



Boot Camp Offenders on Parole: Examining the Lasting Impact of Change Among Graduates of Pennsylvania's Boot Camp Program

Cynthia Kempinen
Megan Kurlychek

The Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing
Pennsylvania State University
<http://pcs.la.psu.edu/>

American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting
November 2003
Denver, Colorado



Pennsylvania's Motivational Boot Camp Program

- Legislative concerns [Act 215 of 1990]
 - Overcrowding
 - Relationship between substance abuse and crime
 - Alternative to reduce criminal behavior
 - Provide discipline and structure
 - Substance abuse treatment
- Opened in June 1992
- Six-month program



Survey Background

- Part of larger Boot Camp Evaluation
- Legislative mandate to report annually
 - Part I: Who goes to Boot Camp?
 - Part II: Boot Camp Offender Survey
[Began in October 2000]
 - Part III: Recidivism of Boot Camp Offenders



Purpose of Survey

- Attitudinal changes
- Self-reported behavioral changes
- Factors related to recidivism



Three-Phase Survey

Admission

Graduation

Parole [six months later]

Two Surveys:

Self-Report Survey

> Admission and Parole

Boot Camp Evaluation Survey

> Admission, Graduation, and Parole



Multi-Agency Involvement

- Boot Camp: Department of Corrections
 - Give surveys at admission and graduation

- Parole Board
 - Give surveys at parole stage



Today's presentation

- Findings from Self-Report Survey
 - In-depth profile
- Findings from Boot Camp Evaluation Survey
 - Expectations
 - Attitudinal and behavioral changes
- Factors related to recidivism
- *Findings based upon 148 offenders who responded at all three stages [44% response rate]*



Self-Report Survey Content

- Demographics—age, race, gender, religion, marital status, parental status
- Education and Employment—education, employment status, type of work, income.
- Family Background—childhood living arrangements, mother and father education level.
- Drug and Alcohol use—frequency and types
- Prior Criminal involvement—victim of crime, prior offenses, friend/family member in jail, age at first arrest, juvenile incarceration



Self Report Survey: *Admission* Demographics

- Gender 97% male
- Race 63% non white
- Age 25 years [mean]
- Marital status 77% never married
- Children 55% had children
- Education 59% completed H.S.
- Religion 80% strong influence
- Childhood 47% lived >both parents
44% lived >one parent



Self Report Survey: *Admission* Drug use

- A majority of offenders had
 - used drugs day of crime
 - used drugs daily
 - started using drugs as a juvenile [mean age of 15]
 - previously attempted to quit using drugs
 - had a preference for marijuana



Self Report Survey: *Admission*

Criminal Justice Exposure

- Most offenders:
 - Had committed prior offenses- mostly drug dealing
 - Current conviction - for drug dealing
 - Had been the victim of a crime
 - Had a friend who had been incarcerated
 - Had a family member who had been incarcerated.



Results from Boot Camp Evaluation Survey

- Expectations
- Attitudinal Shifts
- Self-Reported Behavioral Changes



Evaluation Survey Content

- Expectation Scales — beneficial expectations, easy time, and personal change (MacKenzie)
- Self-Control Scales—six sub-scales (Grasmick)
- Decision-Making (TCU) —“Thinking for Change”
- Motivation for Treatment - Problem recognition and Desire for Help (TCU)
- Family Warmth (TCU)
- Friends in Trouble (TCU)



Scale Reliability

<u>SCALE</u>	<u>ALPHA</u>
■ Easy Time	.5123
■ Beneficial Expectations	.7743
■ Personal Change	.7842
■ Grasmick Sub-Scales	
■ Impulsivity	.4338
■ Self-Centered	.6306
■ Simple Task	.7754
■ Physical Activity	.3674
■ Temper	.7318
■ Risk taking	.7987
• Motivation for Treatment	.8092
■ Desire for Help	.9161
■ Decision-making	.8164
■ Family Warmth	.9307
■ Friends in Trouble	.8848

Mean Differences on Scales

<u>Scale</u>	<u>Admission</u>	<u>Graduation</u>	<u>Parole</u>
■ Easy Time	13.89	15.77***	14.38
■ Expectations	47.40	44.71***	45.59***
■ Personal Change	39.22	37.21***	38.17*
■ Impulsivity	10.47	9.04***	8.75***
■ Self-Centered	8.47	8.61	8.37
■ Task	6.62	6.07***	5.99***
■ Risk	7.92	7.94	6.28***
■ Temper	8.90	9.46*	8.15**
■ Self Efficacy	28.69	29.02	28.91
■ Decision-Making	28.96	31.55***	31.88***
■ Desire for Help	17.80	16.01***	14.49***
■ Prob. Recognition	19.77	16.98***	13.99***
■ Family	41.17		40.50
■ Friends-in-Trouble	18.18		14.32***

*p<.05

**p<.01

***p<.001



Attitudinal Shifts Occurred

- Expectations of Boot Camp
- Problems with drugs
- Decision-making



Expectations

- Majority of offenders had high expectations at admission and felt positive about Boot Camp at graduation and parole
 - Learned self-discipline
 - Benefited from substance abuse counseling
 - Became a better person
 - Became more mature
 - Not get into trouble again
 - Proud that they were accepted into the program
- Opinions regarding the Boot Camp, however, were slightly diminished after going through the boot camp experience



Drug Use

- Most offenders did not feel that their drug use was a problem
- Most offenders did not indicate a high desire for help
- After Boot Camp, and on parole, offenders were significantly less likely to indicate that drugs were a problem



Factors related to Motivation for Treatment

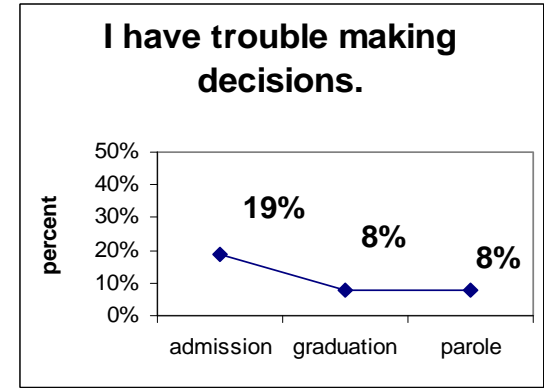
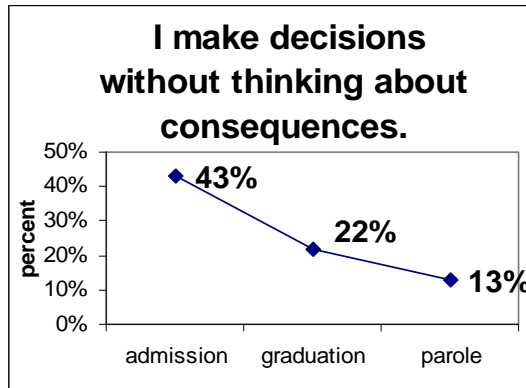
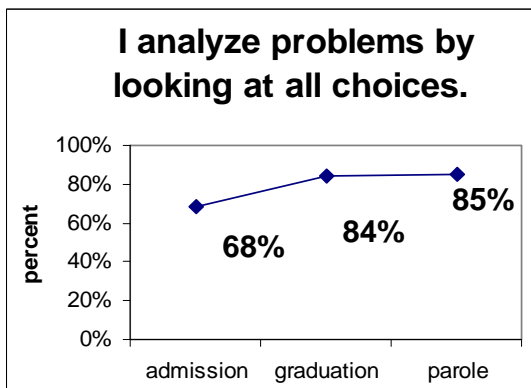
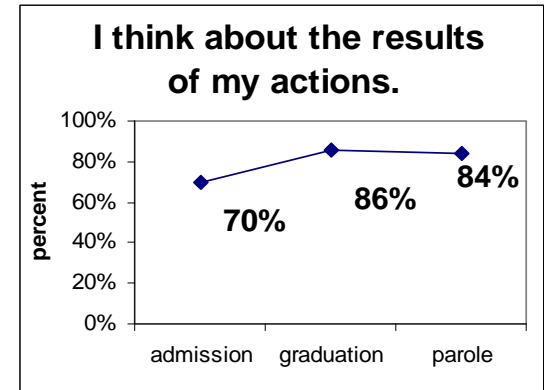
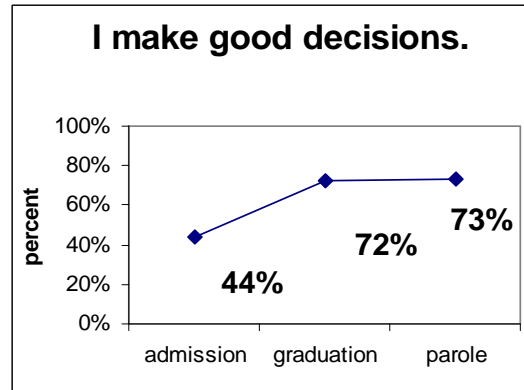
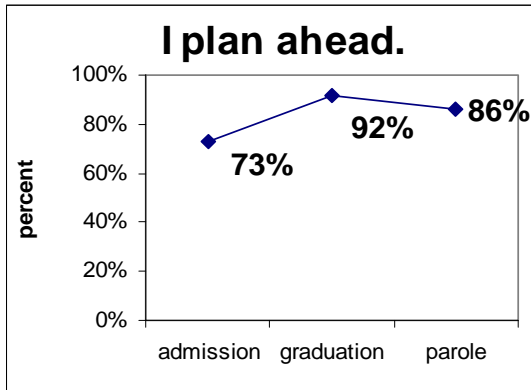
- Offenders indicated higher level of problem recognition and desire for help:
 - Use drugs or alcohol the day of the crime
 - Had fear of being an alcoholic or drug addict
 - Had previously tried to quit using drugs or alcohol
 - Others had encouraged them to quit
 - More frequent use of drugs/alcohol
 - Were younger when started using drugs



Decision-Making

- Offenders reported significant improvement in their decision making skills.
- Positive change endured at parole stage.

Decision Making





Factors related to good decision making

- Offenders who rank high on decision making scale:
 - Married
 - Finished high school
 - Religious
 - Friends never incarcerated
 - Older at first arrest and at first drug use
 - No prior criminal activity
 - No alcohol or drugs day of crime
 - Less frequent drug use



Improvement in decision making

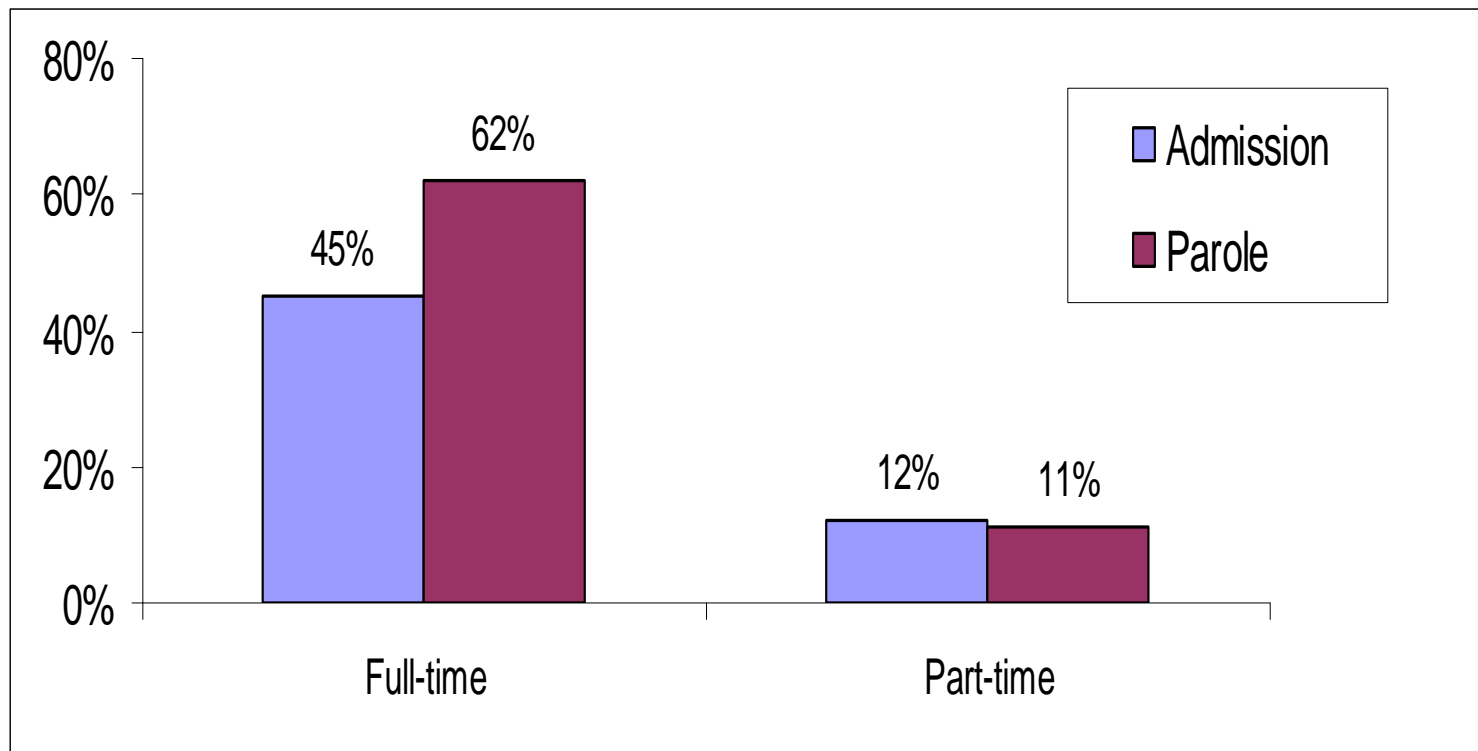
- Those offenders who ranked low on decision-making scale upon admission to Boot Camp showed significant improvement in this area at graduation.



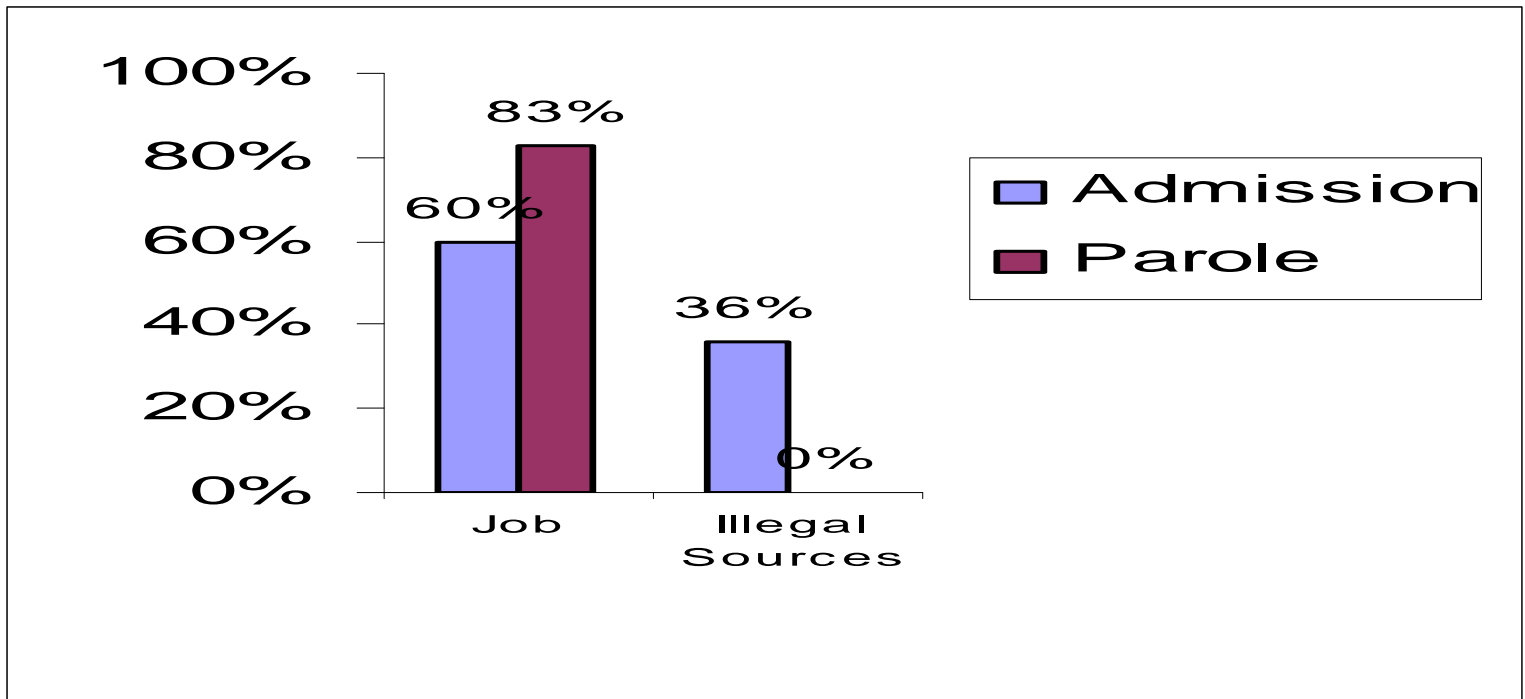
Self-reported behavioral changes

- Employment
- Drug use
- Association with 'Friends-in-trouble'

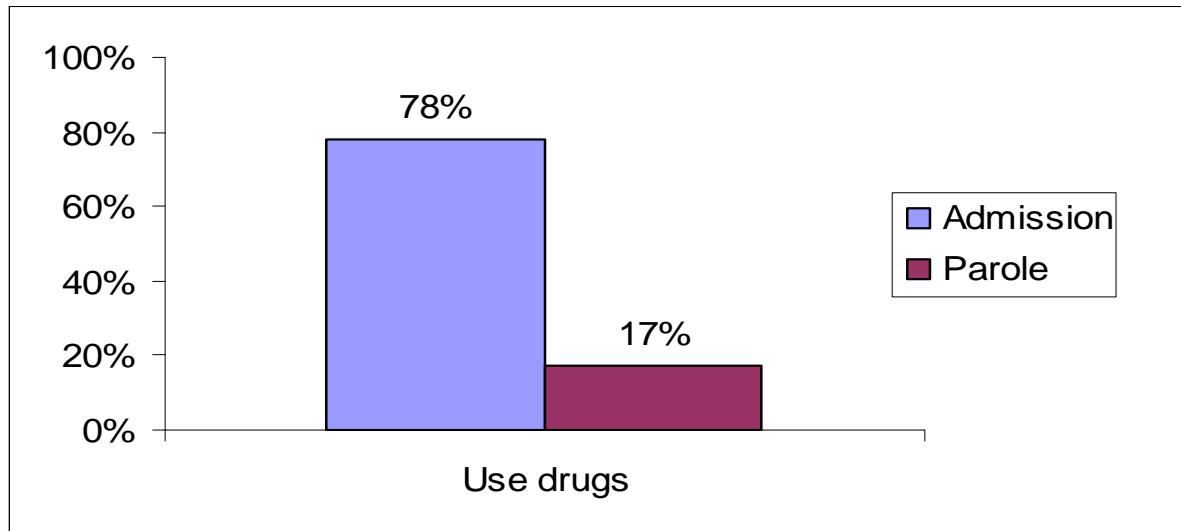
Offenders were more likely to be employed full time after Boot Camp.



Offenders were less likely to have illegal sources of income after Boot Camp

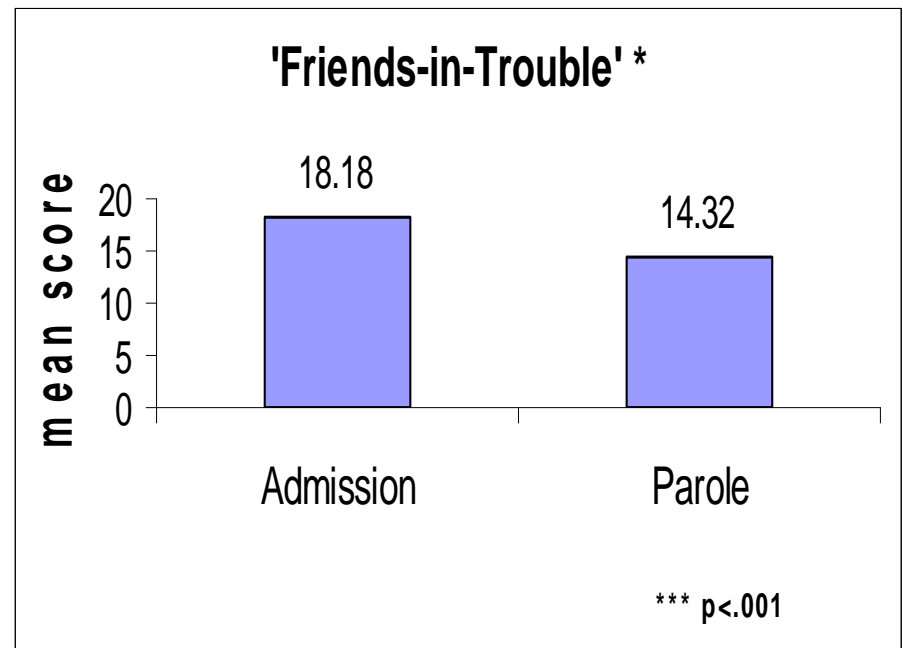


Offenders were less likely to use drugs after Boot Camp



Friends-in-Trouble

- Significant change in type of friends – fewer:
 - quit school
 - were in trouble at school or work
 - had been picked up by police
 - damaged property on purpose
 - used a weapon in a fight





Boot Camp Offender Recidivism

- Previous studies by Sentencing Commission
 - No difference in the recidivism of offenders graduating from Boot Camp and those released from prison
 - While Boot Camp offenders were more likely than offenders released from prison to commit technical violations and less likely to commit new crime, finding not significant
 - Employment status most significant predictor of recidivism regardless of Boot Camp or prison.



Current Study

- Factors related to recidivism
- Definition of recidivism
 - Technical violations
 - New crime
- Obtained data from Parole Board
- Tracking period – 12 to 18 months



Factors related to recidivism

- Offenders significantly less likely to recidivate:
 - Rural county
 - More educated
 - Employed prior to attending Boot Camp
 - Had not been 'incarcerated' as a juvenile
 - Were older at first arrest
 - Had high degree of family warmth



Factors not related to recidivism

- While offenders who ranked high on the *Motivation for Treatment Scale* and *Decision Making Scale* and low on '*Friends-in-Trouble Scale*' were less likely to recidivate, these findings were not statistically significant.



Conclusions

- Offenders report benefiting from the Boot Camp experience.
- Offenders report positive attitudinal and behavioral changes after Boot Camp and on parole:
 - Better decision-making; less impulsive?
 - Less likely to use drugs
 - Less likely to 'hang out' with 'friends in trouble'.
 - More likely to be employed
- Employment a significant factor for success



Future Research

- Continue analysis of attitudinal and behavioral changes of Boot Camp graduates with additional year of data
- Recidivism study - impact of 90-day mandatory aftercare for Boot Camp graduates