



INCORRIGIBILITY PROJECT

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Incorrigibility Project

The mission of the incorrigibility project is to work toward the development of a system of services for incorrigible youth in Erie County that is accessible, coordinated, effective, and accountable, minimizing the need for formal child welfare or juvenile probation involvement with affected children and families.

According to the Juvenile Act, incorrigibility is defined as #6 under “Dependent Child” as a youth who: (6) has committed a specific act or acts of habitual disobedience of the reasonable and lawful commands of his parent, guardian or other custodian and who is ungovernable and found to be in need of care, treatment or supervision.

The Incorrigibility Project set out a strategy as follows: from the current relatively independent, fragmented services available to this population, create a network of services with: a) a single tracking system, b) defined outcomes for each component of the network, c) mechanisms to monitor and document outcomes, d) mechanisms to revise programs when necessary, and e) mechanisms to allocate resources based on outcomes.

A Management Team consisting of Erie County funders directs the Incorrigibility Project. More specifically, representatives from the Erie County Department of Human Services, Erie County Office of Children and Youth, Erie County Juvenile Probation Department, and the School District of the City of Erie provide direction to an Implementation Team composed of program supervisors. The Implementation Team follows through with requests from the Management Teams as well as provides information and recommendations to them.

Over the past year, the Implementation Team has continued to meet regularly to coordinate effective and efficient services for incorrigible youth in Erie County. These efforts have led to strengthen the collaboration among the individual programs. Seven programs have been identified as serving Erie County incorrigible youth. These include the After School Support Program (ASSP), Alternative Education Program (AEP), Delinquency Prevention Program (DPP), Families Together, Intensive Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Program (IJDPP), Project Intercept, and the Student Assistance Program (SAP). Collaboration taking place within the individual programs include the following: the Intensive Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Program now meets monthly with the Erie County Office of Children and Youth Truancy Department Supervisor in order to coordinate efforts on curbing truancy; the Intensive Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Program has also opened their parenting classes up to parents of juveniles on school-based probation; the Alternative Education Program is currently working with not only the Student Assistance Program and Delinquency Prevention Program, but also the

After School Support Program on providing a smoother transition for youth who are returning to their home schools; one Alternative Education Program classroom is operating out of the Boys and Girls Club, home of Project Intercept.

In addition to those activities, the workgroup planned and hosted a two-day training conference dealing with issues pertinent to servicing incorrigible youth. The conference, entitled *Solutions 2003*, provided the opportunity to learn more about the incorrigibility initiative and related programs, as well as a forum to engage in discussion with other service providers concerning ways to improve collaboration and communication among service systems and agencies for the betterment of servicing youth and families. Over 80 direct line staff from the initiative's programs, community agency staff, juvenile probation officers, child welfare workers, district justices, mental health providers, and others attended the conference.

The effectiveness of the ongoing collaboration between programs is evidenced in the following report by the low placement rate of juveniles being serviced by these programs.

System Level Interpretation and Evaluation

Data in this report represent those youth who were enrolled between July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003 in all of the programs listed above with the exception of the Student Assistance Program and the Delinquency Prevention Program. The Delinquency Prevention Program is implemented in entire elementary grades and is not specifically targeting high-risk youth. Similarly the Student Assistance Program services a youth with a variety of concerns that may or may not include incorrigible behavior.

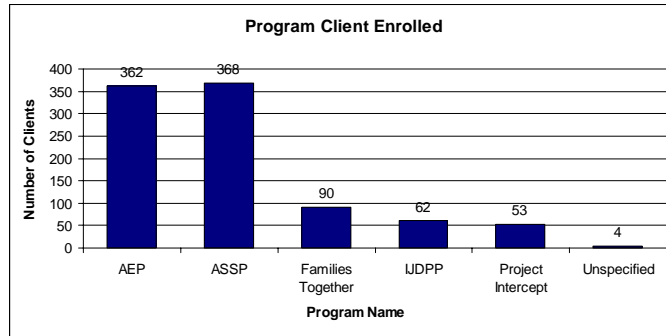
The methodology used in this research project was quantitative analysis of data collected through surveys or "client profiles." A client profile, consisting of 11 questions, was completed by program staff for each client accepted into their program and then forwarded to a researcher who entered the data into the database that was started in 2000.

Section I: Client Data for July 1, 2002 – June 30, 2003

Program Involvement

In the first section, descriptive information is presented pertaining to the youth that were served within the constellation of incorrigibility programs from July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003 (N=939). Of the client profiles completed for those clients enrolled in incorrigibility programming, 39% were identified as being enrolled in the After School Support Program, 39% who were enrolled in the Alternative Education Program and 10% enrolled in the Families Together Program (see Figure 1). The numbers for program involvement are reflective of new intakes and are not reflective of total client enrollment for each program, as many programs have clients enrolled over the course of more than one year.

Figure 1:



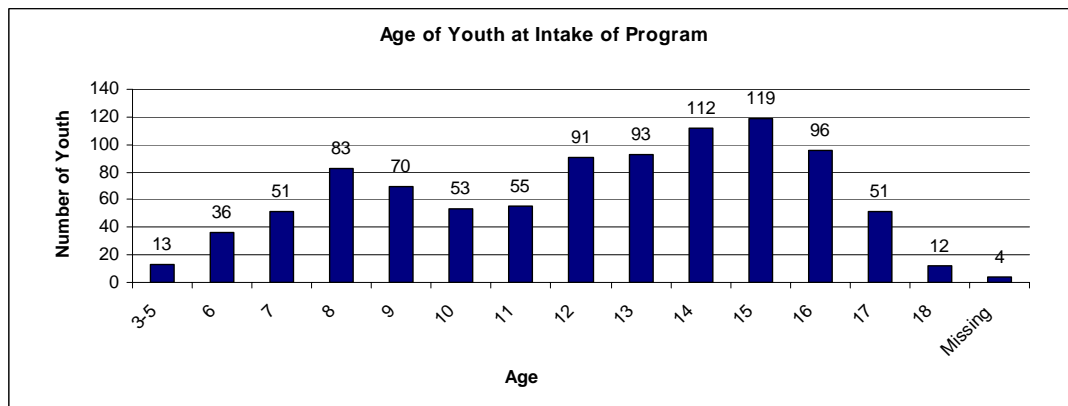
Clients of the incorrigibility programs are referred by other sources. Fifty-eight percent of clients were referred by their schools while 18% were referred by the Northwest County Intermediate Unit (IU) and 11% were referred by the Erie County Office of Children and Youth. The Alternative Education Program utilizes the school as their primary referral source while the After School Support Program frequently obtains referrals from the IU, and Families Together from OCY, which is reflected by the higher level of referrals, recorded by these three sources. All other referral sources were widely varied.

CIRCLE, a centralized intake, tracking, and referral service for youth, was implemented in 2001 and accounted for one percent of referrals to incorrigibility programs as identified by client profiles. CIRCLE, however, serviced 247 calls during the period of July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003, providing over 313 referrals to any of the incorrigibility programs (callers can receive more than one referral depending on each individual caller’s needs). CIRCLE referrals, however, are the responsibility of the parents/guardians to follow through with initiating contact with the recommended service.

Client Demographics

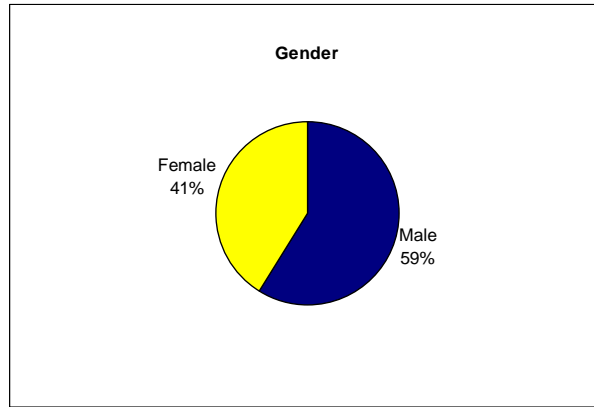
The age range of the typical incorrigible client varies; however, ages fourteen and fifteen account for nearly 25% of the total client population (see Figure 2).

Figure 2.



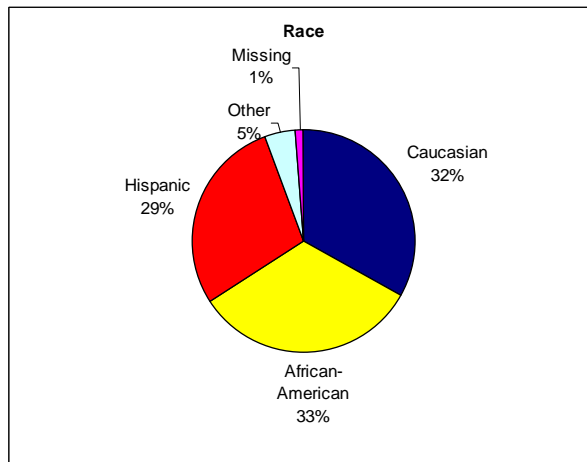
There are slightly more males (59%) being served by the constellation of incorrigibility services than are females (41%) (See Figure 3).

Figure 3.



Caucasian youth represent 33% of the entire enrolled population, African-American youth represent an additional 33%, and Hispanic youth make up 29% of those enrolled (see Figure 4). Due to the After School Support Program primarily accepting migrant students, this sample is not universally reflective of all programs.

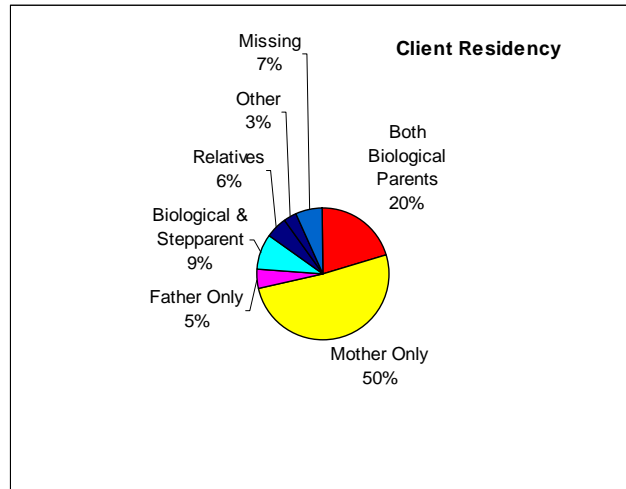
Figure 4.



Multiple Risk Factors

Many of the youth being served in the spectrum of incorrigibility services face difficult situations. In the analysis, 51% reside with their mothers only while only 5% reside with their fathers only. Twenty-one percent were reported to reside with both biological parents while 9% were identified as residing with a biological parent and stepparent. Six percent were reportedly residing with relatives (see Figure 5). The low percentage of youth living in two parent households may, according to much of the research, indicate family stress and disruption that often translates into greater risk of delinquent behaviors, school failure, or alcohol, tobacco and other drug use.

Figure 5.



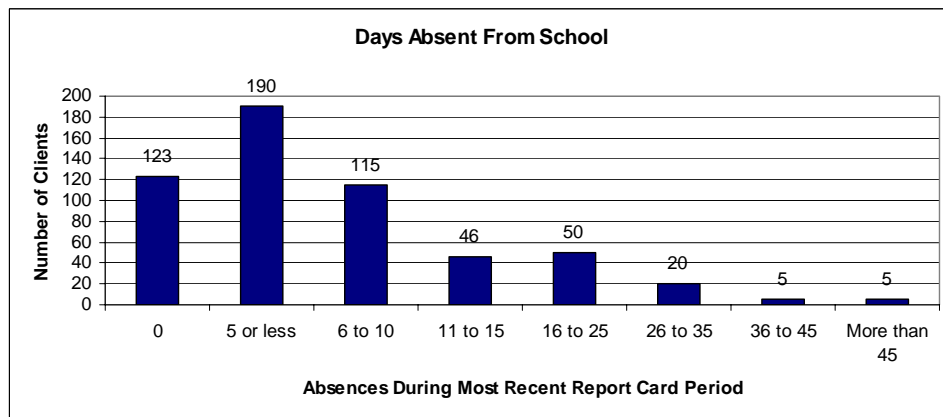
Educational Status

The majority of incorrigibility clients were enrolled in a regular educational placement curriculum. Seventy percent are enrolled in regular educational placement; 26% are enrolled in a special education program; and four percent are enrolled in some other educational placement program.

The number of excused days absent from school, the number of days unexcused from school, and grade point averages continue to be difficult to obtain. Forty-one percent of client absences, 43% of client unexcused absences, and 51% of client grade point averages were not reported.

Based on available data, 13% of clients were absent zero days during their most recent report card period (see Figure 6). Twenty percent of clients were absent between one to five days, which was the most common category of client absences among the entire reporting client population. Roughly 12% were reported to have been absent six to ten days, and 10% reported between 11 and 25 absences. Roughly three percent of clients were reported to have missed more than 25 days.

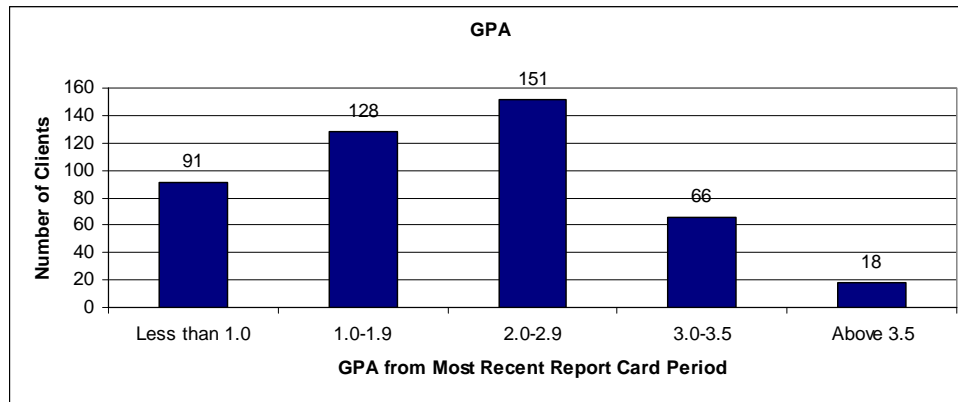
Figure 6.



Data of unexcused absences revealed that thirty-one percent of youth did not report an unexcused absence during their most recent report card period. However, roughly 13% of clients had between one and five unexcused absences, four percent reported between six and ten unexcused absences, five percent reported between 11 and 20 unexcused absences, and four percent reported over 20 unexcused absences.

Sixteen percent of clients reported having a grade point average (GPA) between 2.0 and 2.9, representing the most common GPA range (see Figure 7). This was followed by 14% reporting between a 1.0 and 1.9. Ten percent of clients had below a 1.0 while 9% had above a 3.0.

Figure 7.



Involved with the Erie County Office of Children and Youth and the Erie County Juvenile Probation Department

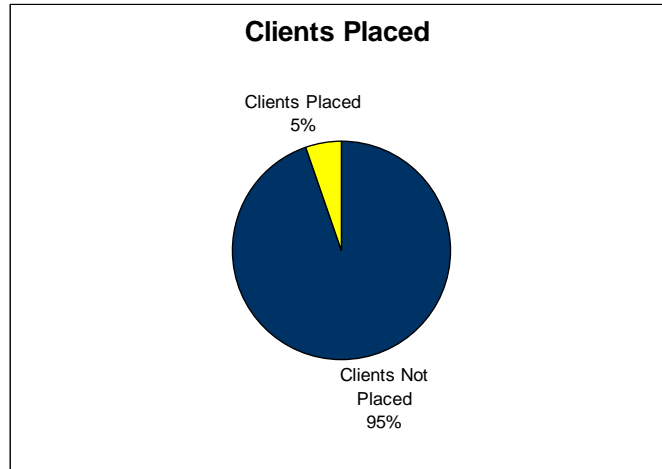
At the time the client profile surveys were completed, five percent of the youth involved in the incorrigibility programs were reported to be involved with the Erie County Office of Children and 10% were reported to be involved with the Erie County Juvenile Probation Department.

Section II: Data of Clients Placed

The second section presents data pertaining to client profiles completed for the youth who have been served within the constellation of incorrigibility programs beginning in July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2003 who have been placed by Erie County Juvenile Probation or the Erie County Office of Children and Youth following incorrigibility program entry (N=138).

Evaluation of juvenile probation and child welfare placements during the period of July 1, 2001-June 30, 2003 revealed that of the 2,629 client profiles completed at intake of incorrigibility programs between July 1, 2000 and June 30, 2003, five percent of those youth had been placed following program enrollment (See Figure 8). Twenty-eight youth had been placed two times following program enrollment and four youth had been placed three times following program enrollment.

Figure 8.

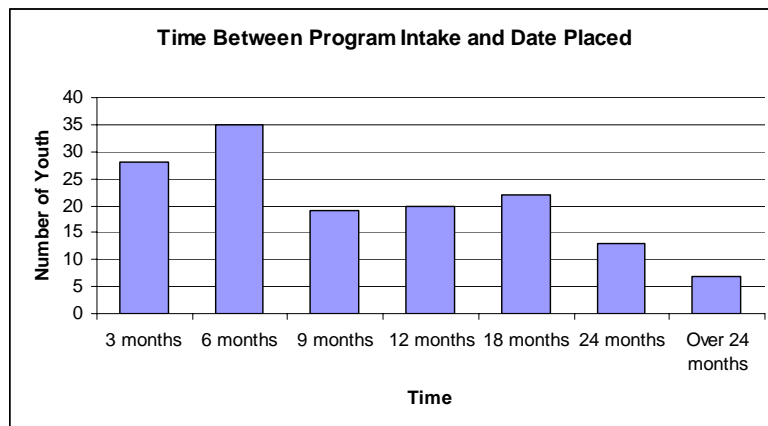


Of those youth served by incorrigibility programs that have been placed, 63% were enrolled in the Alternative Education Program. The Alternative Education Program is unique from other incorrigibility initiatives in that the program receives referrals from school districts and participation is not voluntary. Fourteen percent of clients placed had been enrolled in IJDPP, eight percent in the Families Together Program, eight percent in ASSP, and six percent in Project Intercept.

Of the 138 clients being placed, twenty-two clients had been enrolled in two incorrigibility programs prior to placement, and one youth was enrolled in three incorrigibility programs prior to placement.

The average time frame between a youth intake into one of the incorrigibility programs and placement was nine months. Twenty-four percent of youth were placed between six and nine months following program enrollment, however, the majority of youth were placed nine months or more following program involvement (see Figure 9).

Figure 9.



The average length of program involvement for clients placed was five months. Length of enrollment for non-placed clients was unavailable for comparison.

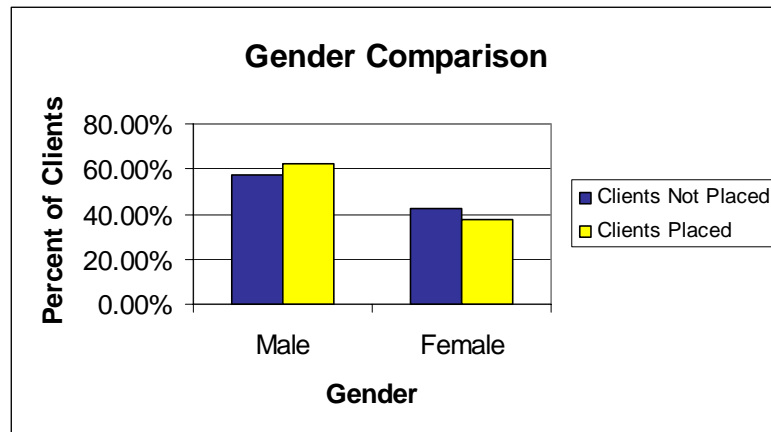
Section III: Comparison of Clients Placed and Total Clients Served

Demographic Comparison

The third section offers a comparison between those youth who have been served by incorrigibility programming and have been maintained in the community/home and those youth who have been served by incorrigibility programming and have been placed through the Erie County Office of Children and Youth or Erie County Juvenile Probation.

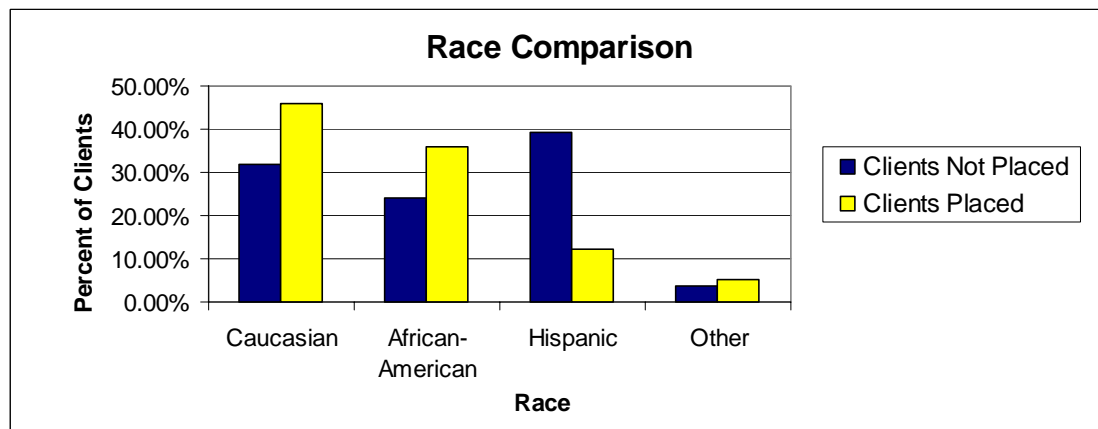
The percentage of males is slightly higher for clients who were placed than for the general client population (see Figure 10).

Figure 10.



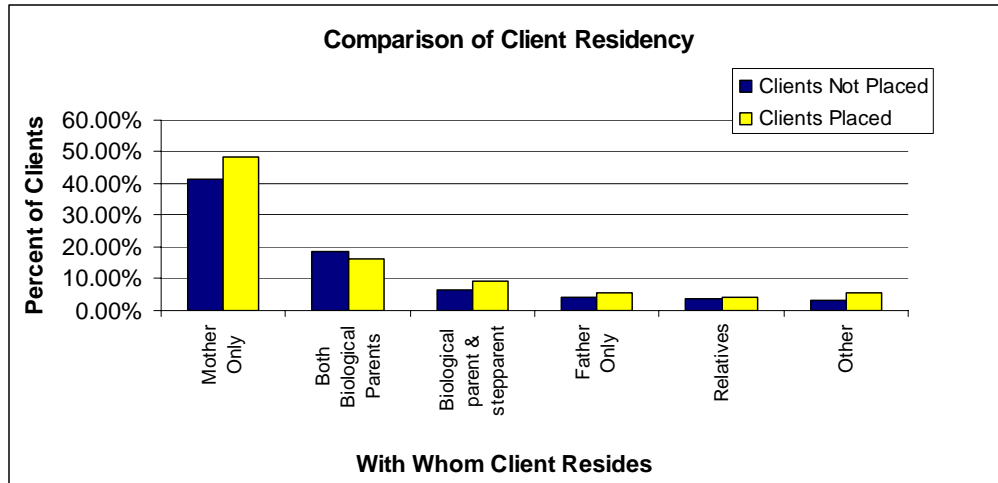
Caucasian and African American clients are placed at rates greater than their proportion of the total population served while Hispanic clients, representing roughly 29% of the total population served, are placed at a rate lower than 12% (see Figure 11).

Figure 11.



The following data on residency comparison should be interpreted with caution due to a disproportionate amount of missing data between clients placed and clients not placed (data was not reported for 23% of clients not placed and 10% of clients placed). Based on available data, the majority of clients both placed and not placed reside with their mothers only, followed by living within a two-parent household (see Figure 12).

Figure 12.



Education Status Comparison

The number of absences, number of unexcused absences, and grade point averages of clients has not been consistently reported since the beginning of data collection. Roughly 52% of client absence data, 56% of unexcused absence data, and 63% of grade point average data was not reported for both comparison groups. Therefore, due to the significant amount of missing data, the following findings should be interpreted with great caution.

Based on available data, clients who do not miss school are much less likely to be placed than others (see Figures 13 & 14). Clients who had been placed had a higher percentage of GPAs below 1.0 than the general client population (see Figure 15). In addition, clients placed are more likely to be in special education (see Figure 16).

Figure 13.

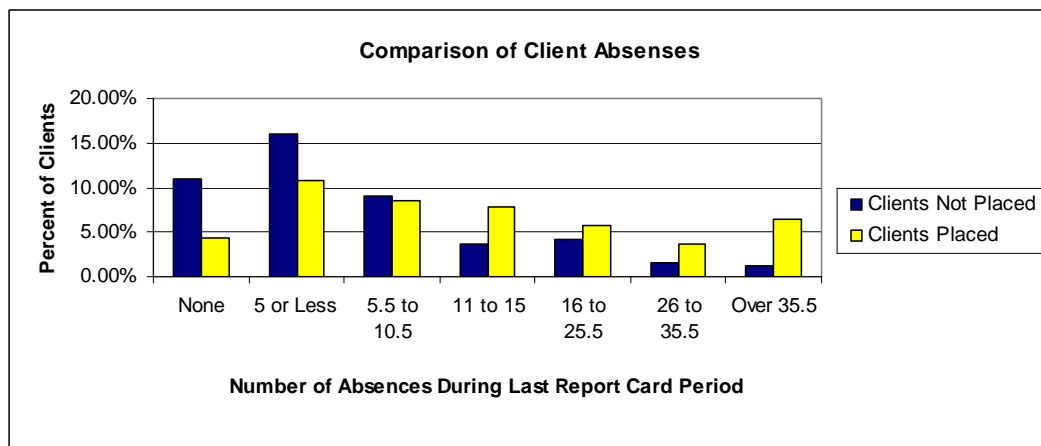


Figure 14.

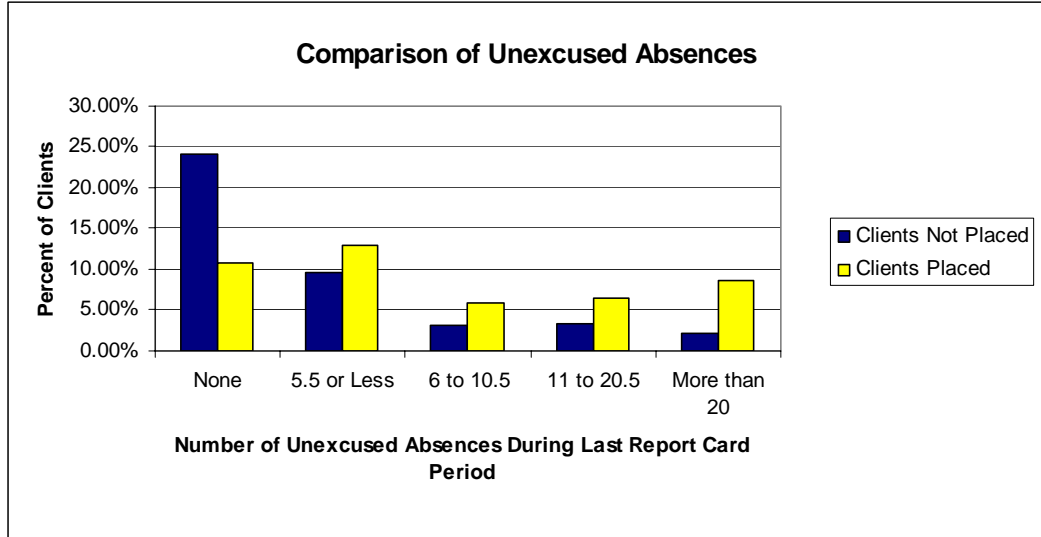


Figure 15.

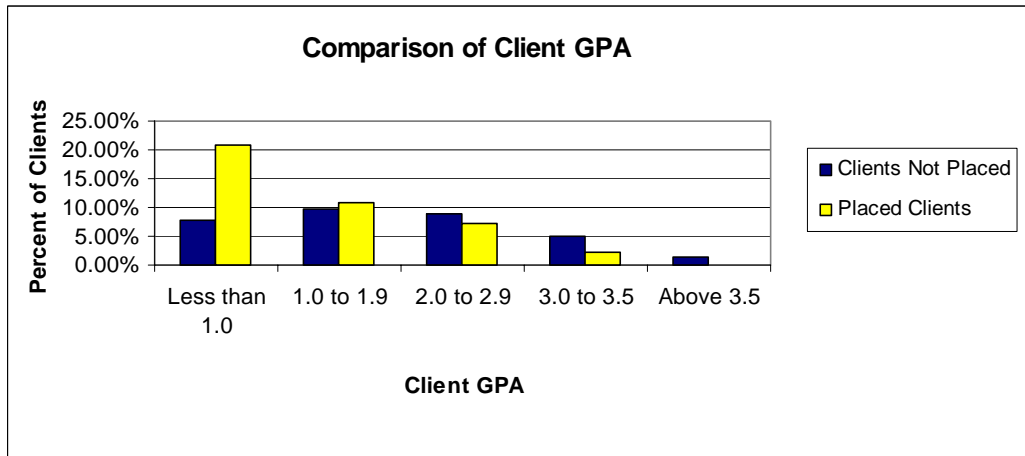
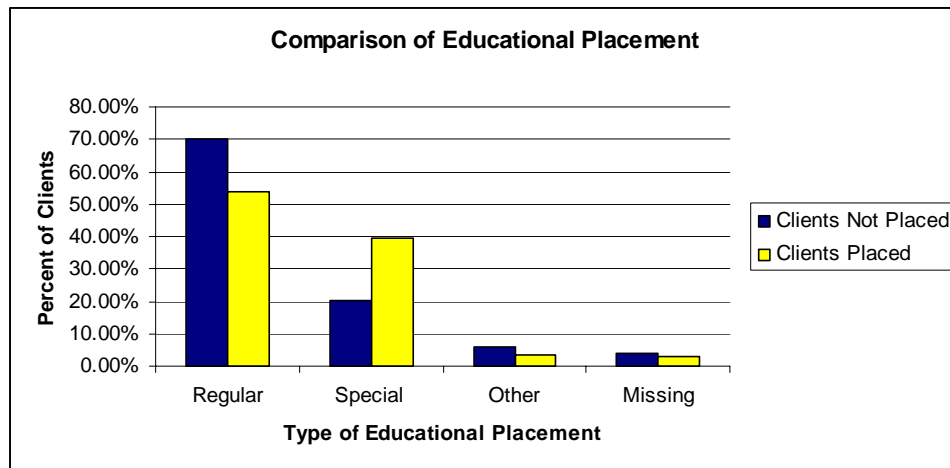


Figure 16.



Involved with the Erie County Office of Children and Youth and the Erie County Juvenile Probation Department Comparison

Comparing client involvement with Juvenile Probation and Child Welfare, the percentage of placed clients involved with Juvenile Probation and Child Welfare at the time of incorrigibility program intake was slightly higher than that of the general client population; however, the vast majority of clients placed and not placed clients did not have current involvement in either system at the time of acceptance into their respective incorrigibility program (see Figures 17 & 18).

Figure 17.

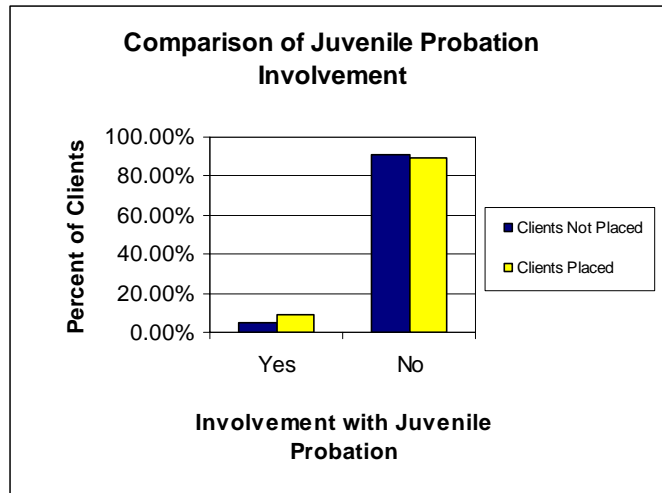
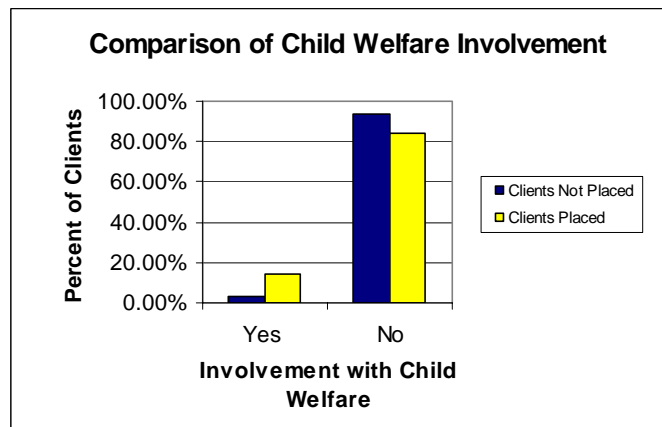


Figure 18.



Section IV: Individual Program Outcome Summary

Due to the individual nature of many of the incorrigibility programs, program supervisors were requested to revise and submit updated logic models reflecting the individualized goals of each of the programs by June 1, 2003. The outcomes identified by these logic models are to be tracked by each program starting July 1, 2003. Four of the programs have already been tracking outcomes, and those findings are highlighted below.

After School Support Program

There were three hundred ninety-four students for whom pre- and post-teacher evaluations were completed by their homeroom teachers. The evaluation measures academic and behavioral skills rating on a Likert scale (1 = below average; 3 = average and 5 = above average). There was an overall increase in academic rating of 15% and a 17% increase in the behavior rating. Significant increases occurred in language art skills (21% increase), math skills (24% increase), English language proficiency (11% increase) and written language proficiency (17% increase). A control group was identified to validate results. There was a ten percent academic and behavioral decrease for students who did not complete the program, whereas, the randomly selected treatment group showed a thirteen percent overall increase.

In addition to the student evaluations, two hundred thirty-eight parents surveys were completed. Fifty-eight percent felt their child's attendance improved and seventy-nine percent said they would recommend the program to others.

Delinquency Prevention Program

The Delinquency Prevention Program serviced approximately 2,100 students during the 2002-2003 school year. All school sites randomly identify at least 51% of their population and submit outcomes based on that population relating to grade point average, attendance, and discipline referrals. There was an increase in grade point average by 9%, a decrease in illegal absences by 14% and a decrease in discipline referrals by 18%.

Intensive Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Program

Ninety-seven percent of clients did not have to be referred to the Erie County Office of Children and Youth for truancy during the 2002-2003 school year. The overall program identified a 40% decrease in discipline referrals, a 67% decrease in office detention, and a 49% decrease in Saturday detention.

Project Intercept

Project Intercept identified the average length of enrollment for a client in the program is approximately seven months. Of the 89 clients served during the 2002-2003 school year, 88% of clients achieved the goal of maintaining a daily school attendance of at least 97%. In addition, 98% of clients were promoted to the next grade level for the following school year.

Section V: Looking Ahead

Completion and submission of client profiles of youth involved in the incorrigibility spectrum will continue to be an ongoing data collection process. For the upcoming year, the goal will be to continue to strive for completed data for all clients from all of the incorrigibility initiatives. In addition, emphasis will be placed on tracking individual program outcomes as identified through each program's logic models.