



Department of
Youth Services

Recidivism Report

An Examination of the Reincarceration Rates of Youth Released
from Juvenile Correctional Facilities
of the Ohio Department of Youth Services

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Ohio Department of Youth Services Recidivism Rates

This report examines the recidivism rates of DYS's released youth population over a three-year period. While the use of recidivism can be seen as a rehabilitative effort, it is of significant importance to the public. Adjudicated youth under the supervision of DYS will be released back into the community. Thus for DYS, who is charged with ensuring public safety, the recidivism rate is an important measure of youths' reentry into society.

For the purpose of this analysis, recidivism is defined as the number of youth who are returned to the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) or incarcerated in the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) within one, two, and three years of release from a DYS correctional facility. Table 1 below shows the recidivism rates for youth released from the agency over the past decade.

Latest DYS Recidivism Rates

One-Year rate

Of the 380 releases of DYS youth from juvenile correctional facilities during 2019, 53 either returned to DYS or were admitted to DRC within one year of their release date. This is a recidivism rate of **13.9%**, which is the lowest rate since recidivism has been measured this way by the department.

Two-year rate

In 2018, there were 373 releases of youth from DYS. The two-year recidivism rate of these youth was **29.0%**. This is the lowest two-year rate since recidivism has been measured this way.

Three-year rate

Of the 449 DYS youth releases during 2017, **43.2%** recidivated within three years of their release date.

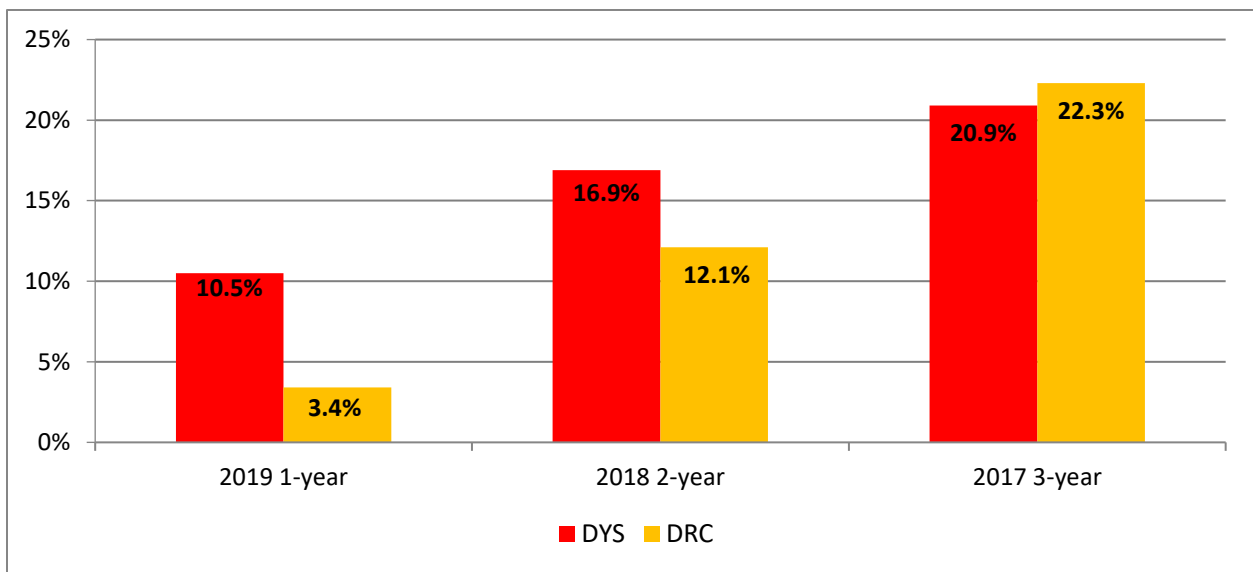
Table 1. DYS Recidivism Rates by Year of Release

CY	1-year	2-year	3-year
2010	22.7%	37.2%	45.0%
2011	22.9%	38.1%	47.2%
2012	26.0%	39.0%	46.5%
2013	24.7%	39.6%	49.4%
2014	20.1%	36.5%	43.2%
2015	20.8%	36.0%	44.7%
2016	17.7%	33.2%	40.8%
2017	23.8%	38.1%	43.2%
2018	17.7%	29.0%	
2019	13.9%		

Returns to DYS Versus DRC Admissions

Recidivists under the definition used here either return to the Department of Youth Services (DYS) or are incarcerated in the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC), the adult correctional system in Ohio. As can be seen in Figure 1 below, during the first year after release it is much more likely that a youth returns to DYS than for them to be admitted to DRC. The rate of admission to DRC increases the second year after release, while admissions back to DYS slow down. In the second and third years, more youth go to DRC than return to DYS. The average age of youth at release is 18 years old, so many of them have aged out of DYS by this time.

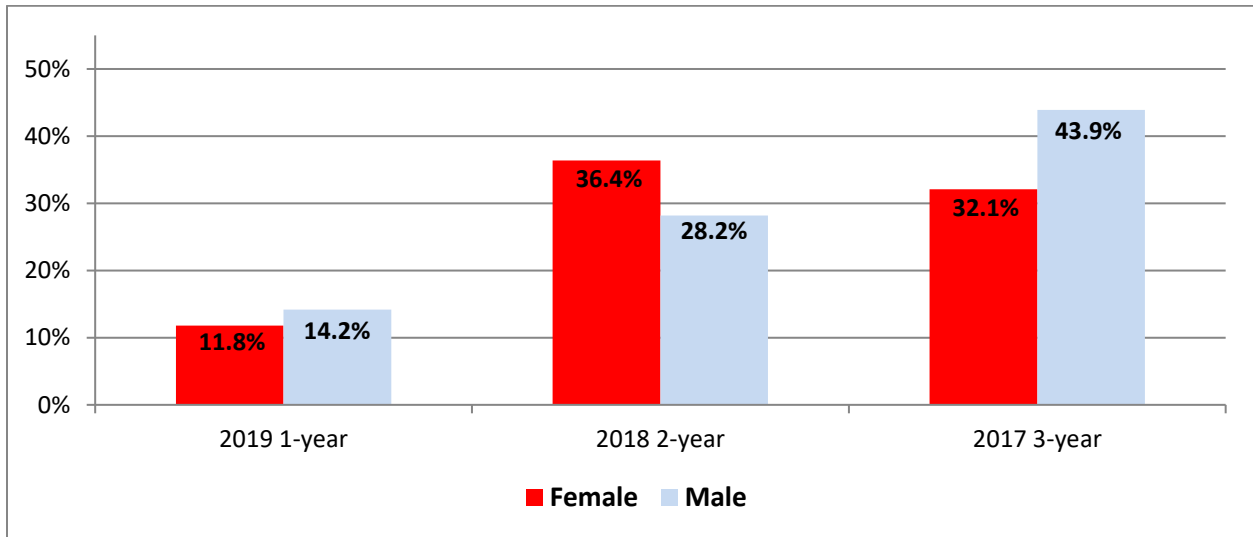
Figure 1. Comparison of Rates of Return to DYS and Admissions to DRC



Recidivism by Gender

Males have historically had higher rates of recidivism than females. In the most recent cohorts, however, the two-year rate for females was higher. The reliability of these rates is suspect, though, since so few females are now released. For the last three cohorts presented in Figure 2 below, the annual number of females released ranged from 28 to 34. The three-year rate for males is typically much higher than females. This is primarily because not as many females end up admitted to DRC, and DRC admissions are where the rates increase after youth have been out for more than a year or so.

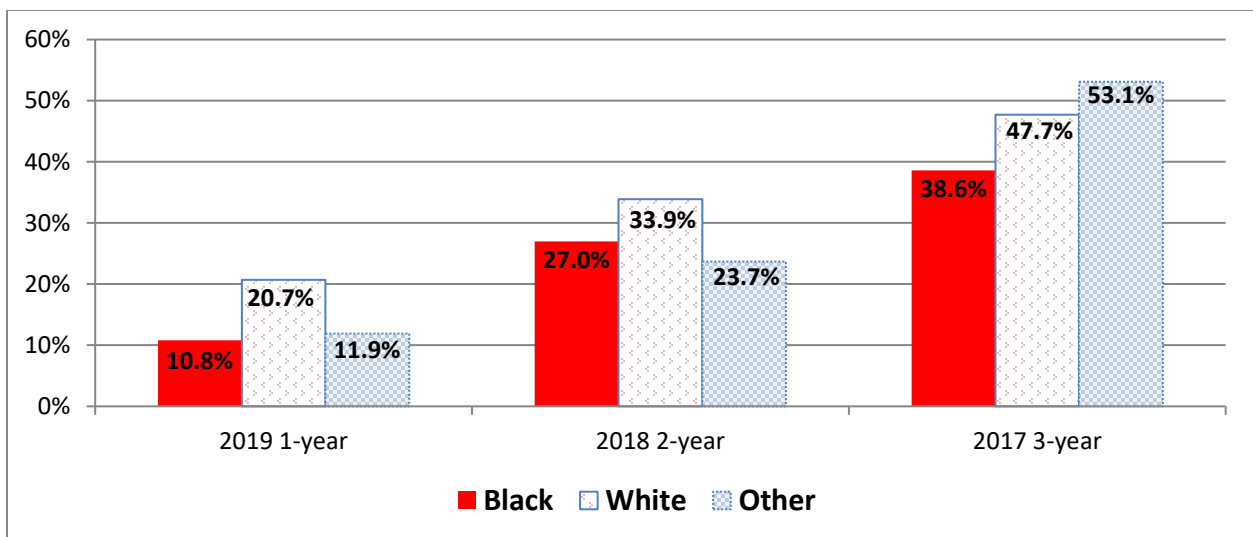
Figure 2. Comparison of Recidivism Rates by Gender



Recidivism by Race

The rates of recidivism broken down by race has flipped over the past few years. Previously, the one-year rates are usually very close to the same between Black/African-American and White youth, but in the second and third year after release, the rates of the Black youth consistently increased more than those of White youth. In the past several cohorts, however, the rates of Black youth have consistently been lower across the board. The “Other” race category (consisting mostly of Hispanic and mixed-race youth) tends to fluctuate more from year to year, in part due to the low numbers of youth in this category. The latest recidivism percentages by race are presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Comparison of Recidivism Rates by Race



Methodology

The recidivism rates are based on all DYS releases in a particular calendar year. An individual youth may be released more than once in a year. Recidivism is defined as readmission to DYS or an admission to the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC), the adult prison system. Readmission to DYS can be either by a new felony commitment or a revocation of parole. The date of admission is then compared to the release date to determine if the youth has recidivated within a one-, two-, or three-year time period. The total number of admissions is divided by the total number of releases to determine the percentage of youth that are recidivists. Youth transferred directly from a DYS facility to DRC are not counted as recidivists in the percentages presented in this report.

Acknowledgements

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