

## **Data Regarding Non-Arrest/Referral Police/Juvenile Encounters**

The JJPOCC requested information from Connecticut municipal police departments regarding the number of police/youth encounters, which do not lead to arrests. Obtaining data on non-arrest contacts with juveniles is not easily available because electronic records systems used by departments are not uniformly programmed for closing/clearing all youth related calls for police service. Nor do the records differentiate between felony and misdemeanor, violent or property crimes, or disorderly conduct and families with service needs (FWSN) referrals.

The various CAD/RMS (Computer Aided Dispatch/Records Management Systems) software utilized by police departments do not record data in easily retrievable format. A recent survey confirmed police contacts which do not result in a referral to either juvenile court or juvenile review board (JRB) are not logged in similar manner by the agencies queried. There is no uniform method of recording juvenile dispositions beyond those incidents referred to court or a local JRB and therefore, collecting the data from police is often time consuming and labor intensive.

Over 16% of the organized municipal police departments in the state responded to a recent survey. Sixty percent of the responding agencies utilized a local JRB as an alternative to referral to juvenile court for some cases. Over the past two years, departments with access to a local JRB diverted 18% of their juvenile apprehensions to the JRB in lieu of referral to court. However, it's important to note that use of JRBs is usually limited to juveniles who reside in the jurisdiction of the reporting police department. Non-resident juveniles are normally referred to the juvenile court having jurisdiction for the youth's town of residence.

Some departments do record a juvenile diversion to a family/youth service agency other than a JRB for follow up but most do not include this type of disposition in easily retrievable format. Additionally, with the increase of police School Resource Officers (SRO) by many Connecticut police departments, some juveniles are diverted to follow-up with SROs who collaborate with school administrators, guidance counselors and social workers rather than referral of the youth to court.

The non-inclusion of arrest/referral alternatives in most RMS recordkeeping reduces documentation of the actual number of police enforcement actions involving juveniles. The 20% of survey responding departments capable of retrieving juvenile dispositions other than referral to juvenile court or JRB indicated additional police/youth enforcement contacts of between five and nine percent above their juvenile disposition totals. Even this increase does not include the uncounted number of youth who are released to their parents or guardians in the field or from police stations following reprimand by the officer with no further action.

The collection of practical data for police/juvenile contacts depends on a standardized method of recording to be used by all police departments in the state. Currently, there is no systematic method of recovering the data from police departments in the state and therefore, there is no accurate record of the number of encounters, which do not lead to arrests/juvenile referrals.

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