

2018 YOS EVALUATION: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Presented to
Age of Delinquency Task Force
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Division of Criminal Justice
Office of Research and Statistics

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Agenda

2018 YOS Evaluation

- Recommendations from 2016
- Intro/background of 2018 YOS/study
- Research methods
 - ▣ Research questions came from statute
- Findings
 - ▣ Findings related to research questions
 - ▣ “Additional Findings”
- Recommendations

YOS responses to 2016 recommendations

1. **Continue to examine educational programming and staffing to ensure it is relevant to an older population. Over one-third (38.2%) of YOS intakes in 2016 were functionally illiterate, reflecting the need for a wide range of educational programming necessary to meet the needs of this older population.**

Due to the increase in average age YOS has moved away from a HS Diploma curriculum and is now solely offering GED. This change benefits older offenders arriving with limited credits and limited time to achieve mandatory credits before aging out.

Additional CTE programs are being offered in addition to previous vocational / post-secondary courses.

YOS responses to 2016 recommendations

- 2. Due to management turnover in 2016, Administrators should make every effort to communicate the vision and expectations to staff to ensure the program mission is not compromised as YOS evolves.**

Annual strategic planning sessions have been instituted involving staff from all areas and ranks.

Staff are involved in evaluating processes and programs to encourage engagement and ownership.

The YOS mission is aligned with DOC's mission regarding case management services and offender case planning.

YOS responses to 2016 recommendations

- 3. Every effort should be made to fill the vacant mental health position.**

CONGRATULATIONS!!

A recommendation was made in 2012, 2014 and 2016 for administrators to prioritize and fill one of the vacant mental health positions. As of January 2018 both Social Worker III positions were filled.

YOS responses to 2016 recommendations

4. **Concerns about gang activity were voiced by both staff and offenders. The review of YOS programming by DOC administrators as it relates to gang activity should continue, and the historical practice of not recognizing gang-related behavior should be reconsidered.**

The current YOS contract designates a zero tolerance for STG/gang-related issues, involvement and/or behaviors. The contract holds offenders accountable through status change, privilege restriction, behavior contract or even grounds to seek revocation.

YOS responses to 2016 recommendations

- 5. Continue efforts to expand the women's access to programming and recreational activities.**

A driving simulator and two welding simulators have been installed in the female unit.

Recreational improvements include the installation of a walking track, stationary equipment and basketball court in Building 26.

Work opportunities have been expanded for females where possible, including janitorial jobs in the administrative buildings.

The male-female separation requirement continues to limit the possibility of work in other areas.

YOS responses to 2016 recommendations

6. **YOS should continue to cultivate its relationships with community stakeholder employers.**

YOS continues to maintain excellent relationships with approximately 20 community stakeholders which impacts Phase I, Phase II and Phase III residents and includes job fairs and in-reach services.

YOS responses to 2016 recommendations

- 7. YOS administrators should carefully document the outcomes of the new Youth Transfers pursuant to Senate Bill 15-182.**

This effort appears to be ongoing and successful. Youth Transfers are carefully tracked at each stage of their stay in YOS



Thank you

**For the attention you gave to our
recommendations in 2016!**

Now....let's turn to our 2018 evaluation.

RESEARCH METHODS

Survey response rates

- **OFFENDER SURVEY*** (88% RESPONSE RATE)
(n=149)
- **STAFF SURVEY*** (69% RESPONSE RATE)
(n=111)

*2016 response rates: 97% residents, 68% staff

Study Limitations

- ❑ Anything short of a 100% response rate for study participants raises questions of sample bias
- ❑ **Time and resource constraints, and challenges with informed consent, preclude researchers from observing routine activities in the YOS setting including program groups and program participants**
- ❑ Carefully evaluating the specific program components, such as GGI, Quick Skills and vocational training, was beyond the scope of this study yet is central to the understanding of how YOS works to impact the lives of offenders
- ❑ **Finally, this evaluation focuses entirely on YOS at the Pueblo facility and excludes Phase III**

Offender Survey Sample

Study participants:

- Were on average 20.7 years old (16-25) and had spent 25 months at YOS (1-63 months)
- Respondents included all of the female residents (n=7), and 14 respondents were Youth Transfers
- 29% said parents were involved with YOS (42% in 2014 and 32% in 2016)

FINDINGS: Bottom line

**YOS IS OPERATING AS THE
LEGISLATURE INTENDED**



Per Colorado Revised Statute 18-1.3-407(10)(b), is the current operation of YOS consistent with statute?

- ***Does the system provide for teaching offenders self-discipline by providing clear consequences for inappropriate behavior?***
 - Yes, YOS operations appear to be generally consistent with statute. Consequences for negative behavior range from revocation to DOC to regression to lower behavioral status levels and negative chronological reports.
 - There is zero-tolerance for STG/gang-related issues under current YOS contract.
 - The majority of residents surveyed (64.6%) felt somewhat or definitively that there are clear consequences for inappropriate behavior. However, a quarter (25.9%) indicated 'discipline and rules are arbitrary'.

Per Colorado Revised Statute 18-1.3-407(10)(b), is the current operation of YOS consistent with statute?

- ***Does the system include a daily regimen of physical training, self-discipline exercises, education and work programs, and meaningful interaction?***
 - **Yes**, many updates have been made to the YOS facility since the 2016 evaluation resulting in increased access to physical training and exercise.
 - The completion of the new multi-purpose building added 13,941 square feet of usable space including a gymnasium, and an indoor workout area with cardio machines and weights.
 - Building 26 now has a walking track, basketball court and stationary equipment.
 - When asked about the best things at YOS, 24% mentioned recreational opportunities.

Per Colorado Revised Statute 18-1.3-407(10)(b), is the current operation of YOS consistent with statute?

- ***Does the system include a daily regimen of physical training, self-discipline exercises, education and work programs, and meaningful interaction?***
 - **Yes**, when asked what programs or activities have been most useful to them, 65% indicated education and school, and 50% stated vocational programming.
 - In 2018 there was an increased completion rate for GED's. 42 residents graduated in June 2018, 35 with a GED and 7 with a high school diploma.
 - However, 22% wished to see improvements made to the educational system and to have the high school restored.
 - Another 22% expressed a desire for more or better vocational options.

Education challenge

- Assessment instruments used by YOS describe a high-need population. Over the past seven years the proportion of those with a high school diploma or GED upon intake has declined from over half to only 16.7% in 2018.
- *Those who are considered functionally illiterate or who are illiterate in English represent an increasing proportion of the population, going from approximately a third of intakes to three-quarters in 2018.*
 - *We later determined this information to be unreliable*

Per Colorado Revised Statute 18-1.3-407(10)(b), is the current operation of YOS consistent with statute?

- ***Does the system provide a component for a tiered system for swift and strict discipline for noncompliance?***
 - ▣ Yes, a 9-tiered behavioral management level system links behavioral expectations to privileges
 - ▣ The behavioral management system is central to the YOS offender experience
 - ▣ Approximately 1/2 of the YOS population (54%) is Phoenix level (highest)

Per Colorado Revised Statute 18-1.3-407(10)(b), is the current operation of YOS consistent with statute?

- ***Does the system use staff role models and mentors to promote pro-social behavior?***
 - **Yes**, most staff members who participated in the study seem to take this expectation seriously
 - 86% (95) of staff survey respondents answered Yes to the question: “Do you consider yourself a role model?”
 - 11 said “sometimes”
 - 76% (84) of staff survey respondents reported that they have taken specialized training courses to work with youth offenders since beginning at YOS

Per Colorado Revised Statute 18-1.3-407(10)(b), is the current operation of YOS consistent with statute?

- ***Does the system provide offenders with instruction on problem-solving skills and the use of cognitive behavior strategies?***
 - **Yes**, YOS offers several types of problem-solving instruction and cognitive behavioral approaches, including:
 - Guided Group Interaction (GGI)
 - Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens
 - Sex offender treatment
 - Anger management classes
 - Victim empathy classes
 - Substance abuse classes
 - Quick Skills (cognitive skill-building techniques)
 - Baby-Think-It-Over, Parents on a Mission

Per Colorado Revised Statute 18-1.3-407(10)(b), is the current operation of YOS consistent with statute?

- ***Does the system promote pro-social behavior?***
 - **YES**, through the use of the 9-level behavioral management system
 - Changes have been made to the Positive Peer culture at YOS and Phoenix level residents are no longer responsible or expected to confront the negative behavior of others. Confrontation of negative behavior is now entirely left to the staff.
 - Residents may be encouraged to try to influence others but it is not expected.

Per Colorado Revised Statute 18-1.3-407(10)(b), is the current operation of YOS consistent with statute?

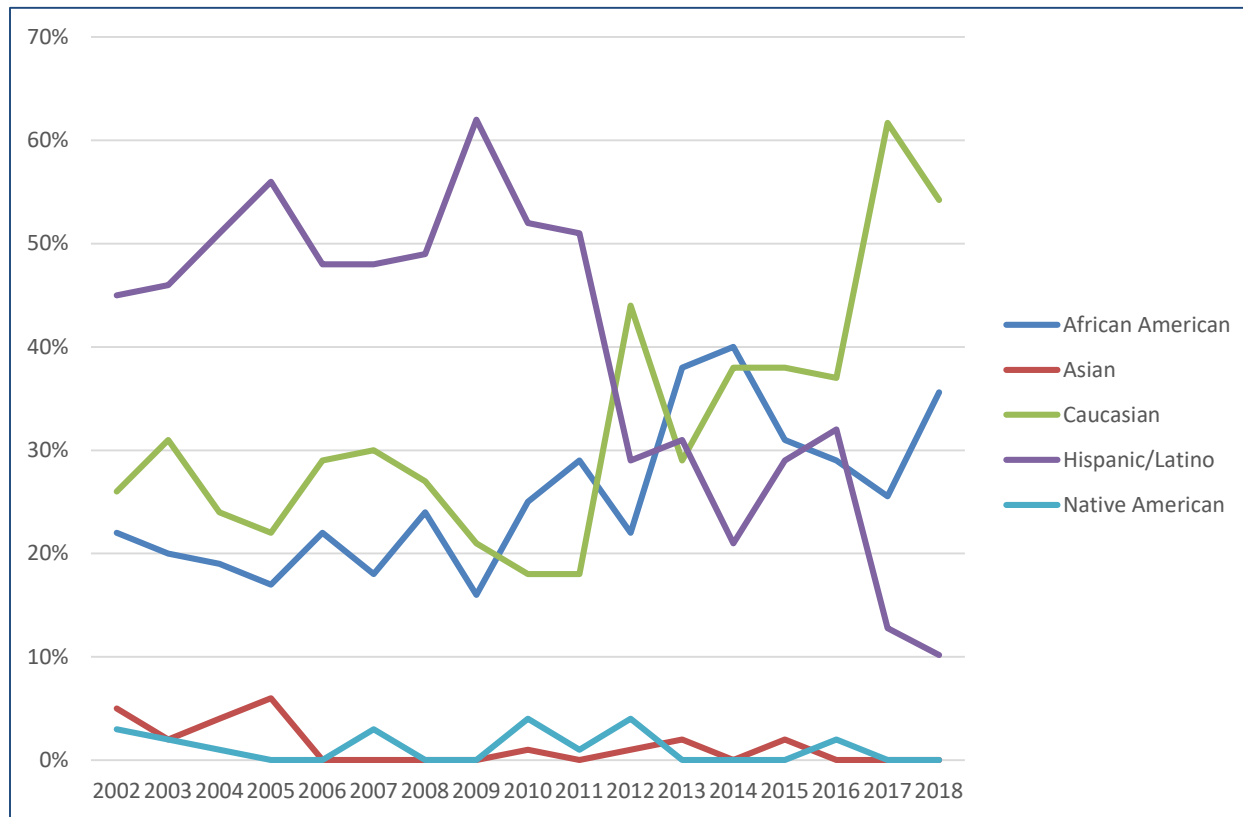
- ***Does the system provide offenders the opportunity to gradually reenter the community?***
 - ▣ **Yes, Phases II and III are designed to gradually reintegrate the offender into the community**
 - We had very few Phase II inmates participate in the 2018 study so we do not have information about their perceptions.

Additional Research Questions

What are the current and overall characteristics of the YOS population? Have these changed over time?

Average age 18.2 years old in 2018

Race and ethnicity of YOS intakes, FY 2002-2018 (N=1,014)



Additional Research Questions

What are the current and overall characteristics of the YOS population? Have these changed over time? (cont.)

YOS continues to serve a high-need population in terms of educational needs, and most have no positive and productive leisure time activities.

LSI need levels at intake:

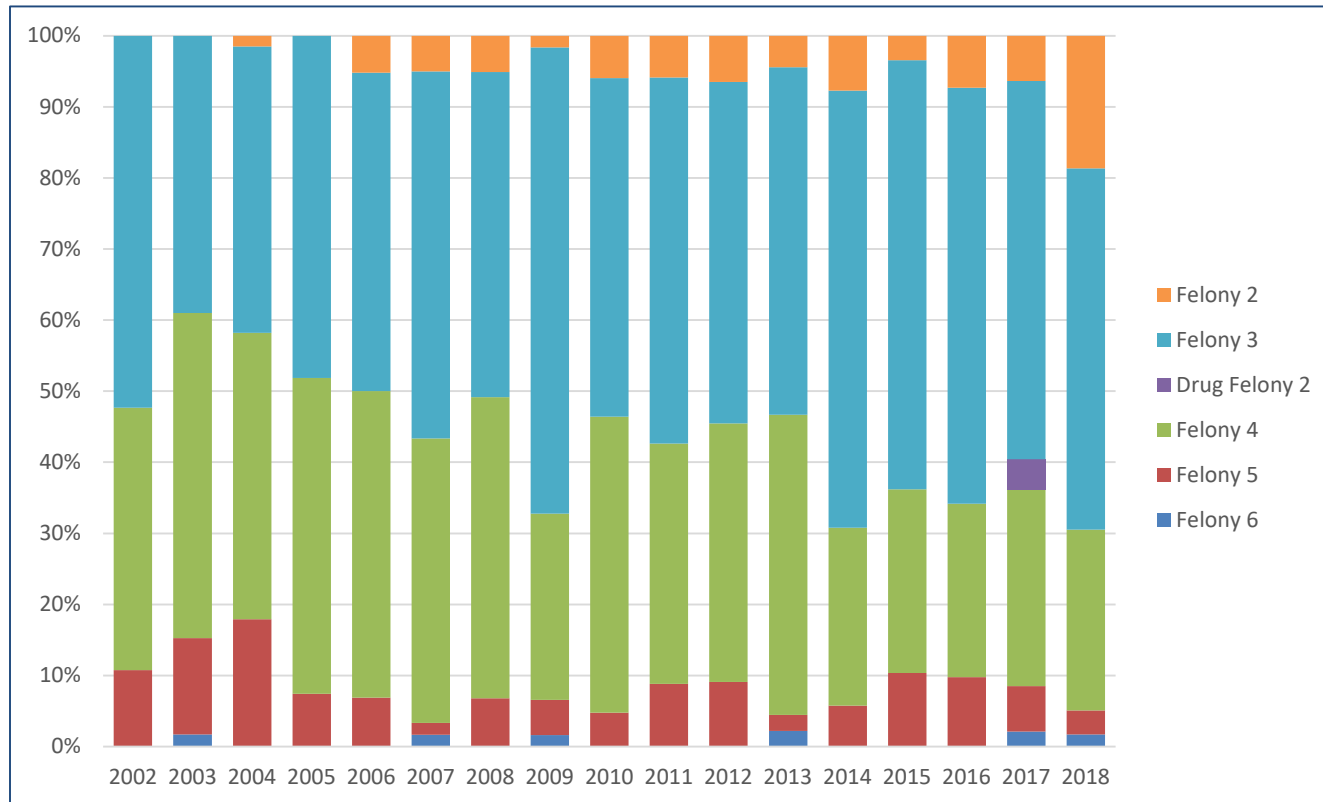
Scale	2016	2017	2018
N	41	62	60
Criminal history	40.7	45.6	45.5
Education/employment	74.1	72.6	73.3
Financial	40.2	54.1	55.8
Family/marital	22.6	31.1	31.3
Accommodation	69.4	65.2	68.0
Leisure/recreation	81.7	93.4	95.0
Companions	61.0	62.3	63.0
Alcohol/drug	39.2	43.0	49.7
Emotional/personal	27.8	27.9	31.1
Attitude/orientation	60.4	54.2	44.6
LSI total score	26.6	28.5	29.3

** DOC considers 0-12 low; 13-25 medium; 26-54 high.

Additional Research Questions

**What are the current and overall characteristics of the YOS population?
Have these changed over time? (cont.)**

Felony class of most serious conviction crime for YOS intakes,
FY 2002-2018 (N=1,014)



Additional Findings

Strong staff and administration

- ❑ The 2016 evaluation took place during a time of considerable organization change at YOS.
- ❑ After 2016, YOS conducted an internal and thorough evaluation of management and staff which resulted in strategic planning that involved all staff at all levels.
- ❑ Currently line staff, area supervisors and Management Teams are actively involved in policy revision and review to ensure expectations.
- ❑ The YOS mission is now aligned with the rest of DOC in regards to case management services and offender case planning..

Additional Findings

Strong Staff and Administration

The 2018 survey showed staff perceptions of morale rebounding under the current administration.

	2014 survey results	2016 survey results	2018 survey results
Very good	19.1%	2.4%	8.1%
Good	44.3%	15.9%	35.1%
OK	27.0%	51.6%	31.5%
Poor	8.7%	21.4%	18.9%
Very poor	.9%	8.7%	6.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100%

Additional Findings

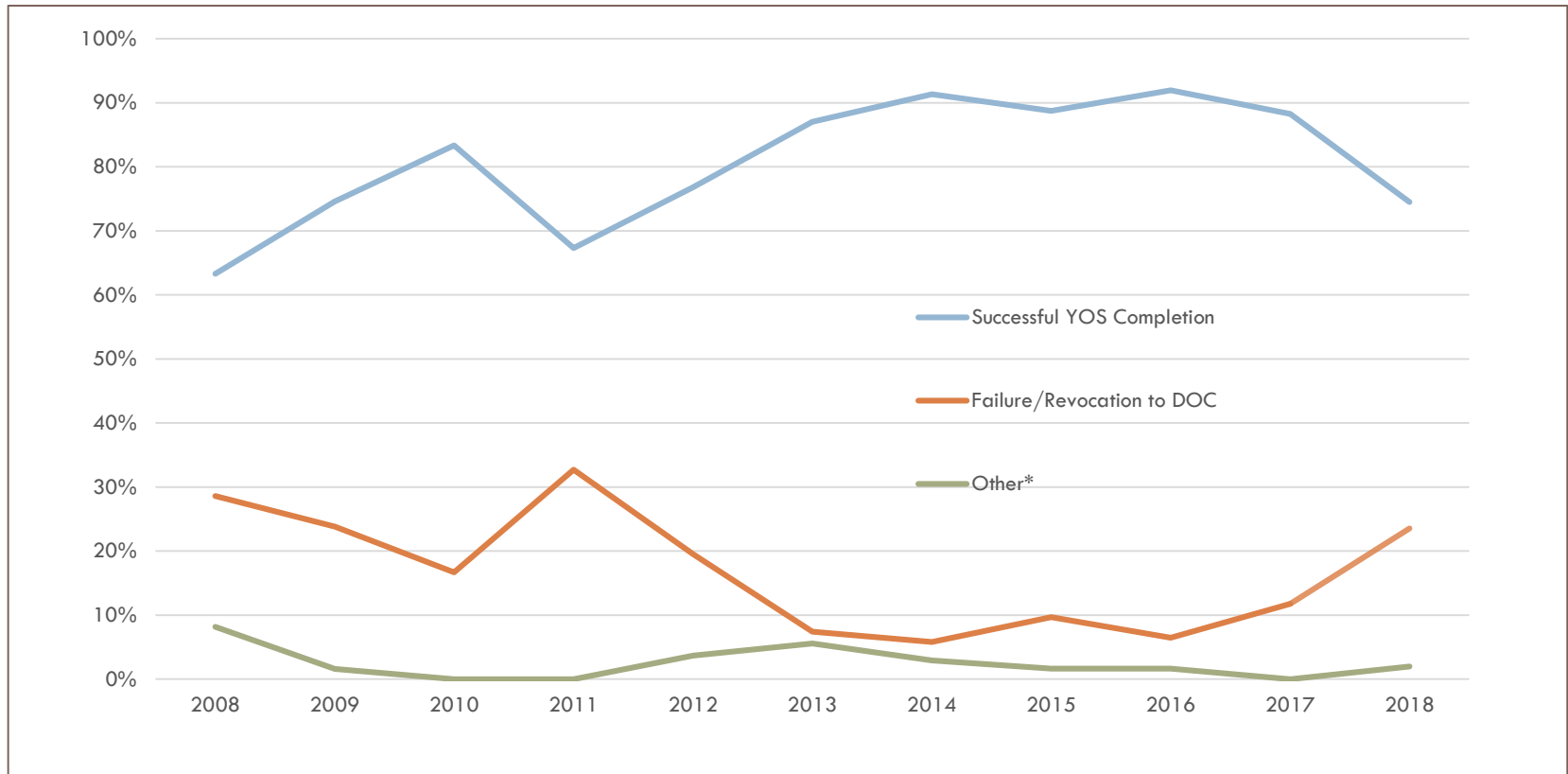
Strong Staff and Administration

The survey also captured changing perceptions by staff regarding whether there was a consistent philosophy between facility administrators and the line staff who work directly with residents.

	2014 survey results	2016 survey results	2018 survey results
Yes	42.1%	17.3%	42.5%
Somewhat	35.1%	37.3%	29.3%
Not really	15.8%	24.5%	15.0%
No	7.0%	20.9%	13.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100%

Additional Findings

□ **PROGRAM SUCCESS RATE: 2016=92% , 2017=88%, 2018=75%**



Additional Findings

Additional Physical Space and Activities

- ❑ The 2012, 2014 and 2016 DCJ evaluation consistently noted a lack of sufficient space and activities for offenders.
- ❑ The completion of the multi-purpose building in July 2017 resulted in significant, positive changes for YOS. The new building added 13,941 square feet of usable space including the addition of:
 - A gymnasium
 - Indoor cardio and weight room
 - Music room
 - A library and law library
 - Barber shop and cosmetology classrooms
 - Game room
 - Offices
 - Restrooms

Additional Findings

Safety

- ❑ Physical changes have been made since the 2016 report to strengthen security including:
 - ❑ Housing pods secured with individual pod doors
 - ❑ Windows installed between day halls and staff offices to provide additional observation
 - ❑ Cameras placed in every offender room in Building 8
 - ❑ Lockable footlockers installed on each bed
 - ❑ Furniture in rooms secured to the floor

- ❑ The creation of a new housing pod for residents under 18 including:
 - ❑ Their own wing
 - ❑ Two housing rooms, accommodating 5 residents each
 - ❑ A bathroom and shower
 - ❑ Small day hall

Additional Findings

Safety

- ❑ Another pod was established for new residents transferring from intake at IDO.
 - ❑ Those residents are housed together on Orientation Level for two weeks before mixing with the full population.
 - ❑ The creation of this new transition pod has helped cut down on fighting.

- ❑ Another positive addition was the creation of de-escalation rooms which have proven to be an effective tool for conflict management.
 - ❑ De-escalation rooms in Building 8 and in the women's housing unit

- ❑ Importantly, there was no indication in any of the study data of assaultive behavior by staff.

Additional Findings

Programming for Females

- ❑ A consistent criticism by females in the 2012, 2014 and 2016 evaluations was inequities, including the lack of access to vocational programming, college classes and ability to perform jobs and earn money.
- ❑ Since the 2016 report the following improvements have been made to address these issues:
 - The installation of a permanent driving simulator and two welding simulators in the female housing unit
 - Access to a forklift simulator
 - Additional video-conferencing access to post-secondary core classes, business classes and graphic design classes
 - The creation of janitorial jobs for females in the administration building
- ❑ As of July 2018 all of the females have completed both the welding and machining labs through Pueblo Community College.

Additional Findings

- **RECIDIVISM WITHIN 2 YEARS OF RELEASE (n=1091):**
- **NEW FILING RATE (total): 55.5%**
 - **NEW FELONY CONV RATE: 24.8%**
 - **NEW VIOLENT FEL CONV RATE: 11.6%**

Recommendations

□ **Education**

- The average age at intake has been increasing and is now, on average, just over 18 years old. YOS officials should continue efforts to examine existing educational programming and staffing to ensure that it is relevant to an older population.
- Expand programming related to parenting and expand family engagement opportunities

Recommendations

□ **Management and morale**

- The turnover of management staff in 2016 resulted in an organization in transition, affecting communication and morale. Morale has improved since 2016 but has not rebounded to pre-2016 levels.
- Administrators should continue efforts to communicate their vision and expectations to staff to ensure that staff morale and the YOS mission are not compromised as YOS evolves.

Recommendations

- **Sanctions and family contact**
 - ▣ Criminology research has found that family contact and support is a critical component of recidivism reduction. Administrators should encourage and promote family relationships, and should reconsider any sanction or earned “privilege” that limits family contact, in particular, phone contact.
- **Mail**
 - ▣ Administrators should resolve issues related to the delays in receiving mail, as reported by residents.

Recommendations

□ **Women residents**

- Despite substantial improvements in this area, programming for the women continues to challenge YOS. With the completion of the multipurpose building, efforts should continue to focus on expanding the women's access to programming and recreational activities.

□ **Community engagement**

- The YOS management team should continue its work building and maintaining excellent relationships with community employers who assist with job fairs, resume/interview skills, and hiring.

Questions?

Thank you