



*Juvenile Offenders and Victims:*



# National Report Series

*Bulletin*

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*This bulletin is part of the Juvenile Offenders and Victims National Report Series. The National Report offers a comprehensive statistical overview of the problems of juvenile crime, violence, and victimization and the response of the juvenile justice system. During each interim year, the bulletins in the National Report Series provide access to the latest information on juvenile arrests, court cases, juveniles in custody, and other topics of interest. Each bulletin in the series highlights selected topics at the forefront of juvenile justice policymaking, giving readers focused access to statistics on some of the most critical issues. Together, the National Report and this series provide a baseline of facts for juvenile justice professionals, policy-makers, the media, and concerned citizens.*

## Juvenile Residential Facility Census, 2008: Selected Findings

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### A Message From OJJDP

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) developed the biannual Juvenile Residential Facility Census (JRFC) to collect information about the facilities in which juvenile offenders are held. Facilities provide information about characteristics such as their size, structure, type, ownership, and security arrangements. JRFC also reports the number of juveniles who died in custody during the past 12 months. This Bulletin presents findings from the 2008 JRFC—findings that are generally positive.

JRFC data indicate that the population of juvenile offenders in custody continued to decline—down 12% from 2006, a trend that may be explained by the decline in juvenile arrests. Although crowding is still a problem in many facilities, improvements continue. The proportion of residents held in facilities that were at or above the limit of their standard bed capacity dropped from 40% in 2000 to 21% in 2008. In 2008, 3% of facilities (holding 5% of juvenile offenders in custody) exceeded their standard bed capacity or had juveniles sleeping in makeshift beds.

JRFC alternates with its companion study, the biannual Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement, which describes the characteristics of youth in custody. In pursuing these data collection efforts, OJJDP supports the vital role of corrections in maintaining the safety of the community and providing essential services to confined youth.

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# The Juvenile Residential Facility Census provides data on facility operations

## Facility census describes 2,860 juvenile facilities

In October 2008, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) administered the fifth Juvenile Residential Facility Census (JRFC). JRFC began in 2000 with data collections occurring every other year.

JRFC is designed to routinely collect data on how facilities operate and the services they provide. It includes detailed questions on facility security, capacity and crowding, injuries and deaths in custody, and facility ownership and operation. Supplementary information is also collected each year on specific services, such as mental and physical health, substance abuse, and education.

JRFC does not capture data on adult prisons or jails, nor does it include facilities used exclusively for mental health or substance abuse treatment or for dependent children. Thus, JRFC includes most, but not all, facilities that hold juvenile offenders. The reporting facilities may also hold adults or “nonoffenders,” but data were only included if the facility held at least one juvenile offender on the census date.

The 2008 JRFC collected data from 2,860 juvenile facilities, 2,458 of which held a total of 81,015 offenders younger than 21 on the census date (October 22, 2008). The remaining 402 reporting facilities held no juvenile offenders on that date.

JRFC is one component in a multitiered effort to describe the youth placed in residential facilities and the facilities themselves. Other components include:

- **The National Juvenile Court Data Archive**, which collects information on sanctions that juvenile courts impose.
- **The Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement**, which collects information on the demographics and legal attributes of each youth in a juvenile facility on the census date.
- **The Survey of Youth in Residential Placement**, which collected in 2003 a broad range of self-reported information from interviews with individual youth in residential placement.

### On October 22, 2008, 47% of juvenile facilities were publicly operated; they held 69% of juvenile offenders

State	Juvenile facilities			Juvenile offenders			State	Juvenile facilities			Juvenile offenders		
	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private		Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private
U.S. total	2,458	1,150	1,300	81,015	56,157	24,757	Missouri	68	63	5	1,226	1,196	30
Alabama	56	13	43	1,328	632	696	Montana	16	8	7	161	114	30
Alaska	18	8	10	249	178	71	Nebraska	16	4	12	773	438	335
Arizona	40	16	20	1,488	1,198	240	Nevada	23	17	6	1,052	841	211
Arkansas	32	11	21	836	286	550	New Hampshire	8	2	6	157	86	71
California	215	117	98	13,309	12,056	1,253	New Jersey	49	39	10	1,564	1,428	136
Colorado	56	13	43	1,688	853	835	New Mexico	19	15	4	409	397	12
Connecticut	12	3	9	303	180	123	New York	169	40	129	3,157	1,470	1,687
Delaware	7	6	1	256	239	17	North Carolina	52	22	30	1,014	557	457
Dist. of Columbia	10	3	7	236	174	62	North Dakota	9	4	5	85	73	12
Florida	118	37	81	5,895	2,210	3,685	Ohio	87	66	21	3,871	3,521	350
Georgia	40	26	14	2,692	2,168	524	Oklahoma	46	16	29	923	626	276
Hawaii	8	3	5	130	118	12	Oregon	47	25	22	1,437	1,106	331
Idaho	28	15	13	683	540	143	Pennsylvania	152	34	118	5,034	1,263	3,771
Illinois	42	28	14	2,440	2,141	299	Rhode Island	10	1	9	291	168	123
Indiana	76	37	39	2,422	1,561	861	South Carolina	33	13	20	1,258	794	464
Iowa	66	15	51	1,060	297	763	South Dakota	23	7	14	507	233	261
Kansas	41	17	24	973	682	291	Tennessee	48	30	18	1,151	836	315
Kentucky	39	29	10	944	873	71	Texas	109	85	24	5,831	5,192	639
Louisiana	43	17	26	1,294	909	385	Utah	35	18	17	770	384	386
Maine	7	2	5	215	189	26	Vermont	4	1	3	48	24	24
Maryland	35	14	21	787	615	172	Virginia	61	56	5	2,114	2,022	92
Massachusetts	58	18	40	961	343	618	Washington	37	31	6	1,382	1,302	80
Michigan	82	37	45	2,659	1,252	1,407	West Virginia	26	11	15	565	376	189
Minnesota	76	21	55	1,332	697	635	Wisconsin	69	20	49	1,395	884	511
Mississippi	16	14	2	413	351	62	Wyoming	21	2	19	247	84	163

Notes: “State” is the state where the facility is located. Offenders sent to out-of-state facilities are counted in the state where the facility is located, not the state where they committed their offense. Totals include 8 tribal facilities (holding 101 juvenile offenders) located in Arizona, Montana, Oklahoma, and South Dakota.

Source: Authors’ analysis of Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2008 [machine-readable data file].

# Although most facilities are small and private, most offenders are held in large public facilities

## Local public facilities are more numerous, but state facilities hold more youth

Local facilities (those staffed by county, city, or municipal employees) made up more than half of all public facilities but held fewer than half of the juvenile offenders who were in custody in public facilities on the census date in 2008.

	Facilities		Juvenile offenders	
	Number	Pct.	Number	Pct.
Total	2,458	100%	81,015	100%
Public	1,150	47	56,157	69
State	475	19	28,161	35
Local	675	27	27,996	35
Private	1,300	53	24,757	31

Note: Totals include 8 tribal facilities holding 101 juvenile offenders.

During the course of a year, more juveniles pass through local facilities than state facilities because the majority of local facilities are detention centers, where youth stay for relatively short periods of time. In state facilities, such as training schools, stays are generally longer.

## Residential treatment centers and group homes outnumber other types of facilities

JRFC asks respondents to identify the type of facility (e.g., detention center, shelter, reception/diagnostic center, group home/halfway house, boot camp, ranch/forestry/wilderness camp/marine program, training school/long-term secure facility, or residential treatment center). Respondents were allowed to select more than one facility type category, although the vast majority (85%) selected only one.

### Training schools tend to be state facilities, detention centers tend to be local facilities, and group homes tend to be private facilities

Facility operation	Facility type							
	Total	Detention center	Shelter	Reception/diagnostic center	Group home	Ranch/wilderness camp	Training school	Residential treatment center
Number of facilities	2,458	734	167	64	661	85	210	847
<b>Operations profile</b>								
All facilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Public	47	86	31	67	22	52	89	29
State	19	20	4	59	11	12	73	16
Local	27	66	26	8	10	40	15	13
Private	53	13	69	33	78	48	11	71
<b>Facility profile</b>								
All facilities	100%	30%	7%	3%	27%	3%	9%	34%
Public	100	55	4	4	13	4	16	21
State	100	31	1	8	16	2	32	28
Local	100	72	7	1	10	5	5	17
Private	100	7	9	2	40	3	2	46

- Detention centers, reception/diagnostic centers, and training schools were more likely to be public facilities than private facilities; however, a substantial proportion of reception/diagnostic centers were private.
- Most shelters were private facilities, as were group homes and residential treatment centers.
- Detention centers made up the largest proportion of all local facilities and approximately half of all public facilities.
- Training schools constituted 32% of all state facilities.
- Group homes accounted for 40% of all private facilities.

Note: Counts (and row percentages) may sum to more than the total number of facilities because facilities could select more than one facility type category.

Source: Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2008* [machine-readable data file].

Slightly less than 850 facilities identified themselves as residential treatment centers and were holding juvenile offenders on the 2008 census date. Residential treatment centers made up 34% of all facilities and held 36% of juvenile offenders. More than 660 facilities identified themselves as group homes/halfway houses and were holding juvenile offenders. Group homes made up 27% of facilities and held 10% of juvenile offenders. There were 103 facilities that identified themselves as both residential treatment

centers and group homes. In fact, the group home/residential treatment center combination was the most common facility type combination. There were 734 facilities that identified themselves as detention centers—they accounted for 30% of facilities and held 40% of juvenile offenders in residential placement on the census date. Facilities identified as detention centers most commonly also identified themselves as residential treatment centers (74 facilities), training schools (43 facilities), and shelters (28 facilities).

# Security features and size varied across types of facilities

## Facilities varied in their degree of security

Overall, 38% of facilities said that at least some of the time youth are locked in their sleeping rooms. Among public facilities, 76% of local facilities and 62% of state facilities reported locking youth in sleeping rooms. Few private facilities locked youth in sleeping rooms (9%).

### Percentage of facilities locking youth in sleeping rooms

	Percentage of facilities locking youth in sleeping rooms
Total	38%
Public	70
State	62
Local	76
Private	9

Note: Percentages are based on facilities that reported security information (75 of 2,458 facilities [3%] did not report).

Among facilities that locked youth in sleeping rooms, most did this at night (85%) or when a youth was out of control (77%). Locking doors whenever youth were in their sleeping rooms (60%) and locking youth in their rooms during shift changes (49%) were also fairly common. Fewer facilities reported locking youth in sleeping rooms for a part of each day (25%) or when they were suicidal (25%). Very few facilities locked youth in sleeping rooms most of each day (2%) or all of each day (less than 1%). Five percent (5%) had no set schedule for locking youth in sleeping rooms.

Facilities indicated whether they had various types of locked doors or gates intended to confine youth within the facility (see sidebar). Nearly half of all facilities that reported security information said they had one or more confinement features (other than locked sleeping rooms). A greater proportion of public facilities (82%) than private facilities (26%) had confinement features.

### Percentage of facilities

	No confinement features	One or more confinement features
Total	47%	53%
Public	18	82
State	18	82
Local	18	82
Private	74	26

Note: Percentages are based on facilities that reported security information (75 of 2,458 facilities [3%] did not report).

Among detention centers and training schools that reported security information, more than 9 in 10 said they had one or more confinement features (other than locked sleeping rooms).

### Facilities reporting one or more confinement features (other than locked sleeping rooms):

	Number	Percentage
Total facilities	1,258	53%
Detention center	699	96
Shelter	50	30
Reception/diagnostic center	47	75
Group home	81	13
Ranch/wilderness camp	22	26
Training school	195	93
Residential treatment center	375	46

Note: Detail sums to more than totals because facilities could select more than one facility type category.

Among group homes, fewer than 1 in 5 facilities said they had locked doors or gates to confine youth. A facility's staff, of course, also provides security. In some facilities, a remote location is a security feature that also helps to keep youth from leaving.

Overall, 21% of facilities reported external gates in fences or walls with razor wire. This arrangement was most common among training schools (55%), detention centers (44%), and reception/diagnostic centers (36%).

## JRFC asks facilities about their security features

Are any young persons in this facility locked in their sleeping rooms by staff at any time to confine them?

Does this facility have any of the following features intended to confine young persons within specific areas?

- Doors for secure day rooms that are locked by staff to confine young persons within specific areas?
- Wing, floor, corridor, or other internal security doors that are locked by staff to confine young persons within specific areas?
- Outside doors that are locked by staff to confine young persons within specific buildings?
- External gates in fences or walls WITHOUT razor wire that are locked by staff to confine young persons?
- External gates in fences or walls WITH razor wire that are locked by staff to confine young persons?

Are outside doors to any buildings with living/sleeping units in this facility ever locked? If yes, why?

- To keep intruders out?
- To keep young persons inside this facility?

JRFC did not ask about security features such as resident counts (roll calls), cameras, or guard towers.

## Security increased as facility size increased

Among the largest facilities (those with more than 200 residents) that provided security information, 74% lock youth in their sleeping rooms to confine them at least some of the time. The vast majority of large facilities (88%) had one or more features (locked doors or gates) intended to confine youth.

Facility size	Percentage of facilities reporting		
	Youth locked in sleep rooms	One or more confinement features	Razor wire
Total facilities	38%	53%	21%
1–10 residents	17	26	6
11–20 residents	34	50	15
21–50 residents	48	66	27
51–100 residents	60	75	39
101–200 residents	68	86	46
201+ residents	73	88	65

Although the use of razor wire is a far less common security measure, approximately 6 in 10 of the largest facilities said they had locked gates in fences or walls with razor wire.

## Large facilities were most likely to be state operated

Few (14%) state-operated facilities (65 of 475) held 10 or fewer residents in 2008. In contrast, 43% of private facilities (555 of 1,300) were that small. In fact, these small private facilities made up the largest proportion of private facilities.

Facility size	Facility operation		
	State	Local	Private
Total facilities	475	675	1,300
1–10 residents	65	149	555
11–20 residents	82	154	308
21–50 residents	156	210	275
51–100 residents	81	103	111
101–200 residents	63	45	39
201+ residents	28	14	12

## More than half of facilities were small (holding 20 or fewer residents), although nearly half of juvenile offenders were held in large facilities (holding more than 100 residents)

Facility size	Number of facilities	Percentage of facilities	Number of juvenile offenders	Percentage of juvenile offenders
Total facilities	2,458	100%	81,015	100%
1–10 residents	773	31	3,960	5
11–20 residents	546	22	6,725	8
21–50 residents	643	26	18,355	23
51–100 residents	295	12	18,466	23
101–200 residents	147	6	18,457	23
201+ residents	54	2	15,052	19

- Although the largest facilities—those holding more than 200 residents—accounted for only 2% of all facilities, they held 19% of all juvenile offenders in custody.
- Inversely, although the smallest facilities—those holding 10 or fewer residents—accounted for 31% of all facilities, they held only 5% of all juvenile offenders in custody.

Note: Column percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Source: Authors' analysis of Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2008 [machine-readable data file].

## Small group homes holding 20 or fewer residents were the most common type of facility

Facility size	Facility type						
	Detention center	Shelter	Reception/diagnostic center	Group home	Ranch/wilderness camp	Training school	Residential treatment center
Number of facilities	734	167	64	661	85	210	847
Total facilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
1–10 residents	19	50	14	64	4	1	18
11–20 residents	22	26	19	21	11	10	25
21–50 residents	33	20	14	10	49	25	34
51–100 residents	16	2	25	3	27	27	15
101–200 residents	7	1	19	0	8	24	7
201+ residents	3	1	9	1	1	12	2

- 64% of group homes and 50% of shelters held 10 or fewer residents. For other facility types, this proportion was less than 20%.
- 12% of training schools and 9% of reception/diagnostic centers held more than 200 residents. For other facility types, this proportion was less than 4%.

Note: Facility type counts sum to more than 2,458 facilities because facilities could select more than one facility type category. Column percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Source: Authors' analysis of Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2008 [machine-readable data file].

State-operated facilities made up just 19% of all facilities, and they accounted for 57% of facilities holding more than 200 residents. Private facilities constituted 53% of all facilities, and they accounted for 74% of facilities holding 10 or fewer residents.

# Facility crowding affected a substantial proportion of youth in custody

## Many juvenile offenders were in facilities with more residents than standard beds

Facilities reported both the number of standard beds and the number of make-shift beds they had on the census date. Occupancy rates provide the broadest assessment of the adequacy of living space. Although occupancy rate standards have not been established, as a facility's occupancy passes 100%, operational functioning may be impaired.

Crowding occurs when the number of residents occupying all or part of a facility exceeds some predetermined limit based on square footage, utility use, or even fire codes. Although it is an imperfect measure of crowding, comparing the number of residents to the number of standard beds gives a sense of the crowding problem in a facility. Even without relying on makeshift beds, a facility may be crowded. For example, using standard beds in an infirmary for youth who are not sick or beds in seclusion for youth who have not committed infractions may indicate crowding problems.

Twenty-five percent (25%) of facilities said that the number of residents they held on the 2008 census date put them at or over the capacity of their standard beds or that they relied on some makeshift beds. These facilities held more than 17,291 residents, the vast majority of whom were offenders younger than 21. Thus, 21% of all residents held on the census date and 21% of offenders younger than 21 were held in facilities operating at or above their standard bed capacity. In comparison, such facilities held 30% of all residents in 2006, 32% in 2004, 34% in 2002, and they held 40% in 2000. In 2008, 3% of facilities reported being over capacity (having fewer standard beds than they had residents or relying on makeshift beds). These facilities held 5% of juvenile offenders.

### Compared with other types of facilities, public detention centers and reception/diagnostic centers were more likely to be over standard bed capacity

Facility type	Percentage of facilities at their standard bed capacity			Percentage of facilities over their standard bed capacity		
	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private
Total	22%	13%	30%	3%	6%	1%
Detention center	9	7	19	8	9	2
Shelter	13	12	14	3	4	3
Reception/diagnostic center	16	9	29	2	2	0
Group home	36	30	38	0	1	0
Ranch/wilderness camp	19	20	17	1	0	2
Training school	16	15	25	4	4	4
Residential treatment center	26	19	29	1	2	1

### The largest facilities were the most likely to be crowded

Facility size	Number of facilities	Percentage of facilities under, at, or over their standard bed capacity			Mean number of makeshift beds at facilities over capacity
		<100%	100%	>100%	
Total facilities	2,458	75%	22%	3%	7
1–10 residents	773	73	27	0	2
11–20 residents	546	72	26	3	3
21–50 residents	643	73	22	5	4
51–100 residents	295	82	13	6	10
101–200 residents	147	84	12	5	26
201+ residents	54	81	13	6	17

Note: A single bed is counted as one standard bed and a bunk bed is counted as two standard beds. Makeshift beds (e.g., cots, roll-out beds, mattresses, and sofas) are not counted as standard beds. Facilities are counted as over capacity if they reported more residents than standard beds or if they reported any occupied makeshift beds. Facilities could select more than one facility type category.

Source: Authors' analysis of Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2008 [machine-readable data file].

### 45 states held fewer juvenile offenders in 2008 than in 2006

Overall, the juvenile offender custody population dropped 12% from 2006 to 2008. States with declines held an average of 14% fewer juvenile offenders on the census date in 2008 than in 2006—ranging from 64% in New Mexico to less than 5% in 13 states.

Among the five states that had more juveniles in residential placement in 2008 than in 2006, the average growth was 10%. Four of these states had increases of 15% or less (Georgia, Nebraska, Oregon, and West Virginia). Idaho reported an increase of 26%, whereas the District of Columbia reported virtually no change in their custody population between 2006 and 2008.

## Public facilities were more likely than private facilities to be crowded

Among publicly operated facilities, 6% exceeded standard bed capacity or had residents occupying makeshift beds on the 2008 census date. For privately operated facilities, the proportion was 1%. However, a larger proportion of private facilities (30%) compared to public facilities (13%) said they were operating at 100% capacity.

State-operated public facilities had a somewhat greater proportion of facilities that exceeded capacity (8%) than did locally operated facilities (4%).

Facility operation	Percentage of facilities at or over their standard bed capacity		
	≥100%	100%	>100%
Total	25%	22%	3%
Public	19	13	6
State	24	17	8
Local	15	11	4
Private	31	30	1

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

## Use of makeshift beds varied widely

About 78 facilities reported having occupied makeshift beds, averaging 7 such beds per facility. Many facilities rely on makeshift beds, whereas many others operate well below standard bed capacity. On average, there were 12 unoccupied standard beds per facility. This average masks a wide range: 1 facility with 195 residents had 72 standard beds and 123 residents without standard beds; another facility with 1,200 standard beds had 465 residents, leaving 735 unoccupied beds.

### Nationwide, 624 juvenile facilities (25%) were at or over standard capacity or relied on makeshift beds

State	Total facilities	Number of facilities under, at, or over capacity			Percentage of juvenile offenders in facilities at or over capacity		State	Total facilities	Number of facilities under, at, or over capacity			Percentage of juvenile offenders in facilities at or over capacity	
		<100%	100%	>100%	100%	>100%			<100%	100%	>100%	100%	>100%
U.S. total	2,458	1,834	546	78	22%	3%	Missouri	68	48	15	5	21%	12%
Alabama	56	48	8	0	14	0	Montana	16	15	1	0	5	0
Alaska	18	12	4	2	11	14	Nebraska	16	15	1	0	2	0
Arizona	40	34	4	2	4	3	Nevada	23	17	4	2	3	13
Arkansas	32	23	8	1	27	4	New Hampshire	8	8	0	0	0	0
California	215	152	61	2	9	1	New Jersey	49	42	5	2	15	2
Colorado	56	44	12	0	18	0	New Mexico	19	17	2	0	10	0
Connecticut	12	8	4	0	13	0	New York	169	124	45	0	10	0
Delaware	7	4	2	1	38	30	North Carolina	52	38	9	5	6	12
Dist. of Columbia	10	4	6	0	22	0	North Dakota	9	7	2	0	7	0
Florida	118	65	50	3	39	3	Ohio	87	63	16	8	11	15
Georgia	40	22	6	12	14	36	Oklahoma	46	24	20	2	25	11
Hawaii	8	7	0	1	0	64	Oregon	47	32	15	0	41	0
Idaho	28	20	8	0	17	0	Pennsylvania	152	115	33	4	12	9
Illinois	42	30	12	0	55	0	Rhode Island	10	6	2	2	5	69
Indiana	76	57	14	5	9	9	South Carolina	33	27	6	0	9	0
Iowa	66	51	15	0	38	0	South Dakota	23	16	7	0	34	0
Kansas	41	36	5	0	11	0	Tennessee	48	33	13	2	21	3
Kentucky	39	32	7	0	18	0	Texas	109	92	14	3	9	5
Louisiana	43	28	12	3	17	5	Utah	35	24	9	2	29	6
Maine	7	5	2	0	6	0	Vermont	4	3	1	0	10	0
Maryland	35	25	9	1	19	4	Virginia	61	54	4	3	3	5
Massachusetts	58	37	21	0	39	0	Washington	37	30	5	2	25	2
Michigan	82	66	16	0	9	0	West Virginia	26	18	8	0	24	0
Minnesota	76	62	14	0	11	0	Wisconsin	69	61	8	0	9	0
Mississippi	16	14	0	2	0	11	Wyoming	21	19	1	1	4	0

Note: A single bed is counted as one standard bed, and a bunk bed is counted as two standard beds. Makeshift beds (e.g., cots, roll-out beds, mattresses, and sofas) are not counted as standard beds. Facilities are counted as over capacity if they reported more residents than standard beds or if they reported any occupied makeshift beds. Facilities could select more than one facility type category. "State" is the state where the facility is located. Offenders sent to out-of-state facilities are counted in the state where the facility is located, not the state where they committed their offense. Totals include 8 tribal facilities (holding 101 juvenile offenders) located in Arizona, Montana, Oklahoma, and South Dakota.

Source: Authors' analysis of Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2008 [machine-readable data file].

# JRFC asks facilities about certain activities that may have occurred in the month before the census date

In addition to information gathered on the census date, JRFC collects data on the following questions for the 30-day period of September 2008:

- Were there ANY UNAUTHORIZED DEPARTURES of any young persons who were assigned beds at this facility?
- Were ANY young persons assigned beds at this facility transported to a hospital emergency room by facility staff, transportation staff, or by an ambulance?
- Were ANY of the young persons assigned beds here restrained by facility staff with a mechanical restraint?
- Were ANY of the young persons assigned beds here locked for more than 4 hours alone in an isolation, seclusion, or sleeping room to regain control of their unruly behavior?

## Nearly a quarter of facilities (22%) reported unauthorized departures in the month before the census date

Facility type	Number of facilities		Percentage of reporting facilities with unauthorized departures
	Total	Reporting	
Total facilities	2,458	2,156	22%
Detention center	734	700	3
Shelter	167	155	37
Reception/diagnostic center	64	61	10
Group home	661	515	39
Ranch/wilderness camp	85	69	38
Training school	210	206	6
Residential treatment center	847	748	29

■ Group homes were most likely to report one or more unauthorized departures.

Note: Detail may sum to more than the totals because facilities could select more than one facility type category.

Source: Authors' analysis of Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2008 [machine-readable data file].

## Sports-related injuries were the most common reason for emergency room visits in the previous month

Reason for ER visit	Percentage of facilities
Total	36%
Injury:	
Sports-related	38
Work/chore-related	2
Interpersonal conflict	19
Other	19
Illness	32
Pregnancy:	
Complications	4
Labor and delivery	2
Suicide attempt	6
Non-emergency:	
No other health professional available	11
No doctor's appointment could be obtained	8
Other	21

Note: Percentages are based on facilities that reported emergency room information (32 of 2,458 facilities [1%] did not report).

Source: Authors' analysis of Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2008 [machine-readable data file].

## Approximately 1 in 4 facilities reported using mechanical restraints; 1 in 5 reported locking youth in some type of isolation

Facility type	Percentage of reporting facilities	
	Used mechanical restraints	Locked youth in room for 4 or more hours
Total facilities	23%	21%
Detention center	42	45
Shelter	4	4
Reception/diagnostic center	52	31
Group home	2	1
Ranch/wilderness camp	20	6
Training school	69	51
Residential treatment center	16	10

■ Training schools were the most likely type of facility to use mechanical restraints (i.e., handcuffs, leg cuffs, waist bands, leather straps, restraining chairs, strait jackets, or other mechanical devices) in the previous month and most likely to lock a youth alone in some type of seclusion for 4 or more hours to regain control of their unruly behavior.

■ Group homes were the facility type least likely to use either of these measures.

Note: Percentages are based on 2,155 facilities that reported mechanical restraints information and 2,154 facilities that reported locked isolation information, of a total 2,458 facilities.

Source: Authors' analysis of Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2008 [machine-readable data file].



# Facilities reported 14 deaths of juvenile offenders in custody over 12 months—6 were suicides

## Juvenile offenders rarely die in custody

Juvenile facilities holding juvenile offenders reported that 14 youth died while in the legal custody of the facility between October 1, 2007, and September 30, 2008. Each death occurred at a different facility.

Routine collection of national data on deaths of juveniles in custody began with the 1988/89 Children in Custody Census of Public and Private Juvenile Detention, Correctional, and Shelter Facilities. Either accidents or suicides have always been the leading cause of death. Over the years 1988–1994, there were an average of 46 deaths reported nationally per year, including an annual average of 18 suicides. Over the years 2000–2008, those averages dropped to 22 deaths overall and 9 suicides. In 2006, the number of suicides that occurred at residential facilities (four) was at the lowest level since OJJDP first started collecting data from JRFC in 2000. There were six suicides in 2008.

Training schools and residential treatment centers reported equal numbers of deaths in 2008 (four each). Training schools accounted for two suicides, one death due to illness, and one death as a result of an accident. Residential treatment centers accounted for two suicides, one death as the result of an illness, and one as the result of an accident. Detention centers accounted for 3 of the 14 deaths; 1 death was a suicide, and 2 were the result of accidents. Group homes accounted for 2 of the 14 deaths: 1 death was a suicide and 1 was a homicide. One facility classified itself as an “other” facility and accounted for 1 of the 14 deaths, an accident.

### During the 12 months prior to the census, suicides were the most commonly reported cause of death in custody

Cause of death	Total	Inside the facility			Outside the facility		
		All	Public	Private	All	Public	Private
Total	14	6	3	3	8	4	4
Suicide	6	3	1	2	3	2	1
Illness/natural	2	0	0	0	2	1	1
Accident	5	3	2	1	2	1	1
Homicide	1	0	0	0	1	0	1

■ The deaths from illness were not AIDS related.

■ The reported homicide was attributed to a nonresident(s).

Notes: Data are reported deaths of youth in custody from October 1, 2007, through September 30, 2008.

Source: Authors' analysis of Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2008 [machine-readable data file].

### In 2008, the death rate was generally higher for private facilities than for public facilities

Cause of death	Deaths per 10,000 juveniles held on the census date, October 22, 2008		
	Total	Public facility	Private facility
Total	1.7	1.2	2.8
Suicide	0.7	0.5	1.2
Illness/natural	0.2	0.2	0.4
Accident	0.6	0.5	0.8
Homicide	0.1	0.0	0.4

Type of facility	Deaths per 10,000 juveniles held on the census date, October 22, 2008		
	Total	Public facility	Private facility
Detention center	0.9	1.0	0.0
Training school	2.0	2.1	0.0
Group home	2.6	0.0	4.0
Residential treatment center	1.4	0.0	2.4
Other	2.8	0.0	6.8

■ The death rate in 2008 (1.7) was substantially lower than that in 2000 (2.8). There were 30 reported deaths of youth in custody in 2000; accidents were the most commonly reported cause. In 2008, suicides were the most commonly reported cause (followed closely by accidents, illness/natural death, and homicide).

Note: Data are reported deaths of youth in custody from October 1, 2007, through September 30, 2008.

Source: Authors' analysis of Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2008 [machine-readable data file].

**Of the total deaths in custody, 5 of 14 deaths involved white non-Hispanic males**

Race/ethnicity	Cause of death									
	Total		Suicide		Illness/natural		Accident		Homicide	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	11	3	4	2	1	1	5	0	1	0
White non-Hispanic	5	1	1	1	0	0	4	0	0	0
Black non-Hispanic	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic	3	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Other race/ethnicity	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

Note: Data are reported deaths of youth in custody from October 1, 2007, through September 30, 2008.

Source: Authors' analysis of Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2008 [machine-readable data file].

**Generally, suicides did not occur in the first days of a youth's stay**

One suicide occurred 9 days after the youth was admitted to the facility, one occurred 6 weeks after admission, three occurred between 21 and 44 weeks after admission, and the remaining suicide occurred approximately 2.5 years after admission. One juvenile died on the youth's date of admission as the result of an accident, and one had been in custody for 1,107 days (almost 3 years) when he or she died as a result of an accident. The overall median number of days since admission for deaths of juveniles in custody was 161. In the instance of the one homicide that occurred in 2008, the facility did not provide the date of death.

**JRFC asks facilities about deaths of young persons at locations inside and/or outside the facility**

During the year between October 1, 2007, and September 30, 2008, did ANY young persons die while assigned to a bed at this facility at a location either INSIDE or OUTSIDE of this facility?

If yes, how many young persons died while assigned beds at this facility during the year between October 1, 2007, and September 30, 2008?

What was the cause of death?

- Illness/natural causes (excluding AIDS)
- Injury suffered prior to placement here

- AIDS
- Suicide
- Homicide by another resident
- Homicide by nonresident(s)
- Accidental death
- Other (specify)

What was the location of death, age, sex, race, date of admission to the facility, and date of death for each young person who died while assigned a bed at this facility?

## The Juvenile Residential Facility Census includes data submitted by tribal facilities

The 2008 JRFC collected data from eight tribal facilities (down from nine in 2006). The tribal facilities were in Arizona, Montana, Oklahoma, and South Dakota. The number of offenders held in tribal facilities dropped from 165 in 2006 to 101 in 2008. OJJDP is working with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to ensure greater representation of tribal facilities in the CJRP and JRFC data collections.

Of the eight tribal facilities, six were owned and operated by tribes. One

facility was tribe owned but privately operated. One facility did not report operation and ownership information.

All eight tribal facilities identified themselves as detention centers. One facility also identified itself as an “other” type of facility. They held from 6 to 22 residents, with half (50%) holding between 1 and 10 residents. On the census day, five facilities were operating at less than their standard bed capacity, one was operating at capacity, and two exceeded capacity.

Standard bed capacities ranged from 10 to 107; 6 facilities had fewer than 60 beds.

Seven of the eight tribal facilities reported locking youth in their sleeping rooms. Among tribal facilities that locked youth in their rooms, four did so when they were out of control, and three reported that youth were locked in their rooms all day.

Data from the eight tribal facilities are included in the presentations throughout the Bulletin.

## Sources

National Center for Health Statistics. 2009. Estimates of the July 1, 2000–July 1, 2008, United States Resident Population From the Vintage 2008 Postcensal Series by Year, County, Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin. [Released 9/2/2009.] Prepared under a collaborative arrangement with the U.S. Census Bureau. Available online from [www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged\\_race.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged_race.htm).

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, and 2009. Juvenile Residential Facility Census for the years 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, and 2008 [machine-readable data files]. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau (producer).

## Resources

OJJDP’s **Statistical Briefing Book** ([www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb)) is a comprehensive online resource covering various topics related to delinquency and the juvenile justice system. The **Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement Databook**, accessible through the Briefing Book, contains a large set of predefined tables detailing the characteristics of juvenile offenders in residential placement facilities.

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