

The Special Needs Units:

**A Program Review and Profile of the Residents at
the Southeast Arkansas Community Correctional
Center in Pine Bluff and the Southwest Arkansas
Community Correctional Center in Texarkana**

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Arkansas Department of
Community Correction



Background and Description of the Special Needs Units

The Department of Community Correction balances the protection of the community with the needs of offenders. To reduce future criminal activities, DCC provides therapeutic residential treatment services, such as substance abuse education and anger management, at all of its residential facilities. These services are provided to enable offenders to better reintegrate into the community. Many offenders in the corrections system have drug and/or alcohol addictions more difficult to treat and remedy due to mental or physical health issues.

To address the dual needs of mental health services with the substance abuse treatment, the Department began operating a Special Needs Unit (SNU) for males at the Southwest Community Correctional Center (SWCCC) in Texarkana, Arkansas on September 1, 1999. The unit is the only DCC-operated program for male offenders who have been diagnosed with at least two treatment issues; generally an alcohol and/or drug problem and a mental health problem. A female housing unit was designated at the Southeast Arkansas Community Correctional Center in 2005 for the same services.

The units operate within a modified Therapeutic Community (MTC) model, where offenders receive consistent supervision from staff, appropriate behavioral modeling from staff and peers, and new values and morals are modeled in everyday activities. Residents are introduced to various change- and recovery-based approaches, including the 12-Step approach to recovery, how to identify and change past criminal thinking and behavior patterns and cognitive restructuring. They work on specific cognitive areas that contributed to old patterns, and learn how to deal with issues in positive ways. Relapse prevention strategies are taught, and the resident learns to identify re-entry challenges and options.

DCC uses the MTC concept as a method for change, with substance abuse recovery as an important component, but only one piece, of the treatment program. DCC treatment focuses on a multi-level approach to reach desired re-socialization – a change in thinking and behavior where pro-social choice and actions become automatic/reflexive. To achieve re-socialization, the residents are taught new concepts, new values, and rules of expected conduct. They are given structure, something many of them have never had. They are immersed in an environment of peers following, teaching, and modeling the new values and morals. The rules are clearly stated, learned in orientation, and modeled in every day activities. There are positive and negative consequences for behavior.

Study Methodology

This examination of the Special Needs Units utilizes the data maintained by the personnel at the unit. This data file was provided to the Evaluation Section and additional information sources were explored for recidivism information. The data received from the centers were not edited and there is incomplete or missing data. When appropriate, this information is noted in the charts, tables or graphs.

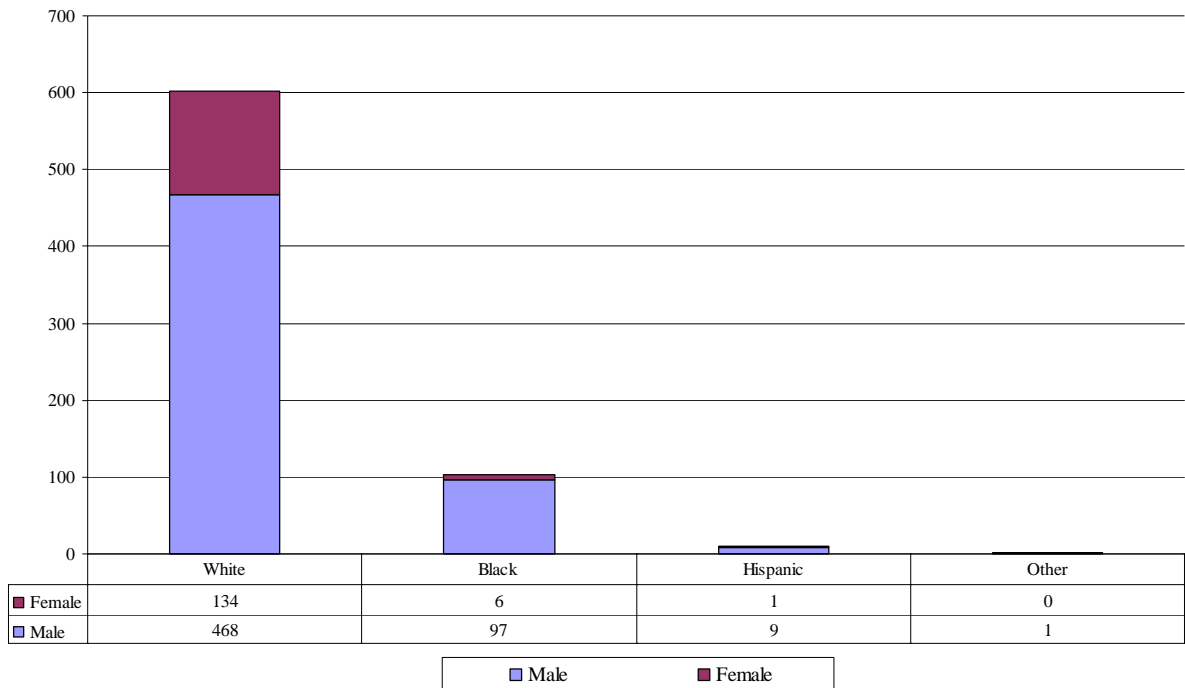
As part of the Department of Community Correction's internal monitoring of programs, the recidivism rate for offenders released from the program is reviewed. Recidivism is defined as an offender who is returned to incarceration in a prison or community correctional facility. It does not include individuals sentenced or placed in a local jail. Recidivist activity is further broken down into whether the individual was placed in a facility for a technical violation of the release conditions or commission of a new crime which resulted in a new conviction and sentencing to a facility.

The study also reviewed the offenders files once they were released and examined the referral for continued services and the occurrences of drug testing.

Files of released offenders were examined for continued services and occurrences of drug use.

Offender Demographics for Admissions

Since the inception of the program, the SNU accepted and released 716 individuals, either into the community or to another facility. The majority of both the male and female offenders in the study group are White and make up 84% of the population (males 81%, female 95%), with Blacks (males 17%, female 4%) comprising 14% of the total population, and Hispanics and other ethnic groups comprising 2% of the released population.

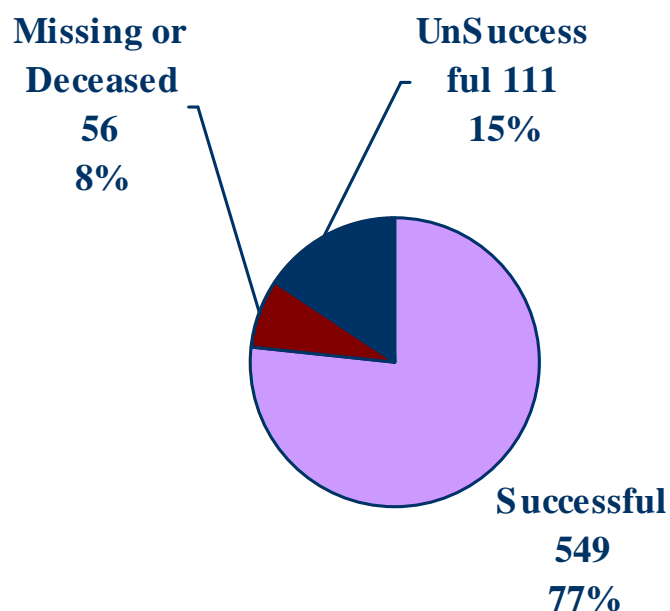


Overall Program Success – Offender Releases from the Units

The Special Needs Unit has two measures of success. The first measure is the successful completion of the program where the individual is admitted to the unit and remains there until completion of the program or expiration of his/her period of confinement. Failure is defined as admission to the unit and subsequent move to general population at another DCC facility or transfer to the Arkansas Department of Correction (ADC) prior to completing the program.

The second measure of success is the rate of recidivism resulting in re-incarceration at a correctional facility. This measure is discussed in the recidivism component of this report.

For offenders admitted to the unit from their initial start up until August 27, 2007, 77 percent successfully completed the program and 23% were removed prior to completion of the program. There was 1 offender death while in the program.



Female and Male Offenders Successful and Unsuccessful Program Completion

Female offenders in the Special Needs Unit have a much lower percentage of unsuccessful completions than the males (2% for females and 14% for males).

| | Successful Number (Pct.) | Unsuccessful Number (Pct.) | Missing or Deceased Number (Pct.) | Total Number (Pct.) |
|---------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Male | 420 (58.7%) | 99 (13.8%) | 56 (7.8%) | 575 (80.3%) |
| Female | 129 (18.0%) | 12 (1.7%) | 0 (0%) | 141 (19.7%) |
| Total | 549 (76.7%) | 111 (15.5%) | 56 (7.8%) | 716 (100%) |

Program Completion by Fiscal Year

Since activity is reported by fiscal year for most programs, this information has been included for analysis. As time passes, the data on program completions will show how fiscal years compare. This information can be used to show not only program completion, but can be used to show shifts in age groups and how fiscal years compare on recidivism factors.

As noted below, 73% of the males admitted to the SNU successfully completed the program and were released to community supervision (Probation/Parole) or returned to general population until their release date.

SNU Released Male Offenders Program Completion Status by Fiscal Year

| | Successful Number (Pct.) | Unsuccessful Number (Pct.) | Missing Number (Pct.) | Total Number Each Fiscal Year (Pct. of Total) |
|--------|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| FY '00 | 10 (91%) | 1 (9%) | 0 (0%) | 11 (2%) |
| FY '01 | 62 (84%) | 12 (16%) | 0 (0%) | 74 (13%) |
| FY '02 | 53 (71%) | 22 (29%) | 0 (0%) | 75 (13%) |
| FY '03 | 56 (80%) | 14 (20%) | 0 (0%) | 70 (12%) |
| FY '04 | 69 (81%) | 14 (17%) | 2 (2%) | 85 (15%) |
| FY '05 | 37 (45%) | 8 (10%) | 37 (45%) | 82 (14%) |
| FY '06 | 64 (64%) | 20 (20%) | 15 (15%)* | 99 (17%) |
| FY '07 | 69 (87%) | 8 (10%) | 2 (3%) | 79 (14%) |
| Total | 420 (73%) *2006: Number includes one (1) deceased offender | 99 (17%) | 56 (10%) | 575 (100%) |

**Released Female Offenders
Program Completion Status
by Fiscal Year FY 2006 and FY 2007**

Compared to male released offenders, the female SNU has a much lower rate – both in terms of raw number and percent of the total released population – of unsuccessful released offenders.

| | Successful Number (Pct.) | Unsuccessful or (Pct.) | Total Number Each Fiscal Year |
|---------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| FY '06 | 81 (91%) | 8 (9%) | 89 |
| FY '07 | 48 (92%) | 4 (8%) | 52 |
| Total | 129 (91.5%) | 12 (8.5%) | 141 |

Recidivism Results – Male Offenders

As part of the Department of Community Correction’s internal monitoring of programs, the recidivism rate for offenders released from the program is reviewed.

Since their release, 163 of the 575 male offenders have been sentenced to a facility for either a technical violation or a new criminal conviction. **This is a total recidivist rate of 28.3%.** Over 66% of the recidivists were sentenced for new conviction and were incarcerated at ADC. Technical Violations comprise approximately 33% of those returning to incarceration and most technical violations occurred within the first year and a majority of those violators were also sent to ADC.

| | ADC | DCC | Total |
|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| New Conviction | | | |
| Number | 104 | 5 | 109 |
| Percent of Total Recidivists | 63.8% | 3.1% | 66.9% |
| Technical Violators | | | |
| Number | 37 | 17 | 54 |
| Percent of Total Recidivists | 22.7% | 10.4% | 33.1% |
| Total Number | 141 | 22 | 163 |
| Total Percent | 86.5% | 13.5% | 100.0% |

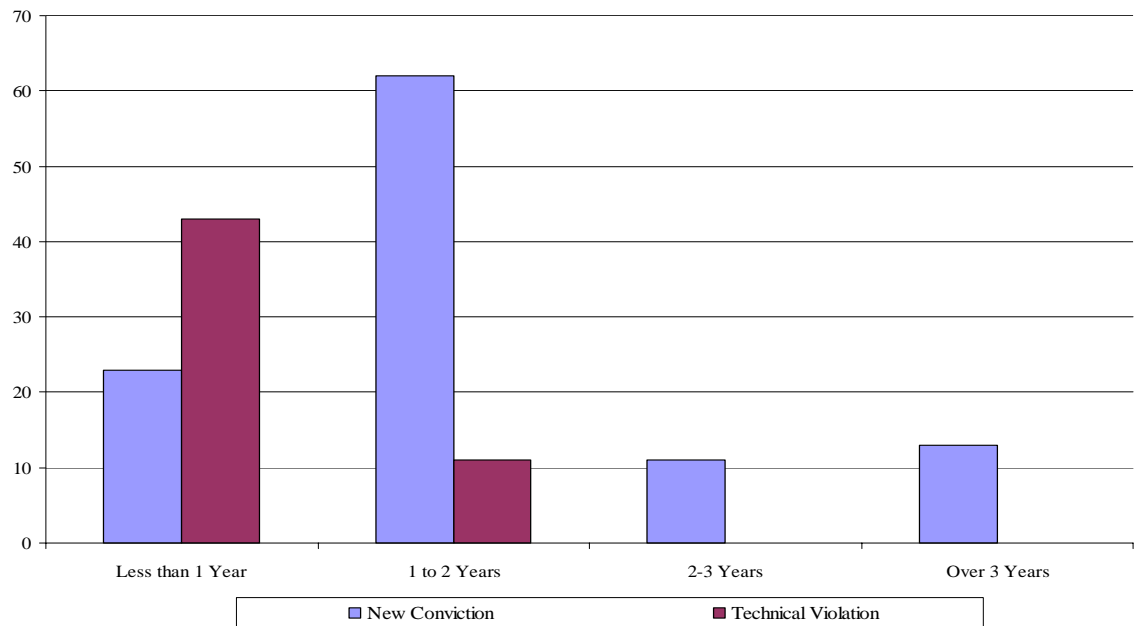
Recidivism Results – Female Offenders

Since their release, only 9 of the 141 released female offenders were sentenced to a facility for either a technical violation or a new criminal conviction. **This is a total recidivist rate of 6.4%. The male recidivism rate is nearly 5 times higher than the female rate.** Technical Violations comprise approximately 77.7% of those returning to incarceration and all of the technical violations occurred within the first year.

| | ADC | DCC | Total |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| New Conviction | | | |
| Number | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Percent of Total Recidivists | 22.1% | 0.0% | 22.1% |
| Technical Violators | | | |
| Number | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| Percent of Total Recidivists | 11.1% | 66.6% | 77.9% |
| Total Number | 3 | 6 | 9 |
| Total Percent | 33.3% | 66.6% | 100.0% |

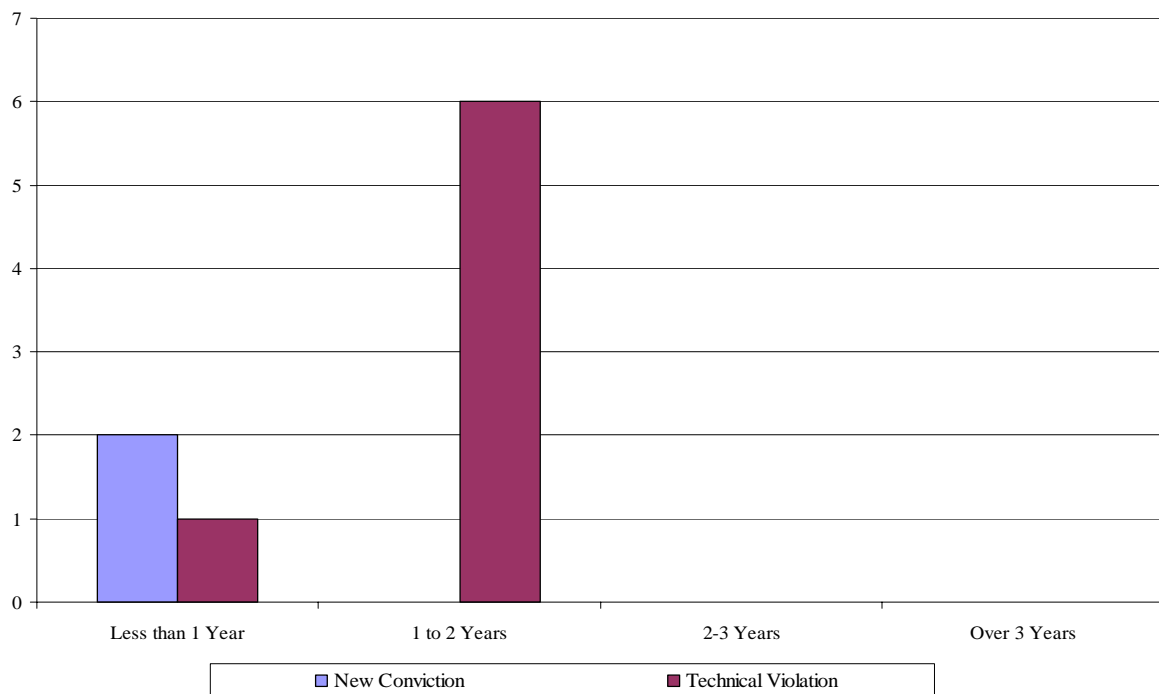
TIME AFTER RELEASE BEFORE RECIDIVISM EVENT FOR MALE OFFENDERS

| N=575 Male Offenders | Less than 1 year (Pct. of All Male Offenders) | 1 – 2 years (Pct. of All Male Offenders) | 2 – 3 years (Pct. of All Male Offenders) | Over 3 years (Pct. of All Male Offenders) | Total (Pct. of All Male Offenders) |
|----------------------|--|---|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| New Conviction | 23 (4.0%) | 62 (10.8%) | 11 (1.9%) | 13 (2.3%) | 109 (19.0%) |
| Technical Violation | 43 (7.5%) | 11 (1.9%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 54 (9.4%) |
| Total | 66 (11.5%) | 73 (12.7%) | 11 (1.9%) | 13 (2.3%) | 163 (28.3%) |



Recidivism Results – Female Offenders

| N=141 Female Offenders | Less than 1 year (Pct. of All Female Offenders) | 1 – 2 years (Pct. of All Female Offenders) | 2 – 3 years (Pct. of All Female Offenders) | Over 3 years (Pct. of All Female Offenders) | Total (Pct. of All Female Offenders) |
|------------------------|--|---|---|--|---|
| New Conviction | 0 (0%) | 2 (1.4%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1.4%) |
| Technical Violation | 7 (5%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 7 (5%) |
| Total | 7 (5%) | 2 (1.4%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 9 (6.4%) |



Recidivists and Program Completion

Released Offenders Recidivism by Program Completion (Number)

| | Successful Program Completion | | Unsuccessful Program Completion | | Missing Program Data | | Total |
|---------|-------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|-------|
| | Non-recidivists | Recidivists | Non-recidivists | Recidivists | Non-recidivists | Recidivists | |
| Males | 302 | 118 | 69 | 30 | 56 | 0 | 575 |
| Females | 120 | 9 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 141 |
| Total | 422 | 127 | 81 | 30 | 56 | 0 | 716 |

Released Offenders Recidivism by Program Completion (Percentages)

| | Successful Program Completion | | Unsuccessful Program Completion | | Missing Program Data | | Total |
|---------|-------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|--------|
| | Non-recidivist | Recidivists | Non-recidivist | Recidivists | Non-recidivist | Recidivists | |
| Males | 42.2% | 16.5% | 9.6% | 4.2% | 7.8% | 0.0% | 80.3% |
| Females | 16.8% | 1.3% | 1.7% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 19.7% |
| Total | 58.9% | 17.7% | 11.3% | 4.2% | 7.8% | 0.0% | 100.0% |

Recidivism Rates and Drug Involvement

For male technical violators, more than half (51.9%) of the reported violations involved drugs or alcohol. Four of seven female technical violators reported violations involved drugs or alcohol (57%).

Male new convictions reflects only 49 of 109 cases involved substance abuse, while female new convictions (2) reflected only one case involving drugs or alcohol.

Released Male Offenders Recidivism by Type of Offense and Drug Violation

| | New Conviction | Technical Violation | Total |
|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|-------|
| No Indication of Drug Violation | 60 | 26 | 86 |
| Drug Violation | 49 | 28 | 77 |
| Missing | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 109 | 54 | 163 |

Released Female Offenders Recidivism by Type of Offense and Drug Violation

| | New Conviction | Technical Violation | Total |
|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|-------|
| No Indication of Drug Violation | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Drug Violation | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| Missing | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 2 | 7 | 9 |

Program Referrals for Released Offenders

By definition, offenders from the Special Needs Units have two or more co-occurring disorders, one of which usually involves a substance abuse problem.

Offender records were examined to determine whether offenders were referred to programs that might address their substance abuse or mental health issues once released to the field. This review did not include offenders who were only referred for an assessment, but includes those actually referred to a program such as Drugs 101 or Substance Abuse Counseling. For the offenders referred to a program (14.8%), the indication of a referral does not necessary mean a successful participation in the program; only that they received a referral.

Over 86% of offenders released from a Special Needs Unit were not referred to a program for follow-up or continuing care. The subsequent page shows that most of the offenders referred to a program were referred to one that might address their substance abuse issues. Over 62% of the referrals were to a substance abuse program, e.g., substance abuse counseling, chemical dependence education, or recovery dynamics.

| | Referred to Program | Not Referred to a Program | Total |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| Number of Offenders | 106 (14.8%) | 690 (85.2%) | 716 (100%) |

Specific Program Referrals

| Program Offender Referred: | Number | Percent |
|---------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| 12 Step Programs | 8 | 7.5% |
| Alcoholics Anonymous | 1 | 0.9% |
| Anger Management | 2 | 1.9% |
| Basic Living Needs (Food Stamps/AFDC) | 1 | 0.9% |
| Chemical Dependence Education | 10 | 9.4% |
| Community Service | 1 | 0.9% |
| Day Reporting | 5 | 4.7% |
| Drug Court | 7 | 6.6% |
| Drugs 101 | 8 | 7.5% |
| Employment Skills | 4 | 3.8% |
| GED\Literacy | 2 | 1.9% |
| General Supervision | 1 | 0.9% |
| Mental Health Outpatient Services | 2 | 1.9% |
| Moral Reconciliation Therapy | 15 | 14.2% |
| Narcotics Anonymous | 1 | 0.9% |
| Recovery Dynamics | 9 | 8.5% |
| Relapse Prevention | 5 | 4.7% |
| Substance Abuse Inpatient | 2 | 1.9% |
| Substance Abuse Counseling | 22 | 20.8% |
| Total | 106 | 100% |

Drug Testing Released Offenders

Most offenders from the special needs units are not tested for drug usage. Over 24% of all offenders have never been tested and over half of the population have been tested no more than 3 times during their supervision.

| Number of Offenders Tested | Median Number of Drug Tests per Offender | Range |
|----------------------------|--|---------|
| 716 | 2 | 0 - 143 |

| <u>Number of Drug Tests Given</u> | <u>Number of Offenders</u> | <u>Percent</u> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| 0 | 175 | 24.0% |
| 1 | 129 | 18.0% |
| 2 | 96 | 13.4% |
| 3 | 78 | 10.9% |
| 4 | 64 | 8.9% |
| 5 | 39 | 5.4% |
| 6 to 10 | 87 | 12.2% |
| 11 to 15 | 20 | 2.8% |
| 16-50 | 17 | 2.4% |
| 51 to 143 | 11 | 1.5% |
| Total | 716 | 100.0% |