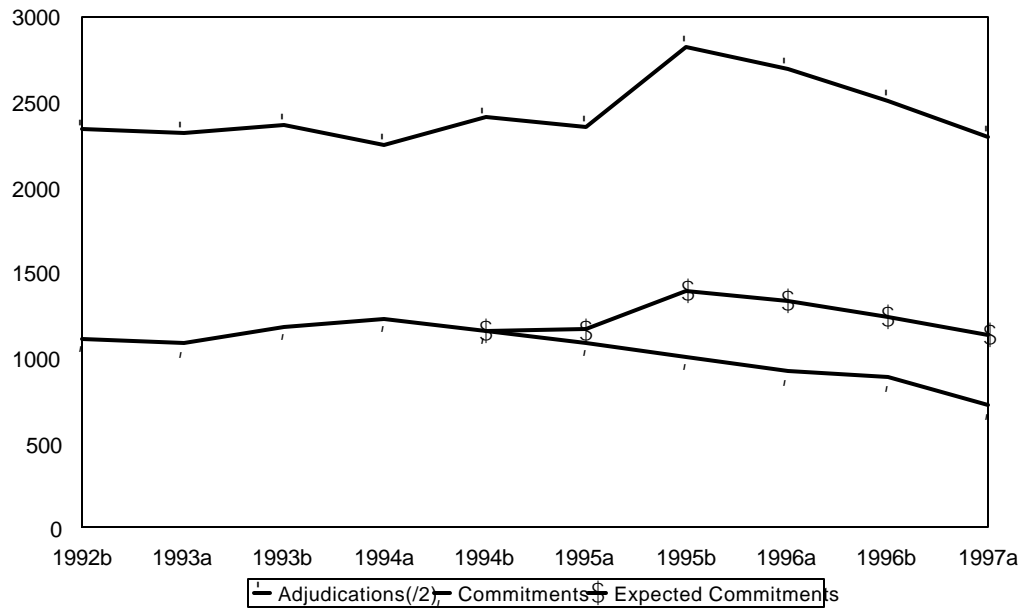


of RECLAIM Ohio, the number of commitments would have been substantially higher. As it is, the number of commitments in the first half of 1997 (1,032) represent a 36.2 percent reduction over what would have been expected (1,617) for this period based on the number of youths adjudicated for felonies. In the face of substantial increases in felony adjudications, a trend that would be expected to result in comparable increases in commitments to state facilities, Ohio counties were able “hold the tide.” Furthermore, they have been able to maintain the reduced level of commitments. For the first two-and-one-half years of the state-wide RECLAIM initiative, the number of committed youths has remained at or below the number committed in 1994.

Figures 7.2 through 7.5 display the semi-annual adjudications, commitments, and expected commitments for the urban, medium, small, and rural counties separately. These figures reveal largely the same patterns as when all of the counties were combined. The number of youths adjudicated for felonies has increased since 1992. Because of this trend, the expected number of commitments also is higher than it was in 1992. In each group of counties, however, the number of youths committed to state institutions has declined since RECLAIM Ohio was implemented. The greatest shift has been experienced by the medium counties; they were able to reduce commitments by 39 percent. The remaining counties also committed substantially fewer youths than would have been expected: urban counties by 37 percent, small counties by 33 percent, and rural counties by 27 percent.

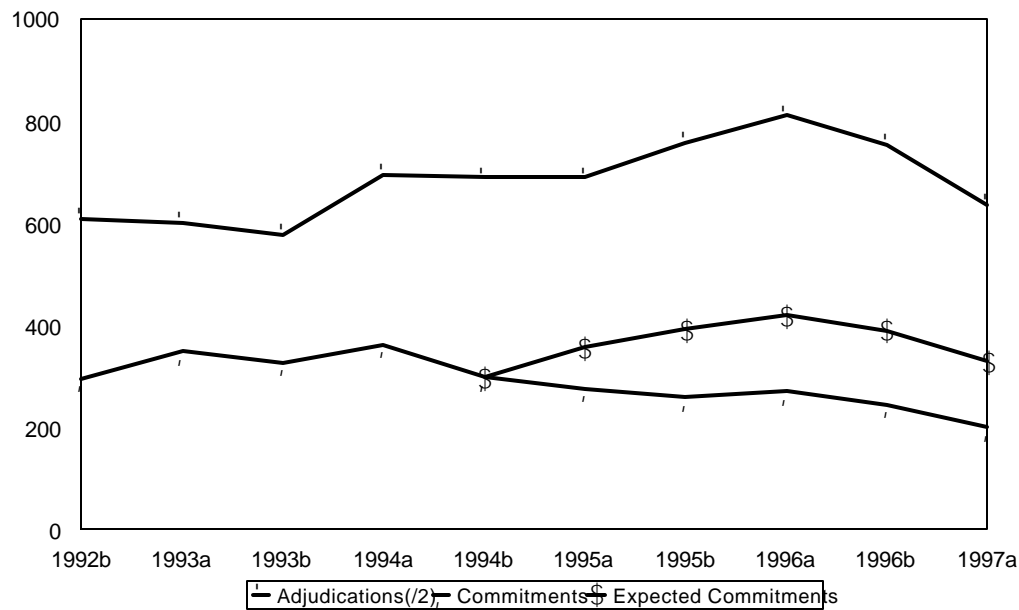
Because RECLAIM Ohio was implemented in the nine pilot counties in 1994, one year earlier than in the other Ohio counties, their experiences allow for consideration of what effects RECLAIM Ohio may have over a longer period of time. That is, we can examine whether commitments return to their previous rates, remain at a lower level, or continue to decline. Figure 7.6, which displays the adjudications, commitments, and expected commitments for the pilot counties, shows that the pilot counties have been able to sustain their reduced number of commitments. Moreover, these counties have kept commitments low despite increases in felony adjudications since 1994. The pilot county evaluation reported that commitments had been reduced by 42.7 percent over what had been expected for 1994. The success experienced by these counties continued and even increased into 1996, when the number of commitments among the pilot counties (114) was 52.1 percent less than expected (238). A slight slip is noticeable in the first half of 1997, but the pilot counties still were able to reduce commitments by 42 percent over what would have been expected.

Figure 7.2. Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Adjudications and Commitments: Urban Non-Pilot Counties



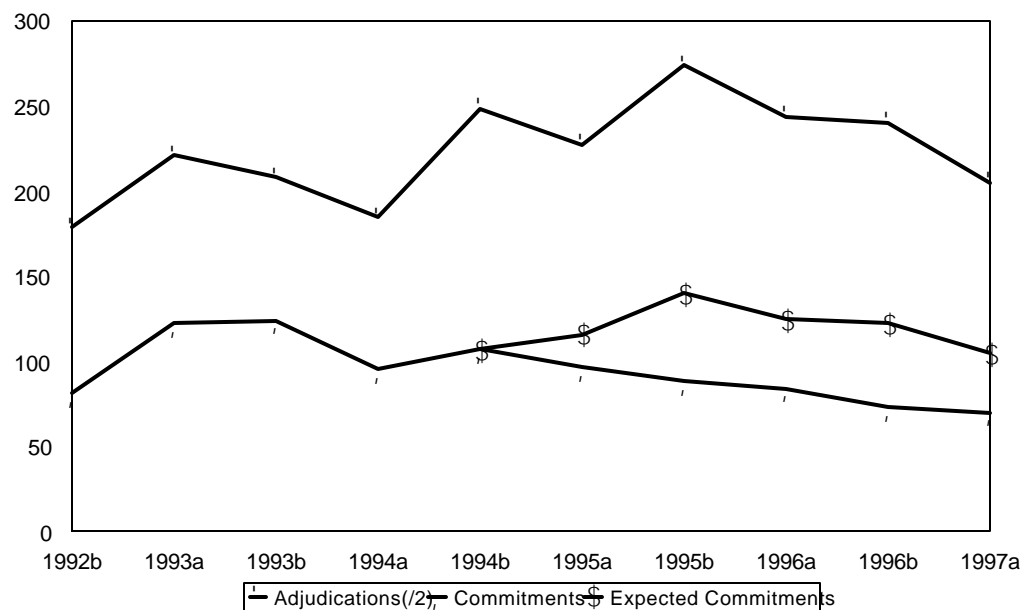
Note: 'a' indicates the period January 1 through June 30; 'b' indicates the period July 1 through December 31.

Figure 7.3. Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Adjudications and Commitments: Medium Non-Pilot Counties



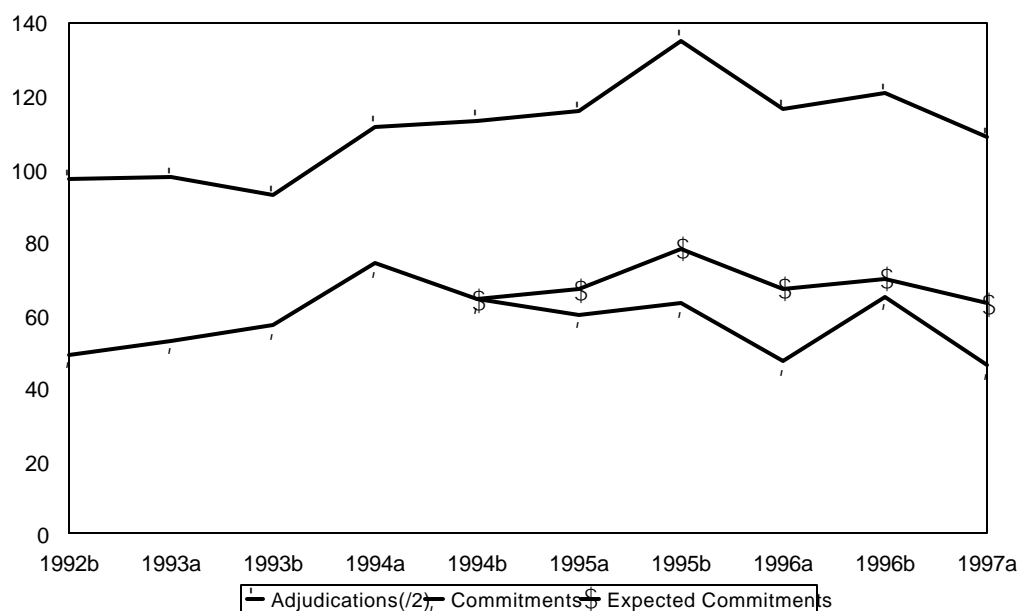
Note: 'a' indicates the period January 1 through June 30; 'b' indicates the period July 1 through December 31.

Figure 7.4. Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Adjudications and Commitments: Small Non-Pilot Counties



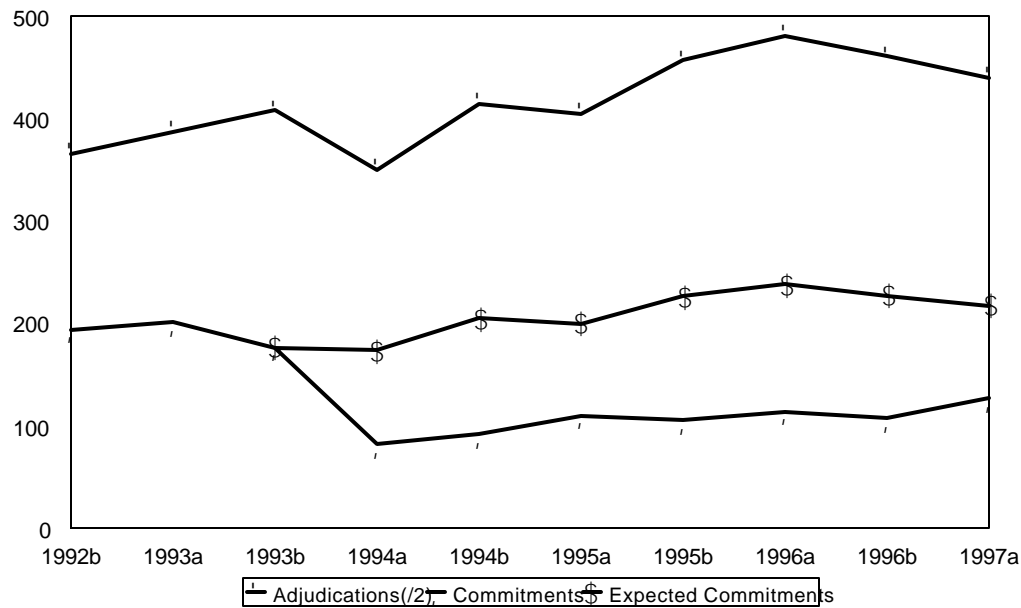
Note: 'a' indicates the period January 1 through June 30; 'b' indicates the period July 1 through December 31.

Figure 7.5. Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Adjudications and Commitments: Rural Non-Pilot Counties



Note: 'a' indicates the period January 1 through June 30; 'b' indicates the period July 1 through December 31.

Figure 7.6. Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Adjudications and Commitments: Pilot Counties



The experience of the pilot counties shows greater reductions in commitment rates in the second year following implementation of RECLAIM Ohio. Generalizing these findings to the other counties, however, should be approached with caution. That the pilot counties achieved a reduction in commitments of over 40 percent in their first year while the other counties reduced commitments between 25 and 40 percent suggests that the pilots may be unique. Indeed, the counties that participated in the pilot phase of

RECLAIM Ohio volunteered. Conversely, RECLAIM Ohio was a requirement for the remaining counties. If some of the non-pilot counties are less committed to the goals of RECLAIM Ohio, the long-term impact of the program on commitment rates also would likely be diminished.

Our findings regarding the effects of RECLAIM Ohio on adjudications and commitments to DYS by juvenile courts can be summarized as follows:

- Overall, the non-pilot counties were able to reduce the number of youths committed to DYS institutions by approximately 36 percent over what would have been expected based on the number of youths adjudicated for felony offenses and previous commitment rates.
- The rates at which commitments were reduced were similar across counties of different size. Commitments were reduced by 37 percent among urban counties, 39 percent among medium counties, 33 percent among small counties and 27 percent among rural counties.
- Among the pilot counties, the number of commitments held steady after 1994, while felony adjudications continued to increase. In the first half of 1996, the pilot county commitments were 52 percent lower than their expected level, and in 1997 they were 42 percent below what would have been expected.

Research Question #8: What impact does the RECLAIM Ohio initiative have on the use of community corrections facilities by juvenile courts?

Our approach to this question is multifaceted. First, an analysis of the trends in commitments over time is used to explore how RECLAIM Ohio influences admissions to community corrections facilities (CCF). We present data on the number of youths committed to a CCF for six-month periods between 1993 and 1996. We also present the number of commitments that would have been expected in 1995 and 1996 (for the pilot counties, 1994, 1995, and 1996) had RECLAIM Ohio not been implemented. These expectations are determined by extending pre-RECLAIM commitment rates. In addition, we explore the possibility that changes in commitments may be confined to particular felony levels by presenting commitment rates for each felony degree separately.

Second, moving beyond an examination of the rate at which youths are committed to a CCF, it also is important to consider how the implementation of RECLAIM Ohio may have influenced the length of sentences given to youths. In this regard, we examine the trends in the average length of stay in CCFs before and after RECLAIM Ohio was initiated.

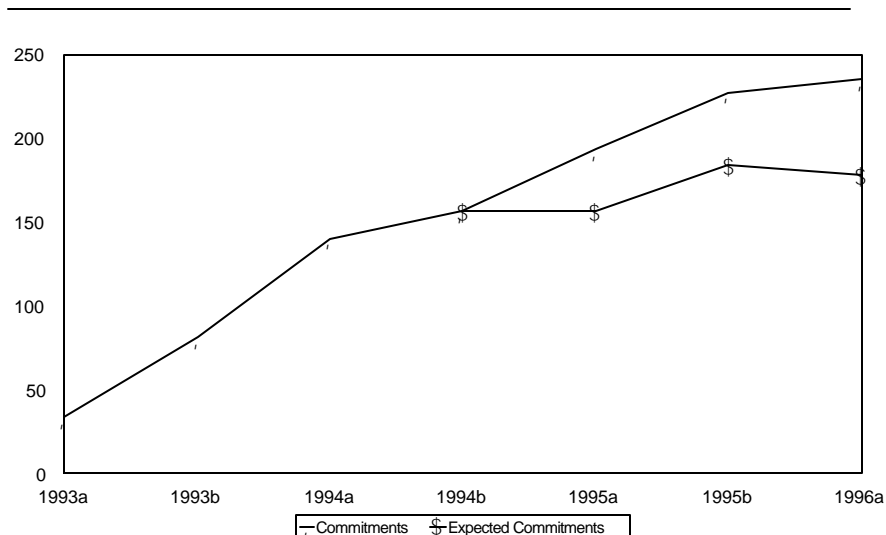
Third, to assess whether community corrections facilities are being used as an intermediate sanction between local alternatives and DYS commitment, we report responses to survey questions that targeted this issue. In particular, we discuss whether the courts see CCFs as part of a continuum of possible sanctions.

Commitment Rates

Figure 8.1 displays the semi-annual commitments and expected commitments for all of the non-pilot counties combined. Examination of this figure reveals that commitments to community corrections facilities

increased dramatically in 1993 and in the first 6 months of 1994. Although less dramatic, these commitments continued to increase through the end of 1994. When RECLAIM Ohio was implemented in 1995, however, commitments to CCFs again began to rise substantially. In contrast, the number of felony adjudications and the commitment rate prior to 1995 predicted that commitments would have increased at a much lower rate. That is, youths were committed to CCFs at a higher rate than expected following the implementation of RECLAIM Ohio programs. The increase in commitments is likely to be attributed to the increase in available bed space for CCF facilities. Specifically, between 1992 and 1996, nine CCF's opened. Refer to the footnote in figure 8.1 to obtain the exact years in which the CCF's opened.

Figure 8.1. Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on CCF Commitments: All Non-Pilot Counties*



Note: 'a' indicates the period January 1 through June 30; 'b' indicates the period July 1 through December 31.

*One CCF was opened in 1992, two opened in 1993, three opened in 1994, two opened in 1995, and one opened in 1996.

Turning our attention to the pilot counties, the results are quite different. Figure 8.2 shows the number of pilot county commitments to community corrections facilities as well as the expected number of commitments (based on the commitment rate). Like the non-pilot counties, the pilot counties also experienced a substantial increase in commitments early in this series. However, when they began to participate in RECLAIM Ohio in 1994, the pilots were able to reduce the number of commitments in the first six months, holding commitments well below what was expected. Although in the second half of 1994 and in 1995, CCF commitments rose, the number of youths committed to community corrections facilities from the pilot counties remained substantially lower than what was expected. It should be noted that the pilot counties never committed more than 20 youths in any six-month period. With so few commitments, even small fluctuations in the number of youths sent to CCFs can appear to be considerable.

Figures 8.3 and 8.4 display the annual CCF commitment rates for each felony level among the non-pilot and pilot counties, respectively. As would be expected, the overall trends here mirror those shown in Figures 8.1 and 8.2. What these figures add is the ability to determine whether commitment rates have changed differently among the various felony levels. Although some small variations are apparent, overall changes in CCF commitment rates are strikingly similar for first, second, third, and fourth degree felonies across the time period examined.⁹ As Figure 8.3 shows, commitment rates for all levels of felonies

⁹ No fifth degree felons were committed to CCF facilities during the study period.

Figure 8.2. Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on CCF Commitments: Pilot Counties

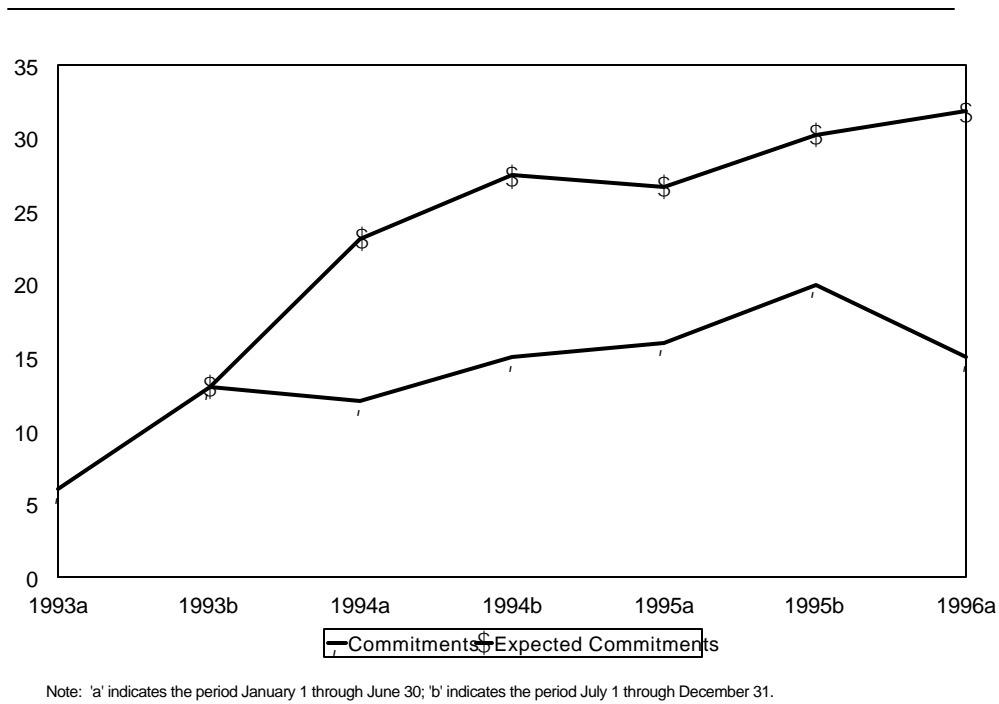
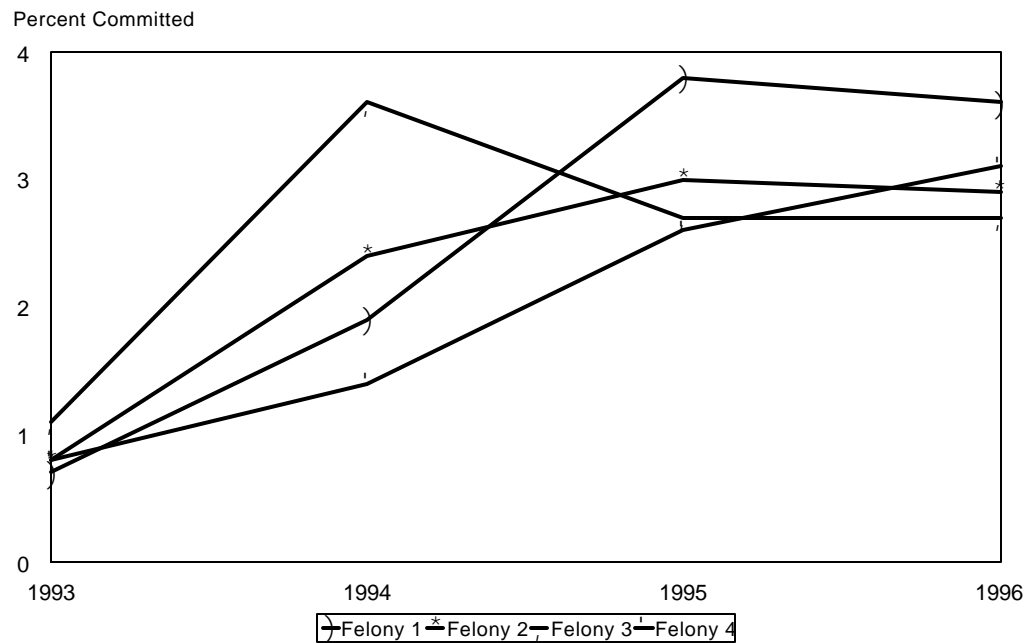
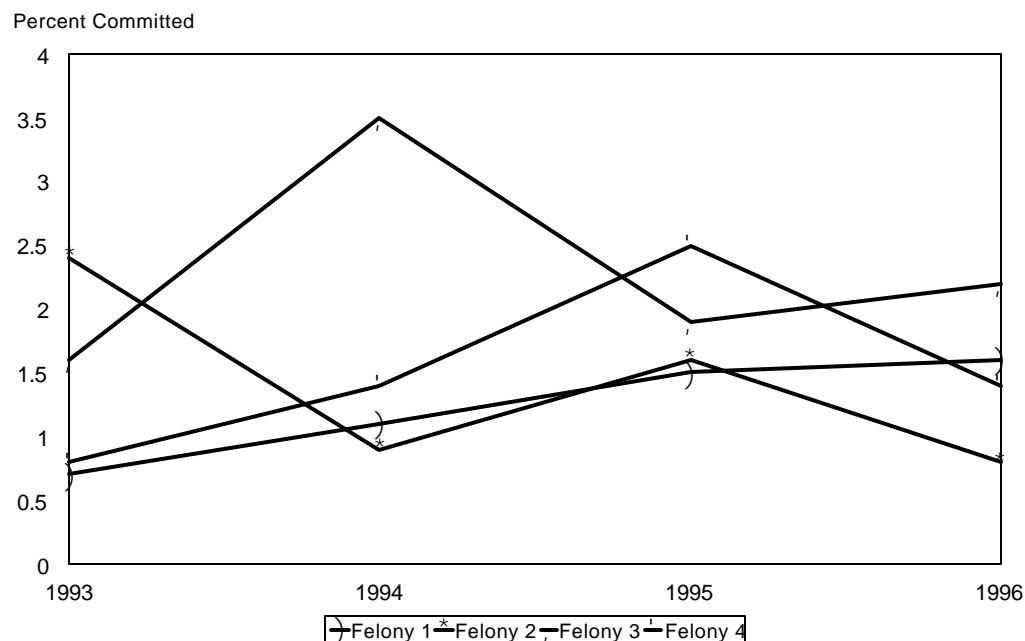


Figure 8.3 Annual CCF Commitment Rates by Felony Level: Non-Pilot Counties



Note: These rates were computed by dividing the number of youths committed to a CCF facility by the number adjudicated for each felony level.

Figure 8.4 Annual CCF Commitment Rates by Felony Level: Pilot Counties



Note: These rates were computed by dividing the number of youths committed to a CCF facility by the number adjudicated for each felony level.

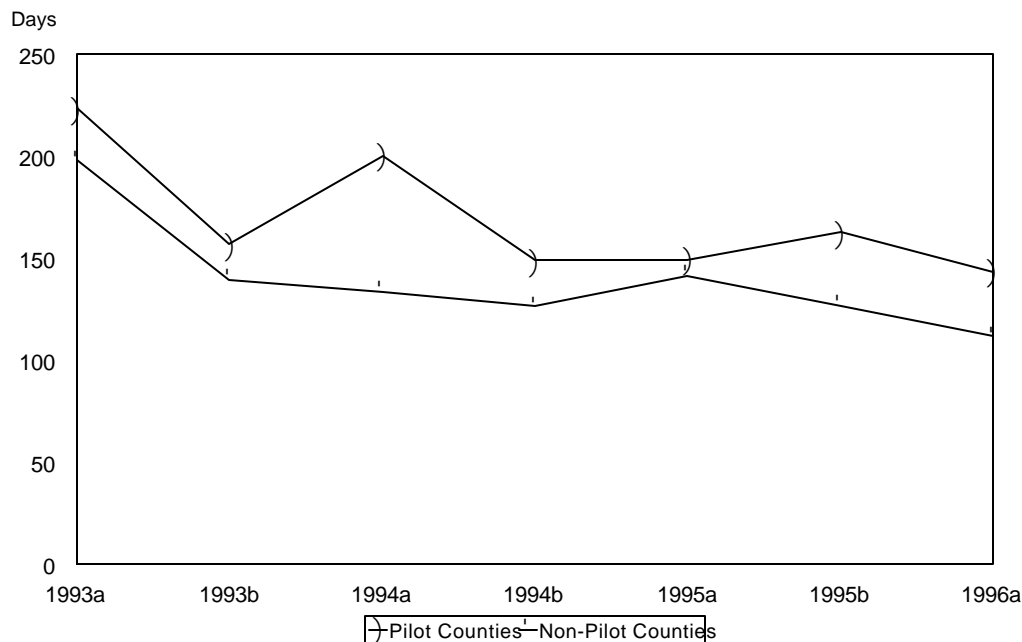
increased among the non-pilot counties from approximately one percent in 1993 to three to three-and-one-half percent in 1995. All of the rates leveled off between 1995 and 1996. Similar consistency among the pilot counties can be noted from the figures represented in Figure 8.4. Among these counties, first, second, third, and fourth degree felony commitment rates all remained fairly stable from 1993 to 1996. The above increase noted in overall commitments among the non-pilot counties, therefore, is not isolated to particular felony levels, and the apparent stability of overall pilot county commitments is not due to decreases in one type of commitment balancing increases in another.

Sentence Length

In addition to choosing whether to send youths to community corrections facilities, the courts also may use CCFs differently by altering the length of time youths spend incarcerated. Figure 8.5 displays the

average number of days that youths were confined in CCFs during six month periods from 1993 through the first half of 1996. Aside from an anomalous peak for the pilot counties during the first six months of 1994, the average length of stay for youths committed to CCFs by pilot and non-pilot counties has decreased steadily since 1993. Moreover, based on the fact that this trend started before either the pilot or non-pilot counties began to participate in RECLAIM Ohio, and no discernable shift has occurred since RECLAIM Ohio, it does not appear that the decline in sentence length can be attributed to this initiative.

Figure 8.5. Average Length of Confinement in Community Corrections Facilities: Pilot and Non-Pilot Counties



Note: 'a' indicates the period January 1 through June 30; 'b' indicates the period July 1 through December 31.

Our findings regarding the effects of RECLAIM Ohio on the use of community corrections facilities juvenile courts can be summarized as follows:

- Overall, the non-pilot counties increased the number of youths committed to community corrections facilities by approximately 32 percent (in the first half of 1996) over what would have been expected based on the number of youths adjudicated for felony offenses and previous commitment rates.
- Among the pilot counties, the number of CCF commitments increased after RECLAIM Ohio was implemented. However, the number of commitments remained below what was expected; in the first half of 1996, the pilot county commitments were 112 percent lower than their expected level.
- Although some small variations are apparent, overall changes in CCF commitment rates are strikingly similar for first, second, third, and fourth degree felonies across the time period examined.
- Since 1993, the length of time youths have spent incarcerated in CCFs has declined. It does not appear that RECLAIM Ohio has influenced this trend.

Research Question #9: What are the opinions of the courts and other county agencies regarding RECLAIM Ohio?

This question was addressed by examining four main areas. The first area was to discover what the most important criteria are when deciding whether to place a youth in a RECLAIM Ohio program. The factors examined included both static and dynamic risk factors. Static risk factors are those that the youth cannot change such as age and prior record. Dynamic risk factors are those factors that can be changed for or by the youth. Examples of these include: program availability, parental cooperation, school record, and family stability. These data were analyzed by size of county.

The second area examined was the level of satisfaction with RECLAIM Ohio. Court personnel from pilot and nonpilot counties were asked about their overall satisfaction with RECLAIM Ohio, (i.e., aspects that they find most and least attractive; what they would most like to change about the RECLAIM program; their level of communication with DYS; and how satisfied they have been with the technical support from DYS). This examination is presented by county size and by pilot and nonpilot counties. In addition, parole and institutional personnel were asked about their overall satisfaction with RECLAIM Ohio and what they would most like to change about the program. Due to the small sample size, these responses are presented in aggregate form.

The third area examined was the level of satisfaction with various funding aspects of RECLAIM Ohio. Court personnel from all counties were asked about their satisfaction with the funding formula, their allocation, the per diem cost of DYS commitment, their court effectiveness using RECLAIM funds, and the amount of money spent in certain programming and administrative areas. These data are presented by county size and by pilot and nonpilot counties.

The final area addresses the level of support for the goals of RECLAIM Ohio. Court personnel and various child care agencies were asked if they support the goals of RECLAIM and their perceptions of whether these goals are actually achievable. The respondents were also asked if other groups (e.g., police, schools, media, and other juvenile personnel) support RECLAIM and how important they believe these people are to the success of the program. These court personnel data are presented by county size. Responses for child care agency personnel are presented in aggregate form due to the small sample size.

Criteria for Placing in a RECLAIM Program

Juvenile court personnel were asked to rank on a scale of one to six (one was least important and six was most important), the level of importance of certain criteria when deciding whether to place a youth in a RECLAIM program. The responses were very similar among all counties. Specifically, the respondents indicated that the most important factors were whether a program was available to meet the youth's needs, the amount of harm/injury to the victim, whether a weapon was involved, and whether the youth had a prior commitment to DYS. Some moderately important criteria for all counties were: age, family stability, school record, and parental cooperation. When the data were examined by pilot and nonpilot counties, the results were found to be quite similar.

In addition to examining criteria that were important when deciding to place a youth in a RECLAIM program, counties were asked if they currently use any standardized risk assessment form to guide in their decision making. Overall, only 33 percent of the respondents indicated that their courts used such instruments. The urban county respondents were most likely to report using assessment instruments, while the small counties were least likely. Forty-five percent of the urban, 37 percent of the medium, 25 percent of the rural, and 15 percent of the small counties reported using instruments in their courts. Of the

respondents who did report using assessment instruments, risk assessments were most commonly used, followed by both risk and needs assessments (17 percent), and pre-screening and sentencing instruments (14 percent). See Table 9.1.

Satisfaction with RECLAIM and DYS

Personnel from the courts were asked how satisfied they have been with the RECLAIM Ohio program since its inception. Table 9.2 indicates the level of satisfaction across three categories: very satisfied, moderately satisfied, and very dissatisfied. The most prominent response received from all sized counties was a moderate level of support for the RECLAIM program. Between 43 and 50 percent of the responses were in this category. For the urban, medium, and rural counties at least one third were very satisfied with the RECLAIM program, while 28 percent of the small counties were very satisfied. There were also some respondents that were very dissatisfied with the RECLAIM program. The responses in this category ranged from 24 percent of respondents in the small counties being very dissatisfied to 16 percent of the urban county respondents being very dissatisfied.

When these data are examined by type of county, the results become markedly different. Seventy-five percent of the pilot counties were very satisfied with the RECLAIM Ohio program, while only 27 percent of the nonpilot counties reported this level of satisfaction. The nonpilot counties (50 percent) reported a more moderate level of satisfaction than the pilot counties (25 percent). Twenty-three percent of the nonpilot counties reported being very dissatisfied with the RECLAIM program, while none of the pilot county respondents reported this level of dissatisfaction.

Counties were also asked to indicate the favorableness of certain aspects of RECLAIM Ohio. Three categories were used: most, less, and least favorable. All responses are presented in Table 9.3. Although in differing order, all counties indicated four main favorable aspects of RECLAIM Ohio.

Table 9.1 Type of Assessment Instrument Used by the Court.

Response	N)	Percent
Risk	43	29.9
Both Risk and Needs	25	17.4
Pre-screening/sentencing	20	13.9
Drug/Alcohol	17	11.8
Mental Health/Medical	17	11.8
Family Assessment	11	7.6
Needs	6	4.2
Sex	5	3.5

Table 9.2 Level of Satisfaction with RECLAIM Ohio.

Type	Very Satisfied % (n)	Moderately Satisfied % (n)	Very Dissatisfied % (n)
Urban	33.3 (43)	50.4 (65)	16.3 (21)
Medium	36.8 (53)	43.1 (62)	20.1 (29)
Small	28.4 (19)	47.8 (32)	23.9 (16)
Rural	34.2 (25)	45.2 (33)	20.5 (15)
Pilot	75.0 (42)	25.0 (14)	0.0 (0)
Nonpilot	27.5 (98)	49.9 (178)	22.7 (81)

Table 9.3 The Favorableness of Certain Aspects of RECLAIM Ohio: All County Sizes.

Aspects/County Size	Most Favorable % (n)	Less Favorable % (n)	Least Favorable % (n)
Options			
Urban	70.1 (94)	23.1 (31)	6.7 (9)
Medium	62.6 (92)	23.8 (35)	13.6 (20)
Small	50.7 (36)	35.2 (25)	14.1 (10)
Rural	68.6 (48)	21.4 (15)	10.0 (7)
Tailor/Flexibility			
Urban	66.9 (89)	25.6 (34)	7.5 (10)
Medium	66.7 (98)	19.7 (29)	13.6 (20)
Small	47.1 (33)	35.7 (25)	17.1 (12)
Rural	72.5 (50)	21.7 (15)	5.8 (4)
Funding uncertainty			
Urban	8.9 (11)	34.1 (42)	56.9 (70)
Medium	4.3 (6)	33.3 (46)	62.3 (86)
Small	7.5 (5)	29.9 (20)	62.7 (42)
Rural	11.8 (8)	27.9 (19)	60.3 (41)
More money available			
Urban	50.8 (61)	30.0 (36)	19.2 (23)
Medium	53.2 (75)	24.1 (34)	22.7 (32)
Small	47.1 (32)	33.8 (23)	19.1 (13)
Rural	57.6 (38)	25.8 (17)	16.7 (11)
Funding formula			
Urban	19.2 (19)	44.4 (44)	36.4 (36)
Medium	11.8 (15)	44.9 (57)	43.3 (55)
Small	12.7 (8)	52.4 (33)	34.9 (22)
Rural	15.7 (8)	52.9 (27)	31.4 (16)
Community-based			
Urban	66.7 (86)	26.4 (34)	7.0 (9)
Medium	65.7 (94)	24.5 (35)	9.8 (14)
Small	46.5 (33)	35.2 (25)	18.3 (13)
Rural	69.6 (48)	24.6 (17)	5.8 (4)
Increased workload			
Urban	18.1 (21)	61.2 (71)	20.7 (24)
Medium	10.9 (15)	56.2 (77)	32.8 (45)
Small	11.1 (7)	60.3 (38)	28.6 (18)
Rural	18.2 (12)	50.0 (33)	31.8 (21)

These were: having more options available to the court, the flexibility to tailor programs to the youth in their community, having more money available, and that RECLAIM is a community-based program. Two of the less favorable aspects of RECLAIM were the funding formula and the workload. The least favorable aspect of the RECLAIM program for all counties was funding uncertainty.

Juvenile court personnel were asked what they would most like to change about RECLAIM Ohio. Those interviewed reported a variety of different responses as to what they would like to change about RECLAIM Ohio. Overall, 25 percent of the juvenile court personnel would like to change the funding formula. The second most common response was to increase funding overall (15 percent), followed by reducing the amount of paperwork (9 percent), and better evaluation and assessment of programs (6 percent). Although respondents did not give specific direction on how to address these issues, DYS staff has recently developed workgroups among county personnel to address some of these concerns.

The counties were also asked to rate the level of communication between their courts and DYS regarding youths currently being held in institutions. Communication includes the youth behavior while in institutions, treatment plans, any disciplinary problems, or date of release. Table 9.4 indicates that the majority of counties reported that they have a moderate level of communication with DYS. Those who reported a moderate level of communication ranged from 52 percent in the urban counties to 41 percent in the rural counties. The remaining responses were somewhat evenly divided between the remaining two options: excellent and poor communication. Between 27 and 36 percent reported excellent communication with DYS, while 22 to 26 percent reported having poor communication.

Forty-six percent of the pilot counties reported having excellent communication with DYS, while only 27 percent of the nonpilot counties reported this level of communication. The nonpilot respondents were

more likely to indicated a moderate level of satisfaction than the pilots (50 percent vs. 28 percent). Even though most counties indicated good communication, 26 percent of the pilot counties and 23 percent of the nonpilot counties reported that they had a poor level of communication with DYS.

The counties were also asked to indicate how satisfied they were with the technical support they had received from DYS. The most common response for all counties was a moderate level of satisfaction. See Table 9.5. Between 42 and 53 percent of respondents reported this level of satisfaction. Forty-one percent of the respondents from the urban and medium size counties, 38 percent of the rural counties, and 32 percent of the small counties reported being very satisfied with the technical support from DYS. Twenty percent of the rural counties were very dissatisfied, followed by small and urban counties (15 percent), and medium-sized counties (8 percent).

Sixty percent of the pilot counties were very satisfied and 37 percent were moderately satisfied with the technical support they received from DYS. For the nonpilot counties, 50 percent were moderately satisfied and 35 percent were very satisfied. Only 15 percent of the nonpilots and 7 percent of the pilots were very dissatisfied with the technical support they received from DYS.

Issues with Funding

County court staff were asked if the amount of money they received from RECLAIM was more than, less than, or about the same as they expected. Those who indicated that they received the same as they expected ranged from 61 percent in the small counties to 40 percent in the urban

Table 9.4 Level of Communication Between DYS and the Courts.

Type	Excellent % (n)	Moderate % (n)	Poor % (n)
Urban	26.7 (32)	51.7 (62)	21.7 (26)
Medium	28.9 (41)	46.5 (66)	24.6 (35)
Small	29.0 (20)	44.9 (31)	26.1 (18)
Rural	35.6 (26)	41.1 (30)	23.3 (17)
Pilot	46.3 (25)	27.8 (15)	25.9 (14)
Nonpilot	26.9 (94)	49.7 (174)	23.4 (82)

Table 9.5 Level of Satisfaction with the Technical Support from DYS.

Type	Very Satisfied % (n)	Moderately Satisfied % (n)	Very Dissatisfied % (n)
Urban	41.1 (39)	44.2 (42)	14.7 (14)
Medium	40.8 (53)	51.5 (67)	7.7 (10)
Small	31.8 (21)	53.0 (35)	15.2 (10)
Rural	37.7 (26)	42.0 (29)	20.3 (14)
Pilot	58.7 (27)	34.8 (16)	6.5 (3)
Nonpilot	35.7 (112)	50.0 (157)	14.3 (45)

counties. A sizeable percentage indicated that they received less than they expected; ranging from 32 percent in the small counties to 46 percent in the rural counties.

Court personnel were also asked to discuss how much they were able to expand their court services given the funding they had received. The majority of the counties were able to expand their services somewhat. A smaller percentage, ranging from 22 percent in urban counties to 10 percent in the

small and rural counties, were able to expand their services greatly. However, a sizeable percentage, ranging from an urban county low of 25 percent to a medium county high of 41 percent, indicated that they were not able to expand their services given the funding they received.

Respondents were also asked to indicate how much of an interference it was to not know how much money they will receive each month from RECLAIM. The majority of counties reported a moderate to great interference in not knowing how much money they will receive. The greatest interference was indicated by the rural counties (61 percent). Around one-fourth of all counties, however, indicated that not knowing how much money they will receive would have no interference in their planning.

In order to determine a level of satisfaction with certain funding aspects of RECLAIM Ohio, counties were asked to rate their level of satisfaction in the following four areas: the county's total allocation, the funding formula, the 75 percent per diem cost for a DYS commitment, and the 50 percent per diem cost for a community corrections facility. The respondents' level of satisfaction in these areas are presented in Table 9.6. Regarding the county's total allocation, no clear pattern is present across county size. Overall, the majority of the counties indicated they were moderately to very satisfied with the allocation. However, a sizeable percentage (29-38 percent) were very dissatisfied with the allocation.

Table 9.6 Level of Satisfaction with the Following Aspects of RECLAIM Ohio.

Aspects	Very Satisfied % (n)	Moderately Satisfied % (n)	Very Dissatisfied % (n)
County's total allocation			
Urban	26.7 (27)	37.6 (38)	35.6 (36)
Medium	22.5 (29)	42.6 (55)	34.9 (45)
Small	21.5 (14)	49.2 (32)	29.2 (19)
Rural	23.4 (15)	39.1 (25)	37.5 (24)
Pilot	51.1 (24)	40.4 (19)	8.5 (4)
Nonpilot	19.6 (61)	42.0 (131)	38.5 (120)
Funding formula			
Urban	22.8 (21)	34.8 (32)	42.4 (39)
Medium	15.9 (20)	44.4 (56)	39.7 (50)
Small	11.7 (7)	55.0 (33)	33.3 (20)
Rural	15.8 (9)	35.1 (20)	49.1 (28)
Pilot	35.9 (14)	38.5 (15)	25.6 (10)
Nonpilot	14.5 (43)	42.6 (126)	42.9 (127)
75% per diem (DYS)			
Urban	27.2 (25)	47.8 (44)	25.0 (23)
Medium	10.2 (13)	53.1 (68)	36.7 (47)
Small	14.1 (9)	57.8 (37)	28.1 (18)
Rural	13.6 (8)	49.2 (29)	37.3 (22)
Pilot	23.8 (10)	52.4 (22)	23.8 (10)
Nonpilot	15.0 (45)	51.8 (156)	33.2 (100)
50% per diem (CCF)			
Urban	23.8 (20)	46.4 (39)	29.8 (25)
Medium	18.5 (23)	58.1 (72)	23.4 (29)
Small	25.8 (16)	50.0 (31)	24.2 (15)
Rural	22.8 (13)	42.1 (24)	35.1 (20)
Pilot	46.3 (19)	41.5 (17)	12.2 (5)
Nonpilot	18.5 (53)	52.1 (149)	29.4 (84)

With regard to the funding formula, the majority of counties reported that they were moderately to very dissatisfied with the funding formula. The percentage of those person who were very dissatisfied ranged from 33 percent in the small counties to 49 percent in the rural counties. The urban counties reported being the most satisfied, although this percent was small (23 percent).

A variety of answers were given when the counties were asked what changes they would like to see made to the funding formula. The most common change requested was to have the funding formula give fair balance to felony population versus the general population (30 percent), followed by changing the formula so counties will receive more money (15 percent). Overall, although many of the counties want to change the funding formula, at this point, there is little agreement about how the adjustments should be made.

Returning to level of satisfaction with certain aspects of RECLAIM Ohio, about half of all the counties reported that they were moderately satisfied with the 75 percent per diem cost for a DYS institutional commitment. However, once again, a sizeable percentage also reported being very dissatisfied with this per diem cost. The level of dissatisfaction ranged from 37 percent in the medium and rural counties to 25 percent in the urban counties. When the counties were asked if they wanted to change the 75 percent per diem, the majority of the respondents indicated that they wanted to change the percentage cost. Of the personnel that requested a change, nearly all indicated they wanted a decrease in the per diem cost. Even though 34 percent from rural counties would prefer no charge for a commitment, the most common request was to decrease the per diem to 50 percent.¹⁰ It must be noted, however, that the elimination of the 75

¹⁰ When these data were examined by pilot/nonpilot, the results were the same--sixty-three percent said they would like to see a change.

percent per diem would be contrary to the foundation of what RECLAIM Ohio was established. In fact, RECLAIM Ohio would cease to exist if counties were not charged a portion of the per diem for commitments.

Between 42 and 58 percent of the respondents indicated that they were moderately satisfied with the 50 percent per diem charge for a commitment to a community corrections facility. However, once again, a sizeable percentage reported being very dissatisfied with the per diem cost. The level of dissatisfaction ranged from 23 percent in the medium counties to 35 percent in the rural counties. Respondents from the medium and small counties were least likely to want to change the 50 percent per diem cost. However, nearly half of the urban and rural counties indicated that they wanted to change the per diem cost. Nearly all the personnel that requested a change would like to decrease the per diem cost of this type of commitment. The most common request by the urban, medium, and small counties was to decrease the per diem to 25 percent. Respondents from the rural counties most often requested no charge for a commitment to a community corrections facility.¹¹

Support for the Goals of RECLAIM

Personnel from the courts were asked if they believed the goals of RECLAIM were achievable and how much they supported the goals. Overall, nearly three-fourths of all counties reported that they believed the goal, to reduce commitments to DYS, is achievable. The urban county respondents were most likely to believe the goal is achievable (84 percent). Ninety percent of the pilot counties and 66 percent of the nonpilots believe the goal is achievable.

¹¹ When these data were analyzed by pilot/nonpilot, the nonpilot counties (42 percent) were almost twice as likely to want to change the per diem cost when compared to the pilot counties (24 percent).

A greater percentage of respondents indicated that the second goal of RECLAIM, to increase community-based alternatives, is achievable. Ninety percent of the urban, medium, and rural county respondents, and 79 percent from the small counties believe this goal is achievable. Nearly all the pilot counties and 76 percent of the nonpilot counties believe RECLAIM Ohio can increased community-based alternatives.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their level of support for these two goals. As shown in Table 9.7, 72 percent of the urban respondents and around two-thirds of the medium, small, and rural respondents fully support the goal of RECLAIM--to reduce commitments to DYS. Less than eleven percent in all counties were not supportive of this goal. When these data were examined by pilot and nonpilot, 90 percent of the pilot counties fully support the goal to reduce commitments, while only 66 percent of the nonpilots report this level of support. Twenty-four percent of the nonpilot counties indicated a moderate level of support for this goal.

Overall, respondents were more supportive of the goal to increase community-based alternatives for youths. Table 9.7 shows that over eighty percent of the respondents from urban, medium, and rural counties and 73 percent from small counties fully support this goal. Ninety-three percent of the pilot counties and 80 percent of the nonpilot counties also support the goal of increasing community-based options for youths.

Court personnel were also asked to indicate how much they believed other groups supported the goals of RECLAIM Ohio and how important these groups are to the success of RECLAIM. The level of support for the goals will be discussed first. The responses from the four different size counties were quite similar. With regards to the levels of support for the goals of RECLAIM by county size, the urban and medium county respondents indicated that the groups that are most likely to fully support the goals of RECLAIM

are: defense attorneys, youth-serving organizations, judges, aftercare personnel, and DYS institutional staff.

Over half of the prosecutors, school officials, and

Table 9.7 Amount of Support for the Goals of RECLAIM Ohio.

Type	Fully Supportive % (n)	Moderately Supportive % (n)	Not Supportive % (n)
Reduce commitments			
Urban	72.3 (99)	17.5 (24)	10.2 (14)
Medium	67.1 (106)	22.8 (36)	10.1 (16)
Small	65.7 (46)	25.7 (18)	8.6 (6)
Rural	68.8 (55)	23.8 (19)	7.5 (6)
Pilot	89.8 (53)	6.8 (4)	3.4 (2)
Nonpilot	65.5 (253)	24.1 (93)	10.4 (40)
Child Services	73.1 (125)	22.8 (39)	4.1 (7)
Increase Community- Based Alternatives			
Urban	83.2 (114)	13.9 (19)	2.9 (4)
Medium	81.8 (130)	16.4 (26)	1.9 (3)
Small	73.2 (52)	26.8 (19)	0.0 (0)
Rural	84.6 (66)	12.8 (10)	2.6 (2)
Pilot	93.3 (56)	6.7 (4)	0.0 (0)
Nonpilot	79.5 (306)	18.2 (70)	2.3 (9)
Child Services	91.8 (157)	7.0 (12)	1.2 (2)

the media are perceived by the urban and medium size counties to be moderately supportive of the goals of RECLAIM. In the urban counties, the public was also viewed as being moderately supportive. Police and victims are believed to be among those least likely to support the goals of RECLAIM. For the medium

counties, victims are perceived as least likely to support the goals, while the public and police are considered to be somewhere in between moderately supportive and not at all supportive.

The respondents from the small counties indicated that the following groups are most likely to be fully supportive of the goals of RECLAIM Ohio: defense attorneys, judges, institutional personnel, aftercare personnel, and probation officers. Prosecutors, school officials, and the media are believed to moderately support these goals. Victims are perceived as being least supportive of the goals of RECLAIM Ohio.

In the rural counties, judges, institutional personnel, probation officers, aftercare personnel, and youth-serving organizations are believed to be fully supportive of the goals of RECLAIM. Prosecutors are believed to be in between fully and moderately supportive. The public and police also vacillate between moderately supportive and not supportive at all. Like the other counties, victims are perceived as being least supportive of the goals.

County personnel were also asked how important certain groups are to the success of RECLAIM Ohio. Once again the responses among the different size counties were very similar. The counties reported that judges, probation officers, youth-serving organizations, and aftercare personnel are among the most important groups to the success of the RECLAIM program.¹² Although the counties indicated that other groups were important, the groups named were believed to be the most important.

In summary:

- For all size counties, the most important criteria when deciding whether to place a youth in a community program were: the amount of harm/injury to victim, whether a weapon was

¹² The rural county respondents also indicated that prosecutors were very important to the success of RECLAIM.

involved, the type of felony offense, a prior commitment to DYS, and whether there was a program available to meet youths needs.

- Less than half of the county respondents reported using risk and/or needs instruments in their court. The urban counties were most likely and the small counties were least likely to report using these instruments.
- The most common types of assessment instruments used were: risk, a combination of risk and needs assessments, and pre-screening and sentencing.
- Over three-fourths of all size counties' respondents were either moderately or very satisfied with RECLAIM Ohio. Between 16 and 24 percent were very dissatisfied. Seventy five percent of the pilots were very satisfied with RECLAIM. Only 27 percent of the nonpilots were very satisfied, while 50 percent were moderately satisfied.
- The four most favorable aspects about RECLAIM Ohio were: having more options available in the court, the flexibility to tailor programs to the youth in their community, having more money available, and that RECLAIM Ohio is community-based.
- Two less favorable aspects of RECLAIM Ohio were the funding formula and the workload. The least favorable aspect of RECLAIM Ohio was funding uncertainty.
- Juvenile court personnel would most like to change the following about RECLAIM Ohio: the funding formula, increase the overall funding, reduce the paperwork and have better assessment and evaluation of programs.

- While the majority--between 40 and 61 percent--of respondents suggested that they received the same amount of money from RECLAIM Ohio, a sizable minority--between 32 and 46 percent--indicated that they received less than what they expected.
- The majority of the counties reported that they were able to expand their community services somewhat given the money they had received. However, between 25 and 41 percent reported not being able to expand their services.
- The majority of counties reported a moderate to great interference in knowing how much money they would receive from RECLAIM Ohio. The greatest interference was indicated by the rural counties.
- The majority of respondents were moderately to very satisfied with their county's allocation. However, 29 to 38 percent were very dissatisfied.
- The majority of respondents reported being moderately to very dissatisfied with the funding formula and would like to change it. Although no clear pattern emerged when the counties were asked how they would change the funding formula, the most common response was: to give fair balance to the felony population versus general population.
- Nearly three-fourths of all counties reported that they believed the RECLAIM goal, to reduce commitments to DYS, is actually achievable. Nearly all the pilot counties and 66 percent of the nonpilot counties believe this goal is achievable.
- A greater percentage of court personnel indicated that the second RECLAIM goal, to increase community-based alternatives, is achievable. The responses ranged from 90

percent in the urban, medium and rural counties to 79 percent in the small counties. Nearly all the pilots and 76 percent of the nonpilots believe this goal is achievable.

- The majority of respondents were fully supportive of the goal of RECLAIM-- to reduce commitments to DYS (between 66 and 73 percent). An even greater percent is fully supportive of the goal to increase community-based alternatives (73-85 percent). Once again, the pilots are more likely to report being fully supportive of both goals than the nonpilots.

Research Question #10:**What is the impact of the RECLAIM Ohio debiting process on other court decisions?**

Using two sources of data, we attempt to determine the effects of RECLAIM Ohio on other court decisions. We first compare commitments for different felony levels, for public safety offenses, and for revocations of community supervision before and after RECLAIM was implemented. We then present the qualitative data obtained in the interviews and surveys regarding the juvenile court decision making.

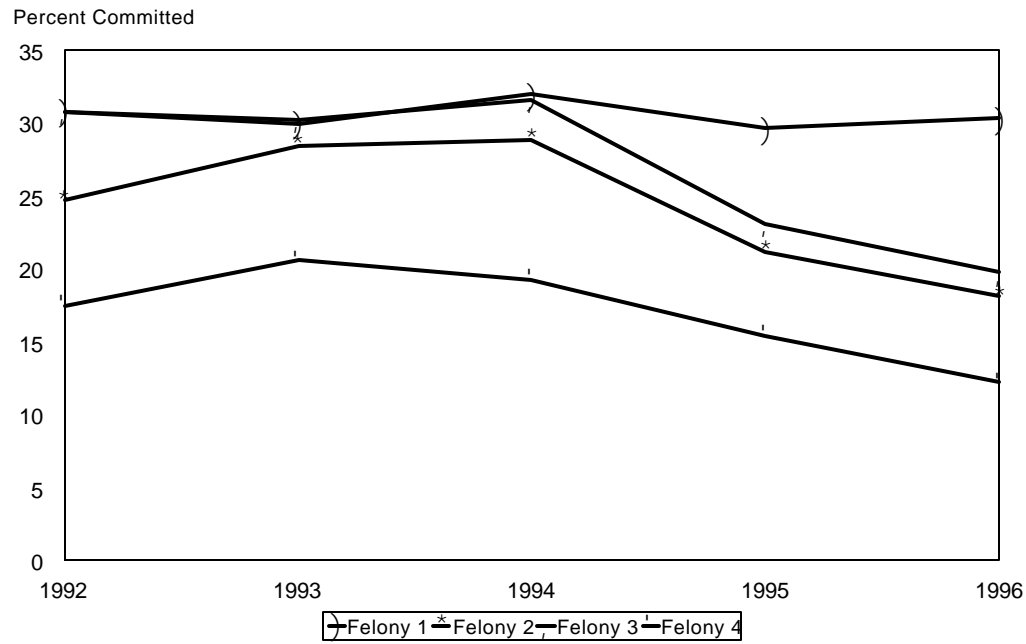
Quantitative Shifts

Our examination of the quantitative data begins with Figure 10.1, which shows the rates of commitments to DYS institutions for first, second, third, and fourth degree felonies among the non-pilot counties.¹³ These rates reflect the percentage of youths adjudicated for each felony level who were committed to an institution. Notably, the commitment rates for second, third, and fourth degree felons all declined substantially in 1995 and 1996 compared to their pre-RECLAIM levels. Most striking is the drop in third degree felony commitments. In 1994, more than 31 percent of the youths who were adjudicated for a third degree felony were committed to a state institution. By 1996, however, this rate was less than 20 percent. In contrast to this substantial reduction, commitments for first degree felonies appear to have been largely unaffected by RECLAIM Ohio. This result is not surprising given that first degree felons ostensibly would pose greater risks to public safety if served in the community.

The commitments by felony level for the pilot counties, whose additional year of experience with RECLAIM Ohio may provide added insights, are displayed in Figure 10.2. In the pilot year,

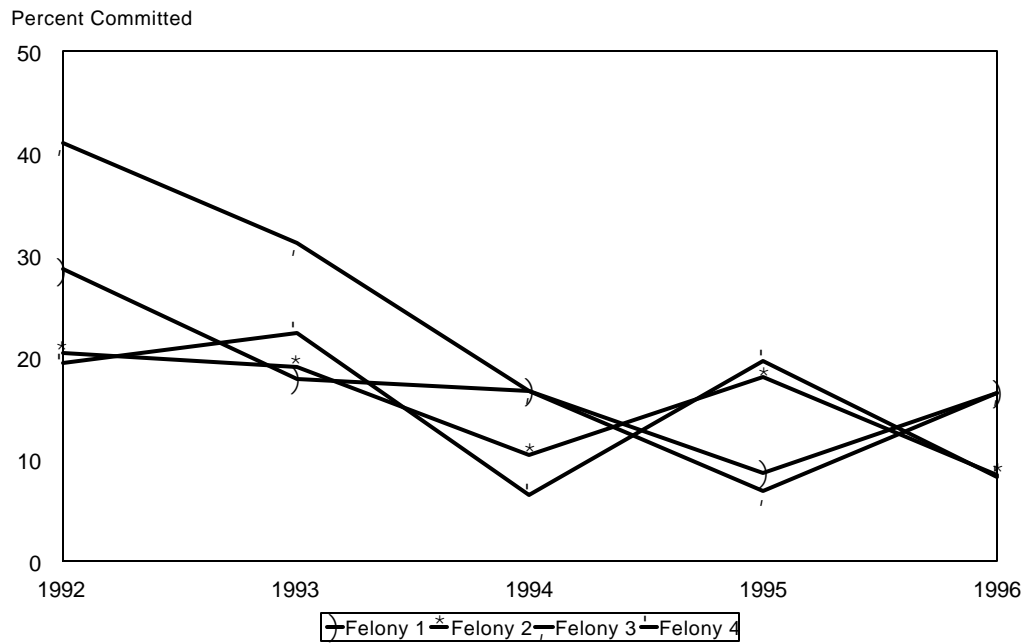
¹³ No fifth degree felons were committed to DYS facilities during the study period.

Figure 10.1 Annual Commitment Rates by Felony Level: Non-Pilot Counties



Note: These rates were computed by dividing the number of youths committed to a DYS institution by the number adjudicated for each felony level.

Figure 10.2 Annual Commitment Rates by Felony Level: Pilot Counties



Note: These rates were computed by dividing the number of youths committed to a DYS institution by the number adjudicated for each felony level.

these counties also were able to reduce commitment rates noticeably for all types of felonies except first degree felonies. In the following year, the commitment rates for first and third degree felonies declined while the rates for second and fourth degree felonies increased. As shown in the figure, these felony levels again crossed paths in 1996, with felony 1 and 3 commitment rates on the rise and felony 2 and 4 rates declining. Perhaps the most notable feature of Figure 10.2 is that despite these fluctuations, the commitment rates for all types of felonies have remained below 20 percent since the implementation of RECLAIM Ohio. It appears that regardless of the level of felony committed, RECLAIM Ohio is helping to hold commitment rates down among the pilot counties.

Under RECLAIM Ohio, a certain set of offenses are defined as “public safety offenses.” That is, it is presumed that a youth who commits one of these offenses poses an unusually severe threat to community safety. Between January 1, 1994, when RECLAIM Ohio was implemented as a pilot program, and December 31, 1995, three offenses were designated “public safety” offenses: aggravated murder, murder, and rape. Beginning on January 1, 1996, the list of offenses was expanded to also include attempted aggravated murder, attempted murder, kidnaping, voluntary manslaughter, involuntary manslaughter (if it is a first degree felony), felonious sexual penetration, and aggravated arson. Aggravated robbery is also included but only if the court commits the youth on a three year gun specification.

Unlike other offenses, commitments for public safety offenses do not result in a deduction from a county’s RECLAIM allocation. Because of the special status that these offenses have under the RECLAIM Ohio debiting arrangement, it is possible that RECLAIM may influence commitments for these offenses in unique ways.

In an attempt to explore this possibility, we examined the number of youths committed for public safety offenses before and after RECLAIM was implemented.¹⁴ Figures 10.3 and 10.4 display the number of youths committed for public safety offenses among the non-pilot and pilot counties, respectively. The data suggest that RECLAIM Ohio has not influenced commitments for public safety offenses among either the pilot counties or among the non-pilot counties. Both figures show some variation in the number of public safety commitments between 1992 and 1996. For both the pilot and non-pilot counties, the largest shift occurs between the second half of 1995 and the first half of 1996, when there are clear increases in public safety commitments. These increases coincide with the expansion of offenses included as “public safety offenses.” Figures 10.3 and 10.4 also show the number of youths who were committed under the original definition. Although commitments increased even under this more limited definition, the change is consistent with the normal fluctuations occurring before RECLAIM was implemented. Thus, factors that are apparently unrelated to RECLAIM Ohio have generated these shifts in the number of youths sent to state institutions for public safety offenses. The final quantitative analysis of the effects of RECLAIM Ohio on court decision making concerns the practice of returning to DYS institutions youths who previously had been released and subsequently misbehaved in the community. Because counties are charged for use of DYS bed space regardless of the reason for the commitment,¹⁵ one possible

¹⁴ It would be preferable to examine the rate of commitment for public safety offenses (number of youths adjudicated for a public safety offense divided by the number of youths committed for a public safety offense) because this would allow us to determine whether a larger percentage of the youths who committed public safety offenses were committed to a state institution following implementation of RECLAIM Ohio. Unfortunately, offense information was missing for more than 20 percent of those adjudicated. Since we cannot be certain how many youths were adjudicated for public safety offenses, commitment rates would likely be misleading.

¹⁵ As noted above, public safety offenses are an exception.

Figure 10.3 Semi-Annual Commitments for Public Safety Offenses: Non-Pilot Counties

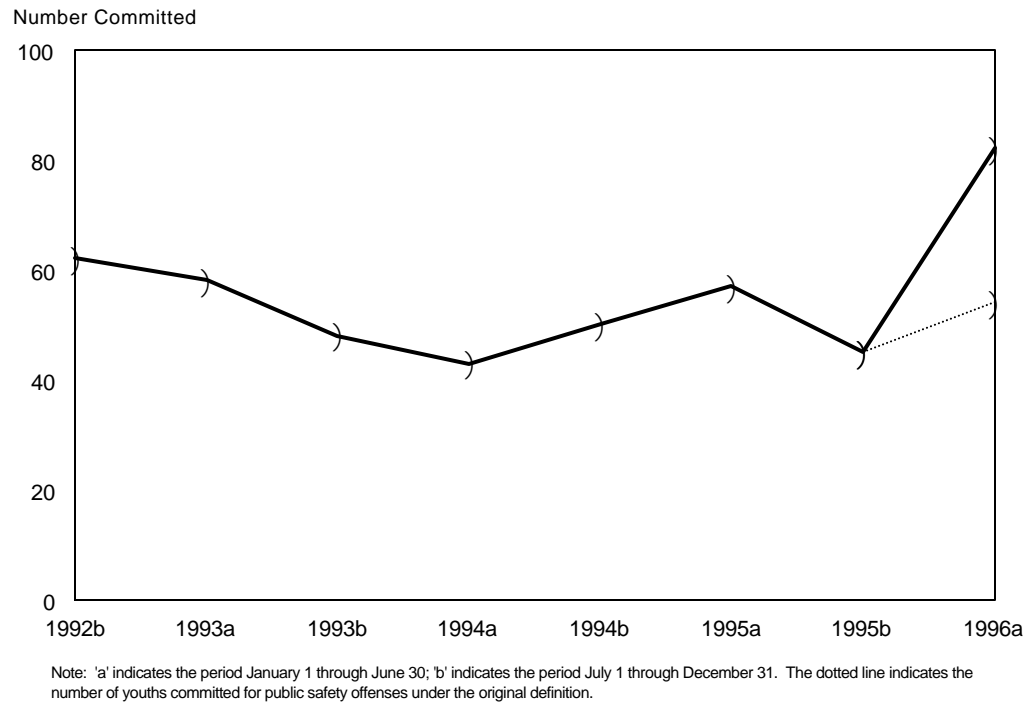
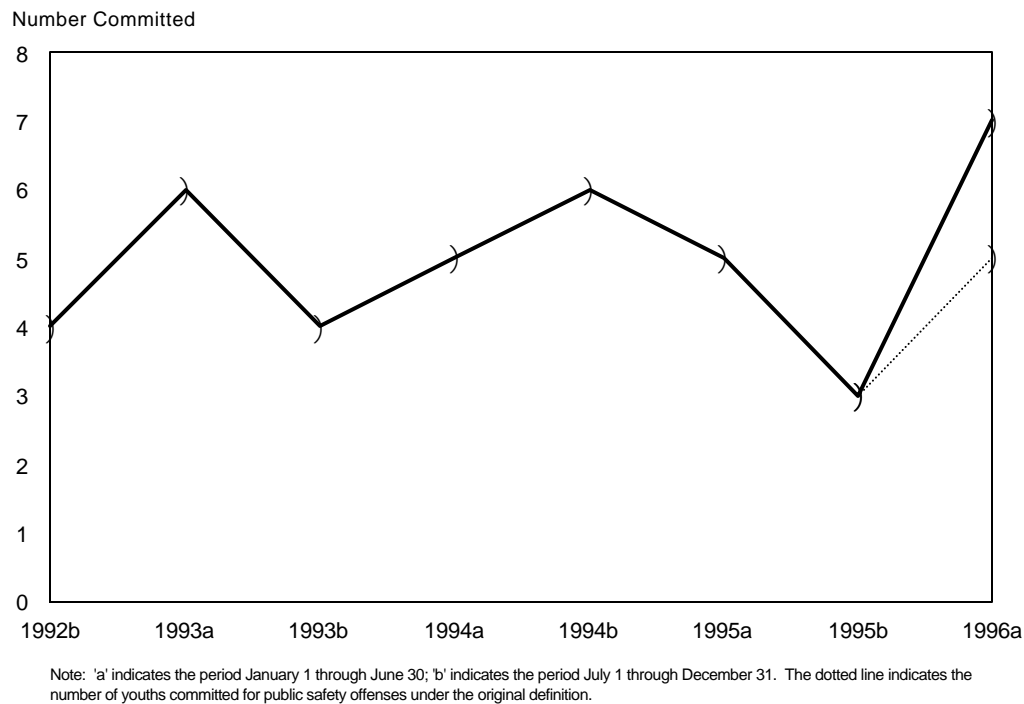


Figure 10.4 Semi-Annual Commitments for Public Safety Offenses: Pilot Counties



consequence of RECLAIM Ohio is that the local courts may become hesitant to revoke the community release status of its youths.

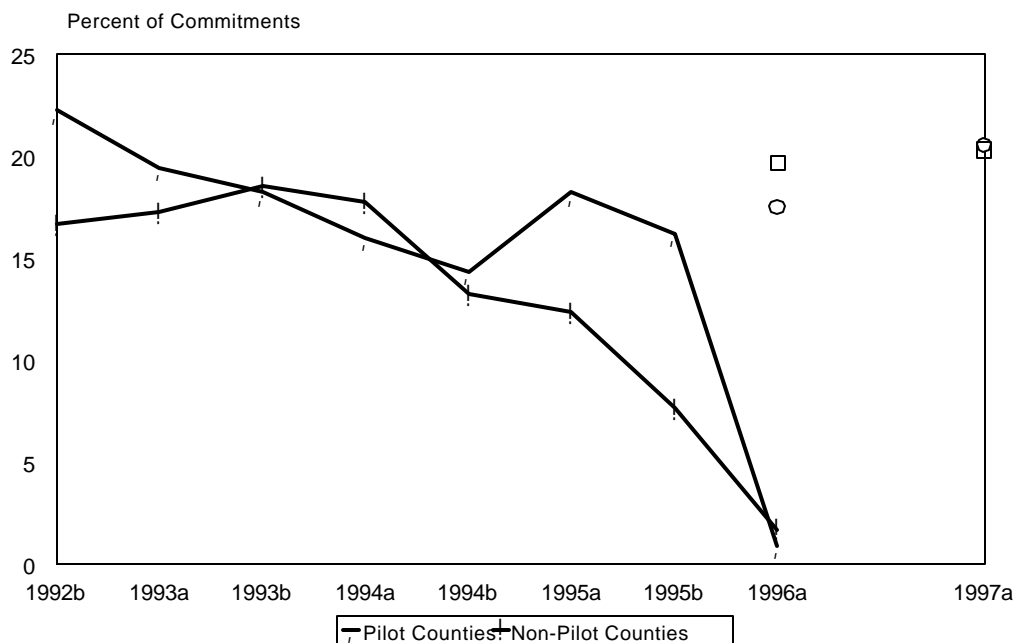
Unfortunately, the data that were available on this issue cannot be relied upon to provide an accurate indication of court practices. Initially, we examined commitments from July 1992 through June 1996 for each county using a computerized database, provided by DYS. These data are displayed in Figure 10.5 by the solid black lines. These data suggest that the rate at which youths released from DYS institutions are revoked declined somewhat between 1992 and the end of 1994 and dropped dramatically during 1995 and 1996. In an effort to extend these results, we subsequently obtained a printed report of commitments from DYS covering the six-month periods January to June 1996 and January to June 1997. The percentages of these commitments that were revocations also are shown in the figure. The values revealed by this report are shown as empty squares and circles and suggest that the original figures for the first half of 1996 may be in error. Reportedly, the disparity is due to a constant updating of the status of youths who are in or awaiting custody. Although it would be tempting to conclude that revocations have remained stable, or increased slightly, since RECLAIM's inception, such a conclusion is suspect without independent verification of the reasons youths were committed prior to 1996. It may be that the percent of commitments involving revocation were actually higher between 1992 and 1995 than what is displayed in Figure 10.5. Unfortunately, the available data cannot provide a clear answer regarding whether revocations have declined since RECLAIM Ohio was implemented.

Qualitative Decision Making

Early Release

The respondents were asked in the questionnaire whether their court grants early release before a juvenile has served his or her minimum sentence. A large percentage of the urban (95 percent) small (90 percent) and medium (88 percent) counties indicated that their courts do engage in this type of early release practice. The rural counties, when compared to other sized counties, were least likely to indicate that their court releases a juvenile before his or her minimum sentence

Figure 10.5 Semi-Annual Revocations as a Percent of Total Commitments



Notes: 'a' indicates the period January 1 through June 30; 'b' indicates the period July 1 through December 31. Solid black lines reflect figures calculated from a DYS computerized database. Empty squares and circles reflect figures for the same time periods provided in a written DYS report.

has expired. However, 72 percent of these respondents reported that their court engages in this type of release. Figure 10.6 presents the types of early release that are granted by the counties. The most common type of early release is court initiated (45 percent), followed by a combination of both court and DYS initiated (29 percent) and DYS initiated (25 percent).

The respondents were also asked what the most and least important factors were that influenced their decision to release a youth early from an institution. Their responses are listed in Table 10.1. The three most important factors that emerged (although in differing order for each size) for all counties were: type of offense committed, treatment progress, and behavior while institutionalized.

Since RECLAIM Ohio is a fiscally based program, there is a possibility that counties could now be inclined to start to release youths early from institutions in order to save money. Therefore, the respondents were asked if they had witnessed any changes in early release practices since RECLAIM was implemented and if so, what changes have occurred and to what the changes can be attributed. Overall, only 30 percent of the respondents indicated a change in the number of youths released early from institutions since RECLAIM Ohio began. These percentages ranged from a low of 18 percent in the rural to 37 percent in the urban counties. According to Table 10.2, 71 percent of those respondents that indicated a change in early releases said their courts are now more likely to early release. Only 15 percent of the respondents reported that their counties are now less likely to early release. When asked to what these changes can be attributed, 54 percent conveyed financial reasons and 27 percent reported the changes were due to RECLAIM (i.e., more funds and programs are available in the community) (see Table 10.3).

Public Safety Beds

Respondents were asked if the changes in the definition in public safety beds has affected their counties. Urban county respondents were most likely to report that the changes have affected their counties (50 percent) followed by the rural counties (34 percent). These changes were least likely to affect the medium (24 percent) and small counties (23 percent). Those who reported a change were then asked specifically how these changes in the definition of public safety beds have affected their county. Twenty-eight percent reported that more youths are eligible for DYS and 22 percent indicated that this change has saved the county money. The remaining responses for how changes in the definition of public safety beds has affected the counties are listed in Table 10.4.

Table 10.1 Level of Importance of Criteria Used to Release a Youth Early from a DYS Institution

Criteria	Most Important % (n)	Moderately Important % (n)	Least Important % (n)
Treatment progress	76.8 (298)	20.4 (79)	2.8 (11)
Type of offense committed	77.8 (302)	19.6 (76)	2.6 (10)
Behavior while institutionalized	74.7 (290)	21.9 (85)	3.4 (13)
Availability of comm. alternatives	58.4 (226)	35.9 (139)	5.7 (22)
Recommendation of DYS institution	55.3 (214)	34.6 (134)	10.1 (39)
Level of remorse	56.5 (217)	36.7 (141)	6.8 (26)
Amount of time served	44.5 (173)	46.3 (180)	9.3 (36)
Family cooperation/support	47.9 (186)	45.9 (178)	6.2 (24)
Availability of a CCF	27.7 (99)	42.9 (153)	29.4 (105)

Table 10.2 Changes that have Occurred in Early Releases Since RECLAIM Began in 1995.

Response	(N)	Percent
More likely to early release/ER's increased	77	71.3
Less likely to early release	16	14.8
Using local programs for early release	6	5.6
Financial factor on decisions	4	3.7
More tracking of youth in the system	3	2.8
Detention center more crowded	1	.9
More revocations of early release	1	.9

Table 10.3 To What Can the Changes in Early Releases be Attributed.

Response	(N)	Percent
Financial	57	54.3
RECLAIM (more funds/programs available)	28	26.7
Judicial decision	7	6.7
Needs of the youth	4	3.8
Risk factor to community	3	2.9
Access to community correction facility	2	2.9
Because have fewer commitments	1	1.0
Poor legislation decisions	1	1.0
Substitute House Bill 1	1	1.0
Increased caseload	1	1.0

*percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding

Table 10.4 How Have the Changes in the Definition of Public Safety Beds Affected Your County?

Responses	(N)	Percent
More kids now eligible for DYS/available beds	32	28.1
Saves the county money	25	21.9
More commitments to DYS	11	9.6
Fewer kids eligible for DYS	8	7.0
Reduced alternatives/ability to institutionalize	8	7.0
Try to keep juveniles in community	7	6.1
Influenced on how to charge/plea	5	4.4
Resulted in an increase in bind overs	2	1.8
DYS per diem rate higher	2	1.8
Impair ability to accrue Reclaim money	2	1.8
Affected budget	2	1.8
More fair/reasonable for counties	2	1.8
Cut into Reclaim allocation	2	1.8
More plea bargaining	2	1.8
Increase in arrests	1	.9
Politics affected	1	.9
Decreased	1	.9
Youth more aware of seriousness	1	.9

*percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding

Technical Violations

Respondents were asked if they had seen any changes in the number of technical violations being filed in their court since RECLAIM Ohio began. Overall, only 18 percent reported a change. This ranged from a high of 27 percent in the rural counties to a low of 15 percent in the medium counties. Those that indicated a change were then asked what specific changes have occurred. Fifty-nine percent of these respondents reported an increase in the number of technical violations filed, while only 19 percent had witnessed a reduction. The remaining responses are listed in Table 10.5.

Bindovers

Respondents were asked to what the changes in the number of bind overs to adult courts can be attributed. According to Table 10.6, 30 percent reported that the seriousness of the crime (i.e., more violent, weapons used) was the primary reason for the change in the number of bind overs. An additional 16 percent said the change was due to chance, 13 percent noted changes in the law (e.g., mandatory bind overs) and 11 percent reported the change was due to the background of the individual offender (e.g., violent).

Effects of Substitute House Bill 1

Respondents were asked to indicate a variety of ways in which Substitute House Bill 1 (SHB1) will impact their courts and the RECLAIM program. Briefly, SHB1 permits that certain offenses be bound over into the adult system. They were first asked what effect the SHB1 had on transfers to adult court in their county. Seventy percent of the respondents from the small and rural counties indicated that SHB1 had no effect since they were already binding over these types of youths. Fifty seven percent of the medium and 44 percent of the urban county respondents reported that SHB1 has not influenced transfers to adult court. Only about 25 percent of the small and rural counties indicated that transfers to adult court increased due to SHB1, whereas a greater percentage of the urban (55 percent) and medium (43 percent) size counties reported an increase.

Table 10.5 Changes in the Number of Technical Violations Being Filed.

Responses	(N)	Percent
Increase in technical violations filed	40	58.8
Reduction in technical violations filed	13	19.1
More probation violators	8	11.8
Increased due to intensive supervision/staff support	5	7.4
More filings because of lack of programs	1	1.5
Fluctuate (up/down)/then balance out	1	1.5

*percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding

Table 10.6 To What Can the Changes in Bindovers Be Attributed.

Responses	(N)	Percent
Seriousness of crime (violent, weapons)	56	29.8
Chance	31	16.5
Changes in the law (mandatory bind overs)	24	12.8
Background of individual offender (e.g., violent)	20	10.6
Philosophy of the court (e.g., get tough mentality)	15	8.0
Changes in administration/election	10	5.3
Repeat offenders already been in DYS	7	3.7
Increase in local crime rate	6	3.2
Publicity surrounding the case	5	2.7
Financial	4	2.1
Nothing	2	1.1
No requests from prosecution	2	1.1
Low crime rate of repeat juvenile offenders	2	1.1
Kids bound over from other counties	2	1.1
Decrease, emphasis on treatment	1	.5
Drug offender/offenses	1	.5

*percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding

Respondents were then asked if SHB1 had impacted how prosecutors charge youths in the their county. Only about 21 percent of the medium, small, and rural counties claimed that RECLAIM had influenced how prosecutors charge youths. However, about 42 percent of the urban counties believe that prosecutors have been influenced by RECLAIM Ohio when charging youths. Thirty-four percent of the respondents reported that prosecutors are now more closely examining youths and offenses, 20 percent said bind over requests by prosecutors have increased, and 16 percent report that prosecutors now overcharge or add additional charges. The remaining responses are listed in Table 10.7.

Respondents were then asked what impact this bill will have on the future of RECLAIM Ohio. Twenty-nine percent of all respondents believe SHB1 will not have an impact (or a minimal impact) on the future of RECLAIM. The remaining respondents believe this new law will somehow affect the future of RECLAIM. Sixteen percent believe more juveniles will be moved to adult court and 9 percent believe more youths will be locked up.

Detention as Disposition

The small (89 percent) and rural (82 percent) county respondents were more likely to indicate that their court uses detention as a disposition than either the medium (66 percent) or urban (44 percent) counties. For those respondents that reported using this as a correctional option they were then asked if they had witnessed a change in either the number or types of youths receiving detention as a disposition. Overall, 60 percent of all respondents reported a change in the number of youths

Table 10.7 How has Substitute House Bill 1 Influenced How Prosecutors Charge Youth in Your County?

Response	(N)	Percent
Examining youths and offenses more closely now	31	33.7
Bind over requests have increased	18	19.6
Prosecutors overcharge or add additional charges	15	16.3
Some bind overs are automatic	11	12.0
Less plea bargaining on felony cases	5	5.4
Prosecutors use bind over threats in plea bargaining	4	4.3
More inclined to dismiss cases, not go to trial	2	2.2
Prosecutors work intensely with judges	2	2.2
Focus on punishment over rehabilitation	2	2.2
Younger youth are being bound over	1	1.1
Fewer bind overs will be necessary	1	1.1

*percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding

receiving this type of disposition. These percentages ranged from 70 percent in the rural counties to 48 percent in the urban counties. When asked about the specific changes that have occurred, 67 percent of the respondents reported an increase in the number of youths receiving detention as a disposition. Overall, an average of 42 percent of the respondents reported a change in the types of youths receiving detention as a disposition. These percentages ranged from 34 percent in the small counties to 42 percent in the urban counties. With regards to changes in the types of youths receiving detention as a disposition, 50 percent of the respondents reported that more serious offenders are now receiving detention as a disposition, 15 percent are repeat offenders, and 12 percent are younger.

Unintended Consequences

County personnel were asked to report if any unintended consequences had occurred in their court since RECLAIM Ohio. A variety of responses were given, however the two most common were: commitment decisions are impacted by finances (18 percent) and overcrowding/ decreased resources (12 percent).

In summary:

- The non-pilot counties were able to reduce commitment rates for less-serious offenses (second, third, and fourth degree felonies). Commitment rates for first degree felonies, however, remained largely unchanged.
- The pilot counties have held the rates of DYS commitments for all felony levels below 20 percent.
- The RECLAIM Ohio debiting process does not seem to have affected the number of youths committed for public safety offenses.
- Nearly three-fourths of respondents indicated that their counties will release a juvenile before their minimum sentenced has expired. The most common type of early release given is initiated by the court.
- The most important factors when deciding to release a youth early were: type of offense committed, treatment progress, and behavior while institutionalized.
- Only about one-third of the respondents have seen a change in the number of youths being released early from institutions. For those that had seen a change, the majority indicated

they are now more likely to early release. Over half of these respondents attribute these changes to financial reasons.

- Respondents from the urban counties were most likely (50 percent) and small county respondents (23 percent) were least likely to report that changes in the definition of public safety beds had affected their county. When asked how the changes have affected the county, about one-third said that more youths are now eligible for DYS and one-fourth said the change has saved the county money.
- Only a small percentage (18 percent) of respondents reported that the number of technical violations had changed since RECLAIM began. For those that have seen a change, the majority have seen an increase in the number of technical violations filed.
- Respondents indicated that the change in the number of bind overs can be attributed to the following: the seriousness of the crimes being committed, chance alone, changes in the law, and the background of the offender.
- Only about 25 percent of the small and rural counties indicated that transfers to adult court have increased due to Substitute House Bill 1, whereas a greater percentage of the urban (55 percent) and medium (43 percent) size counties reported an increase.
- A greater percentage of respondents from the urban counties (42 percent) claim that SHB1 has changed how prosecutors charge youths when compared to all other size counties (21 percent). Respondents reported that the most common changes seen were: that prosecutors more closely examining youths and offenses, bind over requests by

prosecutors have increased, and that prosecutors now overcharge or add additional charges

- When asked how SHB1 will affect the future of RECLAIM, about one-third believe it will have minimal or no impact. Other respondents claim that more juveniles will be moved to adult court and more youths will be locked up.
- The small and rural respondents were more likely than the medium and urban respondents to indicate that their court uses detention as a disposition.
- Sixty percent of all respondents have seen a change in the number of youths receiving this disposition. Specifically, two-thirds have seen an increase in the number of youths receiving detention as a disposition.
- Overall, an average of 42 percent of the respondents reported a change in the types of youths receiving detention as a disposition. Specifically, 50 percent of the respondents reported that more serious offenders are now receiving detention as a disposition, 15 percent are repeat offenders, and 12 percent are younger.
- The two most common unintended consequences reported by the counties were that commitment decisions are now impacted by finances and overcrowding/ decreased resources.

Research Question #11: How does the RECLAIM Ohio process affect local resources, financially, and in terms of local agencies and services?

A variety of juvenile service providers were surveyed about their attitudes toward RECLAIM Ohio, the relationship between their agency and the juvenile court, and if they have seen any changes since RECLAIM Ohio began. Among those surveyed were: child care providers, mental health agencies, and alcohol and drug service providers. The counties were also surveyed on their level of involvement with the child-serving agencies.

Awareness of RECLAIM

Ninety-four percent of all child services providers were aware of the RECLAIM Ohio initiative. However, only 22 percent of these agencies reported that they receive RECLAIM Ohio funds. Table 11.1 lists the respondents' reasons why their agencies do not receive RECLAIM funds. Forty-three percent of child-serving personnel said that the courts either divert funds elsewhere or the funds are pooled through the courts. Another 23 percent reported that their agency functions as a board, not a service provider, while 15 percent said the funds are not available. Even though a small percentage of these agencies actually receive RECLAIM funds, 51 percent of these child-serving personnel have noticed an increase in the amount of funds being made available for multi-need youth in their communities. Forty-six percent of the child care respondents reported that none of the budget for family and children first councils is provided by the juvenile courts. The remaining 54 percent reported that between 1 and 30 percent of this budget is provided by their juvenile courts.

Sixty-nine percent reported that their agency's relationship with the juvenile court has not changed since RECLAIM Ohio. Of the remaining 31 percent (N=45) that have seen a change in the relationship, the most common change reported was that the agency has become more collaborative with the juvenile court (49 percent). Another 13 percent indicated that the relationship has become worse.

Table 11.1 Why the Agency Does Not Receive RECLAIM Funds.

Response	(N)	Percent
Court diverts funds elsewhere/funds pooled through the court	37	42.5
Agency functions as a board not service provider	20	23.0
Funds not available/do not receive money	13	14.9
Work with juvenile court and operate program	8	9.2
No contact with juvenile court	3	3.4
Funding agency	2	2.3
Minimal contact with RECLAIM	2	2.3
No program	1	1.1
Not needed	1	1.1

Level of Support for RECLAIM

Eighty-six percent of the child care providers believe the RECLAIM goal, to reduce commitments to DYS, is achievable. Nearly all (92 percent) believe the RECLAIM goal, to increase community-based services for youths, is actually achievable. The respondents were also asked how supportive they are of these two goals of RECLAIM Ohio. Seventy-three percent are fully supportive of the goal to reduce commitments, while 23 percent are moderately supportive and only 4 percent are not supportive. Ninety-

two percent of the child services personnel are fully supportive of the goal to increase community-based alternatives. Seven percent are moderately supportive, while only 1 percent is not supportive of this goal.

Involvement with the Juvenile Court

Court personnel were first asked if their courts receive services from certain child care providers. Nearly all the respondents reported receiving services from public children's services agencies (95 percent), local mental health agencies (96 percent), local substance abuse agencies (97 percent), and schools (90 percent). The agency that court respondents were least likely to be involved with were the mental retardation and developmentally disabled service boards in their county (75 percent).

The counties were also asked to indicate their level of involvement of these agencies with their court. Their responses reflect the above percentages. Overall, the respondents reported the least amount of involvement with the mental retardation and developmentally disabled services providers and a moderate to great amount of involvement with public child services agencies, mental health, substance abuse and educational service providers.

When the child care service providers were asked this same question regarding level of involvement, their responses were similar. The majority of the child care service providers (52 percent) said they are very involved with the juvenile courts since RECLAIM Ohio. Thirty-three percent said they are moderately involved, while 15 percent reported not being involved with the juvenile courts.

The child care providers were also asked how involved their agencies were in planning programs with the juvenile courts. Fifty percent indicated they are involved while 50 percent are not involved. For the respondents that did indicate involvement, twenty-eight percent of the child-serving personnel reported

that they coordinate services and provide needs assessments. Fourteen percent indicate they are involved in both providing home-based care, serving in an advocacy role, or as an advisory board.

These providers were also asked to indicate the current level of communication between their agencies and the juvenile courts. Fifty-two percent reported that they had excellent communication with courts, while 36 percent reported a moderate level of communication. Only 13 percent indicated that they had a poor level of communication with the juvenile courts.

Changes in the Number and Types of Referrals

The child care personnel were asked if they had seen any changes in the number and types of youth being referred to their agencies. The results for both areas were about evenly divided. Fifty-three percent of the respondents reported having seen a change in the number of referrals from the juvenile courts since RECLAIM Ohio began in 1995. Table 11.2 presents the changes the respondents have noticed in the number of youth referred to their agencies. A sizeable majority, (68 percent) said the number of youth being referred had increased since RECLAIM began.

Fifty-one percent of the respondents have seen a change in the types of youth being referred by the juvenile courts since RECLAIM began. According to Table 11.3, thirty-four percent of these personnel have seen more serious offenders and corresponding crimes being referred to the courts. An additional 20 percent have seen more delinquent and unruly youths being referred, while 14 percent have seen more youths referred for mental health problems and childhood trauma issues.

Involvement with Family and Children First Council

The child care and county personnel were asked a few questions about the level of involvement between the local family and children first council and the courts. Family and children first coordinators were

asked to report their level of involvement with the juvenile court. Sixty-one percent stated that they were very involved with the juvenile courts. Twenty-three percent indicated a moderate level of involvement and 16 percent reported their councils were not involved with the juvenile courts. When the counties were asked this same question, they provided similar responses. Sixty percent indicated they have much collaboration, 29 percent indicated moderate collaboration, and 11 percent reported little collaboration.

These reported levels of involvement are also reflected in the extent of the association between the family and children first councils and the juvenile courts with regards to programming. Fifty-six percent of the county respondents indicated that the family and children first council had very little input into the court's RECLAIM Ohio programming. Thirty-three percent indicated a moderate level of input and only 10 percent reported having a great amount of input into court programming.

Table 11.2 How the Relationship With the Juvenile Court has Changed Since RECLAIM Began.

Response	(N)	Percent
More collaborative	22	48.9
Gotten worse	6	13.3
More court involvement	4	8.9
No - always good relationship	3	6.7
Pressure to place unruly delinquents	3	6.7
Increase judicial discretion	2	4.4
More options to participate in out-of-placement programs	2	4.4
Because of new judge	2	4.4
Some services eliminated	1	2.2

Table 11.3 Level of Involvement the Court has with the Following Agencies: Urban.

Criteria	Very Involved	Moderately Involved	Not Involved
Childrens's services	50.8%	40.5%	8.7%
Local mental health agency	43.7	50.8	5.6
Local substance abuse agency	60.9	35.2	3.9
Mental retardation/Dev. Disabled	15.5	46.6	37.9
Education	44.4	38.1	17.5

In summary:

- The data reveal that over three-fourths of the child care personnel responding to the survey do not receive RECLAIM Ohio funds.
- Half of the these respondents have seen an increase in the amount of funding available for multi-need youths.
- Slightly over two-thirds of the agencies reported that their relationship have not changed with the juvenile courts. For those that did indicate a change, the majority said their agencies have become more collaborative with the juvenile court.
- A significant percentage believe the RECLAIM goals, to decrease commitments (86 percent) and increase alternatives (92 percent), are achievable. Three-fourths reported they are very supportive of the goal to reduce commitments and 92 percent fully supported the goal to increase community-based programming.

- The courts personnel reported that they receive services from all child care agencies. These personnel reported being most involved with public children's services agencies, their local mental health and substance abuse agencies, and schools. They reported being least involved with local mental retardation and developmentally disabled agencies.
- Over half of the child care agencies reported they are to very involved and had excellent communication with the juvenile courts. However, only half reported being involved with programming efforts with the courts.
- Over half of the respondents reported that the number and types of youths now being sent to their agencies have changed. Sixty-eight percent noted an increase in referrals and 34 percent report they are seeing more serious crimes and youth offenders.
- Approximately two-thirds of the family and children first coordinators reported that they were very involved with the juvenile courts. When the court personnel were asked these questions, their responses were found to be similar.
- Over half of the family and children first coordinators reported that they have little input on courts programming efforts.

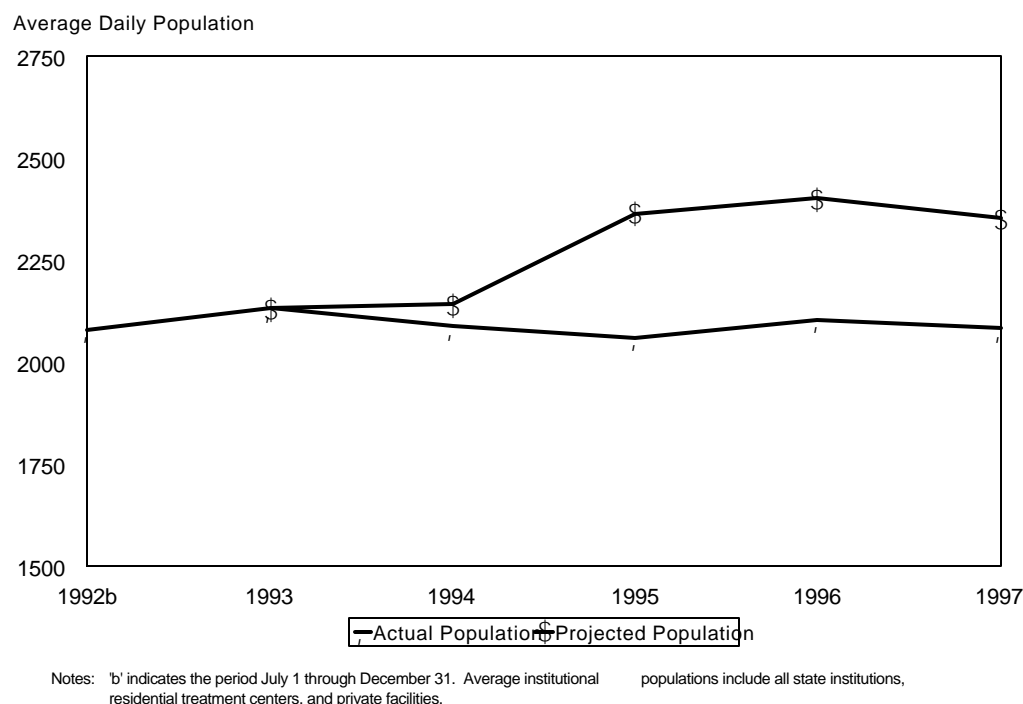
Research Question #12: What effect has the RECLAIM Ohio initiative had on institutional populations and the ability of DYS to treat the youths in its care?

This question clearly has two parts. To address the influence that RECLAIM Ohio has had on institutional populations, we will examine the actual and the expected average daily populations of DYS institutions over time. Although trends in the institutional population might suggest changes in the resources available for institutionalized youths, such an analysis falls short of detailing any influences of the RECLAIM initiative on the ability of DYS to treat the youths in its care.

One way to examine the effects of RECLAIM Ohio on the number of youths housed in state institutions is to present the average daily population over time. Figure 12.1 shows the average daily population (ADP) for all state institutions (including residential treatment centers and private facilities) from July 1992 through June 1997. The most striking aspect about these data is the relative stability of the ADP throughout this time period. Indeed, at its highest point (in 1992), the ADP reached 2,216 youths. By the end of the series, the ADP was 2,082 youths, a marginal decline of only 6 percent. Although this series of observations indicates a largely stable number of institutionalized youths both before and after RECLAIM Ohio was implemented, it fails to consider the available supply of youths who could have been committed.

Figure 12.1 also includes a “projected population.” These projections are based on the number of youths adjudicated for a felony each year. Thus, they account for the number of youths who could have been incarcerated each year following the implementation of RECLAIM Ohio. This analysis reveals that the stability observed in the number of youths incarcerated is misleading. Due to increases in the number

Figure 12.1 Influence of RECLAIM Ohio on Institutional Populations



of youths adjudicated, we would have anticipated a slight increase in the ADP in 1994, and substantial increases in 1995 and 1996. In fact, the projection for the first six months of 1997 (2,353 youths) is 13 percent higher than the actual average daily population of 2,082. Although RECLAIM Ohio has not produced a reduction in institutional populations, it appears to have held them stable at a time when increases would have been expected.

Level of Satisfaction of Counties of Institutional Services

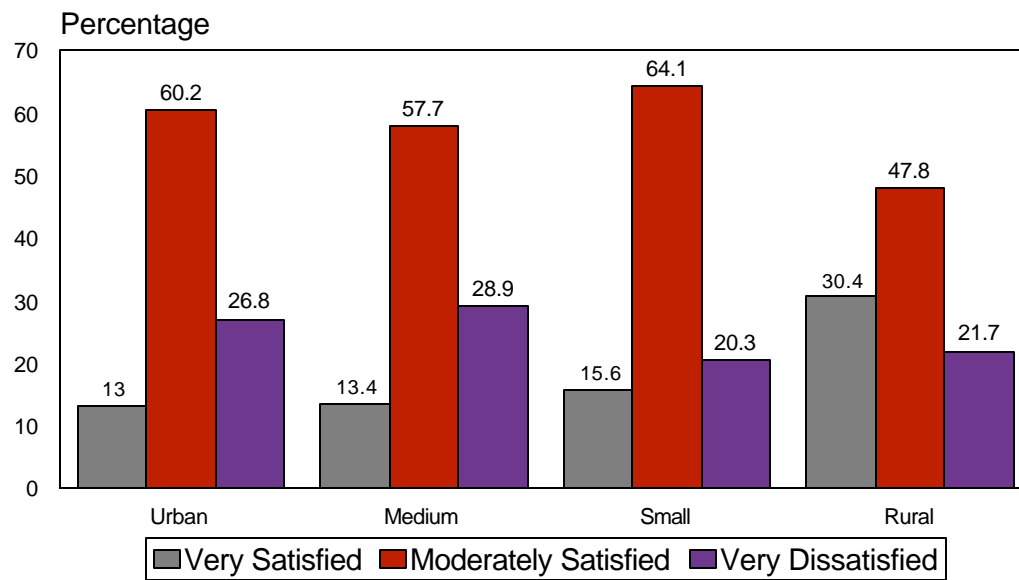
County personnel were also asked about their level of satisfaction with the programs operating in DYS institutions and any changes they would like to see made. As Figure 12.2 indicates, respondents from the rural counties were the most satisfied (30 percent) with the programs provided by the institutions for youth. The majority of the urban, medium, and smaller county respondents were only moderately satisfied with the

programming. However, a sizeable percentage, ranging from 22 percent in the rural counties to 29 percent in the medium counties, were very dissatisfied with institutional programs available to youths. Between 64 and 74 percent of all county personnel would like to see changes made to the programs youths receive. The most commonly suggested changes were to provide more substance abuse treatment programs, enhance the educational programs, provide more psychological assistance/mental health, and provide a sex offender treatment program.

In summary:

- Increases in the number of felony adjudications in 1994, 1995, and 1996 lead to the expectation that institutional populations would increase during these years. However, the average daily population of state institutions has declined by 6 percent since 1992.
- In the first six months of 1997, the projected average daily population was 13 percent higher than the actual population.
- The rural county respondents are most satisfied with the institutional programs while the remaining counties indicated a moderate level of satisfaction. A sizeable percentage reported that they are very dissatisfied with the programming in institutions.
- The counties indicated they would like to see more substance abuse treatment programs, enhancements in educational programs, more psychological/mental health programs and programs to treat sex offenders.

Figure 12.2. County Level Satisfaction With Institutional Programming



Research Question #13: What effect has the RECLAIM Ohio initiative had on parole services and the number of youths on parole?

County Satisfaction with Parole and Suggested Changes

The counties were asked about their level of satisfaction with parole and what changes they would suggest. Table 13.1 displays the varying levels of satisfaction the counties have with the current parole services provided to youths. The level of satisfaction varies significantly by size of the county. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents from the rural counties and 30 percent from the medium counties reported being very satisfied with the parole services. The majority of the respondents from the urban and small counties reported being moderately satisfied with parole. Between 20 and 30 percent of all respondents were very dissatisfied with the parole services being provided to youths.

Even though the counties varied on their level of satisfaction toward parole a sizeable majority (between 65 percent and 77 percent) did want to make changes to parole. The respondents from the urban counties (77 percent) were most likely to report that changes need to be made, followed by small (71 percent), rural (70 percent) and medium (65 percent). With regards to the ways in which county personnel would like to change parole, the most common response (29 percent) made was that youths need better/more intensive monitoring and more money needs to be spent on parole. Two other common responses were to have more communication between the agencies and the courts (11 percent) and more staff support (11 percent).

Table 13.1 County Level Satisfaction With Parole.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Very</u> <u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Moderately</u> <u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Very</u> <u>Dissatisfied</u>
<u>Urban</u>	<u>18.8%</u>	<u>54.5%</u>	<u>26.8%</u>
<u>Medium</u>	<u>30.3</u>	<u>44.4</u>	<u>25.4</u>
<u>Small</u>	<u>13.2</u>	<u>57.4</u>	<u>29.4</u>
<u>Rural</u>	<u>37.8</u>	<u>41.9</u>	<u>20.3</u>

Number of Youths on Parole

Data on the number of youths released on parole were assessed for the calendar years 1990 through 1996. The data indicate that 3,470 youths were released on parole in 1990, 3,437 youths were released on parole in 1991, 3,597 youths were released on parole in 1992, 3,474 youths were released on parole in 1993, 3,551 youths were released on parole in 1994, 3,384 youths were released on parole in 1995, and 3,235 youths were released on parole in 1996. These data suggest that the mean number of youths released on parole following the implementation of RECLAIM Ohio ($O = 3309.5$) in 1995 has decreased from pre-implementation levels ($O = 3505.8$).

In summary:

- The rural counties are most satisfied with parole. The small and urban counties are moderately to very dissatisfied with parole. The medium size counties are the most divided on their level of satisfaction.
- At least two-thirds of all counties would like to see changes made to parole. The counties would most like to see better/more intensive monitoring, followed by an increase in funds for parole and more staff support.
- The trend in youths released on parole indicates a general decrease.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on this assessment of RECLAIM Ohio, several conclusions may be drawn.

- RECLAIM Ohio has served a wide variety of youths, but its focus has been on juveniles who might be considered the most appropriate for community supervision. They have served mostly misdemeanants and less-serious felons.
- It appears that RECLAIM Ohio has been successful in meeting its goal of reducing commitments to state institutions. Moreover, counties were able to hold commitments constant during a period of increased felony adjudications. This consistency also benefitted Ohio's institutions for youths, staving off projected increases in the incarcerated population.
- Failure rates following release from RECLAIM Ohio programs have not been unusually high. Especially salient, the percentage of RECLAIM youths who were eventually committed to a DYS institution has remained low.
- During the first year of RECLAIM there were a number of counties that received zero dollars. DYS is working to assist these counties in determining how they can better use their RECLAIM dollars. This is especially important for the urban counties. Although the majority of RECLAIM dollars are allocated to the urban counties, these counties actually received the smallest proportion of their original allocation.
- This evaluation discovered that less than half of the counties are using assessment instruments to guide in their decision making process.

- The respondents have indicated a substantial level of dissatisfaction with the funding formula for RECLAIM Ohio. However, these respondents did not provide any clear cut answers on how to remedy this problem.
- By the same token, it is apparent that the counties also need to be more educated on exactly how RECLAIM Ohio works fiscally. A number of counties expressed a desire to reduce per diem costs, increase the number public safety bed offenses, or more generally, just receive more money. The counties should clearly understand that all funds are being taken from the “same pie.” If money is given to counties in one area (such as reducing a per diem cost) then other areas must be taken away (the counties monthly allocation). Because RECLAIM is a fiscally based program, it is only natural that counties will want to receive as much money as they can. However, they should realize that this is not a program that they can “have their cake and eat it too.” Thus, they have a few choices. They can either support a program like RECLAIM that provides extra funds for community programming or revert back to the old system where they received no funds or small grants to offer community-based alternatives for youths.
- Another concern voiced by the counties was the amount of paperwork associated with RECLAIM Ohio.
- Pilot counties were able to reduce the number of youths committed to DYS institutions by approximately 42 percent over what would have been expected based on the number of youths adjudicated for felony offenses and previous commitment rates. Reductions for non-pilot counties were similar: a 36 percent reduction.

- At the time of the evaluation, the level of satisfaction toward the RECLAIM program appeared to be tentative at best. Many respondents seem to be “on the fence” with regard to satisfaction--most being moderately satisfied. The pilot counties appear to be more satisfied than the nonpilots, however, the program was implemented a year earlier for the pilots and they also had the full attention of the DYS during the pilot phase to help them get started and assist with any problems that arose.
- It must be noted that even though satisfaction may be “soft” at this time, the counties, and child care personnel are supportive of the goals of RECLAIM Ohio, especially the one to increase community-based alternatives. Thus, although satisfaction is vacillating, the theory behind RECLAIM has received widespread support.
- Although these personnel are supportive of the goals, the media, victims of crimes, and the public are perceived to be the least supportive of the goals of RECLAIM.
- A sizeable percentage of the county personnel were very dissatisfied with the programming youths receive while committed to an institution. Institutional personnel may want to consider the many suggestions provided by the counties on the types of programs the counties would like to see provided to their youths. The counties overall level of satisfaction may change if their youths begin receiving the types treatment necessary for them to return to their communities and remain crime-free. Moreover, since the institutional personnel have indicated a change in the types and number of youths being sentenced to their facilities, a reevaluation of the types of programs should ensue to ensure that the programs in operation are meeting the needs of the youths now being committed to these institutions.

Recommendations

Drawing on the analyses presented above, we offer three recommendations:

- The majority of youths committed to DYS are from urban counties, therefore, DYS should place special attention on getting the urban counties to “buy into” RECLAIM because they could have the greatest impact on the long term success of RECLAIM.
- Since RECLAIM Ohio places a strong emphasis on providing community-based alternatives, the counties should be given resources to determine if the types of programs they are utilizing have been shown to be effective in reducing recidivism. By evaluating the more common programs utilized by the counties (i.e., intensive probation, substance abuse), the courts will have the ability to provide services to youths that can change the juvenile’s behavior and reduce their involvement with the juvenile court. DYS may want to consider providing fiscal rewards for counties that provide or contract with outside providers for these types of theoretically-based programs.
- DYS should provide training and stress the importance of using various assessment instruments (e.g., risk, needs). These instruments can assist counties in determining which youths may be better served in the community versus those that should be sent to an institution.
- Although paperwork is a necessary evil, DYS could assist counties in finding the most efficient method of handling the increase in paperwork due to RECLAIM.
- DYS should consider creating focus groups composed of members in counties of all sizes to delve into why individuals are generally dissatisfied with the funding formula. This group could be

responsible for exploring ways in which the money could be more equitably dispersed among the counties.

- DYS should consider creating a database where counties could enter their data locally and send reports on a disk to DYS on a monthly basis.
- DYS should make it their priority to respond to criticisms of the program and be open to suggestions from the counties on how to improve RECLAIM. It is recognized that this will continue be a difficult task for DYS (i.e., managing 88 counties is a more arduous task than handling only nine pilot counties.)
- DYS should encourage counties to generate support for RECLAIM from the media, victims of crimes, and the public by continually keeping them informed about the purpose of RECLAIM and apprising them of which types of youths are being treated and the types of programs being utilized in their community.
- DYS may want to offer assistance to local administrators of family involvement programs to create more alternatives and services to help address the issue of families.
- DYS should work more closely with counties to collaborate with the parole agency in their area to identify the types of programs that could best assist youths during their reintegration process into the community.
- Attention should be given to any changes in the practice of returning to DYS institutions youths who have been released and subsequently misbehave in the community. Youths who are not revoked for minor misbehavior will be able to maintain community ties that can be essential to helping them turn away from crime. Thus, consistent with saving money, the counties may wish to revoke youths

sparingly. On the other hand, it is important that decisions about revocation be based on needs for community safety and the reformation of juveniles, not on the court's willingness to pay for incarceration. As noted, the data available on this issue were unreliable. DYS should make every effort to verify the commitment status of each youth.

- DYS should consider extending the follow-up period beyond three months. It is clear from the extended follow-up analysis presented above that three months is not long enough to accurately estimate the extent of recidivism among RECLAIM releases. The approach used here, following a random sample of releases for a longer period of time, would be an adequate means of estimating recidivism if the period cannot be extended for all youths.
- DYS should consider providing an incentive program for success. Under the current funding formula, those counties that effectively change youthful deviant behavior, reduce recidivism, and subsequently reduce adjudications eventually will lose money.
- We believe that RECLAIM Ohio has been effective in reducing commitments because DYS has developed criteria for funding that ties dollars to actual reductions in commitments. RECLAIM is not an entitlement program, nor should it become one. The continued success of RECLAIM will require DYS to remain diligent in their application of criteria for funding.
- It should also be noted that commitment rates should not be confused with the DYS institutional population. We are confident that RECLAIM Ohio is having and will continue to have an effect on the commitment rates. The effectiveness of RECLAIM Ohio on institutional populations, however, will become more difficult if youth are required to spend longer periods in confinement. Counties

may, in fact, be committing fewer youth, but if these youth are committed for longer periods then the institutional population may dramatically increase.