

**December 1, 2024 Intake
Snapshot Dataset
Received 12/19/24**

**A Probation Oversight Commission Analysis of
Youths' LADS Scores**

The mission of the Probation Oversight Commission (POC) is to re-imagine probation services in the County of Los Angeles to achieve accountability, transparency, and healing of the people served by and working for the Probation Department.

INTRODUCTION

The Los Angeles County Probation Department (Probation) shared an anonymized data “snapshot” with the Probation Oversight Commission containing demographic information about the youth housed at all their juvenile detention facilities on December 1, 2024. This fact sheet reports on the Los Angeles Detention Screener scores (LADS) of youths housed at the facilities on December 1, 2024.

Per Probation Directive #1229, the Los Angeles Detention Screener (LADS) is an assessment tool intended to screen youth accused of crimes prior to recommending detention or alternatives to detention.¹ The assessment tool provides an immediate opportunity for the Intake Detention Officer to engage the young person, review their detention report, and assess information available in the Probation Case Management System to evaluate risk and the probability for recidivism. Per the directive, “LADS is a 1-page assessment tool intended to screen juvenile offenders for recommendation for immediate detention or detention alternatives.”

The Judicial Council of California Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) defines assessments as “standardized questionnaire instruments used to evaluate the risks, needs, strengths, and abilities of an individual youth.”² The AOC suggests there are three main benefits to using standardized screening and assessment instruments in the juvenile justice system:

1. “It provides structure and consistency to the system’s decision-making process and helps to ensure that all youth who enter the system are treated equitably.
2. The information obtained can help to identify a youth’s needs early in the process in order to inform treatment and dispositional planning.
3. Research suggests that screening and assessment instruments that have been tested and validated are more accurate than subjective or clinical judgements in identifying a youth’s needs and level of risk.”³

The benefits of a risk assessment tool hinge on the instrument being **evidence-based**, meaning research indicates that the instrument has established measurement properties, the most important of which are validity and reliability. An instrument’s reliability refers to the stability and consistency of results on repeated trials while validity is the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure.⁴

In Los Angeles County, when a Probation Intake Officer completes the LADS, a lower score equates to lower risk, although Probation’s directive does not mandate that a youth who receives a low score be recommended for release. The youth in detention on December 1, 2024 have scores ranging from zero (0) to 13.

¹ See the policy and tool attached as Appendix A.

² Administrative Office of the Courts Briefing. [“Screenings and Assessments Used in The Juvenile Justice System: Evaluating Risks and Needs of Youth in the Juvenile Justice System.”](#) Judicial Council of California Center for Families, Children & The Courts. February 2011.

³ Id.

⁴ Id.

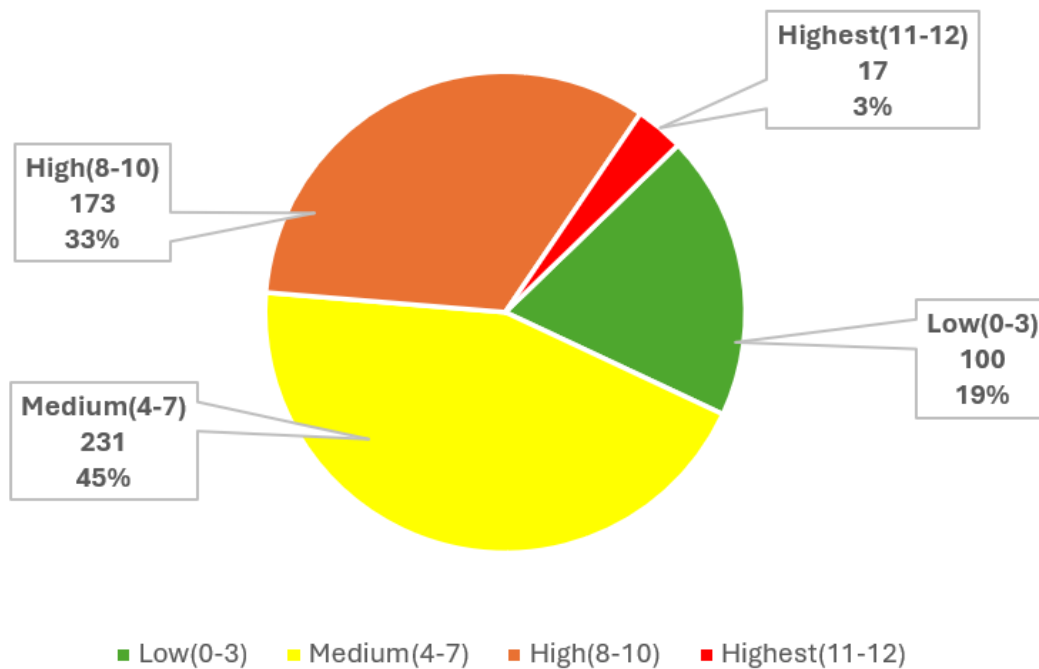
The POC created the following grouping system for the purpose of illustrating the data:

Risk	Score
Green (low)	0-3
Yellow (medium)	4-7
Orange (high)	8-10
Red (highest)	11-12

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF ALL YOUTH AT ALL FACILITIES

There were 521 youth in the dataset on December 1, 2024 and the average LADS score for the population on December 1, 2024 was six (6).

LADS Scores for All Youth
N= 521



GENDER BREAKDOWN

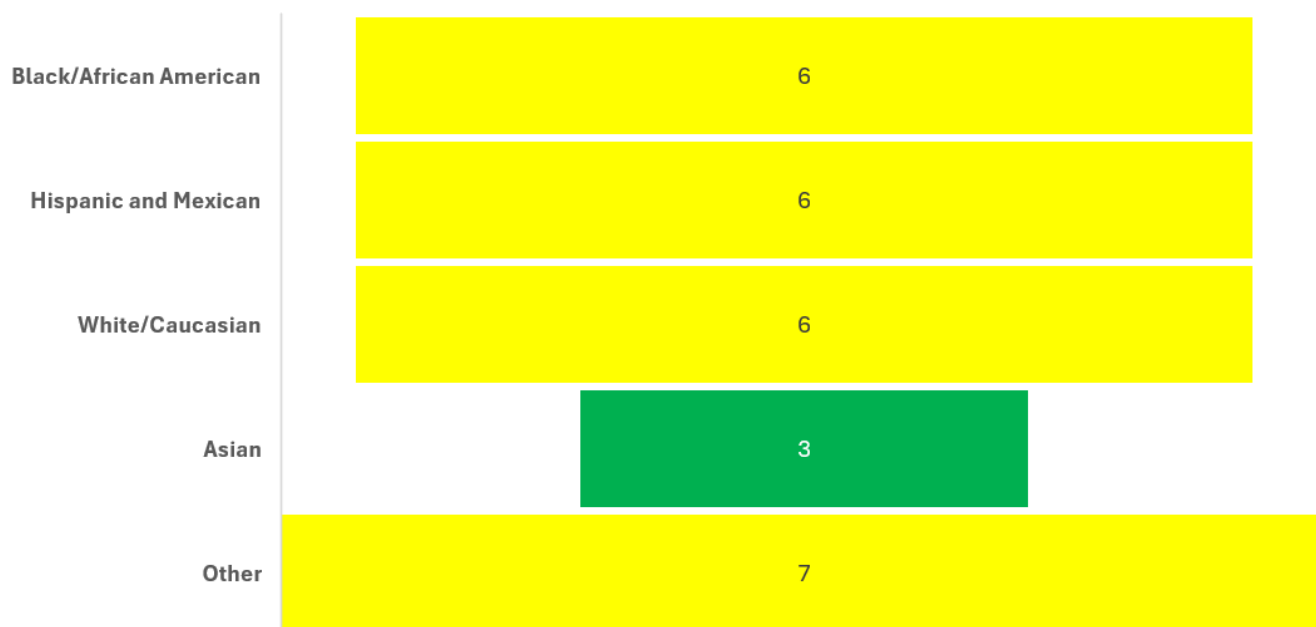
Risk	Score	Male	Female
Green (low)	0-3	92 (19%)	8 (20%)
Yellow (medium)	4-7	216 (45%)	15 (37.5%)
Orange (high)	8-10	156 (32%)	17 (42.5%)
Red (highest)	11-12	17 (4%)	0 (0%)
	Total	481	40

ETHNICITY BREAKDOWN

The following table shows which group had the highest rate high and red scores:

Rank	Ethnicity/Race	Count
1	Hispanic and Mexican ⁵	127 or 67% of the higher scores
2	Black	54 or 28% of the higher scores
3	Caucasian	5 or 3% of the higher scores
4	Other or Unknown	4 or 2% of the higher scores

Average LADS Score by Ethnicity



- “Asian” contains one youth identified as “Filipino” and one as “Other Asian”
- “Other” contains youths of “other,” “unknown,” and blank ethnicities

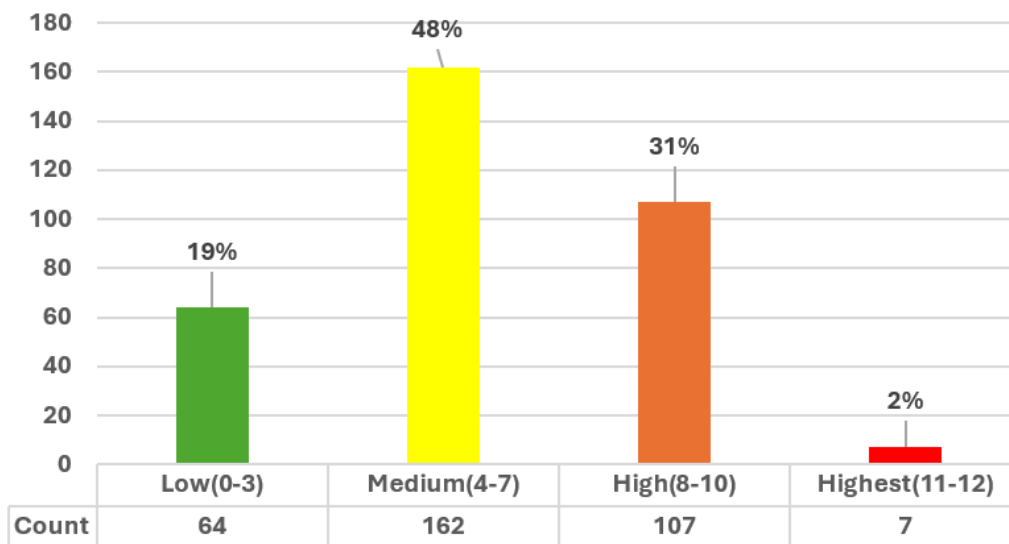
707(B) CHARGES

As shown in the general overview on the first page, 17 youth scored in the “Highest” category. Of those 17 youth, only 7 were booked on a 707(b) offense.

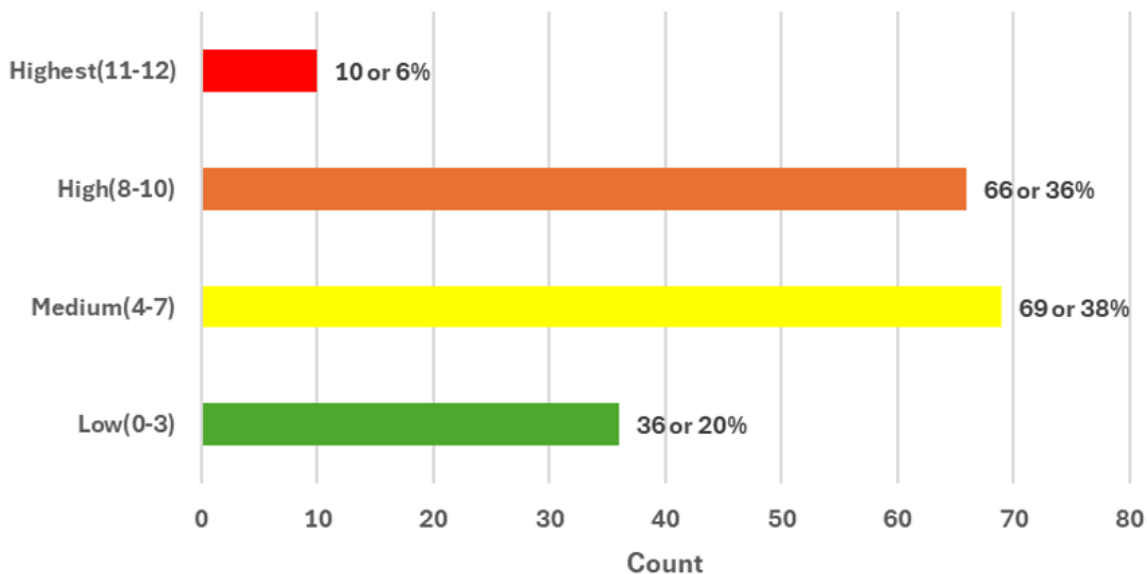
- All 7 were detained at Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall and were male youth of color
- 226 (66%) of all youth charged with a 707(b) offense had a “Low” or “Medium” LADS score.

⁵ The category “Mexican” was utilized for a short time in Probation’s population statistics. The POC discussed this with the Department and believes it has been changed to conform with prior race/ethnicity categories.

707(b) Charges by LADS score N = 340



Non-707(b) Charges by Perceived Risk N = 181



As illustrated above, 20% of the youth detained on non-707(b) charges had LADS scores between zero and three and 38% of youth in this population had scores between the four and seven. The Welfare and Institutions Code stresses that youth should only be removed from their homes when they pose a threat to public safety or their own safety. More information is needed to understand why roughly 58% of the youth with low LADS scores and detained on non-707(b) charges were detained instead of being offered less restrictive placement options.

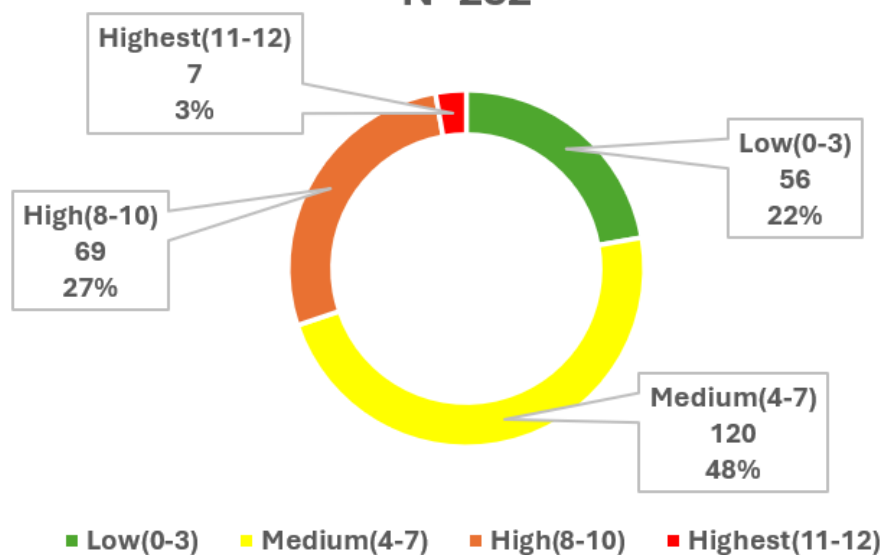
YOUTHS WITH COMPLEX NEEDS

	DCFS Involvement (N=56)	Developmental Disability (N=38)	Both (N=8)	Neither (N=419)	Only Regional Center (N= 4)
Minimum	0	0	4	0	4
Maximum	11	11	11	12	9
Average	6	7	7	6	6

Youth with child welfare involvement and those with a developmental disability are among the most vulnerable subpopulation of youth given histories of trauma and symptoms of their disability that adversely affect behavior. Based on our review, youth in these demographic categories did not have a significantly higher or lower LADS scores than other youth, with the average still being in the “Medium” category. The POC would be interested to understand how Intake Officers weigh the traumatic histories of youth during the scoring process and what, if any, allowances are made.

LOS PADRINOS JUVENILE HALL

Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall LADS Scores
N=252



GENDER BREAKDOWN

Risk	Score	Male	Female
Green (low)	0-3	50 (21%)	6 (35%)
Yellow (medium)	4-7	112 (48%)	8 (47%)
Orange (high)	8-10	66 (28%)	3 (18%)
Red (highest)	11-12	7 (3%)	0 (0%)
	Total	235	17

LADS Score Analysis

There are 36 youth at Los Padrinos with a score of “0”. Of those youth:

- 3 had a DCFS case
- 1 is listed as Developmentally Disabled and a Regional Center Client
- 4 are girls
- 21 are accused of a 707(b) offense
- 15 are not booked on a 707(b) eligible offense
 - 3 of the youth booked on a non-707(b) eligible offense are 14 years old

LENGTH OF STAY FOR YOUTH WITH A “0” LADS SCORE

Average Length of Stay	136 days or 4 months and 14 days
Median Length of Stay	67 days or 2 months and 6 days

Significant scholarly research exists supporting the use of community-based alternative placement options for pre-adjudicated youth as preferable to carceral institutions that produce environments similar to adult prisons.⁶ The impact of pretrial juvenile detention has short- and long-term consequences. When comparing the outcomes of justice-involved youth who were detained before their hearing to those who were placed on home detention or released to their parents, researchers from Duke University and the University of Michigan found that pretrial detention has significant effects such as:

- A 38% percent decline in the probability of graduating high school
- A 27% increased probability of being arrested as an adult
- Disruptions to school make it more likely that they’ll be retained in the same grade, receive special education services, and be chronically absent⁷

These facts and other data about the impact detention has on mental health makes the data about length of stay concerning. In this dataset, thirty-six (36) youth at Los Padrinos had LADS scores of zero. Additional information is needed to understand why these youth were not afforded an alternative placement option. Furthermore, the median length of stay for these youth is more than double the national average.⁸

JUVENILE CAMPS

The data reveals that there were 23 youth detained at a residential treatment camp on December 1, 2024 who had LADS scores within the “low” range. With further analysis, we found that:

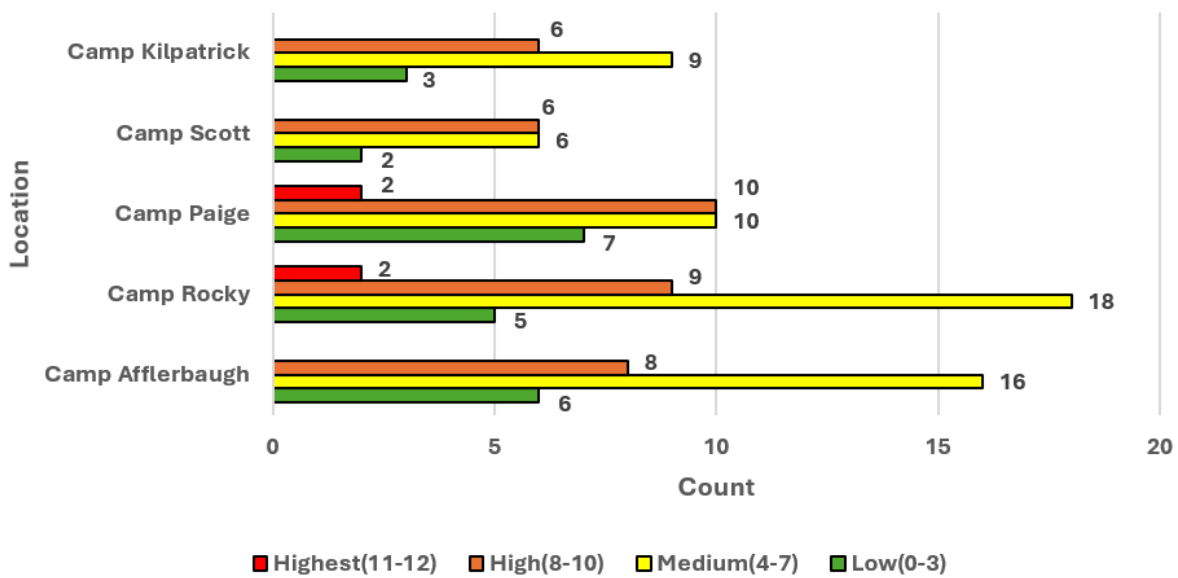
- 18 out of 23 (78%) of the youth with a “low” perceived risk had a LADS score of “0”

⁶ Pre-adjudication refers to youth who are waiting for their case to be processed and heard before a judge.

⁷ E. Jason Baron, Brian Jacob, and Joseph P. Ryan. “[Pretrial Juvenile Detention](#)” *Cato Research Briefs in Economic Policy*. February 23, 2023 Number 321

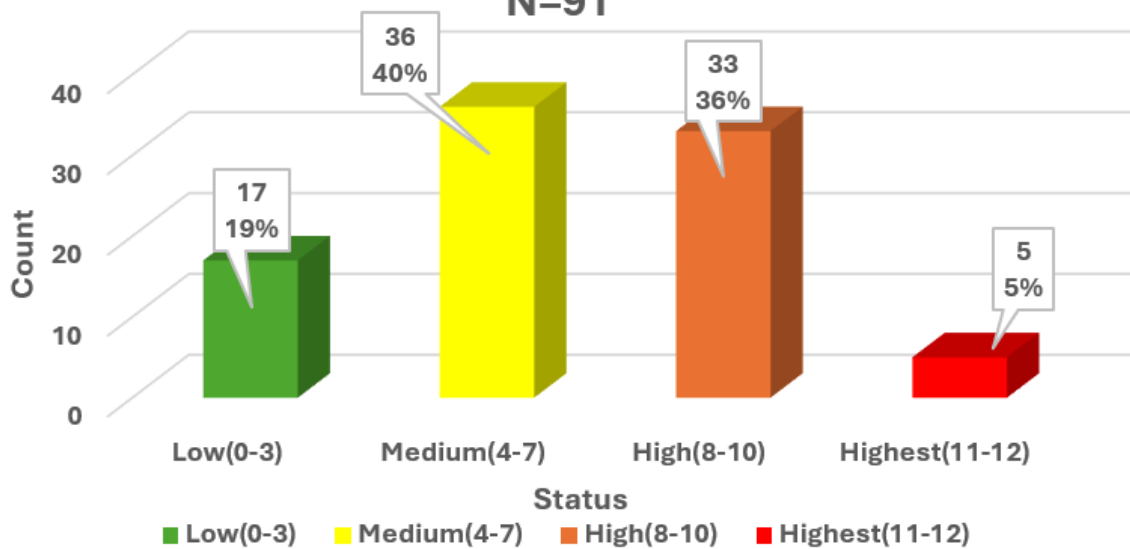
⁸ Per the “[Juvenile Detention Explained](#)” blogpost by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the national average length of stay for young people in detention centers is 27 days.

Count of Youth at Each Camp by Perceived Risk Level



SYTF AT BARRY J. NIDORF

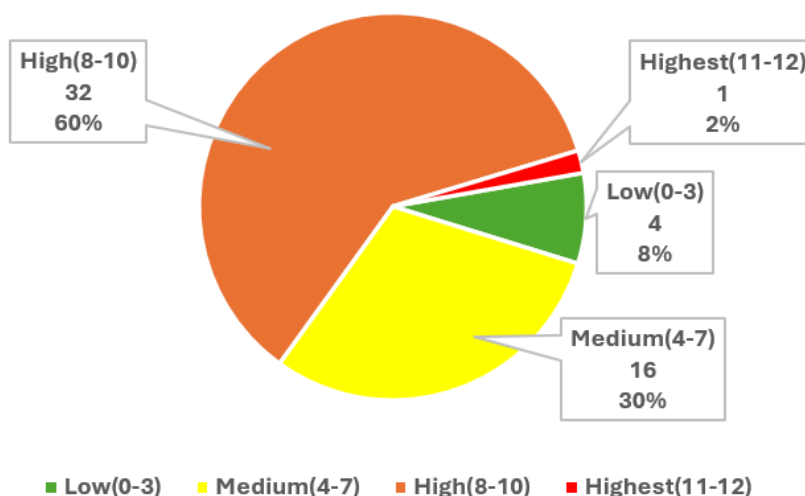
Count of Youth at each Perceived Risk Level At Barry J. Nidorf N=91



DOROTHY KIRBY CENTER

The Dorothy Kirby Center is a co-ed juvenile placement made up of different cottages, one of which houses girls, young women, and gender expansive youth dispositioned to Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) and another that houses girls dispositioned to camp. The rest of the cottages house boy, girls, and gender expansive youth dispositioned to locked placement because of their mental health and behavioral health issues. This may help to explain why the facility has a significant population of youth with higher LADS scores.

**Count of Youth at each Perceived Risk Level
At Dorothy Kirby Center
N= 53**



CONCLUSION

The LADS was created by the Los Angeles County Probation Department to serve as a County-specific screening tool to replace the previously used Krisberg assessment tool which many believed was too narrow in scope and too focused on the booking charge rather than on community risk and support factors.

The outcomes of risk assessments can have a far-reaching impact on a young person’s life given that practitioners use the scores to drive decisions about detention, risk and adjudication. Given their importance, it is critical for juvenile justice agencies to ensure assessments are reliable, valid and support equity and justice rather than simply reinforcing existing structural inequities and bias that disproportionality harm youth of color.⁹

⁹ Freeman, Kelly R., Hu, Cathy et. al. *Racial Equity and Criminal Justice Risk Assessment*. Urban Institute Justice Policy Center. March 2021

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Our review of this dataset raises the following questions:

- How was the LADS developed? How often is it updated? Why is it preferable to other assessment tools?
- How does the Department know that the tool is effective? What steps were taken to ensure the assessments are valid and reliable?
- How does the Department explain why youth with scores of very low scores, including scores of zero are still detained?
- Is there a practice of recommending release or Community Detention Program (CDP) for youth with very low LADS scores? If not, why?
- Aside from estimating risk, does the LADS help determine the best intervention and treatment for youth? How does the LADS facilitate needs assessment and inform case planning?
- How does the LADS take into account the traumatic histories of youth with child welfare involvement, victims of child sexual exploitation and those with developmental disabilities?

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PROBATION DEPARTMENT

No.:	1229
Issued:	04/19/10
Post Until:	05/19/10

DIRECTIVE

**SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION LOS ANGELES COUNTY DETENTION
SCREENER (LADS) ASSESSMENT TOOL IN DETENTION SERVICES
BUREAU, INTAKE AND DETENTION CONTROL**

It is the policy of the Detention Services Bureau, Intake and Detention Control (IDC) to provide a consistent, universal and accurate assessment tool (LADS) to every juvenile offender prior to recommending detention or alternatives to detention in juvenile hall.

The LADS is a 1-page assessment tool intended to screen juvenile offenders for recommendation for immediate detention or detention alternatives. The assessment tool provides an immediate opportunity for the IDC Officer to engage the juvenile and also to review of the Probation Case Management System (PCMS) to gather additional information that may not be readily available. (See Attachment A)

In addition to the LADS, the Los Angeles Risk and Resiliency Checkup (LARRC) is used to guide the IDC Officer through the screening process prior to making a decision on detention or detention alternatives.

The Detention Report, prepared by IDC Officer, shall only utilize LADS as the assessment tool to evaluate risk and the probability for recidivism as a determination on whether to detain or release a minor prior to the initial court appearance.

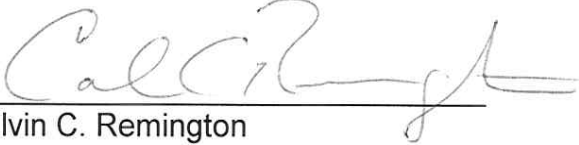
When an IDC Officer meets with a minor admitted to Juvenile Hall facility by an outside agency, the IDC Officer shall:

- Interview the minor utilizing the LADS as the exclusive assessment tool and facilitate data-gathering from Delinquency/ Dependency Juvenile Systems;
- Show the minor the "Total Score" on the LADS and explain the implications of that score; and
- Indicate in the LADS section of the PCMS Detention Screen, the IDC Officer completing the LADS assessment as well as the date of completion.

The IDC Supervising Deputy Probation Officer shall ensure a LADS is completed for each minor brought into juvenile hall for possible detention. In addition, the IDC Supervising Deputy Probation Officer shall ensure that only the approved override decisions are utilized in the DPO's decision making of whether to detain or release. (Attachment B)

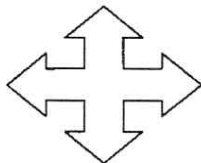
**IMPLEMENTATION LOS ANGELES COUNTY DETENTION SCREENER (LADS)
ASSESSMENT TOOL IN DETENTION SERVICES BUREAU, INTAKE AND DETENTION
CONTROL
PAGE 2**

Any questions regarding this Directive should be directed to the Detention Service Bureau Consultant at (562) 940-2523.



Calvin C. Remington
Acting Chief Probation Officer

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Name: _____

DOB: _____ PDJ#: _____

Ethnicity: WHITE BLACK HISPANIC ASIAN NATIVE AMER. OTHER

1) Current Age (_____)

Write score in box:

Up to age 13 = 0	Age 14, 15, 16 = 1	17 or older = 0	<input type="text"/>
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2) Gender

Female = 0	Male = 1	<input type="text"/>
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3) Age at 1st Arrest (_____)

If 12 or older = 0	If 11 or younger = 1	<input type="text"/>
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4) No. of Prior Arrests (_____)

If 3 or less = 0	If 4 or more priors = 1	<input type="text"/>
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LARRC Items (score based on prevailing pattern over previous six months)

5) Delinquent Orientation (risk) – LARRC #10

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	<input type="text"/>
Youth obtains reinforcement primarily from delinquent or criminal behavior (e.g., kudos or acceptance by peers for destruction of property, dealing drugs, assault, etc.).	Youth obtains reinforcement from both prosocial and procriminal activities (e.g., receives praise or monetary rewards for prosocial behavior like community service and also receives praise or monetary rewards for procriminal behavior like dealing drugs).	Youth obtains reinforcements from prosocial behavior (e.g., compliments, appreciation from family, teachers; award for community service; receives monetary rewards for social work); does not like youth who engage in delinquent or criminal behavior.	

6) Poor Academic Achievement (risk) – LARRC #16

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	<input type="text"/>
Youth rarely completes homework and has consistently below a C average with behavior that shows little or no commitment to schoolwork.	Youth does not consistently complete homework; however they do have a C average with behavior that reflects an inconsistent commitment to schoolwork.	Youth consistently completes homework and has at least a B/C average; more B's than C's with behavior that consistently reflects an academic commitment or minor has successfully completed an educational/vocational program.	

7) Few Prosocial Acquaintances (risk) – LARRC #37

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	<input type="text"/>
Over half of the youth's family, friends, or acquaintances value or perceive a variety of delinquent behaviors and deviance as acceptable.	Youth has a mixture of prosocial and procriminal friends, family, acquaintances.	All of the youth's family, friends or acquaintances value and are involved in prosocial behavior.	

8) Frequent Substance Use (risk) – LARRC #48

Yes = 2	Somewhat = 1	No = 0	<input type="text"/>
Youth uses alcohol and/or other mood-altering substances two or more times a week.	Youth has involvement twice a month to once a week with alcohol and/or other drugs.	Youth uses alcohol and/or other mood altering substances less than twice a month.	

9) Constructive use of time with family (protective, reverse-scored) – LARRC #22

No = 0	Somewhat = -1	Yes = -2	<input type="text"/>
Youth is not engaged in constructive, prosocial activities at home such as reading, completing homework, building models, playing mentally challenging games, working in the yard, etc. Either spends most of the time being bored, doing nothing, channel surfing the TV, computer/video games, surfing the internet with no goal, or involved in antisocial behaviors such as drugs, porn, destroying property when at home.	Youth engaged in constructive prosocial, non passive activities such as reading, completing homework, building models, playing mentally challenging games, working in the yard, etc. no more than once a week at home, independent from family members.	Youth is engaged in positive activities at home at least twice per week that are not passive such as reading, completing homework, building models, playing mentally challenging games, working in the yard, independent from other family members.	

Subtotal Items 1-8

Subtotal Item 9

Write in Total Screening Score here:

TOTAL =

KRISBERG ITEMS - NOT SCORED

10) Most Serious Present Offense (Check appropriate answer)

Firearms/ WIC 707B / Weapon or great threat = 1 flag Yes? _____ / No? _____

11) Warrant Status: Active warrants exist = 1 Flag Yes? _____ / No? _____

TOTAL FLAGGED ITEMS: _____

Name of Staff Conducting the Screening Interview: _____

Screening Date: _____



**OVERRIDES BASED ON THE
628 WIC - LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DETENTION**

Check the applicable section(s) as outlined below:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>1. The minor is in need of proper and effective parental care or control and has no parent, legal guardian, or responsible relative, or has no parent, legal guardian, or responsible relative willing to exercise or capable of exercising that care or control, or has no parent, legal guardian, or responsible relative actually exercising that care or control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>No parent available/appropriate</i> ○ <i>Parent refused custody</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>2. The minor is destitute or is not provided with the necessities of life or is not provided with a home or suitable place of abode.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>3. The minor is provided with a home which is an unfit place for him or her by reason of neglect, cruelty, depravity or physical abuse by either of his or her parents, or by his or her legal guardian or other person in whose custody or care he or she is entrusted.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>4. Continued detention of the minor is a matter of immediate and urgent necessity for the protection of the minor or reasonable necessity for the protection of the person or property of another.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Serious threat to minor</i> ○ <i>Victim/witness safety</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>5. The minor is likely to flee the jurisdiction of the court.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Transient</i> ○ <i>Inter-County Transfer (WI750)</i> ○ <i>Inter-State Compact (WI1300/WI1400)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>6. The minor has violated an order of the juvenile court.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Camp filing</i> ○ <i>CDP violation</i> ○ <i>Replacement</i> ○ <i>WI777</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>7. The minor is physically dangerous to the public because of a mental or physical deficiency, disorder or abnormality.</p>