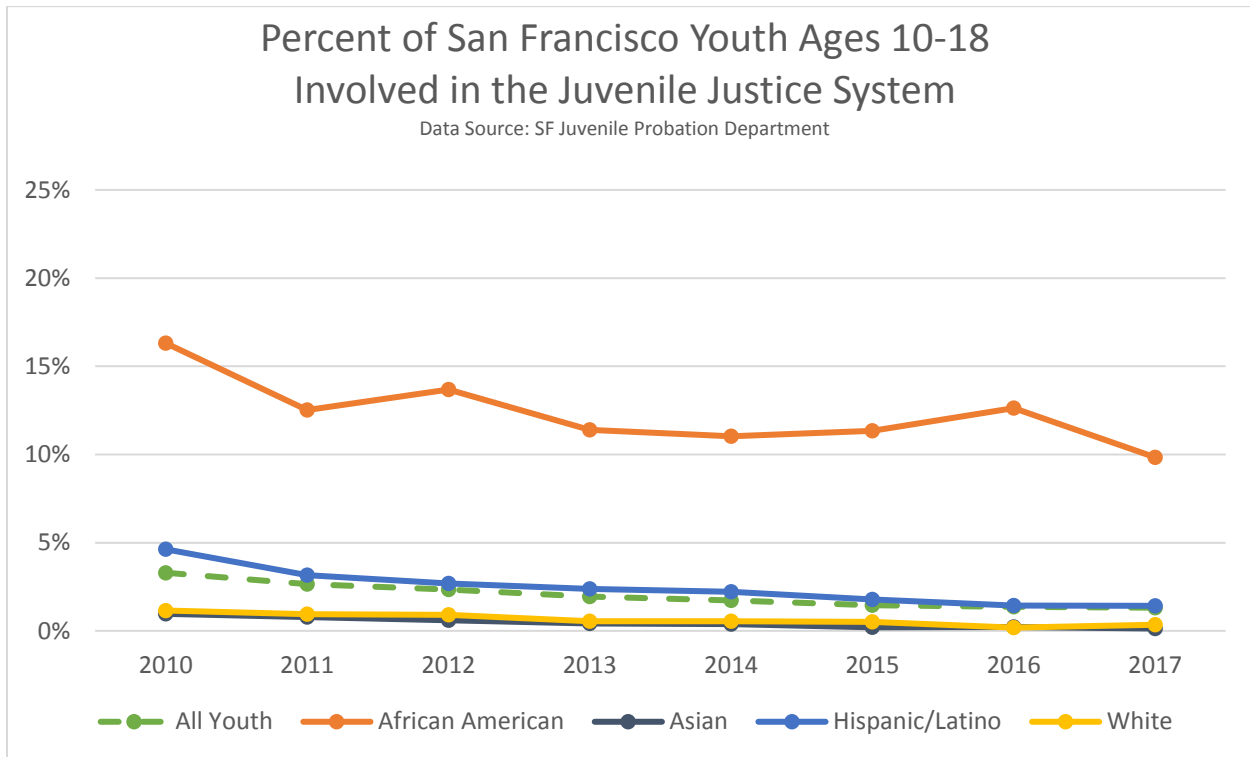


Decrease the percent of 10-18 year olds involved in the Juvenile Justice System



The above chart shows the percent of youth ages 10-18 in San Francisco by race/ethnicity who were referred to the San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department between 2010 and 2017.

Data Definition & the San Francisco Trend line

Referrals include all cases referred to the San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department (JPD) for purposes of screening. These referrals may or may not result in a booking into Juvenile Hall or petition for adjudication of wardship¹; however, these referrals mark a formal involvement with the juvenile justice system. To calculate the percent of San Francisco youth who have been referred to the probation department, we divide the unduplicated number of youth who have been referred to the probation department by American Community Survey (ACS) estimates of the population of youth ages 10-18 in San Francisco, by year and race/ethnicity. The unduplicated count of youth involved in the juvenile justice system is available through JPD's annual reports.¹ Due to the small size of the American Indian and Pacific Islander youth population in San Francisco, we are unable to accurately report on their rates of system involvement.

¹ Adjudication is a court process where a judge decides there is evidence the youth committed the act for which they are charged. Wardship is the Court's legal authority over the youth where they may act as the "parent" or guardian of the youth. Wardship cases are placed on active supervision either at home, with a relative or when the youth is removed from the home. For more information on the juvenile justice process see JPD's guide: <http://sfgov.org/juvprobation/sites/default/files/A%20Guide%20to%20the%20Juvenile%20Justice%20System%20System.pdf>

In 2017, 1.3% of all youth in San Francisco were referred to the San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department, down from 3.3% in 2010. Despite steady declines in the percent of youth involved in the juvenile justice system, significant disparities in system involvement remain, especially for African American youth, who accounted for 56% of all referrals in 2017 (415 out of the 746 youth referred). In fact, the percentage of African American youth referred as a share of total referrals has consistently increased (from 44% in 2010 to 56% in 2017), even as the proportion of African American youth within the population has decreased by from 9% to 7% during the same period.

There is also a disparity for Hispanic/Latino youth, albeit a much smaller one, who accounted for 24% of all youth in San Francisco as compared to 26% of all referrals in 2017. San Francisco's Hawaiian/Pacific Islander youth are likely disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system as well, but the small size of the Hawaiian/Pacific Islander youth population makes it challenging to produce reliable estimates across years. In 2017, Pacific Islander youth made up 3.4% of the youth involved in the juvenile justice system while Pacific Islanders of all ages routinely make up under one percent of the city's population.

Story Behind the Curve

Over the last ten years, the United States has seen a shift in perspective regarding juvenile delinquency and the incarceration of young people. In the 1990s there was a national narrative of the teen "superpredator," which led to higher rates of teen arrests for fear that there were exceptionally violent youth devoid of impulse control or remorse. While the "superpredator" view of adolescents in the political sphere was unsubstantiated, it led directly to the over incarceration and criminalization of teenagers, especially African American boys.ⁱⁱ The United States has seen a marked decline in juvenile offenses since 2000. Overall, there were 56% fewer juvenile arrests nationally in 2017 compared to 2000.ⁱⁱⁱ This trend of decreasing juvenile arrests persists at the state level as well. California saw nearly 79% fewer juvenile arrests statewide in 2017 compared to 2000. This section highlights key policy and practice shifts San Francisco has made over the past 20 years that may have impacted rates of juvenile justice involvement, and some of the factors that have been linked to continuing disparities in the juvenile justice system.

Practice & Policy Shifts in San Francisco

In 1998, there were 5,222 referrals made to JPD, of which half were for African American youth. Over the next seventeen years, these numbers would continually decrease—with 3,013 total referrals in 2005, 2,814 in 2010, to just **1,277 in 2017**; however, uneven racial/ethnic group representation persists. Although part of the decline in referrals is likely the result of the out-migration of African American families from San Francisco (African American youth are disproportionately referred to JPD), part of the decline may also be the result of citywide efforts that have accompanied statewide and national shifts in approaches for addressing delinquent behavior away from detention and court-involvement and toward rehabilitation and restorative justice. Recent data on the Community Assessment and Resource Center (CARC), the Violence Prevention and Intervention (VPI) initiative and SFUSD policy shifts to address arrests on school campuses suggest that these efforts have helped to reduce juvenile justice system involvement in San Francisco.

Community Assessment and Resource Center. San Francisco was an early adopter of the Annie E. Casey Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative model and created a multitude of alternative to detention programs with the aim of keeping youth out of custody and out of contact with law enforcement. As

part of these reforms, in 1999 the San Francisco Police Department adopted a code requiring police officers that make contact with a young person during specific hours to bring the young person to CARC, a diversion program. CARC helps to reduce juvenile incarceration by connecting young people to positive youth programming in their communities and providing other supportive services to the youth and their family as needed.

Violence Prevention and Intervention Initiative and Justice Services. Historically, Violence Prevention and Intervention programs were funded and managed by multiple city agencies. In fiscal year 2009-2010 DCYF, the Department of Public Health, and the Juvenile Probation Department came together to align resources in order to improve coordination of services, leverage available funding sources, consolidate reporting by funded agencies and streamline the funding process across city departments. VPI programs are designed to direct youth away from the juvenile justice system by addressing their immediate needs and connecting them to activities where they can develop pro-social skills, explore their interests and develop relationships with positive adult allies. Between 2013 and 2017 over 19,000 at-risk youth and youth involved in the juvenile justice system were served by programs funded under the VPI initiative. Data from 2015-16 show that over 70% of youth connected to VPI services as a result of contact with the juvenile justice system did not committed a second offense within 180 days of service. DCYF's VPI programming transitioned into the Justice Services Service Area for the 2018-2023 funding cycle. Whereas VPI programs formerly served youth with mixed levels of risk for justice system involvement, Justice Services programs are intended to serve only youth with justice system involvement. Justice Services programs are designed to prevent further youth engagement with the justice system and reduce rates of youth recidivism through connection to adult allies, culturally relevant programming, ongoing case management, access to positive skill building activities and whole family engagement.

San Francisco Unified School District practice and policy shifts. Arrests in San Francisco schools have declined each year since the 2010-2011 school year. That year, 195 students were arrested on SFUSD school campuses. By the 2015-2016 school year, the number of students arrested had dropped to 49. This decline was partly influenced by noteworthy practices and policies implemented by SFUSD to specifically address school arrests. Since 2010, SFUSD and SFPD have provided trainings to SFPD school resource officers on restorative practices. In January 2014, SFUSD and SFPD signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the aim of minimizing arrests at schools.^{iv} The MOU also created a hearing process for family concerns around school-based arrests. SFUSD's Chief of Student, Family and Community Support Division holds monthly meetings with school resource officers to monitor implementation of the MOU. These meetings focus on efforts related to minimizing arrests at schools and fostering school safety through building community.

Factors that Contribute to Disparities

Academic Challenges. Data shows that youth who are not succeeding in school are much more likely to end up in the juvenile justice system than their academically successful peers.^v Over the past five years African American youth have made up about half of all SFUSD suspensions, while only making up nine percent of the district population despite significant reductions in the total number of suspensions (see corresponding Suspension scorecard for additional information). As evidenced in the corresponding scorecards, African American youth also have the lowest rates of kindergarten readiness, meeting 3rd grade reading standards, high school readiness, high school graduation and participation in school or work, and the highest rates of chronic absenteeism and suspension.

Experiences with Trauma and Poverty. Young people who grow up in poverty, who are less connected to school and who have experienced severe trauma are significantly more likely to make contact with the juvenile justice system.^{vi} In San Francisco, over half of African American children ages 0-17 live in households with incomes below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (a proxy measure for the percent in poverty given the high cost of living in San Francisco). African American youth are also more likely to experience trauma in childhood. In 2012, over 50% of homicide and shooting victims in San Francisco were African American.

Institutional Racism and Individual Bias. Institutional racism and individual bias are significant factors in the disparities in the justice system involvement described in this scorecard. Two recent efforts initiated in response to community concerns regarding policing in San Francisco provide evidence for these factors. In May 2015, the Blue Ribbon Panel on Transparency, Accountability, and Fairness in Law Enforcement was established as an advisory body to the San Francisco District Attorney in the wake of revelations that 14 San Francisco Police Department officers had exchanged numerous racist and homophobic text messages.^{vii} In 2016, as a result of several officer-involved shootings in the city, Mayor Ed Lee and Chief of Police Greg Suhr requested assistance from the Department of Justice in assessing the status of policing in San Francisco. The reports prepared as a result of these efforts provide recommendations to address internal bias within the San Francisco Police Department and describe external perceptions of fair and unbiased justice of the community.

What Works: A Selection of Best Practices to reduce the percent of Youth involved in the Juvenile Justice System

While there is a wealth of information on programs that reduce juvenile delinquency and justice system involvement, one of the most significant and effective national efforts to date has been the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI).^{viii} This section outlines seven core strategies of the JDAI model that have been effective in reducing the number of youth involved in the juvenile justice system. For additional information on the strategies specific to San Francisco see the City and County of San Francisco's Comprehensive Multi-agency Local Action Plan: Strategies for San Francisco Juvenile Justice.^{ix}

Systems-level Collaboration. Because the juvenile justice system involves the interaction of multiple systems, improvements require systems collaboration to guide the reform process; to analyze problems and recommend solutions; to design changes to policies, practices and programs; and to monitor impact. This requires a commitment to joint planning, shared responsibility and mutual accountability.^x

Rigorous Data Collection and Analysis. Data on detention population, utilization and operations is necessary to provide a portrait of youth in detention, to understand reasons for detention, and to monitor the impacts of policies and practices. All data should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity and gender to monitor disparities in the system.^{xi}

Objective Admissions Criteria and Risk Assessment Instruments. Detention admissions policies and practices must distinguish between the youth who are likely to flee or commit new crimes and those who are not. Absent an objective approach, high-risk offenders may be released and low-risk offenders detained. Replacing subjective decision-making processes with objective admissions criteria and risk-assessment instruments will help determine whether youth should be placed into secure detention facilities.^{xii}

New or Expanded Alternatives to Detention Programs. New or enhanced alternatives to detention (ATD) programs increase the options available for arrested youth by providing supervision, structure and accountability. Targeting youth who would otherwise be detained, detention alternative programs typically include electronic monitoring, house arrest, community monitoring, day or evening reporting centers, and shelter beds for youth who cannot return home. The most effective juvenile justice systems have a program continuum that both responds to the legal status of youth and ensures that they can also be safely supervised in the community. ATDs should be grounded in an understanding of adolescent development and behavior, and program activities should reflect youths' needs, cultures and traditions.^{xiii}

Expedited Case Processing. Modifications of juvenile court procedures accelerate the movement of delinquency cases, streamline case processing and reduce unnecessary delay. Case processing reforms are introduced to expedite the flow of cases through the system. These changes reduce length of stay in custody, expand the availability of slots in alternative to detention programs and ensure that interventions with youth are timely and appropriate.^{xiv}

Reduce the Number of Youth Detained. "Special detention cases" are those cases that commonly represent large percentages of inappropriate or unnecessary stays in detention. Reducing the number of youth detained for probation rule violations or failing to appear in court, and the number held in detention awaiting transfer to a residential facility can have immediate and significant impact on safely reducing detention populations.^{xv}

Reducing Racial & Ethnic Disparities. Reducing racial disparities requires specific strategies aimed at eliminating bias and ensuring a level playing field for youth of color. Racial/ethnic disparities are the most stubborn aspect of detention reform. Real lasting change in this arena requires committed leadership, on-going policy analysis and targeted policies and programming.^{xvi}

Please see the following selected references for more information on the 'Story Behind the Curve' and highlighted 'Best Practices'

ⁱ City and County of San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department. Publications & Documents: Annual Reports. <http://sfgov.org/juvprobation/publications-documents>

ⁱⁱ Haberman, C. (2014). When Youth Violence Spurred 'Superpredator' Fear. New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/07/us/politics/killing-on-bus-recalls-superpredator-threat-of-90s.html?_r=0

ⁱⁱⁱ FBI Uniform Crime Reports. (2015). Arrests by Age. <https://ucr.fbi.gov/>

^{iv} MOU between the San Francisco Police Department and the San Francisco Unified School District. <http://www.fixschooldiscipline.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/SFPD-SRO-MOU.pdf>.

^v Youth.gov. Risk & Protective Factors. <http://youth.gov/youth-topics/juvenile-justice/risk-and-protective-factors>

^{vi} Lansford, J. E., Miller-Johnson, S., Berlin, L. J., Dodge, K. A., Bates, J. E., & Pettit, G. S. (2007). Early physical abuse and later violent delinquency: A prospective longitudinal study. *Child maltreatment*, 12(3), 233-245. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1077559507301841>

^{vii} City and County of San Francisco. (2016). The Blue Ribbon Panel on Transparency, Accountability, and Fairness in Law Enforcement. http://sfdistrictattorney.org/sites/default/files/Document/BRP_report.pdf

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- viii JDAI 2013 Annual Results Report. (2013). <http://www.aecf.org/resources/juvenile-detention-alternatives-initiative-2013-annual-results-report/>
- ix City and County of San Francisco's Comprehensive Multi-agency Local Action Plan: Strategies for San Francisco Juvenile Justice. <http://www.dcyf.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=4993>
- x JDAI Helpdesk. Collaboration. <http://www.jdaihelpdesk.org/SitePages/collaboration.aspx>
- xi JDAI Helpdesk. Data Driven Decisions. <http://www.jdaihelpdesk.org/SitePages/datadrivendecisions.aspx>
- xii JDAI Helpdesk. Objective Admissions. <http://www.jdaihelpdesk.org/SitePages/objectiveadmissions.aspx>
- xiii JDAI Helpdesk. Alternatives to Detention. <http://www.jdaihelpdesk.org/SitePages/alternativestodetention.aspx>
- xiv JDAI Helpdesk. Expedited Case Processing. <http://www.jdaihelpdesk.org/SitePages/caseprocessingreforms.aspx>
- xv JDAI Helpdesk. Special Detention Cases. <http://www.jdaihelpdesk.org/SitePages/specialdetentioncases.aspx>
- xvi JDAI Helpdesk. Reducing Racial & Ethnic Disparities. <http://www.jdaihelpdesk.org/SitePages/reducingracialdisparities.aspx>