

JUVENILE CRIME AND DETENTION FACT SHEET

In 2003, there were an estimated 2.2 million arrests of youth in the United States. Youth ages 16-17 comprised 68% of all juvenile arrests.¹

Youth of color comprised 30% of the 2,200,000 youth arrested in 2003:

- 71% were White;
- 27% were Black;
- 2% were Asian; and,
- 1% were American Indian.²

From 1985 to 2002, the number of delinquency cases in which adjudicated youth were ordered to some form of residential placement rose 44%.³ On an average day in 2003, 96,555 juveniles were held in residential placement.

Of these:

- 2% (1,671) were 12 years old and younger;
- 4% (4,088) were age 13;
- 10% (9,890) were age 14;
- 19% (18,363) were age 15;
- 26% (24,809) were age 16;
- 25% (23,933) were age 17; and,
- 14% (13,841) were age 18 and older.⁴

From 1991 to 2003, the detained delinquency population increased 38% while committed population rose only 28%. Of the 96,655 juveniles held in residential placement:

- 71% (69,007) of these youths were committed;
- 27% (26,269) were detained; and
- 1% (1,318) were diverted.⁵

¹ U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2006 National Report* (Washington D.C., U.S. Department of Justice, 2006) Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Census of Juvenile Residential Placement Databook* (Washington D.C., U.S. Department of Justice, 2003) Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

⁵ U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2006 National Report* (Washington D.C., U.S. Department of Justice, 2006) Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

Once adjudicated, white youth were less likely than black youth or youth of other races to be ordered into residential placement. Of the 26,269 juveniles detained in residential placement facilities in 2003:

- 40% (10,408) were Black;
- 35% (9,218) were White;
- 21% (5,613) were Hispanic;
- 2% (473) were Asian; and
- 2% (443) were American Indian.⁶

In 2003, 96,655 youth were held in residential placement. 23% (22,356) of these were detained for violent offenses and 77% (74,600) for nonviolent offenses. Of those crimes for which youth were detained:

- 37% were property offenses;
- 28% were public order offenses;
- 26% were person offenses; and
- 10% were drug offenses.⁷

⁶ U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2006 National Report* (Washington D.C., U.S. Department of Justice, 2006) Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

⁷ *Ibid.*