



# Juvenile Court Statistics 2011

NCJJ | OJJDP



# Online resources

## National Center for Juvenile Justice

[ncjj.org](http://ncjj.org)

NCJJ's Web site describes its research activities, services, and publications, featuring links to project-supported sites and data resources including OJJDP's Statistical Briefing Book, the National Juvenile Court Data Archive, and the MacArthur Foundation's Juvenile Justice Geography, Policy, Practice & Statistics web site.

## OJJDP's Statistical Briefing Book

[ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb](http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb)

The Briefing Book is a comprehensive online resource describing various topics related to delinquency and the juvenile justice system, including the latest information on juveniles living in poverty, teen birth rates, juvenile victims of violent crime, trends in juvenile arrest rates, and youth in residential placement facilities. The Briefing Book is also a repository for more detailed presentations of juvenile court data than are found in the annual *Juvenile Court Statistics* report.

- ◆ Under the "Juveniles in Court" section of the Statistical Briefing Book users will find the latest statistical information on trends in the volume of cases handled by the nation's juvenile courts and the court's response (e.g., detention, adjudication, and disposition decisions) to these cases. Juvenile court data are displayed in an easy-to-read, ready-to-use format, using tables and graphs.
- ◆ The Briefing Book's "Juveniles in Court" section includes an interactive tool that describes how specific types of delinquency cases typically flow through the juvenile justice system. Annual summaries are available from 1985 to present for more than 25 offense categories, and include separate presentations by gender, age, and race.

## National Juvenile Court Data Archive

[ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/njcda](http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/njcda)

The annual *Juvenile Court Statistics* report series is one of many products supported by the National Juvenile Court Data Archive. To learn more, visit the Archive Web site.

- ◆ The Archive Web site was developed to inform researchers about data sets housed in the National Juvenile Court Data Archive and the procedures for access and use of these data. Visitors can view variable lists and download user guides to the data sets. The site also includes links to publications based on analyses of Archive data.
- ◆ Easy Access to Juvenile Court Statistics is an interactive Web-based application that allows users to analyze the actual databases that are used to produce the *Juvenile Court Statistics* report. Users have access to national estimates on more than 40 million delinquency cases processed by the nation's juvenile courts between 1985 and 2011 and can explore trends of and relationships among a youth's demographics and referral offenses, and the court's detention, adjudication, and disposition decisions. Results of analyses can be saved and imported into spreadsheet and word processing software. Users can also view preformatted tables describing the demographic characteristics of youth involved in the juvenile justice system and how juvenile courts process these cases. This application is available from the "Products & Publications" section on the Archive Web site.
- ◆ Easy Access to State and County Juvenile Court Case Counts gives users quick access to multiple years of state and county juvenile court case counts for delinquency, status offense, and dependency cases. This application is available from the "Products & Publications" section on the Archive Web site.

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# Juvenile Court Statistics 2011

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## Report

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July 2014

National Center for Juvenile Justice

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# Foreword

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Since its passage in 1974, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act has changed the way states and communities deal with youthful offenders. As directed by the Act, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) helps state and local governments prevent and control juvenile delinquency and improve the juvenile justice system. A second and equally important focus of the JJDP Act and, therefore, OJJDP is to protect youth in the system from inappropriate placements and from the harm—both physical and psychological—that young offenders can experience when they are exposed to adult inmates.

OJJDP envisions a system where confinement is employed only to protect public safety and every youth is treated fairly. Youth who enter the system should receive the services and treatment that they may need. OJJDP places a very high priority on reinforcing a prosocial identity, keeping youth in touch with their families and other caring adults, providing as little disruption as possible in their schooling, and providing, where necessary, substance abuse and mental health treatment and trauma-informed care.

America's juvenile courts have a critical role to play in realizing these goals and fostering a more supportive and fair juvenile justice system. Juvenile Court Statistics 2011, which the National Juvenile Court Data Archive compiled and produced, chronicles the progress that has been made over the years and highlights the challenges that remain. This report profiles approximately 1.2 million delinquency cases that U.S. courts with juvenile jurisdiction handled in 2011. It also describes trends in delinquency cases that juvenile courts processed between 1985 and 2011 and the status offense cases they handled between 1995 and 2011. One challenge that remains is producing credible estimates that include details on cases involving youth of Hispanic ethnicity and that will be a focus of the project moving forward.

Much of the information contained in this report is available online through OJJDP's Statistical Briefing Book [[ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb](http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb)], which includes a series of Frequently Asked Questions on Juveniles in Court and the data analysis tool, Easy Access to Juvenile Court Statistics. Both can be found on the OJJDP Web site.

Data and research form the foundation of our efforts to create a more responsive juvenile justice system. Within these pages, policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and other concerned citizens will find a broad array of useful data to support their endeavors.

**Robert L. Listenbee**  
*Administrator*  
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention



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# Acknowledgments

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*Juvenile Court Statistics* would not be possible were it not for the state and local agencies that take the time each year to honor our requests for data and documentation. The following agencies contributed case-level data or court-level aggregate statistics for this Report:

**Alabama**—State of Alabama, Administrative Office of the Courts.

**Alaska**—Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice.

**Arizona**—Supreme Court, State of Arizona, Administrative Office of the Courts.

**Arkansas**—Administrative Office of the Courts, State of Arkansas.

**California**—Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts; and California Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center.

**Colorado**—Colorado Judicial Branch.

**Connecticut**—Judicial Branch Administration, Court Support Services and Court Operations Divisions.

**Delaware**—Delaware Family Court, Administrative Office of the Courts.

**District of Columbia**—Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

**Florida**—State of Florida Department of Juvenile Justice.

**Georgia**—Judicial Council of Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts; Georgia Council of Juvenile Court Judges; and Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice.

**Hawaii**—Family Court of the First Circuit, The Judiciary, State of Hawaii.

**Idaho**—Idaho Supreme Court.

**Illinois**—Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, Probation Services Division; and Juvenile Court of Cook County.

**Indiana**—Supreme Court of Indiana, Division of State Court Administration.

**Iowa**—Iowa Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning.

**Kansas**—Supreme Court of Kansas, Office of Judicial Administration.

**Kentucky**—Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts.

**Louisiana**—State of Louisiana, Office of Juvenile Justice.

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**Massachusetts**—Administrative Office of the Courts.

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**Missouri**—Office of State Court Administrator.

**Montana**—Office of State Court Administrator, Youth Court Services.

**Nebraska**—Nebraska Crime Commission.

**New Jersey**—Administrative Office of the Courts.

**New Mexico**—Children, Youth and Families Department.

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**North Carolina**—North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

**North Dakota**—North Dakota Supreme Court, State Court Administrator's Office.

**Ohio**—Supreme Court of Ohio; Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court Division; Franklin County Court of Common Pleas; and Hamilton County Juvenile Court.

**Oklahoma**—Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs.

**Oregon**—Oregon Youth Authority.

**Pennsylvania**—Juvenile Court Judges' Commission.

**Rhode Island**—Rhode Island Family Court.

**South Carolina**—Department of Juvenile Justice.

**South Dakota**—Unified Judicial System.

**Tennessee**—Tennessee Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

**Texas**—Texas Juvenile Justice Department.

**Utah**—Utah Administrative Office of the Courts.

**Vermont**—Vermont Court Administrator's Office.

**Virginia**—Department of Juvenile Justice; and Virginia Supreme Court.

**Washington**—Office of the Administrator for the Courts.

**West Virginia**—West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals Administrative Office, Court Services Division.

**Wisconsin**—Supreme Court of Wisconsin.

**Wyoming**—Wyoming District Court.



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# Preface

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*Juvenile Court Statistics 2011* describes delinquency cases handled between 1985 and 2011 and petitioned status offense cases handled between 1995 and 2011 by U.S. courts with juvenile jurisdiction. National estimates of juvenile court delinquency caseloads in 2011 were based on analyses of 910,063 automated case records and court-level statistics summarizing an additional 51,569 cases. Estimates of status offense cases formally processed by juvenile courts in 2011 were based on analyses of 80,837 automated case-level records and court-level summary statistics on an additional 6,285 cases. The data used in the analyses were contributed to the National Juvenile Court Data Archive (the Archive) by more than 2,400 courts with jurisdiction over 85% of the juvenile population in 2011.

The first *Juvenile Court Statistics* report was published in 1929 by the U.S. Department of Labor and described cases handled by 42 courts during 1927. During the next decade, *Juvenile Court Statistics* reports were based on statistics cards completed for each delinquency, status offense, and dependency case handled by the courts participating in the reporting series. The Children's Bureau (within the U.S. Department of Labor) tabulated the information on each card, including age, gender, and race of the

juvenile; the reason for referral; the manner of dealing with the case; and the final disposition of the case. During the 1940s, however, the collection of case-level data was abandoned because of its high cost. From the 1940s until the mid-1970s, *Juvenile Court Statistics* reports were based on simple, annual case counts reported to the Children's Bureau by participating courts.

In 1957, the Children's Bureau initiated a new data collection design that enabled the *Juvenile Court Statistics* series to develop statistically sound national estimates. The Children's Bureau, which had been transferred to the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), developed a probability sample of more than 500 courts. Each court in the sample was asked to submit annual counts of delinquency, status offense, and dependency cases. This approach, though, proved difficult to sustain as courts began to drop out of the sample. At the same time, a growing number of courts outside the sample began to compile comparable statistics. By the late 1960s, HEW ended the sample-based effort and returned to the policy of collecting annual case counts from any court able to provide them. The *Juvenile Court Statistics* series, however, continued to generate national estimates based on data from these nonprobability samples.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) became responsible for *Juvenile Court Statistics* following the passage of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. In 1975, OJJDP awarded the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) a grant to continue the report series. Although NCJJ agreed to use procedures established by HEW to ensure reporting continuity, NCJJ also began to investigate methods of improving the quality and detail of national statistics. A critical

innovation was made possible by the proliferation of computers during the 1970s. As NCJJ asked agencies across the country to complete the annual juvenile court statistics form, some agencies began offering to send the detailed, automated case-level data collected by their management information systems. NCJJ learned to combine these automated records to produce a detailed national portrait of juvenile court activity—returning to the original objective of the *Juvenile Court Statistics* series.

The project's transition from using annual case counts to analyzing automated case-level data was completed with the production of *Juvenile Court Statistics 1984*. For the first time since the 1930s, *Juvenile Court Statistics* contained detailed case-level descriptions of the delinquency and status offense cases handled by U.S. juvenile courts. This case-level detail continues to be the emphasis of the reporting series.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

This Report describes delinquency cases handled between 1985 and 2011 by U.S. courts with juvenile jurisdiction and status offense cases handled between 1995 and 2011. Courts with juvenile jurisdiction may handle a variety of matters, including child maltreatment, traffic violations, child support, and adoptions. This Report focuses on cases involving juveniles charged with law violations (delinquency or status offenses).

### Unit of Count

In measuring the activity of juvenile courts, one could count the number of offenses referred; the number of cases referred; the actual filings of offenses, cases, or petitions; the number of disposition hearings; or the number of juveniles handled. Each “unit of count” has its own merits and disadvantages. The unit of count used in *Juvenile Court Statistics (JCS)* is the number of “cases disposed.”

A “case” represents a juvenile processed by a juvenile court on a new referral, regardless of the number of law violations contained in the referral. A juvenile charged with four burglaries in a single referral would represent a single case. A juvenile referred for three burglaries and referred again the following week on another burglary charge would

represent two cases, even if the court eventually merged the two referrals for more efficient processing.

The fact that a case is “disposed” means that a definite action was taken as the result of the referral—i.e., a plan of treatment was selected or initiated. It does not necessarily mean that a case was closed or terminated in the sense that all contact between the court and the juvenile ceased. For example, a case is considered to be disposed when the court orders probation, not when a term of probation supervision is completed.

### Coverage

A basic question for this reporting series is what constitutes a referral to juvenile court. The answer depends partly on how each jurisdiction organizes its case-screening function. In many communities, an intake unit within the juvenile court first screens all juvenile matters. The intake unit determines whether the matter should be handled informally (i.e., diverted) or petitioned for formal handling. In data files from communities using this type of system, a delinquency or status offense case is defined as a court referral at the point of initial screening, regardless of whether it is handled formally or informally.

In other communities, the juvenile court is not involved in delinquency or status offense matters until another agency (e.g., the prosecutor's office or a social service agency) has first screened the case. In other words, the intake function is performed outside the court, and some matters are diverted to other agencies without the court ever handling them. Status offense cases, in particular, tend to be diverted from court processing in this manner.

Since its inception, *Juvenile Court Statistics* has adapted to the changing structure of juvenile court processing nationwide. As court processing became more diverse, the *JCS* series broadened its definition of the juvenile court to incorporate other agencies that perform what can generically be considered juvenile court functions. In some communities, data collection has expanded to include departments of youth services, child welfare agencies, and prosecutors' offices. In other communities, this expansion has not been possible. Therefore, while there is extensive data coverage in the *JCS* series of formally handled delinquency cases and adequate data coverage of informally handled delinquency cases and formally handled status offense cases, the data coverage of informally handled status offense cases is limited and is not sufficient to support the generation of national estimates. For this reason, *JCS* reports do not present any information on informally handled status offense cases. (Sub-national analyses of these cases are available from the National Juvenile Court Data Archive [the Archive].)

## Juvenile Court Processing

Any attempt to describe juvenile court caseloads at the national level must be based on a generic model of court processing to serve as a common framework. In order to analyze and present data about juvenile court

activities in diverse jurisdictions, the Archive strives to fit the processing characteristics of all jurisdictions into the following general model:

**Intake.** An intake department (either within or outside the court) first screens referred cases. The intake department may decide to dismiss the case for lack of legal sufficiency or to resolve the matter formally or informally. Informal (i.e., nonpetitioned) dispositions may include a voluntary referral to a social service agency, informal probation, or the payment of fines or some form of voluntary restitution. Formally handled cases are petitioned and scheduled in court for an adjudicatory or waiver hearing.

**Judicial Waiver.** The intake department may decide that a case should be removed from juvenile court and handled instead in criminal (adult) court. In such cases, a petition is usually filed in juvenile court asking the juvenile court judge to waive juvenile court jurisdiction over the case. The juvenile court judge decides whether the case merits criminal prosecution.<sup>1</sup> When a waiver request is denied, the matter is usually then scheduled for an adjudicatory hearing in the juvenile court.

**Petitioning.** If the intake department decides that a case should be handled formally within the juvenile court, a petition is filed and the case is placed on the court calendar (or docket) for an adjudicatory hearing. A small number of petitions are dismissed for various reasons before an adjudicatory hearing is actually held.

<sup>1</sup>Mechanisms of transfer to criminal court vary by state. In some states, a prosecutor has the authority to file juvenile cases directly in criminal court if they meet specified criteria. This Report, however, includes only cases that were initially under juvenile court jurisdiction and were transferred as a result of judicial waiver.

**Adjudication.** At the adjudicatory hearing, a juvenile may be adjudicated (judged) a delinquent or status offender, and the case would then proceed to a disposition hearing. Alternatively, a case can be dismissed or continued in contemplation of dismissal. In these cases, the court often recommends that the juvenile take some actions prior to the final adjudication decision, such as paying restitution or voluntarily attending drug counseling.

**Disposition.** At the disposition hearing, the juvenile court judge determines the most appropriate sanction, generally after reviewing a predisposition report prepared by a probation department. The range of options available to a court typically includes commitment to an institution; placement in a group home or other residential facility or perhaps in a foster home; probation (either regular or intensive supervision); referral to an outside agency, day treatment, or mental health program; or imposition of a fine, community service, or restitution. Disposition orders often involve multiple sanctions and/or conditions. Review hearings are held to monitor the juvenile's progress. Dispositions may be modified as a result. This Report includes only the most severe initial disposition in each case.

**Detention.** A juvenile may be placed in a detention facility at different points as a case progresses through the juvenile justice system. Detention practices also vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. A judicial decision to detain or continue detention may occur before or after adjudication or disposition. This Report includes only those detention actions that result in a juvenile being placed in a restrictive facility under court authority while awaiting the outcome of the court process. This Report does not include detention decisions made by law enforcement officials prior to court intake or those occurring after

the disposition of a case (e.g., temporary holding of a juvenile in a detention facility while awaiting court-ordered placement elsewhere).

### Data Quality

*Juvenile Court Statistics* relies on the secondary analysis of data originally compiled by juvenile courts or juvenile justice agencies to meet their own information and reporting needs. Although these incoming data files are not uniform across jurisdictions, they are likely to be more detailed and accurate than data files compiled by local jurisdictions merely complying with a mandated national reporting program.

The heterogeneity of the contributed data files greatly increases the complexity of the Archive's data processing tasks. Contributing jurisdictions collect and report information using their own definitions and coding categories. Therefore, the detail reported in some data sets is not contained in others. Even when similar data elements are used, they may have inconsistent definitions or overlapping coding categories. The Archive restructures contributed data into standardized coding categories in order to combine information from multiple sources. The standardization process requires an intimate understanding of the development, structure, and content of each data set received. Codebooks and operation manuals are studied, data providers interviewed, and data files analyzed to maximize the understanding of each information system. Every attempt is made to ensure that only compatible information from the various data sets is used in the standardized data files.

While the heterogeneity of the data adds complexity to the development of a national data file, it has proven to be valuable in other ways. The diversity of the data stored in the National

Juvenile Court Data Archive enables the data to support a wider range of research efforts than would a uniform, and probably more general, data collection form. For example, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program is limited by necessity to a small number of relatively broad offense codes. The UCR offense code for larceny-theft combines shoplifting with a number of other larcenies. Thus, the data are useless for studies of shoplifting. In comparison, many of the Archive's data sets are sufficiently detailed to enable a researcher to distinguish offenses that are often combined in other reporting series—shoplifting can be distinguished from other larcenies, joyriding from motor vehicle theft, and armed robbery from unarmed robbery. The diversity of these coding structures allows researchers to construct data sets that contain the detail demanded by their research designs.

### Validity of the Estimates

The national delinquency and status offense estimates presented in this Report were generated with data from a large nonprobability sample of juvenile courts. Therefore, statistical confidence in the estimates cannot be mathematically determined. Although statistical confidence would be greater if a probability sampling design were used, the cost of such an effort has long been considered prohibitive. Secondary analysis of available data is the best practical alternative for developing an understanding of the nation's juvenile courts.

National estimates of delinquency cases for 2011 are based on analyses of individual case records from nearly 2,300 courts and aggregate court-level data on cases from more than 200 additional courts. Together, these courts had jurisdiction over 85% of the U.S. juvenile population in 2011. National estimates of petitioned

status offense cases for 2011 are based on case records from more than 2,100 courts and court-level data from 159 additional courts, covering 79% of the juvenile population. The imputation and weighting procedures that generate national estimates from these samples control for many factors: the size of a community, the age and race composition of its juvenile population, the volume of cases referred to the reporting courts, the age and race of the juveniles involved, the offense characteristics of the cases, the courts' responses to the cases (manner of handling, detention, adjudication, and disposition), and the nature of each court's jurisdictional responsibilities (i.e., upper age of original jurisdiction).

### Structure of the Report

Chapters 2 and 3 of this Report present national estimates of delinquency cases handled by the juvenile courts in 2011 and analyze caseload trends since 1985. Chapter 2 describes the volume and rate of delinquency cases, demographic characteristics of the juveniles involved (age, gender, and race), and offenses charged. Chapter 3 traces the flow of delinquency cases from referral to court through court processing, examining each decision point (i.e., detention, intake decision, adjudication decision, and judicial disposition), and presenting data by demographic characteristics and offense. Together, these two chapters provide a detailed national portrait of delinquency cases.

Chapter 4 presents national estimates of status offense cases formally handled by the juvenile courts in 2011 and caseload trends since 1995. It includes data on demographic characteristics, offenses charged, and case processing.

Appendix A describes the statistical procedure used to generate these

estimates. Readers are encouraged to consult appendix B for definitions of key terms used throughout the Report. Few terms in the field of juvenile justice have widely accepted definitions. The terminology used in this Report has been carefully developed to communicate the findings of the work as precisely as possible without sacrificing applicability to multiple jurisdictions.

This Report uses a format that combines tables, figures, and text highlights for presentation of the data. A detailed index of tables and figures appears at the end of the Report.

### Data Access

The data used in this Report are stored in the National Juvenile Court Data Archive at the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) in Pittsburgh, PA. The Archive contains the most detailed information available

on juveniles involved in the juvenile justice system and on the activities of U.S. juvenile courts. Designed to facilitate research on the juvenile justice system, the Archive's data files are available to policymakers, researchers, and students. In addition to national data files, state and local data can be provided to researchers. With the assistance of Archive staff, researchers can merge selected files for cross-jurisdictional and longitudinal analyses. Upon request, project staff is also available to perform special analyses of the Archive's data files.

Researchers are encouraged to explore the National Juvenile Court Data Archive Web site at [ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/njcda/](http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/njcda/) for a summary of Archive holdings and procedures for data access. Researchers may also contact the Archive directly at 412-227-6950.

### Other Sources of Juvenile Court Data

With support from OJJDP, NCJJ has developed two Web-based data analysis and dissemination applications that provide access to the data used for this Report. The first of these applications, *Easy Access to Juvenile Court Statistics 1985–2011*, was developed to facilitate independent analysis of the national delinquency estimates presented in this Report while eliminating the need for statistical analysis software. It also enables users to view preformatted tables, beyond those included in this Report, describing the demographic characteristics of youth involved in the juvenile justice system and how juvenile courts process these cases. The second application, *Easy Access to State and County Juvenile Court Case Counts*, presents annual counts of the delinquency, status offense, and dependency cases processed in juvenile courts, by state and county. These applications are available from OJJDP's Statistical Briefing Book at [ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb](http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb).



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# Chapter 2

## National Estimates of Delinquency Cases

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Delinquency offenses are acts committed by juveniles that, if committed by an adult, could result in criminal prosecution. This chapter documents the volume of delinquency cases referred to juvenile court and examines the characteristics of these cases, including types of offenses charged and demographic characteristics of the juveniles involved (age, gender, and race).

Analysis of case rates permits comparisons of juvenile court activity over time while controlling for differences in the size and demographic characteristics of the juvenile population. Rates are calculated as the

number of cases for every 1,000 juveniles in the population—those age 10 or older who were under the jurisdiction of a juvenile court.<sup>1</sup>

The chapter focuses on cases disposed in 2011 and examines trends since 1985.

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<sup>1</sup> The upper age of juvenile court jurisdiction is defined by statute in each state. See appendix B, the “Glossary of Terms,” for a more detailed discussion on the upper age of juvenile court jurisdiction. Case rates presented in this Report control for state variations in juvenile population.

# Counts and Trends

- In 2011, courts with juvenile jurisdiction handled an estimated 1,236,200 delinquency cases.
- In 1960, approximately 1,100 delinquency cases were processed daily. In 2011, juvenile courts handled about 3,400 delinquency cases per day.
- The number of delinquency cases processed by juvenile courts increased 7% between 1985 and 2011.
- Between its peak year 1997 and 2011, the delinquency caseload declined 34%.
- Between 1997 and 2011, the number of cases decreased for all offense categories: property 49%, person 25%, drugs 20%, and public order 17%.
- Person offense cases and public order offense cases accounted for most of the growth in the delinquency caseload between 1985 and 2011.

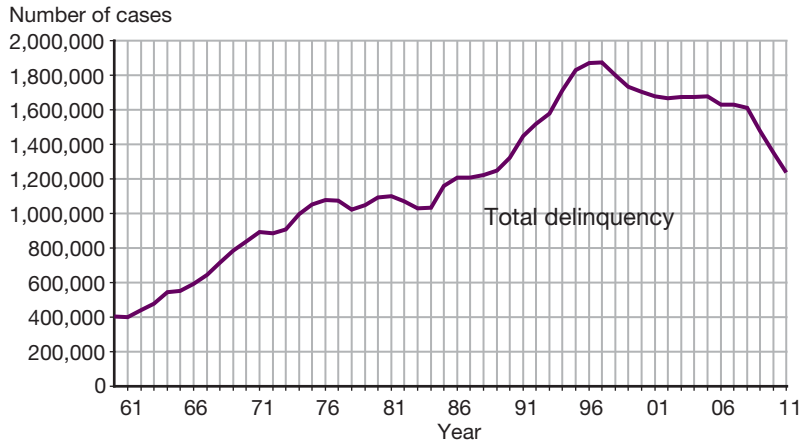
### Offense profile of delinquency cases:

Most serious offense	2002	2011
Person	24%	26%
Property	40	36
Drugs	11	12
Public order	25	26
Total	100%	100%

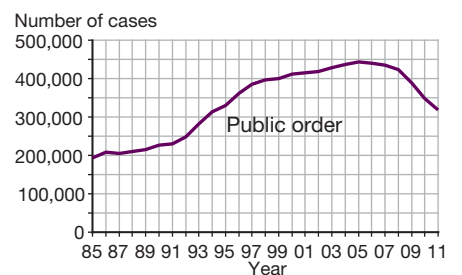
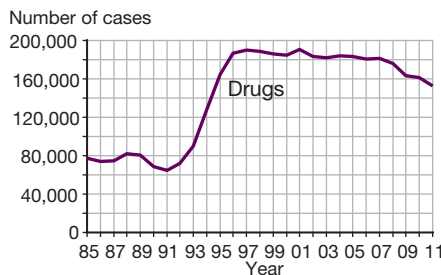
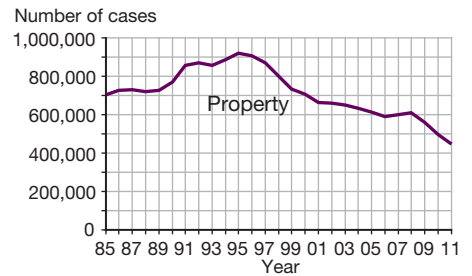
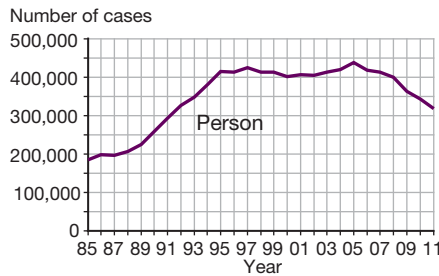
**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

- The offense profile of the court's delinquency caseload was similar in 2002 and 2011.

### Between 1960 and 2011, juvenile court delinquency caseloads tripled (205%)



### Between 1985 and 2011, delinquency caseloads involving drug offenses nearly doubled, while person offenses increased 72%, and public order increased 64%; in contrast, the property offense caseload decreased 36%



## Counts and Trends

**In the last 10 years (2002–2011), the number of cases handled by juvenile courts has decreased for almost all offenses**

Most serious offense	Number of cases 2011	Percent change			
		1985–2011	10 year 2002–2011	5 year 2007–2011	1 year 2010–2011
<b>Total delinquency</b>	<b>1,236,200</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>-26%</b>	<b>-24%</b>	<b>-8%</b>
<b>Total person</b>	<b>317,500</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>-22</b>	<b>-23</b>	<b>-7</b>
Violent Crime Index*	61,500	3	-15	-28	-10
Criminal homicide	900	-26	-40	-39	-14
Forcible rape	5,700	64	-12	-12	1
Robbery	23,200	-8	10	-27	-12
Aggravated assault	31,600	6	-27	-31	-11
Simple assault	221,300	110	-23	-21	-7
Other violent sex offenses	10,800	30	-20	-16	-3
Other person offenses	23,900	119	-24	-30	-7
<b>Total property</b>	<b>447,500</b>	<b>-36</b>	<b>-32</b>	<b>-26</b>	<b>-10</b>
Property Crime Index**	317,500	-39	-32	-21	-10
Burglary	79,800	-44	-28	-23	-8
Larceny-theft	219,700	-34	-29	-17	-10
Motor vehicle theft	12,700	-67	-66	-52	-16
Arson	5,400	-18	-39	-32	-2
Vandalism	70,400	-18	-29	-36	-11
Trespassing	39,300	-26	-27	-29	-10
Stolen property offenses	12,000	-56	-46	-36	-13
Other property offenses	8,200	-55	-59	-43	-11
<b>Drug law violations</b>	<b>152,600</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>-17</b>	<b>-16</b>	<b>-5</b>
<b>Public order offenses</b>	<b>318,600</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>-24</b>	<b>-27</b>	<b>-9</b>
Obstruction of justice	149,700	125	-24	-22	-8
Disorderly conduct	90,200	101	-23	-31	-9
Weapons offenses	26,400	31	-19	-35	-9
Liquor law violations	14,400	-20	-5	-29	-11
Nonviolent sex offenses	11,700	-7	-26	-6	-3
Other public order offenses	26,300	-18	-34	-37	-11

\* Includes criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

\*\* Includes burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. Percent change calculations are based on unrounded numbers.

- Compared with 2002, juvenile courts handled 10% more robbery cases in 2011.
- Between 2002 and 2011, offenses with the largest percentage decrease in caseloads included motor vehicle theft (66%), stolen property offenses (46%), and arson (39%).
- Trends in juvenile court cases paralleled trends in arrests of persons younger than 18. The number of juvenile court cases involving offenses included in the FBI's Violent Crime Index<sup>2</sup> (criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) fell 10% between 2010 and 2011. The FBI reported that the number of arrests involving persons younger than age 18 charged with Violent Crime Index offenses also dropped 10% during this same period.
- Between 2010 and 2011, the volume of juvenile court cases involving Property Crime Index offenses (burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson) declined 10%, and the FBI reported that arrests of persons under age 18 for Property Crime Index offenses decreased 9%.

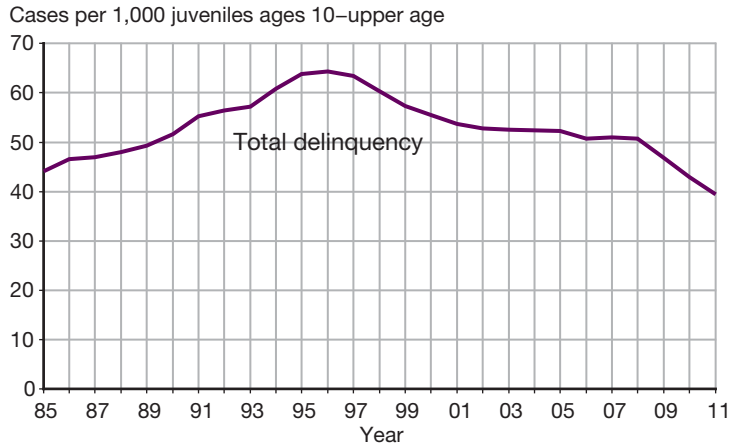
<sup>2</sup> The annual series of reports from the FBI, *Crime in the United States*, provides information on arrests in offense categories that have become part of the common vocabulary of criminal justice statistics. The *Crime in the United States* series tracks changes in the general nature of arrests through the use of two indexes, the Violent Crime Index and the Property Crime Index. Although they do not contain all violent or all property offenses, the indexes serve as a barometer of criminal activity in the United States. The arrest trends reported above are from *Crime in the United States 2011*.

# Case Rates

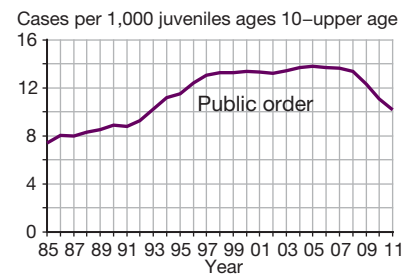
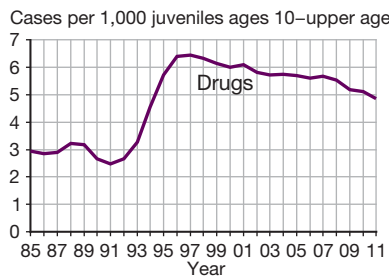
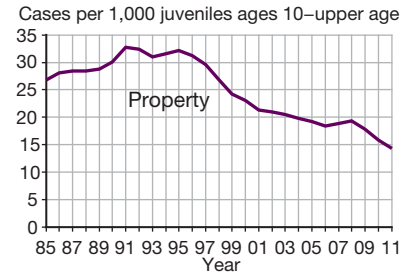
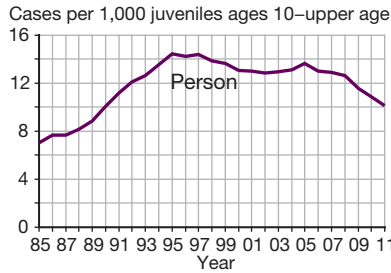
- More than 31 million youth were under juvenile court jurisdiction in 2011. Of these youth, 79% were between the ages of 10 and 15, 12% were age 16, and 8% were age 17. The small proportion of 16- and 17-year-olds among the juvenile court population is related to the upper age of juvenile court jurisdiction, which varies by state. In 2011, youth age 16 in 2 states were under the original jurisdiction of the criminal court, as were youth age 17 in an additional 11 states.
- In 2011, juvenile courts processed 39.4 delinquency cases for every 1,000 juveniles in the population—those age 10 or older who were under the jurisdiction of a juvenile court.
- The total delinquency case rate increased 46% between 1985 and 1996 and then declined 39% to the 2011 level. As a result, the overall delinquency case rate in 2011 was 11% below the 1985 level.<sup>3</sup>
- Between 1985 and 2011, case rates increased 65% for drug law violations, 44% for person offenses, and 38% for public order offenses.
- In contrast to other offense categories, case rates for property offenses declined 47% between 1985 and 2011.

<sup>3</sup> The percent change in the number of cases disposed may not be equal to the percent change in case rates because of the changing size of the juvenile population.

## Delinquency case rates rose from 44.1 to 64.3 per 1,000 juveniles between 1985 and 1996, and then declined through 2011 (39.4)



## Between 1985 and 2011, case rates for person offenses increased 44% (from 7.0 to 10.1 per 1,000 juveniles)



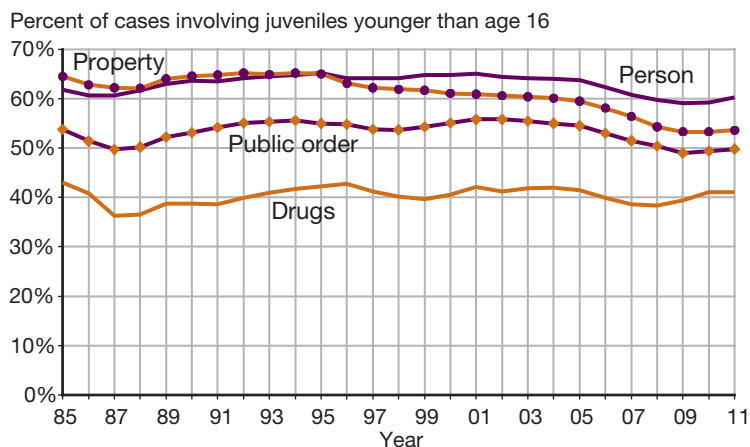
## Age at Referral

**Of the 1,236,200 delinquency cases processed in 2011, 53% involved youth younger than 16, 28% involved females, and 64% involved white youth**

Most serious offense	Number of cases	Percentage of total juvenile court cases, 2011		
		Younger than 16	Female	White
<b>Total delinquency</b>	<b>1,236,200</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>Total person</b>	<b>317,500</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>58</b>
Violent Crime Index	61,500	53	17	45
Criminal homicide	900	33	13	55
Forcible rape	5,700	60	3	70
Robbery	23,200	48	10	29
Aggravated assault	31,600	57	25	52
Simple assault	221,300	62	36	60
Other violent sex offenses	10,800	70	7	65
Other person offenses	23,900	58	30	68
<b>Total property</b>	<b>447,500</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>65</b>
Property Crime Index	317,500	53	34	63
Burglary	79,800	52	10	61
Larceny-theft	219,700	52	43	63
Motor vehicle theft	12,700	47	21	60
Arson	5,400	75	13	73
Vandalism	70,400	61	16	77
Trespassing	39,300	52	20	60
Stolen property offenses	12,000	47	15	56
Other property offenses	8,200	44	28	65
<b>Drug law violations</b>	<b>152,600</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Public order offenses</b>	<b>318,600</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>63</b>
Obstruction of justice	149,700	41	26	63
Disorderly conduct	90,200	63	36	54
Weapons offenses	26,400	58	11	63
Liquor law violations	14,400	36	32	88
Nonviolent sex offenses	11,700	66	20	73
Other public order offenses	26,300	48	25	74

**Note:** Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

**In 2011, juveniles younger than 16 accounted for more than half of all delinquency cases, including 60% of person offense cases**



- The proportion of cases involving juveniles age 15 or younger varied by offense category. Between 1985 and 2011, younger juveniles accounted for a smaller proportion of drug and public order cases than of person and property offense cases.

- In 2011, juveniles younger than 16 accounted for three-quarters (75%) of juvenile arson cases.

### Offense profile of delinquency cases by age group:

Most serious offense	Age 15 or younger	Age 16 or older
<b>2011</b>		
Person	29%	22%
Property	37	36
Drugs	10	15
Public order	24	27
Total	100%	100%
<b>2002</b>		
Person	27%	21%
Property	41	37
Drugs	8	15
Public order	24	27
Total	100%	100%

**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

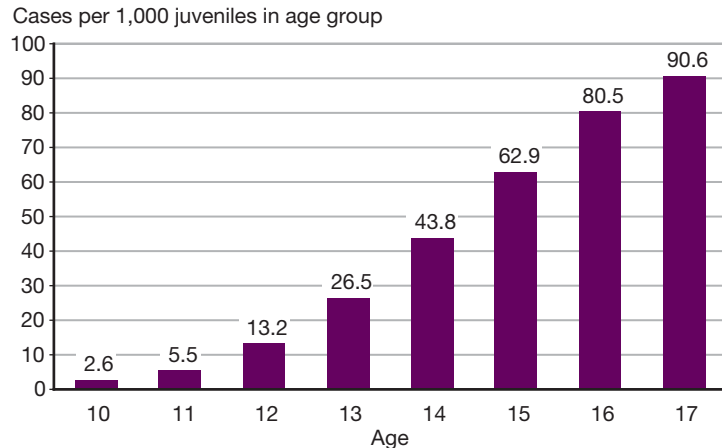
- Compared with the delinquency caseload involving older juveniles, the caseload of youth age 15 or younger in 2011 included larger proportions of person and property offense cases and smaller proportions of drug and public order offense cases.

- Compared with 2002, the caseload in 2011 of younger juveniles involved greater proportions of person, and drugs offense cases, the same proportion of public order offense cases, but a smaller proportion of property offense cases. The 2011 caseload of older juveniles involved a slightly greater proportion of person offense cases, a slightly smaller proportion of property offense cases, and equal proportions of drugs and public order offense cases.

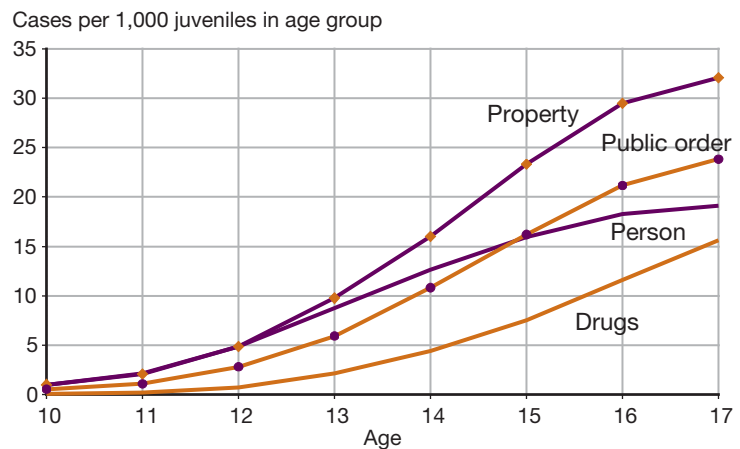
## Age at Referral

- Although more 17-year-olds than 16-year-olds were arrested in 2011 (431,400 vs. 357,600), the number of juvenile court cases involving 17-year-olds (239,900) was lower than the number involving 16-year-olds (310,900). The explanation lies primarily in the fact that in 13 states 17-year-olds are excluded from the original jurisdiction of the juvenile court. In these states, all 17-year-olds are legally adults and are referred to criminal court rather than to juvenile court. Thus, far fewer 17-year-olds than 16-year-olds are subject to original juvenile court jurisdiction.
- In 2011, the delinquency case rate for 17-year-olds (90.6) was more than twice the rate for 14-year-olds (43.8) and more than 3 times the rate for 13-year-olds (26.5).
- The largest increase in case rates between age 13 and age 17 was for drug offenses. The case rate for drug offenses for 17-year-old juveniles (15.6) was more than 7 times the rate for 13-year-olds (2.1).
- For public order offenses in 2011, the case rate for 17-year-olds (23.8) was 4 times the rate for 13-year-olds (5.9) and the property offense case rate for 17-year-olds (32.1) was more than 3 times the rate for 13-year-olds (9.8).
- For cases involving person offenses, the case rate for 17-year-olds (19.1) was more than double the rate for 13-year-olds (8.7).

### In 2011, delinquency case rates increased with the referral age of the juvenile



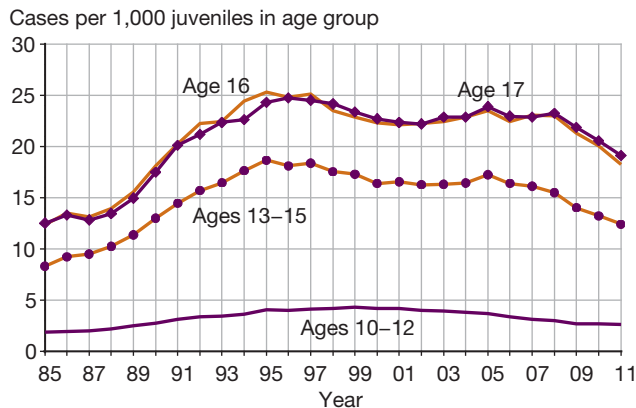
### Case rates increased continuously with age for property, drug, and public order offense cases, while person offense case rates leveled off after age 16



# Age at Referral

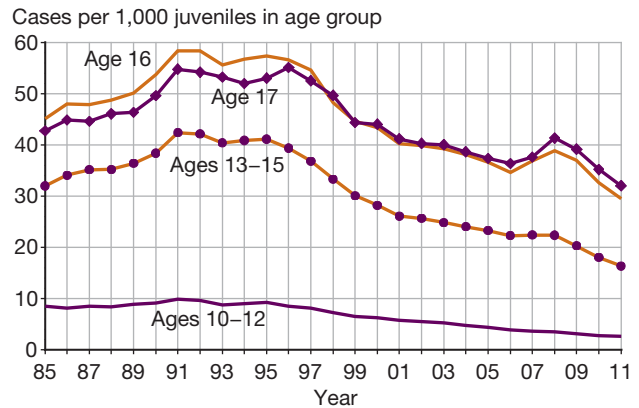
Trends in case rates were similar across age groups between 1985 and 2011 for each general offense category

## Person offense case rates



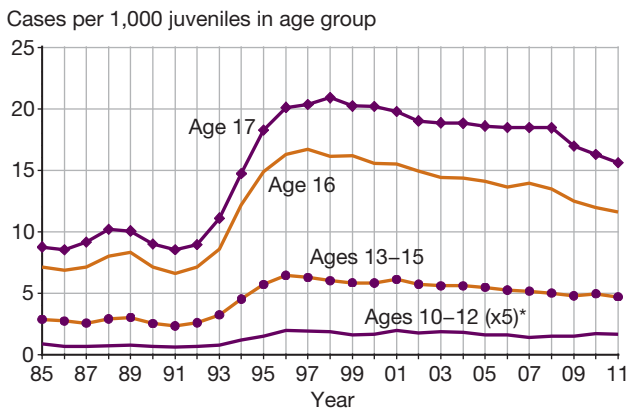
- With the exception of 10- to 12-year-olds, person offense case rates increased from 1985 through the mid-1990s and then declined through 2000. For youth ages 10–12, person offense case rates increased through 1999.
- Since reaching their peak, person offense case rates for all age groups declined through 2011 — down 39% for youth ages 10–12, 33% for youth ages 13–15, 28% for 16-year-olds, and 23% for 17-year-olds.

## Property offense case rates



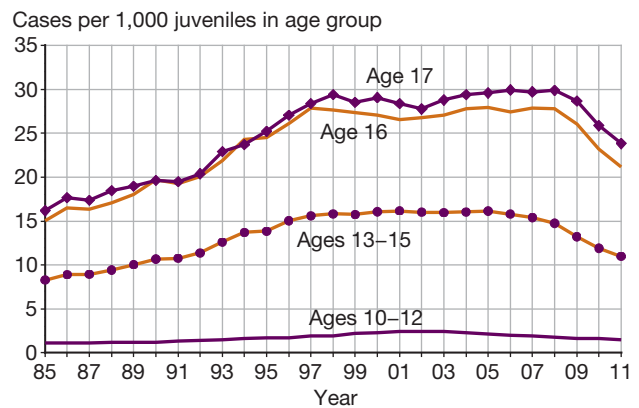
- Property offense case rates peaked in the early to mid-1990s for all age groups and then declined through 2011.
- Property offense case rates were lower in 2011 than in 1985 for all age groups. In 2011, the case rate for juveniles ages 10–12 was 69% less than the 1985 rate, the rate for juveniles ages 13–15 was 49% less, the rate for 16-year-olds was 35% less, and the rate for 17-year-olds was 25% less.

## Drug offense case rates



- With the exception of 17-year-olds, drug offense case rates were at their lowest for all age groups in 1991 and increased dramatically through the peak years: 229% to the 2001 peak for juveniles ages 10–12, 177% to the 1996 peak for youth ages 13–15, and 153% to the 1997 peak for 16-year-olds. The case rate for 17-year-olds was at its lowest in 1986 and increased 146% to its 1998 peak.

## Public order offense case rates



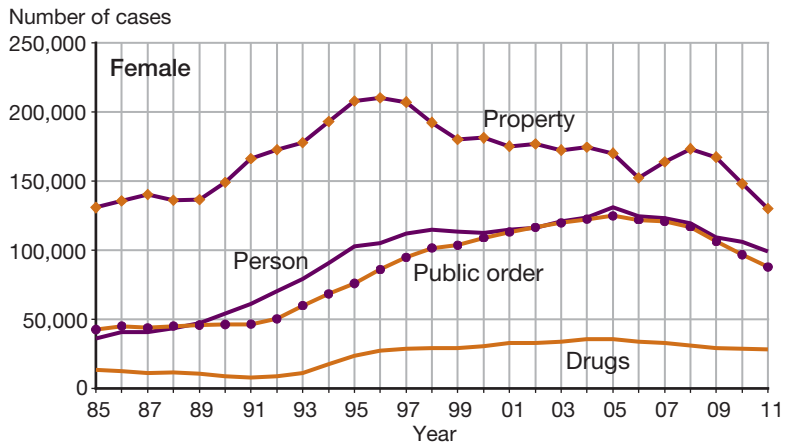
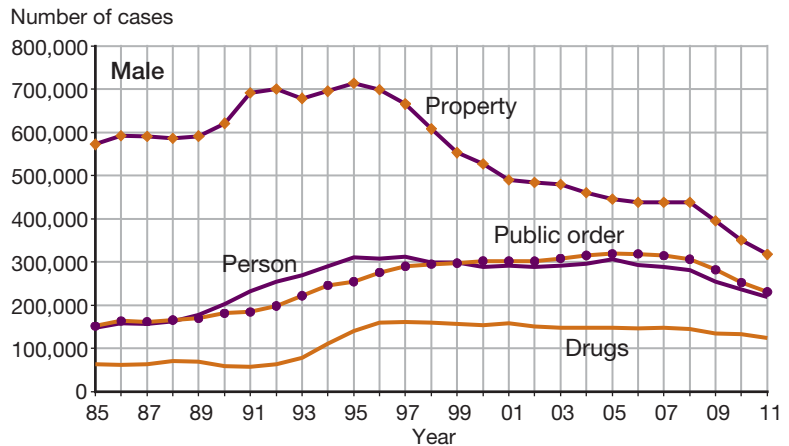
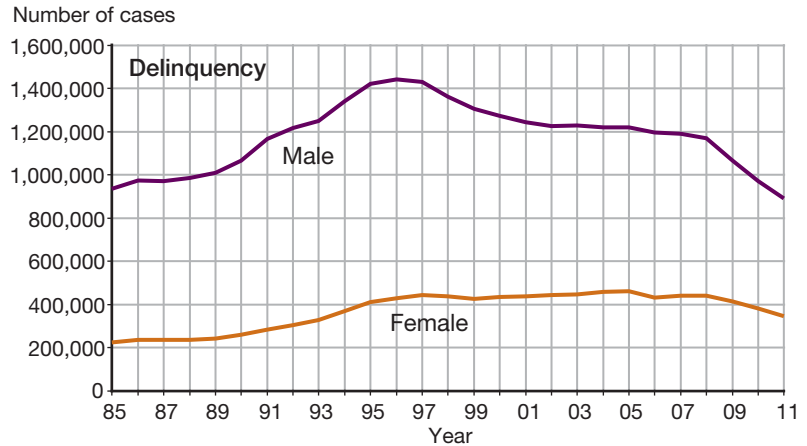
- Public order offense case rates nearly doubled between 1985 and each age group's peak year in the early to mid-2000s.
- Since reaching the peaks, public order offense case rates decreased by at least 20% by 2011 for each age group.

\* Because of the relatively low volume of cases involving youth ages 10–12 for drug offenses, their case rates are inflated by a factor of 5 to display the trend over time.

# Gender

- Males were involved in 72% (891,100) of the delinquency cases handled by juvenile courts in 2011.
- Overall, the female delinquency caseload grew at an average rate of 2% per year between 1985 and 2011, while the average rate increase was less than 1% per year for males.
- Most of the growth in the male and female delinquency caseloads took place between 1985 and 1997. During that time, the growth in the female caseload outpaced the growth in the male caseload (98% vs. 53%).
- Between 1997 and 2011, the male delinquency caseload declined 38%, while the female caseload decreased 22%.
- The average annual growth in the female caseload outpaced that for males for all offense categories between 1985 and 2011.
- The number of property offense cases involving males peaked in 1995, and the female caseload peaked in 1996. Between their respective peaks and 2011, the male caseload declined 56% while the female caseload fell 38%.
- Most of the growth in the male and female drug offense caseloads occurred in the 1990s. During this period, the female drug offense caseload grew at an average rate of 16% per year while the male caseload increased at an average rate of 12% per year.
- The public order offense caseload increased steadily for males and females, reaching a peak in 2005 for both groups. Since the 2005 peak, the public order caseload declined 30% for females and 28% for males.

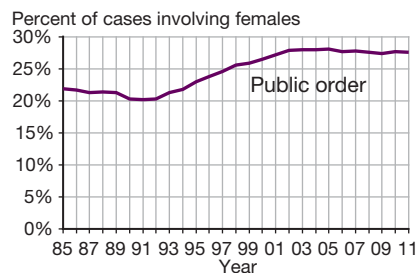
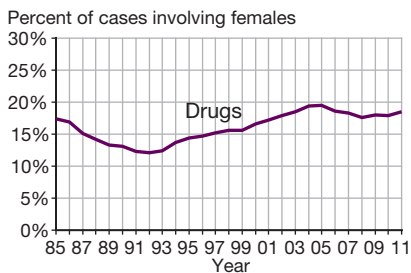
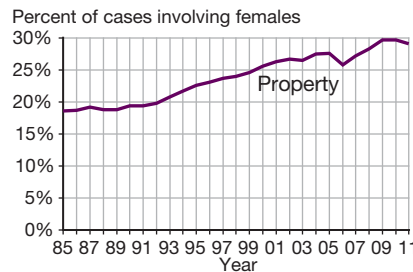
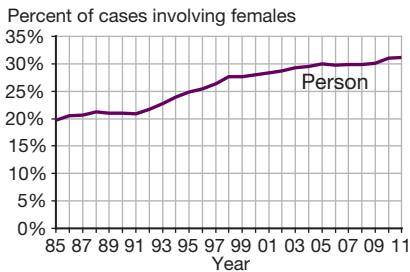
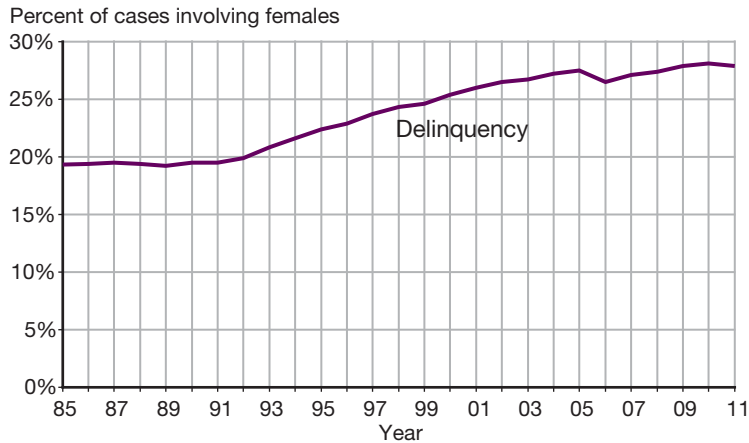
**Between 1985 and 2011, the number of delinquency cases involving females increased 55% (from 223,300 to 345,100 cases); for males, the caseload decreased 5% (from 935,100 to 891,100 cases)**





# Gender

**Females accounted for 28% of the delinquency caseload in 2011 — up from 19% in 1985**



Between 1985 and 2011, the female proportion of the person offense caseload has steadily increased from 20% to 31%.

### Offense profile of delinquency cases for males and females:

Most serious offense	Male	Female
<b>2011</b>		
Person	25%	29%
Property	36	38
Drugs	14	8
Public order	26	25
Total	100%	100%
<b>2002</b>		
Person	24%	26%
Property	40	40
Drugs	12	7
Public order	25	26
Total	100%	100%

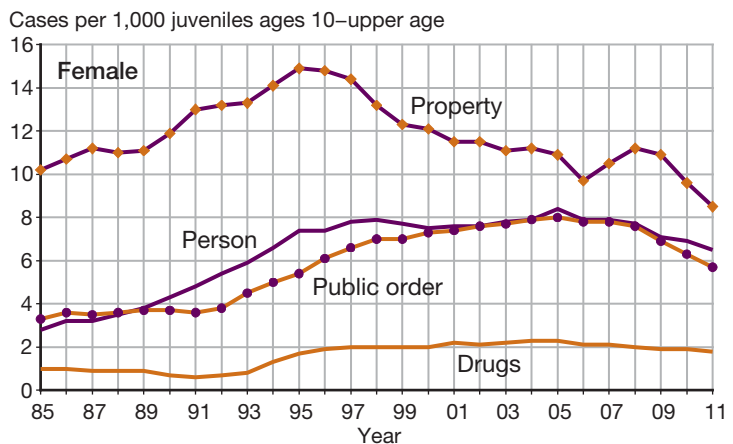
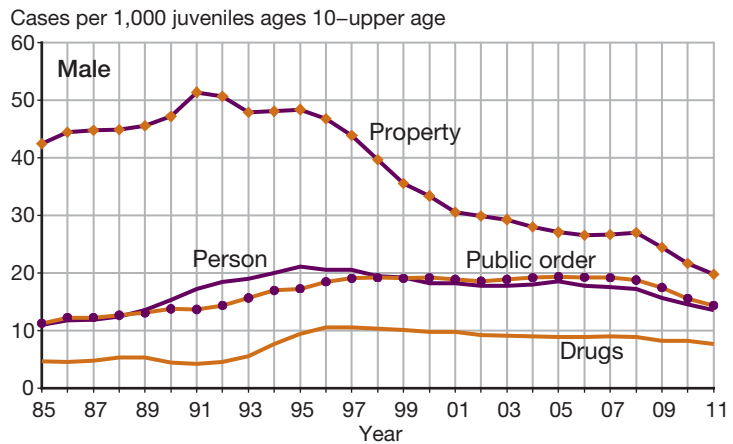
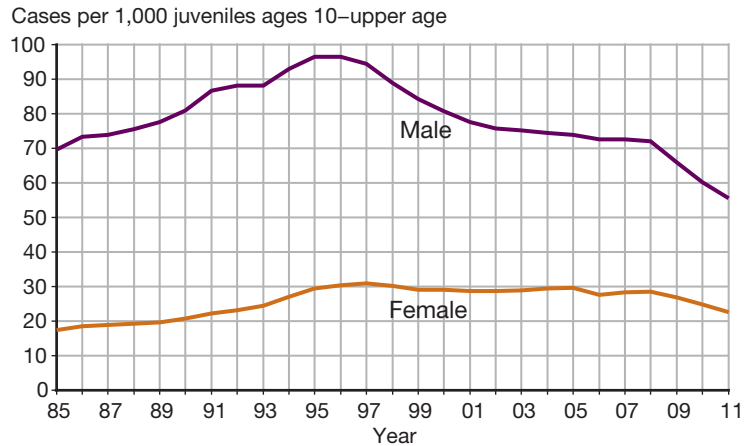
**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

- For both males and females, the property offense proportions of the delinquency caseloads were less in 2011 than in 2002.
- In 2011, the male caseload contained a greater proportion of drug offenses than the female caseload.
- The male and female caseloads contained similar proportions of person, property, and public order offenses in 2011.

# Gender

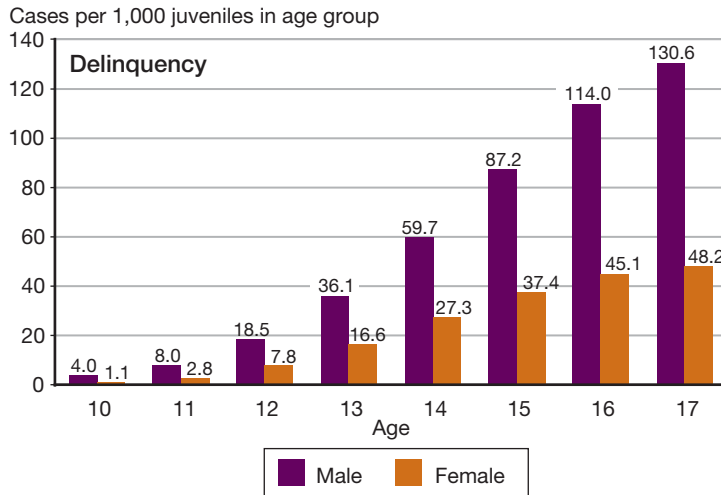
- For both males and females, the delinquency case rate increased from 1985 through the mid-1990s. For males, the rate increased 39% to its peak in 1996 and then fell 43% by 2011. The female rate grew 77% between 1985 and 1997 then dropped 27% through 2011.
- In 1985, the delinquency case rate for males was 4 times greater than the rate for females; by 2011, the male rate was about 2.5 times the female rate: 55.5 compared with 22.5.
- While property offense case rates declined 59% for males between 1995 and 2011, they fluctuated for females during the same time period. The female property offense case rate increased 46% between 1985 and 1995, then decreased 43% to its lowest level in 2011.
- The male person offense case rate increased 92% through 1995 then declined 36% by 2011. The female person offense case rate reached its peak in 2005, then fell 23% over the last 6 years.
- The drug offense case rate for males more than doubled between 1985 and 1997, while the female rate decreased 40% to its low in 1991 before tripling to its peak in 2004. Although the drug offense case rate for females decreased through 2011, the 2011 rate was higher than the 1985 rate.
- Male and female drug offense case rates have converged since the early 1990s. In 1992, the male drug offense case rate was nearly 7 times greater than the rate for females (4.6 compared with 0.7); by 2011, the male rate was 4 times greater than the rate for females (7.7 compared with 1.8).
- Public order offense case rates increased more for females than for males (73% compared with 28%) between 1985 and 2011.

**Although the delinquency case rate is much higher for males than females, the female rate increased more than the male rate between 1985 and 2011**

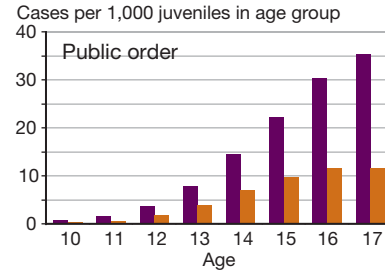
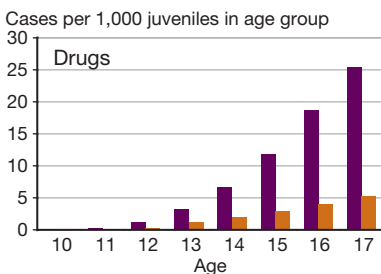
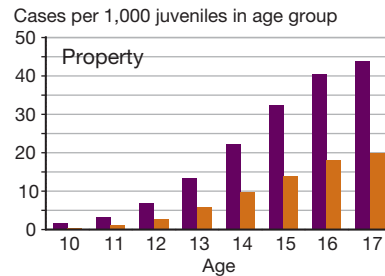
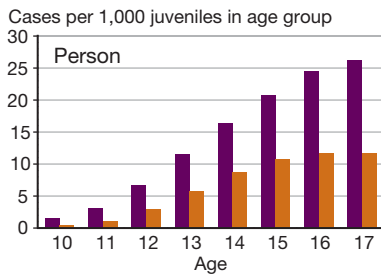


# Gender

**In 2011, the delinquency case rate for males and females increased steadily through age 17**



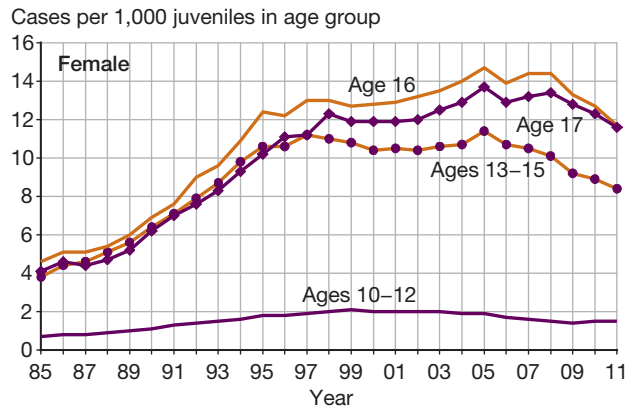
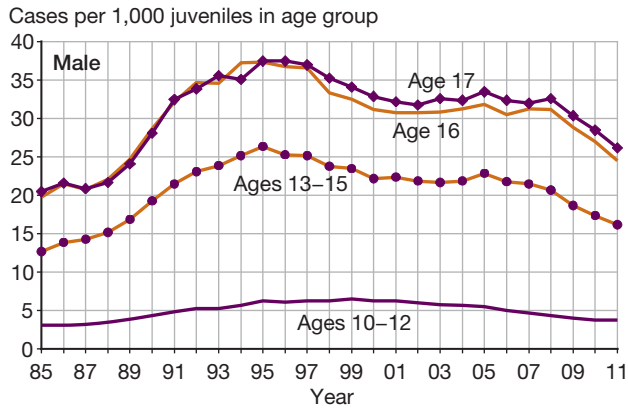
- In 2011, the difference between age-specific male and female delinquency case rates was greatest for the younger juveniles. The male delinquency rate for 10-year-olds was 3.6 times the female rate; for 11-year-olds, the male case rate was nearly 3 times the female rate.
- In all four delinquency offense categories in 2011, case rates increased continuously through age 17 for both males and females.
- The largest disparity between males and females was among younger youth where the case rate for 10-year-old males was 3.6 times the case rate for 10-year-old females.
- In 2011, the drug offense case rate for 17-year-old males was nearly 23 times the rate for 12-year-old males; among females, the drug offense case rate for 17-year-olds was nearly 16 times the rate for 12-year-olds.



# Gender

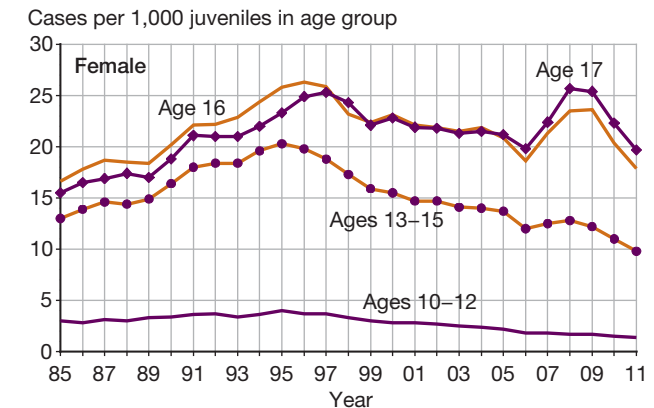
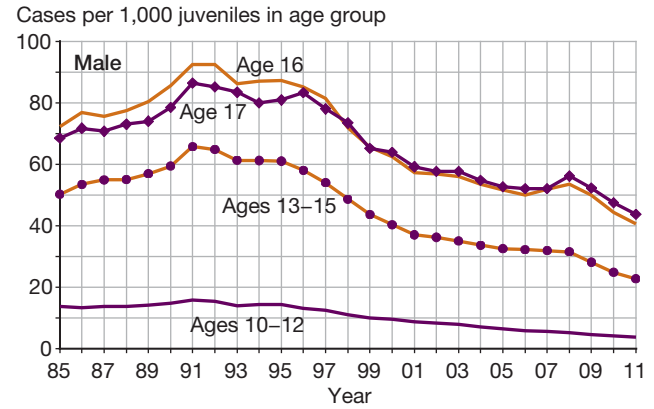
Across all age groups and offense categories, case rates for males exceed rates for females; however, since the late 1990s, female rates for person and drug cases increased, while male rates leveled off

## Person offense case rates



- In the last 10 years (2002 through 2011), male person offense case rates decreased for all age groups: 37% for youth ages 10–12, 26% for youth ages 13–15, 21% for 16-year-olds, and 18% for 17-year-olds.
- During the same period, female person offense case rates followed a similar pattern as males, decreasing 26% for youth ages 10–12, 19% for youth ages 13–15, 11% for 16-year-olds, and 3% for 17-year-olds.

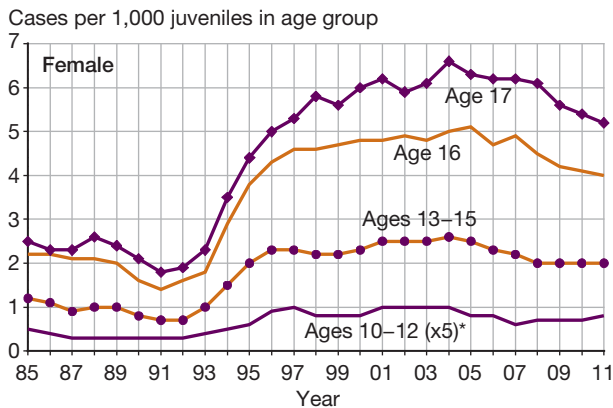
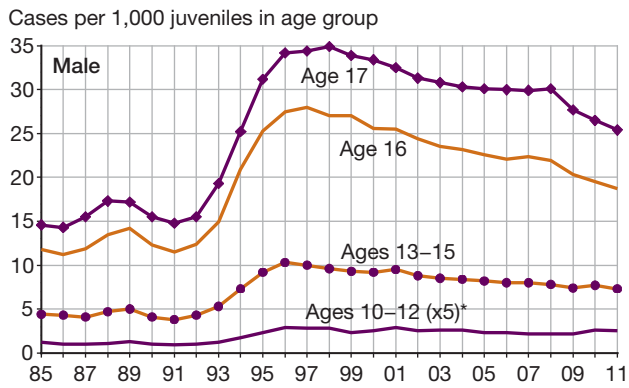
## Property offense case rates



- Male property offense case rates increased across all age groups between 1985 and the early 1990s, then, despite some fluctuation for 16- and 17-year-olds through 2006, decreased to their lowest levels for all age groups in 2011.
- Between 1991 and 2011, male property case rates decreased 76% for youth ages 10–12, 65% for ages 13–15, 56% for age 16, and 49% for age 17.
- In contrast to the male rates, age-specific property offense rates for females were higher in 2011 than in 1985 for 16- and 17-year-olds.

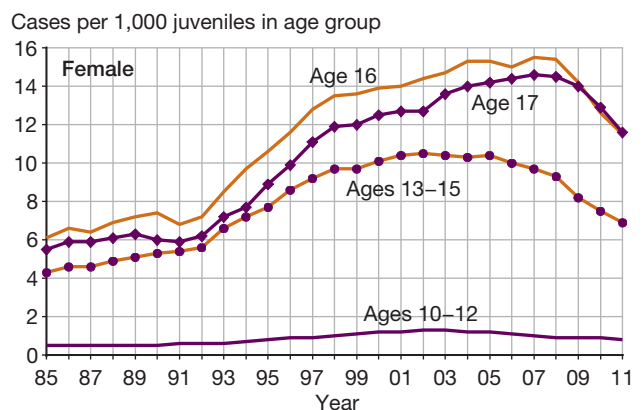
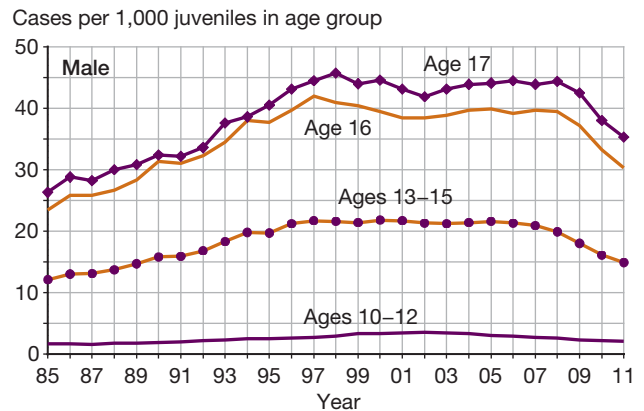
## Gender

## Drug offense case rates



- For males, drug offense case rates increased sharply between 1991 and 1996: 232% for males ages 10–12, 169% for ages 13–15, 140% for age 16, and 131% for age 17.
- Between 1996 and 2011, male drug offense case rates declined, decreasing between 14% and 32% for all age groups.
- Female drug offense case rates increased continuously for all age groups between 1991 and the early 2000s and then decreased through 2011.

## Public order offense case rates



- Across gender and age groups, public order offense case rates increased considerably between 1985 and the late 1990s. For males, the case rate increased an average of 71% for each age group during this period; for females, the public order case rate increased an average of 104% for each age group.
- For both males and females, public order case rates for all youth declined in recent years.
- For females, public order offense case rates for ages 10–12 and ages 13–15 peaked in 2003 and 2002, respectively, and have since declined. Case rates peaked in 2007 for 16- and 17-year-olds before declining.

\* Because of the relatively low volume of cases involving male and female youth ages 10–12 for drug offenses, their case rates are inflated by a factor of 5 to display the trends over time.

# Race

## Percent change in number of cases by race, 2002–2011:

Most serious offense	White <sup>4</sup>	Black	Amer. Indian <sup>5</sup>	Asian <sup>6</sup>
<b>Delinquency</b>	-30%	-17%	-30%	-28%
Person	-26	-13	-27	-30
Property	-37	-19	-42	-34
Drugs	-15	-25	0	6
Public order	-27	-17	-20	-28

■ Between 2002 and 2011, the number of cases decreased for all racial groups and offenses with the exception of drug offense cases for American Indian, which remained unchanged, and Asian youth, which increased slightly.

## Offense profile of delinquency cases by race:

Most serious offense	White	Black	Amer. Indian	Asian
<b>2011</b>				
Person	23%	31%	23%	21%
Property	37	35	38	44
Drugs	15	7	14	13
Public order	25	27	26	22
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>2002</b>				
Person	22%	29%	22%	21%
Property	41	36	46	48
Drugs	12	8	10	9
Public order	25	27	23	22
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

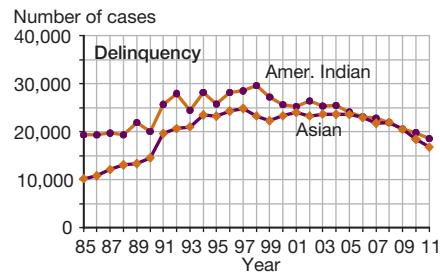
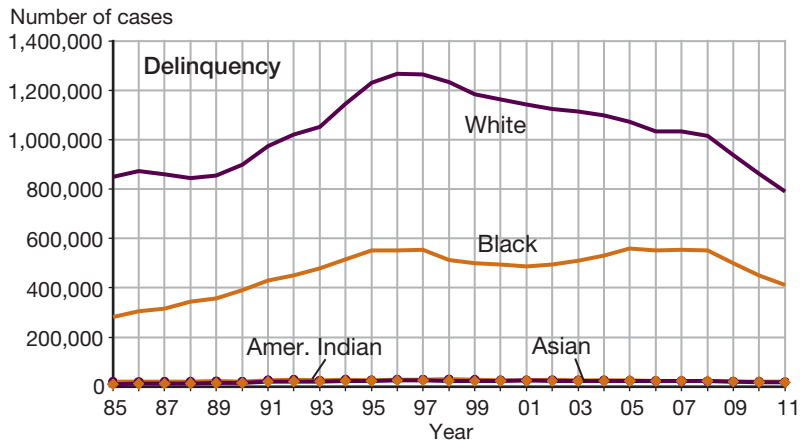
■ In 2011, the offense profile was similar to that of 2002 for all racial groups. Although the proportion of delinquency cases that involved property offenses decreased for all racial groups, the American Indian caseload experienced the largest decrease for these offenses.

<sup>4</sup> Throughout this Report, juveniles of Hispanic ethnicity can be of any race; however, most are included in the white racial category.

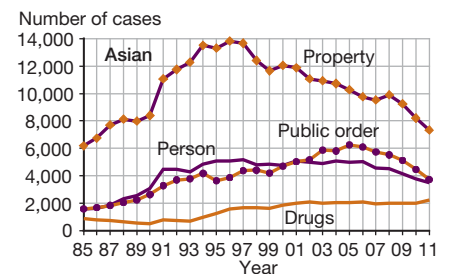
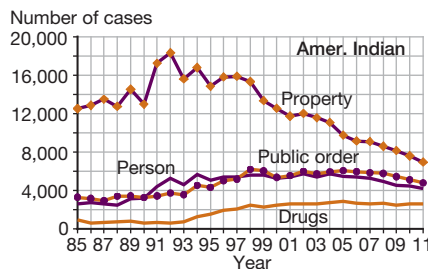
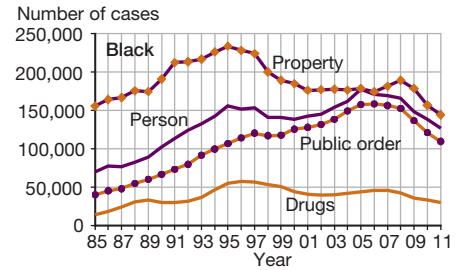
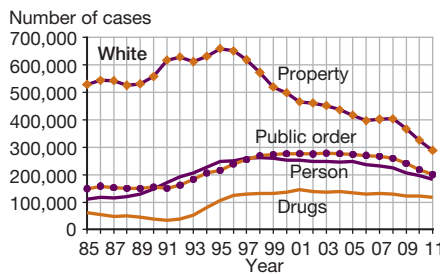
<sup>5</sup> The racial classification American Indian (usually abbreviated as Amer. Indian) includes American Indian and Alaskan Native.

<sup>6</sup> The racial classification Asian includes Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander.

Between 1997 and 2011, the delinquency caseload decreased for all race groups: 38% for white youth, 35% for American Indian youth, 32% for Asian youth, and 26% for black youth

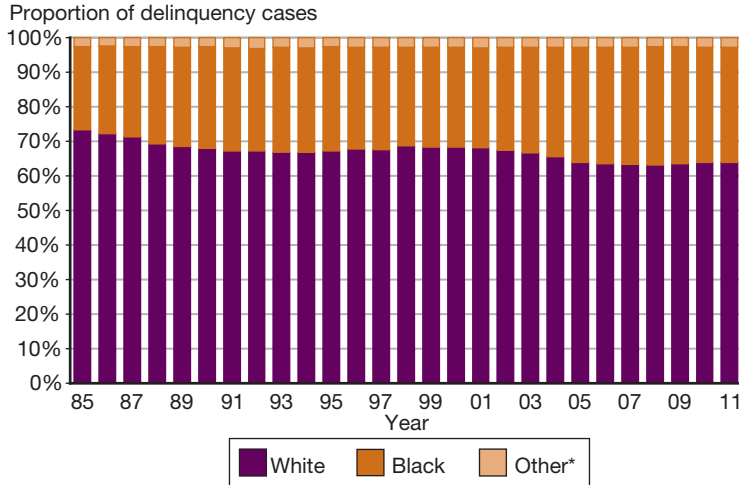


For all racial groups, the decrease in delinquency cases since 1997 has been driven by the decrease in property cases



# Race

**In 2011, nearly two-thirds of all delinquency cases involved white youth: 58% of person offense cases, 65% of property offense cases, 77% of drug offense cases, and 63% of public order offense cases**



■ In 2011, white youth made up 76% of the U.S. population under juvenile court jurisdiction, black youth 16%, American Indian youth 2%, and Asian youth 5%.

### Racial profile of delinquency cases:

Race	2002	2011
White	67%	64%
Black	30	33
American Indian	2	2
Asian	1	1
Total	100%	100%

**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

■ Although white youth represented the largest share of the delinquency caseload, their relative contribution declined between 2002 and 2011, from 67% to 64%.

■ The proportion of delinquency cases involving black youth increased from 30% in 2002 to 33% in 2011.

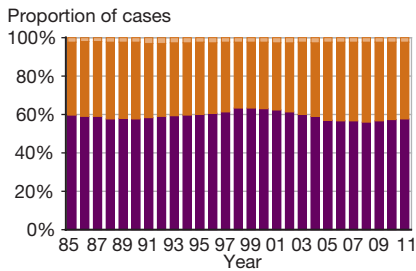
■ For each year from 2002 through 2011, American Indian youth made up less than 3% of the delinquency caseload; Asian youth made up 1%.

### Racial profile of delinquency cases by offense:

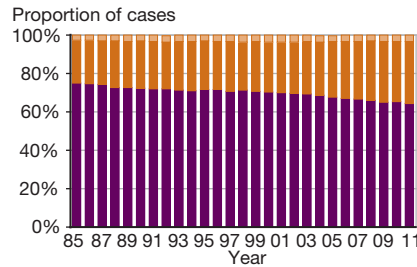
Race	Person	Property	Drugs	Public order
<b>2011</b>				
White	58%	65%	77%	63%
Black	40	32	20	34
Amer. Indian	1	2	2	1
Asian	1	2	1	1
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>2002</b>				
White	61%	70%	76%	66%
Black	36	27	22	32
Amer. Indian	1	2	1	1
Asian	1	2	1	1
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

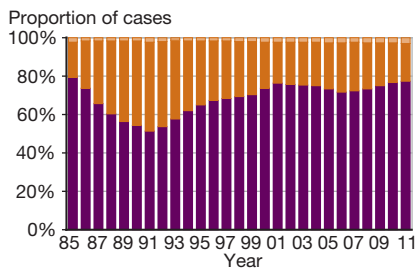
### Person offense cases



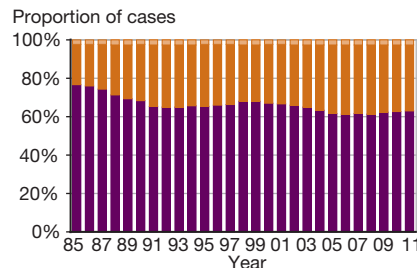
### Property offense cases



### Drug offense cases



### Public order offense cases

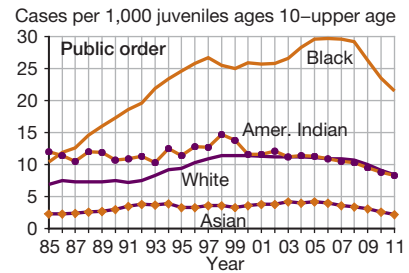
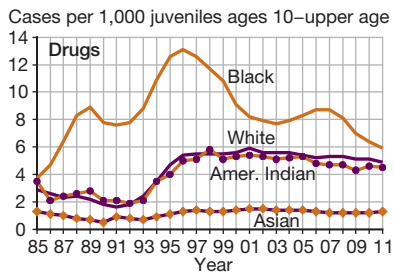
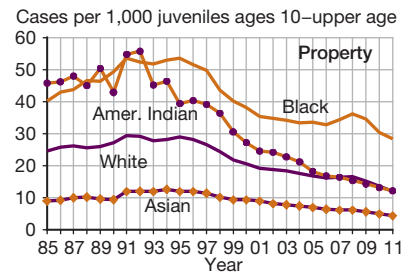
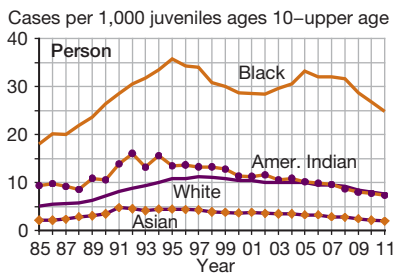
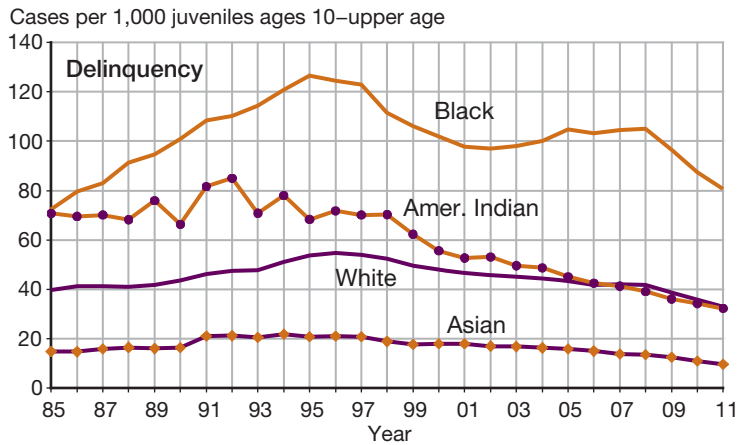


\* Because American Indian and Asian proportions are too small to display individually, they are combined in the category "Other races" in the above graphs.

# Race

- In 2011, the total delinquency case rate for black juveniles (80.6) was more than double the rate for white juveniles (32.9) and for American Indian youth (32.3); the delinquency case rate for Asian youth was 9.7.
- The delinquency case rate for white juveniles peaked in 1996 (54.8) and then fell 40% by 2011; for black juveniles, the rate in 2011 was down 36% from its 1995 peak (126.6). The delinquency case rate for American Indian youth peaked in 1992 (85.0) and then declined 62% by 2011; for Asian youth the peak occurred in 1994 (21.9) and fell 56% by 2011.
- Between 1985 and 2011, the person offense case rate increased 49% for white youth and 38% for black youth. The rate decreased 22% for American Indian youth and 9% for Asian youth.
- In 2011, the person offense case rate for black juveniles (25.0) was more than 3 times the rate for white youth and American Indian youth (7.6 and 7.4, respectively), and more than 12 times that of Asian youth (2.0).
- Property offense case rates in 2011 were lower than in 1985 for each racial group.
- The drug offense case rate for black juveniles increased dramatically from 1985 to 1989, leveled off, and then increased to reach a peak in 1996 (13.1) that was 254% above the rate in 1985 (3.7). Between 1996 and 2011, the drug offense case rate declined 55% for black juveniles, 5% for Asian youth, and 9% each for white youth and American Indian youth.
- Between 1985 and 2011, public order offense case rates increased 107% for black juveniles (10.4 to 21.5), 20% for white juveniles (6.9 to 8.4), and 6% for Asian youth (2.3 to 2.2), while they decreased 31% for American Indian youth (12.0 to 8.3).

**Between 1997 and 2011, delinquency case rates declined for youth of all racial groups: 19% for blacks, 23% for whites, 35% for American Indians, and 41% for Asians**

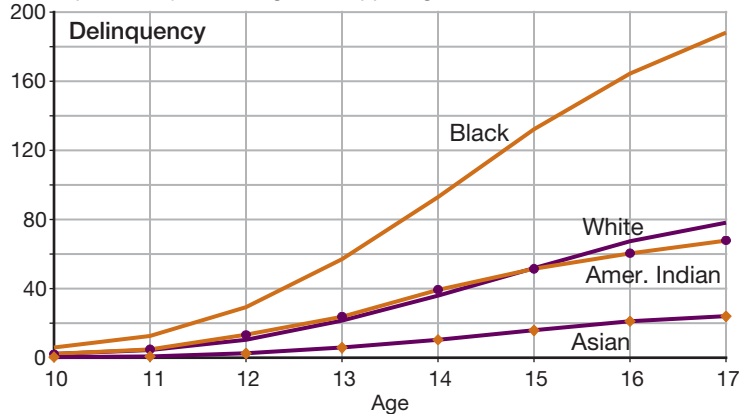




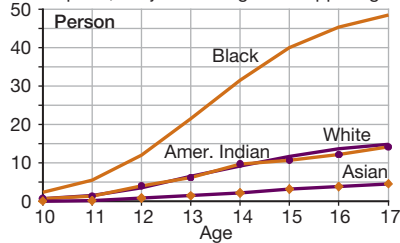
## Race

### Case rates for juveniles generally increased with age for person, drug, and public order offenses, regardless of race

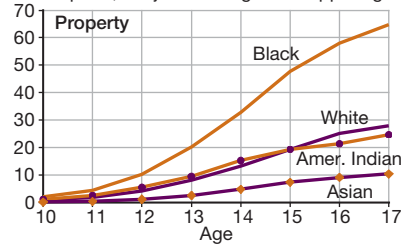
Cases per 1,000 juveniles ages 10–upper age



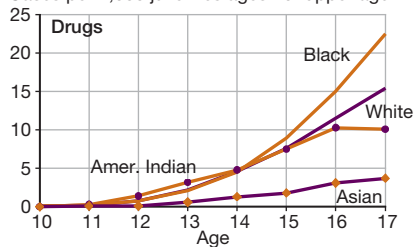
Cases per 1,000 juveniles ages 10–upper age



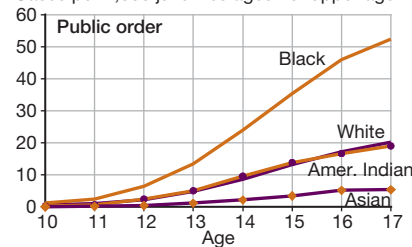
Cases per 1,000 juveniles ages 10–upper age



Cases per 1,000 juveniles ages 10–upper age



Cases per 1,000 juveniles ages 10–upper age

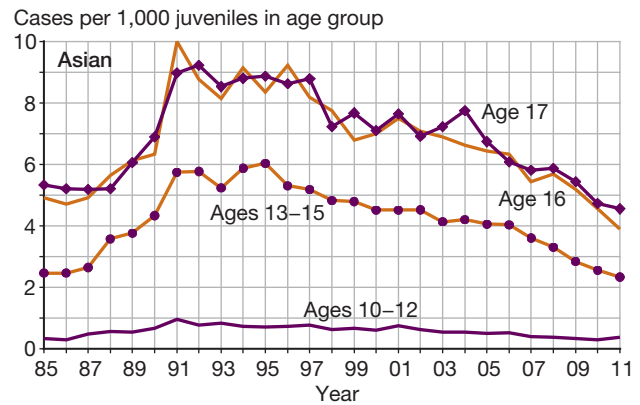
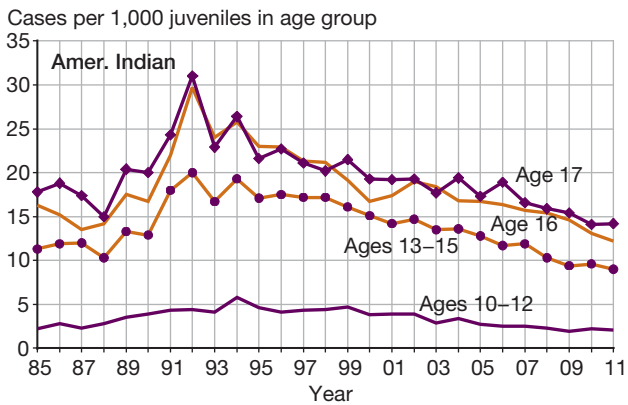
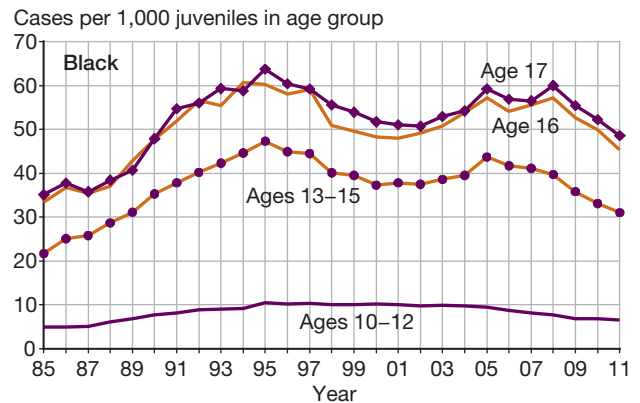
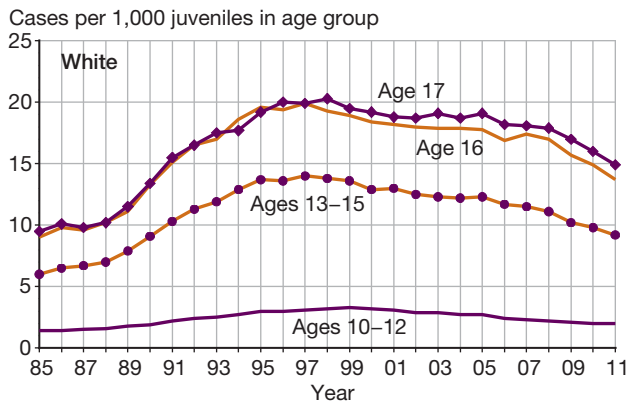


- In 2011, the delinquency case rate for 13-year-olds was more than 10 times the rate for 10-year-olds for each racial group.
- In 2011, with the exception of drug offenses, case rates in each general offense category were higher for black juveniles than those for youth of all other race categories for each age group.
- Age-specific person offense rates for black juveniles in 2011 averaged more than 3 times the rates for American Indian and white juveniles.
- In 2011, the person offense case rate for 16-year-olds was about twice the rate for 13-year-olds for all racial groups.
- With the exception of black juveniles, age-specific case rates for property offenses in 2011 were higher than the rates for other offense categories.
- In 2011, racial disparity in age-specific drug offense case rates increased after age 13. By age 17, the black drug offense case rate was 1.5 times the white rate, more than twice the rate of American Indian youth, and more than 6 times the rate of Asian youth.
- Within each age group, the 2011 public order offense case rate for black juveniles was 2 to 4 times the rate for white and American Indian youth.

# Race

Case rates for person offenses in 2011 were higher than those in 1985 for all age groups within each racial category

Person offense case rates

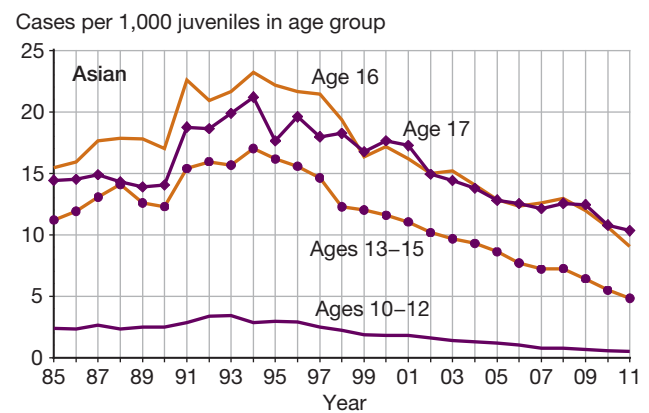
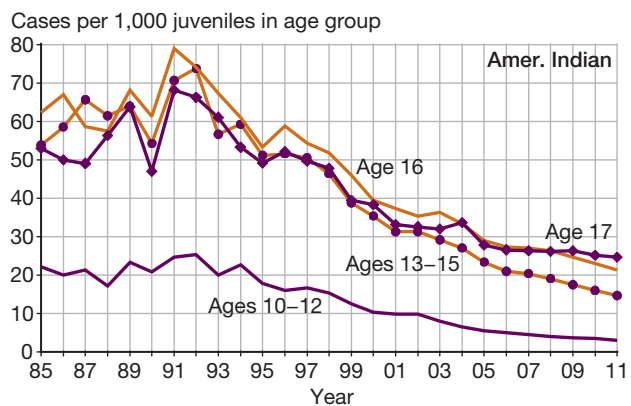
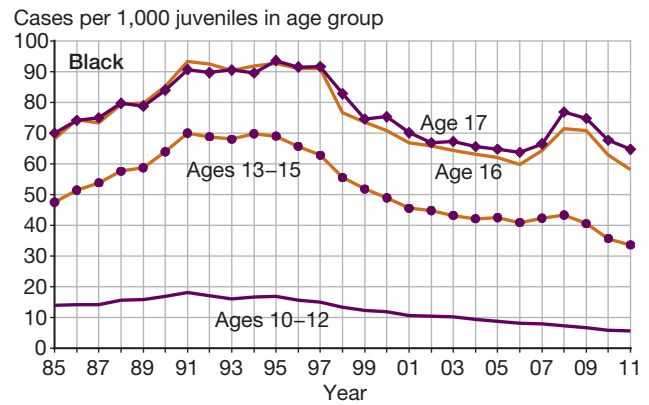
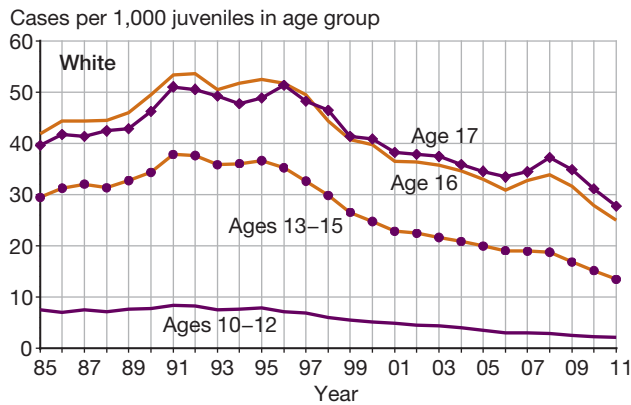


- Among white youth, person offense case rates increased dramatically for each age group between 1988 and 1998, and then decreased somewhat. Between 1998 and 2011, the person offense case rates for white youth decreased 38% for 10–12-year-olds, 33% for 13–15-year-olds, 29% for 16-year-olds, and 27% for 17-year-olds.
- Among black youth, person offense case rates increased steadily for all age groups between 1987 and 1995: 105% for 10–12-year-olds, 83% for 13–15-year-olds, 70% for 16-year-olds, and 78% for youth age 17.
- Person offense case rates for black youth decreased between 1995 and 2000, fluctuated through 2008, then decreased through 2011 for all age groups.
- Person offense case rates for American Indian youth and Asian youth peaked in the early to mid-1990s for all age groups and then decreased through 2011.

## Race

Property offense case rates peaked in the early 1990s for all age groups within each racial category; however, case rates for the oldest youth increased in recent years

## Property offense case rates

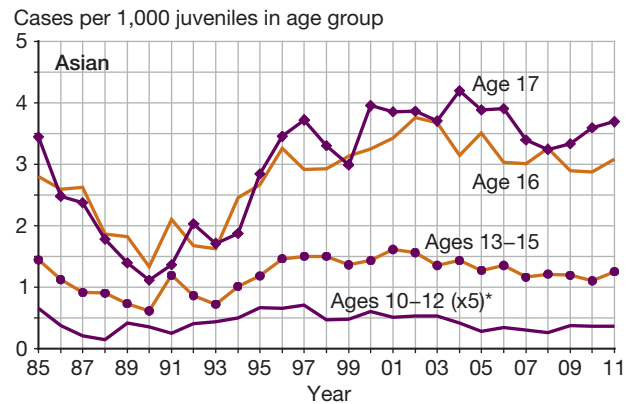
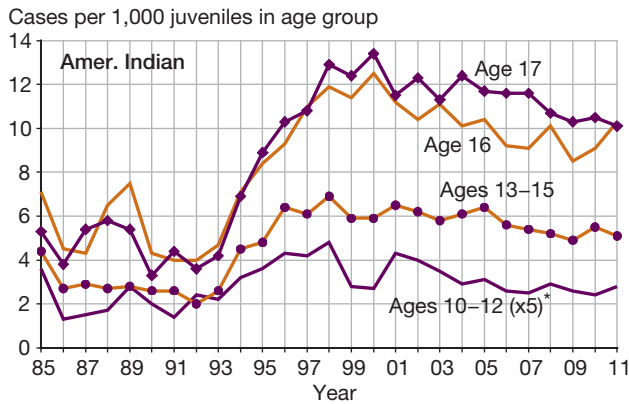
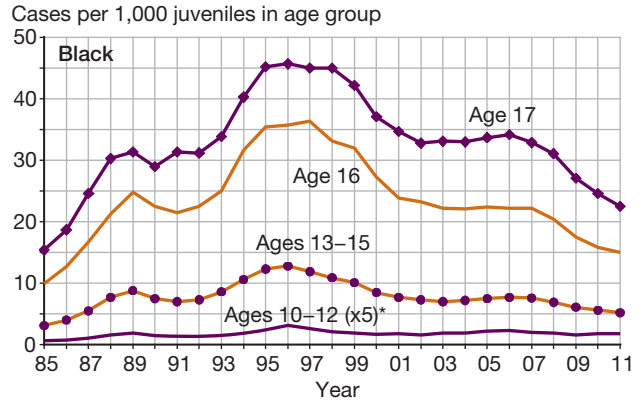
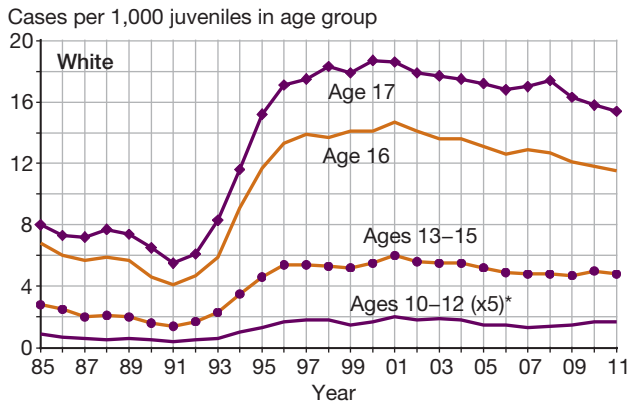


- Between 1992 and 2006, property offense case rates for whites, blacks, and Asians declined 30% or more for each age group, and the rates for American Indian youth fell 60% or more for each age group.
- In contrast to all other racial groups where the property offense case rate decreased for all ages in recent years, the case rate for 17-year-old black youth increased (2%, between 2006 and 2011)
- As a result, the property offense case rate for 17-year-old black juveniles was at a similar level in 2011 and 1985, while property offense case rates for all other black juveniles and juveniles of all ages in all other racial groups reached their lowest level since 1985.
- Regardless of race, the largest relative decline in property offense case rates between 1992 and 2011 was for youth ages 10-12.

# Race

**Case rates for drug offenses increased dramatically for all age groups within each racial category during the 1990s**

## Drug offense case rates



- For white youth, drug offense case rates increased dramatically for all age groups between 1991 and 2002: 361% for 10–12-year-olds, 314% for 13–15-year-olds, 254% for 16-year-olds, and 237% for youth age 17. Between 2002 and 2011, case rates declined for all age groups: 16% for youth ages 10–12, 20% for youth ages 13–15, 22% for youth age 16, and 17% for youth age 17. Despite these declines, the 2011 drug offense case rates for white youth of all ages were well above the rates in 1985.

- Drug offense case rates for black youth generally increased for all age groups into the 1990s, reaching a peak in 1997 for 16-year-olds and in 1996 for all other age groups. Between the peak and 2011, drug offense case rates for

black youth decreased for all age groups: 42% for youth ages 10–12, 60% for youth ages 13–15, 55% for youth age 16, and 51% for youth age 17.

- Drug offense case rates for American Indian youth increased dramatically for all age groups between 1991 and 1998 and then decreased through 2011: 42% for 10–12-year-olds, 26% for 13–15-year-olds, 14% for 16-year-olds, and 22% for 17-year-olds.

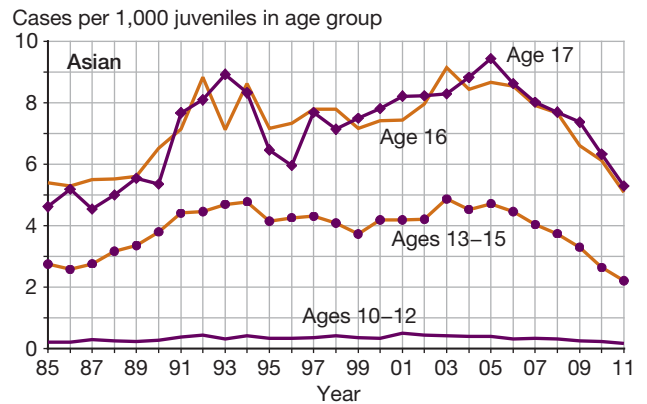
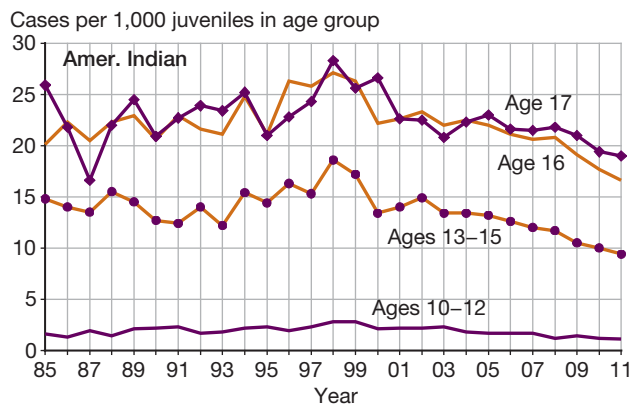
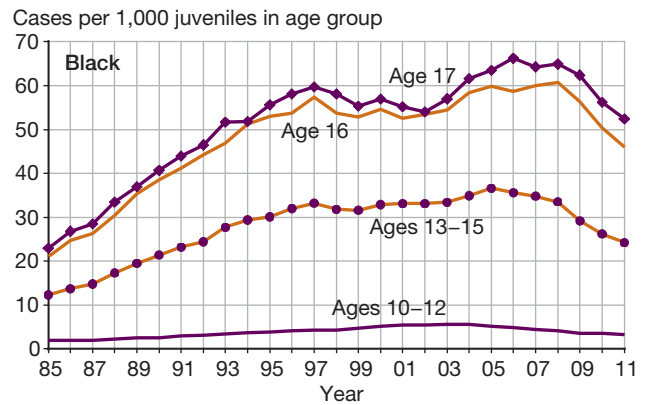
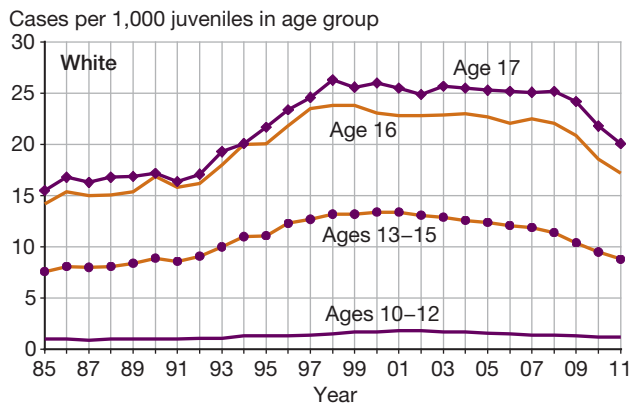
- The drug offense case rates for Asians peaked in 1997 for youth ages 10–12, and the early 2000s for all other ages before declining through 2011.

\* Because of the relatively low volume of cases involving youth of all races ages 10–12 for drug offenses, their case rates are inflated by a factor of 5 to display the trends over time.

## Race

Regardless of racial category, case rates for public order offenses in 2011 were higher than those in 1985 for all age groups

## Public order offense case rates

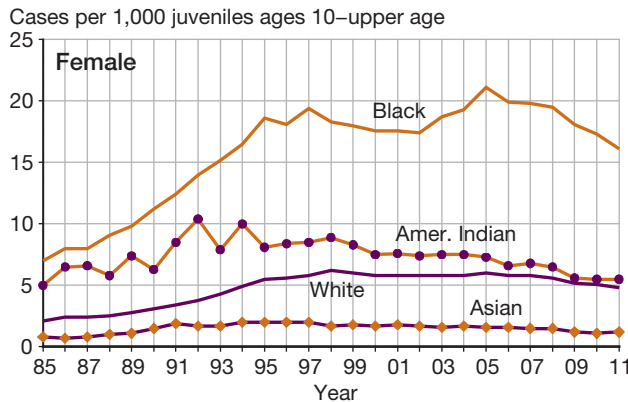
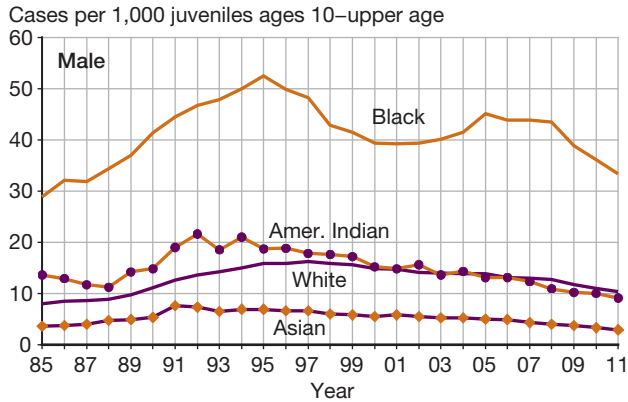


- Between 1991 and 1998, age-specific public order offense case rates for white youth increased substantially for all age groups and then stabilized through 2008 and decreased through 2011. Among white youth, the 2011 public order offense rate was 17% higher than the 1985 rate for youth ages 10–12, 15% higher for youth ages 13–15, 21% higher for 16-year-olds, and 30% higher for youth age 17.
- Between 1985 and 2011, among black youth, public order offense rates increased 72% for youth ages 10–12, 97% for youth ages 13–15, 119% for 16-year-olds, and 128% for youth age 17.
- Age-specific public order offense case rates for American Indian youth have decreased steadily in the 10 years between 2002 and 2011: 52% for youth ages 10–12, 37% for youth ages 13–15, 29% for 16-year-olds, and 15% for 17-year-olds.
- Age-specific public order case rates for Asian youth began to increase in the mid-1990s and peaked in 2002 for youth ages 10–12, in 2003 for youth ages 13–15 and 16-year-olds, and in 2005 for 17-year-olds. Since the peak years, public order case rates have decreased 44% or more for all age groups.

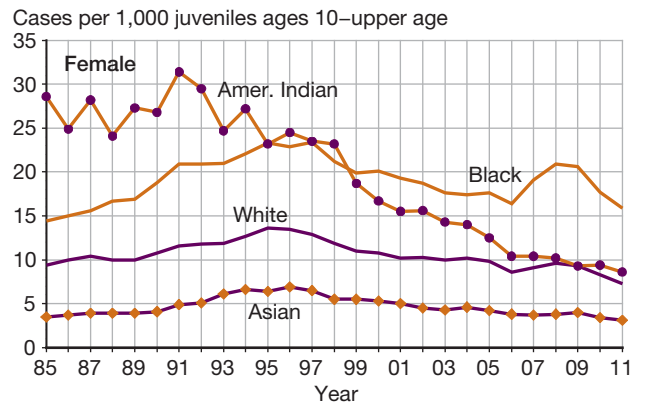
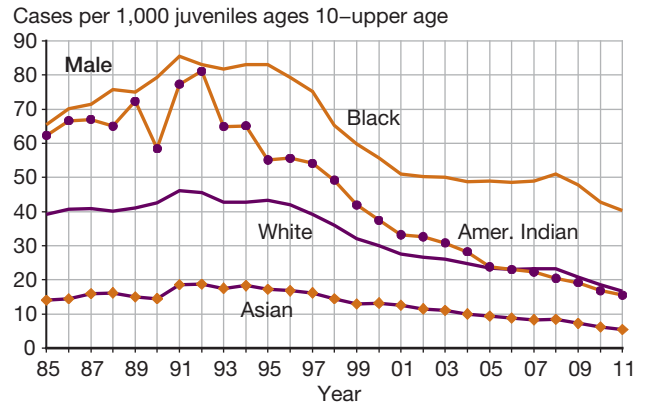
# Race

**For males, case rates for black youth were higher than rates for all other racial groups, regardless of offense; this was not the case for females**

## Person offense case rates



## Property offense case rates

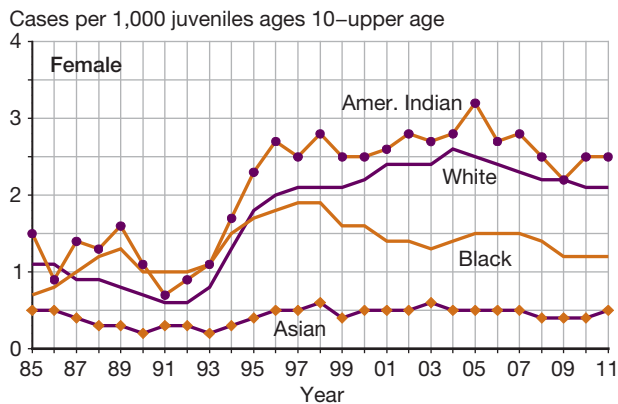
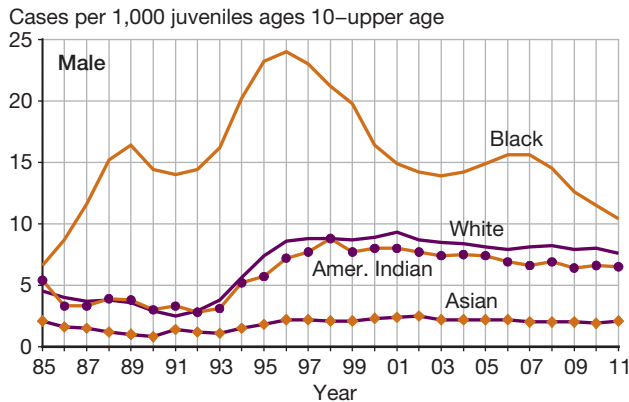


- Among males, person offense case rates peaked in the 1990s for all racial groups.
- For all years between 1985 and 2011, person offense case rates for black males were 2 to 4 times higher than the corresponding rates for white males and American Indian males, and 6 to 12 times higher than those for Asian males.
- Among females, person offense case rates for black juveniles were considerably higher than those for the other racial groups. In 2011, the person offense case rate for black females (16.1) was 14 times the rate for Asian females (1.2), more than 3 times the rate for white females (4.8), and almost 3 times the rate for American Indian females (5.5).

- Among males, property offense case rates peaked in the early 1990s and then declined to a level lower in 2011 than in 1985 for all racial groups.
- Among females, property offense case rates were lower in 2011 than in 1985 for all racial groups except blacks.

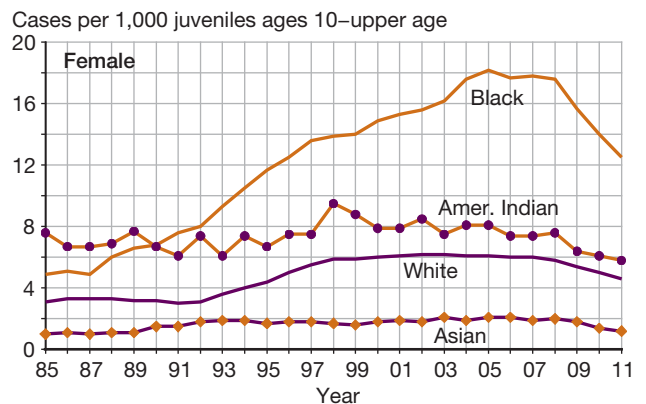
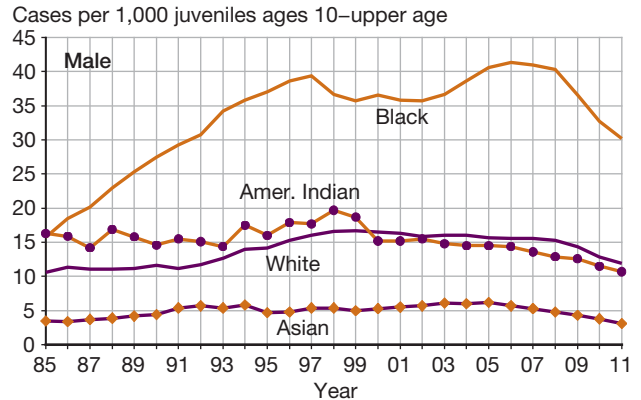
## Race

## Drug offense case rates



- Among males, drug offense case rates for black youth peaked in 1996 and then declined 57% through 2011.
- The large relative decline in black male drug offense case rates reduced the racial disparity in drug offense case rates. In 1996, the black male drug offense case rate was nearly 3 times the rate for white male youth, more than 3 times the rate for American Indian male youth, and almost 11 times the rate for Asian males. By 2011, the black rate was less than twice the rate for white and American Indian youth and about 5 times the rate for Asian juveniles.
- Among females, drug offense case rates between 1998 (the peak year for black youth) and 2011 decreased 36% for black youth, 12% for Asian youth, 11% for American Indian youth, and 2% for white youth.
- Since 1994, drug offense case rates for American Indian females were higher than the corresponding rates for other race groups.

## Public order offense case rates



- The public order case rate for black males nearly doubled between 1985 and 2011 while the female rate more than doubled.
- In 2011, the public order offense case rate for black males was more than twice the rate for both white and American Indian males and nearly 10 times the rate for Asian males.
- Between 1985 and 2011, cases involving black youth showed the largest relative increase in public order offense case rates for males and females. During this period, the public order case rate for black males increased 91% while the rate for black females increased 158%.





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# Chapter 3

## National Estimates of Delinquency Case Processing

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This chapter quantifies the flow of delinquency cases referred to juvenile court through the stages of the juvenile court system as follows.

**Referral:** An agency or individual files a complaint with court intake that initiates court processing. Cases can be referred to court intake by a number of sources, including law enforcement agencies, social service agencies, schools, parents, probation officers, and victims.

**Detention:** Juvenile courts sometimes hold youth in secure detention facilities during court processing to protect the community, to ensure a juvenile's appearance at subsequent court hearings, to secure the juvenile's own safety, or for the purpose of evaluating the juvenile. This Report describes the use of detention between court referral and case disposition only, although juveniles can be detained by police prior to referral and also by the courts after disposition while awaiting placement elsewhere.

**Intake:** Formal processing of a case involves the filing of a petition that requests an adjudicatory or waiver hearing. Informally processed cases, on the other hand, are handled without a petition and without an adjudicatory or waiver hearing.

**Waiver:** One of the first decisions made at intake is whether a case should be processed in the criminal (adult) justice system rather than in the juvenile court. Most states have more than one mechanism for transferring cases to criminal court: prosecutors may have the authority to file certain juvenile cases directly in criminal court; state statute may order that cases meeting certain age and offense criteria be excluded from juvenile court jurisdiction and filed directly in criminal court; and a juvenile court judge may waive juvenile court jurisdiction in certain juvenile cases, thus authorizing a transfer to criminal court. This Report describes those cases that were transferred to criminal court by judicial waiver only.

**Adjudication:** At an adjudicatory hearing, a youth may be adjudicated (judged) delinquent if the juvenile court determines that the youth did commit the offense(s) charged in the petition. If the youth is adjudicated, the case proceeds to a disposition hearing. Alternatively, a case can be dismissed or continued in contemplation of dismissal. In these cases where the youth is not adjudicated delinquent, the court can recommend that the youth take some actions prior to the final adjudication decision, such as paying restitution or voluntarily attending drug counseling.

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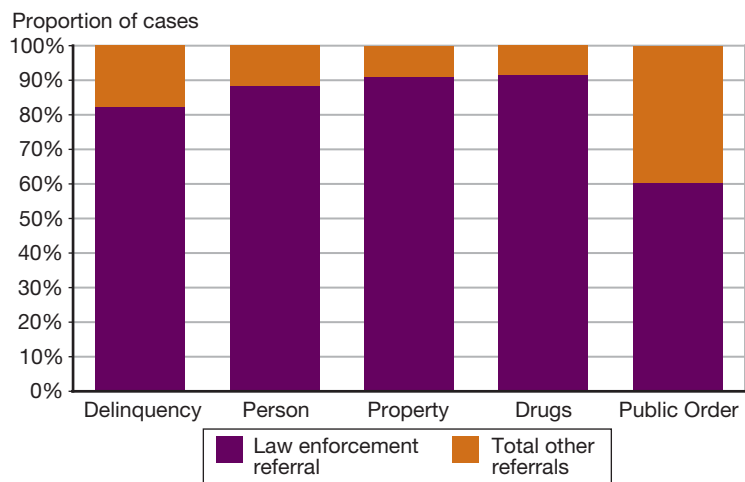
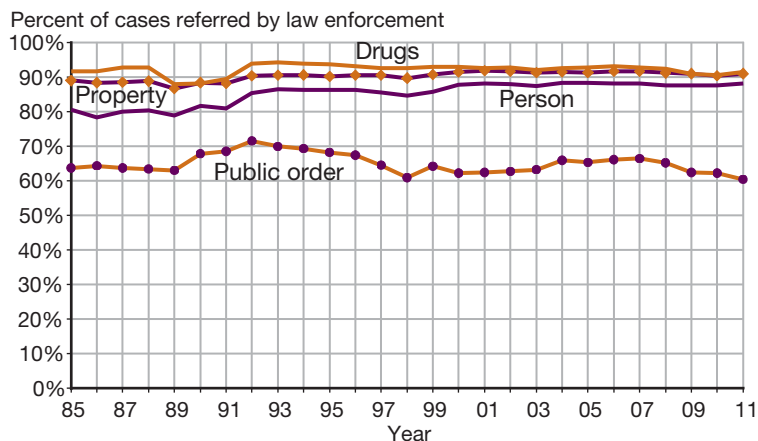
**Disposition:** Disposition options include commitment to an institution or other residential facility, probation supervision, or a variety of other sanctions, such as community service, restitution or fines, or referral to an outside agency or treatment program. This Report characterizes

case disposition by the most severe or restrictive sanction. For example, although most youth in out-of-home placements are also technically on probation, in this Report cases resulting in placement are not included in the probation group.

This chapter describes case processing by offense and by demographics (age, gender, and race) of the juveniles involved, focusing on cases disposed in 2011 and examining trends from 1985 through 2011.

# Referral

## Law enforcement agencies are the primary source of delinquency referrals to juvenile court



### Source of referral profile, 2011:

Referral source	Delinquency	Person	Property	Drugs	Public order
Law enforcement	82.2%	88.3%	91.1%	91.5%	60.5%
School	2.5	2.6	0.9	3.5	3.9
Relative	1.1	1.7	0.8	0.6	1.3
Other	14.2	7.4	7.2	4.3	34.4
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

- Between 1985 and 2011, law enforcement agencies were the primary source of delinquency referrals for each year.
- In 2011, 82% of all delinquency cases were referred by law enforcement; however, there were variations across offense categories.
- Law enforcement agencies referred 92% of drug law violation cases, 91% of property offense cases, 88% of person offense cases, and 60% of public order offense cases in 2011.
- For each year between 1985 and 2011, public order offense cases had the smallest proportion of cases referred to court by law enforcement. This may be attributed in part to the fact that this offense category contains probation violations and contempt-of-court cases, which are most often referred by court personnel.
- Law enforcement referred larger proportions of person offense cases in 2011 than in 1985.

# Detention

- The number of delinquency cases involving detention increased 7% between 1985 and 2011, from 239,500 to 256,800. The largest relative increase was for person offense cases (84%), followed by public order offense cases (40%) and drug offense cases (35%). In contrast, the number of detained property offense cases declined 39% during this period.
- Despite the growth in the volume of delinquency cases involving detention, the proportion of cases detained was about the same in 2011 as in 1985 (21%).
- Between 1985 and 2011, the use of detention decreased for public order offense cases (from 28% to 24%) and for drug law violation cases (from 22% to 15%), and changed little for property offense cases (from 18% to 17%) and for person offense cases (from 24% to 26%).

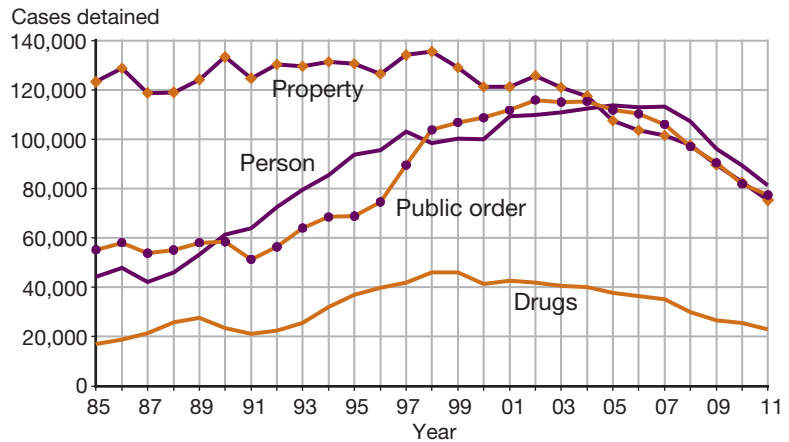
### Offense profile of detained delinquency cases:

Most serious offense	2002	2011
Person	28%	32%
Property	31	29
Drugs	11	9
Public order	29	30
Total	100%	100%
Number of cases	376,800	286,900

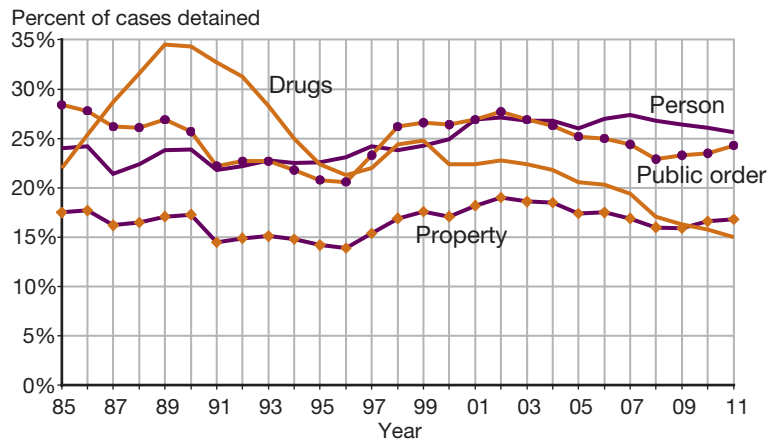
**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

- Compared with 2002, the offense characteristics of the 2011 detention caseload changed, involving a greater proportion of person and public order cases and smaller proportions of drug and property offense cases.

**The number of cases involving detention increased substantially between 1985 and 2011 for person, drug, and public order offenses but decreased for property offense cases**

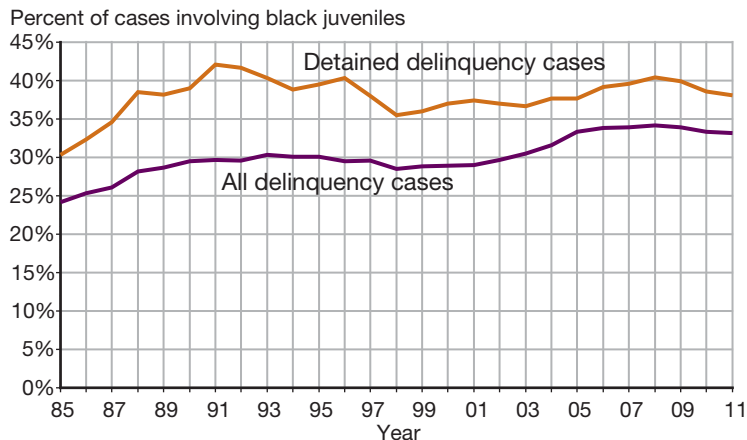


**The proportion of drug offense cases involving detention reached a peak of 34% in 1989 and declined to 15% in 2011**

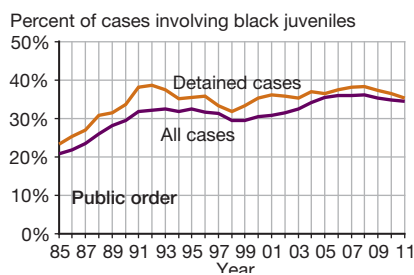
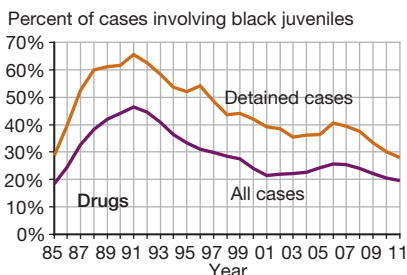
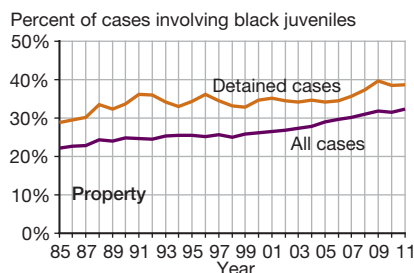
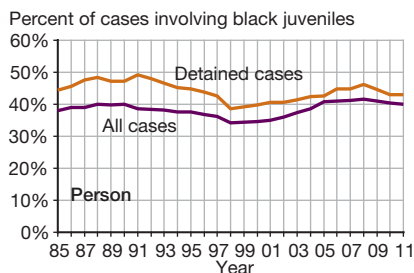


# Detention

**While black youth represented 33% of the overall delinquency caseload in 2011, they made up 38% of the detention caseload**



- Between 1985 and 2011, the proportion of all delinquency cases that involved black youth averaged 30%, while that average was 38% of all detained cases.
- Overrepresentation of black youth was greatest for drug offense cases. On average, between 1985 and 2011, black youth accounted for 30% of all cases involving drug offense violations but represented 46% of such cases detained.
- Between 1985 and 1991, the proportion of detained drug offense cases involving black youth increased substantially (from 29% to 65%). Since that time, the proportion of detained drug offense cases involving black youth fell, resulting in a level in 2011 that was 27 percentage points below the 1991 peak.
- Between 1987 and 1996, the proportion of detained drug offense cases involving black youth was more than 50%.
- Black youth accounted for 20% of all drug offense cases processed in 2011 but were involved in 28% of the drug offenses that involved detention.
- Black youth accounted for 40% of the person offense cases processed in 2011 and 43% of those detained.
- In 2011, the proportion of property offense cases involving black youth was 32%, while the proportion of detained property offense cases involving black youth was 39%.
- Black juveniles made up 34% of public order offense cases processed in 2011 and 35% of those detained.



# Detention

## Age

- In each year from 1985 through 2011, delinquency cases involving youth age 16 or older were more likely to be detained than were cases involving youth age 15 or younger.
- In contrast with 1985, person offense cases for both age groups were more likely to involve detention than were other offenses.

## Gender

- In 2011, male juveniles charged with delinquency offenses were more likely than females to be held in secure facilities while awaiting court disposition. Overall in 2011, 23% of male delinquency cases involved detention, compared with 16% of female cases.

### Offense profile of detained delinquency cases by gender, 2011:

Most serious offense	Male	Female
Person	30%	37%
Property	31	24
Drugs	9	7
Public order	30	32
Total	100%	100%

## Race

- Cases involving black youth were more likely to be detained than cases involving white youth in each year between 1985 and 2011 across offense categories.
- In 2011, person offense cases involving American Indian and Asian youth were more likely to involve detention (32% and 30%, respectively) than those involving black or white youth (27% and 24%, respectively).

### Detention was more likely for cases involving older youth than younger youth, and for cases involving males than females

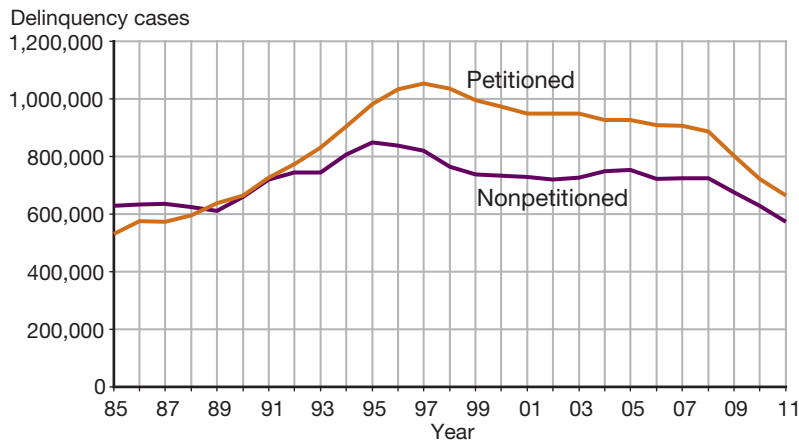
Most serious offense	Percentage of cases detained			
	Age 15 and younger	Age 16 and older	Male	Female
<b>2011</b>				
Delinquency	19%	23%	23%	16%
Person	23	30	28	20
Property	15	18	20	10
Drugs	13	17	15	13
Public order	21	27	26	20
<b>2002</b>				
Delinquency	22%	26%	25%	19%
Person	25	31	29	23
Property	18	21	21	13
Drugs	21	24	24	19
Public order	26	30	29	25
<b>1985</b>				
Delinquency	19%	23%	21%	18%
Person	22	26	25	18
Property	16	20	18	14
Drugs	21	23	22	20
Public order	29	27	28	31

### Detention was more likely for cases involving black youth than cases involving white youth

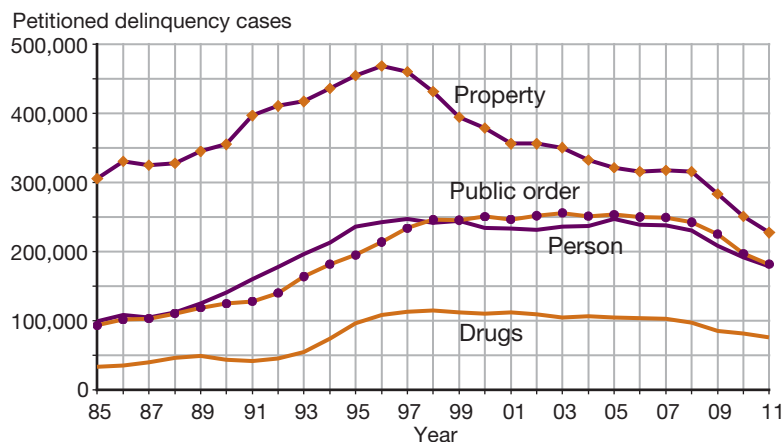
Most serious offense	Percentage of cases detained			
	White	Black	American Indian	Asian
<b>2011</b>				
Delinquency	19%	24%	26%	22%
Person	24	27	32	30
Property	15	20	20	17
Drugs	13	22	18	14
Public order	24	25	34	28
<b>2002</b>				
Delinquency	21%	29%	21%	28%
Person	25	31	25	33
Property	17	25	17	24
Drugs	18	40	18	24
Public order	26	31	27	31
<b>1985</b>				
Delinquency	19%	26%	26%	22%
Person	21	28	32	29
Property	16	23	22	19
Drugs	19	34	28	20
Public order	27	32	38	29

# Intake Decision

Since 1989, delinquency cases were more likely to be handled formally, with the filing of a petition for adjudication, than informally



In contrast to the other general offense categories, the number of petitioned property offense cases decreased 51% between 1996 and 2011



- Between 1985 and 2011, the likelihood that a delinquency case would be handled informally (without filing a petition for adjudication) decreased. While the overall delinquency case-load increased 7% between 1985 and 2011, the number of nonpetitioned cases decreased 9% and the number of petitioned cases increased 25%.
- The number of petitioned cases nearly doubled between 1985 and the peak in 1997 and then declined 37% by 2011.
- The largest relative increase in the number of petitioned cases between 1985 and 2011 was seen in drug offense cases (129%), followed by public order offense cases (95%) and person offense cases (81%).
- The number of petitioned property offense cases increased 53% between 1985 and the peak in 1996 and then declined 51% by 2011.

### Offense profile of delinquency cases, 2011:

Most serious offense	Nonpetitioned	Petitioned
Person	24%	27%
Property	38	34
Drugs	13	11
Public order	24	27
Total	100%	100%
Number of cases	572,100	664,100

**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

- In 2011, the offense profiles of nonpetitioned and petitioned delinquency cases were very similar.

# Intake Decision

- The overall likelihood of formal handling was greater for more serious offenses within the same general offense category. In 2011, for example, 75% of aggravated assault cases were handled formally, compared with 49% of simple assault cases. Similarly, 74% of burglary cases and 76% of motor vehicle theft cases were handled formally by juvenile courts, compared with 41% of larceny-theft and 43% of trespassing cases.
- Youth younger than 16 accounted for 49% of the delinquency cases handled formally by juvenile courts in 2011; females accounted for 23% and white youth accounted for 60% of petitioned cases.
- Between 1985 and 2011, the likelihood of formal processing increased: from 48% to 57% for public order cases, from 43% to 51% for property offense cases, from 43% to 50% for drug offense cases, and from 54% to 56% for person offense cases.
- Between 1988 and 1994, drug offense cases were more likely than other cases to be handled with a petition for adjudication.
- In 2011, 50% of drug offense cases were petitioned—a substantially lower percentage than in the peak year 1991, when 65% were petitioned.
- Between 1985 and 2010, property offense cases were less likely than cases in each of the other general offense categories to be handled with a petition for adjudication; in 2011, drug offense cases were the least likely.

## In 2011, juvenile courts petitioned 54% of all delinquency cases

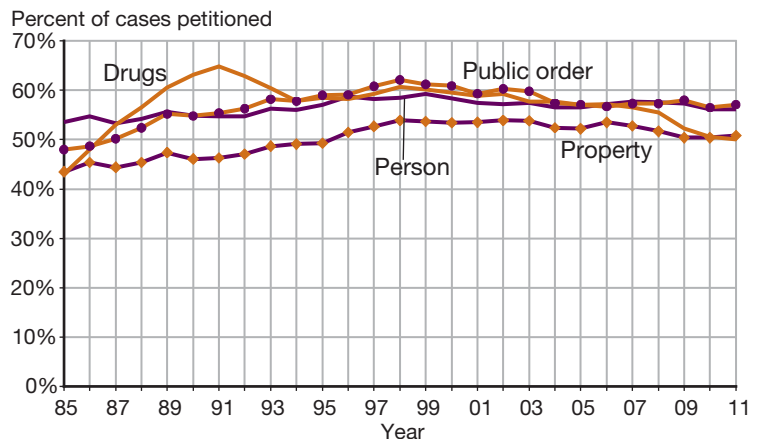
Most serious offense	Petitioned cases	Percentage of total delinquency cases	Percentage of all petitioned cases, 2011		
			Younger than 16	Female	White
<b>Total delinquency</b>	<b>664,100</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>Total person</b>	<b>178,500</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>53</b>
Violent Crime Index*	48,900	80	53	16	43
Criminal homicide	700	82	31	13	55
Forcible rape	4,400	78	60	3	68
Robbery	20,000	86	48	10	28
Aggravated assault	23,700	75	56	25	50
Simple assault	108,700	49	59	34	56
Other violent sex offenses	7,600	70	72	7	64
Other person offenses	13,200	55	54	25	61
<b>Total property</b>	<b>227,500</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>61</b>
Property Crime Index**	161,700	51	50	23	59
Burglary	59,000	74	51	9	59
Larceny-theft	89,800	41	50	34	58
Motor vehicle theft	9,600	76	47	20	59
Arson	3,300	60	71	13	69
Vandalism	35,900	51	58	15	74
Trespassing	17,000	43	49	17	54
Stolen property offenses	8,500	71	43	14	51
Other property offenses	4,500	54	39	27	62
<b>Drug law violations</b>	<b>76,200</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Public order offenses</b>	<b>181,800</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>60</b>
Obstruction of justice	108,700	73	39	25	61
Disorderly conduct	36,500	40	59	32	51
Weapons offenses	15,000	57	52	9	58
Liquor law violations	4,300	30	33	28	86
Nonviolent sex offenses	6,200	53	62	17	73
Other public order offenses	11,100	42	47	25	69

\* Includes criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

\*\* Includes burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

**Note:** Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

## Between 1985 and 2011, the use of formal processing increased in all general offense categories





# Intake Decision

## Formal processing was more likely for cases involving older youth than younger youth, and more likely for cases involving males than females

Most serious offense	Percentage of cases petitioned			
	Age 15 and younger	Age 16 and older	Male	Female
<b>2011</b>				
Delinquency	50%	58%	57%	45%
Person	54	60	60	49
Property	48	54	56	37
Drugs	45	53	51	44
Public order	51	63	59	52
<b>2002</b>				
Delinquency	54%	61%	59%	50%
Person	55	61	60	51
Property	51	58	58	43
Drugs	57	61	61	52
Public order	57	64	61	57
<b>1985</b>				
Delinquency	43%	51%	48%	36%
Person	51	58	57	41
Property	40	50	46	31
Drugs	38	47	45	34
Public order	47	50	48	47

## For all years between 1985 and 2011, formal processing was more likely for cases involving black youth than cases involving white youth

Most serious offense	Percentage of cases petitioned			
	White	Black	American Indian	Asian
<b>2011</b>				
Delinquency	50%	60%	58%	56%
Person	52	62	57	66
Property	48	57	52	47
Drugs	47	61	52	50
Public order	55	61	69	68
<b>2002</b>				
Delinquency	54%	62%	52%	62%
Person	54	62	52	67
Property	52	59	48	57
Drugs	55	76	47	59
Public order	59	62	63	68
<b>1985</b>				
Delinquency	43%	55%	42%	42%
Person	48	63	52	56
Property	41	52	41	39
Drugs	39	60	29	31
Public order	46	54	42	47

## Age

- In each year between 1985 and 2011, delinquency cases involving juveniles age 16 or older were more likely to be petitioned than were cases involving younger juveniles.
- In 2011, 50% of delinquency cases involving youth age 15 or younger were petitioned, compared with 58% of cases involving older youth.

## Gender

- Between 1985 and 2011, the likelihood of formal case processing increased for males from 48% to 57% and for females from 36% to 45%.
- For females, the likelihood of formal case processing increased more for drug offense cases (10 percentage points) between 1985 and 2011 than for the other general offense categories. For males, the likelihood of formal case processing increased most for public order offenses cases (11 percentage points).

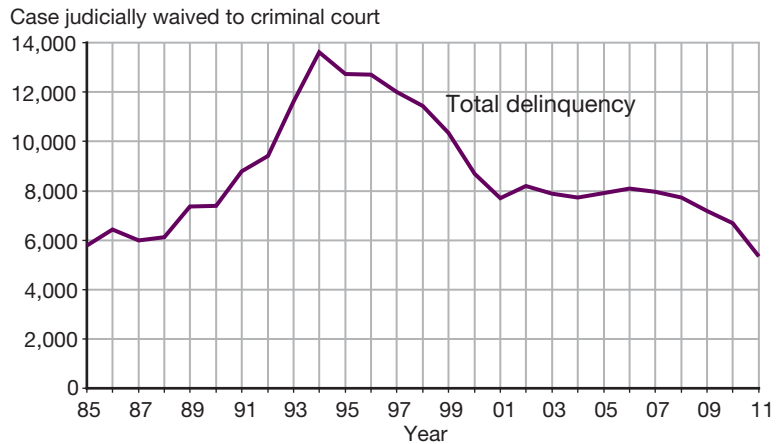
## Race

- The proportion of delinquency cases petitioned increased for all racial groups between 1985 and 2011: from 43% to 50% for white youth, from 55% to 60% for black youth, from 42% to 58% for American Indian youth, and from 42% to 56% for Asian youth.
- For each year between 1985 and 2011, drug offense cases involving black juveniles were more likely to be petitioned than were cases involving any other racial group for any offense.

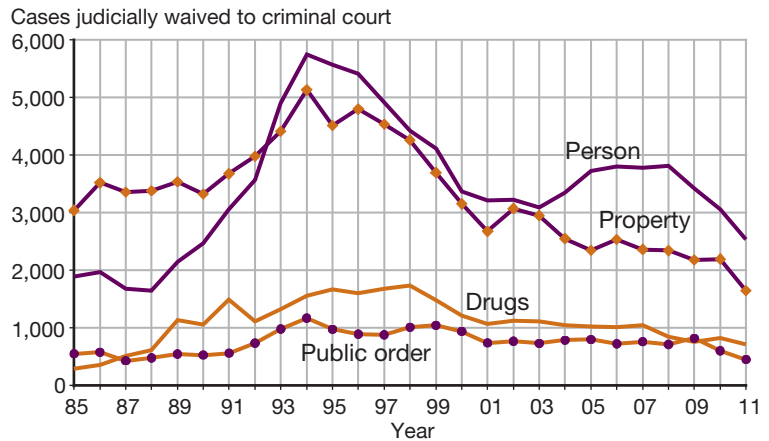
# Waiver

- The number of delinquency cases judicially waived to criminal court in 1994, the peak year, was 135% greater than the number waived in 1985. This increase was followed by a 43% decline between 1994 and 2002.
- The increase in the number of judicially waived delinquency cases since 2002 was interrupted in 2011, falling 33% between 2007 and 2011. As a result, the number of cases judicially waived in 2011 was 7% less than in 1985.
- The number of judicially waived person offense cases increased 204% between 1985 and 1994 and then fell substantially through 2002, down 44% from its 1994 peak. Between 2002 and 2008, the number of cases waived increased 19%, and then declined 33% between 2008 and 2011.
- The number of drug offense cases judicially waived increased 481% between 1985 and the peak in 1998. The number of cases waived in 2011 was 59% less than the number waived in 1998.
- Between 1985 and 1992, the largest number of judicially waived cases involved property offenses; since that time, the largest group of waived cases has been person offense cases.
- For public order offenses, the number of waived cases increased 112% between 1985 and the peak in 1994 and then declined 61% by 2011.
- The decline in the number of cases judicially waived after 1994 may be attributable in part to the large increase in the number of states that passed legislation excluding certain serious offenses from juvenile court jurisdiction and legislation permitting the prosecutor to file certain cases directly in criminal court.

## The number of cases judicially waived to criminal court peaked in 1994

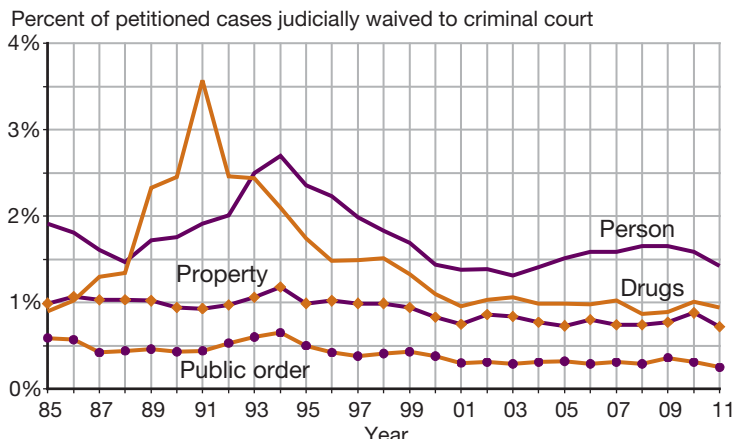


## In 1985, more property offense cases were judicially waived than cases in any other offense category; in 2011, more person offense cases were waived than cases in any other category

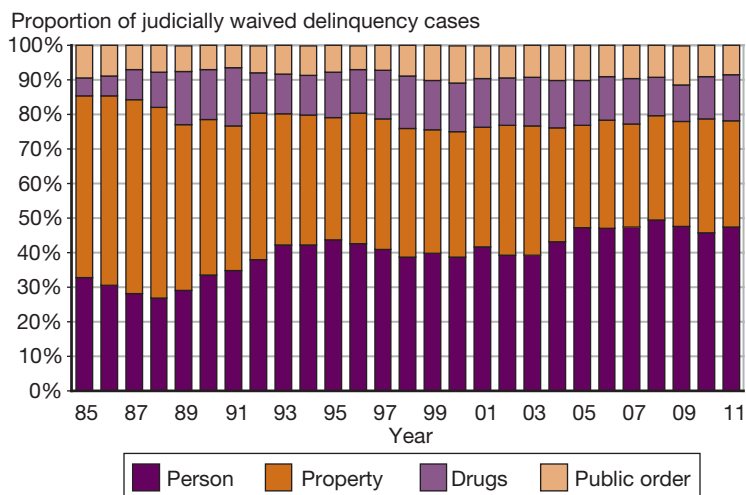


# Waiver

**Between 1989 and 1992, cases involving drug offenses were most likely to be judicially waived; for all other years between 1985 and 2011, person offense cases were most likely to be waived**



**Between 1985 and 2011, the offense profile of the judicially waived caseload changed substantially—the share of property offense cases decreased and the share of person offense cases increased**



- Between 1985 and 1991, the proportion of judicially waived drug offense cases increased sharply from 0.9% to 3.6%. After peaking in 1991, the proportion of waived drug offense cases decreased, with 0.9% of drug cases being waived in 2011.
- After an initial decrease between 1985 and 1988, the proportion of judicially waived person offense cases increased to its peak level in 1994, when 2.7% of such cases were waived. The proportion declined to its lowest level in 2003 (1.3%). The proportion waived in 2011 was 1.4%.
- Between 1985 and 2011, the proportion of property offense cases that were judicially waived decreased from 1.0% to 0.7%. Following a similar pattern, the proportion of judicially waived public order offense cases decreased from 0.6% to 0.2% during the same time period.
- The proportion of the waived caseload involving person offenses grew steadily between 1985 and 2011. In 1985, person offense cases accounted for one-third (33%) of the waived caseload; by 2011, person offense cases were 47% of the waived caseload.
- The proportion of all waived delinquency cases that involved a property offense as the most serious charge declined from 53% in 1985 to 31% in 2011.
- Drug offense cases represented 5% of the judicially waived cases in 1985; by 1991, they comprised 17% of the waived caseload. In 2011, drug offense cases made up 13% of the judicially waived caseload.
- Between 1985 and 2011, public order offense cases comprised 6% to 11% of the waived caseload.

# Waiver

## Age

- In 2011, 1.5% of all petitioned delinquency cases involving juveniles age 16 or older were waived to criminal court, compared with 0.1% of cases involving younger juveniles.
- For older juveniles, the probability of waiver peaked in 1994 at 3.1%, declined to 1.5% by 2001, and remained relatively stable at that level through 2011.
- This pattern was most marked in waivers for older juveniles charged with drug offenses, which peaked at 5.5% in 1991 and then steadily declined to 1.7% in 2000. In 2011, the likelihood of judicial waiver in drug offense cases involving older juveniles was 1.4%.

## Gender

- The proportion of petitioned drug offense cases judicially waived increased substantially for males between 1985 and 1991 (from 0.9% to 3.7%) and decreased steadily through 2011, when the proportion of these cases was 1.0%.
- Judicially waived drug offense cases involving females followed a similar pattern. In 2011, 0.5% of petitioned drug offense cases involving females were judicially waived.

## Race

- The likelihood of judicial waiver among cases involving white youth was lower in 2011 (0.7%) than in 1985 (1.0%); the pattern was similar for cases involving black youth (0.9% in 2011 compared with 1.4% in 1985).
- In 2011, cases involving person offenses were most likely to be waived for youth of all races: 1.3% among white juveniles, 1.6% among black juveniles, 2.2% among American Indian juveniles, and 1.0% among Asian juveniles.

## Cases involving juveniles age 16 or older were much more likely to be judicially waived to criminal court than those involving younger juveniles

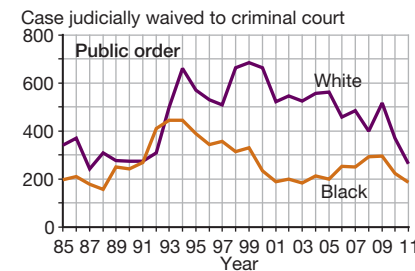
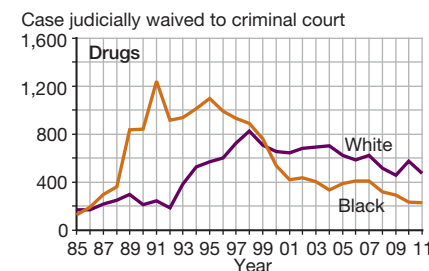
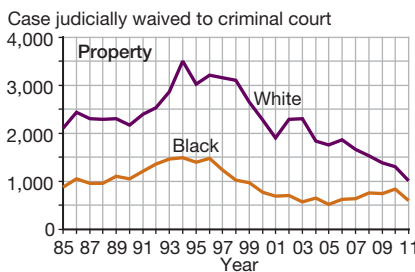
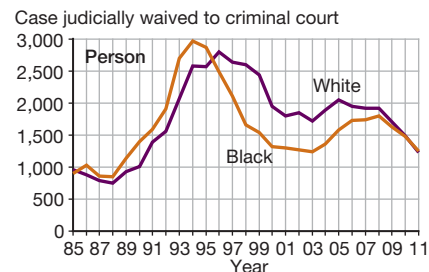
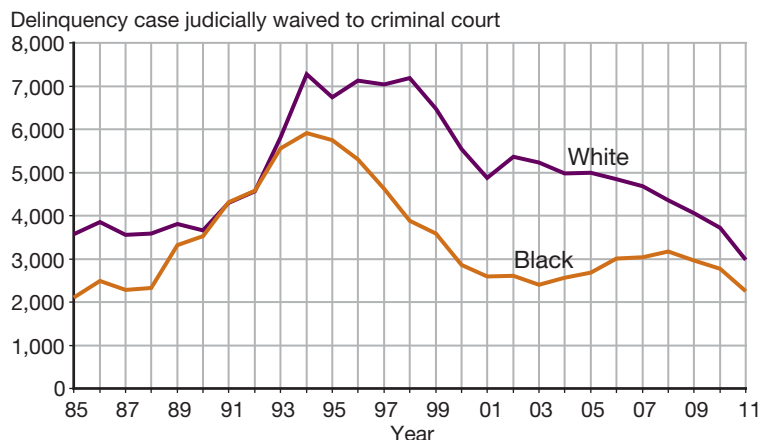
Most serious offense	Percentage of petitioned cases judicially waived			
	Age 15 and younger	Age 16 and older	Male	Female
<b>2011</b>				
Delinquency	0.1%	1.5%	1.0%	0.3%
Person	0.3	2.9	1.8	0.4
Property	0.1	1.4	0.8	0.3
Drugs	0.1	1.4	1.0	0.5
Public order	0.0	0.4	0.3	0.1
<b>2002</b>				
Delinquency	0.3%	1.6%	1.0%	0.4%
Person	0.5	2.9	1.7	0.4
Property	0.2	1.8	1.0	0.4
Drugs	0.1	1.7	1.1	0.7
Public order	0.1	0.5	0.3	0.2
<b>1985</b>				
Delinquency	0.1%	2.3%	1.2%	0.4%
Person	0.3	4.1	2.2	0.5
Property	0.1	2.3	1.1	0.3
Drugs	0.1	1.4	0.9	0.6
Public order	0.1	1.2	0.7	0.2

## Person and drug offense cases involving black youth were more likely than cases involving white youth to be judicially waived

Most serious offense	Percentage of petitioned cases judicially waived			
	White	Black	American Indian	Asian
<b>2011</b>				
Delinquency	0.7%	0.9%	1.0%	0.3%
Person	1.3	1.6	2.2	1.0
Property	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.1
Drugs	0.9	1.2	0.6	0.5
Public order	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.0
<b>2002</b>				
Delinquency	0.9%	0.8%	1.0%	0.6%
Person	1.4	1.4	2.2	1.2
Property	1.0	0.7	0.8	0.5
Drugs	0.9	1.4	0.9	0.1
Public order	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.2
<b>1985</b>				
Delinquency	1.0%	1.4%	1.2%	0.4%
Person	1.8	2.1	2.0	0.9
Property	1.0	1.1	1.1	0.3
Drugs	0.7	1.5	NA	NA
Public order	0.5	0.9	1.0	0.2

NA Data are not presented because the small number of cases produces unstable estimates.

**For both white juveniles and black juveniles, the number of delinquency cases judicially waived to criminal court in 2011 was well below the mid-1990s peak**



- The number of judicially waived cases involving white juveniles increased 104% between 1985 and 1994, from 3,600 to 7,300, and then declined 59% to its lowest level (3,000) in 2011.
- For black juveniles, the number of judicially waived cases more than doubled between 1985 and 1994, and then fell substantially through 2002. However, between 2002 and 2008, the number of judicially waived cases grew 22% and then fell 29% through 2011.
- The number of judicially waived person offense cases involving white youth increased 193% between 1985 and 1996, and then declined 56% by 2011.
- The number of judicially waived drug offense cases involving black juveniles increased substantially between 1985 and the peak in 1991 and then declined 82% by 2011.

### Offense profile of waived cases:

Most serious offense	2002	2011
<b>White</b>		
Person	34%	41%
Property	43	34
Drugs	13	16
Public order	10	9
Total	100%	100%
<b>Black</b>		
Person	49%	55%
Property	27	26
Drugs	17	10
Public order	8	8
Total	100%	100%

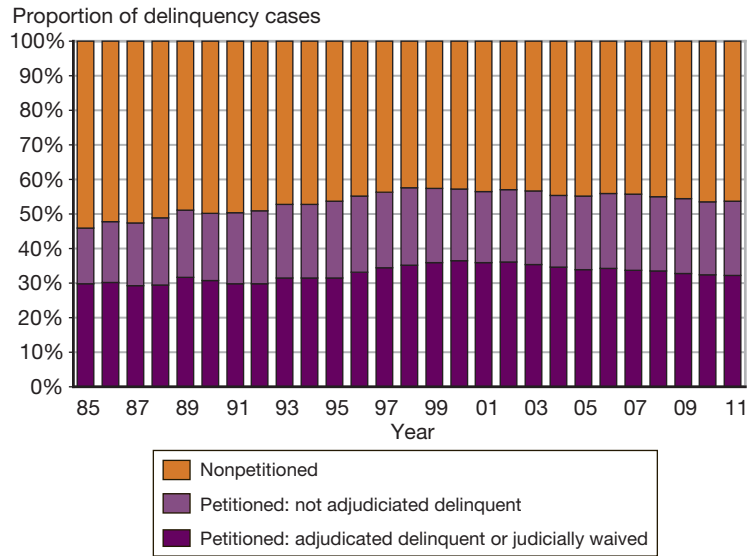
**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding. Offense profiles are not presented for American Indian and Asian youth because counts were too small to calculate meaningful percentages.

- In 2011, person offense cases accounted for 55% of the waived cases involving black juveniles.
- In 2002, property offenses accounted for the largest share of the waived caseload for white youth (43%) but, in 2011, person offenses accounted for the largest share (41%).

# Adjudication

- In 1985, 30% of all delinquency cases resulted in either adjudication of delinquency or waiver to criminal court. By 2011, this proportion had increased to 32%.
- Between 1985 and 2011, the number of delinquency cases that resulted in a delinquency adjudication or were judicially waived to criminal court increased 16%, and the number of formally handled cases that were not adjudicated delinquent increased 43%.
- In general, the likelihood of being adjudicated delinquent was greater for more serious offenses within the same general offense category.
- Within the 2011 person offense category, 58% of petitioned aggravated assault cases were adjudicated delinquent, compared with 54% of simple assault cases.
- In the property offense category in 2011, similar proportions of petitioned burglary and motor vehicle theft cases were adjudicated delinquent (64% and 66%, respectively), compared with 57% of larceny-theft cases.
- Among public order offenses in 2011, 65% of obstruction of justice cases and 62% of liquor law violation cases were adjudicated delinquent, compared with 58% of disorderly conduct cases.
- Youth younger than 16 accounted for 50% of all adjudicated delinquency cases handled by juvenile courts in 2011, females accounted for 22%, and white youth accounted for 62%.

**The proportion of formally processed delinquency cases that resulted in a delinquency adjudication or waiver changed little since 1997**



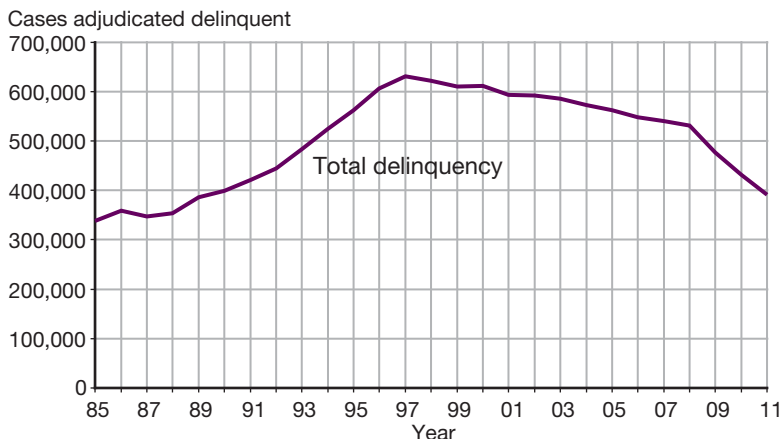
**In 2011, youth were adjudicated delinquent in 3 of every 5 petitioned delinquency cases**

Most serious offense	Cases adjudicated delinquent	Percentage of total petitioned cases	Percentage of all adjudicated cases, 2011		
			Younger than 16	Female	White
<b>Total delinquency</b>	<b>391,700</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>62%</b>
<b>Total person</b>	<b>99,700</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>55</b>
Criminal homicide	300	43	39	19	67
Forcible rape	2,700	62	65	2	69
Robbery	12,400	62	50	9	31
Aggravated assault	13,800	58	56	23	54
Simple assault	58,900	54	59	32	58
Other violent sex offenses	4,800	63	75	7	64
Other person offenses	6,700	51	55	21	63
<b>Total property</b>	<b>134,300</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>62</b>
Burglary	37,600	64	52	7	59
Larceny-theft	51,300	57	51	31	60
Motor vehicle theft	6,300	66	49	19	61
Arson	1,900	59	71	11	70
Vandalism	20,600	57	57	14	76
Trespassing	8,900	53	50	16	56
Stolen property offenses	5,100	60	44	12	52
Other property offenses	2,600	58	42	26	62
<b>Drug law violations</b>	<b>44,200</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Public order offenses</b>	<b>113,500</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>62</b>
Obstruction of justice	71,000	65	39	25	64
Disorderly conduct	21,000	58	59	31	51
Weapons offenses	8,800	58	49	8	57
Liquor law violations	2,700	62	34	27	86
Nonviolent sex offenses	3,800	60	64	14	75
Other public order offenses	6,300	57	45	23	71

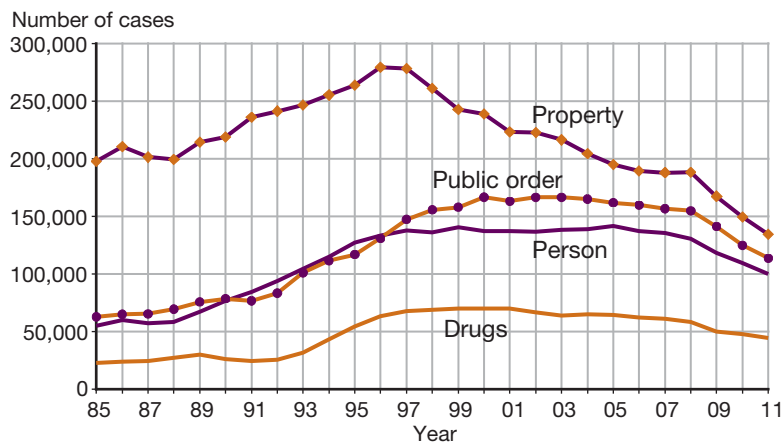
**Note:** Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

# Adjudication

**Between 1985 and 2011, the number of cases in which youth were adjudicated delinquent increased 16%**



**Since 1997, the number of cases adjudicated delinquent decreased for all general offense categories**



- Beginning in 1985 and continuing through 1997, the annual number of delinquency cases in which youth were adjudicated delinquent steadily increased from 338,000 to 631,300 and then declined to 391,700 in 2011.
- The number of adjudicated person offense cases nearly doubled between 1985 and 2011 (55,000 vs. 99,700).
- The number of adjudicated cases involving property offenses increased 41% between 1985 (197,500) and its peak in 1996 (279,400) and then declined 52% by 2011 (134,300) for an overall decline of 32%.
- Between 1985 and 1999, the number of adjudicated drug offense cases increased 205% (from 22,900 to 69,900) and then declined 37% by 2011.
- Between 1985 and 2011, the number of public order offense cases adjudicated delinquent increased 81%, from 62,600 cases to 113,500 cases.

### Offense profile of cases adjudicated delinquent:

Most serious offense	2002	2011
Person	23%	25%
Property	38	34
Drugs	11	11
Public order	28	29
Total	100%	100%
Cases adjudicated delinquent	592,200	391,700

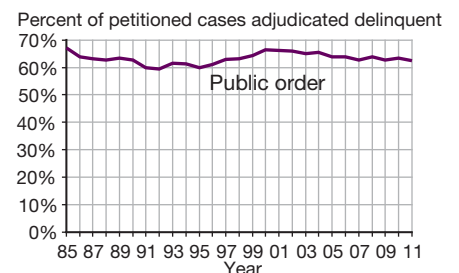
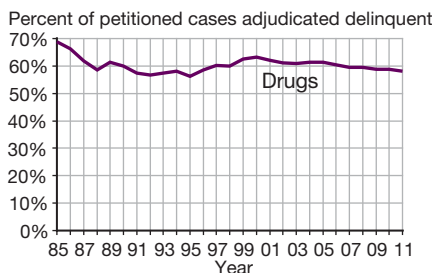
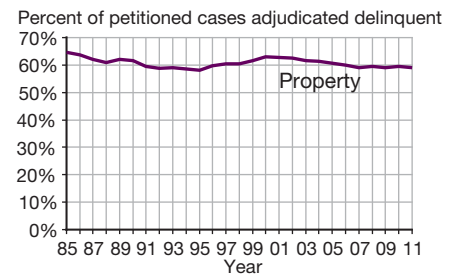
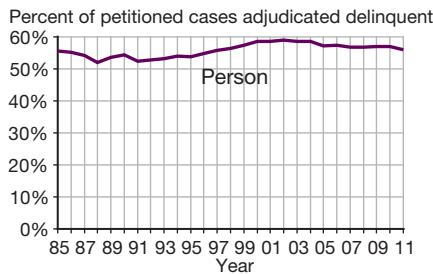
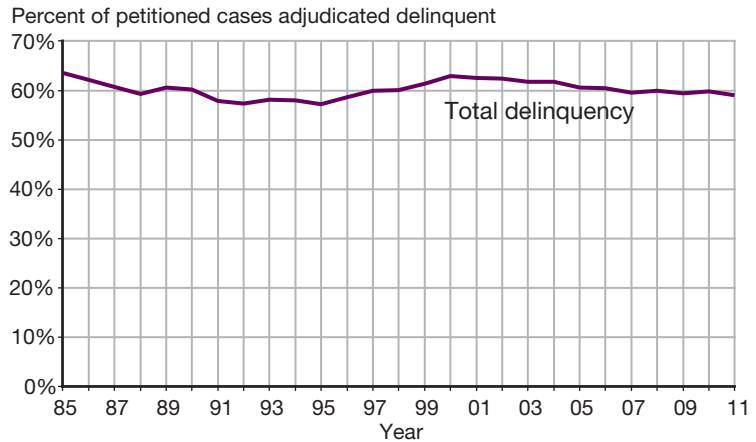
**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

- Compared with 2002, the 2011 adjudicated delinquent caseload included greater proportions of person and public order cases, a smaller proportion of property offense cases, and an equal proportion of drug offense cases.

# Adjudication

- The likelihood of delinquency adjudication decreased from 64% to 57% between 1985 and 1992. The likelihood of adjudication in 2011 was 59%.
- In 2011, the likelihood of a delinquency adjudication for cases involving property, drug, and public order offenses was less than in 1985 (by 5 to 11 percentage points). However, for cases involving a person offense, the likelihood of a delinquency adjudication was the same in 2011 as it was in 1985 (56%).
- Among the four general offense categories, person offense cases were least likely to result in delinquency adjudication for all years between 1985 and 2011.
- The likelihood of adjudication among cases involving a property offense decreased from 65% to 58% between 1985 and 1995, then remained relatively stable through 2011.
- The likelihood of adjudication among drug offense cases followed a similar pattern, decreasing from 69% to 57% between 1985 and the early 1990s and then remaining relatively stable through 2011.
- Among public order cases, the likelihood of adjudication decreased from 67% to 59% between 1985 and 1992 and then increased to 62% in 2011.
- Cases involving public order offenses were slightly more likely than any other offense to result in a delinquency adjudication each year between 1987 and 2011.

**Between 1992 and 2011, the likelihood of petitioned cases resulting in a delinquency adjudication remained stable between 57% and 63%**





# Adjudication

## Cases involving younger juveniles were more likely to be adjudicated delinquent than those involving older juveniles, regardless of offense

Most serious offense	Percentage of petitioned cases adjudicated delinquent			
	Age 15 and younger	Age 16 and older	Male	Female
<b>2011</b>				
Delinquency	60%	58%	60%	55%
Person	57	54	57	52
Property	60	58	61	52
Drugs	62	56	58	57
Public order	62	63	63	60
<b>2002</b>				
Delinquency	63%	61%	63%	59%
Person	60	58	60	55
Property	63	61	64	57
Drugs	63	60	61	61
Public order	66	66	66	65
<b>1985</b>				
Delinquency	64%	63%	64%	60%
Person	56	55	57	50
Property	65	64	65	60
Drugs	71	67	69	66
Public order	69	65	68	66

## Delinquency cases involving black youth were less likely to result in a delinquency adjudication than were cases involving white youth

Most serious offense	Percentage of petitioned cases adjudicated delinquent			
	White	Black	American Indian	Asian
<b>2011</b>				
Delinquency	61%	56%	69%	55%
Person	58	53	66	55
Property	60	57	70	52
Drugs	59	54	72	44
Public order	64	59	69	65
<b>2002</b>				
Delinquency	64%	59%	67%	62%
Person	61	56	67	61
Property	64	59	68	62
Drugs	63	57	66	59
Public order	67	65	65	65
<b>1985</b>				
Delinquency	66%	58%	68%	58%
Person	57	53	66	58
Property	67	59	69	57
Drugs	70	65	NA	NA
Public order	69	63	66	66

NA Data are not presented because the small number of cases produces unstable estimates.

## Age

- Regardless of age, person offense cases were less likely than other offense categories to be adjudicated delinquent for each year between 1985 and 2011.
- For drug offense cases involving juveniles age 16 and older, the likelihood of adjudication decreased from 67% to 56% between 1985 and 2011.

## Gender

- Between 1985 and 2011, male cases generally were more likely to be adjudicated delinquent than were female cases.
- Since 2002, however, petitioned drug offense cases involving females were nearly as likely as those involving males to result in a delinquency adjudication.
- Between 1985 and 2011, for female juveniles, the likelihood of a delinquency adjudication increased for person offense cases.

## Race

- The likelihood of a delinquency adjudication decreased between 1985 and 2011 for delinquency cases involving white juveniles (5 percentage points) and black juveniles (2 percentage points). For both racial groups, the likelihood of adjudication decreased more for drug offense cases than for other general offense categories between 1985 and 2011: from 70% to 59% for white juveniles and from 65% to 54% for black juveniles.
- Cases involving American Indian juveniles were more likely to result in a delinquency adjudication than cases involving white, black, or Asian juveniles.

# Dispositions: Out-of-Home Placement

- The number of cases adjudicated delinquent that resulted in out-of-home placement decreased 9% from 1985 to its lowest level in 2011. During this period, the number of cases involving the use of out-of-home placement increased 36% for person offense cases, 37% for public order offense cases, and 28% for drug offense cases but decreased 45% for property offense cases.
- The number of cases involving out-of-home placement peaked in 1997 at 168,700 cases and then decreased 43% by 2011. Between 1997 and 2011, the number of cases resulting in out-of-home placement decreased 55% for property offense cases, 54% for drug offense cases, 36% for person offense cases, and 25% for public order offense cases.
- Public order offense cases include escapes from institutions, weapons offenses, and probation and parole violations. This may help to explain the relatively high number of public order offense cases involving out-of-home placement.

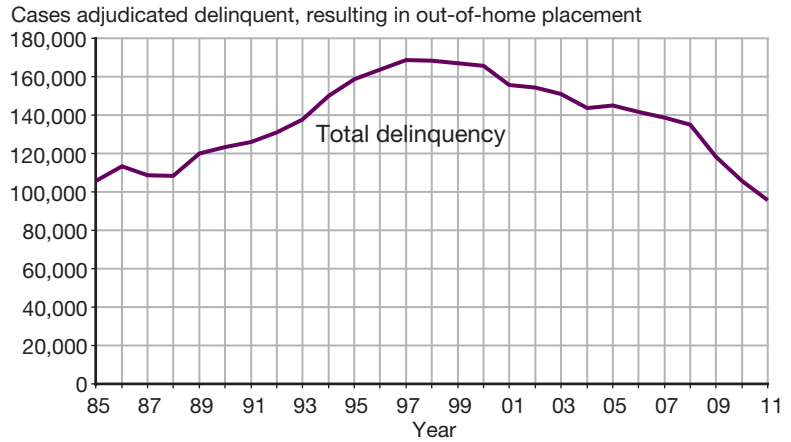
### Offense profile of cases adjudicated delinquent, resulting in out-of-home placement:

Most serious offense	2002	2011
Person	25%	27%
Property	36	33
Drugs	9	8
Public order	30	32
Total	100%	100%
Cases resulting in out-of-home placement	154,600	95,900

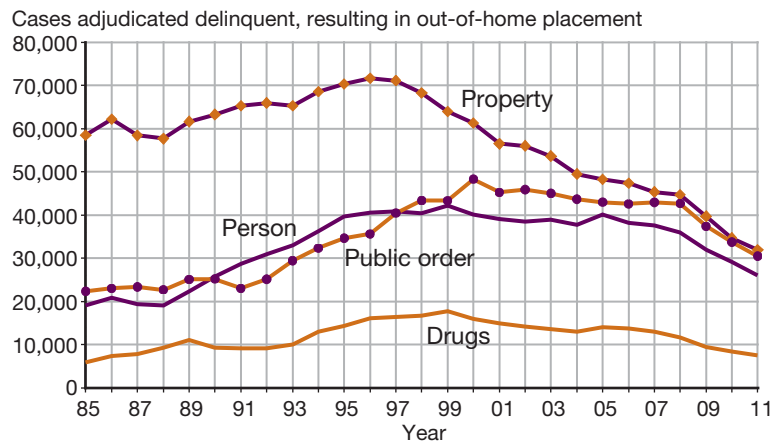
**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

- Property offense cases are the largest share of cases adjudicated delinquent that result in out-of-home placement, although the proportion declined between 2002 and 2011.

**The number of cases adjudicated delinquent that resulted in out-of-home placement increased 60% between 1985 and 1997 and then decreased 43% through 2011**

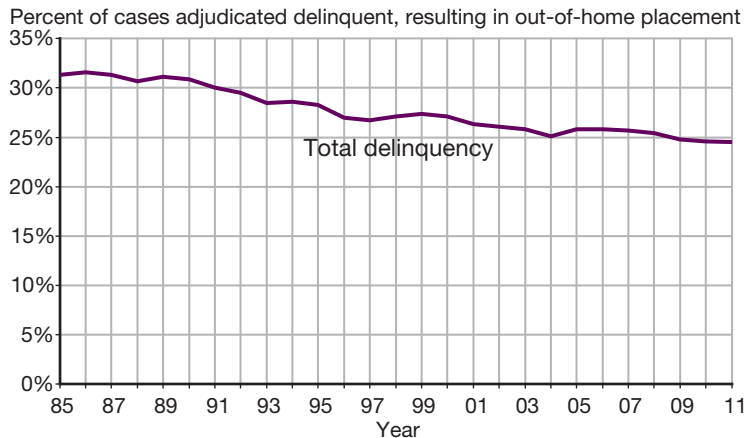


**The number of property offense cases adjudicated delinquent that resulted in out-of-home placement decreased 50% between 1997 and 2011**



# Dispositions: Out-of-Home Placement

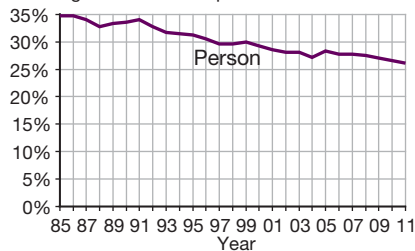
**The court ordered out-of-home placement in 24% of all cases adjudicated delinquent in 2011, down from 31% in 1985**



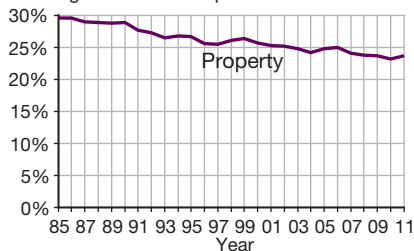
■ The likelihood that an adjudicated case would result in out-of-home placement decreased between 1985 and 2011 for each of the four major offense groups. The decline in the proportion of adjudicated cases resulting in out-of-home placement during this time was equal for person, drug offense, and public order cases (down 9 percentage points each). During the same period, the proportion of adjudicated cases resulting in out-of-home placement decreased 6 percentage points for property offense cases.

■ Between 1985 and 2011, the trend in the likelihood of out-of-home placement for drug offense cases differed from the trends of the other general offense categories. The proportion of adjudicated drug offense cases that resulted in out-of-home placement increased from 26% in 1985 to 38% in 1991 before decreasing through 2011. In contrast, the proportion of person, property, and public order offense cases adjudicated delinquent resulting in out-of-home placement declined between 1985 and the mid-2000s, then remained relatively constant between 2004 and 2011.

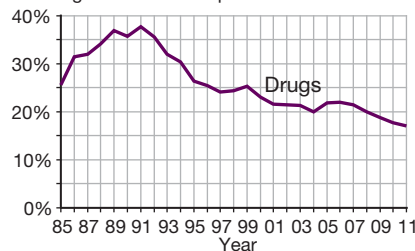
Percent of cases adjudicated delinquent, resulting in out-of-home placement



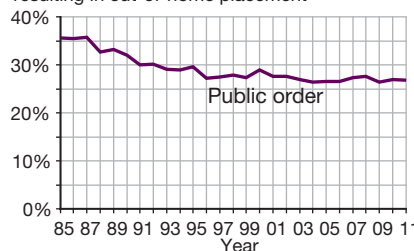
Percent of cases adjudicated delinquent, resulting in out-of-home placement



Percent of cases adjudicated delinquent, resulting in out-of-home placement



Percent of cases adjudicated delinquent, resulting in out-of-home placement



# Dispositions: Out-of-Home Placement

## Age

- In each year from 1995 through 2011, cases involving juveniles age 16 or older adjudicated delinquent were more likely to result in out-of-home placement than were cases involving youth age 15 or younger, regardless of offense.
- Between 1985 and 2011, the use of out-of-home placement declined for both younger youth and older youth across all four general offense categories. The declines for younger youth were greater than those for older youth.

## Gender

- For males in 2011, person and public order offense cases adjudicated delinquent were most likely to result in out-of-home placement (28% and 29%, respectively), followed by property cases (25%), and cases involving drug offenses (18%).
- For females in 2011, adjudicated public order offense cases were most likely to result in out-of-home placement (21%), followed by person cases (19%), property cases (17%), and drug offense cases (13%).

## Race

- After adjudication, the likelihood of out-of-home placement in 2011 was greater for black youth (28%) than for white or American Indian youth (23% each) or Asian youth (20%).
- For person, property, and public order offense cases, the proportion of cases adjudicated delinquent that resulting in out-of-home placement was smaller in 2011 than in 1985 for all races.
- In each year between 2005 and 2011, adjudicated property, drug offense, and public order offense cases involving black juveniles were more likely to result in out-of-home placement than were the same case types involving juveniles of any other races.

## Between 1985 and 2011, the likelihood of out-of-home placement declined more for younger youth than older youth

Most serious offense	Percentage of petitioned cases adjudicated delinquent, resulting in out-of-home placement			
	Age 15 and younger	Age 16 and older	Male	Female
<b>2011</b>				
Delinquency	22%	27%	26%	19%
Person	23	30	28	19
Property	22	26	25	17
Drugs	14	19	18	13
Public order	23	30	29	21
<b>2002</b>				
Delinquency	24%	29%	28%	20%
Person	26	33	30	22
Property	23	28	27	18
Drugs	19	23	22	16
Public order	25	30	29	22
<b>1985</b>				
Delinquency	32%	31%	32%	27%
Person	34	36	36	28
Property	30	30	31	23
Drugs	27	25	26	23
Public order	38	33	36	35

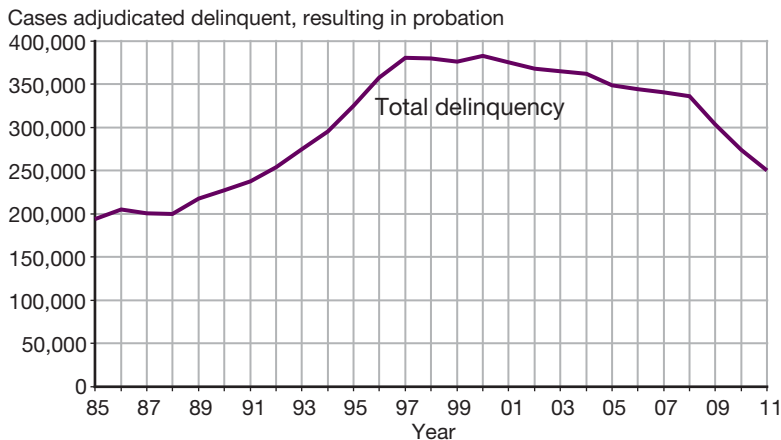
## Since 2001, adjudicated person offense cases were more likely than other offense categories to receive a disposition of out-of-home placement for American Indian youth and Asian youth

Most serious offense	Percentage of petitioned cases adjudicated delinquent, resulting in out-of-home placement			
	White	Black	American Indian	Asian
<b>2011</b>				
Delinquency	23%	28%	23%	20%
Person	24	29	30	23
Property	22	28	22	18
Drugs	15	24	15	NA
Public order	26	28	24	22
<b>2002</b>				
Delinquency	25%	28%	29%	27%
Person	28	29	37	28
Property	24	27	29	27
Drugs	18	32	16	20
Public order	27	29	25	27
<b>1985</b>				
Delinquency	30%	34%	41%	31%
Person	33	36	49	38
Property	29	31	39	27
Drugs	23	33	NA	NA
Public order	35	37	42	NA

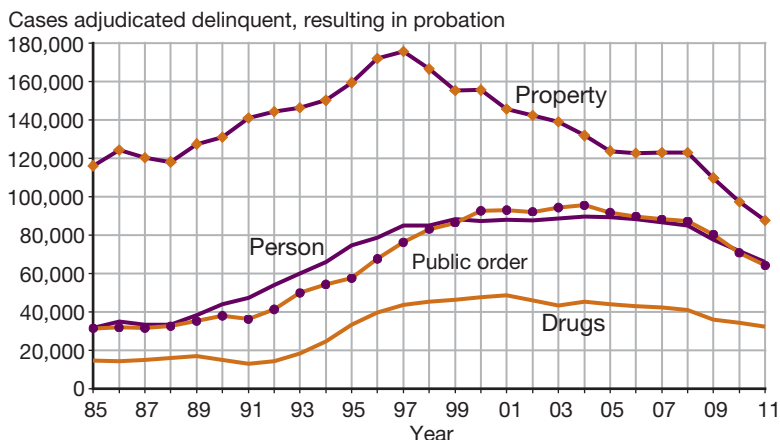
NA Data are not presented because the small number of cases produces unstable estimates.

# Dispositions: Probation

**After reaching a peak in 2000, the number of cases adjudicated delinquent that resulted in probation declined 35% by 2011**



**The number of adjudicated property offense cases resulting in an order of probation fell 50% since 1997**



- Between 1985 and 2011, the number of cases adjudicated delinquent that resulted in an order of probation increased 29%, compared with a 9% decrease in the number of cases that resulted in out-of-home placement.
- Nearly all of the growth in the number of cases adjudicated delinquent that resulted in probation took place between 1985 and 2000. During that period, the number of cases adjudicated and ordered to probation nearly doubled and then declined through 2011.
- Since 1985, the largest percent increase in the number of cases adjudicated delinquent that received probation has been for drug offense cases (121%), followed by person offenses (109%) and public order offenses (104%). The number of property offense cases decreased 25% since 1985.
- Between 2000 and 2011, the number of adjudicated cases resulting in an order of probation decreased 44% for property offenses, 32% for drug offenses, 31% for public order offenses, and 24% for person offenses.
- Increases in the person and public order offense categories accounted for most of the growth in the number of adjudicated cases resulting in probation between 1985 and 2011.

# Dispositions: Probation

- Probation was the most restrictive disposition used in 64% (250,100) of the cases adjudicated delinquent in 2011, compared with 57% (193,900) of the adjudicated caseload in 1985.
- Between 1985 and 2011, the likelihood of probation for cases adjudicated delinquent was relatively stable for person, property, and public order offense cases, varying from 7 to 11 percentage points, compared with a 19 percentage point range for drug offense cases.

### Offense profile of cases adjudicated delinquent, resulting in probation:

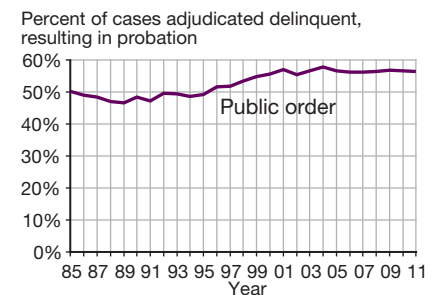
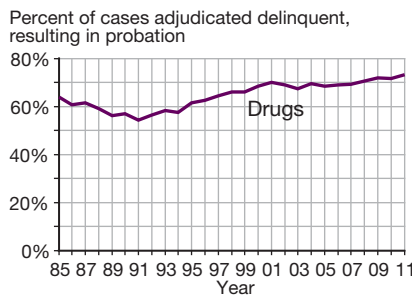
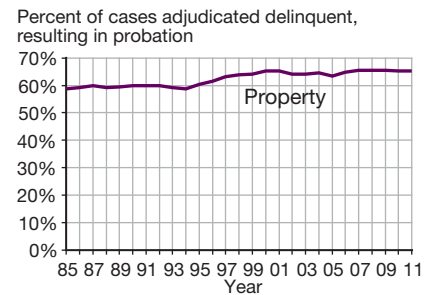
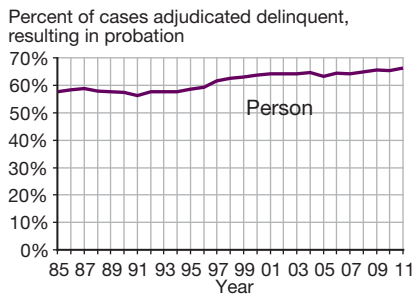
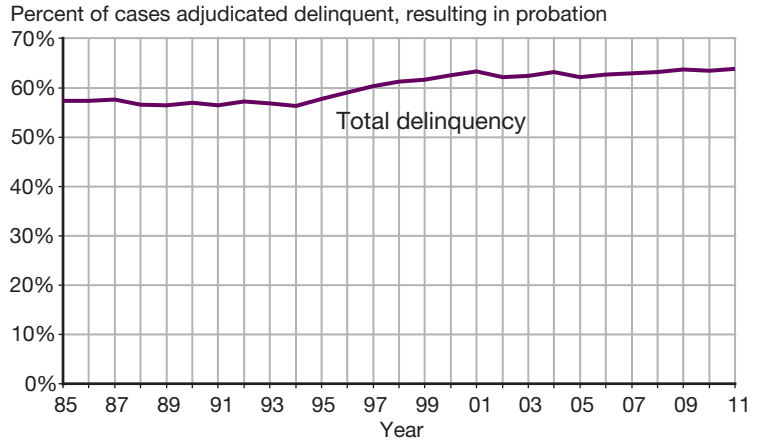
Most serious offense	2002	2011
Person	24%	26%
Property	39	35
Drugs	12	13
Public order	25	26
Total	100%	100%

Cases resulting in formal probation 368,200 250,100

**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

- In 2011, 35% of cases adjudicated delinquent that resulted in probation involved property offenses, while person cases and public order cases each accounted for approximately one quarter of these cases (26% each).
- The offense characteristics of cases adjudicated delinquent that resulted in probation changed between 2002 and 2011, with an increase in the proportion of cases involving person, drug, and public order offenses and a decreases in the proportion involving property offenses.

### Probation remains the most likely sanction imposed by juvenile courts



# Dispositions: Probation

## Cases involving youth age 15 or younger were generally more likely than cases involving older youth to be placed on formal probation following a delinquency adjudication

Most serious offense	Percentage of petitioned cases adjudicated delinquent, resulting in probation			
	Age 15 and younger	Age 16 and older	Male	Female
<b>2011</b>				
Delinquency	67%	61%	63%	67%
Person	69	62	64	72
Property	68	62	64	68
Drugs	77	71	73	76
Public order	61	53	56	59
<b>2002</b>				
Delinquency	65%	59%	61%	65%
Person	67	60	62	70
Property	66	61	63	67
Drugs	73	66	68	74
Public order	59	52	54	58
<b>1985</b>				
Delinquency	59%	56%	57%	60%
Person	59	55	57	63
Property	60	57	58	63
Drugs	64	64	64	65
Public order	51	49	50	52

## Since 1995, adjudicated cases involving white youth were more likely than cases involving black youth to be placed on probation

Most serious offense	Percentage of petitioned cases adjudicated delinquent, resulting in probation			
	White	Black	American Indian	Asian
<b>2011</b>				
Delinquency	66%	60%	65%	72%
Person	68	63	65	72
Property	67	62	69	72
Drugs	75	67	78	NA
Public order	58	53	55	70
<b>2002</b>				
Delinquency	63%	60%	60%	63%
Person	65	63	56	66
Property	64	63	61	62
Drugs	72	60	75	71
Public order	56	53	57	59
<b>1985</b>				
Delinquency	57%	60%	40%	64%
Person	58	58	38	59
Property	58	62	41	67
Drugs	64	64	NA	NA
Public order	49	56	41	NA

NA Data are not presented because the small number of cases produces unstable estimates.

## Age

- Among juveniles age 15 or younger, the overall likelihood of being placed on formal probation increased between 1985 and 2011 from 59% to 67%.
- Among youth age 16 or older, the overall likelihood of being placed on formal probation also increased between 1985 and 2011, from 56% to 61%.
- For both age groups in 2011, adjudicated cases involving drug offenses were more likely to result in probation than cases in other offense categories.

## Gender

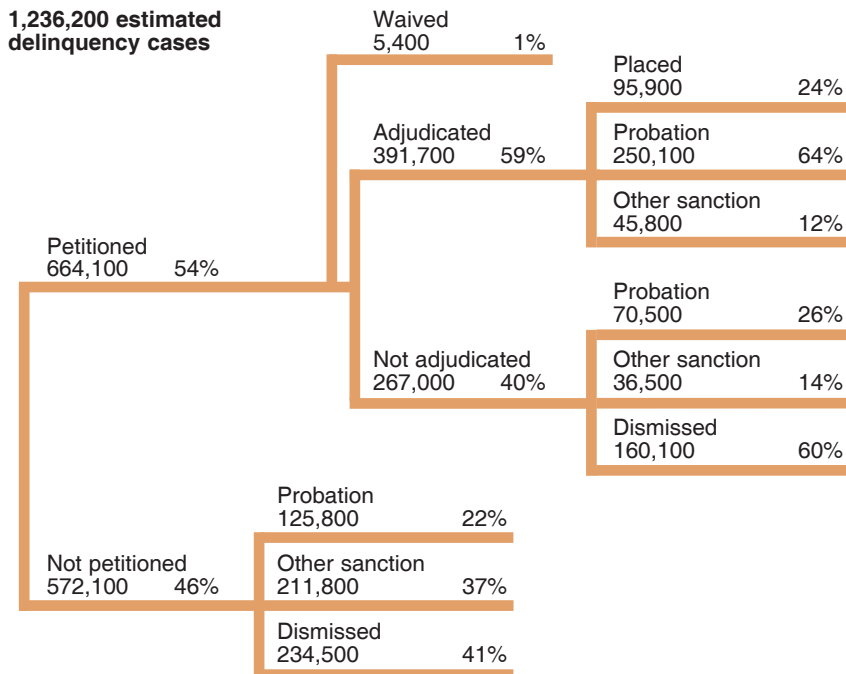
- The overall likelihood of being placed on formal probation increased for females between 1985 and 2011 (from 60% to 67%) and for males (from 57% to 63%).
- For females in 2011, drug offense cases adjudicated delinquent were most likely to be placed on probation (76%), followed by person (72%) and property offense cases (68%). Public order offense cases were least likely to result in formal probation (59%).

## Race

- Between 1985 and 2011, the overall likelihood of being placed on formal probation increased for adjudicated cases involving American Indian youth (from 40% to 65%), white youth (from 57% to 66%), and Asian youth (from 64% to 72%). The likelihood remained the same for black youth (60% in both years).
- In 2011, among white youth, drug offense cases that were adjudicated delinquent were most likely to be placed on formal probation (75%), followed by adjudicated person and property offense cases (68% and 67%, respectively) and public order offense cases (58%).

## Case Processing Overview, 2011

- In 2011, 54% (664,100) of the estimated 1,236,200 juvenile court cases were handled formally (with the filing of a petition).
- In 2011, 1% (5,400) of all formally processed delinquency cases were judicially transferred to criminal court.
- In 2011, 59% (391,700) of the cases that were handled formally (with the filing of a petition) resulted in a delinquency adjudication.
- In 64% (250,100) of cases adjudicated delinquent in 2011, formal probation was the most severe sanction ordered by the court.
- In 2011, 24% (95,900) of cases adjudicated delinquent resulted in placement outside the home in a residential facility.
- In 12% (45,800) of cases adjudicated delinquent in 2011, the juvenile was ordered to pay restitution or a fine, to participate in some form of community service, or to enter a treatment or counseling program—dispositions with minimal continuing supervision by probation staff.
- In 40% (267,000) of all petitioned delinquency cases in 2011, the youth was not subsequently adjudicated delinquent. The court dismissed 60% of these cases, while 26% resulted in some form of informal probation and 14% in other voluntary dispositions.
- In 2011, the court dismissed 41% of the informally handled (i.e., nonpetitioned) delinquency cases, while 22% of the cases resulted in voluntary probation and 37% in other dispositions.

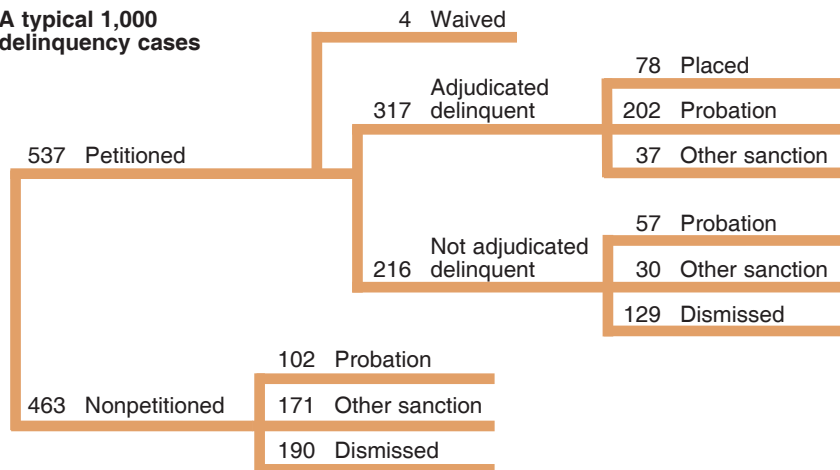


**Notes:** Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. Annual case processing flow diagrams for 1985 through 2011 are available online at [ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp](http://ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp).



# Case Processing Overview, 2011

A typical 1,000 delinquency cases



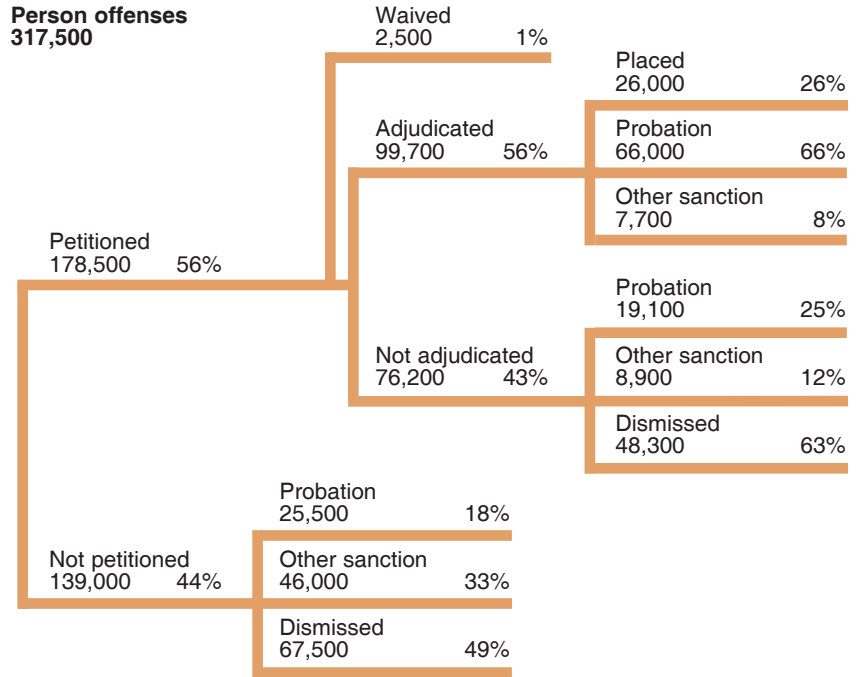
**Notes:** Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

- For every 1,000 delinquency cases processed in 2011, 537 were petitioned for formal processing and 463 were handled informally.
- Of the cases that were adjudicated delinquent, 64% (202 of 317) received a disposition of probation and 25% (78 of 317) were placed out of the home.
- In many petitioned delinquency cases that did not result in a delinquency adjudication, the youth agreed to informal services or sanctions (87 of 216), including informal probation and other dispositions such as restitution.
- Although juvenile courts in 2011 handled more than 4 in 10 delinquency cases without the filing of a formal petition, 59% of these cases received some form of court sanction, including probation or other dispositions such as restitution, community service, or referral to another agency.

# Case Processing by Offense Category, 2011

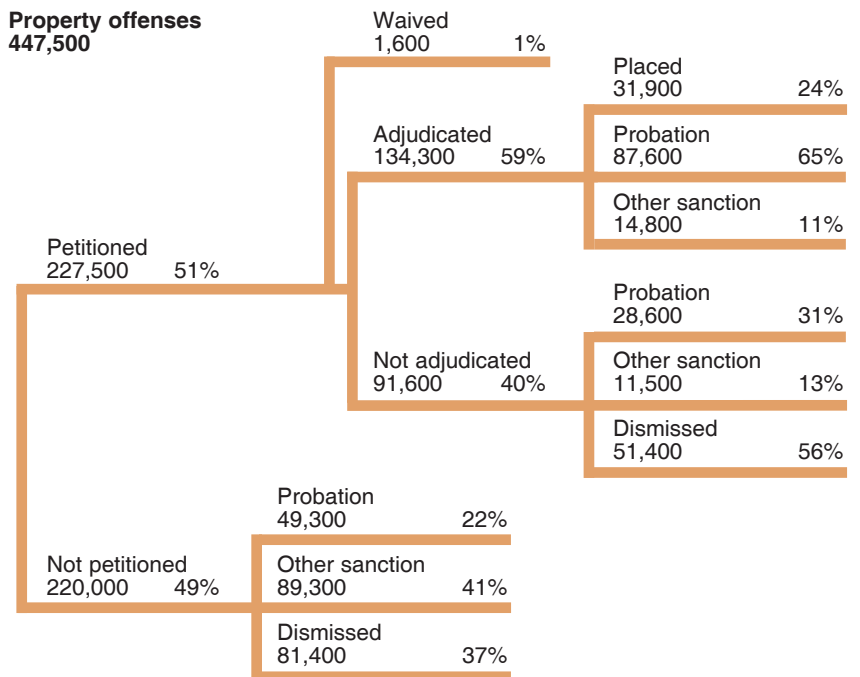
## Person Offense Cases

- In 2011, 56% (99,700) of all formally processed person offense cases resulted in a delinquency adjudication.
- Formal probation was the most severe sanction ordered by the court in 66% (66,000) of the adjudicated person offense cases in 2011.
- Once adjudicated, person offense cases were nearly as likely as public order offense cases to result in out-of-home placement (26% and 27%, respectively) and more likely than property offenses cases (24%) and drug offense cases (17%).
- In 2011, 18% of person offense cases that were handled informally resulted in probation; 49% were dismissed.
- Juvenile courts waived jurisdiction in 1% (2,500) of all petitioned person offense cases in 2011.



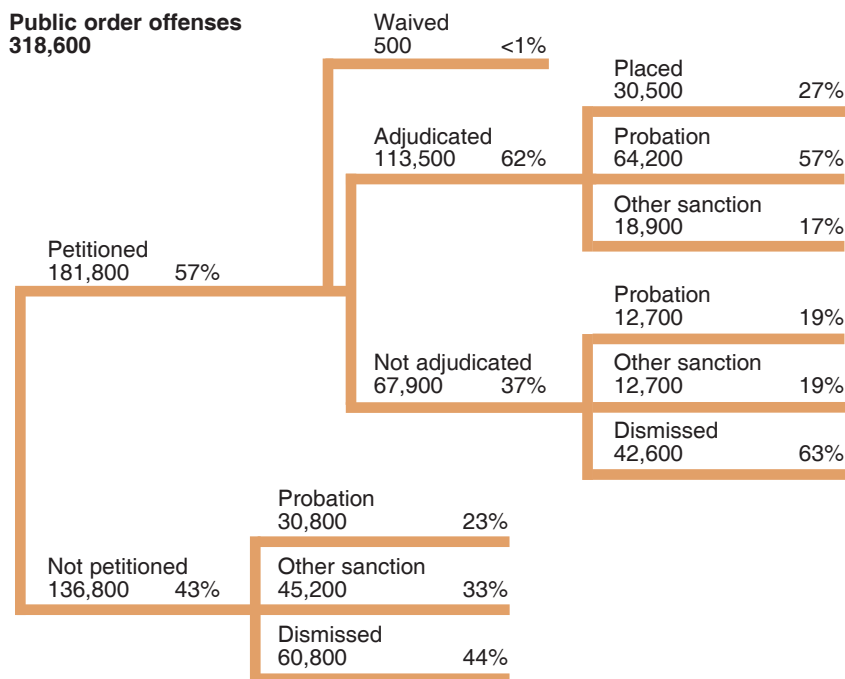
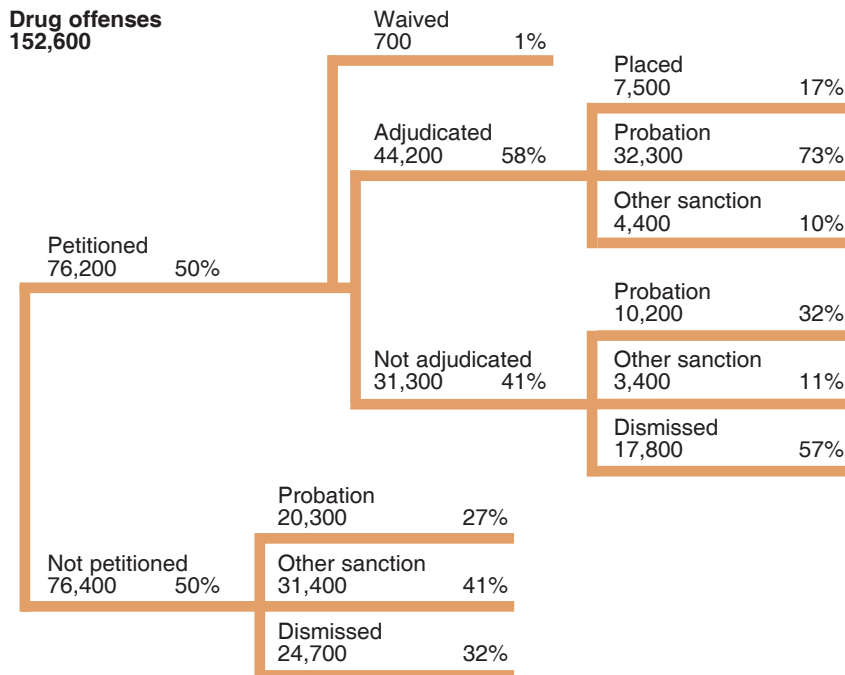
## Property Offense Cases

- Juvenile courts handled half (51%) of all property offense cases formally in 2011. Of these formally handled cases, 59% (134,300 cases) were adjudicated delinquent.
- In 2011, 87,600 (65%) of the adjudicated property offense cases resulted in probation as the most severe sanction; another 24% (31,900) resulted in out-of-home placement. Other sanctions, such as restitution, community service, or referral to another agency, were ordered in 11% (14,800) of the petitioned property offense cases following adjudication.
- Property offense cases were less likely than person offense cases to be petitioned for formal processing. Once petitioned, however, property offense cases were more likely to result in the youth being adjudicated delinquent than were cases involving person offenses.



**Notes:** Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. Annual case processing flow diagrams for 1985 through 2011 are available online at [ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp](http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp).

# Case Processing by Offense Category, 2011



**Notes:** Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. Annual case processing flow diagrams for 1985 through 2011 are available online at [ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp](http://ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp).

## Drug Offense Cases

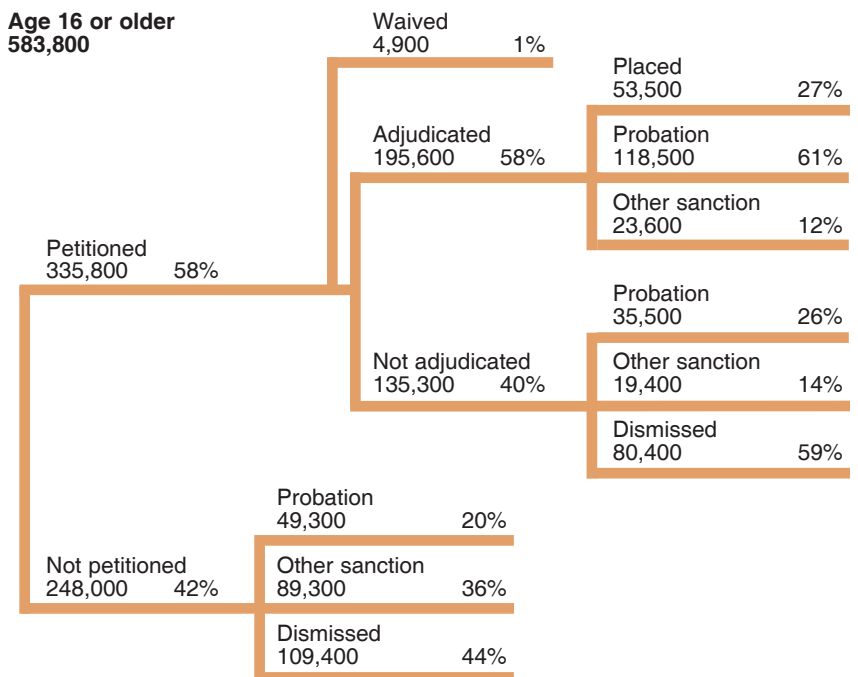
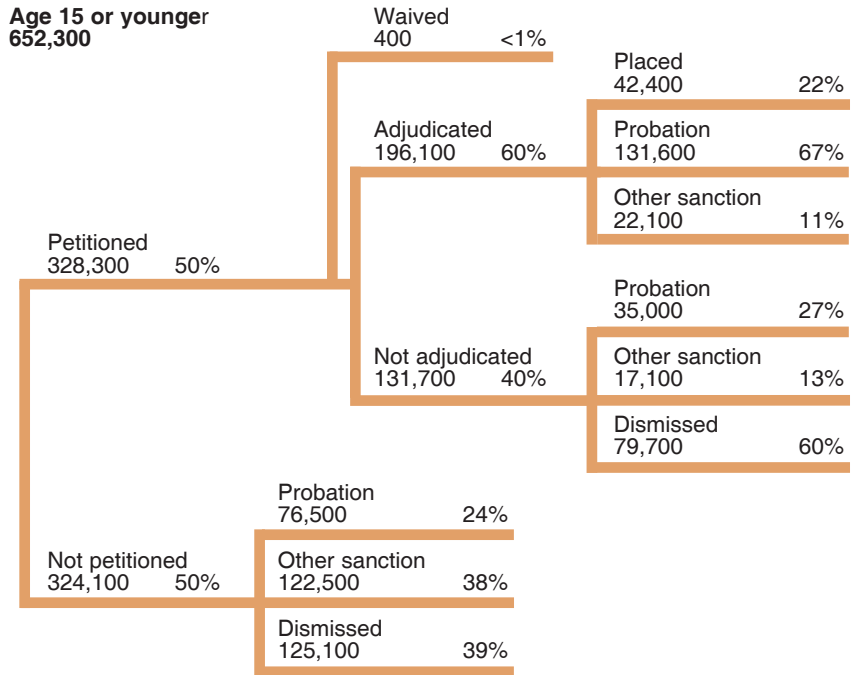
- In 2011, 58% (44,200) of all petitioned drug offense cases resulted in the youth being adjudicated delinquent; 73% (32,300) of these cases received probation as the most severe sanction, and another 17% (7,500) resulted in out-of-home placement.
- Other sanctions, such as restitution, community service, or referral to another agency, were ordered in 10% (4,400) of petitioned drug offense cases following adjudication in 2011.
- Juvenile courts waived jurisdiction in 1% (700) of all petitioned drug offense cases in 2011.
- Half (50%) of drug offense cases were informally handled in 2011; 68% of the informally handled drug offense cases resulted in probation or some other sanction.

## Public Order Offense Cases

- In 2011, the majority (57%) of all public order offense cases were handled formally, with the filing of a petition for adjudication.
- Once adjudicated delinquent, 57% of public order offense cases in 2011 resulted in probation as the most severe sanction, 27% were placed out of the home, and 17% resulted in other sanctions.
- In 2011, 43% of all public order offense cases were handled informally. Of the informal cases, 44% were dismissed, while the remaining cases resulted in some form of court sanction, including probation, restitution, community service, or referral to another agency.

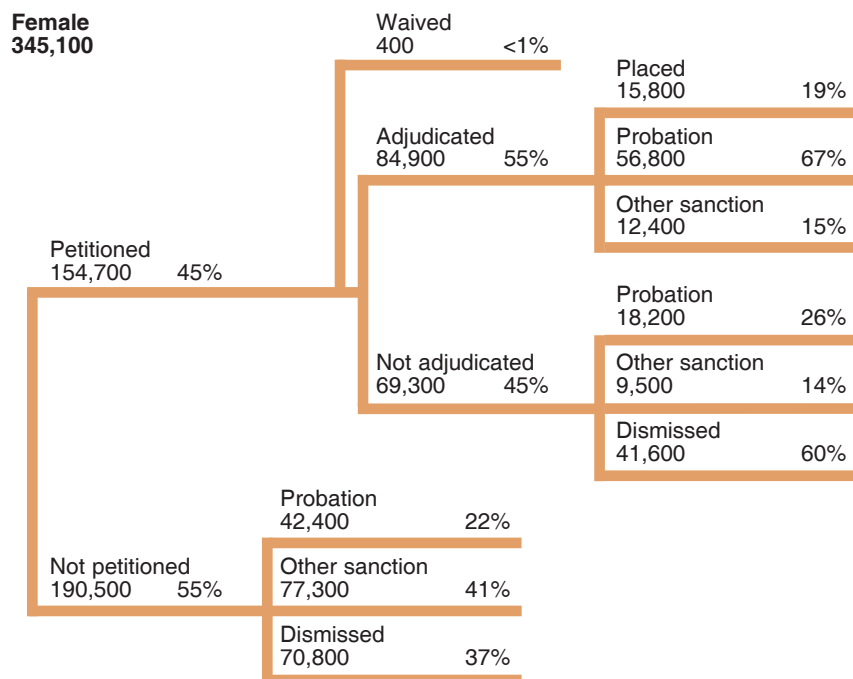
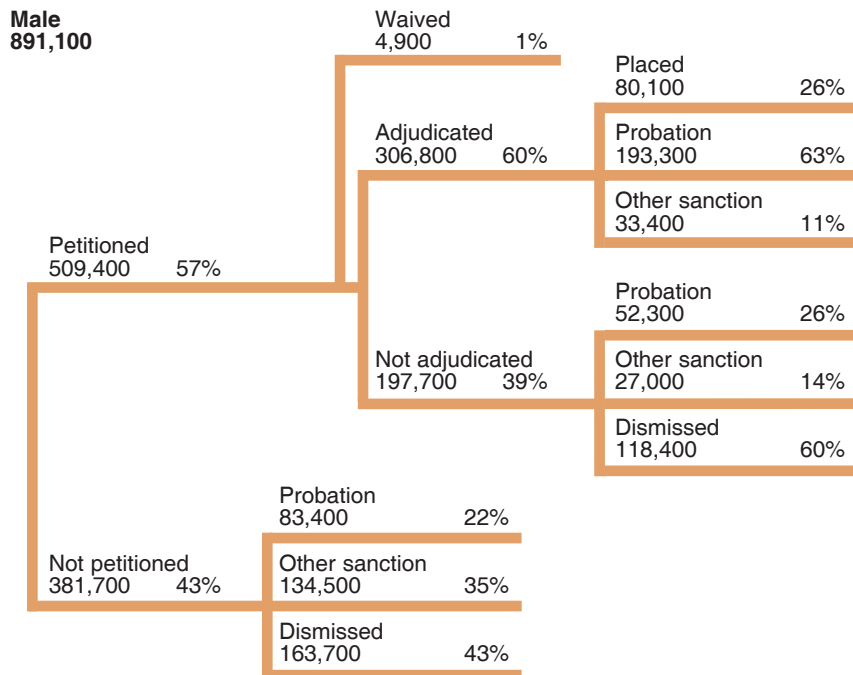
# Case Processing by Age, 2011

- In 2011, 50% (328,300) of all delinquency cases involving youth age 15 or younger and 58% (335,800) of cases involving youth age 16 or older were handled formally with the filing of a petition.
- Cases involving youth age 15 or younger were adjudicated delinquent in 60% of all formally processed cases in 2011; cases involving youth age 16 or older were adjudicated delinquent in 58% of all such cases.
- The proportion of petitioned cases waived to criminal court in 2011 was less than 1% for youth age 15 or younger, compared with 1% for youth age 16 or older.
- In 2011, 22% of cases adjudicated delinquent involving youth age 15 or younger and 27% of such cases involving youth age 16 or older resulted in out-of-home placement.
- Probation was ordered as the most severe sanction in 2011 in 67% of the adjudicated cases involving youth age 15 or younger, compared with 61% of adjudicated cases involving youth 16 or older.
- Among cases formally adjudicated in 2011 involving youth age 15 or younger, 11% resulted in other sanctions. For cases involving youth age 16 or older, 12% of the formally adjudicated cases resulted in other sanctions.
- For youth age 15 or younger, 50% of all delinquency cases were handled informally in 2011; of these cases, 24% resulted in a disposition of probation and 39% were dismissed. Among older youth, 42% of all delinquency cases were handled without the filing of a petition for adjudication in 2011; 20% of these cases resulted in a disposition of probation and 44% were dismissed.



**Notes:** Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. Annual case processing flow diagrams for 1985 through 2011 are available online at [ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp](http://ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp).

# Case Processing by Gender, 2011

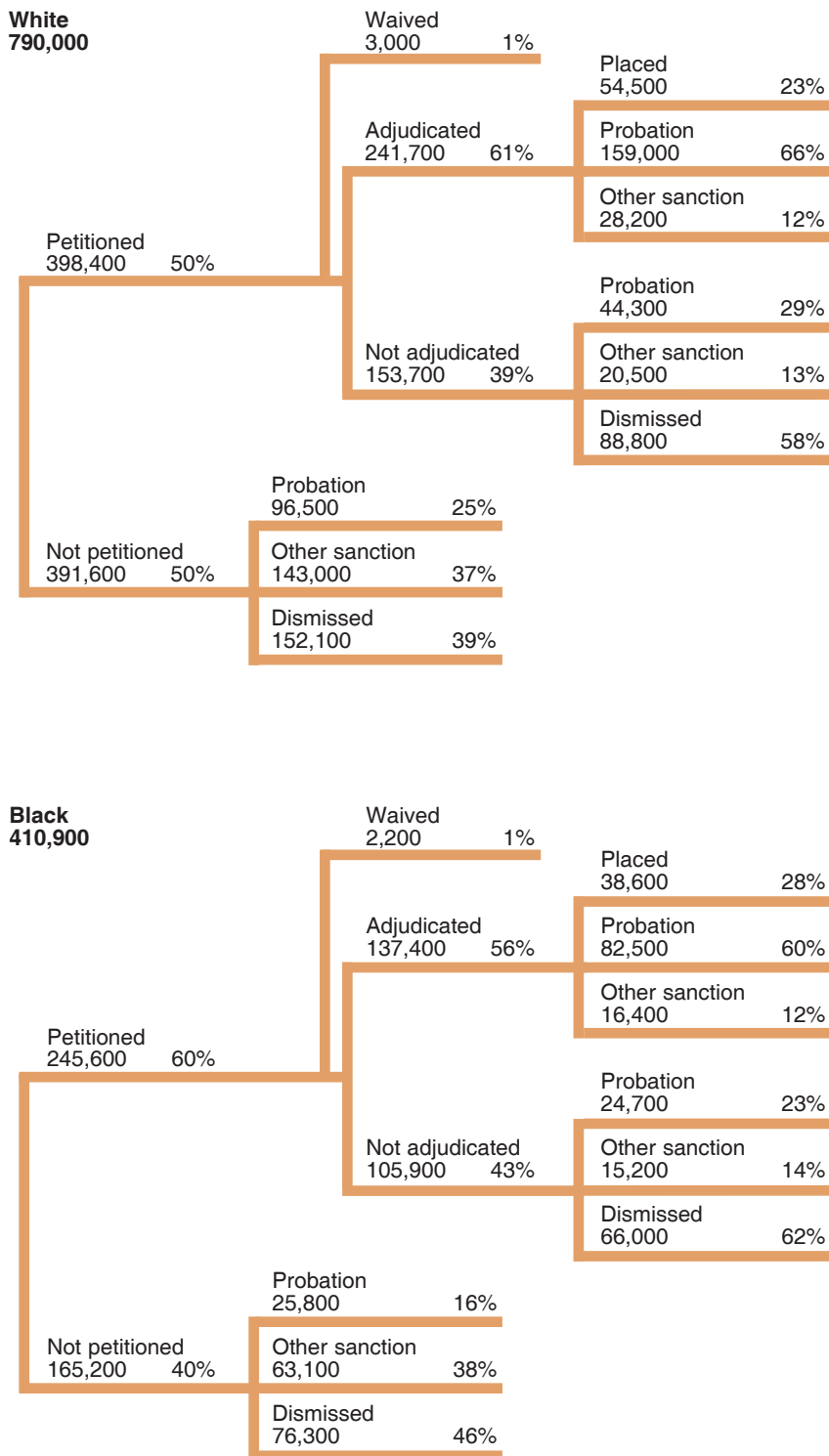


- In 2011, 57% of delinquency cases involving males were handled with the filing of a petition for adjudication, compared with 45% of those involving females.
- Once petitioned, cases involving males in 2011 were more likely to result in a delinquency adjudication than were cases involving females (60% vs. 55%).
- Delinquency cases involving females in 2011 were less likely to be waived to criminal court than those involving males.
- Once adjudicated delinquent, 26% of cases involving males in 2011 resulted in out-of-home placement, compared with 19% of those involving females.
- Of the adjudicated cases involving males, 63% received probation as the most severe sanction, and 11% resulted in other sanctions such as restitution or community service.
- Among adjudicated cases involving females in 2011, 67% received probation as the most severe sanction and 15% resulted in other sanctions.
- Informally handled delinquency cases involving males were equally as likely as those involving females to receive probation in 2011 (22% each); male cases were more likely than female cases to be dismissed (43% vs. 37%).
- In 2011, informally handled delinquency cases involving females were more likely to result in other sanctions than those involving males (41% vs. 35%).

**Notes:** Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. Annual case processing flow diagrams for 1985 through 2011 are available online at [ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp](http://ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp).

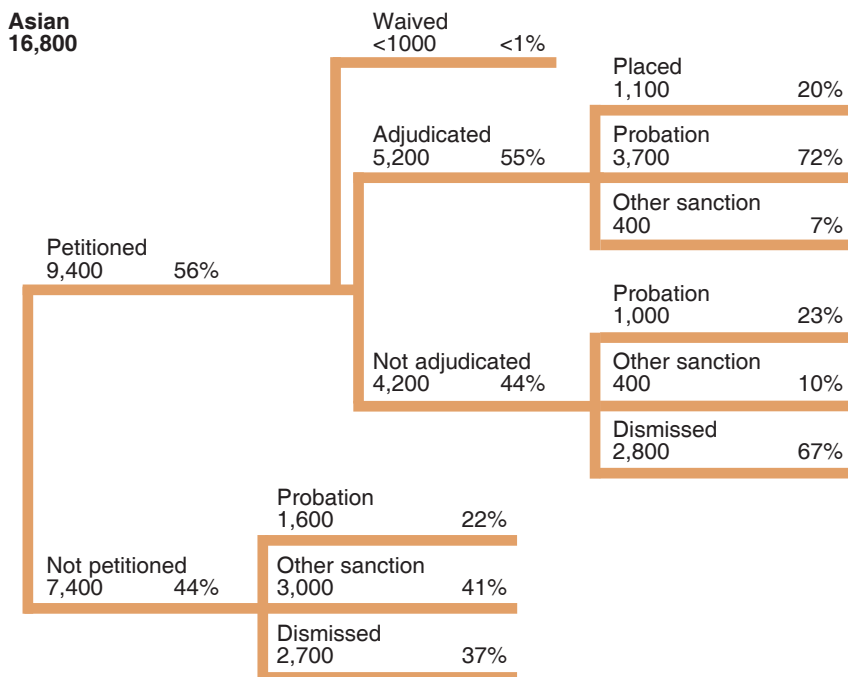
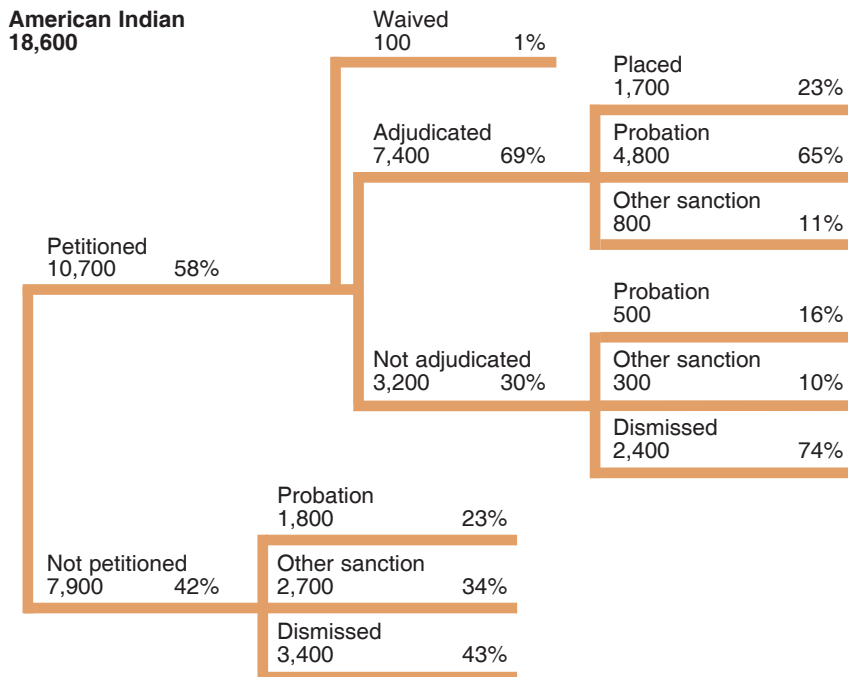
## Case Processing by Race, 2011

- In 2011, delinquency cases involving white youth were less likely to be handled formally (50%) than those involving black youth (60%), American Indian youth (58%), or Asian youth (56%).
- Once petitioned, cases in 2011 involving black youth (56%) and Asian youth (55%) were less likely to be adjudicated delinquent than were cases involving white youth (61%) or American Indian youth (69%).
- For all racial groups in 2011, about 1% or less of petitioned delinquency cases resulted in waiver to criminal court.
- In 2011, adjudicated delinquency cases involving black youth were more likely to result in out-of-home placement (28%) than cases involving all other races. White and American Indian youth were equally as likely to be ordered to residential placement (23% each) and Asian youth were least likely (20%).
- For adjudicated cases involving black youth in 2011, probation was the most severe sanction ordered in 60% of the cases and 12% resulted in other sanctions.



**Notes:** Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. Annual case processing flow diagrams for 1985 through 2011 are available online at [ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp](http://ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp).

# Case Processing by Race, 2011



- For adjudicated cases involving American Indian youth in 2011, probation was the most severe sanction ordered in 65% of the cases and 11% resulted in other sanctions.
- In 72% of the adjudicated cases involving Asian youth in 2011, probation was the most severe sanction; 7% resulted in other sanctions such as restitution or community service.
- In 2011, 50% of delinquency cases involving white youth were handled informally, compared with 40% of cases involving black youth, 42% of cases involving American Indian youth, and 44% of cases involving Asian juveniles.
- Informally handled delinquency cases involving black youth and American Indian youth in 2011 were more likely to be dismissed (46% and 43%, respectively) than those involving white youth or Asian youth (39% and 37%, respectively).
- In 2011, informally handled delinquency cases involving Asian youth were more likely to result in other sanctions such as restitution, community service, or referral to another agency (41%) than were cases involving white youth (37%), black youth (38%), or American Indian youth (34%).

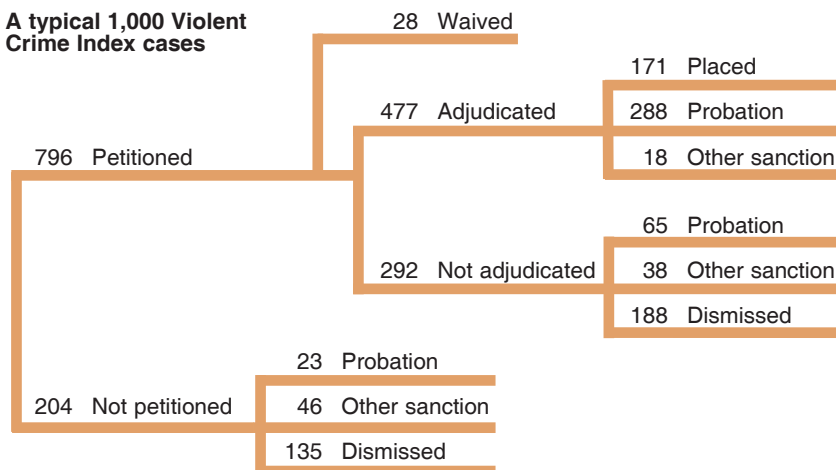
**Notes:** Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. Annual case processing flow diagrams for 1985 through 2011 are available online at [ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp](http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp).

# Case Processing by FBI Offense Category, 2011

## Violent Crime Index Cases

- In 2011, juvenile courts waived 28 of every 1,000 Violent Crime Index offense cases to criminal court.
- Juvenile courts ordered formal sanctions or waived jurisdiction in more than half (505 of 1,000) of Violent Crime Index offense cases handled in 2011.
- Cases involving juveniles adjudicated delinquent for Violent Crime Index offenses in 2011 were more likely to result in out-of-home placement (171 of 1,000) than were Property Crime Index offense cases (76 of 1,000).
- Cases that are not petitioned and cases in which juveniles are not adjudicated delinquent may result in informal sanctions. Thus, juvenile courts imposed some sort of sanction—formal or informal—in 68% (677 of every 1,000) of the Violent Crime Index offense cases handled in 2011.

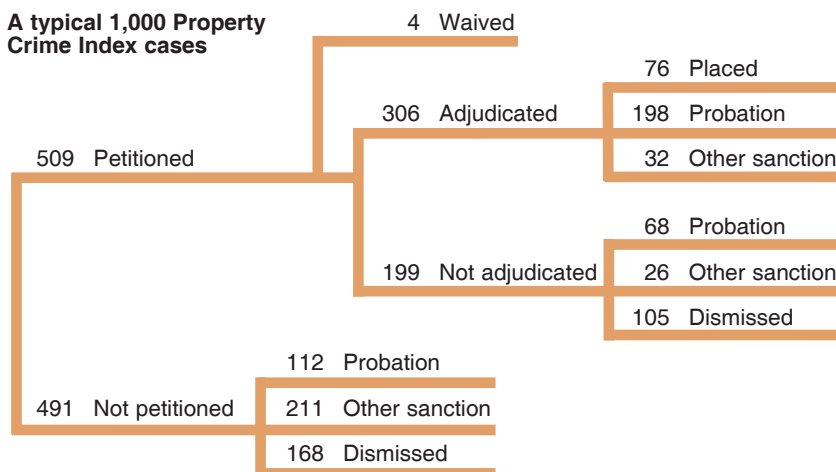
### A typical 1,000 Violent Crime Index cases



## Property Crime Index Cases

- Juveniles received informal sanctions in 42% (417 of every 1,000) of Property Crime Index offense cases processed in 2011.
- Juvenile courts waived 4 of every 1,000 Property Crime Index offense cases to criminal court in 2011.
- Cases involving juveniles adjudicated delinquent for Property Crime Index offenses were more likely to result in probation (198 out of 306) than were Violent Crime Index offense cases (288 out of 477).
- More than 25% of all Property Crime Index offenses referred to juvenile courts in 2011 were ultimately dismissed (273 of 1,000)—21% of the petitioned cases and 34% of those not petitioned.

### A typical 1,000 Property Crime Index cases

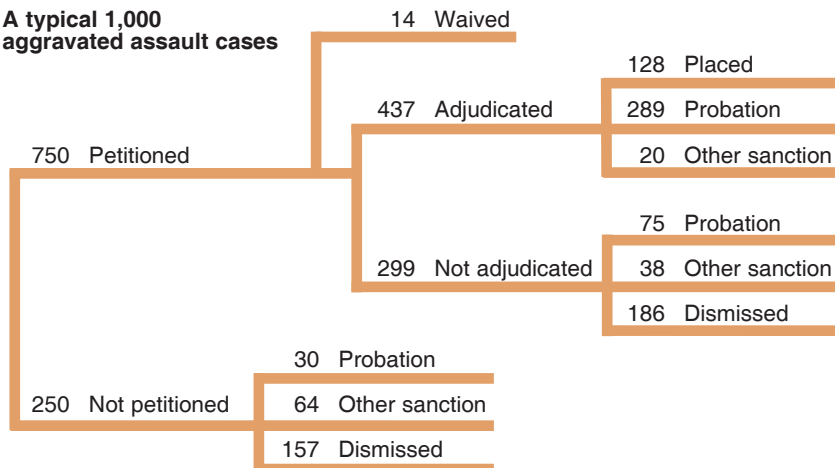


**Notes:** The Violent Crime Index includes criminal homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. The Property Crime Index includes burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. Annual case processing flow diagrams for 1985 through 2011 are available online at [ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp](http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp).

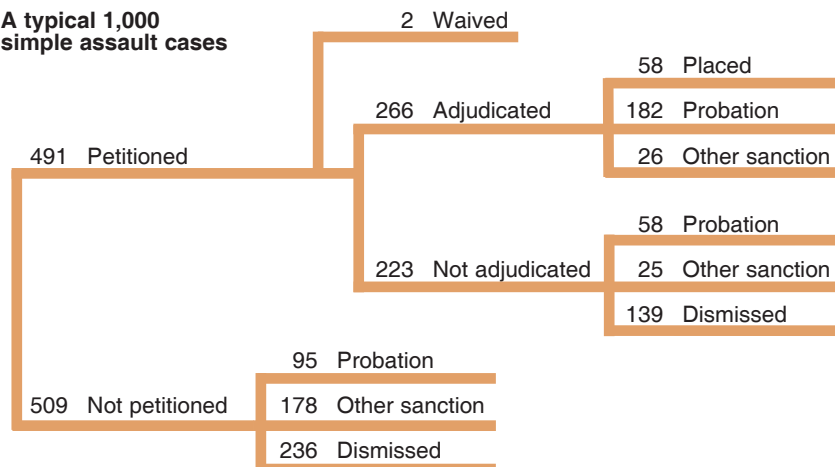


# Case Processing by Selected Individual Offense, 2011

## A typical 1,000 aggravated assault cases



## A typical 1,000 simple assault cases



**Notes:** Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. Annual case processing flow diagrams for 1985 through 2011 are available online at [ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp](http://ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp).

## Aggravated Assault Cases

- Juvenile courts waived 14 of every 1,000 aggravated assault cases to criminal court in 2011, compared with 2 of every 1,000 simple assault cases.
- Nearly half (45%) of aggravated assault cases in 2011 received some formal sanction or were waived to criminal court (451 of 1,000).
- In 2011, 13% of aggravated assault cases received a formal sanction of out-of-home placement (128 of 1,000) and 29% were placed on formal probation (289 of 1,000).
- Of all aggravated assault cases referred to juvenile courts in 2011, 34% were eventually released or dismissed (343 of 1,000)—25% of the petitioned cases and 63% of those that were informally handled.

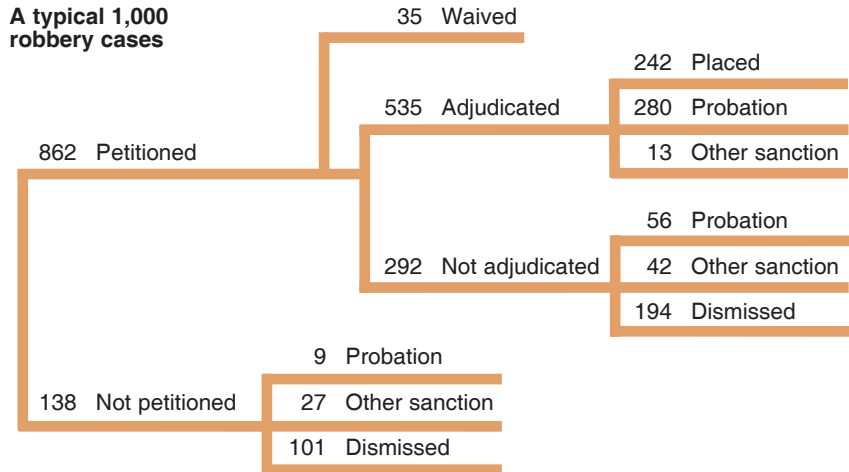
## Simple Assault Cases

- Juveniles received informal sanctions in 36% of simple assault cases processed in 2011 (357 of 1,000).
- Of every 1,000 simple assault cases handled in 2011, 268 received some formal sanction or were waived to criminal court.
- In 2011, 6% of simple assault cases resulted in the juvenile receiving a formal sanction of out-of-home placement (58 of 1,000) and 18% were placed on formal probation (182 of 1,000).
- Of all simple assault cases referred to juvenile courts in 2011, 38% were eventually dismissed (375 of 1,000)—28% of the petitioned cases and 46% of those that were informally handled.

# Case Processing by Selected Individual Offense, 2011

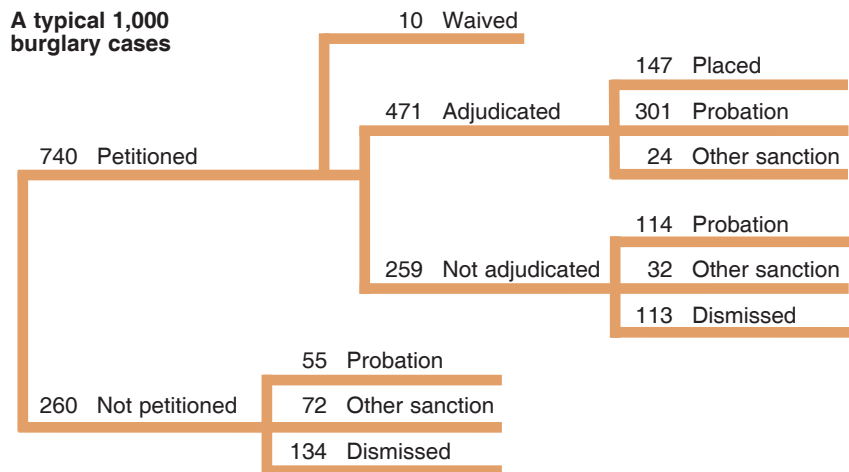
## Robbery Cases

- Juvenile courts waived 35 of every 1,000 robbery cases to criminal court in 2011.
- In 2011, juvenile courts ordered formal sanctions or waived jurisdiction in 57% of all robbery cases (570 of 1,000).
- In 2011, 24% of robbery cases received a formal sanction of out-of-home placement (242 of 1,000) and 28% resulted in formal probation (280 of 1,000).
- Of all robbery cases referred to juvenile court in 2011, 14% were not petitioned; the majority (73%) of these cases were dismissed.



## Burglary Cases

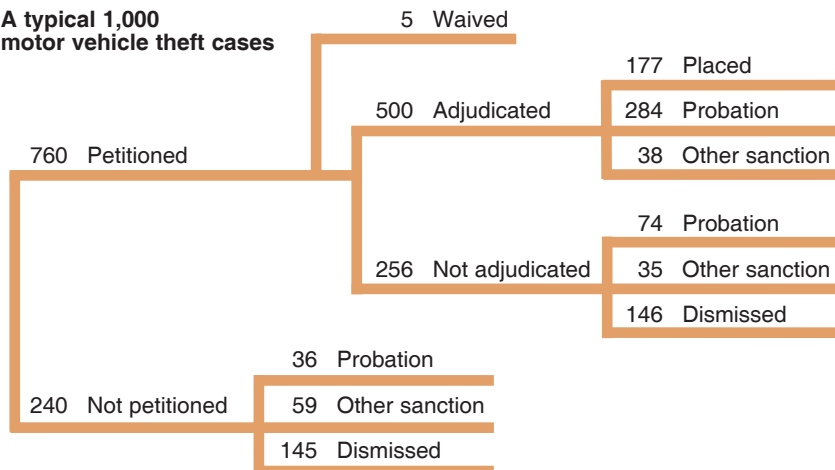
- Juvenile courts waived 10 of every 1,000 burglary cases to criminal court in 2011.
- In 2011, 64% (471 of 740) of all petitioned burglary cases resulted in the youth being adjudicated delinquent.
- Juvenile courts ordered formal sanctions or waived jurisdiction in 65% of all formally handled burglary cases in 2011.
- In 2011, 147 of 1,000 burglary cases received a formal sanction of out-of-home placement and 301 of 1,000 resulted in formal probation.
- One-quarter (26%) of all burglary cases referred to juvenile courts in 2011 were handled informally and more than half of these cases (134 of 260) were dismissed.



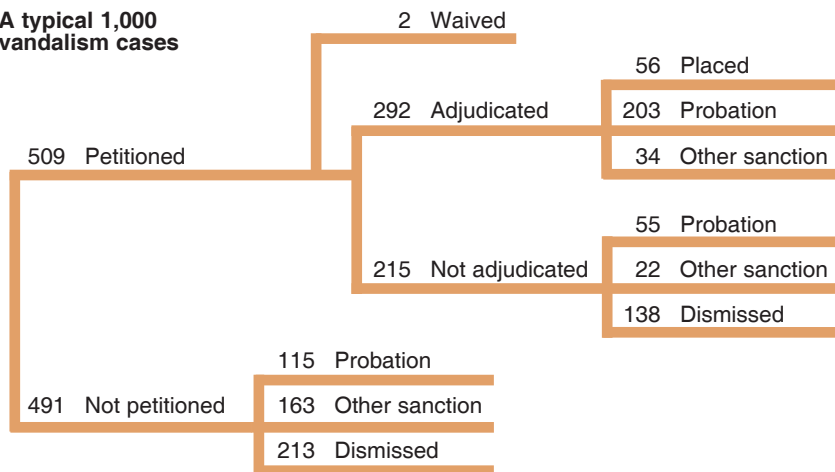
**Notes:** Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. Annual case processing flow diagrams for 1985 through 2011 are available online at [ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp](http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp).

# Case Processing by Selected Individual Offense, 2011

## A typical 1,000 motor vehicle theft cases



## A typical 1,000 vandalism cases



**Notes:** Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. Annual case processing flow diagrams for 1985 through 2011 are available online at [ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp](http://ojdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp).

## Motor Vehicle Theft Cases

- Juvenile courts waived less than 1% of motor vehicle theft cases to criminal court in 2011 (5 of every 1,000).
- In 2011, 50% of motor vehicle theft cases referred to juvenile courts resulted in formal court sanctions or waiver to criminal court.
- About 35% of motor vehicle cases adjudicated delinquent in 2011 resulted in out-of-home placement (177 of 500).
- Nearly one-quarter of motor vehicle theft cases referred to juvenile courts in 2011 were handled without the filing of a petition (240 of 1,000).

## Vandalism Cases

- Juvenile courts waived 2 of every 1,000 vandalism cases to criminal court in 2011.
- More than half of vandalism cases referred to juvenile courts in 2011 were handled formally (509 of 1,000). Of these cases, 57% were adjudicated delinquent (292 of 509).
- In 2011, 70% of petitioned vandalism cases adjudicated delinquent resulted in a court sanction of probation (203 of 292), and 19% resulted in out-of-home placement (56 of 292).
- Juvenile courts handled 491 of every 1,000 vandalism cases informally (without a petition) in 2011. Youth received informal sanctions in 57% of these nonpetitioned cases.



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# Chapter 4

## National Estimates of Petitioned Status Offense Cases

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Status offenses are acts that are illegal only because the persons committing them are of juvenile status. The five major status offense categories used in this Report are running away, truancy, curfew law violations, ungovernability (also known as incorrigibility or being beyond the control of one's parents), and underage liquor law violations (e.g., a minor in possession of alcohol, underage drinking). A number of other behaviors, such as those involving tobacco offenses, may be considered status offenses. However, because of the heterogeneity of these miscellaneous offenses, they are not discussed independently in this Report but are included in discussions and displays of petitioned status offense totals.

Agencies other than juvenile courts are responsible for processing status offense cases in many jurisdictions. In some communities, for example, family crisis units, county attorneys, and social service agencies have assumed this responsibility. When a juvenile charged with a status offense is referred to juvenile court, the court may divert the juvenile away from the formal justice system to other agencies for service or may decide

to process the juvenile formally with the filing of a petition. The analyses in this Report are limited to petitioned cases.

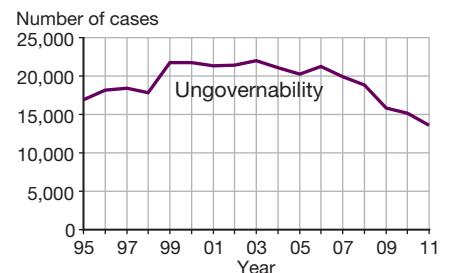
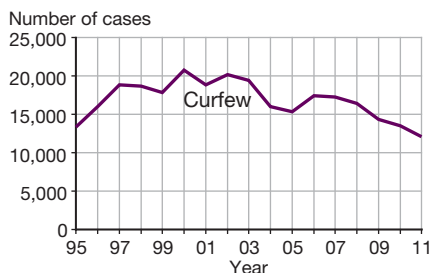
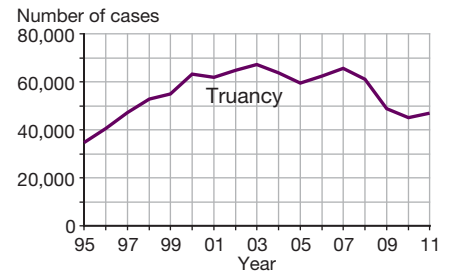
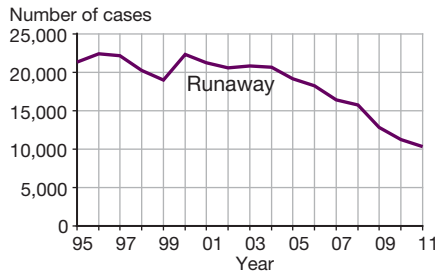
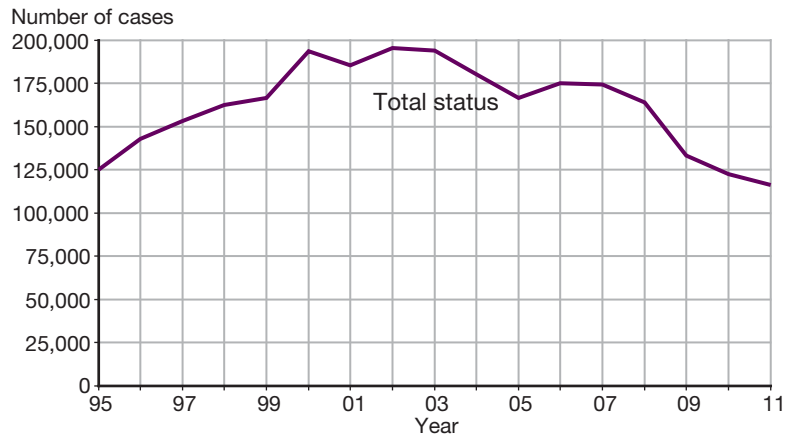
Juvenile courts may adjudicate petitioned status offense cases and may order sanctions such as probation or out-of-home placement. While their cases are being processed, juveniles charged with status offenses are sometimes held in secure detention. (Note that the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act discourages secure detention of status offenders. States holding large numbers of status offenders in secure detention risk losing a significant portion of their juvenile justice block grant awards.)

This chapter presents national estimates of petitioned status offense cases disposed in 2011 and examines trends since 1995, including demographic characteristics of the juveniles involved, types of offenses charged, and the flow of cases as they moved through juvenile court processing. (See chapter 3 for a description of the stages of court processing.)

# Counts and Trends

- In 2011, U.S. courts with juvenile jurisdiction petitioned and formally disposed an estimated 116,200 status offense cases.
- The number of petitioned status offense cases processed by juvenile courts decreased 7% between 1995 and 2011.
- The number of petitioned runaway cases processed by juvenile courts decreased 52% between 1995 and 2011 (from 21,300 to 10,300).
- The number of petitioned truancy cases processed by juvenile courts nearly doubled between 1995 and 2007 (from 34,600 to 65,600) and then declined 28% through 2011.
- Between 1995 and 2000, the number of petitioned curfew cases increased 55% (from 13,400 to 20,800) and then declined 42% through 2011 (12,100).
- The number of petitioned ungovernability cases in 2011 (13,600) was 38% below the 1995 level (21,900).
- The number of petitioned liquor law violation cases decreased 20% between 1995 and 2011 (from 29,200 to 23,200).

**Between 1995 and 2000, the formally handled status offense caseload increased considerably (55%) and then declined 40% through 2011**

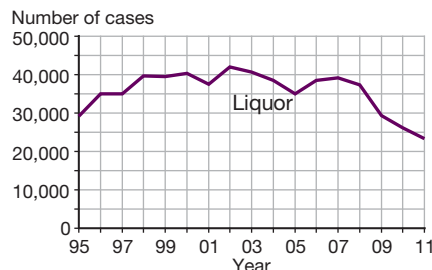


### Offense profile of petitioned status offense cases:

Most serious offense	2002	2011
Runaway	11%	9%
Truancy	33	40
Curfew	10	10
Ungovernability	11	12
Liquor	21	20
Miscellaneous	13	9
Total	100%	100%
Number of cases	195,300	116,200

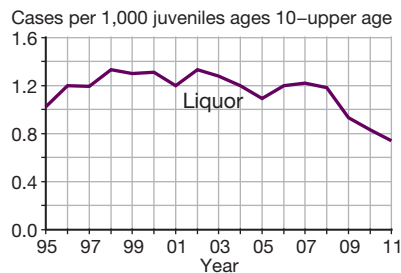
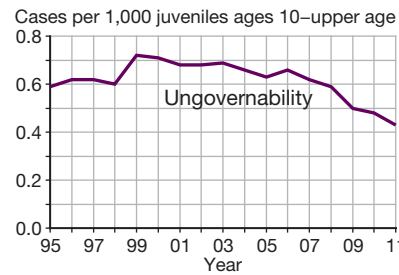
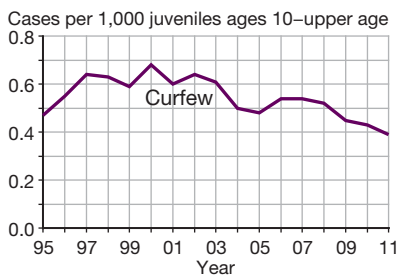
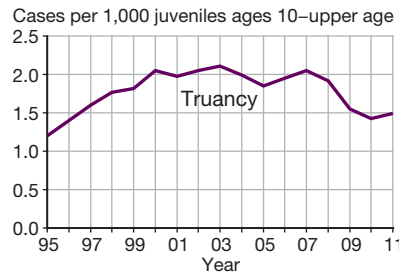
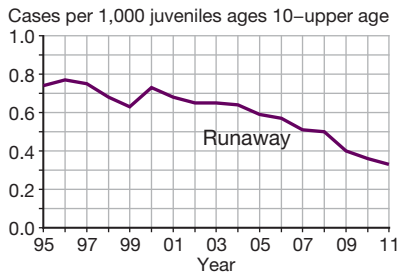
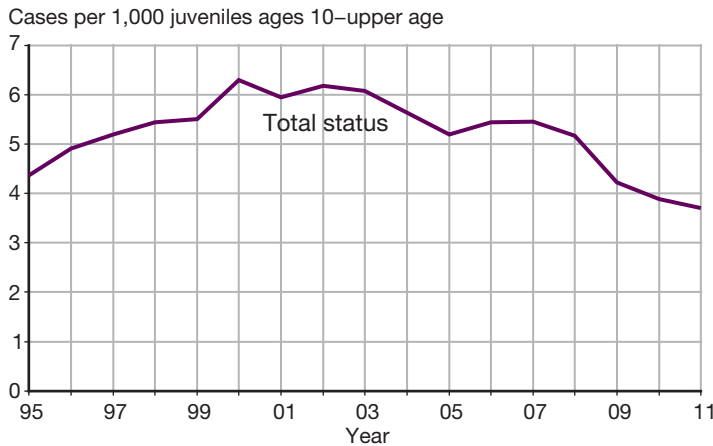
**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

- Compared with 2002, a larger proportion of the court's petitioned status offense caseload in 2011 involved truancy cases.



# Case Rates

## Petitioned status offense case rates decreased from 4.4 to 3.7 per 1,000 juveniles between 1995 and 2011



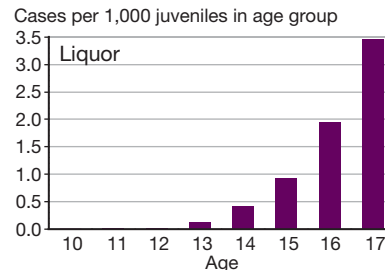
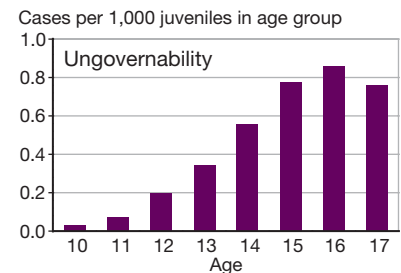
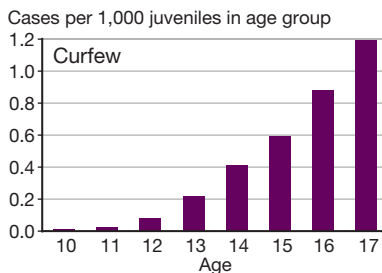
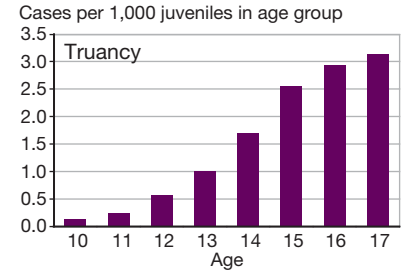
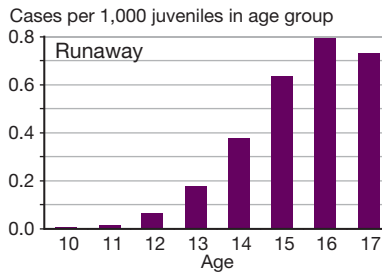
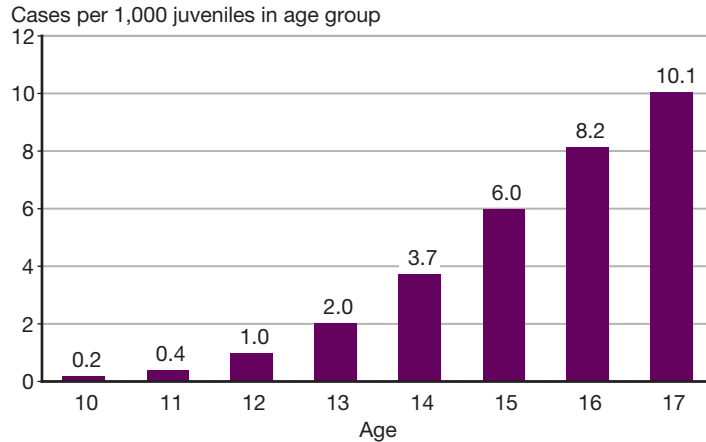
- In 2011, juvenile courts formally processed 3.7 status offense cases for every 1,000 juveniles in the population—those age 10 or older who were under the jurisdiction of a juvenile court.
- The total petitioned status offense case rate decreased 15% between 1995 and 2011.<sup>1</sup>
- Between 1995 and 2011, the petitioned runaway case rate decreased 56%.
- The petitioned truancy case rate increased steadily (70%) between 1995 and 2007, and then declined 27% through 2011.
- Between 1995 and 2000, the petitioned curfew violation case rate increased 45% and then decreased 43% by 2011.
- After reaching a peak in 1999, the petitioned ungovernability case rate declined 40% by 2011.
- The petitioned liquor law violation case rate decreased 15% between 1995 and 2011.

<sup>1</sup> The percent change in the number of cases disposed may not be equal to the percent change in case rates because of the changing size of the juvenile population.

# Age at Referral

- In 2011, the petitioned status offense case rate for 16-year-olds was twice the rate for 14-year-olds, and the rate for 14-year-olds was nearly 4 times the rate for 12-year-olds.
- The largest increase in case rates between age 13 and age 17 was for liquor law violations. The case rate for 17-year-old juveniles (3.5) was nearly 30 times the rate for 13-year-olds (0.1).
- Truancy, curfew, and liquor law violation rates increased continuously with the age of the juvenile. In contrast, rates for petitioned cases involving runaway and ungovernability were higher for 16-year-old juveniles than for 17-year-olds.

## In 2011, status offense case rates increased with the age of the juvenile

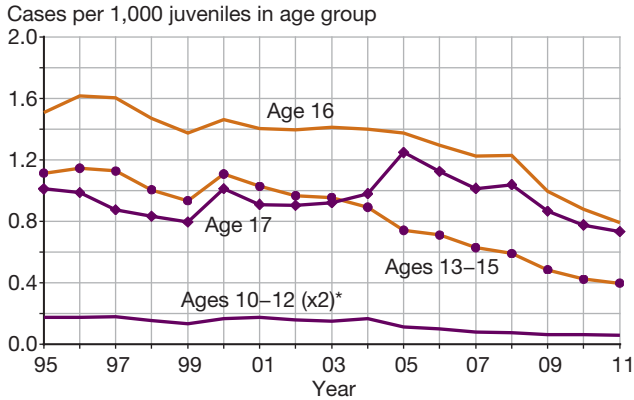




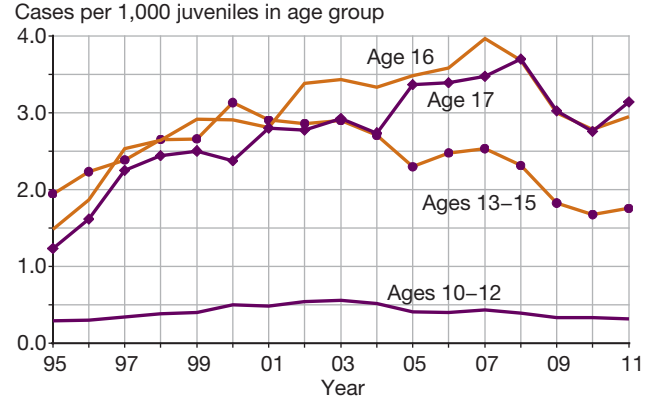
# Age at Referral

Trends in case rates differed across age groups for each general status offense category

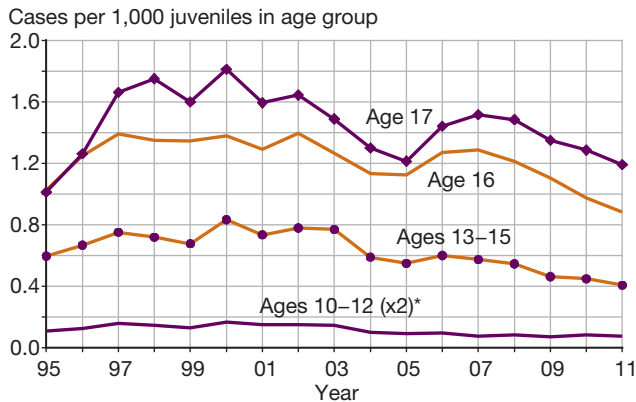
## Runaway case rates



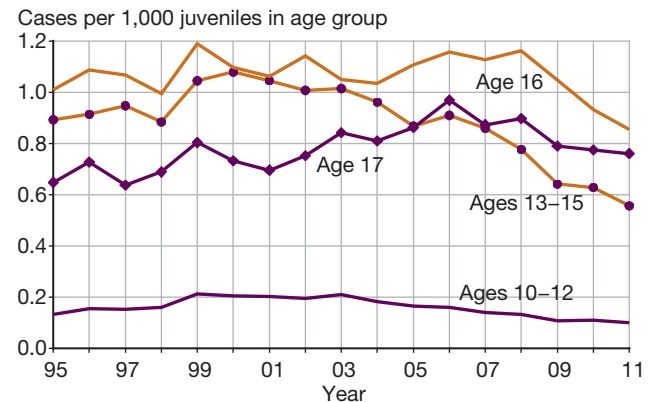
## Truancy case rates



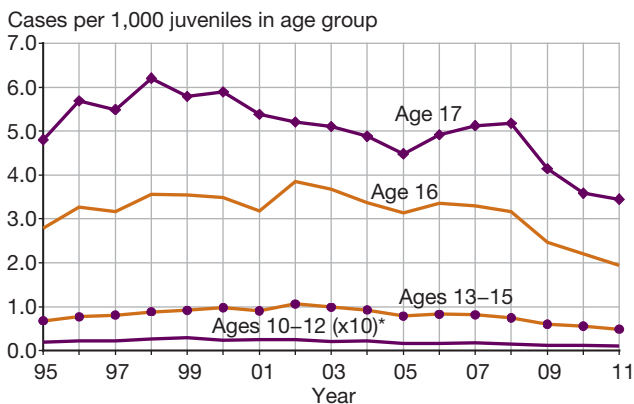
## Curfew case rates



## Ungovernability case rates



## Liquor law violation case rates



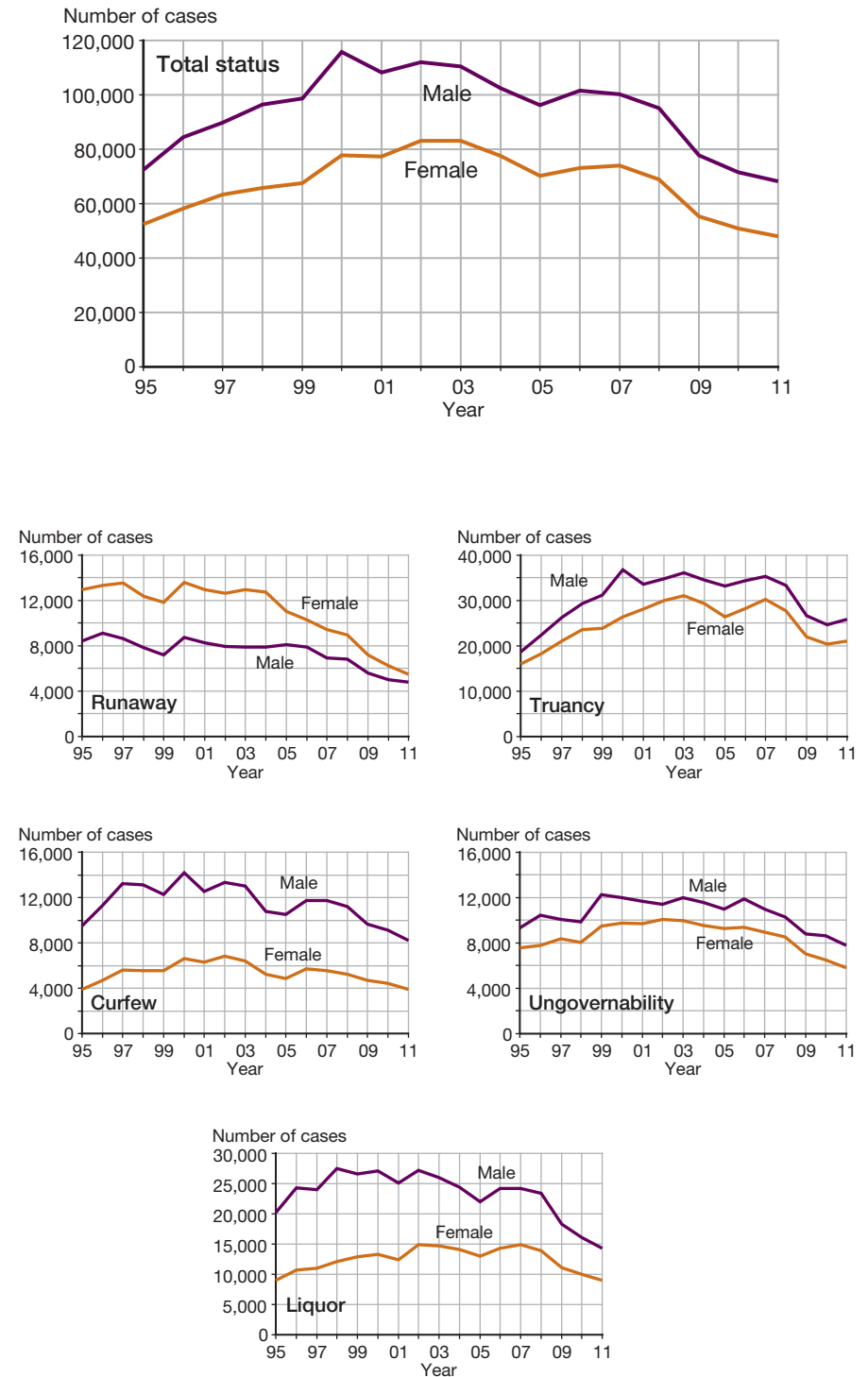
- Case rates for petitioned runaway cases decreased more for younger youth than older youth between 1995 and 2011.
- Between 1995 and 2011, case rates for petitioned truancy cases decreased for 13–15-year-olds (10%) and increased for all other age groups: 155% for 17-year-olds, 99% for 16-year-olds, and 8% for youth age 10–12.
- Case rates for petitioned curfew cases for 16-year-olds and 17-year-olds peaked in 2002 and 2000, respectively, and have since declined.
- Case rates for petitioned ungovernability cases were higher in 2011 than in 1995 for 17-year-olds.
- Case rates for petitioned liquor law violation cases peaked in 1998 for youth age 17 and declined 44% by 2011.

\* Because of the relatively low volume of cases involving youth ages 10–12 for runaway, curfew, and liquor law violations, their case rates are inflated by a factor specified in the graph to display the trend over time.

# Gender

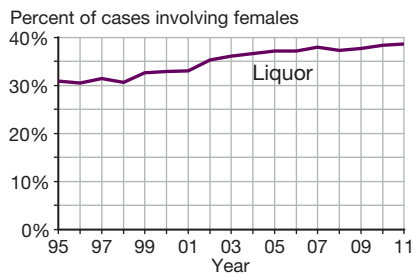
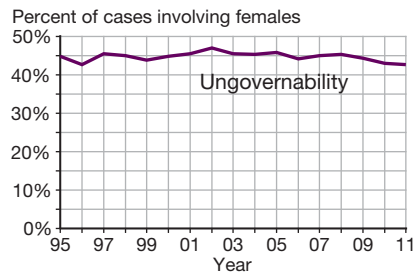
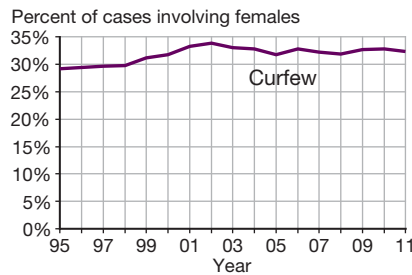
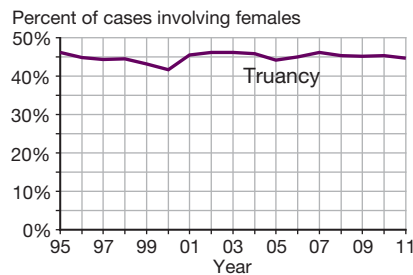
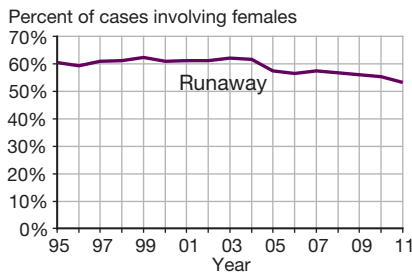
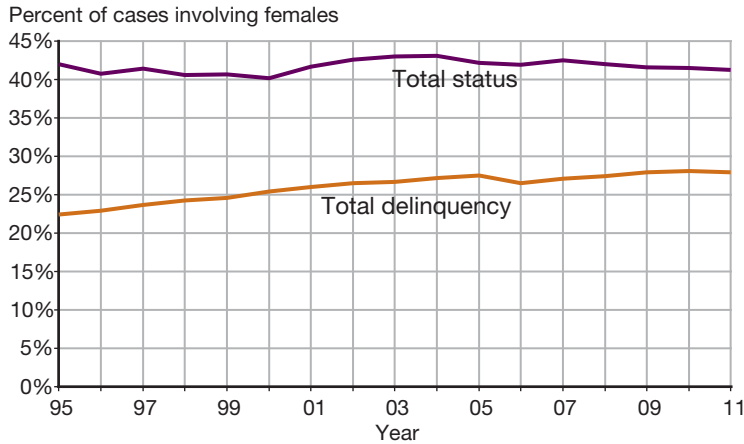
- Overall, the relative decrease in petitioned status offense cases between 1995 and 2011 was similar for males (6%) and females (9%), but the nature of the decrease varied.
- For males, the number of truancy cases increased while all other offense case types decreased. For females, truancy cases increased while runaway and ungovernability cases decreased. In 2011, the number of curfew and liquor law violation cases returned to the levels reported in 1995.
- Between 1995 and 2007, the number of petitioned truancy cases nearly doubled for both males and females, and then fell through 2011 (27% and 31%, respectively).
- Between 1995 and 2011, the petitioned runaway caseload decreased 43% for males and 57% for females.
- Between 1997 and 2011, the number of petitioned truancy cases outnumbered all other status offense cases among males; among females, petitioned truancy cases outnumbered those of all other status offense categories from 1995 through 2011.

## Trends in petitioned status offense caseloads revealed similar patterns for males and females



# Gender

## Compared with the delinquency caseload, females accounted for a substantially larger proportion of petitioned status offenses



- Males accounted for 59% of the total petitioned status offense caseload in 2011.
- In 2011, males accounted for the majority of both curfew (68%) and status liquor law violation cases (61%) and more than half of petitioned ungovernability (57%) and truancy (55%) cases.
- Females accounted for 53% of petitioned runaway cases in 2011, the only status offense category in which females represented a larger proportion of the caseload than males.

### Offense profile of petitioned status offense cases by gender:

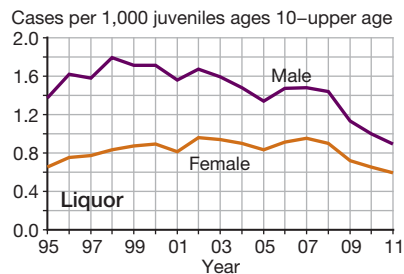
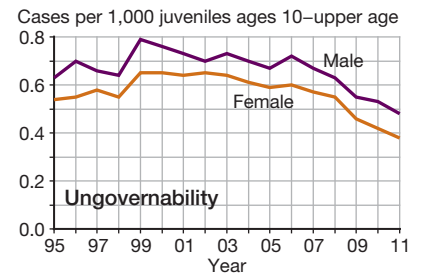
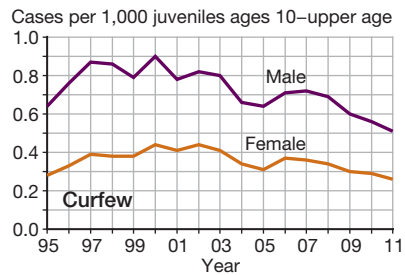
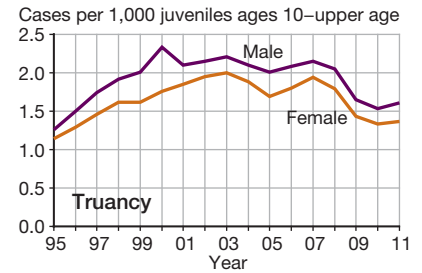
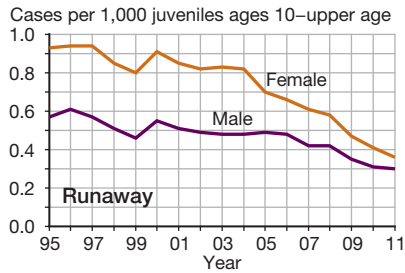
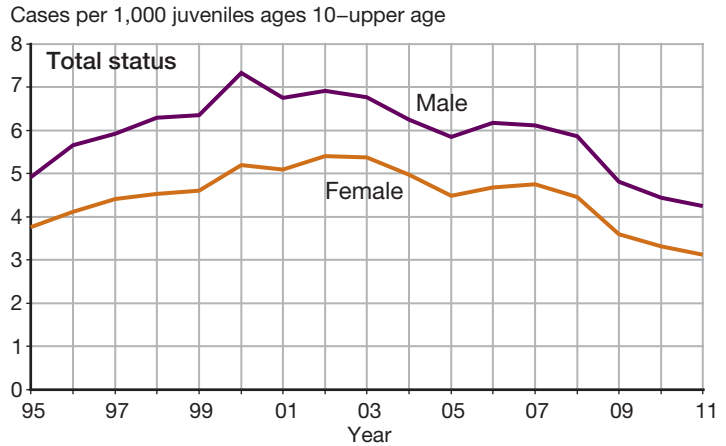
Most serious offense	Male	Female
<b>2011</b>		
Runaway	7%	11%
Truancy	38	44
Curfew	12	8
Ungovernability	11	12
Liquor	21	19
Miscellaneous	11	6
Total	100%	100%
<b>2002</b>		
Runaway	7%	15%
Truancy	31	36
Curfew	12	8
Ungovernability	10	12
Liquor	24	18
Miscellaneous	16	11
Total	100%	100%

**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

# Gender

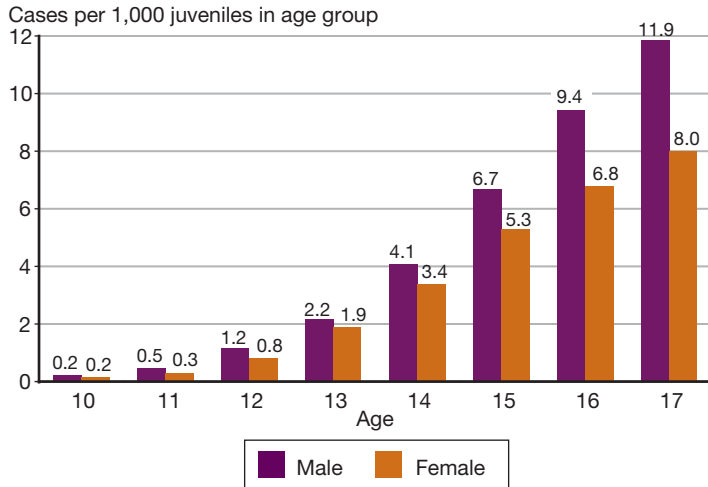
- The petitioned status offense case rate decreased for both males and females between 1995 and 2011 (14% and 17%, respectively).
- Runaway case rates declined between 1995 and 2011 for both males (48%) and females (61%).
- Prior to 1997, the liquor law violation case rate for males was greater than any other status offense rate. Between 1997 and 2011, the truancy case rate was greater than the rate of any other status offense category.
- Among females, the truancy case rate was higher than the rate of any other status offense category for each year between 1995 and 2011.
- For both males and females, the case rates for curfew violations increased between 1995 and 2000 and then declined through 2011. As a result, between 1995 and 2011, case rates for curfew violations decreased 9% for females and 21% for males.
- Between 1995 and 2011, case rates for ungovernability declined 24% for males and 30% for females.

## The petitioned status offense case rates followed similar patterns for males and females between 1995 and 2011

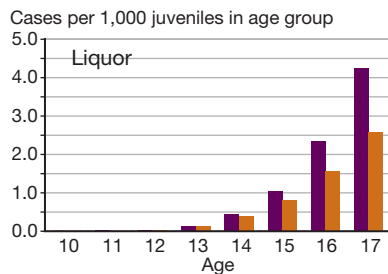
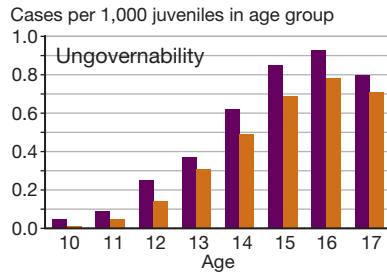
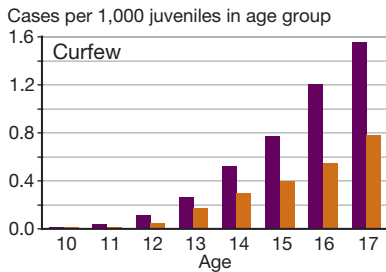
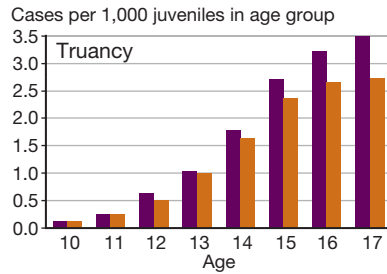
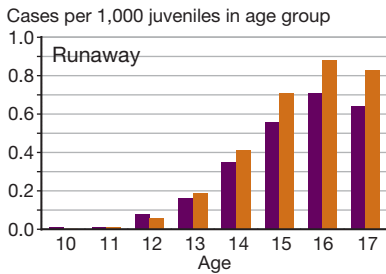


# Gender

**In 2011, the status offense case rate for males and females increased through age 17**



- For both males and females, petitioned status offense case rates increased continuously with age in 2011.
- After age 12, case rates for running away were higher for females than for males in 2011.
- In 2011, petitioned case rates for running away and ungovernability peaked at age 16 for both males and females.
- For both males and females, petitioned status offense case rates increased continuously with age for truancy, curfew, and liquor law violations in 2011.



# Race

## Percent change in number of cases by race, 2002–2011:

Most serious offense	White <sup>2</sup>	Black	Amer. Indian <sup>3</sup>	Asian <sup>4</sup>
<b>Status</b>	-44%	-26%	-16%	-57%
Runaway	-56	-35	-54	-67
Truancy	-28	-29	17	-36
Curfew	-51	-4	-2	-71
Ungovern.	-44	-18	0	-4
Liquor law	-46	-23	-31	-60

■ Between 2002 and 2011, in contrast to other racial groups and offenses, the number of cases for American Indian youth increased for truancy and returned to levels reported in 1995 for ungovernability.

## Offense profile of status offense cases by race:

Most serious offense	White	Black	Amer. Indian	Asian
<b>2011</b>				
Runaway	7%	16%	3%	13%
Truancy	42	36	34	46
Curfew	8	17	19	10
Ungovern.	10	19	3	6
Liquor law	24	6	34	16
Misc.	10	6	7	8
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>2002</b>				
Runaway	9%	18%	5%	18%
Truancy	33	38	24	31
Curfew	9	13	16	15
Ungovern.	10	17	2	3
Liquor law	25	6	41	17
Misc.	15	8	10	16
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

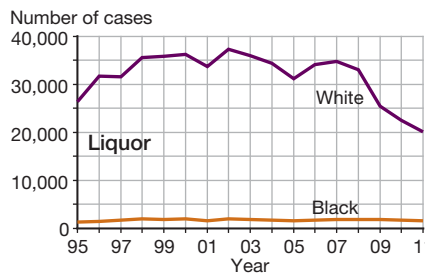
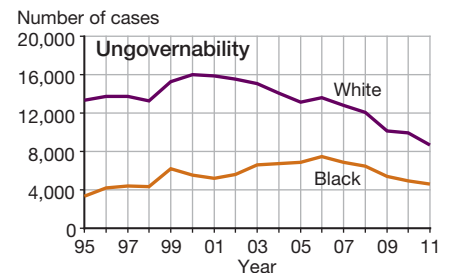
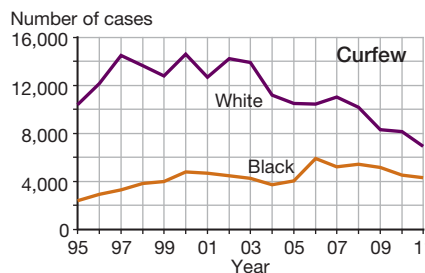
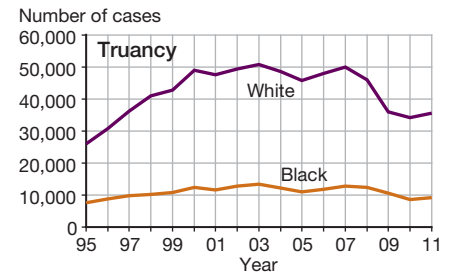
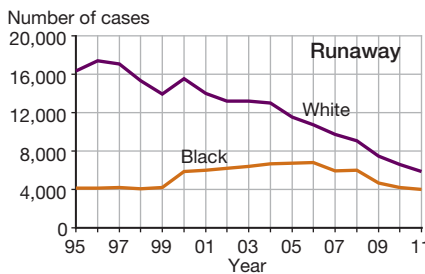
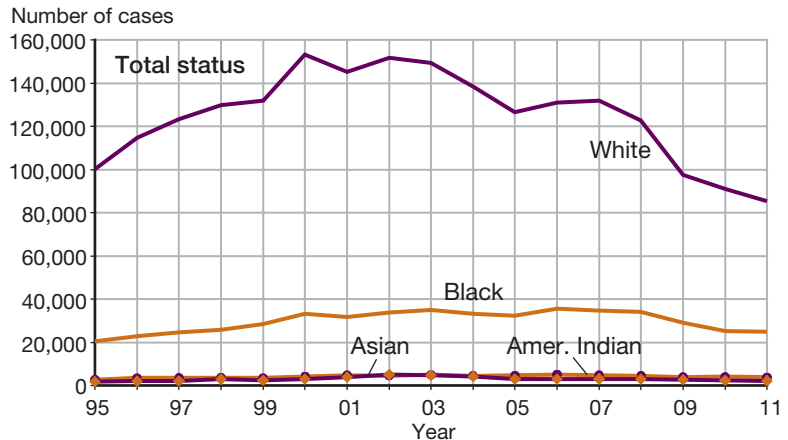
■ In 2011, truancy cases made up the greatest proportion of the caseloads for white, black, and Asian juveniles; truancy and liquor law violation cases made up the greatest proportion for American Indian juveniles.

<sup>2</sup> Throughout this Report, juveniles of Hispanic ethnicity can be of any race; however, most are included in the white racial category.

<sup>3</sup> The racial classification American Indian (usually abbreviated as Amer. Indian) includes American Indian and Alaskan Native.

<sup>4</sup> The racial classification Asian includes Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander.

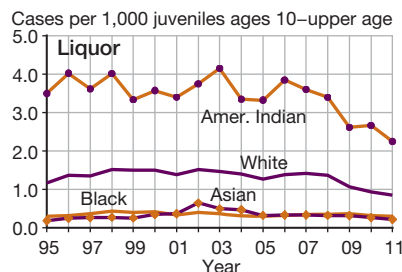
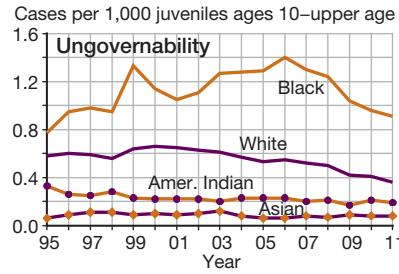
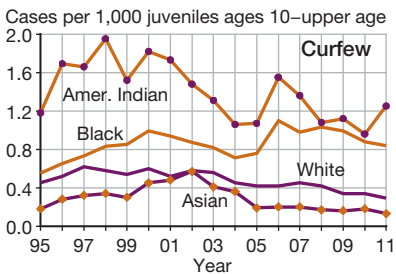
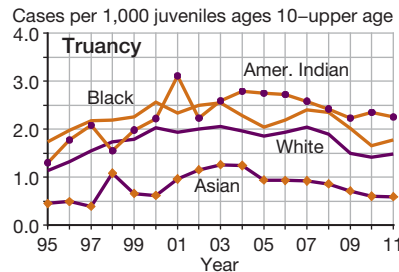
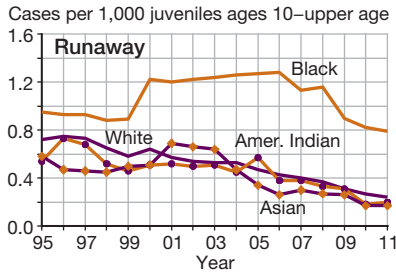
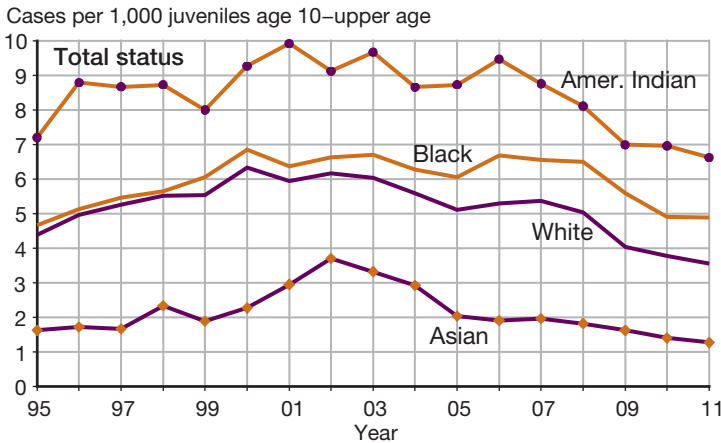
## Between 1995 and 2011, the petitioned status offense caseload increased for all racial groups except white youth



**Note:** Case counts for American Indian and Asian youth are not shown in the offense graphs above because their numbers are too small for display.

# Race

**Between 1995 and 2011, petitioned status offense case rates decreased for white (19%), American Indian (8%), and Asian youth (22%) but increased for black youth (4%)**



- For all years between 1995 and 2011, the total petitioned status offense case rate for American Indian youth was higher than that for juveniles of all other racial categories. In 2011, the petitioned status offense case rate for American Indian youth was 5.2 times the rate for Asian youth and nearly twice the rate for white youth.
- Between 1995 and 2006, the runaway case rate for black youth increased 35% while the rate fell 39% for white youth. Despite declines for both groups between 2006 and 2011, the runaway case rate for black youth in 2011 was more than 3 times the rate for white youth.
- In 2011, the ungovernability case rate for black juveniles was more than twice the white rate, more than 4 times the rate for American Indian youth, and 11 times the rate for Asian youth.
- American Indian juveniles had the highest case rate for liquor law violations in each year between 1995 and 2011. In 2011, the liquor law violation case rate for American Indian juveniles was nearly 3 times the white rate, 7 times the rate for black youth, and 11 times the rate for Asian youth.

# Source of Referral

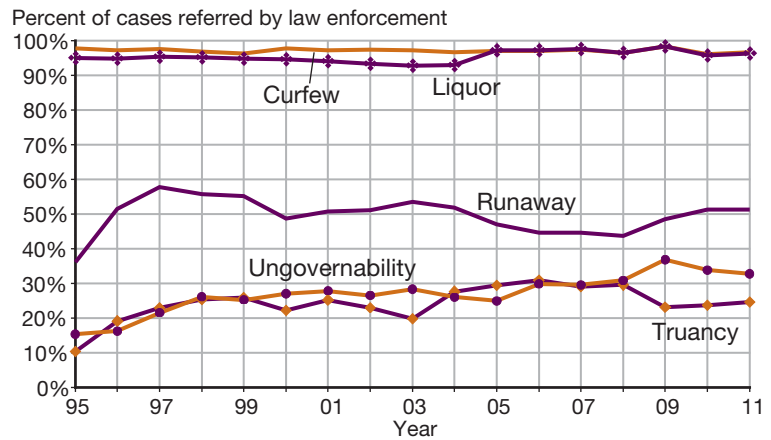
- Status offense cases can be referred to court intake by a number of sources, including law enforcement agencies, schools, relatives, social service agencies, probation officers, and victims.

## Percentage of petitioned status offense cases referred by law enforcement:

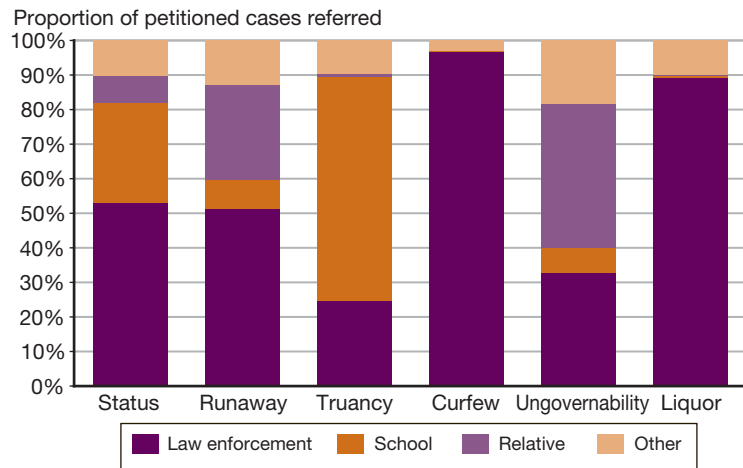
Most serious offense	2002	2011
Total status	52%	53%
Runaway	51	51
Truancy	23	25
Curfew	97	97
Ungovernability	27	33
Liquor law	93	96

- In 2011, law enforcement agencies referred more than half (53%) of the petitioned status offense cases disposed by juvenile courts.
- Compared with 2002, law enforcement referred larger proportions of truancy, ungovernability, and liquor law violation cases in 2011.
- Schools referred 65% of the petitioned truancy cases in 2011.
- Relatives referred 42% of the petitioned ungovernability cases in 2011.

## Law enforcement agencies are the primary source of referrals to juvenile court for curfew and liquor law violation cases



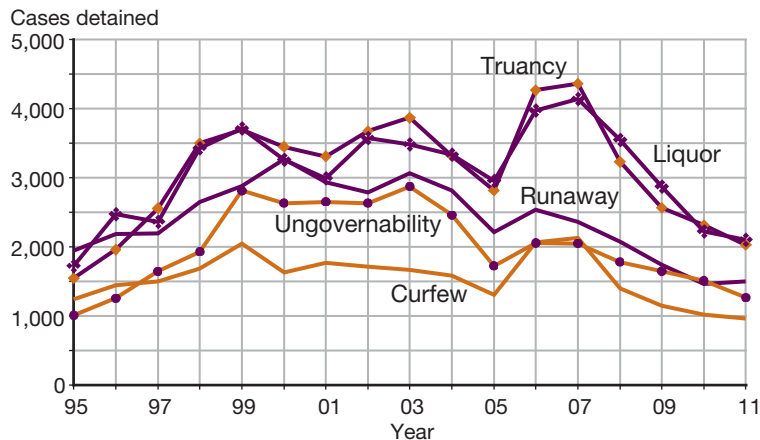
## The source of referral for petitioned status offense cases varied with the nature of the offense



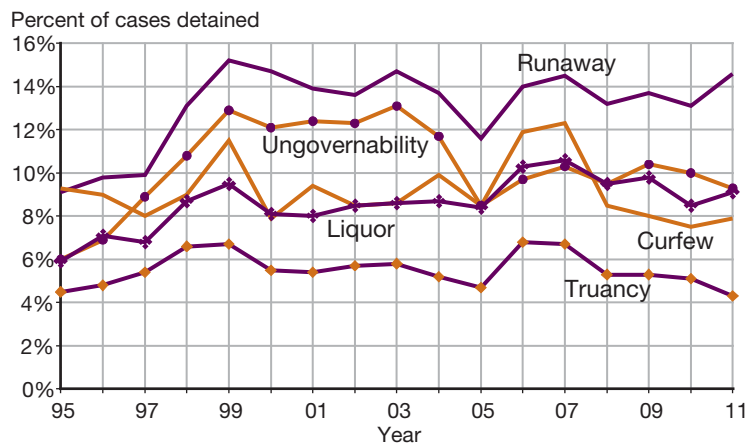


# Detention

The number of cases involving detention decreased substantially between 2000 and 2011 for all case types



Between 1995 and 2011, truancy cases were least likely to involve detention, and runaway cases were the most likely



- Between 2000 and 2011, the number of petitioned cases involving detention decreased 54% for runaway, 52% for ungovernability, 41% for both truancy and curfew, and 35% for liquor law violations.
- The number of petitioned status offense cases involving detention increased 5% between 1995 and 2011 (from 8,400 to 8,800). The largest relative increase was for truancy cases (32%).
- Despite the growth in the volume of petitioned status offense cases involving detention, the proportion of cases detained was nearly the same in 2011 (8%) as in 1995 (7%).
- Between 1996 and 2011, cases involving runaway offenses accounted for the largest share of the detained status offense caseload.

### Offense profile of detained status offense cases:

Most serious offense	2002	2011
Runaway	17%	17%
Truancy	22	23
Curfew	10	11
Ungovernability	16	14
Liquor law	22	24
Miscellaneous	13	11
Total	100%	100%
Number of cases	16,500	8,800

**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

- Compared with 2002, the offense characteristics of the 2011 status offense detention caseload involved greater proportions of liquor law violation, truancy, and curfew cases and a smaller proportion of curfew cases. The proportion of runaway cases remained the same between the two years.

# Adjudication

- Between 1995 and 2011, the annual number of status offense cases in which the youth was adjudicated a status offender increased from 65,600 to 66,400.
- Between 1995 and 2011, the annual number of cases in which the youth was adjudicated a status offender increased 3% for curfew violations and 33% for truancy. Decreases occurred for runaway (46%), ungovernability (18%), and liquor law violation cases (2%).

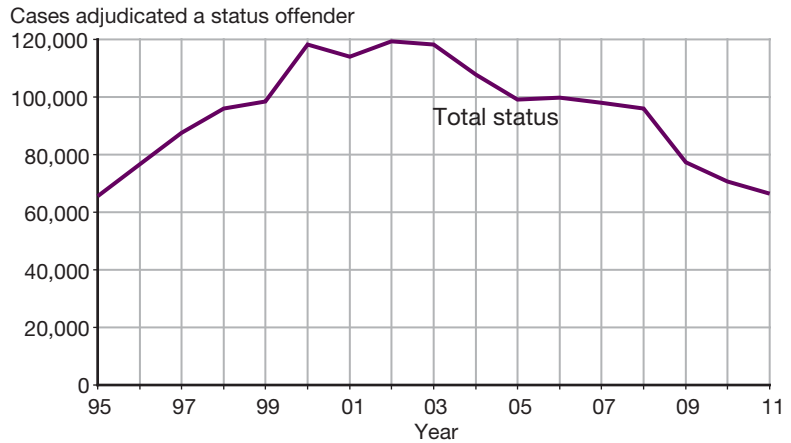
### Offense profile of cases adjudicated a status offender:

Most serious offense	2002	2011
Runaway	8%	7%
Truancy	33	38
Curfew	11	10
Ungovernability	10	11
Liquor law	23	22
Miscellaneous	15	11
Total	100%	100%
Cases adjudicated a status offender	119,300	66,400

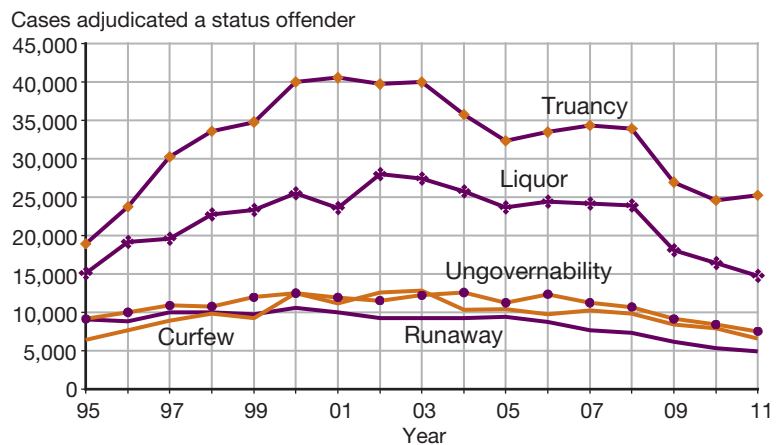
**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

- The adjudicated status offense case-loads for 2002 and 2011 were similar. For both years, cases involving truancy and liquor law violations made up the largest proportions of the adjudicated caseload.

**Between 1995 and 2002, the number of cases in which the youth was adjudicated a status offender increased substantially (82%) and then declined 44% through 2011**

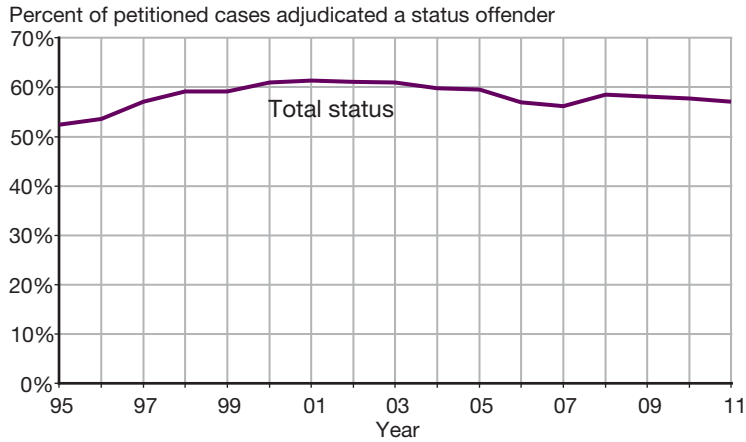


**In the past 10 years (2002–2011), the number of cases in which the youth was adjudicated a status offender decreased for all status offense categories**



# Adjudication

## The likelihood of adjudication for petitioned status offense cases increased from 52% in 1995 to 57% in 2011



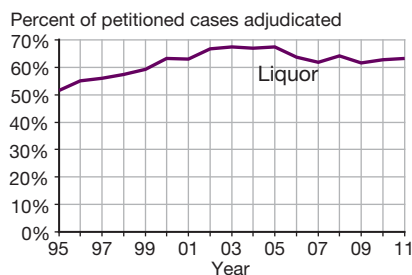
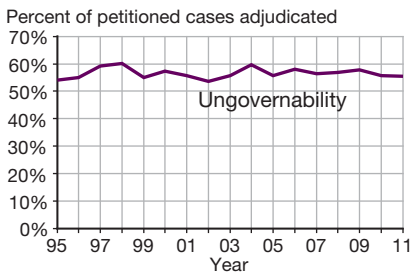
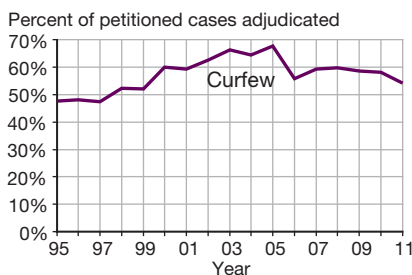
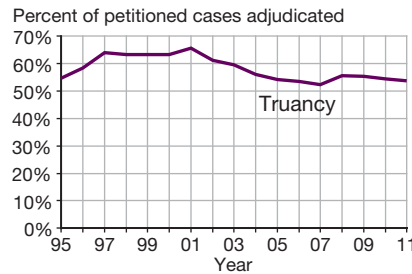
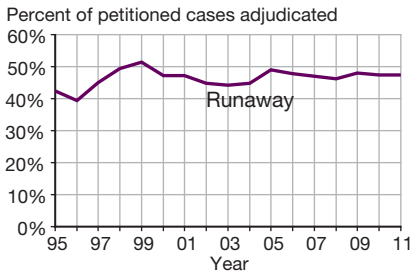
- Among status offense categories in 2011, adjudication was least likely in petitioned runaway cases (47%) and most likely in cases involving liquor law violations (63%).
- The likelihood of petitioned runaway cases resulting in adjudication peaked in 1999 (at 52%) and then declined to 47% in 2011.
- Between 1995 and 2011, the likelihood of adjudication among petitioned curfew cases increased from 48% to 54%.
- The likelihood of adjudication among petitioned liquor law violation cases increased from 52% in 1995 to 63% in 2011.

### Percentage of petitioned status offense cases adjudicated, 2011:

Most serious offense	15 or younger	16 or older	Male	Female
<b>Total status</b>	56%	58%	58%	56%
Runaway	50	45	46	48
Truancy	53	55	55	52
Curfew	51	57	54	54
Ungovern.	58	52	56	54
Liquor law	64	63	63	64

Most serious offense	White	Black	Amer. Indian	Asian
<b>Total status</b>	59%	50%	62%	47%
Runaway	50	45	NA	NA
Truancy	54	53	65	49
Curfew	69	33	39	NA
Ungovern.	55	57	NA	NA
Liquor law	64	56	72	NA

NA: Too few cases to obtain a reliable percentage.



# Dispositions: Out-of-Home Placement

- The number of cases in which a youth was adjudicated a status offender and ordered to out-of-home placement increased 56% between 1995 and the peak in 2000 and then declined 66% by 2011.

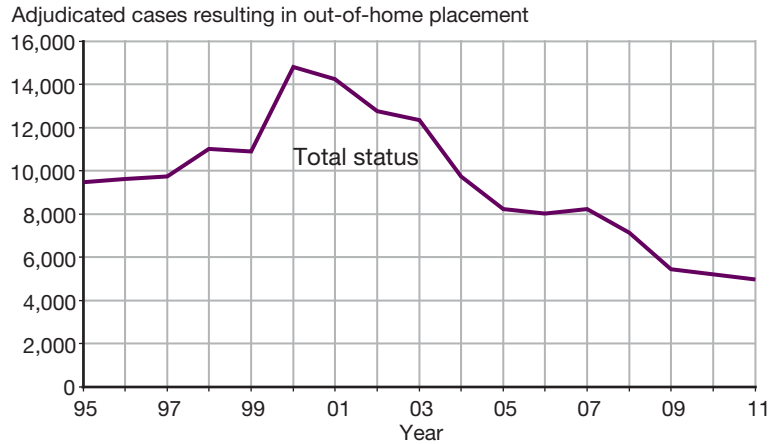
### Offense profile of adjudicated status offense cases resulting in out-of-home placement:

Most serious offense	2002	2011
Runaway	15%	18%
Truancy	28	22
Curfew	4	5
Ungovernability	17	17
Liquor law	21	21
Miscellaneous	16	17
Total	100%	100%
Cases resulting in out-of-home placement	12,700	5,000

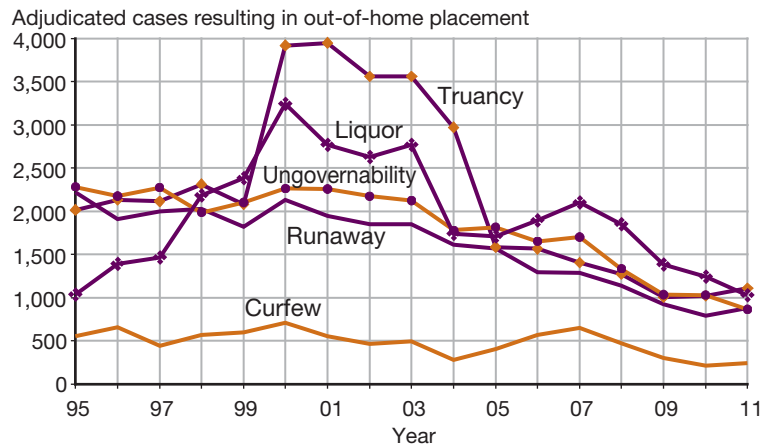
**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

- In 2002 and 2011, truancy cases accounted for the largest share of adjudicated status offense cases that resulted in out-of-home placement.

### The number of adjudicated status offense cases resulting in out-of-home placement declined 47% between 1995 and 2011

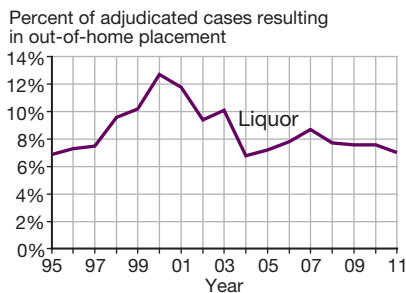
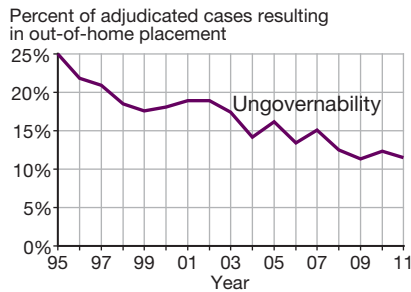
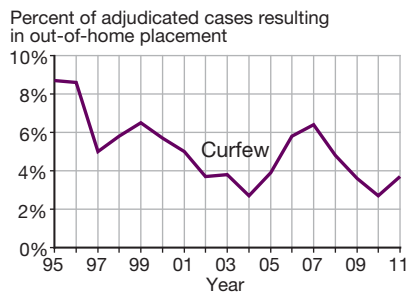
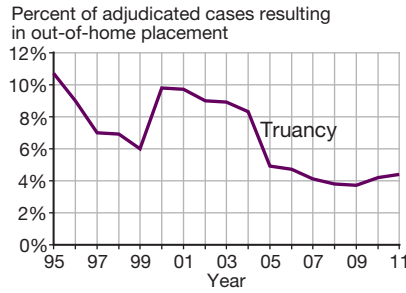
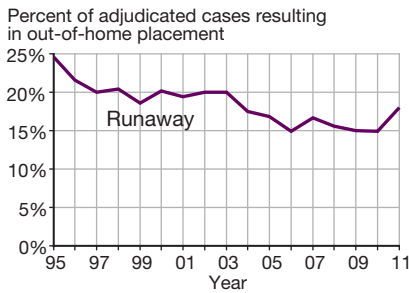
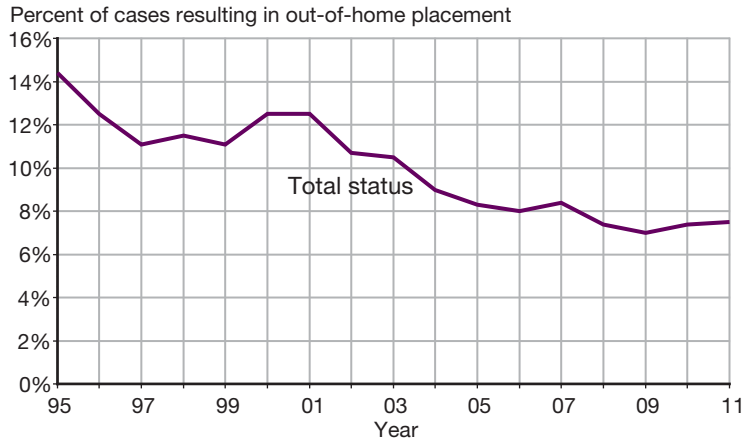


### The number of adjudicated status offense cases that resulted in out-of-home placement varied considerably by the nature of the offense



# Dispositions: Out-of-Home Placement

The court ordered out-of-home placement in 7% of all adjudicated status offense cases in 2011



- The likelihood that an adjudicated status offense case would result in out-of-home placement decreased between 1995 and 2011 for all status offense categories except liquor law violations.
- Between 1995 and 2011, the largest decline in the proportion of adjudicated status offense cases resulting in out-of-home placement was seen in cases involving ungovernability (from 25% to 11%), followed by runaway cases (from 25% to 18%) and truancy cases (from 11% to 4%).
- For adjudicated liquor law violation cases, the likelihood of out-of-home placement was the same in 2011 as in 1995.

## Percentage of adjudicated status offense cases resulting in out-of-home placement, 2011:

Most serious offense	15 or younger		16 or older	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Total status</b>	8%	7%	7%	7%
Runaway	15	22	21	15
Truancy	4	4	5	4
Curfew	4	3	4	3
Ungovern.	12	11	12	11
Liquor law	7	7	8	5

Most serious offense	Amer. Indian/Alaskan			
	White	Black	Indian	Asian
<b>Total status</b>	8%	8%	5%	3%
Runaway	21	15	NA	NA
Truancy	4	5	2	NA
Curfew	3	7	NA	NA
Ungovern.	13	8	NA	NA
Liquor law	7	10	9	NA

NA: Too few cases to obtain a reliable percentage.

# Dispositions: Probation

- Between 1995 and 2011, the number of adjudicated status offense cases resulting in an order of probation decreased 6%, compared with a 47% decrease in the number of cases resulting in out-of-home placement.
- Between 1995 and 2011, the number of adjudicated status offense cases receiving probation decreased for runaway (37%), curfew and ungovernability (5% each), and liquor law violation cases (2%), and increased for truancy cases (2%).
- The number of adjudicated truancy cases receiving probation increased 2% between 1995 and 2011.
- Between 2000 and 2011, the number of adjudicated cases receiving probation decreased for all status offense categories: 57% for cases involving curfew violations, 50% for runaway cases, 49% for cases involving liquor law violations, 39% for ungovernability cases, and 38% for truancy cases.

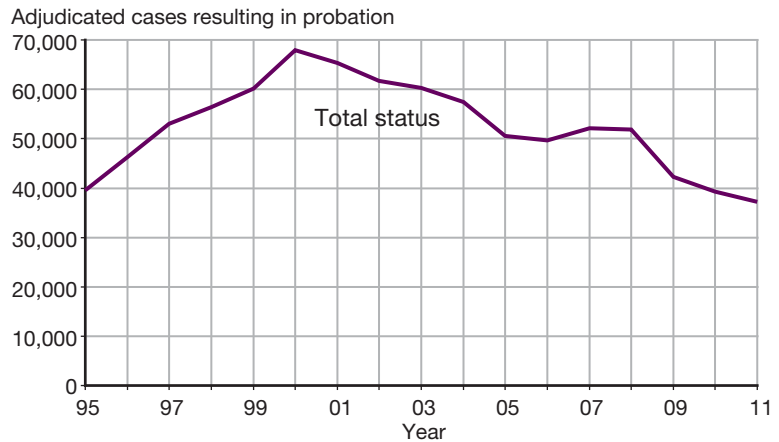
### Offense profile of adjudicated status offense cases resulting in probation:

Most serious offense	2002	2011
Runaway	10%	9%
Truancy	36	38
Curfew	6	5
Ungovernability	14	15
Liquor law	24	25
Miscellaneous	11	8
Total	100%	100%
Cases resulting in formal probation	61,700	37,200

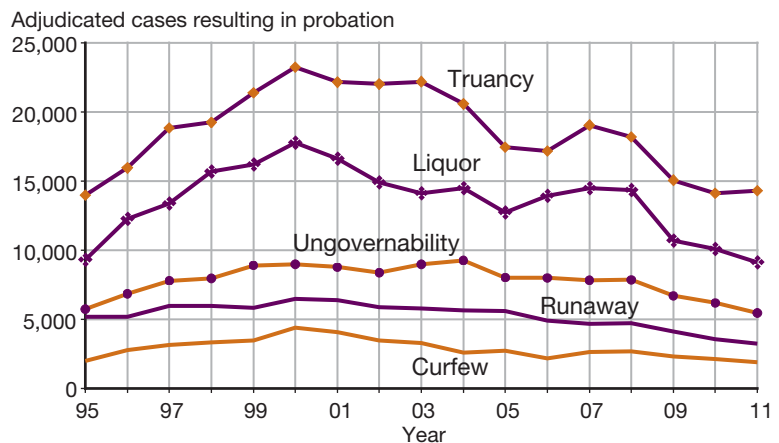
**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

- In 2011, most adjudicated status offense cases that resulted in probation involved truancy offenses (38%), followed by liquor law violations (25%) and ungovernability cases (15%).

**Between 1995 and the peak year 2000, the number of adjudicated status offense cases that resulted in probation increased 72% and then declined 45% by 2011**

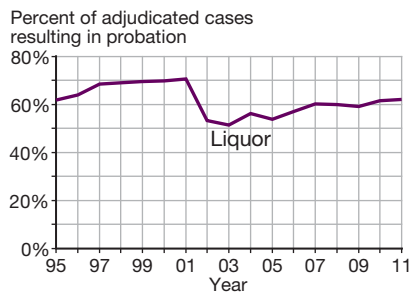
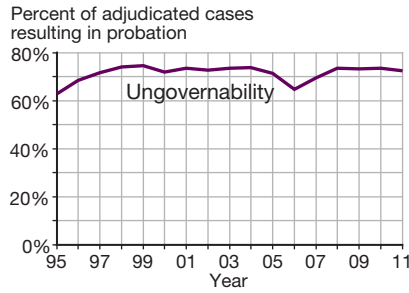
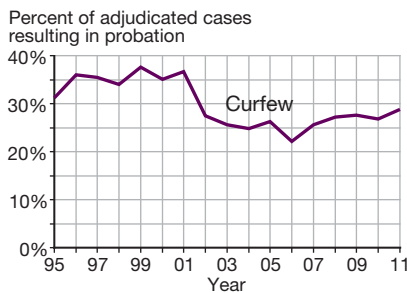
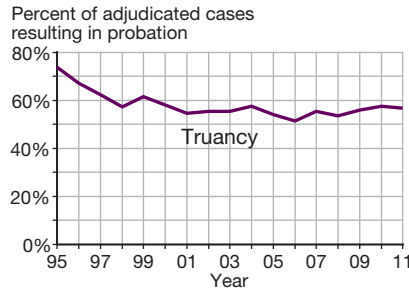
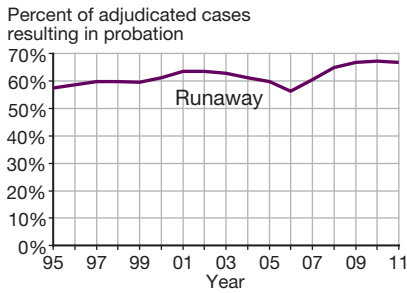
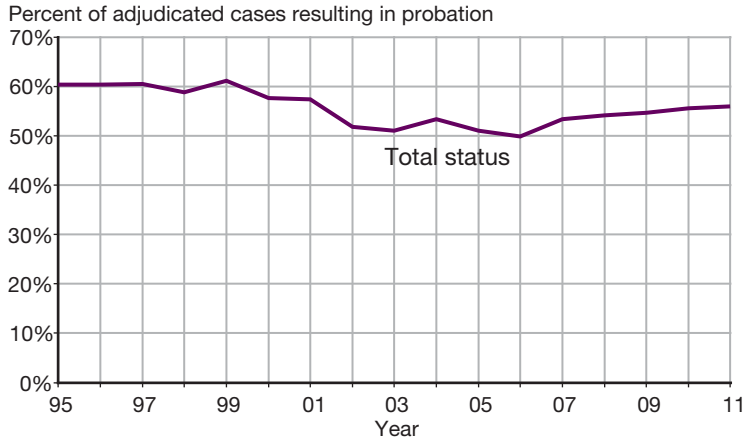


**Between 1995 and 2011, the number of adjudicated status offense cases that resulted in probation increased in all major status offense categories except truancy**



# Dispositions: Probation

## The use of probation as the most restrictive disposition in adjudicated status offense cases varied with the nature of the offense



■ Probation was the most restrictive disposition used in 56% of the adjudicated status offense cases in 2011, compared with 60% of the adjudicated caseload in 1995.

■ In 2011, probation was ordered in 67% of adjudicated runaway cases, 57% of truancy cases, 29% of curfew violations, 72% of ungovernability cases, and 62% of cases involving liquor law violations.

### Percentage of adjudicated status offense cases resulting in probation, 2011:

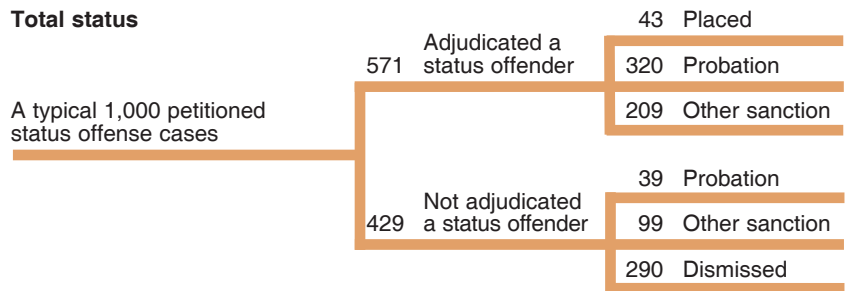
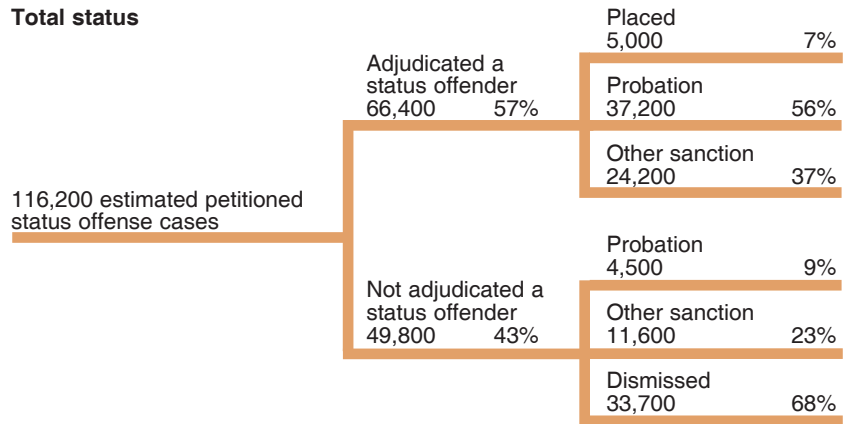
Most serious offense	15 or younger	16 or older	Male	Female
<b>Total status</b>	59%	53%	55%	58%
Runaway	71	62	65	68
Truancy	61	52	56	57
Curfew	33	26	29	28
Ungovern.	75	68	72	73
Liquor law	60	63	62	63

Most serious offense	White	Black	Amer. Indian	Asian
<b>Total status</b>	56%	58%	47%	72%
Runaway	64	69	NA	NA
Truancy	58	55	36	NA
Curfew	29	24	NA	NA
Ungovern.	70	76	NA	NA
Liquor law	63	57	57	NA

NA: Too few cases to obtain a reliable percentage.

# Case Processing Overview, 2011

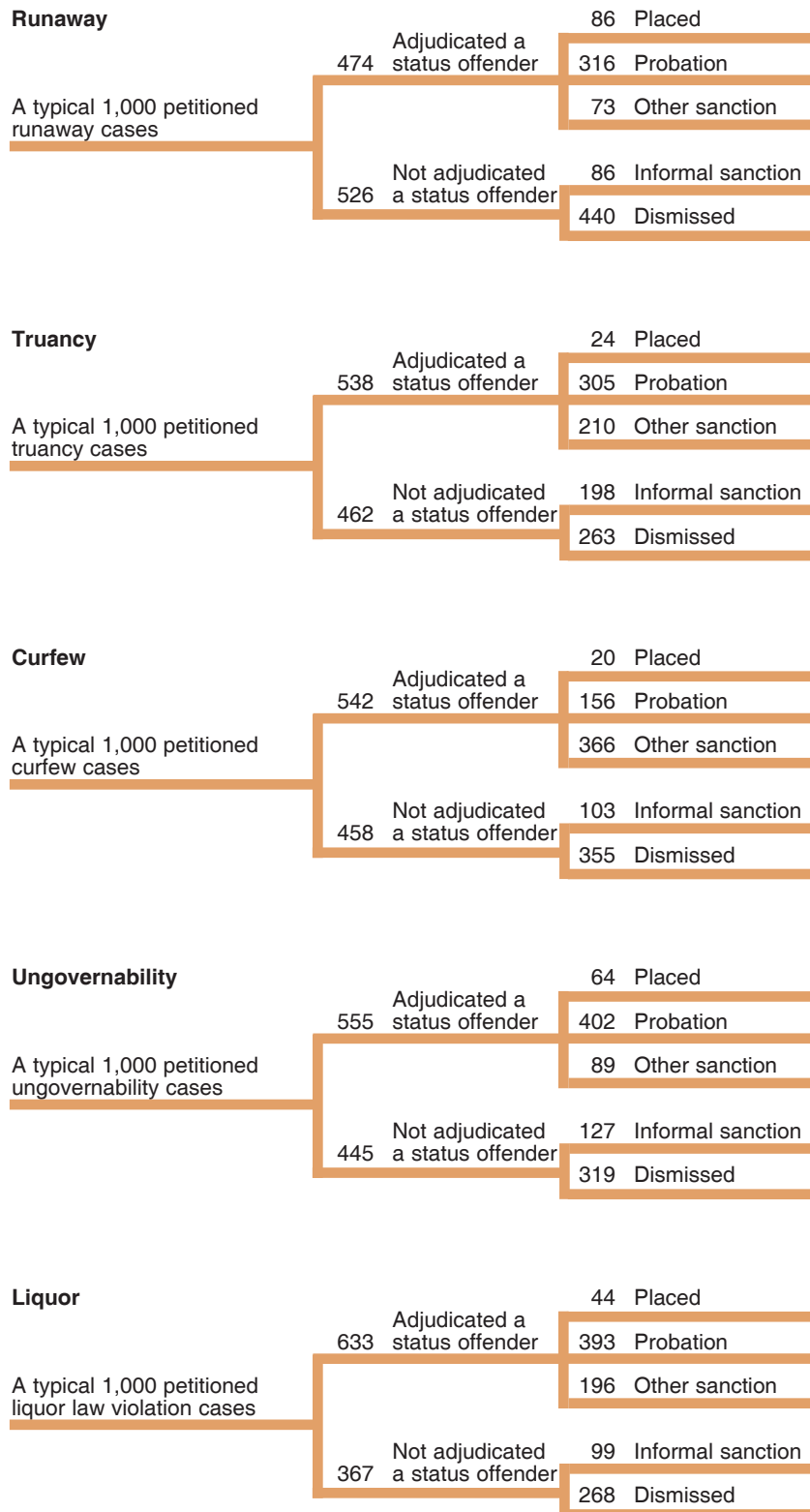
- In 2011, 57% of petitioned status offense cases resulted in adjudication.
- In 56% of adjudicated status offense cases, formal probation was the most restrictive sanction ordered by the court.
- In 2011, 7% of adjudicated status offense cases resulted in out-of-home placement.
- Dispositions with minimal continuing supervision by probation staff were ordered in 37% of status offense cases adjudicated in 2011—the juvenile was ordered to enter a treatment or counseling program, to pay restitution or a fine, or to participate in some form of community service.
- In 43% of formally handled status offense cases in 2011, the juvenile was not adjudicated a status offender. The court dismissed 68% of these cases, while 9% resulted in some form of informal probation and 23% in other voluntary dispositions.
- For every 1,000 status offense cases formally processed by juvenile courts in 2011, 320 resulted in formal probation and 43 were placed out of the home.



**Notes:** Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.



# Case Processing by Offense Category, 2011



**Notes:** Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

## Runaway Cases

- Among the five major status offense categories, juvenile courts were most likely to order youth to out-of-home placement following adjudication in runaway cases (86 of 474 cases), but formal probation was a more likely outcome (316 of 474).

- Among petitioned runaway cases in 2011, youth were not adjudicated a status offender in 526 of a typical 1,000 cases. Of these 526 cases, most (84%) were dismissed.

## Truancy Cases

- In 2011, of a typical 1,000 formal truancy cases, 305 resulted in formal probation and 24 were placed out of the home.

## Curfew Violation Cases

- In 2011, for every 1,000 petitioned curfew violation cases, 156 resulted in formal probation following adjudication and 20 were placed out of the home.

- Among petitioned cases involving curfew violations in 2011, youth were not adjudicated a status offender in 458 of a typical 1,000 cases. Of these 458 cases, 78% (355) were dismissed.

## Ungovernability Cases

- For every 1,000 petitioned ungovernability cases in 2011, 402 resulted in formal probation following adjudication and 64 were placed out of the home.

## Liquor Law Violation Cases

- Among petitioned liquor law violation cases in 2011, the most likely outcome was formal probation (393 of 1,000); out-of-home placement was ordered in 44 of a typical 1,000 cases.

- In 2011, among petitioned liquor law violation cases, youth were not adjudicated as status offenders in 367 of a typical 1,000 cases.



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# Appendix A

## Methods

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The *Juvenile Court Statistics (JCS)* series uses data provided to the National Juvenile Court Data Archive (the Archive) by state and county agencies responsible for collecting and/or disseminating information on the processing of youth in juvenile courts. These data are not the result of a uniform data collection effort. They are not derived from a complete census of juvenile courts or obtained from a probability sample of courts. The national estimates presented in this Report are developed by using compatible information from all courts that are able to provide data to the Archive.

### Sources of Data

The Archive uses data in two forms: detailed case-level data and court-level aggregate statistics. Case-level data are usually generated by automated client-tracking systems or case-reporting systems managed by juvenile courts or other juvenile justice agencies. These systems provide detailed data on the characteristics of each delinquency and status offense case handled by courts, generally including the age, gender, and race of the youth referred; the date and source of referral; the offenses charged; detention and petitioning decisions; and the date and type of disposition.

The structure of each case-level data set contributed to the Archive is unique, having been designed to meet the information needs of a particular jurisdiction. Archive staff study the structure and content of each data set in order to design an automated restructuring procedure that will transform each jurisdiction's data into a common case-level format.

Court-level aggregate statistics either are abstracted from the annual reports of state and local courts or are contributed directly to the Archive. Court-level statistics typically provide counts of the delinquency and status offense cases handled by courts in a defined time period (calendar or fiscal year).

Each year, many juvenile courts contribute either detailed data or aggregate statistics to the Archive. However, not all of this information can be used to generate the national estimates contained in *JCS*. To be used in the development of national estimates, the data must be in a compatible unit of count (i.e., case disposed), the data source must demonstrate a pattern of consistent reporting over time (at least 2 years), and the data file contributed to the Archive must represent a complete count of delinquency and/or status offense cases disposed in a jurisdiction during a given year.

Table A-1: 2011 Stratum Profiles for Delinquency Data

Stratum	County population ages 10–17	Counties in stratum	Counties reporting compatible data			
			Number of counties			Percentage of juvenile population
			Case-level	Court-level	Total*	
1	Fewer than 13,210	2,657	1,888	181	2,031	78%
2	13,210–48,700	341	260	27	274	81
3	48,701–119,000	110	89	8	91	84
4	More than 119,000	35	33	5	33	97
Total		3,143	2,270	221	2,429	85

\* Some counties reported both case-level and court-level data; therefore, the total number of counties reporting delinquency data is not equal to the number of counties reporting case-level data plus the number of counties reporting court-level data.

Table A-2: 2011 Stratum Profiles for Status Offense Data

Stratum	County population ages 10–17	Counties in stratum	Counties reporting compatible data			
			Number of counties			Percentage of juvenile population
			Case-level	Court-level	Total	
1	Fewer than 13,210	2,657	1,790	143	1,933	74%
2	13,210–48,700	341	237	14	251	74
3	48,701–119,000	110	77	2	79	74
4	More than 119,000	35	32	0	32	95
Total		3,143	2,136	159	2,295	79

The aggregation of the JCS-compatible standardized case-level data files constitutes the Archive's national case-level database. The compiled data from jurisdictions that contribute only court-level JCS-compatible statistics constitute the national court-level database. Together, these two multijurisdictional databases (case-level and court-level) are used to generate the Archive's national estimates of delinquency and status offense cases.

In 2011, case-level data describing 910,063 delinquency cases handled by 2,270 jurisdictions in 40 states met the Archive's criteria for inclusion in the development of national delinquency estimates. Compatible data were available from Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio,

Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. These courts had jurisdiction over 82% of the nation's juvenile population in 2011. Compatible court-level aggregate statistics on an additional 51,569 delinquency cases from 221 jurisdictions were used from Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, New York, and Wyoming. In all, the Archive collected compatible case-level data and court-level statistics on delinquency cases from 2,429 jurisdictions containing 85% of the nation's juvenile population in 2011 (table A-1).

Case-level data describing 80,837 formally handled status offense cases from 2,136 jurisdictions in 38 states met the criteria for inclusion in the sample for 2011. The states included Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland,

Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. These courts had jurisdiction over 71% of the juvenile population. An additional 159 jurisdictions in 3 states (Idaho, Indiana, and Wyoming) had compatible court-level aggregate statistics on 6,285 petitioned status offense cases. Altogether, compatible case-level and court-level data on petitioned status offense cases were available from 2,295 jurisdictions containing 79% of the U.S. juvenile population in 2011 (table A-2).

A list of states contributing case-level data (either delinquency or petitioned status offense data), the variables each reports, and the percentage of cases containing each variable are presented in table A-3.

Table A-3: Content of Case-Level Data Sources, 2011

Data source	Age at referral	Gender	Race	Referral source	Referral reason	Secure detention	Manner of handling	Adjudication	Disposition
Alabama	AL	AL	AL	AL	AL	AL	AL	AL	AL
Alaska	AK	AK	AK	AK	AK	AK	AK	AK	AK
Arizona	AZ	AZ	AZ	AZ	AZ	AZ	AZ	AZ	AZ
Arkansas	AR	AR	AR	–	AR	–	AR	AR	AR
California	CA	CA	CA	CA	CA	CA	CA	CA	CA
Colorado	–	–	CO	–	CO	–	CO	–	–
Connecticut	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT	CT
District of Columbia	DC	DC	DC	–	DC	–	DC	DC	DC
Florida	FL	FL	FL	FL	FL	–	FL	FL	FL
Georgia	GA	GA	GA	GA	GA	–	GA	GA	GA
Hawaii	HI	HI	HI	HI	HI	–	HI	HI	HI
Illinois <sup>1</sup>	IL	IL	–	–	IL	IL	IL	IL	IL
Iowa	IA	IA	IA	–	IA	–	IA	IA	IA
Kentucky	KY	KY	KY	–	KY	–	KY	KY	–
Maryland	MD	MD	MD	MD	MD	–	MD	MD	MD
Michigan	MI	MI	MI	MI	MI	MI	MI	MI	MI
Minnesota	MN	MN	MN	–	MN	–	MN	MN	–
Missouri	MO	MO	MO	MO	MO	MO	MO	MO	MO
Montana	MT	MT	MT	MT	MT	MT	MT	MT	–
Nebraska	NE	NE	NE	NE	NE	–	NE	NE	NE
Nevada	NV	NV	NV	–	NV	NV	NV	NV	NV
New Jersey	NJ	NJ	NJ	–	NJ	–	NJ	NJ	NJ
New Mexico	NM	NM	NM	NM	NM	–	NM	NM	NM
New York	NY	NY	NY	–	NY	–	NY	NY	NY
North Carolina	NC	NC	NC	–	NC	–	NC	NC	NC
Ohio <sup>2</sup>	OH	OH	OH	OH	OH	OH	OH	OH	OH
Oklahoma	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK
Oregon	OR	OR	OR	OR	OR	OR	OR	OR	OR
Pennsylvania	PA	PA	PA	PA	PA	–	PA	PA	PA
Rhode Island	RI	RI	–	RI	RI	RI	RI	RI	RI
South Carolina	SC	SC	SC	SC	SC	SC	SC	SC	SC
South Dakota	SD	SD	SD	–	SD	–	SD	SD	SD
Tennessee	TN	TN	TN	TN	TN	–	TN	TN	TN
Texas	TX	TX	TX	TX	TX	–	TX	TX	TX
Utah	UT	UT	UT	UT	UT	UT	UT	UT	UT
Vermont	VT	VT	VT	–	VT	VT	VT	VT	VT
Virginia	VA	VA	VA	VA	VA	VA	VA	VA	VA
Washington	WA	WA	WA	WA	WA	–	WA	WA	WA
West Virginia	WV	WV	WV	WV	WV	WV	WV	WV	WV
Wisconsin	WI	WI	WI	–	WI	–	WI	WI	WI
Percentage of estimation sample	98%	98%	95%	76%	97%	41%	100%	93%	87%

Note: The symbol “–” indicates that compatible data for this variable are not reported by this state.

<sup>1</sup> Data from Cook County only.

<sup>2</sup> Data from Cuyahoga, Franklin, and Hamilton counties only.

## Juvenile Population

The volume and characteristics of juvenile court caseloads are partly a function of the size and demographic composition of a jurisdiction's population. Therefore, a critical element in the Archive's development of national estimates is the population of youth that generates the juvenile court referrals in each jurisdiction—i.e., the “juvenile” population of every U.S. county.

A survey of the Archive's case-level data shows that very few delinquency or status offense cases involve youth younger than 10. Therefore, the lower age limit of the juvenile population is set at 10 years for all jurisdictions. On the other hand, the upper age limit varies by state. Every state defines an upper age limit for youth who will come under the original jurisdiction of the juvenile court if they commit an illegal act. (See “Upper age of jurisdiction” in the “Glossary of Terms” section.) Most states set this age to be 17 years; other states have set the age at 15 or 16. States often enact exceptions to this simple age criterion (e.g., offense-specific youthful offender legislation and concurrent jurisdiction or extended jurisdiction provisions). In general, however, juvenile courts have responsibility for all law violations committed by youth whose age does not exceed the upper age of original jurisdiction.

For the purposes of this Report, therefore, the juvenile population is defined as the number of youth living in a jurisdiction who are at least 10 years old but who are not older than the upper age of original juvenile court jurisdiction. For example, in New York, where the upper age of original juvenile court jurisdiction is 15, the juvenile population is the number of youth residing in a county who have had their 10th birthday but are not older than 15 (e.g., they have not yet reached their 16th birthday).

The juvenile population estimates used in this Report were developed

with data from the Census Bureau.<sup>1</sup> The estimates, separated into single-year age groups, reflect the number of white, black, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and Asian (including Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander) youth ages 10 through the upper age of juvenile court jurisdiction who reside in each county in the nation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> County-level intercensal estimates were obtained for the years 1985–2011. The following data files were used:

U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1994. *1980–1989 Preliminary Estimates of the Population of Counties by Age, Sex, and Race* [machine-readable data file]. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau.

National Center for Health Statistics. 2004. *Bridged-race intercensal estimates of the July 1, 1990–July 1, 1999 United States Resident Population by County, Single-year of Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin* [machine-readable data file]. Prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau with support from the National Cancer Institute. Available online: [cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged\\_race.htm](http://cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged_race.htm) [released on 7/26/2004].

National Center for Health Statistics. 2012. *Intercensal Estimates of the Resident Population of the United States for July 1, 2000–July 1, 2009, by Year, County, Single-year of Age (0, 1, 2, ..., 85 Years and Over), Bridged Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex* [machine-readable data file]. Prepared under a collaborative arrangement with the U.S. Census Bureau. Available online: [cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged\\_race.htm](http://cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged_race.htm) [Released 10/26/12, following release by the U.S. Census Bureau of the unbridged intercensal estimates by 5-year age group on 10/9/12].

National Center for Health Statistics. 2013. *Postcensal Estimates of the Resident Population of the United States (April 1, 2010, July 1, 2010–July 1, 2012), by Year, County, Single-year of Age (0, 1, 2, ..., 85 Years and Over), Bridged Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex (Vintage 2012)* [machine-readable data file]. Prepared under a collaborative arrangement with the U.S. Census Bureau. Available online: [cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged\\_race.htm](http://cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged_race.htm) [released on 6/13/13, following release by the U.S. Census Bureau of the unbridged Vintage 2012 postcensal estimates by 5-year age group on 6/13/13].

<sup>2</sup> Most individuals of Hispanic ancestry are coded as white.

## Estimation Procedure

National estimates are developed using the national case-level database, the national court-level database, and the Archive's juvenile population estimates for every U.S. county. “County” was selected as the unit of aggregation because (1) most juvenile court jurisdictions in the United States are concurrent with county boundaries, (2) most data contributed by juvenile courts identify the county in which the case was handled, and (3) youth population estimates can be developed at the county level.

The Archive's national estimates are generated using data obtained from its nonprobability sample of juvenile courts. There are two major components of the estimation procedure. First, missing values on individual records of the national case-level database are imputed using hot deck procedures. Then the records of the national case-level database are weighted to represent the total number of cases handled by juvenile courts nationwide. Each stage of the estimation procedure will be described separately.

**Record-level imputation.** The first step in the estimation procedure is to place all U.S. counties into one of four strata based on their youth population ages 10 through 17. The lower and upper population limits of the four strata are defined each year so that each stratum contains one-quarter of the national population of youth ages 10 through 17.

This information is added onto each record in the national case-level database. As a result, each record in the national case-level database contains 11 variables of interest to the *JCS* report: county strata, year of disposition, intake decision, youth's age, youth's gender, youth's race, referral offense, source of referral, case detention, case adjudication, and case disposition.

By definition, the first three of these variables (i.e., county strata, year of disposition, and intake decision) are known for every case in the database. Each of the other variables may be missing for some records and given a missing value code. The estimation procedure for the *JCS* report employs a multistage process to impute information for each missing value on each case record in the national case-level database.

Within a county's set of records in the database there can be two types of missing information: record-level missing and format-level missing. For many counties, a small proportion of their case-level records are missing valid codes in data elements that are valid for most of the other records from that county. For example, the gender of a youth may not have been reported on a few records while it is known for all the other youth in the county's database. This type of missing value is "record-level missing." There are also counties in which every record in the database has a missing value code for a specific variable. For example, some court data collection systems do not capture information on a youth's pre-disposition detention. Therefore, the variable "case detention" in the national case-level data has a missing value code on each record from that county. This type of missing value is "format-level missing." (Table A-3 indicates the standardized data elements that were not available, i.e., format-missing, from each jurisdiction's 2011 data set.) The imputation process handles the two types of missing values separately.

The imputation of record-level missing values uses a hot deck procedure with a donor pool of records from the same county. First, all the records for a specific county are sorted by disposition date. Then the file is read again, one record at a time. When the imputation software identifies a record with a record-level missing value (i.e., the target record), it

imputes a valid code for this target data field. This is accomplished by locating the next record in the county file that matches the target record on all of its nonmissing values and has a nonmissing code in the target data field; this record is called the donor record. The imputation software copies the valid code from the donor record and replaces the missing value code on the target record with this nonmissing value.

Once a donor record is used in the process for a given variable, it is not used again for that variable unless no other matches can be found for another target record. There are a small number of instances in which no donor record can be found in the county file. When this occurs, the imputation software relaxes its record matching criteria. That is, instead of trying to find a donor record with identical codes on variables other than the target field, the software ignores one nonmissing variable and attempts to find a match on all of the others. In the small number of cases where this does not lead to the identification of a donor record, a second variable is ignored and the file is reread looking for a donor. Although theoretically (and programmatically) this process can be repeated until all variables but county, year of disposition, and intake decision are ignored to find a donor, this never occurred. The order in which variables are removed from the matching criteria are source of referral, detention, offense, adjudication, race, gender, and age.

**Format-level imputation.** After all the record-level missing values have been imputed, the process turns to format-missing information, or information that is missing from a case record because that court's information system does not report this information on their cases. The process for imputing format-missing information is similar to that used in the record-missing imputation process with the needed difference that the donor pool is

expanded. Since all records in a county are missing the target data, the donor pool for format-missing records is defined as the records from all counties in the target record's stratum with the same year of disposition and intake decision.

Using this expanded donor pool, the imputation process follows the steps described above where a target record (i.e., one with missing data) is identified and the donor pool is scanned for a match. Once a match is found, the missing information on the target record is overwritten and the donor record is flagged as having been used for that variable so it will not be reused for that variable unless all other donors are used. If a donor record cannot be found in the first pass through the donor pool, matching criteria are relaxed until a donor is found.

There is one major exception to this process of imputing format-level missing information. This exception involves the process of imputing missing race for those counties that do not report this data element to the Archive. The racial composition of a court's caseload is strongly related to the racial composition of the resident juvenile population. Creating a donor pool that ignores this relationship would reduce the validity of the imputation process. So for those few data files that did not include race, donor pools were developed that restricted the pool to counties with racial compositions similar to that of the target record's county.

This was accomplished by dividing the counties in the U.S. into four groups defined by the percentage of white juveniles in their age 10–17 populations. This classification was then added to each case record and used as a matching criterion for finding a donor record within the set of potential donor records defined by stratum, year of disposition, and intake decision.

**Weighting to produce national estimates.** The Archive employs an elaborate multivariate procedure that assigns a weight to each record in the national case-level database that, when used in analysis, yields national estimates of juvenile court activity. The weights incorporate a number of factors related to the size and characteristics of juvenile court case-loads: the size of a community, the age and race composition of its juvenile population, the age and race profile of the youth involved in juvenile court cases, the courts' responses to the cases (intake decision, detention, adjudication, and disposition), and the nature of each court's jurisdictional responsibilities (i.e., upper age of original jurisdiction).

The basic assumption underlying the weighting procedure is that similar legal and demographic factors shape the volume and characteristics of cases in reporting and nonreporting counties of comparable size and features. The weighting procedure develops independent estimates for the number of petitioned delinquency cases, nonpetitioned delinquency cases, and petitioned status offense cases handled by juvenile courts nationwide. Identical statistical procedures are used to develop all case estimates.

As noted earlier, all U.S. counties are placed into one of four strata based on the size of their youth population ages 10 through 17. In the first step to develop the weights, the Archive divides the youth 10–17 population for each stratum into three age groups: 10- through 15-year-olds, 16-year-olds, and 17-year-olds. The three age groups are further subdivided into four racial groups: white, black, American Indian (including Alaskan Native), and Asian (including Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander). Thus, juvenile resident population estimates are developed for 12 age/race categories in each stratum of counties.

The next step is to identify within each stratum the jurisdictions that contributed to the Archive case-level data consistent with *JCS* reporting requirements. The populations of these case-level reporting jurisdictions within each stratum are then developed for each of the 12 age/race categories. The national case-level database is summarized to determine within each stratum the number of court cases that involved youth in each of the 12 age/race population groups. Case rates (number of cases per 1,000 juveniles in the population) are then developed for the 12 age/race groups within each of the four strata.

For example, assume that a total of 3,748,000 white youth ages 10–15 resided in those stratum 2 counties that reported *JCS*-compatible case-level data to the Archive. If the Archive's case-level database shows that the juvenile courts in these counties handled 42,731 petitioned delinquency cases involving white youth ages 10 through 15, the number of cases per 1,000 white youth ages 10–15 for stratum 2 would be 11.4, or:

$$(42,731 / 3,748,000) \times 1,000 = 11.4$$

Comparable analyses are then used to establish the stratum 2 case rates for black youth, American Indian youth, and Asian youth in the same age group (37.4, 14.7, and 5.2, respectively).

Next, information contained in the national court-level database is introduced, and stratum-level case rates are adjusted accordingly. First, each court-level statistic is disaggregated into the 12 age/race groups. This separation is accomplished by assuming that, for each jurisdiction, the relationships among the stratum's 12 age/race case rates (developed from the case-level data) are paralleled in the court-level data.

For example, assume that a jurisdiction in stratum 2 with an upper age of original juvenile court jurisdiction of 15 reported it processed 500 cases during the year. Also assume that this jurisdiction had a juvenile population of 11,000 white youth, 2,800 black youth, 300 American Indian youth, and 900 Asian youth. The stratum 2 case rates for each racial group in the 10–15 age group would be multiplied by the corresponding population to develop estimates of the proportion of the court's case-load that came from each age/race group, as follows:

White:

$$(11.4 \times 11,000) / [(11.4 \times 11,000) + (37.4 \times 2,800) + (14.7 \times 300) + (5.2 \times 900)] = 52.4\%$$

Black:

$$(37.4 \times 2,800) / [(11.4 \times 11,000) + (37.4 \times 2,800) + (14.7 \times 300) + (5.2 \times 900)] = 43.8\%$$

American Indian:

$$(14.7 \times 300) / [(11.4 \times 11,000) + (37.4 \times 2,800) + (14.7 \times 300) + (5.2 \times 900)] = 1.8\%$$

Asian:

$$(5.2 \times 900) / [(11.4 \times 11,000) + (37.4 \times 2,800) + (14.7 \times 300) + (5.2 \times 900)] = 2.0\%$$

The jurisdiction's total caseload of 500 would then be allocated based on these proportions. In this example, it would be estimated that 52.4% of all cases reported in the jurisdiction's aggregate statistics involved white youth, 43.8% involved black youth, 1.8% involved American Indian youth, and the remaining 2.0% involved Asian youth. When these proportions are applied to a reported court-level caseload statistic of 500 cases, this jurisdiction is estimated to have handled 262 cases involving white youth, 219 cases involving black youth, 9 cases involving American Indian youth, and 10 cases involving Asian youth age 15 or



younger. The same method is used to disaggregate into the 12 age/race groups the aggregated case counts reported by those jurisdictions that could only report aggregate court-level statistics.

The disaggregated court-level counts are then added to the counts developed from case-level data to produce an estimate of the number of cases involving each of the 12 age/race groups handled by reporting courts (i.e., both case-level and court-level reporters) in each of the four strata. The juvenile population figures for the entire reporting sample are also compiled. Together, these new stratum-specific case counts and juvenile population for the reporting counties are used to generate a revised set of case rates for each of the 12 age/race groups within each of the four strata.

Stratum estimates for the total number of cases involving each age/race group are then calculated by multiplying the revised case rate for each of the 12 age/race groups in a stratum by the corresponding juvenile population in all counties belonging to that stratum (both reporting and nonreporting).

After the stratum estimates for the total number of cases in each age/race group in each stratum has been calculated, the next step is to weight the records in the national case-level database. This weight is equal to the estimated number of cases in one of the stratum's 12 age/race groups divided by the actual number of such records in the national case-level database. For example, assume that the Archive generates a national estimate of 31,469 petitioned delinquency cases involving white 16-year-olds

from stratum 2 counties. Assume also that the national case-level database for that year contained 23,376 petitioned delinquency cases involving white 16-year-olds from stratum 2 counties. In the Archive's national estimation database, each stratum 2 petitioned delinquency case that involved a white 16-year-old would be weighted by 1.35, because:

$$31,469 / 23,376 = 1.35$$

Finally, by incorporating the weights into all analyses of the national case-level database, national estimates of case volumes and case characteristics can be produced. More detailed information about the Archive's national estimation methodology is available on request from the National Center for Juvenile Justice.



# Appendix B

## Glossary of Terms

**Adjudication:** Judicial determination (judgment) that a juvenile is or is not responsible for the delinquency or status offense charged in a petition.

**Age:** Age at the time of referral to juvenile court.

**Case rate:** Number of cases disposed per 1,000 juveniles in the population. The population base used to calculate the case rate varies. For example, the population base for the male case rate is the total number of male youth age 10 or older under the jurisdiction of the juvenile courts. (See “juvenile population.”)

**Delinquency:** Acts or conduct in violation of criminal law. (See “reason for referral.”)

**Delinquent act:** An act committed by a juvenile which, if committed by an adult, would be a criminal act. The juvenile court has jurisdiction over delinquent acts. Delinquent acts include crimes against persons, crimes against property, drug offenses, and crimes against public order.

**Dependency case:** Those cases involving neglect or inadequate care on the part of parents or guardians, such as abandonment or desertion; abuse or cruel treatment; improper or inadequate conditions in the home; and insufficient care or support

resulting from death, absence, or physical or mental incapacity of parents/guardians.

**Detention:** The placement of a youth in a secure facility under court authority at some point between the time of referral to court intake and case disposition. This Report does not include detention decisions made by law enforcement officials prior to court referral or those occurring after the disposition of a case.

**Disposition:** Sanction ordered or treatment plan decided on or initiated in a particular case. Case dispositions are coded into the following categories:

- **Waived to criminal court**—Cases that were transferred to criminal court as the result of a judicial waiver hearing in juvenile court.
- **Placement**—Cases in which youth were placed in a residential facility for delinquents or status offenders, or cases in which youth were otherwise removed from their homes and placed elsewhere.
- **Probation**—Cases in which youth were placed on informal/voluntary or formal/court-ordered supervision.
- **Dismissed/released**—Cases dismissed or otherwise released (including those warned and counseled) with no further sanction or

consequence anticipated. Among cases handled informally (see “manner of handling”), some cases may be dismissed by the juvenile court because the matter is being handled in another court or agency.

- **Other**—Miscellaneous dispositions not included above. These dispositions include fines, restitution, community service, referrals outside the court for services or treatment programs with minimal or no further court involvement anticipated, and dispositions coded as “other” in a jurisdiction’s original data.

**Formal handling:** See “intake decision.”

**Informal handling:** See “intake decision.”

**Intake decision:** The decision made by juvenile court intake that results in the case either being handled informally at the intake level or being petitioned and scheduled for an adjudicatory or judicial waiver hearing.

- **Nonpetitioned (informally handled)**—Cases in which duly authorized court personnel, having screened the case, decide not to file a formal petition. Such personnel include judges, referees, probation officers, other officers of the court, and/or agencies statutorily designated to conduct petition screening for the juvenile court.
- **Petitioned (formally handled)**—Cases that appear on the official court calendar in response to the filing of a petition, complaint, or other legal instrument requesting the court to adjudicate a youth as a delinquent, status offender, or dependent child or to waive jurisdiction and transfer a youth to criminal court for processing as a criminal offender.

**Judicial decision:** The decision made in response to a petition that asks the

court to adjudicate or judicially waive the youth to criminal court for prosecution as an adult. This decision is generally made by a juvenile court judge or referee.

**Judicial disposition:** The disposition rendered in a case after the judicial decision has been made.

**Juvenile:** Youth at or below the upper age of original juvenile court jurisdiction. (See “juvenile population” and “upper age of jurisdiction.”)

**Juvenile court:** Any court that has jurisdiction over matters involving juveniles.

**Juvenile population:** For delinquency and status offense matters, the juvenile population is defined as the number of children between the age of 10 and the upper age of jurisdiction. For dependency matters, it is defined as the number of children at or below the upper age of jurisdiction. In all states, the upper age of jurisdiction is defined by statute. Thus, when the upper age of jurisdiction is 17, the delinquency and status offense juvenile population is equal to the number of children ages 10 through 17 living within the geographical area serviced by the court. (See “upper age of jurisdiction.”)

**Nonpetitioned case:** See “intake decision.”

**Petition:** A document filed in juvenile court alleging that a juvenile is a delinquent or a status offender and asking that the court assume jurisdiction over the juvenile or that an alleged delinquent be judicially waived to criminal court for prosecution as an adult.

**Petitioned case:** See “intake decision.”

**Race:** The race of the youth referred, as determined by the youth or by court personnel.

- **White**—A person having origins in any of the indigenous peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East. (In both the population and court data, nearly all youth of Hispanic ethnicity were included in the white racial category.)

- **Black**—A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

- **American Indian**—A person having origins in any of the indigenous peoples of North America, including Alaskan Natives.

- **Asian**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, Hawaii, or any of the other Pacific Islands.

**Reason for referral:** The most serious offense for which the youth is referred to court intake. Attempts to commit an offense are included under that offense, except attempted murder, which is included in the aggravated assault category.

- **Crimes against persons**—Includes criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, simple assault, and other offenses against persons as defined below.

- ◆ **Criminal homicide**—Causing the death of another person without legal justification or excuse. Criminal homicide is a summary category, not a single codified offense. In law, the term embraces all homicides in which the perpetrator intentionally kills someone without legal justification or accidentally kills someone as a consequence of reckless or grossly negligent conduct. It includes all conduct encompassed by the terms murder, nonnegligent (voluntary) manslaughter, negligent (involuntary) manslaughter, and vehicular manslaughter. The term is broader than the Crime Index category used in the Federal Bureau of

Investigation's (FBI's) *Uniform Crime Reports (UCR)*, in which murder/nonnegligent manslaughter does not include negligent manslaughter or vehicular manslaughter.

- ◆ **Forcible rape**—Sexual intercourse or attempted sexual intercourse with a female against her will by force or threat of force. The term is used in the same sense as in the *UCR Crime Index*. Some states have enacted gender-neutral rape or sexual assault statutes that prohibit forced sexual penetration of either sex. Data reported by such states do not distinguish between forcible rape of females as defined above and other sexual assaults and are included as forcible rape. (Other violent sex offenses are classified as “other offenses against persons.”) [Note: Effective 2012, the FBI revised the definition of rape to be gender-neutral. Beginning with data year 2012, *Juvenile Court Statistics* data will reflect the revised definition.]
- ◆ **Robbery**—Unlawful taking or attempted taking of property that is in the immediate possession of another by force or threat of force. The term is used in the same sense as in the *UCR Crime Index* and includes forcible purse snatching.
- ◆ **Assault**—Unlawful intentional infliction, or attempted or threatened infliction, of injury upon the person of another.
  - ❖ **Aggravated assault**—Unlawful intentional infliction of serious bodily injury or unlawful threat or attempt to inflict bodily injury or death by means of a deadly or dangerous weapon with or without actual infliction of any injury. The term is used in the same sense as in the *UCR Crime Index*. It includes conduct encompassed under the statutory names: aggravated assault and battery, aggravated battery, assault with intent to kill, assault with intent to commit murder or manslaughter, atrocious assault, attempted murder, felonious assault, and assault with a deadly weapon.
  - ❖ **Simple assault**—Unlawful intentional infliction or attempted or threatened infliction of less than serious bodily injury without a deadly or dangerous weapon. The term is used in the same sense as in *UCR* reporting. Simple assault is not often distinctly named in statutes because it encompasses all assaults not explicitly named and defined as serious. Unspecified assaults are classified as “other offenses against persons.”
- ◆ **Other offenses against persons**—Includes kidnapping, violent sex acts other than forcible rape (e.g., incest, sodomy), custody interference, unlawful restraint, false imprisonment, reckless endangerment, harassment, and attempts to commit any such acts.
- **Crimes against property**—Includes burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, arson, vandalism, stolen property offenses, trespassing, and other property offenses as defined below.
  - ◆ **Burglary**—Unlawful entry or attempted entry of any fixed structure, vehicle, or vessel used for regular residence, industry, or business, with or without force, with intent to commit a felony or larceny. The term is used in the same sense as in the *UCR Crime Index*.
  - ◆ **Larceny**—Unlawful taking or attempted taking of property (other than a motor vehicle) from the possession of another by stealth, without force and without deceit, with intent to permanently deprive the owner of the property. This term is used in the same sense as in the *UCR Crime Index*. It includes shoplifting and purse snatching without force.
  - ◆ **Motor vehicle theft**—Unlawful taking or attempted taking of a self-propelled road vehicle owned by another with the intent to deprive the owner of it permanently or temporarily. The term is used in the same sense as in the *UCR Crime Index*. It includes joyriding or unauthorized use of a motor vehicle as well as grand theft auto.
  - ◆ **Arson**—Intentional damage or destruction by means of fire or explosion of the property of another without the owner's consent or of any property with intent to defraud, or attempting the above acts. The term is used in the same sense as in the *UCR Crime Index*.
  - ◆ **Vandalism**—Destroying, damaging, or attempting to destroy or damage public property or the property of another without the owner's consent, except by fire or explosion.
  - ◆ **Stolen property offenses**—Unlawfully and knowingly receiving, buying, distributing, selling, transporting, concealing, or possessing stolen property, or attempting any of the above. The term is used in the same sense as the *UCR* category “stolen property: buying, receiving, possessing.”

- ◆ **Trespassing**—Unlawful entry or attempted entry of the property of another with the intent to commit a misdemeanor other than larceny or without intent to commit a crime.
- ◆ **Other property offenses**—Includes extortion and all fraud offenses, such as forgery, counterfeiting, embezzlement, check or credit card fraud, and attempts to commit any such offenses.
- **Drug law violations**—Includes unlawful sale, purchase, distribution, manufacture, cultivation, transport, possession, or use of a controlled or prohibited substance or drug or drug paraphernalia, or attempt to commit these acts. Sniffing of glue, paint, gasoline, and other inhalants is also included. Hence, the term is broader than the *UCR* category “drug abuse violations.”
- **Offenses against public order**—Includes weapons offenses; nonviolent sex offenses; liquor law violations, not status offenses; disorderly conduct; obstruction of justice; and other offenses against public order as defined below.
  - ◆ **Weapons offenses**—Unlawful sale, distribution, manufacture, alteration, transportation, possession, or use of a deadly or dangerous weapon or accessory, or attempt to commit any of these acts. The term is used in the same sense as the *UCR* category “weapons: carrying, possessing, etc.”
  - ◆ **Nonviolent sex offenses**—All offenses having a sexual element not involving violence. The term combines the meaning of the *UCR* categories “prostitution and commercialized vice” and “sex offenses.” It includes offenses such as statutory rape, indecent exposure, prostitution, solicitation, pimping, lewdness, fornication, and adultery.
- ◆ **Liquor law violations, not status offenses**—Being in a public place while intoxicated through consumption of alcohol. It includes public intoxication, drunkenness, and other liquor law violations. It does not include driving under the influence. The term is used in the same sense as the *UCR* category of the same name. Some states treat public drunkenness of juveniles as a status offense rather than delinquency. Hence, some of these offenses may appear under the status offense code “status liquor law violations.” (When a person who is publicly intoxicated performs acts that cause a disturbance, he or she may be charged with disorderly conduct.)
- ◆ **Disorderly conduct**—Unlawful interruption of the peace, quiet, or order of a community, including offenses called disturbing the peace, vagrancy, loitering, unlawful assembly, and riot.
- ◆ **Obstruction of justice**—Intentionally obstructing court or law enforcement efforts in the administration of justice, acting in a way calculated to lessen the authority or dignity of the court, failing to obey the lawful order of a court, escaping from confinement, and violating probation or parole. This term includes contempt, perjury, bribery of witnesses, failure to report a crime, and nonviolent resistance of arrest.
- ◆ **Other offenses against public order**—Other offenses against government administration or regulation, such as bribery; violations of laws pertaining to fish and game, gambling, health, hitchhiking, and immigration; and false fire alarms.
- **Status offenses**—Includes acts or types of conduct that are offenses only when committed or engaged in by a juvenile and that can be adjudicated only by a juvenile court. Although state statutes defining status offenses vary and some states may classify cases involving these offenses as dependency cases, for the purposes of this Report the following types of offenses are classified as status offenses:
  - ◆ **Runaway**—Leaving the custody and home of parents, guardians, or custodians without permission and failing to return within a reasonable length of time, in violation of a statute regulating the conduct of youth.
  - ◆ **Truancy**—Violation of a compulsory school attendance law.
  - ◆ **Curfew violations**—Being found in a public place after a specified hour of the evening, usually established in a local ordinance applying only to persons under a specified age.
  - ◆ **Ungovernability**—Being beyond the control of parents, guardians, or custodians or being disobedient of parental authority. This classification is referred to in various juvenile codes as unruly, unmanageable, and incorrigible.
  - ◆ **Status liquor law violations**—Violation of laws regulating the possession, purchase, or consumption of liquor by minors. Some states treat consumption of alcohol and public drunkenness of juveniles as status offenses rather than delinquency. Hence, some of these offenses may appear under this status offense code.
  - ◆ **Miscellaneous status offenses**—Numerous status offenses not included above (e.g., tobacco violation and violation of a

court order in a status offense proceeding) and those offenses coded as “other” in a jurisdiction’s original data.

- **Dependency offenses**—Includes actions that come to the attention of a juvenile court involving neglect or inadequate care of minors on the part of the parents or guardians, such as abandonment or desertion; abuse or cruel treatment; improper or inadequate conditions in the home; and insufficient care or support resulting from death, absence, or physical or mental incapacity of the parents or guardians.

Offenses may also be grouped into categories commonly used in the FBI’s *Uniform Crime Reports*. These groupings are:

- **Violent Crime Index**—Includes the offenses of murder/nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.
- **Property Crime Index**—Includes the offenses of burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

**Source of referral:** The agency or individual filing a complaint with intake that initiates court processing.

- **Law enforcement agency**—Includes metropolitan police, state police, park police, sheriffs,

constables, police assigned to the juvenile court for special duty, and all others performing a police function, with the exception of probation officers and officers of the court.

- **School**—Includes counselors, teachers, principals, and attendance officers.
- **Relatives**—Includes the youth’s own parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, stepparents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other legal guardians.
- **Other**—Includes social agencies, district attorneys, probation officers, victims, other private citizens, and miscellaneous sources of referral often only defined by the code “other” in the original data.

**Status offense:** Behavior that is considered an offense only when committed by a juvenile (e.g., running away from home). (See “reason for referral.”)

**Unit of count:** A case disposed by a court with juvenile jurisdiction during the calendar year. Each case represents a youth referred to the juvenile court for a new referral for one or more offenses. (See “reason for referral.”) The term disposed means that during the year some definite action was taken or some treatment plan was decided on or initiated. (See “disposition.”) Under this definition, a

youth could be involved in more than one case during a calendar year.

**Upper age of jurisdiction:** The oldest age at which a juvenile court has original jurisdiction over an individual for law-violating behavior. For the time period covered by this Report, the upper age of jurisdiction was 15 in 2 states (New York and North Carolina) and 16 in 11 states (Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Texas, and Wisconsin). In the remaining 37 states and the District of Columbia, the upper age of jurisdiction was 17. It must be noted that within most states, there are exceptions in which youth at or below the state’s upper age of jurisdiction can be placed under the original jurisdiction of the adult criminal court. For example, in most states, if a youth of a certain age is charged with an offense from a defined list of “excluded offenses,” the case must originate in the adult criminal court. In addition, in a number of states, the district attorney is given the discretion of filing certain cases in either the juvenile court or the criminal court. Therefore, while the upper age of jurisdiction is commonly recognized in all states, there are numerous exceptions to this age criterion.

**Waiver:** Cases transferred to criminal court as the result of a judicial waiver hearing in juvenile court.





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