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## The Lancaster County Juvenile Reentry Project

Anne M. Hobbs

University of Nebraska at Omaha, ahobbs@unomaha.edu

Ryan E. Spohn

University of Nebraska at Omaha, rspohn@unomaha.edu

Jenna Strawhun

Timbre Wulf-Ludden

Johanna Peterson

*See next page for additional authors*

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**Authors**

Anne M. Hobbs, Ryan E. Spohn, Jenna Strawhun, Timbre Wulf-Ludden, Johanna Peterson, and Sommer Fousek



# The Lancaster County Juvenile Reentry Project

**Final Report  
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**Prepared by:**  
Juvenile Justice Institute  
University of Nebraska Omaha  
Anne Hobbs, JD, PhD, Director  
Ryan Spohn, PhD  
Jenna Strawhun  
Timbre Wulf-Ludden  
Johanna Peterson  
Sommer Fousek

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
Omaha



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## Executive Summary

In order to establish a best practice model for juveniles reentering the community, Lancaster County brought multiple agencies together in 2012 and began to develop a systematic juvenile reentry approach, which became known as the “Reentry Project.” By January 2013, Lancaster County had contracted with multiple agencies to ensure this new approach was used when youth were returning to the community.

From January 1 to December 31, 2013, 119 youth were served under the Lancaster County Reentry Project. Of these, 40 (33.6%) were young women who were returning from YRTC - Geneva and 79 (66.4%) were young men returning from YRTC - Kearney. The majority were youth of color (55.7%), which is consistent with research that demonstrates minority overrepresentation in detention facilities in Nebraska. Youth were a little older than 16 and a half when they entered the Reentry Program.

All of the youth served under this grant had experienced a placement outside of their homes prior to being involved in this project. On average, youth were 12.7 years of age when they were placed outside the home. On average, youth in this sample were placed out of their homes 8.8 times prior to their involvement in the Reentry Project, including stays at YRTC. This does not include the number of times they were placed back with their families or went on run.

UNO’s Juvenile Justice Institute was hired to evaluate the success of the program. To examine overall effectiveness of the Reentry Project, the stakeholder agreed to measure revocations (youth sent back to the facility after having been released and served under the program) and recidivism (new law violations filed after participating in the program).

During CY2013, a total of 71 youth were released from a YRTC and reentered Lancaster County. A youth was considered revoked when he or she had parole revoked after leaving YRTC and was referred under this grant. Of the 71 youth released in 2013, 9 youth, or 12.7%, were subsequently revoked. However, this should be interpreted with caution as some youth were returned to the facility (recommitted) and then not revoked.

Another important aspect of successful reentry is refraining from new law violations. This was examined by searching a released youth’s name in JUSTICE to see if the

County Attorney had filed charges on any new law violation. Of the 71 youth released in 2013, 18.3% had a subsequent legal charge filed by the County Attorney, while 81.7% (58 youth) had not had a subsequent new filing.

These early results should be interpreted as preliminary, as a relatively small number of youth were served by the different interventions and the interventions overlapped. In the final evaluation, the Juvenile Justice Institute will use a comparison group of youth who did not receive any of the reentry services.



# Introduction

In 2011 Lancaster County received a planning grant under the Second Chance Act administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Using these funds, they examined the limited reentry services available to juveniles who return to Lancaster County after a stay in a Nebraska Youth Rehabilitation Treatment Center. The planning grant allowed Lancaster County to convene a team and lay the groundwork for a vision of which reentry services should be available in the county, not just for youth in detention-type settings, but for *all* youth in out-of-home placements.

The **vision** of the Lancaster County Reentry Initiative is for every youth with delinquent behaviors who is released from out-of-home placement to have access to the services, supports, education, and resources they need to succeed in the community.

The **mission** of the Lancaster County Reentry Initiative is to **reduce recidivism, promote public safety, and rebuild community relationships by implementing a seamless plan of coordinated services and supervision developed for each youth.** Lancaster County focused its efforts on youth involved in the juvenile justice system who are reentering the community after a stay in one of the Nebraska Youth Rehabilitation Treatment Centers (YRTC). In October 2012, they were one of four sites nationwide to receive an Office of Juvenile Justice Second Chance Act Implementation grant. These funds allowed the reentry team to begin designing and implementing reentry strategies for youth.

A review of reentry literature reveals there are specific aspects to successfully reintegrating youthful offenders who have been detained in a juvenile detention or rehabilitation center. Altschuler (2013) identified key dimensions of successfully reintegrating youth back into their communities. These include: 1) developing a well-trained group of reentry professionals; 2) creating an overarching case-management system; 3) using research-driven interventions and services; 4) identifying or developing a supportive continuum of reentry services; and 5) focusing on multi-agency collaboration.

The Lancaster County Reentry team met regularly with community stakeholders throughout 2011-2012 to ensure that the community experts agreed on services that should be provided. After thoughtful deliberation, the following strategies were identified as key components to successful reentry for juvenile offenders:

1. Two transition specialists were hired through The HUB. The specialists work closely with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, including juvenile services case workers and juvenile probation officers. The goal of these positions is to ensure that youth have a reentry plan in place *before* they return to their home communities.
2. An education specialist was hired through Lincoln Public Schools to assist an already existing position. The goal of the education specialist is to ensure there is an education plan and school placement available as the youth transitions back. Ideally, youth complete all paperwork during furlough so they can be back in class within a day or two of return. The education specialists also provide ongoing monitoring to determine whether the youth is attending classes and/or is struggling with reentry to the Lincoln Public Schools System.
3. Mentorship was also identified as an important component of the reentry process. Mentors are available through the University of Nebraska and Heartland Big Brothers Big Sisters. Youth who indicate a desire to have a mentor are matched with an individual who provides ongoing support across multiple dimensions (social, academic, employment). The goal of the mentoring program is to assist with the youth's transition back to the community by supporting educational needs and employment skills, as well as building healthy relationships.
4. A family advocate was contracted through Families Inspiring Families. This agency provides assistance from a parent who has had a child committed to a Nebraska YRTC. The goal of the family advocate is to reach out to families

and provide support and guidance to parents/guardians of youth transitioning back to Lancaster County.

5. Additional case-specific services were contracted by Lancaster County to help youth successfully transition back to the community, including:
  1. Project Hire – employment readiness services for youth;
  2. GED Services – financial assistance and preparation for the GED; and
  3. Crisis Response – crisis intervention to families on an as-needed basis to keep youth at home or in the community.

## Research Questions

The Lancaster County Reentry Project contracted with the University of Nebraska Omaha’s Juvenile Justice Institute (JJI) to evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts. Specifically, the stakeholders wanted to determine whether youth were “successfully reintegrated” and which of the interventions were most effective at reducing recidivism and improving public safety.

We measured “successful reintegration” using multiple outcome variables. Two primary areas of interest were school enrollment/GED completion and gainful employment. As a community, we want youth to return from a facility and engage as productive young people, either as students or through employment. But to achieve these goals, the youth must remain in the community and not return to a rehabilitation center; therefore, we had to first consider recidivism. To measure the youth recidivism rate, we examined revocation of parole and convictions of law violations filed on after the youth was released.

The specific research question related to revocation was:

- I. Which reentry strategy, or combination thereof, is most effective in preventing a youth from having the conditions of liberty revoked and causing the youth to return to YRTC?

We then examined new law violations by searching a released youth’s name in JUSTICE. The JUSTICE system allows for online access to most of the Nebraska State Trial Court’s case information. We examined new law violations, first counting *all*

new law violations (except traffic) and secondly, violations involving more serious crimes (misdemeanor II or above in adult court, subdivision 1 or above in juvenile court). We counted only convictions/adjudications that occurred within one year of the youth's release from a YRTC.

The specific research question related to new law violations was:

- II. Which reentry strategy, or combination thereof, is most effective in preventing a youth from committing new law violations?

As the Reentry Project developed in Lancaster County, other interesting questions arose. For instance, youth who are "on run" cannot benefit from services, and it became apparent that youth in this population frequently went on run. In addition, it became apparent that youth who violate their conditions of liberty may often be booked into the local detention center prior to revocation. Additional research was completed to determine the frequency with which Lancaster County utilized detention.

## **Methodology**

We utilized a variety of analytical tools to determine whether youth were more likely to be successful in response to particular reentry interventions. Data were imported into and analyzed with SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Prior to conducting our analysis, we examined each of the variables for accuracy and missing values, as well as whether the variables met the assumptions for multivariate analysis. When combining data from multiple sources, many of the variables were recoded to allow for meaningful analysis.

We approached data analysis using a variety of tools, including:

- **Frequency Distribution:** The number of times the various attributes of a variable are observed. For example, 50% of the sample was male and 50% of the sample was female.
- **Cross Tabs:** Presents the relationship between two variables. For example, comparing the revocation rates of males versus females.
- **ANOVA:** Statistically compares the mean values on a particular variable between two or more groups. For example, this technique would allow one

to statistically compare the average YLS score of youth served by the Reentry Program.

- Regression: this technique allows one to examine a variety of variables (age, race, gender, YLS scores), as well as the reentry interventions employed (education specialists, mentors, Project Hire) to statistically compare how each intervention impacted the outcome variable.

### **Report Format**

The following sections provide detailed information on the various services provided. Each section focuses on a particular intervention and contains a brief literature review, a report of the youth served, and the successes and challenges of implementing the particular service. The later sections focus on outcomes and the broader research questions identified above regarding the overall effectiveness of combined services and recidivism. The concluding sections provide an explanation of legislative changes that impacted the Lancaster County Reentry Project and recommendations for serving youth more effectively in the second year of this project.

## Transition Specialists

The Council for State Governments, among other reentry experts, acknowledge that the first step to developing a reentry initiative is getting the appropriate agencies to the table and eliciting a commitment to work together on a particular aspect of the issue. Altschuler (2013) also identified that multi-agency collaboration is a critical element of successful reentry after detention. However, without coordination, multi-agency involvement can overwhelm the youth and family with contacts and services (Council for State Government, Justice Center, 2013).

Researchers in the field of juvenile justice, mental health, and education have advocated that youth transitioning back to communities require extensive supportive and rehabilitative services (Abrams, Shannon, & Sangalang, 2008). This programming extends well beyond traditional monitoring and check-ins associated with juvenile probation services (Abrams & Snyder, 2010; Anthony et al., 2010). Yet, there is minimal systematic research regarding best practices in juvenile reentry and the most pressing needs that youth face as they re-integrate into their communities (Anthony et al., 2010). Youth may encounter problems such as difficulty securing a job, housing, and transportation, as well as issues upon re-entering school (Abrams et al., 2008); minimal best practice standards lead to underdeveloped intervention and troublesome outcomes for reentry youth (Bullis, Yovanoff, & Havel, 2004).

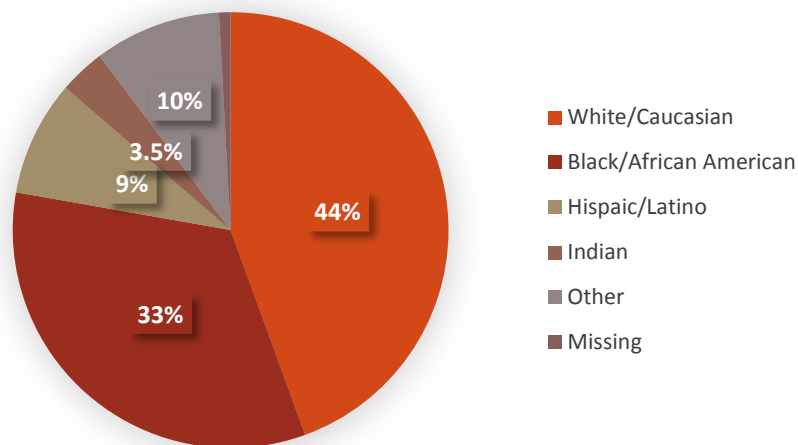
Beginning in 2012, Lancaster County brought multiple agencies together during the planning phase of the Reentry Project. Lancaster County hired an individual to assist in service planning and coordination. The timing of these efforts can be found in the Lancaster County Reentry Matrix (Addendum A).

By January 2013, Lancaster County had contracted with The HUB to hire two transition specialists to oversee youth returning to Lancaster County and assist in managing the continuum of reentry services that would be available to each youth. Originally, the vision was that the transition specialists would be assigned to a youth when the case was referred by DHHS or probation. However, referrals were not always made in a timely fashion. Because the specialists began working with a youth while he or she was still in the YRTC, they often knew of a youth needing services before a referral was made. Consequently, they began working directly with the facilities to ensure that youth had a reentry plan prior to release.

From January 1 to December 31, 2013, 119 youth were served under the Lancaster County Reentry Project. Of these, 40 (33.6%) were young women who were

returning from YRTC – Geneva and 79 (66.4%) were young men returning from YRTC – Kearny. The majority were youth of color (55.7%), which is consistent with research that demonstrates minority overrepresentation in detention facilities in Nebraska (Hobbs, Neeley, Behrens, & Wulf-Ludden, 2012).

**Figure 1: Racial and Ethnic Population Served**



As Figure 1 illustrates, 44% of youth referred to the Reentry Project were white, 33% were Black, 10% were other races, 9% were Hispanic, and 3.5% were Native American.

The ages of youth served ranged from 14 to 19, although 19 year olds were not served under the grant. The average age was 16.7 years old. The mean age for young women was slightly younger (16.5) compared to young men (16.8), but this difference was not statistically significant.

A number of factors can influence whether a youth is able to successfully reintegrate into his or her community. Some of these factors relate to the community, such as whether or not services are available. However, other factors relate directly to the youth’s personal history. As the data allowed, we attempted to control for some of these factors when we examined the effectiveness of the reentry intervention.

### **Age First Removed**

The age a youth is first placed outside the home and the number of placements a youth has may be predictors of how successful the youth will be once he or she tries to reintegrate into the community. All of the youth served under this grant had experienced a prior out-of-home placement. On average, youth were 12.7 years of age when they were placed outside the home.

### **Type of Placement**

For 45 youth (37.8% of the youth served), the Lancaster County Detention Center was their first placement outside the home. Only two youth (1.7%) had no prior stays in detention before being sent to YRTC. Of those who had gone to detention, the frequency ranged from 1 to 11 placements. On average, youth had gone to the Lancaster County Detention Center 2.96 times prior to being committed to YRTC.

### **Number of Prior Placements**

When we consider all types of out-of-home placement, the overall number ranged from 1 to 30 prior placements. On average, youth in this sample were placed out of their homes 8.8 times, including stays at YRTC. This does not include the number of times they were placed back with their families or went on run.

Although females experienced a slightly higher number of out-of-home placements (9.9 compared to 8.3 for males), this was not statistically significant. There was almost no difference for minority youth when compared to white youth (8.9 compared to 8.8).

Females had a higher number of prior detentions before being committed to YRTC – Geneva (3.4) compared to males' prior detentions (2.8), but again this was not statistically significant.

Although there was no significant difference between detention stays and mean out-of-home placements by program, youth served through BBBS had the highest average out-of-home placements (10.4), compared to the average number of placements for youth without a BBBS mentor (8.6).

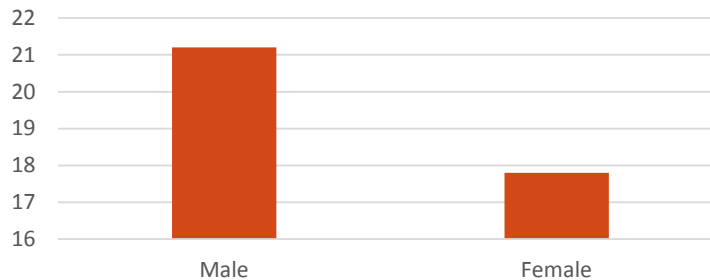


## YLS Score

Based on prior research, youth who score higher on the YLS are more likely to commit a new law violation, and therefore may be more likely to have their probation or parole revoked (Betchel, Lowenkamp, & Latessa, 2007).

Youth reentering Lancaster County from a YRTC had an average score of 20 on their most recent YLS. As Figure 2 illustrates, males had a significantly higher YLS score (21.2) compared to females (17.8).

**Figure 2. YLS Score By Gender**



Throughout the Reentry Project, youth served spent more time with the transition specialists than with any other reentry service provider. On average, the transition specialists traveled to the YRTC facilities five times each month. The two specialists spent varying amounts of time working directly with the youth who were transitioning out, ranging from 20 to 40 hours per week in direct face-to-face or phone contact with youth.

The transition specialists not only met and spoke with youth in the facilities, they also assisted in transporting youth to various appointments, including childbirth classes, doctor appointments, and employment-related activities.

## Education Specialists

Educational concerns for youth reentering the public schools include discontinued or disrupted educational instruction, special education needs related to academics and behavior, and the need for re-engagement and attachment with school to prevent recidivism and school dropout (Bullis et al., 2004). Many adolescents who are incarcerated receive some sort of special education or social skills services prior to or while in treatment, although service delivery (e.g., Individualized Education Plans) is often inconsistent in facilities and fails to continue once youth return to school (Anthony et al., 2010). The exact prevalence of system-involved youth with special education needs is unclear, although recent reports suggest that approximately one-third of incarcerated youth exhibit learning and behavioral problems (Quinn, Rutherford, Leone, Osher, & Poirier, 2005). Yet, only a portion of those youth may be receiving special education services (Unruh, Waintrup, Canter, & Smith, 2009). Unfortunately, due to the punitive nature of most correctional facilities coupled with the need for youth to receive special education services through IDEA, educational service delivery for youth inside and outside of detention facilities can be complex and problematic (Griller-Clark, Mathur, & Holding, 2011).

Youth with disabilities, particularly learning disabilities, are already less likely to be engaged with school (Bullis et al., 2004) and disruption in the youth's school environment leads to problems with continuity of educational services (Anthony et al., 2010). After failing to achieve success in traditional schools, many youth may return to an alternative school setting in order to receive more intensive behavioral services or to streamline the graduation process (Unruh et al., 2009). Moreover, many youth return to schools that they associate with previous negative experiences (Baltodano et al., 2005), which further underscores the need for support and guidance during school reentry. Interagency collaboration and coordinated support across educational, mental health, child welfare, and juvenile justice domains is recommended, although may be difficult in practice, as each system operates within isolated silos (Anthony et al., 2010).

Collaboration across domains can be created via education specialists. Within a correctional setting, educational specialists work with the youth, family, regular and special education teachers, probation officers, case managers, and any other relevant individuals (Unruh et al., 2009). The education specialists not only help create and implement the adolescent's transition plan based on the youth's strengths and needs, but they also help the youth navigate ancillary services related to education, occupation, and mental health (Griller-Clark & Unruh, 2010) and may

also work with mentors (Hagner et al., 2008). Transition planning should begin as soon as the youth enters the justice system (Baltodano et al., 2005), although navigation of resources traditionally occurs during the first six months after leaving the correctional institution, which is when youth are most likely to recidivate (Unruh et al., 2009). Ideally, transition planning and any adjunct services provided through the education and mental health systems will also help catalyze success for the youth as he or she enters into employment and other adult roles (Hagner et al., 2008).

One recent study reported that youth who were provided access to an education specialist to aid in education services were 64% less likely to recidivate one month following release than youth who had not received the intervention (Griller-Clark et al., 2011). Along with reduced recidivism, research has emphasized that youth working with an education specialist were more likely to be engaged in an educational or vocational setting (i.e., actively enrolled or employed) during the first six months of release (Unruh et al., 2009). These findings implicate the effectiveness of education specialists in offering a continuum of integrated care for youth in transition before, during, and after a youth's release. Education specialists or coordinators may also be effective in connecting youth with other mental health and relevant services, as well as marginally decreasing a youth's likelihood to recidivate (Bouffard & Bergseth, 2008).

A total of seventeen youth (14.3%) were able to graduate while in the YRTC (10 females and 7 males). Other youth transitioning out of the YRTCs were short on the credits needed to graduate. The education specialist's task was to focus on the youth who had not received their high school diplomas; thus, they often ended up working with the youth who faced the toughest academic challenges. For example, on average, students served under the Reentry Project had only 27.7 of the 245 credits needed to graduate from high school.

Youth who are transitioning back to school typically lag behind their peers in other ways. As noted above, they are often short on the credits needed to graduate. This may result in youth who are 17 years old being placed in classes with freshman peers, leading to additional obstacles and setbacks. Some youth may have never consistently attended school, and many have poor study habits. More than a third of the students served (37.5% or 12 youth) were identified as eligible for Special Education through the school district.

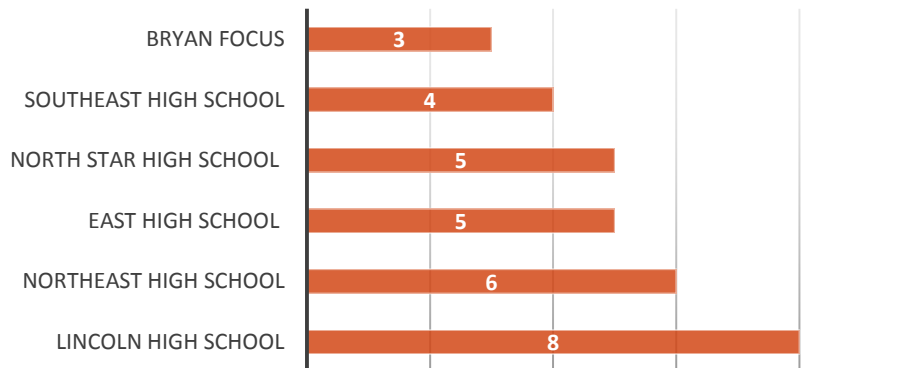
All of these factors conspire to make it exceedingly difficult for youth to return to school and successfully obtain a high school diploma.

Of the 71 youth who have been released from YRTC, roughly 54 had a valid Lincoln Public Schools ID and appeared to be returning back to a school within LPS boundaries. Of the 54 youth with valid IDs, only 31 were served under the grant.

As Figure 3 indicates, youth most often reenter Lincoln High School.

- 8 of the 31 students served under this grant returned to Lincoln High School (26%);
- 6 students returned to Northeast High School (19%);
- 5 students returned to East High School (16%);
- 5 students returned to North Star High School (16%);
- 4 students returned to Southeast High School (13%); and
- 3 students attended Bryan Focus (10%).

**Figure 3. LPS School by Students Reentering**



## Conclusions

All of our conclusions are tentative, given the small sample size. In addition, due to a lack of data, we were unable to determine the number of contacts that each youth had with an education specialist. Data on the number of contacts was complete in only 7 of the files (25 files lacked data on the number of times the education

specialist attempted to contact the youth and family). The average number of contacts for the seven youth was 4.9. For these reasons, we used Lincoln Public Schools as the reference group in our final multivariate analysis.

## Mentors

Mentoring interventions for incarcerated adolescents aim to prevent recidivism by creating a relationship with a caring and trusted adult (Abrams & Snyder, 2010). In particular, the adult seeks to model and reinforce positive behaviors across multiple contexts (e.g., school, home, employment settings, extracurricular activities) (Trupin, 2007). Mentoring is usually associated with low costs and integrating community resources in the form of supportive individuals (Miller, Barnes, Miller, & McKinnon, 2013). Mentoring with system-involved youth is often characterized by engagement, consistency, guidance, positive regard, modeling appropriate behavior, helping youth access additional services, and maintaining a personal connection with youth (Baltodano, Mathur, & Rutherford, 2005). In addition, mentoring approaches traditionally operate within a risk and protective and/or resiliency framework, aiming to predict and address factors that lead to increased recidivism (Abrams & Snyder, 2010).

In an early study of factors predicting resiliency in youth transitioning from corrections, many youth reported that mentors had played a supportive and critical role during their reentry (Todis, Bullis, Waintrup, Schultz, & D'Ambrosio, 2001). In addition, Drake and Barnowski (2006) found that youth who participated in mentoring programs in which they met with a mentor at least once a week were less likely to recidivate following release, although these effects did not hold at 24- and 36-month follow-up periods. Other research has demonstrated that skill training with youth may be a more successful intervention than mentoring when attempting to decrease recidivism. This may be due in part to the contrived nature of some mentoring relationships (Blechman, Maurice, Buecker, & Helberg, 2000) and the fact that relationships characterized by a higher degree of chemistry and connectedness are often longer in duration and more impactful (Hagner, Malloy, Mazzone, & Cormier, 2008; Trupin, 2007). Therefore, mentoring programs need to facilitate a systematic recruitment process that aims to match youth and adults on key variables of interest (Trupin, 2007), particularly in a population that may already experience negative relationships with adults.

Despite the long-term questions regarding the effectiveness of mentoring, youth identify that mentoring is an important element in fostering their own successful transitions, suggesting that youth value supportive mentoring relationships (Baltodano et al., 2005; Hagner et al., 2008). A recent study designed to unpack the active ingredients in mentoring programs for incarcerated youth reported that mentoring interventions that are longer in duration and involve more frequent

contact between the youth and mentor are more successful. Moreover, programs that implement formal mentoring training consistent with evidence-based practices were also found to be more effective (Miller et al., 2013). Thus, further investigation into the research and logistics regarding mentoring and juvenile justice emphasizes the importance of consistent and frequent communication with mentors, as well as consideration of the perceived strength of the mentoring relationship. Therefore, we focused on these best practices while testing the effectiveness of mentoring.

As a part of the Second Chance Act Grant, a total of 48 youth were paired with a mentor under the Reentry Project (46.2% of all referrals). Big Brothers Big Sisters matched 18 youth with a “Big.” The University of Nebraska matched 30 youth with a college student enrolled in a two-semester course entitled Juvenile Reentry (in the Facility and in the Community). Mentoring services were available by referral, but were considered voluntary and could be declined.

### **Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS)**

The average BBBS mentor was 28.4 years old. Roughly 56% of BBBS mentors were male, while 44% were female. The racial and ethnic breakdown of BBBS mentors was 78% white (14 mentors), 11% Asian (2 mentors), 6% black (1 mentor), and 6% Hispanic (1 mentor). Ten of the 18 matches are now closed. Reasons for closure include: 3 youth ran away, 2 youth moved, 1 youth had time constraints, 2 youth stopped contacting the Big and BBBS, 1 adult volunteer stated that she did not have adequate time to meet with the youth, and 1 youth was placed at Boystown. The average length of mentorship for closed matches was 90.6 days. The number of meetings the mentor had with the youth once released ranged from 1 to 13 meetings and the time spent with the youth each meeting ranged from less than an hour (30 minutes) to 5 hours.

### **University of Nebraska Lincoln (UNL)**

There were 29 UNL mentors matched with 30 reentry youth.<sup>1</sup> The average UNL mentor was 21.3 years old. Roughly 45% of UNL mentors were male, while 55% were female. The racial and ethnic breakdown of UNL mentors was roughly 72% (21 mentors) white, 10% Hispanic (3 mentors), and 3.3% Middle Eastern (1 mentor). There were also 14% (4 mentors) who did not report a race or ethnicity.

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<sup>1</sup> One mentor had 2 mentees that were included under this grant. There were 29 total mentors to grant youth and 30 youth under the grant who had a mentor through UNL.

Ninety percent (27/30) of UNL matches remain open at the time of this report. Of the 3 cases that closed, one was due to the student not following through. In the remaining 2 cases, the student was hired by DHHS as a caseworker and could no longer continue as a mentor due to conflict of interest. The average match length for a UNL mentor was 189.5 days.

Mentors had anywhere between 2 and 16 face-to-face meetings with youth at the time of this report.<sup>2</sup> The mentors met with their mentees an average of 7 times. UNL mentors spent anywhere from 5 to 57 hours total with their mentees, with an average of 17 hours spent together. It is important to note that these hours only capture face-to-face contact with the youth and do not take into account any other type of communication, including letters and phone calls. Additionally, many of these matches are new and are still active, which means these numbers may not be an accurate portrayal of the current status of these mentoring relationships.

### **Perception Survey**

In addition to the main quantitative findings, we were interested in examining mentoring from the perspective of the mentor. How mentors perceive juvenile delinquents may affect their relationships with mentees. Also, how a mentor's perceptions change over time might be a reflection of mentoring relationship quality. In order to test this, we used an adaptation of a survey used to gauge perceptions of inmates and changed the questions to represent attitudes of juvenile delinquents and delinquent activity (Salazar, 2012). Students in the Fall 2013 UNL mentoring class participated in this online survey before being matched with a mentee. Students were then asked to complete the survey again later in the semester to track how their perceptions of juvenile delinquents may have changed.

Scales in the perception survey measure a mentor's beliefs about juvenile delinquents in general, their lives in a correctional institution, and their prospects after reentry. Overall, 23 students took the survey once, while 8 students took the survey both times, allowing us to see how their perceptions changed over time. Below are some selected responses from the pre-administration of the Perceptions Survey. The vast majority of mentors believed that youth can be rehabilitated and should be given an opportunity to change their criminal behaviors. Mentors were

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<sup>1</sup> Total mentor hours and face-to-face meeting information was not available for all mentees matched with UNL students (7 were unavailable, leaving information for 23 out of the 30 matches). Total hours were rounded to the nearest hour for analysis.



somewhat more undecided in their perceptions of whether youth will commit new crimes and whether youth made mistakes and were simply being kids.

*I believe juvenile delinquents:*

| Question  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree   | Neutral     | Agree       | Strongly Agree |
|---|-------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| Can be rehabilitated  | 0                 | 0          | 1<br>4.2%   | 12<br>50%   | 11<br>45.8%    |
| Will commit a crime after their release from the facility   | 0                 | 5<br>20.8% | 12<br>50.0% | 7<br>29.2%  | 0              |
| Should be given an opportunity to change criminal behaviors | 0                 | 0          | 0           | 11<br>45.8% | 13<br>54.2%    |
| Made a mistake and are simply being “kids”                  | 2<br>8.3%         | 5<br>20.8% | 15<br>62.5% | 2<br>8.3%   | 0              |

Regarding life in a correctional facility, mentors had mixed opinions as to whether the facility has a positive impact on a juvenile’s behavior. Mentors tended to disagree that the facility creates consequences that juveniles will face after release. Mentors tended to agree that the facility provides useful skills that will help the juvenile upon release. Finally, mentors tended to be neutral as to whether the facility leads to emotional problems for the juvenile.

*A juvenile’s life in a correctional facility:*

| Question   | Strongly Disagree | Disagree    | Neutral     | Agree       | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| Has an overall positive impact on their behavior                                       | 1<br>4.2%         | 3<br>12.5%  | 11<br>45.8% | 8<br>33.3%  | 1<br>4.2%      |
| Creates consequences that they will face once released from custody                    | 1<br>4.2%         | 11<br>45.8% | 7<br>29.2%  | 5<br>20.8%  | 0              |
| Provides useful skills that help the juvenile once they are released from the facility | 0                 | 0           | 6<br>25.0%  | 16<br>66.7% | 2<br>8.3%      |
| Leads to emotional problems for the juvenile   | 0                 | 8<br>33.3%  | 11<br>45.8% | 5<br>20.8%  | 0              |

Mentors were asked whether or not juveniles face difficulties upon being released from the facility. Most mentors believed the youth would face challenges when

returning to school. Mentors were more neutral in their perceptions that juveniles would face challenges in trying to find a job. Most mentors agreed that juveniles would face challenges when trying to find a good peer group. Finally, mentors tended to be neutral in their perceptions that the juveniles would face challenges when returning to their families.

*After being released from the facility:*

| Question   | Strongly Disagree | Disagree  | Neutral     | Agree       | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| Juveniles are faced with many challenges when returning to school              | 0                 | 0         | 0           | 15<br>65.2% | 8<br>34.8%     |
| Juveniles are faced with many challenges when trying to find a job             | 0                 | 1<br>4.3% | 16<br>69.6% | 6<br>26.1%  | 0              |
| Juveniles are faced with many challenges when trying to find a good peer group | 0                 | 0         | 1<br>4.3%   | 12<br>52.2% | 10<br>43.5%    |
| Juveniles are faced with many challenges when trying to return to a family     | 0                 | 1<br>4.3% | 17<br>73.9% | 5<br>21.7%  | 0              |

Three scales were created from the Perceptions Survey and were compared “pre” and “post” for UNL mentors. Eight mentors completed the survey both times and were included in this analysis. The first scale represents an empathetic attitude toward juveniles. This scale includes 10 items, scored “0” for strongly disagree to “5” for strongly agree, for a potential range of 0 to 50. The second scale represents positive attitudes toward the juvenile facilities. This scale also includes 10 items and is scored “0” for strongly disagree to “5” for strongly agree, for a potential range of 0 to 50. The third scale represents attitudes that juveniles face significant challenges upon release from the facility.

| Scale  | Mean  | Standard Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|--|-------|--------------------|---------|---------|
| PRE: Empathetic attitudes toward juvenile    | 36.75 | 2.87               | 31      | 39      |
| POST: Empathetic attitudes toward juvenile   | 36.75 | 2.12               | 34      | 39      |
| PRE: Positive attitudes toward facility      | 30.38 | 6.61               | 23      | 45      |
| POST: Positive attitudes toward facility     | 30.63 | 4.78               | 23      | 37      |
| PRE: Perceptions that youth face challenges  | 17.50 | 1.85               | 16      | 20      |
| POST: Perceptions that youth face challenges | 17.25 | 2.05               | 15      | 20      |

Among these eight mentors, there was very little change from the pre- to post-surveys on these three scales. In the table above, we see that the mean “empathetic attitudes toward the juvenile” did not change at all, although the standard deviation decreased and the range decreased, indicating that mentors’ attitudes became slightly more similar in the post-survey. Positive attitudes toward the facility increased slightly, and again the standard deviation and the range decreased, indicating that mentors’ attitudes became slightly more similar in the post-survey. Finally, perceptions that youth face challenges decreased slightly from pre- to post-survey. Overall, however, we must conclude that participation in the mentoring class and mentoring activities did not substantially change the perceptions of these mentors.

## Recidivism

Youth recidivism rates may also be a sign of how effective the mentoring program is in this population. Ideally, an effective mentoring program following best practices would help to reduce recidivism among the youth that are served. Below are the recidivism rates for youth who participated in the mentoring program compared to all youth referred under this grant.

### All Recidivism

Our measure of all recidivism reflects any non-traffic adjudication that was filed and not dropped or dismissed after a youth was referred under this grant. The following table includes data regarding the recidivism for four different groups. The first group includes any juvenile who received a service, mentoring or otherwise. The second

group includes juveniles who received non-mentoring services. The third group includes juveniles who received BBBS mentoring and also might have received other non-mentoring services. The fourth group includes juveniles who received UNL mentoring and also might have received other non-mentoring services.

| Group  | Mean | Standard Deviation | Minimum | Maximum | N  |
|--|------|--------------------|---------|---------|----|
| Juveniles receiving any service                | 0.80 | 2.07               | 0       | 10      | 74 |
| Juveniles receiving non-mentoring services     | 0.75 | 1.97               | 0       | 10      | 60 |
| BBBS mentors with potential for other services | 1.06 | 2.60               | 0       | 9       | 18 |
| UNL mentors with potential for other services  | 0.50 | 1.47               | 0       | 7       | 30 |

Juveniles paired with BBBS mentors had the highest rate of recidivism (1.06 adjudications per youth). Juveniles paired with UNL mentors had the lowest rate of recidivism (0.50 adjudications per youth). Juveniles receiving only non-mentoring services fell in the middle.

### Recidivism Misdemeanor 2 or Above

The second measure of recidivism is any adjudication listed as a misdemeanor 2 or higher that was filed and not dropped or dismissed after a youth was referred under this grant. The four different groups of juveniles are included in the table below.

| Group  | Mean | Standard Deviation | Minimum | Maximum | N  |
|--|------|--------------------|---------|---------|----|
| Juveniles receiving any service                | 0.57 | 1.52               | 0       | 9       | 74 |
| Juveniles receiving non-mentoring services     | 0.55 | 1.50               | 0       | 8       | 60 |
| BBBS mentors with potential for other services | 0.83 | 2.07               | 0       | 8       | 18 |
| UNL mentors with potential for other services  | 0.37 | 1.07               | 0       | 5       | 30 |

Again, juveniles paired with BBBS mentors had the highest rate of recidivism (0.83 adjudications per youth). Juveniles paired with UNL mentors again had the lowest rate of recidivism (0.37 adjudications per youth). Juveniles receiving only non-mentoring services fell in the middle.

### Revoked Status

Our third measure of recidivism represents youth who have had their parole revoked after leaving YRTC and after being referred under this grant. The four different groups of juveniles are included in the table below.

| Group  | Percent Revoked | N  |
|--|-----------------|----|
| Juveniles receiving any service                | 9%              | 74 |
| Juveniles receiving non-mentoring services     | 10%             | 60 |
| BBBS mentors with potential for other services | 6%              | 18 |
| UNL mentors with potential for other services  | 10%             | 30 |

Whereas juveniles with UNL mentors had the lowest rates of recidivism, they have the highest rates of revocation (10%), matching the rate of juveniles receiving non-mentoring services. Juveniles with BBBS mentors had the lowest rate of revocation (6%).

### Multivariate Analysis

Regressions were run to compare the relative impact of the mentoring programs on recidivism and revocation, both with and without relevant control variables. Ordinary least squares (OLS) models were run for the recidivism variables and logistic regression was run to predict revocation. The mentoring variables did not have significant effects in any of the models. These results are most likely an artifact of the small sample size. As more juveniles are mentored, multivariate models should provide more meaningful results.

### Conclusions

All of our conclusions are tentative, given the small sample size. However, the results in this section suggest that UNL mentoring served to reduce overall recidivism and serious recidivism, whereas BBBS mentoring reduced revocations. Because the mentored youth might have received other services, however, it is not possible to determine the impact of mentoring, controlling for all other relevant factors. As the project proceeds and sample sizes increase, we will utilize

multivariate methods in an effort to more clearly distinguish the unique impact of mentoring on subsequent recidivism and revocation.

## Family Support Advocates

The extant research on reentry outcomes for youth suggests that family variables are key in predicting successful transitions (Abrams & Snyder, 2010; Trupin, 2007); however, familial influences are often the most difficult to target for intervention (Wiebush, Wagner, McNulty, Wang, & Le, 2005). Youth reentering their communities repeatedly struggle with “old friends and influences,” including family, peer, and gang influences that may impact decisions to engage in substance use and violent behavior (Abrams et al., 2008). Specific family problems have been linked to offending, including coercive parenting, neglect, and parental substance use (Trupin, 2007), as well as physical, verbal, and sexual abuse (Abrams & Snyder, 2010). Additionally, incarcerated youth are more likely to return home to single parent households or to parents who have been previously incarcerated themselves (Snyder, 2004).

Thus, youth are not likely to respond to isolated interventions that do not cater to ecological influences. Given the effectiveness of other family-based interventions (e.g., functional family therapy, brief strategic family therapy) for youth who are transitioning (Abrams & Snyder, 2010), assigning youth and their families to a family advocate to help facilitate reentry appears appropriate. Still, there is very little research in the area of family advocacy and reentry, with most studies focusing on some form of family therapy as a means to encompass familial influences.

Many youth in the Lancaster County Reentry Project had complicated family situations. According to the most current YLS scores provided, 86.6% of youth (103 youth) scored a 2 or higher on the YLS (family circumstances domain). Referral data for youth involved in the Reentry Project indicate that reunification with an immediate family is not recommended or possible in 56% of the cases.

Families Inspiring Families (FIF) attempted to work with all of the 32 youth and families referred to them. They made 345 attempts to contact families. Attempts to contact families ranged from 1 to 78 interactions per family (families with more contacts were more engaged with the family advocate.) A total of 32 reentry youth and families had some contact with a family advocate through FIF (27% of all youth referred to the Reentry Project). This service was available by referral, however it was voluntary could be declined.

On average, family advocates were in contact with a youth and guardian 10.7 times. They generally tried to make contact via phone, however they also used email, text

messaging, and in-person meetings to reach out to families. Family advocates most often contacted the mother (43.8%) of the youth reentering the community, however they also contacted fathers (12.5%), both parents (15.6%), sisters (3%), and grandmothers (6.3%).

FIF family advocates often made referrals for community resources that helped meet the family's basic needs, including housing placement, furniture location, parenting classes, and budget assistance. One of the agency's goals is to assist parents in understanding and managing responsibilities and accountability; for example, they help families set appropriate rules during furloughs (home visits) from the detention centers.

FIF also worked diligently to improve communication between system partners during the planning process so all parties had consistent and accurate information, however the focus was always on empowering family members. Empowerment was accomplished by meeting with families prior to team meetings to ensure the family's voice was heard. One parent reported feeling empowered as a parent and better able to take an active role in her son's life as a result of working with a family advocate.

At the time of this report, FIF ceased services in 12.5% of the cases (4 cases) – most often because the family indicated they are not interested in having contact with a family advocate. Family advocates reported the family relationship improved in only 3 cases. The final chapter of this report demonstrates that working with a family advocate may have promising preliminary results and outcomes for youth reentering the community.



## Additional Services

Lancaster County also contracted with a variety of services to support the youth reentry process. Twelve youth attended employment training through Project Hire, with 6 of these youth finding employment. Many youth were able to secure jobs without attending Project Hire. Eighteen youth found employment after being released from YRTC (3 subsequently quit the position). Of the 18 who found employment, only 5 youth had also attended Project Hire. Twelve youth attended at least some of the Project Hire classes, 4 of whom are still seeking employment.

Some services were set up at the beginning of the Reentry Project, but were not fully utilized. For example, a Crisis Response Team was established at the onset of the Reentry Planning process, but it was never utilized. Similarly, GED classes were offered through The HUB, and it appears that only two youth attended with no youth completing their GED through The HUB.

Toward the end of 2012, Lancaster County contracted with CEDARS to provide Aggression Replacement Therapy (ART). At the time of this report, very few have attended ART; thus, participation in this program will be assessed in a subsequent report.

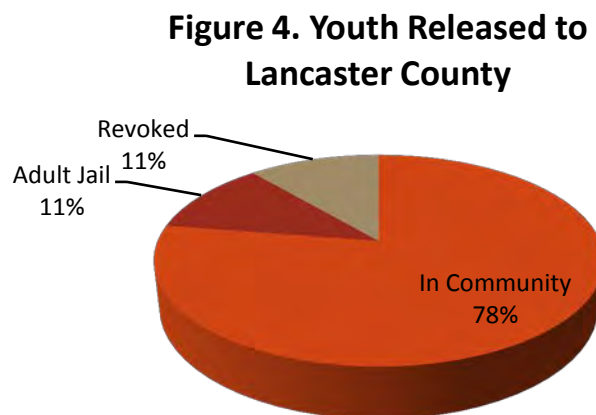
ART and Project Hire services were available by referral, however they were voluntary and could be declined.

## Outcomes

Engaging the juvenile reentry population is undoubtedly a difficult task, especially once the youth is released from YRTC. Youth have a variety of influences vying for their attention, ranging from reentry service providers to peers. The goal under the Reentry Project is for youth to transition into healthy, productive lives. As Figure 4 displays, 78% of the youth released from YRTC remained in the community. Roughly 22% became more deeply involved in the system by violating the conditions of liberty.

In the first year of the Lancaster County Reentry Project, we found that about 15% of the youth who were released go on run during the reentry process. While there are certainly cases where youth run at earlier points (such as while they are in the facility or out on furlough), we maintain that the reasons for running may be quite different when a youth runs after release. It is important to examine when and why youth go on run because this impacts whether or not youth remain enrolled in reentry services, and ultimately how successful the youth is in reintegrating into the community. However, because this is not the focus of this study, we will present those results in a later qualitative study.

Youth who go on run and violate their conditions of liberty, or those detained for new law violations, often had their release revoked through the Department of Health and Human Services.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Due to reform of juvenile justice in Nebraska, revocations will be determine via judicial review in 2013 and forward.

### **Adult Jail**

Youth who run may also be part of the population that ends up in the adult system. Roughly 11% of the youth released from YRTC were later booked into County Jail. The reasons youth ended up in adult jail ranged from absconding from the YRTC facility to failing to comply with conditions of liberty. Youth who ended up the adult system were 17-18 years old (63% were 18 or older).

### **Revocation**

Youth who run may also cycle back through the juvenile justice system due to technical violations and/or new law violations. Of the none youth who went back to the facility 12.7%, it appears that only five of these were officially revoked. The revocation reasons included truancy, refusing drug testing, running away, cutting and destroying an electronic monitor, failure to follow rules, and new law violations.

### **Lancaster County Detention**

Of the youth released from YRTC, roughly 21% (15 youth) were subsequently booked into the Lancaster County Juvenile Detention Center after release. These 15 youth were booked an average of 1.4 times, with total days in detention ranging from 1 to 31 and an average of 7.93 days spent in the detention center post release. This cost Lancaster County an estimated \$24,979.50.

### **Recidivism**

When examining recidivism, we first considered all youth involved in the Reentry Project (not just those who had been released). Of the 119 youth, 82.4% (98 youth) had not committed a serious new law violation (defined as misdemeanor II and above). When considering all law violations (non-traffic), 79.8% (95 youth) had not had a new law violation filed against them after release.

When we restrict recidivism analysis to only those youth who have been released, the percentages drop. Eighty-one percent (56 of the 71 youth released) had refrained from being charged with a new law violation for any non-traffic offense.

## Overarching Research Questions

As mentioned at the beginning of this report, we measured successful reintegration using multiple outcome variables, but our primary focus was whether or not youth were revoked and/or charged with new law violations.

Ultimately, our aim was to determine whether certain reentry strategies were more effective than others. For instance, perhaps one specific reentry strategy, or a combination of strategies, was quite effective in preventing a youth from having conditions of liberty revoked and returning to YRTC. Similarly, one strategy or combination of strategies may be more effective in preventing a youth from committing new law violations. Results are preliminary due to the relatively small sample size. In year two, we will examine a juvenile population that received no reentry services. This control group will provide a more accurate analysis of whether participation in specific services impacted recidivism.

### Revocation

We conducted a logistic regression to examine revocation among youth. The only control variable to reach significance was the number of YRTC stays a youth had experienced. Those with more stays were more likely to be revoked. That said, these results must be interpreted with great caution, as the regression model as a whole was *not* significant. This may be due to the small number of cases included in our analyses.

### Recidivism (all law violations)

We explored recidivism with several distinct measures. First, we considered whether the youth had any new law violation (except traffic). Because recidivism was a count variable, we used a negative binomial regression to examine any significant relationships between recidivism and our independent variables (see table below).<sup>4</sup> Only one of these variables significantly predicted recidivism: Families Inspiring Families (FIF) participation. More specifically, we omitted youth who worked with an LPS Education Specialist from our analyses to serve as a proxy reference group. Compared to these youth, their peers who participated in the FIF program are expected to have decreased counts of recidivism. In other words, they are likely to

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<sup>4</sup> Further, the Vuong test indicated that a negative binomial regression fits the data better than a Poisson regression. As a result, negative binomial regression was selected for the current analyses.

recidivate less frequently than youth who participated in the LPS Education Specialist program.

**Negative Binomial regression on Recidivism based on any law violation**

|                             | Coef. | Std. Error | z       | Sig. |
|-----------------------------|-------|------------|---------|------|
| Big Brothers Big Sisters    | 1.15  | 0.80       | 1.44    |      |
| Families Inspiring Familie: | -2.11 | 1.00       | -2.12 * |      |
| HUB Project Hire            | 1.01  | 0.80       | 1.26    |      |
| UNL Mentor                  | -0.04 | 0.81       | -0.05   |      |
| Gender                      | 1.36  | 0.74       | 1.84    |      |
| Current Age                 | 0.50  | 0.27       | 1.83    |      |
| Age at First Placement      | -0.01 | 0.08       | -0.14   |      |
| White vs. Non-white         | -0.15 | 0.56       | -0.26   |      |
| Number of Placements        | 0.00  | 0.05       | 0.05    |      |
| Most Recent YLS Score       | -0.04 | 0.06       | -0.65   |      |
| Number YRTC Stays           | 0.26  | 0.53       | 0.48    |      |
| constant                    | -9.61 | 5.04       | -1.91   |      |

Model Statistics:

$n = 112$

Pseudo  $R^2 = 0.1135$

Prob >chi2 = 0.0176

\*= $p < .05$ , \*\*= $p < .01$ , \*\*\*= $p < .001$

**Recidivism (Misdemeanor II and above)**

Recidivism was also examined as any law violation including misdemeanor type 2 and above. Again, our dependent variable was a count variable and we used negative binomial regression. The results are displayed in the table below. The model as a whole was significant. The variable age was significantly correlated with recidivism. Specifically, older youth are expected to recidivate more frequently than younger youth. In some of our models, gender and prior YTRC stays approached significant levels. With additional cases, it is likely that these factors may significantly predict recidivism.

**Zero-inflated negative binomial regression predicting Recidivism at misdemeanor 2 and above**

|                             | Coef.  | Std. Error | z        | Sig. |
|-----------------------------|--------|------------|----------|------|
| Any Mentor                  | 1.03   | 0.51       | 2.03 *   |      |
| LPS Education Specialist    | 1.04   | 0.45       | 2.34 *   |      |
| Families Inspiring Familie: | -1.32  | 0.97       | -1.35    |      |
| HUB Program                 | 2.30   | 0.70       | 3.30 *** |      |
| Gender                      | 0.96   | 0.75       | 1.28     |      |
| Current Age                 | 0.72   | 0.27       | 2.63 **  |      |
| Age at First Placement      | -0.07  | 0.06       | -1.16    |      |
| White vs. Non-white         | -0.18  | 0.44       | -0.40    |      |
| Number of Placements        | -0.06  | 0.04       | -1.33    |      |
| Most Recent YLS Score       | -0.10  | 0.04       | -2.29 *  |      |
| Number YRTC Stays           | 0.07   | 0.30       | 0.23     |      |
| constant                    | -10.19 | 5.22       | -1.95    |      |

Model Statistics:

$n = 112$

LR  $\chi^2 = 30.83$

Prob  $>\chi^2 = 0.0012$

\*= $p < .05$ , \*\*= $p < .01$ , \*\*\*= $p < .001$

## Political Shifts

Clearly, individual factors as well as program availability impact the success of reentry youth. Macro-level factors, such as legislative changes, also play a role in how well youth reintegrate within their communities. In May 2013, Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman signed into law Legislative Bill 561, aimed at reforming the juvenile justice system. The new law shifted the supervision of all juvenile offenders in the community from the Department of Health and Human Services to the Office of Probation Administration under the Nebraska Supreme Court. It also placed a renewed emphasis on diversion and community-based programs intended to divert youth out of the system.

Newly allocated funding was made available to hire 196 new staff positions, including 95 new probation officers (some of whom will be designated reentry specialists), administrative staff, and supervisors, as well as two reentry coordinators to work as the liaisons between the Youth Rehabilitative Treatment Centers and Probation. Although the reform was necessary and will bring about overall benefits to the system, the transition has caused minor set-backs for the overall implementation of the Reentry Project.

The influx of new personnel has created a need for retraining and reorganization within the Reentry Project. It has also caused minor deviations in how data was collected and the types of data available. Many of the reentry processes will change due to legislative reform.

## Recommendations

Successful reentry initiatives should equip adolescents with coping and cognitive skills that will aid in avoiding proximal and salient negative influences. Reentry programs that address not only individual risks, but also multiple ecological contexts, such as the family and neighborhood, are likely to have increased effectiveness (Abrams & Snyder, 2010; Trupin, 2007). Interventions also need to program for generalization so youth can utilize newly learned techniques in their communities (Abrams et al., 2008).

This report offers only a preliminary glimpse into the efficacy of individual programs. Like any task worth undertaking, we must continuously improve our efforts. To this end, we conclude this report by making the following recommendations:

1. For youth who have not completed their education in the YRTC, educational programming must begin at least a month prior to release. The education specialist worked diligently to introduce a transition school for youth reentering the community. They must also meet with the team in the facility to ensure that youth are enrolled the day they return to the community.
2. Programs that provide cognitive behavioral change should be intertwined with existing programming to allow for consistency once the youth is released. For instance, many of the young women utilize behavioral plans while they are in the facility. Under the current model, the youth completes the required outcomes in the facility and does not revisit them, despite the fact that these coping strategies are often most needed upon reentry. As appropriate, mentors, probation officers, and transition specialists should be made aware of these strategies during family team meetings, so they can build off them and reinforce the lessons learned once the youth is in the community.
3. To truly measure the impact of these reentry services, Lancaster County must approve an experimental or quasi-experimental research model. Although random assignment may not be feasible with the reentry population, a



control group of youth who reentered Lancaster County will provide us with a better research design.

4. Programs must submit the dosage of the service they provided:
  1. Service delivery programs should report the number of times a youth attends the service.
  2. Mentoring programs must provide the total time and sessions where the mentor met with the mentee.

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# Appendix

## Lancaster County Reentry Matrix

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>STAGE 1: Admission – 60 Day Notification</b></p> <p><i>Follow ups from December Meeting:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>For youth who are returning to YRTC a second time. Try to work together to identify patterns of behavior/triggers. Include school administrators.</i></li> <li>• <i>Judges need to remind families to go to probation after court.</i></li> </ul> |  |
| OJS  | <input type="checkbox"/> When OJS is filing/recommending a higher level, they will make all efforts to notify probation so they can be at court as often as possible.  |
| YRTC Facility  | <input type="checkbox"/> Notified by JSO, Probation or Court of transport and pending admission of youth.<br><input type="checkbox"/> An individualized treatment plan is developed in the first 14 days (by statute).<br><input type="checkbox"/> Assist in connecting OJS worker and probation officer.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Participate in Family Team meetings.   |
| Probation  | <input type="checkbox"/> Attends youth’s court hearing. If court hearing is known, notify FIF to have them in court as well.<br><input type="checkbox"/> After Commitment at court, they meet with youth and parent. They provide the YRTC handbook and explain the reentry program. They get a release of information order from the judge.<br><input type="checkbox"/> They identify who the JSO on the case will be and other stakeholders needing to be involved. Start communication with these stakeholders to coordinate first Family Team Meeting (FTM) within the first 30 days.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Probation sends an email to the HUB and the referral packet.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Probation will send referral directly to FIF. |
| Transition Specialists   | <input type="checkbox"/> Receive referrals from OJS/Probation.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meet with the youth in facility.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Send referrals to program partners.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Attend Family Team Meetings (FTM).<br><input type="checkbox"/> Receive updates from mentors.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Communicate with Probation/OJS.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Monthly data reports to the evaluator.  |
| UNL Mentors  | <input type="checkbox"/> Trained by DHHS.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Background checks are completed.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Receive referral of interested youth.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Interviews with youth in the facility are conducted.<br><input type="checkbox"/> After a youth’s orientation a match may be made.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Monthly reports to evaluator.   |
| BBBS   | <input type="checkbox"/> Receive referrals.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Interview youth and parent.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Visit youth in facility.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Match youth.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Monthly reports to evaluator.  |

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| Families<br>Inspiring<br>Families  | <input type="checkbox"/> Receive referral from probation.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Contact parent/build relationship. When possible attend court hearing where youth is committed to YRTC.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Attend FTM/parent support in crisis, furlough planning, treatment resources.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Assist in facilitating visits.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide resources/parent support groups and parenting classes provided by FIF.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Monthly reports to evaluator.  |
| Public<br>Defender   | <input type="checkbox"/> Letter of introduction and schedule meeting with youth.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Notify probation of representation of youth and get information on family team meeting schedule  |
| <p><b>STAGE IIA: 60 Day Notification – Facility Discharge</b></p> <p><i>Follow ups from December Meeting:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Probation ensure all partners are notified of furloughs and reason/expectations with furlough</i></li> <li>• <i>Need to talk more about rules of furlough</i></li> </ul> |   |
| YRTC Facility  | <input type="checkbox"/> Gives 60 day notification to probation and court.<br><input type="checkbox"/> 30 day notice of review hearing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Arranges furloughs as necessary.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Participates in FTM to help develop the reentry plan prior to the review hearing.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Both facilities conduct post testing and ensure school credit is finalized.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Both facilities work to ensure medical appointments are scheduled and medications are set up.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Ensures youth attends reentry review hearing (in person or through Jabber)  |
| Probation  | <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinates final FTM. Includes LPS Reentry Specialist to assist in youth’s enrollment in school. This could happen during furlough.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Coordinates and develops the Individualized Reentry Plan (IRP) and submits to the court (*medical and medications must be addressed).<br><input type="checkbox"/> Ensures community supports are in place- discusses barriers, such as school transition.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provides supervision on furloughs as planned in furlough planning meeting/guide.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Works with the court to set the court date.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Coordinates with YRTC to have youth attend court.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Coordinates with YRTC in discharge planning to ensure efficient use of resources (i.e. release from court, etc.) |
| Transition<br>Specialists  | <input type="checkbox"/> Attends FTM.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Works with youth on furlough.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Notifies LPS when youth is leaving.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Continues to meet with youth/problem solve.   |

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|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Attends court.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Collects data for evaluator.  |
| UNL Mentors                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Continues to meet with youth in facility and community.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Get contact information for family where they will live.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Work with transition specialists on any concerns.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Collects data for evaluator.  |
| BBBS                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Communicates with the facility and transition specialist.<br><input type="checkbox"/> 1 <sup>st</sup> match meeting occurs and agreement signed.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Dana has weekly contact with the "Bigs".<br><input type="checkbox"/> Collects data for evaluator.   |
| Families Inspiring Families             | <input type="checkbox"/> Ensures family voice in FTM.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Empowers family to implement the plan and attend FTM and ensure youth is enrolled in school.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure family understands expectations of reentry plan.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Assists family in Identifying informal supports.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Assists with referrals for basic need resources.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Encourage parent to attend monthly support group/classes.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Collects data for evaluator. |
| LPS Transition Specialist               | <input type="checkbox"/> Works with probation and transition specialists in helping youth transition back to school.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Helps provide needed information.  |
| Public Defender                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Attend Family Team Meetings<br><input type="checkbox"/> Get copy of IRP from Probation<br><input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing meetings with clients, discuss plan<br><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for and attend reentry court hearings   |
| <b>STAGE IIA.1: Step Down Placement</b> |   |
| YRTC Facility                           |   |
| Probation                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly team meetings.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Monitor probation conditions.   |
| Transition Specialists                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Regular visits if in Lincoln.<br><input type="checkbox"/> If not in Lincoln regular contact by phone, some in person contact.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Attend FTM.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.   |
| UNL Mentors                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with youth wherever they are.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.  |
| BBBS                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with youth wherever they are.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.  |
| Families Inspiring Families             | <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to meet with parent/guardian.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Attend FTM.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other supports as described above.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.   |
| LPS                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> If in school, will make contact/offer support.   |



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| Transition Specialist | <input type="checkbox"/> If outside of LPS, but coming back eventually, they will participate in FTM to help with transition.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator. |
| Cedars                | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth could be attending ART programming if in the community.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.  |
| HUB                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth could be attending Project Hire if in the Community.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.   |
| Public Defender       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>  |

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| <b>STAGE II B: Transition to Community Supervision</b>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Need to monitor for consistent and accurate documentation;</i></li> <li>• <i>Get LPS engaged earlier- team meeting before reentry LPS will be involved, helping look at credits, registration/mtgs on furloughs; figuring out what school they will attend; enrolling in summer school.</i></li> </ul> |  |
| YRTC Facility  |  |
| Probation  | <input type="checkbox"/> Court will issue Probation order and a copy of is provided to the youth and parents. Parents and youth will get a copy. Parent and youth can share the probation order with the partners, or probation can share at the next FTM.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Monitors Reentry Plan.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Case management- follow up on appointments for school, medical, meds, etc.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate and facilitate FTM's.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Probation has contact with youth within 48 hours.<br><input type="checkbox"/> A FTM within 7 days.                               |
| Transition Specialists   | <input type="checkbox"/> Attend FTM within 2 weeks or as scheduled by OJS/Probation.<br><input type="checkbox"/> May meet with the youth on the day of their return.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure school enrollment complete.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meet with the youth at least every other week.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Referrals to Project HIRE & ART.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Check on needs: i.e. bus passes, GED, etc.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Communicate with PO's, Mentors, OJS, etc.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Follow up on appointments.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator. |
| UNL Mentors  | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet within a couple of days of reentry- could be person or phone.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Communicate with transition specialists.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Regular meetings with mentee's.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Mentors contact transition specialists on a weekly basis.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.  |

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| BBBS                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate first community meeting.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Regular contact and support.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Communicate with project partners, help inform Big of any issues.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Dana gives updates to transition specialists weekly on matches.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.   |
| Families Inspiring Families | <input type="checkbox"/> Offer parent classes & support groups.<br><input type="checkbox"/> More frequent contact with the family/support during FTMs .<br><input type="checkbox"/> Continue to work on building informal supports.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Follow up on medical/medication needs.<br><input type="checkbox"/> They generate a monthly summary that will go to probation and HUB if family signs release.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator. |
| LPS Transition Specialist   | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with student- explain their role, discuss issues or concerns the student is having.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Communicate with probation and transition specialists.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Weekly visits thereafter or as needed.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Check attendance and grades.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.  |
| Cedars                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide ART groups.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.  |
| HUB                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide GED and Project Hire Services.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.   |
| Public Defender             | <input type="checkbox"/> Address issues if they arise while youth is transitioning.  |

| <b>STAGE III A: Community Supervision</b> |  |
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| YRTC Facility                             |  |
| Probation                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on priority domains in case management.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate FTM's- focusing on how to complete reentry plan and prepare for release from probation.      |
| Transition Specialists                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Attend FTM.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Try to scale back contact.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Same as Stage II B.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator. |
| UNL Mentors                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Regular meetings.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Communicate with Transition Specialists.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.                             |
| BBBS                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Regular meetings.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Communicate with Transition Specialists.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.                             |

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| Families Inspiring Families | <input type="checkbox"/> Less frequent contact.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Encourage more reliance on informal supports.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Encourage partnership with parents and other system partners i.e. probation, schools, etc.<br><input type="checkbox"/> FTM- voice in aftercare plan/ safety planning.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator. |
| LPS Transition Specialist   | <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor school and activities.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Communicate with transition specialist and probation.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.   |
| Cedars                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth could be attending ART programming if appropriate.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.   |
| HUB                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth could be attending Project Hire or GED if appropriate.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provide monthly data to evaluator.   |
| Public Defender             | <input type="checkbox"/> Work with youth and family if issues arise.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Contact probation officer to see if there are any issues.   |

| <b>STAGE III B: Off Community Supervision</b> |   |
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| YRTC Facility                                 |   |
| Probation                                     |   |
| Transition Specialists                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Connect youth with other HUB services if needed                  |
| UNL Mentors                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Will continue to meet  |
| BBBS  | <input type="checkbox"/> Will continue to meet  |
| Families Inspiring Families                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Continues to provide parent support group and parenting classes. |
| LPS Transition Specialist                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Continues to support as long as they are in school.              |
| Cedars  |   |
| HUB   | <input type="checkbox"/> Will provide additional community supports as necessary.         |

