



# A Preliminary Examination of Sentencing Trends for Youth in DYS Facilities

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# Justice Reinvestment Initiative

- Data driven approach to reducing the overall prison population
  - Use of research and evidence to guide policy
- Efficient use of limited resources to reduce overall prison population
  - Validated risk assessment is a key to targeting treatment



# Overview of ODYS

- Statewide programs
  - e.g. BHJJ, RECLAIM, Competitive RECLAIM
- Wide adoption and use of risk assessment tool
  - Ohio Youth Assessment System (OYAS)
    - Measures criminogenic risk



# Ohio Youth Assessment System

- Five tools administered at different points of the juvenile justice system
  - Designed to measure criminogenic risk
  - Multiple domains including juvenile justice history, family living arrangements, pro-social skills, etc.
- Use of OYAS to inform a variety of decisions in the juvenile justice system



# Preliminary Analysis

- Description of youth DYS facilities between 2011-2016
  - Sentencing trends over time
  - Risk assessment (OYAS)
    - Examined over time and 2016



# Available Data

- All DYS commitments between 2011-2016
  - We examined offenses rather than cases or youth to monitor sentencing trends (except for OYAS slides)
  - Focused mainly on new commitments
  - OYAS data closest to the commitment date

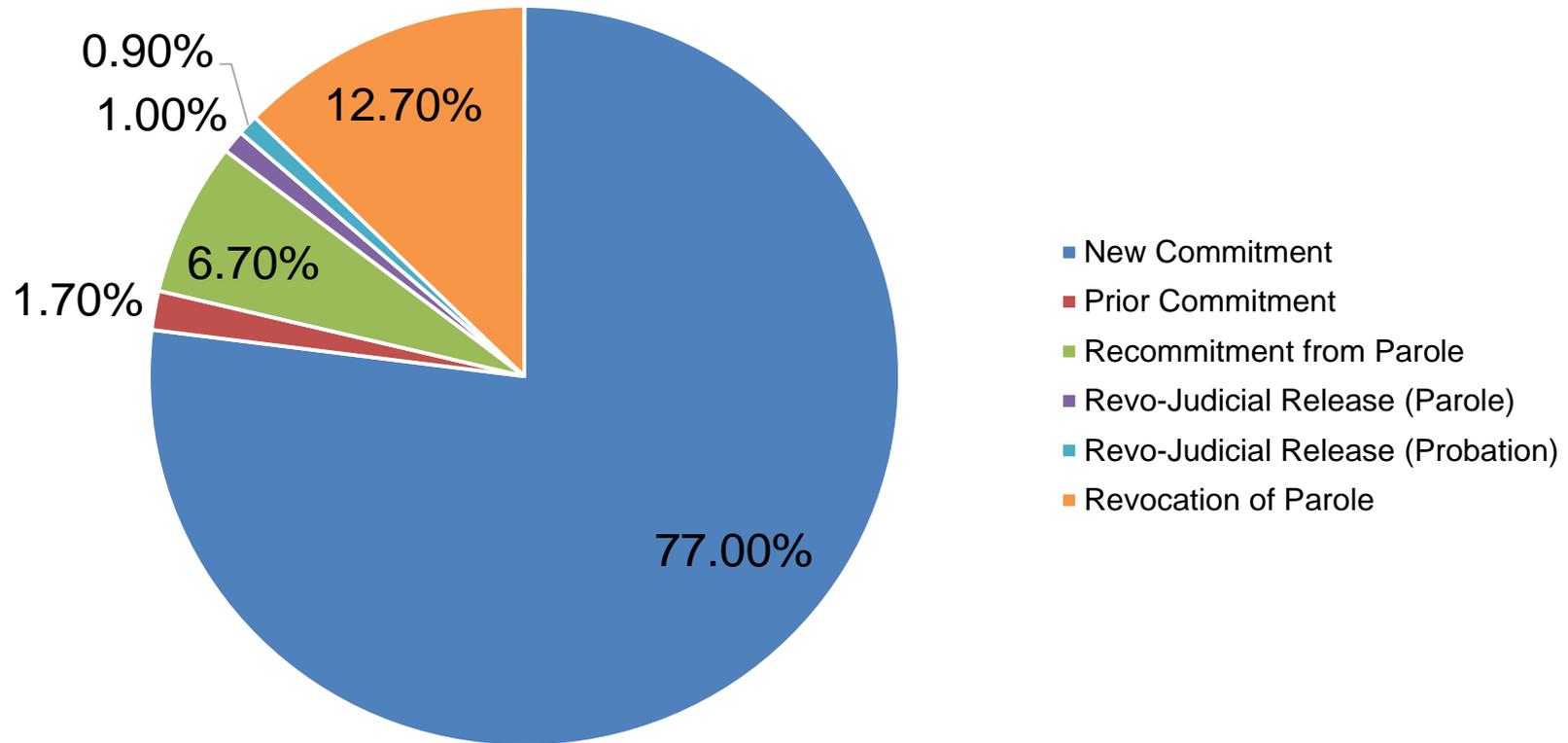


# Demographic Characteristics of DYS Population

- 94% are male
- 58% are African-American
- Average age is 17.36 years at the beginning of the sentence



# Percent of Commitment Cases to DYS from 2011-2016



# Demographic Characteristics of DYS Population

- Average sentence length is 10.02 months.
- 40.3% of cases are either F1 or F2
- OYAS
  - 44.3% Low
  - 32.7% Moderate
  - 23.0% High



# Sentencing Trends Over Time

- Overall number of cases have declined
  - Number of offenses have increased
- Average sentencing length has not changed over time.
  - This is especially true for specific felony offenses of F3, F4, and F5.
  - F2 length is decreasing slightly, but F1 is increasing slightly.



# OYAS Risk and DYS Commitments

- Percentage of High risk youth has increased steadily
  - a 66% increase from 30% in 2011 to 50% in 2016
- Moderate risk youth have decreased 22%
  - 45% in 2011 to 35% in 2016
- Low risk youth has decreased 40%
  - 25% in 2011 to 15% in 2016

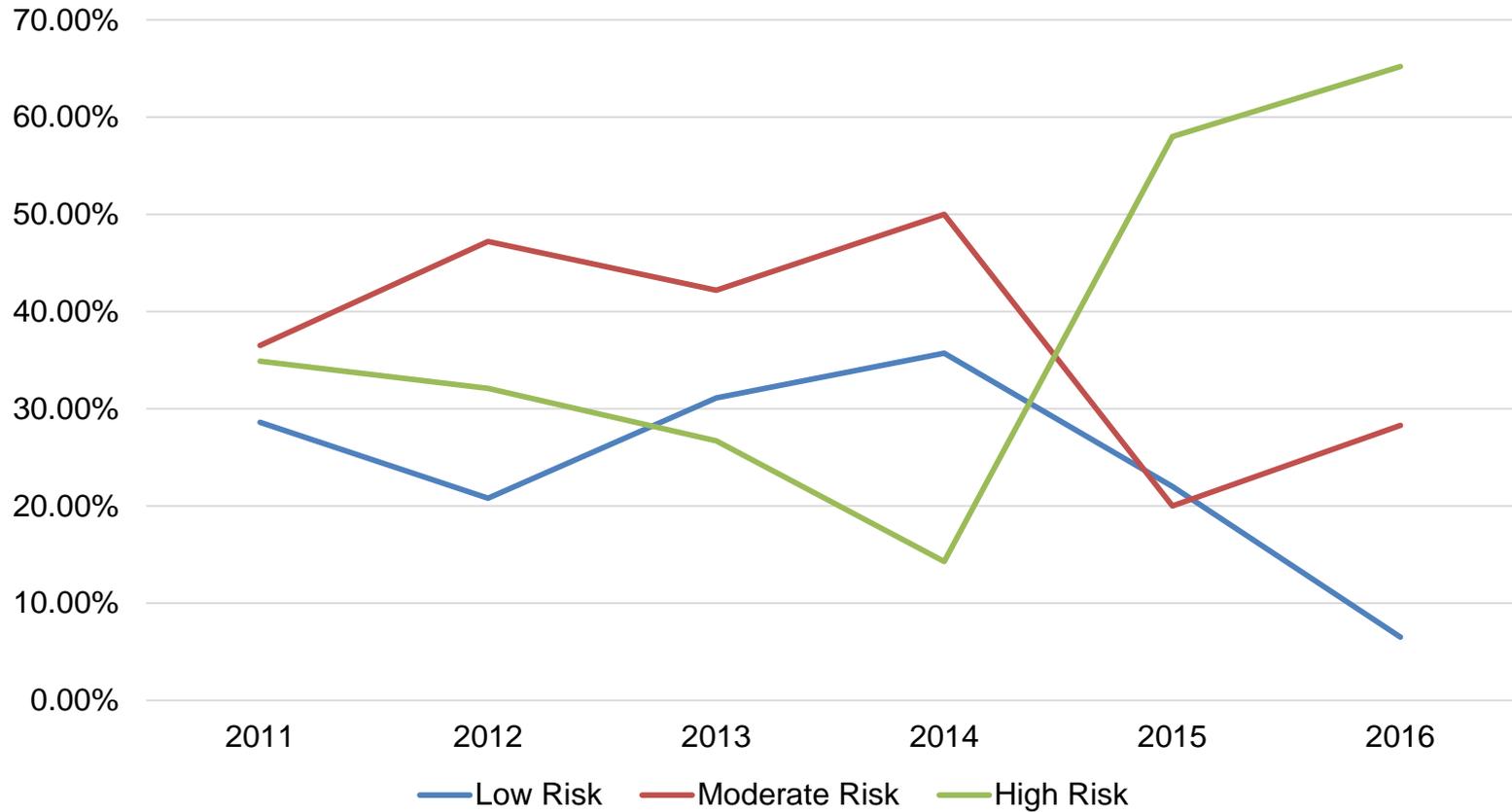


# OYAS Risk and DYS Commitments in 2016

- Commitments for F1 offenses are fairly equal across OYAS risk levels
- Majority of F4 and F5 commitments were for Moderate or High risk youth
  - There were no new DYS commitments of Low risk youth in 2016 with an F5 offense
- High risk youth have shortest average sentence length



# Percent of OYAS Risk over Time among Revocations for Technical Violations



# Conclusions

- JRI approaches have had a major impact on Ohio's juvenile justice system
  - OYAS risk assessment has been a major driving force behind sentencing trends
  - Continued research into the utility, validity, and the impact of the OYAS

