

2024 Annual Report



Comprehensive Map

Juvenile Justice facilities in North Carolina

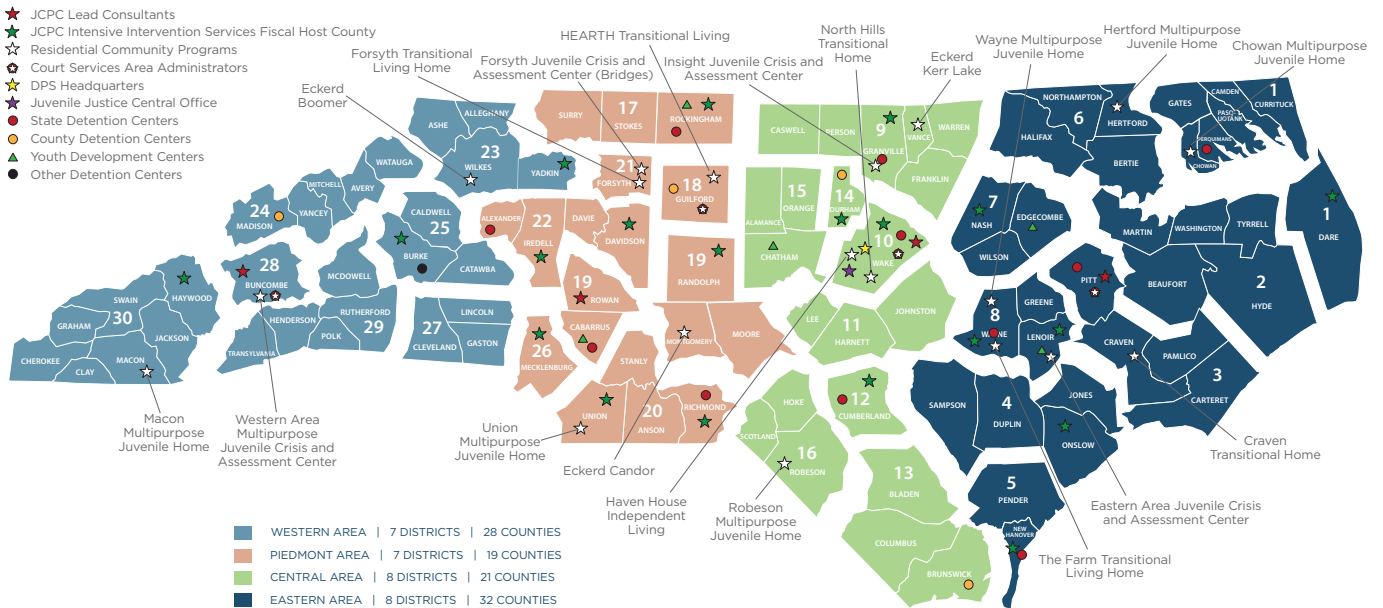


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Residents of North Carolina,

I am pleased to present the 2024 Annual Report on behalf of the Department of Public Safety, Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (DJJDP).

In 2024, DJJDP made significant strides in improving staffing and housing capacity in our state's juvenile detention centers. Thanks to the implementation of a comprehensive salary plan in late 2023, as well as a concentrated effort to improve recruitment and retention, the division's overall vacancy rate decreased from 34% in January 2024 to 23% in December 2024.



Meanwhile, the state's juvenile detention capacity increased substantially in 2024 with the reopening of Perquimans Juvenile Detention Center in eastern North Carolina, and the grand opening of Rockingham Youth Development Center in Reidsville. Together these sites created 48 new detention beds, and more will come online at Rockingham YDC once that facility is fully staffed.

Renovations were also underway throughout the year at Richmond Juvenile Detention Center in Hoffman, which has an anticipated opening date in winter 2026. Additionally, site selection got underway in late 2024 for a new juvenile detention center, after the General Assembly provided planning funds toward construction of a new facility.

One of the most significant legislative changes for DJJDP in 2024 was the implementation of HB 834 (SL 2024-17). Effective Dec. 1, 2024, 16- and 17-year-olds are now automatically charged as adults if they are alleged to have committed a class A-E felony. Because adult court youth tend to have longer lengths of stay in juvenile detention centers (200 days vs. 27 days for non-adult court youth), we anticipate that a growing adult court population in our facilities may create new capacity challenges for DJJDP in 2025 and beyond.

As we focus on providing appropriate services for this older population, both adult court youth and those who remain under juvenile jurisdiction, we have had to rethink the way we provide services—including reentry programming and education. I am proud to report that 50 youth earned either their high school diploma or equivalency in 2024, 57 youth participated in post-secondary education, and hundreds more engaged in vocational programming.

In 2024, we were able to further enhance this programming through the deployment of more than 500 tablets in our facilities. In addition to creating new opportunities for education in the classroom, these tablets also afford youth more opportunities to expand their horizons through access to eBooks, financial literacy courses, and a wide variety of independent study resources that allow them to explore their individual passions.

On the public outreach front, 2024 marked the continuation of the NC S.A.F.E. (Secure All Firearms Effectively) campaign, a major DJJDP initiative designed to educate North Carolinians on best practices for safe firearm storage. Since this campaign got underway in 2023, DJJDP professionals have distributed thousands of gun locks to firearm owners at community events throughout the state. This campaign also includes a wide-reaching media and marketing campaign, reaching countless North Carolinians with potentially lifesaving messaging through advertising, sponsorships and media spotlights.

Looking ahead to 2025, I am excited to continue the life-changing work we do each day to support our state's most vulnerable youth. For many of the young people in our care, Juvenile Justice can represent the final backstop when all other support systems may have failed them. I sincerely appreciate the efforts of our staff members to create new opportunities for these youth, and the ongoing support of community stakeholders.

Sincerely,

William Lassiter, Deputy Secretary

Year in Review

2024 was a year of challenges and triumphs for the Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, with many long-term projects coming to fruition to help address some of the division's most pressing needs.

EXPANDING CAPACITY

DJJDP opened two new facilities in 2024, greatly expanding the division's capacity to house a growing juvenile detention population. Rockingham Youth Development Center opened in June 2024 with a capacity of 12 youth development center commitment beds and 24 juvenile detention center beds. The space allows for a total of 60 beds once fully staffed. Perquimans Juvenile Detention Center began serving youth in July 2024 and offers 24 beds. Renovations at Richmond Juvenile Detention Center are set to be completed by February 2026 and site selection remained underway in late 2024 for a new juvenile detention center.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

DJJDP experienced an overall decrease in staff vacancies during 2024, thanks in large part to the implementation of a legislatively authorized salary plan for four direct care positions within the DJJDP Facility Operations and Court Services sections. This salary plan benefited both new hires and existing employees, simultaneously improving both recruitment and retention. In addition, DJJDP recruiters hosted dozens of hiring events throughout the year and partnered with the DPS Communications Office to build a strong recruitment marketing campaign, placing the Division in a stronger position to recruit staff.

HB 834/S.L. 2024-17 IMPLEMENTATION

In preparation for the implementation of House Bill 834/S.L. 2024-17, Court Services began equipping staff statewide with the necessary training, tools and resources to ensure a seamless transition. This effort included comprehensive education sessions and collaboration with community partners to promote understanding and alignment on the bill's objectives. By fostering readiness and building partnerships, leadership laid the foundation for implementation.

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

Throughout 2024, DJJDP staff continued to spread the message of safe firearm storage through the NC S.A.F.E. (Secure All Firearms Effectively) initiative. Since the campaign began in 2023, DJJDP staff members have engaged with countless North Carolinians and distributed thousands of gun locks to firearm owners. In 2024 specifically, the campaign expanded its reach by partnering with local health departments, pediatricians, suicide prevention teams, churches and school resource officers.

EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMING IN FACILITIES

Education Services staff continued efforts in 2024 to provide quality educational and vocational activities for youth in all DJJDP facilities. Over the course of the year, 37 youth earned their high school diploma, 13 earned a HiSET equivalency, 57 participated in post-secondary education and 238 engaged in some type of vocational programming.

REENTRY SIMULATIONS PREPARE YOUTH FOR LIFE

During Second Chance Month in April, youth development centers throughout the state hosted a series of real-world reentry simulations designed to teach youth about the realities of adult life - from selecting a career to maintaining a balanced budget while juggling bills, childcare and other expenses. These simulations were especially beneficial for the division's 16 and older population, many of whom will be on the cusp of adulthood when they return to the community.

NEW RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

The Yanceyville Boys Academy began admitting youth in August 2024. Eckerd Connects, the vendor contracted to deliver its residential model, sponsored an on-site open house in May 2024. The new residential 40-bed program model increases access to services based on referrals from DJJDP Court Services and district courts, while reducing youth development center admissions. The program is four to nine months in duration and serves youth statewide.



TEEN COURT EVALUATION

The Community Programs section initiated its first statewide teen court evaluation through a collaboration with the NC Office of Strategic Partnerships (OSP). Through the assistance of OSP and a grant from the NC Evaluation Fund, the section executed a memorandum of agreement with Montreat College researchers, who completed their evaluation in June 2024. The average rate of recidivism for those approved for juvenile court was 21.49% while the rate of recidivism for those referred to teen court was 4.73%, making a difference of means of about 17%.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAMMING EXPANDED

Several key initiatives were carried out in early 2024 to incorporate restorative justice practices across the division. This included hiring a JJDP restorative justice coordinator to conduct community circles within DJJDP secure custody facilities and maintain the fidelity of these practices.

TABLETS DEPLOYED IN DJJDP FACILITIES

As of November 2024, more than 500 tablets had been deployed at all juvenile facilities to utilize for programming such as Essential Ed, Carey Guides (cognitive behavioral worksheets), Ebooks, National Correction Works, Kolibri (Khan Academy) and others.

ESCAPE DRILLS CONDUCTED

In the second half of 2024, DJJDP Facility Operations and the DPS Communications Office conducted a series of escape drills at DJJDP facilities throughout the state. These drills provided a valuable opportunity to gauge and improve the readiness of DJJDP and Communications staff to respond to escapes. The feedback compiled from each of these drills will further continuous quality improvement efforts.

Comprehensive Strategy

The NC Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention works to provide the state of North Carolina with a comprehensive strategy that helps prevent and reduce juvenile delinquency. This strategy focuses on strengthening families, promoting delinquency prevention, supporting core social institutions, intervening immediately and effectively when delinquent behavior occurs.

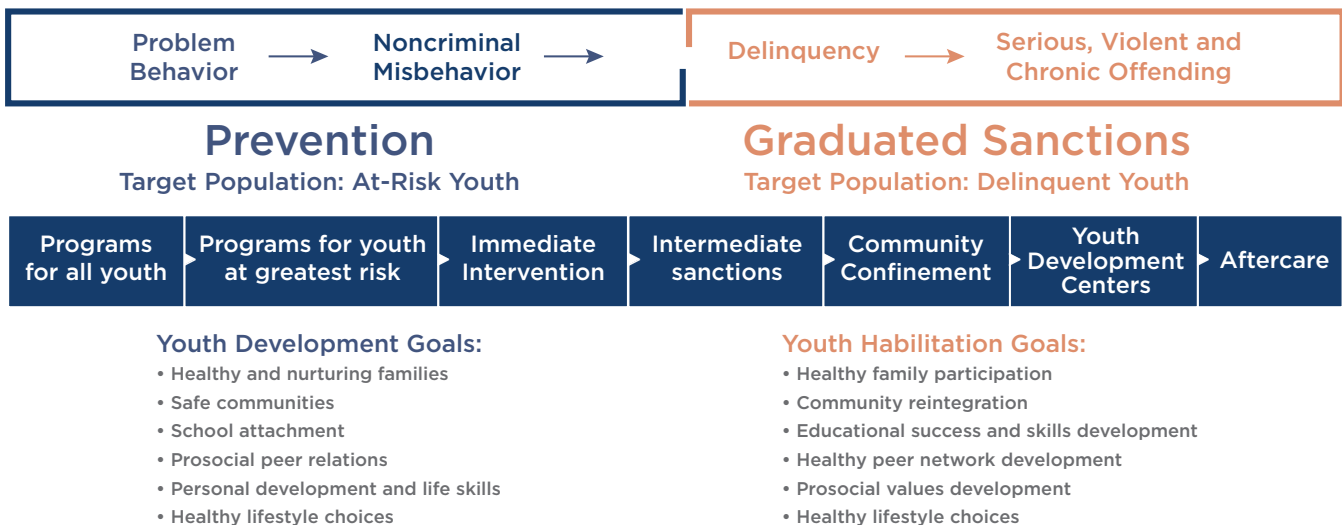
The Division provides a full continuum of interventions involving all children and youth ages 8-17 either at-risk, vulnerable, or alleged to or have been found to have committed an undisciplined or delinquent offense.

The Division uses a comprehensive strategy rooted in social science and evidence-based practices throughout the continuum to achieve its outcomes (Howell, 2009). The strategy allows for a system of graduated responses based on a youth's seriousness of risk/ behavior or offense, their history of offending, coupled with the needs of the youth and their family or support systems within their local communities. DJJDP's philosophy is that to be evidence-based and effective, 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 and values 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 use of graduated sanctions with youth. The initial data displays the early stages of the continuum (focusing on the programs targeted at the youth at greatest risk of entering the juvenile justice system and those receiving beginning or intermediate sanctions or dispositions, through Juvenile Community Programs). The following data encompasses information regarding those entering the juvenile justice system through their alleged delinquent behavior, through Juvenile Court Services; and 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

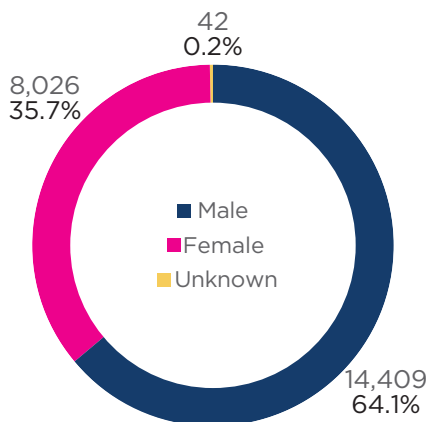
FY 2024

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.

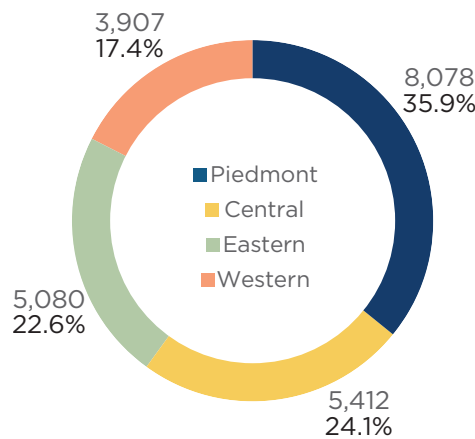
Programming and services funded through JCPCs, targeted in each county to address the problem areas, risks and needs of its juvenile population, include: assessment, clinical treatment, structured day programs, residential programs, restorative justice, mentoring and skill-building programs.

By Age

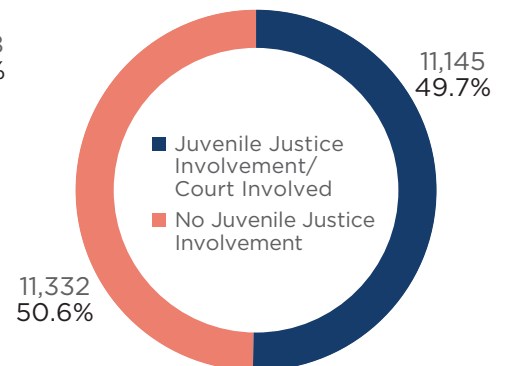
<=10	1,727
11-13	6,189
14-15	7,895
>=16	6,666



By Sex



By Region



By Legal Status

By Race/Ethnicity

Black or African American	9,812
White	7,785
Hispanic/Latino	2,906
Unknown	950
Two or More Races	517
American Indian or Alaska Native	355
Asian	118
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	34

Youth Served

FY 2024

JCPC Youth Served by Program Type

Program Type	Youth Served
Interpersonal Skill Building	5,134
Restitution/Community Service	4,980
Teen Court	4,133
Tutoring/Academic Enhancement	1,408
Assessments	1,157
Mediation/Conflict Resolution	990
Juvenile Structured Day	756
Parent/Family Skill Building	673
Mentoring	552
Individual Counseling	505
Group Counseling	477
Vocational Skills	475
Experiential Skill Building	264
Home-Based Family Counseling	238
Family Counseling	215
Substance Abuse Counseling	194
Temporary Shelter Care	181
Runaway Shelter Care	98
Services Addressing Problem Sexual Behavior	38
Specialized Foster Care	9
Total	22,477

Youth Served by Funding Source

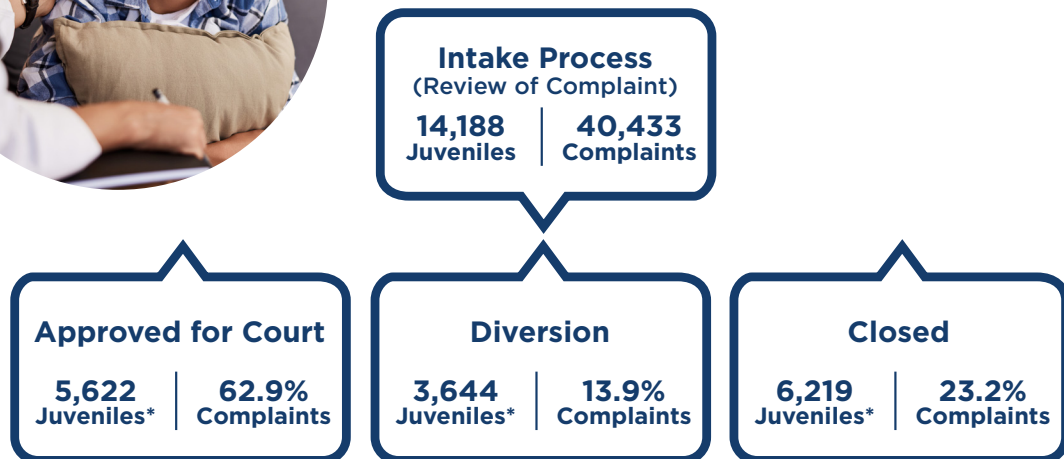
Funding Source	Youth Served
JCPC Funds	22,477
Intensive Intervention Services	362
Community-Based Contractual Services	411
Residential Contractual Services	752
Total	24,002

DECISION OUTCOMES

CY 2024

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 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 14,188.

Complaints Received

2011-2024

Due to significant legislative juvenile jurisdictional changes, the juvenile justice system experienced upper and lower age boundary modifications. 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)
- 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)
- 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 begin in the juvenile justice system.

Between January 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 8-9 year olds. For the final month of 2024, 16- and 17-year-old youth charged with an A-E felony offense were adjudicated as appropriate in criminal court.

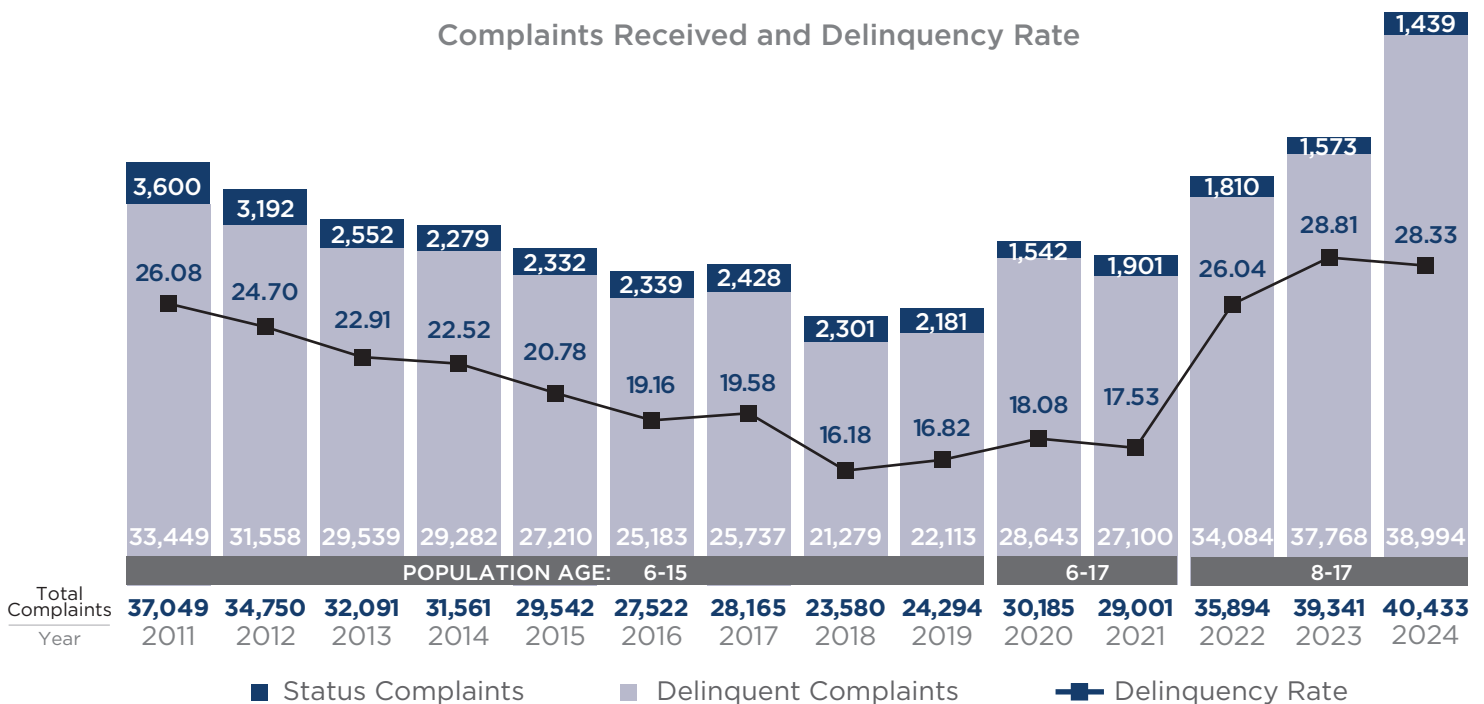
The number of 16- and 17-year-old juveniles served in Community Programs has increased steadily — by 67% since 2019 — following implementation of Raise the Age. Raise the Age juveniles are more likely to receive intensive community intervention services.

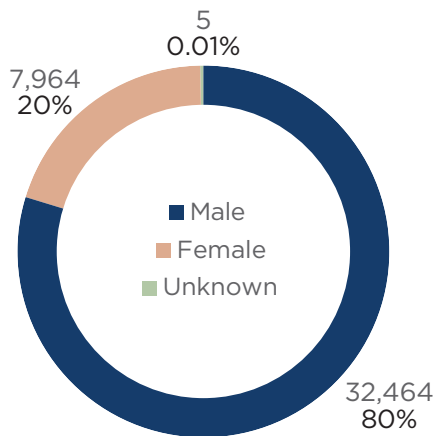
Commitments to youth development centers have not risen significantly since last year.

Forty-five percent of all delinquency complaints received in 2024 were linked to youth aged 16- or 17-year-old on the date of offense.

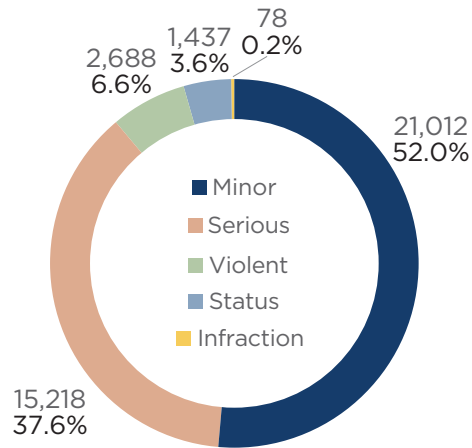
The 2024 juvenile delinquency rate is 28.33. This reflects full implementation of the added Raise the Age population, along with the reduction in 6- and 7-year-olds who are now served through vulnerable juvenile consultation instead of through juvenile jurisdiction (approximately 100-300 complaints regarding juveniles under age 10 occurred annually, prior to raising the minimum age).

Complaints Received and Delinquency Rate





Complaints Received by Sex



Complaints Received by Offense Class

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED CY 2024

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 (52%) are for minor offenses. Status offenses are offenses that are based on the youth's age (e.g., runaway, truancy, etc.) and represent only 3.6% of all complaints received.

Complaints Received by Age

Age <=10	339
Age 11	884
Age 12	2,075
Age 13	4,087
Age 14	6,806
Age 15	8,542
Age 16	8,896
Age 17	8,804

Complaints Received by Race/Ethnicity

Black or African American	24,919
White	9,213
Hispanic/Latino	3,966
Two or More Races	1,153
Unknown	558
American Indian or Alaska Native	463
Asian	134
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	27

Complaints by Age <=10

Age 6	—
Age 7	—
Age 8	2
Age 9	4
Age 10	333

Juvenile School-Based Offenses

CY 2024

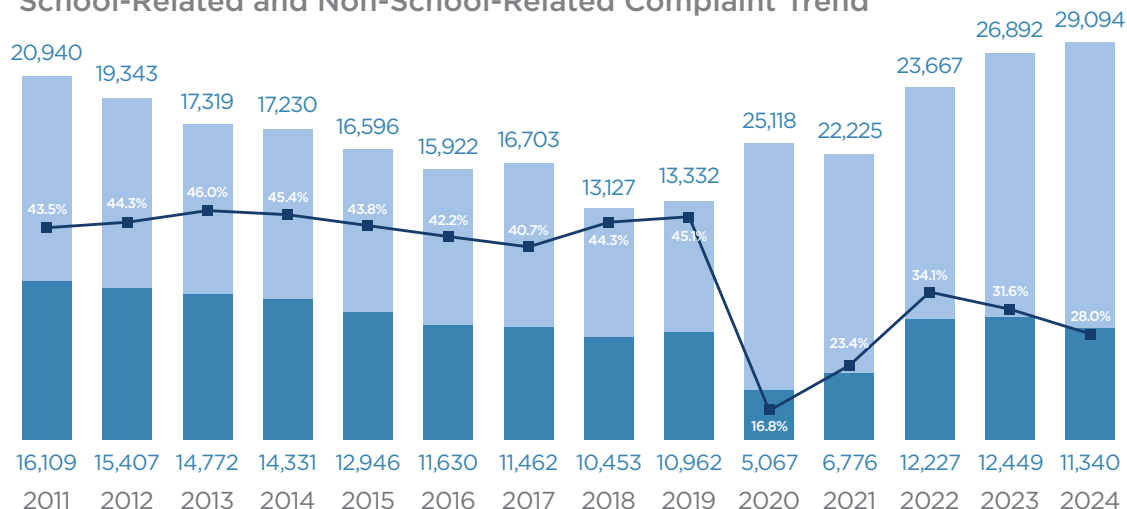
A school-based offense is an offense that occurs on school grounds, school property (buses, etc.), at a school bus stop, or at an off-campus school-sanctioned event (field trips, athletic competitions, etc.) or whose victim is a school

(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 2024

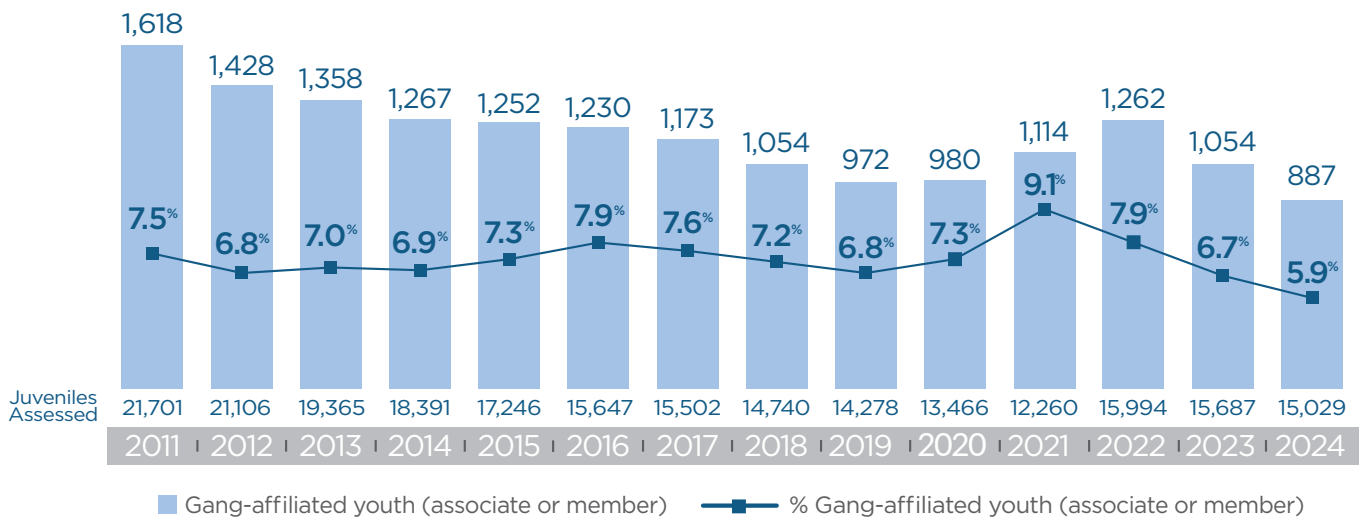
Charged Offense	Complaints
(M) misdemeanor (F) felony (S) status offense	
Simple assault (M)	2,221
Simple affray (M)	1,434
Disorderly Conduct at School (M)	1,176
Communicating threats (M)	658
Truant < 16 (S)	504
Possession of weapons other than firearms and explosives on school grounds (M)	463
Communicating Threat of Mass Violence on Educational Property (F)	432
Assault school employee/volunteer (M)	328
Assault government official/employee (M)	300
Disorderly Conduct by engaging in fighting or other violent conduct or in conduct creating the threat of imminent fighting or other violence (M)	293

School-Related and Non-School-Related Complaint Trend



*School-based offenses decreased in 2020 and 2021 largely due to the coronavirus pandemic and accompanying school closures.

Juvenile Gang Associates or Members 2011-2024



Top 10 Juvenile Offenses: CY 2024

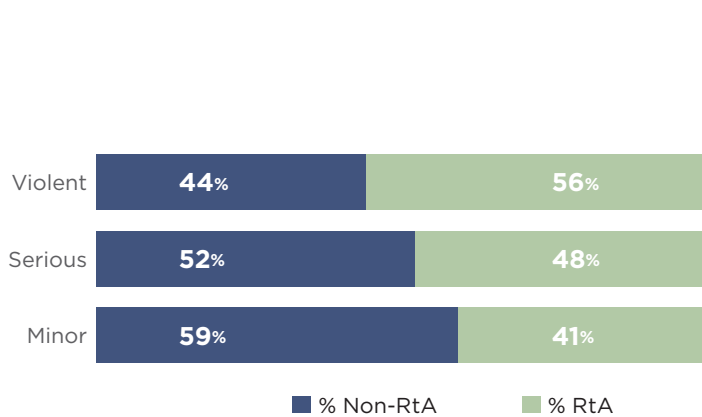
Offense	Complaints	Distinct Juveniles	Complaints per Juvenile
(M) misdemeanor (F) felony (S) status offense			
Simple assault (M)	3,753	3,138	1.2
Break or enter a motor vehicle (F)	3,643	669	5.4
Larceny of a motor vehicle (F)	1,789	682	2.6
Larceny (M)	1,692	988	1.7
Simple affray (M)	1,561	1,431	1.1
Resisting public officer (M)	1,374	1,215	1.1
Disorderly Conduct at School (M)	1,181	1,057	1.1
Communicating threats (M)	1,083	901	1.2
Possess handgun by minor (M)	1,011	787	1.3
Injury to real property (M)	879	681	1.3

Raise The Age Offenses

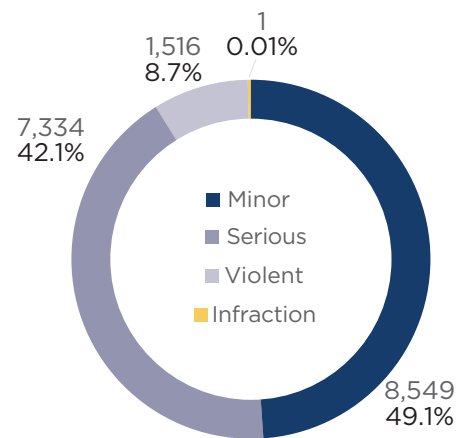
CY 2024

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

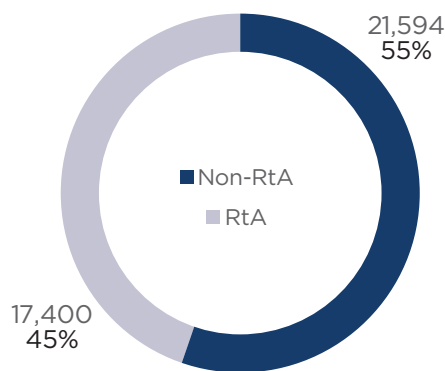
felonies and/or misdemeanors. On Dec. 1, 2024, HB 834 (S.L. 2024-17) went into effect in North Carolina, automatically placing 16- and 17-year-olds charged with Class A-E felonies in criminal court. This change for one month of 2024 will be reflected in this annual report.



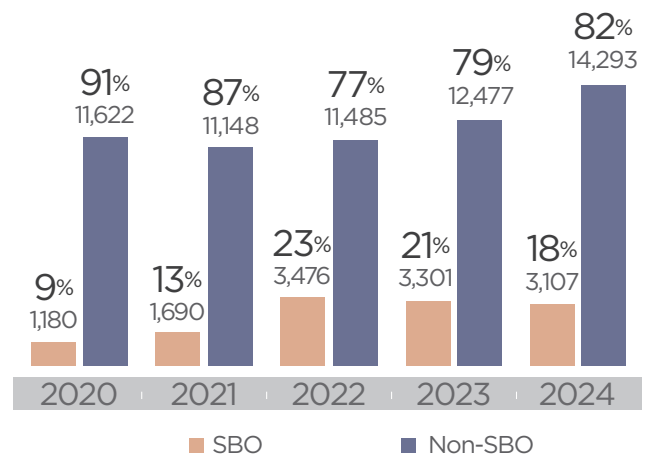
Non-RtA and RtA Proportions by Offense Class Group



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



Complaints by RtA and Non-RtA Designation



Raise the Age: School-Based Offenses 2020-2024

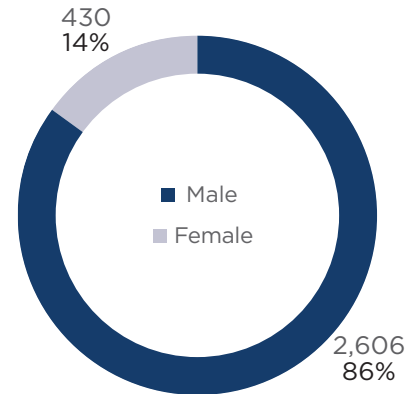
JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER ADMISSIONS CY 2024

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

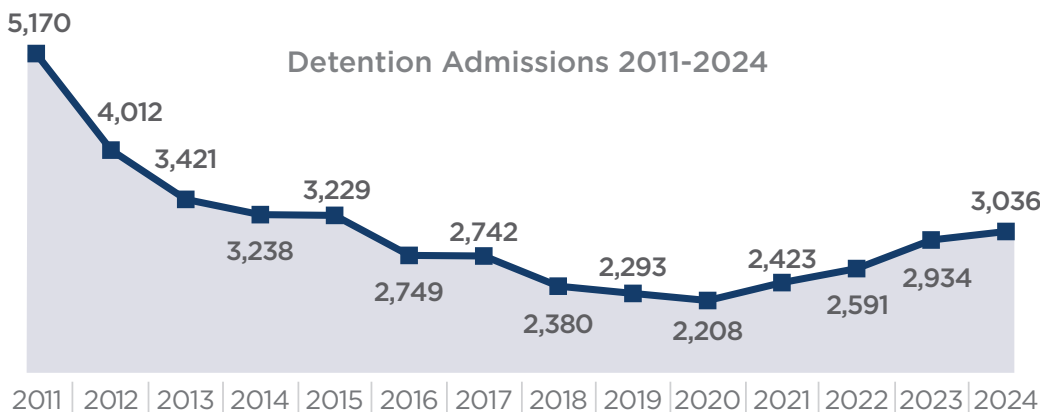
Black or African American	2,177
White	407
Hispanic/Latino	296
Two or More Races	81
American Indian or Alaska Native	33
Unknown	32
Asian	7
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	3

Admissions by Sex



Admissions by Age

<=10	0
11	5
12	42
13	205
14	445
15	622
16	744
17	866
18	88
19	17
20	2



Detention

CY 2024

Two important pieces of legislation have altered the landscape of the state's juvenile detention population in recent years. Most recently, the implementation of HB 834 (SL 2024-17) on Dec. 1, 2024, automatically placed 16- and 17-year-old youth charged with A-E in criminal court, removing them from the juvenile justice system.

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, ensuring compliance with the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. This population includes juveniles classified as "criminal court youth" who are not subject to juvenile court jurisdiction, but rather are charged outside of the juvenile justice system. HB 834 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 criminal court youth.

- **Criminal Court Youth:** By statute some offenses must be heard from beginning to end in the criminal court (adult) system (H593), despite the youth being under the age of 18. "Transfers to Superior Court" (TSC) 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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Detention Average Length of Stay (Days)

Transfers to Superior Court	200
Non-Transfers to Superior Court	27
All Detention Exits	39

2015-2024 Detention Average Length of Stay

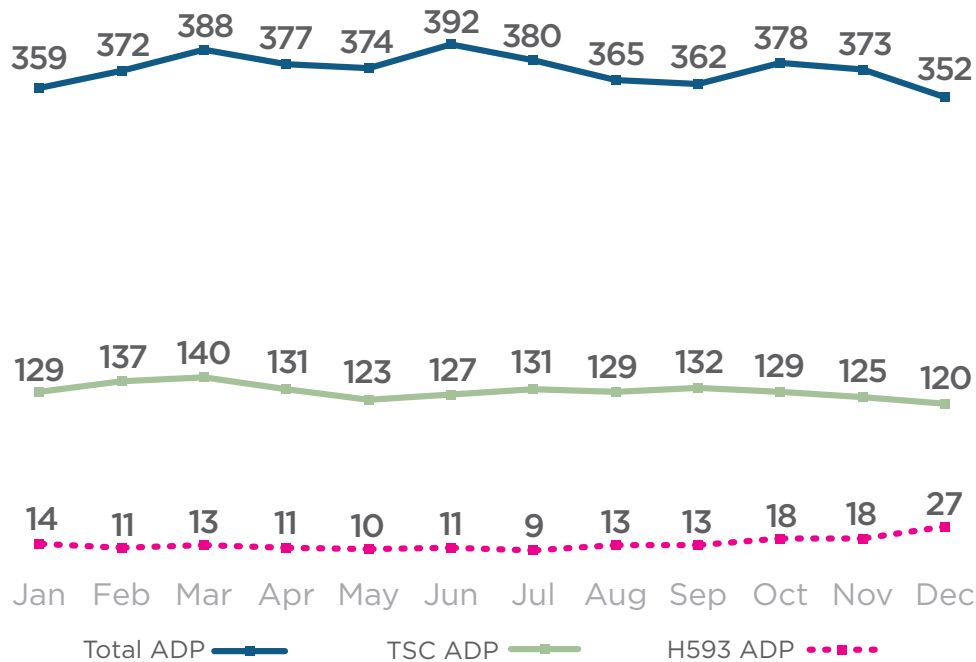
Year	Average Length of Stay (in days)
2015	15
2016	18
2017	17
2018	20
2019	22
2020	25
2021	32
2022	33
2023	35
2024	39

Transfers and superior court youth have a longer length of stay (200 days on average) compared to youth under juvenile jurisdiction (27 days on average). Criminal court youth average length of stay increased from 140 days in 2022 to 200 days in 2024, greatly impacting the availability of juvenile detention beds. Meanwhile, the average length of stay for youth under juvenile jurisdiction has remained unchanged over the past three years. With a 17% increase in admissions to juvenile detention since 2022, and a 43% increase in the criminal court youth's average length of stay, demands on bed capacity have increased.

On Dec. 31, 2024, 43% of the state's juvenile detention population was comprised of criminal court youth. By comparison, criminal court youth made up 33% of the state's juvenile detention population on Dec. 31, 2023. This figure is anticipated to increase in 2025, as more youth are charged as adults under HB 834.

Detention Average Daily Population by Month

Total, H593 and Transfers to Superior Court



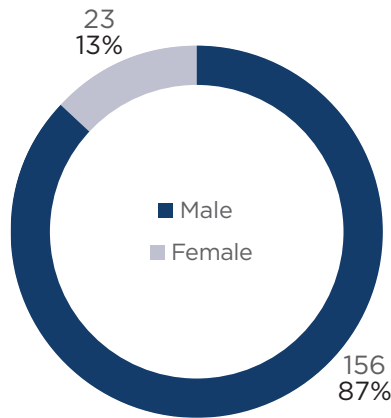
* H593 Criminal Court Youth: By statute some offenses must be heard from beginning to end in the criminal court (adult) system (H593), despite the youth being under the age of 18.

TSC: Transfers to Superior Court cases involve youth who are transferred from juvenile to superior court due to the severity of their charges.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CENTER COMMITMENTS CY 2024

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.



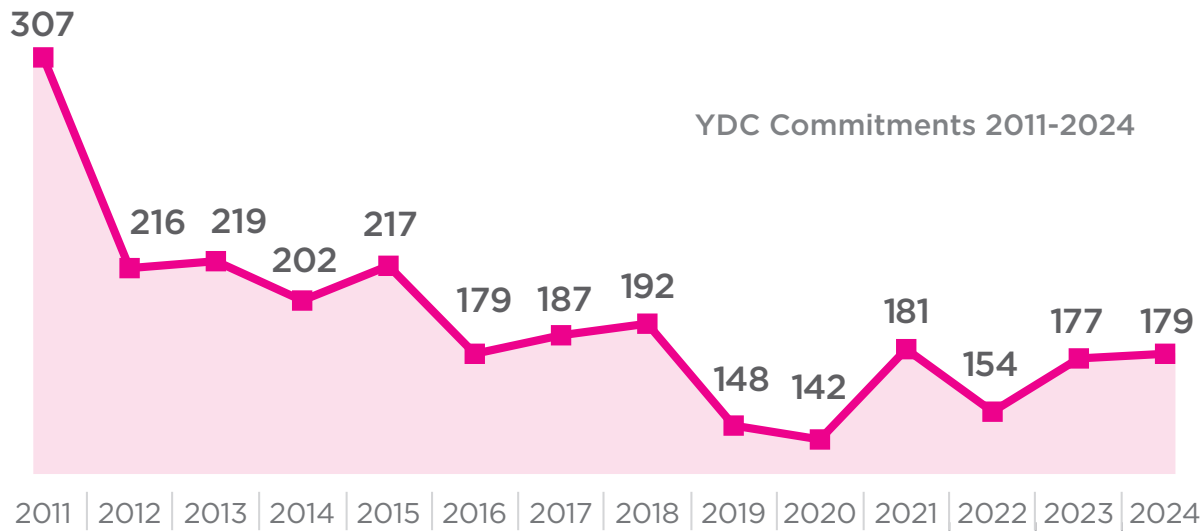
Commitments by Sex

Commitments by Age

13	6
14	16
15	42
16	51
17	48
18	13
19	2
20	1

Black or African American	125
White	29
Hispanic/Latino	13
Two or More Races	8

Commitments by Race/Ethnicity

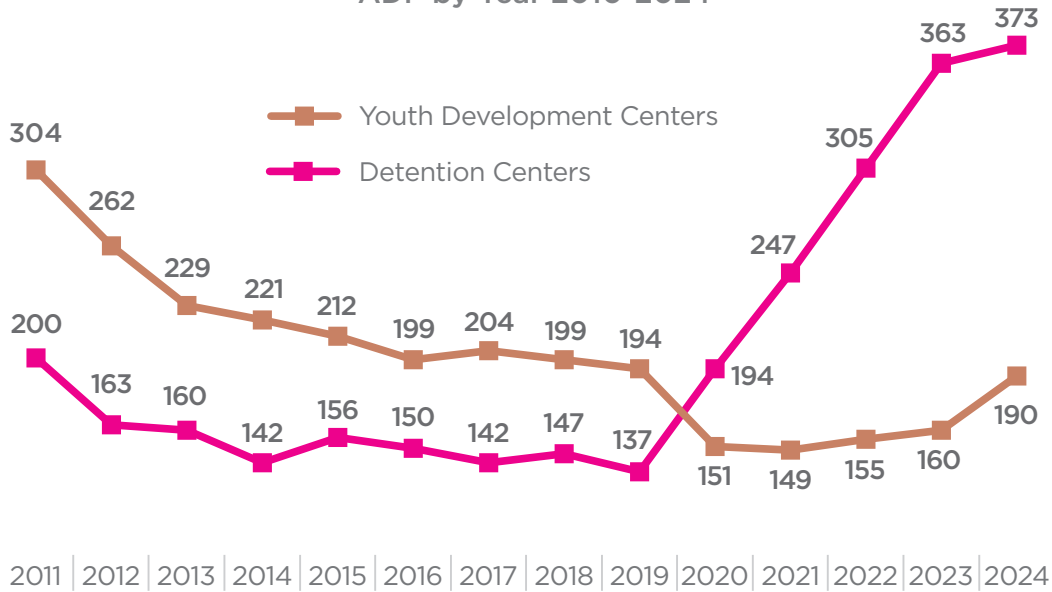


YDC Commitments 2011-2024

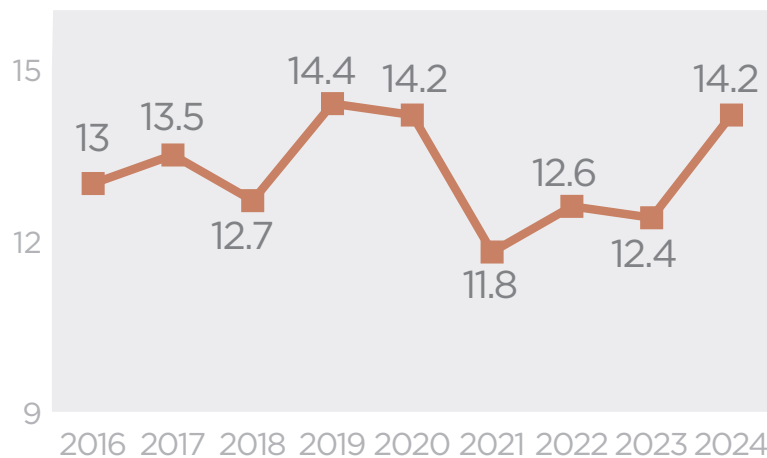
Average Daily Population

In 2024, the daily YDC population averaged 190 juveniles, who stayed for an average commitment length of 14.2 months.

Youth Development Center (YDC) and Detention Center (DC)
ADP by Year 2010-2024



Average Length of Commitment (in Months) in
Youth Development Centers 2016-2024



Capacity and Staffing

CY 2024

The average daily population at juvenile detention centers statewide in 2024 was 373 youth. For the fifth year in a row, detention average daily population exceeded the youth development center average daily population.

During the 2023 legislative session, the NC General Assembly recognized the importance of direct care

positions by establishing a comprehensive play plan designed to recruit and retain staff members in four hard-to-hire positions.

As a result of the step pay plan created by the General Assembly, coupled with retention bonuses, the average vacancy rate for juvenile justice direct care staff in 2024 decreased from 32% to 23%.

Facility Type	Facility	Capacity*	Average Daily Population
Youth Development Centers	Cabarrus	64	64.3
	Chatham	32	31.9
	Edgecombe	44	43.2
	Lenoir	44	43.3
	Rockingham	12	8.7
State-Operated Juvenile Detention Centers	Alexander	24	28.7
	Cabarrus	78	77.4
	Cumberland	18	22.6
	Dillon	55	49.7
	Dobbs/Lenoir	12	11.8
	New Hanover	18	21.1
	Perquimans	24	16.9
	Pitt	18	22.9
	Richmond Jenkins	12	13.0
	Rockingham	36*	9.3
	Wake	24	27.0
County-Operated Juvenile Detention Centers	Brunswick	10	9.4
	Durham	14	17.7
	Foothills	4	3.4
	Guilford	32	32.4
	Madison	25	34.9

* Opened April 9, 2024, Rockingham worked up to 36 juvenile detention center beds in 2024.

Clinical Services and Programming

CY 2024

Juveniles committed to North Carolina's juvenile justice system in 2024 presented with multiple and complex behavioral health needs. A representative point-in-time survey of youth confined in youth development centers on Dec. 31, 2024 (152 males and 21 females), revealed that:

- 97.7% carried at least one mental health diagnosis;
- 56.6% had co-occurring mental health and substance use diagnoses;
- 50.9% were taking prescribed psychotropic medication (85.7 % of girls and 46.1% of boys);
- youth committed to YDCs had an average of 4.2 distinct mental health and/or substance use disorder diagnoses, and in some cases as many as 11.

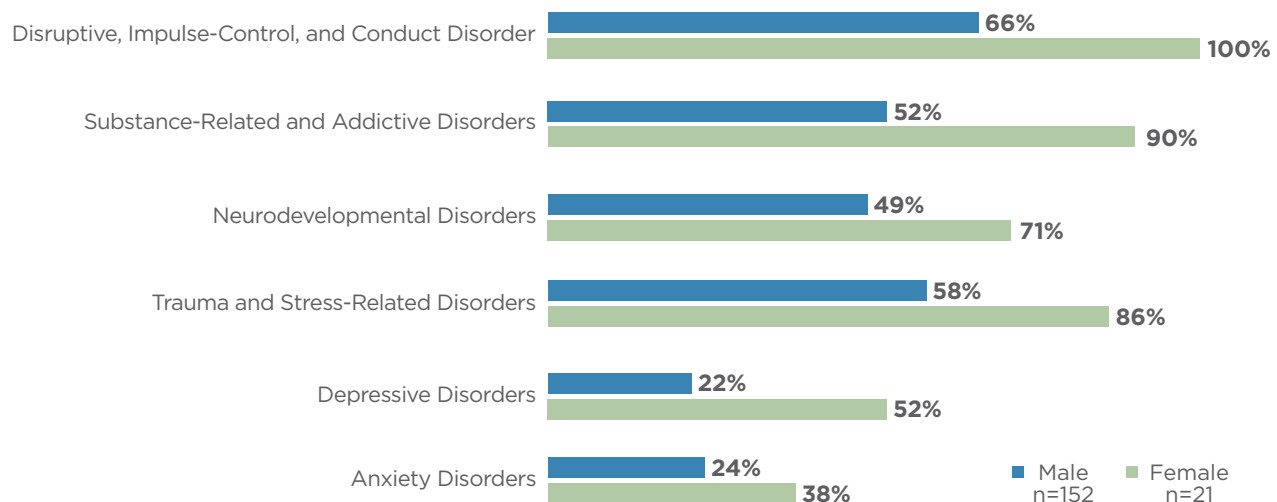
These findings are similar to diagnostic trends found over recent years in this population, with one exception: the rate of substance use disorders, which has been steadily declining among the YDC population since 2015 with the exception of small increases previously noted in 2021 and 2023, and remained steady in 2024. In 2015 substance use disorders were present in 74% of the YDC population. That rate fell to 64% in 2016, to 60% in 2017, to 55% in 2018, 48% in 2019, 46% in 2020, 51% in 2021, 49% in 2022, and then an increase to 56% in 2023 that remained constant at 56% in 2024.

The most frequent categories of diagnoses within the 2024 population of YDC youth, found after completion of a comprehensive evaluation using standardized assessment tools by a licensed mental health clinician, were within the category of disruptive, impulse-control and conduct disorders. These diagnoses describe problems of self-control manifested in behaviors that violate the rights of others and/or bring an individual into conflict with rules, laws or authority figures. The 2024 data indicated that 70% percent of youth confined in YDCs carry at least one diagnosis within this class (66% of males and 100% of females). Fifty-four percent (54%) of the overall YDC population was diagnosed with Conduct Disorder (51% of males and 81% of females) and 33% of the YDC population had an Oppositional Defiant Disorder diagnosis (31% of males and 48% of females).

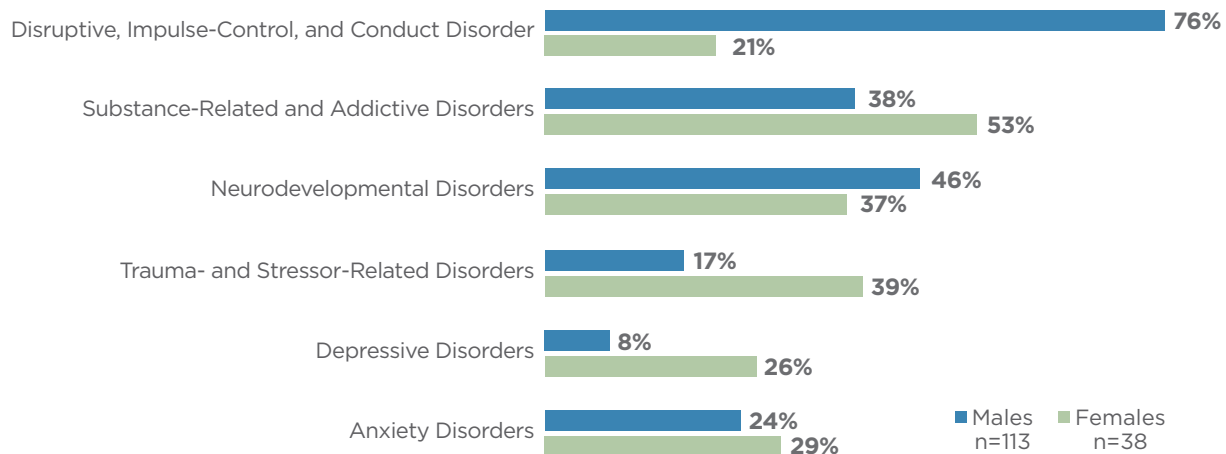
The second most frequently found category of diagnoses was substance-related and addictive disorders, reported in 56% of the YDC population (52% males and 90% females). Of these, 96% were cannabis-related and 1% were a combination of opioid, alcohol-related, hallucinogen or stimulant abuse. The further analysis of this category indicated that YDC youth were 1.3 times higher to have cannabis-related issues compared to youth in community-based residential programs.

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Most Prevalent Diagnostics by Percentage of YDC Population



Most Prevalent Diagnostic with the Contract Residential Population



The third most common diagnostic category was trauma- and stress-related disorders, present in 61% of the YDC population. Disorders within this class arise in response to exposure to one or more traumatic or stressful life events. A marked discrepancy is seen in the frequency of these problems by gender: trauma- and stress-related disorders were more likely in females (86%) than males (58%), but that gap closed significantly compared to 2023's data (94% and 39%, respectively).

The fourth most common diagnostic category was neurodevelopmental disorders. Disorders within this class manifest early in life and are characterized by developmental deficits that affect personal, social, academic or vocational functioning. Neurodevelopmental disorders were diagnosed in 51% of the YDC population (49% of males and 71% of females). The most frequently diagnosed disorders within this category were attention-deficit/ hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), found in 40% of the YDC population (39% of males and 48% of females).

Depressive disorders (25% of YDC population) and anxiety disorders (25% of YDC population) were the fifth and sixth most common diagnostic category for the YDC population.

The 2024 point-in-time survey administered the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) inventory to all youths residing in the YDC. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) is defined as different traumatic events that an individual was exposed to prior to the age of 18. These childhood adverse experiences include childhood abuse (i.e., physical, emotional and sexual abuse), neglect (i.e., physical and emotional neglect), and household challenges (i.e., substance misuse, mental illness, violent treatment of mother or stepmother, parental separation/divorce, and incarcerated household member). A respondent's ACE score is between 0-10 based on how many of the 10 types of adverse experiences they report experiencing prior to their 18th birthday. Empirical evidence has consistently shown that a higher ACE score is directly related to an increased risk of delinquency, fighting, dating violence, mental health issues, physical health issues, and suicidal ideation and attempts. The average ACE score for all youth in the YDC was 3.7.

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A representative point-in-time survey of youth confined in the contract residential population (CRP) on Dec. 31, 2024 (113 males and 38 females), revealed that:

- 100% carried at least one mental health diagnosis
- 38% had co-occurring mental health and substance use diagnoses and;
- 25% were taking prescribed psychotropic medication (44.7% of females and 17.7% of males);

The most frequent categories of diagnoses within this group of youth were within the category of disruptive, impulse-control and conduct disorders. In other words, 62% percent of the contract residential population carry at least one diagnosis within this class (76% of

males and 21% of females). This category is followed by neurodevelopmental disorders with 43% of the overall CRP population (46% of males and 37% of females). The third most diagnosed category was substance-related and addictive disorders which included 42% of population (38% of males and 53% of females). The fourth most common category was anxiety disorders (25%) followed by trauma and stress-related disorders with 23% of the CRP population (17% of the males and 39% of the female population). Finally, depressive disorders were the least diagnosed, and 13% of the CRP population (8% of males and 26% of females). The average ACE score for all youth in the CRP was 3.1, which was significantly lower than ACE scores for YDC youth.

Education Services

CY 2024

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.

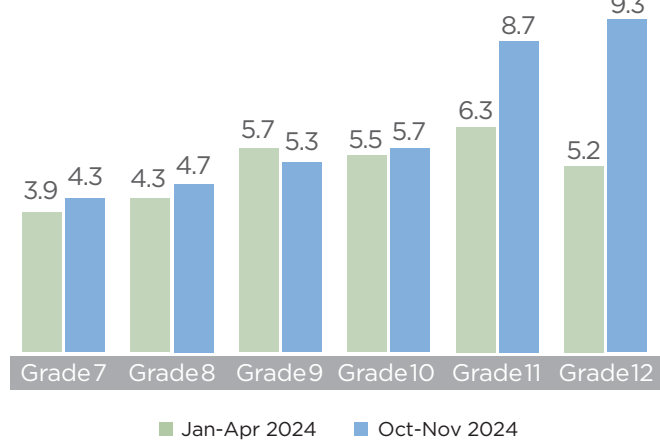
Upon entry to a youth development center (YDC), students' reading and math skills are assessed through the (STAR) assessment.

Juvenile Justice classrooms are led by state-licensed teachers 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 YDC and the local community college. 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 Individuals with Disabilities 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 YDCs, these students, as well as those who have been released, demonstrate significant academic gains. Notably, high school students are showing faster growth compared to middle school students.

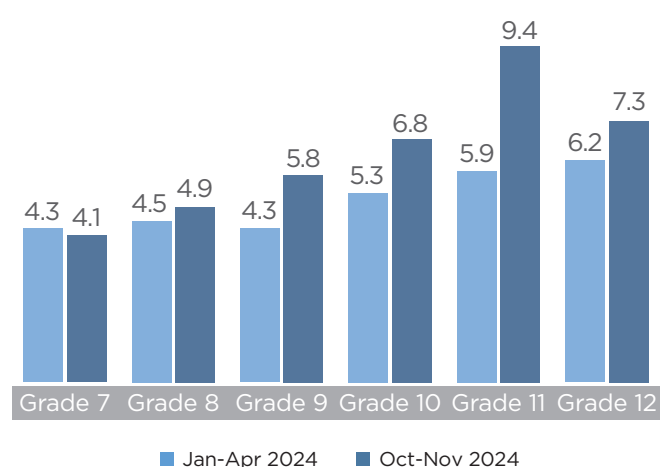
Star Math Enterprise:

Grade Equivalent (GE) Averages by Grade



Star Reading Enterprise:

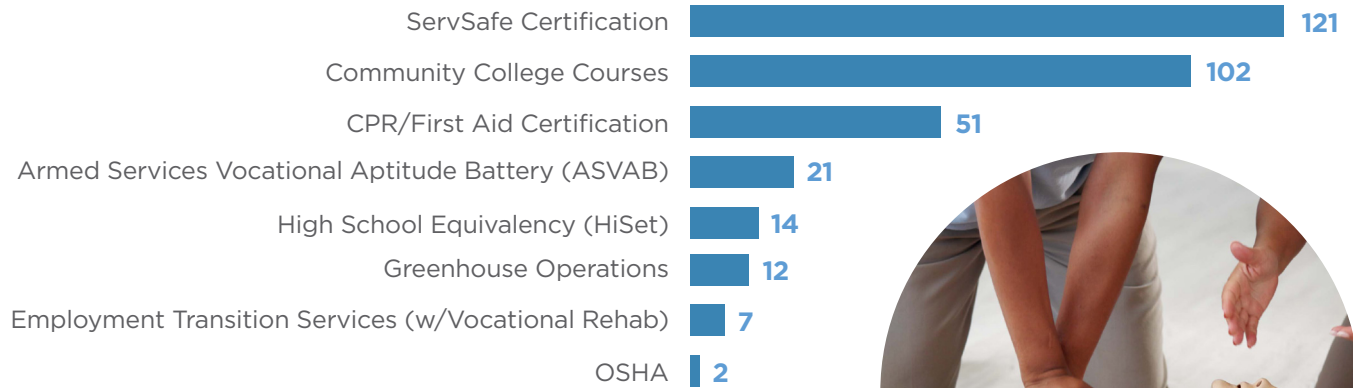
Grade Equivalent (GE) Averages by Grade



Career Preparation

CY 2024

Post-Secondary Programs, Certifications and Credentials CY 2024



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



Budget

CY 2024

2024 Appropriations

28.5% Juvenile Court Services — \$64,339,139



14.7% Community Program Services — \$33,304,734



13.0% Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils (JCPC) — \$29,407,147



14.1% Youth Development Services — \$31,956,442



11.2% Youth Detention Services — \$25,308,881



9.1% Youth Treatment Services — \$20,558,353



5.5% Administration — \$12,475,104



3.8% Youth Education Services — \$8,639,278



Total
\$225,989,078

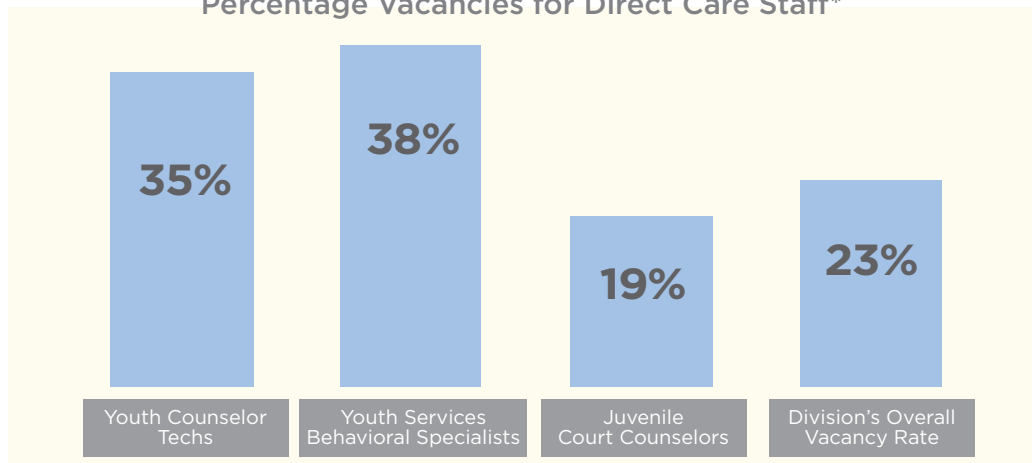
Employees and Staffing

CY 2024

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	683	580	85%
Facility Services (Includes Education/Health/ Clinical)	965	769	80%
Transportation Services	75	65	87%
Administration	76	0	0%
Total	1,830	1,414	77%

Percentage Vacancies for Direct Care Staff*

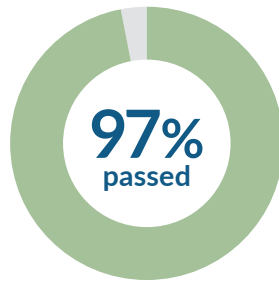


* As of the end of 2024

Basic Training

CY 2024

Basic Training Certification Exam Pass Percentages



Juvenile Justice Officers



Juvenile Court Counselors

All Basic Training Classes			
Class Type	Total # Trainees	Total # Passed	% Passed
Females	148	146	98.65%
Males	101	98	97.03%
Total	249	244	97.99%
Juvenile Justice Officers	143	139	97.20%
Juvenile Court Counselors	106	105	99.06%



Juvenile Justice and
Delinquency Prevention
NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

