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JUVENILE JUSTICE BULLETIN

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Juvenile Arrests 2005

Howard N. Snyder

In 2005, law enforcement agencies in the United States made an estimated 2.1 million arrests of persons under age 18.* According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), juveniles accounted for 16% of all violent crime arrests and 26% of all property crime arrests in 2005. The substantial growth in juvenile violent crime arrests that began in the late 1980s and peaked in 1994 was followed by 10 consecutive years of decline. Between 1994 and 2004, the juvenile arrest rate for Violent Crime Index offenses fell 49%, reaching its lowest level since at least 1980. However, this long-term downward trend was broken in 2005 with a 2% annual increase in Violent Crime Index arrests. More specifically, 2005 saw an increase in juvenile arrests for murder and robbery, but continued declines in arrests for forcible rape and aggravated assault.

These findings are derived from data that local law enforcement agencies across the country report annually to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. Based on these data, the FBI prepares its annual *Crime in the United States* report, which summarizes crimes known to the police and arrests made during the reporting calendar year. This information is used to characterize the extent and nature of juvenile crime that comes to the attention of the justice system. Other recent findings from the UCR Program include the following:

* Throughout this Bulletin, persons under age 18 are referred to as juveniles. See Notes on page 12.

- ◆ Of the estimated 1,650 juveniles murdered in 2005, 36% were under 5 years of age, 71% were male, 50% were white, and 50% were killed with a firearm.
- ◆ Juveniles were involved in 12% of all violent crimes cleared in 2005—specifically, 5% of murders, 11% of forcible rapes, 15% of robberies, and 12% of aggravated assaults.
- ◆ In the peak year of 1993, there were about 3,790 juvenile arrests for murder. By 2004, the number of juvenile murder arrests had dropped to 1,110, which was 71% below the 1993 level. However, in 2005, this figure increased to 1,260.
- ◆ The violent crime arrest rate for black juveniles was four times greater than the white rate in 2004 and five times greater in 2005.
- ◆ Females accounted for 24% of juvenile arrests for aggravated assault and 33% of those for other assaults in 2005, far more than their involvement in other types of violent crimes.
- ◆ Between 1980 and 2005, the juvenile arrest rate for simple assault increased 105% for males and 285% for females.
- ◆ Between 1996 and 2005, juvenile arrests for drug abuse violations fell 14% for males and increased 14% for females.
- ◆ The juvenile arrest rate for motor vehicle theft declined consistently and substantially between 1990 and 2005, falling 68%.

A Message From OJJDP

Juvenile Arrests 2005 summarizes and analyzes national and State juvenile arrest data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's report *Crime in the United States 2005*. The Bulletin provides baseline information for monitoring the Nation's progress in addressing juvenile crime.

From 2004 to 2005, juvenile arrests for murder and robbery increased 20% and 11%, respectively. Although such increases after decade-long declines cannot be ignored, they should be viewed in perspective. In 2004, juvenile arrests for these crimes were close to their lowest points in a generation. The number of these arrests in 2005 was, therefore, still far below the peaks of the mid-1990s.

Although some of the recent increases in juvenile violent crime arrests are cause for vigilance, the overall large declines in the violent and property crime arrests from the mid-1990s through 2005 indicate a broadbased and general reduction in the delinquent behavior of America's youth. Nevertheless, this Bulletin highlights remaining areas of concern. For example, between 1980 and 2005, juvenile arrest rates for simple assault increased more than 140%, with the increase twice as great for females as for males. Also, after declining for 10 years, the juvenile arrest rate for weapons law violations increased 27% between 2002 and 2005, with the increase far greater for black youth (48%) than white youth (15%).

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What do arrest statistics count?

To interpret the material in this Bulletin properly, the reader must have a clear understanding of what these statistics count. Arrest statistics report the number of arrests that law enforcement agencies made in a particular year—not the number of individuals arrested, nor the number of crimes committed. The number of arrests is not equivalent to the number of people arrested because an unknown number of individuals are arrested more than once in the year. Nor do arrest statistics represent counts of crimes that arrested individuals commit because a series of crimes that one individual commits may culminate in a single arrest or a single crime may result in the arrest of more than one person. This latter situation, where many arrests result from one crime, is relatively common in juvenile law-violating behavior because juveniles are more likely than adults to commit

crimes in groups. This is the primary reason why one should not use arrest statistics to indicate the relative proportion of crime that juveniles and adults commit. Arrest statistics are most appropriately a measure of flow into the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Arrest statistics also have limitations for measuring the volume of arrests for a particular offense. Under the UCR Program, the FBI requires law enforcement agencies to classify an arrest by the most serious offense charged in that arrest. For example, an agency would report the arrest of a youth charged with aggravated assault and possession of a controlled substance to the FBI as an arrest for aggravated assault. Therefore, when arrest statistics show that law enforcement agencies made an estimated 191,800 arrests of young people for drug abuse violations in 2005, it means that a drug abuse violation was the most serious charge in these 191,800 arrests. An

unknown number of additional arrests in 2005 included a drug charge as a lesser offense.

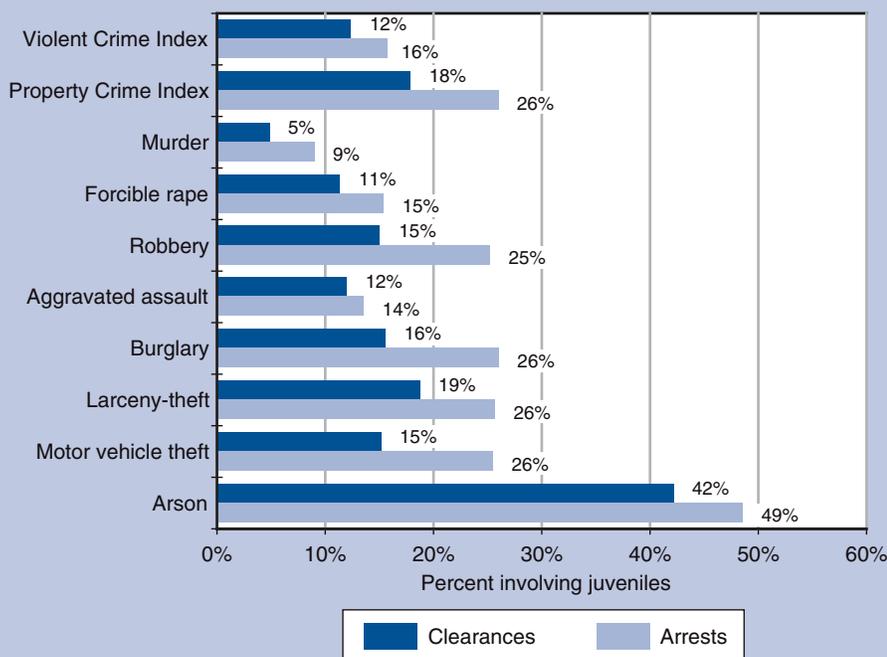
What do clearance statistics count?

Clearance statistics measure the proportion of reported crimes that were resolved by an arrest or other, exceptional means (e.g., death of the offender, unwillingness of the victim to cooperate). A single arrest may result in many clearances. For example, 1 arrest could clear 40 burglaries if the person was charged with committing all 40 of these crimes. Or multiple arrests may result in a single clearance if a group of offenders committed the crime. For those interested in juvenile justice issues, the FBI also reports information on the proportion of clearances that involved offenders under age 18. This statistic is a better indicator of the proportion of crime that this age group commits than is the arrest proportion, although there are some concerns that even the clearance statistic overestimates the juvenile proportion of crimes.

For example, the FBI reports that persons under age 18 accounted for 25% of all robbery arrests but only 15% of all robberies that were cleared in 2005. If it can be assumed that offender characteristics of cleared robberies are similar to those of robberies that were not cleared, then it would be appropriate to conclude that persons under age 18 were responsible for 15% of all robberies in 2005. However, the offender characteristics of cleared and noncleared robberies may differ for a number of reasons. For example, research has shown that juvenile robbers were more easily apprehended than adult robbers; consequently, the juvenile proportion of cleared robberies probably overestimates the juvenile responsibility for all robberies. To add to the difficulty in interpreting clearance statistics, the FBI's reporting guidelines require the clearance to be tied to the oldest offender in the group if more than one person is involved in the crime.

In summary, while the interpretation of reported clearance proportions is not straightforward, these data are the closest measure generally available of the proportion of crime known to law enforcement that is attributed to persons under age 18.

The juvenile proportion of arrests exceeded the juvenile proportion of crimes cleared by arrest or exceptional means in each offense category, reflecting the fact that juveniles are more likely to commit crimes in groups and are more likely to be arrested than are adults



Data source: *Crime in the United States 2005* (Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2006), tables 28 and 38.

The number of juveniles murdered increased in 2004 and 2005

Each *Crime in the United States* report presents estimates of the number of crimes reported to law enforcement agencies. A large number of most crimes are never reported to law enforcement. Murder, however, is one crime that is nearly always reported.

An estimated 16,690 murders were reported to law enforcement agencies in 2005, or 5.6 murders for every 100,000 U.S. residents. The murder rate in the U.S. was essentially constant between 1999 (the year with the fewest murders in the last three decades) and 2005. Prior to 1999, the last year in which the U.S. murder rate was under 6.0 was 1966.

Of all murder victims in 2005, 90% (or 15,040 victims) were 18 years of age or older. The other 1,650 murder victims were under age 18 (i.e., juveniles). The number of juveniles murdered in 2005 was 3% above the average number of juveniles murdered in the prior 5-year period, and 43% below the peak year of 1993, when an estimated 2,880 juveniles were murdered in the U.S. During this same period, the estimated number of adults murdered fell 31%.

Of all juveniles murdered in 2005, 36% were under age 5, 71% were male, and 50% were white. Compared with older juvenile murder victims, victims under age 13 in 2005 were more likely to be female (44% vs. 16%) and less likely to be black (40% vs. 53%).

In 2005, 68% of all murder victims were killed with a firearm. Adults were more likely to be killed with a firearm (70%) than were juveniles (50%). However, the involvement of a firearm depended greatly on the age of the juvenile victim. In 2005, 14% of murdered juveniles under age 13 were killed with a firearm, compared with 80% of murdered juveniles age 13 or older. The most common method of murdering children under age 5 was by physical assault: in 50% of these murders, the offenders' only weapons were their hands and/or feet, compared with only 2% of juvenile victims age 13 or older and 4% of adult victims. In 2005, knives or other cutting instruments were used in 8% of juvenile murders and 14% of adult murders.

The number of arrests of juveniles in 2005 (2.1 million) was 25% fewer than the number of arrests in 1996

Most Serious Offense	2005 Estimated Number of Juvenile Arrests	Percent of Total Juvenile Arrests		Percent Change		
		Female	Under Age 15	1996– 2005	2001– 2005	2004– 2005
Total	2,143,700	29%	30%	-25%	-6%	-3%
Violent Crime Index	95,300	18	31	-25	0	2
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	1,260	10	10	-47	16	20
Forcible rape	3,940	2	37	-25	-15	-11
Robbery	28,910	9	23	-34	13	11
Aggravated assault	61,200	24	34	-20	-5	-1
Property Crime Index	418,500	34	34	-44	-15	-8
Burglary	78,000	12	33	-44	-13	-5
Larceny-theft	294,900	42	35	-43	-15	-9
Motor vehicle theft	37,700	17	23	-54	-24	-9
Arson	7,900	14	59	-24	-12	1
Nonindex						
Other assaults	247,900	33	41	4	9	-1
Forgery and counterfeiting	4,200	31	12	-52	-31	-16
Fraud	8,200	35	18	-31	-13	-2
Embezzlement	1,200	44	6	-15	-40	8
Stolen property (buying, receiving, possessing)	22,300	17	25	-48	-16	-6
Vandalism	104,100	14	42	-28	-3	-1
Weapons (carrying, possessing, etc.)	44,800	11	34	-14	24	7
Prostitution and commercialized vice	1,600	74	14	20	22	-12
Sex offense (except forcible rape and prostitution)	16,700	9	50	-2	-11	-9
Drug abuse violations	191,800	17	16	-10	-7	-2
Gambling	2,000	2	14	-30	37	23
Offenses against the family and children	5,400	39	32	-37	-40	-7
Driving under the influence	17,800	22	2	-4	-13	-9
Liquor law violations	126,400	36	9	-20	-13	-3
Drunkenness	15,900	24	12	-39	-21	-8
Disorderly conduct	201,400	32	40	3	14	-1
Vagrancy	4,700	27	32	-30	109	1
All other offenses (except traffic)	363,400	27	26	-17	-9	-2
Suspicion (not included in totals)	500	29	24	-75	-62	-18
Curfew and loitering	140,800	30	28	-27	0	2
Runaways	109,000	58	35	-44	-16	-5

- ◆ In 2005, there were an estimated 61,200 juvenile arrests for aggravated assault. Between 1996 and 2005, the annual number of such arrests fell 20%.
- ◆ Between 1995 and 2004, murder and robbery arrests declined substantially (63% and 44%, respectively). As a result, the seemingly large percentage increases between 2004 and 2005 (20% and 11%, respectively) raised the annual arrest counts to levels that were still well below those of 1995 (56% and 38%, respectively).
- ◆ In 2005, females accounted for 29% of all juvenile arrests, 18% of juvenile Violent Crime Index arrests, and 34% of juvenile Property Crime Index arrests.
- ◆ In 2005, youth under the age of 15 accounted for about one-third of all violent and property crime arrests.

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

Data source: *Crime in the United States 2005* (Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2006), tables 29, 32, 34, 36, 38, and 40. Arrest estimates were developed by the National Center for Juvenile Justice.

The juvenile share of property crime was the lowest in 40 years

The relative responsibility of juveniles and adults for crime is difficult to determine. Law enforcement is more likely to clear crimes that juveniles commit than crimes that adults commit. Therefore, drawing a picture of crime from law enforcement records is likely to give a high estimate of juvenile responsibility for crime.

Clearance data show that the proportion of violent crimes that law enforcement attributes to juveniles has declined in recent years. The juvenile proportion of violent crimes cleared by arrest or exceptional means grew from between 9% and 10% in the 1980s to 14% in 1994; after 1994, the proportion fell somewhat, remaining near 12% between 1997 and 2005.

Since 1980, the juvenile proportion of murders cleared peaked in 1994 at 10%. Between 2000 and 2005, the proportion was 5%—the lowest proportion since 1987 and slightly above the levels of the mid-1980s. The juvenile proportion of cleared forcible rapes peaked in 1995 (15%) and then fell; however, the 2005 proportion (11%) was still above the levels of the late 1980s (9%). The juvenile proportion of robbery clearances also peaked in 1995 (20%) and then fell; the proportion in 2005 (15%) was halfway between the peak level in 1995 and the low levels of the late 1980s (10%). The juvenile proportion of aggravated assault clearances in 2005 (12%) was slightly below its peak in 1994 (13%) and substantially above the levels of the late 1980s (8%). The juvenile proportion of Property Crime Index offenses cleared by arrest or exceptional means in 2005 (18%) was at its lowest level since at least the mid-1960s.

Juvenile arrests for violence increased slightly in 2005

The FBI assesses trends in the volume of violent crimes by monitoring four offenses that are consistently reported by law enforcement agencies nationwide. These four crimes—murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault—together form the Violent Crime Index.

Following annual declines between 1994 and 2004, juvenile arrests for a Violent Crime Index offense increased 2% between 2004 and 2005. Given that the annual number of arrests in 2004 was smaller than in any year since 1987, the number of juvenile Violent Crime Index arrests in 2005 was still relatively small, and the increase should not be characterized as indicative of an upcoming juvenile crime wave.

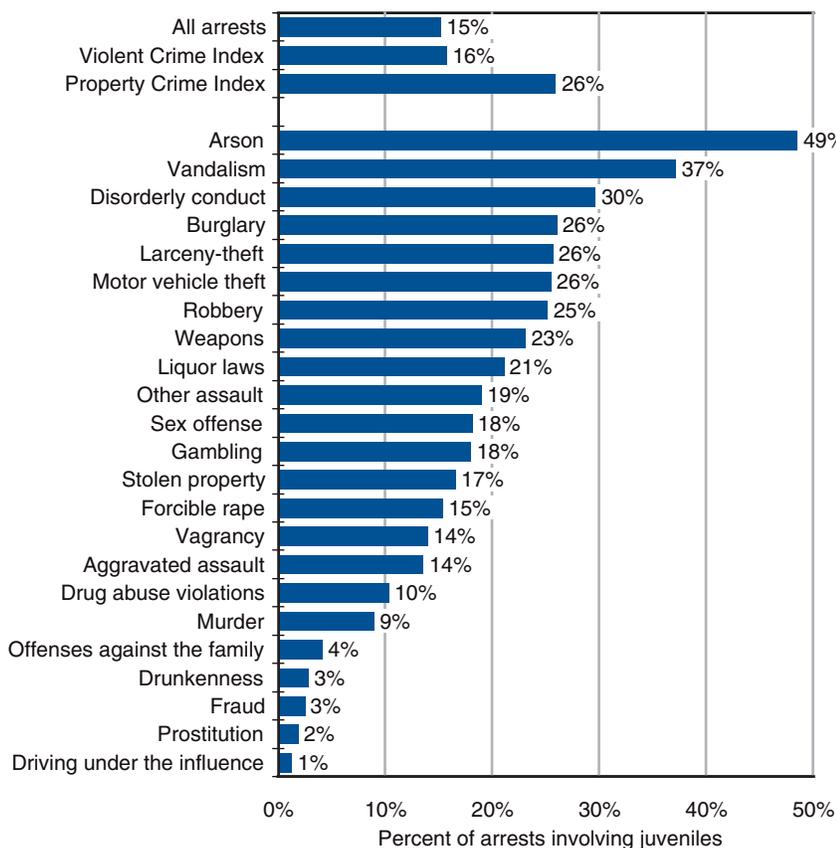
The number of juvenile arrests in 2005 for forcible rape was lower than in any year since at least 1980. The number of juvenile aggravated assault arrests in 2005 was lower than in any year since 1988. In contrast, after also falling to relatively low levels in 2004, juvenile arrests for robbery and murder both increased in 2005 (11% and 20%, respectively). It should be emphasized that both these increases are from low points. To put these increases in perspective, if the 2004–2005 increase was to continue annually into the future, it would take another 16 years for juvenile murder arrests to return to their peak level of the mid-1990s.

In the 10-year period of 1996–2005, the number of arrests in most offense categories either declined more for juveniles than adults or increased less:

Most Serious Offense	Percent Change in Arrests 1996–2005	
	Juvenile	Adult
Violent Crime Index	-25%	-9%
Murder	-47	-11
Forcible rape	-25	-18
Robbery	-34	-8
Aggravated assault	-20	-9
Property Crime Index	-44	-9
Burglary	-44	-1
Larceny-theft	-43	-13
Motor vehicle theft	-54	9
Simple assault	4	-4
Weapons law violations	-14	-15
Drug abuse violations	16	30

Data source: *Crime in the United States 2005*, table 32.

In 2005, juveniles were involved in 1 in 11 arrests for murder, 1 in 10 arrests for a drug abuse violation, and 1 in 4 arrests for a weapons violation, robbery, motor vehicle theft, larceny-theft, and burglary



Data source: *Crime in the United States 2005* (Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2006), table 38.

Juvenile arrests for property crimes in 2005 were the lowest in at least three decades

As with violent crime, the FBI monitors four offenses that are consistently reported by law enforcement agencies nationwide and are pervasive in all geographical areas of the country to assess trends in the volume of property crimes. These four crimes, which form the Property Crime Index, are burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

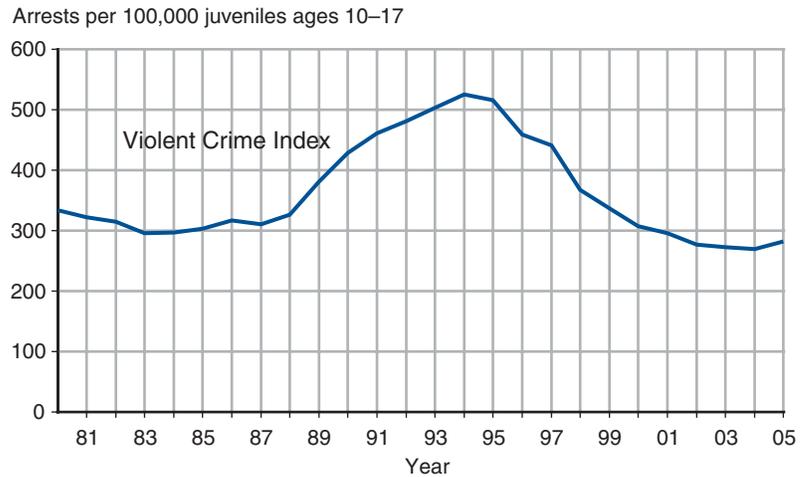
For the period 1980–1994, during which juvenile violent crime arrest rates increased substantially, juvenile property crime arrest rates remained relatively constant. After this long period of relative stability, juvenile property crime arrest rates began to fall. Between 1994 and 2005, the juvenile Property Crime Index arrest rate dropped 51%, to its lowest level since at least the 1970s. This period also saw large declines in juvenile arrest rates for individual property offenses—burglary (52%), larceny-theft (49%), motor vehicle theft (64%), and arson (34%). Taking a longer view, arrest rates in 2005 for each property crime were at their lowest level since at least the 1970s.

Most arrested juveniles were referred to court

In most States, some persons younger than age 18 are, because of their age or by statutory exclusion, under the jurisdiction of the criminal justice system. For arrested persons younger than age 18 and under the original jurisdiction of their State's juvenile justice system, the FBI's UCR Program monitors what happens as a result of the arrest. This is the only instance in the UCR Program in which the statistics on arrests coincide with State variations in the legal definition of a juvenile.

In 2005, 20% of arrests involving youth eligible in their State for processing in the juvenile justice system were handled within law enforcement agencies and released, 71% were referred to juvenile court, and 7% were referred directly to criminal court. The others were referred to a welfare agency or to another police agency. The proportion of juvenile arrests sent to juvenile court increased from 1980 to 2005 (from 58% to 71%). In 2005, the proportion of juvenile arrests sent to juvenile court in cities with a population of more than 250,000 (68%) was lower than the proportion sent to juvenile court in smaller cities (71%).

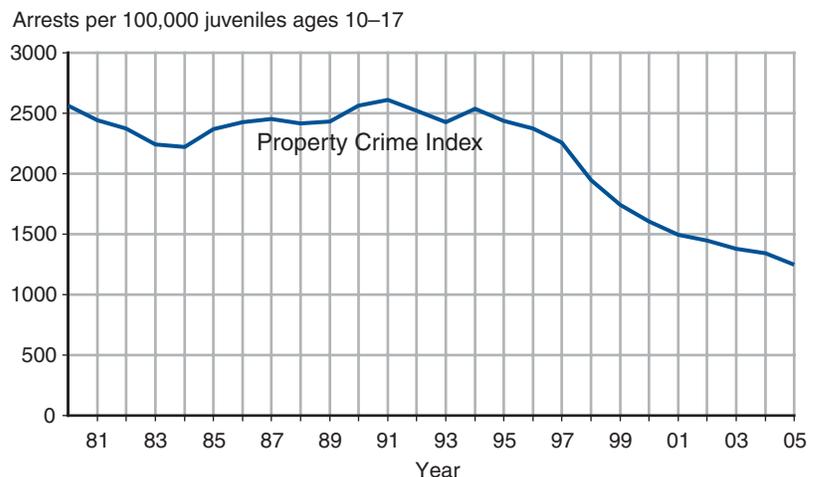
Following a year when it fell to its lowest level since at least 1980, the juvenile Violent Crime Index arrest rate increased in 2005



- ◆ The juvenile Violent Crime Index arrest rate increased 5% between 2004 and 2005. This increase follows a year in which the rate had reached an historically low level. To place the extent of this increase in perspective, if the rate continued to increase annually by the same amount, it would be almost 20 years before it once again reached the peak level of 1994.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics. [See data source note on p. 12 for detail.]

After years of relative stability, the juvenile Property Crime Index arrest rate began a decline in the mid-1990s that continued through 2005

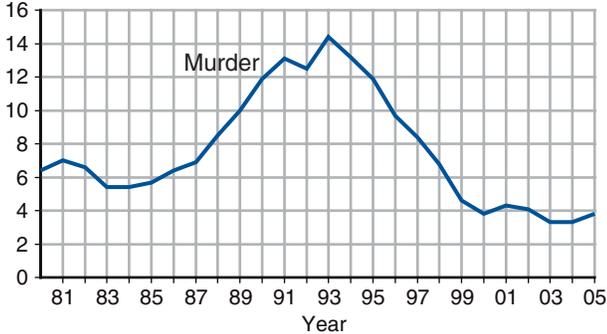


- ◆ The juvenile arrest rate for Property Crime Index offenses in 2005 was half of what it was in 1980—down 51% over the period. The large declines over the last decade in the two arrest indexes that have traditionally been used to monitor juvenile crime indicates a substantial reduction in the law-violating behavior of America's youth over this period.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics. [See data source note on p. 12 for detail.]

In 2005, the juvenile arrest rates for murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault were each well below their peak levels of the 1990s

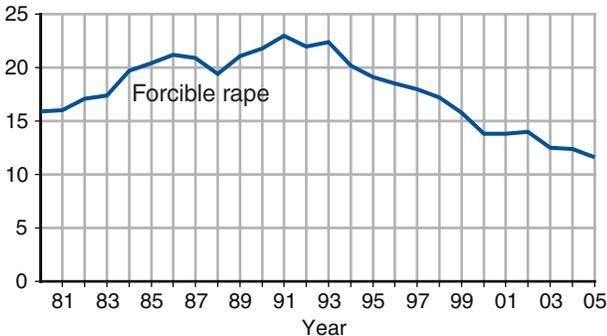
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Murder

- ◆ From the mid-1980s to the peak in 1993, the juvenile arrest rate for murder more than doubled; since then, a steep decline has occurred.
- ◆ With two exceptions (2001 and 2005), the juvenile arrest rate for murder fell each year after 1993, so that by 2005 it was 74% below the peak 1993 rate.
- ◆ The 20% growth in the number of juvenile murder arrests between 2004 and 2005 increased the number to 1,260 arrests; even with this increase, the 2005 level was still well below the 1993 estimate of 3,790 arrests.

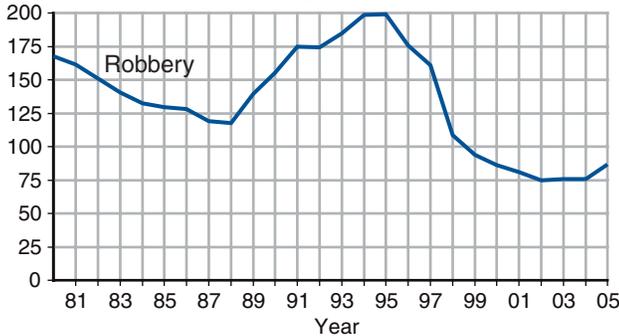
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Forcible Rape

- ◆ Following the general pattern of other assaultive offenses, the juvenile arrest rate for forcible rape increased from the early 1980s through the early 1990s and then fell substantially.
- ◆ Over the 1980–2005 period, the juvenile arrest rate for forcible rape peaked in 1991, 44% above its 1980 level.
- ◆ From 1991, with minor exceptions, the juvenile arrest rate for forcible rape dropped annually through 2005. By 1999, it had returned to its 1980 level. By 2005, the rate had fallen to a point 27% below the 1980 level, 49% below its 1991 peak, and to its lowest level in more than a generation.

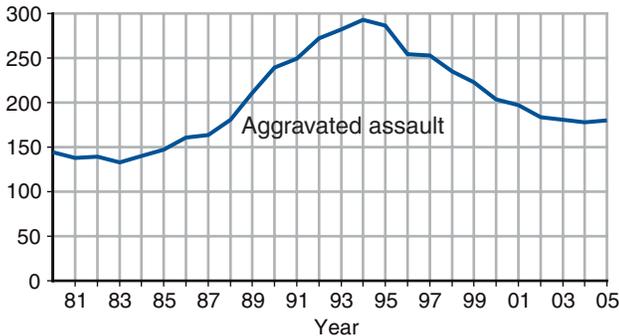
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Robbery

- ◆ Unlike the juvenile arrest rates for other violent crimes, the rate for robbery declined through much of the 1980s, reaching a low point in 1988, 30% below its 1980 level.
- ◆ The growth in the juvenile arrest rate for robbery between 1988 and 1994–1995 moved the rate above the 1980 level, a pattern found in each of the other Violent Crime Index offenses.
- ◆ Like the juvenile arrest rates for other Violent Crime Index offenses, the rate for robbery declined substantially after its mid-1990s peak. The rate fell 56% between 1995 and 2005; however, it did increase between 2002 and 2005, returning in 2005 to its 2000 level.

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Aggravated Assault

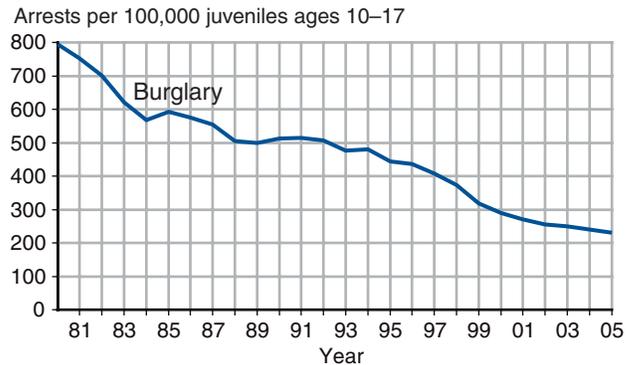
- ◆ The juvenile arrest rate for aggravated assault doubled between 1980 and 1994 and then fell substantially and consistently through 2004. After many years of decline, the rate increased slightly (1%) in 2005.
- ◆ The juvenile arrest rate for aggravated assault declined 38% from 1994 through 2005.
- ◆ Unlike the juvenile arrest rates for other crimes in the Violent Crime Index, the rate for aggravated assault in 2005 was not below its levels in the early 1980s. The rate in 2005 was, in fact, 25% more than its 1980 level.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics. [See data source note on p. 12 for detail.]

The juvenile arrest rate trends for the four offenses that make up the Property Crime Index show very different patterns over the 1980–2005 period

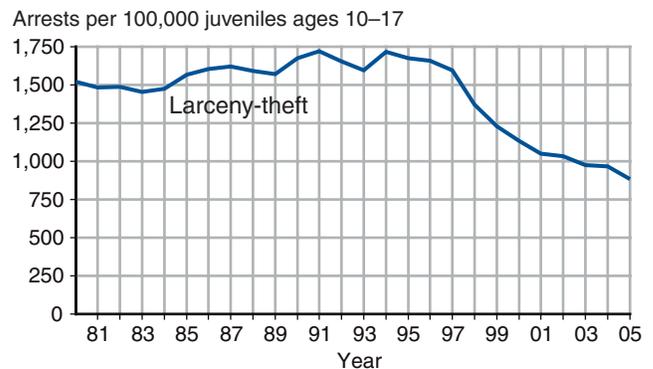
Burglary

- ◆ Unique in the set of Property Crime Index offenses, the juvenile arrest rate for burglary declined almost consistently and fell substantially between 1980 and 2005. The 2005 rate was less than one-third of the 1980 rate, down 71%.
- ◆ This large fall in juvenile arrests from 1980 through 2005 was not replicated in the adult statistics. Between 1996 and 2005, the number of juvenile burglary arrests fell 44%, while adult burglary arrests remained essentially the same. In the prior 10-year period, the juvenile and adult patterns were the same; between 1986 and 1995, both juvenile and adult arrests for burglary fell 18%.



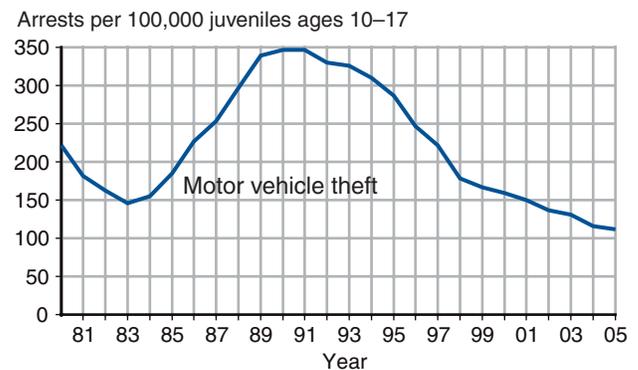
Larceny-Theft

- ◆ The juvenile arrest rate for larceny-theft remained essentially constant between 1980 and 1997, then fell 45% between 1997 and 2005.
- ◆ In 2005, 70% of all juvenile arrests for Property Crime Index offenses were for larceny-theft. Therefore, the annual trends of juvenile arrests for Property Crime Index offenses largely reflect the pattern of larceny-theft arrests (which itself is dominated by shoplifting—the most common larceny-theft violation). As can be seen on this page, the juvenile arrest trends for individual property crimes vary considerably and, therefore, should be considered separately.



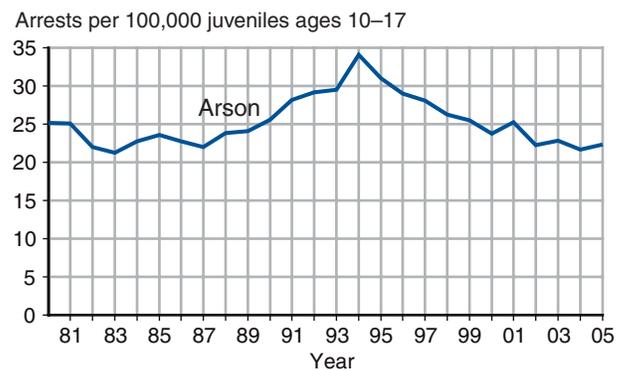
Motor Vehicle Theft

- ◆ The juvenile arrest rate for motor vehicle theft more than doubled between 1983 and 1990, up 137%.
- ◆ After the peak years of 1990 and 1991, the juvenile arrest rate for motor vehicle theft declined substantially and consistently through 2005, falling 68%. In 2005, the juvenile arrest rate for motor vehicle theft was lower than in any year in the 1980–2005 period.
- ◆ This large decline in juvenile arrests was not replicated in the adult statistics. Between 1996 and 2005, the number of juvenile motor vehicle theft arrests fell more than 54%, while adult motor vehicle theft arrests increased 8%.



Arson

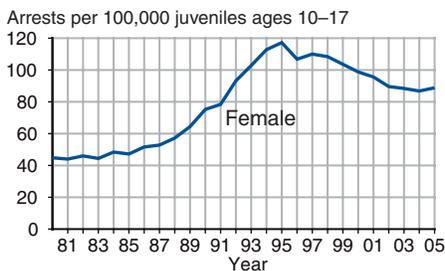
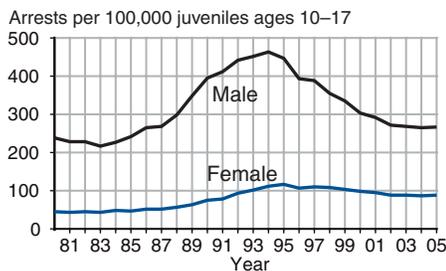
- ◆ After being relatively stable for most of the 1980s, the juvenile arrest rate for arson grew 33% between 1990 and 1994.
- ◆ The juvenile arrest rate for arson declined substantially between 1994 and 2005, falling 34%.
- ◆ In the 26 years from 1980 through 2005, only 5 years had a lower juvenile arrest rate for arson than did 2005. The 2005 rate was just 5% above the lowest rate in the period.



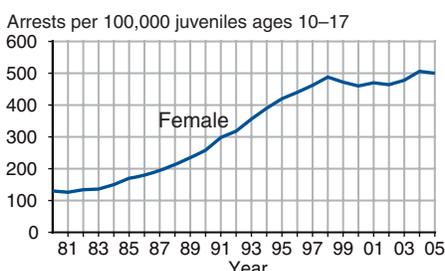
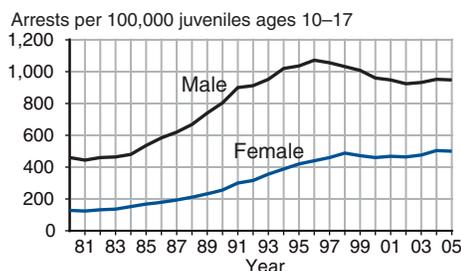
Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics. [See data source note on p. 12 for detail.]

Unlike the female rates, the male juvenile arrest rates for aggravated assault and weapons law violations in 2005 were near their low points for the 1980–2005 period

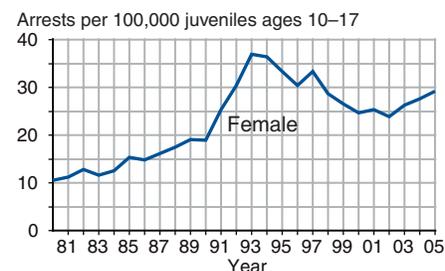
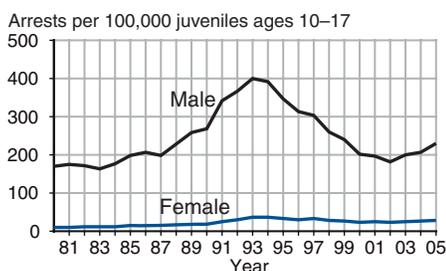
Aggravated assault



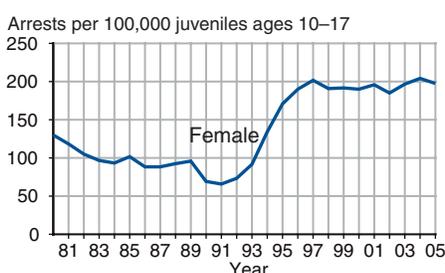
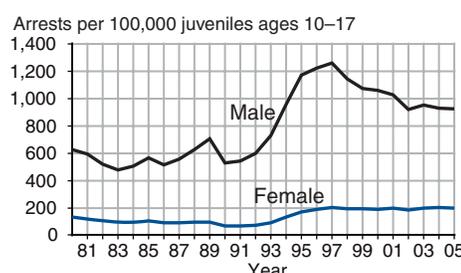
Other (simple) assault



Weapons



Drug abuse violations



- ◆ Comparing juvenile arrest rates in 2005 with those in 1980, the growth in the rates is considerably greater for females than males for the offenses of aggravated assault (97% vs. 12%), simple assault (285% vs. 105%), and weapons law violations (175% vs. 36%).
- ◆ In contrast, the increase between 1980 and 2005 in the female juvenile arrest rate for drug abuse violations was similar to the increase in the male rate (52% vs. 48%).

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics. [See data source note on p. 12 for detail.]

In 2005, 29% of juvenile arrests involved females

Law enforcement agencies made 630,000 arrests of females under age 18 in 2005. From 1996 through 2005, arrests of juvenile females decreased less than male arrests in most offense categories; in some categories, female arrests increased while male arrests decreased.

Most Serious Offense	Percent Change in Juvenile Arrests 1996–2005	
	Female	Male
Violent Crime Index	-10%	-28%
Aggravated assault	-5	-23
Simple assault	24	-4
Property Crime Index	-29	-49
Burglary	-34	-46
Larceny-theft	-28	-50
Motor vehicle theft	-47	-55
Vandalism	-10	-30
Weapons	15	-16
Drug abuse violations	14	-14
Liquor law violations	-5	-26
DUI	31	-11
Disorderly conduct	29	-6

Data source: *Crime in the United States 2005*, table 33.

Gender differences also occurred in the assault arrest trends for adults. Between 1996 and 2005, adult male arrests for aggravated assault fell 12%, while female arrests rose 8%. While adult male arrests for simple assault fell 8% between 1996 and 2005, adult female arrests rose 13%. Therefore, the disproportionate growth in female assault arrests over this period was related to factors that affect both juveniles and adults. In contrast, while juvenile female arrests for weapons law violations grew 15% over the 1996–2005 period, weapons-related arrests of juvenile males, adult males, and adult females all fell (16%, 7%, and 12%, respectively).

The greater decline in male arrests compared with female arrests for Property Crime Index offenses seen for juveniles between 1996 and 2005 was also seen in adult arrests, with adult male arrests falling 13% and adult female arrests falling 1%. Similarly, while juvenile female drug abuse violation arrests grew disproportionately between 1996 and 2005 (increasing 14% compared with a 14% decline in male arrests), adult female drug abuse violation arrests also grew more than male arrests (45% and 27%, respectively).

Juvenile arrests disproportionately involved minorities

The racial composition of the U.S. juvenile population in 2005 was 78% white, 17% black, 4% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% American Indian. Most Hispanics (an ethnic designation, not a race) were classified as white. Of all juvenile arrests for violent crimes in 2005, 48% involved white youth, 50% involved black youth, 1% involved Asian youth, and 1% involved American Indian youth. For property crime arrests, the proportions were 67% white youth, 30% black youth, 2% Asian youth, and 1% American Indian youth. Black youth were overrepresented in juvenile arrests.

Most Serious Offense Black Proportion of Juvenile Arrests in 2005

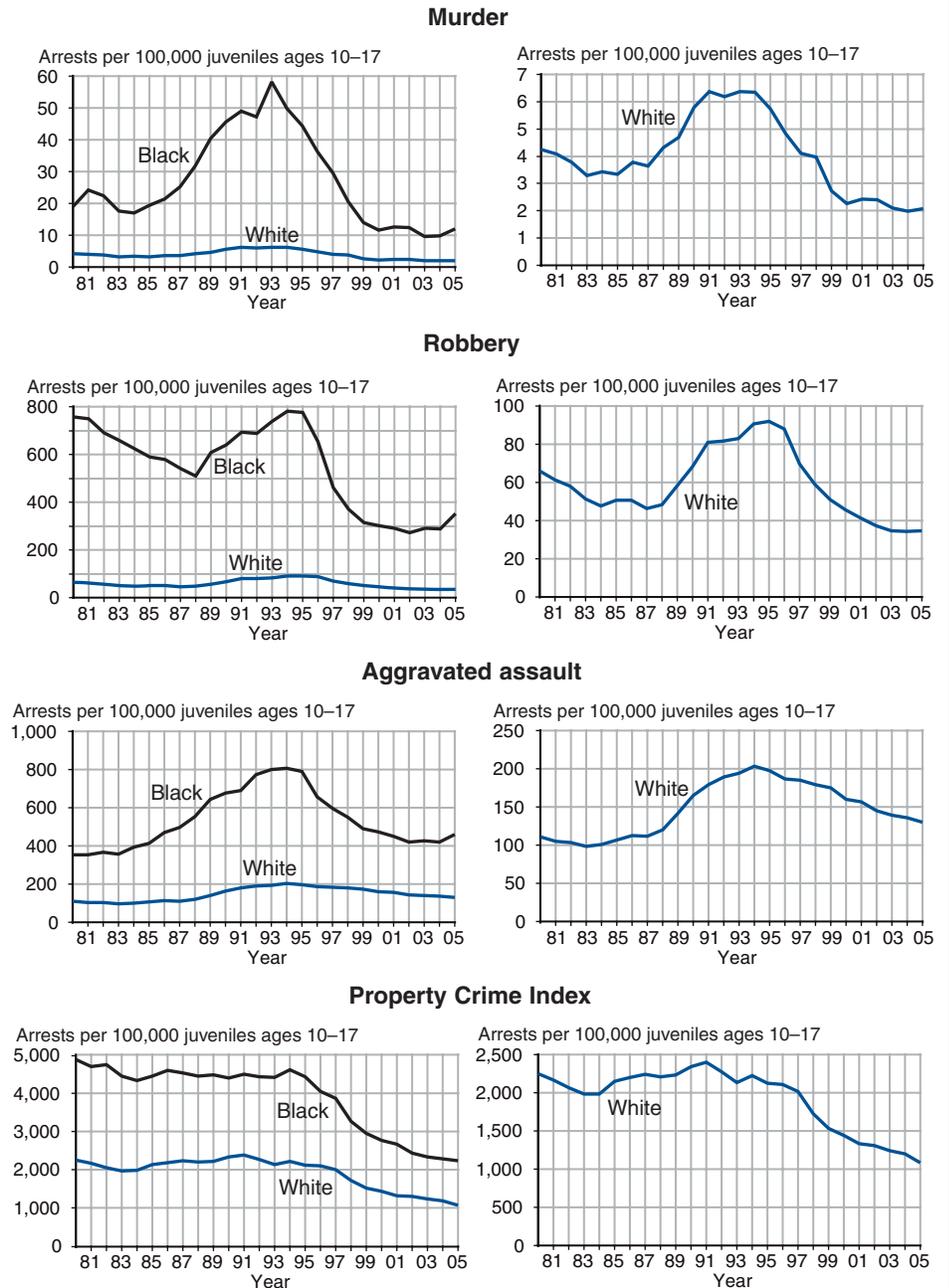
Most Serious Offense	Black Proportion of Juvenile Arrests in 2005
Murder	54%
Forcible rape	34
Robbery	68
Aggravated assault	42
Simple assault	39
Burglary	31
Larceny-theft	28
Motor vehicle theft	43
Weapons	37
Drug abuse violations	29
Vandalism	20
Liquor laws	5

Data source: *Crime in the United States 2005*, table 43.

The Violent Crime Index arrest rate (i.e., arrests per 100,000 juveniles in the racial group) in 2005 for black juveniles (851) was almost 5 times the rates for American Indian juveniles (181) and white juveniles (176) and about 12 times the rate for Asian juveniles (71). For Property Crime Index arrests, the rate for black juveniles (2,244) was about double the rates for American Indian juveniles (1,191) and white juveniles (1,083) and about 5 times the rate for Asian juveniles (465).

From 1980 through 2005, the black-to-white disparity in juvenile Violent Crime Index arrest rates declined. In 1980, the black rate was 6.3 times the white rate; in 2004, the rate ratio had declined to 4.1. But in 2005, the ratio jumped to 4.8, returning to the levels of the mid-1990s. The 2004–2005 increase in violent arrest rate disparities was the result of larger changes in black rates than white rates. For example, the black robbery rate increased about 20% while the white rate held constant. Similarly, while the black aggravated assault arrest rate increased about 10%, the white rate fell about 5%.

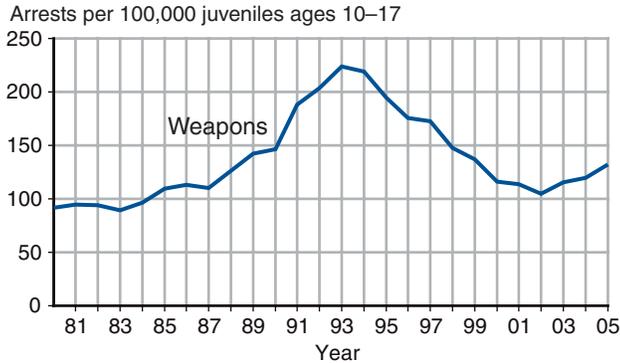
The trends in annual arrest rates for white juveniles and black juveniles were similar over the 1980–2005 period



- ◆ The juvenile murder arrest rate in 2004 was at its lowest level since at least 1980 for white youth and near the lowest level for black youth. Between 2004 and 2005, however, the black rate increased 23%, while the white rate grew just 4%.
- ◆ After falling to relatively low levels between 1980 and 2004, the robbery arrest rate between 2004 and 2005 increased 1% for white juveniles and 22% for black juveniles. Between 2004 and 2005, the Property Crime Index arrest rates for both white and black youth continued to decline.
- ◆ Between 2004 and 2005, the aggravated assault arrest rate for white youth continued its decline (4%), while the black rate increased (10%).

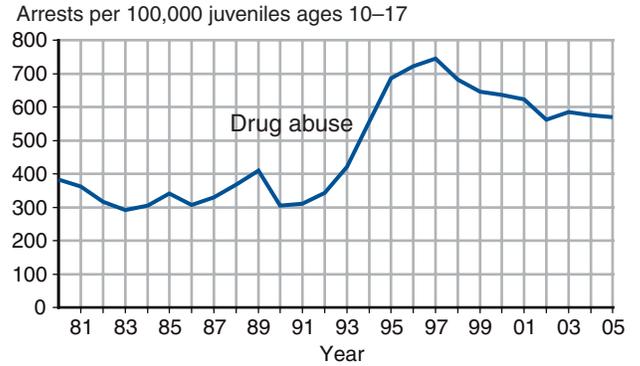
Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics. [See data source note on p. 12 for detail.]

In 2005, the juvenile arrest rate for weapons law violations continued an increase that began in 2003



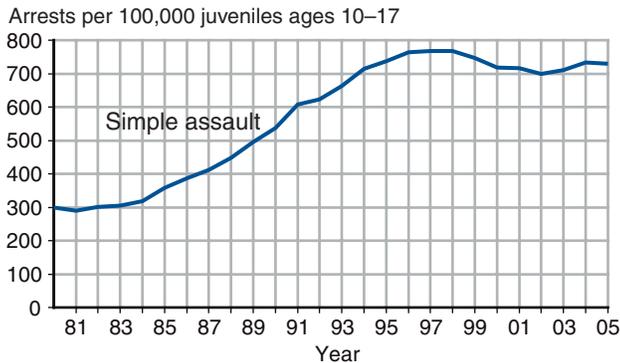
- ◆ Between 1980 and 1993, the juvenile arrest rate for weapons law violations increased more than 140%. Then, the rate fell substantially, so that by 2002, the rate was just 14% above the 1980 level.
- ◆ However, between 2002 and 2005, the juvenile weapons arrest rate grew 27%. During this period, the white arrest rate grew 15% and the black rate grew 48%.

After a considerable rise in the 1990s, the juvenile arrest rate for drug abuse violations has trended downward from 1997 through 2005



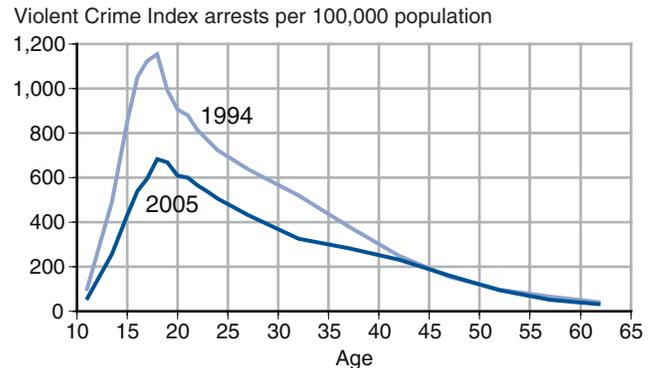
- ◆ Between 1990 and 1997, the juvenile arrest rate for drug abuse violations increased 145%. The rate declined 24% between 1997 and 2005, but the 2005 rate was still almost double the 1990 rate.
- ◆ Over the 1980–2005 period, the white juvenile arrest rate for drug abuse violations peaked in 1997 and then held relatively constant through 2005 (down 13%). In contrast, the black rate peaked in 1995, and, by 2002, had fallen 49%; from 2002 to 2005, the black rate grew 17%.

Unlike the aggravated assault rate, the juvenile arrest rate for simple assault did not decline substantially after the mid-1990s



- ◆ The juvenile arrest rate for simple assault increased more than 140% between 1980 and 2005. The rate held constant between 1994 and 2005, while the juvenile aggravated assault arrest rate fell almost 40%.
- ◆ This pattern was seen across races. Between 1980 and 2005, the juvenile arrest rate for simple assault more than doubled for both white youth and black youth (126% and 155%, respectively). Between 1994 and 2005, the rates remained essentially constant, while aggravated assault arrest rates fell for both races (36% and 43%, respectively).

Between 1994 and 2005, the age-specific arrest rates for Violent Crime Index offenses fell substantially for all ages under 40



- ◆ Juvenile ages showed the largest decline—falling about 50% in each age group from 13 through 17. Between 1994 and 2005, the Violent Crime Index arrest rates for youth ages 10–12 and for 18-year-olds both fell about 40%. The Violent Crime Index arrest rates for those ages 19–34 fell close to 30% for each age group.
- ◆ Over the period from 1994 to 2005, the Violent Crime Index arrest rates for ages 40–54 changed very little, while the arrest rates for ages 55–64 declined about 20%.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics. [See data source note on p. 12 for detail.]

State variations in juvenile arrest rates may reflect differences in juvenile law-violating behavior, police behavior, and/or community standards; therefore, comparisons should be made with caution

State	2005 Juvenile Arrest Rate*					State	2005 Juvenile Arrest Rate*				
	Reporting Coverage	Violent Crime Index	Property Crime Index	Drug Abuse	Weapons		Reporting Coverage	Violent Crime Index	Property Crime Index	Drug Abuse	Weapons
United States	79%†	296	1,289	581	134	Missouri	63%	357	1,359	627	118
Alabama	71	130	720	291	28	Montana	83	134	2,039	431	50
Alaska	97	238	1,574	388	79	Nebraska	90	105	1,935	656	95
Arizona	90	249	1,672	852	81	Nevada	100	181	1,315	271	70
Arkansas	78	201	1,288	413	67	New Hampshire	83	77	956	576	26
California	99	346	1,026	493	207	New Jersey	96	340	823	660	205
Colorado	92	220	1,848	777	153	New Mexico	74	242	1,110	696	170
Connecticut	88	306	1,107	526	127	New York	51	301	1,070	543	92
Delaware	100	578	1,563	840	153	North Carolina	86	305	1,319	412	188
District of Columbia	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	North Dakota	86	91	1,695	415	72
Florida	100	463	1,792	752	148	Ohio	57	163	1,059	413	72
Georgia	37	344	1,430	653	203	Oklahoma	94	189	1,310	442	89
Hawaii	82	212	1,137	306	30	Oregon	94	196	1,784	612	89
Idaho	63	159	1,876	532	112	Pennsylvania	85	442	1,091	546	146
Illinois	23	1,075	1,851	2,567	356	Rhode Island	81	215	1,057	532	147
Indiana	75	290	1,280	457	36	South Carolina	91	380	1,366	707	209
Iowa	89	287	1,865	412	38	South Dakota	36	133	1,700	291	161
Kansas	47	122	740	393	38	Tennessee	78	324	1,288	636	147
Kentucky	64	208	1,095	694	54	Texas	96	191	1,159	546	71
Louisiana	54	372	1,618	651	104	Utah	85	140	2,193	518	154
Maine	99	80	1,499	425	32	Vermont	87	65	622	272	19
Maryland	99	494	1,804	1,189	255	Virginia	77	166	870	353	102
Massachusetts	77	255	489	343	36	Washington	86	222	1,766	456	115
Michigan	97	206	985	326	82	West Virginia	85	69	486	227	27
Minnesota	94	237	1,605	569	145	Wisconsin	68	210	2,614	769	207
Mississippi	50	97	1,306	538	108	Wyoming	98	131	1,837	901	127

* Throughout this Bulletin, juvenile arrest rates are calculated by dividing the number of arrests of persons ages 10–17 by the number of persons ages 10–17 in the population. In this table only, arrest rate is defined as the number of arrests of persons under age 18 for every 100,000 persons ages 10–17. Juvenile arrests (arrests of youth under age 18) reported at the State level in *Crime in the United States* cannot be disaggregated into more detailed age categories so that the arrest of persons under age 10 can be excluded in the rate calculation. Therefore, there is a slight inconsistency in this table between the age range for the arrests (birth through age 17) and the age range for the population (ages 10–17) that are the basis of a State's juvenile arrest rates. This inconsistency is slight because just 1% of all juvenile arrests involved youth under age 10. This inconsistency is preferable to the distortion of arrest rates that would be introduced were the population base for the arrest rate to incorporate the large volume of children under age 10 in a State's population.

† The reporting coverage for the total United States in this table (79%) includes all States reporting arrests of persons under age 18. This is greater than the coverage in the rest of the Bulletin (73%) for various reasons. For example, Florida provided arrest counts of persons under age 18 but did not provide the age detail required to support other presentations in *Crime in the United States 2005*.

NA = *Crime in the United States 2005* reported no arrest counts for the District of Columbia.

Interpretation cautions: Arrest rates are calculated by dividing the number of youth arrests made in the year by the number of youth living in reporting jurisdictions. While juvenile arrest rates in part reflect juvenile behavior, many other factors can affect the size of these rates. For example, jurisdictions that arrest a relatively large number of nonresident juveniles would have higher arrest rates than jurisdictions where resident youth behave in an identical manner. Therefore, jurisdictions that are vacation destinations or regional centers for economic activity may have arrest rates that reflect more than the behavior of their resident youth. Other factors that influence the magnitude of arrest rates in a given area include the attitudes of its citizens toward crime, the policies of the jurisdiction's law enforcement agencies, and the policies of other components of the justice system. **Consequently, comparisons of juvenile arrest rates across States, while informative, should be made with caution.** In most States, not all law enforcement agencies report their arrest data to the FBI. Rates for these States are necessarily based on partial information. If the reporting law enforcement agencies in these States are not representative of the entire State, then the rates will be biased. **Therefore, reported arrest rates for States with less than complete reporting coverage may not be accurate.**

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI's *Crime in the United States 2005* (Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2006), tables 5 and 69, and population data from the National Center for Health Statistics' *Estimates of the July 1, 2000–July 1, 2005, United States Resident Population From the Vintage 2005 Postcensal Series by Year, County, Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin* [machine-readable data files available online at www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/dvs/popbridge/popbridge.htm, released 8/16/2006].

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Data source note

Analysis of arrest data from unpublished FBI reports for 1980 through 1997, from *Crime in the United States* reports for 1998 through 2003 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999 through 2004, respectively), and from *Crime in the United States* reports for 2004 and 2005 that are available online at www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm#cius, released September 2006; population data for 1980–1989 from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 1980 to 1999* [machine-readable data files available online, released April 11, 2000]; population data for 1990–1999 from the National Center for Health Statistics (prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau with support from the National Cancer Institute), *Bridged-race Intercensal Estimates of the July 1, 1990–July 1, 1999 United States Resident Population by County, Single-year of Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin*. [machine-readable data files available online at www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/dvs/popbridge/popbridge.htm, released July 26, 2004]; and population data for 2000–2005 from the National Center for Health Statistics (prepared under a collaborative arrangement with the U.S. Census Bureau), *Estimates of the July 1, 2000–July 1, 2005, United States Resident Population From the Vintage 2005 Postcensal Series by Year, County, Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin* [machine-readable

data files available online at www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/dvs/popbridge/popbridge.htm, released August 16, 2006].

Notes

In this Bulletin, “juvenile” refers to persons under age 18. This definition is at odds with the legal definition of juveniles in 2005 in 13 States—10 States where all 17-year-olds are defined as adults and 3 States where all 16- and 17-year-olds are defined as adults.

FBI arrest data in this Bulletin are counts of arrests detailed by age of arrestee and offense categories from all law enforcement agencies that reported complete data for the calendar year. (See *Crime in the United States* for offense definitions.) The proportion of the U.S. population covered by these reporting agencies ranged from 63% to 94% between 1980 and 2005, with the 2005 coverage being 73%.

Estimates of the number of persons in each age group in the reporting agencies’ resident populations assume that the resident population age profiles are like the Nation’s. Reporting agencies’ total populations were multiplied by the U.S. Census Bureau’s most current estimate of the proportion of the U.S. population for each age group.

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