Juvenile Reentry in Los Angeles County: An Exploration of Strengths, Barriers and Policy Options

A report to the Second District of Los Angeles County

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

California’s Los Angeles County is home to the largest juvenile justice system in the United States. The county incarcerates most of its juvenile offenders in one of 19 probation camps, or residential facilities, and typically releases the juveniles within a year. As juveniles leave confinement, they face the daunting challenge of abruptly reentering their communities, often without adequate support.

Reentry is challenging for any prison population, but for juvenile offenders it is particularly complicated given the range of developmental changes these youth are experiencing. Additionally, juvenile offenders in the L.A. County juvenile justice system are burdened by high rates of mental illness, substance abuse, gang involvement, and low rates of educational attainment. For too many juveniles, these barriers to reentry go unaddressed, making it difficult to successfully reintegrate into their communities. Recidivism rates are high, and while the Probation Department does not collect and share outcome data in a systematic way, the available evidence indicates that youth outcomes are grim.

While the Probation Department should be credited for undergoing notable changes over the last few years, its reentry process requires improvement. The typical reentry process juveniles experience reveals numerous holes and challenges, such as difficulty re-enrolling in school, interruption of medical services and inadequate or nonexistent structured activities in the community where they reside. By comparing the Los Angeles reentry process to national best practices and innovative reentry programs, we conclude that pre-release planning, transition services, interagency collaboration and data collection can all be strengthened. While there are some effective tools and policies in place, the Probation Department lacks a system that adequately prepares most juveniles for reentry.

Fortunately, L.A. County and Probation Department officials can look to a number of national and local (both county and privately-led) reentry programs that embody promising reentry approaches. These innovative programs can guide the county in improving its own process.

We recommend the county take the following actions to improve its reentry process:

1. Build up pre-release planning using a multi-disciplinary perspective.
2. Ease youth out of the controlled environment of confinement by incorporating step-down features into the transition.
3. Implement strategies to minimize educational and healthcare service disruptions during reentry.
4. Build a comprehensive strategy to address juvenile gang involvement during reentry.
5. Establish an accountability system for youth with graduated rewards and sanctions.
6. Centralize local information on reentry practices, programs and research.
7. Examine county pilot programs to explore new ways for interagency collaboration.
8. Enforce consistent implementation of the Probation Department’s reentry protocol.
9. Improve data collection and analysis capabilities of the Probation Department.
10. Evaluate and consider replicating promising L.A. programs, such as the Day Reporting Center, Long Beach Reentry and New Roads.
INTRODUCTION

Spikes in crime in the United States in the 1980s and 1990s ignited public fervor for more punitive treatment of offenders of all ages. An impetus to be “tough on crime” led to a wave of laws being passed that put more juveniles behind bars, either in the adult or juvenile criminal justice systems.¹ Similarly, California experienced an increase in “tough on crime” laws and has consistently ranked among the states with the highest rates of incarceration for juveniles. According to 2006 data compiled by Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) within the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), the state had a juvenile incarceration rate of 351 per 100,000 youth 21 or younger, awarding California the ninth highest juvenile incarceration rate in the country.¹¹ Indeed, its sheer size coupled with high rates of incarceration give Los Angeles County the largest juvenile justice system of any county in the country.¹²

This massive incarceration rate has implications not only for those locked up, but also for the communities they come from. The vast majority of incarcerated youth will be released, and they face the challenge of reintegrating back into their communities and avoiding future criminal behavior. The process of reintegration can be especially challenging for juvenile offenders given their ongoing physical, mental and emotional development. In addition to trying to transition into adulthood, these juveniles face another central challenge as they are released from incarceration: even if they have undergone internal changes and are willing and able to modify their behavior, the neighborhoods and families to which they return have often not changed.

Many policymakers in Los Angeles County are concerned with public safety and, consequently, with the successful outcomes of juvenile probationers. Therefore, it is imperative to identify the reentry policies and programs that effectively curb recidivism among juveniles released from incarceration. Recidivism cannot be reduced without examining the practices of the agency primarily tasked with providing probation services, the L.A. County Probation Department.

Investigations into the L.A. County Probation Department by the U.S. Department of Justice have spurred several reforms in the last decade. These changes include reducing juvenile Probation Officer (PO) caseloads from about 90 to 25 and moving toward a model of service provision that serves youth and their families.¹² The Probation Department has also improved the conditions in the juvenile detention halls by developing mental health assessments and more in-detention services. The Probation Department is now striving to improve its collaboration with other county agencies that play a role in delivering reentry services and supports to juveniles, as well as meeting DOJ requirements for improvements in the probation camps.

Despite these efforts, many challenges remain in regards to the treatment of juveniles in probation camps and the reentry process that follows for the approximately 3,900 juveniles released from camp each year. This paper will examine this reentry process for male juvenile offenders, who represent over three-quarters of all arrests and an even greater percentage of those incarcerated in probation camps.⁵ Given that the needs of juveniles differ based on gender, the findings of this report may not necessarily apply to female offenders.

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas is particularly concerned with juvenile reentry and public safety given the historically high crime rates in L.A. County’s Second District. Still, while
juvenile reentry may be a pressing concern for some communities more than for others, the resources used to curb youth crime and recidivism are county-wide and county officials should be concerned that these resources are being used optimally. How do we know the county is effectively employing human and economic resources to ensure successful juvenile reentry from probation camps, thereby improving public safety throughout Los Angeles?

Background and Context

**The county system** - Los Angeles County – the largest in the country – is home to nearly 10 million residents living across 88 cities and is broken into five supervisorial districts. The nature of L.A. County government is quite complex as it consists of 37 departments and over 100,000 employees. Several county departments are simultaneously responsible for delivering services for successful reentry of juvenile probationers (Department of Mental Health, Department of Public Health, Los Angeles County Office of Education, etc.); however, the Probation Department is primarily responsible for probationer outcomes.

**The Second District** - In 2008, Mark Ridley-Thomas was elected County Supervisor of the Second District. His district, which is home to about 2.3 million residents, encompasses the area historically known as South Central Los Angeles, which is characterized by high concentrations of poverty, violence and gang activity. A total of 38 percent of the 3,900 juvenile probationers leaving county probation camps each year (about 1482 youth) call the Second District home. Supervisor Ridley-Thomas and his staff are therefore particularly concerned with reentry.

**Juvenile reentry: the pathways from arrest to incarceration in Los Angeles** – The county detains juveniles in one of the three county juvenile halls while they await adjudication. When juveniles are found guilty, the county will either send them home on probation (which happens to the majority of youth, and particularly first-time offenders) or incarcerate them in one of three settings: 1) the county juvenile probation camps managed by the Probation Department and functioning as long-term residential facilities, 2) the California Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) prisons, consisting of state-run secure facilities, or 3) the adult criminal justice system, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. The chart below shows this process, and Appendix A details these different reentry pathways:
The most serious repeat juvenile offenders may be sent to the adult system or state juvenile prisons. Judges usually sentence mid-level offenders to one of the 19 county probation camps. Since the vast majority of juveniles who become incarcerated end up in a county camp, the county-run process embodies the “average reentry experience” for youth in Los Angeles.

**Average juvenile offender in camp** - The average youth offender sent to camp is between the ages of 15 and 17, and the most common violations are offenses against persons (43%) and property offenses (33%). (See Appendix B for more demographic information on the camp population). Most youth held in camp stay for short periods of time – usually around six to nine months. Most offenders will leave camp as a legal minor (age 17 or younger); the mean age of male youths at time of camp exit is 16.7. However, about 25 percent of juveniles will be legal adults (18 or older) when released.

**Reentry as a continuum: juvenile halls, probation camps and our scope** - Reentry is often understood as a continuous process that begins from the moment of arrest. Indeed, everything a youth experiences – from the manner in which he is treated by law enforcement officials to where he is detained while awaiting trial, to the treatment he receives while incarcerated – will influence his ability to successfully reintegrate into his community. This paper defines more narrowly the reentry process as beginning with the transition out of camp and continuing with aftercare. Using this scope enables a more fluid comparison of the reentry (aftercare) programs provided by the county and private entities. Even though it is outside of the scope of this paper, it is important to acknowledge the role that both detention in juvenile hall and placement in probation camp play in preparing (or failing to prepare) youth to reenter their communities. 

L.A. County juveniles who are detained in one of the three county juvenile halls while awaiting trial are held for an average of 16 to 24 days. However, this average does not capture the number of youth who are held for many months in juvenile hall. In 2003, these juvenile halls were found to be violating youth residents’ rights because of deficient medical and mental health care, failure to provide rehabilitation, inadequate education and insufficient protection from harm. While some of these deficiencies have since been addressed, the juvenile halls still suffer from overcrowding, safety concerns, and a lack of programming. Again, while outside the scope of this report, the county should examine the decision to hold so many youth in these facilities while awaiting trial rather than letting them stay home or diverting them to programs run by community-based organizations (CBOs).

After adjudication, the county sends many juvenile male offenders with sustained petitions (found guilty) to one of 16 camps. These county camps vary quite substantially in staff culture, programming and location (See Appendix C for a list of camps). Camp Gonzalez, for example, is situated in the Malibu hills close to the city of Los Angeles. This camp benefits from the involvement of nonprofit organizations and philanthropists that run counseling programs, writing classes, a structured education and reentry program, and even cooking classes. Alternatively, the Challenger camps in Lancaster are located about 70 miles outside the city and are known for their prison-like environments and scant programming. Furthermore, the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) schools at the six Challenger camps faced recent litigation for inadequate educational programming. Given these camp-by-camp differences, it is clear that the quality of services a youth receives depends largely on the camp in which he is placed.
Additionally, in 2008, a DOJ investigation of the camps documented various constitutional violations, including excessive use of force by guards, insufficient staffing and deficient mental health care. The DOJ also cited that some camps lack appropriate rehabilitative programs to address issues such as anger management, substance abuse, gang affiliation and family conflict. The DOJ is threatening to intervene further in 2011 in all of the camps if these conditions are not fixed. This is all indicative of the limited rehabilitative programming most camps offer.

The following timeline provides context for our discussion of juvenile reentry policy in L.A. County in this paper:

Structure and Methodology

The research and writing for this report was conducted between November 2009 and April 2010, with additional editing done in the fall and winter of 2010 as the report became utilized by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. Below are the major research questions that we addressed, as well as the methodology that obtains to each question. After addressing each research question, this report will conclude with policy recommendations for our client and the county as a whole.

A. What does the evidence tell us about the outcomes of juvenile probationers in Los Angeles who are reentering their communities from county probation camps?

A problem analysis will utilize quantitative outcome data, qualitative information from interviews, and reports on L.A. County to explore youth outcomes under the current system.

B. What are the age-specific needs and characteristics of juvenile offenders in L.A. County?

We will assess the characteristics of juvenile offenders in Los Angeles and make an estimation of their needs by looking at quantitative data from various county agencies and interviews with practitioners (County Probation Department and CBO staff).
C. What does juvenile reentry literature tell us about best practices?
A literature review will reveal best practices for juvenile reentry programs. We will create a framework based on these best practices and needs of the probation youth.

D. What is the average reentry process for juvenile offenders in L.A. County, and does it fulfill the needs of youth released from probation camps reentering their communities?
We will investigate the average reentry process for juvenile offenders in L.A. County through site visits and interviews with Probation Officers, Probation Camp Directors and youth advocates. We then discuss how the process succeeds, or falls short, of meeting the needs of these youth using our framework of model reentry programs.

E. What local and national programs can L.A. County build on to further success in juvenile reentry?
Lastly, we investigate a number of innovative county-run and community-based programs in Los Angeles that address the challenges to reentry in an effective manner according to our framework. We rely on interviews and site visits to explain local program models, and then assess how these L.A. programs match up to best practices using a matrix and identified “criteria for success.”

Further details of the methodology, including a list of interviews and site visits, can be found in Appendices D and E.

Limitations of Methodology: Starting in December 2009, we began our quest to gather a range of descriptive and outcome data from the Probation Department as well as other departments. Descriptive data was provided, however, a taskforce was eventually formed by the Probation Department to aggregate the outcome data we requested that was not readily available. Unfortunately, the department did not provide it to us in time to incorporate it into our original report (see Appendix F for this data), although we have incorporated some in since then. Some of this new data, in our estimation, lacks enough context (i.e., the employment statistic) or is too narrowly-defined (i.e., the recidivism statistic) for us to use with complete confidence. Additionally, the Probation Department was not able to provide us with some of the other outcome data we requested. Therefore, it is important to note that in the absence of needed data, this report relies substantially on individual interviews of practitioners and experts in the field, including Probation Department staff. Additionally, due to a limited time frame for fieldwork, we did not survey youth directly but instead used past studies and expert interviews to discuss the youth perspective.
PROBLEM ANALYSIS

**Problem Definition:** The juvenile reentry process in Los Angeles County does not adequately address the needs of most juvenile probationers to support their successful reintegration back into their communities and achieve rehabilitation after incarceration.

Reentry is typically described as the experience of transitioning from some form of incarceration back into one’s community. What evidence is there to tell us whether juvenile offenders leaving probation camps in Los Angeles are successfully reentering their communities?

At a minimum, to successfully reenter a society means to not recidivate, or to refrain from repeating criminal activities. In L.A. County, the figures we received on recidivism for youth leaving camp seemed somewhat limited. The probation taskforce that gathered data for our report estimated a recidivism rate as low as 12.8 percent, although the definition for recidivism was limited to “new subsequent sustained charge within six months,” a narrow definition, since a juvenile would have to re-offend, be re-arrested and re-adjudicated, and found guilty again in a very short time frame. Another juvenile recidivism estimate (with recidivism defined as a re-arrest within two years of release) from the Probation Department for 2008-2009 hovers around 40 percent; however, there was little explanation to accompany this figure. For example, it is unclear whether this rate also accounts those juvenile probationers re-arrested as adults. The OJJDP estimates a national recidivism rate (re-arrest within 12 months) of roughly 55 percent, which is higher than both L.A. County estimates. Even if we were to adhere to the 40 percent county recidivism rate, this still means that a youth exiting a probation camp in Los Angeles has almost a one-in-two chance of being re-arrested within two years. This is not successful reentry.

Successful reentry is not defined solely as the ability to avoid renewing criminal behavior; rather, successful reentry is the creation of productive citizens. This includes rehabilitation in the form of good mental health and engagement in pro-social activities like education and the workforce. Since recidivism rates do not truly capture whether a youth is a “successful” citizen in his community after incarceration, they should be used in conjunction with other outcome measurements such as graduation and employment rates. Unfortunately, the Probation Department was unable to provide us with some of this outcome data. Still, we gathered considerable information from interviews of practitioners throughout the county – from judges to advocates to POs – who collectively estimate that only a slim minority, between 10 and 20 percent of juvenile probationers, acquire a high school diploma or GED. Moreover, the Probation Department indicated that only around 7 percent of youth are employed after leaving camp, adding to our findings that these youth struggle to become productive citizens in the mainstream.

Aside from the reentry outcomes, the material we read and individuals we interviewed described the average county-led reentry process as problematic. Our interviews revealed that the county approach fails in many cases to adequately involve the youth’s family, address underlying causes of delinquency or engage in meaningful pre-planning of aftercare support. A DOJ investigation into the camps also cited inadequate involvement of families, poor mental health planning and insufficient record-keeping and sharing. An investigative report commissioned by the County Board of Supervisors and executed by the Children’s Planning Council noted that “[transition]
services for youth leaving the juvenile halls and camps are limited and not necessarily available in all the communities where they are needed…. aftercare treatment services for youth and families are sorely needed.”xx Therefore, from the available outcome data, interviews with practitioners in Los Angeles and past documented findings, there is little available evidence to show that juvenile offenders leaving camp are reentering their communities successfully.

The nature of the problem: understanding the youthful offender

In order to further understand the challenge of rehabilitating Los Angeles youth, we need to describe who they are and what characteristics make their successful reentry difficult. We will examine the inherent challenge of adolescence by highlighting recent findings in adolescent brain development research. We also look at some descriptive data of characteristics specific to juvenile probationers in Los Angeles, which helps us understand why reentry and rehabilitation is often difficult to achieve, and guide our policy recommendations.

Adolescent brain development: Research has found that youth maturity, cognitive ability and psychosocial capacity differ considerably from those of adults in ways that inhibit decision-making skills.xxi These findings have implications for reentry program models in Los Angeles:

• **Deficiencies in decision-making skills:** Research has shown that teenagers are less efficient in processing information and making logical, in-the-moment decisions than adults.xxii Their cognitive abilities, which enable them to strategize and weigh the consequences of their actions on themselves and others, are not yet developed. This makes teenagers less likely to perceive or be concerned with risks, consider the future, or self-regulate their behavior. Because these skills are still developing, adolescents often base their decisions on their emotions alone.xxiii As a result, teenagers are likelier to engage in thrill-seeking activities like excessive drinking, unsafe sex and crime.xxiv

• **Vulnerability to peers and external coercion:** Youth are particularly susceptible to peer influence, especially around ages 14 to 17—right at the peak years of juvenile crime.xxv Youth seek the acceptance and fear the rejection of their peers, and this influence is heightened in situations where there is pressure to participate in antisocial behavior.xxvi For juvenile offenders, this vulnerability to seek peer acceptance often leads to gang involvement and group criminal activity. Youth vulnerability to peer and gang influence must be addressed in juvenile reentry programming.

• **Unformed Character:** In addition to the ongoing physical, mental and emotional development youth undergo, their character is still forming, and thus positive interactions with adults are very important. However, youth do have a moral code, which is strong in loyalty and fairness. Therefore, reentry programs that stress fair treatment, clear guidelines and consistent accountability would be most appropriate.

Characteristics of juvenile probationers in L.A.: The following summarizes the Los Angeles probation population’s struggle with education, mental health, substance abuse, and gang involvement:
**Problem Analysis**

- **Education:** One in five probation-involved youth in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is identified as special education, compared to one in 10 of all youth in the district. The figure for special education is likely higher for the probation camp population, especially if we account for the fact that many youth go unidentified.\(^{xxvii}\) Standardized test scores show that youth in probation camps have, on average, a grade level math score of 5.5 and a reading score of 5.3 (meaning middle fifth-grade level for both).\(^{xxviii}\) Moreover, the California High School Exit Exam pass rate, an indicator for high school graduation rates, was only 11 percent in 2007 for probation students.\(^{xxix}\)

- **Mental health:** According to the Probation Department, approximately 30 percent of all youth screened in juvenile hall in 2004-05 had received prior mental health treatment from the Department of Mental Health, as indicated by the Massachusetts Youth Screening (MAYSI-2). However, various Probation Department staff have suggested that the MAYSI-2 screening tool might be under-detecting mental health disorders.\(^{xxx}\) The national average of incarcerated youth with mental health problems is closer to two-thirds, and a 2009 UCLA research study of Los Angeles’ juvenile probation camp population revealed that 50 percent of a sample of males had received mental health services before arriving to camp.\(^{xxxi}\) Of these mental health problems, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety disorders and anger problems are the most common.

- **Substance abuse:** Nationally almost 50 percent of juvenile offenders suffer from a substance abuse disorder, primarily alcohol and marijuana dependency.\(^{xxxii}\) The UCLA study referenced above revealed that 58 percent of the male sample reported having received a professional diagnosis of substance abuse dependency and over one-third admitted to being in an alcohol or drug placement program before entering camp.\(^{xxxiii}\)

- **Gang involvement:** The gang presence in Los Angeles is unparalleled in the country. L.A. County is home to approximately 150,000 gang members, 39,000 of whom reside within the city limits, and there are about 1,300 different street gangs scattered across the county.\(^{xxxiv}\) The UCLA study found that 80 percent of the sample from Camp Gonzalez self-reported gang affiliation. Almost half of the sample stated that they had a caretaker who was also involved with gangs, showing how entrenched gangs are in vulnerable neighborhoods.\(^{xxv}\) While the study is based on a small sample size, based on our interviews and fieldwork, we suspect gang involvement levels exceed 50 percent.

**Summary on juvenile offender characteristics:**

Moving onto the next section, it is important to keep in mind that juveniles in Los Angeles have very complex academic, health and social needs, not to mention under-developed decision making skills and susceptibility to peer influence that accompany adolescence. Since it is the combination of these factors that contributes to juvenile crime in Los Angeles, any reentry program will have to address these issues.
FINDINGS

Part I: What makes for a successful reentry program in Los Angeles?

A) Best Practices in Juvenile Reentry

**Finding #1:**

Best practices for reentry programs include: 1) assessment and planning, 2) a focus on transition, 3) individualized aftercare, 4) inter-agency collaboration, and 5) implementation and evaluation.

Few reentry programs, nationally or in Los Angeles, have been rigorously evaluated. Still, extensive research and dialogue spurred largely by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has produced some literature about reentry practices. We have combined best practices from the reentry literature with the reentry needs in L.A. County we identified during our fieldwork to design a framework consisting of five main components. This framework is meant to be a tool to analyze the current, Probation Department-led, average reentry process, and thus focuses on aspects county agencies can influence, such as assessment, transitions and individual youth risk-factors. While our analysis still attempts to incorporate the research on the importance of family and neighborhood conditions on re-offending, we do not offer an in-depth analysis or set of recommendations about what should occur at the community-level to improve juvenile reentry. ^xxxvi

Reentry Program Framework
Findings

1) Assessment and planning

- **Pre and post-release assessments of youth needs**: Detailed, well-designed assessments and classification systems are needed to identify youths’ needs. These types of assessments should first occur during incarceration and should identify strengths and deficits in mental and physical health, education, peer networks and family supports. These assessments are most helpful if performed periodically to document changes. Targeted assessments are crucial to ensure that resources are being used strategically.

- **Pre and post-release planning using assessment findings**: These assessments should be used to inform the development of reentry plans that dictate the type of treatment and supervision a youth will need. These plans are most effective if they speak to the time spent in incarceration, the transition back into the community, and the months or years following that. It is essential that these plans are created well before a youth is released; these plans should also be updated periodically, especially if a youth’s needs or support network has changed dramatically.

- **Multi-disciplinary perspective**: Given a youth’s myriad of needs, multiple agencies should be at the table for pre and post-release planning. This planning of wraparound services ensures a juvenile’s needs can be discussed and planned for in a holistic manner.

2) Focus on transition

The month or two surrounding the transition from incarceration to community is the most critical period of reentry. Often times, if a youth can make it successfully past the first few months, he is less likely to re-offend overall. Moving from an institutional setting back into his home neighborhood can be a huge change for a youth, and successful reentry programs structure this transition in a way to minimize the disruption.

- **Step-down features**: Step-down features are useful for easing a youth out of the structured, disciplined environment of incarceration into the less structured environment of the community. These step-down features serve to prepare youth for increased responsibility, autonomy and decision-making capacity in the community setting. This can happen through changes in the institution or exposure to the outside world. Examples include increasing autonomy while in residential placement, reacquainting a youth with his family and neighborhood before being released (supervised trips to the community, coaching on how to successfully overcome peer pressure), and continuing intensive treatment and supervision for the 30 to 60 days after release.

- **Family involvement**: Family (or caregiver) involvement during incarceration can keep a youth connected to the outside world, and family counseling can help strengthen relationships, both of which are important to a successful transition. Families should be involved in the planning, as they are vital to keeping a youth on track, providing a structured home environment and helping ensure school and counseling appointments are attended. Adolescents struggle to stay focused and need the support of adults to stay on track. However, when a family has played a destructive role in a youth’s life, he may
benefit more from living away from the family. In these cases, finding a supportive home environment is necessary.

• **Continuity of care:** Lastly, to ensure a smooth transition, it is essential that youth receive continuous access to educational and medical services. After release, youth need to immediately enroll in school and medical care (to prevent interruptions in medication intake) in order to have as stable a transition as possible.\(^{xli}\)

### 3) Individualized aftercare with youth development programming

For an adolescent to successfully reenter a community, he needs both supervision and treatment that encourages personal development and enhances his ability to contribute to and exist peacefully within his community.\(^{xliii}\)

• **Structured alternatives to crime / Positive engagement in the community:** Probation officers should supervise youth by referring them to school and after school activities such as sports, tutoring, and art programs, or to vocational and professional opportunities to facilitate employment. Since evidence has shown that reentry programming must “view youth as part of a larger system that includes the school, the family, peers and the community,” probation officers should work with community resources to remove barriers to school enrollment, work, and involvement in other pro-social activities and positive relationships that are key to transitioning into adulthood.\(^{xliii}\) Mere punishment will not incentivize juveniles to behave; however, if they feel they have a different mode of achieving and receiving recognition, they may utilize those alternatives. These structured alternatives should address the realities of the community (high gang activity) and consist of activities that engage youth in meaningful ways.

• **Individualized treatment that addresses deficits and risk factors:** Aftercare programming needs to treat individual needs that can contribute to criminal activity, including substance abuse, mental illness, low educational attainment, gang involvement, family and home structure, and an individual’s willingness to change.\(^{xliv}\)

• **Use of appropriate rewards and sanctions:** Juveniles should face clear sanctions or rewards for breaking or respecting their probation terms. In order to focus on rehabilitation and not just punishment, sanctions should be graduated and balanced against a set of rewards.\(^{xlv}\) Moreover, the first sanction for delinquency during probation should not always be re-incarceration, but instead, include options like ankle bracelet monitoring, community service and restorative justice. The latter helps the juvenile empathize with the victim and feel in control of his choices. Restorative justice requires juveniles commit to an activity in the community to make amends.\(^{xlvi}\)

### 4) Inter-agency collaboration

• **Collaboration with state, city and federal agencies:** Reentry programs should collaborate with other government agencies to share and maximize resources. Different departments and agencies have access to funding streams and expertise. Beyond resources, data and
Findings

information sharing is key for un-classified case information to be used by various agencies for aftercare planning.

- **Link to CBOs and service providers:** Tapping into community resources is equally as important, as CBOs are often best situated to serve the youth and families in their community. Links to community services and advocates – such as juvenile court judges and defenders, educational agencies and legal advocacy groups – are critical to guaranteeing that youth receive appropriate and continuous access to services well after their terms of probation end.

5) **Implementation and evaluation**

- **Consistent execution of program model:** A well-designed program must be consistently executed to be successful. Many reentry programs have the right elements on paper, but are not implemented either due to lack of training, resources, personnel, will or enforcement. Sometimes programs are not implemented adequately because there is reliance on other agencies to do so, therefore inter-agency collaboration may be necessary for consistent implementation to take place.

- **Transparent data collection and evaluation:** All quality programs, including reentry programs, need to document their successes and failures and make this information publicly available in order to be truly transparent agencies held accountable to the public. Without measuring outcomes and conducting evaluations of program activities, it is difficult to ascertain which activities impact successful reentry, and which do not.

**Part II: Does the average reentry process in Los Angeles meet the needs of its population and align with best practices?**

A) **The Average Reentry Process in Los Angeles**

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<th>Finding #2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The average reentry process led by the Probation Department includes many valuable aspects in planning and care, but lacks sufficient pre-planning as well as profound and meaningful efforts to measure implementation and its own effectiveness.</td>
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In Los Angeles County, all juveniles exiting camp will experience the county-run reentry process as set up by the Probation Department. Unless juveniles are heavily involved in a pilot program or a community-based organization, this may encompass their entire reentry experience. The table below organizes standard reentry activities according to when they occur in the process and how they fit in our framework. The chart is helpful to see how human resources are distributed. The chart lists all reentry services the Probation Department provides as outlined in their standard policy, therefore, actual services provided may exceed or fall short of these (see Appendix G for the Probation Department’s Camp/Aftercare Transition protocol).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Best Practices</th>
<th>Stages of the Probation-led reentry process</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment and planning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Intake, Detention, Camp</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Los Angeles Risk and Resilience Check (LARRC)</td>
<td>▪ LARRC</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Mental Health Assessment (given by Dept of Mental Health)</td>
<td>▪ 30 days prior to release home assessment requested</td>
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<td><strong>Focus on transition</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pre-release Planning</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Camp DPO verify youth's home school</td>
<td>▪ Initial orientation with the field deputy probation officer within 24 hrs of release</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Parent / caregiver notified of youth's release 30 days before scheduled release date</td>
<td>▪ Juveniles must check in with their PO within 24 and 72 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Relapse prevention plan</td>
<td>▪ 15 day post report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individualized programming</strong></td>
<td><strong>Release</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Minors with elevated risks receive enhanced services</td>
<td>▪ Parents of youth with medical needs are notified by nursing staff of post-camp medical needs / services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth development</strong></td>
<td><strong>Field Supervision (Aftercare)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Field DPO is sent copy of Camp Court Report, Case Plan, and School Information 14 days prior to minors release from camp</td>
<td>▪ High risk / high needs home-based services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Parents of youth with medical needs are notified by nursing staff of post-camp medical needs / services</td>
<td>- functional family therapy (FFT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Parents of youth with medical needs are notified by nursing staff of post-camp medical needs / services</td>
<td>- multi-systemic therapy (MST)</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ School enrollment within 48 hrs</td>
<td>- wrap-around services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Community-based organizations (CBOs) services</td>
<td>- referral to substance abuse and mental health treatments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inter-agency coordination</strong></td>
<td><strong>Implementation and evaluation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ School alerted to release academic transcripts</td>
<td>▪ Family monitoring supervision worksheet (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implementation and evaluation</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Explanations and Variations

**Intake, assessment and detention:** There are some planning aspects that occur during intake, assessment, and detention that affect reentry services later in a youth’s trajectory. After a youth is arrested, the Los Angeles Risk and Resilience Checkup (LARRC), an assessment tool adopted from San Diego County, determines his risk factors (See Appendix H for a copy of the LARRC). Specifically, the LARRC measures a juvenile’s risk and protective factors and helps predict levels of recidivism. The Probation Department uses the LARRC to plan for in-camp services the youth will receive, namely by using the tool to determine his camp placement, as each camp has different services available. For example, if a youth is taking psychotropic drugs, this will affect his camp placement. The Department of Mental Health is responsible for performing a mental health assessment and providing services. Therefore, the quality of mental health assessments and treatments depend heavily on the collaboration between these two departments.

**Pre-release planning:** The Probation Department conducts a site visit to the juvenile’s residence 30 days before the camp sentence is completed to determine whether the home is suitable. However, sometimes this visit occurs much closer to release than the 30 days. The county assigns each youth with a new probation officer, a “field PO”, when released from camp. The nature of the home visit is basic—the field PO verifies the address and checks for proper plumbing, and other amenities such as a bed and stove. The parents or guardians answer a series of questions regarding their work hours to determine adequate supervision. If the home environment is deemed inadequate, the field PO may recommend the youth for suitable placement (group home). While field POs may begin discussing reentry services with families, this home visit is, to the best of our knowledge, not meant for reentry planning, but rather, to determine suitability.

The Probation Department gives the field PO a file containing basic information 14 to 30 days before the youth is released in order to start planning for individualized reentry programming. However, interviews indicated that Field POs may get the file somewhere between two months before and many days after a youth is released from camp. This file contains basic personal information as well as the terms of probation. This file does not necessarily contain the details about prior youth gang activity, notes from previous camp probation officers, nor their records on mental health, education, prior arrests, or court proceedings. The field PO usually has to conduct further research through other files and databases to have a more complete picture of the youth’s history. There are several databases that a field PO can access to collect data on the youth and plan appropriately for services and individualized programming, however this is done at the discretion of the PO. The county does not require the field POs to do this research, nor does the county always explicitly train the field POs on how to navigate the systems.

There is no system-wide process to assist juveniles in transitioning back into the traditional school environment. There is a pilot operating in a couple of the probation camps where officials from the home school attend meetings to plan for services before a youth is released, but the county does not conduct this type of planning for the entire probation population. The Education Coordinating Council (ECC) has worked with willing school districts to develop a process for school transition. Pomona Unified School District and Long Beach Unified School District are notable examples, but again, this is not a county-wide process.
Findings

**Release process:** Little system-wide preparation exists for the days leading up to a youth’s release from the probation camps. For instance, the county does not mandate that counseling occur to prepare youth for the upcoming changes as they leave the structured and controlled environment of the probation camp and reenter their communities. A parent, guardian, or family member usually picks up the juvenile on the day of his release. The Probation Department may provide transportation in cases when the youth’s relatives are unable. Juveniles and their families should receive school transcripts, any psychotropic medications and instructions on how to re-fill their prescriptions, as well as any other relevant health information upon release. Once they are released, youth are required to check in with their probation officer within 24 to 72 hours and enroll in school within 48 hours. Fulfilling this last requirement depends on coordination with community schools and the timely transfer of records from LACOE. While the ECC, LACOE and the Probation Department have acknowledged this problem and are working to address it, little county-wide standardization of this coordination exists to ensure youth are enrolled in school by the deadline.

**Aftercare:** The aftercare unit of the Probation Department consists mainly of field POs and other staff who coordinate services. The field PO is responsible for supervising youth in the community and for referring them to the necessary services. They are also responsible for referring youth back to court when they commit a violation of their terms of probation. Service provision is generally done by community-based or nonprofit organizations. There are four different aftercare departments that sort field POs and their assigned probationers. These four departments are 1) Camp Community Transition Program (CCTP), 2) School-based, 3) Gang, and 4) Suitable Placement. There are minimal differences between the four units, mainly where the youth is located in relation to the field PO and where they are likely to meet for supervision appointments. All field POs are required to meet with their clients once a week for the first 90 days, then once or twice a month afterwards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Probation Department Aftercare Units</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The “catch-all” department that handles approximately 78% of all probationers released from camp. Juveniles in the CCTP meet with their field POs sometimes in the home, but most often at a service provision site.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Finally, from the previous chart titled “Stages of the Probation-led reentry process,” we can see that the area in need of most improvement according to our framework and summary of the Probation Department’s current activities is implementation and evaluation. While field POs do
Findings

mark delivery of services in the juvenile’s file, the Probation Department does not have a standard protocol for tracking and measuring the effectiveness of its reentry activities; therefore it is impossible to know which activities throughout the reentry process are effective in easing transition and lead to successful reentry, and which are not. We will discuss this more in a later section.

It should be noted that our interviews with several staff at the Probation Department revealed that the practices of field POs vary as widely as the practices of different teachers in different classrooms. As referenced before, some POs will engage in thorough research for their clients, while others will rely on the basic information that is more readily available. Some field POs build closer relationships with their probationers and go above and beyond the requirements to supervise them, while others just focus on maintaining probation terms and giving citations when youth fail to meet them. These widely varying factors may have a powerful impact on the youth, in either the positive or negative direction.

B) Barriers to Reentry Under the Current System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding #3:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth leave camp unprepared to reenter their unstructured communities and often struggle with accessing school, medical care, and other essential resources. The average reentry process in Los Angeles lacks focus on transition planning, structured alternatives to crime, coordination from different county departments, universal implementation, and practical data collection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment and Planning

Primary Finding: Multi-disciplinary transition planning is inadequate and does not maximize the use of assessment data.

- Inadequate multi-disciplinary planning: For the vast majority of youth, no multi-disciplinary planning occurs. This is troublesome because the average juvenile in Los Angeles has a myriad of problems such as substance abuse and learning disabilities, and it is unlikely the Probation Department alone can meet these needs on its own during reentry planning. Probation has recognized this and is working to change it, but currently only youth in a pilot program (discussed later) benefit from multi-disciplinary planning.

- Inadequate short-term planning for transition: The Probation Department does little pre-release planning when the juvenile is in camp to identify the best school environment for the youth and set up enrollment, prepare the youth’s family, or align health resources.
**Focus on Transition**

**Primary Finding:** Youth leave camp unprepared to return to their differently structured home life and struggle to continue with school and medical services.

- **Absence of step-down features:** Aside from a few rare examples, probation camps lack meaningful step-down features where youth gain increased responsibility and begin to reacquaint themselves with their communities. As a result, many youth leave the highly structured camp environment and face the difficulty of productively filling in the after-school hours. This stark contrast between incarceration and the community results in many youth being unprepared for reintegrating without re-offending.

- **Limited family involvement:** Most families rarely visit their child while incarcerated (partly due to the remote locations of many camps and the lack of transportation). Camps often fail to thoroughly explain important information to parents, such as mental health diagnoses and medication schedules, leaving parents unprepared to help their child when he returns. The PO home visit prior to release is more about the physical home than the family. Some POs use this visit to try to start working with the families, but this type of sustained interaction is not built into the model. POs may tell the parents that strong amounts of structure and accountability are important when the youth returns, but families may lack the tools or knowledge about how to properly create these conditions in their home. Consequently, many youth return to an unstructured environment unwilling to listen to their parents, who often feel helpless about being able to help rehabilitate their children.

- **Gaps in medical coverage:** Lack of pre-planning for the transition can affect youth who require health services. Due to federal regulations, when youth are incarcerated they lose their Medi-Cal coverage. In the past, L.A. County often terminated rather than temporarily suspended this coverage, causing juveniles released from camp and their families to have to reapply for coverage (which could take up to 45 days) or pay out-of-pocket for services. The California State Legislature’s passage of SB 1147 in 2008 helps address this by requiring a suspension but not termination of Medi-Cal, which means that coverage should be reinstated on a youth’s release date for youth incarcerated after January 1, 2010. Interviews with legal advocates suggested that while this new legislation has helped, some youth appear to still have gaps in their medical coverage when leaving camp. These interruptions may reflect glitches in the system or in implementation, or may be caused by changes to a youth’s release date.

- **Interruption of medication:** Interviews with legal advocates, as well as the recent DOJ investigation, have found that many camp facilities discharge mentally ill youth without an adequate supply of their psychotropic medications and a plan for continuing intake, making it likely they will go off their medication. Going off medication during this transition period can be disastrous for the youth and increases the likelihood of erratic or criminal behavior.

- **School transition:** Many youth find it extraordinarily difficult to re-enroll in a traditional school, with schools literally turning them away. This is partly due to a lack of timely transfer of records and transcripts between LACOE and local school districts when youth
Findings

leave camp. Without transcripts and other documentation, schools are reluctant to re-enroll youth. Even with transcripts in place, some public high schools simply refuse to re-admit a youth. This is usually illegal, but youth often do not know their rights, and their families may not have the knowledge or legal resources to address this barrier. Sometimes a PO successfully intervenes, often with the help of legal advocates who also provide education clinics for youth to assist in enrollment. The ECC has addressed the issue of barriers to enrollment by circulating a letter signed and endorsed by the various school district superintendents insisting that youth must be re-enrolled even in the absence of transcripts. Parents or POs can use this tool. Through our interviews, however, it is unclear whether these resources are being used on a wide scale to ensure rapid school re-enrollment. Given all these barriers, many of these juveniles turn instead to vocational or alternative schools, which often lack academic rigor and can be breeding grounds for delinquency given the concentration of students who have been unsuccessful in their traditional schools.

Individualized Aftercare with Youth Development Programming

Primary Finding: Aftercare contains too little emphasis on treatment and structured alternatives to crime, and is not designed to appropriately motivate youth to adhere to probation terms.

• Inadequate substance abuse and mental health services: Probation’s current success in dealing with substance abuse and mental illness problems is largely dependent on whether services or counseling are court-mandated. When substance abuse treatment, drug testing or mental health services are conditions of court-ordered probation terms, youth are more likely to comply. Without a mandate for services, a PO can be quite limited in his or her ability to ensure youth can access (and afford) these types of services, as it often takes a court order to get these services provided for free. Additionally, while proactive POs may refer youth to various agencies, youth may simply choose not to attend.

• Absence of educational and job support: The current reentry process often does not address the amount of educational support and skills-training youth offenders will need to succeed in school and the workplace. While holding the Probation Department solely responsible for getting youth caught up educationally is inappropriate, more educational supports need to be built into the reentry process if youth are expected to succeed academically. The ECC has developed a Comprehensive Educational Reform report with guidelines for working with the Probation Department to increase these educational supports. LACOE, county school districts (including LAUSD) and individual POs must collaborate further to guarantee that IEP services are being delivered and that youth are being given the opportunity to succeed in school. Moreover, youth not attending school need to be reengaged in other meaningful ways. The Probation Department does not currently emphasize skills training nor has adequate partnerships with the private sector to facilitate youth employment.

• Difficulty accessing knowledge of and transportation to reentry resources: Youth face barriers to accessing aftercare resources as they are released from camp. POs often do not have a geographically-organized list of available services to distribute to youth as they return to their communities. Therefore, youth may not be aware of the resources that exist in their community. Juveniles may also lack transportation to the various locations where they access
services. Many youth and their families do not have cars, and thus face long bus rides that can be unsafe, especially if going through rival gang territories. The size of the county also makes transportation to different service provision sites challenging.

- **Insufficient gang interventions**: Even though we estimate that somewhere between half and two-thirds of male juvenile offenders are gang-affiliated, only around 10 percent of the probation population is placed in the Gang Unit aftercare program. While this paper did not assess whether the Gang Unit effectively addresses gang involvement, it seems that most gang-involved youth are not getting the targeted treatment or supervision they need to avoid returning to gang life. The POs who supervise them also need to be supported in their endeavors. POs recounted that they often feel unsafe providing services for youth that are gang involved, since they are often required to interfere in the relationships youth have with fellow gang members. POs also face safety issues when they enter areas with high gang activity to provide supervision.

- **Attitude and motivation to change**: All adolescents have difficulty weighing consequences, understanding their impact in the world, and developing self-efficacy. The county’s current reentry process does not systematically address this motivational and developmental component. Probation terms for some youth mandate individual counseling, which may include developing self-determination and motivation to change. However, the reentry process does not address the motivational component in a deep way. As our fieldwork recognized, youth have to want to change to get the most out of programs.

- **No known rewards for positive behavior**: While some probation camps reward youth with material benefits or program involvement for good behavior, the Probation Department does not systematically, to the best of our knowledge, currently reward youth for positive behavior when back in the community.

- **Lack of appropriate and graduated sanctions**: Appropriate, predictable and graduated sanctions seem largely absent when youth violate the terms of their probation or get off track. The Probation Department often re-commits a juvenile when he breaks a term of probation or commits a new violation, instead of first offering structured, transparent, and fair sanctions or interventions first. The department sometimes uses graduated interventions such as ankle bracelet monitoring when youth break a term of probation. Interviews indicated that in most instances, however, the department often either ignores the infraction or sends the youth back to camp, neither of which is necessarily effective in developing the notion of accountability and fairness in youth. Parents seem reluctant to communicate problems their child is facing with the PO because they fear the child will be sent back to camp. It also seems the department under-utilizes strategies like community service and restorative justice.

**Inter-agency Coordination**

**Primary Finding**: While improvements exist, the Probation Department still does not optimally coordinate with other county agencies and CBOs to offer a more efficient reentry process.
Findings

• **Insufficient coordination between county agencies:** While inter-agency coordination has greatly improved, there are still examples throughout the reentry process where the Probation Department does not sufficiently coordinate with different county agencies, and vice versa. Examples include the planning phase (where multi-disciplinary planning is still a rarity), school access (where LACOE does not get educational records to Probation or LAUSD in a timely manner for many youth) and health services (where Probation and Department of Mental Health still miss opportunities to collaborate). This lack of coordination occurs with service provision, resources and information.

• **Under-utilization of CBOs:** There are countless CBOs in L.A. County providing youth services, several of which will be discussed in the next section. While some POs seem very adept at directing their clients to these organizations, this is not uniform practice. Moreover, POs do not always know about important services. For example, Public Counsel, Learning Rights and Mental Health Advocacy Services are all legal aid organizations that will advocate on behalf of youth for educational or health services. There are also centers housed within the community that provide intensive tutoring and recreational activities after school. It is imperative that POs access these services for the youth on their caseloads.

• **Limited sharing of information and best practices:** Organizations in Los Angeles seem to be continuously reinventing the wheel with both programs and research. Our interviews revealed that a variety of reentry organizations and actors are creating similar programs yet not talking to each other. Different county agencies are also sanctioning research into this field. An example is the Young Offender Reentry Planning Grant, housed in the L.A. County Community and Senior Services Department, which is designing a county-wide blueprint for addressing youth reentry issues – yet this information took us three months to uncover. This lack of best practice sharing leads to inefficient use of resources in the county.

Implementation and Evaluation

**Primary Finding:** The Probation Department struggles to collect and analyze data to efficiently measure program implementation, and allow for proper program evaluation.

Throughout the course of our interviews and site visits in Los Angeles, we saw little evidence of any large-scale attempts to measure effective program implementation or performance evaluation. While the Probation Department has made changes and success stories exist, we are concerned with the department’s capacity to evaluate its mission of “effecting positive probationer behavioral change.”

• **Inconsistent implementation of reentry protocol:** The Probation Department has in place several features of the reentry model that seem promising at easing the transition, including verifying a child’s home school, requesting educational transcripts, and notifying parents of a child’s medical needs, all while the youth is still in camp. Unfortunately, our field research indicated that this protocol is often not implemented uniformly across the board. Possible explanations of this weak implementation are:
Variation between POs: Different POs offer different levels of supervision, as some exceed, others simply meet, and some fall short of implementing the standard reentry program as outlined earlier. Some POs, as well as their clients, will just “go through the motions” and check for the attainment of probation terms, while others go deeper and ensure their clients receive vital services.

Inadequate performance evaluation: Aside from an annual performance evaluation that seems very general in nature, we are not aware of any formal periodic assessments of POs to evaluate or reward their implementation of the standard protocol at every stage. In other words, if a PO fails to ensure a juvenile is re-enrolled in school in a timely manner, it is not likely to be documented or addressed, and there are not likely to be any repercussions for that PO. Also, we are not aware of any performance benchmarks POs are expected to achieve, other than marking off whether probation terms are maintained. Therefore, we infer that the department is not optimally utilizing such evaluations to ensure quality activities and supervision.

Change of PO: Youth also face a lack of consistency as their POs change at each different interval of the probation experience. For scheduling purposes, it is easiest to change the PO at each stage of the process as youth move from one location to the next. Logistically speaking, separating POs into the camp and field categories may be the easiest way to organize supports, but the discontinuity of POs is not optimal to forming pro-social relationships. It is also less likely that services are uninterrupted and that information will be exchanged and used.

Incomplete record keeping: Our interviews of academics and individuals who work with probation youth indicated that the Probation Department has an antiquated data collection and analysis system. Although the department has recently transitioned to a newer data system, the new system does not seem to have dramatically improved the department’s ability to electronically and systematically keep records (this could reflect a number of issues, from an inadequate system to a lack of training on how to use the system). Probation does collect some data, but it often does not aggregate or use that data to generate readily available informative records to guide organizational practices. Some of the poorly collected and tracked data is information that could be formative in developing aftercare plans. For example, the 2008 DOJ investigation found the Challenger camps were not producing adequate mental health records and discharge summaries for youth, impeding a PO’s ability to judge the mental health needs of the youth.

Scavenger-hunt for relevant data: It is not only difficult for the leadership in the Probation Department to aggregate and analyze data when it is spread across different databases; it is also difficult and time-consuming for POs to conduct adequate research on their clients to plan for the appropriate reentry services. As was previously mentioned, the county scatters data on youth throughout many different databases. The Probation Department manages court and arrest records, as well as records pertaining to gang-affiliation, probation terms and camp history in different databases. The Department of Children and Family Services and the Department of Mental Health may also have data.
on probation-involved youth if they have ever received services from their departments, but they do not easily share this information. It is not clear that different POs who have served the same youth at various stages of the system are reading each others’ notes about youth needs in the different databases and files that exist across the agencies. It is very difficult to hold anyone accountable for youth outcomes when probation staff does not have the tools necessary to adequately plan for youth success.

- **Lack of evaluations, outcome data and transparency:** In 2009, the Probation Department began designing a Web site called Digital DASHBOARD containing some youth outcome data, but recidivism is currently the only piece of information uploaded. As of April 2010, the Probation Department did not make available sections for outcome data on education and employment. As previously mentioned, a task force was assembled in order to aggregate the data we requested. We therefore infer that the department does not have the capacity to regularly collect and aggregate data in an organized manner and make it readily available. This lack of collection and transparency likely impedes the department’s ability to develop adequate planning for reentry, and program evaluation.

**Part III: How can local and national programs inform the county’s reentry process?**

**Finding #4:**

| There are many innovative reentry programs; some are unique to Los Angeles’ characteristics and needs while others work at a national level. The county would benefit from close examination of these program components to extract lessons and ideas to build on its own strengths. |

**A) Innovative Reentry Programs in Los Angeles**

We have discussed some deficiencies of reentry efforts in Los Angeles; however, in order to move forward it is imperative to discuss the county’s strengths. There are many innovative programs run by the Probation Department and other county agencies, CBOs, and other nonprofits that address and meet the needs of youth. Rather than evaluate each program, we discuss their strengths based on our framework.

**COUNTY-RUN:**

1) **L.A. County Day Reporting Center (DRC):** The DRC is a structured, individualized, and multidisciplinary reentry program with a focus on providing necessary treatments during the transition, which includes classes in pro-social skills, moral reasoning, and anger management— all under one roof.

The L.A County Day Reporting Center (DRC) is a rehabilitative multi-service treatment center run by the Probation Department serving young adults ages 18 to 24. The DRC provides individualized case planning with a multi-disciplinary team meeting frequently to discuss cases.
All youth experience 1) motivational treatment, 2) cognitive behavior treatment, and 3) educational/employment support. The DRC also streamlines mental health and substance abuse treatment in a way that makes access easy. The on-site POs provide participants with intense supervision. Participants spend most of the day at the center in a very structured environment, easing the transition from incarceration back into community life. Each young adult picks a vocation as they complete the program. If they do not complete the aforementioned three stages, they do not graduate. The graduation is often a special moment for many of the participants, as it may be the only ceremony recognizing their pro-social behavior they have experienced. The DRC strives to acquire immediate employment for each probationer who completes the program.

2) Cross-Systems Assessment pilot at two probation camps: A promising reform in two probation camps is working to achieve harmonious inter-agency collaboration on aftercare planning with a multi-disciplinary approach, and prevent the interruptions during transition.

Since June 2009, the juveniles in camps Onizuka and Smith (formerly known as Camp Holten) have undergone a multi-disciplinary planning process that brings together the Probation Department, Department of Social Services, Department of Mental Health, Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), and the youth’s home school district (usually LAUSD). The Cross-Systems team conducts a home visit 90 days before the youth is released to assess the environment in which the youth will reside (instead of the typical 30 days before release). The team then meets 45 days before the youth is released from camp to assess services based on his experience in camp and the observations from the home visit. LACOE and the home school district discuss the transition back to school, while the departments of Social Services and Mental Health collaborate to ensure mental health treatment continues without interruption, as well as other services under their jurisdictions for which the youth may qualify.

3) SORT pilot: The most ambitious attempt at inter-agency coordination is the SORT pilot, which brings together multiple county departments to collaboratively discuss the aftercare planning of juvenile probationers, with an emphasis on improving the family environment.

The Systems Opportunity Review Team (SORT) is a new county pilot, which is scheduled to operate at four different sites throughout the county and serve a total of 100 youth leaving probation camp. Each pilot site will have a facilitator who will manage 25 juvenile probationer cases consisting of heavy wraparound services and early (pre-release) planning. SORT will convene periodically to discuss individual cases. Between these meetings, however, juveniles in the program will also benefit from a centralized online database in which all service providers will mark up the interventions they have made with the youth. In an attempt to improve the state of the home environment in which the youth resides, the team will provide services to the family members of the youth as well. They will also track these interventions. The ultimate goal is to test out how the Probation Department can best collaborate with other agencies also involved with and responsible for service provision for probation youth and their family members.

NON-COUNTY:

4) Homebody Industries: A trusted community organization, Homebody Industries is known for helping gang members embark on healthier lives through wraparound services and employment.
Homeboy Industries (HI) is a nonprofit, community-based organization with the mission “Jobs, not jails.” HI, which is well known throughout Los Angeles, primarily assists former gang-involved and at-risk youth and young adults in becoming positive and contributing members of society through a focus on education, job placement, counseling and training. While HI does not explicitly target youth coming out of camps or young adults coming out of prison, by default, the vast majority of those young adults who access services have been involved in the juvenile or adult systems. HI offers wraparound services including free tattoo removal, GED preparation, substance abuse classes (or 12-Step meetings), mental health services, family counseling, anger management classes, group therapy, and legal and employment services. Currently, the most innovative job training classes are in solar panel installation. Traditionally, HI has acquired employment for its clients primarily through its own enterprises—silkscreen press, cafes, bakeries, and maintenance services. However, HI does have some partnerships with local businesses and many times clients are able to find employment through these. Participation in programs and services is completely voluntary. Many clients go to HI for the tattoo removal only, while others are drawn to HI initially for this free service but then stay on for the other services. Our interviewees told us that many clients would begin their programming and suddenly drop out, perhaps stop showing up to work, or go back to the gang life. Therefore, the program best serves young adults who are ready to change their lives toward more pro-social behavior. (See Appendix I for program summary.)

5) Long Beach Reentry Program: The Long Beach Reentry Program is focused on smooth and expedient transitions that link education and employment through intense mentoring.

This is a pilot reentry program born out of a congressional earmark last year through the U.S. Department of Education. Administered by the Pacific Gateway Workforce Investment Network, this program is a collaboration of the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD), the Probation Department and the Long Beach BLAST mentoring program. Over two years, this program is intended to provide education, employment and mentoring opportunities for 120 youth ages 14-18 transitioning out of the county probation camps. This program is geared toward providing a comprehensive approach to ensure smooth transitions back into school and into the workforce, with the help of mentoring services by college youth. The program model will incorporate pre-release, multi-disciplinary planning with the Probation Department at some time in the future. The strengths of this program include a strong workforce development component, including job training and employment opportunities, a weekly or bi-weekly mentoring component, a strong relationship with LBUSD, quick reintegration back into school after release, and an emerging family involvement component.

6) New Roads: New Roads is the only camp-based reentry program spurring motivation among youth through education and pro-social skills building.

New Roads Camp Community Partners (NRCCP) is a program of the New Visions Foundation and New Roads School, and it operates under the supervision of the Probation Department. New Roads is an education-focused juvenile reentry program that is particularly unique given its location inside an L.A. County probation camp, Camp David Gonzalez. The program has two phases—an “in camp” phase focusing on developing social skills, coping skills and educational attainment, and a “reentry” phase with an individually-designed transition planning process to
meet aftercare needs. New Roads relies on a standardized assessment instrument to measure risks, needs, strengths, and to set goals. The program aims to help youth develop a range of academic skills, from writing to poetry to theater performances, looking to inspire a love of learning in these youth. (See Appendix J for a program description.)

7) Amer-I-can: Amer-I-can is the only program we observed focused primarily on personal attitudes and beliefs in order to build a youth’s self esteem and sense of self-efficacy.

The Amer-I-can program is a 15-chapter curriculum in life skills based on attitude adjustment and self-esteem. The curriculum is targeted specifically for high-risk juvenile offenders, but can be used on youth from varying risk and resilience levels. The curriculum starts by addressing self-esteem and motivating feelings (such as fear), and then engages participants in exploring the causes of their delinquent behavior through group dialogue in a very structured class setting. The premise for this program is that one cannot expect to see any change in behavior until a juvenile undergoes some internal changes first. This program is typically led by ex-gang members or convicts, and takes place in both high school settings as well as in the juvenile camps. While this program has not yet been evaluated, the program model could be easily replicated in more camps or during reentry to address youth motivation. (See Appendix K for a program description.)

8) Community Build: Community Build is a one-stop shop helping families build social and human capital.

Community Build is a nonprofit, community-based organization with the mission of revitalizing the communities in South Los Angeles affected by the 1992 riots by making investments in human capital and increasing commercial economic development. Community Build does not offer direct reentry services to juvenile probationers; it is more of a one-stop shop for city and county services that are available to community residents. Community Build has also partnered with numerous other CBOs to provide multiple services under one roof. These services include legal aid, mental health counseling, education and vocational advising, technology training and workshops, and parenting classes. The consolidation of services and programs may be helpful to the families of juveniles reentering their communities, as well as to the juveniles themselves. In particular, Community Build may be helpful to juveniles who already have children of their own.

9) Advancement Project (Urban Peace Project): This program actively intervenes to stop gang violence on the streets and supports motivated ex-gang members.

The Advancement Project (AP) is a nonprofit organization and self-described civil rights and policy “action-tank.” The Urban Peace component in Los Angeles focuses on gang violence reduction through intervention efforts, as opposed to the traditional suppression upon which law enforcement relies heavily. Trained interventionists enter the hot spots of gang activity in the community to work directly with gang members on the street. These interventionists are often ex-gang members themselves, and they intervene to dispel rumors that may lead to revenge killings among rival gangs, as well as walk the streets to de-escalate other potentially violent situations. Through these activities, interventionists meet gang members who want to leave the gang life and they can offer these young people the support to succeed.
A Matrix of Best Practices in Los Angeles

We have fused lessons from the reentry literature with strong L.A. reentry efforts to develop criteria for reentry programs that meet the needs of youth. This criteria includes four of the five components of our reentry framework and assesses how the L.A. programs we have highlighted measure up accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs in LA</th>
<th>Best Practices in LA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment and Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment tools</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-disciplinary treatment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual case planning</td>
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</tbody>
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**County-run Pilots**

| Day Reporting Center (DRC) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Graduation ceremony |
| Cross-Systems Assessment | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | No |
| SORT pilot | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |

**Non-County NPOs and CBOs**

| Homeboy Industries | No | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Tattoo removal and in-house employment |
| Long Beach reentry program | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | Weekly mentoring |
| New Roads | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Goal-setting |
| Amer-I-can | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | Yes | No | Attitude adjustment based on youth development |
| Community Build | No | No | No | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | Links to County resources and programs |
| Advancement Project | No | No | No | No | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | Gang intervention in the community |
B) National Innovative Reentry Programs

In addition to local programs, we have profiled a few innovative programs that have achieved national attention in the reentry literature. Unfortunately, there are few national programs known to unequivocally reduce recidivism among juvenile offenders, largely due to a lack of long-term evaluations. However, we believe the following profiles will augment the county’s menu of options for improving reentry programming. These programs do not necessarily use every component of our reentry framework, but collectively they show how to employ pre-release planning, individualized aftercare, and inter-agency collaboration. We should also note that while these programs have gained attention for their merits, they lack vigorous evaluations.

1) Youth Advocacy Program in Seneca County, N. Y.: Seneca County has experimented with a reentry pilot that is designed to facilitate a smooth and often earlier transition from incarceration to community by providing advocacy services to youth and their families both during and after confinement.

The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) partnered with Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. (YAP) in 2006 to launch the reentry pilot. YAP is a national organization that provides gang prevention, diversion, gender-specific, and reentry programming for youth involved in the juvenile justice system. YAP case managers, or “advocates,” develop weekly schedules and meet with youth to provide structured supervision, support, and activities. These activities are intended for high-risk youth and focus on community safety, education, employment, rebuilding and strengthening family relationships, and engaging youth in pro-social activities. Case managers also ensure that youth are in compliance with their terms of probation.

YAP staff members work with youth and their families when they become incarcerated to identify appropriate reentry services in the community to access for successful reintegration. After release, a reentry service plan lasting four to six months goes into effect consisting of:

- Relationship-building – Youth work with a caring adult who strives to reconnect them to family, school and the community by developing positive relationships in all domains.
- Wraparound and strength-based planning – Youth and family members participate in the development of their service plan and goals. A team plans services based on youth and family needs and strengths to ensure family buy-in and agency coordination.
- Family support – YAP addresses the needs of family members (substance abuse, mental illness, etc.). The intended result is for families to be better able to care for their children.
- Group interventions – Gang-involved and at-risk youth participate in a range of group activities such as retreats and mediations.
- Positive Youth Development – Youth should engage in activities where they are making contributions to their family, school, and community. These pro-social activities help improve a youth’s self-esteem and image of self.
- Supported employment – Youth work in local business, assist with local charities, or perform in-house services within YAP and earn wages. This employment is short-term but is a transition to mainstream employment.
- Ancillary funds – Non-categorical dollars are included in the service contract to support families when they face financial troubles or to pay for pro-social activities based on the youth’s interests.
Findings

2) **Missouri Model Aftercare:** A well-known model that combines rehabilitative, non-prison like detention with a thoughtful aftercare approach consisting of pre-release planning, family involvement, step-down features, assessment and tracking and mentoring.

The Missouri Model, the approach devised and employed by the Division of Youth Services (DYS) in Missouri, is best known for its rehabilitative residential placement. Indeed, the Missouri Model consists of small, even cozy facilities located closer to communities that emphasize intense counseling, group treatment, skill-building like conflict resolution, an emphasis on building safety though relationships and not coercion, and family involvement. While L.A. County’s probation camps may be a far cry from this rehabilitative environment, there are still many lessons to be learned from the Missouri’s reentry model such as:

- **Pre-release planning and family involvement:** Well before the juvenile leaves the facility, the service coordinator convenes numerous meetings consisting of staff members from the youth’s treatment team, the youth himself, and the family. These meetings are used to plan for the transition and to address things like school enrollment, identifying employment opportunities, and planning pro-social activities or community service the youth will engage in. DYS also uses this meeting to discuss rules for the youth’s behavior at home.

- **Step-down features:** Before being released, most youth will have the opportunity to return home for one or more short-term visits to re-acquaint with their home and community and identify any potential problems that might come up when returning to this environment upon release.

- **Assessment and tracking:** DYS developed a performance indicator to track the transition, measuring whether a youth is enrolled in school and/or employed at the time of release.

- **Mentoring:** Most youth stay in touch with their service coordinators during aftercare, and almost two-thirds are assigned a community-based mentor who can help guide the youth and make sure expectations for school attendance and participation in activities are being met.

The Missouri Model can boast a very low recidivism rate compared to other states – between eight and 17 percent depending on the definition. While it is near impossible to parse out how much of the reduced recidivism is the result of the therapeutic environment versus the aftercare component, it seems clear the strategic aftercare is helping youth in Missouri avoid re-offending.

3) **New Hampshire Diversion Program:** New Hampshire builds a notion of accountability and empathy in the juvenile, as he must engage with family, peers, victims and community members to devise a strict contract to make amends.

New Hampshire’s diversion program is not a program targeted at youth reentering after an extended period of incarceration, but many of its concepts regarding planning may be applied to populations reentering from juvenile hall or incarceration. For L.A. County, the New Hampshire’s program could be immediately applied to planning for juveniles with home on probation status or diverted cases. The following lessons on reentry planning can be derived from the New Hampshire program:

- **Probation staff form close partnerships with judges to ensure appropriate sentencing.**
- **Staff interview the family extensively to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of the youth and the family, which may influence youth delinquency.**
Findings

• A contractual agreement is drawn by a committee of community volunteers (including adults and teenagers), victims, the youth, the youth’s family, and the probation staff.
  o The offense, its impact, and ways to remedy its harm are discussed.
  o The committee discusses factors that influence the youth’s behavior negatively, such as school, family, sibling relations, social and work life. They then discuss strengths and plan for supports to build on the youth’s resiliency and other tools for success.
  o Finally, a contract contains a restorative justice component where the youth commits to completing a community service project (i.e., mural painting, clean-ups, volunteering).
    ▪ Transportation is often provided.
  o After it is signed, the contract typically lasts 90 days, but may last longer if necessary.

4) New York City Justice Corps: The Justice Corps provides formerly incarcerated young adults with a full year of support and vocational and academic training to develop the hard and soft skills necessary to successfully reenter school or employment.

John Jay College of Criminal Justice, the New York City’s Department of Corrections, and other community and economic development organizations partnered in 2008 to launch the New York City Justice Corps. Modeled after Civic Justice Corps, this program recruits young adults from certain zip codes in New York City that have high rates of incarceration and unemployment. Justice Corps programming lasts six months and extends support for six additional months after graduation. The programming engages young adults in team building exercises with peer Corp members, as well as enhances their ability to search for jobs, write resumes, prepare for an interview and discuss conviction and incarceration histories. Programming also includes:

• Community benefit project service – Service projects allow Corps members to directly contribute to the repair and development of their communities. Corps members conduct a needs assessment in their communities to identify sites. Community groups comprised of elected officials and faith-based groups approve of the identified sites. Service projects help build community support for these formerly incarcerated Corps members.

• Internship – Immediately following the community benefit project service, Corps members complete a six to eight week internship to develop and expand job skills in an identified area of professional interest. Jobs are procured from the private, public, and non-profit sectors throughout New York City. Some Corps members split their time between vocational and academic placements.

• Post-Corps placement – Corps members graduate and are given support for up to six months to maximize their investment in their transition to the workforce.

In 2010, Justice Corps exceeded its goal of providing services for up to 250 corps members. Justice Corps was recently featured at the New York City Employment and Training Coalition Workforce Development Summit and Expo as a program that successfully targets disconnected youth to programs. The Grassroots and Groundwork Conference in Oregon also applauded Justice Corps as an innovative workforce development program.
RECOMMENDATIONS AND MOVING FORWARD

L.A. County and the Probation Department have many strengths to build off of from their own agency-led processes, resources and pilot programs, and the innovative programming that exists in Los Angeles and nationally. The following is a list of our recommendations. While many of these speak primarily to changes that need to happen within the Probation Department, these recommendations are still intended for a larger audience including all personnel who works with juvenile probationers from county departments to nonprofit organizations.

Assessment and Planning

1) Build up pre-release planning by expanding the Cross-Systems Assessment and/or SORT model to all probation camps.

WHAT AND WHY: We have recognized that pre-release, multi-systemic planning is one of the most critical pieces of a reentry program, yet also one of the weakest components of Los Angeles’ process. Indeed, the Probation Department has recognized this shortfall and is currently piloting two programs – the Cross-Systems Assessment and SORT, discussed in the previous section – consisting of a multi-disciplinary team tasked with identifying needed services (for during and after incarceration) long before release takes place. This Cross-Systems Assessment and SORT pilots seems very promising, though are small in scope. Probation has talked about incorporating this process in all camps, but this process has been slow.

HOW:
• The county should conduct evaluations to learn lessons from the Cross-Systems Assessment and SORT pilot. With these lessons in mind, the county should begin expansion to other camps, starting with the camps that seem to have the infrastructure and needed cooperation in place.
• The county should also look to national programs we have highlighted for replication. For example, the aftercare component of the Missouri Model brings families, youth and DYS staff together for pre-release meetings that even discuss establishing rules for home. The YAP model could also serve as an example of how planning and supervision services are designed; the PO role could be modeled after the YAP “advocate.”
• To achieve these expansions, the Probation Department will likely need financial support and cooperation from other county agencies to ensure that pre-release planning consists of meaningful planning and data-sharing with multiple agencies, and not just added paperwork in the process.

Focus on Transition

2) Incorporate step-down features into camp and the reentry process.

WHAT AND WHY: As recognized earlier, there is little in place at the camp or community level in the form of step-down features to ease the transition from incarceration to the outside world. This massive shift from a highly structured, fenced-in environment to the unstructured outside world in the matter of one day is very difficult for a youth to navigate. The county needs to put
Recommendations and Moving Forward

steps into place, like those in some of the national model programs discussed, which ease this transition.

HOW:
- The county should first recognize step-down strategies the department thinks would be appropriate and effective given its population and current camp and aftercare infrastructure and resources. They should investigate which camps, if any, currently employ these strategies (ex: Camp Gonzalez has programs that allow youth to interact in the community).
- They should pull from the best practices of innovative programs such as increased autonomy in camp, home visits while youth are still incarcerated (as seen in Missouri’s aftercare process), community involvement while incarcerated, and intense but declining levels of supervision once released (like the county-run DRC program).
- They should survey youth who have recently reentered their communities to identify the components that have been the hardest about reentering their communities.
- They should pilot different strategies in different camps and evaluate each one’s effectiveness. They should expand to other camps those that seem most promising.

3) Implement strategies to minimize education and mental health disruptions in transition.

a) Education – Immediate re-enrollment in school:

WHAT AND WHY: Many youth are not re-enrolled in school within, or even close to, the 48 hours that the Probation Department sets as a goal. We have discussed the reasons, and the consequences are clear: each out-of-school day further hurts the youth with more unsupervised and unstructured time, and a lower likelihood he will return to a rigorous high school setting to earn the skills needed for a productive future. The Probation Department needs to work with individual schools, LACOE and the ECC to ensure this 48-hour deadline is met.

HOW:
- The ECC should continue to play a large role by working with the Probation Department on implementing the Comprehensive Educational Reform plan and finding ways to ensure all youth are immediately re-enrolled in school upon reentry.
- POs should use assessment data and family input to identify the appropriate school environment at least three weeks before release.
- LACOE should generate a system to ensure updated educational records are transferred to home schools before the youth is released. Ideas for achieving this include creating a liaison between Probation and LACOE to facilitate transfer and school transition, and/or creating an automatic trigger in the system, based on youth’s release date, to process the information.
- Engage education and legal advocates at a systemic level to represent youth when schools refuse them. Public Counsel staff has trained some POs on how to best advocate for their clients; this training could be included in the general PO training. Moreover, POs should be encouraged to contact education lawyers as soon as they get resistance from schools.
- The county and ECC should continue to highlight school districts who are effectively addressing successful school transition and find ways to incentivize or pressure other
districts to do the same. This might include implementing a separate study on school reentry.

b) Mental health – Automatic re-enrollment in health coverage:

WHAT AND WHY: While the new legislation (SB 1147) helps address health coverage, interviews suggested that some youth may still struggle to get immediate Medi-Cal coverage when released, which can serve as a serious barrier to accessing health services.

HOW:
- Investigate the new legislation – both the implementation of it and the impact of it – to make sure it is working as designed to and achieving its desired effect.
  - The county should look at a cohort, or sample, of youth being released from camp to verify whether every youth’s Medi-Cal is reinstated on the day of release.
    - Mental health and legal advocates working with youth have relevant input to improve the process.

c) Mental health – Continuity in medication intake:

WHAT AND WHY: Mentally ill youth who go off their psychotropic medications after being released from camp are at a heightened risk of re-offending. Many factors influence the interruption of medication in youth. The county could influence medication regimens by educating youth and their family members on when, why and how medication should be taken.

HOW:
- POs or DMH staff should provide youth and families affected by mental illness with an orientation on their diagnoses and psychotropic medication intake before release.
- Camps should ensure that youth leave with a 30-day supply of medication.
- POs or DMH staff should instruct the family and youth on where they can seek treatment and refill their medications (including the name and address of the clinic or pharmacy).

Individualized Aftercare Programming

4) Build a comprehensive county-run strategy to address gang intervention and prevention.

WHAT AND WHY: We strongly suspect that gang affiliation among juvenile probationers well exceeds 50 percent. Currently the Probation Department’s Gang Unit seems to be the main strategy used in reentry, yet it does not have the capacity to serve all juvenile probationers that are gang-involved. Evaluations of the Gang Unit should be conducted. The Probation Department should also engage in meaningful efforts to further integrate gang intervention strategies into the reentry process.

HOW:
- Strengthen probation-led gang intervention strategies:
  - Investigate the practices of the Probation Gang Unit for effectiveness and whether the unit could be expanded to address rampant gang affiliation more widely.
Recommendations and Moving Forward

- Determine appropriate supports and strategies all POs can implement with their gang-affiliated clients. Provide POs with both safety and training to be able to implement gang prevention strategies. Increase safety for POs through closer partnerships with law enforcement agencies and the presence of foot and bicycle patrols in known gang hot spots.

- Examine the strategies of the Community Based Gant Intervention Model (made into official L.A. City policy in 2008), OJJDP’s Comprehensive Gang Model, Boyle Height’s Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) zone, and the Advancement Project’s Urban Peace, and find ways to include these in the reentry process. Form partnerships with other community organizations that have the capacity for intervention.

- Explore programs such as DRC, Amer-I-Can, or YAP, and others for their component on youth development, which may help with the motivation to transition out of gang life.
  - If the reentering population consists of young adults who have already earned their high school diploma or GED, a workforce development program such as Justice Corps could serve as a model for integrating young adults into a professional environment and away from gang activities.
  - YAP, Inc. may also offer a helpful model for gang prevention and intervention services to possibly replicate in Los Angeles.

5) Establish an accountability system for completion of probation terms consisting of rewards and graduated sanctions.

WHAT AND WHY: With no formal accountability system or standards for POs to develop rewards and sanctions that appropriately incentivize or correct good or bad behavior, juvenile probationers may not have any direct incentives to comply with probation terms. The guidelines for graduated sanctions are not clear and many times parents are afraid to report misbehavior to avoid the re-incarceration of their children. By the time POs realize the youth is breaking his probation terms, it is too late to correct behavior and re-incarceration is unavoidable. Youth respond best when they believe they are being treated fairly, and a consistent and predictable system may not only attain their buy-in, but also their successful reentry.

HOW:
- Use a system of appropriate graduated sanctions that youth and families clearly understand, and where re-incarceration is seen as the last resort.
- Create a template for a reward system for POs to use and modify for their subpopulation of juvenile probationers. Consider procuring donations from local business or sports organizations to provide POs with rewards to give youth.
- Organize a graduation ceremony to honor juvenile probationers when they have successfully completed their probation terms, graduated from high school or completed their GED, or other accomplishments. Replicate the DRC graduation ceremony, which commemorates the successful completion of the reentry program.
- Examine the New Hampshire Diversion program for components of accountability and components of restorative justice.
Inter-agency Coordination

6) Compile and centralize information on reentry programs, research and best practices

WHAT AND WHY: Information on juvenile reentry is scattered throughout the county; few people seem to know the array of programs that exist, the research studies have been commissioned by the county, or what best practices are. Since reinventing the wheel is expensive and inefficient, the county needs to centralize information on reentry resources and local research.

HOW:
- The Young Offender Reentry Planning Grant, housed in the L.A. County Community and Senior Services Department, is a research grant examining youth reentry issues in the county and compiling the information; the documents they produce, along with this report, will be a great starting point for the centralization of resources.
- A staff person at the Probation Department should develop and maintain a clearinghouse for all the reentry programs, efforts, and initiatives in the community, as well as coordinate between agencies to spread information about best practices. This person should further investigate the local and national programs this report describes.
  - When the county compiles this information, POs should have access to it and should use it as a resource to direct youth to appropriate programs and providers within their neighborhood.

7) Use the SORT Pilot to test how different county agencies can share information regarding the same youth.

WHAT AND WHY: It appears to us that the level of relevant information-sharing among county departments needs some improvement. The SORT Pilot could be a beta test to determine how a system of information-sharing could work. For example, when local school districts diagnose a youth as a special education student, he may qualify for special services and interventions from the county’s Public Defenders’ Office. However the Public Defenders’ Office may never become aware of such a diagnosis. We realize there is some sensitive information in a youth’s record that not all county departments should be able to access, but if there were some way to build a centralized database granting county staff access to information on the youth in a differentiated (password protected) manner, decisions about aftercare made by different departments could be expedited and based on thorough information located in one place.

HOW:
- Evaluate SORT’s information-sharing protocol and build off lessons.
- Continue to work with other departments to identify about the most user-friendly online databases to share information. Create rules about how and when information-sharing is used to enhance service provision for juvenile probationers while still ensuring confidentiality.
- Provide technical support and training to various county departments to ensure proper implementation.
Recommendations and Moving Forward

Implementation and Evaluation

8) Enforce consistent implementation of current protocol.

WHAT AND WHY: The Probation Department has made considerable improvements in developing its reentry model with transition steps built into the aftercare components. Thus we are not recommending that they overhaul their whole protocol. The problem, as our fieldwork suggested, is largely the lack of consistent and timely implementation or contingency plans when obstacles are expected (i.e. school re-enrollment). While we have not seen the Probation Department’s tracking system that measures the completion of PO tasks, our research indicates the system is not succeeding at measuring and enforcing implementation.

HOW:
• Set a department-wide goal to improve protocol implementation, by the leadership of the Probation Department.
• Collect and aggregate implementation data in order to recognize procedures that are effectively implemented department-wide and those that are rarely implemented; this would help uncover barriers POs face in implementation, allowing the department to adjust procedures and support POs.
• Enforce greater accountability regarding implementation.
  o Use a more recurring PO performance evaluation system, rather than yearly.
  o Incentivize POs to comply

9) Improve data collection and analysis capabilities of the Probation Department.

WHAT AND WHY: The lack of outcome data on juvenile probationers permits the county to be ambivalent about its own effectiveness, and inhibit the ability of mid-level and frontline probation staff to plan for success because they simply do not know which activities work and which do not. Summative data, or outcome data, keeps the Probation Department accountable to its clients and to county constituents concerned for public safety. Formative data, collected from POs who track the implementation of the program model as services and interventions take place, could inform the Probation Department of which variables in the reentry process may have more impact on recidivism than others. For example, if the Probation Department was in the habit of keeping immaculate records on individual juvenile interventions, the statistics branch of the Probation Department could analyze the data in a way to isolate the impact of specific interventions. This should be the end goal, because only then can the department really strategize and learn the impact of the activities into which it invests time and resources. The public should have access to basic data such as recidivism as it bears a consequence on their communities.

HOW:
• Conduct an analysis of the capacity of the current data system at the Probation Department. An outside entity should investigate exactly what the current data system can track and produce for both evaluation and re-entry planning purposes.
  o Assess the extent to which current data limitations are the result of an inadequate system, poorly trained staff, insufficient staff working on data, and/or political will of the department to analyze and share data.
Recommendations and Moving Forward

- Survey the frontline staff, mid-level supervisors, and youth probationers on how to improve the system. Conduct focus groups or individual interviews, since those most involved in implementation or most directly impacted by a program often know exactly what makes most sense to achieve the mission of the organization.
- After the analysis of the data and evaluation unit / system has been done, the County and Probation department should hire technical assistance to help either transition to a new system or better implement the current one. Funding sources from various federal, state or local governments or foundations will need to be identified to help with this new system or needed training / adjustments (ex: the OJJDP offers these types of grants).
- Thoroughly train POs on how to use whatever data system is implemented.
- Aim to collect, aggregate and analyze camp-level data on programming and interventions, and generate a recidivism rate per probation camp.
  - This effort to collect camp-specific data is not to compare camps to each other or to punish certain camps with more high-risk juvenile populations for higher recidivism rates. Camp-specific would help to compare programming at camps that are similar or to each other, as well as help isolate the programming that is associated with success.
- Publicly report the juvenile probationer recidivism rate on the Probation Department’s web site to show transparency and reliability as a public organization. Even if the recidivism rate is high, it builds more trust with the public to display it openly, rather than appear to cover it up.

10) Closely examine and consider replicating promising Los Angeles reentry programs such as DRC, Long Beach Reentry and New Roads.

WHAT AND WHY: The DRC, Long Beach Reentry and New Roads reentry programs, to name a few, have many organizational characteristics that the county should evaluate for effectiveness, and then consider sustaining or replicating. There is no need to re-invent the wheel, and if one program has learned to serve youth in a successful manner, and has the best capacity to execute the model, then the county should continue to support them in their efforts. The county should also consider ways to adopt some of the effective practices within the probation camps when possible, with program support from the aforementioned organizations.

HOW:
- Evaluate programs like the DRC, Long Beach Reentry and New Roads in order to determine how well they work, and which program components are the most effective aspects.
- Depending on evaluation results, decide which partnerships to maintain and what program characteristics the Probation Department, or relevant county agency, should adopt.
- Refer juvenile probationers to these programs whenever possible.
- Consider ways to make sure these model programs can be fully accessed by youth. Provide transportation for youth who live far away from services, or for ex-gang members who fear crossing gang territory borders on public transportation.
CONCLUSION

The juvenile reentry process for youth leaving camp in L.A. County may not be up to par yet, but there is reason to be hopeful. First, the Probation Department has demonstrated some willingness and ability to change, as evidenced by the improvements that have taken place in the juvenile halls in the last ten years. Second, there are numerous reentry pilot programs in place that show promising models. Lastly, L.A. County is extremely rich with community-based organizations and bright minds – so much so that we constantly encountered exciting programs and individuals working toward change during our fieldwork.

We hope that our recommendations provide next steps for Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, the Probation Department and the county as a whole. When implemented, these changes should go a long way toward improving the outcomes of our young offenders, many of whom would be successful citizens if we made the right investments in delinquency prevention and intervention.

Lastly, we hope that our report does indeed improve the reentry process for youth in L.A. County. However, while it was outside the scope of this report, two things must be emphasized. First, as long as youth are returning to resource-poor neighborhoods with high levels of violence, reentry will remain a challenge. As recent research has revealed, the environment – including the widespread use and availability of alcohol and drugs, the prevalence of gangs and violence, and poor social ties – impact a youth’s ability to avoid re-offending. Ultimately, the county should address neighborhood factors by flooding the communities where youth are reentering with resources, and then connecting youth to these resources. Secondly, it must be emphasized that in addition to changes in transition and aftercare, considerable reform is needed at the camp-level. While the Probation Department has recognized camp deficiencies and has expressed an interest in making substantial changes to the way the camps are run, too much time has passed under the status quo. Indeed, it is hard to truly address successful reentry when often the time spent in camp does more harm than good to our youth. Both county support and political pressure are needed to push these camp reforms through; only then can youthful offenders face the ultimate chance at rehabilitation and a smooth transition home.
ENDNOTES:


ii Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement Databook, 2006 data

iii Zhang, Sheldon X., “Youth on Youth Violence in Los Angeles County Juvenile Detention and Camp Facilities: A Comparative Analysis.” San Diego State University, 2007: p. viii

iv Interview with Stanley Ricketts and Greg McCovey, Los Angeles County Probation Department, January, 2010.


vi Camp Offense Demographics by Supervisorial Districts, 2007 data, prepared by the Los Angeles County Department of Probation in March 2010 (found in Appendix B of our report)

vii Los Angeles County Probation Department descriptive data, 2007-08

viii Multiple interviews with Probations staff revealed that this is the average length of detention, though 3 month terms used to be common though have been mostly phased out, and occasionally youth are held for more than one year.

ix County of Los Angeles Probation Department, “Report on Data Request for Juvenile Reentry Project,” prepared for Supervisor Mark Ridley Thomas, April 2010

x Boyd, Ralph F Jr., Assistant Attorney General. “Letter to Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors,” commissioned through the Department of Justice Investigation on Juvenile Halls, April 2003

xi We performed a site visit of Camp Gonzalez and witnessed these various programs. Additionally, in several interviews with the Probations Department and various nonprofits, Camp Gonzalez was identified as the “best camp.”

xii A site visit of two of the camps at Camp Challenger allowed us to witness this shortage of programming. Information on the lawsuit came from the media as well as a conversation with Public Counsel, who is involved with the suit.

xiii Grace Chung Becker, Acting Assistant Attorney General, “Letter on the Investigation of the Los Angeles County Probation Camps.” Written to the Board of Supervisors from the Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, October 2008


xv County of Los Angeles Probation Department, “Report on Data Request for Juvenile Reentry Project,” p. 4

xvi Probation Digital Dashboard System (PDDS)


xix This employment percent, provided to us in the Probation Department’s taskforce report, is limited in its application. We were not provided information on when this employment
measurement was made (right upon leaving camp? six months after?) or what it meant to be employed (part time? full time?) or how long this employment lasted.

McCroskey, Jacquelyn. “Youth in the Los Angeles County Juvenile Justice System: Current Conditions and Possible Directions for Change.” p. 29 and 31

Mears, Daniel P and Travis, Jeremy. “The Dimensions, Pathways and Consequences of Youth Reentry.” p. 6

Elizabeth Scott and Laurence Steinberg. “Adolescent Development and the Regulation of Youth Crime.”


Kathleen Stassen Berger, The Developing Person: Through Childhood and Adolescence


Elizabeth Scott and Laurence Steinberg. “Adolescent Development and the Regulation of Youth Crime.”

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Abrams, Laura S. and Freisthler, Bridget. “A Spatial Analysis of Risks and Resources for Reentry Youth in Los Angeles County.” p. 49


Nellis, Ashley and Wayman, Richard Hooks. “Back on Track: Supporting Youth Reentry from Out-of-Home Placement to the Community.” p. 27


Gies, Steve V, “Aftercare Services.” p. 25


Multiple interviews, Field Probation Officers, March, 2010. (In our fieldwork, interviews with POs revealed this to be the case.)

Multiple interviews, Field Probation Officers, March, 2010. (In our fieldwork, interviews with POs revealed this to be the case.)

In our fieldwork, Diana Felix from Soledad Enrichment Action (a CBO) indicated that she rarely starts working with families until after the youth has been released.

In our fieldwork, we went on two pre-release home visits, and in both the parents seemed extremely worried about how to control their child when he returned. In one visit the PO offered to start family counseling meetings before release; in the other no such support was offered.

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Appendix A:

Diverse Pathways to Youth Reentry in LA County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>County juvenile system</th>
<th>State juvenile system</th>
<th>Adult system</th>
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<tr>
<td>Entered as</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>J or A</td>
<td>J</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Released as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway 1</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>J or A</td>
<td>J or A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway 2</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>J or A</td>
<td>J or A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pathway 3</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>J or A</td>
<td>J or A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pathway 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pathway 6</td>
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<td>J or A</td>
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</table>

J = Legally defined juvenile, age 17 and younger
A = Legally defined adult, age 18 or older

(Table adopted from a similar table in “The Dimensions, Pathways and Consequences of Youth Reentry” article by Daniel P. Mears and Jeremy Travis, pg. 5)

Pathway 1 is fairly straightforward: the majority of juvenile offenders (legally defined as age 17 and younger) who are incarcerated are done so within residential-type facilities; in Los Angeles, this means in the County juvenile justice system in one of the 19 Probation Camps. Those incarcerated in County Camps are usually repeat offenders convicted of anything from property crimes to attempted murder. Most youth in the County Camps are released still as legal minors; however, a number will turn 18 while incarcerated and will thus reenter society as legal adults.

Pathways 2 and 3 are less traditional pathways for juvenile offenders, and occur when juveniles begin their confinement in the juvenile camps but are transferred into more secure, prison-like settings. In Los Angeles this transfer can be either into the state juvenile system – the California Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), formerly known as the California Youth Authority, or CYA (Pathway 2) – or into the adult criminal justice system (Pathway 3). The juveniles finish their terms of incarceration there, and can eventually be released as juveniles or as legal adults.

Pathway 4 and 5 are where, as stated earlier, a youth who commits a more serious crime enters the state, rather than County, juvenile system. The DJJ is a division of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and houses some of California’s most serious youth offenders. DJJ facilities serve youth and young adults from ages 12 to 25 and function as youth prisons.

Pathway 6 is a more recent phenomenon stemming from the passage of tough laws throughout the country in the 1990s that increasingly waived juveniles into adult criminal courts. In California, it was Proposition 21 that made it significantly easier for juveniles to be processed as adults, even mandating adult trials for juveniles 14 and over (changed from 16) charged with murder or specified sex offenses. In LA County, around 200 of the roughly 31,000 juveniles arrested each year are referred to adult courts, and most are convicted and sentenced to adult prison (McCroskey, p. 6).
Appendix B:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>First District</th>
<th>Second District</th>
<th>Third District</th>
<th>Fourth District</th>
<th>Fifth District</th>
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<tr>
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<td>110 38%</td>
<td>279 44%</td>
<td>102 46%</td>
<td>108 47%</td>
<td>103 40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offenses Against Property</td>
<td>97 33%</td>
<td>205 32%</td>
<td>60 27%</td>
<td>69 30%</td>
<td>106 41%</td>
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<td>Offenses Against Public Order</td>
<td>67 23%</td>
<td>124 19%</td>
<td>43 19%</td>
<td>42 18%</td>
<td>32 12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drug-Related Offenses</td>
<td>16 6%</td>
<td>30 5%</td>
<td>18 8%</td>
<td>13 6%</td>
<td>16 6%</td>
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<td>290 100%</td>
<td>638 100%</td>
<td>223 100%</td>
<td>232 100%</td>
<td>257 100%</td>
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Total of District Minors: 1640

Out of County or State Minors: 59

Grand Total of Minors: 1699

GENDER BREAKDOWN - 01/01/07 THRU 12/31/07

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<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>TOTALS</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>AVG per MO</th>
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<td>41</td>
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<td>35</td>
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<td>39</td>
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<td>366</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>275</td>
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<td>408</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>4353</td>
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ETHNIC BREAKDOWN - 01/01/07 THRU 12/31/07

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<th>Sep</th>
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<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
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<td>201</td>
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<td>258</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>2704</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>225.3</td>
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<td>OTHER</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>157</td>
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<td>352</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>338</td>
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<td>376</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>4353</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>362.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C:

County Probation Camps

Camp Afflerbaugh: 6631 N Stephens Ranch Rd, La Verne 91750; (909) 593-4937
Camp David Gonzales: 1301 N Las Virgenes Rd, Calabasas 91302; (818) 222-1192
Camp Smith: 12653 N Little Tujunga Canyon Rd, Sylmar 91342; (818) 896-0571
Camp Vernon Kilpatrick: 427 S Encinal Canyon Rd, Malibu 90265; (818) 889-1353
Camp William Mendenhall: 42230 N Lake Hughes Rd, Lake Hughes 93532; (661) 724-1213
Camp Fred Miller: 433 S Encinal Canyon Rd, Malibu 90265; (818) 889-0260
Camp John Munz: 42220 N Lake Hughes Rd, Lake Hughes 93532; (661) 724-1211
Camp Joseph Paige: 6601 N Stephens Ranch Rd, La Verne 91750; (909) 593-4921
Camp Glenn Rockey: 1900 N Sycamore Canyon Rd, San Dimas 91773; (909) 599-2391
Camp Louis Routh: 12500 Big Tujunga Canyon Rd, Tujunga 91042; (818) 352-4407
Camp Joseph Scott: 28700 N Bouquet Canyon Rd, Santa Clarita 91350; (661) 296-8500
Camp Kenyon Scudder: 28750 N Bouquet Canyon Rd, Santa Clarita 91350; (661) 296-8811
Challenger Memorial Youth: Center 5300 W Avenue "I", Lancaster 93536; (661) 940-4000
Camp Gregory Jarvis*: 5300 W Avenue "I", Lancaster 93536; (661) 940-4111
Camp Ronald McNair*: 5300 W Avenue "I", Lancaster 93536; (661) 940-4146
Camp Ellison Onizuka*: 5300 W Avenue "I", Lancaster 93536; (661) 940-4144
Camp Judith Resnik*: 5300 W Avenue "I", Lancaster, 93536; (661) 940-4044
Camp Francis J. Scobee*: 5300 W Avenue "I", Lancaster, 93536; (661) 940-4011
Camp Michael Smith*: 5300 W Avenue "I", Lancaster, 93536; (661) 940-4011

* Located at Challenger Memorial Youth Center in Lancaster
Appendix D: Methodology – Interviews conducted:

Julian Mendoza, Amer-I-Can
Ulysses Plummer, Amer-I-Can, Executive Director
Veronica Vargas, Homeboy Industries, Chief Executive Officer
Alberto Gonzalez, LA County Probation Department
Greg McCovey, LA County Probation Department
Stanley Ricketts, LA County Probation Department
Rikki Lamb, LA County Probation Department, Field Probation Officer, CCTP
Tanesha Lockhart, LA County Probation Department, Field Probation Officer, CCTP
Jon Kim, Advancement Project, Co-Director
Vincent Holmes, Chief Executive Office, Public Safety
Edward Sykes, LA County Probation Department, Day Reporting Center, Supervising Deputy Probation Officer
Gilbert Bautista, LA County Probation Department, Camp Gonzalez, Supervising Deputy Probation Officer
Supervising Deputy Probation Officer, LA County Probation Department, Camp Onizuka,
Tanya Jewell, LA County Department of Mental Health
Diana Felix, Soledad Enrichment Action, Caseworker
Carrie Miller, Education Coordinating Council
Jaqueline McCroskey, Los Angeles Children’s Council
Maggie Brandow, Mental Heath Advocacy Services
Ariel Wander, Public Counsel
Laura Faer, Public Counsel
Shantel Vachani, Learning Rights

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Appendix E:

Methodology – Site visits conducted:

Amer-I-Can, Warren High School; Downey, CA
Homeboy Industries; Los Angeles, CA
Public Counsel; Los Angeles, CA
LA County Day Reporting Center; Los Angeles, CA
LA County Probation Department, Camp Gonzalez; Malibu, CA
LA County Probation Department, Camp Onizuka; Lancaster, CA
Community Build; Los Angeles, CA
LA County Probation Department ride-alongs: Two home visits in Lennox, CA
LA County SORT Meeting
Appendix F:

County of Los Angeles
Probation Department

REPORT ON
Data Request for Juvenile Reentry Project
Prepared for:
Mark Ridley-Thomas, Supervisor Second District

Report Generated
April 2010
Executive Summary

At the request of Supervisor Mark Ridley Thomas, the Los Angeles County Probation Department has prepared the following summary brief to address community re-entry outcomes for youth released from probation camps. Data for this report were extracted from the Wards Inmate Tracking System (WITS) and Probation Case Management System (PCMS). These systems retain youth demographics, departmental movements, placement and educational information, and court data for Los Angeles County juvenile probationers. This report includes a review of all male youths (i.e., probation youth county-wide) having exited our camp system during Calendar Year (CY) 2008 (January 1 – December 31, 2008). These data were then filtered to include a sub-set of those youth having residency in the Second District (based on zip code designations) prior to camp entry.

Based on the questions posed in the February 19, 2010 data request from the Second District (see attached), the following information was assessed:

1. Age (See Tables 1 & 1B)

Table 1: Age Distribution of Male Youths at Time of Camp Exit: CY 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LA County-Wide Probation</th>
<th>Second District Population</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
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County of Los Angeles
Probation Department

Table 1B: Descriptive Statistics: Age of Male Youths at Time of Camp Exit: CY 2008

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2. Race/Ethnicity (See Table 2)

Table 2: Ethnic Distribution of Male Youths at Time of Camp Exit: CY 2008

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<td>Asian</td>
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3. Length of stay in camp (See Table 3)

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics: Camp Length of Stay of Male Youths: CY 2008

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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>161.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Median</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>169.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>92.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>73.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missing Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to the information presented above, the following outcome-related questions posed in the February 19th data request from the Second District were addressed:

1. Number of youth employed after camp exit? (See Table 4)

Table 4: Employment Outcome – Number of Male Youths Employed after Camp Exit: CY 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LA County Wide Probation Count</th>
<th>Second District Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Youth Employed</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Number of youth who complete their probation term at camp exit? (See Table 5)

Table 5: Number of Male Youths with Probation Termination at Time of Camp Exit: CY 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LA County Wide Probation Count (%)</th>
<th>Second District Count (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Youth Terminated Probation at Camp Exit</td>
<td>54 (1.6%)</td>
<td>17 (1.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3389</td>
<td>1135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. What percent of youth recidivate, and how is recidivism being defined? (See Table 6)

Table 6: Percentage of Male Youths with a New Subsequent Sustained Charge within 6 Months after Camp Exit: CY 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LA County Wide Probation Count (%)</th>
<th>Second District Count (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth with Sustained Charge</td>
<td>433 (12.8%)</td>
<td>147 (12.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3389</td>
<td>1135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For this report, the recidivism outcome has been defined as those male youths receiving a new subsequent sustained charge within 6-months after release from camp.
County of Los Angeles
Probation Department

Due to information sharing constraints with partnering agencies and other county departments, Probation was unable to provide responses to the following questions posed in the February 19th data request from the Second District:

- What are their educational outcomes (high school graduation, drop-out and/or GED completion rates)?
- What percent are receiving services and support for mental illness?
- What percent are receiving services and support for substance abuse?
- What percent are participating in re-entry programs of any kind after camp exit?
  Is there a breakdown of which reentry programs are utilized?
Appendix G:

Transition Services

Aftercare

Youth & Family

Camp

Los Angeles County Probation

Services

Substance Abuse

Wrap Around Services

Family Preservation

Lithisformal Therapy (MST)

Functional Family Therapy (FFT)

Service

Enhanced Services

Moms with Elevated Risks Receive

15 Day Post Report

Release Prevention Plan

Family Mentoring/Support Workgroup

School Enrollment within 48 hrs.

School Enrollment Within 72 hrs of Release

Initial Determination with the Field Deputy

30 Day Pre-Release Home Screening

Needs/Goals

• Family Needs

• School Performance

• Services

• Organizations (CCBO)

• Protective Factors

• Medical (Health)

• Risk Factors

Camp

Pre-Release Information

Piece of Focal Camp Medical Needs are included in nursing needs are noted by nursing

Parents of Youth with medical

Date

Pre-Camp #enforced Required of

Home School

Camper Demographics

Academic Transcripts

School Arrived to Release

Pre-Released

Home Assessment

30 Days Prior to Release

Appendix C:
### Appendix H: LARRC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DELIQUENCY - Protective</strong></th>
<th><strong>DELIQUENCY - Risk</strong></th>
<th><strong>EDUCATION - Risk</strong></th>
<th><strong>FAMILY - Risk</strong></th>
<th><strong>PEER - Risk</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 SUPPORT/REINFORCEMENT IN COMMUNITY</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>SOME</td>
<td>UNK</td>
<td>UNK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 PRO-SOCIAL ADULT RELATIONS</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 EXTENSIVE STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES (PRIORITY 6 MONTHS)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 PARTICIPATES IN FAITH COMMUNITY</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION (PRIORITY 6 MONTHS)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DELIQUENCY Protective Subscale Score</strong></td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>→</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>EDUCATION - Protective</strong></th>
<th><strong>EDUCATION - Risk</strong></th>
<th><strong>FAMILY - Risk</strong></th>
<th><strong>PEER - Risk</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT/CONSCIOUSNESS</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>SOME</td>
<td>UNK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 ATTACHMENTS TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVER</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 POSITIVE INTERACTIONS WITH TEACHERS</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 CARING/SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION Protective Subscale Score</strong></td>
<td>+6</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>→</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>FAMILY - Protective</strong></th>
<th><strong>FAMILY - Risk</strong></th>
<th><strong>PEER - Risk</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 COMMUNICATES WITH FAMILY (PRIORITY 6 MONTHS)</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>SOME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME AT HOME (PRIORITY 6 MONTHS)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 FAMILY ACTIVITIES (PRIORITY 6 MONTHS)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 FAMILY SUPPORT</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 UNCONDITIONAL REGARD FROM A PARENT</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FAMILY Protective Subscale Score</strong></td>
<td>+8</td>
<td>→</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PEER - Protective</strong></th>
<th><strong>PEER - Risk</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31 POSITIVE PEER RELATIONS</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 HAS AT LEAST ONE PERSON TO CONFIDE IN</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 VALUES DIGNITY/RIGHTS OF OTHERS</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 ABILITY TO MAKE FRIENDS</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE DISAGREEMENTS</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PEER Protective Subscale Score</strong></td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DELINQUENCY Risk Subscale Score**

**EDUCATION Risk Subscale Score**

**FAMILY Risk Subscale Score**

**PEER Risk Subscale Score**

*Instructions: If your selection is not absolutely affirmative, use an arrow pointing in the direction you would lean to if given another choice by clicking the "No" between the choices.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance Use - Protective</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>UNK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41 Parents Model Healthy</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 Effectively Manages Peer Pressure</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43 Youth is Free of Distressing Habits</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 Youth Manages Stress Well</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 Positive Self-Concept</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Substance Use Protective Subscale Score: +6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance Use - Risk</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>UNK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46 Pattern of Alcohol Use</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47 Used Mood Altering Subst.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Than Alcohol</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48 Uses Substances Frequently</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 Substance Use Interferes</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Daily Functioning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 Early Onset Substance Use</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(≥13)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Substance Use Risk Subscale Score: +7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual - Protective</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>UNK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51 Values Honesty/Integrity</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 Self Control</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53 Self Efficacy in Prosocial Roles</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54 Problem-Solving Skills</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 Plans, Organizes, &amp;</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completes Tasks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individual Protective Subscale Score: +6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual - Risk</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>UNK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56 No Prosocial Interests</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57 Supportive of Delinquency</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58 Anger Management Issues</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 Sensation Seeking</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 Manipulative/Deceitful</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individual Risk Subscale Score: +3
Appendix I:

HOMEBOY INDUSTRIES

Jobs not Jails

Homeboy Industries assists at-risk and formerly gang-involved youth to become contributing members of our community through a variety of services in response to their multiple needs. Free programs—including counseling, education, tattoo removal, job training and job placement—enable young people to redirect their lives and provide them with hope for their future.

Our free support services focus on education, training, financial responsibility and personal development to enable clients to successfully turn their lives around. Services include:

Case Management: Clients who work in our offices often have the most challenges to getting on their feet, and/or are recently released. By meeting regularly with Case Managers, we are able to design short-term and long-term plans for our clients, closely monitor progress, and ensure they are receiving the services they need.

Curriculum/Education: Because many of our clients struggle with literacy issues and come from home environments without role models and where they did not learn effective life skills, our educational curriculum provides classes such as math, computer, and GED preparation, as well as life skills classes in parenting, personal development, basic finances and budgeting, and household management.

Employment Counselors: Our Employment Counselors work with local employers, searching out available jobs, and talking with employers about the unique challenges and rewards of hiring our clients. Additionally, they work one-on-one with clients developing resumes, honing interview skills, and finding good employment matches.

WEN (Work is Noble): WEN is an early intervention program offered in cooperation with the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, which serves at risk youth ages 14-18. The intent is to provide entry-level employment opportunities and to divert young teens from gang activity.

Legal Services Program: Provides on-site guidance, support and referrals for legal issues including immigration status, clearing warrants, child support, and adult and juvenile records. All these are often obstacles for our clients seeking employment.

Mental Health: Our Mental Health Program has expanded significantly. Through a partnership with Pacific Clinics, we have added dedicated substance and domestic violence abuse counselors, group therapy, and a psychiatrist for clients in need of more serious help and medication. Peer-to-peer counselors also work with the incarcerated prior to release.

Twelve Step Meetings: Recognizing that substance abuse is often linked to violence and gang activity, Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and Criminal/Gangmembers Anonymous meetings are held on site.

Volunteer “Navigators”: We are fortunate to have volunteers who coordinate with Case Managers, Therapists and other staff to assist clients to enroll in school, obtain driver's license, get jobs, find and retain gainful employment, fulfill their court-ordered community service requirements, etc.

Ve ‘Stereo Tattoo Removal: Many gang members have visible tattoos that inhibit their ability to secure employment, thus we offer free tattoo removal. The new building houses two clinic rooms, and an office to hold records and data. Providing an average of 250 treatments per month, this continues to be a critical entry point for many clients.
Appendix J:

new roads
CAMP COMMUNITY PARTNERS

A Program of the New Visions Foundation

1301 N. Las Virgenes Road
Calabasas, California 91302
(818) 222-1192, ext. 229
fax: (818) 222-1164

(NRCCP-formerly New Roads Community Partner, is a program of the New Visions Foundation and New Roads School and operates in accordance with the provision of the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act of 2000 and under the supervision of the Los Angeles Probation Department)
Philosophy and Mission Statement

New Roads Camp Community Partners (NRCCP) is a skills-based education and reentry program for incarcerated youth which operates at Probation Camp David Gonzales in Los Angeles County. The mission of our program is to maximize youths’ chances for a successful community transition, thereby reducing risk for recidivism.

Our program operates in two phases. Following a comprehensive assessment, the first, “in camp” phase includes an array of promising and proven practices geared to enhance educational attainment, social skills, and coping skills among incarcerated youth. The second, “reentry” phase consists of individually tailored transition and aftercare services that help youth to integrate their new skills and goals back into back into their school, community, peer, and family contexts.

Our continuum of programming is connected by five primary objectives:

- Provide youth with multiple opportunities to enhance their educational, social, and coping skills;
- Engage youth in constructive activities that promote creativity and teamwork and reduce inter-group conflict;
- Improve communication between youth, their families, teachers, and probation officers to achieve a coordinated and seamless transition home;
- Assist youth in developing constructive goals for life after incarceration and envisioning a positive future; and
- Provide supportive and skills-based aftercare services to youth in their community and family contexts to help them achieve their goals.

Our program model is part of the overall New Visions Foundation philosophy and is driven by the following set of core values:

- **Restore Hope** so that youth can envision a more positive future;
- **Advocate for Fairness** to open up opportunities and break down barriers to success;
- **Provide Alternatives** so that youth can realize their full human potential.
The Program

Assessment
The New Roads Camp Community Partners program is currently adopting the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI), a standardized instrument for use by professionals in assessing a range of risk, need, and responsivity factors in the formulation of a targeted case plan for delinquent youth. The YLS/CMI is based on the evidence-based core that a careful assessment of clients’ risks and needs, followed by a carefully selected dosage of programs that appropriately target these needs, will maximize chances to prevent future antisocial behavior (Hoge & Andrews, 2002).

The YLS/CMI includes two main components; the first is an in-depth standardized assessment interview. This instrument allows our counselors to establish necessary rapport with each client while simultaneously assessing their various risks, needs, and strengths. The instrument also assists in the formulation of case planning goals, including a tailored package of services to meet these individual needs. Our counselors can revisit these case management goals at any time to note progress or to record changes in the clients’ case plan or life circumstances.

The second component of the YLS/CMI allows our counselors to assign each youth a composite risk score across multiple domains related to anti-social behavior (i.e., criminal history, family circumstances, education/employment, peer relations, substance abuse, leisure/recreation, personality/behavior, and attitudes/orientation). Our counselors will administer this instrument three times: At intake, at exit from camp, and 6 months post-release. This will allow us to assess our progress with each client, well as to assess in the aggregate, the areas where our program appears to make the most impact.

Phase I: In-Camp Services
After a careful assessment of risks, needs, and strengths, our counselors assign youth to a tailored menu of classes.

The NRCCP in-camp services are geared to enhance educational attainment, social skills, and coping skills among youth and thereby reduce patterns of criminal thinking and behavior. To this end, we offer empirically supported, promising and proven programs to enhance youths’ skills in the following areas:

- **In the area of education**, our programs are designed to instill a greater appreciation for learning, to enhance traditional academic skills, and to guide youth toward an educational future that includes college. These programs include GED preparation, College Workshops, Employment Workshops, and the Gemstone Strengthening Reading class.
- **Our social skills programs** involve group activities that enhance youths’ abilities to relate cross-culturally, to foster inter-group tolerance, and to promote teamwork. These include such activities as arts programs, theater performances, music classes, poetry recitals and the production of the in-camp newspaper, Behind the Wall.
Our coping skills programs are geared to reduce stress, manage anger, and promote healthy conflict resolution skills. These include activities that have been shown to promote positive coping skills such as yoga, meditation, arts, and physical fitness.

For each youth, the assigned menu of activities involves one, two, or all three of these areas of focus. The correct dosage (or hours of program service) is determined by individual need, the risk assessment, and the parameters of camp scheduling.

In all of these enrichment activities, we anticipate that students benefit from all of their enrichment experiences by: 1) seeing the product of their labors, 2) receiving praise from authority figures and peers for their positive accomplishments, 3) gaining a new perspective on education and classroom pursuits; 4) following through on a project and their commitments; and 5) eventually building on this positive momentum after they return to the community.

**Outcomes.** Based on prior research and our past successes, we anticipate that youth who complete their participation in their assigned programs will

- Reduce their risk scores in designated areas of concern (measured by YLS/CMI)
- Have a higher chance of passing the GED than the general population of offenders (measured by our own follow-up with the alumni)

**Phase II: Reentry Services**

Community reentry is the second phase of our program program. It begins in the transition (i.e. 60 days pre-release) phase, when we begin to prepare the young person for transition by connecting them with jobs, school programs, or other community resources, as needed. We offer both transition and aftercare services for youth.

*Transition:* About 60 days pre-release, all youth who participate in the NRCCP program are enrolled in a "re-entry academy" that impart practical skills for youth to prepare them for community reentry. This includes information such as how to obtain a driver’s license or find a doctor, as well as emotional preparation around reintegrating with family and peers. The re-entry academy reduces the abrupt transition that many youth face when they leave a secure setting and return to their former homes and communities.

*Aftercare:* Once youth return to their communities, our YLS/CMI assessment of risks and needs is refined and implemented for phase two. Our counselors then design a series of reentry goals that geared to assist the youth and their family in achieving a successful community transition. Our counselors serve a unique role in the youths’ lives. Whereas juvenile probationers are supervised by a different probation officer in the community than the one with whom they worked in camp, the New Roads’ re-entry counselor follows the youth out of the camp and into his community. For example, our counselors accompany, and often transport, program participants during their initial meeting with their field probation officer. Likewise, the counselors also accompany participating youth on their first visit to a new educational setting, substance-abuse
program, transitional housing program, or job-training program. In addition to accompanying youth to important transition events, re-entry counselors attempt to meet a whole host of educational and vocational needs, including providing assistance in enrolling in community college, obtaining financial aid, and counseling youth suspected of drug relapses to begin or resume substance abuse counseling prior to being required to do so by Court action.

Outcomes. These services are offered from 6-12 months post community release. The long term outcomes we anticipate (as measured by tracking alumni) are:

- Completion of high school or GED by 75% of eligible program participants
- Entrance into higher education by 50% of eligible program participants
- Successful completion of probation by 90% of program participants
- No new petitions by 90% of program participants

Enhanced Educational and Life-Skills Support
In 2007, NRCCP formalized a scholarship program to financially assist youth leaving camp to implement their educational and career goals. These funds are critical in eliminating economic barriers that can often discourage youth from pursuing their academic goals as it’s common for financial aid to take a few months before issuing any money to students. As currently contracted by the Department of Probation, New Roads’ youth receive six months of intensive supportive services after release. However, these monetary funds will continue to be made available to those youth who successfully demonstrate a higher level of commitment towards their education and their overall life choices, i.e. leaving gang life, securing employment.

Consequently, NRCCP is exploring the possibility to create an alumnus of successful camp Gonzales youth to serve as mentors for camp detained youth. Over the last two years, former Camp Gonzales youth have been able to share their transition experience at various program events.
Appendix K:

THE AMER-I-CAN PROGRAM

The Amer-I-Can Program was founded in 1988 by NFL Hall of Fame Football star Jim Brown. Amer-I-Can is a 60 hour, 15 chapter, Life Management Skills/Self-Improvement Training Program. It is the program's contention that Self-Esteem is key in improving one's decision making process and achieving success through Self-Determination. The Amer-I-Can Program systematically develops the attitude of the trainee from I-CAN'T to I-CAN, by accepting the responsibility of determining the direction of his/her life. The Amer-I-Can Program has successfully been implemented in Prisons, Jails, Juvenile Probation Camps, High Schools, Colleges, Universities, Businesses and Communities. The Amer-I-Can facilitators are carefully selected and are highly trained individuals, the majority of which are former gang members. These respected facilitators bring an invaluable experience and ability to connect and work with anyone who is willing to make a positive change in their life.

The Amer-I-Can Curriculum addresses 9 critical areas:

1. Motivation, Habits, and Attitudes  
2. Goal Setting  
3. Effective Communication  
4. Problem Solving, Decision Making  
5. Emotional Control  
6. Family Relationships  
7. Job Search/Retention  
8. Financial Stability  
9. Drug & Alcohol Abuse

The Program operates within the structure of a self-help, peer group relationship, with a trained facilitator monitoring the groups achievements. Guided by the facilitator, the training methodology consist of:

A. Dual Sensory Perception - The group listens to the material on a CD while reading the printed manual.
B. Space Repetition - Lessons can be presented up to 3 times to ensure comprehension & maximum retention.
C. Controlled Discussion - Each participant is encouraged and allowed to respectfully comment without interruption.

The beauty of the Amer-I-Can Program is that it is applicable to all people, as it transcends race, age, gender, religion, and socio-economic status. For the past 20 years The Program has been very effective working with at-risk youth, who may be struggling or dealing with certain challenges, as well as an Enhancement Program to those young people who are well on their way to success. The Amer-I-Can Program also trains and works with those adults from various Agencies and Organizations that are currently involved in working with and effecting our young people. We in the Amer-I-can Program are willing and capable of working with and enhancing any individual, family, or organization that is motivated to effect Positive Change.

Completing the Amer-I-Can Program will change your life and will help you become a contributor to a better family, better community and ultimately a better world.

If you have any questions please contact:
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