

# LUCAS COUNTY TASC RETURNING HOME

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Lucas County TASC Returning Home program has served families returning to Lucas County since 2006. The LCRH program has served a total of 49 families totaling 203 fathers, parenting partners, and children. Overall the LCRH model targets family connectedness to assist the inmate in returning to the community successfully.

The LCRH program provides family case management, group treatment, and enhanced visitation to the program participants. The program has been using the Strengthening Families curriculum during the enhanced visitation so that all family members can participate in the program. In addition, the program provides Thinking for a Change, as well as, general case management services to the father and his family.

Overall the program had a difficult time keeping family members engaged in the program. Only 16 percent of the participants successfully completed the program while 72 percent were terminated during Phase II. The program was successful at improving family targets including flexibility, disengagement, rigidity, family communication, and family satisfaction. Moreover the program was successful in lowering participants' antisocial attitudes. Overall the program had a slight impact but showed marked improvement in addressing personal responsibility and entitlement.

As for recidivism rates, the program had an impact on re-incarceration rates. No participant in LC Returning Home has returned to the institution for a new crime, while only 4 percent have returned on a technical violation.

The following were offered as recommendations for the LCRH program:

- The program would benefit from developing strategies to keep participants engaged in the program. Low completion rates can have a long-term impact on the success of the program.
- The program should continue providing cognitive-behavioral interventions and family programming to the father and their family.
- The program should consider providing a greater density of services to higher risk clients.

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## LUCAS COUNTY TASC RETURNING HOME DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Nearly 800,000 parents were incarcerated in 2007, affecting more than 1.7 million children. The cost of incarcerated parents has taken its toll on communities. Extended families have been forced to provide childcare to these youth while community resources have been overburdened (Glaze and Maruschak, 2008). In an effort to address this issue, the Governor's Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives (GOFBCI) released the Returning Home grants in 2006. The Returning Home grants were designed to fund small demonstration programs that served ex-inmates and their families.

The Returning Home RFP encouraged community agencies and faith-based organizations to submit proposals for new and innovative ways to support ex-inmates and their families. The only stipulation placed on the candidates was that the services had to fall within the Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) guidelines. These guidelines state that the program participants must fall into at least one of the following categories:

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own home or in the homes of relatives
- End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Lucas County TASC Returning Home (TRH) project was designed to serve inmates returning to Lucas County from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. The TRH program targets moderate to high risk offenders through family, group, and case management services. The qualified participant would be a father who has a child less than 18 years of age, is interested in having a relationship with the child, and is returning to Lucas County or one of several contiguous counties.

The TRH model is comprised of three phases. Phase I is delivered while the father is incarcerated. During the incarceration period the family receives case management services, group services, and enhanced visitation. The case management services are typically focused on assisting the father in successfully transitioning to the community. TRH has continued to incorporate Strengthening Families curriculum into the enhanced visitation, ensuring that the entire family receive the benefits of the curriculum. In addition, TRH provided Thinking For a Change to inmates on a weekly basis.

In addition to these services, TRH has restructured the mentoring program and is working to link each father (as the father demonstrates interest) to a mentor. While the initial contact with the mentor occurs in the institution, the primary focus is to cultivate that relationship so that when the father steps down to the community he can be successful. Once the father makes this transition the family is moved into Phase IIA.

The primary focus of Phase IIA is to assist in transitional needs of the family and to enhance support of the father. The TRH works with the families to develop and address the needs of the family through the use of a standardized case plan. The TASC Case

Plan is initially developed during Phase I but is the primary focus of Phase IIA. As families meet their goals, the case manager is focused on providing referrals to services, addressing any areas of need, and reducing barriers that the family may be facing. In addition to the case management needs, TRH makes referrals to community partners, like North Toledo Citizen Circle. The Toledo Citizen Circle is a support circle comprised of interested and concerned community members. The Citizen Circle is based on a restorative justice model and focuses on re-incorporating the ex-inmate and his family into the community. The TRH initially provided referrals to Parents Helping Parents, but after the first year PHP was no longer used as a referral source.

Once the family makes significant progress on their goals, the family is then transitioned to Phase IIB. Phase IIB is designed as an aftercare model and is designed to provide long-term social support. TASC Returning Home is planning on expanding the use of mentors this year during Phase IIB, to ensure that the long-term needs of the family are met.

## **METHODS**

Two sets of data were collected for this report. First the program level data were collected by the program and provided to the University of Cincinnati's Center for Criminal Justice Research (CCJR) for analysis. The information included intake, treatment, and termination data. In addition pre/post tests were conducted on program participants at intake, release from institution, and successful discharge. The pre/post tests included the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales IV (FACES IV) and the Texas Christian University-Criminal Thinking Scales (TCU-CTS).

## **Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales IV**

The Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales, Version 4 (FACES IV), is a self-report assessment designed to measure dimensions of family cohesion and flexibility across six domains (for a thorough review of the FACES IV assessment see Olson & Gorall, 2003). Two of the domains directly measure cohesion and flexibility of the family and were included in earlier versions of FACES. The Cohesion domain measures concepts such as whether the family is involved with each others' lives, feels close to one another, and enjoys spending free time with each other (for a discussion of individual items included in each domain, see Olson, Gorall, & Tiesel, 2006). The Flexibility domain measures concepts such as whether discipline is perceived as fair, if family members compromise, and whether there are clear rules in the family.

Four other domains were added to FACES IV in order to capture extremes on the Cohesion and Flexibility scales. The domains of Disengaged and Enmeshment are used to further describe the Cohesion scale, while the domains of Rigid and Chaos are used to understand the Flexibility scale in greater detail. The Disengaged domain is measured using items such as whether family members depend on one another or whether family members know very little about the friends of other family members. The Enmeshment domain is measured using items such as whether the family spends too much time together and whether the family resents members doing things outside the family. The Rigid domain is measured using items that include whether there are strict consequences for breaking the rules, or whether the family becomes frustrated when there is a change in routines. The Chaotic domain is measured using items such

as whether there is leadership in the family, and whether the family is hectic and disorganized.

The FACES IV assessment also calculates a total ratio designed to provide a summary composite measure of general family health (for a discussion of the total ratio, see Olson, Gorall, & Tiesel, 2006). The ratio essentially is the sum of the Cohesion and Flexibility domains (that indicate healthy functioning) divided by the sum of the four other domains (that indicate problematic functioning). A family score below 1 indicates that the family is experiencing an unbalanced family system. In contrast, the higher a family scores above 1 the more the family is functioning as a balanced family system. The FACES IV assessment has been used and tested repeatedly as a measure of family functioning. All of these scales have been shown to be reliable and valid measures of family functioning. Further, research has found that the scales are able to differentiate between healthy and problematic families.

The FACES IV assessment also provides two supplemental measures of Family Communication and Family Satisfaction (these measures are discussed in depth in Olson & Gorall, 2003). The family communication scale is designed to indicate the extent to which both factual and emotional information lacks constraint and is free flowing. Items included in this scale measure concepts such as whether family members are good listeners and whether family members can calmly discuss problems with one another. The Family Satisfaction scale is designed to gauge the family's satisfaction with the levels of Cohesion and Flexibility. The domain of family satisfaction includes items such as whether the respondent is satisfied with the degree of closeness between family members and whether the respondent is satisfied with the family's ability

to solve conflicts. Both the Family Satisfaction and Family Communication scales have been widely used in studies and found to be both reliable and valid measures.

### **Texas Christian University-Criminal Thinking Scales**

One of the primary purposes of the TRH program is to reduce recidivism. Results from meta-analyses on offender programming suggest that antisocial attitudes are significantly correlated with program completion and recidivism. That is, those offenders that possess a high degree of antisocial attitudes have a higher likelihood of being terminated unsuccessfully from programming as well as committing new crimes.

The Texas Christian University Criminal Thinking Scale (TCU-CTS) was adopted as a measure of antisocial values. The TCU-CTS is an actuarial assessment designed to measure antisocial cognitions that have been shown to be related to criminal and antisocial behavior. Prior research on the TCU-CTS has shown it to be a valid and reliable indicator of criminal thinking (for a discussion of the TCU CTS, its reliability, validity, and relationship to antisocial behavior, see Knight, Garner, Simpson, Morey, & Flynn, 2006). Participants (fathers only) are assessed on the TCU- CTS at intake, release from the institution, and successful discharge from the program.

The TCU-CTS assessment provides a total score for criminal thinking and is also separated into 6 domains: Entitlement, Justification, Power Orientation, Cold Heartedness, Criminal Rationalization, and Personal Irresponsibility. Each domain provides a summary score that can be interpreted based on the specific domain as well as a composite score that provides an overall review of the individual's antisocial attitudes. The following are the domains identified by the TCU CTS:

**Entitlement** measures the extent to which the client feels s/he deserves benefits from the system without putting forth much effort.

**Justification** measures the extent to which the offender minimizes the seriousness of his/her behavior and rationalizes the behavior based on social injustices and other external circumstances.

**Power Orientation** measures the extent to which the offender uses aggression and manipulation in order to control his/her environment and others.

**Cold Heartedness** measures callousness and indicates the lack of emotional involvement in relationships.

**Criminal Rationalization** reflects the extent to which offenders rationalize their behavior based on their belief that the law and authority figures are corrupt.

**Personal Irresponsibility** measures the degree to which the offender fails to accept responsibility for their criminal behavior and instead casts blame onto others.

## **Treatment Data**

The program also submitted case plans and termination summaries for each of the families. The case plans identified the primary goals established for the family. Progress on these goals was measured to help determine if a family successfully completed the program. Upon termination (either successful or unsuccessful) the program submitted a termination report that declared the type of termination.

There are four types of terminations a family could be assigned. The first, successful completion is defined as a family that has completed 75 percent of their family case plan. The second, unsuccessful Phase I is assigned when the family is terminated unsuccessfully during Phase I. Reasons for unsuccessful Phase I termination may include non-interest in the program, non-engagement in treatment, or inappropriate institutional behavior. The third termination type is unsuccessful Phase II, which results after the father is released from the institution. Phase II terminations are a result of the

lack of engagement in the program, lack of progress on the case plan, or involvement in criminal behavior.

The second set of data was collected through the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction and was used for the comparison group. The comparison group was developed from a list of inmates that were eligible for the program but were not selected by the TRH, therefore, only received the “typical” ODRC services.

Recidivism was collected by ODRC for all participants as well as the comparison group. For the purpose of this study, recidivism was measured multiple ways including arrest, return to incarceration for a new crime, and return to institution for any reason (new crime or technical violation). Inmates were tracked for 12 months upon release from the institution as well as from successful completion of the program. The comparison was drawn from a statewide sample of offenders returning to the community from ODRC.

Two limitations to this research must be considered when interpreting the results. First, the samples used in this research were not randomly assigned to group membership. Despite this, the two groups were very similar on relevant factors. Second, the numbers of clients served in the TRH program is relatively low, making it difficult to determine the effectiveness of the program compared to those that did not receive RTH services.

## **PROGRAM/PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS**

The TRH program has been providing services to fathers and their families since the summer of 2006. Since its inception, the program has served a total of 203 persons.

Specifically they have served 49 fathers and their parenting partners as well as 105 children. As noted in Table 1, TRH served 15 families during FY 2007 compared to 34 in FY 2008.

Table 1: Number of intakes per Fiscal Year

	FY 2007		FY 2008		Total
	N	%	N	%	N
Fathers	15	31	34	69	49
Parenting Partners	15	31	34	69	49
Children	40	38	65	62	105
Total	70	34	133	66	203

Table 2 provides demographic data related to the fathers enrolled in the program. As noted, 63 percent of the fathers participating in the program are African-American. As for age, nearly half of the participants fell between the ages of 26 and 34, while 35 percent were older than 35 and 17 percent were 25 or younger.

Table 2: Demographics

	N	%
Race/Ethnicity		
African American	37	63
Caucasian	20	34
Hispanic	1	2
Other	1	2
Age		
18-25	8	17
26-34	23	48
35 and older	17	35

In addition to age and race, criminal history characteristics were captured on the fathers in Table 3. As noted, the average number of prior incarcerations for the program participants was 1.2 while the average Static Risk Assessment (SRA) score was 2.6. Based on these findings it can be inferred that the TRH serves a relatively moderate risk group. In addition, the average participant serves approximately 16 months in prison, 12 prior to entering the program and 4 months while in Phase I of the program.

**Table 3: Criminal History of Fathers**

<b>Static Risk Score (0 to 8)</b>	2.6
<b>Avg Prior Incarcerations</b>	1.2
<b>Length of Stay in prison</b>	16 months
<b>Prior to program</b>	12 months
<b>Phase I</b>	4 months

Table 4 provides a review of the program’s completion rate. Overall, 16 percent of the participants were successfully discharged from the program. Moreover, 12 percent had been unsuccessfully terminated during Phase I while 72 percent of the families were unsuccessfully terminated during Phase II of the program. As noted, TRH has had difficulties keeping families engaged in Phase II of the program.

Table 4: Program Completion<sup>1</sup>

	N	%
Termination		
Successful Completion	4	16
Unsuccessful Termination Phase I	3	12
Unsuccessful Termination Phase II	18	72
Administrative Termination	3	

### SHORT AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

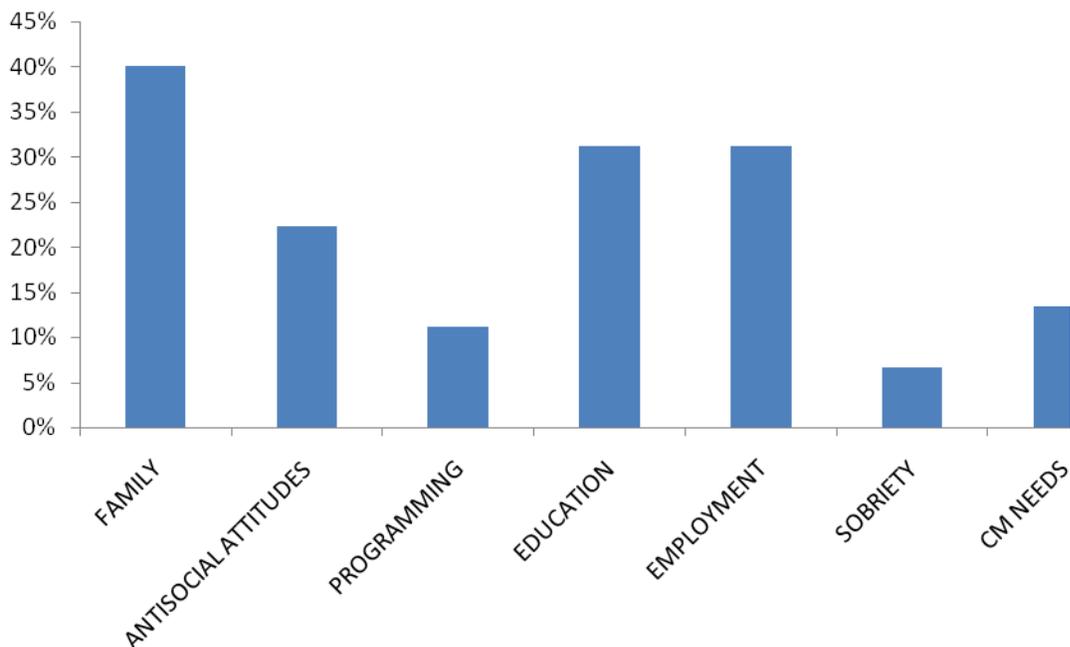
In order to determine if the Lucas County TASC Returning Home program was successful in meeting the needs of the families enrolled in the program, several intermediate and long-term outcome measures were collected. As noted previously, the primary long-term outcome for the program was measured as new crime, but there were several intermediate outcomes that have been built into the evaluation to determine if the program has met the needs of the family.

<sup>1</sup> This includes only persons who were terminated from the program. The program had 21 active participants at the end of the fiscal year.

## Case Plan and Service Delivery

The TRH program implemented case plans near the end of FY 2006. TRH used the case plans as a means to track the services provided to the father. Primary interventions delivered by TRH were around family and employment. Figure 1 provides the percentage of fathers who were working on each goal. As noted, 40 percent of the participants had family as a goal, while slightly more than 30 percent of the participants had education or employment as an identified goal. Very few participants identified sobriety as a need, as well as basic case management needs.

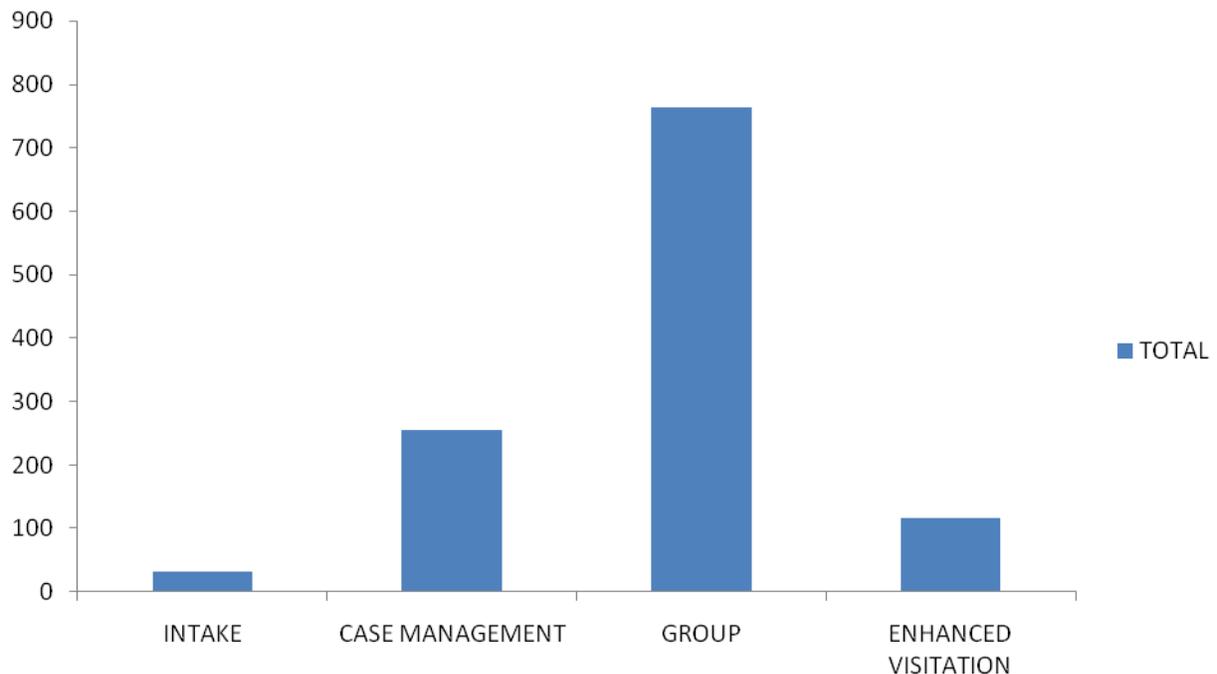
Figure 1: Percentage of fathers working on identified goals



Overall, TRH has served 49 families. Of those families, 3 have been administratively terminated. Based on the 46 families who have received services, the

TRH program has delivered 763 hours of group services, 255 hours of case management, 33 hours of assessment/intake and 117 hours of enhanced visitation. On average each family has received 5 hours of case management, 17 hours of group, and 3 hours of enhanced visitation.

Figure 2: Total number of hours of service



## **FAMILY ADAPTABILITY AND COHESION EVALUATION SCALES IV**

Participants of the TASC Returning Home Program are given the FACES IV assessment at intake, release from the institution, and successful discharge from the program. To measure the ability of TRH to modify the family functioning of its participants, pre/post-tests were conducted for each of the domains of FACES IV. The following section describes the results of these analyses. Figure 3 presents the

FACES IV scores for the TRH participants at initial assessment. At intake, 37 TRH participants were given the FACES IV assessment. The initial assessment revealed that, for the total ratio, 14 percent of the clients were categorized as unbalanced, 8 percent were identified as neutral, and 78 percent as balanced.

Figure 3: Total ratio on FACES IV at intake

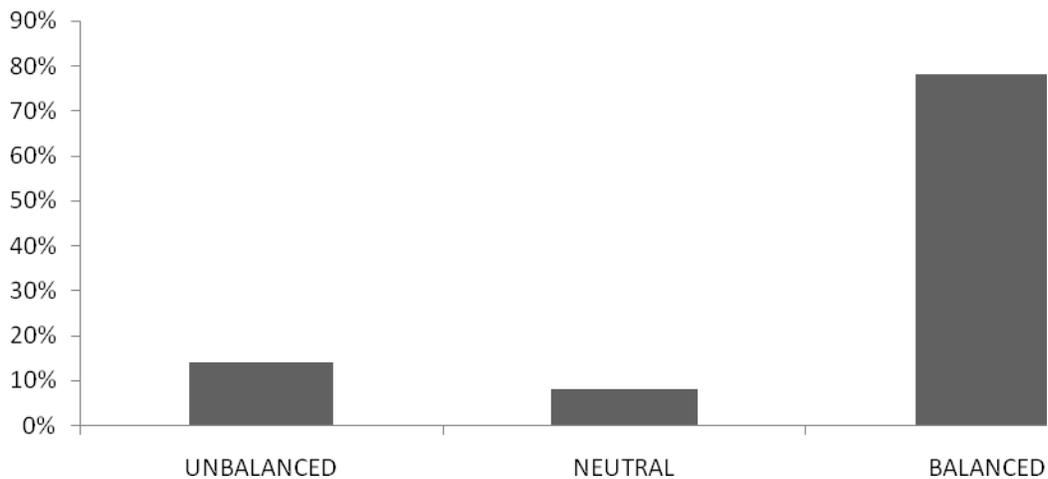
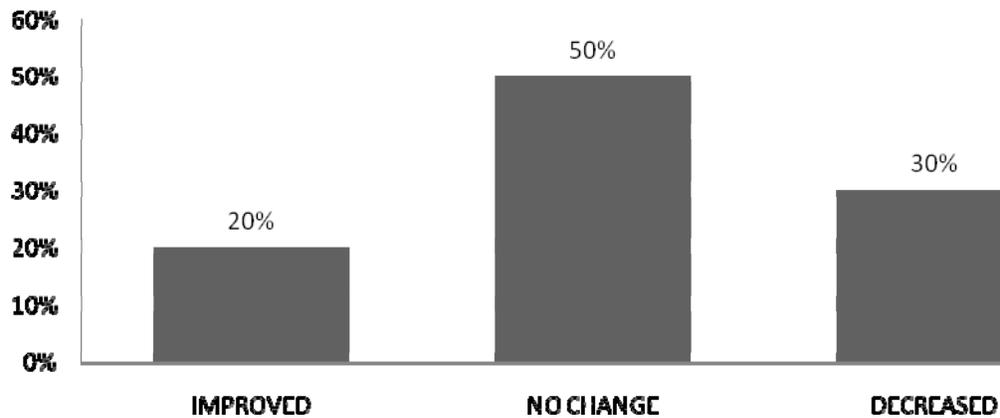


Figure 4 shows the differences in the total ratio for program participants between the first and second assessments. As noted, 20 percent improved on the total ratio, 50 percent experienced no change, and 30 percent got worse. Again, the total ratio is a composite score of all the domains and reflects the balance of cohesion and flexibility for the participants' family.

Figure 4: Change in FACES IV total ratio score from Intake to completion of Phase I

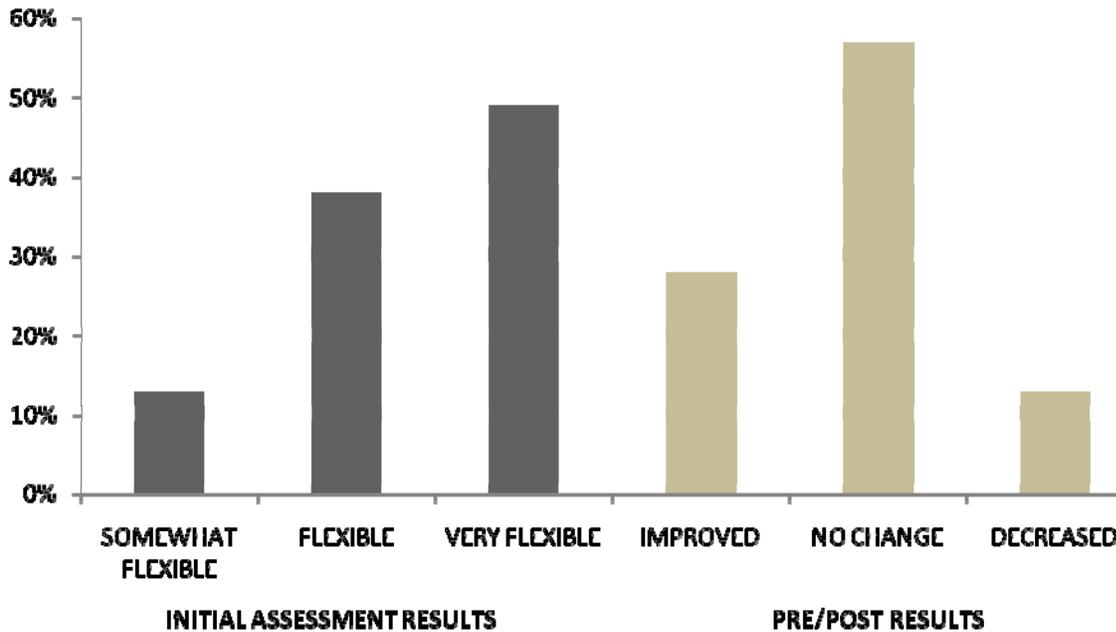


Results from the Cohesion domain are presented in Figure 5 and indicate that 18 percent were identified as somewhat cohesive, 38 percent as cohesive, and 44 percent as very cohesive. Overall the families in the program reported that they felt that their family was rather cohesive at intake to the program. Differences between the first and second assessment on the Cohesion domain show that 29 percent improved, while 28 percent reported feeling less cohesive. These findings suggest that the program had minimal effect on a family's cohesiveness.

Figure 6 provides the results for the Flexibility domain. The initial assessment, 13 percent of clients scored in the somewhat flexible range, 38 percent in the flexible range, and 49 percent in the very flexible range. Again, the program participants scored as rather flexible. The pre/post differences between the first and second assessment indicate a modest net gain with 28 percent of clients improving, while only 13 percent of

participants reported feeling less flexible. These limited results suggest that the program had a modest impact on families increasing their flexibility.

Figure 6: Measures of flexibility within the family



Results for the Disengaged domain are shown in Figure 7. As noted, the initial results show that 54 percent of clients scored very low, 32 percent scored low, 14 percent scored moderate levels of disengagement. Differences in scores between the first and second assessment reveal that 35 percent of the clients improved, while only 25 percent reported feeling more disengaged. The results of this domain suggest that families reported feeling slightly less disengaged while in the program.

Figure 7: Measures of disengagement within the family

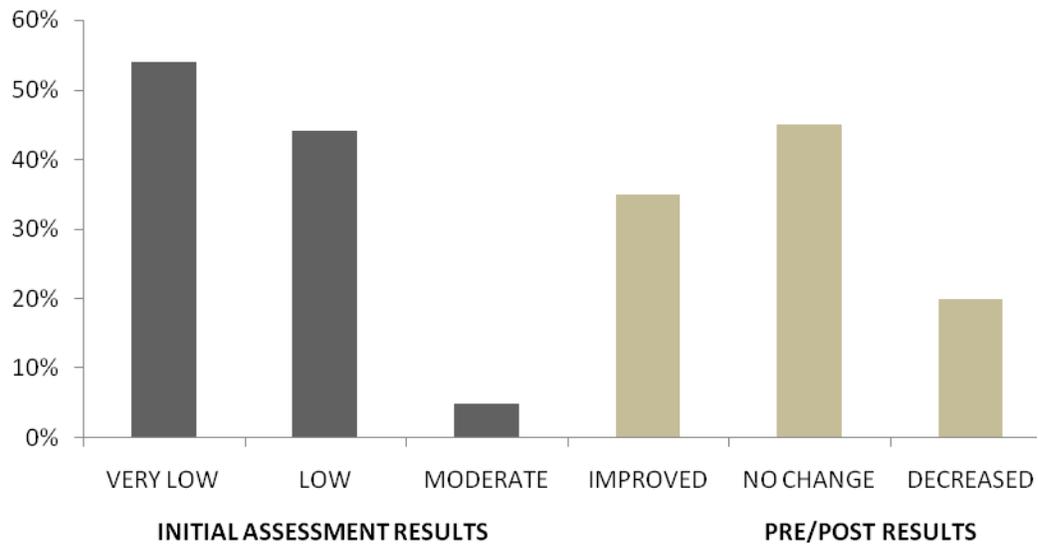
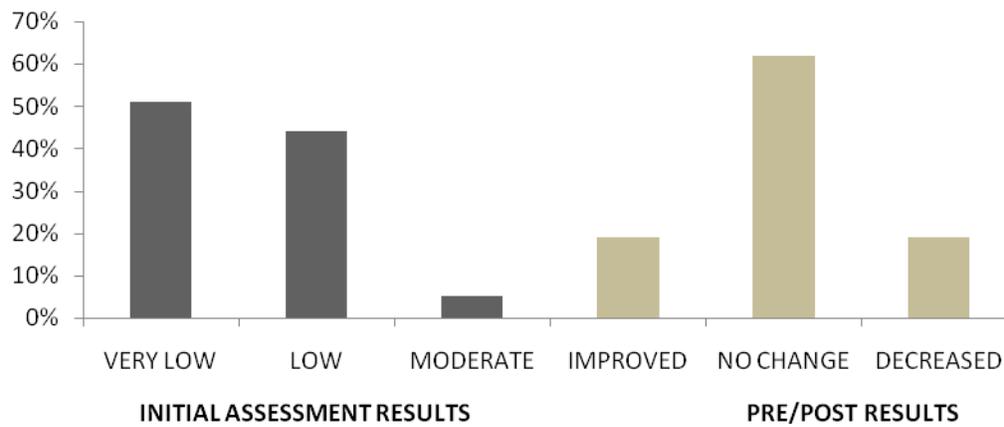


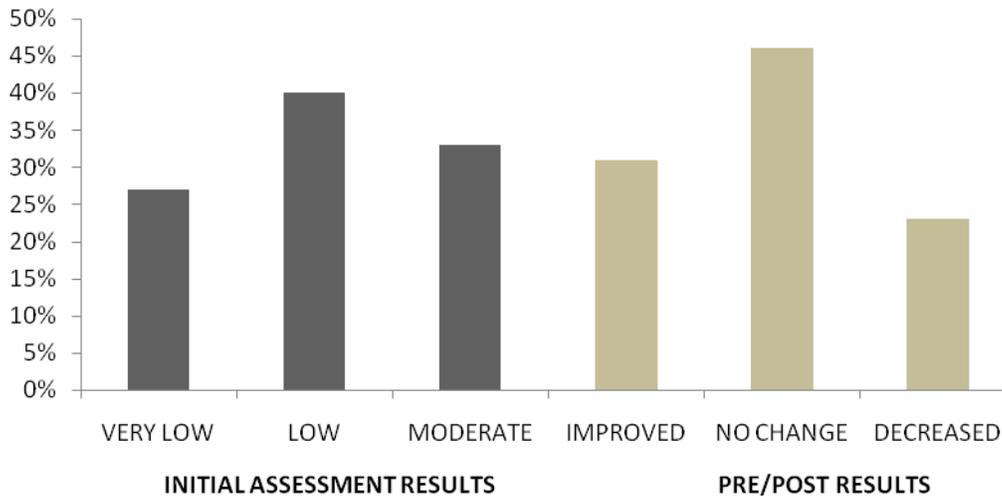
Figure 8 provides scores on the Enmeshed domain. These data indicate that 51 percent of program participants scored very low, 44 percent scored low, and 5 percent scored moderate, signifying that most of the families reported very low levels of enmeshment. The pre/post differences reveal that 19 percent of clients improved their score, 62 percent remained the same, and 19 percent got worse. Overall, while baseline enmeshment scores were low, the program had no effect on the level of enmeshment that families experienced.

Figure 8: Measures of enmeshment within the family



Results for the Rigid domain are presented in Figure 9. Fifteen percent of clients were categorized as very low, 36 as low, and 49 as moderately rigid. Overall, families reported low to moderate levels of rigidity at intake. Differences between the first and second assessment reveal that 23 percent of clients improved while 37 percent felt their family was more rigid. These results suggest that the participants in the program felt that their family was more rigid than before they attended the program.

Figure 9: Measures of rigidity within the



family

For the Chaotic domain (Figure 10), the initial assessment shows that the 54 percent of the families reported very low levels of chaos, 23 percent reported low levels, 21 percent reported moderate levels, and 3 percent reported high levels of chaos. As for the pre/post-test results, 28 percent of the families reported feeling less chaotic, while the same percentage reported feeling more chaotic, suggesting that the program had little impact on the level of chaos the family experienced.

Figure 10: Measures of chaos within the family

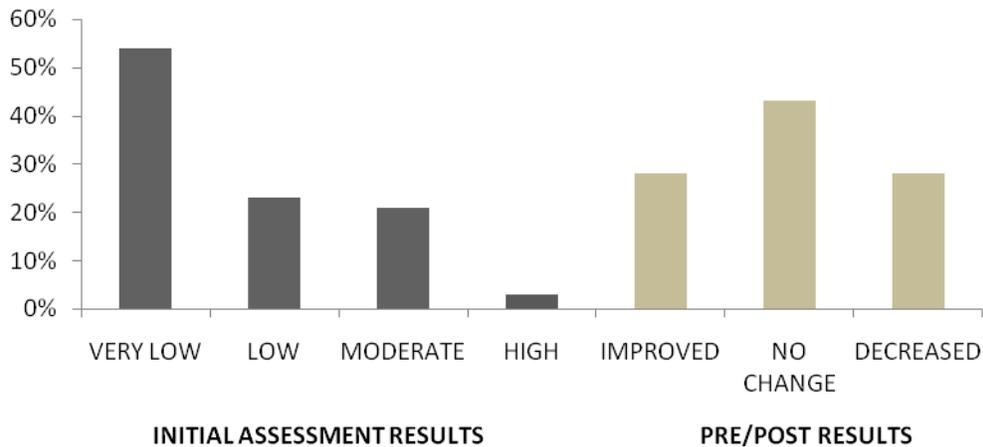
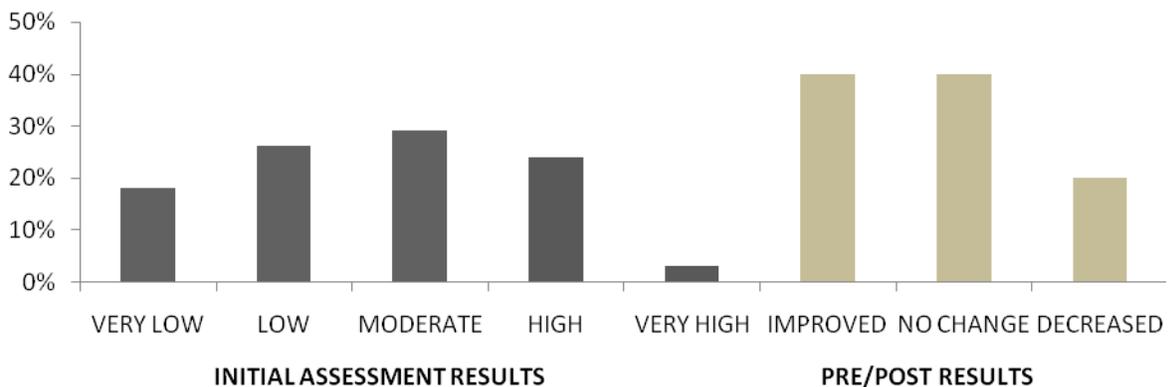


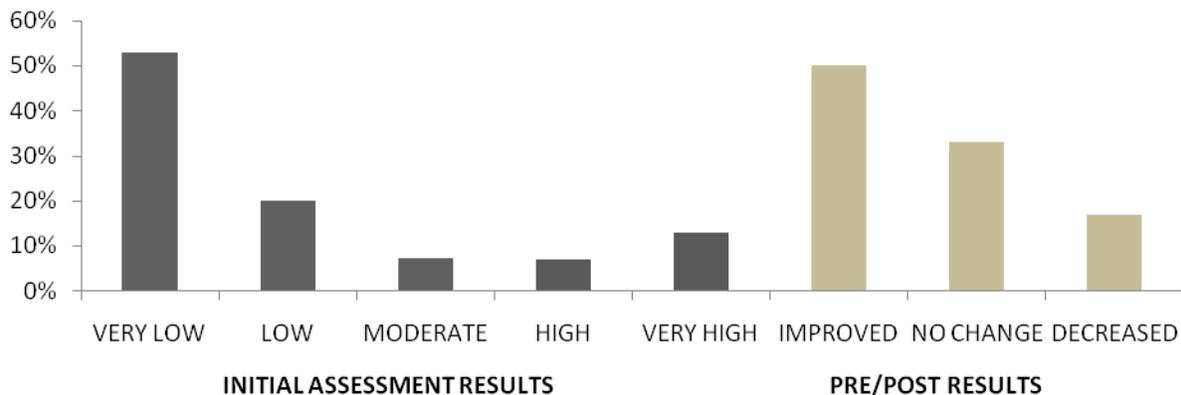
Figure 11 provides the results for the Family Communication domain. The intake assessment data indicate that 18 percent of the participants were categorized as very low, 26 percent as low, 29 percent as moderate, 24 percent as high, and 3 percent as very high. Overall the families reported a wide range of communication skills. Differences in the first and second assessment reveal a substantial increase in scores, with 40 percent of clients improving while only 20 percent got worse. Given these results, it suggested that the program had an impact on the overall levels of communication experienced by the families.

Figure 11: Measures of family communication



Lastly, Figure 12 provides the results for the Family Satisfaction domain. The initial assessment shows that 50 percent of clients were classified as very low, 21 percent as low, 18 percent as moderate, and 11 percent as high. Hence, the overall satisfaction of families was relatively low. The pre/post differences for this domain show a substantial net gain, with 48 percent of clients improving while only 22 percent reported feeling less satisfied. Similar to the Communication domain, the overall family satisfaction measure represents the program's ability to help clients feel more satisfied with their relationships. Based on these results it is suggested that the program had an impact on the participants' level of family satisfaction.

Figure 12: Family satisfaction domain



## TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY: CRIMINAL THINKING SCALES

To measure the ability of the TRH program to modify offenders' antisocial thoughts, pre/post tests were conducted. The following section describes the results of these analyses. Figure 13 presents statistics regarding the TCU-CTS scores for the TASC Returning Home program participants. The TRH program provided initial assessments

for 40 participants and release assessments for 7 participants. For the total TCU-CTS score, the results reveal that TRH' participants averaged 23.2 on the initial assessment, which is associated with moderate level of antisocial beliefs. Participants scored just slightly lower on the post-test at 21.5

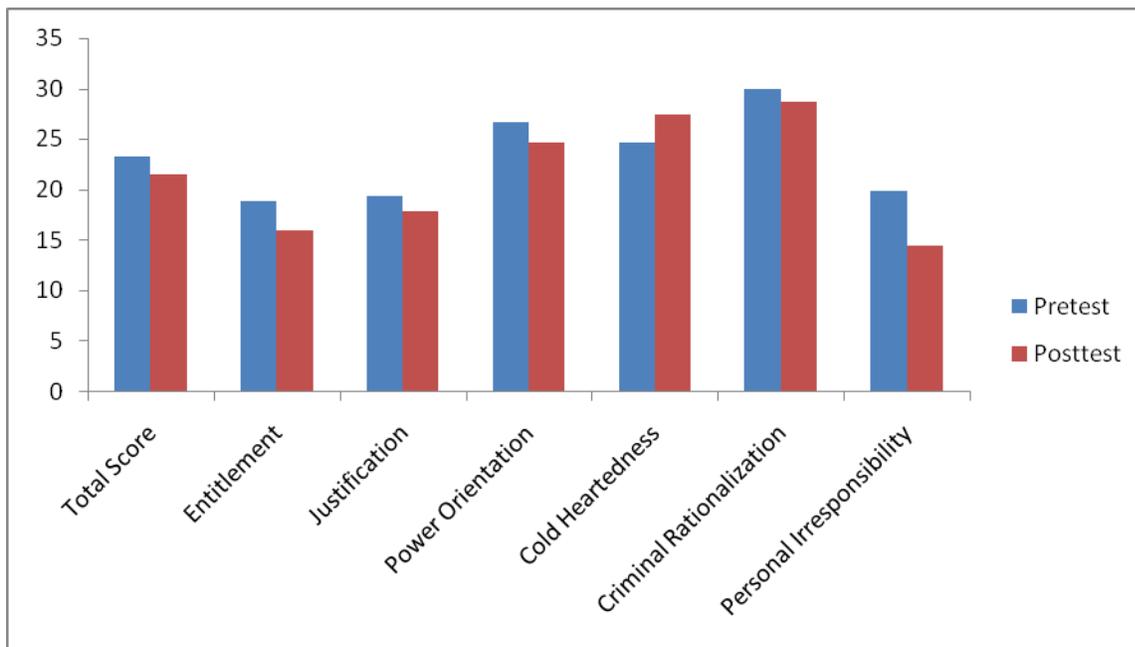
With regard to the TCU-CTS domain scores, participants from TRH scored 18.8 in the entitlement component on the initial assessment. Participants who were given the second assessment had a mean difference of -2.9, indicating a decrease in the feeling of entitlement. Results for the Justification domain indicate an average score of 19.3 on the initial assessment. The mean difference between the first and second assessment was -1.43, indicating a slight decrease in participants' justification for criminal behavior.

Participants scored an average of 26.7 on the Power Orientation domain suggesting that the participants had a slightly elevated level of manipulation and power/control issues relative to the average offender. The mean difference of -2.0 reveals a decrease in scores between the first and second assessment resulting in participants reporting less use of aggressiveness and manipulation in their interactions with others. The results for the Cold Heartedness domain reveal an average initial score of 24.6. The mean difference of 2.9 for program participants suggests that participants' level of empathy had decreased during Phase I.

Participants scored on average 29.9 on the Criminal Rationalization domain. The mean difference in this domain for clients is -1.2, indicating a reduction in scores from the first to second assessment. The decrease in criminal rationalization suggests that the program had a slight impact on the overall rationalization used by participants to

engage in crime. Average scores for the Personal Irresponsibility domain were 19.9. The mean difference between the first and second assessments reveals an average difference of -5.5. This significant decrease suggests that the program had a major impact on the participants' level of responsibility with regard to their criminal behavior.

Figure 12: Texas Christian University: Criminal Thinking Scales



The results of the TCU-CTS suggest that the program had some impact on the overall antisocial values of the participants as indicated by a slight drop in the overall TCU-CTS score. Based on the individual domain scores, the TRH had a strong impact on the level of personal irresponsibility that the participants reported. In addition, all other domains had a decrease except for cold heartedness in which participants report an increase. Again, these results should be interpreted with some reservation given the small numbers of participants that completed the re-assessment at Phase I completion.

## RECIDIVISM

This section provides an initial examination of the recidivism rates for the Lucas County TASC Returning Home program. Several caveats to the data should be noted prior to discussing the results. First, administrative terminations were not included in these analyses. Families that were administratively terminated either received few services or were deemed inappropriate for the program. Second, only families that have been terminated from the program (either successfully or unsuccessfully) have been included in the analyses; therefore any family who was active at the end of FY 2008 was not included. Third, due to the low numbers enrolled in the program and the short follow-up period, recidivism rates were measured for any participant who met the above criteria despite the length of exposure to the community. Since the longest time period a TRH participant was exposed to the community was 18 months, the follow-up period for the comparison group was limited to 18 months also. Fourth, although the comparison group was comprised of offenders returning from ODRC, it was drawn from a statewide sample that was not specific to Lucas County.

As noted in Table 5, 13 percent of the participants terminated from the program were arrested. Arrest rates for Lucas County comparison group were not available at the time of this report. Further examination also found that no TRH participants were re-incarcerated for a new crime and only four percent were re-incarcerated for any reason. This is compared to an 18 percent re-incarceration rate for inmates returning to Lucas County.

Table 5: Recidivism rates for the TRH program

	Arrest	Return to Incarceration: New Crime	Return to Incarceration: Any Reason
TASC RH program	13%	0%	4%
Lucas County Comparison	-	11%	18%

\*Follow-up period was up to 18 months

## FINDINGS

This report examines the effectiveness of the Lucas County TASC Returning Home project on incarcerated fathers and their families. The TRH program is designed to assist provide services to fathers returning to the community. The TRH program has been in operation for two years and has served 49 families.

First, based on the limited number of post-tests, the TRH program had some promising effects on the fathers' antisocial attitudes. Overall, there was a slight decrease in pre/post scores but there was a large decrease in fathers reporting an increase in personal responsibility. In addition, the program had a slight to modest impact on attitudes of entitlement and power and control. The only measure from the TCU-CTS that the program showed a negative effect was with cold heartedness. The cold heartedness scale measures the empathy of the participant. Although empathy has not shown to be a direct correlate with future criminality, there are many reasons to increase an inmate's level of victim empathy.

Second, the TRH program had a positive effect on family's communication skills and overall family satisfaction. These findings suggest that the program had an impact on the overall attitude participants had regarding their families. In addition the preliminary

results suggest that the program assisted in increasing feelings of flexibility and increased engagement.

Third, the TRH program had an impact on recidivism. Arrest rates were very low compared to the arrest rates of the statewide comparison group. In addition, the program has not had a single father re-incarcerated for a new offense, and only had 4 percent re-incarcerated for any reason. Although not statistically significant from the re-incarceration rate for the county, substantive differences suggest early support for the program. Again, it must be noted that there have only been 23 people who have been terminated from the program at the time of this report.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Given the results of these findings several recommendations can be made to address some of the program's limitations:

- The program has a relatively low successful completion rate
  - The program would benefit from increasing the focus on keeping participants engaged when they transition to the community. Effective programs tend to have completion rates that near 65 percent. It is important that program participants remain engaged to ensure that their needs are met successfully. There are several strategies to keep families engaged including incentivizing participation, structuring Phase II services to reinforce expectations, and building quality relationships with participants while in the facility.
- Given the small numbers of participants served a year, the program should ensure that post-tests are completed prior to the father's release from the institution.
  - Pre/post-tests can provide the program with additional knowledge regarding the effectiveness of the program. To ensure that the

pre/post-test be completed, the program may want to provide a copy to the participant ahead of time in case he is released from the institution without notification to the program.

- The program should continue providing cognitive-behavioral interventions and family programming to the father and their family.
- The program has had some positive effects on several areas regarding family and antisocial attitudes, but there were also several areas in which the impact of the program was either minimal or had some negative effects.
  - The program should review those areas that participants reported as having negative or minimal impact and should develop strategies to better address these needs.
- Preliminary results suggest that the program has an impact on recidivism.
  - The program should continue providing services to offenders and working with them pre-release as well as post-release. It may benefit the program to increase the density of services participants receive while in the institution. This may have impact on two levels. First, evidence suggests that more treatment can have an impact on long term retention. Second, a higher dose of treatment has been found to be effective. The program serves relatively moderate risk offenders which would translate to approximately 100 hours of treatment. Given the limited treatment provided by ODRC, it may be beneficial to increase the dosage of treatment while the participant is incarcerated.