

Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg  
Counties Adult Drug Court  
Implementation Evaluation

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# **Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court Implementation Evaluation**

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## **PREFACE**

### **Need for Adult Drug Court in Kentucky**

Though Kentucky recidivism rates have decreased slightly in the past couple of years, both generally and specific to drug crimes, rates remain troublingly high. The most recent data provided by the Kentucky Department of Corrections reported that 7,579 inmates were released in 2000 from adult institutions in Kentucky and 27.5% of them returned to prison within two years (Kentucky Department of Corrections, 2002). The rate of recidivism for drug offenders in 2000 was higher than the overall recidivism rate at 28.7%. Arrests for narcotic law violations increased from 34,082 in 2000 to 36,551 in 2003 (12.1% and 15.7% of total arrests respectively; Kentucky State Police, 2004).

Additionally, during a large-scale needs assessment of prisoners in Kentucky, Leukefeld et al. (1999) found that 59% of Kentucky inmates were dependent on substances and that inmate illicit drug use one month prior to incarceration was 20 times higher than use in the general population. In response to the rising costs of incarceration and increased numbers of drug related arrests and recidivism, Kentucky's Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) established a Drug Court department in July 1996, to provide fiscal and administrative oversight to all Drug Court programs in the state.

The motto for Kentucky Drug Court is "A chance...a change" and Kentucky Drug Court is aligned with the more than 1000 Drug Courts in operation across the United States. Reflecting the philosophy of therapeutic jurisprudence (Hora, 2002), it's mission is to create a criminal justice environment in Kentucky that is effective in both eliminating illicit drug use and related criminal activity while promoting recovery and reintegration into society, emphasizing public safety and fair representation of all interests under the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Drug Court programs in Kentucky represent a team-oriented effort that brings together professionals from the criminal justice system, the treatment delivery system, and the community who are focused on combining intensive criminal justice supervision with drug abuse treatment. This combination of intensive supervision and treatment helps hold offenders accountable for their actions and provides an atmosphere that has been shown to be effective for reducing recidivism and drug use and for improving employment rates among Kentucky drug offenders (Logan, Hiller, Minton, & Leukefeld, in press).

All adult Drug Courts in Kentucky are grounded in the 10 Key Components described in the publication *Defining Drug Courts: The Key Components* (United States Department of Justice, 1997). These 10 Key Components were developed by the Drug Court Standards Committee to ensure that a core set of standards were defined for all Drug Court programs to follow. Drug Court programs in Kentucky are required to adhere to a programmatic model developed by Administrative Office of the Courts that fulfills the standards set forth in the 10 Key Components. Of course, individual programs vary to a certain degree in exactly how each of these standards are fulfilled because the 10 Key Components are intended to be somewhat flexible for helping each jurisdiction answer specific needs unique to its Drug Court. These guidelines provide an important standard by which to measure whether a particular Drug Court has been successfully implemented in the manner intended by the U. S. Department of Justice.

Altogether, at the time of this evaluation, Kentucky had 27 operational adult Drug Courts, 10 operational juvenile Drug Courts, and 2 operational family Drug Courts (Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts, available online). Many more Drug Courts are being planned, and the expansion of Drug Court is expected to continue as more programs are developed through Operation Unite, a local grassroots effort to address a prescription drug abuse

crisis in Eastern Kentucky and growing problems with methamphetamine abuse in Western Kentucky.

### **Need for the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court Program**

Many of the crimes in the counties served by this program are drug or alcohol related. For example, in Caldwell County during 2003, 109 arrests were made for driving under the influence (DUI), 36 arrests were made for drunkenness, 327 arrests were made for narcotic drug law offenses, and 15 arrests were made for liquor law offenses, altogether accounting for 44% of Caldwell County arrests in 2003. In Lyon County during 2003, 128 arrests were made for driving under the influence (DUI), 47 arrests were made for drunkenness, 227 arrests were made for narcotic drug offenses, and 66 arrests were made for liquor law offenses, which altogether accounted for 62.5% of Lyon County arrests in 2003. In Livingston County during 2003, 95 arrests were made for driving under the influence (DUI), 12 arrests were made for drunkenness, 113 arrests were made for narcotic drug offenses, and 26 arrests were made for liquor law offenses, which altogether accounted for 54.6% of Livingston County arrests in 2003. In Trigg County during 2003, 132 arrests were made for driving under the influence (DUI), 45 arrests were made for drunkenness, 69 arrests were made for narcotic drug offenses, and 26 arrests were made for liquor law offenses, which altogether accounted for 46.8% of Trigg County arrests in 2003. (Kentucky State Police, 2004).

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The current report is a compilation of qualitative and quantitative data collected during November, 2002 and February 2005. This evaluation summarizes findings of the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court. Baseline characteristics including demographics, drug use history, and criminal history were collected from the files of Drug Court participants as were during-program outcome indicators. During-program outcome indicators were based on participant-level program information that described the participant's retention in the program, drug use as measured by urinalysis, employment, sanctions and phase promotions. The current evaluation also examined post-program recidivism of program graduates and nongraduates. Recidivism was based on official criminal records from the Administrative Office of the Courts' CourtNet database, and information coded from these records included when a new charge or conviction was received (i.e., during-program, one year after the program, and two years after the program), the severity of the charge or conviction (i.e., felony or misdemeanor), and the specific type of the offense charged (i.e., any charge or conviction, drug law violations, driving under the influence, property offenses, violent offenses, weapons offenses, probation violations, and other types of offenses). Overall findings from the current evaluation show:

- The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court is in compliance with the 10 Key Components, a national standard for effective Drug Court operations. This program has a committed treatment team which combines criminal justice and substance abuse treatment philosophies in order to benefit participants.
- This court has successfully identified and partnered with numerous community agencies to provide services to participants including community service, education and job skills, and emergency services. Providing such opportunities contributes to the participants' ultimate success in completing the Drug Court program.
- The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Drug Court has been successful in graduating 12 participants from the program, which is important because individuals who complete substance abuse programs have a higher likelihood of long-term recovery (Peters, Haas, & Hunt, 2001; Zhang, Friedmann, & Gerstein, 2003; and Simpson, Joe, & Rowan-Szal, 1997).
- The Drug Court successfully retained the majority of individuals beyond three months, which is considered by many to be the minimum length of treatment for community-based substance abuse programs (Banks & Gottfredson, 2003; Joe, Simpson, & Broome, 1998; Hubbard, Craddock, Flynn, Anderson & Etheridge, 1997).

## **PROCESS EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

Developing a specialized court takes extensive planning and program development processes. In order to document the tasks and outcomes of the tasks of these specialized courts, a process evaluation methodology was employed for this study. Utilizing a process evaluation methodology has several advantages. One advantage is that it allows the program to not only document, but also later revisit initial steps to determine what aspects of the program are successful and perhaps what aspects of the program need revising. A second advantage is that in conjunction with an outcome evaluation, it may explain why participants are successful or not successful in completing the program. And finally, process evaluations are essential for replication of future programs.

For the process evaluation component of the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg County Drug Court Evaluation, the research team conducted interviews with Drug court coordinators and Judges, conducted focus groups with key Drug Court personnel, conducted treatment team staffings and court observations, and coded Drug Court participant case files.

### **Interviews**

The research team conducted structured face-to-face interviews with the Drug court coordinator as well as the Drug Court Judge using instruments which collected both quantitative and qualitative data (see Logan, Lewis, Leukefeld, & Minton, 2000). The Drug Court Judge Interview assessed level of prior experience with the target population, the perceived potential impact of the Drug Court on the community and judicial system, who determined program eligibility, overall capacity, the consequences for failing the program, the services needed, the planned level of supervision, and the types of graduated sanctions and rewards used. The Drug

Court Administrator Interview is a comprehensive questionnaire that detailed the specific operational characteristics of the Drug Court program. Specific sections highlight the target population, program goals, program organization and function (e.g., recruitment, capacity, assessment, and services), supervision practices, staff characteristics, and community organization involvement.

### **Court Observation**

The court observation allowed for the research team to extract observational data regarding the interactional (exchanges between the Judge, court staff, and participants) and environmental (physical characteristics of the setting) variables of the Drug Court session. Data were coded using a protocol developed by Satel (1998) during a national study of 15 adult Drug Court programs. The method involved coding the session on 17 specific characteristics that focused upon the interaction between the Drug Court Judge and participants (including eye contact, physical proximity of the Judge to the participant, who the Judge first addresses, whether each participant remains present in the court room throughout the entire session, and time spent with each participant) and the court room setting (including seating arrangements and ambient noise level). In addition, Drug Court staff were asked to rate how typical the observed sessions were for regular court operations. A copy of the observation code sheet is included in Appendix B.

### **Monthly AOC Statistical Reports**

All active Drug Courts in Kentucky, including the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court, are required to submit monthly reports to the Administrative Office of the Courts. These reports summarize the number of candidates referred, the number assessed, the number of individual drug screens, number of candidates eligible, and the number transferred

from probation. Also reported are the number of participants receiving phase promotions or demotions; the number of court sessions; the number of participants identified as using an illicit substance based on urine drug screens; the number of individual sessions; the number of drug sessions; the number of family/support sessions; the number of participants referred to outside agencies; employment and educational status of participants; number of employment and housing verifications; amount paid toward court obligations; the number of sanctions; the number of participants rearrested for new charges; the number of terminations; and the total number of active participants in the preceding month. For the current evaluation, monthly statistics reports from November 2002 through February 2005 were reviewed and analyzed.

### **Program Documentation**

Several other sources of program documentation also were reviewed for the process evaluation. These included copies of the grant application submitted by each court for funding, handbooks provided by each Drug Court to its participants to outline the design and expectations of the program, and the policy and procedure manuals for each court. In addition to this information, monthly administrative reports from the program to the Administrative Office of the Courts were reviewed. Each report summarized the monthly activities of each Drug Court, including caseflow, number of treatment sessions held, number of court sessions, and graduation and terminations from the program in the preceding month.

### **Focus Group and Logic Model**

A focus group also was conducted during the process evaluation with Drug Court team members. The goal of the focus group session was to synthesize a comprehensive description of program elements for this Drug Court using a “logic model” approach. A preformatted logic flow model (adapted from Harrell, 1996) was completed during a researcher-led focus group to

help Drug Court staff to articulate specific goals, outputs, and activities for their Drug Court, with special emphasis placed on identifying links between specific program activities and their influence on the stated goals and objectives.

## **LOCATION AND SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT**

The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court program is located in the Western Pennyriple region of the state with its main program office in Smithland, the county seat of Livingston. (Kentucky Atlas and Gazetteer, retrieved online February 2005). Regional offices are located in Lyon, Livingston, and Trigg counties. Drug Court sessions are held in the courthouse of each county. At the time of this report the Trigg County Drug Court was still in the planning phase; therefore Drug Court sessions only take place in Caldwell, Lyon, and Livingston counties.

In 2003, there were 12,824 residents in Caldwell County, 8,078 residents in Lyon County, 9,726 residents in Livingston County, and 12,877 residents in Trigg County (Kentucky State Data Center, retrieved online February 2005). US Census figures reported in 2000 indicate that 93.9% of Caldwell County's population is Caucasian, 4.8% African American, and 0.6% Hispanic. Lyon County's demographic composition as reported in 2000 was 91.9% Caucasian, 6.7% African American, and 0.7% Hispanic. Livingston County's demographic composition as reported in 2000 was 98.5% Caucasian, 0.1% African American, and 0.8% Hispanic. Trigg County's demographic composition as reported in 2000 was 88.3% Caucasian, 9.8% African American, and 0.9% Hispanic (United States Census Bureau, retrieved online February 2005).

Caldwell, Lyon, Livingston, and Trigg Counties are located in the Land Between the Lakes area positioned between the Illinois and Tennessee state borders. The per capita income

reported for Caldwell County in 1999 was \$16,264, which was 75% of the national average for that year. 1999 Census statistics also reported that 15.9% of the Caldwell County population was below the poverty line. Educational data regarding Caldwell County provides that in 2000, 73.1% of the county's population had completed a high school degree. The per capita income reported for Lyon County in 1999 was \$16,016, which was 74% of the national average for that year. 1999 Census statistics also reported that 12.7% of the Lyon County population was below the poverty level. Educational data regarding Lyon County provides that in 2000, 68.% of the county's population had completed a high school degree. The per capita income reported for Livingston County in 1999 was \$17,072, which was 79% of the national average per capita income for that year. 1999 Census statistics also reported that 10.3% of the Livingston County population was below the poverty line. Educational data regarding Livingston County provides that in 2000, 74.3% of the county's population had completed a high school degree.

The per capita income reported for Trigg County in 1999 was \$17,184, which was 79.6% of the national average per capita income for that year. 1999 Census statistics also reported that 12.3% of the Trigg County population was below the poverty level. Educational data regarding Trigg County provides that in 2000, 72.1% of the county's population had completed a high school degree.

### **FINDINGS: DURING PROGRAM IMPACT AND OUTCOMES**

The findings presented in this section are comprised of information gathered from the Administrative and Judge interviews, focus group, participant observation, and participant files. These data were examined and are presented within the context of the 10 Key Components (Drug Court Programs Office, 1997).

**Key Component #1. Drug Courts integrate alcohol and other drug treatment services with justice system case processing.**

The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg County Adult Drug Court successfully incorporates substance abuse treatment with criminal justice-based case management as evidenced by the make-up of their treatment team, which is comprised of professionals from both the criminal justice and treatment systems.

The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Adult Drug Court employs two full-time staff members; a Treatment Coordinator and a Case Specialist. The Coordinator's primary responsibility is to oversee the Drug Court program by conducting assessments, providing and assuring quality treatment, updating each participants' individual plan, and verifying employment and housing stability. The Case Specialist's primary responsibilities include providing individual and group treatment sessions, conducting curfew checks, and administering urine drug screens to participants. The Treatment Coordinator and Case Specialist work together to identify participant needs and provide thorough case management in all phases of the program. The Drug Court Judge volunteers his time to the Drug Court Program and remains in contact with the Drug Court staff and team to consistently monitor participants. The Drug Court team also includes a representative from probation/parole, a public defender, a defense attorney, representatives from Pennyroyal Regional Mental Health/Mental Retardation Board, Inc., and representatives from local law enforcement. Outside treatment professionals are also consulted when necessary. For example, if a participant is sent to a residential treatment facility where progress is monitored by the court, the therapist is contacted and often participates in staffing sessions if possible. The treatment coordinator also maintains contact with various local and state resources in order to gain advice and assistance as needed.

This broad representation of both systems and perspectives among the members of the team help integrate the public safety and public health goals of Drug Court. Intensive supervision is a key element in the program and is maintained through regular contact with the Judge, Drug Court staff, and treatment professionals. The combined efforts of these individuals ensure that participants receive a full range of treatment options and supervision.

**Key Component #2. Using a non-adversarial approach, prosecution and defense counsel promote public safety while protecting participants' due process rights.**

Observation of staffing and Drug Court sessions indicated that the prosecutors and defense attorneys work together within the Drug Court team to help in the participants' recovery process and cessation of criminal activities. The entire team works closely together to develop a shared understanding of the values, goals, and operating procedures of both the treatment and justice system components. This cooperative role was not only evident in court and staffing observation but also echoed by various team members during interviews and focus group proceedings. Observations of the court sessions and staffing sessions were conducted by research staff and are detailed in the "Court Sessions and Staffings" section under Key Component #7 below.

**Key Component #3. Eligible participants are identified early and promptly placed in the Drug Court program.**

Information collected from interviews with the coordinator and Judge showed that the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court follows a plan that is designed to identify, assess, and place eligible participants into the program in a timely manner. The team

follows established inclusion and exclusion criteria to determine which adult offenders may be eligible to participate in Drug Court. After a potential participant is referred to the team, an assessment is done within two days. Following completion of the assessment and criminal background check, the referral is presented to the entire team and program eligibility is determined. Participants are accepted on a “first come, first served” basis and therefore are not required to wait until a sufficient number of candidates are available. These measures are in place to ensure that eligible participants begin receiving treatment through the Drug Court program in a timely manner.

**Referrals, eligibility, and admission procedures.** Participants may be referred to the program by public defenders, word of mouth among offenders, brochures, prosecutors, and the Judge. The team meets during “staffing” each week in order to discuss and to either approve or disapprove all referrals made during the preceding week. When a referral has been approved for entry into Drug Court, the Kentucky Addiction Severity Index (Logan and Messer 2001) is administered to them by the Drug Court coordinator. This assessment is done either in jail or in the Drug Court office, and is completed within approximately 2-5 days after the participant is referred. To be eligible for the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg County Drug Court, adults must be assessed on certain inclusionary and exclusionary criteria. Participants must be a resident of the 56<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, must be on a diversion track, and must also be abusing or dependent on substances. Participants are most often first offense Class D felons, but in some cases may be accepted with a misdemeanor charge if there is a past Class D felony. It is important to note, consistent with requirements for the Department of Justice, only non-violent offenders are eligible for participation in this Drug Court. Other exclusionary criteria include offenders with a persistent felony criminal history, individuals who are charged solely with trafficking and

offenders who have no history of drug abuse or dependence. Offenders who are eligible for the Drug Court program are required to sign a written agreement of participation. An Individual Program Plan (IPP) is also developed when a participant enters Drug Court. Although a general guideline is followed when completing an IPP each plan is developed around each participant's needs. IPPs are consulted throughout the program by both the Drug Court staff and the participant and are modified at each phase change.

**Capacity and Caseflow.** The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Adult Drug Court has treatment slots for up to 100 participants; 50 participants in Caldwell County, 25 participants in Lyon County, and 25 participants in Livingston County. A total of 60 participants have been served to date, the majority of whom are male, aged 18 to 30 years. About half of the participants are unemployed at program entry, and the majority do not have a high school education (Table 1).

Currently, there are a total of 23 participants actively enrolled in this Drug Court, with a steady flow of assessments being conducted and new participants being accepted on a regular basis. Figure 1 illustrates the number of participants enrolled per month since the court's inception. At the time of this report there are no active participants in Trigg County; however, participants from Trigg County can be placed in either the Caldwell, Lyon, or Livingston Drug Court.

A major prerequisite for admission into the Drug Court is the presence of a substance abuse history. This information is collected in the Kentucky Addiction Severity Index (ASI) at program entry. As Figure 2 indicates, the largest number of participants entered the program with drugs of choice being reported as alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine/crack. More than half of the participants were polydrug users. This is defined by the ASI as using more than one substance in a day. Although opiate use, specifically Oxycontin, is a large problem in the eastern part of the

state, only 28% of participants reported using opiates before entering this Drug Court. More than half the participants reported using amphetamines and methamphetamines prior to entering the program. This figure is not as high as the figures for marijuana and cocaine/crack; however, during the focus group many staff members observed that they were witnessing a rise in methamphetamine use and expect the numbers to increase as more participants are enrolled.

**Table 1. Participant Background Characteristics at Drug Court Entry**

| Characteristic        | N = 60 |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Gender                |        |
| Male                  | 43     |
| Female                | 17     |
| Race/Ethnicity        |        |
| Caucasian             | 58     |
| African-American      | 2      |
| Age                   |        |
| 18-30                 | 35     |
| 31-40                 | 15     |
| 41-50                 | 9      |
| 51+                   | 1      |
| Employment            |        |
| Full-Time             | 26     |
| Part-Time             | 4      |
| Unemployed            | 29     |
| Missing               | 1      |
| Education             |        |
| Less than High School | 21     |
| High School/GED       | 34     |
| Some College          | 4      |
| College Degree        | 1      |

Figure 1.

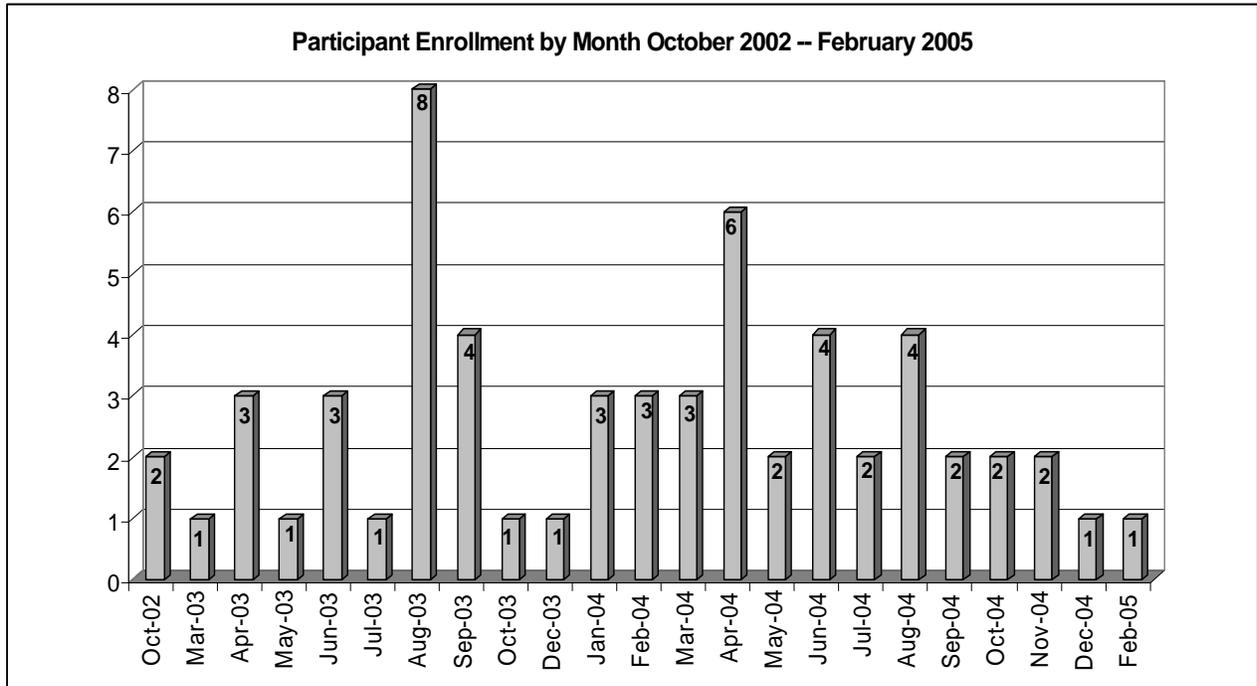
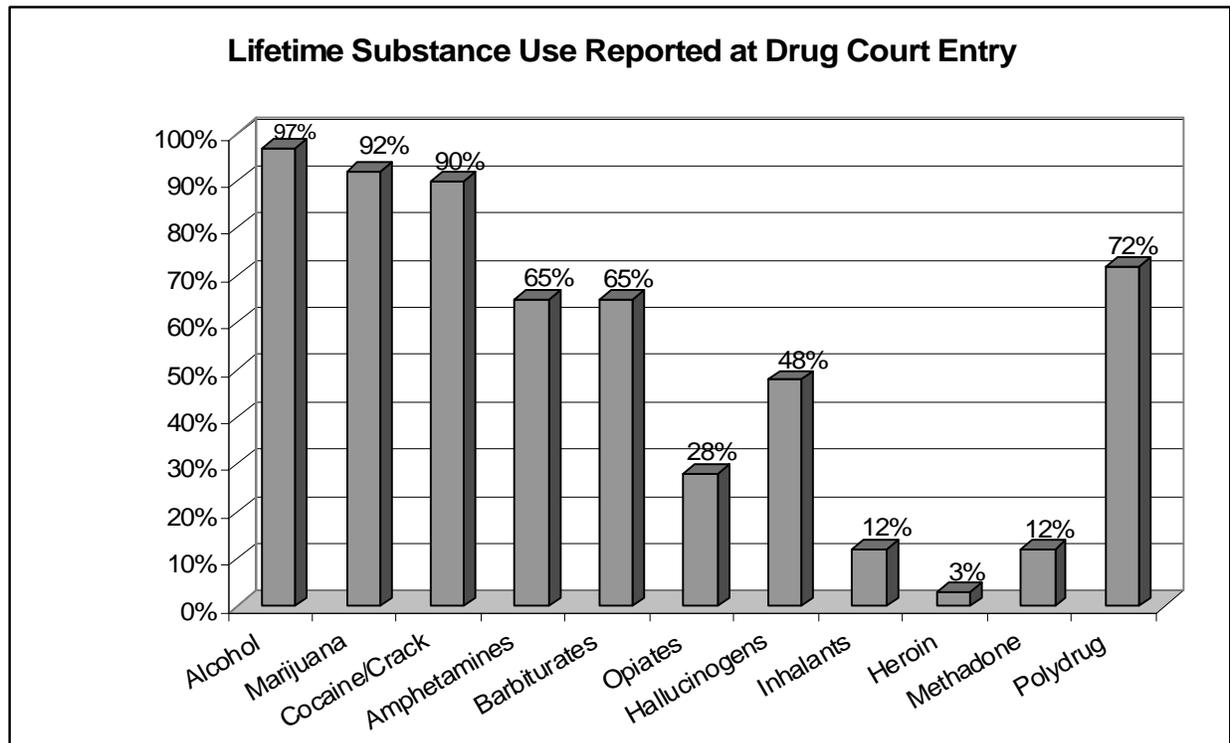


Figure 2.



**Key Component #4. Drug Courts provide access to a continuum of alcohol, drug, and other related treatment and rehabilitation services.**

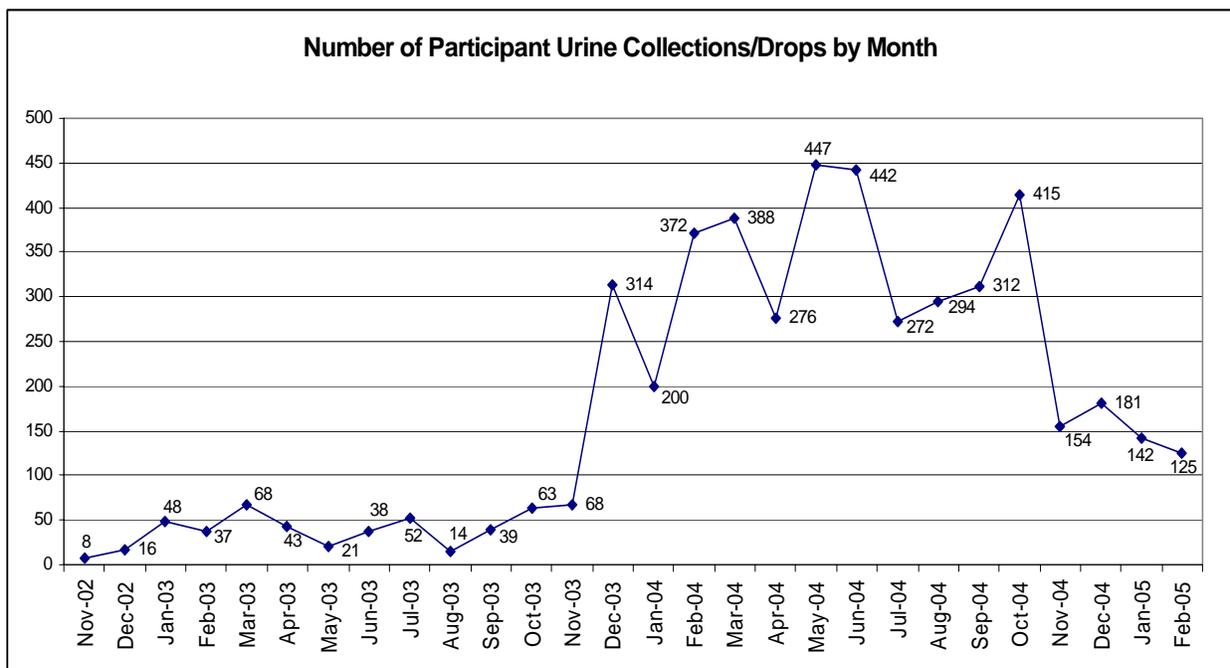
Results from interviews and participant observations showed that the Drug Court team has successfully established a relationship with Pennyroyal, Inc., the local substance abuse treatment provider, as well as other residential programs and halfway houses such as the Fuller Center, New Horizons, and the Phoenix House. Team members work together with treatment counselors to provide the participant with outpatient and residential substance abuse treatment as needed. Drug Court participants are required to attend group and individual treatment sessions throughout the duration of the program. Family and parenting therapy classes are also available if requested by the participant or if the team decides that these skills are useful or necessary to the participant. Drug Court staff also provide case management services on a regular basis and are available for emergency consultations as needed. The Drug Court program also provides a gender-specific curriculum to participants requiring this type of treatment. During the program the participant is required to attend AA/NA meetings on a regular basis. The participant's attendance at the meetings is monitored by the Judge and treatment coordinator. As with most Drug Courts throughout the state, participants are required to show proof of AA/NA meeting attendance by having a card signed by the meeting facilitator, and then submitting this card to the Judge while in court or to the treatment coordinator and case specialist. Participants are also required to obtain an AA/NA sponsor soon after the program begins.

**Key Component #5. Abstinence is monitored by frequent alcohol and other drug testing.**

Many of the resources of the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court are focused upon reducing the use of alcohol and other illicit drugs among its participants. Drug

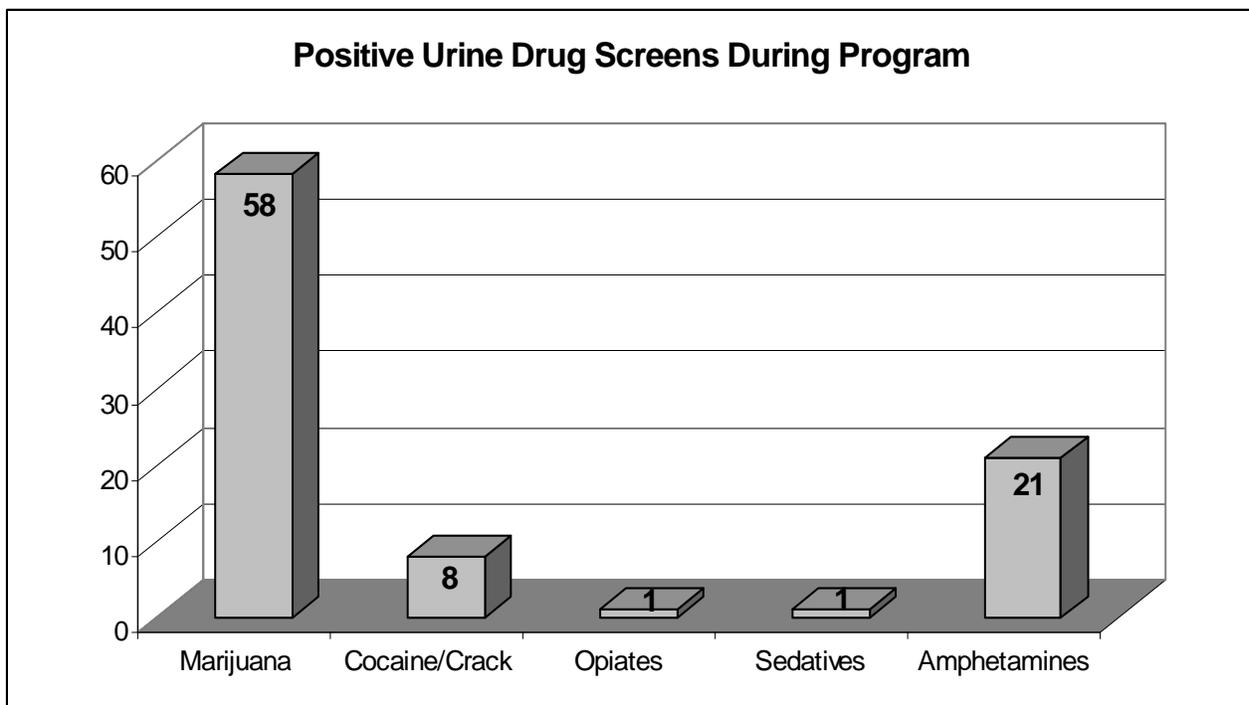
Court staff provide recovery-oriented therapy to their participants and employ urine testing for illicit drugs to determine participant progress and to identify relapse. Random and frequent urine screens are administered to each participant throughout their tenure in the program (Figure 3). Since the program began the team has administered 4,849 urine drug tests. As can be seen in the chart below, the total number of urine collections are often inconsistent. This is due to a number of varying factors. If a participant is in jail or a residential treatment facility they are required to provide urine screens in those venues instead of by Drug Court personnel. All results, however, are reported to the treatment coordinator and case specialist.

**Figure 3.**



Results from positive drug screens show that marijuana is most commonly used substance among the Drug Court participants (Figure 4). As participants advance through the phases, drug testing is performed less frequently. The Drug Court Judge reviews results of urine drug tests and applies appropriate sanctions when an individual submits a positive urine screen. Participants are tested at least three times per week in Phase I, twice per week in Phase II, and once per week in Phase III.

**Figure 4.**



**Key Component #6. A coordinated strategy governs Drug Court responses to participants' compliance.**

Each new Drug Court participant is given a Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court Handbook at program entry that details the operations of the program, policies and procedures, as well as program rules. Rules are viewed by the team as being important for many reasons. They impose a structure (often unfamiliar to participants) upon the lives of the

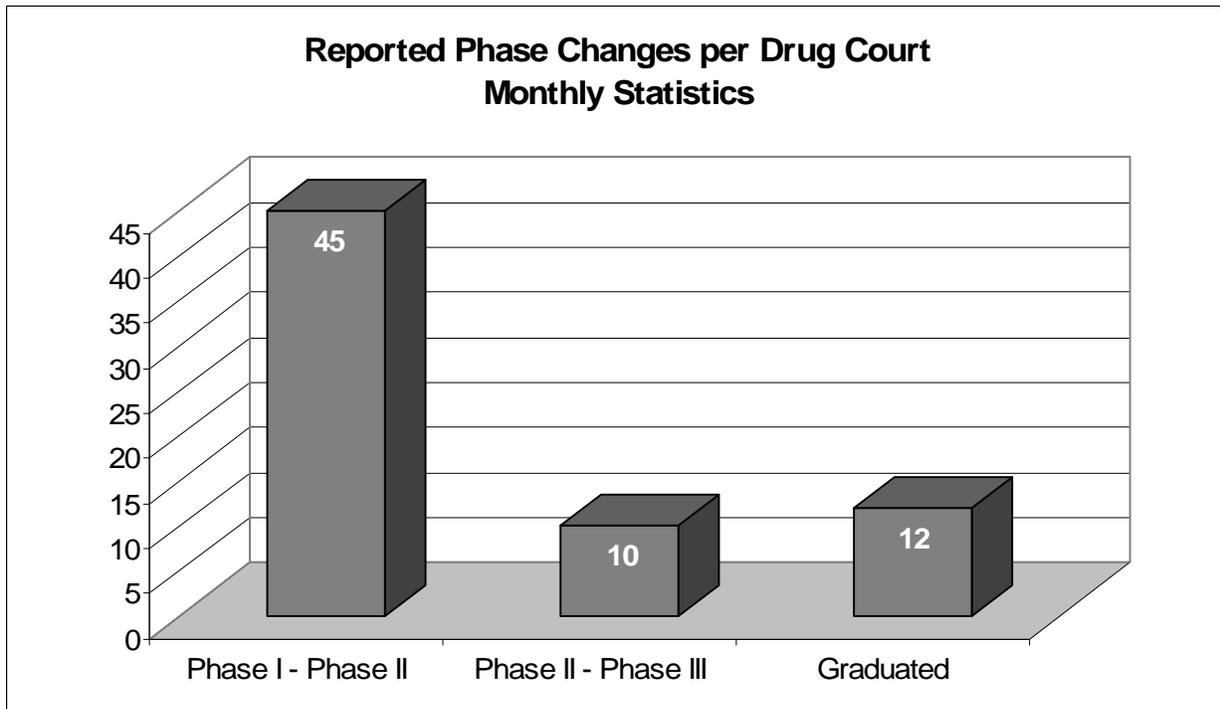
participant, ensure the safety of the staff and participants, provide a model of the larger social order, and promote programmatic consistency, predictability, and fair treatment of all participants.

The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg County Adult Drug Court program follows a clear system of rewards and sanctions that ties specific behaviors to specific consequences in order to encourage compliance with program rules, goals and objectives. Rewards and incentives are given when a participant continues to act in a manner that conforms to program rules, and achievements are regularly acknowledged during court sessions. Conversely, participants are sanctioned when they fail to act in a manner that is in compliance with program rules.

**Rewards.** Participants gain rewards by being compliant with the program rules and showing significant progress on treatment goals. Negative drug screens, good journals, attendance, and no probation violations all may garner rewards for the participants. Rewards that are frequently given to the participants include phase promotion, encouragement from the Judge, and applause by the Drug Court staff and other participants during court sessions. Good deeds are reported informally in Drug Court sessions. The Drug Court uses good deeds in order to help participants develop new value systems while encouraging their progress through the program.

Phase promotions indicate that the participant is performing successfully in the program. Therefore, examining the number of phase promotions is a valuable during- treatment performance measure that provides direct behavioral measures of participants' levels of compliance with treatment plans and program rules. As shown in Figure 5, analysis of data from the monthly statistics showed that 68 phase promotions were given during the time frame covered by the report.

**Figure 5.**

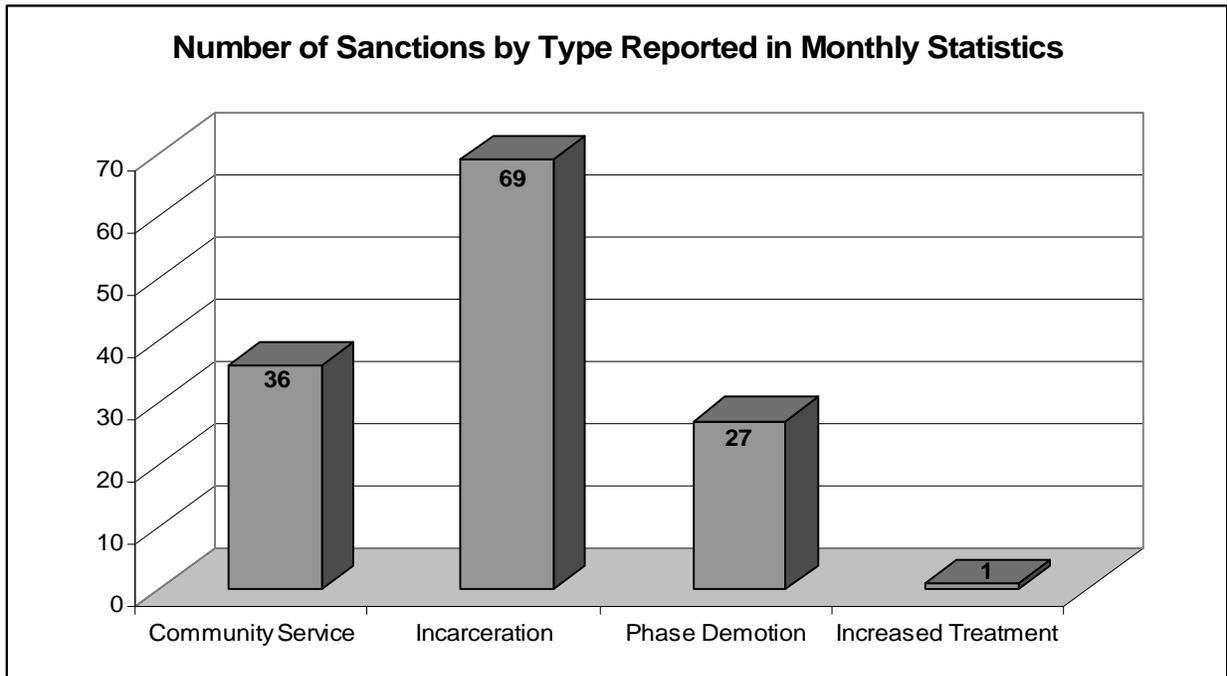


**Sanctions.** Sanctions are applied consistently and fairly while taking into consideration individual participants' program performance history and current relevant circumstances. The entire Drug Court team has input into the sanction process; however, the Judge makes the final determination of which sanction will be used. Positive urine screens, missed curfew, incomplete community service, late or missing assignments, tardiness to Drug Court sessions, and general noncompliance with the Drug Court program all may initiate use of a sanction. Sanctions include jail time (which varies depending on the severity of the infraction), phase demotion, additional drug screens, community service, additional contact with NA/AA sponsor, and/or termination from the program.

As seen in Figure 6, during the current reporting period, incarceration was the most commonly received sanction, with 69 of the total sanctions given being jail time that varied in

length. Community service was given as a sanction 36 times, increased treatment was given only once, and phase demotion was given as a sanction 27 times.

**Figure 6.**



**Termination.** In some cases it is necessary to terminate a participant from the program. A participant may be discharged from the program if he/she absconds, receives new charges, or is consistently noncompliant with program rules. Consistent noncompliance can include repeated positive urine drug screens, a consistent lack of adhering to the regulations, and persistent absences from Drug Court sessions and/or treatment sessions. Although the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Drug Court adheres to the above guidelines for termination, each participant is handled on a case-by-case basis and all aspects of the participant's activities are thoroughly reviewed before a final determination is made. As this court follows a diversion

track model, if a participant is terminated from the program the case is returned to the criminal court docket and sent to the Grand Jury to proceed as usual.

**Phase Structure.** Like all Kentucky Drug Courts, the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court is divided into three distinct phases, each with a separate set of goals, procedures, and strategies for reaching these goals. A general overview of these three phases (including Drug Court sessions, treatment activity, and supervision level) is presented in Table 2. A participant in this Drug Court program can remain in Phase I for a minimum of 45 days and a maximum of ten months; however the average length of stay is two months. Phase II requires a minimum of six months to complete and generally participants remain in this phase for nine months. Phase III of the program requires a total of three months to complete and an average time of the same. As can be seen in Figure 5 above, at the time of this report 45 participants have been promoted from Phase I to Phase II, ten participants have been promoted from Phase II to Phase III and 12 participants have graduated. An aftercare component is required in the program. Although specific elements of aftercare are still being planned, participants are required to complete six months of continued communication with the Drug Court. The aftercare program has been established as a method of continued support to the participant. Aftercare also serves to help participants who are currently in the Drug Court program. Graduates are invited to attend court sessions and report on their progress. The team believes that this form of mentoring can encourage participants in their own progress.

**Table 2. Drug Court Phase Requirements**

***Phase I: Stabilizing Period (Minimum Requirements)***

1. To attend one Drug Court session per week.
2. To provide all assigned drug screens each week which reflect no use of drugs or alcohol.
3. To attend and document required number of 12-step support meetings.
4. To attend all assigned group, family, and/or individual counseling sessions.
5. To begin to make necessary arrangements for payment of Court obligations.
6. To maintain Court-approved stable housing.
7. To maintain Court-approved employment, training, and/or education referrals.
8. To turn in journal assignments.
9. To comply with any necessary medical referrals.
10. To purchase a NA or AA text book, begin work on a 12-step recovery program, and obtain a sponsor.

***Phase II: Educational Period (Minimum Requirements)***

1. To attend one Drug Court session per week.
2. To provide all assigned drug screens each week which reflect no use of drugs or alcohol.
3. To attend and document required number of 12-step support meetings.
4. To attend all assigned group, family, and/or individual counseling sessions.
5. To begin payment of any restitution, court costs, etc..
6. To maintain Court-approved stable housing.
7. To maintain Court-approved employment, training, and/or education referrals.
8. To turn in journal assignments.
9. To complete assigned readings.
10. To maintain daily physical activity.
11. To do at least one good deed per court appearance.
12. To obtain/maintain an approved NA/AA Sponsor and continue work on a 12-step program.

***Phase III: Self-motivational Period (Minimum Requirements)***

1. To attend one Drug Court session every three weeks.
2. To provide all assigned drug screens each week which reflect no use of drugs or alcohol.
3. To attend and document required number of 12-step support meetings.
4. To attend all assigned group, family, and/or individual counseling sessions.
5. To pay a substantial amount of restitution, court costs, etc.
6. To maintain Court-approved stable housing.
7. To maintain Court-approved employment, training, and/or education referrals.
8. To turn in journal assignments.
9. To complete assigned readings.
10. To maintain daily physical activity.
11. To do at least one good deed per court appearance.
12. To maintain a full-time sponsor and continue work on a 12-step program.
13. To regularly mentor a new Drug Court participant and/or group session.
14. To complete an exit calendar; exit interview and plan for aftercare.

**Key Component #7. Ongoing judicial interaction with each Drug Court participant is essential.**

Judicial supervision of each participant is an essential element to the success of Drug Courts. The Drug Court team clearly recognizes the importance of judicial interaction with the participants and uses this technique as an effective tool in the program. Three observations of the Drug Court sessions were recorded by members of the research team at the Center on Drug & Alcohol Research at the University of Kentucky

**Court Sessions and Staffing.**

Team members not only attended court sessions but also attended the “staffing” sessions held immediately before in the Judge’s chambers. The pre-court staffing session is short and used to discuss any last-minute issues which need to be discussed. The reason for short pre-court staffing sessions is due to the fact that a longer, more in-depth meeting is held every Thursday to discuss the progress of participants in each county. The entire Drug Court team attends these meetings, including treatment professionals and any other individual who is involved with a particular case. For example, if a participant is currently in a residential treatment facility, the therapist working with the participant will attend the staffing session to provide any necessary input. At these staffings, team members receive a progress report that details the activities of each participant during the last week.

Court sessions take place in the courtrooms of each county, with the exception of Trigg County where the program is still in development. A separate Drug Court docket is not utilized; instead, participants’ cases are included in the regular criminal court docket. At the end of the criminal court session the Judge announces that Drug Court will take place and requires any persons not associated with the Drug Court to leave the courtroom. During the court session participants appear in front of the judge to discuss their progress. In one observed session,

participants were seated in the gallery and approached the bench after being called by the Judge. In another observed court session, participants approached the bench simultaneously and remained there throughout the court session. When asked about the variation in procedure, the treatment coordinator replied that depending on the location of the courtroom and the number of participants to be seen in a session, the Judge employs different techniques in order to more effectively facilitate the court session. Members of the Drug Court team were present during the observed court sessions, and were often called on to discuss matters pertaining to the participants' treatment or progress. The Judge was consistent in her interactions with each participant and spent approximately 3-5 minutes with person discussing their status. During one observed court session, a graduate was asked to appear and report on his status in the Aftercare program. The treatment coordinator reported that aftercare participants are often present in the court sessions to update the Judge on their progress and to encourage other participants.

**Key Component # 8. Monitoring and evaluation measure the achievement or program goals and gauge effectiveness.**

This report is the result of an ongoing evaluation that has been conducted by the University of Kentucky Center on Drug and Alcohol Research since the Court's inception. The data presented in this report are a combination of two process evaluations, one focusing on qualitative data and one focusing on quantitative data as well as an outcome evaluation. This report is submitted per Bureau of Justice Assistance requirements for an externally-conducted process evaluation of all federally-funded Drug Courts.

One component of this process evaluation is a researcher-led focus group consisting of the Drug Court's treatment team members. This focus group follows a Logic Model approach

(adapted from Harrell, 1996), which allows the Drug Court to participate in its own program development and evaluation. The focus group is initially conducted during the process evaluation, with a follow-up focus group conducted approximately one year later.

The focus group is begun by the researcher asking the treatment team to discuss key components of their program using open-ended questions. Given the two-part format, during the follow-up focus group the team members are allowed to opportunity to revisit these program characteristics to examine how they have changed or stayed the same; what worked or didn't work about the program, and what obstacles they felt the program still needed to overcome to successfully continue operations. This self-evaluation is an integral part of program's development process and is essential to program success.

The end result of this focus group is a one-page graphic representation of important elements of the team's mission. The team was asked to identify their target population, talk about the short- and long-term goals they had for the participants, therapeutic activities, community resources available to the program, characteristics of their participants, factors that influenced their activities, and concerns regarding program operations.

**Target Population.** The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court team described their target population as adults over the age of 18 who were not violent felons and who were dependent on drugs and alcohol. The team noted that they did accept individuals who were charged with trafficking, but only if the individual was selling drugs to support their own drug abuse; otherwise, those who had a history of drug trafficking were not eligible for consideration. The Drug Court only accepts those individuals who are charged with drug-related Class D felonies.

Staff also discussed other characteristics of the target population. Although individuals entering the Drug Court program must have a charge that originated in the 56<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, those residing in neighboring counties may also be eligible. The team also noted that they will accept participants who are transferring from other Drug Court programs in the state.

**Short-Term Goals.** The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court team recognized that the identification and completion of various short-term objectives was necessary in order to realize its long-term goals, or program mission. The team noted that they were particularly concerned about intervening as early as possible in problem areas, including substance abuse and other psychosocial issues affecting the participants' functioning.

The staff related that it is necessary to address the participant's substance abuse issues immediately upon program entry. Related to this objective, the team noted that they look for a noticeable, progressive decrease in substance levels with the use of frequent urine screens.

Staff identified another short-term objective, which was to ensure that participants were enrolled in the appropriate ancillary programs in a timely manner. Participants are required to attend AA/NA meetings, participate in group treatment sessions, and meet individually with treatment staff for any additional issues which need to be addressed. The team indicated a desire to engage the participants in "active participation" as soon as possible, so that they would be working in concert with the Drug Court team toward positive results.

Drug Court staff also work the participants to change and improve their home and social environments. Participants are encouraged to stay away from "people, places, and things" that might hinder their progress.

**Long-Term Goals.** Similar themes emerged when discussing the Drug Court's long-term goals. Team members agreed that a main goal of the Drug Court is to help participants to become drug

free. By accomplishing this goal, staff believe that Drug Court participants can become “independent and self-sufficient” members of the community. Other goals which the staff believe are important relate to the educational and employment requirements of the program. The Drug Court requires that participants obtain full-time employment and complete their GED, if necessary. If the participant has chosen to further his/her education by enrolling in a technical or college program, he/she is allowed to work on a part-time basis. By encouraging the development of drug-free lifestyles, the team believes that the community will benefit through the payment of child support and court fines, a decrease in the jail population, and a decrease in domestic violence.

Some comments made by the team regarding long-term goals identified specific aims regarding program development. Team members hope to raise community awareness of the Drug Court program. They believe that by serving the community in a positive way the participants will benefit by the addition of available community resources.

**Therapeutic Activities.** The team was next asked to identify what activities the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Adult Drug Court use to assist the participants with their efforts to recover from substance abuse and dependence, and further progress toward their long-term goals. The team described a comprehensive list of activities, services and interventions that contributed to therapeutic success. One staff member recognized the unique capability of this particular Drug Court team to work together in a multidisciplinary fashion as immeasurably valuable. Staff agreed that each team member brought a useful perspective and contributed energy and motivation to a common, collaborative mission.

Many therapeutic activities and services were identified following this initial observation. Intensive outpatient treatment and group therapy is provided to Drug Court participants through

Pennyroyal Mental Health, Inc. Additional individual and group therapy is provided by the Drug Court staff in-house. Staff also identified the therapeutic value of parenting and family counseling sessions, which provide a holistic approach to the participants' treatment. Additionally, participants are required to attend AA/NA groups and to obtain a sponsor. Local AA/NA groups were described as helpful therapeutic options. When residential treatment is deemed necessary, the Drug Court team identified treatment facilities such as New Horizons and the Fuller Center as potential options. Supplementary mental health treatment that was also mentioned by team members included clinical intervention for anger, self-esteem, and depression problems.

Other activities perceived as therapeutic by the Drug Court team involved services and program components that are not primarily designed for therapeutic purposes but function as such. These included urine analyses, homework assignments, journals, and autobiographies written by the participant at intake and graduation. Staff identified urine screens as a motivating influence upon therapy, providing the participant with clear extrinsic motivation to progress in therapy. An aftercare component is included in this Drug Court program, and participants are encouraged to mentor newly enrolled participants. The activities related to educational achievement, journaling, and "homework" serve to reinforce the development of individual intellectual capabilities, as well as provide opportunity for the participant to engage in reflection and contemplation regarding their therapeutic progress.

**Community Resources.** The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court has mobilized many community resources in order to best serve its participants with a wide range of psychosocial and lifestyle supports. The team commended the contributions of the county jail system, county courthouses, and Judge Executives. Various local churches not only provide

opportunities for participants to fulfill community service obligations and to complete good deeds, but also offer direct services to the participants by providing clothing, furniture, and temporary housing.

The Drug Court staff also noted the efforts of the county adult learning centers, spouse abuse centers, and the Salvation Army in cooperation with the Drug Court program. Team members commented on the abundance of resources their communities offer and the Drug Court's commitment to partner with these resources to provide a comprehensive and thorough treatment program to its participants.

**Client Background Characteristics.** Team members agreed strongly that their participants came from a variety of backgrounds. They also agreed that it was difficult to identify any specific trends due to the diversity of the client population. It was also noted that both educational attainment and socioeconomic status varied among participants.

Further discussion led team members to mention that alcohol- and drug-related offenses were common denominators as well as charges of theft and "doctor shopping." According to one team member, a majority of participants were poly-substance abusers although marijuana, crack, and opiates were the leading drugs of choice in the area. Many of the participants in the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Drug Court program have been using and/or abusing substances since adolescence. It was also noted that many of the participants have family members in the program.

**Other Influences.** Staff members were asked to discuss any other factors that impact their capability to meet participant needs and program goals. The team noted that a key factor in the success or failure of participants was family support. Those participants whose family members were supportive of the program's goals and the recovery process provided the participants with

additional external motivation; however, families of participants who were not invested in such goals or were opposed to recovery efforts had a negative effect on participant progress.

Related to this issue is the existence of peer pressure. One staff member noted that it is difficult for participants to separate themselves from old habits, environments, and associations. The peer pressure resulting from these factors can be a disadvantage to participants who are attempting to disengage from the substance abusing lifestyle.

As with many Drug Courts throughout the state, the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Drug Court encountered problems with consistent, available transportation. The four counties that make up the 56<sup>th</sup> Judicial District are relatively rural areas; and various meetings, sessions and community service obligations are located throughout the counties within the judicial district. Since not all participants have access to transportation, participation in the required program activities may be limited by this factor, and this therefore presents an obvious dilemma to both the team and to the participants.

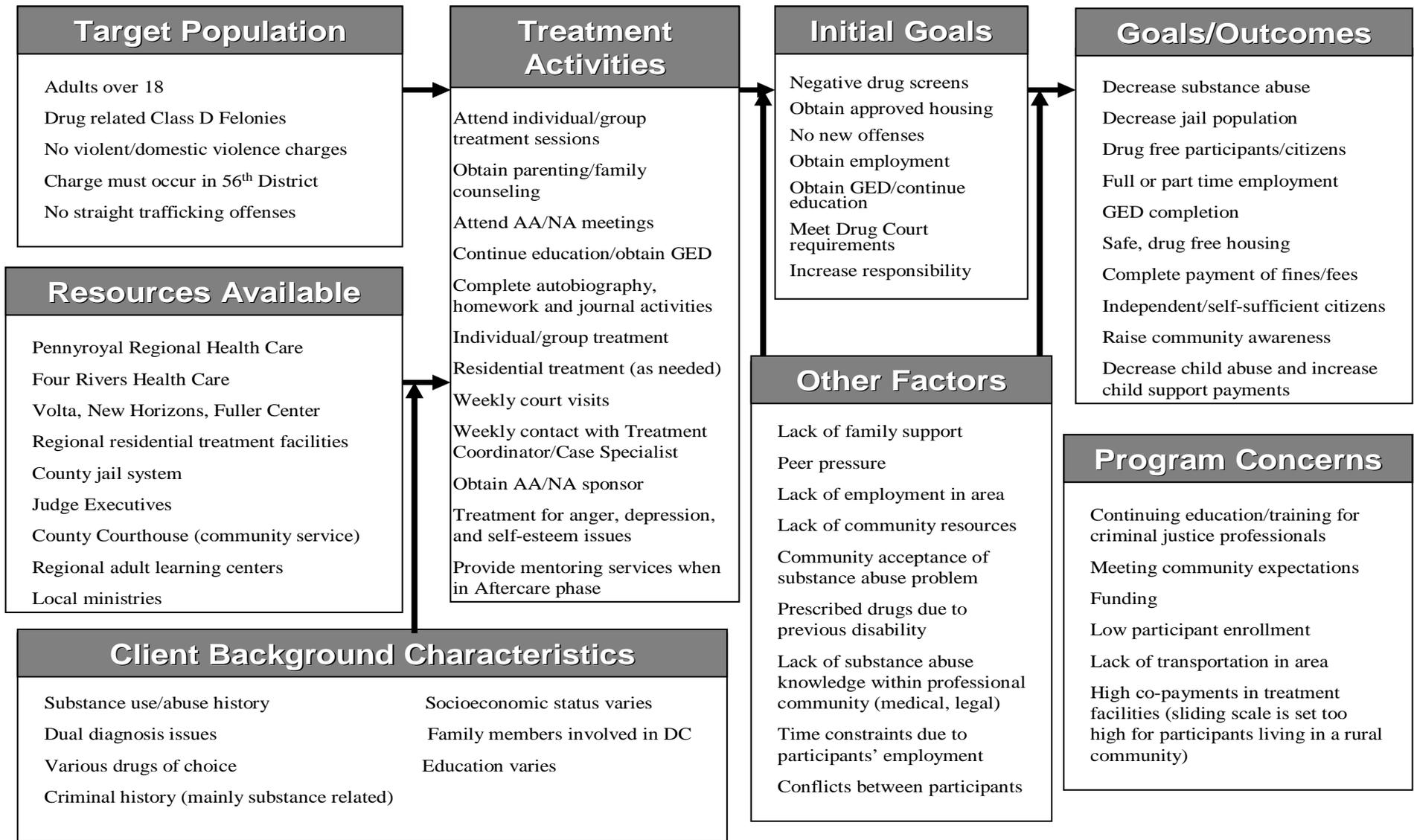
Other community issues were also discussed in terms of hindering a participant's progress through the program. This region, like other rural areas in Kentucky, offers little in the way of employment opportunities. Participants are required to obtain either full-time or part-time employment (depending on educational status) and the lack of employment opportunities makes it difficult for participants to meet this goal. Not only does this area have limited work opportunities, which was viewed by the team as essential to the participants' success and long-term outcomes, but team members also noted that many local employers are wary of hiring people with felony criminal records. Since the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court only serves participants with substance-related felonies, this poses a hardship for the majority of participants that the Drug Court team cannot completely alleviate.

Team members also noted a lack of community awareness. Several staff agreed that the community, as a whole, denies the existence of a drug problem in the area. This belief therefore engenders hesitancy within the community to accept the Drug Court program. Team members expressed a desire to educate the public about the high substance abuse rates, as well as the number of drug-related crimes committed each year within in the community. By educating community residents, Drug Court team members hope to raise awareness and create a stronger level of support for the program and the participants.

**Program Concerns.** To conclude the focus group, the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court team was asked to identify what concerns they had regarding the program as it is currently functioning. The first issue raised by team members addressed their wish for continuing education opportunities for criminal justice and medical professionals. Staff expressed their concern that many physicians, dentists, and lawyers in the area are not fully cognizant of substance abuse issues. This often causes difficulties when participants are treated for a medical condition or need to address legal issues with attorneys who are not associated with the Drug Court program. As with many Kentucky Drug Courts, transportation issues are also a concern for the team. The team reiterated the problems encountered by participants who have lost their drivers' licenses but are still required to attend court sessions, treatment sessions, and AA/NA meetings. Team members also agreed that participant enrollment is lower than expected, and they look forward to increasing recruitment efforts. Another concern noted by staff is the high co-payments required of participants who are seeking outpatient and residential substance abuse treatment. Many team members agreed that although a sliding fee scale is in place, the minimum payment is too high for individuals living in a rural area. Participants often find it

difficult to find sufficient funds for therapy, which is crucial to their Drug Court treatment progress.

**Figure 7. Logic Model of the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Drug Court**



## **DURING PROGRAM PROGRESS INDICATORS AND OUTCOMES**

The primary emphasis of the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court is to help its participants to learn to live drug-free and crime-free lives. Participants are held accountable for their maladaptive behaviors through therapeutic sanctions and are rewarded for their successes. The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court program employed efforts to positively influence the participants involved to maintain jobs and to remain drug- and offense-free. Two outcomes which provide insight into the progress achieved during this time by the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court Program include program retention and recidivism among Drug Court participants.

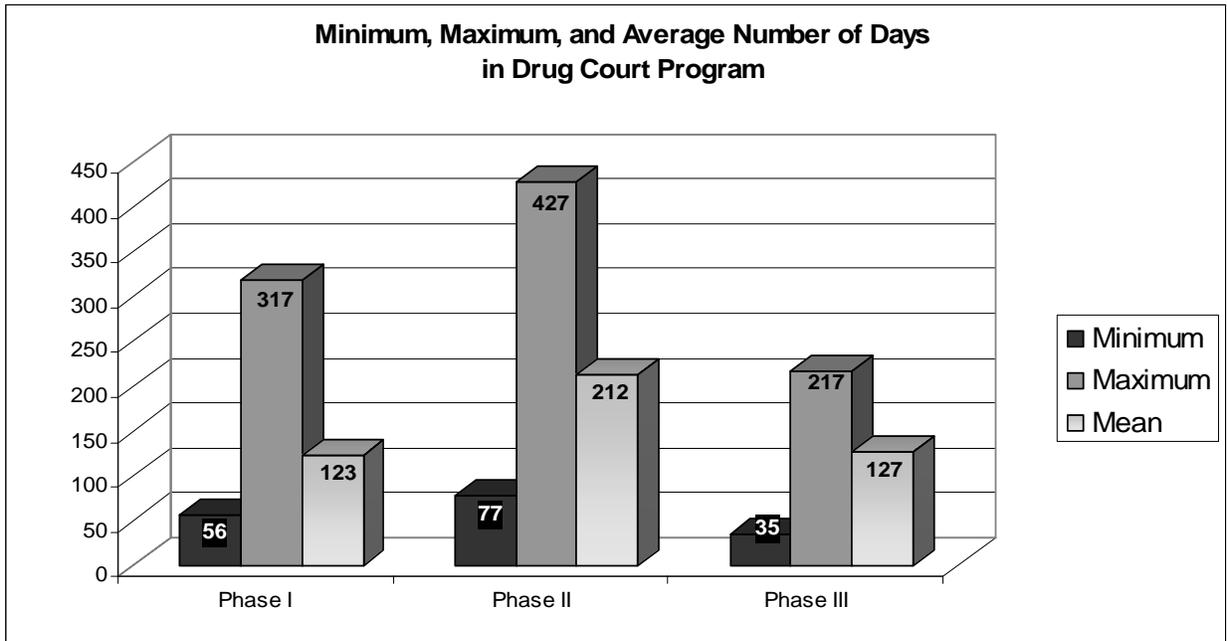
**Retention and Graduation in Drug Court.** Engagement and retention in the Drug Court program is an essential and critical element of the program's success. If the participant is terminated from the program, substance abuse treatment is also discontinued, which reduces the likelihood that he or she will experience long-term recovery. Nevertheless, not all participants can be allowed to remain indefinitely in the program. Some participants are terminated for noncompliance, or in response to new criminal charges. At the time of this report, the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Drug Court has graduated a total of 12 participants from the program. Graduates remained in the Drug Court program for a minimum of 357 days and a maximum of 543 days. The average length of stay in the Drug Court program for graduates was 441 days. When a participant graduates from the program, a ceremony is held to which the participant may invite family or friends. The participant is given a certificate of graduation and given the chance to speak to the Drug Court if he or she so chooses.

The graduation rate for the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Adult Drug Court is 30.8%. When compared with Belenko's 2001 findings, this figure falls short of the national average for

graduation rates. In an evaluation of eight Drug Courts, Belenko found that on average, 47% of participants successfully graduated from these programs. The minimum average graduation rate was recorded at 36% with the maximum rate reported as 60%. This is important because a large body of research in the substance abuse treatment field and in Drug Court literature shows that program graduates perform significantly better on rearrest/recidivism outcome measures than those who do not finish a program (Belenko, 2001; Logan, Hiller, Leukefeld & Minton, in press; Peters & Murrin, 2000).

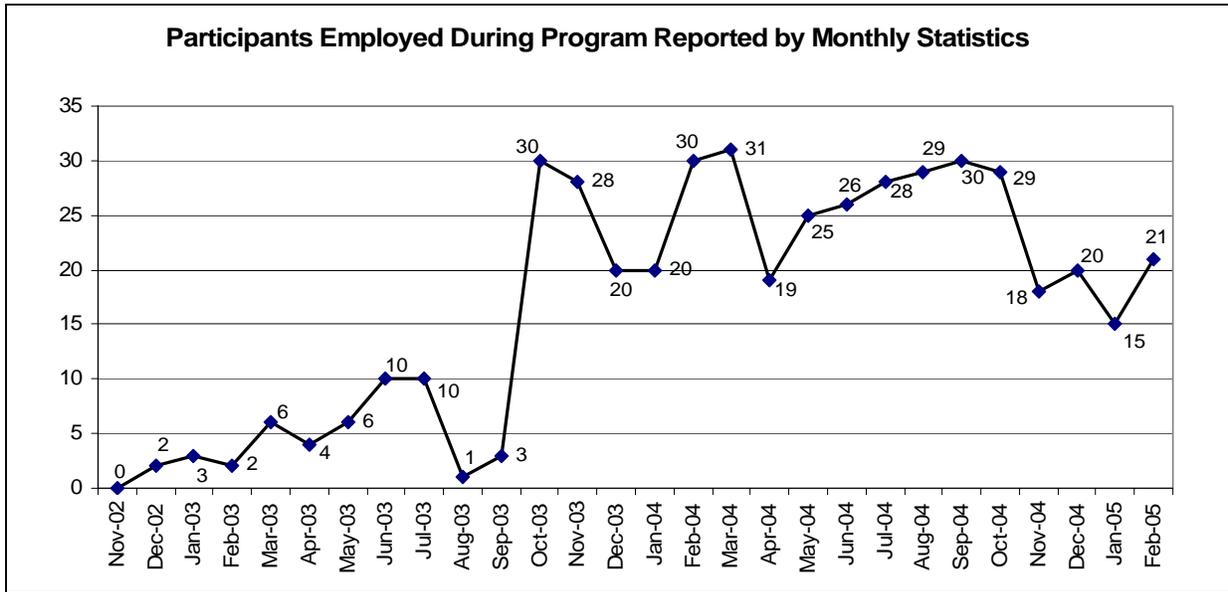
Length of retention in Drug Court, similar to other substance abuse treatment programs, has been correlated with long-term outcomes for participants (Peters, Hawes & Hunt, 2001; see related substance abuse literature including Zhang, Friedmann & Gerstein, 2003 and Simpson, Joe & Rowan-Szal, 1997). The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court participants spent an average of 123 days in Phase I, 212 days in Phase II, and 127 days in Phase III. Minimum and maximum lengths of stay for all three phases can be seen in the figure below.

**Figure 8.**



**Employment while in Drug Court.** Employment problems are a reliable predictor of early dropout from treatment among adults in community-based substance abuse treatment programs (Platt, 1995). Employment or active employment-seeking is required of every Drug Court participant unless they are a full-time student. Employment status of participants while enrolled in Drug Court must be considered within the context of two factors unrelated to the program: regional employment availability and the criminal charges which led to the Drug Court program enrollment. Employers may be unwilling to retain workers who have been charged with substance-related felony offenses, regardless of whether or not the employee enrolls in Drug Court. Therefore, Drug Court participants in rural counties face marked barriers to stable employment which include being part of a stigmatized group (ex-felons) and residing in an economically depressed region. Figure 9, below, shows the number of participants employed per month during this evaluation period, as provided by the program’s monthly statistics.

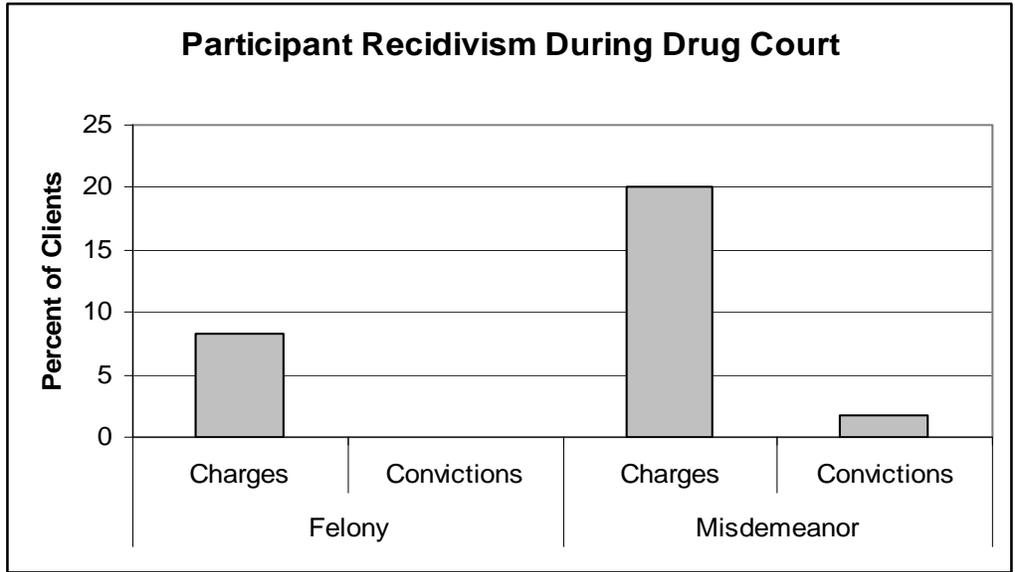
Figure 9.



**Recidivism during and after Drug Court.** Recidivism (often defined as re-arrests) is a fundamental outcome indicator used to judge the effectiveness of criminal justice-based programs. Therefore, one of the primary performance measures for the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Drug Court examines arrests and convictions for new crimes while under the program’s supervision and one-year post-program participation.

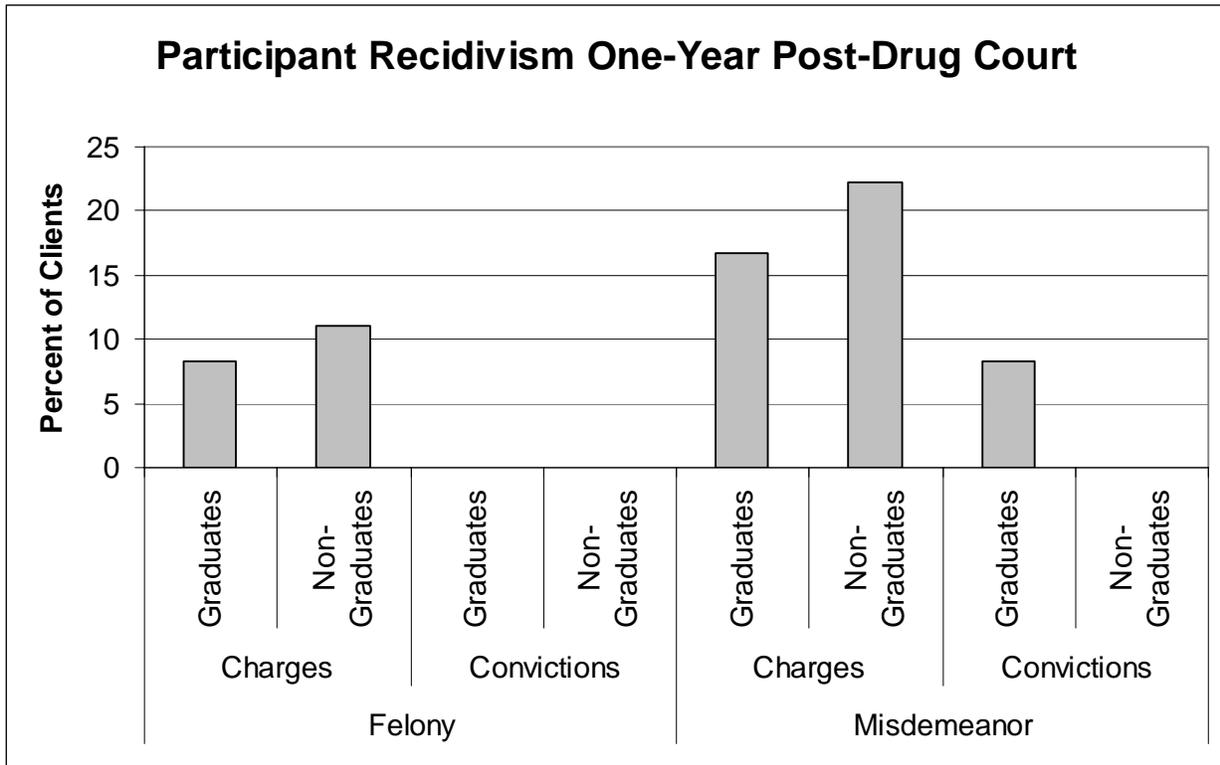
During their tenure in Drug Court, 8.3% of participants were charged and none were convicted of a felony offense, while 20% were charged and 1.7% were convicted of a misdemeanor offense (Figure 10). Within one year of either graduation or termination from the program, 16.7% of Drug Court participants were charged with a felony offense and 1.7% were convicted. For misdemeanor offenses, 8.3% were charged and 1.7% were convicted.

**Figure 10**



Comparing Drug Court graduates and non-graduates on one-year post-Drug Court recidivism, similar proportions of graduates and non-graduates were charged with a felony offense (8.3% and 11.1%, respectively). At 8.3%, recidivism for graduates of the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Drug Court was approximately half that of national estimates (16.4%) (Roman et al., 2003). Furthermore, none of the graduates or non-graduates were convicted of a felony offense in the one-year post-program participation (Figure 11). When examining misdemeanor offenses, two graduates were charged and one was convicted convicted, while 22.2% and 0% of non-graduates were charged and convicted of a misdemeanor offense, respectively.

Figure 11



**Key Component # 9. Continuing interdisciplinary education promotes effective Drug Court planning, implementation, and operations**

Several members of the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Drug Court team have attended a number of educational workshops and trainings. The Drug Court coordinator and Judge have attended trainings conducted by the National Drug Court Institute (NDCI) as well as other local and state workshops. Other team members have attended regional Drug Court trainings and voiced their willingness to attend additional conferences in order to maintain a level of ongoing education. By attending these educational trainings, members of the Drug Court team are exposed to interdisciplinary perspectives which can help maintain the high level of professionalism, commitment, and collaboration shown by this team. As with many Drug Courts throughout the state, team members of the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Drug court were not

present during the initial phase of NDCI training. During the focus group many staff members expressed a desire for ongoing training opportunities in order to enhance their knowledge of the Drug Court process and treatment issues surrounding substance abuse.

**Key Component # 10. Forging partnerships among Drug Courts, public agencies, and community-based organizations generates local support and enhances Drug Court effectiveness.**

Findings from the participant observations, Drug Court coordinator interview, and focus group showed that the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court program has developed a series of partnerships with several local agencies and community organizations. The composition of the Drug Court team demonstrates this networking with the community, with representatives from the court system, including the Judge, prosecution, and defense counsel, and also treatment providers and law enforcement from within the communities the Drug Court program serves. The Drug Court program has formed relationships with private and nonprofit treatment providers, and with community resources such as businesses, universities, hospitals, vocational rehabilitation, and adult education programs. For a more detailed summary of community resources and partnerships please refer to the Logic Model (Figure 7). A discussion during the focus group involved several concerns regarding local support. A synopsis of this conversation can be found in the “Community Resources” section preceding the Logic Model.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court is firmly grounded in the Ten Key Components that define effective strategies for Drug Courts nationwide. The program provides recovery-oriented services and supervision to adult felony offenders with substance abuse problems. A dedicated team of criminal justice and substance abuse treatment professionals work together closely to aid participants to begin the recovery process, improve personal/social functioning, and abstain from criminal activities. The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court has continued to grow not only in the number of participants enrolled in their program, but also in the commitment from local community organizations and businesses who are willing to work with the Drug Court to further their mission. In conclusion, the Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Drug Court is in full compliance with the 10 Key Components outlined for implementing effective Drug Court programs (DCPO, 1999).

**Strengths.** The Caldwell/Lyon/Livingston/Trigg Counties Adult Drug Court has many strengths; specifically the dedication of key individuals on the Drug Court team. Judges, staff, and treatment professionals attend all treatment team meetings, Drug Court staffings and Drug Court sessions. These committed individuals form a cohesive unit whose goal is to better the lives of those participating in their program. Another strength of this court is the network of community organizations who facilitate effective service delivery to Drug Court participants.

**Recommendations.** Based upon information collected from Drug Court team members and the data reviewed for this evaluation period, the following recommendations are offered:

- (1) Continue implementation of Drug Court program operations in accordance with the Ten Key Components.

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- (2) Improve graduation rates. Examine characteristics of non-graduates to determine whether changes to program structure are necessary to facilitate program completion.
- (3) Continue to cultivate and enhance community networks supportive of Drug Court in order to expand volunteer, vocational, educational and therapeutic opportunities for participants.
- (4) Continue to enroll participants in order to meet target figures estimated in the original grant proposal, including the addition of participants from Trigg County. Attempt to resolve any difficulties that may inhibit the addition of this county to the program.
- (5) Improve data collection methods and recording procedures. Develop and maintain detailed and comprehensive information regarding participant status in Drug Court files. Ensure that data kept in charts is accurately reflected in monthly statistics to be submitted to the Administrative Office of the Courts.
- (6) Widen the scope of sanctions given to participants. A majority of participants in the program are incarcerated due to noncompliant behavior. Continue to expand the continuum of responses to include alternative sanctions (curfew restrictions, book reports, home incarceration, fines, increased drug testing, etc) in order to more effectively address participant noncompliance.

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