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OJJDP/NIJ REPORT SHOWS JUVENILE ARRESTS DROP TO FOUR-DECADE LOW

WASHINGTON – Juvenile arrests dropped to their lowest level in 40 years, according to a report released today by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the National Institute of Justice. In 2019, U.S. law enforcement agencies arrested an estimated 696,620 youth under age 18, the lowest number since at least 1980 and 74% below its 1996 peak of 2.7 million. Juvenile arrests overall fell by 58% between 2010 and 2019, although patterns vary by demographic group and offense.

Juvenile arrests for burglary, theft and arson were at their lowest levels since 1980, but arrests for motor vehicle thefts have been increasing since 2013. Juvenile arrests for murder increased by 10% between 2015 and 2019. Relative declines in arrests have been greater for boys than for girls across many offenses, with the female share of juvenile arrests growing from 18% in 1980 to 31% in 2019.

“These findings are encouraging and we are hopeful that the declines in juvenile arrests will continue in years to come,” said OJJDP Acting Administrator Chyrl Jones. “OJJDP remains committed to supporting programs and initiatives to help ensure that this trend continues.”

The arrest estimates presented in the report are based on analyses of data provided by local law enforcement agencies to the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reporting program.

The bulletin, [*Juvenile Arrests, 2019*](#), was written by Chaz Puzzanchera, Senior Research Associate for the National Center for Juvenile Justice. Access additional information about OJJDP research, evaluations and statistics on the OJJDP website at ojjdp.ojp.gov/statistics.

The Office of Justice Programs provides federal leadership, grants, training, technical assistance and other resources to improve the nation’s capacity to prevent and reduce crime, advance racial equity in the administration of justice, assist victims and enhance the rule of law. More information about OJP and its components can be found at www.ojp.gov.

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