

Juvenile Court Offense Referrals

Juvenile court offense referrals are a way to track trends in juvenile crime. Juvenile court referrals are standardized throughout the state and can be retrieved from the JUVIS system, which is maintained by the Office of the Administrator for the Courts, and from the King County record system. The two systems are not compatible.

A court referral is a listing of a juvenile's name and offense in the juvenile court's legal record keeping system. It is a record that the juvenile was arrested or cited for an offense by a law enforcement agency, and then referred to the prosecutor. A referral is not a conviction.

The number of juvenile court offense referrals is always greater than the number of arrests, because a referral may include other court procedures, such as warrants.

In 2005, the Administrative Office of the Courts converted counties from the previous JUVIS reporting system to a new Juvenile and Corrections System (JCS). The JCS is a major component of the effort to better serve the needs of courts and judges.

As a result of the statewide conversion to JCS, pre 2006 data is not comparable. At the time of this report, only 2007 data has been utilized. It is anticipated that 2006 and 2008 data will be released on our website in late November.

The JCS was developed to support the unique needs of juvenile departments, standardizing data and enabling statewide data sharing with JIS, local court systems and other justice agencies. The new system is Web-based – much more user-friendly than the old code-driven system – and eliminates the need for multiple entries of the same data.

Previously, AOC used four applications to record and process information on each juvenile in their system. These programs - the Judicial Information System (JIS), the Superior Court Management Information System (SCOMIS), The Juvenile Information System (JUVIS), all mainframe-based applications and the Court Automated Proceedings and Scheduling System (CAPS), a web application needed, to be integrated and simplified to enable customers to decrease duplicate data-entry time, to provide a single consolidated view of as much pertinent information about a youth as possible, and for professionals working on a case to access information easily.

The county prosecutor is responsible for prosecuting juvenile cases. The prosecutor decides whether to divert a case, whether charges should be filed and which offenses should be charged. A juvenile may be involved in more than one case within a year depending on the number of times the juvenile offends. A case may involve more than one charge/offense depending on the circumstances of the event and the decision of the prosecutor.

Juveniles who commit minor/first offenses may be offered diversion instead of being taken to court. Juveniles who do not complete a diversion agreement, refuse diversion or are refused diversion are charged in juvenile court.

In 2007, 48,624 cases were referred to the prosecutor for criminal offenses. Cases referred to diversion comprised 38 percent of the cases; charges were filed on 38 percent of the cases; and on 20 percent of the cases there was no action taken. The courts remanded juveniles to adult court in less than one percent of the cases charged.

In 2007, just over seven percent of the juvenile cases where a youth was found to be guilty were sentenced to the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA). Ninety-three percent of the cases were sentenced to detention, probation, community service, community supervision, counseling, fines, restitution, or the Consolidated Juvenile Services program.

During 2007, 191 juvenile cases (less than one half of one percent of those juvenile cases referred to the prosecutor) were transferred to adult court. Counties where ten or more juvenile cases were remanded to adult court were Clark (23), Pierce (20), Skagit (21), Spokane (20), and Thurston (12), and Yakima (29).

Sentencing within the standard range was the most common disposition. Over ninety-eight percent of the juvenile cases adjudicated guilty were sentenced within the standard range. One and a half percent were sentenced outside the standard range (judge declared a manifest injustice [M.I.]). Of the cases sentenced outside the standard range, Eighty-two percent of the cases were above the standard range (MI up) and eighteen percent of the cases were below the standard range (MI down).

Gender

Males have legal cases filed at a higher rate than females. Seventy-seven percent of the juvenile cases referred to the prosecutor in 2007 involved males. Eighty-three percent of the juvenile cases remanded to adult court involved males.

Cases referred to the prosecutor that involved females were much less likely to be charged (29 percent for females, compared to 40 percent for males in 2007).

Race and Ethnic Distribution

Of the cases where race or ethnicity was recorded in 2007, 62 percent of the cases referred to the prosecutor were White, eleven percent were Black, four percent were Native American, fifteen percent were Hispanic, three percent were Asian American, and five percent were unknown/other.

Of the juvenile cases referred to diversion where race or ethnicity was recorded, 67 percent of the juveniles were White, nine percent were Black, three percent were Native American, thirteen percent were Hispanic, three percent were Asian American, and five percent were unknown/other.

Table 58
2007 JUVENILE OFFENSE REFERRALS BY ETHNICITY

	2007		State Pop
	Statewide Totals		Age 0-17
	Number	Percent	% Dist
White	30,204	62.12	
Black	5,661	11.64	5.78
Asian	1,500	3.08	7.43
Hispanic	7,372	15.16	15.40
Native American	1,963	4.04	1.86
Other/Unknown	1,924	3.96	**
TOTAL			
REFERRALS	48,624	100	

Source: Puzzanchera, C., Sladky, A., and Kang, W. (2008), "Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2007," Online. JCS referrals were obtained from report 3012, produced by the Administrator of the Courts.

Table 58A

For Juveniles with Referral Dates January 1 through December 31, 2007

JUVENILES	White 2007 % Total		Black 2007 % Total		Native American 2007 % Total		Hispanic 2007 % Total		Asian 2007 % Total		Total* 2007
REFERRED TO											
JUVENILE DEPT.	30,204	62%	5,661	12%	1,963	4%	7,372	15%	1,500	3%	48,624
Legal Cases Filed	10,388	58%	2,928	16%	822	5%	2,907	16%	588	3%	18,050
No Action **	3,268	61%	547	10%	245	5%	879	17%	113	2%	5,315
Transfer to Adult Court	94	49%	24	13%	13	7%	51	27%		0%	191
Diversions Filed	10,475	67%	1,375	9%	456	3%	2,090	13%	530	3%	15,640
CHARGES FILED											
Charge Dismissed	3,938	58%	1,206	18%	386	6%	957	14%	255	4%	6,841
Not Guilty	56	53%	33	31%	4	4%	10	9%	1	1%	106
Guilty	6,790	58%	2,153	18%	558	5%	1,960	17%	318	3%	11,779
DISPOSITION											
Standard Range	5,877	60%	1,370	14%	421	4%	1,685	17%	281	3%	9,850
Manifest Injustice (MI)	90	44%	68	33%	13	6%	29	14%	3	1%	203
JRA Standard Range	378	53%	149	21%	23	3%	114	16%	33	5%	709
JRA MI	70	41%	62	36%	11	6%	27	16%	1	1%	171

* Totals include Other/Unknkown categories.

These data were obtained from Office of the Administrator for the Courts, Sept 2008.

Table 59

2007 Juvenile Offense Referrals by County/Ethnicity

County	White	Black	Native American	Hispanic	Asian	Other/ Unknown	Total
Adams	76	1		233		88	398
Asotin/Garfield	185	5	8	2	1	6	207
Benton/Franklin	1,928	145	10	1,389	25	14	3,511
Chelan	396	10	10	304	9	54	783
Clallam	468	11	71	29	2	21	602
Clark	2,961	333	30	172	85	141	3,722
Cowlitz	1,098	48	41	167	24	46	1,424
Douglas	327	10	8	111		63	519
Ferry	12		14				26
Grant	507	37	30	423		96	1,093
Grays Harbor	542	17	51	31	4	73	718
Island	231	17	4	12	24	66	354
Jefferson	158	5	7	3	7	8	188
King	3,381	2,243	119	646	523	91	7,003
Kitsap	1,361	186	67	109	86	184	1,993
Kittitas	191	7	8	22		23	251
Klickitat	133	4	19	11		4	171
Lewis	458	21	3	42	2	60	586
Lincoln	61	2	10	3	1	11	88
Mason	418	3	40	19	13	52	545
Okanogan	233	5	231	88		21	578
Pacific/Wahkiakum	156	9	2	4	7	81	259
Pend Oreille	103	2	17			2	124
Pierce	3,353	1,438	184	366	316	21	5,678
San Juan	84			4		1	89
Skagit	769	26	58	533	16	18	1,420
Skamania	112	2	7	22	1		144
Snohomish	3,636	330	166	259	204	83	4,678
Spokane	3,064	384	255	139	33	37	3,912
Stevens	235	7	27	5	1	71	346
Thurston	1,285	150	44	88	76	27	1,670
Walla Walla	319	20	6	227	2	115	689
Whatcom	795	44	148	134	24	176	1,321
Whitman	207	21	9	13	5	20	275
Yakima	961	118	259	1,762	9	150	3,259
TOTAL	30,204	5,661	1,963	7,372	1,500	1,924	48,624

Data obtained from Administrator Office of the Courts.

Data do not include King County.

Table 60
2007 Juvenile Offense Referrals by County/Gender*

County	Male Total	%	Female Total	%
Adams	328	82.4	69	17.3
Asotin/Garfield	124	59.9	83	40.1
Benton/Franklin	2,560	72.9	951	27.1
Chelan	573	73.6	206	26.4
Clallam	442	73.4	160	26.6
Clark	2,592	69.7	1,123	30.2
Cowlitz	952	66.9	472	33.1
Douglas	358	69.5	157	30.5
Ferry	23	88.5	3	11.5
Grant	812	74.2	281	25.7
Grays Harbor	507	70.7	210	29.3
Island	242	68.4	111	31.4
Jefferson	134	71.7	53	28.3
King	4,861	69.5	2,131	30.5
Kitsap	1,365	68.1	627	31.3
Kittitas	181	72.1	70	27.9
Klickitat	124	72.9	46	27.1
Lewis	457	78.0	129	22.0
Lincoln	72	81.8	16	18.2
Mason	351	63.6	192	34.8
Okanogan	407	70.4	171	29.6
Pacific/Wahkiakum	169	65.5	89	34.5
Pend Oreille	91	73.4	33	26.6
Pierce	4,019	70.8	1,657	29.2
San Juan	64	71.9	25	28.1
Skagit	1,017	71.6	403	28.4
Skamania	101	70.1	43	29.9
Snohomish	3,332	71.2	1,343	28.7
Spokane	2,721	69.5	1,191	30.4
Stevens	242	70.3	102	29.7
Thurston	1,140	68.4	524	31.4
Walla Walla	488	71.1	198	28.9
Whatcom	834	63.1	487	36.8
Whitman	212	77.1	63	22.9
Yakima	2,469	75.7	789	24.2
TOTAL	34,364	70.68	14,208	29.22

Data obtained from Administrator Office of the Courts.