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**RAND**

*Validation of the Los Angeles County Probation Department's Risk and Needs Assessment Instruments*

**FINAL REPORT**

Approved By: M. Battli

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Susan Turner and Terry Fain

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**Public Safety and Justice**

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## PREFACE

The Federal Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, as amended, provided for federal Violent Offender Incarceration and Truth-in-Sentencing (VOI/TIS) incentive grants to the states and U.S. Territories. These grants are to be used to increase the capacity of state correctional systems to confine serious and violent offenders. Congress and the U.S. Department of Justice have agreed to devote some of the committed funds to evaluating the actions they support. This project was supported by funds from the National Institute of Justice for projects that are collaborative efforts between researchers and practitioners.

The current study addresses the issue of offender classification for risk and needs. In collaboration with the Los Angeles Probation Department, RAND validated a series of risk/needs instruments for adults and juveniles under probation responsibility. Seven different instruments and sample groups (total sample = 2781) were scored on draft forms developed by the Probation Department. Subsequent recidivism outcomes were obtained from automated data systems maintained by juvenile and adult divisions.

This project is one in a series of RAND studies funded by VOI/TIS research dollars. Other reports for interested readers include:

Susan Turner, Laura J. Hickman, Judith Greene, and Terry Fain (2001), *Changing Prison Management Strategies in Response to VOI/TIS Legislation*, RAND Report DRU-2721-NIJ, Final Report to the National Institute of Justice.

Susan Turner, Peter Greenwood, Terry Fain, Elsa Chen, and James Chiesa (2001), *National Evaluation of Violent Offender Incarceration Truth-in-Sentencing Incentive Grant Program*, RAND Report DRU-2634-NIJ, Final Report to the National Institute of Justice.

Joan Petersilia, Susan Turner, and Terry Fain (2000), *Profiling Inmates in Los Angeles County Jail: Risks, Recidivism, and Release Options*, DRU-2394-NIJ, Final Report to the National Institute of Justice.

Susan Turner, Peter Greenwood, Elsa Chen, and Terry Fain (1999), "The Impact of Truth-in-Sentencing and Three-Strikes Legislation: Prison Populations, State Budgets, and Crime Rates," *Stanford Law and Policy Review*, Volume 11:1.

Nancy Merritt, Susan Turner, Peter Greenwood, and Terry Fain (1999), *Implementation and Impact of Violent Offender and Truth-in-Sentencing Legislation:*

*How Counties Respond to the Challenge*, DRR-2110-NIJ, Final Report to the National Institute of Justice.

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## SUMMARY

As with much of the nation, Los Angeles County's crime and arrest rates fell during the 1990s. While overall rates declined, however, the proportion of violent offenses reported continued to rise throughout the decade. Felony arrests for violent offenses also made up an increasing percentage of all felony arrests between 1994 and 1999. As a result of this change, more offenders remained in the criminal justice system for a longer period of time--generally in the county jail as pre-adjudicated offenders awaiting court disposition. Because Los Angeles County operates under a federal court mandate limiting jail populations, this increase in offender length of stay must be offset by an increase in the number of offenders released from jail. As a consequence, inmates previously considered "unfit for release" were routinely placed on probation or a similar, lesser, form of supervision in order to free up needed bedspace (Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and Los Angeles County Probation Department 1996). These and other changes led to what was perceived as a higher-risk and need probation population.

The Probation Department, however, has been unable to provide adequate client services to all supervised offenders. In response to litigation and a county-wide analysis of correctional needs, Probation established department-wide minimum standards in early 1995. Three of the five minimum standards devised by the department dealt directly with the creation of a risk/needs assessment instrument, requiring that:

- a risk and need assessment be conducted for all probationers
- all cases receive appropriate services based on identified risks and needs
- a case classification system be developed based on case needs

### PHASE I PILOT SAMPLE AND PRE-TEST

A fifteen member department-wide task force was established in mid-1996 with the purpose of implementing these standards. Six instruments were developed to assess offender risk and needs:

- Juvenile Intake and Detention Control (IDC) Assessment
- Juvenile Camp Classification Assessment
- Juvenile Investigation and Disposition Assessment
- Juvenile Supervision Assessment

- Adult Investigation Assessment
- Adult Supervision Assessment

The risk and needs instruments (RAN) were designed to "assess probationers in relation to the identified departmental risk and needs factors, and to standardize the decision-making process for determining appropriate sanctions and service delivery."<sup>1</sup> Each instrument was intended to serve a specific purpose, with separate instruments used for adult and juvenile populations, release and placement decisions. Instruments were to be completed by Probation staff (DPOs) using available reports and case file information. Responses to items were weighted and scored, with outcome determined by the total score. Policy allowed the probation officer to override the recommended outcome but required a written explanation.

These instruments were tested on a pilot project by Probation field staff in 1997. A survey was administered to participating probation officers in order to identify problems related to instrument administration and to determine the perceived usefulness of the instruments. Six-month recidivism data were collected in order to validate instruments' relationship to subsequent offender recidivism. The department completed a preliminary Risk/Needs Assessment Pilot Project Progress Report based on the initial pilot data and survey results. Findings concluded that

- the juvenile instruments yielded more DPO overrides than expected or desired, indicating a need to re-evaluate scoring systems
- adult classification instruments performed well, producing few overrides
- the instrument did not appear to discriminate in terms of ethnicity, age or sex
- six-month recidivism did not appear to be strongly related to decision, based on risk score, for adult instruments and for the juvenile IDC and camp classification instruments
- the instrument was not supported by the probation officers administering the pilot testing (Los Angeles County Probation Department 1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 1998d, 1998e)

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<sup>1</sup> Memo to Executive Committee, from Floyd Simpson, Probation Director, April 4, 1996.

Having completed the first phase of the study, it was evident that the department had neither the resources nor expertise to continue beyond the initial six-month follow-up period. As a result, the department approached RAND, requesting assistance in the study. For the second phase, RAND was asked to re-examine the six instruments for instrument integrity, use of overrides, decisions, and relationship to longer-term recidivism outcomes than in the Phase I pilot.

## PHASE II PILOT SAMPLES AND PRE-TEST

### Samples

Phase II added recidivism data for an 18-month period following the administration of the risk and needs instrument. Descriptions of each sample, as well as sample size, are given in Table S.1.

**Table S.1**  
**Phase II Sample Description and Sample Sizes**

<i>Instrument</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Size</i>
Juvenile IDC	New referrals from Central, Los Padrinos, and San Fernando	300
Juvenile Camp	New furloughs from camp headquarters	101
Juvenile Investigation	New cases assessed in eight area offices	377
Juvenile Disposition	New cases assessed in eight area offices	397
Juvenile Supervision	New supervision cases in eight area offices	813
Adult Investigation	Prorated cases from probation and sentencing, pre-plea, and true summary programs in four area offices	395
Adult Supervision	Prorated cases from P&S, pre-plea, and true summary programs in four area offices	398

### Validation and Instrument Bias

Instruments were checked for internal consistency using Chronbach's alpha. In order to examine whether instruments were associated with race, age, or gender, total scores and individual instrument items were examined for each of these background characteristics. In addition, regression models were employed to examine recidivism as a function of both instrument score and ethnicity.

## **Relationship of Instruments to Recidivism**

Relationships between instrument scores and recidivism were examined using separate automated juvenile and adult data systems maintained by the Probation Department. For juveniles, data were available on the nature and date of arrest from the Juvenile Automated Information (JAI) files. For adults, automated information was unavailable for arrests. Instead, the Adult Probation System (APS) indicated the date and nature of offenses referred to probation, as well as their disposition.

For both juveniles and adults, multiple measures of recidivism, measured within 6, 12, and 18 months of assessment were used.

Recidivism measures used in the juvenile analyses were:

- percent of juveniles arrested
- mean number of new arrests
- most severe arrest offense
- percent of youth convicted
- most severe conviction offense

Adults measures of recidivism included:

- percent referred to probation
- percent who had a grant of probation
- percent committed to prison

Analyses examined correlations of instrument total score with recidivism, each individual instrument item and its relationship with recidivism, cut points for classification decisions, and the use of unit weights for instrument items.

## **JUVENILE INSTRUMENTS**

### **Instruments as Predictors of Recidivism**

The juvenile investigation and supervision instruments appear to function adequately as predictors of recidivism, as measured by re-arrest at 6, 12, and 18 months after assessment in the non-court investigation, court investigation, and supervision samples. In contrast, the IDC and camp classification instruments seem to have a different purpose, one of classification rather than true risk and needs assessment. These

latter instruments lack adequate scale integrity, result in relatively high numbers of supervisor overrides, and do not reliably predict recidivism within their respective samples.

### **Weights**

For all the juvenile instruments except the one used for camp placement, unit weighting--where item responses are simplified to yes/no or none/some--would result in higher correlations with recidivism in the instrument's respective sample than when the original item weights are used. Unit weighting actually increases the correlation between instrument score and re-arrest, particularly for the IDC sample.

**Using Item Weights as Filters.** Some of the juvenile instruments use weights for certain items (e.g., warrant status on the juvenile IDC instrument) to ensure a high score regardless of responses on any other item. The high score automatically assigns a juvenile to a caseload or decision. Under a unit weighting scheme, the same result could be obtained by adding a filter which would dictate the desired result irrespective of instrument score.

### **Bias for Demographic Factors**

Blacks scored higher than whites in all five juvenile samples, though the difference in scores was statistically significant only for the court investigation sample. Hispanics scored higher than whites in all except the IDC sample, although the difference was statistically significant for the court investigation and supervision samples.

Higher scores for blacks and Hispanics reflected more risk factors. In the non-court investigation sample, blacks showed a younger age at first arrest, more gang involvement, and more out-of-home placements. Hispanics also had more gang involvement. In the court investigation sample, both blacks and Hispanics had more prior law enforcement contacts than whites, as well as poorer school performance. Hispanics also showed more gang involvement. In the supervision sample, both minorities score higher than whites on community habilitative services and gang association. Blacks also had worse home/community adjustment, while Hispanics had worse probationer reporting, poorer school status, and less payment of restitution, fines, and fees or less community service. Whites had poorer mental health and more substance usage than minorities, but these were not enough to offset minorities' higher scores on the other items.

**Relationship Between Ethnicity and Risk.** Although blacks and Hispanics, to a lesser degree, score higher than whites on both juvenile and adult instruments, not all the

differences were statistically significant. Nonetheless, untangling the relationship between offender ethnicity and higher risk instrument scores is important. Our analyses indicated that higher scores were the result of black and Hispanic youth often having more of the risk/need factors contained in the instruments. We may question the choice of the instrument items contained in the scales. Are these items ones currently in use? Are the items predictive of recidivism, or are they unrelated to subsequent involvement in crime? The extent to which the items reflect the current state of the art and are predictive of recidivism, the more appropriate the instrument.

For juveniles, we established that the IDC and camp instruments do not have good predictive validity--they appear to have been developed for other classification purposes. The investigation and supervision scales, on the other hand, were predictive of recidivism within the samples we studied. In the non-court investigation sample, blacks showed higher risk scores for being arrested at a younger age; having gang involvement and prior placements; Hispanics showed more involvement in gangs. Earlier arrest and gang involvement were predictive of subsequent recidivism. In the non-court investigation sample, Hispanics showed higher risk scores on individual items related to law enforcement contacts; school performance, and gang activity while blacks had higher scores on the first two. All three items were related to subsequent recidivism. For the supervision sample, minority youth evinced higher risk on six of the nine items--all six items are predictive of recidivism. Overall, items on which minority youth scored at "higher risk" were predictive of subsequent recidivism.

These interrelationships translated into higher recidivism rates in several instances. When we examined the relationship between youth race/ethnicity, risk scores, and recidivism, however, we found no independent effect for race/ethnicity on recidivism above and beyond that of youth risk score. This suggests that it is the risk factors that mediate higher recidivism for minority youth.

## **ADULT INSTRUMENTS**

The adult investigation and supervision instruments also appear to have sufficient scale integrity, as indicated by relatively high values for Chronbach's alpha. We found the investigation instrument to be a poor predictor of recidivism in the adult investigation sample except for prison commitment. The supervision instrument, on the other hand, is a significant predictor of referral to probation, probation grant, and commitment to prison in the supervision sample.

## **Weights**

For the adult samples, a unit weighting system correlated with the three measures of recidivism much like original weighted scores, although the unit weighted scores tended to have slightly lower correlations with recidivism measures.

These findings suggest that simplifying the instruments to make them easier to administer would not affect their ability to predict recidivism.

**Using Item Weights as Filters.** In contrast to the juvenile instruments, no single item on either adult instrument is weighted in such a way as to automatically assign an offender to a caseload or decision. Filtering would not be a factor in a unit weighting scheme for the adult instruments.

## **Bias for Demographic Factors**

Both adult instruments assigned harsher scores to blacks, relative to Hispanics and whites, although the differences were statistically significant only on the investigation instrument. Blacks tended to score higher on individual instrument items, and instrument scores were highly correlated with decisions. In the investigation sample, blacks scored significantly higher than whites on eight of the nine items. In the supervision sample, the primary difference was in employment.

Males in the investigation sample had significantly higher scores than females. There was no difference by gender in the supervision sample. In both samples, those above the age of thirty scored higher than those below thirty, though the differences were not statistically significant. These differences were possibly due to probationers accumulating more risk and needs factors with the passage of time.

**Relationship Between Ethnicity and Risk.** Instrument appropriateness seems somewhat less for the two adult instruments than for the juvenile instruments. For investigations, black offenders scored as higher risk on eight of the items; for supervision, blacks scored higher on one of the items. The investigation instrument was a poor predictor of recidivism in the investigation sample, except for subsequent incarceration. No individual items were predictive for grants or subsequent probation terms. Five of the nine items were associated with subsequent incarceration; blacks had higher scores on all these items. For the supervision sample, blacks had higher risk scores for employment and family issues; these factors were not significantly related to subsequent recidivism.

Similar to youth, in several instances minority adults evinced higher recidivism than whites. When we examined the relationship between race/ethnicity, risk scores, and recidivism, however, we found no independent effect for race/ethnicity on recidivism



above and beyond that of adult risk score. This suggests that it is the risk factors that mediate higher recidivism for minority adults.

### **Instrument Validity**

Adult instruments, much more than juvenile instruments, appear to have internal validity problems. Many of the items did not correlate with the recidivism measures used, even though the instruments were based on existing risk and needs instruments. The lack of relationship between individual items and recidivism may reflect the recidivism measures used. Information on actual *arrests* was not available. Measures used--subsequent probation referral, grant, or incarceration--are somewhat removed from arrest behavior, and relationships may be more tenuous.

### **RISK/NEED ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT**

The use of formal instruments designed to assess risk began in the late 1970s, when probation and parole caseloads swelled and agencies sought ways to stretch limited resources. Risk assessment went from a seldom-used technology in 1980 to the primary management tool of probation and parole agencies by 1990 (Baird 1991). Most classification systems rely on a quantification of risk factors and service needs that result in risk and need scores that determine levels of supervision (Petersilia and Turner 1987).

These tools are generally developed in much the same way as was the Los Angeles County Probation Department's--by "borrowing" variables and weighting schemes from instruments validated using a different population. A recent survey of adult probation departments and their use of case classification instruments revealed that slightly over 80 percent of agencies use standardized, objective instruments to classify offenders. The most commonly used were variants of the Wisconsin Risk Classification tool system--used in the development of the Los Angeles instruments--and the Client Management Classification tool that helps staff determine the best intervention strategy for an offender (Petersilia and Turner 1987).

However, the items on the youth investigation and supervision scales are similar to items in instruments detailed in the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency and Prevention's *Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent and Chronic Juvenile Offenders*, as well as those contained in the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory developed by Andrews and colleagues (Multi-Health Systems, 1998). According to OJJDP, a core set of items includes age at first referral or adjudication, number of prior referrals or arrests, number of out-of-home

placements or institutional commitments, school behavior and attendance, substance abuse, family stability, parental control, and peer relationships, among others (OJJDP, 1995). The Los Angeles juvenile investigation instrument is comprised of these items (with the inclusion of current offense). The supervision instrument contains fewer of the core items.

Los Angeles County is continuing its effort to institute system-wide risk assessment for adults and juveniles. The Probation Department reviewed available instruments and selected the Risk and Resiliency assessment developed by Brad Bogue for use in San Diego County as a potential tool. The county is currently conducting a validated study with this tool for juvenile intake and supervision. Results should be available in 2004.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

We wish to thank the Los Angeles County Probation Department for the opportunity to work with them on issues directly related to probation planning and policy. Many staff in this Department assisted us on a wide variety of tasks. We wish to thank Paul Higa, David Davies, and Virginia Snapp for overall project guidance. Staff from the research unit, Celso de la Paz, Larry Naples, and Lesley Blacher were invaluable in the abstraction of key data used for the analyses, as well as for assistance in understanding the details of the Phase I effort conducted by Probation.

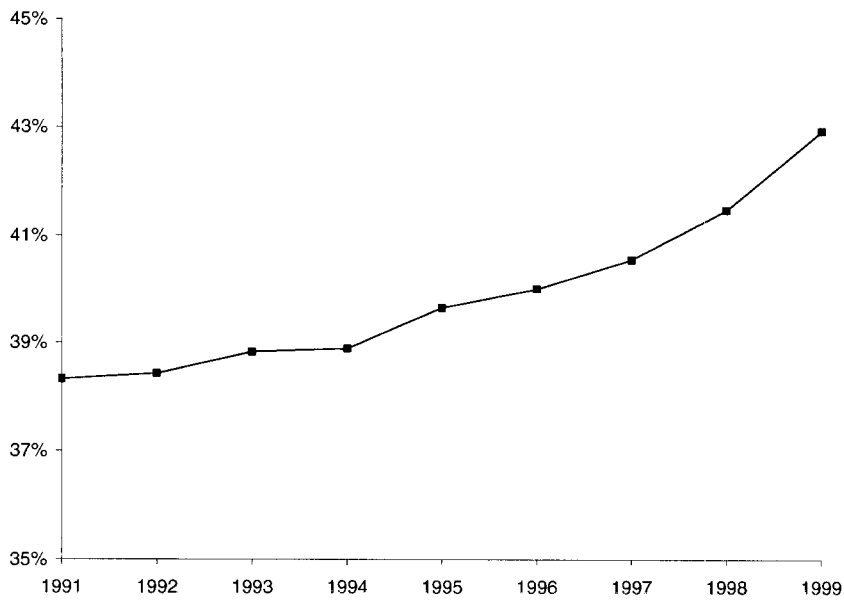
## I. BACKGROUND

As with much of the nation, Los Angeles County's crime and arrest rates fell during the 1990s. While overall rates declined, however, the proportion of violent offenses reported continued to rise throughout the decade<sup>2</sup> (see Figure 1.1). Felony arrests for violent offenses also made up an increasing percentage of all felony arrests between 1994 and 1999<sup>3</sup>, as shown in Figure 1.2. As a result of this change, more offenders remained in the criminal justice system for a longer period of time--generally in the county jail as pre-adjudicated offenders awaiting court disposition. Because Los Angeles County operates under a federal court mandate limiting jail populations, this increase in offender length of stay must be offset by an increase in the number of offenders released from jail. As a consequence, inmates previously considered "unfit for release" were routinely placed on probation or a similar, lesser, form of supervision in order to free up needed bedspace (Los Angeles County Community Based Punishment Options Planning Committee 1996). These and other changes led to what was perceived as a higher-risk and need probation population.

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<sup>2</sup> In 2000, the trends of the 1990s were reversed, with the crime rate rising and violent crime becoming a smaller proportion of the overall reported crime rate.

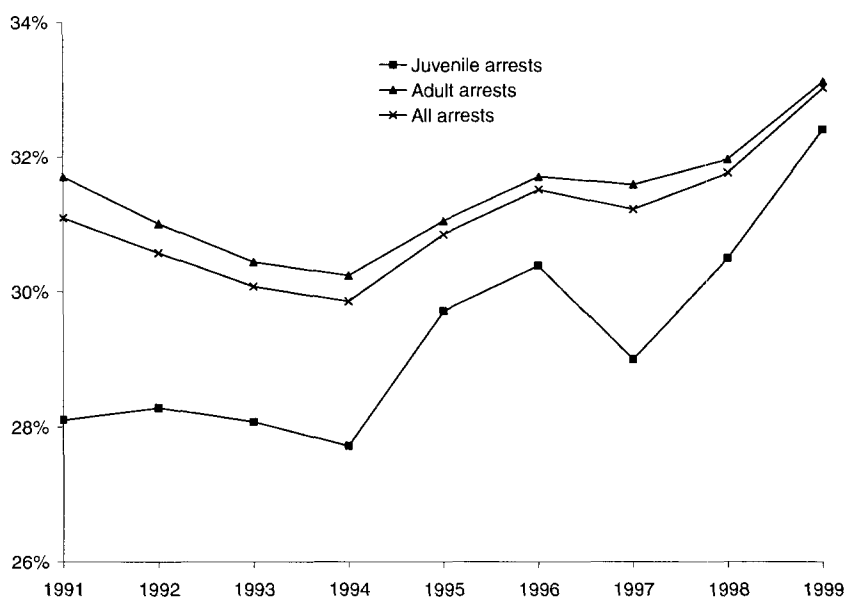
<sup>3</sup> Unlike reported crimes, felony arrest rates continued the downward trend in 2000. Proportion of arrests for violent offenses, however, also declined in 2000.



**Fig. 1.1 - Violent Crimes as a Percentage of All Reported Crimes in Los Angeles County, 1991-1999<sup>4</sup>**

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<sup>4</sup> This figure comes from the California Crime Index ([http://justice.hdcdojnet.state.ca.us/cjsc\\_stats/prof00/19/1.htm](http://justice.hdcdojnet.state.ca.us/cjsc_stats/prof00/19/1.htm)), which is based on different offenses than the FBI's Uniform Crime Index.



**Fig. 1.2 - Felony Arrests for Violent Offenses as a Percentage of All Felony Arrests, Adults and Juveniles in Los Angeles County, 1991-1999<sup>5</sup>**

In 1996, the county established a Community Based Punishment Options Planning Committee charged, among other duties, with assessing the "match" between existing criminal justice services and clients. As part of their study, the committee developed a one-day (April 17, 1996) "data snapshot" drawn from the automated Adult Probation System (APS). This data showed that nearly 20% of the adult supervision caseload had been convicted of serious or violent offenses. Of these, only 4% were supervised in Intensive Supervision Programs (ISP) and 26% were on High Risk Offender caseloads (HRO); the remainder were supervised on standard caseloads. Thus, while the department had established supervision levels designed to provide for the more dangerous or high risk offender, over half of those convicted of serious or violent offenses were supervised under the Automated Minimum Services Caseload (AMSC) - the lowest level of supervision provided by the Department. Furthermore, while those convicted of drug offenses made up the largest proportion of offenders on the adult probation caseload (40%), only 14% of supervised offenders received services through the department's Narcotic Testing Office (NTO) the probation branch charged with testing and servicing

<sup>5</sup> Source: [http://justice.hdcdojnet.state.ca.us/cjsc\\_stats/prof00/19/3a.htm](http://justice.hdcdojnet.state.ca.us/cjsc_stats/prof00/19/3a.htm), [http://justice.hdcdojnet.state.ca.us/cjsc\\_stats/prof00/19/3b.htm](http://justice.hdcdojnet.state.ca.us/cjsc_stats/prof00/19/3b.htm), and [http://justice.hdcdojnet.state.ca.us/cjsc\\_stats/prof00/19/3c.htm](http://justice.hdcdojnet.state.ca.us/cjsc_stats/prof00/19/3c.htm).

offenders with known drug problems (Los Angeles County Community Based Punishment Options Planning Committee 1996).

This mismatch of services and apparent lack of supervision was noted in the final committee report, which concluded that, "Too many offenders, over 15,000, who pose a risk to public safety, are loose in the community with little or no supervision. The system seems to have lost its ability to deliver severe and lengthy punishment, even to offenders convicted of violent crime. While Los Angeles County operates some excellent intermediate programs, capacity is so limited or underutilized that very few of those who need the programs can participate" (Los Angeles County Community Based Punishment Options Planning Committee 1996).

### **DEVELOPMENT OF LOS ANGELES PROBATION RISK/NEEDS ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS**

While the Planning Committee's work encompassed the entire Los Angeles criminal justice system, a 1991 lawsuit specifically highlighted the probation department's inability to provide adequate client services and appropriate probationer/program matches. Among other charges, the lawsuit held that the department had no objective or systematic method by which to assess client risks and needs. Responding to these and other concerns, Probation established department-wide minimum standards in early 1995. Three of the five minimum standards devised by the department dealt directly with the creation of a risk/needs assessment instrument, requiring that:

- a risk and need assessment be conducted for all probationers
- all cases receive appropriate services based on identified risks and needs
- a case classification system be developed based on case needs

A fifteen member department-wide task force was established in mid-1996 with the purpose of implementing these standards. Like many jurisdictions, Los Angeles did not have the resources or expertise to develop a statistically derived instrument designed to suit its particular caseload. Instead, the committee drew variables and weighting schemes from instruments in use within the department<sup>6</sup>, and others from selected county (San

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<sup>6</sup> During the course of its work, the group reviewed client assessment instruments already in use throughout the department, including two instruments developed within the department, one developed for use in Wisconsin, and one originally designed by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD). The NCCD instrument had been

Diego, Orange, and San Bernardino), city (Chicago), and state (Wisconsin) probation agencies. While original plans had called for a single instrument to be used system-wide, it was determined that the specialized nature of the various selection tasks and unique needs of each client population called for a series of instruments. Thus, the following six instruments were developed:

- Juvenile Intake and Detention Control (IDC) Assessment
- Juvenile Camp Classification Assessment
- Juvenile Non-Court Investigation and Court Investigation Assessment
- Juvenile Supervision Assessment
- Adult Investigation Assessment
- Adult Supervision Assessment

The risk and needs instruments (RAN) were designed to "assess probationers in relation to the identified departmental risk and needs factors, and to standardize the decision-making process for determining appropriate sanctions and service delivery."<sup>7</sup> Each instrument was intended to serve a specific purpose, with separate instruments used for adult and juvenile populations, release and placement decisions. Instruments were to be completed by Probation staff (DPOs) using available reports and case file information. Responses to items were weighted and scored, with outcome determined by the total score. Policy allowed the probation officer to override the recommended outcome but required a written explanation.

#### **PHASE I: PILOT SAMPLE AND PRE-TEST**

Only the IDC and camp placement instruments were actually used system-wide. For all other instruments, the department undertook a pilot study to simulate the implementation of the instruments in the decision-making process. The study was designed to:

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validated using a sample of Los Angeles juvenile probationers in the early 1990's when the department was exploring the development of juvenile sentencing guidelines. However, as with the others used by the department at this time, this instrument had not been implemented in a systematic manner.

<sup>7</sup> Memo to Executive Committee, from Floyd Simpson, Probation Director, April 4, 1996.



- compare decisions probation staff would have made based on the application of the risk/needs assessment instruments with decisions based on current policy, procedures, and practices
- determine the level of agreement between the risk/needs assessment, based on probation staff recommendations, versus court decisions
- determine the instrument's effectiveness in formulating recommendations through the review of the probationers' subsequent performance and/or criminal activity
- evaluate the weighting of responses and score determination decisions
- forecast the probable numbers of juvenile and adult cases placed on the identified supervision levels
- identify any disparate and/or inappropriate impact on probationers due to ethnicity, sex, age, residence, and need factors
- identify any instrument deficiencies and/or operational issues associated with the implementation of the risk/needs assessment

The timeframe for piloting the individual instruments, as well as sample selection and size, varied depending upon the specific instrument being tested. Testing began in April, 1997, and was completed in December, 1997, by the department's research staff. Assessment information for 3,300 cases was collected, as well as a simulated decision.<sup>8</sup> Probation officers at each test site had responsibility for completing risk/need forms for selected offenders and returning them to department headquarters, where the data were automated and analyzed. The original study design called for case tracking and arrest/probation violation reviews at three, six, twelve, and eighteen months from the date of instrument administration. Following the pilot, a survey was administered to participating probation officers in order to identify problems related to instrument administration and to determine the perceived usefulness of the instrument.

The department completed a preliminary Risk/Needs Assessment Pilot Project Progress Report based on initial pilot data and survey results. Findings concluded that

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<sup>8</sup> Except for the juvenile IDC and camp placement samples, the pilot studies did not actually assign youth and adults to decisions or caseloads--all other decisions were simulated.

- the juvenile instruments yielded more DPO overrides than expected or desired, indicating a need to re-evaluate scoring systems
- adult classification instruments performed well, producing few overrides
- the instrument did not appear to discriminate in terms of ethnicity, age or sex
- six-month recidivism did not appear to be strongly related to decision, based on risk score, for adult instruments and for the juvenile IDC and camp classification instruments
- the instrument was not supported by the probation officers administering the pilot testing (Los Angeles County Probation Department 1998)

Having completed the first phase of the study, it was evident that the department had neither the resources nor expertise to continue beyond the initial six-month follow-up period. As a result, the department approached RAND, requesting assistance in completing the study. RAND was chosen to work on the project due to its long-standing relationship with the department and its reputation for conducting unbiased empirical research. Most importantly, RAND had recently worked with the Los Angeles Probation Department on a federally-funded evaluation of Probation's pre-trial risk assessment instrument as part of the project "Managing Felons in Los Angeles County: An Evaluation Partnership Between Law Enforcement and Probation."

## **PHASE II: PILOT SAMPLE AND PRE-TEST**

For the second phase, RAND was asked to re-examine the six instruments for instrument integrity, use of overrides, and relationship to longer-term recidivism outcomes than in the Phase I pilot. The department had already selected samples and administered the instruments to the subjects before RAND became involved. Subsequently, the department gave RAND data on recidivism for participants in this Phase II test.

### **Juvenile Risk and Need Instruments**

Four juvenile instruments were examined in Phase II. Although juvenile non-court investigation and juvenile court investigation samples used the same risk/needs assessment instrument, the samples of youth were different, thus producing a total of five different juvenile samples used to test four different juvenile instruments. As in Phase I, all decisions were simulated for the Court Investigation, Non-court Investigation, and

Supervision instruments. No actions were actually taken on the basis of these instruments. The Intake and Detention Control (IDC) and Camp Placement instruments were actually used as a basis for actions.

**Intake and Detention Control (IDC).** A five-item instrument was used to determine the youth's disposition at Intake and Detention Control (IDC). Youth in the sample were tested at the time a decision was made to hold or release the juvenile, i.e., before adjudication. The purpose of the IDC instrument was to determine which youths should be detained and which could safely be released back into the community, pending resolution of their referral. Individual instrument items were weighted from 0 to 10. Items, responses, and corresponding weights are given in Table 1.1. Youth who scored 10 or more were detained, those with scores of 0-9 released.

**Table 1.1**  
**Juvenile IDC Risk/Needs Assessment Instrument**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Weight/Response</i>
Warrant status	10 Subject of active bench warrant 0 None
Most serious present offense	10 Violent or involving firearm 7 Non-violent with weapon 5 Person/property/drug offense 3 Other criminal offense 0 Status offense
Number of sustained petitions in past 12 months	5 Two or more 3 One 0 None
Youth residence	2 Out of home 0 In home
Under the influence of drugs or alcohol at time of arrest	2 Yes 0 No

**Court Investigation and Non-court Investigation.** The same nine-item instrument was used for both the juvenile court investigation and juvenile non-court investigation samples.<sup>9</sup> The instrument was administered to pre-adjudicated youth. Individual items were weighted from -1 to 10. The items and corresponding weights are

<sup>9</sup> Non-court investigation cases generally involve less serious offenses, and are unlikely to be referred to the district attorney for processing.

given in Table 1.2. When the instrument was used for non-court investigation, scores of 1-5 would have resulted in a closed case, while youth scoring 6-10 would have been assigned to informal probation ("654 status"), and those with scores of 11 or more would have been referred to the district attorney. For court investigations, instrument score would have been used to make recommendations for the case; a judge actually makes the decision. Youth who scored 1-7 would have been recommended for informal probation, those with scores of 8-17 for "home on probation." Youth scoring 18-26 would have been recommended for suitable placement or camp, and those with scores of 27 or more would have been recommended for transfer to the California Youth Authority (CYA).

**Table 1.2**

**Juvenile Court Investigation and Non-Court Investigation Instrument**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Weight/Response</i>
Most serious offense	10 Violent or involving firearm
	7 Non-violent with weapon
	5 Person/property/drug offense
	3 Other criminal offense
	0 Status offense
Prior law enforcement contacts	5 Prior probation supervision
	2 Prior closed probation referral
	1 Prior arrest, no referral
	0 None
Age at first arrest	4 11 or younger
	3 12-13 years old
	2 14-15 years old
	1 16 or older
Gang involvement/peer influence	5 Hard-core gang member
	4 Hard-core tagger
	3 Peripheral gang member
	2 Peripheral tagger
	1 Negative peer associations
Out-of-home placements	0 No reported negative influences
	2 Two or more
	1 One
Alcohol/drug problems	0 None
	4 Chronic use and/or abuse
	2 Occasional abuse
	1 Occasional use/experimentation
School	0 No reported use
	4 Expelled/not attending
	3 Severe behavior problems/truant
	2 Frequent disciplinary referrals
	1 Marginal performance
Family dynamics	0 Satisfactory performance*
	4 Repeated physical/sexual abuse
	3 Negative/criminal influence
	2 Pervasive family dysfunction
	1 Temporary family crisis
Mental health	-1 Supportive/resourceful family
	5 Suicidal/severe problems
	4 Incurable
	3 Chronic runaway
	2 Prior psychiatric hospitalization
	0 No reported problems

\*One point is added if the youth is performing below grade level.

**Supervision.** The juvenile supervision instrument was administered to youth already on probation. Its purpose was to assess the appropriate level of supervision the youth required. The instrument was intended to be re-administered periodically to supervised youth, and their level of supervision adjusted as necessary, based on changes in their scores over time. In the Phase II testing, the instrument was actually administered only once to all youth in the sample.<sup>10</sup> Like the Investigation instrument, the Supervision instrument also contains nine items. Weights range from -1 to 5. Based on the total score, youth would have been assigned to one of six supervision levels:

- Limited (1-7)
- Minimum (8-11)
- Standard (12-15)
- Transitional (16-19)
- Intensive (20-23)
- Maximum (24 or more)

Instrument items and corresponding weights are given in Table 1.3.

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<sup>10</sup> The supervision instrument was re-administered to a very few youth in the sample, but only scores from the first administration of the instrument were considered in our analyses.

**Table 1.3**  
**Juvenile Supervision Instrument**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Weight/Response</i>
Probationer reporting	5 Failure to report to court
	3 Failure to report
	1 Not reporting as scheduled
	0 Reporting regularly
Restitution/fines/fees/ community service	3 No payment or hours completed
	1 Irregular payment/hours
	0 Regular payments/hours completed
	-1 Met all obligations
Community habilitative services	3 No attendance
	1 No progress
	0 Session participation
	-1 Progress made
School status	5 Expulsion
	4 Dropout
	3 Suspension/not attending
	0 Enrolled
	-1 Grad/GED/satisfactory attendance
Employment/vocational training	5 Unemployed/training dropout
	3 Not seeking job/attending training
	0 Attending training/not required
	-1 Employed
Drug/alcohol use	5 Chronic use/positive test
	2 Occasional use
	0 No use/negative tests
Gang association	5 Participating in gang activity
	2 Gang activity
	1 Peripheral association
	0 No reported negative associations
Home/community adjustment	5 Exhibiting oppositional behavior
	2 Uncooperative/unresponsive
	0 Cooperative and responsive
	-1 Involved in positive activities
Mental health	5 Violent behavior/suicidal
	3 Severe emotional problems
	0 No reported problems

**Camp Placement.** A four-item instrument was used for camp classification. The sample consisted of post-adjudicated youth who had been assigned to youth camps. The

instrument was intended to separate youth who needed to be placed in the Violence Alternative Program (VAP) from those who did not. Instrument items were weighted from 5 to 20. Youth who scored less than 20 were assigned to the general camp program, while those with scores of 20 or more went to VAP. Instrument items and weightings are shown in Table 1.4.

**Table 1.4**  
**Juvenile Camp Classification Instrument**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Weight/Response</i>
Most serious offense	20 Violent or involving firearm
	15 Non-violent with weapon
	5 Person/property/drug offense
Prior violent offense history	10 Three or more
	5 One or two
Record of assault on staff	20 Incident filing
	10 Non-filed incident
Record of assault on ward	20 Multiple incident filings
	15 Single incident filing
	10 Multiple non-filed incidents
	5 Single non-filed incident

### **Adult Risk and Needs Instruments**

Two adult instruments were tested, each using a different sample. As with the juvenile instruments, all decisions were simulated. No actions were actually taken on the basis of scores from the tested instruments.

**Investigation.** A nine-item instrument, with items weighted from 0 to 10, was used to assess adult risk. Instrument items and weights are shown in Table 1.5. Adult probationers would have been assigned to one of four supervision levels, based on total instrument score. Scores of 0-15 would have been assigned to Automated Minimum Services Caseload (AMSC). Higher scores would have resulted in assignment to one of three levels of High Risk Offender (HRO) supervision: level 3 for scores of 16-26, level 2 for scores of 27-35, and level 1 for scores of 36 or higher.



**Table 1.5**  
**Adult Investigation Instrument**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Weight/Response</i>
Alcohol use problems	4 Frequent abuse
	2 Occasional abuse
	0 No reported problem
Drug use problems	4 Abuse; disruption of functioning
	0 No reported problem
Gang involvement	2 Known affiliation
	0 No known affiliation
Age at first conviction or juvenile adjudication	4 16 or younger
	2 17-23
	0 24 or older
Prior probation/parole grants	2 One or more
	0 None
Prior probation/parole revocation	4 One or more
	0 None
Convictions for assaultive offenses within past five years	4 Violent crimes, no weapon
	2 Property crimes
	0 None
Adult convictions or juvenile adjudications	10 Use of a deadly weapon
	5 Physical force/stalking/possession of weapon
	0 None
Circumstances in current offense	10 Use of a deadly weapon
	5 Physical force/stalking/possession of weapon
	0 Not applicable

**Supervision.** Adults under supervision were assessed using a 13-item instrument, with individual instrument items weighted between 0 and 6. Based on total score, probationers would have been assigned to one of three HRO supervision levels: level 3 (0-15), level 2 (16-25), or level 1 (26 or more). Instrument items and corresponding weightings are given in Table 1.6.

**Table 1.6**  
**Adult Supervision Instrument**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Weight/Response</i>
Attitude	2 Defiant; uncooperative 1 Resistant; somewhat negative 0 Positive cooperative attitude
Employment	6 Unemployed, not seeking employment 3 Unemployed, seeking employment 0 Employed
Alcohol use	3 Chronic use 2 Current use 1 Prior use 0 None
Illegal drug use	6 Current or chronic use 3 Prior use 0 None
Family dynamics	3 Repeated history of conflict 1 Temporary family crisis 0 No conflict
Family finances	2 Severe difficulties 1 Minor difficulties 0 No current difficulties
School history	2 No high school diploma or GED 0 Attending, graduated, or GED
Aptitude	3 Severely impaired or illiterate 1 Borderline functioning 0 Normal intellectual functioning
Mental health status	6 Chronically mentally ill 3 Some emotional problems 0 No known problems
Peers	6 Criminal influences/associations 3 Negative influences/associations 0 Supportive, positive influences
Recreation/hobby	1 No constructive activities 0 Positive activities
Organization/social affiliation	1 No positive affiliations 0 Positive affiliations
Health (physical status)	2 Serious handicap; chronic illness 1 Interference with functioning 0 Sound physical health

## II. METHODOLOGY

As noted in Chapter I, RAND's involvement in the evaluation of the Los Angeles County Probation Department's risk and needs instruments began after all samples had been selected and all instruments administered to study subjects. The department gave RAND the data on instrument scores, and subsequently data that would allow us to determine recidivism rates for each sample at 6, 12, and 18 months following each participant's administration of the instrument.

### SAMPLES

Descriptions of each juvenile sample, as well as sample size, are given in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1**  
**Phase II Juvenile Sample Description and Sample Sizes**

<i>Sample</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Size</i>
IDC	New referrals from Central, Los Padrinos, and San Fernando	300
Non-court Investigation	New cases assessed in eight area offices	377
Court Investigation	New cases assessed in eight area offices	397
Supervision	New supervision cases in eight area offices	813
Camp	New furloughs from camp headquarters	101

Although the court investigation and non-court investigation samples used the same risk and needs assessment instrument, the two sample groups had different characteristics. Non-court investigation cases generally involve less serious offenses, and are unlikely to be referred to the district attorney for processing. Many of the youth in this group would eventually be placed on informal probation, or their cases simply closed without any further action. The court investigation sample, on the other hand, consisted of cases referred to the district attorney for determination. Some of these youth would eventually be placed on informal probation, while others would be assigned to "home on probation," suitable placement, or juvenile camp.

Table 2.2 gives a description of the two adult samples, including sample size.

**Table 2.2**  
**Phase II Adult Sample Description and Sample Sizes**

<i>Sample</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Size</i>
Investigation	Prorated cases from P&S, pre-plea, and true summary programs in four area offices	395
Supervision	Prorated cases from P&S, pre-plea, and true summary programs in four area offices	398

### **Inter-administrator Reliability**

The probation department did not measure the reliability of the administrators of either juvenile or adult instruments. Nor were the identities of the individual administrators recorded. Therefore, RAND had no data by which to determine whether the instruments were administered with the same rules and procedures among all administrators of a given instrument. We cannot rule out the possibility that lack of consistency in instrument administration introduced systematic biases that could affect how individual instrument items were scored, and therefore also affect the overall score assigned to study participants.

### **Validation and Instrument Bias**

Within each sample, instruments were checked for internal consistency using Chronbach's alpha. In order to examine whether instruments were associated with race, age, or gender, total scores and individual instrument items were correlated with indicators of juvenile and adult ethnicity.

### **Relationship of Instruments to Recidivism**

Relationships between instrument scores and recidivism were examined using separate automated juvenile and adult data systems maintained by the Probation Department.

For juveniles, data were available on the nature and date of arrest from the Juvenile Automated Information (JAI) files. For adults, automated information was unavailable for arrests. Instead, the Adult Probation System (APS) indicated the date and nature of offenses referred to probation, as well as their disposition.

For both juveniles and adults, used multiple measures of recidivism, measured within 6, 12, and 18 months of assessment.

Recidivism measures used in the juvenile analyses were:

- percent of juveniles arrested
- mean number of new arrests
- most severe arrest offense
- percent of youth convicted
- most severe conviction offense

Lacking data on institutionalization for youth, we were not able to control for "exposure" to re-arrest. Youth who were sentenced to confinement, youth camps, or the California Youth Authority may have been incapable of being re-arrested simply because they were already being held in confinement. Thus it is possible that some of the most serious offenders would not show up as having been re-arrested, particularly in the 6-month recidivism numbers. Measuring recidivism (as indicated by re-arrest) at 12 and 18 months makes it more likely that such youth would have had a chance to recidivate later in the study period.

Re-arrest data were not available for the adult samples. Adults measures of recidivism were limited to:

- percent referred to probation
- percent who had a grant of probation
- percent committed to prison

We attempted to control for exposure to re-arrest in the adult samples by eliminating subjects from the study who were committed to prison within 30 days of the assessment date, on the assumption that such a commitment to prison were the result of the current arrest.

Analyses examined correlations of instrument total score with recidivism, each individual instrument item and its relationship with recidivism, cut points for classification decisions, and the use of unit weights (described in more detail below) for instrument items.

The following chapters will consider the juvenile and adult risk and needs assessment forms and present our findings for each.

### III. JUVENILE INSTRUMENTS

Each of the juvenile risk and needs assessment instruments includes several items, with each item containing two or more categories. Each category is associated with a weighting factor, and the total assessment score is the sum of all these weights. Cutoff points are used to determine which of two or more possible outcomes will be selected for the youth. Supervisors could override the decision implied by the assessment scores, and indicate their reasons for such overrides. The juvenile instruments, along with corresponding weights, are listed in Chapter I, Tables 1.1-1.4. The actual forms used for assessment are shown in Appendix A.

#### INSTRUMENT INTEGRITY

We assessed the integrity of each of the juvenile instruments by computing Chronbach's alpha, a statistic designed to estimate the reliability of a scale by determining the internal consistency of the scale components (Chronbach, 1951), within each sample. Scales with standardized alpha scores of .70 and higher are generally considered to be well integrated. As Table 3.1 shows, the instruments used with the non-court investigation, court investigation, and supervision samples met this criteria, while the IDC and camp classification instruments fell well below it within their respective samples.

**Table 3.1**  
**Instrument Integrity for the Juvenile Risk and Needs Assessment Samples**

<i>Sample</i>	<i>Chronbach's alpha</i>
IDC	.45
Non-court Investigation	.70
Court Investigation	.73
Supervision	.75
Camp	.49

#### INSTRUMENT SCORES RELATED TO DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

For each of the five juvenile samples, we examined whether scores were related to age, gender, or ethnicity. Table 3.2 shows the mean score for each sample, broken down

by demographic characteristics. The court investigation and supervision scores were somewhat related to race. Minorities tended to have higher scores than whites.

**Table 3.2**  
**Mean Sample Scores by Age, Sex, and Race**

<i>Sample</i>	<i>7-15</i>	<i>16+</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>
IDC	8.2	8.8	8.6	8.5	9.0	8.8	8.4
Non-court Investigation	11.7	11.3	11.7	11.0	12.5	11.3	11.4
Court Investigation	14.5	15.1	14.2	15.0	15.5*	13.4	15.4*
Supervision	5.9	6.0	5.9	6.0	6.3	5.0	6.3*
Camp	14.0	11.7	12.1	N/A	13.2	10.0	11.6

\* p < .05 compared to whites using t-tests

Higher scores for blacks and Hispanics reflected more risk factors. In the non-court investigation sample, blacks showed a younger age at first arrest, more gang involvement, and more out-of-home placements. Hispanics also had more gang involvement. In the court investigation sample, both blacks and Hispanics had more prior law enforcement contacts than whites, as well as poorer school performance. Hispanics also showed more gang involvement. In the supervision sample, both minorities score higher than whites on community habilitative services and gang association. Blacks also had worse home/community adjustment, while Hispanics had worse probationer reporting, poorer school status, and less payment of restitution, fines, and fees or less community service. Whites had poorer mental health and more substance usage than minorities, but these were not enough to offset minorities' higher scores on the other items. Details are shown in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3**  
**Mean Scores on Selected Items, by Race**

<i>Sample/Item</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>
<b>Non-court Investigation</b>			
Age at first arrest	2.4*	2.0	1.9
Gang involvement/peer influence	0.8*	0.3	1.0*
Out-of-home placements	0.2*	0.0	0.1
Alcohol/drug problems	0.5	1.4	0.7*
<b>Court Investigation</b>			
Prior law enforcement contacts	1.2*	0.7	1.2*
Gang involvement/peer influence	1.0	0.6	1.5*
School	2.3*	1.6	2.3*
<b>Supervision</b>			
Probationer reporting	0.6	0.4	0.6*
Restitution/fines/fees/community service	1.3	1.1	1.5*
Community habilitative services	0.8*	0.4	0.6*
School status	0.6	0.4	0.7*
Drug/alcohol use	0.6*	1.0	0.7*
Gang association	0.6*	0.3	0.9*
Home/community adjustment	0.9*	0.5	0.7
Mental health	0.4*	0.7	0.3*

\* p < .05 relative to whites

### **DECISIONS RELATED TO INSTRUMENT SCORES**

The instrument forms included guidelines for decisions based on total score. For example, as indicated earlier, youth with non-court investigation scores of 1-5 were to have their case closed, while those scoring 6-10 were recommended to be put on informal probation. Cases scoring 11 or higher would be referred to the district attorney. However, a probation supervisor could override the decision dictated by the instrument.

For the most part, decisions paralleled instrument scores, with blacks and Hispanics generally receiving harsher decisions in the non-court investigation, court investigation, and supervision samples than whites. However, in the IDC sample, Hispanics had more lenient decisions when compared with whites. Table 3.4 shows correlations between race and decision for each of the five juvenile samples.



**Table 3.4**  
**Correlations Between Race and Severity of Decision**

<i>Sample</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>
IDC	.02	.12	-.13*
Non-court Investigation	.13*	-.03	-.08
Court Investigation	.04	-.12*	.09
Supervision	.04	-.05	.06
Camp	.09	-.01	-.06

\* p < .05

### Decision Overrides

As noted above, on occasion a supervisor could override the decision dictated by the risk and needs assessment score for an individual. These overrides could be either harsher or more lenient than the score would indicate. As a result of overrides, placement decisions were not completely compliant with instrument scores. As Table 3.5 shows, agreement between scores and placements was highest with the juvenile supervision sample, and lowest with the IDC sample.

**Table 3.5**  
**Decisions Compared with Instrument Scores**

<i>Sample</i>	<i>Agreement</i>	<i>Override direction</i>
IDC	73%	More detained
Non-court Investigation	82%	More referred to district attorney
Court Investigation	81%	Either lower or higher level of supervision
Supervision	91%	Higher level of supervision
Camp	86%	Fewer assigned to Violence Alternative Program

Overall, overrides tended to be in the direction of the decision being harsher than the score would indicate. In the case of camp classifications, however, the overrides tended toward fewer referrals to the Violence Alternative Program than assessment scores would indicate. Court investigation overrides showed no clear pattern, with both harsher and more lenient overrides being given.

The most common reasons listed for overrides in the IDC sample were that the youth posed a serious threat to the community, had no parent available, posed a danger to the safety of victim or witness, or was a Community Detention Program (CDP) referral to court. For the non-court investigation and court investigation samples, as well as for the supervision sample, the most common reason given for override was that no parent was

available. The absence of a violent ("707(b)") offense was the most common override reason for the camp assessment sample.

### **USING ASSESSMENT SCORES TO PREDICT RECIDIVISM**

Expectations are that individuals who score higher on a valid risk and needs assessment instrument would show a greater tendency toward recidivating than those with lower scores. Recidivism was measured in several ways: whether the youth was re-arrested, how many new arrests, time to first arrest, whether convicted, number of convictions, and time to first conviction.<sup>11</sup> To assess recidivism in both shorter and longer time frames, we asked whether an individual had one or more new arrests within 6, 12, and 18 months of the assessment date. Arrests could be for a new criminal offense, a violation of municipal code, a status offense, or a technical violation of probation.

Correlation coefficients for each of the five samples are given in Table 3.6. For both investigation samples and for the supervision sample, a higher score was predictive of re-arrest regardless of time frame. However, assessment instruments did not significantly predict recidivism for the IDC and camp samples.

**Table 3.6**  
**Instrument Correlation with Re-arrest at 6, 12, and 18 Months**

<i>Sample</i>	<i>New Arrest within:</i>		
	<i>6 months</i>	<i>12 months</i>	<i>18 months</i>
IDC	.01	.05	.09
Non-court Investigation	.21*	.20*	.20*
Court Investigation	.12*	.19*	.21*
Supervision	.18*	.20*	.19*
Camp	.05	-.03	.02

\*  $p < .05$

### **Individual Instrument Items Related to Recidivism**

As noted above, for some of the RAN instruments, certain items were weighted so as to insure a higher-level response for anyone who fell into the designated category. This suggests that while the overall score was used as a basis for decision-making, and with certain instruments was also predictive of future recidivism, some instrument

<sup>11</sup> Because so few youth were convicted during the time frames covered by the data, the best indicator of recidivism was whether a youth was re-arrested within a given period of time.

components may be more predictive of re-arrest than others. We assessed this in two ways, by looking at how re-arrest correlated with an individual's score of each item of the instrument, and how it correlated with each of the individual components of each item.

We considered an individual instrument item to be related to re-arrest if the correlation coefficient between the score on that item and re-arrest was statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ). In all the instruments except the camp placement instrument, at least one individual item was found to be more highly related to re-arrest than other items.

**IDC.** For the IDC sample, we found a slight relationship between re-arrest and two of the instrument items: number of sustained petitions in the past 12 months, and whether under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of arrest. Those who had two or more sustained petitions were more likely to recidivate, as were those who had been under the influence of drugs or alcohol at arrest. The other three items on the IDC instrument were not significantly related to re-arrest. Correlations coefficients are shown in Table 3.7.

**Table 3.7**  
**Correlations Between Re-arrest and Instrument Items for the IDC Sample**

<i>Item/Response</i>	<i>6 months</i>	<i>12 months</i>	<i>18 months</i>
Warrant status	.00	.01	.04
Subject of active bench warrant	-.01	.00	.02
None	.01	-.01	-.02
Most serious present offense	-.07	-.08	-.06
Violent or involving firearm	-.03	-.07	-.03
Non-violent with weapon	-.03	.01	-.01
Person/property/drug offense	.02	.05	.06
Other criminal offense	.12	.07	.07
Status offense	-.07	-.06	-.08
Sustained petitions past 12 mos.	-.01	.09	.13
Two or more	.05	.13*	.11
One	.00	.03	.07
None	-.02	-.09	-.12
Youth residence	-.04	.04	.02
Out of home	-.02	.05	.02
In home	.02	-.05	-.02
Under the influence at arrest	-.06	.15	.13
Yes	-.03	.13*	.11
No	.03	-.13*	-.11

\*  $p < .05$

**Non-court Investigation.** Several items from the instrument were predictive of re-arrest in the non-court investigation sample. We found a slight relationship between re-arrest and the type of prior law enforcement contacts, with those who had a prior arrest without a probation referral being more likely to recidivate. Stronger relationships were found with five other instrument items:

- youth who were aged 16 or more at first arrest were less likely to be re-arrested
- hard core taggers were more likely to recidivate, while those with no gang association or negative peer influences were less likely
- occasional users or experimenters with drugs or alcohol had higher rates of recidivism, those with no usage lower re-arrest rates
- youth with negative or criminal parental or sibling influence were more likely to be re-arrested
- incorrigible youth were more likely to recidivate, those with no mental health problems less likely

Only three items on the instrument were not significantly related to re-arrest for the non-court investigation sample: severity of the present offense, number of out of home placements, and school status. See Table 3.8 for details.

**Table 3.8**  
**Correlations Between Re-arrest and Instrument Items for the Non-court Investigation Sample**

<i>Item/Response</i>	<i>6 months</i>	<i>12 months</i>	<i>18 months</i>
Most serious offense	.04	.02	.01
Violent or involving firearm	.04	.07	.04
Non-violent with weapon	-.03	-.05	-.03
Person/property/drug offense	.06	.04	.03
Other criminal offense	-.05	-.05	-.03
Status offense	-.02	.06	.03
Prior law enforcement contacts	.12*	.06	.07
Prior probation supervision	.10	.06	.07
Prior closed probation referral	-.05	-.09	-.08
Prior arrest, no referral	.16*	.12*	.11*
None	-.15	-.07	-.07
Age at first arrest	.12*	.16*	.18*
11 or younger	-.01	.03	.02
12-13 years old	.08	.09	.08
14-15 years old	.07	.11*	.15*
16 or older	-.14*	-.20*	-.24*
Gang involvement/peer influence	.17*	.14*	.13*
Hard-core gang member	.12*	.08	.05
Hard-core tagger	.12*	.13*	.11*
Peripheral gang member	.05	.03	.04
Peripheral tagger	.05	.08	.05
Negative peer associations	-.03	-.03	.01
No reported negative influences	-.10	-.08	-.10
Out-of-home placements	.05	.06	.07
Two or more	.04	.02	.04
One	.03	.06	.06
None	-.05	-.06	-.07
Alcohol/drug problems	.10	.09	.10
Chronic use and/or abuse	.02	.01	.03
Occasional abuse	.04	.06	.04
Occasional use/experimentation	.15*	.11*	.12*
No reported use	-.16*	-.15*	-.15*

\*  $p < .05$

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**Table 3.8 (cont'd)**  
**Correlations Between Re-arrest and Instrument Items for the Non-court Investigation Sample**

<i>Item/Response</i>	<i>6 months</i>	<i>12 months</i>	<i>18 months</i>
School	.06	.07	.06
Expelled/not attending	.02	.01	.00
Severe behavior problems/truant	.00	.06	.02
Frequent disciplinary referrals	.07	.06	.06
Marginal performance	-.03	-.02	.03
Satisfactory performance	-.04	-.06	-.09
Family dynamics	.12*	.14*	.14*
Repeated physical/sexual abuse	.03	.14*	.13*
Negative/criminal influence	.13*	.10*	.13*
Pervasive family dysfunction	.10*	.09	.09
Temporary family crisis	-.08	-.09	-.09
Supportive/resourceful family	-.04	-.04	-.03
Mental health	.14*	.18*	.18*
Suicidal/severe problems	.01	.05	.04
Incorrigible	.14*	.18*	.18
Chronic runaway	.02	-.02	-.01
Prior psychiatric hospitalization	N/A	N/A	N/A
No reported problems	-.13*	-.17*	-.16*

\*  $p < .05$

**Court Investigation.** As with the non-court investigation sample, most of the items on the instrument were significantly correlated with recidivism for the court investigation sample. As Table 3.9 indicates, some instrument items were predictive of both higher and lower rates of recidivism, depending on which category the youth fell into. For example, those with peripheral gang involvement were more likely to be re-arrested, whereas those with no gang involvement were less likely. Other instrument items, however, were predictive in only one direction. For example, those who were age 16 or more at the time of first arrest showed lower levels of recidivism, but those first arrested at 11 or younger had no higher recidivism rates than those whose first arrest came at any other age less than 16. The only item on the instrument not related to recidivism in the court investigation sample was the number of out-of-home placements.

**Table 3.9**  
**Correlations Between Re-arrest and Instrument Items for the Court Investigation Sample**

<i>Item/Response</i>	<i>6 months</i>	<i>12 months</i>	<i>18 months</i>
Most serious offense	-.05	-.08	-.08
Violent or involving firearm	-.09	-.10*	-.12*
Non-violent with weapon	.01	-.01	.01
Person/property/drug offense	.06	.06	.07
Other criminal offense	.01	.03	.02
Status offense	-.03	-.03	-.02
Prior law enforcement contacts	.09	.10*	.11*
Prior probation supervision	-.01	.02	.02
Prior closed probation referral	.16*	.14*	.15*
Prior arrest, no referral	.08	.05	.06
None	-.08*	-.16*	-.17*
Age at first arrest	.11*	.17*	.16*
11 or younger	.06	.08	.05
12-13 years old	.05	.09	.06
14-15 years old	.04	.05	.13*
16 or older	-.12*	-.18*	-.22*
Gang involvement/peer influence	.10*	.21*	.24*
Hard-core gang member	-.01	.07	.10
Hard-core tagger	-.03	.03	.09
Peripheral gang member	.21*	.22*	.21*
Peripheral tagger	.07	.05	.03
Negative peer associations	.01	.02	.01
No reported negative influences	-.14*	-.22*	-.23*
Out-of-home placements	.05	.02	.02
Two or more	.06	.04	.01
One	.00	-.02	.01
None	-.04	-.01	-.02
Alcohol/drug problems	.04	.09	.09
Chronic use and/or abuse	.04	.08	.07
Occasional abuse	-.01	.00	.00
Occasional use/experimentation	.04	.06	.06
No reported use	-.05	-.09	-.10

\*  $p < .05$

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**Table 3.9 (cont'd)**  
**Correlations Between Re-arrest and Instrument Items for the Court Investigation Sample**

<i>Item/Response</i>	<i>6 months</i>	<i>12 months</i>	<i>18 months</i>
School	.15*	.22*	.22*
Expelled/not attending	.11*	.16*	.16*
Severe behavior problems/truant	.08	.07	.07
Frequent disciplinary referrals	-.04	.01	-.01
Marginal performance	-.01	-.03	.01
Satisfactory performance	-.14*	-.22*	-.23*
Family dynamics	.09	.10	.08
Repeated physical/sexual abuse	-.07	-.04	-.06
Negative/criminal influence	.02	.01	.00
Pervasive family dysfunction	.06	.06	.04
Temporary family crisis	.07	.08	.09
Supportive/resourceful family	-.11*	-.13*	-.13*
Mental health	.02	.07	.12*
Suicidal/severe problems	.00	.00	.02
Incorrigible	.00	.07	.10*
Chronic runaway	.05	.06	.05
Prior psychiatric hospitalization	-.06	-.07	-.03
No reported problems	-.02	-.07	-.11*

\*  $p < .05$

**Supervision.** Among the instrument items, only employment/vocational training was unrelated to re-arrest for the juvenile supervision sample. The relationship between the item related to restitution/fines/fees/community service was not as strong as that of the other instrument items. Table 3.10 lists the items significantly correlated with re-arrest. Similar to the instrument used in the court investigation and non-court investigation samples discussed above, a supervision instrument item may be predictive of either higher or lower recidivism, or both, depending on which category the youth falls into. For example, habilitative service was predictive only for those who did not attend (more likely to be re-arrested); employment/vocational status only for those employed (less likely to be re-arrested); and school status in both directions, with a good record associated with lower recidivism and suspension or expulsion with higher.



**Table 3.10**

**Correlations Between Re-arrest and Instrument Items for the Supervision Sample**

<i>Item/Response</i>	<i>6 months</i>	<i>12 months</i>	<i>18 months</i>
Probationer reporting	.11*	.10*	.07*
Failure to report to court	.06	.05	.03
Failure to report	.07	.07	.06
Not reporting as scheduled	.05	.05	.03
Reporting regularly	-.11*	-.10*	-.07*
Restitution/fines/fees/service	.04	.07	.09*
No payment or hours completed	.05	.07*	.09*
Irregular payment/hours	-.02	-.01	.00
Payments/hours completed	-.03	-.05	-.06
Met all obligations	-.01	-.02	-.04
Community habilitative services	.13*	.13*	.13*
No attendance	.14*	.14*	.12*
No progress	-.02	-.02	-.02
Session participation	-.01	-.02	-.01
Progress made	-.04	-.05	-.06
School status	.09*	.11*	.10*
Expulsion	.03	.09*	.07*
Dropout	-.02	-.04	-.04
Suspension/not attending	.12*	.12*	.11*
Enrolled	.01	.01	.04
Grad/GED/attending	-.09*	-.10*	-.13*
Employment/vocational training	.03	.04	.04
Unemployed/training dropout	.00	-.02	-.02
Not seeking job/not training	.02	.04	.03
Attending training/not required	.03	.06	.07*
Employed	-.06	-.10*	-.13*
Drug/alcohol use	.08*	.09*	.07*
Chronic use/positive test	.02	.01	.00
Occasional use	.10*	.12*	.11*
No use/negative tests	-.10*	-.11*	-.09*
Gang association	.11*	.15*	.15*
Participating in gang activity	.05	.08*	.08*
Gang activity	.11*	.15*	.15*
Peripheral association	.10*	.09*	.08*
No negative associations	-.17*	-.20*	-.19*
Home/community adjustment	.16*	.14*	.13*
Oppositional behavior	.06	.04	.03
Uncooperative/unresponsive	.15*	.15*	.15*
Cooperative and responsive	-.14*	-.12*	-.11*
Involved in positive activities	-.06	-.06	-.07*
Mental health	.07	.10*	.10*
Violent behavior/suicidal	.05	.09*	.09*
Severe emotional problems	.03	.04	.04
No reported problems	-.06	-.08*	-.09*

\* p < .05

**Camp.** As Table 3.11 shows, none of the four items on the camp classification instrument was significantly correlated with recidivism in the camp sample, nor were any of the individual responses to the items. It should be noted, however, that the sample size for the camp classification sample was small (N = 101), and that the correlations follow a general pattern where youth with the most serious prior behaviors exhibit the most subsequent recidivism.

**Table 3.11**  
**Correlations Between Re-arrest and Instrument Items in the Camp Classification Sample**

<i>Item/Response</i>	<i>6 months</i>	<i>12 months</i>	<i>18 months</i>
Most serious offense	.07	.00	.06
Violent or involving firearm	-.14	-.12	-.03
Non-violent with weapon	.09	.08	.06
Person/property/drug offense	.03	.10	.08
None	-.19	-.16	-.19
Prior violent offense history	-.02	-.07	-.09
Three or more	-.12	-.16	-.19
One or two	-.01	.00	-.01
None	.05	.07	.10
Record of assault on staff	-.06	-.07	.14
Incident filing	N/A	N/A	N/A
Non-filed incident	-.06	-.07	.13
None	.06	.07	-.13
Record of assault on ward	.05	.02	.00
Multiple incident filings	-.06	-.07	-.08
Single incident filing	N/A	N/A	N/A
Multiple non-filed incidents	.17	.15	.13
Single non-filed incident	.08	.06	.04
None	-.12	-.08	-.05

### **Unit Weighting of Instrument Items**

As noted above, each item in the instrument contains a weighting factor for every possible response category. We examined the value of these weights by simplifying each of the items to a dichotomy, with "no" or "none" categories coded as a 0, and any other category coded as a 1. The total instrument score was then re-computed by summing the scores for each of the instrument items. Table 3.12 shows how each instrument was converted to unit weighting.

**Table 3.12**  
**"Unit Weighting" of Juvenile Assessment Instruments**

<i>Instrument/Item</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Weights</i>	
		<i>Original</i>	<i>Unit</i>
<b>IDC</b>			
Warrant status	None	0	0
	Other categories	10	1
Most serious present offense	Status offense	0	0
	Other categories	3,5,7,10	1
Sustained petitions past 12 mos.	None	0	0
	Other categories	3,5	1
Youth residence	In home	0	0
	Other categories	2	1
Under influence at time of arrest	No	0	0
	Other categories	2	1
<b>Investigation</b>			
Most serious offense	Status offense	0	0
	Other categories	3,5,7,10	1
Prior law enforcement contacts	None	0	0
	Other categories	1,2,5	1
Age at first arrest	16 or older	1	0
	Other categories	2,3,4	1
Gang involvement/peer influence	No negative influences	0	0
	Other categories	1,2,3,4,5	1
Out-of-home placements	None	0	0
	Other categories	1,2	1
Alcohol/drug problems	No reported use	0	0
	Other categories	1,2,4	1
School	Satisfactory performance	0	0
	Other categories	1,2,3,4	1
Family dynamics	Supportive family	-1	0
	Other categories	1,2,3,4	1
Mental health	No problems	0	0
	Other categories	2,3,4,5	1

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**Table 3.12 (cont'd)**  
**"Unit Weighting" of Juvenile Assessment Instruments**

<i>Instrument/Item</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Weights</i>	
		<i>Original</i>	<i>Unit</i>
<b>Supervision</b>			
Probationer reporting	Reporting regularly	0	0
	Other categories	1,3,5	1
Rest./fines/fees/service	Regular payments/hours	0	0
	Met all obligations	-1	0
	Other categories	1,3	1
Habilitative services	Session participation	0	0
	Progress made	-1	0
	Other categories	1,3	1
School status	Enrolled	0	0
	Grad/GED/attending	-1	0
	Other categories	3,4,5	1
Employment/training	Attending training	0	0
	Employed	-1	0
	Other categories	3,5	1
Drug/alcohol use	No use/negative tests	0	0
	Other categories	2,5	1
Gang association	None	0	0
	Other categories	1,2,5	1
Home/community adjustment	Cooperative/responsive	0	0
	Positive activities	-1	0
	Other categories	2,5	1
Mental health	No reported problems	0	0
	Other categories	3,5	1
<b>Camp Classification</b>			
Most serious offense	None	0	0
	Other categories	5,10,20	1
Prior violent offense history	None	0	0
	Other categories	5,10	1
Record of assault on staff	None	0	0
	Other categories	10,20	1
Record of assault on ward	None	0	0
	Other categories	5,10,15,20	1

Correlations between re-arrest and the unit-weighted scores are shown in Table 3.13. A comparison of this table with the correlations in Table 3.6 above shows that the unit weighted instrument is actually a better predictor of recidivism than the original (weighted) version. The IDC instrument, in particular, benefits from unit weighting.

Weighted total score on the IDC instrument was not significantly related to re-arrest in the IDC sample, but the unit weighted total score is a significant predictor of re-arrest at 12 and 18 months. For the non-court investigation, court investigation, and supervision samples, unit weighted total scores showed higher correlation with re-arrest than did weighted scores.

**Table 3.13**  
**Instrument Correlation with Re-arrest at 6, 12, and 18 Months, Using Unit Weighting for Instrument Items**

<i>Sample</i>	<i>New Arrest within:</i>		
	<i>6 months</i>	<i>12 months</i>	<i>18 months</i>
IDC	.05	.15*	.17*
Non-court Investigation	.22*	.21*	.24*
Court Investigation	.21*	.27*	.30*
Supervision	.19*	.21*	.19*
Camp	.06	-.05	-.03

\* p < .05

### **RACE AND RECIDIVISM**

As Table 3.14 shows, minority youth in the juvenile samples generally showed higher re-arrest rates than whites, and Hispanic youth in the court investigation sample had significantly higher re-arrest rates at 12 and 18 months than whites. But as Table 3.2 above showed, minority youth also had higher scores on the risk and needs instruments. To determine whether race had an independent effect on recidivism, we performed logistic regressions on the non-court investigation, court investigation, and supervision samples, with re-arrest at 6, 12, and 18 months as the dependent variable. We used a stepped approach. First we regressed instrument score on outcome; second, we replicated the model and added ethnicity as a predictor. The results were consistent for all three samples: risk score was a significant predictor of re-arrest, and continued to be significant when race also entered into the regression equation.<sup>12</sup> Race alone, however, was not a significant predictor of re-arrest, above and beyond the youth's risk score, in any of the three samples.

<sup>12</sup> Dummy variables were used for black and Hispanic, with whites as the reference group. Other races were not included in these analyses.

**Table 3.14**  
**Percentage of Re-arrest within 6, 12, and 18 Months, by Race**

<i>Sample/Race</i>	<i>Percent with New Arrest within:</i>		
	<i>6 months</i>	<i>12 months</i>	<i>18 months</i>
Non-court Investigation			
Black	23.8%	32.1%	40.5%
Hispanic	19.4%	27.7%	31.6%
White	17.5%	25.4%	31.8%
Court Investigation			
Black	27.7%	35.1%	40.4%
Hispanic	24.4%	39.2%*	45.0%*
White	14.6%	23.6%	27.3%
Supervision			
Black	23.6%	33.0%	36.1%
Hispanic	20.5%	27.5%	32.2%
White	18.5%	24.4%	26.0%

\* p < .05 compared to whites

#### IV. ADULT INSTRUMENTS

As with the juvenile risk and needs instruments, the two adult instruments were composed of several items, each with multiple categories. Each category was assigned a pre-determined weighting factor, and the sum of these weights constituted the total assessment score. Using set cut-off points, adults were assigned to one of several possible outcomes. Supervisors could override the decision indicated by the instrument score, and a reason for the override may be specified. Items that comprise the adult instruments, along with corresponding weights, are given in Chapter I, Tables 1.5-1.6. The assessment forms are shown in Appendix B.

##### INSTRUMENT INTEGRITY

Instrument integrity for both adult instruments was good. The adult investigation instrument had a standardized Chronbach's alpha of .75, while the alpha for the adult supervision instrument was .72.

##### INSTRUMENT SCORES RELATED TO DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

Following the same strategy as with the juvenile samples, we examined whether the adult assessment scores were significantly related age, gender, or race. As Table 4.1 indicates, males had significantly higher scores than females, and blacks significantly higher than whites, on the investigation instrument. There were no significant differences on the supervision scores by demographic factors.

**Table 4.1**  
**Mean Instrument Scores by Age, Sex, and Race, in the Adult Samples**

<i>Sample</i>	<i>16-30</i>	<i>31+</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>
Investigation	10.9	10.7	11.4**	7.4**	14.6*	8.2	9.2
Supervision	13.6	12.2	13.0	13.1	14.3	13.2	12.6

\*  $p < .05$  compared to whites

\*\*  $p < .05$

Lack of significant differences by race in the adult supervision scores was basically a result of cancellation: higher scores for minorities on some risk factors were offset by lower scores for others, relative to whites. Higher scores on the investigation instrument

reflected more risk factors for blacks and, to a lesser extent, for Hispanics. Blacks scored significantly higher than whites on eight of the nine items on the investigation instrument, Hispanics on two. Table 4.2 shows means for items where significant differences were present by race.

**Table 4.2**  
**Mean Scores on Selected Items, by Race, in the Adult Samples**

<i>Instrument/Item</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>
Investigation			
Drug use problems	2.9*	2.2	1.7
Gang involvement	0.3*	0.1	0.4*
Age at first conviction	1.7*	1.1	1.4
Prior probation/parole grants	1.7*	1.2	1.2
Prior probation/parole revocations	2.4*	1.3	1.4
Assault convictions, past five years	1.4*	0.5	0.8
Adult convictions/juvenile adjudications	2.4*	0.5	0.9
Circumstances in current offense	2.2*	0.6	1.5*
Supervision			
Employment	3.9*	2.7	3.1
Family dynamics	0.5*	0.8	0.6
School history	1.0	0.7	1.3*
Mental health status	0.5	0.7	0.2*
Health (physical status)	0.2	0.2	0.1*

\*  $p < .05$  relative to whites

## **DECISIONS RELATED TO INSTRUMENT SCORES**

Decisions were aligned with instrument scores for the most part, though males received harsher decisions than females in the investigation sample, and blacks harsher decisions in both samples.<sup>13</sup> Overall, the agreement between the instrument score and the actual decision was 90.6% for the adult investigation sample, and 98.4% for the adult supervision sample.

### **Decision Overrides**

As with the juvenile samples, supervisors have the discretion to override the instrument's recommended disposition. In the case of adults, these overrides tended to be in the direction of more harsh decisions. For the investigation sample, the most common

<sup>13</sup> Decisions for blacks were harsher on the investigation scale relative to both whites and Hispanics, and on the supervision scale relative to Hispanics.



reasons specified for overriding the recommendation based on instrument scores were for probationers who posed a serious threat to the community, had drug issues, or had a criminal record that warranted non-standard handling. The most cited override reason for the supervision sample was domestic violence.

### **USING ASSESSMENT SCORES TO PREDICT RECIDIVISM**

In contrast to the juvenile samples, we did not have access to re-arrest data for adults. Instead we used data on subsequent referrals to probation, grants of probation, and prison commitments following the assessment date. Since an individual who is in prison is not eligible for either referral or grant, we eliminated from the investigation sample all those who were committed to prison within 30 days of the assessment date, on the assumption that these prison commitments were the result of the current arrest.

Correlations between instrument scores and the three measures of recidivism are shown in Table 4.3. While the supervision instrument correlates consistently with recidivism, the investigation scores show significant correlation only with commitment to prison.

**Table 4.3**  
**Instrument Correlation with Recidivism at 6, 12, and 18 Months in the Adult Samples**

<i>Sample</i>	<i>Referral to Probation</i>			<i>Probation Grant</i>			<i>Prison Commitment</i>		
	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>
Investigation	-.02	.04	.06	-.12*	-.06	-.02	.21*	.20*	.18*
Supervision	.14*	.14*	.15*	.07	.10*	.12*	.09	.11*	.12*

\* p < .05

### **Individual Instrument Items Related to Recidivism**

To determine whether certain instrument items were more influential than others in predicting adult recidivism, we looked at each item separately. As with the juvenile instruments, we approached this question in two ways, looking first at the score of each item, then at the contribution made by each category within the items. The results are summarized below for the investigation and supervision samples.

**Investigation.** None of the items on the adult investigation instrument correlated significantly with either referral to probation or a grant of probation in the investigation sample. In contrast, five of the nine instrument items were significantly related to prison commitment. Adults were more likely to be committed to prison if they

- had known gang affiliation
- were first arrested at age 16 or less
- had at least one prior probation or parole revocation
- had a prior adult conviction within the past five years
- had an adult conviction or juvenile adjudication for an offense which included use of a deadly weapon

In contrast, those with no prior revocations, and those with no prior adult convictions that did not involve a weapon, were less likely to have a prison commitment. For correlations between recidivism and individual items, see Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4**  
**Correlations Between Recidivism and Instrument Items in the Adult Investigation Sample**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Referral to Probation</i>			<i>Probation Grant</i>			<i>Prison Commitment</i>		
	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>
Alcohol use problems	.03	.00	.04	.05	.01	.05	.03	.04	.03
Frequent abuse	-.04	-.06	-.01	-.04	-.04	-.01	.01	-.02	-.03
Occasional abuse	.13	.12	.11	.15*	.10	.10	.02	.11	.09
No reported problem	-.06	-.02	-.04	-.08	-.03	-.06	-.03	-.07	-.04
Drug use problems	-.13	-.04	.01	-.11	-.03	.03	-.01	.00	-.02
Abuse; functioning disrupted	-.10	-.01	.05	-.10	-.01	.06	.00	.02	.00
No reported problem	.14*	.07	.02	.12	.04	.00	.02	.02	.04
Gang involvement	.02	.05	.06	-.05	-.03	-.01	.15*	.18*	.17*
Known affiliation	.02	.05	.05	-.05	-.03	-.01	.14*	.16*	.15*
No known affiliation	.02	.01	-.04	.06	.05	-.02	-.08	-.12	-.10
Age, 1st conviction	.01	.02	.03	-.06	-.06	-.06	.12	.15*	.16*
16 or younger	.02	.01	-.02	-.05	-.07	-.10	.14*	.16*	.15*
17-23	.01	.04	.08	-.01	.01	.03	.02	.04	.06
24 or older	.02	.00	-.03	.05	.04	.03	-.06	-.08	-.09
Prior probation/parole grants	-.06	.01	.04	-.08	-.02	.03	.07	.04	.01
One or more	-.05	.02	.06	-.08	.00	.05	.08	.03	.01
None	.06	.00	-.03	.07	.01	-.02	-.06	-.04	-.02
Prior revocation	.02	.05	.08	-.08	-.03	.03	.21*	.14*	.12
One or more	.03	.04	.08	-.08	-.03	.02	.22*	.13*	.12
None	-.01	-.03	-.08	.06	.02	-.05	-.15*	-.11	-.09
Assault convictions, past 5 yrs	.01	.11	.13	-.14*	-.02	-.01	.25*	.21*	.19*
Violent crimes, no weapon	.01	.03	.03	-.10	-.04	-.07	.22*	.15*	.14*
Property crimes	.02	.14*	.19*	-.07	.02	.09	.11	.13	.11
None	.00	-.10	-.14*	.10	.00	-.04	-.16*	-.16*	-.14*
Convictions/adjudications	.05	.01	-.02	-.04	-.05	-.08	.18*	.13	.12
Use of a deadly weapon	.14*	.10	.07	.02	.00	-.02	.26*	.20*	.19*
Physical force/stalk/weapon	-.07	-.08	-.09	-.06	-.07	-.08	-.03	-.04	-.04
None	.05	.05	.07	.05	.05	.05	-.02	-.02	-.01
Circumstances, current offense	-.09	-.02	-.04	-.11	-.08	-.10	.04	.13	.12
Use of a deadly weapon	-.07	.00	-.03	-.09	-.06	-.08	.06	.11	.10
Physical force/stalk/weapon	-.07	-.02	-.03	-.06	-.07	-.08	-.03	.09	.09
Not applicable	.10	.04	.03	.08	.07	.04	.03	-.08	-.07

\*  $p < .05$

**Supervision.** Two items on the adult supervision instrument accounted for most of the relationship between instrument score and recidivism in the supervision sample. Those with current or chronic drug use were more likely to recidivate on all three measures. Adults with no drug use were less likely to have a referral, but lack of drug use was not significantly correlated with either a probation grant or a prison commitment.

The other supervision instrument item related to recidivism was affiliation with organizations or schools. Those who were involved with organizations were less likely to have either a referral to probation or a prison commitment, while lack of involvement in organizations was correlated with both referral and prison. No significant correlation was found between organizational membership and a grant of probation, however. Table 4.5 shows correlations between the items on the supervision instrument and measures of recidivism.

**Table 4.5**  
**Correlations Between Recidivism and Instrument Items in the Adult Supervision Sample**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Referral to Probation</i>			<i>Probation Grant</i>			<i>Prison Commitment</i>		
	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>
Attitude	.02	.06	.05	.12*	.14*	.15*	-.08	-.04	-.06
Defiant; uncooperative	.02	.06	.03	.06	.13*	.09	-.03	-.04	-.05
Resistant; somewhat negative	.02	.02	.06	.10*	.06	.12*	-.07	.00	-.02
Positive cooperative attitude	.01	-.01	-.01	-.09	-.09	-.12*	.09	.05	.07
Employment	.05	.09	.07	.03	.06	.05	.03	.09	.08
Unemployed, not seeking employment	.06	.09	.07	.05	.08	.06	.03	.06	.06
Unemployed, seeking employment	.01	.00	.03	-.03	-.04	.01	.02	.06	.04
Employed	-.03	-.06	-.05	.00	-.03	-.04	-.03	-.09	-.07
Alcohol use	.13*	.06	.06	.06	.04	.05	.10	.05	.07
Chronic use	.13*	.05	.07	.07	.02	.05	.08	.05	.08
Current use	.03	.03	.03	.03	.05	.05	.04	.02	-.01
Prior use	-.07	-.03	-.04	-.08	-.06	-.08	-.04	-.03	.00
None	-.07	-.04	-.03	-.01	-.03	-.01	-.06	-.02	-.04
Illegal drug use	.12*	.18*	.19*	.05	.10	.12*	.09	.13*	.13*
Current or chronic use	.13*	.18*	.18*	.05	.11*	.13*	.11*	.16*	.14*
Prior use	.02	.03	.03	.02	.00	.00	-.01	-.02	.00
None	-.07	-.11*	-.12*	-.03	-.06	-.08	-.05	-.07	-.07
Family dynamics	.08	.00	-.01	.03	-.01	.01	.06	.00	.00
Repeated history of conflict	.08	-.01	.00	.00	-.04	-.01	.07	.01	.03
Temporary family crisis	.05	.08	.06	.08	.10*	.10	.02	.03	-.01
No conflict	-.05	-.01	.01	-.05	-.04	-.04	-.03	.01	.04
Family finances	.06	.04	.04	.03	.03	.05	.00	.00	.00
Severe difficulties	.06	.02	.03	.05	.04	.07	-.03	-.07	-.06
Minor difficulties	.02	.07	.07	-.01	-.01	-.01	.07	.16*	.14*
No current difficulties	-.04	-.05	-.04	-.01	-.01	-.02	-.03	-.07	-.05
School history	.01	.03	.05	-.02	.01	.00	.05	.07	.09
No high school diploma or GED	.00	.04	.06	-.06	-.01	.00	.06	.09	.11*
Attending, graduated, or GED	.02	.00	-.01	.05	.01	.02	-.03	-.05	-.07

\* p < .05

(continued on next page)

**Table 4.5**  
**Correlations Between Recidivism and Supervision Items (cont'd)**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Referral to Probation</i>			<i>Probation Grant</i>			<i>Prison Commitment</i>		
	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>
Aptitude	-.01	-.01	.01	-.01	.01	.05	.00	.00	-.02
Severely impaired or illiterate	-.02	-.03	-.03	-.01	-.02	-.02	-.01	-.02	-.02
Borderline functioning	.01	.03	.01	.01	.04	.03	.01	.02	.00
Normal intellectual functioning	.04	.03	.04	.02	-.01	-.01	.02	.02	.04
Mental health status	.08	.05	.11*	.03	.03	.09	.04	.03	.03
Chronically mentally ill	-.03	-.04	.01	-.02	-.03	.04	-.02	-.03	-.03
Some emotional problems	.12*	.10*	.14*	.06	.07	.09	.07	.06	.07
No known problems	-.05	-.02	-.05	-.01	-.03	-.05	-.02	.00	.00
Peers	.09	.08	.08	.04	.06	.06	.08	.06	.06
Criminal influences/associations	.06	.04	.04	.02	.01	.02	.03	.05	.05
Negative influences/associations	.08	.09	.10	.05	.07	.07	.10	.06	.06
Supportive, positive influences	-.06	-.08	-.08	-.02	-.09	-.08	-.08	-.04	-.03
Recreation/hobby	-.03	.00	.00	-.02	.03	.00	-.05	-.02	.02
No constructive activities	-.02	.03	.04	-.01	.05	.02	-.06	-.01	.04
Positive activities	.03	-.01	-.01	.03	-.04	.00	.04	.01	-.03
Organization/social affiliation	.12*	.10*	.09	.08	.07	.04	.07	.12*	.13*
No positive affiliations	.13*	.12*	.11*	.09	.07	.05	.08	.13*	.15*
Positive affiliations	-.10*	-.08	-.07	-.07	-.06	-.03	-.06	-.11*	-.12*
Health (physical status)	.10	.04	.03	.11*	.06	.06	-.01	-.01	.00
Serious handicap; chronic illness	.04	-.01	.02	.08	.03	.07	-.02	-.03	-.04
Interference with functioning	.11*	.07	.03	.08	.05	.01	.02	.03	.05
Sound physical health	-.05	-.01	.03	-.06	-.03	-.01	.02	.03	.02

\*  $p < .05$

### **Unit Weighting of Instrument Items**

To determine the role of instrument weights, we reduced each item in the instruments to a yes/no or some/none basis, with the "no" and "none" categories coded as a 0, and the "yes" or "some" categories as a 1. The total score was then recalculated as the sum of the scores on the individual items. Table 4.6 gives the details of how items were recoded using unit weighting.



**Table 4.6**  
**"Unit Weighting" of Adult Assessment Instruments**

<i>Instrument/Item</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Weights</i>	
		<i>Original</i>	<i>Unit</i>
<b>Investigation</b>			
Alcohol use problems	No reported problem	0	0
	Other categories	1,2	1
Drug use problems	No reported problem	0	0
	Other categories	3,6	1
Gang involvement	No known affiliation	0	0
	Other categories	1,2,3	1
Age at first conviction	24 or older	0	0
	Other categories	3,6	1
Prior grants	None	0	0
	Other categories	1,3	1
Prior revocation	None	0	0
	Other categories	1,2	1
Assault convictions past 5 yrs.	None	0	0
	Other categories	2	1
Convictions/adjudications	None	0	0
	Other categories	5,10	1
Circumstances, current offense	Not applicable	0	0
	Other categories	5,10	1
<b>Supervision</b>			
Attitude	Cooperative attitude	0	0
	Other categories	1,2	1
Employment	Employed	0	0
	Other categories	3,6	1
Alcohol use	None	0	0
	Other categories	1,2,3	1
Illegal drug use	None	0	0
	Other categories	3,6	1
Family dynamics	No conflict	0	0
	Other categories	1,3	1
Family finances	No current difficulties	0	0
	Other categories	1,2	1
School history	Attending, graduated, GED	0	0
	Other categories	2	1
Aptitude	Normal functioning	0	0
	Other categories	1,3	1
Mental health status	No known problems	0	0
	Other categories	3,6	1
Peers	Positive influences	0	0
	Other categories	3,6	1
Recreation/hobby	Positive activities	0	0
	Other categories	1	1
Organization/social affiliation	Positive affiliations	0	0
	Other categories	1	1
Health (physical status)	Sound physical health	0	0
	Other categories	1,2	1

Table 4.7 shows the correlations between the unit weighted instruments and the three measures of recidivism. A comparison of the correlation coefficients in this table with those in Table 4.3 above shows that the relationship between instrument score and recidivism is consistent, regardless of whether instrument weights are used or not. Unlike the juvenile instruments, where unit weighting actually increased the correlations between instrument scores and recidivism, the unit weighted adult instruments showed slightly lower correlations with recidivism than did their weighted counterparts. However, the patterns of significance are identical; instruments that were significantly correlated with recidivism when weighted were also significantly correlated without weights.

**Table 4.7**

**Instrument Correlation with Recidivism at 6, 12, and 18 Months in the Adult Samples, Using Unit Weighting for Instrument Items**

<i>Sample</i>	<i>Referral to Probation</i>			<i>Probation Grant</i>			<i>Prison Commitment</i>		
	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>
Investigation	-.02	.05	.10	-.11	-.04	.02	.18*	.18*	.16*
Supervision	.12*	.14*	.15*	.08	.10*	.11*	.07	.11*	.12*

\* p < .05

## **RACE AND RECIDIVISM**

As Table 4.8 indicates, minorities generally showed higher rates of recidivism than whites. The difference was statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) for Hispanics in the investigation sample. Table 4.1 above showed that minorities generally scored higher on the risk and needs instruments than whites, as well. To determine whether race was an independent factor in recidivism, we performed logistic regressions using each of the nine measures of recidivism as the dependent variable. We used a stepped approach. First we regressed instrument score on outcome; second, we replicated the model and added ethnicity as predictors. In the investigation sample, instrument score significantly predicted incarceration at 6, 12, and 18 months but was not a significant predictor for referrals or grants. Instrument score remained a significant predictor of prison when race entered the regression equation.<sup>14</sup> Race was never a significant predictor, above and beyond the adult risk score, of any measure of recidivism. A similar pattern held in the supervision sample, except that instrument score was a significant predictive factor for referral at 6, 12, and 18 months, for probation grant at 18 months, and for incarceration at 12 and 18 months. Score remained significant when race entered the regression equation, and race was not a significant predictor, above and beyond the adult risk score, of any of the measures of recidivism.

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<sup>14</sup> Dummy variables were used for black and Hispanic, with whites as the reference group. Other races were not included in these analyses.

**Table 4.8**  
**Percentage of Recidivism at 6, 12, and 18 Months, by Race**

<i>Sample/Race</i>	<i>Referral to Probation</i>			<i>Probation Grant</i>			<i>Prison Commitment</i>		
	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>	<i>6 mos.</i>	<i>12 mos.</i>	<i>18 mos.</i>
Investigation									
Black	10.3%	19.0%	32.8%	6.9%	12.1%	24.1%	3.4%	5.2%	5.2%
Hispanic	15.7%	23.1%	23.1%	9.9%	14.0%	14.0%	4.1%*	4.6%*	6.6%
White	17.4%	19.6%	28.3%	17.4%	19.6%	26.1%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%
Supervision									
Black	7.4%	16.7%	21.6%	3.9%	7.8%	10.8%	2.0%	5.9%	7.8%
Hispanic	5.2%	11.0%	16.7%	2.3%	5.8%	8.7%	2.9%	4.6%	6.4%
White	4.5%	11.2%	15.7%	2.3%	5.6%	10.1%	2.2%	3.4%	3.4%

\* p < .05 compared to whites

## V. CONCLUSIONS

### JUVENILE INSTRUMENTS

#### **Instruments as Predictors of Recidivism**

The juvenile investigation and supervision instruments appear to function adequately as predictors of recidivism, as measured by re-arrest at 6, 12, and 18 months after assessment in the non-court investigation, court investigation, and supervision samples. In contrast, the IDC and camp classification instruments seem to have a different purpose, one of classification rather than true risk and needs assessment. These latter instruments lack adequate scale integrity, result in relatively high numbers of supervisor overrides, and do not reliably predict recidivism within their respective samples.

#### **Weights**

For all the juvenile instruments except the one used for camp placement, unit weighting--where item responses are simplified to yes/no or none/some--would result in higher correlations with recidivism in the instrument's respective sample than when the original item weights are used. Unit weighting actually increases the correlation between instrument score and re-arrest, particularly for the IDC sample.

**Using Item Weights as Filters.** Some of the juvenile instruments use weights for certain items (e.g., warrant status on the juvenile IDC instrument) to ensure a high score regardless of responses on any other item. The high score automatically assigns a juvenile to a caseload or decision. Under a unit weighting scheme, the same result could be obtained by adding a filter which would dictate the desired result irrespective of instrument score.

#### **Bias for Demographic Factors**

Blacks scored higher than whites in all five juvenile samples, though the difference in scores was statistically significant only for the court investigation sample. Hispanics scored higher than whites in all except the IDC sample, although the difference was statistically significant for the court investigation and supervision samples.

Higher scores for blacks and Hispanics reflected more risk factors. In the non-court investigation sample, blacks showed a younger age at first arrest, more gang involvement,

and more out-of-home placements. Hispanics also had more gang involvement. In the court investigation sample, both blacks and Hispanics had more prior law enforcement contacts than whites, as well as poorer school performance. Hispanics also showed more gang involvement. In the supervision sample, both minorities score higher than whites on community habilitative services and gang association. Blacks also had worse home/community adjustment, while Hispanics had worse probationer reporting, poorer school status, and less payment of restitution, fines, and fees or less community service. Whites had poorer mental health and more substance usage than minorities, but these were not enough to offset minorities' higher scores on the other items.

**Relationship Between Ethnicity and Risk.** Although blacks and Hispanics, to a lesser degree, score higher than whites on both juvenile and adult instruments, not all the differences were statistically significant. Nonetheless, untangling the relationship between offender ethnicity and higher risk instrument scores is important. Our analyses indicated that higher scores were the result of black and Hispanic youth often having more of the risk/need factors contained in the instruments. We may question the choice of the instrument items contained in the scales. Are these items ones currently in use? Are the items predictive of recidivism, or are they unrelated to subsequent involvement in crime? The extent to which the items reflect the current state of the art and are predictive of recidivism, the more appropriate the instrument.

For juveniles, we established that the IDC and camp instruments do not have good predictive validity--they appear to have been developed for other classification purposes. The investigation and supervision scales, on the other hand, were predictive of recidivism within the samples we studied. In the non-court investigation sample, blacks showed higher risk scores for being arrested at a younger age; having gang involvement and prior placements; Hispanics showed more involvement in gangs. Earlier arrest and gang involvement were predictive of subsequent recidivism. In the non-court investigation sample, Hispanics showed higher risk scores on individual items related to law enforcement contacts; school performance, and gang activity while blacks had higher scores on the first two. All three items were related to subsequent recidivism. For the supervision sample, minority youth evinced higher risk on six of the nine items--all six items are predictive of recidivism. Overall, items on which minority youth scored at "higher risk" were predictive of subsequent recidivism.

These interrelationships translated into higher recidivism rates in several instances. When we examined the relationship between youth race/ethnicity, risk scores, and recidivism, however, we found no independent effect for race/ethnicity on recidivism

above and beyond that of youth risk score. This suggests that it is the risk factors that mediate higher recidivism for minority youth.

## **ADULT INSTRUMENTS**

The adult investigation and supervision instruments also appear to have sufficient scale integrity, as indicated by relatively high values for Chronbach's alpha. We found the investigation instrument to be a poor predictor of recidivism in the adult investigation sample except for prison commitment. The supervision instrument, on the other hand, is a significant predictor of referral to probation, probation grant, and commitment to prison in the supervision sample.

### **Weights**

For the adult samples, a unit weighting system correlated with the three measures of recidivism much like original weighted scores, although the unit weighted scores tended to have slightly lower correlations with recidivism measures.

These findings suggest that simplifying the instruments to make them easier to administer would not affect their ability to predict recidivism.

**Using Item Weights as Filters.** In contrast to the juvenile instruments, no single item on either adult instrument is weighted in such a way as to automatically assign an offender to a caseload or decision. Filtering would not be a factor in a unit weighting scheme for the adult instruments.

### **Bias for Demographic Factors**

Both adult instruments assigned harsher scores to blacks, relative to Hispanics and whites, although the differences were statistically significant only on the investigation instrument. Blacks tended to score higher on individual instrument items, and instrument scores were highly correlated with decisions. In the investigation sample, blacks scored significantly higher than whites on eight of the nine items. In the supervision sample, the primary difference was in employment.

Males in the investigation sample had significantly higher scores than females. There was no difference by gender in the supervision sample. In both samples, those above the age of thirty scored higher than those below thirty, though the differences were not statistically significant. These differences were possibly due to probationers accumulating more risk and needs factors with the passage of time.



**Relationship Between Ethnicity and Risk.** Instrument appropriateness seems somewhat less for the two adult instruments than for the juvenile instruments. For investigations, black offenders scored as higher risk on eight of the items; for supervision, blacks scored higher on one of the items. The investigation instrument was a poor predictor of recidivism in the investigation sample, except for subsequent incarceration. No individual items were predictive for grants or subsequent probation terms. Five of the nine items were associated with subsequent incarceration; blacks had higher scores on all these items. For the supervision sample, blacks had higher risk scores for employment and family issues; these factors were not significantly related to subsequent recidivism.

Similar to youth, in several instances minority adults evinced higher recidivism than whites. When we examined the relationship between race/ethnicity, risk scores, and recidivism, however, we found no independent effect for race/ethnicity on recidivism above and beyond that of adult risk score. This suggests that it is the risk factors that mediate higher recidivism for minority adults.

### **Instrument Validity**

Adult instruments, much more than juvenile instruments, appear to have internal validity problems. Many of the items did not correlate with the recidivism measures used, even though the instruments were based on existing risk and needs instruments. The lack of relationship between individual items and recidivism may reflect the recidivism measures used. Information on actual *arrests* was not available. Measures used--subsequent probation referral, grant, or incarceration--are somewhat removed from arrest behavior, and relationships may be more tenuous.

### **RISK/NEED ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT**

The use of formal instruments designed to assess risk began in the late 1970s, when probation and parole caseloads swelled and agencies sought ways to stretch limited resources. Risk assessment went from a seldom-used technology in 1980 to the primary management tool of probation and parole agencies by 1990 (Baird 1991). Most classification systems rely on a quantification of risk factors and service needs that result in risk and need scores that determine levels of supervision (Petersilia and Turner 1987).

These tools are generally developed in much the same way as was the Los Angeles County Probation Department's--by "borrowing" variables and weighting schemes from instruments validated using a different population. A recent survey of adult probation departments and their use of case classification instruments revealed that slightly over 80

percent of agencies use standardized, objective instruments to classify offenders. The most commonly used were variants of the Wisconsin Risk Classification tool system--used in the development of the Los Angeles instruments--and the Client Management Classification tool that helps staff determine the best intervention strategy for an offender (Petersilia and Turner 1987).

However, the items on the youth investigation and supervision scales are similar to items in instruments detailed in the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency and Prevention's *Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent and Chronic Juvenile Offenders*, as well as those contained in the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory developed by Andrews and colleagues (Multi-Health Systems, 1998). According to OJJDP, a core set of items includes age at first referral or adjudication, number of prior referrals or arrests, number of out-of-home placements or institutional commitments, school behavior and attendance, substance abuse, family stability, parental control, and peer relationships, among others (OJJDP, 1995). The Los Angeles juvenile investigation instrument is comprised of these items (with the inclusion of current offense). The supervision instrument contains fewer of the core items.

Los Angeles County is continuing its effort to institute system-wide risk assessment for adults and juveniles. The Probation Department reviewed available instruments and selected the Risk and Resiliency assessment developed by Brad Bogue for use in San Diego County as a potential tool. The county is currently conducting a validated study with this tool for juvenile intake and supervision. Results should be available in 2004.

**Appendix**

**A. JUVENILE RISK AND NEEDS INSTRUMENTS**

L. A. COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

<b>PERSONAL DATA</b>		POJ#:	JAIN:	S. S. #:
Name:		AKA:		TN:
Address:			Zip:	Phone:
DOB:	Place of Birth:	Age:	Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Ethnicity:
Age at first arrest:	<input type="checkbox"/> First Time Offender	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate Recidivist (2-3 referrals)	<input type="checkbox"/> High Recidivist (4 or more referrals)	
Medical Need: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes: Specify:	School:			
Special Handling: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes: Reason:	Gang Affiliation: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes: Gang:			
Parent/Guardian Monthly Income: \$	Number Supported:	Minor:		
MINOR: Speaks English: <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> None	MINOR: Speaks English: <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> None			
MINOR'S ASSESSMENT: Primary Language in Home:		Preferred Language:		
PARENT/GUARDIAN: Speaks English: <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> None		PARENT/GUARDIAN: Speaks English: <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> None		
PARENT/GUARDIAN ASSESSMENT: Primary Language in Home:		Preferred Language:		
<b>PRESENT OFFENSE</b>				
Date Arrested:	Time Arrested:	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	Date of Detention:	Time Detained: <input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM
Most Serious Present Offense:			Victim: All present charges: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
This offense is a: <input type="checkbox"/> 707(b) <input type="checkbox"/> Other Felony <input type="checkbox"/> Misdemeanor <input type="checkbox"/> Other:				
If minor is referred for probation violation only, without a new criminal offense, describe the violation:				
<b>LEGAL STATUS</b>		Current Court #:	Number of sustained petitions in last 12 months:	
Minor is (check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Active Probation <input type="checkbox"/> CYA Parole <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer by other county <input type="checkbox"/> INS Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Other				
<input type="checkbox"/> Active DCPS <input type="checkbox"/> Subject of bench warrant <input type="checkbox"/> Illegal resident of U.S. <input type="checkbox"/> AWOL from placement or county institution				
<b>DETENTION/RELEASE ASSESSMENT</b> (For use by IDC Officer)				Score:
1. Warrant Status:	10 0	Minor is the subject of an active bench warrant None		
2. Most Serious present Offense:	10 7 5 3 0	707(b) WVC offenses/Any non-707(b) offenses with firearms Non-707(b) offenses (Weapons/Threat of great bodily harm) Non-707(b) offenses (Person/Property/Drug - Assault, Grand Theft, Vehicle Theft, Narcotics Sale) Other offenses (Misdemeanors, Graffiti, Trespass, etc.) Status offenses (non-criminal violations)		
3. Number of Sustained Petitions in last 12 months:	5 3 0	Two or More One None		
4. Youth Residing with:	2 0	Out of home (institution, group/foster home, other) In home (parents, guardian, relative, or spouse)		
5. Under the influence of drugs or alcohol at time of arrest?	2 0	Yes No		
Detention/Release Scale 0-9 = release, 10+ = detained				<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>RELEASE</b> - Date: _____ Time: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM				
Released to: Name: _____ Relationship: _____				
Address: _____ Phone: _____				
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>DETAIN</b> - Location: <input type="checkbox"/> Central Juvenile Hall <input type="checkbox"/> San Fernando Valley Juvenile Hall <input type="checkbox"/> CDP				
<input type="checkbox"/> Los Padres Juvenile Hall <input type="checkbox"/> PAD/BOA				
Reason for detention decision when not supported by score:				
IDC Officer:	Date:	Time:	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	
SDPO:	Date:	Time:	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	
<b>FOLLOW-UP INFORMATION</b> (For use by IDC Officer)				
Petition Due Date:	Detention Hearing Date:	Time:	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	Location:
Area Office to which case is assigned:		If active, Casehold #:		

L. A. COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

NAME:		PO#:	JAN#:
<b>652/DISPOSITION ASSESSMENT (For use by Investigating DPO)</b>			<b>652</b>
<b>1. Most Serious Present Offense (R)</b>	10 7 5 3 1	707(b) WIC offense/Any non-707(b) offenses with firearms Non-707(b) offenses (Weapons/Threat of great bodily harm) Non-707(b) offenses (Purse/Property/Drug - Assault, Grand Theft, Vehicle Theft, Narcotics Sale) Misdemeanor Offense 801 WIC Status Offense/Infraction	
<b>2. Prior Law Enforcement Contacts (R)</b>	5 2 1 0	Prior probation supervision Prior closed probation referral Prior law enforcement arrest without probation referral None	
<b>3. Age at First Arrest (R)</b>	4 3 2 1	11 or younger 12 to 13 years old 14 to 18 years old 18 or older	
<b>4. Gang Involvement/Peer Influence (R)</b>	5 4 3 2 1 0	Hard-core gang member Hard-core tagger Peripheral gang member Parents/siblings gang member and/or involved in gang activity, strong local gang presence, peripheral tagger Negative peer association or influence No reported negative association or influence	
<b>5. Out-Of-Home Placements (Involves/SP/CCP) (R)</b>	2 1 0	Two or more One None	
<b>6. Alcohol/Drug Problems (RN)</b>	4 2 1 0	Chronic use and/or abuse Occasional abuse Occasional use/Experimentation No reported usage	
<b>7. School (RN)</b>	4 3 2 1 0	Expelled/Not attending/Alternative School Severe behavior problems/Assaultive/Frequent truantion/ Suspensions Frequent disciplinary referrals Marginal performance Satisfactory performance <i>Note: Add 1 point if below grade level</i>	
<b>8. Family Dynamics (R)</b>	4 3 2 1 -1	Reported history of physical or sexual abuse by family Negative/abused parent or sibling influence Persistent family dysfunction/Current 300 WIC Temporary family crisis Very supportive/resourcesful family	
<b>9. Mental Health (R)</b>	5 4 3 2 0	Stable/Severe emotional problems Insignificant Chronic runaway Prior psychiatric hospitalization No reported problems	
(R) = Risk Factor (RN) = Need Factor			<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>
<b>652 DECISION SCALE</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Case (1 - 5) <input type="checkbox"/> 654 WIC (6 - 10) (Assign to Level 1 except cases approved by SAPP/SDPO) <input type="checkbox"/> DA (11 +)              If Active: <input type="checkbox"/> HSA <input type="checkbox"/> CWP <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____			
Reason for recommendation when not supported by scores:			
DPO:	Casefile #:	Area Office:	Date:
SDPO:	Casefile #:		Date:
<b>DISPOSITION ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATION SCALE</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> 654.2 WIC (1 - 7)              Suitable Placement/Camp (18 - 26)              California Youth Authority (27 +)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Home on Probation (8 - 17)              Suitable Placement (Factors 8 and 9 = 8+)              Camp (Factors 8 and 9 = 0 - 4)			
Reason for recommendation when not supported by scores:			
DPO:	Casefile #:	Area Office:	Date:
SDPO:	Casefile #:		Date:
<b>INITIAL SUPERVISION SERVICE LEVEL SCALE</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Limited Supervision (1-7)              Level 3 Standard Supervision (12-15)              Level 5 Intensive Supervision (20-23)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Minimum Supervision (8-11)              Level 4 Transitional Supervision (16-19)              Level 6 Maximum Supervision (24+)			
Reason for decision when not supported by scores:			
DPO:	Casefile #:	Area Office:	Date:
SDPO:	Casefile #:		Date:

L. A. COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

NAME		PDJ#				JAIN:			
SUPERVISION LEVEL RE-ASSESSMENT (For use by Supervision DPO)		Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
1. Prisoner Reporting	5 Failure to Report to Court 3 Failure to Report 1 Not reporting as scheduled 0 Reporting regularly								
2. Restitution Fines Fees: Community Service	3 No payment no hours completed 1 Irregular payments/hours 0 Regular payments/hours completed 1 Met financial obligation/hours met								
3. Community Habilitative Services	3 No attendance 1 No progress 0 Session participation 1 Progress made								
4. School Status	5 Expulsion 4 Drop Out 3 Suspension(s)/Not Attending 0 Enrolled -1 Grad/GED/Satisfactory attendance and/or behavior								
5. Employment/Vocational Training	5 Unemployed/Vocational Training Drop Out 3 Not Seeking Employment/Not attending vocational training 0 Attending vocational training and/or not required to attend -1 Employed								
6. Drug/Alcohol Use	5 Chronic use/positive test results 2 Occasional use 0 No use/negative test results								
7. Gang Association	5 Participating in gang activity 2 Gang behavior 1 Peripheral association 0 No reported negative associations								
8. Home/Community Adjustment	5 Minor exhibiting oppositional behavior 2 Minor not cooperative or responsive 0 Minor cooperative and responsive -1 Minor involved in positive activities								
9. Mental Health	5 Violent behavior/suicidal 3 Severe emotional problems 0 No aberrant behavior/No reported problems								
CURRENT CASELOAD:		TOTAL SCORE							
JUVENILE SUPERVISION SERVICE LEVEL SCALE									
Level 1 Limited Supervision (1-7)			Level 3 Standard Supervision (12-15)			Level 5 Intensive Supervision (20-23)			
Level 2 Minimum Supervision (8-11)			Level 4 Transitional Supervision (16-19)			Level 6 Maximum Supervision (24+)			
Reason for decision when not supported by score:									
Date:									
Date:									
Date:									
Date:									
DPO:		Casefile #:		Area Office:		Date:			
SDPO:		Casefile #:		Area Office:		Date:			

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L. A. COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

<b>PERSONAL DATA</b>		PDJF:	JAW:	S.S.N.:	
Name:		AKA:		TN:	
Address:			Zip:	Phone:	
DOB:	Place of Birth:	Current Age:	Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Ethnicity:	
Age at first arrest:	<input type="checkbox"/> First Time Offender <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate Recidivist (2-3 referrals) <input type="checkbox"/> High Recidivist (4 or more referrals)				
Medical Need: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes: Specify:	School:				
Special Handling: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes: Reason:	Gang Affiliation: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes: Gang:				
Parent/Guardian Monthly Income: \$	Number Supported:	Marital:			
MINOR: Speaks English: <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> None	MINOR: Speaks English: <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> None				
MINOR'S ASSESSMENT: Primary Language in Home:		Preferred Language:			
PARENT/GUARDIAN: Speaks English: <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> None		PARENT/GUARDIAN: Speaks English: <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> None			
PARENT/GUARDIAN ASSESSMENT: Primary Language in Home:		Preferred Language:			
<b>PRESENT OFFENSE</b>					
Date Arrested:	Time Arrested:	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	Date of Detention:	Time Detained:	
Most Serious Present Offense:			Victim(s) All present charges: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
This offense is a: <input type="checkbox"/> 707(b) <input type="checkbox"/> Other Felony <input type="checkbox"/> Misdemeanor <input type="checkbox"/> Other:					
If minor is referred for probation violation only, without a new criminal offense, describe the violation:					
<b>LEGAL STATUS</b>		Current Court #:	Number of successful petitions in last 12 months:		
Minor is (check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Active Probation <input type="checkbox"/> CVA Parole <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer by other county <input type="checkbox"/> JMS Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Active DCFB <input type="checkbox"/> Subject of bench warrant <input type="checkbox"/> Legal resident of U.S. <input type="checkbox"/> AWOL from placement or county institution					
<b>CAMP CLASSIFICATION ASSESSMENT (For use by Camp Staff)</b>				Initial	2nd
1. Most Serious Offense	20 707(b) WVC offenses/Any non-707(b) offenses with firearms 15 Non-707(b) offenses (Weapons/Threat of great bodily harm) 5 Non-707(b) offenses (Person/Property/Drug - Assault)				
2. Prior Violent Offense History	10 Three or more 5 One to two				
3. Record of Assault on Staff	20 Incident Filing 10 Non Filing Incident				
4. Record of Assault on Ward	20 Multiple Incident Filings 15 Single Incident Filings 10 Multiple Incident Non Filing 5 Single Incident Non Filing				
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>					
<b>CAMP CLASSIFICATION SCALE</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> General Program (Less than 20) <input type="checkbox"/> Violence Alternative Program (20 or more)					
Reason for decision when not supported by score:					
Date:					
Date:					
Staff:	Date:	SDPO:	Date:		

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## **B. ADULT RISK AND NEEDS INSTRUMENTS**



L. A. COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

PERSONAL DATA		XF:	COURT #:	CI #:	S. S. #:	
Name: _____ AKA: _____ TN: _____						
Address: _____				Zip: _____	Phone: _____	
DOB: _____	Place of Birth: _____	Age: _____	Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Ethnicity: _____		
Age at first arrest: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> First Time Offender		<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate Recidivist (2-3 referrals)		<input type="checkbox"/> High Recidivist (4 or more referrals)	
Most Serious Referred Charge/Conviction: _____						
Speaks English: <input type="checkbox"/> Well <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor/Not at All			Translation Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, Language: _____			
Gang Affiliations: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes: Gang: _____						
ADULT RISK ASSESSMENT (For use by Investigation and Supervision Staff) VERIFIED BY CH, DMV, FBI, LASO, JAI, PROB, PAROLE, AND/OR ARREST REPORT				INV	SUPV	SUPV
1. Alcohol Use Problems (Prior to and including present offense)	4 Frequent abuse; serious disruption; needs treatment 2 Occasional abuse; some disruption of functioning 0 No reported problem					
2. Drug Use Problems: (Prior to and including present offense)	4 Abuse; disruption of functioning 0 No reported problem					
3. Gang Involvement: (History or indicated by current offense)	2 Known affiliation 0 No known affiliation					
4. Age at First Conviction/Juvenile Adjudication:	4 16 or younger 2 17 - 23 0 24 or older					
5. Prior Probation/Parole Grants: (Formal or Informal probation grants)	2 One or more 0 None					
6. Prior Probation/Parole Revocations: (Adult/Juvenile)	4 One or more 0 None					
7. Adult Conviction/Juvenile Adjudication for Assaultive Offenses within past five years:	4 Crimes of violence without use of weapon 2 Crime against property 0 None					
8. Adult Conviction/Juvenile Adjudication for:	10 Use of a deadly weapon 5 Possession of a deadly weapon; use of physical force; stalking 0 None					
9. Circumstances present in current offense:	10 Use of a deadly weapon 5 Possession of a deadly weapon; Use of physical force; stalking 0 Not applicable					
				TOTAL SCORE		
CASE CLASSIFICATION RISK ASSESSMENT SCALE						
<input type="checkbox"/> AMSC (0 - 15) <input type="checkbox"/> HRO Level 3 (16-26) <input type="checkbox"/> HRO Level 2 (27-35) <input type="checkbox"/> HRO Level 1 (36+)						
Reason for decision when not supported by score: _____						
DPO: _____	Caseload #: _____	Area Officer: _____	Date: _____			
SDPO: _____	Caseload #: _____	Date: _____				
SPECIALIZED CASELOAD CLASSIFICATION CODING ASSESSMENT (For use by Supervision Staff)				INV	SUPV	
1. Mince Order State Narcotic Testing Conditions code NTD						
2. Documented Gang Activity or Gang Related Offense or Delinquent Gang Member code GAMB						
3. Child Threat Offense code CT						
4. Domestic Violence Offense code DV						
5. No specialized caseload classification conditions, code AMSC, HRO 1, HRO 2, or HRO 3 according to Case Classification Assessment Scale Decision						
Analyze Caseload Classification: Record the last classification code identified above.						
Reason for decision when not supported by score: _____						
DPO: _____	Caseload #: _____	Area Officer: _____	Date: _____			
SDPO: _____	Caseload #: _____	Date: _____				

L. A. COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT #

PERSONAL DATA		X#:	COURT #:	CIT #:	S. S. #:		
Name:		AKA:		TN:			
Address:				Zip:	Phone:		
DOB:	Place of Birth:	Age:	Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Ethnicity:			
Age at first arrest:	<input type="checkbox"/> First Time Offender		<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate Recidivist (2-3 referrals)		<input type="checkbox"/> High Recidivist (4 or more referrals)		
Most Serious Charge/Conviction:			Gang Affiliation: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes; Gang:				
ADULT: Speaks English: <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> None			ADULT: Speaks English: <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> None				
ADULT'S ASSESSMENT: Primary Language in Home:			Preferred Language:				
ADULT HIGH RISK OFFENDER CASELOAD NEEDS ASSESSMENT (For use by Supervision staff)					INITIAL	2ND	3RD
1. Attitude	2 Defiant; uncooperative 1 Resistant; somewhat negative 0 Positive cooperative attitude						
2. Employment	6 Not employed in the past six months; no effort to seek employment 3 Employed in the past six months; seeking employment 0 Employed full-time, part-time; not relative						
3. Alcohol Use	3 Chronic Use 2 Current Use 1 Prior Use 0 None						
4. Illegal Drug Use	6 Current or Chronic Use 3 Prior Use 0 None						
5. Family Dynamics	3 Repeated history of family conflict 1 Temporary family crisis 0 No conflict						
6. Family Finances	2 Severe difficulties 1 Minor difficulties 0 No current difficulties						
7. School History	2 No High school Diploma or equivalent 0 Attending school, graduated, GED or equivalent						
8. Aptitude	3 Severely impaired functioning; illiterate 1 Borderline functioning 0 Normal intellectual functioning						
9. Mental Health Status	6 Chronically mentally ill; hospitalization or psychotic episodes in past year 3 Some emotional problems; moderate level of functioning impairment 0 No known problems						
10. Peers	6 Criminal influences and associations (e.g. gang, hate groups) 3 Negative associations or influences; loner 0 Supportive, positive influences						
11. Recreation/Hobby	1 Not participating in constructive leisure time activities, hobbies or regular physical exercise 0 Participating in positive recreational activities/hobbies						
12. Organization/Social Affiliation	1 Not involved in any positive extracurricular social groups, (e.g. clubs, church, school, social, athletics) 0 Involved in positive organization/social affiliation						
13. Health (Physical Status)	2 Serious handicap or chronic illness 1 Handicap or illness interferes with functioning 0 Sound physical health						
TOTAL SCORE							
HIGH RISK OFFENDER CASELOAD NEEDS ASSESSMENT SCALE							
<input type="checkbox"/> HRO Level 3 (10 - 15)		<input type="checkbox"/> HRO Level 2 (16-25)		<input type="checkbox"/> HRO Level 1 (26+)			
Reason for decision when not supported by score:							
DPO:	Caseload #:		Area Office:		Date:		
SDPO:	Caseload #:		Area Office:		Date:		

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