



*Juvenile Offenders and Victims*



# National Report Series

*Bulletin*

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*This Bulletin is part of the Juvenile Offenders and Victims National Report Series. Published every 4 years, the National Report offers a comprehensive statistical overview of the problems of juvenile crime, violence, and victimization and the response of the juvenile justice system. During each interim year, the Bulletins in the National Report Series provide access to the latest information on juvenile arrests, court cases, juveniles in custody, and other topics of interest. Each Bulletin in the series highlights selected topics at the forefront of juvenile justice policymaking, giving readers focused access to statistics on some of the most critical issues. Together, the National Report and this series provide a baseline of facts for juvenile justice professionals, policymakers, the media, and concerned citizens.*



## Juvenile Residential Facility Census, 2000: Selected Findings

*Melissa Sickmund*

### A Message From OJJDP

OJJDP developed the Juvenile Residential Facility Census (JRFC) to collect information about the facilities in which juvenile offenders are held. The census is designed to collect information on such facility characteristics as type, size, structure, security arrangements, and ownership. The biannual survey also examines the adequacy of bedspace and a range of services provided youth in residential facilities. In keeping with OJJDP's congressional mandate, JRFC also reports on the number of deaths of juveniles in custody. This Bulletin presents findings from the inaugural 2000 JRFC. It focuses on two issues of primary interest to the juvenile justice field: facility crowding and facility-related deaths.

JRFC data suggest that crowding is a problem in a significant number of residential facilities. About 40 percent of the facilities reported that their residents exceeded their available beds. While the census cannot establish a causal relationship, these crowded facilities were more likely than other facilities to report that they had transported youth to an emergency room in the last month because of injuries resulting from a conflict with another resident or individual.

JRFC data indicate that the number of youth who die while in custody is decreasing. The census reports 30 deaths in 2000—a death rate for youth in custody that is about half the rate for their counterparts in the general U.S. population.

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# The Juvenile Residential Facility Census gives insight into facility operations

## New data describe 3,061 facilities

In October 2000, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) administered the first Juvenile Residential Facility Census (JRFC). OJJDP will administer JRFC every 2 years. The 2000 JRFC collected data from 3,690 facilities, 3,061 of which held a total of 110,284 offenders younger than 21 on the census date. JRFC does not capture data on adult prisons or jails, nor does it include facilities used exclusively for mental health or substance abuse treatment or for dependent children. Thus, JRFC includes most, but not all, facilities that hold juvenile offenders.

JRFC is one component in a multitiered effort to describe both the youth placed in residential facilities and the environments of these facilities. The other components are:

- **The National Juvenile Court Data Archive**, which collects information on the processing of juvenile court cases and the sanctions imposed by juvenile courts.
- **The Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement**, which collects information on youth held in residential placement as a result of contact with the juvenile justice system.

- **The Survey of Youth in Residential Placement**, which collects a broad range of self-report information (on their experience in custody, past offense histories, education, and other important life events) from interviews with individual youth in residential placement.

JRFC is designed to routinely collect information on how facilities operate and the services they provide. It includes detailed questions on facility security, crowding, deaths in custody, and facility ownership and operation. It also asks about specific services for mental and physical health care, substance abuse, and education.

### In October 2000, 4 in 10 juvenile facilities were publicly operated and held 70% of juvenile offenders in custody

State	Juvenile facilities			Offenders younger than 21			State	Juvenile facilities			Offenders younger than 21		
	All facilities	Public	Private	All facilities	Public	Private		All facilities	Public	Private	All facilities	Public	Private
U.S. Total*	3,061	1,203	1,848	110,284	77,662	32,464	Missouri	65	57	8	1,540	1,290	250
Alabama	46	12	34	1,583	926	657	Montana	18	8	10	260	173	65
Alaska	19	5	14	339	261	78	Nebraska	23	6	17	789	577	212
Arizona	51	16	35	2,248	1,752	398	Nevada	15	10	5	1,176	750	426
Arkansas	45	11	34	639	295	344	New Hampshire	8	2	6	193	123	70
California	285	116	169	19,286	17,551	1,735	New Jersey	57	45	12	2,274	2,171	103
Colorado	73	12	61	2,054	1,112	940	New Mexico	27	19	8	885	838	47
Connecticut	26	5	21	1,360	900	460	New York	210	59	151	5,081	2,883	2,198
Delaware	7	3	4	295	246	49	North Carolina	67	27	40	1,555	1,237	318
Dist. of Columbia	17	3	14	272	159	113	North Dakota	13	4	9	203	105	98
Florida	166	53	113	7,278	3,269	4,009	Ohio	106	71	35	4,890	4,342	548
Georgia	50	29	21	3,270	2,593	677	Oklahoma	52	14	38	1,034	535	479
Hawaii	7	3	4	122	107	15	Oregon	48	27	21	1,637	1,415	222
Idaho	22	14	8	580	470	110	Pennsylvania	163	29	134	5,085	1,241	3,844
Illinois	46	26	20	3,402	3,074	328	Rhode Island	11	1	10	360	211	149
Indiana	97	41	56	3,334	2,239	1,095	South Carolina	42	16	26	1,592	1,072	520
Iowa	76	16	60	1,166	395	771	South Dakota	22	9	13	646	365	265
Kansas	51	17	34	1,185	831	354	Tennessee	63	28	35	1,824	1,041	783
Kentucky	58	31	27	950	757	193	Texas	138	77	61	8,354	6,475	1,879
Louisiana	64	20	44	2,663	2,105	558	Utah	51	17	34	1,135	453	682
Maine	17	3	14	300	248	52	Vermont	5	1	4	158	26	132
Maryland	43	11	32	1,492	690	802	Virginia	74	62	12	2,868	2,616	252
Massachusetts	71	18	53	1,481	567	914	Washington	42	31	11	2,064	1,938	126
Michigan	108	42	66	3,896	1,782	2,114	West Virginia	27	6	21	381	241	140
Minnesota	121	22	99	1,922	986	936	Wisconsin	94	27	67	2,017	1,271	746
Mississippi	20	19	1	787	785	2	Wyoming	24	2	22	379	173	206

Note: State is the State where the facility is located. Offenders sent to out-of-State facilities are counted in the State where the facility is located, not the State where their offense occurred.

\*U.S. total includes 158 offenders in 10 tribal facilities. These offenders were located in Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Oklahoma, and South Dakota.

Source: Author's analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2000* [machine-readable data file].

# Facility crowding affects a substantial proportion of youth in custody

## Many facilities report not having enough standard beds for all their residents

Nearly all facilities (94%) reported the number of standard beds they had and whether they had any occupied makeshift beds on the census date. About 4 in 10 facilities said they had more residents than available standard beds. These “crowded” facilities held about 40% of all residents and 40% of offenders younger than 21. Crowding occurs when the

number of residents occupying all or part of a facility exceeds some predetermined limit based on square footage, utility use, or even fire codes. While not a perfect measure of crowding, comparing the number of residents to available standard beds gives a sense of the crowding problem. However, a facility may be crowded even without relying on makeshift beds. For example, using standard beds in an infirmary for youth who are not sick or beds in seclusion for youth who have not committed infractions may indicate crowding problems.

Nationwide, there was an average of nearly five empty standard beds per facility. This average masks a wide range: one facility with 567 residents had 124 residents for whom it did not have standard beds and one facility with 1,207 residents reported 1,181 empty standard beds.

Facilities reporting fewer standard beds than residents were significantly more likely than other facilities (45% vs. 38%) to say they transported youth to emergency rooms because of injuries resulting from interpersonal conflict in the month prior to the census.

### Nationwide, 39% of juvenile facilities reporting bed information held more residents than they had standard beds

State	Facilities reporting bed information			Percent of facilities with more residents than standard beds			State	Facilities reporting bed information			Percent of facilities with more residents than standard beds		
	All facilities	Public	Private	All facilities	Public	Private		All facilities	Public	Private	All facilities	Public	Private
U.S. Total*	2,875	1,164	1,704	39%	37%	40%	Missouri	63	55	8	25%	27%	13%
Alabama	45	11	34	38	73	26	Montana	19	8	10	26	25	20
Alaska	15	4	11	27	25	27	Nebraska	21	6	15	33	50	27
Arizona	51	15	32	39	47	41	Nevada	15	10	5	33	40	20
Arkansas	36	11	25	33	27	36	New Hampshire	8	2	6	50	50	50
California	258	115	143	56	37	71	New Jersey	54	45	9	35	38	22
Colorado	70	12	57	31	67	25	New Mexico	27	19	8	33	37	25
Connecticut	23	5	18	30	20	33	New York	208	59	149	53	37	59
Delaware	7	3	4	57	100	25	North Carolina	62	24	38	37	38	37
Dist. of Columbia	11	3	8	18	0	25	North Dakota	13	4	9	0	0	0
Florida	147	53	94	52	47	55	Ohio	106	71	35	35	38	29
Georgia	50	29	21	42	59	19	Oklahoma	43	14	29	53	57	52
Hawaii	7	3	4	43	33	50	Oregon	44	24	20	30	25	35
Idaho	21	13	8	52	62	38	Pennsylvania	149	28	121	33	36	32
Illinois	42	25	17	19	16	24	Rhode Island	10	1	9	80	100	78
Indiana	95	41	54	23	29	19	South Carolina	37	13	24	38	38	38
Iowa	74	16	58	43	13	52	South Dakota	21	7	13	24	0	31
Kansas	47	16	31	28	25	29	Tennessee	58	27	31	52	48	55
Kentucky	57	30	27	28	30	26	Texas	125	73	52	33	37	27
Louisiana	62	20	42	35	30	38	Utah	51	17	34	39	29	44
Maine	17	3	14	41	0	50	Vermont	5	1	4	20	0	25
Maryland	43	11	32	30	36	28	Virginia	74	62	12	41	44	25
Massachusetts	69	18	51	77	89	73	Washington	42	31	11	21	19	27
Michigan	104	39	65	34	21	42	West Virginia	27	6	21	52	67	48
Minnesota	114	22	92	29	45	25	Wisconsin	91	24	67	14	13	15
Mississippi	14	13	1	29	23	100	Wyoming	23	2	21	17	0	19

Note: A single bed is counted as one standard bed and a bunk bed is counted as two standard beds. Makeshift beds (e.g., cots, rollout beds, mattresses, and sofas) are not counted as standard beds. Percents are based on facilities reporting bed information. State is the State where the facility is located. Offenders sent to out-of-State facilities are counted in the State where the facility is located, not the State where their offense occurred.

\*U.S. total includes seven tribal facilities that reported bed information. These tribal facilities were located in Arizona, Colorado, Montana, and South Dakota.

Source: Author's analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2000* [machine-readable data file].



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## The death rate was lower for youth in custody than for youth in the general population

### Deaths of juveniles in custody are relatively rare

Juvenile facilities reported that 45 juveniles died while in custody in 1994. According to the 2000 JRFC, juvenile facilities reported that 30 youth died while in the legal custody of the facility. There has been concern about the risk of death to youth in custody and whether that risk is greater than the risk faced by youth in general. For every 2,230 youth ages 13–17 in the general population, there was 1 death during 1999. For youth in custody, there was 1 death for every 3,990 beds occupied during the year. Thus, the custody death rate was a little more than half the death rate for youth ages 13–17 in the general population.

More than half of the deaths reported occurred outside the facility (17 of 30). Private facilities accounted for most of the deaths that occurred outside the facility. Public facilities accounted for most of the deaths that occurred inside the facility. Public facilities reported 14 deaths (9 inside, 5 outside). Private facilities reported 16 deaths (4 inside, 12 outside).

### Accidents were the most commonly reported cause of death in custody during the 12 months prior to the census

Cause of death	Total	Inside the facility			Outside the facility		
		All	Public	Private	All	Public	Private
Total	30	13	9	4	17	5	12
Accident	9	2	0	2	7	2	5
Illness/natural	8	5	4	1	3	2	1
Suicide	7	6	5	1	1	0	1
Homicide by nonresident	4	0	0	0	4	1	3
Other	2	0	0	0	2	0	2

■ Accidents were also the leading cause of death for youth ages 13–17 in the general population, followed by homicide and suicide.

Note: Data are reported deaths of youth in custody from 10/1/1999 through 9/30/2000. Death information was reported by 94% of facilities that held 96% of all residents.

Source: Author's analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2000* [machine-readable data file].

All facilities reporting suicides said they evaluate residents within 24 hours of arrival to determine whether they are at risk for suicide. All but one facility said they evaluate all residents for suicide risk. That one facility said they evaluate youth who attempt suicide, who display or communicate suicide risk, or for whom no mental health record is available.

Of the 135 facilities that reported transporting juvenile(s) to a hospital emergency room because of suicide attempt(s), none also reported a suicide death.

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