

Boys Republic Probation Placement Waiver Project

Performance Outcome Update Report

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Submitted by Boys Republic to the
California Department of Social Services
December, 2011

Boys Republic Probation Placement Waiver Project

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME UPDATE REPORT

December, 2011

I. INTRODUCTION

This report is submitted to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) as a supplement to draft evaluation submitted December 1, 2011 by Carol Ritchie, the independent evaluator for the project. This report provides detailed performance outcomes for all waiver placements at Boys Republic from inception (April 2007) through the first half of the fifth year of project activity (September 2011). In addition, this report describes new legislative and budget mandates affecting all group care providers subject to the Rate Classification (RCL) payment system. Decision makers at all levels must soon reckon with how the results of this project will be applied to meet the future needs of the provider, placing counties and young court wards. The present waiver will expire in April 2013. At that time—absent regulatory or legislative remedies—Boys Republic revert to a lower and unsustainable RCL. It is time now to consider long term rate solutions.

Boys Republic is a Southern California provider of residential and day treatment services for juvenile offenders (WIC 602 youth) referred by county Juvenile Courts throughout the state. In April 2007, the Department of Social Services (CDSS) approved waiver applications filed by eight counties making placements of probation youth delinquent at Boys Republic.¹ Major foster care reform legislation in 1998 (SB 933) allowed CDSS to approve waivers of foster care regulations in order to test innovative approaches to care and to meet the changing needs of the placement caseload. This "waiver project" implements county-provider "performance agreements" to provide innovative services to probation youth. The project includes a regulation waiver that effectively raises the group care rate to RCL 10, a level that more closely reflects the level of care provided.²

The overall goal of the waiver project is to demonstrate that under a more flexible rate framework, probation youth placed at Boys Republic can satisfy specific performance outcome measures related to community transition, educational achievement, public safety and placement stability. Another objective is to demonstrate that the Boys Republic staffing model—utilizing fewer staff with longer tenure and higher levels of training—is a cost-effective approach to residential care.

Waiver extension in 2010. The original waiver was subject to a three year, statutory sunset in April 2010. Needing more time to document project outcomes, the provider and participating counties sponsored AB 488 (Torres, 2010). As adopted, AB 488 allows waiver extensions under specific conditions that include the submission of an independent evaluation to CDSS one year before the end of the waiver. CDSS approved a waiver extension to April 1, 2013. New county performance agreements were executed and approved by CDSS, as was the hiring of an independent evaluator. Under agreements with CDSS, the evaluation and final report are to be submitted as a consolidated, single document in two stages: an interim report on 12/1/11 and a final evaluation report due by 4/1/12.

Though a separate provider report is not required at this time, Boys Republic is submitting this supplement to provide CDSS with complete performance outcome data and to update conclusions offered in the last-submitted report (March 2010) to the current California policy and budget situation. A concluding section of the report describes options for law and policy change that are needed to sustain the Boys Republic program beyond the waiver termination date.

¹ The eight participating counties are Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Francisco and San Joaquin.

² The authorizing statutes are found at Welfare and Institutions Code Sections 18987.61 -.62.

II. BACKGROUND AND PROJECT ACTIVITY TO DATE

Boys Republic campus program. Boys Republic provides a near unique setting and treatment program for adolescents under the delinquency jurisdiction of the Juvenile Courts. The main campus is a large, 200 acre site with an average placement population of about 145 youth. The campus has its own accredited high school operated through the Chino School District. The campus includes extensive recreational, vocational, library, livestock, kitchen and religious facilities. Boys Republic also has an on-campus independent living program and a comprehensive aftercare and re-entry service program for all graduating youth. Boys Republic also operates four community residential care centers in Southern California for boys and girls referred by Juvenile Courts, as well as a day-treatment program in Monrovia. Referrals come from multiple California counties—including the eight counties that are participants in this waiver project. Boys Republic has been repeatedly cited as a model of rehabilitation for adolescent youth who come under the delinquency jurisdiction of the juvenile court, including commendation by resolution of the California Legislature as an exemplary program.

The innovative accountability model of care. Boys Republic applies an innovative approach to the care of juvenile offenders. This approach is a "Positive Peer Culture" model of care that has been evaluated and proven to be successful. The treatment model promotes personal accountability for behavior. It is based on the premise that delinquent conduct is learned from negative group or peer interactions. The cycle of delinquent behavior can be reversed through a set of positive interactions by the youth with his peers and with highly trained staff. These interactions emphasize personal responsibility, attainment of educational goals and essential life and vocational skills. An important adjunct to this treatment model is youth self-governance. Since the organization began in 1907, boys in the program have elected their own leaders and held assemblies to resolve issues related to their placement and their lives. This program element gives rise to the name, "Boys Republic".

Evidence-based approach. The Boys Republic treatment model is evidence-based. It derives from a series of studies of effective programs for delinquents, conducted by respected researchers beginning in the 1960s. These studies include the "Provo Experiment" (Empey, 1959-65); the Silverlake Experiment (Empey, Lubeck, Newland and Corry, 1968) and the research on the Boys Republic Monrovia Day Treatment Program (Univ. of Southern California, 1981). Each of these studies successful outcomes for recidivism (compared to correctional institutions) and for other measures of youth success. These studies are available from Boys Republic upon request.

Rate structure penalizes the Boys Republic model. The California group home rate payment system does not adequately support the Boys Republic model of care—most specifically, in regard to the staffing structure. For this model to succeed, staff must be well trained and experienced in dealing with this difficult youth offender population. Long experience has confirmed that retaining a smaller and highly skilled staff over long periods of employment yields the best treatment results. Over-saturation with too many staff is counter-productive and interferes with the quality of staff-youth relationships on which the treatment model depends. The current California rate structure penalizes this approach, because it bases higher rates on increased staffing. The pre-waiver rate assigned to Boys Republic is RCL 5—a rate that supports less than half of the cost of operating the program. Under these circumstances, Boys Republic has been forced to spend down endowment funds in order to maintain its program. Counties in the waiver project recognize that the rate system provides insufficient support for the level of service provided by Boys Republic. They also recognize the need to maintain Boys Republic as a dispositional option for youth who would otherwise be placed in RCL-12 or higher programs, at much higher county cost.

How the waiver addresses the problem. The waiver project addresses the rate deficiency for Boys Republic. For youth placed under the county Performance Agreements, the waiver supports an RCL 10 rate by augmenting available RCL weights and points for staff tenure and training, thus more accurately reflecting the credentials of the long-tenured Boys Republic staff. The result is a possible higher point total rate for waiver project youth. To achieve and sustain the RCL 10 rate, Boys Republic had to pass stringent audits by CDSS, verifying all staffing levels, credentials, weights and points toward the waiver rate. The waiver also resolves, to some extent, the disparity of operating cost as between a smaller six-bed group home on which the current rate structure is based and a large campus program like Boys Republic.

Provider-county performance agreements under the waiver. In 2007, statutory Performance Agreements under the Children's Services Program Development Act (WIC 18987.61) were concluded between Boys Republic and each of the eight participating counties. These agreements describe a set of innovative, comprehensive services to be provided by Boys Republic for youth placed in the campus program. They specify that counties will pay their share of the higher RCL rate. The eight county agreements were renewed in 2010 upon extension of the waiver. Under the performance agreements, the following services are to be provided by Boys Republic.

SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER THE PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS

CORE SERVICES (all youth)

- Residential board and care
- Testing/ assessment for personal, family, education, vocational, health/MH and re-entry needs
- Accredited, on-grounds school operated by the Chino Valley Unified School District
- Vocational training including print shop, welding, farming, cattle-raising, food service, television production and fork lift certification.
- Recreational and athletic including intra-mural and inter-scholastic team sports, on-grounds gymnasium, baseball- football-soccer fields, all-weather track, swimming pool, volleyball court.
- Religious services and activities in the on-grounds chapel
- Professional medical, dental and nutritional care
- Substance abuse education and counseling and group, family and multi-family counseling
- Psychological and psychiatric care based on individually assessed need
- Participation in the Boys Republic youth self-government program. A signature program in which youth run for office, elect representatives and are educated in the democratic process.

RE-ENTRY AND AFTERCARE SERVICES (youth completing the program)

- Pre-release planning to locate an appropriate post-program living situation
- Evaluation for entry into the on-campus Independent Living Program (ILP)
- Assistance with school enrollment and continuing education
- Assistance in obtaining gainful employment
- Continuing counseling and follow-up services to meet community re-entry needs
- Housing and transitional living assistance
- Financial support as needed

Performance Outcome measures. The Performance Agreements include performance outcome measures for the waiver project. These outcome measures were required by CDSS to document project performance and as a condition for granting the rate waiver. The outcome measures were the product of detailed negotiations extending over many months between CDSS staff, Boys Republic and representatives from each county. Six key measures were adopted, crossing child welfare and probation data systems. Data on four of the measures are collected by Boys Republic. One-year follow up data on recidivism and placement stability are collected by the participating counties. These outcome measures and collection responsibilities are listed in the table below.

BOYS REPUBLIC WAIVER PROJECT OUTCOME MEASURES

TO BE COLLECTED BY THE PROVIDER:

- **Program completion:** Number/percent of referred youth completing the campus program.
- **Education outcome:** Did educational achievement levels improve? Specific measures: education credits upon admission, upon completion, accrued credits and school enrollment/diploma status upon completion.
- **Community transition outcome:** Did youth make a successful transition to the community? Specific measures include initial living situation, aftercare services delivered and living/employment/education status 12 months after program completion.
- **Youth satisfaction outcome:** For youth completing the program, was the Boys Republic experience a positive one? (Based on post-completion interviews.)

TO BE COLLECTED BY EACH REFERRING COUNTY:

- **Recidivism outcome:** Number/percent youth having a new offense (adjudication or adult conviction) within 12 months of completing the program.
- **Placement stability outcome:** Number/percent of youth who were replaced or institutionalized within one year of completing the program.

III. PERFORMANCE OUTCOME RESULTS

This section of the report documents the performance outcomes and results for the first four and one-half years of the project. In the text, we show composite results for all eight participating counties for each project year, with related comment on the outcomes achieved. Full tables with county-level detail are attached as an Appendix.

Data collection methodology. In 2007, Boys Republic enhanced its program software and information systems to enable it to collect outcome data for the CDSS-approved performance measures. Objective outcomes are recorded for each youth as to program completion, education achievement, living situation on graduation and aftercare services. The only subjective measure gathered by the provider is the youth's own opinion of his experience in the program, gathered by personal interview of each student upon program completion. In addition, Boys Republic follows each youth who completes the program for one year, to log follow up data on living situation, employment and education status. Participating counties are responsible for monitoring each youth twelve months post completion on the measures of placement stability and recidivism. They have been collecting follow-up data in six month cycles, depending on the county. Outcomes for each annual program group (April 1 through March 31st of the following year) are tabulated and compiled as annual data reports. Probation data on juvenile adjudications, adult convictions and subsequent placements in juvenile or adult facilities are tabulated with the data collected by the provider. Some county follow up reports omit, as a matter of law, juvenile recidivism data for a very small number of youth whose records were sealed following placement, as noted in the text and tables for each data reporting cycle.

Benchmarks for performance outcomes. In this waiver project, participating counties and Boys Republic are breaking new ground with the standardized and coordinated measurement of performance outcomes for probation placed youth. No other provider or placing agency is, so far as we know, collecting performance and follow up data at this level of detail. In this respect, the

Boys Republic waiver project is setting a new evidence-based standard for the measurement of outcomes for delinquent youth who are placed in California residential care facilities governed by AFDC-FC rules and rate provisions.

In general, the California juvenile justice system is notorious for the absence of standardized uniform performance measures for programs, facilities and clients. There is no statewide standard or accepted definition for recidivism, nor is there any state requirement that placing agencies or residential care providers track performance data on other outcomes for youth who leave their programs.³ Thus, we lack reliable California benchmarks or comparisons for the performance results being tracked and reported in the framework of this waiver project. Where possible we have cited surrogate benchmarks or comparisons to the extent they may be useful—e.g., the comparable Florida residential care outcome reports for recidivism. On placement stability, no useful comparable data could be located; the CWS/CMS child welfare data bank maintained by the U.C. Berkeley School of Social Welfare does not yield results that are applicable to this probation caseload. In some cases, the results are self-evident—for example, as to the near 100 percent youth satisfaction tally over 4.5 years of project activity. In other respects, readers must draw their own conclusions until placement agencies and providers in California are able to implement performance and quality assurance tracking systems at the level adopted for this project.

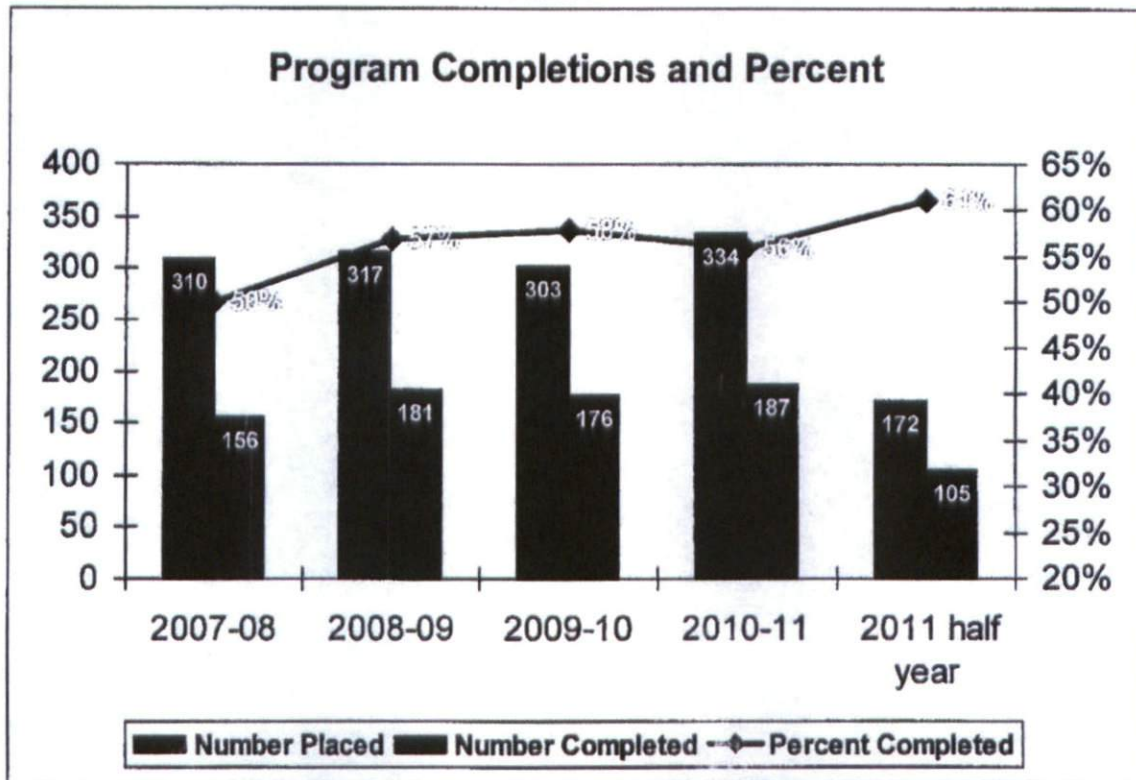
A. Program completion

Program completion means that the youth has satisfied all court and probation conditions and has completed the Boys Republic program. The program completion results for each year of project operation are shown in Chart 1 below. The completion rate starts at 50 percent of referrals for the first project year, rising to 61 percent of referrals for the first half of the most recent project year. The completion rates as shown exceed historical rates of completion for the main campus program which averaged 45 percent of placements in the three years before the waiver.

Program completion rates are strongly influenced by the fact that, as a licensed group home, Boys Republic must by law maintain an open campus without secure perimeters. Delinquent court wards placed at the Chino campus are not forced to stay on the premises. Boys Republic does not use the physical or chemical restraints that are applied by some agencies and providers to control the behavior of youth in its care. AWOLs usually occur quickly in the placement cycle. Once youth have acclimated to the program over a period of weeks, they are more likely to appreciate the benefits of the program and less likely to walk away. Boys Republic staff makes every effort to encourage those in the program to recognize the benefits of full participation and successful graduation, but staff will not physically restrain these 13-17 year old youth to hold them on campus against their will. Some youth fail to complete the program because they will not cooperate with program requirements, are disruptive or compromise the safety of others, and these youth may be returned to the custody of the probation department. For the four and one half referral years covered by this report, AWOLs accounted for 73 percent of all incompletes, while returns to probation accounted for the other 27 percent. Annual results for individual counties are shown in the tables in the Appendix.

³ The State Commission on Juvenile Justice, on 1/1/09, issued a State Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan in which it addressed the need to standardize performance measures and data collection methods in both state and county juvenile justice systems. The report includes a blueprint for establishing standard measures and for upgrading local data systems to support those measures.

Chart 1



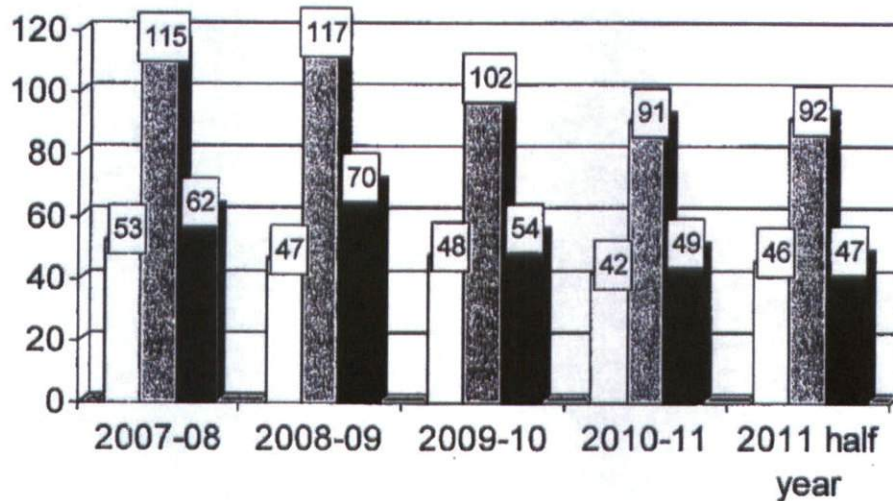
B. Education Outcomes

Boys Republic has an on-grounds and fully accredited high school operated by the neighboring Chino Valley Unified School District. A top priority for the campus program is to bring students up to grade level (number of credits) for their age and to achieve high school graduation for eligible youth (high school, adult or GED diploma).

For this project, specific education outcomes were tracked for all youth who completed the program. These included: education credits upon entry into the program; education credits upon discharge; total credits accrued in the program; and education discharge status (graduated from high school, enrolled in high school, or not graduated or enrolled). The education outcomes for the youth completing the program in the first four and one half years of the project are shown in Charts 2 and 3 below. In all, these results pertain to 700 youth completing the program in the first four years and another 105 completing in the first half of the fifth year. County level results are detailed in the Appendix.

Chart 2

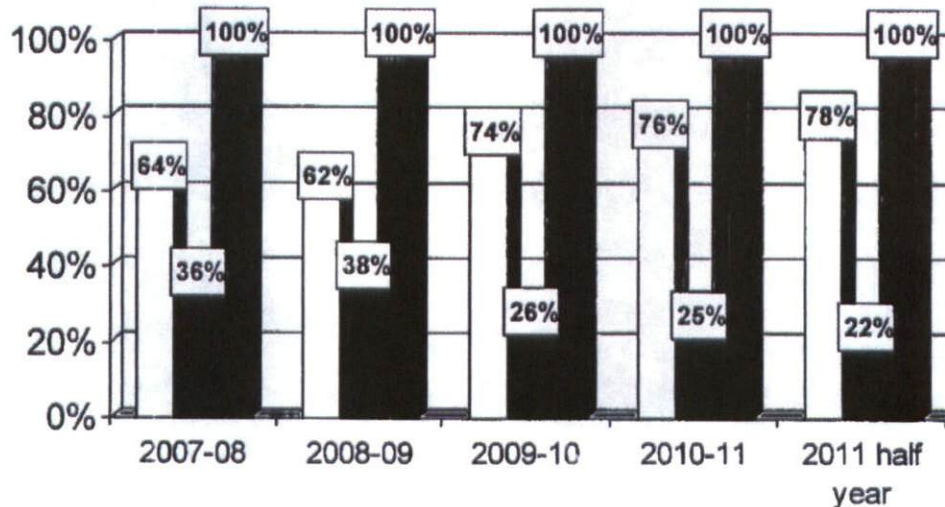
Education Outcomes: Average Education Credits on Entry, Credits Earned & Accrued on Discharge



□ Av. Credits on Entry ■ Av. Credits on Discharge ■ Av. Credits Accrued

Chart 3

Education Outcomes: Percent Enrolled in School or Completed High School on Graduation



□ Pct Enrolled in School ■ Pct Completed High School ■ Pct Enrolled or Completed

The vast majority of youth at Boys Republic come to the program with troubled records of school attendance and with other education deficits. Some of these students enter the program with education credits that are many grades below their age level. In this context, the education performance outcomes displayed above are quite positive. Some notable results are:

- o *For all project years, 100 percent of those completing the program either graduated high school (or high school equivalent) or were enrolled in high school upon program completion.*
- o *In the first two program years, Boys Republic graduates accumulated more average education credits (62 and 70 respectively) than the average credits per year earned by students in regular public high school (60).*

Though total accrued credits declined somewhat in the third through fifth years, this trend is due largely to the declining average length of stay in the campus program. Time of commitment is controlled by the placing county, and counties (largely to reduce costs) have steadily shortened in-placement time over the life of the waiver project, affecting the time available to accrue education credits. ALOS in the campus program declined from 10 months in 2006-07 to just 7 months by 2010-11. However, the average credits-per-month earned by youth in the last three groups was actually higher than in the first two years (7.1 credits per youth/month vs. 6.6 in the first two years).

No other probation placement provider in California is known to be collecting or reporting similar education outcome data. Yet, based on the data presented here, the Boys Republic waiver project objective of improving educational outcomes appears to have been well-satisfied. Additional education outcomes (12 month follow up) are reported in section G. below.

C. Community Transition (living situation and aftercare services)

For this project, Boys Republic tracks two sets of community transition outcomes. The first set documents the immediate post-program living situation for each youth and the types of aftercare services provided to each youth. The second set documents 12 month follow up status for each youth with regard to living situation, employment and school status; these 12 month follow up results are reported in a separate section below. The contemporaneous community transition outcomes (upon and shortly after program completion) are summarized in charts 4 and 5 below. For detailed county reports see the Appendix.

Living situation. An important focus of the Boys Republic program is to promote successful transition to the community. Boys Republic assists each youth in locating a suitable living situation upon completing the program. As these results indicate, the vast majority of youth completing the program were reunited or placed with parents or relatives upon completion of the program. A smaller share was admitted to the Boys Republic on-campus Independent Living Program (ILP). Youth in the ILP program live in two seven-bed group homes on the main campus. In the ILP program, youth learn adult living skills including job finding and maintenance, personal financial management and more mundane but still-important tasks like cooking and doing their own laundry.

Aftercare services. All youth in the waiver project are evaluated for supplemental aftercare services. The number and type of aftercare services delivered to each youth are based on the youth's individual transition circumstances and needs. The menu of available Boys Republic aftercare services includes:

Chart 4

Community Transition Outcomes by type of living situation upon completion

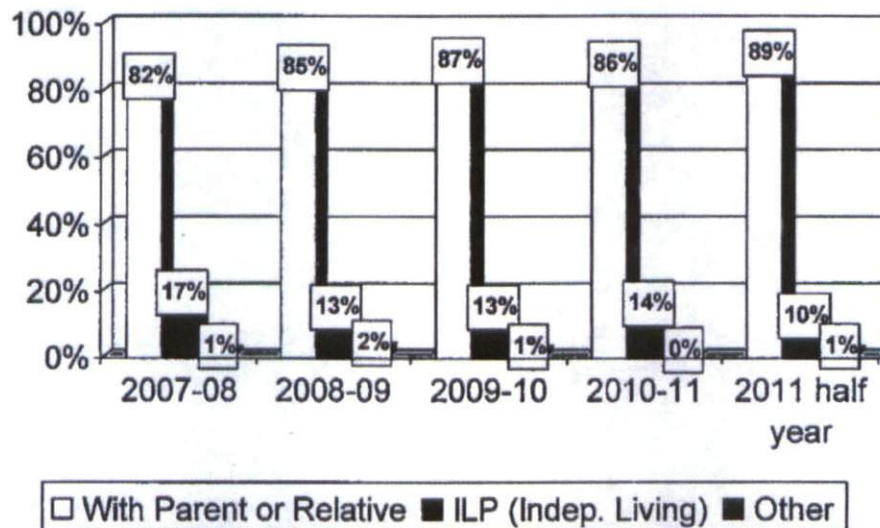
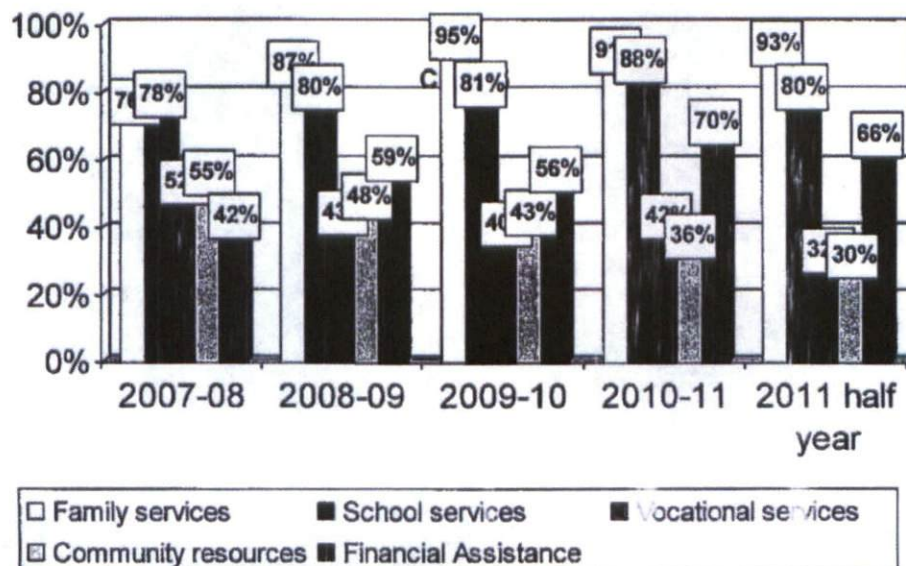


Chart 5

Community Transition-- Aftercare services by type and percent of grads receiving them



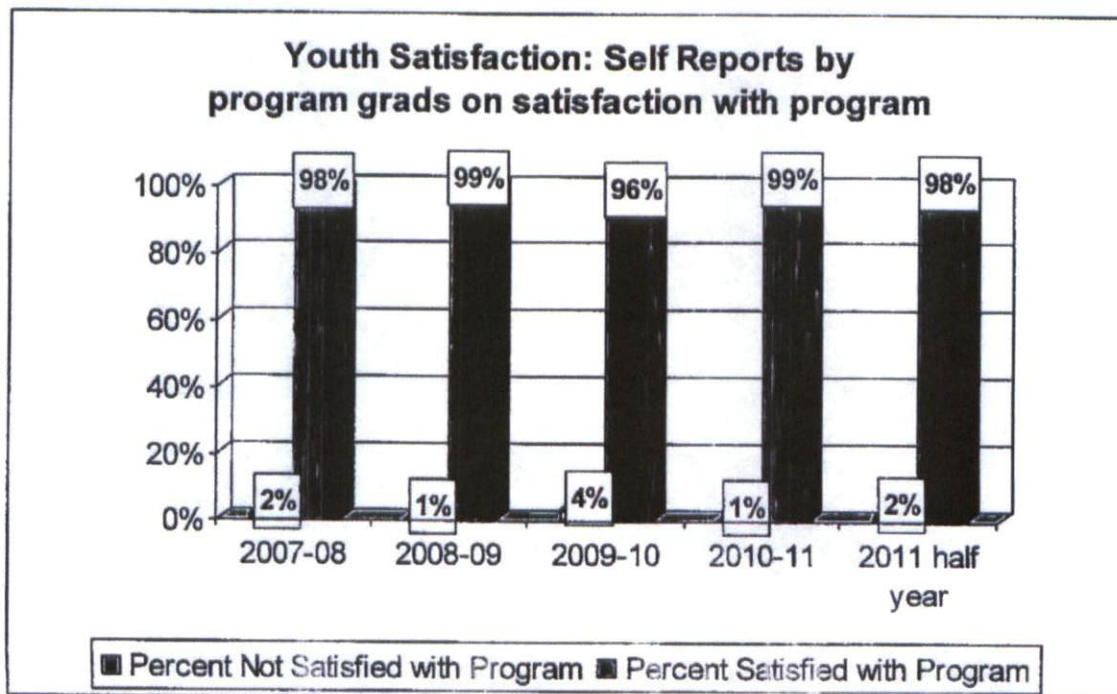
- Pre-release planning to locate an appropriate post-program living situation for the youth, which may be living at home with parents or relatives or some form of independent living
- Evaluation for entry into the on-campus Independent Living Program (ILP)
- Assistance with school enrollment and continuing education
- Assistance in obtaining gainful employment
- Continuing counseling and follow-up services to meet community re-entry issues and needs
- Housing and transitional living assistance
- Financial support in the form of "scholarships" for youth who may need monetary assistance

Of all 805 youth who completed the program in the four and one half placement cycles covered by this report, 99 percent received aftercare services of one type or another. Family services (setting up a home living situation, counseling with the family, etc.) were the most frequently delivered type of service. One feature that distinguishes the Boys Republic aftercare program from others is the availability of financial assistance. Making even a small grant of funds available to court wards who are trying to reconnect with family, school and community can make the difference between a successful transition and one that is troubled by repeat misconduct. Nearly 60 percent of all youth completing the program received some form of financial assistance from Boys Republic.

D. Youth satisfaction

All youth completing the program under the waiver project were interviewed as to whether they were satisfied or dissatisfied overall with the program and their experience at Boys Republic. The outcomes for the first four and one half placement cycles are shown below in Chart 6 (N= 805 youth completing the program). With a satisfaction rate approaching 100 percent for all years, these results speak for themselves.

Chart 6

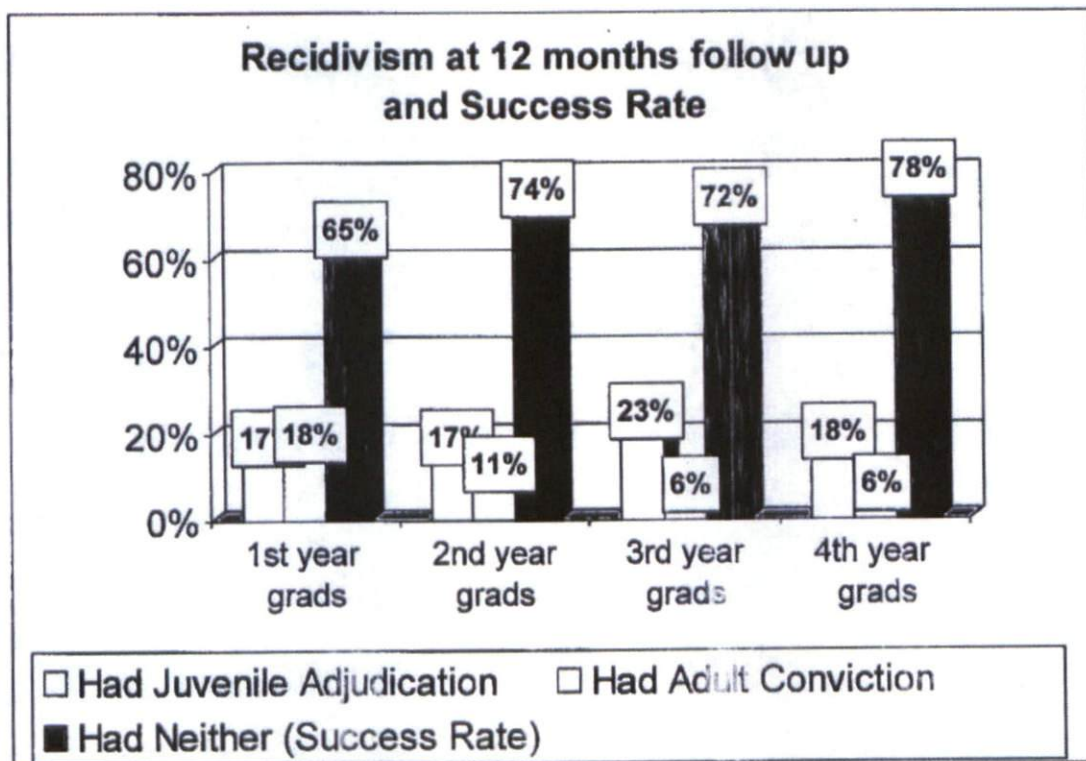


E. Recidivism

For probation placed youth—placed after court adjudication on criminal charges—recidivism is considered a key measure of program success or failure. The measure of recidivism adopted for this project is any Juvenile Court delinquency adjudication or an adult conviction occurring within one year of program completion. Recidivism data are collected by participating counties from their own court and probation records. Recidivism outcomes are reported for 507 youth having follow up reports in three full program completion-year groups (2007-2009) and for another 96 youth who completed the program in the half-year between 4/1 and 9/30/10 (allowing for follow up through 9/30/11). Follow up reports on juvenile adjudications were not available for a small number of youth whose case records were sealed after completing the program (N = 10 youth).

Recidivism outcome results are shown in Chart 7. The recidivism success rate (no follow up adjudications or conviction) averaged 72 percent for all project years, with the highest success rate (78 percent) occurring in the most recent half-year. A small number of youth had both a juvenile adjudication and an adult conviction in the first, second and fourth year groups (N = 6 in all); column totals for “juvenile” + “adult” + “neither” thus slightly exceed 100% for those years. Detailed county-by-county results are available in the tables in the Appendix.

Chart 7



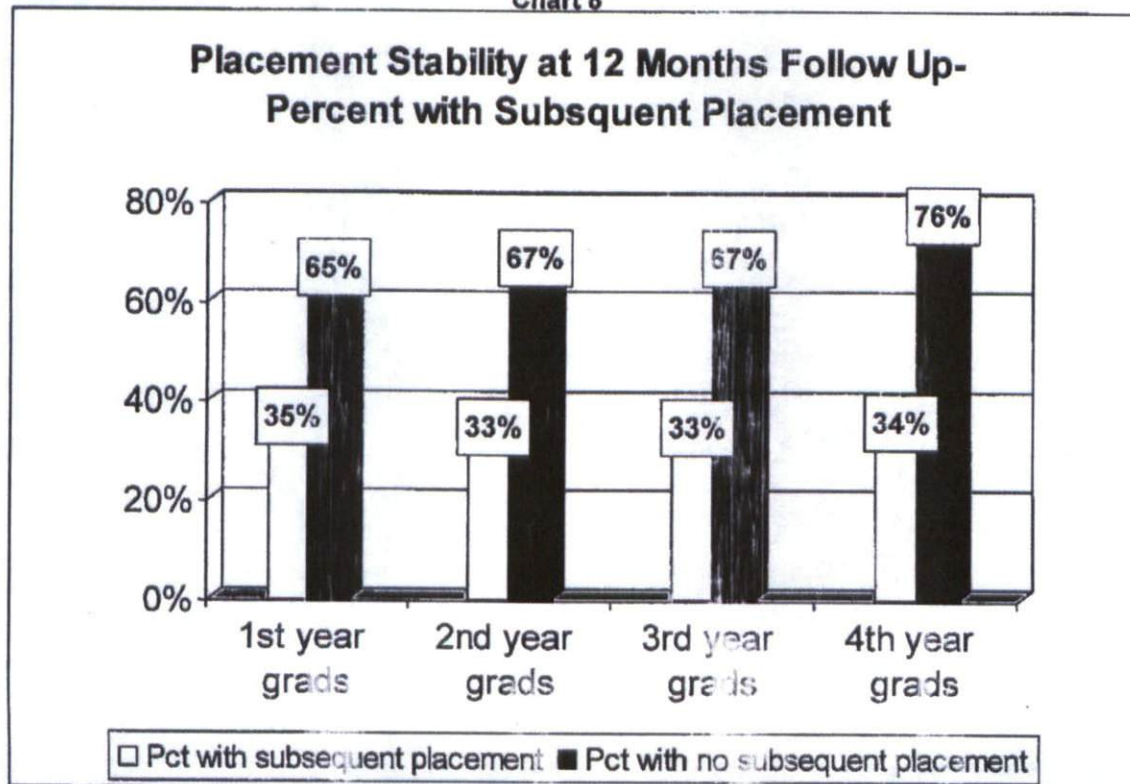
Recidivism benchmarks. As noted earlier, in California there are no standardized state or county measures or definitions of recidivism. We know of no county that routinely monitors how juvenile justice youth in various facilities or programs perform after release. The California Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) has issued annual reports on youth who fail the terms of parole and are returned to DJJ institutions within two years of release. This parole failure rate averaged about 50 percent of releases in years prior to the year 2010 realignment of DJJ parole to county probation

departments, and it did not include a significant share who were convicted or sentenced by adult courts. According to various studies of the DJJ release population, about 75% of DJJ youth are rearrested within three years. Perhaps the closest benchmark for this Boys Republic project is the data set maintained by the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. That Florida agency tracks one year re-adjudication and adult conviction events for all youth referred to "low risk residential programs" under contract with the state juvenile justice agency. Over the last five annual reporting cycles (2006-10), this youth recidivism rate has averaged 53 percent—or conversely, a 47 percent success rate. By contrast, the Boys Republic success rates reported here are significantly better.

F. Placement Stability

Another county-reported outcome measure tracks the number and type of re-placements within one year of program completion. The outcomes include the number of youth having an out-of-home placement prior to admission to the Boys Republic program, and the number with a placement in a juvenile or adult facility within one year of program completion. The overall subsequent placement results are shown in Chart 8 for 603 youth who completed the Boys Republic program between March 31, 2008 and September 30, 2010 and (allowing for one year follow up) and had county follow up reports. The average success rate for all four years was 68 percent (no subsequent placements), rising to 76 percent for the most recent, half-year group. The subsequent placements shown in Chart 8 include out-of-home placements in a public or private facility and (for those over 18) time spent in adult jails, but do not include short-term admissions to juvenile halls not resulting in a new out-of-home placement. There are no useful benchmarks for comparison of these results. As noted earlier, the outcome data available through the CWS-CMS data bank at U.C. Berkeley tracks replacements in foster care but does not track follow up placements in justice system facilities.

Chart 8

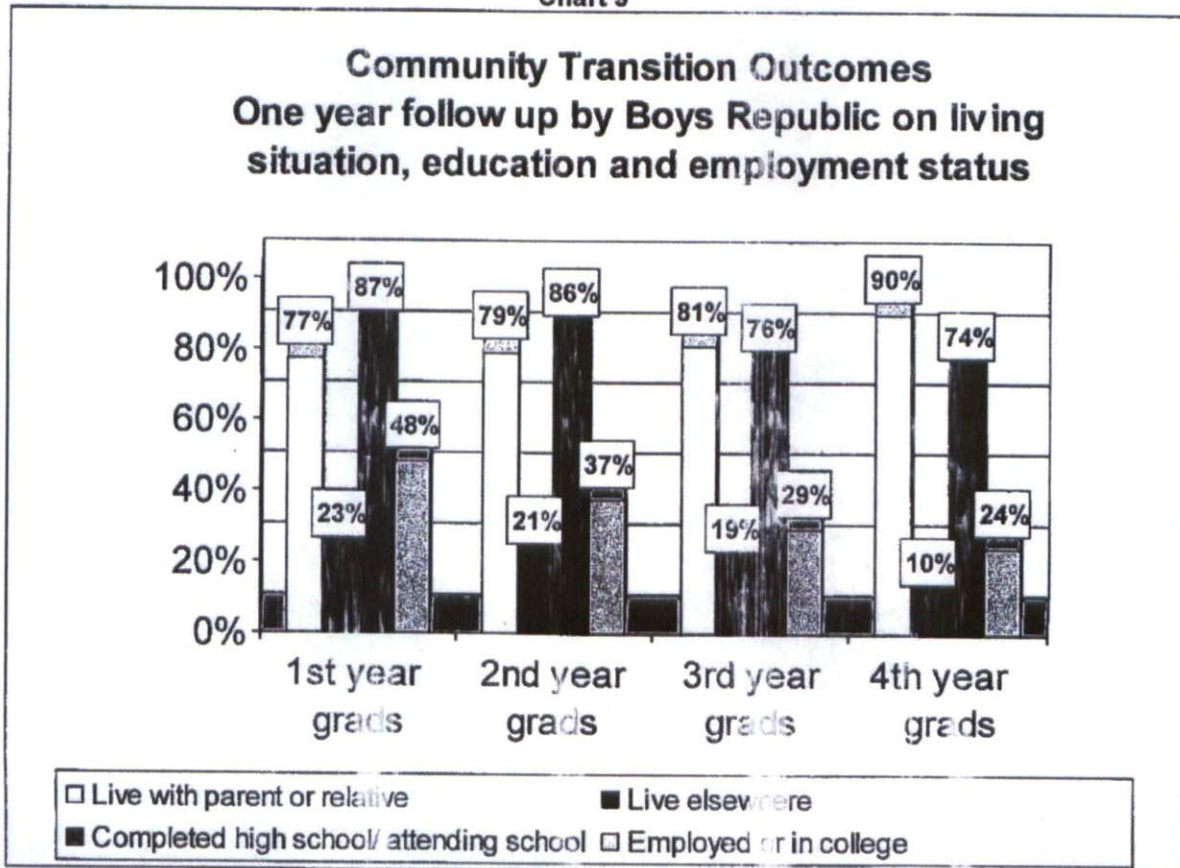


G. Follow up community transition outcomes

Under CDSS performance outcome requirements, Boys Republic tracks youth completing the program to determine their community transition status at 12 months after program completion. At 12 months, staff locates the youth and collects information on living situation, school and employment status. Chart 9 is a summary of the community transition outcomes at 12 months post-completion for youth who completed the program between March 31, 2008 and September 30, 2010. In all, follow up data on community transition was collected for 482 of the total of 609 youth who completed the program in this time period.

As shown by Chart 9, 75 to 80 percent of youth completing the program were still living at home one year after they left Boys Republic. A very high percentage (averaging 83 percent over four annual groups) had completed high school or was still attending school at the twelve month post-grad point. Employment levels were lower, starting at 48 percent of youth a year after completing the program in the first year and declining to just 24 percent of those graduating from the program in the first half of the fourth project year. We surmise that this declining employment trend bears some relationship to declining employment in the larger state and national economies. Recessionary and economic factors may also help to explain the rising number of youth continuing to live at home as the project timetable continues into 2011. Again, as with the other post-completion data for this project, there are no benchmarks or studies allowing for the comparison of these Boys Republic outcomes with other programs or similarly situated youth groups. The Boys Republic project is the first known effort in California to collect data on performance outcomes of probation placed youth at this level of detail.

Chart 9



IV. APPLICABILITY TO A WIDER POPULATION

The authorizing statutes for the waiver project require the evaluation and final report to address the issue of the applicability of the program approach to a wider population (WIC 18987.61 (f)). In our March 2010 report to CDSS, we described the applicability of the Boys Republic model to a wider referral population, as required by the code for a final report on the first three years of activity. For the extension years (2010-13), the "wider population" issue is being addressed by the independent evaluator in her interim and final reports. Meanwhile we offer the following, supplemental observations on the issue of applicability to a wider population, incorporating all project results to date and with reference to recent state law and budget changes.

A. The outcome results for youth completing the program at Boys Republic continue to be positive and promising, as documented over four and one-half years of project activity. These results suggest that the Boys Republic model of residential care for adolescent offenders is a successful one that has application to a wider population of probation youth in California.

The outcomes reported by the project to date are indeed promising. No other probation placement provider in California has tracked and compiled performance outcome data at this level of detail and follow up on its client population. The results reported here cover program outcomes for 805 youth who completed the Boys Republic program over four and one half years of project operation, plus 12 month follow up results for 603 youth who completed the program in the first three and one half years (allowing for one year follow up). In highlight form these results include:

- o Recidivism. A 72 percent success (no juvenile adjudication or adult conviction) at 12 months follow up for all youth completing the program, with a rising success trend to 78 percent. These results exceed known, comparable benchmarks for like populations.
- o Placement stability. A 68 percent placement stability success rate at 12 months for all program-completing youth (no placement in a juvenile or adult facility within 12 months of program completion). This success rate rises to 76 percent for the most recent half-year. No comparable data are available from other providers or operators of public juvenile facilities for probation youth.
- o Education status on graduation: 100 percent of youth completing the program (all 805) graduated from high school, received their GED or were enrolled in school upon completion. Youth completing the program averaged an increase of 57 education credits per student (over their education level on entry) over the full 4.5 year reporting period, with monthly per-youth credit accrual averages showing an increase over the full reporting period.
- o Youth satisfaction: 98 percent of youth completing the program over the four and one half years of outcome monitoring reported that they were satisfied with the program (790 of 805).

These outcomes bode well, not only for the young men who derived the benefits of the comprehensive treatment model, but also for the public agencies that bear the cost of placements at Boys Republic. Low recidivism and re-placement rates mean reduced future costs for county courts, probation departments, juvenile institutions, jails and other public service agencies. This finding alone underscores the value of the Boys Republic model as one worthy of replication for counties operating under budget constraints affecting all justice and human service agencies.

B. The results suggest that the Boys Republic aftercare program, in particular, is an effective model of post-release follow up for adolescent offenders and is deserving of wider adoption.

The Boys Republic treatment model includes an extensive aftercare and re-entry component. As previously noted, the aftercare and follow up services provided to program graduates include:

- Pre-release planning to locate an appropriate post-program living situation
- Evaluation for entry into the on-campus Independent Living Program (ILP)
- Assistance with school enrollment and continuing education
- Assistance in obtaining gainful employment
- Continuing counseling and follow-up services to meet community re-entry needs
- Housing and transitional living assistance
- Financial support in the form of money "scholarships" for youth who need it

There has been wide criticism and growing public and policymaker concern about the quality and level of aftercare and re-entry services for all types of offenders in California. Corrections realignment laws adopted over the last three years in California have focused resources on re-entry strategies and programs designed to reduce repeat incarceration events for both juveniles and adults. While some counties have made strides toward improving juvenile justice aftercare, it is difficult to identify an aftercare model that is as comprehensive the one provided through Boys Republic. Boys Republic helps each program graduate find an appropriate living situation, obtain employment and become fully self-supporting. As necessary, financial assistance is provided. The high success rates documented by project data to date—for placement stability, recidivism and other measures—support an opinion that the Boys Republic aftercare program is a model deserving wider replication in California.

C. Juvenile justice "realignment" laws in California have increased local caseloads of delinquent youth, with increased demand for local programs and placements that are innovative and effective in meeting youth needs while reducing youth recidivism. The Boys Republic program model is adaptable to meet this growing local demand for probation placement and treatment options.

In 2007, Senate Bill 81 moved all non-violent youth out of the state Division of Juvenile Justice and into local custody and care. Later (in 2010) Assembly Bill 1628 expanded juvenile justice realignment to shift re-entry and parole supervision over DJJ cases to local control. The youth moved to county control by SB 81 in 2007 are, by and large, moderate juvenile offenders with multiple mental health and other treatment needs. They comprise a caseload that is similar to the caseload served by the Boys Republic campus program—in short, a wider population of probation youth who might well be successfully programmed using the Boys Republic models of care and aftercare. Many counties have responded to juvenile justice realignment by sentencing more youth to longer terms of custody in juvenile halls, camps and ranches. The shift of former state wards into county juvenile hall and probation camp space has, for some counties, pre-empted use of the same space for youth with less serious offense histories. The alternative for this displaced group is home on probation, with minimal supervision or service to meet their recovery needs. These needs include family counseling, help with schooling, vocational training and personal responsibility development. These are in fact, the very points of treatment and aftercare that are comprehensively addressed by the Boys Republic model. This delinquency push-out group is another population that could benefit prospectively from the Boys Republic treatment approach. Notably, that approach includes backup programs in the form of Independent Living and Day Treatment. In short, to meet this growing demand, counties may benefit from seeking expansions of the Boys Republic model, either through the creation of new private placement capacity or by the incorporation of Boys Republic program elements into their juvenile hall, ranch or camp programs. One option that does not serve these interests would be the failure of policymakers to agree on a long term rate solution that can sustain the Boys Republic program as a placement resource.

V. COST EFFICACY OF THE BOYS REPUBLIC STAFFING AND TREATMENT MODEL

As noted previously, a primary goal of the Boys Republic probation placement waiver project is to demonstrate the cost efficacy of the Boys Republic staffing and treatment program. The comments below address the issue of cost-efficacy in the context of changing state policies and budgets affecting probation and foster care caseloads.

A. The results achieved to date tend to confirm that the Boys Republic staffing model— as supported by the waiver—is a cost-effective model of placement and treatment for probation youth. This has strong implications for rate reforms that could potentially enhance the capacity of the private residential care sector to serve probation youth more cost-efficiently in the years ahead.

The waiver project was generated, in part, as a test of the Boys Republic staffing model. As explained earlier, that staffing model relies on a smaller number of highly trained individuals with long tenure and experience in the rehabilitation of adolescents under the delinquency jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court. This staffing model is not rewarded by the current statutory group home (Rate Classification Level) rate structure which yields higher RCL's and payments for greater numbers of program staff. Under pre-waiver conditions, Boys Republic would have to compromise its own successful treatment model in order to qualify for a reimbursement rate that pays more than 50 percent of costs incurred for the comprehensive residential and aftercare program it provides.

In this waiver project, CDSS approved a regulation waiver that acknowledges the staffing model by increasing weights and points for the training and tenure of Boys Republic staff.

As a test of the staffing model, the waiver project has produced strong performance results that tend to confirm the value of staffing model used to produce those results. These positive results have been thoroughly described in the preceding text of this report.

Placement professionals in counties participating in the placement project have acknowledged the value received by placing youth at Boys Republic. If Boys Republic (at RCL 10 under the waiver) were not available, placement personnel would have to scan for available placements at RCL 12 or higher programs, in hopes of deriving the same level of service (though generally without the documentation of service outcomes now occurring at Boys Republic) Taking these other placement options into account, placing youth at Boys Republic produces significant cost savings for counties. For example: in each of the first four years of the waiver project, Los Angeles County placed an average number of 105 youth who completed the Boys Republic Program. Assuming a 7 month average length of stay in the program (2010-11 average) and a \$ 1075 difference between RCL 10 and RCL 12 (standardized 2011 rates), Los Angeles County under a 100 percent county cost scenario stands to save about \$ 800,000 per year in placement cost by accessing Boys Republic, with its proven track record, in lieu of placing the same youth in RCL 12 programs. These savings materialize and accumulate year after year as long as Boys Republic carries the RCL 10 waiver-based rate. These savings would disappear if the waiver-rate terminates in 2013, forcing Boys Republic to reduce or eliminate its services. In all, the waiver project demonstrates that placements at Boys Republic under the waiver-supported staffing model are cost-efficient for local payers, while at the same time potentially liberating local realignment dollars for other uses.

B. The waiver project is founded on evidence-based principles. The lower cost of placement at Boys Republic (in relation to RCL 12 or higher options) is tied to performance outcome results that confirm the value received for cost of the placement.

Strong performance measures are built into the design of this CDSS approved waiver project. These measures include program completion, education achievement, living status on graduation, documentation of aftercare, youth satisfaction with the program and 12 month follow up reports on youth recidivism, placement stability and community transition. It would be a challenge to identify a probation placement program in California that is now gathering more complete performance data on its service population than Boys Republic, and its county partners, are gathering under the auspices of this CDSS approved project

The need to adopt evidence-based approaches to juvenile offender care has been highlighted in multiple state and national reports. In January 2009, the State Commission Juvenile Justice issued a Juvenile Justice Master Plan calling for the adoption of standardized performance measures for county-level youth-serving programs. However, few steps have been taken to mandate or implement a system-wide framework for data collection, performance outcome measurement or quality assurance for probation youth. In fact, California lags well behind other states (like Washington or Florida) that have implemented sophisticated client outcome and quality assurance systems for juvenile justice placements.

Cost-efficacy cannot be evaluated in the absence of program and client performance outcome data. Boys Republic has, in this waiver project, tracked and reported strong performance outcomes for five placement-year cohorts. In this sense, the waiver project has provided the tools and information needed to document the cost-efficacy of the Boys Republic treatment program, including its staffing model.

C. With 100 percent realignment of foster care to counties in 2011, and with uncertainty about the future of California's group care rate system, the Boys Republic program may provide state and local policymakers with an evidence-based and cost-efficient treatment model that is consistent with the current direction of state and local foster care policy and funding.

The California FY 11-12 budget supports the realignment of \$6 billion in state-funded operations and services to local control. Among these is the 100 percent realignment of foster care to counties. In the future, drawing from dedicated tax funds, counties will have full payment responsibility for AFDC-FC placements, including private placements of probation youth. Stakeholders and policymakers have undertaken a lengthy review of the California group home rate structure. They have adopted legislation establishing the Residentially Based Service (RBS) demonstration project in four counties to test alternative methods of payment for group care. The RBS model serves mainly dependent children under child welfare jurisdiction, rather than probation youth, and its demonstration results are not due until 2015. From a broad, statewide policy perspective, efforts to design and implement alternative models of funding and care for probation youth are still a "work in progress". The Boys Republic approach, including the unique staffing and cost features and the positive evidence on outcomes to date, may well be instructive for policymakers reviewing issues of program and cost efficacy across the entire foster care spectrum.