



Juvenile Justice Processes and Offenders in WV: Future Research and Evaluation Issues

**Presented to the
WV Juvenile Justice State Advisory Group (SAG)**

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Introduction

- Offer an overview of selected juvenile justice research issues in the state;
- Identify potential areas of study in various areas of juvenile justice in WV;
- Provide results from recent statistical reports on juvenile arrests, detention, and corrections;
- Discuss findings from recent statistical reports in relation to national figures; and
- Propose ways in which the SAC can be of assistance to SAG members and program personnel.



WV Juvenile Research Reports, 2004-2005

- Turley & Haas (2004, July) *WV Juvenile Arrest Report 2000-2002.*
- Haas & Summers (2004, June) *Racial Disparity and the Juvenile Justice Process: A Multistage Analysis for the State of West Virginia.*
- Hamilton, Haas, & Turley (2004, September) *WV Juvenile Court Statistics 2001-2003.*
- Hamilton & Haas (2005, June) *WV Juvenile Detention Report: 2001-2003.*
- Hamilton & Haas (2005, June) *WV Juvenile Corrections Report: 2001-2003.*



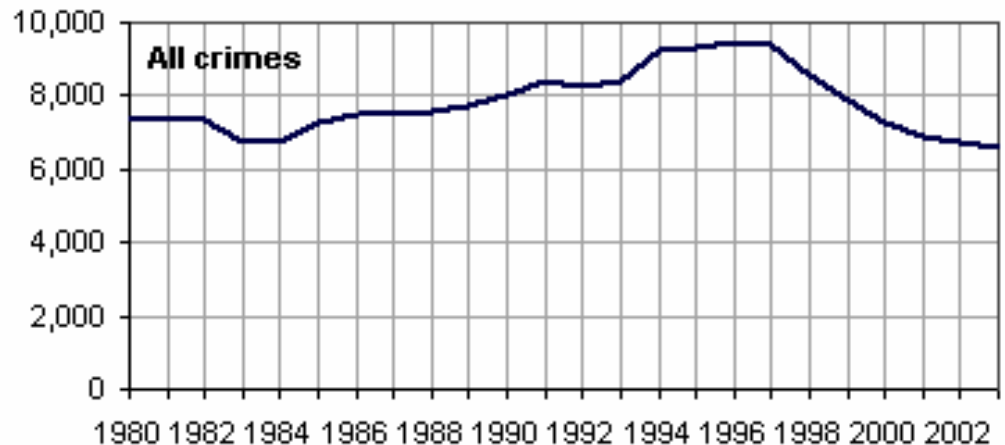
Selected Juvenile Justice Research Issues

- Crime-Detention/Commitment Rates Disjuncture
- Disproportionate Minority Contact/Racial Disparity
- Gender-Specific Research and Programming
- Serious, Violent and Repeat Offenders
- Program Evaluation and Assessment

Crime-Detention/Commitment Rates Disjuncture

- Nationally, the juvenile arrest rate for all offenses reached its highest level in the last two decades in 1996, and then declined 30% by 2003.
- The overall juvenile arrest rate was lower in 2003 than in 1980.

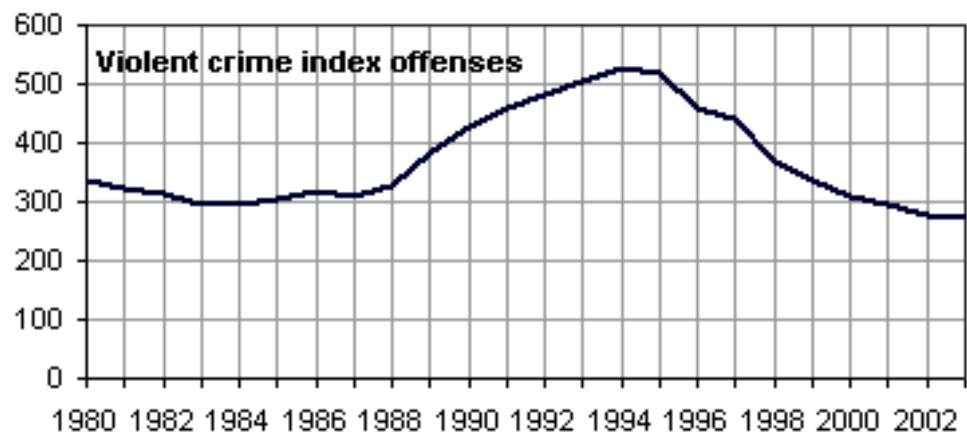
Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10-17, 1980-2003



Crime-Detention/Commitment Rates Disjuncture

- The juvenile Violent Crime Index arrest rate in 2003 was lower than in any year since at least 1980 and 48% below the peak year of 1994.
- After years of relative stability, the juvenile Property Crime Index arrest rate began a decline in the mid-1990s that continued through 2003.
- The juvenile arrest rate for Property Crime Index offenses in 2003 was 46% below its levels in 1980.

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10-17, 1980-2003

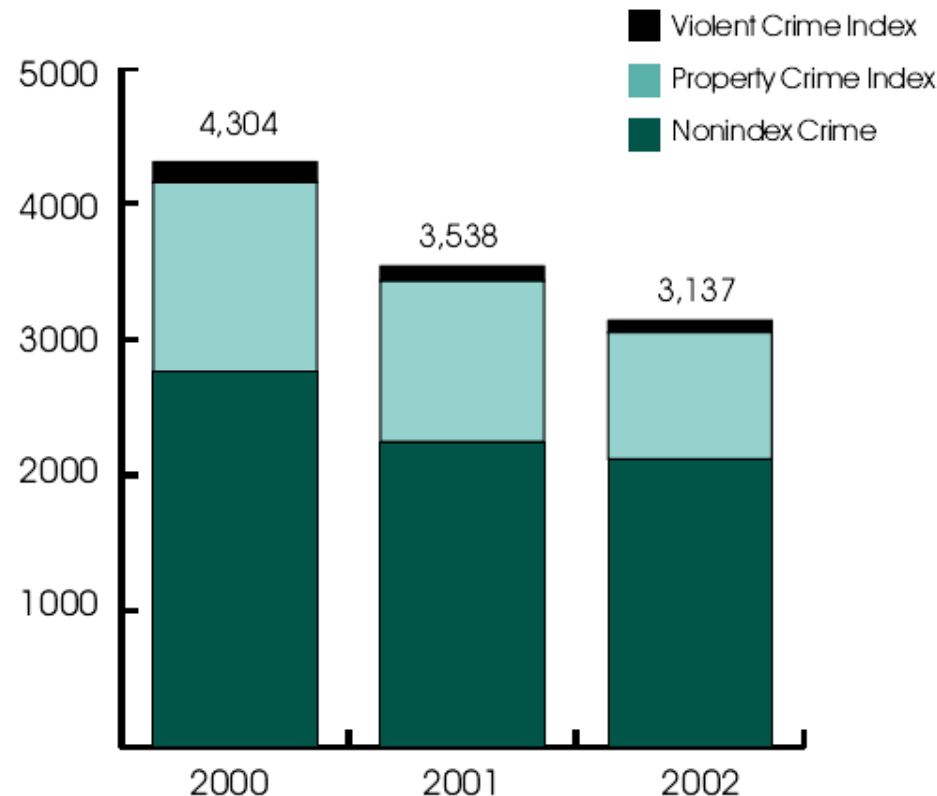


Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10-17, 1980-2003



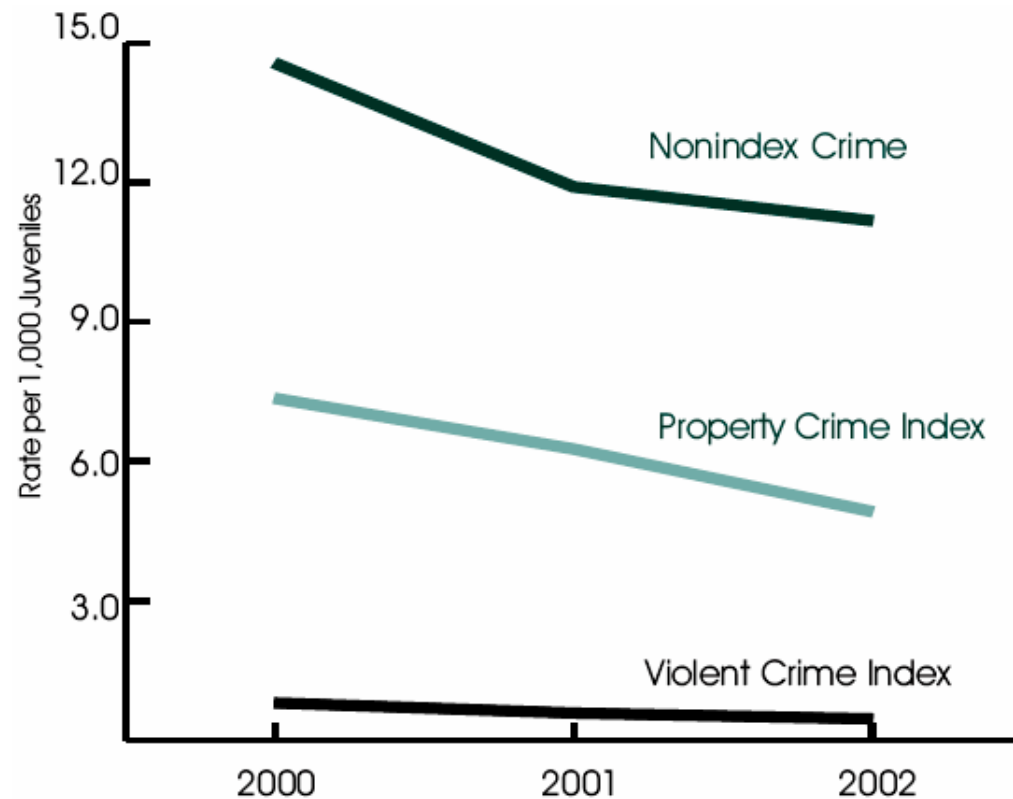
Crime-Detention/Commitment Rates Disjuncture

- The total number of juvenile arrests in WV have also declined sharply over the past three years.
- From 2000 to 2002 juvenile arrests declined by 27.1%.
- For this period, the vast majority of arrests were for Nonindex (65.0%) and Property Crime Index offenses (31.8%).
- Only 3.1% of juvenile arrests were for a Violent Crime Index offense.



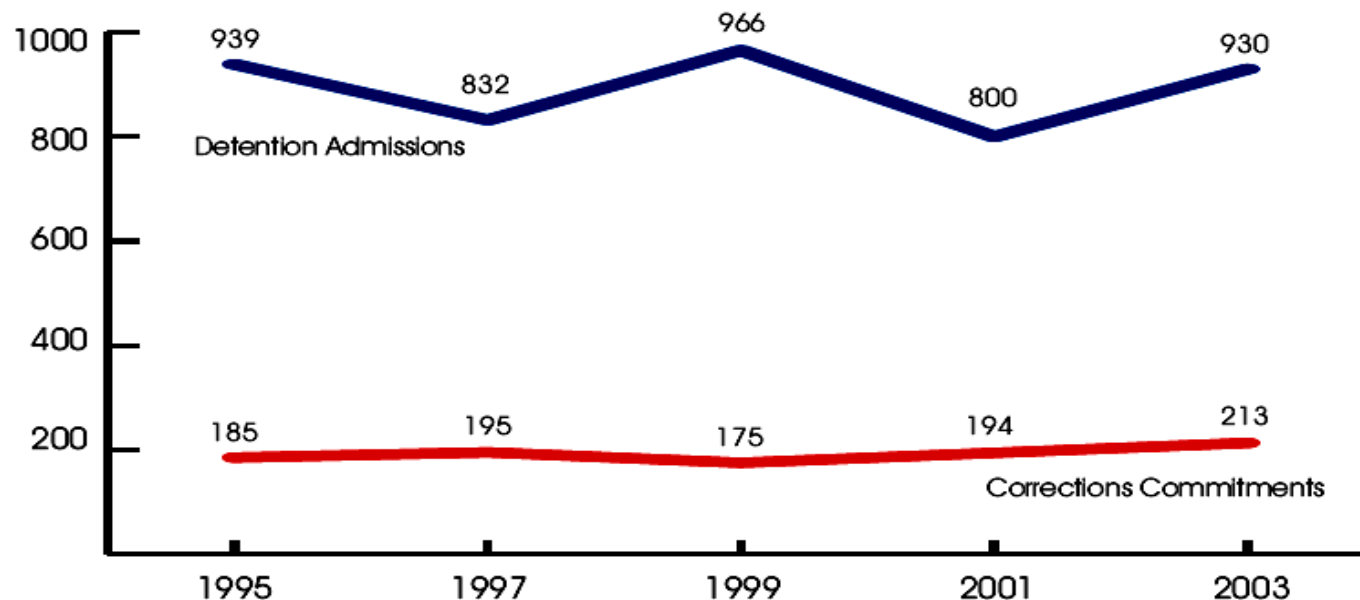
Crime-Detention/Commitment Rates Disjuncture

- The Violent Crime Index rate declined over this 3-year period to 0.46 per 1,000 juveniles in 2002.
- Declines were most pronounced for property and nonindex offenses.
- Property Crime Index declined from 7.4 in 2000 to 4.9 juveniles per 1,000 in 2002.



Crime-Detention/Commitment Rates Disjuncture

- However, admissions/commitments have remained stable or increased over the past decade in WV.
- There were 930 admissions in WV detention centers in 2003, the highest number of admissions reported since 1999.
- A total of 213 juveniles were committed to correction facilities in 2003, the highest number in 10-years.





Crime-Detention/Commitment Rates Disjuncture

- **These findings imply a need to study/develop:**
 - the nature of cases/juveniles serving time in detention and corrections in greater detail;
 - changes in referral and referral sources to the JJS (decline in LE referrals and increase in non-LE referrals in recent years);
 - closer examination of factors that impact sentencing decisions (e.g., availability of bed space, alternatives to detention/secure confinement, use of diversion, etc.);
 - changes in systems response to particular offense/offender types; and
 - study the effectiveness of interventions and impact of differences in repeat offenders on admissions and commitments.



Disproportionate Minority Contact/Racial Disparity

- Consistent with national figures, minorities continue to be over-represented in arrests and detention/correction populations in WV.
- Black youths comprised 16% of the US population in 2003.
- In particular, black youths were overrepresented in juvenile arrests for violent crimes - to a lesser extent, property crimes.
- Over the period from 1980 through 2003, the black-to-white disparity in juvenile arrest rates for violent crimes declined from 6.3 in 1980 to 4.0 in 2003.

Most Serious Offense	Black Proportion of Juvenile Arrests in 2003
Murder	48%
Forcible rape	33
Robbery	63
Aggravated assault	38
Burglary	26
Larceny-theft	27
Motor vehicle theft	40
Weapons	32
Drug abuse violations	26
Runaways	20
Vandalism	18
Liquor laws	4

Data source: *Crime in the United States 2003*, table 43.



Disproportionate Minority Contact/Racial Disparity

- In WV, nonwhite juveniles accounted for 11.1% of all arrests in 2003, compared to 5.8% of the population.
- Nonwhite youths were overrepresented in arrests for every offense, except burglary and forcible rape.
- Nonwhite males represented 8.2% of the arrestees, but only 3.0% of the population.

	<u>Nonwhite Proportion of Juvenile Arrests</u>
Total	11.1%
Violent Crime Index	24.1%
Murder/Nonnegligent Manslaughter	25.0%
Forcible Rape	0.0%
Robbery	30.0%
Aggravated Assault	25.0%
Property Crime Index	11.3%
Burglary	4.8%
Motor Vehicle Theft	18.3%
Larceny-Theft	11.6%
Arson	20.0%
Nonindex	10.4%
Other Assaults	14.7%
Stolen Property	41.9%
Vandalism	12.9%
Drug Abuse Violations	15.2%
Weapons	21.2%
Curfew/Loitering/Vagrancy	18.5%



Disproportionate Minority Contact/Racial Disparity

- Minorities accounted for:
 - 11.0% of juveniles processed by the courts in 2003.
 - 17.1% of detainees in 2001, 17.2% in 2002, and 17.5% in 2003.
 - 21.6% of youths committed to WVIHY in 2001, 17.3% in 2002, and 16.9% in 2003.
- In addition, research on *racial disparity* in WV indicates:
 - There is some evidence that minorities may represent a higher risk group of youths with greater needs:
 - More likely to be referred to juvenile probation at younger ages and for more serious offenses,
 - Living in single parent homes, and
 - Enrolled in alternative forms of education.



Disproportionate Minority Contact/Racial Disparity

- More likely to receive harsher dispositions at the informal disposition, predispositional detention, and formal disposition stages, even after controlling for seriousness of offense, prior record, age, and gender.
- Predispositional detention stage: nonwhite youths have greater than 2 to 1 odds of being detained prior to adjudication in a detention center compared to white youths.
- Formal disposition stage: nonwhite youths are twice as likely to be sentenced to a secure correctional facility or DJS.



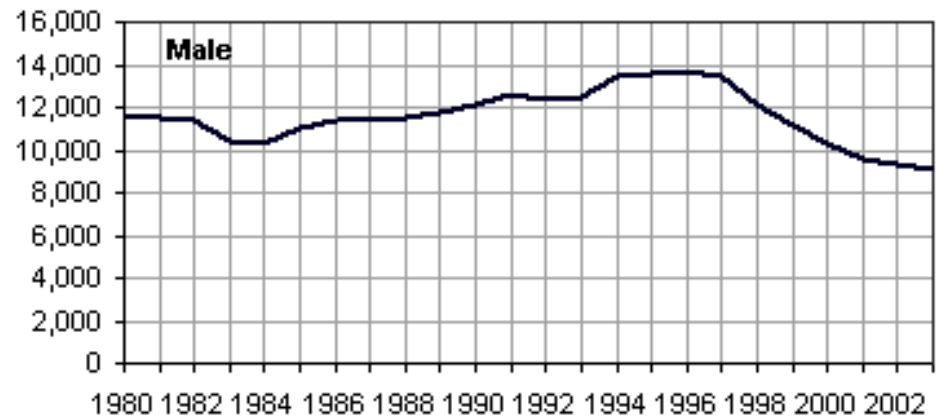
Disproportionate Minority Contact/Racial Disparity

- **These findings imply a need to study/develop:**
 - race in relation to other factors that impact the probability of arrests;
 - objective criteria at the earliest points in the process – detention screening instruments and factors that impact informal vs. formal processing decisions;
 - differences in levels of risk and the types of needs that distinguish white and nonwhite youths referred to the system -- and the delivery of services to target these needs;
 - sources of referral and how white and minority cases differ by sources of referral as well as how other agencies/institutions may contribute to disparity in JJS referrals, and;
 - how risk and need differences, combined with legal factors, influence the judgments of stakeholders at key decision-making points.

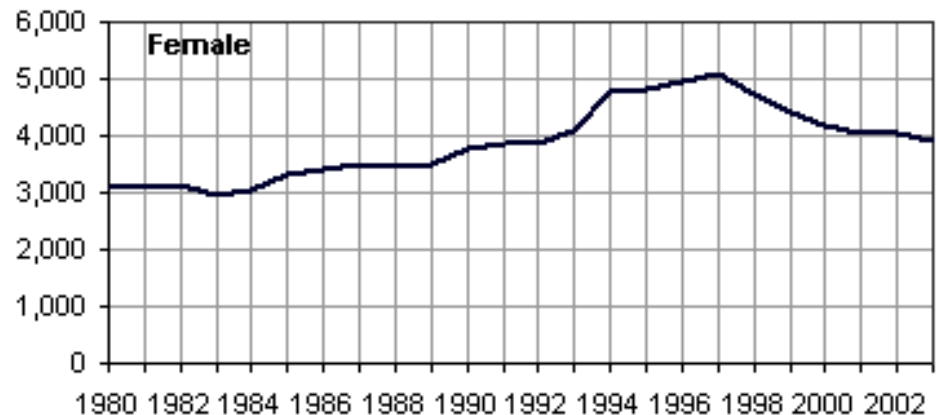
Gender-Specific Research and Programming

- Nationally, 29.0% of juvenile arrests involved females in 2003.
- Between 1994-2003, arrests of juvenile females generally decreased less than male arrests.

Arrests per 100,000 males ages 10-17, 1980-2003



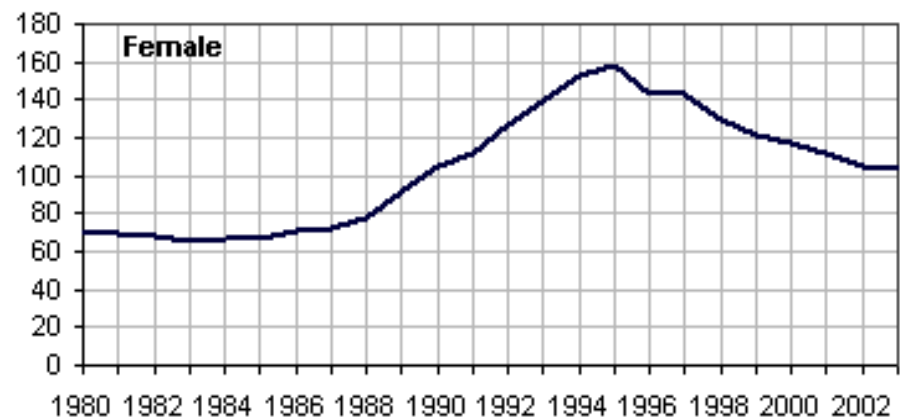
Arrests per 100,000 females ages 10-17, 1980-2003



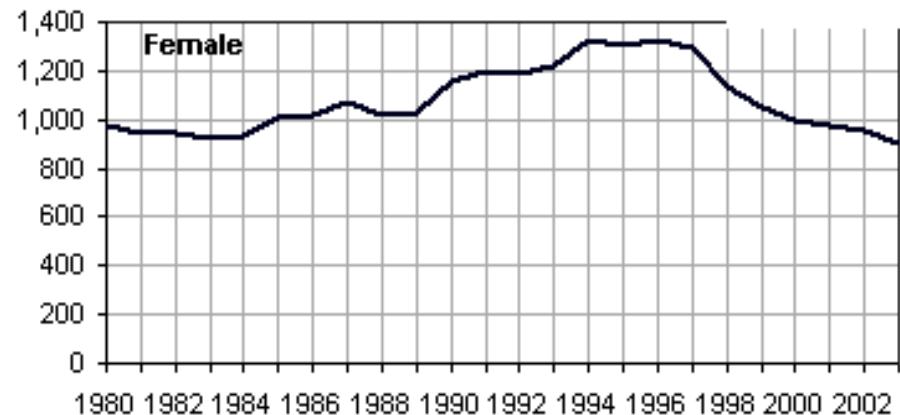
Gender-Specific Research and Programming

- Nationally, declines since the mid-1990's have brought the rate below the 1980 rate for males in 2003, but not for females.
- The 2003 arrest rate for females remained 47% above the 1980 rate.
- Male juvenile Property Crime Index arrest rates generally declined during the 1990's but female rates declined only after 1996.

Arrests per 100,000 females ages 10-17, 1980-2003— Violent Index



Arrests per 100,000 females ages 10-17, 1980-2003 Property Index





Gender-Specific Research and Programming

- In 2002, females in WV accounted for:
 - 26.2% - Total WV arrests
 - 14.9% - Violent Index
 - 34.9% - Property Index
 - 15.5% - Nonindex
- 43.4% of juvenile arrests for larceny-theft involved females in 2002.
- 92.5% of these were for shoplifting.

	<u>Female Proportion of Juvenile Arrests</u>
Total	26.2%
Violent Crime Index	14.9%
Murder/Nonnegligent Manslaughter	25.0%
Forcible Rape	0.0%
Robbery	0.0%
Aggravated Assault	17.6%
Property Crime Index	34.9%
Burglary	13.6%
Motor Vehicle Theft	10.8%
Larceny-Theft	43.4%
Arson	6.7%
Nonindex	15.5%
Other Assaults	29.7%
Stolen Property	15.6%
Vandalism	6.7%
Drug Abuse Violations	14.4%
Weapons	3.0%
Curfew/Loitering/Vagrancy	31.5%



Gender-Specific Research and Programming

- In WV, females represented 33.2% of youth processed by the juvenile courts in 2003.
- Compared to male offenders, females were more likely to be referred to the juvenile court for a *person offense* (28.8% of female delinquent offenders) or a *property offense* (42.3% of female delinquent offenders).
- Female youths were *nearly twice* as likely as male youths to be charged with a runaway offense and only slightly more likely than male youths to be charged with a truancy offense.



Gender-Specific Research and Programming

- In 2003, females comprised 21.9% of the 930 juvenile detainees in WV, up from 16.0% in 1998.
- Of the 212 juveniles committed to WVIHY in 1998, 13 (6.1%) were female compared to 24 (11.3%) of commitments in 2003.
- Female detainees and commitments were on average 4-5 months younger than their male counterparts in 2003.



Gender-Specific Research and Programming

- Currently, we know very little regarding gender differences in sentencing, services provided, developmental/need factors in WV.
- WV racial disparity research shows that females are sentenced more leniently than males, controlling for various factors – but more study is needed.
- The racial disparity study indicates that females are significantly *less likely* to receive a sentence to DJS custody, be adjudicated as delinquent, be detained prior to adjudication, and are *more likely* to receive informal probation supervision.



Gender-Specific Research and Programming

- Meta-analytic research at the national level indicates that many of the strong predictors for female delinquency are the same for males.
 - Antisocial peers, history of antisocial behavior, antisocial attitudes, and personality.
 - School, IQ, and family relationships and a history of physical and/or sexual assault are also *relatively* important.
 - Should continue to focus on strongest criminogenic needs in interventions/treatments, but address other factors such as family and school relationships and prior physical/sexual assault.
 - These factors are “non-criminogenic” and relate to responsivity – prior victimization, depression/anxiety/mental health, self-esteem.



Gender-Specific Research and Programming

- **These findings imply a need to study:**
 - differences in referral, handling, and sentencing between gender groups;
 - subsets of data by offense and gender to better understand growth/nature of female offending;
 - differences in risk/needs of across gender groups (protective factors may be more important for females);
 - the degree to which current interventions for females address important criminogenic factors and responsivity issues; and
 - adherence to the “principles of effective intervention” and “what works”



Serious, Violent and Repeat Offenders

- Most delinquents stop committing illegal acts at some point, and most of them stop relatively early.
- Roughly 6-8% of offenders are responsible for half of all crimes known to law enforcement.
 - Farrington and West (1993), 6% of the entire cohort of 411 London males, accounted for 49% of all recorded convictions up to the age of 32.
- The “8% Solution” and Orange County Probation Department research staff – discovered this small group accounted for 55% of repeat cases.



Serious, Violent and Repeat Offenders

- Orange County found that even a modest reduction in recidivism rates for the 8% problem group could result in major, long-term savings.
- Thus, serious juvenile delinquency could be reduced significantly by identifying and *treating* a small percentage of offenders at risk for becoming chronic offenders.
- The empirical literature clearly distinguishes between those who stop offending in adolescence and those that continue offending into adulthood.
 - Moffitt (1993) distinguished between “life-course persistent” and “adolescence-limited” offenders.

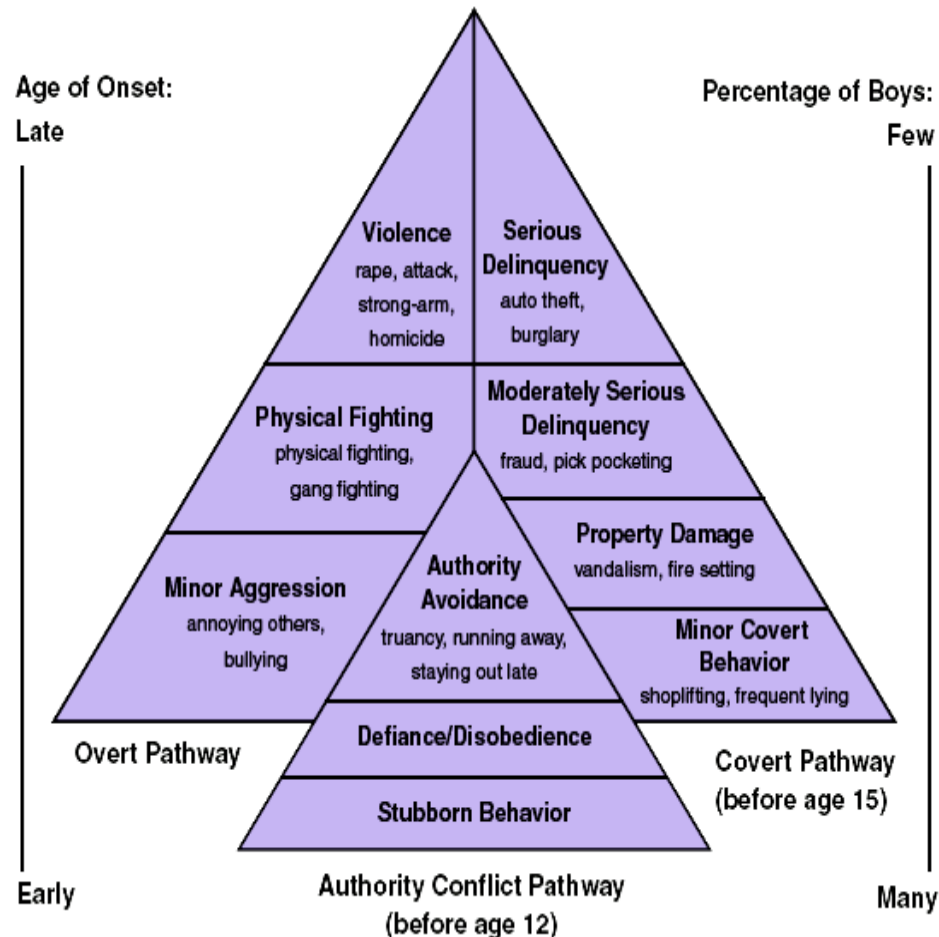


Serious, Violent and Repeat Offenders

- Orange County's 8% could be identified reliably at first contact with the JJS:
 - early onset of crime
 - a multi-problem profile: family problems (abuse, neglect, criminal family members, and/or lack of parental supervision);
 - school problems (truancy, failing more than one course, or a recent suspension or expulsion);
 - drug and alcohol abuse, and behaviors such as gang involvement, running away, and stealing.

Serious, Violent and Repeat Offenders

- Development toward more serious forms of delinquency tends to be orderly.
 - Aggressive youth involved in overt acts are at particular risk of committing covert acts, but not visa versa.
- Early onset of behavior is strong indicator.
- More serious offenders engage in multiple pathways.





Serious, Violent and Repeat Offenders

- A small percentage of juveniles are arrested for violent offenses in WV, but some delinquents do return to the system.
- WV juveniles account for 5.8% of all Violent Crime Index arrests in 2002, compared to 15.0% nationally.
- Person (violent) offenses were the second most common type of offense charged in 2003 in cases admitted to detention (26.0%) and corrections (23.7%) facilities.
- 11.8% of juveniles processed by the juvenile courts in 2003 were charged with a felony offense.



Serious, Violent and Repeat Offenders

- In terms of repeat offenders in WV:
 - 9.6% prior adjudication for a delinquent offense
 - 7.5% prior sentence to probation
 - 6.7% prior arrest
 - 5.1% prior adjudication for a status offense
- No information on detention admissions and corrections commitments.

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Prior adjudication for status offense		
No	6,467	94.8
Yes	352	5.1
Prior adjudication for delinquent offense		
No	6,163	90.4
Yes	656	9.6
Prior arrest		
No	6,356	93.2
Yes	463	6.7
Prior probation		
No	6,304	92.4
Yes	515	7.5



Serious, Violent and Repeat Offenders

- **These findings imply a need to study/develop:**
 - “chronic” or “repeat offenders” to assess differences across behavioral indicators and risk/need classifications, compared to non-repeaters;
 - the impact (or “effectiveness”) of previous dispositions on subsequent referrals;
 - differences in treatment/services provided and relationship to recidivism; and
 - procedures to conduct detailed assessments of self-report behavior on first referral to JJS
 - OJJDP found that average age at which individuals took their first step in any of the pathways was approximately 7.



Program Evaluation and Assessment

Research-based approaches:

- Provide policy-makers and administrators with the information to make informed decisions.
- Help us demonstrate effectiveness of strategies and approaches.
 - Successes can then be replicated, failures can be reduced or eliminated.
- Assist in selection and allocation of resources and strategies to deliver those resources.



Program Evaluation and Assessment

Research-based approaches:

- Play a key role in developing long-term policies and practices to reduce future offending.
 - Hopefully, policies based on sound and tested theoretical principles.
- Test our assumptions and beliefs about “what is happening, and what is really happening”
 - Criminological literature is replete with examples of programs and policies that “should work” or are “believed to work”, but are later found to be ineffective (even counterproductive)



Program Evaluation and Assessment

- Conduct evaluation/explanatory research that includes proper controls.
 - A minimum of legal history, current offense seriousness, and common demographic variables.
- Identify well-established programs for evaluation – both process *and* outcome.
 - Currently, there is little scientific evidence of program/intervention effectiveness in the WV.
 - Use control or adequate comparison groups to determine differences in outcomes.
 - Should examine “program integrity”: implementation, client pre-service assessment, program characteristics, staff characteristics, evaluation, and other – in relation to outcomes.



Program Evaluation and Assessment

- Determine availability of programs and impact on service delivery and supervision practices.
 - Programs provided by probation?
 - Community/"outside" contractors?
- Conduct validation studies on extant assessment and classification tools. Value is dependent upon:
 - accuracy with which they predict future offending;
 - whether agencies can use the information to structure service delivery to reduce future offense.
- Make greater use of extant data and fill important data gaps: probation/court information, risk/need assessment information, greater use of detention/corrections data.



Conclusions

- JRSA and OJJDP survey of *juvenile justice specialists* - “supportive evaluation environment” was important for facilitating research/evaluation efforts and SAG’s play a vital role.
- This environment was characterized as one in which key JJ stakeholders possessed:
 - a desire to know what works;
 - a shared belief that evaluation is necessary to determine program effectiveness and impact;
 - leaders who advocate outcome evaluations instead of just process evaluations; and
 - the desire to use evaluation findings to enhance state and local planning.



Conclusions

- **The SAC can be of assistance to SAG members/program personnel:**
 - develop data collection systems or assist in the improvement of extant systems;
 - assist in developing measurable goals and objectives for programs;
 - provide consultation on common research design and evaluation practices;
 - assist in the development of evaluation components in grant proposals;



Conclusions

- **The SAC can be of assistance to SAG members/program personnel:**
 - suggest viable research projects given available data;
 - identify data needs for research and evaluation for given topics or areas;
 - consult on program development and implementation issues;
 - provide information on academic and scholarly studies in the areas of delinquency and offender rehabilitation; and
 - develop, conduct, and produce research on juvenile offenders and programs.



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