



Fact Sheet: South Carolina

Key Facts:

- The juvenile arrest rate for index crimes has increased 6.3% since 1976.¹
- The five most frequent offenses for juvenile referrals in South Carolina are: disturbing schools, simple assault and battery, shoplifting, simple assault and simple possession of marijuana.²
- Between 1983 and 2005, the number of juvenile referrals increased 139.4%, but the last few years have seen a drop in the number of referrals (there were 26,213 referrals in FY 2005).³
- 17% of case dispositions in FY 2005 resulted in a commitment to the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)
- Since 1979, admissions to the DJJ have increased 118.9%.⁴ There were 1,867 admissions in 2005.
- FY 04-05, 3,766 males and 1,269 females were securely detained. While they comprise on 35% of the youth population, 49% of all detentions in FY 04-05 were black males.⁵
- The average length of stay in secure detention for a juvenile is 14 days.⁶
- It costs the state of South Carolina \$150.00 per day for one juvenile in detention, \$50.00 of which the county reimburses DJJ.⁷

Major Developments:

- In 2005, SCDJJ established a contract with Clemson University to operate a Youth Development Camp in an effort to

reduce the number of low-level offenders in high security institutional placements.⁸ This community-based residential program has a capacity for 30 males and 15 females.

- The DJJ-Clemson partnership also established the Palmetto Plan, which uses the natural resources in DJJ's long-term incarceration facilities to promote hands-on learning opportunities similar to that of its community wilderness camps.⁹
- The South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) received a \$645,957 federal grant in 2005 to establish centers in four metropolitan counties to provide employment and social skills training to juvenile offenders.¹⁰
- The DJJ and the Children's Law Office (CLO) have partnered with the Governor's Juvenile Justice Advisory Council, the South Carolina Department of Public Safety, and Court Administration to pursue detention reform.¹¹

What South Carolina Law Says:

- A child must be at least 11 to be detained in a detention facility, and children 11 or 12 years of age may only be detained by order of the family court.¹²
- A child who is taken into custody because of a status offense should not be detained more than 24 hours in a juvenile detention facility, unless a

previously issued court order notified the child that further violation of the court's order may result in the secure detention of that child in a juvenile detention facility.¹³

- A child who has been ordered detained must be screened by a social worker or a psychologist within 24 hours to determine if the child is in need of any services.¹⁴
- A child must not be detained in a detention facility for more than 90 days, absent exceptional circumstances as determined by the court.¹⁵
- Youth who have reached the age of 14 can be transferred to adult court for a series of offenses, including drugs and weapons charges, and other felonies.¹⁶
- The juvenile detention regulations only allow status offenders to be held in the SCDJJ Juvenile Detention Facility, but not in any other JDCs in the state.

State Resources:

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¹ South Carolina Department of Public Safety: Office of Justice Programs. 2006. *South Carolina Criminal and Juvenile Justice Trends 2006*.

www.scdps.org/ojp/2006%20Crime%20Book%20-%20final%20version.pdf

² South Carolina Department of Public Safety: Office of Justice Programs. 2006.

³ South Carolina Department of Public Safety: Office of Justice Programs. 2006.

⁴ South Carolina Department of Public Safety: Office of Justice Programs. 2006.

⁵ Children's Law Office at the University of South Carolina School of Law. 2006. *Juvenile Detention in South Carolina*. <http://childlaw.sc.edu/frmPublications/JuvenileDetentionInSouthCarolina.doc>

⁶ South Carolina Department of Public Safety: Office of Justice Programs. 2006.

⁷ South Carolina Department of Public Safety: Office of Justice Programs. 2006.

⁸ National Center for Juvenile Justice. 2006. *State Juvenile Justice Profile—South Carolina*.

www.ncjj.org/stateprofiles/profiles/

⁹ National Center for Juvenile Justice. 2006.

¹⁰ National Center for Juvenile Justice. 2006.

¹¹ Children's Law Office at the University of South Carolina School of Law. 2006.

¹² S.C. Code Ann. §20-7-7210(F) (Supp. 2005).

¹³ S.C. Code Ann. §20-7-7210(E) (Supp. 2005).

¹⁴ Children's Law Office at the University of South Carolina School Of Law. 2006.

¹⁵ S.C. Code Ann. §20-7-7215(A) (Supp. 2005).

¹⁶ National Center for Juvenile Justice.