

Juvenile Crime Rate Trends

The United States (U.S.) Census Bureau estimates that there were approximately 73.8 million youth under the age of 18 in the United States in 2011.^[1] State statutes define which youth are in the original jurisdiction of the juvenile court, and it varies from state to state; the upper age limit for this jurisdiction ranges from 15 to 17.^[2] In 2009, courts with juvenile jurisdiction disposed more than 1.5 million delinquency cases.^[3]

Fast Facts

- In 2008, an estimated 60% of children in the United States were **exposed to violence**, crime, or abuse in their homes, schools, and communities within the past year. Approximately 46% were assaulted at least once in the past year and 10% were injured in an assault.^[4]
- **Child protective services** agencies investigated nearly 2 million reports of maltreatment involving more than 3.5 million children in 2010. More than one-third of maltreatment victims were infants or toddlers (ages 0-3) with neglect being the most pervasive form of maltreatment (62% of cases).^[5]
- In 2009 there were 262 arrests for violent crime offenses for every 100,000 youth ages 10-17. The **juvenile arrest rate** (ages 10-17) had fallen 47% from its peak level in 1994.^[6]
- The victimization rate for non-Hispanic black youth in 2010 was approximately twice the rate for non-Hispanic white youth, and juvenile males reported higher victimization rates than juvenile females.^[7]
- **Violent crime** committed by juvenile offenders peaks during the after school hours. Nearly one-third (29%) of all violent crime committed by juvenile offenders occurs between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. In comparison, nearly the same proportion of violent crime committed by adults (26%) occurs between the hours of 8 p.m. and 12 a.m.^[8]
- In 2010, juvenile offenders were known to be involved in 8% of all homicides in the United States.^[9]
- From July 2009, through June 2010, there were 17 homicides and 1 suicide of school-age youth (ages 5-18) in **schools**. This is there approximately one homicide or suicide per 2.7 million students enrolled during the 2009-2010 school year. Higher percentages of black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaskan Native students reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property than white students.^[10]
- In 2009, 22% of arrests involving youth who were eligible in their state for processing in the juvenile justice system were handled within law enforcement agencies and the youth were released. 67% were referred to juvenile court, and 9% were referred directly to criminal court.^[11]

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