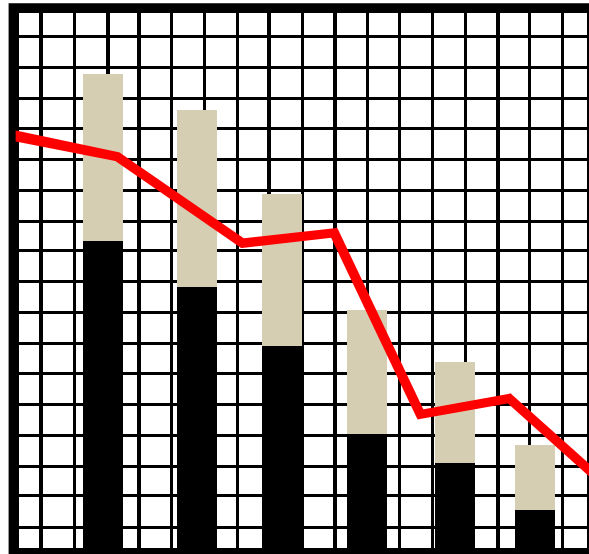


Juvenile Recidivism and Cost Avoidance Analysis
Oregon Juvenile Department Directors Association

Oregon's Counties
3-31-09



Prepared By Linda Wagner
Juvenile Justice Researcher

Findings in Brief

Background – In 1995, a collaboration among juvenile justice officials and state partners developed a standardized, statewide definition of juvenile recidivism (re-offenses). That single effort created the foundation for evaluating delinquency reduction programs and the juvenile justice system which provides them. This work has created more momentum in the last ten years than in the previous forty. Powerful tools now exist to track juvenile crime and to evaluate the efficacy of juvenile justice services in Oregon.

Those tools include recidivism reports and cost avoidance equations. Unlike “cost savings” which suggests funds are sitting in a bank, cost avoidance is related to the cost of each criminal referral and what is “avoided” by reducing delinquency. Respectively, additional referrals increase the costs to victims, law enforcement, the courts, and the juvenile justice system.

Recidivism Highlight - Local, state and national recidivism findings show that a smaller group of juvenile offenders commit a significant portion of crime. This group is referred to as “chronic offenders.” At the same time there are principles of effective practices which decrease offending patterns for all juvenile offenders.

Research Question – How effective is Oregon’s juvenile justice system at preventing high risk juveniles from becoming chronic offenders? What is the cost avoidance of that impact?

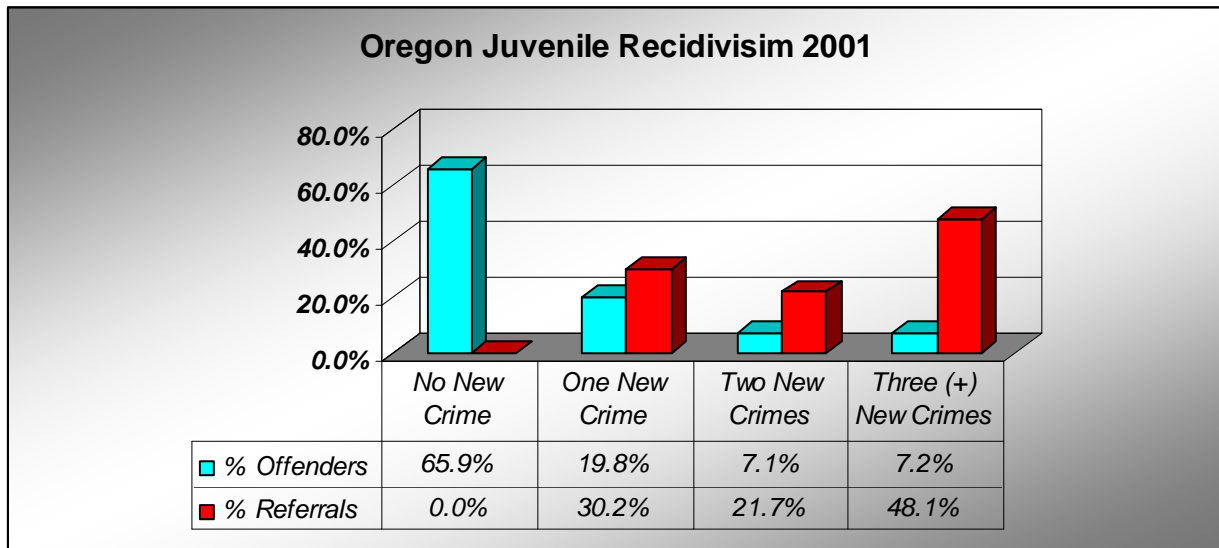
Conclusion – If the state had one percentage point fewer chronic offenders (7.2% to 6.2%) in a single year, there would have been 2,000 fewer crimes with a cost avoidance of over \$22 million. Reducing the percent of juveniles who become chronic offenders, even by a small amount, significantly reduces crime in local communities and yields a substantial cost avoidance. This occurs because the chronic group is so criminally active that even a small reduction creates very positive outcomes.ⁱ

STATEWIDE	N	% Chronic	Number in Chronic Group	Avg. Referrals Per Offender	Referrals Per Chronic Group	Avg. Crimes Per Referral	Total Crimes
2001 Chronic	19,794	7.2%	1,428	4.4	6,238	2.4	14,971
2001 With 2006 Chronic Group	19,794	6.2%	1,227	4.4	5,361	2.4	12,866
Difference In Crime:							2,105

Cost Avoided Estimates	
Cost with '01 chronic group	\$ 157,422,168
Cost with '06 chronic group	<u>\$ 135,289,140</u>
Cost avoided ('01 with '06 chronic rate)	\$ 22,133,028

A predictable pattern occurs when reviewing juvenile justice recidivism data. A smaller group of all offenders within a cohort, go on to commit a significant amount of new crime. In 2001 of the '01 / '06 example of this study, 7.2% of all offenders committed 48% of all new criminal referrals.

New Referrals	Offenders (N=19,794)	Referrals (N=8,716)	% Offenders	% Referrals
None	13,050	0	65.9%	0.0%
One	3,913	3,913	19.8%	30.2%
Two	1,403	2,806	7.1%	21.7%
Three or More	1,428	6,238	7.2%	48.1%
TOTAL:	19,794	12,957	100.0%	100.0%



Through the use of effective strategies over time, the juvenile justice system became more effective in reducing the number of offenders who go on to become chronic offenders. The question of, “*What would have been the impact in '01 if the success rate was the same as in '06?*” found that there would have been 2,000 fewer crimes in that single year for a cost avoidance of over \$22 million. This impact was created by reducing the proportion of chronic offenders by a single percentage point.

Reducing the proportion of juvenile offenders who become chronic is imperative in order to reduce delinquency in local communities. Those changes significantly reduce victimizations by juvenile crime and make juvenile justice officials more effective stewards of the public funds. Regional data illustrate the followingⁱⁱ:

Oregon Regions:	
	Cost Avoidance
Tri-County	\$ 1,581,770
Southern	\$ 11,793,355
Northern	\$ 9,528,133
Central & Eastern	\$ 2,711,180

ⁱ Data sources: Data for these reports were generated by the Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS). The rationale for selecting these specific years includes – 2001: all thirty-six counties were providing consistent recidivism data to the JJIS system at that time / 2006: represents the most recent recidivism report – 2006.

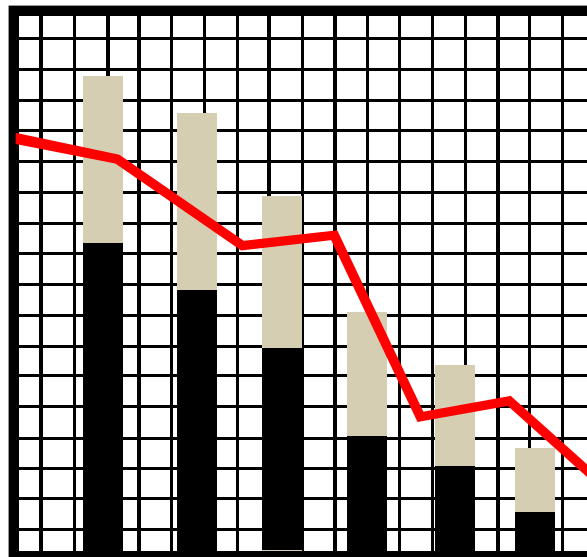
ⁱⁱ Regional data does not add up to statewide totals due to youth migration between counties. A single youth may have been counted in respective counties whereas he / she should be a single count at the state level.

Juvenile Recidivism and Cost Avoidance Analysis

Oregon Juvenile Department Directors Association

Yamhill County

3-31-09



Prepared By Linda Wagner
Juvenile Justice Researcher

Background - Oregon's juvenile departments have moved toward evidence-based interventions and are evaluating the impact of that reform on reducing juvenile crime and its associated costs. Their basic question is, "*Is Oregon's juvenile justice system effective at reducing juvenile crime and are justice officials efficient stewards of the public's funds?*" The purpose of this summary is to provide a brief description of methods used

to answer that question and county specific data concerning juvenile re-offenses and cost avoidance.

Methodology - In 1995, a collaboration among juvenile justice officials and state partners developed a standardized, statewide definition for tracking juvenile re-offenses (the number and types of crimes each youth commits). It found that a smaller group of offenders commit the majority of new offenses. They are referred to as the chronic group of juvenile offenders.

Creating a method to evaluate cost efficiencies proved to be challenging, however. Cost avoidance is related to the cost of each re-offense, what is incurred with increases in juvenile crime, and what is avoided by reducing delinquency. National research studies have varied greatly on the cost per juvenile crime. Some studies have listed it as several hundred dollars while others describe it at millions per crime.

The rationale for the cost per re-offense in this study was established in 1995 in a single Oregon county with an inflation rate applied to it each year. It is based on a) an average cost to victims established by a national study, b) costs to the juvenile justice system including, personnel, programs, utilities, training, supplies, etc. c) costs to law enforcement including making arrests and processing of juvenile crimes, and d) prosecution, defense, and court costs.

The cost per crime was applied to the “chronic group’s” offending pattern at two different points in time – 2001 and 2006. Reducing the percent of juveniles who become chronic offenders, even by a small amount, significantly reduces crime in local communities and yields a substantial cost avoidance. This occurs because the chronic group is so criminally active that even a small reduction creates very positive outcomes.

Findings (state, region, county specific) - The basic question in this study is, “*What would have been the impact in '01 if the chronic group rate had been the same as experienced in '06?*” For example, state wide juvenile crime data showed that in 2001, 7.2% of all juvenile delinquents became chronic offenders. That group was reduced to 6.2% by 2006. A change of only one percentage point in the chronic group would have resulted in 2,000 fewer crimes in '06 with a cost avoided of over \$22 million. Reducing the proportion of juvenile offenders who become chronic is imperative in order to reduce delinquency in local communities. Those changes significantly reduce victimizations by juvenile crime and make juvenile justice officials more effective stewards of the public funds. Regional data illustrate the following:

Oregon Regions:	
	Cost Avoidance
Tri-County	\$ 1,581,770
Southern	\$ 11,793,355
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Local Data – Yamhill County’s chronic juvenile offender group decreased from 9.1% in '01 to 5.4% in '06. Had the county experienced the '06 rate in '01, there would have been 251 fewer crimes for a cost avoidance of over \$2.6 million for that year.

YAMHILL COUNTY	N	% Chronic	Number in Chronic Group	Avg. Referrals Per Offender	Referrals Per Chronic Group	Avg. Crimes Per Referral	Total Crimes
2001 Chronic	582	9.1%	53	4.2	220	2.8	616
2001 With 2006 Chronic Group	582	5.4%	31	4.2	130	2.8	365
Difference In Crime:							251

	Cost Avoided Estimates
Cost with '01 chronic group	\$ 6,477,240
Cost with '06 chronic group	<u>\$ 3,840,881</u>
Cost avoided ('01 with '06 chronic rate)	\$ 2,636,359

by Savings per Target Youth

(Comparing years 2001 to 2006)

	County	Est. Pop'0- 17 Yrs.	Cost Avoided Amount	Cost Avoided per youth 10-17
1	Morrow	3,465	\$1,145,977	\$331
2	Lincoln	8,572	\$2,200,900	\$257
3	Tillamook	5,058	\$1,220,879	\$241
4	Yamhill	22,263	\$2,636,359	\$118
5	Grant	1,686	\$171,170	\$102
6	Hood River	5,715	\$546,687	\$96
7	Douglas	22,619	\$2,037,842	\$90
8	Josephine	17,320	\$1,560,069	\$90
9	Klamath	16,094	\$1,250,430	\$78
10	Benton	15,630	\$1,086,577	\$70
11	Coos	12,820	\$887,571	\$69
12	Jefferson	6,284	\$425,833	\$68
13	Jackson	45,605	\$2,533,641	\$56
14	Columbia	11,852	\$635,167	\$54
15	Crook	6,454	\$339,611	\$53
16	Lane	71,361	\$3,543,921	\$50
17	Wasco	5,894	\$282,184	\$48
18	Deschutes	35,666	\$1,526,243	\$43
19	Clackamas	90,182	\$2,550,855	\$28
20	Linn	27,113	\$614,894	\$23
21	Malheur	8,136	\$138,287	\$17
22	Marion	81,790	\$1,180,585	\$14
23	Polk	15,343	\$40,159	\$3
24	Wheeler	315	\$0	\$0
25	Sherman	400	\$0	\$0
26	Gilliam	401	\$0	\$0
27	Multnomah	157,184	(\$197,307)	(\$1)
28	Curry	3,704	(\$20,119)	(\$5)
29	Washington	137,742	(\$771,778)	(\$6)
30	Baker	3,428	(\$20,492)	(\$6)
31	Clatsop	8,019	(\$87,386)	(\$11)
32	Umatilla	18,639	(\$408,126)	(\$22)
33	Lake	1,724	(\$201,207)	(\$117)
34	Harney	1,778	(\$217,226)	(\$122)
35	Union	5,838	(\$720,109)	(\$123)
36	Wallowa	1,450	(\$297,652)	(\$205)