

# Trends and Characteristics of Richmond City Youth Referred to the Department of Justice Services 2003 - 2015

## Background

The Clark-Hill Institute for Positive Youth Development regularly examines trends of youth violence in Richmond City. This fact sheet examines trends and characteristics of youth who were referred to the Department of Justice Services (DJS). The DJS provides a variety of services to youth and their families who are either at risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system or have been processed by the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. This fact sheet describes youth who were referred to the DJS between 2003 and 2015 and formally involved in the court system for offenses *other than truancy-related offenses*. Youth between the ages of 10 and 18 years were included in this analysis. Age (in years) was calculated by subtracting the date of birth from date of first service referral. Where referral date was missing, the mid-point of the calendar year was used. Referral data was missing in less than 1% of the youth.

## Overall DJS Service Referrals

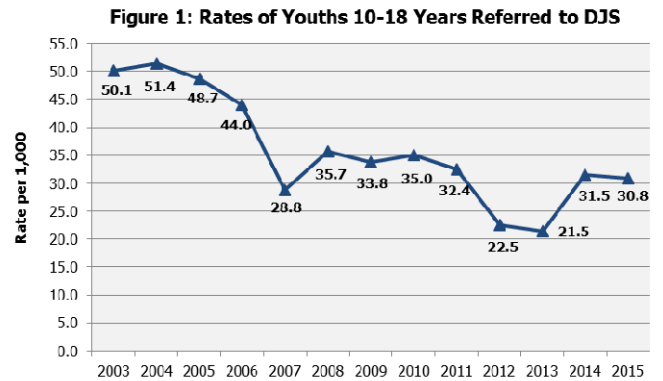
Between 2003 and 2015, there were 9,583 youths who were formally referred to the DJS for offenses that were not truancy-related (N=26,757). Table 1 shows the number of youth clients, service referrals, and the mean and range of referrals by years of service.

**Table 1: Number of 10-18 Years Old Youths Referred to Juvenile Justice**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of Unique Clients <sup>1</sup>	1,075	1,103	1,045	943	617	767	725	666	618	428	409	600	587
Number of Service Referrals	3,446	3,437	3,287	2,407	1,327	2,129	2,328	1,918	1,716	1,045	887	1,397	1,433
Mean Number of Referrals (Range)	3.2 (1-22)	3.1 (1-22)	3.1 (1-28)	2.6 (1-18)	2.2 (1-17)	2.8 (1-19)	3.2 (1-34)	2.9 (1-26)	2.8 (1-16)	2.4 (1-15)	2.2 (1-12)	2.3 (1-14)	2.4 (1-12)

<sup>1</sup>Unique clients in the calendar year

The rate of youth referrals to the DJS has declined steadily between 2003 and 2007. In 2012 and 2013, the rates of annual unique clients served by DJS decreased to the lowest rates at 22.5 and 21.5 per 1,000 youths, respectively. However, the rate increased and stabilized in 2014 and 2015 (Figure 1).



The five most frequently occurring offenses for DJS referrals are shown in Table 2. In all years, assault was the most frequently reported offense. Additionally, larceny, parole violation, drug, weapon and disorderly conduct offenses remain in the top five offenses until 2013. However, in 2014 and 2015 burglary emerged as one of the most frequently occurring offenses.

**Table 2: Top Five Most Frequent Offenses Among Court-Involved Youth 10-18 Years Old**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
1	Assault	Assault	Assault	Assault	Assault	Assault	Assault	Assault	Assault	Assault	Assault	Assault	Assault
2	Larceny	Larceny	Larceny	Larceny	Drug	Drug	Larceny	Disorderly Conduct	Disorderly Conduct	Larceny	Larceny	Parole Violation	Parole Violation
3	Parole Violation <sup>1</sup>	Parole Violation	Drug	Drug	Larceny	Larceny	Drug	Larceny	Larceny	Parole Violation	Parole Violation	Larceny	Larceny
4	Drug <sup>1</sup>	Drug	Parole Violation	Weapon	Disorderly Conduct	Weapon	Weapon	Parole Violation	Drug	Drug	Weapon	Weapon	Burglary
5	Weapon	Disorderly Conduct	Disorderly Conduct	Parole Violation	Weapon	Disorderly Conduct	Disorderly Conduct	Drug	Parole Violation	Disorderly Conduct	Disorderly Conduct	Burglary	Robbery

Note: It is possible to have multiple referrals for a single offense; in these analyses, all referrals were included

<sup>1</sup> The number of referrals were the same for both offenses; parole violation is ranked higher as it was more frequently reported as the first offense listed in a referral

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## Violence-Related DJS Service Referrals

Violent offenses comprised of homicide, assault, sexual assault, weapons/bombs, robbery and kidnapping offenses. Table 3 shows a summary of referrals by year of service for violence-related offenses.

**Table 3: Numbers of Court-Involved 10-18 Years Old Youths for Violence-Related Offenses**

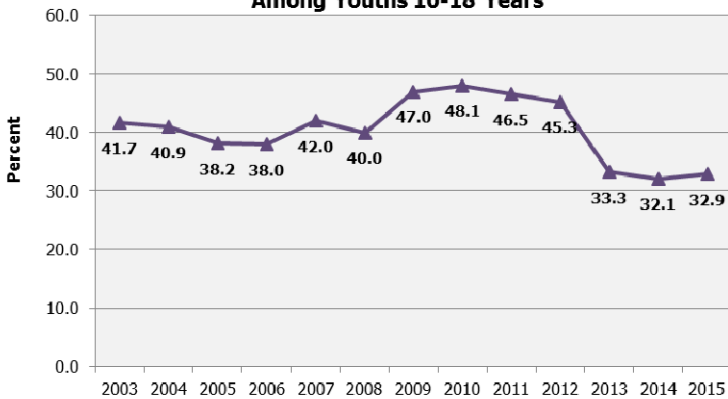
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of Unique Clients <sup>1</sup>	558	568	514	462	292	391	409	386	325	201	168	235	242
Number of Service Referrals	1,436	1,407	1,256	914	557	851	1,094	922	798	473	295	449	471
Mean Number of Referrals (Range)	2.6 (1-13)	2.5 (1-19)	2.4 (1-20)	2.0 (1-12)	1.9 (1-13)	2.2 (1-15)	2.7 (1-33)	2.4 (1-26)	2.5 (1-13)	2.4 (1-11)	1.8 (1-12)	1.9 (1-8)	2.0 (1-9)

<sup>1</sup>Unique clients in the calendar year

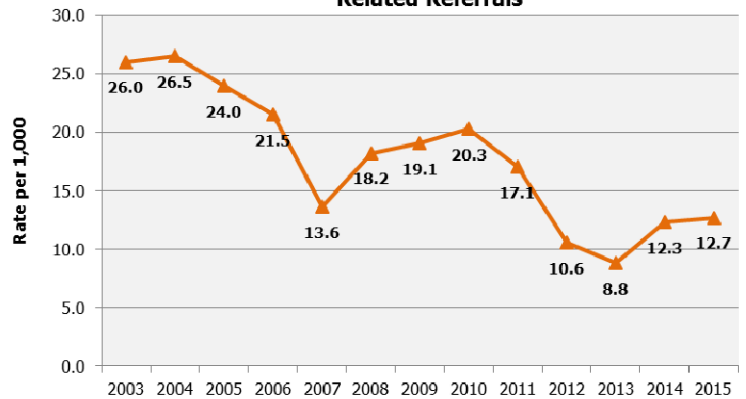
Although the majority of referrals to the DJS were not violent offenses, the proportion of violence-related referrals gradually increased between 2003 and 2012. However, there was a significant decline in 2013 and stabilization through 2015 (Figure 2). The lowest and highest level violence-related referrals were observed in 2014 (32.1%) and 2010 (48.1%), respectively.

The pattern of violence-related referral rates are shown in Figure 3. There was a steep decline between 2003 and 2007 from 26.0 to 13.6 per 1,000 youths, respectively. However, the rate increased between 2008 and 2010, to 20.3 per 1,000 youths. Subsequently, the rate of violence-related referrals declined annually to 8.8 per 1,000 in 2013 and was followed by increases in 2014 and 2015 to 12.3 and 12.7 per 1,000, respectively.

**Figure 2: Proportion of Violence-Related Referrals Among Youths 10-18 Years**



**Figure 3: Rate of Youths 10-18 Years with Violence-Related Referrals**

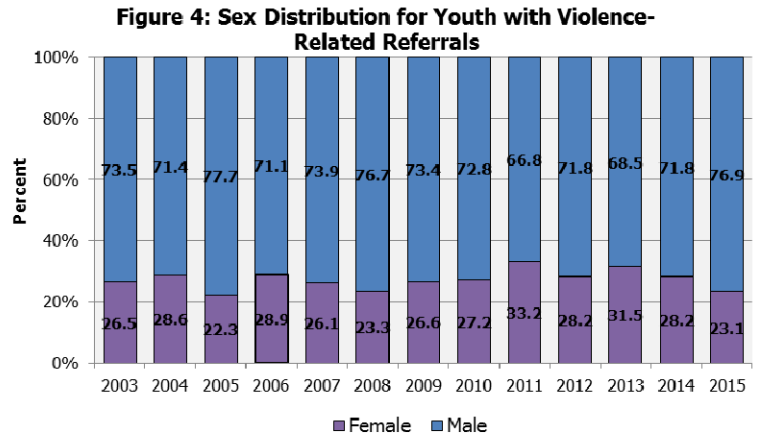


# Trends and Characteristics of Richmond City Youth Referred to the Department of Justice Services 2003 - 2015

## Demographic Characteristics Among Youth Referred for Violence-Related Offenses

Overall, the majority of violence-related referrals were males and blacks. The proportion of female clients referred for violence-related offenses ranged from 22.2% in 2005 to 33.2% in 2011. In general, the proportions of referrals among male and female were relatively stable. However, the proportion of referrals among females has declined during the past three years (Figure 4).

As shown in Table 4, each year black youth represented the majority of youth referred for violence-related offenses. White, Hispanic, and youth of other races accounted for less than 3% of DJS clients per year. The mean age of males and females was similar, ranging from 14.9 to 16.2 years. However, there was a statistically significant difference in the mean age between males and females in 2006, 2007 and 2015.



	Race & Ethnicity*				Age (Mean)	
	Black	White	Hispanic	Other	Males	Females
2003	96.6	2.3	0.4	0.7	15.2	14.9
2004	97.0	1.8	0.7	0.5	15.5	15.4
2005	97.5	1.9	0.2	0.4	15.8	15.8
2006	96.8	2.2	0.9	0.2	15.9 <sup>†</sup>	15.5 <sup>†</sup>
2007	96.3	1.0	2.4	0.3	15.9 <sup>†</sup>	15.5 <sup>†</sup>
2008	95.9	1.8	2.0	0.3	16.2	15.9
2009	96.8	2.0	1.2	0.0	16.2	16.1
2010	95.6	1.6	2.6	0.2	16.1	15.9
2011	95.7	2.1	1.8	0.3	16.2	16.0
2012	98.0	0.5	1.5	0.0	16.1	15.9
2013	94.0	2.4	3.0	0.6	15.8	15.6
2014	94.9	2.5	1.8	0.8	15.8	15.8
2015	96.3	0.4	2.5	0.8	16.0 <sup>†</sup>	15.4 <sup>†</sup>

\* Ethnicity is not captured separately from race  
<sup>†</sup> p-value < 0.05

## Geographic Distribution

The residential zip codes of clients served by DJS for violence-related offenses between 2011 and 2015 are shown in Figures 5-8. The zip codes with the highest rate of violence-related DJS referrals varied from year to year. However, four zip codes consistently had the highest rate of referrals: 23219, 23222, 23223 and 23224.

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Figures 5-8: Rate of Unique Clients 10-18 Years Old Referred for Services for Violence-Related Offenses by Zip Code of Residence, 2012-2015

Figure 5: 2012

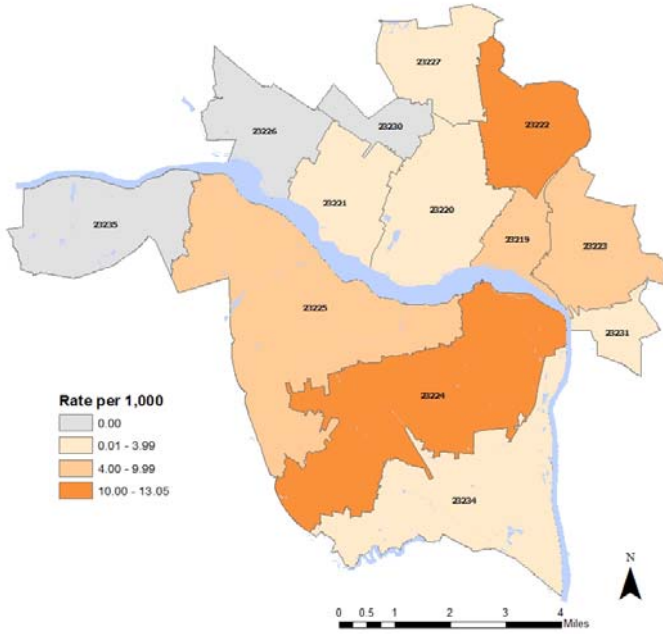


Figure 6: 2013

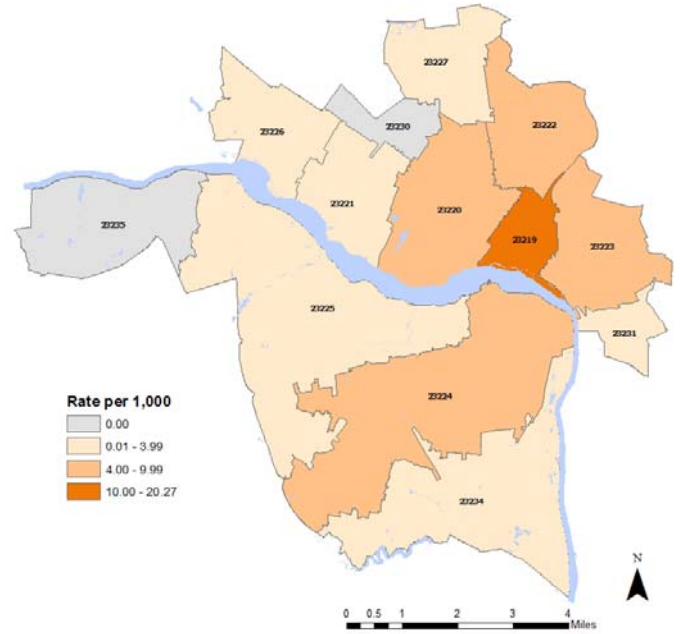


Figure 7: 2014

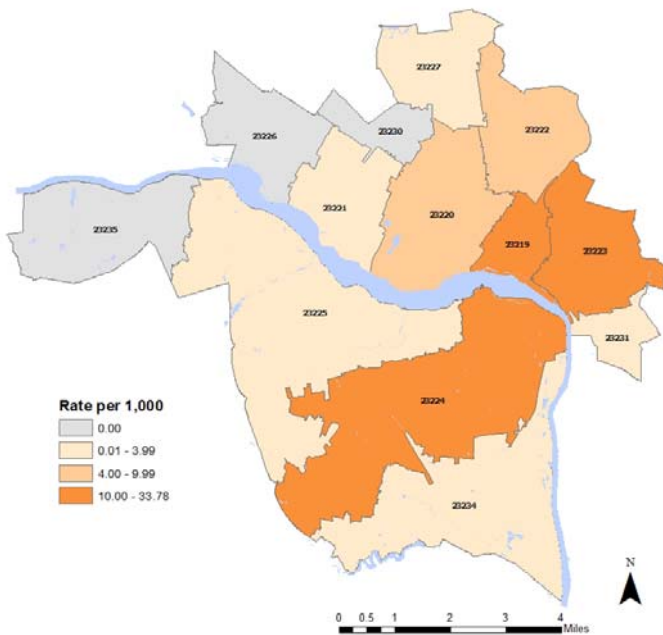
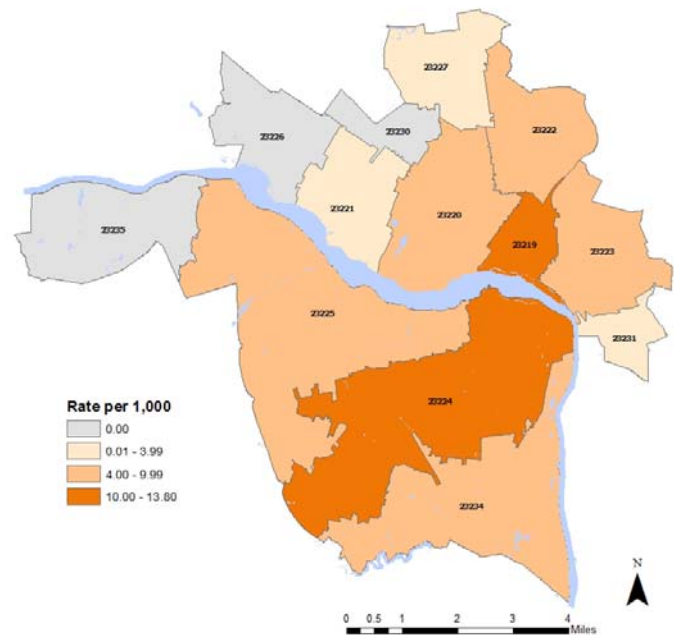


Figure 8: 2015



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