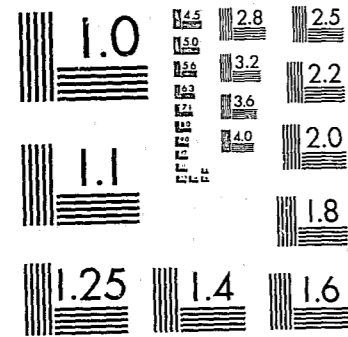


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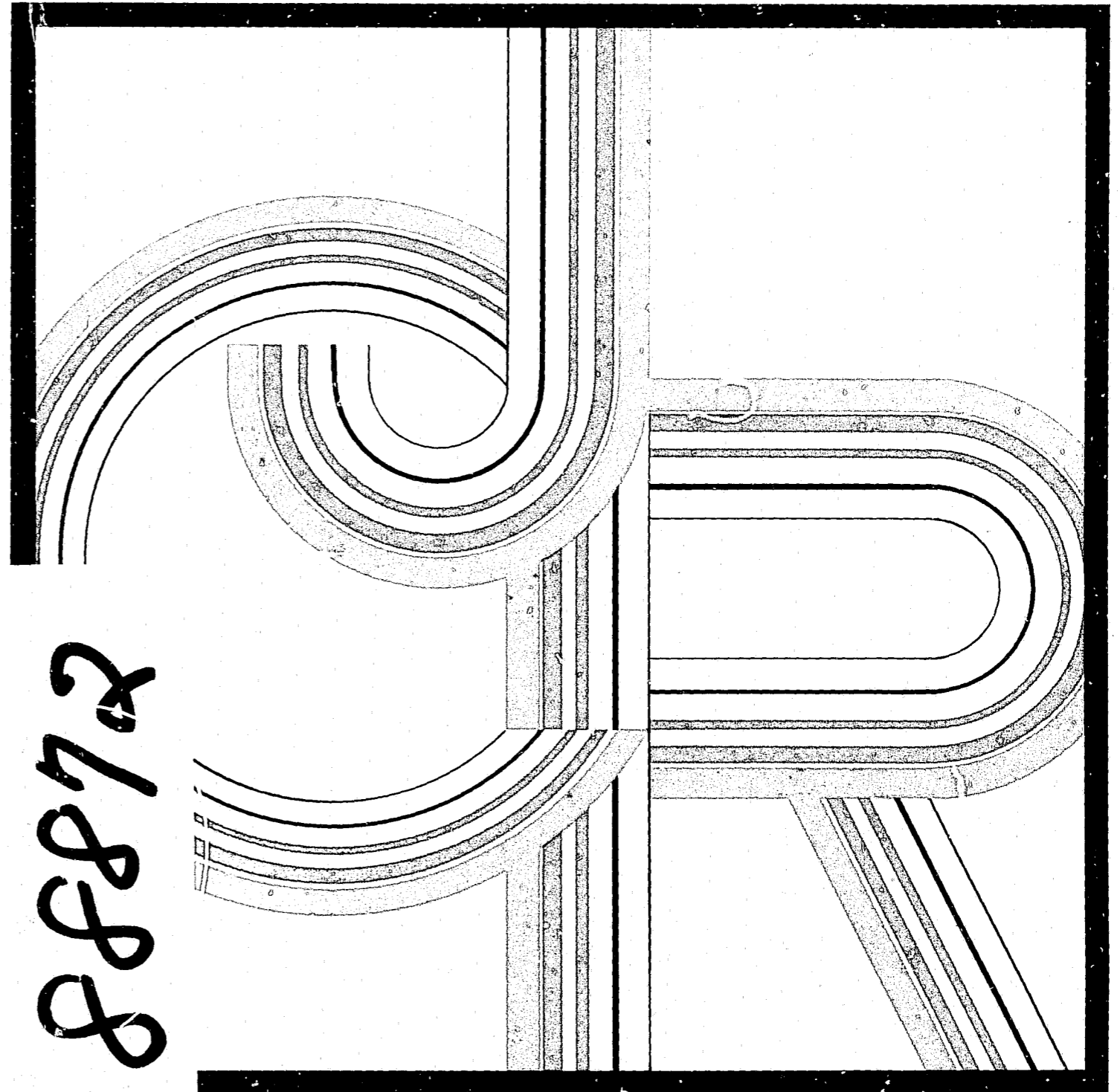
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Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice



Juvenile Cases Processed by County Courts

# JUVENILE COURT REPORT—1981



88872

Juvenile Cases Processed by County Courts

**JUVENILE COURT REPORT—1981**

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# Introduction

The Juvenile Court Report presents data collected during calendar year 1981 through the Juvenile Court Reporting (JCR) System concerning young people who were processed by courts with juvenile jurisdiction in the State of Nebraska. These include 90 county courts and the three separate juvenile courts of Douglas, Lancaster and Sarpy Counties.

The JCR system was instituted in 1971 by the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (hereafter referred to as the Commission). The system is based on the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Juvenile Court Statistics Series begun in 1927. In 1973 this system was assumed by the National Center for Juvenile Justice under a grant from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), the parent agency of this Commission. The Center compiles national statistics on juvenile delinquency based on state reporting systems such as the one in Nebraska.

In Nebraska, the Commission uses data obtained through the JCR system as a basis for its function of juvenile justice planning. The system also proves to be a valuable source of information for any private or public agency, or individual dealing with juvenile delinquency or related problems. Readers are reminded that upon request to the Commission, specific information collected through the JCR system can be provided. While this report presents a large amount of data describing the characteristics of youth who enter the Nebraska court system, the report does not interpret the information beyond words of caution in the uses of the data.

The many associate county judges, court clerks, probation officers, and other court personnel deserve recognition for their time and effort involved in reporting consistently. Without their cooperation, this publication would not be possible.

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# Juvenile Court Reporting System

One of the primary purposes of this publication is to provide information that accurately reflects the level of juvenile crime occurring in the State of Nebraska. In this report, the particular measure used to estimate the degree of juvenile crime is the flow of juveniles through the Nebraska Court System (see Figure 1). The sources of the data are the three separate juvenile courts of Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties and the county courts in the remaining 90 counties. The district courts of Nebraska do not report to the Commission nor do the municipal courts in Omaha and Lincoln. District court cases usually involve older juveniles appearing for serious offenses and the number of such cases is small compared to the volume of cases handled in county courts. The Commission does not collect data on traffic offenses which comprise the bulk of juvenile referrals to municipal court along with violations of ordinances.

The 93 courts report cases disposed of to the Commission monthly. For each individual juvenile disposition, the court fills out a Juvenile Court Statistical Form shown in Figure 2. The following sections of the form are required information on all cases: A. Court Code, E. Age at Time of Referral, F. Sex, G. Ethnic Group, H. Date of Referral, L. Reason Referred, M. Manner

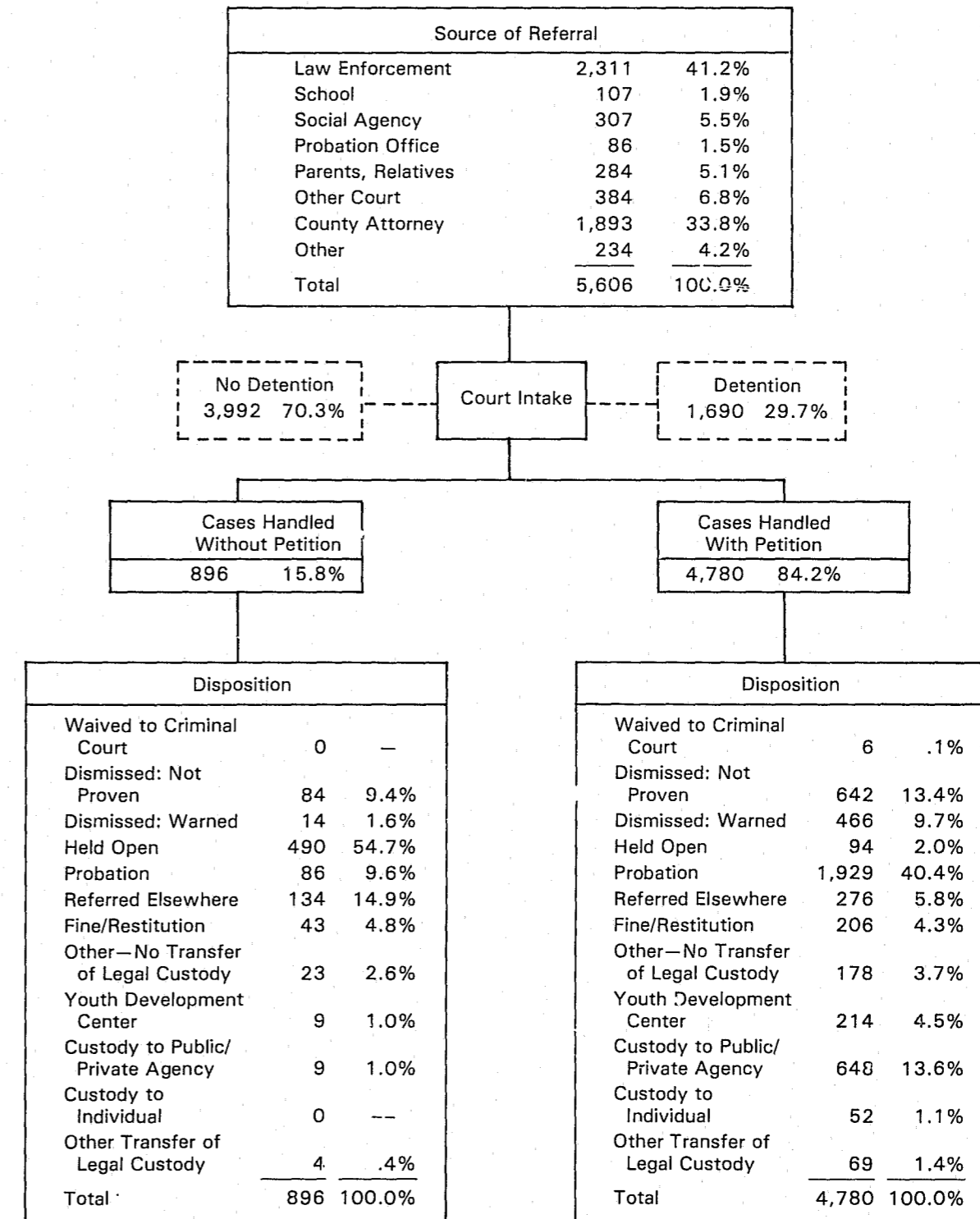
of Handling, N. Date of Disposition, and O. Disposition. The remainder of the form is optional information, however, the courts are encouraged to include as much of the information as they possibly can. In the tables contained in this report, references to missing data mean that not all counties completed the section(s) of the form being discussed.

A *Juvenile Court Statistical Form Instruction Manual*, which is intended to explain how to complete the JCS Form, is available to assist persons responsible for completing the form.

At this time, the Commission has juvenile court data from all counties from 1974 through 1981 and some partial data from 1973.

It is important to note that the information contained in this report pertains to **dispositions** of juvenile cases by county and separate juvenile courts during calendar year 1981. The case may have been referred to the court during 1981 or previously. Thus, an accurate count of the number of referrals during a given period is not possible because a JCS Form is not received until a final disposition in the case has been determined.

Figure 1  
Juvenile Court Reporting Program Flow Diagram, 1981\*



\* Does not include cases with missing data in respective categories.

Figure 2

Juvenile Court Statistical Form

**A. County** \_\_\_\_\_ **Court Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Child's Number** \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Census tract of residence (Douglas County only)** \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Date of birth** \_\_\_\_\_

**E. Age at time of referral** \_\_\_\_\_

**F. Sex** 1 Male 2 Female \_\_\_\_\_

**G. Ethnic Group**  
 1 White 4 Mexican-American  
 2 Black 5 Oriental  
 3 Indian 6 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**H. Date of Referral** \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Referred By**  
 1 Law enforcement agency  
 2 School  
 3 Social agency  
 4 Probation officer  
 5 Parents or relatives  
 6 Other court  
 7 County Attorney  
 8 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**J. Prior court referrals**  
 This calendar year \_\_\_\_\_  
 In prior years \_\_\_\_\_

**K. Care pending disposition**  
 0. No detention or shelter care overnight  
 Detention or shelter care overnight or longer in:  
 1. Jail or police station with separate facilities  
 2. Jail or police station with no separate facilities  
 3. Detention home  
 4. Foster or group home  
 5. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**L. Reason Referred (Enter only one code)**

Offenses applicable to both juveniles and adults (excluding traffic)	
01 Murder	15 Theft; value over \$300 but less than \$1,000
02 Manslaughter	16 Theft; value less than \$300
03 Assault; 1st & 2nd degree	17 Theft; value less than \$100
04 Assault; 3rd degree	18 Criminal Mischief; Felony
05 Sexual Assault; 1st degree	19 Criminal Mischief; Misdemeanor
06 Sexual Assault; 2nd degree	20 Criminal Trespass
07 Robbery	21 Forgery; Felony
08 Violation of Drug Laws; Felony	22 Forgery; Misdemeanor
09 Violation of Drug Laws; Misdemeanor	23 Weapons Offenses; Felony
10 Arson; Felony	24 Weapons Offenses; Misdemeanor
11 Arson; Misdemeanor	25 Driving While Intoxicated; 3rd offense
12 Burglary	26 Disturbing the Peace
13 Unauthorized Use of a Propelled Vehicle	27 Other Felony
14 Theft; value over \$1,000	28 Other Misdemeanor
Offenses applicable only to juveniles (excluding traffic)	
31. Running away	34. Ungovernable behavior
32. Truancy	35. Possessing or drinking liquor
33. Violation of curfew	39. Other
Nonoffenses	
51. Neglect	52. Dependent

**M. Manner of handling**  
 1 Without petition  
 2 With petition \_\_\_\_\_

**N. Date of disposition** \_\_\_\_\_

**O. Disposition (Enter only one code)**  
 00 Waived to criminal court; Complaint not substantiated  
 01 Dismissed; Not proved or found not involved  
 Complaint substantiated  
 No transfer of legal custody  
 11 Dismissed; Warned, counseled  
 12 Hold open without further action  
 13 Formal probation  
 14 Referred to another agency or individual for service or supervision  
 15 Runaway returned  
 16 Fine or restitution  
 17 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Transfer of legal custody to:  
 21 Youth Development Center - Kearney or Geneva  
 22 Public agency or department (including court or jail)  
 23 Private agency or institution (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 24 Individual (Specify relationship) \_\_\_\_\_  
 29 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**P. Diagnostic Services**

	NEED FOR DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES			
	Indicated and provided	Indicated but not available	Not Indicated	
Psychological	1	2	3	_____
Psychiatric	1	2	3	_____
Medical	1	2	3	_____
Social	1	2	3	_____

**Q. School attainment** Grade completed (00-12) \_\_\_\_\_

**R. Employment and school status**

	Out of School		In School	
	1	2	3	4
Not employed	1	2	3	4
Employed	5	6	7	8
Full time	9	10	11	12
Part time	13	14	15	16
Preschool	17	18	19	20

**S. Length of residence of child in county**  
 0 Not currently a resident  
 1 Under one year  
 2 One year or more \_\_\_\_\_

**T. Living arrangement of child in home with**

01 Both parents  
 02 Mother and stepfather  
 03 Father and stepmother  
 04 Mother only  
 05 Father only  
 Outside own home with  
 06 Relatives  
 07 Foster or group home  
 08 Institution  
 09 Independent arrangement  
 10 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 11 Unknown

**U. Marital status of natural parents**  
 01 Parents married and living together  
 One or both parents dead  
 02 Both dead  
 03 Father dead  
 04 Mother dead  
 Parents separated  
 05 Divorced or legally separated  
 06 Father deserted mother  
 07 Mother deserted father  
 08 Other reason (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 09 Parents not married to each other  
 10 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 11 Unknown

**V. Combined family annual income**  
 1. Receiving public assistance  
 Not receiving public assistance  
 2. Under \$5,000  
 3. \$5,000 to \$9,999  
 4. \$10,000 to \$24,999  
 5. \$25,000 and over  
 6. Unknown \_\_\_\_\_

**W. Counsel**  
 1. Court appointed  
 2. Retained  
 3. Public defender  
 4. Not represented  
 5. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**X. Occupation of primary parent or guardian**

01 Professional or technical  
 02 Managerial or administrative  
 03 Farmer or rancher  
 04 Sales worker  
 05 Craftsman or other skilled laborer  
 06 Clerical  
 07 Service workers or other unskilled laborers  
 08 Unemployed  
 09 Unknown \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDITIONAL SPACE FOR COURT USE**

5000 (10/80)

Referrals

A juvenile may come under the jurisdiction of a juvenile court or a county court sitting as a juvenile court in Nebraska if it is determined that he or she is described in Sections 43-202(1) through 43-202(6) of the Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, 1943. For purposes of the Juvenile Court Reporting Program, the following sections are applicable:

- "(1) . . . any child under the age of eighteen years, who is homeless or destitute, or without proper support through no fault of his parent, guardian, or custodian;
- "(2) . . . any child under the age of eighteen years (a) who is abandoned by his parent, guardian, or custodian; (b) who lacks proper parental care by reason of the faults or habits of his parent, guardian, or custodian neglects or refuses to provide proper or necessary subsistence, education, or other care necessary for the health, morals, or well-being of such child; (d) whose parent, guardian, or custodian neglects or refuses to provide special care made necessary by the mental condition of the child; or (e) who is in a situation or engages in an occupation dangerous to life or limb or injurious to the health or morals of such child;
- "(3) (a) . . . any child under the age of sixteen years at the time he has violated any law of the state or any city or village ordinance amounting to an offense other than a felony, traffic offense, or parking violation; (b) . . . any child under the age of eighteen years at the time he has violated any law of the state constituting a felony; and (c) . . . any child sixteen or seventeen years of age at the time he has (i) violated a state law or any city or village ordinance amounting to an offense other than a felony or parking violation, and (ii) . . . any child under sixteen years of age at the time he has committed a traffic offense;
- "(4) . . . any child under the age of eighteen years (a) who, by reason of being wayward or habitually disobedient, is uncontrolled by his parent, guardian or custodian; (b) who is habitually truant from school or home; or (c) who departs himself so as to injure or endanger seriously the morals or health of himself or others;"

For purposes of this report, referrals to juvenile court are classified into three categories: major offenses, minor offenses, and neglect/dependent cases. Major Offense referrals are coded on the Juvenile Court Statistical Form (see Figure 2) under section L. as responses 01 through 28. The major offense referrals are typically regarded as "delinquency" offenses. Minor offense referrals are coded in categories 31 through 39.

Minor offenses are often referred to as "status" offenses and represent offenses applicable only to individuals under 18 years of age. Neglect/dependent referrals are coded as 51 or 52. "Neglect" refers to juveniles described in Section 43-202(2), while "Dependent" refers to juveniles described in Section 43-202(1), Nebraska R.R.S., 1943; the usage of these terms was retained in the JCR Program after the definitions of "Neglect" and "Dependent" were removed from the juvenile code in 1978.

Non-felony motor vehicle-related offense or infraction data are not collected in the JCR Program or presented in this report.

After a case comes to the court's attention, a decision is made whether to handle the case unofficially (without petition) or officially (with petition). Most cases handled without petition are generally disposed of by the court intake staff by one of several options. Many of these options are the same as those for cases handled with petition. If it is decided to file a petition (similar to a "complaint" in an adult case) with the clerk of the court, the procedure is most often performed by the County Attorney. After a petition is filed, a hearing is conducted for the juvenile by a judge; no jury is present. The hearing proceeds in an informal manner, applying the rules of evidence used by district courts in civil trials without a jury. The judge will decide the case with one of many disposition options.

There were 5,682 juvenile court referrals reported to the Commission in the Juvenile Court Reporting Program which reached final disposition in 1981. Of these, 4,781 (84.2%) were handled with petition, while 899 (15.8%) were handled without petition. Referrals for major offense categories accounted for 60.5% or 3,439 of the total number of cases. Minor offense referrals comprised 27.2% and 1,545 of the total, while 698 neglect/dependent cases (12.3% of the total) were reported. Breakdowns of the reasons for referral are given in Tables 1, 2, and 3 for major, minor, and neglect/dependent cases, respectively.

The fact that major offense referrals are more than twice the frequency of minor offense referrals does not necessarily indicate that this ratio exists in the juvenile population. The major offenses are usually considered more serious since they are infractions of state or local laws while the minor offenses are offenses only because of juvenile status. Major and minor offenders are therefore most likely to be treated differently before the court stage is ever reached. Many minor offenders are handled directly by the police or diverted to various social agencies and programs and may never appear in juvenile court.



Theft under \$100, burglary, and misdemeanor criminal mischief, respectively, were the three largest major offense referral categories. Theft under \$100 alone

represented about 1 in 6 major offense referrals, while the three categories combined represented 30% of all major offense referrals.

**Table 1**  
**Major Offense Frequencies, 1981**

Offense Type	Frequency	Percent of Total
Murder	0	-
Manslaughter	3	.1
Assault 1 and 2	16	.5
Assault 3	182	5.3
Sex Assault 1	7	.2
Sex Assault 2	21	.6
Robbery	38	1.1
Drug Laws (Felony)	30	.9
Drug Laws (Misdemeanor)	140	4.0
Arson (Felony)	5	.1
Arson (Misdemeanor)	10	.3
Burglary	388	11.3
Unauthorized Use of Vehicle	136	4.0
Theft over \$1,000	57	1.6
Theft: Value over \$300, less than \$1,000	143	4.2
Theft under \$300	197	5.7
Theft under \$100	983	28.6
Criminal Mischief (Felony)	40	1.2
Criminal Mischief (Misdemeanor)	348	10.1
Trespassing	170	4.9
Forgery (Felony)	12	.4
Forgery (Misdemeanor)	53	1.5
Weapons Laws (Felony)	2	.1
Weapons Laws (Misdemeanor)	21	.6
Driving While Intoxicated (3rd Offense)	15	.4
Disturbing the Peace	57	1.7
Other Felony	46	1.3
Other Misdemeanor	319	9.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,439</b>	<b>100.0</b>

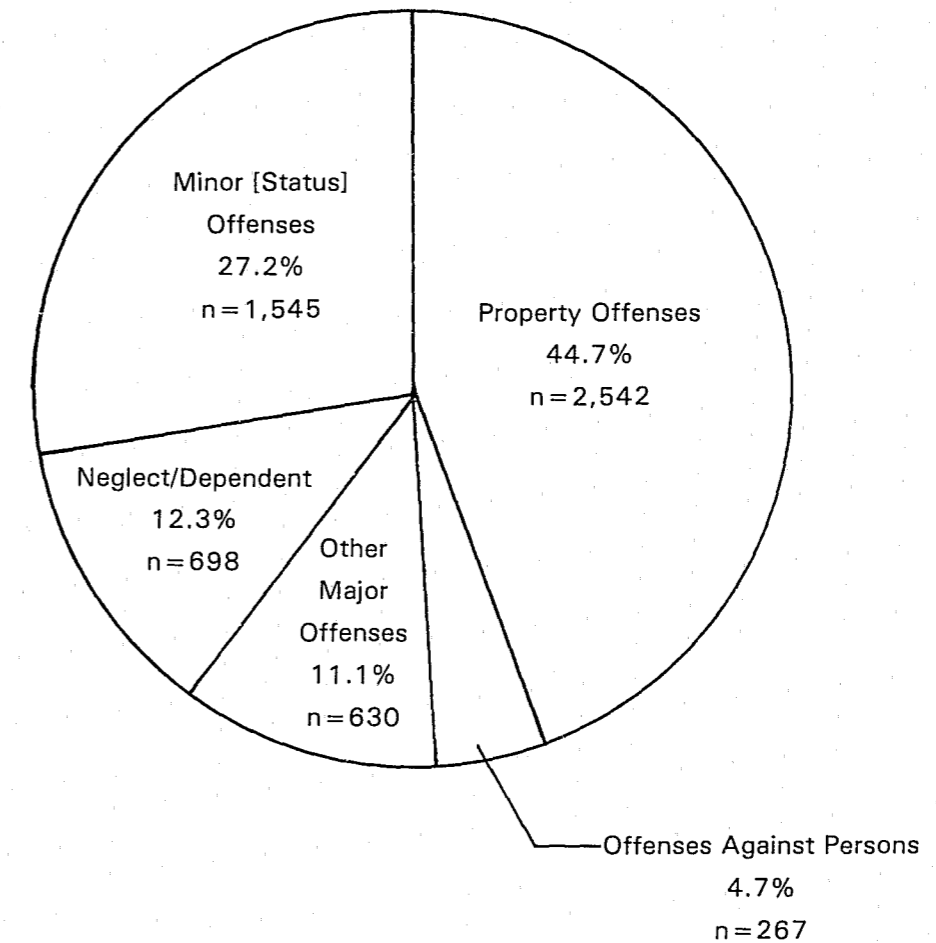
**Table 2**  
**Minor [Status] Offense Frequencies, 1981**

Offense Type	Frequency	Percent of Total
Running Away	110	7.1
Truancy	184	11.9
Curfew Violation	52	3.4
Ungovernable Behavior	409	26.5
Possessing or Drinking Liquor	609	39.4
Other	181	11.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,545</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3**  
**Neglect/Dependent Frequencies, 1981**

	Frequency	Percent of Total
Neglect	508	72.8
Dependent	190	27.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>100.0</b>

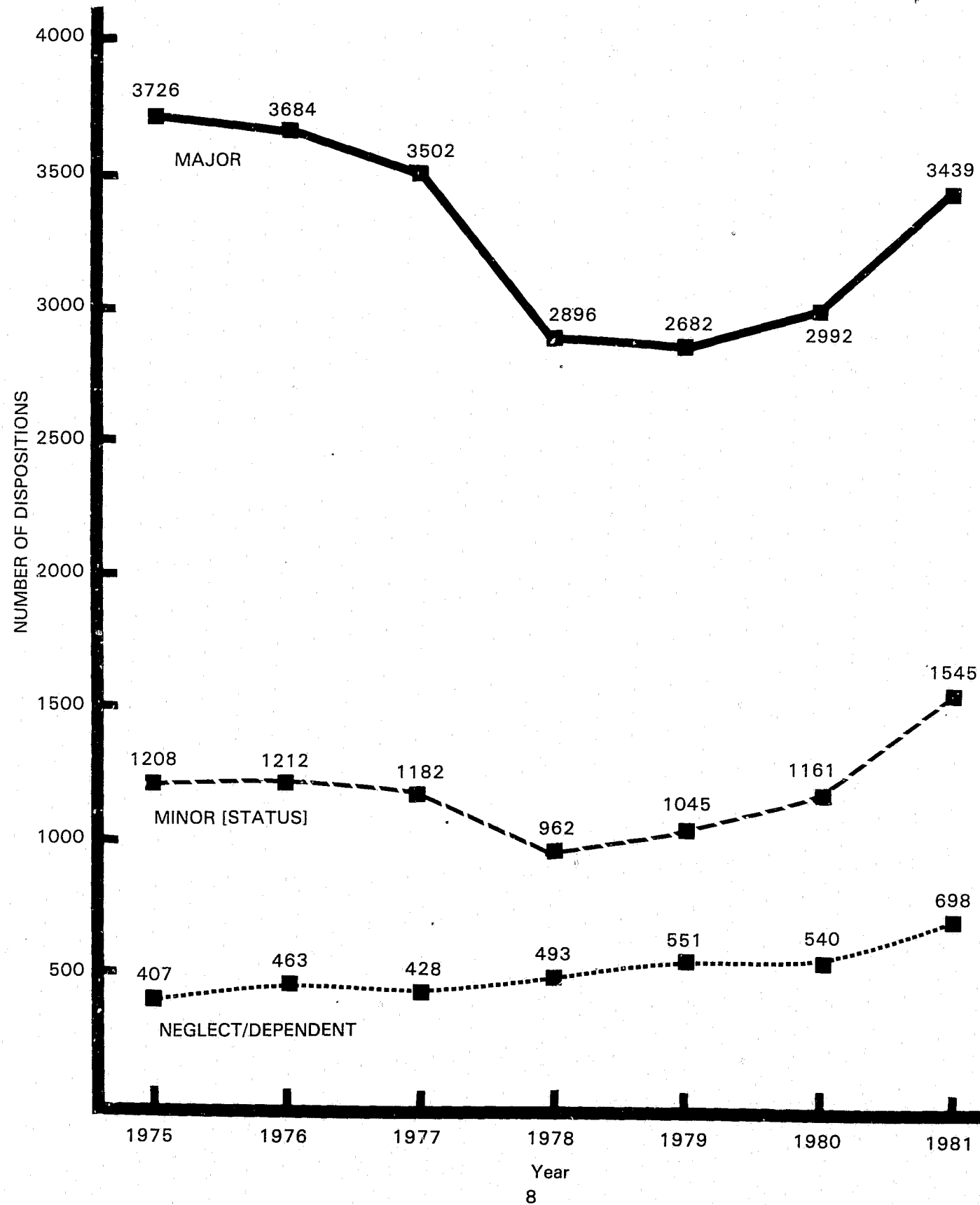
**Figure 3**  
**Referral Proportions, 1981**



**Table 4**  
**Reason Referred, 1981**

Reason Referred	Frequency	Percent of Total	Percent of Major
<b>Total Major Offenses</b>	<b>3,439</b>	<b>60.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>
a. Offenses Against Persons	267	4.7	7.8
b. Property Offenses	2,542	44.7	73.9
c. Other Major Offenses	630	11.1	18.3
<b>Minor [Status] Offenses</b>	<b>1,545</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>--</b>
Neglect/Dependent	698	12.3	--
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,682</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>--</b>

**Figure 4**  
**Juvenile Court Dispositions, 1975-1981**

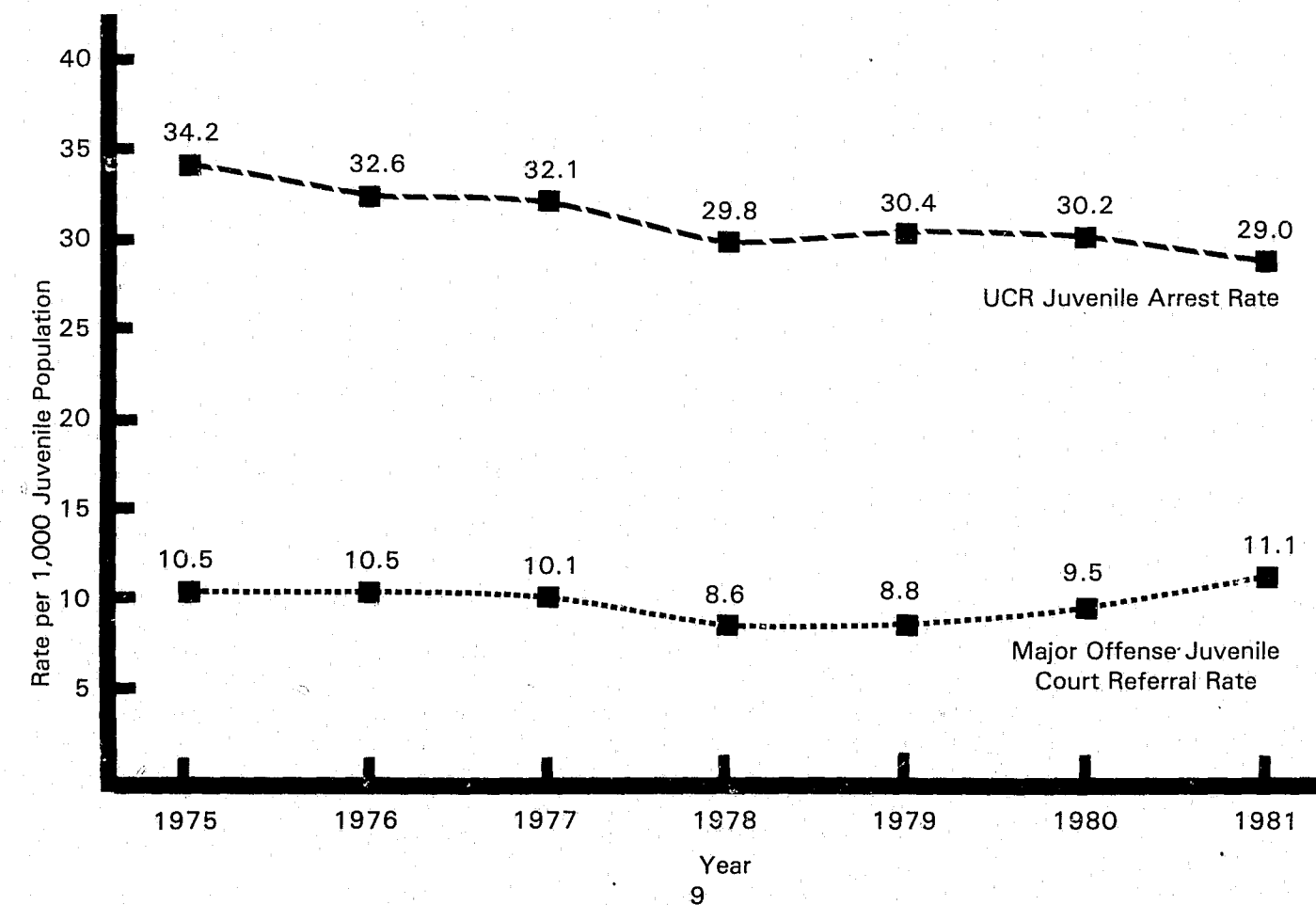


**Table 5**  
**Major Offense Court Referrals,**  
**UCR Juvenile Arrests (Non-Status Offenses),**  
**School-Age Juvenile Population Estimates, 1975-1981**

	1975	1976	% Change	1977	% Change	1978	% Change	1979	% Change	1980	% Change	1981	% Change
Major Offense Court Referrals	3,725	3,684	-1.1	3,502	-4.9	2,896	-17.3	2,862	-1.2	2,992	+4.5	3,439	+14.9
UCR Juvenile Arrests (Non-Status)	12,179	11,460	-5.9	11,072	-3.4	9,997	-9.7	9,854	-1.4	9,530	-3.3	9,015	-5.4
School-Age Juvenile Population Estimate*	356,438	351,828	-1.3	345,280	-1.9	335,318	-2.9	324,614	-3.2	315,755	-2.7	310,513	-1.6

\*See text

**Figure 5**  
**Comparison of Rates for Major Court Referrals and UCR Juvenile Arrests, 1975-1981**





The category of major offenses may be subdivided into smaller categories of offenses against persons and offenses against property (see Table 4). Offenses against persons, which included murder, manslaughter, assault, sexual assault, and robbery, comprised about 8% of major offenses and 5% of all referrals. Offenses against property constituted the largest proportion of major and total offenses, representing 45% of all referrals and 74% of major referrals. Other major referrals which could not be categorized as offenses against persons or as offenses against property, such as Driving While Intoxicated (DWI), Disturbing the Peace, and drug violations, composed the remainder of major offense referrals (18%) and 11% of all referrals.

Major, minor, and neglect/dependent referral trends are illustrated in Figure 4, along with percentage changes for each year from 1976 to 1981. The positive change from 1979 to 1981 in the number of major offense referrals reversed a decreasing trend since 1975. One possible interpretation of this increase, however, is that more jurisdictions were reporting or that some jurisdiction(s) reported for cases that would not have been reported in the previous year.

The number of minor offense or "status" offense referrals continued with the same trend established from 1978. In fact, the 33% increase in minor offense referrals from 1980 to 1981 was the largest year-to-year change (in either direction) since 1974. The practice of diverting status offenders from juvenile court adjudication is not reflected in statewide totals for status offender referrals since 1978. Juvenile arrests for status offenses (see Appendix B) do not show a conclusive trend supporting the notion that more status offenders are being arrested and then appear in court. In addition, changes in absolute numbers with the relatively low frequencies involved are not likely to represent significant changes.

The number of neglect and dependent referrals to juvenile courts in Nebraska has remained relatively stable since 1976. The large percentage changes for some years mask the relatively small changes in the absolute number of neglect and dependent cases for a given year.

It should also be noted that these aggregate figures represent the State as a whole and tend to obscure changes that may have occurred over time in individual jurisdictions or groups of jurisdictions in the referral, intake, scheduling, and processing policies that are applied.

As will be explained in detail in another section of this report, all State total data are heavily weighted toward the juvenile courts of Douglas, Lancaster and Sarpy counties; about 50% of all dispositions were reported from these counties. This does not imply, however, that the data are unrepresentative of the State as a whole, but that about 43% of the State's estimated juvenile

population live in these counties. In addition, reporting jurisdictions represent nearly all of the State's total estimated juvenile population.

One source of further information concerning juvenile involvement in the criminal justice system is the Nebraska Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. Information collected in the UCR Program is based on reports submitted by law enforcement agencies in the State. State total UCR juvenile arrest data and State total major offense referral frequencies for the period from 1975 to 1981 are illustrated in Table 5. The UCR juvenile arrest totals presented include only **non-status** offenses in order to enable more accurate comparisons with the major offense court referrals. In addition, school age population estimates are presented which are based on Nebraska Department of Education enrollment totals for all elementary and secondary schools in the State. These enrollment totals constitute the only reliable estimate of the Nebraska population roughly between the ages of 5 and 17 which are available for all the years listed. It is assumed in presenting these population estimates that very few, if any, pre-school juveniles were arrested and that the estimates would have some error involving especially older juveniles who have dropped out of school. In fact, no juveniles under 5 years of age were referred to juvenile courts for major offenses; the youngest age group for UCR arrest information is that under 10.

The information presented in Table 5 suggests that, with few exceptions, UCR juvenile arrests and major offense court referrals are related. A major increase in the number of juvenile court dispositions from 1980 to 1981 probably represents an increase in the number of juvenile court referrals **reported** to the Commission rather than an increase in the number of referrals **processed** by courts. In the years between 1976 and 1980 a steady decline occurred in the number of juvenile arrests for non-status offenses as well as the number of juvenile court referrals for major offenses. However, in 1980 and 1981, the number of juvenile court referrals for major offenses increased over the previous year, while the number of juvenile arrests continued the declining trend. When the steady decrease in school age population (generally, the population at risk) is considered along with these facts, the data suggest that a real increase has occurred in major offense court referrals. Figure 5 depicts these relationships graphically and indicates the upturn in the rate of major offense referrals per 1,000 juvenile population and the corresponding decrease in UCR non-status offense juvenile arrests from 1979 to 1981.

Although the data suggest a relationship between the number of major offense juvenile court referrals and the number of arrests of juveniles for non-status offenses, only about one-half of major offense court referrals are received from law enforcement agencies in Nebraska. In

fact, of the 9,015 arrests of juveniles for non-status offenses in 1981, only about one-third of that number were referred to juvenile court for major (non-status) offense reasons and disposed of in 1981. For a number of reasons, this type of comparison must be made with caution, but it does indicate that a large proportion of juvenile arrests do not result in formal juvenile court proceedings. This may be due to immediate transfer of the case to county or district court, withdrawal of the complaint or petition, informal transfer of custody of the juvenile, or some other diversion procedure prior to intake processing by the court and submission of a Juvenile Court Statistical Form. Also, all data in this report refer to cases **disposed of** during calendar year 1981, and it is to be expected that a number of juvenile cases referred to court during 1981 would be carried

over into 1982 and would not be reflected in the 1981 totals.

Table 6 includes breakdowns on the sources of referrals to Nebraska juvenile courts for major, minor, and neglect/dependent cases. As previously discussed, the largest number of major offense referrals (54%) were from law enforcement agencies. Referrals from county attorneys comprised the next largest category (1,079 or 32%) of sources of referrals. These standings hold for status offenses also, where about 29% of referrals were from law enforcement agencies and approximately 33% were referred by the county attorney. Accordingly, the largest number of neglect/dependent referrals (45%) came from county attorneys with about 39% originating from social agencies. Law enforcement agencies referred only about 7% of all neglect/dependent cases.

Table 6  
Source of Court Referrals, 1981

Source of Referral	Major		Minor [Status]		Neglect/Dependent		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Law Enforcement	1,822	53.9	441	28.8	48	6.9	2,311	41.2
School	3	.1	99	6.5	5	.7	107	1.9
Social Agency	3	.1	33	2.2	271	38.9	307	5.5
Probation Office	7	.2	67	4.4	12	1.7	86	1.5
Parents, Relatives	10	.3	251	16.4	23	3.3	284	5.1
Other Court	304	9.0	68	4.4	12	1.7	384	6.8
County Attorney	1,079	31.9	498	32.5	316	45.4	1,893	33.8
Other	152	4.5	73	4.8	9	1.3	234	4.2
TOTAL*	3,380	100.0	1,530	100.0	696	99.9**	5,606	100.0

\* Does not include 76 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent total differs from 100 due to rounding error.

One measure of recidivism in juvenile involvement in the criminal justice system is the number of prior referrals to juvenile court for a given juvenile. For all juvenile cases disposed of during 1981, about 30% had been referred to court previously. The largest group of juveniles (15.9% of the total) had been referred to juvenile court once in the past. Table 7 presents detailed information on prior referrals for major and minor offense referrals and neglect/dependent cases. It should be noted that this information is based on records of a particular juvenile court jurisdiction for a given juvenile case and

may not accurately reflect referrals to court for the juvenile in question in **other** jurisdictions. Because of this, the data probably represent a conservative estimate with regard to prior court referrals. In addition, data on the **nature** of previous referrals is not collected and it is therefore not possible to identify repeat offenders for certain crimes or types of referrals. The information in Table 7 does indicate, however, that a significant number of juveniles have appeared previously in juvenile court for one reason or another. Specifically, 35% of juveniles referred for major offenses had been referred to

court in the past. For offenses against persons, about 37% had been previously referred to juvenile court, while of juveniles referred for property offenses, 34% had appeared for some reason in juvenile court before. The proportion of juveniles referred for status offenses or neglect/dependency who had been referred to court previously was much smaller than for the major offense categories. About 28% of juveniles referred for status offenses had appeared in court previously, while approximately 15% of neglect and dependent cases in 1981 involved prior referrals to juvenile court for some reason.

The data suggest that although the number of referrals for offenses against persons was relatively small (260 out of 5,391 total referrals), juveniles referred to court for this reason were more likely to have been referred to court previously than any other subgroup identified in Table 7. This could have occurred because juveniles committing personal crimes were more likely to be scheduled for formal court proceedings than other offenders and less likely to become involved in or referred to diversion programs.

**Table 7**  
**Total Prior Referrals by reason for Referral, 1981**

	Total Prior Referrals						Total
	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more	
Total Major Offenses	2,143	569	222	133	80	152	3,299
a. Offenses Against Persons	164	64	16	6	7	3	260
b. Offenses Against Property	1,595	396	176	95	58	102	2,422
c. Other Major Offenses	384	109	30	32	15	47	617
Minor [Status] Offenses	1,027	218	84	44	18	29	1,420
Neglect/Dependent	570	70	21	3	5	3	672
TOTAL*	3,740	857	327	180	103	184	5,391
% of Total	69.4	15.9	6.1	3.3	1.9	3.4	100.0

\*Does not include 291 cases with missing data.

## Dispositions

Information on juvenile court disposition activity is contained in Tables 8, 9, 10, and 11. Once a juvenile case has been referred to court, the hearing and adjudication process has taken place, and a final disposition is determined, the court submits a Juvenile Court Statistical Form to the Commission.

The disposition outcomes listed in Table 8 summarize the types of determinations which may be made in most juvenile cases. In general, there are three possible outcomes described on the form: the case may be waived to criminal court (about 1% of the total 1981 cases), it may be dismissed because of insufficient grounds (about 13% of the 1981 total), or a final disposition may be reached based on the substantiation of a complaint and/or petition (the remaining 86% of cases were in this category). If the court determines that there is evidence to substantiate the complaint and/or petition, a decision regarding legal custody of the juvenile may be reached. Of these cases, and across all reasons for referral, approximately 18% involved a transfer of legal custody of the juvenile to one of the Youth Development Centers, or some other agency or individual. The remaining 82% of juvenile cases which were not dismissed or waived to criminal court involved no transfer of legal custody, but rather the imposition of a sentence such as probation, restitution, or a fine.

Most juvenile cases referred to court for major offenses resulted in a disposition of formal probation (44.3%). This was also true for status offense referrals, of which 31.2% resulted in a disposition of formal probation. The largest number of neglect/dependent cases involved transfer of legal custody of the juvenile to a public agency (38.5%) followed by referral to another agency or individual with no transfer of legal custody (18.8%). It is interesting to note that approximately equal percentages of major, minor, and neglect/dependent cases were dismissed: generally between 18% and 25% of cases in these categories were dismissed.

Detailed processing times for juvenile court referrals are presented in Table 9, 10, and 11. About one-third (1,203) of major offense referrals were disposed of in 30 days or less, while approximately 45% of status offense referrals were disposed of in the same time period. Roughly 1 in 5 of neglect and dependent referrals were disposed of within 30 days of referral. For the 3,421 cases referred in major offense categories for which processing time data was available, the median time between date of referral and date of disposition was 43 days. Median times between referral and disposition for status offense and neglect/dependent referrals were 35 and 95 days, respectively. The data contained in Tables 9, 10, and 11 is illustrated in summary form in Figure 6.

**Table 8**  
**Juvenile Court Dispositions, 1981\***

Disposition	Major		Minor		Neglect/Dependent		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Waived to Criminal Court	4	.1	2	.1	0	--	6	.1
<i>Complaint Not Substantiated</i>								
Dismissed: Not Proven or found not involved	497	14.5	158	10.2	71	10.2	726	12.8
<i>Complaint Substantiated</i>								
<b>No Transfer of Legal Custody</b>								
Dismissed: warned, counseled	246	7.2	135	8.7	99	14.2	480	8.5
Hold open without further action	429	12.5	142	9.2	13	1.9	584	10.3
Formal probation	1,522	44.3	482	31.2	11	1.6	2,015	35.5
Referred to another agency or individual for service or supervision	151	4.4	128	8.3	131	18.8	410	7.2
Runaway returned	3	.1	14	.9	0	--	17	.3
Fine or restitution	111	3.2	138	8.9	0	--	249	4.4
Other	82	2.4	83	5.4	19	2.7	184	3.2
<b>Transfer of Legal Custody to:</b>								
Youth Development Center	208	6.1	15	1.0	0	--	223	3.9
Public Agency or Department	115	3.3	160	10.4	268	38.5	543	9.6
Private Agency or Institution	43	1.3	50	3.2	21	3.0	114	2.0
Individual	5	.1	13	.8	34	4.9	52	.9
Other	20	.6	23	1.5	30	4.3	73	1.3
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>3,436</b>	<b>100.0**</b>	<b>1,543</b>	<b>99.8**</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>100.1**</b>	<b>5,676</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Does not include 6 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

**Table 9**  
**Elapsed Time, in Days, Between Date of Referral and Date of Disposition for Major Offense Referrals, 1981\***

Reason Referred	Number of Cases for Elapsed Days: Referral to Disposition								TOTAL
	0	1-7	8-14	15-30	31-60	61-90	91-180	181+	
Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manslaughter	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	3
Assault: 1st and 2nd degree	0	0	0	4	7	2	2	1	16
Assault: 3rd degree	3	3	19	16	40	34	34	32	181
Sexual Assault: 1st degree	0	0	0	1	3	3	0	0	7
Sexual Assault: 2nd degree	0	0	1	0	5	7	6	2	21
Robbery	0	0	5	12	10	4	2	5	38
Violation of Drug Laws: Felony	1	2	1	2	10	5	5	4	30
Violation of Drug Laws: Misdemeanor	6	19	21	27	32	22	9	2	138
Arson: Felony	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	4
Arson: Misdemeanor	0	2	0	0	4	2	0	2	10
Burglary	6	20	32	40	136	71	45	38	388
Unauthorized Use of a Propelled Vehicle	3	9	13	27	52	11	13	7	135
Theft: Value Over \$1,000	0	2	8	7	13	11	10	6	57
Theft: Over \$300, Less \$1,000	5	7	7	12	34	20	43	15	143
Theft: \$100-\$300	8	21	9	30	56	25	31	16	196
Theft: Under \$100	25	70	85	178	274	140	130	73	975
Criminal Mischief: Felony	1	1	4	6	23	1	3	1	40
Criminal Mischief: Misdemeanor	5	42	23	61	91	42	59	25	348
Trespass	7	12	31	21	47	15	14	22	169
Forgery: Felony	1	1	0	3	4	0	2	1	12
Forgery: Misdemeanor	1	2	3	8	23	8	3	5	53
Weapons Offense: Felony	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Weapons Offense: Misdemeanor	0	0	4	3	8	3	2	1	21
Driving While Intoxicated: 3rd Offense	1	1	0	4	7	0	2	0	15
Disturbing the Peace	1	11	6	14	11	1	6	7	57
Other Misdemeanor	13	34	40	52	87	34	40	16	316
Other Felony	0	0	8	6	17	4	8	3	46
<b>TOTAL MAJOR*</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>995</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>3,421</b>
% of Total	2.5	7.6	9.4	15.7	29.1	13.7	13.7	8.3	100.0

\*Does not include 18 cases with missing data.

**Table 10**  
**Elapsed Time, in Days, Between Date of Referral**  
**and Date of Disposition for Minor [Status] Offense Referrals, 1981 \***

Reason Referred	Number of Cases for								TOTAL
	Elapsed Days: Referral to Disposition								
	0	1-7	8-14	15-30	31-60	61-90	91-180	181+	
Running Away	21	11	9	15	28	15	8	3	110
Truancy	3	10	12	26	36	29	23	41	180
Curfew Violation	1	2	2	14	15	10	2	3	49
Ungovernable Behavior	12	23	32	61	114	45	83	36	406
Possessing or Drinking Liquor	21	74	86	166	144	40	54	19	604
Other	21	6	22	34	36	26	14	21	180
<b>TOTAL MINOR*</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>1,529</b>
. % of Total	5.2	8.2	10.7	20.7	24.4	10.8	12.0	8.0	100.0

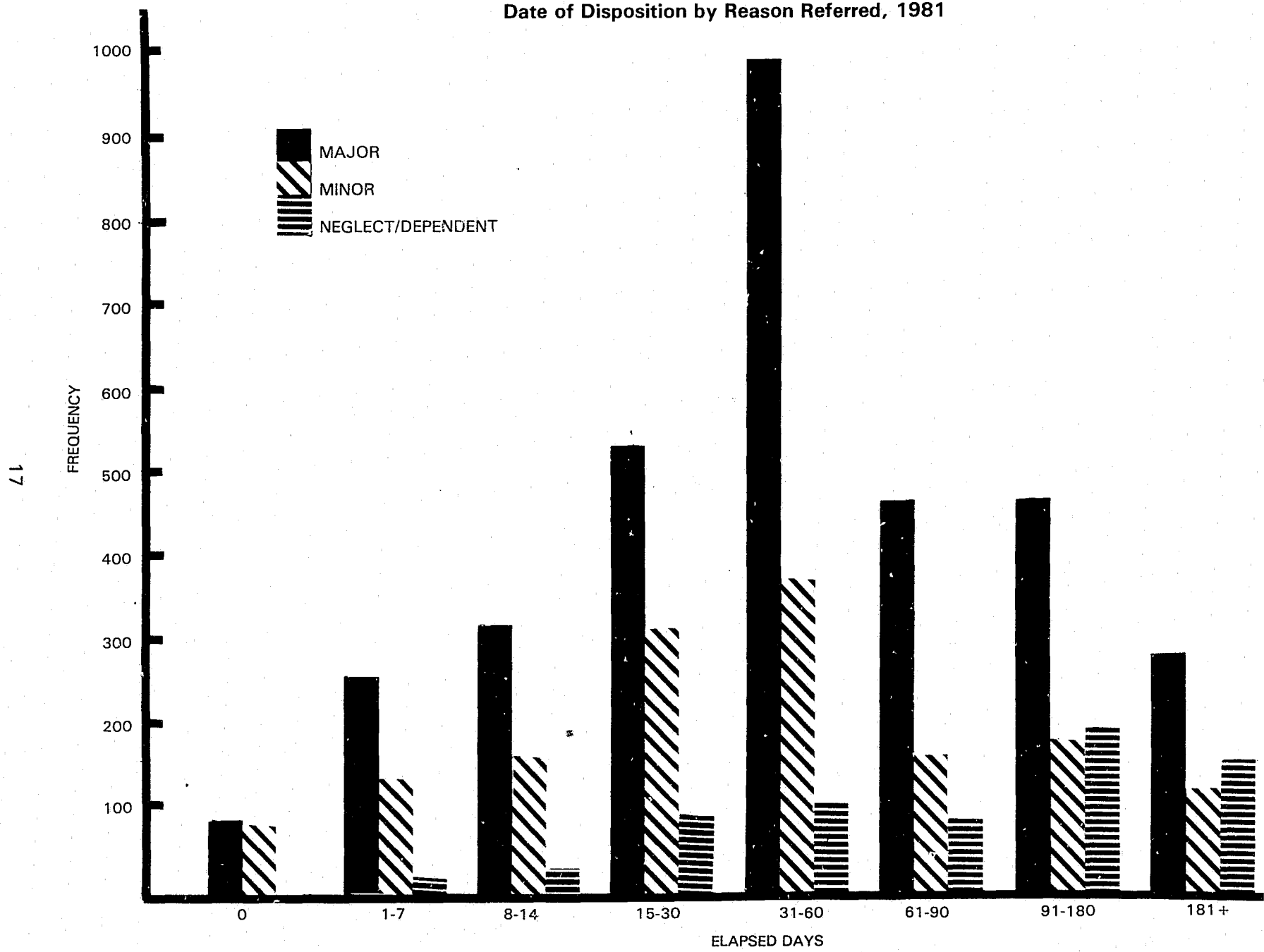
\*Does not include 16 cases with missing data.

**Table 11**  
**Elapsed Time, in Days, Between Date of Referral**  
**and Date of Disposition for Neglect/Dependent Referrals, 1981 \***

Reason Referred	Number of Cases for								TOTAL
	Elapsed Days: Referral to Disposition								
	0	1-7	8-14	15-30	31-60	61-90	91-180	181+	
Neglect	2	13	14	50	67	74	154	133	507
Dependent	0	9	13	41	42	14	44	26	189
<b>TOTAL NEGLECT/DEPENDENT*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>696</b>
% of Total	.3	3.2	3.9	13.1	15.7	12.6	28.4	22.8	100.0

\*Does not include 2 cases with missing data.

Figure 6  
 Number of Days Between Date of Referral and  
 Date of Disposition by Reason Referred, 1981



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# Age

For convenience, and because only about 5% of major and status offenders were under 10 years old, juveniles 9 and under were grouped together in Tables 12 and 13. Table 12 indicates that the majority (61%) of neglect/dependent referrals were under 10 years old. In fact, of all referrals involving juveniles under 10, about 4 in 5 (79%) were for neglect or dependency. The age group as a whole, however, represented only about 9% of the total referrals. As the data in Table 12 suggest, juveniles under 10 were much more likely to be referred to court in neglect and dependency cases and much less likely to be referred in major offense category.

As age groups, 15 year-olds and 16 year-olds had the largest proportion of referrals for major offenses: 63% of 15 year-olds and 66% of 16 year-olds were referred for major offenses. In contrast, only 11% of juveniles under 10, and 52% of 10 year-olds were referred for major offenses. About two-thirds (67%) of major offense referrals involved juveniles age 15 and over.

The distribution of status offense referrals across age groupings was not distinctly different from that for major offense referrals. Again, roughly two-thirds of referrals (70%) involved juveniles 15 and over. Age groups with the largest proportion of status offenders were ages 15 (22%), 16 (28%), and 17 (21%).

As table 12 indicates, about 60% of all neglect and

dependent cases were under 10 years old. The remainder were quite evenly distributed across the age groups from 10 to 17.

Across all referral categories, the 16 year-old age group accounted for the largest proportion of referrals (24%), followed by 18 year-olds (19%).

Table 13 provides disposition data for the age groups of 11 and under, 12 to 13, 14 to 15, and 16 to 17. For the 11 and under age group, the largest disposition category was transfer of legal custody to a public agency. It is likely that these were transfers to the Department of Public Welfare. Formal probation was the most frequent disposition category for juveniles age 12 and over: nearly 40% of cases involving juveniles age 12 and over resulted in a disposition of formal probation.

Cases involving juveniles under 12 were also more likely to result in dismissal than cases involving older juveniles: about 26% of 11 and under cases were dismissed for any reason, while about 20% of cases involving 12 to 17 year-olds were dismissed. Because the 11 and under age group was referred for fewer serious offenses than the older age groups, and because there was some variation in the reasons for referral within the other age groups, direct comparisons of dispositions across age groups must be done with caution.

**Table 12  
Reason Referred by Age, 1981\***

Age	Major		Minor (Status)		Neglect/Dependent		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Under 10	60	1.7	50	3.2	422	60.5	532	9.4
10	43	1.3	8	.5	31	4.4	82	1.4
11	102	3.0	21	1.4	31	4.4	154	2.7
12	153	4.5	47	3.0	29	4.2	229	4.0
13	301	8.8	121	7.8	29	4.2	451	7.9
14	489	14.2	209	13.5	33	4.7	731	12.9
15	681	19.8	338	21.9	59	8.5	1,078	19.0
16	913	26.6	426	27.6	34	4.9	1,373	24.2
17	693	20.2	325	21.0	30	4.3	1,048	18.5
<b>TOTAL**</b>	<b>3,435</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>1,545</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>5,678</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Does not include 4 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

**Table 13  
Disposition by Age, 1981\***

Disposition	11 and Under		12-13		14-15		16-17		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Waived to Criminal Court	0	--	0	--	3	.2	3	.1	6	.1
<i>Complaint Not Substantiated</i>										
Dismissed: Not proved or found not involved	94	12.2	107	15.8	272	15.0	251	10.4	724	12.8
<i>Complaint Substantiated</i>										
<b>No Transfer of Legal Custody</b>										
Dismissed: warned, counseled	107	13.9	43	6.3	127	7.0	202	8.4	479	8.4
Hold open without further action	48	6.3	79	11.6	144	8.0	313	13.0	584	10.3
Formal probation	91	11.8	246	36.2	707	39.1	971	40.2	2,015	35.5
Referred to another agency or individual for service or supervision	115	15.0	52	7.7	115	6.4	127	5.3	409	7.2
Runaway returned	0	--	1	.1	6	.3	10	.4	17	.3
Fine or restitution	9	1.2	13	1.9	65	3.6	162	6.7	249	4.4
Other	28	3.6	22	3.2	62	3.4	72	3.0	184	3.2
<b>Transfer Legal Custody to:</b>										
Youth Development Center	0	--	13	1.9	80	4.4	130	5.4	223	3.9
Public Agency or Department	194	25.3	67	9.9	158	8.7	124	5.1	543	9.6
Private Agency or Institution	25	3.3	20	2.9	44	2.4	25	1.0	114	2.0
Individual	28	3.6	6	.9	11	.6	7	.3	52	.9
Other	29	3.8	10	1.5	15	.8	19	.8	73	1.3
<b>TOTAL**</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>1,809</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>2,416</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>5,672</b>	<b>99.9</b>

\* Does not include 10 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

# Sex

More than two-and-one-half times as many males were referred to Nebraska juvenile courts than females in 1981. Overall, about 72% of referrals involved males while the remainder, approximately 28%, were females.

The disparity between the proportion of male and female referrals is more marked for major offense referrals; in this case about 83% of major offense referrals involved males while only about 17% involved females. Minor offense referrals were more evenly distributed with regard to sex: about 56% were male, with approximately 44% female. Neglect and dependent referrals were the only categories in which the proportion of females exceeded the proportion of males. Slightly over 50% of neglect and dependent referrals were females, while just under 50% were male.

Females had roughly equal number of referrals for major and minor offenses (606 and 668, respectively) while more than three times as many males were referred for major offenses as for minor offenses. Accordingly, of

the three referral categories, males were most likely to be referred for a major offense while females were most likely to be referred to juvenile court in a neglect or dependent case.

As Table 14 shows, the most frequent disposition category for males and females was formal probation. However, males were more likely than females to have a disposition of probation. Again, differences in reasons for referral between males and females make it difficult to draw firm conclusions regarding the distribution of disposition outcomes for males vs. females. Because a larger proportion of males than females were referred for serious offenses, it is likely that males would account for a larger proportion of the more severe or restrictive dispositions. This is generally true in the case of imposition of probation (involving about 39% of male referrals and 28% of females), and transfer to a Youth Development Center (4.3% of males and 2.4% of females).

Figure 7  
Reason Referred by Sex, 1981

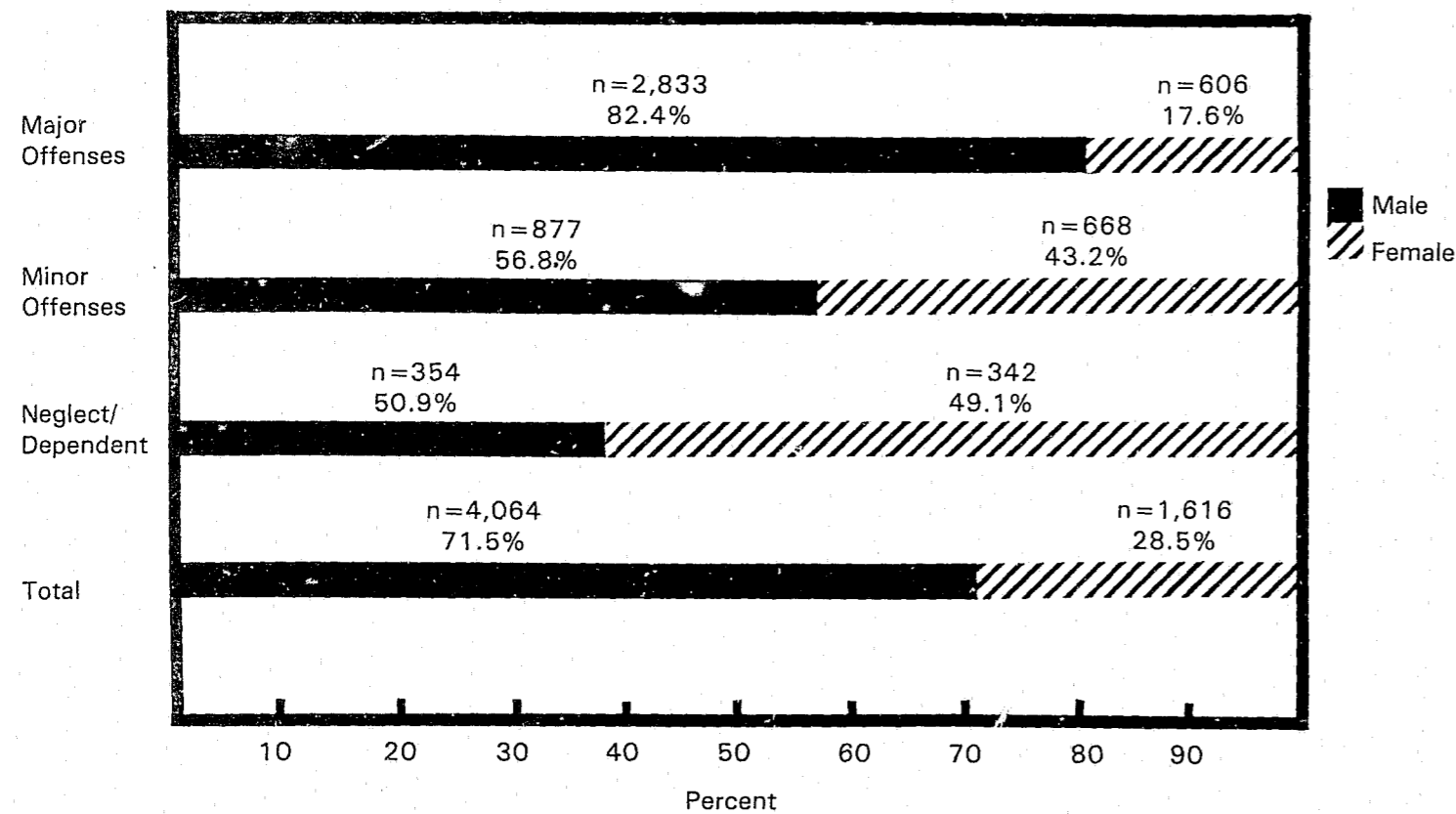


Table 14  
Disposition by Sex, 1981\*

Disposition	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Waived to Criminal Court	6	.1	0	--	6	.1
<i>Complaint Not Substantiated</i>						
Dismissed: Not proved or found not involved	529	13.0	197	12.2	726	12.8
<i>Complaint Substantiated</i>						
<b>No Transfer of Legal Custody</b>						
Dismissed: warned, counseled	309	7.6	169	10.5	478	8.4
Hold open without further action	433	10.7	151	9.3	584	10.3
Formal probation	1,587	39.1	428	26.5	2,015	35.5
Referred to another agency or individual for service or supervision	255	6.3	155	9.6	410	7.2
Runaway returned	6	.1	11	.7	17	.3
Fine or restitution	181	4.5	68	4.2	249	4.4
Other	109	2.7	75	4.6	184	3.2
<b>Transfer of Legal Custody to:</b>						
Youth Development Center	196	4.8	27	1.7	223	3.9
Other public institution	299	7.4	244	15.1	543	9.6
Private agency or institution	77	1.9	37	2.3	114	2.0
Individual	25	.6	27	1.7	52	.9
Other	47	1.2	26	1.6	73	1.3
<b>TOTAL**</b>	<b>4,059</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,615</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,674</b>	<b>99.9</b>

\* Does not include 8 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.



## Ethnic Group

Data collected by the Commission on the ethnic group or race of young persons referred to juvenile court included the categories of white, black, Native American, Hispanic, Oriental, and "other". It should be noted that the proportion of minority group juveniles in Nebraska's population is quite small outside counties such as Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, and Scotts Bluff, and therefore measures of delinquency among ethnic groups in the state (with the exception of the majority white population) are difficult to estimate. The information contained in Table 15 does suggest, however, that there is some variation among racial groups in the proportion of referrals for major, minor, and neglect/dependent

reasons. For example, about 60% of referrals involving white juveniles were for major offenses, while approximately 68% of black juveniles were referred for major offenses and close to 63% of Native American juvenile referrals involved major offenses.

The largest referral category in all ethnic groups, though, was for major offenses. Non-white juvenile referrals accounted for approximately 18% of major offense referrals, 9% of status offenses and roughly one-quarter of neglect and dependent cases. Thus, the large majority of referrals in each category involved white juveniles.

**Table 15**  
Reason Referred by Ethnic Group, 1981\*

Ethnic Group	Major		Minor [Status]		Neglect/Dependent		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
White	2,820	82.0	1,400	90.7	537	77.2	4,757	83.8
Black	287	8.3	61	4.0	74	10.6	422	7.4
Native American	107	3.1	25	1.6	38	5.5	170	3.0
Hispanic	152	4.4	28	1.8	24	3.4	204	3.6
Oriental	10	.3	4	.3	1	.1	15	.3
Other	62	1.8	26	1.7	22	3.2	110	1.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,438</b>	<b>99.9**</b>	<b>1,544</b>	<b>100.1**</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,678</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Does not include 4 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

## Other Demographic Characteristics

### Living Arrangement

Table 16 presents information concerning the living arrangements of juveniles at the time of referral. For major and status offense referrals, the most common living situation was at home with both parents: about 43% of major offense referrals and 41% of minor offense referrals were in this category. A juvenile living

at home with the mother only was the next largest living arrangement category.

About 32% of all referrals came from single parent families. The largest category of referrals was for neglect/dependent in which about 41% were from single parent families; 28% of the neglect/dependent juvenile referrals were living with the mother only.

**Table 16**  
Reason Referred by Living Arrangement of Juvenile, 1981\*

Living Arrangement	Major		Minor [Status]		Neglect/Dependent		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Both Parents	1,229	42.9	501	40.9	127	21.5	1,857	39.6
Mother only	787	27.5	283	23.1	226	38.2	1,296	27.7
Father only	128	4.5	54	4.4	19	3.2	201	4.3
Mother, Stepfather	260	9.1	117	9.5	37	6.3	414	8.8
Father, Stepmother	71	2.5	26	2.1	15	2.5	112	2.4
Relatives	63	2.2	33	2.7	26	4.4	122	2.6
Foster/Group Home	91	3.2	63	5.1	108	18.3	262	5.6
Institution	62	2.2	7	.6	2	.3	71	1.5
Independent	42	1.5	14	1.1	6	1.0	62	1.3
Other	29	1.0	17	1.4	13	2.2	59	1.3
Unknown	105	3.7	111	9.1	12	2.0	228	4.9
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>2,867</b>	<b>100.3**</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>99.9**</b>	<b>4,684</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Does not include 998 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

### Employment and School Status

The majority of referrals in all categories involved juveniles who were in school at the time of referral; about 84% of all referrals. Referrals of preschool youngsters were almost exclusively in the neglect/dependent category, as would be expected.

Juveniles who were unemployed and in school

constituted the largest proportion of major, minor, and neglect/dependent cases, and except for neglect/dependent referrals, juveniles who were employed and in school comprised the next largest proportion of referrals in these categories. About 12% of all juveniles were not in school at the time of referral (excluding preschool); approximately 13% of major offense referrals and 9% of minor offense referrals were not in school.

**Table 17**  
**Reason Referred by Employment**  
**and School Status, 1981\***

Employment/School Status	Major		Minor [Status]		Neglect/Dependent		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Unemployed, not in school	261	9.6	73	6.4	33	6.4	367	8.4
Employed, not in school	86	3.2	31	2.7	1	.2	118	2.7
Unemployed, in school	2,034	75.0	830	73.1	272	52.6	3,136	71.8
Employed, in school	330	12.2	195	17.2	11	2.1	536	12.3
Preschool	1	.1	7	.6	200	38.7	208	4.8
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>2,712</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,136</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,365</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Does not include 1,317 cases with missing data.

## Separate Juvenile Courts

Referrals to the separate juvenile courts of Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties constituted nearly 51% of all juvenile referrals across the state; however, these counties represent only about 43% of the State's total estimated juvenile population. Lancaster County Separate Juvenile Court processed more dispositions (1,325) in 1981 than any other jurisdiction while Douglas county was second with 1,072 dispositions, followed by Sarpy County Separate Juvenile Court with 477. It should be noted that the information presented in Tables 18 and 19 (as well as all other data in this report) is based on counts of dispositions during 1981 rather than referrals during 1981, and therefore provides only a partial estimate of the activity of the juvenile court. It is likely that the intake activity of juvenile courts involves many more juveniles during a given year than are reflected in these disposition statistics.

The procedures involved in referral to juvenile court may vary across jurisdictions and influence the number of cases reported in the Juvenile Court Reporting Program. In addition, the policies of prosecutors, juvenile service agencies, and judges may vary in different jurisdictions influencing the nature and number of juvenile referrals reported to the Commission. Also, the three separate juvenile courts in the state have some differences in processing procedures which may result in differing reporting results.

The Douglas County Attorney's Office acts as the

court intake for all juvenile referrals in Douglas county. This means that the only juvenile cases reported to the Commission are those which are filed with petition by the County Attorney's office.

In Lancaster County, the juvenile probation office serves the court intake function. Cases that come to the attention of the juvenile probation office (regardless of the source of referral) are reported to the Commission. Cases formally disposed of by the court represent those filed with petition while cases handled informally by the juvenile probation office represent cases handled without petition.

In Sarpy County, the processing of referrals to juvenile court is similar to that in Lancaster county. The juvenile probation office of the court handles the intake function and those cases filed with petition are formally disposed of by the court. Cases handled informally by the probation office are not reported to the Commission.

Differences among the three separate juvenile courts in the receipt of referrals are indicated in Table 18. Although the largest source of referrals in Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy counties was from law enforcement authorities, Lancaster County had a much larger proportion of referrals from the county attorney (31.5%) than did the other separate juvenile courts, while Douglas County had a larger proportion of referrals from social agencies than did other separate juvenile courts or the balance of the State's courts sitting as juvenile courts.

**Table 18**  
**Source of Referrals in Separate Juvenile Courts**  
**of Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties, and All Other Counties, 1981\***

Source of Referral	Douglas		Lancaster		Sarpy		All Others		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Law Enforcement	527	49.2	393	29.7	394	82.6	997	36.5	2,311	41.2
School	27	2.5	47	3.6	15	3.1	18	.7	107	1.9
Social Agency	212	19.8	4	.3	12	2.5	79	2.9	307	5.5
Probation Office	0	--	71	5.4	12	2.5	3	.1	86	1.5
Parents, Relatives	149	13.9	78	5.9	30	6.3	27	1.0	284	5.1
Other Court	140	13.1	208	15.7	2	.4	34	1.2	384	6.8
County Attorney	16	1.5	416	31.5	5	1.0	1,456	53.2	1,893	33.8
Other	1	.1	105	7.9	7	1.5	121	4.4	234	4.2
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>1,072</b>	<b>100.1**</b>	<b>1,322</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>99.9**</b>	<b>2,735</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,606</b>	<b>100.0</b>

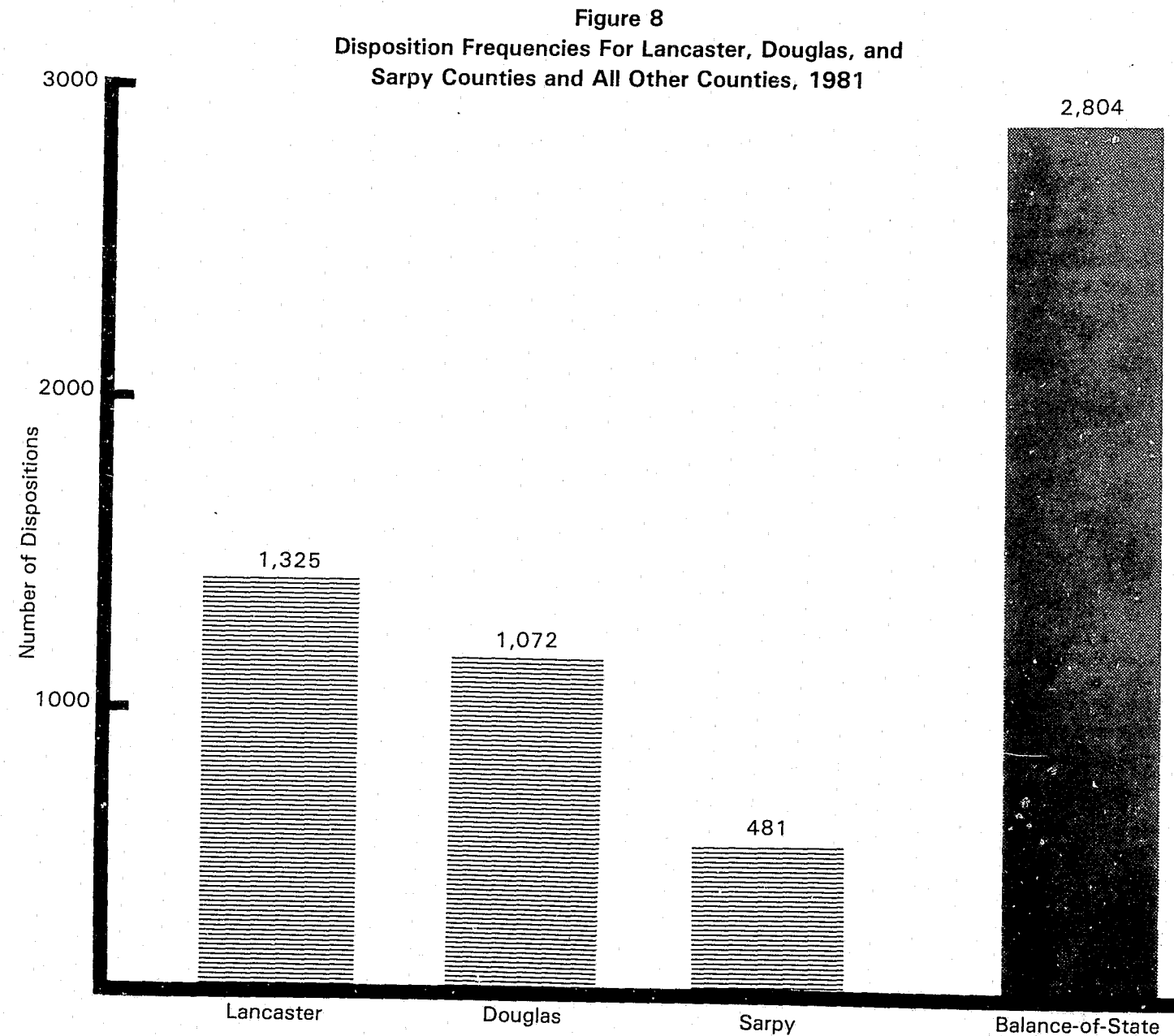
\* Does not include 76 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

Although Douglas County had a larger estimated juvenile population (115,538) than Lancaster County (47,064), Douglas County had more than 250 fewer dispositions than Lancaster in 1981. This is probably because the count of Douglas County cases was based only on those filed with a formal petition, while Lancaster County totals included not only those filed with petition but also those handled informally by the juvenile probation office in which no formal petition is filed. If the ratio between petitioned cases disposed of and estimated juvenile population is compared for Lancaster and Douglas County, the measures of juvenile court activity are more comparable.

For Douglas County, the referral rate for petitioned cases was about 9 per 1,000 juvenile population while the referral rate for petitioned cases in Lancaster County was approximately 13 per 1,000 juvenile population. All but two of the Sarpy County juvenile court cases were filed with petition resulting in a petitioned referral rate of 16 per 1,000 juvenile population.

Figure 8 shows the pattern of dispositions for Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, and all other counties. Detailed county-by-county breakdowns are presented in Appendix A.



**Table 19**  
**Dispositions in Separate Juvenile Courts**  
**of Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties, and All Other Counties, 1981\***

Disposition	Douglas		Lancaster		Sarpy		All Others		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Waived to Criminal Court	0	--	0	--	2	.4	4	.1	6	.1
<i>Complaint Not Substantiated</i>										
Dismissed: Not proved or found not involved	336	31.3	75	5.7	67	14.0	248	8.8	726	12.8
<i>Complaint Substantiated</i>										
<b>No Transfer of Legal Custody.</b>										
Dismissed: warned, counseled	62	5.8	93	7.0	105	21.9	220	7.8	480	8.5
Hold open without further action	0	--	489	37.0	2	.4	93	3.3	584	10.3
Formal probation	297	27.7	245	18.5	164	34.2	1,309	46.7	2,015	35.5
Referred to another agency or individual for service or supervision	6	.6	219	16.6	46	9.6	139	5.0	410	7.2
Runaway returned	0	--	9	.7	0	--	8	.3	17	.3
Fine or restitution	15	1.4	1	.1	1	.2	232	8.3	249	4.4
Other	4	.4	12	.9	20	4.2	148	5.3	184	3.2
<b>Transfer of Legal Custody to:</b>										
Youth Development Center	56	5.2	30	2.3	19	4.0	118	4.2	223	3.9
Public Agency	182	17.0	148	11.2	49	10.2	164	5.9	543	9.6
Private Agency	84	7.8	1	.1	1	.2	28	1.0	114	2.0
Individual	30	2.8	0	--	2	.4	20	.7	52	.9
Other	0	--	0	--	1	.2	72	2.6	73	1.3
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>1,072</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,322</b>	<b>100.1**</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>99.9**</b>	<b>2,803</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,676</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Does not include 6 cases with missing data.

\*\* Percent totals may differ from 100 due to rounding error.

In general, direct comparisons among courts with regard to juvenile processing must be made with caution because of varying procedures in reporting, differences

in the types and number of referrals, juvenile population characteristics, and other related pertinent factors.

Lancaster County had the largest number of major offense referrals (839) and minor offense referrals (300) while Douglas County had the largest number of neglect/dependent cases (214). Overall, the three separate juvenile courts processed about 52% of all major offense referrals, about 41% of all status offense referrals, and 66% of all neglect and dependent referrals which reached final disposition in the State in 1981.

The distribution of disposition categories in the three separate juvenile courts is presented in Table 19. There

were some differences among the separate juvenile courts in the distribution of dispositions, which probably reflects the varying types of cases referred to each court. While about 37% of Lancaster county cases were held open without further action, less than 1% of Douglas and Sarpy's referrals were held open. Approximately 31% of referrals in Douglas County were found to be unsubstantiated and dismissed. Comparable Lancaster and Sarpy County proportions were 5.7% and 14.0%, respectively.

## APPENDICES

**Appendix A**  
**County Juvenile Justice Data, 1981**

County	Juvenile Population (Ages 0-17) <sup>1</sup>	Number of Juvenile Arrests <sup>2</sup>	Arrest Rate Per 1,000 Juveniles	Juvenile Court Filings <sup>4</sup>	Juvenile Court Dispositions <sup>3</sup>			
					Major Offenses	Minor Offenses	Neglect/Dependent	Total Cases
Adams	8,737	209	23.9	203	69	28	0	97
Antelope	2,585	4	1.5	5	0	3	1	4
Arthur	136	0	—	0	—	—	—	—
Banner	269	—	—	0	0	0	0	0
Blaine	270	—	—	1	1	0	0	1
Boone	2,180	7	3.2	23	11	3	0	14
Box Butte	4,068	200	49.2	70	39	21	8	68
Boyd	806	—	—	0	0	0	0	0
Brown	1,247	1	.8	10	9	1	0	10
Buffalo	9,117	183	20.1	80	20	6	0	26
Burt	2,309	26	11.3	11	9	5	1	15
Butler	2,631	2	.8	37	4	17	0	21
Cass	6,150	84	13.7	105	73	15	18	106
Cedar	3,708	17	4.6	19	15	3	0	18
Chase	1,461	8	5.5	18	8	3	0	11
Cherry	1,906	17	8.9	3	0	2	0	2
Cheyenne	2,766	98	35.4	60	35	17	1	53
Clay	2,335	9	3.9	15	15	3	1	19
Colfax	2,799	34	12.1	50	21	12	2	35
Cuming	3,534	39	11.0	10	6	7	1	14
Custer	3,788	85	22.4	13	—	—	—	—
Dakota	5,419	115	21.2	38	25	8	3	36
Dawes	2,402	61	25.4	17	8	4	5	17
Dawson	6,714	133	19.8	98	71	64	8	143
Deuel	667	8	12.0	9	—	—	—	—
Dixon	2,120	19	9.0	20	14	4	0	18
Dodge	10,037	231	23.0	205	72	65	19	156
Douglas	115,538	2,800	24.2	998 <sup>3</sup>	678	180	214	1,072
Dundy	698	1	1.4	4	6	0	0	6
Fillmore	2,146	18	8.4	110	20	54	2	76
Franklin	1,068	1	.9	12	0	0	0	0
Frontier	1,010	4	4.0	2	1	0	1	2
Furnas	1,570	11	7.0	13	3	5	0	8
Gage	6,138	243	39.6	91	49	23	14	86
Garden	658	0	—	5	3	2	0	5
Garfield	640	—	—	1	0	1	0	1
Gosper	591	—	—	1	1	0	0	1
Grant	267	2	7.5	0	0	0	0	0
Greeley	1,077	0	—	9	3	0	3	6
Hall	14,355	755	52.6	315	189	103	24	316
Hamilton	2,818	78	27.7	30	18	22	6	46
Harlan	1,086	9	8.3	10	—	—	—	—
Hayes	393	—	—	0	0	0	0	0
Hitchcock	1,146	5	4.4	21	11	2	4	17
Holt	4,201	0	—	5	—	—	—	—
Hooker	261	7	26.8	0	0	0	0	0
Howard	2,079	34	16.4	17	6	8	1	15
Jefferson	2,346	67	28.6	23	17	8	0	25
Johnson	1,369	36	26.3	3	4	1	0	5

**Appendix A (Continued)**  
**County Juvenile Justice Data, 1981**

County	Juvenile Population (Ages 0-17) <sup>1</sup>	Number of Juvenile Arrests <sup>2</sup>	Arrest Rate Per 1,000 Juveniles	Juvenile Court Filings <sup>4</sup>	Juvenile Court Dispositions <sup>3</sup>			
					Major Offenses	Minor Offenses	Neglect/Dependent	Total Cases
Kearney	1,933	49	25.3	37	—	—	—	—
Keith	2,725	97	35.6	41	0	15	0	15
Keya Paha	385	1	2.6	0	0	0	0	—
Kimball	1,440	12	8.3	8	4	1	4	9
Knox	3,300	35	10.6	32	32	4	1	37
Lancaster	47,064	2,184	46.4	1,389 <sup>3</sup>	839	300	186	1,325
Lincoln	11,192	302	27.0	192	64	23	0	87
Logan	309	—	—	0	1	0	0	1
Loup	241	—	—	3	0	3	0	3
Madison	8,599	218	25.4	68	43	15	10	68
McPherson	161	—	—	0	2	0	0	2
Merrick	2,746	79	28.8	30	16	1	0	17
Morrill	1,751	19	10.9	17	8	0	0	8
Nance	1,394	—	—	14	8	6	0	14
Nemaha	2,075	41	19.8	18	12	3	1	16
Nuckolls	1,816	7	3.9	30	—	—	—	—
Otoe	4,099	100	24.4	65	38	12	1	51
Pawnee	909	8	8.8	6	3	3	0	6
Perkins	1,029	—	—	3	1	0	0	1
Phelps	2,638	38	14.4	51	16	1	0	17
Pierce	2,485	—	—	9	8	2	3	13
Platte	9,002	242	26.9	160	29	52	0	81
Polk	1,820	35	19.2	37	—	—	—	—
Red Willow	3,494	45	12.9	37	34	1	0	35
Richardson	2,806	83	29.6	41	31	11	6	48
Rock	715	—	—	8	1	0	0	1
Saline	3,243	75	23.1	41	15	14	4	33
Sarpy	30,621	1,346	44.0	499 <sup>3</sup>	275	147	59	481
Saunders	5,559	76	13.7	70	45	17	4	66
Scotts Bluff	11,580	329	28.4	283	196	41	39	276
Seward	4,200	77	18.3	131	30	75	5	110
Sheridan	2,173	71	32.7	42	21	9	6	36
Sherman	1,251	0	—	3	2	1	0	3
Sioux	518	2	3.9	0	0	0	0	0
Stanton	2,227	7	3.1	11	2	5	4	11
Thayer	1,941	15	7.7	22	2	20	0	22
Thomas	297	0	—	0	—	—	—	—
Thurston	2,450	—	—	23	7	3	6	16
Valley	1,538	55	35.8	44	14	18	1	33
Washington	4,652	60	12.9	47	41	7	4	52
Wayne	2,317	22	9.5	9	—	—	—	—
Webster	1,258	3	2.4	9	2	1	0	3
Wheeler	352	—	—	10	0	0	0	0
York	4,114	295	71.7	108	66	34	17	117
<b>Total</b>	<b>448,035</b>	<b>11,687</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>6,438</b>	<b>3,439</b>	<b>1,545</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>5,682</b>

<sup>1</sup> Source: **Business in Nebraska**, University of Nebraska Bureau of Business Research: March, 1982. (1980 Census data)

<sup>2</sup> Source: **1981 Nebraska Uniform Crime Reports**.

<sup>3</sup> Source: **1981 Nebraska Juvenile Court Report**.

<sup>4</sup> Source: **The Courts of Nebraska, 1981**, Nebraska State Court Administrator.

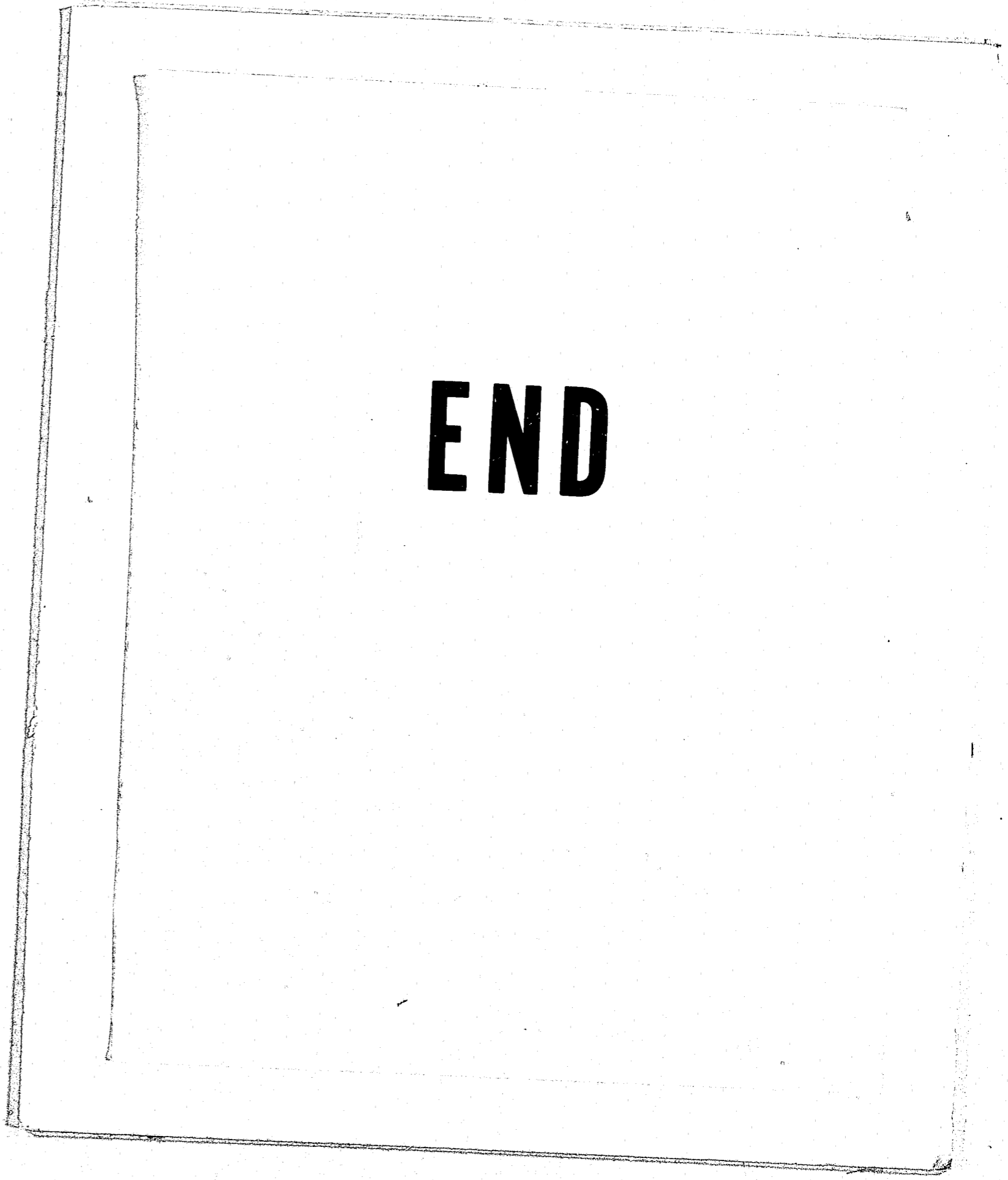
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**Appendix B**  
**Total Juvenile Arrests**  
**Nebraska Uniform Crime Reports, 1974-1981**

	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
Murder, Manslaughter	9	6	2	8	4	12	4	6
Death by Negligence	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	0
Forcible Rape	23	36	30	18	13	34	20	17
Robbery	213	210	158	127	102	122	107	100
Felony Assault	160	163	137	106	90	67	67	56
Burglary	1,279	1,175	1,120	1,181	1,048	889	747	832
Larceny-Theft	4,023	4,056	3,765	3,562	3,349	3,583	3,409	3,225
Motor Vehicle Theft	657	527	467	454	458	388	305	272
Misdemeanor Assault	571	440	500	451	317	375	352	341
Arson	115	50	65	44	31	89	45	65
Forgery, Counterfeiting	76	104	82	103	86	111	82	90
Fraud	123	137	116	97	116	116	108	88
Embezzlement	4	1	1	4	6	6	0	2
Stolen property-Buy, etc.	203	182	200	209	185	197	256	211
Vandalism	1,424	1,248	1,384	1,105	834	1,011	1,093	972
Weapons Offenses	75	77	68	60	58	80	51	78
Prostitution, Comm. Vice	26	14	28	15	6	16	24	24
Sex Offenses	112	72	86	38	57	56	56	73
Drug Abuse Violations	1,162	1,064	1,038	918	746	536	456	482
Gambling	8	0	3	0	0	0	3	0
Offenses Against Fam., Children	3	11	3	10	7	5	11	1
Driving Under the Influence	172	209	259	290	302	332	313	266
Liquor Laws	1,405	1,549	1,564	1,757	1,585	1,768	1,733	1,747
Drunkness-Intoxication*	261	323	256	318	323	—	—	—
Disorderly Conduct	725	692	568	460	509	505	611	539
Vagrancy	16	9	4	6	8	2	1	20
All Other Offenses	1,248	1,173	1,056	1,408	1,268	1,285	1,376	1,216
Suspicion	201	199	62	79	72	36	31	39
Curfew, Loitering Violations	633	466	658	712	462	491	455	458
Runaways	1,260	1,070	590	551	523	451	462	467
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,189</b>	<b>15,264</b>	<b>14,272</b>	<b>14,092</b>	<b>12,567</b>	<b>12,504</b>	<b>12,180</b>	<b>11,687</b>

\*Decriminalized in 1979

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