



# North Carolina Department of Public Safety

*Prevent. Protect. Prepare.*

Pat McCrory, Governor

Frank L. Perry, Secretary

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairs of House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Justice and Public Safety  
Chairs of Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Justice and Public Safety

FROM: Frank L. Perry, Secretary  
W. David Guice, Commissioner

RE: Alternatives to Commitment Report

DATE: March 1, 2015

Pursuant to S.L. 2005-276, 16.11(c), *The Division of Juvenile Justice of the Department of Public Safety shall report to the Senate and House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittees on Justice and Public Safety no later than March 1, 2006, and annually thereafter, on the results of the alternatives to commitment demonstration programs funded by Section 16.7 of S.L. 2004-124. The 2007 report and all annual reports thereafter shall also include projects funded by Section 16.11 of S.L. 2005-276 for the 2005-2006 fiscal year. Specifically, the report shall provide a detailed description of each of the demonstration programs, including the numbers of juveniles served, their adjudication status at the time of service, the services/treatments provided, the length of service, the total cost per juvenile, and the six- and 12-month recidivism rates for the juveniles after the termination of program services. (1998-202, s. 1(b); 2000-137, s. 1(b); 2005-276, s. 16.11(c); 2011-145, s. 19.1(l), (x), (ggg).)*



**Alternatives to Commitment Programs  
Annual Evaluation Report  
March 2015**

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**Session Law 2004-124, Section 16.7**

**Submitted by:  
Department of Public Safety  
Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice  
Juvenile Community Programs Section**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report is required by Session Law 2004-124, Section 16.7 to provide alternatives to juvenile commitment services through the Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils. This report focuses on the youth served in programs for FY 2013-2014 that delivered services to youth in Level III disposition (commitment), youth in Level II disposition (intermediate) who were at risk of a Level III disposition, and youth reentering the community after youth development center commitment (post-release supervision). In FY 2013-2014, the General Assembly allocated \$750,000 for these services.

Statewide, the Alternatives to Commitment Programs delivered somewhat similar intensive case management services that “wrapped services around” the juvenile and family. Typical services included home-based family counseling, individual counseling, tutoring, interpersonal skill-building, behavior management and cognitive behavior training. Projects coordinated a 24 hour a day, 7 days per week adult supervision plan for each Level III youth. Program providers and court counselors supported and planned for youth as they integrated into the community. The programs also managed referrals to a variety of other community services including such education programs as structured day, after-school programming, and tutoring. On occasion, court counselors used electronic monitoring as a support for supervision of youth.

Alternatives to Commitment Programs served 117 youth and exits from the programs totaled 88 during FY 2013-2014. Of the 88 youth who exited the programs in FY 2013-2014, 73 youth completed the program meeting the goals of the program with a high or acceptable level of participation and achievement of behavior improvement goals.

For FY 2013-2014, the average annual cost (based on actual expenditures) per youth in Alternatives to Commitment Programs was \$5,632 while the average annual cost per youth in a youth development center was \$127,210.

This report is in response to the legislation and provides a description of the programs, the number of youth served, their adjudication status at the time of service, services and treatments provided, the length of service, the total cost per youth, and the six (6) and twelve (12) month recidivism rates for youth after the termination of program services. In this report, data support the need for the continued development and delivery of Alternatives to Commitment Programs at the local level to addresses unmet gaps in the continuum of services within the communities.

## Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Alternatives to Commitment Programs

### Project Background

Session Law 2004-124, Section 16.7 made available \$750,000 to establish community programs for youth who otherwise would be placed in a youth development center. This legislation required that funded programs provide residential and/or community-based intensive services to juveniles who have been adjudicated delinquent and have been given a Level III or Level II disposition or juveniles who are re-entering the community after receiving commitment programming in a youth development center. Data since the implementation of services since FY 2004-2005 confirm that intensive case management that provide wrap-around services to the juvenile and family continue to be effective and cost-efficient programs. Services provided in FY 2013-2014 as Alternatives to Commitment Programs continued to provide those services.

By statute, there are three disposition levels for adjudicated youth in North Carolina: Level I, Community Disposition; Level II, Intermediate Disposition; and Level III, Commitment. The intent of the 2004 legislation was that programs be established to serve youth who were at either a Level II or Level III disposition.

### Program Data

The following tables provide detailed data of the eight (8) Alternatives to Commitment Programs funded in FY 2013-2014. These tables include the number of youth served, adjudication status at the time of service, the services/treatments provided, average length of service, total cost per youth, status when exiting the program, living arrangements after exit, and the six (6) and twelve (12) month recidivism rates. The projects are identified by the host county.

### Youth Served and Adjudication Status

In FY 2013-2014 projects served a total of 117 youth. Table 1 below identifies the number of youth served and their adjudication status at admission.

**Table 1. Youth Served and Adjudication Status**

| <b>Host County</b> | <b>Adjudicated<br/>Delinquent<br/>Disposition<br/>Pending</b> | <b>Probation</b> | <b>Post-Release<br/>Supervision</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Alamance           | 0                                                             | 15               | 3                                   | 18           |
| Burke              | 0                                                             | 4                | 4                                   | 8            |
| Cumberland         | 0                                                             | 5                | 0                                   | 5            |
| Dare               | 0                                                             | 11               | 2                                   | 13           |
| Davidson           | 1                                                             | 10               | 1                                   | 12           |
| Onslow             | 0                                                             | 20               | 1                                   | 21           |
| Rockingham         | 0                                                             | 29               | 2                                   | 31           |
| Wayne              | 0                                                             | 7                | 2                                   | 9            |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>1</b>                                                      | <b>97</b>        | <b>15</b>                           | <b>117</b>   |

## Services and Treatments Provided

Through the development of program agreements, the program providers worked to match the services they provided to services that are identified through research to be characteristic of effective services. Statewide, the programs delivered somewhat similar intensive case management services that “wrapped services around” the youth and family. Typical services included family counseling, individual counseling, tutoring, mentoring, interpersonal skill-building, behavioral management, and cognitive behavioral training. Projects coordinated a 24 hour a day, 7 days per week adult supervision plan for each Level III youth. Program providers and court counselors supported and planned for youth as they integrated into the community. On occasion, court counselors used electronic monitoring as a support for supervision of youth.

Table 2 describes the services and treatments provided by the Alternatives to Commitment Programs in FY 2013-2014. The host county, sponsoring agency, the counties receiving services, and the number of youth who could be served at one time (capacity) are identified.

**Table 2. Program Services and Treatments**

| <b>Host County<br/>(Sponsoring Agency)</b>                                       | <b>Counties<br/>Served</b>       | <b>Services<br/>Provided<br/>(includes 24/7 staff availability)</b>                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Capacity</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>ALAMANCE</b><br>(Alamance County<br>Dispute Settlement and<br>Youth Services) | Alamance                         | <b>Program Type: Structured Day</b><br>Intensive wraparound services including parenting classes and educational alternatives as well as tutoring for youth.                                                                | <b>5</b>        |
| <b>BURKE</b><br>(Barium Springs for<br>Children, Inc.)                           | Burke, Caldwell and<br>Catawba   | <b>Program Type: Parent/Family Skill Building</b><br>Intensive wraparound in-home services including individual and family counseling. .                                                                                    | <b>3</b>        |
| <b>CUMBERLAND</b><br>(Cumberland County<br>CommuniCare, Inc.)                    | Cumberland                       | <b>Program Type: Parent/Family Skill Building</b><br>Intensive home-based services including individual and family counseling, mentoring, and community service.                                                            | <b>5</b>        |
| <b>DARE</b><br>(Dare County Schools)                                             | Dare                             | <b>Program Type: Home Based Family Counseling</b><br>Substance abuse assessments, individual and group counseling, intensive home-based family counseling, substance abuse education, and interpersonal skills development. | <b>10</b>       |
| <b>DAVIDSON</b><br>(Family Services of<br>Davidson County, Inc.)                 | Davidson                         | <b>Program Type: Home Based Family Counseling</b><br>Intensive wraparound in-home services including family and individual counseling.                                                                                      | <b>4</b>        |
| <b>ONslow</b><br>(Onslow County Youth<br>Services)                               | Onslow and Sampson               | <b>Program Type: Home Based Family Counseling</b><br>Intensive home-based individual and family therapy including 24-hour availability.                                                                                     | <b>9</b>        |
| <b>ROCKINGHAM</b><br>(Rockingham County<br>Youth Services)                       | Rockingham, Stokes,<br>and Surry | <b>Program Type: Home Based Family Counseling</b><br>Intensive home-based counseling and cognitive behavioral group counseling.                                                                                             | <b>10</b>       |
| <b>WAYNE</b><br>(Methodist Home for<br>Children)                                 | Wayne, Lenoir and<br>Greene      | <b>Program Type: Home Based Family Counseling</b><br>Intensive wraparound home-based individual and family therapy.                                                                                                         | <b>3</b>        |

## Length of Service

Alternatives to Commitment Programs continued to serve youth who were high risk and in need of intensive interventions for a considerable length of time. Table 3 illustrates youth being served by a program for an average length of stay ranging from 84 days to 240 days. The statewide average length of stay was 128 days.

**Table 3. Days in Program**

| Host County    | Average Length of Stay |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Alamance       | 98                     |
| Burke          | 104                    |
| Cumberland     | 114                    |
| Dare           | 240                    |
| Davidson       | 84                     |
| Onslow         | 170                    |
| Rockingham     | 119                    |
| Wayne          | 123                    |
| <b>Average</b> | <b>128</b>             |

## Program Cost

As legislatively mandated, no one program received more than \$100,000. Table 4 illustrates the total youth served, actual program expenditures, and annual cost for FY 2013-2014 which averaged \$5,632 per youth.

**Table 4. Program Cost**

| Host County<br>(Program Type)                | Total Youth<br>Served | Actual<br>Expenditure | Cost per<br>Youth |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Alamance<br>(Structured Day)                 | 18                    | \$100,000             | \$5,555           |
| Burke<br>(Parent/Family Skill Building)      | 8                     | \$45,891              | \$5,736           |
| Cumberland<br>(Parent/Family Skill Building) | 5                     | \$65,166              | \$13,033          |
| Dare<br>(Home Based Family Counseling)       | 13                    | \$89,722              | \$6,902           |
| Davidson<br>(Home Based Family Counseling)   | 12                    | \$97,125              | \$8,094           |
| Onslow<br>(Home Based Family Counseling )    | 21                    | \$73,248              | \$3,488           |
| Rockingham<br>(Home Based Counseling)        | 31                    | \$99,594              | \$3,213           |
| Wayne<br>(Home Based Counseling)             | 9                     | \$88,194              | \$9,799           |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>117</b>            | <b>\$658,940</b>      | <b>\$5,632</b>    |

## Exit from Program

Table 5 illustrates the 88 youth who exited the projects in FY 2013-2014. Seventy-three (73) youth or 83% completed their programming at a high or acceptable level of participation and achievement of behavior improvement goals. Program completion was categorized as successful, satisfactory, unsuccessful, or non-compliance.

**Table 5. Status of Youth at Exit**

| County       | Successful Completion | Satisfactory Completion | Unsuccessful Completion | Non-compliance | Total     |
|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Alamance     | 13                    | 3                       | 2                       | 0              | 18        |
| Burke        | 2                     | 0                       | 1                       | 1              | 4         |
| Cumberland   | 0                     | 0                       | 2                       | 0              | 2         |
| Dare         | 4                     | 4                       | 0                       | 0              | 8         |
| Davidson     | 7                     | 5                       | 0                       | 0              | 12        |
| Onslow       | 10                    | 1                       | 2                       | 0              | 13        |
| Rockingham   | 16                    | 5                       | 4                       | 0              | 25        |
| Wayne        | 1                     | 2                       | 2                       | 1              | 6         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>53</b>             | <b>20</b>               | <b>13</b>               | <b>2</b>       | <b>88</b> |

Table 6 illustrates the living arrangements for those 88 youth upon exit from the program which shows eighty-six percent (86%) of the youth were living in the community with their parent(s) or guardian; eleven percent (11%) were in a treatment facility while three percent (3%) were in a youth development center or county jail.

**Table 6. Youth Living Arrangement at Exit**

| County       | At Home with Parent(s) or Guardian | Treatment Facility | YDC/County Jail | Total     |
|--------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Alamance     | 18                                 | 0                  | 1               | 19        |
| Burke        | 2                                  | 1                  | 0               | 3         |
| Cumberland   | 2                                  | 0                  | 0               | 2         |
| Dare         | 5                                  | 3                  | 0               | 8         |
| Davidson     | 11                                 | 1                  | 1               | 13        |
| Onslow       | 10                                 | 3                  | 0               | 13        |
| Rockingham   | 25                                 | 0                  | 0               | 25        |
| Wayne        | 3                                  | 2                  | 0               | 5         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>76</b>                          | <b>10</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>88</b> |

## Recidivism

Table 7 below illustrates youth who exited the projects during the past two fiscal years (FYs 2012-2013 and 2013-2014) and incurred additional delinquent complaints in the juvenile justice system.

**Table 7. Recidivism Measure 1**

| <b>Recidivism Measure 1: Youth Receiving an Additional Juvenile Complaint Post-Discharge</b> |               |                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Post Discharge Timeframe                                                                     | 0 to 6 Months | 0 to 12 Months |
| Distinct Juveniles who had at Least 6 or 12 Months Post-Discharge to be Studied              | 183           | 148            |
| Distinct Juveniles with Additional Delinquent Complaints                                     | 32            | 38             |
| <b>Percentage of Juveniles with Additional Delinquent Complaints</b>                         | <b>17%</b>    | <b>26%</b>     |

Table 8 below shows the percentage of youth of the two year sample who recidivated by receiving a juvenile adjudication or adult conviction post-discharge from the programs.

**Table 8. Recidivism Measure 2**

| <b>Recidivism Measure 2: Youth Receiving a Juvenile Adjudication or Adult Conviction Post-Discharge</b> |               |                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Post Discharge Timeframe                                                                                | 0 to 6 Months | 0 to 12 Months |
| Distinct Juveniles who had at Least 6 or 12 Months Post-Discharge to be Studied                         | 183           | 148            |
| Distinct Juvenile with Juvenile Delinquent Adjudications                                                | 26            | 31             |
| Percentage of Juvenile with Delinquent Adjudications                                                    | 14%           | 21%            |
| Distinct Juvenile with Adult Convictions                                                                | 9             | 17             |
| Percentage of Juvenile with Adult Convictions                                                           | 5%            | 11%            |
| Distinct Juvenile with Juvenile Adjudication(s) or Adult Conviction(s)                                  | 34            | 47             |
| <b>Juvenile Adjudications + Adult Convictions</b>                                                       | <b>19%</b>    | <b>32%</b>     |

In comparison, according to the most recent NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission's (SPAC) *Juvenile Recidivism Study: Sample FY 2008/09*, 40.1% of juveniles who were both adjudicated and disposed received an additional adjudication or conviction within 36 months. Although the time frame for the SPAC's study was longer than the recidivism study conducted by the Department, the SPAC recidivism study shows that the average juvenile will recidivate within the first 12 months.



## Summary and Conclusion

Alternatives to Commitment Programs served high-risk youth who were in need of intensive interventions to be successfully served in the community. Without the programs these youth may have been served in a more costly youth development center. Noteworthy outcomes of the programs are:

- Ninety-seven percent (97%) of the youth exiting the projects were in a non-secure living arrangement while only three percent (3%) of the youth exiting the projects were committed to a youth development center or were placed in county jail.
- Eighty-three percent (83%) of the youth exiting the projects completed their programming at a high or acceptable level of participation and achievement of behavior improvement goals.
- Nineteen percent (19%) of the distinct juveniles who could be followed for a full 6 months post-discharge received a delinquent adjudication or an adult conviction while 32% received a delinquent adjudication or an adult conviction within 12 months post discharge. This data supports research that shows the average juvenile will recidivate within the first 12 months.
- The average cost per youth in the Alternatives for Commitment Programs was \$5,632 while the average annual cost per youth in a youth development center was \$127,210. The data indicate that Alternatives to Commitment Programs continue to be effective and cost-efficient programs that develop and deliver programming for committed youth at the local level while addressing unmet gaps in the continuum of services within communities.