

Evaluation of Florida's

Juvenile Detention Services



DEPARTMENT
OF
HEALTH
AND
REHABILITATIVE
SERVICES

Youth Services Program

PLANNING
COORDINATION
UNIT



1
9
7
7

54422

NCJRS

FEB 9 1979

ACQUISITIONS

DETENTION EVALUATION

Department of Health and Rehabilitative
Services
Youth Services Program Office
April, 1977

TABLE OF CONTENTS

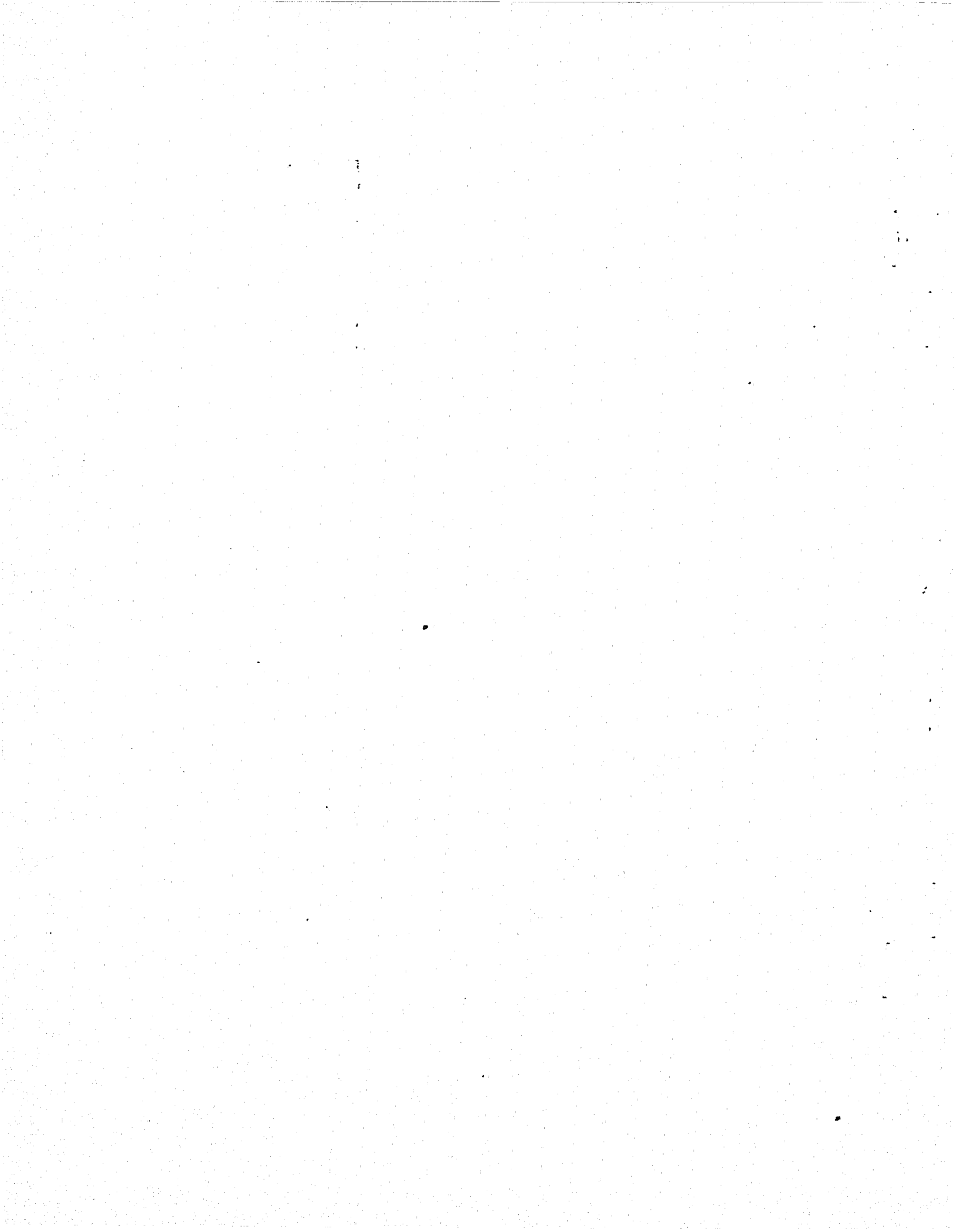
	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	1
How Children Come to Detention	1
Population Descriptions	4
Legal Representation	13
Utilization of Secure and Non-Secure Detention.	13
Escapes from Secure Detention	26
Conclusions	28
Appendix	29
Footnotes	30

List of Tables

		<u>Page</u>
1	Quarterly index of relationships between total detention admissions and total delinquency referrals	2
2	Source of detention requests	2
3	Reported reasons for detention	3
4	Original detention authority	4
5	Sex breakdowns of detention screenings and children detained	6
6	Releases and detentions, by sex	6
7	Racial breakdowns of children screened and children detained	7
8	Releases and detentions, by race	7
9	Age breakdowns of children screened and children detained	8
10	Releases and detentions, by age	9
11	School grade breakdowns for children screened and children detained	10
12	Releases and detentions, by grade in school	11
13	Employment breakdowns for children screened and those detained	12
14	Releases and detentions, by employment	12
15	Child's response to charge	13
16	Reasons children not initially placed in non-secure detention	16
17	Distribution of lengths of stay in secure detention prior to transfer to non-secure	17
18	Distribution of resident days in detention (secure and non-secure)	18
19	Proportion of resident days in non-secure detention for each program	19
20	Detention placement by age	20
21	Cost breakdowns for three types of detained cases	21
22	Detention cost breakdowns based on length of stay in secure custody prior to transfer to non-secure	23
23	Proportion of cost broken down by length of stay in secure custody prior to transfer to non-secure	23
24	Detention admissions and escapes from secure facilities	27

Figures

		<u>Page</u>
1	Percent of children screened who were detained for charges listed	5
2	Status of non-secure program in each district	14
3	Detention average daily population by month, January 1976 - May 1977	24
	Appendix	29



DETENTION EVALUATION

Each month in Florida, HRS Central Intake staff determine that approximately 2000 children charged with delinquent acts require temporary custody in one of 22 state operated secure facilities. Children are brought to detention under various circumstances. The most common cause is a new law violation. They are also brought in for probation and aftercare violations. Approximately four percent of probation caseloads and seven percent of aftercare cases are detained each month.¹ In addition children in Group Treatment facilities may be detained for new law violations, running away, or for severe management problems. Apprehended escapees from Training Schools are also detained. Many children are ordered detained by the courts, and children are held for other states and federal authorities. Detention is the program area charged with the responsibility of caring for these children until their release or disposition. Detention itself does not decide who is to be detained or when they are to be released.

Ideally, detention should provide each child with the least secure custody that is consistent with the safety and welfare of the child and the protection of the community. The stated goals of detention include efforts to reduce the use of secure detention by limiting it to children who are actually a threat to themselves or others, or where reason exists to believe that, unless detained, they will not be present at their court hearing. Establishment of alternatives to secure detention has long been an objective of the program, reserving secure custody as a last resort.

The Non-Secure detention program has been developed to provide these alternatives to placement in secure custody of children who may not require it. The cost of supervising a child in the non-secure program is only 40 percent of the cost of keeping a child in secure detention. In addition, many children are spared the trauma of a lengthy stay in a secure detention facility. These children are also given a chance to demonstrate prior to their case dispositions that they can stay out of trouble. This program will be discussed in detail late in the paper.

This study will examine how children come to detention, the characteristics of such children, and why they are detained. The study will evaluate the extent to which alternatives to secure detention have been utilized. Lengths of stay in detention and transfers between secure and non-secure detention will also be examined. The high cost of providing detention services, requires close quality control, monitoring and cost-effectiveness assessment. The primary purpose of this study is to assist management in examining current procedures and policies to insure the legislative intent of detention is carried out.

How Children Come to Detention

During the 18-month period from July 1975 through December 1976, 154,890 delinquency cases were referred to Youth Services statewide. During these eighteen months, 34,530 admissions to detention were logged. The percent these admissions were of total delinquency referrals provides a rough index of practices with respect to detention. The average for the entire period was 22.3 percent.

Table 1 gives this index for each quarter. An increasing trend in the use of detention is clearly evident. It should be noted that approximately 72 percent of the detention admissions actually came in as intake referrals. This will be dealt with in detail later in this paper.

Requests that a child be detained may come from a variety of sources. Table 2 presents a distribution for children detained by percent of requests coming from each listed source. Over half of detention admissions are based upon requests by law enforcement. One fifth of the admissions are based upon Field Services requests to detain children already under supervision, and another fifth are based on court requests for children already under their jurisdiction.

TABLE 1

	<u>Total Detention² Admissions</u>	<u>Total Delinquency³ Referrals</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>1975</u>			
July - Sept	5042	25617	19.7
Oct - Dec	5459	25730	21.2
<u>1976</u>			
Jan - March	6116	26899	22.7
April - June	6132	27369	22.4
July - Sept	5873	25116	23.4
Oct - Dec	5908	24159	24.5
<u>18-mo Total</u>	<u>34530</u>	<u>154890</u>	<u>22.3</u>

TABLE 2

<u>Detention Requested By⁴:</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Law Enforcement	54.9
Youth Services - Field Services	19.5
Youth Services - Group Treatment	3.0
School	.4
Social & Economic Services	.8
Parents	1.5
Court & Other	<u>19.9</u>
	100.0

Detention screening takes place for every child physically delivered to Intake. Screening consists of a review of the case circumstances by an Intake Detention Screener who makes the determination of whether or not the child is to be released. Florida Statutes 39.03(3)(c) permits detention of a child for protection of the person or property of the child or others, to secure the child's presence at court hearing, or if there is no one into whose custody the child can be released. It is the policy of Youth Services that children not be detained for this latter reason and that efforts be made to use volunteers, private agencies or local community programs for children who otherwise would be detained. (Because of this policy, no provision was made in the data gathering to allow for this reason for detention.) In addition, the statutes require detention of all twice previously adjudicated delinquents who are referred for an offense which would be a felony if the child were an adult. Table 3 presents a breakdown of the reasons given for detention of 7,662 children reported detained on Detention Screening Forms received for the months of August through December, 1976. This is a 77.3 percent sample of children actually admitted to detention during the time period.*

TABLE 3

Reasons for Detention⁵

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Protection of person or property	3694	48.2
To Secure Presence at Hearing	3277	42.8
Felony referral twice previously-- Adjudicated Delinquent	489	6.4
No Reason Given	202	2.6
	<u>7662</u>	<u>100</u>

If the decision is made not to release the child, detention may originally be ordered by Intake on its own authority or upon the authority of the requesting agency. Table 4 gives a percentage breakdown of original authority for detentions.

* The reporting percentage is somewhat low for the period since the new form was implemented in August and the number of forms did not come up to the number of admissions until December.

TABLE 4

Original Detention Authority ⁶

	<u>Percent of detentions</u>
Intake	62.7
Court order requested by Youth Services	10.4
Court order not requested by Youth Services	16.4
Field Services Administrative order	4.6
Group Treatment Administrative order	2.9
Training Schools Administrative hold	.7
Other	<u>2.3</u>
	100

These data are in close agreement with figures from the most recent six months of available Intake Statistical Card data, which indicate that 17.3 percent of intake delinquency referrals are detained.⁷ This means that about 8,518 detainees during the period from July through December, 1976 came in as new intake referrals, while about 3,258, or 28 percent came from other sources.

Population Descriptions

Figure 1 lists all significant reasons for which children were physically brought in for detention screening. For each category listed, the percent is given of children in that category who were actually detained. As evidenced in the chart, children brought in for escape, probation violation, immigration offenses and very serious felonies, as well as those picked up on court orders, were most likely to be detained.

Of those children considered for detention (screened), 76.7 percent were male and 23.3 percent were female. Of those actually detained, 77.5 percent were male, 22.5 percent female. These data are presented in Table 5. Table 6 gives the percentage of screened cases who were detained, by sex. Seventy-one percent of the girls screened were detained, while 74.2 percent of the boys screened were detained. Thus females were only slightly more likely to be released. This difference does not appear to be important.

Percentage Detained

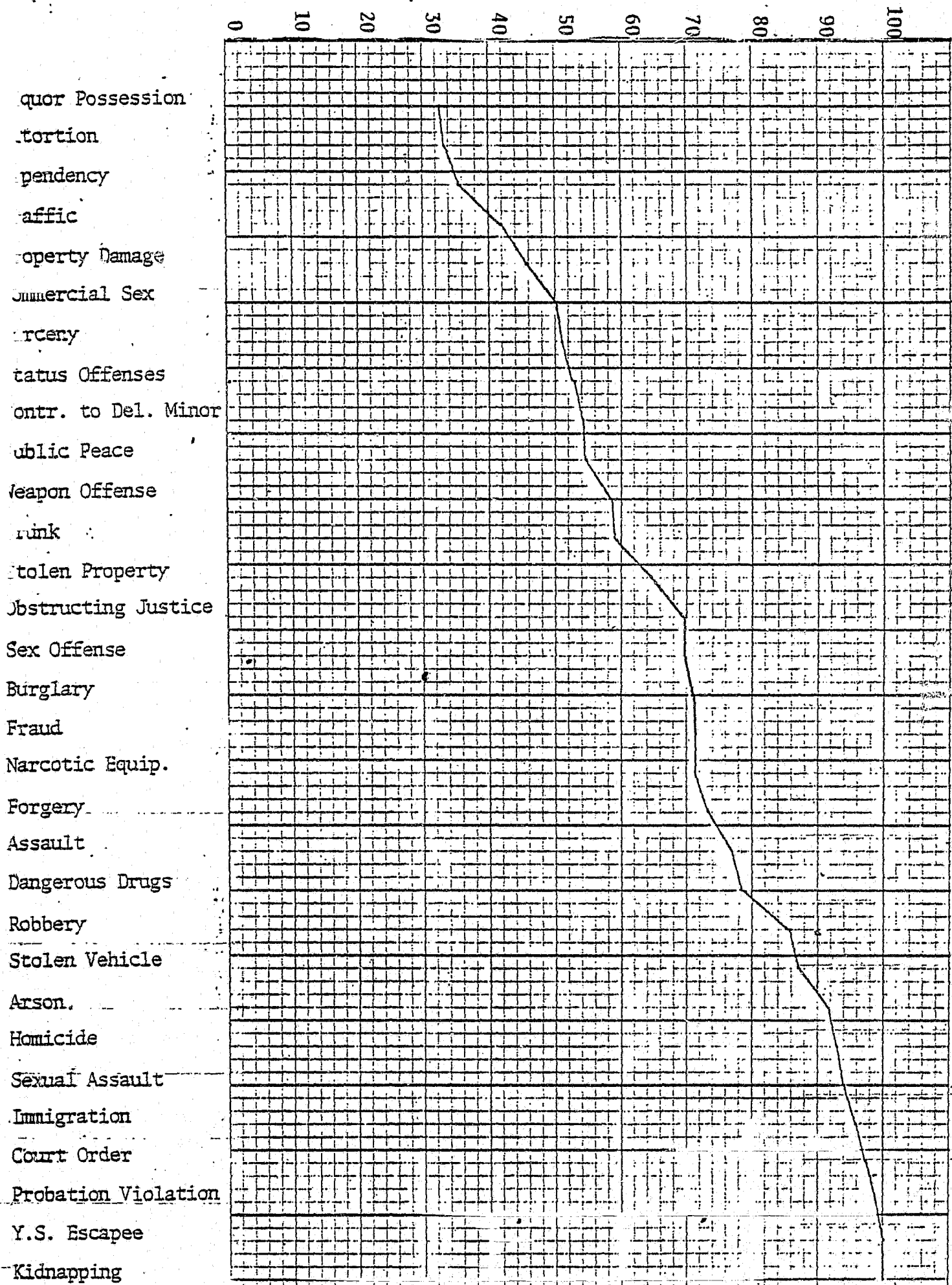


Figure 1 Percent of Children Screened Who Were Detained for Charges Listed

TABLE 5

Sex Breakdowns of Detention Screenings and Children Detained⁹

	<u>Screened</u>	<u>Detained</u>
Male	76.7%	77.7%
Female	<u>23.3%</u>	<u>22.3%</u>
	100.00	100.00

TABLE 6

Releases and Detentions, by Sex¹⁰

	<u>Percent Released</u>	<u>Percent Detained</u>
Male	22.7%	77.3%
Female	26.9%	73.1%
Total	23.7%	76.3%

Racial breakdowns of children screened and those actually detained are given in Table 7, indicating that black children are slightly more likely to be detained. The extent of this difference is shown in Table 8. While 75.5 percent of white children were detained, 77.8 percent of black children were detained. It should be noted that this difference does not appear to be important.

TABLE 7

Racial Breakdowns of Children Screened and Children Detained¹¹

	<u>Screened</u>	<u>Detained</u>
White	67.3%	66.6%
Black	31.9%	32.5%
Other	.9%	.9%
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100.01	100.00

TABLE 8.

Releases and Detentions, by Race¹²

	<u>Percent Released</u>	<u>Percent Detained</u>
White	24.5%	75.5%
Black	22.2%	77.8%
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	23.8%	76.2%

Table 9 presents the age breakdowns for children screened and for those who were detained. All ages below 15 made up greater proportions of the screened population than of the detained group. For all ages 15 and above, the reverse was true. Table 10 examines this relationship in greater detail. As would be expected, likelihood of detention increases as a function of age. This is understandable since older children are more likely to be referred for serious offenses, and they are likely to have had more extensive previous involvement with the juvenile justice system.

TABLE 9

Age Breakdowns of Children Screened and Children Detained¹³

<u>Age</u>	<u>Screened</u>	<u>Detained</u>
7-10	.6%	.3%
11	.5%	.3%
12	1.7%	1.3%
13	4.6%	4.2%
14	10.7%	10.5%
15	17.1%	17.5%
16	24.1%	24.7%
17	26.8%	27.3%
18 *	13.4%	13.4%
19 *	.5%	.6%
	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.1</u>

* Persons of age 18 and above would only be considered for detention for reasons of a technical violation of their probation or aftercare, or for having absconded from a commitment program.

TABLE 10

Releases and Detentions, By Age ¹⁴

<u>Age</u>	<u>Released</u>	<u>Detained</u>
7-10	63.8%	36.2%
11	56.8%	43.2%
12	39.9%	60.1%
13	28.8%	70.2%
14	25.0%	75.0%
15	21.7%	78.3%
16	21.2%	78.8%
17	21.8%	78.2%
18*	23.6%	76.4%
19*	12.5%	87.5%

* Person's of age 18 and above would only be considered for detention for reasons of a technical violation of their probation or aftercare, or for having absconded from a commitment program.

Table 11 gives school grade breakdowns for those children screened and those detained. Very little variation is evident between the two groups. Table 12 shows that likelihood of detention increases up through ninth grade. The detention rate then drops precipitously for tenth through twelfth grades. Children who have made it past the ninth grade are evidently more often considered better risks for release. Children who have dropped out of school are slightly more likely to be detained.

TABLE 11

School Grade Breakdowns for Children Screened and Children Detained¹⁵

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Screened</u>	<u>Detained</u>
1 - 4	.6%	.3%
5	.4%	.2%
6	1.3%	1.0%
7	5.2%	4.9%
8	10.6%	10.4%
9	15.9%	16.4%
10	15.4%	15.0%
11	10.1%	9.3%
12	4.4%	3.7%
Not in School	36.0%	38.8%
	<hr/> 99.9	<hr/> 100.0

TABLE 12

Releases and Detentions, By Grade in School¹⁶

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Released</u>	<u>Detained</u>
1-4	62.3%	37.7%
5	59.0%	41.0%
6	42.3%	57.7%
7	28.7%	71.3%
8	25.2%	74.8%
9	21.4%	78.6%
10	25.8%	74.2%
11	29.8%	70.2%
12	35.5%	64.5%
not in school	17.9%	82.1%

Employment rates for children screened and children detained are presented in Table 13. Unemployed children are slightly overrepresented in the sub-group of detainees. The specific proportion detained of each category is presented in Table 14. Children with jobs are less likely to be detained.

TABLE 13

Employment Breakdowns for Children Screened and Those Detained¹⁷

	<u>Screened</u>	<u>Detained</u>
Employed	11.9%	10.7%
Not Employed	<u>88.1%</u>	<u>89.3%</u>
	100.0	100.0

TABLE 14

Releases and Detentions, By Employment¹⁸

	<u>Released</u>	<u>Detained</u>
Employed	30.7%	69.3%
Not Employed	22.4%	77.6%

Data indicate that sixteen percent of children admitted to detention required medical attention.¹⁹ The major problem areas requiring attention are venereal diseases, drug abuse, pregnancy and dental and psychological problems. Efforts are made to require parents of children involved to pay for required medical expenditures. When this is not possible, the Department is responsible for such payment. This is a problem area since detention is not adequately funded to cover medical expenses.

Legal Representation

Data collected for August-December, 1976²⁰ indicate that less than four percent of children screened for detention were represented by an attorney at the time. Only .6 percent were represented by private counsel, while public defenders represented 3.2 percent of the children. In light of this data and the fact that children being screened for detention are asked to respond to the charges against them, the replies given will be examined. A breakdown of these responses is presented in Table 15. Over half the children fully or partially admitted to the allegations.

TABLE 15

Child's Response to Charge²¹

	<u>Children Screened</u>	<u>Children Detained</u>
Admits	44.5%	42.5%
Partially Admits	8.6%	7.9%
Denies	11.0%	10.7%
No Response	<u>35.9%</u>	<u>38.9%</u>
	100.0	100.0

Utilization of Secure and Non-Secure Detention

The Youth Services Detention program consists of two components, secure and non-secure detention. Secure custody is the traditional concept of continuous surveillance and locked, high security facilities. There are actually two different programs subsumed under non-secure detention: Attention Homes and Home Detention. Attention Homes are run by persons under contract with HRS to provide a temporary home for detained children who do not require secure custody but for some reason cannot be allowed to immediately return to their own homes. Home Detention consists of intensive supervision by a Community Youth Leader of children in detention status who are living in their own homes. The Community Youth Leader's caseload is limited to a maximum of five children. Figure 2 gives the status of the non-secure program for each HRS district, as of March, 1977. Youth Services is currently funded for 105 Attention Home beds, with a budgeted occupancy rate of 80 percent. The Home Detention program has a maximum of 175 slots available for detained children through regular state staff. Due to constant caseload

Figure 2

STATUS OF NON-SECURE PROGRAM IN EACH DISTRICT

<u>District</u>	<u>Status of Non-Secure Program</u>
I	Fully implemented
II	Fully implemented in sub-district II-A. Implemented in Leon County only in sub-district II-B. No program in the other seven counties.
III	Fully implemented in Marion County through CETA workers. No other program in other fifteen counties.
IV	Two positions in Duval County, terminated in March, 1977. Fully implemented in Volusia County through CETA. No program in the other five counties.
V	Fully implemented
VI	Fully implemented in Hillsborough County. No program in Manatee County.
VII	Fully implemented in Seminole County through CETA workers. Partially implemented in Orange County through CETA workers. No program in Brevard and Osceola counties.
VIII	Fully implemented in Polk County through CETA workers. Fully implemented in Ft. Myers. Partially implemented in Sarasota County through CETA workers. Fully implemented in Highlands County. No program in the other six counties.
IX	Partially implemented in Palm Beach County through CETA workers. No program in the other four counties.
X	No program.
XI	Fully implemented in Dade County. No program in Monroe County.

turnover, this is not a realistic goal. A good Community Youth Leader will average a caseload of four (80 percent of capacity). Additional placements are available through utilization of staff funded under CETA (Comprehensive Employment Training Act) and WIN (Work Incentive) federal programs. Such positions have at times provided as many as 155 additional Home Detention slots. There are, however, considerable problems with this segment of the non-secure program which make it very difficult to administer. The positions are available only in certain areas, not necessarily where they are needed. The number of CETA workers may fluctuate from month to month, with positions subject to arbitrary elimination at any time.

During the 18-month period from July 1975 - December 1976 there were 34,530 admissions to detention. Direct admissions to secure detention accounted for 98.2 percent of these cases, while only 1.8 percent were directly admitted to a non-secure program.²² This agrees exactly with figures from the first four months of data from the Detention Screening Form. Direct admissions to non-secure are discouraged to help preclude detention in that program of children who would otherwise not be detained at all. Table 16 gives breakdowns of the percentages of children not initially placed in non-secure detention for the reasons given. The column to the right gives the adjusted percentages for only those cases where a reason was given. Not having a non-secure placement available was the most common reason, followed by court orders. These court orders can often be modified to allow later release of the child to a non-secure program.

Of the 98 percent of detainees initially placed in secure custody, 12 percent are subsequently transferred to a non-secure program. The mean length of stay in secure detention prior to such transfer is 7.3 days. These children then spend an average of 17.6 days in non-secure status.

Approximately two percent of the children detained are initially placed in a non-secure program. They spend an average of 17.9 days in that program, except for the 8.5 percent of them who are transferred to secure detention after an average of 9.4 days. Of those children initially admitted to secure and later transferred to non-secure detention, 20.8 percent are returned to secure custody after an average of 12.3 days. Thus the non-secure program exhibits an overall rate of 18.7 percent of its cases transferred to secure detention.

Those who successfully remain in non-secure status stay in the program an average of 18.9 days. Those children held entirely in secure status (never admitted to non-secure) had an average length of stay of 9.8 days.²⁴ Consideration must be given to the fact that many children placed in secure detention are released within a day or two, and not processed further. The non-secure population represents a population consisting of juveniles who will generally be processed through the court. Thus comparing length of stays could be misleading unless one compared only children handled formally in secure with children handled in non-secure detention.

By way of illustration, of every 1000 children detained, 980 go into secure custody, while 20 are directly admitted to a non-secure program. Of the 980, 118 children are transferred to non-secure detention. Two of the 20 originally admitted to non-secure are subsequently transferred to secure status, and 25 of the 118 later placed in non-secure are returned to secure detention.²⁵

TABLE 16

Reasons Children Not Initially Placed in Non-Secure Detention²³

	<u>Percent of Total Detained</u>	<u>Adjusted Percent</u>
Initial Placement in Non-Secure	1.8	
Reasons not Initially Placed in Non-Secure		
Seriousness of Offense	18.3	26.5
Child's Attitude	2.7	3.9
Multiple Prior Referrals	2.8	4.1
No Non-Secure Placement Available	21.5	31.2
Court Order	19.2	27.8
Administrative Order	4.4	6.5
No Reason Given	<u>29.3</u>	<u>-</u>
	100.0	100.0

The 7.3 day average length of stay in secure detention prior to transfer to non-secure has considerable impact in terms of the high cost of this care and its contribution to overall high secure populations. Table 17 presents a breakdown of the data for 1011 cases transferred to non-secure during August - December, 1976.

As shown in the chart, almost half of the children are transferred to non-secure custody within four days after admission. Fifteen percent are not transferred until they have spent over two weeks in secure detention. These are often cases where the court would not allow early placement in non-secure, but then permitted it due to lengthy case processing time.

TABLE 17

Distribution of Lengths of Stay in Secure Detention²⁶
Prior to Transfer to Non-Secure

<u>Time until Transfer</u>	<u>Number of Transfers</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
0-2 days	313	31.0%
3-4 days	149	14.7%
5-7 days	175	17.3%
8-14 days	222	22.0%
15-21 days	82	8.1%
Over 21 days	<u>70</u>	<u>6.9%</u>
	1011	100.0

Since average stays in non-secure exceed those in secure detention, the proportion of children in the non-secure program during a given month will exceed the proportion of children placed in the program that month. The best measure of the proportion of detainees handled by non-secure during a given time period is a comparison of resident days. Table 18 gives the distribution of resident days between secure and non-secure detention for each of the last ten quarters. From late 1974 through early 1976 there was a continuous rise in the proportion of resident days in non-secure programs. After a slight drop during the second quarter of 1976, the proportion seems to have stabilized at 22.7 percent. Budgeted non-secure positions appear to be operating at close to capacity. It is unlikely that the proportion of resident days in non-secure can be significantly increased unless current high detention population levels can be reduced.

TABLE 18

Distribution of Resident Days in Detention²⁷

	<u>Secure</u>	<u>Non-Secure</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percent of Total in Non-Secure</u>
1974 July-September	63,568	9,921	73,489	13.5
October-December	66,333	10,328	76,661	13.5
1975 January-March	78,223	13,099	91,322	14.3
April - June	68,908	16,551	85,459	19.4
July-September	57,489	15,574	73,063	21.3
October-December	61,979	18,458	80,437	22.9
1976 January- March	68,583	20,575	89,158	23.1
April - June	70,836	18,792	89,628	21.0
July-September	68,693	20,203	88,896	22.7
October-December	74,944	22,024	96,968	22.7

A more precise representation of non-secure detention can be obtained by looking at the proportion of resident days spent in non-secure for each of the programs in the state. These figures are presented for July, 1976 through February 1977 in Table 19. It can be seen in the table that an adequately staffed non-secure program can handle as many as 45 percent of total resident days in detention.

In the 1975-76 Non-Secure Detention Grant the program established as a measurable objective the placement of 35 percent of detained delinquency referrals in the non-secure program. Data for August through November, 1976, indicate that 18.0 percent of intake delinquency referrals were admitted to a non-secure program. As indicated in the non-secure grant, attainment of the stated goal will require more than one fiscal year to achieve.

TABLE 19

Proportion of Resident Days in Non-Secure Detention for Each Program²⁸

<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>Total Resident Days</u>	<u>Resident Days in Non-Secure</u>	<u>Percent of Total in Non-Secure</u>
I	Escambia	13580	5519	40.6
II	Bay	6801	3072	45.2
	Leon	4715	1662	35.3
III	Alachua	6446	1553	24.1 *
	Lake	1413	0	0
	Marion	5039	1312	26.0
IV	Duval	28180	2322	8.2
	Volusia	4599	651	14.2
V	Pinellas	25777	6662	25.8
VI	Hillsborough	21371	5870	27.5
	Manatee	3489	461	13.2 *
VII	Orange	15262	1980	13.0 **
	Seminole	4441	1022	23.0
	Brevard	5647	0	0
VIII	Polk	10566	3770	35.7
	Sarasota	3890	759	19.5
	Lee	14535	3525	24.3
IX	West Palm Beach	15579	4569	29.3
	St. Lucie	3963	0	0
X	Broward	16604	0	0
XI	Dade	35116	11599	33.0
	Monroe	1140	0	0
		248153	56308	22.7

* Programs terminated in January, 1977.

** Figure adjusted to include Orange detainees transferred to Seminole, Lake, Volusia and Brevard due to Federal court limitation of 40 on population.

Using the last available data reported on the Detention Screening Forms,²⁹ racial breakdowns of detainees were obtained for children handled exclusively by secure detention and those who were at some point assigned to a non-secure program. The figures appear below.

	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Other</u>
Secure Detention Only	84.0%	83.3%	92.9%
Admitted to Non-Secure	16.0%	16.7%	7.1%

It appears that there is no significant relationship between race and assignment to the non-secure program.

A breakdown by sex for the same time period yields the following percentages.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Secure Detention Only	83.4%	85.6%
Admitted to Non-Secure	16.6%	14.4%

Females are slightly less likely to be admitted to a non-secure program.

Information presented in Table 20 shows the direct relationship between the age of detainees and the probability of admission to the non-secure program. The younger the child, the more likely he is to be placed in non-secure detention.

TABLE 20

<u>Age</u>	Detention Placement by Age ³⁰		<u>N</u>
	<u>Secure Only</u>	<u>Admitted to Non - Secure</u>	
12 and under	66.0%	34.0%	268
13	73.5%	26.5%	506
14	76.4%	23.6%	1018
15	77.0%	23.0%	1671
16	78.6%	21.4%	2039
17	79.9%	20.1%	2031
18	84.6%	15.4%	39

Based on the most recent figures available, the cost per day for non-secure detention custody is \$10.98, while the cost for secure detention is \$27.41 per day³¹. Children initially placed in secure detention who were never admitted to a non-secure program had an average length of stay of 9.8 days, at an average expense of \$268.62 (9.8 x \$27.41). Those children initially placed in non-secure had an average length of stay of 17.9 days, at an average cost per case of \$196.54 (17.9 x \$10.98). Non-secure detention is obviously a less expensive alternative, and the cost differential is actually greater than the above figures indicate due to factors which artificially reduce the average length of stay for secure detention. These factors will be dealt with below. Children first admitted to secure detention spent an average of 7.3 days in that program prior to being transferred to non-secure custody, where they remained an average of 17.6 days. Thus, the average cost for such cases is \$393.34 ([7.3 x \$27.41] + [17.6 x \$10.98]). These figures are presented in Table 21.

TABLE 21

Cost Breakdowns for Three Types of Detained Cases

a. Children initially placed in Non-Secure and not Transferred:

$$\text{\$10.98/day} \times 17.9 \text{ days} = \text{\$196.54}$$

b. Children initially placed in Secure and not Transferred:

$$\text{\$27.41/day} \times 9.8 \text{ days} = \text{\$268.62}$$

c. Children initially placed in Secure and later Transferred to Non-Secure:

$$\text{Secure Cost: } \text{\$27.41/day} \times 7.3 \text{ days} = \text{\$200.09}$$

$$\text{Non - Secure Cost: } \text{\$10.98/day} \times 17.6 \text{ days} = \text{\$193.25}$$

$$\text{Total Detention Cost: } \underline{\text{\$393.34}}$$

The high total detention cost for children in this last category merits closer examination. The data presented in Table 17 will be useful for this purpose. Sufficient information is available on 993 of these cases to develop comparative cost data. Table 22 gives the average costs for these children's stays in secure custody, non-secure detention, and the totals. Computation of these figures is presented in the Appendix. The great expense of lengthy stays in secure detention is quite evident. Table 23 presents this average cost data multiplied by the number of cases in each category and expressed as a proportion of total detention expenditures on cases transferred into non-secure detention. While only 17.8 percent of the total costs were accounted for by 309 (31.2%) of the cases transferred within two days, the 149 cases (14.9%) who first spent over two weeks in secure detention accounted for 31 percent of the total expenditures. For the 69 children held in secure custody for over three weeks prior to transfer to non-secure, less than seven percent of the cases accounted for over eighteen percent of the cost.

Some additional interpretive information will give a truer picture of the data for cost comparison purposes. On-site audits of detention screening practices indicate that a significant number of detainees are inappropriately detained. These cases are often released within a day or two, and, therefore, are not often admitted to a non-secure program. These and other cases where children are released after a short stay have the effect of lowering the average length of stay for secure detention, while having little impact on non-secure averages. In fact, admissions to non-secure themselves result in a decrease in the secure average length of stay. Examining only those cases who remained exclusively in secure custody until their cases were disposed of, the average length of stay is found to be 19.1 days. The average cost per child is then \$523.53 for these secure detainees, compared with a total detention cost (secure and non-secure) of \$469.58 for children who remained in non-secure custody until their cases were disposed of. This last figure is based on their average stay of 9.0 days in secure detention prior to transfer to non-secure, where they spent an average of 20.3 days (\$246.69 + \$222.89).

The costs for handling a child in a non-secure program is, therefore, approximately two hundred dollars. Factors often beyond the control of the non-secure program result in increased cost for most of these cases due to prior stays in secure facilities. Restrictions placed on the child's custody by the court may result in many cases remaining in secure detention for weeks before permission can be obtained to admit the child to a non-secure program. These cases have considerable impact on the average length of stay in secure prior to transfer to non-secure status. As previously shown, almost a third of the children's transfers to non-secure have taken place within two days of admission to detention. Sixty-three percent of such transfers occur within a week of admission to secure custody.

One of the stated objectives of the 1976-77 Non-Secure Detention Services Grant was, "to reduce the populations in the secure detention facilities to a level consistent with the maintenance of safety and control." Figure 3 charts the average daily population for each month from July, 1975 through May, 1977.



Detention Cost Breakdowns based on Length of Stay in Secure Custody
Prior to Transfer to Non-Secure

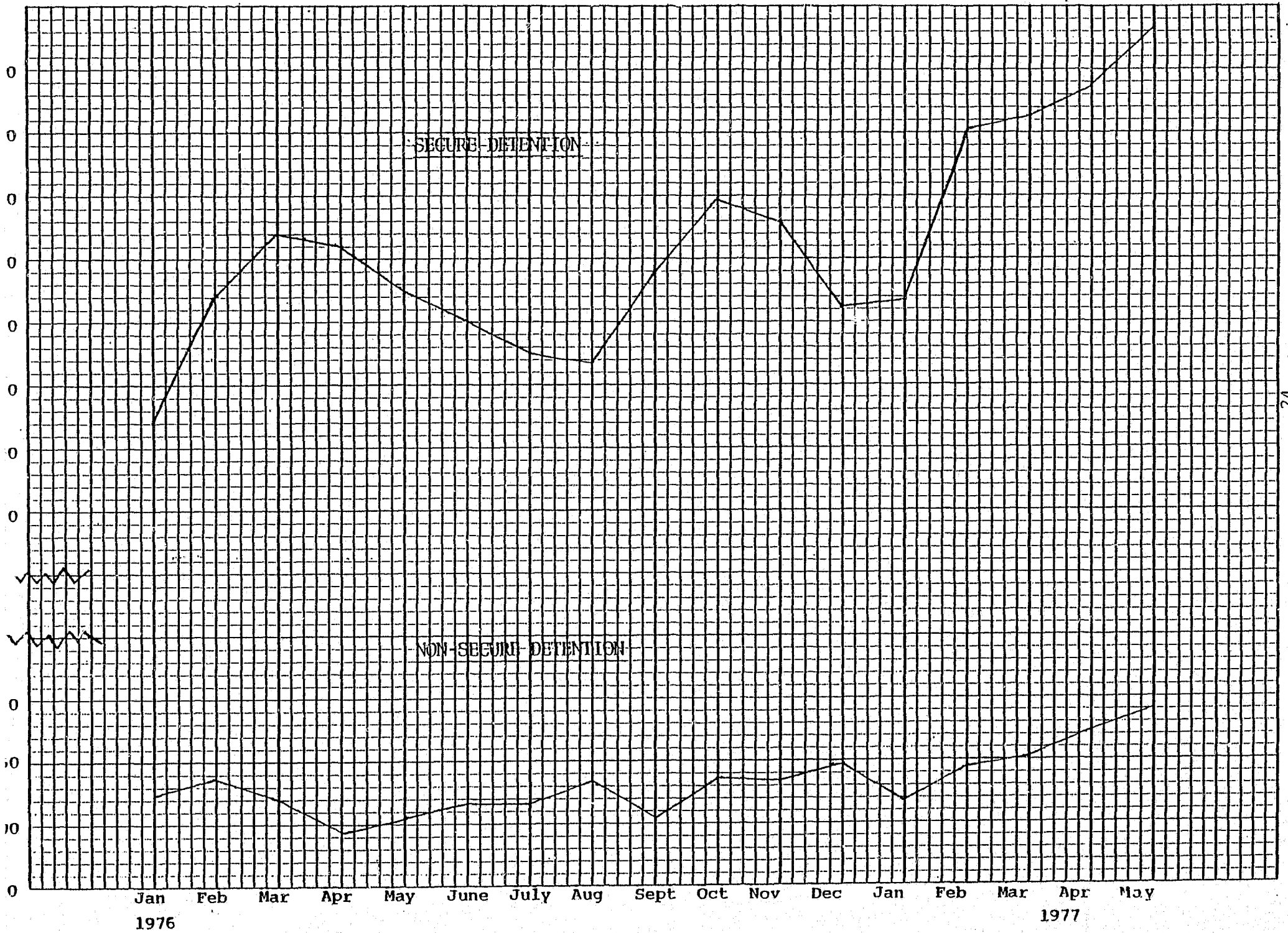
<u>Time Spent in Secure Prior to Transfer to Non-Secure</u> Days	<u>N (%)</u>	<u>Secure Detention *Cost per Case</u>	+	<u>Non-Secure Detention Cost per Case</u>	=	<u>Total Cost Per Case</u>
0 - 2	309(31.2%)	\$ 27.14		\$ 190.94		\$ 218.08
3 - 4	146(14.7%)	\$ 93.47		\$ 195.66		\$ 289.13
5 - 7	174(17.5%)	\$164.19		\$ 174.25		\$ 338.44
8 - 14	215(21.7%)	\$291.92		\$ 132.20		\$ 424.12
15 - 21	80(8.0%)	\$472.55		\$ 111.45		\$ 584.00
21 +	69(6.9%)	\$834.36		\$ 151.52		\$ 985.88

TABLE 23

Proportion of Cost Broken Down by Length of Stay in Secure Custody
Prior to Transfer to Non-Secure

<u>Time Spent in Secure Prior to Transfer to Non-Secure</u> Days	<u>N (%)</u>	<u>Total Detention Cost per Case (Secure & Non-Secure)</u>	<u>N X (Total Cost per Case)</u>	<u>Percent of Total Cost</u>
0 - 2	309(31.2%)	\$ 218.08	\$ 67,387	17.8%
3 - 4	146(14.7%)	\$ 289.13	\$ 42,213	11.2%
5 - 7	174(17.5%)	\$ 338.44	\$ 58,889	15.7%
8 - 14	215(21.7%)	\$ 424.12	\$ 91,186	24.3%
15 - 21	80(8.0%)	\$ 584.00	\$ 46,720	12.8%
21+	69(6.9%)	\$ 985.88	\$ 68,026	18.2%
	993(100.0%)		\$374,421	100.0%

Figure 3
 Detention Average Daily Population by Month³²
 January 1976 - May 1977





While the non-secure detention program has experienced some growth and is currently operating at near capacity, it is obvious that secure detention populations have greatly increased. This increase is particularly notable in view of significant factors which should have been bringing detention populations down.

The revision of Chapter 39 of the Florida Statutes, effective July 1, 1975, changed the definition of dependent and delinquent children, thus restricting the use of detention to delinquent children and those twice previously adjudicated ungovernable. Therefore, status offenders (runaways, truants and ungovernables) should not be placed in detention unless they have also been charged with a delinquent offense or have twice previously been adjudicated ungovernable. Data from the Detention Screening Form for six months (August 1976 - January 1977) indicate that 4.0 percent of detainees are listed as status offenders. Less than one half of one percent were truants and ungovernables, with runaways constituting 3.7 percent of all detained children. Examination of the individual records of these cases showed most of them to have also been charged with minor delinquent offenses. In any event, status offenders now comprise a very small number of detention admissions. Prior to July, 1975, approximately half of all admissions and a third of average daily detention populations were comprised of status offenders. Their exclusion from the system might have been expected to occasion a drop in detentions, as would the decrease in delinquency referrals which has been occurring. For example, total delinquency referrals for October-December 1976 were down 6.1 percent from the same period in 1975. Detention admissions were, however, 8.2 percent higher for the last quarter of 1976. As illustrated in Figure 3, detention populations have escalated to levels far above any previous experience. There have obviously been significant changes in juvenile detention practices in Florida.

The following are factors which have been identified as having an impact on the increase in detention populations:

1. The single intake system is not functioning as smoothly as anticipated.
2. The detention auditor program is not having the same impact that it previously had.
3. The court is having a significant impact on populations by utilizing court orders that have questionable legality:
 - a. the detention of dependent children through contempt citations;
 - b. the automatic detention of probation violators through contempt citations;
 - c. the detention of children on probation who are suspended from school for the duration of the suspension;
 - d. the sentencing of children to detention;
 - e. detaining children for specific time periods for contempt of court, including traffic;

- f. standing court orders which require the detention of a child that:
- 1) resists arrest with violence,
 - 2) violates the rules of county programs,
 - 3) violates the rules of foster home programs.
4. The proximity of the districts to the communities is placing pressure on intake to detain more children.
 5. State's Attorneys are filing petitions on a higher percentage of children, which is filling up the court dockets and making it more difficult for a child in detention to get an expedient hearing.
 6. The non-secure program is not functioning at the same capacity as it previously had in some districts.
 7. The CETA non-secure program is phasing down in some districts.
 8. The juvenile court is taking a more adversary posture which is resulting in more continuations and longer processing time.
 9. It is taking longer to place a child after commitment, which increases stays in detention.

Escapes from Secure Detention

In January, 1977, a telephone survey of all programs was conducted to determine the number of children who had escaped from secure detention facilities during a six month period of July through December, 1976. A total of 83 escapes were reported for the period, as shown in Table 24. This represents 0.71 percent of the 11,620 children admitted to secure facilities during the six-month period. With this escape rate of less than one percent, secure detention facilities obviously are doing an effective job of retaining children placed in their custody.

TABLE 24

DETENTION ADMISSIONS AND ESCAPES FROM SECURE FACILITIES

July 1 - December 31, 1976

<u>District</u>	<u>Facility</u>	<u>Secure Detention Admissions</u>	<u>Number Escaped</u>	<u>Escape Rate (% of Admissions)</u>
I	Escambia	645	3	0.47
II	Bay	291	0	0.00
	Leon	327	0	0.00
III	Alachua	265	5	1.89
	Lake	217	2	0.92
	Marion	266	12	4.51
IV	Duval	1,411	3	0.21
	Volusia	464	2	0.43
V	Pinellas	1,105	0	0.00
VI	Hillsborough	1,056	26	2.46
	Manatee	236	4	1.69
VII	Brevard	626	0	0.00
	Orlando	1,363	10	0.73
	Seminole	282	0	0.00
VIII	Lee	517	0	0.00
	Polk	831	0	0.00
	Sarasota	176	0	0.00
IX	St. Lucie	302	4	1.32
	West Palm Beach	734	2	0.27
X	Broward	964	1	0.10
XI	Dade	1,539	9	0.58
	Monroe	111	0	0.00
	TOTAL	13,728*	83	
	Total Admissions	11,620		0.71

* This number is higher than the statewide total of 11,620 secure detention admissions since the population at risk for a given facility includes cases admitted elsewhere and transferred to that facility.

Conclusions

We have seen that law enforcement agencies are the main source of detainees, who are held by Intake on its own authority. The most frequently cited reasons for detention are the protection of the person or property of others or of the child himself and to secure the child's presence at his next court hearing. The children most likely to be detained are those charged with serious felonies, escape, probation violation or those brought in under court orders. Older children are more likely to be detained, except those still in school who have attained the tenth grade or higher. Children with jobs are much less likely to be detained than those who are not employed.

Once detained, younger children are more likely to be admitted to a non-secure program. Females have a slightly lower probability of admission to non-secure custody. A positive trend in the proportion of resident days spent in the non-secure program is evident, an increase from 13.5 percent during the last half of 1974 to 22.7 percent for the last half of 1976..

A main point of concern is that in spite of the availability of non-secure placements the populations in secure detention have not decreased. Secure detention populations are, in fact, higher than they were a year ago, even though Intake referral rates and juvenile arrests have fallen. Every additional day a child spends in secure detention when he could be in a non-secure program represents a loss of \$16.43. It is recommended that ways be developed to facilitate earlier transfers into non-secure programs, not only for the inherent cost savings, but for the benefit of the children involved as well.

The curious rise in the proportion of referrals being detained is obviously a significant factor in the escalation of detention populations. This seems to indicate a shift in Intake detention screening practices, with some children being inappropriately detained. While many variables are involved, the availability of additional detention placements in the non-secure program may be a factor.



APPENDIX

<u>Days</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Average Length of Stay in Secure Days</u>	<u>Secure ALS X \$27.41</u>	<u>Average Length of Stay in Non-Secure Days</u>	<u>Non-Secure ALS X \$10.98</u>	<u>Total Detention Cost (Sec. & Non-Sec.)</u>
0 - 2	309	.99	\$ 27.14	17.39	\$ 190.94	\$ 218.08
3 - 4	146	3.41	\$ 93.47	17.82	\$ 195.66	\$ 289.13
5 - 7	174	5.99	\$164.19	15.87	\$ 174.25	\$ 338.44
8 - 14	215	10.65	\$291.92	12.04	\$ 132.20	\$ 424.12
15 - 21	80	17.24	\$472.55	10.15	\$ 111.45	\$ 584.00
21+	69	30.44	\$834.36	13.80	\$ 151.52	\$ 985.88

FOOTNOTES

1. Caseload Management Review data, January - October, 1976.
2. Detention Population Analysis Reports, July 1974 - May 1977.
3. Intake Recapitulation Reports, July 1975 - December 1976.
4. Detention Screening Form data, August - December 1976. Figures are based on 10,048 cases reported screened for detention and 7,662 cases reported detained. A Detention Screening Form is to be completed on each child physically delivered to Intake for a decision on whether or not the child is to be detained. Additional information is added in cases where the child is actually detained.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Intake Statistical Card data, July - December 1976. A statistical card is completed by Intake on the disposition of every delinquency referral, whether or not the child is screened or detained.
8. Detention Screening Form, op. cit.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.

Statistical tests were not utilized on these data since a large sample virtually assures that statistical significance will be obtained even for differences which are trivial from the standpoint of theoretical or practical significance. See the discussion of this point in Hubert Blalock, Social Statistics (1960), pgs. 225-228.

13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. Detention Population Analysis, op. cit.

23. Detention Screening Form, op. cit.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Detention Population Analysis, op. cit.
28. Ibid.
29. Detention Screening Form, op. cit.
30. Intake Statistical Card data, December 1975 - May 1976.
31. Youth Services Budget Request for FY 1977-78.
32. Detention Population Analysis, op. cit.

END