



# Examining Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the Juvenile Justice System in Indiana



*Presentation by Christine Reynolds, Research Division Director*

Indiana Criminal Justice Institute

# Examining Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the Juvenile Justice System in Indiana:

A Comprehensive Analysis



2024

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# Purpose

- Comply with Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018 Requirements – “implement policy, practice and system improvement to reduce racial and ethnic disparities among youth who come in contact with the juvenile justice system
- Improve data collection and analysis at both the state and local level to reduce disparities
- Conduct a statewide analysis of counties’ disproportionality data
- Provide counties a better way to understand and address disparities
  - Dashboards with Relative Rate Index and data on juvenile offense.



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# Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

- Is juvenile arrest data collected and able to be reported by probation officers?
- Where do most referrals come from?
- Where within the juvenile justice system does disproportionality exist?
- What factors contribute to racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system?
- How can stakeholders ensure better/more accurate data collection?

# Mixed Methods Approach

## Qualitative

- Interviews with juvenile probation officers
- Survey of juvenile justice stakeholder in Indiana

## Quantitative

- **Analysis of Relative Rate Index (RRI) for each county**
- **Court data on juvenile offenses**



# Issues Encountered

- Inconsistent ability to gather and report juvenile arrest data
- Lack of standardized definitions for terms like 'arrest' and 'detained'
- Inconsistent receipt of police reports by probation officers
- High turnover in positions responsible for entering RED data
- Limitations of using only RRI for analysis



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## Key Findings

- Inconsistent juvenile arrest data collection across counties
  - Referrals primarily from law enforcement, schools and SROs
  - Disparities exist at multiple stages, especially referrals and diversions
  - Black/African American, Other or Mixed-Race, and Hispanic youth face higher referrals rates and lower diversion rates
  - 46% of agencies lack formal policies for juvenile interaction
  - 20% of survey respondents lack confidence in interpreting RED data
  - Highest RRIIs occur at the referral contact point
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## Recommendations

- Implement strategies to mitigate disparities at the referral level
  - Improve information sharing between courts and probation offices
  - Conduct local assessments and create action plans
  - Develop written policies for juvenile interactions
  - Provide implicit bias training for staff
  - Explore alternatives to incarceration and systemic changes
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# Deliverables

- Comprehensive Analysis Report
- Survey Analysis Report
- Relative Rate Index dashboard
- Statewide Juvenile Offenses dashboard



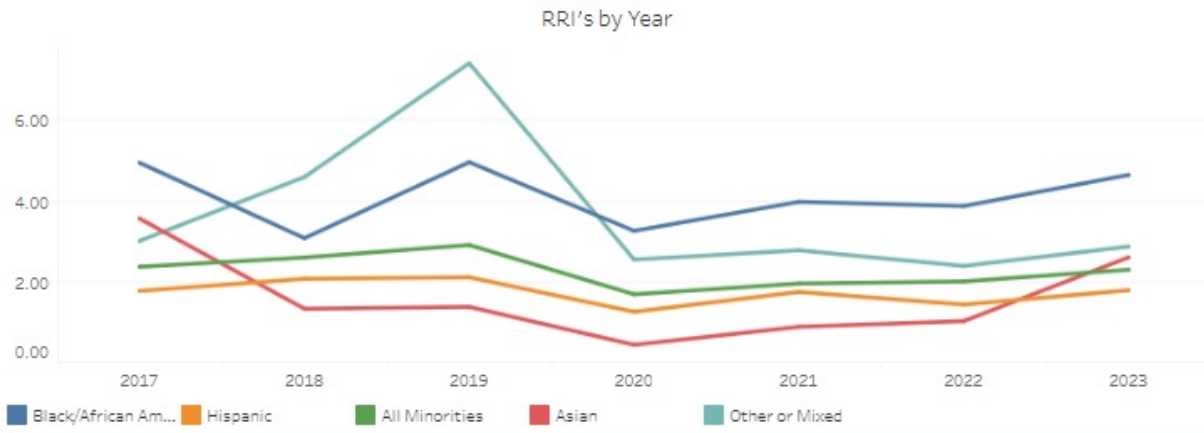
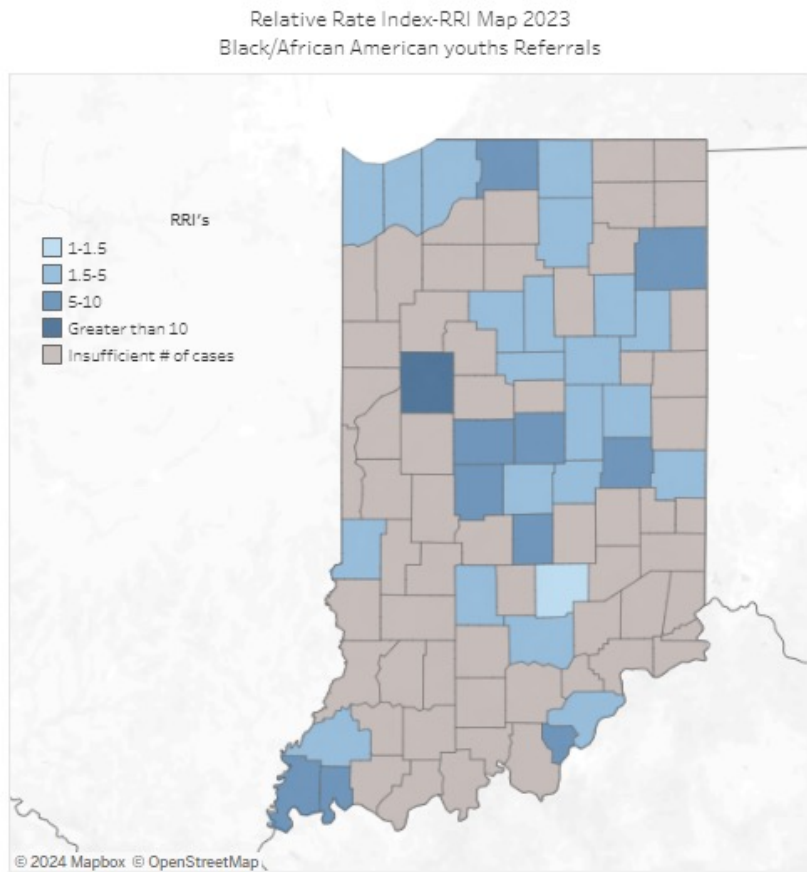
**<https://www.in.gov/cji/youth/racial-and-ethnic-disparities/>**

Select filters to analyze:

Year2023

Race/EthnicityBlack/African American

Decision Pt.Referrals



Click filters to see the % of the total youth population of each racial or ethnic group by county & decision point.

County:				Decision Pt:				
Allen				Referral				
Race & Ethnicity	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020
White	40%	38%	37%	41%	32%	36%	24%	60%
Black or AfricanAmerican	34%	35%	31%	34%	42%	37%	34%	15%
Hispanic Or Latino	12%	12%	11%	9%	10%	6%	11%	12%
Asian	2%	3%	0%	1%	4%	8%	16%	6%
American Indian Or Alask..	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Native Hawaiian Or Pacifi..	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other or Mixed Race	12%	12%	21%	16%	13%	13%	15%	7%

NOTE: RRIs averaged at the county level if multiple years, racial or ethnic groups, or decision points are selected. Counties with high RRIs may be due to data errors rather than high RED.

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Search CJI

Relative Rate Index

Statewide Juvenile Offenses

Indiana Statewide Juvenile Offenses

Total Offenses

123,587

Select Offense Category

(All)

Select Year

(All)

165

5,179

Status

Property

Person

Drug

Alcohol

Traffic

Society

Domestic

Sex

Gender

Male

Female

0K20K40K60K80K

Age Category

Under 10

10 to 12

13 to 16

17

18 and older

0K10K20K30K40K50K60K70K

OFFENSES

Offense	White	Black or African ..	Multiracial	Race Asian	Other	Unknown	Grand Total
BATTERY	9,710	4,855	1,165	76	385	157	16,373
RUNAWAY	8,952	2,888	978	63	357	148	13,402
THEFT	6,741	4,171	691	107	265	129	12,121
TRUANCY	7,475	2,151	818	158	815	299	11,744
POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA, HASH OIL, HAS..	6,561	1,402	472	55	315	167	8,982
ILLEGAL POSSESSION OR CONSUMPTION OF A..	5,165	281	215	55	138	168	6,032
CRIMINAL MISCHIEF	3,839	748	282	13	95	70	4,755
DOMESTIC BATTERY	2,991	829	368	10	73	32	4,309
RESISTING LAW ENFORCEMENT	1,940	1,787	346	45	102	32	4,256
INTIMIDATION	2,623	891	254	13	90	53	3,937

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# THANK YOU

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