

ONE YEAR RECIDIVISM



2013

Frank G. Cousins, Jr., Sheriff

Essex County Sheriff's Department

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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Table of Contents

<u>Table of Contents</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>List of Tables and Graphs</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Mission Statements</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Acknowledgments</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Executive Summary</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Introduction and Purpose</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Recidivism Data</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Demographics</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Re-entry Exit Interview/Release Plan</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>Conclusion</u>	<u>25</u>

List of Graphs and Tables

Recidivism Categories

<u>One-year Recidivism Rate, 2009-2013</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Type of Recidivism</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Released and Recidivated by Facility</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Recidivism and Method by Facility</u>	<u>10</u>

Demographic Categories

<u>Housing Data</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Employment Data</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Education</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Substance Abuse</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Post-Release Supervision</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>Family Status</u>	<u>18</u>

Exit Interview Categories

<u>Facility from which Released</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>Offenses for which Incarcerated</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>Communities to Which Released</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>Substance of Choice among Inmates</u>	<u>22</u>
<u>Education Levels: At Time of Release</u>	<u>22</u>
<u>Education Levels: At Time of Release and One Year Post Release</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>Programs</u>	<u>24</u>

Essex County Sheriff's Department

Mission Statement

The Essex County Sheriff's Department's top priority is to protect residents in the region from criminal offenders.

This is accomplished by:

- ★ Housing inmates in a secure and fair manner.
- ★ Providing rehabilitation and academic training to offenders while they are incarcerated, so they will not repeat their mistakes once they are released.
- ★ Practicing correctional policies that comply with all local, state and federal laws.
- ★ Using innovative correctional approaches that are in accord with the Essex County Sheriff's Department's top mission.
- ★ Informing and educating the public about the Department through the media, tours of the facility and public appearances by the Sheriff, administrators, K-9 Unit, and uniformed personnel.

Research and Statistics Division

Mission Statement

The Research and Statistics Division of the Essex County Sheriff's Department strives to remain on the cutting edge of data collection, analysis, and presentation. Through diligence, integrity and attention to detail the division will provide relevant and highly reliable information.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Sheriff Frank G. Cousins, Jr. is a robust proponent of inmate rehabilitation and community re-entry. Sheriff Cousins emphasizes this philosophy and encourages employees of the Essex County Sheriff's Department to adopt it in their daily interactions with inmates and their families. The efforts of Sheriff Cousins and the ECSD staff are documented in the findings of this report, as is the association between reintegration programs and the reduction of recidivism. Sheriff Cousins is a strong supporter of the mission and staff of the Research and Statistics Division. Thank you Sheriff Cousins.

We would like to extend a sincere thank-you to Chief of Staff Barbara Maher, Superintendent Michael Marks, Superintendent Joseph Furnari and Assistant Superintendent Christine Arsenault. Their information, knowledge, and resources made our research possible.

We also owe thanks to the correctional officers, supervisors, and dedicated non-sworn employees of the ECSD for their assistance with our research.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sheriff Frank G. Cousins, Jr. was appointed Sheriff of Essex County in 1996 and has been re-elected several times since initially taking office. He and his staff stress community safety and inmate rehabilitation as key values of the Essex County Sheriff's Department (ECSD). To that end, each employee realizes that he or she is charged with providing excellent care and custody of inmates. The ECSD serves the 34 communities and 800,000 people of Essex County. The ECSD staff operates three correctional facilities.

Superintendent Michael Marks oversees the Middleton medium-security facility for men, which houses approximately 1,300 inmates. This number includes those inmates awaiting trial (i.e. pre-trial), individuals held for a short period of time, such as overnight or a weekend for local or state police departments (i.e. safe-keeps) and sentenced inmates who do not qualify to be housed in the Department's minimum-security facility. The Middleton facility maintains *American Correctional Association (ACA)* accreditation, signifying the facility meets the highest operational and professional standards. At its most recent ACA audit in October, 2012, the Middleton facility scored 98.62/100 for non-mandatory standards and 100/100 for mandatory standards.

Superintendent Joseph Furnari oversees the Essex County Prerelease and Reentry Center (ECPRC), which is the Department's minimum-security facility for men. It houses inmates with less serious records as well as those who are approaching the end of their sentences and have earned the privilege of being transferred to the lower-security facility. The facility houses approximately 300 sentenced and 40 pre-trial inmates and supervises approximately 75 men on electronic monitoring. The ECPRC staff's primary mission is to provide reintegration services for inmates. Allowing inmates to work their way from the Middleton facility to the ECPRC is part of the "step-down process" that is vital to reintegration. Through the staff's relationships and cooperation with community leaders, civic organizations and local employers, supervised inmates give back to Essex County through work release employment as well as numerous community service projects.

Assistant Superintendent Christine Arsenault oversees the Women in Transition (WIT) facility in Salisbury, which is a female minimum-security facility that houses approximately 24 women. The WIT is also responsible for another 24 women on electronic monitoring bracelets, all of whom have been transferred from MCI Framingham. In 2006 the WIT received *American Correctional Association* accreditation. At its most recent ACA audit in March 2015, the WIT scored 100/100 for both non-mandatory and mandatory standards.

The Regional Emergency Communications Center became operational in the summer of 2013. The \$11 million state-of-the-art dispatch center is located on the Middleton Campus. RECC staff provide emergency dispatch landline services for local communities as well as cell phone 911 calls originating from 69 communities in Essex, Middlesex and Suffolk Counties.

The Regional Support Services Building, a 17,000 square foot facility, became operational in the summer of 2014. The structure provides an indoor Sally Port which is a secure area for vehicles coming into or leaving the facility. This building has improved and streamlined the inmate transportation and intake process. The new intake/booking area and inmate property carousel expedite the inmate booking and release processes. New construction has also transformed the former inmate intake/booking area into 25 pretrial beds for female inmates.

This report examines the one-year recidivism rate of inmates released from the Essex County Sheriff's Department in 2013 and factors affecting this rate. Of the 1,948 sentenced inmates who were released in 2013, 898 recidivated, for a one-year recidivism rate of 46.10%.

This is slightly higher than the 2012 rate of 45.11% and higher than the average for the past five years (inclusive of 2013) of 45.54%.

Of the former sentenced inmates who were released in 2013 and recidivated within one year, 57% had new arraignments, 33% were found guilty of new crimes and 10% violated parole or probation. As Middleton is the largest facility and houses the more serious offenders, it accounted for the largest portion of inmates *released* (59%) and the largest portion of those who *recidivated* (64%). The ECPRC accounted for 35% of released inmates and 31% of those who recidivated. The WIT accounted for 6% of released inmates and 5% of those who recidivated.

INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

This report presents the one-year recidivism rate for sentenced inmates released in 2013. Recidivism is considered by ECSD to be a conviction, new arraignment or probation/parole violation occurring within one year of an inmate's release. This report also details employment, education, housing, family structure, substance use, program involvement and inmates' opinions of certain aspects of the Essex County Sheriff's Department. A predominant goal of the Department is to help inmates stay out of jail or prison in the future. The recidivism rate is a reliable measure of this goal (Pew Center, 2011, p. 6). Additionally, county correctional facilities in general typically "absorb the costs of re-arrest, reprocessing, retrial, and re-incarceration of the same offenders" (Turley, Thornton, Johnson, & Azzolino, 2004, p. 721).

METHOD

Information for this report was gathered from the ECSD's Sheriff's Information and Reporting System (SIRS) and the Massachusetts Criminal Justice Information System.

Each inmate was interviewed and given *The Re-entry Exit Interview/Release Plan* several times during his or her incarceration. Only Reintegration Coordinators, most of whom are trained correctional officers, were allowed to administer 60-day reviews or exit interviews. Each interview was conducted in person.

Research and Statistics staff administered the *Aftercare Questionnaires*. If an individual who was released during 2013 was re-incarcerated at the ECSD (i.e. had been arrested and incarcerated since his or her release) the interview was conducted in-person when feasible. The interview was done by phone for all other former inmates whom researchers could contact.

THE RELEASE COHORT

All participants in this study were released from the custody of the ECSD in 2013; 94% were male. Fifty-nine percent were released from the Department's Middleton facility, 35% from the ECPRC and 6% from the WIT. The *Re-entry Exit Interview/Release Plan* was mandatory for all participants who were incarcerated. Inmates were informed that all information was confidential and would not affect their treatment or status before or after release.

Participation in the *Aftercare Questionnaire* was voluntary. The individuals were informed that their participation or refusal to participate, as well as all responses, would not affect their treatment or status as former inmates.

MEASURES

Recidivism was calculated by dividing the number of former inmates *who recidivated* (n = 898) by the number *who were released* in 2013 (n = 1,948). This resulted in a one-year recidivism rate of 46.10%.

DATA COLLECTION

Data on recidivism were obtained by running a Board of Probation (BOP) on each inmate one year after his or her release. In addition, as a form of self-reporting, the former inmates were asked if they recidivated. A BOP, which is a type of Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI), is a Massachusetts criminal history and court activity report which details arraignments, offenses, court of origin, and parole or probation violation notices or findings. It also includes the overall disposition of a case which could be a conviction, acquittal, continued without a finding (CWO), dismissal, probation imposed by a court, or default statuses by a defendant. ECSD's ability to view these data makes the BOP a highly useful resource for determining if a former inmate has recidivated according to the parameters of this report.

In compiling personal information, researchers used only information from participants who responded. This assured representative figures. All information given by current or former inmates by way of the *Aftercare Questionnaire* or *Re-entry Exit Interview/Release Plan* was self-reported.

On the first business day of each month between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014 researchers ran a *Call List* obtained through SIRS comprised of all sentenced inmates who had been released one year earlier (January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013). In addition, an *Active Inmate List* was run each month informing researchers who was in the custody of the ECSD. Using these lists, researchers administered the Department's *Aftercare Questionnaire* to former inmates; in person to some of those re-incarcerated at the ECSD, and by phone to all others researchers could locate. *The Re-entry Exit Interview/Release Plan* was given to inmates just prior to their release.

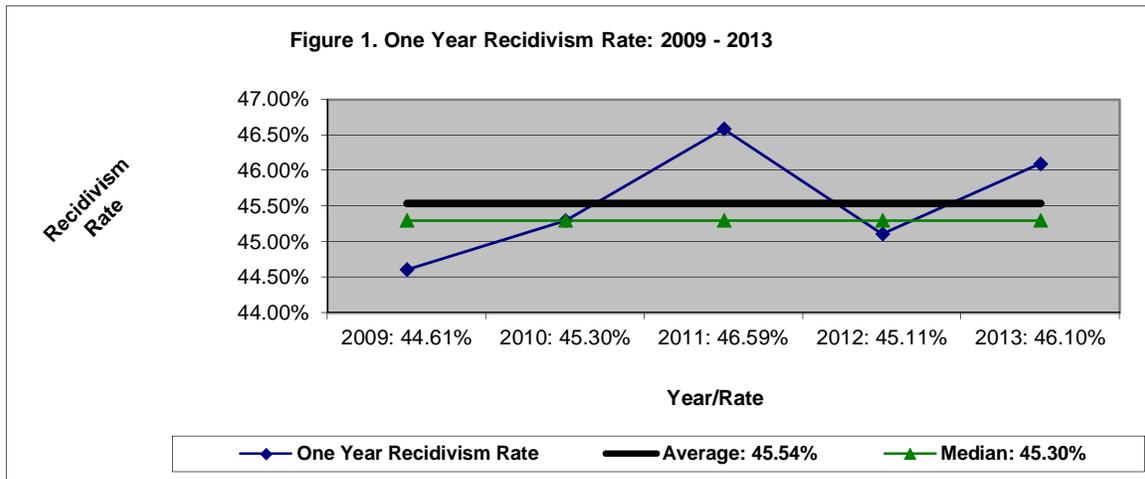
DATA ANALYSIS

Data obtained through interviews were put into two separate *Microsoft® Access* databases: *Exit Interviews* were added to the ECSD *ANS* (Aftercare Network System), and the *Aftercare Questionnaires* were added to the ECSD *Aftercare Questionnaire* database. Queries were used to extract desired information. *Microsoft® Access* was also used to compile the *Active Inmate List*. *Microsoft® Excel* spreadsheets were used to compile statistics and design spreadsheets and charts.

I. RECIDIVISM STATISTICS

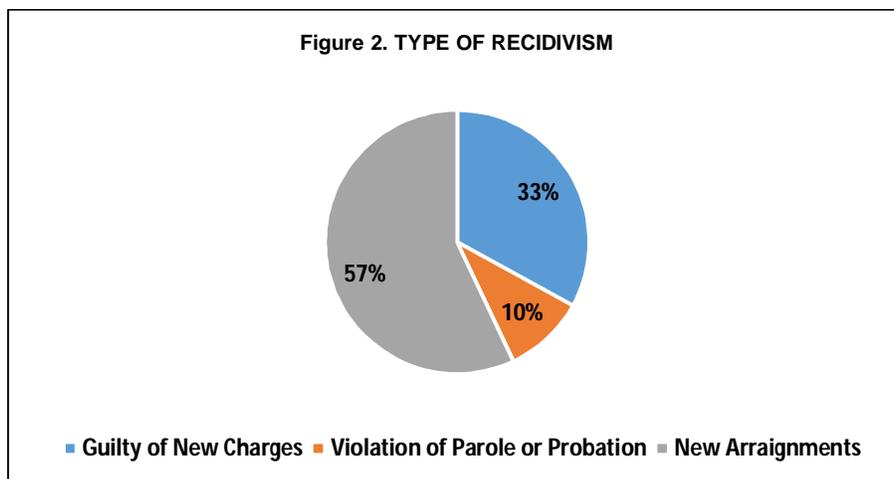
During 2013, 1,948 sentenced inmates were released from the custody of the Essex County Sheriff's Department. Of these former inmates, 898 recidivated, meaning a one-year recidivism rate of 46.10% (see Figure 1).

The 2013 one-year recidivism rate is a slight .99% above the 2012 rate and 0.56% above the average between 2009 and 2013. The one year rate fluctuates, going above and below the average. This demonstrates the statistical principle of "migration toward the mean." This principle states that under normal circumstances, everyday occurrences do not vary greatly. As ECSD staff consistently works to help inmates return to society, the recidivism rate will remain lower than it would have otherwise been.



RECIDIVISM CATEGORIES

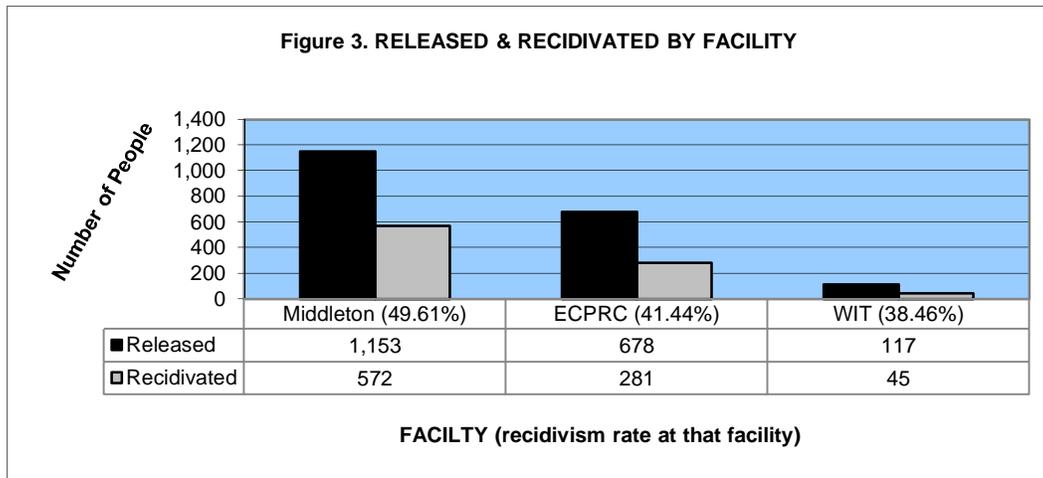
Of the 898 former inmates who reoffended, 57% had new arraignments. Thirty-three percent were found guilty of new crimes and 10% recidivated by violating parole or probation (see Figure 2).



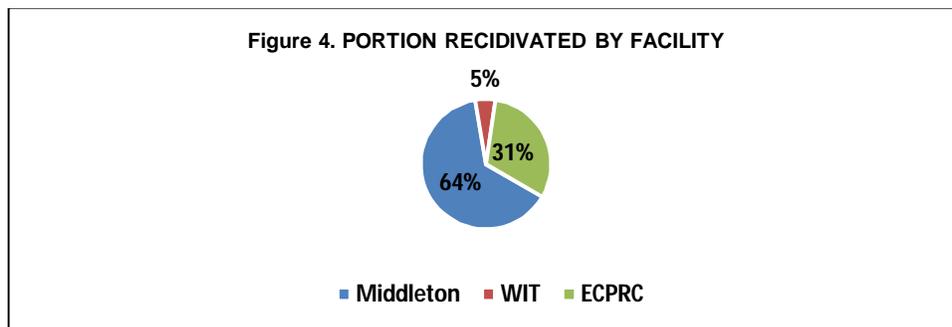
RECIDIVISM BY FACILITY

The ECSD operates three correctional facilities, each housing a different level of offender. As Middleton is medium-security, it houses the more serious male offenders as well as those male inmates who do not qualify for the ECPRC. Accordingly, it consistently exhibits the highest recidivism rate. The ECPRC is a minimum security pre-release facility for men. Minimum security means the inmates either have less serious charges than the inmates at the Middleton facility, or they have earned their way to the ECPRC as part of the step-down process. Accordingly, the ECPRC typically has a lower recidivism rate than Middleton. The Women in Transition center in Salisbury is also a minimum-security facility. The recidivism rate for the WIT is traditionally the lowest of the Department’s three facilities.

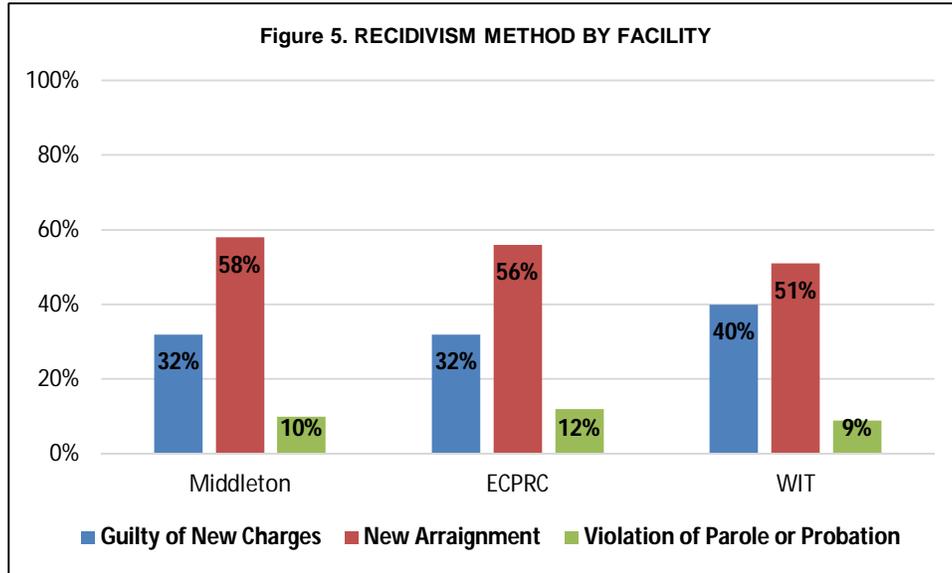
The step-down process classifies and houses inmates according to their criminal history, risk level, rehabilitation needs and conduct while incarcerated. This is reflected in the recidivism rate for each facility (see Figure 3).



As the Middleton facility houses the most inmates and the more serious offenders, it accounts for the largest portion of inmates who recidivate. The ECPRC and the WIT house fewer inmates, as well as those convicted of less serious crimes. The ECPRC has the second largest number of inmates released and the second highest recidivism rate. The WIT has the fewest inmates released and the lowest recidivism rate. Of inmates who recidivated after being released in 2013, 64% were released from Middleton, 31% from the ECPRC and 5% from the WIT.



New arraignments were the most common form of recidivism across the three facilities. Guilty verdicts were the next most frequent type of recidivism followed by violations of parole or probation.



Over one-half of the recidivism at each facility comprised of new arraignments. Different possibilities may explain the high percentages of new-arraignments including recidivists having open and unresolved cases, court scheduling issues, dismissal or non-prosecution of charges or continuances without a finding.

Guilty verdicts represented almost one-third of re-offenders at the Middleton House of Correction and the ECPRC while convictions represented 40% of re-offending at the WIT.

Individuals who recidivate through new arraignments or being found guilty of new charges often violate parole or probation because of the new arraignment or conviction. The new arraignment or guilty finding “trumps” the parole or probation violation in this situation. This, in general, decreases the number of violation of parole or probation findings. Probation and parole can also be violated through technical violations of conditions set by the courts. Probationers or parolees found in violation could have convictions entered on their records, be committed to a house of correction such as ECSD, have additional conditions imposed or have their term of parole or probation extended.

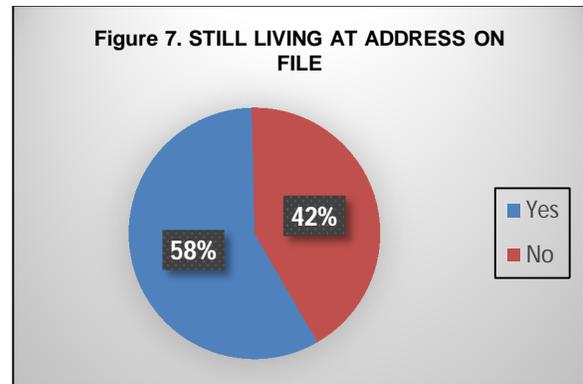
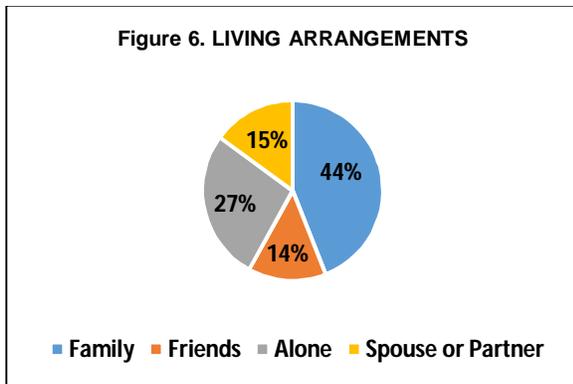
II. DEMOGRAPHICS

Section Overview

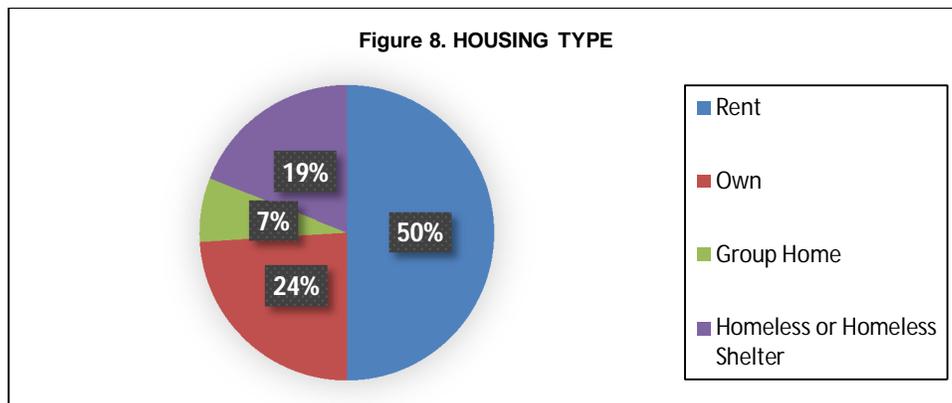
This section covers demographic data obtained through the ECSD's "Aftercare Questionnaire." Current and former inmates that took the questionnaire did so on a voluntary basis. Participants were informed that neither their choice to participate nor their responses would affect their pre or post release treatment. Housing, employment, education, substance abuse, rehabilitation, post release supervision and family information were the areas that were examined. All participants were released from the custody of the Essex County Sheriff's Department during 2013.

Housing

Living with family members (44%) was the most common living situation reported by former inmates one year after release. This may be likely due to continued economic difficulties and conditions. Over one-quarter (27%) stated that they lived alone, representing an 18% increase from 2012. Fifteen percent were residing with a spouse or partner and 14% lived with friends or roommates (see Figure 6). Fifty-eight percent reported living at the same address they were at when released (see Figure 7).



One-half of questionnaire participants reported renting, while 24% reported owning a home or living with a person who owns a home. Seven percent lived in group homes. Nineteen percent self-reported as being homeless or living in homeless shelters.

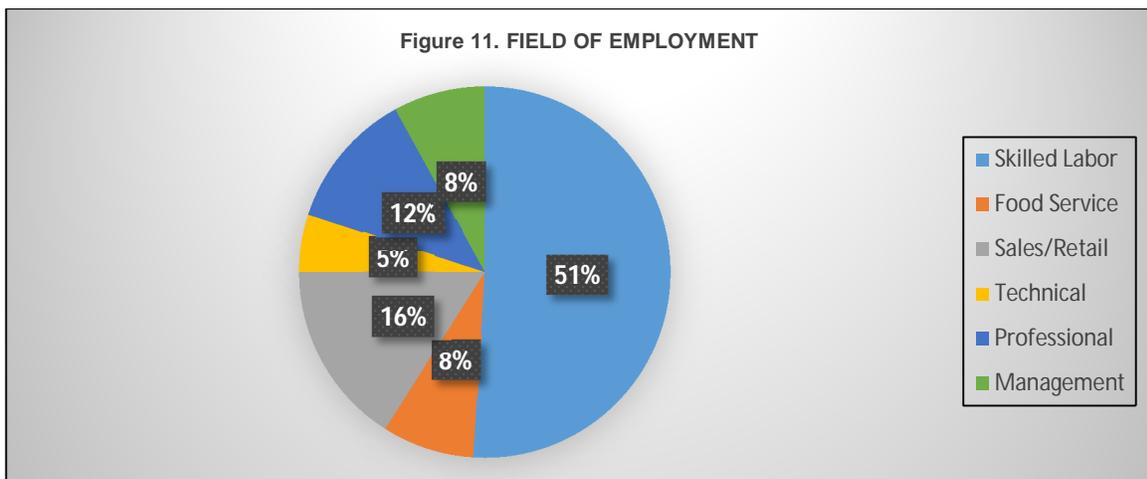
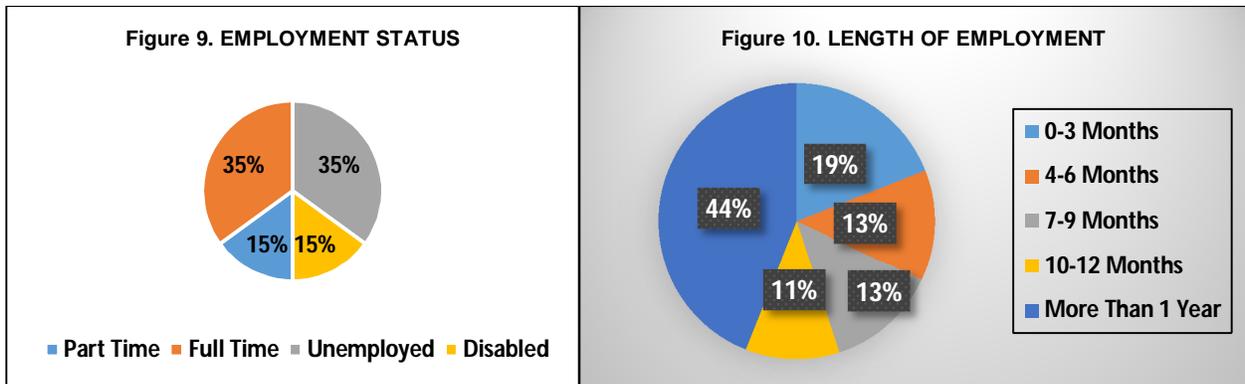


Employment

Eligible ECSD inmates have the opportunity to attend classes and workshops that may prepare them for employment in the workforce. However, skills deficits, the stigma of having been incarcerated and a continuously weak economy can hamper employment opportunities for former inmates. The unemployment rate among former inmates released in 2013 was 35% (see Figure 9). Current inmates are excluded from these figures, as 100% of them are unemployed and their inclusion would skew results.

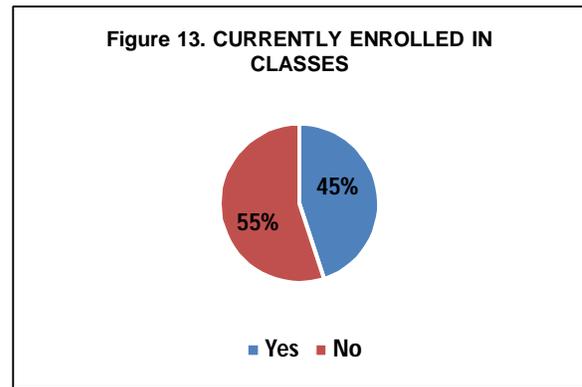
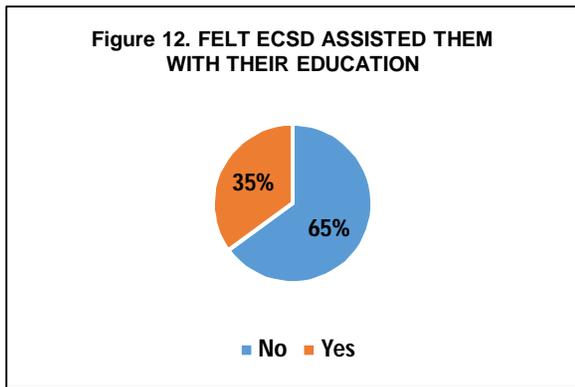
Of former inmates who reported being employed, 44% reported holding their position for more than a year (see Figure 10). Thirty-two percent reported being employed for six months or less and 24% stated they had their jobs between seven and 12 months. Employment reported for more than one year is indicative of an employer holding a position for an employee during incarceration.

Skilled labor and trades formed over one-half of the field of employment of former inmates. A combined 41% worked in the professional, food service, sales/retail and technical fields, while 8% were in management (see Figure 11). With regard to wages, 52% earned \$500 or less per week and 18% earned between \$501 and \$750 per week. Those earning \$751 or higher per week amounted to 30%.



Education

Education is associated with release success, while conversely, limited education is considered a risk factor for recidivism (Braga, Piehl, & Hureau, 2008, p. 2). ECSD, therefore, encourages inmates to pursue education during their sentences. Not all inmates participate in classes, however, and this is due to several factors. Brevity of sentence may limit educational opportunities, or inmates may have already obtained general equivalency, a high school diploma or a degree. Disciplinary issues may not permit an inmate to partake, while others make a choice not to take classes. Thirty-five percent of respondents answered that the ECSD assisted them with their education (see Figure 12). Forty-five percent were pursuing education one year after release (see Figure 13).



Twenty-nine percent reported having college or other higher education experience (see Table 1). Thirty percent reported having received a high school diploma and 19% had GEDs. Just under a quarter (22%) had no GEDs or high school diploma.

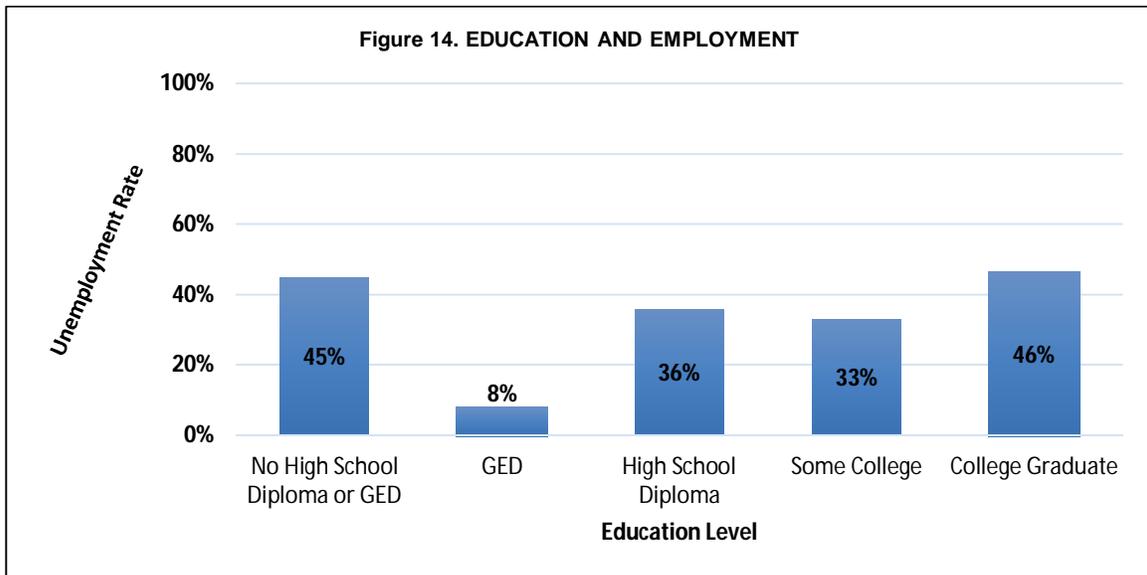
Table 1

Education Levels Among Former Inmates	
Level of Education	%
No HS Diploma or GED/HiSet	22
GED or HiSET	19
High School Diploma	30
Some College	20
College Graduate	9

Education and Employment

Former inmates with no high school diplomas or GEDs had a high unemployment rate of 45%. The unemployment rate for inmates with high school diplomas was 36%, and with GEDs, 8%. Former inmates with some college experience saw an unemployment rate of 33% and college graduates a rate of 46% (see Figure 14).

These high unemployment rates may reflect a shortage of available positions in the job market whether managerial, support, labor or other types. Additionally, the label of “ex-offender” and the reluctance of employers to hire applicants with criminal or jail histories may still impact employability (Pager & Western, 2009). During interviews, several former and current inmates stated anecdotally that their incarceration history was a hindrance to securing meaningful and legitimate employment.



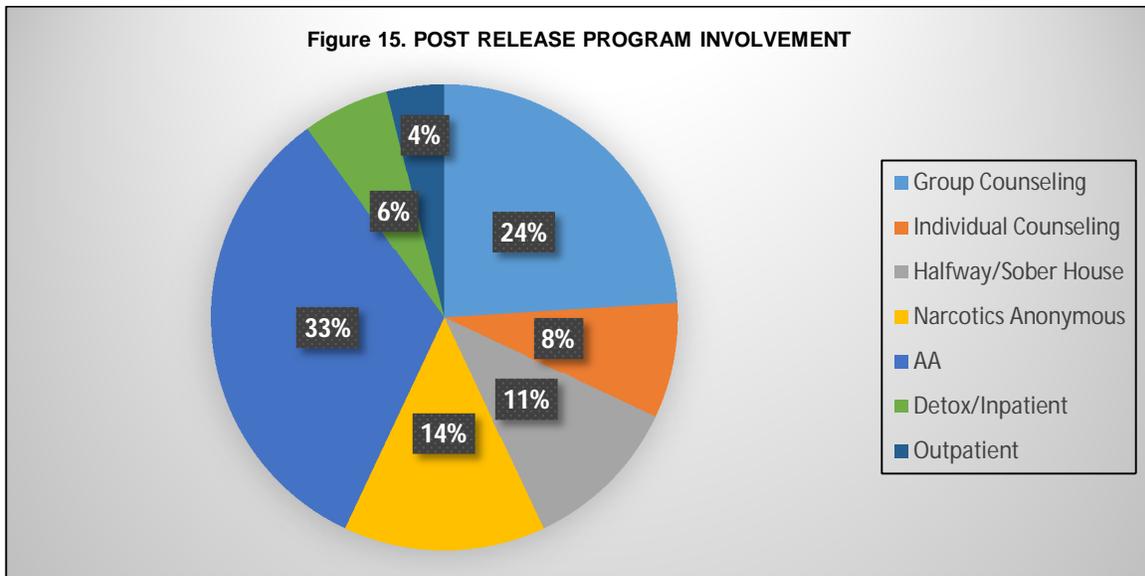
Substance Abuse

Approximately 85% of ECSD inmates have substance related issues. Consequently, the ECSD staff helps inmates face, and hopefully overcome, their substance abuse issues. Several drug and alcohol programs are offered to offenders while they are incarcerated. Seventy-nine percent of inmates released in 2013 participated in substance abuse programs prior to their release. Upon release from the ECSD inmates may participate in outside programs through referral, court mandate or personal choice. One year after release, 86% reported being enrolled in a substance abuse program (see Table 2).

Table 2

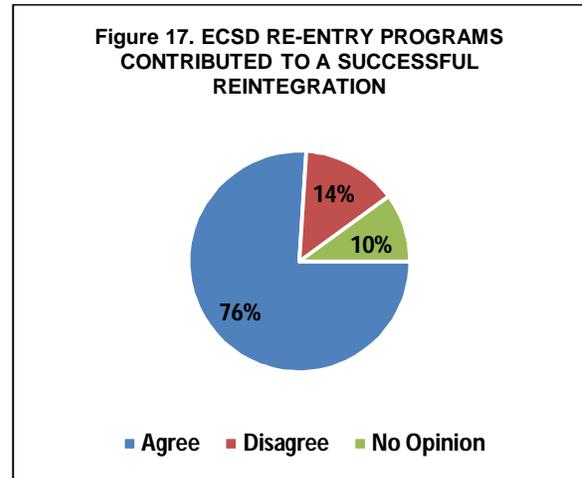
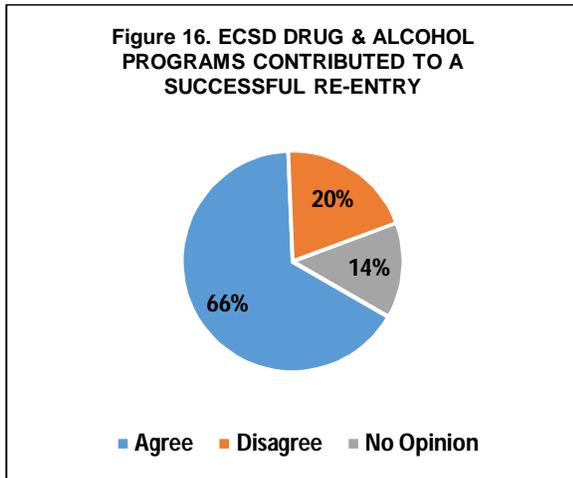
Participation in Substance Abuse Programs Pre/Post Release		
Status	Participated (%)	Did Not Participate (%)
In Custody	79	21
Post Release	86	14

Of former inmates who participated in post-release counseling, treatment or programs, 33% attended Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Thirty-two percent attended individual or group counseling. Narcotics Anonymous and halfway/sober houses had 25% of participants. The remaining 10% reported seeking treatment at outpatient locations or inpatient detoxification centers (see Figure 15).

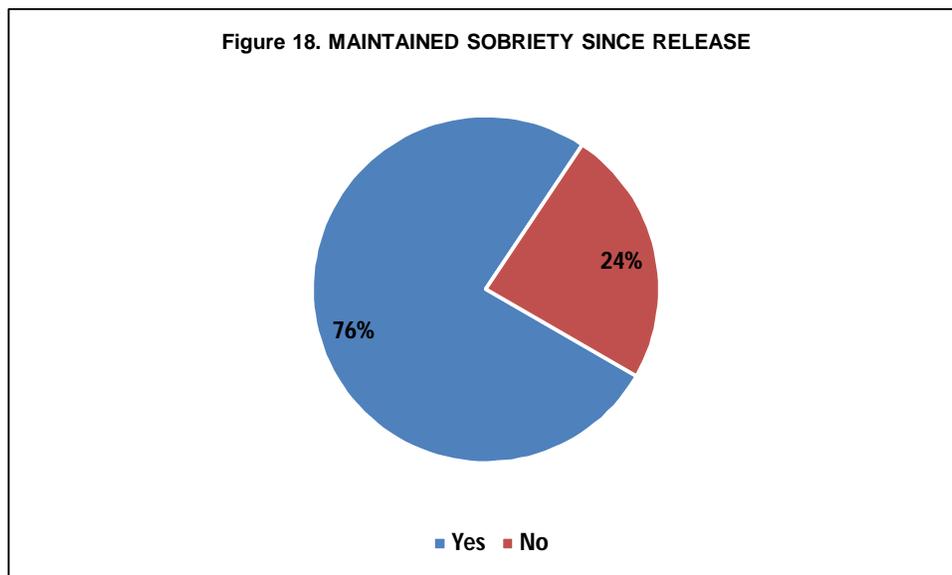


Rehabilitation Programs

The ECSD staff is committed to helping inmates with substance abuse issues. This is reflected in inmates' attitudes toward ECSD program offerings. Two-thirds (66%) of former inmates interviewed believed that drug and alcohol programs available through ECSD contributed to a successful reintegration (see Figure 16). Seventy-six percent felt that the Department's Re-entry programs contributed to a successful reintegration (see Figure 17).

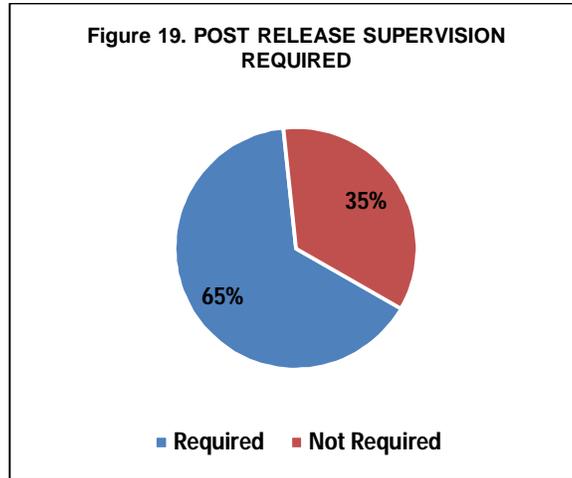


Seventy-six percent of respondents stated that they had maintained sobriety since their release (see Figure 18). This may reflect some bias with the former inmate putting himself or herself in the best possible light but it also reflects the success of the programs taken while incarcerated at the ECSD and after release.

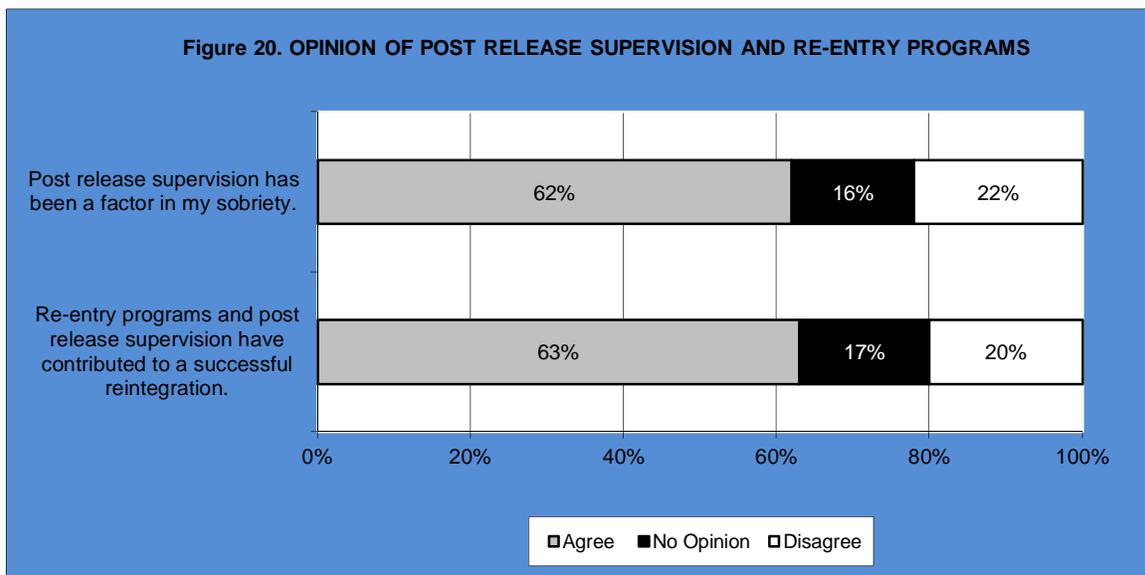


Post Release Supervision

The ECSD enjoys a close working relationship with the Massachusetts Parole and Probation Departments. Regular information sharing, frequent communication and a joint ECSD/Probation working group that meets periodically all serve to assist with the seamless transition of offenders. The post release supervision provided by parole and probation give structure and accountability to aid the success and reintegration of former inmates. The majority of inmates released in 2013 (65%) were required to be on parole or probation (see Figure 19).

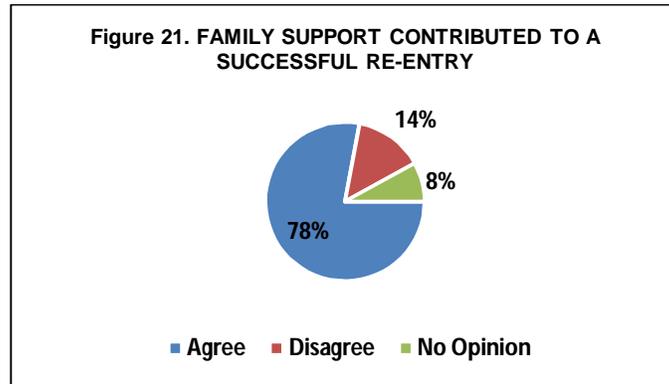


Of former inmates who were required to have post release supervision, 62% felt that such supervision helped them maintain sobriety. Sixty-three percent felt that the combination of post release supervision *and* the ECSD’s Re-Entry programs were helpful (see Figure 20).

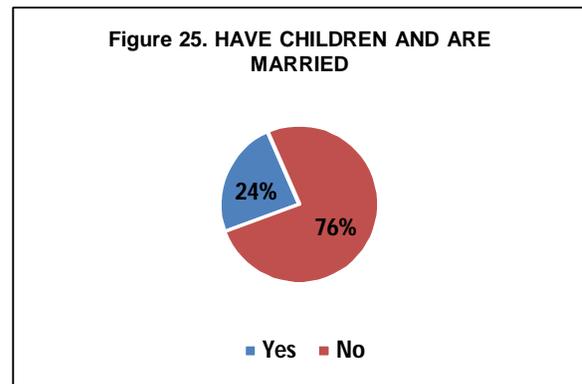
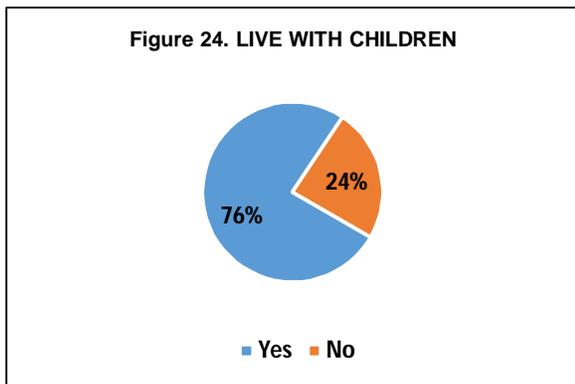
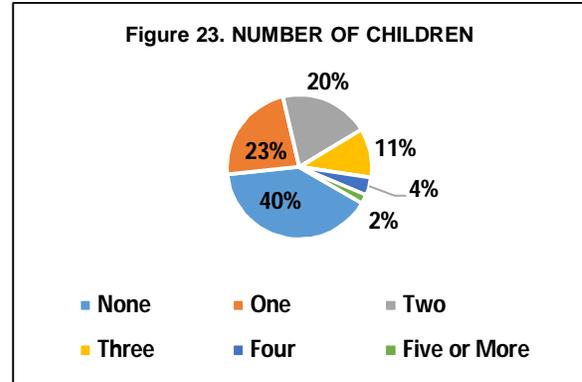
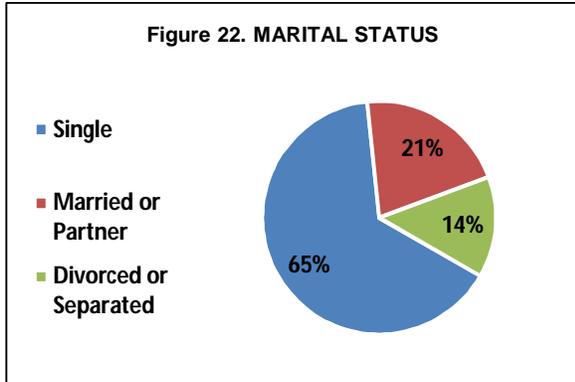


Family Status

Most former inmates were of the opinion that family helped them. An impressive 78% responded that they felt family contributed to a successful re-entry (see Figure 21). Inmates' family members are encouraged to visit, as family is a key part to reintegration. Loved ones often provide stability, a place to live and financial support. In addition, the responsibility of having a family can sometimes help a former inmate succeed.



While the family unit provides support for former inmates, most (65%) remained single (see Figure 22). Sixty percent had at least one child (see Figure 23), and 24% reported living with their children. Of those former inmates who had children, only 24% were married (see Figure 25).



III. RE-ENTRY EXIT INTERVIEW RELEASE PLAN

Section Overview

The inmates who took part in the Exit Interviews (just prior to release) are not necessarily the same people who took part in the Aftercare Questionnaires (one year after release). Therefore, the results shown in the "Exit Interview" section may be different than those in the "Demographics" section. The information contained in this section was obtained through the ECSD's "Re-entry Exit Interview/Release Plan" administered to inmates just prior to release. Participation was mandatory. Inmates, though, were informed that their responses would not affect their pre or post release treatment. The following areas were examined: facility from which released, offenses for which incarcerated, cities to which released, post-release supervision, drug of choice, education level and program involvement. All participants were released from the custody of the Essex County Sheriff's Department during 2013.

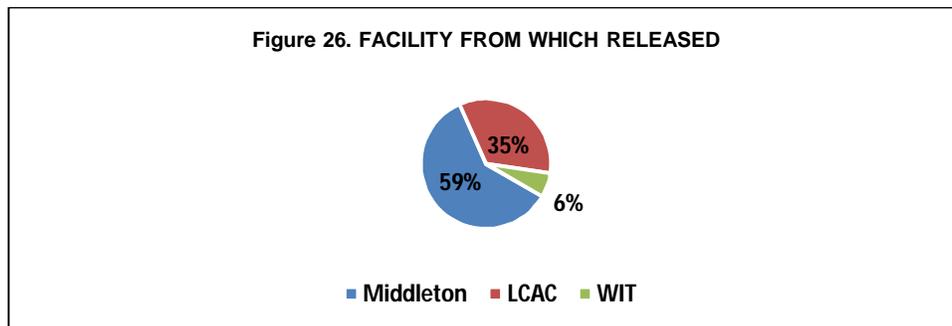
The ECSD Reintegration Process

Reintegration Coordinators at the ECSD's facilities assist inmates in preparing for their release. Each sentenced inmate meets with his or her Reintegration Coordinator every 60 days and again just before release. A schedule of programs, classes and/or treatments are planned for the inmate to help him or her succeed after incarceration. Before his or her release, each inmate is required to complete a Re-entry/Exit Interview and Release Plan. In addition to helping the inmate prepare to leave, the plan helps staff obtain useful information about each inmate.

Inmates and their coordinators discuss several key issues relevant to their incarceration. These include an examination of the inmate's CORI record including current/open charges and a review of the ECSD Inmate Handbook. Willingness to accept responsibility, substance abuse history, domestic violence issues and gang affiliations are also discussed. Areas which may need focus such as education, life and family skills and job skills are covered as well. Sheriff Frank G. Cousins, Jr. has remarked that ECSD "owes it to the citizens of Essex County to help our inmates be the best they can be after their release."

Facility from Which Released

In 2013, 59% of sentenced inmates who were released came from the Middleton Facility, ECSD's largest facility. Thirty-five percent of sentenced releases came from the ECPRC, the second largest facility, and 6% came from the WIT.



Offenses for Which Incarcerated

Assault and battery, drug related charges, motor vehicle offenses and OUI are among the most typical charges from inmates sentenced to the ECSD. Of sentenced inmates released in 2013, 19% were incarcerated for A&B and 12% for drug related charges (see Table 3). Eleven percent were incarcerated for motor vehicle offenses and 9% for OUI, usually subsequent offenses which may carry mandatory house of correction time.

Most inmates have substance abuse issues and that underlying issue or addiction may have spurred criminal behavior. An inmate may have been under the influence while committing a crime; was committing a crime to get money to fuel a substance habit; or was involved in buying or selling drugs.

Table 3

Offenses for Which Incarcerated	
Offense	(%)
Assault and Battery	19
Drug Related Charges	12
Motor Vehicle Violations	11
OUI	9
Burglary/Larceny	8
Other	8
Violation of Parole/Probation	8
Breaking and Entering	5
Abuse Prevention Act/Restraining Order/209A Violations	4
Non-Payment of Child Support	4
Receiving Stolen Property	3
Firearms/Weapons Violations	3
Destruction of Property	2
Shoplifting	2
Resisting Arrest	1
Threat/Attempt to Commit a Crime	1

* "Other" include offenses with less than 1% response.

Communities to Which Released

Of the 2013 release cohort, 76% were going to live in Essex County. Annually, the largest portions of inmates released reside in the population dense cities of Lawrence, Lynn and Haverhill. The trend continued for inmates released in 2013: 16% went to Lawrence, 14% to Lynn and 14% to Haverhill (see table 4).

Table 4

Communities to Which Released	
City	(%)
Amesbury	3
Beverly	3
Danvers	1
Gloucester	3
Haverhill	14
Lawrence	16
Lynn	14
Methuen	3
Newburyport	1
Peabody	4
Salem	5
Salisbury	2
Saugus	1
Other Communities in Essex County	6
Out of Essex County	24

Substance Use

Alcohol is consistently the number one substance of choice among inmates who stated they used drugs or alcohol. Of inmates released in 2013, 33% of substance users claimed alcohol as their substance of choice. Heroin users exceeded marijuana users with 28% choosing heroin versus 26% choosing marijuana (see Table 5). This is indicative of the growing amount of heroin and other opiate use in the Commonwealth and especially Essex County. Cocaine and crack were cited by 7% and prescription drugs by 3%. Some inmates listed other substances (such as suboxone or synthetic marijuana) which are categorized as "Other" and amounted to 2%. Benzodiazepine was cited by 1%.

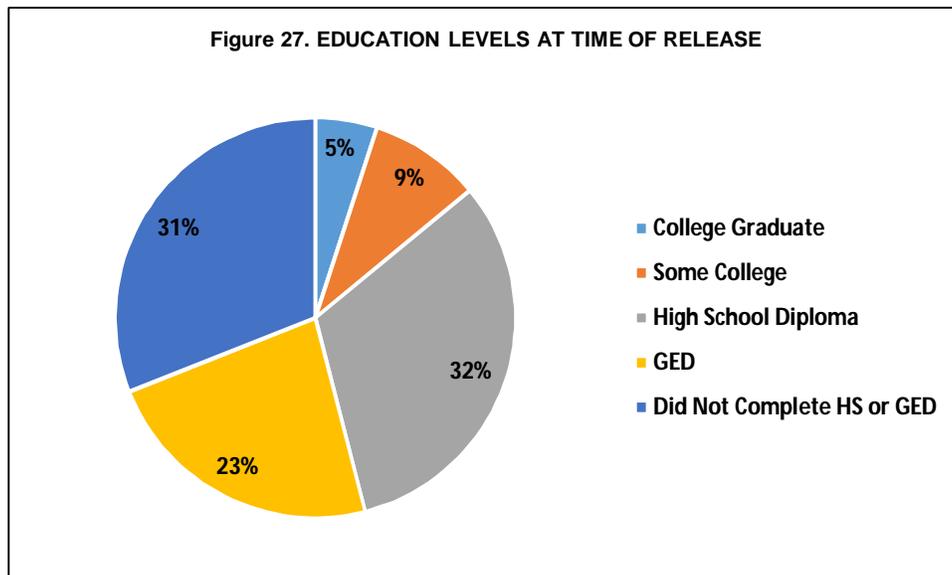
Table 5

Substance of Choice Among Inmates	
Drug of Choice	(%)
Alcohol	33
Heroin	28
Marijuana	26
Cocaine/Crack	7
Prescription	3
Other	2
Benzodiazepine	1

* "Other" includes categories with less than 1% response.

Education

At the time of their Exit Interviews, 31% did not have GEDs or high school diplomas. Thirty-two percent had high school diplomas, 23% had GEDs, 9% had some college and 5% were college graduates (see Figure 27). A comparison of pre-release and post-release education is available in Table Six.



Education Comparison: Pre-Release vs. Post-Release

The portion of former inmates without high school diplomas or GEDs decreased from 31% at exit to 22% one year post release. The portion of GEDs decreased slightly from 23% at exit to 19% post release, and the portion with high school diplomas decreased from 32% to 30%. The percentage with college experience rose from 14% at exit to 29% post release (see Table 6). These data indicate that former inmates may be pursuing higher education.

Table 6



Education	Exit Interview (%)	One Year Post Release.(%)
No HS Diploma or GED	31	22
GED	23	19
High School Diploma	32	30
Some College	9	20
College Graduate	5	9

Program Involvement

“Re-entry begins day one.” All ECSD Reintegration Coordinators are familiar with this expression and practice this philosophy. A variety of programs, classes, support groups, life skills classes, peer meetings and one-on-one counseling sessions are available to ECSD inmates at Middleton, ECPRC and WIT.

Adult Basic Education/HiSet classes focus on the fundamentals that will help the inmates succeed in the workforce. Studies include writing skills, social studies, science, literature and math. ECSD is an approved state testing center.

Computer Literacy presents a basic understanding of personal computer applications.

ROCA provides education, counseling and job skills and placement assistance to ECSD high risk inmates ages 18-24. United Teen Equality Center provides similar services to youthful offenders in Lawrence and Lowell.

TRAC is a collaboration between Middleton’s 80-bed (Substance Abuse) unit and the ECPRC. This therapeutic program focuses on the understanding of the disease of addiction as a way to establish a recovery-based lifestyle. Through a community environment, it promotes responsibility, honesty, accountability and positive care.

The Essex County Re-entry Center offered at the ECPRC is a cognitive-behavioral treatment with a focus on an inmate’s release plan. The curriculum includes criminal and addictive Thinking, drug and alcohol Education and relapse prevention.

Alternatives to Violence is designed to identify and address negative behavior with inmates living on a separate unit committed to intense treatment.

Drug and Alcohol Group Counseling offers clients help in substance abuse recovery, accessing aftercare and further understanding relapse, recovery and sponsorship.

Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous meetings are held seven days a week at the ECPRC.

Vocational training such as Barbering master licensure, Serv-Safe Certification and Occupational Health and Safety certification are available to inmates.

Motheread at the WIT provides a nationally recognized approach to teaching literacy skills to adults and children. It utilizes children’s books and adult poems/narratives as the basis for instruction. This group also increases participants’ self-esteem and helps provide women with tools to bond with their children.

Substance Abuse/Understanding Addiction at the WIT provides drug and addiction education as well as addressing the cycle of addiction, and biological, physiological, social and environmental influences.

Volunteers from various 12-step groups within the local communities provide in-house commitments for the WIT. WIT inmates also attend outside AA/NA meetings within the area and participate in in-house peer-led meetings.

Conclusion

Ultimately, the one year recidivism rate reflects the success of released sentenced inmates. The inmates' success or failure is a product, however, of several factors. These factors include education, employment, substance abuse and family support. To understand how effective ECSD management and staff have been in helping inmates succeed after incarceration, one needs to examine each of these factors.

Education: A large variety of classes and programs are offered to the people in the care of the ECSD, at the three correctional facilities as well as at the three Offices of Community Corrections (OCC). The OCCs offer day reporting for inmates who have been released from one of the three correctional facilities, but are required by the court to attend programs, provide urine samples or hold a part-time job through the OCC. Virtually every sentenced inmate receives education in the form of programs, formal classes, peer support or treatment. Of sentenced inmates released in 2013, 35% felt the ECSD assisted them with their education.

Employment: Employment allows former inmates to feel good about themselves. A job helps one to be productive, and improves one's self esteem. Unfortunately, the unemployment rate among former inmates is significantly higher than the general population. The higher unemployment rate reflects not only the propensity of some former inmates to seek *alternative means of income* (i.e. through illegal activity, resulting in arrest and recidivism), but also the barriers former inmates face attempting to find work with the "ex-offender" label. To address both sides of this issue, the ECSD staff provides not only educational courses, but also occupational training, resume writing and career training for inmates.

Substance Abuse: ECSD management has a pragmatic approach to substance abuse and treatment. They realize that approximately 85% of ECSD inmates have substance abuse issues and, therefore, must be treated. Programs such as TRAC (Treatment and Recovery of Addictions in Corrections), Drug & Alcohol and ECRC (Essex County Recovery Center) provide excellent counseling and rehabilitation opportunities for inmates.

Family: Seventy-eight percent of inmates released in 2013 felt that family support contributed to a successful re-entry. Sixty-five percent were single and 60% had at least one child. Over three-quarters (76%) lived with their children. Of those former inmates who had children only 24% were married, showing a small percentage of inmates maintaining a conventional family structure. Inmates are encouraged to reach out to their families for support and to allow family to help them in their reintegration process. In addition, families are encouraged to visit inmates and plan for their release.

The efforts of the ECSD staff are reflected further in the agency's one year recidivism rate. In the face of budget constraints and a difficult economy, the ECSD staff has continued to offer excellent care, custody and rehabilitation services for inmates. The evidence of this success is quantified in the 2013 one year recidivism rate of 46.10%. This is .99% above the 2012 rate, and 0.56% above the average one year rate (2009 – 2013) of 45.54%.

A Profile of Essex County Sheriff's Department's 2013 Released Inmates:

- The one year recidivism rate five year average is 45.54%.
- The one year recidivism rate for 2013 is 46.10%.
- Of former inmates who recidivated, 57% had new arraignments while 33% were found guilty of new charges and 10% violated parole or probation.
- Of the Department's three facilities, Middleton had the highest recidivism rate with 49.61%, followed by the ECPRC with 41.44% and the WIT with 38.46%.
- Forty-four percent of former inmates lived with family, 14% lived with friends, 15% lived with a spouse or partner, and 27% lived alone.
- Seventy-eight percent felt family support helped them with reintegration.
- Most (65%) were single, 21% were married or had a partner and 14% were divorced or separated.
- Sixty percent had at least one child. Seventy-six percent lived with their children and 24% who reported having children were married.
- The top three offenses for which the inmates were incarcerated were assault and battery (19%) drug-related charges (12%) and motor vehicle violations (11%).
- Among former inmates who declared a drug of choice, 33% chose alcohol, followed by heroin at 28% and marijuana at 26%. The remaining 13% was comprised of cocaine/crack, prescription drugs, benzodiazepine or other substances.

The data presented in this report were collected primarily between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014. Data collection went into April 2015 to allow researchers to capture as much relevant data and obtain as large a sample size as possible. Extending the data collection period only enhanced the reliability of the findings.

Based on the research conducted for this report, it is evident that Sheriff Frank G. Cousins, Jr. and the staff at the Essex County Sheriff's Department are working diligently on, and succeeding in, helping offenders succeed once released from the custody of the Essex County Sheriff's Department.

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