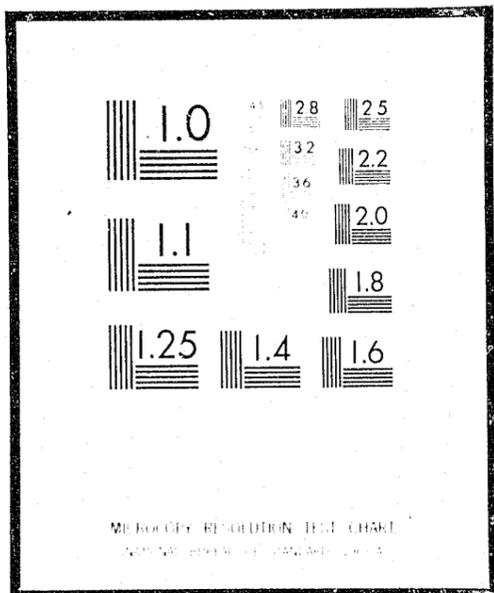


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1450 Western Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12203

DELINQUENTS IN FOSTER CARE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 1973

Introduction

Of the 48,000 children in New York State's Foster Care System, approximately 2,400 are delinquent children. These children, despite their relatively small number, have special problems and considerably different characteristics from the rest of the foster care population. The purpose of this report is to describe the delinquent population, to compare the characteristics of the New York City delinquent population with those residing in the rest of the State and, whenever appropriate, to compare them with the entire foster care population.

Delinquent children in Foster Care account for approximately 60 percent of the total delinquent population in direct care; the other two-fifths are in State Training Schools under the auspices of the New York State Division for Youth. Technically, delinquent children are defined as Juvenile Delinquents, who account for 19 percent of this population, and Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) who make up 81 percent. A juvenile delinquent is defined as "any child over seven and under sixteen years of age who commits any act which, if committed by an adult, would constitute a crime." A Person in Need of Supervision is "a male under sixteen or female under eighteen who commits an act which, while not a crime in the adult sense, represents any of a number of types of behavior deemed unmanageable, may have implications of danger for himself or society." For purposes of this brief, both will be referred to as delinquent children, and all further reference to the delinquent population will pertain only to those within the New York State Foster Care System. A high percentage (35%) of those in care are age 16 or over. This is due to the fact that even after a child reaches the age of 16, he may still be inducted into the system for any designated behavior that took place before he reached that age. Fully 27 percent of those in care were admitted after reaching the age of sixteen.

The Delinquent Population

Age:

The median age of delinquents statewide was 15.5 years compared to 11.0 years for the entire foster care population. Over 90 percent were thirteen or older, while less than 1 percent were under the age of ten (Table 1). As can be seen in Table 5, there was virtually no difference between the median age of PINS and Juvenile Delinquents.

Sex:

Statewide, males comprised 67 percent of the delinquent population. The male proportion was somewhat higher in New York City (70%) than in the rest of the State (65%). Males accounted for 93 percent of the Juvenile Delinquents and 61 percent of the PINS. In the entire child foster care population, only 56 percent were male.

Ethnic Group:

The ethnic distribution of delinquents in care was 66 percent white* and 34 percent non-white. In New York City whites accounted for 49 percent versus 79 percent in the rest

*It was not possible to analyze Puerto Ricans as a separate group because of the standard practice of regarding them as white, unless considered Black in their community.

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of the State. Compared to the total foster care population, non-whites were adjudicated delinquent to a lesser extent proportionately than were whites (4.0% versus 5.6%).

Religion of Parent:

Of the delinquent population, 38 percent were children of Protestants, 33 percent of Roman Catholics, 10 percent of parents with other religious affiliations and 19 percent of parents reporting no religious affiliation. Children whose parents reported no religious affiliation accounted for 25 percent of the New York City delinquent population and 14 percent of that outside New York City. Children whose parents professed no religious affiliation were adjudicated delinquent significantly more than would be indicated by their proportion in the overall foster child population (Chart 1).

Civil Status:

Of the total delinquent population, 81 percent were born in wedlock. Less than one-third of the 81 percent, however, had parents who were currently living together.

Time in Care:

Due to the age limitations defining the delinquent population, and the fact that they are usually adjudicated for a specific length of time, the median length of stay (.98 years) is much shorter than that of the overall foster care population (3.56 years). Blacks tended to remain in care somewhat longer than whites; males longer than females; and Catholics longer than Protestants. By Civil Status, those with parents living together spent the least amount of time (.86 years) and those born out of wedlock the most (1.55 years). Delinquents in New York City remained in care longer than those in the rest of the State. Also, the older the delinquent, the longer his median length of stay (Table 3). The median length of stay for Juvenile Delinquents was shorter than for PINS (.78 years versus 1.08 years).

Type of Care:

Of the total delinquent population, 68 percent were in institutional care, 16 percent resided in boarding homes, 6 percent in group homes, and the remaining 10 percent in other types of care. These percentages vary somewhat between New York City and the remainder of the State (Chart 2). In regards to type of care, some other findings were:

1. Outside New York City, the percentage of white delinquents currently in institutional care tended to be slightly less than the percentage of non-white delinquents, while the reverse was true in New York City.
2. Proportionately more males were currently in institutional care than females outside New York City, while in the City, the opposite was true.
3. In New York City, Protestants stood slightly less chance of being currently in institutional care than Roman Catholics, 66 percent versus 73 percent; outside New York City the difference was more significant, 57 percent versus 73 percent (Table 4).

Some Effects of the Delinquent Population

Delinquent children, while representing only 5 percent of the total foster child population, account for:

- 12 percent of those in care less than one year.
- 13 percent of those fourteen and over.
- 17 percent of those currently in institutional care.
- 26 percent of those fourteen and over currently in institutional care.
- 41 percent of those fourteen and over who have been in care less than one year.
- 51 percent of those fourteen and older in care less than one year and currently in institutions.

It is clear that, although relatively small in number, delinquents exert a disproportionate effect on certain aspects of the foster child population.

Chart 1
FOSTER CARE POPULATION VERSUS DELINQUENT
SUBPOPULATION IN CARE BY RELIGION OF PARENT

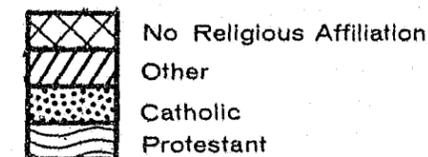
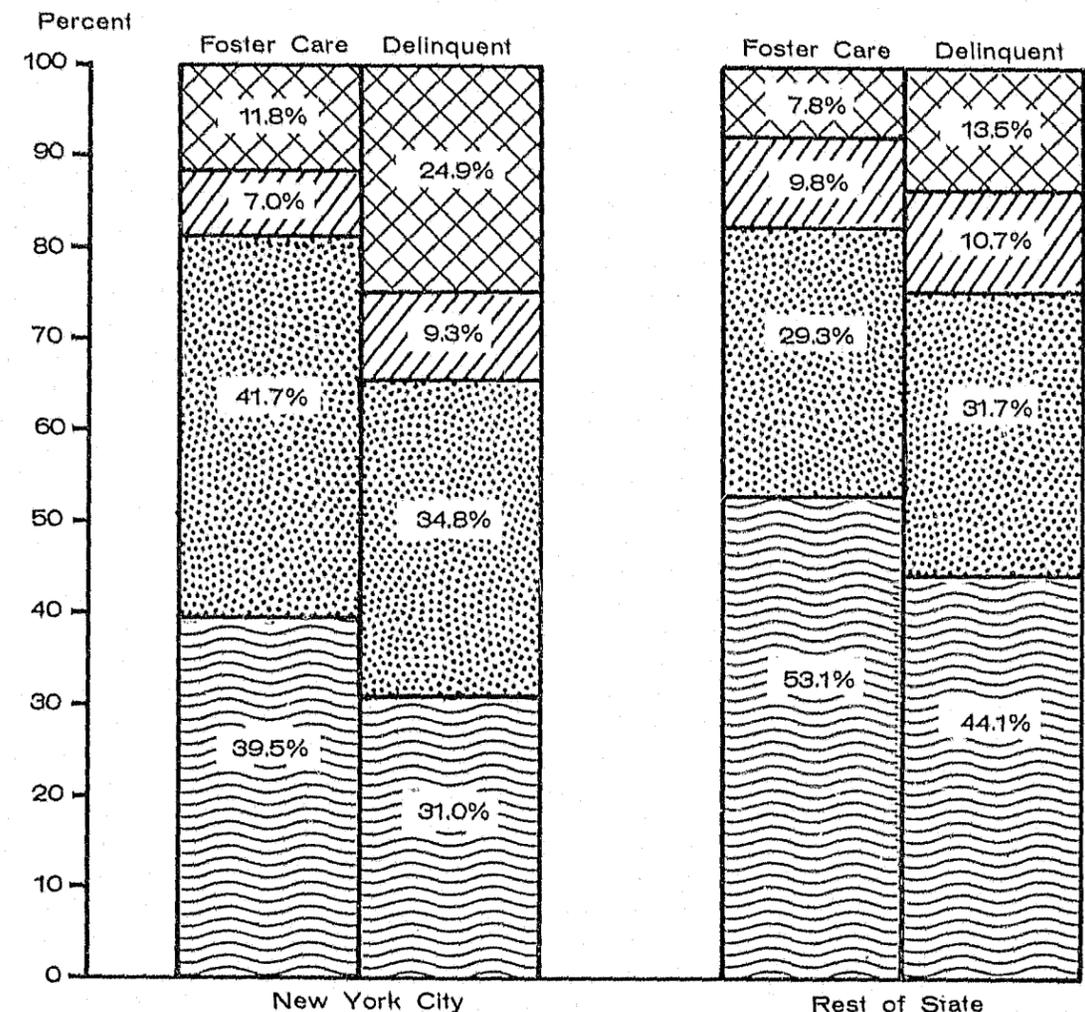


Chart 2
 DELINQUENTS IN FOSTER CARE, BY TYPE OF CARE
 December 31, 1973

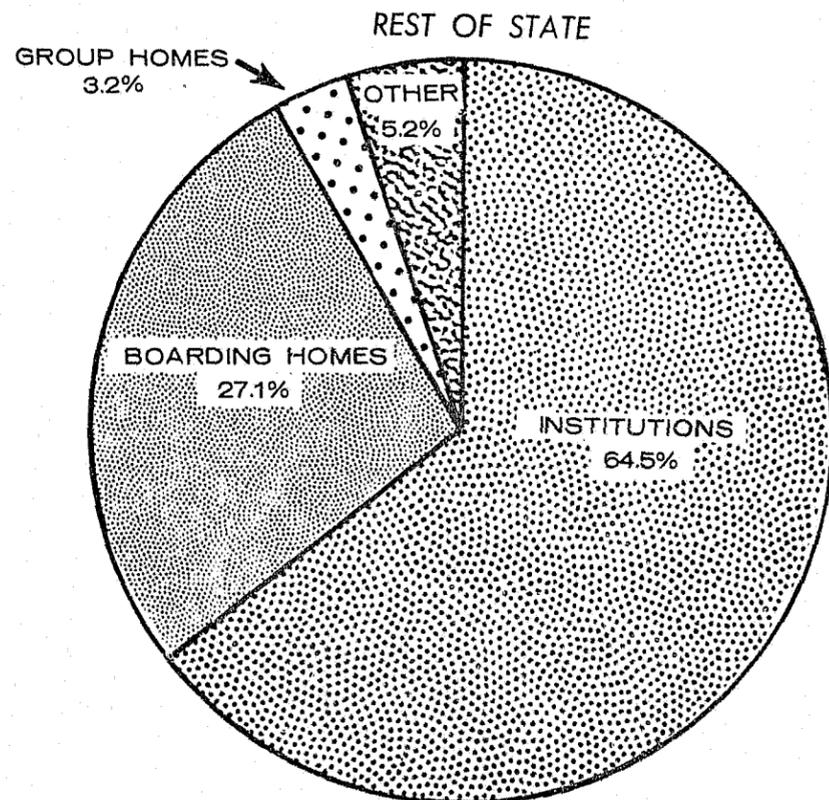
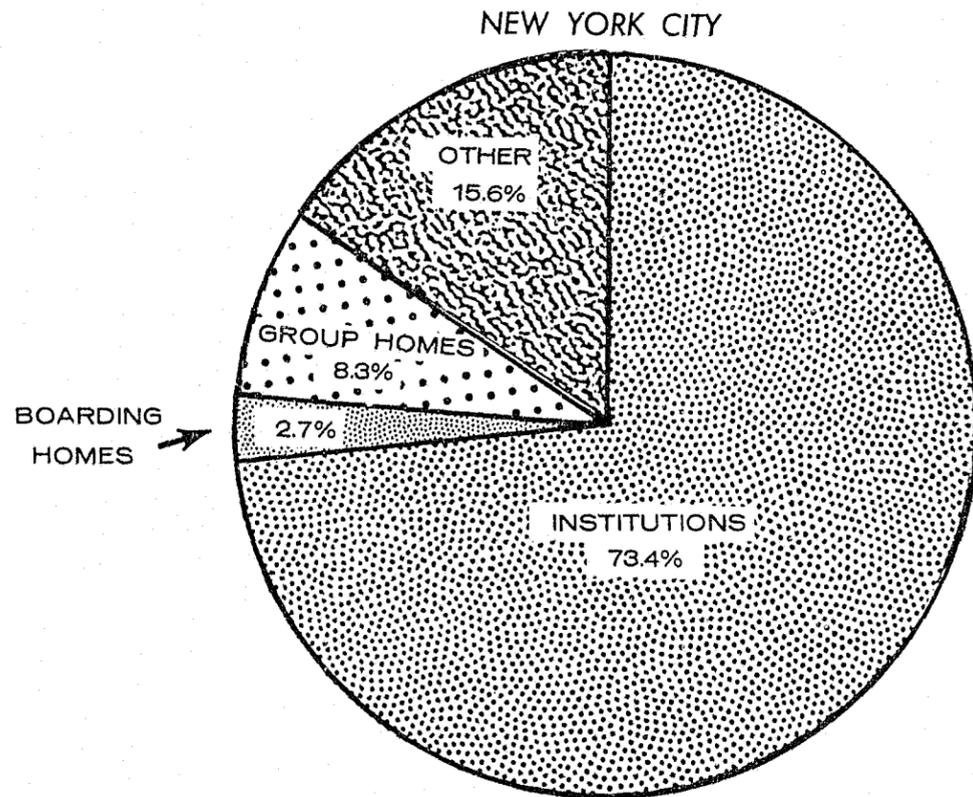


TABLE 1
 DELINQUENTS IN FOSTER CARE BY AGE
 DECEMBER 31, 1973

Age	New York State		New York City		Rest of State	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	2,382	100.0%	1,050	100.0%	1,332	100.0%
Under 10	21	0.9	7	0.7	14	1.1
10-12	199	8.4	99	9.4	100	7.5
13-15	1,318	55.3	529	50.4	789	59.3
16 and over	844	35.4	415	39.5	429	32.1

TABLE 2
 DELINQUENTS IN FOSTER CARE BY CIVIL STATUS
 DECEMBER 31, 1973

Civil Status	New York State	New York City	Rest of State
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Born in wedlock	80.9	73.7	86.4
Parents living together	26.4	20.1	31.4
Parents living apart	41.7	40.3	42.5
Full or half orphans	12.8	13.3	12.5
Born Out of Wedlock	17.0	22.7	12.6
Unknown	2.1	3.6	1.0

TABLE 3
DELINQUENTS IN FOSTER CARE
MEDIAN TIME IN CARE (YEARS)
DECEMBER 31, 1973

Characteristics	New York State	New York City	Rest of State
All Delinquents	0.98	1.24	0.89
Age:			
Under 10	0.62	0.58	0.78
10-12	0.81	0.91	0.74
13-15	0.80	0.89	0.75
16 and over	1.70	1.90	1.52
Sex:			
Male	1.01	1.38	0.87
Female	0.92	0.94	0.91
Ethnic Group:			
White	0.95	1.23	0.89
Non-White	1.06	1.25	0.87
Religion of Parent:			
Protestant	0.95	1.20	0.87
Roman Catholic	1.08	1.39	0.93
None	0.86	1.05	0.76
Other	1.14	1.51	0.99
Civil Status:			
Born in Wedlock	0.92	1.05	0.86
Parents living together	0.86	1.00	0.91
Parents living apart	0.94	1.13	0.86
Orphans	0.99	0.99	1.00
Born Out of Wedlock	1.55	1.80	1.20
Unknown	1.33	1.36	1.25
Type of Care:			
Institutions	0.86	0.93	0.81
Group Homes	2.68	3.03	1.93
Boarding Homes	1.17	3.67	1.04
Other	2.01	2.44	1.39

TABLE 4
DELINQUENTS IN FOSTER CARE BY TYPE OF CARE
ETHNIC GROUP, SEX, AND RELIGION OF PARENTS
DECEMBER 31, 1973

Type of Care	New York State		New York City		Rest of State	
	White	Non-White	White	Non-White	White	Non-White
Institutions	67.1%	71.0%	76.4%	70.2%	62.4%	72.4%
Boarding Homes	20.4	8.1	2.4	3.0	29.4	18.4
Group Homes	4.3	7.8	6.9	9.7	3.0	4.0
Other	8.2	13.1	14.3	17.1	5.2	5.2

Type of Care	Sex		Sex		Sex	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Institutions	69.6%	65.7%	72.6%	75.1%	66.9%	59.4%
Boarding Homes	14.7	19.8	1.8	4.8	25.8	29.9
Group Homes	5.8	4.7	8.3	8.3	3.7	2.3
Other	9.9	9.8	17.3	11.8	3.6	8.4

Type of Care	Religion of Parent			Religion of Parent			Religion of Parent		
	Protestant	Roman Catholic	No Religious Affiliation	Protestant	Roman Catholic	No Religious Affiliation	Protestant	Roman Catholic	No Religious Affiliation
Institutions	60.2%	73.0%	73.5%	66.3%	73.4%	78.5%	56.7%	72.6%	66.2%
Boarding Homes	24.6	10.6	10.6	4.0	1.9	2.7	36.2	18.2	22.2
Group Homes	4.4	6.1	6.8	8.6	8.5	8.4	2.0	4.0	4.4
Other	10.8	10.3	9.1	21.1	16.2	10.4	5.1	5.2	7.2

TABLE 5

PINS AND JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN
FOSTER CARE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 1973

Characteristics	New York City		Rest of State	
	PINS	Juvenile Delinquents	PINS	Juvenile Delinquents
Number	943	107	984	348
Percent	89.8%	10.2%	74.0%	26.0%
Median Age	15.5 (yrs.)	15.7 (yrs.)	15.5 (yrs.)	15.3 (yrs.)
Median Time in Care	1.27 (yrs.)	.96 (yrs.)	.95 (yrs.)	.74 (yrs.)
Ethnic Group				
White	47.7%	56.1%	81.4%	71.7%
Non-White	52.3	43.9	18.6	28.3
Religion				
Protestant	30.6%	33.6%	43.3%	46.5%
Roman Catholic	34.0	41.1	33.0	27.7
Other	9.6	8.5	10.6	11.3
None	25.8	16.8	13.1	14.5
Civil Status				
Born in wedlock	73.0%	80.4%	86.7%	85.5%
Parents living together	18.7	32.7	30.2	34.7
Parents living apart	40.3	40.2	43.0	41.3
Full or half orphans	14.0	7.5	13.5	9.5
Born out of wedlock	23.1	18.7	12.3	13.6
Unknown	3.9	0.9	1.0	0.9
Sex				
Male	67.3%	96.3%	54.9%	91.9%
Female	32.7	3.7	45.1	8.1
Type of Care				
Institution	73.7%	70.1%	63.1%	68.5%
Group Home	8.3	8.4	3.3	3.2
Boarding Home	2.7	2.8	27.8	24.8
Other	15.3	18.7	5.8	3.5

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