

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIVERSION PROGRAMMES -  
A LONGITUDINAL EVALUATION OF CASES**

**BY**

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**(South African National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of  
Offenders)**

**MAY 2001**

This research was made possible with the financial assistance of the Royal Netherlands Embassy. The views expressed here are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Royal Netherlands Embassy.

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# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIVERSION PROGRAMMES - A LONGITUDINAL EVALUATION OF CASES<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. Introduction

Does diversion work? Does it prevent crime? Does it teach the client anything? These are questions that are asked by both sceptics and advocates of diversion alike. Diversion was established in South Africa on a fairly informal basis in the early 1990s by NICRO and Lawyers for Human Rights. Advocates of diversion have campaigned for the expansion of diversion, including diversion into legislation, making it a cornerstone of juvenile justice legislation and also using it to decongest the criminal justice system. Diversion has been extremely successful in other parts of the world, especially Europe, Britain, North America and Australia. However, there is very limited information available on the performance of diversion programmes in the developing world and specifically in Southern Africa.

Nearly nine years after the establishment of the first diversion programmes for juvenile offenders, we in South Africa remain without proper documented research that evaluates the performance of diversion programmes as a crime reduction measure. The advocates of diversion have campaigned for it rather successfully without providing hard evidence of its effectiveness<sup>2</sup>. Appealing to the logic (and sometimes emotions) of decision-makers has been fairly

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<sup>1</sup> This research was made possible with the financial assistance of the Royal Netherlands Embassy as part of their programme to support and expand diversion in South Africa. The author also wishes to express his gratitude to Monique Ritter, Jackie Williams and Fairoza Brey for their assistance, as well as all the other NICRO staff who made this project possible.

<sup>2</sup> A number of mini-evaluations have been carried out by university students with the assistance of NICRO in the various provinces over the past three years but none of them attempted to track programme participants on a national scale over a longer period of time.

successful to date. It is true that the United Nations Standards Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice state clearly that where possible and appropriate diversion should take place<sup>3</sup>:

- 11.1 *Consideration shall be given, wherever appropriate, to dealing with juvenile offenders without resorting to formal trial by the competent authority.*
- 11.2 *The police, the prosecution or other agencies dealing with juvenile cases shall be empowered to dispose of such cases, at their discretion, without recourse to formal hearings, in accordance with the criteria laid down for that purpose in the respective legal system and also in accordance with the principles contained in these rules.*
- 11.3 *Any diversion involving referral to appropriate community or other services shall require the consent of the juvenile, or her or his parents or guardian, provided that such decision to refer a case shall be subject to review by a competent authority, upon application.*
- 11.4 *In order to facilitate the discretionary disposition of juvenile cases, efforts shall be made to provide for community programmes, such as temporary supervision and guidance, restitution, and compensation for victims.*

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<sup>3</sup>

United Nations: Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice, United Nations, New York, 1986

The SA Law Commission's Report on Juvenile Justice makes recommendations based on the Constitution of South Africa and international instruments on juvenile justice, and concludes that it is both realistic and feasible to include diversion as a central feature of the proposed legislation<sup>4</sup>.

NICRO, as the largest provider of diversion services in South Africa, has created the setting for the longitudinal study of diversion clients. In 1995 the organisation implemented a comprehensive information system making possible the tracking of clients over time as well as the monitoring of trends. In October 1998 a NICRO report entitled *"The effectiveness of diversion programmes - a longitudinal evaluation of cases"* was published by the organisation. Said report described the findings of the first longitudinal study of diversion cases in South Africa that surveyed 460 former programme participants. In 2000 a second survey of the same sample was conducted and this report presents the findings of the 2000 survey and integrates it with the 1998 survey findings. For obvious reasons the second survey did not cover all the topics addressed in the first. The significant findings of both surveys are presented here.

## **2. DESCRIPTION OF NICRO DIVERSION PROGRAMMES AND BACKGROUND STATISTICS**

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<sup>4</sup>

SA Law Commission (2000) Report on Juvenile Justice, Project 106, p 89.

In the early 1990s NICRO established a number of diversion programmes in the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. The first two programmes were Pre-trial Community Service (PTCS) and the Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES). Soon the need for a wider variety of programmes was identified and these were consequently developed. South Africa does not as yet (2001) have a separate juvenile justice system for persons under the age of 18 years charged with criminal offences. These children are, apart from minor exceptions, treated as adults by the criminal justice system. Persons under the age of 7 years are regarded by the law as not having criminal capacity. Children between the ages of 7 and 14 years are presumed to lack criminal capacity until the contrary is proved<sup>5</sup>.

Diversion can be defined as *the channelling of prima facie cases from the formal criminal justice system on certain conditions to extra judicial programmes, at the discretion of the prosecution*. Diversionary options in no way intend to make offenders less accountable or responsible for their actions but rather to provide offenders with the opportunity to rethink their lives without getting a criminal record<sup>6</sup>. In principle, a case is eligible for diversion when it is not in the best interest of the offender, the victim (if present), the criminal justice system and society that he or she should be prosecuted and convicted. Under South African criminal law the Director of Public Prosecutions has the authority to withdraw the charges against any accused person conditionally or unconditionally. This power is delegated to prosecutors at local courts and makes the diversion of cases possible. Should a person not comply with the conditions of the diversion, this will be reported to the prosecutor, who will in turn reinstitute the prosecution.

From NICRO's perspective, as a social service agency, the following embody the primary aims of diversion:

- to make offenders responsible and accountable for their actions
- to provide an opportunity for reparation
- to identify underlying problems motivating offending behaviour
- to prevent first-time or petty offenders from receiving a criminal record and being labelled as criminals as this may become a self-fulfilling prophecy
- to provide educational and rehabilitative programmes to the benefit of all parties concerned
- to lessen the case load of the formal justice system.

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<sup>5</sup> Skelton, A (1993) Children in trouble with the Law, LHR, Pretoria, p 5

<sup>6</sup> Muntingh, LM & Shapiro, R (1997) NICRO Diversions - an introduction to diversion from the criminal justice system, NICRO, Cape Town.

A brief description of each of the NICRO diversion programmes is provided below<sup>7</sup>.

#### *Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES)*

This is a six-part life skills programme spread over six weeks, one afternoon per week. The programme normally involves 15 to 25 participants. The parents or guardians participate in the first and last sessions. A variety of issues are addressed, such as conflict resolution, crime and the law, parent-child relationships and responsible decision-making. The programme can be used as a pre-trial diversion or as part of a postponed or deferred sentence.

#### *Pre-trial Community Service (PTCS)*

In lieu of prosecution the offender has to perform a number of hours of community service at a non-profit organisation. The number of hours are determined by NICRO in consultation with the public prosecutor. NICRO also monitors the performance of the client and reports to the prosecutor. On average these clients have to perform between 20 and 60 hours of community service.

#### *Victim Offender Mediation (VOM)*

This programme gives the victim and offender the opportunity to meet and work out a mutually acceptable agreement with the assistance of a mediator (from NICRO) with the aim of restoring the balance. Once an agreement is reached, this is reported to the prosecutor and the contract is then monitored by NICRO.

#### *Family Group Conferences (FGC)*

In certain respects FGCs are very similar to VOM, except that they involve the families of the victim and the offender in the mediation process. The aim is also to work out an agreement with the assistance of a mediator or facilitator. Preventing recidivism is an important component of FGCs and all FGCs have to implement plans that will prevent further offending. The involvement of significant others is central to the process.

#### *The Journey*

The Journey programme is aimed at high-risk children and juveniles. The programme can last between three

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<sup>7</sup>

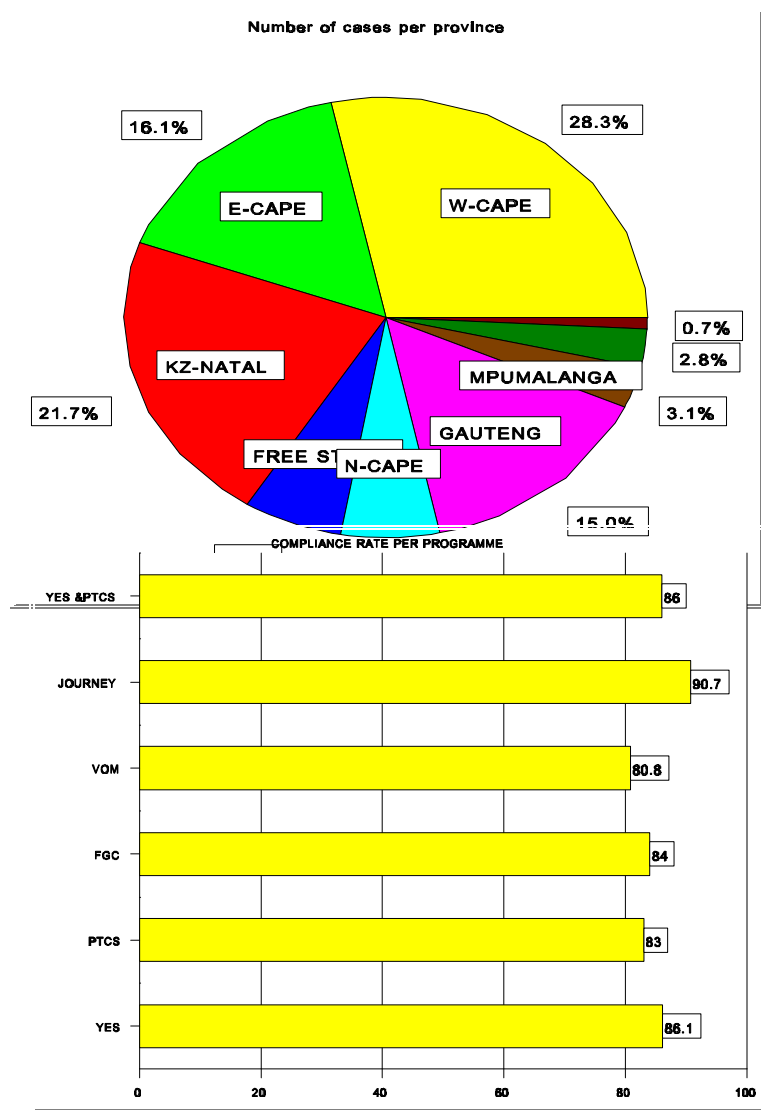
For a more detailed description of the NICRO diversion programme refer Muntingh, LM and Shapiro, RJ (1997) NICRO Diversions - an introduction to diversion from the criminal justice system, NICRO, Cape Town.

and 12 months, depending on the needs of the client group. The programme is usually structured around a group of ten to 15 participants. The participants are usually school drop-outs with one or more previous convictions. The programme involves life skills training, adventure education and vocational skills training.

### Overview of diversion statistics 2001

In the 2000/1 financial year NICRO handled 13 785 diversion cases in South Africa in the nine provinces. As is evident from Figure 1, the cases are not distributed evenly across the country, with the majority being in three of the more densely populated provinces, where diversion programmes have been running for some years.

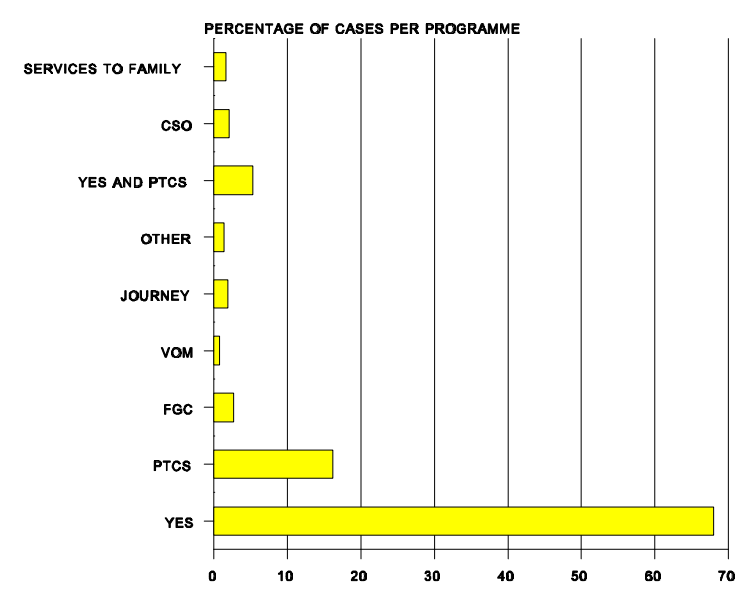
The majority of children referred are charged with minor property crimes such as theft, shoplifting and malicious damage to property. A small percentage of violent offenders are also referred, as well as victimless offences.





The compliance rate per programme is fairly high, ranging between 80% and 91%. The compliance rate is one indicator of the success of the programmes, but is in essence only an indicator and does not provide any conclusive evidence of their effectiveness.

The majority of diversion clients participate in the YES programme (see Figure 3) as it is group-based and is thus able to handle higher numbers than the other programmes.



### 3. AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

As stated above, much work has been done in recent years on diversion but with very little data to support it. The Child Justice Bill sets the agenda for legislative reform in South Africa but even this bill relies on very limited research as to the effectiveness and impact of diversion programmes. It is therefore the overall aim of this report to inform the debate on diversion by evaluating a sample of diversion programme participants. This research provides a longitudinal view of South African diversion programme participants from various parts of the country in both rural and urban settings, and the 2000 survey further investigates the findings of the 1998 survey. This study therefore has the following aims:

- To provide accurate information on children who have participated in NICRO's diversion programmes at least 24 months ago
- To identify trends in reoffending and non-offending cases
- To collect feedback on the programme from participants
- To assess the impact of the programmes on the participants
- To create a profile of recidivists

The study is investigative in nature and a distinct hypothesis was therefore not formulated.

#### 4. Methodology

Two important factors influenced the basic design of the study. The first is that most diversion cases (95%) are pre-trial referrals and there is consequently no conviction and thus no record of the offence, and it would therefore not be possible or practical to trace recidivists through official records. The second is that the South African criminal justice system has no electronic centralised or linked-up information system whereby cases can be traced. Even if there were records of diversions, it would be an impossible task to trace such cases. These two factors necessitated the tracing of clients through NICRO records and interviewing them. Naturally participation in the study was voluntary.

This study focuses strongly on recidivism and the effectiveness of the NICRO programmes in preventing further offending. It should, however, be noted that the commission of further offences after participation in a programme is only one indicator of the effectiveness of the programme. The two studies are aimed at providing basic data on programme effectiveness that can be used as a stepping stone for further and more detailed research. For similar reasons the study did not make use of control and experimental groups.

The 1998 sample framework identified a stratified sample of 640 individuals who participated in a diversion programme at least 12 months prior to the survey according to geographical location and programme profile. Respondents were selected from seven provinces in proportion to the numbers in the five diversion programmes. Once these numbers were calculated, respondents were selected randomly in the provinces per programme. Respondents were interviewed by means of a questionnaire and only clients who have completed the programmes were included in the sample.

Of the 640 questionnaires that went out in 1998, 468 (67%) were received back. Owing to certain problems not all the questionnaires were completed. Of the 468 that came back, 64% were completed when interviewing the client and 36% when interviewing an alternative

respondent, as the client was not available. It was anticipated that in a number of situations the original client would not be available but in order to gather some essential information, the questionnaire provided for interviewing another person familiar with the client, such as a parent or guardian. Although this method is not ideal, the completed questionnaires provide sufficient information on which to base certain findings.

In 2000 the same group of 468 was targeted and 356 (76.1%) questionnaires were completed. In 55.3% of the cases the client was the respondent and in 44.7% of cases, an alternative respondent was interviewed. Table 1 summarises the tracking rate of the two surveys. As expected the proportion of questionnaires in which the client was the respondent decreased by 10% because the target group is at a very mobile stage in life.

**Table 1      Respondent numbers in 1998 and 2000 surveys**

			Percentage	Respondent	
<b>1998</b>	Targeted	640		Client	65.8%
	Received	468	73.1%	Alternative	34.2%
<b>2000</b>	Targeted	468		Client	55.3%
	Received	356	76.1%	Alternative	44.7%

The questionnaire consists of three parts:

- Section A      To be completed by NICRO worker based on the case file
- Section B      To be completed by fieldworker when interviewing client
- Section C      To be completed by fieldworker when interviewing alternative respondent

Once the questionnaires had been completed, they were coded and recorded on computer. Basic profiles were generated and cross-tabulations made where appropriate. Responses to open-ended questions were also coded but kept as close as possible to the original response.

The questionnaires dealt with a number of issues and these are listed below. Some of the themes were covered only in the 1998 survey whereas others were covered in both surveys. These are indicated accordingly:

- biographical information (updated in 2000)
- case history (same as in 1998)
- residential situation and household structure (only in 1998)
- reason for attending programme (only in 1998)
- expectation of programme (both)
- retention of programme content (both)
- best and worst impressions of the programme (both)
- what was learned from programme (both)
- best and worst aspects of programme (only in 1998)
- current opinion of programme (both)
- reason for finishing programme (only in 1998)
- personal change after programme (both)
- commission of offences after programme (both)
- time lapse to further offences and reasons for further offences (both)
- reasons for not committing further offences (both).

## 5. recidivism

One of the primary aims of the study was to measure the recidivism rate of diversion programme participants, firstly after at least a 12 month period after participation in the programme had expired and then after at least a 24-month period had expired. Measuring recidivism and establishing its cause is a complex task and sometimes borders on developing arbitrary scales. If a person commits another offence this can be for a variety of reasons that have very little or nothing to do with the programme he or she has participated in. Furthermore, if a person reoffends it cannot be summarily deduced that the programme is ineffective as other factors may have pushed that individual into a situation of reoffending.

There has been much debate around recidivism and the standards that should be used for

measurement. Barnoski provides guidance in this regard<sup>8</sup> and sets clear standards as to how recidivism studies should be conducted. However, there is no reference to studies pertaining to diversion programmes.

For the purposes of this study recidivism will refer to the commission of another offence (irrespective of seriousness) after attendance of a NICRO diversion programme. It is also not a prerequisite, in terms of this definition, that the person must have been arrested, charged and convicted to be defined as a recidivist. It will be shown later that the number of recidivists is extremely low, even when using such a wide definition.

## 6. Profile of respondents

The following provides the profile of the diversion programme participants who also participated in the two surveys, either directly or indirectly.

The geographical distribution of clients is shown in Table 2. The majority of respondents were from the Western Cape, followed by Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. This profile is broadly in line with the overall profile of referrals.

**Table 2      Geographical distribution of respondents and tracking rate**

Area	1998 Respondents	2000 Respondents	Tracking rate
Bellville	24	9	37.5
Bloemfontein	41	28	68.3
Botshabelo	10	9	90.0

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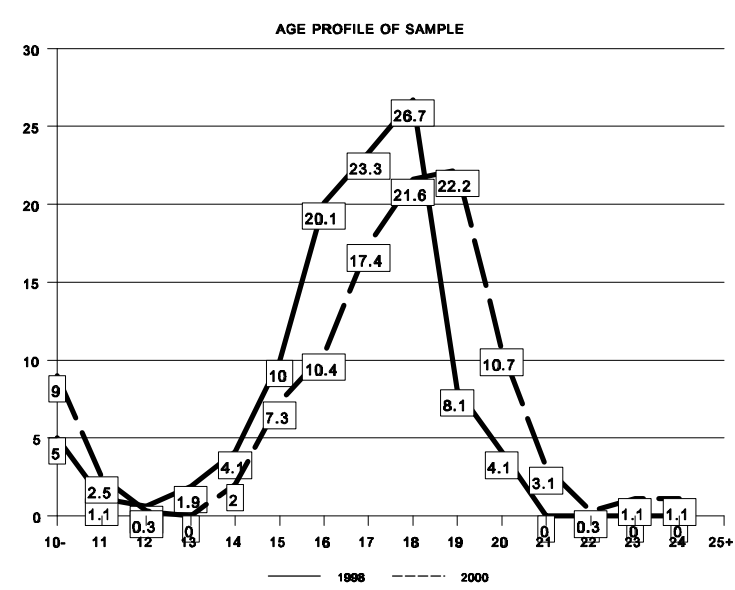
<sup>8</sup> Barnoski, R (1997) Standards for Improving Research Effectiveness in Adult and Juvenile Justice, Washington State Institute for Public Policy, (<http://www.wagov/wsipp/reports/ResearchStandards.html>)

Cape Town	45	31	68.9
Durban	30	24	80.0
East London	28	28	100.0
Empangeni	19	12	63.2
Germiston	12	8	66.7
Johannesburg	45	37	82.2
Kimberley	18	16	88.9
Mitchells Plain	21	10	47.6
Namaqualand	5	5	100.0
Nelspruit	9	7	77.8
George	4	4	100.0
Pietermaritzburg	31	26	83.9
Port Elizabeth	26	19	73.1
Pretoria	19	16	84.2
Queenstown	5	5	100.0
Soweto	34	32	94.1
Umtata	3	3	100.0
Vereeniging	10	6	60.0
Worcester	29	21	72.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>356</b>	

Table 2 shows that in all areas except one (Bellville) at least 60% of the respondents in the 1998 survey, or an alternative, were tracked in 2000. Based on this it can be concluded that the second survey drew a representative sub-sample of the first in terms of geographical distribution. It was anticipated from the start that the survey would not be able to track all the 1998 respondents to the survey as people relocate and do not leave forwarding addresses.

#### **Age profile of participants**

The respondents in the 1998 survey were concentrated in the 15- to 17-year age group, with substantially fewer people in the other categories above and below these three ages. Occasionally young people of 18 years and slightly older are referred to NICRO and are also included in this study. The 2000 profile shows an appropriate two-year ageing in the sample.



### Race and gender profile of respondents

Despite slight over-representations of females, whites and coloureds, there is no real reason to assert that there is discrimination in terms of race of referrals. The race profile is strongly linked to the geographical distribution of population groups and their overlapping with the availability of diversion programmes. In terms of gender, the two profiles are identical.

**Table 3 Gender of respondents**

	Male	Female	N =
<b>1998</b>	72%	28%	468
<b>2000</b>	72%	28%	356

The race profile of the two samples shows minor variations but this does not appear to be significant.

**Table 4 Race of respondents (percentages)**

Race	1998	2000	Variance
African	54.3	57.9	3.6
Asian	4.5	5.1	0.6

Race	1998	2000	Variance
Coloured	29.1	26.8	-2.3
White	12.0	10.2	-1.8

### Home language

The home language profile of respondents compared with the census figures supports the point made above that the availability of the diversion programmes coincides with the geographical distribution of certain population groups. These programmes are also better established in certain urban areas than others or in rural areas. Again the differences between the two samples appear to be negligible.

**Table 5 Home language of respondents**

Language	% 1998	% 2000	Census 1997
Afrikaans	27.8	24.0	15.1
English	14.5	13.6	9.1
isiZulu	18.6	20.6	22.4
isiXhosa	15.2	16.4	17.5
Tshivenda	0.2	0.3	1.7
Setswana	6.4	5.6	7.2
Xitsonga	1.1	1.1	4.2
siSwati	2.1	2.3	2.6
SeSotho	7.3	8.8	6.9
isiNdebele	0.2	0.3	1.5
Sepedi	1.9	1.7	9.8
Afrikaans & English	4.3	4.8	0.2



Language	% 1998	% 2000	Census 1997
Other	0.4	0.6	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

### Programme profile

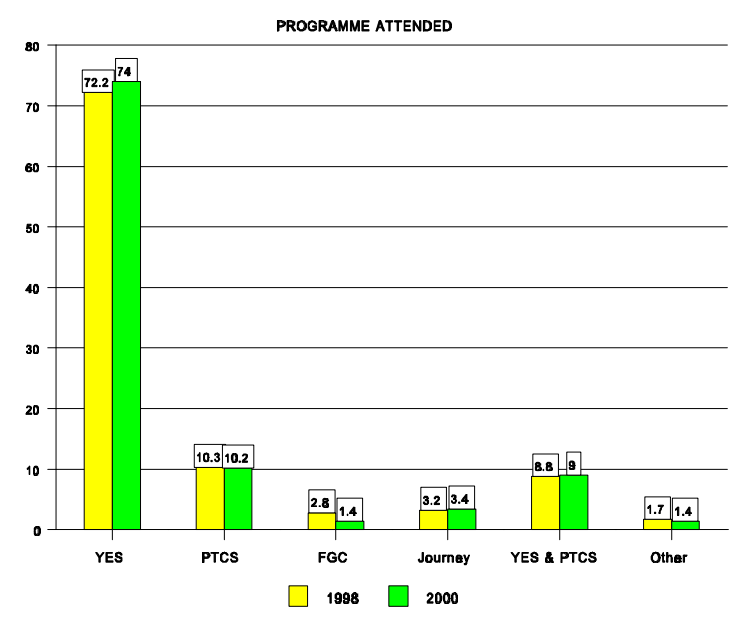
The respondents in the two surveys participated in the following programmes as shown in Table 6. The majority were referred to the YES programme, followed by PTCS and a combination of the two.

**Table 6 Programme profile of respondents**

Programme	1998	2000
YES	72.2	74.0
PTCS	10.3	10.2
FGC	2.8	1.4
Journey	3.2	3.4
YES & PTCS	8.8	9.0
Other	1.7	1.4

## Offence profile of respondents

The original offences with which the respondents were charged are listed in Table 7 and shows the wide variety of offences for which the clients were referred. These include violent offences, property offences and victimless offences. However, theft and shoplifting account for between 69% and 73% of the total.



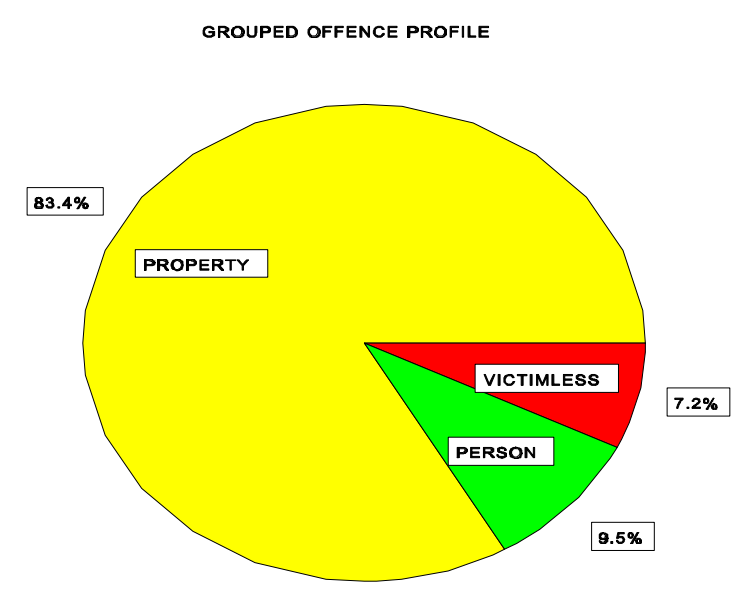
**Table 7 Offence profile of respondents**

Offence	1998	2000	1998	2000
Unknown	4	2	0.9	0.6
Murder	1	0	0.2	0.0
Attempted Murder	1	1	0.2	0.3
Common Assault	28	19	6.0	5.4
Assault Gbh	1	0	0.2	0.0
Robbery	6	4	1.3	1.1
Theft	115	90	24.6	25.4
Shoplifting	213	171	45.5	48.3
Attempted Theft	3	1	0.6	0.3
Fraud	1	0	0.2	0.0
Malicious Damage to Property	5	2	1.1	0.6
Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol	2	2	0.4	0.6
Pointing A Firearm	1	1	0.2	0.3
Reckless Driving	4	4	0.9	1.1
Possession of Dagga	15	10	3.2	2.8

Offence	1998	2000	1998	2000
Possession of Other Narcotics	3	1	0.6	0.3
Dealing in Dagga	1	1	0.2	0.3
Possession of Stolen Goods	4	4	0.9	1.1
Unauthorised use of a motor vehicle	1	1	0.2	0.3
Sexual Harassment	1	1	0.2	0.3
Arson	6	2	1.3	0.6
Gambling	1	0	0.2	0.0
Trespassing	1	0	0.2	0.0
Possession housebreaking equipment	2	2	0.4	0.6
Possession of Firearm	3	2	0.6	0.6
Theft from motor vehicle	4	4	0.9	1.1
Theft of motor vehicle	5	5	1.1	1.4
Housebreaking	34	23	7.3	6.5
Sodomy	1	1	0.2	0.3
Not Applicable	1	0	0.2	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>354</b>		

If the offences are grouped in terms of crimes against the person, property and victimless offences the following profile emerges as shown in Figure 6. Of the 1998 sample 83.4% were charged with a property-related offence. Victimless offences refer in the majority of cases to the possession of illegal substances, the dealing thereof or traffic offences.

#### Number of previous offences



At the time of attending the programme, only 18 (3.8%) of the sample had previous convictions against them. It has

been NICRO's experience that the programmes are generally used for first-time offenders and this profile is consistent with other analyses of the client group.

### Type of referral

Cases can either be referred to the programmes, specifically the YES programme, as a pre-trial diversion or as part of a suspended or postponed sentenced. Of both samples, just over 3% were sentenced referrals and the balance were pre-trial referrals.

**Table 8 Type of referral**

Type	1998	2000
Sentenced	15 (3.2%)	12 (3.4%)
Diverted	452 (96.8%)	341(96.6%)

### Source of referral

Referrals may come from a variety of sources, but consistent with the above, the majority of referrals are from public prosecutors in the form of pre-trial referrals. Table 9 gives the profile on the source of referrals in the sample. The two samples are highly consistent on this variable as well.

**Table 9 Source of referrals**

Source	1998	2000	1998	2000
Prosecutor	394	300	84.2	84.7
Magistrate	34	25	7.3	7.1
Police	2	1	0.4	0.3
School	5	4	1.1	1.1
Family	2	2	0.4	0.6
Other	27	20	5.8	5.6
Social worker	1	0	0.2	0.0
Unknown	3	2	0.6	0.6

Total	468	356	100.0	100.0
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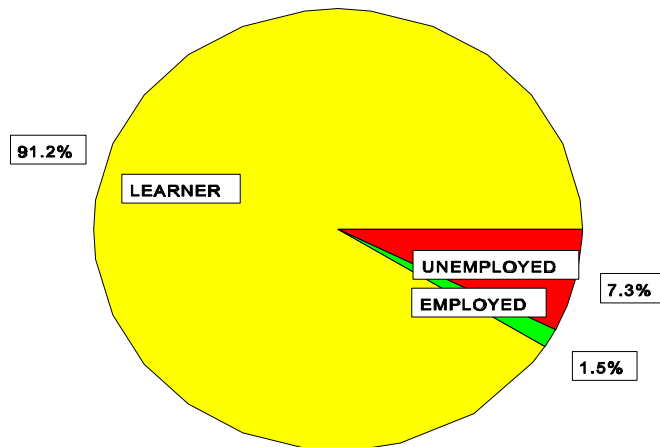
### Employment at time of the programme

Almost all the programme participants were still busy with their schooling while attending the programme. Other research has shown that school attendance strongly influences the decision of the prosecutor to divert a case or not<sup>9</sup>.

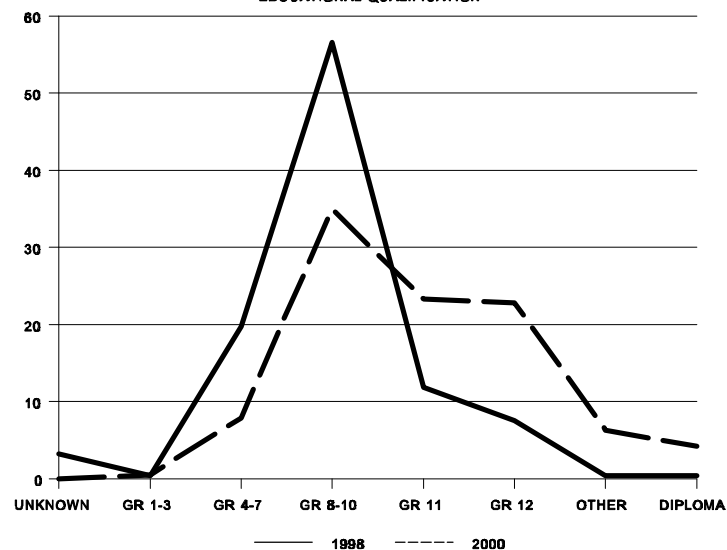
### Educational qualifications

Consistent with the age profile in the 1998 survey, the majority of respondents were busy with their high school training at the time they participated in the programmes. It is, however, interesting to note that comparatively few participants were in the higher school grades at that time. The 2000 survey profile shows that there has been a clear educational progression, with more respondents now concentrated in Grades 11 and 12.

EMPLOYMENT AT TIME OF PROGRAMME



EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION



## 7. Feedback from clients interviewed

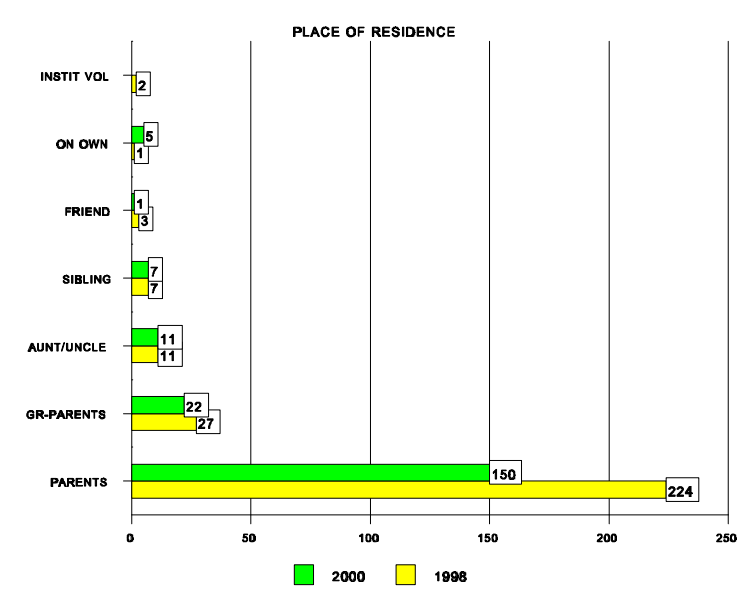
<sup>9</sup>

Muntingh, LM (1998) Prosecutorial attitudes towards diversion, NICRO, Cape Town

Owing to the fact that not all selected respondents could be traced, field workers were instructed to interview alternative respondents (ie a parent or guardian) when the child could not be found. Of the total 1998 sample the actual clients were interviewed in 65.8% of the cases and 34.2% of respondents were alternative respondents. As the questions in Section B of the questionnaire relate more specifically to the programme content and impressions thereof, the 34.2% of responses are thus excluded from the following section and the total number for the 1998 survey is therefore 310 and 197 for the 2000 survey.

### Place of residence

At the time of the interviews the majority of respondents were staying with their parents. The remainder were staying with family members, friends or on their own as shown in Figure 9.



### Household structure

Table 10 summarises the household structure of the respondents as recorded in 1998 and it is indeed significant that in nearly 48% of cases the father was not living with the child and in 24% of cases the mother was not living with the child. The effect of absentee fathers requires further investigation as it may hold some implications for programme design.

**Table 10 Summarised household structure**

Relation	Present	Not present

<b>Relation</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Not present</b>
Grandparent(s)	18.0	82.0
Father	52.1	47.9
Mother	75.7	24.3

In 60% of cases the programme participant was the first or second child in the family.

**Table 11**                      **Respondent's ranking in relation to siblings**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Only child	19.2
First child	32.1
Second child	28.1
Third child	11.6
Fourth child	5.0
Fifth or later child	4.0

### **Relationship with people in household**

In 1998 respondents were asked to describe their relationship with the people they were staying with. This was based on their impression and is entirely subjective. The majority (80%) of respondents had a positive impression of their relationships with the other people in their household. This question was not repeated in the 2000 survey.

**Table 12**                      **Relationship with people in household**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Unsure	1.9
Very good	19.5

Good	57.1
Fair	17.9
Bad	3.2
Very bad	0.3

The next set of questions centred around the respondents' experience of the programme. The responses are grouped and structured according to the questions asked. As far as possible, the responses are as close as possible to the respondents' actual words.

### **Reasons for attending the programme (1998)**

When the respondents in the first survey were asked "Why did you attend the programme?" the most frequent responses were that they had either been referred to the programme by the court or a social worker or they attended it because they had committed a crime. The latter response is particularly interesting because it indicates an immediate realisation of responsibility on the part of the participant. Other responses referred to themes such as to bring about a change in their lives, to learn and to show others that they can change.

**Table 13 Reason for attending the programme (1998)**

<b>Reason</b>	<b>%</b>
Unsure	3.2
Referred by court/police/social worker	35.1
To avoid criminal record	6.8
To start a new life	1.0
Was given a second chance	1.6
To learn from mistakes	7.1
Committed a crime	30.5
To learn to stop doing crime	4.9
Regrets what he/she did	3.2
Curious	0.6



Advised/motivated by someone to do it	1.3
To learn to be a better person	1.9
To prove to self and others that I can change	0.6
To empower self	1.3
To take responsibility for own actions	0.6

## Expectations

In the 1998 survey respondents were asked what they were expecting to happen during the programme that they were about to attend. From the responses it is clear that there was a fair amount of misconception of what was to happen in the programme. The responses are listed in the table below according to the programme they were referred to.

**Table 14**            **Expectations of the programme**

EXPECTATIONS	YES	PTCS	FGC	Journey	YES & PTCS	Other
No idea what to expect	43	3		4	3	1
Learn about disadvantages of crime	32	1	1		2	
Tough, would have to work to repay crime	7	10	2		6	
Learn about life skills	16	3	1	1	2	
To receive some guidance/counselling	26	1		1	1	
Would go to jail after completing programme	3	1			1	
Would be treated like a criminal	13	1	3		3	
To learn new things	6					
Would have to talk to someone	3					
Would help to solve problems		1	1			
Clear name of criminal record	7					
Learn skills to avoid crime	25	2	1		4	
Good treatment	2					1
Physical punishment	12	2		1	3	
Formal education	10	1			1	
Skills to earn own income	1					

EXPECTATIONS	YES	PTCS	FGC	Journey	YES & PTCS	Other
To be sent away	1					
To be like a reform school	6				1	1
To appear in the newspaper	1					
Would be punished by victim			1			
Negative response	4				3	
Overt punishment	2	1				
To receive a warning	1	1				
To correct his/her mistakes	1					
To be boring	3				1	
To be disciplined	1					
Total	226	28	10	7	31	3

The respondents were then asked if their expectations were met and 61.5% replied in the affirmative. It should be noted from the table above that a substantial number of respondents had a negative to highly negative expectation of the programme. The fact that 38.5% stated that their expectations were not met should thus not be regarded as a negative but rather as a positive response. Nonetheless, from a programme evaluation point of view, the degree of misconception is a matter requiring follow-up on the part of programme facilitators.

#### **Retention of programme content**

The respondents were asked in 1998 what they remembered from the programme itself. The responses obviously refer to different components of the different programmes and are listed in the table below.

**Table 15          Retention of programme content**

RETENTION	YES	PTCS	FGC	Journey	YES & PTCS	Other
Unsure	4				1	
Sessions on crime/ law	48	1			6	1
Sessions on drugs	5	1				
Disadvantages of a criminal record	5					
Sessions on relationships/sharing feelings	29	1	3		1	
Life skills	11	1		1	2	

RETENTION	YES	PTCS	FGC	Journey	YES & PTCS	Other
Sessions on problem-solving	8		1		1	
Not much	12	3			1	
Sessions on decision-making	14					
People involved - working & supporting	8	2	1	1	2	
Role-playing	13				5	
Physical work		17	2	1	3	
Learning right from wrong	4				1	
Effect of crime on victim	1		1		1	
Session on being a good role model	1					
The camp				2		
Games	16				4	
Group work	8		1		1	1
Introduction session	4		1	1		1
Self-awareness skills	9				2	
Communication skills	3					
Sessions on assertiveness	3					
Everything	2	2		1		
Session on bad influences/ friends	4					
Educational talks	3					
Setting goals for the future	6					
Accepting responsibility for own actions	2					
Sessions on trusting others	2					
Farewell letter at end of programme	1					
Felt relieved at receiving forgiveness	1					
Total	227	28	10	7	31	3

The table shows that there is a wide spectrum of aspects that the respondents remember from the programme. There are, however, certain items that stand out, such as the sessions on crime and law, and sessions on sharing of feelings and relationships. Basic education on crime and the law appears to have made a significant impact on the participants. The fact that participants are given the opportunity to share their feelings and talk about relationships also appears to leave a lasting impression.

## Impressed most

Respondents were asked what impressed them most about the programme in which they participated. Two responses stand out from the long list, namely the co-ordination and facilitation of the programme, and the games they played in the (YES) programme. The YES programme relies strongly on interactive and experiential learning techniques, such as games and role-playing to make the programme material accessible. Very few respondents gave negative responses such as "Nothing" or "Can't remember".

**Table 16** Impressed most about programme

Description	YES	PTCS	FGC	Journey	YES & PTCS	Other
Unsure	3					
Self-awareness skills	17				1	
Co-ordination of programme/workers skills	23	1	1		3	
Opportunity to voice own opinions/skills	17			1	3	
Opportunity to think/plan future	4					
Learned effect of bad friends	6					1
Problem-solving skills	7				2	
Relationship skills	9			1	1	
Everything	17	6		2	1	
Victims' forgiveness			1			
Games	24				2	2
Can't remember	3	1				
Role-playing	13	1	2		7	
Being treated with respect and understanding	6	4	1		1	
Consequences of crime	15				2	
Everyone working together	6		1			
The hike				2		
Group discussions	18	1			1	
To learn the value of parents	1					
Place where community service was done		5	1		2	
Visit to the prison	1					

Description	YES	PTCS	FGC	Journey	YES & PTCS	Other
Sessions attended by parents	5					
Session on crime awareness/prevention	7				3	
Physical work		3	1	1	1	
Decision making skills	5					
Session on gangsterism and drugs	1					
Other children attending the programme	2					
Introduction session	2	1				
Parent-child relationship	4					
Nothing	3	4				
Educational talks	4					
Achievement of goals	2					
Sessions on trust	2				1	
Victim's forgiveness			1			
Planning careers			1			
Total	227	27	10	7	31	3

### Impressed least

Most of the respondents had no negative feed-back on the programme. However, the negative experiences that were listed covered a wide range of issues ranging from conflict on the programme to programme content and administrative arrangements. The single item with the highest frequency was the sharing of personal feelings and telling their "story" to other programme participants. Although this may be an uncomfortable experience, it is part of the process of taking responsibility. The other issues listed, especially about administration, require further investigation.

**Table 17** Impressed least about programme

Description	YES	PTCS	FGC	Journey	YES & PTCS	Other
Nothing	166	14	7	5	16	2
That the programme ran over a weekend	2				1	
Long hours/times	5	4			1	
Games	10	2	1	1	1	

Description	YES	PTCS	FGC	Journey	YES & PTCS	Other
Knowing that if someone does not attend there will be trouble	2					
Sharing personal feelings/history of crime	17		1		5	
Compulsory		1				
Some children were fighting	4			1	1	
Physical work		6			4	
The venue	2					
Questionnaire	3					
Role-playing	2					
Sessions attended by parents	1	1			1	
Groups	1					
Not enough participation by workers	1					
Employees too strict	1		1			
Being body-searched	1					
Instructions not always clear	1					
Dangerous activity during Journey						1
Learning about the consequences of crime	1					
Sessions on HIV/Aids	1					
Sessions on friends	2					
Sessions on alcohol and drugs	1				1	
Total	224	28	10	7	31	3

### Learned from the programme

From the feedback it appears that the main messages of the programmes are transferred to most participants, such as "crime does not pay", to take responsibility for your own life and responsible decision-making. The other items listed are mostly supportive of these three main themes. The 2000 survey indicates a slight shift in the responses to this question as indicated in Table 18.

**Table 18**      **Learned from the programme**

<b>Learned from programme</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>2000</b>
Unsure	3	5	1.0	2.5
Respect for self and others	27	7	8.7	3.6
Crime doesn't pay	64	20	20.7	10.2
Effect of crime on victim	5	2	1.6	1.0
Basic life skills	5	8	1.6	4.1
To stay away from bad influences/friends	29	15	9.4	7.6
How to handle personal problems	8	6	2.6	3.0
Learned from his/her mistakes	12	6	3.9	3.0
Motivated to finish school - to get job one day	4	2	1.3	1.0
To accept responsibility for own actions/life	25	14	8.1	7.1
To understand other people	4	6	1.3	3.0
A criminal record can destroy your future	15	11	4.9	5.6
To do the right things	33	22	10.7	11.2
Humanity/compassion for others	1	4	0.3	2.0
Vision for future	3	0	1.0	0.0
To share personal problems/feelings	8	3	2.6	1.5
Responsible decision-making	12	10	3.9	5.1
Communication skills	13	10	4.2	5.1
To be a child again	1	0	0.3	0.0
Danger of alcohol and drug abuse	3	0	1.0	0.0
To obey the law	6	7	1.9	3.6
Nothing	2	5	0.6	2.5
Honesty is the best policy	1	2	0.3	1.0
Skills, eg cooking, etc	4	0	1.3	0.0
How to control temper/violence isn't an answer	6	4	1.9	2.0
People are willing to give you a second chance	6	4	1.9	2.0
To believe in oneself	5	10	1.6	5.1
You have many options in life	2	2	0.6	1.0

Learned from programme	1998	2000	1998	2000
To work as part of a team	1	3	0.3	1.5
Importance of forgiveness	1	1	0.3	0.5
Have to work for what want in life-can't just steal if you want it	0	8	0.0	4.1

### Best part of the programme

The respondents were asked what they regarded as the best part of the programme. In a sense this question is cross-checking the responses given in reply to the question around the "most impressive part" of the programme. Again the experiential learning techniques and games used featured high on the list in both sets of responses. Being treated with respect and meeting new friends (in the 1998 responses) were also regarded as strongly positive experiences. Only three respondents in 2000 replied that nothing was good about the programme. It is evident that the respondents' opinion of the programme they attended has remained fairly stable over a two-year period and that they were able to recall it in a fair amount of detail.

**Table 19** What was the best part of the programme?

Response	1998	2000	% 1998	% 2000
Unsure	7	8	2.3	4.1
Learned right from wrong	12	5	3.9	2.5
Learning by participating, eg roleplaying, games	37	21	12.1	10.7
Being treated with respect and understanding	19	6	6.2	3.0
Meeting new people/friends	27	6	8.8	3.0
Games	22	23	7.2	11.7
Avoiding a criminal record	7	1	2.3	0.5
Problem-solving	7	4	2.3	2.0
Nothing	6	3	2.0	1.5
Learning about the consequences of crime	10	1	3.3	0.5
Crime-awareness sessions	13	14	4.2	7.1
Everything	27	20	8.8	10.2
Learning how to control your feelings	3	2	1.0	1.0



Response	1998	2000	% 1998	% 2000
Outdoor activities	4	2	1.3	1.0
Chance to make own decisions	3	3	1.0	1.5
Group discussions	24	22	7.8	11.2
Beginning - reason for being there	3	0	1.0	0.0
Opportunity to voice own opinion	16	15	5.2	7.6
Questionnaires, worksheets	3	1	1.0	0.5
Communication skills	8	5	2.6	2.5
Visual aids, eg video	1	1	0.3	0.5
Physical work - serving community	7	6	2.3	3.0
Parent-child relationship	10	5	3.3	2.5
Self-concept session	11	12	3.6	6.1
Cooking for other people	1	1	0.3	0.5
Planning his/her own business	1	0	0.3	0.0
Ending - summary of how I have grown	6	3	2.0	1.5
Aids-awareness programme	1	1	0.3	0.5
Setting goals for the future	2	1	0.7	0.5
Learning to trust others	7	0	2.3	0.0
Facilitator	1	2	0.3	1.0
Session on peer pressure	0	2	0.0	1.0
Visit to prison	0	1	0	0.5
Total	306	197	100	100

### **Worst part of the programme**

Most of the respondents (56% in 1998 and 57% in 2000) identified no negative components of the programme in which they participated. The issues raised as negative aspects that received the highest frequencies related to the sharing of personal feelings and telling their "story", and feeling uncomfortable at the beginning of the programme, although the latter has dropped significantly and the former has increased. It should also be noted that not all the participants enjoyed the games and interactive learning techniques. The 2000 responses also yielded some new insights from the respondents, for example realising the impact of the programme on their parents who had to be

present at the YES programme.

**Table 20 Worst part of the programme**

<b>Response</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>% 1998</b>	<b>% 2000</b>
Too short	8	2	6.5	2.4
Having to talk in a group	11	2	8.9	2.4
Long hours/times	15	7	12.1	8.4
Sharing personal feelings/history of crime	26	23	21.0	27.7
Feeling guilty	6	4	4.8	4.8
Felt uncomfortable in the beginning	19	7	15.3	8.4
Asked too many questions	2	0	1.6	0.0
Physical work	5	3	4.0	3.6
Games	12	5	9.7	6.0
Some people were rude/argued	11	3	8.9	3.6
Questionnaires	4	1	3.2	1.2
Promises were not always kept by workers	1	1	0.8	1.2
Working for no pay	1	0	0.8	0.0
The end	2	3	1.6	3.6
Being advised to look for new friends	1	2	0.8	2.4
Parent being present-saw how it hurt them	0	6	0.0	7.2
Long discussions	0	3	0.0	3.6
Venue	0	2	0.0	2.4
Transport cost - difficult to get to venue	0	5	0.0	6.0
Everything	0	1	0.0	1.2
Mixed with other race groups/racism	0	2	0.0	2.4
Not always enough depth to discussions	0	1	0.0	1.2
Total	124	83	100	100.0

## Current opinion

Asking respondents what their current opinion of the programme is, was thought to give a fairly accurate gauge of how the programme was experienced initially and whether it changed over time. All the participants but 16 in 1998 and 15 in 2000 had a positive opinion of the programme they attended, indicating that they were unsure of the value of the programme they attended. In both surveys the highest single response was that the programme was effective and helpful. In the 2000 survey two new response categories showed interesting insights, namely "useful tool to empower youth" and "Should be offered in schools", indicating that these respondents are realising the wider issues relating to youth and crime.

**Table 21**                      **Current opinion of the programme**

<b>Response</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>2000.0</b>	<b>% '98</b>	<b>% 2000</b>
Refer others to it	14	1	4.6	0.5
Useful tool to empower youth	19	26	6.2	13.2
Helped him/her to see life differently	13	13	4.2	6.6
Can open new doors for you	3	0	1.0	0.0
Very good/effective/helpful	112	68	36.5	34.5
You can learn a lot	29	2	9.4	1.0
Offers you a second chance	16	6	5.2	3.0
Should do it more than once	9	3	2.9	1.5
Should use client to talk to other youths	6	1	2.0	0.5
Tough, but really helps	5	1	1.6	0.5
Unsure	16	15	5.2	7.6
Saved me	4	3	1.3	1.5
More meaningful than going to jail	4	1	1.3	0.5
Makes you take responsibility for own life	4	3	1.3	1.5
Should continue good work	18	17	5.9	8.6
Learn how to serve your community	3	2	1.0	1.0
Helped to stay out of trouble	12	5	3.9	2.5
Programmes too abstract - use more visual aids, etc	2	2	0.7	1.0
Benefited a lot	5	1	1.6	0.5
Helps you realise your mistakes	3	5	1.0	2.5

Response	1998	2000.0	% '98	% 2000
Should be offered to communities/ schools	5	14	1.6	7.1
Monitoring of youth after programme is important	1	1	0.3	0.5
Teaches you to be yourself	2	0	0.7	0.0
Teaches you things you take for granted	2	0	0.7	0.0
Needs a skills training component	0	2	0.0	1.0
Should be run over holidays & weekends	0	3	0.0	1.5
Workers should be more positive	0	1	0.0	0.5
Parents should be more involved	0	1	0.0	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### Reason for finishing the programme

Fear of re-arrest was singled out as the most important reason for completing the programme. As most cases were pre-trial referrals, it follows that non-compliance would result in the case being referred back to court for reinstatement of prosecution. However, if the other reasons are seen collectively, they emphasise a willingness by the programme participants to change their behaviour and not commit further offences.

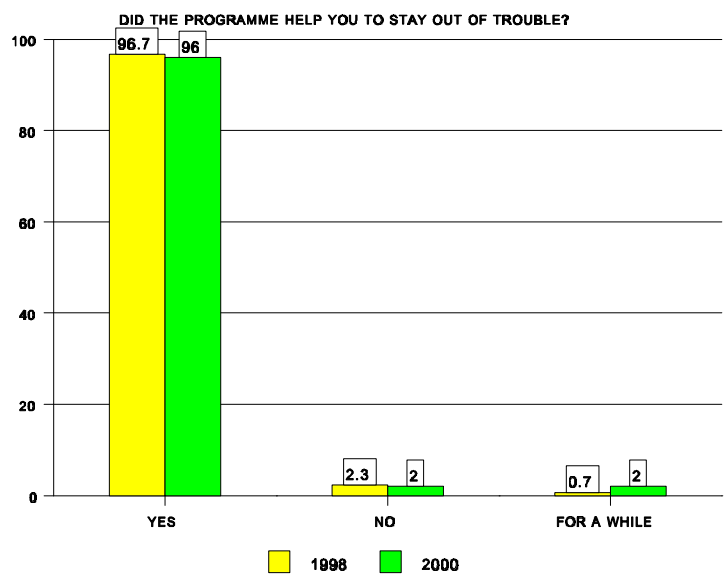
**Table 22 Reason for finishing the programme**

Description	YES	PTCS	FGC	Journey	YES & PTCS	Other
Afraid of law/prison/criminal record	90	12	6		10	1
Enjoyed the programme	10	2		1	5	
Realised for own good	20	1			2	
Committed to the rules of the programme	23	4			1	
Social worker	7					
Curious	6			1		
To learn new things/interesting/ informative	15	1			3	
To understand crime better	3	1			2	1
Unsure	9	2			1	

Description	YES	PTCS	FGC	Journey	YES & PTCS	Other
To help others who might be in trouble	2					
Vision for future - career, family, etc	5			1	1	
To have a better life	12			2	1	
To learn from mistakes	5					
Felt guilty about crime	5	1	1		2	1
Stay out of trouble					1	
Prove self to community/family	4	3	1	2		
Motivated by family/friends	6	1	1			
Didn't have any other options	3				1	
Didn't want to waste this opportunity	1	1				
Family dependent on him/her			1			
Total	226	29	10	7	30	3

### Did the programme help you stay out of trouble?

The overwhelming majority of respondents (96.7% and 96%) were of the opinion that the programme they attended did assist them to stay out of trouble with the law.



### Change after the programme

The respondents were asked if, in their own opinion, they experienced some personal change after attending the programme, and if so, what this change was. A wide range of positive change aspects is listed in Table 23 relating to the effects of the programme in which they participated. Less than 10% of both samples said that they were still the

same and did not experience any specific change. There is very little change between the 1998 and 2000 responses indicating a fairly consistent self-opinion in the respondents.

**Table 23 Did anything change for you after the programme?**

Description	1998		2000	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Motivated person	22	7.2	2	1.0
Not interested in crime any more	57	18.6	26	13.3
Choosing friends more selectively	42	13.7	25	12.8
Better interpersonal skills	14	4.6	6	3.1
Knows what is the right thing to do	18	5.9	3	1.5
A total turnaround	16	5.2	8	4.1
Knows what he/she wants from life	4	1.3	4	2.0
Attending school regularly	13	4.2	10	5.1
Staying home more	15	4.9	13	6.6
Still the same	25	8.1	18	9.2
Think twice before doing something, eg drinking	15	4.9	9	4.6
Positive attitude	14	4.6	7	3.6
Given up possession of dangerous weapons	2	0.7	0	0.0
More responsible person	7	2.3	20	10.2
Relationship with parents improved	21	6.8	16	8.2
Taking part in community activities	4	1.6	10	5.1
Believes in self	7	2.3	8	4.1
Better time management	1	0.3	0	0.0
Could ask victim for forgiveness	1	0.3	0	0.0
Inform others about crime and consequences	5	1.6	4	2.0
Became more consistent	1	0.3	1	0.5
Learned to respect others	2	0.7	1	0.5
Stopped using dagga			2	1.0
Found employment			3	1.5

**Reason for staying out of trouble**

While the programmes provide valuable educational input in terms of personal development, it remains the decision of the individual to be law-abiding. Therefore, the appropriate respondents were asked why they had not come into conflict with the law since attending the programme and the following responses were give (see Table 24). It is interesting that the threat of imprisonment, either real or perceived, of imprisonment received the third highest individual score. The possible consequences of re-offending appear to be the most important motivating factor not to re-offend.

**Table 24**                **Reasons for staying out of trouble**

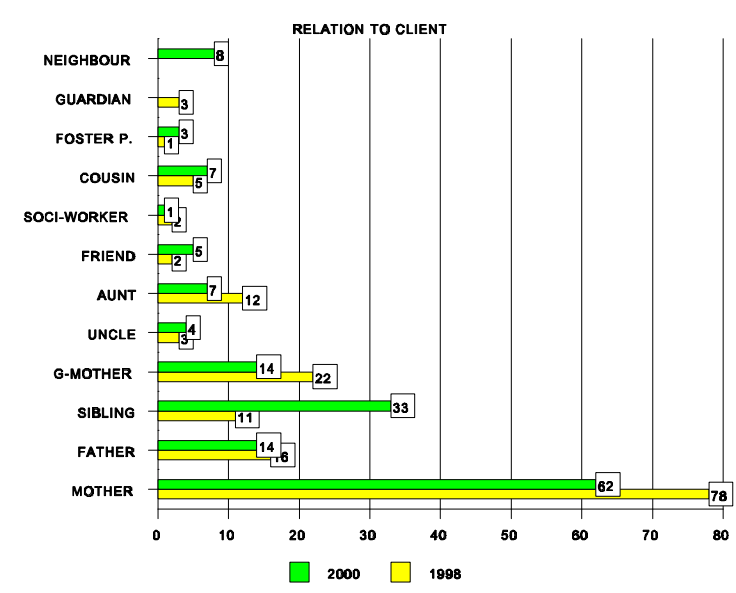
Description	Number	Percentage
Unknown	10	3.4
Crime does not pay	47	16.2
Realised the disadvantages of re-offending	36	12.4
Could see the error of his/her ways	6	2.1
Realised what he or she wants out of life	15	5.2
Good after-care	2	0.7
Now has a vision for the future	18	6.2
New friends	5	1.7
Support of parents/family/friends	17	5.9
Realised effect on family/parents	13	4.5
Got a job	3	1.0
Felt bad at seeing victim's anger/pain	4	1.4
Doesn't want to go to jail	28	9.7
Advice from social worker	3	1.0
Keeps busy with meaningful activities	6	2.1
Didn't want to waste this opportunity	7	2.4
New knowledge gained from programme	26	9.0
Didn't want to repeat this experience	11	3.8
Programme helped me to believe in myself	3	1.0
Religion	3	1.0
Prove to community/family that he/she has changed	4	1.4

Description	Number	Percentage
Has to provide for child/parents	1	0.3
Avoid criminal record	13	4.5
To be a role model for other young people	2	0.7
Wants to complete schooling	3	1.0
Doesn't want to be labelled a criminal	2	0.7
Better interpersonal skills	2	0.7

## 8. FEEDBACK FROM INTERVIEWS WITH ALTERNATIVE RESPONDENTS

### Relation to the client

In those cases where the clients were not available and an alternative respondent was interviewed, this respondent was the mother in 50% of the interviews. Fathers and grandmothers also make up significant proportions of the total.



### Responded positively



The alternative respondents were asked if the child, in their opinion, had reacted positively to the programme. Table 25 summarises the responses. The overwhelming assessment in both surveys was that the children did respond positively to the programme in which they were involved. It is clear from these responses that the programme had a sustainable impact on the majority of participants.

**Table 25 Did the child react positively to the programme?**

	<b>1998</b>		<b>2000</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	135	88.8	139	87.4
No	10	6.6	9	5.6
Unsure	5	3.3	10	6.3
For a short period	2	1.3	1	0.6
Total	152	100.0	159	100.0

## 9. PROFILE OF RECIDIVISTS

This section records crimes committed after attendance of the programmes and combines the responses of the clients interviewed and the alternative respondents.

### **Type of crime**

Table 26 shows the number of offences reported in the two surveys as well as how long after the programme they were committed. In total, 76 offences were reported by the respondents involving 68 individuals as some committed more than one offence after attending the programme.



**Table 26      Recidivism profile and time lapse**

	Time period in months														
Offence	0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18	19-21	22-24	25-27	28-30	31-33	34-36	36+	Unknown	TOTAL
Murder	4		2											1	7
Common assault	1					1		2				1			5
Rape		1		1			1								3
Theft	4	2	1	6	2	2		5		1		1		3	27
Shoplifting	1	1				2									4
Driving under the influence					1										1
Possession of dagga	1				1			1							3
Armed robbery	1						1								2
Housebreaking	2	4		2				2						1	11
Unknown	2	2				1									5
Damage to property			1							1					2
Hijacking							1	1							2
Possession firearms								1			1				2
Discharge firearm													1		1
Possession stolen goods											1				1
TOTAL	16	10	4	9	4	6	3	12	0	2	2	2	1	5	76

**Table 27**      **Reporting of re-offending and respondent type**

Offence	1998 Client resp. 1 <sup>st</sup> offence	1998 Alternative resp. 1 <sup>st</sup> offence	1998 Alternative resp. 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence	2000 Client resp. 1 <sup>st</sup> offence	2000 Client resp. 1 <sup>st</sup> offence	2000 Alternative resp. 1 <sup>st</sup> offence	2000 Alternative resp. 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence
Unknown	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Murder	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Attempted Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Common Assault	1	0	0	2	0	2	0
Rape	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Theft	4	7	1	3	1	8	1
Shoplifting	1	0	0	2	0	0	0
Malicious Damage to Property	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Possession of Dagga	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
Possession of Stolen Goods	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Possession of Firearm	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Armed Robbery	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

Offence	1998 Client resp. 1 <sup>st</sup> offence	1998 Alternative resp. 1 <sup>st</sup> offence	1998 Alternative resp. 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence	2000 Client resp. 1 <sup>st</sup> offence	2000 Client resp. 1 <sup>st</sup> offence	2000 Alternative resp. 1 <sup>st</sup> offence	2000 Alternative resp. 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence
Theft from Motor Vehicle	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Theft of Motor Vehicle	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Hijacking	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Housebreaking	0	6	1	3	0	2	0
Total	13	19	2	14	1	21	4

It is interesting to note that when an alternative respondent was used in both surveys, the reported re-offending rate was slightly higher than when the programme participant was the respondent.

Figure 12 presents a cumulative profile of the re-offending rate and indicates that just more than half of the re-offending took place in the first 12 months and 84% within 24 months.

### Offence profile of recidivism period

Following from Table 27, Table 29 profiles possible shifts in offence patterns. The majority of recidivists remained property offenders. Five of the sample shifted from property offences to violent offences, of which two were murders and one rape.

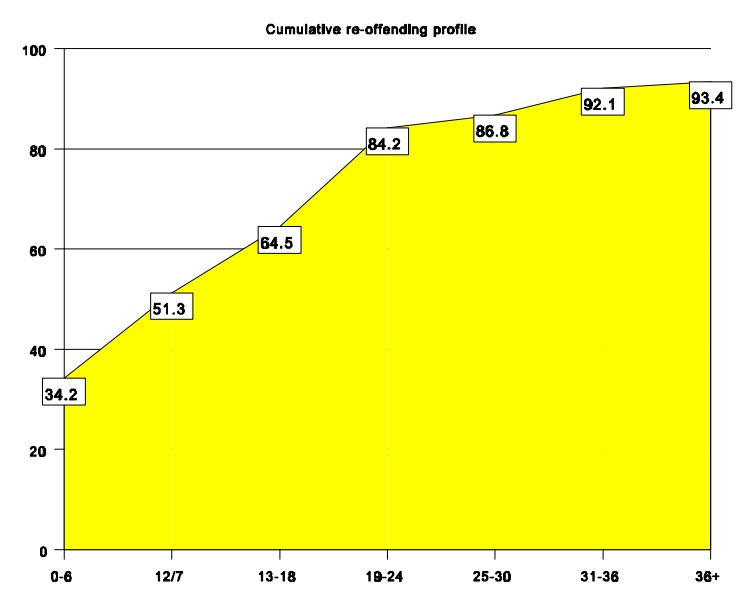


Table 29 Offence profile of recidivism period (1998)

Period	Property to property	Property to violent	Violent to property	Property to victimless	Victimless to property	Violent to violent	Total
1 - 6 months	7	4	1	1	1	1	15
7 - 12 months	4	1	1				6
12 + months	2	1		2			6
Average	7.16	6.3	6	11	1	3	
Total	15	5	2	3	1	1	27

### Programme profile of recidivists

Table 30 provides the programme profile of recidivists. The percentage indicated in the last column expresses the recidivists as a proportion of the total number of programme participants in the survey sample as recorded in the 1998 survey sample. The actual numbers per programme are unfortunately too low to make any sound conclusions except

perhaps in the case of the YES programme, which shows a recidivism rate of 15.4%.

**Table 30** Programme profile of recidivists

Programme	Number	Percentage of total per programme
YES	52	15.4
PTCS	5	10.4
FGC	0	0.0
The Journey	5	33.3
YES & PTCS	5	12.2
Other	1	20.0

### Reasons given why further offence was committed

When asked why they had committed further offences, the responses were not entirely clear in one third of the cases and respondents indicated no specific reason. A similar proportion indicated that they were influenced by friends or gang members. A range of other reasons such as economic reasons and being under the influence of alcohol are also cited.

**Table 31** Reasons presented why further offence was committed

None given	20
Influenced by friends/gangs	19
Wanted possessions/money	9
Under influence of alcohol	5
Believes is innocent	4
To support drug addiction	4
Anger	3
Unsure	2
Father doesn't support family	1

Mental illness	1
For the fun of it	1
Self-defence	1
Lack of support system	1
Retrenched	1

## 10. Conclusions

This study represents the second diversion follow-up study in South Africa and was in itself a learning experience for all those involved. The study, was however, not limited to tracing recidivists and yielded valuable programme feedback from former participants. Diversion programmes continue to operate without legislative support and this naturally impacts on the scope and extent of its utilisation. This study has nevertheless collected and analysed baseline information that will be used for further research. By way of conclusion a number of points are highlighted from the report.

1. Information systems remain inadequate and it was therefore not possible to trace former clients through official records. Well-developed information systems are vital for the proper administration and management of juvenile justice services. NICRO's own information system will only provide part of the picture in so far as the scope of that individual client's contact with the organisation is concerned. An integrated information system will not only enhance research but also service delivery to children in trouble with the law through accurate tracking.
2. This study was undertaken without the development of a recidivism framework or standard, such as those referred to earlier<sup>10</sup>. In the absence of quality quantitative data it was decided that it would be sufficient at this stage to first develop some indigenous data before standards and frameworks are developed.

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<sup>10</sup> Barnoski (1997)



3. The research was able to build a detailed profile of programme participants from across the country and across the different diversion programmes and is regarded as a representative sample of the total group. The typical diversion programme participant is a male, aged 15 - 17 years, a first offender charged with property crime, who resides with his parents and is in his second to third year of secondary schooling.
4. The compliance rates for all the programmes are very high, 80% and higher, which is regarded as a positive indication of participants' commitment to completing the programme.
5. The majority of participants are pre-trial referrals, meaning that there has not been any conviction and there will thus not be a criminal record against the child. From the outset it was an explicit aim of the Diversion Project to limit the number of children being convicted in South African courts. It appears that we have been at least partially successful in this regard, although the number of diverted cases remains relatively low compared with the number of convictions.
6. Feedback from programme participants on programme content in both surveys was extremely positive and for most participants the programme they attended was a memorable experience. Most respondents were able to remember a fair amount of detail about the programme content, which is indicative of impact. Experiential and adventure education techniques appear to have been used to good effect by the programme facilitators. The fact that the majority of the respondents still had a positive opinion of the programme 24 months after they participated is also indicative of the programme effect.
7. Limited negative feedback was received from the interviewed participants. Some negative feedback did in fact refer to intentionally difficult processes that form part of the programme such as discussing personal matters.
8. Avoiding re-arrest and conviction was identified as the single most important reason for

complying with the conditions of the diversion. However, if the other reasons are seen collectively, it appears that the “carrot weighed more than the stick”.

9. The majority of participants said that they experienced a positive personal change after the programme, with the emphasis being on more responsible decision-making.
10. A very small percentage of participants re-offended, 6.7% in the first 12 months after participating in a diversion programme and a further 9.8% were recorded in the second survey. The average time lapse from the completion of the programme to re-offending was 7.2 months. The first 12-month period after completing the programme appears to be a crucial period as more than 50% of re-offending took place in that period. Owing to the low number of recidivists it is difficult to make generalisations.
11. There appears to be a fair amount of offence specialisation and the majority of recidivists again committed property offences.

#### 11. Sources

Barnoski, R (1997) **Standards for Improving Research Effectiveness in Adult and Juvenile Justice**, Washington State Institute for Public Policy, Washington.

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