

A Report of the 2003-2004 Civil Grand Jury
For the City and County of San Francisco

INCARCERATION AND BEYOND: Where do we go from here?

Released July 2004

Pursuant to State law, reports of the Civil Grand Jury do not identify the names of identifying information about individuals who provided information to the Civil Grand Jury.

Departments and agencies identified in the report must respond to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court within the number of days specified, with a copy sent to the Board of Supervisors. As to each finding of the Grand Jury, the response must either (1) agree with the finding, or (2) disagree with it, wholly or partially, and explain why. Further, as to each recommendation made by the Grand Jury, the responding party must report either (1) that the recommendation has been implemented with a summary explanation of how it was; (2) the recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a timeframe for implementation; (3) the recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation of the scope of that analysis and a timeframe for the officer or agency head to be prepared to discuss it (less than six months from the release of this Report); or (4) the recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable, with an explanation of why that is. (Cal. Penal Code, secs. 953, 953.05.)

Summary of Recommendations

1. Funding for in-custody programs in the jails should be continued.
2. The needs of people exiting the county jails should be studied to help formulate effective programs for the homeless.
3. A comprehensive continuum of services to assist this population should take priority in planning for the homeless.
4. The Sheriff's Department should utilize a computer program to track recidivism.
5. A sponsor/mentor program, which would provide assistance to this population for a limited of time after they are released from custody, should be developed.
6. One agency overseeing all homeless programs should be developed to maintain a registry of services, act as a clearinghouse for requests for services, and audit all programs involved with the homeless.
7. An audit of all agencies, City departments, and community-based organizations that are charged with providing services to the homeless, should be undertaken.

GLOSSARY

- Recidivism: habitual or chronic relapse, especially into crime or antisocial behavior
- Misdemeanant: an individual found to have committed a misdemeanor
- RSVP: Resolve to Stop the Violence Project
- Roads to Recovery – an in-custody drug treatment for men
- SISTER – an in-custody drug treatment for women

OVERVIEW

The San Francisco County jails house an average of 2,200 people per day at a cost of \$98, or \$35,770 per person per year, which is nearly \$80 million annually. During the course of their incarceration, inmates have available to them a number of programs, including a Charter school established by the Sheriff. These programs are Roads to Recovery, SISTER and RSVP. The programs are geared toward helping inmates become crime free and better equipped to cope with life outside the jails. The majority of inmates are awaiting trial, while others have been committed by the Courts to county jail time (up to one year). Some have been committed to the state prison system and await transportation. Many of these programs are suited to all inmates, regardless of their status, while others are aimed at those who will be returning to the community. The vast majority of people incarcerated will be released to the community within a relatively short period. By all accounts, most programs are farsighted, innovative and beneficial to those who attend them. The Sheriff is to be commended for such extraordinary efforts.

After release from the jails, a few additional programs, sponsored by the Sheriff's Department, are available. These offer job training, placement and counseling services to a limited number of people. Additionally, other programs are scattered throughout the community, offering a variety of services intended to assist people in establishing themselves in the community. Once released from custody, people must seek out these services. Post-release services provided by the Sheriff are, understandably, limited. It is not the responsibility of the Sheriff to continue to provide for released individuals. That is the responsibility of the City.

There does not appear to be a comprehensive list of programs that would help people locate appropriate services. The greatest need expressed by the majority of inmates interviewed is for permanent housing. Finding employment without an address, and at least a message telephone number, is nearly impossible. Remaining crime-free becomes a staggering challenge when people are forced to sleep on the streets for lack of adequate shelter. The current shelter system is difficult to access due to limited beds. People staying in the shelters must leave early each morning and remain on the streets until late afternoon, when they must stand in line again to gain access to food and a bed. Frequently, an individual may attempt to find a bed at several shelters, only to find that there is no space. They then revert to living in doorways or any other place that seems reasonably safe. All of the education, counseling and good intentions forged while in jail are swept away by the reality of trying to survive. It is a great irony that in order to get services people need to be incarcerated.

Many of the people in the county jails are misdemeanants who cycle in and out of the jails frequently. The Sheriff's Department does not track recidivists in the jails. There is, therefore, no reliable means of assessing how many people in jail have been there before. Agencies which work with individuals exiting the jails estimate that 40 - 60% of this population is homeless. This estimate coincides with the statements of approximately 80% of interviewed inmates who list housing as their first priority. An accurate picture of who comprise the homeless would assist the City in planning for and providing services to this population. If, in fact, a large number of the homeless are individuals released from the jails, planning around their needs is indicated. The logical repository of this data would be the Sheriff's Department.

Many of the community-based agencies that receive funding from a variety of sources, including City funds, offer similar services to the homeless population. These services typically include counseling, twelve-step programs (for alcohol and drug addiction), job preparation and placement, as well as a smattering of other services. Programs are limited in their funds and tend to spread themselves too thin by offering a panoply of services rather than developing one area of expertise, such as job preparation and placement. The staffs of the programs tend to be by young people, either in school and getting academic credits for their work, or by recent graduates who will move on to better jobs when possible. Many programs rely heavily on volunteers who stay with the program for a limited period. Hence, there is little continuity for people in the programs, people who need consistency and personal contact with a reliable person. Many of these programs enjoy success, while others appear to be ineffectual and inconsistent in their services. There is little significant oversight of these programs.

Anecdotal evidence, as reported by individuals who work with people released from the county jails, suggests that a large number of the homeless living on the streets of San Francisco are individuals who have been in and out of the jails. The Sheriff's Department has provided them with education, counseling, and other tools to help them upon release from custody. They report feeling renewed and empowered by the in-custody programs. Once released however, people find that services, for the most part, are hard to access. These individuals frequently have substance abuse problems, which have contributed greatly to their situations. They have self-esteem issues and may easily become frustrated and discouraged. Without short-term assistance upon release, many quickly return to their old habits and haunts because the system they are expected to access is daunting at best.

When possible, mentors could be assigned to a person prior to their release, in order to set in place services - such as housing, counseling and job preparation and search - needed to enable a person to remain crime free. Most of the interviewed inmates were enthusiastic about the concept of a "mentor" or "sponsor" who could help them for a limited period of time following release. The savings accrued from keeping the person out of the jail system could provide funding for this program.

The expense to the taxpayers of San Francisco in terms of incarceration, crime, medical care, the negative effect on tourism, and quality-of-life issues attributed to this population is exorbitant. Providing funding for programs which address their needs could prevent further offenses while significantly reducing the number of people living and dying on the streets, benefiting both the individual and the citizens.

Providing relevant, quality programs will require political resolve. Significant oversight of existing and future programs is necessary. Programs not performing satisfactorily should be denied City funding. Agencies should be encouraged to develop specialties rather than trying to be all things to all people. A central clearing point for all services should be developed so that anyone can access available services with a telephone call. Permanent housing should quickly replace shelter beds.

Estimates of the homeless population in San Francisco range from 6,000 to 10,000. If, in fact, 40-60% of these individuals (2,400 -6,000) are "graduates" and repeat "graduates" of the county jails, studying their needs and gearing services toward those needs can do much towards alleviating the problem.

Significant reduction of the homeless population and its attendant problems will be difficult but possible. The Mayor and Board of Supervisors need to have the political will to demand quality service for money provided and a cessation of "turf wars" between agencies vying for this money. Careful monitoring of services is needed. Agencies not meeting a high standard of service should be denied access to City and County funding. A concerted effort by all agencies, both public and private, can make the difference between San Francisco's continuing to be a second-class city or reclaiming its rightful place as a first class environment for residents and visitors alike.

BACKGROUND

The Civil Grand Jury reviewed the in-custody programs provided to inmates by the Sheriff's Department. These programs are: Roads to Recovery, SISTER Program, RSVP (Resolve to Stop the Violence Project) and the 5 Keys Charter School. The Sheriff's Department has kept statistics on recidivism rates for these programs.

Roads to Recovery is an in-custody drug treatment program that includes acupuncture, academic classes, life skills, relapse prevention, 12-step groups, anger management, family issues, community planning and recovery process groups (Attachment 1). Groups meet Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM. The 2000 recidivism study indicates that 55% of the non-treatment control group recidivated; while 44.8% of program graduates relapsed. Significantly the recidivism rate for program graduates who were transitioned into residential programs was only 35.7%.

The SISTER program, the only one for women in the jails, collaborates with the Walden House Drug treatment program to provide a substance abuse course similar to Roads to Recovery. The recidivism rate for women inmates who completed the program was 40%, and 55% for the control group (Attachment 2).

RSVP is the first violence prevention program of its kind in the nation (Attachment 3). Participants are held accountable for their violence as well as for refocusing and restructuring their attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. A 2002 study of recidivism, subsequent to release, for this group found the following:

2 months or more in the program: a 42.4% reduction in re-arrest for violent crimes;

3 months or more: a 50.7% reduction

4 months or more: a 79.7% reduction (Attachment 3).

The Sheriff's Department received \$1,352,491 for these programs in 2003 - 2004.

In September 2003, the 5 Keys Charter School was opened in the jail (Attachment 4). It is believed to be the first such school in a jail nationwide. It was developed when the public schools withdrew their educational support due to budget cuts. Classes take place from 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Subjects are taught in three and four-hour blocks since only about 10% of the students remain in the program (and in custody) for a month or more. Participants can improve their grade-point average by 1.7 grades in thirty days. Inmates and deputies are equally enthusiastic about the benefits of this program. Funding comes from a variety of sources, largely grants and State funds for ADA (Average Daily Attendance).

As a natural adjunct, the post-release programs were also examined, which led the jurors to explore other options available to this population when they are released from custody. Although the Sheriff's programs are laudable, they are necessarily limited in scope. Once an individual is released from jail and on their own, there is precious little assistance to be had.

Post-release programs include the Garden Project, electronic home detention and monitoring, court diversion (own recognizance) and graffiti cleanup (Attachment 5). The budget for these services for FY 2003-2004 was \$1,601,034. Of these programs, The Garden Project holds the most promise. Whereas the other services, i.e., home detention,

court diversion and graffiti cleanup are established for people going through the Court process or fulfilling a Court order, the Garden Project is geared toward people in the community who have been released from custody after the conclusion of their court case. The Project, begun in 1982 as an in-custody program, trained inmates in organic farming and landscaping at the facility in San Bruno. Due to budget cuts, the in-custody portion of the Project was eliminated. Increased funding to restore this program in the jails is a very desirable priority of this Civil Grand Jury.

The current program trains individuals in landscaping and gardening at two sites away from the jail. Participants are paid \$8 per hour and work 32 hours per week. While most of the produce is donated to local senior centers, homeless shelters and family centers, a part of each harvest is sold at the Ferry Plaza Farmer's Market. The proceeds help pay salaries and fund program operation.

A second part of this Project is the Tree Corps, which pays the same amount for the same length workweek. Individuals plant and maintain street trees throughout City neighborhoods.

Additionally, the Project has a third component, Garden Project Trainees. These are people who are not ready to join the work force because they lack the skills to do so. Trainees work on various jobs; e.g., planting flowers in neighborhoods, delivering produce to agencies and beginning to work in the Hunter's Point Garden.

The recidivism rate for all of the Jail Alternative Programs (post release) is 60% (Attachment 6). The recidivism rate for the Garden Project is 6% four months after release and 24% two years after release. These statistics are far better than those for any other post release program and suggest that actual job training that develops skills and rewards the person for achievements is a powerful tool.

After investigating the in-custody and post-release programs, jurors turned to community services available to this population. There appear be numerous agencies, both public and private, which receive funding for and provide various services to the homeless population. Descriptions for most of the programs identified as service providers offered similar or identical services; e.g., counseling, job training and preparation, alcohol/drug programs, etc. According to people who accessed and are knowledgeable about these programs, their effectiveness varies widely. Jurors, with the resources to identify and locate agencies that offer services to the homeless, were unable to find a comprehensive list of all available services. Both users of the system and professionals in the field reported that accessing services is incredibly difficult. When asked about programs for the homeless in general, and for people exiting the county jail population in particular, one professional stated, "There is nothing going on out there." Additionally, agencies contracted to provide services often engage in "turf wars" over provision of those services and funding to support them. In many instances, the result is poor service delivery. Agencies need to be held accountable for funding; they should be denied City and County funding when found in violation of their contract. Careful oversight of all providers is warranted in order to ensure proper expenditure of funds and provision of services.

A Life

“Walter” is a Viet Nam veteran who has an alcohol problem. He lives on the Tenderloin streets and reports having been in county jails ten times. Currently in the Roads to Recovery Program, he has participated in other jail programs during previous incarcerations. He receives a monthly check from the Veteran’s Administration that he admits he spends unwisely. As a result, he frequently cannot afford housing in low-rent hotels. Sleeping on the street is frightening and dangerous. He has seen people robbed and bludgeoned in their sleep. On more than one occasion, others sleeping on the streets in his vicinity have died during the night.

When he tries to find space in the shelter system, he says, he is frequently turned away because the shelters are full. When he is able to get into a shelter, he can stay there from 4:00 or 5:00 PM until 7:00 the following morning. These temporary and unreliable situations are frustrating and demeaning. During the wet and cold winter months, he may commit a petty crime or be arrested for public drunkenness so that he can go to jail where he knows he will be warm and fed in a clean environment.

When he is incarcerated, the Veteran’s Administration is notified and his check is withheld. Upon release, he must go to the VA office to have the checks reinstated. It takes two months for the new check to arrive, during which time he has no income and is again on the streets. Thus goes the cycle for the thousands of “Walters” in San Francisco.

INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

The Civil Grand Jury investigated programs provided by the Sheriff’s Department for individuals incarcerated in the county jails. The Jury also investigated a number of community-based services designed to serve the homeless. The investigation included interviews with senior Sheriff’s Department staff, deputies, inmates, community-based providers, a member of the Mayor’s office, judges and attorneys. The Jury reviewed program descriptions and statistics related to this population.

I. IN-CUSTODY PROGRAMS

FINDINGS

- 1.1. In-custody programs administered by the Sheriff’s Department are beneficial to the inmates and should be retained. Inmates participating in these programs are low-risk, non-violent offenders, most of whom are incarcerated for alcohol and drug offenses.
- 1.2. The 5 Keys Charter School, although in operation for less than a year, holds great promise. Students enrolled in the school are enthusiastic about this program, respond well to the teachers and are eager to learn and achieve. They report a renewed sense of accomplishment and self-esteem.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1a. The Mayor and Board of Supervisors should find in-custody programs at current or higher levels.

II. OUT-OF-CUSTODY PROGRAMS

FINDINGS

- 2.1. The Sheriff's Department does not have the staff or budget to develop community-based programs to serve released individuals, nor is it their responsibility.
- 2.2. Programs in existence are frequently difficult to locate, confusing to access, limited in capacity and often inadequate to the needs of this population.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2a. The Mayor's office should determine the needs of individuals exiting the jails to assist in formulating effective programs
- 2b. Develop a computer program to track recidivism of individuals entering and exiting the county jail system.
- 2c. Prioritize services needed by individuals released from the county jails when planning for the homeless.

III. COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

FINDINGS

- 3.1. The cost to the taxpayers of San Francisco as a result of the negative effects of homelessness is great.
- 3.2. It is estimated that 40% – 60% of the homeless are individuals who have been in the county jails at least once, and frequently numerous times.
- 3.3. Determining the needs of this population and addressing those needs can reduce the number of homeless people.
- 3.4. Providing permanent, safe and sober, clean housing is a priority for these individuals. Without an address and at least a message telephone, seeking and obtaining employment is nearly impossible.
- 3.5. The current shelter system is unreliable and inadequate. Roaming the streets during the day, hoping for a shelter bed each night, is discouraging and demoralizing.

- 3.6. There is no accurate data available to track people entering and exiting the jails. Identifying this population would allow proper planning for their needs.
- 3.7. These individuals need short- term assistance upon release from custody to help them navigate the “system”. Only the most determined are able to persevere in finding programs suited to their needs.
- 3.8. Most inmates expressed a desire for assistance from a mentor/sponsor for a short period.
- 3.9. Existing agencies frequently provide similar or identical services, rather than specializing in one service. As a result, most programs are spread too thinly and can only provide limited assistance.
- 3.10. There does not appear to be significant oversight of agencies receiving public dollars. The quality of services varies greatly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3a. A mentor/sponsor program should be created to assist this population for a limited period after they return to the community from the jails.
- 3b. An audit of all agencies currently charged with providing services to the homeless should be undertaken.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

Sheriff – 60 Days

Mayor – 60 Days

Office of the Controller – 60 Days

Board of Supervisors – 90 Days

Roads to Recovery Program

Roads to Recovery is an in-custody drug treatment program of the San Francisco Sheriff's Department. It is a culturally competent criminal justice treatment program committed to providing comprehensive intervention and treatment services to incarcerated individuals, enabling them to develop strengths and acquire requisite skills for a positive, productive lifestyle. Recovery services are provided for sentenced and pre-sentenced prisoners at the San Francisco County Jail.

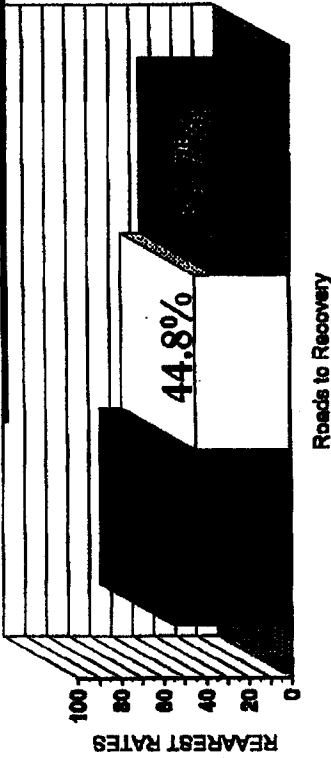
Inmates serious about recovering from drug addiction begin the process here. Roads to Recovery provides inmates with an opportunity to learn new skills and gain tools which will assist them to integrate into the community and to lead productive and stable lives. For clients interested in residential treatment once released, the Roads to Recovery program will prepare them for this next phase of their recovery.

Services include acupuncture, academic classes, life skills, relapse prevention, 12-step groups, anger management, family issues, community planning and recovery process groups. Groups meet from 7:30 am until 3:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Case Managers meet on a regular basis with participants in the Roads to Recovery Program to provide individual counseling and transition planning.

Established in 1998, this innovative, in-custody criminal justice program provides re-entry, transitional and support services to offenders returning to the San Francisco community. Roads to Recovery is an effective program and is in the forefront of the fight against crime and recidivism, providing public safety through investment in our people.

ROADS TO RECOVERY: Challenges, Choices, and Change

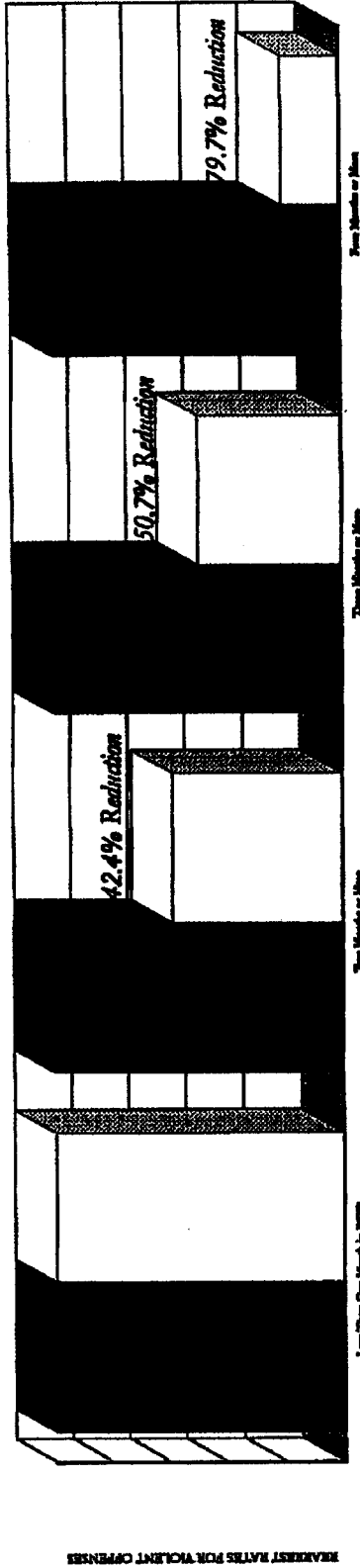
Effectiveness of In-Jail Treatment Programs



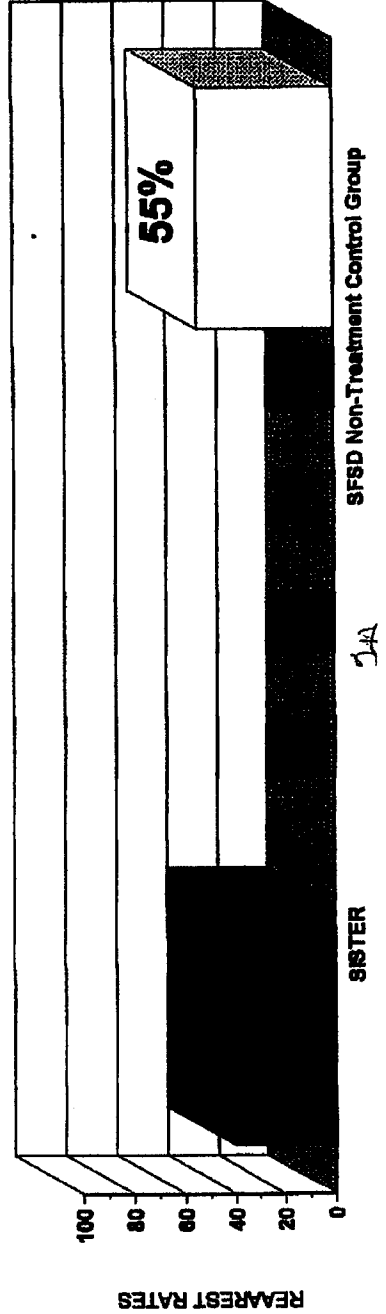
- Roads to Recovery
- SFSD Non-Treatment Control Group
- Roads to Recovery Graduates (22 of 49 Participants Rearrested)
- Roads to Recovery Graduates Who Transitioned Into Residential Treatment Programs (10 out of 28 Participants Rearrested)

RSVP Rearest Rates for Violent Offenses

- Non RSVP Participants
- RSVP Participants



SISTER Recidivism Rates





SISTER Program

Sisters in Sober Treatment Empowered in Recovery

The mission of the San Francisco Sheriff's Department's SISTER Project is to collaborate with Walden House Drug Treatment Program in providing a safe and secure environment for incarcerated women seeking to receive substance abuse treatment in conjunction with in-jail and post-release services such as counseling, educational and vocational needs. The SISTER Project commits to providing these recovery services and needs to incarcerated women while maintaining a high standard of service by practicing the following:

- ◆ Openness to progressive ideas and actions
- ◆ Maintaining an environment of honesty and mutual respect
- ◆ Taking pride in and responsibility for the quality of services being provided
- ◆ Courageously holding ourselves and other accountable
- ◆ Helping incarcerated women to achieve success in recovery



S.I.S.T.E.R. PROGRAM

(Sisters in Sober Treatment Empowered in Recovery)

The S.I.S.T.E.R. Program is a San Francisco Sheriff's Department program available to women in the San Francisco County Jail System. The program began in 1993 with a federal demonstration grant from the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) and has since been incorporated into the city and county budget due to its effectiveness in helping women develop the tools needed to live happy, healthy, drug free lives.

A modified therapeutic community, S.I.S.T.E.R. Program is intensely structured with activities from 7:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. The day starts with acupuncture and / or stress reduction class. In addition to group and individual counseling there are groups addressing issues ranging from parenting skills, incest survival, physical and emotional abuse and a variety of other topics. Weekly two-hour parent-child visitation provides an opportunity for family reunification to take place.

The focus is on open communication, strengthening the family unit, and comprehensive medical and mental health services which address the underlying causes of addiction. S.I.S.T.E.R promotes wellness techniques in a culturally sensitive and gender specific treatment environment. Women of color, mothers women living with HIV / AIDS, and other special populations benefit from personalized services to help them with their special needs.

The program is staffed by personnel from the Sheriff's Department, Walden House, Milpitas Adult Education, City College, ARTS (Acupuncture Recovery Treatment Services) and Forensic Aids Project, as well as a number of volunteers and community based agencies.

Participation in S.I.S.T.E.R Program is largely on a voluntary basis, although a woman may be mandated to the program. Interested participants receive assistance in finding treatment and other services upon release from jail.



SISTER Program
In Jail Substance Abuse Treatment for Women

Summary of the 1996 Recidivism Study Report
University of California at San Francisco

The 1996 study conducted by UCSF compared 150 women who participated in the **SISTER** program to a comparison group of 150 non-**SISTER** participants in the San Francisco county jail system. The **SISTER** group was selected randomly, with the proviso that the distribution of age, ethnicity and arrest charge approximate that of the total group of women who have participated in **SISTER**. Once the **SISTER** group was selected, a similar group of comparison (non-**SISTER**) inmates was selected. The comparison control group contained the same distribution of demographic characteristics.

Rearrest Rates for subjects out of custody for at least one year:

CONTROL GROUP: 55% Recidivism

SISTER GRADUATES: 40% Recidivism

ATTACHMENT 3



San Francisco Sheriff's Department Resolve to Stop the Violence Project (RSVP)

Resolve to Stop the Violence Project (RSVP), is the first violence prevention program of its kind in the nation, incorporating victim impact, offender accountability, and community involvement to reduce recidivism, responsibly return ex-offenders to their communities, create opportunities for restoration and prevent further violence. The human and material costs of violence are unacceptable. Families grieve for the murdered and maimed. Survivors of violent crimes experience injury, pain and fear for their safety. Offenders' families suffer in shame. Young men, resigned to spending their lives in and out of prison, hurt each other, themselves, their spouses, families, friends and neighbors. Communities are forced to redirect tax dollars from hope to despair, from education and social services to criminal justice and incarceration. RSVP brings together all those harmed by crime: victim, offender, and community – to resolve to stop the violence.

Components

Offender Restoration

The Offender Restoration Program provides mandated violence reeducation programs for violent offenders while in jail and upon release. The program holds offenders accountable for their violence, focusing on redefining and restructuring their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that fuel male role violence and on repairing the harm caused to their victims and communities.

Survivor Restoration

The Survivor Restoration Program provides direct services to the survivors of the violent offenders participating in the Offender Restoration Program. The program empowers survivors to restore themselves, their families and their communities as they make the transition from being victims of violent crimes to becoming survivors and advocates.

Community Restoration

The Community Restoration Program pioneers violence prevention efforts in community education and mobilization. Public awareness initiatives are driven by the principles of Restorative Justice: survivor restoration; offender accountability; and, community restoration.

Recidivism Study Results

Dr. James Gilligan, of the Center for the Study of Violence at Harvard Medical School, conducted a preliminary study examining violent offenders in RSVP compared to violent offenders among the general jail population. The re-arrest rates of RSVP participants one year after release demonstrated a 42.4%, 50.7%, and 79.7% reduction in re-arrest for violent charges among offenders who complete two, three, and four months or more in RSVP respectively.

Awards

- Governor Gray Davis's Crime Victims Services and Restitution Award, 2001
- Attorney General Bill Lockyer's Crime Prevention Program of the Year Award, 1999
- The National Council on Crime and Delinquency, New American Community Award, 1998
- SF Commission on the Status of Women, Domestic Violence Awareness Month Leadership Award, 1998



RSVP/Resolve to Stop the Violence Program

**Preliminary Report (1/01) on the evaluation Study Conducted by
Dr. James Gilligan
Center for the Study of Violence
Harvard Medical School**

Dr. Gilligan's study will not be completed and published until 2002. Below are highlights of the data so far released. Criminal contacts are reviewed one year after a study subject is released from custody into the community.

RSVP Study group:	102 subjects
Control group:	101 subjects

Compared with the rearrest rates of the scientific (age, ethnicity, criminal history, offense category) control group:

--a 42.4% reduction in rearrest for violent charges among offenders who complete two months or more in the RSVP program

--a 50.7% reduction in rearrest for violent charges among offenders who complete three months or more in the RSVP program

--a 79.7% reduction in rearrest for violent charges among offenders who complete four months or more in the RSVP program

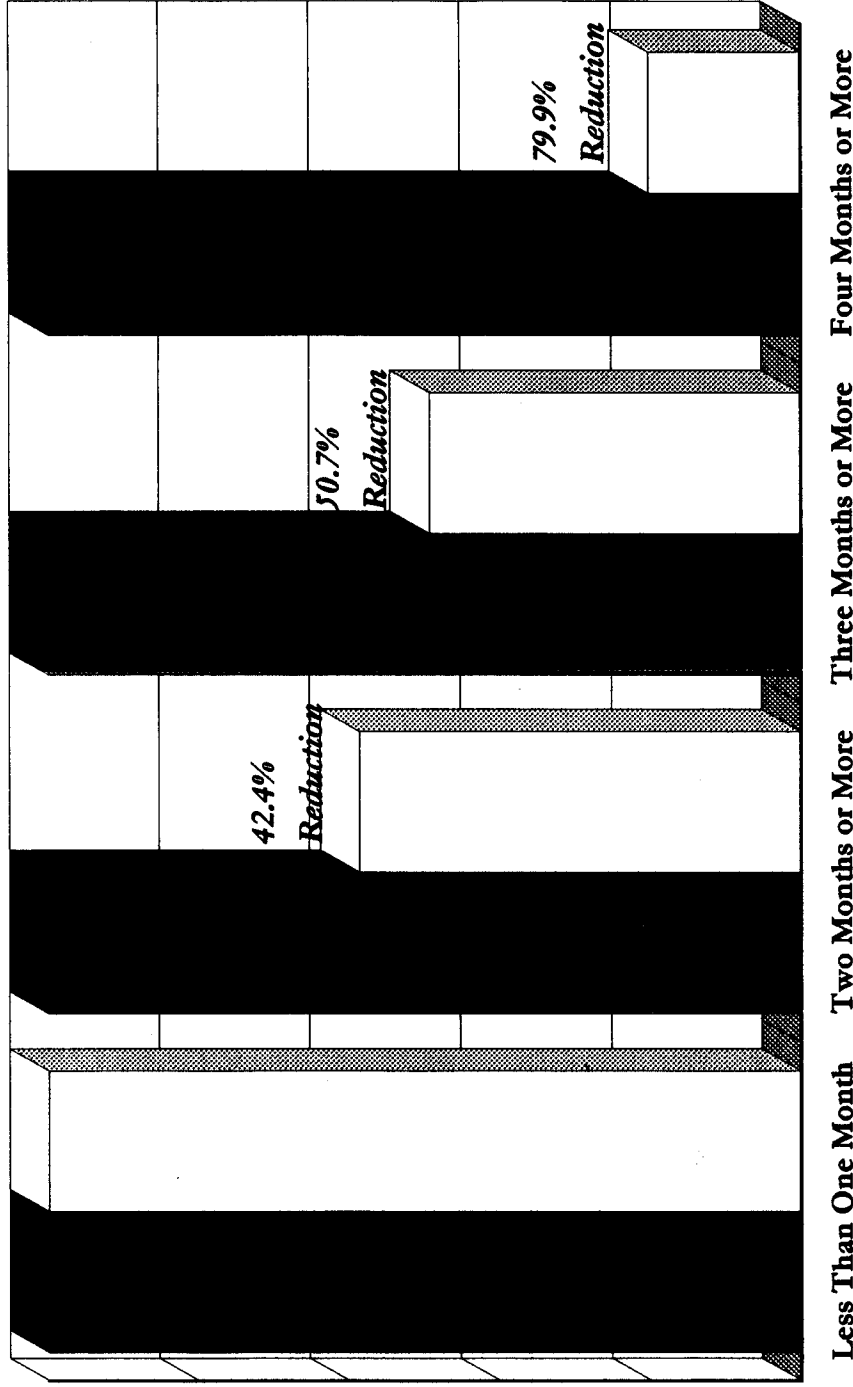
Offenders younger than 30 years of age show a 68.1% greater improvement rate with RSVP than do older offenders in the program.

General (all offenses) rearrest rates in the first post-release year show negligible difference between the control and RSVP groups. RSVP group rearrests are predominately drug and old vehicle code charges.

01/27/01

Rearrest Rates for Violent Offenses Resolve to Stop the Violence Project

- Non RSVP Participants
- RSVP Participants



Less Than One Month Two Months or More Three Months or More Four Months or More

TIME SPENT IN RSVP

REARREST RATES FOR VIOLENT OFFENSES

ATTACHMENT 4

San Francisco Sheriff's Department Public Charter School April 30, 2003

Introduction

In September of 2002, San Francisco Sheriff Michael Hennessey announced plans to develop the first jail-based public high school in the nation. The Sheriff's Department is in the process of creating a charter school within the county jail, which will extend into the Sheriff's post-release program. The goal is to give its current inmates, the vast majority of whom come from San Francisco and are released back into The City after serving their terms, the education and skills they need through a comprehensive high school program. The goal of this program will lead towards the attainment of a full diploma. This will allow the Sheriff's inmates the opportunity to permanently and productively re-enter society.

The department has a decade-long track record of implementing a successful program, despite relationships with its Local Education Agencies (LEA's) that either lacked the capacity or could not prioritize their programs to deliver the educational assistance their inmates so desperately need. This includes San Francisco Unified School District, Milpitas Unified School District, and currently, San Francisco City College. After carefully studying every possibility of properly giving these inmates the education and skills they need, the only plausible solution was to develop an autonomous public school through the charter school model.

County Inmates

Most of the county inmates are under the age of 35. Seventy percent of them have not graduated high school, and a shocking two-thirds have never been employed. The department continues to see its inmates released back into The City with little education and no employable skills. Some quickly end up right back in the county jail. Many staff of the Sheriff's Department are seeing three generations of the same family simultaneously incarcerated on unrelated charges. The most commonly committed crimes include drug offenses, petty theft and domestic violence. The average sentence for each inmate is 90 days, followed by a probationary period of between two to three years. It is the intent for offenders who are released back into the community to continue to participate in the department's limited educational programs during their probation.

Proven Success from a Limited Program

Despite the difficult relationships with the prior LEA's, the Sheriff's limited educational programs have been extremely effective. Confirmed by a recent Harvard study of the department's educational program, the department has experienced a 50 percent reduction in violent re-arrests for offenders who complete at least three months of their RSVP educational programs. They have also seen a five percent reduction in total recidivism for those who have completed their GED. Many former offenders have gone on to pursue a college, and in some cases, a master's degree. Some of the finest staff members of the Sheriff's Department are graduates of the limited jail-based educational programs. By offering the county inmates a full high school diploma, the department expects that the rate of success will be dramatically increased.

Charter School Plans

Without an LEA, the only way the department can provide a comprehensive high school diploma to those that the system has let down is through the charter school model. The Sheriff's Department is currently in the process of designing the curriculum to reflect state standards,

recruiting credentialed teachers, many of who have expressed interested in teaching this under-served student population, and assembling a qualified board and administrative staff to oversee the operation of the school.

Savings to Taxpayers

It is important to consider that the current programs do not accept taxpayer money from Sacramento. The \$5,000 it costs to educate each of the proposed 200 students will be money well spent in light of the \$25,000 it costs taxpayers yearly to incarcerate each prisoner. This does not include the hidden savings due to a reduction in crime as a result of the program, nor does it include the hidden benefit due to the increase in the number of productive, taxpaying citizens that will come out of this program.

Local Support

Sheriff Hennessey has lined up a broad-based coalition of community support in San Francisco, which includes the support of several members of the San Francisco school board, and members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and representatives of San Francisco City College.

Budget Reductions

The state Board of Education has been exploring new regulations that would limit the ability of particular programs to serve students over the age of 19. If enacted, this would have negative consequences on the success of the Sheriff's program. Many student-inmates have had their regular high school programs interrupted by jail sentencing at age 19 and would therefore not be able to secure a full high school diploma without using the charter school mechanism.

Exceptions and waivers have been granted to organizations that serve a student population similar to the ones served by the Sheriff. The Sheriff's program is consistent with the waiver permission granted to these similar organizations, which include the California Conservation Corps, and others. The state Board of Education recognizes this, and many individuals on the State Board are very supportive of a proposed legislative remedy for the Sheriff's Department. In fact, at the state Board of Education's April 9, 2003 meeting, the board voted to postpone implementation of these regulations for 16 months, in order to allow time for a legislative remedy.

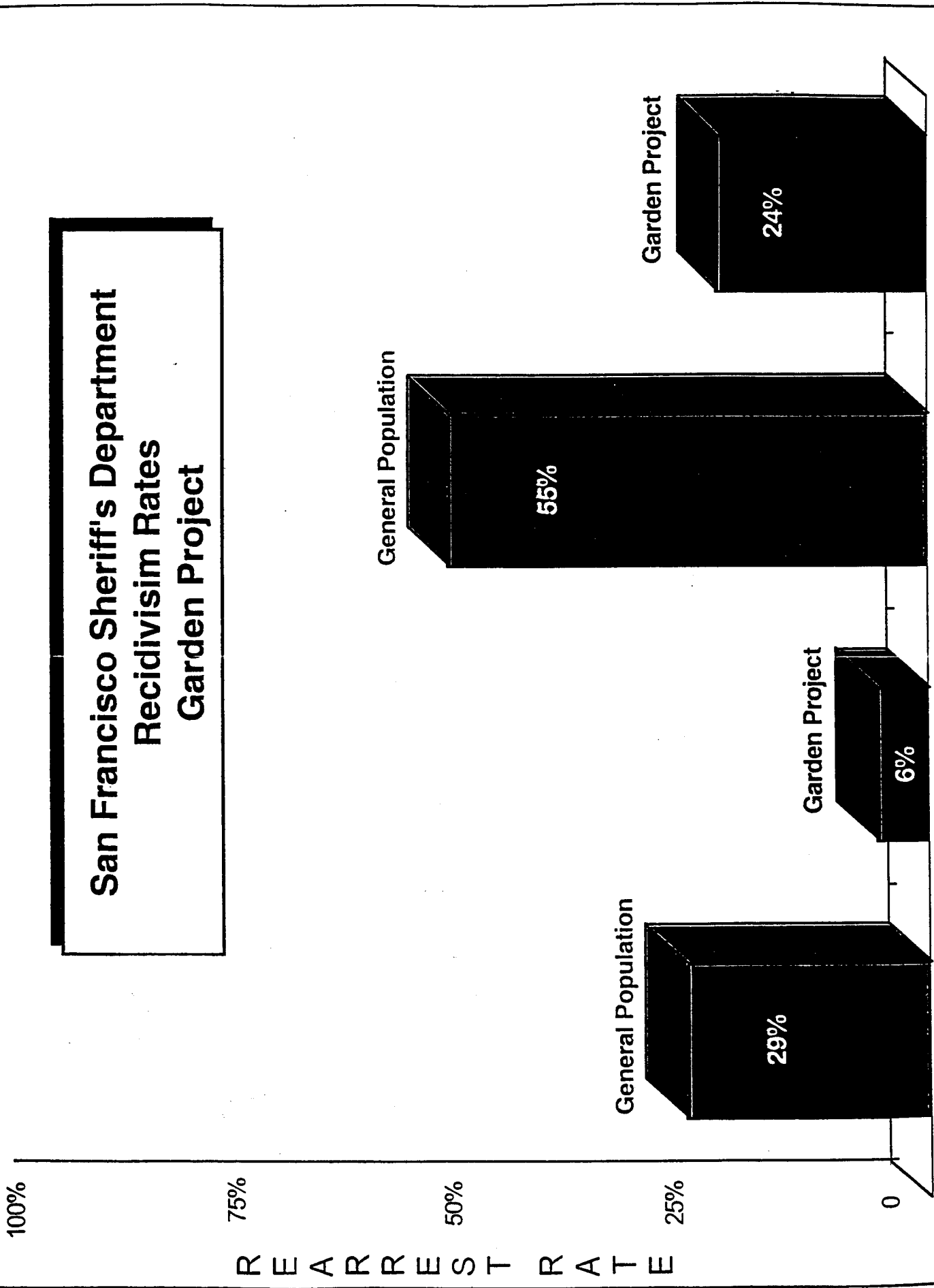
Plan of Action

The Sheriff is supporting Senate Bill (SB) 979, authored by State Senator Denise Moreno Ducheny, which would make the education code more consistent and fair with respect to the treatment of this at-risk student population. Given the current budget situation, this will not require a spending increase, nor will it need a review by the Appropriations Committee or the Fiscal Committee. It would simply grant the state Board of Education authority to grant equitable exemptions along with the existing programs. This would keep the department's plans to open its doors in September 2003 on schedule.

A Win for the Community

It is a fact: offenders who get their GED are more likely to stay jail-free. This likelihood is even greater for those who get a full high school diploma. Through its existing programs, the Sheriff's Department is beginning to reverse this cycle of incarceration by providing these offenders with the opportunity to gain a full high school diploma in perhaps the only environment possible. Expanding the ability of the Sheriff's department through its creation of an autonomous public school will be a win for these inmates who are preparing to re-enter The City. Through the resulting decreased crime and an increase in opportunities for these at-risk students, this program will also be a win for taxpayers and for the entire community.

**San Francisco Sheriff's Department
Recidivism Rates
Garden Project**



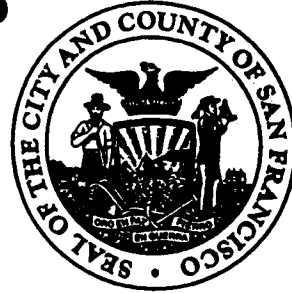
REARREST RATE

Two Years After Release

Four Months After Release

City and County of San Francisco

OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF



Michael Hennessey
SHERIFF

(415) 554-7225

**2003 Recidivism SFSD Studies
Jail Alternative Programs**

Alternative Program Rearrest rates compared with the San Francisco County Jail control rate of 60%.

Percentages are the result of tracking the criminal justice contacts of a sample comprised of 400 randomly selected participants who have been out of custody for at least one year:

Jail Alternative Programs, Entire Division: 33% Recidivism

Individual Unit Results:

Home Detention	08% Recidivism
Residential County Parole	40% Recidivism
SWAP/Court Referral	16% Recidivism
SWAP/Jail Referral	47% Recidivism
SWAP Total:	32% Recidivism
Community Parole	18% Recidivism
PREP/Jail Referral	68% Recidivism