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## County Probation Camps and Ranches for Juvenile Offenders

*By Marcus Nieto*

*Requested by  
Assembly Member, Jose Solorio, Chair,  
Public Safety Committee*



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*By Marcus Nieto*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report, which was requested by Assembly Member Jose Solorio, Chair of the Public Safety Committee, examines California's county camps and ranches for juvenile offenders in the context of recent reforms of the state's juvenile justice system.

Under the 2007 Juvenile Justice Realignment law (SB 81, Chapter 175, and AB 191, Chapter 257, Statutes of 2007), the state Division of Juvenile Justice is charged with providing treatment and rehabilitation for only the most violent juvenile offenders, (as defined in Welfare and Institutions Code Sec. 707 (b)). Counties are responsible for providing treatment and rehabilitation to all other juvenile offenders, some of whom were previously sent to the state system. No longer can counties send their most chronic juvenile offenders to the state, regardless of a youth's behavioral condition or criminal record. As a result, county probation camps and ranches are playing an increasingly important role in rehabilitating juvenile offenders and are developing new programs for this more challenging population.

Currently over 550 juvenile offenders serving detention in state DJJ facilities fit this profile. Beginning in 2009, they will be released back to county supervision as mandated by the Juvenile Justice Realignment law. In addition, there are other non-707 (b) juveniles who currently are under county supervision and will no longer be committed to the state DJJ. The California Department of Finance estimates there will be 500 to 700 juveniles annually across the state in this group, based on past DJJ commitment trend data. This population will pose new and serious challenges to both county courts and probation departments. Not all counties have the capacity or the resources to deliver rehabilitation and other services to the more challenging youth being redirected from state confinement. These counties must either develop new capacities of service and detention or contract with other counties who already provide them. County probation departments supervise over 97 percent of all juvenile offenders in the state. The remaining three percent are committed to the State Division of Juvenile Justice because they met the commitment criteria for violent offenders specified in Welfare and Institution Code Section 707 (b). In contrast, according to the Department of Justice about 18 percent of all convicted adults are sent to the state prison.

Twenty eight counties in the state operate 67 probation camps and ranches. Los Angeles has the most, with 19. These county camps and ranches serve primarily a juvenile population that has been adjudicated (sentenced) by the court to detention. They provide one-third of county juvenile probation beds, and currently operate at about 83 percent capacity, according to the state Correctional Standards Authority.

County probation camps and ranches operate primarily through local funding from property taxes, penalties, fines, and forfeitures. These local funds are supplemented with state funding, principally the Juvenile Probation and Camps Funding Program (JPCFP), which allocates an average of \$32 million per year to all 67 camps.

This report describes the current county probation camp system for juveniles, including the different requirements imposed by various state agencies involved in funding and overseeing

programs in the camps. There are different models of county probation camps, including conventional camps, wilderness camps, military (boot camps), and small residential treatment facilities (known as the Missouri model). We describe the different models as implemented by California counties, with information about length of stay requirements and treatment options. When possible, we also describe the educational and vocational requirements and programs provided by the camps, and examine the availability of health and mental health services.

Some of the information presented in this report is drawn from a series of site visits. Those site visits and tours of selected county camps and detention facilities provided additional insight about daily life in a county camp. The report presents personal observations and anecdotal information about camp procedures and programs that are designed to help juvenile detainees progress into responsible adulthood. The consequences of failure are severe for the youth and for society.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE JUVENILE COURT PROCESS

Over 100 hundred years ago, the Illinois legislature enacted the Illinois Juvenile Court Act (1899 Ill. Laws 132 et seq.), creating the first separate juvenile court in the United States. The 1899 Illinois Juvenile Court Act was, in part, a response to the growing incidence of jury nullification\* in cases involving minors, and reform-based opposition to confining youth with adults.<sup>1</sup> While the Act did not fundamentally change procedures in existing courts that were sitting as juvenile courts to adjudicate cases involving children, it did introduce the *parens-patriae* philosophy,<sup>∞</sup> and gave the juvenile courts exclusive jurisdiction over children charged with crimes.

By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, juvenile courts were established in 46 states, three territories, and the District of Columbia. However, in the mid-1960s, juvenile courts came under increased scrutiny because of the wide discretion given juvenile court judges, most of whom had no specialized training regarding children, and many of whom were not even lawyers.<sup>1</sup> This resulted in a series of decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court that formalized juvenile court procedures and made them more like criminal courts. Formal hearings were required in situations where juveniles were remanded to adult courts, and juveniles facing confinement were required to receive notice of the charges against them, and to have the right to have an attorney represent them. "Proof beyond a reasonable doubt" was required, instead of "a preponderance of evidence" for adjudication.<sup>2</sup>

The most notable Supreme Court decision was a 1967 case (*Gault v. United States*), which affirmed that juvenile courts must respect the due process of law rights of juveniles during court proceedings. The case involved an Arizona juvenile court's decision to confine Gerald Francis Gault (age 15), who had been placed in detention for making an obscene phone call to a neighbor while under probation. The court placed him in the State Industrial School until he became an adult (age 21) or was "discharged by due process of law." The U.S. Supreme Court decision emphasized that the youth had a right to receive fair treatment under the law and enumerated the following rights of minors:

- The right to receive notice of charges
- The right to obtain legal counsel
- The right to confrontation and cross-examination
- The privilege against self-incrimination
- The right to receive a transcript of the court proceedings

The right to appellate review<sup>3</sup> programs, when approved, were qualified to receive federal funding. By 1974, many states had developed programs to prevent juvenile delinquency by

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\* Jury nullification is the source of much debate. Some maintain that it is an important safeguard of last resort against wrongful imprisonment and government tyranny. Others view it as an abuse of the right to a jury trial that undermines the law. Some view it as a violation of the oath sworn to by jurors. While the requirement that jurors take an oath is lawful, others view the oath's reference to "deliverance" to require nullification of unjust law: "will well and truly try and a true deliverance make between the United States and the defendant at the bar, and a true verdict render according to the evidence, so help [me] God." *United States V. Green*, 556 F.2d 71 ~.1 (D.C. Cir. 1977).

<sup>∞</sup> PARENS PATRIAE - Lat. "parent of his country." Used when the government acts on behalf of a child or mentally ill person. Refers to the "state" as the guardian of minors and incompetent people.

removing youth from detention and placing them in the community, and keeping juvenile offenders separate from adult offenders.

Congress passed the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, creating the following entities:

- The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
- The Runaway Youth Program
- The National Institute for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (NIJDP)

In order to receive the federal funds made available by the Act, states were required to remove youth from “secure detention and correctional facilities,” and to separate juvenile delinquents from convicted adults. Part of the rationale behind the separation of juvenile and adult offenders was evidence that delinquent youth learned more criminal behavior from older inmates. As noted during the Progressive Era by the writer Morrison Swift:

Young and impressionable offenders were being carried off to Rutland with more hardened men, there to receive an education in lawlessness from their experienced associates.<sup>4</sup>

In the 1980s, the public’s perception of the juvenile justice system began changing because juvenile crime was on the rise. Many thought the system was too lenient. A number of states, including California, passed punitive laws including mandatory sentences and automatic waivers to adult court for certain crimes. In the 1990s, this trend accelerated. Laws were enacted making it easier to transfer juvenile offenders to the adult criminal justice system, where the emphasis is more on punishment and less on rehabilitation. However, the balance is beginning to shift again, from solely punishment to some rehabilitation.

A number of states are making concerted efforts to reduce patterns of juvenile incarceration and increase utilization of community-based interventions. Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Texas, Illinois, New York and California are among the states that have significantly changed policies towards juvenile detention and incarceration.<sup>5</sup>

Many factors, including lawsuits, have motivated this change. “Evidence-based” practices supported by research are beginning to identify the effects of environmental factors on juvenile criminal behavior and promising programmatic approaches that motivate change<sup>†</sup> Other factors

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<sup>†</sup> **Evidence based practice** (EBP) is an approach that tries to specify how professionals or other decision-makers should make decisions by identifying supporting evidence for a practice, and rating it according. The goal is to eliminate unsound or excessively risky practices in favor of those that have better outcomes. EBP relies on various methods (e.g. carefully summarizing research and educating professionals in how to understand and apply the findings) to encourage, and in some instances to require, professionals and other decision-makers to pay more attention to evidence that can inform their decision-making.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evidence\\_based\\_practice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evidence_based_practice)

motivating change include reports of severe abuse in some state juvenile detention facilities, particularly severe treatment of minority offenders, and the significant cost of state juvenile incarceration.

As the momentum to decrease incarcerating juveniles in state institutions builds, sufficient funding, adequate facilities with trained staff, and coordinated local responsibilities for these youth have become increasingly important. Probation agencies and their community-based partners are challenged to expand their services to meet the need of more juveniles for longer periods of time.

- Illinois has begun to provide fiscal incentives to local jurisdictions to conduct mental health assessments of juveniles who were previously sent to state facilities.
- The state of New York will pay only 50 percent of the pretrial juvenile detention costs, as an incentive for locals to reduce detention and develop community-based alternatives.
- Louisiana has closed two of its most notorious state juvenile facilities in response to class-action lawsuits, and has reduced the mostly minority inmate (ward) population from 2,000 to 500. The remaining state facilities for juveniles also are undergoing major changes, such as using smaller facilities and community-based alternatives (modeled after Missouri).<sup>6</sup>
- Mississippi reduced its state juvenile incarceration population from 500 youth in 2002, to less than 300 today, and has shifted financial resources to local jurisdictions to support local alternatives.<sup>7</sup>

Missouri has been influential in demonstrating the value of this change. Their community-based centers for juveniles are considered a national model. Instead of housing minor offenders and more serious offenders in the same facility, as often happens elsewhere, Missouri segregates detainees by the seriousness of their crimes. The state stresses strong family involvement and intensive treatment in small and moderately secure settings (ten to 12 beds per unit), non-secure group homes, and day-treatment centers. Youth rarely are placed more than one or two hours away from home. A full discussion of this model, and of a California hybrid in Santa Clara County, is presented later in this paper.

## **JUVENILE COURT PROCEEDINGS IN CALIFORNIA**

In most counties, the presiding Superior Court judge is responsible for the Juvenile Court (although in smaller counties, one judge is in charge of all juvenile proceedings). There are three distinct types of juvenile proceedings.

### ***Dependency Courts***

In Dependency Court, the juvenile court determines if a child needs protection and, if so,

removes responsibility for care from the parents and assigns custody and care responsibilities to the social services and probation department. The court is responsible for making decisions about the child's future.<sup>8</sup>

If the minor becomes a dependent of the court, the minor may reside at home under court supervision, or be placed outside the home under the custody of a responsible adult. County departments for children and family services are generally responsible for investigating allegations of child abuse and neglect and are the petitions on dependency cases. In many cases, the court's initial decision involves placing the minor in a foster care home with conditions for reunification with parents.

As part of any court order involving reunification, the parent must comply with conditions set by the judge such as participation in substance abuse treatment or a parenting class. This complex process is beyond the scope of this report (See Lisa Foster, *Foster Care Fundamentals: An Overview of California's Foster Care System*, California Research Bureau, December 2001 CRB-01-008), but there are several important ways in which dependent minors interact with the juvenile justice system. If a child runs away from foster care (AWOL), police may become involved in finding and returning the child to care. This may involve a stay in juvenile hall in the interim. Similarly, youth who are unsuccessful in a group home placement may be housed in juvenile hall while awaiting a new placement. A 2005 study by the Youth Law Center found that youth with mental health needs were detained an average of 105 days in juvenile hall awaiting placement.<sup>9</sup>

According to the State Judicial Council, in FY 2005-06, there were 43,203 juvenile dependency filings in California courts.

### *Delinquency Courts*

Delinquency cases involve minors alleged to have committed a delinquent act (which would be a crime if committed by an adult), or who are habitually disobedient, truant or beyond the control of a parent or guardian ("status offenses"). Delinquency proceedings do not involve trial by jury. The Juvenile Court judge decides whether the youth has committed an offense, and, if so, the youth is found to be a delinquent.

Youth who are adjudicated as delinquent become wards of the court. Usually the county probation department is responsible for preparing reports ("called a social study") for the court about the ward. These reports include crimes (offenses) committed, a victim's statement (if any), and discussion about the youth's family environment, school attendance and performance, as well as any known substance abuse or mental health issues. The probation report also recommends appropriate consequences and treatment to motivate the juvenile ward to change behavior.

The Juvenile Court determines the appropriate adjudication based on this report. Usually the court imposes sanctions based on the severity of the offense and the availability of services. For example, a youth may be placed on informal or formal juvenile probation, in detention, in secured residential treatment, or committed to the state's Division of Juvenile Justice (Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation). In the absence of an appropriate local commitment facility, the judge also can place a ward in another county that agrees to accept the ward and has an appropriate facility for the level of sanction required.

According to the State Judicial Council, in FY 2005-06, there were 105,714 juvenile delinquency filings in California courts, both original and subsequent. Subsequent filings alter or enhance the original charge and are not always reflective of a separate alleged offense. In FY 2005-06, there were 61,637 original filings, which are more representative of alleged offenses.<sup>10</sup>

### ***Informal Juvenile and Traffic (IJT) Courts***

In some large urban counties, Informal Juvenile and Traffic Courts also are involved in the early intervention and prevention of delinquent and criminal acts. Most of the cases (79 percent) are not related to traffic, but are misdemeanor and infraction violations. Most counties use the IJT Courts to reduce the number of filings in Delinquency Court.

In some counties, an Informal Juvenile Court resolves juvenile traffic and Penal Code misdemeanor infractions, while in others the IJT Courts resolve only juvenile misdemeanor traffic violations. Alternatively, a designated probation officer may hear only juvenile traffic matters while the IJT Courts resolve adult and juvenile traffic misdemeanors.<sup>11</sup> According to the State Judicial Council, hundreds of thousands of these cases are heard each year throughout the state. In general, police officers ticket the minor with a notice to appear that the minor signs, promising to appear in court on a certain date and location. The minor must be accompanied by a parent in court.

Cases in Informal Juvenile and Traffic Courts often are heard by Superior Court Referees and Commissioners. A referee is a judicial officer who is appointed by the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court. A referee hears assigned cases with the same authority as a judge of the Juvenile Court (Section 248, Welfare and Institutions Code, hereafter WIC). The most common non-traffic violations cited by probation or law enforcement are: alcohol and drug violations, thefts, battery, trespassing, disturbing the peace, curfew violations, daytime loitering (usually called "truancy"), loitering, graffiti, disturbance of the peace and fare evasion on public transportation.

## **JUVENILE DETENTION IN CALIFORNIA**

Escalating responses to criminal offenses by juveniles of increasing severity range from informal probation, formal probation, and out-of-home placement (group or foster homes), to residential treatment, and county detention. Before 2007, for a juvenile to be incarcerated at the state level, he/she must have committed a violent offense (as defined in Welfare and Institution Code Section 707 (b)), failed to progress through programs and services at the county probation level, or if the county had no services (some counties have a broader array of services than others), was sent to state detention at a pre-determined cost (sliding scale).<sup>‡</sup> The most stringent program sanctions provided by counties include residential treatment programs, home and electronic

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<sup>‡</sup> WIC 707 (b) is applicable in any case in which a minor is alleged to be a person described in Section 602 by reason of the violation of one of the following offenses: (1) Murder, (2) Arson, as provided in subdivision (a) or (b) of Section 451 of the Penal Code, (3) Robbery, (4) Rape with force, violence, or threat of great bodily harm, (5) Sodomy by force, violence, duress, menace, or threat of great bodily harm. (6) Lewd or lascivious act as provided in subdivision (b) of Section 288 of the Penal Code, (7) Oral copulation by force, violence, duress, menace, or threat of great bodily harm.

supervised detention in camps and ranches, and intensive community supervision by probation officers. If a juvenile fails to respond appropriately, and if the allotted time in placement has expired, the juvenile is free to leave, generally on informal probation.

Rehabilitation is the goal of both the state and county juvenile justice systems. For a juvenile to succeed, many agencies have a role to play including schools, social services agencies, and community-based organizations.

### ***Juvenile Hall Booking***

Once arrested, the path a juvenile may follow through the juvenile justice system to final disposition varies greatly. A law enforcement officer has the discretion to release the juvenile to his or her parents, or take the offender to juvenile hall. Alternatively, the law enforcement agency may refer the juvenile offender's offense to the district attorney for direct filing in adult court if the crime is serious and violent in nature. Typically, the county probation department (the agency responsible for the juvenile hall) has the discretion to accept and "book" the offender. If it decides not to book the juvenile, disposition is left to the police. Because most of the state's juvenile halls are overcrowded, mainly with juveniles being held for violent offenses or waiting placement in a secure residential treatment facility or group home, some juvenile arrestees are released back to the custody of their parents or guardians and the case is closed.

Probation departments decide how to process juvenile cases. A case may be closed or transferred to another county, a juvenile may be placed on informal probation or in a diversion program, or a petition may be sought for a court hearing. If the latter is the case, the juvenile offender is usually placed in juvenile hall and the probation department and/or the district attorney will file a petition with the Juvenile Court. In a few cases, the district attorney may request that the juvenile be "remanded" to adult court as "unfit" to be adjudicated as a juvenile due to the nature of the offense. Juveniles who are adjudicated and whose petitions are sustained (tried and convicted) in Juvenile Court, can be placed on probation in the community, in foster care or in a secure group home, or detained in the county's juvenile ranch or camps (if available).

Before 2007, a recalcitrant nonviolent juvenile offender could be sent to State Division of Juvenile Justice (formally California Youth Authority) institutions for an indeterminate amount of time. Counties no longer can send nonviolent juvenile offenders to (Welfare and Institutions Code non-707 (b) offenders) the State Division of Juvenile Justice. Juveniles tried and convicted in adult court can be sentenced to the state adult prison system.

Only the Juvenile Court can adjudicate status offenses (acts that are considered illegal if a juvenile, not an adult, commits them, such as violating curfew or running away). Once a status or other offense has been referred by law enforcement, the court must decide whether to process the case by filing a petition or by referring youth to juvenile delinquency service agencies, such as foster care or group homes. In either case, the probation department monitors the youth for compliance.

If a juvenile offender's arrest for an alleged crime (felony or misdemeanor) warrants booking and placement in juvenile hall, a probation officer, intake officer, or probation department

employee usually conducts an initial risk assessment. A set process must be followed that includes reviewing the arrest report to ensure there is probable cause (evaluating the facts that led to the arrest), and conducting a preliminary investigation. Based on the probation officer's evaluation, pre-determined scoring criteria (increasingly an evidence-based risk-assessment tool), and relevant laws, a determination is made by the intake officer as to whether the offending minor should be detained pending further review by the Court. If detention is not deemed mandatory or appropriate, the intake officer may release the minor to a parent/guardian on home supervision or without conditions.

If a minor is adjudicated for a criminal act and becomes a ward of the court, it is up to the judge to determine where the minor will live, what school he/she will go to, and with whom the minor will associate. In other words, the judge assumes parental authority over the minor. The judge can allow the minor to live at his parents' home under their supervision, locate another suitable placement, or remove the minor to juvenile hall or juvenile probation camp. If the minor committed a serious and violent offense that qualifies as a Welfare and Institutions Code 707 (b) violation, the judge can send the minor to state Division of Juvenile Justice facilities.

A citation hearing is usually conducted by a probation officer, who interviews the minor and his/her parents and reviews the crime report. Depending upon the type of offense and other factors, the probation officer may conditionally dismiss the case, offer informal supervision, or refer the case to the district attorney for review and the possible filing of a petition with the Juvenile Court.

When counties have alternative community-based programs available, such as Peer Courts or Neighborhood Accountability Boards, juvenile cases can be referred to them.<sup>§</sup> If allowed to participate, a juvenile can eventually have his or her record expunged. Juvenile offenders who have completed formal probation also can apply to the Juvenile Court to have their records sealed.

Probation officers and other department personnel investigate cases and prepare predisposition social history reports for the Juvenile Court. For the social history report, officers must obtain a statement from the victim, when applicable, as well as make recommendations about restitution for victims. These reports, which require investigations into the offense and the background of the juvenile, are relied upon by the Court, District Attorney and Public Defender during negotiations and adjudication/sentencing. Probation officers also prepare reports for disposition and fitness (for trial in adult court), coordinate psychological evaluations, and develop extensive case plans for each minor who is detained or may be detained in excess of 30 days prior to the dispositional hearing.

Juvenile hall is similar to a county jail but for minors. Young offenders live under supervision in dormitory settings. The vast majority of juveniles housed in county juvenile halls are awaiting trial to determine if they are guilty of an offense (pre-placement detention).

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<sup>§</sup>Youth Courts and Neighborhood Accountability Boards are alternatives to Juvenile Delinquency Court proceedings that allow the community at-large and youth in the community to determine what the appropriate sanction should be for a minor juvenile offender.

Repeat offenders who have shown that they are not able to live at home and abide by the rules imposed by the court may be sent to county juvenile camps and ranches. The camps and ranches provide juveniles with intense supervision, behavioral remediation, and an opportunity to earn a diploma or GED or learn a vocational skill. Juveniles can be ordered to attend a camp or ranch program for periods ranging from three months to a year.

Group homes also are deemed a “suitable placement.” A minor is usually required to live in a group home when he or she has a problem that is not being addressed at home, such as drug abuse. In that situation, the minor is placed in a group home for a period of time specified by the Juvenile Court while staff will concentrate on resolving the minor’s drug or other problems.

While there are stringent timelines that must be met for filing a juvenile dependency petition (Welfare and Institutions Code Section 16545), there are no mandated timelines in processing a delinquency petition with the Juvenile Court or coordinating the minor's appearance at a preliminary hearing in the adult court. Juvenile Courts across the country are beginning to address the issue of timely filing of juvenile delinquency petitions and are developing guidelines with the help of the National Center for Juvenile Justice.<sup>12</sup>

In California, the state Judicial Council is proposing that the Juvenile Dependency Court adopt new rules designed to help the court make better decisions on how it allocates resources by measuring performance in the area of hearing timeliness, court procedures and due process, and child and family well-being.<sup>13</sup> There is very little data available about timeliness of dependency court hearings in California. A 2005 study of three courts found about 9 in 10 cases with detained children begin their six-month hearings within the mandated six months of the date the disposition hearing. However, these same courts were less successful in completing these reviews within the mandated time frame (between 59 and 67 percent are successful). More than eight in ten of the six-month review hearings are complete within 30 days of the six-month time frame.<sup>14</sup>

### ***The Role of County Probation Departments***

County probation departments supervise over 97 percent of all juvenile offenders in the state. The remaining three percent are committed to the State Division of Juvenile Justice because they meet the commitment criteria for violent offenders specified in Welfare and Institution Code Section 707 (b). In contrast, according to the California Department of Justice, about 18 percent of all convicted adults are sent to the state prison.

County probation departments undertake risk assessments, make recommendations to judges on juvenile placements and sentencing, supervise offenders in the community, provide rehabilitation and training services, and operate juvenile halls, county ranches and camps. Since county probation departments are primarily funded through local general funds (allocated by Boards of Supervisors), as well as state grants and other grant funding sources, juvenile placement decisions usually are limited by the available local resources.

Probation personnel handle all juvenile intake referrals at juvenile halls. According to the latest data published in 2006, by the Administrative Office of the Courts

- 36 percent of all juvenile cases referred to county probation departments were closed at intake
- 51 percent of juveniles were placed on formal probation
- three percent were given informal probation
- five percent were sent to diversion programs
- five percent were either transferred to other jurisdictions, deported, remanded to adult court, or sent to traffic court.<sup>15</sup>



## PROBATION CAMPS AND RANCHES

There are 28 counties in the state that operate 67 probation camps and ranches, five of which are for girls. Los Angeles, which has 19 camps, operates the most. On average, there are about 3,880 boys (89 percent) and 480 (11 percent) girls detained in county probation camps annually.<sup>16</sup> County probation camps and ranches are locally funded through property taxes and penalties, fines, and forfeitures. According to the Chief Probation Officers of California, counties spent over \$900 million for probation services in 2006. This includes the following:

- \$143.5 million for juvenile services at an average cost of \$1,712 per juvenile offender
- \$368.5 million for juvenile halls, which accounted for 41 percent of all locally-funded probation services
- \$111 million for county probation camps and ranches, an average of \$83 per day per bed, for an annual cost of \$30,295 per bed.<sup>17</sup>

County probation departments receive some state and federal funding. These funding sources include the state Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (\$100 million), a small percentage from the state allocation of Federal Title IV-E funds (Adoption Assistance for Children Adopted from Foster Care), and Proposition 172 funds (one-half cent sales tax). The primary state funding source is the state Juvenile Probation and Camps Funding Program (JPCFP), which allocates over \$151 million per year to all counties that provide services ranging from prevention through incarceration. This amount includes about \$32 million per year to be divided among all 67 camps and ranches, based on the number of beds that are occupied (average daily use).

### PROBATION CAMP MODELS

There are several types of probation camp models in California that seek to rehabilitate and treat primarily young male offenders. All camps have similar programming including grade-level class work, vocational training, counseling, and group therapy. However the approaches used and services provided differ from county to county. The following discussion describes the basic models, and Table 1 and 2 summarize the models and specialized services that counties with juvenile camps and ranches provide.

#### *Conventional Model*

The conventional camp and ranch is a fully-enclosed facility with a fenced and concertina wire perimeter that is designed to house groups ranging from 45 to more than 100 young men. The five probation camps for girls in the state also are of this type. The residence is typically a dormitory-style, open-bunk setting, built around a monitoring center from which staff can view in all directions at all times. During daylight hours, the legal standard minimum staffing ratio is one to 15 youth. During night time hours, the minimum standard staffing pattern is one to 30 youth.<sup>18</sup>

Most daily activities begin with a roll call followed by breakfast and another roll call. School work begins by mid-morning, with a lunch break and an afternoon break as well. Some conventional camps allow juveniles to participate in recreational activities during this time as a reward for good behavior. All camps conduct morning and afternoon education classes that are mandated by California Code of Regulations, Title 15, Division 1, Article 6, Section 1370. Other mandated programs under Title 15 include recreation, exercise, religious programming (at least once per week), and work programs that are designed to teach a vocational skill or service. In most conventional camps, lunch is served in a mess hall (cafeteria-style) where juveniles are rushed in and out with little or no time to talk. In camps that do not have a mess hall but have a kitchen area, meals are taken directly to the residential area where the juveniles conduct their daily activities. In some camps, meals are brought in from the juvenile hall or an adjacent facility.

After lunch and roll call, the afternoon programming usually is a repeat of the morning session. In some camps there are variations including a combination of behavioral programming (counseling, drug education, or therapy) and educational classes or work programs. These activities usually last into the mid-to-late afternoon. Just before and after dinner, juveniles are allowed some recreational time. Some camps provide certified Regional Occupation Center Programs (ROCP) in vocations such as welding, culinary arts, fashion design, and computer science. Other camps offer vocational training that is not ROCP-certified. All camps offer a variety of individual and group counseling and therapy (such as drug and alcohol treatment, anti-gang classes, and anger management).

Juveniles are rewarded by earning points for performing the required activities without disciplinary action (rewards include treats to eat, television time, extra recreation, etc.) The incentive is for the juvenile to conform his or her behavior to the program.<sup>19</sup>

### ***Wilderness Model***

There are two wilderness model camps in the state, a fire camp in Los Angeles and a mountain camp in Colusa. Both camps have dormitory-style residences and freestanding facilities such as a dedicated mess hall and dining area, and a classroom area.

- The Colusa camp is a large open-campus style facility without a defined perimeter or any fencing, since it is located in a National Forest and is far from any community. The camp is operated by the Solano County Probation Department.
- The Los Angeles camp is a training facility to train young firefighters and develop discipline.

The Colusa camp conducts morning and afternoon education classes, as mandated by law, along with other required activities. Counseling and behavior modification therapy is usually offered once a week by a contract therapist. Juveniles who complete their daily program activities and exhibit good behavior are rewarded on weekends with day hikes into the mountains or to remote mineral springs, where they may learn about forest stewardship from rangers.

The camp's remote location in Mendocino National Forest presents unique problems. The nearest town is 15 miles away, making it difficult to attract qualified staff. Finding people with the necessary skills to provide counseling and other kinds of behavioral therapy, and who are willing to travel long distance is difficult. Most maintenance and service personnel live on-site along with probation staff from Solano County. Teachers who work for the Colusa County Office of Education and teach court school classes travel over an hour each day to the camp. The camp offers several vocational training classes, but they are not ROCP-certified.

Camp Routh (Fire Camp #15) in Los Angeles County is for older male juveniles (those who turn 18 years old while under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court), who have failed at other interventions and are ordered by the court to participate or are willing to participate. Up to 90 juveniles are in the camp at any one time for a minimum of six months to a year. Daily activities include morning roll call, exercise, breakfast and firefighting training. During these activities, juveniles are taught the rigors of fire fighting, which involves a high degree of fitness training and disciplined teamwork. Classroom work is designed to teach the skills needed to fight fires. Juveniles also must participate in court school programming.

In the event of a major wilderness fire, camp crews are called to the front lines as part of a coordinated effort between Cal-Fire and other county agencies. According to a camp official, some juveniles sent to Camp Routh by order of the court after failing at other sanctions and interventions within the Los Angeles probation system find the task of fighting wildfires rewarding. One young person called his mother with the news that he had fought his first fire and was thrilled at his accomplishment.<sup>20</sup>

Wilderness camps show promise in successfully helping juveniles to complete daily program activities and to learn firefighting and other skills. However, critics point out that the fire camp can only serve older juveniles who are about to age out of the juvenile system. In addition, funding issues (liability and operating costs) may curtail or end the camp's involvement in fighting fires. Some county probation officials would like to see a different camp that houses younger juveniles (ages 15-17 years) who would train in the firefighting program but not be directly involved in front-line firefighting, but rather in post-cleanup operations.<sup>21</sup>

### ***Boot Camp Model***

Ten counties, mostly in the Central Valley, support juvenile boot camps to treat and rehabilitate adjudicated male juveniles. California county boot camps have a total rated capacity of over 700 beds.

The Fresno County Probation Department is the most aggressive supporter of a boot camp program that focuses on military discipline and offers a highly structured program with a system of interventions and accountability that is designed to

- instill self-esteem,
- develop respect for others and property,
- teach skills to overcome life's barriers and problems,
- create opportunities to reinforce family and community ties.

Demonstration of military marching skills in parades and other competitions is required for advancement in the boot camp program. The key goal in all boot camps is for youth to show respect for authority. If a juvenile can successfully complete the five-and-a-half month boot camp program, he is eligible for the aftercare component of the program.

Some boot camps also provide ROCP-certified courses in vocations such as welding, culinary arts, fashion design, and computer science. Other boot camps offer vocational training that is not ROCP-certified. All boot camps provide an assortment of counseling and therapy programs, but the type of service (drug, alcohol, gang avoidance, anger management, etc), who provides it, and when it is offered varies from camp to camp.

Numerous evaluations conducted nationally over the years have found that boot camps do not improve juvenile recidivism rates. There are many critics of this model. Boot camps are nonetheless supported by the counties of Riverside, Kings, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Yuba, Santa Barbara, Ventura and Los Angeles. <sup>\*\*</sup> The juveniles in these boot camps range in age from 13 to 15, or from 16 to 18 years old.

None of the county juvenile boot camps use the California Grizzly Youth Academy (CGYA) model, which is financially supported by the National Guard and the Department of Defense, and is an accredited program that incorporates cognitive learning practices in its curriculum. CGYA is part of the Challenge Youth Programs started in 1994, by the US Department of Defense. There are 32 programs throughout the United States, including the Grizzly Youth Academy (CGYA) in Camp San Luis Obispo, California. The goal of these academies is to educate young men, aged 16 through 18 years, in a structured learning environment that also improves their self-esteem, pride and level of confidence. These programs are for youth who had problems with traditional education, and seek to help them gain the discipline and life skills to become productive members of their communities and “academically successful.” Admission to the CGYA program is voluntary and tuition free. Some qualifications for admission include being a high school dropout or being at risk of dropping out, free of illegal substances, and having no felony adjudication/convictions or new offenses pending. <sup>††</sup>

County boot camps vary in the aftercare supervision offered to juvenile wards. Most evaluations find that programming after leaving camp is critical to the reinforcement of the personal skills and positive behavioral changes that occurred during the in-custody segment of the program. Intensive face-to-face supervision ranging from six to 12 months, along with electronic monitoring, drug testing, individual and family counseling, and continued community service are key components. Recent budget problems have affected the ability of Fresno and Kings County juvenile boot camps to offer the aftercare components. A camp administrator expressed concern that probation officers assigned to supervising boot camp graduates do not have the time to meet with them before they leave camp, or to do the intensive field work after release that is necessary to reinforce what was learned in the boot camp.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>\*\*</sup> See Dale Parent, “*Correctional Boot Camps: Lesson from a Decade of Research*,” U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, June 2003. With few exceptions, the study found that juvenile boot camp programs do not lead to lower recidivism rates. Those programs that did offered more services had longer sessions and more intensive post-release supervision.

<sup>††</sup> The California Grizzly Youth Academy (CGYA) receives substantial financial support from private donors as well as the military and is also accredited by the Western Association of Schools.

*The Santa Barbara boot camp*, the Los Prietos Boys Academy, serves a tri-coastal county area and can house up to 40 male juveniles. It provides an array of therapeutically-funded services for boot camp participants. The wards are challenged to develop leadership skills, self-confidence, personal accountability and assume community and family responsibility. A camp officer is assigned as squad leader and is responsible for the group's conduct, maintaining structure and discipline, teaching physical training, supervising work crews, and providing daily guidance and support.

All wards in the Los Prietos Boys Academy are assigned to a squad within one of four platoons. Daily activities include classroom work five days a week, participation in work crews, team sports, and counseling groups and physical training, with an emphasis on teamwork and cooperation. Teaching staff from the Santa Barbara County Office of Education provide individualized and remedial instruction, including Special Education and ESL classes. Wards also attend cognitive behavior therapy, peer group sessions, alcohol and drug education, and 12-step and a variety of other intensive therapeutic interventions.<sup>‡‡</sup> The intent is for wards to learn skills to successfully reintegrate at home, school, and in the community.

Wards who are at least 17 and-one-half years of age or who are within 30 credits of completing high school can receive a \$500 stipend to further their educational or vocational training. Two scholarship funds are provided by local civic organizations and are maintained and tracked in the camp's discretionary account.

*Riverside, Madera, and Yuba* counties offer a more traditional boot camp model. By way of military protocol, these camps refer to the juveniles as cadets and attempt to instill structure, discipline, and accountability. The camps also provide therapeutic intervention and education along with family involvement in the rehabilitation process. Cadets range in age from 15 to 18 years old. Riverside's program focuses on the vocational side of ranch life, such as raising pigs and cattle, preparing meals, and working on farm projects in plumbing, masonry and auto shop. Many camps allow their cadets to participate in local parades where they can receive honors, and they also compete in football, baseball, and soccer against schools in the California Intercollegiate Federation (CIF).

These boot camps provide drug education, victim-awareness classes, community service, gang redirection efforts and strong mental health programming in anger management, stress control, and positive socialization skills. Family involvement is mandatory, with the goal of strengthening the home environment and the parents' communication and supervision/control skills. These program features, along with a strong aftercare component affording intensive community supervision, are intended to assist young men to make better decisions and lead crime-free and productive lives.

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<sup>‡‡</sup> Cognitive Behavioral Therapy appears to be the most effective treatment therapy for substance abusers. Researchers have found that programs that include the cognitive component are more than twice as effective as programs that do not. In Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, "alcohol and drug dependence are viewed as learned behaviors that are acquired through experience. If alcohol or a drug provides certain desired results (e.g., good feelings, reduced tensions, etc.) on repeated occasions, it may become the preferred way of achieving those results, particularly in the absence of other ways of meeting those desired ends. From this perspective, the primary tasks of treatment are to (1) identify the specific needs that alcohol and drugs are being used to meet, and (2) develop skills that provide alternative ways of meeting those needs". See Kadden, Ronald M., *Cognitive-Behavior Therapy for Substance Dependence: Coping-Skills Training*, Illinois Department of Human Services' Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, 2000.

The Yuba County boot camp program is going through a series of changes to reconfigure its program, with a new \$4 million grant to add a 46-bed camp for male offenders and a 15 bed Serious Habitual Offender Unit to the existing juvenile hall. The existing 12-bed Maxine Singer Youth Guidance Center boot camp unit will be converted to a girls' treatment program.

### *Missouri Model (Santa Clara County)*

Santa Clara County is the first county in California to reconfigure its probation camps into small residential units, a major change in youth detention practices. One of the two probation camps is a coed facility. Studies find that treating youth in small home-like secure facilities, and allowing them to interact with youth development specialists in individual and group settings, improves their chances for success in life.<sup>23</sup>

Santa Clara modeled its programs after programs created in Missouri. No facility contains more than 40 youth, who live in partitioned ten-bed units. Staff personnel are ethnically diverse and trained in youth development. The goal is to enable a juvenile to bond with staff and consequently reintegrate into the community. According to national research, 70 percent of youth released from Missouri-style programs across the country in 1999, avoided recommitment to any correctional program three years later, as compared to a 45 to 75 percent re-arrest rate in other juvenile detention facilities.<sup>24</sup>

A central tenet of the Santa Clara/Missouri model is that "treatment occurs 24 hours a day." Therapy sessions and all other activities reinforce messages of individual responsibility and discipline in the family context.<sup>§§</sup> Each unit is organized into treatment groups of 10-12 youth who share the same living quarters and participate together in academic classes and group therapy sessions. Ninety-minute group sessions are conducted five times a week at all facilities. These sessions are designed to help youth explore their own identities, reflect on their family histories, learn to understand their emotions, and build skills to recognize and reverse negative behavior patterns.<sup>25</sup>

Some research suggests that the aftercare a juvenile receives is the most important component of a successful re-entry program. In the Missouri model, prior to the youth's release from residential programming, a service coordinator convenes a meeting of the youth's

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<sup>§§</sup> *Pathways Model Family Therapy:* A systemic therapist views the client and his or her symptoms in the context of his or her family system, rather than in isolation. The therapist prefers to work with the entire family and not just the individual who is defined as "the problem." The therapist helps the family examine multigenerational patterns of relationships and behavior, the rules and structure of the family, and the functions or roles of the various family members within the system. The goal is to help family members develop as healthy individuals and resolve family conflicts in order to have a healthy family unit.

*Pathways Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy:* The therapist helps clients in identifying distorted thinking patterns, which are seen as being the cause of depression, anxiety or other emotional problems. The therapist then helps clients see the connection between thinking distortions, beliefs, feelings, and behavior. By learning to challenge their thinking distortions and irrational beliefs, clients can change their feelings and behavior in order to improve their situations. The therapist also helps clients to develop healthy coping skills and alternative strategies for solving problems.

*Pathways Social Skills Training:* The therapist teaches the clients new ways of solving a variety of life's problems. Social skills training can be offered in individual or group therapy and is commonly focused on a topic such as anger management, parenting, and assertiveness. The goal is to raise awareness and develop practical tools and strategies to improve lives.

parents/guardians and facility staff to begin developing an aftercare plan. Typically, this plan will focus on continued education, treatment and/or employment. Aftercare usually is preceded by furloughs in which a youth returns home for one or more overnight visits prior to release.

The length of aftercare services depends on the specific needs of the youth and family but is seldom less than four months. Violations or failures while on aftercare can be met in a variety of ways, depending on the level of concern. Options include increased contact with the service coordinator, brief returns to residential placement, alternative placements (e.g. a drug and alcohol program), or revocation. Revocation is reserved for youth who require additional, long-term residential treatment. In these situations, the youth is returned to the residential phase of programming and treatment starts over again.<sup>26</sup>

**Table 1****California County Juvenile Probation Camps and Ranches**

| <b>County</b>         | <b>Conventional</b>        | <b>Wilderness</b> | <b>Missouri Model</b> | <b>Boot Camp</b> |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| <b>Alameda</b>        | One camp                   |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>Contra Costa</b>   | One camp                   |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>Del Norte</b>      | One camp                   |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>El Dorado</b>      | One camp                   |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>Fresno</b>         | One camp                   |                   |                       | One camp         |
| <b>Kern</b>           | Three camps                |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>King</b>           | One camp (females)         |                   |                       | One camp         |
| <b>Los Angeles</b>    | 17 camps (two for females) | One camp          |                       | One camp         |
| <b>Madera</b>         |                            |                   |                       | One camp         |
| <b>Merced</b>         |                            |                   |                       | One camp         |
| <b>Monterey</b>       | One camp                   |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>Orange</b>         | Three camps                |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>Riverside</b>      | Two camps                  |                   |                       | Two camps        |
| <b>Sacramento</b>     | Two camps                  |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>San Bernardino</b> | One camp                   |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>San Diego</b>      | Three camps (one female)   |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>San Francisco</b>  | One camp                   |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>San Joaquin</b>    | One camp                   |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>San Mateo</b>      | Two camps (one female)     |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>Santa Barbara</b>  | One camp                   |                   |                       | One camp         |
| <b>Santa Clara</b>    |                            |                   | Two camps, one co-ed  |                  |
| <b>Shasta</b>         | One camp                   |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>Solano</b>         | One camp                   | One camp          |                       |                  |
| <b>Sonoma</b>         | Two camps                  |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>Trinity</b>        | One camp                   |                   |                       |                  |
| <b>Tulare</b>         | One camp                   |                   |                       | One camp         |
| <b>Ventura</b>        | One camp                   |                   |                       | One camp         |
| <b>Yuba</b>           |                            |                   |                       | One camp         |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>52 camps (5 female)</b> | <b>2 camps</b>    | <b>2 camps</b>        | <b>11 camps</b>  |

Source: CRB and Correctional Standards Authority, 2008

**Table 2**

**Services Provided by County Probation Camp or Ranch Model Type**

| <b>Camp Model</b>  | <b>Conventional</b> | <b>Wilderness</b> | <b>Boot Camp</b> | <b>Missouri/Hybrid</b> |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| <b><i>Programming Goals</i></b>  |                     |                   |                  |                        |
| Change behavior  | X                   | X                 | X                | X                      |
| Change thinking  |                     | X                 |                  | X                      |
| <b><i>Residence Type</i></b>   |                     |                   |                  |                        |
| Large Dorms (100 or more)  | X                   |                   | X                |                        |
| Small Dorms (25 to 100)  | X                   | X                 | X                |                        |
| Pods (10 or less)  |                     |                   |                  | X                      |
| <b><i>Staff Ratio to Youth</i></b>   |                     |                   |                  |                        |
| High (more staff to youth than is required under state guidelines)                         |                     |                   |                  | X                      |
| Normal   | X                   | X                 | X                |                        |
| Cognitive Behavior–Yes *   |                     |                   |                  | X                      |
| Cognitive Behavioral –No   | X                   | X                 | X                | X                      |
| <b><i>Service Activities</i></b>   |                     |                   |                  |                        |
| Conducted in large group   | X                   | X                 | X                |                        |
| Conducted in small group   |                     |                   |                  | X                      |
| Conducted in separate groups   | X                   |                   |                  | X                      |
| Conducted together all the time  |                     |                   |                  | X                      |
| <b><i>Services/Style/Programs</i></b>  |                     |                   |                  |                        |
| Reward-based   | X                   | X                 | X                | X                      |
| Cognitive-behavioral **  |                     |                   | X                | X                      |
| Evidence-based   |                     |                   |                  | X                      |
| Drug counseling  | X                   | X                 | X                | X                      |
| Family therapy   |                     |                   | X                | X                      |
| Combination group and/or individual therapy (life coping skills, anger management, etc.)   | X                   | X                 | X                | X                      |
| <b><i>Academic Skills Building</i></b>   |                     |                   |                  |                        |
| GED/HS Diploma Equivalent (wards can earn a credential but is not required before leaving) | X                   | X                 | X                | X                      |
| Regional Occupation Center Program   | X                   | X                 | X                | X                      |
| Vocational Training (Uncertified)  | X                   | X                 | X                | X                      |

Source: CRB, 2008

\*Learning the principles of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is required of all staff.

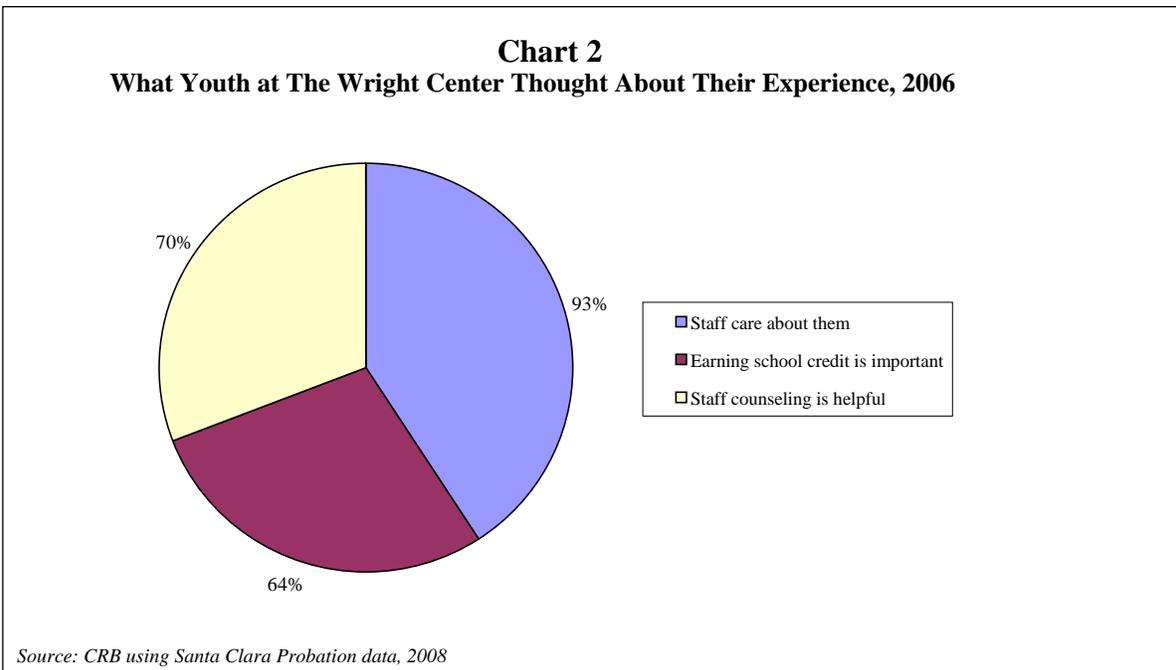
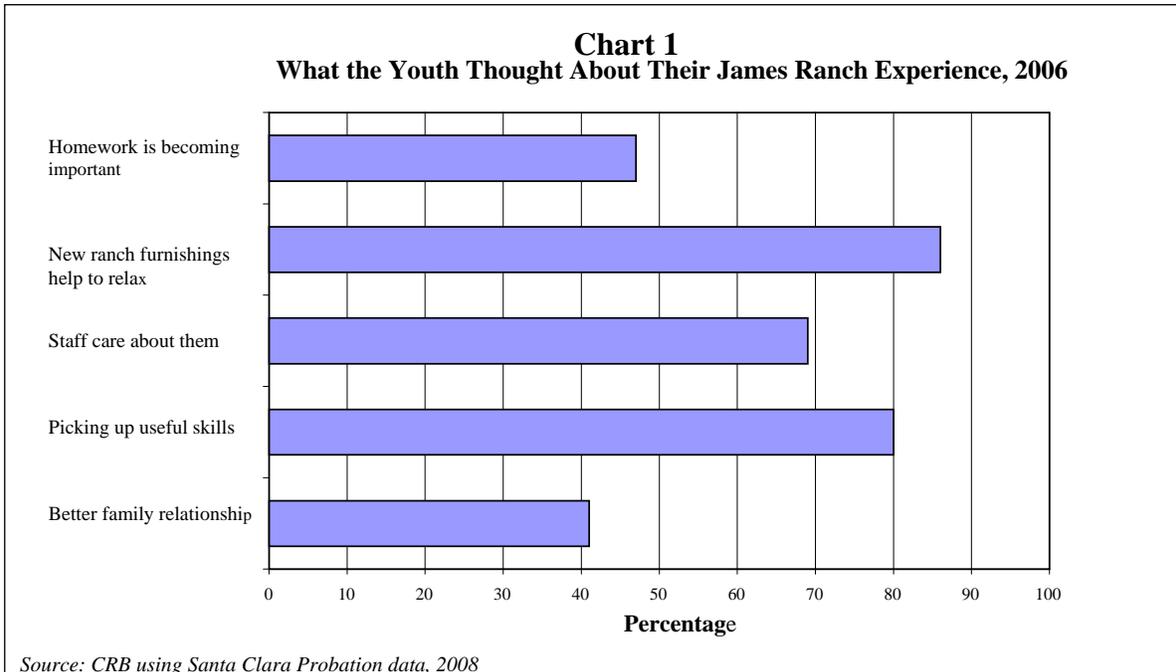
\*\* Pathways Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy

According to the Missouri Department of Youth Services, only 11 percent of the juveniles who went through the program in 1999 were either re-arrested or returned to juvenile custody within one year. In 2004, only eight percent of young offenders were recommitted within a year of release. A long-term recidivism study found that only eight percent of youth released in 1999, were incarcerated in youth or adult corrections three years later, while 19 percent were sentenced

to adult probation — meaning 73 percent of the recent graduates avoided either prison or probation for at least three years.<sup>27</sup> Santa Clara County's initial experience is a positive one. According to county probation officials, since the Enhanced Ranch Program began in 2007, 110 youth have been committed, 75 percent have successfully completed the program, and 70 percent of the juveniles in aftercare supervision have successfully graduated after the ten week requirement. It is too soon to measure the program's impact on recidivism.

Significantly, the Missouri model is less expensive to operate than many state-operated juvenile residential detention facilities. The annual cost per bed in a Missouri residential treatment facility ranges from \$41,400 to \$55,000. Missouri devoted fully 89 percent of its juvenile detention budget to treatment services in its various residential programs. In 2004, Maryland spent \$64,000 per bed, while California spent \$71,000 per bed (for wards housed in Division of Juvenile Justice facilities). However, far more young people in Maryland and California end up in prison as adults, meaning that those states effectively pay much more.<sup>28</sup> It is difficult to compare recidivism rates, because states use different methods to calculate the percentage of repeat offenders. But most states, including California, report double-digit rates, with more than half the youth who leave traditional juvenile detention facilities returning within three years.<sup>29</sup>

Youth in Santa Clara County juvenile camp facilities were asked about their experiences, with their responses shown in the following two charts.



### *Juvenile Court Schools in County Probation Camps*

A juvenile who is adjudicated by the courts and remains under the authority of the county probation department must continue pursuing grade-level academic requirements (California Code of Regulations, Title 15, Division 1, Sec 1370). Juvenile court schools are public schools or classes offered in any juvenile hall, juvenile home, day center, juvenile ranch, camp, regional youth educational facility or in any group home housing 25 or more youth.

County offices of education operate juvenile court schools. Each county office of education has its own revenue rate for daily funding, which is provided from the state General Fund. The minimum regular school day is 240 minutes of instruction. The minimum school day for pupils in attendance in approved vocational education and work experience programs is 180 minutes. Juvenile court schools are open year-round except for holidays or days set aside by the County Board of Education for teacher in-service purposes.

Students served by juvenile court schools run the entire gamut of K-12 grade-levels. In FY 2006-07, 48 of the 58 county offices of education operated juvenile court schools, with a statewide average daily attendance of approximately 16,200 students. The largest was Los Angeles County with 3,338 students, and the smallest was Trinity County with 11 students. There are 180 educational facilities in operation in 84 juvenile halls, 11 ranches, 14 residential/group homes, 19 day centers, 36 camps, and 16 detention centers. The average daily number of juveniles serving detention in county probation camp and ranch facilities in 2007 was 4,229. Counties that do not operate court schools send their students to other counties with available facilities.

Most court schools in county probation camps teach English and math as the core classes. Some offer a broader array of courses such as science, career education, health, art, computer technology, and physical education.<sup>30</sup> In 2007, there were 541 juveniles in California who graduated from court schools while serving in one of the 180 juvenile education facilities.<sup>31</sup> There is no data on how many juveniles earned a GED or earned grade-level transferable credit, or the type of facility in which a juvenile earned a high school diploma. However approximately ten percent of all juveniles who passed through the 12 camps and ranches that we visited earned their diploma or GED while in detention over a two year period (2006 and 2007), as shown in Table 3.

All county probation camps and ranches operate more than one cycle per year (the length of the term a juvenile serves in detention). On the short end, some camps have three or four cycles (90 to 120 days each) per year, while others operate one and one-half or two cycles per year (180 days to 270 days). As a result, more kids cycle in and out of camp detention, making it difficult to achieve a high school diploma or a GED equivalent.<sup>32</sup>

**Table 3**  
**Number of Diplomas and GEDs Earned At Selected County Probation Camps, 2006 and 2007**

|  | <b>*Beds/average daily census per cycle</b> | <b>Number of juveniles in camp over a two year period</b> | <b>HS diploma earned</b> | <b>GED earned</b> |
|--|---|---|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Sacramento – Boys Ranch                    | 125/107                                     | 107 juveniles x 3 cycles = 321 juveniles                  | 9                        | 105               |
| Solano – Fouts Springs                     | 60/58                                       | 58 juveniles/cycle x 2.5 cycles = 145 juveniles           | 7                        | 7                 |
| Contra Costa – OAYRF                       | 100/97                                      | 97 juveniles/cycle x 6 cycles = 582 juveniles             | 22                       | 50                |
| Santa Clara – James Ranch, Wright Center   | 160/98                                      | 98 juveniles/cycle x 4 cycles = 392 juveniles             | 47                       | n/a               |
| San Joaquin – Camp                         | 45/40                                       | 40 juveniles/ cycle x 6 cycles = 240                      | 0                        | 1                 |
| El Dorado – Challenge                      | 20/14                                       | 14 juveniles/cycle x 4 cycles = 56 juveniles              | 2                        | 1                 |
| Los Angeles – Gonzales, Scudder, and Scott | 355/210                                     | 210 juveniles/cycle x 8 cycles = 1,680 juveniles          | 41                       | 84                |
| Fresno – Elkhorn                           | 200/170                                     | 170 juveniles/cycle x 4.8 cycles = 816 juveniles          | 57                       | 26                |
| San Diego –YOU                             | 40/20                                       | 20 juveniles/cycle x 3 cycles = 60 juveniles              | 0                        | 0                 |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>1105/814</b>                             | <b>4,292 Juveniles</b>                                    | <b>185 (4%)</b>          | <b>274 (5.9%)</b> |

Source: CRB, based on site visits, 2008

\* average daily census = the number of juveniles who occupied beds during each camp or ranch cycle

### ***Vocational Training in County Probation Camps***

Regional Occupational Center Programs (ROCP) are career and technical training programs offered through 74 ROCPs across the state. They are an integral part of California's educational system, providing high school students (16 years of age and older) and adult students with career and technical education to enable them to enter the workforce. Students also can pursue advanced training in postsecondary educational institutions and upgrade existing vocational skills and knowledge by enrolling in ROCP-certified programs. ROCPs offer placement assistance for jobs, counseling and guidance services for students.

ROCPs collaborate with public agencies, including county offices of education, to create and implement instructional classes and programs. Examples include: Certified Nurse Assistant/Home Health Care Aide, and Automotive Youth Education Systems programs.

We found several collaborations between probation camps and ROCPs during site visits to county probation camps and ranches. The California State Department of Education does not maintain a database about whether any of the 74 ROCPs have contracts with county probation departments.<sup>33</sup> However, with the help of a survey conducted by the California Association of Regional Occupation Center Programs, we were able to determine the following information about county probation camp and ROCP collaborations:

- About one-in-five county probation camps and ranches in the state operates a ROCP program (22 percent).
- There are 13 ROCP programs with certified instructors offered in the 67 county probation camps and ranches.
- In FY 2006-07, there were 1,087 juveniles enrolled in ROCP courses in county probation camps and ranches.
- In FY 2006-07, 361 (one-third) of the juveniles enrolled in ROCP courses in county probation camps and ranches completed the programs.

## **LIFE IN A CALIFORNIA COUNTY PROBATION CAMP**

We conducted site visits at 12 selected county probation camps, with the assistance of the Chief Probation Officers Association of California, to get a better understanding of daily activities and operations, find out about the types of services provided, and determine the expectations for juvenile offenders. Two of the facilities we visited were for girls.

Most county ranches and camps are secure residential facilities located in rural areas. They tend to have highly structured programming in terms of daily activities and offer reward-based incentives (for good behavior and adherence to rules) for juveniles who progress through the program. The amount of time a juvenile spends in a camp or ranch facility is generally based on how well he/she adheres to the structure and programming, and the accumulation of good time credits. There is some variation in how juveniles are housed and the length of time they may remain at the facility. For example, some camps in Los Angeles keep juveniles for only 90 days, while in other counties juveniles remain from 120 to 270 days, based on good conduct and adherence to program requirements.

Some older camps have dormitory-style facilities in an open quad setting (four sections of beds surrounding a monitoring platform where staff can observe easily) with 15-30 bunks per section. Other newer detention facilities combine, but separately house, juvenile hall participants from probation camp participants, and are more prison-like with single bunks in a confined cell. San Diego and El Dorado counties have this type of facilities. Santa Clara County's Missouri-model of camp facility is more casual and collegiate with couches, tables, and other furniture clustered in small residential settings of ten to 12 beds.

Most camps have cafeteria-style mess halls where meals are served, although some newer camps serve meals in the dorm areas where offenders reside. All camps provide court-mandated education classes and some provide state-certified vocational classes as well.

Many researchers believe that shorter camp stays of three to four months are not long enough for juveniles to improve communications, learn how to interact with others, and develop the necessary discipline to change their behavior and the way they think. If the youth do not leave the system (camp) with some employment skills, housing options or life skills, they are likely to return to their old lifestyle.<sup>34</sup>

### ***San Joaquin County***

The San Joaquin County probation camp is located in French Camp on the grounds of juvenile hall. It has 45 beds, which is small in comparison to facilities in other counties. It was originally designed for use by several rural foothill counties that no longer send youth there. The facility is dormitory-style with a normal juvenile placement cycle of 180 days that can be reduced up to 60 days for good behavior and program completion. The camp operates in a minimum security environment, with unlocked doors and surrounding fences without barb wire. Several escapes have occurred this year because of easy public access to the rear of the facility. According to program staff, the facility is outdated and personnel are insufficiently trained to serve the needs of the high-risk juveniles that are now being sent to the facility.

San Joaquin County plans on using state grant (SB 81) and federal funding to reconfigure the current juvenile hall facility and to build a new adjoining juvenile camp facility to house 15 female juveniles. The goal is to increase the camp term to a full year to accommodate juveniles who can no longer be sent to the state's DJJ facilities.

Camp participants attend court school in the morning and early afternoon. Lunch and other meals are brought in from the main juvenile hall and served in the multi-purpose recreation room. Occasionally juveniles who have adhered to programming rules can work on community projects like harvesting fruit on-site and delivering it to Stockton Senior Meals on Wheels.

The camp does not have the resources to hire or contract for professional counseling either for groups of youth or one-on-one. Instead, the camp relies on a staff probation officer to teach courses in anger management and substance abuse education. Any juvenile adjudicated to the camp with an existing mental health issue has access to clinical services at the adjacent juvenile hall.

According to the camp administrator, San Joaquin County would like to do more with the camp but is physically limited by the camp facility.

### ***South Tahoe Challenge Program, El Dorado County***

El Dorado County's camp is located in South Lake Tahoe and is called the South Tahoe Challenge Program (STC). It was established in 2005, is coed, serves up to 20 youth, and is part of a joint-use facility that serves as juvenile hall and camp. Juveniles from adjacent counties

may be sent by court order to the STC. As many as 30 percent of the juveniles in the program in the last three years have been sent from other counties.

Mental health services are provided on-site by the El Dorado County Mental Health Department. A licensed therapist is available on-site every day to work with juveniles in the camp program and in the juvenile hall side of the facility. Juveniles may request services, or the Juvenile Treatment Center staff may refer any ward in need of mental health services at any time. When the mental health staff is not on-site, a Psychiatric Emergency Service unit is available in case of a crisis.

Juveniles are assigned to a probation officer who remains part of the treatment team while the youth is in the Challenge Program. According to program staff, having an assigned probation officer helps to reinforce the continuity of the program and enables the juvenile to develop a relationship with the probation officer for the term of the commitment.

The six-month program has four phases designed around alpine theme (base camp, ascent, summit, descent). The goal is to provide participants with assessments, services, education and counseling to develop healthy and productive lifestyles. Upon completion of the program, each minor receives a transition plan and participates in a supervised aftercare program for up to six months.

Educational services are provided by the Blue Ridge School located within the Juvenile Treatment Center and operated by the El Dorado County Office of Education. Blue Ridge School serves both the juvenile hall and Challenge program. The curriculum includes remedial and regular classes as well as a variety of electives, and can accommodate students with special educational needs. Preparation for the General Education (GED) exam is offered to students who qualify. The Challenge camp program does not offer ROCP vocational and educational programs. However, a certified chef has offered to teach a culinary arts program and is waiting approval by the county office of education.

### ***Sacramento County***

The Sacramento Boys Ranch has an average daily population of 110 juveniles ages 13-18 years old. The ranch is a highly-structured one-year program with daily activities including academic work in reading and math operated under the authority of the county department of education. Juveniles who possess the requisite skills can take GED and grade level equivalent testing, and those with advanced computer skills can participate in vocational programming.

Juveniles also can participate in the county ROCP, which provides certified vocational training in welding and woodwork, and for which some juveniles are paid an hourly wage (most of the earnings go to victims). For example, metal-spikes are produced and sold to vendors for use in parking lot entrances and exits.

Juveniles who progress and succeed at programming receive points, resulting in incentives and rewards that can reduce a one-year committed term by 120 days, to eight months. Youth who progress wear different colored jumpsuits and get to reside in an honors residence with less

structure and more personal possessions. Juveniles who near the eight-month mark of their commitment term, and who maintain good behavior and are up-to-date on daily programming, can also earn weekend passes and attend special community events.

There are impediments to success for many of the juveniles at this ranch, due to gang affiliation and rivalries. Youth are constantly challenged to defend their “turf,” especially on the less structured weekends. Violations can result in more commitment time, although the total time served (commitment term and added time) cannot exceed 12 months.

Family visitations on weekends (Friday-Sunday) play an essential role in a juvenile’s rehabilitation, according to the presiding Juvenile Court Judge, Kenneth Peterson. However, there is no data demonstrating the impact of family visits on lessening camp violations or improving recidivism rates. The county does not track the success or failure rates of juveniles after they leave the Boys Ranch to determine if they re-offend or violate the terms of parole less than other wards.

### ***Fout Springs Camp, Solano County***

Solano County operates the Fout Springs (FS) probation camp for boys, which is located in Colusa County in a remote part of the Mendocino National Forest at the base of a mountain range. There is no secured fencing around the perimeter of the facility due to its remote location. The current capacity of the camp is 60 juveniles, but it can be expanded to 160 with additional funding. All youth are sent there for a minimum term of six months to one year, depending on the county they came from and the court’s order. Over the last eight years, judges in as many as 16 counties have sent adjudicated juveniles, with San Bernardino County the most frequent and largest user outside of Solano County, in order to place gang-affiliated juveniles as far away from their home environments as possible. According to Administrator Bruce Lillis, the camp has been successful with these types of juveniles.

The camp model is cognitive behavioral-based (see Table 2, page 21). The Colusa County Office of Education provides instructors and curriculum for the academic part of the programming, which takes place five days a week in the morning and afternoons. All vocational woodwork classes, metal shop, and welding classes run concurrently with academic work. However, these courses are not ROCP-certified and students do not receive credit for taking them.

Morning exercise takes place daily beginning at 5:30 a.m. Juveniles earn points at each stage of the daily process for participating in programs and behaving appropriately. Various colored shirts identify how long a juvenile has been in the camp as well as how many points he has accumulated. Counseling occurs in the late afternoon and resumes after dinner until early evening. Juveniles usually have one or two hours of free time in the residential dorm after all programming activities have been completed for the day.

Visitation is allowed only on weekends; most visits are by parents from Solano County. There is no documented correlation between juveniles who receive parental visits and their subsequent success on probation. The camp does not have a probation officer to plan for the re-

entry/aftercare services for juveniles leaving the facility, nor does Solano County track the success or failure rates of juveniles once they leave the camp.

### ***James Boys Ranch and Muriel Wright Center, Santa Clara County***

Santa Clara County operates the James Ranch Facility for boys, ages 15 and one-half years to 18 years old, and the Muriel Wright Center, a coed facility for youth 13-15 years old. These are both closed facilities. Prior to entry, each juvenile is given a needs and risk assessment; the results allow counselors to develop individualized plans that address relevant issues for each ward. At both facilities, juveniles are placed into small groups of no more than 12 youth who reside in living “pods” and remain together during meals and for all programming.

In November 2005, Santa Clara County Supervisors approved and funded a \$3.2 million program to enhance these two juvenile rehabilitation facilities. The goal was to institute a cognitive-based program modeled after the Missouri Youth Services Institute. By 2006, the operational upgrades at the facilities (including living quarters) were completed, staff had been trained, and new wards adjudicated to the ranch by the court.

A young juvenile offender serves from six to eight months in the camp and progresses according to individual case plans within the following general framework. The goal is to change the way the youth thinks rather than only modify behavior.

- Program orientation (weeks one to four)
- Program treatment (weeks five-12)
- Family reunification (weeks 13-20)
- Responsibility and action (weeks 21-24)

Families are brought to the facility in the last phase of the program to work with counselors and the juveniles on how to better deal with high-risk family problems. If the parents are not able to participate, or could impede the juvenile’s progress at the ranch, the youth are instead offered group and individual therapy (Pathways model see page 20).

If a juvenile progresses through the program on schedule, he will sign a contract with the program administrator and begin to plan for re-entry back into the community 30 days before graduation. The aftercare/re-entry process requires ten weeks of intensive supervision. This includes continuation of family counseling with an aftercare counselor, home visits, school visits, curfew checks, and drug and alcohol testing by an assigned probation officer. Juveniles can be sent back to the ranch to work on issues, such as substance abuse, that they could not handle after re-entry.

### ***Orin Allen Youth Rehabilitation Facility, Contra Costa County***

Contra Costa County’s camp is for adjudicated male youth, ages 15-18 years. The camp’s operating capacity is for 100 youth. Staffing ratios are one-to-15 during daylight hours and one-to-30 at night. The county probation department assigns a probation officer who maintains a

caseload of juveniles at the facility, as well as a caseload of juveniles who have completed their time at the facility.

There are two separate dorms, one for youth 15-16 years old and one for the older youth. They co-mingle during their daily activities but are segregated for meals and lodging. This facility, unlike other conventional ones, is not fenced or wired around the perimeter. While the facility was built in a rural part of the county in the 1960s, there has since been substantial growth near its perimeter and it has tried to maintain good relations with the community.

Camp personnel are moving towards a Missouri-model program, with a focus on cognitive behavioral learning tools. Thus far, only the administrative staff has been trained in the cognitive approach, but the line staff is learning the core principles. The County Board of Supervisors must approve the change and funding is an issue.

The current core programming consists of daily classroom activities in the morning and afternoon, and evening group therapy sessions involving discussions about drugs, alcohol, and the dangers of gang life. An academic needs and risk assessment to determine placement is conducted for each youth at juvenile hall prior to transferring to the camp. Classroom activity includes GED-related work, computer labs, and vocational classes including woodwork and culinary arts. The vocational instructors are volunteers.

Most youth stay at the camp for six months, although some receive nine month terms. All youth can earn points which will allow them to leave earlier at the end of four- to six-month stays. Maximum points (ten) can be earned every day by juveniles if they do nothing wrong and attend all required programming. As a result, the facility can accommodate three cycles of 100 youth annually for a total of 300 youth per year.

Pre-release planning is an integral part of the program. An assigned probation officer meets with the youth, family, and camp administrators three weeks after the youth's arrival to discuss programming requirements at the facility, and any risks the youth faces in the community. One month prior to leaving, the probation officer meets again with the youth and his parent, guardian, or a family member to review his re-entry plan and discuss expectations in the community. The juvenile will be intensely supervised by a probation officer for no less than four months, depending on the adjudication term, as part of a one-to-25 probation caseload. Any violation could result in the fulfillment of the remaining adjudication term.

The county probation department does not have the capability to measure or track the success or failure of juveniles on probation after leaving detention, as it lacks an automated management information system. While each probation officer maintains a computerized file on the juveniles in their individual caseloads, this information it is not accessible at the departmental level.

### ***Camp Gonzales Los Angeles County***

Camp Gonzales, like other camps in Los Angeles County, operates a conventional program. It has a daily census of 110 boys, ages 16-17 years. The length of term varies from three, six, to nine months, with most of the younger boys receiving the shorter terms of three and six months.

According to camp administrators, the shorter terms are not long enough for the programs to change behaviors and attitudes.

All juveniles sleep in large residential dorm units that are partitioned into four sections of 25 or more beds. Staffing ratios are one-to-20 during weekdays, one-to-40 weekends, and one-to-70 during night hours. Camp case managers reside and work at camp for two and one-half day shifts and then are off for 96 hours.

Many of the juveniles in Camp Gonzales test far below their academic grade level age and are in need of Individual Educational Development (IED) plans, according to school psychologists at the camp. However, IED plans are not currently developed for them. The only vocational activities offered are woodwork and credits for learning how to do light duty cooking and kitchen work. There are no ROCP training classes offered.

Psychologists say that most of the young kids in their large caseloads (1-to-50) have Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). It is difficult to get the resources they need to respond effectively, or enough time (90 days minimum) to deal with severe behavioral problems.<sup>35</sup> A mental health nurse is stationed at the camp 24 hours a day and oversees all medications. Only during an emergency will a juvenile leave the camp for treatment.

Each juvenile is administered a Lark Test (risk assessment) prior to entry into the camp. However, according to case managers at the camp, this assessment does not accurately gauge the influence of gangs on the individual (i.e. intimidation factor and attitude towards authority) and thus does not get to the root causes of problems, especially for the large number of short-term juveniles placed in the camp by the courts.

Only juveniles with nine-month terms who are “aging out” of the juvenile justice system have access to outside resources. The “New Roads” transition program works inside the camp with older juveniles 30 days before they leave. It provides assistance for work placement, college, jobs, and vocational training. Unfortunately, the New Roads Program is not large enough to help the younger kids in Camp Gonzales or in other camps.

For the other juveniles about to re-enter the community, there is very little coordination between camp personnel and probation officers assigned in the community. An assigned probation officer does not participate in the case planning meeting 21 days prior to release that involves the juvenile, camp administrator, and parents or guardians. Thus there is limited continuity between the camp and aftercare, and what was learned in the camp is not effectively reinforced by the probation officer. This lack of coordination has resulted in problems for juveniles leaving Camp Gonzales. For example, a probation officer may overrule the camp manager in determining what school a juvenile will attend, even if there is an agreement between the school and the camp administrator. This action can place a juvenile in an uncomfortable situation at a school where he may have known enemies and an unsafe learning environment. Other problems can occur when the field probation officer does not coordinate his or her activities with camp staff. For example, according to camp staff, on several occasions a juvenile has been released to his home community even though there is ongoing gang activity. A police raid in the neighborhood then

resulted in the youth's arrest and a violation of probation, with the youth adjudicated back to camp.<sup>36</sup>

Finally, there are problems in the continuity of aftercare services provided by the community-based organizations (CBO). According to a camp manager, there is a great deal of turnover among the CBOs working with probation because many cannot sustain their programs long-term after receiving start-up funds.

### *Camp Scott and Camp Scudder, Los Angeles County*

These two conventional camps house all adjudicated juvenile females in Los Angeles County, ages 13-17 years old. Camp Scott has a population of 95 juveniles while Scudder has 65. The adjudication terms for girls are similar to those of the boys: three, six, and nine months. These fixed terms can be extended based on behavior. Like Camp Gonzales, staff managers feel that the shorter adjudication terms do not give them enough time to adequately work with the girls.

Both camps house single residential dorms. Camp Scott is the largest, with four partitioned sections of 25 beds or more, and Camp Scudder has two sections of 25 beds or more. Staffing ratios are the same as for the boys.

All juveniles are administered a risk assessment (Lark Test) at Juvenile Hall prior to entry at the camps. Camp administrators have the option to modify the assessment based on factors they identify during the initial individual program interview with the juvenile and her parents or guardians, which takes place within three days of arrival.

Administrators at both camps indicate that the entire Los Angeles County camp system is moving toward an evidence-based cognitive behavioral model, in which changing the way juveniles think and reason is the goal. Their approach is to provide girls with more privileges and a higher level of recognition as they succeed. Camp Scott has a secure unit that is used to house problem girls for short cooling-off periods (two to 24 hours), or girls who feel threatened by others. Camp personnel rely upon discipline to maintain order and authority.

Notably there is a fully-staffed and licensed mental health clinic serving both camps, unlike the boys' camps. According to the lead psychiatrist at the clinic, they have regular caseloads of one-to-20 girls. Most girls at the camps fall into depression during their stay in detention.<sup>37</sup> Many also are gang members or affiliates who have previously failed at different levels of intervention; some have run away and become homeless.

Like their male counterparts, most girls test below grade-age level and many are diagnosed with ADD. Academic programming requirements are supplemented by volunteers from the "Learn-to-Read" Program, in which the girls receive one-on-one tutoring in reading comprehension. These services are provided after classes in the residential dorm area.

Field probation officers responsible for supervising girls at re-entry have the same approach to aftercare as with the boys. There is no pre-planning meeting with camp staff about their

programming goals in the community and no program such as the New Roads Program that serves older male wards.

### *Youthful Offender Unit (YOU), San Diego County*

The San Diego Youthful Offender Unit program is a new self-contained detention facility for male juvenile offenders who can no longer be sent to DJJ and/or who have failed at the probation camp level. The YOU program is part of the larger and newly constructed East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility (EMJDF), a 380-bed complex located on 25 acres, in a rural area of the county. It is considered a maximum security facility.

EMJDF is similar in design to more recently constructed juvenile detention facilities across the state that incorporate multiple use activities into one structure. According to the facility administrator, the facility also serves as an overflow when the main juvenile hall exceeds its design capacity as a place to hold youthful offenders waiting to be transferred to permanent placements.<sup>38</sup> Previously, overcrowding led to litigation.

Each housing unit has a day room with recreation areas, telephones, classrooms, library shelves and one television set for instructional viewing or a weekly Saturday night movie. Medical services are available 24-hours a day, including psychiatry and dental services.

The YOU offers a four-part program designed for a 12-month term. With good behavior and adherence to an individual case plan, a juvenile's time can be reduced to nine months. Up to 60 days can be earned by completing the program components, and the remaining 30 days can be awarded by the program supervisor and school staff. At any stage of the program a noncompliant, juvenile can have up to an additional four months of time added to his term. In this regard, the program is like other camps or ranches in which the offender is punished for fighting, having contraband, or being kicked out of school (class).

The school portion of the program is critically important to the success of the YOU, because it is where the juveniles must show progress in earning class credits towards a GED, high school diploma, or a certified vocational skill (ROCP). It is also where they must enroll and participate in programs such as substance abuse treatment, anger management, life skills, and discussions about the negative effects of gang violence. Since none of the juveniles have completed the YOU program yet, there is no way to determine how successful it is in helping youth gain additional educational credits.

Phase two of the program begins 60 days prior to a juvenile leaving the facility, with an assessment involving custody staff, the file probation officer, school staff, and aftercare treatment staff. The parent and/or guardian also may attend. The focus is on continuing the juvenile's education/vocational training, treatment, and court-ordered conditions. Phase three is the case management and community supervision process which is designed to oversee and reinforce what was learned in detention.

### *Elkhorn Boot Camp Facility, Fresno County*

The Elkhorn Correctional Facility (EBCF) is a five-and-one-half month boot camp program for boys featuring military drill, discipline, and physical training and conditioning. There is a court school program for cadets who have deficiencies in fundamental academic skills, and ROCP-certified culinary classes.

Currently there are 180 cadets, ranging from 14 to 18 years old. They are expected to achieve a number of specific objectives prior to completion and release from the boot camp program. These include learning to respect others, working as a team, and talking through problems. A battery of formal assessments conducted by on-site school staff, mental health staff, substance abuse staff and boot camp staff, determines the strengths and weaknesses of each new cadet and is used to establish an expected “level of achievement,” along with the necessary services and/or support needed.

There are four groups of cadets, including one comprised of youth sent back for probation violations by the court for more training and programming after initial release. Juvenile court judges are increasingly placing juvenile probation violators in the camp rather than juvenile hall for weekends and shorter stays of two weeks or less.<sup>39</sup> Cadets in “Delta Barracks” participate in daily camp activities such as morning drills, court school, and camp maintenance, but they usually are there for days, rather than weeks, so they do not receive the full benefits of the longer camp program.

Cadets staying at camp for a normal term (five and one-half months) can receive visits from family members on weekends, in which the family is appraised by camp staff of their son’s progress. As cadets progress through programming and earn credit for good behavior, they are taken on weekend trips to the Sierras sponsored by the California National Guard. During these trips, the National Guard, with the help of faith-based volunteers, provides leadership classes and mountain survival skills training. Cadets also participate in community service projects such as Tree Fresno, in which they learn how to propagate and plant trees. The River Parkway Trust, which is developing a 20-mile greenbelt along the San Joaquin River, is another service project. These projects are designed to help the cadets learn good work habits, interact with members of the community in a positive and acceptable manner, and instill a level of pride for a job well done.

Due to budget constraints, the aftercare component of the boot camp – which research indicates is critical to reinforcing the personal skills and positive behavioral changes learned during the in-custody segment of the program – is no longer provided. Previously a field probation officer would interview family members to assess the home environment (such as parental communication and supervision/control skills), and identify areas that could positively or negatively impact the cadet upon release. This does not happen anymore. Instead probation officers meet with cadets prior to their leaving the boot camp to go over the conditions of probation. Cadets may be subject to electronic monitoring and drug testing. The probation department does not provide intensive supervision or individual and family counseling as part of aftercare.<sup>40</sup>

Fresno County probation officials believe that their boot camp program is changing the long-term, anti-social values of cadets while building self-accountability. A recent two-year evaluation (conducted prior to budget cutbacks in aftercare programming) found declining recidivism rates among boot camp participants.

## THE IMPACT OF THE STATE JUVENILE JUSTICE REALIGNMENT LAW ON COUNTY PROBATION SERVICES

The Juvenile Justice Realignment law (Chapter 175, Statutes of 2007) requires counties to detain, rehabilitate and treat the needs of juveniles who can no longer be sent to the state DJJ for detention. Often these individuals are “criminally sophisticated and violent” juveniles. Typically, they come from highly dysfunctional families and have extensive histories of substance abuse, school failure, and running away from group home placements, as well as juvenile records with numerous law violations. According to a county chief probation officer, the violations range from vehicle theft and burglary to carjacking and arson.<sup>41</sup> Most, if not all of the juvenile offenders who match this profile have exhausted every applicable county service and intervention, including detention at county camps and ranches, in-home custody, or placement in juvenile hall, before they were sent to the state DJJ. These juveniles are referred to as “chronic offenders” or “non-707 (b)” offenders.<sup>42</sup>

Currently over 550 juvenile offenders serving detention in state DJJ facilities fit this profile.<sup>43</sup> Beginning in 2009, they will be released back to county supervision as mandated by the Juvenile Justice Realignment law. In addition, there are other non-707 (b) juveniles who currently are under county supervision and will no longer be committed to the state DJJ. The California Department of Finance estimates there will be 500 to 700 juveniles annually across the state in this group, based on past DJJ commitment trend data. This population will pose new and serious challenges to both county courts and probation departments. An administrator from a major urban county testified before the Little Hoover Commission that:

We are currently on overload out here and we have no capacity to serve additional challenged youth who have multiple needs and issues in our current systems. We need to be careful not to disrupt the delicate balance of limited resources that we use for other populations or we will have a problem pop up elsewhere in the system.<sup>44</sup>

The challenge for counties is to apply their new but limited resources from the state to effectively assess juvenile offenders’ risk of reoffending, including the application of appropriate interventions or sanctions and the need for housing and supervision.

### *Outcome Measures*

The new Juvenile Justice realignment law does not require county juvenile justice and probation systems to develop outcome indicators that can measure the effectiveness of intervention programs. For example, data is not collected about juveniles who re-offend after completing detention in a county probation camp or ranch, or who are placed in an intervention program, such as drug treatment and fail. In contrast, state-funded programs (such as the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Program) do require counties to collect some outcome data.

In 2007, with funding from the National Institute of Corrections, six counties participated in a project to identify common data elements that measure program outcomes and evaluate the

reliability of risk assessments.\* The goal is to determine how well intervention programs are working and to develop a consensus on which outcomes should be tracked.<sup>45</sup> According to Jim Kelly, Communications Director of Assessments.com:

The stated goal is to prevent recidivism in an individual youth by accurately addressing what led him or her to trouble. For example, a minor caught with drugs may not actually have a drug problem, but instead may be acting out because of grief, poor parenting at home or bullying by an older relative with criminal ties. In the latter case, a child may benefit from some assertion counseling.<sup>46</sup>

Useful data measurements identified by the counties included:

- The number and background of juveniles who enter the system and experience more arrests after leaving.
- The number and backgrounds of juveniles who continue to offend into adulthood.
- The number of juveniles who are incarcerated four years after the first arrest.
- Process evaluations of the risk assessment tools used to place juveniles in intervention programs.
- Tracking the content, intensity, and duration of each program in which a juvenile participates.

### ***Regional Efforts***

Some counties have begun to collaborate across jurisdictional lines to better address regional needs. For example, a consortium of 15 Northern California counties have agreed to share in the implementation of a new juvenile risk and needs assessment tool ('Positive Achievement Change Tool'), and to develop consistent protocols for probation officers to follow when determining a juvenile's needs.

- Humboldt County's New Horizons program is a regional program designed to meet the mental health needs of juveniles in the county as well as neighboring counties.
- The Fout Springs probation camp in the rugged mountains of the Mendocino National Forest accepts juveniles from as many as 12 other counties.
- In South Lake Tahoe, the El Dorado County Juvenile Treatment Facility serves kids from neighboring counties that do not have the facilities or resources to meet local needs.

Counties are far from maximizing opportunities to pool their resources to address the growing program needs of juvenile offenders.

### ***Plans for State Grant Funds***

The Local Youthful Offender Rehabilitative Facility Construction Fund (Senate Bill 81, Chapter 175, Statutes of 2007), authorizes up to \$100 million in funding for county youthful offender facilities through state lease-revenue bonds. Prior to its enactment, as many as 16 counties sent

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\* Contra Costa, Santa Barbara, San Mateo, Shasta, Tulare, and Yolo.

ten or more juveniles annually to the DJJ for state detention. These counties recently submitted funding proposals to the Correctional Standards Authority (CSA). Table 4 shows what these counties plan to do with SB 81 grant funds. Most intend to develop an enhanced treatment program in either a secured detention facility or a camp/ranch for juveniles who can no longer be sent to the state DJJ. There also is a substantial commitment to provide an aftercare/re-entry component to compliment the detention phase of the program. A few counties have chosen to focus the new state resources on juveniles returning from the DJJ, since they are the older and more sophisticated offenders.

**Table 4**

**Youthful Offender Block Grant Fund Plans of Counties That Historically Sent Ten or More Juvenile Offenders to the State Division of Juvenile Justice**

| <b>County<br/>(\$ grant)</b>              | <b>Camp or<br/>Ranch/Detention</b>     | <b>Juvenile<br/>Hall/Detention</b> | <b>Aftercare/Re-entry</b>  | <b>DJJ/Re-entry</b>                            |
|---|--|------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Alameda<br/>(\$730,000)</b>            |  |                                    | Risk assessment, GPS, ISP, community services                      |  |
| <b>Riverside<br/>(\$1.7 million)</b>      | Enhanced treatment                     |                                    | GPS, ISP, and community services                                   | GPS, ISP, community services for DJJ returnees |
| <b>San Diego<br/>(\$1.43 million)</b>     |  | Enhanced treatment                 | Community services and treatment in an enhanced MH program         |  |
| <b>Sacramento<br/>(\$1.1 million)</b>     |  |                                    | Services for 60 juveniles in the community                         | Services for DJJ returnees                     |
| <b>Santa Clara<br/>(\$790,000)</b>        |  |                                    | Services for about 26 juveniles in the community                   | Service for about 26 DJJ returnees             |
| <b>Los Angeles<br/>(\$5.5 million)</b>    | Enhanced services for 80 juveniles     |                                    | ISP for juveniles returning from camps                             | Risk assessment and ISP for DJJ returnees      |
| <b>San Bernardino<br/>(\$1.6 million)</b> |  | Enhanced treatment                 | Community services and treatment in an enhanced MH program         |  |
| <b>San Joaquin<br/>(\$602,000)</b>        | Enhanced services for 32 juveniles     |                                    |  | Risk assessment, ISP for 32 DJJ returnees      |
| <b>Fresno<br/>(\$790,000)</b>             |  | Enhanced treatment program         | Electronic monitoring for re-entry juveniles                       |  |
| <b>Orange<br/>(\$1.5 million)</b>         |  |                                    | DJJ parolees and local probationers transition to Phoenix House    | DJJ returnees transition at detention facility |
| <b>Kern<br/>(\$850,000)</b>               | Residential treatment center for girls |                                    | Services for transition from treatment center                      | Group home services                            |
| <b>Merced<br/>(\$270,000)</b>             |  |                                    | Risk assessment and community services                             | Risk assessment                                |
| <b>Monterey<br/>(\$187,000)</b>           |  | Enhanced service for juveniles     | Community services for juveniles after camp                        | Community services and ISP                     |
| <b>Ventura<br/>(\$389,000)</b>            |  | Enhance services for juveniles     | Community services for juveniles after camp                        | Community services and ISP                     |
| <b>Tulare<br/>(\$260,000)</b>             |  |                                    | Risk assessment, community services and school support for females |  |

Source: CRB, California Correction Standards Authority data, 2008.

\* (ISP) Intensive Supervision Program \* (GPS) Global Positioning Satellite monitoring \* (MH) Mental Health

## MENTALLY ILL JUVENILE OFFENDERS

Many counties lack appropriate mental health services and facilities for juvenile offenders. Over time this has led to inappropriate placement or no placement for juveniles with a mental illness, as they often remain in juvenile hall until they can be placed. A 2004 survey conducted by the Youth Law Center found that a number of counties had no access to placement options in rate classification level 14 group homes for the most seriously mentally ill juvenile offenders.<sup>\*\*\*</sup> The Youth Law Center survey also found that:

- Alameda County had neither a community treatment facility with locked hospital services nor a high-level group home capable of providing therapeutic services to youth who are seriously mentally disturbed.
- Fresno County did not have an in-county psychiatric hospital for adolescents. Youth requiring hospitalization for mental health issues had to be transported to another county. Although the county contracted with private hospitals to provide inpatient services, the focus was on treating the crisis rather than the illness.<sup>47</sup>
- Sacramento County officials reported that they needed a community treatment facility for severely mentally ill youth, including a locked component. In addition, Sacramento and other counties reported that few mental health service providers could offer timely follow-up treatment to support mentally ill youth and their families during the transition from an institutional or residential setting back into the community.
- San Bernardino and San Diego counties did not have appropriate treatment facilities to perform psychiatric evaluations (Cal. Welfare & Institutions Code section 5150), or care for youth who attempted suicide or engaged in self-mutilation or other self-injurious behavior, or who exhibited chronic violent or sexual behaviors.<sup>†††</sup>
- The State of California does not have designated locked psychiatric facilities that can respond to the needs of youth who are a threat to themselves and others due to psychiatric issues, and who cannot be appropriately treated in an open setting.<sup>48</sup>

### *Medi-Cal Eligibility*

Until recently, the termination of Medi-Cal eligibility was a major problem for juveniles with mental health issues when leaving correctional facilities. Medi-Cal provisions required termination of eligibility for young offenders once they entered a correctional facility for less than 30 days. This meant that young offenders had to re-apply for Medi-Cal when they left confinement, even if they were eligible when they were confined and when they were released.

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<sup>\*\*\*</sup>The California Department of Social Services licenses group home beds, and rates them according to the level of services to be provided. The highest level of service is provided in rate classification level (RCL) 14, which is reserved for seriously emotionally disturbed children. (*Cal. W & I Code §§ 11462, 11462.01.*)

<sup>†††</sup> An appropriate mental health treatment facility, as defined in W & I. Code Sec. 5150, is a facility designated by the county and approved by the State Department of Mental Health to offer 72-hour treatment and evaluation.

This also created additional work for county probation, public health, and eligibility staff, and imposed costs on the youth's family or care providers. Many health care providers and pharmacies would not provide treatment or prescription medication unless a juvenile had proof of Medi-Cal eligibility.<sup>49</sup>

In September 2008, Senate Bill 1147 (Chapter 546, Statutes of 2008) was enacted, requiring that Medi-Cal benefits provided to an inmate under 21 years of age be suspended rather than terminated during incarceration. By January of 2010, county probation departments and social welfare departments are required to establish protocols and procedures to implement these provisions.

In 2006, Senate Bill 1469 (Chapter 657, Statutes of 2006) required counties to process Medi-Cal and Healthy Families applications for juvenile offenders committed to county facilities for 30 days or more (Cal. Welfare & Institutions Code section 14029.5.). However, since most young juvenile offenders are held in juvenile hall awaiting adjudication or are confined by court order, often for violations of probation for less than 30 days, the problem persists.

### ***Juvenile Mental Health Courts and Mentally-Ill Offender Crime-Reduction Programs***

Some counties have created juvenile Mental Health Courts. These courts focus on treatment rather than punishment and represent collaboration between courts, probation officers, prosecutors, public defenders, mental health workers, and civil advocates. Their goal is to divert mentally ill youth, especially those suffering from bipolar disorder, from juvenile halls and other detention facilities to community-based mental health services.<sup>50</sup>

There are variations in county approaches towards juvenile Mental Health Courts.

- In one county, the Mental Health Court is part of a multi-disciplinary team that meets bi-weekly to review a juvenile's progress in therapy as well as any issues affecting the family.
- In another county, the Mental Health Court determines if a juvenile should be placed in a specialized post-custody intensive case management aftercare program (wraparound services on a 24/7 basis) that reports directly to the court.
- In yet another county, the juvenile offender is referred to a Behavioral Health Court after being booked in juvenile hall to determine if he qualifies for the community treatment program. If the juvenile qualifies, an interdisciplinary team of probation, district attorneys, and clinical staff develop a treatment plan that probation oversees. The team has the court authority to determine when the plan has been successfully completed or whether the youth should be terminated from the program.

In general, once a juvenile has been accepted into the Mental Health Court by the judge (usually after a thorough needs assessment and psychological evaluation), he or she appears for regular reviews so the court can stay abreast of progress. This allows the court to monitor challenges or problems as they arise, provides an opportunity for therapists and community mental health treatment agencies to provide input to the court, and allows juveniles to be commended on their progress.

According to the Department of Corrections, Correctional Standards Authority, there are eight county Mental Health Court programs. Ventura and San Bernardino have two courts, and Humboldt, Fresno, Santa Clara, San Joaquin, Merced, and Los Angeles counties each have one special court that serves mentally ill juvenile offenders. In 2006-2007, these courts diverted 739 juveniles from detention into mental health treatment and other community-based programs.

Judges in other counties have expressed interest in establishing a mental health or a specialty court with an emphasis on the mentally ill juvenile population, but have been unable to find the financial resources and collaborative partners to build a program.<sup>51</sup>

## **MENTALLY ILL CRIME REDUCTION GRANT PROGRAM (MIOCR)**

In the 2008-09 state budgets the Mentally Ill Crime Reduction Grant Program was eliminated as a cost saving measure. However, in previous funding cycles, several counties were able to show promising results with programs implemented using grant funds. The following discussion highlights county programs funded in 2006 by MIOCR state grants to address the mental health needs of juvenile offenders and reduce recidivism.

### ***Humboldt County***

The New Horizons Program focuses on the intensive in-custody mental health treatment needs of juveniles within a secure setting. New Horizons is located in the Northern California Regional Treatment Facility and provides a combination of individual, group, and family counseling, alcohol/drug assessment and counseling, anger management, training in decision-making and social skills, victim awareness, and medication support services. Aggression Replacement Training (ART) is offered to young juvenile offenders who show particularly aggressive behaviors. ART focuses on teaching how to reduce anger levels, identify risky situations, develop skills to avoid trouble, and learn social skills. Currently ART is being offered to juveniles who have been sentenced to the New Horizons Program for a stay of four to six months. Since the program began in 2006, it has diverted 59 severely disturbed juvenile offenders away from detention facilities and into treatment.<sup>52</sup>

Upon completion of the treatment phase of the New Horizons Program, a juvenile offender transitions to the aftercare phase. Aftercare services are coordinated through a multi-agency team (Family Intervention Team) that develops a family case plan, followed by wraparound case-managed mental health services to support the minor and his/her family. For those juvenile offenders who are not part of the New Horizons Program (and with less intensive mental health needs), the Healthy Alternatives for Families Program provides services in the community including functional family therapy, aggressive behavior replacement training, gang resistance intervention, and alcohol and drug treatment. A special bi-weekly juvenile Mental Health Court monitors the progress of each juvenile offender in the program.<sup>53</sup>

## ***Fresno County***

Fresno County used state grant funding to create a Juvenile Justice Mental Health Collaborative that combines mental health screenings and assessments with intensive treatment and services provided through either Family Functional Therapy (FFT) or Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) programs. Both of these programs are evidence-based models, meaning they have been evaluated and shown to produce positive results. Juveniles who are arrested and brought to juvenile hall, and are assessed as having a possible mental health condition, are referred to the county's new Behavioral Health Court team. The team includes representatives from mental health, the court, and juvenile hall, and determines if a juvenile is suitable for placement. Enrollees receive a comprehensive psychiatric evaluation and intensive case management and supervision. Independent treatment plans (ACT or FFT) include individual and group therapy, medication management, and assistance with housing, employment, and education. The juvenile meets periodically with the team to determine his or her successful completion of the program. The Stanford Criminal Justice Center is currently evaluating the project.<sup>54</sup>

## ***San Bernardino County***

San Bernardino County has responded to the need for juvenile mental health care by creating a continuum of services. The Forensic Adolescent Services Team (FAST) serves juveniles detained in the San Bernardino County juvenile hall or housed at a probation treatment facility. Juveniles with mental and emotional issues, as well as some with severe mental illness, qualify for the program. There also is an alcohol and drug program to provide in-custody minors with substance abuse education. FAST also assists in the training of probation's custody and supervisory staff.

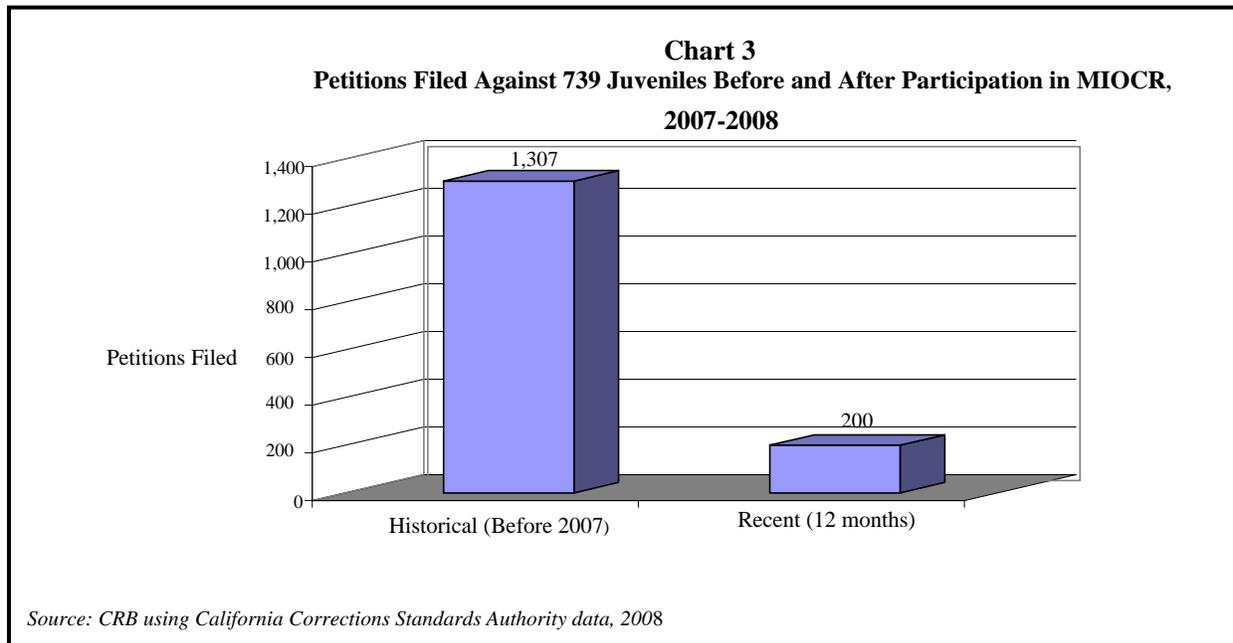
The county's Integrated New Family Opportunities program serves juveniles coming out of juvenile hall. It seeks to reduce the involvement of mentally ill minors in the juvenile justice system by involving families in their treatment, case management and support, behavioral therapy, and peer counseling.

The county's Mental Health Court diverts juvenile offenders into the Court Individualized Treatment of Adolescents (CITA) program. CITA identifies juveniles who have significant mental illnesses and links them with outpatient psychotherapy and psychiatric care. Additionally, juveniles are given close probation and court oversight. Minors accepted into the program are 17 and one-half years of age or younger, are court-ordered for treatment, and require a high level of parent involvement.<sup>55</sup> (San Joaquin and Alameda counties also have used state MIOCR grant funds to implement the CITA program.)

| <b>Table 5</b>   |             |                 |                     |
|--|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| <b>Juvenile Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction County Grants, 2007-08</b> |             |                 |                     |
| Marin  | \$810,539   | Yolo (Woodland) | \$700,000           |
| Santa Cruz   | \$999,971   | Yolo (W. Sacto) | \$288,502           |
| Santa Clara  | \$1,500,000 | Los Angeles     | \$1,028,000         |
| San Diego  | \$1,424,038 | Los Angeles     | \$1,485,000         |
| San Joaquin  | \$990,551   | San Bernardino  | \$1,470,000         |
| Humboldt   | \$697,285   | Nevada          | \$697,285           |
| Ventura  | \$1,000,000 | Orange          | \$1,000,000         |
| Solano   | \$597,411   | Sierra          | \$597,411           |
| Merced   | \$982,726   | Sonoma          | \$819,916           |
| Sacramento   | \$1,500,000 | Monterey        | \$1,500,000         |
| Fresno   | \$997,770   | Contra Costa    | \$1,370,407         |
| <b>Total Awards</b>  |             |                 | <b>\$22,295,000</b> |
| <i>Source: Correctional Standards Authority, 2007</i>                        |             |                 |                     |

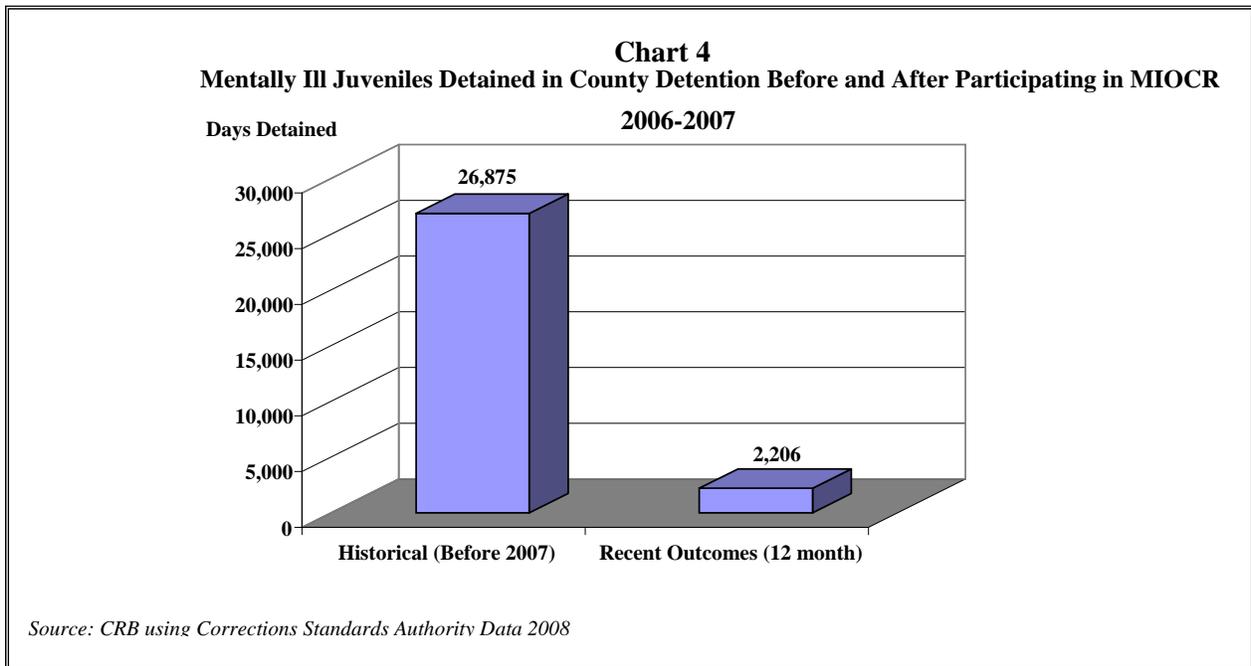
**Evaluations**

The legislation enacting the Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction grant did not require a formal evaluation. However the Correctional Standards Authority (CSA) has developed some benchmarks/outcome measurements, and preliminary data indicate positive results. Before February 2007, district attorneys across the state had filed 1,307 petitions initiating court action against 793 juveniles who were then assigned to participate in MIOCR-funded programs. Since then, only 200 petitions have been filed against those youth for new crimes through February 2008, a decrease of 85 percent (Chart 3).<sup>56</sup>



The improved outcomes generated by MIOCR-funded programs are the result of more juvenile offenders receiving mental health screening and assessments at the point of entry into juvenile hall, diversion away from detention and into community-based treatment programs, and better case management by probation officers after release to keep them from re-offending. According to the CSA, the outcome data also indicate a decrease in the number of petitions filed for a felony versus misdemeanor offense.<sup>57</sup>

Another key indicator is the number of days a mentally ill juvenile offender is detained in a juvenile hall, ranch or camp. According to CSA data, MIOCR-funded programs have resulted in a 42 percent reduction in the number of mentally ill offenders committed to juvenile correctional facilities, and there has been an even greater 92 percent reduction in the number of days that mentally ill offenders are in detention waiting for placement or release to aftercare.





## LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE OPTIONS

While not the recommendations of the California Research Bureau, the author, or the Legislator requesting this report, the following options reflect some of the possible applications of this research.

### *Adjudication Terms at Probation Camps and Ranches*

The impact of crowding at county juvenile detention facilities is an ongoing concern. In county probation camps across the state, administrators are continuously juggling bed space to insure that they can accommodate adjudicated juvenile offenders. In many instances, juvenile offenders are serving minimum rather than maximum terms (three-to-six months rather than six-to-nine months). The most immediate impact of this shortened detention is on programming, which is not long enough to challenge a juvenile's behavior or impact the way he or she thinks.<sup>58</sup> Shorter stays of less than six months in camps are also insufficient to improve skills in English or math, learn a trade, or understand how to compete for a job.<sup>59</sup> If youth do not leave the camps with some employable skills and housing options, they may return to their old lifestyles.<sup>60</sup>

- The Commission on Juvenile Justice, which is developing strategies to promote a continuum of evidence-based responses to youthful offenders, could direct county probation departments to set a minimum baseline time standard for detention in camps and ranches. This would improve the ability of juveniles to learn useful skills and develop a better understanding of the behavioral problems that lead to detention. It would provide also a degree of consistency from county-to-county in what a juvenile is expected to achieve while in detention.
- Alternatively, the Corrections Standards Authority (CSA) could establish expected timeframes for juvenile detention in camps and ranches that would lead to better program outcomes such as more high school diplomas and GEDs and improved vocational skills.

### *Regional Collaborations*

All county probation departments receive the majority of their funding from local general funds. They also rely on state and federal grants and other funding sources. As more responsibility falls on probation departments to provide services to a broader range of juveniles, the practice, the need for counties to pool their resources becomes far more important. For example, in a recent collaborative effort, 15 Northern California counties agreed to collect the same data about offenders and to use the same assessment criteria to identify risk factors associated with re-offending. The tri-county areas of Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo also are planning to establish a regional partnership for future non-707 (b) offenders, with each county specializing in an aspect of the services needed for this group.

Post-detention support for juveniles is critical, but many counties do not have the necessary community services to successfully sustain aftercare support and sanctions. Probation departments also do not have the personnel to supervise and actively reinforce positive

behavioral outcomes. This results in poor outcomes such as missed appointments, relapses and higher recidivism rates.

- The Legislature could direct the CSA to require that state grants to county probation departments require an analysis of the feasibility of forming regional collaborations or multi-county consortiums in order to provide a full array of aftercare services for juveniles leaving county camps and ranches.

According to the “best practice” Missouri model for rehabilitating juvenile offenders, smaller confinement facilities that stress treatment and not detention are most effective in reducing youthful criminal behavior and recidivism. A central tenet is that treatment takes place 24 hours a day. Not only therapy sessions, but all activities reinforce the message of individual responsibility and discipline. Thus far, only Santa Clara County has adopted this model in California.

- The Legislature could require the CSA to direct existing grant funding to county pilot projects based on the Missouri model.

### ***Data Collection***

The ability of county probation departments to collect useful data about individual and system-wide outcomes is difficult at best, according to a recent study by the University of Southern California, Center for Research on Crime.<sup>61</sup> CRB site visits to various county probation camps and detention facilities also found problems in getting accurate data about the skills and training juveniles receive while serving time in those facilities. In order to evaluate how effective these programs are, policymakers need to know how well juveniles have performed, what they learned, and whether they were less likely to re-offend. This data is currently not available.

- The Legislature could require the CDCR or its Division of Juvenile Justice to develop useful and accurate outcome data for counties to monitor the performance of their programs.
- The Legislature could require the CDCR or its Division of Juvenile Justice to convene a taskforce of county officials to analyze what data they need to collect and how, how much it would cost, and which entities should be responsible for collecting, evaluating, and publishing the information.

### **REGIONAL OCCUPATION CENTER PROGRAMS**

Juvenile camps and ranches offer an opportunity for detained youth to learn vocational skills. Classes in culinary arts, welding, computers, and clothing design are available to juveniles serving detention in some county camps and ranches. These classes can offer youth a new direction and skills to turn their lives around. However, not all county ranches and camps offer occupational programs, and those that do are sometimes not certified by a ROCP or offered by certified instructors. This makes them less valuable on the job market.

While the State Department of Education oversees ROCP educational programs, it does not collect any data about who uses those programs in county probation camps or if certified programs are offered.

- The Legislature could require the court schools operated by county offices of education to collect consistent data about the number of youth/students who have enrolled in ROCP programs while detained in probation camps, the number of county probation camps that offer certified ROCP instructors and/or programs, and the number of youth who have completed a ROCP-certified program while detained.
- The Legislature could direct the Department of Education to encourage every county office of education that operates a court school to also provide an appropriate ROCP-certified program in every county juvenile probation camp or ranch in which at least 25 juveniles are detained (the minimum number required for a ROCP program).
- There should be more information about how well ROCPs partner with K-12 districts and community colleges to provide educational programs that benefit probation-camp juveniles.

## COURT SCHOOLS

Most academic programs provided in probation camps and ranches are operated by county offices of education. The focus of most, if not all, the curriculum is on teaching math and English. Some schools also offer class work in computer competency. Little is known about how effective these programs are, or even the most basic information about the number of juveniles in probation camp court schools who receive high school diplomas, GEDs, or who achieve grade-level status.

- The Legislature could direct the Department of Education to collect data from county offices of education about the number of juveniles who obtain a high school diploma, GED, or other form of academic achievement while detained in a county camp or ranch. It would also be useful to know about the type of courses offered and their academic or vocational value (for example, whether they are certified). This information could assist with needed adjustments to the course curriculum or a change in emphasis on what is taught and for how long.

Our site visits uncovered several issues relating to education in the camps and ranches. Notably it appears that many juvenile offenders have moderate to severe learning disabilities and are in need of special education, for which they may not be assessed. As a result, they may not receive the services that they require to succeed in their classes. This situation has probably led to a smaller percentage of juveniles leaving probation camps with a GED, high school diploma, or grade-level competency. In addition, the camps also are experiencing significant turnover of teachers in math and English.

- The Legislature could direct the Department of Education to require that court schools conduct a learning disability assessment along with the needs and risk assessment that is

currently required of every juvenile prior to placement in the camps. This would allow county offices of education to tailor camp curriculum to better meet the needs of these challenged youth.

## **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

A significant number of incarcerated youth have serious mental health and drug abuse problems. We found that there are few, if any, treatment options for juveniles with mental illness in county camps. The Los Angeles County probation camps for girls (Scott and Scudder) are notable exceptions. Probation camps need immediate access to mental health care services and staff in order to treat mentally ill youth, either on-site or in an adjacent facility.

- One option would be to minimize detention of mentally ill juveniles in the probation camp system by creating a secure residential treatment program for mentally-ill juvenile offenders at a regional or state level. Most county camps are not programmed to provide mental health services and do not have the resources to do so.
- Proposition 63, the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act, could be used to fund gaps in county mental health services for adjudicated juveniles.

## SERVICES FOR FEMALES

There is a lack on information about the types of services provided to juvenile female offenders in detention. With exception of the two probation camps in Los Angeles, there appear to be few specialized services provided to girls in juvenile detention facilities. According to psychiatric staff serving the two Los Angeles County camps, most girls fall into depression during their stay in detention and thus their need for mental health services is different than for boys. We were unable to determine the types of therapy provided to girls in detention.

- In the 1990s, the Legislature passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 133 that established a task force to investigate the unique service needs of adult female offenders incarcerated in state prisons. The Legislature could require the CSA to form a similar task force composed of county probation officials and others to gather information about the types of detention and post-detention services that young female offenders need while in the juvenile justice system and what is needed to fill gaps in the current system.
- The Legislation could direct the CSA to assess the need for gender-specific staff training and ward services in regional or county juvenile justice systems.
- The Legislature could consider directing funding for mental health treatment research specific to transition-age women in detention.



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