

2013 PA RECIDIVISM REPORT

The descriptive comparison of recidivism rates by parole release type in the previous pages is informative, but the observed differences in the recidivism rates may not represent statistically significant differences and may be due to chance variation or the influence of factors that vary between those who are paroled to the street and those who are paroled to a center which are not yet accounted for. Table 26 shows the overall recidivism rates by parole release type while controlling for various important predictors of recidivism such as age, race, prior criminal history, and risk score

(LSI-R)¹². The differences in modeled recidivism rates by parole release type essentially mirror the descriptive differences in Table 25. Across the various release years (2005-2006, 2008-2009, 2010-2011), the recidivism rates of those who are paroled to a center are about 5 percentage points higher than the rates of those who are paroled to the street, despite the differences being narrower than the descriptive differences in Table 25 as a result of statistically accounting for the other factors mentioned above (e.g., age, race, prior criminal history, etc.).

TABLE 26: MODELED OVERALL RECIDIVISM RATES BY PAROLE RELEASE TYPE

Release Year	6-Month Overall Recidivism		1-Year Overall Recidivism		3-Year Overall Recidivism	
	Parole to Street	Parole to Center	Parole to Street	Parole to Center	Parole to Street	Parole to Center
2005-06 Releases	17.0%	20.2%	34.1%	39.5%	63.2%	67.9%
2008-09 Releases	16.4%	19.7%	33.1%	38.8%	61.2%	65.7%
2010-11 Releases	17.6%	22.6%	32.3%	38.1%	N/A	N/A



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The higher recidivism rates of those who are paroled to a center do not necessarily indicate that the parolee's chance of recidivating increases as a result of being sent to a center. It could indicate that close monitoring provided by the centers (and to some degree Parole staff) help detect violating behaviors of parolees (criminal or otherwise) that would remain undetected if parolees did not live in centers. If this is true and centers essentially better detect violating behaviors and remove high-risk parolees from centers through arrests and reincarcerations, then we might expect that those parolees who are discharged from centers without recidivism have lower recidivism rates. Also, those who are successfully discharged from a center may benefit from the programs and treatments they receive while at the center. In order to examine this possibility further, we compared the recidivism rates of those who were discharged from a center and stayed recidivism-free for at least six months after their release from prison with those who were paroled to the street and stayed recidivism-free for at least 6 months.

The results in Table 27 show that among those who remained recidivism-free for at least six months, there was no statistically significant difference in overall recidivism rates between parolees who were assigned to a center and discharged successfully and parolees who were paroled to the street, both at one year after their release from prison (19.0% vs. 18.0% respectively) and three years after their release from prison (53.0% vs. 52.0% respectively).¹³ We also looked at whether the length of stay at a center matters to the recidivism rates of parolees who were discharged from a center and stayed recidivism-free for at least six months. Again, the recidivism rates of those who

were assigned to a center were statistically no higher than the rates of those who were paroled to the street, but those who stayed at a center for three to six months actually had statistically lower recidivism rates than those paroled to the street. The fact that a longer stay at a center is associated with lower recidivism rates than the rates of those paroled to the street is consistent with the possibility that centers efficiently detect and help sanction violations and remove high-risk parolees so that those who are successfully discharged from a center consist of relatively low-risk parolees. Regardless of the explanation, we were able to substantiate in this analysis at least one comparison where those who were paroled to a center had a lower recidivism rate than those who were paroled directly to the street.

TABLE 27: MODELED OVERALL RECIDIVISM RATES BY SIX MONTH SURVIVAL TIME

Parole Type	Overall Recidivism Rates	
	1-Year	3-Year
Parole To Center	19.0%	53.0%
< 1 Month	17.0%	60.0%
1 to <3 Months	19.0%	54.0%
3 to <6 Months	15.0%*	50.0%
Parole To Street	18.0%	52.0%

NOTE: Parole To Center 3 to <6 Months 1-Year Overall Recidivism rate is significantly different from Parole To Street at $p < .05$

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FIGURE 24: 1-YEAR OVERALL RECIDIVISM RATE PERCENTAGE POINT DIFFERENCE COMPARED TO PAROLE TO STREET

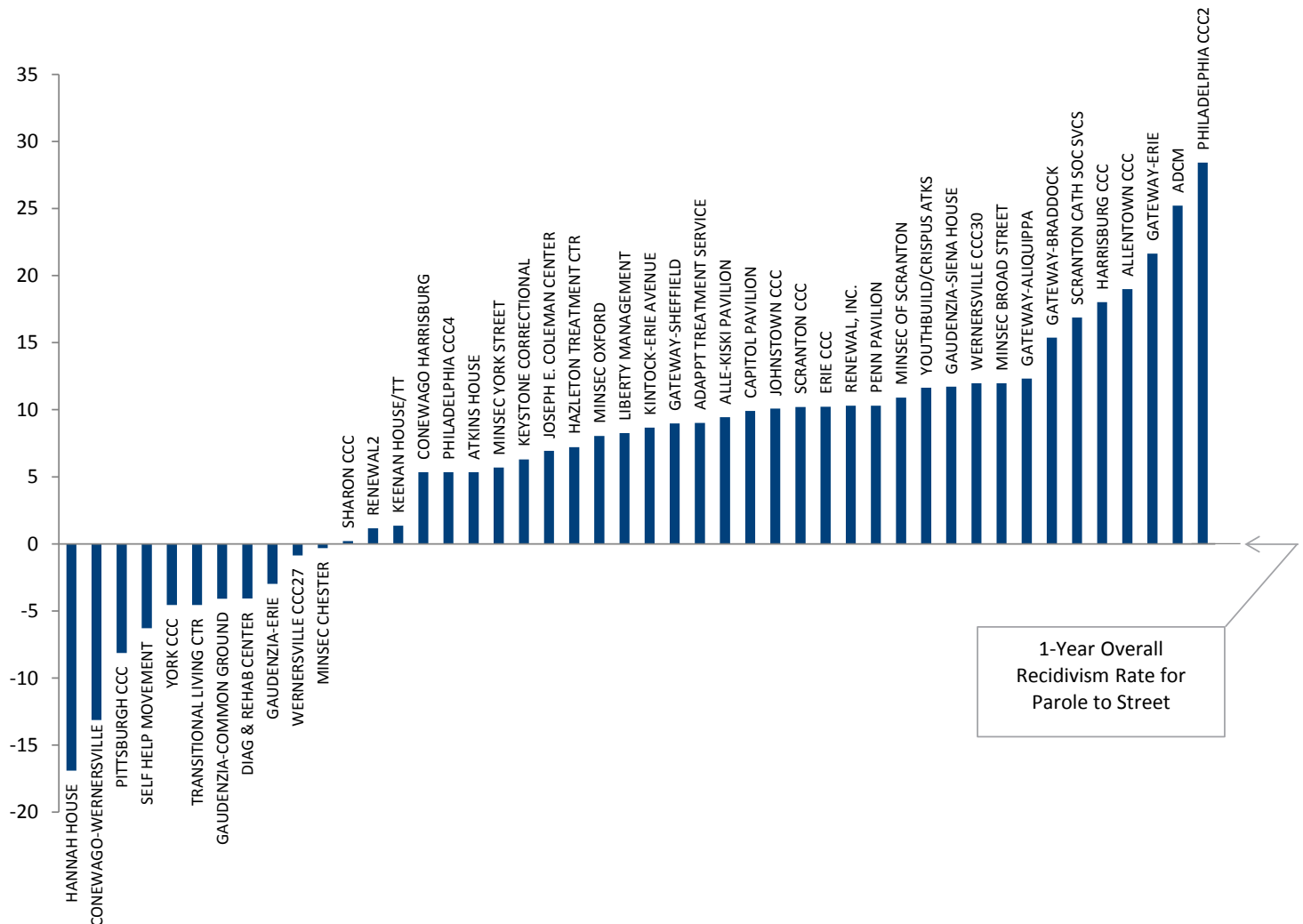


Figure 24 shows the overall recidivism rates for all the individual Community Corrections Centers (CCCs) and contracted facilities (CCFs) with more than 10 parolees, in comparison to the recidivism rate of those who are paroled to the street. By setting the recidivism rate of the “parole to the street” group at zero, the recidivism rates for the centers are shown as the percentage points higher or lower than the recidivism rates of parole to the

the overall patterns in Table 25, only about a quarter of the centers have lower recidivism rates than those paroled to the street, and the majority of centers have much higher recidivism rates than those paroled to the street.

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The next three tables and figures (tables 28-30, figures 25-27) show the recidivism rates for some of the major contractors of community corrections facilities in Pennsylvania, along with the recidivism rate of state-run community corrections centers. The recidivism rates are displayed by the type of recidivism measure (rearrest, reincarceration, overall recidivism), by the release year (2005-2006, 2008-2009, 2010-2011), and by the length of follow-up period (6 months, 1 year, 2 years). Aside from several contractors and the state-run centers showing lower rearrest rates than those parole to the street across different release years and follow-up times, the contract facilities and the state-run centers almost always show higher overall recidivism rates.

There are several ways to display comparisons between contractors and state-run centers in terms of recidivism rates. One way is to look at the rank order of contractors and state-run centers by recidivism rates across different recidivism measures. For the 3-year follow-up, Gateway and Minsec facilities tend to have the highest recidivism rates for rearrest, reincarceration, and overall recidivism based on the 2008-09 releases, as shown in figures 25-27.

Interestingly, CEC is one of the contractors with the highest 3-year rearrest rates, but had the lowest reincarceration rate among contractors and state-run centers, although still higher than those who were paroled to the street. Firetree and Renewal consistently demonstrated fairly low recidivism rates across recidivism measures, according to figures 25-27. Another way to evaluate comparisons between contractors and state-run centers in terms of recidivism is to look at the relative change of recidivism rates over time (across release years). For the 6-month and 1-year overall recidivism rates, Gateway demonstrated the largest increase in recidivism over time, whereas Renewal demonstrated the largest decrease in recidivism over time. Firetree also demonstrated a large increase in overall recidivism over time, at least for the 1-year rate. Kintock showed highly fluctuating rates, with a large drop from 2005-06 to 2008-09, but then an increase from 2008-09 to 2010-11. Yet another way to assess comparisons in recidivism rates is to examine rates across the three follow-up periods (6-months, 1-year, and 3-year). Gateway and the state run centers are both again among the top highest overall recidivism rates across the three different follow-up periods.

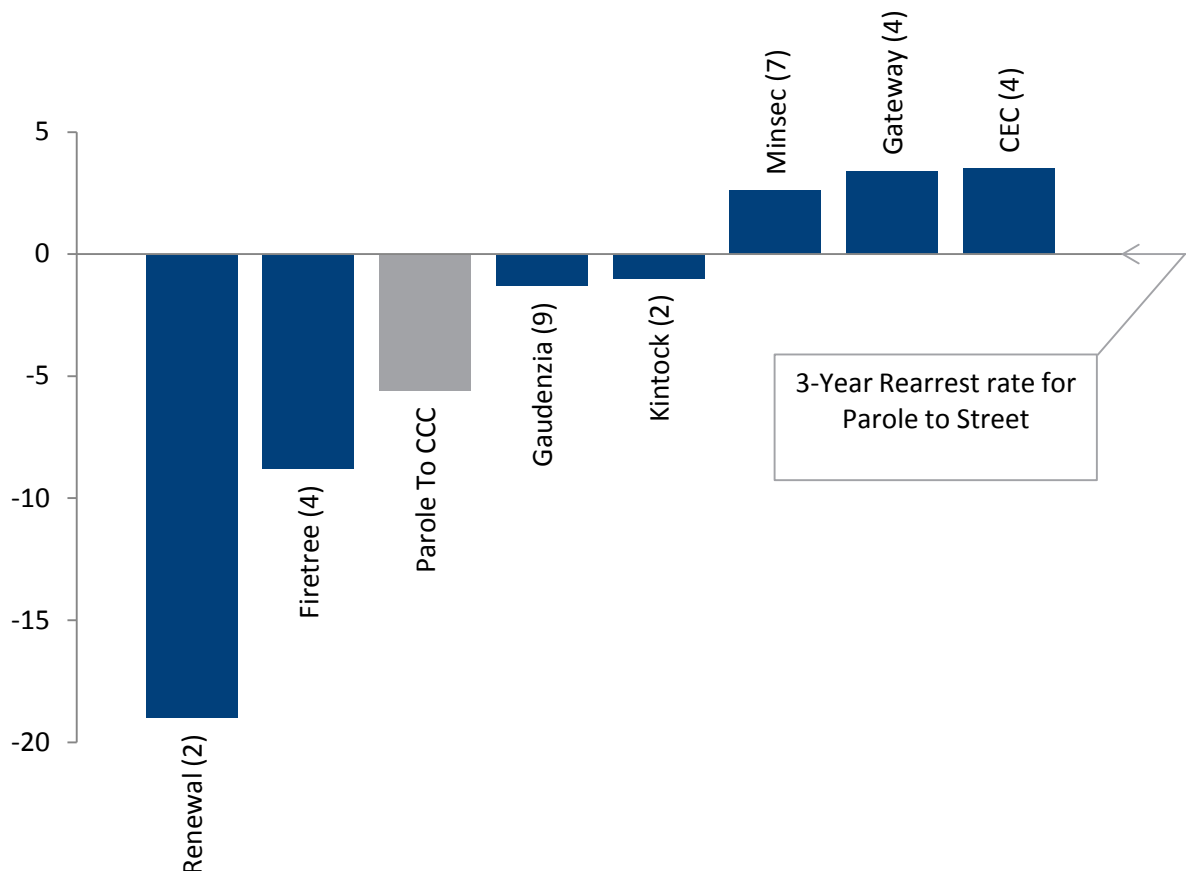


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TABLE 28: REARREST RATES BY VENDOR

Vendor (# of Centers)	2005-06 Release Cohort			2008-09 Release Cohort			2010-11 Release Cohort		
	6-Month	1-Year	3-Year	6-Month	1-Year	3-Year	6-Month	1-Year	3-Year
CEC (4)	14.8%	31.5%	54.9%	12.4%	21.6%	51.6%	9.0%	19.1%	N/A
Firetree (4)	6.5%	15.2%	47.8%	9.8%	19.7%	39.3%	9.2%	16.9%	N/A
Gaudenzia (9)	6.7%	13.5%	50.0%	9.2%	20.2%	46.8%	6.6%	11.6%	N/A
Gateway (4)	7.1%	19.0%	38.1%	9.1%	25.8%	51.5%	10.3%	21.8%	N/A
Kintock (2)	14.9%	31.0%	63.2%	9.6%	22.8%	47.1%	13.3%	26.7%	N/A
Minsec (7)	15.2%	30.3%	59.3%	10.8%	22.9%	50.7%	6.4%	12.3%	N/A
Renewal (2)	3.4%	24.1%	48.3%	3.6%	16.4%	29.1%	2.8%	9.7%	N/A
Parole To Street	12.0%	23.2%	49.2%	12.2%	23.4%	48.1%	11.8%	21.1%	N/A
Parole To CCC	9.2%	24.6%	48.6%	10.4%	20.4%	42.5%	13.2%	23.9%	N/A
Parole To CCF	12.1%	25.5%	53.2%	9.8%	22.1%	48.1%	8.3%	16.8%	N/A

FIGURE 25: 3-YEAR REARREST RATE PERCENTAGE POINT DIFFERENCE COMPARED TO PAROLE TO THE STREET (2008-2009 RELEASES)

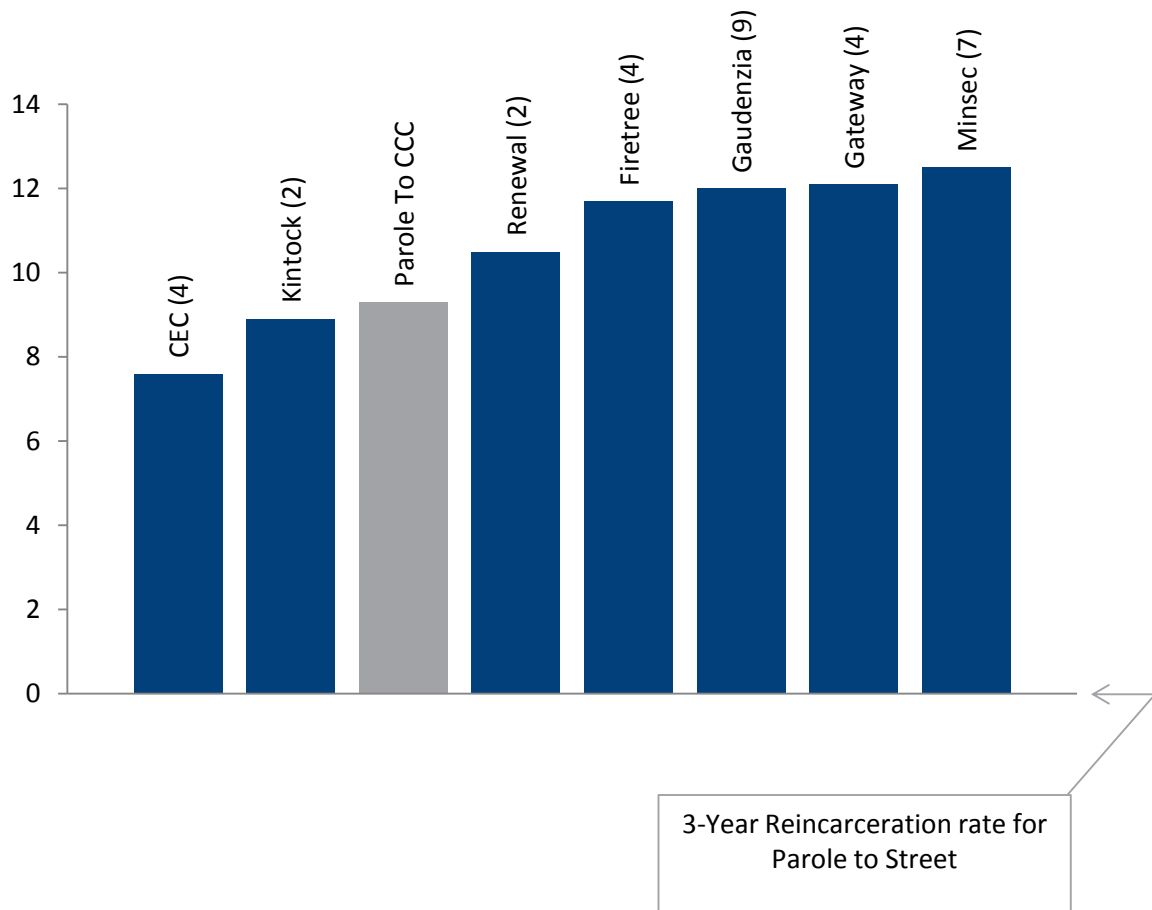


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TABLE 29: REINCARCERATION RATES BY VENDOR

Vendor (# of Centers)	2005-06 Release Cohort			2008-09 Release Cohort			2010-11 Release Cohort		
	6-Month	1-Year	3-Year	6-Month	1-Year	3-Year	6-Month	1-Year	3-Year
CEC (4)	17.3%	40.7%	61.7%	16.0%	33.2%	51.6%	21.1%	36.0%	N/A
Firetree (4)	15.2%	27.2%	56.5%	19.7%	24.6%	55.7%	13.8%	38.5%	N/A
Gaudenzia (9)	17.3%	33.7%	52.9%	12.8%	37.6%	56.0%	17.2%	26.8%	N/A
Gateway (4)	19.0%	35.7%	54.8%	18.2%	36.4%	56.1%	27.6%	54.0%	N/A
Kintock (2)	21.8%	47.1%	69.0%	14.0%	27.2%	52.9%	16.7%	36.7%	N/A
Minsec (7)	17.2%	35.2%	57.2%	17.9%	33.2%	56.5%	22.8%	34.2%	N/A
Renewal (2)	27.6%	48.3%	72.4%	12.7%	30.9%	54.5%	16.7%	34.7%	N/A
Parole To Street	11.8%	26.3%	47.5%	9.3%	22.1%	44.0%	9.8%	22.5%	N/A
Parole To CCC	26.1%	40.1%	62.0%	20.4%	34.6%	53.3%	17.6%	30.2%	N/A
Parole To CCF	16.7%	35.3%	58.1%	15.1%	31.4%	53.2%	19.5%	34.0%	N/A

FIGURE 26: 3-YEAR REINCARCERATION RATE PERCENTAGE POINT DIFFERENCE COMPARED TO PAROLE TO THE STREET (2008-2009 RELEASES)

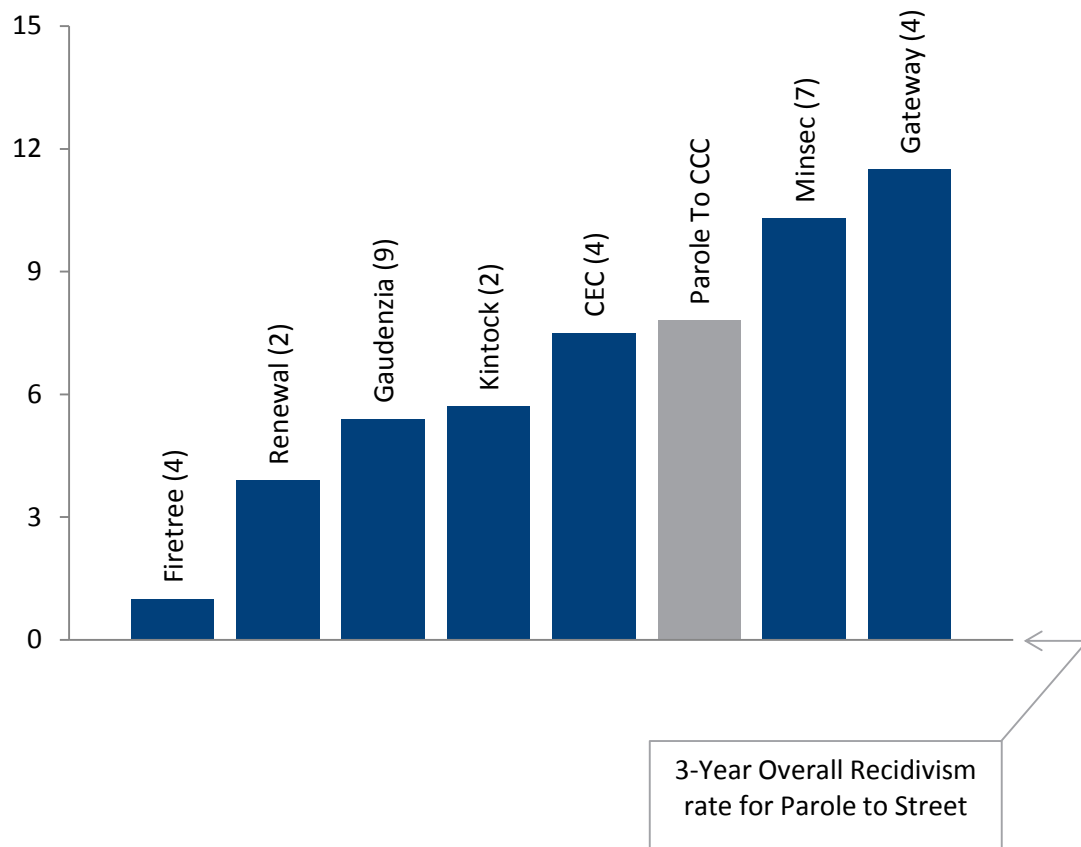


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TABLE 30: OVERALL RECIDIVISM RATES BY VENDOR

Vendor (# of Centers)	2005-06 Releases			2008-09 Releases			2010-11 Releases		
	6-Month	1-Year	3-Year	6-Month	1-Year	3-Year	6-Month	1-Year	3-Year
CEC (4)	22.2%	45.1%	71.0%	24.0%	41.2%	67.2%	24.4%	42.1%	N/A
Firetree (4)	18.5%	31.5%	64.1%	26.2%	39.3%	60.7%	18.5%	43.1%	N/A
Gaudenzia (9)	18.3%	36.5%	65.4%	18.3%	43.1%	65.1%	22.2%	33.3%	N/A
Gateway (4)	26.2%	45.2%	64.3%	21.2%	43.9%	71.2%	32.2%	59.8%	N/A
Kintock (2)	25.3%	48.3%	78.2%	19.1%	37.5%	65.4%	21.7%	41.7%	N/A
Minsec (7)	22.8%	42.1%	69.7%	23.8%	41.3%	70.0%	24.7%	38.8%	N/A
Renewal (2)	31.0%	62.1%	75.9%	14.5%	41.8%	63.6%	18.1%	40.3%	N/A
Parole To Street	18.6%	35.5%	61.5%	17.4%	33.8%	59.7%	18.1%	32.7%	N/A
Parole To CCC	30.3%	47.9%	70.4%	27.9%	45.4%	67.5%	27.3%	42.0%	N/A
Parole To CCF	21.5%	41.6%	68.3%	20.8%	40.7%	66.5%	23.5%	40.3%	N/A

FIGURE 27: 3-Year Overall Recidivism Rate Percentage Point Difference Compared to Parole to the Street (2008-2009 Releases)



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Appendix A—Technical Definition of Recidivism/Data Sources

Definition of Recidivism

The PA DOC identifies a recidivist as an inmate who, after release from prison, commits a new offense or violates parole, resulting in an arrest, an incarceration, or both. It is important to note that this report only captures recidivism events that occurred in Pennsylvania, and does not include recidivism events that may have occurred in another state. The recidivism rate for rearrests, reincarcerations, and overall recidivism is calculated using:

$$\text{Recidivism Rate } (t, y) = \frac{\text{\# of released inmates who recidivated within time period } t}{\text{\# of total releases in calendar year } y}$$

where t is length of recidivism follow-up time and y is the release year.

The PA DOC has generally defined its benchmark recidivism follow-up period as three years after prison release. This follow-up period is generally recognized as an optimal follow-up period for capturing recidivism as a stable and reliable measure. In addition to three-year rates, this report also examines six-month and one-year rates, as well as at least one comparison of five-year rates.

In order to provide maximum insight into recidivism of inmates released from the PA DOC, data on arrests have been collected in addition to standard reincarceration data. Arrest data was used to calculate rearrest rates for released inmates. Many recidivism studies use multiple measures of recidivism, including rearrest and reincarceration rates.

Recidivism rates for Community Corrections Centers (CCCs) and Contract Facilities (CCFs) were only calculated for those who were paroled from prison to a Center. This report did not examine recidivism rates for Center residents who were in a Center for a technical parole violation (e.g., “halfway back” cases and TPV Center cases). Recidivism rates for pre-release offenders in Centers were not included either. To maximize comparability between those paroled to a Center and those paroled “to the street”, this report further only examined the sub-set of parole release cases who received a “parole to an approved home plan” Parole Board action, some who transitioned through a Center (i.e., the “Parole to Center” group) and others who were paroled directly home (i.e., the “Parole to Street” group). We think this is an important methodological improvement over previous attempts to evaluate recidivism rates for Pennsylvania’s CCCs and CCFs.

Data Sources: Releases and Reincarceration Data

Reincarceration data for this report was extracted from PA DOC internal databases by the Bureau of Planning, Research and Statistics. The data used represents released inmates by release year. Demographic information (e.g., age, sex, race) and commitment data (e.g., primary offense type) was collected from release records. Only inmates released permanently were included- that is, the releases included all inmates whose incarceration sentence had been satisfied. This includes some inmates whose sentence involves a period of post-prison supervision.

Data Sources: Rearrest Data

The Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) provided arrest data for this report. The PSP receives arrest reports from local police agencies within the state. Since arrest reports from local agencies are not mandated by law, this data may underreport actual arrests of released inmates. Computerized criminal history files drawn from this statewide database were used to provide arrest data to the PA DOC.

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Appendix B—End Notes

1. Rearrest and Overall Recidivism rates were not available for the 20-year time period
2. Metropolitan Areas as defined by the PA Department of Labor (www.paworkstats.state.pa.us).
 - Allentown : Carbon, Lehigh, Northampton
 - Altoona: Blair
 - Erie: Erie
 - Harrisburg-Carlisle: Cumberland, Dauphin, Perry
 - Johnstown: Cambria
 - Lancaster: Lancaster
 - Lebanon: Lebanon
 - Philadelphia: Philadelphia, Delaware, Chester, Bucks, Montgomery
 - Pittsburgh: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Washington, Westmoreland
 - Reading: Berks
 - Scranton-Wilkes-Barre: Lackawanna, Luzerne, Wyoming
 - State College: Centre
 - Williamsport: Lycoming
 - York-Hanover: York
3. Race/ethnicity categories are measured as mutually exclusive, according to the inmate's response upon entry into state prison.
4. Other race/ethnicity categories are not used in this report because they make up less than 1% of the releases in any given year.
5. Age groups are determined based on equal sizes of the inmates released in 2008.
6. The number of prior arrests and incarcerations were determined based on equal groupings of the inmates released in 2008.
7. Risk score based on the LSI-R assessment given upon entry into state prison. The **LSI-R™** assessment is a quantitative survey of offender attributes and offender situations relevant for assessing criminal risk of re-offending, and making decisions about levels of supervision and treatment. The instrument's applications include assisting in the allocation of resources, helping to make probation and placement decisions, making appropriate security level classifications, and assessing treatment progress. The 54 LSI-R items include relevant factors for making decisions about risk level and treatment.
8. Breakdown of Broad Crime Categories:
 - Violent—Murder/Manslaughter, Forcible Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Other Assault, Statutory Rape, Other Sexual Offenses, Kidnapping
 - Property—Burglary, Theft/Larceny, Arson, Fraud, Stolen Property, Forgery
 - Drugs—Drug Offenses
 - Public Order/Other—Weapons, DUI, Prison Breach, Part II Other
9. Arrests according to 2010 Pennsylvania State Uniform Crime Report (PA State Police, 2012).
10. Part I crimes were only included in this analysis because some Part II crime, such as simple assaults, may not be fully reported to the Pennsylvania State Police.
11. Rates in Table 20 are per 100,000 population in Pennsylvania.
12. The complete set of controlled predictors consists of age at release, race, marital status, count of prior institutional misconducts, count of prior incarcerations, LSI-R score, violent commitment offense indicator committing county, sex offender indicator, status of completing prescribed institutional treatment, and time served in prison. The controlled predictors are set at their mean values.
13. The follow-up time of 1 year and 3 years includes the 6 months of recidivism-free time assumed for this analysis.

Study: Halfway houses a flop at rehabilitation

The federal government and states across the country have spent billions of dollars in recent years on sprawling, privately run halfway houses, which are supposed to save money and rehabilitate inmates more effectively than prisons do.

But now, a study by officials in Pennsylvania is casting serious doubt on the halfway-house model, concluding that inmates who spent time in these facilities were more likely to return to crime than inmates who were released directly to the street.

The findings startled the administration of Gov. Tom Corbett, which responded last month by overhauling contracts with companies that run the 38 private halfway houses in Pennsylvania. The system costs more than \$110 million annually.

'An abject failure'

Pennsylvania's corrections secretary, John Wetzel, who oversaw the study, called the system "an abject failure."

"The focus has been on filling up beds," he said. "It hasn't been on producing good outcomes."

The state now plans to link payments to the companies to their success at rehabilitating the thousands of inmates who go through halfway houses in Pennsylvania annually.

The federal government and many states have increasingly sought to cut spending on corrections by relying on privately run halfway houses, many of which are as large as prisons.

The study by the Pennsylvania Corrections Department found that 67 percent of inmates sent to halfway houses were rearrested or sent back to prison within three years, compared with 60 percent of inmates who were released to the streets.

Discouraging results

The study examined 38 privately run and 14 state-run halfway houses. The results for both categories were discouraging, Wetzel said.

He said researchers had not pinpointed the reasons, but he said he suspected that some halfway houses were not providing adequate services.

"I did unannounced tours at every one," Wetzel said. "Sometimes I felt there wasn't enough structured activity, more idleness than I was comfortable with. We're not paying to let inmates watch Jerry Springer."



March 24, 2013

Pennsylvania Study Finds Halfway Houses Don't Reduce Recidivism

By **SAM DOLNICK**

The federal government and states across the country have spent billions of dollars in recent years on sprawling, privately run halfway houses, which are supposed to save money and rehabilitate inmates more effectively than prisons do.

But now, a groundbreaking study by officials in Pennsylvania is casting serious doubt on the halfway-house model, concluding that inmates who spent time in these facilities were more likely to return to crime than inmates who were released directly to the street.

The findings startled the administration of Gov. Tom Corbett, which responded last month by drastically overhauling state contracts with the companies that run the 38 private [halfway houses in Pennsylvania](#). The system costs more than \$110 million annually.

Pennsylvania's [corrections secretary, John E. Wetzel](#), who oversaw the study, called the system "an abject failure."

"The focus has been on filling up beds," Mr. Wetzel said in an interview. "It hasn't been on producing good outcomes."

The state now plans to link payments to the companies to their success at rehabilitating the thousands of inmates who go through halfway houses in Pennsylvania annually.

Correctional experts said the move by Mr. Corbett, a Republican, made Pennsylvania a prominent voice in the national debate over whether new correctional strategies, including halfway houses, lowered recidivism rates and cut ballooning prison budgets.

By contrast, New Jersey, which has also been a leader in the halfway-house movement, has moved far more slowly to revamp its system, even though senior New Jersey lawmakers acknowledge that it is as troubled as Pennsylvania's.

The same company, [Community Education Centers](#), is the biggest provider of halfway houses in both New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

The New York Times published [a series of articles](#) last year that detailed [escapes, violence, drug use and other problems](#) at Community Education halfway houses in New Jersey.

Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey, a Republican, has been a vocal supporter of Community Education. Until November, [his close friend and political adviser William J. Palatucci](#) was a senior executive at the company.

Mr. Christie's chief spokesman, Michael Drewniak, said it was not proper to compare the systems in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

"I have no interest in assisting The New York Times if it is cherry-picking facts and figures, drawing conclusions from a Pennsylvania study and applying them erroneously to this state," Mr. Drewniak said.

But the Pennsylvania study was so conclusive that it dismayed even a criminologist who serves on Community Education's board of directors.

The criminologist, [Prof. Edward Latessa of the University of Cincinnati](#), said the study confirmed his own research on the Pennsylvania system, which has about 4,500 beds.

"We looked at quality indicators in our study," he said. "They were all poor. There were almost no positive results. I was shocked."

The federal government and many states have increasingly sought to cut spending on corrections by relying on privately run halfway houses, many of which are as large as prisons.

Inmates can be paroled or sent toward the end of their sentences to these facilities, where per-bed costs are generally two-thirds those of prisons. The companies promise to give the residents therapy, drug treatment, job training and other services to help ease their transition back to society.

The [study by the Pennsylvania Corrections](#) Department found that 67 percent of inmates sent to halfway houses were rearrested or sent back to prison within three years, compared with 60 percent of inmates who were released to the streets.

The study examined 38 privately run and 14 state-run halfway houses. The results for both categories were discouraging, said Mr. Wetzel, the state corrections chief.

He said researchers had not pinpointed the reasons, but he said he suspected that some halfway houses were not providing adequate services.

"I did unannounced tours at every one," Mr. Wetzel said. "Sometimes I felt there wasn't enough structured activity, more idleness than I was comfortable with. We're not paying to let inmates watch Jerry Springer."

Community Education has four halfway houses in Pennsylvania, with a total of 780 beds, and its recidivism rate was also 67 percent, like that of the overall halfway-house system, officials said. The company recently acquired another company in Pennsylvania with 581 beds.

The study included inmates who committed crimes while living in the halfway houses — on work-release programs, for example — or after they left.

In explaining why recidivism rates for halfway houses might be higher, Christopher Greeder, a spokesman for Community Education, said halfway-house inmates were under more scrutiny than prisoners released into the community. They were thus more likely to be detected when they break the law, he said.

"The Pennsylvania report is a landmark study that offers a complex look at the challenging issue of reducing recidivism," Mr. Greeder said in a prepared statement. "There are many excellent recommendations and constructive discussions of the multiple factors surrounding current procedures and about future benchmarks and performance standards."

Community Education runs six large facilities in New Jersey, with a total of 1,900 beds for state inmates and parolees, along with many hundreds more for county and federal inmates.

The state and counties in New Jersey spend more than \$100 million on halfway houses, but New Jersey officials have never examined how these programs may affect recidivism.

In 2011, the Christie administration commissioned a report on the issue that it said would be completed in 2014 or 2015.

At the same time, the New Jersey Legislature, which is controlled by Democrats, has moved slowly on several bills that would revamp the system.

The [measure to establish a task force](#) to study the safety, security and effectiveness of halfway houses. The task force would deliver a final report in 2015.

Lawmakers acknowledged that they had created the task force because they did not fully understand the system, which is more than two decades old.

"The task force bill is viewed as a starting point," said the Assembly speaker, Sheila Y. Oliver, an Essex County Democrat. "Once we get that report, legislative fixes can then be considered."

The task force would include lawmakers of both parties, as well as the corrections commissioner, the chairman of the State Parole Board, and independent experts selected by legislative leaders.

Nancy Wolff, director of the [Center for Behavioral Health Services and Criminal Justice Research](#) at Rutgers University, who testified last year at legislative hearings on halfway houses, said the task force was a delaying tactic.

She said if New Jersey were serious, it would follow the lead of Pennsylvania and another state that effected major changes, Ohio.


"There are too many lives at risk and too many people who could benefit from reform to wait two years to institute change," Dr. Wolff said.

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Testing the Functions and Effect of the Parole Halfway House: One Case Study

James A. II Beha

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James A. II Beha, Testing the Functions and Effect of the Parole Halfway House: One Case Study, 67 J. Crim. L. & Criminology 335 (1976)

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TESTING THE FUNCTIONS AND EFFECT OF THE PAROLE HALFWAY HOUSE: ONE CASE STUDY

JAMES A. BEHA, II*

The halfway house has become the basic model for many of the new programs encompassed by the label "community corrections." Of the more than 250 current programs in the International Halfway House Association, over half did not exist in 1965. Thus, it is hardly an exaggeration to speak of an "explosion" in the halfway house field. Yet little research has been done on the effectiveness of such programs. This paper reports on a study of a Boston halfway house's clients over a seven year period.

The paper begins with an analysis of background data on clients, including trends over time, and makes comparisons to parallel data on the general parolee and releasee populations, where available. The second section of the paper presents data on length of stay and mode of termination, and attempts to relate these variables to background factors.

The final section of the paper describes a follow-up of the client group to determine the overall recidivism rate, and a comparison of that rate to the rate that might have been "predicted" for the group by using appropriate base expectancy tables.

"Halfway houses" include residential facilities with capacities from two or three to over fifty, and which provide services and treatment ranging from simple shelter to intensive therapeutic community. They focus on a number of social problems, only one of which is the ex-offender's difficult transition from prison to the community.¹ The most recent directory for the International Halfway House Association lists programs aimed at ex-offenders, parolees, probationers, juveniles, "youths," narcotics addicts and al-

coholics. In addition, the Association includes some mental health facilities. Programs dealing with alcoholics were extensively developed during the immediate post-World War II period,² and mental health and personal "crisis" houses began shortly thereafter. Halfway house programs for addicts date from the early 1950's and were expanded in the early 1960's.

While these focused halfway programs, like the network of casual residential programs (for example, YMCA's and hospitals), will accept ex-offenders, such clients may be only a small portion of their population. For example, in 1972 programs *not* tailored to ex-inmates received 40 per cent of the parole residential placements made in Massachusetts; yet none of these programs took more than five such placements during the full year.³ While it can be argued that these mixed population houses make "reintegration" a fact from the start, they are equipped to deal with their residents only in terms of the primary focus of their programs. The parole and correctional halfway programs, by contrast, take *as* their primary focus the fact that clients have been—and may still be—in trouble with the law.

Historically, the basic elements in the halfway house program for the adult ex-inmate were the resources of residence: the house would provide shelter and support to those who lacked it. Later, with the advent of parole, access to such a program could balance the absence of community ties and thus make early release a possibility. Nevertheless, post-prison residence seems an opportunity only to a limited portion of those in prison; it is therefore not surprising that only a small percentage of those released from prison are served by halfway houses. To refer again to the Massachusetts experience: in 1972 only about 13 per cent of all parolees were required to accept a residential placement of any kind (placements were fewer than available beds)⁴ and a

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This research was supported in part by funds from the Massachusetts Committee on Criminal Justice.

¹ Among the works which provide useful discussion of the halfway house in its criminal justice applications are E. DOLESCHAL, *GRADUATED RELEASE* (Public Health Service Pub. No. 2128, 1971), also in *1 INFORMATION REVIEW ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY* 1 (1969); R. GOLDFARB & L. S. KELLER & B. O. KELLER, *CRIME CENTERED CORRECTION AND TREATMENT* (1970).

² Blacker & Kantor, *Halfway House for Problem Drinkers*, *FED. PROBATION* at 18 (June 1960).

³ MASS. PAROLE BOARD, *REPORT ON 1972 RELEASES TO PAROLE SUPERVISION FROM MASSACHUSETTS CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS*, (April, 1973).

⁴ *Id.*

study that same year concluded that only about 5 to 10 per cent of future releasees would "need" the residential structure of a halfway house.⁵

Why, then, the wide interest in the halfway house model and experience? The answer seems to be that the halfway house provides both an historical tradition and a model for a variety of programs now grouped as "community corrections", that is, programs which serve as an alternative or as a supplement to the more intensive deprivations of freedom presently characteristic of the detention and correction process.

Despite this widespread interest, the literature on halfway house programs—and particularly the evaluative literature—is spotty at best. After a review of all the available information on halfway programs,⁶ this author decided to take a closer look at one particular program which seemed a fair test of the parole halfway house concept, and which was plainly having a major impact as a model for state correctional programs. Explicitly, then, this program was chosen because it was *atypical*. Most important—and most unusual—was the willingness of the program's administrators to cooperate with a candid "impact evaluation" effort.

Brooke House, operated in Boston by Massachusetts Halfway Houses, Inc., has been in existence since 1965. The house appears to be well-run, and has a national reputation for the high quality of the training which staff members receive. The operational philosophy of the House—reality therapy—is much in vogue throughout the American correctional network. The parole program at Brooke House was well respected by the Parole Board, and was utilized almost completely for most of the period studied.⁷ For all these reasons, Brooke House would appear to be an appropriate example of the well-developed correctional halfway house model, and an appropriate test of the utility of the parole halfway house model, at least for programs with similar operating philosophies.

⁵Cohen, *A Study of Community-Based Correctional Needs in Massachusetts* (Massachusetts Dep't of Correction, 1973).

⁶Beha, *Halfway Houses in Adult Corrections: The Law, Practice, and Results*, 11 CRIM. L. BULL. 434 (1975).

⁷The research here must be *post hoc* both because we want to cover client flow from the start of the program in order to obtain an adequate number of cases (and in order to parallel the House's own research) and because Brooke House (TTNA EXHIBIT 29) rather than a parole, follow-up period, the sample stops with clients entering in 1972.

CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

Introduction to Brooke House

Since its inception in late 1965 Brooke House has taken placements from federal correctional institutions on pre-release status, as well as parolees from the state system. Referrals from other sources (county houses of correction and "the street") average about 15 per cent of total admissions.⁸ Financial support for the House's operation has come from federal and state contracts, private contributions, and the earnings of residents (a portion of which is applied toward room and board).

Throughout its existence Brooke House has utilized the modality known as "reality therapy."⁹ In contrast to some other techniques, reality therapy does not directly attack the client's norms, nor does it push for "insights" into past behavior and motivations. Rather, the counsellor and client are expected to concentrate on specifying the client's set of current and potential life-needs and the possible non-criminal avenues to their achievement. Brooke House particularly emphasizes job placement, work habits and sound financial planning. This latter point includes the proper use of savings; in this connection, Massachusetts Halfway Houses, Inc. operates.

the only Federal Credit Union ever chartered specifically to serve ex-offenders. The major purpose of the Credit Union is to provide ex-offenders with an opportunity to re-establish a credit rating in the community.¹⁰

Brooke House's administrators report that "the program was designed for chronic offenders with long periods of incarceration and few community resources."¹¹ As a result, the program begins in a highly structured format and moves toward greater freedom for the individual resident as the House staff concludes that he has accepted greater accountability and involvement.

The Present Research Effort

Brooke House has sponsored several "internal" studies of recidivism among former clients,¹² in

⁸MASSACHUSETTS HALFWAY HOUSES, INC., ANNUAL REPORT (1972) [hereinafter cited as ANNUAL REPORT].

⁹W. GLASSER, REALITY THERAPY (1965).

¹⁰ANNUAL REPORT, *supra* note 8.

¹¹Interview with house director (Spring 1973).

¹²MASSACHUSETTS HALFWAY HOUSES, INC., BROOKE HOUSE RESEARCH: TWO YEAR RECIDIVISM STUDY (May 1972); Runyan, *Evaluation of a Correctional Halfway House*, (unpublished study prepared for Brooke House, September 1970); J. PLECK, S. SIMON, & J. B. RILEY, THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A CORRECTIONAL HALFWAY HOUSE (1969).

addition to annual reports which have included data on background and length of stay. Each of these reports has covered all types of House clients (federal, state, county, and "street").

The focus of the present report is different in several respects. First, it is limited to clients who came directly to the House on parole from Massachusetts state correctional facilities. Second, for all information other than length of stay at the House and mode of termination, this study is based on data files maintained and verified by the Department of Correction and the Board of Paroles.¹³ Last, the report covers seven full years of client-flow, providing cumulative as well as period-specific analyses.

The first of these differences—limiting the report to parolees from Massachusetts state correctional institutions—requires further explanation. For analytical purposes, both this author and the research sponsors wanted to isolate the character and impact of the House as a *parole* halfway facility from its function as a *pre-release* center. Our concern was not merely with the logical aspect of this distinction, but also with the operational and selection differences which were necessarily at work (for example, the difference between the direct custodial control possible at a pre-release stage and the much more indirect control which is predicated on the ultimate threat of parole revocation).¹⁴

The second reason for this limitation was more pragmatic: an important part of the analysis was to be the evaluation of recidivism rates among former clients. But realistic appraisals only make sense as comparisons. The Massachusetts Department of Correction periodically prepares Base Expectancy Tables which, under proper constraints, may provide a standard of comparison for state parolees. No comparable tool exists for county parolees released prior to 1972, and the only tables available for the federal system at the time this study was undertaken were so old that one could not justify reliance on them in a research setting.¹⁵

Finally, data on individuals released from state institutions was accessible, albeit with effort. Files on county house of correction inmates are scattered, fragmented, and not always comparable. Background and follow-up data on federal placements is, unfortunately, very difficult to obtain.

¹³Data was made available under a plan for maintaining confidentiality which was approved by the Criminal History Systems Board. Thanks are due to a number of persons for their assistance; see note 30 and accompanying text.

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Corrections: The BULL. 434 (1975).

¹⁵*Id.* at n. 99.

We have therefore limited the report to those incarcerated in the state system,¹⁶ although the house in operation is very much a "mixed bag." Internal research by the Brooke House staff indicates that the federal and state placements do in fact differ in several respects, such as age, and the staff suggests that the "leavening" effect of this mixture is a noticeable element in the therapeutic milieu.

THE BROOKE HOUSE CLIENT

It would be superfluous in a report of this scope to present all the background information analyzed for this study. But we should attempt a "modal profile" of the Brooke House state parole client:

The client is white, Catholic, unmarried, and from Boston. He has no military experience [if he does, he has an honorable discharge]. He is unskilled and worked irregularly; he has completed some high school. He was 16 at his first conviction, and has accumulated nine convictions, mostly for property crimes. He had been incarcerated three times before the current sentence, serving over two years, and has been on both juvenile and adult parole; he has also been on adult probation. He pled guilty to his present offense, for which he had no co-defendants, and served approximately 22 months for that offense. He was between 25 and 26 years old at release.

Over the time period studied in this report most of the background characteristics of the Brooke House population remained relatively constant. While there were some changes in the background of the clients served between the mid-1960's and those in the early 1970's, on only four background items was the change substantial and statistically significant. There was a decline in the number and length of prior adult incarcerations at the county (misdemeanor and minor felony) level, and a related increase in the proportion of clients who had experienced adult probation. (There were, however, no sizeable shifts in the total number of prior offenses or in the number or length of incarcerations at the level of the state prison system.) Those in the program during 1971-1972 were less likely to have been returned to prison previously for the violation of a parole.

The proportion of participants who described themselves as Catholics showed a significant decline.

¹⁶There were 256 such clients from 1965-1972. No data could be located in the Department of Corrections files on 11 clients (4 per cent). Ninety-five per cent of these clients were parolees. An additional five 1969-1972 cases were "lost" in developing base expectancy scores due to insufficient information.

Finally—and most importantly in terms of the operating milieu of the House—by 1971–1972 there was a marked increase in the proportion of clients whose records included arrests for narcotics offenses.

Our statistical analysis revealed that the likelihood of recidivism among Brooke House clients was related both to involvement with narcotics and to the number of county incarcerations. Neither relationship is particularly strong and, since they oppose each other in terms of their significance for the changing character of the client population, it seems safe to conclude that the 1971–1972 population was quite similar to that of 1965–1968 in terms of their “recidivism threat.”

We had available comparable data on 1971 releasees from state correctional institutions for thirty-five of our background variables and we had data on 1972 parolees that were comparable on eleven items. As a somewhat incomplete summary of the more extensive comparison available to us, that with the 1971 releasee group, we note:

The Brooke House client was less likely to be married, to have a skill or a stable work record, to be involved with narcotics, or to have been released from Walpole. He was more likely to have been committed for a sex-related offense, or for a robbery that included the use of a weapon. The client had somewhat less education. He was more likely to come from Boston, to have a military record and an honorable discharge, and to come from MCI Concord.

We should stress that since Brooke House drew almost exclusively from the parolee, rather than releasee, population, these mixed comparisons tend

to understate the seriousness of the prior criminal record of Brooke House clients. On those few variables for which we have comparable data on parolees, Brooke House clients clearly show up as having much more serious than average records. For example, the typical parolee had served less time in prison for his current offense before gaining his parole than had the Brooke House client, who had gained a far more restricted release. Brooke House clients had also been incarcerated more often in the past, particularly in juvenile and county-level adult facilities.

Despite these differences in criminal records, the comparison between Brooke House and other releasee populations most clearly establishes that the process by which inmates came to be conditionally paroled to the House was primarily attuned to the candidate's social background and to the character of his present offense, rather than to the details of his prior criminal history. A straightforward concern that the defendant would be arrested for a new crime after his release seems to have been less significant than a concern with the *kind* of offense involved and a perception that the delivery of social services and structured support might be appropriate for this offender. (The fact that this somewhat limited data set is able to pick up distinctions consistent with this analysis gives us some encouragement in employing a statistical approach to “control” for these kinds of biases when examining the client group's recidivism.)

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

The bulk of Brooke House state admissions were parolees (96 per cent), of whom 92 per cent

TABLE 1
TIME AT BROOKE HOUSE FOR PAROLEE CLIENTS 1965–1968 AND 1969–1972; BREAKDOWN BY WHETHER
“COMPLETED” PROGRAM

Group	Avg Time	Std Deviation*
All Parolees (N = 235)	82.4 days	66.6
Parolees 1965–1968 (N = 86)	102.9 days	86.8
Parolees 1969–1972 (N = 149)	70.5 days	31.6
All Parolees “completing” (N = 115)	112.7 days	68.8
1965–1968 Parolees “completing” (N = 35)	155.1 days	104.9
1969–1972 Parolees “completing” (N = 80)	94.1 days	31.0
All Parolees “not complete” (N = 120)	53.4 days	49.4
1965–1968 Parolees “not complete” (N = 51)	67.2 days	63.9
1969–1972 Parolees “not complete” (N = 69)	43.2 days	32.3

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within this range around the average.

remained at the House beyond the first week. About half of this group was reported as "completing" the program; that is, when they did leave, it was with the approval of the staff. Data on length of stay at Brooke House are presented in Table 1, where the data are broken down by time period and by whether or not the client was reported as completing the program.

The author wanted to determine which background variables distinguish those parolees who "split" at once from the program from those who remained for at least a week. A variety of differences were found which pointed to two underlying factors. First, the less extensive the parolee's prior involvement with the prison system, the more likely he was to remain. Second, but closely related, the less extensive the client's prior involvement with *petty* crime, the more likely he was to remain.

These same factors continued to be related to the likelihood that those who remained beyond the first week would eventually complete the program. These findings are consistent with a rather intriguing interpretation of the House process. Most Brooke House clients have had substantial prison experience. What is significant, it would seem, is not the *length* of imprisonment, but the *number* of times imprisoned. Program administrators agree that the inmate who has done a few long stretches of "hard" time survives well in the structured Brooke House environment. The inmate who has been in and out of prison on a series of less serious offenses is less likely *ever* to have adjusted to structure, and is quite likely to find the Brooke House environment unsatisfactory.

Our analysis revealed several important time trends concerning participation in the program and whether or not clients were rated as completing the program. These may be summarized as follows:

The average number of days spent in the program declined steadily over time—from 102 to 80 to 64.¹⁷ At the same time, however, the rate at which clients were reported as having completed the program increased substantially in 1969–70, though it receded somewhat in 1971–72. A similar curvilinear trend was apparent for the proportion of clients completing at least a week at the program.

The fact that clients in the 1969–1972 period were surviving in the program, leaving on positive terms, and thereby retaining their parole beyond the condi-

tional stage correlates with the fact that the later group was substantially more successful in avoiding a return to the state prison than were clients in the 1965–1968 group. Figure 1 gives the month-by-month results, and confirms the widely held perception that the first year of release is the critical period for recidivism. What this figure cannot tell us, of course, is whether the sharp drop in returns to prison is connected to some element in the Brooke House program, or was experienced by the general population of those released from the prison system. Nor, of course, can these figures give us any indication whether these sorts of clients would not have shown about the same performance without the assistance of a halfway placement. The sections which follow attempt to respond to these concerns.

MEASURING PROGRAM IMPACT

Defining "Success"

"Success" for criminal justice programs is generally defined in terms of a net effect on the crime rate. For correctional programs, the measure of success is typically narrowed to the recidivism rate for participants although, in theory, correctional programs might also affect criminal behavior through the potential offender's perception of the type of punishment with which he is being threatened. Analytically, an effect on recidivism is the product of the interaction between specific deterrence and rehabilitation.¹⁸

Occasionally, other standards are introduced, including the "justness" (proportionality?) of a particular treatment and the relation of a program to various civil rights—most frequently to "due process of law." Cost and operational control are also often considered. It remains true, however, that "effectiveness" is most frequently stated in terms of subsequent behavior patterns.

It is sometimes argued that recidivism is an inadequate standard because the correctional goal is properly one of rehabilitation—of which recidivism is but one element.¹⁹ This position is, of course,

¹⁸ Stated for the individual, rehabilitation of the actor occurs when an opportunity for a sustained noncriminal lifestyle is utilized; stated in program-action terms, rehabilitation is the effect of programs in instigating and shaping individual change. Stated practically—given the researcher's access only to arrest and conviction information—what is perceived as rehabilitation may be a matured skill at avoiding apprehension.

¹⁹ E.g., Woodring, *A Dilemma: Rehabilitation and Its Relationship to Recidivism*, 22 YOUTH AUTHORITY QUARTERLY 3 (1969).

Figure 1: Patterns of Recidivism for Brooke House Clients, 1965-1968 Group and 1969-1972 Group

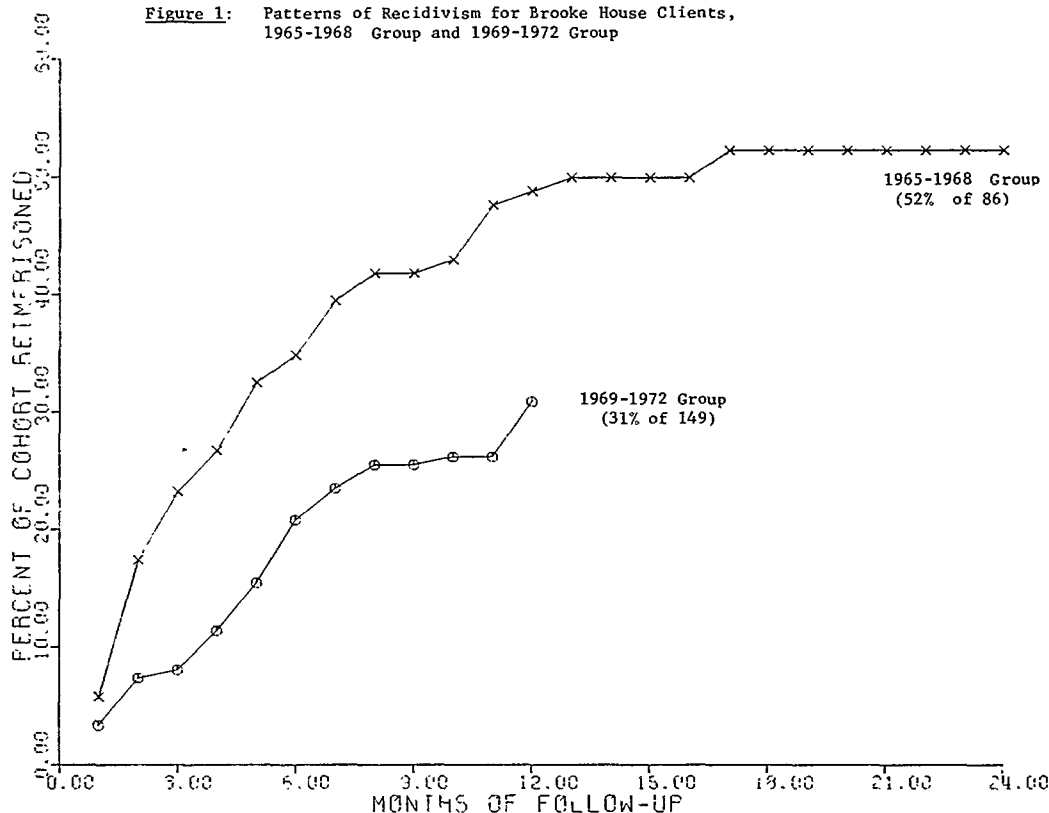


FIGURE 1

linked to the "professional treatment" model of corrections perceptively critiqued by Francis Allen and more recently assessed in *Struggle for Justice*.²⁰

The point to be made in response to the social-rehabilitative approach is not that social services are

irrelevant to the reduction of recidivism nor that they should not be available for their own sake within correctional programs as well as elsewhere. Rather the terms of the criminal justice system's mandate must be stressed: the correctional process is necessarily and fundamentally intrusive and coercive, and the exercise of that intrusive power is justified in terms of the punishment and prevention of criminal behavior. It is inconsistent with that mandate to structure a "rehabilitation" regime which is not judged in terms of its effect on criminal behavior. The problem is not merely that such cross-purposes undermine and often unduly extend the correctional process (although they may),²¹ but that, fundamentally, no "right" has been—or can be—granted to exercise that kind of dominion.

This brief response can hardly do justice either to the complex arguments or to the depth of professional and ideological feelings which are involved in

²⁰ Allen, *Criminal Justice, Legal Values, and the Rehabilitative Ideal*, 50 J. CRIM. L.C. & P.S. 228 (1959); AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE, *STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE: A REPORT ON CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN AMERICA* (1971). See also Lehman, *The Medical Model of Treatment*, 18 CRIME & DELINQUENCY 204 (1972); Shorer, "Experts" and *Diagnosis in Correctional Agencies*, 20 CRIME & DELINQUENCY 347 (1974). One important, though not logically essential, element in the critique of the rehabilitative approach to criminal conduct is the continuing inability of professional caseworkers to predict subsequent individual criminality with any substantial accuracy. Cf. N. MORRIS, *THE FUTURE OF IMPRISONMENT* 66-72 (1974); P. MEEHL, *CLINICAL VERSUS STATISTICAL PREDICTION* (1957); BUREAU OF REHABILITATION, *REPORT ON SHAW RESIDENCE, MARCH 1964-MARCH 1968* at 81 (1968), which noted "the lack of any correlation at all

TTNA EXHIBIT 29 residents' chances for rework . . . with the full institutional file," [hereinafter cited as SHAW REPORT].

²¹ Comment, *Pretrial Diversion: The Threat of Expanding Social Control*, 10 HARV. CIV. RIGHTS-CIV. LIB. L. REV. 180 (1975).