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FOLLOW-UP STUDY
 SAMPLE OF PARKSIDE WORK RELEASE PARTICIPANTS

At the request of the Department's Director of Temporary Release, this report examines the return rate of a sample of participants in the Parkside Correctional Facility work release program.

The highlights of this report, which is the fourth in the Department's research series on facility work release programs, are presented in the following Executive Summary and illustrative graphic.

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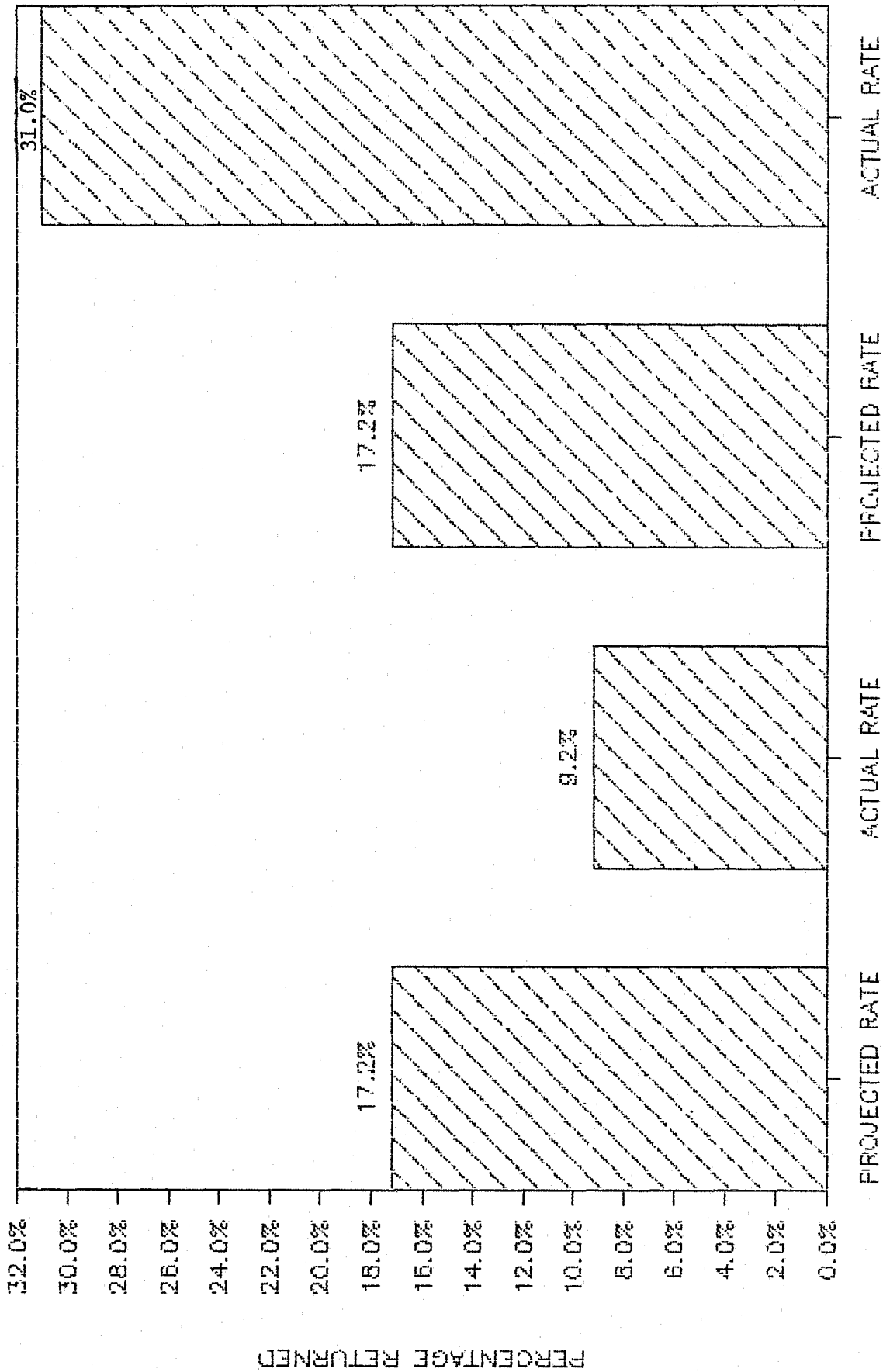
FOLLOW-UP STUDY
SAMPLE OF PARKSIDE WORK RELEASE PARTICIPANTS

HIGHLIGHTS

1. Purpose of Research. At the request of the Department's Director of Temporary Release, this research series was designed to generate statistical data pertinent to the basic question, "Does satisfactory participation in a work release program reduce the participant's likelihood of return to the Department's custody following release?"
2. Prior Research. The three preceding studies in this research series examined the return rate of satisfactory participants in the Rochester, Fishkill and Edgecombe Work Release Programs. The Parkside Program for women was selected as the site for the present study to provide a program contrast to the prior studies of male work release programs.
3. Research Design. To generate a sample of similar cases, this survey selected all work release participants leaving the Parkside Correctional Facility in 1984 and 1985. This sample was composed of satisfactory program participants paroled from the facility and unsatisfactory participants transferred to other facilities during this time period.
4. Follow-Up Procedure. Of the 36 unsatisfactory participants, 29 had been released as of December 31, 1985. These 29 unsatisfactory program participants and the 162 satisfactory program participants were tracked from their varying release dates to December 31, 1986.
5. Comparison of Return Rates of Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory Program Participants. The return rate of the 162 satisfactory program participants (9.2% or 15 cases) was notably lower than the return rate (31.0% or 9 cases) of the 29 unsatisfactory program participants.
6. Comparison of Return Rate of Satisfactory Program Participants and Overall Return Rate of Department Releases. The average return rate was computed for the sample of satisfactory program participants based on the number of months since their release. The actual return rate (9.2%) of this group was considerably lower than their projected rate (17.2%) based on the Department's overall return rate for female offenders.
7. Conclusion. The findings of this research and the prior studies of the Rochester, Fishkill and Edgecombe programs suggest that satisfactory participation in work release programs is positively related to successful post-release adjustment for both male and female program participants (as measured by return to the Department).

COMPARISON OF RETURN RATES

PARKSIDE WORK RELEASE PARTICIPANTS



Satisfactory Program Participants
(162 Cases)

Unsatisfactory Program Participants
(29 Cases)

FOLLOW-UP STUDY
SAMPLE OF PARKSIDE WORK RELEASE PARTICIPANTS

The present report examines the return rate of a sample of offenders involved in the work release program at the Parkside Correctional Facility.

Background. The New York State Department of Correctional Services currently operates a temporary release program for male and female offenders at a number of its facilities. Under this program, selected offenders are permitted to leave facilities for specified purposes.

A major component of the Department's overall temporary release program is the work release program. Under the work release program, eligible inmates are allowed to leave the correctional facility for a specified number of hours each day for employment purposes. At the end of the individual's work day, the inmate returns to the correctional facility.

The basic objective of the work release program is to assist the offender in subsequently making a successful adjustment following his/her release. It is argued that work release programs assist offenders in avoiding subsequent recidivism in a number of ways. Work release programs are seen to aid offenders by enabling them to secure employment situations that will hopefully continue after their release, to gain valuable job experience and skills, and to earn funds that can be utilized upon release.

Purpose of Present Research. In recent years, questions have been increasingly raised on the impact of program services, including work release programs on the subsequent recidivism rate of program participants.

At the request of the Department's Director of Temporary Release, the present research was initiated to generate statistical data pertinent to this basic question: "Does satisfactory participation in a work release program enhance an offender's likelihood of making a successful adjustment in the community upon release?" In other words, the question might be phrased: "Does satisfactory participation in a work release program reduce the participant's likelihood of returning to the Department's custody?"

Research Methodology. This ongoing research project was designed to assess the impact of work release on the return rate of participants from different facilities with work release programs.

A series of facility based reports were planned to ensure reasonable homogeneity within each of the successive samples drawn from different facilities.

Each report in the series is being prepared with the same basic research approach. The principal difference in the successive reports is the difference in the facility programs and the involved inmate population at the various facilities.

Site Selection. The first report in this planned series focused on the Rochester Correctional Facility Work Release Program.A/ The Rochester Work Release Program was chosen as the site for the initial study due to the stability of its work release program population during the entire sampling period. From 1979 through 1982, this community based facility provided opportunities to male offenders scheduled for release to the Western New York area, primarily Monroe County, and the six surrounding counties. A significant number of the program participants continued their work release jobs upon release.

The Fishkill Work Release Program was selected as the site for the second study to provide a geographic and program contrast to the Rochester program.B/ The Fishkill Work Release Program is part of a major facility operation (1,500 inmates) while the Rochester program involves a self-contained facility devoted solely to work release. As noted above, the Rochester program covers the Rochester/Western New York area. In contrast, the Fishkill program provides work release opportunities to inmates scheduled for release to the lower Hudson Valley counties of Dutchess, Orange, Delaware, Putnam, Ulster, Sullivan, and Broome.

The Edgecombe Work Release Program was selected as the site for the third study to provide a major geographic and program contrast to those two prior studies. The Edgecombe Correctional Facility is located in New York City as compared to the Upstate facilities surveyed in the earlier reports. Similar to the Rochester Correctional Facility, Edgecombe is a community based facility which is devoted to temporary release programming. However, the size of the programs are strikingly different. In 1982, 318 individuals were paroled from the Edgecombe program as compared to only 42 from the Rochester program.C/

These three prior studies of work release programs for male offenders consistently found that satisfactory program participants had lower than projected return rates.

Recently, the Office of the Director of Criminal Justice suggested to the Department that consideration be given to expanding this research series to include a study of the Parkside Correctional Facility Work Release Program for female offenders. In response to this suggestion, the Department's Division of Temporary Release asked that the present study be initiated.

A/ Macdonald and Bala, Follow-Up Study of Sample of Rochester Work Release Participants, New York State Department of Correctional Services, April 1983.

B/ Macdonald and Bala, Follow-Up Study of Sample of Fishkill Work Release Participants, New York State Department of Correctional Services, April 1984.

C/ Macdonald and Bala, Follow-Up Study of Sample of Edgecombe Work Release Participants, New York State Department of Correctional Services, July 1985.

The Parkside Correctional Facility is a community based facility in New York City with current population of 60 women. This facility was established as a separate institution with its own Superintendent and expanded staff in January 1984. Prior to that date, this facility was considered as Lincoln Annex and administered by the Superintendent of Lincoln Correctional Facility.

Sample Selection. To generate this sample of similar cases, this survey selected all work release participants leaving the Parkside Correctional Facility during its first two years of operation (1984 and 1985).

It should be noted that all individuals in this sample were work release participants (rather than the other temporary release programs). As such, the entire sample participated in the same type of temporary release program during the same time period.

The sampling period of 1984 and 1985 was selected to insure all of the sample cases were covered by the same State statute and Department regulations and to provide an adequate follow-up period. The cut-off release date of December 31, 1985 was selected to permit a follow-up period of at least 12 months as of December 31, 1986.

The sample was divided into two main groups. One group consists of the satisfactory program participants who were paroled from Parkside Correctional Facility. The other main group is comprised of the unsatisfactory program participants who were transferred out of the program due to their unsatisfactory performance while on work release (including a number of absconders).

Work Release Participants Leaving Parkside Correctional Facility: 1984 and 1985. The following number of work release participants left the program in 1984 and 1985 by release or disciplinary removal.

<u>REASON FOR LEAVING PROGRAM</u>	<u>Number</u>
Satisfactory Program Participants (Released by Board of Parole or Conditional Release)	162
Unsatisfactory Program Participants (Transferred to Another Facility Due to Disciplinary Problem)	<u>36</u>
TOTAL	198

Follow-Up Procedure. The Department's computer file was then utilized to determine (a) the number of unsatisfactory program participants who were subsequently released and (b) the number of satisfactory and unsatisfactory program participants returned to Department custody.

As noted previously, a cut-off date of December 31, 1985 was utilized for releases to permit at least a 12 month follow-up period as of December 31, 1986. As such, unsatisfactory program participants who were not released until 1986 were excluded from this survey.

Release Dates of Unsatisfactory Program Participants. Of the total 36 unsatisfactory program participants, 29 had been released by the cut-off date of December 31, 1985.

Comparison to Overall Return Rate of Department Releases. For general comparison purposes, the average return rate of Department releases is used in Department recidivism studies. The actual return rates of program participants in various programs are compared to this overall return rate.

The average return rate of Department releases can be utilized to compute a projected return rate among the satisfactory and unsatisfactory program participant groups.

This approach permits a comparison of the return rate of the satisfactory and unsatisfactory participant groups and the Department's overall return rate.

Development of Projected Return Rate for Comparison Purposes. The Bureau of Records and Statistical Analysis tracks all Department releases for a five year period to generate return rate statistics. In this research, separate return rate statistics are compiled for male and female offenders. Similar to previous Department studies, this study of 1980 releases found that the return rate for female releases (26.3%) was lower than the return rate for male releases (42.0%). However, this report observed that the return rate for female releases had increased substantially in recent years from 11.9% for female releases in 1972 to 26.3% for female releases in 1980.D/

D/ Donnelly and Bala, 1980 Releases: Five Year Post Release Follow-Up, New York State Department of Corrections Services, August 1986.

Using the average return rate of all female Department releases in 1980, a projected return rate can be developed for the program participants based on the number of months since their release.

Release Year	Months Since Release (as of 12/31/86)	Projected Percent Returned
1984	25 - 36 Months	20.3%
1985	13 - 24 Months	14.5%

For example, the program participants released in 1984 would have been in the community between 25 and 36 months as of December 31, 1986 depending on their respective release dates. Based on the Department's average return rate, it may be projected that 20.3% of these individuals released in 1984 would be returned to Department custody for a parole violation or with a new sentence by December 31, 1986.

These projected return rates can then be applied to the number of program participants released in each of these years to generate the number of expected returns.

Release Year	Return Rate	Number Released in Year	Projected Number Returned by 12/31/86
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Satisfactory Program Participants:

1984	20.3	X	78	=	16
1985	14.5	X	84	=	12
TOTAL	17.2	X	162	=	28

Unsatisfactory Program Participants:

1984	20.3	X	9	=	2
1985	14.5	X	20	=	3
TOTAL	17.2	X	29	=	5

Overall, it can be projected that 28 (17.2%) of the 162 satisfactory program participants would have been returned by December 1986.

Similarly, it can be projected that 5 (17.2%) of the 29 unsatisfactory program participants would have been returned by December 1986.

Comparison of Actual and Projected Return Rates. The following table compares the actual and projected return rates of the two groups of program participants.

As illustrated by this table, the actual return rate of the satisfactory program participants (9.2%) was notably less than the return rate of the unsatisfactory program participants (31.0%). While the difference in the size of the sample populations (162 satisfactory program participants and only 29 unsatisfactory program participants) precludes a definitive comparison, the magnitude of the differences in the return rates (9.2% as compared to 31.0% merits consideration).

	<u>Projected Return Rate</u>		<u>Actual Return Rate</u>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Satisfactory Program Participants	28	17.2%	15	9.2%
Unsatisfactory Program Participants	5	17.2%	9	31.0%

It is also noteworthy that the return rate of the satisfactory program participants (9.2%) was lower than their projected rate based on the Department's overall female release population (17.2%).

On the other hand, the return rate of the unsatisfactory program participants (31.0%) exceeded with their projected return rate based on the Department's female release population (17.2%).

The Department has occasionally been asked what percentage of returned program participants in the prior work release studies were returned with new sentences or for parole violations. Of the satisfactory program participants, 11 were returned for parole violations and 4 were returned with new sentences. Of the unsatisfactory program participants, 7 were returned for parole violations and 2 with new sentences.

Conclusion. In brief terms, the two major findings of this survey may be summarized in the following fashion:

1. The sample of satisfactory work release participants had a lower return rate than their projected rate based on the Department's overall female release population.
2. This sample of satisfactory work release participants at the Parkside Correctional Facility also returned to the Department's custody at a notably lower rate than the comparison group of unsatisfactory program participants.

Selection Bias v. Program Impact. In reviewing these findings, it might be argued that there may be a selection bias caused by the Department's screening procedures in approving inmates for the work release program. It might thus be contended that inmates selected for work release are better risks and should be expected to have a lower return rate than the Department's overall release population.

However, it should also be noted that this possible selection bias would not apply to the comparison of satisfactory and unsatisfactory program participants. All of these cases were approved for the Parkside Work Release Program under the same procedures. As such, these samples may be more appropriately compared with respect to the impact of the program. The principal difference between these two groups is the nature of their program participation.

Consistent Findings of Research Series. As noted in the introduction to this report, the specific question addressed by this research series was, "Does satisfactory participation in a work release program reduce the participant's likelihood of returning to the Department's custody?"

With respect to this question, this survey, as well as the prior studies of the Rochester, Fishkill and Edgecombe programs, have consistently found that satisfactory participation in work release programs is positively related to successful post-release adjustment as measured by return to the Department.

While the reader is cautioned against any definitive conclusions concerning the Department's overall work release program based on these four sample studies, the consistent findings of this ongoing research series supports the position that satisfactory work release participation is positively related to post-release adjustment for both male and female program participants.