# Vocational and Life Skills Initiative: Data Tracking and Evaluation

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# Background

- VLS was created by LB907 in (2014), with these tracking requirements:
  - How many individuals received programming?
  - Types of programming received
  - Cost per individual for each program, service, or training provided
  - How many individuals successfully completed their programming?

# Evaluation Questions

- It takes time to track recidivism and employment, but as our data improves, our research questions include:

  1. What works? (effectiveness)
  2. For whom? (responsivity)
  3. For how much? (cost-effectiveness)

# NCJR Role: VLS Grant Cycle 2

- Developed and maintain online data management system
- Benefits to stakeholders:
  - Grantees: provided database system and T/TA, enhancing capacity to do their work
  - NDCS: can see real-time data
  - NCJR: can ensure that data is accurate, timely, complete, and uniform

# NCJR Role: VLS Grant Cycle 2

- As a result of new data system:
  - Programs have data updated monthly
  - Created a common language about data
  - Grantees see data system as a tool and not just something to meet grant requirements
  - Grantees are now regularly talking about data and how it relates to their programming

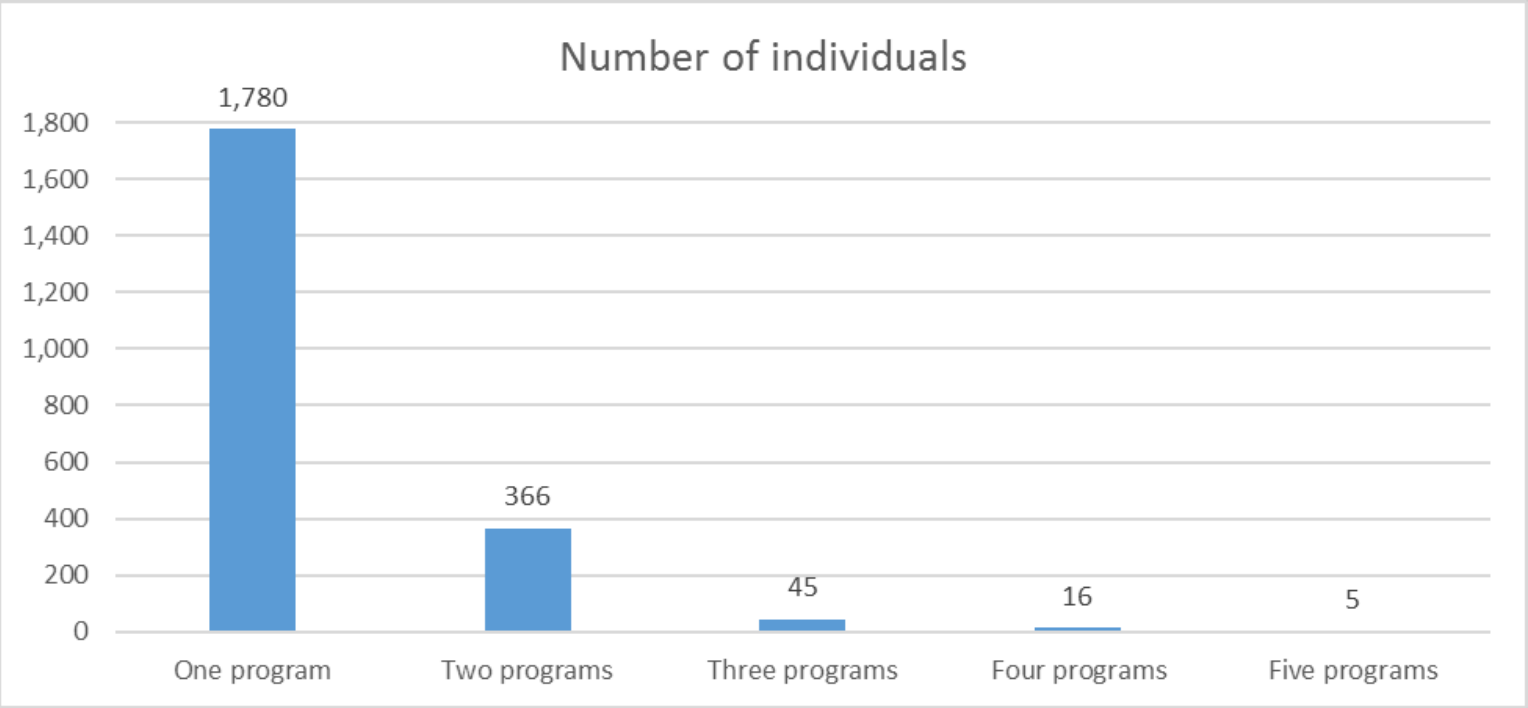
# NCJR Role: VLS Grant Cycle 2

- Provide monthly, quarterly, and annual data reports
- Website developed that provides access to all reports (justiceresearch.unomaha.edu)
- Data sharing with outside agencies (e.g. NDCS, Probation, Dept. of Labor)

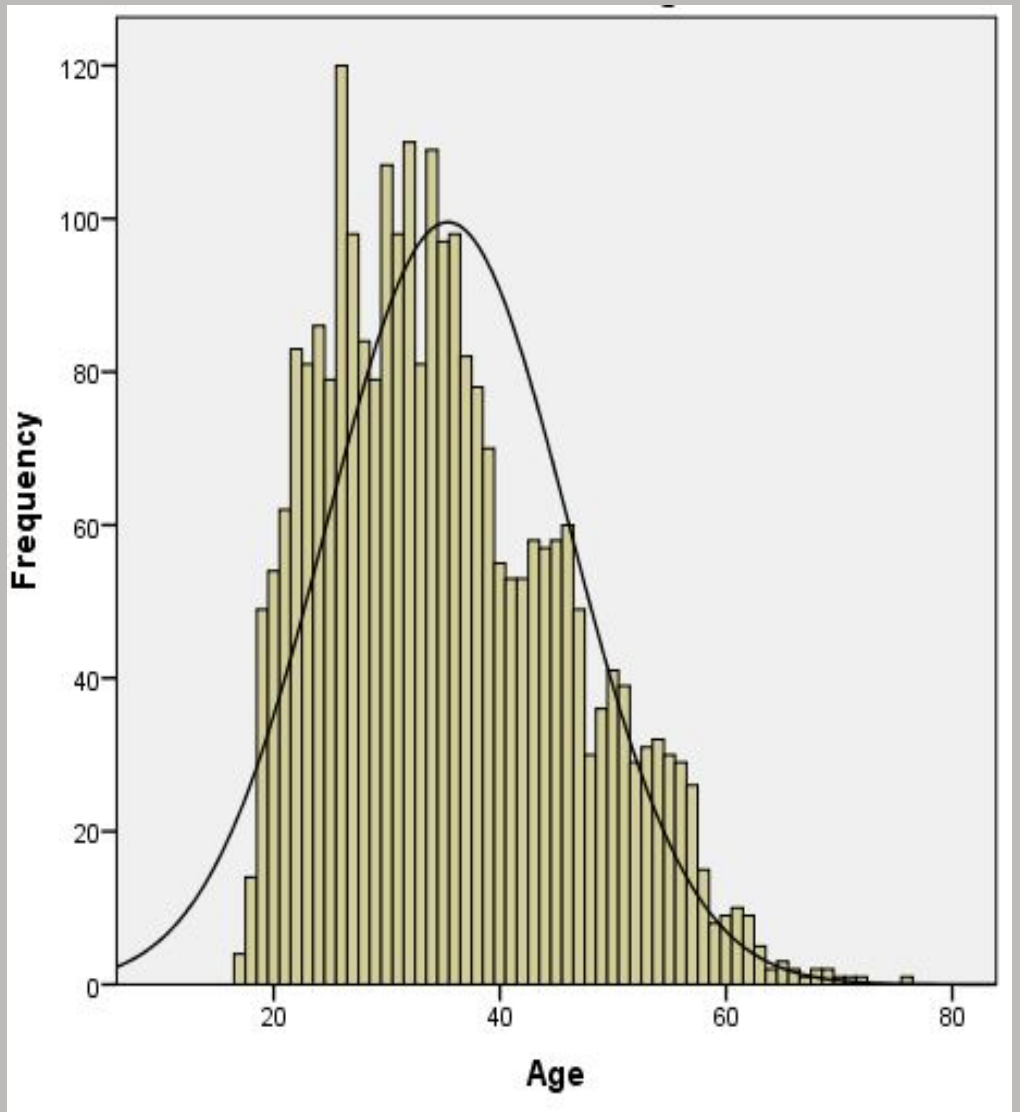
# Description of Participants

## July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017

- Data analysis reflects 2,661 “individual participations” by 2,179 unique individuals.

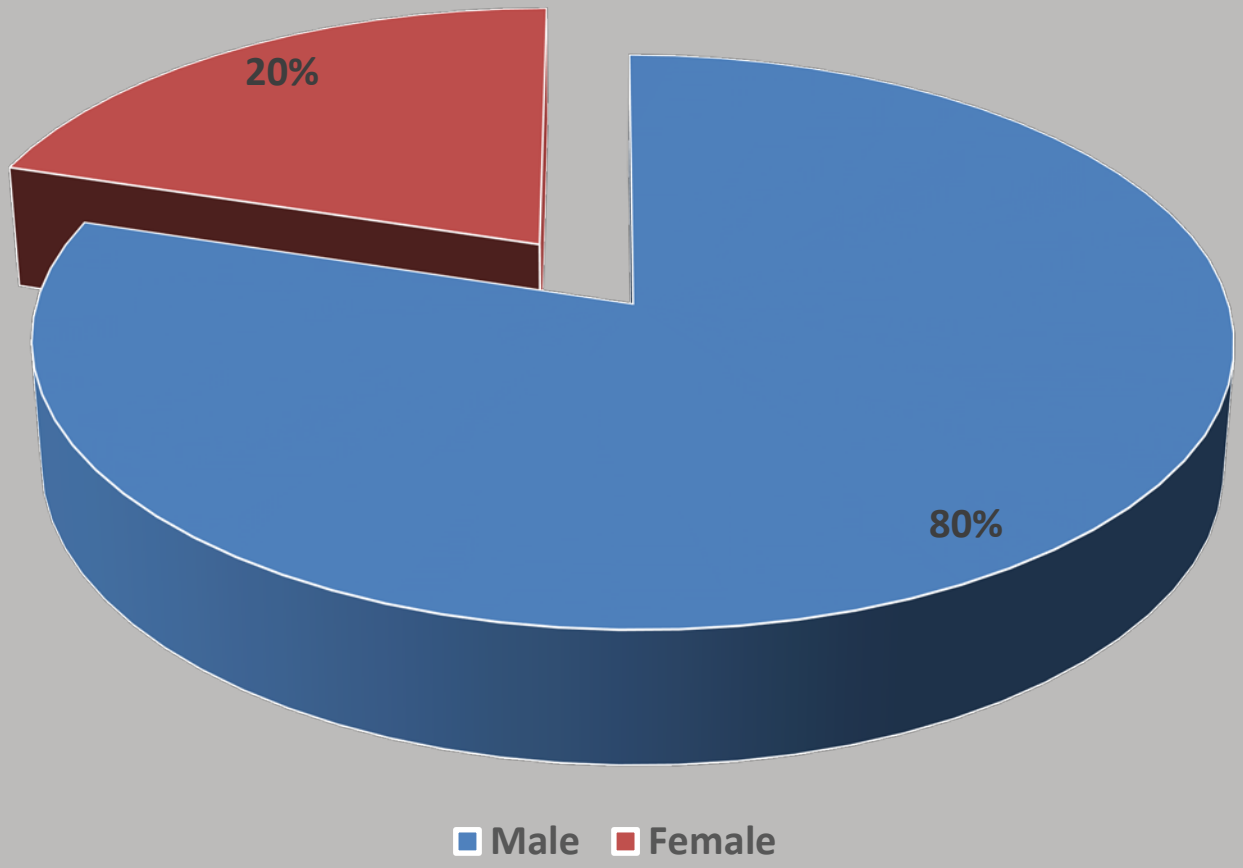


# Age Distribution



# Gender Distribution

Males: 2125 Females: 536



# Racial Distribution

White: 1399

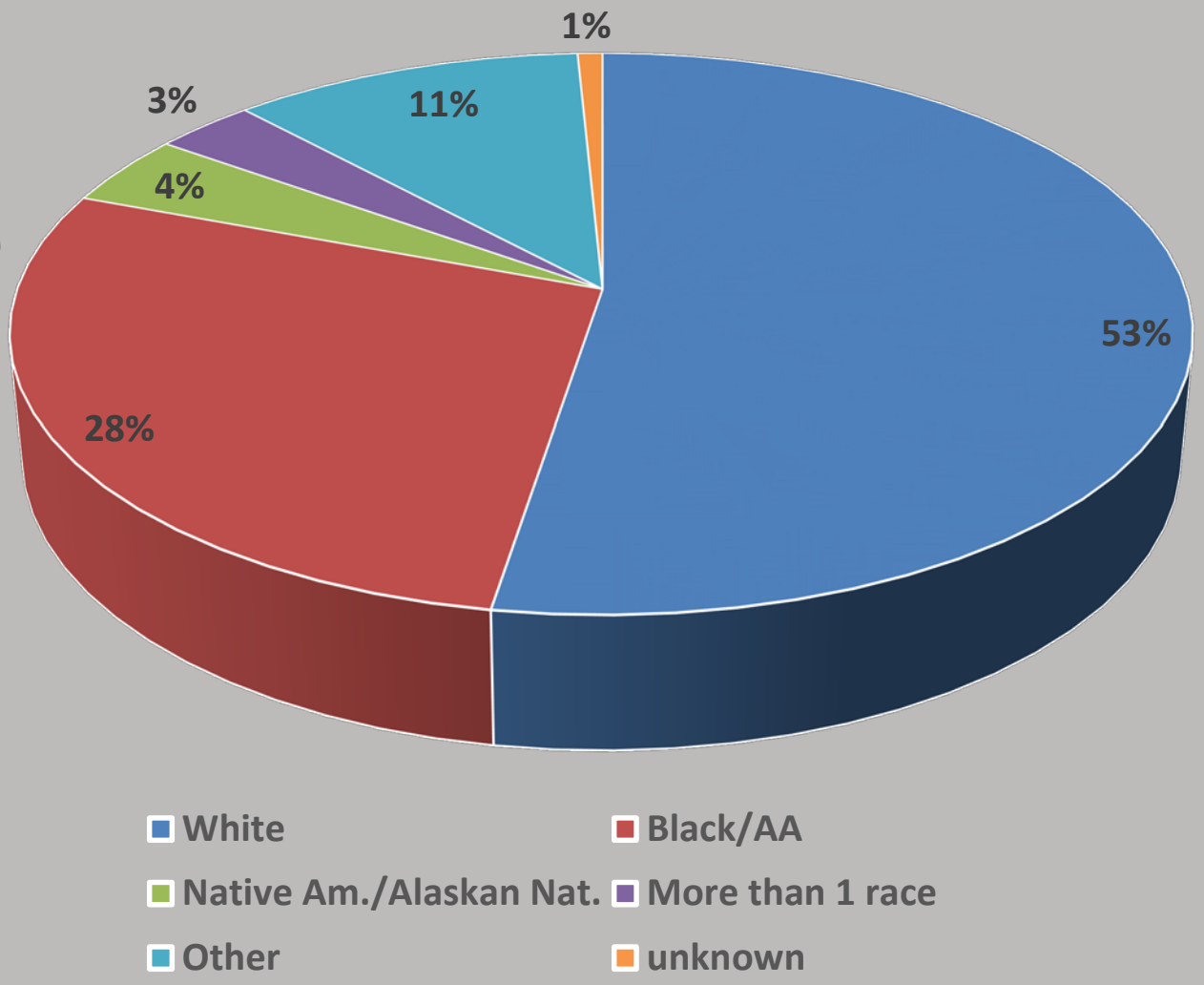
Black: 749

N. Am./Alaskan: 110

Other: 297

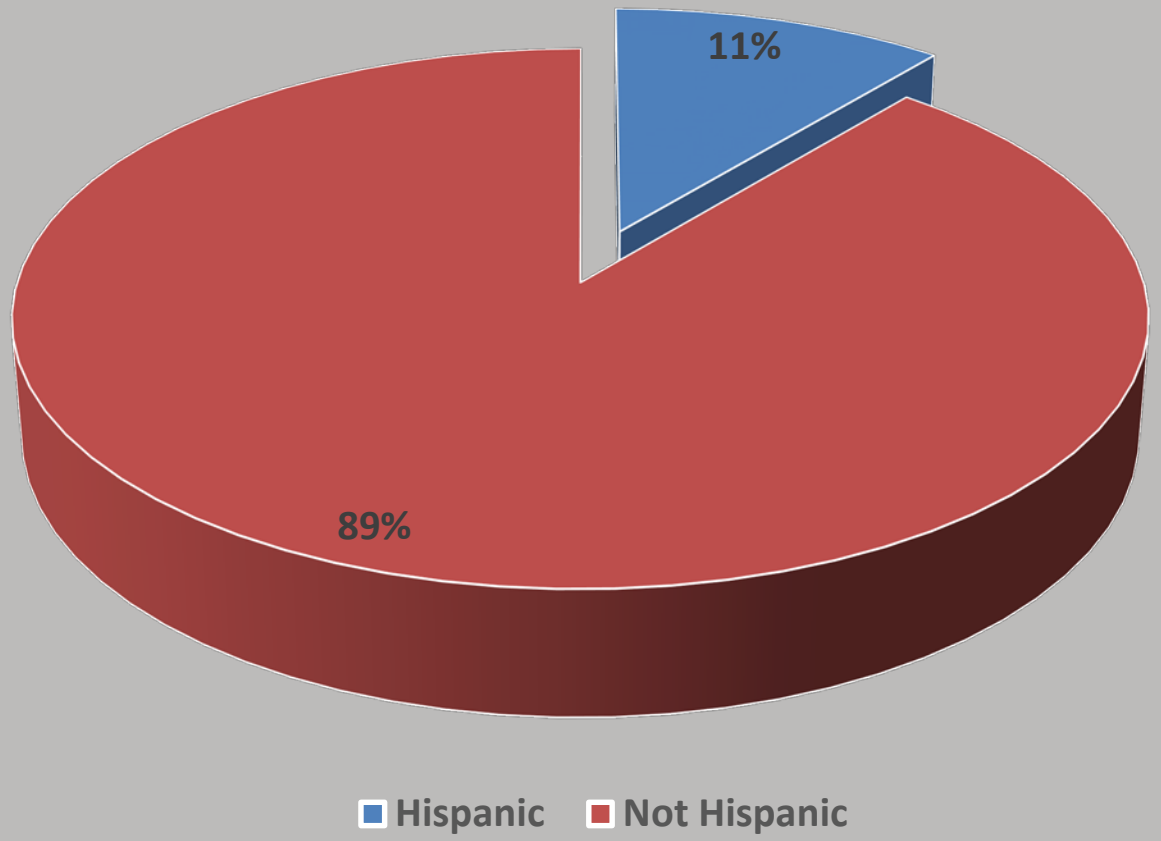
Unknown: 21

More than one: 85



# Ethnic Distribution

Hispanic: 290 Non-Hispanic: 2348



# Marital Status

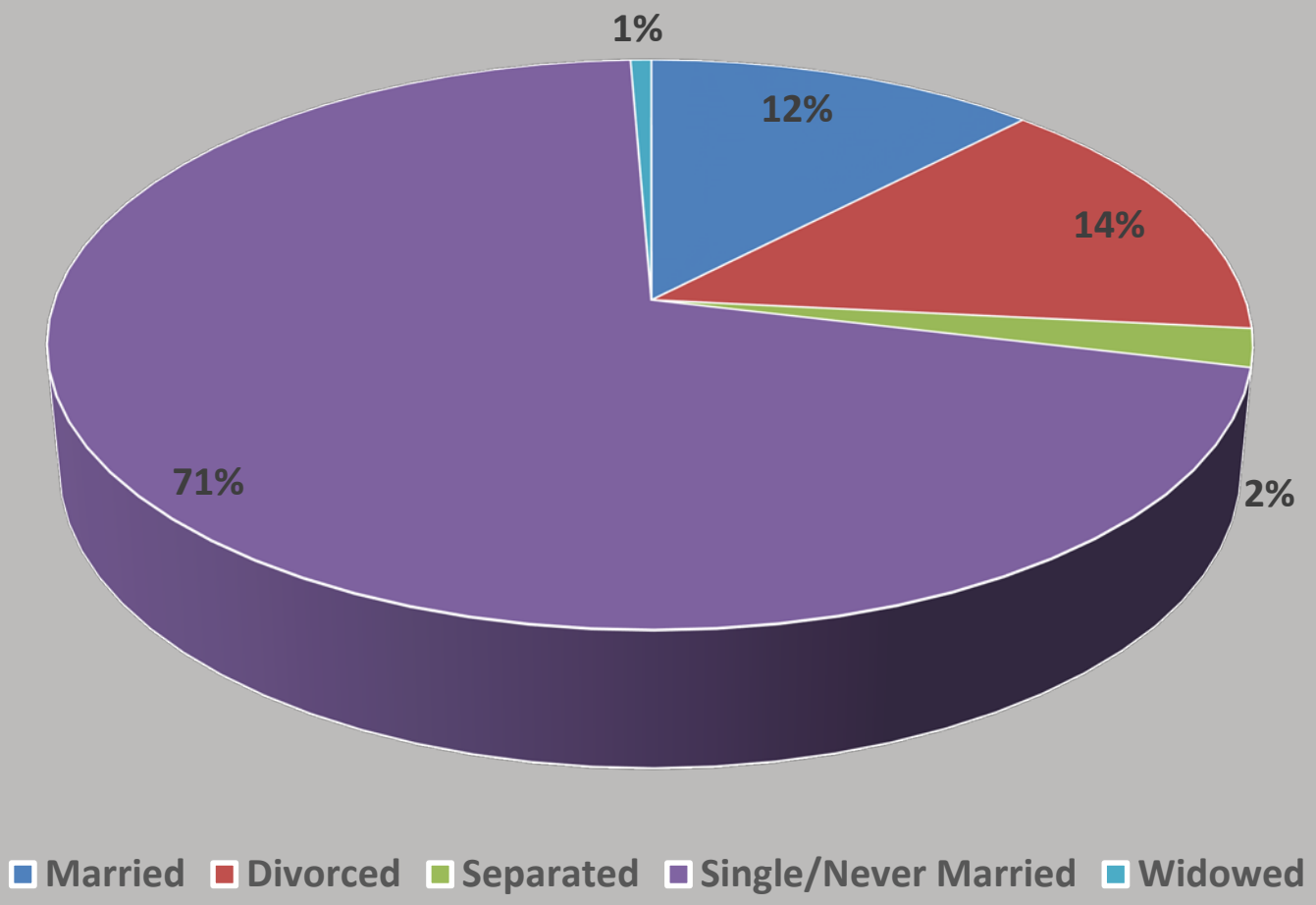
Married: 321

Divorced: 380

Separated: 57

Single: 1860

Widowed: 17



# Education

Less than HS: 282

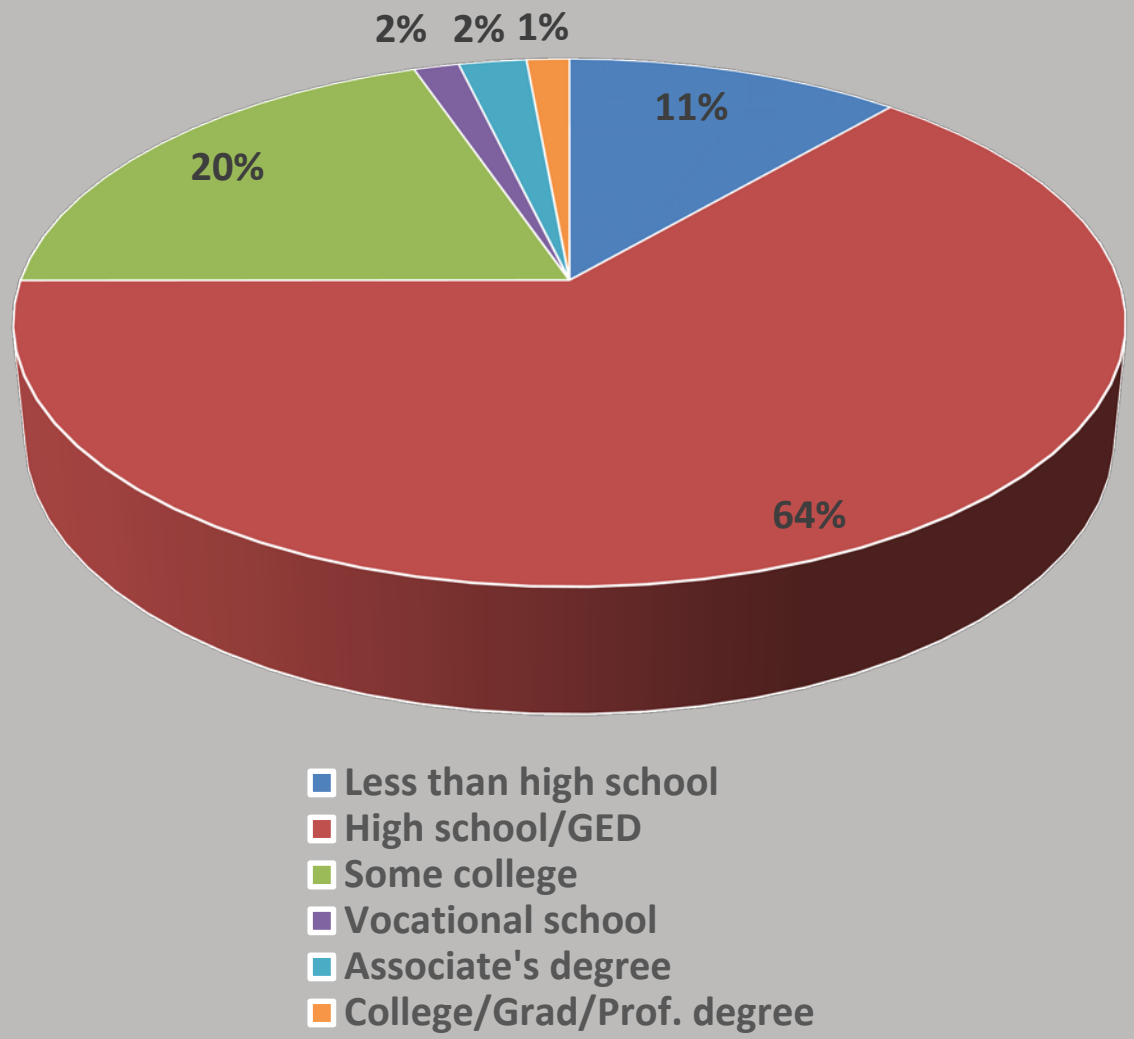
HS/GED: 1576

Some college: 489

Vocational: 38

Associate's: 57

College+: 36



# Intake Status

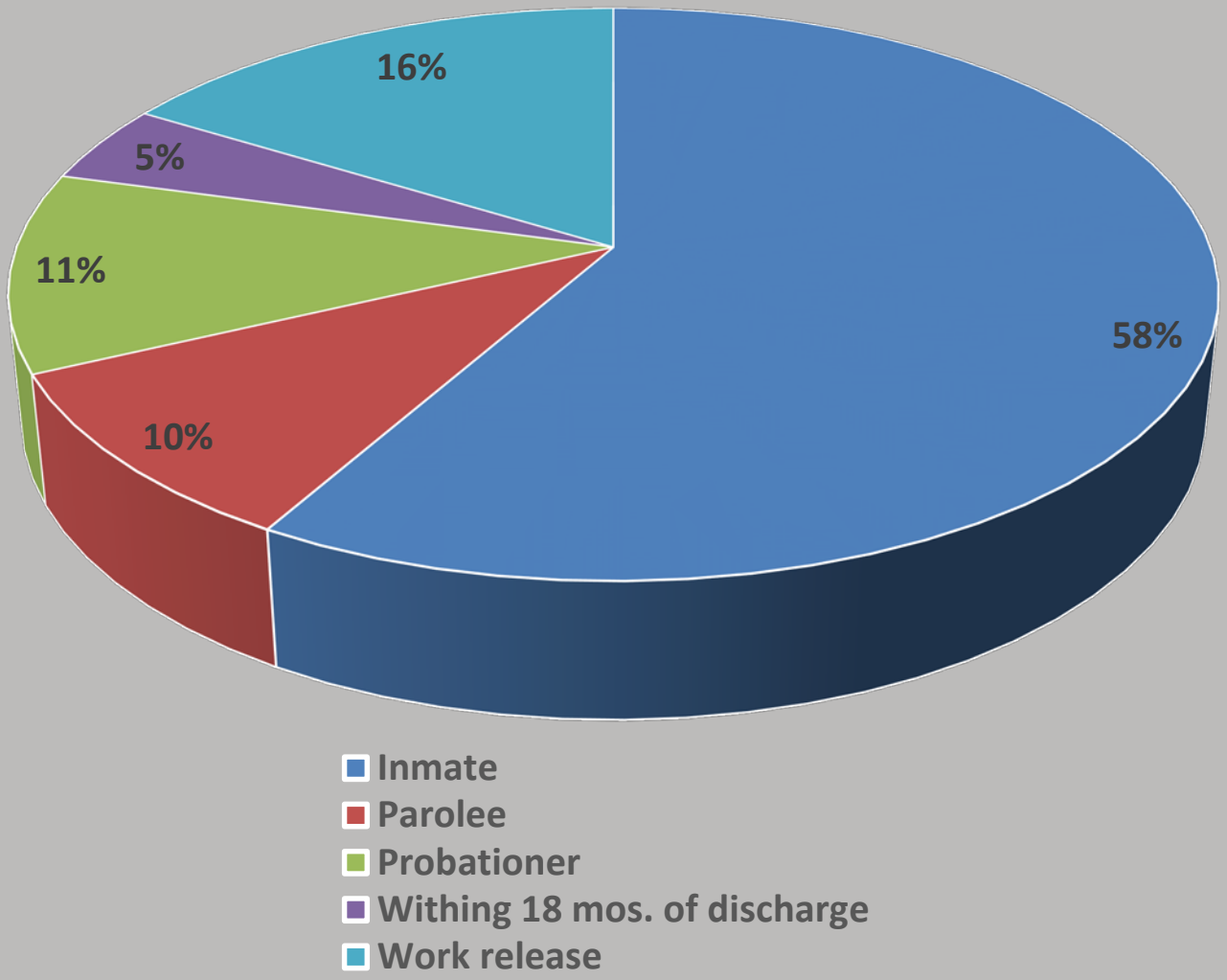
Inmate: 1550

Parolee: 259

Probationer: 300

W/in 18 mos.: 118

Work release: 433



# Reason Program Ended

Successful Comp: 1499

Term. by program: 75

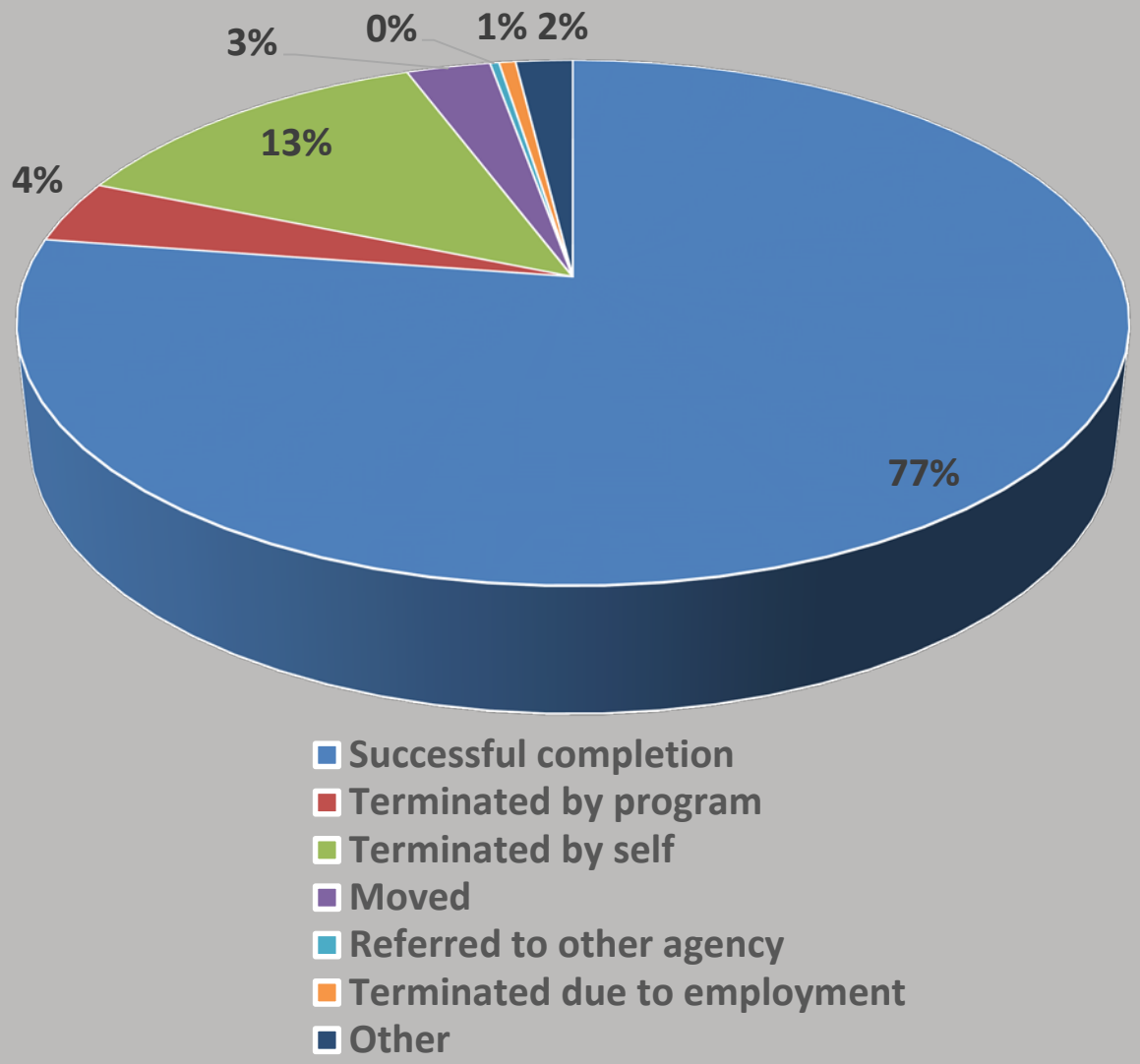
Term. by self: 252

Moved: 56

Referral: 6

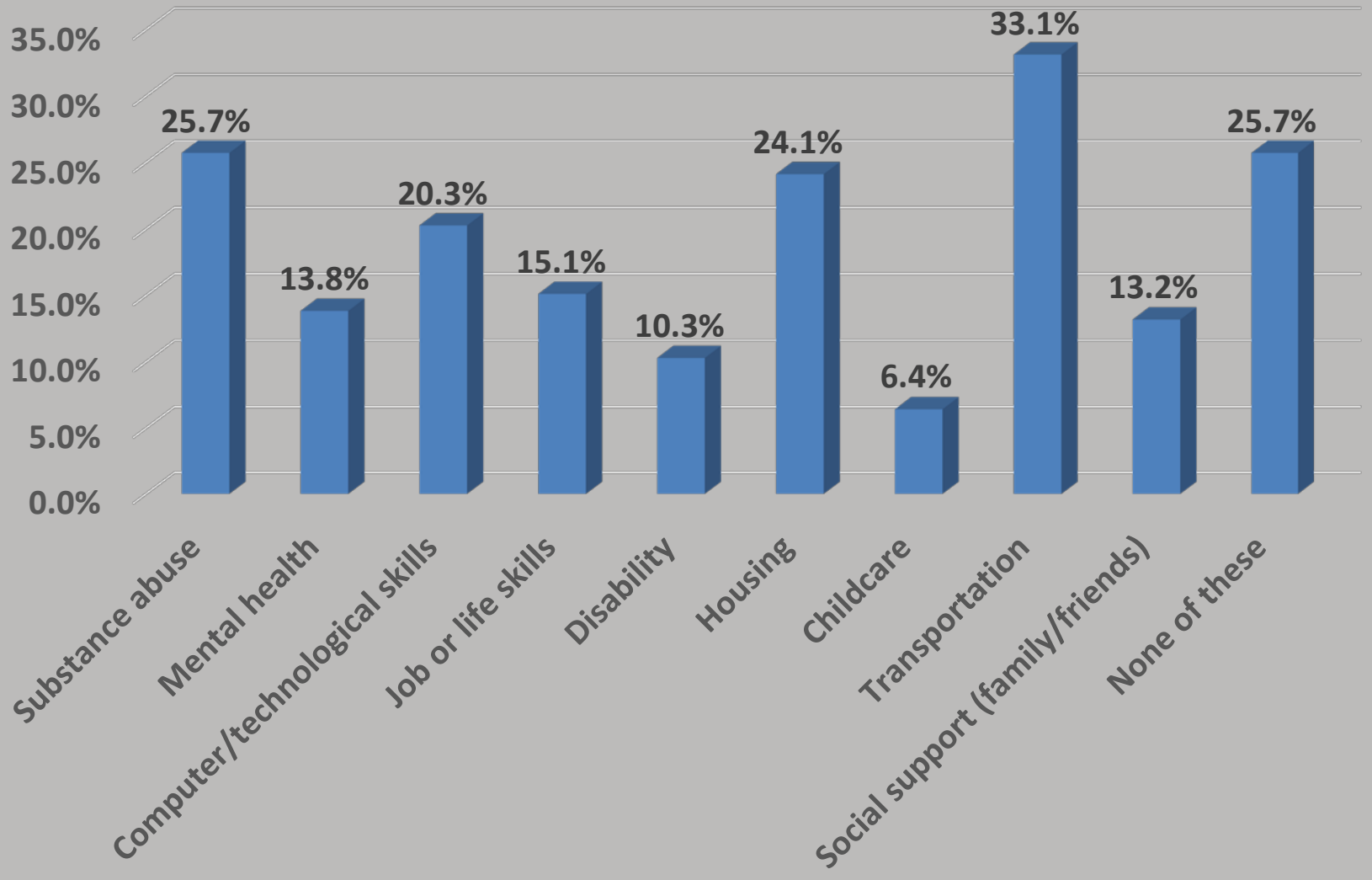
Term. employ: 11

Other: 38



# Barriers to Employment

## Survey data: April-Oct. 2017



# Complexity of Tracking Data

- Multi-site evaluation:
  - 7 grantees
  - 33 program areas with unique interventions
  - 10 correctional facilities and the community
- Programs vary widely:
  - Length, programming type, location, risks/needs, resources available
- Voluntary participation

# Future Directions

1. Performance measures for programs
   - Created in agreement with NDCS and grantees
   - Clearly specify performance expectations
   - Provide “measuring stick” to assess monthly, quarterly and annual progress

# Future Directions

2. Outcome data:

   - Continue to track and expand outcome data for participants
   - Consider short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes
   - Match appropriate outcomes to program areas both in institutions and community

# Future Directions

3. Evidence-based practices
   - Principles of Effective Interventions (PEI)
   - Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR)

# Thank you!

# Questions?

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