



JUVENILE JUSTICE STATISTICS

NATIONAL REPORT SERIES BULLETIN

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August 2019

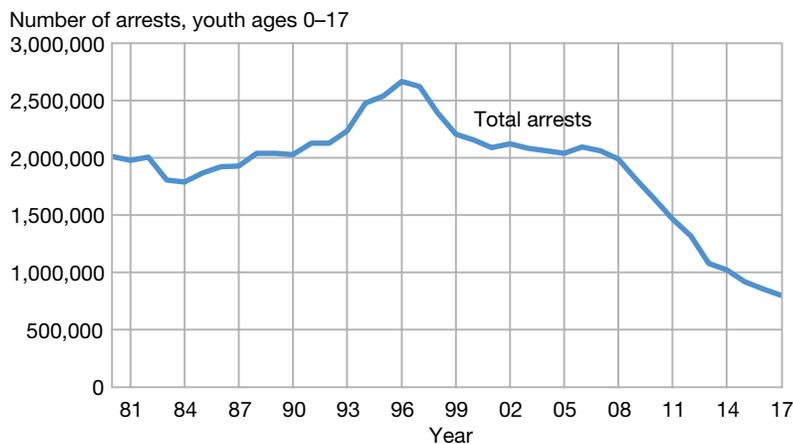
Juvenile Arrests, 2017

Charles Puzzanchera

Highlights

This bulletin documents the latest trends in arrests involving juveniles (youth younger than age 18) by drawing on arrest estimates developed by the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice based on analyses of data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reporting program. Overall, juvenile arrests have been on the decline for more than a decade, but patterns vary by demographic group and offense.

In 2017, law enforcement agencies made an estimated 809,700 arrests of youth younger than 18—the fewest arrests of juveniles in nearly four decades



■ Arrests of juveniles (youth ages 0–17) peaked in 1996, at nearly 2.7 million. Arrests of juveniles have since declined—the number in 2017 was 70% below the 1996 peak. In comparison, arrests of adults fell 21% during the same period.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice. (See data source note on page 13 for details.)

- The juvenile arrest rate for aggravated assault declined in the last 5 years, the robbery arrest rate stayed about the same, and the murder arrest rate increased annually since 2012.
- Juvenile arrest rates for property crimes have declined in recent years. By 2017, juvenile arrest rates for larceny-theft, burglary, and arson were at their lowest levels since at least 1980, while rates for motor vehicle theft increased annually since 2013.
- The violent crime arrest rate for older juveniles (ages 15 to 17) was lower than the rates for young adults (ages 18 to 20 and 21 to 24).
- Male and female juvenile arrest rates have declined in the last 10 years; however, the relative declines have been greater for males than for females across many offenses. As a result, the female share of juvenile arrests has grown since 1980.
- Juvenile arrest rates involving violent crimes (such as murder and robbery) tend to be much higher for black youth than for white youth. Conversely, arrest rates for liquor law violations were higher for American Indian and white youth than black youth.

A Message From OJJDP and NIJ

This bulletin provides an overview of the nation's juvenile crime problem by analyzing arrest data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reporting program. The cumulative data in this bulletin reveal recent and long-term shifts in juvenile arrests based on offense, gender, and race. It is a useful tool for juvenile justice practitioners, researchers, policymakers, and others who seek to prevent, intervene in, and respond to juvenile delinquency.

The total number of arrests involving juveniles in 2017 was at its lowest level since at least 1980, and much of the decline has occurred in the past 10 years. Between 2008 and 2017, the number of juvenile arrests fell 59%. However, juvenile arrests for certain offenses increased in the last few years. Among violent crimes, juvenile arrests for aggravated assault declined 9% between 2013 and 2017, while arrests for robbery increased about 1% and arrests for murder increased 23%. Among property crimes, juvenile arrests for burglary, larceny-theft, and arson reached historic lows in 2017, while arrests for motor vehicle theft increased in each year since 2013.

Relative declines in arrests have been greater for boys than for girls across many offenses. As a result, the female share of juvenile arrests has grown from 18% in 1980 to 29% in 2017.

OJJDP and NIJ remain committed to supporting research, programs, and initiatives to combat juvenile delinquency and to provide positive outcomes for youth, their families, and their communities.

Caren Harp
OJJDP Administrator

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The FBI's UCR program provides data about juvenile arrests

What do arrest statistics count?

Findings in this bulletin are drawn from data that local law enforcement agencies across the country report to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. To properly interpret the material presented, the reader needs a clear understanding of what arrest statistics count. Arrest statistics report the number of arrests that law enforcement agencies made in a given year—not the number of individuals arrested nor the number of crimes committed. The number of arrests is not the same as the number of people arrested because an unknown number of individuals are arrested more than once during the year. Nor do arrest statistics represent the number of crimes that arrested individuals commit because a series of crimes that one person commits may culminate in a single arrest, and 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* often commit crimes in groups. For this reason, one should not use arrest statistics to indicate the relative proportions of crime that juveniles and adults commit. Arrest statistics are most appropriately a measure of entry into the justice system.

Arrest statistics also are limited in measuring the volume of arrests for a particular offense. Under the UCR program, the FBI requires law enforcement agencies to classify only the most serious offense charged in an arrest. For example, the arrest of a youth charged with aggravated assault and possession of a weapon would be reported to the FBI as an arrest for aggravated assault. Therefore,

* In this bulletin, "juvenile" refers to persons younger than age 18. In 2017, this definition was at odds with the legal definition of juveniles in nine states—seven states where all 17-year-olds are defined as adults, and two states where all 16- and 17-year-olds are defined as adults.

when arrest statistics show that law enforcement agencies made an estimated 18,370 arrests of young people for weapons law violations in 2017, it means that a weapons law violation was the most serious charge in these arrests. An unknown number of additional arrests in 2017 included a weapons charge as a lesser offense.

Crime in the United States reports data on murder victims

Each *Crime in the United States* report, published by the FBI, presents estimates of the number of crimes reported to law enforcement agencies. Although many crimes are never reported, murder is one crime that is nearly always reported. An estimated 17,284 murders were reported to law enforcement agencies in 2017, or 5.3 murders for every 100,000 U.S. residents. The murder rate was essentially constant between 1999 and 2006 and then fell 22% through 2014, reaching its lowest level since at least 1980. The rate has increased in each of the last 3 years, however, so that by 2017, the rate was at the highest level since 2009.

Of all murder victims in 2017, 92% (or 15,889 victims) were 18 years old or older. The other 1,395 murder victims were younger than age 18 (i.e., juveniles). The number of juvenile murder victims declined 33% between 2007 and 2013, reaching its lowest level since at least 1980. Following 4 years of increase, the number of juvenile murder victims in 2017 was 16% above the 2013 low point and 52% below the 1993 peak, when an estimated 2,880 juveniles were murdered.

Of all juveniles murdered in 2017, 34% were younger than age 5, 72% were male, 43% were white, and more than half (56%) were killed by a firearm.

In 2017, law enforcement agencies in the United States made more than 809,700 arrests of persons younger than 18

The number of arrests of juveniles in 2017 was 59% fewer than the number of arrests in 2008

Most serious offense	2017 estimated number of juvenile arrests	Percent of total juvenile arrests			Percent change		
		Female	Younger than 15	White	2008–2017	2013–2017	2016–2017
Total	809,700	29%	28%	62%	–59%	–25%	–5%
Violent Crime*	48,470	20	27	45	–48	–5	1
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	910	8	9	38	–27	23	7
Rape*	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Robbery	19,330	10	19	32	–45	1	1
Aggravated assault	28,220	26	33	54	–49	–9	1
Property Crime Index	168,050	30	29	56	–61	–31	–9
Burglary	30,850	12	31	56	–63	–28	–4
Larceny-theft	118,660	37	28	57	–63	–36	–12
Motor vehicle theft	16,300	18	24	45	–34	40	4
Arson	2,240	14	57	73	–65	–39	–12
Nonindex							
Other (simple) assault	123,040	37	39	58	–47	–16	–5
Forgery and counterfeiting	1,220	22	14	58	–53	16	1
Fraud	4,760	33	20	46	–34	6	3
Embezzlement	640	43	8	55	–49	60	–6
Stolen property (buying, receiving, possessing)	10,500	16	21	41	–49	1	–4
Vandalism	36,720	18	40	69	–66	–21	–6
Weapons (carrying, possessing, etc.)	18,370	10	29	54	–54	–10	–5
Prostitution and commercialized vice	280	61	14	45	–81	–63	–44
Sex offense (except rape and prostitution)*	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Drug abuse violation	94,830	24	15	74	–47	–19	–4
Gambling	270	18	13	21	–83	–62	7
Offenses against the family and children	3,770	37	34	58	–35	35	9
Driving under the influence	6,080	25	2	89	–62	–20	–6
Liquor law violation	33,560	41	12	87	–74	–43	–9
Drunkenness	4,300	30	13	78	–72	–41	–10
Disorderly conduct	62,530	36	39	54	–67	–34	–5
Vagrancy	730	22	26	53	–82	–16	–6
All other offenses (except traffic)	149,050	28	25	66	–59	–24	–4
Curfew and loitering	30,130	30	29	56	–77	–47	–12

■ The number of arrests involving juveniles in 2017 was at its lowest level since at least 1980, and much of the decline has occurred in the past 10 years. Between 2008 and 2017, the number of juvenile arrests fell 59%.

■ Among violent crimes, arrests for aggravated assault declined 9% between 2013 and 2017, while arrests for robbery increased about 1% and arrests for murder increased 23%.

■ In 2017, there were an estimated 123,040 juvenile arrests for simple assault. More than one-third (37%) of these arrests involved females, nearly 4 in 10 (39%) involved youth younger than 15, and 58% involved white youth.

*Beginning in 2013, the FBI broadened the definition of rape, removing the phrase “forcible” from the offense name and description. (See the Notes on page 13 for more detail.) Due to differences in agency reporting practices, national estimates for the offenses of “rape” and “sex offenses” are not available after 2012. The “violent crimes” category (which includes murder, robbery, and aggravated assault) replaces the Violent Crime Index (which included “forcible rape”), as the latter category is no longer compatible with prior years. In any given year prior to the change in the rape definition, these three offenses accounted for more than 95% of arrests for Violent Crime Index offenses.

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

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice. (See data source note on page 13 for details.)

Despite increases in the last year, juvenile arrests for violent crime remain near historically low levels

Juvenile arrests for violent crimes increased 1% since 2015

This bulletin uses a measure of violence that includes the offenses of murder, robbery, and aggravated assault.* Following 10 years of decline between 1994 and 2004, juvenile arrests for violent crimes increased through 2006 and then declined each year through 2015, reaching its lowest level since at least 1980. Despite a 1% increase since 2015, the number of juvenile arrests for violent crimes in 2017 was 66% less than the 1994 peak.

After falling 71% between 1993 and 2004, juvenile arrests for murder increased through 2007, then declined 46% through 2012 to reach the lowest level in three decades. However, the number of juvenile arrests for murder has increased each year since 2012. Juvenile arrests for robbery were cut in half between 1995 and 2002, increased through 2008, and then fell 47% through 2015. After

*See the Notes on page 13 for differences in the definition of rape that prohibit it from being included in the measure of violent crimes for trending purposes.

reaching the lowest level since at least 1980, the number of juvenile robbery arrests increased 4% by 2017. The number of juvenile arrests for aggravated assault, which account for 58% of all juvenile arrests for violent crime, fell 67% between 1994 and 2016 to the lowest level in the last 36 years. This decline was followed by a 1% increase in the last year.

Juvenile property crime arrests declined each year since 2008

Law enforcement agencies nationwide consistently report data on four offenses that form the Property Crime Index—burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson—to determine trends in the number of property crime arrests.

For the period 1980–1994, during which juvenile violent crime arrests increased substantially, juvenile property crime arrests remained relatively constant. After this long period of relative stability, juvenile property crime arrests began a two-decade decline.

Between 1994 and 2017, the number of juvenile Property Crime Index arrests fell 78% and reached its lowest level since at least 1980. Between 2008 and 2017, juvenile arrests declined for individual property offenses: burglary (63%), larceny-theft (63%), motor vehicle theft (34%), and arson (65%).

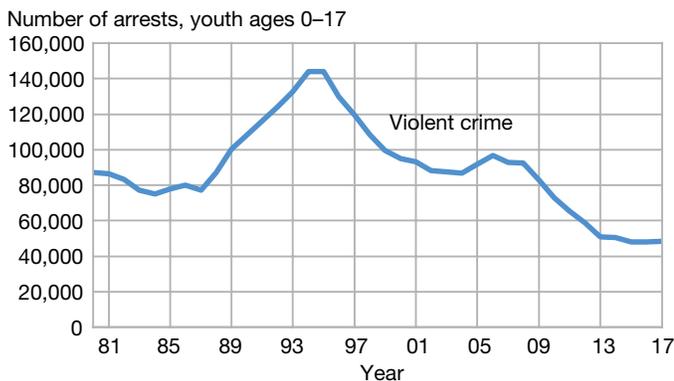
Percent change in juvenile arrests 2008–2017

Most serious offense	Juvenile	Adult
Violent crime*	-48%	-7%
Murder	-27	-3
Robbery	-45	-21
Aggravated assault	-49	-4
Property Crime Index	-61	-14
Burglary	-63	-25
Larceny-theft	-63	-12
Motor vehicle theft	-34	2
Simple assault	-47	-12
Weapons law violations	-54	5
Drug abuse violations	-47	1

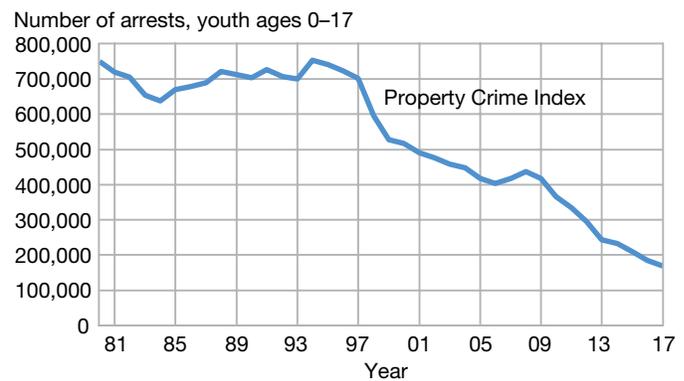
*Includes murder, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice. (See data source note on page 13 for details.)

Juvenile arrests for Property Crime Index offenses reached a historic low in 2017 while arrests for violent crimes were 1% above the 2015 historic low



Juvenile arrests for violent crimes reached a historic low in 2015, and increased slightly (1%) through 2017.

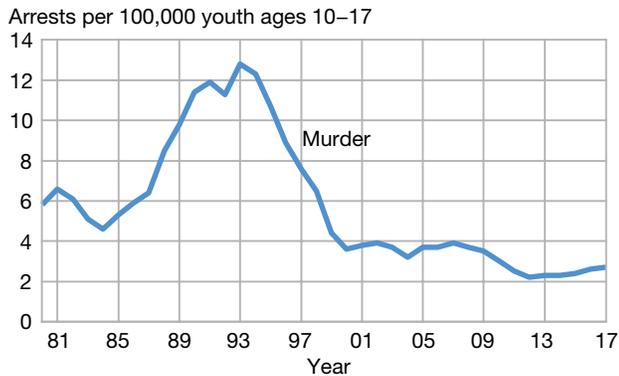


Arrests for Property Crime Index offenses have declined annually since 2008, falling 61% by 2017.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice. (See data source note on page 13 for details.)

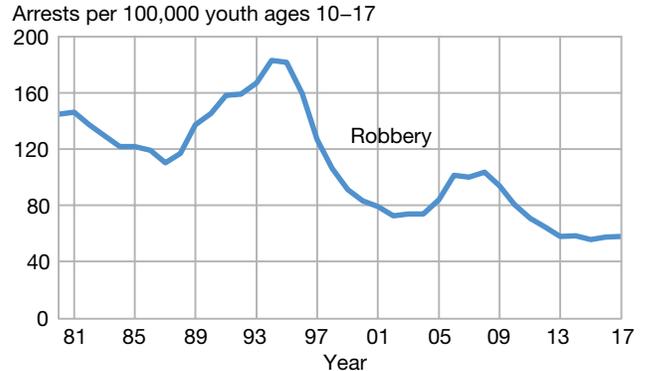
Juvenile arrest rates for murder, robbery, and aggravated assault were at or near historic lows

Murder rate



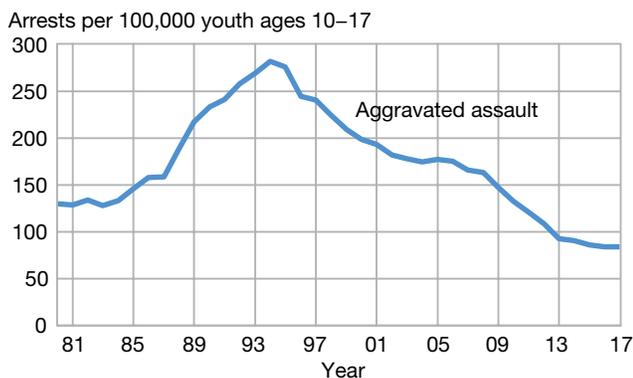
- The juvenile murder arrest rate fell 44% between 2007 and 2012, when it reached its lowest level since at least 1980. This decline was followed by a 26% increase through 2017.
- The growth in the juvenile murder arrest rate between 2012 and 2017 returned it to near its 2011 level; however, the rate in 2017 was 79% less than its 1993 peak.

Robbery rate



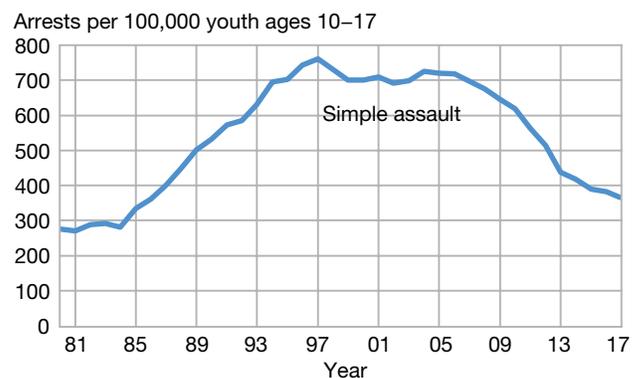
- The juvenile robbery arrest rate in 2015 reached its lowest level in more than three decades, but then increased 4% in the last 2 years. In 2017, the rate was 44% below the 2008 rate and 68% below the 1994 peak.
- Juvenile robbery arrest rates declined for all gender and racial subgroups since 2008: 45% for males, 37% for females, 53% for Asians, 44% for blacks, 42% for whites, and 33% for American Indians.

Aggravated assault rate



- Unlike the pattern for robbery, the juvenile arrest rate for aggravated assault declined steadily for more than two decades. Following a 49% decline in the last 10 years, the rate in 2017 remained near its lowest level since at least 1980 and 70% below the 1994 peak.
- Although juvenile arrest rates for aggravated assault and simple assault each declined in the last 10 years, the relative decline was greater for aggravated assault (49%) than for simple assault (46%).

Simple assault rate

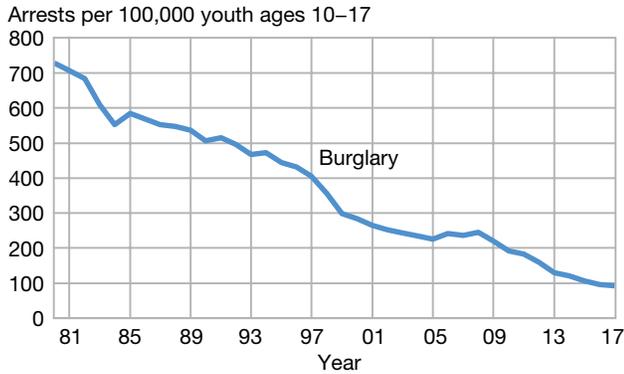


- The simple assault arrest rate declined steadily since 2004, falling 50% through 2017. Despite this decline, the rate in 2017 remained well above the 1981 low point.
- Since 2004, the relative decline in the number of juvenile arrests for simple assault outpaced that of adults (51% vs. 9%). As a result, 12% of simple assault arrests in 2017 involved a juvenile, compared with 20% in 2004.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics. (See data source note on page 13 for details.)

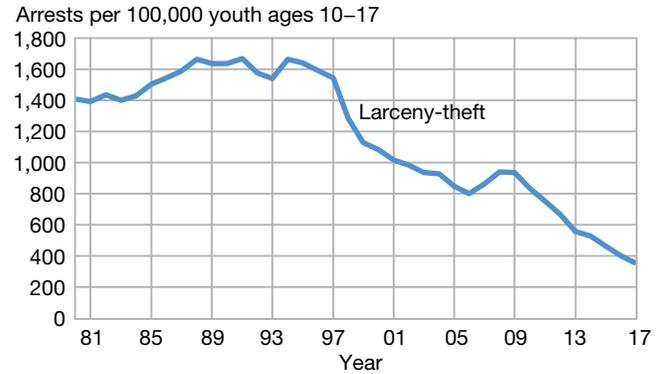
Juvenile arrest rates for burglary, larceny-theft, and arson reached historic lows in 2017

Burglary rate



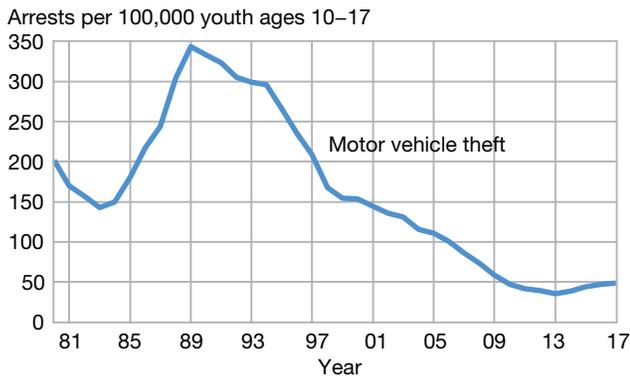
- Unlike the pattern for other property crimes, the trend in the juvenile arrest rate for burglary was a steady decline since 1980. By 2017, the rate reached its lowest level of the 38-year period.
- The large decline in juvenile burglary arrests was not reflected in the adult statistics. For example, between 2008 and 2017, the number of juvenile burglary arrests fell 63%, while adult burglary arrests fell 25%. As a result of this decline, 15% of all burglary arrests in 2017 were juvenile arrests, compared with 27% in 2008.

Larceny-theft rate



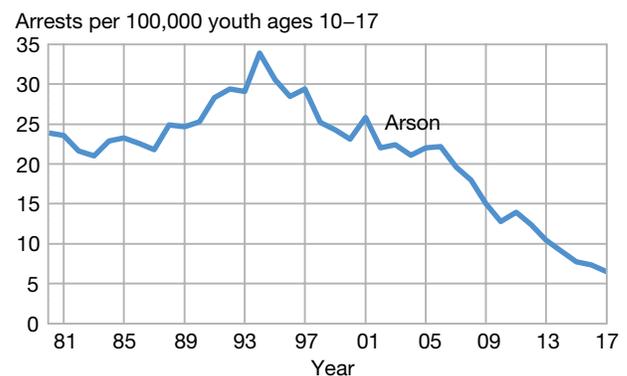
- The juvenile larceny-theft arrest rate declined steadily from the mid-1990s through 2006. This decline was interrupted by 2 years of increase, and then followed by 9 consecutive years of decline. By 2017, the rate was 63% below the level 10 years prior and at its lowest level since at least 1980.
- Juvenile arrests for larceny-theft typically involve older juveniles (ages 15–17). Since 2008, older juveniles accounted for 70% or more of juvenile larceny theft arrests.

Motor vehicle theft rate



- Like the larceny-theft pattern, the juvenile motor vehicle theft arrest rate declined considerably since the mid-1990s. However, unlike larceny-theft, the motor vehicle theft arrest rate increased in each of the last 4 years. After reaching its lowest level in 2013, the juvenile motor vehicle theft arrest rate increased 39% by 2017.
- The juvenile motor vehicle theft arrest rates increased for all demographic subgroups in the last 4 years: 48% for females, 38% for males, 89% for American Indians, 64% for blacks, 62% for Asians, and 18% for whites.

Arson rate

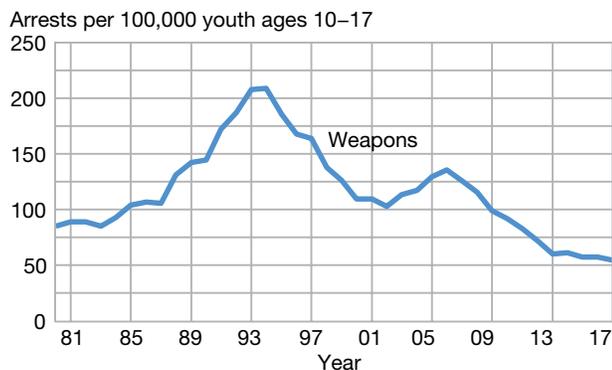


- With few exceptions, the juvenile arrest rate for arson has declined since the mid-1990s. Following 6 consecutive years of decline, the juvenile arson arrest rate in 2017 fell to its lowest level of the 1980–2017 period.
- Arson is the criminal act with the largest proportion of juvenile arrestees. In 2017, 25% of all arson arrests were arrests of juveniles, and most of these juvenile arrests (57%) involved youth younger than 15. In comparison, 12% of all larceny-theft arrests in 2017 involved juveniles, but only 28% of these juvenile arrests involved youth younger than 15.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics. (See data source note on page 13 for details.)

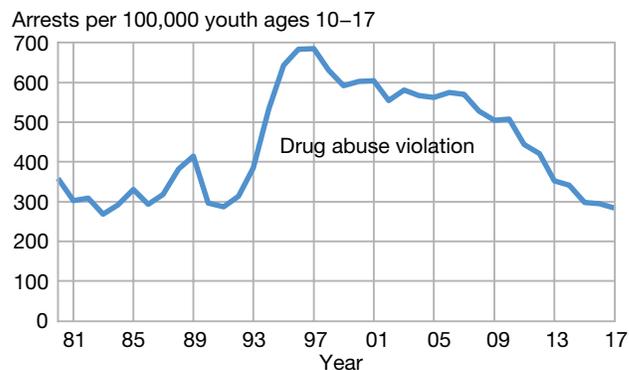
In 2017, juvenile arrest rates for weapons and vandalism were at their lowest levels

Weapons law violation rate



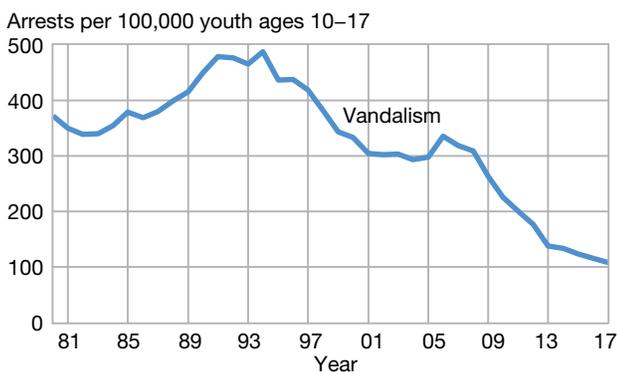
- Similar to robbery, the juvenile arrest rate for weapons law violations declined considerably since the mid-1990s. This decline was interrupted between 2002 and 2006, when the juvenile weapons law violation arrest rate increased 32%. The rate has since fallen 60%, bringing the 2017 rate to its lowest level since 1980.
- The relative decline in weapons law violation arrests in the last 10 years was not replicated in the adult statistics. Since 2008, the number of juvenile weapons law violation arrests fell 54%, while adult arrests increased 5%.

Drug abuse violation rate



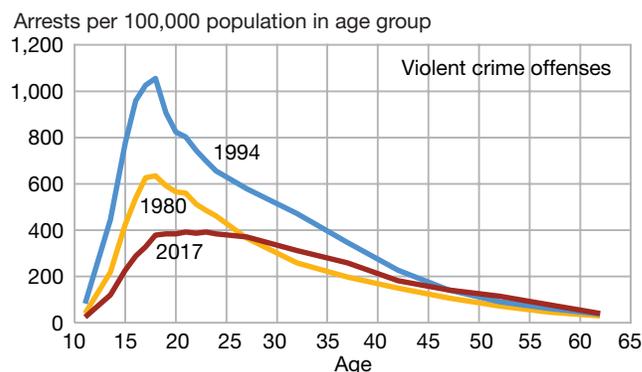
- Following a period of relative stability between 2000 and 2006, the juvenile drug abuse arrest rate declined 51% through 2017, reaching its lowest level since the early 1990s, and just 5% above the 1983 low point.
- The juvenile drug abuse arrest rate declined for most race groups in the last 10 years, falling 55% for black youth, 43% for white youth, and 28% for Asian youth; during this same period, the arrest rate for American Indian youth increased 13%.

Vandalism rate



- Following 11 consecutive years of decline, the juvenile vandalism arrest rate in 2017 fell to its lowest level since at least 1980 and 78% below the 1994 peak.
- Since 2006, the relative decline in the number of juvenile arrests for vandalism outpaced that of adults (69% vs. 17%). As a result, 19% of vandalism arrests in 2017 involved a juvenile, compared with 39% in 2006.

Violent crime age rate



- Regardless of age, the violent crime (murder, robbery, and aggravated assault) arrest rate grew substantially between 1980 and 1994. During this period, the relative increase was greater for juveniles than adults.
- By 2017, arrest rates for violent crimes fell substantially from the 1994 peak for every age group younger than 45. Juveniles showed the largest decline—falling more than 65% in each age group from 10 through 17. In comparison, the rates dropped an average of 57% for young adults ages 18–21, 44% for adults ages 22–24, 36% for those ages 25–29, and 30% for those ages 30–39.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics. (See data source note on page 13 for details.)

In 2017, about 1 in 5 juvenile violent crime arrests involved females and more than half involved minority youth

Females accounted for 29% of juvenile arrests in 2017

In 2017, law enforcement agencies made 234,990 arrests of females younger than age 18 and 574,715 arrests of males. Although males accounted for the majority (71%) of juvenile arrests overall in 2017, the female share was relatively high for certain offenses, including larceny-theft (37%), liquor law violations (41%), simple assault (37%), and disorderly conduct (36%). Females accounted for 20% of juvenile violent crime arrests and 26% of aggravated assault arrests in 2017.

From 2008 through 2017, arrests of juvenile females decreased less than male arrests in most offense categories (e.g., aggravated and simple assault, robbery, vandalism, and drug abuse violations).

Percent change in juvenile arrests 2008–2017

Most serious offense	Female	Male
Violent crime*	-42%	-49%
Robbery	-38	-46
Aggravated assault	-43	-51
Simple assault	-42	-50
Property Crime Index	-67	-58
Burglary	-64	-63
Larceny-theft	-69	-59
Motor vehicle theft	-22	-37
Vandalism	-54	-67
Weapons	-50	-54
Drug abuse violation	-19	-52
Driving under influence	-62	-62
Liquor law violation	-72	-75
Disorderly conduct	-63	-69

*Includes murder, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice. (See data source note on page 13 for details.)

Gender differences also occurred in arrest trends for adults. For example, between 2008 and 2017, adult male arrests for aggravated assault fell 6% while adult female arrests increased 5%, and adult male arrests for

simple assault fell 16% while adult female arrests rose 2%. Therefore, the female proportion of arrests grew for both types of assault for adults, as it did for juveniles. The number of drug abuse violation arrests declined more for juvenile males (52%) than females (19%) between 2008 and 2017, while it declined 6% for adult males and increased 30% for adult females. Over the same time, the number of disorderly conduct arrests of juvenile females fell 63% while it fell 69% for juvenile males, and adult female arrests fell 31% while male arrests fell 45%.

Juvenile arrests disproportionately involved black youth

The racial composition of the U.S. juvenile population ages 10–17 in 2017 was 75% white, 16% black, 6% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 2% American Indian. More than half (52%) of all juvenile arrests for violent crimes in 2017 involved black youth, 45% involved white youth, 1% involved American Indian youth, and 1% involved Asian youth. For Property Crime Index arrests,

the proportions were 56% white youth, 40% black youth, 2% Asian youth, and 2% American Indian youth. [Not all agencies provide ethnicity data through the Uniform Crime Reporting program; therefore, arrest estimates for juveniles of Hispanic ethnicity are not available.]

Black proportion of juvenile arrests in 2017

Most serious offense	Black proportion
Violent crime*	52%
Murder	61
Robbery	67
Aggravated assault	42
Simple assault	39
Property Crime Index	40
Burglary	41
Larceny-theft	39
Motor vehicle theft	52
Vandalism	28
Weapons	44
Drug abuse violation	22
Liquor law violation	6

*Includes murder, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice. (See data source note on page 13 for details.)

In 2017, juveniles were involved in about 1 in 13 arrests for murder and about 1 in 5 arrests for robbery and vandalism

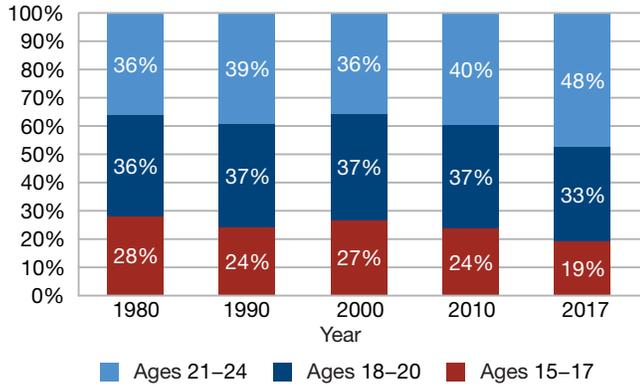
Most serious offense	Juvenile arrests as a percentage of total arrests						
	All	Male	Female	White	Black	Indian	Asian
Total	8%	7%	8%	7%	10%	7%	7%
Murder	7	8	5	6	9	5	5
Robbery	21	22	15	15	25	10	20
Aggravated assault	7	7	8	6	9	6	5
Burglary	15	17	10	13	21	20	14
Larceny-theft	12	13	11	11	17	12	17
Motor vehicle theft	18	19	15	12	30	19	13
Arson	25	26	18	25	24	17	18
Other (simple) assault	12	10	15	10	14	9	9
Vandalism	19	21	16	20	19	16	13
Weapon	11	11	12	11	11	12	13
Drug abuse violation	6	6	6	6	5	9	8
Liquor law violation	16	14	22	18	7	13	15
Disorderly conduct	18	16	22	15	24	9	14

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice. (See data source note on page 13 for details.)

Arrest rates for older juveniles were lower than the rates for young adults

Age profile of older juveniles and young adults

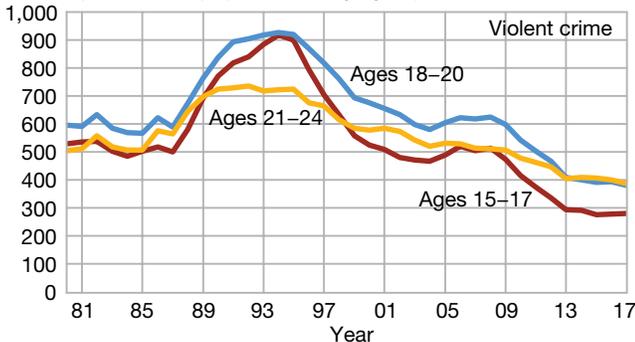
Percent of arrests of persons ages 15–24



- The relative decline in the number of arrests was greater for older juveniles (60%) than adults ages 18–20 (45%) and ages 21–24 (22%) between 1980 and 2017.
- As a result of this decline, older juveniles accounted for a smaller share of arrests of persons ages 15–24 (19%) in 2017 than in 1980 (28%).

Violent crime

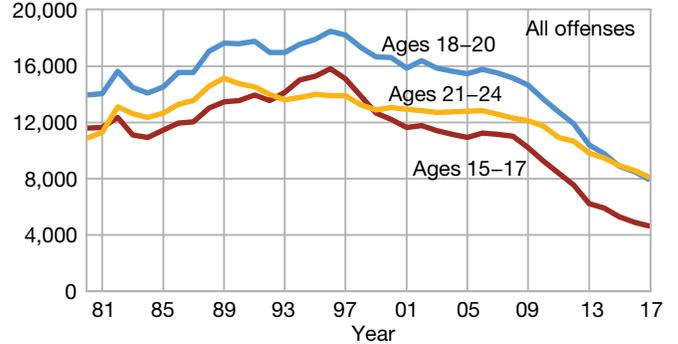
Arrests per 100,000 population in age group



- Violent crime arrest rates for older juveniles and young adults ages 18–20 followed a similar pattern between 1980 and 2017. Rates peaked for both age groups in 1994, then fell considerably (69% and 59%, respectively) through 2017.
- Comparatively, the violent crime arrest rate for adults ages 21–24 peaked in 1992, then declined 47% through 2017.
- The 2017 violent crime arrest rate for juveniles ages 15–17 was about 35% below the rates for young adults.

All offenses

Arrests per 100,000 population in age group



- The overall arrest rate for older juveniles and young adults ages 18–20 followed a similar pattern. Rates peaked in 1996 for both groups, then declined (71% and 57%, respectively) to reach their lowest level in 2017.
- Comparatively, the arrest rate for adults ages 21–24 peaked earlier (1989), then declined at a slower pace, down 47% through 2017.

Property Crime Index

Arrests per 100,000 population in age group

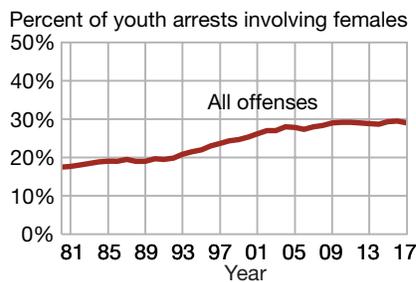
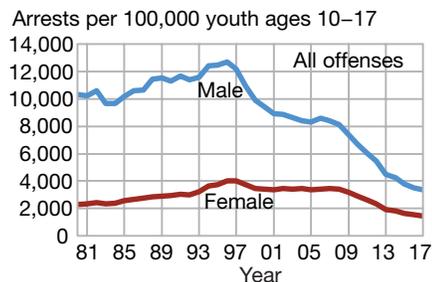


- Despite a brief interruption in the mid-2000s, Property Crime Index arrest rates declined steadily for older juveniles and young adults since the mid-1990s. In the last 10 years, rates declined 60% for older juveniles, 51% for young adults ages 18–20, and 32% for young adults ages 21–24; by 2017, Property Crime Index arrest rates for each age group were at or below their lowest level since at least 1980.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics. (See data source note on page 13 for details.)

The female share of juvenile arrests increased between 1980 and 2017

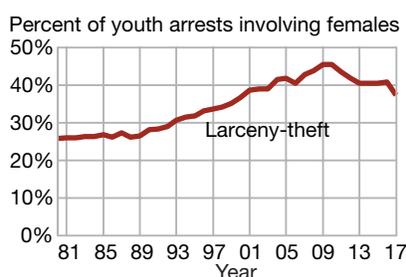
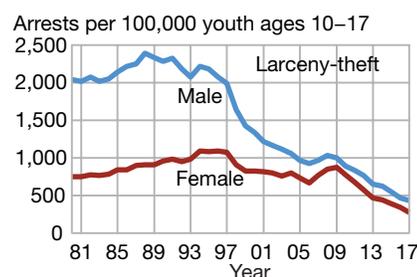
All offenses



■ The overall juvenile arrest rate declined in recent years and the relative decline was greater for males than for females. Since 2006, for example, the male arrest rate fell 61%, compared with 58% for females.

■ The number of arrests of females increased more than males through the mid-1990s, and then decreased less through 2017. As a result, the female share of juvenile arrests has increased, from 18% in 1980 to 29% in 2017.

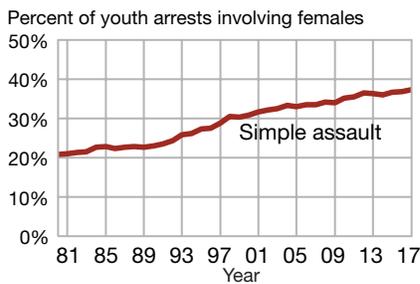
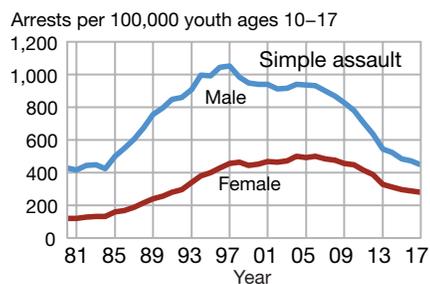
Larceny-theft



■ Larceny-theft arrest rate trends were marked by two periods of substantial decline. From the mid-1990s through the mid-2000s, the decline in the male rate outpaced that of females (57% vs. 33%). In the more recent 10-year period, the female rate declined 68%, compared with 58% for males.

■ The net result was that the female share of juvenile larceny-theft arrests increased from 26% in 1980 to 45% in 2009, then fell to 37% by 2017.

Simple assault

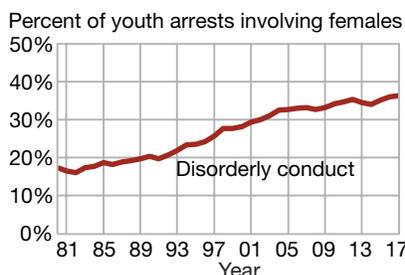
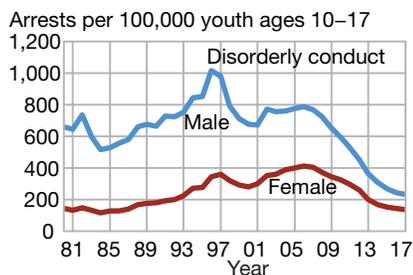


■ Juvenile arrest rate trends for simple assault followed a similar pattern for males and females, but the female rate increased more and declined less than the male rate between 1980 and 2017.

■ The female proportion of juvenile simple assault arrests grew from 21% in 1980 to 37% in 2017.

■ Across genders, the disorderly conduct arrest rate declined in recent years and the relative decline was greater for males than for females. Since 2006, the male arrest rate fell 71%, compared with 66% for females.

Disorderly conduct

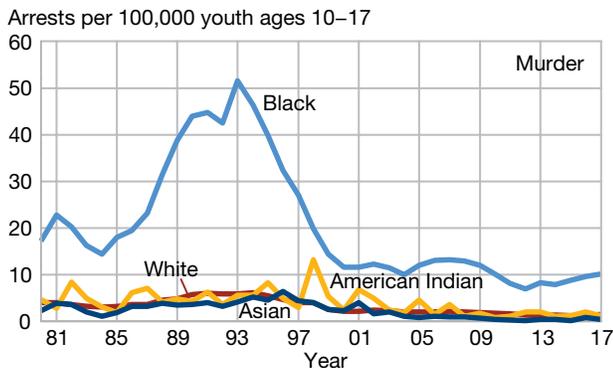


■ Similar to the pattern for simple assault, the female share of disorderly conduct arrests increased steadily and reached 36% in 2017.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics. (See data source note on page 13 for details.)

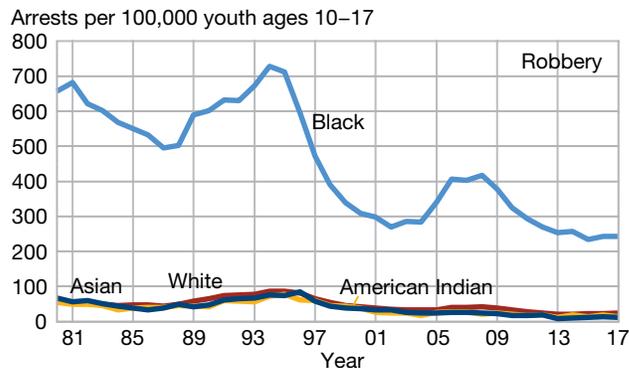
Arrest rates for murder and robbery were much higher for black youth than youth of other races

Murder



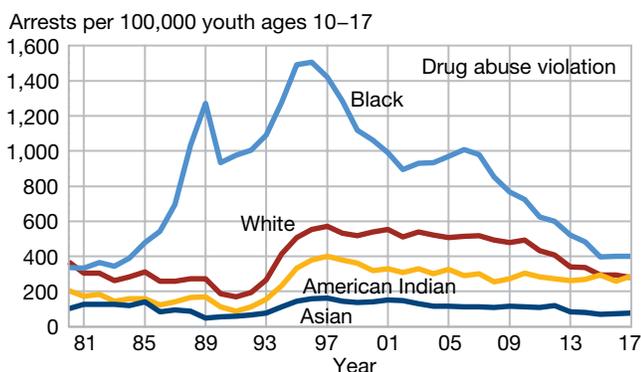
- The murder arrest rate for white juveniles reached a historic low in 2013, 82% below its 1994 peak, while the rate for black juveniles reached its low point 1 year earlier in 2012, 87% below its 1993 peak. Since their respective low points, rates for both increased through 2017: 47% for black juveniles and 22% for white juveniles.
- The disparity in black-to-white juvenile murder arrest rates reached a peak in 1993, when the black rate was nearly nine times the white rate. This ratio declined during the late 1990s and early 2000s, falling to about 5 to 1. The black rate was more than seven times the white rate in 2017.

Robbery



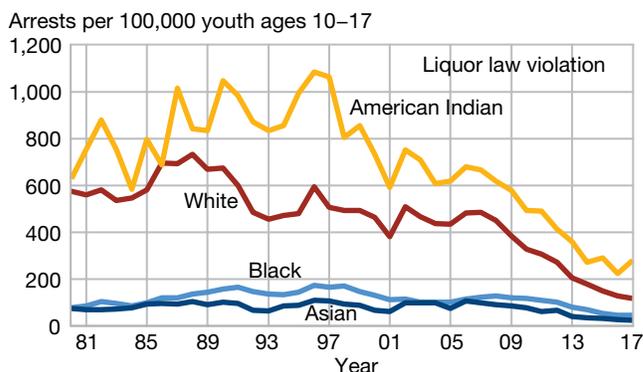
- Juvenile robbery arrest rates reached a historic low in 2013 for white, American Indian, and Asian youth, while the rate for black youth reached its low point in 2015. From their low points to 2017, rates have increased: 18% for white youth, 11% for American Indian youth, 36% for Asian youth, and 1% for black youth.
- Similar to murder, the black arrest rate for robbery was higher than the rate for whites, but the difference in rates was far greater for robbery than for murder. In 2017, for example, the robbery arrest rate for black juveniles was nearly 10 times the white rate.

Drug abuse violation



- In the last 10 years, the drug arrest rate declined 55% for black youth, 43% for white youth, and 28% for Asian youth, but increased 13% for American Indian youth.
- The black-to-white ratio in the drug abuse violation arrest rate has narrowed in recent years, largely influenced by the considerable decline in the black arrest rate since the mid-1990s (75% vs. 50% for the white arrest rate). The ratio peaked in 1991, at nearly 6 to 1; by 2017, the black arrest rate was 1.4 times the white rate.

Liquor law violation



- The liquor law arrest rate declined for all race groups in the last 10 years: 74% for whites, 73% for Asians, 71% for American Indians, and 55% for blacks. By 2017, the rate reached its lowest level since at least 1980 for all but American Indian juveniles.
- Liquor law violations are one of the few offenses for which rates are higher for American Indian juveniles than for other race groups. The American Indian rate in 2017 was twice the white rate, nearly 8 times the rate for black youth, and 11 times the rate for Asian youth.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Juvenile Justice and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics. (See data source note on page 13 for details.)

Many factors can influence state variations in juvenile arrest rates

Although state data are available from the Uniform Crime Reporting program, comparisons should be made with caution because of variations in jurisdictional standards and reporting

State	2017 reporting population coverage	Arrests of juveniles under age 18 per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17, 2017				State	2017 reporting population coverage	Arrests of juveniles under age 18 per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17, 2017			
		Aggravated assault	Larceny-theft	Drug abuse	Weapons			Aggravated assault	Larceny-theft	Drug abuse	Weapons
U.S. total	84%	86	527	283	54	Missouri	92%	85	656	392	48
Alabama	77	51	329	51	27	Montana	99	86	874	382	17
Alaska	100	149	586	230	27	Nebraska	12	98	325	341	16
Arizona	91	102	666	455	38	Nevada	89	199	421	269	62
Arkansas	92	101	533	299	43	New Hampshire	96	41	309	420	4
California	100	94	264	93	76	New Jersey	95	63	313	408	65
Colorado	91	89	751	501	62	New Mexico	39	168	250	112	16
Connecticut	99	59	522	164	51	New York	51	72	515	354	35
Delaware	100	195	712	361	88	North Carolina	63	65	651	228	82
District of Columbia	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	North Dakota	99	68	910	663	40
Florida	100	103	827	288	45	Ohio	80	45	437	205	34
Georgia	79	79	567	233	45	Oklahoma	96	73	502	311	35
Hawaii	100	48	463	338	10	Oregon	90	59	514	504	30
Idaho	89	64	684	532	52	Pennsylvania	98	143	484	293	71
Illinois	22	65	873	284	233	Rhode Island	89	63	432	129	122
Indiana	64	121	591	302	45	South Carolina	78	81	734	532	111
Iowa	85	109	924	320	46	South Dakota	84	140	1,040	1,258	95
Kansas	65	66	328	336	26	Tennessee	97	144	663	391	62
Kentucky	97	30	319	120	21	Texas	92	60	410	331	28
Louisiana	80	192	1,173	347	101	Utah	85	49	680	482	38
Maine	100	26	651	292	5	Vermont	96	68	257	92	19
Maryland	91	155	819	354	109	Virginia	92	39	459	286	41
Massachusetts	95	97	194	35	28	Washington	90	71	412	187	34
Michigan	98	66	422	213	29	West Virginia	63	39	151	112	13
Minnesota	96	80	886	337	77	Wisconsin	98	89	1,052	550	89
Mississippi	46	33	548	187	55	Wyoming	94	46	789	881	54

NA = Arrest counts were not available for the District of Columbia in the FBI's *Crime in the United States, 2017*.

Notes: Arrest rates for jurisdictions with less than complete reporting may not be representative of the entire state. Although juvenile arrest rates may largely reflect juvenile behavior, many other factors can affect the magnitude of these rates. Arrest rates are calculated by dividing the number of youth arrests made in the year by the number of youth living in the jurisdiction. Therefore, jurisdictions that arrest a relatively large number of nonresident juveniles would have a higher arrest rate than jurisdictions where resident youth behave similarly. Jurisdictions (especially small ones) that are vacation destinations or that are centers for economic activity in a region may have arrest rates that reflect the behavior of nonresident youth more than that of resident youth. Other factors that influence arrest rates in a given area include the attitudes of citizens toward crime, the policies of local law enforcement agencies, and the policies of other components of the justice system. In many areas, not all law enforcement agencies report their arrest data to the FBI. Rates for such areas are necessarily based on partial information and may not be accurate. Comparisons of juvenile arrest rates across jurisdictions can be informative. Because of factors noted, however, comparisons should be made with caution.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from *Crime in the United States, 2017* (Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018) tables 3 and 22, and population data from the National Center for Health Statistics' *Vintage 2017 Postcensal Estimates of the Resident Population of the United States (April 1, 2010, July 1, 2010–July 1, 2017), by Year, County, Single-Year of Age (0, 1, 2, . . . , 85 Years and Over), Bridged Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex* [machine-readable data files available online at www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged_race.htm, as of June 27, 2018].

Notes

Data source

The Bureau of Justice Statistics developed arrest estimates for 1980–2014 using the Arrest Data Analysis Tool [available online at www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=datool&url=/arrests/index.cfm, retrieved September 29, 2017]; the National Center for Juvenile Justice developed arrest estimates for 2015–2017 based on data published in the FBI's *Crime in the United States* reports for the respective years; population data for 1980–1989 are from the U.S. Census Bureau, *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 are 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/nvss/bridged_race.htm, released July 26, 2004]; population data for 2000–2009 are from the National Center for Health Statistics (prepared under a collaborative arrangement with the U.S. Census Bureau), *Intercensal Estimates of the Resident Population of the United States for July 1, 2000–July 1, 2009, by Year, County, Single-Year of Age (0, 1, 2, . . . , 85 Years and Over), Bridged Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex* [machine-readable data files available online at www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged_race.htm, as of October 26, 2012, following release by the U.S. Census Bureau of the revised unbridged intercensal estimates by 5-year age group on October 9, 2012]; and population data for 2010–2017 are from the National Center for Health Statistics (prepared under a collaborative arrangement with the U.S. Census Bureau), *Vintage 2017 Postcensal Estimates of the Resident Population of the United States (April 1, 2010, July 1, 2010–July 1, 2017), by Year, County, Single-Year of Age (0, 1, 2, . . . , 85 Years and Over), Bridged*

Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex [machine-readable data files available online at www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged_race.htm, as of June 27, 2018, following release by the U.S. Census Bureau of the unbridged vintage 2017 postcensal estimates by 5-year age group, retrieved on June 29, 2018].

Data coverage

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, 2017* for offense definitions.) The proportion of the U.S. population covered by these reporting agencies ranged from 72% to 86% between 1980 and 2017, with 2017 coverage of 78%.

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.

The reporting coverage for the total United States (84%) in the table on page 12 includes all states reporting arrests of persons younger than age 18. This is greater than the coverage in the rest of the bulletin (78%) for various reasons. For example, a state may

provide arrest counts of persons younger than age 18 but not provide the age detail required to support other subpopulation estimates.

Changes in the definition of rape in the FBI data

Since 1927, forcible rape was defined by the FBI as “the carnal knowledge of a female, forcibly and against her will.” Beginning in 2013, the FBI adopted a broader definition of rape: “Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.” Unlike the definition in place for more than 80 years, the new definition does not require force and is gender neutral.

Under current reporting practices, law enforcement agencies may submit data on rape arrests based on either the new definition or the legacy definition. Due to differences in agency reporting practices, national estimates for the offenses of “rape” and “sex offenses” are not available after 2012. Additionally, estimates for the Violent Crime Index (which included “forcible rape”) are not shown as this category is no longer compatible with prior years. More information about these changes can be found on the FBI's website [https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2013/crime-in-the-u.s.-2013/rape-addendum/rape_addendum_final].

Visit OJJDP's Statistical Briefing Book for more information on juvenile arrests

OJJDP's online Statistical Briefing Book (SBB) offers access to a wealth of information about juvenile crime and victimization and about youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Visit the “Law Enforcement and Juvenile Crime” section of the SBB at ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/crime/faqs.asp for more information about juvenile arrest rates. The SBB contains FAQs about juvenile arrests, displays arrest rate trends detailed by offense and youth demographics, and offers users access to national arrest data that support customizable annual and trend displays by offense and youth demographics.

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NCJ 252713

Acknowledgments

This bulletin was written by Charles Puzzanchera, Senior Research Associate at the National Center for Juvenile Justice, with funds provided by OJJDP to support the National Juvenile Justice Data Analysis Project.

This bulletin was prepared under grant number 2016-JF-FX-K001 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice.

To ensure the efficiency and coordination of all Office of Justice Programs research activities, the juvenile justice research, evaluation, and statistical data collection projects funded by OJJDP are managed by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ).

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The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office for Victims of Crime; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking.