

Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

Regarding

Multipurpose Juvenile Homes

Department of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention

March 1, 2008

***Multipurpose Juvenile Homes
Executive Summary***

In accordance with the requirements of Session Law 2007-323, Section 18.4: Annual Evaluation of Community Programs, the Department of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention undertook, and completed, an evaluation of its Multipurpose Juvenile Home Program. In so doing, the Department sought to determine whether participation in the program results in a reduction of court involvement and whether the Multipurpose Juvenile Home Program is achieving the goals and objectives of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1998. The cost of a bed per day is \$173.00.

The findings derived in the course of the Department's evaluation clearly support the conclusions that the Multipurpose Juvenile Home Program is effective in reducing court involvement for a significant majority of program participants and that the program is assisting the Department achieve the goals and objectives of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1998. Specific findings are reflected in the body of this report.

In summary, the data show that Multipurpose Juvenile Homes are operational in Chowan, Craven, Hertford, Robeson, Wayne, and Alamance counties and serve the following primarily rural and under serviced Judicial Districts: 1, 2, 3A, 3B, 6A 6B, 17A, 17B, and 19B. The program's focus is residential care, treatment, and Continuing Care for Pre and Post Adjudicated youths in their home communities. The Methodist Home for Children has been contracted to deliver these program services since the Homes opened in 1993.

The treatment approaches utilized in the homes are evidenced based and directed toward controlling and modifying antisocial/pro criminal attitudes and reducing impulsiveness, risk taking, and low self control behaviors. The Model of Care utilized has grown out of 15 years of experience with the types of youths and families served and is grounded in the Methodist Homes' 108 years of experience as a child and family service agency.

Each youth admitted to a Multipurpose Home is referred by his/her local Juvenile Court. They range in age from 12 to 17 and most are minority males whose living arrangements are most often recorded as living with a single mother, relative or being admitted directly from a Secure Care facility. Ninety seven percent of the youths admitted have been adjudicated delinquent by the Court for personal or property crimes. The overwhelming majority (88 of 96 admissions) are youth who have been ordered by the Court to comply with a Level II disposition. A Level II disposition is ordered when a youth has been adjudicated for a serious offense or has a history of delinquency. The Court's disposition requires a high level of intervention. Although 71% are identified as being enrolled in school, an extremely high percentage is performing below grade level and test as having poor reading skills.

Lengths of residence range between 4 and 8 months. Continuing Care in the youth's home community is provided for six months following discharge. Families are served while the youth is in residence at the Home and throughout his/her period of Continuing Care. During FY 2006-07 a total of 206 youths and families received Multipurpose Home services and the Homes operated at 84% of capacity.

Risk and Protective Factors are measured for each youth at admission and at discharge. The data shows a significant positive increase in critical protective factors for youth while they are in care. Three fourths (75%) of youths are released to their family home and assessment revealed that among the 87 youths discharged from care in a Multipurpose Home during FY 2006-07, only one (1) parent was determined to have a decrease in accountability/involvement with their child. Fifteen (15) other parents demonstrated no change in their accountability/involvement. But, 28 of the 87 parents showed improvement in accountability/involvement and 32 parents showed significant improvement in accountability/involvement with their child.

At the conclusion of services to the youth and family through Continuing Care (N=56) the evaluation process was repeated. Seven of these relationships were rated as not reflecting problems and six (6) were determined to be unchanged. Six (6) parents were evaluated as demonstrating a decrease in their accountability/involvement with their child. However, 16 of the 56 families assessed showed improvement in their accountability/involvement and 21 parents were determined to demonstrate significant accountability/improvement in their relationships with their child.

Eighty nine percent (89% of the youths discharged from care in a Multipurpose Home were reenrolled in school at the time of discharge and another seven percent (7%) were pursuing GED classes. Two percent (2%) were prevented from reentering school because of long term suspensions. Another two percent (2%) dropped out of school.

During the six (6) months preceding admission to a Multipurpose Home youths age 15.6 years or lower accumulated 126 complaints. During the six months subsequent to discharge from a Multipurpose Home youths age 15.6 or lower had only 47 complaints filed against them. Of the 87 youths discharged from a Multipurpose Home during FY 2006-07 63 of the 87 (73%) had no violation of Community Supervision requirements. A similar trend followed discharged Multipurpose Home youths during their time of receiving Community Care. Forty two of fifty six (75%) had no violations of Community Supervision recorded against them.

The data also reflects a reduction in the number of subsequent convictions of youth's age 15.6 or lower. In the six (6) months prior to admission to a Multipurpose Home a total of 66 adjudications were reported. In the six (6) months subsequent to discharge from a

Multipurpose Home only 28 (43%) new adjudications were recorded. Only ten (10) new Adjudications were recorded for youths of this age six months subsequent to their completion of Continuing Care. Sixty four percent (64%) of youths discharged self report as avoiding criminal activity one year after discharge from a Multipurpose Home.

A total of 18 youths were court ordered to provide restitution to the victim(s) of their offenses while in care at a Multipurpose Home. All but one (1) successfully completed this requirement. Another nine (9) youths were court ordered to provide restitution to the victim(s) of their offense(s) while in Continuing Care. All but two (2) successfully completed this requirement of the Court.

Academic performance was significantly enhanced during the time of a youth's residency at a Multipurpose Home. The data shows that at the time of admission only 25% of the youths admitted were functioning at grade level. But, at the time of discharge, 67% of the youth admitted were functioning at grade level.

The Methodist Home continues to train its staff for optimum operation in a Multipurpose Home and seven (7) Resident Counselors were Certified during FY 2006-07. Additionally, the Methodist Home continues to offer academic scholarships to youth served through the Multipurpose Home Program as a benevolent contribution. One (1) former Multipurpose Home youth received such a scholarship during FY 2006-07.

The finding of the FY 2006-07 Evaluation of the Multipurpose Home Program caused the Department to conclude that the Program supports and is in compliance with the goals and objectives of the *Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1998*.

Introduction

Responding to the requirements of Session Law 2007-323, Section 18.4 Annual Evaluation of Community Programs, the Department of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention is pleased to submit this, the FY 2006-2007, evaluation of its Multipurpose Homes Program. In so doing, the Department has considered whether a youth's participation in the Multipurpose Home Program results in a reduction of court involvement and whether the Multipurpose Home Program is achieving the goals and objectives of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act, S. L. 1998-202.

Historical Background

The Multipurpose Home Program has been a mainstay of the Department's early intervention and prevention strategy since 1993. It represents a State-Community Partnership with fourteen (14) of North Carolina's most economically and service deprived rural Judicial Districts for the provision of residential care and treatment to juvenile offenders.

Originally these facilities offered secure detention, long term treatment, and a place of safe transition between institutional confinement and a youth's local community. Development of additional detention capacity and passage of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act allowed the Department to strengthen the Home's treatment component while continuing to serve as a place of safe transition between the Youth Development Center and youth's local community.

Multipurpose Homes are currently operational in Chowan, Craven, Hertford, Robeson, Wayne, and Alamance Counties. Jointly, these Homes serve Judicial Districts 1, 2, 3A, 3B, 6A, 6B, 8, 15A, 15B, 16A, 16B, 17A, 17B, and 19B. Youths served through the Alamance Home may be either a Disposition Level 1 for Minor Offenses (Misdemeanors) or a Disposition Level 2 for Serious Offenses (A1 Misdemeanors and F1 Felonies). Three contracted foster care beds are also provided through the Alamance contract. Each of the other Multipurpose Homes accepts only Disposition Level 2 offenders.

Contracted Provider

Methodist Home for Children (MHC) has provided contract services to the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention for the operation of the Multipurpose Juvenile Homes since the Homes opened. Methodist Home has 108 years of experience serving children, youth, and families. It employs 185 trained and professionally competent staff, holds two national accreditations, and administers a service continuum that includes a Five Star child care center, nine group care facilities, supervisory and management services for 105 foster families, adoption services, in-home family counseling, and substance abuse counseling.

Scope of Services Rendered

The nature and duration of the services rendered by each of the Multipurpose Juvenile Homes are diverse, but always directed toward serving the needs of Court Ordered youth, their families, and the Court itself. The process begins with the development and implementation of an individualized Service Plan for each youth and family served. In all of the Multipurpose Homes, any youth ordered by the Court to comply with a Level II disposition may be admitted to one or more of several programs offered. For example, a youth categorized as requiring secure custody may be admitted, assessed, and provided care for a period of time before being returned to Court for adjudication. Disposition may see the same youth returned to the Multipurpose Juvenile Home for treatment as a component of probation. Once residential treatment goals have been realized, the youth may be served through the Multipurpose Juvenile Home's Continuing Care program. Another Multipurpose Juvenile Home client may progress through treatment and be released to some other community plan of care coordinated by the Multipurpose Juvenile Home's staff and the youth's Court Counselor.

Because it is located in a residential neighborhood the Alamance Home is licensed as a DSS Residential Care Facility and serves six (6) youth who may be ordered to comply with either a Level 1 or a Level 2 disposition. Treatment flows from an individualized Service Plan and includes public school placement and planned community interactions. As in all of the other Homes, staffs conscientiously render services to the families of all youth who are actively engaged in one or more of the Multipurpose Juvenile Home's programs.

Each Multipurpose Juvenile Home provides for at least two staff on the premises during normal program hours and overnight awake supervision while clients sleep. A Program Manager, Family Services Specialist and Certified Teacher contribute to treatment services in addition to the Multipurpose Juvenile Home's Resident Counselors. Moreover, several areas of the Multipurpose Juvenile Home Program continue to positively evolve. For example, Methodist Home for Children continues to strengthen the Model of Care relied upon in these facilities. The model focuses on evidence-based treatment principles¹ in its programming. The primary principles are:

- Antisocial/Pro-criminal attitudes and antisocial personality factors such as impulsiveness, risk taking, and low self control are addressed;
- Effective interventions involve behavioral, social learning, and cognitive behavioral strategies;
- Treatment is delivered in a style and mode that is consistent with the learning styles of the offenders.

The Model of Care addresses antisocial behavior by implementing a social and life skills curriculum individualized for each youth. Implementation involves consistent and continuous behavioral teaching and practice of these skills.

¹ Howell, J.C. 2003. Preventing & Reducing Juvenile Delinquency: A Comprehensive Framework. p. 212-213. Sage Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, California.

This practice and skills focus meets the learning-style needs of the youths served and leads to an internalization of these skills and the values of honesty, respect, responsibility, empowerment, compassion, and spirituality. Throughout FY 2006-2007 staff continued to become more proficient in understanding and employing the Model, and the youth have become more consistent in learning and using the social and life skills taught.

Admission Characteristics – Who is served?

Multipurpose Juvenile Homes routinely compile data on the youths, but not the families of the youths, served through its programs. During FY2006-07 a total of 96 youths were admitted to Multipurpose Homes. These 96 youths joined 35 youths already in residential care and 17 in Continuing Care on July 1, 2006. The diverse nature of those admitted to care is reflected in the tables, charts, and graphs presented below:

**Figure 1 - FY 2006-2007
Admissions By Referral Source
Total Admissions: 96**

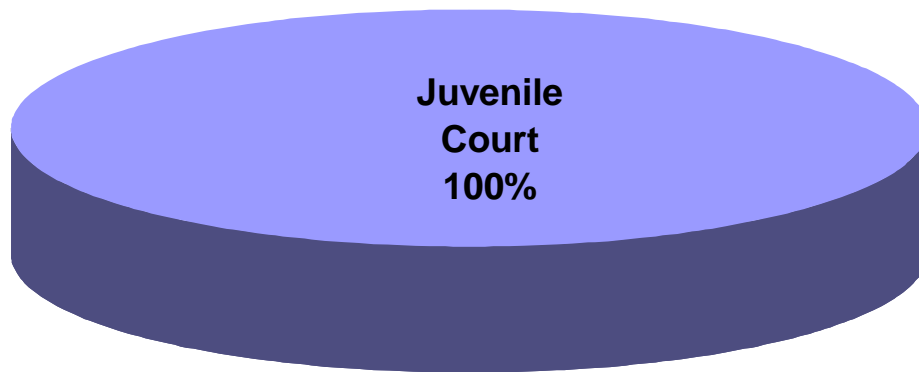


Figure 2 - FY 2006-07
Number of Admissions By Age
Total Admissions: 96

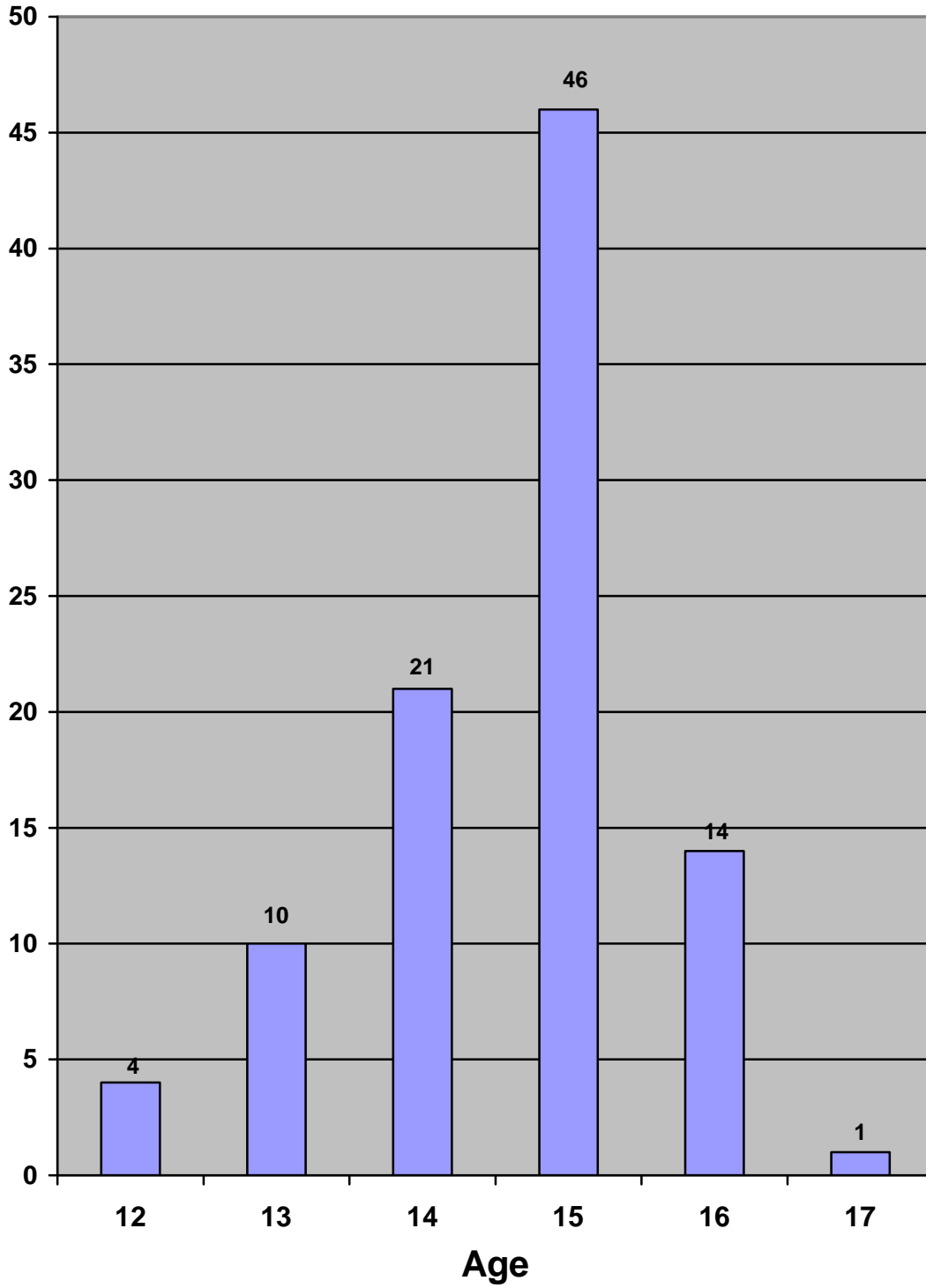


Figure 3 - FY 2006-2007
Number of Admissions By Gender
Total Admissions: 96

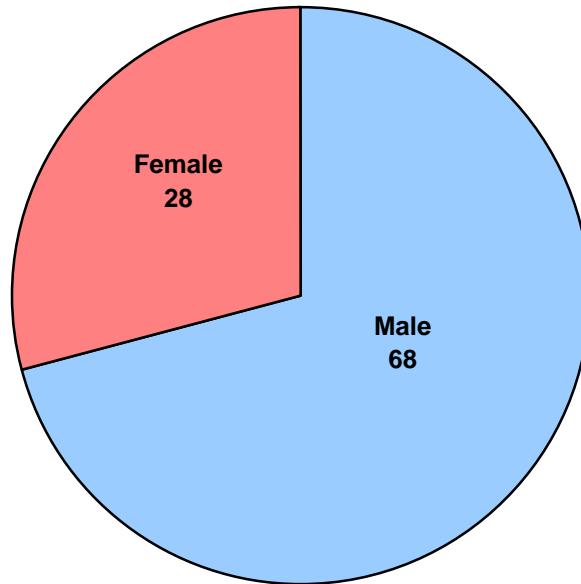


Figure 4 FY 2006-2007
Number of Admissions By Race
Total Admissions: 96

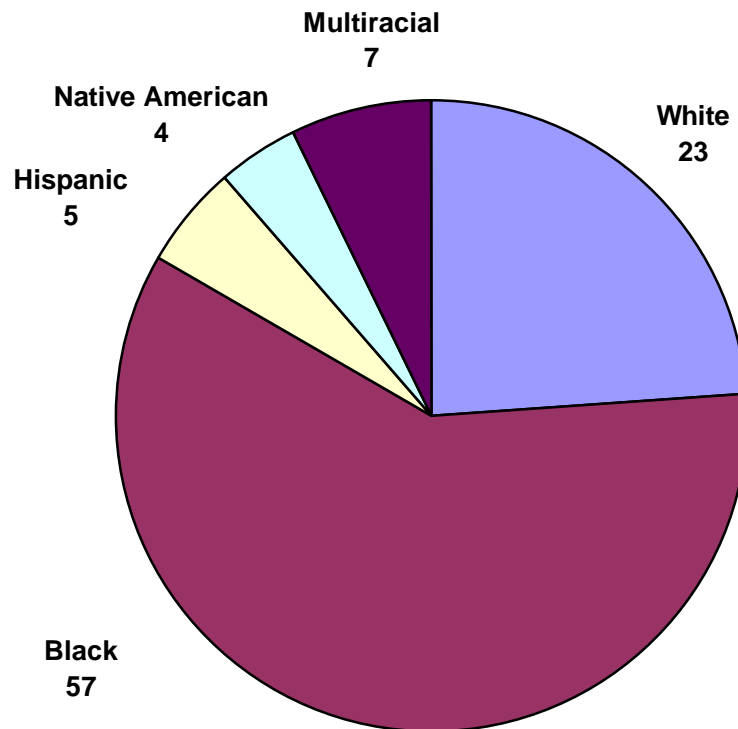


Figure 5 FY- 2006-2007
Living Arrangements Upon Admission
Total Admissions: 96

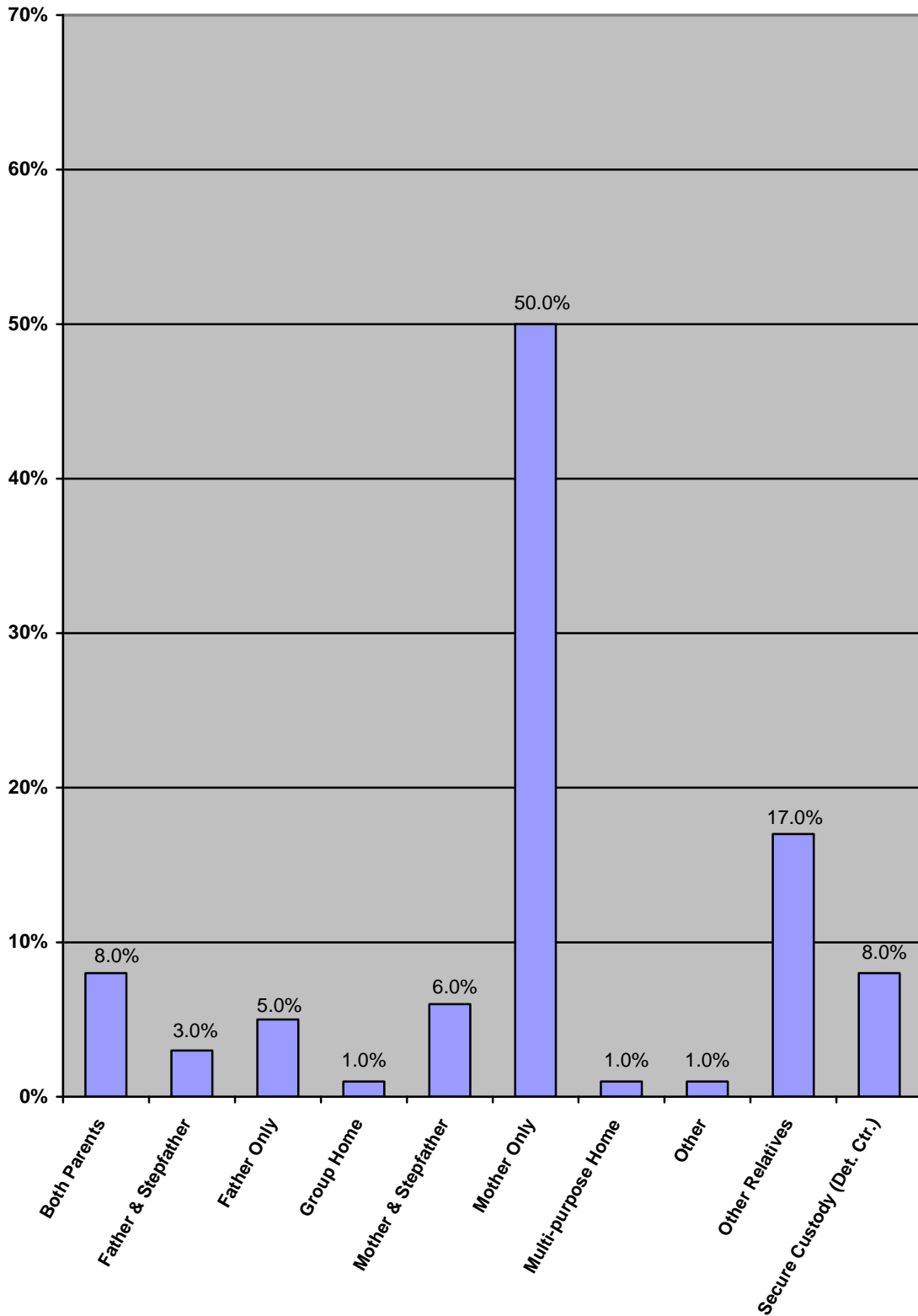


Figure 6 FY 2006-2007
School Status Upon Admission
Total Admissions: 96

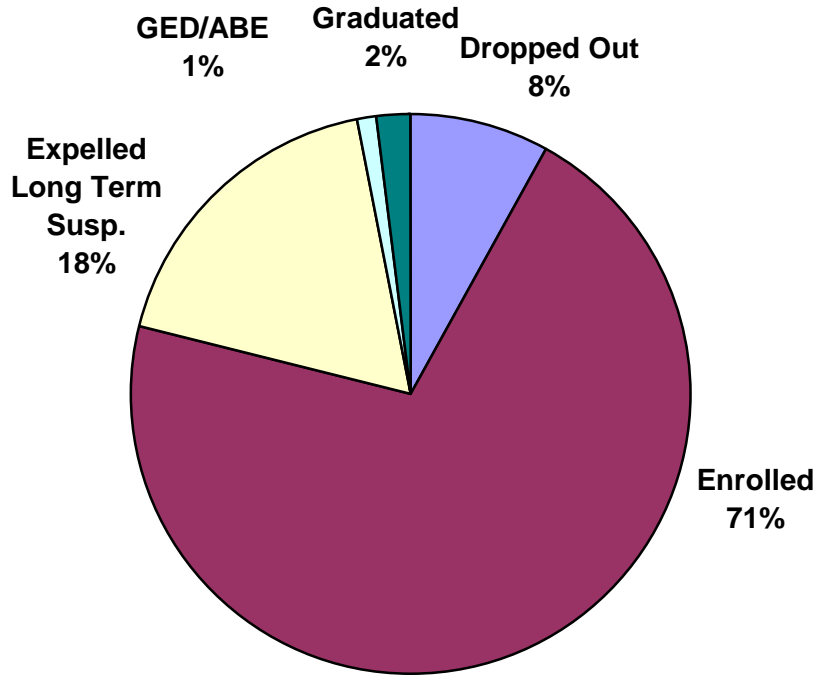


Figure 7 FY 2006-2007
Legal Status Upon Admission
Total Admissions: 96

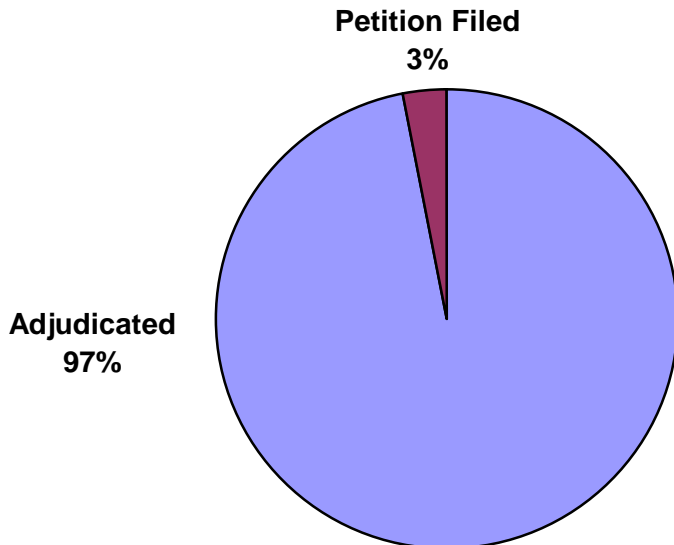


Figure 8 FY 2006-07
Number Of Admissions By Referral Reason
Total Admissions: 96

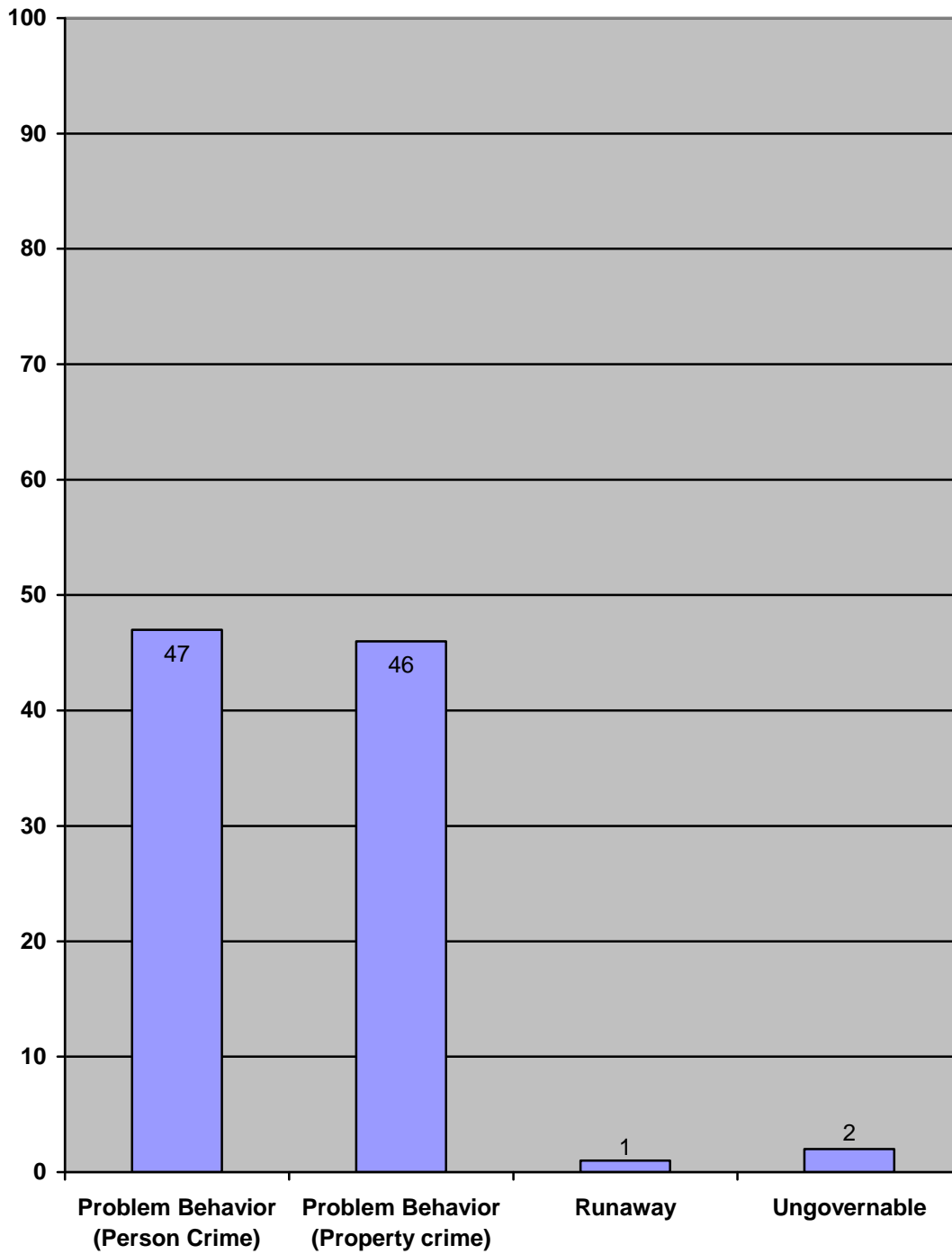


Figure 9 FY 2006-2007
Number of Admissions By Disposition
Total Admissions: 96

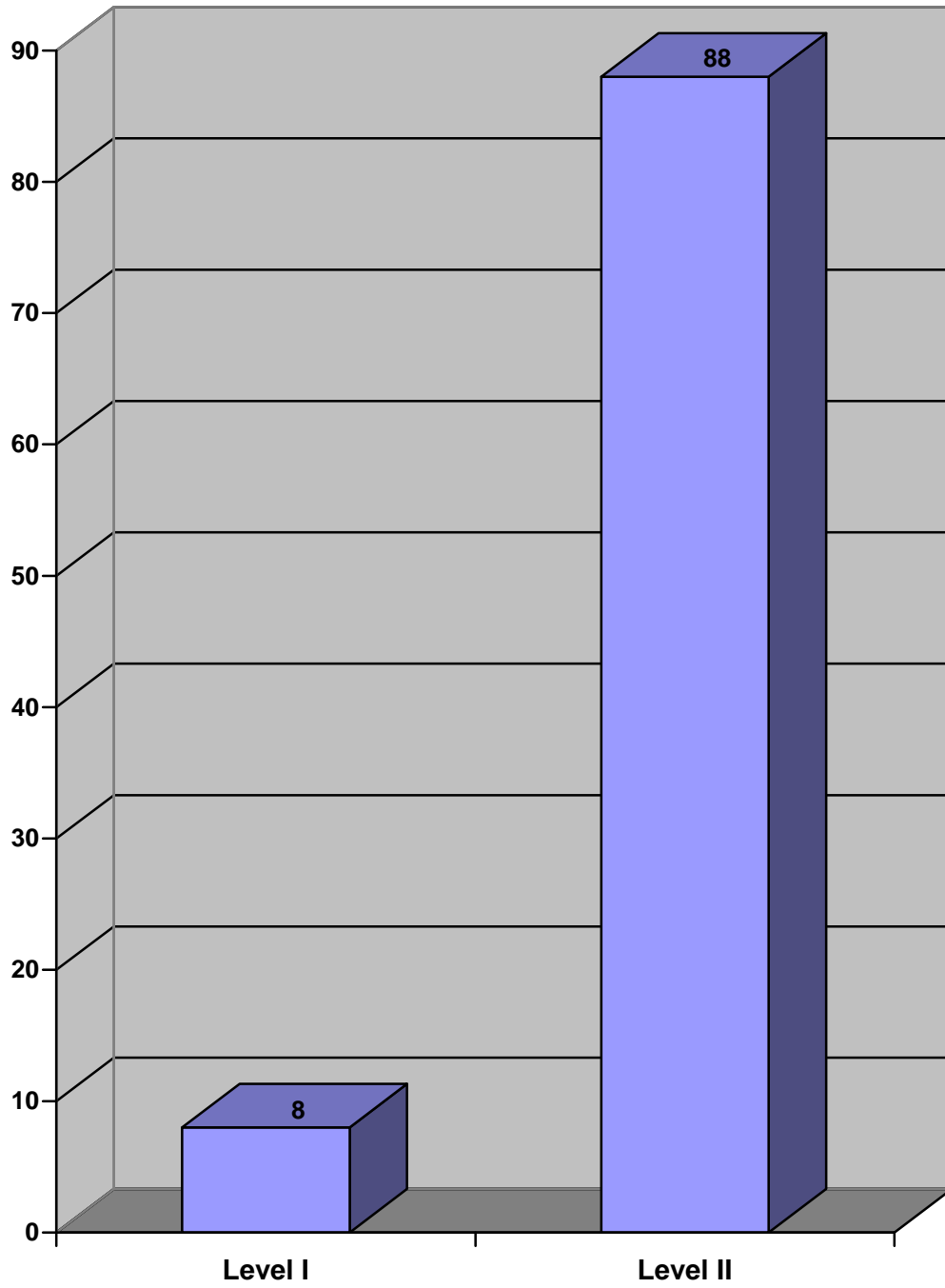


Figure 10 FY 2006-2007
Number Of Youths Served 2006-2007
 Total Served: 206

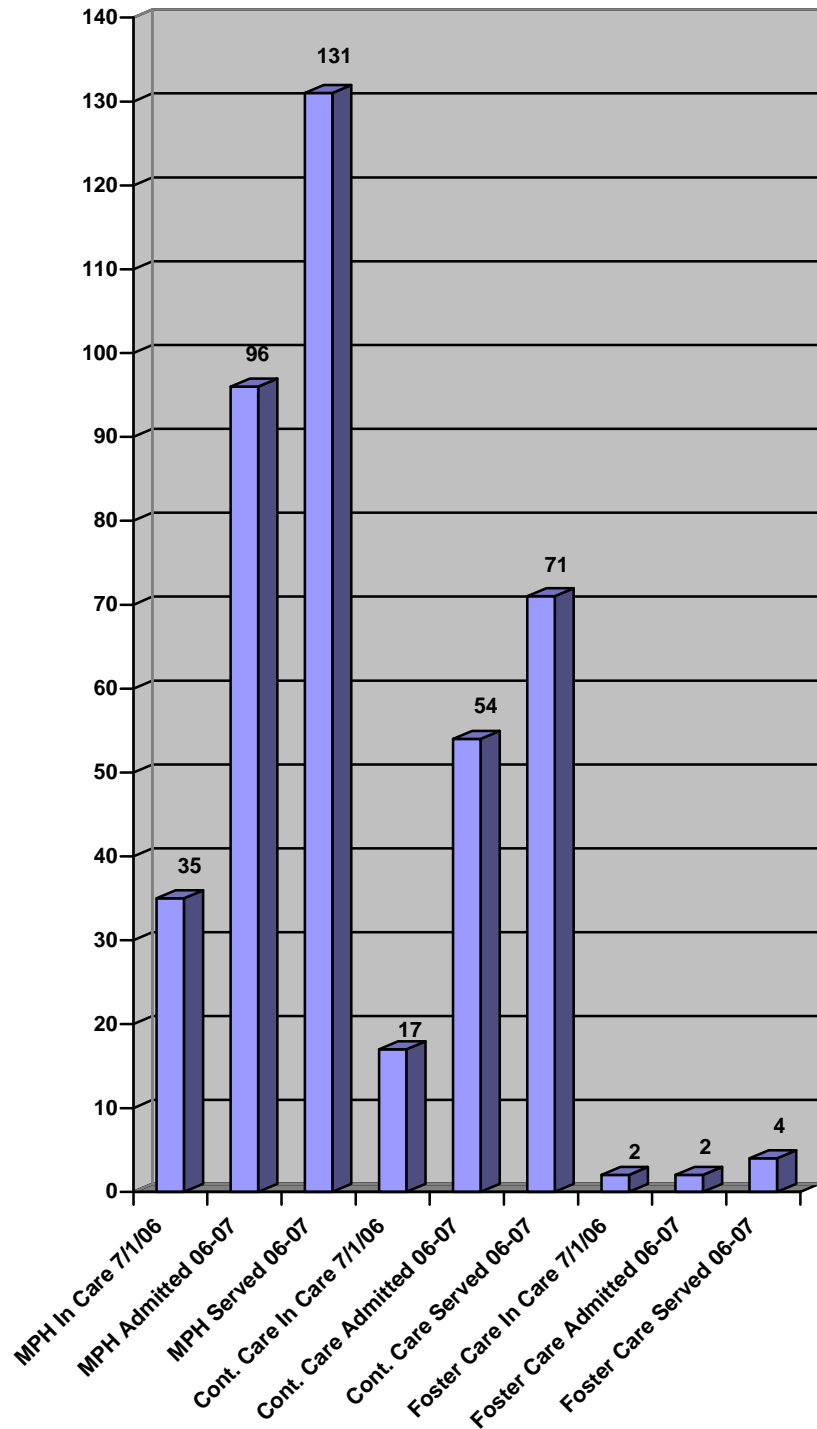
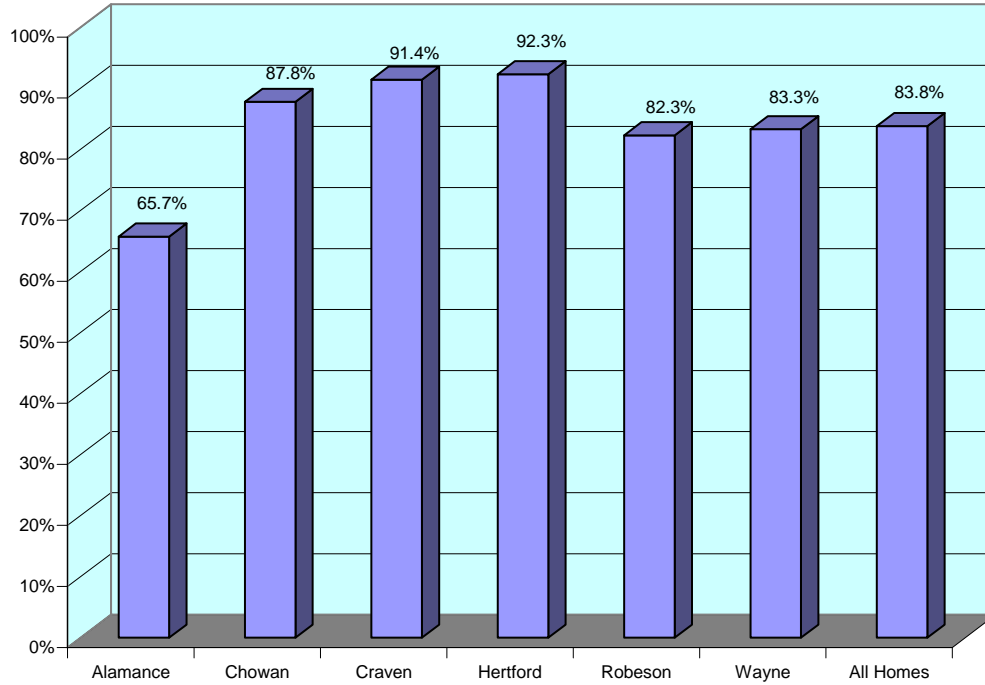


Figure 11 FY 2006-07

**Figure 1. July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007
Percent Capacity Filled Multipurpose Homes**



Outcomes – What are the results?

Available results are outlined below-+:

Youth Outcome Survey

In order to follow the progress of program served youth the Methodist Home for Children conducts outcome surveys at 6 and 12 months post discharge. These surveys help all parties understand the success of post discharge youth served through a Multipurpose Home. Listed below is data from the survey completed during FY 2006-2007.

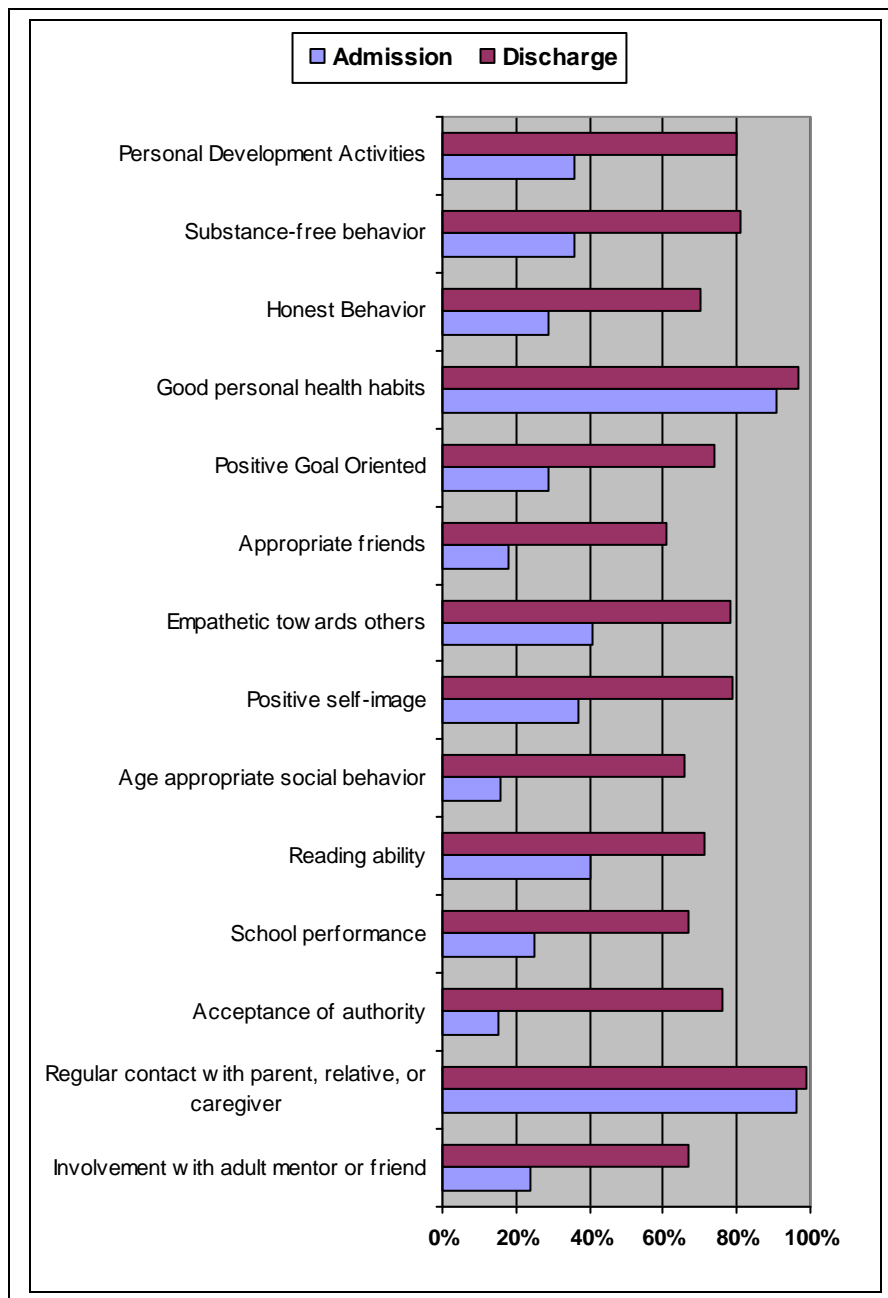
Living in a safe home environment that is either in the child’s permanent home or the next logical, most appropriate setting towards a permanent home	79%
Maintains a positive on-going relationship with a caring, responsible adult	89%
Is maintaining optimal health functioning with needed and appropriate supports	100%
Avoiding subsequent complaints at 6 months post discharge	67%

Change in Risk & Protective Factors by Discharge

The chart that follows reflects data from the Risk and Protective Factors Worksheet for youths served during FY 2006-2007. Risk factors are evidence-based characteristics that increase the likelihood of a youth being at high risk for committing delinquent acts and therefore needing continuous services to manage functioning. Likewise, Protective Factors are characteristics that protect the youth and reduce this risk. This assessment is completed for each youth at admission and at discharge. The categories listed represent a set of protective factors that have a positive correlation to youth resiliency and success. The data shows a significant positive increase in critical protective factors for youth while in care.

Figure 12 FY 2006-07

Protective Factors



**Figure 13 FY 2006-2007
Living Arrangements Upon Discharge
Total Discharges: 87**

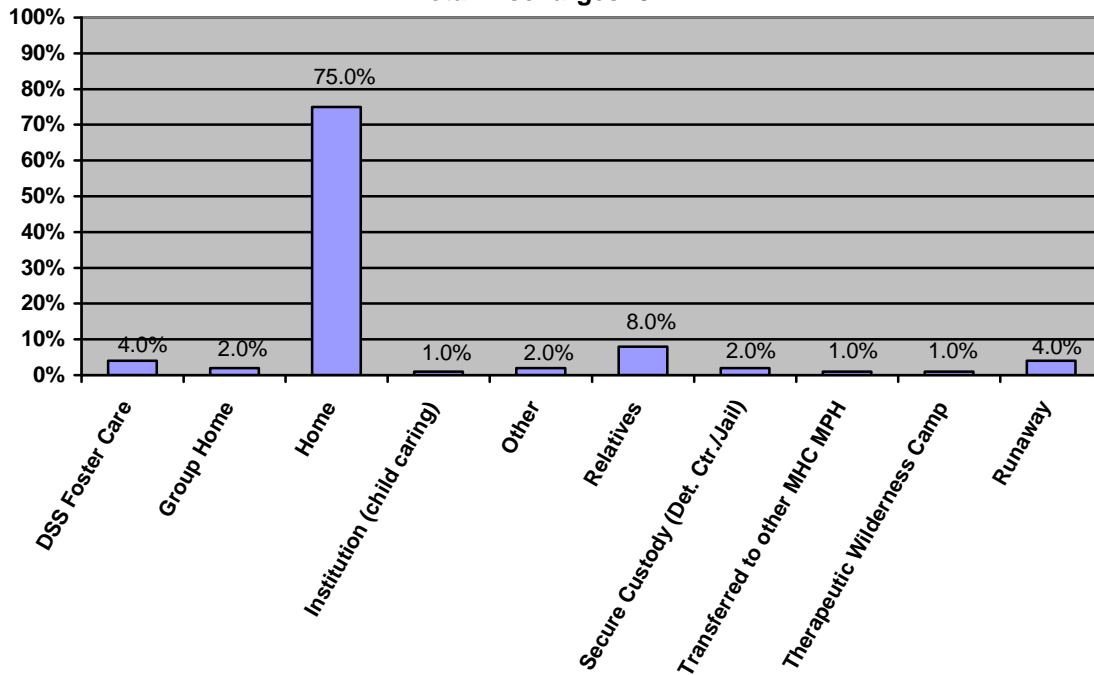
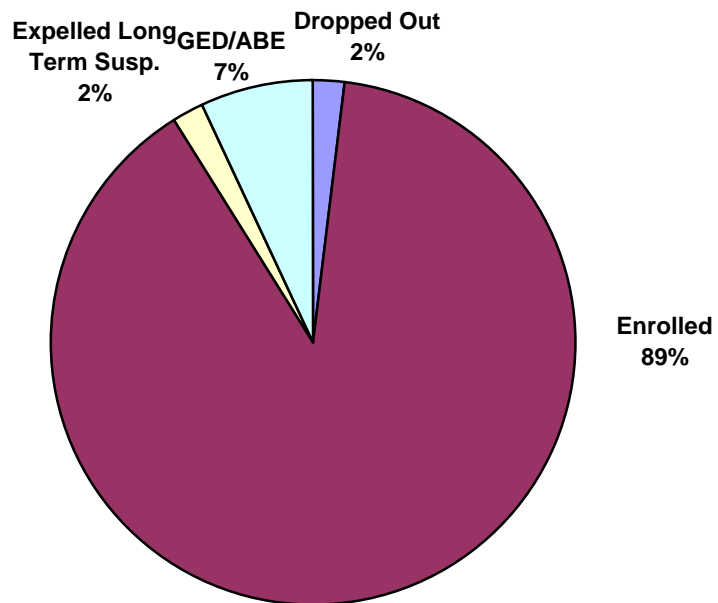


Figure 13 above and Figure 14 below show that a significant majority of youth resided with their family and were enrolled in school following discharge from a Multipurpose Home.

**Figure 14 FY 2006-2007
School Status Upon Discharge
Total Discharges: 87**



Reduction in Subsequent Complaints

Figure 15 FY 2006-2007

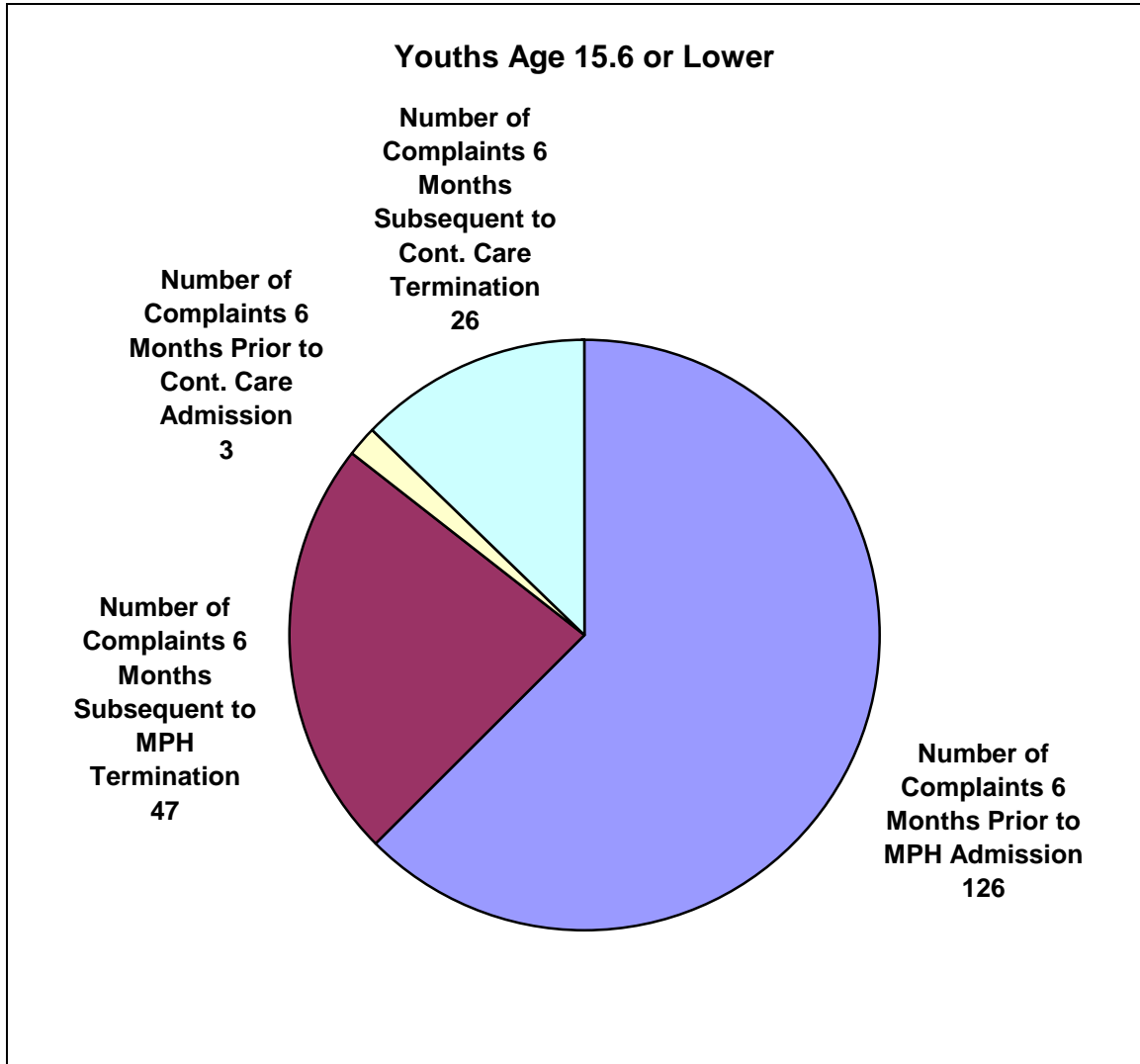
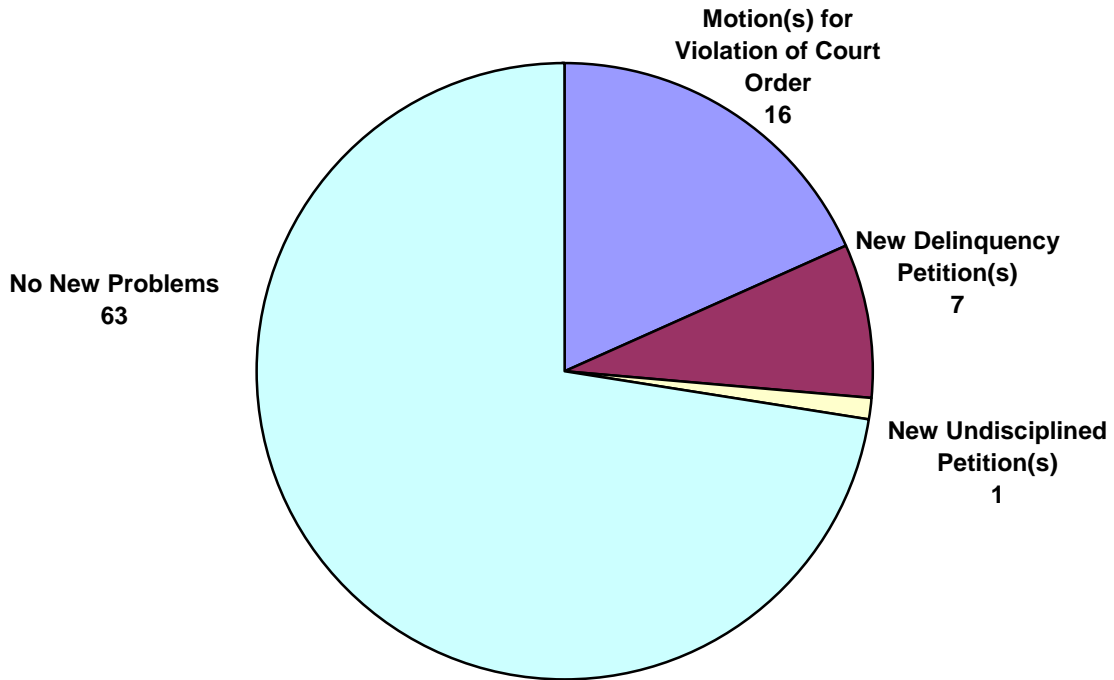


Figure 15 above shows that in the 6 months prior to admission to a Multipurpose Home the youths admitted to care accumulated a total of 126 complaints and that in the 6 months subsequent to discharge only 47 new Complaints were filed against them. The data also show that only 3 complaints were filed against youth while they were in care and that only 26 new complaints were filed during the six months following release from Continuing Care.

Figure 16 FY 2006-2007
**Reduction in Violations of Community Supervision
of Discharged Youths while in Residence**
Total: 87

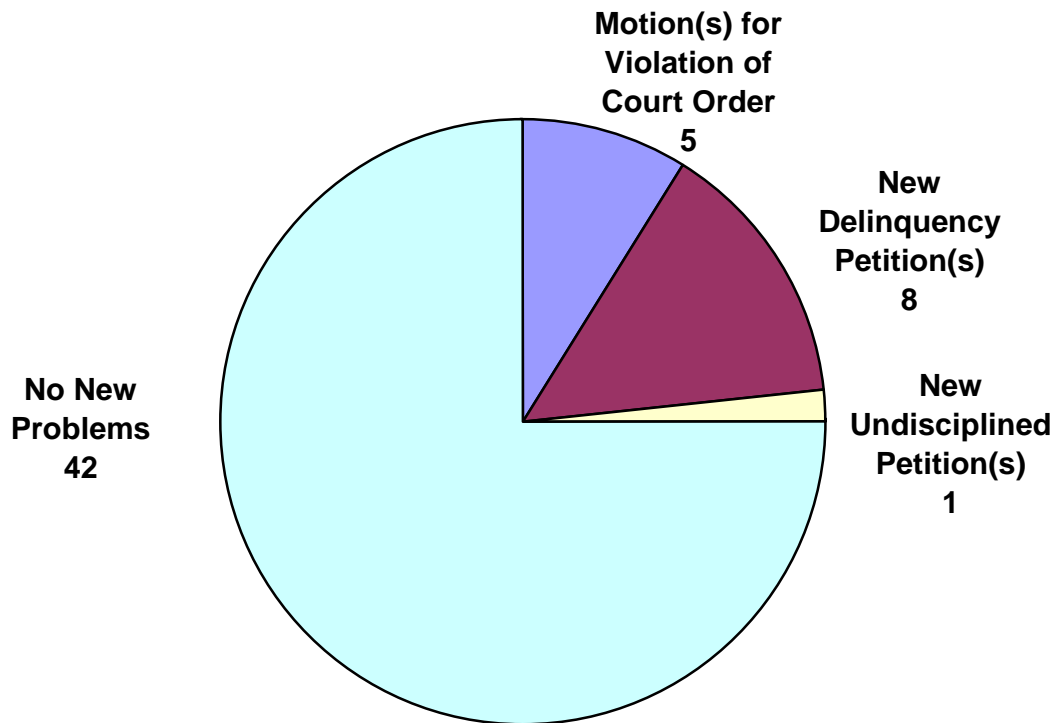


73% of the 87 youths discharged from a Multipurpose Home in FY 2006-07 successfully completed their residency without a violation of the terms of Community Supervision.

Approximately 8% of youth admitted to Multipurpose Juvenile Homes had new delinquency petitions filed while they were in care. A sizable portion of the new delinquency petitions filed were for offenses that occurred prior to admission but were not known to the Court when the Multipurpose Home placement was made.

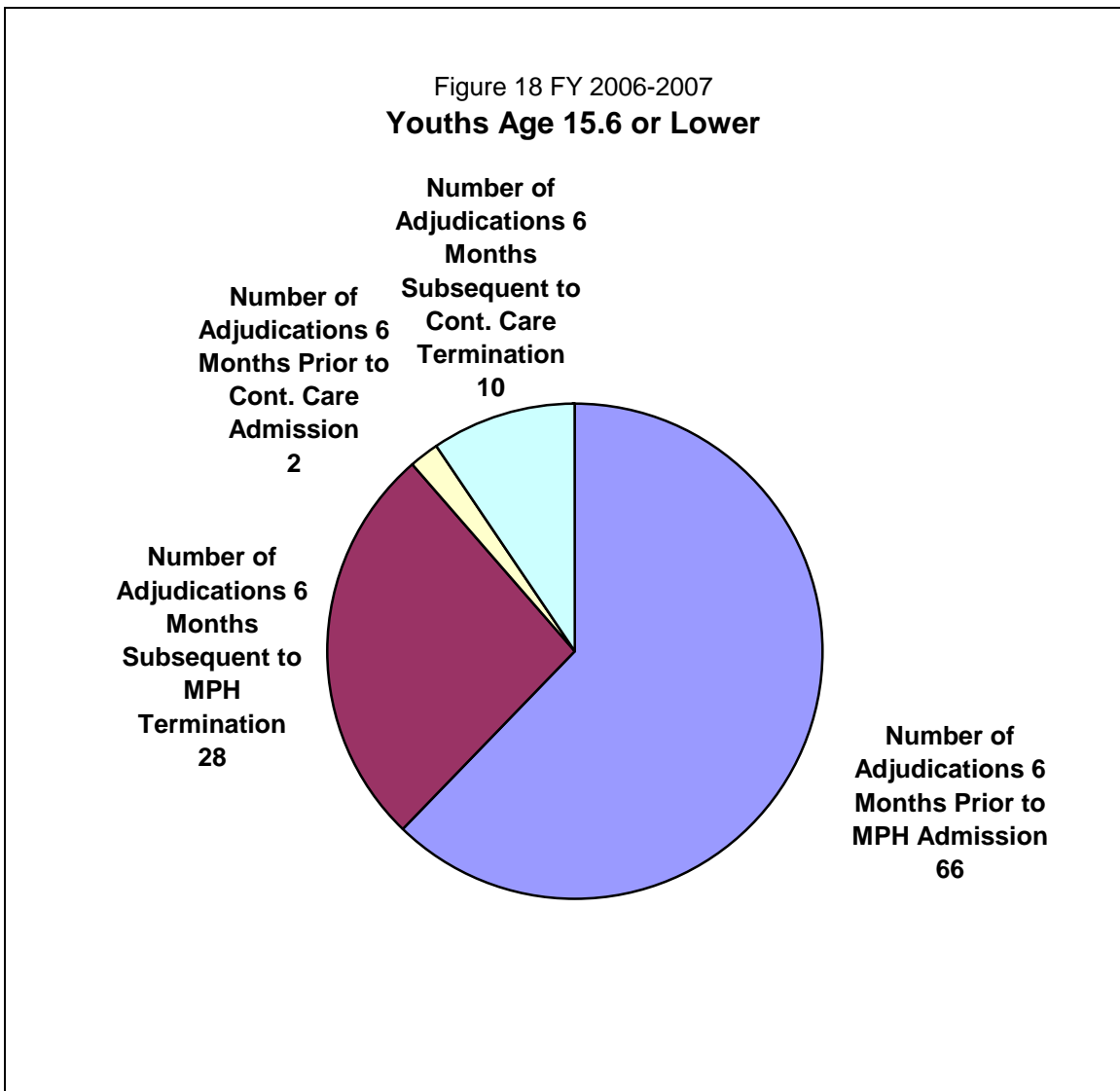
Figure 17 FY 2006-2007

**Reduction in Violations of Community Supervision
Standards of Youths Completing Continuing Care
Total: 56**



A total of 56 youths received Continuing Care in their home community during FY 2006-07. Only nine (9) of this number had new Petitions filed against them. Another five (5) youths demonstrated behavior that caused the Court Counselor to file a Motion to review the terms of Community Supervision because of alleged violations of terms. The clear majority, 42 of 56, (75%) successfully completed their Order of Community Supervision without a violation.

Reduction in Subsequent Convictions (Adjudications)



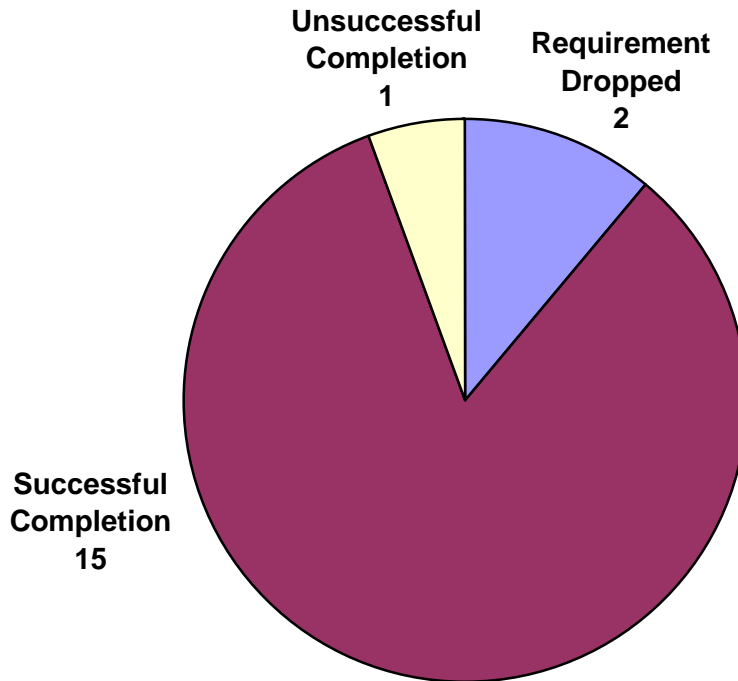
During FY 2006-07 the number of adjudications for youths age 15.6 or lower during the six months prior to their admission to a Multipurpose Home totaled 66. During the six months subsequent to discharge from the Multipurpose Home the number of adjudications totaled 28. Evaluation data show that only two (2) youth were adjudicated while receiving Continuing Care and that only 10 youth were adjudicated for offenses six months subsequent to release from Continuing Care.

As reflected in the following data, approximately two thirds of youths discharged from a Multipurpose Home self report as avoiding criminal activity for at least one year following discharge.

Self Reported Assessments from Discharged Youths'

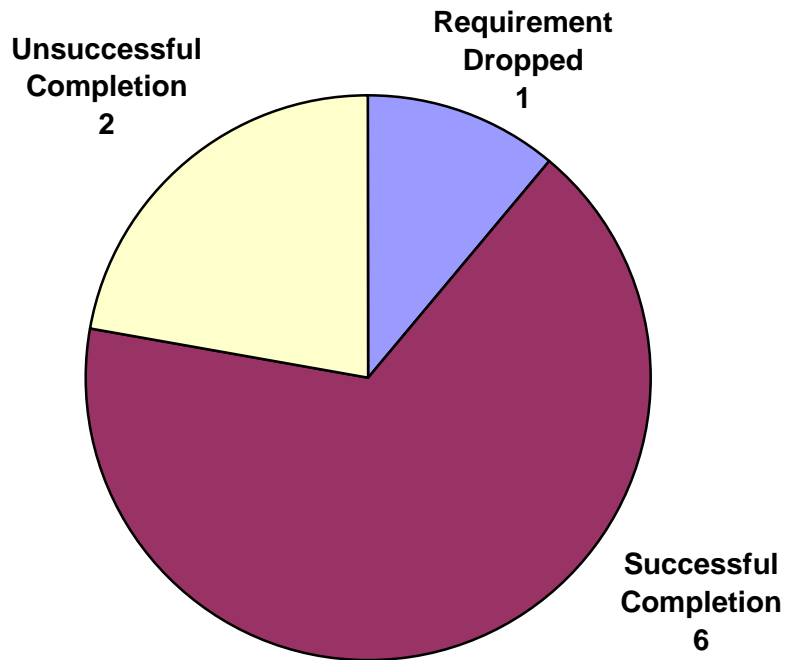
Avoiding criminal activities	
Six months after discharge:	67%
One year after discharge:	64%

Figure 19 FY 2006-2007
Fulfillment of Restitution to Victims for Youths' Having Such a Court
Ordered Requirement while in Residence
Total: 18



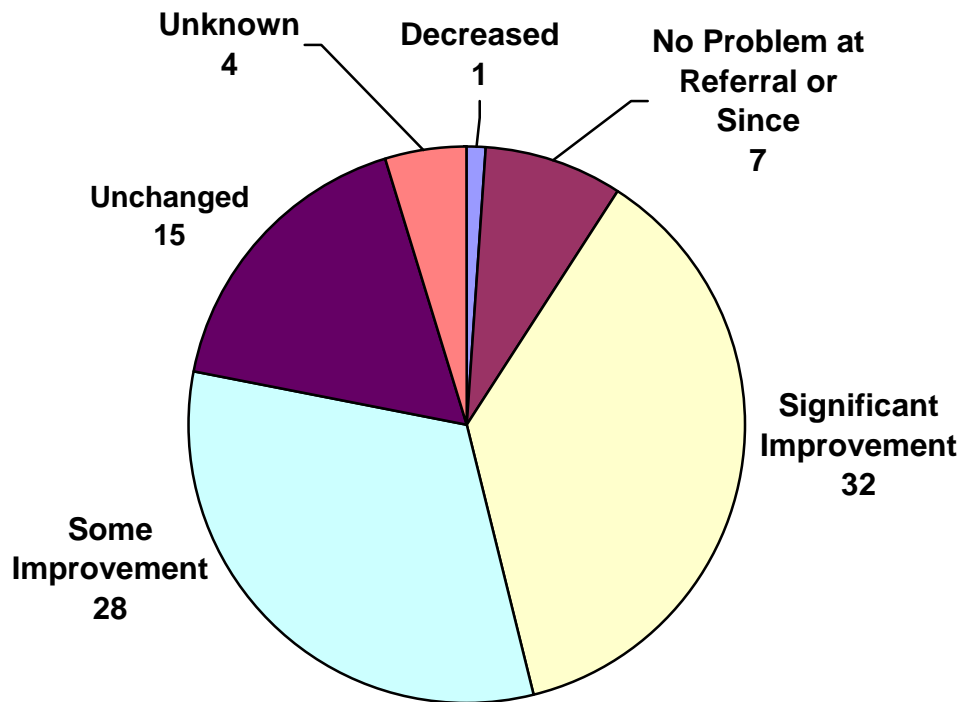
A total of 18 youths served by a Multipurpose Home had a restitution requirement as a part of their Court Order. Two Courts dismissed this requirement from their youth's order during placement at the Multipurpose Home. Only one (1) of the remaining 16 youths failed to successfully complete the restitution requirement of the Court's Order during their time of residency at the Multipurpose Home.

Figure 20 FY 2006-2007
Fulfillment of Restitution to Victims for Youths' Having
Such a Court Ordered Requirement while Receiving
Continuing Care
Total: 9



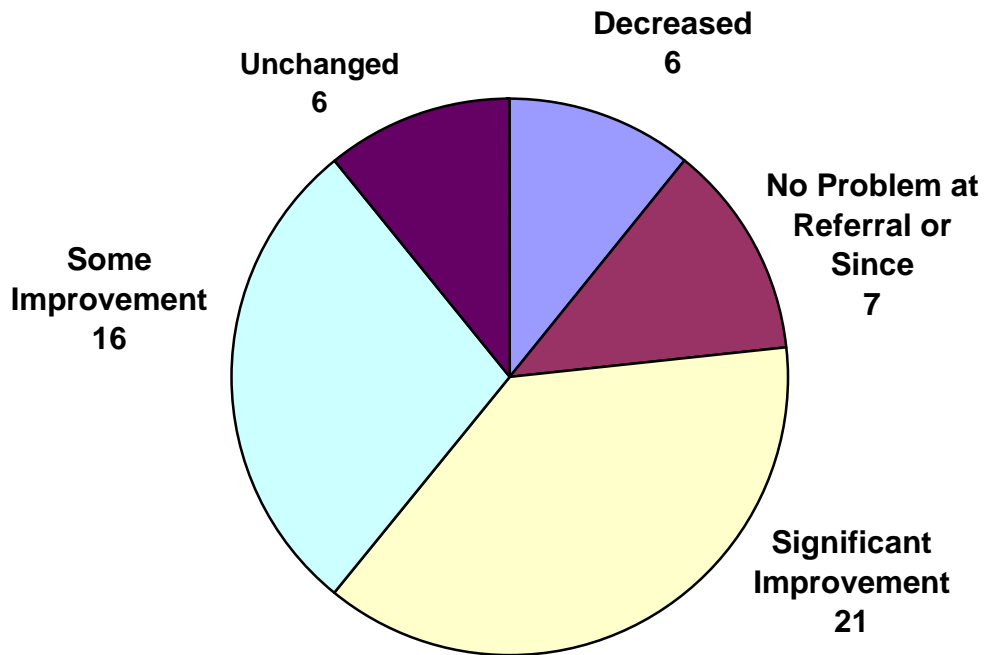
The requirement to fulfill an Order of Restitution to a victim was required of 9 youths during the time that they were being served through Continuing Care. The requirement was dropped by the Court in one (1) case. Six (6) youths successfully completed the Order of the Court. Only two (2) youths failed to successfully complete the Order of the Court.

Figure 21 FY 2006-2007
Increased Parental Accountability/Involvement of
Discharged Youths while the Youth was in Residence
Total: 87



Evaluation showed that of the 87 youths discharged from a Multipurpose Home during FY 2006-07 a total of 7 parents were deemed to display acceptable involvement with their child at admission and during his/her period of residence. Twenty eight parents demonstrated some improvement in involvement with their child and 32 parents reflected significant positive change in their degree of involvement with their child during his/her residence at a Multipurpose Home. Fifteen parents remained unchanged in their degree of involvement with their child and one parent showed a decrease in involvement. Four youths discharged from care did not have an ongoing relationship with their parents.

**Figure 22 FY 2006-2007
Increased Parental Accountability/Involvement of Youths
Completing Continuing Care
Total: 56**



Parental Accountability/Involvement was also tracked during the time a youth was receiving Continuing Care. This data showed that 7 parents demonstrated acceptable involvement with their child at the time that he/she was admitted to Continuing Care. During the time that Continuing Care was offered, 16 parents were deemed to demonstrate some improvement in involvement with their child and 21 were seen as showing significant improvement in involvement with their child. Six (6) parents remained unchanged in the degree of involvement demonstrated during the period of Continuing Care, and six (6) parents were viewed as having a decrease in involvement with their child.

Youth's Reading Ability

Youths continue to improve in reading ability as evidenced by *Wide Range Achievement Test* scores. Youth are tested on their reading ability upon entry into the program and at several intervals while in residence. During FY 2006-2007 the *Wide Range Achievement Test* of youth scoring average or above in reading showed a Standard Score improvement of 8% during the typical eight month period of residency. The Multipurpose Home program has a strong focus on reading and provides many resources such as computers, phonics programs, and an extensive collection of books.

Overall Academic Functioning

Overall academic functioning showed a positive change as well. The Risk and Protective Factors assessments showed that at admission, 25% of youths had an overall functioning at grade level while at discharge, 67% were functioning at grade level. Experience and best practice options suggest that addressing problem behavior is critical to educational success. As a part of the *Value Based Therapeutic Environment Model of Care* created and offered by the contracted provider, Methodist Home for Children, the education program incorporates this insight. The program focuses on identifying behavioral skill deficits and teaching skills to perform new, more positive behaviors. Trained staffs spend considerable time helping students to see the value in engaging in appropriate school behavior and creating a living environment that promotes learning.

Scholarship Program

Methodist Home for Children continues to offer a scholarship program for post-secondary education or vocational training as a benevolent contribution to the future of these youth. All youths served by the program are eligible for this scholarship. Methodist Home for Children funds this program independent of this Contract and bears all of the financial responsibility. One Multipurpose Home youth benefited from this program during FY 2006-2007.

Staff Enhancement

Seven (7) staff members earned their Resident Counselor certification during FY 2006-2007. The certification process is an ongoing method of verifying staff competency and creates additional incentive, recognition, and reward for excellence.

Compliance with the Goals of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act S. L. 1998-202

The Juvenile Justice Reform Act supports change away from the traditional operational processes of juvenile justice in North Carolina. Its authors foresaw the need for different outcomes and provided a road map to achieve the envisioned ends. Prominent among the established goals are:

- Development of a sound admission and intake program to juvenile facilities
- Creation and operation of programs that meet the needs of juveniles receiving services

- Adoption of rules and regulations that implement the various provisions of the Act
- Development and coordination of comprehensive multidisciplinary services and programs for the prevention of juvenile delinquency, early intervention, and rehabilitation of juveniles
- Collection of data
- Assisting private agencies in the development of juvenile prevention services
- Purchase of services from private agencies
- The development of community based alternatives to YDC Commitment
- Working with communities to provide services and treatment options to meet the physical, emotional, and mental needs of juveniles and families including Group homes with psychological treatment and programs

Multipurpose Juvenile Homes strongly support the Department's compliance requirement. Built using 1990 Prison Bond Referendum funds, Multipurpose Juvenile Homes have consistently operated as evolving rather than static entities. Physical structures have been maintained and updated. Community relations have been strengthened. And, community partnerships have expanded access to medical, dental, clinical, educational and recreational resources. Service outreach has been broadened to embrace the youth's family. Staff training has been significantly enhanced, an evidence based Model of Care has been adopted, and data is being amassed and utilized to guide treatment and programmatic decisions. Change, as envisioned in the Juvenile Justice Reform Act is occurring. The Department's evaluation of the Multipurpose Juvenile Homes' compliance with the requirements, and tenor, of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act resulted in a determination that that the compliance rating is "High."

Summary

Responding to the requirement of Section 18.4: Annual Evaluation of Community Programs, of Session Law 2007-323, the Department of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention undertook careful evaluation of the contracted providers' compliance with the requirements of the Contract that is in place and the Juvenile Justice Reform Act, S.L. 1998-202. In so doing, the Department also considered whether participation in the Multipurpose Juvenile Home Program results in a reduction of court involvement among those youth who participate in the program.

The Department's findings are presented in detail above. In summary, they show that day to day operation and management of the Multipurpose Home Program has been contracted to the Methodist Home for Children since the program began in 1993. This long term partnership has allowed the Contractor to hone the therapeutic approach utilized in the Homes and expand outreach to include the families of the youth served as well as the communities where the youths and their families reside. Without exception the Homes are viewed as a valuable, contributing community resource that currently offers service to fourteen (14) predominately rural, underserved, and often high commitment Judicial Districts.

The Homes' programs utilize a Model of Care that is grounded in evidence based practices and directed toward reducing impulsive risk taking while strengthening low self control. The effective interventions relied upon include strategies for improving social learning and reducing behavioral and cognitive behavioral concerns.

All youths received in the Multipurpose Homes are referred by their local Juvenile Court and range in age from 12 to 17. Most admissions are minority males from a single parent home. Slightly more than two thirds of those youth admitted are still enrolled in school but, a majority is performing poorly in all academic pursuits.

Of the 96 youth admitted during FY 2006-07, 47 were referred for a crime against a person, 46 were referred for a crime against property, and three (3) were Status Offenders. A total of 206 youth were served through the Multipurpose Homes program during FY 2006-07 and the Homes operated at 84% of capacity at a cost per bed day of \$173.00.

The Multipurpose Home and Continuing Care Programs produced a host of positive outcomes throughout FY 2006-07. Among them were: increases in all measured Protective Factor Outcomes, the return of 75% of the youth served to the home of their parent(s) upon discharge with 89% being reenrolled in their home school upon discharge. A dramatic drop in delinquent complaints following discharge, and 63 of 87 having no violations of Community Supervision while in residence and 42 of 56 having no violations of Community Supervision while receiving Continuing Care. Moreover, new adjudications were also dramatically reduced. For example, evaluation data showed that in the six months prior to admission to a Multipurpose Home 66 adjudications had occurred, but, during the six months subsequent to discharge only 28 adjudications occurred. The youth themselves reported that nearly two thirds were avoiding criminal activities one year after discharge.

During FY 2006-07 eighteen (18) youth arrived at the Multipurpose Home with a Court Order requiring restitution to the victim of their offense and only one (1) youth failed to successfully complete the requirement. Nine (9) other youth were required to make restitution to the victim of their crime while receiving Continuing Care and six (6) of the nine successfully completed the requirement.

Parental Accountability/Involvement was not found to be a problem in seven of the 87 parent/child relationships examined. Improvement was noted in 60 of the remaining 80 cases. Only one case was identified as reflecting a decrease in Parental Accountability/Involvement while the youth was in residence and only six (6) of fifty six (56) cases showed a decrease in Parental Accountability/Involvement while the youth was in Continuing Care.

Youths made considerable progress in academic pursuits while in care. For example, only 25% of the admitted youth were functioning at grade level at the time of admission but, 67% were functioning at grade level on discharge. The Standard Score on Reading levels reflected an 8% improvement during the period of a youth's residential care. Also, during

FY 2006-07, seven (7) staff members earned certification as Resident Counselors and one (1) youth received a post secondary scholarship through Methodist Home for Children.

Value of the Multipurpose Home Program

February 2008 marks the Department's fifteenth year of experience in the operation of Multipurpose Juvenile Homes. Each Annual Evaluation has shown them to be an effective means of interrupting placement in a Detention facility and commitment to a Youth Development Center. And, this accomplishment occurs while serving a youth, and his/her family in their home community. Over the years, the five original Multipurpose Juvenile Homes have accumulated a long history of acceptance by, and cooperation with, the communities and Judicial Districts served because of the quality of the services rendered, the physical location of the Homes, the community's appreciation of the resource, and the desire of staff to maintain and promote positive relationships.

At the request of the Department, independent researchers have reviewed the Multipurpose Juvenile Home Program Model and determined that it is sound, progressive, and effective. It relies on specific counseling approaches that include cognitive-behavioral interventions, and it emphasizes the values of compassion, honesty, empowerment, respect, responsibility and, spirituality. The Model supplements these interventions and values with services such as mentoring, academic tutoring and the improvement of interpersonal skills. Together, these options serve to provide effective treatment ingredients within a comprehensive program structure. This conclusion is supported by the nationally recognized meta-analysis research of Dr's. Mark Lipsey and Buddy Howell, consultants to numerous State Juvenile Justice Systems, including North Carolina's Department of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention and the Federal Government.

The program's emphasis on empowering youth to stay connected with, and reintegrate back into their home community on discharge has caused Multipurpose Juvenile Homes to be viewed as an indispensable part of the Department's habilitation strategy in the underserved communities and Judicial Districts where they are located. Outcome data shows that the program structure of the Multipurpose Juvenile Homes allows youth to acquire the skills and values they need to be successful upon return to their local communities.