

Essex County Sheriff's Department

Massachusetts



One Year Recidivism 2012

Frank G. Cousins, Jr., Sheriff

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 we 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 re-entry. It is this philosophy that the Sheriff encourages employees of the Essex County Sheriff's Department to adopt in their daily dealings 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 Kimberly Murtagh. 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.

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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. 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. The hallmark of the ECPRC, however, is the staff's commitment to the community. Through the staff's efforts and cooperation with community leaders and civic organizations, inmate work crews give back to Essex County. From painting buildings to filling sand bags to prevent storm damage, supervised ECPRC inmates can be seen helping throughout Essex County.

Assistant Superintendent Kimberly Murtagh 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 December, 2011, 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 provides emergency dispatch services for local communities as well as cell phone 911 calls originating from 67 communities.

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; a secure area for vehicles coming into or leaving the facility. This will improve and streamline the inmate transportation and intake process. The new intake/booking area and inmate property carousel serve to streamline inmate booking and release processes. New construction will transform the current 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 2012, and factors affecting this rate. Of the 2,055 sentenced inmates who were released in 2012, 927 recidivated, for a one-year recidivism rate of 45.11%.

This is slightly lower than the 2011 rate of 46.59% and lower than the average for the past five years (inclusive of 2012) of 45.58%.

Of the former inmates who were released in 2012 and recidivated within one year, 56% had new arraignments, 28% were found guilty of new crimes and 16% 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* (62%). The ECPRC accounted for 36% of released inmates and 33% of those who recidivated. The WIT accounted for 5% of released inmates and 5% of those who recidivated.

Introduction

Purpose

This report includes the one-year recidivism rate for sentenced inmates released in 2012. For the purposes of this report, an individual has recidivated if, within one year after his or her release, he or she was found guilty of a new charge, had a new arraignment or violated parole or probation. This report also details employment, education, housing, family structure, drug use, program involvement and inmates' opinions of certain aspects of the Essex County Sheriff's Department. An underlying goal of the Department is to help inmates stay out of jail or prison in the future. This goal is measurable through the recidivism rate which is considered to be the "leading statistical indicator of return on correctional investment" (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

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

Research and Statistics staff (also trained correctional officers), trained Research Assistants or supervised college interns administered the *Aftercare Questionnaires*. If an individual who was released during 2012 was re-incarcerated at the ECSD (i.e. had been arrested and incarcerated since his or her release) the interview was done in-person when possible. The interview was done by phone for all other former inmates whom researchers could locate.

The Release Cohort

All participants in this study were released from the custody of the ECSD in 2012; 95% were male. Fifty-nine percent were released from the Department's Middleton facility, 36% from the ECPRC and 5% 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.

As participants were former inmates, 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 = 927) by the number *who were released* in 2012 (n = 2,055). This resulted in a one-year recidivism rate of 45.11%.

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 report which details dates of 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 (CWOFF), dismissal, probation imposed by a court, or default statuses by a defendant. In short, the BOP is 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, 2013 and December 31, 2013 researchers ran a *Call List* comprised of all sentenced inmates who had been released one year earlier (January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012). In addition, an *Active Inmate List* was run each month. This list told 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. A *Crystal® Report Writer* program was used to compile the *Active Inmate List*. *Microsoft® Excel* spreadsheets were used to compile statistics and design spreadsheets and charts.

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The background of the page features a large, faint, light-gray seal of the Essex County Sheriff's Department. The seal is a seven-pointed star with a central circular emblem. The emblem contains a shield with a scale of justice and a sword. The words "SHERIFF'S DEPT." are arched over the top of the shield, and "ESSEX COUNTY" is arched below it. The word "MASSACHUSETTS" is written in a smaller arc across the middle of the shield. The star's points are decorated with ornate scrollwork.

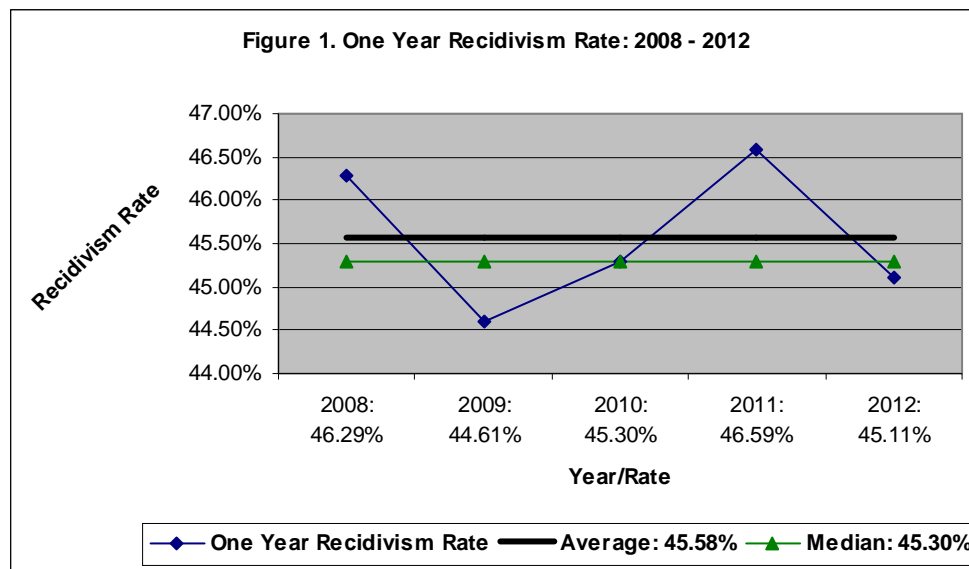
RECIDIVISM

The information contained in this section pertains to data gathered on sentenced individuals released from the custody of the Essex County Sheriff's Department during 2012. The information is broken down into monthly indicators showing the way in which the offenders did recidivate. Recidivism is defined as the percentage of individuals who, within one year of release, had new arraignments, were found guilty of new charges, or violated parole or probation.

Recidivism

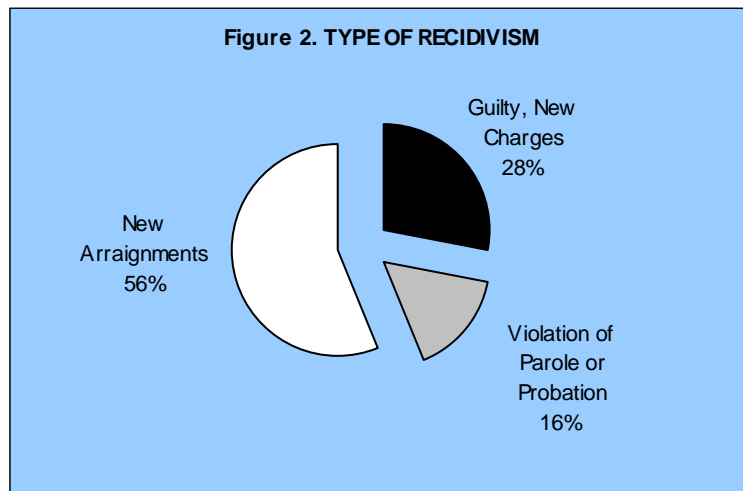
During 2012, 2,055 sentenced inmates were released from the custody of the Essex County Sheriff's Department. Of these former inmates, 927 recidivated, meaning a one-year recidivism rate of 45.11% (see Figure 1).

The 2012 one-year recidivism rate is a slight 1.48% below the 2011 rate and 0.47% below the average between 2008 and 2012. 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 927 former inmates who did recidivate, more than half (56%) had new arraignments. Twenty-eight percent were found guilty of new crimes and 16% recidivated by violating parole or probation (see Figure 2).

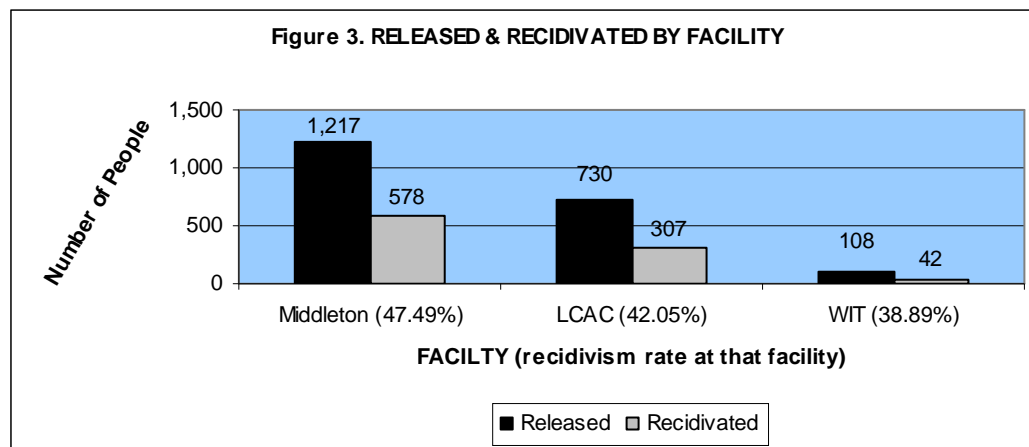


Recidivism

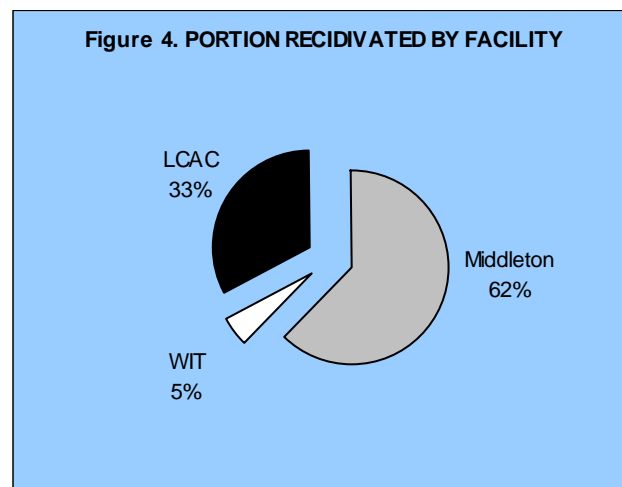
Recidivism by Facility

The ECSD operates three main 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 facility for men. Being a minimum security facility 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 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 allows inmates to be housed 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).



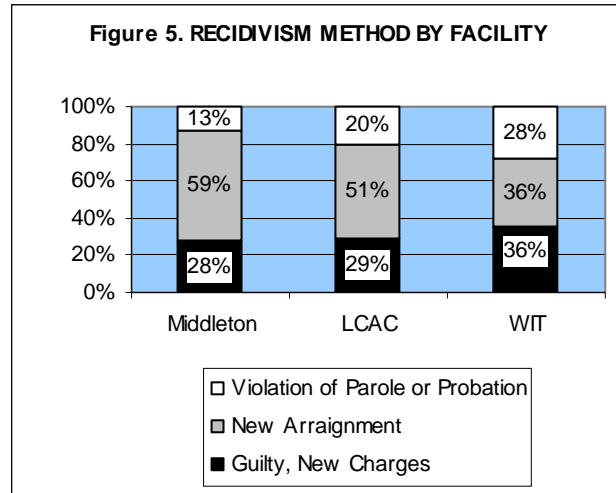
As the Middleton facility houses the most inmates and the more serious offenders, it accounts for the largest portion of inmates who recidivate. The ECPRC and the WIT house fewer inmates, as well as those convicted of less serious crimes. The ECPRC has the second largest number of inmates released and 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 2012, 62% were released from Middleton, 33% from the ECPRC and 5% from the WIT.



Recidivism

For each of the three facilities, most former inmates who recidivated did so by having new arraignments. Guilty verdicts accounted for slightly more than one-fourth of re-offenders from the Middleton facility and the ECPRC.

For WIT re-offenders, over one-third violated parole or probation or were found guilty of new offenses, respectively. (see Figure 5).



Note that those who re-offend by having new arraignments or being found guilty of new charges often violate parole or probation because of the new arraignment or new charge. In these cases, we would allow the new arraignment or new guilty finding to “trump” the parole/probation violation. This, in general, decreases the number of violation of parole/probation findings.



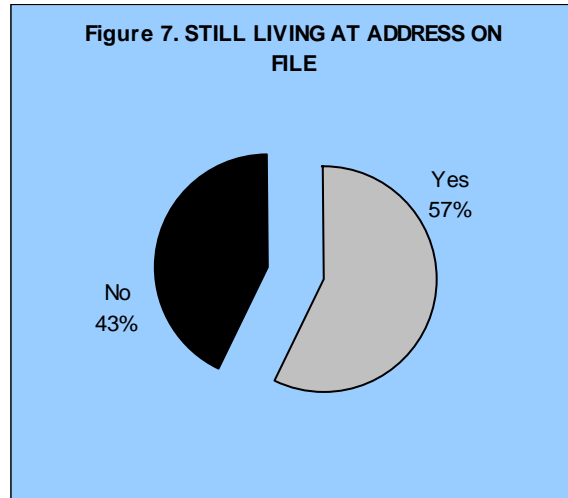
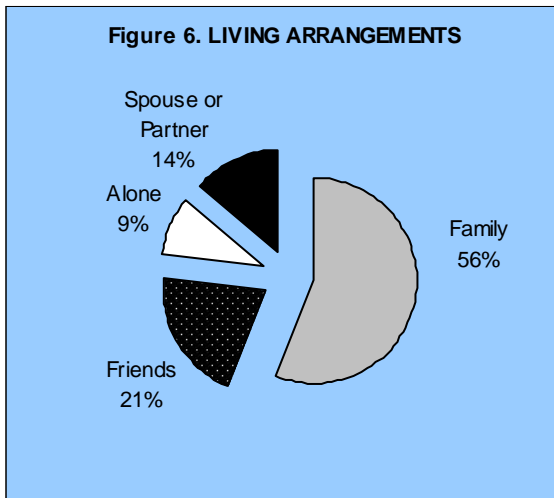
DEMOGRAPHICS

This section covers demographic data obtained through the Department's "Aftercare Questionnaire." The questionnaire was taken on a voluntary basis. Participants were informed that neither their choice to participate nor their responses would affect their pre or post release treatment. The following areas were examined: housing, employment, education, substance abuse, rehabilitation, post release supervision and family information. All participants were released from the custody of the Essex County Sheriff's Department during 2012.

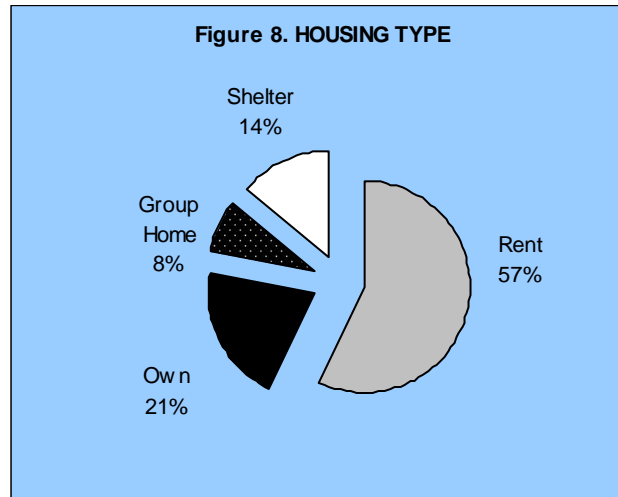
Demographics

Housing

Perhaps due to economic difficulties, a large portion (56%) of former inmates reported living with family one year after release. More than one in five (21%) lived with friends. Fourteen percent found residence with a spouse or partner and 9% lived alone (see Figure 6). Fifty-seven percent reported living at the same address they were at when released (see Figure 7).



Over one-half (57%) reported renting, while 21% reported owning a home or living with a person who owns a home. Twenty-two percent lived in group homes or shelters (see Figure 8).



Demographics

Employment

ECSD inmates attend classes and workshops that prepare them for employment. Unfortunately, a slow economy, skills deficits and the stigma of being a former inmate can limit job opportunities for former inmates. The unemployment rate among former inmates released in 2012 was 55% (see Figure 9). Note that these figures exclude current inmates. As 100% of current inmates are unemployed, including them on this chart would skew results.

Of former inmates who reported being employed, 42% of respondents reported being employed for six months or less and 17% stated they had their jobs between seven and 12 months. Forty-one percent reported having their jobs for more than a year (see Figure 10). Reporting employment for more than one year indicates the employer held the position for the employee while he or she was incarcerated, as is often the case in labor-type fields.

Thirty-nine percent of former inmates who found work were employed as skilled laborers. A combined 57% were employed in various fields (professional, food service, sales/retail and technical), though only 4% were in management (see Figure 11).

Wages remained relatively low among former inmates. Sixty-three percent earned \$500 or less, and another 12% earned between \$501 and \$750 per week. Only 25% reported earning \$751 or more per week.

Figure 9. EMPLOYMENT STATUS

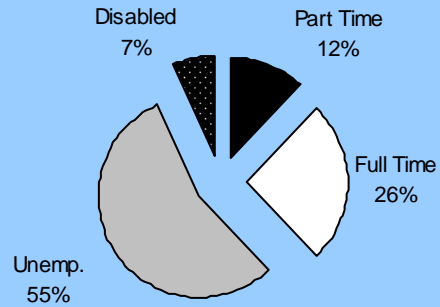


Figure 10. LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT

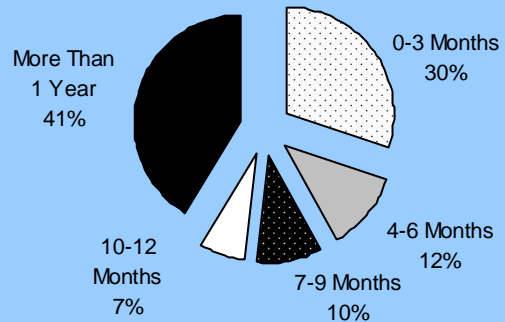
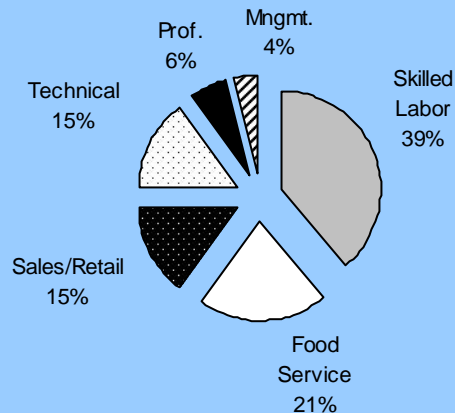


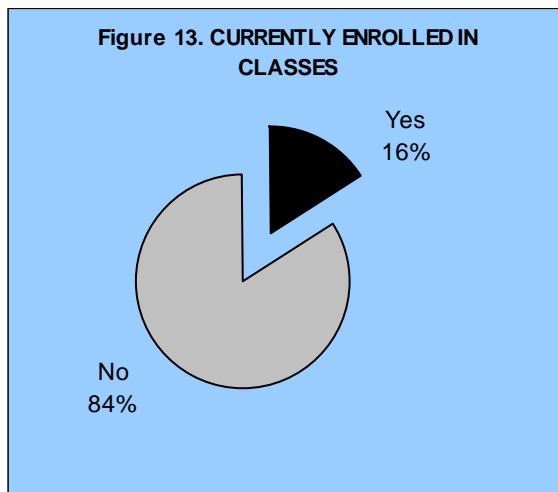
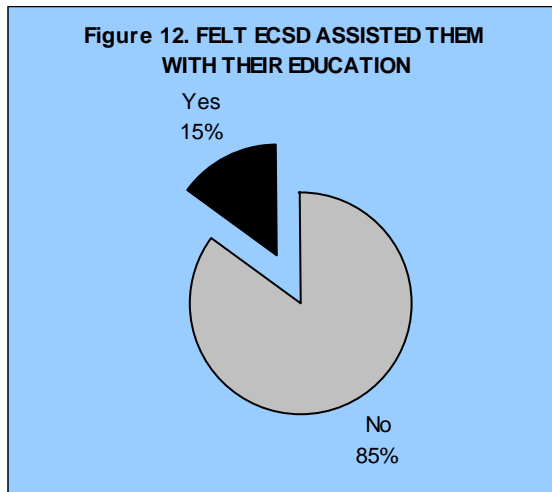
Figure 11. FIELD OF EMPLOYMENT



Demographics

Education

Education is associated with success post release. ECSD, therefore, encourages inmates to pursue education (see “Program Involvement,” page 20). Not all inmates, however, participate in classes. Some inmates’ sentences are too short for them to enroll. Some already have GEDs, high school diplomas or higher education. Others cannot participate due to disciplinary issues, and some simply choose not to partake. Fifteen percent of former inmates stated that the ECSD helped them with their education (see Figure 12). Sixteen percent were pursuing education one year after release (see Figure 13).



One quarter (25%) of former inmates had no GEDs or high school diplomas. While 19% had GEDs, 27% had high school diplomas. Twenty-nine percent reported having college experience (see Table 1).

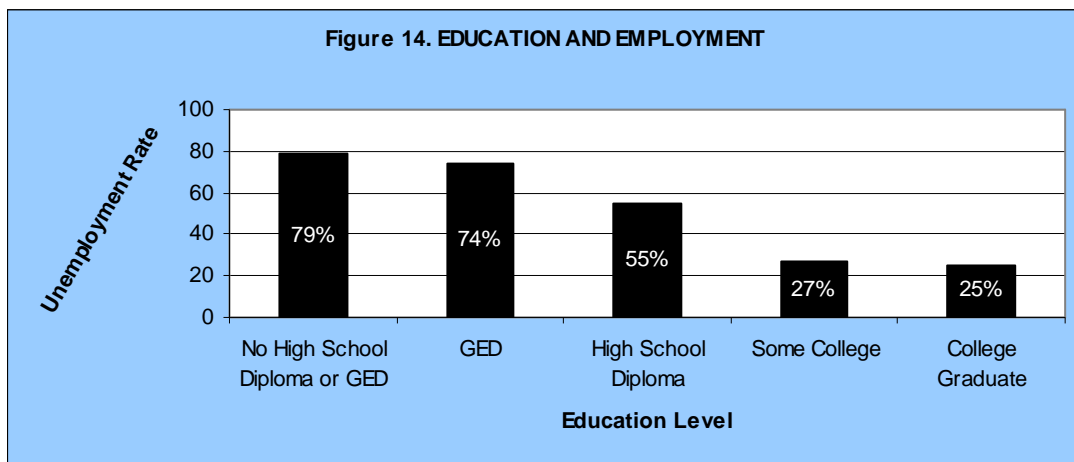
Table 1

Education Levels Among Former Inmates	
Level of Education	%
No HS Diploma or GED	25
GED	19
High School Diploma	27
Some College	21
College Graduate	8

Demographics

Education and Employment

Former inmates with no high school diplomas or GEDs had an extremely high unemployment rate of 79%. The unemployment rate was also high for inmates with GEDs or high school diplomas; 74% and 55% respectively. Former inmates with some college experience saw an unemployment rate of 27% and college graduates a rate of 25%. (see Figure 14). The steady high unemployment rate may be reflecting the shortage of managerial positions or the fact that the label of “ex-offender” may still impact employability. Please note that for the purposes of this study, “disabled” is not considered “unemployed”.



Demographics

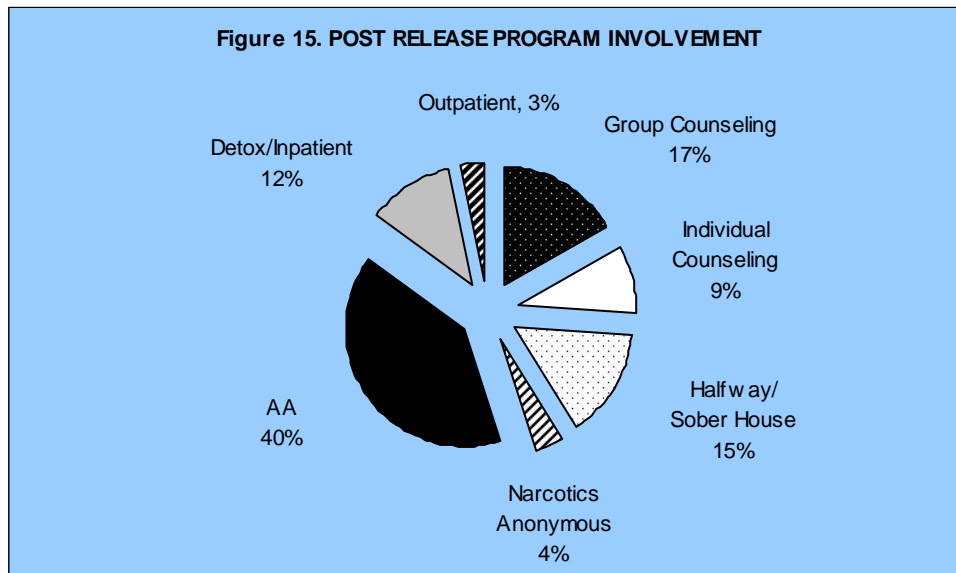
Substance Abuse

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. Fifty-seven percent of inmates released in 2012 participated in substance abuse programs prior to their release. In addition, upon release from the ECSD, inmates are referred to outside programs. One year after release 60% 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 (%)
Pre Release	57	43
Post Release	60	40

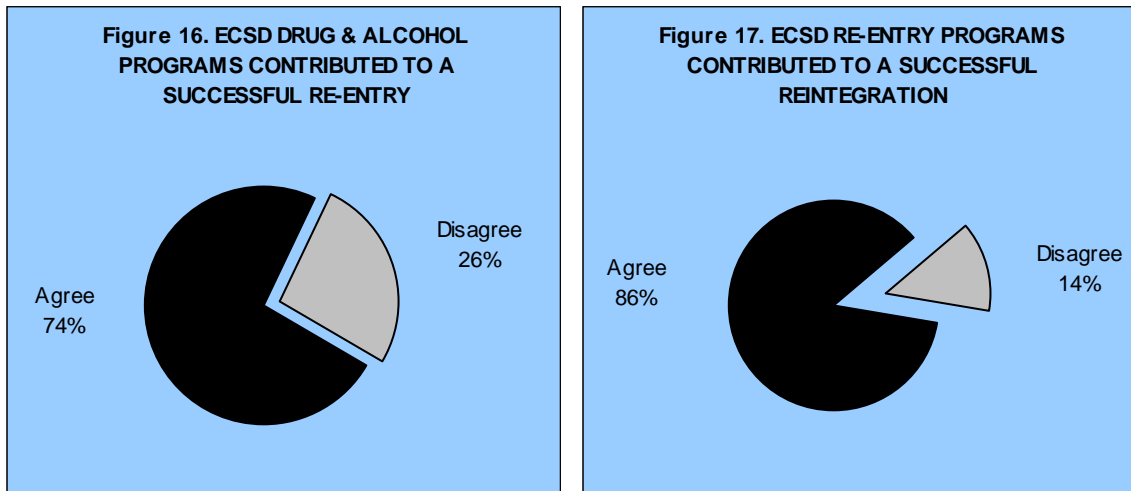
Of former inmates who participated in post-release counseling or programs, 40% attended AA. Twenty-six percent attended individual or group counseling. Narcotics Anonymous and halfway/sober houses had 19% of participants; while inpatient detoxification centers saw 12% of participants (see Figure 15).



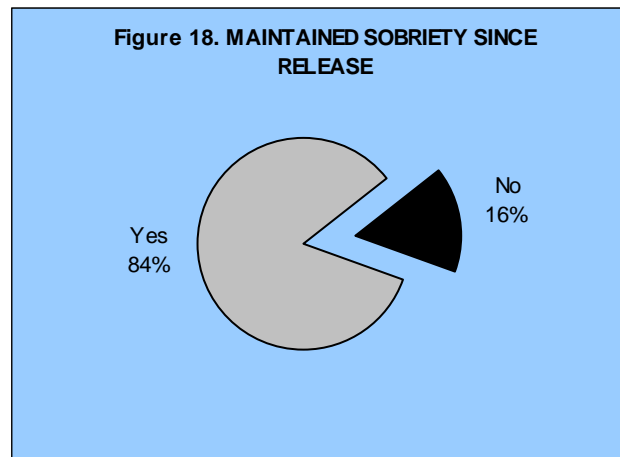
Demographics

Rehabilitation Programs

The ECSD staff is committed to helping inmates with substance abuse issues. This shows in inmates' feelings toward these programs. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of former inmates interviewed felt the ECSD's drug and alcohol programs contributed to a successful reintegration (see Figure 16). Eighty-six percent felt that the Department's Re-entry programs contributed to a successful reintegration (see Figure 17).



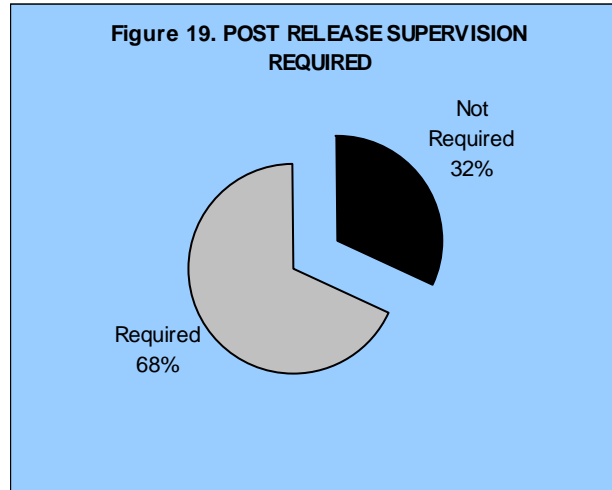
Eighty-four percent of respondents stated they had maintained sobriety since their release (see Figure 18). While this may be reflecting some bias (the former inmate may be attempting to put himself or herself in the best possible light), it also reflects the success of programs taken while incarcerated at the ECSD and after release.



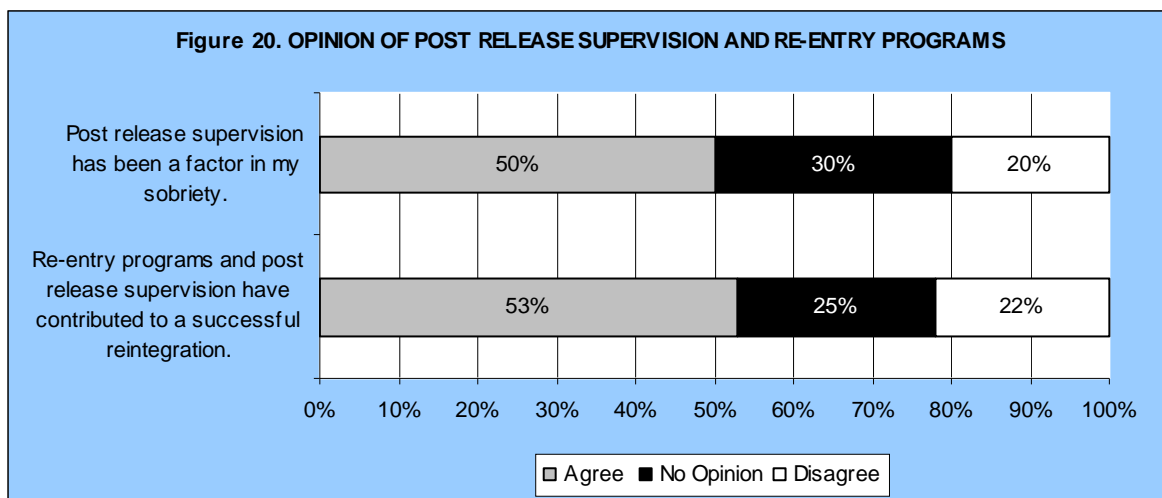
Demographics

Post Release Supervision

The ECSD staff works closely with Massachusetts Parole and Probation Departments to share information and assist with the seamless transition of offenders. Providing post release supervision, parole and probation provide the structure needed to help former inmates succeed. With structure and accountability, former inmates reintegrate into society. Of the inmates released in 2012, 68% were required to be on parole or probation (see Figure 19).



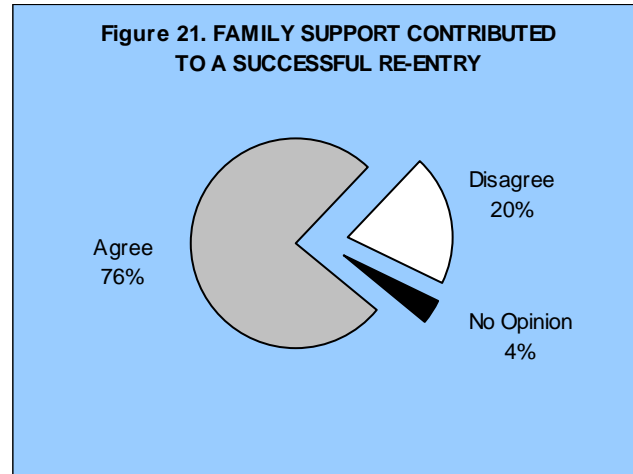
Of former inmates who were required to have post release supervision, 50% felt that post release supervision had helped them maintain sobriety. Fifty-three percent felt the combination of post release supervision *and* the ECSD's Re-entry programs were helpful (see Figure 20).



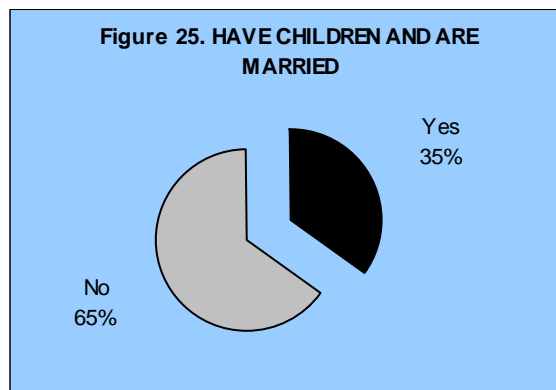
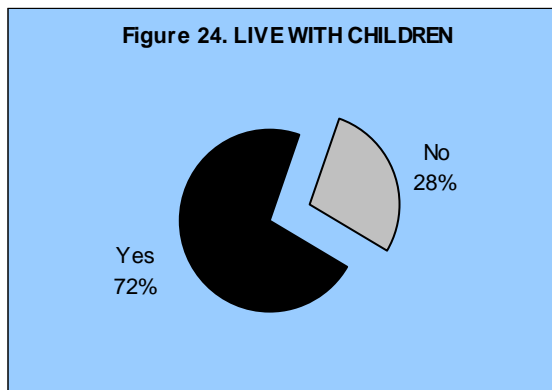
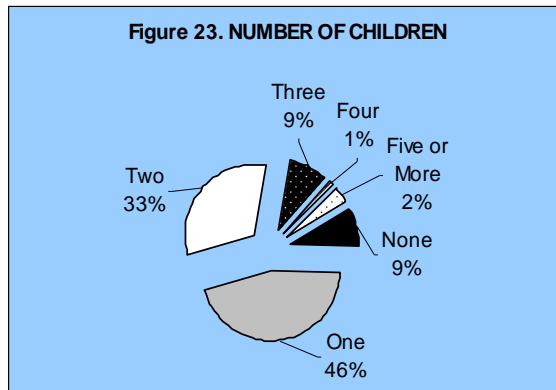
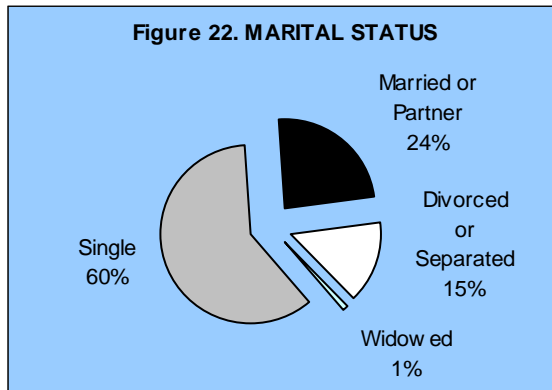
Demographics

Family Status

Most former inmates stated that they felt family helped them. An impressive 76% said 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 (60%) remained single (see Figure 22). Ninety-one percent had at least one child (see Figure 23), and 72% reported living with their children (see Figure 24). Of those former inmates who had children, only 35% were married (see Figure 25).



The background of the title page features a large, faint, light-gray seal of the Essex County Sheriff's Department. The seal is a five-pointed star with a central circular emblem containing a shield. The words "SHERIFF'S" and "ESSEX COUNTY" are visible within the seal's design.

RE-ENTRY EXIT INTERVIEW RELEASE PLAN

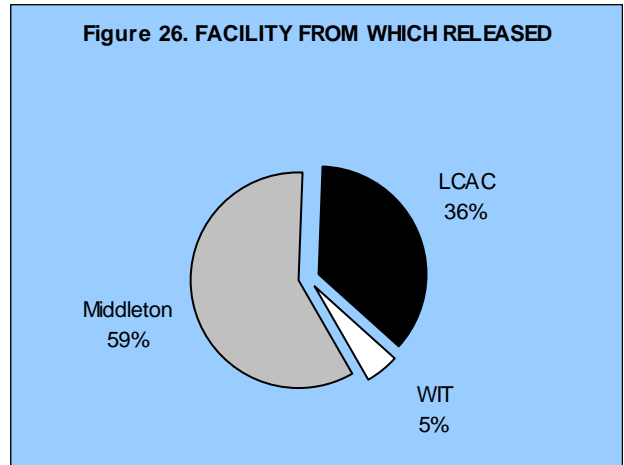
The inmates who took part in the Exit Interviews (just prior to release) are not necessarily the same people who took part in the Aftercare Questionnaire (one year after release). Therefore, the results shown in the “Exit Interview” section may be different than those in the “Demographics” section. The information contained in this section was obtained through the Department’s “Re-entry Exit Interview/Release Plan,” administered to the inmates just prior to their release. Participation was mandatory. However, the inmates 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 2012.

Re-entry/Exit Interview Release Plan

The Department's Reintegration Coordinators 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 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 *Re-entry/Exit Interview and Release Plan* helps staff obtain useful information about each inmate.

Facility from Which Released

Middleton is the Department's largest facility. Middleton houses, and therefore releases, the largest portion of inmates annually. In 2012, 59% of sentenced inmates who were released came from the Middleton facility. Thirty-six percent of sentenced releases came from the ECPRC, the second largest ECSD facility. The WIT generated 5% of sentenced releases (see Figure 26).



ECSD's Focus on Re-entry and Rehabilitation

When an inmate begins his or her sentence at ECSD, he or she will meet with their Reintegration Coordinator to discuss several key issues relevant to their incarceration. These include:

- The inmate's CORI record, including current/open charges
- A review of the ECSD Inmate Handbook
- An inmate's willingness to accept responsibility
- Substance abuse problems or history
- Domestic violence issues
- Gang affiliations
- Areas which may need focus: e.g. education, life & family skills, job skills

-“We owe it to the citizens of Essex County to help our inmates be the best they can be after their release.” -Sheriff Frank G. Cousins, Jr.

Re-entry Exit Interview Release Plan

Offenses for which Incarcerated

Assault and battery, OUI, and drug related charges are perennially the most frequent charges among offenders. Of sentenced inmates released in 2012, 21% were incarcerated for A&B, and 13% for drug related charges. Fifteen percent were incarcerated for OUI; usually subsequent offenses (see Table 3). Most inmates have substance abuse issues: he or she was under the influence while committing a crime; was committing a crime to get money for drugs; or was involved in buying or selling drugs.

* "Other Offenses" include those with less than 1% response.

Table 3

Offenses for Which Incarcerated	
Offense	(%)
Assault and Battery	21
OUI	15
Drug Related Charges	13
Burglary/Larceny	10
Motor Vehicle Violations	9
Violation of Parole/Probation	7
Breaking and Entering	6
Other	6
Abuse Prevention Act/Restraining Order/209A Violation	3
Firearms/Weapons Violations	3
Receiving Stolen Property	2
Contempt of Court	1
Non-Payment of Child Support	1
Threat/Attempt to Commit a Crime	1
Shoplifting	1
Destruction of Property	1

Re-entry Exit Interview Release Plan

Communities to Which Released

Of inmates interviewed just prior to release, 73% were going to live in Essex County. Annually, the largest portions of inmates released reside in Haverhill, Lawrence and Lynn. The trend continued for inmates released in 2012: 13% went to Haverhill, 12% to Lynn and 12% to Lawrence (see Table 4).

Table 4

Communities to Which Released	
City	(%)
Amesbury	3
Beverly	3
Danvers	1
Gloucester	4
Haverhill	13
Lawrence	12
Lynn	12
Methuen	3
Middleton	1
Newburyport	2
North Andover	1
Peabody	4
Salem	6
Salisbury	2
Saugus	1
Other Communities in Essex County	5
<u>Out of Essex County</u>	<u>27</u>

Re-entry/Exit Interview Release Plan

Substance Use

Alcohol is consistently the number one substance of choice among inmates who stated they used drugs or alcohol. Of inmates released in 2012, 40% of substance users claimed alcohol as their drug of choice. Twenty-three percent chose marijuana, 23% chose heroin and 10% chose cocaine or crack. Prescription drugs were cited by 3%. Some inmates listed other substances (such as benzodiazepine or suboxone) which are categorized as “Other” and amounted to 1% (see Table 5).

Table 5

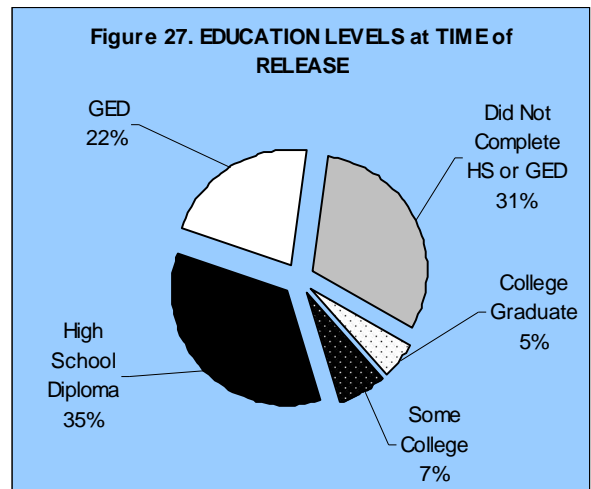
Substance of Choice Among Inmates

Drug of Choice	(%)
Alcohol	40
Marijuana	23
Heroin	23
Cocaine	8
Prescription	3
Crack	2
Other	1

* “Other” includes categories with less than 1% response.

Education

At the time of their Exit Interviews, 31% of the inmates did not have GEDs or high school diplomas. Thirty-five percent had high school diplomas, 22% had GEDs, 7% had some college and 5% were college graduates (see Figure 27). A comparison of pre-release and post-release education levels is available in Table Six on page 19.



Re-entry/Exit Interview Release Plan

The portion of former inmates without high school diplomas decreased from 31% at exit to 25% one year post release. The portion with GEDs decreased slightly from 22% at exit to 19% post release, and the portion with high school diplomas decreased from 35% to 27%. The percentage with college experience rose from 12% at exit to 29% post release. (see Table 6). These data indicate that former inmates *may* be pursuing higher education.

Table 6

Education Levels at Time of Release and One Year Post Release		
Education	Exit Interview (%)	One Year Post Rel. (%)
No HS Diploma or GED	31	25
GED	22	19
High School Diploma	35	27
Some College	7	21
College Graduate	5	8

Re-entry/Exit Interview Release Plan

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. As many inmates face substance abuse issues, Drug & Alcohol programs as well as TRAC (Treatment and Recovery of Addictions in Corrections) are the most well-attended. Table Seven illustrates some of the many programs available to ECSD inmates.

It should be noted that when looking at completion rates, a large portion of participants were referred to other programs or were still currently enrolled at the time of this survey. The participation and completion rates are a percentage of all inmates. They are not meant to equal 100%. In addition, programs like Drugs and Alcohol, AA, Sex Offender Education, 2nd Chance/Straight Ahead Ministries, ESL, and Creative Writing are open-ended and therefore have no completion rate.

****ECRC = Essex County
Recovery Center**

Table 7

Program Involvement		
Program	Participation Rate (%)	Completion Rate (%)
TRAC	35	15
OUI	2	33
GED	20	10
Alternatives to Violence	8	8
Batterers	10	50
Parenting	2	66
ECRC	19	23
Computers	2	33

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 2012, 15% 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 different problems 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. In 2012, 120 inmates at the WIT and 108 at the ECPRC completed substance abuse treatment programs.

Family: Seventy-six percent of inmates released in 2012 felt that family support contributed to a successful re-entry. Sixty percent were single and 91% had at least one child. Nearly three-quarters (72%) lived with their children. Of those former inmates who had children only 35% 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 2012 one year recidivism rate of 45.11%. This is 1.48% below the 2011 rate, and 0.47% below the average one year rate (2008 – 2012) of 45.58%.

A Profile of Essex County Sheriff's Department's 2012 Released Inmates:

- The one year recidivism rate five year average is 45.58%.
- The one year recidivism rate for 2012 is 45.11%.
- Of former inmates who recidivated, 56% had new arraignments while 28% were found guilty of new charges and 16% violated parole or probation.
- Of the Department's three facilities, Middleton had the highest recidivism rate with 47.49%, followed by the ECPRC with 42.05% and the WIT with 38.89%.
- Fifty-six percent of former inmates lived with family, 21% lived with friends, 14% lived with a spouse or partner, and 9% lived alone.
- Seventy-six percent felt family support helped them with reintegration.
- Most (60%) were single, 24% were married or had a partner, 15% were divorced or separated, and 1% were widowed.
- Ninety-one percent had at least one child. Seventy-two percent lived with their children and 35% who reported having children were married.
- The top three offenses for which the inmates were incarcerated were assault and battery (21%), OUI (usually subsequent offenses; 15%), and drug-related charges (13%).
- Among former inmates who declared a drug of choice, 40% chose alcohol, followed by marijuana and heroin each at 23%. The remaining 14% was comprised of cocaine/crack, prescription drugs, or other substances.

The data presented in this report were collected primarily between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2013. Data collection went into March 2014 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.

REFERENCES

- Pew Center on the States, *State of Recidivism: The Revolving Door of America's Prisons* (Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts, April 2011).
- Turley, Alan., Thornton, Tim., Johnson, Craig., & Azzolino, Sue. (2004). Jail Drug and Alcohol Treatment Program Reduces Recidivism in Non-Violent Offenders: A Longitudinal Study of Monroe County, New York's, Jail Treatment Drug and Alcohol Program. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 48 (6), 721-728.