



PENNSYLVANIA JUVENILE JUSTICE

The Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission

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PROFESSIONAL CAUCUSES HELD AT THE VIRTUAL 2021 JAMES E. ANDERSON PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE ON JUVENILE JUSTICE

On Wednesday, November 3rd, five professional caucuses were held at the 2021 James E. Anderson Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice. The professional caucuses provide an opportunity for juvenile court professionals from different parts of the state to come together to discuss issues of importance or concern. For various logistical reasons, professional caucuses were not part of the agenda for last year's conference. Given the need to discuss key issues such as how the pandemic has affected the operation of juvenile courts and the findings and recommendations of the recently completed Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force, the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission decided to include professional caucuses in this year's conference. Participants had the opportunity to join with colleagues from their specialty within Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system to discuss issues of mutual interest. Below is a synopsis of topics covered at each caucus.

Over 70 chief and deputy chief juvenile probation officers attended the **Chief and Deputy Chief Juvenile Probation Officer Caucus**. Dauphin County Director of Probation Services and current President of the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers Chadwick Libby welcomed participants and provided opening remarks focused on the findings and recommendations of the recently completed Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force. In his comments, Mr. Libby recognized the progressive and excellent work being performed by juvenile probation departments across the state, while also acknowledging areas where the system can improve.

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The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission's Harrisburg office has relocated within the Pennsylvania Judicial Center.

The agency's new address is:

**Pennsylvania Judicial Center
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 4600
P.O. Box 62425
Harrisburg, PA 17106-2425**

Various participants voiced the need for the juvenile justice system to do a better job of publicizing and promoting the positive work being done within our system, as most individuals in the general public are unfamiliar with the juvenile justice system and only hear about highly publicized, negative events. Participants also acknowledged that while our system does have its flaws, it is also very resilient and has always examined ways to improve, as shown by Pennsylvania's involvement with various juvenile justice reform efforts over the past several decades.

Mr. Libby proceeded by sharing data used throughout the task force proceedings related to the handling of non-payment of MDJ fines, diversion, and expungement of juvenile records, matters that received great attention during the task force proceedings.

Several juvenile probation chiefs shared their practices regarding each topic, along with describing the challenges and barriers they face locally regarding each matter. A common theme was the need to engage their various stakeholders, with several counties sharing ideas how they involve their local stakeholders.

Additional topics of discussion included: County experiences with the Random Moment in Time Study (RMTS) audit, currently taking place in several counties with additional counties participating in this audit in the upcoming weeks; Updates and reminders of how counties can become involved with the Massachusetts Youth Screening Inventory - 2 (MAYSI-2) Project, and Trauma Screening Project, both projects supported through Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES); Probation Officer Safety; Activities currently taking place within the Chief Council's Research Committee;

The session closed with a brief conversation about the impact COVID-19 is having on juvenile probation departments, including whether agencies are being required to be vaccinated to maintain employment.

The **Juvenile Probation Supervisors Caucus** was facilitated by Bill Keim, a Supervisor from Berks County. Approximately fifty-one juvenile probation supervisors representing several Pennsylvania counties attended the session.

Following brief introductions, Mr. Keim began the session with an overview of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force, including data that was used by the Task Force, as well as the major findings and recommendations of the group. This presentation led to detailed discussions of the supervisor experience in the use of Graduated Responses, and the implementation and use of Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS). A common theme in these discussions was the important role that supervisors play in supporting probation officers as they learn to use these (and other) evidence-based practices.

Next, the conversation quickly evolved into a discussion about how counties have been responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Clearly, this has been a time of extraordinary challenges. While there were nuanced differences in the ways that counties have been responding to the health crisis, supervisors were clear that the use of advanced communication technology (ACT) was invaluable to the continuation of operations and services.

The session closed with supervisors discussing their unique training needs. Supervisors were clearly interested in attending workshops specifically tailored to their role as a manager. Training topic suggestions included wellness/self-care, dealing with difficult personnel issues, adult learning theory and techniques, and setting professional boundaries.

Allegheny County Juvenile Probation Officer Emilinda Jarrett facilitated this year's **Juvenile Probation Officers Caucus**. She started the session with a high-level overview of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force's goals, findings, and recommendations. The presentation and Ms. Jarrett's follow up questions prompted an in-depth discussion of the possible impact of the Task Force for Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system over the next five years, and how juvenile probation officers might be affected by changes to policy and practice. The discussion then moved to the issue of probation officer safety, which has been a major focus of the JPO Caucus in past years. This year, there was greater urgency to these discussions given the recent uptick in lethal violence and increases in gun-related offenses that juvenile probation officers in certain counties have observed.

The **Victim Services Caucus** was facilitated by Angela Mackley, Deputy Chief Probation Officer in Franklin County. A small group of 13 people had a free-flowing conversation that centered around the impact of COVID-19 on the courtroom setting and, in particular, how virtual court hearings have affected victim participation. All participants indicated that their counties had been holding virtual hearings during the COVID-19 pandemic. Several participants noted that their counties are back to holding in-person court hearings full-time with the intent to remain that way. Other counties indicated that they intend to use a blended court hearing approach, with some hearings virtual and others in-person.

There was general agreement that the use of virtual hearings had resulted in greater victim participation in the court process. A major reason mentioned was that victims did not need to take off work and commute to court to attend a virtual hearing. Another challenge with in-person hearings mentioned was how difficult it was for parents without cars or with difficult bus schedules to commute to court. Finally, the virtual setting does not require victims to face the juvenile who victimized them in-person and may be less intimidating as a result.

Another topic discussed in some detail was the victim advocate training and curriculum and the need for it to be revised, finalized and rolled out into a training program. A final discussion item focused on the best ways to reach victims with feedback forms and other types of communication. Several participants indicated that paper forms are being mailed while others are emailing and texting with victims to get a higher response rate more quickly.

The **Service Providers Caucus** was facilitated by Andy Benner, Chief Probation Officer of Cumberland County Juvenile Probation, and Abigail Wilson, Manager of Children's Policies and Programs at the Pennsylvania Council of Children, Youth and Family Services. There were 27 attendees, not including the facilitators. Benner started the discussion by asking about the impact of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force on the juvenile justice system as a whole and on service providers in particular. Several participants brought up the greater need for accurate and

high-quality data in order to accurately describe trends in the system and to predict programming needs for difficult populations (e.g., complex cases). Several participants mentioned the need to improve service providers' ability to analyze their own data, and one participant noted they had recently hired a part-time data analyst.

The discussion then turned to the staffing crisis that providers have been experiencing for a number of years, which COVID-19 has exacerbated. Several participants reported that the substantial decline in youth sent to residential placement due to the onset of the pandemic forced providers to let certain staff go. At the same time, there was widespread agreement that the principal problem providers face now is not being able to retain staff and hire new qualified staff, which is mainly due to not being able to compete with other industries that pay much higher salaries. Several proposed strategies for finding interested and qualified staff to work closely with system-involved youth included recruiting at college campuses, advertising on social media, and conducting focus groups with young job seekers to better understand how they find jobs.

The conversation then turned to how COVID-19 has affected daily operations and difficult decision providers have been forced to make. There was mention of the ongoing difficulty of trying to manage large numbers of youth safely when there are frequent quarantines and not enough staff on hand. Another important issue providers are grappling with is how to handle unvaccinated youth as well as attending to staff health and wellness during the pandemic.

The caucus ended with a conversation about trauma-informed care. Several participants mentioned that their programs had recently added trauma-specific services or hired staff with clinical expertise, complementing the efforts juvenile probation departments are making to screen more effectively for trauma-related needs.

SAVE the DATE! SAVE the DATE! SAVE the DATE!

The 2022 James E. Anderson Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice is scheduled to be held on **November 2-4, 2022.**

CHARLES MCINTYRE JOINS JCJC

The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC) is pleased to announce Charles McIntyre joined the staff on December 6, 2021, in the Administrative Assistant 1 position. In this role, Mr. McIntyre will offer various administrative and operational support services to the JCJC.

Prior to joining the JCJC, Mr. McIntyre was employed by the federal government for eighteen years, most recently in the role of Supervisory Staff Administrator for an ARMY Hospital Center. While employed by the federal government, Mr. McIntyre was responsible for coordinating the operation of the Hospital Center and exercising control in the name of the hospital Commander. He was also responsible for supervising the daily activities of full-time staff which included military and civilian employees assigned to assist in carrying out the functions of the unit. Mr. McIntyre retired from federal service in October of 2021. He obtained his Associates Degree in Business Administration from Columbia Southern University in 2008.

In his free time, Mr. McIntyre enjoys playing basketball, coaching basketball, golfing, and spending time with family. Mr. McIntyre can be reached at 717-787-0649 or at chrmcintyre@pa.gov.



Key Program Features:

- Nationally recognized program, taught by highly qualified and experienced faculty.
- Free tuition and lodging provided by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission.
- A hybrid 33-credit program.
- Summer coursework fully online and 3 face-to-face weekend sessions during the fall and spring semesters.
- A cohort-based program designed to enhance professional networking across the Commonwealth.
- Practical courses designed for juvenile justice professionals with an emphasis on evidence-based practices.

Program Contact: Sonya Stokes at systokes@ship.edu



For program information,
visit:

www.jcjc.pa.gov/Program-Areas/Graduate-Education

Juvenile Court Judges' Commission Position Announcement

Director of the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research

The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC) is seeking applicants for the position of Director of the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research (CJJT&R) located at Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania.

Position Description: This position is responsible for planning, directing, and coordinating all programs administered at the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research including: oversight of the agency's Professional Development and Graduate Education Programs; the agency's Information and Technology Division, including the design and implementation of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Case Management System and activities associated with data collection, data analysis, and publication of juvenile court dispositions and other related juvenile justice information. This position also oversees juvenile justice-related research projects and provides technical assistance to juvenile court judges and chief juvenile probation officers.

Qualifications: Applicants must possess Seven years of professional juvenile justice experience which includes two years in an administrative, supervisory, or professional juvenile court consultative capacity; and a master's degree in criminal justice, criminology, or the behavioral sciences.

- Civil Service Permanent Full-Time Position - *The examination announcement for this position is available at:* <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/pabureau/jobs/3359367/juvenile-justice-training-and-research-director?sort=PostingDate%7CDescending&page=3&paqetype=jobOpportunitiesJobs>

PLEASE NOTE: All applicants are responsible for adhering to the application and posting requirements as described in the job posting to be eligible for consideration. Failure to exactly follow these requirements will eliminate a candidate from consideration. All questions on the application must be fully answered. No question should be answered as "see attachment", as attachments will not be considered as part of the formal application screening and scoring process.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Richard D. Steele, JCJC Executive Director, at ricsteele@pa.gov or (717) 787-6910.

Application Deadline: January 27, 2022



FEDERAL JJRPA REAUTHORIZATION REQUIRES “INTEREST OF JUSTICE” DETERMINATION

In December of 2018, the Juvenile Justice Reform Act (JJRA) of 2018 was signed into law, reauthorizing and substantially amending the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJRPA) originally enacted in 1974. The JJRPA established the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to support local and state efforts to prevent delinquency and improve the juvenile justice system.

Although there are several significant amendments provided by the JJRA, one of the most impactful of these is the requirement that any child under the age of 18 who is being processed through criminal proceedings must be separated by sight and sound from adult inmates and may not, except under limited circumstances, be held pretrial in a jail or lockup for adults.

In Pennsylvania, this requirement would apply to individuals who are either “direct filed” to adult proceedings pursuant to the exclusion provisions of the Juvenile Act (42 Pa.C.S. § 6302), or those who are transferred to criminal proceedings pursuant to the Juvenile Act (42 Pa.C.S. § 6355).

In these situations, if the child is not released pretrial on bail or otherwise, they may be held securely in a facility licensed by the Department of Human Services as a juvenile detention center, but not in an adult jail or lockup.

The exception to this requirement occurs when a court holds a hearing and finds that keeping the child in an adult facility is “in the interest of justice”. To determine whether detaining a child in an adult jail or lockup is in the interest of justice, the court must weigh seven factors, including:

1. the person’s age;
2. their physical and mental maturity;
3. their present mental state, including whether they present an imminent risk of self-harm;
4. the nature and circumstances of the charges;
5. the youth’s history of delinquency;
6. the relative ability of the available adult and juvenile facilities to both meet the needs of the individual but to protect the public and other youth in their custody; and,
7. “any other relevant factor”.

If the court concludes that the balance of these factors points in favor of detaining the child in an adult facility, the court must hold a hearing once every 30 days to review whether the placement in an adult jail is still in the best interest of justice. Additionally, even when it is in the interest of justice, the child cannot be held in an adult facility for more than 180 days total, unless the court finds good cause for an extension, or the child waives the 180-day maximum. Individuals who are held in adult facilities under the interest of justice exception will still be protected by the Prison Rape Elimination Act’s (PREA) Youthful Inmates provision.

This requirement of the JJRA became effective on December 21, 2021. The Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission (JCJC) has been working along with the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) to develop proposed legislative amendments to the Juvenile Act related to transfer to criminal proceedings reflective of the new requirements. Additionally, it is anticipated that amendments will be made to both the Rules of Juvenile Court Procedure and the Rules of Criminal Procedure reflective of these federal requirements. These amendments are not currently completed.

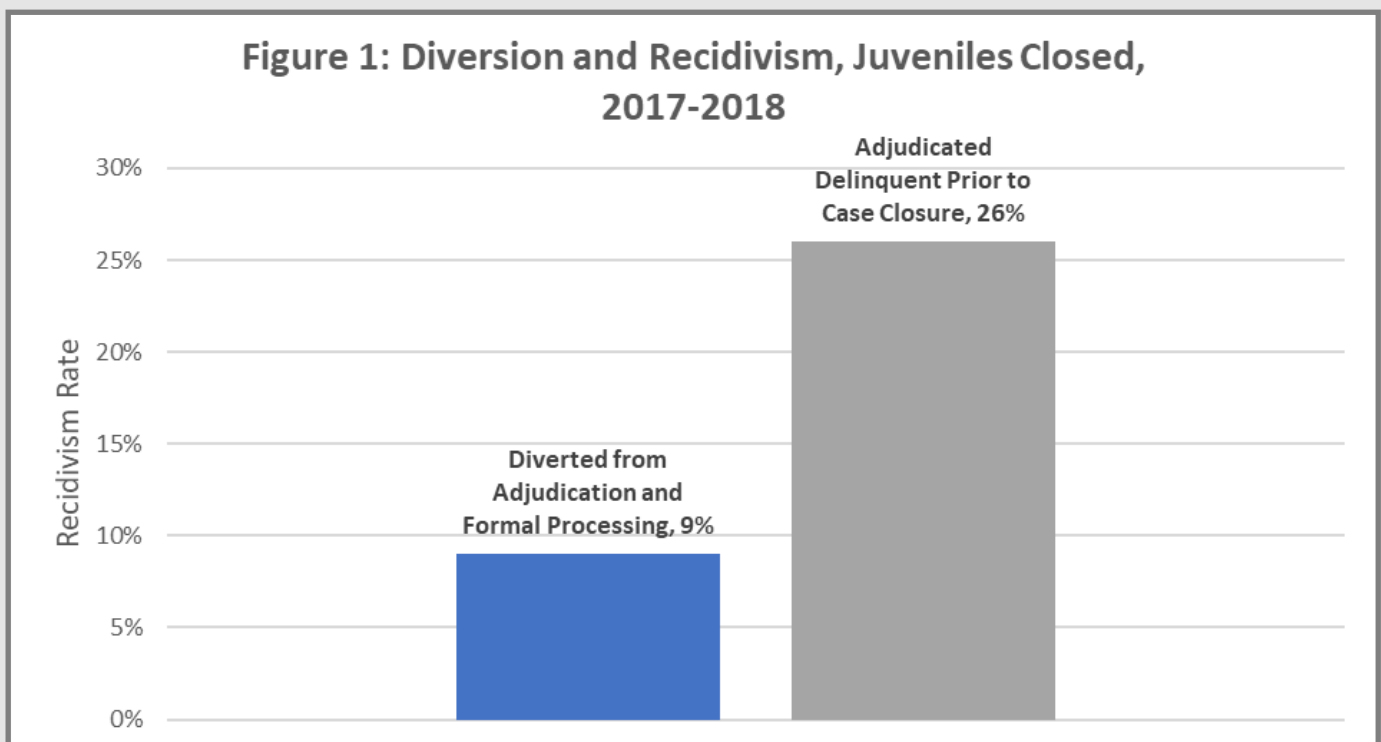
Given the background above, JCJC has provided guidance to juvenile courts to temporarily implement the federal JJRA requirements as they apply to proceedings pursuant to 42 Pa.C.S. § 6355 Transfer to criminal proceedings. Likewise, the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) has provided guidance prepared by PCCD of a similar nature in the handling of cases that meet the direct file requirements of Pa. C.S.A. § 6302.

As efforts continue to clarify this matter, JCJC will keep juvenile courts advised of legislative or rules amendments. For additional information on this matter, feel free to contact Rick Steele (ricsteele@pa.gov) or Bob Tomassini (rtomassini@pa.gov).

PENNSYLVANIA JUVENILE JUSTICE RECIDIVISM REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

In September, the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC) released its seventh recidivism report, entitled: *The Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Recidivism Report: Juveniles Closed 2007-2018*. The current study updates the analysis of recidivism trends and predictors to include juveniles closed in 2017 and 2018. This report is part of Pennsylvania's longstanding effort to measure the impact of the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES) on recidivism and other youth outcomes. Data for this project was compiled from the Pennsylvania Juvenile Case Management System (PaJCMS) and the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Court's (AOPC) Common Pleas Case Management System (CPCMS). Recidivism is defined as: A subsequent delinquency adjudication in juvenile court or conviction in criminal court for either a misdemeanor or felony offense within two years of case closure.

This is the final part of a four-part series meant to highlight key findings from this report. Part 4 examines trends in the offense history and system penetration of juveniles closed between 2007 and 2018 and how those characteristics relate to recidivism. To review a copy of the full report, please visit: www.jcjc.pa.gov.



- The majority of juveniles closed in 2017 and 2018 (61% and 62%, respectively) were diverted from adjudication and formal processing (not shown). These numbers are consistent with past reports.
- As Figure 1 shows, juveniles closed in 2017-2018 who were diverted from adjudication and formal processing were almost one-third as likely to recidivate as juveniles who were adjudicated delinquent prior to closure (9% vs. 26%).

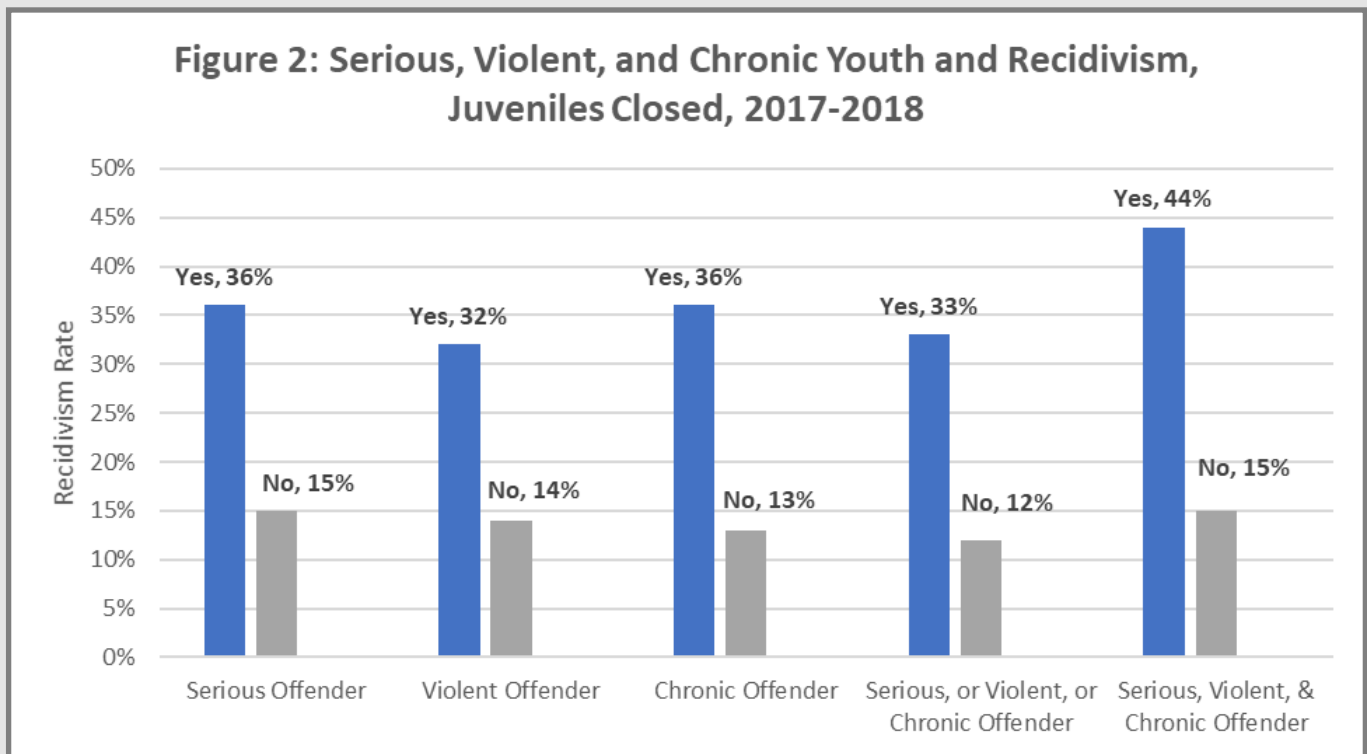
In response to the growth of violent juvenile crime in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) developed the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders. The terms "serious," "violent," and "chronic" emerged as part of an effort by researchers to identify the subset of juveniles that research shows account for a disproportionate share of offending and re-offending, and to focus court interventions on this group. The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC) wanted to have a research-based method for identifying which youth were at higher risk of reoffending based on their offense profile. For these reasons, starting with the publication of the first recidivism report in May 2013, JCJC has presented data on the relationship between Serious, Violent, and Chronic offending and recidivism.

JCJC consulted with the former Director of OJJDP, James “Buddy” Howell, who provided guidance on which offenses in the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Management System (PaJCMS) should be considered “serious” and “violent” and how to utilize Serious, Violent, and Chronic youth offending classifications (defined below) in research on recidivism.

Serious Offender: A juvenile who has been adjudicated delinquent in juvenile court at any point in his or her juvenile offending history for one of the following offenses: burglary, theft (felonies only), arson, drug trafficking (manufacture/deliver/possession with intent to deliver), and extortion (theft by extortion).

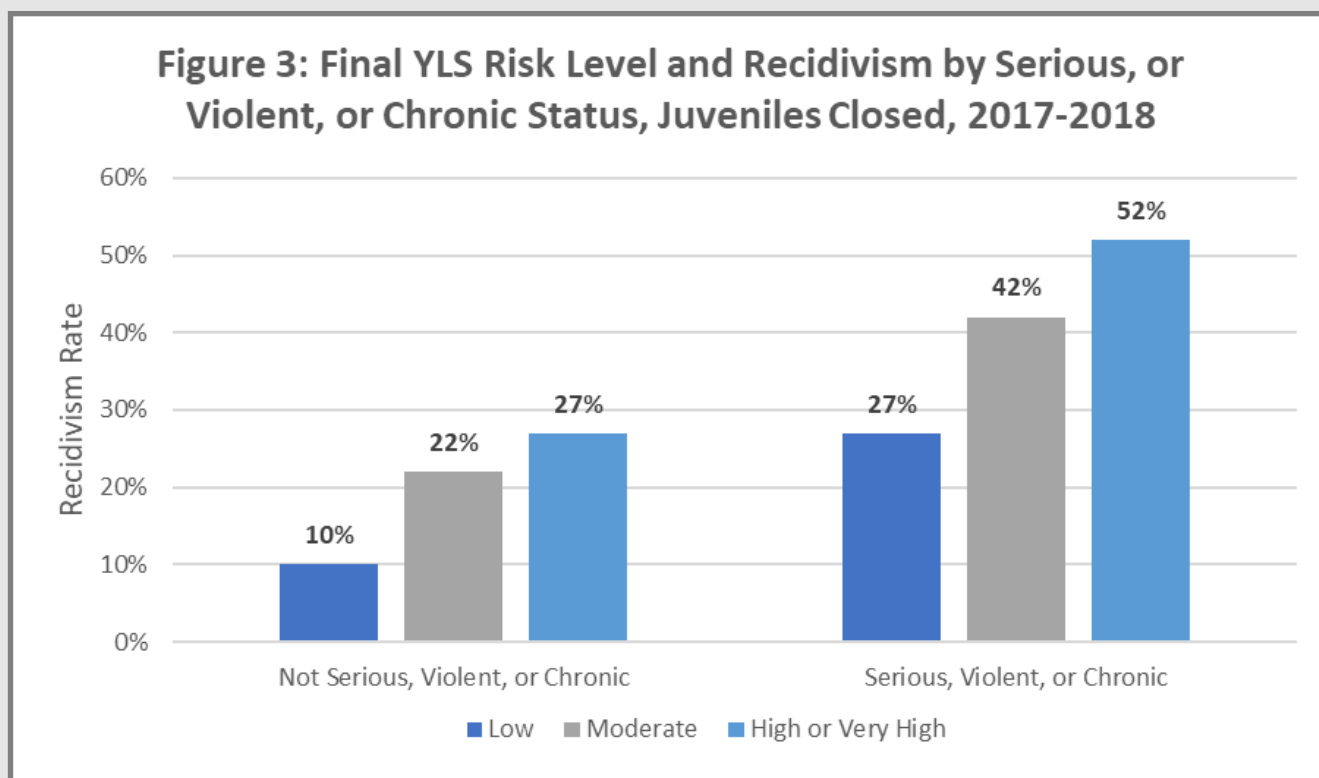
Violent Offender: A juvenile who has been adjudicated delinquent in juvenile court at any point in his or her juvenile offending history for one of the following offenses: homicide or non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, kidnapping, and select firearm/weapon offenses.

Chronic Offender: A juvenile who has four or more previous written allegations for separate incidents that occurred prior to the date of the 2007-2016 case closure.



- For each of the past twelve years, approximately one out of five juveniles closed met the criteria of being a Serious, or Violent, or Chronic (SVC) offender (not shown).
- As was the case in previous reports, for juveniles closed in 2017-2018, the Serious, Violent, and Chronic variables were all strongly correlated with recidivism. See figure 2 above.
- Juveniles who met the criteria for being Serious, Violent, **and** Chronic recidivated at a higher rate than those who only met the less restrictive criteria of being Serious, **or** Violent, or Chronic offenders (44% vs. 33%).
- Figure 3 (see next page) demonstrates that being a Serious, or Violent, or Chronic offender is correlated with recidivism after taking into account youths’ final YLS risk level. At each YLS risk level, SVC youth recidivated at a much higher rate than non-SVC youth (e.g., 27% vs. 10% for low risk youth).

- As expected, the YLS is correlated with recidivism after taking into account youths' offense history. Among non-SVC youth, for example, 10% of low risk, 22% of moderate risk, and 27% of high or very high risk youth recidivated.



Main Conclusion

- Both offense history, as captured by Serious, or Violent, or Chronic status, and the YLS are independently related to recidivism and should continue to be analyzed separately and together.

TECHNOLOGY CORNER

Each year, the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC) gathers data on Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED). This data is compiled for federal reporting by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). The goal of reporting this data is to identify areas where there are differences between how white and minority juveniles are experiencing the juvenile justice system in Pennsylvania. If disparities are identified, the state and counties can create a plan to address areas of concern and create training for those in the juvenile justice system.

Additional information on this reporting requirement can be found at <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/programs/racial-and-ethnic-disparities>. If you are interested in getting your county's annual reports, please contact c-reanders@pa.gov.



NATIONAL JUVENILE JUSTICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements are reprinted from JUVJUST, an OJJDP news service:

NEW ISSUE OF AMBER ADVOCATE AVAILABLE NOW

OJJDP has released the latest issue of [The AMBER Advocate](#) newsletter, rounding out the series for the year. This issue highlights the 2021 National AMBER Alert and AMBER Alert in Indian Country Virtual Symposium and features articles on:

- The Connecticut AMBER Alert that led to the safe recovery of a 4-year-old autistic boy in one hour
- Jon Roddenberry, Florida's Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse Supervisor
- AMBER Alert international news
- AMBER Alert briefs



RESOURCES:

- Access [previous issues](#) of the newsletter.
- Follow OJJDP on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

OJJDP LAUNCHES REDESIGNED TRIBAL YOUTH RESOURCE CENTER WEBSITE

The OJJDP [Tribal Youth Resource Center](#) (TYRC) has launched a newly designed website. [Tribalyouth.org](#) provides enhanced features and serves as a portal to tribal youth-specific prevention and intervention resources to support OJJDP tribal grantees and interested communities.



Features on the redesigned website include:

- Enhanced resource library with streamlined search features.
- Access to training opportunities and program assessment tools.
- Subscriber feature for newsletter and e-blast.
- Links to blogs, podcasts, and YouTube channel.

RESOURCES:

- Learn more about OJJDP's [Tribal Youth Programs and Services](#).
- View the Tribal Youth Initiatives [fact sheet](#).
- Follow OJJDP on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

OJJDP NEWS @ A GLANCE, NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2021

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) announces the availability of [OJJDP News @ a Glance](#), November/December 2021.



This issue's Message from the Acting Administrator and top story recognize National Native American Heritage Month and highlight OJJDP initiatives promoting the growth and resilience of tribal youth. The Youth Voices column profiles a graduate of an OJJDP mentoring program who now serves on the National Mentoring Resource Center's Youth Advisory Council. The Tribal Connections section highlights trauma-informed trainings for school staff, Peacemaking Circle trainings, and the value of cultural connectedness in tribal juvenile healing to wellness courts.

Other features in this issue—

- [OJJDP Hosts National Training Conference for State Practitioners](#)
- [Staff Spotlight: Grants Management Specialist Kara McDonagh](#)
- [Trauma-Informed Trainings Designed to Boost Academic Success for Tribal Youth](#)
- [Using Peacemaking Circles to Build and Restore Relationships](#)
- [Emphasis on Native Culture Distinguishes Tribal Juvenile Healing to Wellness Courts](#)
- [News in Brief](#)
- [Upcoming Events](#)

RESOURCES:

- [OJJDP News @ a Glance](#), November/December 2021 (NCJ 303043) is available [online](#).
- Follow OJJDP on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

This publication is produced monthly by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission. Guest articles are welcome; please submit by e-mail to ra-oajcnews@pa.gov.

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