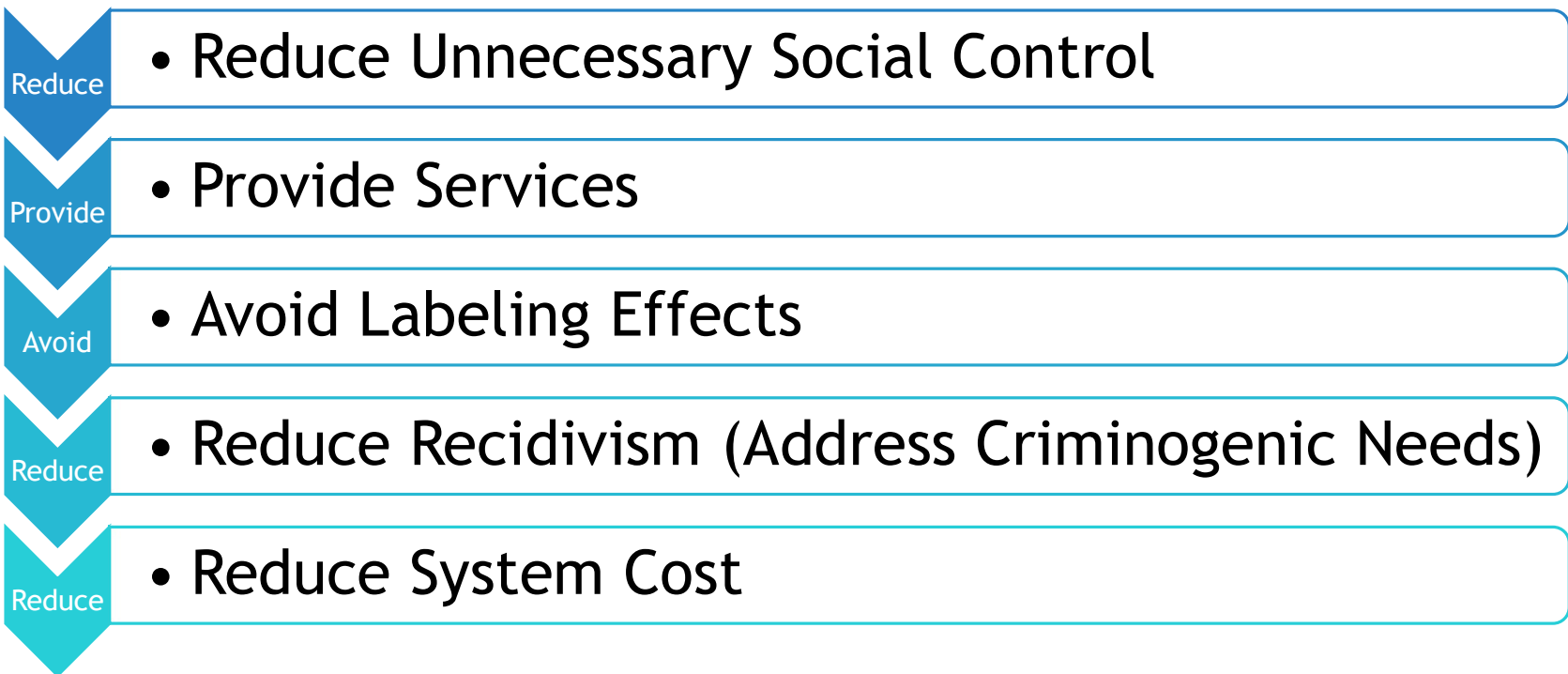


Utilizing the RNR Model for Juvenile Offenders in Lancaster County

June 12, 2025

Why Diversion?



Diversion: Match the Risk Level

When:

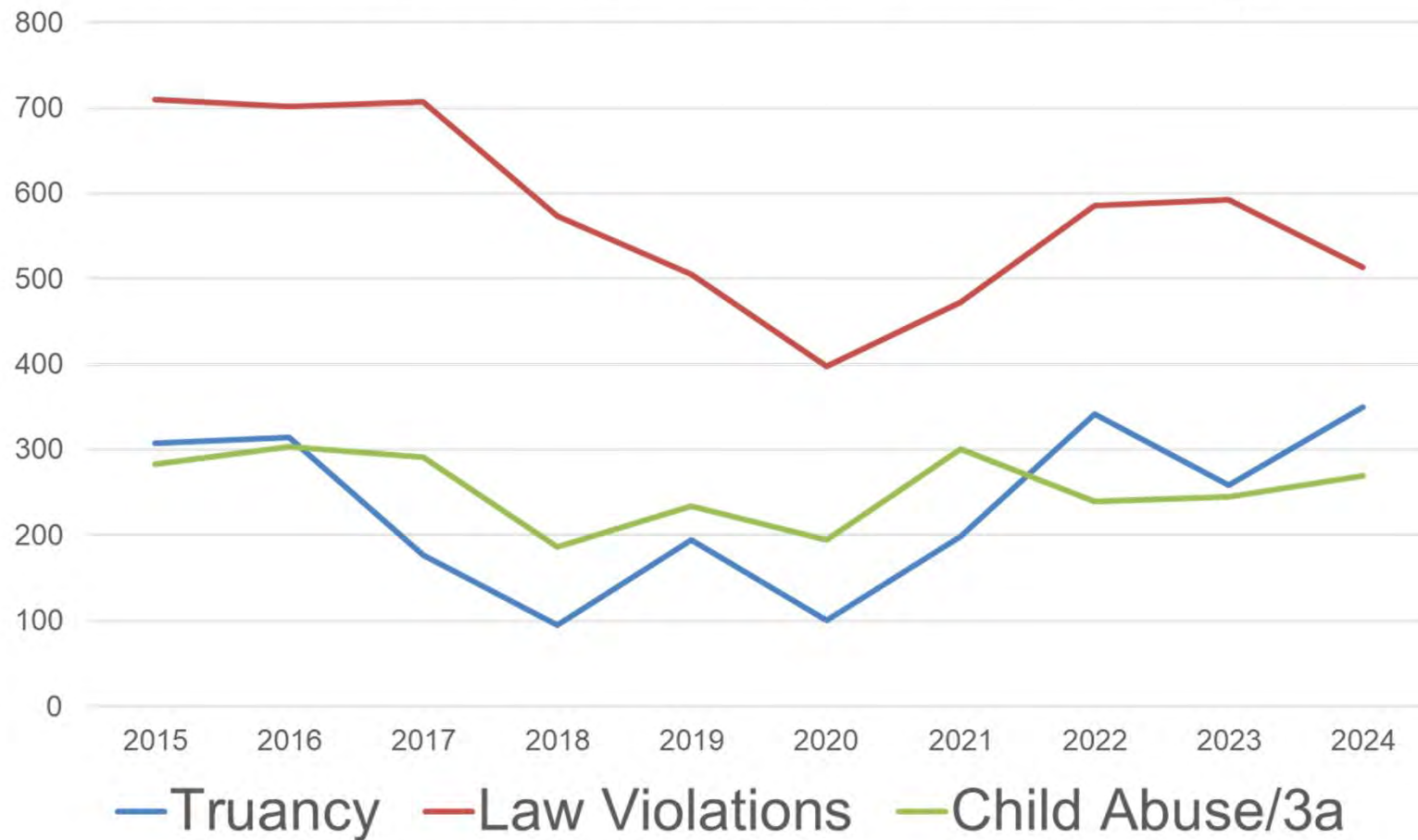
- ▶ For minor offenses and low risks for future offending

Why:

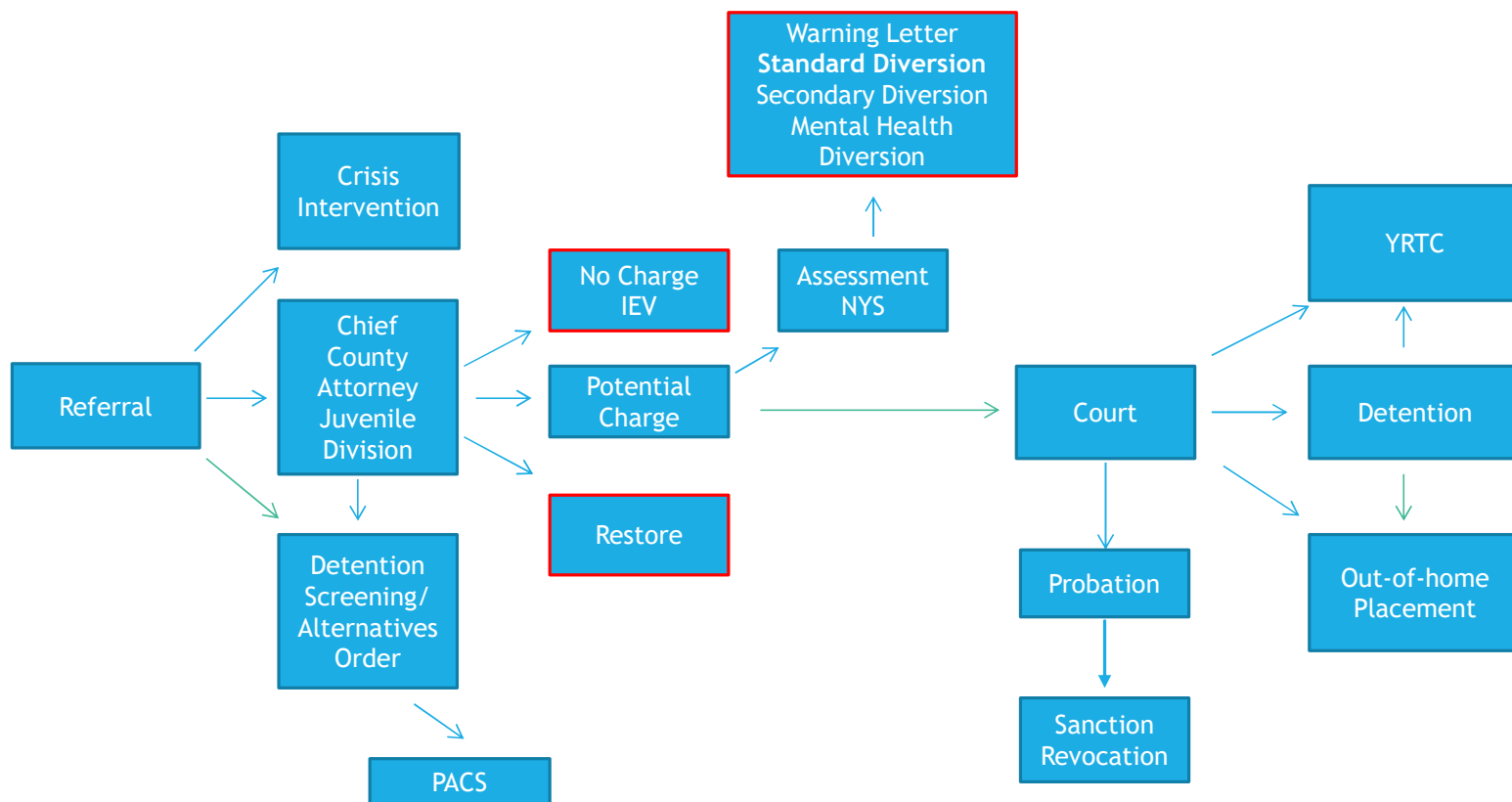
- ▶ Diversion can be more effective in reducing recidivism than the traditional juvenile justice system
- ▶ In fact, low-risk youth receiving only a caution have been found to fare better than those referred to a diversion intervention

Juvenile Justice System Overview

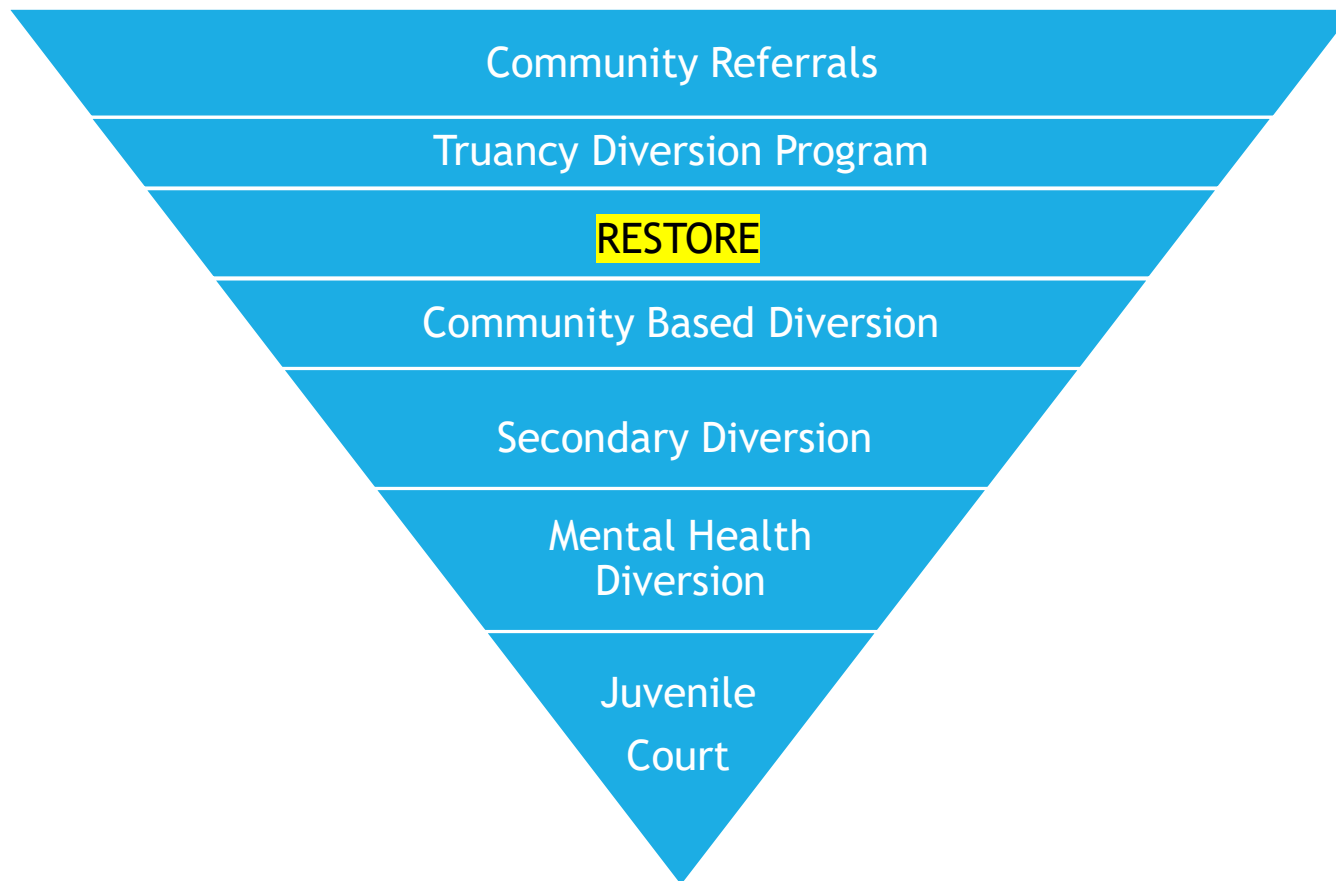
2015 to 2024 Juvenile Court Filings



Law Violations: Referral Process



Lancaster County Tiered Diversion Approach

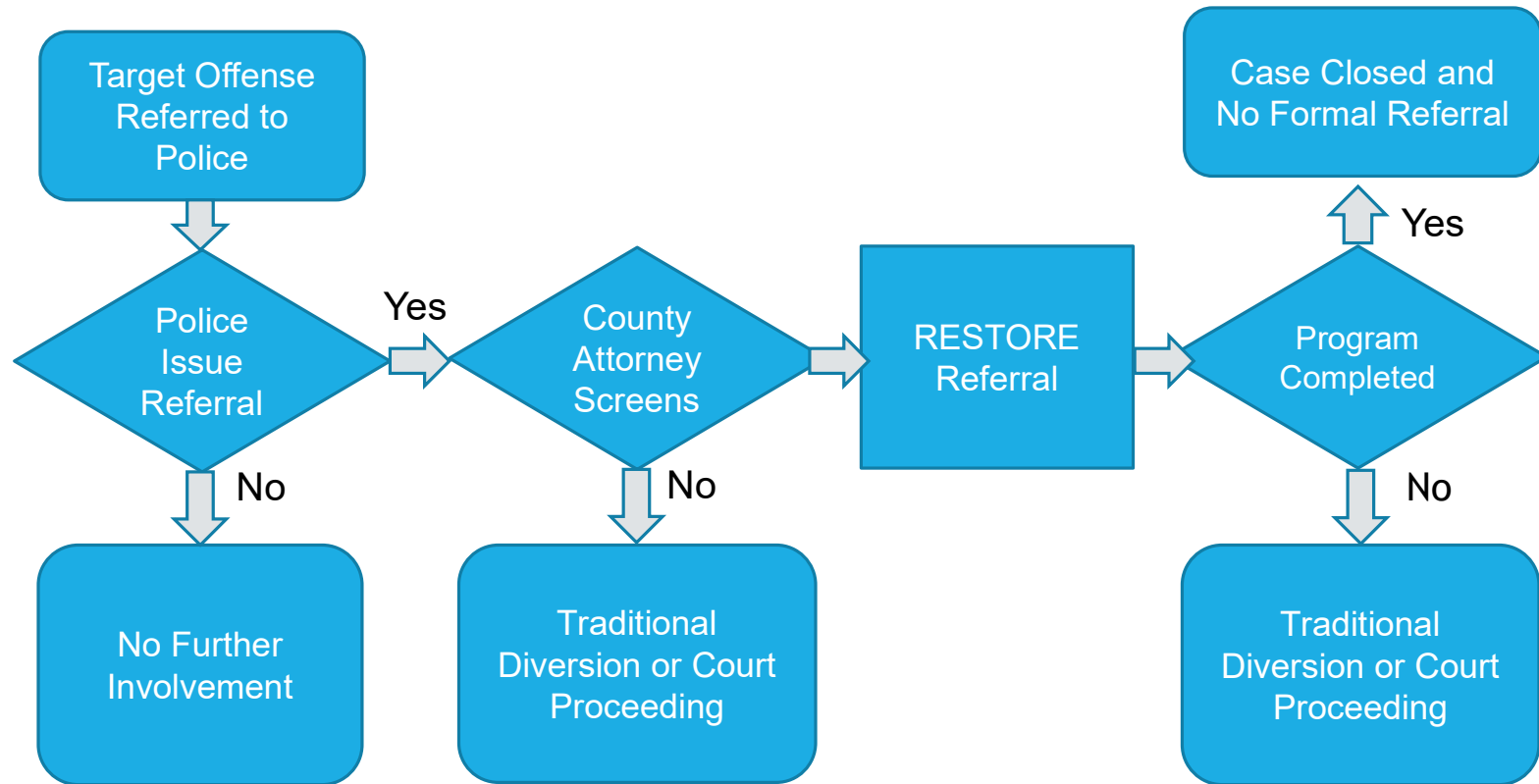


RESTORE Components

- ▶ Referral based diversion for Disturbing the Peace & Assault offenses occurring at school
- ▶ Immediate intervention
- ▶ Restorative Justice principles applied to case plan
- ▶ 11 to 17 years of age
- ▶ Evidence-based
- ▶ 60 days or less
- ▶ Data Driven



Model & Core Components, Procedures and Decision-making Points



RESTORE Components

Connection with Project RESTORE Case Manager:

- Visits youth at school
- Ensure timely completion of program components

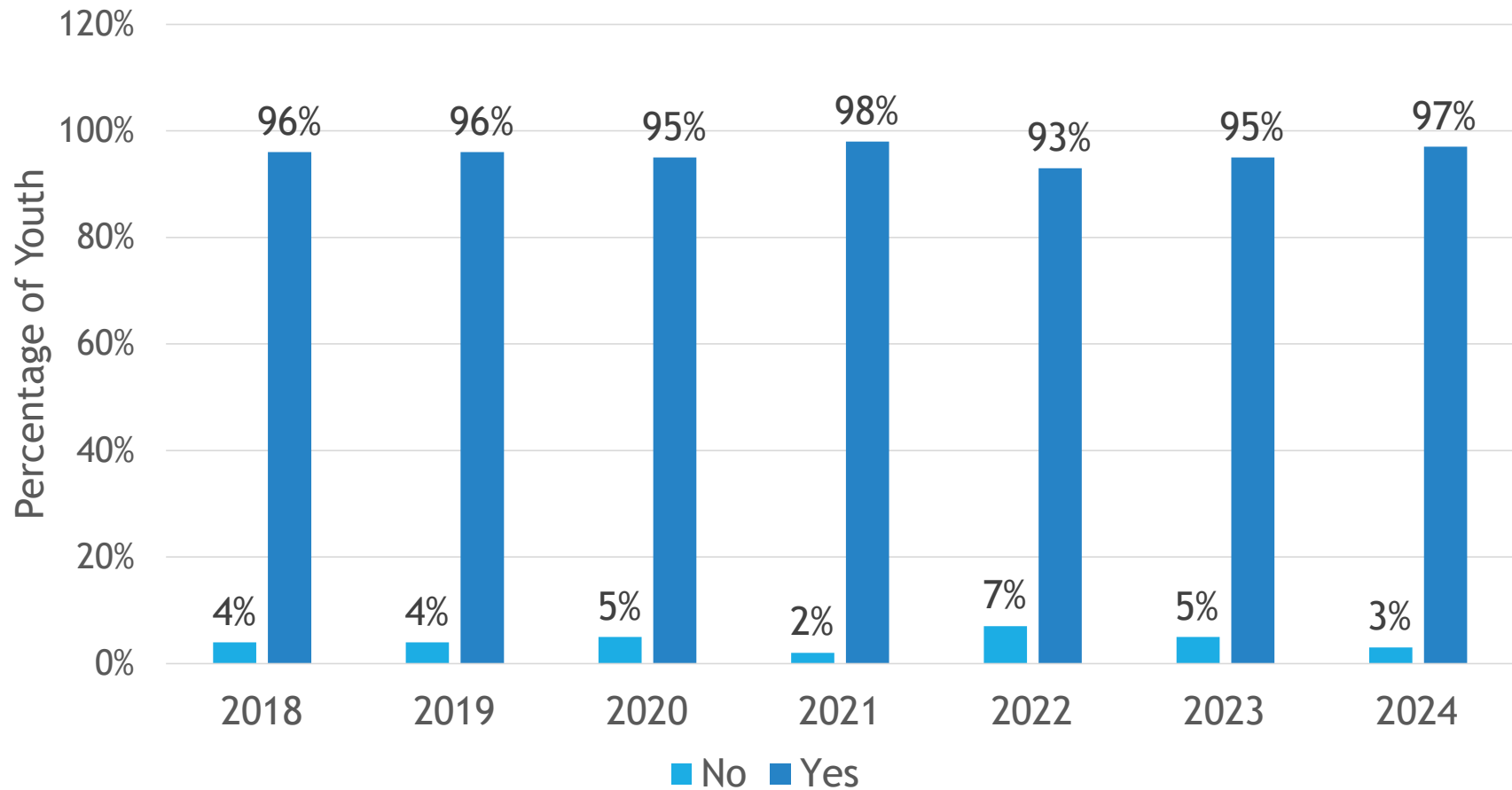
Victim-Youth Conferencing by Trained Mediator:

- Obtains perspective of youth and victim separately
- Conference with youth and either victim or a surrogate
- Discuss impact of offense physically, emotionally, and financially

Outcomes from Victim-Youth Conferencing:

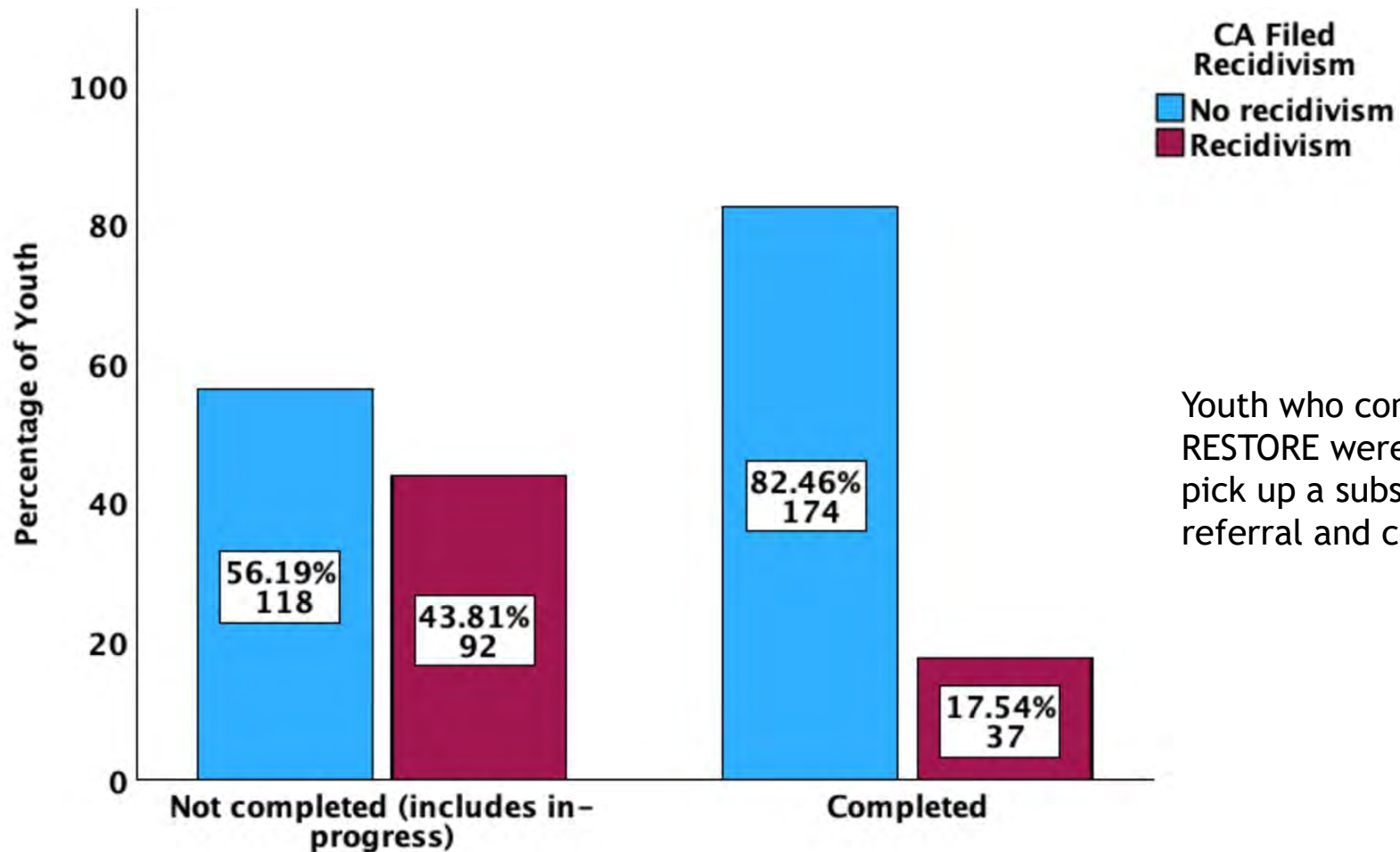
- Apology (verbal or written)
- Restitution
- Community service
- Services for the youth
- Other remedies agreed upon

Project RESTORE Succes by Year



The success rate was stable from 2018-2024.

Promising Outcomes



Youth who completed RESTORE were less likely to pick up a subsequent LPD referral and court filing.

Assessment - Overview

- ▶ Any youth that is determined to be eligible for diversion is sent to have a risk screen completed
- ▶ The completed screen is returned to the County Attorney's Office to help inform their decision on the referral
- ▶ There are 3 main outcomes for youth that are screened
 - ▶ The charged is dropped and warning letter is sent
 - ▶ Youth is referred to diversion
 - ▶ The charge is filed in juvenile court

Assessment - Process

- ▶ Lancaster County uses the Nebraska Youth Screen (NYS)
 - ▶ Instrument was developed by Dr. Brad Bogue of the Justice Systems Assessment and Training (J-SAT)
 - ▶ Is an adaption of the Youth Level of Service (YLS) designed to be a shorter screening tool than the full YLS

NYS has 9 Domains

Age at First Arrest	Number of Prior Arrests	Family Circumstances/Parenting
Education/Employment	Peer Relationships	Substance Use
Leisure/Recreation	Personality/Behavior	Attitudes/Orientation

Nebraska Youth Screen (NYS)

NAME: [REDACTED] DOB: [REDACTED] AGE: 12 GENDER: [REDACTED] RACE: [REDACTED] CASE #: [REDACTED] Write score in box:

1) Age at 1 st Arrest () 12	8-13 = 3	14 = 2	15 = 1	16+ = 0	3
2) No. of Prior Arrests () 0	3+ = 3	2 = 3	1 = 1	0 = 0	0

Proxy
Subtotal 3

Problem Areas:

3) Family Circumstances/Parenting

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	
<i>Most apply:</i> caretakers have distant or highly conflicted relationships with youth, leave youth unsupervised, and control or discipline youth poorly or inconsistently.	<i>Some apply:</i> caretakers have distant or highly conflicted relationships with youth, leave youth unsupervised, and control or discipline youth poorly or inconsistently.	<i>Few apply:</i> caretakers have distant or highly conflicted relationships with youth, leave youth unsupervised, and control or discipline youth poorly or inconsistently.	1

4) Education/Employment

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	
<i>Most apply:</i> youth is not employed or seeking employment; demonstrates disruptive school behavior, truancy, problems with peers and teachers, low school achievement.	<i>Some apply:</i> youth is not employed or seeking employment; demonstrates disruptive school behavior, truancy, problems with peers and teachers, low school achievement.	<i>None apply:</i> youth is not employed or seeking employment; demonstrates disruptive school behavior, truancy, problems with peers and teachers, low school achievement.	2

5) Peer relationships

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	
<i>All of the youth's</i> acquaintances, friends, and role models are delinquents. <i>None</i> are positive and pro-social.	Youth's acquaintances, friends, and role models are <i>a mix</i> of delinquents and positive, pro-social people.	<i>Few of the youth's</i> acquaintances, friends, and role models are delinquents. <i>Most</i> are positive and pro-social.	1

6) Substance Use

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	
<i>More than two apply:</i> occasional drug use, chronic drug use, chronic alcohol use, life functioning affected by use, use-related offenses.	<i>One or two apply:</i> occasional drug use, chronic drug use, chronic alcohol use, life functioning affected by use, use-related offenses.	<i>None apply:</i> occasional drug use, chronic drug use, chronic alcohol use, life functioning affected by use, use-related offenses.	0

7) Leisure/Recreation

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	
<i>Two or more apply:</i> youth spends time unconstructively, has no positive activity interests, has no organized activities.	<i>Only one applies:</i> youth spends time unconstructively, has no positive activity interests, has no organized activities.	<i>None apply:</i> youth spends time unconstructively, has no positive activity interests, has no organized activities.	2

8) Personality/Behavior

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	
<i>Most apply:</i> inflated self worth, physical or verbal aggression, tantrums, short attention span, impulsivity, and little remorse.	<i>Some apply:</i> inflated self worth, physical or verbal aggression, tantrums, short attention span, impulsivity, and little remorse.	<i>None apply:</i> inflated self worth, physical or verbal aggression, tantrums, short attention span, impulsivity, and little remorse.	2

9) Attitudes/Orientation

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	
<i>Most apply:</i> anti-social attitudes, rejects and won't seek help, defies authority, callous.	<i>Some apply:</i> anti-social attitudes, rejects and won't seek help, defies authority, callous.	<i>None apply:</i> anti-social attitudes, rejects and won't seek help, defies authority, callous.	2

Interview
Subtotal 10

GRAND TOTAL 13

Risk Level Classification

Low Risk						Medium Risk					High Risk				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

Assessment - Process

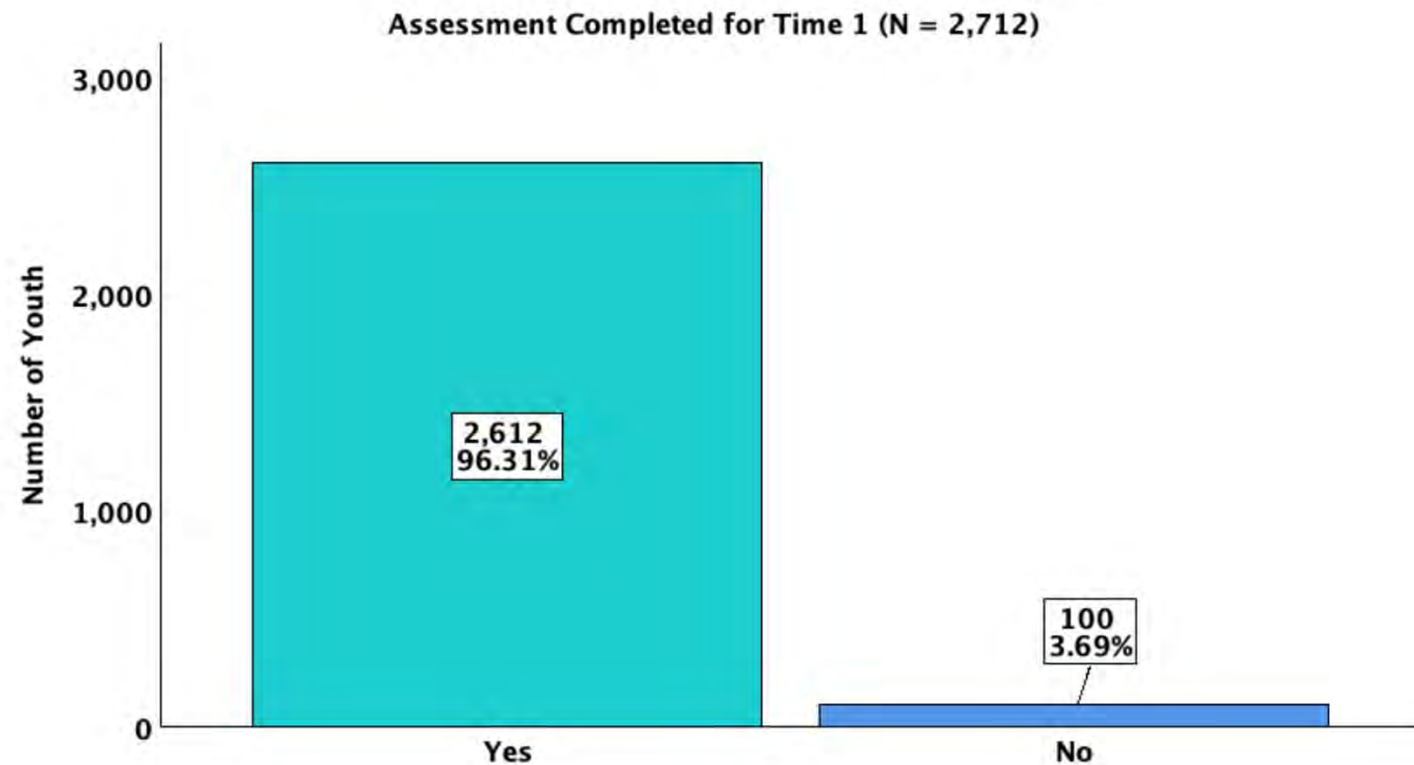
- ▶ The Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI-2) is used to screen for Youth Mental Health Diversion (YMHD)
 - ▶ “Is a brief behavioral health screening tool designed especially for juvenile justice programs and facilities. It identifies youths 12 through 17 years old who may have important, pressing behavioral health needs.”
- ▶ Answers provide scores on 7 scales: Alcohol/Drug Use, Angry-Irritable, Depressed-Anxious, Somatic Complaints, Suicide Ideation, Thought Disturbance, Traumatic Experiences
- ▶ Administered if Assessment Specialist detects a mental health concern during the interviews or if Law Enforcement indicates on the juvenile referral that mental health is a concern

Assessment - Process

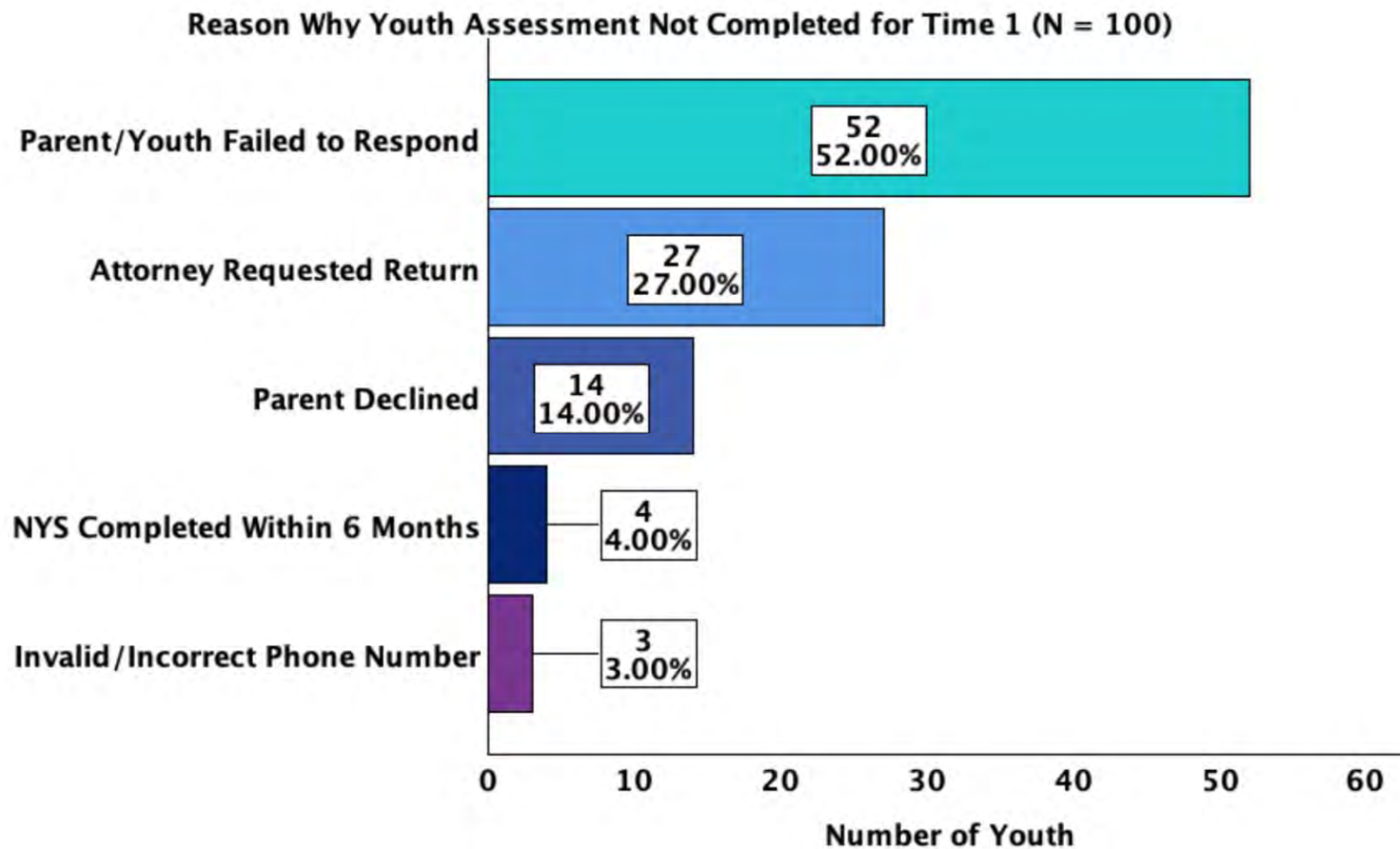
- ▶ Interviews are completed with a parent/guardian and with the youth over the phone, ideally done separately
- ▶ A finished screen is returned to the County Attorney's Office that includes the NYS score sheet, a narrative summary of the information obtained, and when applicable the completed MAYSI-2
 - ▶ The narrative summary serves a number of additional uses
 - ▶ Provides specific information to the youth helpful for case planning (youth's interests, activities, and more details about areas of risk)
 - ▶ Explains any discipline action taken at home for the law violation

Assessment - Data

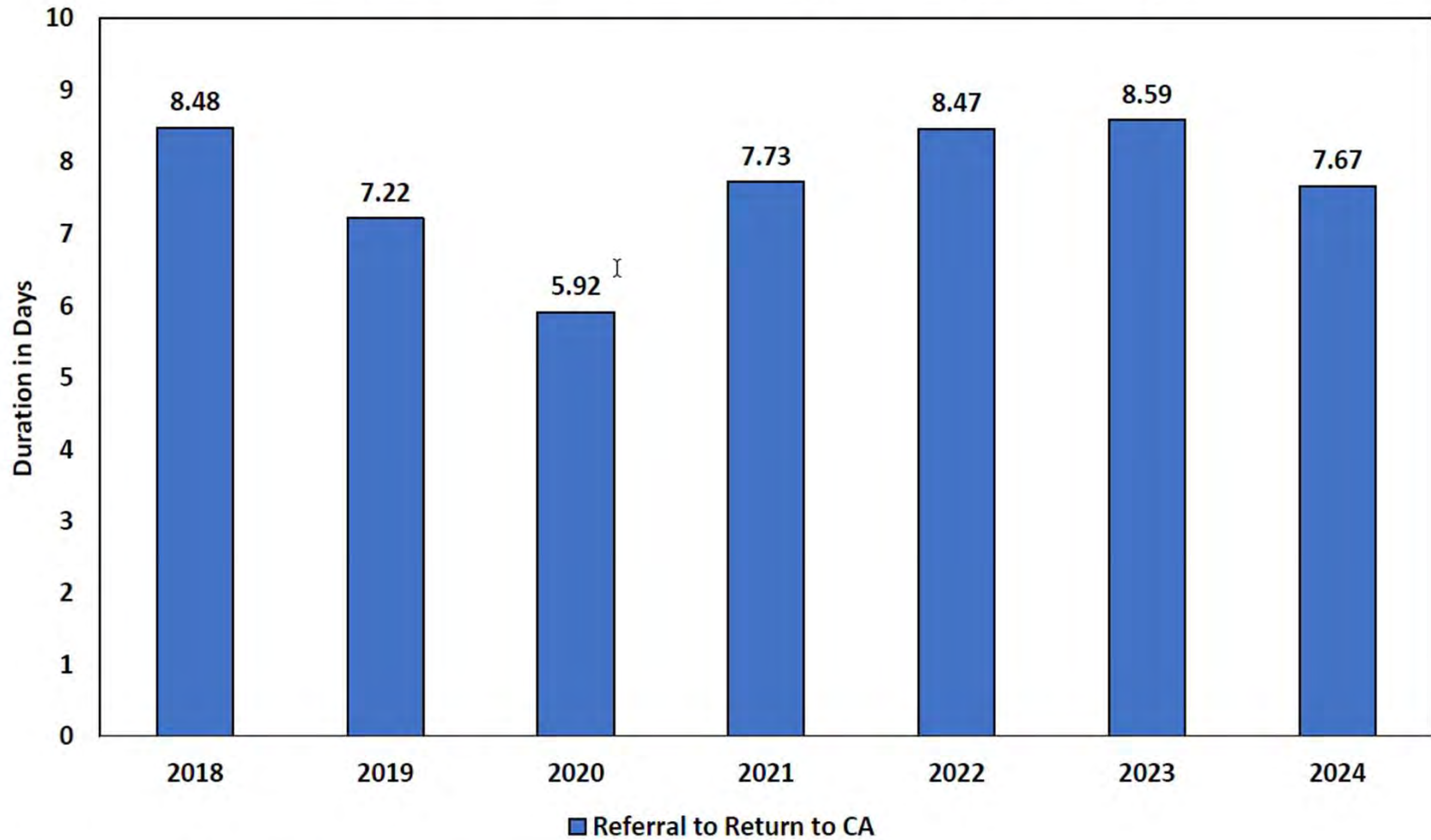
- ▶ Of the youth sent for a NYS screen, 96% have the screen successfully completed.



Assessment - Data



**Assessment Case Processing Duration in Days for First Time by Year -
Referral Date to Return to County Attorney Date Only**

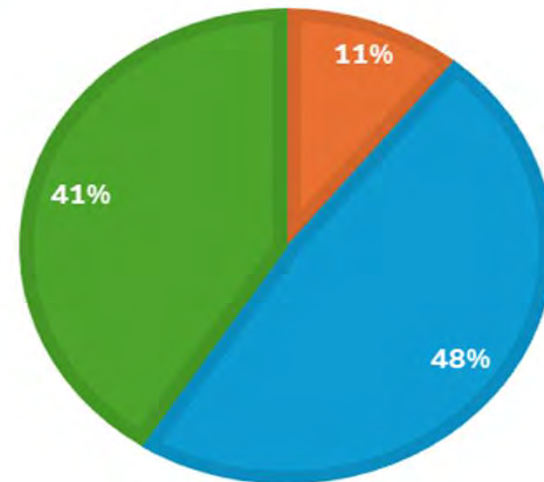


Note. Referral date is the date sent to assessment.

- ▶ Outcomes for Youth Sent for an NYS screen from 2018 through 2024
 - ▶ 10.8% have the charge filed in juvenile court
 - ▶ 48.3% youth are referred to diversion
 - ▶ 40.9% the charge is dropped and warning letter is sent

OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH SCREENED WITH NYS

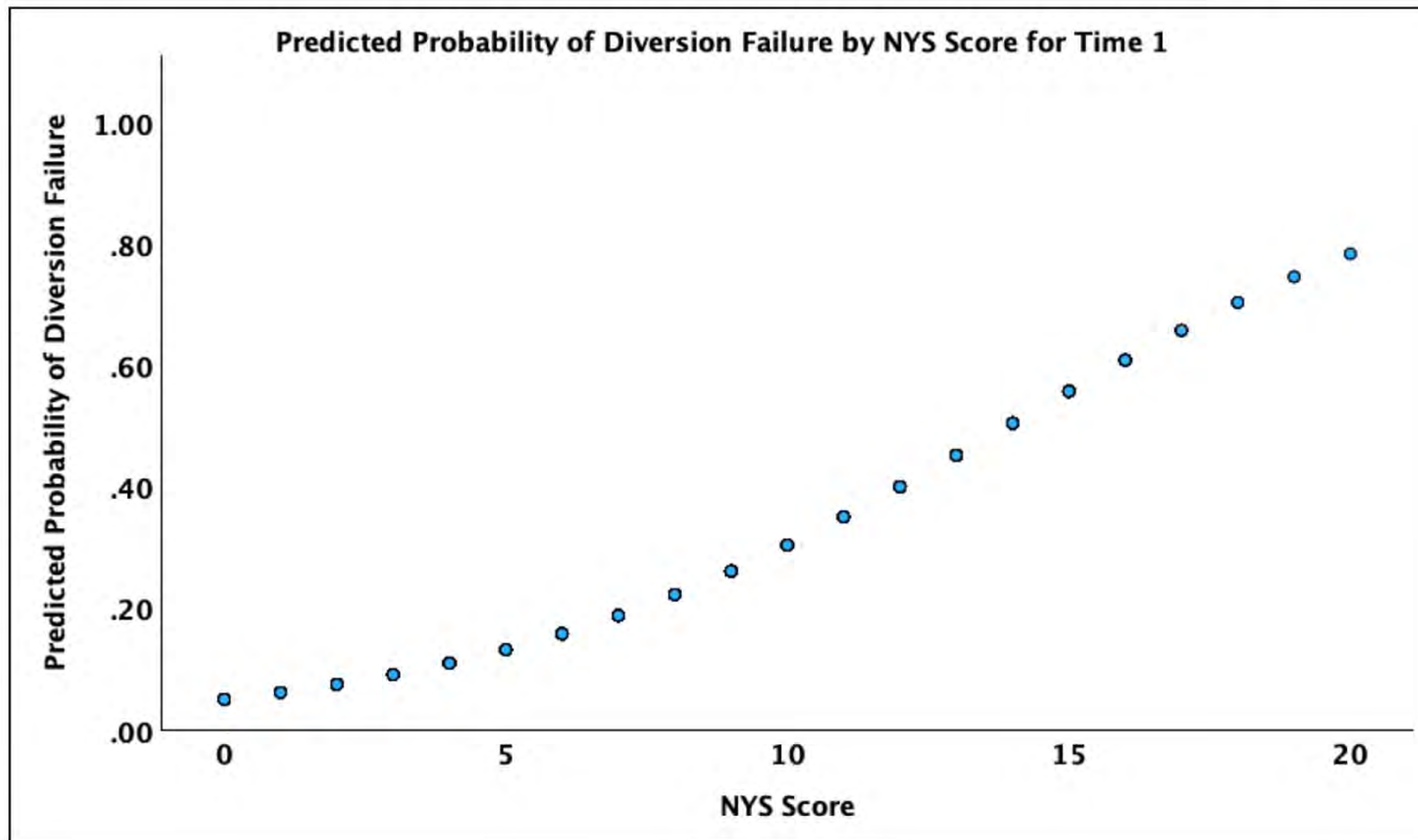
Filed in Court Diversion No Charge



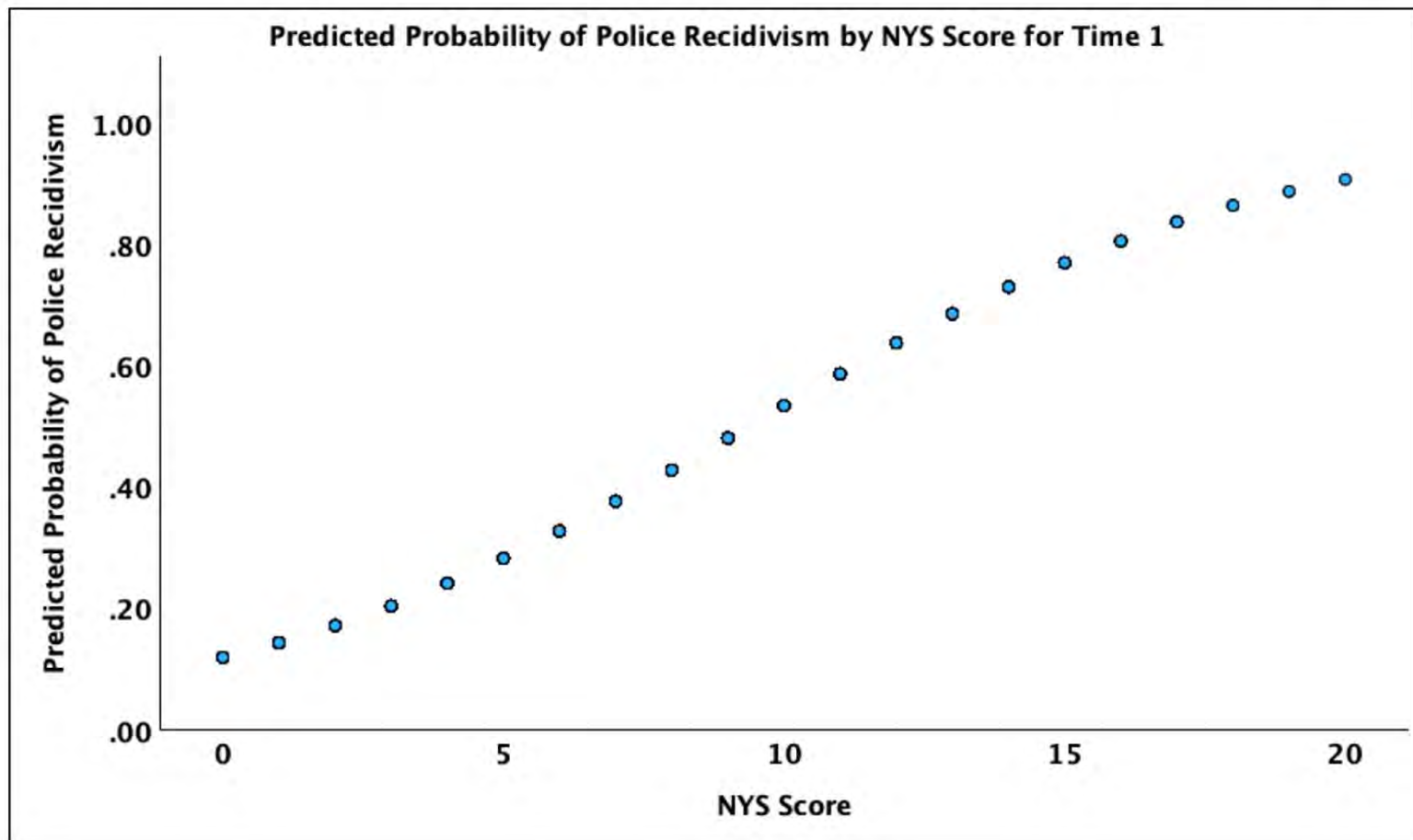
Diversion Failure						
Model χ^2 (1) = 98.85, $p < .001$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .12$, $N = 1,222$						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	OR
NYS	0.21	0.02	87.61	1	< .001	1.24
Police Recidivism						
Model χ^2 (1) = 329.05, $p < .001$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .19$, $N = 2,130$						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	OR
NYS	0.21	0.01	349.34	1	< .001	1.24
CA Violation Recidivism						
Model χ^2 (1) = 475.00, $p < .001$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .25$, $N = 2,314$						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	OR
NYS	0.25	0.01	371.11	1	< .001	1.29
CA Filed Recidivism						
Model χ^2 (1) = 262.52, $p < .001$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .18$, $N = 2,314$						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	OR
NYS	0.23	0.02	223.06	1	< .001	1.26

NYS significantly predicts diversion failure, police recidivism, County Attorney violation recidivism, and County Attorney filed recidivism.

NYS for First Time Predicting Probability of Diversion Failure – Overall



NYS for First Time Predicting Probability of Police Recidivism – Overall

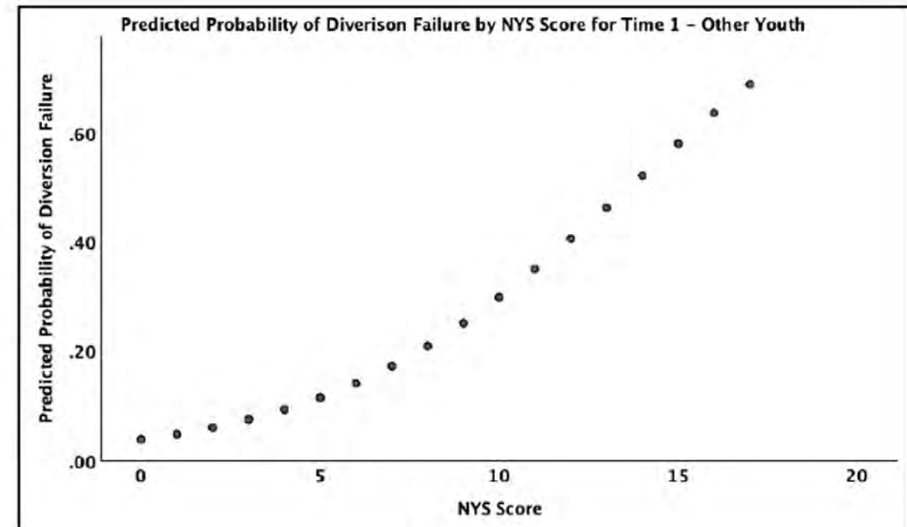
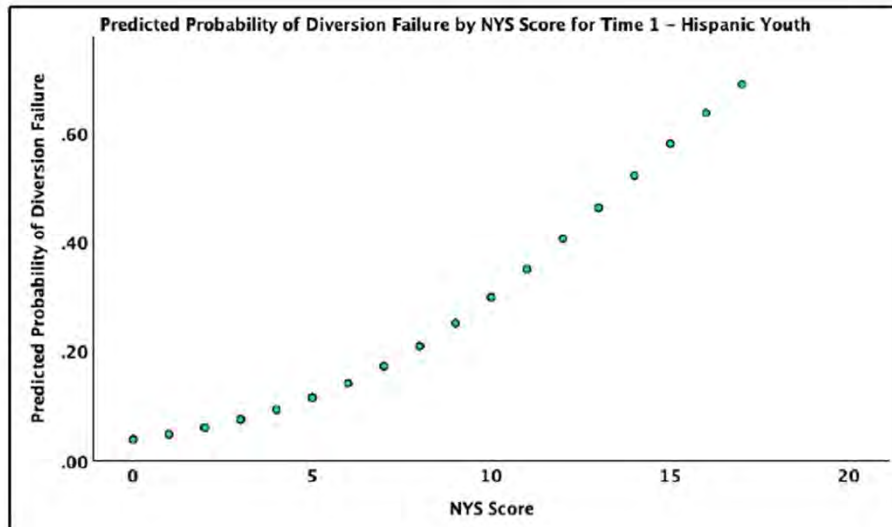
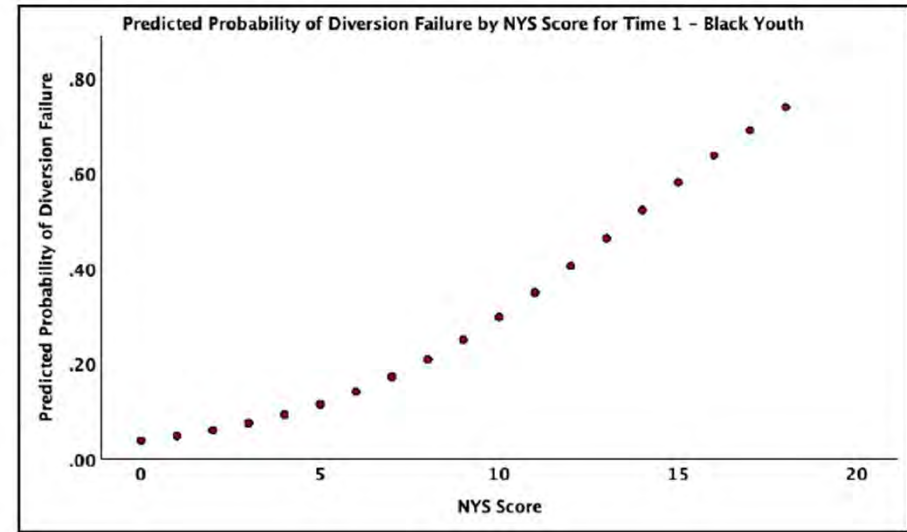
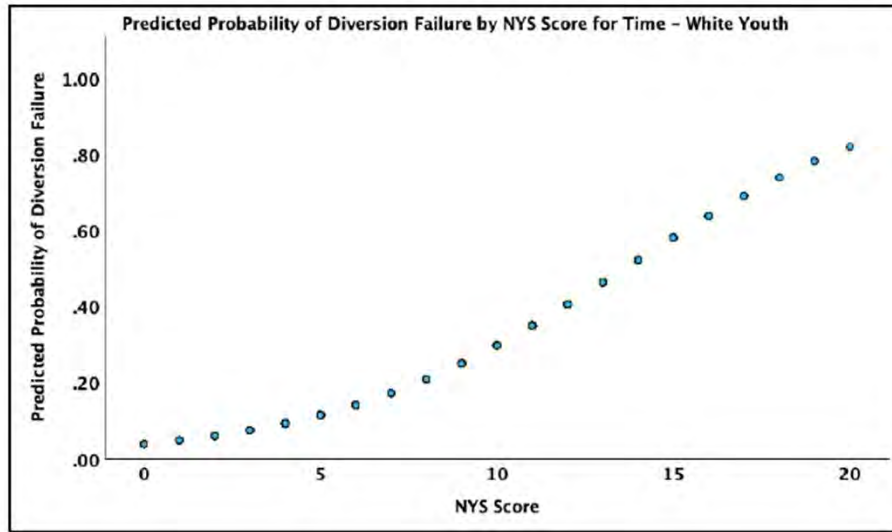


NYS for First Time Predicting Diversion Failure by Race/Ethnicity (Separately)

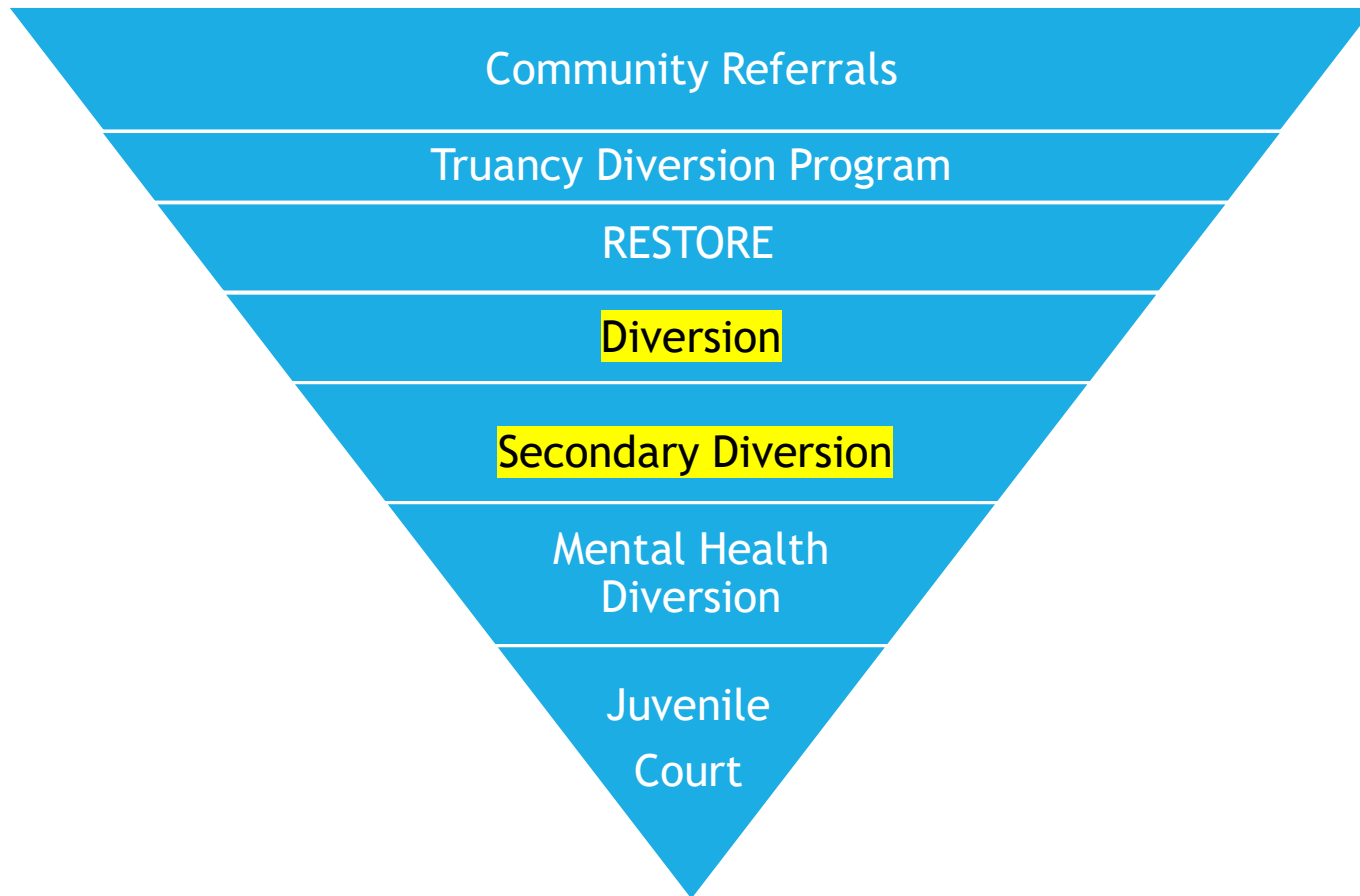
White Youth						
Model χ^2 (1) = 51.28, $p < .001$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .11$, $N = 741$						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	OR
NYS	.21	.03	45.52	1	<.001	1.23
Black Youth						
Model χ^2 (1) = 34.92, $p < .001$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .14$, $N = 341$						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	OR
NYS	.23	.04	60.78	1	<.001	1.25
Hispanic Youth						
Model χ^2 (1) = 31.40, $p < .001$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .28$, $N = 155$						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	OR
NYS	.39	.08	22.94	1	<.001	1.48
Other Youth						
Model χ^2 (1) = 19.49, $p < .001$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .24$, $N = 115$						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	OR
NYS	.34	.09	15.24	1	<.001	1.41

NYS significantly predicts outcomes with no difference by gender or race.

NYS for First Time Predicting Probability of Diversion Failure by Race/Ethnicity – Overall



Lancaster County Tiered Diversion Approach



Diversion & Secondary Diversion

- ▶ Voluntary program
- ▶ Alternative to court program
- ▶ Case by case determination with majority of charges being misdemeanors
- ▶ Restorative justice approach
- ▶ Community partners and agency referrals
- ▶ Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model

RNR Case Planning

Individualized case plans

Focus on youth and/or family needs rather than the law violation

Youth and family engagement

Connections to community agencies

Nebraska Youth Screen (NYS)

NAME: _____ DOB: _____ AGE: _____ RACE: _____ CASE #: _____ Write in box:

1) Age at 1 st Arrest/citation ()	8-13 = 3	14 = 2	15 = 1	16+ = 0	<input type="text"/>
2) No. of Prior arrests/citation ()	3+ = 3	2 = 2	1 = 1	0 = 0	<input type="text"/>

Static Subtotal

Problem Areas:

3) Family Circumstances/Parents

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	<input type="text"/>
Most apply: caretakers have distant or highly conflicted relationships with youth, leave youth unsupervised, and control or discipline youth poorly or inconsistently.	Some apply: caretakers have distant or highly conflicted relationships with youth, leave youth unsupervised, and control or discipline youth poorly or inconsistently.	Few apply: caretakers have distant or highly conflicted relationships with youth, leave youth unsupervised, and control or discipline youth poorly or inconsistently.	

4) Education/Employment

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	<input type="text"/>
Mostly apply: youth is not employed or seeking employment, demonstrates disruptive school behavior, truancy, problems with peers and teachers, low school achievement.	Some apply: youth is not employed or seeking employment, demonstrates disruptive school behavior, truancy, problems with peers and teachers, low school achievement.	None apply: youth is not employed or seeking employment, demonstrates disruptive school behavior, truancy, problems with peers and teachers, low school achievement.	

5) Peer Relationships

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	<input type="text"/>
All of the youth's acquaintances, friends, and role models are delinquents. <i>None</i> are positive and pro-social.	Youth's acquaintances, friends, and role models are a <i>mix</i> of delinquents and positive, pro-social people.	Few of the youth's acquaintances, friends, and role models are delinquents. <i>Most</i> are positive and pro-social.	

6) Substance Use

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	<input type="text"/>
More than two apply: occasional drug use, chronic drug use, chronic alcohol use, life functioning affected by use, use-related offenses.	One or two apply: occasional drug use, chronic drug use, chronic alcohol use, life functioning affected by use, use-related offenses.	None apply: occasional drug use, chronic drug use, chronic alcohol use, life functioning affected by use, use-related offenses.	

7) Leisure/Recreation

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	<input type="text"/>
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8) Personality/Behavior

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	<input type="text"/>
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9) Attitudes/Orientation

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	<input type="text"/>
Most apply: anti-social attitudes, rejects and won't seek help, defies authority, callous.	Some apply: anti-social attitudes, rejects and won't seek help, defies authority, callous.	None apply: anti-social attitudes, rejects and won't seek help, defies authority, callous.	Interview Subtotal <input type="text"/>

GRAND TOTAL

Risk Level Classification

Low Risk						Medium Risk					High Risk				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16-20

The Guide

RNR Case Planning Guide example

1) Age at 1 st Arrest/citation (15__)	8-13 = 3	14 = 2	15 = 1	16+ = 0	⇒	1
2) No. of Prior arrests/citation (0__)	3+ = 3	2 = 2	1 = 1	0 = 0	⇒	0
Static Subtotal						1

Problem Areas:

3) **Family Circumstances/Parents**

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	⇒	2
Most apply: caretakers have distant or highly conflicted relationships with youth, leave youth unsupervised, and control or discipline youth poorly or inconsistently.	Some apply: caretakers have distant or highly conflicted relationships with youth, leave youth unsupervised, and control or discipline youth poorly or inconsistently.	Few apply: caretakers have distant or highly conflicted relationships with youth, leave youth unsupervised, and control or discipline youth poorly or inconsistently.		

4) **Education/Employment**

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	⇒	1
Mostly apply: youth is not employed or seeking employment, demonstrates disruptive school behavior, truancy, problems with peers and teachers, low school achievement.	Some apply: youth is not employed or seeking employment, demonstrates disruptive school behavior, truancy, problems with peers and teachers, low school achievement.	None apply: youth is not employed or seeking employment, demonstrates disruptive school behavior, truancy, problems with peers and teachers, low school achievement.		

5) **Peer Relationships**

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	⇒	1
All of the youth's acquaintances, friends, and role models are delinquents. None are positive and pro-social.	Youth's acquaintances, friends, and role models are a mix of delinquents and positive, pro-social people.	Few of the youth's acquaintances, friends, and role models are delinquents. Most are positive and pro-social.		

6) **Substance Use**

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	⇒	0
More than two apply: occasional drug use, chronic drug use, chronic alcohol use, life functioning affected by use, use-related offenses.	One or two apply: occasional drug use, chronic drug use, chronic alcohol use, life functioning affected by use, use-related offenses.	None apply: occasional drug use, chronic drug use, chronic alcohol use, life functioning affected by use, use-related offenses.		

7) **Leisure/Recreation**

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	⇒	2
Two or more apply: youth spends time unconstructively, has no positive activity interests, has no organized activities.	Only one applies: youth spends time unconstructively, has no positive activity interests, has no organized activities.	None apply: youth spends time unconstructively, has no positive activity interests, has no organized activities.		

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9) **Attitudes/Orientation**

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	⇒	1
Most apply: anti-social attitudes, rejects and won't seek help, defies authority, callous.	Some apply: anti-social attitudes, rejects and won't seek help, defies authority, callous.	None apply: anti-social attitudes, rejects and won't seek help, defies authority, callous.	Interview Subtotal	7
GRAND TOTAL				8

Risk Level Classification

Low Risk							Medium Risk			High Risk					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16-20

Family Circumstances/Parenting

Omni's Collaborative Family Engagement

Region V's FYI program
 Families Inspiring Families
 Family Activities from the Service/Learning/Engagement activities
 Therapy
 Anger Management online course
 Asian Center – community case management for families
 KVC – Skill Builder Program
 Cedars Basic Center

Education/Employment

Education/Employment Activities from Service/Learning/Engagement activities
 Participation in school activity
 Applying for jobs
 Truancy Intervention online course
 Life Skills online course
 Asian Center – Life After High School Program
 Attending CLC's or Boys & Girls Club
 Malone Center – entrepreneurship leadership program
 Lighthouse – Trades & Industry Program, Academic Support
 YESS
 American Job Center
 The HUB
 Afterschool Homework zone

Peer Relationships

Joining a positive school/community activity that involves other youth

Any mentoring program (TeamMates, Big Brother Big Sister, leadership programs)
 Peer Evaluation Written Assignment (written guidelines)

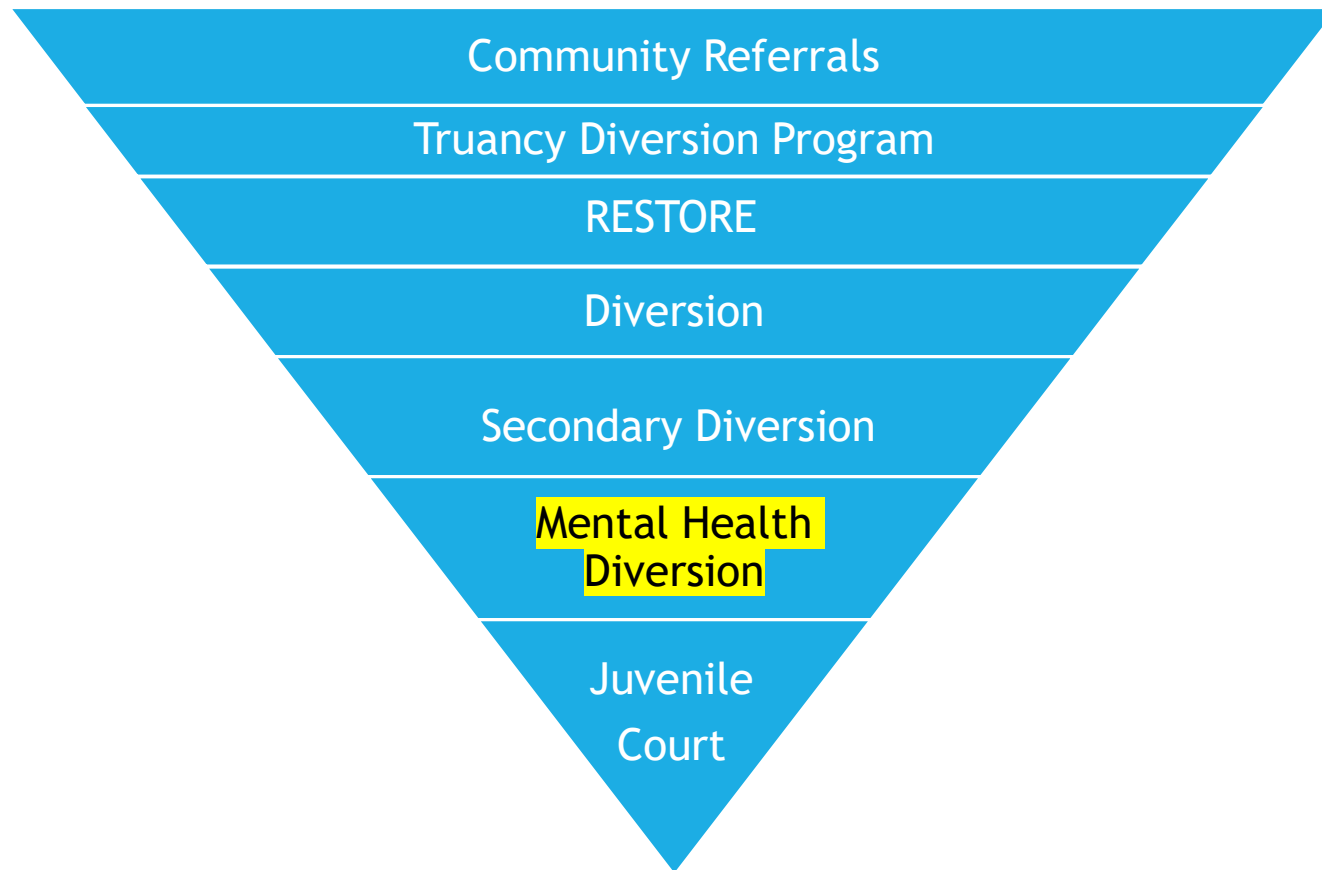
Diversion Case Plan Overview

- Omni's Collaborative Family Engagement
- Lighthouse Academic Support
- Positive Extracurricular Activity - could be other programming offered at Lighthouse
- Take Pause or Cop Club

What is Youth Mental Health Diversion? (YMHD)

- ▶ Specialized diversion program for youth who have committed a law violation and:
 - ▶ Are between 11 and 17 years of age at the time of the offense
 - ▶ Has **screened positive for mental illness** or co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse use disorder or already has a verifiable diagnosis
 - ▶ Scores at least a 7 on NYS and in the Caution Level in at least 2 scales on MAYSI-2
 - ▶ Current allegations can be correlated to mental illness
- ▶ Designed to fast-track mental health services
- ▶ No cost to participate

Lancaster County Tiered Diversion Approach



Mental Health Diversion Components

- ▶ After County Attorney approval, the Youth has an intake with the Diversion Officer and care manager:
 - ▶ Explain the program requirements and expectations
 - ▶ Schedule comprehensive evaluation within 2 weeks
 - ▶ Mental Health
 - ▶ Substance Abuse
 - ▶ Trauma
 - ▶ Family History/Dynamics
- ▶ May do other specific assessments (trauma, substance abuse, etc.)

Creating a YMHD case plan

Treatment components and goals are based on results of comprehensive evaluation and recommendations from provider

May include additional evaluations (i.e. trauma, psych)

Regular therapy

Care management (life skills/goals)

Additional case plan components

Law violation requirements

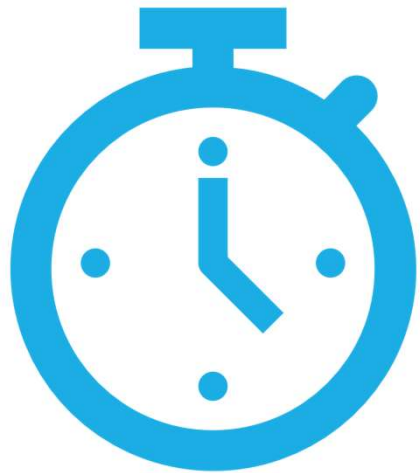
- online course
- reflection paper
- restorative justice
- restitution

Prosocial activity/Community programs

Drug testing

Avoid further criminal activity/new law violations

YMHD Phases



Timelines may vary on a case-by-case basis. However, generally youth should move through the program through phases and average approximately 5 months in YMHD.

Phase 1 (4-6 weeks)

- Initial intake and evaluation
- Show up to 85% of appointments
- Complete 1 law violation requirement

Phases cont.

Phase 2 (8 or more weeks)

- Keep attending therapy/care management
- Establish negative drug tests
- Complete all law violations requirements
- DLA scores

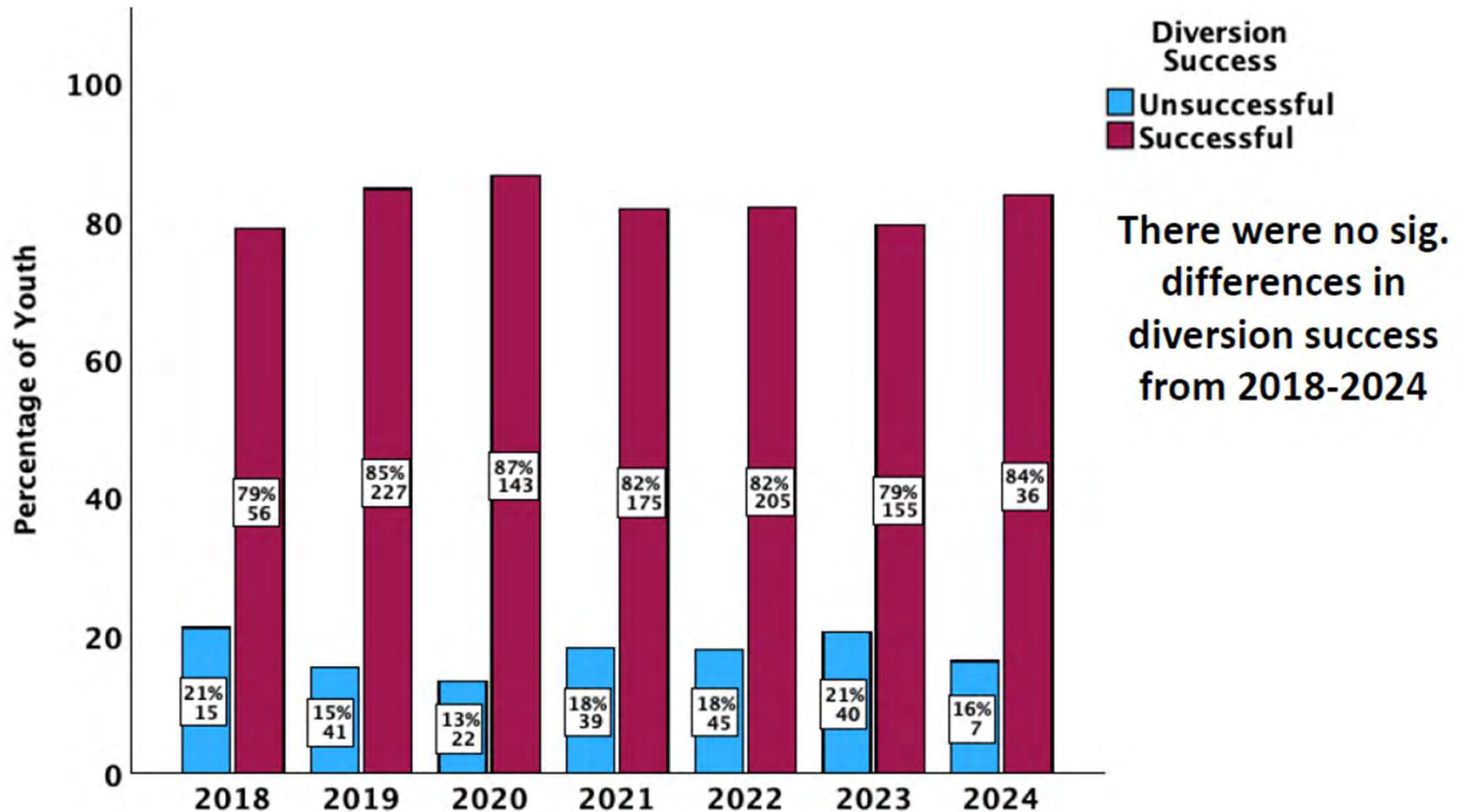
Phase 3 (3-4 weeks)

- Transition to after care program or ongoing outpatient therapy
- Incentives
- Discharge meeting

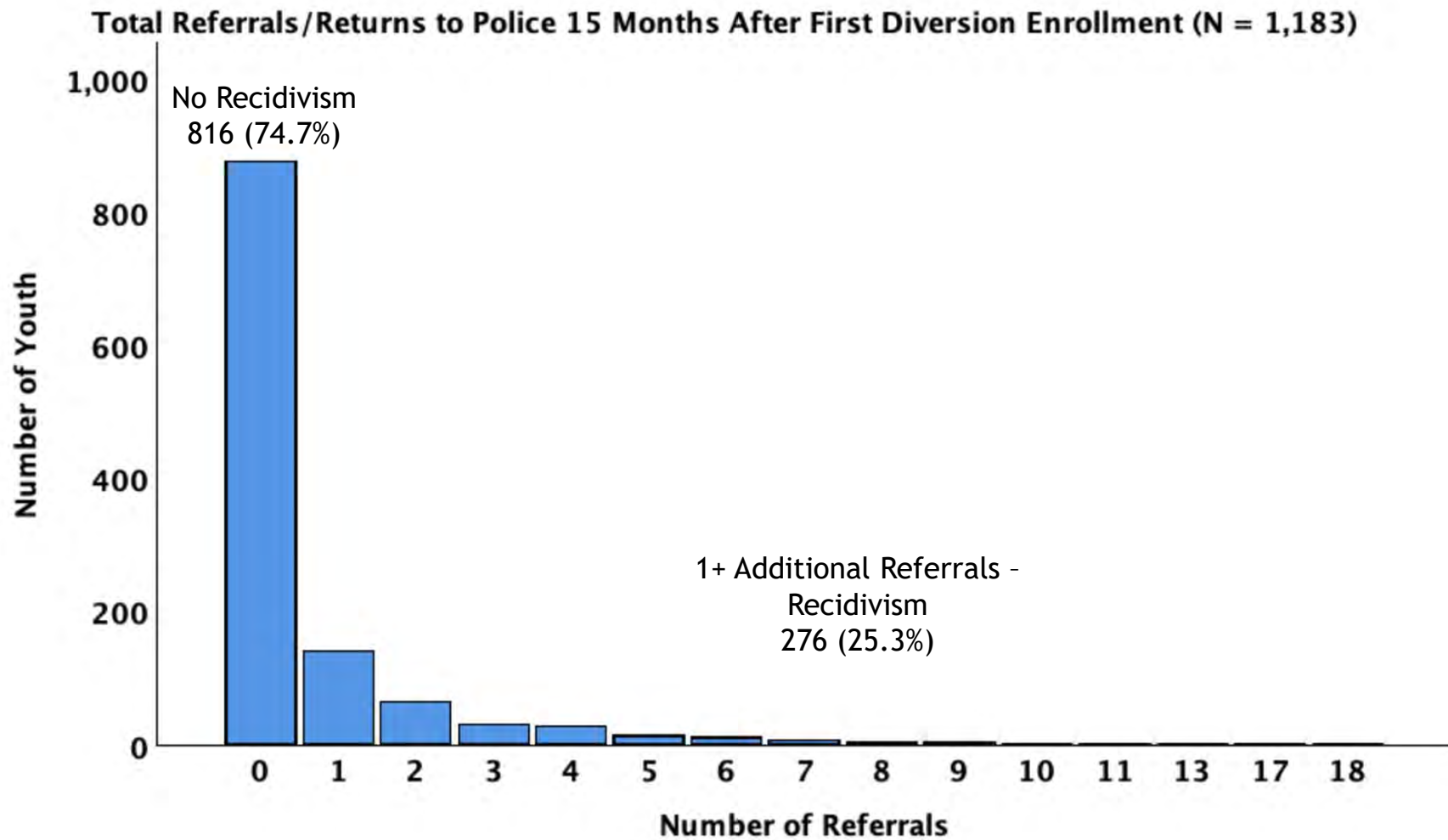
Discharge

- ▶ Upon successful completion of a diversion program, the prosecuting attorney agrees not to file any charges on the offense that was diverted. Juvenile record is sealed.
- ▶ Withdrawal or termination from a diversion program will result in the prosecuting attorney filing the law violation(s) in juvenile court.

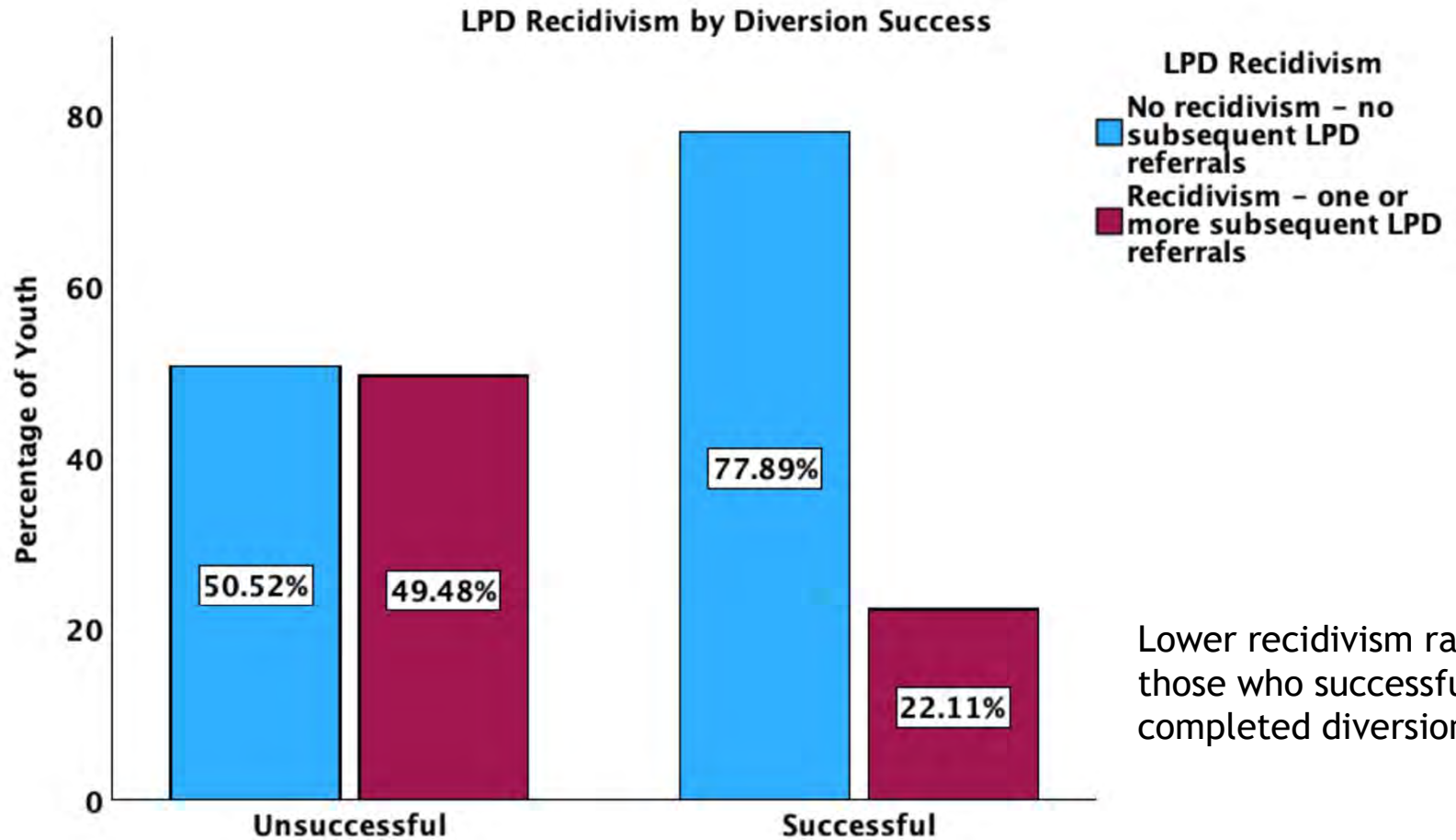
Diversion Success by Year



Recidivism

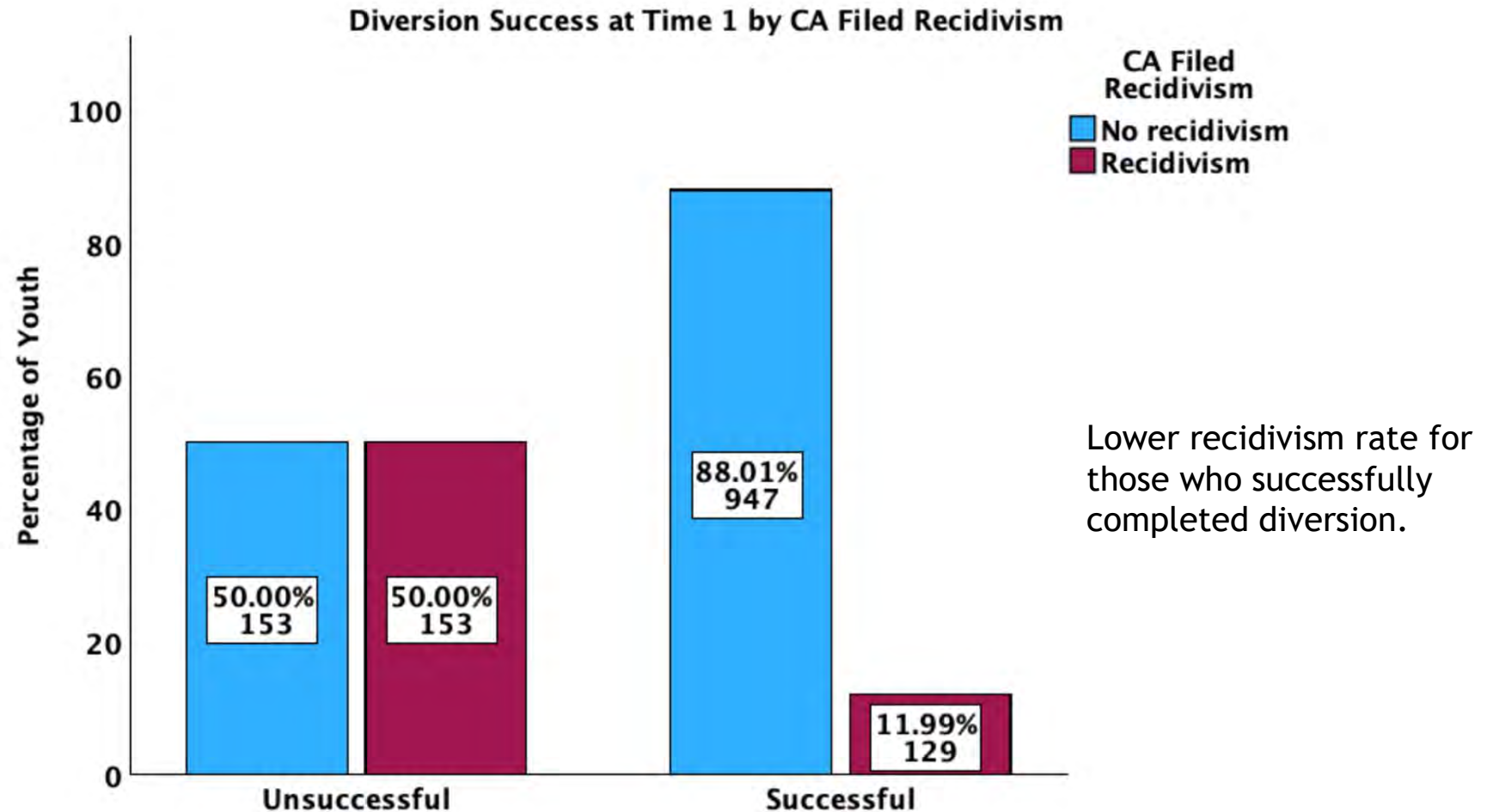


Recidivism - LPD



Lower recidivism rate for those who successfully completed diversion.

Recidivism - County Attorney



Questions?

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Lancaster County Attorney's Office

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Lincoln Lancaster County Human Services

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