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The District of Columbia Juvenile Reoffending Study: 2007–2008

**CSP-09-37: Study to Examine Reoffending
Activity of Post-Disposition Youth in the
District of Columbia**

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Executive Summary

Project Overview

This report presents analysis of data on a cohort of 1,222 juvenile offenders who received placement dispositions for delinquency offenses committed in the District of Columbia during 2007. Analyses present demographic and offense profiles for the cohort and the target case that made them eligible for the study. Data were also examined for any cases filed prior to youths' target cases.

In addition to studying youths' court history, analyses focused on youths' subsequent offending in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. For each juvenile in the cohort, cases were identified relative to the target case—as prior, during, or after. The first case resulting in a probation or placement commitment disposition in 2007 for each juvenile was identified as the **target case**. Cases with filing dates before the filing date of the target case were counted as **prior** cases. Three measures of reoffending were used. Cases with filing dates between the target case filing and placement start date were counted as cases occurring **during the target case**. These youth had cases subsequent to the target case, but before the court had decided the case or imposed any sanctions. The key measure of reoffending was cases filed after the target placement start date. These were counted as **after the target case**. This measure is more appropriate as an outcome measure as it reflects the impact of the court's sanctioning. Some youth had cases filed between the target placement start and end dates. These cases were counted as **during the target placement**. The follow-up time period for the study was through yearend 2008—a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 24 months, depending on the date of the target case in 2007. For 80% of the youth that reoffended after the target case, the subsequent case was filed within 12 months of the target placement date, and for 97% it was filed within 18 months.

Method

District of Columbia Superior Court's IT Division extracted data on individual and case variables from CourtView. Juveniles with probation or commitment placement dispositions in 2007 resulting from delinquency charges were identified. IT extracted from CourtView information on each youth and not only on the target case that brought them into the cohort, but also on all their prior cases and all their subsequent cases through yearend 2008. The main extract sent to the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) contained 67 variables describing a total of 4,177 cases involving 1,231 youth. (Nine youth were excluded from the cohort because their placement in 2007 did not stem from delinquency charges). IT also provided NCJJ with an extract of event data elements and docket information relating to these cases.

From these data, NCJJ created a juvenile-level file for analysis with information on 1,222 youth in the study cohort. This file

contains case processing information regarding the target case, information on the youth's case history prior to the target case, information on any cases concurrent to the target case, and information on any cases subsequent to the target case.

Summary of Findings

Descriptive findings for the cohort include:

- Youth included in the cohort represented 2.6% of the District of Columbia's youth population ages 10 through 17 in 2007.
- The cohort was made up of predominantly non-Hispanic black males age 15–16 at the time of the target case.
- Person offenses were 40% of the target cases. More than half of those were simple assault.
- Motor vehicle theft (19%), drug offenses (13%), and robbery (10%) were also common offenses in target cases.
- About 8 in 10 youth in the cohort were placed on Court Social Services (CSS) probation in their target case.
- The 2 in 10 youth who were committed to Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) had proportionately more violent offenses than those placed on probation.
- Youth with prior cases slightly outnumbered those without priors (53% vs. 47%).
- Slightly more than half of those with prior cases had more than one prior case.
- Nearly one-quarter of the study cohort had cases filed during the processing of the target case (between the filing of the target case and the start of the target placement).
- Juveniles with prior cases were more likely to have cases filed during the target case.
- Just over half (51%) the juveniles in the cohort (622) had *no cases after* the start of the target placement during the study period.
- For 227 youth in the cohort (19%) the *target case was their only case* during the study period.
- 60% of the youth in the cohort had *no petitioned cases after* the placement started for the target case.
- 684 youth in the cohort (56%) had *no placements after* the target placement during the study period. Of the 44% of juveniles in the cohort with one or more placements after the start of the target placement, more than half had more than one subsequent placement.

- 71% of youth in the study cohort had *no DYRS commitments after the target placement start date*—and of those that did, more than half had one or more.
- 76% of youth in the cohort had *no CSS probation placements after the start of the target placement*. Among juveniles with one or more subsequent probation placements, most had only one.
- Some youth in the cohort (9%) had both subsequent CSS probation placements and subsequent DYRS commitments.

Subsequent CSS probation	Subsequent DYRS commitment		
	Total	None	1 or more
Total	100%	71%	29%
None	76	56	20
1 or more	24	15	9

- Nearly 7 in 10 youth who were 14 or younger at target case filing had one or more subsequent cases.
- Nearly 6 in 10 youth who were 14 or younger at target case filing had one or more subsequent placements.
- 57% of youth with property charges as the most serious offense in their target case had one or more cases filed after their target case.
- Youth ordered to CSS placement in their target case were more likely to have a subsequent placement (50%) than those committed to DYRS (44%), but the available data did not allow for the control of “street time” for the youth in the cohort.

- Nearly one third of the cohort had one or more cases filed *during their target placement* (between start and end dates).
- Among youth with cases *after the target case*, those ordered to CSS probation in their target case were less likely than youth committed to DYRS to return with a Violent Crime Index offense (i.e., murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault), a Property Crime Index offense (burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson), or a drug offense as their most serious offense.
- Youth with prior cases were more likely than other youth to have cases filed *during the target placement* (38%).

Cases before target case	Cases during the target placement		
	Total	None	1 or more
Total	100%	68%	32%
None	100	74	26
1 or more	100	62	38

- Juveniles committed to DYRS in the target case were more likely than other youth to have a case filed *during the target placement* period (42%).

Target placement	Cases during the target placement		
	Total	None	1 or more
Total	100%	68%	32%
CSS	100	70	30
DYRS	100	58	42

Key Terms

Cases after the target case—cases filed after the target placement start date.

Cases during the target case—cases with filing dates between the target case filing and placement start date.

Cases during the target placement—cases filed during the target placement (between the placement start date and end date).

Commitment placement—youth committed to the District of Columbia Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS).

Follow-up time-period—through yearend 2008.

Offense—See full Glossary at the end of the report for definitions of the offense categories used.

Petitioned case—case that appears on the official court calendar in response to the filing of a petition requesting the court to adjudicate the youth as a delinquent (or status offender, or dependent child) or to waive jurisdiction and transfer the youth to criminal court.

Placement disposition—youth ordered to Court Social Services (CSS) probation supervision or commitment to the District of Columbia Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS).

Prior cases—cases with filing dates before the filing date of the target case.

Probation placement—youth ordered to Court Social Services (CSS) probation supervision.

Reoffending—cases that were petitioned subsequent to the target case. This includes two measures 1) cases filed during the target case (before the target placement start date), and 2) cases filed after the target placement start date (which includes cases filed during the target placement, between the start and end dates).

Study cohort—juvenile offenders who received placement dispositions for delinquency offenses during 2007.

Target case—youths’ first delinquency case resulting in a placement (probation or commitment disposition) in 2007. The case that made youth eligible for the study cohort.

Project Overview

This report presents analyses of data on a cohort of 1,222 juvenile offenders who received placement dispositions for delinquency offenses during 2007. Analyses present demographic and offense profiles for the cohort and the target case that made them eligible for the study. Data were also examined for any cases filed prior to juveniles' target cases. Some juveniles had more than one case in 2007 that made them eligible for the cohort. In such instances, the case resulting in the first probation or commitment was selected as the target case.

In addition to studying youths' court history, analyses focused on youths' subsequent offending. For each juvenile in the cohort, cases were identified relative to the target case—as prior, during, or after. The first case resulting in a probation or placement commitment disposition in 2007 for each juvenile was identified as the *target* case. Cases with filing dates before the filing date of the target case were counted as *prior* cases. Three measures of reoffending were used. Cases with filing dates between the target case filing and placement start date were counted as cases occurring *during the target case*. These youth had cases subsequent to the target case, but before the court had decided the case or imposed any sanctions. The key measure of reoffending was cases filed after the target placement start date. These were counted as *after the target case*. This measure is more appropriate as an outcome measure as it reflects the impact of the court's sanctioning. Some youth had cases filed between the target placement start and end dates. These cases were counted as *during the target placement*. The follow-up time period for the study was through yearend 2008—a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 24 months, depending on the date of the target case in 2007. For 80% of the youth that reoffended after the target case, the subsequent case was filed within 12 months of the target placement date, and for 97% it was filed within 18 months.

Methods

District of Columbia Superior Court's IT Division extracted data on individual and case variables from CourtView. Juveniles with probation or commitment placement dispositions in 2007 resulting from delinquency charges were identified. IT extracted from CourtView information on each youth and not only on the target case that brought them into the cohort, but also on all their prior cases and all their subsequent cases through yearend 2008. The main extract sent to the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) contained 67 variables describing a total of 4,177 cases involving 1,231 youth. (Nine youth were excluded from the cohort because their placement in 2007 did not stem from delinquency charges). In addition, IT provided NCJJ with an extract of event data elements and docket information relating to these cases.

Additional data on subsequent offending by members of the cohort were obtained from Maryland's Department of Juvenile Services and Virginia's Department of Juvenile Justice. Maryland and Virginia agencies were provided with a listing of study cohort members that included names, date of birth, gender, race, and case numbers to facilitate their search for those individuals in their databases. Maryland and Virginia returned data files with information on youth in the study cohort with cases in those jurisdictions. Detail was provided on most serious offense and key dates throughout case processing: intake, detention, and probation and commitment dispositions.

NCJJ created a juvenile-level file for analysis with information on 1,222 youth in the study cohort. This file contains case processing information regarding the target case, information on the youth's case history prior to the target case, information on any cases concurrent to the target case, and information on any cases subsequent to the target case.

The Cohort

Cohort Demographics

The cohort is a sample of 1,222 juvenile offenders adjudicated delinquent who had Court Social Services (CSS) supervised probation or Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) commitment placements during calendar year 2007. This cohort (1,222 youth) represents 2.6% of the District of Columbia's youth population ages 10 through 17 that year (47,053 youth). The number of delinquent youth in the cohort as a proportion of the total number of youth ages 10–17 in a population is a useful statistic for gauging the general magnitude of delinquency serious enough to warrant placement dispositions.

Demographically, the cohort was made up predominantly of non-Hispanic black males who were 15–16 at the time of the target case (Table 1). As is the case with most offender populations, the cohort is skewed toward the older teen ages. However, the cohort is only slightly disproportionately old when compared with the entire U.S. delinquency caseload for 2007. Nationwide, 44% of juveniles in delinquency cases were 16 or older at the time their case was petitioned. In comparison, 47% of the cohort was at least 16 at the time of their target case. The cohort median age was 15.9.

Compared with the District of Columbia's youth population ages 10–17, the cohort is disproportionately black.

Youth population 10–17, 2007:

Race/ethnicity	DC		Study cohort	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	47,053	100%	1,222	100%
Black, non-Hispanic	35,090	75	1,173	96
Hispanic	4,034	9	27	2
White, non-Hispanic	6,708	14	15	1
Other, non-Hispanic	1,221	2	7	1

Table 1: Target Case Demographics

Characteristics at the time of the target case	Juveniles in cohort	
	Number	Percentage
Total		
Gender	1,222	100%
Male	1,060	87
Female	162	13
Age group*	1,221	100%
13 or younger	122	10
14	199	16
15	315	26
16	305	25
17 or older	280	23
Race/ethnicity	1,222	100%
Black, non-Hispanic	1,173	96
Hispanic	27	2
White, non-Hispanic	15	1
Other, non-Hispanic	7	1

* One juvenile was missing information necessary to calculate age and four were older than 17 when the target case was filed.

Offenses

Although youth may have more than one offense in their case, for the analysis, cases are identified by the most serious offense involved. Person offenses accounted for 4 in 10 target cases (Table 2). More than half of those involved simple assault offenses—22% of the target cases. More juveniles had simple assault as their most serious offense than had aggravated assault offenses (22% vs. 5%) in their target case. Taken together, Violent Crime Index offenses (i.e., criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) accounted for 15% of target cases' most serious offense. In comparison, Property Crime Index offenses (i.e., burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson) made up 26% of juveniles' most serious offenses in their target case. After simple assault, the most common offenses were motor vehicle theft (19%), drug law violations (13%), and robbery (10%).

Less serious offenses such as vandalism, trespassing, disorderly conduct, and nonviolent sex offenses appear relatively uncommon. This stems from the fact that if a juvenile's target case included multiple charges only the most serious is represented here—a juvenile charged with burglary and stolen property offenses would be counted in only the burglary category.

Offenses as a proportion of total cases:

Most serious offense	Study cohort	2007 U.S. delinquency caseload
Robbery	10%	2%
Simple assault	22	16
Burglary	1	6
Larceny-theft	6	15
Motor vehicle theft	19	2
Vandalism	2	7
Obstruction of justice	0	13
Disorderly conduct	1	7
Weapons offenses	6	2

Table 2: Target Case Offense Profile

Most serious offense charged	Juveniles in cohort	
	Number	Percent
Total	1,222	100%
Person offenses	488	40
Violent Crime Index*	183	15
Criminal homicide	2	0
Forcible rape	0	0
Robbery	119	10
Aggravated assault	62	5
Simple assault	268	22
Other violent sex offenses	27	2
Other person offenses	10	1
Property offenses	436	36
Property Crime Index*	322	26
Burglary	12	1
Larceny-theft	78	6
Motor vehicle theft	231	19
Arson	1	0
Vandalism	29	2
Trespassing	39	3
Stolen property offenses	30	2
Other property offenses	16	1
Drug law violations	161	13
Public order offenses	109	9
Obstruction of justice	1	0
Disorderly conduct	12	1
Weapons offenses	71	6
Liquor law violations (not status)	1	0
Nonviolent sex offenses	10	1
Other public order offenses	14	1
Missing offense information**	28	2

* Violent Crime Index includes criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault. Property Crime Index includes burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

** Offense detail was missing from the charge records extracted for the study (charges 1–5 per case). They were confirmed as delinquency cases by reviewing data submitted to the National Juvenile Court Data Archive, which included information for charges 6 or higher.

Compared with the offense profile for cases referred to juvenile courts nationwide, the cohort target cases had relatively more robbery, simple assault, motor vehicle theft, and weapons offenses. The cohort target cases also had relatively less burglary, larceny-theft, vandalism, obstruction of justice, and disorderly conduct cases.

Target Case Placement

CSS probation was ordered for 81% of the most serious offenses charged in target cases—984 juveniles in the cohort (Table 3). Property (83%) and public order cases (83%) were somewhat more likely than person offense (78%) and drug cases (78%) to be ordered to probation.

The more detailed offense categories each contain a range of seriousness levels and the likelihood of a probation disposition varied with offense seriousness. Target cases involving more serious offenses were generally less likely than less serious cases to be ordered to CSS probation and instead were more likely to be committed to DYRS.

For example, 66% of target cases for which robbery was the most serious charge were put on CSS probation and 34% were ordered to DYRS. In comparison, 87% of target cases with simple assault as the most serious charge were ordered to CSS probation and 13% were committed to DYRS. CSS probation was ordered for 82% of motor vehicle theft cases.

Nationally, among all adjudicated delinquency cases processed in 2007, in roughly 56% the juvenile was placed on probation as the most severe disposition. An additional 25% of adjudicated cases resulted in residential placement and 19% received other dispositions such as community service, restitution, or fines. The ratio of probation dispositions to residential placement dispositions was 2.2-to-1 nationally compared with 4.1-to-1 in the cohort. Nationwide, the use of probation was lower for person offense and public order offense cases than for drug offense and property offense cases. In the cohort, the use of probation was somewhat lower for person offense and drug cases than for property and public order cases.

Offense Profiles by Placement

Juveniles ordered to CSS probation differed from those ordered to DYRS commitment. Juveniles committed to DYRS were significantly less likely to be female than those placed on CSS probation. Among those placed on probation, 14% were female, compared with 9% of the juveniles committed to DYRS. Both CSS and DYRS placement groups were predominantly black. Juveniles who were placed on CSS probation were younger than juveniles committed to DYRS. Among those placed with CSS, 28% were age 14 or younger at the time their target case was filed. For those committed to DYRS, the proportion was 20%.

Table 3: Placement Distribution of Cohort by Offense

Most serious offense charged in target case	Percentage ordered to placement	
	CSS probation (N=984)	DYRS Commitment (N=238)
Total	81%	19%
Person offenses	78	22
Violent Crime Index	67	33
Criminal homicide	0	100
Forcible rape	NA	NA
Robbery	66	34
Aggravated assault	71	29
Simple assault	87	13
Other violent sex offenses	78	22
Other person offenses	70	30
Property offenses	83	17
Property Crime Index	81	19
Burglary	83	17
Larceny-theft	81	19
Motor vehicle theft	82	18
Arson	0	100
Vandalism	83	17
Trespassing	90	10
Stolen property offenses	87	13
Other property offenses	100	0
Drug law violations	78	22
Public order offenses	83	17
Obstruction of justice	100	0
Disorderly conduct	100	0
Weapons offenses	77	23
Liquor law violations (not status)	100	0
Nonviolent sex offenses	100	0
Other public order offenses	79	21
Missing offense information*	82	18

* Offense detail was missing from the charge records extracted for the study (charges 1–5 per case). They were confirmed as delinquency cases by reviewing data submitted to the National Juvenile Court Data Archive, which included information for charges 6 or higher.

Juveniles sent to DYRS had greater proportions of person offenses (44%) compared with those supervised by CSS (39%) (Table 4). Robbery accounted for 17% of the DYRS group and 8% of the CSS group. The difference in aggravated assaults was smaller (8% for juveniles sent to DYRS and 4% for those placed with CSS). In contrast, the CSS group had relatively more simple assaults (24% vs. 15% for the DYRS group). The two groups were remarkably similar in the remainder of their offense profiles.

Table 4: Offense Profiles by Placement Type

Most serious offense charged in target case	Offense profile	
	CSS probation (N=984)	DYRS Commitment (N=238)
Total	100%	100%
Person offenses	39	44
Violent Crime Index	12	26
Criminal homicide	0	1
Forcible rape	0	0
Robbery	8	17
Aggravated assault	4	8
Simple assault	24	15
Other violent sex offenses	2	3
Other person offenses	1	1
Property offenses	37	31
Property Crime Index	27	25
Burglary	1	1
Larceny-theft	6	6
Motor vehicle theft	19	18
Arson	0	0
Vandalism	2	2
Trespassing	4	2
Stolen property offenses	3	2
Other property offenses	2	0
Drug law violations	13	15
Public order offenses	9	8
Obstruction of justice	0	0
Disorderly conduct	1	0
Weapons offenses	6	7
Liquor law violations (not status)	0	0
Nonviolent sex offenses	1	0
Other public order offenses	1	1
Missing offense information	2	2

The DYRS commitment and CSS probation groups' offense profiles differed from national residential placement and probation groups.

Offenses as a proportion of total disposition group:

Most serious offense	Residential Placement		Probation	
	Study cohort	2007 U.S. delinquency caseload	Study cohort	2007 U.S. delinquency caseload
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Person	44	28	39	25
Property	31	33	37	35
Drugs	15	10	13	13
Public order	8	29	9	26

Case History

For each juvenile in the cohort, cases were identified relative to the target case—as prior, during, or after. The first case resulting in a probation or placement commitment disposition in 2007 for each juvenile was identified as the *target* case. Cases with filing dates before the filing date of the target case that brought them into the cohort were counted as *prior* cases. Cases with filing dates between the target case filing and

placement start date were counted as cases occurring *during* the target case. Cases filed after the target placement start date were counted as *after* the target case. Some juveniles had cases filed between the target placement start and end dates. These cases were counted as *during the target placement*.

There were 576 juveniles in the cohort with no reported cases prior to the target case filing date. These juveniles represented 47% of the cohort. An additional 282 juveniles (23%) had just one prior case. Few juveniles (6%) had 5 or more prior cases. There was one juvenile with 18 prior cases, the most of any juvenile in the cohort.

Proportion of juveniles with prior cases:

Juveniles in cohort	Total	Prior cases				
		None	1	2	3–4	5–18
Number	1,222	576	282	147	147	70
Percent	100%	47%	23%	12%	12%	6%

Older juveniles were more likely to have prior cases than younger youth. Among juveniles age 15 or older, 57% had prior cases, compared with 40% among juveniles age 14 or younger. Similarly, males (56%) were more likely than females (33%), and blacks (54%) were more likely than other youth (33%) to have prior cases.

The offense profile for the most serious prior cases was more serious than the profile for the target case (Table 5). Comparing the most serious prior offenses with the most serious offenses in target cases shows higher proportions of robberies and aggravated assaults and lower proportions of larceny-thefts, motor vehicle thefts, drug offenses, and public order offenses. However, for 3 in 10 juveniles with priors, their most serious target offense was less serious than their most serious prior offense, and for 2 in 10, the target case had a more serious offense than any prior case. For 16% of juveniles with priors, their most serious target offense was in the same offense category as their most serious prior offense.

Reoffending

During the Target Case (Before Placement)

Approximately one quarter (26%) of the study cohort had cases filed between the filing of the target case and the start of the target placement (Table 6). Juveniles with prior cases were more likely to have cases filed during the target case. Among juveniles in the cohort with no cases filed prior to the filing of the target case, 19% had cases filed between the filing of the target case and the start of the target placement. In comparison, 32% of juveniles with prior cases had cases during the processing of the target case.

Cases before target case	Total	Cases during target case	
		None	1 or more
Total	100%	74%	26%
None	100	81	19
1 or more	100	68	32

Juveniles with prior violent cases were more likely than others to have a case during the target case. For those juveniles in the study cohort who had one or more prior violent offenses before the filing of their target case, 32% had one or more cases filed during the processing of the target case (between the filing of the target case and the start date of the target case placement).

Most serious prior offense	Total	Cases during target case	
		None	1 or more
Total	100%	74%	26%
No violent priors	100	77	23
1 or more violent priors	100	68	32

Compared with the offense profile for target cases, the offense profile for cases filed during the target case had proportionately more serious offenses (Table 7).

Table 5: Prior Case Offense Profile

Prior case characteristics	Juveniles in cohort	
	Number	Percent
Total	646	100%
Total delinquency	636	98
Person offenses	379	59
Violent Crime Index**	222	34
Criminal homicide	2	0
Forcible rape	0	0
Robbery	131	20
Aggravated assault	89	14
Simple assault	129	20
Other violent sex offenses	24	4
Other person offenses	4	1
Property offenses	171	26
Property Crime Index**	146	23
Burglary	17	3
Larceny-theft	91	14
Motor vehicle theft	37	6
Arson	1	0
Vandalism	19	3
Trespassing	4	1
Stolen property offenses	1	0
Other property offenses	1	0
Drug law violations	57	9
Public order offenses	29	4
Obstruction of justice	2	0
Disorderly conduct	6	1
Weapons offenses	20	3
Nonviolent sex offenses	1	0
Other public order offense	0	0
Total status offense	6	1
Running away	2	0
Truancy	4	1
Traffic	2	0
Missing offense information*	28	0

* Offense detail was missing from the charge records extracted for the study (charges 1–5 per case). They were confirmed as delinquency cases by reviewing data submitted to the National Juvenile Court Data Archive, which included information for charges 6 or higher.

Table 6: Reoffending During the Target Case

Cases during the target case	Juveniles in cohort	
	Number	Percent
Total	1,222	100%
None	902	74
No other cases	227	19
Other cases but none during the target case	675	55
One or more cases during the target case	320	26
1 case	222	18
2 cases	69	6
3–6 cases	29	2

Table 7: Offense Profile Comparison of Cases Filed During the Target Case with Target Case

Most serious offense	Offense profile	
	Case filed during target case	Target case
Total	100%	100%
Person offense	43	40
Violent Crime Index*	19	15
Robbery	12	10
Aggravated assault	7	5
Simple assault	22	22
Property offense	29	36
Property Crime Index*	24	26
Larceny-theft	17	6
Motor vehicle theft	6	19
Drug law violation	10	13
Public order offense	11	9
Disorderly conduct	4	0
Weapon law violation	3	6

Note: Detail does not add to totals because low volume offense categories are not shown.

Cases After Target Case Placement Start

For 227 juveniles in the cohort (19%), the target case was their only case during the study period (Table 8). More than half of the juveniles in the cohort (622 of 1,222) had no cases after the start of the target placement during the study period. In addition to the 227 juveniles in the cohort that had no cases other than the target case, there were 395 juveniles who had other cases that were all prior to the target case's placement start date. Taken together these 622 cases represent 51% of the cohort. There were 600 juveniles in the cohort with cases filed after the target placement start, most with only one case after the start of target case placement. However, 29% of the cohort had multiple cases after the target case and 17% had 3 or more. Two juveniles had 8 cases filed after the target placement start.

Four in 10 juveniles in the cohort had one or more **petitioned** cases after the start of the target placement; 60% of the juveniles in the cohort had no petitioned cases after the target case placement start. There were 729 juveniles who did not have any petitioned cases after the target placement start. Of those juveniles, 107 did have cases after the target placement

Table 8: Reoffending After Target Placement Start

Cases after target placement start	Juveniles in cohort					
	Any case		Petitioned case		Placement	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	1,222	100%	1,222	100%	1,222	100%
None	622	51	729	60	684	56
No other cases	227	19	227	19	227	19
Other cases but none after target placement start	395	32	502	41	457	37
One or more cases after target placement start	600	49	493	40	538	44
1	247	20	228	19	235	19
2	148	12	143	12	135	11
3 or more	205	17	122	10	168	14

Note: More juveniles had placements after the target case than had formal cases after the target case—this could result from subsequent cases with multiple placements and placements due to probation revocation on the target case.

start, but had no petitioned cases. These juveniles represent 18% of those with cases after the target placement start.

After the target placement, 684 youth in the cohort (56%) had **no placements** and 538 youth in the cohort (44%) had one or more placements. Roughly 1 in 5 juveniles in the cohort had one placement after the target placement start date and about 1 in 4 had more than one placement after the target placement start.

Over one-quarter (29%) of youth in the study cohort had **subsequent DYRS commitments** after the target placement start date (Table 9). Of those juveniles in the cohort with subsequent DYRS commitments, less than half (45%, 161 of 355) had just one subsequent DYRS commitment and more than half (55%, 194 of 355) had more than one subsequent commitment during the study period.

Nearly one-quarter of youth in the cohort (24%) had **subsequent CSS probation placements** after the start of the target placement. Among youth with one or more subsequent probation placements during the study period, most (63%, 186 of 246) had only one subsequent probation placement.

Some juveniles in the cohort (9%) had both subsequent CSS probation placements and subsequent DYRS commitments (Table 10). Two in 10 juveniles in the cohort had no probation placements but had one or more DYRS commitments, and 15% had probation placements and no DYRS commitments after the start of the target placement.

Table 9: Placements After Target Placement Start

Number of subsequent placements	Juveniles in cohort with placement after target placement start			
	DYRS commitment		CSS probation placement	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	1,222	100%	1,222	100%
None	867	71	926	76
No other cases	227	19	227	19
Other cases but no placements after target placement start	640	52	699	57
One or more placements after target placement start	355	29	296	24
1	161	13	186	15
2	92	8	73	6
3 or more	102	8	37	3

Note: More juveniles had placements after the target case than had formal cases after the target case—this could result from subsequent cases with multiple placements and placements due to probation revocation on the target case.

Table 10: Proportion of the Cohort with Subsequent Placements by Placement Type

Subsequent CSS probation	Total	Subsequent DYRS commitment	
		None	1 or more
Number			
Total	1,222	867	355
None	926	684	243
1 or more	296	183	112
Percent			
Total	100%	71%	29%
None	76	56	20
1 or more	24	15	9

Reoffending by Demographics and Offenses

There were substantial demographic variations in the proportion of youth with subsequent cases or subsequent cases resulting in placement (Table 11). Females were substantially less likely than males to have cases or placements after the start of the target placement. Younger offenders were more likely than older offenders to have cases and placements after the start of the target placement. For youth who were 14 or younger at the time their target case was filed, 68% had 1 or more subsequent cases, compared with 42% of youth who were 15 or older at case filing.

Age at target case filing*	Total	Cases after target placement start	
		None	1 or more
Number			
Total	1,222	621	600
14 or younger	321	102	219
15 or older	900	519	381
Percent			
Total	100%	51%	49%
14 or younger	100	32	68
15 or older	100	58	42

* Totals include one juvenile who was missing information necessary to calculate age.

Younger juveniles (age 14 or younger) were also more likely than older juveniles to have at least one placement after the start of their target placement. Among youth who were 14 or younger at target case filing, 6 in 10 had 1 or more subsequent placements. In comparison, among youth age 15 or older, approximately 4 in 10 had 1 or more subsequent placements.

Age at target case filing	Total	Placements after target placement start	
		None	1 or more
Number			
Total	1,222	683	538
14 or younger	321	130	191
15 or older	900	553	347
Percent			
Total	100%	56%	44%
14 or younger	100	40	60
15 or older	100	61	39

* Totals include one juvenile who was missing information necessary to calculate age.

Reoffending by Target Placement Type

In reviewing the reoffending findings by placement type, it is important to keep in mind a key limitation of the available data. All youth placed on CSS probation were in the community. Youth committed to DYRS include both youth supervised by DYRS in the community and youth in secure confinement. Opportunities to reoffend are substantially different in a community setting from a secure environment. Compared with youth in the community, one would expect youth in secure confinement to have lower reoffending rates while in

Table 11: Reoffending by Cohort Demographics and Offense

Characteristics at the time of the target case	Juveniles in cohort	Percent with subsequent	
		Cases	Placements
Total	1,222	49%	44%
Gender			
Male	1,060	51%	47%
Female	162	34	27
Age group*			
13 or younger	122	68%	58%
14	199	68	60
15	315	62	55
16	305	45	38
17 or older	280	18	21
Race/ethnicity			
Black, non-Hispanic	1,173	50%	45%
Hispanic	27	26	22
White, non-Hispanic	15	47	27
Other, non-Hispanic	7	14	29
Most serious offense charged in any prior case			
No prior cases	578	47%	39%
Person offenses	379	50	46
Violent Crime Index	222	50	45
Other person	157	50	47
Property offenses	171	57	57
Property Crime Index	146	57	55
Other property	25	60	68
Drug law violations	57	44	44
Public order offenses	29	48	52
Weapons	20	60	55
Other public order	9	22	44
Status & traffic offenses	8	38	50
Most serious offense charged in the target case			
Person offenses	488	49%	42%
Violent Crime Index	183	53	45
Other person	305	46	40
Property offenses	436	58	53
Property Crime Index	322	58	50
Other property	114	48	59
Drug law violations	161	41	37
Public order offenses	109	36	35
Weapons	71	35	31
Other public order	38	37	42
Target case disposition			
CSS Probation	984	50	47
DYRS commitment	238	44	34

* One juvenile was missing information necessary to calculate age and four were older than 17 when the target case was filed.

confinement. Accurate data on dates youth were released from secure confinement to the community were not available for youth committed to DYRS. Youth in the cohort who were committed to DYRS and placed in secure confinement had less opportunity to reoffend while in placement, but without the necessary dates to determine their “start time” in the community, it was not possible to create a fair comparison for analysis.

Youth in the cohort who had been placed on CSS probation in their target case were somewhat more likely to have subsequent cases than youth committed to DYRS. Among youth placed on probation in their target case, 50% had subsequent cases for

delinquency offenses. Among those committed to DYRS in their target case, 44% had one or more subsequent cases. It is impossible to determine how much of this difference is because some DYRS youth remained in secure confinement. Youth placed on CSS probation in their target case were also more likely to have subsequent probation or commitment

placements. Overall, 47% of youth ordered to CSS probation in their target case had one or more subsequent placements. For those committed to DYRS in their target case, 34% had one or more subsequent placements. Again, the data do not allow for a fair comparison.

For some subgroups of juveniles, the difference in the likelihood of subsequent placement between those placed on CSS probation and those committed to DYRS was smaller. For example, among 15-year-olds only 3 percentage points separated the probation group from the commitment group (Table 12). There was a similarly small difference for juveniles with prior drug law violations or weapons charges. In contrast, for some groups the likelihood of subsequent placements was 25 percentage points or more greater for the probation group than for the DYRS group (14-year-olds, juveniles with prior Property Crime Index offenses, juveniles with weapons offenses or non-Index property offenses in their target case). Still, the data did not allow the analysis to control for variations in DYRS youth's "time in the community."

Variations were also seen between CSS probation and DYRS commitment groups in the offense profile of the subsequent cases among youth who reoffended (one or more subsequent cases after the start of the target placement) (Table 13). Among youth ordered to CSS probation in their target case 24% returned with a charge in the FBI's Violent Crime Index offense category (i.e., criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) compared with 27% of youth committed to DYRS on their target case. Similarly, a smaller proportion of youth in the CSS group than the DYRS group returned with offenses in the FBI's Property Crime Index (burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson). The CSS group also had a smaller proportion of youth return with drug charges as their most serious offense than did the DYRS group.

Table 12: Reoffending after Target Placement Start by Target Case Placement Type

Characteristics at the time of the target case	Percent with placements after target placement start	
	CSS probation target case	DYRS commitment target case
Total	47%	34%
Gender		
Male	50	35
Female	28	18
Age group*		
13 or younger	60	46
14	64	41
15	56	50
16	41	30
17 or older	22	16
Race/ethnicity		
Black, non-Hispanic	48	34
Hispanic	24	—
White, non-Hispanic	—	—
Other, non-Hispanic	—	—
Most serious offense charged in any prior case		
Person offenses	50	37
Violent Crime Index	50	36
Other person	50	39
Property offenses	63	40
Property Crime Index	61	38
Other property	74	—
Drug law violations	45	41
Public order offenses	52	—
Weapons	56	—
Other public order	—	—
Status & traffic offenses	—	—
Most serious offense charged in the target case		
Person offenses	45	33
Violent Crime Index	49	38
Other person	43	27
Property offenses	54	44
Property Crime Index	51	47
Other property	62	31
Drug law violations	39	28
Public order offenses	39	16
Weapons	36	13
Other public order	64	—

* One juvenile was missing information necessary to calculate age and four were older than 17 when the target case was filed.

— Fewer than 10 juveniles in the category.

Note: CSS and DYRS reoffending data are not truly comparable because confinement time for DYRS juveniles, which could affect reoffending, could not be tracked.

Table 13: Offense Profile of Subsequent Cases Among Youth Who Reoffended

Most serious offense charged in any subsequent case	All reoffending youth	CSS probation target case	DYRS commitment target case
Total	100%	100%	100%
Person offenses	47	48	45
Violent Crime Index	24	24	27
Other person	23	24	18
Property offenses	31	30	35
Property Crime Index	24	23	29
Other property	7	6	7
Drug law violations	10	10	13
Public order offenses	7	7	7
Weapons	2	2	1
Other public order	5	5	6

Note: Detail does not add to totals because low volume offense categories are not shown.

Note: CSS and DYRS reoffending data are not truly comparable because confinement time for DYRS juveniles, which could affect reoffending, could not be tracked.

Reoffending During the Target Placement

Juveniles with cases filed during the target placement (those filed between the placement start and end dates, a subset of cases filed after the start of the target placement) were 32% of the study cohort (Table 14). Juveniles with prior cases were more likely to have cases filed during the target placement. Among juveniles in the cohort with no cases filed prior to the filing of the target case, 26% had cases filed during the target placement. In comparison, 38% of juveniles with prior cases had cases filed during the target placement.

Cases before target case	Total	Cases filed during the target placement	
		None	1 or more
Total	100%	68%	32%
None	100	74	26
1 or more	100	62	38

Juveniles committed to DYRS in the target case were more likely than other youth to have a case filed during the target placement period. Among juveniles in the cohort who received a DYRS commitment as the disposition of their target case, 42% had cases filed during the target placement. In comparison, 30% of juveniles placed on CSS probation on the target case had cases filed during the target placement. However, the data are not truly comparable because confinement time for DYRS juveniles could not be tracked.

Target placement	Total	Cases filed during the target placement	
		None	1 or more
Total	100%	68%	32%
CSS probation	100	70	30
DYRS commitment	100	58	42

Cases during target placement (between start and end dates)	Juveniles in cohort	
	Number	Percent
Total	1,222	100%
None	828	68
No other cases	227	19
Other cases but none during target placement	601	49
One or more	394	32
1	281	23
2-3	66	5

Discussion of Findings

Although 44% of youth in the cohort had one or more subsequent placements after the start of the placement in their target case, the majority of youth in the cohort did not have any subsequent placements (684 youth in the cohort (56%) had no

placements after the target placement) during the study period. To put some of these reoffending proportions in perspective, one can look to studies of reoffending in other jurisdictions. Because of the District’s urbanicity one might expect reoffending rates substantially higher than rates for states with a mix of urban, suburban, and rural areas. Published rates of rereferral to court (similar to cases after the target placement used here) for Colorado and Maryland averaged 45%. The comparison figure for the District of Columbia was 49%. The rate of reconviction/readjudication (similar to placements after the target placement used here) for Alaska, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and Virginia was 33% on average. In comparison, the District’s rate was 44%. The rate of reincarceration/reconfinement (similar to DYRS commitments after the target placement used here) for Florida, Maryland, and Virginia was 24% on average. The rate in the District was 29%. Thus, although the District’s rates of reoffending are slightly higher than these comparison figures, they are within the expected range (method differences aside).

Arizona, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Utah also report data on the proportion of youth who return to court for new cases while under probation supervision. The proportions ranged from 14% to 31%. For the District, the proportion of youth with cases during their CSS probation placement was 30%. Again the District reoffending rate is within range of these other jurisdictions.

Limitations

The primary limitations of this study stem from limitations of the data available for analyses.

The data show that juveniles in the cohort who were committed to DYRS in their target case were less likely to have subsequent cases resulting in placement. However, the data did not permit a determination of the duration of a juvenile’s length of stay in secure residential custody. Meetings with court personnel indicated that youth committed to DYRS jurisdiction may be released from secure custody by DYRS and returned to the community (either to their homes or to non-secure residential facilities) without notification to the court of the change in the youth’s status. Therefore, the court’s CourtView information system does not include the dates required to calculate “street time” for youth placed with DYRS. The analyses, thus, could not control for variations in “street time.” If it is at all possible for the court to obtain data on juveniles’ dates of release from secure custody, future analyses would be significantly enhanced. Reoffending analyses could include measures of “time to reoffend” which would provide information useful to decisionmaking regarding the allocation of supervision and services to youth in the community.

Similarly, data were not available to readily track juveniles who aged up to the adult criminal court system. For this reason,

the proportion of 17-year-olds with subsequent case activity is somewhat suppressed. Nevertheless this does not diminish the findings regarding subsequent case activity for juveniles who were age 14 or younger. This finding is consistent with other research.

The analyses would benefit from additional variables on various risk and protective factors from juvenile's social files. Having data from risk assessments and needs assessments available to the analyses would perhaps contribute significantly to the logistic regression analyses and be very useful for planning strategies to address repeat offending, particularly among young probationers.

Recommendations

Establish a mutually beneficial data sharing agreement with DYRS

To fully control for juvenile's "street time" the court will need to have accurate data on the dates that juveniles committed to DYRS are released from secure confinement. It would be beneficial for the court to obtain such information on a more real-time basis, if not as it happens, then weekly or monthly.

A mutually beneficial information sharing arrangement between the court and DYRS might involve DYRS providing data on dates of admission to and release from secure confinement and information on the type of community program placement. In turn, the court could provide DYRS with information on dates of referral or filing for subsequent cases involving youth previously committed to DYRS—information DYRS needs for its own reoffending analyses.

Continue data sharing agreements with Maryland and Virginia

The data obtained from the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services and the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice were useful to the analyses. It would have been easier to manage the out-of-district data had they been collected at the same time as the CourtView data were being extracted. While it may not be necessary or practical to obtain such data on a continual basis, it would be beneficial to obtain them periodically. The inclusion of these out-of-district data adds substantial face-validity to the findings and limits criticisms.

Make youth "profile" reports available to judges, CSS, and other interested Court personnel

The Court's new data warehouse will make it easier for Court personnel to access a range of data to support decisionmaking at case, management, and policy levels. During the next phase of this project, NCJJ staff will work with the Court's IT staff to develop some additional reports to present CourtView/warehouse data in ways that are useful to help improve outcomes for youth.

Conduct reoffending analyses regularly

During the next phase of this project, NCJJ will work with Court IT and R&D staff to design a research data extract that will support analyses of reoffending similar to the work presented here. The desire is to have the Court present reoffending findings on cohorts of interest at least annually with the possibility of doing so more frequently if warranted. The extract program will also be able to produce an analysis file on an ad hoc basis.

Consider other reoffending analyses using other cohorts

Other jurisdictions around the country have found it useful to study cohorts of youth who are aging out of the juvenile justice system. These "class of" analyses, much like a high school year book give a perspective of the youth that allows decision-makers to consider whether class cohorts of youth have changed substantially from one year to the next in terms of their demographics, risk and protective factors, offense history, exposure to the juvenile justice system, and reoffending patterns. A similar, but somewhat different analysis is the "career" analysis of several birth cohorts who have aged out of the juvenile system. By maximizing the number of youth included, one can minimize the issues created by small numbers in an analysis and can gain understanding of the development of youth's court careers. Such analyses allow consideration of the prevalence of serious and chronic offenders and can assess whether case decisionmaking has improved youth outcomes.

References

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Glossary

Cases after the target case Cases filed after the target placement start date.

Cases during the target case Cases with filing dates between the target case filing and placement start date.

Cases during the target placement Cases filed during the target placement (between the placement start date and end date).

Commitment placement Youth committed to the District of Columbia Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS). This includes both placement in the community under DYRS supervision and commitment to a secure facility.

Follow-up time-period Through yearend 2008.

Offenses:

Aggravated Assault Unlawful intentional inflicting of serious bodily injury, or unlawful threat or attempt to inflict bodily injury or death, by means of a deadly or dangerous weapon with or without actual infliction of any injury.

Arson Intentional damaging or destruction by means of fire or explosion of the property of another without the owner's consent, or of any property with intent to defraud, or attempting the above acts.

Burglary Unlawful entry or attempted entry of any fixed structure, vehicle, or vessel used for regular residence, industry, or business, with or without force, with intent to commit a felony or larceny.

Criminal Homicide Causing the death of another person without legal justification or excuse—intentionally killing someone without legal justification, or accidentally killing someone as a consequence of reckless or grossly negligent conduct. The term is broader than the murder/nonnegligent manslaughter category used in the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports (UCR).

Disorderly conduct Unlawful interruption of the peace, quiet, or order of a community, including offenses called disturbing the peace, vagrancy, loitering, unlawful assembly, and riot.

Drug Law Violations Unlawful sale, purchase, distribution, manufacture, cultivation, transport, possession, or use of a controlled or prohibited substance or drug, or drug paraphernalia, or attempt to commit these acts.

Forcible Rape Sexual intercourse or attempted sexual intercourse with a female against her will by force or threat of force.

Larceny Unlawful taking or attempted taking of property (other than a motor vehicle) from the possession of another, by stealth, without force and without deceit, with intent to permanently deprive the owner of the property.

Liquor law violations (not status) Being in a public place while intoxicated through consumption of alcohol, or intake of a controlled substance or drug. It includes public intoxication, drunkenness, and other liquor law violations. It does not include driving under the influence. The term is used in the same sense as the UCR category of the same name.

Motor vehicle theft Unlawful taking, or attempted taking, of a self-propelled road vehicle owned by another, with the intent to deprive the owner of it permanently or temporarily.

Nonviolent sex offenses All offenses having a sexual element not involving violence.

Obstruction of justice This category includes intentionally obstructing a court (or law enforcement) in the administration of justice, acting in a way calculated to lessen the authority or dignity of the court, failing to obey the lawful order of a court, and violations of probation or parole other than technical violations, which do not consist of the commission of a crime or are not prosecuted as such. It includes contempt, perjury, obstructing justice, bribing witnesses, failure to report a crime, nonviolent resisting arrest, etc.

Other person offenses This category includes kidnapping, violent sex acts other than forcible rape (e.g., incest, sodomy), custody interference, unlawful restraint, false imprisonment, reckless endangerment, harassment, etc., and attempts to commit any such acts.

Other property offenses This category includes extortion and all fraud offenses, such as forgery, counterfeiting, embezzlement, check or credit card fraud, and attempts to commit any such offenses.

Other public order offenses This category includes other offenses against government administration or regulation, e.g., escape from confinement, bribery, gambling, fish and game violations, hitchhiking, health violations, false fire alarms, immigration violations, etc.

Person offense This category includes criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, simple assault, and other person offenses.

Property Crime Index This category includes burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

Property offense This category includes burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, arson, vandalism, stolen property offenses, trespassing, and other property offenses.

Public order offense This category includes weapons offenses; nonviolent sex offenses; liquor law violations, not status; disorderly conduct; obstruction of justice; and other offenses against public order.

Robbery Unlawful taking or attempted taking of property that is in the immediate possession of another by force or the threat of force.

Simple Assault Unlawful intentional inflicting, or attempted or threatened inflicting, of less than serious bodily injury without a deadly or dangerous weapon.

Stolen property offenses Unlawfully and knowingly receiving, buying, distributing, selling, transporting, concealing, or possessing stolen property, or attempting any of the above.

Trespassing Unlawful entry or attempted entry of the property of another with the intent to commit a misdemeanor, other than larceny, or without intent to commit a crime.

Vandalism Destroying or damaging, or attempting to destroy or damage, the property of another without the owner's consent, or public property, except by burning.

Violent Crime Index This category includes criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Weapons offenses Unlawful sale, distribution, manufacture, alteration, transportation, possession, or use of a deadly or dangerous weapon, or accessory, or attempt to commit any of these acts.

Petitioned case Case that appears on the official court calendar in response to the filing of a petition requesting the court to adjudicate the youth as a delinquent (or status offender, or dependent child) or to waive jurisdiction and transfer the youth to criminal court.

Placement disposition Youth ordered to Court Social Services (CSS) probation supervision or commitment to the District of Columbia Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS).

Prior cases Cases with filing dates before the filing date of the target case.

Probation placement Youth ordered to Court Social Services (CSS) probation supervision.

Race/ethnicity:

Black, non-Hispanic A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa who is not of Hispanic origin.

Hispanic A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

White, non-Hispanic A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East who is not of Hispanic origin.

Other American Indian, Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander or mixed race.

Reoffending Cases that were petitioned subsequent to the target case: includes two measures 1) cases filed during the target case (before the target placement start date), and 2) cases filed after the target placement start date (which includes cases filed during the target placement, between the start and end dates).

Residential placement Court disposition in which youth are placed in a residential agency or committed to an agency responsible for such facilities or otherwise removed from their homes and placed elsewhere.

Study cohort Juvenile offenders who received placement dispositions for delinquency offenses during 2007.

Target case Youths' first delinquency case resulting in a placement (probation or commitment disposition) in 2007. The case that made youth eligible for the study cohort.