



Crime and Justice Atlas 2001 Update



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

National Institute of Justice

Corrections Program Office

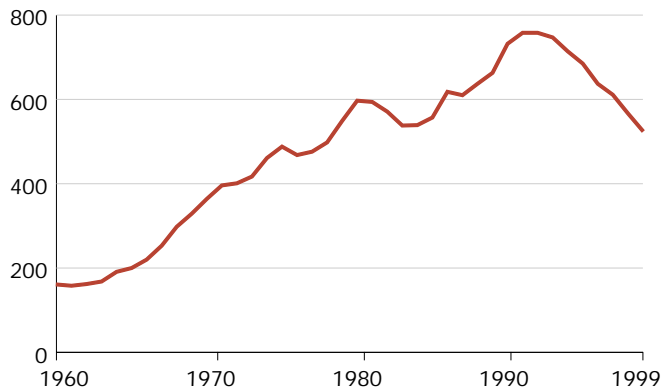
Crime Rates in the United States

Violent Crime

The United States is currently experiencing the longest period of decline in violent crime rates since the early 1960s. Violent crime rates are most commonly tracked by counting the reported incidence of murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. The most recent and sustained violent crime rate reductions came at a time when the country was experiencing considerable economic prosperity. Federal deficits turned to surpluses, unemployment rates were at historic lows, income levels increased, and our nation's gross domestic product (GDP) climbed steadily.

The total violent crime rate has fallen 31% since 1991 and is currently at its lowest level since 1978.

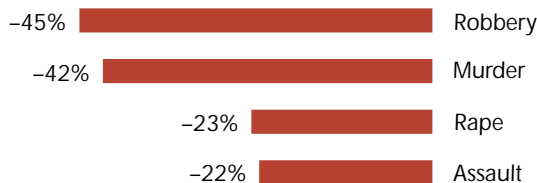
Crimes per 100,000 population



Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, 1960-1999.*

The crime rate for all violent crime categories has decreased 20% or more since 1991; the largest reduction since 1991 was for robbery.

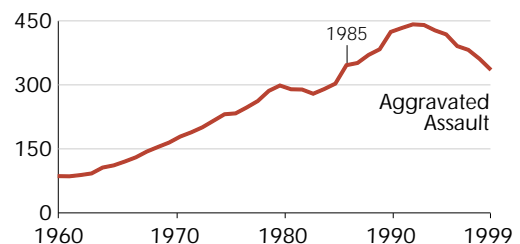
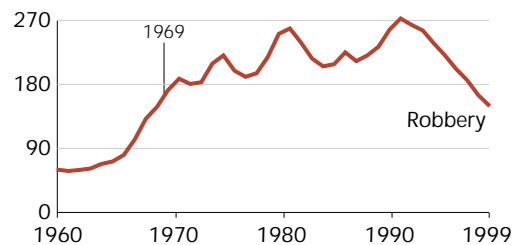
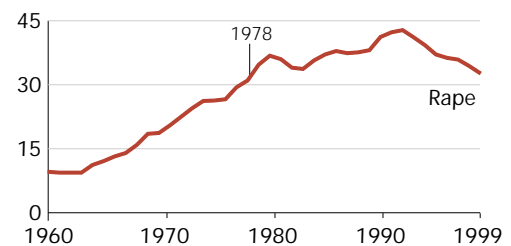
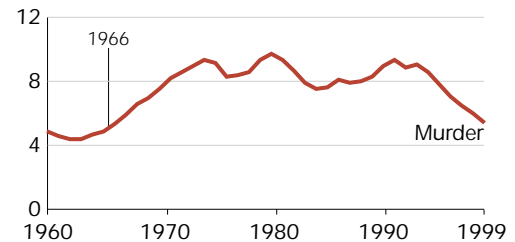
Percent change in index crimes, 1991-1999



Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, 1991, 1999.*

Murder and robbery rates have fallen to levels last seen during the mid to late 1960s. (Years marked show the last year the crime rate was lower than in 1999.)

Crimes per 100,000 population



Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, 1960-1999.*

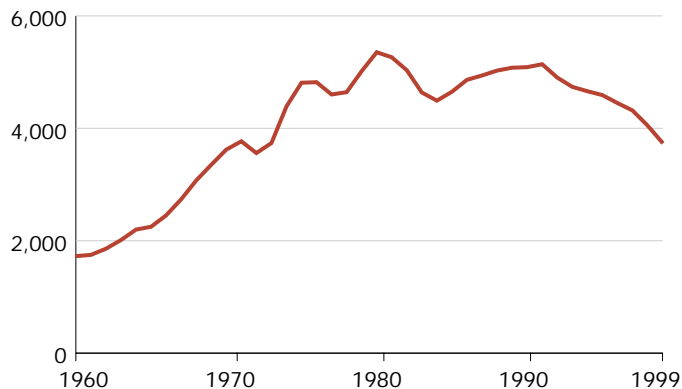
Crime Rates in the United States

Property Crime

Property crime rates have dropped steadily over the last 10 years after having remained relatively stable during the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s. Some have attributed these declines in burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft to an increase in “self-protection” strategies on the part of potential victims, such as the use of alarm systems to deter motor vehicle thefts and household burglaries. Others have suggested that reducing the number of drug-involved offenders, whether through incarceration or treatment, has contributed to the decline in thefts motivated by the need for money to buy drugs.

The total property crime rate has fallen 27% since 1991, and is currently at its lowest level since 1973.

Crimes per 100,000 population



Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, 1960-1999.*

The crime rate for all property crime categories has decreased 20% or more since 1991. Burglary and motor vehicle theft showed larger declines than larceny.

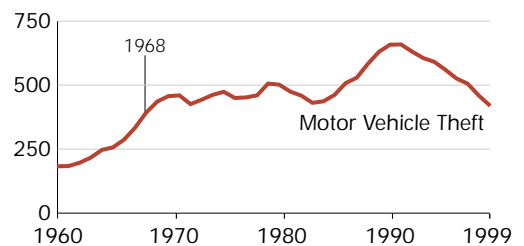
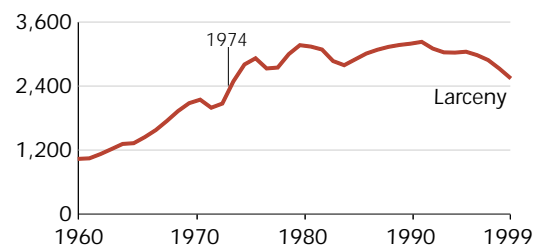
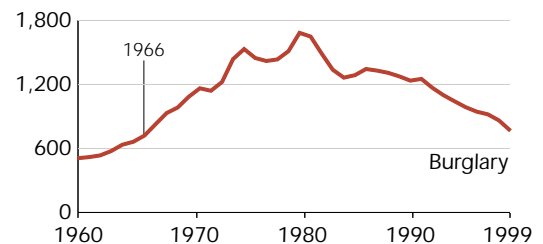
Percent change in index crimes, 1991-1999



Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, 1991, 1999.*

Falling property crime rates are largely a result of moderate decreases in larceny rates, but steep drops in burglary and motor vehicle theft have also occurred. (Years marked show the last year the crime rate was lower than in 1999.)

Crimes per 100,000 population



Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, 1960-1999.*

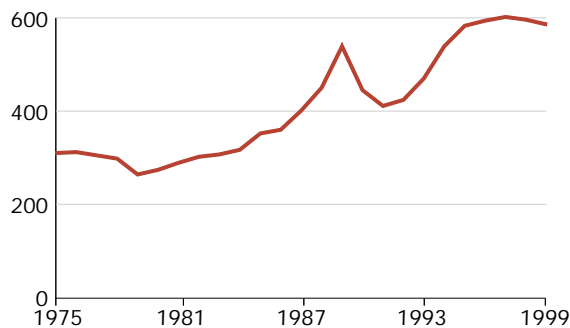
Drugs

Illegal drug use—and its link to other crimes and related social issues—has been a major concern of the American public for the last 20 years. Federal, state, and local officials have responded in a number of ways, including devoting significant resources to law

enforcement, treatment, and prevention strategies. This is clearly evident when examining key measures within the justice system; drug arrest rates, drug control budgets, and correctional populations all exhibit sharp increases.

Over the last five years drug arrest rates have stabilized at their highest level during the past quarter century.

Drug arrest rate (per 100,000 population)



Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, 1975–1999*.

Testing of arrestees shows different drug use patterns around the country. Ten cities chosen to represent different geographic areas are ranked according to type of drug and percent of arrestees testing positive.

Percent of arrestees testing positive, 1999

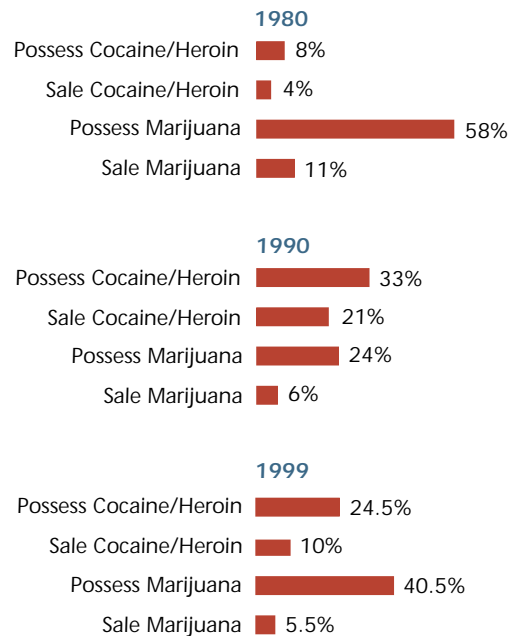
Any Drug		Marijuana	
New York City	77.1%	Minneapolis	41.7%
Atlanta	76.9	Atlanta	41.7
Chicago	74.9	Chicago	41.2
Denver	67.5	Denver	41.0
Miami	66.0	Miami	36.2
Portland	65.1	New York City	35.6
Phoenix	65.0	Phoenix	33.5
Los Angeles	62.3	Houston	31.5
Minneapolis	59.9	Portland	31.1
Houston	52.4	Los Angeles	30.1

Cocaine	
Atlanta	54.0%
New York City	51.6
Miami	49.2
Chicago	46.0
Denver	43.5
Los Angeles	35.8
Phoenix	34.5
Minneapolis	30.3
Houston	30.3
Portland	25.9

Methamphetamine	
Portland	21.3%
Phoenix	16.0
Los Angeles	9.5
Denver	2.8
Minneapolis	1.3
Atlanta	0.5
Houston	0.1
Chicago	0.0
Miami	0.0
New York City	0.0

In 1980, most drug arrests were for possession of marijuana. By 1990, sale and possession of cocaine or heroin accounted for most arrests. In 1999, arrests for marijuana possession again exceeded those for cocaine and heroin.

Percent of drug arrests



Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, 1980, 1990, 1999*.

Opiates	
Chicago	22.4%
New York City	17.3
Portland	14.7
Phoenix	8.6
Houston	6.5
Los Angeles	6.0
Minneapolis	4.6
Atlanta	4.3
Miami	3.4
Denver	3.3

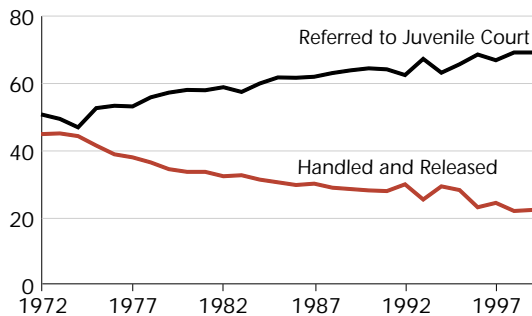
Juveniles

Roughly 70 million people are under the age of 18 in the United States. With juveniles comprising such a significant portion of our population, juvenile crime and victimization issues require considerable resources and attention from our justice, educational, and other social support systems. Similar to overall crime

rate patterns, juvenile crime and victimization rates have recently decreased. Even school-related crimes, which lately have received so much media attention, were substantially lower in number in the late 1990s than at the beginning of the decade.

Juveniles taken into custody by police are increasingly more likely to be referred to court rather than be handled and released by arresting authorities.

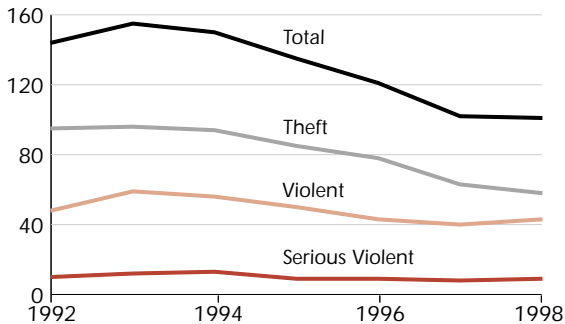
Percent of juveniles taken into custody



Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, 1972–1999*.

Victimization surveys indicate crime at school decreased from 1992 to 1997. From 1997 to 1998, reported thefts at school decreased, while violent crime increased slightly.

Crimes reported per 100,000 students

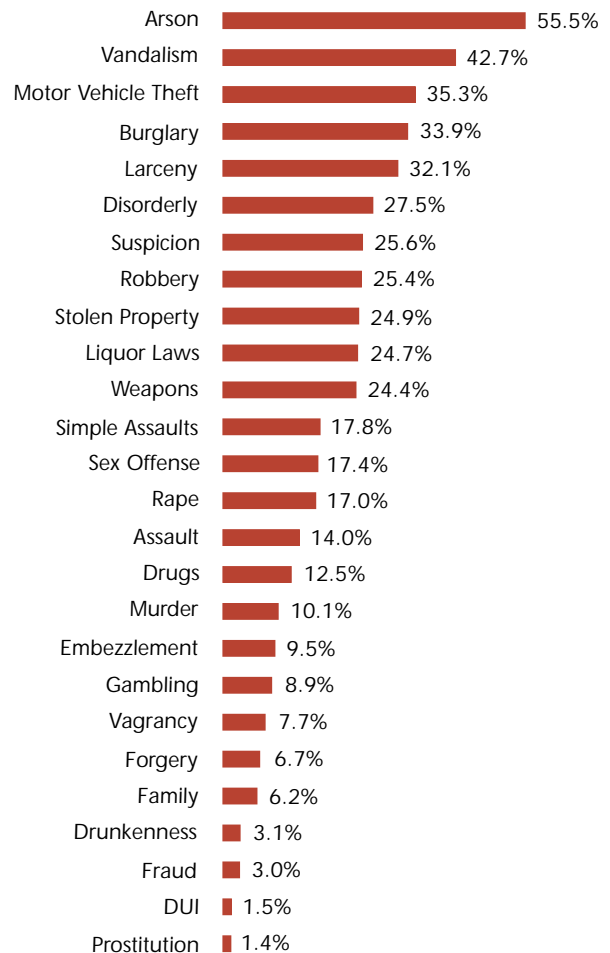


Bureau of Justice Statistics, *National Crime Victimization Survey, 1992–1998*.

Note: Included are crimes against students ages 12-18 occurring at school or going to and from school.

Juveniles are most often involved in property crime, but account for less than 20% of arrests for murder, assault, rape, and other sex offenses.

Percent of arrests involving juveniles, 1999



Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, 1999*.

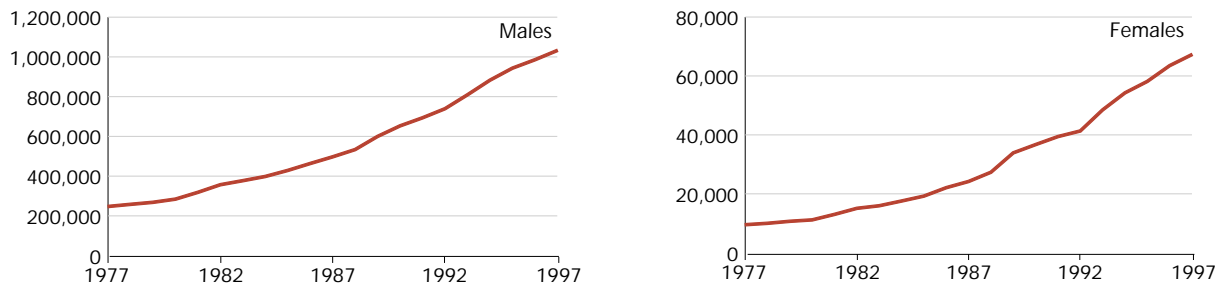
Prisons

Many of our “front-end” criminal justice policies have a tremendous impact on our country’s correctional systems. Law enforcement strategies, prosecutorial policies, and sentencing laws all relate to the amount of pressure placed on prisons and jails. While prison populations increased dramatically over

the past 20 years, the characteristics of offenders incarcerated have also changed. The type of offense for which offenders are imprisoned has varied over time, the composition of inmate demographics has changed, and the needs of various special populations have become greater.

The number of women incarcerated in state prisons increased by over 600% since the late 1970s, which was about double the rate of increase observed for male offenders incarcerated during that same period.

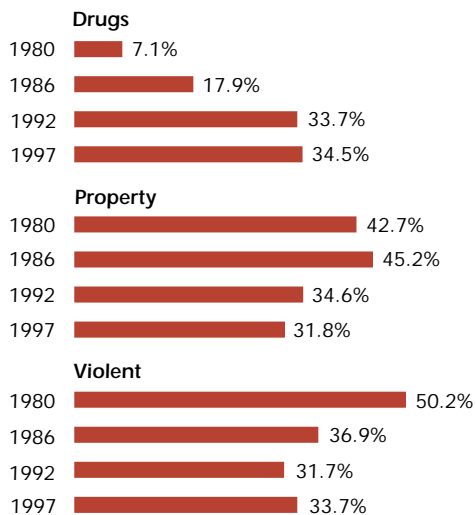
Males and females incarcerated in state institutions with sentences of more than 1 year



Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Correctional Populations in the United States, 1977-1997*.

In 1997, over one third of prison commitments involved drug offenses, compared to only 7% in 1980. In 1980, about half of all commitments were for violent offenses; by 1997, only about one third were.

Percent of new court commitments to state prisons



Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Correctional Populations in the United States, 1980, 1986, 1992, 1997*.

The inmate population in 1997 comprised various groups with special needs that may present challenges to correctional administrators; some of these included:

Characteristic	Percent
Reported drug use in the month prior to offense	57%
Parents of children under 18 years of age	55
Reported drug or alcohol use at time of offense	52
Reported a physical impairment or mental condition	31
Confined for a drug offense	21
Reported a mental condition/hospital stay	16
Never attended high school	14
Veterans	13
Reported drug or alcohol treatment in prison	12
Female	6
Citizens of other countries	5
55 years or older	3
HIV-positive	2
Under age 18	1

Bureau of Justice Statistics: *Correctional Populations in the United States, 1997; Incarcerated Parents and Their Children (August 2000); Medical Problems of Inmates, 1997 (January 2001); Mental Health and Treatment of Inmates and Probationers (July 1999); Substance Abuse and Treatment, State and Federal Prisoners, 1997 (January 1999); HIV in Prisons, 1997 (November 1999)*.

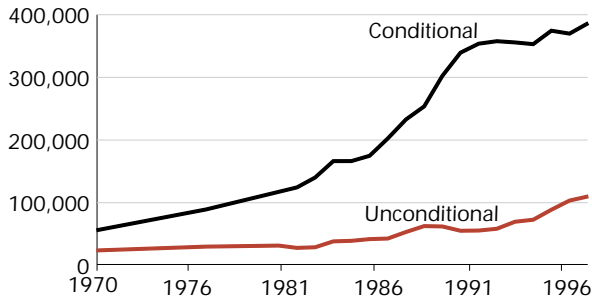
Parole/Reentry

There has been a renewed concern and focus at the federal and state levels regarding the adequate transition of released inmates back into the community. Adequate programs and support for offender “reentry” not only make sense from a public safety

standpoint, but are important from a social and cost perspective. Offenders who succeed productively on parole are in a better position to contribute to the workforce, support their families, and serve as successful role models for others in similar situations.

About a half million people reentered the community from prison in 1997. The vast majority of these are on some form of conditional release.

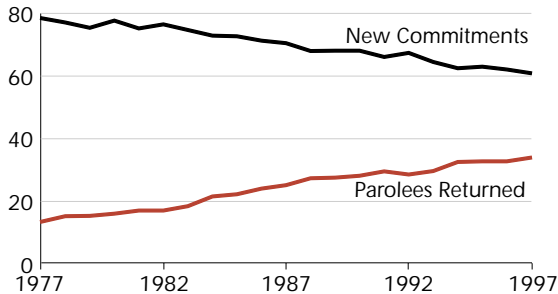
Releases from prison



Bureau of Justice Statistics: *Historical Statistics on Prisoners in State and Federal Institutions, Year End 1925–1986: United States; Correctional Populations in the United States, 1987–1997.*

In the late 1970s, almost 80% of prison admissions were for a new offense; this dropped to 70% in 1987. By 1997, over one third of admissions were for parole violation or some other form of conditional release.

Percent admitted to prison



Bureau of Justice Statistics: *Historical Statistics on Prisoners in State and Federal Institutions, Year End 1925–1986: United States; Correctional Populations in the United States, 1987–1997.*

Parole supervision policies vary dramatically across states. Offenders on parole from 1987 to 1997 decreased in 5 states, while 15 others saw increases in excess of 100%.

Adults on parole, 1987 vs. 1997

	Percent Change		Percent Change
Oregon	695%	Texas	63%
Alaska	457	South Carolina	56
Vermont	234	Arizona	52
Florida	195	Nebraska	50
Utah	192	Arkansas	49
Louisiana	175	Maine	44
California	153	Alabama	39
Colorado	146	New Mexico	36
Wisconsin	137	Indiana	32
Kansas	130	Montana	29
Michigan	125	Idaho	28
Illinois	124	Kentucky	27
Connecticut	114	Rhode Island	26
Nevada	107	Massachusetts	14
Georgia	101	Ohio	14
Pennsylvania	99	Oklahoma	9
Missouri	97	New Jersey	8
Maryland	95	West Virginia	6
New York	91	Iowa	4
District of Columbia	84	Wyoming	2
South Dakota	83	Tennessee	-6
Hawaii	77	North Dakota	-21
North Carolina	75	Delaware	-47
Virginia	70	Mississippi	-60
Minnesota	69	Washington	-95
New Hampshire	69		

Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Correctional Populations in the United States, 1987, 1997.*

Data are estimated for Arkansas (1997), Delaware (1997), Missouri (1987, 1997), Montana (1987), Texas (1997), Virginia (1997), and Washington (1997).

Note: Yearly changes in the numbers of offenders on parole may be due in part to changes in parole laws and definitions and data reporting changes or inconsistencies. In addition, cross-state comparisons should be made with caution since states use different definitions for parole.

State Crime Legislation: 2000

Crime Legislation Related to Adults

- **Probation and parole: 25 states.** Examples of legislation passed by the states include requiring departments to offer programs such as offender transition services or probation violator prison diversion programs, changing parole requirements and the composition of parole boards, and authorizing home confinement as an alternative to incarceration. CA, CO, CT, GA, HI, ID, IN, KY, LA, MI, MS, NE, NJ, NH, NM, OK, PA, RI, SC, TN, UT, VA, VT, WA, WV
- **Criminal records: 23 states.** Examples of legislation passed by the states include regulating access to criminal history information for non-criminal justice purposes, identifying and modifying offenses for which offenders must provide DNA samples, and allowing certain convicted offenders to request DNA testing. AK, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, IA, ID, IL, KY, MD, MI, MN, NE, NJ, NY, OK, TN, VT, WA, WV
- **Corrections-related: 21 states.** Examples of legislation passed by the states include requiring prison systems to initiate inmate work and treatment programs, allowing state corrections departments to recover the costs of incarceration, and establishing or revising penalties for sexual contact between prison employees and prisoners. AZ, CA, CO, DE, FL, ID, IL, KY, MD, MI, MN, NM, OH, OK, PA, RI, SC, SD, UT, VA, WV
- **Sex offender registration and notification: 19 states.** Examples of legislation passed by the states include requiring registration of offenders convicted in other states or nonresidents working in the state, imposing registration requirements on certain juvenile sex offenders, and requiring lifetime registration for those convicted of specific sex offenses. CO, FL, ID, KY, MN, MS, NH, NM, NY, OK, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, WA, WI, WV, WY
- **Drug crimes: 17 states.** Examples of legislation passed by the states include enhancing penalties for the manufacture and sale of methamphetamines and enhancing penalties for selling or using drugs in the presence of minors. AK, AZ, CO, DE, FL, GA, IA, KS, KY, NJ, MI, PA, TN, UT, VA, WV, WI
- **Sentencing: 14 states.** Examples of legislation passed by the states include establishing habitual offender statutes and penalties, enhancing penalties for certain types of offenses, and requiring court instructions regarding time to be served and parole eligibility for imposed sentences. AK, AL, CA, HI, IA, KS, MI, NJ, TN, UT, VA, VT, WA, WV

Crime Legislation Related to Juveniles

- **Crimes committed in schools: 15 states.** Examples of legislation passed by the states include enhancing punishments for possessing a firearm on school grounds, requiring law enforcement agencies to notify school districts of certain offenses committed by juveniles, and permitting schools to disclose education records to law enforcement agencies. CA, CO, DE, IA, ID, ME, MN, MO, NY, OH, OR, SC, TN, VA, WA
- **Access to juvenile proceedings and records: 14 states.** Examples of legislation passed by the states include requiring photographs, fingerprints, and DNA samples from juveniles who commit certain offenses, and placing limits on access to juvenile records. AZ, CA, CO, CT, FL, MN, MS, OH, OK, SC, SD, UT, VA, WV
- **Detention and incarceration of juvenile offenders: 12 states.** Examples of legislation passed by the states include establishing criteria and standards for placement in secure detention, requiring notification of legal guardians of juveniles' upcoming detention hearings, and establishing criteria and guidelines for the use of physical restraints and seclusion. CT, FL, ID, KS, KY, MD, ME, NC, RI, SD, VA, WA
- **Treating juveniles as adults: 11 states.** Examples of legislation passed by the states include requiring or allowing the transfer of juveniles to criminal court for certain types of offenses, extending the jurisdiction of the juvenile court for certain offenses, and allowing for "blended" juvenile and adult sentences. CO, FL, GA, ID, KY, MI, MN, OK, VA, VT, WA
- **Status offenders: 11 states.** Examples of legislation passed by the states include authorizing procedures for dealing with truancy and allowing various activities of law enforcement officials with regard to children who are in need of services. CT, FL, ID, KY, ME, MS, OH, SC, SD, TN, WA
- **Mental health and substance abuse treatment needs: 10 states.** Examples of legislation passed by the states include permitting juvenile courts to order children to receive residential treatment services, and requiring mental health assessment and substance abuse testing and treatment for certain juvenile offenders. AZ, CA, CO, FL, KY, ME, MI, MO, VA, WA

Burton, M. *Juvenile Justice State Legislation in 2000*, National Conference of State Legislatures, February 2001.

Lyons, D. *State Crime Legislation in 2000*, National Conference of State Legislatures, January 2001.