

2025 Annual Report



Comprehensive Map

Juvenile Justice facilities in North Carolina

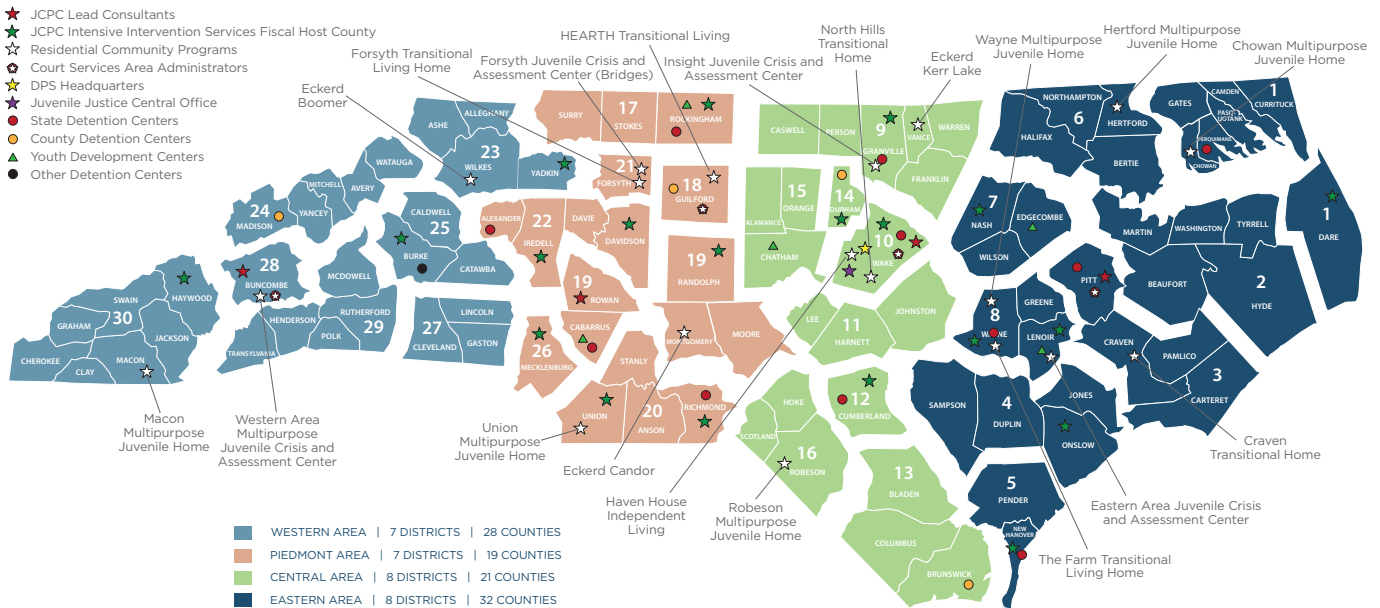


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Residents of North Carolina,

It is my honor to present the 2025 Annual Report on behalf of the Department of Public Safety’s Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

2025 brought both challenges and opportunities. Our commitment to providing therapeutic environments that reduce recidivism guided structural improvements, new partnerships, a streamlined hiring model, and planning for a two-year enhanced behavioral health unit for secure custody youth funded by the Department of Health and Human Services.

To strengthen our therapeutic approach, we created the Facilities and Programs Section, unifying facility management and clinical services under one direction to better address criminogenic needs and improve programming in secure custody settings. We also entered multi-year partnerships with the Council of State Governments and RTI. Supported by federal grants, these collaborations enhance facility programming and re-entry services—critical shifts as legislation has changed the makeup and needs of youth in secure custody. Adult court youth now remain in detention far longer than their juvenile-system peers (276 vs. 25 days), increasing the number of long-term-stay youth and the intensity of services required.



The year also brought significant strain on detention capacity. Rising lengths of stay and reduced contractual residential options, including 36 beds lost due to inflation, create system strain and can impact the detention population. While average detention length of stay for youth under juvenile jurisdiction decreased to 25 days, down one day from a 26-day average over the past three years, average length of stay for youth transferring to Superior Court increased 38% to 276 days in 2025 from 200 days the year previous, increasing demand on bed capacity.

Staff vacancy rates continued to be a major challenge. While juvenile court counselor vacancies reduced from 19% in December 2024 to 16% in December 2025 and direct-care vacancies reduced from 35% to 28% for youth counselor technicians, other critical positions saw increases: vacancy rates jumped from 38% to 41% for youth services behavioral specialists, and from 39% to 54% for youth counselors. The Division’s overall vacancy rate remained consistent at 23% between December 2024 and December 2025. To accelerate hiring of facility staff, DJJDP launched a streamlined model in which HR and facility teams conduct virtual interviews three times a week for all locations. This effort cut hiring time for criminal-justice-certified staff by 56%, from 216 days to 95 days. Retention concerns remain, and we have submitted recommendations and funding requests to address them. We continue to advocate for enhancements to step-pay plans to recruit and retain the high-quality staff these critical roles demand.

A new behavioral health unit, scheduled to open in 2026, will provide specialized care for youth in our custody. A point in time count indicated that 99.4% of youth in youth development centers had at least one mental health diagnosis as of December 31, 2025.

Throughout 2025, DJJDP served youth at every point in the system.

- 23,809 court-involved or at-risk youth received services through Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) programs, residential and community-based contracts, and intensive interventions.
- Staff processed and assessed 12,572 juveniles connected to 34,845 complaints.
- We reviewed 100 complaints involving vulnerable six- to nine-year-olds, providing service referrals and supports instead of court involvement.
- We served 2,876 detention admissions and 162 commitments to youth development centers, with approximately 597 youth in custody on any given day.

The NC S.A.F.E. initiative expanded significantly in 2025, building new partnerships with the military, schools, and medical professionals to promote secure firearm storage. More than 55,000 gun locks and educational materials were distributed statewide, including 10,000 locks provided to the NC National Guard’s Integrated Primary Prevention Team.

I am grateful to work alongside so many dedicated professionals. Their commitment, compassion, and willingness to take on difficult work make an enduring difference for youth and families across our state. I cannot thank them enough for their service.

Sincerely,
William Lassiter, Deputy Secretary



Year in Review

In 2025, the North Carolina Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention continued to face ongoing challenges related to facility staffing, detention bed capacity, and a growing adult court population in the state's juvenile detention centers. Despite these systemic challenges, DJJDP staff continued to find new and innovative ways to serve the youth in their care, from focusing on behavioral health and reentry opportunities, to connecting youth with appropriate community-based alternatives to prevent deeper involvement in the juvenile justice system.

DETENTION POPULATION SHIFT

Since its implementation in Dec. 2024, HB 834 (S.L. 2024-17) has resulted in a significant shift in the state's juvenile detention population from mostly juvenile jurisdiction youth to mostly adult court youth. On Dec. 1, 2025, adult court youth made up 65% of the state's juvenile detention population, up from 39% one year prior on Dec. 1, 2024. Adult court youth have a longer length of stay (276 days on average for youth transferring their cases to criminal court, and 47 days on average for youth starting their cases in criminal court) compared to youth under juvenile jurisdiction (25 days on average).

DETENTION BED CAPACITY

Despite expanding detention bed capacity with the opening of Rockingham Youth Development Center, Richmond-Jenkins Juvenile Detention Center and Perquimans Juvenile Detention Center, the Division continued to house more juveniles than available, staffed detention beds in 2025, creating a recurring pattern of youth sleeping in cots on dayroom floors. By the end of 2025, 393 county and state juvenile detention beds were operational. With an average daily population of 405, that left secure custody short 12 operational beds on average a day and with population surges, the number was higher.

STAFFING PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

In 2025, DJJDP refined its hiring process to reduce the time required to hire new criminal justice certified staff who work in DJJDP facilities. This included the implementation of a new centralized hiring process that resulted in a 56% reduction in the time required to hire certified staff, from 216 days to 95 days, with further improvements expected.

REORGANIZATION OF FACILITY OPERATIONS

To improve communication, collaboration and problem-solving, DJJDP established a new Facilities and Programs section encompassing Facility Operations, Clinical Services,

Health Services, Nutrition, Education and Programs under one management umbrella. During 2025, DJJDP onboarded several new facility directors and regional managers, creating new opportunities for fresh perspectives in our facilities.

REDUCTION IN RESIDENTIAL CONTRACTUAL PLACEMENTS

Due to inflationary costs, DJJDP and its residential contractual partners were forced to close 36 residential contractual service beds statewide in 2026. This included the closure of 11 juvenile crisis and assessment beds, 20 short-term residential beds for males and five short term residential beds for females. This is significant, as these placements serve as important alternatives to detention.

ELECTRONIC MAINTENANCE REQUEST SYSTEM

To better streamline maintenance requests in DJJDP facilities and offices, DJJDP implemented an electronic maintenance request system in 2025. This request system allows maintenance staff to track, prioritize and address the Division's physical needs in a timely manner.

COURT SERVICES YASI EVALUATION

Court Services completed an implementation evaluation of the Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI), demonstrating a need for ongoing refinement and investment in the tool to continue to enhance service planning for youth.

CAPACITY REMEDIATION

In collaboration with the UNC School of Government, the DJJDP Juvenile Community Programs Section established psychoeducational remediation programming to support juveniles who lack capacity to understand the offenses they are charged with committing and the court procedures that may impact them. Methodist Home for Children was selected to deliver remediation programming.



MENTAL HEALTH

According to a point in time survey of youth in North Carolina's youth development centers and contractual residential services, 89.8% of youth in these settings carried at least one mental health diagnosis. Juveniles in North Carolina's YDCs on average carried an average of 4.7 distinct mental health and/or substance use disorder diagnoses, and in some cases as many as 12. This underscores the need for designated spaces for youth in need of acute mental health services, not only within juvenile justice facilities, but across the state's continuum of care.

CARE REVIEW PROCESS

DJJDP completed 160 care reviews in 2025, bringing together youth, their parent(s), juvenile court counselors, and community stakeholders to provide additional options for youth who were eligible for a Level 3 commitment to a YDC or placement in a psychiatric residential treatment facility, and crafting recommendations for courts to consider at disposition.

FOCUS ON REENTRY

A 2024 Second Chance Act Grant supported the Division in creating a robust reentry strategic plan that will focus on necessary services for youth and their families that ensure a reduction in recidivism after release. This data-informed plan will allow the Division to leverage current resources while prioritizing funding for new, innovative services across the state. DJJDP is also playing a role in the Joint Reentry Council created by Gov. Roy Cooper to create additional reentry opportunities for incarcerated adults and justice-involved youth.

JUVENILE REENTRY EMPLOYMENT PROJECT

The Juvenile Reentry Employment Project (JREP) began admitting youth in July 2025. The JREP program provides intensive case management to youth 17 and older who are returning from juvenile facilities to Court Services District 3 securing their access to employment, housing, and other basic needs, in partnership with Methodist Home for Children and Craven Community College's VOLT Center.

NC S.A.F.E. REACHES NEW AUDIENCES

Through a statewide educational effort and local events, the NC S.A.F.E. (Secure All Firearms Effectively Campaign) has allowed DJJDP staff members to distribute more than 150,000 gun locks since 2023 to promote safe firearm storage and reduce youth access to unsecured weapons. Outreach efforts included collaborations with education, health care, government, law enforcement, faith-based and other organizations.

EDUCATIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

DJJDP continued to offer youth in secure custody facilities a wide array of educational and vocational opportunities. In 2025, 61 youth in juvenile justice facilities earned their high school diplomas, 26 earned their high school equivalency (HiSET) and 64 enrolled in community college courses. As a whole, youth in JJ facilities earned 289 credentials or certifications that will help prepare them for employment when they return to the community. DJJDP also expanded youth access to educational tablets in facilities, resulting in 17,837 hours of student engagement, 318 course completions, and 80 program certifications earned through tablet educational programs.

Comprehensive Strategy

The North Carolina Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention works to implement a comprehensive strategy that helps prevent and reduce juvenile delinquency in North Carolina. This strategy focuses on strengthening families, promoting delinquency prevention, supporting core social institutions, intervening immediately and effectively when delinquent behavior occurs, and identifying and controlling the state's serious, violent and chronic juvenile offenders.

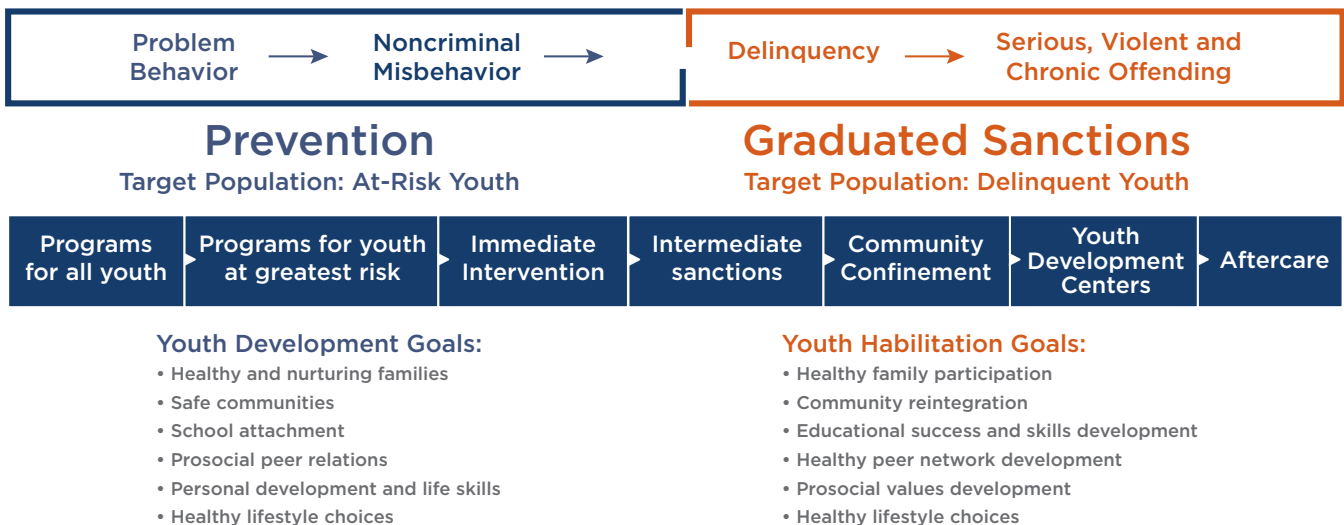
The Division provides a full continuum of interventions involving all children and youth ages 8-17 who are at-risk, vulnerable, or alleged to or have been found to have committed an undisciplined or delinquent offense.

The Division uses a comprehensive strategy rooted in social science and evidence-based practices throughout the continuum to achieve its outcomes. The strategy allows for a system of graduated responses based on a youth's seriousness of risk, behavior or offense, their history of offending, the needs of the youth and their family and available support systems within their local communities. DJJDP's philosophy is that the most successful way to approach risk and problem behaviors in youth is through

effective prevention, treatment, education and accountability-based sanctions that are used in graduated levels and guided by professional, strategic leadership through a tapestry of local and state partnerships. This approach requires evidence-supported practices and effectual partnerships in local jurisdictions, including close relationships with families, local resources, law enforcement and the courts to achieve the most effective levels of impact.

Data is presented throughout this report to mirror DJJDP's philosophy of using graduated sanctions with youth. The initial data displays the early stages of the continuum (focusing on the programs targeted at youth at greatest risk of entering the juvenile justice system and those receiving beginning or intermediate sanctions or dispositions, through Juvenile Community Programs). Next, the data shows information regarding those youth entering the juvenile justice system due to their alleged delinquent behavior, through Juvenile Court Services; finally, data is provided describing those juveniles whose delinquency led to secure custody, the most stringent sanction within the juvenile justice system. Also included is data related to clinical services, education and the administrative functions of DJJDP.

North Carolina Comprehensive Strategy for Juvenile Delinquency



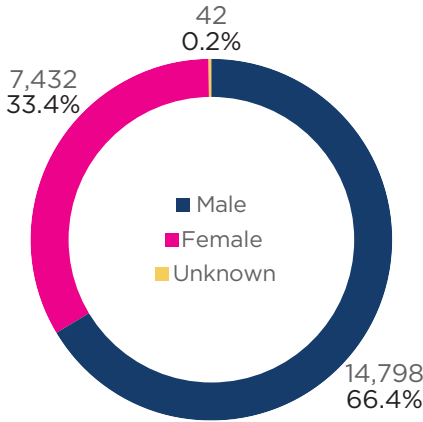
YOUTH SERVED IN JCPC PROGRAMS
FY 2025

The Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention partners with Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils in each county to galvanize community leaders, locally and statewide, to reduce and prevent juvenile crime. JCPC board members are appointed by county boards of commissioners and meet monthly in each county.

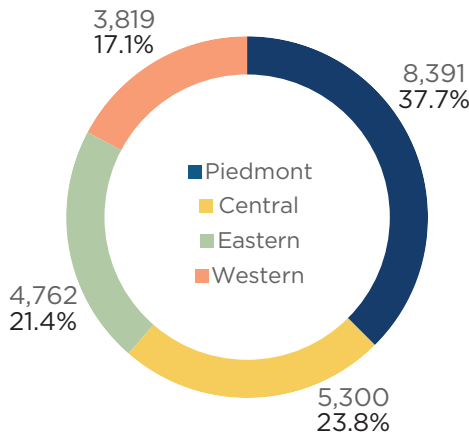
Programming and services funded through JCPCs include: assessment, clinical treatment, structured day programs, residential programs, restorative justice, mentoring, and skill-building programs. These services are targeted in each county to address the problem areas, risks and needs of its juvenile population.

By Age

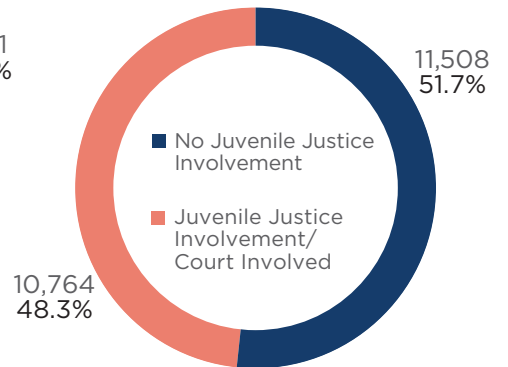
<=10	1,855
11-13	6,064
14-15	7,504
>=16	6,849



By Sex



By Region



By Legal Status

By Race/Ethnicity

Black or African American	9,806
White	7,377
Hispanic/Latino	2,816
Unknown	1,302
Two or More Races	503
American Indian or Alaska Native	347
Asian	108
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	13



Youth Served

FY 2025

Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) Youth Served by Program Type

Program Type	Youth Served
Interpersonal Skill Building	5,685
Restitution/Community Service	4,844
Teen Court	3,667
Tutoring/Academic Enhancement	1,313
Assessments	1,284
Mediation/Conflict Resolution	964
Juvenile Structured Day	659
Parent/Family Skill Building	638
Individual Counseling	564
Vocational Skills	551
Mentoring	540
Group Counseling	331
Experiential Skill Building	280
Home-Based Family Counseling	248
Substance Abuse Counseling	200
Family Counseling	190
Temporary Shelter Care	174
Runaway Shelter Care	97
Services Addressing Problem Sexual Behavior	30
Specialized Foster Care	13
Total	22,272

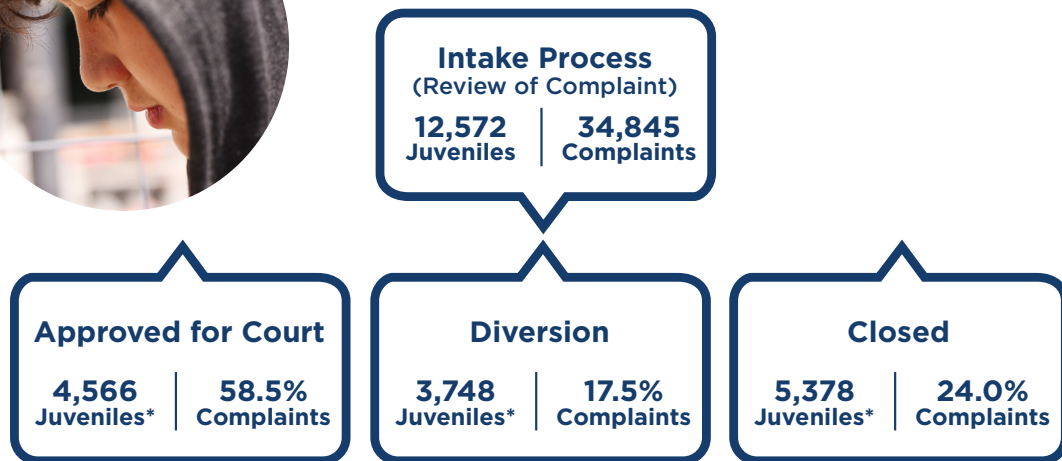
Youth Served by Funding Source (FY 2024-2025)

Funding Source	Youth Served
JCPC Funds	22,272
Residential Contractual Services	701
Community-Based Contractual Services	478
Intensive Intervention Services	358
Total	23,809

DECISION OUTCOMES CY 2025

Juvenile complaints received by DJJDP have three potential outcomes following an intake evaluation. Complaints can either be:

- (1) **approved for court** (become a petition), requiring the juvenile for whom the complaint was received to appear in court;
- (2) **diverted**, which means the juvenile and legal guardian agree to enter into a diversion plan or contract potentially including programming/ services. If the conditions of a diversion plan or contract are met, the complaint does not go to court. If the conditions are not met, the complaint may be approved for court;
- (3) **closed**, meaning the complaint does not need to go to court or be diverted. "Closed" on this page of data means closed at intake.



* A juvenile can have multiple complaints receive multiple outcomes over the course of a year (e.g., one complaint approved for court, another diverted and another closed). The combinations cause the juvenile count for approved, diverted and closed to sum more than 12,572, the total number of juveniles served by the Division this year.

Complaints Received

2012-2025

Due to significant legislative juvenile jurisdictional changes, the juvenile justice system experienced upper and lower age boundary modifications during the past decade. These changes require different age ranges for the respective years since implementation.

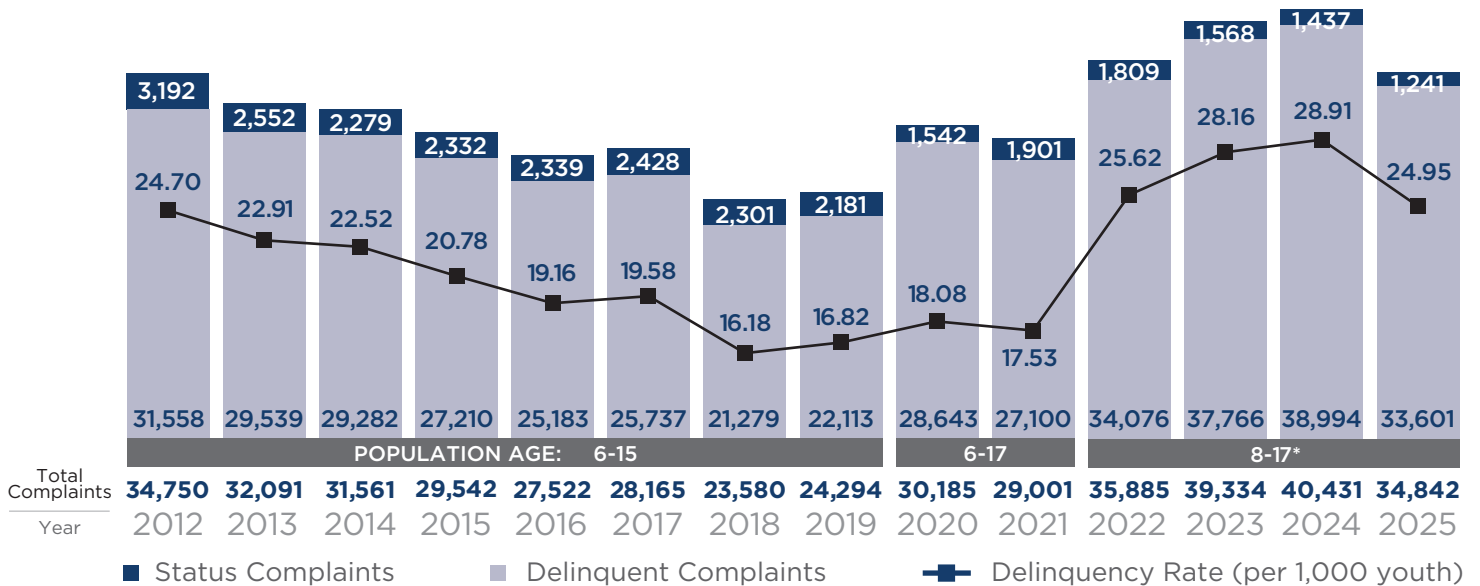
- Pre-2019: the age of juvenile jurisdiction was 6-15.
- Dec. 1, 2019: Upper boundary change from age 15 to age 17 (Raise the Age, S.L. 2017-57)
- Dec. 1, 2021: Lower boundary change from age 6 to age 10 with some exceptions for 8- and 9-year-olds (Raise the Minimum Age, S.L. 2021-123). 6- and 7-year-olds are now served through vulnerable juvenile consultation, rather than juvenile jurisdiction.
- Dec. 1, 2024: HB 834 (S.L. 2024-17) automatically places 16- and 17-year-old youth charged with an A-E felony offense in criminal court. These charges are no longer classified as juvenile complaints, and no longer originate in the juvenile justice system.

Between Jan. 2022 and Dec. 1, 2024, upper and lower boundary changes (predating HB 834) were in effect, placing the age of juvenile jurisdiction at 10-17, with exceptions for 8- and 9-year-olds. For the final month of 2024 and all of 2025, 16- and 17-year-old youth charged with an A-E felony offense were charged as appropriate in criminal court.

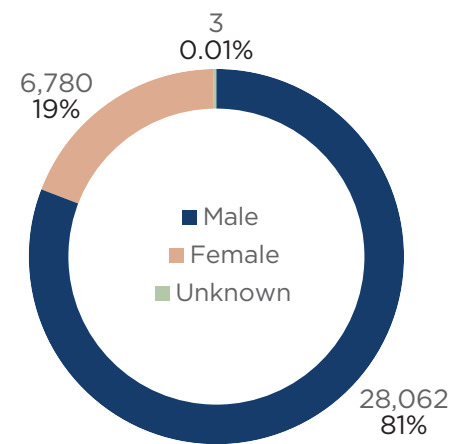
Forty-one percent of all complaints received in 2025 were linked to youth aged 16- or 17-year-old on the date of offense.

The 2025 juvenile delinquency rate is 24.95 per 1,000 youth. This reflects all of the boundary changes listed above, including the removal of 16- and 17-year-olds charged with class A-E felonies from the juvenile justice system.

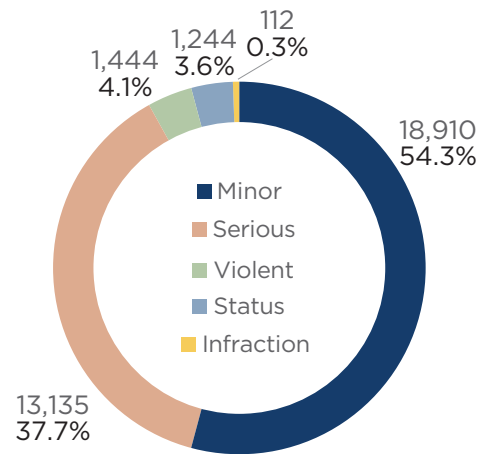
Complaints Received and Delinquency Rate (2012-2025)



* Official delinquency rates are calculated using delinquent complaints received by DJJDP's youth population, which included 6-15 year olds until 2019, 6-17 until 2022, and 8-17 since 2022. While rare, youth younger than eight can receive complaints, and thus total delinquent complaints received may vary from delinquent complaints graphed here for delinquency rate calculations.



Complaints Received by Sex



Complaints Received by Offense Class

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED
CY 2025

A complaint is a written allegation that a juvenile is delinquent or undisciplined, which is submitted to a juvenile court counselor for evaluation. Most complaints (54%) are for minor offenses. Status offenses are offenses that are based on the youth's age (e.g., runaway, truancy, etc.) and represent 3.6% of all complaints received.

Complaints Received by Age

Age <=10	380
Age 11	813
Age 12	1,688
Age 13	3,529
Age 14	6,081
Age 15	8,028
Age 16	7,357
Age 17	6,969

Complaints Received by Race/Ethnicity

Black or African American	21,545
White	8,153
Hispanic/Latino	3,405
Two or More Races	904
Unknown	389
American Indian or Alaska Native	314
Asian	129
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	6

Complaints by Age <=10

Age 6	2
Age 7	1
Age 8	5
Age 9	5
Age 10	367



Juvenile School-Based Offenses

CY 2025

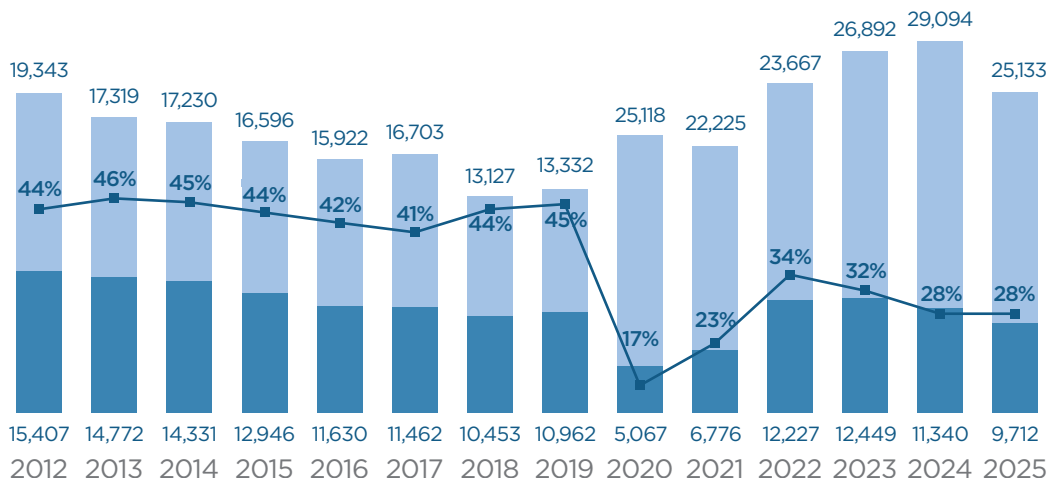
A school-based offense is an offense that occurs on school grounds, school property (buses, etc.), at a school bus stop, or at an off-campus school-sanctioned event (field trips, athletic competitions, etc.) or whose victim is a school

(such as a false bomb report). School includes any public or private institution providing elementary (K-8), secondary (9-12), or post-secondary (community college, trade school, college, etc.) education, but excludes home schools, preschools and day cares.

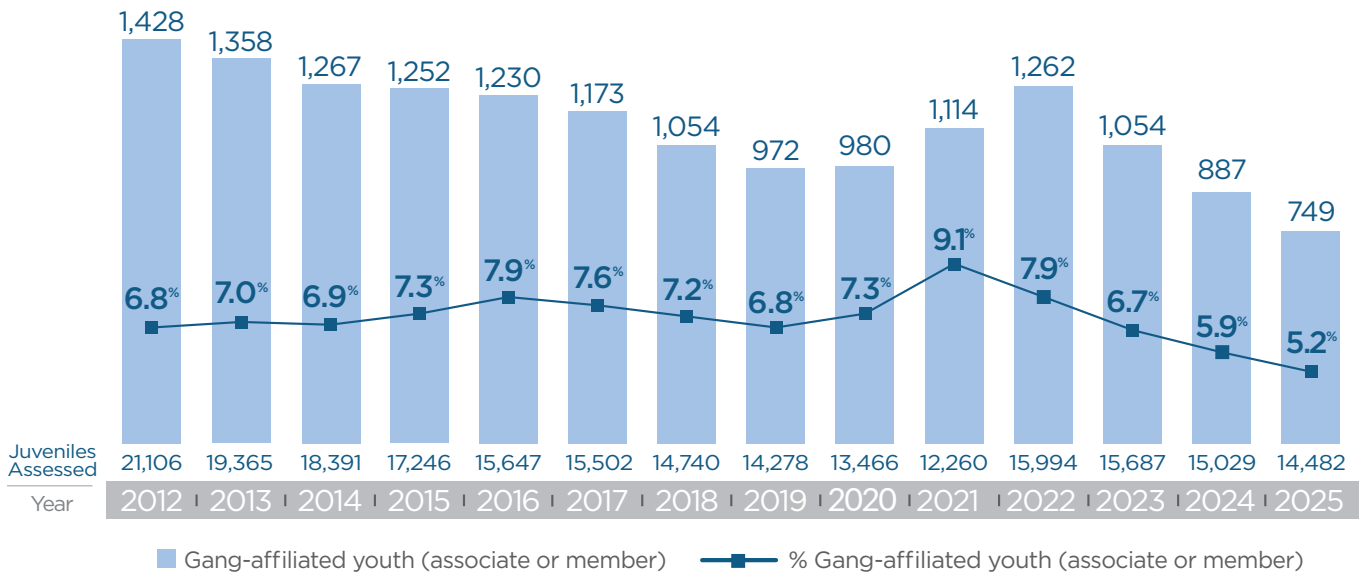
Top 10 School-Based Offenses: CY 2025

Charged Offense	Complaints
(M) misdemeanor (F) felony (S) status offense	
Simple assault (M)	1,864
Simple affray (M)	1,181
Disorderly conduct at school (M)	936
Communicating threats (M)	521
Truant < 16 (S)	444
Disorderly Conduct by engaging in fighting or other violent conduct or in conduct creating the threat of imminent fighting or other violence (M)	359
Possession of weapons other than firearms and explosives on school grounds (M)	342
Assault school employee/volunteer (M)	290
Assault government official/employee (M)	273
Communicating Threat of Mass Violence on Educational Property (F)	261

School-Related and Non-School-Related Complaint Trend



Juvenile Gang Associates or Members 2012-2025*



* The decline in the percentage of gang associates/members is not a reflection of an actual decline in NC gang membership, but more likely a result of youth ages 16-17 with violent offenses beginning in the adult system instead of the juvenile system effective December 1, 2024, and thus not being included in these screenings.

Top 10 Juvenile Offenses: CY 2025

Offense	Complaints	Distinct Juveniles	Complaints per Juvenile
(M) misdemeanor (F) felony (S) status offense			
Break or enter a motor vehicle (F)	3,577	685	5.2
Simple assault (M)	3,434	2,879	1.2
Larceny (M)	1,494	928	1.6
Simple affray (M)	1,342	1,267	1.1
Resisting public officer (M)	1,317	1,130	1.2
Larceny of motor vehicle (F)	1,271	635	2.0
Possess handgun by minor (M)	965	760	1.3
Communicating threats (M)	959	781	1.2
Disorderly conduct at school (M)	943	876	1.1
Felony possession of stolen vehicle (F)	865	614	1.4

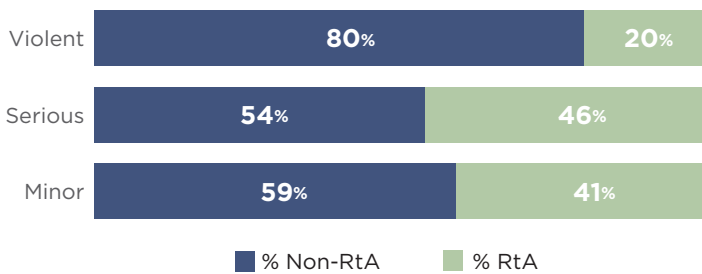


Raise The Age Offenses

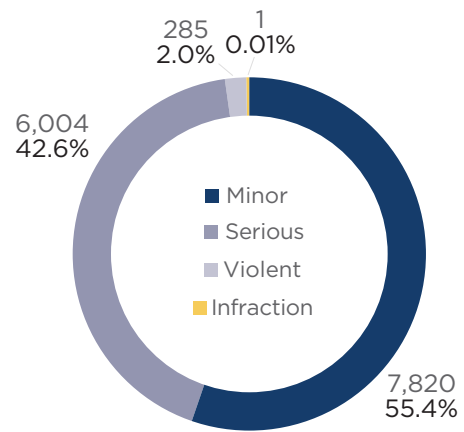
CY 2025

On Dec. 1, 2019, the Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act (S.L. 2017-57) raised the age of juvenile jurisdiction for most offenses to include 16- and 17-year-olds under juvenile jurisdiction. Raise the Age allows charges against 16- and 17-year-olds to be heard in the juvenile justice system if they are charged with non-violent crimes classified as low-level felonies and/or misdemeanors. On Dec. 1, 2024, HB 834 (S.L. 2024-17) went into effect in North Carolina, automatically placing 16- and 17-year-olds charged with Class A-E felonies in criminal court.

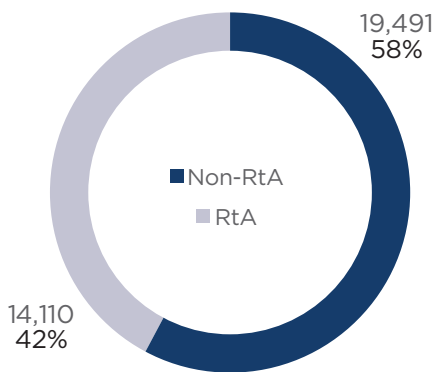
The number of 16- and 17-year-old juveniles served in Community Programs has increased steadily—by 72% since 2019—following implementation of Raise the Age. Raise the Age juveniles are more likely to receive intensive community intervention services.



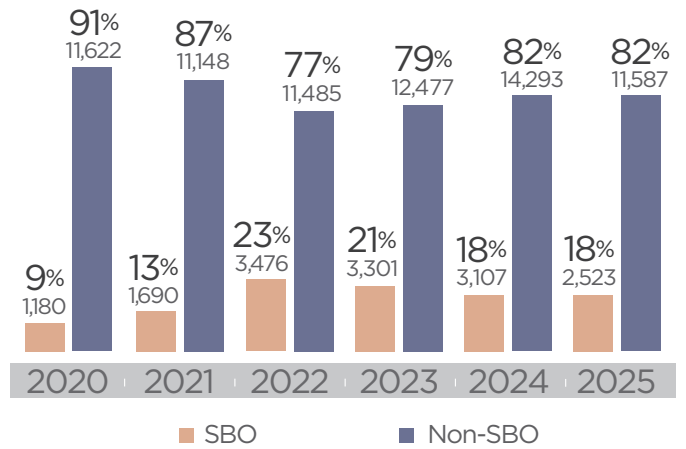
Non-RtA and RtA Proportions by Offense Class Group



Complaints for 16- and 17-year-olds by Charged Group



Delinquent Complaints by RtA and Non-RtA Designation



Raise the Age: School-Based Offenses 2020-2025

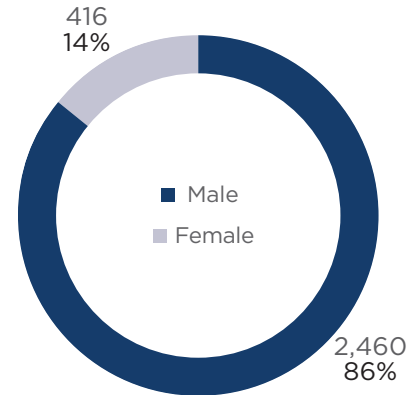
JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER ADMISSIONS CY 2025

Juvenile detention centers are secure facilities that temporarily house youth alleged to have committed a delinquent act or to be a runaway. Youth are generally placed in a juvenile detention center while awaiting a court hearing, or until another placement can be found, either in a community-based program or service or in a youth development center following commitment.

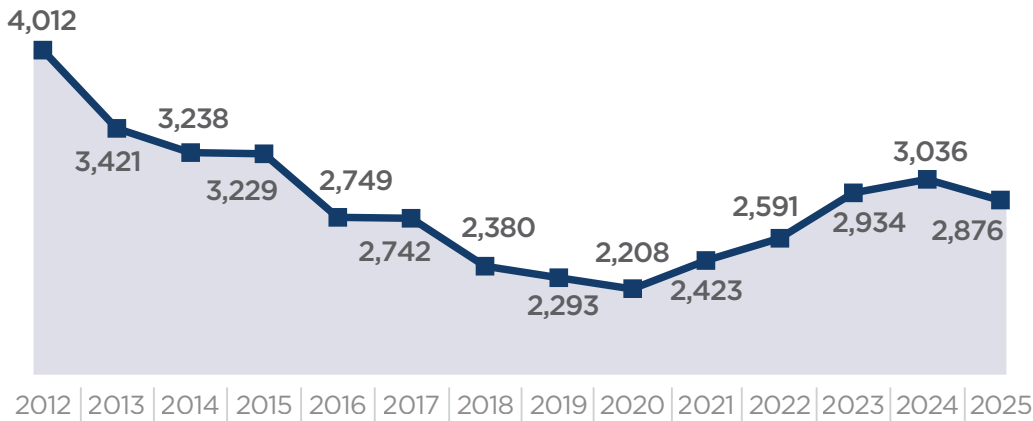
Admissions By Race/Ethnicity

Black or African American	2,007
White	444
Hispanic/Latino	285
Two or More Races	84
American Indian or Alaska Native	25
Unknown	23
Asian	8
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0

Admissions by Sex



Detention Admissions 2012-2025



Admissions by Age

<=10	0
11	4
12	21
13	161
14	334
15	572
16	793
17	901
18	75
19	11
20	4



Detention

CY 2025

Important legislation has altered the landscape of the state's juvenile detention population in recent years. Most recently, the implementation of HB 834 (S.L. 2024-17) on Dec. 1, 2024, automatically placed 16- and 17-year-old youth charged with A-E felonies in adult court, removing them from the juvenile justice system.

However, under previously existing legislation (S.L. 2020-83), all youth under the age of 18 who are ordered to be detained in secure custody must be housed in a juvenile detention center instead of jail, in compliance with the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. This population includes juveniles classified as adult court youth who are not subject to juvenile court jurisdiction, but rather are charged outside of the juvenile justice system. Session Law 2024-17 added 16- and 17-year-olds charged with A-E felonies to this classification.

The detention population is composed of youth under juvenile jurisdiction and adult court youth.

- Adult court youth: By statute some offenses must be heard from beginning to end in the criminal court system (H593, S.L. 2020-83), despite the youth being under the age of 18. Transfers to Superior Court cases involve youth who are transferred from juvenile to Superior Court due to the severity of their charges.
- Youth with certain prior adult convictions, emancipated youth and youth aged 16 or 17 alleged to have committed a Chapter 20 motor vehicle offense are excluded from juvenile jurisdiction, but are housed in juvenile detention when a secure custody order is issued, and thus are counted in the population for average length of stay.

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2017-2025 Detention Average Length of Stay

Year	Average Length of Stay (in days)
2017	17
2018	20
2019	22
2020	25
2021	32
2022	33
2023	35
2024	39
2025	40

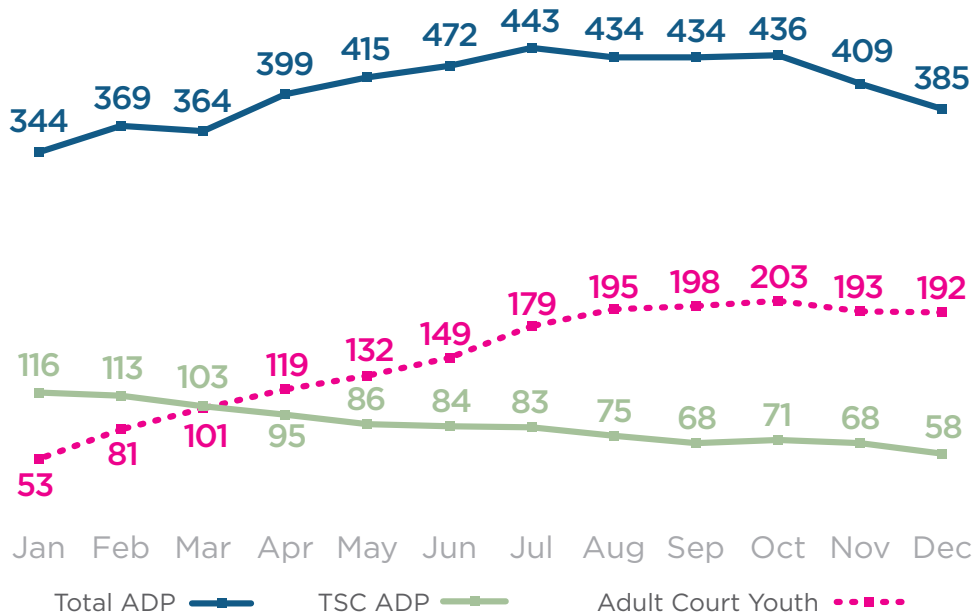
Criminal court youth have a longer length of stay (276 days on average for youth transferring their cases to criminal court, and 47 days on average for youth starting their cases in criminal court) compared to youth under juvenile jurisdiction (25 days on average).

While average detention length of stay for youth under juvenile jurisdiction decreased to 25 days, down one day from a 26-day average over the past three years, average

length of stay for youth transferring to Superior Court increased 38% to 276 days in 2025 from 200 days the year previous, increasing demand on bed capacity.

Detention Average Daily Population by Month

Total, Adult Court Youth Transfers to Superior Court



Adult Court Youth: By statute, some offenses must be heard from beginning to end in adult court (H593). For youth with these cases that are never in juvenile jurisdiction, detention stays occur entirely under adult court jurisdiction.

TSC: Youth with serious offenses can have their cases received in juvenile jurisdiction but transferred to adult court before the case is finished. These youth start their detention stays under juvenile jurisdiction, but upon transfer to superior court, are then under adult jurisdiction.



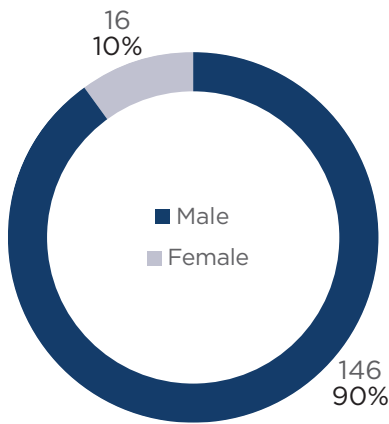
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CENTER COMMITMENTS CY 2025

Youth development centers are secure facilities that provide education and treatment services to prepare committed youth to successfully transition to a community setting. Youth receive educational, recreation, vocational, mental and physical health, nutritional and risk/needs specific programming in youth development centers.

This type of commitment is the most restrictive, intensive dispositional option available to the juvenile courts in North Carolina. The structure of the juvenile code limits this disposition to those juveniles who have been adjudicated for violent or serious offenses or who have a lengthy delinquency history.

Commitments by Age

13	5
14	13
15	32
16	41
17	58
18	12
19	0
20	1

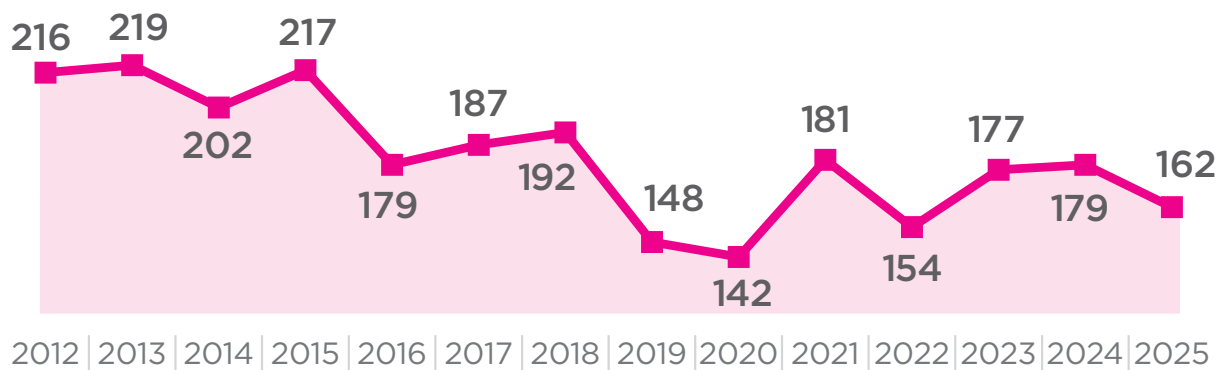


Commitments by Sex

Black or African American	121
White	27
Two or More Races	7
Hispanic/Latino	6
Unknown	1

Commitments by Race/Ethnicity

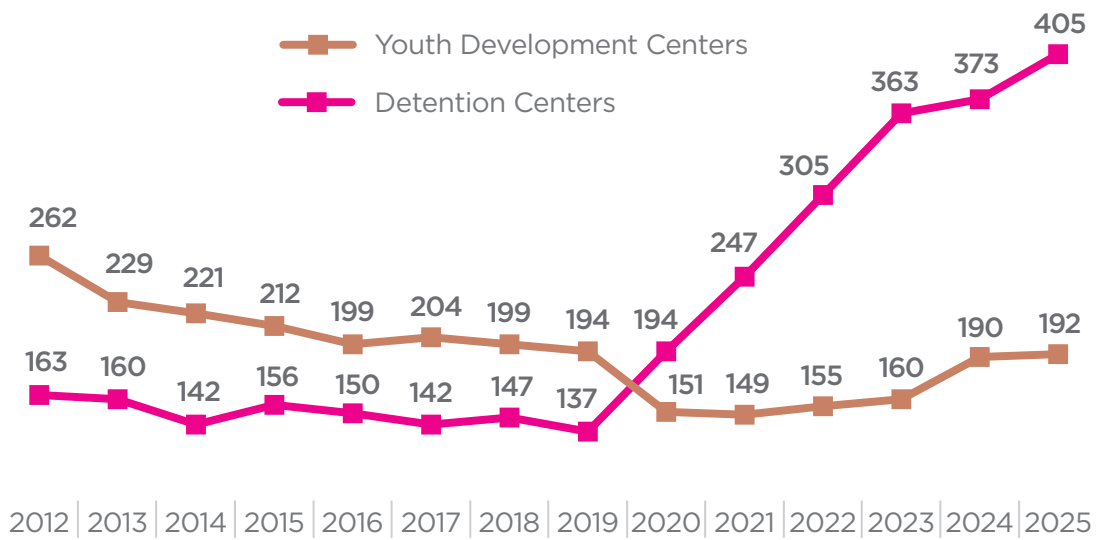
YDC Commitments 2012-2025



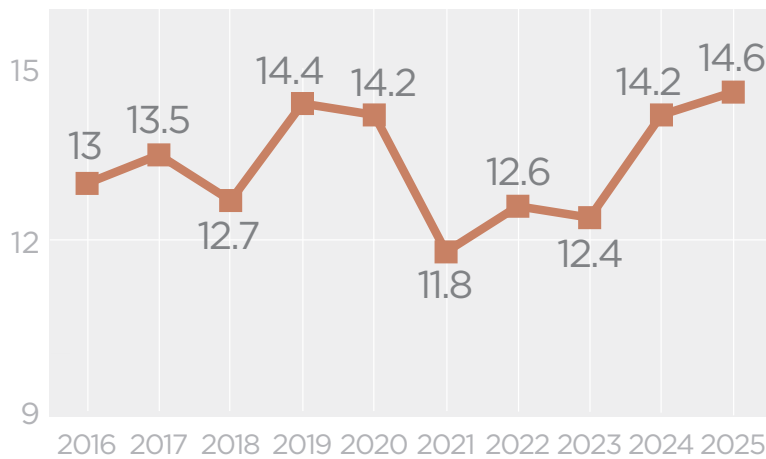
Average Daily Population

In 2025, the daily YDC population averaged 192 juveniles, who stayed for an average commitment length of 14.6 months.

Youth Development Center (YDC) and Detention Center (DC) ADP by Year 2012-2025



Average Length of Commitment in Months in Youth Development Centers 2016-2025



Facility Capacity

CY 2025

The average daily population at juvenile detention centers statewide in 2025 was 405 youth. For the sixth year in a row, detention average daily population exceeded the youth development center average daily population.

Facility Capacity and Average Daily Population

Facility Type	Facility	Capacity*	Average Daily Population
Youth Development Centers	Cabarrus	64	62.0
	Chatham	32	31.0
	Edgecombe	44	43.4
	Lenoir	44	43.9
	Rockingham	12	12.1
State-Operated Juvenile Detention Centers	Alexander	24	29.6
	Cabarrus	94	90.4
	Cumberland	18	22.0
	Dillon	90	64.7
	New Hanover	18	20.0
	Perquimans	24	24.4
	Pitt	18	22.8
	Richmond Jenkins	24	11.9
	Rockingham	48	30.9
	Wake	24	23.8
County-Operated Juvenile Detention Centers	Brunswick	10	9.2
	Durham	14	20.7
	Guilford	32	33.2
	Madison	25**	0.3

Detention by facility excludes Western Area Multi-Purpose Juvenile Crisis and Assessment Center and Eastern Area Juvenile Crisis and Assessment Center

* Capacity in this table indicates the physical bed capacity of each facility. Depending upon staffing and other factors, operational capacity may be lower than listed here.

** Capacity reduced to zero after January 3, 2025

Clinical Services and Programming

CY 2025

Juveniles committed to North Carolina’s Youth Development Centers in 2025 presented with multiple and complex behavioral health needs. A representative point-in-time survey of youth confined in youth development centers on Dec. 31, 2025 (138 males and 22 females), revealed that:

- 99.4% carried at least one mental health diagnosis;
- 43% had co-occurring mental health and substance use diagnoses;
- 58.1% were taking prescribed psychotropic medication (86.4% of girls and 53.6% of boys);
- youth committed to YDCs had an average of 4.7 distinct mental health and/or substance use disorder diagnoses, and in some cases as many as 12.

In 2025, the most common diagnoses among YDC youth were disruptive, impulse-control, and conduct disorders. These involve behaviors that conflict with social rules or violate others’ rights. 89.8% of YDC youth had at least one such diagnosis (88% of males, 100% of females). Conduct Disorder affected 78% overall (78% males, 77% females), while Oppositional Defiant Disorder was found in 35% (40% males, 32% females).

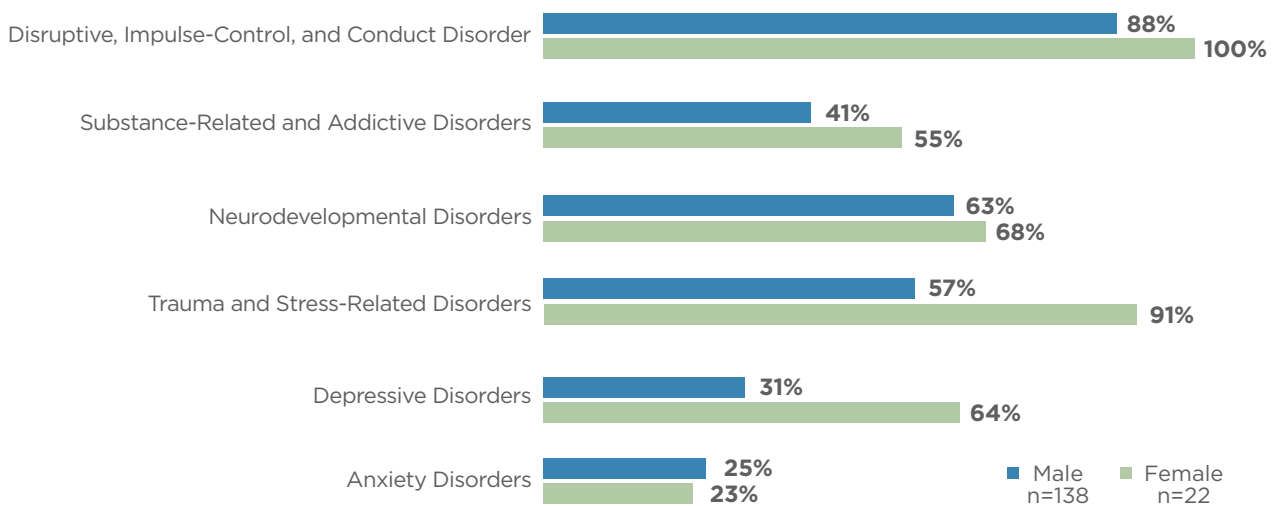
Neurodevelopmental disorders were the second most common diagnosis, affecting 64% of YDC participants (63% males, 68% females). These early-onset conditions can impact functioning across multiple areas, including learning, social interaction, communication abilities, and behavioral regulation. ADHD was most prevalent, found in 56% of the group (59% males, 41% females).

Trauma- and stress-related disorders affected 61% of the YDC population, stemming from exposure to traumatic or stressful events. These disorders were more common in females (91%) than males (57%). Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder was the most frequent diagnosis in this category, present in 35% overall—59% of females and 31% of males.

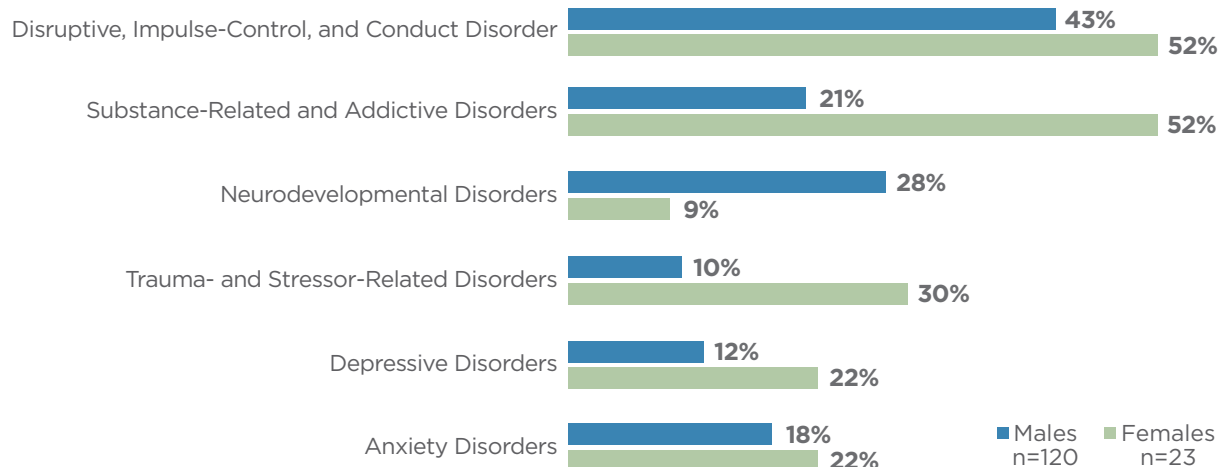
The 2025 survey at the YDC used the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) inventory to measure exposure to traumatic events before age 18—including abuse, neglect, and household challenges—yielding scores from 0-10 based on reported experiences. A higher ACE score correlates with increased risks of delinquency, violence, health concerns, suicidal behavior, depression, anxiety disorders, substance misuse, learning difficulties, chronic physical illnesses, trouble maintaining relationships, and difficulty regulating

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Most Prevalent Diagnostics by Percentage of YDC Population



Most Prevalent Diagnostic with the Contract Residential Population



emotions. It can also indicate greater odds of involvement with criminal justice systems, impaired academic performance, and barriers to employment and stable housing. Among YDC youth, the average ACE score was 4. For comparison, studies indicate that the average ACE score in the general population is around 3.1, highlighting elevated risk factors among YDC youth.



Substance-related and addictive disorders were the fourth most common diagnosis in the YDC population, affecting 43% (41% of males, 55% of females). Of these, 97% involved cannabis; 2.7% were related to opioid, alcohol, hallucinogen, or stimulant abuse. This mirrors recent diagnostic trends, with substance use disorders dropping from 74% in 2015 to 43%, aside from a slight increase in 2023 and 2024.

Depressive disorders affected 36% of YDC residents (31% of males, 64% of females), and anxiety disorders affected 24% overall (25% of males, 23% of females), making them the fifth and sixth most common diagnoses in this group.

CONTRACTUAL RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

A representative point-in-time survey of youth confined in the contract residential population (CRP) on Dec. 31, 2025 (120 males and 23 females), revealed that:

- 79% carried at least one mental health diagnosis
- 22% had co-occurring mental health and substance use diagnoses and;
- 22% were taking prescribed psychotropic medication (45% of females and 18% of males);

Disruptive, impulse-control, and conduct disorders are the most common diagnoses among contract residential youth, affecting 45% (43% of males, 52% of females), down from 62% in 2024. Substance-related and addictive disorders involve 26% of the population (21% males, 52% females). Neurodevelopmental disorders account for 25% (28% males, 9% females). Anxiety disorders impact 18%, while trauma and stress-related disorders affect 13% (10% males, 30% females). Depressive disorders also affect 13% (12% males, 22% females). The average ACE score for all CRP youth is 3.

Education Services

CY 2025

Juvenile Justice Education Services (JJES) serves a diverse population of students and provides instruction and activities that support students' goals for a successful transition to their communities. Depending on the student's academic standing and personal goals, he/she will receive:

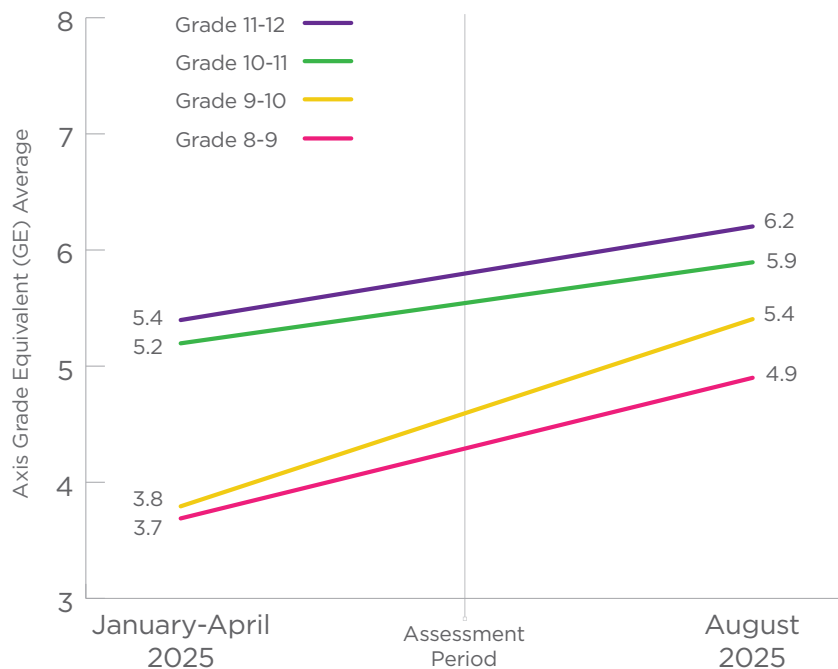
- Instruction aligned to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, which leads to a standard high school diploma;
- Instruction toward obtaining their high school equivalency (HSE) by passing all sections of the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET); or
- Enrollment in a web-based postsecondary course.

Upon entry to a juvenile detention center or youth development center, students' reading and math skills are assessed through the STAR assessment.

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In 2025, 61 youth in juvenile justice facilities earned their high school diplomas, 26 earned their high school equivalency (HiSet) and 64 enrolled in community college courses.

Star Math Enterprise:
Grade Equivalent (GE) Averages by Grade

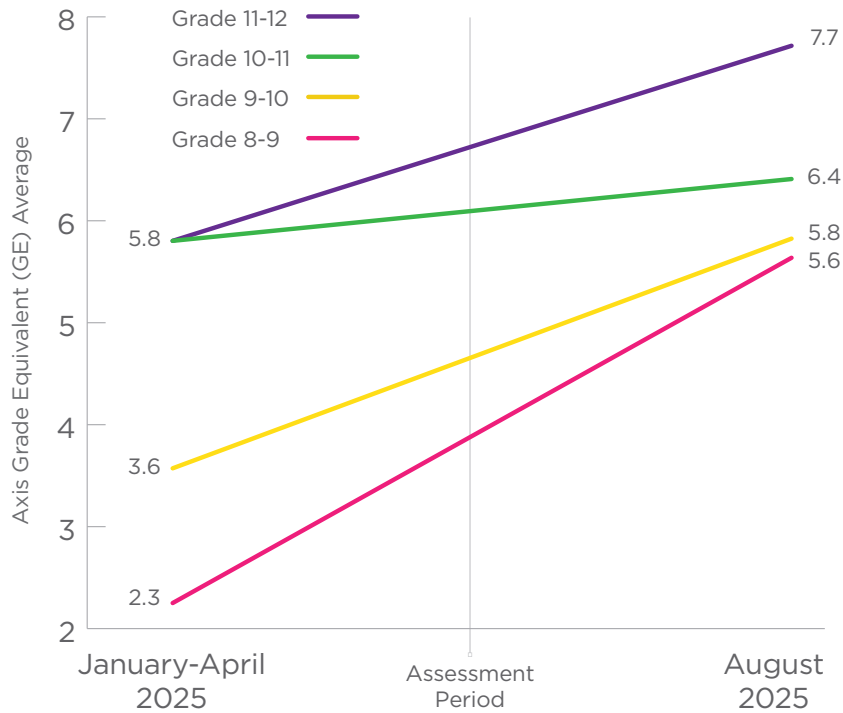


Juvenile Justice classrooms are led by teachers licensed by the NC Department of Public Instruction who provide personalized instruction, incorporating direct instruction as well as supplemental web-based instruction. While most students are enrolled in core curriculum courses (English, Math, Science, Social Studies), they also have the opportunity to take career and technical education (CTE) courses such as Career Management, Personal Finance, Entrepreneurship, Horticulture or Principles of Business. Students who are pursuing their HSE diploma receive instruction from a community college instructor through partnerships established between the learning centers, youth academies, and local community colleges.

Students who qualify for special education services receive support from exceptional children's (EC) teachers and/or related service providers as stated in their individual education program (IEP), per the federal legislation Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Student data indicates that when individuals enter Juvenile Justice classrooms their test scores are significantly below grade level. However, while attending school in JDC's and YDCs, these students demonstrate significant academic gains. Notably, new data for this year shows 8th to 10th grade students are showing faster growth compared to our 10th to 12th grade students.

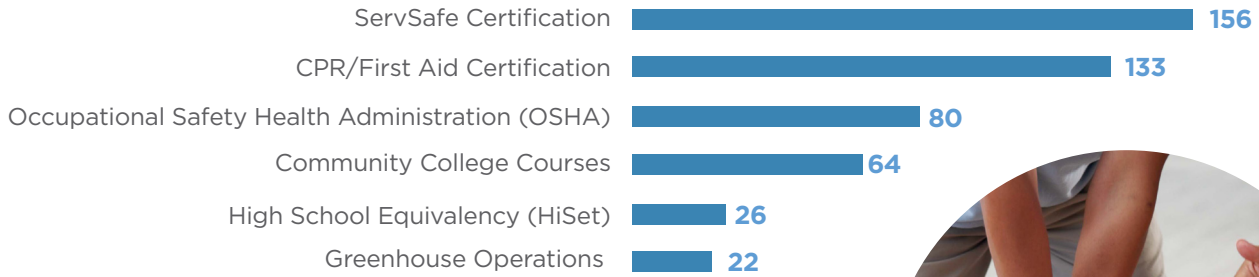
Star Reading Enterprise:
 Grade Equivalent (GE) Averages by Grade



Students Participating in Career Preparation

CY 2025

Post-Secondary Programs, Certifications and Credentials CY 2025



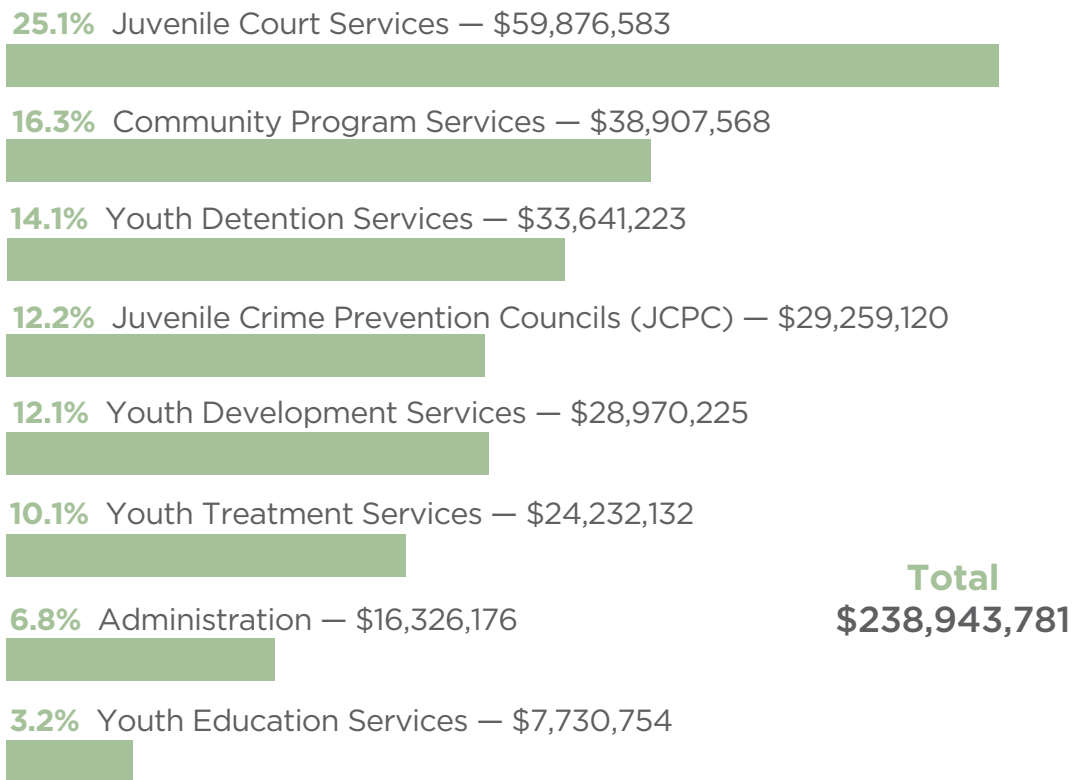
*Youth may participate in more than one career preparation and post-secondary program.



Budget

CY 2025

2025 Appropriations



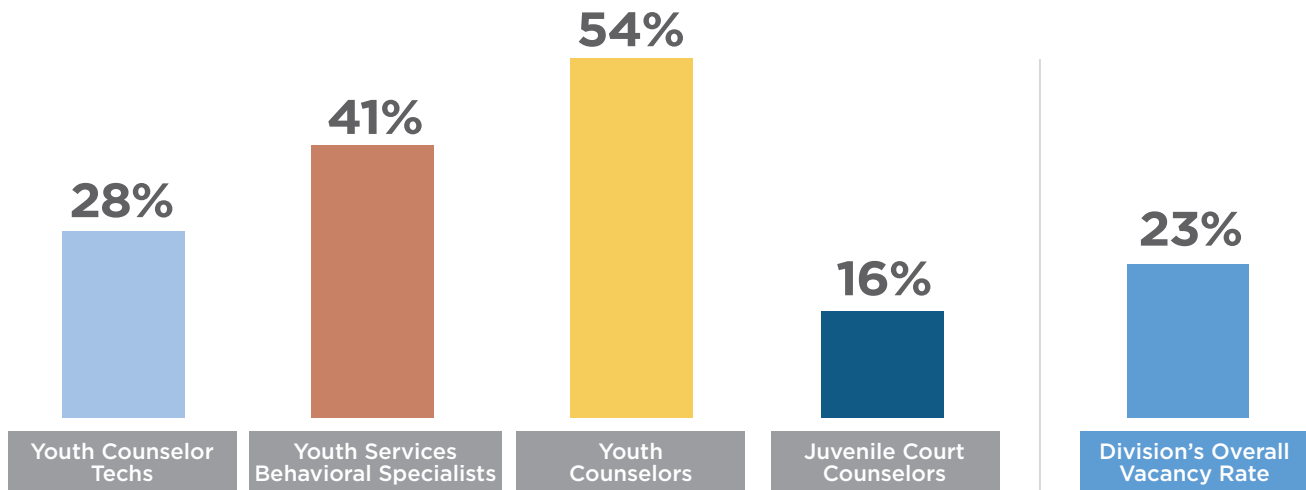
Employees and Staffing

CY 2025

Juvenile Justice Employees

Section	Total Number of Staff	Number of Criminal Justice Certified Staff	% of Staff who are Criminal Justice Certified
Community Programs	31	0	0%
Court Services	682	579	85%
Facility Services (Includes Education/Health/Clinical)	968	764	79%
Transportation Services	75	65	87%
Administration	77	0	0%
Total	1,833	1,408	77%

Percent of Direct Care Positions that are Vacant



Notes:

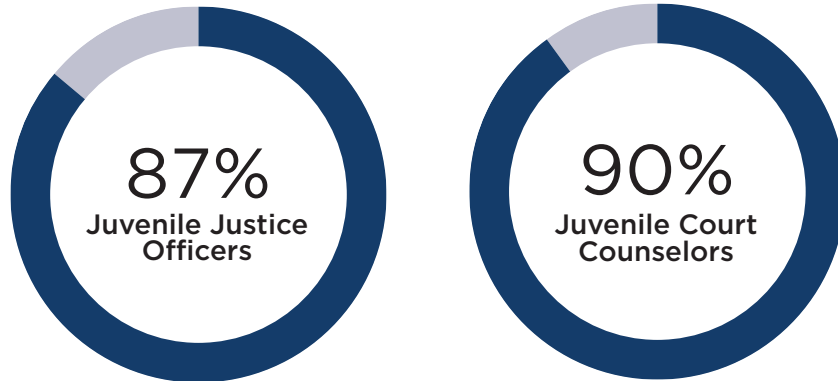
- As of December 2025
- The Division's overall vacancy rate remained consistent at 23% between December 2024 and December 2025



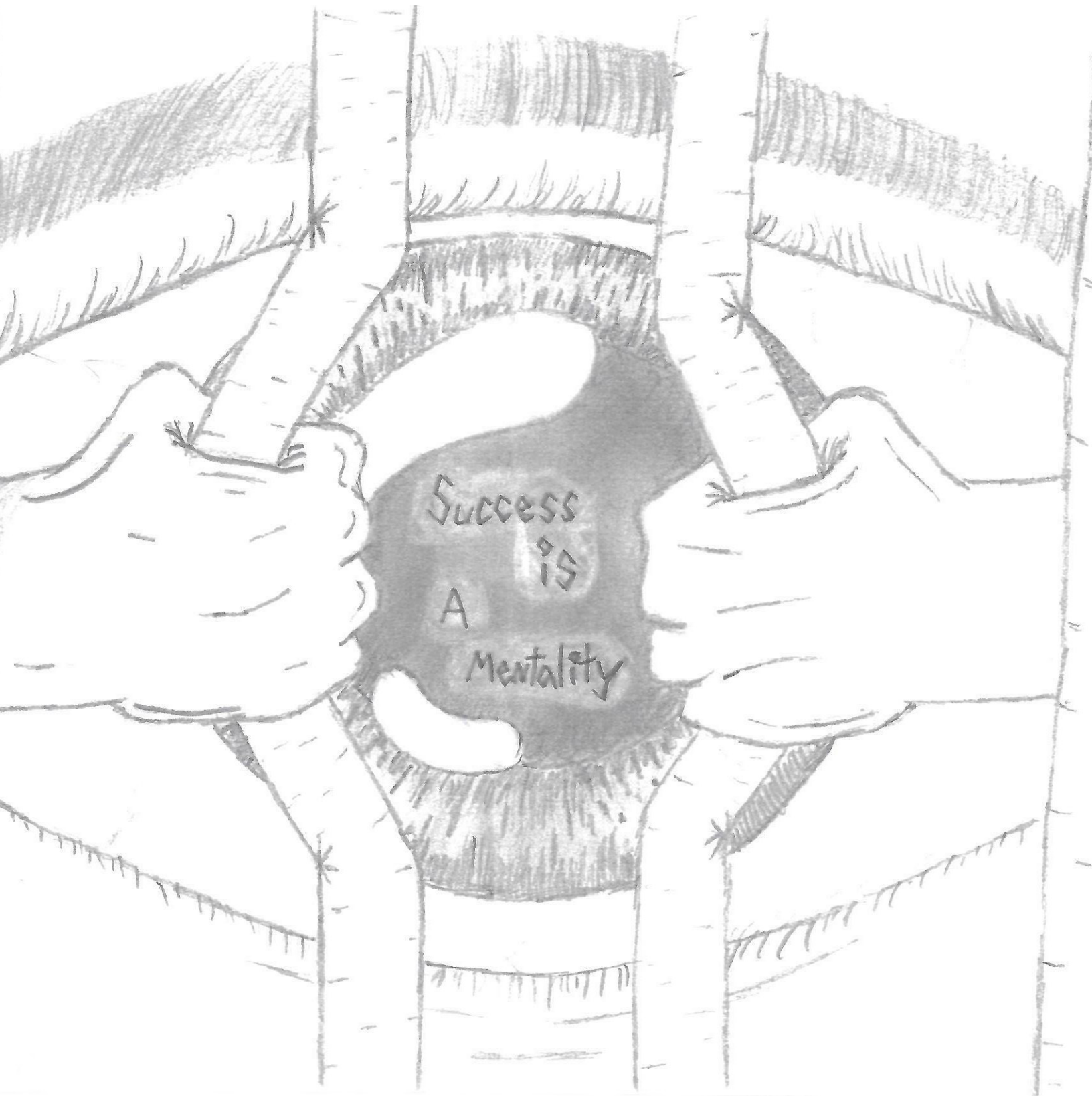
Basic Training

CY 2025

Basic Training Certification Exam Pass Percentages



All Basic Training Classes			
Class Type	Total # Trainees	Total # Passed	% Passed
Females	145	129	88.97%
Males	111	96	86.49%
Total	256	225	87.89%
Juvenile Justice Officers	163	141	86.50%
Juvenile Court Counselors	93	84	90.32%



Juvenile Justice and
Delinquency Prevention
NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

