



Using Research and Data to Inform Policy and Accountability Measures

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Presentation Outline

- **Prior Research on Delinquency and Education**
- **Florida's Research Agenda for Juvenile Justice Education**
- **Interagency Data Sources**
- **Methods for Tracking Long-term Community Reintegration Outcomes**
- **Student Characteristics**
- **Findings**
- **Future Research**



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Prior Life Course Research

- **Prior life course research has reported persistence or continuity in delinquent to criminal behavior.**
- **More recent studies have found particular life events experienced by young adults may alter continuity in criminal behavior and lead instead to transition from criminal behavior.**
 - ◆ **For example, marriage, military experience or employment can lead to transition from criminal behavior for a number of young adults.**
- **Largely absent from the prior transition research, have been studies focused upon identifying adolescent life events and experiences that may lead to transition from delinquent behavior.**



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Literature on Academic Achievement and Delinquency

- **How effective is academic achievement in reducing recidivism?**
 - ◆ **Academic achievement and participation in school decreases youth's involvement in crime**
 - ◆ **Positive experiences with education in adolescence results in less criminality among young adults**
 - ◆ **Educational programming in prison decreases the recidivism rates of offenders released from prison**



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Literature on Employment and Delinquency

- **How effective is employment in reducing recidivism for delinquent youth?**
 - ◆ **Research shows that employment reduces recidivism**
 - ◆ **Job stability from ages 17 to 25 significantly decreases crime during this age period and beyond to 25 to 32 years of age**



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Literature on School Participation and Employment Effects on Delinquency

- **Is it employment or education that effects recidivism?**
 - ◆ **Educational achievement and graduation affects later crime by increasing future employment success**
 - ◆ **Employment has been found to be more effective for older offenders, while educational experiences are more effective in reducing criminal behavior in younger people**



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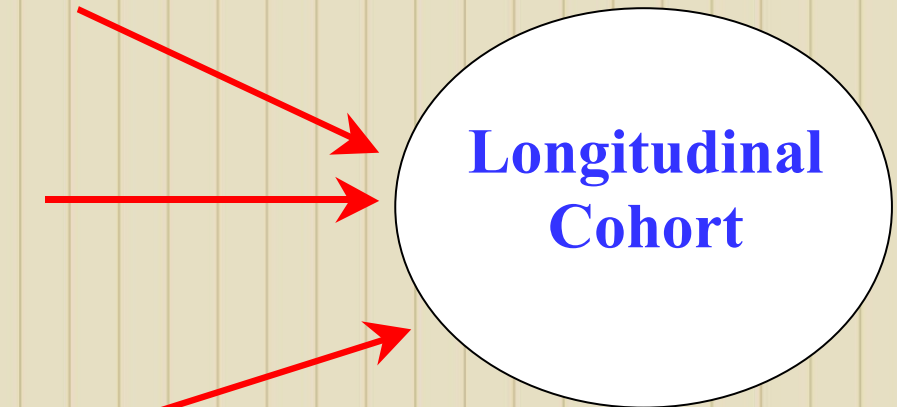
Interagency Data Sources

DOE – School participation histories and outcomes

FDLE – Arrest history and severity

DOC – Commitments

FETPIP – Employment, Adult Ed./GED Prep., College Enrollment, Military



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DOE Data Sources

- DOE Survey 5 data (*FY1999-00 to 2004-05*)
 - ◆ Demographic files
 - ◆ Attendance files
 - ◆ End-of-year files
 - ◆ Special Education files
 - ◆ Transcript files
 - ◆ **Entry/exit testing results**



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DOE Outcome Measures

- **Return to School**
 - ◆ **Type of School (High School, Alternative, Special Ed., Vocational, Adult Ed.)**
 - ◆ **Attendance and Time in School**
- **Academic Performance**
 - ◆ **Grades & GPA**
 - ◆ **Credits Earned and Pupil Progression**
- **School Discipline**
 - ◆ **Suspension and Expulsion**
- **Graduation Rates**
 - ◆ **Diploma Types (Standard, GED, Special)**



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FDLE, DOC and FETPIP Measures

FETPIP

- Employment
- Adult Ed./GED Prep.
- Vocation Education
- College Enrollment
- Military Enlistment

FDLE

- Number and severity of prior offenses
- Re-Arrest within three years
- Severity of offense

DOC

- Conviction
- Commitment



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Research Methods

- **Our research addresses the role of incarceration and educational achievement upon post-release transition from delinquent behavior for a cohort of 4,147 incarcerated youths drawn from 115 Florida juvenile institutions**
- **With in a two year follow-up, we examine academic achievement while incarcerated, returning to school after release, school attendance within 12 and 24 months, and rearrest within 12 and 24 months**
- **We employed three distinct matching methods as well as multi-variate regression in its analysis of the data**



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Research Questions

To address the relationship between educational achievement and employment upon post-release desistance from crime among incarcerated youth, the following research questions are addressed

1. Does above average educational achievement, as measured by the number and proportion of academic credits earned, increase the likelihood among incarcerated youth of returning to school following release?
2. Are youths who attend school regularly following release less likely to be rearrested as compared to those youths who do not return to school or who return to school but attend school less regularly?
3. Does returning to school following release increase the likelihood of employment and length of employment?
4. Does employment reduce the likelihood of re-arrest within 12 and 24 months?
5. Does the length of employment reduce the likelihood of re-arrest within 12 and 24 months?





Outcomes of Delinquent Youth Released from Residential Programs



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Demographics

Variable	Mean/Percentage
Age at Release	16.8 (7-21)
Gender – Male	86%
Race – Non-White	57%



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Pre Incarceration History

Variable	Mean/Percentage
Age at First Arrest	14.1 Years
Seriousness of Prior Criminal Record (Arrests)	137
Disability	38%
Below Age/Grade Level	1.7



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Incarceration Event

Variable	Mean/Percentage
Security Level of DJJ Facility	Level 4 = 12% Level 6 = 60% Level 8 = 26% Level 10 = 2%
Length of Incarceration	8 Months
Above Average Academic Achievement	39%



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Public School Follow-up

Return to School One Semester	36%
In School at One Year	42%
In School at Two Years	45%



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Other Educational Follow-up

Vocational Technical School:

One Year	1%
Two Years	1%
Three Years	1%

Adult Ed./GED Prep. in Community College

One Year	2%
Two Years	2%
Three Years	1%



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Other Educational Follow-up

College Enrollment:

One Year

4%

Two Years

3%

Three Years

3%



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Employment Follow-up

Variable	Percent/Mean
Employed	
1 Year	47%
2 Years	44%
3 Years	44%
Average Quarters Employed	2.3
Military (1,2, 3 Years)	0.2 to 0.4



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Recidivism Follow-up

Re-Arrest:

One Year

48%

Two Years

16%

Three Years

6%

DJJ Residential Commitment

One Year

17%

Two Years

8%

Three Years

1%



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Recidivism Follow-up

DOC – Prison Commitment:	
One Year	4%
Two Years	4%
Youth Not Found in Any Follow-up Measure	
One Year	14%
Two Years	11%



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Findings

1. Higher educational achievement while incarcerated significantly increases the likelihood of youth returning to school following release. Youth with above average educational achievement while incarcerated exhibit a 69% increase in their odds of returning to school.
2. Youth who stay in school longer post-release are significantly less likely to be re-arrested within 12 and 24 months after release from incarceration.



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Findings

3. Those youth who return to school post-release are significantly more likely to be employed. The odds of obtaining employment increases by 48% for those youth who return to school post-release.
4. Youth who are employed post-release are much less likely to be re-arrested.
5. As the length of employment post-release increases, the likelihood of re-arrest declines over the first 12 and 24 months after incarceration. With each additional quarter of employment in the first 12 months post-release, the odds of re-arrest decreases by 10%, and by 6% for each quarter employed within 24 months.



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Summary and Discussion

1. Higher educational achievement during incarceration was found to significantly increase the likelihood of post-release return to school and youth who returned to and stayed in school were significantly less likely to be re-arrested within 12 and 24 months.
2. Youth who return to school are significantly more likely to be employed and less likely to be re-arrested within 12 and 24 months.



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Summary and Discussion

These findings raise several theoretical and policy implications.

1. In terms of life course criminology, the findings reported here indicate that criminal desistance can result from not only young adult experiences but a series of adolescent life experiences, namely educational achievement, school attachment and employment.
2. Findings on the relationship between educational achievement, school attachment and employment provide support for the current No Child Left Behind Act that mandates the same high quality and accountable education services for juvenile justice students as for all other students in public schools.



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Future Research Agenda



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Future Research

- **Study the relationships between**
 - ◆ **Education and employment**
 - ◆ **Employment and age**
 - ◆ **Employment and delinquency**
- **The type of school youth return to after release and school dropout**
- **Subgroups of youth such as age, gender, special education students**



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