

Evaluation of the Enhanced Ranch  
Program  
Santa Clara County Probation  
Department

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NCCD

# Enhanced Ranch Program

- Implementation in August 2006
- Two sites: James Boys Ranch and Muriel Wright Center, both in Morgan Hill, CA
- Adaptation of the Missouri Model developed by the Missouri Division of Youth Services

# The Missouri Model

- Home-like physical setting: bed covers, couches, arranged in pods of 12 so youth and counselors can sit and talk
- Youth wear their own clothes
- Focus on changing thinking rather than on simply changing behavior
- Staff are counselors with specific training
- Therapeutic units focused on cognitive behavior, personal development, and group processes

# Previous Ranch

- 40% failure rate
- 6-month program
- High number of escapes
- High number of incidents during confinement
- Didn't promote growth of detained youth (CPO)
- High recidivism rate upon returning home

# County Support

- Probation Department takes the lead in the development of new programs with support of Board of Supervisors
- Probation Department leads study groups to analyze effectiveness of old ranch program and improve outcomes for youth in custody
- 20-person delegation visited Missouri
- Board of Supervisors approved \$3.2 million to implement the Missouri model

# Implementation

- Made physical improvements to facilities to replicate the pods and home-like setting
- Decreased the populations at the ranches
- Variable time in the ranch (6-8 months)
- 96 hours of instruction on Cognitive Based Treatment model of group counseling, plus onsite mentoring/coaching of staff
- Staff ratio: 1:6 day/evening; 1:12 night
- Previous: 1:15 day/evening; 1:30 night

# Characteristics of the Program

- Geared toward high risk, high need youth with gang affiliations, substance abuse, and significant criminal histories
- Therapeutic using proactive models of rehabilitation
- Holistic program – develop pro-social skills, critical thinking, self control, anti-criminal thought patterns, and positive relationships
- Primary focus is to internalize learning to *do what is right* rather than because the counselors enforce behavior
- Behavior management program that is cognitively based
- Comprehensive aftercare supervision and aftercare program services

## Enhanced Ranch Program Admittance Criteria

James Ranch

Wright Center

Only males

Males and females

16-18 years

12-15.5 years (male)

12– 18 years (female)

Felony or multiple  
misdemeanors

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misdemeanors

Must be appropriate  
for open housing setting

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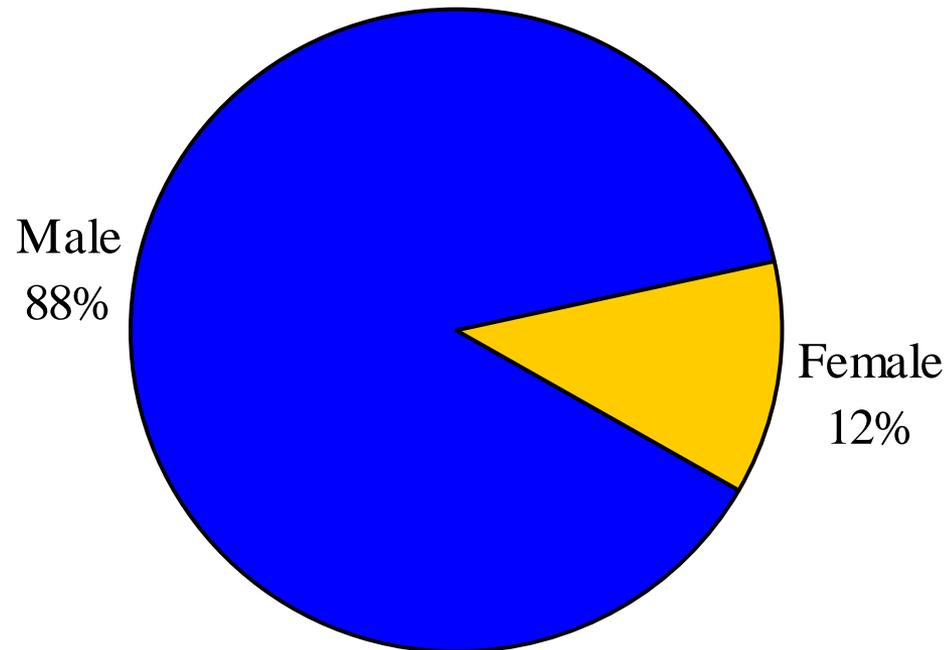
Parental/caretaker  
involvement required

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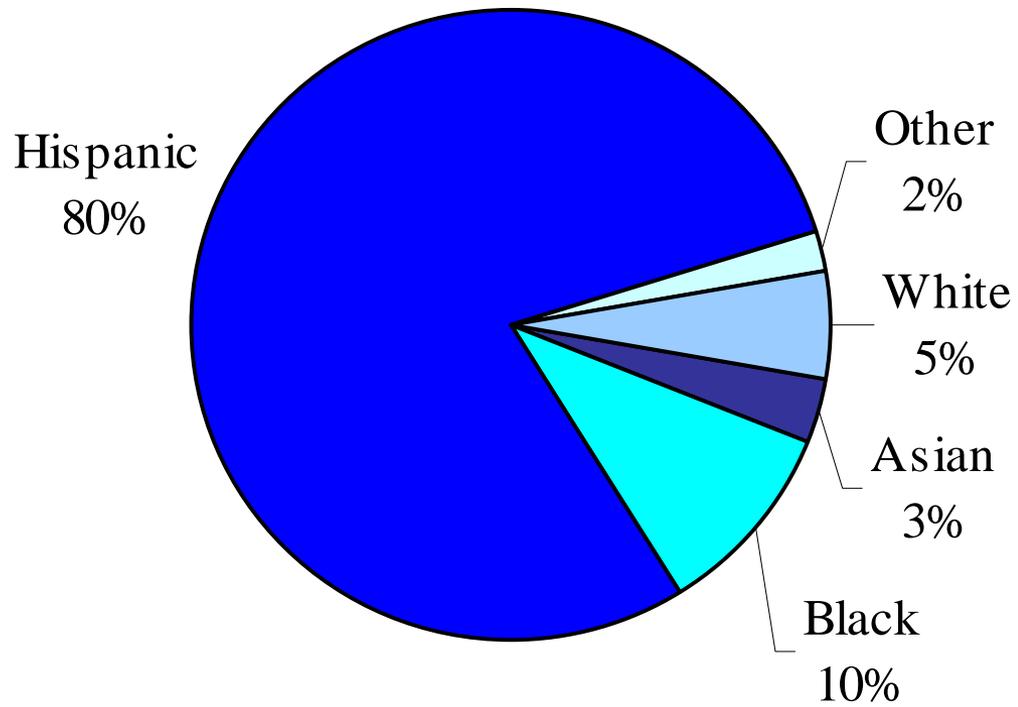
# Core Elements

- Staff development and coaching
- Treatment
- Family atmosphere
- Group process
- Small staff-to-youth ratios
- Family participation
- Personal enhancement opportunities
- Extended length of stay for youth
- Relationship building
- Education
- Aftercare programs

Gender of Enhanced Ranch Participants  
(Cohort 2)

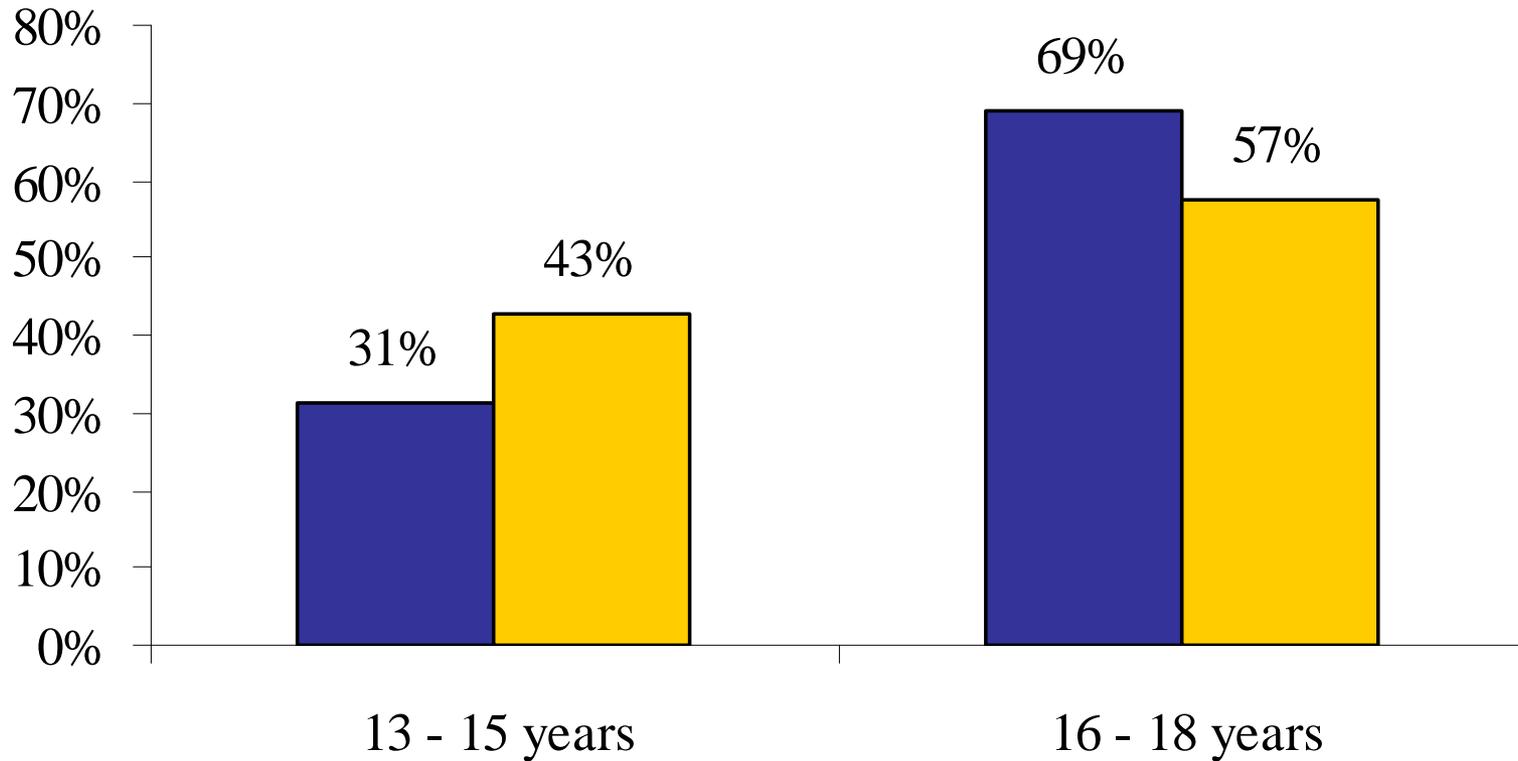


Race/Ethnicity of Enhanced Ranch Participants  
(Cohort 2)

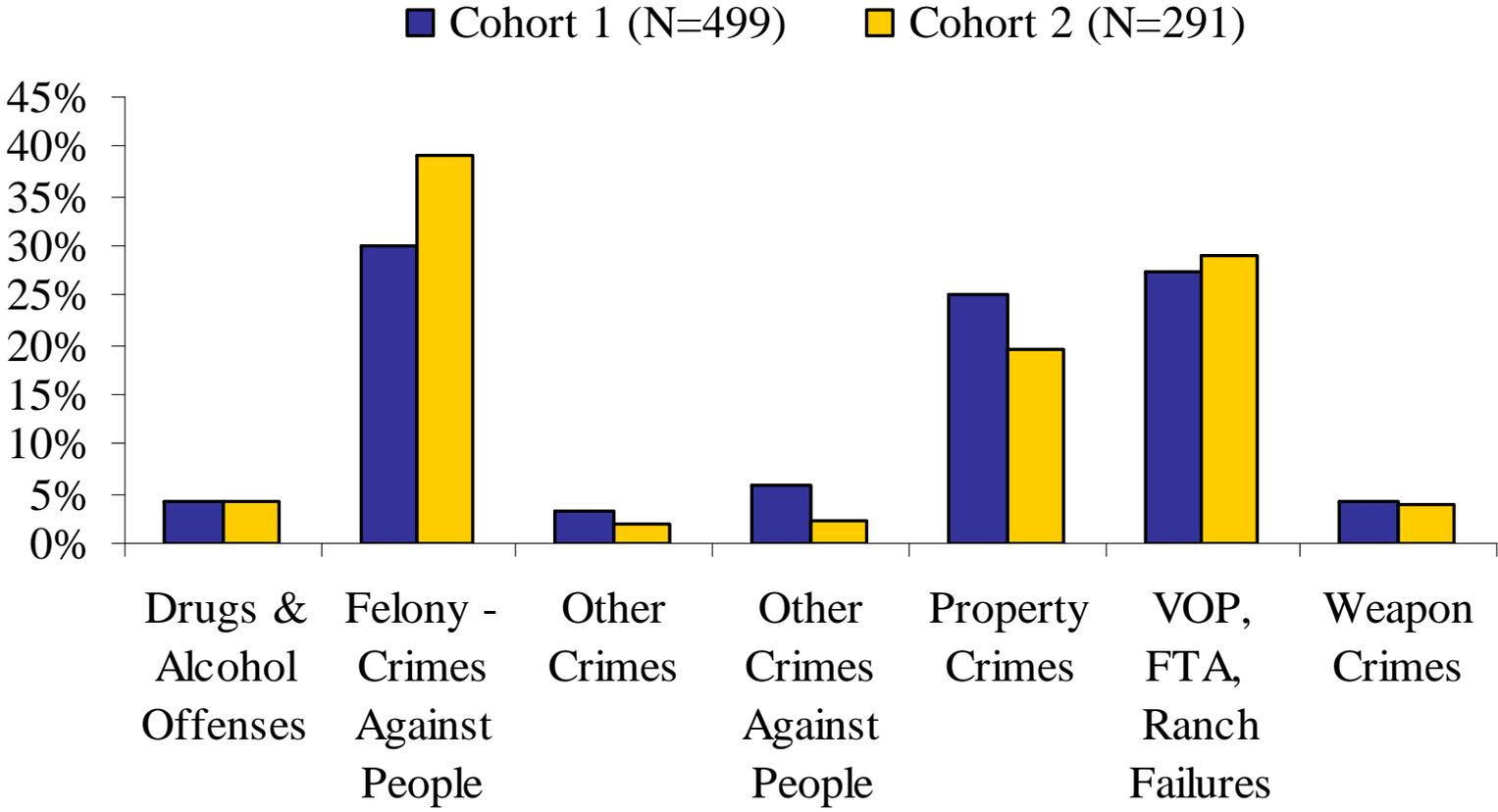


## Age of Ranch Participants by Cohort

■ (Cohort 1 (N=499))    ■ Cohort 2 (N= 291)



# Most Serious Sustained Offenses that Resulted in Confinement of Ranch Residents



# Outcome Measures Identified by SCCPD

		Old Ranch Participants (Cohort 1)	Enhanced Ranch Participants (Cohort 2)
While at Ranch	Violations/failures	47%	25%
	Probation Violation	23%	8%
	New arrest	24%	17%
Within 12 Months Of Exiting ranch	Violations/failures	42%	37%
	Probation violations	11%	9%
	New arrest	31%	28%

# Reported Incidents at Ranch Facilities by Cohort

	Old Ranch Participants (Cohort 1)	Enhanced Ranch Participants (Cohort 2)
Total number of incidents	4647	1294
Unique individuals	475	262
Average number of incidents per individual	9.7	4.9
Range per individual	1-65	1-46

# Next Steps

- Continue to monitor outcomes of the Enhanced Ranch Program
- Examine root causes of those who fail aftercare
- Investigate program elements that will strengthen aftercare and produce better outcomes