



# JUVENILE JUSTICE STATISTICS

## NATIONAL REPORT SERIES BULLETIN

Caren Harp, Administrator

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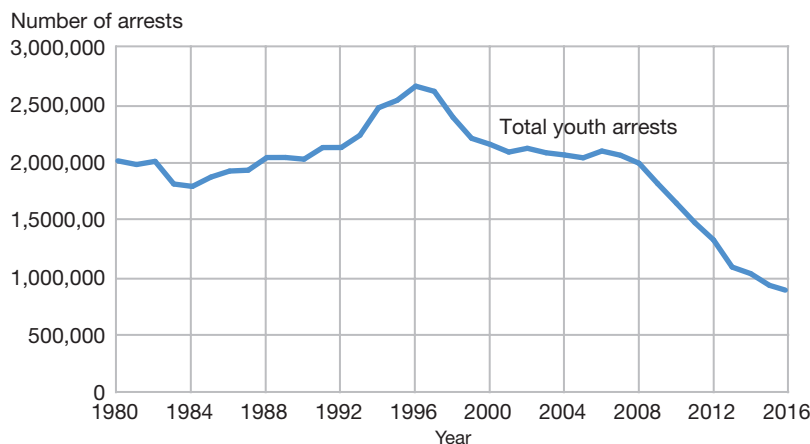
## Juvenile Arrests, 2016

Charles Puzzanchera

### Highlights

This bulletin describes the latest trends in arrests involving juveniles (youth younger than age 18) covering the period from 1980 to 2016, 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 offense and demographic group.

**In 2016, law enforcement agencies made an estimated 856,130 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 2016 was 68% less than the 1996 peak. In comparison, arrests of adults fell 20% 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 11 for details.)

- Juvenile arrest rates for violent crimes, such as robbery and aggravated assault, have declined in the last 5 years.
- Conversely, juvenile arrest rates for murder have increased since 2012.
- Juvenile arrest rates for property crimes have declined in recent years. By 2016, juvenile arrest rates for larceny-theft, burglary, and arson were at their lowest levels since at least 1980.
- Following 6 years of decline, the juvenile arrest rate for drug law violations in 2016 was at its lowest level since the early 1990s.
- Male and female juvenile arrest rates have declined in the last 10 years, and the relative declines have been greater for males than for females across many offenses.
- Juvenile arrest rates have declined for all racial groups since 2007, and the relative declines have been greater for white youth than for black youth for all but drug offenses.

## A Message From OJJDP

This bulletin summarizes recent trends in juvenile arrests in the United States based on 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 arrest rates 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 number of arrests involving juveniles in 2016 was at its lowest level since at least 1980, and much of the decline has occurred in the past 10 years. Between 2007 and 2016, the number of juvenile arrests fell 58%. Among violent crimes, arrests for aggravated assault and robbery declined 23% and 11%, respectively, between 2012 and 2016. However, juvenile arrests for murder increased 18% during the same period. About 3 in 10 (29%) juvenile arrests in 2016 involved females, more than a quarter (28%) involved youth younger than 15, and 62% involved white youth.

OJJDP remains committed to supporting research, programs, and initiatives to combat juvenile delinquency and to promote positive youth outcomes. Visit the Statistical Briefing Book on the OJJDP website for more information about juvenile arrest rate trends.

Caren Harp  
Administrator

# The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting 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\* are more likely than adults to 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, when arrest statistics show that law enforcement agencies made an estimated 19,420 arrests

of young people for weapons law violations in 2016, it means that a weapons law violation was the most serious charge in these arrests. An unknown number of additional arrests in 2016 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 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 17,250 murders were reported to law enforcement agencies in 2016, 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 2 years, however, so that by 2016, the rate was at the highest level since 2009.

Of all murder victims in 2016, 92% (or 15,910 victims) were 18 years old or older. The other 1,340 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 3 years of increase, the number of juvenile murder victims in 2016 was 11% above the 2013 low point and 54% below the 1993 peak, when an estimated 2,880 juveniles were murdered.

Of all juveniles murdered in 2016, 38% were younger than age 5, 67% were male, and 46% were white. Of all juvenile victims in 2016, 31% of males, 52% of females, 45% of whites, and 30% of blacks were younger than age 5.

\*In this bulletin, "juvenile" refers to persons younger than age 18. In 2016, 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.

# In 2016, law enforcement agencies in the United States made more than 856,000 arrests of persons younger than 18

The number of arrests of juveniles in 2016 was 58% fewer than the number of arrests in 2007

Most serious offense	2016 estimated number of juvenile arrests	Percent of total juvenile arrests			Percent change		
		Female	Younger than 15	White	2007–2016	2012–2016	2015–2016
<b>Total</b>	856,130	29%	28%	62%	-58%	-35%	-7%
<b>Violent Crime Index*</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	850	9	9	36	-36	18	9
Rape*	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Robbery	19,200	11	19	29	-44	-11	4
Aggravated assault	28,060	26	32	54	-51	-23	-2
<b>Property Crime Index</b>	184,430	34	28	58	-56	-38	-12
Burglary	31,990	12	30	55	-61	-41	-10
Larceny-theft	134,180	41	27	60	-55	-40	-14
Motor vehicle theft	15,720	19	23	47	-47	20	8
Arson	2,550	16	57	71	-64	-42	-6
<b>Nonindex</b>							
Other (simple) assault	128,930	37	39	58	-47	-26	-2
Forgery and counterfeiting	1,220	26	11	56	-61	-16	19
Fraud	4,640	32	21	50	-36	-2	3
Embezzlement	680	38	9	59	-59	55	16
Stolen property (buying, receiving, possessing)	10,890	16	22	39	-51	-16	5
Vandalism	39,120	17	40	69	-65	-35	-6
Weapons (carrying, possessing, etc.)	19,420	11	31	54	-55	-21	1
Prostitution and commercialized vice	500	73	12	40	-67	-37	-15
Sex offense (except rape and prostitution)*	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Drug abuse violation	98,490	23	15	75	-50	-30	-1
Gambling	260	12	11	25	-87	-73	-46
Offenses against the family and children	3,470	40	38	59	-40	4	1
Driving under the influence	6,480	25	2	89	-64	-31	-2
Liquor law violation	36,710	40	11	88	-74	-53	-15
Drunkenness	4,770	29	12	83	-72	-52	-13
Disorderly conduct	65,710	36	38	53	-68	-45	-8
Vagrancy	780	26	24	61	-80	-45	-27
All other offenses (except traffic)	155,180	28	25	66	-59	-35	-7
Curfew and loitering	34,180	30	29	56	-76	-51	-24

- The number of arrests involving juveniles in 2016 was at its lowest level since at least 1980, and much of the decline has occurred in the past 10 years. Between 2007 and 2016, the number of juvenile arrests fell 58%.
- Among violent crimes, arrests for aggravated assault and robbery declined (23% and 11%, respectively) between 2012 and 2016.
- In contrast, juvenile arrests for murder increased 18% during the same period.
- In 2016, there were an estimated 134,180 juvenile arrests for larceny-theft. About 4 in 10 (41%) of these arrests involved females, more than a quarter (27%) involved youth younger than 15, and 60% 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 text box on page 4.) 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 after 2012, as this category is no longer compatible with prior years.

**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 11 for details.)

# Juvenile arrests for violent crime remain near historically low levels

## Juvenile arrests for violent crimes fell 67% since 1994

For many years, the primary means of assessing trends in violent crime was to monitor four offenses that law enforcement agencies nationwide consistently report. These four crimes—murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault—formed the Violent Crime Index. Due to changes in the official definition of rape implemented in 2013 (see text box), tracking violence through the Violent Crime Index is no longer tenable, as the meaning of the included offenses is no longer consistent before/after 2013. In this bulletin, the author has adopted a modified measure of violence that includes the offenses of murder, robbery, and aggravated assault. In any given year prior to the definition change, these three offenses accounted for more than 95% of arrests for Violent Crime Index offenses.

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 modest increase (less than 0.5%) in the last year, the number of juvenile arrests for violent crimes in 2016 was 67% less than the 1994 peak.

After falling to a relatively low level in 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 reaching the lowest level since at least 1980, the number of juvenile robbery arrests increased by 4% in the last year. 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 previous 36 years.

Between 2007 and 2016, the number of arrests in all offense categories declined for juveniles, and the relative decline for juveniles exceeded that of adults.

### Percent change in arrests 2007–2016

Most serious offense	Juvenile	Adult
Violent crime*	-48%	-8%
Murder	-36	-10
Robbery	-44	-17
Aggravated assault	-51	-6
Property Crime Index	-56	-2
Burglary	-61	-21
Larceny-theft	-55	5
Motor vehicle theft	-47	-21
Simple assault	-47	-11
Weapons law violations	-55	-5
Drug abuse violations	-50	-10

\*Violent crime 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 11 for details.)

## Juvenile property crime arrests declined for the eighth straight year

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 2016, the number of

juvenile Property Crime Index arrests fell 76% and reached its lowest level since at least 1980. Between 2007 and 2016, juvenile arrests declined for individual property offenses: burglary (61%), larceny-theft (55%), motor vehicle theft (47%), and arson (64%). As a result, juvenile arrests for Property Crime Index offenses in 2016 were at their lowest levels since at least 1980.

## The definition of rape has changed in the FBI's UCR program

Since 1927, the FBI had defined forcible rape 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 or 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.

Find more information about these changes 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](https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2013/crime-in-the-u.s.-2013/rape-addendum/rape_addendum_final).

# In 2016, 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 2016

In 2016, law enforcement agencies made 252,520 arrests of females younger than age 18 and 603,610 arrests of males. Although males accounted for the majority (71%) of juvenile arrests overall in 2016, the female share was relatively high for certain offenses, including larceny-theft (41%), liquor law violations (40%), simple assault (37%), and disorderly conduct (36%). Females accounted for 19% of juvenile violent crime arrests and 26% of aggravated assault arrests in 2016.

From 2007 through 2016, arrests of juvenile females decreased less than male arrests in several offense categories (e.g., aggravated and simple assault, robbery, vandalism, drug abuse violations, and liquor law violations).

## Percent change in juvenile arrests 2007–2016

Most serious offense	Female	Male
Violent crime*	-44%	-49%
Robbery	-39	-45
Aggravated assault	-45	-53
Simple assault	-42	-49
Property Crime Index	-57	-55
Burglary	-60	-61
Larceny-theft	-57	-53
Motor vehicle theft	-41	-48
Vandalism	-55	-66
Weapons	-50	-56
Drug abuse violation	-27	-54
Driving under influence	-62	-65
Liquor law violation	-72	-75
Disorderly conduct	-65	-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 11 for details.)

Gender differences also occurred in arrest trends for adults. For example, between 2007 and 2016, adult male arrests for aggravated assault fell 8% while female arrests increased 4% and adult male arrests for simple assault fell 15% while adult female arrests rose 4%. 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 (54%) than females (27%) between 2007 and 2016, while it declined 15% for adult males and increased 9% for adult females. Over the same time, the number of disorderly conduct arrests of juvenile females fell 65% while it fell 69% for juvenile males, and adult female arrests fell 30% while male arrests fell 43%.

## Juvenile arrests disproportionately involved black youth

The racial composition of the U.S. juvenile population ages 10–17 in 2016 was 75% white, 17% black, 6% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 2% American Indian.<sup>†</sup> More than half (53%) of all juvenile arrests for violent crimes in 2016 involved black youth, 44% involved white youth, 2% involved American Indian youth, and 1% involved Asian youth. For Property Crime Index arrests, the proportions were 58% white youth,

38% black youth, 2% Asian youth, and 2% American Indian youth.

## Black proportion of juvenile arrests in 2016

Most serious offense	Black proportion
Violent crime*	53%
Murder	61
Robbery	69
Aggravated assault	43
Simple assault	40
Property Crime Index	38
Burglary	42
Larceny-theft	36
Motor vehicle theft	50
Vandalism	28
Weapons	44
Drug abuse violation	22
Liquor law violation	7

\*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 11 for details.)

## In 2016, juveniles were involved in about 1 in 14 arrests for murder and about 1 in 5 arrests for robbery, motor vehicle theft, and vandalism

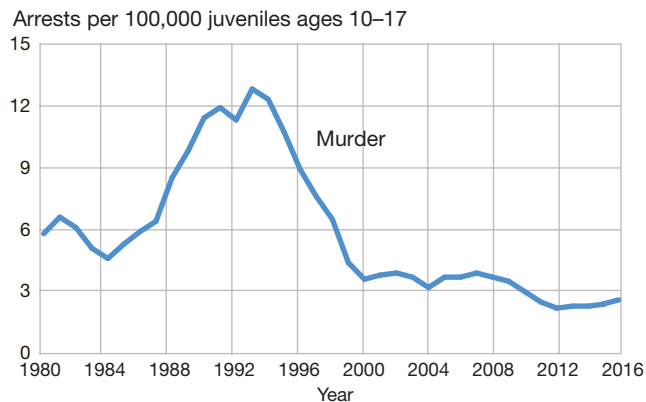
Most serious offense	Juvenile arrests as a percentage of total arrests						
	All	Male	Female	White	Black	Indian	Asian
<b>Total</b>	8%	7%	8%	7%	10%	7%	7%
Murder	7	7	6	6	8	8	9
Robbery	20	21	15	13	25	14	22
Aggravated assault	7	7	8	6	9	6	5
Burglary	15	17	10	12	22	22	15
Larceny-theft	13	13	12	11	17	12	17
Motor vehicle theft	18	19	16	13	30	19	11
Arson	26	28	19	26	27	22	28
Other (simple) assault	12	11	16	11	15	9	8
Vandalism	20	21	16	20	20	18	16
Weapon	12	12	15	12	13	14	14
Drug abuse violation	6	6	6	7	5	10	7
Liquor law violation	16	13	21	17	7	13	13
Disorderly conduct	18	16	22	15	24	8	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 11 for details.)

<sup>†</sup>Not all agencies provide ethnicity data through the Uniform Crime Reporting program; therefore, arrest estimates for juveniles of Hispanic ethnicity are not available.

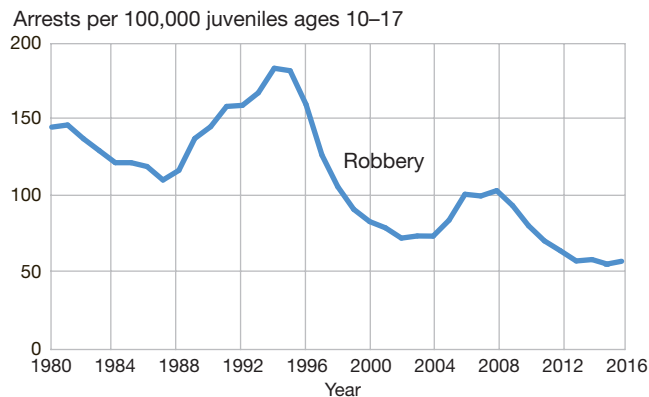
# Juvenile arrest rates for murder, robbery, and aggravated assault were at or near historic lows

## Murder rate



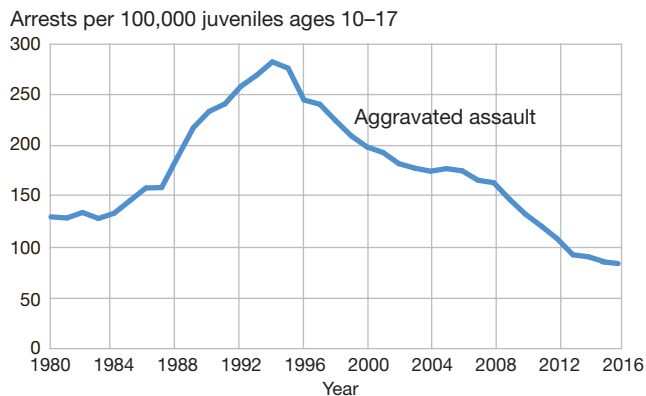
- The juvenile murder arrest rate fell 44% between 2007 and 2012, when it reached its lowest level since at least 1980. This decline was followed by an 18% increase through 2016.
- The growth in the juvenile murder arrest rate between 2012 and 2016 returned it to near its 2011 level; but even with this increase, the rate in 2016 was 80% less than its 1993 peak.

## Robbery rate



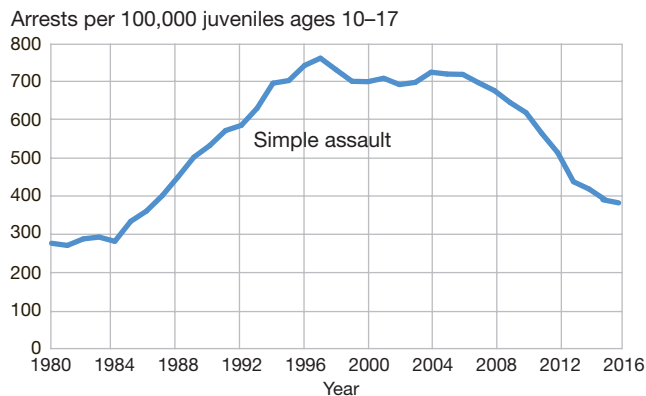
- The juvenile robbery arrest rate in 2015 reached its lowest level in more than three decades, but then increased 4% in the last year. In 2016, the rate was 43% below the 2007 rate and 69% below the 1994 peak.
- Juvenile robbery arrest rates declined for all gender and racial subgroups since 2007: 43% for males, 37% for females, 50% for Asians, 44% for whites, 30% for blacks, and 30% 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 2016 was 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 (45%).

## Simple assault rate

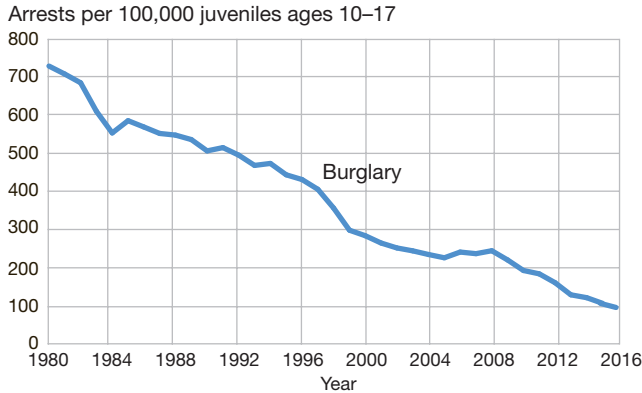


- The simple assault arrest rate declined steadily since 2004, falling 47% through 2016. Despite this decline, the rate in 2016 remained well above the 1981 low point.
- Since 2004, the relative decline in the number of juvenile arrests for simple assault outpaced that of adults (49% vs. 8%). As a result, 12% of simple assault arrests in 2016 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 11 for details.)

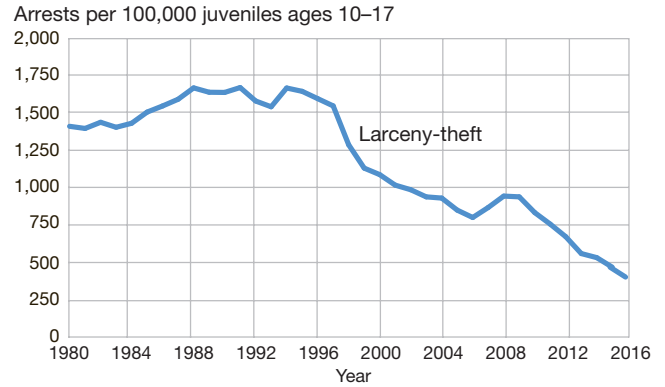
# Juvenile arrest rates for larceny-theft, burglary, and arson reached historic lows in 2016

## Burglary rate



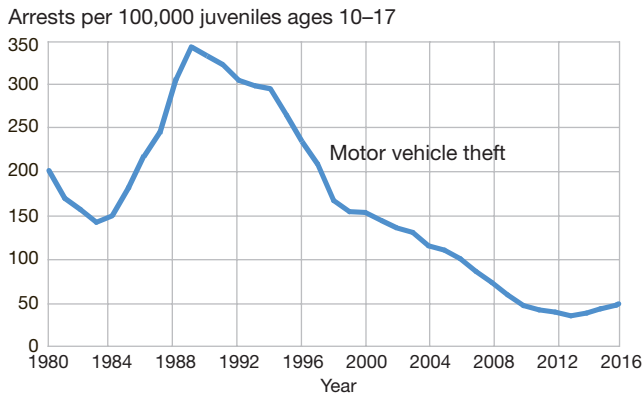
- Unlike the pattern for other property crimes, the trend in the juvenile arrest rate for burglary was a steady decline since 1980. By 2016, the rate reached its lowest level of the 37-year period.
- The large decline in juvenile burglary arrests was not reflected in the adult statistics. For example, between 2007 and 2016, the number of juvenile burglary arrests fell 61%, while adult burglary arrests fell 21%. As a result of this decline, 15% of all burglary arrests in 2016 were juvenile arrests, compared with 27% in 2007.

## Larceny-theft rate



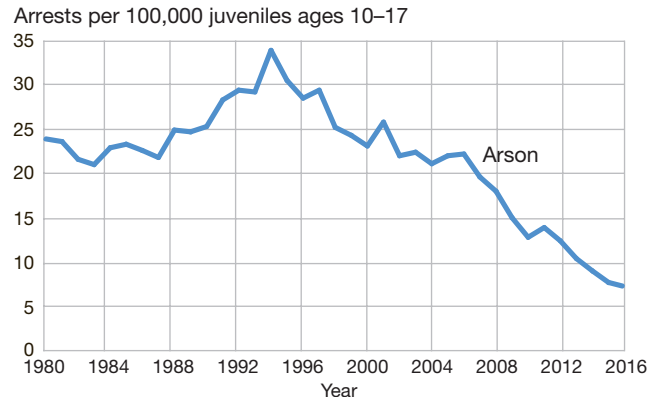
- The juvenile larceny-theft arrest rate declined steadily from the mid-1990s through 2006. This decline was interrupted by 2 years of increase, and then followed by 8 consecutive years of decline. By 2016, the rate was 54% below the level 10 years prior and at its lowest level since at least 1980.
- Juvenile larceny-theft arrest rates declined for all racial subgroups since 2007: 63% for Asians, 58% for whites, 45% for American Indians, and 43% for blacks.

## 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 3 years. After reaching its lowest level in 2013, the juvenile motor vehicle theft arrest rate increased 35%.
- The juvenile motor vehicle theft arrest rates increased for all demographic subgroups in the last 3 years: 44% for females, 33% for males, 56% for blacks, 46% for American Indians, 41% for Asians, and 18% for whites.

## Arson rate

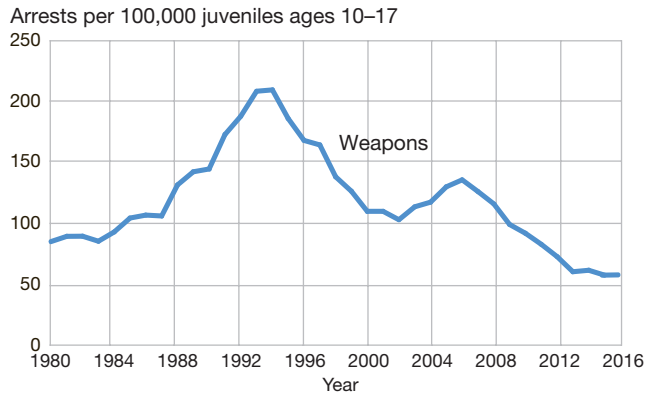


- For much of the past two decades, the juvenile arrest rate for arson has alternated between periods of increase and decline. Following 5 consecutive years of decline, the juvenile arson arrest rate in 2016 fell to its lowest level of the 1980–2016 period.
- Arson is the criminal act with the largest proportion of juvenile arrestees. In 2016, 26% of all arson arrests were arrests of juveniles, and most of these juvenile arrests (58%) involved youth younger than 15. In comparison, 13% of all larceny-theft arrests in 2016 involved juveniles, but only 27% 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 11 for details.)

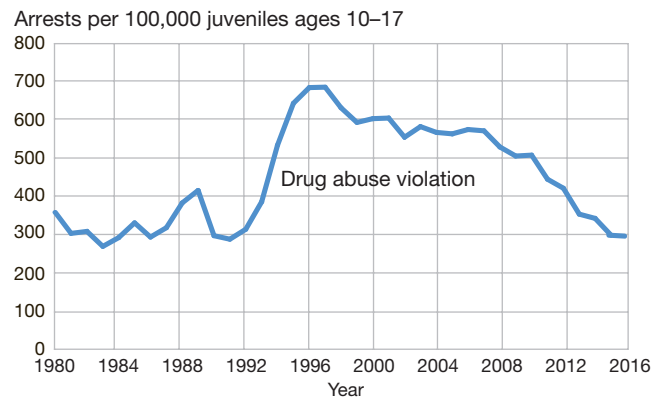
# In 2016, juvenile arrest rates for weapons, drugs, and vandalism were at or near their lowest levels

## Weapons law violation rate



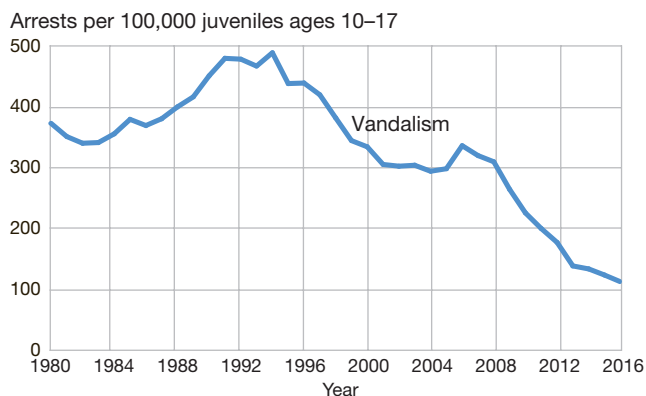
- Similar to robbery, the juvenile arrest rate for weapons law violations declined considerably since the mid-1990s. This decline was interrupted between 2002 and 2006, when the juvenile weapons law violation arrest rate increased 32%. The rate has since fallen 58%, bringing the 2016 rate near its lowest level of the 37-year period.
- The relative decline in weapons law violation arrests in the last 10 years was greater for juveniles than adults. Since 2007, the number of juvenile weapons law violation arrests fell 55%, while adult arrests fell 5%.

## Drug abuse violation rate



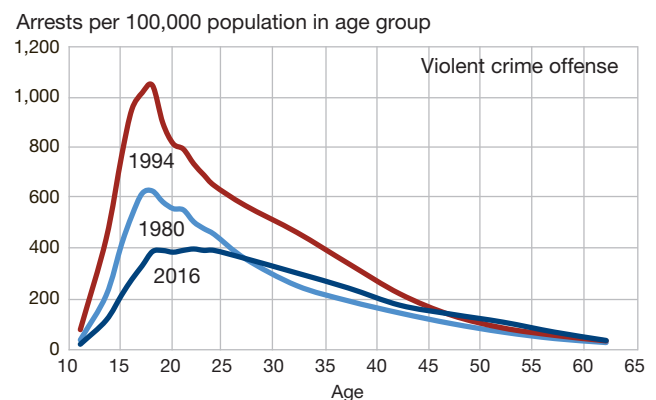
- Following a period of relative stability between 2000 and 2006, the juvenile drug abuse arrest rate declined 48% through 2016, reaching its lowest level since the early 1990s, and just 10% above the 1983 low point.
- The juvenile drug abuse arrest rate declined for all race groups in the last 10 years, falling 60% for black youth, 43% for white youth, 35% for Asian youth, and 10% for American Indian youth.

## Vandalism rate



- Following 10 consecutive years of decline, the juvenile vandalism arrest rate in 2016 fell to its lowest level since at least 1980 and 76% below the 1994 peak.
- Since 2006, the relative decline in the number of juvenile arrests for vandalism outpaced that of adults (67% vs. 14%). As a result, 20% of vandalism arrests in 2016 involved a juvenile, compared with 39% in 2006.

## Violent crime age rate



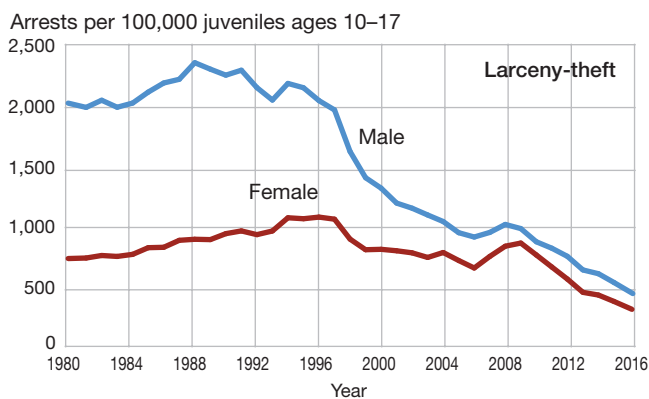
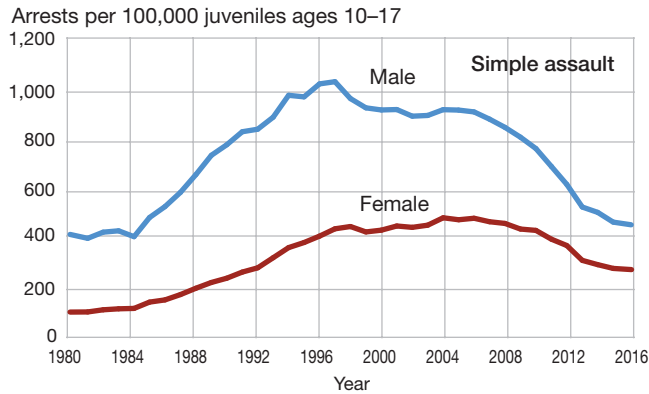
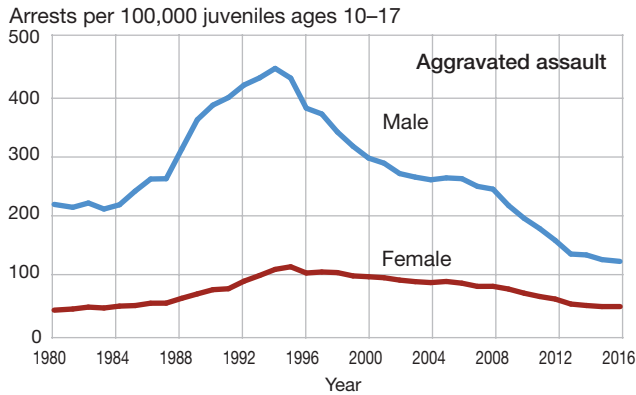
- Regardless of age, the violent crime (murder, robbery, and aggravated assault) arrest rate grew substantially between 1980 and 1994. During this period, the relative increase was greater for juveniles than adults.
- By 2016, arrest rates for violent crimes fell substantially from the 1994 peak for 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 55% for young adults ages 18–21, 43% for adults ages 22–24, 36% for those ages 25–29, and 31% 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 11 for details.)



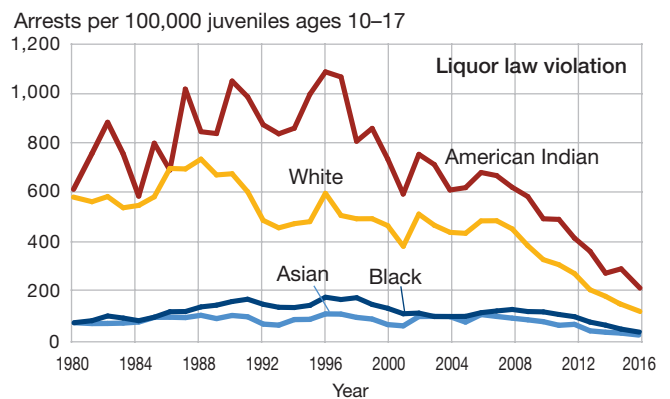
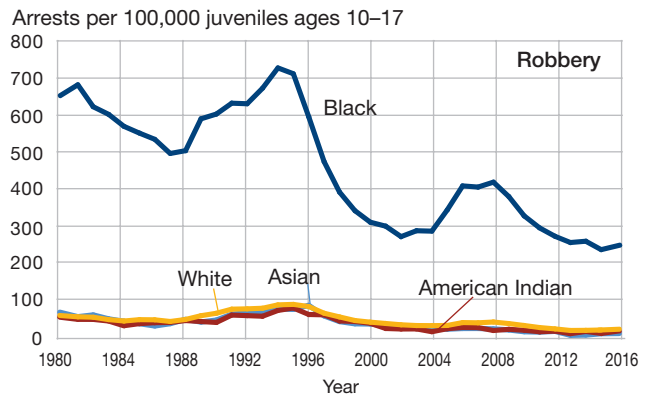
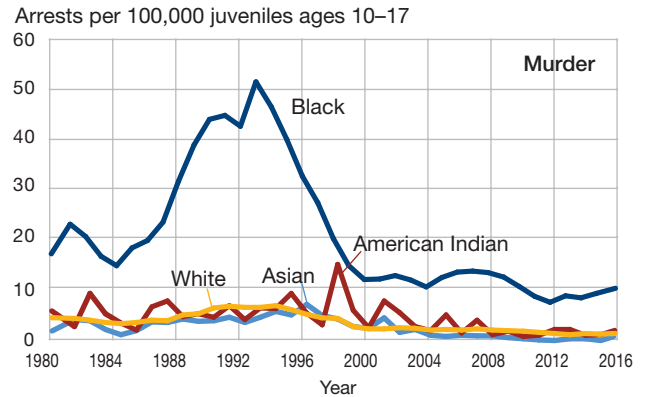
# The decline in juvenile arrest rates varied by gender and race

## Gender rates



■ Regardless of gender, arrest rates have declined in recent years; for most offenses, the relative decline was greater for males than for females. For example, since 2007, the male aggravated assault rate fell 51%, compared with a 44% decrease for females. Similarly, the male simple assault arrest rate fell 48%, compared with 40% for females. Conversely, the decline in larceny theft arrest rates since 2007 was greater for females (56%) than males (52%).

## Race rates



■ Arrest rates have declined for all races in recent years. However, violent crime arrest rates for black youth were greater than those for white youth, and the rates decreased less than those for white youth between 2007 and 2016 (28% and 41%, respectively, for murder and 40% and 44% for robbery).

■ Although arrest rates for liquor law violations declined more for white youth than black youth between 2007 and 2016 (73% and 63%, respectively), rates for white youth were greater than those for black youth across all years.

**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 11 for details.)

# Many factors can influence state variations in juvenile arrest rates

Among states with at least minimally adequate reporting (above 74%), those with the highest juvenile drug abuse violation arrest rates in 2016 were Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming

State	2016 reporting population coverage	Arrests of juveniles under age 18 per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17, 2016				State	2016 reporting population coverage	Arrests of juveniles under age 18 per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17, 2016			
		Aggravated assault	Larceny-theft	Drug abuse	Weapons			Aggravated assault	Larceny-theft	Drug abuse	Weapons
U.S. total	86%	85	577	293	57	Missouri	95%	85	717	412	49
Alabama	78%	42	314	49	24	Montana	99%	61	858	360	6
Alaska	100%	191	619	259	30	Nebraska	90%	27	1,268	695	50
Arizona	92%	91	751	454	32	Nevada	100%	205	466	277	55
Arkansas	93%	94	607	260	41	New Hampshire	96%	35	334	527	1
California	99%	100	310	156	84	New Jersey	98%	77	311	398	74
Colorado	90%	88	921	473	57	New Mexico	72%	131	667	319	41
Connecticut	99%	62	527	161	49	New York	54%	78	526	330	39
Delaware	100%	229	770	367	106	North Carolina	62%	58	679	189	91
District of Columbia	0%	NA	NA	NA	NA	North Dakota	99%	61	884	624	31
Florida	100%	108	944	298	43	Ohio	77%	35	450	195	34
Georgia	79%	73	616	264	61	Oklahoma	95%	70	561	328	41
Hawaii	100%	61	532	351	12	Oregon	91%	59	622	525	30
Idaho	79%	55	656	466	49	Pennsylvania	92%	124	489	279	69
Illinois	22%	85	980	444	244	Rhode Island	100%	55	505	82	138
Indiana	65%	92	659	236	55	South Carolina	97%	68	692	435	91
Iowa	90%	140	871	319	41	South Dakota	91%	110	1,199	1,015	59
Kansas	60%	56	479	351	28	Tennessee	97%	148	616	379	59
Kentucky	100%	29	323	110	21	Texas	97%	66	475	337	27
Louisiana	89%	194	1,062	335	103	Utah	92%	38	737	480	55
Maine	100%	20	677	318	12	Vermont	56%	29	192	74	22
Maryland	86%	150	930	414	122	Washington	89%	62	496	214	37
Massachusetts	94%	104	211	37	26	West Virginia	68%	30	130	94	21
Michigan	98%	75	480	221	35	Wisconsin	98%	90	1,058	544	103
Minnesota	95%	79	913	279	72	Wyoming	94%	30	982	956	67
Mississippi	46%	20	537	179	86						

NA = Arrest counts were not available for the District of Columbia in the FBI's *Crime in the United States, 2016*.

**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 the factors noted, however, comparisons should be made with caution.

**Data source:** Analysis of arrest data from *Crime in the United States, 2016* (Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2017) tables 3 and 22, and population data from the National Center for Health Statistics' *Vintage 2016 Postcensal Estimates of the Resident Population of the United States (April 1, 2010, July 1, 2010–July 1, 2016), 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](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged_race.htm), as of June 26, 2017].

# 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&surl=/arrests/index.cfm](http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=datool&surl=/arrests/index.cfm), retrieved September 29, 2017]; the National Center for Juvenile Justice developed arrest estimates for 2015–2016 based on data published in the FBI's *Crime in the United States* reports for the respective years; population data for 1980–1989 is 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 is 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](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged_race.htm), released July 26, 2004]; population data for 2000–2009 is 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](http://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 2010–2016 is from the National Center for Health Statistics (prepared under a collaborative arrangement with the U.S. Census Bureau), *Vintage 2016 Postcensal Estimates of the Resident Population of the United States (April 1, 2010, July 1, 2010–July 1, 2016), 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](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged_race.htm), as of June 26, 2017, following release by the U.S. Census Bureau of the unbridged vintage 2016 postcensal estimates by 5-year age group, retrieved on July 8, 2017].

## 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, 2016* for offense definitions.) The proportion of the U.S. population covered by these reporting agencies ranged from 72% to 86% between 1980 and 2016, with 2016 coverage of 80%.

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 (86%) in the table on pages 10–11 includes all states reporting arrests of persons younger than age 18. This is greater than the coverage in the rest of the bulletin (80%) 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.

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Points of view or opinions expressed in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of OJJDP or the U.S. Department of Justice.

*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.*

## 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](http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/crime/faqs.asp) for more information about juvenile arrest rate trends detailed by offense, gender, and race, including a spreadsheet of all juvenile arrest rates used in this bulletin.

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