

143304

WORKING PAPER

# Projecting Future Trends in Child Abuse and Juvenile Delinquency

by

Philip J. Cook  
John H. Laub



Institute of Policy Sciences  
and Public Affairs

Duke University

143304  
12-8-93  
MFI

**U.S. Department of Justice  
National Institute of Justice**

This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the National Institute of Justice.

Permission to reproduce this copyrighted material has been granted by  
Phillip J. Cook

to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS).

Further reproduction outside of the NCJRS system requires permission of the copyright owner.

**PROJECTING FUTURE TRENDS**

**IN CHILD ABUSE AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY**

© Philip J. Cook  
John H. Laub

Philip J. Cook, Professor of Public Policy Studies and Economics, Duke University  
Ph.D., Economics, 1973, University of California, Berkeley

John H. Laub, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice, Northeastern University  
Ph.D., Criminal Justice, 1980, State University of New York, Albany

**Note:** This paper was commissioned by the Harvard Executive Session on Juvenile Justice, and was sponsored in part by OJJDP. The authors wish to thank Mark Moore for helping to organize this research project and set it on a productive track.

### Abstract

This paper seeks to project future trends in child abuse and juvenile delinquency. Such projections are useful in planning capacity changes in the juvenile justice system. Trends in youth crime and child abuse as well as information on various social indicators affecting children are reviewed. We conclude that juvenile crime rates per capita will probably remain at current levels or even decline over the next 10 to 15 years, although we are inclined to emphasize the uncertainty that attaches to this prediction.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The sport of projecting future crime rates has had a number of players in recent years,<sup>1</sup> employing a variety of techniques and data sets. Our effort is focussed on predicting the trends in juvenile arrests through the year 2000. It is distinguished by its methodological simplicity. Arrest rates for youths age 13-17 have remained nearly constant since 1971, despite the large changes during this period in etiological factors such as the age structure of the population and the decline in the quality of family life. After considering a number of related trends, we conclude that there is no strong evidence pointing to an increase or decline in future arrest rates. Hence our projections are based on the assumption that juvenile arrest rates will continue at the current plateau level. The projected volume of arrests thus tracks the predicted trends in the population of youths age 13-17.

The resulting projections are relevant as indicators of the future potential workload of the juvenile justice system. The future capacity requirements of the JJS are not determined solely by the volume of arrests, since the police and court officials have almost unlimited discretion over what resources to devote to each case (as documented in the next section). Thus our arrest projections are best viewed as measuring the future workload of the system if implicit policies governing resource allocation do not change.

The juvenile and family courts and related agencies handle child abuse and neglect cases as well as cases involving youthful offenders. The volume of abuse and neglect cases has been growing rapidly in recent years. Yet at least one statistical indicator of the volume of serious assaults against young children - the homicide rate - has not exhibited any upward trend since 1970. Thus we conclude that the recent trend in abuse and neglect cases has reflected an increasing propensity to handle child victimization cases in the

system. Future trends in caseload may also be dominated by changes in policy and the public's sensitivity to such cases, rather than by changes in the underlying volume of child victimization.

Our report is organized as follows:

Section 2 below provides a statistical characterization of current practices with respect to juvenile justice case processing. These practices differ widely among jurisdictions. We do not attempt to project future policy, but rather simply note that future capacity requirements will be influenced by social values as much as by the volume and nature of juvenile crime and child abuse.

Section 3 describes recent trends in youth crime and child abuse. The period 1965-1971 decade was one of rapidly increasing juvenile arrest rates per capita. During the subsequent years (1971-1983), arrest rates have been more or less constant at the high level reached circa 1971. One basis for projecting the future volume of juvenile crime is to assume that this recent plateau in arrest rates per capita will extend for another 10-15 years.

It is more difficult to measure recent trends in the prevalence of serious child abuse and neglect. The per capita rate of court referrals for such cases was roughly constant for 30 years but jumped markedly after 1980 (Nimick, et al. 1984). There is some evidence that this increase reflects increased public concern about child abuse rather than an increase in its prevalence (Russell and Trainor, 1984).

Section 4 presents information on recent trends in the conditions under which children are being raised and educated in the United States. One conclusion from these statistics is that the continuing deterioration in family life is not necessarily predictive of increasing levels of pathology among youths - indeed, some social indicators show improvement since 1980.

Given this evidence, we conclude that juvenile crime rates per capita may remain at current levels or even decline over the next 10-15 years. Our projections of the volume of youth crime and child abuse follow in Section 5.

## 2. The Funnel Effect

In the juvenile justice system (JJS), as in the criminal justice system, the volume of cases that are within the jurisdiction of the court vastly exceeds the volume of cases actually adjudicated. This case selection process is characterized below for both delinquency cases and abuse and neglect cases. The main lesson from the statistics presented here is that the observed workload of the JJS is the cumulative result of a series of decisions made by JJS authorities. Since the potential workload is far larger than the observed workload at any point in time, it is reasonable to claim that the workload in a jurisdiction is a matter of choice (or de facto policy) rather than being dictated by exogenous circumstances.

### a. Processing Juvenile Delinquency Cases

While national statistics on the processing of juvenile delinquency cases are not routinely available, there have been several recent efforts to piece together the available statistics and estimate the aggregate volume of cases at each step in the process.

There are untold millions of delinquent acts committed each year, ranging from truancy to murder. Only a small fraction of these acts result in any official intervention by the police or the juvenile court. Most cases result in no action at all, or are dealt with by the delinquent's family, neighborhood, or school. Even when the police are called in, they are more likely to "handle" the case in the field rather than making an arrest (see, for example, Black, 1971). Nevertheless, approximately two million juveniles are arrested each year. It is at this point in the process that we

begin to have credible estimates of the nationwide volume of cases.

Black and Smith (1981) estimate that 2.3 million juveniles were arrested in 1977. About half (51%) of these cases were referred to court intake, with most of the others being handled on an informal basis within the police department. The million plus cases that are referred by law enforcement agencies constitute about 80% of all delinquency cases referred to the juvenile court each year.

The national statistics on sources of referral and ultimate disposition of delinquency cases for 1981 are depicted in Figure 1, taken from Snyder, Finnegan, and Hutzler (1983). Based on their data we can conclude that for every 1000 delinquency cases referred to the juvenile court, the distribution of dispositions is approximately this:

507 dismissed<sup>2</sup>  
282 probation  
64 state or local institution  
18 public or private agency  
9 waived to adult court  
120 other

Most of those cases that are ultimately dismissed are handled without petition, which is to say they are dealt with informally by a probation officer or other court official and are not placed on the official court calendar for adjudication.

These statistics on the "funnel" effect can be quickly summarized: First, the police handle an unknown but large number of youthful suspects in the field without an arrest. Of the two million youths who are arrested each year, only half are referred to the juvenile court. Approximately half of these referrals are formally adjudicated. The most common disposition of

a case referred to the juvenile court is dismissal, with some sort of formal or informal probation arrangement for most of the remaining cases. A sentence to a state or local institution is a relatively rare event.

Clearly the norm at each of the important decision points in the process is diversion. If this de facto policy were modified so that police propensity to refer cases increased, or the propensity to adjudicate cases that were referred to the court increased, then the workload of the court would be increased accordingly. The point is that the resources applied to processing a given amount of "raw material" (police contacts with youthful suspects and referrals from other agencies) can vary greatly depending on the standard operating procedures adopted by police, prosecutors, and probation departments. In fact we can observe considerable variations in these policies across jurisdictions and over time. For example, Black and Smith (1981: 127) report the percentage of police dispositions referred to court intake by state ranged from under 30% (6 states) to over 70% (11 states) in 1977. Nationwide the fraction of delinquency referrals resulting in a petition has varied in recent years between 41% and 54% (Nimick, et al., 1984, p.18).

It is reasonable to suppose that most of this variation in case handling is the result of de facto policies concerning the less serious cases. Very serious cases are unlikely to be diverted early in the process. Greenwood, et al. (1983: 38), for example, report that for fully 75% of older boys arrested for armed robbery in Los Angeles, the police refer the case to the court and a petition is filed; only 38% of a random sample of cases proceeded that far in the Los Angeles system in 1980. This difference reflects the fact that most police contacts with juveniles are for relatively minor status offenses, public order offenses, and larceny.



b. Processing Abuse and Neglect Cases

The recent National Study of the Incidence and Severity of Child Abuse and Neglect provides a nationwide estimate of the serious abuse and neglect (A/N) cases known to authorities. (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, 1982). This estimate was based on data collected from 26 counties in 10 states during the period May 1979 to April 1980. Based on this sample, the Study generated an estimate of 625,000 serious cases nationwide, or 10.5 per 1000 children under age 18. The Study's standard for including a case in their estimate was quite strict: the case had to involve evidence of clearcut and serious maltreatment causing avoidable injury, illness, or emotional/behavioral impairment, resulting from purposive acts or extreme inattention by a parent or other adult caretaker. Also included were cases of repeated truancy or delinquency if the child's guardian knew about the situation but refused to take any action.

The estimated population of cases were about evenly divided between abuse and neglect, as shown by these rates:

Abuse 5.7/1000	Neglect 5.3/1000
Physical 3.4	Physical 1.7
Sexual .7	Educational 2.9
Emotional 2.2	Emotional 1.0

Of the 625,000 estimated cases, only about one-third were known to child protective services agencies.<sup>3</sup> The remainder were found in the files of other investigating agencies or from records kept by schools, hospitals, and other agencies dealing with children.

During the 12-month period covered by the National Incidence Study we know from other sources that there were only about 160,000 A/N cases disposed

of in juvenile court. Approximately 75% of these cases resulted in a petition for adjudication (Nimick et al., 1984). It is not possible from the available data to estimate how many of the cases referred to the court would have met the standard for inclusion in the National Incidence Study estimate. We can conclude that no more than one in four serious A/N cases known to some public agency are referred to the court. And of course there are many serious cases that are not known to any public agency.

The number of A/N cases referred to the court in a jurisdiction will vary as a function of local concern about child abuse the nature of mandatory reporting laws, and acceptance of formal intervention by the court as an appropriate response.

### 3. Recent Trends in Delinquency and Abuse and Neglect

The statistics presented in the previous section document the fact that most delinquency cases, and A/N cases are diverted from the JJS early in the process - in the field or the station house or at court intake processing for delinquency cases, and by social service agencies and other public agencies for A/N cases. Thus the court makes little or no investment of its resources in most of the cases that come to the attention of the police or other authorities. The court's resources are concentrated on the relatively few cases - usually the most serious - that are allowed to penetrate the system to the point of formal adjudication and an expensive disposition such as commitment to a training school or removal to a foster home. The resource requirements of the system are thus determined to a large extent by the de facto policies governing screening and diversion of cases at each point in the process. Any prediction of the future resource requirements of the system must be made contingent on a characterization of these policies.

Our concern here is not to predict the evolution of policy governing the processing of juvenile court cases, but rather to predict the trend in the volume of potential cases - crimes committed by juveniles, and instances of child abuse and neglect. The average amount of resources the court should devote to each type of case is ultimately a value judgment, one that has changed markedly over the last two decades and will continue to evolve. The implications of our predictions of future rates of delinquency and child abuse for JJS resource requirements are not direct, but rather conditioned on the evolution of societal values.

The place to begin in predicting the future volume of cases is with a look at recent trends in delinquency and child abuse. This section reports statistics characterizing these trends from 1965 to 1983. Subsequent sections consider several factors that may influence future rates of delinquency, and offer some projections.

a. Trends in Juvenile Crime and Arrests

The most commonly used indicator of the volume of juvenile criminal activity as it intersects with the JJS is the arrest rate for youths aged 17 or less. An alternative indicator is the rate of juvenile court dispositions for delinquency cases. Table 1 displays these indicators for the years since 1965.<sup>4</sup> Both increase by about 50% during the first ten years of this period, with the arrest rate remaining at approximately double the court disposition rate. The two indicators diverge after 1974: the court disposition rate continues to increase rapidly until 1980, whereas the arrest rate declines somewhat after its 1974 peak. Since 1980 the arrest rate for youths aged 10-17 has been about 70 per 1000, while the court disposition rate has been about 44 per 1000.

Table 2 exhibits trends in arrest rates for the 13-17 age group, the group that is responsible for the great bulk of youth crime. Their overall arrest rate exceeded 100 per 1000 for most of the years since 1971. About 37% of these arrests have been for the "Index" crimes of violence (criminal homicide, aggravated assault, robbery, rape) and against property (burglary, auto theft, larceny, arson). The most notable thing about these arrest rates is their low variance since 1971.

Interestingly, this stability in arrest rates for youths has been associated with a rather sharp reduction in their relative importance in the overall crime picture. As shown in Table 3, violence arrests of youths under 18 dropped from over 23% of the total in 1975 to 17% in 1983. Property crime arrests for youths dropped from over 50% of the total to 34% (in 1983). This decline is a consequence of the large baby boom cohorts aging out of the juvenile court jurisdiction. The result is that the JJS is responsible for a somewhat smaller piece of the crime problem in the mid-1980s than it was in the 1960s and early 1970s.

A final intertemporal pattern of some interest is the relative arrest rate for Black and White youths, as shown in Table 4. The Black arrest rate for Index crimes has been several times as high as the white arrest rate throughout this period. This difference peaked circa 1970, with a Black/White ratio of about 3.0 for property crimes and over 11.0 for violent crimes. Since 1975 those ratios have been relatively constant at about 2.2 and 6.5 respectively.

It should be acknowledged that arrest trends are not necessarily reliable indicators of the underlying trends in juvenile crime rates. The likelihood that a crime will result in a recorded arrest depends on a number of factors - the propensity of victims to report crimes to the police and

request that the police intervene formally if there is a known suspect, the police department's standard operating procedure for dealing with juvenile suspects, and so forth. If the likelihood that a crime results in arrest changes over time, then to that extent the arrest trend misrepresents the underlying trend in juvenile crime.<sup>5</sup> There are two reasons why this potential problem is not of great concern in the present context. First, the arrest rate is a more direct determinant of the juvenile court's workload than the crime rate, and hence more directly relevant to our inquiry. Second, estimates of the volume of juvenile crime for the period 1973-1981, generated from National Crime Survey data, are quite compatible with the arrest trends reported above (Laub, 1983).

To summarize, the annual statistics on juvenile arrests changed rapidly during the period 1965-1971, and have been relatively static since then. This characterization applies to overall arrest rates and arrest rates for both property and violent Index crimes. If it is reasonable to project that the arrest rate "plateau" will continue for another decade, then predicting the volume of juvenile arrests for 1995 is simply a matter of multiplying the projected juvenile population in that year by the "plateau" value of the arrest rate.

b. Trends in Abuse and Neglect Rates

Judging by the statistics compiled by Nimick et al. (1985), the volume of A/N cases handled by the court varied remarkably little between 1950 and 1975, remaining throughout this period at a rate of  $2.0 \pm .3$  per 1000 children under 18. There has been some increase since then, with peak rates of 2.9 in 1981 and 2.7 in 1982. Russell and Trainor (1984) report a much larger increase in the volume of cases reported to child

protective services during this period; this reporting rate doubled from 10.1 per 1000 children in 1976, to 20.1 in 1982. The authors explain this increase by noting the greatly increased public attention and resources devoted to child abuse during this period, resulting in an increased likelihood that suspected abuse or neglect victims would be reported to the relevant authorities.

Given the recent volatility in reporting rates for A/N cases, it is of interest to know whether there has been much change in the prevalence of maltreatment. One indicator of the prevalence of physical abuse is the criminal homicide rate for young children. A majority of homicide victims aged four and under are killed by relatives, suggesting that these cases are the logical extreme outcome of physical abuse in the home. The victimization series depicted in Table 5 for the period 1965-1982 suggests that homicide rates trended sharply upward during the period 1965-1973. For children aged 1-4 the victimization rate reached 2.5 per 100,000 in 1973. It has remained close to this level through 1982, the most recent year for which these data are available. A recent study (Jason, Carpenter, and Tyler, 1983) suggests that a number of criminal homicides for infants have been classified as deaths resulting from "Injury undetermined whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted" since that category was introduced in 1968. The addition of this category to the homicide category (in the last column of Table 5) does not much affect our conclusion regarding trends for the victim group age 1-4. This correction is more important for the series on homicides involving victims less than one year, since it helps explain the large drop in the infant homicide rate between 1967 and 1968. Further, what emerges is a pattern quite similar to that of the victimization rates for older children.

If the homicide rate for young children is a valid proxy for the prevalence of serious physical abuse, then we are left wondering about the disparity between the trends in this rate and the court referral statistics - which exhibit little movement between 1965 and 1973, and a sharp increase in 1981.

In conclusion, there is no reliable evidence to suggest that the rate of serious child abuse and neglect has been increasing since, say, 1975. What is clear, however, is that the public and government agencies have become more sensitive to the problem of child abuse in recent years. The volume of reports to child protective agencies and court referrals have increased substantially since the mid-1970s. Whether this trend will continue is difficult to judge.

#### 4. Trends in Family Characteristics

Juvenile arrest rates per 1000 have not varied much since the early 1970s. Our best guess for the juvenile arrest rate in 1995 and beyond is that it will remain on the same "plateau" as in recent years, simply because we have no strong reason for thinking it will move either up or down. This section considers and rejects one possible argument for suggesting that juvenile crime and arrest rates will in fact increase during the next decade: the continuing decline in the stability and resources provided children by their parents.

It seems only common sense that children will be less prone to delinquency if they are raised in a stable home environment providing a high level of adult supervision, guidance, and support than otherwise.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, it has long been known that a disproportionate number of delinquents are from single parent and/or low income households. This observation suggests that the increase in the proportion of children raised in households that lack the

parenting and economic resources of the "traditional" middle class nuclear family will lead to a corresponding increase in youthful involvement in crime. As far as we can tell from the available data, this increase has not occurred, at least for the period since 1970.

There are various indicators of the decline of the nuclear family. First is the fraction of births that are out-of-wedlock (Table 6). This fraction stood at 4.5% for the 1955 cohort, which reached its most active delinquent phase in 1970-71. The 1965-67 cohorts, which reached their most active phase in the early 1980s, included nearly twice this percentage of illegitimate births. (The non-white illegitimacy percentage is much higher than the white percentage, and increased from 20 to 30 percent between 1955 and 1967.)

The period since 1970 has also been characterized by a gradual decline in the percentage of children living with two parents (Table 7). For all children, this percentage dropped from 85 to 75 between 1970 and 1982; for Black children, the percentage dropped from 58 to 42. During this same period the percentage of children with mothers in the labor force increased from 39 to 55.

These indicators suggest a substantial decline in the percentage of children raised to adulthood by both natural parents, and an increased percentage of children that were sharing their mother's time and energy with her job. And despite this increase in labor force participation by mothers, the percentage of children living in poor households increased somewhat between 1980 and 1983 (Table 8).

In looking ahead to 1995, we know that the youths in the age group of greatest delinquent activity (13-17) will be members of birth cohorts characterized by unprecedented rates of illegitimacy - for Black youths, the fraction is over half. This and the related trends discussed above are



troublesome for a number of reasons, but recent history gives no support for the notion that this continued deterioration in the nuclear family will necessarily lead to an increase in delinquency. Indeed, there is even some slight basis for an optimistic view of the next decade in this respect. One particularly encouraging trend is the reduction in the prevalence of drug use by high school seniors since 1978 (Table 9).

There is something of a sociological mystery here. We believe that the home is the primary site for "civilizing" children, and that the amount and quality of effort devoted by parents to this task appears to be declining on the average (see also Felson and Gottfredson, 1984). Since there is no evidence of an increase in "uncivilized" (criminal) behavior by youths in recent years, we are encouraged to search for compensating trends in other institutions that contribute to the civilizing process. But this paper is not the right context in which to launch such a search. For now, we simply note the trend in one indicator that may be relevant - the ratio of adults (aged 18-65) to children (aged 10-17). As shown in Table 10, this ratio has increased steadily since 1970, and will continue upward till the 1990s. To the extent that other adults supplement parents' efforts to guide youthful behavior, then this ratio indicates an increase in society's capacity in this respect. The adult-child ratio may also have an indirect influence on youthful behavior through its effect on popular culture, the political process, and in general the tolerance accorded youthful misbehavior. James Q. Wilson (1983: 38) gives a related explanation for the crime boom of the 1960s:

"Since the 1960s, an increase in the proportion of young persons in the population has been met by the celebration of the youth culture in the marketplace, in the churches, and among adults... This institutionalization in all parts of society of the national desire of youth for greater freedom may well have given legitimacy to all forms of self-expression--including, alas, those forms that involve crime and violence--and thus helped magnify and sustain what would have been a crime increase in any event."

By symmetry, it is plausible that the more recent decline in the proportion of young persons in the population may be causing a drift away from "the youth culture."

Our position, then, is that the long plateau in juvenile arrest rates is the result of opposing trends in powerful etiological factors that have (by chance?) balanced each other for more than a decade. The future course of some of the demographic factors is quite predictable, but we have no reliable way of projecting their net influence on delinquency rates. In the interest of making some concrete projections, we assume the "balance of forces" will continue. But that assumption may prove wrong by a wide margin.

#### 5. Projections

Approximately 85% of arrests of youths under 18 involve teenagers age 13-17. This is the group of primary concern in generating our projections. The size of this group peaked in 1974 and has declined steadily since. By 1990 it will be 5 million less than in 1974 (a 23% reduction), but will increase thereafter through the year 2000 (Table 11).

Since Black youths have an arrest rate more than double that of White youths, it is of some interest to note the trend in the Black youth population is highly correlated with that of the White population. Blacks made up 13.7% of the population age 13-17 in 1975: this percentage increased slightly to 14.7% in 1985, and will be about 15.5% in 1995. Because there is so little change in racial population composition over this period, we ignore race in what follows.

As explained in the previous section, we project the future volume of juvenile arrests by assuming the arrest rates in future years will be the same as in recent years. The extraordinary stability of arrest rates in recent

years, revealed by the statistics below, justifies this assumption.

Total Arrests per 1000, for Ages 13-17

	<u>1975-1983</u>	<u>1971-1983</u>
Mean	103.4	103.0
Standard Dev.	3.3	4.2

Total Index Arrests per 1000, for Ages 13-17

Mean	38.3	37.6
Standard Dev.	1.4	2.6

Note that during the nine year period 1975-1983, the standard deviation for both the total arrest rate and the Index crime arrest rate was less than 4% of the mean. Extending the series back to include the 13 years 1971-1983 has little effect on the means but does increase the standard deviations somewhat.

Given the assumption that juvenile arrest rates will remain at the same level through the year 2000 yields the following results, based entirely on Census projections of the future population of youths aged 13-17:

Percentage Change in Number of Juvenile Arrests

1985 - 1990	-10%
1985 - 1995	- 2%
1985 - 2000	+ 6%

These projections are meant to apply to total arrests as well as Index arrests. The underlying volume of serious juvenile crime should also follow this pattern.

We believe that the confidence intervals around these projections should be quite broad due to uncertainty about future arrest rates. (Relatively speaking there is very little uncertainty about the size of the future populations.) For an historical precedent for the possibility of large changes, note that the Index juvenile arrest rate increased by 30% between 1966 and 1971. The possibility of a swing of this magnitude (in either direction) during the next few years cannot be ruled out.

We will not attempt a specific projection of the incidence of serious child abuse and neglect cases. The number of such cases reported to child protective services and/or referred to the court has been increasing rapidly in recent years, apparently as a result of the upsurge of public concern beginning in the late 1970s. The only accurately measured indicator of the trend in the actual incidence of such cases is the homicide victimization rate for young children. This rate is probably correlated with the rate of serious physical abuse (other than sexual), but may not tell us much about trends in other forms of abuse and neglect. We conclude by restating our basic conclusion that the court's workload in dealing with abuse and neglect cases is likely to be more sensitive to trends in public opinion than in the true incidence of such cases.

## NOTES

1. For recent examples see Blumstein, Cohen, and Miller (1980), Fox (1978), Klepinger and Weis (1981) Cohen, Felson, and Land (1980) and Easterlin (1978).
2. According to Snyder, Finnegan, and Hutzler (1983:37), dismissals include all cases dismissed as well as those held open for fulfillment of certain conditions with no further disposition expected.
3. Only one-fifth of the cases reported to child protective service agencies were included in the overall estimate. The other cases lacked substantiation or were not considered serious enough for inclusion.
4. The arrest rates were adjusted to take into account the varying population coverage in the Uniform Crime Reports over the 1965 to 1983 period. Comparing the population coverage reported in the UCR annual reports with the U.S. Bureau of the Census population counts, the UCR coverage ranges from about 70 percent to 92 percent of the U.S. population over the time period in question. In order to use these UCR data, the arrest rates were adjusted each year to correct for under coverage of the U.S. population. For more information on adjustment factors see Smith et al. (1980: 304-306). Moreover, in 1979, arson was reclassified as an Index Crime. For sake of comparability, the UCR data reported here includes arson in the total index crime category as well as in the property index crime category for each year throughout the 1965 to 1983 series. Similarly, in 1978, the category "manslaughter by negligence" was removed from the UCR reports. For sake of comparability, the UCR data reported here excludes manslaughter by negligence arrests for the years 1965 to 1977.

5. For a general discussion of police arrest statistics, see Sherman and Glick (1984).
6. For an interesting analysis of changes in routine activity patterns of youth with implications for informal social control mechanisms see Felson Gottfredson (1984). Wilson and Herrnstein (1985, Chap. 9) review a number of studies relevant to the question of whether the absence of a father in the family is criminogenic. The evidence is not clear cut, due in part to the difficulty of deciding what is the relevant control group for children raised by their mothers.

## REFERENCES

- Black, Donald (1971). "The Social Organization of Arrest," Stanford Law Review 23 (June) 1087-1111.
- Black, T. Edwin, and Charles P. Smith (1981). A Preliminary National Assessment of the Numbers and Characteristics of Juveniles Processed in the Juvenile Justice System. Washington, D.C.: Natl. Inst. for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- Blumstein, Alfred, Jacqueline Cohen, and Harold D. Miller (1980) "Demographically Disaggregated Projections of Prison Populations" Journal of Criminal Justice 8: 1-26.
- Cohen, Lawrence E., Marcus Felson, and Kenneth C. Land (1980), "Property Crime Rates in the United States: A Macrodynamic Analysis, 1947-1977; With Ex Ante Forecasts for the Mid-1980's" American Journal of Sociology 86, 1:90-118.
- Easterlin, Richard A. (1978). "What Will 1984 Be Like? Socioeconomic Implications of Recent Twists in Age Structure" Demography 15 (Nov.): 397-421.
- Felson, Marcus and Michael Gottfredson (1984). "Social Indicators of Adolescent Activities Near Peers and Parents" J. of Marriage and Family, Aug. 709-714.
- Fox, James Alan (1978). Forecasting Crime Data. Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath.
- Greenwood, Peter W., Albert J. Lipson, Allan Abrahamse, and Franklin Zimring (1983). Youth Crime and Juvenile Justice in California. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corp.

- Jason, Janine, Mary M. Carpenter, and Carl W. Tyler, Jr. (1983). "Underrecording of Infant Homicide in the United States" American J. of Public Health 73(2), 195-197.
- Klepinger, Daniel and Joseph G. Weis (1981). "Projecting Arrest Trends: An Age, Period, and Cohort Model." Seattle: Center for Law and Justice, Univ. of Washington.
- Laub, John H. (1983). Trends in Juvenile Criminal Behavior in the United States: 1973-1981. Albany: Hindelang Criminal Justice Research Center, SUNY.
- Nimick, Ellen H., Linda L. Dahma, Howard N. Snyder, and Dennis P. Sullivan (1985). Juvenile Court Statistics, 1982. Pittsburgh: National Center for Juvenile Justice.
- Nimick, Ellen H., Linda L. Dahma, Howard N. Snyder, and Dennis P. Sullivan (1984). Juvenile Court Statistics, 1981. Pittsburgh: National Center for Juvenile Justice.
- Russell, Alene, and Cynthia M. Trainor (1984). Trends in Child Abuse and Neglect: A National Perspective. Denver: The American Humane Assn.
- Sherman, Lawrence and Barry Glick (1984). "The Quality of Police Arrest Statistics." Washington, D.C.: Police Foundation.
- Smith, Charles P., Paul S. Alexander, Thomas V. Halatyn, and Chester F. Roberts (1980). A National Assessment of Serious Juvenile Crime and the Juvenile Justice System: The Need for A Rational Response. Volume II: Definition, Characteristics of Incidents and Individuals, and Relationship to Substance Abuse. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- Snyder, Howard N., Terrence A. Finnegan, and John L. Hutzler (1983). Delinquency, 1981. Pittsburgh: National Center for Juvenile Justice.
- Wilson, James Q. (1983). "Crime and American Culture." The Public Interest 70, 22-48.

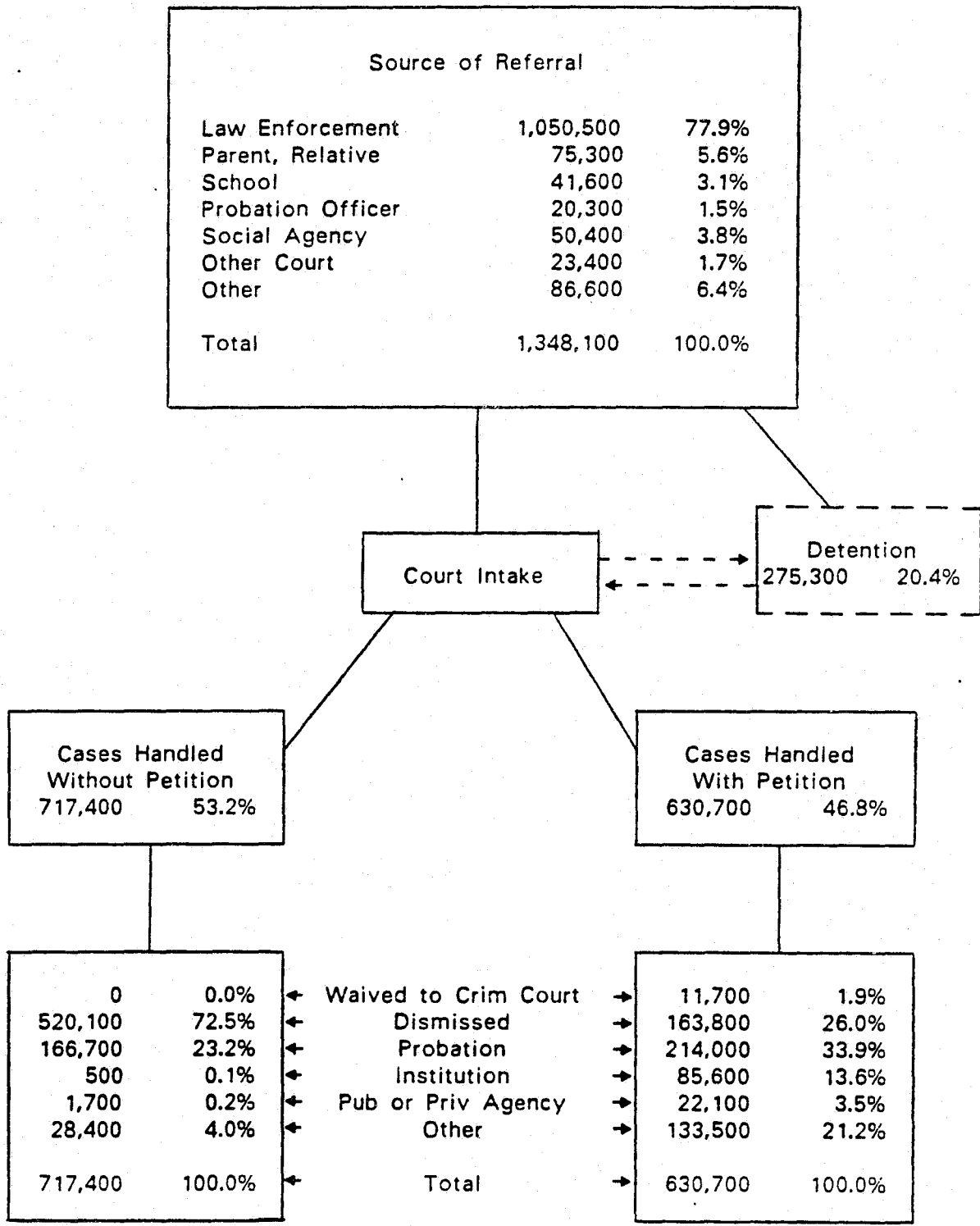


U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 952 (1984). Projections of the Population of the United States, by Age, Sex, and Race: 1983 to 2080. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Nat'l Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (1982). Executive Summary: National Study of the Incidence and Severity of Child Abuse and Neglect. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

Wilson, James Q., and Richard J. Herrnstein (1985). Crime & Human Nature. New York, Simon and Schuster.

Figure 1  
 DELINQUENCY CASE CHARACTERISTICS: 1981 ESTIMATES



Source: Snyder, Finnegan, and Hutzler (1983).

Table 1

## Delinquency Arrests and Juvenile Court Dispositions per 1000 youths aged 10-17, 1965-1983

	Total Arrests per 1000 youths aged 10-17*	Juvenile Court Dispositions per 1000 youths aged 10-17
1965	49.3	23.6
1966	50.2	24.7
1967	55.2	26.3
1968	60.1	28.5
1969	62.8	30.7
1970	65.4	31.7
1971	68.9	33.4
1972	66.9	32.8
1973	66.5	33.5
1974	76.8	36.6
1975	72.0	38.8
1976	71.3	42.3
1977	71.6	42.2
1978	75.6	42.1
1979	74.8	43.4
1980	70.1	46.4
1981	70.3	44.0
1982	74.1	43.2
1983	68.4	n.a.

Source: Arrest statistics are from the FBI's Crime in the United States, various issues. Juvenile Court dispositions are from the National Center for Juvenile Justice, Juvenile Court Statistics, 1982 Pittsburgh, 1985.

\*Note that the youth age categories in the UCR have changed over time. From 1965 to 1979, the age category included: "10 & under," "11-12," and single years throughout for those arrestees 13 to 17. Since 1980, the age category includes: "Under 10," "10 to 12," and single years for those arrestees aged 13 to 17. Therefore, in the arrest rates for 1965 to 1979, the number of arrests attributable to 11 to 17 year olds was used as the numerator of the rate. Since very few arrestees are 10 or younger, the effect is minimal.

Table 2

Arrest Rates for Youths Aged 13-17 per 1000 population, 1965-1983

	Total Arrests	Total Index Crime Arrests <sup>1,2</sup>	Property Index Crime Arrests <sup>1</sup>	Violent Index Crime Arrests <sup>2</sup>
1965	73.5	26.9	24.8	2.1
1966	74.6	26.8	24.5	2.3
1967	82.3	28.7	26.1	2.6
1968	89.5	30.1	27.3	2.8
1969	93.6	31.8	28.6	3.1
1970	97.4	33.2	29.9	3.3
1971	101.9	34.8	31.1	3.7
1972	98.1	33.5	29.7	3.8
1973	97.5	34.1	30.2	3.9
1974	111.3	42.5	38.0	4.6
1975	103.9	40.0	35.5	4.4
1976	102.0	37.9	33.8	4.0
1977	101.5	37.5	33.6	4.0
1978	106.9	39.7	35.1	4.6
1979	106.8	39.8	35.4	4.4
1980	101.0	38.2	33.7	4.5
1981	102.4	37.3	32.8	4.5
1982	108.0	38.2	33.5	4.7
1983	97.9	35.7	31.3	4.4

Source: Arrest statistics compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, adjusted for population coverage of reporting units. See note 4 for additional information.

1. Includes arson, auto theft, burglary, and larceny.
2. Includes aggravated assault, murder and non-negligent homicide, rape, and robbery.

Table 3

## Arrests for Children Under 18 (UCR Data)

	Percent of All Arrests	Percent of Index Crime Arrests	Percent of Violent Index Crime Arrests	Percent of Property Index Crime Arrests
1965	21.4%	48.8	19.7	55.2
1966	22.9	49.5	20.4	56.5
1967	24.3	49.1	21.3	55.7
1968	25.9	48.9	22.0	55.3
1969	25.6	47.8	22.3	54.1
1970	25.3	46.2	22.6	51.8
1971	25.8	45.4	22.8	50.9
1972	25.6	44.6	22.6	50.6
1973	26.4	44.8	22.7	50.9
1974	27.2	45.2	22.6	50.8
1975	25.9	43.2	23.1	48.1
1976	24.9	41.6	22.0	46.2
1977	24.0	41.3	21.0	46.3
1978	23.3	40.5	21.4	45.5
1979	22.5	38.8	20.1	43.5
1980	20.9	35.9	19.3	40.2
1981	19.8	33.5	18.5	37.4
1982	17.9	30.9	17.2	34.5
1983	16.8	30.4	16.8	33.9

Table 4

Ratios of Black Arrest Rates to White Arrest Rates  
for Youths Aged Less than 18 (UCR Data)\*

	All Index Crimes	Property Crimes	Violent Crimes
1965	2.9	2.7	10.4
1966	2.9	2.7	9.8
1967	3.1	2.8	11.1
1968	3.2	2.9	10.4
1969	3.3	3.0	11.4
1970	3.3	2.9	11.1
1971	3.1	2.7	11.4
1972	3.0	2.6	10.4
1973	2.7	2.4	8.5
1974	2.6	2.3	7.8
1975	2.4	2.1	6.6
1976	2.5	2.2	6.6
1977	2.5	2.2	6.0
1978	2.5	2.2	6.6
1979	2.3	2.1	5.7
1980	2.4	2.1	6.1
1981	2.4	2.1	6.4
1982	2.6	2.3	6.4
1983	2.6	2.2	6.7

Each entry in the table is the ratio of the black arrest rate per capita to the white arrest rate per capita for youths 17 or younger.

Table 5

## Homicide Victimization Rates Per 100,000 for Children Less than 5

	Infants		Children Aged 1-4	
	Homicide	Homicide and Undetermined*	Homicide	Homicide and Undetermined*
1965	5.5	-	1.1	-
1966	5.8	-	1.2	-
1967	6.4	-	1.1	-
1968	4.8	7.7	1.4	2.4
1969	4.3	7.9	1.6	2.8
1970	4.3	7.9	1.9	3.2
1971	5.1	8.2	2.1	3.4
1972	5.2	8.1	1.8	3.1
1973	5.2	8.1	2.5	3.6
1974	5.5	9.1	2.2	3.5
1975	5.8	8.9	2.5	3.6
1976	5.6	9.0	2.5	3.6
1977	5.6	8.9	2.7	3.8
1978	5.0	7.6	2.6	3.5
1979	5.2	7.8	2.5	3.3
1980	5.9	7.8	2.5	3.3
1981	6.1	8.4	2.6	3.2
1982	6.7	8.7	2.7	3.2

Sources: Public Health Service, National Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics of the United States, Vol. II Mortality Part A, various years. The data for 1980-1982 is currently unpublished, and was communicated by NCHS staff by telephone, 5/1/85.

\* "Homicide and Undetermined" is the sum of the homicide victimization rate and the death rate due to "Injury undetermined whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted".

Table 6

## Trends in Out-of-Wedlock Births and Births to Young Women

	Out-of-Wedlock Births as Percent of All Births				Births to Women Under 20 as Percent of All Births
	Total	White	Non-White	Black	
1950	3.9	1.7	16.8	-	12.1
1955	4.5	2.1	19.4	-	12.2
1960	5.3	2.7	21.6	-	14.0
1965	7.7	4.0	26.3	-	15.9
1970	10.7	5.7	34.9	37.6	17.6
1973	13.0	6.4	41.7	45.8	19.7
1974	13.2	6.5	42.7	47.1	19.2
1975	14.2	7.3	44.2	48.8	18.9
1976	14.8	7.7	45.2	50.3	18.0
1977	15.5	8.2	46.5	51.7	17.2
1978	16.3	8.7	47.6	53.2	16.6
1979	17.1	9.4	48.8	54.6	16.0
1980	18.4	11.0	48.4	55.2	
1981	18.9	11.6	48.5	56.0	
1982	19.4	12.1	48.8	56.7	

Source: National Center for Health Statistics Vital Statistics  
of the U.S. 1980, Vol. 1 Natality and unpublished data from NCHS.



Table 7

Percent of Children Under 18 Living With Both Parents  
and Percent With Mothers in the Labor Force

	Percent Living with Both Parents			Percent with Mothers in Labor Force
	Total	White	Black	
1970	85	89	58	39
1971	83	88	54	39
1972	83	88	54	40
1973	82	87	52	41
1974	81	87	51	42
1975	80	85	49	44
1976	80	85	50	46
1977	79	85	47	48
1978	78	84	44	50
1979	77	84	43	52
1980	77	83	42	53
1981	76	82	43	54
1982	75	81	42	55
1983	75	81	41	55
1984	75	81	41	56

- Sources: 1. Statistical Abstract of the U.S., 1982-83 , Table 76.
2. U.S. Bureau of the Census Current Population Reports p.20 No. 389 (1984), "Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1983."
3. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Handbook of Labor Statistics

Table 8

## Percent of Children Under 18 Living in Poverty

	Total	White	Black
1965	20	14	-
1966	17	12	51
1967	16	11	47
1968	15	11	43
1969	14	10	40
1970	15	11	42
1971	15	11	41
1972	15	10	43
1973	14	10	41
1974	15	11	40
1975	17	13	41
1976	16	11	40
1977	16	11	42
1978	16	11	41
1979	16	11	41
1980	18	13	42
1981	20	15	45
1982	21	17	47
1983	22	17	46

Sources: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P 60, No. 145 (1984). Money Income and Poverty Status of Families and Persons in the U.S.: 1983.

Table 9

Reported Drug Use Within Last 30 Days  
by High School Seniors, 1975-1984

Class of	Alcohol	Cigarettes	Marijuana/ Hashish	Cocaine
1975	68.2	36.7	27.1	1.9
1976	68.2	38.8	32.2	2.0
1977	71.2	38.4	35.4	2.9
1978	72.1	36.7	37.1	3.9
1979	71.8	34.4	36.5	5.7
1980	72.0	30.5	33.7	5.2
1981	70.7	29.4	31.6	5.8
1982	69.7	30.0	28.5	5.0
1983	69.4	30.3	27.0	4.9
1984	67.2	29.3	25.2	5.8

Source: Flanagan, Timothy J. and Edward J. Brown, editors (1984).  
Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics -- 1983.  
Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office: 360.  
1983 and 1984 provided by Lloyd Johnston, TSR, by phone  
on 5/3/85.

Table 10

## Trends in the Adult-Child Population Ratio

	Ratio of Adults (18-64) to Children (10-17)	Ratio of White Adults (18-64) to White Children (10-17)	Ratio of Black Adults (18-64) to Black Children (10-17)
1965	3.57	3.68	2.80
1966	3.55	3.67	2.75
1967	3.52	3.64	2.70
1968	3.51	3.62	2.67
1969	3.50	3.61	2.66
1970	3.49	3.62	2.66
1971	3.51	3.65	2.66
1972	3.55	3.69	2.69
1973	3.60	3.75	2.72
1974	3.66	3.81	2.76
1975	3.76	3.92	2.82
1976	3.89	4.06	2.90
1977	4.03	4.22	3.01
1978	4.19	4.39	3.12
1979	4.38	4.58	3.26
1980	4.50	4.70	3.39
1981	4.64	4.85	3.51
1982	4.83	5.04	3.68
1983	5.01	5.23	3.84
<u>Projections</u>			
1985	5.30	5.53	4.16
1990	5.79	6.03	4.67
1995	5.43	5.68	4.26
2000	5.34	5.57	4.15

Source: Various U.S. Bureau of the Census population reports and U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 952 (1984). Projections of the Population of the United States by Age, Sex, and Race: 1983 - 2080. Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office.

Table 11

## Trends in the Population Aged 13-17

	Total (millions)	White (millions)	Black (millions)
1965	17.8	15.4	2.2
1966	18.2	15.7	2.3
1967	18.6	16.0	2.4
1968	19.1	16.5	2.5
1969	19.5	16.8	2.5
1970	20.1	17.2	2.6
1971	20.5	17.5	2.7
1972	20.7	17.6	2.8
1973	20.9	17.8	2.8
1974	21.1	17.9	2.9
1975	21.1	17.8	2.9
1976	21.0	17.7	2.9
1977	20.8	17.5	2.9
1978	20.5	17.2	2.9
1979	19.9	16.6	2.9
1980	19.8	16.4	2.9
1981	19.1	15.8	2.8
1982	18.6	15.3	2.8
1983	18.4	15.1	2.7
<u>Projections</u>			
1985	18.1	14.9	2.7
1990	16.2	13.2	2.4
1995	17.8	14.3	2.8
2000	19.3	15.4	3.2

Source: Same as in Table 10.