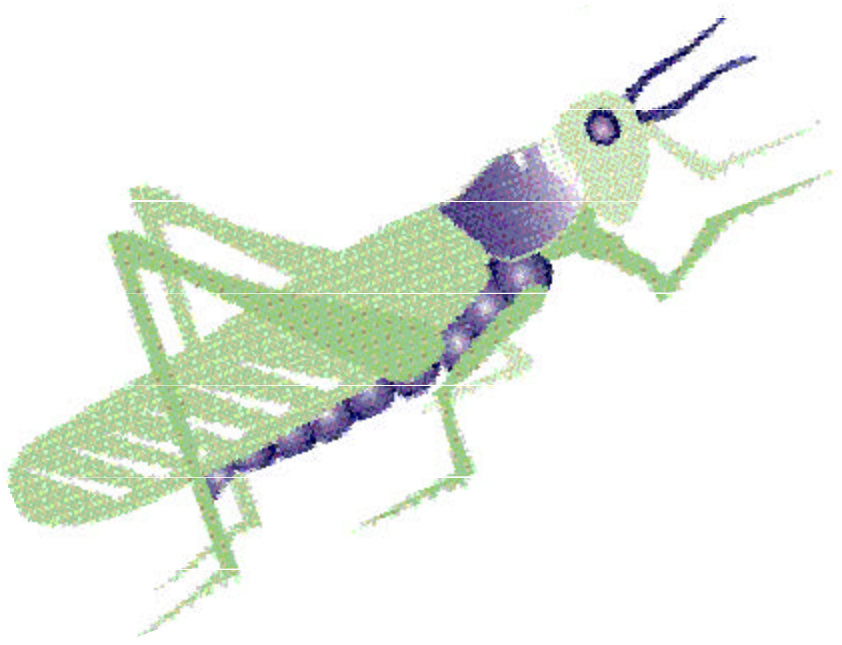
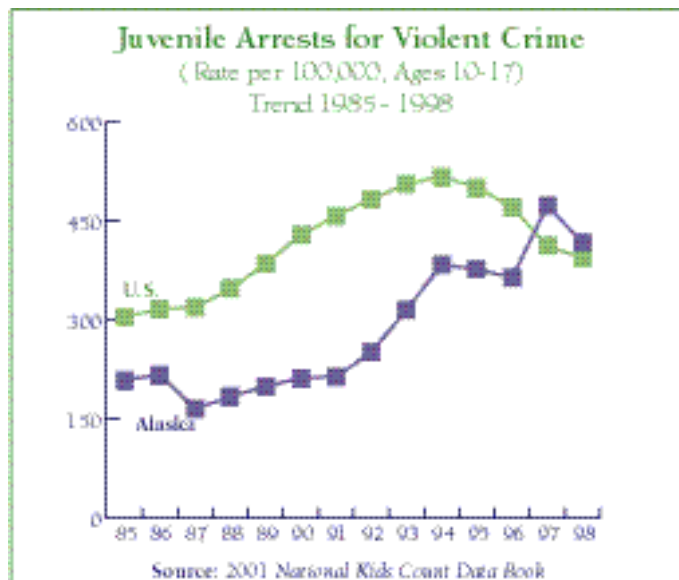


JUVENILE Crime





report is not the same as proof of guilt. Almost all the juveniles who go through the state's juvenile justice system are ages 10-17.²

DATA

The trend graph (based on federal statistics) shows the rate of juvenile arrests for violent crime increasing sharply in Alaska in 1997, while dropping nationwide. In 1998, the most recent year for which we have federal figures, juvenile arrests in Alaska dropped—putting the rate at 417 arrests per 100,000 juveniles, compared with the national average of 394 per 100,000.

The rate of individual juveniles cited in crime reports during that period was 61 per 1,000. Looked at another way, police referred about 6 percent of Alaska's juveniles to the juvenile justice system.

The rate of juvenile crime (which counts multiple referrals of the same juvenile) was 94 per 1,000—or close to 10 per 100 juveniles. Rates of reported crime were highest in the Northern and Southeast regions and lowest in the Mat-Su and Gulf Coast.

Total rates of juvenile crime dropped in

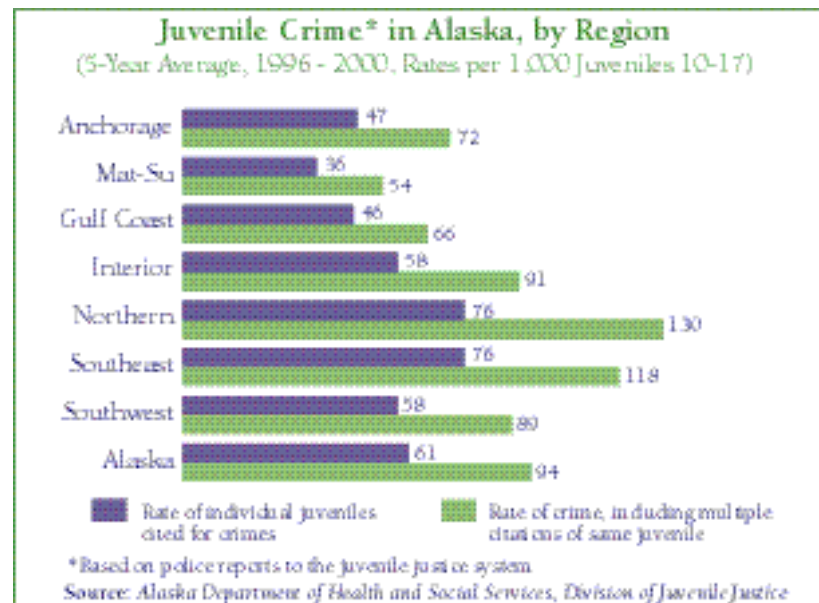
DEFINITION

This section shows two measures of juvenile crime, based on different sources and definitions. The trend graph above shows the rate of arrests for violent crime (homicide, manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) among persons 10-17, in Alaska and on average nationwide.¹ Those figures are reported by the national Kids Count program and are based on adjusted data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Other tables and figures in this section are based on data from the Division of Juvenile Justice in the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. They reflect delinquency reports received by the division. They include all reports of juvenile crime in Alaska—both violent and other. Keep in mind that while these delinquency reports are the best measure we have of “juvenile crime,” a

Remember, however, that because Alaska's population is small—with only about 89,000 persons ages 10-17 in 2000—a small change in the number of juveniles committing crimes can make a noticeable change in the rate of crime.

On average, the Division of Juvenile Justice in the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services received about 8,100 reports of juvenile crime in Alaska each year between 1996 and 2000.





all regions of Alaska from the early to the late 1990s (as we reported on page 15). Remember that these rates are based on all types of juvenile crime, of which crimes against property are the most common.

Crimes against property accounted for more than half of all juvenile crime throughout Alaska between 1996-2000. Crimes against persons made up about 18 percent of juvenile crime statewide. Violations of drug and alcohol laws accounted for about 9 percent of juvenile crime statewide. Other kinds of juvenile crime—including violations of weapons laws and public order laws—accounted for another 18 percent of reported juvenile crimes statewide.

Boys in Alaska and across the U.S. are much more likely to commit crimes than are girls. Nearly three quarters (72 percent) of the juveniles referred to the Division of Juvenile Justice from 1996 through 2000 were boys.

The adjacent table shows reported juvenile crime in Alaska by region in recent years. Crimes against property were by far the most common crimes in all regions, accounting for close to 55 percent of crimes statewide. Crimes against persons made up less than 20 percent of juvenile crimes in most regions, but in the Southwest almost a third of crimes were against people.

The tables on the facing page show the current breakdown of Alaska's juvenile pop-

ulation, and of juvenile crime, by race and region.

Overall, Alaska Native and Black juveniles are reported as delinquent at disproportionately higher rates, compared with their representation in the population, and White juveniles at lower rates. Delinquency rates for Asian juveniles appear similar to their share of the population.³

RECENT RESEARCH FINDINGS

Recent research suggests that boys and girls who were involved in extracurricular school activities are less likely to be arrested when they become young adults. Such

activities may help children at higher risk of committing crimes to strengthen bonds with their peers and teachers. Activities also keep them busy and instill values they might not be exposed to elsewhere.⁴

Longitudinal data reveal that stealing, cheating, skipping school, getting poor grades, abusing substances, and being exposed to peers who use drugs in 7th grade are all significant predictors of violence in 12th grade students.⁵

But early predictors of juvenile violence can differ for girls and boys. Low self-esteem and

ANNUAL JUVENILE DELINQUENCY REPORTS^a BY REGION AND TYPE OF CRIME
(AGES 10-17, 5-YEAR AVERAGE, FISCAL YEARS 1996-2000^b)

Region	Crimes Against Persons		Crimes Against Property		Drug/Alcohol Laws		Other ^c		Total ^d	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Anchorage	454	14.5%	1,681	53.8%	249	8.0%	739	23.7%	3,123	100%
Mat-Su	136	18.0%	442	58.6%	75	10.0%	101	13.4%	754	100%
Gulf Coast	154	19.6%	432	55.1%	86	11.0%	112	14.3%	784	100%
Interior	216	20.1%	560	52.0%	140	13.0%	160	14.9%	1,076	100%
Northern	130	18.6%	405	58.0%	38	5.4%	126	18.0%	699	100%
Southeast	198	19.0%	576	55.4%	113	10.9%	153	14.7%	1,040	100%
Southwest	178	29.8%	299	50.0%	33	5.5%	89	14.9%	599	100%
Alaska	1,466	18.1%	4,395	54.4%	734	9.1%	1,480	18.3%	8,075	100%

^a Reports police send to probation officers, who then investigate. These are duplicate counts—meaning they include more than one reported crime by the same juvenile; duplicated counts show the overall level of reported juvenile crime.

^b The state fiscal year is from July 1 through June 30.

^c Includes violations of public order laws, weapons laws, and miscellaneous other offenses.

^d Annual average number of crimes.

ALASKA POPULATION AGES 10-17, BY RACE AND REGION, 2000

	White	Native	Black	Asian	NH/PI*	More than one race	Other
Anchorage	65.7%	8.3%	6.7%	6.0%	1.4%	9.5%	2.4%
Mat-Su	84.2%	6.7%	0.6%	0.5%	0.1%	6.7%	1.1%
Gulf Coast	77.0%	11.2%	0.4%	3.8%	0.4%	5.9%	1.3%
Interior	68.8%	15.1%	5.0%	1.4%	0.3%	8.0%	1.3%
Northern	7.2%	84.3%	0.2%	1.1%	0.4%	6.6%	0.2%
Southeast	63.4%	20.5%	0.2%	3.5%	0.3%	10.9%	0.8%
Southwest	9.1%	83.7%	0.3%	0.9%	0.07%	5.7%	0.3%
Alaska	62.4%	17.9%	3.5%	3.5%	0.7%	8.3%	1.5%



*Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Note: Persons of Hispanic origin can be of any race.

Sources: Kids Count Website; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000

REPORTS OF DELINQUENT JUVENILES* (10-17), BY RACE AND REGION
(In Percentages, Fiscal Years 1996-2000)

Region	AK. Native	Black	White	Asian/Pacific Isl.	Hispanic and Other	Total Number Juveniles Committing Crimes
Anchorage	15.8%	14.0%	58.7%	6.7%	4.9%	10,350
Mat-Su	8.0%	1.4%	86.9%	0.3%	3.5%	2,535
Gulf Coast	12.3%	1.2%	76.3%	5.2%	4.9%	2,733
Interior	29.0%	9.5%	56.0%	0.8%	4.7%	3,440
Northern	89.7%	0.8%	4.2%	1.2%	4.1%	2,034
Southeast	35.6%	0.9%	46.5%	1.4%	15.6%	3,365
Southwest	90.8%	0.3%	7.1%	0.2%	1.7%	1,947
Alaska	30.1%	7.2%	53.3%	3.6%	5.8%	26,404

*Unduplicated reports of juvenile crime—which means if a juvenile was the subject of three delinquency reports in fiscal

year 1996 and four in fiscal year 1998, the juvenile would be counted once in each year.

Note: Percentages may total slightly more or less than 100 because of rounding.



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: RE-BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

By Robert Buttane, Division of Juvenile Justice
Alaska Department of Health and Social Services

In 1999, the Division of Juvenile Justice was established within the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. Before that, juvenile justice had been the responsibility of a section within the Division of Youth and Family Services. Establishing a separate division for juvenile justice recognized the importance of the work and reflected the commitment of the state administration, the legislature, and the juvenile justice staff—as well as communities—to dealing with juvenile justice issues.

The division operates under the principles of “restorative justice,” as cited in Alaska law and reflected in the division’s mission:

- Holding juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior
- Promoting safety and restoration of victims and communities
- Helping offenders and their families develop skills to prevent crime

Restorative justice requires the Division of Juvenile Justice to help heal individuals and communities that have been injured by crime and to provide victims, communities, and offenders with opportunities for involvement in the justice process as early and as fully as possible. It also requires Alaskans to re-think the relative roles and responsibilities of the government and of the community. Restorative justice asks three questions:

- What is the harm?
- What needs to be done to repair the harm?
- Who is responsible for this repair?

Restorative justice works best when the offenders take responsibility for their crimes and the harm they caused victims; when offenders make amends by restoring losses; and when both communities and victims take active roles in the sanctioning process.

The goal of restorative justice is to re-establish healthy relationships among people. It not only makes offenders accountable for their actions, it gives them opportunities to make amends to their victims and to contribute to their communities—which builds competence, strengthens bonds with the community, and makes offenders less likely to commit crimes in the future.

socioeconomic status in junior high are associated with later violent behavior among teenage girls but not boys. Frequently moving or changing schools and being exposed to pro-drug social influences during the pre-teen years are significant predictors of later violence among boys.⁶

These findings about early influences on later crime make it clear that prevention programs need to begin in elementary school. Families, schools, and communities need to intervene when a child first shows signs of trouble and follow through to make sure that children understand the consequences of their behavior.⁷

NOTES FOR JUVENILE CRIME

¹ Some states do not collect complete or comparable data on violent juvenile crime, so this indicator is not available for all states.

² Juveniles who commit certain violent crimes are charged as adults and go through the court system rather than the juvenile justice system; numbers of juveniles tried as adults are small.

³ Personal communication from Roger Withington, former research analyst, Division of Juvenile Justice, Department of Health and Social Services, State of Alaska, September 28, 2001.

⁴ J. L. Mahoney (2000). “School extracurricular activity participation as a moderator in the development of antisocial patterns,” *Child Development*, 71(2), 502-516.

⁵ P.L. Ellickson and K. A. McGuigan (2000).