



REDUCING THE FOSTER CARE BIAS IN  
JUVENILE DETENTION DECISIONS  
The Impact of Project Confirm

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## Executive Summary

When children in foster care are arrested for delinquent acts, they are more likely than other children to be sent to juvenile detention to await their trials, rather than back home. The results can be damaging for the children and expensive for taxpayers. Yet these foster children have not been charged with more serious crimes than their nonfoster peers. For the first time anywhere, this report quantifies the foster care bias in detention decisions, and shows that a relatively simple intervention can eliminate it for juveniles facing low-level offenses and with no prior records. The report also identifies further obstacles to eliminating these disparities in more serious cases.

In 1998, the Vera Institute of Justice joined with several New York City and New York State agencies to reduce the unnecessary detention of foster juveniles. With government funding, Vera hired a small staff to receive the names of all youth arrested and detained in New York City, then quickly *confirm* which were in foster care. Project Confirm, as it was named, notifies the relevant foster care agencies of the need and their legal obligation to send someone to the first court hearing. The staff of Project Confirm then meet the case workers at court to help them navigate the juvenile justice system.

Vera researchers studied Project Confirm both to measure the foster care bias in detention decisions and to assess the extent to which this intervention reduced that bias. Researchers matched data from the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice on more than 13,000 youth admitted to detention between 1997 and 1999 with data on foster children from the Administration for Children's Services. The researchers then used regression analysis to examine the discrepancy in detention rates between foster and nonfoster youth with similar characteristics, including charge level, detention history, court county, age, race, and gender.

For youth without prior detentions who were charged with misdemeanors and minor felonies, the results show a foster care bias of almost ten percentage points before Project Confirm began. That is, the probability of detention for youth in foster care was 10 percentage points higher than the probability for youth not in foster care, controlling for other influences. For these juveniles, getting their caseworkers to court and helping the workers navigate the system proved sufficient to eliminate this bias.

This was not true, however, for juveniles previously detained and those charged with major felonies or with warrants. Among this group, the statistically *insignificant* foster care bias of approximately six percentage points before Project Confirm grew to a statistically significant 12 percentage point bias with the intervention, suggesting that the extra information judges received in these cases, such as a runaway from foster care, led them to detain more of these youths. To eliminate the foster care bias in more serious cases, other kinds of information, such as the circumstances in which the runaway occurred and additional services will have to be provided.

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## Introduction

The U.S. Supreme Court has upheld the legality of pretrial detention to prevent crimes by juveniles or to ensure their appearance in court, but debate continues concerning its appropriate use.<sup>1</sup> Many believe that detention is a useful tool that deters juveniles from further offending and from failing to appear in court. Those who argue for detention reform contend that detention decisions are arbitrary and often punitive, and that the costs far outweigh the benefits. Most people involved in this debate, however, would agree that youth involved in the juvenile justice system should not be subject to harsher treatment because they are in foster care.

In 1996, New York City's child welfare Commissioner asked the Vera Institute of Justice to examine whether and why foster children were overrepresented in juvenile detention centers. As with all Vera projects, the program development team culled information from a variety of sources to define the problem. This included a survey of youth entering juvenile detention centers, a literature review of foster children's experiences in other human service programs, interviews with foster children in group homes, observations of youth in probation proceedings, analyses of administrative data from the child welfare and juvenile justice agencies, and numerous interviews with officials and frontline workers in New York City agencies.

Through this work, Vera planners discovered that youth in foster care entered juvenile detention facilities to await the outcome of their cases at higher rates than their nonfoster counterparts. Part of this disparity in detention stemmed from the absence of child welfare representatives in court to take custody of foster children eligible for release. Vera coined the term "overlap problem" to signify the alarmingly high rates of children in both the child welfare and juvenile justice system, and the lack of coordination between these two systems. In 1998, the Institute launched Project Confirm to address the overlap problem.

### Background on the Overlap Problem

During the 1990s, New York City's Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) noticed an increase in juvenile detention rates (see New York City Mayor's Management Reports, 1990 to 1998).<sup>2</sup> Despite a decline in juvenile arrests after 1995, judges sent an increasing number of arrested youth to secure detention facilities to await their trials rather than release them to their parents or legal guardians. Vera's exploratory research suggested

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<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey Fagan and Martin Guggenheim, "Preventive Detention and the Judicial Prediction of Dangerousness in Juveniles: A Natural Experiment," *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 86, no. 2 (1996): 415-448.

<sup>2</sup> New York City's Department of Juvenile Justice operates juvenile detention facilities, which house youth age 15 years and younger awaiting trials or placement in a correctional facility. The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), a state-level agency, oversees juvenile placements. Appendix A provides an annotated glossary of these and other terms.

that foster youth constituted a disproportionate share of these juvenile detainees. Though less than two percent of New York City's youth population resided in the foster care of the Administration for Children's Services (ACS), a survey of youth entering detention facilities indicated that they accounted for approximately 15 percent of youth admitted to detention in 1997. There was also no evidence that the foster youth were charged with more serious offenses than the nonfoster youth, indicating an inequity in these disproportionate rates of confinement.

The possibility that foster youth were being disproportionately detained raised several concerns among child welfare and juvenile justice officials. Unnecessary spending ranked high among these concerns. Secure detention costs New York City more than \$250 a day per bed compared to between \$17 and \$150 per day for foster care. In addition, while the federal government pays for fifty percent of foster care costs, no corresponding funding match applies to secure detention. This comparison alone reveals the financial burden associated with housing foster youth in detention facilities rather than in foster homes. Even further costs are generated when ACS continues to pay for foster care services while youth reside in detention, which can result in total costs to the City of up to \$400 per day.

Cost constituted only one element of the overlap problem. There was also concern for the well-being of foster youth in detention. Detention deprives all juveniles of their liberty, a traumatic experience for any youth age 15 years and younger. This trauma may be heightened for foster youth, many of whom have already experienced high levels of abuse, neglect, and institutionalization. Indeed, the detention environment may foster further antisocial behavior among foster and nonfoster children, especially since almost 70 percent of the nation's detained youth reside in overcrowded public facilities.<sup>3</sup> In addition, pretrial detention can harm juvenile defendants' educational attainment and income if it keeps them from school and work.<sup>4</sup> Since foster children already face lower educational and employment prospects than other children, being detained is likely to be even more harmful to youth in foster care.<sup>5</sup> Another concern over pretrial detention in general is that adolescents in detention cannot demonstrate their ability to obey the law or display other positive behaviors that could lead judges to order less severe dispositions—the Family Court equivalent of sentences.<sup>6</sup> Thus, being detained pretrial could lead to higher rates of placement in juvenile correctional facilities operated by the Office of

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<sup>3</sup> Bradford Smith, "Children in Custody: 20-Year Trends in Juvenile Detention, Correctional, and Shelter Facilities," *Crime and Delinquency* 44, no. 4 (1998): 526-543.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Sampson and John Laub, *Crime in the Making: Pathways and Turning Points Through Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).

<sup>5</sup> for a review of studies that compare foster to nonfoster children on several outcomes, see Thomas P. McDonald, Reva I. Allen, Alex Westerfelt, and Irving Piliavin, *Assessing the Long-Term Effects of Foster Care: A Research Synthesis* (Washington: Child Welfare League of America Press, 1996).

<sup>6</sup> M.A. Bortner, *Inside a Juvenile Court: The Tarnished Ideal of Individualized Justice* (New York: New York University Press, 1982); Fagan and Guggenheim, "Preventive Detention".



Children and Family Services (OCFS), again a ordeal most foster youth may have already undergone one time too many.

In addition to the economic and social costs directly attributable to detention, Vera's exploratory research suggested two disturbing child welfare implications that flowed from the overlap problem. First, foster youth who were detained for several days in a row could lose their foster care placements, especially if they resided in congregate care facilities (also called group homes). The private agencies that operate most congregate care facilities for ACS can hold the bed for a missing foster youth for up to three days. But if the juvenile's whereabouts are unknown, the agency usually fills the bed with another child. The youth leaving detention is therefore forced to move to a new home, which can be a very disruptive experience, involving adjustments to new neighborhoods and caretakers. A change in placement also may weaken or destroy relationships with important adults in the children's lives, such as their biological parents and peers, often resulting in antisocial and delinquent behavior among foster youth.<sup>7</sup> Because of the disruption new placements cause, federal foster care guidelines identify reductions in placement changes as a key goal for child welfare agencies.<sup>8</sup>

A related concern was that youth being released from detention would be sent to emergency placement facilities because they had lost their foster care placements. Children without placements usually go to ACS's emergency placement office, called Pre-Placement Services (PPS). Most child welfare managers and officials view emergency placements as undesirable because they disrupt the stability in children's lives and require extensive personnel time to locate new placements quickly. Additionally, until the recent opening of a new one-hundred-bed facility, PPS occasionally faced overcrowding problems, which created uncomfortable spaces for children and stressful conditions for staff.

These consequences of confining foster juveniles in detention facilities called for further investigation into the causes of foster juveniles' disproportionate representation in detention. Vera's exploratory research showed no evidence that foster youth committed more crimes or crimes of greater severity than nonfoster youth, both factors that could explain differential detention rates. Instead, conversations with judges, probation officers, police officers, and DJJ workers revealed a collective concern about the many barriers separating the child welfare and juvenile justice agencies.

The number of actors involved when a child in foster care was arrested was itself a barrier. An arrest, then and now, requires an array of frontline workers to coordinate their efforts: police, probation, and detention officers from the juvenile justice system; and

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<sup>7</sup>Desmond K. Runyan, and Carolyn L. Gould, "Foster Care for Child Maltreatment: Impact on Delinquent Behavior," *Pediatrics* 75, no. 3 (1985): 562-568; Cathy Spatz Widom, "The Role of Placement Experiences in Mediating the Criminal Consequences of Early Childhood Victimization," in *Child Welfare Research Review Volume 1*, eds. J.D. Berrick, R.P. Barth, and N.Gilbert (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

<sup>8</sup> Department of Health and Human Services, *Child Welfare Outcomes Report* (Washington: DHHS, 2000).

caseworkers and foster care providers from the child welfare system. At the time Vera was exploring this issue, many obstacles prevented these professionals from working together. Frontline workers were not always aware of a youth's involvement in other systems. When informed, many did not know how to contact appropriate representatives in the other agencies. Even when equipped with the necessary contact information, many frontline workers did not know their legally mandated responsibilities and roles with respect to other agencies.

These problems often surfaced immediately upon a foster juvenile's arrest and processing at the police station. Some police officers did not ask if the youth was in foster care. Even when they asked, officers often did not have the time or resources needed to locate the contact information of foster care providers or caseworkers who could perform the functions of a legal guardian, and foster youth often did not provide such information. When caseworkers were reached, some did not realize that the arrested juvenile still remained their responsibility or considered detention an appropriate punishment for the alleged crime and chose not to come to the police station. Police procedures, then and now, require that when officers arrest youth after the court is closed, they must transport youth to the secure detention facility unless a guardian is found within three hours. Failure to locate a guardian within this time means that police are forced to send youth to detention even when they have authorization to release them to a guardian. These youth spend at least one night in detention until their initial court hearings the following business day.

At the courthouse, probation officers, prosecuting attorneys, and defense attorneys often have even less time than the police to locate guardians before the first hearing. The court officials interviewed indicated that even when located, some parents or guardians of foster children did not come to court for the interview with probation. With little information about a youth and no one to take custody should release appear warranted, probation officers were forced to refer such cases to prosecutors who in turn chose to prosecute in court. Judges, facing a similar situation, often ordered a youth detained.

The confusion in the roles and responsibilities of the various professionals may have also led to higher arrest rates for foster children. Interviews with staff in several group home facilities revealed that some child care workers called the police for behaviors such as fighting or stealing, an event less likely to occur in a biological family.

In sum, this early research led Vera to believe that the overlap problem arose from communication barriers between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and the absence of clearly defined responsibilities among child welfare professionals. As a result, child welfare workers did not appear in court and court officials lacked important information and release resources. This understanding of the situation shaped the design of Project Confirm.

## Project Confirm as a Solution to the Overlap Problem

July 1998 marked the launch of Project Confirm. Due to regulations attached to part of the program's funding, Project Confirm works only with minors facing juvenile delinquency charges, not juvenile offenders.<sup>9</sup> Within several months of start-up, the program expanded the target population to include youth on trial discharge (children living at home on a trial basis) and under court-ordered supervision (children who never enter foster care, but who are monitored by the Family Court due to allegations of maltreatment). Project Confirm included these cases because ACS maintains legal responsibility for these children even though they live with their natural families.

The program uses two primary strategies to reduce the overlap problem: notification and court conferencing. Project Confirm augments these components with other activities that distribute information and educate child welfare workers, such as community conferencing and informational sessions with frontline workers in the involved agencies. Figure 1 on the next page provides a diagram of the program's logic model.

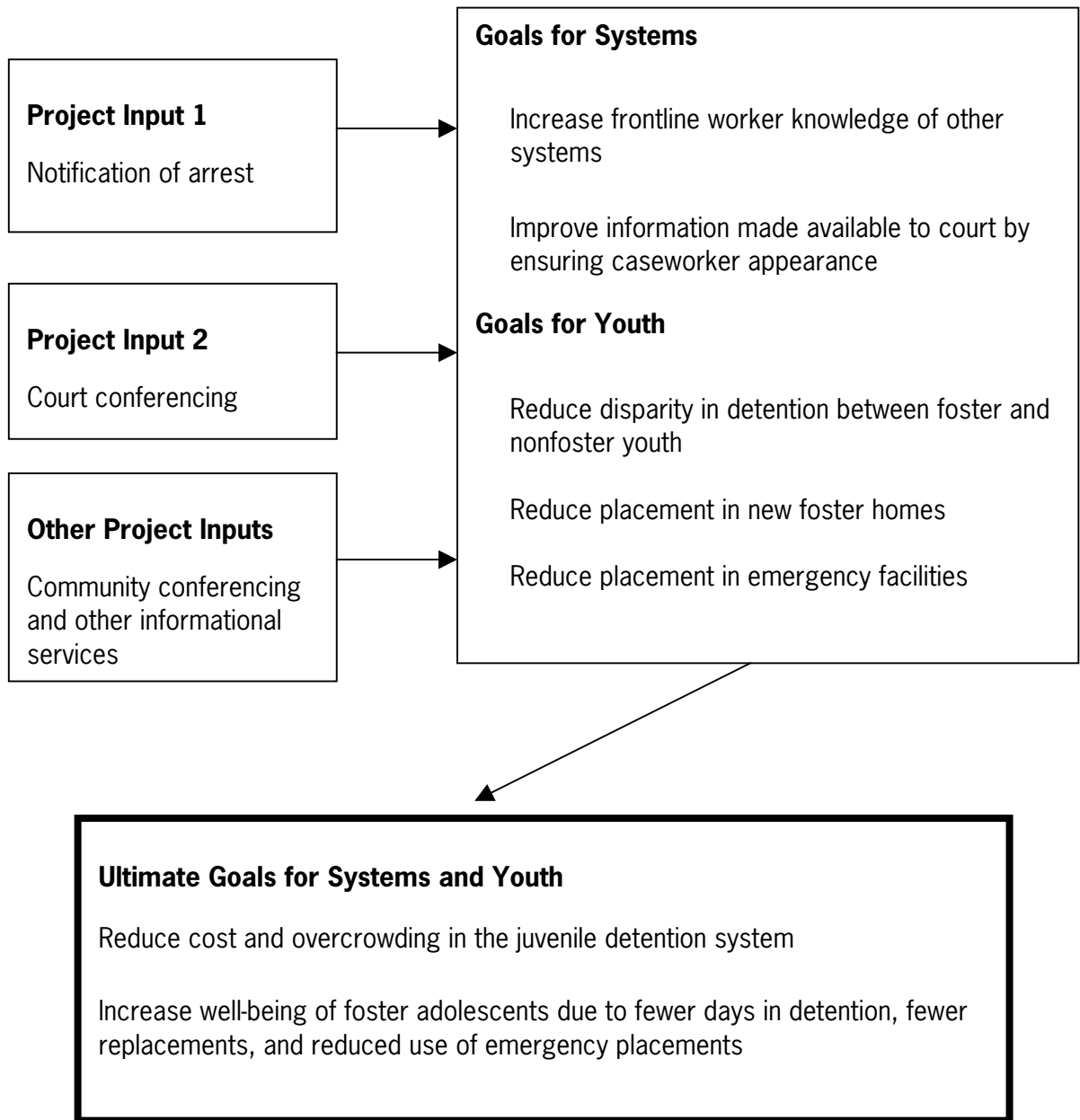
### Notification

Project Confirm starts with a notification system. First, police officers phone Project Confirm following a youth's arrest. If the juvenile is sent directly to detention because Family Court is closed, intake workers there phone Project Confirm as well. A Project Confirm screener then searches the ACS database to ascertain the foster care status of the arrested youth. When the screener identifies a foster child, the program contacts a liaison at one of the 66 private agencies that provide foster care for New York City children (or the ACS case manager if the child is in a foster care placement operated by ACS), and the probation officer assigned to interview the minor in court. The agency liaison, in turn, instructs the teen's caseworker to call Project Confirm for instructions on where to go and whom to contact in the juvenile justice system. Through notification, Project Confirm seeks to increase the appearance rate of child welfare representatives (case managers, caseworkers, and child care workers) who have a legal responsibility to attend hearings and the authority to accept custody of youth released by the court.

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<sup>9</sup> New York defines a juvenile *offender* as a child 13,14, or 15 who commits a serious felony that is tried in adult court. Juvenile *delinquents* are youth under 16 who commit lesser crimes and whose cases are heard in Family Court.

**Figure 1: Project Confirm Logic Model**



## Court Conferencing

Following notification, Project Confirm uses court conferencing to ensure that when notified of an arrest, child welfare representatives and their counterparts in the juvenile justice system know the role they are required to play when responding to a case involving a foster youth. In court conferencing, a Project Confirm field coordinator meets child welfare representatives at court, introduces them to the probation officers, and guides them through the entire process from the probation interview to the hearing before the judge. By connecting child welfare workers with the Family Court system, court conferencing seeks to give probation officers and prosecutors charged with making recommendations to the court more knowledge about the child, to give judges the opportunity to ask child welfare workers questions, and to ensure that in the event of a release, a person authorized to accept a foster minor is present. In this way, field coordinators also play a role in holding child welfare and juvenile justice officials accountable for the arrested foster youth.

## Community Conferencing and Other Informational Services

Project Confirm performs a number of other services not directly related to its primary mission of reducing differential detention rates. The program is seen as an “information Switzerland,”—a neutral party that can share knowledge and connect people from agencies and departments that have historically had either minimal contact or adversarial relationships. Frontline workers and policy makers in child welfare and juvenile justice frequently consult with Project Confirm staff when they have questions about how other agencies work.

If a youth is released, for example, Project Confirm field coordinators often schedule a community conference with the minor, the child welfare representative, and other involved parties to provide information about what to expect at the next hearing. At these meetings, field coordinators explain the court’s action, answer questions, explain how juveniles need to prepare for future hearings, and explain the obligation to appear on the next court date. Field coordinators use community conferences to ensure that all parties know the result and implications of the court hearings, to impress upon youth that they are ultimately responsible for taking the appropriate actions, and to encourage the adults to think about ways to address the problems that lead to arrests.

Project Confirm leverages its expertise in both the juvenile justice and child welfare systems to generate additional contacts that allow the program to intercede in cases that might otherwise escape its notice, and to improve relationships with the numerous actors involved in the overlap problem. The program frequently works with the ACS placement office to find solutions for hard-to-place youth involved with juvenile justice, especially youth who have experienced multiple transfers between child welfare and juvenile justice. The program’s reputation for efficiently providing information in situations

involving overlaps led to many requests concerning youth not in the program's target population. During its first year, for example, the program fielded over 350 phone calls from the DJJ on juvenile *offender* cases not in Project Confirm's formally defined target population. The project also receives unsolicited calls from the police, the probation department, OCFS, and private foster care agencies

### Project Confirm's Goals

By providing each of these three services, the program has two goals for officials in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and three goals for foster youth. The program seeks to increase frontline workers—police officers, probation officers, attorneys, and child welfare caseworkers—information about the policies and procedures of the other system. Additionally, the program intends to improve the amount of information made available to justice professionals, in particular judges, when deciding whether to detain a young person in foster care. For youth, the program seeks to reduce the disparity in detention between foster and nonfoster children as well as minimize placement transfers and use of emergency facilities for youth in foster care. Ultimately, it is expected that these changes will lower costs and reduce overcrowding for the juvenile justice and child welfare systems and improve well-being among youth in foster care who are arrested.

## Evaluating Project Confirm

In a previous report, we examined Project Confirm's implementation, and provided a broad array of implementation statistics.<sup>10</sup> We concluded that despite the typical obstacles encountered in starting up multi-agency programs, Project Confirm successfully implemented most of the operations called for in its logic model. We were, therefore, confident that the program was ready for an impact evaluation and employed the strategy outlined in this section.

### Research Questions

Following Project Confirm's logic model, we transformed its goals into two evaluation questions:

- *Question 1: Has Project Confirm reduced the disparity in detention rates between nonfoster and foster youth?*
- *Question 2: Has Project Confirm increased placement stability for foster youth released from detention?*

Question 1 pertains to Project Confirm's primary goal of reducing the likelihood that a foster youth is detained because of factors related to his or her foster care status. A corollary question to this inquiry is whether Project Confirm reduced the bias more for some groups than for others. Specifically, since court officials have few reasons to detain youth facing low-level charges and with minor delinquency records other than the absence of a release resource, we suspected that Project Confirm would have a larger impact on these types of cases than it would on more serious cases.

As Question 2 indicates, Project Confirm seeks to increase placement stability, which we measure as a return to the same foster care placement after release from detention. As we pointed out in our implementation evaluation, Project Confirm encountered some situations in which child care workers used arrest as a method to transfer disruptive foster juveniles.<sup>11</sup> By clarifying caseworker roles and responsibilities to arrested foster youth, and holding caseworkers (and their agencies) accountable for fulfilling these obligations, Project Confirm seeks to reduce the likelihood that the arrest leads to a disruption in placement. But since Project Confirm plays no formal role in the placement process and does not provide direct services to maintain placements, we did not expect to see a substantial impact on placement stability.

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<sup>10</sup> Timothy Ross and Dylan Conger, *Bridging Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice: An Implementation Evaluation of Project Confirm* (New York: The Vera Institute of Justice, 1999).

<sup>11</sup> Ross and Conger, *Bridging Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice*.

There were two questions we were not able to address in the evaluation. First, although Project Confirm sought to reduce the disparity in detention at the police station in the last year of the demonstration, our evaluation does not examine this goal. This evaluation addresses the impact of the program on “police admits” to detention—those youth arrested after court hours, taken to detention, and whose initial hearing takes place the next day court is open. Project Confirm focused its efforts almost exclusively on this population during its first year: police admits accounted for over 90 percent of youth who received services from the program. Police admits constitute over 40 percent of all admissions to detention eligible for program services (excluding teens who are on warrants from OCFS and juvenile offender cases, neither of whom are releasable from court). Project Confirm did not provide a significant amount of services to “court admits” to detention (those youth who are arrested while court hours are open and sent to detention that same day) until its second year of operations.

Second, although we attempted to evaluate Project Confirm’s ability to reduce the use of PPS—the facility that ACS uses for emergency placements—the poor quality of the available data rendered these analyses unreliable. See Appendix B for details on the limitations of data from the emergency facility.

In sum, the questions we answer in this evaluation are related to Project Confirm’s impact on decisions made by court personnel to detain youth who have already spent one night in detention, not on decisions made by police to detain youth immediately upon arrest. We also examine the replacement of foster youth once they are released from detention, but not the emergency placement rate.

## Research Design

Project Confirm provides services citywide, prohibiting the use of a comparison group of similar youth arrested at the same time but not served by the program.<sup>12</sup> The best comparison group available consists of foster teens detained prior to the program’s start date. Therefore, to estimate Project Confirm’s impact on its participants, we compared groups of juveniles admitted to detention by the police (police admits) before Project Confirm’s launch (January 1997 to June 1998) with police admits after the program began (July 1998 to the most recent month available, September 1999).<sup>13</sup>

To answer the first evaluation question—did Project Confirm reduce detention disparities—we controlled for changes in overall trends in detention. In other words, our analysis did not examine the change in detention among foster youth before and after Project Confirm, but the change in the disparity of detention between foster and nonfoster youth. This is an important point: Project Confirm does not attempt to reduce detention,

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<sup>12</sup> Project Confirm’s program coverage rates following its July 18, 1998 launch exceed 95 percent, so a sufficiently sized experimental group that the program missed does not exist.

<sup>13</sup> Starting in September 1999, DJJ transitioned to a new Management Information System and was unable to provide us with data after that point.



but to reduce the difference in detention between foster and nonfoster youth. Therefore, the design for the first evaluation question incorporates nonfoster juveniles, allowing us to control for any policy or demographic changes that may have altered release rates for all arrested juveniles. This design does not, however, control for changes in policies and trends that may have disproportionately affected either foster or nonfoster youth.

We used a similar design to answer the second evaluation question of whether Project Confirm increased the placement stability of foster youth following their release from detention. Our analysis compared the placement stability of two groups of foster youth released from detention: those who received Project Confirm services and those who were detained prior to Project Confirm. The only difference between this design and the one used to answer the first question is that we did not control for changes in the overall trends in placement stability for all foster youth, including those who were not arrested and detained. While we had information on the movements of all foster youth, we were unable to identify a comparison group that experienced some event, such as detention, that may have triggered a disruption in their placements.

## Analytic Database

We created an extensive database for the impact evaluation with administrative data from ACS and DJJ. We matched identifying information from DJJ on all juvenile detainees from almost a three-year time span (January 1997-September 1999) to ACS records. Through the matches, we identified whether a teen resided in foster care, or was on trial discharge at the time of the admission to detention.<sup>14</sup> See Appendix C for a detailed discussion of the matching process and results.

The following table includes a summary of the results from our matching process. We identified roughly the same percentage of all youth entering DJJ who were in foster care before and after the implementation of Project Confirm, 11 percent and 10 percent respectively. We then excluded from the analytic database juveniles who met the following conditions: charged as juvenile offenders, in court on warrants from OCFS, or sent to detention initially by the court, not by the police (court admits). As mentioned earlier, Project Confirm did not provide services to these youth in its first year; once excluded, the proportion in foster care before the program increases to 12 percent and after the program to 13 percent (see last row of Table 1).

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<sup>14</sup> Our study did not incorporate youth under court-ordered supervision because there were few such cases in the analysis and many did not receive program services because they were not included in the target population until several months after program startup.

**Table 1: Results of Data Matching**

	<i>Before Project Confirm</i>	<i>After Project Confirm</i>
Number of admissions to detention	7,633	5,949
Number (%) of admissions that were in foster care at the time of entry	832 (11%)	595 (10%)
Number of admissions excluding juvenile offenders, OCFS warrants, and court admits	2,685	1,968
Number (%) of admissions that were in foster care, excluding juvenile offenders, OCFS warrants, and court admits	333 (12%)	257 (13%)

The database includes all of the information DJJ collects on juvenile detainees, including their admission and discharge dates, charge levels, and placements in juvenile prison. The database also includes information from juveniles’ ACS records, such as entry and exit dates from foster care and movements between foster homes.

### Analytic Strategy and Variables

#### **Question 1**

To find out the impact of Project Confirm on the disparity in detention rates for foster and nonfoster teens, we estimated the bias against foster youth in initial detention decisions both before and after Project Confirm services. If Project Confirm reduced the influence of being in foster care on detention decisions, we should see the effect of being in foster care on detention eliminated following the program’s introduction. We employed a standard logistic regression model to determine the size of the foster care bias before and after Project Confirm, controlling for legal (juvenile justice) and extralegal (mostly demographic) variables. Initially, we attempted to estimate the program’s impact in one analytic model, with the program effect captured in one variable—children who were in foster care at the time of their arrest and whose arrest occurred after Project Confirm began. However, the estimates from these models and the corresponding tests of statistical significance proved unstable, so we examined the program effect using two separate models: one with cases before the program and one with cases after the program. We then compared the coefficients and statistical significance of being in foster care on detention for juveniles arrested in these two time periods.

The models included two legal variables that tend to play a large role in pretrial detention decisions—charge level and prior arrests that resulted in detention.<sup>15</sup> We also included court county in the model because individual counties often have their own court cultures, philosophies, and standards; this is as true in New York City’s five counties as in any other jurisdiction.<sup>16</sup> Standard demographic variables—age, race, and gender—were added to control for the influence of any extralegal influences on detention decisions.

Corresponding to our corollary hypothesis that the program would affect groups differently according to the severity of their records, we examined the bias separately for juveniles charged with misdemeanors or minor felonies and no prior detentions and for juveniles charged with more serious felonies, warrants, or prior records. See Appendix D for more detail on the statistical model and variables used in the analysis.

## **Question 2**

To determine whether Project Confirm improved placement stability (or reduced replacements), we compared the replacement rates within 15 days of release from detention of Project Confirm participants to those of foster youth detained prior to Project Confirm. We originally planned to develop a logistic regression model similar to the one above, with replacements as our dependent variable and controls for other influences on replacement, but the low number of youth replaced after release from detention eliminated this option. Instead, we ran simple two-variable (bivariate) models to test for changes in placement stability.

In all models, we examined the magnitude of each coefficient in combination with the statistical test of significance, reporting both the conventional ( $p < 0.05$ ) and marginal ( $p < 0.10$ ) cutoffs as indications of statistical significance. While we believe the research design provides enough information to make judgments concerning the impact of Project Confirm, our methodology contains some limitations, such as lack of a perfect control group, potential missing variables, and little observational data (see Appendix D for further discussion).

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<sup>15</sup> William C. Bailey, “Preadjudicatory Detention in a Large Metropolitan Juvenile Court,” *Law and Human Behavior* 5, no. 1 (1981):19-43; Edward J. Pawlak, “Differential Selection of Juveniles for Detention,” *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* July (1977):152-165.

<sup>16</sup> Lawrence E. Cohen and James R. Kluegel, “The Detention Decision: A Study of the Impact of Social Characteristics and Legal Factors in the Two Metropolitan Courts,” *Social Forces* 58, no. 1 (1979): 146-161; Edward Pawlack, “Differential Selection of Juveniles for Detention,” *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* July (1977):152-165; Ira M. Schwartz, William H. Barton, and Frank Orlando, “Keeping Kids out of Secure Detention,” *Public Welfare* Spring (1991): 20-26.

## Results

After discussing the differences between foster and nonfoster groups on the demographic and juvenile justice characteristics, this section provides their likelihood of detention for both groups before and after Project Confirm. We also provide differences in the program's impact for subgroups of the population, most importantly for those with less and more serious delinquency records. Finally, we provide the placement transfer rate among detained foster youth before and after Project Confirm's introduction.

### Comparison of Foster and Nonfoster Youth

Our analytic sample includes 4,653 juveniles detained between 1997 and 1999.<sup>17</sup> Thirteen percent (N=590) of these individuals resided in foster care at the time of their arrests. The group of juveniles in foster care includes a greater proportion of females, African-Americans, and youth arrested in Staten Island and Queens than the group not in foster care (see Table 2). The young people in the two groups are similar with respect to age, charge level, and distribution of previous detentions—the variables that should be most important to a judge in making a decision to detain.

Although the analyses are not shown here, we also compared both foster and nonfoster youth on these same characteristics before and after Project Confirm's implementation and found no differences between the two groups.

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<sup>17</sup> This excludes the following three groups of juvenile detainees: 1) those who were brought to court the same day as their arrest (court admits); 2) juvenile offenders; and 3) juveniles on warrants from OCFS.

**Table 2: Comparison of Foster and Nonfoster Juveniles**

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Foster Care (N=590)</i>		<i>Non Foster Care (N=4,063)</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender*				
Male	426	72%	3,372	83%
Female	165	28%	691	17%
Race*				
African-American	411	70%	2,615	64%
Hispanic <sup>a</sup>	167	28%	1,202	30%
White	11	2%	176	4%
Other	2	<1%	70	2%
Age				
Less than 12	2	<1%	54	1%
12 to 13	111	19%	711	17%
14 to 15	463	78%	3,143	77%
16 or older	15	3%	154	4%
(average age in years)	14		14	
Charge				
C-felony or Above	207	35%	1,540	38%
Below C-felony	342	59%	2,221	55%
Warrant	35	6%	268	7%
Prior arrest that resulted in Detention				
No	432	73%	3,100	76%
Yes	159	27%	963	24%
County of Arrest*				
Brooklyn (Kings)	150	25%	1,212	30%
Bronx	142	24%	1,028	25%
Manhattan (New York)	123	21%	902	22%
Queens	124	21%	680	17%
Staten Island (Richmond)	52	9%	238	6%

\* Difference between foster and nonfoster is significant at  $p < 0.05$

<sup>a</sup> Although we use the term Hispanic, this variable actually refers to nonwhite, nonblack youth from Spanish-speaking countries.

### Reducing Detention Disparity

The analyses reported here show three principal results. First, in the period prior to Project Confirm, court officials detained foster juveniles more often than they did nonfoster juveniles with the same juvenile justice and demographic characteristics—what we call a bias against foster juveniles. Second, the foster care bias changed only modestly for the entire group following the introduction of Project Confirm, with substantially different effects according to the seriousness of the juvenile’s present case and prior

record. Finally, the foster care bias and the program effect differed dramatically according to juveniles' gender, race, and the borough in which they were arrested and tried. We provide only summary statistics in the text and more detailed regression results in Appendix F.

The crux of our analysis is shown in Table 3, which presents the adjusted probabilities of detention for foster and nonfoster juveniles (and the difference between these probabilities) before and after Project Confirm. The term "adjusted probability" refers to the probability of being detained, controlling for all other demographic and juvenile justice factors. The top three rows in the table (under "All Cases") show that before Project Confirm began, the probability of a foster youth being detained was almost eight percentage points higher than that of a nonfoster youth (probability of 55.9% versus 48.4%), holding other factors constant. After Project Confirm, the difference in probabilities shows almost no decline to six percentage points (probability of 57.6% versus 51.3%). The foster care bias was statistically significant before the program and marginally significant after the program, indicating that the small decrease in the bias once the program was introduced was not statistically different from zero.

As stated in our research design, we expected the program to have a larger effect in less serious cases since the absence of a release resource is one of the few reasons to detain juveniles with minor records, while other factors may play a role in more serious cases. The next set of rows in Table 3 shows that the program had a much stronger effect on foster youth charged with less than a C-felony and no prior detentions, a group that makes up 44 percent of the population eligible for program services. The foster care bias for these youth declined from ten percentage points (a statistically significant difference) before Project Confirm to negative numbers following the program's introduction. A negative foster care bias means that foster youth in this group had a lower likelihood of detention than nonfoster youth, however, this reverse in the bias was not statistically significant.

The table also shows that the reverse occurred among juveniles with more serious records; teens facing C-felony or above charges, before the court on warrants from prior arrests, or with a previous detention. Among these youth, the disparity in detention between foster and nonfoster increased following the introduction of Project Confirm from a statistically *insignificant* six percentage points to a statistically significant 12 percentage points.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> In the combined model, the effect of the program was statistically insignificant. However, as reported above, we have less confidence in our combined model due in part to the high correlation among variables.

**Table 3: Adjusted Probability of Detention for Foster and Nonfoster Juveniles Before and After Project Confirm Overall and by Seriousness of Record**

	<i>Probability of Being Detained Before Project Confirm</i>	<i>Probability of Being Detained After Project Confirm</i>
All Cases	(N=2,665)	(N=1,946)
Foster	55.9%	57.6%
Nonfoster	48.4%	51.3%
Difference	7.5 percentage points*	6.3 percentage points <sup>+</sup>
Below C-felony and no priors	(N=1,138)	(N=882)
Foster	42.0%	35.3%
Nonfoster	32.1%	37.7%
Difference	9.9 percentage points*	- 2.4 percentage point
C-felony or above, warrant, or priors	(N=1,546)	(N=1,086)
Foster	65.3%	73.3%
Nonfoster	59.6%	61.2%
Difference	5.7 percentage points	12.1 percentage points*

+p<0.10 \*p<0.05

We also examined the change in the foster care bias according to gender, race, and court county to see whether the program affected these groups differently (we did not examine differences by age because the numbers were too small). Table 4 includes only the differences in the adjusted probabilities for each of the groups (for interested readers, the full regression results are provided in Appendix F).

Perhaps the most striking numbers in the table are the extensive differences in the foster care bias before Project Confirm began. This analysis shows that foster girls, Hispanics, and youth with cases heard in Manhattan or the Bronx all experienced far greater biases than foster youth in the other groups. Additionally, for several of the subgroups—boys, African-Americans, and youth with cases heard in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island—there was no foster care bias before Project Confirm.

In general, the program appears to have reduced or eliminated the very large foster care biases and in one case created a bias where one did not previously exist. The largest decrease in the bias occurred among Hispanics—a drop of over 17 percentage points (from 16.5% to negative 0.9%), which went from being statistically significant to statistically *insignificant*. This large decrease was followed by the 14 percentage-point decline in the bias for cases heard in the Bronx and the almost 5 percentage-point decline for cases heard in Manhattan. Females also experienced a drop in the foster care bias,

however, it was not eliminated with the program as indicated by the marginally statistically significant remaining bias of almost 12 percentage points.

The reverse occurred among African-American juveniles. While black foster juveniles appeared not to be detained at higher rates than black nonfoster juveniles before the program, there was a marginally significant 8.5 percentage point bias after the program. No such change occurred for the rest of the cases that had no bias before the program—boys, and youth in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island.

**Table 4: Percentage Point Difference in Adjusted Probabilities of Detention for Foster and Nonfoster Subgroups of Youth Before and After Project Confirm by Gender, Race, and Court County**

	<i>Before Project Confirm</i>	<i>After Project Confirm</i>
Gender		
Male	4.8	3.8
Female	17.6**	11.6 <sup>+</sup>
Race		
African-American	3.3	8.5 <sup>+</sup>
Hispanic	16.6**	-0.9
Court County		
Brooklyn	-3.1	6.6
Bronx	19.6**	5.3
Manhattan	11.1 <sup>+</sup>	6.5
Queens	2.8	4.1
Staten Island	0.85	6.4

<sup>+</sup>p<0.10 \*p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01

### Increasing Placement Stability

In contrast to the analysis of detention disparities, our examination of changes in placement stability consisted of two relatively simple comparisons. We first compared changes in foster care placement within 15 days of release from detention for youth who were detained prior to Project Confirm and youth detained after the program was launched. We then examined these changes for two groups in the population: those who were initially released by the court (spending 2 or fewer days in detention) and those who were initially detained by the court (typically spending three or more days in detention).

In the first comparison, we discovered that few young people experienced placement transfers within 15 days of release from detention either before or after Project Confirm (see Table 5). Before Project Confirm’s launch, 11 percent of the foster juveniles (27 children) experienced a placement transfer within 15 days of their release. Despite these



small numbers, we detected a program effect. Following Project Confirm, the rate of replacement declined to six percent, a statistically significant change.

**Table 5: Placement Changes in the 15 days Following Release from Detention Before and After Project Confirm**

	<i>Before Project Confirm</i> (N=245)		<i>After Project Confirm</i> (N=195)	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Maintained Placement	218	89%	184	94%
Changed Placement	27	11%	11	6%

Note: the change from 11% to 6% is statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$

The reduction in placement transfers occurred almost exclusively among youth who spent at least three days in detention, the length of time required to pass before youth can lose their congregate care placements (see Table 6). Both before and after Project Confirm, seven percent of youth released within two days experienced a placement transfer, indicating no program effect on this population. In contrast, while 15 percent of youth who spent three or more days in detention experienced a placement transfer before Project Confirm, only four percent of these same youth were transferred after the program, a statistically significant decline.

**Table 6: Placement Changes in the 15 days Following Release from Detention Before and After Project Confirm by Time Spent in Detention**

<i>Time in Detention</i>	<i>Before Project Confirm</i>		<i>After Project Confirm</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
3 days or more*	17	15%	3	4%
2 days or fewer	10	7%	8	7%

\* Difference in placement transfers before to after Project Confirm is statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$ .  
Note: Youth placed at correctional facilities operated by OCFS are excluded from this analysis because they are not able to experience a transfer soon after release.

The number of juveniles transferred in each of these groups is small—ranging from a low of three to a high of 27—so the analysis should be viewed with caution. We cannot say with a high degree of confidence what the true relationship is between Project Confirm and transfers following detention. Our analysis based on these small numbers, however, suggests that the replacement rate declined for all juveniles, and in particular, for those with longer stays in detention, with the introduction of Project Confirm

## Discussion

Our evaluation shows that Project Confirm produced a moderate impact on two of its primary goals, those of reducing disparities in detention and replacement rates among foster children. We also found that Project Confirm reduced the foster care bias for some groups of juveniles and increased it for others. We explain these unexpected findings by examining more closely decisions to detain juveniles in delinquency proceedings and transfer foster teens to new placements.

### The Importance of Unauthorized Absences from Foster Care

The foster care bias—the disparity in detention rates between foster and nonfoster youth in similar circumstances—declined modestly, but was not eliminated with the introduction of Project Confirm. Examining the program’s impact separately for juveniles with minor and more serious records reveals why the overall impact was modest. Project Confirm *eliminated* the bias for youth facing low-level charges (less than a C-felony) and with no prior detention history. In contrast, the program may have created or increased the bias for youth facing higher-level charges, a warrant, or with a prior detention history. What explains the increase in the bias in these cases? Answering this question provides a more comprehensive understanding of the foster care bias, what Project Confirm does, and the limits of the program’s intervention.

Project Confirm intervenes in the juvenile justice process in two primary ways: by ensuring the presence of a responsible adult to take custody in the event of release, and by providing additional information that might not otherwise reach court officials.<sup>19</sup> Having a release resource unambiguously overcomes one obstacle to release—*not* having a release resource is one reason court officials may detain juveniles. Providing more information, however, may increase or decrease the chances of release, depending on the facts made available. Indeed, given that court officials look for signs that an offender poses a risk of flight or danger to the community, knowing a youth’s full history may increase the chances of exposing information that heightens such fears. One such piece of information is the juveniles’ history of running away from their homes, or for foster children, a record of unauthorized absences from foster care—what the child welfare agency calls absent without leave (AWOL) events. At least one study has revealed the impact of runaways on detention decisions among youth not in foster care, and although no research exists on effect of AWOLs, Project Confirm staff report that many court officials detain juveniles with even one previous AWOL.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> The term “court officials” used here refers primarily to the Corporation Counsel attorney (the Family Court equivalent of a prosecutor) and the judge. In New York, Corporation Counsel often plays the key role in determining whether a child is detained or released.

<sup>20</sup> Helen Sumner, *Locking Them Up, A Study of Initial Juvenile Detention Decisions in Selected California Counties* (National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 1970).

AWOL events may play only a small role in cases involving misdemeanor or minor felony offenders with no prior record. Aside from the lack of a release resource, there are few reasons for court officials to detain juveniles with minor records, and the expense of detention facilities provides a further disincentive for their use. Although juveniles facing low-level charges may have an AWOL history, prosecutors may be less likely to request such information than they are in more serious cases. Therefore, ensuring that a release resource is present in court should all but guarantee equal treatment between foster and nonfoster teens, even for foster juveniles with AWOL records. Following this logic, Project Confirm should and does have a strong impact on reducing the bias among youth with no prior detentions facing minor charges.

In contrast, the presence of a release resource for youth charged with more serious offenses or with a prior record, while a necessary pre-condition for release, may not be sufficient. In such cases, the juveniles' school and home lives may weigh more heavily in prosecutors' determination of the risk of further offending or failure to appear. An AWOL record is almost certain to be revealed in these cases, and to be interpreted as a sign that the juvenile will not show up to the next court hearing.

AWOL records reveal why a foster care bias could not be completely eliminated by simply ensuring that caseworkers came to court. But what could explain the apparent increase in the bias for the more serious offenders with the introduction of Project Confirm? In fact, the analysis showed that no bias existed before the program for this group but that one was created after the program began. Through conversations with program staff, we identified two ways that the program may have increased detention for foster juveniles facing more serious charges: by changing *who* appeared in court, and by increasing prosecutors' knowledge of the kinds of information that could influence judicial decisions to detain youth in foster care.

Before Project Confirm, when someone showed up for foster juveniles in delinquency cases, it was often a group home child care worker, foster parent, or biological relative. Because these individuals are less likely to know about the youth's runaway history, the information was rarely revealed to court officials. Caseworkers, on the other hand, are required to have extensive knowledge of a child's foster care history, including their runaway records. Project Confirm may have increased the likelihood that court officials learn of AWOL events by getting well-informed caseworkers to court instead of or in addition to the other adults that sporadically appeared in court prior to the program.

A second possibility is that prosecuting attorneys are now more likely to ask about a juvenile's AWOL history when determining whether a juvenile should be detained. While some prosecutors may have used AWOL records as indication of risk prior to Project Confirm, others might not have requested AWOL information until Project Confirm began to spread awareness about the foster care population. It is possible that some prosecutors now request AWOL information instantly upon learning of a juvenile's

foster care status and base their decisions largely upon the teen's history of unauthorized absences.

While we cannot know for certain whether AWOL records explain most of the remaining foster care bias, we can attempt to uncover their importance by removing juveniles with AWOL records from our analysis and examining the foster care bias that remains. When we do this, the foster care bias in more serious cases does not exist after Project Confirm, suggesting that the existing bias is largely explained by changes in information about AWOL records. Bringing caseworkers to court for juveniles facing high charges with prior records, but no AWOL history, completely equalizes their risk of detention relative to similar youth not in foster care.

In short, by improving the quality of information made available to the court, Project Confirm may have increased the disparity in detention between foster and nonfoster youth charged with higher level offenses or with prior detentions. Though this change is contrary to what Project Confirm expected to accomplish, the program does not consider this outcome a program failure. Project Confirm seeks to reduce disparities in detention and does not advocate for the release of all foster youth. Instead, the program works to ensure that the juvenile justice system treats foster youth in the same fashion as their nonfoster peers. In essence, Project Confirm appears to have increased what court officials believe is necessary detention for one particular group of foster juveniles.

An important question arises from this analysis: Are teens with AWOL records less likely to appear in court or more likely to reoffend? We have no evidence that juveniles who AWOL from their foster care placements do not show up to court. In fact, we know very little about this population, except anecdotally that they often go home to visit their parents, siblings, and other relatives, and sometimes because they feel unsafe in their foster placements.<sup>21</sup> Further research on youth who AWOL could attempt to answer questions such as, why they leave, where they go, and whether they are at an increased risk of failing to show up in court on delinquency cases. In the meantime, court officials could request more contextual information on AWOL cases (e.g. whether the teen was simply overstaying a home visit or had runaway to live on the streets) to better understand the level of risk associated with an AWOL event.

### Differences in Program Impact by Gender, Race, and Court County

Our analysis also reveals that the foster care bias and Project Confirm's impact varied substantially according to race, gender, and court county. Specifically, before Project Confirm, girls faced a very large foster care bias that the program was unable to eliminate, while there was no such bias among boys. Additionally, the program eliminated the large foster care bias among Hispanics, but created a bias that did not exist among African-Americans. Finally, the program had varying effects by court county,

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<sup>21</sup> Nina Biehal and Jim Wade, "Taking a Chance?: The Risks Associated with Going Missing from Substitute Care," *Child Abuse Review* 8, no. 6 (1999): 366-376.

most notably a large reduction in the foster care bias in counties with high biases to begin with and no change in counties with no such biases. What explains these differences and how should they be interpreted?

We discovered a relatively large foster care bias among girls prior to Project Confirm, most of which can be explained by the high rates of AWOL among foster girls. In our sample, 58 percent of the girls had a prior AWOL versus 43 percent of boys. These AWOL differences also explain why Project Confirm was unable to remove the bias against females in foster care. Although not shown in the analyses above, we conducted further analysis of the female population and found that the bias was eliminated among girls in less serious cases, but not so among more serious cases, we suspect because of the high rates of AWOL among girls in these cases. Some researchers suggests that girls in the general juvenile population are referred to the juvenile justice system for running away more often than boys and treated more harshly for running away from home by the court.<sup>22</sup> While our research found a higher likelihood of runaways among girls in the foster care population, we did not find support for the theory that judges treat girls who have AWOLs differently than boys with the same records (this analysis not shown above).<sup>23</sup> However, the number of people included in this analysis may have been too small to detect statistically significant effects

These high rates of detention among foster girls explain why of the entire population of girls who entered detention between 1994 and 1999 in New York City, over 20 percent were in foster care compared to 10 percent of all boys in each year. As we explore the female offender population further, we should pay closer attention to the fact that many of them are already under the care of our human service systems, but that they continue to show higher rates of running away, which reflect poorly on them in juvenile justice proceedings. While concern for girls who runaway is warranted, detention facilities are unlikely to provide the level of treatment that they need.

The high level of bias and Project Confirm's relatively large effect on the bias for Hispanic foster youth suggests that having a caseworker present for this population is especially important. Unlike females, the bias pre-program bias against Hispanics in foster care could not be explained by higher rates of AWOL. Were this the case, the program would not have been able to eliminate the bias as it did. Instead, Hispanics as a group may have had language barriers that limited communication with court officials, and some Hispanic subgroups may come from cultures that have negative experiences with law enforcement agencies that may further limit communication. This difficulty may have been exacerbated when Hispanic foster youth had foster parents, relatives, and other potential release resources with limited English language skills. Therefore, having a

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<sup>22</sup> see, for example, Meda Chesney-Lind, "Challenging Girls' Invisibility in Juvenile Court," *The Annals of the American Academy* 564 (1999): 185-202.

<sup>23</sup> We ran a separate model of detention among foster children only and found no interaction between being a girl and having an AWOL record on the likelihood of detention.

caseworker in court who can serve as an interpreter of both the language and the process appears to have made a substantial difference for this subgroup.

We have no equivalent explanation for the increase in the foster care bias among Black youth. The AWOL rates among black foster youth did not increase from before to after Project Confirm, so we can not attribute the bias to such patterns. It is possible, however, that caseworkers shared other information about the youth that court officials perceived put them at risk of further offending or failure to appear in court, such as truancy from school or substance abuse. Without data on these behaviors among foster youth of different races, we cannot be certain that this explains the development of a foster care bias among black youth with the introduction of the program

The foster care biases ranged from negative numbers to almost 20 percentage points according to the county of arrest. Since the AWOL rates of teens from these different counties do not vary substantially, we can only assume that the varying court cultures contributed to differential detention rates Project Confirm. These differences appeared to have evened out with the introduction of the program. In general, counties that used detention less often, and that started out with a low or non-existent foster care bias prior to Project Confirm, saw no change in the foster care bias following the program's introduction. The opposite effect occurred in counties with high detention rates and a strong foster care biases prior to Project Confirm. By providing similar information and a release resource for every foster child, Project Confirm may have standardized the processing of detention decisions across counties, thereby reducing the impact of individual county court cultures. Nonetheless, substantial differences in detention rates and foster care biases still exist across county boundaries, suggesting that these jurisdictions have different standards for detention.

### Placement Stability

Relatively few juveniles experience placement transfers in the 15 days following their release from detention: 27 in the period before Project Confirm and 11 in the period following the program's introduction. These low numbers suggest that detention does not trigger placement instability for most foster teens who have been arrested. The data also reveal that the introduction of Project Confirm may have helped avert placement transfers in among juveniles who were detained for three or more days, but no among those who were released from detention within two days.

Why did the rate remain the same for those who were initially released? It is possible that before Project Confirm, court officials released some foster youth to their biological parents, kin, neighbors, and in some situations, caseworkers. These adults could have returned the teens to their original placement, preventing any replacements due to extended absences. Another possibility is that the replacements for this population were and still are due to reasons unrelated to their detention, such as an irresolvable conflict with a peer or lack of appropriate services in a placement. If transfers typically occur for

these types of reasons, Project Confirm would have no effect on changing the replacement rate.

The drop in replacements among those initially detained suggests that Project Confirm may have averted unnecessary transfers for this group. Before Project Confirm, some caseworkers might not have known that one of the teens in their caseload had entered detention, and instead thought they had gone AWOL. In AWOL cases, congregate care placements typically hold beds for only three days before accepting a new foster youth. Therefore, a youth who was detained for more than three days without a caseworker's knowledge was highly likely to experience a transfer upon release.

Now that caseworkers are informed when their foster children are detained, they can plan for children's eventual release and prevent unnecessary transfers. In fact, when a caseworker is informed, staying in detention for three or more days might actually *improve* a youth's chances of maintaining a placement because of a "cooling off" effect. In other words, foster parents who refuse to accept a youth back in their home immediately following an arrest may reconsider after three or more days without the youth. Congregate care staff may feel the same way, especially if staff members initiated the arrest to punish the youth or to assert their authority. This may contribute to the drop in placement transfers among the detained youth. This explanation requires caseworkers to actively plan for a youth's return from detention, and this type of planning does not happen automatically. Project Confirm's efforts to educate caseworkers regarding their responsibilities to foster youth involved in the juvenile justice system likely increased planning activity on the part of caseworkers, contributing to the reduction in transfers.

## Conclusion

Our evaluation suggests that Project Confirm reduced the likelihood that foster youth were detained because they lacked a release resource, and thus improved fairness and promoted equal treatment under the law. Still, the analysis shows that a foster care bias remains. Despite Project Confirm's efforts, foster youth continue to enter detention at disproportionate rates, and court officials still detain many foster youth at higher rates than their nonfoster peers arrested on similar charges.

Project Confirm's successful work with low-level offenders shows that this state of affairs is not pre-ordained. Our preliminary analyses suggests that the work that remains centers less on providing new services, and more on shaping interpretations of AWOL records among court officials and studying the likelihood that teens who AWOL will fail to appear in court or commit crimes in the interim.

Project Confirm also reduced the number of foster care replacements, contributing to increased placement stability for foster youth involved in the juvenile justice system. This decrease occurred primarily among youth who were actually detained, indicating that the program affects this outcome more by getting foster care caseworkers involved in juveniles' delinquency cases early on, than by ensuring their presence in court.



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## Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

**ACS:** Administration for Children's Services, New York City's child welfare agency.

**Adjusted probability:** The probability of an individual from a certain group experiencing an event, controlling for the influence of other factors.

**AWOL (absent without leave):** Unauthorized absence from a foster care placement for 24 hours or more.

**Child care worker:** The person who cares for the foster children, such as the foster parent or group home counselor.

**Child welfare representative:** Any person from the child welfare agency (caseworker, child care worker, or foster parent, for example) with legal responsibility to attend hearings and the authority to accept custody of children released by the court.

**Case manager:** An ACS staff member responsible for determining and approving eligibility and authorizing the provision of services, as they comply with ACS standards. The case manager also reviews and approves the service plan, monitors the casework contacts, and ensures integration of service plans in cases with multiple planners.

**Case planner (primary planner):** An ACS or contract agency staff member assigned to carry out planning functions for the entire family unit. The primary planner has the responsibility to assess the needs of the family, plan and coordinate services, and prepare the single, comprehensive family-focused Uniform Case Report, and in foster care cases, to arrange formalized Service Plan Review conferences.

**Corporation Counsel:** Corporation Counsel is the name used for New York City's attorneys. In delinquency cases, Corporation Counsel is the equivalent of a prosecutor in criminal court.

**Court-ordered supervision cases:** Cases monitored by ACS for the Family Court due to allegations of maltreatment

**Detention:** The equivalent of juvenile jail, usually a secure facility that houses youth awaiting trials. Some non-secure detention facilities exist, but they are smaller and less frequently used than their secure counterparts.

**DJJ:** New York City Department of Juvenile Justice. DJJ operates all juvenile detention facilities in New York City.

**DJJ intake worker:** The DJJ worker who interviews a youth when they first enter detention.

**Foster care bias:** The discrepancy in detention rates between foster and nonfoster youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

**Juvenile delinquent (JD):** In New York State, a young person, ages 7 through 15, charged with committing an act that if committed by an adult would be considered a crime. Juvenile delinquency cases are heard in Family Court

**Juvenile offender (JO):** In New York State, a young person, ages 13, 14, or 15, charged with committing one of a list of 15 specified felonies. Juvenile offender cases are heard in adult court.

**OCFS:** The New York State Office of Children and Family Services. OCFS oversees “juvenile prisons,” secure facilities for youth sentenced on a juvenile delinquency charges.

**PINS:** Person in need of supervision, a child under 16 and exhibiting behavior problems whose parent is having a difficult time and chooses to bring the child to court, through probation, and requests that a PINS petition be filed. PINS is New York State’s name for a status offender.

**Police admit:** Youth arrested after court is closed, and who are admitted to detention by the police to await their initial hearing.

**PPS:** Pre-placement services. Formerly known as Emergency Children’s Services, or ECS, pre-placement services is a facility used for emergency placements.

**Status offense:** An act committed by a young person that would *not* be criminal if committed by an adult, but which may require intervention by government. Status offenses usually involve truancy, running away, and/or refusing to obey a parent. In New York State, status offenders are called PINS.

**Trial discharge cases:** Foster youth that return to their parents on a trial basis.

## Appendix B: Matching Child Welfare and Juvenile Detention Records

The DJJ and ACS data systems do not share a common identifier, such as social security number. Therefore, in order to locate a youth listed in both databases, the data match must use several items of identifying information, including name, date of birth, and gender. Human error in entering these data—name misspellings and incorrect dates—require flexible and comprehensive searching techniques to maximize the number of matches. Our technique adjusts the key matching criteria, name and date of birth, to ensure the highest match rate possible.

We used a number of combinations of name, date of birth, and gender in our match. We first matched the first name, last name, gender, and date of birth to identify the “exact” matches. We then used various combinations of name and date of birth to generate a list of “near” matches (see Table B1). For each of the five matching criteria after full name, gender, and date of birth, we shortened the number of characters in the first and last name and/or we required only two out of the three components of birth date (month, day, and year) to match. For example, match criteria number five is the first four characters of the first name and the first four characters of the last name and only two out of the three components of the birth date. With each pass of the data, we made the matching criteria less stringent to identify as many additional youth as possible.

Most of the records that matched on anything less than the full name, date of birth, and gender required further examination. In several instances, we determined that the ACS and DJJ child matched because the first and last name were unusual, or the birth year was exactly ten years off, which is a common error in entering dates. We also discovered a few duplicate records—cases where the ACS youth matched more than one DJJ record, and vice versa. In these cases, we looked for common date errors and unique names to determine the correct match.

Columns two through four in Table B1 list the number of foster youth (after we examined the near matches and duplicate records) located in the DJJ system in each of the three years using the six matching criteria. For example, we located 169 youth using match criteria three—first four characters of the first and last name, gender, and the full date of birth. Approximately 70 percent of the 1,850 youth matched exactly (match criteria one), and employing the five other combinations produced the remaining 30 percent. Match criteria two and three yielded the highest number of matches after full name, gender, and date of birth, while the remaining three criteria yielded much smaller numbers of matches. Readers should note that the final numbers in these tables do not match the numbers used in our analytic sample because we excluded several groups from the analyses. In addition, figures for 1999 include data only through September.

**Table B1: Match Criteria and Results**

<i>Match Criteria</i>	<i>Year of Admission</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999<sup>a</sup></i>	
1. Full name, gender, and date of birth	520	439	332	1,291
2. Full name, gender, and two out of three components of date of birth	92	77	57	226
3. Last name (1 <sup>st</sup> four characters), first name (1 <sup>st</sup> four characters), gender, and date of birth	72	46	51	169
4. Last name (1 <sup>st</sup> four characters), gender, and date of birth	35	27	27	89
5. Last name (1 <sup>st</sup> four characters), gender, and two out of three components of date of birth	16	17	10	43
6. First name (1 <sup>st</sup> four characters), gender, and date of birth	7	16	9	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>1,850</b>

<sup>a</sup> Figures for 1999 only include data through September.

## Appendix C: Assessing Pre-Placement Services Data Quality

As mentioned in the text, we decided against reporting Pre-Placement Services (PPS) data in our evaluation due to data quality concerns. We based this decision on changes in PPS data collection procedures that coincided with the launch of Project Confirm, and on defects in the electronic database and handwritten logs maintained by PPS.

### Data collections methods

Prior to April 1998, ACS maintained unbound handwritten logs containing basic information on the thousands of youth who entered PPS each year. After April 1998, just two months before Project Confirm's launch, PPS started recording intakes in an MS-Access database. PPS staff assert that the new system is too slow to keep up with the volume of youth, and the introduction of computers into PPS became a union-management issue. Under these conditions, it is possible that changes in data collection methods distorted the data.

### Defects in the data and data collection

To generate information on PPS use before April 1998, Vera staff identified the dates that foster juveniles left detention, and examined the handwritten logs to see whether they entered PPS that day or the following day. While many of the logs contained legible handwriting and appeared to be kept in chronological order, the possibility of missing log sheets, chronologically misfiled log sheets, or Vera staff overlooking or being unable to decipher names remained a problem.

There were just as many problems with the automated data used to record children who entered PPS after April 1998. For youth released from detention after 1998, we conducted an automated data match on various combinations of name and date of birth. Unfortunately, the database came to us with several errors, including incomplete identifiers, misspelled names, and unstandardized values in many data fields. The data match used various combinations of name and date of birth, but the poor quality of the data reduced our confidence that we successfully identified all PPS users who came from detention. This concern was verified when we compared the results of our match to Project Confirm records on PPS use and found that we had not identified several PPS users in our match that Project Confirm had identified by calling the facility. Moreover, discussions with senior managers and frontline staff at PPS revealed extensive problems in entering and retrieving data that diminished our confidence in their reliability and validity.

## Appendix D: Model, Variables, and Limitations

## Statistical Model

We created two identical logistic regression models to estimate the program's effect on detention. Model 1 included records for children processed through the juvenile detention system prior to Project Confirm (January 1997 to June 1998) and Model 2 included records for children who entered the juvenile justice system following the launch of Project Confirm to the most recent date for which data were available (July 1998 to September 1999). Both models took the following form:  $\ln(P/(1-P)) = a + b_1F + b_2X + \varepsilon$ , where P= probability of being detained, F= foster care status (1=foster care, 0=nonfoster care), X represented all other non-redundant covariates, and  $\varepsilon$  the error term.

The impact of Project Confirm was determined by comparing the coefficient on foster care status ( $b_1$ ) in Model 1 and Model 2. If a foster care bias existed, we expected to see the coefficient ( $b_1$ ) for the foster care status variable in Model 1 to be positive, substantial in magnitude, and statistically significant. If Project Confirm reduced the bias, Model 2 should show a decline in magnitude and a possible loss of statistical significance in  $b_1$ . This would indicate that being in foster care did not affect the likelihood of detention following Project Confirm's launch.

A simpler test of the program's effect could be achieved in one model of the following form:  $\ln(P/(1-P)) = a + b_1F + b_2T + b_3FT + b_4X + \varepsilon$ , where P, F, and X reflect the same variables described above, T= time of detention (1=after Project Confirm; 0= before Project Confirm), and FT represents the interaction term between F and T (youth who received program services). In this model, foster youth who received Project Confirm services are considered a subgroup of the population (where T=1, F=1, and FT=1) and the impact of the program is determined through a linear combination of  $b_1$ ,  $b_2$ , and  $b_3$ . If foster youth have higher detention rates than nonfoster youth prior to the program, we expect  $b_1$  to be positive, substantial in magnitude, and statistically significant. Project Confirm's impact on foster youth is found in the interaction of the F and T: if Project Confirm reduced the foster care bias (that is the positive effect of  $b_1$ ),  $b_3$  should be negative. We ran these simpler models but in many cases found that FT was too strongly correlated with F or T (even when we centered around the grand mean) or the standard error on FT was too large to detect statistically significant coefficients that appeared large in magnitude.

We ran diagnostic procedures for all regression models and omitted influential observations where appropriate. We inform the reader when such cases have been removed.

## Variables

The independent variables in our analysis included demographic characteristics and factors related to juvenile delinquency (see Table D1).



**Table D1: Independent Variables**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Variables</i>
Variable to capture program effect	in foster care at time of arrest (1=yes, 0=no)
Demographic characteristics	age (1=greater than 12 years old, 0=12 or younger) female (1=female, 0=male) race (dummy variables for African-American, Hispanic, and other)
Juvenile justice factors	charge level (dummy variables for below C-felony, C-felony or above, and warrant from Family Court) borough of arrest (dummy variables for Brooklyn, Bronx, New York, Queens, and Staten Island) admitted to detention before current arrest (1=yes, 0=no)

### Methodological Limitations

Because Project Confirm offered services citywide very early in its development, no contemporaneous control group exists. This weakness reduces our confidence in attributing changes in detention rates solely to Project Confirm. While we did not identify any policy changes that may have affected foster and nonfoster youth in different ways during the period studied, it is possible that policy or demographic changes may have occurred following Project Confirm’s launch. We minimized this possibility by restricting our pre-Project Confirm group to youth detained within the year and a half prior to the program, although we had information on youth who were detained several years prior.

As in all studies, we may also have omitted variables that influence detention decisions and consequently biased our estimates. These include school attendance, arrest history, and other factors that were not recorded in the available databases.<sup>24</sup> We are also missing a key intervening variable—whether an adult showed up in court, and if so, what role the adult played in the detention decision.

Additionally, this report relies exclusively on quantitative data and contains no observational or qualitative information about Project Confirm or the detention process.

<sup>24</sup> Bortner, *Inside Juvenile Court*; Cohen and Kluegel, *The Detention Decision*; Helen Sumner, *Locking Them Up*.

Indeed, this report does not assess a number of “process” effects that Project Confirm appears to have caused, such as improving communication between agencies, increasing the amount of information available to court officials, and elevating awareness of child welfare issues among staff in the juvenile justice system (and vice versa). We addressed many of these issues in our implementation evaluation, which included the results of court observations, interviews with Project Confirm staff, surveys of front-line government workers, and in-depth interviews with mid-level managers in the partnering government agencies.

## Appendix E: Variable Correlations

The correlations among all variables in the model indicate whether there is a relationship between two variables, prior to controlling for the influence of any other factors. Most of the correlations shown in Table E1 column 1 do not exceed 0.20 (correlations of the dependent variable—detained by the court—with the independent variables). The detained variable correlated most negatively with having no previous detentions (-0.26) and most positively with warrant status (0.16). In other words, a child without prior detentions is less likely to be detained than one with a detention record (negative correlation), and a child with a warrant is more likely to be detained than one without a warrant (positive correlation). Again, these simple correlations are likely to change in the regression models, where other factors are introduced.

**Table E1: Correlation Matrix of Dependent and Independent Variables**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Detained by court	1.00															
2. In foster care	0.04	1.00														
3. In treatment group	0.02	0.62	1.00													
4. Female	-0.05	0.09	0.08	1.00												
5. Older than 12 years	0.04	0.01	0.01	-0.04	1.00											
6. Black	-0.03	0.04	0.02	0.01	-0.04	1.00										
7. Hispanic	0.04	-0.01	0.00	-0.02	0.04	-0.88	1.00									
8. Bronx	0.06	-0.01	0.01	-0.04	0.03	-0.14	0.18	-0.04								
9. New York	0.12	-0.01	-0.03	0.02	0.00	-0.01	0.02	0.00	1.00							
10. Queens	0.03	0.03	0.01	-0.01	-0.04	0.00	-0.05	0.09	-0.24	1.00						
11. Staten Island	-0.04	0.04	0.02	0.02	-0.01	-0.02	-0.03	-0.02	-0.14	-0.12	1.00					
12. Brooklyn	-0.17	-0.03	-0.01	0.02	0.01	0.15	-0.14	-0.02	-0.35	-0.29	-0.17	1.00				
13. Below C Felony	-0.17	0.03	0.02	0.14	0.01	-0.02	-0.02	0.00	-0.03	0.02	0.07	0.04	1.00			
14. Above CF	0.09	-0.02	-0.02	-0.15	-0.03	0.05	-0.01	-0.02	0.05	-0.03	-0.06	-0.04	-0.87	1.00		
15. Warrant	0.16	-0.01	-0.01	0.02	0.03	-0.05	0.05	0.03	-0.04	0.03	-0.02	0.00	-0.30	-0.21	1.00	
16. Never detained before	-0.26	-0.02	-0.01	0.10	-0.08	-0.03	0.00	0.05	0.04	-0.01	-0.04	-0.01	0.07	0.03	-0.20	1.00

## Appendix F: Regression Results

The following table shows the results of our logistic regression analyses for the following groups of cases: all cases; C-felony or below and no prior detentions; above C-felony or warrant and/or prior detentions; males; females; African-Americans; Hispanics; Brooklyn; Bronx, Manhattan; Queens; and Staten Island.

**Table F1: All Cases, Coefficients (Standard Errors) from Logistic Regression of Detention**

	<i>Before Project</i>		<i>After Project</i>	
	<i>Confirm</i>		<i>Confirm</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>
In foster care	0.3015*	0.1282	0.2522 <sup>+</sup>	0.1460
Never detained before	-1.4348***	0.1059	-1.3026***	0.1230
Below C-Felony	-0.6532***	0.0854	-0.6059***	0.0997
Female	-0.0801	0.1102	0.00225	0.1267
Age 12 or Older	0.2793	0.1865	-0.0138	0.2236
African-American	-0.0618	0.0897	-0.1305	0.1032
Bronx	0.7492***	0.1192	0.8709***	0.1310
New York	1.2258***	0.1202	0.9396***	0.1408
Queens	0.9337***	0.1309	0.5094***	0.1435
Staten Island	0.2717	0.1766	0.0748	0.2376
N	2,665		1,946	
Intercept	0.5261		0.9763	
Chi-Square	406.492		245.2366	
Pseudo R2	.1886		0.1579	

+ p<0.10 \* p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001

The references groups in this analysis include juveniles not in foster care, with prior detentions, facing C-felony or above or warrant charges, males, below 12 years old, nonblacks, and detained in Brooklyn. Due to high rates of collinearity, racial groups and charge levels could not be distinguished further than what was done here.

**Table F2: C-Felony or Below and No Prior Detention Cases, Coefficients (Standard Errors) from Logistic Regression of Detention**

	<i>Before Project</i>		<i>After Project</i>	
	<i>Confirm</i>		<i>Confirm</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>
In foster care	0.4268*	0.1877	-0.1019	0.2148
Female	-0.1174	0.1488	0.0370	0.1679
Age 12 or Older	0.2545	0.2767	-0.2213	0.3318
African-American	-0.4743 <sup>+</sup>	0.2452	0.2491	0.2881
Bronx	0.8638***	0.1955	1.2172***	0.1966
New York	1.4025***	0.1850	1.1933***	0.2121
Queens	0.9842***	0.2072	0.7016**	0.2170
Staten Island	0.3993	0.2744	0.3259	0.3517
N	1138		882	
Intercept	-1.2402		-1.2211	
Chi-Square	78.0273		58.5443	
Pseudo R2	0.0915		0.0873	

+ p<0.10 \* p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001

The references groups in this analysis include juveniles not in foster care, males, below 12 years old, nonblacks, and detained in Brooklyn.

**Table F3: Above C-Felony or Warrant and/or Prior Detention Cases, Coefficients (Standard Errors) from Logistic Regression of Detention**

	<i>Before Project</i>		<i>After Project</i>	
	<i>Confirm</i>		<i>Confirm</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>
In foster care	0.2421	0.1669	0.5541**	0.2052
Female	-0.1104	0.1602	-0.0613	0.1908
Age 12 or Older	0.4925*	0.2469	0.4701	0.2925
African-American	0.00857	0.1150	-0.2202	0.1392
Bronx	0.6372***	0.1452	0.4943**	0.1705
New York	0.9136***	0.1520	0.6097***	0.1820
Queens	0.8194***	0.1642	0.2991	0.1901
Staten Island	0.2696	0.2213	-0.1134	0.3226
N	1546		1086	
Intercept	-0.5973		-0.1557	
Chi-Square	56.2358		29.5661	
Pseudo R2	0.0483		0.0366	

+ p<0.10 \* p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001

The references groups in this analysis include juveniles not in foster care, males, below 12 years old, nonblacks, and detained in Brooklyn.

**Table F4: Male Cases, Coefficients (Standard Errors) from Logistic Regression of Detention**

	<i>Before Project</i>		<i>After Project</i>	
	<i>Confirm</i>		<i>Confirm</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>
In foster care	0.1909	0.1463	0.1519	0.1716
Never detained before	-1.3381***	0.1121	-1.2862***	0.1320
Below C-Felony	-0.6732***	0.0925	-0.6137***	0.1086
Age 12 or Older	0.1926	0.2118	0.0283	0.2567
African-American	-0.0928	0.0989	-0.1302	0.1134
Bronx	0.7432***	0.1290	0.7224***	0.1438
New York	1.1103***	0.1335	0.7655***	0.1546
Queens	0.8754***	0.1432	0.3729*	0.1580
Staten Island	0.2604	0.1951	-0.4094	0.2797
N	2173		1586	
Intercept	0.6147		1.0605	
Chi-Square	301.6896		188.8384	
Pseudo R2	0.1728		0.1498	

+ p<0.10 \* p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001

The references groups in this analysis include juveniles not in foster care, with prior detentions, facing C-felony or above or warrant charges, below 12 years old, nonblacks, and detained in Brooklyn.

**Table F5: Female Cases, Coefficients (Standard Errors) from Logistic Regression of Detention**

	<i>Before Project</i>		<i>After Project</i>	
	<i>Confirm</i>		<i>Confirm</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>
In foster care	0.7115**	0.2717	0.4652	0.2876
Never detained before	-2.2143***	0.3386	-1.5008***	0.3555
Below C-Felony	-0.5499*	0.2261	-0.6256*	0.2607
Age 12 or Older	0.6723	0.4199	-0.1538	0.4775
African-American	0.0879	0.2191	-0.1160	0.2588
Bronx	0.7195*	0.3215	1.5779***	0.3314
New York	1.7353***	0.2852	1.7361***	0.3551
Queens	1.2986***	0.3331	1.1421**	0.3551
Staten Island	0.2814	0.4278	1.6860***	0.5001
N	492		360	
Intercept	0.3124		0.6752	
Chi-Square	111.2772		71.9176	
Pseudo R2	0.2718		0.2417	

+ p<0.10 \* p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001

The references groups in this analysis include juveniles not in foster care, with prior detentions, facing C-felony or above or warrant charges, below 12 years old, nonblacks, and detained in Brooklyn.

**Table F6: African American Cases, Coefficients (Standard Errors) from Logistic Regression of Detention**

	<i>Before Project</i>		<i>After Project</i>	
	<i>Confirm</i>		<i>Confirm</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>
In foster care	0.1335	0.1531	0.3430 <sup>+</sup>	0.1779
Never detained before	-1.4410***	0.1289	-1.3994***	0.1514
Below C-Felony	-0.6560***	0.1064	-0.4912***	0.1231
Female	0.00372	0.1392	-0.0680	0.1558
Age 12 or Older	0.3724 <sup>+</sup>	0.2217	0.2375	0.2588
Bronx	0.8504***	0.1520	0.8055***	0.1605
New York	1.3690***	0.1453	0.8251***	0.1695
Queens	0.9901***	0.1553	0.5967***	0.1793
Staten Island	0.5039*	0.2153	0.2306	0.3099
N	1734		1266	
Intercept	0.3091		0.6410	
Chi-Square	279.7021		159.5603	
Pseudo R2	0.1987		0.1579	

+ p<0.10 \* p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001

The references groups in this analysis include juveniles not in foster care, with prior detentions, facing C-felony or above or warrant charges, males, below 12 years old, and detained in Brooklyn.

**Table F7: Hispanic Cases, Coefficients (Standard Errors) from Logistic Regression of Detention**

	<i>Before Project</i>		<i>After Project</i>	
	<i>Confirm</i>		<i>Confirm</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>
In foster care	0.6908**	0.2512	-0.0367	0.2711
Never detained before	-1.4457***	0.1980	-0.9762***	0.2289
Below C-Felony	-0.7556***	0.1582	-0.8429***	0.1881
Female	-0.2328	0.2028	0.00630	0.2466
Age 12 or Older	0.1094	0.3843	-0.8721	0.5450
Bronx	0.4190 <sup>+</sup>	0.2182	1.1487***	0.2510
New York	0.8174***	0.2410	1.2166***	0.2787
Queens	0.3998	0.2816	0.7610**	0.2916
Staten Island	-0.1571	0.3777	0.1636	0.4717
N	789		567	
Intercept	1.0248		1.5564	
Chi-Square	118.1467		77.4411	
Pseudo R2	0.1855		0.1710	

+ p<0.10 \* p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001

The references groups in this analysis include juveniles not in foster care, with prior detentions, facing C-felony or above or warrant charges, males, below 12 years old, and detained in Brooklyn.



**Table F8: Brooklyn Cases, Coefficients (Standard Errors) from Logistic Regression of Detention**

	<i>Before Project Confirm</i>		<i>After Project Confirm</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>
In foster care	-0.1455	0.2813	0.2760	0.2813
Never detained before	-1.5592***	0.1841	-1.4211***	0.2108
Below C-Felony	-0.6090***	0.1675	-0.9071***	0.1870
Female	-0.1954	0.2291	-0.6389*	0.2492
Age 12 or Older	0.8297*	0.4164	0.3784	0.5134
African-American	-0.3612 <sup>+</sup>	0.1904	0.0399	0.2150
N	755		594	
Intercept	0.3520		0.8430	
Chi-Square	107.9645		93.1775	
Pseudo R2	0.1837		0.1968	

+ p<0.10 \* p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001

The references groups in this analysis include juveniles not in foster care, with prior detentions, facing C-felony or above or warrant charges, males, below 12 years old, and nonblack.

**Table F9: Bronx Cases, Coefficients (Standard Errors) from Logistic Regression of Detention**

	<i>Before Project Confirm</i>		<i>After Project Confirm</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>
In foster care	0.8435**	0.2793	0.2255	0.2841
Never detained before	-1.5054***	0.2135	-0.8240***	0.2474
Below C-Felony	-0.7664***	0.1723	-0.3784*	0.1900
Female	-0.3614	0.2451	0.0472	0.2528
Age 12 or Older	0.0621	0.4689	0.5149	0.4229
African-American	-0.0414	0.1705	-0.2546	0.1917
N	653		509	
Intercept	1.5697		0.8908	
Chi-Square	98.4077		22.0645	
Pseudo R2	0.1867		0.0573	

+ p<0.10 \* p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001

The references groups in this analysis include juveniles not in foster care, with prior detentions, facing C-felony or above or warrant charges, males, below 12 years old, and nonblack.

**Table F10: New York City Cases, Coefficients (Standard Errors) from Logistic Regression of Detention**

	<i>Before Project</i>		<i>After Project</i>	
	<i>Confirm</i>		<i>Confirm</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>
In foster care	0.4918 <sup>+</sup>	0.2724	0.2903	0.3592
Never detained before	-1.2444***	0.2621	-1.2231***	0.2917
Below C-Felony	-0.5343**	0.1735	-0.6307**	0.2223
Female	0.1728	0.2058	0.2545	0.2956
Age 12 or Older	-0.4171	0.4033	-0.1228	0.4686
African-American	0.1135	0.1774	-0.4224 <sup>+</sup>	0.2321
N	620		392	
Intercept	1.9832		2.1083	
Chi-Square	42.8665		31.7292	
Pseudo R2	0.0904		0.1057	

+ p<0.10 \* p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001

The references groups in this analysis include juveniles not in foster care, with prior detentions, facing C-felony or above or warrant charges, males, below 12 years old, and nonblack.

**Table F11: Queens Cases, Coefficients (Standard Errors) from Logistic Regression of Detention**

	<i>Before Project</i>		<i>After Project</i>	
	<i>Confirm</i>		<i>Confirm</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>
In foster care	0.1151	0.2779	0.1676	0.3371
Never detained before	-1.3560***	0.2696	-1.8628***	0.2989
Below C-Felony	-0.8144***	0.2063	-0.5695*	0.2425
Female	0.0973	0.2726	0.1515	0.3007
Age 12 or Older	0.6807 <sup>+</sup>	0.3808	-0.3615	0.4742
African-American	-0.1574	0.2239	0.1302	0.2350
N	441		355	
Intercept	1.1781		2.0662	
Chi-Square	51.8984		53.0144	
Pseudo R2	0.1486		0.1850	

+ p<0.10 \* p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001

The references groups in this analysis include juveniles not in foster care, with prior detentions, facing C-felony or above or warrant charges, males, below 12 years old, and nonblack.

**Table F12: Staten Island Cases, Coefficients (Standard Errors) from Logistic Regression of Detention**

	<i>Before Project</i>		<i>After Project</i>	
	<i>Confirm</i>		<i>Confirm</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>
In foster care	0.0351	0.4462	0.2636	0.5235
Never detained before	-1.3076***	0.3351	-0.8695	0.5383
Below C-Felony	-0.4608	0.3527	-0.8575 <sup>+</sup>	0.4800
Female	-0.1990	0.4126	1.3624*	0.5473
Age 12 or Older	0.0283	0.6320	--	--
African-American	0.4297	0.3387	0.2344	0.4634
N	195		95	
Intercept	0.5618		0.3071	
Chi-Square	24.3535		11.9305	
Pseudo R2	0.1581		0.1591	

+ p<0.10 \* p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 \*\*\*p<0.001

The references groups in this analysis include juveniles not in foster care, with prior detentions, facing C-felony or above or warrant charges, males, and nonblack. Age had to be dropped from the second analysis because there were too few observations in the below 12 category.