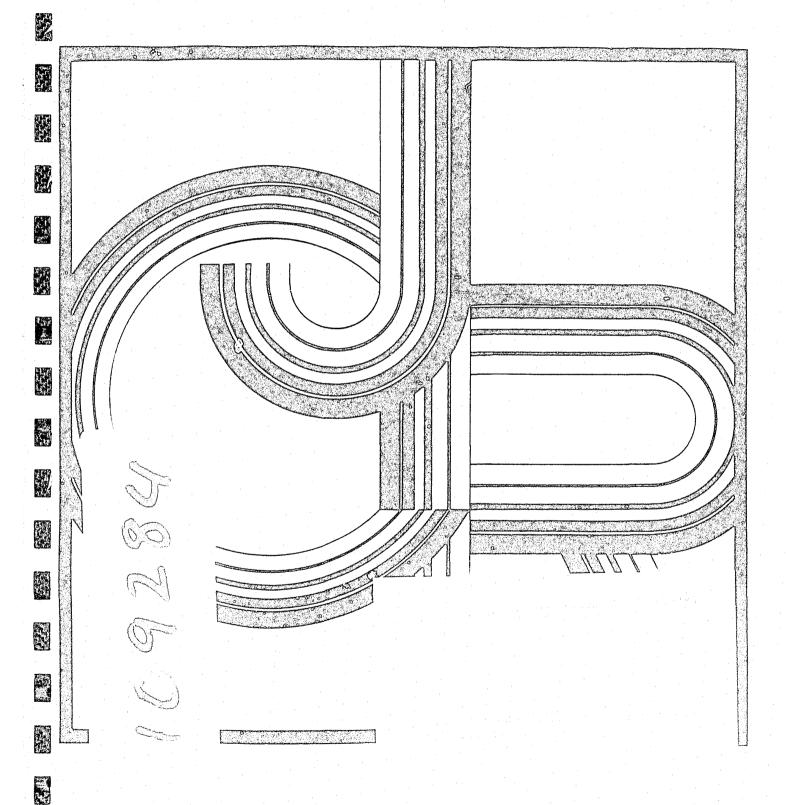
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Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice

JUVENILE COURT REPORT — 1985



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Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice

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Prepared By:

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1985 JUVENILE COURT REPORT SELECTED FINDINGS

- o 5,974 juvenile cases reached final disposition in Nebraska courts having juvenile jurisdiction in 1985, a decrease of 1.9% over 1984.
- o Of all juvenile cases, 3,782 were referred for reasons classified as major offenses, 1,425 for minor or status offenses, and 767 for neglect and dependent reasons.
- o The most common reason for referral to juvenile court was for theft under \$100, involving about 1 in 5 referrals. Neglect cases accounted for the next highest number, about 10%. Possession of Alcohol accounted for 8.8% of all cases.
- o One-fourth of the cases disposed of in 1985 involved juveniles who had previously been referred to the same court.
- o Juveniles referred for major and minor offenses were most likely to be placed on probation. Just over one-third of all referrals resulted in this disposition.
- o 15 and 16 year-old males comprised the largest group of juvenile cases disposed of in 1985. More than twice as many male than female referrals were recorded.
- o Almost three-fourths of male referrals were for major offenses, while slightly more than one-third of female referrals were for major offenses.
- o The Separate Juvenile Courts in Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy counties together processed 56.4% of all juvenile dispositions in 1985.

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JUVENILE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM

One of the primary purposes of this report is to provide information that accurately reflects the level of juvenile crime in the State of Nebraska. In this report, the particular indicator used is the flow of juveniles through the Nebraska juvenile court system (see Figure 1). The sources of the data are the three separate juvenile courts of Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy counties and the county courts in the remaining 90 counties. Neither the district courts nor the municipal courts in Lincoln and Omaha report juvenile case data to the Commission. District court cases usually involve older juveniles appearing for serious offenses and the volume of such cases is small compared to the number of juvenile cases handled in juvenile and county courts. In addition, the Commission does not collect data on juvenile traffic offenses or citations.

The 93 courts report cases disposed of to the Commission monthly. For each individual juvenile case disposition, the court fills out a Juvenile Court Statistical Form as shown in Figure 2. The following sections of the form are required information on all cases: A. Court Code; E. Age a Time of Referral; M. Manner of Handling; N. Date of Disposition; and Q. Disposition. The remainder of the form is optional, however, the courts are encouraged to include as much information as they possibly can. In the tables contained in this report, references to missing data mean that not all counties completed the section(s) of the form being discussed.

A Juvenile Court Statistical Form Instruction Manual, which is intended to explain how to complete the form, is available to assist persons responsible for its completion. The instruction manual also provides definitions and other pertinent information on specifics on information which is collected.

At this time, the Commission has juvenile court data from all counties from 1974 through 1985 and some partial data from 1973.

It is important to note that the information described in this report pertains to <u>dispositions</u> of juvenile cases by county and juvenile courts during calendar year 1985 and not to <u>referrals</u> during that period. Disposition is used in a very broad sense for purposes of most statistics in this report. Disposition refers to those cases filed with a petition as well as those filed without petition. Those wanting strictly disposition cases filed with petition may contact the Commission. The case may have been referred to the court during 1985 or previously. Thus, an accurate count of the number of referrals for a given period is not possible because a statistical form is not received until a final disposition in the case has been determined.

JUVENILE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM FLOW DIAGRAM

FIGURE 1

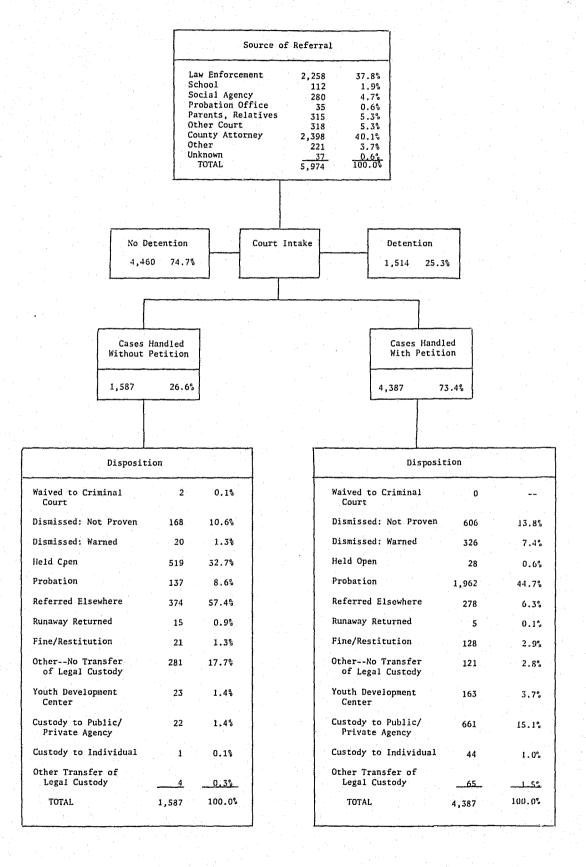


FIGURE 2

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9 Perenta or relativos 6 Other court	64 Assault: 3rd degr	·	18 Criminal Mischief; Felony	O. Disposition
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REFERRAL BACKGROUND

A juvenile may come under the jurisdiction of a juvenile court or a county court sitting as a juvenile court in Nebraska if it is determined that he or she is described in Sections 43-245 through 43-247 of the Nebraska Revised Statues, 1943, Reissue of 1984. For purposes of the Juvenile Court Reporting Program, the following sections are applicable:

- "(1) Any juvenile who has committed an act other than a traffic offense which would constitute a misdemeanor or an infraction under the laws of this state, or violation of a city or village ordinance;
- (2) Any juvenile who has committed an act which would constitute a felony under the laws of this state;
- (3) Any juvenile (a) who is homeless or destitute, or without proper support through no fault of his or her parent, guardian, or custodian; who is abandoned by his or her parent, guardian, or custodian; who lacks proper parental care by reason of the fault or habits of his or her parent, guardian, or custodian; whose parent, guardian or custodian neglects or refuses to provide proper or necessary subsistence, education, or other care necessary for the health, morals, or well-being of such juvenile; whose parent, guardian, or custodian neglects or refuses to provide special care made necessary by the mental condition of the juvenile; or who is in a situation or engages in an occupation dangerous to life or limb or injurious to the health or morals of such juvenile or (b) who, by reason of being wayward or habitually disobedient, is uncontrolled by his or her parent, guardian, or custodian; who deports himself or herself so as to injure or endanger seriously the morals or health of himself, herself, or others; or who is habitually truant from home or school:"

In this report, referrals to juvenile court are classified into three categories; major offenses, minor offenses, and neglect/dependent cases. Major offense referrals are coded on the Juvenile Court Statistical Form (see Figure 2) under section L. as response 01 through 28. The major offense referrals are coded in categories 31 through 39. Minor offenses are often referred to as "status" offenses and represent offenses applicable only to individuals under 18 years of age. Neglect/dependent referrals are coded as 51 or 52. "Neglect" and "dependent" refer to juveniles described in Section 43-247(3) of Nebraska R.R.S., 1943, Reissue of 1984. The usage of these terms was retained after the definitions of "neglect" and "dependency" were removed from the juvenile code in 1978.

Non-felony motor vehicle related offenses or infraction data are not collected in the JCR program or presented in this report.

After a case comes to the court's attention, a decision is made whether to handle the case unofficially (without petition) or officially (with petition). Most cases handled without petition are generally disposed of by the court intake staff by one of several options. Many of these options are the same as those for cases handled with petition. If it is decided to file a petition (similar to a "complaint" in an adult case) with the clerk of the court, the procedure is most often performed by the county attorney. After a petition is filed, a hearing is conducted for the juvenile by a judge; no jury is present. The hearing proceeds in an informal manner, applying the rules of evidence used by district courts in civil trials without a jury. The judge will decide the case with one of many disposition options.

The majority of the state's juvenile cases were concentrated in the four most populous counties. In 1985, approximately 62% of the juvenile cases were held in Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, and Hall counties. A breakdown of juvenile cases throughout the state may be found in Figure 3 and Table 1.

1985 JUVENILE COURT REPORT

JUVENILE CASES DISPOSED OF BY COUNTY

FIGURE 3

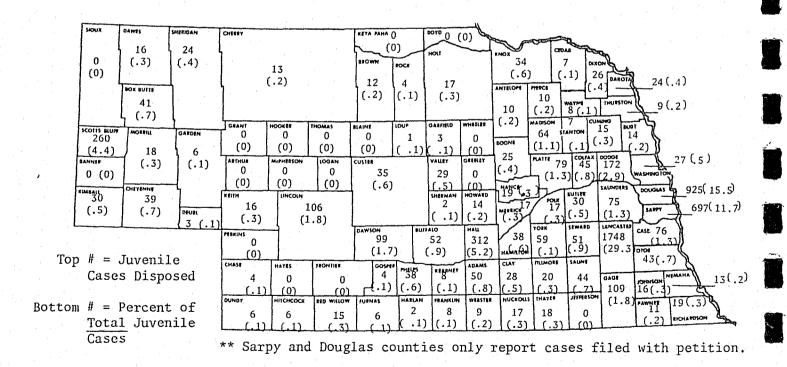


TABLE 1

COUNTY ARREST AND JUVENILE COURT DATA

			JUVENILE COURT DISPOSITIONS				
COUNTY	JUVENILE* POPULATION (Age 1-17)	JUVENILE** ARRESTS	MAJOR OFFENSES	MINOR OFFENSES	NEGLECT/ DEPENDENT	TOTAL	
Adams	8,737	195	23	27	0	50	
Antelope	2,585	3	2	5	3	10	
Arthur	136	-	0	0	0	0	
Banner	269		0	0	0	0	
Blaine	270		0	0	0	0	
Boone	2,180	5	17	8	0	25	
Box Butte	4,068	126	22	12	7	41	
Boyd	806		0	0	0	0.	
Brown	1,247	9	7	5	0	12	
Buffalo	9,117	238	40	12	0	52	
Burt	2,309	13	3	9	2	14	
Butler	2,631	14	25	2	3	30	
Cass	6,150	148	39	25	12	76	
Cedar	3,708	13	6	1	0	7	

Table 1 - County Arrest and Juvenile Court Data Continued

				JUVENILE COURT DISPOSITIONS					
COUNTY	JUVENILE* POPULATION (Age 1-17)	JUVENILE** ARRESTS		MAJOR OFFENSES	MINOR OFFENSES	NEGLECT/ DEPENDENT	TOTAL		
Chase	1,461	1		1	0	3	4		
Cherry	1,906	15		4	1	8	13		
Cheyenne	2,766	78		26	10	3	39		
Clay	2,335	30	:	21	7	0	28		
Colfax	2,799	58		25	18	2	45		
Cuming	3,534	24		10	4	1	15		
Custer	3,788	39	:	25	6	4	35		
Dakota	5,419	114	1	7	4	13	24		
Dawes	2,402	35	1	7	4	5	16		
Dawson	6,714	104		42	33	24	99		
Deuel	667	3	,	3	0	0	3		
Dixon	2,120	10		10	15	1	26		
Dodge	10,037	223		86	49	37	172		
Douglas	115,538	2,803		557	151	217	925		
Dundy	698	3		4	1	1	6		

Table 1 - County Arrest and Juvenile Court Data Continued

T DISPOSITION NEGLECT/DEPENDENT	TOTAL CASES 20
DEPENDENT	CASES
	20
0	
	8
0	0
0	6
15	109
0	6
1	3
0	4
0	0
0	0
57	312
3	38
0	2
0	0
0	6
	0 15 0 1 0 0 0 57 3 0

Table 1 - County Arrest and Juvenile Court Data Continued

				JUVENILE COURT DISPOSITIONS					
COUNTY	JUVENILE* POPULATION (Age 1-17)	JUVENILE* ARRESTS		MAJOR OFFENSE	MINOR S OFFENSE:	NEGLECT/ S DEPENDENT	TOTAL CASES		
Holt	4,201	8	·	11	5	1	17		
Hooker	261			0	0	0	0		
Howard	2,079	20		8	1	5	14		
Jefferson	2,346	8		0	0	0	0		
Johnson	1,369	17		7	6	3	16		
Kearney	1,933	2		6	2	0	8		
Keith	2,725	49		15	1	0	16		
Keya Paha	385	0		0	0	0	0		
Kimball	1,440	52		15	13	2	30		
Knox	3,300	11		17	14	3	34		
Lancaster	47,064	2,449		1,313	290	145	1,748		
Lincoln	11,192	335		85	21	0	106		
Logan	309	0		0	0	0	0		
Loup	241			1	0	0	1		
Madison	8,599	202		47	15	2	64		

Table 1 - County Arrest and Juvenile Court Data Continued

			JUVE	JUVENILE COURT DISPOSITIONS				
COUNTY	JUVENILE* POPULATION (Ase 1-17)	JUVENILE** ARRESTS	MAJOR OFFENSES	MINOR OFFENSES	NEGLECT/ DEPENDENT	TOTAL		
McPherson	161		0	0	0	0		
Merrick	2,746	60	10	4	3	17		
Morrill	1,751	18	9	9	0	18		
Nance	1,394	6	11	8	0	19		
Nemaha	2,075	33	7	2	4	13		
Nuckolls	1,816	15	6	11	0	17		
Otoe	4,099	84	39	4	0	43		
Pawnee	909	13	7	2	2	11		
Perkins	1,029	1	0	0	0	0		
Phelps	2,638	59	33	5	0	38		
Pierce	2,485	8	2	2	6	10		
Platte	9,002	151	48	30	1	79		
Polk	1,820	27	7	9	1	17		
Red Willow	3,494	47	14	0	1	15		
Richardson	2,806	48	8	5	6	19		

Table 1 - County Arrest and Juvenile Court Data Continued

			JUVENILE COURT DISPOSITIONS				
COUNTY	JUVENILE* POPULATION (Age 1-17)	JUVENILE** ARRESTS	MAJOR OFFENSES	MINOR OFFENSES	NEGLECT/ DEPENDENT	TOTAL	
Rock	715	2	3	1	0	4	
Saline	3,243	45	35	5	4	44	
Sarpy	30,621	1,090	381	228	88	697	
Saunders	5,559	68	36	18	21	75	
Scotts Bluff	11,580	218	162	80	18	260	
Seward	4,200	73	33	11	7	51	
Sheridan	2,173	42	18	4	2	24	
Sherman	1,251	19	1	1	0	2	
Sioux	518		0	0	0	0	
Stanton	2,227	10	0	6	1	7	
Thayer	1,941	18	4	9	5	18	
Thomas	297	3	0	0	0	0	
Thurston	2,450	2	4	1	4	9	
Valley	1,538	35	18	9	2	29	
Washington	4,652	52	9	15	3	27	

Table 1 - County Arrest and Juvenile Court Data Continued

			JUV	ENILE COURT	DISPOSITIO	NS
COUNTY	JUVENILE* POPULATION (Age 1-17)	JUVENILE** ARRESTS	MAJOR OFFENSES	MINOR OFFENSES	NEGLECT/ DEPENDENT	TOTAL CASES
Wayne	2,317	33	8	0	0	8
Webster	1,258	***	3	6	0	9
Wheeler	352		0	0	0	0
York	4,114	215	35	22	2	59
NE State I	Patrol	5				
TOTAL	448,035	10,795	3,782	1,425	767	5,974

⁻⁻ Data not available

^{*} Population based on 1980 Census; Bureau of Business Research

^{**} Arrest data from 1985 Nebraska Uniform Crime Report

REFERRALS

There were 5,974 juvenile court referrals reported to the Commission in the Juvenile Court Reporting Program in 1985. Of these, 4,387 (73.4%) were handled with petition, while 1,587 (26.6%) were handled without petition.

Referrals for major offense categories accounted for 63.3% or 3,782 of the total number of cases. Minor offense referrals comprised 23.9% or 1,425 of the total, while 12.8% or 767 neglect/dependent cases were reported. Breakdowns of the reasons for referral are given in Tables 2, 3, and 4 and figures for major, minor, and neglect/dependent cases, respectively.

Four juveniles were referred on murder or manslaughter charges, while 276 were referred for assault, and 80 for sexual assault. The number of juveniles referred for sexual assault increased 66.7% over 1984.

Theft offenses were the most common reason for referral to juvenile court, with about 41.3% of major offense referral cases and 30% of all cases disposed of in 1985. As in the past, theft under \$100, misdemeanor criminal mischief, and burglary were the three largest major offense referral categories. Approximately half of all juveniles referred for major offenses were in these categories. For status offenses, minor in possession was the most frequent with 36.7% (523) of all referrals in this category and 8.8% of all referrals.

About 24% (1,514) of juvenile referrals were detained or placed in a jail facility, detention home, or foster or group home pending disposition of the case. Of all referrals 1.8% (108) were held, at least temporarily, in a jail facility.

Over 80% of those detained or held, however, were placed in a detention, foster, or group home.

TABLE 2

MAJOR OFFENSE FREQUENCIES

FREQUENCY	% OF TOTAL
4	0.1%
1	<0.1%
26	0.7%
250	6.6%
45	1.2%
35	0.9%
25	0.7%
10	0.3%
124	3.3%
16	0.4%
17	0.4%
348	9.2%
111	2.9%
54	1.4%
103	2.7%
	1 26 250 45 35 25 10 124 16 17 348 111

TABLE 2

MAJOR OFFENSE FREQUENCIES

OFFENSE TYPE	FREQUENCY	% OF TOTAL
Theft Under \$300	222	5.9%
Theft Under \$100	1,184	31.3%
Criminal Mischief (Felony)	85	2.2%
Criminal Mischief (Misdemeanor)	454	12.0%
Trespassing	186	4.9%
Forgery (Felony)	7	0.2%
Forgery (Misdemeanor)	39	1.0%
Weapons Laws (Felony)	2	<0.1%
Weapons Laws (Misdemeanor)	19	0.5%
DWI (3rd Offense)	6	.0.2%
Disturbing the Peace	101	2.7%
Other Felony	19	0.5%
Other Misdemeanor	289	7.6%
TOTAL	3,782	100.0%

TOP 11 MAJOR OFFENSES

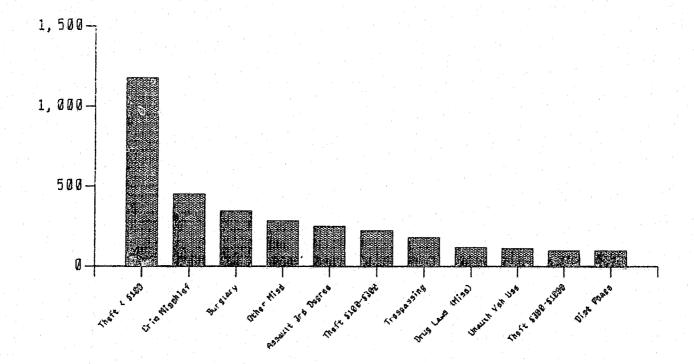


TABLE 3

MINOR OFFENSE FREQUENCIES

OFFENSE TYPE	FREQUENCY	% OF TOTAL
Running Away	68	4.8%
Truancy	176	12.4%
Curfew Violation	46	3.2%
Ungovernable Behavior	498	34.9%
Possession/Drinking Alcohol	523	36.7%
Other	114	8.0%
TOTAL	1,425	100.0%

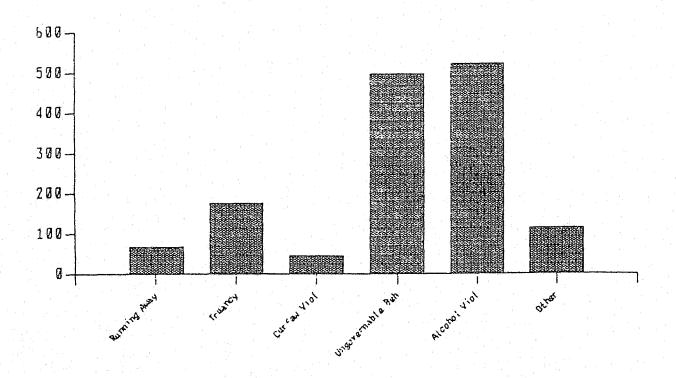
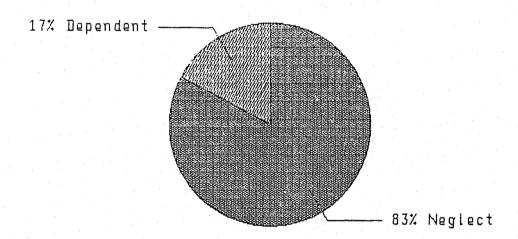


TABLE 4

NEGLECT/DEPENDENT REFERRAL FREQUENCIES

REFERRAL REASON	FREQUENCY	% OF TOTAL
Neglect	634	82.7%
Dependent	133	17.3%
TOTAL	767	100.0%



The category of major offenses may be subdivided into smaller categories of offenses against persons and offenses against property (see Table 5). Offenses against persons, which include murder, manslaughter, assault, sexual assault, and robbery, comprised 10.2% of major offenses and 6.5% of all referrals. Property offenses such as arson, burglary, theft, and forgery constituted the largest proportion of major (and total) referrals, representing 47.7% of all referrals and 75.3% of major offenses referrals. Other major offense referrals which could not be categorized as offenses against persons or as property offenses, such as Driving While Intoxicated (DWI), Disturbing the Peace, and drug violations, composed the remainder of major offense referrals (14.5% and 9.2% respectively) of the total referrals.

TABLE 5
REASON REFERRED

REASON REFERRED	FREQUENCY	% OF TOTAL	% OF MAJOR
All Major Offenses a. Persons	3,782 386	63.4% 6.5%	100.0% 10.2%
b. Propertyc. Other Major	2,847 549	47.7% 9.2%	75.3% 14.5%
Minor Offenses	1,425	23.9%	
Neglect/Dependent	767	12.8%	- 1
TOTAL	5,974	100.0%	

Major, minor, and neglect/dependent disposition trends are illustrated in Table 6, along with percentage changes for each year from 1977 to 1985. The positive change from 1979 to 1981 in the number of major offense dispositions reversed a decreasing trend since 1975. There was a decrease in the number of reported dispositions in 1985, with major offenses increasing 6.7% and neglect/dependent having a substantial decrease of 23.8%. This reduces neglect/dependent cases to approximately 1983 levels after a 34.5% increase in 1984.

Year-to-year changes in the number of reported juvenile court dispositions may be the result of several factors. In some years certain jurisdictions were or were not reporting. Also, some jurisdictions may have changed their policies or procedures for the processing of young persons in juvenile court.

TABLE 6

JUVENILE COURT DISPOSITIONS BY YEAR: 1977-1985

DISPOSITION	MAJOR	MINOR	NEGLECT/	YEAR
YEAR	OFFENSES	OFFENSES	DEPENDENT	TOTAL
1977	3,502	1,182	428	5,112
% chg 1976	(- 4.9%)	(~ 2.5%)	(- 7.6%)	(- 4.6%)
1978	2,896	962	493	4,351
% chg 1977	(-17.3%)	(-18.6%)	(+15.2%)	(-14.9%)
1979	2,862	1,045	551	4,458
% chg 1978	(- 1.2%)	(+ 8.6%)	(+11.8%)	(+ 2.5%)
1980	2,992	1,161	540	4,693
% chg 1979	(+ 4.5%)	(+11.1%)	(- 2.0%)	(+ 5.3%)
1981	3,439	1,545	698	5,682
% chg 1980	(+14.9%)	(+33.1%)	(+29.3%)	(+21.0%)
1982	2,981	1,498	625	5,104
% chg 1981	(-13.3%)	(- 3.0%)	(-10.5%)	(-10.2%)
1983	3,391	1,547	748	5,686
% chg 1982	(+13.8%)	(+ 3.3%)	(+19.7%)	(+10.2%)
1984	3,543	1,542	1,006	6,091
% chg 1983	(+ 4.5%)	(- 0.3%)	(+34.5%)	(+ 7.1%)
1985	3,782	1,425	767	5,974
% chg 1984	. (+ 6.7%)	(- 7.6%)	(-23.8%)	(- 1.9%)

DISPOSITION TRENDS : 1977-1985

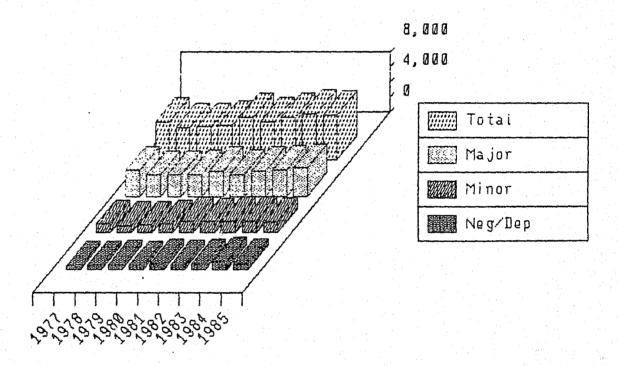


Table 7 includes figures showing the sources of referrals to Nebraska juvneile courts for major, minor, and neglect/dependent cases. The largest number of major offense referrals (49.6%) were from law enforcement agencies. Referrals from county attorneys comprised the next largest category (1,419 or 37.7%) of sources of referral. These rankings are reversed for status offenses where about 23% of referrals were from law enforcement agencies while 41% were referred by the county attorney. Over half (52.6%) of neglect/dependent referrals were from county attorneys while about 32% were from social agencies. Law enforcement agencies referred only about 8.7% of all neglect/dependent cases.

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TABLE 7
SOURCE OF COURT REFERRALS

SOURCE OF REFERRAL	MAJOR OFFENSES (%)	MINOR OFFENSES (%)	NEGLECT/ DEPENDENT (%)	TOTAL (%)
Law Enforcement	1,869 (49.6%)	322 (22.9%)	67 (8.7%)	2,258 (38.0%)
School School	4 (0.1%)	101 (7.2%)	7 (0.9%)	112 (1.9%)
Social Agency	7 (0.2%)	29 (2.1%)	244 (31.9%)	280 (4.7%)
Probation Office	1 (<0.1%)	21 (1.5%)	13 (1.7%)	35 (0.6%)
Parents/Relatives	32 (0.8%)	275 (19.6%)	8 (1.0%)	315 (5.3%)
Other Court	237 (6.3%)	65 (4.6%)	16 (2.1%)	318 (5.4%)
County Attorney	1,419 (37.7%)	576 (41.0%)	403 (52.6%)	2,398 (40.4%)
Other	196 (5.2%)	17 (1.2%)	8 (1.0%)	221 (3.7%)
TOTAL*	3,765 (100%)	1,406 (100%)	766 (100%)	5,937*(100%)

^{*}Does not include 37 cases with missing data

One measure of juvenile recidivism in the criminal justice system is the number of young persons who have been previously referred to a juvenile court. For all juvenile cases disposed of during 1985, about one fourth had been previously referred to a reporting court. Of those previously referred, most (56.9%) had been previously referred only once. It may be noted that htose juveniles referred for major offenses against persons had a higher proportion of previous referrals than any other group.

Table 8a and 8b present detailed information on prior referrals. Table 8a shows the number of previous referrals to that court, while Table 8b shos the referrals within 1985. Because referrals to courts outside the reporting court's jurisdiction are not included, the data probably presents a conservative estimate of actual prior court referrals. In addition, data on the nature of previous referrals is not collected and it is therefore not possible to identify repeat offenders for certain offenses or types of referrals. The information in the tables does indicate, however, that a significant number of juveniles have appeared previously in juvneile court for one reason or another.

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TABLE 8a

TOTAL PRIOR REFERRALS BY REASON OR REFERRAL

REASON REFERRED	Total Prior Referrals						mom a r
REASON REFERRED	0	1 2		3 4		5+	TOTAL
All Major Offenses	2,722	530	192	115	43	121	3,723
a. Personsb. Propertyc. All Other	244 2,075 403	68 391 71	23 150 19	18 77 20	6 31 6	23 78 20	382 2,802 539
Minor Offenses	1,151	152	46	22	6	8	1,385
Neglect/Dependent	649	85	20	4	1	4	763
TOTAL* (%)	4,522 (77.0%)	767 (13.1%)	258 (4.4%)	141 (2.4%)	50 (0.9%)	139 (2.4%)	5,871 (100%)

^{*}Does not include 103 cases with missing data

TABLE 8b

1985 PRIOR REFERRALS BY REASON FOR REFERRAL

REASON REFERRED	1985 Prior Referrals					moment	
REASON REFERRED	0	1	1 2		3 4		TOTAL
All Major Offenses	2,993	490	150	60	25	13	3,731
a. Personsb. Propertyc. All Other	285 2,276 432	61 358 71	22 106 22	11 40 9	1 19 5	3 8 2	383 2,807 541
Minor Offenses	1,226	132	19	4	2	. 3	1,386
Neglect/Dependent	740	19	7	0	0	0	766
TOTAL* (%)	4,959 (84.3%)	641 (10.9%)	176 (3.0%)	64 (1.1%)	27 (0.5%)	16 (0.3%)	5,833 (100%)

^{*}Does not include 91 cases with missing data.

The number of minor (status) referrals to juvenile courts in Nebraska has remained relatively stable since 1981. The number of neglect/dependent referrals has fluctuated the most over the years.

It should also be noted that these aggregate figures represent the state as a whole and tend to obscure changes that may have occurred over time in individual jurisdictions or groups of jurisdictions in the referral, intake, scheduling, and processing policies that are applied to individual cases.

As will be explained in another section of this report, all state total data are heavily weighted toward the juvenile courts of Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy counties. In fact, about 56% of all dispositions were reported from these counties. This does not imply, however, that the data are unrepresentative of the state as a whole, but that about 45% of the state's estimated juvenile population live in these counties.

DISPOSITIONS

Information on juvenile court disposition activity is contained in Tables 9 and 10. Once a juvenile case has been referred to court, the hearing and adjudication process has taken place, and a final disposition is determined, the court submits a Juvenile Court Statistical Form to the Commission.

The disposition outcomes listed in Table 9 summarize the types of determinations which may be made in most juvenile cases. In general, there are three possible outcomes described on the reporting form: the case may be waived to criminal court (only 2 of the total 1985 cases), it may be dismissed because of insufficient grounds (13% of the 1985 total), or a final determination may be reached based on the substantiation of a complaint and/or petition (the remaining 87% were in this category). If the court determines that there is evidence to substantiate the complaint and/or petition, a decision regarding legal custody of the juvenile may be reached. Of these cases, and across all reasons for referral, approximately 16.5% involved a transfer of legal custody of the juvenile to one of the Youth Development Centers or some other agency or individual. The remaining juvenile cases which were not dismissed or waived to criminal court involved no transfer of legal custody, but rather the imposition of a sentence such as probation, restitution, or a fine.

The largest proportion of cases referred to court for a major offense resulted in a disposition of formal probation (43.4%). This was also true for status offense referrals, of which 29.4% resulted in a disposition of formal probation. The most frequent disposition category for neglect/dependent referrals was transfer of custody to a public agency (41.3%). Cases were more often dismissed for major offenses than for minor offenses or neglect/dependent cases (14.5% as opposed to 9% and 12.6% respectively.)

TABLE 9

JUVENILE COURT DISPOSITIONS

	RE	EFERRAL CATEGOR	Y	
DISPOSITION	MAJOR Number (%)	MINOR Number (%)	NEGLECT/DEP Number (%)	TOTAL Number (%)
Waived to Criminal Court	2 (0.4%)	0 ()	0 ()	2 (<0.1%)
COMPLAINT NOT SUBST	ANTIATED			
Dismissed	549 (14.5%)	128 (9.0%	97 (12.6%)	774 (13.0%)
COMPLAINT SUBSTANTI	ATED NO TRANSFE	R OF LEGAL CUS	TODY:	
Dismissed; Warned	141 (3.7%)	111 (7.8%) 94 (12.3%)	346 (5.8%)
Hold Open Without Further Action	440 (11.6%)	100 (7.0%) 7 (0.9%)	547 (9.2%)
Formal Probation	1,640 (43.4%)	419 (29.4%) 40 (5.2%)	2,099 (35.1%)
Referred to Another Agency or Individua		255 (17.9%) 116 (15.1%)	652 (10.9%)
Runaway Returned	1 (<0.1%)	18 (1.3%) 1 (0.1%)	20 (0.3%)
Fine or Restitution	93 (2.5%)	56 (3.9%	0 ()	149 (2.5%)
Other	302 (8.0%)	82 (5.8%) 18 (2.3%)	402 (6.7%)
LEGAL CUSTODY TRANS	FER TO:			
Youth Development Center	176 (4.7%)	8 (0.6%) 2 (0.3%)	186 (3.1%)
Public Agency or Department	91 (2.4%)	167 (11.7%) 317 (41.3%)	575 (9.6%)
Private Agency or Department	37 (1.0%)	45 (3.2%) 26 (3.4%)	108 (1.8%)
Individual .	10 (0.3%)	10 (0.7%) 25 (3.3%)	45 (6.8%)
Other	19 (0.5%)	26 (1.8%) 24 (3.1%)	69 (1.2%)
TOTAL	3,782 (100%)	1,425 (100%) 767 (100%)	5,974 (100%)

Detailed processing times for juvenile court referrals are presented in Table 10. More than one-third of all juvenile court cases (36%) were disposed of within 30 days of referral. This proportion was lower for neglect/dependent referrals (9.6% within 30 days), higher for status offense referrals (41.8% within 30 days), and for major offense referrals (39.2% within 30 days).

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TABLE 10

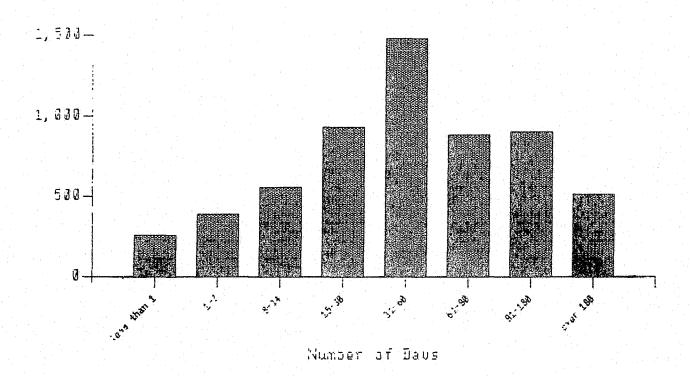
ELAPSED TIME IN DAYS BETWEEN REFERRAL AND DISPOSITION

Number of Days from	REFEI	RRAL CATEGORY		
Referral to Disposition	MAJOR Number (%)	MINOR Number (%)	NEGLECT/DEP Number (%)	TOTAL Number (%)
0 Days	149 (4.0%)	107 (7.6%)	3 (0.4%)	259 (4.4%)
1- 7 Days	280 (7.5%)	94 (6.6%)	15 (2.0%)	389 (6.6%)
8- 14 Days	399 (10.6%)	145 (10.2%)	11 (1.5%)	555 (9.4%)
15- 30 Days	640 (17.1%)	246 (17.4%)	43 (5.7%)	929 (15.7%)
31- 60 Days	1,003 (26.8%)	347 (24.5%)	131 (17.4%)	1,481 (25.0%)
61- 90 Days	567 (15.1%)	172 (12.1%)	147 (19.5%)	886 (15.0%)
91-180 Days	480 (12.8%)	202 (14.3%)	219 (29.0%)	901 (15.2%)
181+ Days	230 (6.1%)	104 (7.3%)	185 (24.5%)	519 (8.8%)
TOTAL*	3,748 (100%)	1,417 (100%)	754 (100%)	5,919 (100%)

^{*}Does not include 60 cases with missing data.

Overall major offenses referrals were processed more quickly than minor or neglect/dependent referrals; however, minor offense referrals were processed sooner than neglect/dependent cases.

ELAPSED TIME BETWEEN REFERRAL AND DISPOSITION



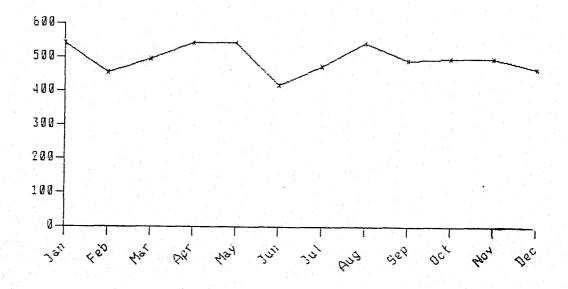
The number of dispositions by month was fairly steady. January, April, May, and August had the most, averaging 543 cases.

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TABLE 11

MONTH OF DISPOSITION

MONTH OF DISPOSITION	FREQUENCY
January	541 (9.1%)
February	456 (7.6%)
March	497 (8.3%)
April	544 (9.1%)
May	545 (9.1%)
June	419 (7.0%)
July	476 (8.0%)
August	543 (9.1%)
September	491 (8.2%)
October	498 (8.3%)
November	497 (8.3%)
December	467 (7.8%)
TOTAL 5	,974 (100%)



AGE

Information concerning the age of juveniles referred to court is presented in Table 12. In proportion to juveniles referred, generally speaking, the older juveniles were referred for more serious offenses, and the younger for less serious offenses.

In the under 10 year-old age group, 73.7% of the referrals were for neglect/dependent, as compared to 3.2% of the 17 year-old age group. The under 10 age group as a whole, however, represented only about 10% of all juvenile referrals. Over 56% of all neglect/dependent referrals were in the under 10 year-old age gropu. The remainder of neglect/dependent referrals were distributed fairly even across age categories.

The 15 and 16 year-old age groups had the largest proportion of referrals for major offenses categories; together, 43.6% of all major offense referrals involved these age groups (add 17 year-olds and the percentage is even higher, 58%). Similarly, in status offense cases about 48.9% of all status offense referrals involved 15 and 16 year-olds, 79.4% for 15.

Across all referral categories, the 15 year-olds and 16 year-olds accounted for the largest number of referrals, each accounting for approximately 20%.

The average age at time of referral for all juvenile cases disposed of during 1985 is 13.8. The average age at time of referral for major offenses cases was 14.4, status offense cases was 14.4, and neglect/dependent cases was 8.8. All offense categories experienced a slight decrease in average ages.

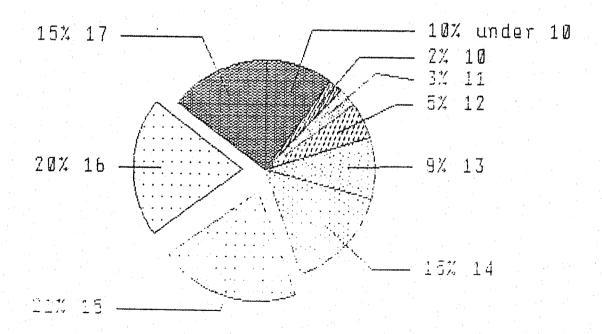


TABLE 12

REASON REFERRED BY AGE

	R	EFERRAL CATEGORY		
AGE	MAJOR Number (%)	MINOR Number (%)	NEGLECT/DEP Number (%)	TOTAL Number (%)
Under 10	111 (2.9%)	43 (3.0%)	431 (56.3%)	585 (9.8%)
10	77 (2.0%)	10 (0.7%)	33 (4.3%)	120 (2.0%)
11	115 (3.0%)	19 (1.3%)	42 (5.5%)	176 (3.0%)
12	211 (5.6%)	51 (3.6%)	46 (6.0%)	308 (5.2%)
13	409 (10.8%)	102 (7.2%)	32 (4.2%)	543 (9.1%)
14	664 (17.6%)	198 (13.9%)	49 (6.4%)	911 (15.3%)
15	868 (21.9%)	341 (24.0%)	60 (7.8%)	1,229 (20.6%)
16	818 (21.7%)	355 (24.9%)	45 (5.9%)	1,218 (20.4%)
17	544 (14.4%)	304 (21.4%)	28 (3.7%)	876 (14.7%)
T O T A L*	3,777 (100%)	1,423 (100%)	766 (100%)	5,966 (100%)

 $[\]mbox{\ensuremath{^{\prime\prime}}}\mbox{Does not include 8 cases with missing data.}$

SEX

More than two times as many males were referred to juvenile courts in Nebraska than females in 1985. There was a 9.7% decrease in female referrals in 1985 compared to 1984. The 4,248 males comprised about 71.1% of all referrals while 1,726 (28.9%) females composed the remainder.

The proportion of male referrals was even higher for major offenses where over 4 of 5 referrals were male. Minor offenses were more equal in proportion to male and female dispositions, with 55% of minor referrals being male. A significant difference was the decrease of 22% of female neglect/dependent referrals in 1985 as compared to 1984. This follows an increase of 45% in this classification in 1984 over 1983. There were 411 (53.6%) females compared to 356 (46.4%) males in the neglect/dependent referral category.

Distribution of females in the three different referral categories was fairly even. On the other hand, males were referred on major offenses 73.1% of the time, almost three times as much as the other categories combined.

As Table 14 indicates, the most frequent disposition category for both males and females was formal probation. Over one-third of male referrals resulted in probation while approximately one-quarter of female referrals resulted in probation. It should be noted, however, that the proportions of males and females referred for various reasons were quite different and this would have a direct effect on the proportions of males and females in the various disposition categories.

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TABLE 13

REASON REFERRED BY SEX

REASON REFERRED	MALE (%)	FEMALE (%)	TOTAL (%)
Major Offenses	3,105 (73.1%)	677 (39.2%)	3,782 (63.3%)
Minor Offenses	787 (18.5%)	638 (37.0%)	1,425 (23.9%)
Neglect/Dependent	356 (8.4%)	411 (23.8%)	767 (12.8%)
TOTAL	4,248 (100%)	1,726 (100%)	5,974 (100%)

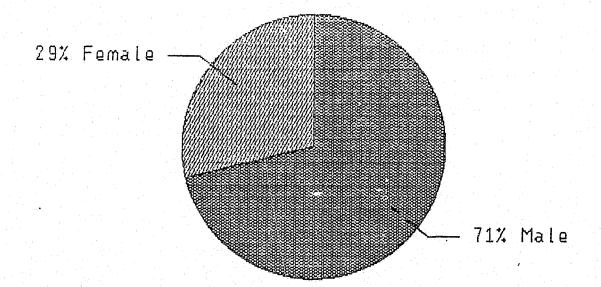


TABLE 14

DISPOSITION BY SEX

DISPOSITION	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	
DISFOSITION	Number (%)	Number (%)	Number (%)	
Waived to Criminal Court	1 (<0.1%)	1 (<0.1%)	2 (<0.1%)	
COMPLAINT NOT SUBST	PANTIATED			
Dismissed	552 (13.0%)	222 (12.9%)	774 (13.0%)	
COMPLAINT SUBSTANT	ATED - NO TRANSFER	OF LEGAL CUSTODY		
Dismissed; Warned	230 (5.4%)	116 (6.7%)	346 (5.8%)	
Hold Open Without Further Action	397 (9.3%)	150 (8.9%)	547 (9.2%)	
Formal Probation	1,645 (38.7%)	454 (26.3%)	2,099 (35.1%)	
Referred to Another Agency/Individual		209 (12.1%)	652 (10.9%)	
Runaway Returned	11 (0.3%)	9 (0.5%)	20 (0.3%)	
Fine or Restitution	110 (2.6%)	39 (2.3%)	149 (2.5%)	
Other	270 (6.4%)	132 (7.7%)	402 (6.7%)	
LEGAL CUSTODY TRANS	SFER TO:			
Youth Development Center	161 (3.8%)	25 (1.4%)	186 (3.1%)	
Public Agency or Department	304 (7.2%)	271 (15.7%)	575 (9.6%)	
Private Agency or Department	69 (1.6%)	39 (2.3%)	108 (1.8%)	
Individual	25 (0.6%)	20 (1.2%)	45 (0.8%)	
Other	30 (0.7%)	39 (2.3%)	69 (1.2%)	
TOTAL	4,248 (100%)	1,726 (100%)	5,974 (100%)	

KTHNIC GROUP

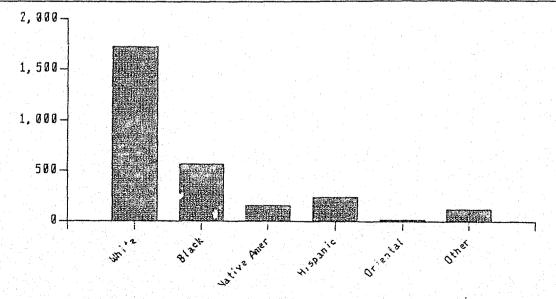
Data collected by the Commission on the ethnic group or race of young persons referred to juvenile court included the categories of White, Black, Native American, Hispanic, Oriental and "other." It should be noted that the proportion of minority group juveniles in Nebraska's population is quite small outside counties such as Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, and Scotts Bluff. As a result, measures of delinquency among ethnic groups in the state are difficult to estimate. The information below does suggest, however, that there is some variation among racial groups in the proportion of referrals for major, minor, and neglect/dependent reasons.

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TABLE 15

REASON REFERRED BY ETHNIC GROUP

ETHNIC	REFE			
GROUP	MAJOR Number (%)	MINOR Number (%)	NEGLECT/DEP Number (%)	TOTAL Number (%)
White	3,033 (80.2%)	1,222 (85.8%)	598 (78.0%)	4,853 (81.2%)
Black	421 (11.1%)	58 (4.1%)	87 (11.3%)	560 (9.5%)
Native Am.	110 (2.9%)	26 (1.8%)	24 (3.1%)	160 (2.7%)
Hispanic	159 (4.2%)	56 (3.9%)	32 (4.2%)	247 (4.1%)
Oriental	17 (0.4%)	2 (0.1%)	7 (0.9%)	26 (0.4%)
Other	42 (1.1%)	61 (4.3%)	19 (2.5%)	122 (2.0%)
TOTAL	3,782 (100%)	1,425 (100%)	767 (100%)	5,974 (100%)



LIVING ARRANGEMENT

Table 16 presents information concerning the living arrangements of juveniles at the time of referral. For major and minor offenses referrals, the most common living situation was at home with both parents; approximately one third of the juveniles referred in these categories lived at home with both parents. The next largest category of major and minor offense referrals was juveniles living at home with the mother only.

Just over one-third of all referrals to juvenile courts in 1985 came from single-parent families. For neglect/dependent referrals the proportion was even higher with 41.1% of all referrals being from single-parent families. It is significant to note that for the 1,835 referrals from single-parent families, 86.9% were from single mother families, while only 13.1% were from single father families.

1985 JUVENILE COURT REPORT

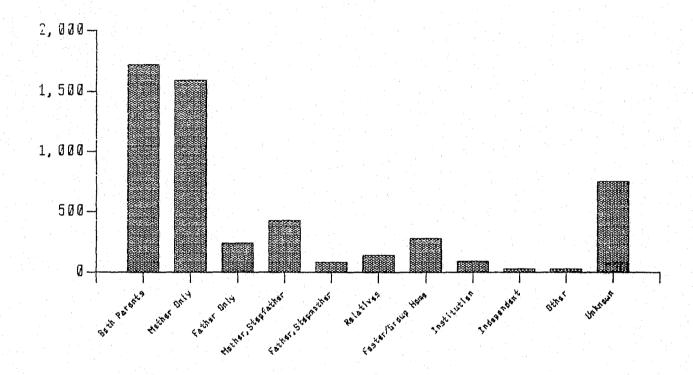
TABLE 16

REASON REFERRED BY LIVING ARRANGEMENT

LIVING	REFERRAL CATEGORY			
ARRANGEMENT	MAJOR Number (%)	MINOR Number (%)	NEGLECT/DEP Number (%)	TOTAL Number (%)
Both parents	1,136 (32.9%)	435 (34.3%)	154 (22.2%)	1,725 (31.9%)
Mother only	1,034 (29.9%)	302 (23.8%)	258 (37.2%)	1,594 (29.4%)
Father only	164 (4.7%)	50 (3.9%)	27 (3.9%)	241 (4.5%)
Mother/stepfather	267 (7.7%)	109 (8.6%)	49 (7.1%)	425 (7.9%)
Father/stepmother	57 (1.7%)	31 (2.4%)	4 (0.6%)	92 (1.7%)
Relatives	89 (2.6%)	29 (2.3%)	27 (3.9%)	145 (2.7%)
Foster/group home	154 (4.5%)	56 (4.4%)	68 (9.8%)	278 (5.1%)
Institution	93 (2.7%)	5 (0.4%)	3 (0.4%)	101 (1.9%)
Independent	20 (0.6%)	5 (0.4%)	3 (0.4%)	28 (0.5%)
Other	16 (0.5%)	9 (0.7%)	7 (1.0%)	32 (0.6%)
Unknown	423 (12.3%)	236 (18.6%)	94 (13.5%)	753 (13.9%)
TOTAL*	3,453 (100%)	1,267 (100%)	694 (100%)	5,414 (100%)

^{*}Does not include 560 cases with missing data.

REFERRAL BY LIVING ARRANGEMENT



SEPARATE JUVENILE COURTS

Referrals to the separate juvenile courts of Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties constituted approximately 56% of all juvenile court referrals across the state; however, these counties represent only about 45% of the state's total juvenile population. It should be noted that the information presented in Tables 17 and 18 (as well as all other data in this report) is based on counts of dispositions during 1985 rather than referrals during 1985, and therefore provides only a partial estimate of the activity of the juvenile court. It is likely that the intake activity of juvenile courts involved many more young persons during a given year than are reflected in these disposition statistics.

The procedures involved in referral to juvenile court may vary across jurisdictions and influence the number of cases reported in the Juvenile Court Reporting Program. In addition, the policies of prosecutors, juvenile service agencies, and judges may vary in different jurisdictions, influencing the nature and number of juvenile referrals reported to the Commission. As an example, the three separate juvenile courts in Nebraska have some differences in processing procedures which result in differing reporting results.

The Douglas County attorney's office acts as the court intake for all juvenile referrals in Douglas County. This means that the only juvenile cases reported to the Commission are those which are filed with petition by the county attorney's office.

In Lancaster County, the juvenile probation office serves the court intake function. Cases that come to the attention of the juvenile probation office (regardless of the source of referral) are reported to the Commission. Cases formally disposed of by the court represent those filed with petition, while cases handled informally by the juvenile probation office represent cases handled without petition.

In Sarpy County, the county attorney's office is the beginning of processing juvenile referrals. If the county attorney's office files a petition, then the juvenile goes to juvenile court; however, if certain criteria are met, the juvenile may get the opportunity to participate in the pretrial diversion program called the Sarpy County Juvenile Intake/Program.

Differences among the three separate juvenile courts in the receipt of referrals are indicated in Table 17. Although the largest proportion of referrals in the three juvenile courts was received from law enforcement agencies, the percentages vary somewhat: 40% of Sarpy County's referrals were from law enforcement agencies, while 43.4% of Lancaster County's, and 52.9% of Douglas County's referrals were from the same source. Douglas County had a larger proportion of referrals from social agencies than either of the other two courts. Sarpy County's largest number of referrals (45.5%) were from the county attorney.

The distribution of disposition categories in the three separate juvenile courts is presented in Table 18. There were several differences among the courts in the distribution of dispositions. This is most likely due to the varying types of cases referred to each court and the court's own policies and practices.

TABLE 17

SOURCES OF REFERRAL IN DOUGLAS, LANCASTER, SARPY SEPARATE JUVENILE COURTS AND ALL OTHER COUNTIES*

SOURCE OF REFERRAL	DOUGLAS COUNTY	LANCASTER COUNTY	SARPY COUNTY	ALL OTHER COUNTIES
	Number (%)	Number (%)	Number (%)	Number (%)
Law Enforcement	489 (52.9%)	758 (43.4%)	273 (40.0%)	738 (28.6%)
School .	26 (2.8%)	65 (3.7%)	11 (1.6%)	10 (0.4%)
Social Agency	204 (22.1%)	2 (0.1%)	22 (3.2%)	52 (2.0%)
Probation Office	1 (0.1%)	9 (0.5%)	22 (3.2%)	3 (0.1%)
Parents/Relatives	107 (11.6%)	110 (6.3%)	36 (5.3%)	62 (2.4%)
Other Courts	91 (9.8%)	195 (11.2%)	1 (0.1%)	31 (1.2%)
County Attorney	6 (0.6%)	488 (27.9%)	311 (45.5%)	1,593 (61.7%)
Other	0 ()	121 (6.9%)	7 (1.0%)	93 (3.6%)
TOTAL**	924 (100%)	1,748 (100%)	683 (100%)	2,582 (100%)

^{*} Only cases filed with petition were figured

^{**} Does not include 37 cases with missing data.

1985 JUVENILE COURT REPORT TABLE 18

DISPOSITIONS IN DOUGLAS, LANCASTER, SARPY SEPARATE JUVENILE COURTS AND ALL OTHER COUNTIES*

SOURCE OF	DOUGLAS COUNTY	LANCASTER COUNTY	SARPY COUNTY	ALL OTHER COUNTIES
REFERRAL	Number (%)	Number (%)	Number (%)	Number (%)
Waived to Criminal Court	0 ()	0 ()	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.1%)
COMPLAINT NOT SUBSTA	ANTIATED			
Dismissed	279 (30.2%)	238 (13.6%)	48 (6.9%)	209 (8.0%)
COMPLAINT SUSTANTIA	red no transfer	OF LEGAL CUSTO	<u>DY</u>	
Dismissed; warned	32 (3.5%)	24 (1.4%)	73 (10.5%)	217 (8.4%)
Hold Open Without Further Action	0 ()	523 (29.9%)	1 (0.1%)	23 (0.9%)
Formal Probation	264 (28.5%)	416 (23.8%)	159 (22.8%)	1,260 (48.4%)
Referred to Another Agency/Individual	3 (0.3%)	140 (8.0%)	370 (53.1%)	139 (5.3%)
Runaway Returned	0 ()	14 (0.8%)	0 ()	6 (0.2%)
Fine/Restitution	13 (1.4%)	0 ()	3 (0.4%)	133 (5.1%)
Other	0 ()	262 (15.0%)	8 (1.1%)	132 (5.1%)
LEGAL CUSTODY TRANS	FER TO			
Youth Development Center	41 (4.4%)	30 (1.7%)	5 (0.7%)	110 (4.2%)
Public Agency or Department	207 (22.4%)	99 (5.7%)	28 (4.0%)	241 (9.3%)
Private Agency/ Department	71 (7.7%)	2 (0.1%)	0 (0.0%)	35 (1.3%)
Individual	14 (1.5%)	0 ()	0 ()	31 (1.2%)
Other	1 (0.1%)	0 ()	1 (0.1%)	67 (2.6%)
TOTAL	925 (100%)	1,748 (100%)	697 (100%)	2,604 (100%)

^{*} Only cases filed with petition were figured.