

Evaluation of the San Francisco Young Adult Court (YAC)

Outcome Study Addendum*

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*This report is an addendum to an earlier report, *An Evaluation of San Francisco's Young Adult Court; Findings on Planning and Early Implementation*, (May 2017).

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March 29, 2018

Introduction

The San Francisco Young Adult Court (YAC) outcome findings shared here are an addendum to an earlier comprehensive report, *An Evaluation of San Francisco’s Young Adult Court; Findings on Planning and Early Implementation* (May 2017). While the earlier report drew on extensive interviews and focus groups with YAC partners and young adult participants, this addendum relies primarily on the YAC Database and outcome data secured from YAC partner agencies.

San Francisco’s **Young Adult Court (YAC)** is a groundbreaking model for rethinking how the developmental characteristics of transitional age youth (TAY) should inform the criminal justice system’s response to this population. As described in *The New York Times*, San Francisco’s YAC is “tailored to the biology and circumstances” of young adults age 18-25. Eligible young adults may participate in the YAC program instead of the regular criminal court process, with the aim of supporting positive life outcomes and avoiding recidivism.

The YAC is part of a larger movement to recognize young adults as a distinct group in the justice system. The unique nature of San Francisco’s model is due not only to its deep roots in neuroscience—which indicates that critical portions of the brain regulating risk-taking and impulsive behavior are still developing substantially until the mid-twenties—but also in its acceptance and prioritization of participants who have committed serious felony offenses. In this way, San Francisco is demonstrating a commitment to altering the composition of San Francisco’s in-custody population where TAY are overrepresented, as well as the life trajectory of young adults with serious crimes and barriers.

San Francisco’s YAC draws on the city’s particularly rich experience developing and implementing alternative “problem-solving” courts, its identification of transitional age youth as a citywide priority group, and its track record of tailoring services to this specific population, including among criminal justice agencies.

As of early spring 2018, the YAC has been operational for just over 2.5 years and enjoyed national media attention from *The Economist*, *Newsweek*, and *The New York Times*. This evaluation update—focused on YAC outcomes—is meant as a companion piece to earlier comprehensive findings on the YAC’s planning process, program components, and early implementation. Both reports yield important insights that can inform the future of San Francisco’s Young Adult Court, as well as the efforts of other interested local areas.

Disconnected youth in San Francisco ages 16-24—also called transitional age youth (TAY)—are one of the most vulnerable populations in the City. Roughly 8,000 TAY are at risk of not transitioning successfully into adulthood, or reaching adulthood at all.¹ They face significant challenges, such as chronic unemployment, homelessness, involvement with the justice system, and lack basic academic and work readiness skills to prepare for the world of work.

Further, the TAY age group is disproportionately represented in San Francisco’s local adult criminal justice system and nationally. Recent estimates² show that approximately 25% of San Francisco adult arrests were young men and women age 18 to 24, and that young adults under age 25 comprised 20% of the jail population, 25% of criminal court cases, and 21% of adult probation’s active caseload. Young adults in the justice system are also overwhelmingly and disproportionately minorities. Approximately 60% of adult probation’s young adult caseload is African American, while African Americans comprise only 6% of San Francisco’s population. The recidivism rate for individuals (adults and young adults) returning from prison is 76%.³

It is in this context that the City of San Francisco established the Young Adult Court (YAC) model, an alternative court program designed for TAY ages 18-25. Reflecting brain development research and needs specific to young adults, and recognizing the importance of providing these young adults an opportunity to change their life trajectory and exit the cycle of recidivism, California’s Board of State and Community Corrections (CBSCC) awarded San Francisco’s Department of Children, Youth and their Families (DCYF) a three-year Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) to implement two programs designed to reduce recidivism of young adults and decrease the school-to-prison pipeline. These programs— Juvenile Alternatives to Suspension (JASP) and Young Adult Court (YAC)—aim to address the needs of San Francisco’s vulnerable young adults by providing participants with access to wraparound services, job referrals, case management services and other supports.

In the spring of 2015, DCYF contracted with Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) to conduct a three-year evaluation of the programs funded by the JAG grant. The goal of the evaluation was to document the planning and implementation of the program models as well as participant outcomes. Due to delays in implementing the JASP program, the evaluation focused on the planning, implementation, and outcomes of the YAC program.

¹ http://www.taysf.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/TAYSF_PolicyPrioritiesdoc.pdf. Downloaded on 3/14/18.

² This data is from January 2012 to March 2014; San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF) proposal to California Board of State and Community Corrections (CBSCC).

³ San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF) proposal to California Board of State and Community Corrections (CBSCC). Note that this rate applies to the county at large, not only young adults.

The Young Adult Court (YAC) Program

San Francisco’s Young Adult Court is a collaborative, “problem-solving” court for young adults ages 18-25 arrested in San Francisco, “who have legal and social service needs, and are given the opportunity to participate in YAC instead of the regular criminal court process.”⁴ The YAC program in San Francisco represents a significant effort to support positive outcomes and reduce recidivism for approximately 80 disconnected transitional age youth (TAY) per year.

The YAC program is also distinct from other young adult court models. The YAC’s unique nature is based not only on its grounding in research on young adults’ brain development, but also in its acceptance and indeed its prioritization of young adults who have committed serious felony offenses. The prioritization of young adults with felony offenses, as codified in the YAC’s formal eligibility criteria, demonstrates a commitment to moving the needle on the nature of San Francisco’s in-custody population where TAY are overrepresented.

Key Partners

The JAG grant to San Francisco County—totaling \$1,045,625 for three years—provides funding to six City partner agencies to expand their capacity and coordination efforts to connect YAC participants to critical resources in the areas of mental services, housing, and employment. The partners are expected to work together in ways that would significantly expand the level of services provided to participants and enhance coordination of these services in San Francisco.

Key YAC team members and partners include the YAC Judge and Superior Court, San Francisco District Attorney’s Office, San Francisco Public Defender’s Office, Adult Probation Department (APD), Community Assessment and Services Center (CASC), Felton Institute/Family Service Agency (FSA), Goodwill Industries, treatment providers, San Francisco Department of Children, Youth, and their Families (DCYF), and the San Francisco Sheriff’s Department.

Summary of YAC Model

Below is a summary of the YAC model, including eligibility guidelines, phases of participation, and expected outcomes.

Young Adult Court (YAC) Eligibility

- Young adults age 18-25 years.
- No residence restriction, but priority given to young adults with “connections to San Francisco, including family and other supports.”

⁴ Zeira, Y. and M. Baldwin, 2016.

- Felony cases have priority over misdemeanor cases:
 - Certain felony charges are eligible on a pre-plea basis, while other felony charges are eligible on a deferred entry of judgment (DEJ) or probation (post-plea) basis.
 - All misdemeanors are eligible on a pre-plea basis with certain exceptions, including drunk driving, gang allegations, and hate crimes.
- If a certain disqualifying condition exists—including but not limited to current offenses involving the use of a firearm and individuals with a prior strike offense—the District Attorney may agree to waive the limitation on a case-by-case basis.

Young adults may be referred to YAC by the Public Defender’s Office, District Attorney, or the Adult Probation Department. The District Attorney’s Office reviews all cases referred to YAC. Potential participants undergo an assessment process conducted by FSA over multiple sessions. The process consists of an initial conversation to put the young adult at ease and address any concerns (e.g., about confidentiality), and then the administration of nationally-recognized assessment tools, including but not limited to the Primary Care Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PC-PTSD) Screen, the PCL-C (a standardized self-reported rating scale for PTSD), the Beck Depression Inventory, and the TCU Drug Screen V.

After assessment, FSA staff makes a recommendation on whether the young adult is suitable for YAC and the attorneys determine whether there is an agreeable legal resolution. Once young adults are accepted into YAC, they receive services organized into four distinct phases:

- Phase 1: Engagement and Assessment
- Phase 2: Stability and Accountability
- Phase 3: Wellness and Community Connection
- Phase 4: Program Transition (and graduation day)

Participants complete the program when they graduate and exit from Phase 4. The timeframe for completing the four phases of service provision is typically between 10 to 18 months.

Key services and components of YAC include the following:

- **Orientation.** After young adults are accepted into the YAC, FSA provides an orientation to the program by introducing the YAC Participant Handbook—which participants are asked to sign—and showing an orientation video. The video introduces participants to the YAC’s collaborative environment and to the different agency partners at the table.
- **Wellness Care Plan.** Upon enrolling in the YAC program, the case managers develop a Wellness Care Plan jointly with the participants. This plan details the goals for each YAC

participant based on individually-identified goals developed by the participant and their YAC case manager. The plan may include some or all of the following components: (1) case management and therapeutic services; (2) dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT) and Life Skills; (3) meeting with probation officer, if applicable; (4) substance abuse counseling, as applicable; and (5) housing, education, employment and family/parenting support. The plan is to be reviewed, monitored, and updated on an ongoing basis.

- **Case management services.** Participants receive intensive case management support from FSA or the CASC. Clients not on probation receive case management support from FSA while clients on probation receive this support from a TAY case manager at the CASC. Case managers provide referrals for housing, substance abuse treatment, and other supportive services. Primary workforce development support is provided by Goodwill Industries. In the case of FSA, case managers are also licensed therapists (clinical case managers). Probation case managers can refer their clients to FSA for therapeutic services, as appropriate. Case managers meet with participants on a regular basis, ranging in frequency from weekly, to bi-weekly, to monthly, depending on each participant's phase and level of engagement.
- **Drug testing.** Participants are required to take a baseline drug test during Phase 1 of the program. Additional, random drug testing can be administered while participants are in YAC if substance abuse is suspected.
- **Case conferencing and court appearances.** Participants are expected to make court appearances before the YAC Judge on a regular basis, the frequency of which is determined by progress realized toward their goals in the Wellness Care Plan. For the first several months, participants typically come to court every week. As participants show progress in meeting goals, court appearances are required less frequently. Prior to each court hearing, YAC team members hold case conferencing sessions to discuss individual YAC participants' status along various dimensions—including rated motivation level and stage of change—to develop a unified message and next steps for each participant, and to determine the order in which cases will be called.
- **Rewards and responses.** The YAC Participant Handbook outlines the specific behaviors that can trigger either a reward or a response. At the discretion of the YAC team, special rewards such as gift cards may be given during court appearances for behaviors such as arriving on time for court hearings and engaging in the Wellness Care Plan. Other, non-monetary rewards include public acknowledgement/"shout-outs" by the Judge and other YAC team members for good behavior, as well as a reduction in required court appearances. Responses or consequences are for behaviors such as continued substance abuse, missed appointments with probation, and failure to appear in court. The consequences for these responses range from increased mandated court appearances to termination from YAC.

Evaluation of YAC

The YAC evaluation was designed to assess how well the YAC program achieved its goals of reducing recidivism among participants while connecting them to a critical network of resources and supports to realize positive life outcomes. This evaluation also sought to understand the lessons that YAC partners learned from planning and implementing the program. To accomplish these goals, the evaluation consisted of implementation and outcome studies.

Implementation Study: Summary of Key Findings

SPR's evaluation of YAC's planning and early implementation yielded insights important for continuous improvement, as well for the efforts of other local areas. Key planning and early implementation study findings—reported in *An Evaluation of San Francisco's Young Adult Court; Findings on Planning and Early Implementation* (May 2017)—can be summarized as follows.

During the YAC planning period, program planners: (1) acted on local data indicating the overrepresentation of TAY in the justice system and emerging brain research focused on young adults; (2) capitalized on exceptional prior experience with specialized collaborative court models and a local commitment to funding TAY services; (3) mobilized diverse city agencies and partners; (4) defined YAC eligibility criteria; and (5) designed the program's core elements.

YAC's early implementation was marked by a full launch of a collaborative court model, a healthy demand for its services, and a set of individual partners serving young adults with dedication and care. Following were findings on core strengths of YAC's structure, important for facilitating young adults' success:

- **A compassionate, diverse court.** YAC conveys compassion and caring to its young adult participants. For some participants, YAC is the first time they've had a sense of support and received praise for their accomplishments. YAC is represented by highly diverse and dedicated individuals, including African American lawyers and an Asian American Judge. This representation is important for personal relatability, potential role models, and an effective YAC.
- **A court grounded in brain research.** The court is based on neuroscience that indicates the brains of young adults are fundamentally different from those of adults in terms of processing information and making decisions—thus requiring different strategies for avoiding recidivism, promoting engagement, and facilitating positive outcomes.⁵

⁵ At the same time that local criminal justice data were underscoring the critical need for an alternative approach with TAY, the San Francisco District Attorney, then-Chief Probation Officer, and Chief of Alternative Programs and Initiatives (District Attorney's Office) attended an Executive Session on Community Corrections at Harvard Kennedy School in March 2014 that covered young adult brain development research and community-based responses to

- **An opportunity for young adult voice and self-advocacy.** The YAC affords young adult participants a primary voice in their own wellness plans, as well as in the court setting and in their interactions with the YAC Judge.
- **Effective service-flow components and opportunities.** Core components include the YAC Handbook’s phases of young adult participation, court appearances as an element of accountability, engagement with clinical case managers, using degree of engagement to help determine frequency of court appearances, and dialectical behavior therapy groups.

As reported in the planning and implementation study, YAC’s most prominent areas of ongoing development were:

- **Continuing to address the balance and implications of clinical and criminal justice worlds being brought together in YAC.** This touches on various aspects of implementation, including: continuing to negotiate eligibility exceptions; agreeing on appropriate responses to disengaged young adults not meeting YAC expectations; and taking steps to make young adults more comfortable in their interactions with criminal justice system representatives.
- **Assessing the relative strengths of two different case management models, including a blended clinical-case manager model.** The YAC model will provide important data on two different case management models for young adults on probation and not on probation. In particular, a continued area of focus will be on whether the same staff can effectively provide both clinical (therapeutic) and case management services, or whether young adults are better served by a separation of functions.
- **Screening for young adult suitability and motivation.** Further YAC implementation may shed light on common characteristics of successful and terminated YAC participants that may be used to inform whether potential participants are indeed suitable and likely to succeed in YAC.
- **Emphasizing consistency in rewards and responses.** YAC partners emphasized the need for more consistency in rewards and responses to YAC participant behavior, whether positive or negative.

justice-involved young adults. The research indicated that brain development is still unfolding in critical ways for the TAY population, thus requiring different approaches for engagement and reducing recidivism than those used for older adults or juveniles. This presented research sparked the initial idea for establishing a YAC. After attending the Harvard session, the YAC planning process included training to all YAC partners on young adult brain development and trauma. One training in particular—entitled “TAY and Complex Trauma: Neurobiology and Psychosocial Approaches”—informed all aspects of the YAC design, including core program elements and the specific language used with and about young adults.

- **Addressing key service gaps.** Housing and mentoring emerged as the most frequently mentioned service gaps for YAC participants, with residential and developmentally-appropriate substance abuse also cited.
- **Knowing when to “let go” of both successful and struggling young adults.** Partners continue to grapple with when to “let go” of participants who are ready to graduate, as well as participants who are not meeting the expectations of the Young Adult Court.

Outcomes Study

After the May 2017 implementation study report, SPR focused on assessing progress toward key YAC objectives and outcomes. Key YAC objectives, drawn from the BSCC JAG 2014 Local Evaluation Plan, were as follows:

- 80 individuals will be served through the YAC annually;
- Of individuals that go through the YAC, decrease from baseline in the percent that reoffend;
- 100% of Young Adult Court participants receive an individualized case plan; and
- 65% of Young Adult Court participants enroll in program services identified in their individualized case plan.

YAC partners articulated other expected outcomes as part of a logic model process that occurred in fall 2015. However, many of these outcomes were broad in nature and/or not measurable—e.g., “wellness outcomes”, “development of life skills”, “legal outcomes”—and thus are not a focus of this report.

In this report, we also look at some differences in criminal justice outcomes between subgroups, based on key reflections that emerged from the implementation study report. In particular, YAC partners raised questions about potential or expected differences in outcomes between:

- **Probation and non-probation participants.** The YAC model offers two different case management models for young adult participants depending on whether they are on probation or not in San Francisco County. Participants not on probation receive a blended clinical-case manager model whereas participants on probation have different adults providing therapeutic and case management services.
- **Older and younger participants.** When speculating on participant characteristics more likely to lead to success in the YAC program, some YAC partners felt that older youth—with more life experience and appreciation of the unique opportunity afforded by YAC—might be better positioned to succeed in the program and avoid re-involvement with the criminal justice system.
- **San Francisco and non-San Francisco residents.** Some YAC partners reflected on the difficulty of consistently engaging participants in the YAC program (e.g., regular court

appearances, attending services identified in their Wellness Care Plan), particularly when participants resided outside of San Francisco County.

Data Sources and Limitations

To assess participant-level outcomes, this addendum relies on multiple data sources, as shown in Exhibit 1 below. The data sources are displayed by data type (e.g., demographics) and by probation status in San Francisco County. The latter distinction is made as there were different data sources for participants on probation (particularly with respect service data), as well as different levels of data coverage for the two groups.

Across the available data sources, data for 170 participants who were referred to YAC between its inception on August 7, 2015 and July 31, 2017 (the study period)⁶ were matched by their SF number, a unique identification number used to track an individual through San Francisco’s criminal justice system. Of the 170 participants, 49 were on probation in San Francisco County and 121 were not.

Exhibit 1: Data Sources and Number of Participants with Related Records, by Data Type and Probation Status (in SF County)

	<i>Probation:</i> 49 participants	<i>Non-Probation:</i> 121 participants	<i>Notes</i>
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YAC Database extract <i>n=36 (73%)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YAC Database extract <i>n=114 (94%)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YAC Database is maintained by Superior Court staff. Records including demographic information; program information such as referral date, court appearances, and program completion; and arrest records through December 31, 2017.
Program Outcomes (Court Appearances and Program Exit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YAC Database extract <i>n=36 (73%)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YAC Database extract <i>n=114 (94%)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YAC Database is maintained by Superior Court staff. Records including demographic information; program information such as referral date, court appearances, and program completion; and arrest records through December 31, 2017.
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APD Database extract Cityspan extract <i>n=49 (100%)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YAC Progress Reports Cityspan extract <i>n=89 (74%)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The APD provided data on the types of services received by the 49 YAC participants who were on probation in SF County and served by case

⁶ In this study, participation is defined as having at least one scheduled court hearing and/or received services from a YAC case manager. There were originally 185 such participants in the study period (August 7, 2015—July 31, 2017). However, 14 were dropped because they did not have a scheduled court hearing or case management services recorded. In addition, one individual who had only one scheduled appointment, which resulted in a no-show, and no record of receiving case management services was dropped from the study. Finally, another individual was dropped because their exit outcome indicated they were never accepted into the program.

			managers at the CASC. Services were categorized as: case management, job training, education, community service, substance abuse treatment, assessments, and individualized plans.
Wellness Care Plan Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellness Care Plan extract <i>n=10 (20%)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellness Care Plan extract <i>n=63 (52%)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FSA tracks participation in individual and group services in Cityspan database. Case management progress reports were provided by Superior Court staff from the YAC Database for a subset of participants. Wellness Care Plan records included information on goals set by participants and their progress toward those goals.
SF County Arrests, Criminal Charges, Motions to Revoke, and jail/prison sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YAC Database extract <i>n=36 (73%)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YAC Database extract <i>n=114 (94%)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YAC Database is maintained by Superior Court staff. Records including demographic information; program information such as referral date, court appearances, and program completion; and arrest records through December 31, 2017.

The findings in this report are subject to two key limitations. First, as revealed in the table above, we did not have records for all participants across the various data sources. For example, we have demographic information and criminal justice data (in SF County) for only 88% of the 170 participants. As another example, because the Wellness Care Plan section of the YAC Database was not established at the onset of the program, only 43% of participants had complete Wellness Care Plan data.

Second, this analysis draws on criminal justice data *only* from San Francisco County (through December 31, 2017) as we were unable to secure statewide criminal justice data during the evaluation period. Therefore, criminal justice data reported here—both before and after YAC referral—is underestimated, particularly given that 42% of YAC participants reside outside of San Francisco.

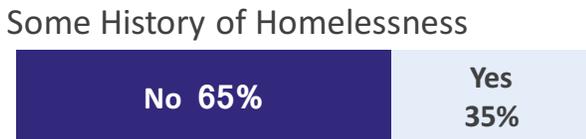
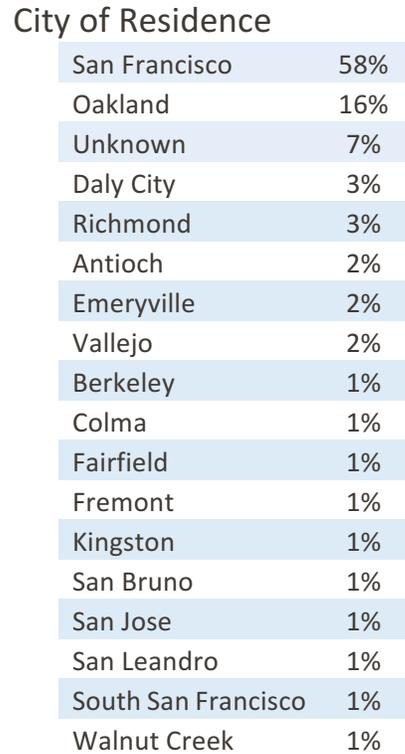
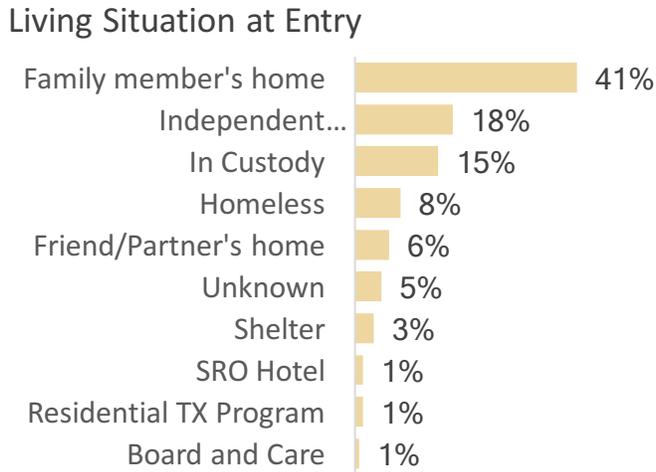
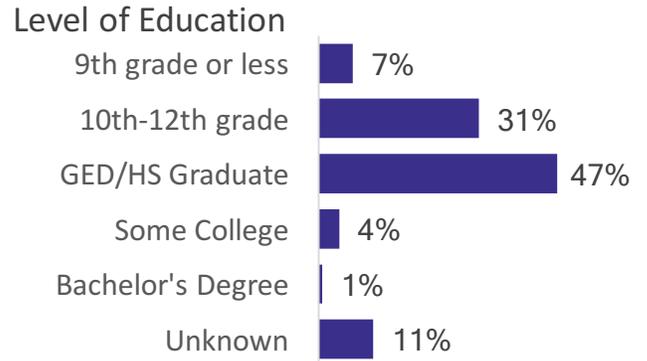
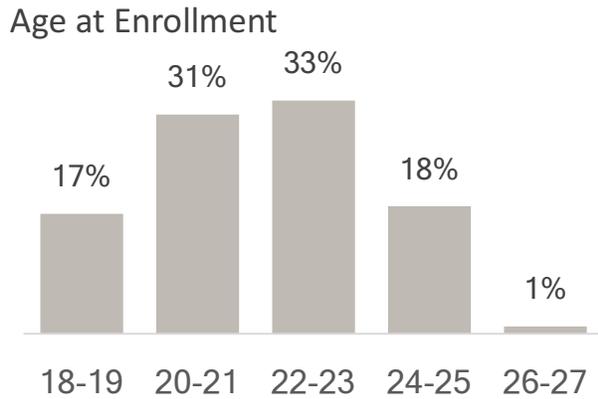
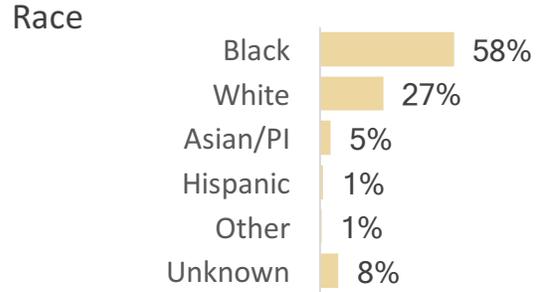
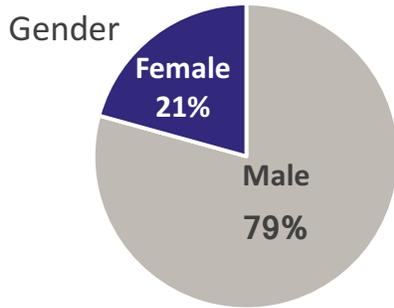
The remainder of this addendum provides an overview of participants, including their demographic information and experience with the criminal justice system in San Francisco County; reports on findings related to YAC objectives; and concludes with a summary of other program outcomes, such as completion of individualized goals and program completion.

Overview of Participants

The Young Adult Court began accepting participants on August 7, 2015. By July 31, 2017, the YAC had a total of 170 participants. Detailed demographic information is displayed in Exhibit 2 for the 150 YAC participants with demographic records available in the YAC Database. Of these 150 participants, **58% were African American, the large majority was male (79%), and over half of**

participants (58%) were high school graduates or had received their GED by the time of referral. On average, at the time of referral, participants were 22 years old, 41% were living in a home with family member(s), and more than one-third had some history of homelessness. As shown in Exhibit 2, 58% of participants resided in San Francisco at the time of referral, while 88% had a connection to San Francisco.

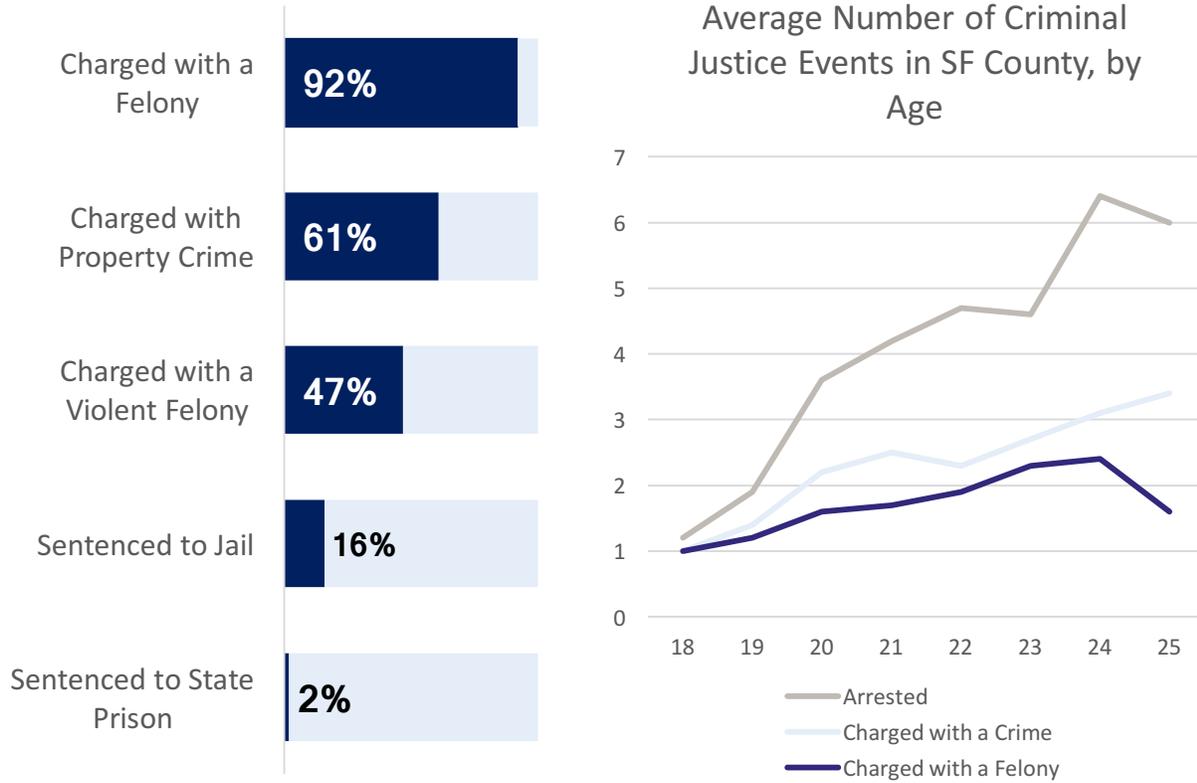
Exhibit 2: YAC Participant Demographics at Time of YAC Entry (n=150)



Experience with the San Francisco criminal justice system varied among participants. **On average, participants had been arrested four times and charged with a crime twice in San Francisco County prior to YAC referral.** The number of arrests ranged from one to sixteen and up to ten of those arrests culminated in charges being filed. Exhibit 3 displays participants' average number of criminal justice events in San Francisco County by age, as well as the number of arrests prior to YAC referral by age group. Older participants had more arrest records on average.

Exhibit 3 shows that the clear majority of YAC participants (92%) had been charged with a felony in San Francisco County prior to referral, 16% had received a jail sentence and 2% had received a state prison sentence. Over half of participants (61%) had been charged with property crime in San Francisco County prior to YAC referral.

Exhibit 3: Experience with Criminal Justice System in SF County Prior to YAC Referral (n=150)



Number of Arrests Prior to YAC Referral

Age	1-2	3-5	6-8	>8	n
18-19	80%	16%	4%	0%	25
20-21	44%	27%	20%	9%	45
22-23	43%	28%	15%	15%	47
24-25	31%	23%	23%	23%	26
>25	100%	0%	0%	0%	7

YAC Objective Findings

The YAC realized strong progress toward its key objectives, described below.

Objective 1: 80 individuals will be served through the YAC annually. **Serving 170 participants between August 1, 2015 and July 31, 2017, YAC met its goal.** Almost all (98%) of the participants were in the target age group, all participants received case management services from FSA or the CASC, and 60% attended at least one court hearing.⁷

Objective 2: 100% of Young Adult Court participants receive an individualized case plan. **YAC made progress toward its goal with 79% of participants receiving an individualized case plan.** In all, 135 participants created an individualized case plan. Close to all participants (98%) on probation received a case plan from case managers at the CASC and 72% of participants not on probation received a case plan from FSA case managers.

Objective 3: 65% of Young Adult Court participants enroll in program services identified in their individualized case plan. **Connecting 87% of YAC participants with program services, YAC exceeded its goal.**⁸ FSA and CASC case managers referred participants to the following programs and services: job training, education, substance abuse treatment, parenting classes, health & behavioral health services, dialectical behavioral therapy groups, housing support, life skills groups, and/or financial support services.⁹ Among the 49 YAC participants on probation, 94% participated in at least one of the program services described above. Among the 89 YAC participants not on probation for whom we have service data, 83% participated in at least one of the program services.

⁷ Of the 49 participants on probation, 20 (or 41%) had YAC court hearings on record. Of the 121 participants not on probation, 68% had court hearings on record.

⁸ This includes 138 participants who had service data available from the APD data extract for probation participants (n=49) or from progress reports entered into the YAC Database for non-probation participants (n=89). The APD data extract included an indicator of whether participants received services in the following categories: health & behavioral health care services, education, job training, and community service. SPR coded individual progress reports entered by FSA staff to identify programs and services non-probation participants accessed. The Cityspan data extract from the Department of Children, Youth, and Families provided data on participation in dialectical behavioral therapy classes and life skills group classes.

⁹ Financial services support includes connections to support such as Supplemental Security Income, no-fee waivers for driver's license renewals, EBT cards, and transportation support.

Exhibit 4: Services Received by YAC Participants (n=138)



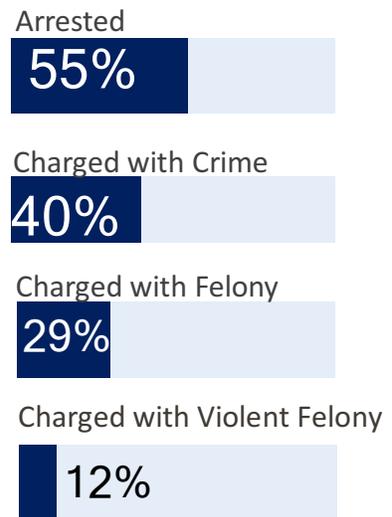
Objective 4: Of individuals that go through YAC, there will be a decrease from baseline in the percentage that reoffend. The State of California’s definition of adult recidivism is “conviction of a new felony or misdemeanor committed within three years of release from custody or committed within three years of placement on supervision for a previous criminal conviction.”¹⁰ For the YAC evaluation, a number of challenges existed to using this definition, including a relatively short timeframe of study to consider criminal justice events post-YAC referral, limited data on incarceration, and criminal justice data limited to San Francisco County. Therefore, we looked at new charges in San Francisco County after participants were referred to the YAC program. We also looked at jail and prison sentences and Motions to Revoke (MTRs) filed after YAC referral, and tracked arrests as negative events for YAC participants. All of these data were for San Francisco County only and are thus underestimates of criminal justice involvement after YAC referral.

¹⁰ This definition was approved by the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) in 2014: <http://bscc.ca.gov/downloads/Recidivism%20Defintion%20Press%20Release.pdf> As stated earlier, the recidivism rate for individuals (adults and young adults) returning from prison to SF County is 76%. Other common measures of offender outcomes include new arrests, criminal filings, offense type, return to custody, and violation of supervision.

Charges: Forty percent of YAC participants were charged with a crime in San Francisco County within one year of their referral to the YAC program.¹¹ Under one-third of participants (29%) faced felony charges within this timeframe, as shown in Exhibit 5.

The likelihood of new charges varied by certain participant characteristics. For example, YAC participants with at least three charges in their history prior to YAC referral were more likely than others to face new charges within one year of their YAC referral (see Exhibit 6).¹² Controlling for the number of prior charges, younger participants (those under 22 years old) were also more likely to face new charges within one year of their YAC referral.¹³

Exhibit 5: Percent of Participants Arrested and Charged in SF County After YAC Referral (n=102)

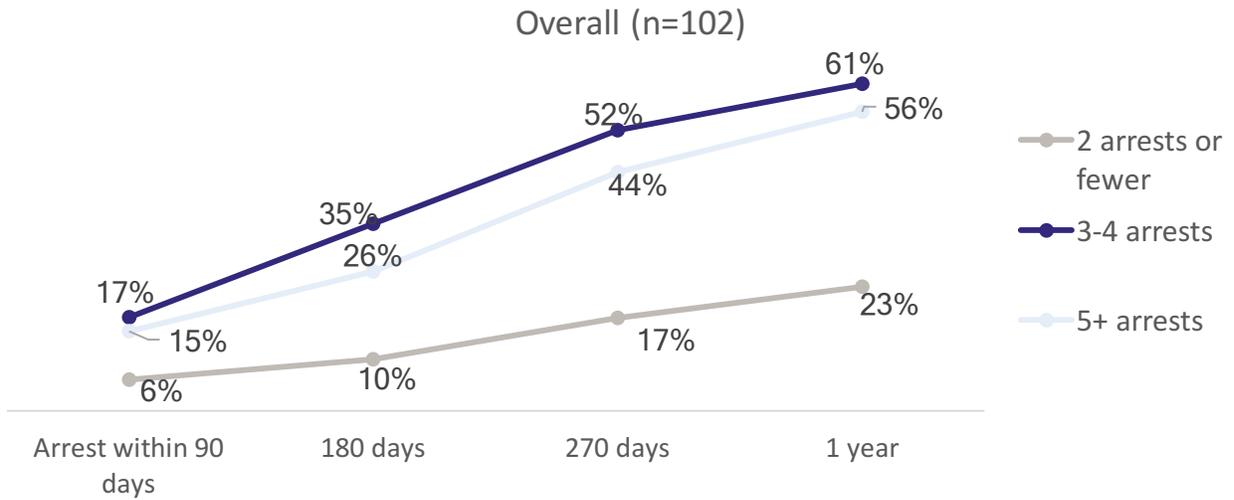


¹¹ This calculation includes all participants who had been referred to YAC by December 31, 2016.

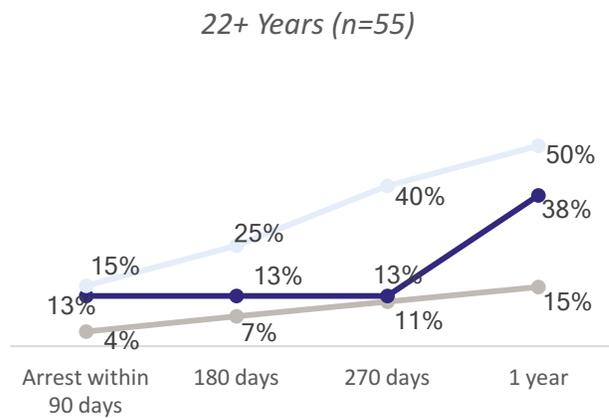
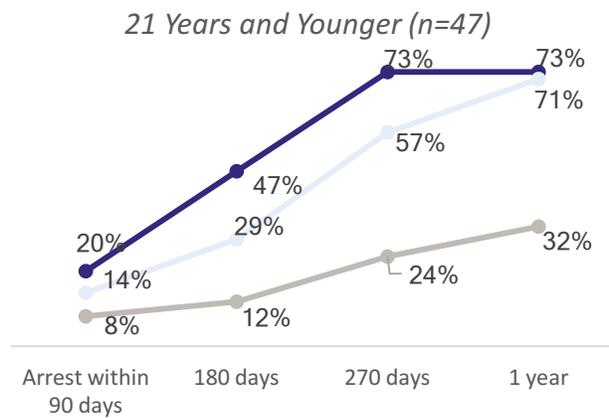
¹² Statistically significant at $p < .05$.

¹³ Statistically significant at $p < .05$.

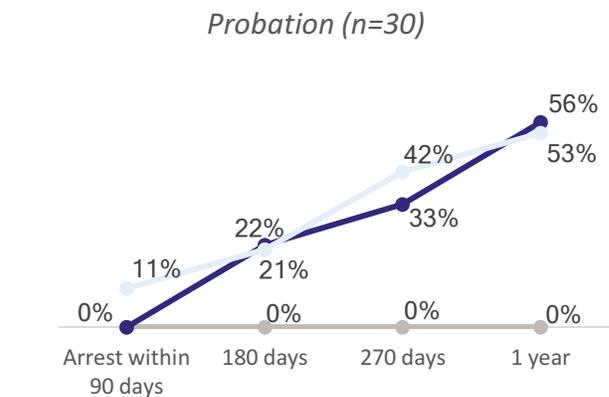
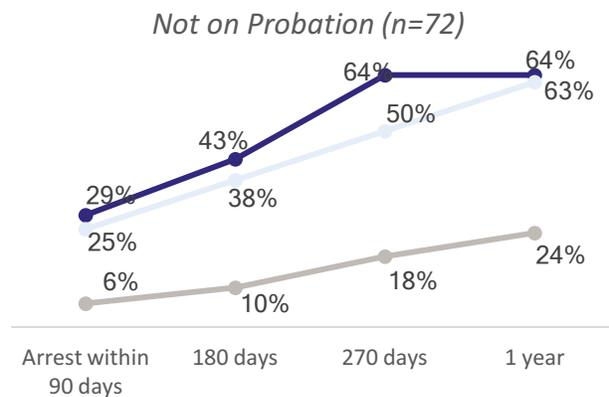
Exhibit 6: Percent Charged in SF County After YAC Referral by Number of Prior-to-YAC Arrests



By Age at Referral



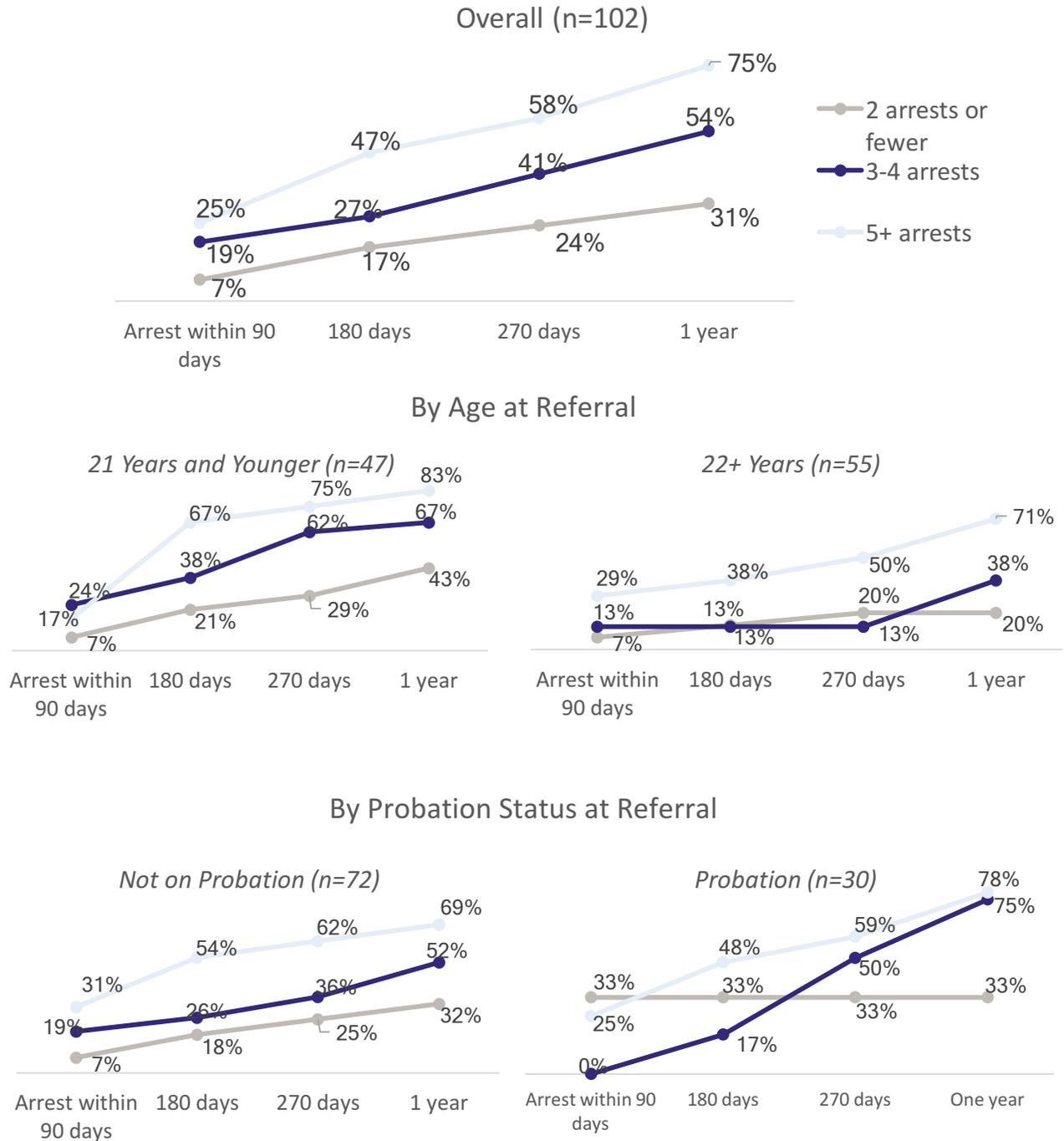
By Probation Status at Referral



Arrests: Overall, a little over half of YAC participants were arrested in San Francisco County within one year of referral (55%). The participant characteristics that were associated with facing new charges after YAC referral, such as age and number of previous arrests, were also associated with new arrests (see Exhibit 7).¹⁴

¹⁴ Both findings were statistically significant at $p < .05$.

Exhibit 7: Percent Arrested in SF County After YAC Referral by Number of Prior-to-YAC Arrests



Incarceration. In the period between being referred to YAC and December 31, 2017, **7% of participants were sentenced in San Francisco County to time in jail; no participants were sentenced to time in state prison.** Participants were sentenced to an average of 46 days, or 7% of their total time since referral, in jail.¹⁵

Probation Violations. We looked at which participants on probation (in San Francisco County) had a Motion to Revoke (MTR) filed after YAC referral as one indicator of probation violation, while recognizing that a range of other probation violations occurred and were documented in the case notes of probation officers.¹⁶ Of the 49 participants who were on probation in SF County at the time of YAC referral, six (or 12%) of them had an MTR filed in San Francisco County after the point of referral to YAC.¹⁷

Other Participant Outcomes

In addition to progress toward key YAC objectives, we examined the following:

Appearances at scheduled court hearings. Overall, participants appeared at 89% of scheduled court hearings.¹⁸ The number of times participants appeared at the YAC varied from zero to 36. On average, participants who successfully completed the YAC program attended 10 court hearings; those that were court-terminated attended an average of 3 court hearings.

Participant goals. The YAC early implementation report described how YAC was evolving in its definition of success. For instance, while some partners agreed that the desired outcomes, at minimum, are achieving a level of personal stability (e.g., in terms of housing and employment) and having no additional involvement with the criminal justice system, others believed that success should be defined by participants themselves based on individually-defined goals.¹⁹

Participants identify short-term and long-term goals and track progress toward those goals in their Wellness Care Plans. For participants with Wellness Care Plans entered in to the YAC Database, they were most likely to identify goals in the areas of employment (94%), wellness

¹⁵ Including jail sentences and time sentenced to jail as a condition of probation.

¹⁶ These data were not accessible to SPR.

¹⁷ Because we did not have dates for the MTRs that were filed, we only considered filed MTRs if their preceding/associated arrests occurred after YAC referral. As a result, this analysis underestimates the number of participants who had an MTR filed after YAC referral because it excludes those filed after YAC referral for arrests occurring prior to YAC referral.

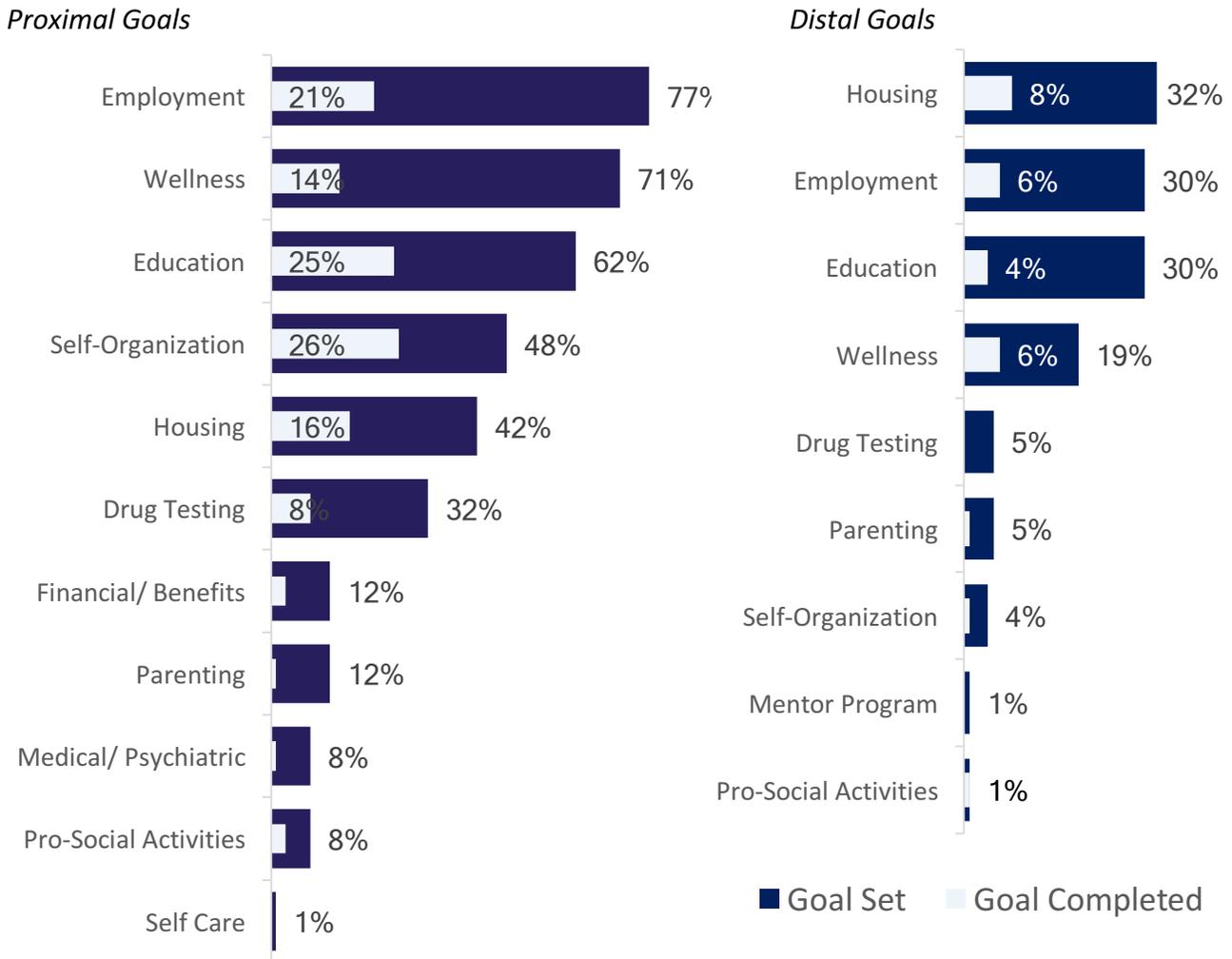
¹⁸ This includes only participants with a record of a scheduled YAC court hearing indicated in the YAC Database (61%). Of the 49 participants on probation at referral, 20 (or 41%) had YAC court hearings on record. Of the participants not on probation, 69% had court hearings on record.

¹⁹ Young adults in the YAC participant focus groups (conducted for the earlier implementation study) stressed employment, housing, and clearing their criminal records as their top goals and priorities.

(79%), and education (75%). During the study period, 55% completed at least one of their short-term (proximal) goals, such as completing parenting classes or finding independent housing.²⁰ Exhibit 8 displays the percentage of participants who set short-term Wellness Care Plan goals in each area, as well as the percentage of participants who completed a short-term goal in each area. Participants were most likely to complete short-term goals related to education and self-organization goals. About one in five completed one of their long-term (distal) goals.

²⁰ A total of 43% of YAC participants had complete Wellness Care Plan records in the YAC Database.

Exhibit 8: Percent of Participants Setting and Completing Wellness Care Plan Goals (n=73)



Program completion and retention. Of the 150 YAC participants for whom we have program completion data, 17% successfully completed the program, 39% are still enrolled, and 44% left the program before completion, translating to an overall retention rate of 56%. The 26 participants who successfully completed the program were enrolled in YAC for an average of 466 days.²¹ In comparison, participants who were terminated by the court were enrolled for an average of 166 days and those who self-terminated were enrolled for an average of 296 days. **Among those who exited the program, participants who lived in San Francisco were twice as likely as other participants to successfully complete the program (35% versus 17%).²²**

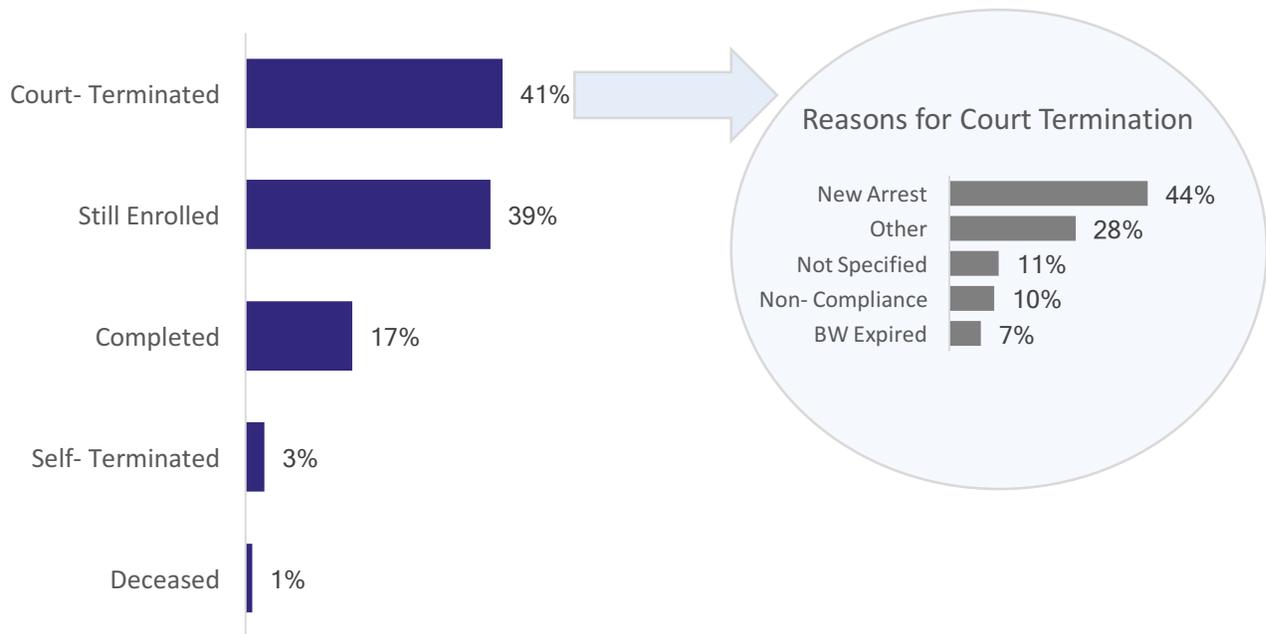
Interviews during early implementation revealed that partners grappled with when to “let go” of participants who were ready to graduate, as well as participants who were not meeting the

²¹ Period of enrollment is defined as the day of referral through the day of exit.

²² Statistically significant at p<.10.

expectations of the Young Adult Court. As shown in Exhibit 9, re-arrest was the most commonly cited reason for court termination. Forty-six participants were terminated or self-terminated after they met with a case manager and before their first court hearing.²³ Reasons for early termination ranged from non-compliance, to referrals to programs better suited for specific needs.

Exhibit 9: Exit Outcomes (n=150)



²³ The 46 participants accounted for 31% of the 150 participants for whom we have program completion data.

Conclusion and Looking Ahead

From August 7, 2015—when YAC partners from clinical and criminal justice orientations came together to formally launch a collaborative court model—to July 31, 2017, the court has provided 170 young adults with services aimed at connecting them to a network of supports to promote positive life outcomes, and reducing recidivism. Our analysis of participant-level data, raises the following key points and issues for future study as the YAC continues to evolve:

- Since its inception, the San Francisco YAC has served its target population and participants have received the services and program components YAC was designed to provide.
- The outcome findings presented in this addendum cannot speak to the non-quantifiable individual-level outcomes that may have taken root within the timeframe of YAC involvement but may not be perceptible or fully realized until the coming months or years (e.g., preliminary shifts in attitude, development of personal strategies to achieve positive life outcomes).
- Reported criminal justice and program completion outcomes varied across participants. Participants younger than 22 and participants with three or more arrests and charges prior to YAC referral were more likely to be arrested and/or charged after their YAC referral. Participants who were residents of San Francisco at the time of referral were twice as likely to successfully complete the program as YAC participants residing outside of San Francisco.
- Reported criminal justice outcomes were significantly limited by our inability during the evaluation period to secure statewide criminal justice data for YAC participants. Securing these data statewide, and over a longer period, would help YAC partners better assess the success of the YAC and make any needed adjustments to program eligibility and implementation.
- The inability to match all YAC participants across different data sources posed a challenge to the evaluation. The YAC would benefit from partners continuing to work across multiple agencies to secure and report recidivism and other outcome data.
- The YAC could benefit from: (1) revisiting key issues raised during the planning and early implementation report (including participant suitability, engagement, and different case management models) to see how they have evolved over time; (2) investigating new implementation successes and challenges to emerge since our last round of qualitative data collection; and (3) implementing a participant survey to capture perspectives on program quality and individual-level changes over time.