

Juvenile Diversion Exits and Recidivism

CY 2017 and 2018

In North Carolina, the volume of juveniles diverted each year remains steady at approximately 25% of juveniles who go through intake. Periodically, the division is prompted to take a closer look at the diverted population and analyze outcomes of the youth served on diversion plans/contracts. To complete such a periodic update, data was analyzed for juveniles who completed diversion plans/contracts and exited in CY 2017 and 2018. Two groups were analyzed:

- 1) juveniles who completed diversion plans/contracts; and
- 2) juveniles who completed diversion plans/contracts who had at least one subsequent juvenile complaint within two years from their diversion exit date.

I. Diversion Exits

Of the juveniles who completed diversion plans in 2017 and 2018, 81.5% of juveniles were successful. Females comprised 33.6% of the exits; and 56% were youth of color. The success rate by race/ethnicity is in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Percent with Successful and Unsuccessful Diversion Exits by Race, CY 2017 and CY 2018

	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black	Hispanic/Latino	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	White
Successful	85%	82%	81%	83%	100%	75%	82%
Unsuccessful	15%	18%	19%	17%	0%	25%	18%

On average, juveniles spent approximately 4.1 months on diversion. Juveniles that had successful exits had a slightly higher average at 4.4 months and juveniles that had unsuccessful exits had a lower average, at 3.1 months on diversion.

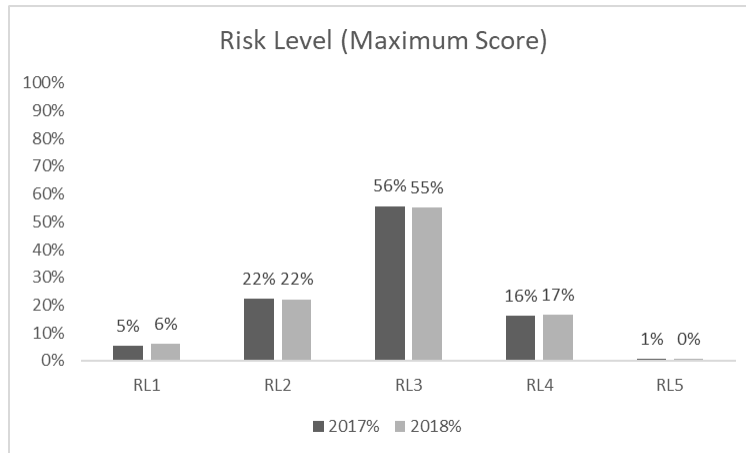
Table 2, below, shows the percentage of ages at the time the diversion plan/contract ended. Half (51%) of the youth in the diverted population were ages 14 or 15 at diversion exit.

Table 2: Age Group at Diversion Exit, CY 2017 and CY 2018

	Age at Exit			
	Under 10	10 - 13	14 - 15	16 and Above
CY 2017	123	1,501	2,455	765
CY 2018	132	1,519	2,337	657
% by Group	3%	32%	51%	15%

Figure 1 shows the maximum score juveniles received on the risk assessment taken before they exited diversion. Over half of the juveniles in both 2017 and 2018 were in Risk Level 3. 84% and 83%, respectively, were in Risk Level 3 or lower.

Figure 1: Risk Level Based on Maximum Score on Risk Assessment



II. Recidivism after Diversion

Table 3, below, shows the total number of juveniles that exited diversion and the juveniles that exited and had 1 or more complaints within 2 years after diversion (recidivists), by calendar year. The recidivism rate for 2017 was 23.4% and 24.8% in 2018.

Table 3: Total Juveniles Exited Diversion, CY 2017 and CY 2018

	Diversion Exited Juveniles	Juveniles with 1 or more Complaints within 2 Years After Diversion	Recidivism
CY 2017	4,844	1,134	23.4%
CY 2018	4,645	1,150	24.8%

When juveniles exit diversion, they are categorized by a Juvenile Court Counselor as successful, satisfactory, or unsuccessful. For purposes of this report, successful and satisfactory reasons are grouped together as “Successful”. Tables 4 and 5, below, show the total number of juveniles that had successful and unsuccessful exits from diversion, along with the total of juveniles that had 1 or more complaints within 2 years after diversion, by calendar year. The recidivism rate is lower for juveniles that had successful diversions compared to juveniles that had unsuccessful exits.

Table 4: Recidivism of Juveniles with Successful Diversion Exits

	Diversion Successful Exited Juveniles	Juveniles with 1 or more Complaints within 2 Years After Diversion	Recidivism
CY 2017	3,814	743	19.5%
CY 2018	3,911	841	21.5%

Table 5: Recidivism of Juveniles with Unsuccessful Diversion Exits

	Diversion Unsuccessful Exited Juveniles	Juveniles with 1 or more Complaints within 2 Years After Diversion	Recidivism
CY 2017	1,030	391	38.0%
CY 2018	734	309	42.1%

Next, is a closer look at recidivism for juveniles under juvenile jurisdiction for at least one year. Table 6 shows the percent of juveniles under age 15 that had 1 or more subsequent complaint within 2 years of diversion exit. In 2017 and 2018, recidivism rates were 32.9% and 32.4%, respectively, for juveniles under age 15 years old at diversion exit. This additional look controls for artificial deflation from youth aging out.

Table 6: Age at Exit, Juveniles with 1 or more Complaints within 2 Years After Diversion

	Under 15
CY 2017	32.9%
CY 2018	32.4%

Table 7, below, shows the top 10 most serious charged recidivist offenses for calendar years 2017 and 2018. Almost all recidivist complaints were misdemeanors, 7 out of the top 10 for both years.

Table 7: Top 10 Most Serious Charged Recidivist Offense

2017 Top 10 Most Serious Charged Recidivist Offenses	2018 Top 10 Most Serious Charged Recidivist Offenses
Simple assault	Simple assault
Communicating threats	Truant < 16
Larceny - Misdemeanor	Disorderly Conduct at School
Disorderly Conduct at School	Larceny - Misdemeanor
Truant < 16	Simple affray
Breaking and or entering (f)	Communicating threats
Simple affray	Breaking and or entering (f)
Assault government official / employee	Assault government official / employee
Robbery with dangerous weapon	Robbery with dangerous weapon
Injury to real property	Assault school employee / volunteer

Conclusion

Diverted youth compose a quarter of intakes. Overall, juveniles diverted are “low risk”, half are ages 14-15 at exit, they spend on average 4 months on diversion, and they recidivate at a low rate. Their recidivist offenses are primarily misdemeanors.