



SAN FRANCISCO COLLABORATIVE COURTS

San Francisco Drug Court Transitional Housing Program Outcome Study

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

San Francisco Drug Court works with defendants facing felony drug charges or property charges motivated by addiction. Roughly 25 percent of incoming Drug Court clients are homeless, and an additional 13 percent are marginally housed.

In 2008, with the support of the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) federal grant, San Francisco Drug Court implemented a transitional housing program at the Pontiac Hotel, a privately-owned single resident occupancy hotel.

The Drug Court Transitional Housing Program (THP) targeted homeless and marginally housed San Francisco Drug Court participants who needed stable and safe housing as they transitioned from jail to the community.

- The Drug Court Transitional Housing Program (THP) pilot served a total of **110 participants** between January 2008 and March 2009.
- THP residents stayed in Drug Court **72 days** longer than a statistically matched comparison group. This represents a **48 percent increase in treatment days** and a statistically significant improvement in Drug Court retention. Research has shown that higher retention rates predict lower post-treatment drug use and lower rates of recidivism.
- THP residency **increased the graduation rate by 60 percent**, demonstrating that stable, supportive housing plays a key role in participant outcomes.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM (THP) OUTCOME STUDY

The pilot transitional housing program (THP) was funded for a total of 15 months, from January 2008 through March 2009, and served 110 Drug Court participants. This report assesses program outcomes through March 2010, 26 months after the program was first implemented, and one year after it ended.

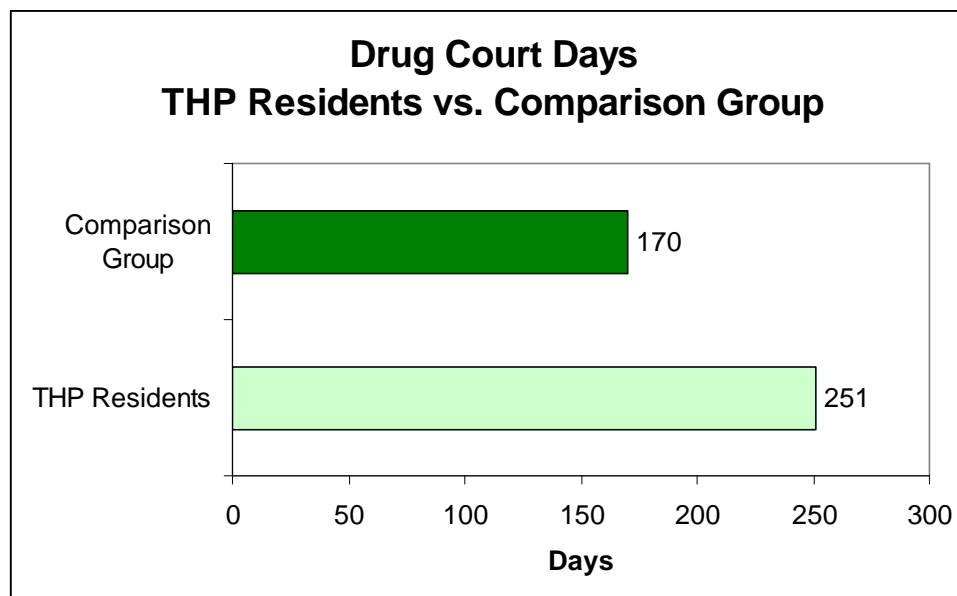
The study sample consists of 94 Drug Court participants who entered the THP during the first year of implementation. Study sample participants resided at the THP for an average of 40 days (median: 28 days; range: 1 to 142 days).

To determine the impact of THP residency on participant outcomes, a statistical procedure, genetic matching, was used to generate a comparison group.¹ Treatment group (Drug Court participants who resided at the THP) and comparison group (Drug Court participants who did not reside at the THP) participants were matched on key characteristics.² The comparison group generated by the genetic matching procedure is not significantly different from the THP group along any of the 14 matched characteristics (Appendix A, Table 1).

This study assesses the transitional housing program sample and the comparison group sample along the following outcomes: Drug Court **Retention**, **Graduation**, and **Recidivism (re-arrest)**.

➤ **Retention**

By March 2010, THP residents stayed in Drug Court 72 days longer than the comparison group. On average, THP residents remained in Drug Court for 251 days, while the comparison group averaged 170 Drug Court days. This represents a 48 percent increase in treatment days and a statistically significant improvement in Drug Court retention.

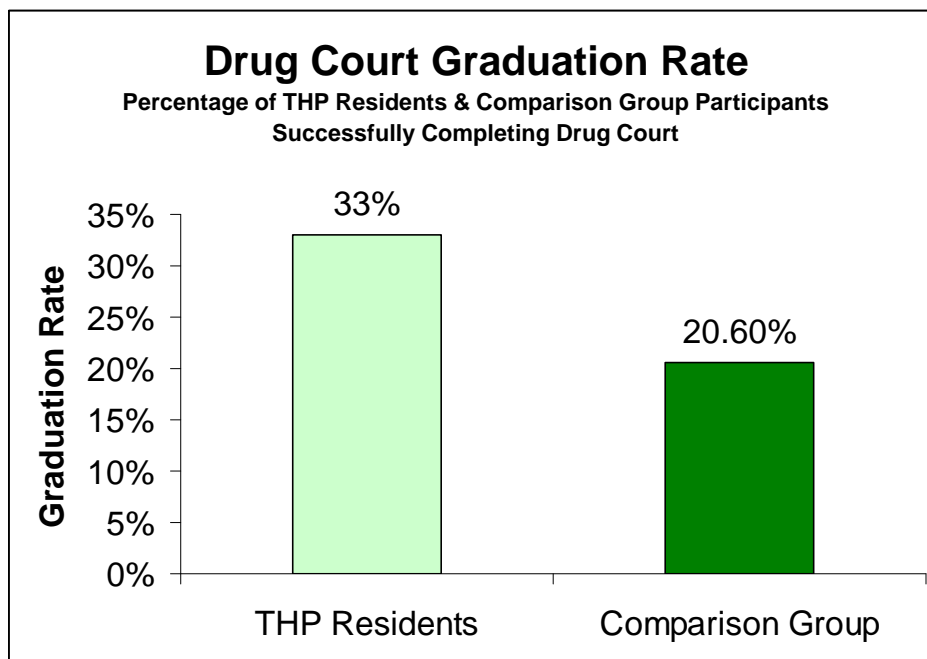


¹ Genetic Matching is a multivariate matching procedure which uses an algorithm to determine the weight each covariate is given.

² Matched characteristics included age, ethnicity, gender, living situation, income, program entry date, probation status, incarceration status, age of onset for substance abuse, primary drug of choice, frequency of substance use, route of administration, Addiction Severity Index (ASI) score, and treatment modality recommendation.

➤ Graduation

THP residency increased the graduation rate by 60 percent (THP Residents: 33%; Comparison Group: 20.6%). Since 2003, the San Francisco Drug Court graduation rate has ranged between 21 and 24 percent. THP residents were much more successful, with 33 percent completing the program. The large and statistically significant increase in the graduation rate associated with THP participation demonstrates that stable, supportive housing plays a key role in participant outcomes.



➤ Recidivism

There was no statistically significant difference in recidivism rates. This may be due to the small sample size and the limited duration of the study period. Subsequent analyses may demonstrate changes in recidivism (Appendix A, Table 2).

San Francisco Collaborative Courts

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➤ **Appendix A**

Table 1: THP Resident & Comparison Group, Seven Matched Characteristics

The comparison group generated by the genetic matching procedure is not significantly different from the THP group along any of the 14 matched characteristics.

CHARACTERISTIC		THP RESIDENTS	COMPARISON GROUP
Age (mean)		38.15	38.96
Ethnicity	Asian	6.2%	5.2%
	Black	29.9%	32%
	Latino	8.2%	6.2%
	Native American	2.1%	1%
	Other	6.2%	8.2%
	White	47.4%	47.4%
Gender	Female	18.6%	22.7%
	Male	81.4%	76.3%
	Transgender	0%	1%
Living Situation	Apartment/House	22.7%	19.6%
	Relative(s)	23.7%	24.7%
	SRO/Hotel	13.4%	13.4%
	Streets/Shelters	37.1%	39.2%
Age of Onset for Substance Abuse (mean)		20.38	19.81
Drug of Choice	Alcohol	4.1%	4.1%
	Cocaine	37.1%	38.1%
	Heroin	29.9%	29.9%
	Marijuana	2.1%	1%
	Methamphetamine	20.6%	20.6%
	Other	3.1%	3.1%
ASI Score-Drug (mean)		4.63	4.64

Table 2: THP Resident & Comparison Group, Recidivism Measures

There was no statistically significant difference in recidivism rates.

Arrest Measure	Average Arrests, THP Residents	Average Arrests, Comparison Group	Statistically Significant?
Arrests, 1 Year Post Drug Court Entry	0.97 arrests	0.96 arrests	No (p=0.951)
Drug Arrests, 1 Year Post Drug Court Entry	0.42 drug arrests	0.40 drug arrests	No (p=0.848)
Arrests, 2 Years Post Drug Court Entry	1.22 arrests	2.03 arrests	No (p=0.187)
Drug Arrests, 2 Years Post Drug Court Entry	0.56 drug arrests	0.83 drug arrests	No (p=0.536)