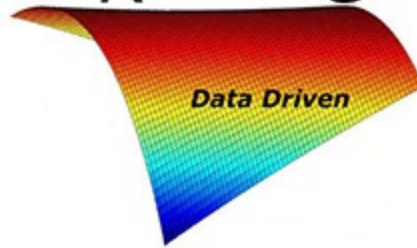


Crime Research Group



**LAMOILLE COMMUNITY JUSTICE
PROGRAM
OUTCOME EVALUATION
FINAL REPORT**

Submitted to:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Lamoille Community Justice Project (LCJP) is a program within the Lamoille County Court Diversion Restorative Justice Programs which operates as a non-profit, community-based agency located in Hyde Park, Vermont, serving the Lamoille Valley region. The LCJP is a prevention program for children of incarcerated parents. The primary program goal is to prevent children from repeating the cycle of criminal justice system involvement as young adults.

Previous outcome evaluations of the LCJP were conducted in 2012 and 2013. The 2012 study included 125 subjects who had participated in the program from January 1, 2002 to June 1, 2012. The results of this study showed that only 4.8% of the participants had contacts with the criminal justice system that resulted in conviction compared to recidivism measures between 24% and 61% found in other studies for similar juvenile subjects. A follow-up outcome evaluation of the program was conducted in 2013 to update the recidivism rates of the 125 subjects from the original study and included an additional 17¹ participants that were not in the previous research. The recidivism rate reported in this follow-up study was essentially unchanged. The results showed that 4.9% of the 142 participants had contacts with the criminal justice system that lead to conviction.

The administrators of the LCJP contracted the Crime Research Group to conduct a third follow-up outcome evaluation of the program to update the recidivism rates from the previous studies, including an additional 20 new subjects. This report presents results from this evaluation.

METHODOLOGY

An outcome evaluation attempts to determine the effects that a program has on participants. In the case of the LCJP, the objective of this outcome evaluation was to determine the extent to which the LCJP reduced incidents of post-program convictions among its participants.

An analysis of the criminal history records of 162 subjects who participated in the LCJP from January 1, 2002 to June 30, 2014, was conducted using the Vermont criminal history record of participants as provided by the Vermont Criminal Information Center at the Department of Public Safety. The Vermont criminal history record on which the analysis was based included all charges and convictions prosecuted in a Vermont Superior Court – Criminal Division that were available as of August 27, 2014. The criminal records on which the study was based do not contain Federal prosecutions, out-of-state prosecutions, or traffic tickets.

¹ In the 2012 study one subject had a hyphenated last name and was inadvertently listed twice in the 2013 study with both last names. The subject had no criminal record and the recidivism rate reported in the 2013 study was not affected by this error.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

1. **The Lamoille Community Justice Program (LCJP) continues to be a promising approach for preventing the children of incarcerated parents from repeating the cycle of criminal justice system involvement as young adults. The recidivism rate determined in this study was 9.3%, an increase from the rate of 4.9% determined in the 2013 study. Although the recidivism rate increased from the previous study, the difference was not found to be statistically significant. Also the rate was still relatively low when compared to recidivism measures between 24% and 61% found in other studies for similar juvenile subjects.²²**
2. **Not only does the LCJP keep over 90% of their participants from having involvement with the criminal justice system, but those that do have contact have a very low probability of being arrested and convicted of violent or felony offenses. Thirty new post-LCJP convictions were recorded since the 2013 evaluation and consisted of only five felonies and 4 violent crimes (simple assault-2, kidnapping, domestic violence).**

² A detailed literature review of recidivism rates for high risk juveniles can be found in the 2013 Outcome Evaluation at this link: <http://crgvt.org/reports/reportscrimjust/reports/lccjpeval2013.html>

INTRODUCTION

This outcome evaluation of the Lamoille Community Justice Program (hereafter the “LCJP”) was designed to answer two questions associated with the post-project behavior of subjects who participated in the LCJP from January 1, 2002 to June 30, 2014.

1. Which subjects were convicted of crimes after their participation in the LCJP?
2. What crimes were the subjects convicted of after participating in the LCLP?

This outcome evaluation was supported through funds provided by the Lamoille County Court Diversion Restorative Justice Programs (LCCDRJP). However, the findings and conclusions, expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the LCCDRJP.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

An outcome evaluation attempts to determine the effects that a program has on participants. In the case of the Lamoille Community Justice Program (LCJP) the objective of this outcome evaluation was to determine the extent to which the LCJP reduced incidents of post-program convictions among participants.

An indicator of post-program criminal behavior that is commonly used in outcome evaluations of criminal justice programs is the number of participants who are convicted of a crime after they complete the program. An analysis of the criminal history records of the 162 subjects who were participants in the LCJP from January 1, 2002 to June 30, 2014, was conducted using the Vermont criminal history record of participants as provided by the Vermont Criminal Information Center (VCIC) at the Department of Public Safety. The Vermont criminal history record on which the recidivism analysis was based included all charges and convictions prosecuted in a Vermont Superior Court – Criminal Division that were available as of August 27, 2014. The criminal records on which the study was based do not contain Federal prosecutions, out-of-state prosecutions, or traffic tickets.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: WHICH SUBJECTS WERE CONVICTED OF CRIMES AFTER THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE LCJP?

Summary of Findings

The request for criminal records on the 162 individuals who went through the LCJP from the VCIC yielded records for only 21 subjects. The remaining 141, which included the 20 new subjects added to the cohort for this study, had no criminal records and were assumed to be conviction free since leaving the LCJP. Of the 21 subjects with criminal records, only 15 were convicted of a post-program crime. The remaining 6 were arrested but not convicted. In total, 9.3% of the 162 participants in the LCJP were convicted of a crime after leaving the program. Only three of the original recidivists from the 2012 study were convicted of new crimes, committing a total of seven new offenses. The remaining eight recidivists were from the original 2012 participant group and were non-recidivists in the previous studies. Since the 2013 study, these eight subjects were convicted of a total of 27 crimes.

The recidivism rate determined in this study is higher than the 4.9% recidivism rate determined in the previous 2013 research, however this difference was determined to be statistically insignificant in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions at a significance level of $p < 0.05$. Although the rate is higher than found in 2012 and 2013, the rate is still low compared to recidivism measures between 24% and 61% found in other studies for similar juvenile subjects.³ Because of this comparison, it can again be concluded that the LCJP is an effective program in preventing the children of incarcerated parents from repeating the cycle of corrections involvement as young adults.

Detailed Findings

Table 1 presents data regarding the percentage of LCJP participants who were convicted of a crime after leaving the program, comparing the current results with the previous outcome evaluations conducted in 2012 and 2013. A search of criminal records through the VCIC for the 162 subjects who went through the LCJP revealed only 21 individuals that had arrest records. Of these 21, 15 subjects, or 9.3% of the total participants, had arrests that ended in convictions.

Table 1

Subjects Convicted for Any Offense after Completion of the LCJP

	2012 Evaluation		2013 Evaluation		2014 Evaluation	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Recidivist	6	4.8%	7	4.9%	15	9.3%
Non-recidivist	119	95.2%	135	95.1%	147	90.7%
Total	125	100.0%	142	100.0%	162	100.0%

³ A detailed literature review of recidivism rates for high risk juveniles can be found in the 2013 Outcome Evaluation at this link: <http://crgvt.org/reports/reportscrimjust/reports/lccjpeval2013.html>

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: WHAT CRIMES DID THEY COMMIT?

Summary of Findings

The 15 recidivists of the LCJP, who had subsequent contacts with the criminal justice system resulting in convictions, committed a total of 57 crimes, or an average of 3.8 convictions per subject. Of those 57 crimes only eight were felonies. The top five most frequent offenses, comprising almost 50% of the total convictions, were primarily non-violent crimes: theft, failure to appear, disorderly conduct, simple assault, and unlawful mischief. The first convictions for the eight new recidivists in this study included only one felony and two misdemeanor simple assaults.

Detailed Findings

Participant Offense Levels and Patterns

Table 2 shows that the 15 participants of the LCJP with post-program convictions committed a total of 57 crimes during the follow-up period. Compared to the 2013 evaluation, five new offenses were prosecuted as felonies, but the percentage of felonies versus misdemeanors remained essentially constant.

Table 2
Offense Levels For All Post-LCJP Crimes For Which Subjects Were Convicted

	2012 Evaluation		2013 Evaluation		2014 Evaluation	
	# of Convictions	%	# of Convictions	%	# of Convictions	%
Felony	3	20.0%	3	13.0%	8	14.0%
Misdemeanor	12	80.0%	20	87.0%	49	86.0%
Total	15	100.0%	23	100.0%	57	100.0%

Table 3 shows the types of post-program crimes for which the subjects were convicted. The 15 LCJP participants, who were arrested and subsequently convicted, committed a total of 57 crimes. The results showed an average of 3.8 crimes per recidivist, with a median of four convictions, and a maximum of seven. The top five most frequent offenses, comprising 47.4% of the total convictions, were primarily non-violent crimes: theft, failure to appear, disorderly conduct, simple assault, and unlawful mischief. The table also indicates the offenses for the recidivists' first conviction since the 2013 study. These offenses included: theft, disorderly conduct, simple assault, careless & negligent driving, burglary, fraud, lascivious conduct, and domestic assault.

Table 3
All Post-LCJP Crimes For Which Subjects Were Convicted

	2012 Evaluation		2013 Evaluation		2014 Evaluation	
	# of Convictions	%	# of Convictions	%	# of Convictions	%
Theft*	1	6.7%	1	4.3%	7	12.3%
Failure to Appear*	0	0.0%	3	13.0%	6	10.5%
Disorderly Conduct*	2	13.3%	3	13.0%	5	8.8%
Simple Assault *	2	13.3%	3	13.0%	5	8.8%
Unlawful Mischief	1	6.7%	1	4.3%	4	7.0%
Vs. Justice*	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	5.3%
Careless & Negligent Driving*	1	6.7%	2	8.7%	3	5.3%
Burglary*	1	6.7%	1	4.3%	3	5.3%
Alcohol Violation	2	13.3%	3	13.0%	3	5.3%
Shoplifting	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	3.5%
Fraud*	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	3.5%
Attempting to Elude	1	6.7%	1	4.3%	2	3.5%
Disturbing the Peace	1	6.7%	1	4.3%	2	3.5%
Assault & Robbery	2	13.3%	2	8.7%	2	3.5%
Unlawful Trespass	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.8%
Possession/Sale Stolen Property	1	6.7%	1	4.3%	1	1.8%
Lascivious Conduct*	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.8%
Kidnapping	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.8%
DUI-2nd Offense	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.8%
Domestic Assault*	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.8%
Driving License Suspended	0	0.0%	1	4.3%	1	1.8%
Arson	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.8%
Total Convictions	15	100.0%	23	100.0%	57	100.0%
Number of Recidivists	6		7		15	
Average # of Convictions	2.5		3.3		3.8	
Median # of Convictions	2		3		4	
Maximum # of Convictions	6		6		7	

* Indicates first new post-LCJP conviction – 2014 study.

CONCLUSIONS

- 1. The Lamoille Community Justice Program (LCJP) appears to be a promising approach for preventing the children of incarcerated parents from repeating the cycle of criminal justice system involvement as young adults.**

Of the 162 LCJP participants in the study, only 21 subjects had arrest records, with only 15 of those subsequently being convicted of a crime. The remaining six subjects were arrested but not convicted. The recidivism rate determined in this study was 9.3%, an increase from the rate of 4.9% determined in the 2013 study. Although the recidivism rate increased from the previous study, the difference was not found to be statistically significant. Also the rate was still relatively low when compared to recidivism measures between 24% and 61% found in other studies for similar juvenile subjects.⁴²

- 2. Not only does the LCJP keep over 90% of their participants from having involvement with the criminal justice system, but those that do have contact have a very low probability of being arrested and convicted of violent or felony offenses.**

The 15 participants of the LCJP, who had subsequent contacts with the criminal justice system resulting in convictions, committed a total of 57 crimes, with 30 of those convictions occurring since the last evaluation in 2013. Of those 30 newly reported, post-LCJP crimes only five were felonies, and four were violent crimes (2 simple assaults, 1 kidnapping, and 1 domestic violence offense).

⁴ A detailed literature review of recidivism rates for high risk juveniles can be found in the 2013 Outcome Evaluation at this link: <http://crgvt.org/reports/reportscrimjust/reports/lccjpeval2013.html>