INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

WOMEN CLASSIFICATION STUDY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1990, the Indiana Department of Corrections (IDOC) implemented an objective prison classification system which has greatly enhanced its overall prison operations. Nevertheless, IDOC is concerned that the current system is over-classifying the female inmate population which is known to pose lower security risk. IDOC also recognizes the importance of identifying the needs and problems unique to female inmates before the Department can devise changes to fulfill those needs.

In August 1992, NCCD received a grant from the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) to evaluate 'the effect of the current IDOC classification system on female inmates, especially on the issue of potential over-classification. It is also the purpose of this study to assess the specific difficulties that female inmates experience during their incarceration.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Women Survey Data

- This study affirms the general perception that women inmates commit fewer infractions compared to their male counterparts.
- Though female inmates pose less threat to management regarding institutional misconduct, they present several unique levels of need that have to be addressed by the Department.
- Most women inmates who are mothers do not receive visits from their children mostly because of transportation problems and guardians' refusal to bring them.
- The vast majority of female inmates are uneducated and unskilled.
- Over half of the female inmates have been victims of physical abuse and a quarter of them victims of sexual abuse.
- Female inmates tend to have a greater demand for medical and psychiatric services.

Classification and Disciplinary Data

• Misconduct among both male and female inmates is best predicted by age, institutional disciplinary history, drug involvement, probation or parole violations, and scored security level.

- The classification system presently in use tends to overclassify women inmates. It is indicated by females' consistent lower rates of misconduct across all security levels when compared to males'.
- The IDOC classification system has an override rate which doubles the generally accepted rate of 20 percent.
- The basis for overrides is poorly documented, so it is difficult to determine if IDOC is using overrides improperly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. To prevent over-classification of women inmates, IDOC should adjust Section III of the female classification instrument: the scale for recommending either a reduction, no change, or an increase in security level should be expanded as indicated in Table 9.
- 2. The OIS Classification Data Base need to be modified so that the precise reasons for overrides are documented. Although preliminary steps have been taken by IDOC to eradicate this problem, this modification needs to be implemented as soon as possible.
- 3. Once the basis for the Department's excessive use of overrides is assessed, steps should be taken by the IDOC to determine whether overrides are being used in an appropriate manner.
- 4. A needs assessment form is required to document properly the unique needs of both male and female inmates (Appendix IV).
- 5. The siting of any new female prisons should be done to increase visits between inmates and their children.

INTRODUCTION

In 1990, the Indiana Department of Corrections (IDOC) successfully developed and implemented an objective prison classification system to guide the transfer and housing of inmates. That system was developed with the direct assistance of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) which provided funds to help design, pilot test and implement the objective classification criteria.

The entire system was put in effect by February, 1991 and has had a very positive effect on overall prison operations. Inmates are now being assessed and housed according to standardized criteria. The Department is also able to describe its inmate population security needs which is helping them to better plan future correctional resources.

Despite these successes, the IDOC is concerned that its growing female inmate population may be inappropriately classified by the newly implemented objective system. Since the current system was pilot tested on a predominantly male inmate population, the tested criteria may not properly. apply to the female inmate population. And, since females in general represent a lower security risk there may be some danger that the current system is over-classifying them. Finally, there is the remote concern that by not having a separate female classification system, the Department may be unnecessarily exposed to potential litigation.

The issue of possibly over-classifying female offenders takes on greater significance given that the female population has been

growing far faster than the male population and that the IDOC soon needs to decide which type of facilities the future female inmate population will require.

Because. of these outstanding concerns, the IDOC seeks to develop a classification system which caters to the specific attributes and needs of female inmates. In August 1992, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency received a grant from the NIC to design and evaluate such a system in collaboration with the IDOC. After almost a year of research efforts, this report is prepared to demonstrate the effectiveness of the existing classification instrument in predicting institutional misconduct among female inmates and to assess the prevalence of overclassifying female inmates in the IDOC. In addition, findings from a female inmate survey are presented to describe the major concerns and needs among female inmates at IDOC.

DATA

There were two types of data used in this study. First were two extract files from the automated record system (OIS) maintained by the IDOC. The first file contained classification data of the stock prison population on one particular day and the second file held all disciplinary incidents that occurred between June 1, 1992 and April 30, 1993. The two files were merged and cases with

The IDOC only began automating its disciplinary data by June 1, 1992 which explains why this time frame was used.

missing classification data were dropped. The procedure resulted in a total of 13,164 inmates, 741 of which were women.

In order to look more closely at the problems and needs specific to female inmates and to assist IDOC in long-term planning for its future female inmate population, a survey study was conducted which collected information on demographics, abuse history, children, and prison visitation of female inmates. The questionnaire was administered to a random sample of 401 female inmates. All responses were voluntary.

COMPARISON OF MALE AND FEMALE INMATES (CLASSIFICATION DATA)

The distributions of male and female inmates in racial and age groups are similar (Table 1). For both genders, whites constitute over half of the inmate population and blacks about 40 percent. The majority of inmates are over 30 years of age; 56.7 percent for males and 61.7 percent for females.

The two sexes differ mainly in their levels of threat as reflected in variables regarding severity of current crimes and conviction history. There are 20 percent more female inmates than male who are currently convicted of minor crimes and about the same difference in the absence of violence in current crimes. There is a higher level of deaths involved in females' current crimes (21 percent as opposed to the males' 14 percent). This is probably a result of women's self-defense mentality especially in domestic violence cases. Women inmates are also less likely to have prior convictions, and if they do the convictions are for minor crimes.

TABLE 1
CLASSIFICATION DATA BY SEX

ATTRIBUTE	MALES	FEMALES	ATTRIBUTE	MALES	FEMALES
	N = 12,423	N=741			
Race			Job Level		
White	57.7	56.3	Highly Skilled	3.0	0.8
Black	39.9	42.7	Skilled	6.2	2.4
Other	2.4	1.0	Semi-Skilled	18.0	2.0
			Unskilled	72.8	94.7
Separation?	45.0	7.0			
			Academic Level		
Security Level			Post Secondary	9.1	1.8
Minimum	9.1	13.5	High School/GED	41.5	37.5
Low Medium	43.4	55.3	6 Grade Plus	25.5	33.2
High Medium	21.2	13.6	Literacy Not Met	15.6	21.1
Maximum	26.3	17.5	Literacy Waived	8.3	6.5
Custody Level			Current Severity		
High	7.2	1.1	Low	12.9	35.6
Low	77.5	80.2	Low Moderate	16.9	8.8
Maximum	0.4	0.0	Moderate	36.6	26.9
out	15.0	18.8	High	33.7	28.7
Medical Level			Violence		
No Conditions	73.3	58.7	None	37.4	58.6
AIDS	0.3	0.5	Deadly Weapon	35.5	11.2
Gross Mental	1.0	0.3	Serious Injury	13.4	9.3
Chronic Condition	5.3	7.7	Death	13.7	20.9
Stabilized	15.2	12.4			
Psychiatric	4.8	18.6			
Pregnancy	0.0	1.8			
Other	0.1	0.0			

TABLE 1 (CONTINUED)

CLASSIFICATION DATA BY SEX

ATTRIBUTE	MALES	FEMALES	ATTRIBUTE	MALES	FEMALES
Prior Conviction			Age		
None	12.4	28.3	30 plus	56.7	61.7
Low	33.1	49.9	22-29	34.3	31.9
Low-Moderate	30.1	15.0	21 below	9.1	6.5
Moderate	19.3	5.5			
High	5.0	1.2	Drug Involvement		
			None/Never	18.7	21.8
Prior Violence			Past	64.3	72.4
None	56.1	76.6	Current	17.1	5.9
Deadly Weapon	38.6	18.9			
Serious Injury	3.8	3.6	Escape History		
Death	1.5	0.8	None	80.5	79.8
			Past Minor	7.4	5.9
Time Remaining			Recent Minor	4.3	11.1
LT 730 Days	20.9	33.1	Past Serious	5.6	2.4
731 - 1,460	19.8	22.4	Recent Serious	2.3	0.8
1,461 - 2,190	13.0	9.6	;		
2,191 - 2,555	4.0	2.7	Misconduct - Severity		
2,555 +/Life	8.2	5.9	None	43.3	61.5
3,286 +/Death	34.2	26.3	Low Moderate	7.0	5.2
			Moderate	24.1	17.3
Prob/Parole Viol			High	15.6	8.7
No Record	78.1	83.8	Greatest	10.0	7.3
Prob/Parole	18.1	13.4			
CAB	3.8	2.8	Misconduct - Freq.		
			None	43.4	61.9
Security Score			1-3	36.1	28.2
Minimum	23.4	45.1	4-7	12.8	7.3
Low Medium	36.3	27.5	8 +	7.7	2.6
High Medium	22.2	10.5			
Maximum	18.2	16.9			

Their use of violence in prior offenses, 23.3 percent, is much lower than males' 43.9 percent.

Due to the above factors, it is only logical that most females are classified for low security and custody supervision and their institutional conduct is superior to the males'. Inmate behavior will be discussed in greater detail in a later section.

Female inmates have more needs in terms of medical services, education and job training than their male counterparts. Almost 20 percent of female inmates enter the prison system requiring psychiatric counselling and related service; one-fifth of them have not attained a functional level of literacy and 95 percent have no job skills at all. If IDOC intends to prepare their female inmates for the demands of life after release, it should give additional attention to meeting these needs.

SURVEY RESULTS OF FEMALE INMATES

A common issue that arises among female inmates is their need to maintain relationships with their children and it is expected of the corrections system to accommodate such needs. The IDOC female survey addresses this issue by measuring the scope of the problem and by assessing the inmates' attitude toward visitation arrangements.

The survey sample of 401 female inmates is representative of the total female inmate population as shown by the almost identical distributions in racial and age groups between the sample and the population (Table 2-1).

TABLE 2-1
CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN INMATES

	N	%
Inmate Characteristics		
Race		
White	401	57.0
Black	292	41.6
Hispanic	8	1.1
Indian	2	0.3
Age		
17-20	22	3.1
21-30	282	40.2
31-40	256	36.5
41-50	101	14.4
> 50	41	5.8
Age (Mean)	34 yr. 1 mo.	
Marital Status	···	
Single	323	46.0
Married	134	19.1
Divorced	173	24.6
Separated	28	4.0
Widowed	44	6.3
Number of Children		
0	133	18.9
1	149	21.2
2	186	26.5
3	123	17.5
4	65	9.3
5 or more	46	6.6
Age of Children (N = 1,401)		
Under 6	315	22.5
6 to 12	434	31.0
13 to 18	276	19.7
19 to 25	224	16.0
Over 25	152	10.8
Inmates With Children Under Age 18		60.0
Yes	482	68.6
No No	221	31.4

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CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN INMATES

	N	%
History Of Abuse As Victim And/Or Perpetrator		
Victim Of Sexual Abuse (Incest) As A Juvenile		
Yes	157	22.5
No	542	77.5
Victim Of Sexual Abuse (Rape) As A Juvenile		
Y e s	162	23.2
No	536	76.8
Victim Of Sexual Abuse As An Adult		
Yes	157	22.6
No	539	77.4
Victim Of Physical Abuse		
Yes	370	52.9
No	330	47.1
Sexual Abuse As Perpetrator		
Yes	20	2.9
No	679	97.1
Physical Abuse As Perpetrator		
Yes	81	11.6
No	618	88.4
Pregnant Within 6 Months Of Admission To Prison		
Yes	85	12.1
No	616	87.9
Had Abortion Within 6 Months Of Admission To Prison		
Yes	12	1.7
No	689	98.3

TABLE 2-3
CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN INMATES

	N	%
Information On The Children Of Inmates		
(N= 1.401)		
Gender		
Male	717	51.4
Female	678	48.6
Number Of Visits To Prison Per Month		
None	732	52.2
Not More Than Once	429	30.6
Two To Four Times	204	14.6
More Than Four Times	36	2.6
Who Are Children Residing With (Relationship To Mother)		
Mother	301	22.1
Husband/Child's Father	228	16.7
Foster Care/Ward Of State/Group Home	123	9.0
Father	56	4.1
Sister	79	5.8
Older Children	23	1.7
Other Relatives	105	7.7
Child's Relatives	32	2.3
Friend	30	2.2
Adopted	28	2.1
Of Age	360	26.4
Custody Rights		
Mother	410	29.9
Father	104	7.6
Joint	65	4.7
Relatives/Friend	127	9.3
Foster Care/Ward Of State	47	3.4
Adopted	34	2.5
No	180	13.1
Yes	57	4.2
Of Age	347	25.3

TABLE 2-4
CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN INMATES

	N	%
Information On Inmate Visitation		
Number Of Primary Visitors		
0	157	22.3
1 to 2	186	26.5
3 to 4	184	26.2
5 or more	176	25.0
Who Visit The Inmates*		
Children	496	25.7
Parents	363	18.8
Siblings	331	17.2
Husband/Boyfriends	135	7.0
Friends	342	17.7
Other Relatives	216	11.2
Minister	44	2.3
Number Of People Inmates Would Like To Have Visited But Are Unable To		
Nobody	241	34.3
1	183	26.0
2	104	14.8
3	81	11.5
4 or more	94	13.4
People Inmates Wish To See* *		
Children	394	39.0
Parents	196	19.4
Siblings	156	15.4
Husband/Boyfriends	43	4.3
Other Relatives	125	12.4
Friends	96	9.5

TABLE 2-5
CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN INMATES

Reasons The Desired Visitors Are Unable To Come**		
Transportation Problems/Distance	514	50.9
Guardians Of Children Refuse		
To Bring Them	101	10.0
Health Problems	89	8.8
Incarcerated/Parole/Probation	84	8.3
Feel Uncomfortable In Prison	51	5.0
Administrative (Not On List,		
Court Order No Visit)	42	4.2
Bad Relationship/Estranged	36	3.6
Too Busy	36	3.6
Don't Know	57	5.6

Figures in this item are based on multiple responses given by inmates. Total responses = 1,927.

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^{• *} The inmates were asked whom they wish to see in prison (no more than four people). The figures in these items are based on the total of 1,010 responses collected.

Forty-six percent of. female inmates are single. and 19.1 percent are presently married. More than 80 percent of them have at least one child and 68.6 percent have children under the age of 18. A little over half of all inmates' children are under 13 and 22.5 percent are in their tender years of one to six. Not counting those children who are of age, the most common living arrangements for these "motherless" children are either to stay with the inmates' mother (22.1 percent) or with the child's father (Table 2-3). Nine percent of these children are under the care of the state being placed in foster care, group homes and the like. Close to 40 percent of the female inmates still have sole or joint custody rights over their children and are expected to resume their maternal duties once they exit the prison system.

Even though inmates' children compose the highest portion of visitors (25.7 percent) to female inmates, it is clear that a good number of the women yearn to see their children who for various reasons do not visit (Table 2-4). The two major reasons which the inmates perceive as preventing visitation from their children and other desired visitors are transportation problems/distance and refusal from children's guardians (Table 2-5).

One portion of the questionnaire inquires about inmates' abuse history and as expected, the data collected paints a sorry picture of these inmates. Fifty-three percent of the female inmates have been victims of physical abuse, around 23 percent victims of incest and rape as a juvenile, and 22 percent victims of sexual abuse as an adult. These traumatic experiences may explain partly why

female inmates are more likely to seek psychiatric assistance than male inmates.

Another issue that is unique among female inmates concerns pregnancies and what they entail, i.e., abortions, child births and child custody. Twelve percent of the sample report they have been pregnant at a certain time in the last six months and 1.7 percent say they have had an abortion during the same period of time.

The survey information reiterates some of the pressing problems which face the management of female prisons. IDOC has to enhance its current visitation program to encourage the meeting of inmates and their children. It may mean making prisons more accessible to the public or it may require the Department to loosen its visitation restrictions in order to provide for longer and more frequent visits between inmates and their children. It is obvious that a prison is not the most natural place for maternal bonding and female inmates, because of their circumstances, may actually find communication with their children impossible. It would be useful for the Department to introduce innovative parenting workshops to help female inmates optimize the little time they have to spend with their children during visitation.

The vast majority of female inmates are not well-equipped to

.---sustain a normal productive life outside the prison walls due to
their lack of education and job skills (more so than male inmates).

Therefore, the Department should seek to expand and improve its
current educational and work programs available at prison
facilities.

DISCIPLINARY CONDUCT

This section will focus on the distribution of disciplinary misconduct across different security levels and the extent to which the classification instrument predicts misconduct. If, indeed, the instrument is measuring inmates' risk in misconduct, then some type of association should exist between scoring items and disciplinary rates. Statistically, the classification items are the independent variables, or predictors, and disciplinary incidents the dependent variable. Readers should bear in mind that institutional disciplinary incidents are rare occurrences in general, and so, any relationship between the independent and the dependent variables may not be obvious.

Table 3 displays the types and the frequency of disciplinary incidents of male and female inmates. Comparing the two gender groups confirms that female inmates are less likely to break rules than male inmates. While female inmates make up 5.6 percent of the sample, they are responsible for only 3.2 percent of total infractions. And the infraction rate (number of incidents per inmate) of men almost doubles that of women; 1.63 for men compared to 0.91 for women.

Total disciplinary incidents include both minor and major infractions, and since the IDOC does not consider minor infractions significant or deserved of special attention, all statistical analyses from this point forward refer to major infractions only.

Major infractions compose 51.9 percent of all infractions in IDOC,

TABLE 3

TYPES OF DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS
BY SEX

	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Sample Total	12,423	94.4	741	5.6	13,164	100.0
Total Disciplinary Incidents	20,268	96.8	672	3.2	20,940	100.0
Number of Incidents per Inmate	1.6	3	.91		1.5	9
Total Major Disciplinary Incidents						
(% of all incidents)	12,417	(61.3)	391	(58.2)	12,808	(61.2)
Types of Major Incidents						
Fighting or Battery	962	97.7	23	2.3	985	7.7
Threats	495	96.7	17	3.3	512	4.0
Possession of Weapons,						
Explosives, or Chemicals	94	100.0	0	-	94	0.7
Sex Violations	171	86.4	27	13.6	198	1.6
Attempt Class A Offense	14	77.8	4	22.2	18	0.1
Destroying Property	245	98.4	4	1.6	249	1.9
Theft	192	96.0	8	4.0	200	1.6
Drug Possession	548	98.9	6	1.1	554	4.3
Trafficking	34	94.4	2	5.6	36	0.3
Possession or Making Intoxicants	144	98.6	2	1.4	146	1.1
Violation of Any Law	88	97.8	2	2.2	90	0.7
Habitual Conduct Rule Violator	397	91.7	36	8.3	433	3.4
Engaging in Group Demonstration	98	100.0	0	-	98	0.8
Encourage Others to Riot	8	100.0	0	-	8	0.1
Resisting or Fleeing	233	99.6	1	0.4	234	1.8
Disorderly Conduct/Insolence	3,192	96.3	124	3.7	3,316	25.9
Refuse to Obey Order	4,302	98.3	73	1.7	4,375	34.2
Unauthorized Possession of Money						
or Property	672	94.3	41	5.8	713	5.6
Being in Unauthorized Area	528	92.2	21	3.8	549	4.3

Note 1: All percents for "males" and "females" are row percents and those for "total" are column percents.

Note 2: Table reflects disciplinary incidents recorded from 6-1 -92 to 4-30-93.

and female inmates have a slightly lower percentage of major infractions (44.6 percent).

Major infractions which occur most frequently are refusal to obey order (40.4 percent) followed by fighting or battery which happens far less often (9.1 percent). Major infractions committed by females tend to be non-violent such as refusal to obey order and unauthorized possession of money, whereas male inmates are more likely to engage in fights and assaults.

Cross-tabulations were run to assess the association between classification factors and misconduct. If the likelihood of misconduct varies proportionally with the levels of an item, it -suggests an association between the two variables. For example, the older an inmate is the fewer his incidents of misconduct. The presence or lack of association with misconduct among the factors is shown on Table 4 and the level of variation for those factors which demonstrate an association are shown on Table 5. Note that the initial classification scoresheet contains only the security items and therefore the number of cases involved in the analysis of custody items is smaller than total inmate population.

Two findings stand out from Table 3: first, custody items are much better predictors of disciplinary misconduct than security items and second, factors which correlate with misbehavior for males are the same for females. Probation/parole violation level is the only factor among security items which shows an association with misconduct. 80.4 percent of female inmates (68.3 percent for males) with no prior probation or parole violations have clean

TABLE 4

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH MAJOR DISCIPLINARY MISCONDUCT BY SEX

	DEGREE OF ASSOCIATION		
	MALES	FEMALES	
Security Items			
Current Severity Level	None	None	
Current Violence Level	None	None	
Prior Conviction Level	None	None	
Prior Violence Level	None	None	
Remaining Time Level	None	None	
Probation/Parole Violation Level	+	+	
Total Security Score	None	None	
Security Score level	None	None	
Custody Items			
Current Age Level	+	+	
Drug Involvement Level	+	+	
Escape History Level	None	None	
Serious Conduct History Level	+	+	
Frequency of Conduct History Level	+	+	
Total Custody Score	+	+	
Custody Score Level	+	+	
Final Security Level	+	+	

Note: Degree of association refers to the ability of an item score to predict misconduct behavior.

TABLE 5

CLASSIFICATION FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH MISCONDUCT BY SEX

PERCENT	WITH	NO	DISCIPI	INARY	INCIDENTS

	PERCENT WITH NO DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS		
CLASSIFICATION FACTORS	MALE	FEMALE	
	(N = 12,423)	(N=741)	
Total Rate	61.9	75.2	
Security Level Items			
Probation/Parole Violation Level			
No Record	64.9	76.1	
Probation or Parole Violations	53.7	72.7	
CAB Convictions	37.8	57.1	
Custody Level Items			
Current Age Level	(N = 9,625)	(N = 496)	
Age 30 or Greater	70.0	82.7	
Age 22-29	48.5	58.9	
Age 21 or Lower	33.2	43.8	
Drug Involvement Level		•	
Never	68.2	82.4	
Past	59.4	71.0	
Current	49.3	55.2	
Serious Conduct History Level			
None	85.4	87.9	
Low Moderate	72.7	65.4	
Moderate	43.2	54.7	
High	31.0	32.6	
Greatest	20.0	38.9	
Frequency of Conduct History Level			
None	85.4	87.6	
1-3	50.8	56.4	
4-7	25.4	30.6	
8 or More	9.0	7.7	
Custody Score Level			
Decrease	84.9	90.7	
No Change	57.3	68.6	
Increase	20.5	36.9	
Scored Security Level	(N = 12,423)	(N=741)	
Minimum	77.5	81.6	
Low Medium	55.6	64.9	
High Medium	57.4	75.2	
Maximum	53.4	67.2	

disciplinary records, and 66.7 percent (42.4 percent for males) of those with CAB convictions are so. The variation in misconduct among- female inmates is lesser in degree mainly due to the fact that they commit fewer infractions in general. This observation will hold true in regard to other factors indicated on Table 5.

Five custody items which are used for reclassification are associated with institutional misconduct. All of them, except for drug involvement, are much stronger predictors of misconduct than the security item mentioned above. Young inmates 21 years of age or younger are more prone to commit infractions than inmates 30 or older (37.3 percent male and 46.9 percent female compared to 73.1 percent male and 86.6 percent female with no violation records). Custody score level, a factor to determine whether an inmate should be moved up or down on the security scale according to his or her total custody score, is strongly correlated with misconduct. Inmates who were recommended a decrease in security level are mostly infraction free (86.8 percent male and 92.4 female), a much smaller group of those given a higher security level are so (24.3 percent male and 40.0 percent female).

There should be no surprise that the two factors which measure misconduct history are strongly correlated with frequency of infractions. To a degree, both the independent and the dependent variables measure the same thing. Despite that, the link between prior misconduct and future risk should not be understated in classification. An inmate's disruptive behavior does not normally improve over a short period of time and the threat he/she imposes

on the system should not be taken lightly. In fact, it may well serve the purpose of classification to include in the initial classification scoresheet previous misconduct committed by new admissions while serving prior sentences.

The correlation between scored security level and misconduct is not linear (i.e., not directly proportional), but the relatively higher misconduct-free percentages (80.2 percent male and 86.5 percent female) in the minimum category and the somewhat lower percentages in other categories suggest that inmates placed at minimum security facilities are less prone to disciplinary problems.

Overall, women inmates behave much better than male inmates across all scored security levels. Assuming the-disciplinary rates of male inmates reflect the tolerance threshold of IDOC toward misconduct in its prison system, then it is obvious that most female inmates are overclassified and placed in a security level higher than necessary. This leads to the next section which discusses what measures can be taken during the classification process to bring women inmates more in line with male inmates.

ADJUSTING SCORED SECURITY LEVEL (SECTION II)

Section II of the IDOC classification instrument is the only section that deals with security assignments based on procedures and can-be used during both initial intake and reclassification, so it should be the most logical place for adjustments to be made. However, as mentioned in the previous section (see Table 4),

security items (i.e., items on Section II) do not correlate with disciplinary rates with the exception of Parole/Probation Violation, thus, it is difficult to make statistically-sound adjustments assuming IDOC's main concern in classification is disciplinary rates.

There is a lack of variation or pattern in misconduct rates among security scores to warrant a change in the security scale, and this is true for both initial and reclassification cases. Looking at initial cases only, the female no-misconduct rates start at 85.2 percent at minimum, slide to 81.8 percent at low medium but shoot back up to 94.4 at high medium (Table 6). The lack of variation is even more visible when all cases are considered where the rates hover around the upper seventies (Table 7).

Since the no-misconduct rates of female inmates at intake are so much lower than the males' (average of 84.9 percent compared to 73.9 percent) and there is no variation by security level scores, one suggestion is to place all newly-admitted women inmates in either minimum or low-medium security for a 12-month period of time, excluding those to whom Departmental restrictions apply, and allow the reclassification process to weed out those who have shown habitual or major behavioral problems such as sexual offenses. In other words, there would be only two possible security levels for women at intake.

This suggestion actually sounds more outrageous than it really is for three reasons. First, the classification instrument in its present form already classifies 208 of the 245 female inmates at

TABLE 6

MISCONDUCT RATES BY TOTAL SECURITY SCORES (SECTION II)
INITIAL CASES ONLY

		MALE	I	FEMALE
	CELL	% NO	CELL	% NO
	TOTAL	MISCONDUCT	TOTAL	MISCONDUCT
2	13	100.0	5	100.0
3	111	82.0	40	90.0
4	66	83.3	12	83.3
5 6	184 102 203	81.5 72.6 79.3	26 7 22	84.6 57.1 86.4
7 8 9	177 180	79.3 78.0 73.9	16 14	75.0 92.9
(minimum)	(1,036)	(78.7)	(142)	(85.2)
10	197	79.7	12	83.3
11	160	75.6	14	71.4
12	137	66.4	4	100.0
13	115	67.0	10	70.0
14	130	68.5	7	85.7
15	72	56.9	6	83.3
16	112	61.6	7	85.7
17	90	70.0	6	100.0
(low medium)	(1,013)	(69.9)	(66)	(81.8)
18	121	65.3	5	100.0
19	109	73.4	5	100.0
20	93	66.7	3	75.0
21	80	75.0		100.0
22	79	65.8	1	100.0
(high medium)	(482)	(69.1)	(18)	(94.4)
23	74	75.7	13	84.6
24	83	90.4	4	100.0
25	30	76.7	0	-
26	38	71.0	0	
27	17	70.6	1	100.0
28	12	50.0	1	0.0
29	4	100.0	0	-
30	6	100.0	0	
31	2	100.0	0	-
32	1	100.0	0	
(maximum)	(267)	(79.4)	(19)	(84.2)
Total:	2,798	73.9	245	84.9

TABLE 7

MISCONDUCT RATES BY TOTAL SECURITY SCORES (SECTION II)

ALL CASES

		MALE		FEMALE
	CELL TOTAL	% NO MISCONDUCT	CELL TOTAL	% NO MISCONDUCT
2	27	81.5	10	100.0
3	214	74.8	71	84.5
4 5	135 401	77.0 69.8	22 61	77.3 77.0
6	296	67.2	27	74.1
7	587	67.5	65	75.4
8	561	62.6	31	74.2
9	685	61.3	47	80.8
(m i n i m u m)	(2,906)	(66.5)	(334)	(79.0)
10	672	61.2	31	77.4
11	700	61.4	52	65.4
12	677	57.5	14	64.3
13	555 564	59.1 59.6	24 16	79.2 81.2
14 15	436	59.6 57.1	23	82.6
16	469	55.9	21	85.7
17	432	58.6	23	82.6
(low medium)	(4,505)	(59.0)	(204)	(76.0)
18	495	63.2	22	81.8
19	605	67.4	21	80.9
20	500	62.2	14	85.7
21	588	66.2	17	70.6
22	567	66.8	178	75.0
(high medium)	(2,755)	(65.3)		(79.5)
23	607	81.2	73	87.7
24	596	81.2	27	85.2
25	285	74.7	3	100.0
26	315 179	72.1	11 4	100.0 75.0
27 28	119	72.6 65.5	3	33.3
29	46	56.5	1	100.0
30	42	73.8	1	100.0
31	31	38.7	1	0.0
32	23	73.9	1	0.0
33	6	33.3	0	-
34	5	40.0	0	-
35	3	66.7	(405)	(O.F. O.)
(maximum)	(2,257)	(76.1)	(125)	(85.6)
Total:	12,423	65.3	741	79.4

initial intake to either minimum and low medium, which is 85 percent of the intake population.

Second, while prison staff may worry that certain newly-admitted inmates with propensity toward major violations will become under-classified, the reality is that the initial instrument is not designed to predict what type of misconduct an inmate is likely to commit.' Therefore violations which have proven to be a great concern in the lower security level facilities such as sex violations are to be dealt with in the reclassification procedure, after a period of observation.

Third, sex violations and habitual conduct violations which are relatively prevalent among female inmates occur mostly among reclassification cases (Table 8). Of the 63 incidents which took place within the ll-month period, only ten were instigated by initial cases, and nine out of the ten by minimum and low medium cases.

NCCD consulted IDOC on this option of eliminating high medium and maximum security levels at intake and the response was that due to Departmental criteria and other administrative restrictions this suggestion would-be impractical. Currently, female intake cases who are assigned to high medium and maximum are mostly driven by Departmental criteria, therefore, changing the instrument as suggested by NCCD is not likely to bring any marked difference in the outcome.

TABLE 8

SEXUAL AND HABITUAL VIOLATIONS AMONG FEMALE INMATES
BY SCORED SECURITY LEVELS

SECURITY LEVELS		ALL CASES INITIAL CLASS N=741 N=245		RECLASS N -496		
	SEXUAL	HABITUAL	SEXUAL	HABITUAL	SEXUAL	HABITUAL
Minimum	7	4	1	2	6	2
Low Medium	17	24	3	3	14	21
High Medium	1	6	0	0	1	6
Maximum	2	2	1	0	1	2
Total:	27	36	5	5	22	31

ADJUSTING SCORED SECURITY LEVEL (SECTION III)

Section III of the classification instrument requires a twelve month period of incarceration to be served before it is used. The score derived from this section is not written in the final classification designation and is merely used as a recommendation for overrides. Despite these limitations this section does affect the majority of inmates being classified, and the impact incurred by changing this section should not be overlooked. Above all, the scored security level recommended by this section correlates with disciplinary rates and this association supports an adjustment of the scale based on quantitative evidence.

Referring back to Scored Security Level, the last item on Table 5, the misconduct rate at the minimum category is distinctively lower than those in the higher categories and we assume that moving a certain number of low-risk female inmates one level down the security scale will not inflate disciplinary incidents to an unacceptable degree. With this assumption in mind, we adjusted the rule which determines the final security level and made it more difficult to increase an inmate's security level (see Table 9). We eventually placed 56.0 percent of all women inmates in the minimum category, 22.9 percent in low medium, 15.2 percent in high medium, and 5.8 percent in maximum (Table 10). At this level of placement, the infraction rates of women are still

This manipulation can only be applied to inmates with reclassification data because the initial classification data do not contain any custody items, which are used to derive the final security level. The first part of Table 11 shows the effect of score adjustment on the reclassification cases only.

TABLE 9

ADJUSTMENTS ON CLASSIFICATION SCORESHEET
IN DETERMINING FINAL SECURITY LEVEL

SECURITY LEVEL	REDUCTION IN SECURITY LEVEL.		NO CHANGE IN SECURITY LEVEL		INCREASE IN SECURITY LEVEL	
	ORIGINAL	AMENDED	ORIGINAL	AMENDED	ORIGINAL	AMENDED
Minimum	N,	/A	0-12	0-18	13+	19+
Low Medium	0-6	0-10	7-15	11-21	16+	22+
High Medium	0-6	0-10	7-15	11-21	16+	22+
Maximum	0-6	0-10	7-31	11+	N	/A

TABLE 10

DISTRIBUTIONS IN SECURITY LEVELS

SECURITY LEVEL	PRE-ADJI	JSTMENT	POST-AD	JUSTMENT
	N	%	N	%
Minimum	369	49.8	415	56.0
Low Medium	185.	25.0	170	22.9
High Medium	129	17.4	113	15.2
Maximum	58	7.8	43	5.8
Total	741	100.0	741	100.0

comparable to those of men; 82.4 percent of no infraction in the minimum category among women inmates compared to 80.2 percent among males (see Table 11).

The initial recommendation for Section II and the adjustments suggested for Section III were experimented on the classification data and the procedure placed 56 percent of female inmates in the minimum security level, 27.9 percent in low medium, 12.8 percent in high medium, and 3.2 percent in maximum (Table 12). The recommended system will place approximately ten percent more female inmates in either the minimum or the low medium levels compared to the current system.

OVERRIDES

The scored security level derived from the classification instrument will become the actual designation unless overridden by classification personnel. Overrides discussed here refer to the discrepancy between the staff-recommended security level and the scored security level found in Section II in the case of initial classification. As for reclassification cases, the scored security level has accounted for increase or reduction in security as suggested by Item 33. Recommendation for overrides is usually justified by policy mandates, potential management problems, and other compelling reasons. Though downward overrides are possible, they are generally rare.

IDOC has an unusually high percentage of overrides as shown in Table 13. Generally, overrides exceeding 20 percent signify flaws

TABLE 11

MISCONDUCT RATES FOR ADJUSTED FINAL SECURITY DESIGNATIONS BY SEX

PERCENT WITH NO DISCIPLINARY MISCONDUCT

	TERCENT WITH NO DISCHEINART MISCONDOCT			
	MALES	FEMALES		
Adjusted Final Security Level (For Cases With Reclassification Data)	(N = 9,625)	(N = 496)		
Minimum	8.08	81.O		
Low Medium	56.9	60.6		
High Medium	58.3	84.2		
Maximum	52.9	66.7		
Adjusted Final Security Level (For All Cases)	(N = 12,423)	(N=741)		
Minimum	80.2	82.4		
Low Medium	60.1	68.8		
High Medium	59.9	85.8		
Maximum	57.3	74.4		

TABLE 12

FEMALE DISTRIBUTION IN SECURITY LEVELS
PRE AND POST RECOMMENDED ADJUSTMENTS

	CURRENT CLASSIFICATION		AFTER AD	JUSTMENTS
SECURITY LEVEL	N	%	N	%
Minimum	369	49.8	415	56.0
Low Medium	185	25.0	207	27.9
High Medium	129	17.4	95	12.8
Maximum	58	7.8	24	3.2
Total:	741	100.0	741	100.0

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TABLE 13
FREQUENCIES OF OVERRIDES

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
	%	%	%
	All	Cases	
	(N = 12,423)	(N=741)	(N = 13,164)
Override Up	37.1	50.6	37.8
Override Down	3.2	1.2	3.1
Total Overrides	40.3	51.8	40.9
	Cases With Initia	l Classification Only	
	(N = 2,798)	(N = 245)	(N = 3,043)
Override Up	23.0	41.2	24.5
Override Down	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total Overrides	23.0	41.2	24.5
	Cases With	Reclassification	
	(N = 9,625)	(N = 496)	(N=10,121)
Override Up	41.1	55.2	41.8
Override Down	4.2	1.8	4.1
Total Overrides	45.3	57.0	45.9

in the instrument itself or in its administration. When all cases are considered, IDOC has a total of 40 percent of overrides, 37.8 of which are upward. Female inmates have an even higher rate of 51.8 percent, 50.6 percent of which are upward overrides. Overrides tend to be more prevalent for reclassification than initial cases; 57 percent in reclassification compared to 41.2 percent in initial classification for women and 45.3 percent compared to 23.0 for men. Also, most overrides are upward movements from minimum to low medium and high medium to maximum (see Table 14).

IDOC captures the basis for overrides in four main categories, namely, score, criteria, time restriction, and management. If a recommendation is based on the final security score and the outcome from Item 33, then SCORE will be checked. For all practical purposes SCORE is irrelevant in explaining overrides since adhering to classification scores for inmate placement is not considered an override in the first place. CRITERIA refer to Departmental policies and restrictions (other than time restriction) which prevent a scored level placement. When the remaining time of incarceration of an inmate exceeds the limits of his scored security level, the necessity to reassign him to a different level is termed TIME RESTRICTION. The last category MANAGEMENT includes a number of considerations such as mental and psychiatric needs, maladaptive behavior in jail, escape threats, detainer and sex offender restrictions.

COMPARISON OF
RECOMMENDED SECURITY LEVELS AND SCORED SECURITY LEVELS
(ALL CASES)

	RECOMME	NDED LEVEL	SCORI	ED LEVEL
FEMALE	N	%	N	%
Minimum	99	13.4	369	49.8
Low Medium	419	56.5	185	25.0
High Medium	95	12.8	129	17.4
Maximum	128	17.3	5 8	7.8
Total:	741	100.0	741	100.0

	RECOMMEND	ED LEVEL	SCORED	LEVEL
MALE	N	%	N	%
Minimum	1,272	10.2	3,450	27.8
Low Medium	5,209	41.9	4,068	32.7
High Medium	2,772	22.3	3,299	26.6
Maximum	<u>3,170</u>	25.5	<u>1,606</u>	<u>12.9</u>
Total:	12.423	100.0	12,423	100.0

The following analysis will concentrate on upward overrides because they compose the bulk of all overrides and also because of the litigation risk that unjustified upward overrides may incur. Also note that when one or more reasons were given to support a recommendation, CRITERIA will take precedence because of its mandatory nature, then MANAGEMENT because of its degree of prevalence and then TIME RESTRICTION. SCORE is rejected unless it is the only reason stated.

What accounts for IDOC's extensive use of overrides? Unfortunately, the information provided by the classification data does not yield a clear answer. The major problem is the frequent "use of the SCORE category as justification for upward overrides. As mentioned before, SCORE is basically a non-reason and should be ignored. Table 15 displays the distributions in the reason categories by scored security levels and gender. classification cases have the "cleanest" distribution as the SCORE cells are very small. For male inmates, over 90 percent of upward overrides are explained by reasons other than scores, and for female inmates it is an impressive 100 percent. Problems seem to arise during the reclassification process, as shown by the high percentages in the SCORE cells. The male percentages in this category are 49.3, 38.7 and 62.5 for minimum, low medium, and high medium respectively, whereas female inmates have an average of 44.5 These overrides will remain an enigma until their recommendations are accounted for.

TABLE 15
BASIS FOR UPWARD OVERRIDES

REASONS

	I	V	SCC	RE	CRITE	ERIA	TIME REST	RICTION	MANAG	EMENT
SCORED SECURITY	MALE	FEMALE	MALE 9	FEMALE	MALE 0/	FEMALE	MALE FEMALE		male %	FEMALE
		•	All Cases							
Minimum	2,209	270	37.1	10.0	46.8	79.6	0.9	1.8	15.2	8.5
Low Medium	1,114	33	37.8	69.7	9.1	18.2	17.3	3.0	35.8	9.1
High Medium	1,282	72	60.0	100.0	3.4	0.0	11.2	0.0	25.5	0.0
			Cases W	ith Initial	Classific	ation Onl	у			
Minimum	562	100	1.2	0.0	87.4	95.0	0.2	0.0	11.4	3.0
Low Medium	31	1	6.4	0.0	51.6	100.0	16.1	0.0	25.8	0.0
High Medium	52	0	0.0	-	32.7	-	63.5	-	3.8	
			Cas	es With	Reclassific	cation				
Minimum	1,647	170	49.3	15.9	33.0	69.4	1.2	2.9	16.5	11.8
Low Medium	1,083	32	38.7	71.9	7.8	15.6	17.4	3.1	36.1	9.4
High Medium	1,230	72	62.5	100.0	2.1	0.0	8.9	0.0	26.4	0.0

e: Row percentages added up to 100 percent.

SCORE aside, CRITERIA is the most prevalent reason for recommendation, then followed by management concern. The majority of upward overrides for the initial cases are supported by some type of Departmental criteria (an average of 81.3 percent for males and 96.0 percent for females), so are reclassification cases but to a lesser degree (an average of 16.5 percent for males and 44.9 for percent females).' Female inmates who score minimum are most likely to be moved up the security level because of criteria restrictions, 95 percent for initial cases and 69.4 percent for reclassification.

While TIME RESTRICTION is relatively infrequent, it is a compelling reason to move high-medium male inmates up to maximum security facilities (63.5 percent). Management problems concern mostly the reclassification cases; around ten percent for women inmates in minimum and low medium and an average of 24.9 percent for men. Most potential management problems are not detected until inmates have resided in an institution for a period of time which explains the above pattern.

CONCLUSIONS

This report affirms the general perception that women inmates commit fewer infractions compared to their male counterparts. Nevertheless, they present several unique levels of needs that have to be addressed by the Department.

The foremost issue is the difficulty women inmates experience in maintaining relationships with their children. The majority of female inmates have young children over whom they hold legal custody, and such children are often unable to see their mothers because of distance and transportation problems. Inmates frequently complain that they do not get to see their children. The Department must revise its visitation rules to encourage more frequent and longer meetings between inmates and their children, and in planning for future prisons for female inmates, give more consideration to location and accessibility.

Another concern specific to female inmates is their higher demand on medical and psychiatric services, which includes gynecological and obstetric care and family-planning counselling.

Lastly, the majority of female inmates are uneducated and unskilled, the Department must determine its role in preparing these women for independent living through education and job training.

The classification and disciplinary data provided by IDOC show that misconduct among both male and female inmates is best predicted by age, institutional disciplinary history, drug involvement, probation or parole violations, and final security level. The custody items on Section III are much better predictors than the security items on Section II.

The classification instrument presently in use tends to overclassify women inmates. Most can be placed at a lower security level without jeopardizing safety in the facilities. Based on statistical results, NCCD would recommend placing all female inmates in minimum and low medium facilities at initial intake, however, recognizing the valid concern IDOC has on this issue, NCCD agrees that Section II of the classification instrument should be left as is.

The designation scales of Item 33 in Section III of the classification instrument was adjusted for females, and note that this measure does not increase their disciplinary rate in the minimum security category to an unacceptable degree. The IDOC should revise its classification process as NCCD has done here to bring women inmates more in line with the male inmates.

A major concern with the IDOC classification system is the excessive use of overrides which doubles the generally accepted rate of 20 percent. And because the justification for overrides is poorly documented, NCCD cannot determine whether overrides have been improperly used. The amount of information available suggests that Departmental criteria are responsible for most upward overrides during initial classification for both males and females, and management restrictions account for a quarter of upward overrides at reclassification for male inmates. There are more overrides applied to female inmates than male and the primary reason is also Departmental criteria.

The issue of overrides has to be resolved before the current instrument can be meaningfully revised. The purpose of an objective classification system is to minimize subjective biases and arbitrary decisions-making during the classification process, and IDOC's frequent use of overrides, regardless of reasons, will defeat this very purpose.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. To prevent over-classification of women inmates, IDOC should adjust Section III of the female classification instrument: the scale for recommending either a reduction, no change, or an increase in security level should be expanded as indicated in Table 9.
- 2. The OIS Classification Data Base need to be modified so that the precise reasons for overrides are documented. Although preliminary steps have been taken by IDOC to eradicate this problem, this modification needs to be implemented as soon as possible.
- 3. Once the basis for the Department's excessive use of overrides is assessed., steps should be taken by the IDOC to determine whether overrides are being used in an appropriate manner.
- 4. A needs assessment form is required to document properly the unique needs of both male and female inmates (Appendix III).
- 5. The siting of any new female prisons should be done to increase visits between inmates and their children.

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APPENDIXX III

INDIANA FEMALE CLASSIFICATION - SUPPLEMENTAL CODESHEET

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INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

E334 Indiana Government Center Si 302 W. Washington St. Indianapolis, IN 46204 (317) 232-5715

TO: Thuc Van Phan, Senior System Analyst

0IS Project-Manager

FROM: Randall Short, Analyst

Classification Division

DATE: May 11, 1993

RE: Offender Information System (0IS) Modifications

As a follow up to our conversation on April 28, 1993, we are requesting the following modifications to the classification screens in the Offender Information System.

- 1. Allow the use of a numeric code 1-8 instead of "X" in the "basis for new designation" criteria field.
- 2: Modification of the "basis for new designation to allow only one option score, 'criteria, time restriction or management to be entered.

We are also requesting the development of two (2) additional classification reports..

- An on-demand report which would provide raw and percentile data of the number of offenders in each criteria category. Raw and percentage totals of offenders at each facility and raw and percentage totals for each security level for the entire department.
- A cycle report (daily) which would select and list offenders of a specified criteria category at a specific facility.

We are requesting a approximate completion date on these modifications. If you have additional questions please contact this office.

cc: Mr. Norman G. Owens, Director Classification Division

Mr. Robert Hughes, Director

Information Management Services

Mr. James Wynn, Supervisor of Offender Placement

Classification Division

File



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

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ATTACHMENTS:

The following is a listing of criteria categories.

- 1. Active warrants, detainers or pending charges extending beyond the offenders Earliest Possible Release Date.. Includes Parole Violators who have not appeared before the Parole Board.
- 2. Escape significant escape history in past four (4) 'years, or current commitment for escape. Includes documented Absconding from probation or parole.
- 3. Violent Offenses as defined in current criteria.
- 4. Sex Offenses -- -- as defined in current criteria.
- 5. Disciplinary Transfer history of disciplinary transfers during the previous two (2) years.
- 6. Conduct Adjustment Board Actions Class A conduct reports guilty findings in the past twelve (12) months, and Class B conduct report guilty finding in the past six (6) months.
- 7. Medical Status Codes.
- 8. Multiple Life Sentences.
- Q. CLASS 4 FELONIES

NEEDS ASSESSMENT FORM

NAME	DOC NUMBER
DATE	COMPLETED BY
FACILITY	DOB
1.	SUBSTANCE ABUSE:
	0 = No alcohol consumption or limited use in social situations. No illicit drug use.
	1 = Use of alcohol predominant in most social and private situations. Experimentation
	and/or recreational use of illegal drugs or abuse of prescription drugs. 2 = Heavy use of alcohol/illegal substances and/or criminal behavior involving substance
	abuse.
2.	EDUCATION:
	0 = Has attained GED or High School diploma.
	1 = Literacy skills at sixth grade level or higher, but has not attained High School Diploma or GED.
	2 = Illiterate or literacy skills below the sixth grade level.
3.	VOCATION:
	<pre>0 = Maintained employment with marketable skills. 1 = May have some work skills.</pre>
	2 = Unstable or no employment with no marketable skills.
4.	EMOTIONAL STABILITY:
	0 = Maintains emotional stability with appropriate life skills
	1 = Experiencing minor emotional difficulties due to inadequate life skills.
	2 = Poor emotional stability requiring psychological/psychiatric evaluation and treatment.
5.	VIOLENT BEHAVIOR:
	<pre>0== No history of physical violence</pre>
	1 = Involvement in act(s) which resulted in bodily injury to others.
	2 = Involvement in act(s) which have caused serious bodily injury/death to others or a lengthy history of acting out physically.
6.	PHYSICAL ABUSE:
	<pre>0 = No history of being physically abused.</pre>
	1 = The victim of an isolated incident of physical abuse which may or may not present
	<pre>an emotional conflict. 2 = The victim of physical abuse occurring on multiple occasions.</pre>
7.	SEXUAL BEHAVIOR:
, •	0 = No history of inappropriate/illegal sexual behavior.
	1 = Non-predatory sexual behavior such as prostitution or promiscuous activity that may
	be dangerous to health.
	2 = Involvement in predatory sexual behavior by use of force, weapon; or threats. Also includes all sexual offenses with minors.
0	
8.	<pre>PARENTING: 0 = No indication of parenting needs.</pre>
	1 = Any reported evidence of parenting skill needs.
	2 = Any documented record of inadequate parenting skills including but not limited to
	criminal convictions for neglect or abuse.
9.	SEXUAL ABUSE:

No history of being sexually abused.

The victim of sexual abuse as an adult or child.