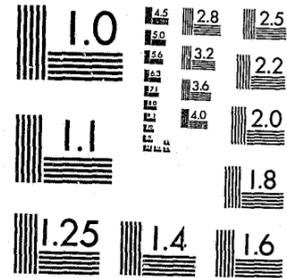


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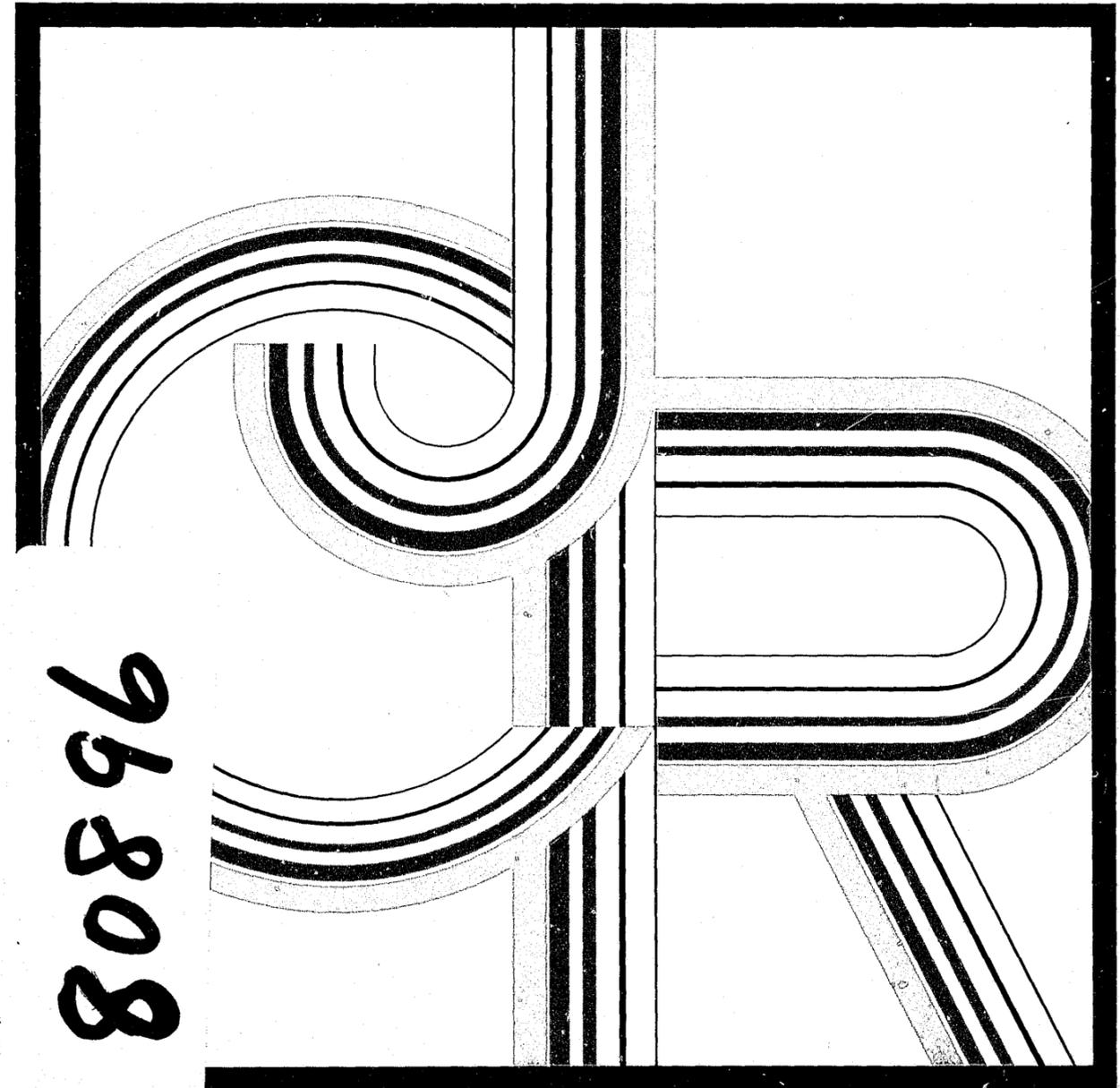
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Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice

Juvenile Offenses Processed by County Courts

# JUVENILE COURT REPORT—1980



✓  
Juvenile Cases Processed by County Courts

# JUVENILE COURT REPORT—1980

U.S. Department of Justice 80896  
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## Introduction

The Juvenile Court Report presents data collected during calendar year 1980 through the Juvenile Court Reporting (JCR) System concerning young people who were processed by courts with juvenile jurisdiction in the State of Nebraska. These include 90 county courts and the three separate juvenile courts of Douglas, Lancaster and Sarpy Counties.

The JCR system was instituted in 1971 by the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (hereafter referred to as the Commission). The system is based on the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Juvenile Court Statistics Series begun in 1927. In 1973 this system was assumed by the National Center for Juvenile Justice under a grant from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), the parent agency of this Commission. The Center compiles national statistics on juvenile delinquency based on state reporting systems such as the one in Nebraska.

In Nebraska, the Commission uses data obtained through the JCR system as a basis for its function of juvenile justice planning. The system also proves to be a valuable source of information for any private or public agency, or individual dealing with juvenile delinquency or related problems. Readers are reminded that upon request to the Commission, specific information collected through the JCR system can be provided. While this report presents a large amount of data describing the characteristics of youth who enter the Nebraska court system, the report does not interpret the information beyond words of caution in the uses of the data.

The many associate county judges, court clerks, probation officers, and other court personnel deserve recognition for their time and effort involved in reporting consistently. Without their cooperation, this publication would not be possible.

# Juvenile Court Reporting System

One of the primary purposes of this publication is to provide information that accurately reflects the level of juvenile crime occurring in the State of Nebraska. In this report, the particular measure used to estimate the degree of juvenile crime is the flow of juveniles through the Nebraska 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. The district courts of Nebraska do not report to the Commission nor do the municipal courts in Omaha and Lincoln. District court cases usually involve older juveniles appearing for serious offenses and the number of such cases is small compared to the volume of cases handled in county courts. The Commission does not collect data on traffic offenses which comprise the bulk of juvenile referrals to municipal court along with violations of ordinances.

The 93 courts report cases disposed of to the Commission monthly. For each individual juvenile disposition, the court fills out a Juvenile Court Statistical Form shown in Figure 2. The following sections of the form are required information on all cases: A. Court Code, E. Age at Time of Referral, F. Sex, G. Ethnic Group, H. Date of Referral, L. Reason Referred, M. Manner of Handling, N. Date of Disposition, and O. Disposition. The remainder of the form is optional information, however, the courts are encouraged to include as much of the 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.

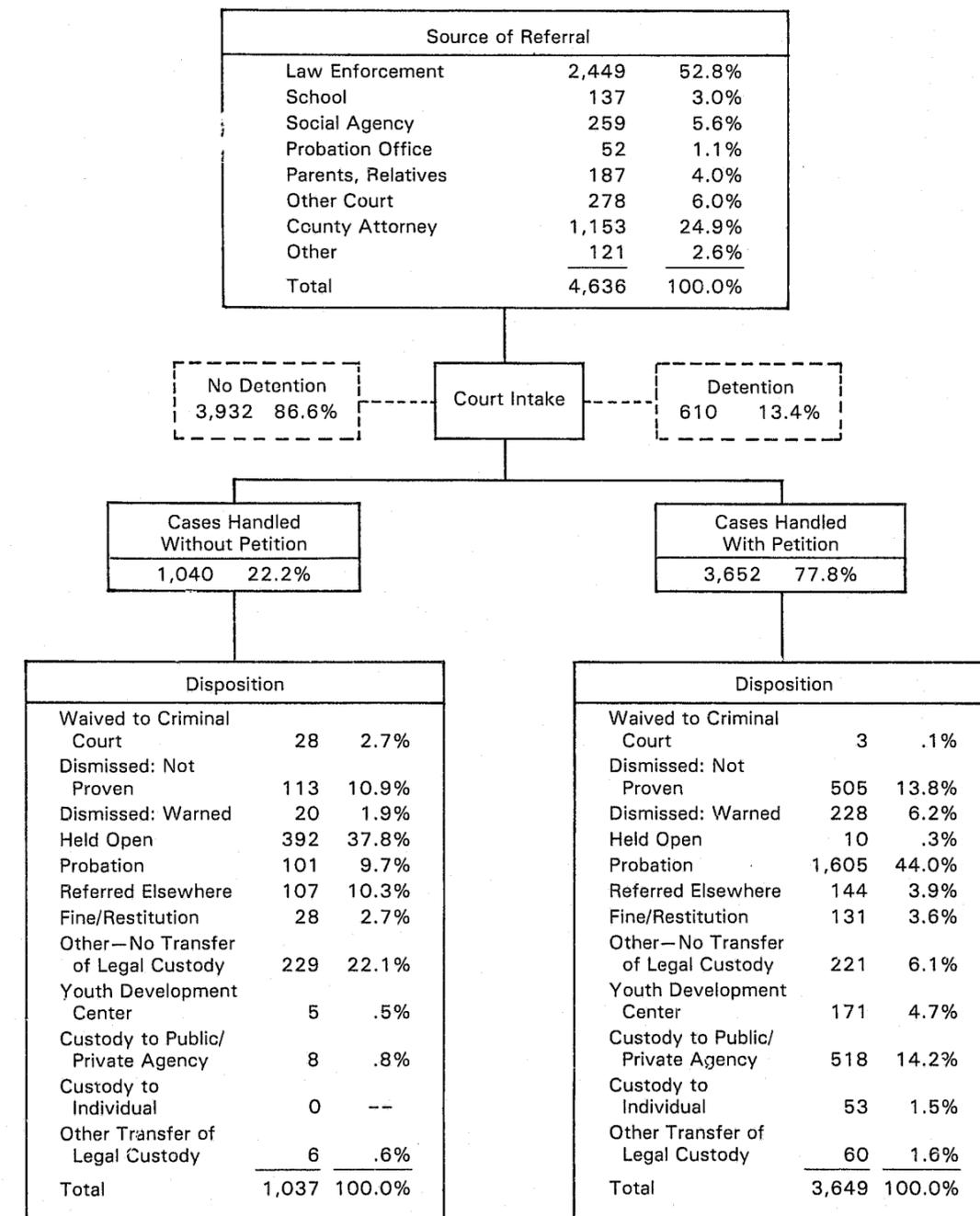
A *Juvenile Court Statistical Form Instruction Manual*, which is intended to explain how to complete the JCS Form, is available to assist persons responsible for completing the form.

All of the data received from the courts are entered at the State Data Processing Center. Magnetic tapes which contain the juvenile court data are constructed on a quarterly basis, and are sent to Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, where they can be analyzed on the Michigan Terminal System (MTS). By connecting with MTS through a remote terminal hook-up at the Commission, cumulative juvenile court information including data from the most recent quarter is easily accessible. Summary totals, crosstabulations, and statistical analyses can be performed using the sophisticated software available on MTS.

At this time, the Commission has juvenile court data from all counties from 1974 through 1980 and some partial data from 1973.

It is important to note that the information contained in this report pertains to **dispositions** of juvenile cases by county and separate juvenile courts during calendar year 1980. The case may have been referred to the court during 1980 or previously. Thus, an accurate count of the number of referrals during a given period is not possible because a JCS Form is not received until a final disposition in the case has been determined.

Figure 1  
Juvenile Court Reporting System Flow Diagram, 1980\*



\*Does not include cases with missing data in respective categories.

Figure 2

Juvenile Court Statistical Form

**A. County** \_\_\_\_\_ **Court Code**

**B. Child's Number**

**C. Census tract of residence (Douglas County only)**

**D. Date of birth**

**E. Age at time of referral**

**F. Sex** 1 Male 2 Female

**G. Ethnic Group**  
 1 White   
 2 Black   
 3 Indian   
 4 Mexican-American   
 5 Oriental   
 6 Other

**H. Date of Referral**

**I. Referred By**  
 1 Law enforcement agency   
 2 School   
 3 Social agency   
 4 Probation officer   
 5 Parents or relatives   
 6 Other court   
 7 County Attorney   
 8 Other

**J. Prior court referrals**  
 This calendar year  or more  
 In prior years  or more

**K. Care pending disposition**  
 0. No detention or shelter care overnight   
 Detention or shelter care overnight or longer in:  
 1. Jail or police station with separate facilities   
 2. Jail or police station with no separate facilities   
 3. Detention home   
 4. Foster or group home   
 5. Other

**L. Reason Referred (Enter only one code)**  
 Offenses applicable to both juveniles and adults (excluding traffic):  
 01 Murder 15 Theft; value over \$300 but less than \$1,000  
 02 Manslaughter 16 Theft; value less than \$300  
 03 Assault; 1st & 2nd degree 17 Theft; value less than \$100  
 04 Assault; 3rd degree 18 Criminal Mischief; Felony  
 05 Sexual Assault; 1st degree 19 Criminal Mischief; Misdemeanor  
 06 Sexual Assault; 2nd degree 20 Criminal Trespass  
 07 Robbery 21 Forgery; Felony  
 08 Violation of Drug Laws; Felony 22 Forgery; Misdemeanor  
 09 Violation of Drug Laws; Misdemeanor 23 Weapons Offenses; Felony  
 10 Arson; Felony 24 Weapons Offenses; Misdemeanor  
 11 Arson; Misdemeanor 25 Driving While Intoxicated; 3rd offense  
 12 Burglary 26 Disturbing the Peace  
 13 Unauthorized Use of a Propelled Vehicle 27 Other Felony  
 14 Theft; value over \$1,000 28 Other Misdemeanor

Offenses applicable only to juveniles (excluding traffic):  
 31. Running away 34. Ungovernable behavior  
 32. Truancy 35. Possessing or drinking liquor  
 33. Violation of curfew 39. Other  
 Nonoffenses  
 51. Neglect 52. Dependent

**M. Manner of handling**  
 1 Without petition   
 2 With petition

**N. Date of disposition**

**O. Disposition (Enter only one code)**  
 00 Waived to criminal court;  
 Complaint not substantiated  
 01 Dismissed; Not proved or found not involved  
 Complaint substantiated  
 No transfer of legal custody  
 11 Dismissed; Warned, counseled  
 12 Hold open without further action  
 13 Formal probation  
 14 Referred to another agency or individual for service or supervisor  
 15 Runaway returned  
 16 Fine or restitution  
 17 Other  
 Transfer of legal custody to:  
 21 Youth Development Center - Kearney or Geneva  
 22 Public agency or department (including court or jail)  
 23 Private agency or institution (Specify)  
 24 Individual (Specify relationship)  
 28 Other

The following questions refer to status at time of referral.

**P. Diagnostic Services**  
 NEED FOR DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES  
 Indicated and provided | Indicated but not available | Not Indicated

Psychological	1	2	3	<input type="text"/>
Psychiatric	1	2	3	<input type="text"/>
Medical	1	2	3	<input type="text"/>
Social	1	2	3	<input type="text"/>

**Q. School attainment**  
 Grade completed (00-12)

**R. Employment and school status**  

	Out of School	In School
Not employed	1	5
Employed		
Full time	2	6
Part time	3	7
Preschool	4	

**S. Length of residence of child in county**  
 0 Not currently a resident   
 1 Under one year   
 2 One year or more

**T. Living arrangement of child**  
 In home with   
 01 Both parents  
 02 Mother and stepfather  
 03 Father and stepmother  
 04 Mother only  
 05 Father only  
 Outside own home with   
 06 Relatives  
 07 Foster or group home  
 08 Institution  
 09 Independent arrangement  
 10 Other  
 11 Unknown

**U. Marital status of natural parents**   
 01 Parents married and living together  
 02 Both dead  
 03 Father dead  
 04 Mother dead  
 Parents separated  
 05 Divorced or legally separated  
 06 Father deserted mother  
 07 Mother deserted father  
 08 Other reason (Specify)  
 09 Parents not married to each other  
 10 Other  
 11 Unknown

**V. Combined family annual income**   
 1. Receiving public assistance  
 Not receiving public assistance  
 2. Under \$5,000  
 3. \$5,000 to \$9,999  
 4. \$10,000 to \$24,999  
 5. \$25,000 and over  
 6. Unknown

**W. Counsel**   
 1. Court appointed  
 2. Retained  
 3. Public defender  
 4. Not represented  
 5. Other

**X. Occupation of primary parent or guardian**   
 01 Professional or technical  
 02 Managerial or administrative  
 03 Farmer or rancher  
 04 Sales worker  
 05 Craftsman or other skilled laborer  
 06 Clerical  
 07 Service workers or other unskilled laborers  
 08 Unemployed  
 09 Unknown

**ADDITIONAL SPACE FOR COURT USE**

5000 (10/80)

Referrals

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 43-202(1) through 43-202(6) of the Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, 1943. For purposes of the Juvenile Court Reporting Program, the following sections are applicable:

- “(1) . . . any child under the age of eighteen years, who is homeless or destitute, or without proper support through no fault of his parent, guardian, or custodian;
- “(2) . . . any child under the age of eighteen years (a) who is abandoned by his parent, guardian, or custodian; (b) who lacks proper parental care by reason of the faults or habits of his parent, guardian, or custodian; (c) 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 child; (d) whose parent, guardian, or custodian neglects or refuses to provide special care made necessary by the mental condition of the child; or (e) who is in a situation or engages in an occupation dangerous to life or limb or injurious to the health or morals of such child;
- “(3) (a) . . . any child under the age of sixteen years at the time he has violated any law of the state or any city or village ordinance amounting to an offense other than a felony, traffic offense, or parking violation; (b) . . . any child under the age of eighteen years at the time he has violated any law of the state constituting a felony; and (c) . . . any child sixteen or seventeen years of age at the time he has (i) violated a state law or any city or village ordinance amounting to an offense other than a felony or parking violation, and (ii) . . . any child under sixteen years of age at the time he has committed a traffic offense;
- “(4) . . . any child under the age of eighteen years (a) who, by reason of being wayward or habitually disobedient, is uncontrolled by his parent, guardian or custodian; (b) who is habitually truant from school or home; or (c) who departs himself so as to injure or endanger seriously the morals or health of himself or others;”

For purposes of 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 responses 01 through 28. The major offense referrals are typically regarded as “delinquency” offenses. Minor 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” refers to juveniles described in Section 43-202(2), while “Dependent” refers to juveniles described in Section 43-202(1), Nebraska R.R.S., 1943; the usage of these terms was retained in the JCR Program after the definitions of “Neglect” and “Dependent” were removed from the juvenile code in 1978.

Non-felony motor vehicle-related offense 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.

There were 4,693 juvenile court referrals reported to the Commission in the Juvenile Court Reporting Program which reached final disposition in 1980. Of these, 3,932 (86.6%) were handled with petition, while 610 (13.4%) were handled without petition. Referrals for major offense categories accounted for 63.8% or 2,992 of the total number of cases. Minor offense referrals comprised 24.7% and 1,161 of the total, while 540 neglect/dependent cases (11.5% of the total) were reported. Breakdowns of the reasons for referral are given in Tables 1, 2, and 3 for major, minor, and neglect/dependent cases, respectively.

The fact that major offense referrals are nearly three times the frequency of minor offense referrals does not necessarily indicate that this ratio exists in the juvenile population. The major offenses are usually considered more serious since they are infractions of state or local laws while the minor offenses are offenses only because of juvenile status. Major and minor offenders are therefore most likely to be treated differently before the court stage is ever reached. Many minor offenders are handled directly by the police or diverted to various social agencies and programs and may never appear in juvenile court.

Theft under \$100, burglary, and misdemeanor criminal mischief, respectively, were the three largest major offense referral categories. Theft under \$100 alone

comprised nearly one-quarter of all major offense referrals, while the three categories combined represented 45% of all major offense referrals.

**Table 1  
Major Offense Frequencies, 1980**

Offense Type	Frequency	Percent of Total
Murder	1	<.1
Manslaughter	3	.1
Assault 1 and 2	18	.6
Assault 3	183	6.1
Sex Assault 1	12	.4
Sex Assault 2	29	1.0
Robbery	49	1.6
Drug Laws (Felony)	17	.6
Drug Laws (Misdemeanor)	126	4.2
Arson (Felony)	12	.4
Arson (Misdemeanor)	7	.2
Burglary	348	11.6
Unauthorized Use of Vehicle	109	3.6
Theft over \$1,000	53	1.8
Theft: Value over \$300, less than \$1,000	92	3.1
Theft under \$300	213	7.1
Theft under \$100	700	23.4
Criminal Mischief (Felony)	42	1.4
Criminal Mischief (Misdemeanor)	289	9.7
Trespassing	160	5.3
Forgery (Felony)	13	.4
Forgery (Misdemeanor)	36	1.2
Weapons Laws (Felony)	5	.2
Weapons Laws (Misdemeanor)	7	.2
Driving While Intoxicated (3rd Offense)	9	.3
Disturbing the Peace	68	2.3
Other Felony	45	1.5
Other Misdemeanor	346	11.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,992</b>	<b>100.0</b>

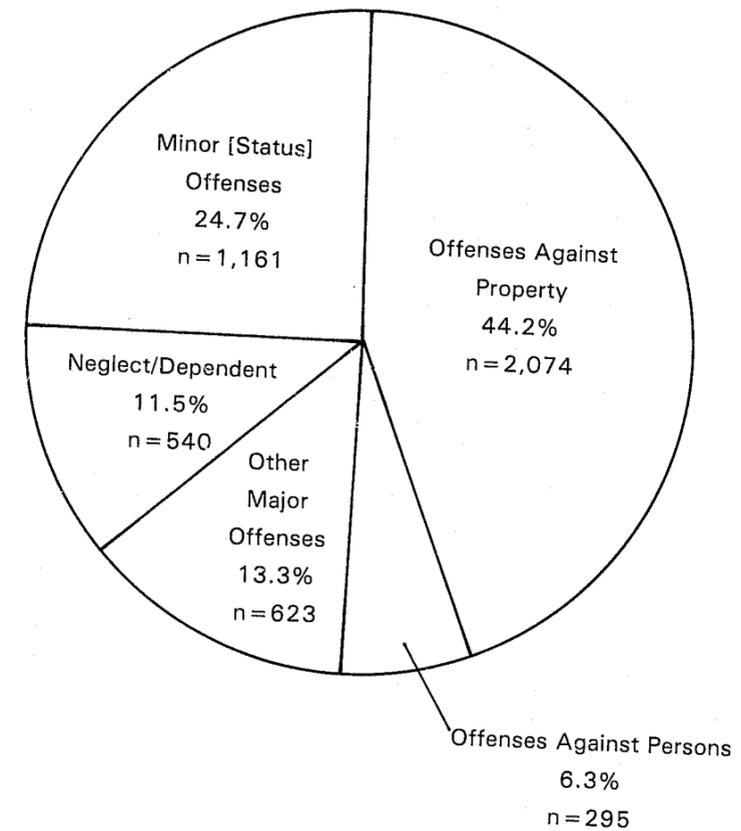
**Table 2  
Minor [Status] Offense Frequencies, 1980**

Offense Type	Frequency	Percent of Total
Running Away	113	9.7
Truancy	175	15.1
Curfew Violation	38	3.3
Ungovernable Behavior	324	27.9
Possessing or Drinking Liquor	390	33.6
Other	121	10.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,161</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3  
Neglect/Dependent Frequencies, 1980**

Neglect/Dependent	Frequency	Percent of Total
Neglect	419	77.6
Dependent	121	22.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>100.0</b>

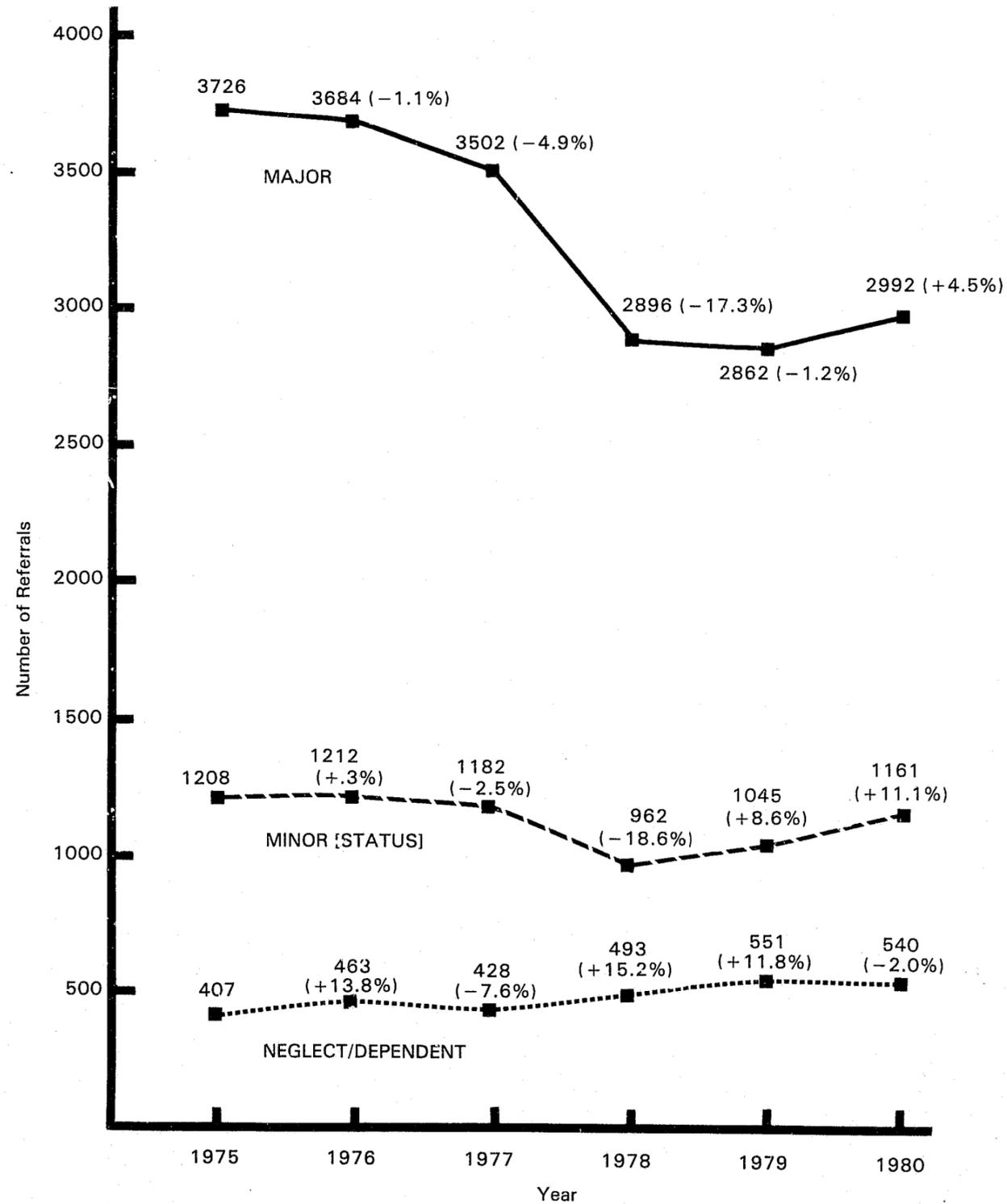
**Figure 3  
Referral Proportions, 1980**



**Table 4  
Reason Referred, 1980**

Reason Referred	Frequency	Percent of Total	Percent of Major
<b>Total Major Offenses</b>	<b>2,992</b>	<b>63.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
a. Offenses Against Persons	295	6.3	9.9
b. Offenses Against Property	2,074	44.2	69.3
c. Other Major Offenses	623	13.3	20.8
Minor [Status] Offenses	1,161	24.7	--
Neglect/Dependent	540	11.5	--
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,693</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>--</b>

**Figure 4**  
Referral Frequencies, 1975-1980

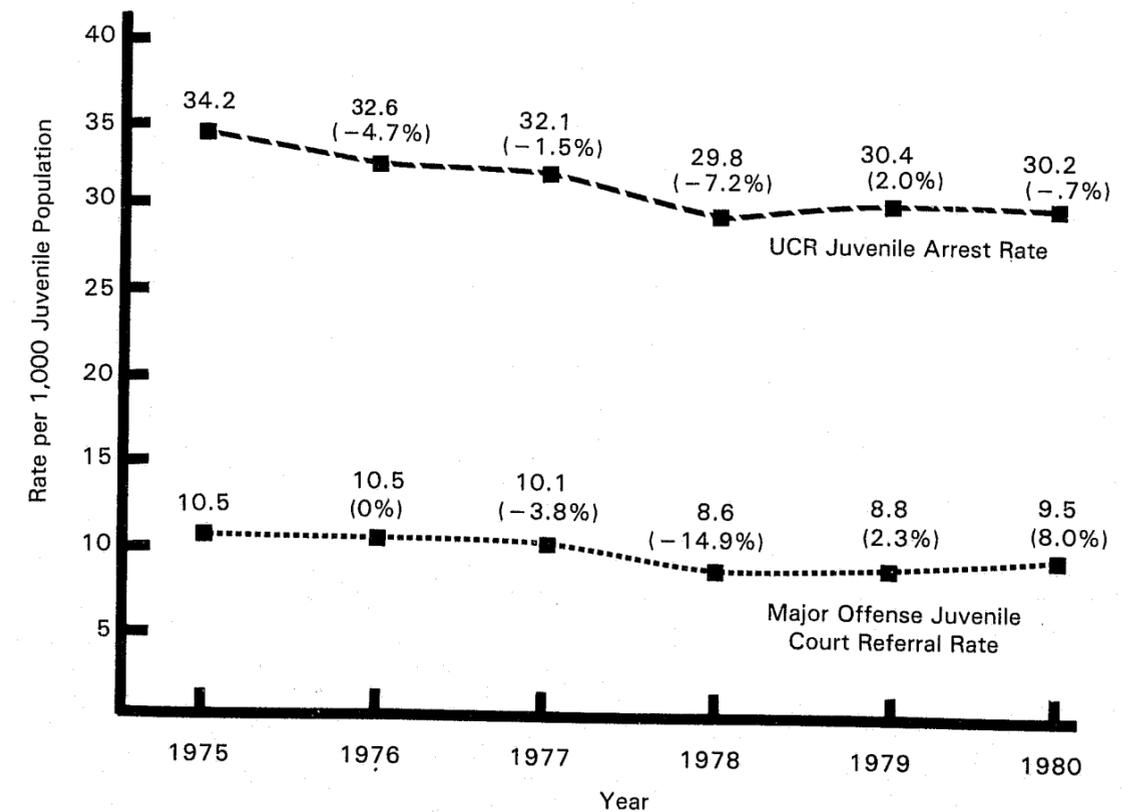


**Table 5**  
Major Offense Court Referrals,  
UCR Juvenile Arrests (Non-Status Offenses),  
School-Age Juvenile Population Estimates, 1974-1980

	1974	1975	% Change	1976	% Change	1977	% Change	1978	% Change	1979	% Change	1980	% Change
Major Offense Court Referrals	3,015	3,725	+23.6	3,684	-1.1	3,502	-4.9	2,896	-17.3	2,862	-1.2	2,992	+4.5
UCR Juvenile Arrests (Non-Status)	12,891	12,179	-5.5	11,460	-5.9	11,072	-3.4	9,997	-9.7	9,854	-1.4	9,530	-3.3
School-Age Juvenile Population Estimate*	361,545	356,438	-1.4	351,828	-1.3	345,280	-1.9	335,318	-2.9	324,614	-3.2	315,755	-2.7

\*See text

**Figure 5**  
Comparison of Rates for Major Court Referrals and UCR Juvenile Arrests, 1975-1980



The category of major offenses may be subdivided into smaller categories of offenses against persons and offenses against property (see Table 4). Offenses against persons, which included murder, manslaughter, assault, sexual assault, and robbery, comprised about 10% of major offenses and 6.3% of all referrals. Offenses against property constituted the largest proportion of major and total offenses, representing 44.2% of all referrals and 69.3% of major referrals. Other major referrals which could not be categorized as offenses against persons or as offenses against property, such as Driving While Intoxicated (DWI), Disturbing the Peace, and drug violations, composed the remainder of major offense referrals (20.8%) and 13.3% of all referrals.

Major, minor, and neglect/dependent referral trends are illustrated in Figure 4, along with percentage changes for each year from 1975 to 1980. The positive change from 1979 to 1980 (+4.5%) in the number of major offense referrals reversed a decreasing trend since 1975. One possible interpretation of this increase, however, is that more jurisdictions were reporting or that some jurisdiction(s) reported for cases that would not have been reported in the previous year.

The number of minor offense or "status" offense referrals continued with the same trend established from 1978 to 1979. In fact, the 11.1% increase in minor offense referrals was the largest year-to-year change (in either direction) since 1974. The practice of diverting status offenders from juvenile court adjudication is not reflected in statewide totals for status offender referrals since 1978. Juvenile arrests for status offenses (see Appendix B) do not show a conclusive trend supporting the notion that more status offenders are being arrested and thus appear in court. In addition, changes in absolute numbers with the relatively low frequencies involved are not likely to represent significant changes.

The number of neglect and dependent referrals to juvenile courts in Nebraska has remained relatively stable since 1975. The large percentage changes for some years mask the relatively small changes in the absolute number of neglect and dependent cases for a given year.

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.

As will be explained in detail in another section of this report, all State total data are heavily weighted toward the juvenile courts of Douglas, Lancaster and Sarpy counties; about 57% of all referrals were from these

counties. This does not imply, however, that the data are unrepresentative of the State as a whole, but only that about 46% of the State's estimated juvenile population live in these counties. In addition, reporting jurisdictions represent about 95% of the State's total estimated juvenile population.

One source of further information concerning juvenile involvement in the criminal justice system is the Nebraska Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. Information collected in the UCR Program is based on reports submitted by law enforcement agencies in the State. State total UCR juvenile arrest data and State total major offense referral frequencies for the period from 1974 to 1980 are illustrated in Table 5. The UCR juvenile arrest totals presented include only **non-status** offenses in order to enable more accurate comparisons with the major offense court referrals. In addition, school age population estimates are presented which are based on Nebraska Department of Education enrollment totals for all elementary and secondary schools in the State. These enrollment totals constitute the only reliable estimate of the Nebraska population roughly between the ages of 5 and 17 which are available for all the years listed. It is assumed in presenting these population estimates that very few, if any, pre-school juveniles were arrested and that the estimates would have some error involving especially older juveniles who have dropped out of school. In fact, no juveniles under 5 years of age were referred to juvenile courts for major offenses; the youngest age group for UCR arrest information is that including 10 and under.

The information presented in Table 5 suggests that, with few exceptions, UCR juvenile arrests and major offense court referrals are strongly related. A major increase in the number of juvenile court referrals from 1974 to 1975 probably represents an increase in the number of juvenile court referrals **reported** to the Commission rather than an increase in the number of referrals **processed** by courts. In the years between 1976 and 1979 a steady decline occurred in the number of juvenile arrests for non-status offenses as well as the number of juvenile court referrals for major offenses. However, in 1980, the number of juvenile court referrals for major offenses increased over the previous year, while the number of juvenile arrests continued the declining trend. When the steady decrease in school age population (generally, the population at risk) is considered along with these facts, the data suggest that a real increase has occurred in major offense court referrals. Figure 5 depicts these relationships graphically and indicates the upturn in the rate of major offense referrals per 1,000 juvenile population and the corresponding decrease in UCR non-status offense juvenile arrests from 1979 to 1980.

Although the data suggest a relationship between the number of major offense juvenile court referrals and the number of arrests of juveniles for non-status offenses, only about two-thirds of major offense court referrals are received from law enforcement agencies in Nebraska. In fact, of the 9,530 arrests of juveniles for non-status offenses in 1980, only about 31% (2,992) were referred to juvenile court for major (non-status) offense reasons and disposed of in 1980. For a number of reasons, this type of comparison must be made with caution, but it does indicate that a large proportion of juvenile arrests do not result in formal juvenile court proceedings. This may be due to immediate transfer of the case to county or district court, withdrawal of the complaint or petition, informal transfer of custody of the juvenile, or some other diversion procedure prior to intake processing by the court and submission of a Juvenile Court Statistical Form. Also, all data in this report refer to cases **disposed**

of during calendar year 1980, and it is to be expected that a number of juvenile cases referred to court during 1980 would be carried over into 1981 and would not be reflected in the 1981 totals.

Table 6 includes breakdown on the sources of referrals to Nebraska juvenile courts for major, minor, and neglect/dependent cases. As previously discussed, the largest number of major offense referrals (66%) were from law enforcement agencies. Referrals from county attorneys comprised the next largest category (651 or 22%) of sources of referrals. These standings hold for status offenses also, where about 40% of referrals were from law enforcement agencies and approximately 25% were referred by the county attorney. On the other hand, the largest number of neglect/dependent referrals (46%) came from social agencies with about 40% originating from county attorneys. Law enforcement agencies referred only about 6% of all neglect/dependent cases.

**Table 6**  
**Source of Court Referrals, 1980**

Source of Referral	Major		Minor [Status]		Neglect/Dependent		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Law Enforcement	1,958	66.3	451	39.7	33	6.2	2,442	52.9
School	5	.2	123	10.8	9	1.7	137	3.0
Social Agency	2	.1	15	1.3	242	45.6	259	5.6
Probation Office	7	.2	39	3.4	6	1.1	52	1.1
Parents, Relatives	5	.2	169	14.9	13	2.4	187	4.0
Other Court	242	8.2	29	2.6	6	1.1	277	6.0
County Attorney	651	22.0	281	24.7	214	40.3	1,146	24.8
Other	83	2.8	29	2.6	8	1.5	120	2.6
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>2,953</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,136</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>99.9**</b>	<b>4,620</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Does not include 73 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent total differs from 100 due to rounding error.

One measure of recidivism in juvenile involvement in the criminal justice system is the number of prior referrals to juvenile court for a given juvenile. For all juvenile cases disposed of during 1980, about 30% had been referred to court previously. The largest group of juveniles (15.3% of the total) had been referred to juvenile court once in the past. Table 7 presents detailed information on prior referrals for major and minor offense referrals and neglect/dependent cases. It should be noted that this information is based on records of a particular juvenile court jurisdiction for a given juvenile case and

may not accurately reflect referrals to court for the juvenile in question in **other** jurisdictions. Because of this, the data probably represent a conservative estimate with regard to 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 crimes or types of referrals. The information in Table 7 does indicate, however, that a significant number of juveniles have appeared previously in juvenile court for one reason or another. Specifically, 37% of juveniles referred for major offenses had been referred to

court in the past. For offenses against persons, about 43% had been previously referred to juvenile court, while of juveniles referred for property offenses, 36% had appeared for some reason in juvenile court before. The proportion of juveniles referred for status offenses or neglect/dependency who had been referred to court previously was much smaller than for the major offense categories. About 23% of juveniles referred for status offenses had appeared in court previously, while approximately 13% of neglect and dependent cases in 1980 involved prior referrals to juvenile court for some reason.

The data suggest that although the number of referrals for offenses against persons was relatively small (291 out of 4,507 total referrals), juveniles referred to court for this reason were more likely to have been referred to court previously than any other subgroup identified in Table 7. This could have occurred because juveniles committing personal crimes were more likely to be scheduled for formal court proceedings than other offenders and less likely to become involved in or referred to diversion programs.

**Table 7**  
**Total Prior Referrals by reason for Referral, 1980**

	Total Prior Referrals						Total
	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more	
Total Major Offenses	1,832	496	241	125	81	127	2,902
a. Offenses Against Persons	167	55	30	11	12	16	291
b. Offenses Against Property	1,280	347	166	87	47	88	2,015
c. Other Major Offenses	385	94	45	27	22	23	596
Minor [Status] Offenses	830	142	60	23	13	14	1,082
Neglect/Dependent	457	53	8	1	2	2	523
TOTAL*	3,119	691	309	149	96	143	4,507
% of Total	69.2	15.3	6.9	3.3	2.1	3.2	100.0

\*Does not include 186 cases with missing data.

## Dispositions

Information on juvenile court disposition activity is contained in Tables 8, 9, 10, and 11. 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 8 summarize the types of determinations which may be made in most juvenile cases. In general, there are three possible outcomes described on the form: the case may be waived to criminal court (less than 1% of the total 1980 cases), it may be dismissed because of insufficient grounds (about 13% of the 1980 total), or a final disposition may

be reached based on the substantiation of a complaint and/or petition (the remaining 86% of cases 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 20% involved a transfer of legal custody of the juvenile to one of the Youth Development Centers, or some other agency or individual. The remaining 80% of 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.

**Table 8**  
**Juvenile Court Dispositions, 1980**

Disposition	Major		Minor		Neglect/Dependent		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Waived to Criminal Court	10	.3	21	1.8	0	--	31	.7
<i>Complaint Not Substantiated</i>								
Dismissed: Not Proven or found not involved	461	15.5	86	7.4	68	12.7	615	13.2
<i>Complaint Substantiated</i>								
<b>No Transfer of Legal Custody</b>								
Dismissed: warned, counseled	117	3.9	105	9.1	26	4.8	248	5.3
Hold open without further action	349	11.7	52	4.5	0	--	401	8.6
Formal probation	1,289	43.3	397	34.3	15	2.8	1,701	36.4
Referred to another agency or individual for service or supervision	106	3.6	68	5.9	77	14.3	251	5.4
Runaway returned	2	<.1	29	2.5	0	--	31	.7
Fine or restitution	62	2.1	96	8.3	0	--	158	3.4
Other	301	10.1	97	8.4	19	3.5	417	8.9
<b>Transfer of Legal Custody to:</b>								
Youth Development Center	152	5.1	23	2.0	0	--	175	3.7
Public Agency or Department	66	2.2	103	8.9	265	49.3	434	9.3
Private Agency or Institution	32	1.1	37	3.2	21	3.9	90	1.9
Individual	14	.5	13	1.1	26	4.8	53	1.1
Other	16	.5	30	2.6	20	3.7	66	1.4
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>2,977</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,157</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>99.8**</b>	<b>4,671</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Does not include 22 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

Most juveniles cases referred to court for major offenses resulted in a disposition of formal probation (43.3%). This was also true for status offense referrals, of which 34.3% resulted in a disposition of formal probation. The largest number of neglect/dependent cases involved transfer of legal custody of the juvenile to a public agency (49.3%) followed by referral to another agency or individual with no transfer of legal custody (14.3%). It is interesting to note that approximately equal percentages of major, minor, and neglect/dependent cases were dismissed: generally between 15% and 20% of cases in these categories were dismissed. However, for cases in which the complaint was substantiated, status offenders were more likely than major offenders to receive counseling or a warning with subsequent dismissal; about 4% of major offense cases were disposed of in this manner while approximately 9% of status offenders received counseling or a warning prior to dismissal of the case.

Detailed processing times for juvenile court referrals are presented in Table 9, 10, and 11. For cases involving major offense referrals, about one-half involved a final disposition within 40 days of referral, while the average major offense case took the same amount of time. On the other hand, nearly 15% of major offense referral cases took longer than 100 days from date of referral to date of disposition. In general, status offense referrals were processed more quickly: the average minor offense case took from 21 to 30 days from date of referral to date of disposition. Of the 534 cases referred for neglect and dependency for which processing time data was available, the median time between referral and disposition was between 51 and 100 days. On the average then, neglect and dependent referrals involved a longer time between referral and disposition than major offense cases, while status offense referrals had shorter processing times than the other two referral categories. The data contained in Tables 9, 10, and 11 is illustrated in summary form in Figure 6.

**Table 9**  
**Elapsed Time, in Days, Between Date of Referral**  
**and Date of Disposition for Major Offense Referrals, 1980\***

Reason Referred	Elapsed Days: Referral to Disposition												TOTAL
	0	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-100	101-200	201-300	301+		
Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	
Manslaughter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	3	
Assault: 1st and 2nd degree	0	1	1	1	2	3	0	6	4	0	0	18	
Assault: 3rd degree	5	11	13	15	19	15	16	54	29	2	4	183	
Sexual Assault: 1st degree	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	3	5	1	0	12	
Sexual Assault: 2nd degree	2	2	3	2	1	1	2	7	3	3	3	29	
Robbery	0	0	3	0	3	12	5	16	7	3	0	49	
Violation of Drug Laws: Felony	1	1	1	0	1	0	2	5	4	2	0	17	
Violation of Drug Laws: Misdemeanor	0	8	18	25	20	8	14	20	8	2	3	126	
Arson: Felony	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	8	2	0	12	
Arson: Misdemeanor	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	7	
Burglary	3	14	19	22	42	48	37	112	38	14	8	357	
Unauthorized Use of a Propelled Vehicle	2	7	4	20	21	13	11	21	6	3	1	109	
Theft: Value Over \$1,000	2	2	7	6	5	3	8	12	6	2	0	53	
Theft: Over \$300, Less \$1,000	4	2	4	6	5	16	8	28	13	2	3	91	
Theft: \$100-\$300	4	8	18	17	19	30	33	56	18	3	3	209	
Theft: Under \$100	29	41	64	87	85	73	75	151	65	16	7	693	
Criminal Mischief: Felony	0	1	3	2	3	3	5	19	4	2	0	42	
Criminal Mischief: Misdemeanor	6	12	28	31	30	35	24	81	27	8	2	284	
Trespass	5	26	16	26	5	14	9	33	23	2	0	159	
Forgery: Felony	0	1	0	1	4	2	0	3	1	0	1	13	
Forgery: Misdemeanor	1	0	2	7	5	2	4	8	4	2	1	36	
Weapons Offense: Felony	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	0	0	5	
Weapons Offense: Misdemeanor	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	7	
Driving While Intoxicated: 3rd Offense	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	1	0	0	9	
Disturbing the Peace	0	11	6	10	10	5	6	9	7	2	1	67	
Other Misdemeanor	21	26	44	37	37	37	34	63	17	13	12	341	
Other Felony	3	0	5	10	2	2	6	11	5	0	1	45	
<b>TOTAL MAJOR*</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>2,977</b>	
% of Total	3.0	5.9	8.7	11.1	10.8	11.0	10.2	24.5	10.3	2.8	1.7	100.0	

\*Does not include 15 cases with missing data.

**Table 10**  
**Elapsed Time, in Days, Between Date of Referral**  
**and Date of Disposition for Minor [Status] Offense Referrals, 1980\***

Reason Referred	Elapsed Days: Referral to Disposition												TOTAL
	0	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-100	101-200	201-300	301+		
Running Away	18	19	7	16	8	10	4	18	8	2	3	113	
Truancy	7	5	11	15	18	15	17	33	30	12	10	173	
Curfew Violation	1	2	0	4	13	6	1	9	1	1	0	38	
Ungovernable Behavior	15	15	14	30	42	35	26	80	48	8	8	321	
Possessing or Drinking Liquor	37	34	42	69	40	30	38	64	21	9	3	387	
Other	4	1	3	17	3	15	13	33	19	5	5	118	
<b>TOTAL MINOR*</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1,150</b>	
% of Total	7.1	6.6	6.7	13.1	10.8	9.7	8.6	20.6	11.0	3.2	2.5	99.9**	

\*Does not include 11 cases with missing data.

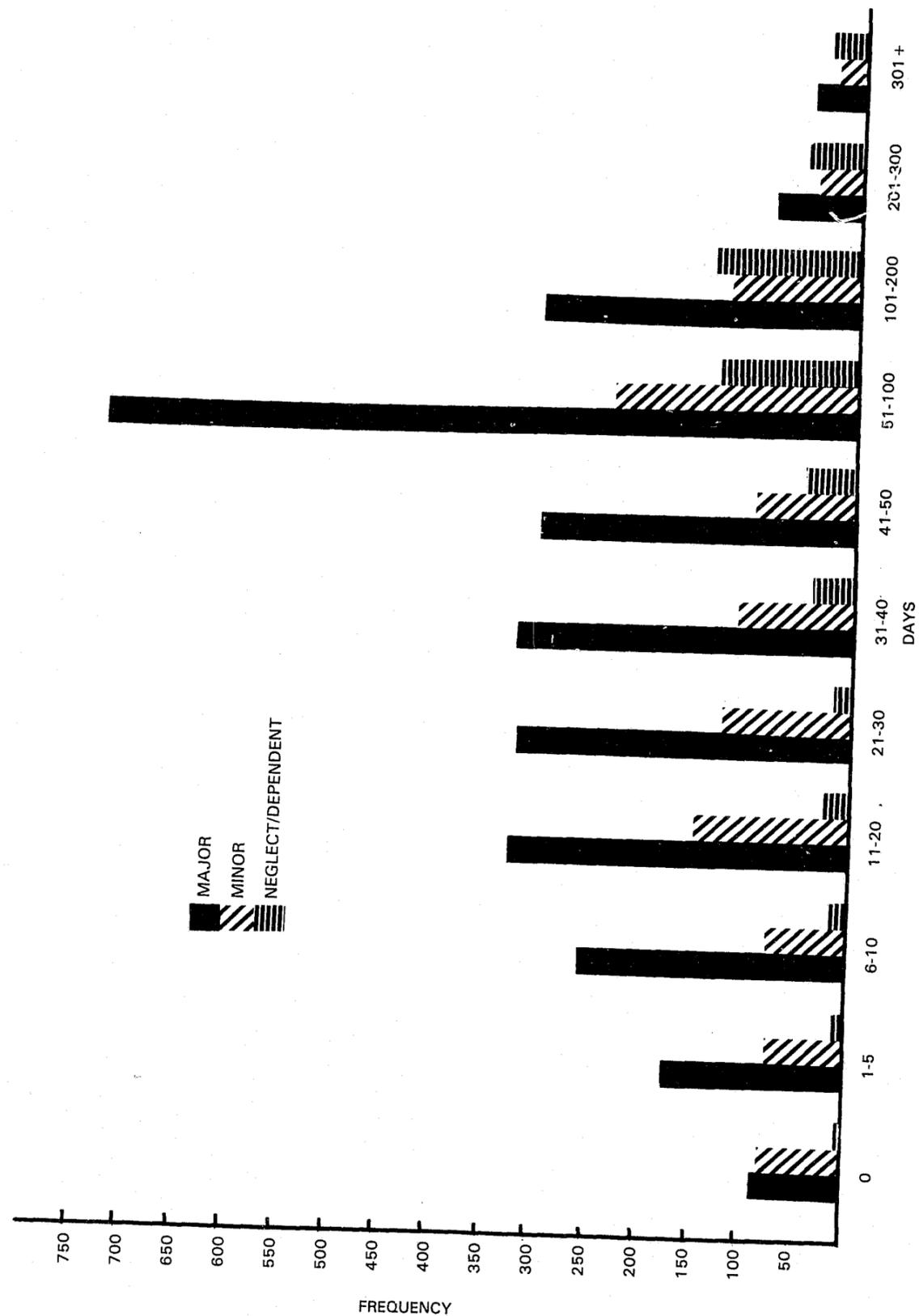
\*\*Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

**Table 11**  
**Elapsed Time, in Days, Between Date of Referral**  
**and Date of Disposition for Neglect/Dependent Referrals, 1980\***

Reason Referred	Elapsed Days: Referral to Disposition												TOTAL
	0	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-100	101-200	201-300	301+		
Neglect	1	6	8	14	16	26	31	100	126	55	33	416	
Dependent	1	6	9	11	4	14	17	34	18	1	3	118	
<b>TOTAL NEGLECT/DEPENDENT*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>534</b>	
% of Total	.4	2.2	3.2	4.7	3.7	7.5	9.0	25.1	27.0	10.5	6.7	100.0	

\*Does not include 6 cases with missing data.

Figure 6  
Number of Days Between Date of Referral and Date of Disposition  
by Reason Referred, 1980



## Age

For convenience, and because only about 4% of major and status offenders were under 10 years old, juveniles 9 and under were grouped together in Tables 12 and 13. Table 12 indicates that the majority (59%) of neglect/dependent referrals were under 10 years old. In fact, of all referrals involving juveniles under 10, about 4 in 5 (82%) were for neglect or dependency. The age group as a whole, however, represented only about 8% of the total referrals. As the data in Table 12 suggest, juveniles under 10 were much more likely to be referred to court in neglect and dependency cases and much less likely to be referred in major offense category.

As age groups, 12 year-olds and 17 year-olds had the largest proportion of referrals for major offenses: 78% of 12 year-olds and 71% of 17 year-olds were referred for major offenses. In contrast, only 11% of juveniles under 10, and 53% of 10 year-olds were referred for major offenses. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of major offense referrals involved juveniles age 15 and over.

The distribution of status offense referrals across age groupings was not distinctly different from that for major offense referrals. Again, roughly two-thirds of referrals (70%) involved juveniles 15 and over. However, age groups with the largest proportion of status offenders were ages 14 (27%), 15 (32%), and 16 (28%).

As table 12 indicates, nearly 60% of all neglect and dependent cases were under 10 years old. The remainder were quite evenly distributed across the age groups from 10 to 17.

Across all referral categories, the 16 year-old age group accounted for the largest proportion of referrals (22%), followed closely by 15 year-olds (21.4%).

Table 13 provides disposition data for the age groups of 11 and under, 12 to 13, 14 to 15, and 16 to 17. For the 11 and under age group, the largest disposition category was transfer of legal custody to a public agency. It is likely that these were transfers to the Department of Public Welfare. Formal probation was the most frequent disposition category for juveniles age 12 and over: slightly more than 40% of cases involving juveniles age 12 and over resulted in a disposition of formal probation.

Cases involving juveniles under 12 were also more likely to result in dismissal than cases involving older juveniles: about 22% of 11 and under cases were dismissed for any reason, while about 18% of cases involving 12 to 17 year-olds were dismissed. Because the 11 and under age group was referred for fewer serious offenses than the older age groups, and because there was some variation in the reasons for referral within the other age groups, direct comparisons of dispositions across age groups must be done with caution.

Table 12  
Reason Referred by Age, 1980

Age	Major		Minor [Status]		Neglect/Dependent		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Under 10	44	1.5	27	2.3	318	58.9	389	8.3
10	42	1.4	9	.8	29	5.4	80	1.7
11	61	2.0	10	.9	23	4.3	94	2.0
12	175	5.8	32	2.8	17	3.1	224	4.8
13	274	9.2	90	7.8	25	4.6	389	8.3
14	462	15.4	186	16.0	42	7.8	690	14.7
15	655	21.9	318	27.4	31	5.7	1,004	21.4
16	715	23.9	287	24.7	30	5.6	1,032	22.0
17	564	18.9	202	17.4	25	4.6	791	16.9
TOTAL*	2,992	100.0	1,161	100.1	540	100.0	4,693	100.1

\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

**Table 13**  
**Disposition by Age, 1980**

Disposition	11 and Under		12-13		14-15		16-17		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Waived to Criminal Court	0	--	0	--	8	.5	23	1.3	31	.7
<i>Complaint Not Substantiated</i>										
Dismissed: Not proved or found not involved	80	14.2	78	12.7	248	14.7	212	11.6	618	13.2
<i>Complaint Substantiated</i>										
<b>No Transfer to Legal Custody</b>										
Dismissed: warned, counseled	45	8.0	34	5.6	86	5.1	83	4.6	248	5.3
Hold open without further action	11	2.0	72	11.8	158	9.3	161	8.8	402	8.6
Formal probation	51	9.1	220	35.9	652	38.6	783	43.0	1,706	36.4
Referred to another agency or individual for service or supervision	68	12.1	41	6.7	67	4.0	75	4.1	251	5.4
Runaway returned	0	--	2	.3	19	1.1	10	.5	31	.7
Fine or restitution	6	1.1	9	1.5	40	2.4	104	5.7	159	3.4
Other	57	10.1	70	11.4	136	8.0	156	8.6	419	8.9
<b>Transfer Legal Custody to:</b>										
Youth Development Center	1	.2	19	3.1	67	4.0	89	4.9	176	3.8
Public Agency or Department	191	33.9	34	5.6	131	7.7	81	4.4	437	9.3
Private Agency or Institution	12	2.1	18	2.9	41	2.4	19	1.0	90	1.9
Individual	18	3.2	8	1.3	18	1.1	9	.5	53	1.1
Other	23	4.1	7	1.1	20	1.2	16	.9	66	1.4
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>1,691</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>1,821</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>4,687</b>	<b>100.1**</b>

\* Does not include 6 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

## Sex

More than two-and-one-half times as many males were referred to Nebraska juvenile courts than females in 1980. Overall, about 73% of referrals involved males while the remainder, approximately 27%, were females.

The disparity between the proportion of male and female referrals is more marked for major offense referrals; in this case about 83% of major offense referrals involved males while only about 17% involved females. Minor offense referrals were more evenly distributed with regard to sex: about 56% were male, with approximately 44% female. Neglect and dependent referrals were the only categories in which the proportion of females exceeded the proportion of males. Slightly over 50% of neglect and dependent referrals were females, while just under 50% were male.

Females had roughly equal number of referrals for major and minor offenses (502 and 513, respectively) while nearly four times as many males were referred for major

offenses as for minor offenses. Accordingly, of the three referral categories, males were most likely to be referred for a major offense while females were most likely to be referred to juvenile court in a neglect or dependent case.

As Table 14 shows, the most frequent disposition category for males and females was formal probation. However, males were more likely than females to have a disposition of probation. Again, differences in reasons for referral between males and females make it difficult to draw firm conclusions regarding the distribution of disposition outcomes for males vs. females. Because a larger proportion of males than females were referred for serious offenses, it is likely that males would account for a larger proportion of the more severe or restrictive dispositions. This is generally true in the case of imposition of probation (involving about 39% of male referrals and 28% of females), and transfer to a Youth Development Center (4.3% of males and 2.4% of females).

Figure 7  
Reason Referred by Sex, 1980

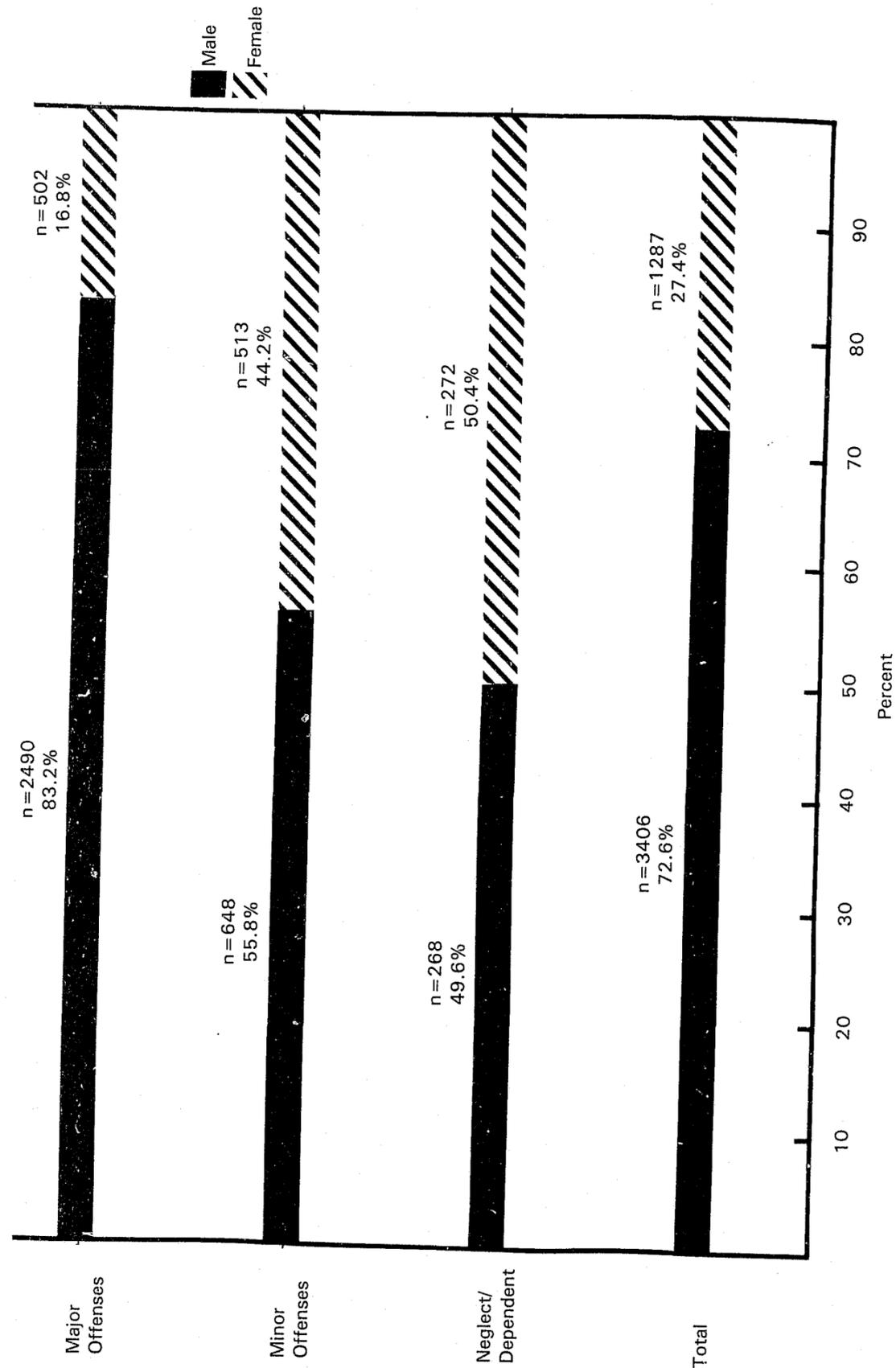


Table 14  
Disposition by Sex, 1980

Disposition	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Waived to Criminal Court	27	.8	4	.3	31	.7
<i>Complaint Not Substantiated</i>						
Dismissed: Not proved or found not involved	475	14.0	143	11.1	618	13.2
<i>Complaint Substantiated</i>						
<b>No Transfer of Legal Custody</b>						
Dismissed: warned, counseled	156	4.6	92	7.2	248	5.3
Hold open without further action	298	8.8	104	8.1	402	8.6
Formal probation	1,342	39.5	364	28.3	1,706	36.4
Referred to another agency or individual for service or supervision	157	4.6	94	7.3	251	5.4
Runaway returned	17	.5	14	1.1	31	.7
Fine or restitution	120	3.5	39	3.0	159	3.4
Other	309	9.1	110	8.6	419	8.9
<b>Transfer of Legal Custody to:</b>						
Youth Development Center	145	4.3	31	2.4	176	3.8
Other public institution	219	6.4	218	17.0	437	9.3
Private agency or institution	65	1.9	25	1.9	90	1.9
Individual	31	.9	22	1.9	53	1.1
Other	40	1.2	26	2.0	66	1.4
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>3,401</b>	<b>100.1**</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>100.2**</b>	<b>4,687</b>	<b>100.1**</b>

\* Does not include 6 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

## Ethnic 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, and therefore measures of delinquency among ethnic groups in the state (with the exception of the majority white population) are difficult to estimate. The information contained in Table 15 does suggest, however, that there is some variation among racial groups in the proportion of referrals for major, minor, and neglect/dependent

reasons. For example, about 62% of referrals involving white juveniles were for major offenses, while approximately 77% of black juveniles were referred for major offenses and close to 55% of Native American juvenile referrals involved major offenses.

The largest referral category in all ethnic groups, though, was for major offenses. Non-white juvenile referrals accounted for approximately 20% of major offense referrals, 11% of status offenses and roughly one-quarter of neglect and dependent cases. Thus, the large majority of referrals in each category involved white juveniles.

**Table 15**  
Reason Referred by Ethnic Group, 1980

Ethnic Group	Major		Minor [Status]		Neglect/Dependent		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
White	2,386	79.8	1,028	88.5	404	74.8	3,818	81.4
Black	333	11.1	46	4.0	56	10.4	435	9.3
Native American	84	2.8	25	2.2	44	8.2	153	3.3
Hispanic	99	3.3	30	2.6	14	2.6	143	3.0
Oriental	5	.2	2	.2	6	1.1	13	.3
Other	85	2.8	30	2.6	16	3.0	131	2.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,992</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,161</b>	<b>100.1*</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>100.1*</b>	<b>4,693</b>	<b>100.1*</b>

\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

## Other Demographic Characteristics

### Living Arrangement

Table 16 presents information concerning the living arrangements of juveniles at the time of referral. For major and status offense referrals, the most common living situation was at home with both parents: about 42% of major offense referrals and 45% of minor offense referrals were in this category. A juvenile living

at home with the mother only was the next largest living arrangement category.

About 33% of all referrals came from single parent families. The largest category of referrals was for neglect/dependent in which almost 41% were from single parent families; 28% of the neglect/dependent juvenile referrals were living with the mother only.

**Table 16**  
Reason Referred by Living Arrangement of Juvenile, 1980

Living Arrangement	Major		Minor [Status]		Neglect/Dependent		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Both Parents	1,075	41.5	398	44.9	87	19.2	1,560	39.7
Mother only	755	29.1	205	23.1	155	34.1	1,115	28.4
Father only	113	4.4	31	3.5	33	7.3	177	4.5
Mother, Stepfather	235	9.1	85	9.6	38	8.4	358	9.1
Father, Stepmother	63	2.4	17	1.9	2	.4	82	2.1
Relatives	72	2.8	24	2.7	31	6.8	127	3.2
Foster/Group Home	74	2.9	58	6.5	78	17.2	210	5.3
Institution	69	2.7	8	.9	4	.9	81	2.1
Independent	42	1.6	6	.7	2	.4	50	1.3
Other	17	.7	13	1.5	10	2.2	40	1.0
Unknown	76	2.9	42	4.7	14	3.1	132	3.4
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>2,591</b>	<b>100.1**</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,932</b>	<b>100.1**</b>

\* Does not include 761 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

### Employment and School Status

The majority of referrals in all categories involved juveniles who were in school at the time of referral: about 83% of all referrals. Referrals of preschool youngsters were almost exclusively in the neglect/dependent category, as would be expected.

Juveniles who were unemployed and in school

constituted the largest proportion of major, minor, and neglect/dependent cases, and except for neglect/dependent referrals, juveniles who were employed and in school comprised the next largest proportion of referrals in these categories. About 13% of all juveniles were not in school at the time of referral (excluding preschool); approximately 15% of major offense referrals and 13% of minor offense referrals were not in school.

**Table 17**  
Reason Referred by Employment  
and School Status, 1980

Employment/School Status	Major		Minor [Status]		Neglect/Dependent		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Unemployed, not in school	237	9.9	75	9.3	28	7.0	340	9.5
Employed, not in school	109	4.6	27	3.4	4	1.0	140	3.9
Unemployed, in school	1,747	73.1	561	69.9	222	55.1	2,530	70.3
Employed, in school	298	12.5	136	16.9	4	1.0	438	12.2
Preschool	0	--	4	.5	145	36.0	149	4.1
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>2,391</b>	<b>100.1**</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>100.1**</b>	<b>3,597</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Does not include 1,096 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

## Separate Juvenile Courts

Referrals to the separate juvenile courts of Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties constituted nearly 57% of all juvenile referrals across the state; however, these counties represent only about 46% of the State's total estimated juvenile population. Lancaster County Separate Juvenile Court processed more dispositions (1,343) in 1980 than any other jurisdiction while Douglas county was second with 989 dispositions, followed by Sarpy County Separate Juvenile Court with 340. It should be noted that the information presented in Tables 18 and 19 (as well as all other data in this report) is based on counts of **dispositions** during 1980 rather than referrals during 1980, and therefore provides only a partial estimate of the activity of the juvenile court. It is likely that the intake activity of juvenile courts involves many more juveniles 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. Also, the three separate juvenile courts in the state have some differences in processing procedures which may 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 processing of referrals to juvenile court is similar to that in Lancaster county. The juvenile probation office of the court handles the intake function and those cases filed with petition are formally disposed of by the court. Cases handled informally by the probation office are not reported to the Commission.

Differences among the three separate juvenile courts in the receipt of referrals are indicated in Table 18. Although the largest source of referrals in Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy counties was from law enforcement authorities, Lancaster County had a much larger proportion of referrals from the county attorney (23.7%) than did the other separate juvenile courts, while Douglas County had a larger proportion of referrals from social agencies than did other separate juvenile courts or the balance of the State's courts sitting as juvenile courts.

**Table 18**  
Source of Referrals in Separate Juvenile Courts  
of Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties, and All Other Counties, 1980

Source of Referral	Douglas		Lancaster		Sarpy		All Others		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Law Enforcement	572	57.8	652	48.6	243	72.1	975	50.0	2,442	52.9
School	33	3.3	52	3.9	23	6.8	29	1.5	137	3.0
Social Agency	197	19.9	5	.4	18	5.3	39	2.0	259	5.6
Probation Office	0	--	42	3.1	10	3.0	0	--	52	1.1
Parents, Relatives	88	8.9	45	3.4	28	8.3	26	1.3	187	4.1
Other Court	92	9.3	168	12.5	3	.9	14	.7	277	6.0
County Attorney	6	.6	318	23.7	9	2.7	812	41.6	1,145	24.8
Other	1	.1	61	4.5	3	.9	55	2.8	120	2.6
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>989</b>	<b>99.9**</b>	<b>1,343</b>	<b>100.1**</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,950</b>	<b>99.9**</b>	<b>4,619</b>	<b>100.1**</b>

\* Does not include 74 cases with missing data.

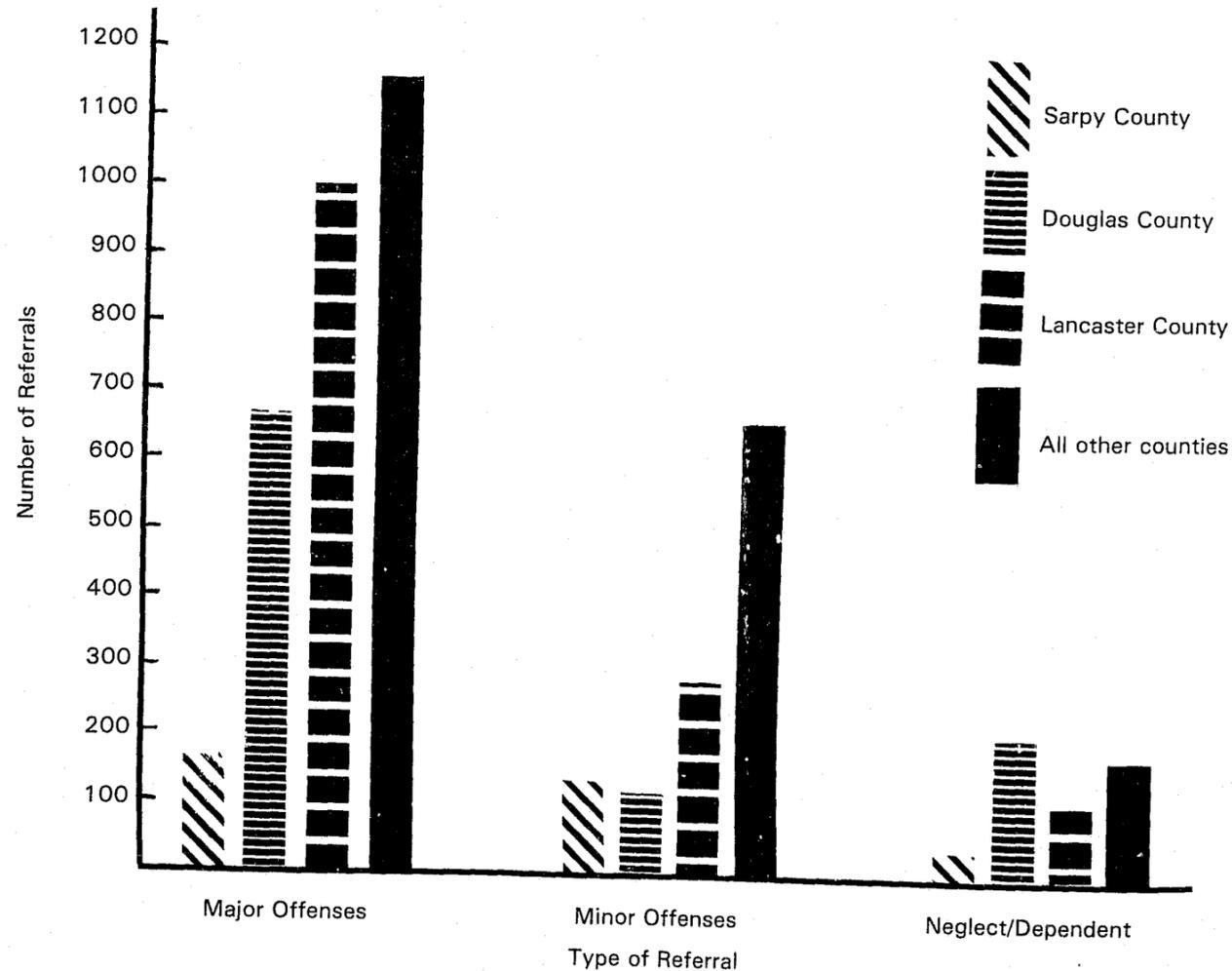
\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

Although Douglas County had a larger estimated juvenile population (122,241) than Lancaster County (51,544), Douglas County had more than 300 fewer dispositions than Lancaster in 1980. This is probably because the count of Douglas County cases was based only on those filed with a formal petition, while Lancaster County totals included not only those filed with petition but also those handled informally by the juvenile probation office in which no formal petition is filed. If the ratio between petitioned cases disposed of and estimated juvenile population is compared for Lancaster and Douglas County, the measures of juvenile court activity are comparable.

For Douglas County, the referral rate for petitioned cases was about 8 per 1,000 juvenile population while the referral rate for petitioned cases in Lancaster County was approximately 10 per 1,000 juvenile population. All but four of the Sarpy County juvenile court cases were filed with petition resulting in a petitioned referral rate of 11 per 1,000 juvenile population.

Figure 8 shows the pattern of referrals for major, minor, and neglect/dependent cases for Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, and all other counties. Detailed county-by-county breakdowns are presented in Appendix A.

**Figure 8**  
Major, Minor, and Neglect/Dependent Referrals  
for Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties and All  
Other Counties, 1980



**Table 19**  
Dispositions in Separate Juvenile Courts  
of Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties, and All Other Counties, 1980

Disposition	Douglas		Lancaster		Sarpy		All Others		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Waived to Criminal Court	0	--	0	--	0	--	31	1.6	31	.7
<i>Complaint Not Substantiated</i>										
Dismissed: Not proved or found not involved	293	29.6	145	10.8	56	16.5	121	6.1	615	13.2
<i>Complaint Substantiated</i>										
<b>No Transfer of Legal Custody.</b>										
Dismissed: warned, counseled	32	3.2	14	1.0	41	12.1	161	8.1	248	5.3
Hold open without further action	0	--	392	29.2	0	--	9	.5	401	8.6
Formal probation	343	34.7	240	17.9	139	40.9	979	49.0	1,701	36.4
Referred to another agency or individual for service or supervision	5	.5	140	10.4	15	4.4	91	4.6	251	5.4
Runaway returned	0	--	14	1.0	1	.3	16	.8	31	.7
Fine or restitution	5	.5	0	--	1	.3	152	7.6	158	3.4
Other	0	--	218	16.2	14	4.1	185	9.3	417	8.9
<b>Transfer of Legal Custody to:</b>										
Youth Development Center	45	4.6	43	3.2	12	3.5	75	3.8	175	4.0
Public Agency	199	20.1	111	8.3	33	9.7	90	4.5	433	9.3
Private Agency	49	5.0	18	1.3	3	.9	20	1.0	90	1.9
Individual	18	1.8	4	.3	6	1.8	25	1.3	53	1.1
Other	0	--	4	.3	19	5.6	43	2.2	66	1.4
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>989</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,343</b>	<b>99.9**</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>100.1**</b>	<b>1,998</b>	<b>100.4**</b>	<b>4,670</b>	<b>100.3**</b>

\* Does not include 23 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

In general, direct comparisons among courts with regard to juvenile processing must be made with caution because of varying procedures in reporting, differences

in the types and number of referrals, juvenile population characteristics, and other related pertinent factors.

Lancaster County had the largest number of major offense referrals (997) and minor offense referrals (240) while Douglas County had the largest number of neglect/dependent cases (206). Overall, the three separate juvenile courts processed about 61% of all major offense referrals, about 42% of all status offense referrals, and 66% of all neglect and dependent referrals which reached final disposition in the State in 1980.

The distribution of disposition categories in the three separate juvenile courts is presented in Table 19. There

were some differences among the separate juvenile courts in the distribution of dispositions, which probably reflects the varying types of cases referred to each court. While about 30% of Lancaster county cases were held open without further action, less than 1% of Douglas, Sarpy, or other courts' referrals were held open. Approximately 30% of referrals in Douglas County were found to be unsubstantiated and dismissed. Comparable Lancaster and Sarpy County proportions were 10.8% and 16.5%, respectively.

## APPENDICES

**Appendix A**  
**County Juvenile Justice Data, 1980**

County	Juvenile Population (Ages 0-17) <sup>1</sup>	Number of Juvenile Arrests <sup>2</sup>	Arrest Rate Per 1,000 Juveniles	Juvenile Court Dispositions <sup>3</sup>			
				Major Offenses	Minor Offenses	Neglect/Dependent	Total Cases
Adams	8,779	204	23.2	45	25	0	70
Antelope	2,260	12	5.3	5	2	4	11
Arthur	149	0	—	—	—	—	—
Banner	253	0	—	0	0	0	0
Blaine	217	0	—	1	0	0	1
Boone	2,116	6	2.8	6	4	0	10
Box Butte	2,561	247	96.5	19	9	8	36
Boyd	851	0	—	0	0	0	0
Brown	1,020	21	20.6	5	1	0	6
Buffalo	9,027	219	24.3	12	2	0	14
Burt	2,147	24	11.2	7	1	0	8
Butler	2,312	13	5.6	15	26	1	42
Cass	5,464	62	11.4	45	12	4	61
Cedar	3,272	20	6.1	1	0	0	1
Chase	1,016	3	3.0	10	6	4	20
Cherry	1,796	51	28.4	1	0	2	3
Cheyenne	2,878	82	28.5	13	11	1	25
Clay	2,259	17	7.5	10	4	2	16
Colfax	2,514	68	27.1	9	22	0	31
Cuming	3,464	73	21.1	1	0	0	1
Custer	3,352	94	28.0	7	3	3	13
Dakota	4,845	119	24.6	21	11	6	38
Dawes	2,329	55	23.6	9	2	2	13
Dawson	5,795	238	41.1	65	33	10	108
Deuel	636	7	11.0	7	0	0	7
Dixon	1,801	2	1.1	9	6	1	16
Dodge	11,017	306	27.8	—	—	—	360*
Douglas	122,241	3,429	28.1	667	117	206	990
Dundy	636	5	7.9	0	0	2	0
Fillmore	1,959	36	18.4	2	24	1	27
Franklin	897	3	3.3	0	0	0	0
Frontier	946	10	10.6	0	0	1	1
Furnas	1,442	8	5.6	6	2	2	10
Gage	6,305	141	22.3	71	21	6	98
Garden	670	6	9.0	1	0	0	1
Garfield	561	5	8.9	1	0	0	1
Gosper	483	0	—	1	0	0	1
Grant	266	2	7.5	0	0	0	0
Greeley	998	0	—	1	5	0	6
Hall	14,149	370	26.2	123	128	29	280
Hamilton	2,582	89	34.5	26	14	0	40
Harlan	947	17	18.0	0	3	0	3
Hayes	355	0	—	0	0	0	0
Hitchcock	901	4	4.4	3	0	0	3
Holt	3,532	3	.9	—	—	—	—
Hooker	250	2	8.0	0	0	0	0
Howard	1,982	22	11.1	2	2	3	7
Jefferson	2,285	71	31.1	15	2	3	20
Johnson	1,370	16	11.7	2	1	0	3

\*Referral total provided by county court

**Appendix A (Continued)**  
**County Juvenile Justice Data, 1980**

County	Juvenile Population (Ages 0-17) <sup>1</sup>	Number of Juvenile Arrests <sup>2</sup>	Arrest Rate Per 1,000 Juveniles	Juvenile Court Dispositions <sup>3</sup>			
				Major Offenses	Minor Offenses	Neglect/Dependent	Total Cases
Kearney	1,839	45	24.5	2	4	0	6
Keith	2,516	100	39.8	—	—	—	—
Keya Paha	364	0	—	—	—	—	—
Kimball	1,669	14	8.4	7	2	0	9
Knox	2,815	14	5.0	10	11	4	25
Lancaster	51,544	2,258	43.8	997	240	112	1,349
Lincoln	9,154	306	33.4	46	23	0	69
Logan	300	0	—	1	0	0	1
Loup	237	0	—	0	0	0	0
Madison	8,456	254	30.0	22	7	7	36
McPherson	175	0	—	0	0	0	0
Merrick	2,651	52	19.6	12	1	0	13
Morrill	1,423	28	19.7	13	5	1	19
Nance	1,221	45	36.9	7	1	0	8
Nemaha	2,149	53	24.7	16	0	1	17
Nuckolls	1,805	5	2.8	—	—	—	—
Otoe	4,123	66	16.0	26	17	1	44
Pawnee	870	3	3.5	1	1	1	3
Perkins	784	0	—	6	0	2	8
Phelps	2,706	61	22.5	12	7	0	19
Pierce	2,405	54	22.5	4	1	0	5
Plate	8,422	258	30.6	22	23	1	46
Polk	1,524	38	24.9	1	0	1	2
Red Willow	3,445	72	20.9	36	7	1	44
Richardson	2,806	46	16.4	11	8	6	25
Rock	569	0	—	10	3	3	16
Saline	3,285	72	21.9	19	23	2	44
Sarpy	29,949	1,065	35.6	168	135	40	343
Saunders	4,543	76	16.7	24	3	2	29
Scotts Bluff	11,139	358	32.1	138	48	34	220
Seward	3,832	95	24.8	14	15	3	32
Sheridan	1,830	86	47.0	28	7	5	40
Sherman	1,185	0	—	1	0	0	1
Sioux	516	5	9.7	0	0	0	0
Stanton	1,712	26	15.2	1	9	0	10
Thayer	1,734	26	15.0	7	11	0	18
Thomas	280	0	—	—	—	—	—
Thurston	1,992	0	—	14	2	6	22
Valley	1,368	29	21.2	13	8	1	32
Washington	4,340	95	21.9	26	2	1	29
Wayne	2,562	18	7.0	—	—	—	—
Webster	1,191	5	4.2	1	1	0	2
Wheeler	309	0	—	0	0	0	0
York	3,843	273	71.0	32	27	3	62
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>441,469</b>	<b>12,183</b>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>2,992</b>	<b>1,161</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>4,692<sup>4</sup></b>

<sup>1</sup>Source: *Nebraska Population Projections II*, UNL Bureau of Business Research, Medium Series (Low Series for Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties)

<sup>2</sup>Source: 1980 *Nebraska Uniform Crime Reports*

<sup>3</sup>Source: 1980 *Nebraska Juvenile Court Report*

<sup>4</sup>Does not include Dodge County

—Data not available

**Appendix B**  
**Total Juvenile Arrests**  
**Nebraska Uniform Crime Reports, 1974-1980**

	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
Murder, Manslaughter	9	6	2	8	4	12	4
Death by Negligence	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Forcible Rape	23	36	30	18	13	34	20
Robbery	213	210	158	127	102	122	107
Felony Assault	160	163	137	106	90	67	67
Burglary	1,279	1,175	1,120	1,181	1,048	889	747
Larceny-Theft	4,023	4,056	3,765	3,562	3,349	3,583	3,409
Motor Vehicle Theft	657	527	467	454	458	388	305
Misdemeanor Assault	571	440	500	451	317	375	352
Arson	115	50	65	44	31	89	45
Forgery, Counterfeiting	76	104	82	103	86	111	82
Fraud	123	137	116	97	116	116	108
Embezzlement	4	1	1	4	6	6	0
Stolen property-Buy, etc.	203	182	200	209	185	197	256
Vandalism	1,424	1,248	1,384	1,105	834	1,011	1,093
Weapons Offenses	75	77	68	60	58	80	51
Prostitution, Comm. Vice	26	14	28	15	6	16	24
Sex Offenses	112	72	86	38	57	56	56
Drug Abuse Violations	1,162	1,064	1,038	918	746	536	456
Gambling	8	0	3	0	0	0	3
Offenses Against Fam., Children	3	11	3	10	7	5	11
Driving Under the Influence	172	209	259	290	302	332	313
Liquor Laws	1,405	1,549	1,564	1,757	1,585	1,768	1,733
*Drunkenness-Intoxication	261	323	256	318	323	—	—
Disorderly Conduct	725	692	568	460	509	505	611
Vagrancy	16	9	4	6	8	2	1
All Other Offenses	1,248	1,173	1,056	1,408	1,268	1,285	1,376
Suspicion	201	199	62	79	72	36	31
Curfew, Loitering Violations	633	466	658	712	462	491	455
Runaways	1,260	1,070	590	551	523	451	462
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,189</b>	<b>15,264</b>	<b>14,272</b>	<b>14,092</b>	<b>12,567</b>	<b>12,564</b>	<b>12,180</b>

\*Decriminalized in 1979

END