

# Issue Brief

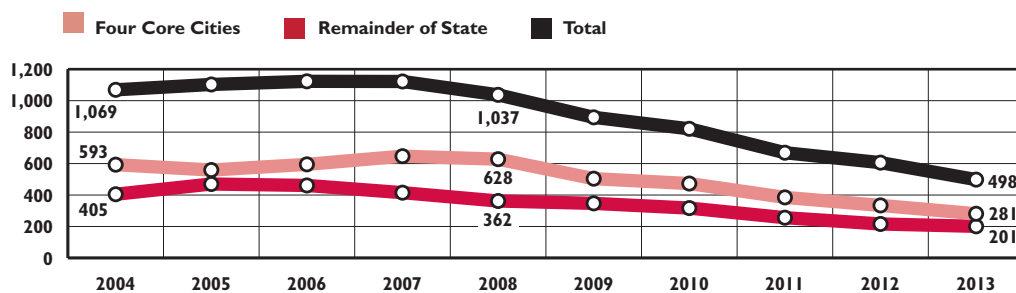
## Juvenile Justice in Rhode Island

The juvenile justice system is responsible for ensuring community safety by promoting the positive development of youth in its care while recognizing that children have different developmental needs than adults.<sup>1</sup>

Youth at risk of juvenile justice system involvement often come to the attention of schools, social service agencies and child welfare systems, presenting early opportunities to prevent entry into the system. Individual factors, such as poor academic performance, early antisocial behavior, cognitive impairment and association with high-risk youth, as well as other factors, such as family and community poverty, inadequate parenting skills, child maltreatment, substance abuse and exposure to family and community violence, contribute to juvenile justice system involvement.<sup>2,3</sup>

Juvenile justice systems have a range of options for monitoring and rehabilitating youth other than incarceration, including probation, restorative justice programs, and evidence-based treatment programs.<sup>4</sup> Alternatives to incarceration have been shown to be more effective in preventing recidivism and more cost-effective. The most successful programs involve families in treatment and promote healthy development at the individual, family, school, and peer levels.<sup>5,6</sup>

**Total Number of Youth in the Care and Custody of the Rhode Island Training School, During Calendar Years 2004-2013**

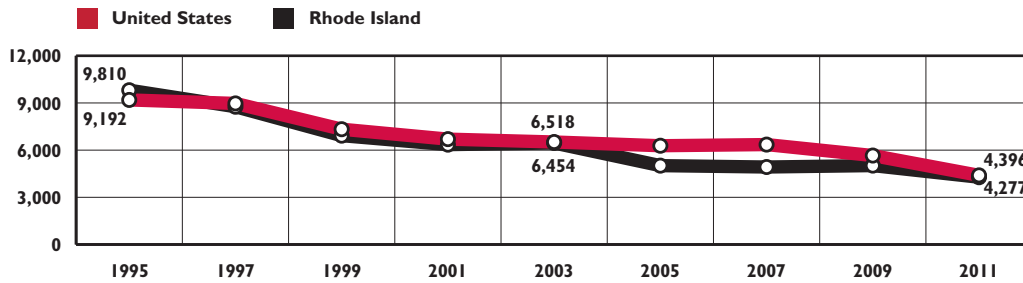


- ◆ Between 2004 and 2013, the annual total number of youth in the care and custody of the Rhode Island Training School declined from 1,069 to 498. Some of this decline is due to the cap of 148 boys and 12 girls on any given day that was placed on the population at the Training School in July 2008. The population has further declined by 44% between 2009 and 2013.
- ◆ Between 2004 and 2013, the annual number of youth held at the Training School declined by 53% for youth from the four core cities and 50% for youth from the remainder of the state. On April 30, 2014, there were 82 youth at the Training School (78 males and four females).

Source: Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, RICHIST, 2004-2013. \*Totals include youth whose home address is out-of-state or unknown. Four core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

## Juvenile Justice Trends

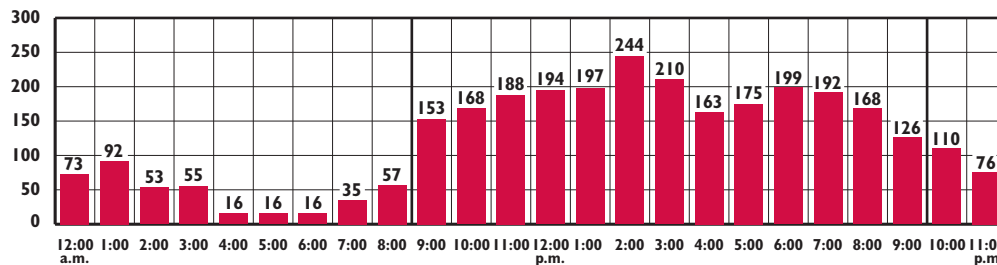
### Arrest Rate per 100,000 Youth Ages 10 to 17, United States and Rhode Island, 1995-2011



Source: Puzzanchera, C. & Kang, W. (2014). *Easy access to FBI arrest statistics 1994-2011*. Retrieved on June 14, 2014, from [www.ojjdp.gov](http://www.ojjdp.gov)

- ◆ Between 1995 and 2011, the juvenile arrest rate fell 56% in Rhode Island and 52% nationally.<sup>7</sup>
- ◆ Nationally and in Rhode Island, juvenile crime, including violent crimes, has fallen sharply since 1995. In 2010, the rate at which states hold youth in secure confinement reached a 35-year low, with almost every state reducing the number and percentage of youth held in secure facilities.<sup>8</sup>

### Juvenile Detentions by Police by Time of Day, Rhode Island, 2013



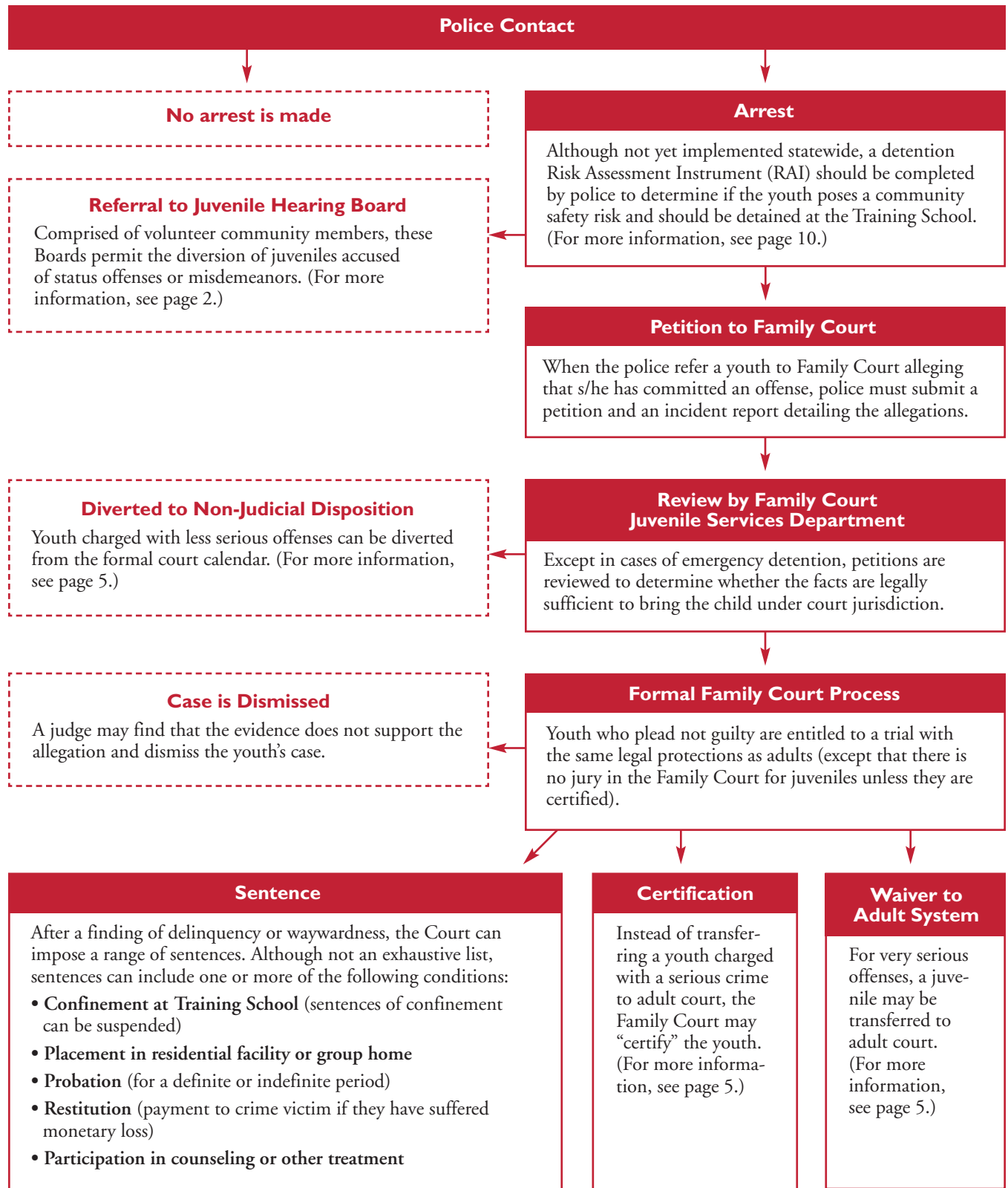
Source: Mongeau, T. & Tocco, G. (2014). *2013 juvenile detention data*. Providence, RI: Rhode Island Department of Public Safety, Public Safety Grant Administration Office. Note: These data represent juveniles who have been apprehended and securely or non-securely detained by the police. Other juveniles may have been released at the scene, transported home, or brought directly to the Training School or Family Court.

- ◆ During 2013 in Rhode Island, police detentions of youth occurred most frequently during school hours (9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.) and after school and early evening (4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.).<sup>9</sup>
- ◆ Designing school disciplinary procedures to reduce out-of-school suspensions and establishing clear guidelines to limit the involvement of school resource officers in student discipline can reduce the number students who become involved in the juvenile justice system.<sup>10,11</sup>

## Juvenile Hearing Boards

- ◆ In 2012, there were 34 Juvenile Hearing Boards in Rhode Island. Three communities in Rhode Island did not have Juvenile Hearing Boards (Central Falls, Little Compton, and Richmond). Rhode Island Juvenile Hearing Boards reported hearing a total of 495 cases in 2012 (the most recent year for which data are available).
- ◆ Comprised of volunteer community members, these Boards permit the diversion of juveniles accused of status offenses or misdemeanors. Sanction options in this process include but are not limited to community service, restitution, and counseling.<sup>12,13</sup>

# Rhode Island's Juvenile Justice System

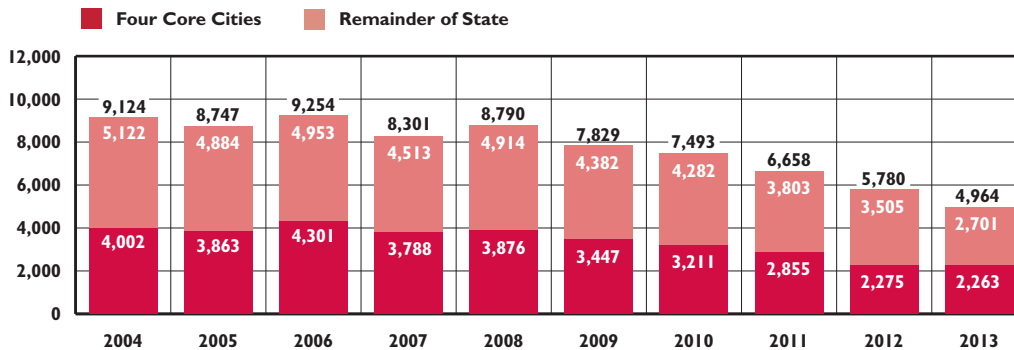


*Note: This chart is intended to provide a general overview of how cases can proceed through different parts of Rhode Island's juvenile justice system and does not include all possible paths.*

## Juveniles Referred to Family Court

- ◆ The Rhode Island Family Court has jurisdiction over juvenile offenders under age 18 referred for wayward and delinquent offenses. When a police or school department refers a youth to Family Court, a petition is submitted, accompanied by an incident report, detailing the alleged violation of law.<sup>14</sup> Family Court has a wide range of options for handling juvenile offenders, including home confinement with electronic monitoring, restitution, community service, revocation of driving privileges, counseling, substance abuse treatment, and probation.<sup>15</sup>

### Juvenile Wayward/Delinquent Offenses Referred to Rhode Island Family Court, 2004-2013



Source: Rhode Island Family Court, 2004-2013 Juvenile Offense Reports.

- ◆ The number of youth referred to Family Court for wayward and delinquent offenses declined 45% between 2004 and 2013, from 5,309 to 2,926. During the same period, the total number of juvenile offenses declined by 46%, from 9,124 to 4,964.
- ◆ After several years of decline, juvenile offenses committed by youth in the four core cities (Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket) leveled off between 2012 and 2013, while offenses committed by youth in the remainder of the state fell by 23%.
- ◆ In 2013, 72% of juveniles referred to the Family Court were male and 28% were female. Forty-nine percent of these youth were White, 19% were Black, 18% were Hispanic, 1% were Asian, and 13% were some other race or an unknown race.
- ◆ In 2013, 15% of juveniles referred to Family Court were age 13 or younger, 35% were age 14 to 15, 49% were age 16 to 17, and 1% had an unknown age.<sup>16</sup>

### Juveniles Referred to Rhode Island Family Court by Type of Offense, 2013

|     |                    |    |                           |
|-----|--------------------|----|---------------------------|
| 24% | Status Offenses*   | 5% | Alcohol and Drug Offenses |
| 22% | Property Crimes    | 5% | Violent Crimes            |
| 20% | Disorderly Conduct | 4% | Motor Vehicle Offenses    |
| 11% | Simple Assault     | 3% | Weapons Offenses          |
|     |                    | 6% | Other**                   |

*n*=4,964

\*Status offenses are age-related acts that would not be punishable if the offender were an adult, such as truancy and disobedient conduct.

\*\*Other includes offenses such as conspiracy, crank/obscene phone calls, computer crimes and possession of a manipulative device for automobiles, etc. Probation violations, contempt of court, and other violations of court orders are not included in the offenses above.

Source: Rhode Island Family Court, 2013 Juvenile Offense Report.

## Family Court Diversionary Program

- ◆ Youth whose alleged offense is not serious and who do not have multiple petitions filed against them can be diverted from the formal court calendar. Factors such as age, victim impact, and prior police contact are considered when deciding if a youth's case is appropriate for diversion. Youth in the diversion program typically must comply with certain conditions (e.g., payment of restitution) before their case is resolved.<sup>17</sup> In 2013 in Rhode Island, 17% of all cases referred to Family Court were diverted instead of proceeding to a formal court hearing.<sup>18</sup>

## Family Court Truancy and Drug Calendars

- ◆ The Rhode Island Family Court administers several alternatives to traditional court hearings, including the Truancy and Juvenile Drug Calendars. In 2013, 1,071 juveniles were referred to the Truancy Calendar by schools. In 2013, 129 juveniles who committed drug offenses or had highlighted drug issues were diverted to the Juvenile Drug Calendar prior to adjudication.<sup>19</sup> Juveniles referred to the Juvenile Drug Calendar undergo a six- to twelve-month program that includes intensive court supervision, drug treatment, and educational and employment services.<sup>20</sup>

## Juveniles Tried as Adults

- ◆ When a juvenile has committed a heinous and/or premeditated felony offense or has a history of felony offenses, the Rhode Island Attorney General may request that the Family Court Judge voluntarily waive jurisdiction so that the juvenile may be tried as an adult in Superior Court. Waiver of jurisdiction is mandatory for juveniles who are 17 years old and who are charged with murder, first degree sexual assault, or assault with intent to commit murder.<sup>21</sup>
- ◆ In 2013, the Attorney General's Office filed 10 (four discretionary and six mandatory) motions to waive jurisdiction to try juveniles as adults. Five youth were waived after a hearing, one was waived voluntarily, one waiver motion was withdrawn, and three were pending before the Family Court at the end of 2013. Two additional waiver motions that were filed during 2012 were decided in 2013 (both were voluntarily waived).<sup>22</sup>
- ◆ A juvenile in Rhode Island also may be “certified,” allowing the Family Court to sentence the juvenile beyond age 19 if there is otherwise an insufficient period of time in which to accomplish rehabilitation. There were three youth certified during 2013.<sup>23</sup> While the child is a minor, the sentence is served at the Training School. The youth can be transferred to an adult facility upon reaching age 19, if the court deems it appropriate.<sup>24</sup>
- ◆ Youth tried and punished in the adult court system are more likely to re-offend and to commit future violent crimes than youth who commit similar crimes but who are in juvenile systems. Adolescents in the adult criminal justice system are at risk for sexual and physical victimization and disruptions in their development, including identity formation and relationship skills.<sup>25,26</sup>
- ◆ Behavioral research shows that most youth offenders will stop breaking the law as part of the normal maturation process and that adolescents are less able than adults to weigh risks and consequences and resist peer pressure. Brain research shows that judgment and decision-making skills do not fully develop until the mid-twenties.<sup>27,28</sup>

## Alternatives to Secure Confinement

### Juveniles on Probation

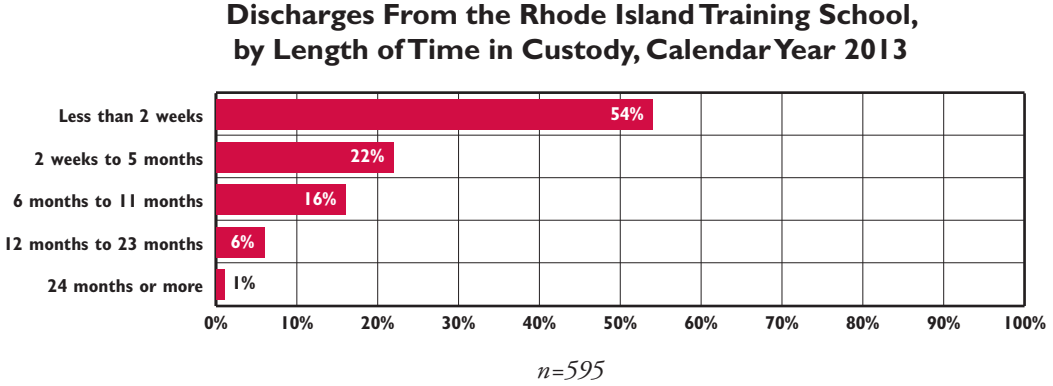
- ◆ The Juvenile Correctional Services Division of DCYF includes the Training School and Juvenile Probation and Parole. Juvenile Probation and Parole works to rehabilitate youth in the community to ensure public safety and full compliance with court orders and conditions of probation. Adolescents are placed on probation by the Family Court either as an alternative to incarceration at the Training School or as the final part of their sentence after being incarcerated at the Training School. Parole is not currently used for youth in Rhode Island.<sup>29</sup>
- ◆ On January 1, 2014, there were 495 youth on the DCYF probation caseload (432 males, 61 females, and two youth of unknown gender). Twenty-eight percent (137) of youth on probation were ages 13 to 15, 54% (267) were ages 16 to 17, 18% (87) were age 18, and 1% (4) were age 19.<sup>30</sup>
- ◆ Almost half (45%) of youth on probation on January 1, 2014 were White, 21% were Black, 1% were Asian or Pacific Islander, 1% were American Indian, 5% were multiracial, and 26% were of unknown race. Twenty-nine percent of youth were identified as Hispanic. Hispanic youth may be of any race.<sup>31</sup>

### Community-Based Services and Programs

- ◆ The Rhode Island Training School is an important resource for the rehabilitation of youth who commit serious offenses and who pose a danger to the community. However, a growing body of research shows that incarceration can increase recidivism among youth with less-serious offense histories and may exacerbate criminal behavior. Research also suggests that increasing the length of time a youth is held in secure confinement has no impact on future offending and that sentencing youth to long stays in correctional facilities is an ineffective rehabilitation strategy.<sup>32,33</sup>
- ◆ Of the 498 youth who were in the care or custody of the Training School at some point during 2013, 18% (89) were admitted twice in 2013, and 4% (19) were admitted to the Training School three or more times. Community-based re-entry programs can help youth make successful transitions from the Training School back to their homes.<sup>34</sup>
- ◆ Several evidence-based interventions have been demonstrated to more effectively prevent recidivism than secure confinement including Multisystemic Therapy (MST), Functional Family Therapy (FFT), and Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC).<sup>35</sup> Shared characteristics of these programs and other research-supported interventions are that they involve parents and family in treatment and have clear guidelines that have been developed over successive trials.<sup>36</sup>
- ◆ For youthful offenders who are not a threat to public safety, high-quality community-based programs can provide them with supervision, accountability, and therapeutic services while avoiding some of the negative outcomes associated with incarceration. Evidence-based programs, education and skills training, career preparation and vocational programs, mentoring programs, outreach and tracking services, evening reporting centers, as well as mental health and substance abuse treatment, are examples of alternatives to secure confinement.<sup>37</sup>

## Juveniles at the Rhode Island Training School

- ◆ The Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) operates the Rhode Island Training School for Youth, the state’s secure facility for detained youth and adjudicated youth (those who have been sentenced by a judge). In 2009, a new Rhode Island Training School facility for boys was opened with 96 beds at the Youth Development Center and 52 beds at the Youth Assessment Center.
- ◆ A total of 498 youth (85% male and 15% female) were in the care and custody of the Training School at some point during 2013.<sup>38</sup> During 2013, the average daily population of the Training School was 101 youth and 54% of youth discharged had stays of less than two weeks.<sup>39</sup>



Source: Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, RIC HIST, 2013. Total discharges (595) are higher than the total number of youth who passed through the Training School (498) due to some youth being discharged from the Training School more than once in 2013. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

## Risk Factors for Rhode Island Youth at the Training School

**Poverty:** Fifty-six percent (281) of the 498 youth at the Training School during 2013 were from the four core cities (Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket), where two-thirds (64%) of Rhode Island's poor children live.

**History of Child Abuse and Neglect:** Twenty-nine (6%) of the 498 youth in the care or custody of the Training School during 2013 had at some point in their childhood been victims of documented child abuse or neglect. Nationally, youth in child welfare systems are 2.5 times more likely to enter the juvenile justice system if they are placed in group homes instead of foster care homes.

**Behavioral Health Needs:** In 2013, 155 youth (139 males and 16 females) were under the care of the Training School's psychiatrist. Of these youth, 137 were prescribed psychiatric medications. During 2013, 188 residents (175 males and 13 females) received either outpatient or residential substance abuse services while serving sentences at the Training School. Of these, 79 (all males) received residential substance abuse treatment.

**Educational Attainment:** In 2013, students entering the Training School had, on average, 6th-grade level math skills and 7th-grade level reading skills, although their average age was 16 years old. Of the 551 youth in 7th through 12th grade who received educational services at the Training School during 2013, 41% received special education services and had Individualized Education Programs. During 2013, 71 youth graduated from high school while serving a sentence at the Training School (52 earned a GED and 19 graduated with a high school diploma). An additional 65 youth received post-secondary education services at the Training School in 2013.<sup>40,41,42,43</sup>

## Girls in the Juvenile Justice System

- ◆ Girls in the juvenile justice system enter with different personal and offense histories and needs than their male peers. Girls are more likely to be detained for non-serious offenses and many have experienced traumatic events, including physical and sexual abuse. Effective programs for girls in the juvenile justice system promote healing from trauma and abuse, address mental and physical health issues, and meet the needs of pregnant and parenting girls.<sup>44</sup>
- ◆ In 2011, the female population of the Training School was relocated from the Mathias Building, a former hospital building, to a unit in the Youth Development Center building where they have improved access to educational, medical, and clinical services, as well as recreational activities.
- ◆ During 2013, there was an average of eight girls at the Training School on any given day. Girls had shorter lengths of stay than boys and made up 7% of the average daily population during the same period.<sup>45</sup>

## Disproportionate Minority Contact in Juvenile Justice Systems

- ◆ Minority youth, especially Black youth, are disproportionately represented at every stage of the U.S. juvenile justice system. Youth of color are more likely to be arrested, formally charged in court, placed in secure detention, and receive harsher treatment than White youth.<sup>46</sup> The federal *Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP)* requires states to collect data and implement strategies to reduce disproportionate minority contact with the juvenile justice system.<sup>47</sup>

### Disproportionate Minority Contact in Rhode Island

|              | % OF TOTAL CHILD<br>POPULATION<br>2010 | PRE-ADJUDICATED YOUTH<br>AT THE TRAINING SCHOOL,<br>DECEMBER 31, 2013 | ADJUDICATED YOUTH*<br>AT THE TRAINING SCHOOL,<br>DECEMBER 31, 2013 |
|--------------|--|---|--|
| White        | 64%                                    | 29%   | 25%  |
| Hispanic     | 21%                                    | 36%   | 37%  |
| Black        | 6%                                     | 18%   | 26%  |
| Asian        | 3%                                     | 7%  | 3%   |
| Multi-Racial | 5%                                     | 9%  | 4%   |
| Other**      | 2%                                     | 0%  | 2%   |
| Unknown      | NA                                     | 2%  | 2%   |
| <i>n</i> =   | 223,956                                | 45  | 99   |

- ◆ Youth of color are disproportionately more likely than White youth to be detained or sentenced to the Training School. On December 31, 2013, Black youth made up 26% of adjudicated youth to the Training School, while making up 6% of the child population in Rhode Island.

\**Juveniles Adjudicated to the Training School includes youth who received Temporary Community Placement (TCP) adjudications.*

\*\**Other includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, and Some other race.*

Sources: Child Population data by race are from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census. Pre-adjudicated and Adjudicated Youth at the Training School data are from the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF).



**Total Number of Youth in the Care and Custody of the Rhode Island Training School,  
During Calendar Years 2009-2013**

| <b>CITY/TOWN</b>          | <b>2009</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>2011</b> | <b>2012</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>% CHANGE FROM 2009 TO 2013</b> |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| Barrington                | 9           | 4           | 3           | 5           | 0           | -100%                             |
| Bristol                   | 5           | 5           | 0           | 2           | 3           | -40%                              |
| Burrillville              | 9           | 2           | 6           | 6           | 6           | -33%                              |
| Central Falls             | 18          | 26          | 30          | 18          | 12          | -33%                              |
| Charlestown               | 3           | 1           | 4           | 4           | 2           | -33%                              |
| Coventry                  | 15          | 23          | 9           | 9           | 15          | 0%                                |
| Cranston                  | 36          | 31          | 29          | 29          | 29          | -19%                              |
| Cumberland                | 21          | 14          | 5           | 12          | 8           | -62%                              |
| East Greenwich            | 0           | 2           | 3           | 5           | 1           | NA                                |
| East Providence           | 29          | 22          | 30          | 11          | 12          | -59%                              |
| Exeter                    | 1           | 0           | 1           | 1           | 0           | -100%                             |
| Foster                    | 1           | 0           | 1           | 1           | 2           | 100%                              |
| Glocester                 | 5           | 1           | 3           | 2           | 3           | -40%                              |
| Hopkinton                 | 3           | 3           | 2           | 3           | 1           | -67%                              |
| Jamestown                 | 0           | 3           | 0           | 0           | 0           | NA                                |
| Johnston                  | 8           | 10          | 4           | 10          | 8           | 0%                                |
| Lincoln                   | 15          | 10          | 5           | 4           | 6           | -60%                              |
| Little Compton            | 1           | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           | -100%                             |
| Middletown                | 10          | 8           | 3           | 8           | 10          | 0%                                |
| Narragansett              | 3           | 3           | 3           | 3           | 3           | 0%                                |
| New Shoreham              | 1           | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           | -100%                             |
| Newport                   | 26          | 24          | 20          | 20          | 18          | -31%                              |
| North Kingstown           | 14          | 16          | 18          | 10          | 7           | -50%                              |
| North Providence          | 18          | 20          | 16          | 7           | 6           | -67%                              |
| North Smithfield          | 4           | 2           | 0           | 3           | 1           | -75%                              |
| Pawtucket                 | 96          | 76          | 66          | 59          | 58          | -40%                              |
| Portsmouth                | 3           | 13          | 3           | 2           | 3           | 0%                                |
| Providence                | 343         | 332         | 259         | 222         | 183         | -47%                              |
| Richmond                  | 0           | 0           | 1           | 1           | 0           | NA                                |
| Scituate                  | 1           | 3           | 1           | 2           | 0           | -100%                             |
| Smithfield                | 5           | 5           | 6           | 4           | 6           | +20%                              |
| South Kingstown           | 10          | 8           | 8           | 10          | 7           | -30%                              |
| Tiverton                  | 7           | 10          | 8           | 4           | 4           | -43%                              |
| Warren                    | 3           | 5           | 3           | 3           | 3           | 0%                                |
| Warwick                   | 37          | 31          | 24          | 28          | 17          | -54%                              |
| West Greenwich            | 0           | 1           | 1           | 0           | 0           | NA                                |
| West Warwick              | 28          | 26          | 23          | 22          | 15          | -46%                              |
| Westerly                  | 16          | 11          | 13          | 13          | 2           | -88%                              |
| Woonsocket                | 47          | 39          | 30          | 35          | 28          | -40%                              |
| <i>Unknown</i>            | <i>4</i>    | <i>0</i>    | <i>0</i>    | <i>1</i>    | <i>2</i>    | <i>NA</i>                         |
| <i>Out of State</i>       | <i>39</i>   | <i>31</i>   | <i>28</i>   | <i>27</i>   | <i>17</i>   | <i>-56%</i>                       |
| <i>Four Core Cities</i>   | <i>504</i>  | <i>473</i>  | <i>385</i>  | <i>334</i>  | <i>281</i>  | <i>-44%</i>                       |
| <i>Remainder of State</i> | <i>347</i>  | <i>317</i>  | <i>256</i>  | <i>244</i>  | <i>198</i>  | <i>-43%</i>                       |
| <i>Rhode Island</i>       | <i>851</i>  | <i>790</i>  | <i>641</i>  | <i>578</i>  | <i>479</i>  | <i>-44%</i>                       |

## Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)

The Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) has worked in jurisdictions across the U.S. to strengthen juvenile justice systems by promoting policies and practices to reduce inappropriate and unnecessary use of secure detention, reduce racial and ethnic disparities, and improve public safety. JDAI promotes the vision that youth involved in the juvenile justice system are best served using proven, family-focused interventions, and creating opportunities for positive youth development. JDAI operates in nearly 300 jurisdictions in 39 states.

Rhode Island became a JDAI site in 2009 when juvenile justice stakeholders joined in partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The Rhode Island JDAI effort, which is coordinated by Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, includes representatives from the Family Court, DCYF, the Attorney General's Office, the Public Defender's Office, Providence Police Department, Office of the Child Advocate, and other agencies and service providers. JDAI in Rhode Island has focused on reducing unnecessary and inappropriate use of secure confinement, enhancing community-based alternatives to detention, and reducing racial and ethnic disparities.<sup>48</sup>

There are eight core strategies of JDAI:

- ◆ Interagency collaboration to improve problem solving and coordination;
- ◆ Use of accurate data to guide programs and policies;
- ◆ Use of objective instruments to guide detention admissions decisions;
- ◆ Increased or enhanced community-based alternatives to secure detention;
- ◆ Expedited case processing to reduce lengths of stay in secure custody;
- ◆ Innovations to reduce secure detention use for probation violations, warrants, and cases in which youth are awaiting placement;
- ◆ Use of best practices to reduce disproportionate minority contact with the juvenile justice system;
- ◆ Improving conditions of confinement through routine inspections.<sup>49,50</sup>

### Risk Assessment Instrument

- ◆ Jurisdictions throughout the country have used objective admissions screening tools to limit the use of secure detention to serious offenders. The Rhode Island General Assembly passed a law in 2008 mandating the use of a screening tool for Rhode Island youth being considered for secure detention.<sup>51,52</sup> A detention Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI) was developed and field tested, and is currently being piloted by the Providence Police Department.

## Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP A)

The federal *JJDP A* was enacted in 1974 and most recently reauthorized in 2002. *JJDP A* created standards to ensure that youth involved in the juvenile and criminal courts are safeguarded by federal standards for care and custody, while also upholding the interests of community safety. *JJDP A* mandates that:

- (1) status offenders cannot be held in secure confinement,
- (2) juveniles may not be held in adult jails or secure lockups for more than six hours,
- (3) when youth are securely detained they must be "sight and sound" separated from incarcerated adults, and
- (4) states address the disproportionate number of minority youth who are confined.<sup>53</sup>

## Recommendations

### Prevent Juvenile Justice System Involvement

- ◆ Increase access to community-based prevention programs and family-based interventions that provide comprehensive case management and services to youth and their families, including mental health services, behavioral interventions, and substance abuse treatment.
- ◆ Ensure that high-quality after school and summer youth development and employment opportunities are available, particularly in high-poverty neighborhoods. Replicate community policing, nonviolence training, and conflict mediation strategies.

### Schools and Juvenile Justice

- ◆ Ensure that all students receive a high-quality education and learn the skills they need to succeed in school, college, and careers. Ensure that educational supports and special education services are provided.
- ◆ Handle attendance problems and behavioral issues in schools in ways that re-engage students in their school communities. This is consistent with the state law that prohibits schools from using a student's truancy or absenteeism as the sole basis for giving a student an out-of-school suspension.
- ◆ Keep youth connected to their district schools while incarcerated and require school districts to reintegrate youth back into school immediately upon release.

### Detention Reform

- ◆ Continue to implement detention reform efforts in Rhode Island, including JDAI.
- ◆ Expand the use of the Risk Assessment Instrument by police departments throughout the state to reduce inappropriate detentions.
- ◆ Increase the availability of best-practice diversion programs and community-based alternatives to secure detention, including juvenile hearing boards, restorative justice programs, and evidence-based programs such as Multisystemic Therapy, Functional Family Therapy, and Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care.

### Improve Services for Youth Incarcerated at the Training School and Those Returning to Their Home Communities after Incarceration

- ◆ Monitor discretionary waiver motions to try youth as adults to ensure they are used only when necessary.
- ◆ Reduce the secure confinement of girls at the Training School for wayward (misdemeanor) offenses, and instead address their needs in community-based settings.
- ◆ Ensure that youth who are victims of sex trafficking are not held in the Training School and are instead provided needed services through the child welfare system.
- ◆ Expand partnerships and connections between Juvenile Probation, other state agencies and community based providers to ensure that all youth who are on probation receive the services they need to remain safely in their communities and to become productive and responsible young adults.

### Reduce Racial and Ethnic Disparities and Improve Cultural Competence

- ◆ Continue efforts to address disproportionate minority contact in Rhode Island juvenile justice systems. As part of this work, improve data collection and data capacity at all points in the system in order to improve monitoring of disproportionate minority contact and identify solutions.
- ◆ Agencies that serve youth in the juvenile justice system should hire, promote, and retain qualified, diverse, and culturally-competent staff. Translation and interpretation services should be provided to youth and their families so that non-English speakers are able to understand their rights and participate in treatment and other services.

## References

- <sup>1,5,33,36,46</sup> National Research Council. (2013). *Reforming juvenile justice: A developmental approach*. Committee on Assessing Juvenile Justice Reform, R. J. Bonnie, R. L. Johnson, B. M. Chemers, & J. A. Schuck, Eds. Committee on Law and Justice, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
- <sup>2</sup> Smith, C. A. (2008). Juvenile delinquency: An introduction. *The Prevention Researcher: Preventing Juvenile Delinquency*, 15(1), 3-6.
- <sup>3</sup> Wasserman, G. A., Keenan, K., Tremblay, R. E., Coie, J. D., Herrenkohl, T. I., Loeber, R. & Petechuk, D. (2003). Risk and protective factors of child delinquency. *Child Delinquency Bulletin Series*. (NCJ Publication No. 193409). Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- <sup>4</sup> Juvenile Justice Information Exchange. (n.d.). *What are community-based alternatives?* Retrieved February 18, 2014, from [www.jjje.org/hub/community-based-alternatives/key-issues/](http://www.jjje.org/hub/community-based-alternatives/key-issues/)
- <sup>6,32,35,37</sup> *No place for kids: The case for reducing juvenile incarceration*. (2011). Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- <sup>7</sup> Puzanchera, C. & Kang, W. (2014). *Easy access to FBI arrest statistics 1994-2011*. Retrieved June 14, 2014, from [www.ojdp.gov](http://www.ojdp.gov)
- <sup>8</sup> KIDS COUNT. (2013). *Data snapshot: Reducing youth incarceration in the United States*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- <sup>9</sup> Mongeau, T. & Tocco, G. (2014). *2013 juvenile detention data*. Providence, RI: Rhode Island Department of Public Safety, Public Safety Grant Administration Office.
- <sup>10</sup> Losen, D., Hewitt, D. & Toldson, I. (2014). *Eliminating excessive and unfair exclusionary discipline in schools: Policy recommendations for reducing disparities*. Bloomington, IN: The Equity Project at Indiana University.
- <sup>11</sup> Kim, C. Y. & Geronimo, I. I. (2009). *Policing in schools: Developing a governance document for school resource officers in K-12 schools*. New York, NY: American Civil Liberties Union.
- <sup>12</sup> Rhode Island Family Court, 2012.
- <sup>13</sup> Rhode Island for Community and Justice, 2014.
- <sup>14,17</sup> Rhode Island Family Court. (n.d.). *About the Family Court*. Retrieved June 16, 2014, from [www.courts.ri.gov](http://www.courts.ri.gov)
- <sup>15</sup> Rhode Island General Laws, Sections 14-1-32.1, 14-1-32.4, 14-1-33, 14-1-36.3, 14-1-51, & 14-1-67.
- <sup>16</sup> Rhode Island Family Court, *2004-2013 Juvenile Offense Reports*.
- <sup>18,19</sup> Rhode Island Family Court, 2014.
- <sup>20</sup> Rhode Island Family Court. (n.d.). *Juvenile drug court*. Retrieved February 8, 2011, from [www.courts.ri.gov/family/drugcourt.htm](http://www.courts.ri.gov/family/drugcourt.htm)
- <sup>21</sup> Rhode Island General Laws, Sections 14-1-5; 14-1-7; 14-1-7.1; 14-1-7.2 & 14-1-7.3.
- <sup>22,23</sup> Rhode Island Office of the Attorney General, January 2014.
- <sup>24</sup> Rhode Island Office of the Attorney General, January 2007.
- <sup>25,27</sup> *A road map for juvenile justice reform: 2008 KIDS COUNT essay summary*. (2008). Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- <sup>26</sup> Mulvey, E. P. & Schubert, C. A. (2012). *Transfer of juveniles to adult court: Effects of a broad policy in one court*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- <sup>28</sup> Gottesman, D. & Wile Schwarz, S. (2011). *Juvenile justice in the U.S.: Facts for policymakers*. New York, NY: Columbia University, National Center for Children in Poverty.
- <sup>29</sup> Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, Juvenile Correctional Services Division, February 2008.
- <sup>30,31,34,38,40</sup> Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, Rhode Island Children's Information System (RICHIST), Calendar Year 2013 and January, 2014.
- <sup>39,45</sup> Rhode Island Family Court & Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative Quarterly Reporting Spreadsheet, 2013.
- <sup>41</sup> Population Reference Bureau analysis of 2008-2012 American Community Survey data.
- <sup>42</sup> Ryan, J. P., Marshall, J. M., Herz, D., & Hernandez, P. M. (2008). Juvenile delinquency in child welfare: Investigating group home effects. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 30(9), 1088-1099.
- <sup>43</sup> Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, Rhode Island Training School for Youth, 2013.
- <sup>44</sup> Watson, L. & Edelman, P. (2012). *Improving the juvenile justice system for girls: Lessons from the states*. Washington, DC: Georgetown Center on Poverty, Inequality and Public Policy.
- <sup>47</sup> Leiber, M., Bishop, D., & Chamlin, M. B. (2011). Juvenile justice decision-making before and after the implementation of the disproportionate minority contact mandate. *Justice Quarterly*, 28(3), 460-492.
- <sup>48</sup> Rhode Island KIDS COUNT. (n.d.). *Rhode Island Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative*. Retrieved June 19, 2014, from [www.rikidscount.org](http://www.rikidscount.org)
- <sup>49</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (n.d.). *Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative*. Retrieved June 19, 2014, from [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org)
- <sup>50</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2014). *Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative: 2013 Annual results report inter-site conference summary*. Retrieved June 19, 2014, from [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org)
- <sup>51</sup> Chappell, A. T., Maggard, S. R., & Higgins, J. L. (2013). Exceptions to the rule? Exploring the use of overrides in detention risk assessment. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 11(4), 332-348.
- <sup>52</sup> Rhode Island General Laws, Section 14-1-11.
- <sup>53</sup> Act 4 Juvenile Justice. (n.d.). *What is the JJDPA?* Retrieved June 19, 2014, from [www.act4jj.org](http://www.act4jj.org)

## Acknowledgements

Janice DeFrances, Kevin Aucoin, Joe Cardin, William Cauley, Chuck Golembeske, Kevin McKenna, Brian Renzi, and Leon Saunders, DCYF; Cynthia Limoges, John Moreira, RI Attorney General's Office; Anne Travers, RI Public Defender's Office; Chief Judge Haiganush Bedrosian, Kevin Richard, Richard Scarpellino, RI Family Court; Gina Tocco, RI Public Safety Grant Administration Office; Toby Ayers and Patricia Taubin, RI for Community and Justice; Cesar Perez, Tides Family Services; John Farley, Family Service of RI; Maureen Philbin, Child and Family; James Payne, Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative.

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT is a children's policy organization that provides information on child well-being, stimulates dialogue on children's issues, and promotes accountability and action.

Primary funding for Rhode Island KIDS COUNT is provided by The Rhode Island Foundation, United Way of Rhode Island, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Prince Charitable Trusts, Alliance for Early Success, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Community Catalyst, DentaQuest Foundation, Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust, Hasbro Children's Fund, Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island, Delta Dental of Rhode Island, Ocean State Charities Trust, and other corporate, foundation, and individual sponsors.

### Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Staff

*Elizabeth Burke Bryant*, Executive Director  
*Jill Beckwith*, Deputy Director  
*Leanne Barrett*, Senior Policy Analyst  
*Jim Beasley*, Policy Analyst  
*Dorene Bloomer*, Finance Director  
*Jennifer Capaldo*, Program Assistant  
*Katy Chu*, Communications Coordinator  
*W. Galarza*, Executive Assistant/  
Office Manager  
*Stephanie Geller*, Policy Analyst  
*John Neubauer*, Policy Analyst  
*Meghan Wenzel*, Intern, Brown University  
*Esther Cortorreal*, Intern, Salve Regina University

### Rhode Island KIDS COUNT

One Union Station  
Providence, RI 02903  
401-351-9400  
401-351-1758 (fax)  
[rikids@rikidscount.org](mailto:rikids@rikidscount.org)  
[www.rikidscount.org](http://www.rikidscount.org)

