



JUVENILE RECIDIVISM IN ILLINOIS: EXPLORING YOUTH RE-ARREST AND RE-INCARCERATION

Juvenile recidivism in Illinois: Exploring youth re-arrest and re-incarceration

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Key findings

This study was conducted to add to the understanding of juveniles incarcerated in Illinois by examining re-arrest and re-incarceration of 3,052 juveniles released from the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) in state fiscal years 2005, 2006, and 2007. This report provides a detailed summary of this population, including demographics and offending history to recidivism into the adult system. Key findings include:

- 63 percent of youth in the sample were incarcerated for a non-violent offense, 43 percent for a property offense, and 31 percent for a person offense.
- Most (85 percent) served sentences in IDJJ for felonies.
- Youth in the sample had been arrested an average of five times prior to incarceration, and 21 percent had previously been incarcerated.
- Youth incarcerated for Class 4 felonies had the highest average number of prior arrests (mean=7) compared to other offense classes.
- Youth incarcerated for drug offenses had the highest average number of prior arrests (mean=8) compared to other offense types.
- 86 percent of youth were re-arrested within three years of release from IDJJ.
- Youth released after serving a sentence for a drug offense had the highest re-arrest rates (95 percent), while sex offenders had the lowest (61 percent).
- Youth released after serving a sentence for a Class 4 felony had the highest re-arrest rates (91 percent).
- Youth released for first-degree murder had the lowest re-arrest rates (46 percent) compared to other offense types.
- 68 percent of youth in the sample were re-incarcerated within three years of release.
- 53 percent of youth in the sample were re-incarcerated as juveniles. Some (34 percent) were re-incarcerated as adults.
- 41 percent of those in the sample were re-incarcerated at least once for a new sentence.
- 53 percent of youth in the sample were re-incarcerated at least once for a technical violation of parole or MSR.
- 64 percent of first re-incarcerations were for technical violations of parole.

Introduction

In Illinois, information about incarcerated youth is limited. A better understanding of the youth in correctional facilities is needed to identify the impact of incarceration on youth, society, public safety, and state finances. Currently, official recidivism information about youth released from IDJJ facilities is limited to how many are re-incarcerated in IDJJ facilities within three years. Little is known about where the youth are released, their re-offending patterns, or whether they are re-arrested or incarcerated as adults.

Studying juvenile recidivism

Recidivism is one of the most commonly studied outcomes in criminal justice research and is often used in criminal and juvenile justice to measure program effectiveness. Recidivism is generally defined as re-arrest, re-conviction, re-incarceration, or some combination of these. Re-arrest is the least restrictive definition, since it does not require proof beyond a reasonable doubt that an individual committed a crime. Because re-arrest information is often the most readily available, it is frequently used to measure recidivism. However, some view re-conviction as a more accurate measure of re-offending than re-arrest, as it requires an admission or finding of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Re-incarceration is a more restrictive definition, typically limiting the measure of re-offending to incidents for which some standard of proof has been met that the individual committed a crime and which are considered serious enough to merit incarceration. However, a return to prison does not always involve a new offense or sentence. An individual released with supervision can be re-incarcerated for violating the conditions of that supervision, which may not necessarily involve criminal activity.

These definitions of recidivism provide different views of an individual's behavior after release from a correctional institution. Having multiple measures of recidivism not only allows researchers and practitioners to gain a more complete understanding of individual reoffending patterns, it also allows for easier comparison of results across studies and jurisdictions that use different definitions (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006).

Much of what is known about juvenile recidivism rates comes from government juvenile justice departments. For these agencies, a recidivism rate is usually a measure of the effectiveness of two main agency functions—rehabilitative programming in facilities and supervision after release from a facility. The way recidivism is measured depends on the data available to these government agencies, usually via an agency's own data systems. Juvenile corrections agencies often use re-incarceration as the measure of recidivism (Illinois Department of Corrections, 2006; North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2004; Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, 2005). However, some agencies have more information available, and therefore, define recidivism in multiple ways (NCDJJD, 2004; VDJJ, 2005). Responses from 27 states to a survey on how juvenile justice entities define and measure recidivism found that they used a number of different methodologies, follow-up periods, and

definitions. Consequently, the recidivism rates returned by the responding states ranged from 8 percent to 78 percent (VDJJ, 2005).

Perhaps the biggest challenge in measuring juvenile recidivism is following the youth into the adult system, as it can be a rather difficult process to match juvenile and adult records. Much of the literature following individuals from the juvenile system into the adult system has focused on offending trajectories and criminal careers (see Blumstein & Cohen, 1987; Moffitt, 1993; and Nieuwebeerta, Nagin, & Blokland, 2009). However, recidivism studies that follow juveniles into the adult system address underrepresentation of offending, a main limitation of recidivism research, by including adult offending behavior. By counting adult re-arrest and incarceration (Lin, 2007) and referrals of juveniles to adult court (Grunwald, Lockwood, Harris, & Mennis, 2010), more recent studies have been able to provide a more complete picture of juvenile re-offending. Regardless of jurisdiction, the juvenile justice system has an age ceiling that is dependent upon the state's statutes (VDJJ, 2005), so studies that ignore adult outcomes cannot account for offending by individuals who have aged out of the juvenile system during a study period. When considering that the upper age for juvenile jurisdiction is 17 in many states (VDJJ, 2005) and research findings have shown that offending behavior is close to peak levels by around age 18 (Nagin & Land, 1993), following juveniles into the adult system should take on an important methodological role in any juvenile recidivism study.

Like many states, the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) has examined recidivism only in the context of re-incarceration in a juvenile correctional facility within three years of release. The latest recidivism rate released by IDJJ was for youth released in 2002. By 2005, 48 percent of releasees had returned to IDJJ facilities (IDOC, 2006). However, as many releasees are close to age 17 at the time of their release, they would not be readmitted to a juvenile facility for a new offense. Such offenders instead would be dealt with in the adult criminal justice system. Therefore, studies that limit themselves to juvenile justice data risk underestimating true reoffending rates of individuals transitioning from the juvenile to the adult system.

Illinois juvenile correctional system

The juvenile justice system in Illinois is operated by various local, county, and state agencies. In Illinois, youth aged 16 years or younger at the time of an offense are considered juveniles and are processed through the juvenile justice system.¹ However, beginning January 1, 2010, 17-year-olds charged with misdemeanor offenses are prosecuted in the juvenile justice system [705 ILCS 405/5-120]. Juvenile prison facilities are operated by IDJJ and a youth must be at least 13 years old to be incarcerated. At trial and sentencing, a youth who has plead or been found guilty (adjudicated delinquent) may be adjudicated a ward of the state and remanded to the custody of IDJJ, referred to by IDJJ as delinquency commitments.

Sentences to incarceration in IDJJ are indeterminate, meaning there is no set release date. However, the youth must be released by their 21st birthday or the maximum time an adult would serve for the same charge, whichever occurs first [705 ILCS 405/5-710(7)]. Release dates from IDJJ facilities are ultimately determined by the Illinois Prisoner Review Board (PRB) but IDJJ

¹ Illinois has several transfer provisions allowing for the prosecution of juveniles charged with specific offenses and over a certain age in the adult criminal court. See Bostwick (2010) for a discussion of transfer provisions.

makes recommendations according to guidelines related to the youth's holding offense, criminal history, and behavior while incarcerated. Upon release from an IDJJ facility for a delinquency commitment, youth are supervised in the community by a parole agent. A youth's parole will last until their 21st birthday unless IDJJ or the PRB requests the court discharge the youth from custody (including early discharge from supervision). Requests are based on a determination the youth is rehabilitated, not a threat to public safety, and successfully complied with the conditions of supervised release. Parole conditions for juveniles typically include attending school, refraining from law-violating behavior, abstinence from drugs and/or alcohol, and obtaining a high school degree, GED, or employment. Youth who fail to comply with the conditions of their parole may be re-incarcerated in an IDJJ facility, referred to as a technical violation commitment.

Youth may only be incarcerated in an IDJJ facility for a new sentence if they are between the ages of 13 and 16 for felony offenses or between the ages of 13 and 17 for misdemeanor offenses. However, since youth may remain on parole until their 21st birthdays, it is possible for a youth over the age of 17 to be in an IDJJ facility for a technical violation of their parole. Therefore, IDJJ houses youth ages 13 to 20.

In addition to delinquency commitments, Illinois allows for temporary, short-term commitments to IDJJ, or *court evaluations* (sometimes referred to as "bring-back orders"). A judge can order a youth to 30, 60, or 90-day commitments to IDJJ to assess a youth's needs and better inform sentencing decisions. After the assessment period, a judge can vacate the youth's commitment to IDJJ and impose a formal sentence, including probation or a delinquency commitment to IDJJ. Youth who have had their sentences vacated by a judge following a court evaluation are not required to be on parole unless the judge imposes a delinquency commitment.

This study examined re-arrests and re-incarcerations among youth released from IDJJ during state fiscal years 2005 through 2007 and sought to answer the following questions:

1. At what rate are youth released from IDJJ re-arrested for new offenses?
2. At what rate are released youth recommitted to an IDJJ facility for a new offense or a parole violation?
3. At what rate are individuals released from IDJJ subsequently committed to correctional facilities as adults for a new criminal offense?

Methodology

Sample

The study sample was derived from youth released from IDJJ facilities in state fiscal years (July 1 to June 30) 2005, 2006, and 2007. The sample included only youth released after a new sentence commitment, which excludes youth released from technical violation commitments and those adjudicated in adult criminal court. Following the initial selection of youth released after serving a new sentence, these releases were separated into court evaluation releases and delinquency commitment releases, creating two distinct samples of youth releases that were analyzed separately. The rationale for delineating releases from court evaluation commitments and releases from delinquency commitments stems from the nature of the commitment. Court orders for court evaluations are temporary or interim dispositions, and are not considered to be a final sentence as these youth are returned before a judge to make a final sentencing decision. Further, youth who have their commitments vacated by the court at the end of the evaluation period are not required to undergo post-release supervision. Therefore, they theoretically are a population with unique needs and risks distinct from those who received full delinquency commitments.

If a youth exited IDJJ multiple times for new offenses during the three-year period, the earliest exit was selected to be included in each sample. Overall, there were 4,282 exits in the combined court evaluation and delinquency commitment samples. It was possible for the same youth to have both a court evaluation release and a delinquency commitment release during the time period examined. A total of 276 youth appeared in both samples, leaving 4,006 unique youth between the samples.

There were 3,052 youth released from full delinquency commitments. This report focuses on findings of delinquency commitments and results for court evaluation releases are presented in a companion report.

Arrest information

The youth in the sample were linked to their prior arrests as recorded in Illinois' central repository for criminal history records information system (CHRI), housed by Illinois State Police (ISP). CHRI contains information that is statutorily mandated to be collected by arresting agencies, state's attorney's offices, circuit courts, and state and county correctional institutions. Upon arrest, an individual is fingerprinted and assigned a State Identification Number (SID) unique to those fingerprints. The arresting agency inputs arrest information onto either a paper card or into an electronic Livescan system which is then sent to ISP and checked for completion of mandatory fields. About 94 percent of all arrest cards in Illinois are submitted electronically via Livescan. ICJIA has access to CHRI through a special connection to ISP's backup server, which allows extraction of arrest information for specific individuals. Using name and date of birth, exact matches were first selected and reviewed, as is the ICJIA standard matching process. If there was not an exact match, researchers used the first three letters of the last name, the first three letters of the first name, and the date of birth. An SQL query into the system returned the

unique SIDs of potential matches. The researchers then manually examined the potential matches to confirm their accuracy and make adjustments. Once matches were confirmed, all arrest records for the matched individuals were pulled, cleaned, and analyzed.

Arrest data were pulled from ISP on November 22, 2010, and arrest incidents were limited to statutorily reportable arrests, excluding minor traffic violations and offenses that were a Class C misdemeanor or less in seriousness. CHRI entries for an issuance of a warrant or ordinance violations were not included as either prior or subsequent arrest events. For the 3,052 individuals in the sample, arrest records were matched for 98 percent (n=2,983). Of those with matched criminal histories, 91 percent had at least one arrest in the system prior to their sample incarceration (n=2,723). While it would be expected that all youth in the study have at least one prior arrest, the CHRI system is limited to events that are submitted. Due to the nature of this system, there is an inherent error rate as evidenced by the 9 percent whose arrests were not posted prior to incarceration. Illinois statute does not require arresting agencies to submit misdemeanor arrests to CHRI for juveniles, so it is possible that such an arrest occurred, but was not submitted. Unfortunately, there is currently no way to verify the reason for missing arrests in CHRI.

For this study, offenses were categorized into seven groups: offenses against a person; property offenses; sex offenses; weapons offenses; drug offenses; status offenses; and all other offenses. Offenses against a person included offenses such as battery and homicide and included most violations of 720 *ILCS* 5/9 through 720 *ILCS* 5/14, except for sex offenses. Property offenses include those in the Part C of the Criminal Code of 1961 of the *Illinois Compiled Statutes* [720 *ILCS* 5/15 through 720 *ILCS* 5/21.3] along with motor vehicle theft [625 *ILCS* 5/4-103]. However, robbery was classified as an offense against a person because it involves the use or threat of force against a person [720 *ILCS* 5/18]. Sex offenses, including criminal sexual assault, were placed into a category separate from crimes against a person and encompassed violations of 720 *ILCS* 5/11. Weapons offenses, such as unlawful use of a weapon, included violations of 720 *ILCS* 5/24. Drug offenses included violations of the Cannabis Control Act [720 *ILCS* 550], the Illinois Controlled Substances Act [720 *ILCS* 570], the Drug Paraphernalia Control Act [720 *ILCS* 600], the Hypodermic Syringes and Needles Act [720 *ILCS* 635], the Use of Intoxicating Compounds Act [720 *ILCS* 690], and the three methamphetamine acts [720 *ILCS* 646; 720 *ILCS* 647; 720 *ILCS* 648]. Status offenses included misrepresentation of age by a minor to purchase alcohol [235 *ILCS* 5/10-1(e)], possession or consumption of liquor by a minor [235 *ILCS* 5/6-20(e)], driving with a blood alcohol content more than 0.00 but less than 0.08 (zero tolerance) [625 *ILCS* 5/11-501.8], minors requiring authoritative intervention, and truancy [705 *ILCS* 405]. Minor traffic violations and offenses that were Class C misdemeanors or less in seriousness were excluded. The remaining offenses, such as disorderly conduct or mob action, were classified as “other” offenses.

In addition to classifying offenses into offense types, this study also classified offenses as violent or non-violent based on the statutory definition provided in the Rights of Crime Victims and Witnesses Act [725 *ILCS* 120/ et seq.]. Violent offenses were defined as any offense that involved bodily harm or the threat of bodily harm, and encompasses most offenses against a person, most sex offenses, such as criminal sexual assault, and some property offenses such as arson. However, not all offenses against a person are considered violent (such as reckless

conduct or aiding child abduction) nor are all sex offenses considered violent (such as prostitution). A complete list of the offenses classified as violent is provided in *Appendix A*.

Incarceration information

In addition to matching youth to their prior arrest records, the sample was linked to any prior incarcerations (from 1993 forward) in IDJJ facilities using the IDJJ number. Each youth is assigned a unique IDJJ number upon initial admission to an IDJJ facility. That number remains a unique identifier for that youth in all subsequent incarcerations with IDJJ. Although admissions were examined back to state fiscal year 1993, the age minimum of 13 for IDJJ admission makes it impossible that any youth in the sample would have been incarcerated prior to 1997. In addition to prior incarcerations, subsequent admissions to IDJJ through state fiscal year 2009, the most current admissions available for examination, were pulled.

The IDJJ number does not follow a youth should the youth be incarcerated as an adult in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC). Using all IDOC admissions between 1993 and 2009, the researchers first queried for exact name and date of birth matches. After reviewing those matches for accuracy, the researchers then matched using the first three letters of the first name, first three letters of the last name, and date of birth. After the matches were reviewed, all admissions to IDOC through state fiscal year 2009 were pulled.

Data limitations

There are a number of limitations to this study that should be considered when examining the results. Any attempts to compare or generalize these results with another state should be done only after a comparable population is identified. It also is important to make sure that recidivism is being measured similarly and that the follow-up periods are comparable. In addition, these results may not be generalizable or comparable to other juvenile justice populations. Youth sent to IDJJ are generally considered to be at a higher risk for re-offending than probation populations or other diverted juveniles.

The availability of suitable Illinois data is lacking in some areas. For example, convictions and other court data are not reliably reported to CHRI for juveniles. As these data currently exist, anyone attempting to link convictions with individuals would have to request that information from each county or circuit court and compile the data into a single matched dataset requiring extensive resources. Therefore, only re-arrest and re-incarceration were analyzed.

In addition, no centralized repository or database containing treatment information exists for individuals after release from an IDJJ facility, which makes determining rehabilitative progress difficult. The IDJJ and IDOC population files utilized for this study do not contain treatment information. Determining programming or treatment the youth in the sample received and subsequent effects on recidivism was not possible.

The datasets used in this study are generally recognized as being some of the best for use in Illinois research. IDOC and IDJJ files are consistently updated and corrected as errors are discovered. CHRI files are periodically subjected to audits for completeness and accuracy by ICJIA. However, some inconsistencies were found in both sets of files and manually corrected.

Some dates in corrections files were not correctly carried over between admissions, which researchers were able to manually check and correct. Further, there were instances with CHRI entries where the same individual was assigned more than one SID, and others in which two different individuals were assigned to the same SID. Researchers manually corrected errors as they were identified.

Findings

Sample demographics

The sample consisted of 3,052 youth released from IDJJ after serving a court-imposed sentence. Thirty-six percent were released in state fiscal year 2005 (n=1,086), 32 percent were released in 2006 (n=988), and 32 percent were released in 2007 (n=978). *Table 1* provides the descriptive characteristics of the delinquency sample.

Table 1
Sample descriptive characteristics

Characteristic	n	Percent
Race		
White	1,092	35.78%
Black	1,613	52.85%
Hispanic	333	10.91%
Other	14	0.46%
Sex		
Female	322	10.60%
Male	2,730	89.40%
Last grade completed		
5 th grade	18	0.59%
6 th grade	110	3.60%
7 th grade	364	11.93%
Grade school graduate (8 th grade)	1,262	41.35%
9 th grade	748	24.51%
10 th grade	345	11.30%
11 th grade	73	2.39%
High school graduate/GED	47	1.54%
Unknown or missing	85	2.79%
Age at admission		
13	98	3.21%
14	326	10.68%
15	726	23.79%
16	1,144	37.48%
17	582	19.07%
18	132	4.33%
19	25	0.82%
20	19	0.62%

Table 1, continued

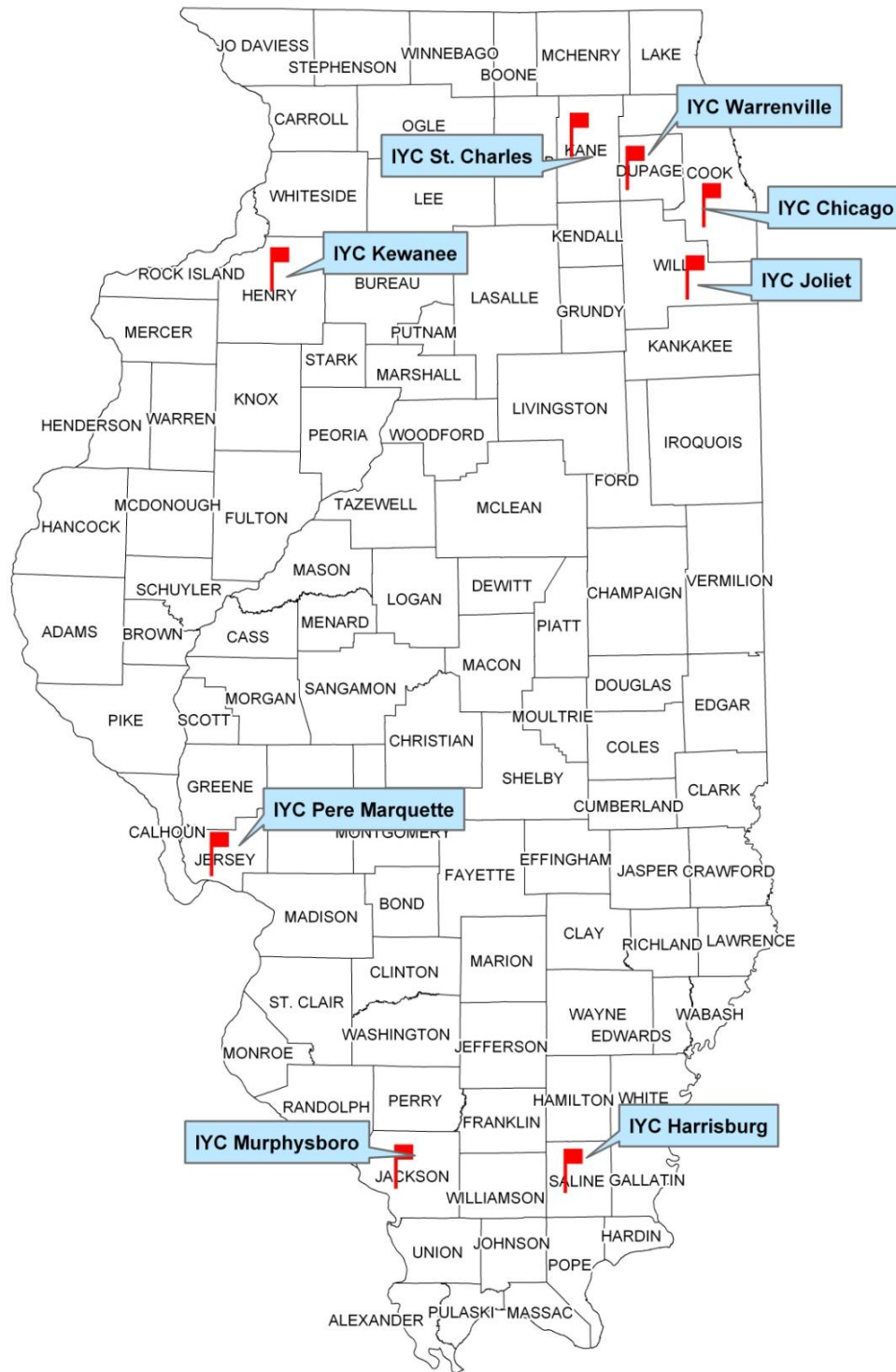
Characteristic	n	Percent
Age at exit		
13	13	0.43%
14	138	4.52%
15	442	14.48%
16	909	29.78%
17	1,012	33.16%
18	376	12.32%
19	111	3.64%
20	51	1.67%
Violent offense		
No	1,926	63.11%
Yes	1,126	36.89%
Offense type		
Person	944	30.93%
Property	1,315	43.09%
Drug	357	11.70%
Weapons	175	5.73%
Sex	184	6.03%
Other	77	2.52%
Offense class		
Misdemeanor	463	15.17%
Class 4	490	16.06%
Class 3	593	19.43%
Class 2	837	27.42%
Class 1	502	16.45%
Class X	154	5.05%
First degree murder	13	0.43%
Security level		
Minimum	1,073	35.16%
Medium	1,791	58.68%
Maximum	180	5.90%
Unknown or missing	8	0.26%
Release institution		
IYC – Chicago	397	13.01%
IYC – Harrisburg	576	18.87%
IYC – Joliet	316	10.35%
IYC – Kewanee	209	6.85%
IYC – Murphysboro	465	15.24%
IYC – Pere Marquette	97	3.18%
IYC – St. Charles	757	24.80%
IYC - Warrenville	235	7.70%

Eighty-nine percent of the sample were male (n=2,730), 53 percent were black (n=1,613), and 36 percent were white (n=1,092). The average age at admission was 15.78 years (SD=1.2) while the average age at exit was 16.51 years (SD=1.2). For 41 percent of the sample, 8th grade was the last grade completed (n=1,262) and 16 percent had not completed grade school (n=492). While, 81 percent of the sample had at least graduated from grade school (n=2,475), only 40 percent had completed some high school (ninth grade or higher) (n=1,213). Less than 2 percent had graduated high school or obtained a GED, however, given the average age of under 18, this was expected.

The majority of the sample (63 percent) were exiting IDJJ facilities after serving sentences for non-violent offenses (n=1,926) and 85 percent had served sentences for felonies (n=2,589). Class 2 offenses were the most common (27 percent, n=837) followed by Class 3 offenses (19 percent, n=593). The most common types of offenses youth were incarcerated for were property offenses (43 percent, n=1,315) and offenses against a person (31 percent, n=944).

Security levels are assessed at various times throughout a youth's stay in an IDJJ facility. Security levels are used in deciding facility placement and are intended to reflect the risk the individual poses to themselves, other inmates, and staff, and for flight risk. This study only included the last security level assessed prior to release. This information was missing for eight youth (0.26 percent). More than half of youth were last assessed at a medium security level (59 percent, n=1,791), followed by minimum (35 percent, n=1,073), and then maximum (6 percent, n=180). Youth were released from all eight of the Illinois Youth Centers (IYC). The most common release facility was IYC- St. Charles (25 percent, n=757), followed by IYC-Harrisburg (19 percent, n=576) and IYC-Murphysboro (15 percent, n=456). *Figure 1* shows the location of the eight IYCs in Illinois.

Figure 1
Location of IDJJ Youth Centers



Note: The location of the flags within the counties does not indicate the exact location of the facilities.

Prior arrests

The number of prior arrests for the sample ranged from zero to 31, with a mean of 4.85 arrests (SD=4.5) and a median of three, indicating that arrest counts are slightly positive-skewed. Seventy-nine percent had at least one prior felony arrest (n=2,365) and 63 percent had at least one prior violent arrest (n=1,866). Seventy-one percent of the sample had at least one prior arrest for a property offense, 59 percent had at least one prior arrest for an offense against a person (n=1,770), and 39 percent for an offense categorized as *other* (such as disorderly conduct, mob action, fleeing, and eluding a peace officer). One-third had at least one prior arrest for a drug offense (n=997), 13 percent for a weapons offense (n=375), 10 percent for status offenses (n=286), and 6 percent for sex offenses (n=192).

In many cases, there will be multiple charges tied to a single arrest, thus the number of charges in all prior arrests were examined. The sample had an average of 6.4 prior charges (SD=5.5) and total prior charges ranged from 0 to 41. On average, the sample had 2.8 prior felony charges (SD=2.9) and 1.7 prior violent charges (SD=2.2). *Table 2* provides an overview of prior arrest statistics. The standard deviation (SD), is the typical distance of a value from the mean and is used as a measure of the variability in the distribution of a variable. When compared to the mean, a large standard deviation indicates a high level of variation, with values for that variable spread out from the mean. A small standard deviation indicates that the values are more closely grouped around the mean.

Table 2
Prior arrest descriptive characteristics

Prior arrests/charges	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Median	SD
Prior arrests	0	31	4.85	3.0	4.5
Violent offense arrests	0	21	1.47	1.0	1.9
Felony offense arrests	0	20	2.31	2.0	2.4
Person offense arrests	0	21	1.41	1.0	1.9
Sex offense arrests	0	3	0.07	0.0	0.3
Property offense arrests	0	22	2.11	1.0	2.6
Drug offense arrests	0	20	0.96	0.0	2.0
Weapons offense arrests	0	5	0.15	0.0	0.4
Status offense arrests	0	12	0.14	0.0	0.5
Other offense arrests	0	12	0.63	0.0	1.0
Prior charges	0	41	6.36	5.0	5.5
Violent offense charges	0	23	1.70	1.0	2.2
Felony offense charges	0	24	2.81	2.0	2.9

Table 3 provides information on prior arrests by incarceration offense and offense class. As seen in the table, counts of prior arrests are typically skewed and therefore the median provides a less biased statistic than the mean.

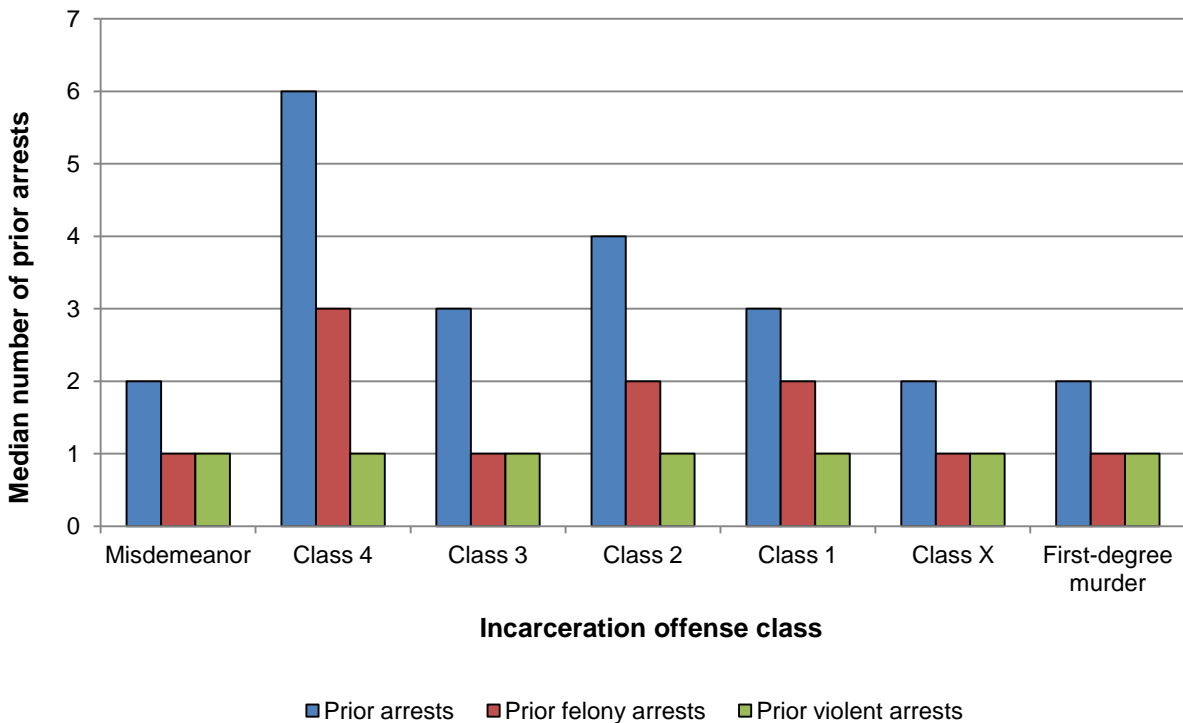
Table 3
Descriptive statistics for the number of prior arrests
by incarceration offense class and type

Incarceration offense	Prior arrests			Prior felony arrests			Prior violent arrests		
	Mean	SD	Median	Mean	SD	Median	Mean	SD	Median
Offense class									
Misdemeanor	3.67	3.89	2.00	1.22	1.89	1.00	1.44	2.06	1.00
Class 4	7.09	4.75	6.00	3.54	2.82	3.00	1.62	1.82	1.00
Class 3	4.35	4.00	3.00	1.91	1.80	1.00	1.82	2.02	1.00
Class 2	5.05	4.77	4.00	2.50	2.31	2.00	1.35	1.80	1.00
Class 1	4.39	4.34	3.00	2.35	2.50	2.00	1.07	1.48	1.00
Class X	3.81	4.25	2.00	2.09	2.33	1.00	1.66	1.74	1.00
First-degree murder	2.38	1.5	2.00	1.54	0.88	1.00	1.69	1.25	1.00
Offense type									
Person	4.62	4.44	3.00	1.98	2.10	1.00	2.15	2.15	2.00
Property	4.39	4.38	3.00	2.10	2.23	2.00	1.01	1.56	0.00
Drug	8.28	4.46	8.00	4.62	2.92	5.00	1.53	1.75	1.00
Weapons	5.55	4.29	5.00	2.25	2.01	2.00	1.64	1.93	1.00
Sex	2.4	2.56	1.00	1.44	1.47	1.00	1.29	1.30	1.00
Other	3.32	3.74	3.00	1.34	1.36	1.00	0.77	1.19	0.00
Overall	4.85	4.52	3.00	2.31	2.38	2.00	1.47	1.85	1.00

Prior arrests by incarceration offense class

Youth released after serving sentences for Class 4 felonies had a median of six prior arrests, while Class 2 felonies had a median of four prior arrests. Class 3 and Class 1 offenders each had a median number of three prior arrests. First-degree murderers, Class X felons, and misdemeanants each had a median number of two prior arrests. *Figure 2* provides a graph of the median number of prior arrests by incarceration offense class.

Figure 2
Median number of prior arrests by incarceration offense class

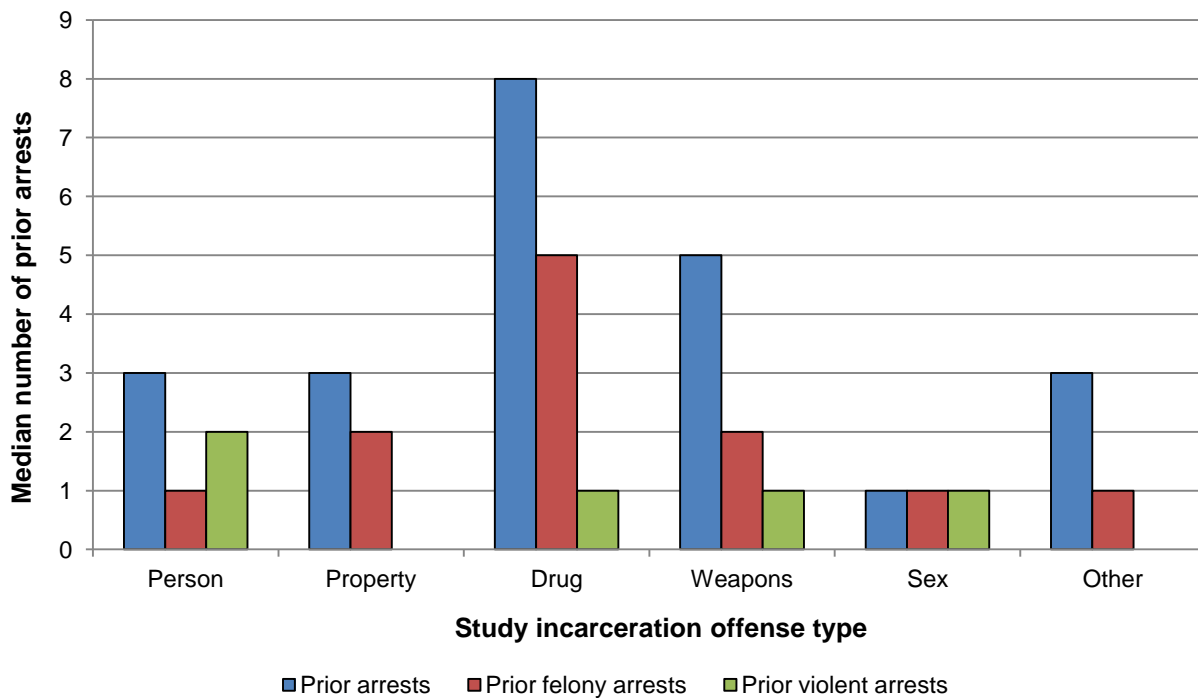


Youth released from IDJJ after serving sentences for Class 4 felonies had the highest median of prior felony arrests (three), followed by Class 2 and Class 1 offenders, each with a median of two prior felony arrests. First degree murders, Class X felons, and misdemeanants each had a median of one prior felony arrest. All offense classes had a median of one prior violent arrest.

Prior arrests by incarceration offense type

Youth in the sample released from IDJJ after serving a sentence for a drug offense had the highest median number of prior arrests (eight), followed by weapons offenders with a median of five prior arrests. Sex offenders had a median of one prior arrest, while person, property, and “other” offenders had a median of three prior arrests. *Figure 3* shows the median number of prior arrests by incarceration offense type.

Figure 3
Median number of prior arrests by incarceration offense type



Following a similar trend to overall prior arrests, drug offenders had the highest median number of prior felony arrests at five, followed by property and weapons offenders who each had a median number of prior felony arrests of two. All other offenders had a median of one prior felony arrest. Prior violent arrests were less common; half of property offenders and other offenders did not have prior violent arrests (median=zero). Youth incarcerated for offenses against a person had a median number of prior violent arrests of two, the highest of the offense types.

Prior incarcerations

Twenty-one percent of the youth in the sample had prior incarcerations in IDJJ facilities (n=631). Eighteen percent had only one prior incarceration (n=562) and 3 percent had two or more previous incarcerations (n=69). Only 1 percent of the sample had prior incarcerations for technical parole violations (n=33). *Table 4* provides an overview of the descriptive statistics for prior incarcerations for the sample.

Table 4
Prior incarceration descriptive characteristics

Prior incarcerations	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Median	SD
Prior incarcerations	0	5	0.24	0.0	0.50
New sentence incarcerations	0	4	0.22	0.0	0.50
Technical violation incarcerations	0	4	0.02	0.0	0.20
Violent offenses	0	2	0.07	0.0	0.30
Felony offenses	0	3	0.18	0.0	0.40
Person offenses	0	2	0.06	0.0	0.26
Sex offenses	0	1	0.01	0.0	0.08
Property offenses	0	2	0.11	0.0	0.34
Drug offenses	0	2	0.02	0.0	0.17
Weapons offenses	0	1	0.01	0.0	0.09
Other offenses	0	2	0.01	0.0	0.08

By the nature of how descriptive statistics are calculated, the average prior incarcerations will be slightly higher than zero while the median number of prior incarcerations will be zero. Therefore, it is not possible to distinguish any differences in prior incarcerations by incarceration offense type and class.

Recidivism

Recidivism after release from IDJJ was defined in four ways: any re-arrest, any re-incarceration in a juvenile or adult facility, re-incarceration resulting from a conviction in juvenile court, and incarceration in an adult facility or an incarceration resulting from a conviction in criminal (adult) court. Re-incarceration was further delineated by new sentence admissions and admissions for a technical violation of the youth's parole. Youth subsequently admitted to IDJJ facilities for convictions in the criminal court were classified as "adult" incarcerations. The researchers chose to classify re-incarceration as juvenile or adult based on how the courts prosecuted the offense, rather than solely by type of facility in which the youth were incarcerated. Youth convicted as adults may be sent to a juvenile facility due to their age. These youth entered the adult criminal justice system by virtue of their conviction in an adult court and are considered as recidivists in the adult system. However, the same distinction is not made for arrests as criminal court transfers are sought by prosecutors or the court and not by law enforcement.

Re-arrest

Of the 2,983 youth matched to arrest records, 91 percent were re-arrested between the date of their release and November 22, 2010 (between three and seven years, depending on the calendar year of release). Subsequent arrests ranged from zero to 30, with an average of five arrests (SD=4.2) and a median of four. Minor traffic, warrant, and ordinance arrests were excluded from these analyses. Seventy-six percent of the sample were re-arrested for at least one felony (n=2,264) and the number of felony re-arrests ranged from none to 12, with an average of two (SD=1.9) and a median of two. Fifty-nine percent of the sample were re-arrested at least once for a violent offense (n=1,768). Violent re-arrests ranged from none to 16, with an average of 1.25 arrests (SD=1.6) and a median of one.

Sixty-one percent of youth had at least one subsequent arrest for a property offense (n=1,832) and 58 percent had at least one re-arrest for an offense against a person. Forty-nine percent of youth had at least one re-arrest for a drug offense (n=1463), 18 percent for a weapons offense (n=537), 16 percent for a status offense (n=485), and 3 percent for a sex offense (n=97). In addition, 58 percent of the sample had at least one arrest for an “other” offense (n=1,729), such as disorderly conduct, DUI, and mob action. *Table 5* provides the descriptive statistics for re-arrests of the youth in the sample.

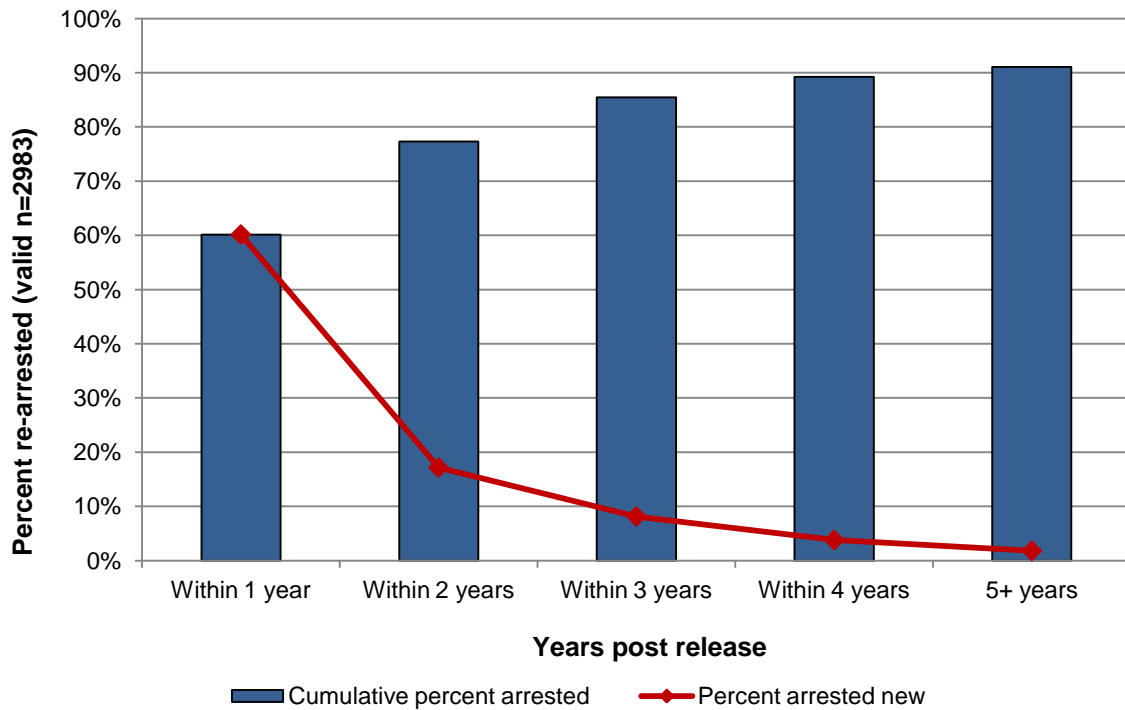
Table 5
Re-arrest descriptive statistics

Re-arrest type	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Median	SD
Total re-arrests	0	30	4.87	4.00	4.22
Violent offenses	0	16	1.25	1.00	1.63
Felony offenses	0	12	2.04	2.00	1.90
Person offenses	0	13	1.21	1.00	1.60
Sex offenses	0	5	0.04	0.00	0.23
Property offenses	0	19	1.55	1.00	1.98
Drug offenses	0	20	1.37	0.00	2.24
Weapons offenses	0	4	0.24	0.00	0.57
Status offenses	0	12	0.27	0.00	0.82
Other offenses	0	19	1.22	1.00	1.60
Total re-arrest charges	0	53	7.24	6.00	6.34
Violent re-arrest charges	0	25	1.56	1.00	2.17
Felony re-arrest charges	0	29	2.80	2.00	2.90

Sixty percent of the youth matched to CHRI were arrested for the first time within the first year after their release (n=1,794). Seventeen percent were arrested for the first time during the second year (n=512), 8 percent during the third year (n=243), 4 percent during the fourth year (n=113), 1 percent in the fifth year (n=39), 0.5 percent during the sixth year (n=14), and one person was arrested for the first time in the seventh year after his release. Nine percent were never re-arrested during the study period (n=267).

Cumulatively, 86 percent were re-arrested within three years of release (n=2,549) and by the fourth year, 89 percent had been re-arrested (n=2,662). *Figure 4* depicts the cumulative percentage of youth re-arrested in each year after initial release.

Figure 4
Percent re-arrested post release, by year



Youth released from IDJJ for sex offenses were the least likely to be re-arrested—27 percent were not re-arrested during the study period (n=45). Conversely, the highest re-arrest rates were among drug offenders, who had a three-year re-arrest rate of 95 percent and an overall re-arrest rate of 96 percent. In terms of incarceration offense severity, youth released from IDJJ facilities after serving a sentence for a Class 4 felony were the most likely to be re-arrested within three years (92 percent, n=444), followed by Class 3 offenders (87 percent, n=500). In regards to security level, youth last assessed as minimum security had the lowest re-arrest rates, with 10 percent never being re-arrested during the study period (n=109) and 84 percent being re-arrested within three years of release (n=883). *Table 6* provides the cumulative re-arrest rates by year by offender characteristic.

Table 6
Cumulative re-arrest rates by year and by offender/offense characteristic

Offender/offense characteristic	Never re-arrested	Cumulative re-arrest rates				
		Within 1 year	Within 2 years	Within 3 years	Within 4 years	Within 5 or more years
Offense type						
Person	8.9%	59.1%	77.1%	85.2%	89.3%	91.1%
Property	8.5%	59.0%	77.4%	85.8%	89.9%	91.5%
Drug	4.2%	80.8%	91.8%	94.6%	95.5%	95.8%
Weapons	6.5%	64.1%	82.4%	91.2%	92.9%	93.5%
Sex	26.5%	31.8%	46.5%	61.2%	67.1%	73.5%
Other	5.4%	50.0%	67.6%	81.1%	89.2%	94.6%
Offense class						
Misdemeanor	12.0%	61.1%	74.2%	82.4%	85.8%	88.0%
Class 4	4.4%	72.0%	87.1%	92.1%	94.8%	95.6%
Class 3	7.8%	57.8%	76.4%	86.8%	89.8%	92.2%
Class 2	9.8%	59.6%	77.0%	83.9%	88.8%	90.2%
Class 1	8.0%	57.7%	76.7%	86.5%	89.8%	92.0%
Class X	16.9%	41.2%	65.5%	76.4%	80.4%	83.1%
First degree	15.4%	30.8%	38.5%	46.2%	84.6%	84.6%
Security level						
Minimum	10.4%	57.0%	76.2%	84.4%	88.2%	89.6%
Medium	8.4%	60.7%	77.3%	85.6%	89.5%	91.6%
Maximum	6.2%	72.9%	83.6%	89.8%	92.1%	93.8%
Race						
White	13.3%	46.7%	67.3%	77.9%	83.7%	86.7%
Black	6.1%	68.4%	82.8%	90.1%	92.7%	93.9%
Hispanic	9.6%	63.2%	82.0%	86.7%	89.8%	90.4%
Other	0.0%	57.1%	92.9%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Gender						
Female	20.9%	34.5%	55.7%	66.5%	75.0%	79.1%
Male	7.5%	63.2%	79.9%	87.7%	90.9%	92.5%

Table 6, continued

Offender/offense characteristic	Never re-arrested	Cumulative re-arrest rates				
		Within 1 year	Within 2 years	Within 3 years	Within 4 years	Within 5 or more years
Education						
5 th grade	11.8%	64.7%	76.5%	76.5%	88.2%	88.2%
6 th grade	13.5%	48.1%	69.2%	76.9%	84.6%	86.5%
7 th grade	11.3%	50.7%	71.3%	81.4%	86.2%	88.7%
Grade school graduate (8 th grade)	7.3%	65.6%	81.9%	88.1%	91.5%	92.7%
9 th grade	7.4%	60.5%	77.1%	87.0%	90.5%	92.6%
10 th grade	10.4%	55.4%	74.4%	84.2%	86.9%	89.6%
11 th grade	25.4%	52.1%	63.4%	70.4%	71.8%	74.6%
High school graduate	26.7%	30.0%	50.0%	66.7%	73.3%	73.3%
GED	12.5%	37.5%	75.0%	81.3%	87.5%	87.5%
Unknown or missing	4.7%	70.6%	80.0%	88.2%	92.9%	95.3%
Age at exit						
13	15.4%	53.8%	69.2%	76.9%	84.6%	84.6%
14	12.7%	47.0%	59.7%	73.1%	82.1%	87.3%
15	9.3%	50.7%	72.0%	83.9%	89.0%	90.7%
16	7.2%	62.8%	80.7%	87.0%	90.7%	92.8%
17	6.8%	67.0%	83.2%	89.7%	92.0%	93.2%
18	14.7%	58.2%	70.7%	80.2%	83.7%	85.3%
19	15.6%	42.2%	67.9%	77.1%	81.7%	84.4%
20	12.2%	49.0%	65.3%	79.6%	87.8%	87.8%

White youth had the lowest three-year re-arrest rates (78 percent, n=816), while Hispanic/Latino youth had a rate of 87 percent (n=280), and black youth had the highest rate at 90 percent (n=1439). Females were less likely than males to be re-arrested within three years of release (67 percent and 88 percent, respectively), as were youth who had completed high school (67 percent).

Three-year re-arrest rates were lowest for youth 14 years of age at the time they exited IDJJ facilities (73 percent, n=98), followed by 13-year-olds (77 percent, n=10), and 19-year-olds (77 percent, n=84). The highest three-year re-arrest rates were seen among 16- and 17-year-olds at 87 and 89 percent, respectively.

Three-year re-arrest

As the typical follow-up period for recidivism studies is three years, this study further analyzed re-arrest data on the three-year follow-up period. Any re-arrest that occurred after the third year following release was re-coded as “not re-arrested”. With this new classification method, 14.5 percent of the sample were not re-arrested (n=434) while 85.5 percent were re-arrested (n=2,549). *Table 7* provides the three-year re-arrest rates by incarceration offense type and offense class.

Table 7
Three-year re-arrest rates by offender/offense characteristic

Offender/offense characteristic	Valid n	Not re-arrested within three years of release		Re-arrested within three years of release	
		n	%	n	%
Offense type					
Person	925	137	14.8%	788	85.2%
Property	1,289	183	14.2%	1,106	85.8%
Drug	355	19	5.4%	336	94.6%
Weapons	170	15	8.8%	155	91.2%
Sex	170	66	38.8%	104	61.2%
Other	74	14	18.9%	60	81.1%
Offense class					
Misdemeanor	450	79	17.6%	371	82.4%
Class 4	482	38	7.9%	444	92.1%
Class 3	576	76	13.2%	500	86.8%
Class 2	825	133	16.1%	692	83.9%
Class 1	489	66	13.5%	423	86.5%
Class X	148	35	23.6%	113	76.4%
First degree murder	13	7	53.8%	6	46.2%
Security level					
Minimum	1,046	163	15.6%	883	84.4%
Medium	1,752	252	14.4%	1,500	85.6%
Maximum	177	18	10.2%	159	89.8%
Race					
White	1,048	232	22.1%	816	77.9%
Black	1,,598	159	9.9%	1439	90.1%
Hispanic	323	43	13.3%	280	86.7%
Other	14	0	0.0%	14	100.0%
Gender					
Female	316	106	33.5%	210	66.5%
Male	2,667	328	12.3%	2,339	87.7%

Table 7, continued

Offender/offense characteristic	Valid n	Not re-arrested within three years of release		Re-arrested within three years of release	
		n	%	n	%
Education					
5 th grade	17	4	23.5%	13	76.5%
6 th grade	104	24	23.1%	80	76.9%
7 th grade	355	66	18.6%	289	81.4%
Grade school graduate (8 th grade)	1,240	148	11.9%	1,092	88.1%
9 th grade	729	95	13.0%	634	87.0%
10 th grade	336	53	15.8%	283	84.2%
11 th grade	71	21	29.6%	50	70.4%
High school graduate	30	10	33.3%	20	66.7%
GED	16	3	18.8%	13	81.3%
Unknown or missing	85	10	11.8%	75	88.2%
Age at exit					
13	13	3	23.1%	10	76.9%
14	134	36	26.9%	98	73.1%
15	428	69	16.1%	359	83.9%
16	895	116	13.0%	779	87.0%
17	987	102	10.3%	885	89.7%
18	368	73	19.8%	295	80.2%
19	109	25	22.9%	84	77.1%
20	49	10	20.4%	39	79.6%

Due to the high rates of re-arrest present in this sample, identifying predictors of re-arrest are difficult. Simply predicting that all youth would be re-arrested would result in 86 percent accuracy. It is unlikely that statistical models would significantly improve such predictions and little variation makes it difficult for analyses to identify models. However, results of bivariate analyses indicate that while certain demographic and incarceration characteristics were significantly correlated with re-arrest within three years of release, these associations were substantively weak (*Table 8* and *Table 9*). Further, some statistical tests, particularly chi-square tests, are sensitive to sample size and may produce significant results due to larger samples. However, due to the highly skewed distribution of three-year re-arrest rates, tests on the strength of association, such as lambda, yield misleading results. Consequently, examining the relationship between categorical variables such as gender or race, are more informed by a discussion of relative risk or odds ratios.

Relationship between demographic characteristics and three-year re-arrest

Age at admission was slightly positively correlated with re-arrest within three years ($r_{rb} = .07$, $p=.000$), however this correlation is weak and likely influenced by the sample size. This potentially spurious correlation is further evidenced by the fact that age at exit is not significantly

correlated with re-arrest ($r_{rb} = .01$, $p = .75$). Additionally, race was significantly, although weakly, correlated with re-arrest (Cramer's $V = .16$, $p = .00$) as was gender ($\phi = .19$, $p = .00$). The last grade completed was not significantly correlated with re-arrest ($r_{rb} = -.02$, $p = .29$). *Table 8* provides the bivariate correlations and associations between offender characteristics and whether or not an individual was re-arrested within three years of release.

Table 8
Results of point-biserial correlation analyses with three-year re-arrest

Characteristic	Pearson's r_{pb}
Age at admission	0.07***
Age at exit	0.01
Last grade completed	-0.02
Length of stay	-0.14***
Prior arrests	0.20***
Prior felony arrests	0.17***
Prior violent arrests	0.08***

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Relationship between incarceration characteristics and three-year re-arrest

Incarceration offense type was significantly associated with re-arrest ($X^2 = 110.53$, 5 df, $p = .000$), and more serious offense classes were less likely to be re-arrested, although the correlation was weak (Cramer's $V = 0.13$, $p = .000$). Longer lengths of stay in IDJJ correlated with lower re-arrest rates ($r_{pb} = -.14$, $p = .000$), although the last assessed security level was not significantly associated with three year re-arrest.

Table 9
Results of chi-square analysis with three year re-arrest

Characteristic	Chi-square	df	Phi/ Cramer's V
Race	78.51	3	226.95***
Sex	102.58	1	0.19***
Incarceration offense type	110.53	5	0.19***
Incarceration offense class	49.43	6	0.13***
Last security level	3.67	2	0.04

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Relationship between criminal history and three-year re-arrest

Additional bivariate analyses revealed that certain types of prior arrests were weakly correlated with three-year re-arrest rates. The number of prior property arrests ($r_{pb} = .16$, $p = .000$), drug arrests ($r_{pb} = .15$, $p = .000$), and arrests for offenses against a person ($r_{pb} = .10$, $p = .000$) were all positively, but weakly, correlated with re-arrest within three years of release. The number of prior sex offense arrests, however, were negatively correlated with re-arrest ($r_{pb} = -.11$, $p = .000$).

An individual's criminal history is generally recognized as an important predictor of subsequent criminal behavior. For this sample, indicators of extensive criminal backgrounds were linked to higher likelihood of re-arrest. Youth who were re-arrested within three years had a higher average number of prior arrests than youth who were not re-arrested ($t = -16.83$, 1015 df, $p = .00$). However, correlations found this relationship to be rather weak ($r_{pb} = .20$, $p = .000$). A higher average number of prior felony arrests was also linked to a higher likelihood of being re-arrested within three years ($t = -13.29$, 953 df, $p = .00$). There was a weak correlation between the number of prior felony arrests and re-arrest ($r_{pb} = .17$, $p = .00$). Youth who had more prior arrests for violent offenses also showed a higher likelihood for re-arrest within three years ($t = -5.08$, $p = .00$). While this correlation was statistically significant, it was also found to be a weak relationship ($r_{pb} = .08$, $p = .00$).

Youth who were previously incarcerated would generally be considered at higher risk for re-offending than youth who have only been arrested (Cottle, Lee, & Heilbrun, 2001). Given the higher perceived risk, one would expect that youth who have been previously incarcerated would have higher likelihoods of re-offending and being re-arrested after release. However, with delinquency commitments, a prior incarceration was a rare enough event that no significant relationship was seen between prior stays in IDJJ and future offending ($t = -1.84$, 640 df, $p = .07$). *Table 10* provides the t-test results of the difference between youth arrested within three years and those that were not.

Table 10
Results of t-tests with three-year re-arrest

Criminal history	Not re-arrested within 3 years (mean)	Re-arrested within 3 years (mean)	t statistic
Prior arrests	2.65	5.23	-16.83***
Prior felony arrests	1.36	2.48	-13.29***
Prior violent arrests	1.11	1.53	-5.08***
Prior IDJJ incarcerations	0.20	0.25	-1.84

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Likelihood of re-arrest within three years

Compared to white youth, the odds of being re-arrested within three years of release, not controlling for other factors, were 2.57 times greater for black youth and 1.85 times greater for Hispanic youth. The odds of a male being re-arrested within three years were 3.60 times higher than females and youth who had a high school diploma or GED were 0.43 times lower.

Compared to youth released after having served a sentence for an offense against a person, the odds of a property offender being re-arrested within three years were about the same ($OR = 1.05$), while drug offender odds were 3.08 times greater, and weapons offender odds were 1.80 times greater. The odds of a youth incarcerated for a sex offense being re-arrested within three years were 0.27 times those of youth incarcerated for offenses against a person.

The odds of a youth incarcerated for Class 4 felonies being re-arrested within three years were 2.49 times greater compared to youth incarcerated for misdemeanor offenses, while the odds for

youth incarcerated for Class 3 felonies were 1.40 times greater. The odds of a youth incarcerated for a Class 2 felony being re-arrested within three years were 1.11 times those of misdemeanants, while youth incarcerated for Class 1 felonies had 1.37 times greater odds. Youth incarcerated for Class X felonies (OR=0.69) and youth incarcerated for first-degree murder (OR=0.18) had lower odds of being re-arrested within three years than misdemeanants. Youth last assessed a medium security risk were about as likely to be re-arrested within three years (OR=1.10) while youth assessed as maximum risk had slightly higher odds of being re-arrested (OR=1.63). *Table 11* provides a summary of the odds ratios for three-year re-arrest rates by characteristic.

Table 11
Three-year re-arrest odds ratios by characteristic

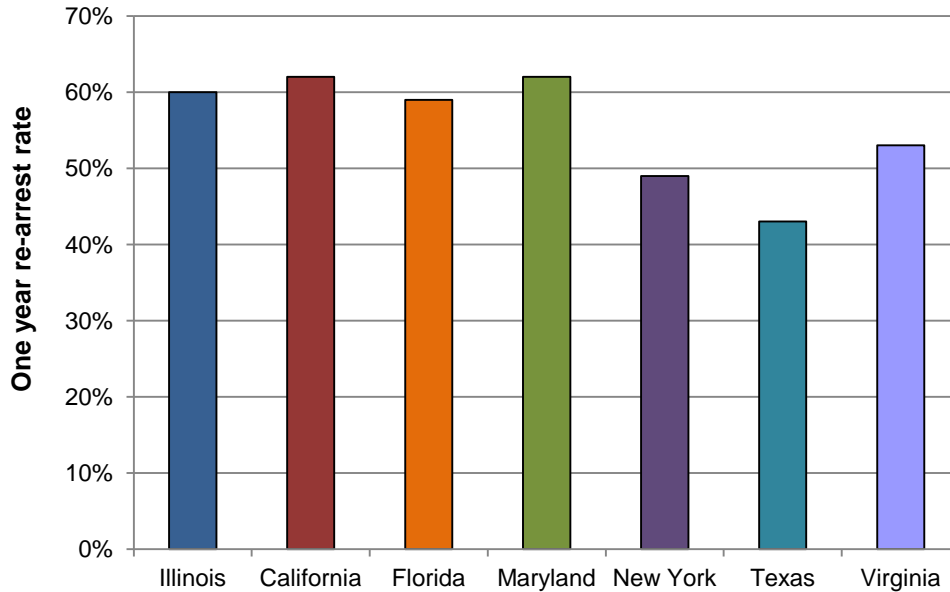
Characteristic	Odds ratio
Race (reference: white)	
Black	2.57
Hispanic	1.85
Gender (reference: female)	
Male	3.60
Education (reference: no HS or GED)	
HS or GED	0.43
Incarceration offense (reference: offense against a person)	
Property	1.05
Drug	3.08
Weapons	1.80
Sex	0.27
Incarceration class (reference: misdemeanor)	
First-degree murder	0.18
Class X	0.69
Class 1	1.37
Class 2	1.11
Class 3	1.40
Class 4	2.49
Security level (reference: minimum)	
Medium	1.10
Maximum	1.63

Comparing Illinois re-arrest rates and other states

Comparing recidivism rates with other states can be difficult as many studies use varying definitions of recidivism and varying time periods. However, examining multiple states' recidivism rates can provide context and perspective to the rates found in this study.

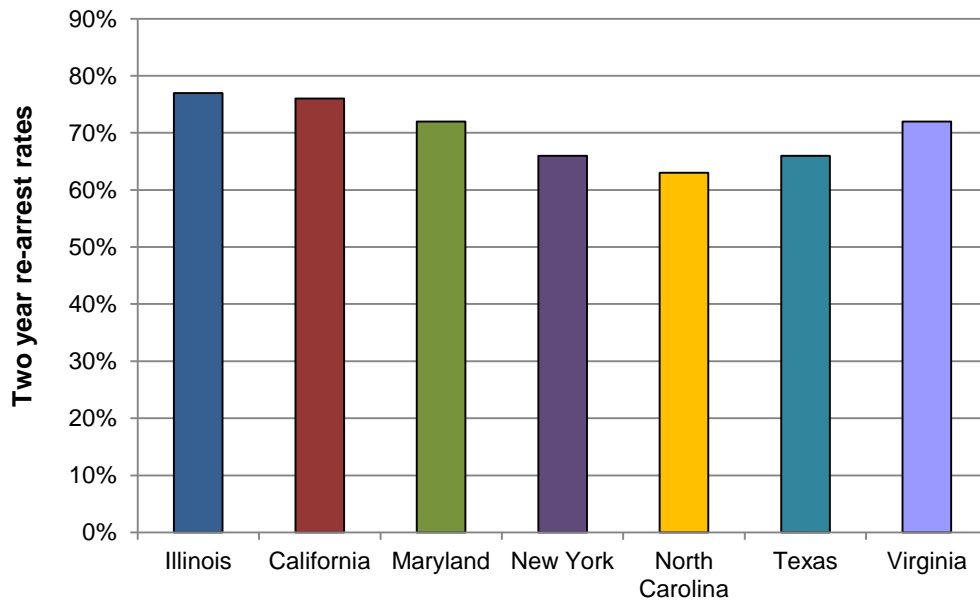
Illinois' one-year and two-year re-arrest rates for youth released from IDJJ facilities were similar to those of other states. Sixty percent of youth released from IDJJ facilities were re-arrested within one year. Similarly, California reported re-arrest rates of 62 percent, Florida reported re-arrest rates of 59 percent, and Maryland reported re-arrest rates of 62 percent (Harris, Lockwood, & Mengers, 2009). New York, Texas, and Virginia reported lower one-year re-arrest rates at 49 percent, 43 percent, and 53 percent, respectively (Harris, Lockwood, & Mengers, 2009). *Figure 5* shows the one-year re-arrest rates of Illinois and six other states.

Figure 5
Comparisons of one-year re-arrest rates in seven states



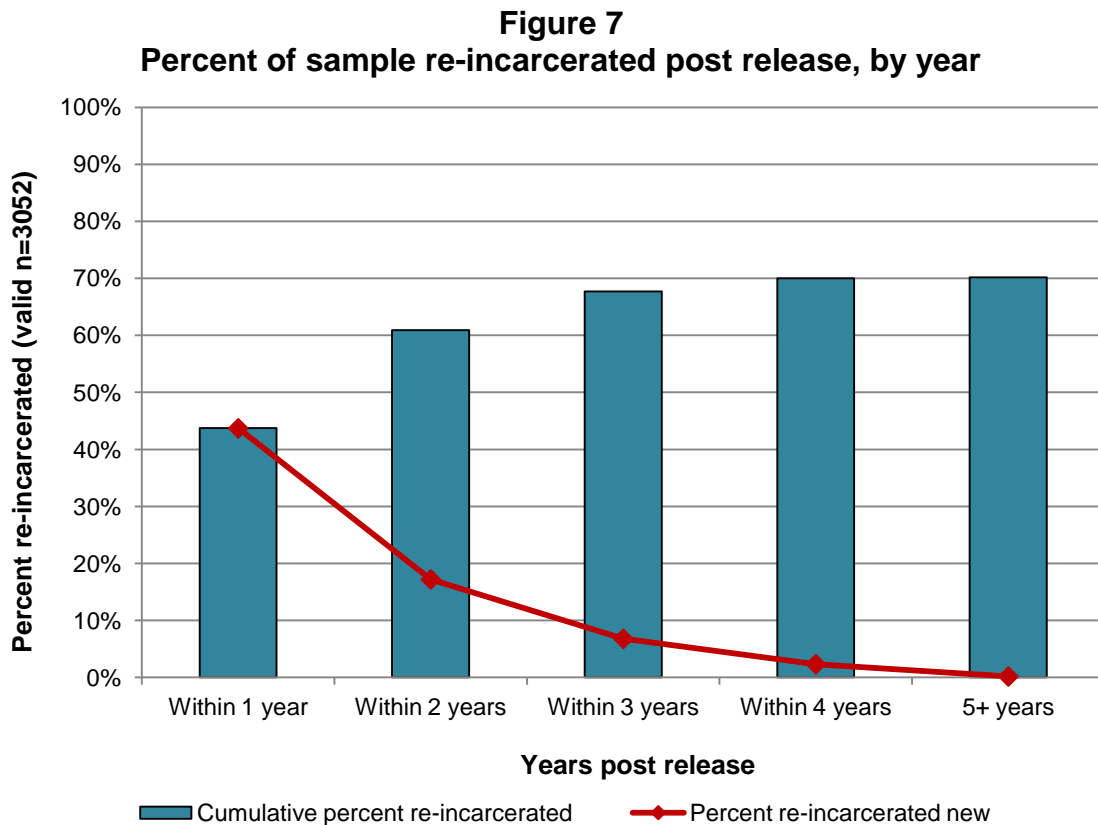
Two-year re-arrest rates in Illinois were 77 percent. The re-arrest rates for California (76 percent), Maryland (72 percent), and Virginia (72 percent) were similar, while New York (66 percent), North Carolina (63 percent), and Texas (66 percent) reported lower rates (Harris, Lockwood, & Mengers, 2009). *Figure 6* provides a comparison of two-year re-arrest rates of the seven states.

Figure 6
Comparison of two-year re-arrest rates in seven states



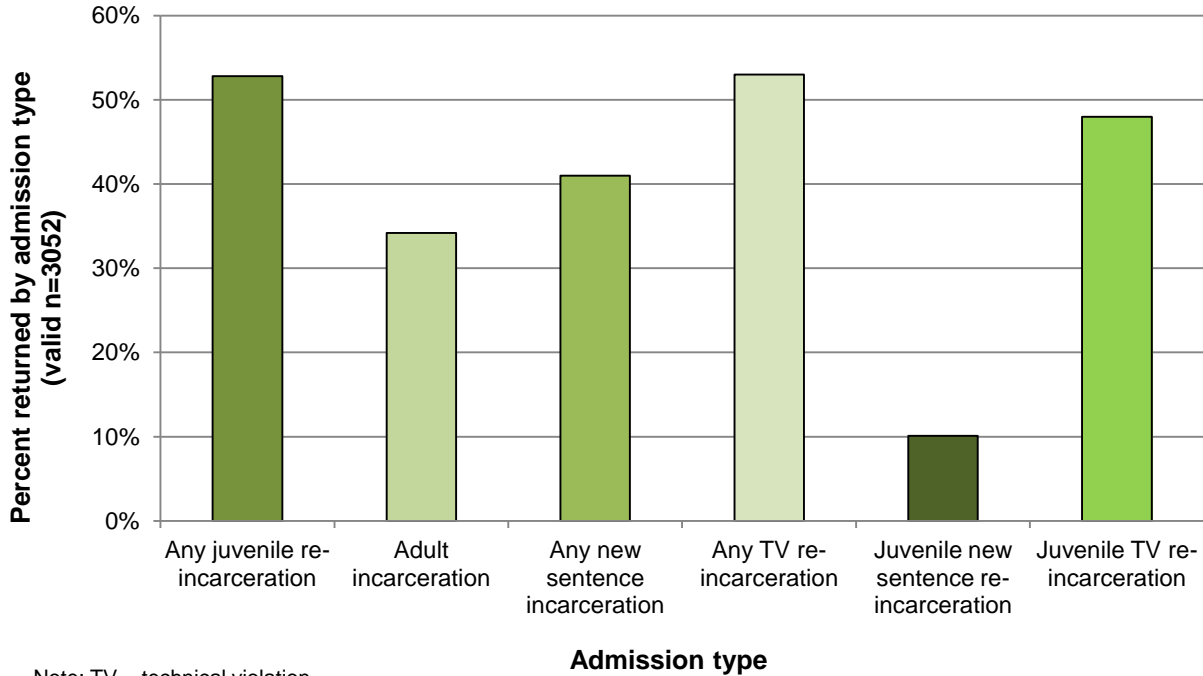
Re-incarceration

Re-incarceration data were examined through state fiscal year 2009, the most recent year available for examination at the time of the study. Of the 3,052 youth in the sample, 70 percent returned to prison between their date of release and June 30, 2009 (n=2,142). The length of time between when youth were released and the end of state fiscal year 2009 varied for each individual and ranged from a minimum of two years to a maximum of five years. Forty-four percent of youth were re-incarcerated within one year of release (n=1,334), 17 percent during the second year (n=525), 7 percent in the third year (n=207), 2 percent during the fourth year (n=71), and less than one percent were re-incarcerated for the first time five or more years after release (n=5). *Figure 7* shows the cumulative post-release incarceration rates.



Many youth experienced multiple types of re-incarceration. Fifty-three percent were returned to juvenile facilities (n=1,612), while 34 percent were incarcerated as adults, either in an adult IDOC facility or in an IDJJ facility due to a conviction in criminal court (n=1,045). About 41 percent of youth were re-incarcerated for a new sentence as either or adults or juveniles (n=1,251) and 53 percent of youth were re-incarcerated for technical violations (n=1,619). *Figure 8* shows re-incarceration rates by admission type.

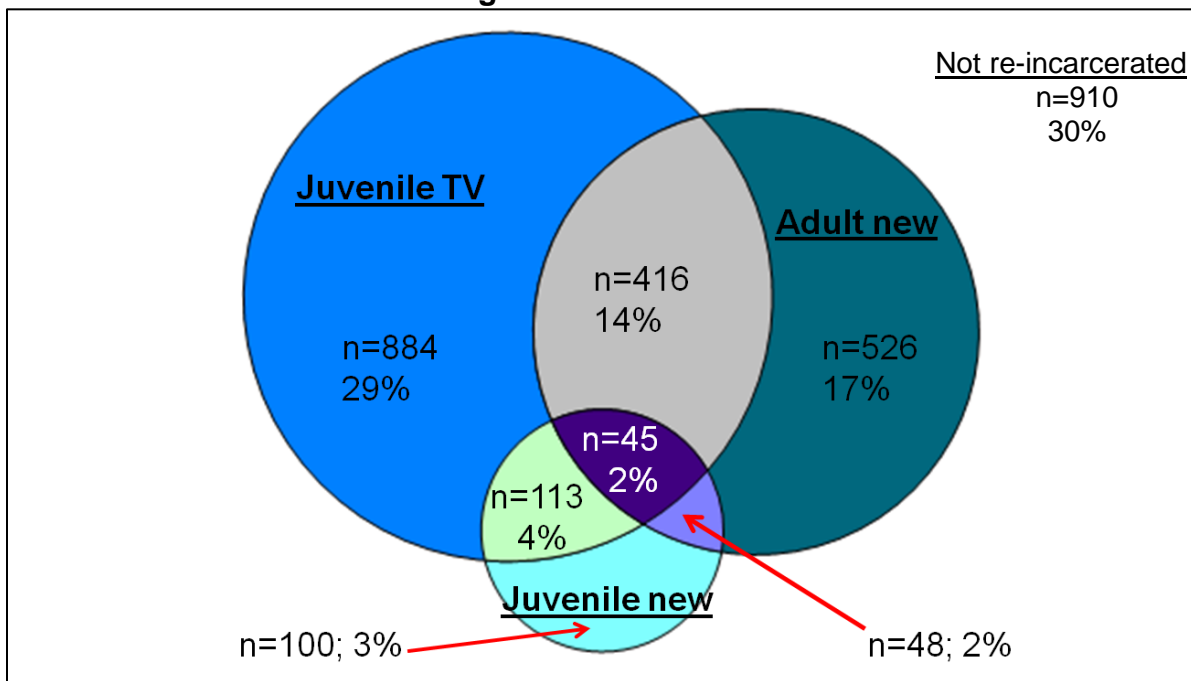
Figure 8
Re-incarceration by admission type



It is also informative to examine re-incarcerations as mutually exclusive groups, exploring the combinations of different types of returns youth experienced. Slightly less than half the youth in the sample only experienced one type of re-incarceration (49 percent, n=1,510). Twenty-nine percent of youth in the sample only were re-incarcerated for technical violations of juvenile parole conditions (n=884) while 3 percent of the sample only were returned as juveniles for new sentences (n=100). Seventeen percent were only re-incarcerated as adults for new sentences (n=526).

The remaining 51 percent of youth experienced multiple types of returns (n=1,542). Two percent were returned for both juvenile and adult new sentences (n=48), 4 percent were returned for new juvenile sentences and technical violations of juvenile parole. Fourteen percent experienced both technical violation returns as well as returns as adults for a new sentence (n=416), while 2 percent experienced returns as juveniles for technical violations, returns as juveniles for a new sentence, and returns as an adult for a new sentence (n=45). *Figure 9* provides a diagram of the returns as mutually exclusive groups.

Figure 9
Venn diagram of re-incarcerations



Note: TV=technical violation

Re-incarceration by offense type

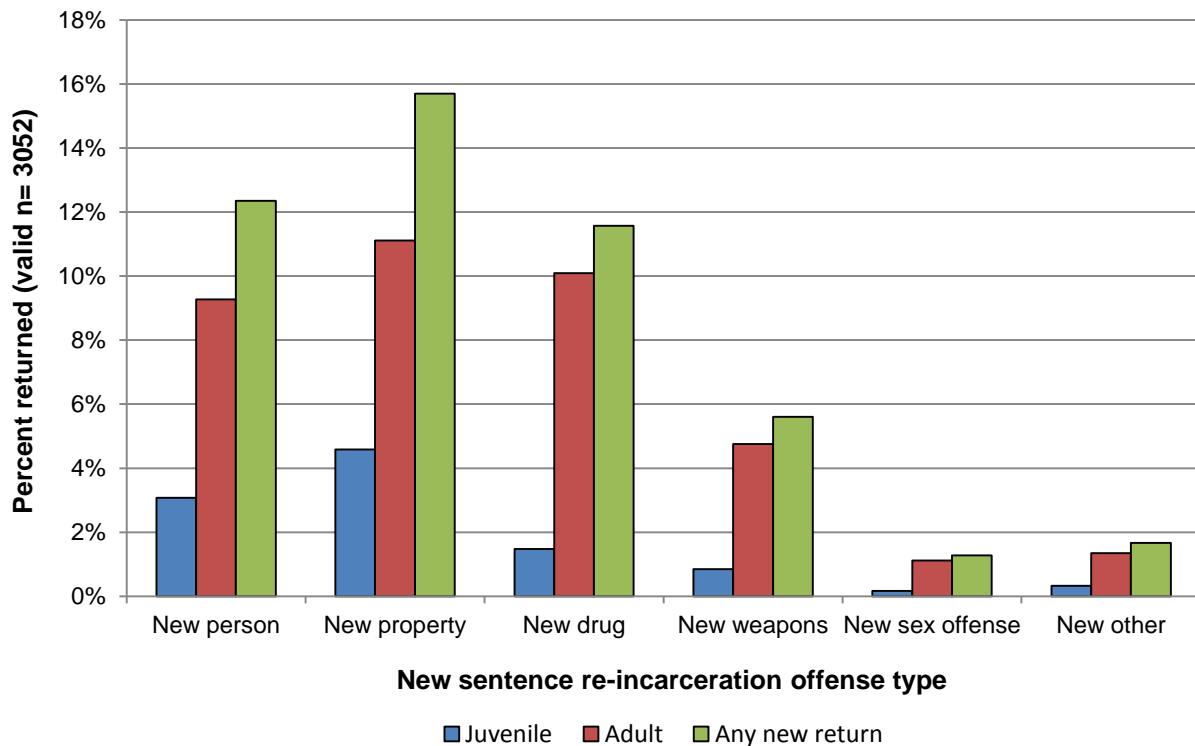
Examining what types of offenses youth are re-incarcerated for can help better understand their offending behaviors. However, since some youth have multiple re-incarcerations, they may be included in more than one offense group displayed in *Table 12*. For example, if a youth were re-incarcerated once for a property offense and another time for a drug offense, the youth would be counted once in property offenses and once in drug offenses. If a youth were re-incarcerated three times for property offenses, the youth would only be counted once in property offense. Re-incarcerations for new sentences occurred for 41 of the sample, and re-incarceration for property offenses were the most common. Sixteen percent of youth in the sample were re-incarcerated for property offenses (n=479). *Table 12* provides detailed information on new sentence returns by offense type.

Table 12
New sentence re-incarcerations by offense type

Offense type	Juvenile re-incarceration		Adult re-incarceration		Either juvenile or adult re-incarceration	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Offense against a person	94	3.1%	283	9.3%	377	12.4%
Property offense	140	4.6%	339	11.1%	479	15.7%
Drug offense	54	1.5%	308	10.1%	353	11.6%
Weapons offense	26	0.9%	145	4.8%	171	5.6%
Sex offense	5	0.2%	34	1.1%	39	1.3%
Other offense	10	0.3%	41	1.3%	51	1.7%
Total new sentence returns	307	10.1%	1047	34.0%	1251	41.0%

Eleven percent of youth were re-incarcerated as adults for a new property offense (n=339) and 5 percent were re-incarcerated as juveniles for new property offenses (n=140). The second most common new re-incarceration sentence was for offenses against a person (12 percent, n=377). Nine percent of youth were returned as adults for an offense against a person (n=283) while 3 percent of youth were returned as juveniles for an offense against a person (n=94). Drug offenses were the third most common cause of new sentence re-incarceration at 12 percent (n=353). Ten percent of youth were re-incarcerated as adults for drug offenses (n=308) and 2 percent were returned as juveniles for drug offenses (n=45). *Figure 10* shows new sentence re-incarcerations by offense type.

Figure 10
New sentence re-incarcerations by offense type



First re-incarceration within two years

Youth in the sample were released between FY05 and FY07. While arrest records are available in real time, the most recent year IDJJ data were available for this study was FY09, providing a follow-up period for re-incarceration between two to four years, varying by the date of release. Combining re-incarceration data with varying time periods can potentially confound results, therefore in addition to all years, this study also examined re-incarcerations within the first two years (the minimum follow-up period).

Of the 3,052 youth in the sample, 61 percent were returned to prison within two years (n=1,859). For 49 percent of the sample, the first re-incarceration was as a juvenile (n=1,482) while for 12 percent the first re-incarceration was as an adult (n=377). The majority of first re-incarcerations

as juveniles (n=1,482) were for technical violations of parole (81 percent, n=1198). The remaining 19 percent of juvenile first re-incarcerations were for new offenses (n=284).

Overall, 36 percent of all youth returned to correctional facilities within two years were for new offenses (n=661), while 64 percent were returned for technical violations (n=1,198). *Table 13* provides the return rates by type within two years after release.

Table 13
First re-incarceration within two years, by re-incarceration type

Re-incarceration type	n	Percent of all youth (n=3,052)	Percent of all returns (n=1,859)
Not returned within two years	1,193	39.1%	-
First re-incarceration as juvenile	1,482	48.6%	79.7%
First re-incarceration as adult	377	12.4%	20.3%
First re-incarceration for a new offense	661	21.7%	35.6%
First re-incarceration for a technical violation	1,198	39.3%	64.4%
First re-incarceration for a juvenile new offense	284	9.4%	15.3%

Conclusion

Overall, youth released from IDJJ facilities after serving a court-imposed sentence in 2005 through 2007 were predominantly male, and more than half were black. The average age of released youth was 16.5 years old, and while the majority had completed grade school, only 40 percent had completed some high school. Most youth released had been admitted for non-violent offenses, most commonly property offenses, followed by offenses against a person.

About half of youth released had been initially admitted for offenses that were Class 3 and 4 felonies or misdemeanors and the majority of youth were last assessed at a medium security level prior to their release. The majority of youth were released from IYC St. Charles or IYC Harrisburg. Youth in the sample had been arrested prior to their incarceration an average of five times and had an average of six prior charges. The majority of youth had at least one arrest prior to incarceration for a property offense and a violent offense.

Youth incarcerated for Class 4 felony offenses had the highest average number of prior arrests and were the most likely to have been arrested for a felony offense prior to their incarcerations. Further, those incarcerated for drug offenses were the most likely to have prior arrests and prior felony arrests and sex offenders were the least likely to have prior arrests. The number of youth

in the sample that had been previously incarcerated was low (21 percent) and the majority of those youth had only one prior incarceration. The most common conviction behind prior incarceration was for felony property offenses.

The majority of youth in the sample were re-arrested within five years of release (91 percent). Sixty percent were re-arrested within one year of release, 77 percent within two years of release, and 86 percent were re-arrested within three years of release. Illinois' re-arrest rates were similar to those found by other states, which typically reported an average of 70 percent re-arrested within two years.

Certain characteristics were correlated with three year re-arrest rates: age, length of stay, criminal history, race, and gender. However, these correlations were generally weak and statistical significance may be influenced by sample size. Those with more extensive criminal histories (more prior arrests) were more likely to be re-arrested within three years. Drug offenders had the highest re-arrest rates (95 percent) while sex offenders had the lowest (61 percent). Class 4 offenders had the highest re-arrest rates (92 percent) while fewer than half of youth released for first-degree murder were re-arrested (46 percent). Females and youth who completed high school were less likely to be re-arrested within three years (67 percent for each group).

The majority of youth were re-incarcerated by the end of the study period (70 percent). Forty-four percent were returned within one year of release, 61 percent within two years, and 68 percent within three years. Fifty-three percent were returned as juveniles while 34 percent returned as adults to either an IDOC facility or an IDJJ facility from the criminal court.

Forty-one percent were returned for new sentences and 53 percent returned at least once for a technical violation of parole or Mandatory Supervised Release. Youth were least likely to return as juveniles for a new sentence (10 percent), although this was likely affected by their aging out of the juvenile justice system. Forty-eight percent of youth returned to juvenile facilities for technical violations of parole. The majority of first re-incarcerations were for technical violations of parole (64 percent).

Information on juvenile correctional populations in Illinois has not been readily available in the past. This study provides a detailed examination of re-arrest and re-incarceration of youth released from Illinois juvenile correctional facilities. This population has received very little research attention and, consequently, is not well understood. The findings presented are consistent with other states' findings on their juvenile corrections populations. While re-arrest rates were quite high, Illinois re-arrest rates were in-line with many other states and re-incarceration rates were lower—fewer than half were re-incarcerated for new offenses.

Youth in this study were released from IDJJ facilities between July 1, 2004, and June 30, 2007, and were monitored under the adult parole model of IDOC. On July 1, 2006, the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice began operations independent of IDOC. The new department was created to provide age-specific programming, but has been hindered in its ability to do so by funding cuts, staff turnover, and decreasing staffing levels. While some progress has been made despite these difficulties, the youth in this study were monitored under the adult parole model of

IDOC. Two purposes of post-release supervision are to maintain public safety and assist in the re-integration of individuals into society. Youth are developmentally different from adults and have specific needs and rehabilitative goals and juvenile parole models are tailored to these needs (Loughran et al., 2009; Lowenkamp, Latessa, & Smith, 2006). IDJJ developed a plan for comprehensive aftercare and re-entry services for youth released from their facilities. Funding constraints have limited IDJJ in accomplishing this goal and youth in Illinois continue to be supervised by adult parole agents outside of Cook County (Connell, 2010).

Although these recidivism rates are high, this should not be interpreted to mean that IDJJ is failing. Short stays combined with a lack of resources make it difficult for IDJJ to provide the services and programming youth may need. In the current economic climate, IDJJ does not have the resources to and cannot be reasonably expected to affect positive change in these individuals. Further, with high caseloads and few juvenile-specific parole officers, implementation of IDJJ's proposed aftercare program is challenging. While this study was unable to account for programming and services needed and received, other studies have indicated that aftercare programming is crucial to successful community re-entry and reduction in recidivism (Kurlychek & Kempinen, 2006). As more information becomes available about incarcerated youth in Illinois, and as IDJJ works towards implementation of its aftercare system, the state will be better positioned to address the underlying causes of recidivism.

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Appendix A: Violent offenses

The following is a list of offenses categorized as violent according to the Rights of Crime Victims and Witnesses Act which defines a violent offense as any felony in which force or threat of force was used against the victim [725 ILCS 120/et seq.].

Description of offense	Statute
Solicitation for murder	720 ILCS 5/8-1
First degree murder	720 ILCS 5/9
Homicide of unborn child	720 ILCS 5/9-1.2
Second degree murder	720 ILCS 5/9-2
Involuntary manslaughter of unborn child	720 ILCS 5/9-2.1
Involuntary manslaughter or reckless homicide	720 ILCS 5/9-3
Involuntary manslaughter or reckless homicide of unborn child	720 ILCS 5/9-3.2
Drug induced homicide	720 ILCS 5/9-3.3
Concealment of homicidal death	720 ILCS 5/9-3.4
Kidnapping	720 ILCS 5/10-1
Aggravated kidnapping	720 ILCS 5/10-2
Unlawful restraint	720 ILCS 5/10-3
Aggravated unlawful restraint	720 ILCS 5/10-3.1
Forcible detention	720 ILCS 5/10-4
Child abduction	720 ILCS 5/10-5
Trafficking persons	720 ILCS 5/10-9
Indecent solicitation of a child	720 ILCS 5/11-6
Indecent solicitation of an adult	720 ILCS 5/11-6.5
Solicitation to meet a child	720 ILCS 5/11-6.6
Sexual exploitation of a child	720 ILCS 5/11-9.1
Custodial sexual misconduct	720 ILCS 5/11-9.2
Sexual misconduct with a disabled person	720 ILCS 5/11-9.5
Child pornography	720 ILCS 5/11-20.1
Aggravated child pornography	720 ILCS 5/11-20.3
Assault	720 ILCS 5/12-1
Aggravated assault	720 ILCS 5/12-2
Vehicular endangerment	720 ILCS 5/12-2.5
Battery	720 ILCS 5/12-3
Battery of an unborn child	720 ILCS 5/12-3.1
Domestic battery	720 ILCS 5/12-3.2
Aggravated domestic battery	720 ILCS 5/12-3.3
Aggravated battery	720 ILCS 5/12-4
Heinous battery	720 ILCS 5/12-4.1
Aggravated battery with a firearm	720 ILCS 5/12-4.2
Aggravated battery with a machine gun or silencer	720 ILCS 5/12-4.2-5
Aggravated battery of a child	720 ILCS 5/12-4.3
Aggravated battery of an unborn child	720 ILCS 5/12-4.4

Description of offense	Statute
Tampering with food drugs or cosmetics	720 ILCS 5/12-4.5
Aggravated battery of a senior citizen	720 ILCS 5/12-4.6
Drug induced infliction of great bodily harm	720 ILCS 5/12-4.7
Infected domestic animals	720 ILCS 5/12-4.8
Drug-induced infliction of aggravated battery to a child athlete	720 ILCS 5/12-4.9
Reckless conduct	720 ILCS 5/12-5-A
Intimidation	720 ILCS 5/12-6
Compelling organization membership of persons	720 ILCS 5/12-6.1
Aggravated intimidation	720 ILCS 5/12-6.2
Interfering with report of domestic violence	720 ILCS 5/12-6.3
Criminal street gang recruitment	720 ILCS 5/12-6.4
Compelling confession by force or threat	720 ILCS 5/12-7
Hate crime	720 ILCS 5/12-7.1
Educational intimidation	720 ILCS 5/12-7.2
Stalking	720 ILCS 5/12-7.3
Aggravated stalking	720 ILCS 5/12-7.4
Cyber stalking	720 ILCS 5/12-7.5
Cross-burning	720 ILCS 5/12-7.6
Threatening public officials	720 ILCS 5/12-9
Home invasion	720 ILCS 5/12-11
Vehicular invasion	720 ILCS 5/12-11.1
Criminal sexual assault	720 ILCS 5/12-13
Aggravated criminal sexual assault	720 ILCS 5/12-14
Predatory criminal sexual assault of a child	720 ILCS 5/12-14.1
Criminal sexual abuse	720 ILCS 5/12-15
Aggravated criminal sexual abuse	720 ILCS 5/12-16
Criminal transmission of HIV	720 ILCS 5/12-16.2
Criminal abuse or neglect of an elderly person or person with disability	720 ILCS 5/12-21
Child abandonment	720 ILCS 5/12-21.5
Endangering the life or health of a child	720 ILCS 5/12-21.6
Violation of an order of protection	720 ILCS 5/12-30
Inducement to commit suicide	720 ILCS 5/12-31
Ritual mutilation	720 ILCS 5/12-32
Ritualized abuse of a child	720 ILCS 5/12-33
Female genital mutilation	720 ILCS 5/12-34
Robbery	720 ILCS 5/18-1
Armed robbery	720 ILCS 5/18-2
Vehicular hijacking	720 ILCS 5/18-3
Aggravated vehicular hijacking	720 ILCS 5/18-4
Aggravated robbery	720 ILCS 5/18-5
Arson	720 ILCS 5/20-1
Aggravated arson	720 ILCS 5/20-1.1

Description of offense	Statute
Residential arson	720 <i>ILCS</i> 5/20-1.2
Place of worship arson	720 <i>ILCS</i> 5/20-1.3
Aggravated DUI with bodily injury	625 <i>ILCS</i> 5/11-501-D-1-C
	625 <i>ILCS</i> 5/11-501-D-1-E
	625 <i>ILCS</i> 5/11-501-D-1-F
	625 <i>ILCS</i> 5/11-501-D-1-J
Aggravated discharge of a firearm	720 <i>ILCS</i> 5/24-1.2



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