

EVALUATION OF THE FLORIDA PROGRAM FOR SERIOUS OFFENDERS

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ACQUISITIONS

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### Highlights

The following is a study of a sample of 122 children furloughed from the Lancaster Youth Development Center during calendar years 1972 and 1973. The two principal variables under consideration in this study are average length of stay and post-furlough success. The training school program at the Lancaster Youth Development Center is being considered separately from the other DYS training schools for several reasons: (1) it is one of two co-educational training school programs operated by the Division; (2) it is a highly intensive program with a high staff/child ratio designed to deal with children who had proved difficult to handle in other treatment programs; and (3) the program deals with children for a longer period of time than the other training school programs.

The more significant findings from this study are presented below:

(1) There is a significant difference in the types of offenses for which males and females are committed to the LYDC. The majority of male commitments were for felonies while the plurality of female commitments were for CINS violations. The majority of males were committed for the more serious offenses against persons and property.

(2) There is a significant difference in the types of offense for which blacks and whites are committed to LYDC. A much higher percentage of blacks are committed for crimes against persons, while victimless crimes are predominately white. Commitments for crimes

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against property are similar for both groups.

(3) With the exception of the Misdemeanor category in which the average length of stay (ALS) for blacks was significantly longer for blacks than whites, there is no significant difference in ALS when it is viewed in terms of race or offense type. It should be noted that this is strikingly different from other ALS studies for the other training schools which found these to be significant predictive variables.

(4) In terms of post-furlough success, the total sample had a 60% success rate; blacks have a 50% success rate and whites have a 66% rate.

(5) Post-furlough success or failure was significantly associated with offense type with the highest post-program success rates being for CINS violations, with crimes against persons and victimless crimes tying for second place. The highest failure rates were associated with crimes against property.

(6) The children who were post-program successes were significantly older than those who were failures.

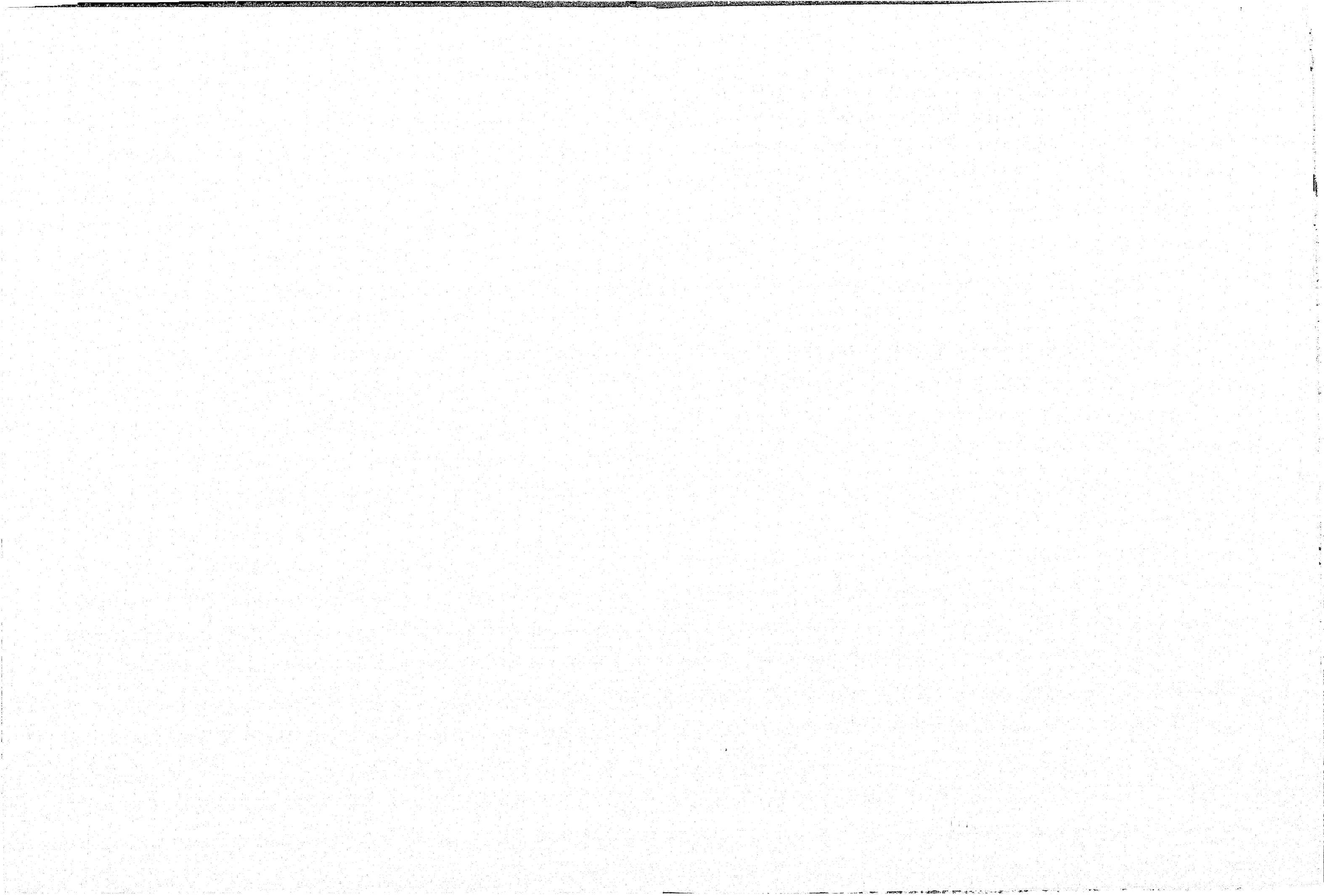
(7) Success or failure was not associated with commitment length.

#### Correlational Analysis

(1) White children have a significantly higher probability of being post-furlough successes than black children.

(2) Females have a significantly higher probability of being post-furlough successes than do males.

(3) Older children have a significantly higher probability of successfully avoiding future reinvolvement with the criminal justice system.



## I. DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE POPULATION

The following study is an analysis of the data on children furloughed from the Lancaster Youth Development Center (LYDC) during 1972 and 1973. The 1972 releases are represented by 40 males and 21 females, while the 1973 sample is comprised of 31 males and 30 females. These children were randomly sampled from the total of all children furloughed during the respective years and should prove representative of those children furloughed from LYDC during these two years. The information for this study was collected from client case files. The two principal variables under consideration in this study are average length of stay (ALS) and post-furlough success. Each of these will be considered as a function of a number of other variables.

The combined sample is comprised of 122 first and return commitment youngsters who were furloughed from training schools during calendar years 1972 and 1973. Of the total sample, 74 children were original commitments with 48 being classified as return commitments. (Second commitments were generally grouped with those children on their third or fourth commitment because there were so few multiple commitments.) With respect to the principal variables under consideration, the distribution for the total sample is as follows:

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TABLE I Distributions On Major Variables

1. Sex:	Male	58.2%
	Female	41.8%
2. Race:	White	58.2%
	Black	41.8%

TABLE I Cont'd

3. Mean Age:	15.2 years
4. Probation Prior to Commitment (1st Com.)	
Yes	49.2%
No	50.8%
5. Type of Offense:	
Felony	36.9%
Misdemeanor	43.4%
*CINS	19.7%
6. Type of Offense: (cont'd)	
Crimes Against Persons	12.3%
Crimes Against Property	27.9%
**Victimless Crimes	40.2%
Others	19.7%
7. Average Length of Stay:	LYDC 298 days
	Total Commitment 482 days

Ranges from 24 to 680 days; 28.8% stay 365 days or more.

\* CINS is defined as Child in Need of Supervision and is made up of the violations of truancy, ungovernable behavior and running away.

\*\* Victimless Crimes are such crimes as prostitution, drug usage and alcohol violations, aftercare violations and probation violations.

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One must consider how these variables interrelate in order to further describe the sample population.

Sex: It was found that the average ages of the sexes were remarkably similar with males averaging 15.4 years (range: 11.7 to 18) and females averaging 14.9 years (range: 11.4 to 17.8). With regard to the number of commitments, the sample contained 37 first commitment males and 34 return commitment males; among females there were 37 first commitments and 14 return commitments. Thus, the ratio of first to return commitments was higher for males than females.

The relationship between sex and type of offense, using two different ways of classifying the committing offense, is demonstrated in Table II.

TABLE II Sex by Type of Offense

A.	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misdemeanors</u>	<u>CINS</u>	
Males	55.1%	40.6%	4.5%	100% (N=69)
Females	13.3%	42.3%	44.4%	100% (N=45)
B.	<u>Crimes Against Persons</u>	<u>Crimes Against Property</u>	<u>Victimless Crimes</u>	<u>CINS</u>
Males	15.9%	46.4%	33.3%	4.4%
Females	8.9%	4.4%	42.5%	44.4%

\* Chi-Square significant at  $\geq .05$  level

This table illustrates the striking differences between the types of offenses for which males and females are committed to LYDC. The majority of the male commitments are for felony violations (54.9%) while a large number of female commitments are for CINS violations (41.2%). With regard to the second offense categorization (Part B of Table II) it should be noted that the majority of men commit the more serious crimes against persons and property.

Race: As was shown in Table I, the sample is fairly evenly divided between white and black children with 58.2% being white and 41.8% being black.

Comparing average age, it was found that the two racial groups were quite similar with whites averaging 15.4 years and blacks, 14.9 years. There was also no significant difference in the distribution of first and return commitments by race. The sample of whites was composed of 59.2% first commitments and 40.8% return

commitments while the black sample contained 62.7% first commitments and 37.2% return commitment youngsters. Comparisons of the two samples by type of offense are made in Table III.

TABLE III Race by Type of Offense\*

	Crimes Against Persons	Crimes Against Property	Victimless Crimes	Others (principally GINS)	
White	5.7%	28.6%	42.8%	22.9%	100% (N=70)
Black	25.0%	31.8%	27.3%	15.9%	100% (N=44)

\* Chi-Square, significant  $\geq .05$  level

A review of the distribution of offense type by race indicates that a higher percentage of blacks are committed to Trenton for crimes against persons than are whites. In looking at crimes against persons they were found to be 25.0% of black commitments. In contrast, crimes against persons were only 5.7% of white commitments. Victimless offenses comprised a higher percentage of white commitments (42.8%) than of black (27.3%). Commitments for crimes against property are very similar for both blacks and whites.

First Commitments/Return Commitments: The total sample was comprised of 74 (60.6%) first commitments and 48 (39.4%) return commitments. Both commitment groups were racially distributed the same as the overall racial balance; 60% white to 40% black. It should be noted that while first commitments were evenly divided according to sex, return commitments were predominately male (70.8%). As might be expected, return commitments were significantly\*\* older than first commitments, with an average age for the latter being 15.8 years, compared to 14.8 years for the former.

\* t-test, significant at  $\geq .05$  level



1972 Releases/1973 Releases: The sample under consideration is made up of two randomly chosen groups of children selected from the furlough lists for calendar years 1972 and 1973. In that these are separate random samples of the two years, they should prove indicative of changes in the LYDC population over time. With regard to race there is indicated an increase in the percentage of white population during this period from 54.1% in 1972, to 62.3% in 1973. A similar increase is evident for females who comprised 34.4% of the 1972 sample and 49.2% in 1973. In terms of the distribution of committing offense there has been little change from 1972 to 1973. With regard to age, the two subsamples are remarkably similar with the 1972 releases averaging 15.0 years and the 1973 releases averaging 15.4 years.

## II. AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY IN LYDC

The major emphasis of this section of the study is a consideration of the Average Length of Stay (ALS) in LYDC as a function of a number of variables: sex, race, probation prior to commitment, offense type and commitment number. The principal findings from the ALS study portion of this study will be compared to the results of another recently completed training school average length study. This recent study was for children furloughed from all Florida training schools during the period August 1974 to January 1975. Thus, the ALS for children in this present evaluation (1972 and 1973) will be compared with that of children released from LYDC in late 1974 and early 1975. It is hoped that this comparison of ALS over time will prove instructive.

Since the vast majority of the children in LYDC were transferred there from another DYS institution, the ALS in LYDC and

the total length of stay for a given commitment will not be the same. For example, the ALS in LYDC (total sample) is 298 days, with an average for the total commitment being 482 days. This would indicate that children spend on the average 184 days in residential institutions prior to being admitted to LYDC. A comparison of total commitment length during the two time periods discussed above indicates a slight, though not significant, increase in total commitment length from 482 days in 72-73 to 526 days in the 74-75 sample.

Each of the variables presented above will be discussed in turn.

#### Sex

When the ALS for the total sample population is considered by sex the following results are achieved: males stayed at LYDC an average of 285 days; females, 316 days. In terms of total commitment length, males stayed 495 days while females had an average total commitment length of 465 days. These differences are not significant which indicates that during the time period under consideration there was no meaningful distinction between either the ALS at LYDC or total commitment length for males and females. This finding is somewhat in opposition to the results of the 74-75 study of ALS in LYDC which showed that in terms of total commitment length males stayed significantly\* longer than females (540 days vs. 410 days).\*\* A breakdown of average length

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\* Statistical significance indicates that there exists a high probability that the difference between the two means is not a random occurrence.

\*\* t-test significant at  $\geq .05$  level

of stay by sex by offense was considered but no significant differences were found. This would indicate, for example, that there is no significant difference between the average length of stay for male felons as opposed to that of female felons.

Race

The average length of stay in LYDC for whites is 288 days, with commitments averaging 454 days. The average length of stay for blacks in LYDC is 312 days with a total commitment length of 521 days. It should be noted that neither of these differences between races in ALS are statistically significant. This is in contrast to the 74-75 study of ALS at LYDC which found a significant difference in ALS for total commitment time, with blacks staying significantly\*\*\* longer (603 days) than whites (397 days). A more in-depth analysis of average length of stay as associated with race is presented in Table V.

TABLE V Length of Stay, by Race and Offense Type

	<u>Felony</u>	<u>Misdemeanor*</u>	<u>CINS</u>
White	304 (22)	252 (33)	336 (16)
Black	303 (23)	331 (20)	290 (8)

\* Significant at the .05 level

The above table presents average length of stay by race and offense type. With the exception of the misdemeanor category, there is no significant difference between the average length of stay for blacks and whites within the same offense category. However, within the misdemeanor category, it should be noted that blacks stay

\*\*\* t-test significant at  $\geq$  .05 level

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to LYDC remaining constant the increase in total commitment time can be attributed solely to the increase in average length of stay in LYDC. In 1972 the ALS in LYDC was 278 days with a total commitment time of 462 days while in 1973 these figures were 318 days and 502 days respectively. The difference in ALS and total commitment length for 1972 and 1973 are not significant.

#### Age

A review of ALS in LYDC and average total commitment length by age indicated that while there is some variation in ALS and total commitment length by age, none of these differences are significant.

### III. SUCCESS/FAILURE RATES FOR SUBSAMPLES OF LYDC FURLOUGH 1972/73

The third principal area of interest in this study is the eventual success or failure of the children furloughed from the LYDC during this two year period. These success/failure rates will be discussed in terms of a number of important variables with an effort being made to relate overall success and failure for program graduates to such important variables as: ALS in LYDC and total commitment time. For the purposes of this study, failure is defined as any post-furlough reinvolvement with the criminal justice system; namely revocation of aftercare, recommitment to the Division of Youth Services, placement of adult probation, commitment to the Division of Corrections. Conversely, post-furlough success is defined primarily as the absence of such involvement. In determining the percentage of successes and failures in each sub-group presented below it should be noted that absconders were removed from the sample and that children still

successfully on aftercare were counted as successes. The length of follow-up for these children varies from 12 to 36 months. Presented below is the success/failure data for the total sample as well as for selected sub-groups within the sample population.

#### Total Sample

For the total sample (N=114)\* there was a success rate of 60%. When considering the success rate for the total sample, particularly in comparison with the success rates for the other training schools, it should be noted that this relatively high success is due at least in part to the presence of a significant number of females in the sample population. In looking for variables which predict success/failure some interesting, though not statistically significant, differences were found. For example, in terms of race, whites had 66% success rate; while only 50% of the blacks were successful. Females were more successful than males by 87% to 42%. Success was not linearly related to age. Children under 14 years showed a 60% success rate; 14 year olds were 52% successful; 15 year olds were most successful with 69%; and youths 16 and over had a success rate of 57%. The relatively high success rate for younger children (14 and younger) is an interesting aspect of this study which merits further consideration. It is particularly interesting in light of the fact that these children have demonstrated less than satisfactory results in other studies.

With respect to age, it should also be noted that the successes were significantly\*\* older than the failures with an average age

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\* There were 8 absconders removed from a sample of 122.

\*\* Significant at  $\geq .05$  level

of 15.7 for the latter and 15.2 for the former. First commitments were less successful (49%) than return commitments (66%).

TABLE VI Post-Program Success/Failure by Commitment Offense\*

	<u>Successes</u>	<u>Failures</u>
Persons	66.7%	33.3%
Property	38.2%	61.8%
Victimless	66.7%	33.3%
CINS**	73.9%	26.1%

\* Chi Square, significant at .05 level

\*\* The CINS category is made up primarily of females which normally have a high success rate.

Table VI indicates that the highest post-program success rates were for commitments for victimless crimes, crimes against persons and CINS violations; while the highest failures rate was for commitments for crimes against property.

The remaining variables to be related to success/failure are ALS in LYDC and, briefly, length of time on aftercare. The ALS in LYDC for successful youths was 302 days with a total commitment length of 468 days. It is interesting to note that the failures has almost exactly the same total commitment length (467 days) and yet spent less time in LYDC (279 days). Since the difference between the ALS in LYDC for successes and failures is not a significant one, it would be dangerous to draw a conclusion based on it. However, the result is an interesting one and should be considered in future studies. A review of the length of time on aftercare for the two groups indicated that the successes stayed a longer period of time on aftercare than the failures. Since some of the children in the sample were still on aftercare at the time of the follow-up, no further detail on this variable was considered.

The success rate for 1972 releases is 47% while the success rate for 1973 releases is 72%. The difference between the success rates for the two years represented in the sample is to a large extent a function of the fact that the 1972 releases have a 12 month longer follow-up than those children released in 1973. The follow-up period for 1972 releases was 24-36 months while the follow-up for 1973 releases was from 12 to 24 months. A comparison of the principal characteristics of the two subsamples is conducted in an earlier section of this report and provides a summary of changes in the LYDC population over this time period. The higher success rate for females is to some extent a determinant of the higher success rate enjoyed by 1973 furloughs. This is a function of the fact that 1973 releases contained a higher percentage of females (49%) than the 1972 releases (34%). It should also be noted that the higher success rate for the 1973 sample is a function of the fact that as a group they had a shorter follow-up period.

#### Correlational Analysis

As a final aspect of the analysis presented in this study a simple correlational analysis was performed. This analysis sought to define the relationship between the two principal dependent variables (post-program success/failure and ALS in LYDC) and other relevant variables. The information provided by this analysis is twofold: (1) A correlation coefficient which gives the percentage of variation in the dependent variable which is explained by variation in the independent variable, and the direction of that relationship, be it positive or negative; and (2) the significance level which defines whether or not the relationship between the two variables is a statistically significant one (i.e., not a



random occurrence). Correlational analysis gives somewhat different results than the cross-tabular view presented earlier in the study because it takes into account the full variability of a continuous variable rather than requiring that it be artificially grouped into discrete categories. (For example, each age can be utilized as 10.7, 12.3, 17.4, etc., rather than being grouped into 14 or younger, 15, 16, 17 or older.) In this analysis the significance level results from a t-test and the relationships discussed below are statistically significant at the .05 level or better.

#### Post-Furlough Success/Failure

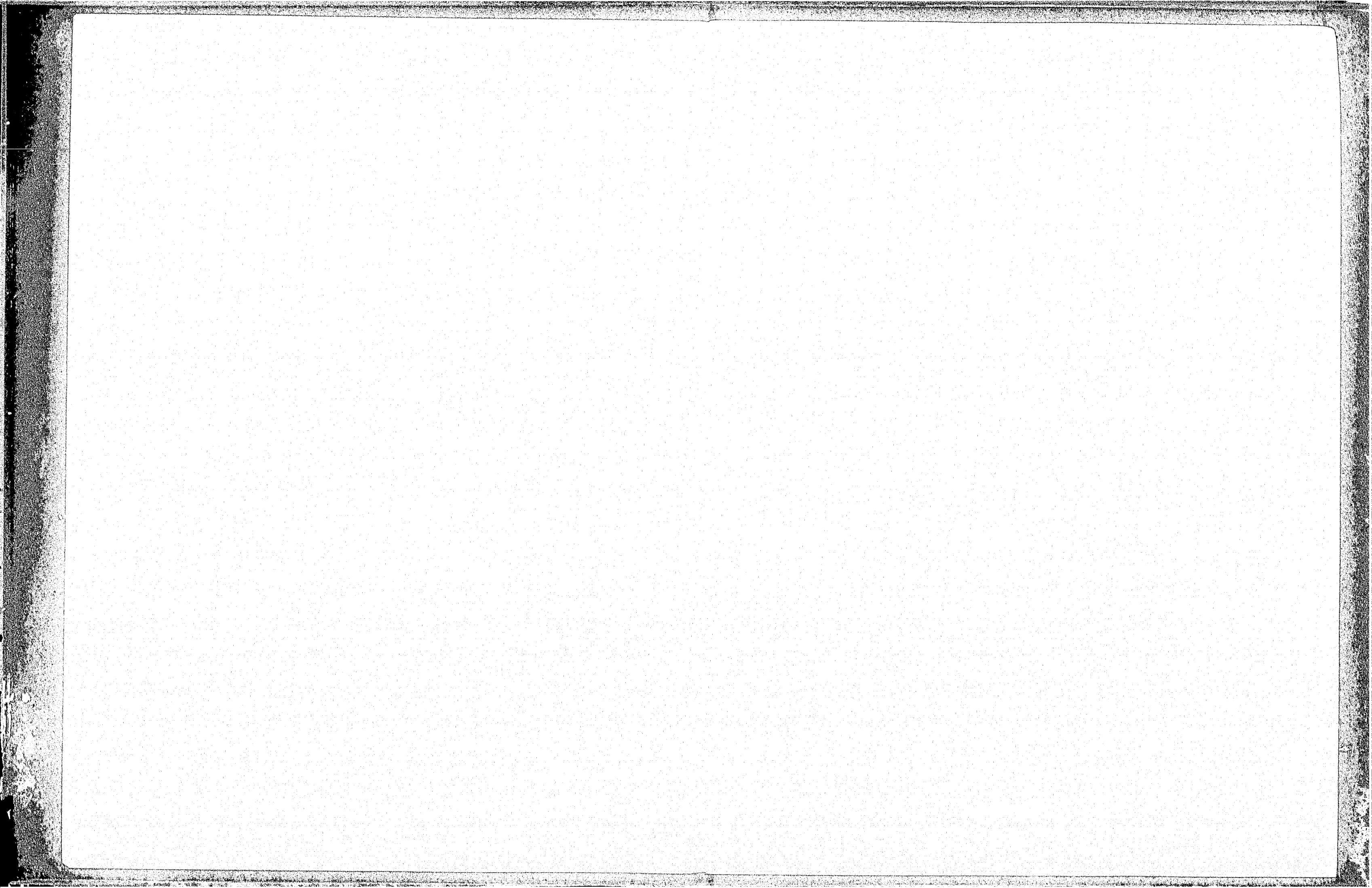
The analysis using post-furlough success/failure as a dependent variable resulted in significant relationships with four separate variables: race, sex, age and number of prior referrals. Each of these will be briefly discussed in turn.

Race: This analysis indicated a relationship between race and post-furlough success. This means that white children have a significantly higher probability of being post-furlough successes than black children.

Sex: This analysis indicated a relationship between post-furlough success and sex. Male furloughs have a significantly lower probability of post-furlough success than do female furloughs.

Age: An analysis of the relationship between post-furlough success and age indicates a positive relationship between age and success on aftercare. This would indicate that the older the child furloughed the greater the probability of successfully avoiding future reinvolvement with the juvenile justice system.

Prior Referrals: In exploring the relationship between the number of referrals which a child has prior to commitment and chance of



**END**

*7/10/1941*