An Analysis of Correctional Recovery Academy Effectiveness

A Lifers' Group Report

Prepared by

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Abstract

Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA) is one of the most important rehabilitative programs offered by the Massachusetts Department of Correction. Assessing CRA effectiveness on prisoner recidivism, the primary indicator of successful rehabilitation is an important goal. The four published studies on CRA results are summarized and analyzed, then contrasted with published annual reports documenting recidivism for all prisoners released in the same years, 2011 and 2013. Initial survey of CRA data suggest very promising and sizeable reductions (17% to 40%) in overall prisoner recidivism as well as similar reductions in various subcategories of prisoners grouped by variable characteristics (e.g. post-release supervison, violent offenses, age, etc.). Further analysis, however, reveals major and troubling evidence of high levels of selection bias in the groups studied. Consequently, the validity of results must be seriously questioned and no reliable conclusions may be drawn from the data. Repeat study employing rigorous, controlled methodology is strongly recommended.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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accessible at www.realcostofprisons.org/writing
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Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA) was initiated 25 years ago as a residential therapeutic community substance abuse treatment program. It has since been enhanced by the addition of violence prevention, anger management, criminal thinking and relapse prevention curricula using an advanced cognitive behavioral and social learning approach. It remains the predominant rehabilitative program for the Massachusetts Department of Correction (MADOC) to prepare prisoners for reentry into the community. Evaluating the effectiveness of CRA programming is of major importance.

MADOC has published 1- and 2-year studies of recidivism by CRA participants for cohorts released 2011 and 2013. Additionally, MADOC also publishes annual recidivism reports on all prisoners released, including for 2011 and 2013. Detailed results from all six reports are gathered in this report. In these studies, outcomes for prisoners completing CRA show apparently sizeable reductions in recidivism compared to noncompleters.

Results for Overall Groups	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year
2011 General Release Group	19%	29%	36%
2013 General Release Group	18%	26%	32%
2011 CRA Completer Group	13%	33%	--
2011 CRA Noncompleter Group	19%	42%	--
2013 CRA Completer Group	14%	30%	--
2013 CRA Noncompleter Group	24%	37%	--

HIGH LEVELS OF SELECTION BIAS INVALIDATE THE APPARENT BENEFIT IN CRA RECIDIVISM STUDIES MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE TO DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS ABOUT CRA EFFECTIVENESS

Other results compare outcomes for both sets of studies, grouping prisoners by variable characteristics (e.g. post-release supervision, release from high or low security, violence of offense, younger age, etc.). There also, those completing CRA showed sizeable reductions in 1- and 2-year recidivism compared to noncompleters.

It is essential to note, however, that analysis of the proportions of prisoners with differing characteristics demonstrate marked imbalances between completer and noncompleter groups. Quantitative analysis of this imbalance documents high levels of selection bias

in these studies between CRA completer and noncompleter groups for most characteristics. Completer groups are markedly over-represented by prisoners with favorable variables that are associated with reduced recidivism and under-represented with those shown to increase recidivism. Obversely, noncompleter groups are over-represented with prisoners with unfavorable variables. Examples of over-sampling of CRA completer groups include: release directly from lower security (+34%); post-release supervision (+11%); non-violent governing offense (+18%); and the resulting reciprocal under-sampling of unfavorable variables, including release directly from maximum-medium security (-22%); no post-release supervision (-21%); and violent governing offense (-18%).

Such high levels of selection bias between favorable and unfavorable characteristics invalidate the apparent benefit in CRA recdivism seen in these studies, making it impossible to draw any conclusions about CRA effectiveness. The question is whether CRA effectively reduces recidivism or whether the studies merely efficiently pre-selected for the most favored subjects.

Because CRA is the primary rehabilitative program and represents major investments in time, effort and money, the MADOC needs to resolve this question. It is recommended that repeat studies of CRA outcomes for recidivism be undertaken urgently, employing the rigorously controlled and randomized sampling necessary to reliably determine efficacy.

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INTRODUCTION

Rehabilitation of offenders is a primary goal of corrections and is captured in the mission statement of the Massachusetts Department of Correction (MADOC): "...[the] mission is to promote public safety by managing offenders while providing care and appropriate programming in preparation for successful reentry into the community" (MADOC, 2017). Recidivism results reflect the primary outcome measures for prisoner rehabilitation and are frequently considered the most important and meaningful metric of deparment of correction performance and quality. The MADOC's predominant and cornerstone program for this effort is Correctional Recovery Academy (CRA). The CRA program is "an intensive six month skill-based residential substance abuse treatment program... [that] targets substance abuse, anger management, criminal thinking and relapse prevention utilizing a therapeutic community social learning approach with an advanced cognitive behavioral curriculum that promotes positive social learning" (Matthews et al., 2016).

The MADOC implemented the original CRA program in 1993 as a substance abuse treatment program and enhanced it in 1996 by adding evidence-based curricula in Criminal Thinking and Violence Reduction. Additional refinements were added in 2003 by incorporating newer concepts from ongoing research studies. Beginning in 2009, use of COMPAS, an evidence-based risk assessment tool was also implemented (Matthews et al., 2012). CRA treatment strategy is based on the Risk--Needs--Responsivity framework which is predicated on core principles: that offender risk can be predicted and intensity of services accordingly matched; that criminogenic needs must be addressed; and that by matching offenders' personality and learning styles responsivity is enhanced. (Matthews et al., 2016; see also Andrews, Zinger, Hoge et al., 1990; Andrews and Dowden, 2005; Andrews and Dowden, 2006; Andrews and Bonta, 2006).

To date the MADOC has published four reports on CRA recidivism outcomes that provide separate one and two year cumulative reconviction rates for CRA study cohorts released in 2011 and 2013 (Matthews et al., 2012; 2014; 2016; 2017). Additionally, annual recidivism rates for all prisoners released each calendar year are available for most years including 2011 and 2013 (Papagiorgakis, 2015;

2017). While this report offers the possibility of making comparisons between the different types of reports, difficulties, including varying subsets of released prisoners and use of different measures of recidivism as well as differing timelines of analyses, limit the nature of inferences to be drawn.

DATA

Cohort and Population Overviews

Data for the two cohorts of released prisoners, each tracked for two years in four CRA reports are limited to reconviction outcomes for criminally sentenced male prisoners. Consequently, for comparison purposes, in this report data for the outcomes of the general annual recidivism reports have been edited to similarly limit them only to criminally sentenced male prisoners.

It is important to note that the two types of recidivism studies use an entirely different metric to assess recidivism. The CRA studies report data as reconviction rates while the general release studies report reincarceration rates. CRA reconviction is defined as "returns because of the occurrence of an arraignment followed by a new criminal sentence, probation, suspended sentence, fine, guilty finding, or continued without a finding (CWOF)". By contrast, as used by general release recidivism studies, reincarceration occurs following a new criminal sentence that results in federal, county or state prison time ("reincarceration excluding technical violations") or, for prisoners on supervision, because of reincarceration for any reason, i.e. a new criminal sentence or simply a violation of the conditions of parole or probation ("reincarceration including technical violations"). The latter often are nothing more than unsubstantiated charges which may eventually be dismissed.

Depending on circumstances, such returns may be short- or long-lived, but each one is counted as an occurrence; further, prisoners so returned for technical violations are incarcerated during a portion of the recidivism study perion, diminishing the likelihood of a nontechnical return. It is likely, however, that a number of events resulting in reconviction occurrences (e.g. those ending only with probation, suspended sentence, fine, guilty finding or CWOF) might not result in reincarceration occurrences and would not be counted. On the other hand, for those prisoners on post-release supervision, most arraignments counting as events in reconviction tallies would also trigger reincarceration through technical violations; but these would not count for those prisoners not on supervision. In any event, it seems clear that although both methods are measures of recidivism, "reconviction" and "reincarceration"

counts may differ substantially. This complicates any direct, quantitative comparisons. In all instances, however, events are counted based on the timing of the initial date of arraignments (for reconvictions) or reincarcerations, whether for new crimes or any other violations.

An additional important variable is that the CRA studies have been limited to involve only a subset of the prisoners released each year while the general release recidivism studies report on all those released. The CRA study participants are preselected for inclusion by a series of risk assessments with the COMPAS risk assessment instrument. Those scoring moderate (decile 5-7) or high (decile 8-10) on the general and violence risk scales are then further screened for substance abuse risk. Here also only those scoring moderate (decile 3-4) or high (decile 5-10) are classified as needing CRA programming.

The initial 2011 CRA cohort was made up of only male, criminally sentenced prisoners released January through July 2011. Of 790 released prisoners, 632 qualified based on general and violence risk, of which 406 qualified for substance abuse. All 406 were apparently included in the 2011 study cohort. The 2013 CRA cohort started with all those released in 2013 (2207) but only 1707 qualified based on general and violence risk, of whom 1304 qualified for substance abuse. However, only 1099 were included in the CRA study cohort. No information is provided in the reports why the additional 205 prisoners were not tracked by the study or how they might differ from the included.

In the 2011 study, 145 prisoners were CRA completers and 261 were noncompleters (either nonparticipants or not completing the program). In the 2013 study, 433 completed the CRA program and 666 were noncompleters. Although qualified prisoners were strongly encouraged to participate, actual enrollment in CRA is always voluntary. At some point during 2013 the MADOC gradually began to roll out, to significant prisoner resistance, a Program Engagement Strategy (PES) that sanctioned some who qualified for programs but refused to enroll. However, initial compliance with PES was spotty at best.

As expected, the four cohorts of released prisoners share many similarities because they were all released from the same prison population only two years apart. Further, the 2011 and 2013 CRA cohorts are subsets of the two general release cohorts for 2011 and 2013 and consequently share many characteristics. 56% and 55% of the two 2011 cohorts were released on supervision (parole, probation or both) as were 63% and 65% of the 2013 cohorts. Similarly, 60-65% of all four were released directly from higher security (maximum or medium rather than minimum or pre-release) and 51-53% carried non-violent governing offenses (property, drug or "other" crimes) as compared to 47-49% convicted of violent

offenses (against persons or for sex crimes). The average age of release for all four cohorts ranged between 36 and 37 years. Median length of sentences were 2.7 and 3.2 years for 2011 and 2013 CRA cohorts and 3.6 years for general release cohorts.

However, differences are also apparent. The 2011 and 2013 CRA cohorts included only 26% and 56%, respectively, of the prisoners released from the general release cohorts. And, only 35% and 39% of the CRA cohorts qualified as completers of the program in 2011 and 2013. It should also be noted that all release cohorts are quite different from the overall prisoner populations from which they are drawn. The average age of the general population was older, averaging 40 and 41 years in 2011 and 2013. Additionally, median sentences are far longer, with median sentence lengths of 9 years even when excluding first degree lifers who are not eligible for release. It is notable that in 2011 and 2013 only 6.6% and 5.2%, respectively, of total prisoners were serving sentences as short as 3 years which was approximately the median length for released prisoners.

Recidivism Results

General release cohort recidivism, which is reported as reincarceration rates for prisoners released in 2011 and 2013, is summarized in Table 1. Annual recidivism data is listed per year and cumulatively. Data excluding ((-)Tech) and including ((+)Tech) technical violations are shown. Data for variable subcategories are available only as 3-year cumulative results. It is apparent that technical violations occur almost exclusively during the first year and that reincarceration rates diminish every year, dwindling from 12-14% in the first year to 9-10% second year, and 5-7% third year.

Table 2 summarizes reconviction rates for the two CRA cohorts, separated into CRA noncompleters, CRA completers and Totals. Here data is limited to 1- and 2-year cumulative results and some of the variable subcategories are not available for 2011.

Overall, 2011 first year recidivism rates are 17% for CRA and 14% (-)Tech or 19% (+)Tech for general release. For 2013, the CRA rate is 20% and general release is 12% (-)Tech or 18% (+)Tech. By the second year, 2011 CRA recidivism has increased to 39% and general release to 24% (-)Tech or 29% (+)Tech. The 2013 rates are 34% for CRA and 21% (-)Tech or 26% (+)Tech for general release. Notably, cumulative third year general release rates, at 30% (-)Tech and 36% (+)Tech for 2011 and 27% (-)Tech and 32% (+)Tech for 2013 are still lower than

second year CRA rates. As noted earlier, it is likely that many of the lesser infractions counted as CRA convictions may not result in prison time, although they may trigger technical violations and reincarceration for those on supervision. By contrast, those not on supervision would not be affected unless the reconviction sentence results in prison time, presumably for the more serious offenses.

This phenomenon is readily apparent when examining the recidivism data for the subcategory variable which addresses supervision. For those not on supervision, 2-year CRA rates are 44% for 2011 and 39% for 2013 while 3-year rates for general release are only 29% (2011) and 26% (2013) even with technical violations included. Comparable results for those on supervision indicate 2-year CRA rates of 35% for 2011 and 32% for 2013, while rates for the general release cohort are 42% (2011) and 35% (2013), including technical violations. It is notable that none of the other variable subcategories studied reveal any similar disparities. For the other variable subcategories, CRA results have mildly higher reconviction rates at 2 years than the reincarceration rates for 3-year general release cohorts which all include technical violations. It will also be remembered that general release rates increase by 6-7% during the third year, although individual variable subcategories are not reported by MADOC.

CRA Participation Results

Table 2 also compares results for CRA Noncompleters with those for CRA completers. These differences are summarized by the "CRA Change" column, expressed both as absolute differences and percent change. Negative values indicate reduced recidivism rates for those completing CRA. Sizable reductions are apparently documented for the overall cohorts and almost all variable subcategories. A caveat remains, however, in that the two groups, CRA completers and noncompleters, are not matched or evenly distributed. For the 2011 cohort, only 145 (36%) of subjects completed CRA, while 261 (64%) were noncompleters. Similarly, in 2013, 433 (39%) completed CRA with 61% noncompleters.

Assessment of Sample Imbalance

Inspection of the numbers of participants in each variable subgroup for both completers and noncompleters suggest imbalances in the proportions of those completing CRA in variable subcategories. For example, in 2013, 666 noncompleters were split 264 to 402 (ratio 1:1.5) between no supervision and supervision, while 433 completers were divided 140 to 293 (ratio 1:2.1). As

reviewed previously and generally accepted, supervision affects recidivism rates, and consequently such an imbalance raised concern that there may be a significant selection bias between the participants distributed within variable subcategories.

Table 3 quantifies this phenomenon, expressing participation as a fraction of the overall annual release number for each variable (columns [c] and [f]). Because the proportion of the CRA completers and noncompleters enrolled is unequal, a further correction is needed. This is accomplished by dividing the fraction of annual releases for each variable by the fraction of overall releases, e.g. (([d]=variable[c]/overall[c])-1) x 100; for convenience, the fraction is expressed as percent increase or decrease. Columns [d] and [g] therefore express the degree to which the numbers of participants for each variable differ from the proportion of overall completers or noncompleters and [g]-[d] yields the Sampling Bias, a quantitative assessment of the degree to which the number of participants differs from the expected, based on overall size of the completer and noncompleter pools. Positive values of the sampling bias express that a disproportionately larger fraction is included in the completer group for a given variable compared to the noncompleter group and negative values indicate that the CRA completer group is disproportionately undersampled. Results reveal that there is indeed evidence of a markedly unbalanced sampling, especially for the 2013 CRA cohort. This suggests the presence of a serious level of selection bias (Table 3)

DISCUSSION

At first blush, it appears that the CRA program substantially reduces recidivism as evidenced by the consistent and frequently sizeable reductions in reconviction rates for those completing the program (Table 2). However, because of evidence that there may be an important level of imbalance in the selection of participants, caution is warranted. The existence of a selection bias seriously undermines the reliability of any results and therefore a number of issues must be considered.

Importantly, enrollment in CRA remains voluntary and it is reasonable and likely that this may create relevant differences in the underlying characteristics or motivations of prisoners who choose to enroll from those refusing. While participants were prescreened to moderate or high risk for recidivism with COMPAS, no data is provided in the studies about the proportions

scoring in each of the risk categories. Data evinces that overall COMPAS risk scores substantially affect recidivism risks, with high scorers recidivating at 152% of moderate scorers (41% to 27%) (Table 1). Another concern is that, because the Parole Board strongly endorses CRA completion, many who are parole eligible strive, often successfully, to enroll even though they do not qualify based on their COMPAS score, in order to enhance their likelihood of being granted parole. Such circumstances may be among reasons why completers are over-represented among the groups released on supervision. Correspondingly, those not eligible for parole may have no motivation to enroll.

Another factor is that CRA is a residential community with separate housing units within the prison which obviously selects prisoners at high risk for substance abuse. Accordingly, these men are exposed to the highest levels of often available contraband substance use in this saturated environment. Based on the frequent drug-based disciplinary reports issuing from these units, many do succumb to temptation. When they are discovered, they are expelled from the program and are not eligible to reapply for at least six months. Especially in light of the very short median sentences of those released in these studies, it is unlikely that they will have time to complete CRA before release. Moreover, those who successfully abide by the house rules and complete the program are, by this simple fact, shown to be more motivated and rehabilitated than those who end up as noncompleters. Such a setting virtually assures a selection bias for the whole program by differentially treating the two groups.

Results by security level may be particularly revealing. Not only are completers markedly over-represented among those released from lower security (+34%) and underrepresented among those released from maximum and medium security (-22%) (Table 3), it is well known (and evident from the data) that release level has a substantial effect on recidivism, with the rates for those released from maximum often exceeding 50%.

However, men are mostly housed in maximum security because they choose or have difficulty abiding by institutional rules. Accordingly, only the most motivated among them are likely to seek CRA enrollment, thereby contributing to uneven enrollment. The importance of mindset and motivation in predicting successful reentry outcome may be most compellingly revealed at the other end of this spectrum. Interestingly, lower security is the only variable where, in both 2011 and 2013 CRA studies, recidivism was mildly increased among completers, in spite of substantial over-representation by completers. This is a relatively smaller subset of prisoners who, by virtue of demonstrating positive adjustment

and prison behavior, are classified to minimum. They are also the most likely to have made the greatest strides towards rehabilitation and this is confirmed by the data revealing the lowest recidivism rates (Table 2). Consequently, it is reasonable to speculate that any oversampling no longer matters because both completers and noncompleters have strong pre-existing biases in favor of successful reentry so that no effect can be seen.

Results based on prisoner ages offer an interesting counterpoint. Younger prisoners generally are the least prepared to accommodate to rehabilitation or enforced behavior. Not surprisingly, data reveals that they have the highest rates of recidivism of any variable subcategories. Nevertheless, in spite of modest oversampling among the CRA completers, their response to CRA enrollment demonstrates one of the most dramatic reductions. It can be hypothesized that this young group, arriving with some of the highest risk factors (but perhaps most susceptible to change) have the greatest potential for improvement--and represent the opposite side of the coin to those in minimum and pre-release security. Here this potentially difficult group has a large enough capacity for change that this swamps any selection bias effect. Notably, the over-25 year old group with no evidence of bias, also shows substantial improvement. The responses seen here may be among the most convincing arguments produced by the CRA study that participation may reduce recidivism.

The fact that in almost every instance of a notable positive sampling bias in favor of completers, the associated variable (e.g. supervision, lower security, non-violent governing offense) is historically and de facto associated with lower overall recidivism rates strongly argues that the entire completer group is over-represented by prisoners with these favorable biases. Obversely, for variables in which noncompleters are oversampled, it is almost inevitably for characteristics associated with the highest rates of recidivism. Taken together, this situation virtually guarantees that the entire sample must suffer from a serious selection bias problem. Although the sampling bias data offers a crude quantitative assessment of this problem, there is no way to retrospectively adjust the data for such bias. As a result, it is now impossible to arrive at any definitive conclusion about whether the apparent beneficial CRA effect to reduce recidivism in these studies is real--or simply a function of having efficiently biased the results by selectively enrolling the most prepared and motivated subjects.

A brief comment is also warranted by observations (Table 2) that the

apparent CRA effect seems to fade quickly by the second year compared to the first (even though the second year data, being cumulative, actually includes the beneficial results of the first year outcomes). One wonders what cumulative third year data might show. If there were even less difference in cumulative recidivism at the end of three years, it might argue that recidivism in later years may actually increase after CRA completion--a troubling eventuality.

A final concern is the selection and definition of the "reconviction" parameter utilized in the CRA studies. By definition, while this metric may be more formal by requiring arraignment than the vague definition encompassed by "technical violation", the infractions captured may be far less meaningful to public safety than the reincarceration metric. This is especilly true when technical violations are excluded. There can be little doubt that collecting statistics on infractions that, rather than eventuating in reincarceration, are adjudicated to require no more than "probation, suspended sentence, fine, guilty finding or continued without a finding" will capture violations that have relatively low risks for society. There may be a desire to invoke the so-called "broken window" theory about the need to remedy even minor offenses, but it seems clear that such infractions will have little practical significance in terms of public safety concerns. The differences are not trivial. Comparing 2011 and 2013 second year CRA rates (39% and 34%) with second year general release reincarceration rates which result from new criminal offenses (24% and 21% for 2011 and 2013), it can be calculated that approximately 38% of CRA reconvictions must represent lesser infractions. These are the offenses that courts adjudicated not to require incarceration. In short, while using a more sensitive metric may be appealing for study purposes, this measure may have little practical, real-life significance, especially when assessing the impact on public safety.

In summary, it appears that completing the CRA program may well have some benefits, especially for select subcategories of prisoners. However, the presently published CRA studies appear flawed and are severely handicapped by important levels of selection bias between the two study populations. Consequently, no firm conclusions should be drawn from these data. Furthermore, use of the reconviction metric to assess recidivism may not measure practically relevant events from the perspective of public safety. The CRA program represents an important and sizeable investment of time, effort and money and it has become a cornerstone rehabilitative program for the MADOC. Consequently, it seems prudent and imperative, based on these results, to recommend that CRA

outcomes be studied once again, using appropriately controlled and randomized methods to protect against otherwise inevitable selection bias. This is especially likely when dealing with a heterogeneous and sometimes recalcitrant prisoner population. Such a study should be undertaken urgently as results will require at least three years for observation to assess recidivism, cost effectiveness and the durability of long-term, cumulative outcomes.

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TABLE 1

Cohorts & Variables	Annual Releases	Year 1 Reincarceration		Year 2 Reincarceration		Year 3 Reincarceration	
	#	#	%	#	%	#	%
2011 Overall (-) Tech [per year]	1587	222	14.0%	155	9.8%	106	6.7%
2013 Overall (-) Tech [per year]	1958	238	12.2%	173	8.8%	110	5.6%
2011 Overall (-) Tech [Cumulative]	1587	222	14.0%	377	23.8%	483	30.4%
2013 Overall (-) Tech [Cumulative]	1958	238	12.2%	411	21.0%	521	26.6%
2011 Overall (+) Tech [per year]	1587	302	19.0%	162	10.2%	109	6.9%
2013 Overall (+) Tech [per year]	1958	350	17.9%	169	8.6%	99	5.1%
2011 Overall (+) Tech [Cumulative]	1587	302	19.0%	464	29.2%	573	36.1%
2013 Overall (+) Tech [Cumulative]	1958	350	17.9%	519	26.5%	618	31.6%
2011 No Supervison (+) Tech	719					209	29.1%
2011 Supervision (+) Tech	868					364	41.9%
2013 No Supervision (+) Tech	688					176	25.6%
2013 Supervison (+) Tech	1270					442	34.8%
2011 Max/Med Security (+) Tech	1033					420	40.7%
2011 Min/Pre-Rel Security (+) Tech	554					153	27.6%
2013 Max/Med Security (+) Tech	1184					439	37.1%
2013 Min/Pre-Rel Security (+) Tech	774					179	23.1%
2011 Non-Violent Off (+) Tech	836					286	34.2%
2011 Violent Off (+) Tech	751					287	38.2%
2013 Non-Violent Off (+) Tech	989					298	30.1%
2013 Violent Off (+) Tech	969					320	33.0%
2011 Age 18-24 (+) Tech	161					77	47.8%
2011 Age ≥25 (+) Tech	1426					496	34.8%
2013 Age 18-24 (+) Tech	205					96	46.8%
2013 Age ≥25 (+) Tech	1753					522	29.8%
2013 Person Offense (+) Tech	813					300	36.9%
2013 Property Offense (+) Tech	219					94	42.9%
2013 Drug Offense (+) Tech	538					118	21.9%
2013 Sex Offense (+) Tech	156					23	14.7%
2013 Other Offense (+) Tech	232					83	35.8%
Open Mental Health Case							
2013 Yes (+) Tech	407					152	37.0%
2013 No (+) Tech	1551					466	30.0%
2013 High Risk Score (+) Tech	1076					441	41.0%
2013 Moderate Risk Score (+) Tech	378					102	27.0%
2013 Low Risk Score (+) Tech	455					59	13.0%

(-) Tech = excluding technical violations; (+) Tech = including technical violations. Data are not published for variable subcategories minus technical violations for all released prisoners each year

TABLE 2

Cohorts & Variables	CRA Non-Completers			CRA Completers			Total			CRA Change	
	Releases	Reconviction		Releases	Reconviction		Releases	Reconviction			
	#	#	%	#	#	%	#	#	%	Absolute	%
2011 Overall - 1 yr	261	49	18.8%	145	19	13.1%	406	68	16.7%	-5.7%	-30%
2011 Overall - 2 yr	261	110	42.1%	145	48	33.1%	406	158	38.9%	-9.0%	-21%
2013 Overall - 1 yr	667	157	23.5%	433	61	14.1%	1100	218	19.8%	-9.5%	-40%
2013 Overall - 2 yr	666	244	36.6%	433	131	30.3%	1099	375	34.1%	-6.4%	-17%
2011 No Supervision - 1 yr	114	23	20.2%	64	7	10.9%	178	30	16.9%	-9.2%	-46%
2011 Supervision - 1 yr	147	26	17.7%	81	12	14.8%	228	38	16.7%	-2.9%	-16%
2011 No Supervision - 2 yr	114	52	45.6%	64	27	42.2%	178	79	44.4%	-3.4%	-8%
2011 Supervision - 2 yr	147	58	39.5%	81	21	25.9%	228	79	34.6%	-13.5%	-34%
2013 No Supervision - 1 yr	265	76	28.7%	140	26	18.6%	405	102	25.2%	-10.1%	-35%
2013 Supervision - 1 yr	402	81	20.1%	293	35	11.9%	695	116	16.7%	-8.2%	-41%
2013 No Supervision - 2 yr	264	111	42.0%	140	45	32.1%	404	156	38.6%	-9.9%	-24%
2013 Supervision - 2 yr	402	133	33.1%	293	86	29.4%	695	219	31.5%	-3.7%	-11%
2011 Max/Med Security - 1 yr	170	39	22.9%	96	13	13.5%	266	52	19.5%	-9.4%	-41%
2011 Min/Pre-Rel Security- 1 yr	91	10	11.0%	49	6	12.2%	140	16	11.4%	**1.3%**	**11%**
2011 Max/Med Security - 2 yr	170	82	48.2%	96	36	37.5%	266	118	44.4%	-10.7%	-22%
2011 Min/Pre-Rel Security - 2 yr	91	28	30.8%	49	12	24.5%	140	40	28.6%	-6.3%	-20%
2013 Max/Med Security - 1 yr	463	134	28.9%	242	39	16.1%	706	173	24.5%	-12.8%	-44%
2013 Min/Pre-Rel Security - 1 yr	203	23	11.3%	191	22	11.5%	394	45	11.4%	**0.2%**	**2%**
2013 Max/Med Security - 2 yr	463	195	42.1%	242	80	33.1%	705	275	39.0%	-9.1%	-22%
2013 Min/Pre-Rel Security - 2 yr	203	49	24.1%	191	51	26.7%	394	100	25.4%	**2.6%**	**11%**
2011 Non-violent Offense -1 yr	144	28	19.4%	72	11	15.3%	216	39	18.1%	-4.2%	-21%
2011 Violent Offense -1 yr	117	21	17.9%	73	8	11.0%	190	29	15.3%	-7.0%	-39%
2011 Non-violent Offense -2 yr	144	57	39.6%	72	26	36.1%	216	83	38.4%	-3.5%	-9%
2011 Violent Offense -2 yr	117	53	45.3%	73	22	30.1%	190	75	39.5%	-15.2%	-33%
2013 Non-violent Offense -1 yr	321	67	20.9%	247	34	13.8%	568	101	17.8%	-7.1%	-34%
2013 Violent Offense -1 yr	346	90	26.0%	186	27	14.5%	532	117	22.0%	-11.5%	-44%
2013 Non-violent Offense -2 yr	321	102	31.8%	247	73	29.6%	568	175	30.8%	-2.2%	-7%
2013 Violent Offense -2 yr	345	142	41.2%	186	58	31.2%	531	200	37.7%	-10.0%	-24%

TABLE 2

Cohorts & Variables	CRA Non-Completers			CRA Completers			Total			CRA Change	
	Releases	Reconviction		Releases	Reconviction		Releases	Reconviction			
	#	#	%	#	#	%	#	#	%	Absolute	%
2013 Age 18-24 - 1 yr	71	23	32.4%	49	8	16.3%	120	31	25.8%	-16.1%	-50%
2013 Age ≥25 - 1 yr	596	134	22.5%	384	53	13.8%	980	187	19.1%	-8.7%	-39%
2013 Age 18-24 - 2 yr	71	37	52.1%	49	15	30.6%	120	52	43.3%	-21.5%	-41%
2013 Age ≥25 - 2 yr	595	207	34.8%	384	116	30.2%	979	323	33.0%	-4.6%	-13%
2013 Person Offense - 1 yr	318	81	25.5%	170	24	14.1%	488	105	21.5%	-11.4%	-45%
2013 Property Offense - 1 yr	95	24	25.3%	54	15	27.8%	149	39	26.2%	**2.5%**	**10%**
2013 Drug Offense - 1 yr	150	26	17.3%	135	11	8.1%	285	37	13.0%	-9.2%	-53%
2013 Sex Offense - 1 yr	28	9	32.1%	16	3	18.8%	44	12	27.3%	-13.4%	-42%
2013Other Offense - 1 yr	76	17	22.4%	58	8	13.8%	134	25	18.7%	-8.6%	-38%
2013 Person Offense - 2 yr	317	133	42.0%	170	53	31.2%	488	186	38.1%	-10.8%	-26%
2013 Property Offense - 2 yr	95	34	35.8%	54	21	38.9%	149	55	36.9%	**3.1%**	**9%**
2013Drug Offense - 2 yr	150	40	26.7%	135	33	24.4%	285	73	25.6%	-2.2%	-8%
2013 Sex Offense - 2 yr	28	9	32.1%	16	5	31.3%	44	14	31.8%	-0.9%	-3%
2013 Other Offense - 2 yr	76	28	36.8%	58	19	32.8%	134	47	35.1%	-4.1%	-11%
2013 No High Sch Diploma - 2 yr	244	103	42.2%	143	60	42.0%	387	163	42.1%	-0.3%	-1%
2013 High Sch Diploma - 2 yr	422	141	33.4%	290	71	24.5%	712	212	29.8%	-8.9%	-27%

TABLE 3

Cohorts & Variables	Annual Releases	CRA Non-Completers			CRA Completers			CRA Sampling Bias
		Releases	Fraction of Annual	Sampling Surplus	Releases	Fraction of Annual	Sampling Surplus	
	#	#		%	#		%	%
	[a]	[b]	[c]	[d]	[e]	[f]	[g]	[g-d]
2011 Overall	1587	261	0.164	--	145	0.091	--	
2013 Overall	1958	666	0.340	--	433	0.221	--	
2011 No Supervision	719	114	0.159	-3.6%	64	0.089	-2.6%	1.0%
2011 Supervision	868	147	0.169	3.0%	81	0.093	2.1%	-0.8%
2013 No Supervision	688	264	0.384	12.8%	140	0.203	-8.0%	-20.8%
2013 Supervision	1270	402	0.317	-6.9%	293	0.231	4.3%	11.3%
2011 Max/Med Security	1033	170	0.165	0.1%	96	0.093	1.7%	1.6%
2011 Min/Pre-Rel Security	554	91	0.164	-0.1%	49	0.088	-3.2%	-3.1%
2013 Max/Med Security	1184	463	0.391	15.0%	242	0.204	-7.6%	-22.5%
2013 Min/Pre-Rel Security	774	203	0.262	-22.9%	191	0.247	11.6%	34.5%
2011 Non-Violent Offense	836	144	0.172	4.7%	72	0.086	-5.7%	-10.5%
2011 Violent Offense	751	117	0.156	-5.3%	73	0.097	6.4%	11.7%
2013 Non-Violent Offense	989	321	0.325	-4.6%	247	0.250	12.9%	17.5%
2013 Violent Offense	969	345	0.356	4.7%	186	0.192	-13.2%	-17.9%
2013 Age 18-24	205	71	0.346	1.8%	49	0.239	8.1%	6.3%
2013 Age ≥25	1753	595	0.339	-0.2%	384	0.219	-0.9%	-0.7%
2013 Person Offenses	813	318	0.391	15.0%	170	0.209	-5.4%	-20.4%
2013 Property Offenses	219	95	0.434	27.5%	54	0.247	11.5%	-16.0%
2013 Drug Offenses	538	150	0.279	-18.0%	135	0.251	13.5%	31.5%
2013 Sex Offenses	156	28	0.179	-47.2%	16	0.103	-53.6%	-6.4%
2013 Other Offenses	232	76	0.328	-3.7%	58	0.250	13.0%	16.7%

Sampling Surplus = [(VARIABLE fraction of annual)/(OVERALL fraction of annual) - 1] x 100 and reflects the imbalance between the fraction of releasees comprising each of the variables studied compared to the overall fraction of releasees included in each of the CRA groups (CRA-NonCompleters and CRA-Completers)

Sampling Bias = Columns [g] - [d]

LIFERS' GROUP Inc.

Continuously since 1974

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MCI-Norfolk
P.O. Box 43
Norfolk, MA 02056

Our Mission

To partner with families and other stakeholders to create solutions for sentencing reform, promote meaningful parole opportunities for all lifers, and assist lifers and long-termers to live positive lives both inside and outside of prison

Assist

Improve rehabilitation, self-respect, and the quality of life for all men and women in Massachusetts prisons

Advocate

Coordinate with any organization striving for similar goals in order to provide an effective use of penal and rehabilitative resources

Inform

Operate under sound ethical and democratic principles and share our knowledge with our members and those on the outside on criminal justice and prison reform issues, such as reducing recidivism, improving public safety, and building peaceful and productive relationships with family members, fellow prisoners, supporters, and the community

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