



**Jackson County Family Court
2022
Annual Statistical Report**

The Honorable Jalilah Otto
Presiding Judge
16th Circuit Court

Mary Marquez
Court Administrator
16th Circuit Court

The Honorable Kevin Harrell
Administrative Judge
Jackson County Family Court

The Honorable Nancy Alemifar
Family Court Commissioner

The Honorable William Jackson
Family Court Commissioner

The Honorable Katie Rooney
Family Court Commissioner

Theresa L. Byrd
Deputy Court Administrator
Jackson County Family Court
Theresa.Byrd@courts.mo.gov

Lori Stipp
Juvenile Officer
Jackson County Family Court
Lori.Stipp@courts.mo.gov

Pamela Behle, Ph.D.
Director, Assessment and Development Services
Jackson County Family Court
(816) 881-6510
pbehle@courts.mo.gov

Cover artwork: ArtsTech

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Executive Summary

As we move further away from the “pandemic years” of 2020 and 2021, the data from that time period becomes easier to interpret. The return to normalcy in 2022 helped to clarify which statistical changes were the result of the pandemic and which were the start of broader trends—or the result of circumstances or procedural changes that were implemented in response to COVID-19 but that have continued beyond the pandemic period.

A prime example of the first situation—changes driven primarily by the pandemic—is the sharp drop and subsequent rise in delinquency referrals over the last three years. Referrals decreased considerably in 2020 and 2021 but returned in 2022 to levels very similar to 2019. The same occurred with the number of youth committed to Hilltop and ordered to probation.

The decline in child abuse and neglect referrals, on the other hand, seems to be part of a broader trend. A sharp drop in referrals coincided with the start of the pandemic, and we expected numbers to pick up again as youth returned to school and other in-person activities. But that rise did not occur, and the number of referrals dropped further in 2022—down another 25% from the year before. A similar trend occurred in Family Treatment Court: Even after low admission numbers during the pandemic, enrollment fell by another 46% in 2022.

Throughout this report, you will find more examples of each situation—and some that do not fit either model, or that fit elements of both. The number of youth admitted to secure detention, for example, dropped sharply in 2020 but rose again in 2021 and then continued even higher the next year—not only “correcting” for the pandemic-related drop, but mostly reversing the general downward trend that had started half a decade before the pandemic began. And delinquent referrals, while rising back to 2019 levels, are still lower than they were eight years ago. The same goes for youth placed on probation and committed to Hilltop. Commitments to the Division of Youth Services (DYS) have inched up slightly since the low point in 2020, but they are still down by 60% compared to the 2015-2019 average. And TPR filings are less than half what they were in 2019, despite rising slightly from the 2021 low.

One of the most significant changes in 2022 could not be measured against the pandemic years at all: the rise in older youth involved in Court programming. With the increase in age of juvenile jurisdiction to 17 in 2021, the Court saw a much higher share of referrals for 17-year-olds. Some of these youth were adjudicated and served on probation, but most were diverted to the Emerging Adult Justice Unit (EAJ), where they were assigned a navigator who worked with them to create a success plan and connect with community resources to help them achieve their goals. In 2022, the EAJ served 107 youth.

Throughout this report, introductory text for each section provides descriptions of what we saw in 2022 and how this fits into the larger picture of the past eight years. A pandemic monitoring section at the end of the report looks more closely at specific indicators for the past three years, some on a monthly basis. A conclusion at the very end provides takeaways from each section of the report.

Introduction

This report provides statistical information about Jackson County Circuit Court – Family Court Division for 2022 and the previous seven years. The report begins with a demographic overview of the Jackson County youth population. Next the report looks at referrals and formal filings to the Family Court for our various case types:

- Child abuse and neglect
- Adoption
- Termination of parental rights
- Status offense
- Delinquent and technical violation

The report considers disposition and intervention services, including the number of commitments to the Division of Youth Services, the number of youth certified to stand trial as an adult, and the number of youth and families participating in Family Court programs and services.

Two years ago, we introduced a section specifically to monitor trends related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we included that section again this year. This includes numbers of open cases for our various case types, admission and population data for secure detention and detention alternatives, time to disposition for disposed cases, and recidivism.

This year, we saw a “return to normal” in certain areas—delinquent referrals and detention admissions, for example, which rose this year after declining during the pandemic. In other areas, such as referrals for abuse and neglect or commitments to DYS, trends we started seeing during the pandemic have continued even as the Court has largely moved back to business as usual.

Current Demographic Picture

The number of youth between the ages of 10 and 17 who resided in Jackson County has increased over the last few years after a steady decline between 2002 and 2012. In 2020, the most recent year for which we have detailed population data, youth under the age of 18 represented 23% of the county population, and 38% of youth were youth of color.¹

Table 1. Youth Population in Jackson County (Ages 0 to 17 years) by Race²

Year	Black	White	American Indian	Asian	Total
2014	51,344	107,324	1,627	4,181	164,476
2015	51,489	107,698	1,616	4,221	165,024
2016	51,522	108,262	1,615	4,357	165,756
2017	51,246	108,588	1,644	4,462	165,940
2018	51,008	107,842	1,639	4,490	164,979
2019	50,556	107,662	1,672	4,482	164,372
2020	51,341	106,155	1,801	4,793	164,090

Table 2. Youth Population in Jackson County (Ages 10 to 17 years) by Race²

Year	Black	White	American Indian	Asian	Total
2014	22,087	46,729	642	1,925	71,383
2015	22,136	47,091	654	2,008	71,889
2016	22,282	47,483	667	2,079	72,511
2017	22,275	47,888	682	2,108	72,953
2018	22,339	47,676	674	2,180	72,869
2019	22,310	47,906	698	2,251	73,165
2020	22,491	47,751	699	2,221	73,162

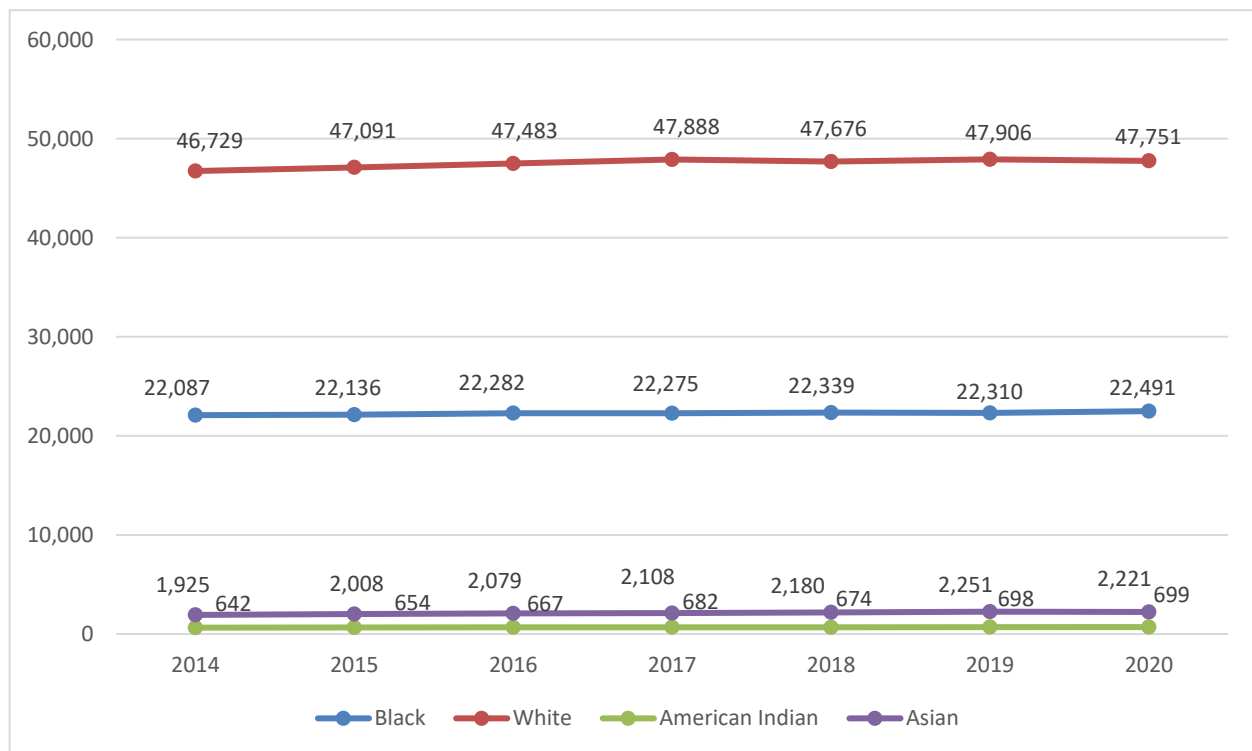
¹ Puzzanchera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2020). "Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2020." Available: <http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/>. United States Census Bureau. Quick Facts: Jackson County, Missouri. Available: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/jacksoncountymissouri/PST045217>. "Youth of color" refers to all youth other than those designated in the Census data as "white alone, not Hispanic or Latino."

² Puzzanchera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2020). "Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2020." Available: <http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/>. Population data from 2021 was not available at the time of this report.

Table 3. Youth Population in Jackson County (Ages 10 to 17 years) by Age²

Year	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Total
2014	9,045	9,029	8,930	8,932	9,038	8,962	8,813	8,634	71,383
2015	9,110	9,107	8,999	8,943	8,915	9,021	8,954	8,840	71,889
2016	9,333	9,125	9,173	9,005	8,984	8,905	9,060	8,926	72,511
2017	9,381	9,278	9,163	9,088	9,094	8,952	8,955	9,042	72,953
2018	9,344	9,315	9,247	9,152	9,068	8,993	8,902	8,848	72,869
2019	9,138	9,396	9,363	9,313	9,154	8,981	8,986	8,834	73,165
2020	9,173	9,083	9,353	9,261	9,293	9,122	8,976	8,901	73,162

Graph 1. Youth Population in Jackson County (Ages 10 to 17 years) by Race³



³ Puzzanchera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2020). "Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2020." Available: <http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/>. Population data from 2021 and 2022 was not available at the time of this report.

Referrals and Formal Filings

This section describes dispositions of referrals and petitions and motions to modify filed by year for (1) child abuse and neglect, adoption, and termination of parental rights cases; (2) status offenses; and (3) delinquent and technical offenses. Both referrals and formal filings listed for a given year were filed in that year. (Some petitions and motions to modify filed in a given year were based on referrals filed in prior years.)

This report uses the following definitions for status and technical offenses from the Missouri Department of Public Safety and the State Juvenile Justice Advisory Group:

Status Offenses – Non-criminal violations that apply only to juveniles, including truancy, runaway, beyond parental control, and behavior injurious to self.

Technical Violations – Violations of court orders including probation violations.

Delinquent and technical offense formal filings are analyzed by race, gender, and city of youth's residence.

Child Welfare Referrals, Filings, and Open Cases

The number of child abuse and neglect referrals declined for the fifth year in a row—down 25% from last year—an indication that the drop coinciding with the start of the pandemic may not have been entirely tied to that event. The number of petitions and motions to modify for child abuse and neglect dropped as well, though not quite as sharply. For the first time since 2016, more petitions and motions to modify were filed than initial referrals.

At the request of the Missouri Supreme Court, in 2015 Jackson County Family Court began a collaboration with Casey Family Programs to improve timeliness to permanency and safely reduce the number of children in foster care. Our local initiative is focused on improving court systems for children in foster care to achieve safe, permanent homes for them. This is a multiyear project.

The clearance rate is the number of cases released from jurisdiction divided by the number of new formal filings. A number below 100% indicates more cases filed than released.

After several years of clearance rates below 100%, the rate increased in 2015 and has remained at or above 100% in nearly every year since. Hearing delays in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a clearance rate just above 100% in 2020, but the pace picked back up in the next two years. In 2022, the Court closed out 134% more cases than it received.

Table 4. Child Abuse and Neglect Referrals and Formal Filings

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Referrals	1,168	1,387	1,501	1,408	1,337	1,097	1,030	771
% change	--	+19%	+8%	-6%	-5%	-13%	-6%	-25%
Rate per 1,000 ⁴	7.1	8.4	9.1	8.5	8.1	7.0	6.3	4.7

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Open Cases December 31	2,072	2,020	2,019	2,056	1,888	1,891	1,727	1,507
New Cases	822	983	991	1,034	845	794	707	608
Releases	1,112	1,031	994	1,001	1,094	802	912	812
Clearance Rate	135%	105%	100%	97%	129%	101%	129%	134%

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Petitions and Mot to Modify	1,298	1,423	1,277	1,304	1,228	983	976	787
% change	--	+10%	-10%	+2%	-6%	-20%	-1%	-19%

Table 5. Adoption and Termination of Parental Rights Formal Filings

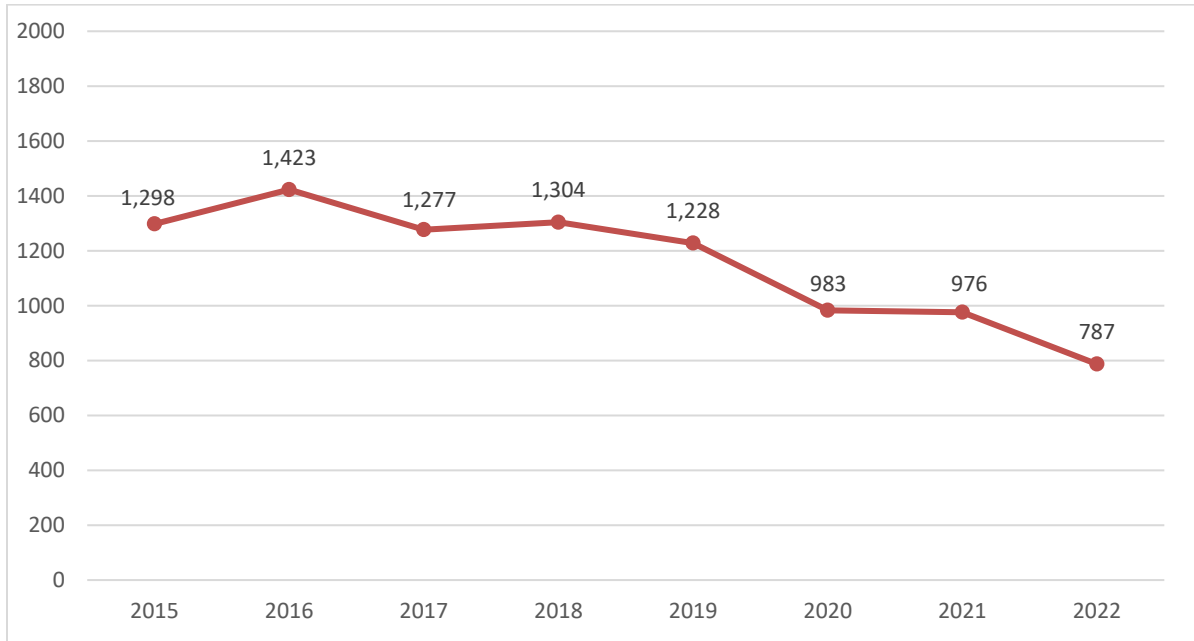
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
New Adoption Cases ⁵	290	294	299	348	335	257	256	241
New Termination of Parental Rights Cases	135	449 ⁶	368	335	310	210	113	127

⁴ Rates were calculated based on the number of children in Jackson County from birth to age 17.

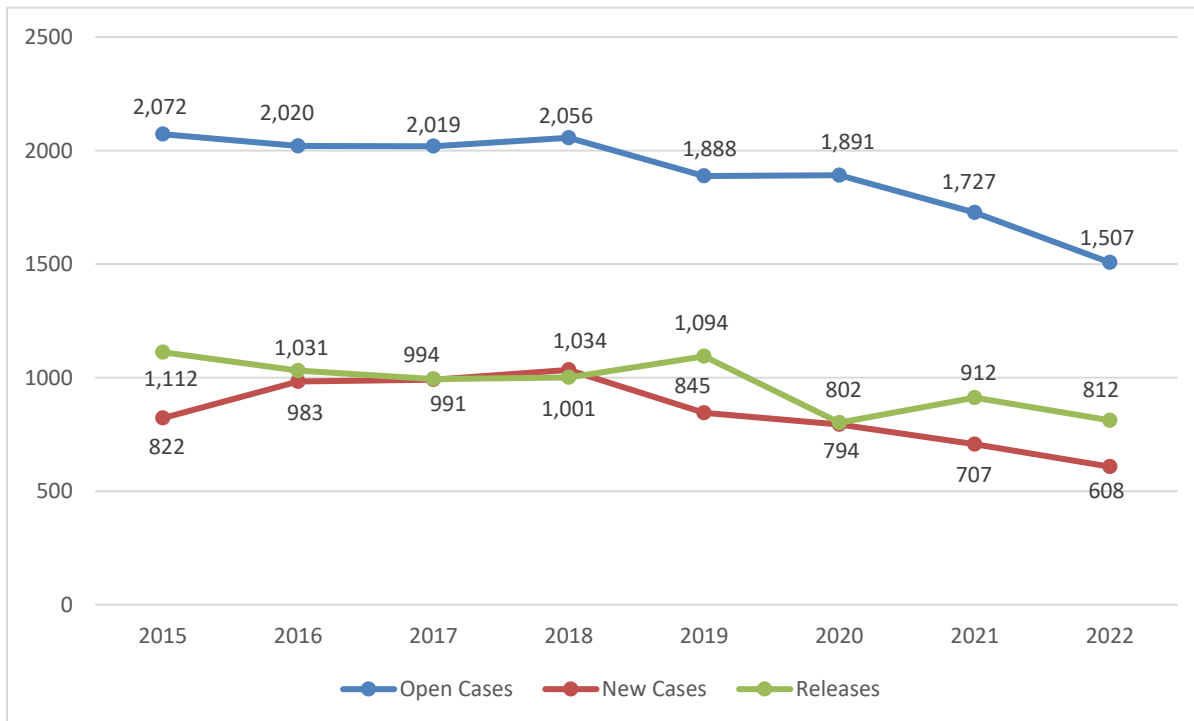
⁵ This table reports regular adoption cases and does not include stepchild or adult adoptions.

⁶ In Fall 2015, the Juvenile Officer identified a number of cases with a goal of TPR lacking a petition for termination. A special work plan was constructed, and these cases were filed in 2016, resulting in an unusually high number of TPR petitions filed.

Graph 2. Child Abuse and Neglect Formal Filings by Year



Graph 3. Child Abuse and Neglect New Cases, Releases, and Number of Open Cases on December 31



Graph 4. Clearance Rates in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases

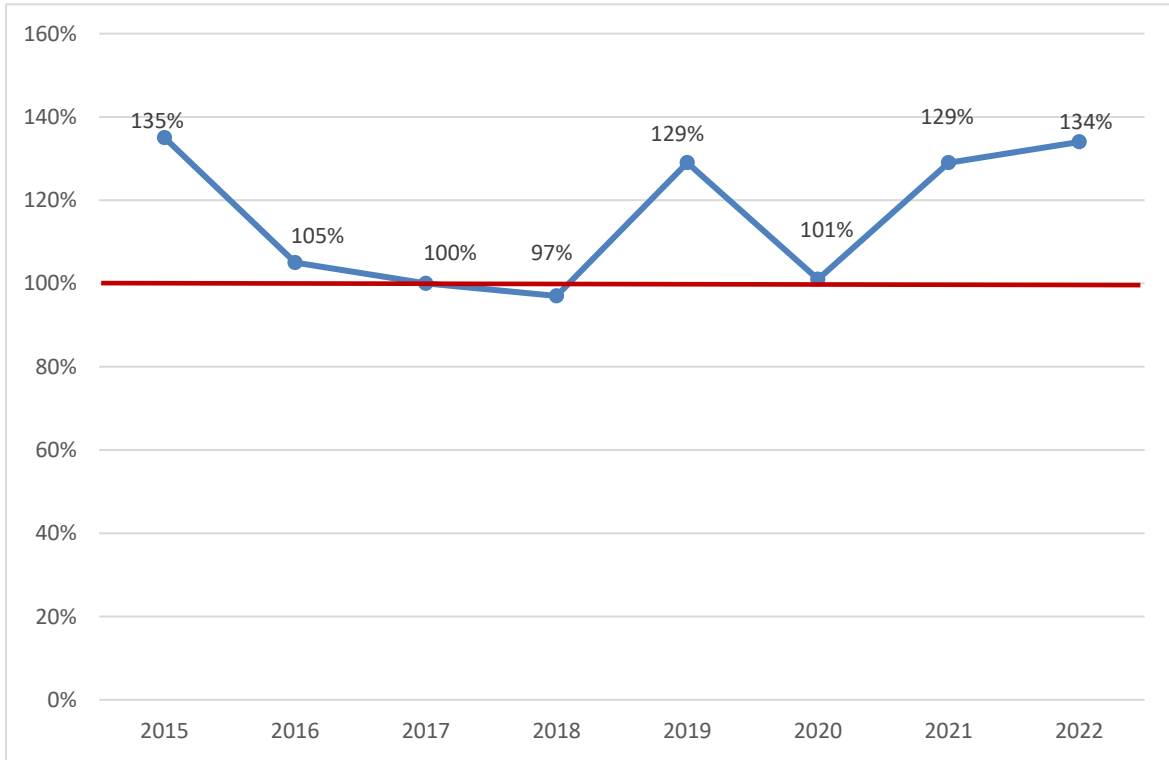
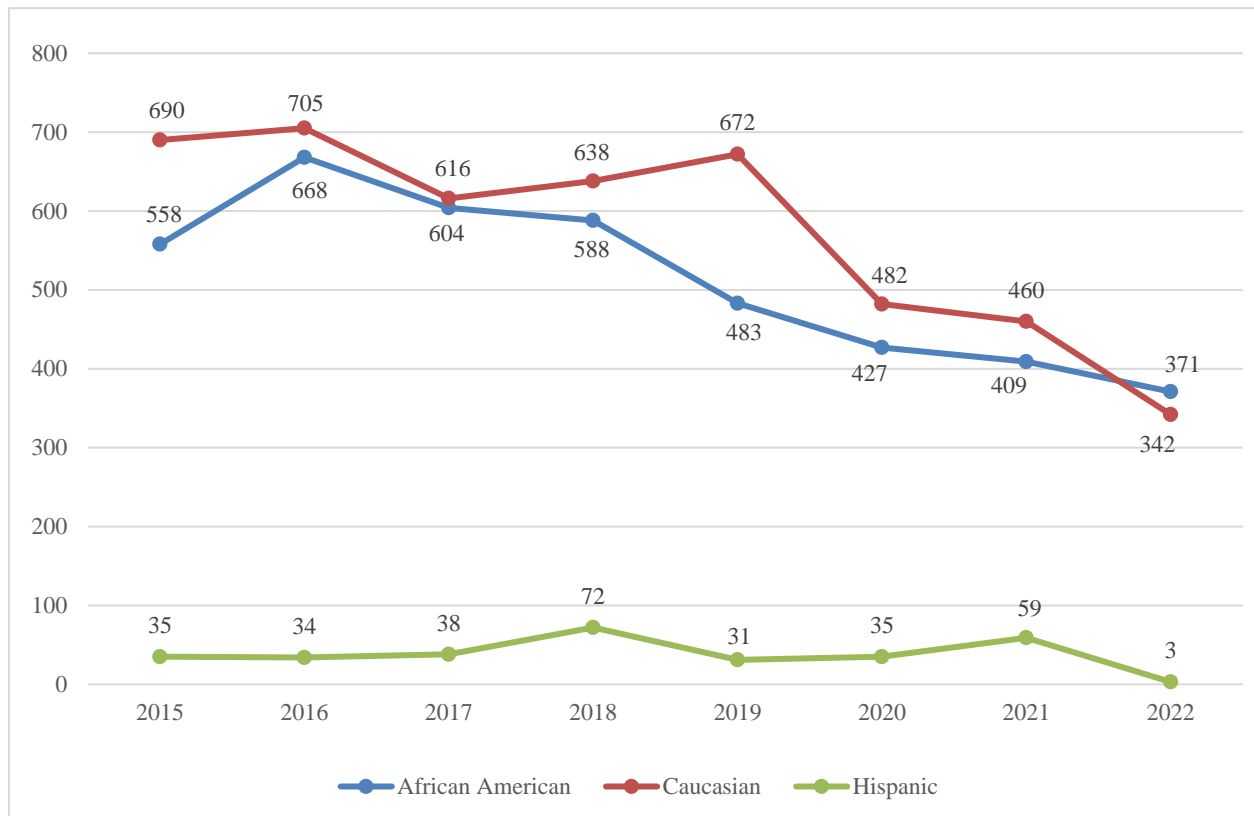


Table 6 and Graph 5
Child Abuse and Neglect Formal Filings by Race

Year	African American		Caucasian		Hispanic		Other		Unknown/ Missing	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2015 ⁷	558	43%	690	53%	35	3%	15	1%	2	<1%
2016 ⁸	668	47%	705	50%	34	2%	13	1%	3	<1%
2017 ⁹	604	47%	616	48%	38	3%	19	1%	0	0%
2018 ¹⁰	588	45%	638	48%	72	5%	17	1%	1	<1%
2019 ¹¹	483	39%	672	55%	31	3%	9	1%	33	3%
2020 ¹²	427	43%	482	49%	35	4%	4	<1%	35	4%
2021 ¹³	409	42%	460	47%	59	6%	20	2%	28	3%
2022 ¹⁴	371	47%	342	43%	63	8%	3	<1%	8	1%



⁸ Race was unknown for 3 cases in 2016. Twenty-six youth included in the African American category identified as biracial.

⁹ Twenty-five youth included in the African American category in 2017 identified as biracial.

¹⁰ Race was unknown for 1 case in 2018. Twenty-nine youth included in the African American category identified as biracial.

¹¹ Race was unknown for 33 cases in 2019. Ten youth included in the African American category identified as biracial.

¹² Race was unknown for 35 cases in 2020. Twelve youth included in the African American category identified as biracial.

¹³ Race was unknown for 28 cases in 2021. Four youth included in the African American category identified as biracial, including one youth who was African American and Hispanic. Five youth included in the Other category identified as biracial with race of the parents unknown.

¹⁴ Race was unknown for 8 cases in 2022. Two youth included in the African American category identified as biracial.

Table 7 and Graph 6
Child Abuse and Neglect Formal Filings by Gender

Year	Males		Females	
	N	%	N	%
2015	660	51%	640	49%
2016	706	50%	717	50%
2017	599	47%	678	53%
2018	670	51%	647	49%
2019	609	50%	619	50%
2020	500	51%	483	49%
2021	476	49%	500	51%
2022	419	49%	367	51%

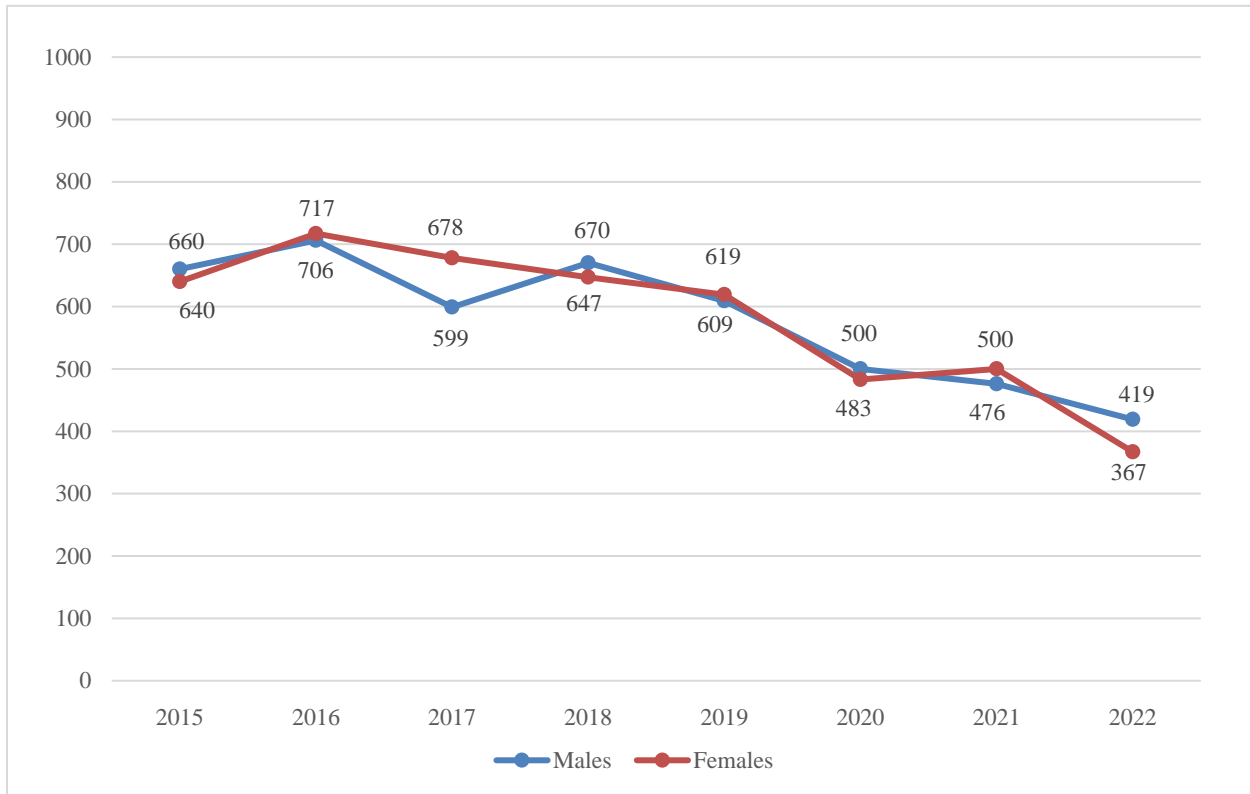
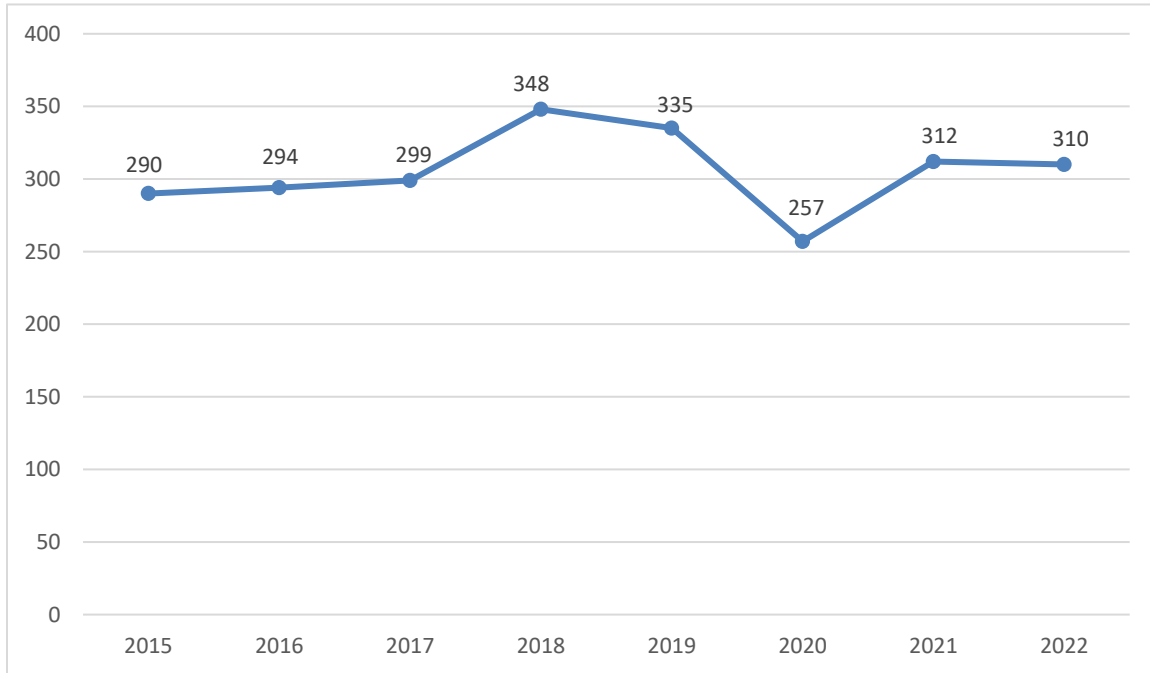


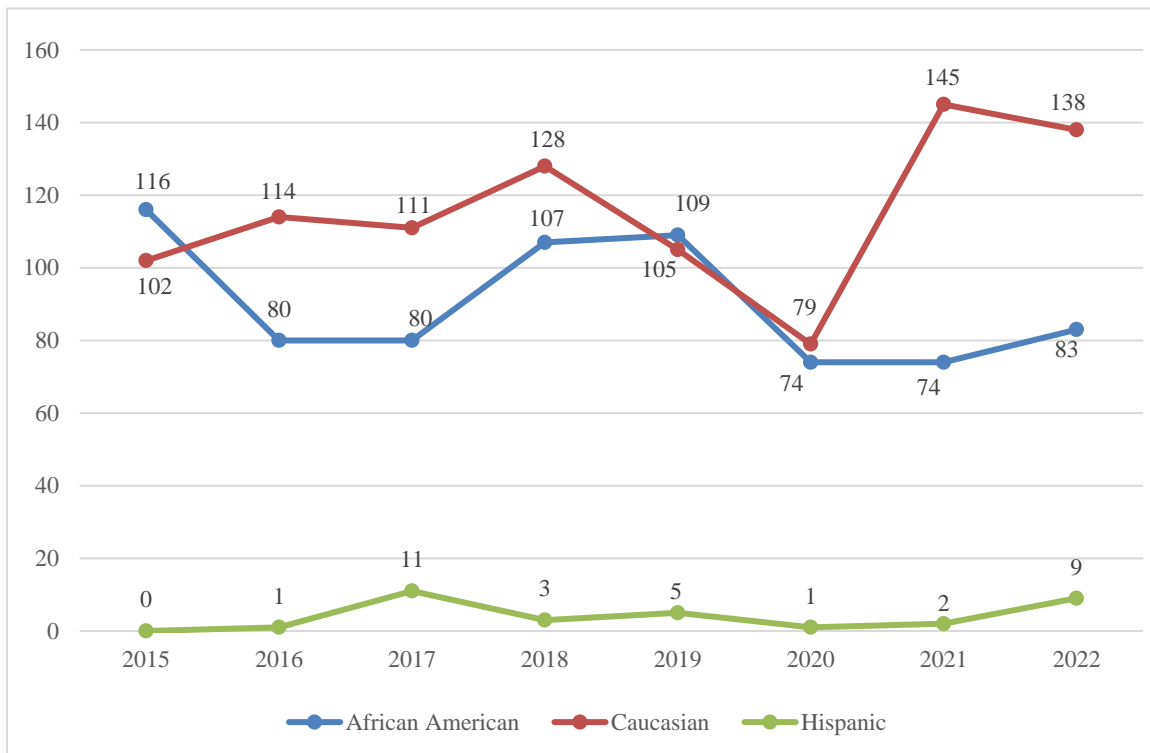
Table 8. Issues Identified in Child Abuse and Neglect Petitions

Issue	2007		2022	
	N	%	N	%
Physical Abuse	161	21%	154	25%
Sexual Abuse	85	11%	16	6%
Neglect (unsafe situation)	392	50%	97	22%
Neglect (living conditions)	174	22%	48	11%
Neglect (abandonment)	64	8%	97	20%
Neglect (CAN cases for siblings)	87	11%	133	18%
Neglect (w/o proper supervision)	103	13%	147	17%
Neglect (medical)	110	14%	56	10%
Neglect (educational)	49	6%	27	5%
Substance Abuse	370	48%	262	55%
Criminal Activity	154	20%	134	23%
Domestic Violence	149	19%	81	21%
Mental Health	127	16%	113	20%
Child Born Drug Exposed	122	16%	81	16%
Homelessness	41	5%	83	11%
Age of Parent	9	1%	4	0%
Cognitive Impairment	4	1%	6	1%
Other	4	1%	33	3%
Total Cases	777		607	
Avg. Issues Identified	2.8		2.6	

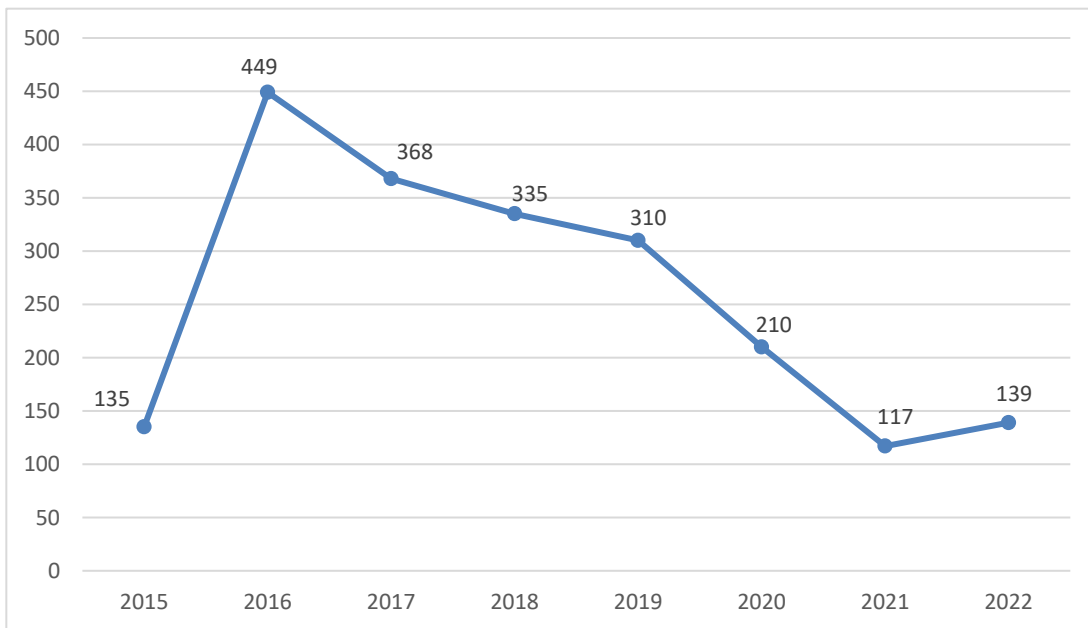
Graph 7. Adoption Cases Filed by Year



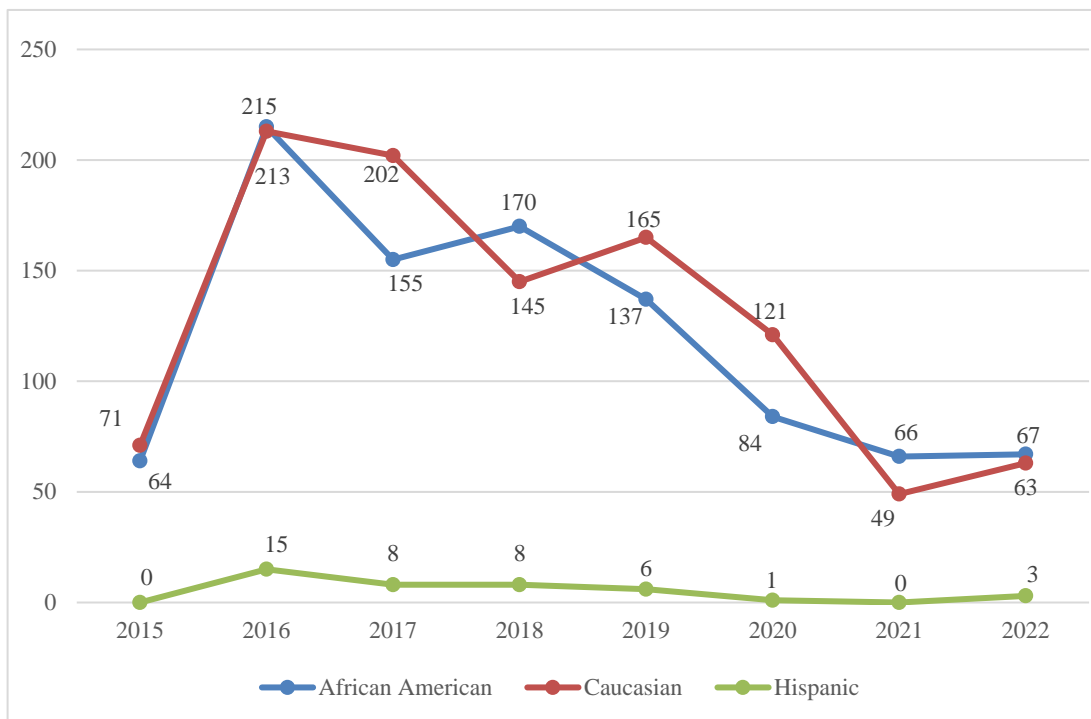
Graph 8. Adoption Cases Filed by Race



Graph 9. Termination of Parental Rights Cases Filed by Year¹⁵



Graph 10. Termination of Parental Rights Cases Filed by Race¹⁶



¹⁵ In Fall 2015, the Juvenile Officer identified a number of cases with a goal of TPR lacking a petition for termination. A special work plan was constructed, and these cases were filed in 2016, resulting in an unusually high number of TPR petitions filed.

¹⁶ Race was unknown for 7 youth in 2014, 1 youth in 2017, 3 youth in 2018, and 3 youth in 2020.

Status Offense Referrals and Filings

The number of status offense referrals was just slightly above average for the past 8 years, but the rate of formal filing was far higher. In 2021, the Court filed formal petitions on just 5% of status referrals, but in 2022, the rate shot up to 27%. This rate is somewhat misleading, as about half of the filings were motions to modify alleging delinquent or technical violations. However, since the original petition was for a status offense, the case shows up here as a status offense case. Aside from the nine filings in this situation, an additional six petitions were filed on status offenses where the youth was found in possession of a firearm.

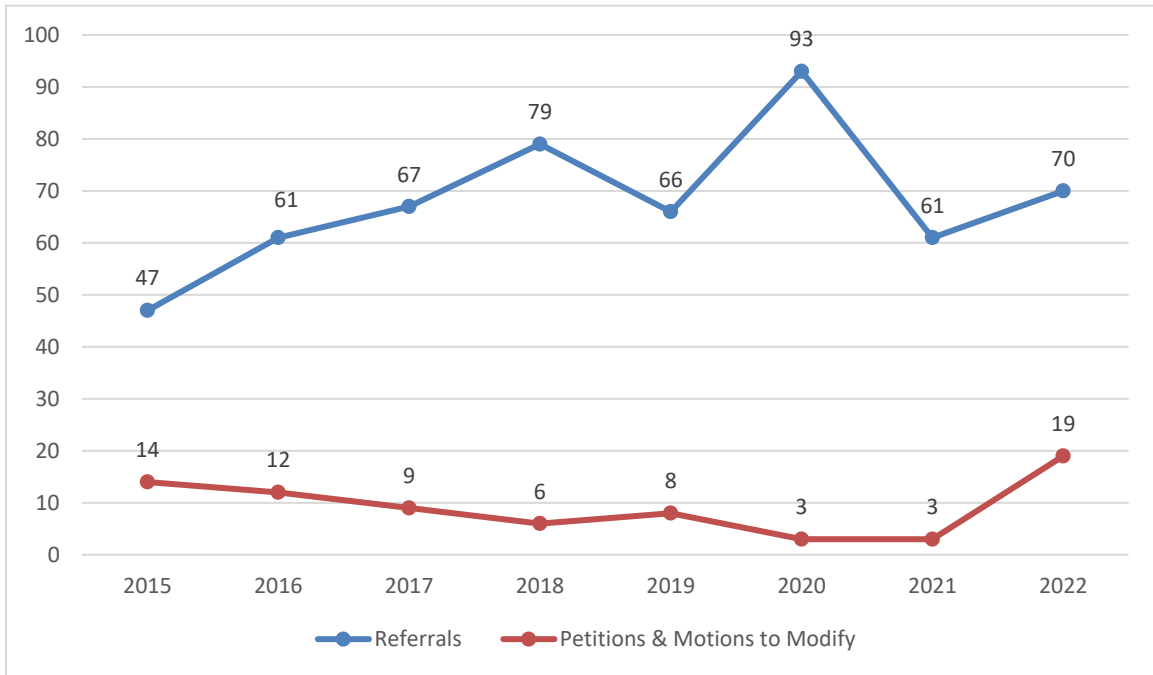
Table 9. Status Offense Referrals and Formal Filings

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Referrals	47	61	67	79	66	93	61	70
% change	--	+30%	+10%	+18%	-16%	+41%	-34%	+15%
Rate per 1,000 ¹⁷	0.7	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	1.3	0.8	1.0

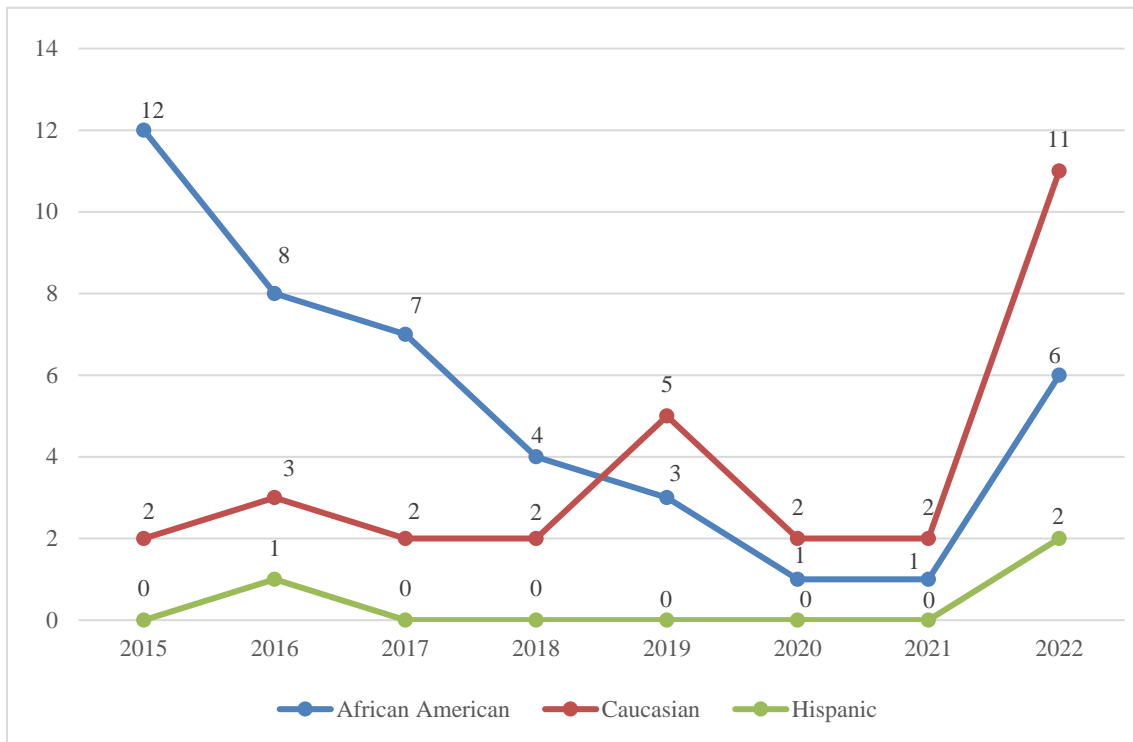
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Petitions and Mot to Modify	14	12	9	6	8	3	3	19
% change	--	-14%	-25%	-33%	+33%	-63%	+0%	+533%

¹⁷ Rates were calculated based on the number of youth in Jackson County aged 10-17 years.

Graph 11. Status Offense Referrals and Formal Filings by Year



Graph 12. Status Offense Formal Filings by Race



Delinquent and Technical Offense Referrals, Filings, and Open Cases

After dropping significantly during the pandemic, delinquent and technical referrals and formal filings have returned to right around pre-pandemic levels. The number of petitions and motions to modify filed in 2022 matched 2019 exactly. The number of referrals filed in 2022 was slightly higher than 2019, indicating a somewhat lower rate of formal filing on referrals.

In the context of the past eight years, delinquent and technical filings are still low. Since 2015, the rate of referral to the Court has dropped from about 20 referrals per 1,000 Jackson County youth to about 16 referrals per 1,000 youth—a decrease of about 20%.

Table 10. Delinquent and Technical Referrals and Formal Filings

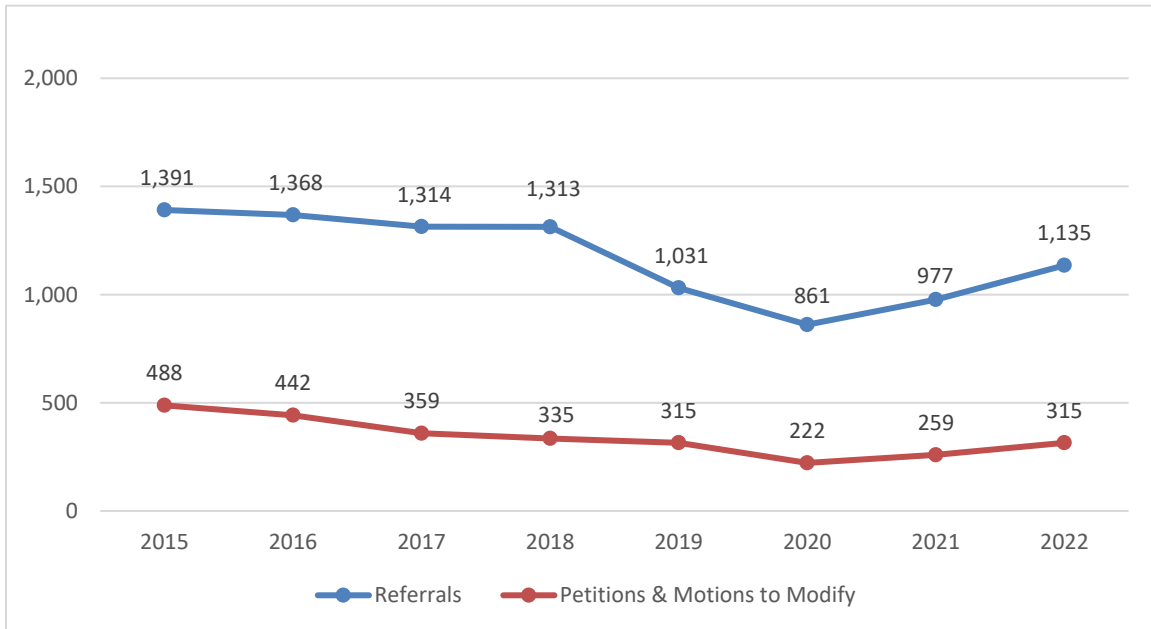
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Referrals	1,391	1,368	1,314	1,313	1,031	861	977	1,135
% change	--	-2%	-4%	0%	-21%	-17%	+13%	+16%
Rate per 1,000 ¹⁸	19.6	19.1	18.1	18.0	14.1	11.7	13.4	15.5

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Open Cases December 31	292	261	224	184	189	154	155	215
New Cases	284	258	231	221	161	133	170	215
Releases	297	294	267	262	186	166	183	156
Clearance Rate	105%	114%	116%	119%	116%	125%	108%	73%

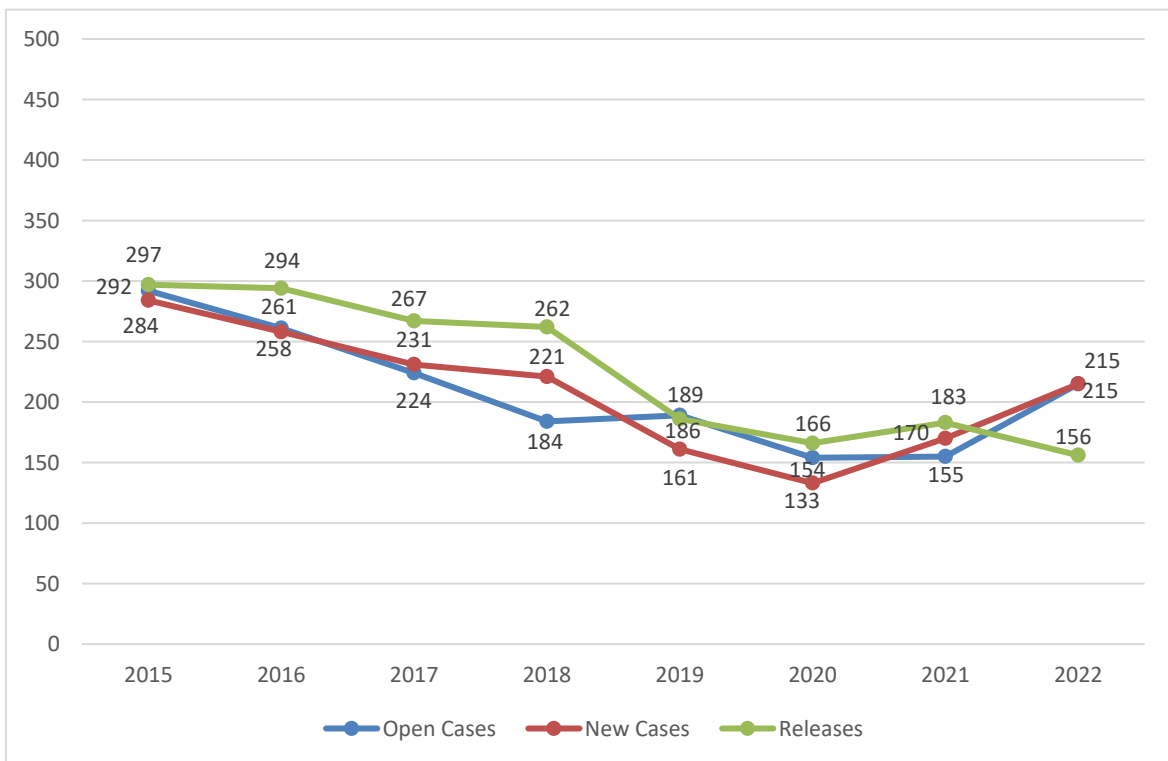
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Petitions and Mot to Modify	488	442	359	335	315	222	259	315
% change	--	-9%	-19%	-7%	-6%	-30%	+17%	+22%

¹⁸ Rates were calculated based on the number of youth in Jackson County aged 10-17 years.

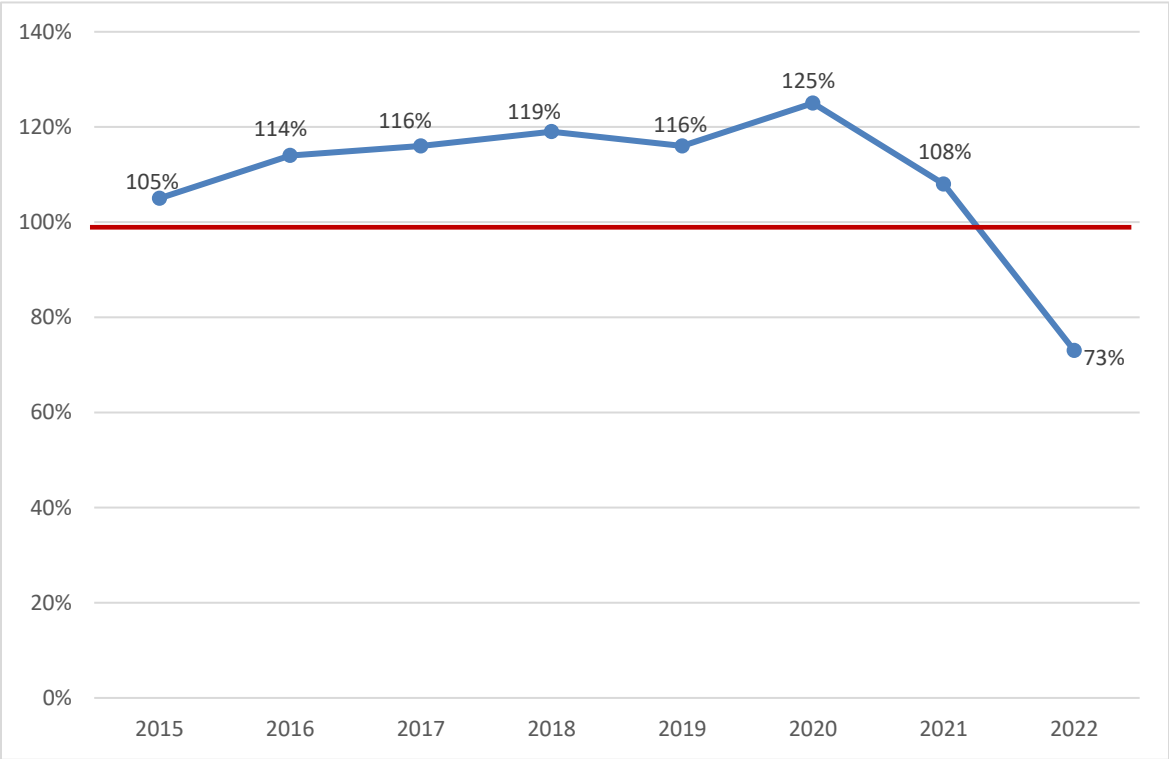
Graph 13. Delinquent and Technical Referrals and Formal Filings by Year



Graph 14. Delinquent and Technical New Cases, Releases and Number of Open Cases on December 31



Graph 15. Clearance Rates for Delinquent and Technical Cases



Delinquent and Technical Offense Filings by Race, Gender, Age, and City of Residence

This section examines delinquent and technical filings by race, gender, age, and the areas of Jackson County where youth charged with these offenses reside. As filings have declined, the distribution of filings by demographic characteristics and geography have remained fairly consistent but changed slightly over the past eight years.

Seventy percent of the filings for delinquent and technical offenses in 2022 were for African American youth. This percentage has seen a general downward trend in recent years from 74% in 2016. Just over a quarter of filings in 2022 were for Caucasian youth, and 4% were for Hispanic youth. African American youth make up about 31% of the youth population in Jackson County, so the 70% filing rate is highly disproportionate to the population. Family Court Services is actively examining racial equity issues in its juvenile justice processes and programs.

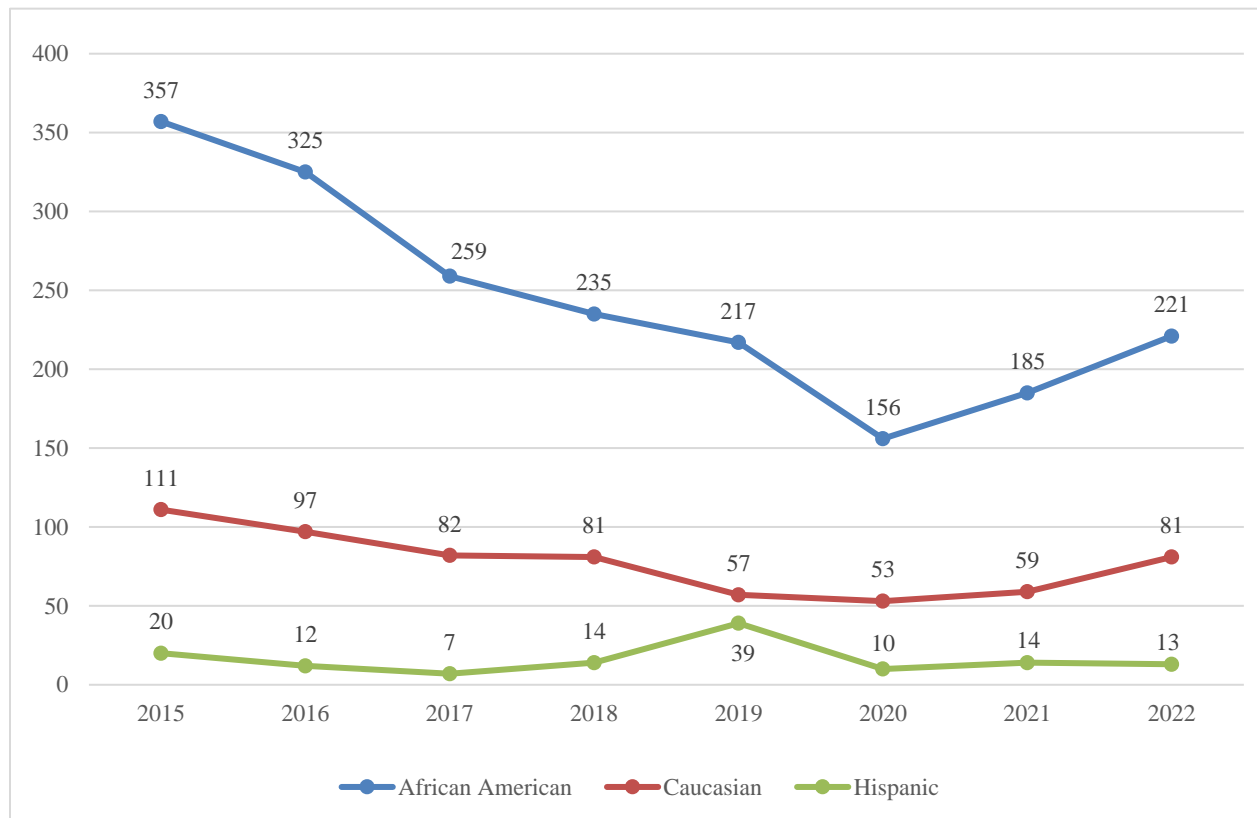
The percentage of filings for males has fluctuated around 83% for the last eight years and was right at this average rate in 2022.

The age breakdown of youth charged with delinquent and technical offenses changed significantly with the 2021 Missouri law raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction to 18. Petitions for youth ages 17 and older made up 10% of petitions filed in 2020 but 27% of petitions filed in 2022.

Filings for youth residing in Kansas City consistently made up around 64% of filings each year from 2015 and 2019, but this share dropped to 57% in 2020 and to 52% in 2022. The lower share of youth from Kansas City was accompanied by an increase in filings for youth from Grandview and Lee's Summit.

Table 11 and Graph 16
Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings by Race

Year	African American		Caucasian		Hispanic		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2015	357	73%	111	23%	20	4%	0	--
2016 ¹⁹	325	74%	97	22%	12	3%	6	1%
2017 ²⁰	259	72%	82	24%	7	2%	3	<1%
2018 ²¹	235	72%	81	24%	14	4%	1	<1%
2019	217	69%	57	18%	39	12%	3	1%
2020 ²²	156	70%	53	24%	10	5%	2	1%
2021	185	71%	59	23%	14	5%	1	1%
2022	221	70%	81	26%	13	4%	0	--



¹⁹ Race was unknown for 2 cases in 2016.

²⁰ Race was unknown for 8 cases in 2017.

²¹ Race was unknown for 4 cases in 2018.

²² Race was unknown for 1 case in 2020.

Table 12 and Graph 17
Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings by Gender

Year	Males		Females	
	N	%	N	%
2015	412	84%	76	16%
2016	369	83%	73	17%
2017	281	78%	78	22%
2018	275	82%	60	18%
2019	258	82%	57	18%
2020	189	85%	33	15%
2021	214	83%	45	17%
2022	263	83%	52	17%

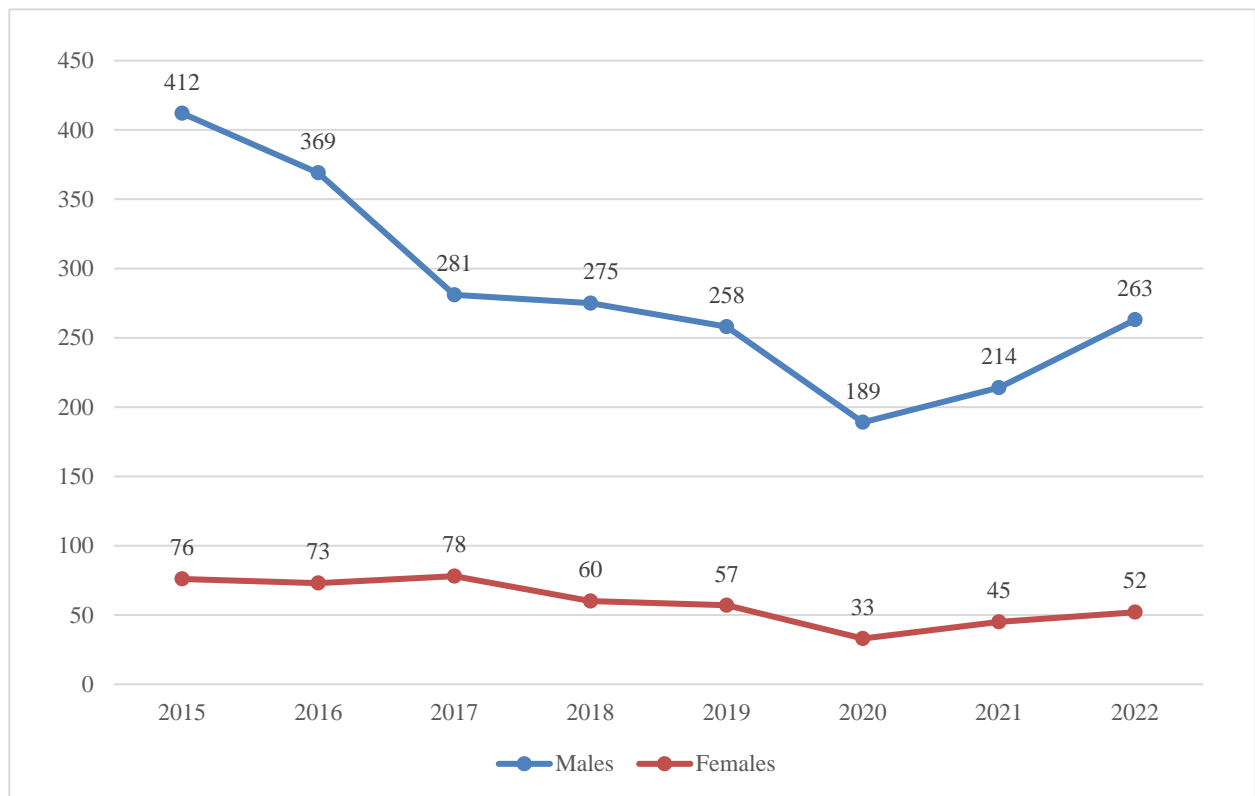
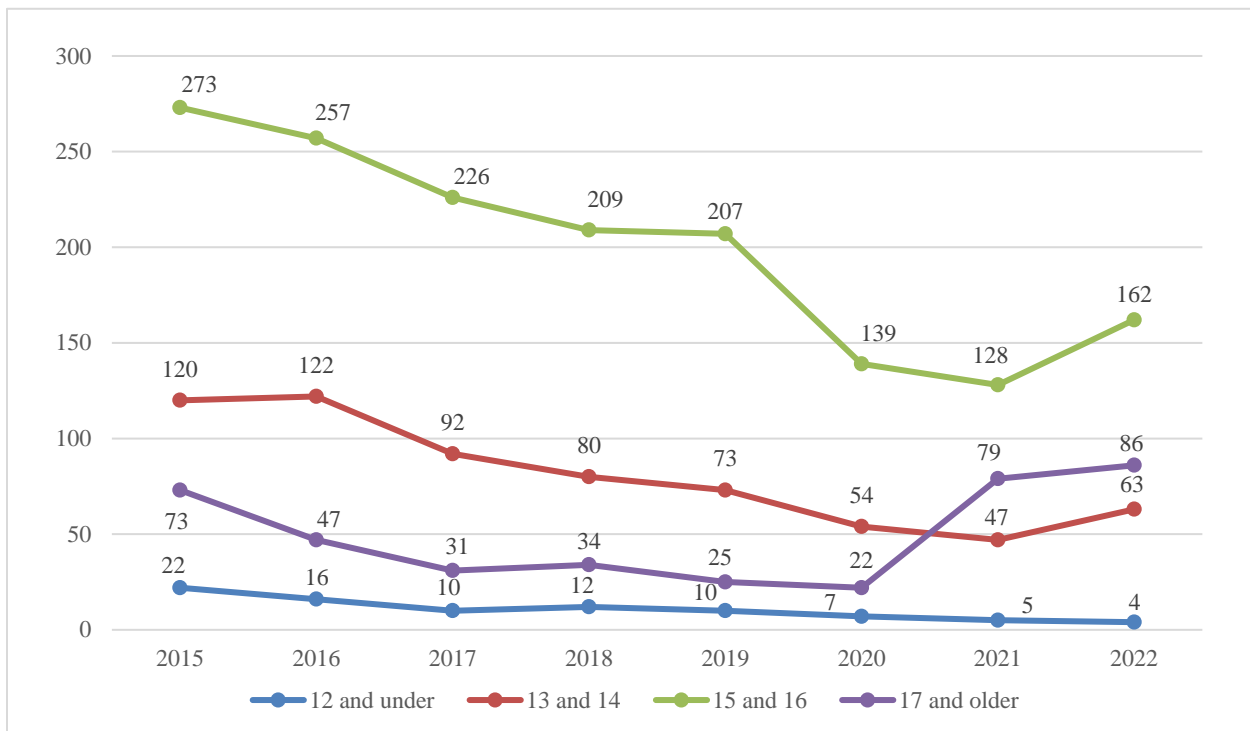


Table 13 and Graph 18
Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings by Age at Filing

	≤11	12	13	14	15	16	17 ²³	≥18
2015	1 <1%	21 4%	36 7%	84 17%	112 23%	161 33%	41 8%	32 7%
2016	5 1%	11 2%	40 9%	82 19%	118 27%	139 31%	31 7%	16 4%
2017	2 1%	8 2%	28 8%	64 18%	115 32%	111 31%	28 8%	3 1%
2018	2 1%	10 3%	29 9%	51 15%	84 25%	125 37%	24 7%	10 3%
2019	2 1%	8 3%	22 7%	51 16%	80 25%	127 40%	24 8%	1 <1%
2020	0 0%	7 3%	19 9%	35 16%	53 24%	86 39%	21 9%	1 1%
2021	1 <1%	4 2%	15 6%	32 12%	66 25%	62 24%	53 20%	26 10%
2022	0 0%	4 1%	16 5%	47 15%	87 28%	75 24%	81 26%	5 2%



²³ Prior to 2021, filings for youth 17 and older were for offenses that took place when the youth was under age 17. Starting in 2021, the age of juvenile court jurisdiction was raised to 17, so filings for 17-year-olds includes offenses that took place when the youth was age 17.

Table 14. Youth with Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings by City of Residence

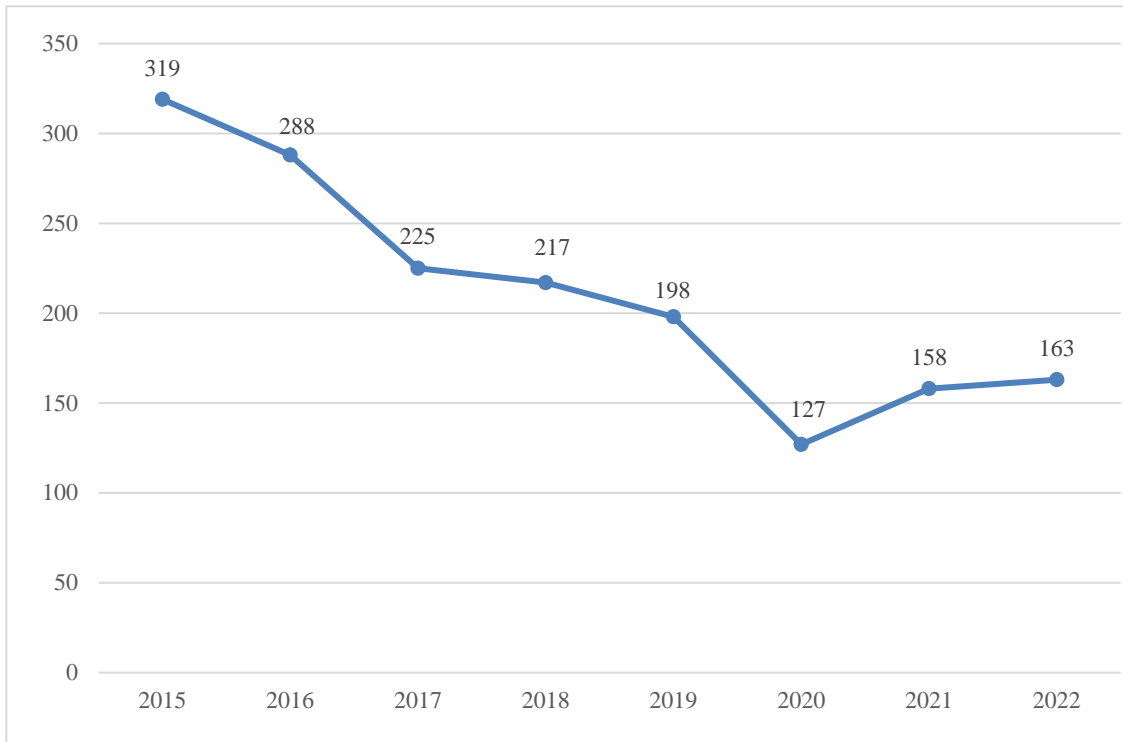
City	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Blue Springs	20 4%	17 4%	11 3%	17 5%	10 4%	16 7%	13 5%	20 6%
Grain Valley	4 <1%	5 1%	7 2%	2 1%	4 1%	2 1%	3 1%	9 3%
Grandview	15 3%	17 4%	20 5%	8 2%	8 4%	13 6%	6 2%	21 7%
Greenwood	0	0	2 <1%	2 1%	3 3%	1 1%	1 <1%	1 <1%
Independence	43 9%	46 10%	35 10%	31 9%	34 12%	33 15%	33 13%	38 12%
Kansas City	319 65%	288 65%	225 63%	217 65%	198 63%	127 57%	158 61%	163 52%
Lee's Summit	27 6%	25 6%	20 6%	11 3%	15 3%	12 5%	11 4%	25 8%
Oak Grove	7 1%	1 <1%	1 <1%	3 1%	0	1 1%	0	0
Raytown	13 3%	9 2%	12 3%	10 3%	10 2%	4 2%	7 3%	9 3%
Sugar Creek	2 <1%	1 <1%	0	0	1 <1%	0	1 <1%	1 <1%
Other	33 7%	20 4%	22 6%	25 7%	29 9%	11 5%	19 7%	23 7%
Unknown	5 1%	13 3%	4 1%	9 3%	3 <1%	2 1%	7 3%	5 2%
Total	488	442	359	335	315	222	259	315

Table 15. Rate of Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings per 1,000 Youth in 2022 by City

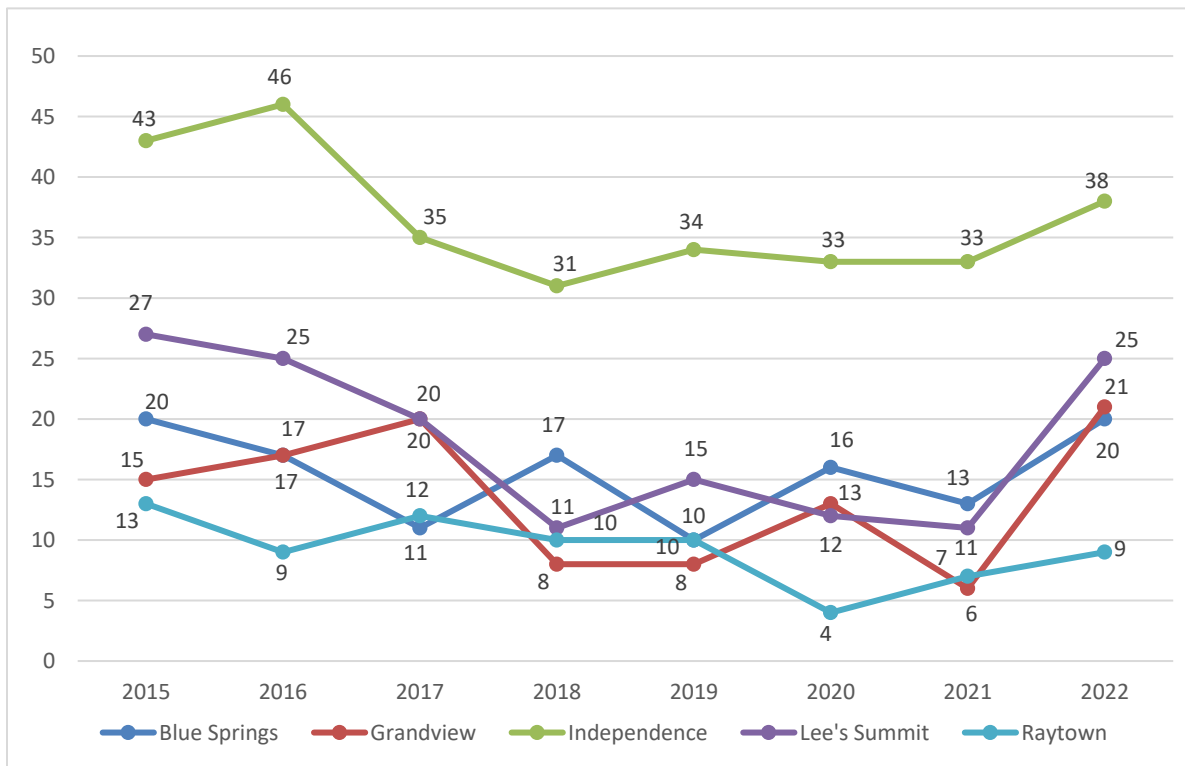
City	Number of Youth Ages 10-17 ²⁴	Rate of Filings per 1,000 Youth Ages 10-17
Blue Springs	7,104	2.8
Grandview	2,812	7.5
Independence	12,499	3.0
Kansas City	50,747	3.2
Lee's Summit	14,534	1.7
Raytown	3,456	2.6

²⁴ Number of youth in each city comes from the 2021 American Community Survey "Age and Sex" charts for individual cities available on United States Census Bureau website: <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table>.

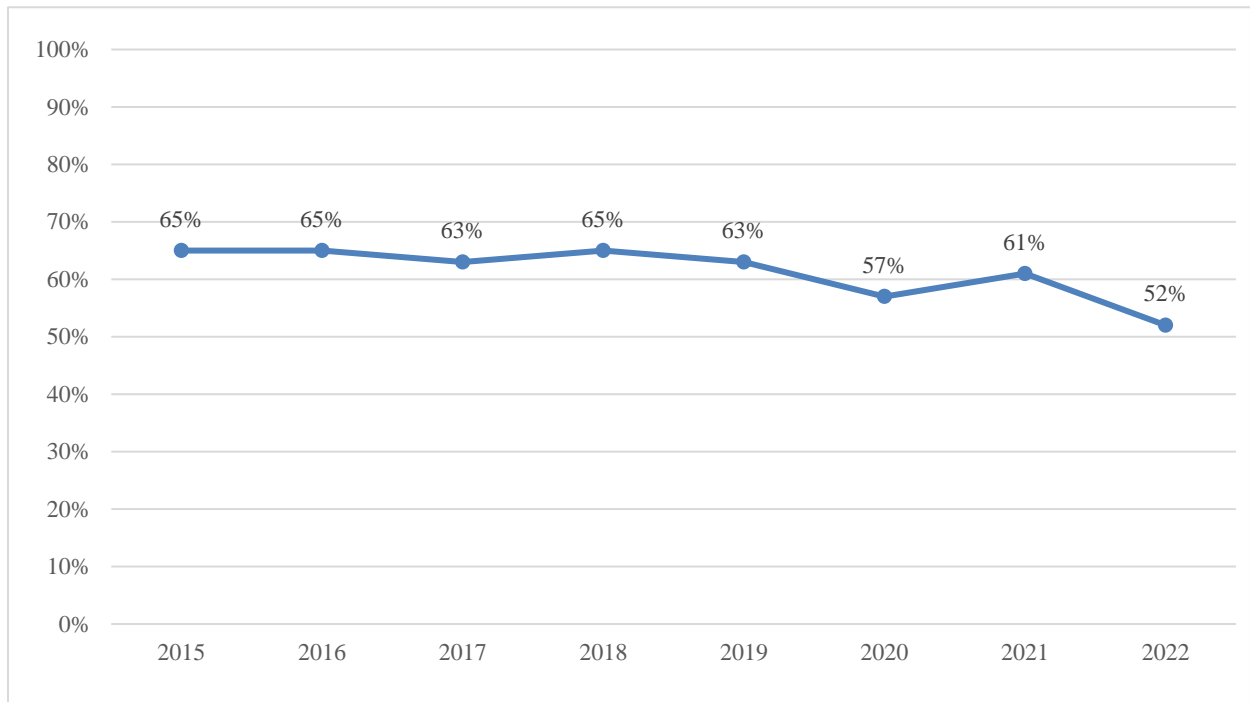
Graph 19. Youth Residing in Kansas City, Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings



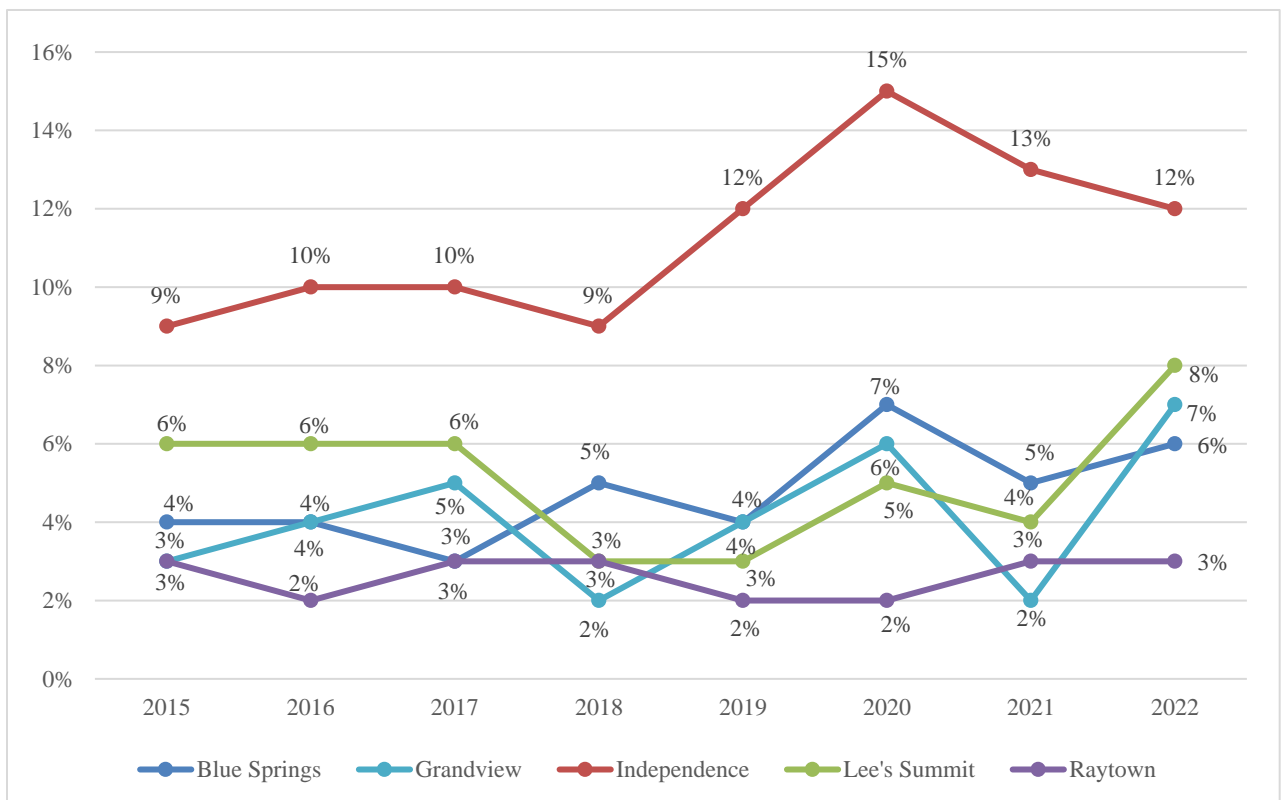
Graph 20. Youth Residing in Other Cities, Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings



Graph 21. Youth Residing in Kansas City with Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings as Percentages of All Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings



Graph 22. Youth Residing in Other Cities with Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings as Percentages of All Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings



Disposition and Intervention Services

This report section describes the youth served by Family Court Services programs, youth considered for certification, and youth committed to the Division of Youth Services (DYS).

Family Court Services offers a broad range of prevention, intervention, and treatment programs and services to youth in Jackson County. This includes programming for delinquent youth, including:

- Detainment (secure and non-secure)
- Prevention and Diversion Services
- Probation Services
- Residential Treatment

In addition to its delinquency programming, Family Court Services offers interventions for youth and families with child abuse and neglect cases, families who are affected by divorce and separation, and victims of offenses by juveniles. These include:

- Family Treatment Court
- Child Protection & Permanency Unit
- Emerging Adult Justice Unit
- Parent Awareness Courses
- Supervised Visitation and Monitored Exchanges
- Victim Services

Family Court Services – Delinquency

This section covers disposition and intervention services provided by the Family Court for youth who are adjudicated as well as those diverted from prosecution.

Detainment (Secure & Non-Secure). After dropping steadily each year between 2015 and 2020, the number of youth detained in secure detention rose significantly in 2021 and again in 2022, virtually matching the number of youth detained in 2016. The number of youth detained in non-secure detention has also risen again somewhat from the low point in 2020 but remains well below the numbers detained in 2015 and 2016.

Prevention & Diversion. In 2022, the Juvenile Assessment Center served nearly 150 youth and their families through three channels (prevention, diversion, and care calls). The Emerging Adult Justice Unit, which started in 2021 to serve youth who were 17 years old at the time of their alleged offense, served an additional 107 youth in 2022. In total, the Court served 269 youth on diversion, just a bit under the number served in 2019.

Probation & Residential Treatment. The number of youth ordered to Field Services supervision and committed to Hilltop Residential Center exactly matched pre-pandemic (2019) levels in 2022 after being exceptionally low in 2020 and 2021. The number of youth on probation is still more than 40% lower than it was in 2015, and the number of youth committed to Hilltop is 25% lower.

Table 16. Detainments in Secure Detention

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Detention	354	299	289	251	211	140	210	302
% change	--	-16%	-3%	-13%	-16%	-34%	+50%	+44%
<i>Avg. Daily Population</i>	19	23	23	23	18	14	17	22

Graphs 23-25. Youth Admitted to Detention

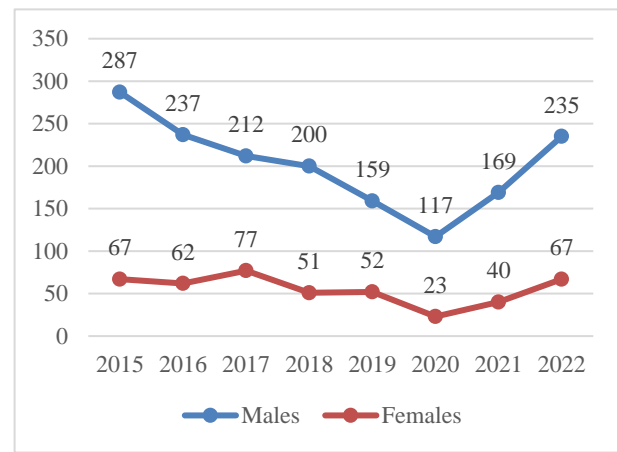
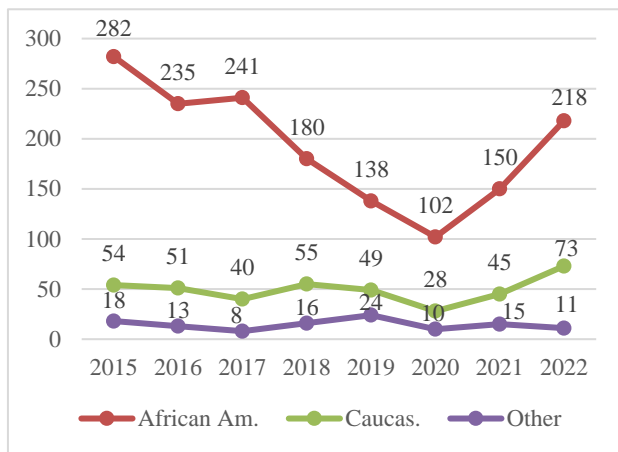
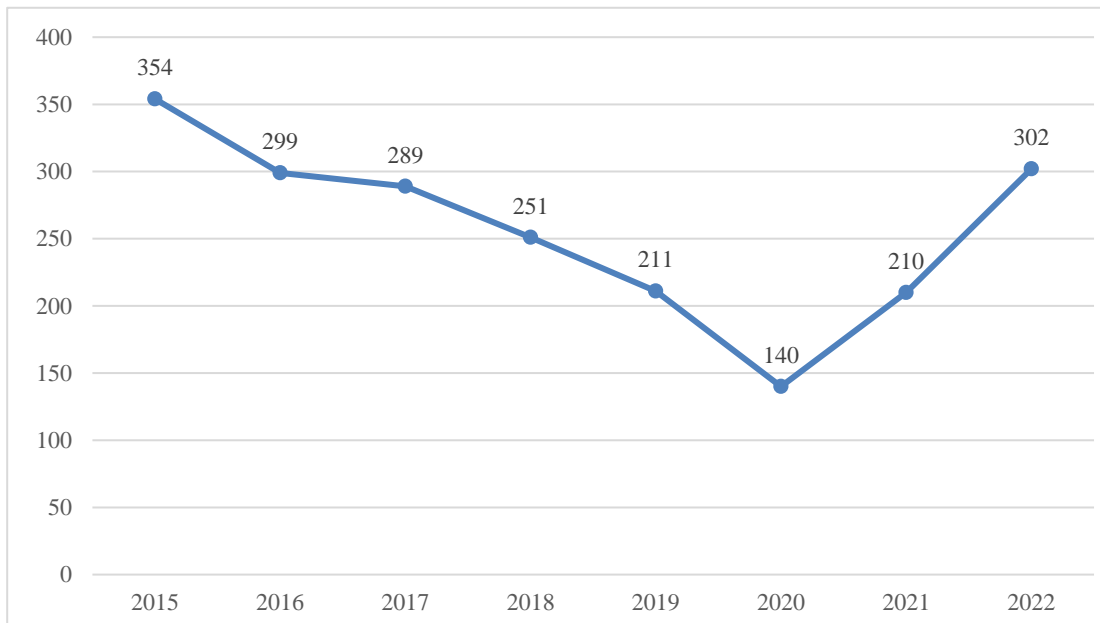
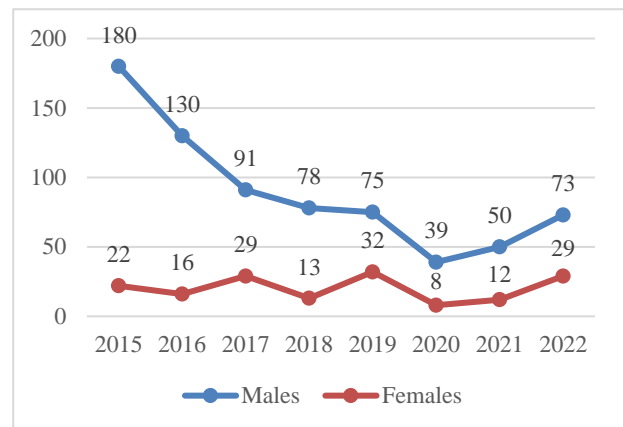
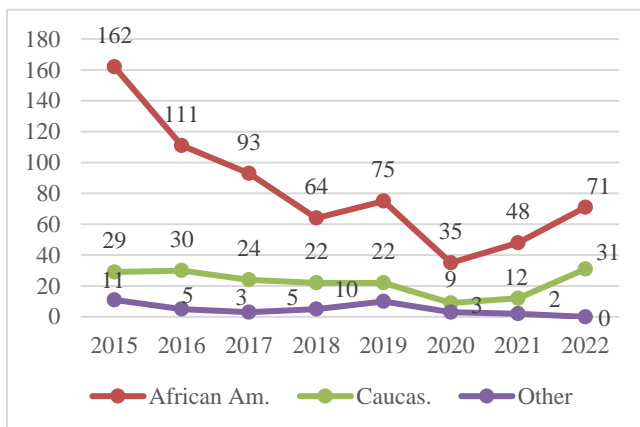
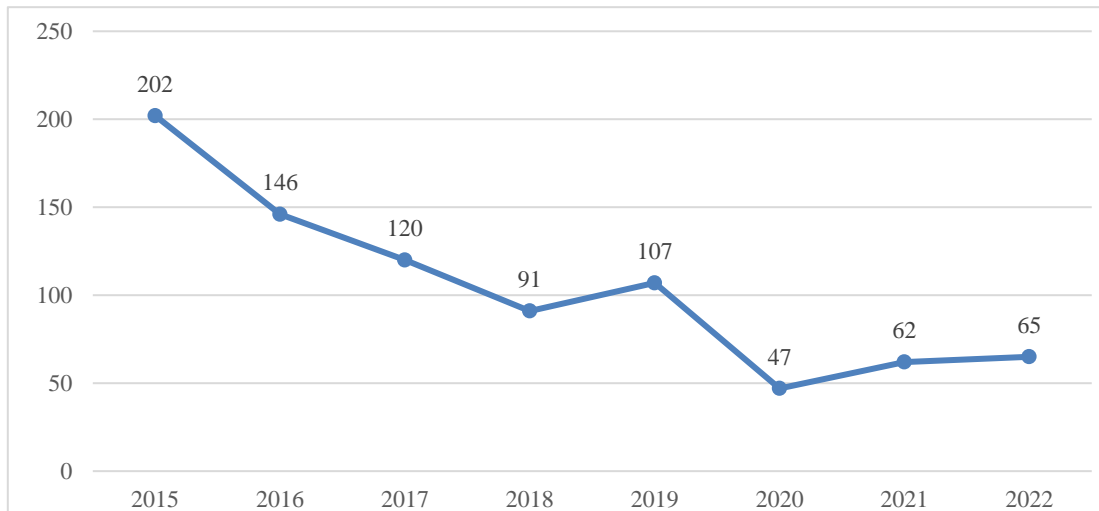


Table 17 and Graphs 28-28
Detainments in Non-Secure Detention Facilities

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Jackson House	83	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Community Reintegration Group Home ²⁵	84	116	61	14	--	--	--	--
Hilltop Residential Center	35	30	59	77	107	47	62	102
Total	202	146	120	91	107	47	62	102
% change	+9%	-28%	-18%	-24%	+18%	-56%	+32%	+65%



²⁵ The Community Reintegration Group Home (CRGH) began housing Jackson House youth in 2015 as a temporary measure due to staffing shortages in Detention. CRGH closed on March 13, 2018; staff and residents were relocated to Hilltop.

Table 18. Prevention and Diversion Programs

Program	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
ASSP (Alternative to School Suspension) ²⁶	50a/ 80y	18a/ 29y	--	--	--	--	--	--
Juvenile Assessment Center – Diversion Program ²⁷	112	94	65	40	34	29	34	14
Juvenile Assessment Center – Prevention ²⁸	--	--	--	--	22 ²⁹	42 ³⁰	73 ³¹	67 ³²
Juvenile Assessment Center – Care Calls ³³	181	164	153	199	202	55	84 ³⁴	79
Shoplifting Diversion	34	66	58	10	27	18	0	2
Success Court ³⁵	222	116	146	29	--	--	--	--
Emerging Adult Justice Unit ³⁶	--	--	--	--	--	--	40	107
Total	629	469	422	278	285	144	231	269
% change	--	-25%	-10%	-34%	+3%	-49%	+60%	+16%

²⁶ The row for ASSP reports the number of youth (y) impacted by the services provided to adults (a) by way of this program. Only the number of youth (not the number of adults) is included in the total number for the column. The ASSP program has not been in operation since 2016.

²⁷ The Juvenile Assessment Center Diversion Program previously operated as the Juvenile Diversion Court. It became a function of the Juvenile Assessment Center in September 2019.

²⁸ The Juvenile Assessment Center began accepting cases on September 15, 2019.

²⁹ In 2019, the JAC received 12 referrals from the Warrant Desk, 9 walk-ins, and 1 referral from law enforcement.

³⁰ In 2020, the JAC received 33 referrals from the Warrant Desk, 2 walk-ins, 1 referral from law enforcement, and 6 referrals from the Case Assessment Unit.

³¹ In 2021, the JAC received 45 referrals from the Warrant Desk, 10 referrals from law enforcement and 2 referrals from the Case Assessment Unit. In addition, 16 care calls were directed to JAC – Prevention and are reflected in this total.

³² In 2022, the JAC received 44 referrals from the Warrant Desk, 17 referrals from law enforcement, 5 walk-ins, and 1 referral from another source.

³³ Care calls became a function of the Juvenile Assessment Center in September 2019. They were previously handled by the Family Counseling Unit.

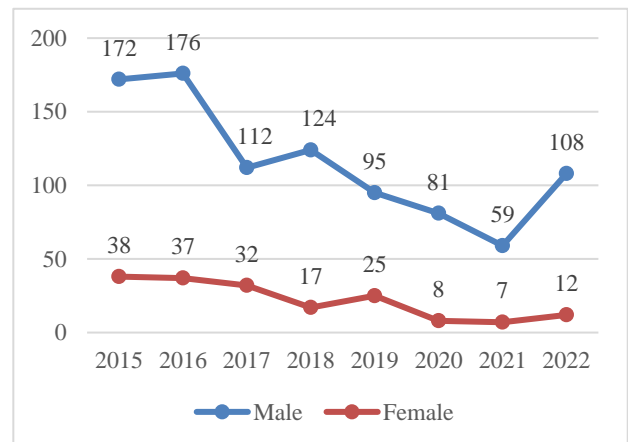
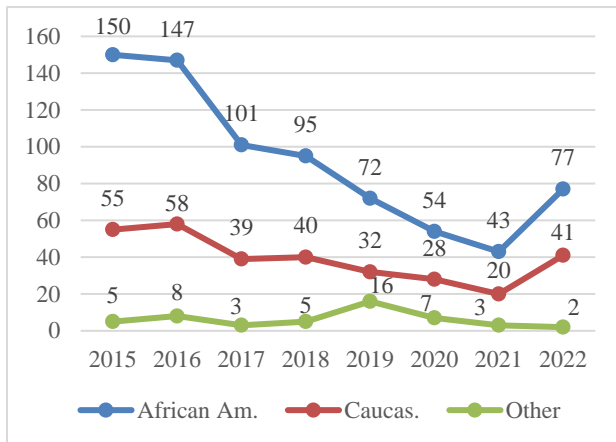
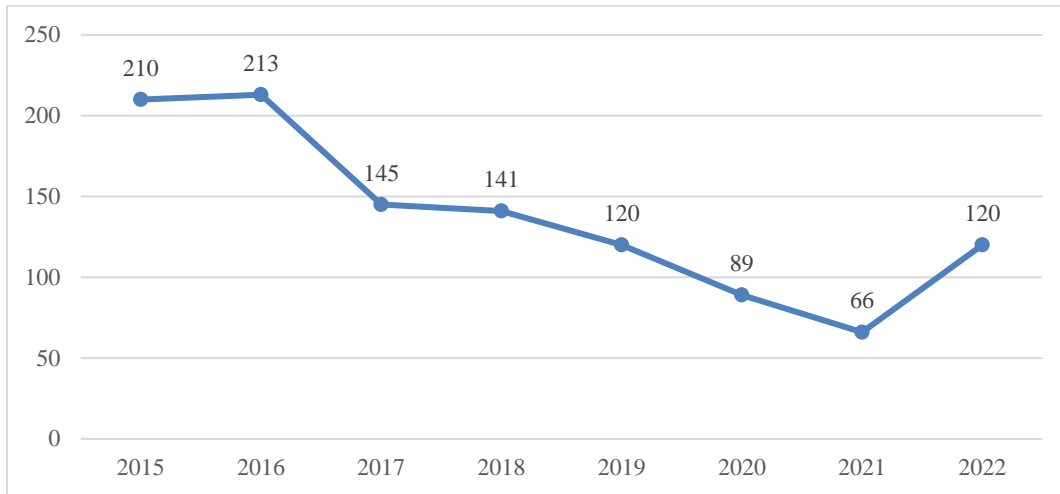
³⁴ The number of care calls reported in 2021 does not include 16 care calls directed to JAC – Prevention for referral to services. Those are included in the total for JAC – Prevention.

³⁵ This program was previously titled Truancy Court. It has not been in operation since 2018.

³⁶ The Emerging Adult Justice Unit began accepting cases referred to the Court on or after July 1, 2021.

**Table 19 and Graphs 33-31
Youth on Probation**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Youth Ordered to FCS Supervision ³⁷	210	213	145	141	120	89	66	120
% change	--	+1%	-32%	-3%	-13%	-26%	-26%	+82%

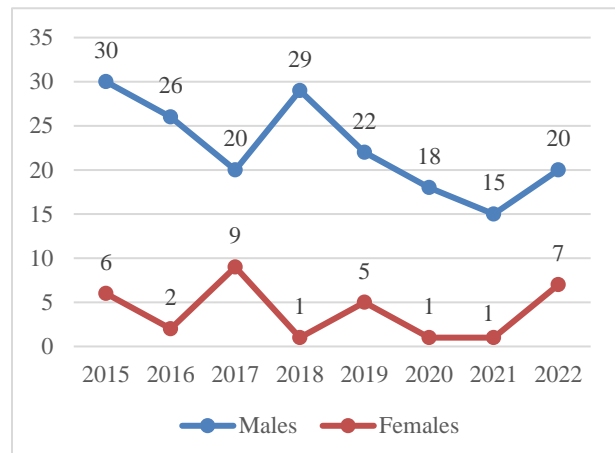
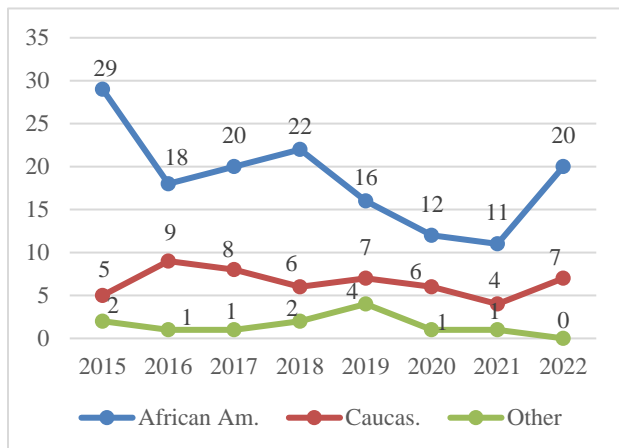
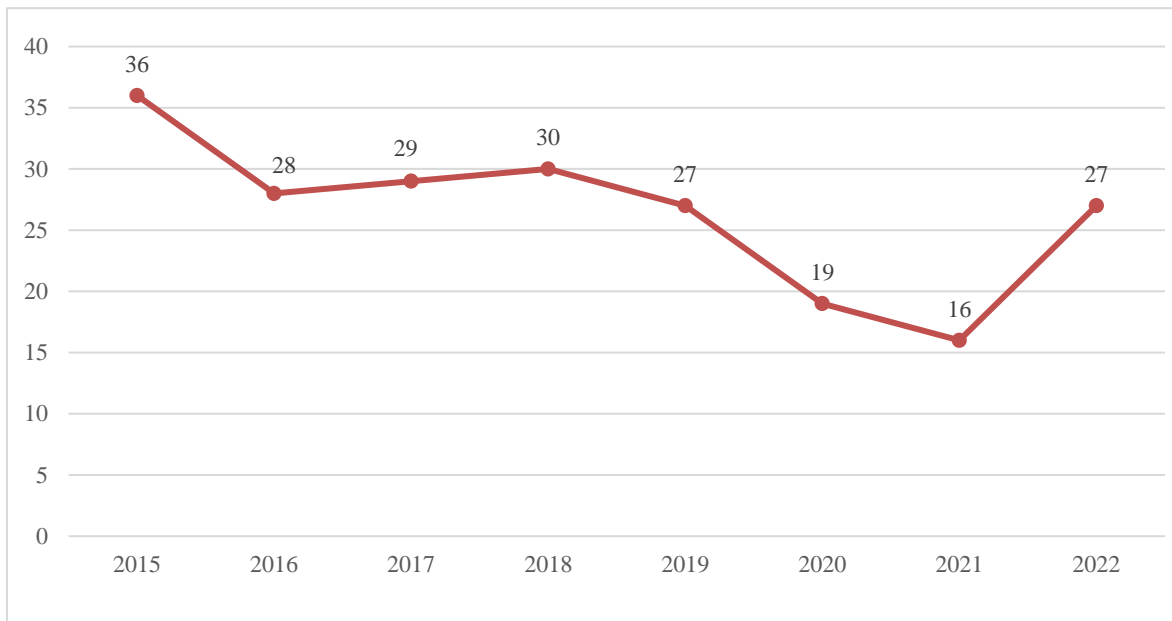


Race was unknown for one youth in 2017 and two youth in 2018.

³⁷ Youth ordered to Family Court Supervision includes youth on probation, at Hilltop Residential Center, and in private residential placements.

Table 20 and Graphs 38-34
Commitments to Hilltop Residential Center

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Hilltop ³⁸	36	28	29	30	27	19	16	27
% change	--	-22%	+4%	+3%	-10%	-30%	-16%	+69%



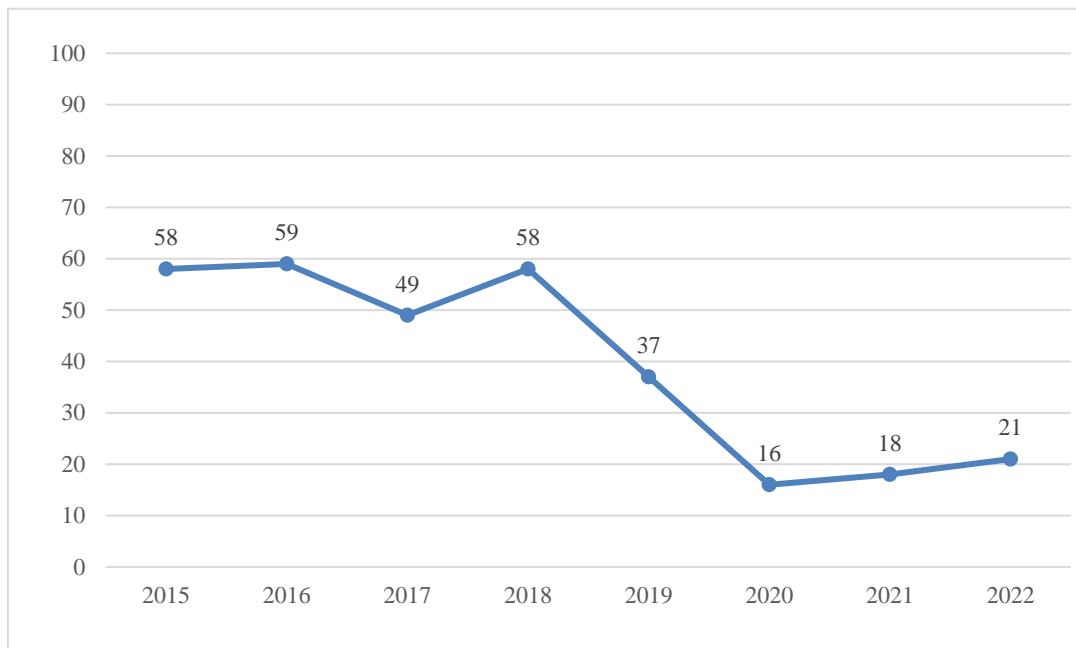
³⁸ Commitment figures capture initial commitment and do not include occasions when youth were returned to Hilltop after having been absent without leave or after being released on furlough.

Commitments to the Division of Youth Services

Commitments to the Missouri Division of Youth Services (DYS) have inched up slightly since the low point in 2020 but are still down by 60% compared to the 2015-2019 average. The percentage of youth committed to DYS who were African American rose from last year and was a few percentage points above average for the past 8 years. The decline in commitments overall may be due to increased efforts to serve youth in the community and avoid out-of-home placements when possible.

Table 21 and Graph 43
Commitments to the Division of Youth Services

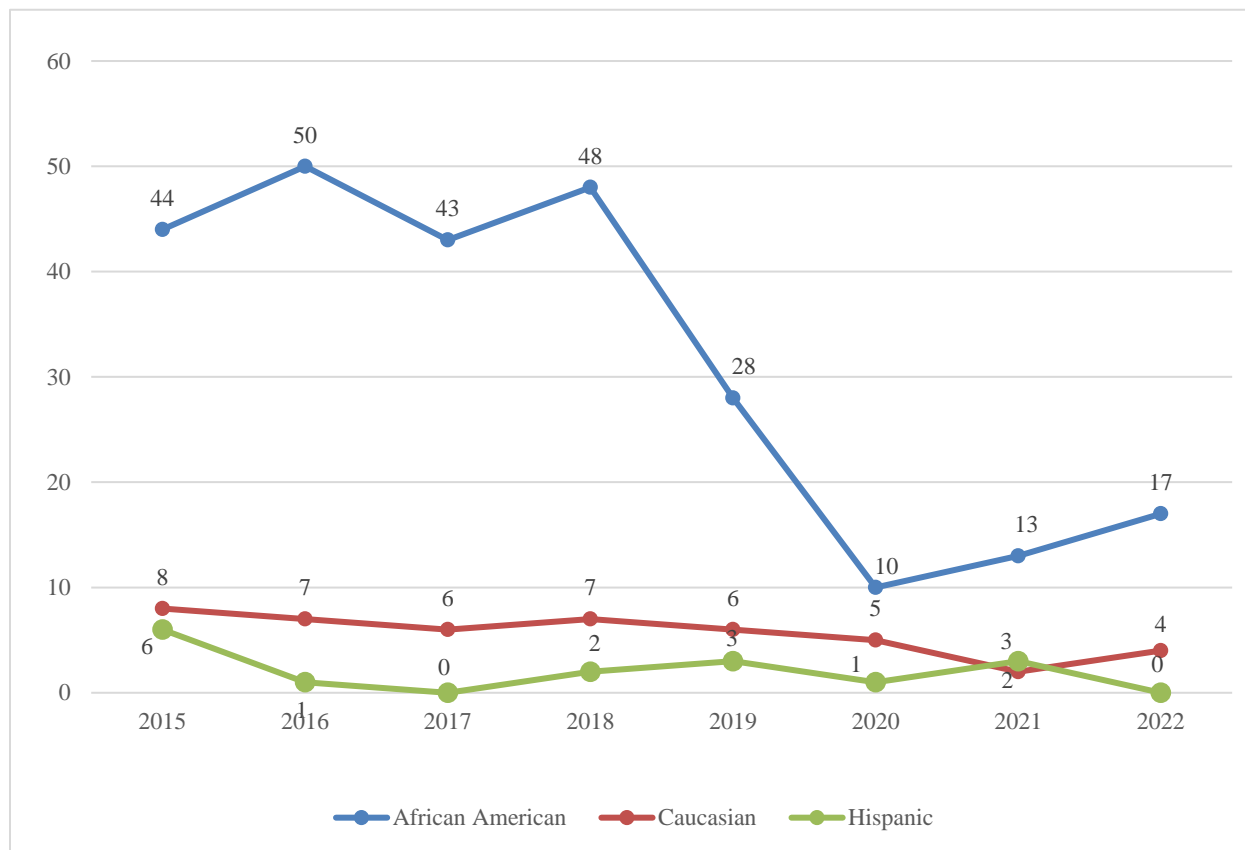
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number	58	59	49	58	37	16	18	21
% change	+16%	+2%	-17%	+18%	-36%	-57%	+13%	+17%
Rate per 1,000 youth ³⁹	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.3



³⁹ Rates were calculated based on the number of youth in Jackson County aged 10 to 17 years.

Table 22 and Graph 44
Commitments to DYS by Race

Year	African American		Caucasian		Hispanic	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
2015	44	76%	8	14%	6	10%
2016 ⁴⁰	50	85%	7	12%	1	2%
2017	43	88%	6	12%	0	--
2018	48	83%	7	12%	2	3%
2019	28	76%	6	16%	3	8%
2020	10	63%	5	31%	1	6%
2021	13	72%	2	11%	3	17%
2022	17	81%	4	19%	0	17%



⁴⁰ Race for one youth was designated other than African American, Caucasian, or Hispanic in 2016.

Table 23 and Graph 45
Commitments to DYS by Gender

Year	Males		Females	
	N	%	N	%
2015	53	91%	5	9%
2016	55	93%	4	7%
2017	38	78%	11	22%
2018	48	83%	10	17%
2019	31	84%	6	16%
2020	14	88%	2	13%
2021	17	94%	1	6%
2022	17	81%	4	19%

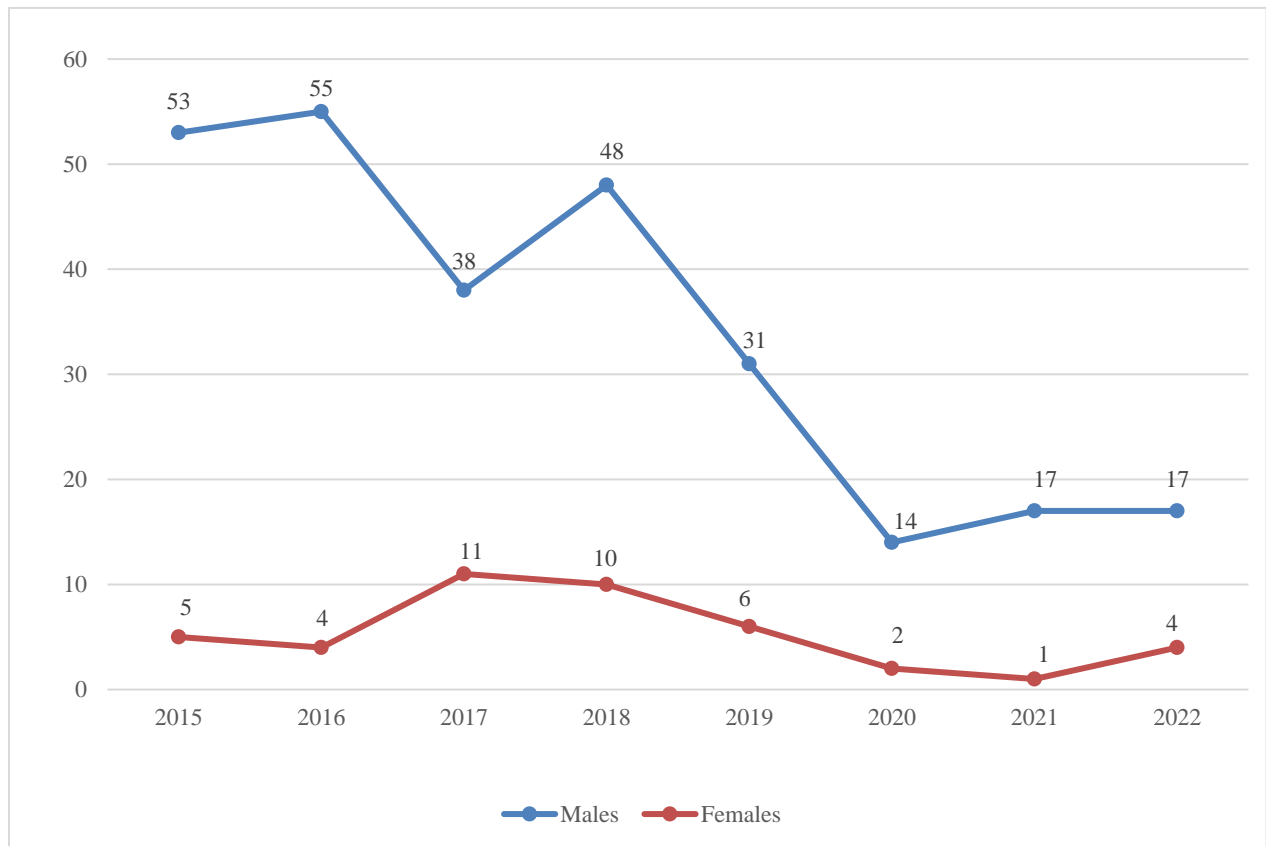
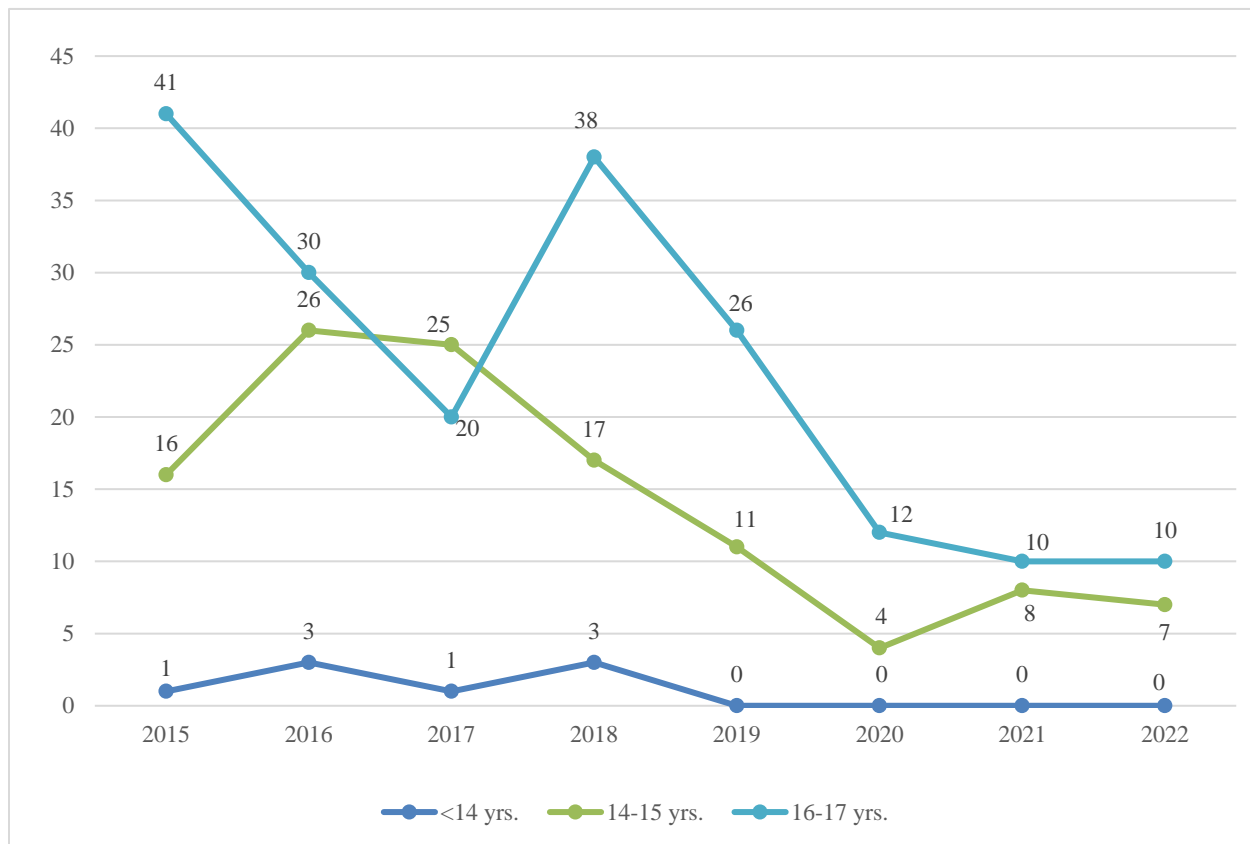


Table 24 and Graph 46
Commitments to DYS by Age

Year	<14 yrs.		14-15 yrs.		16-17 yrs.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
2015	1	1%	16	28%	41	71%
2016	3	5%	26	44%	30	51%
2017	1	2%	25	51%	23	47%
2018	3	5%	17	29%	38	66%
2019	0	--	11	30%	26	70%
2020	0	--	4	25%	12	75%
2021	0	--	8	44%	10	56%
2022	0	--	7	33%	14	67%



Certification Cases

According to Missouri Statute:

“If a petition alleges that a child between the ages of twelve and eighteen has committed an offense which would be considered a felony if committed by an adult, the court may, upon its own motion or upon motion by the juvenile officer, the child or the child's custodian, order a hearing and may, in its discretion, dismiss the petition and such child may be transferred to the court of general jurisdiction and prosecuted under the general law; except that if a petition alleges that any child has committed an offense which would be considered first degree murder, second degree murder, first degree assault, forcible rape, forcible sodomy, first degree robbery, or distribution of drugs, or has committed two or more prior unrelated offenses which would be felonies if committed by an adult, the court shall order a hearing, and may in its discretion, dismiss the petition and transfer the child to a court of general jurisdiction for prosecution under the general law.”⁴¹

The number of certification cases filed was just below average for the past 8 years—leveling out the drop and subsequent spike in 2019 to 2021. So far, a quarter of the cases with a certification hearing held have resulted in certification, but about two-thirds of cases remain undisposed at the time of this report. We will update this section of the report once all cases have been disposed.

⁴¹ Missouri General Assembly. Revised Statute 211.071.

Table 25 and Graph 47
Certification Cases Filed and Youth Certified by Year

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Cases Filed	54	47	48	51	41	34	59	46
% change	--	-13%	+2%	+6%	-20%	-17%	+74%	+22%
Rate per 1,000 youth ⁴²	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.8	0.6
Youth Certified ⁴³	9	15	9	9	10	1	5 ⁴⁴	4 ⁴⁵
% of cases filed	17%	32%	19%	18%	24%	3%	8%	9%



⁴² Rates were calculated based on the number of youth in Jackson County aged 10 to 17 years.

⁴³ Certifications are reported by year the case was filed rather than year certification took place.

⁴⁴ Three certification cases filed in 2021 were undisposed at the time of this report. This report will be updated once all cases are disposed.

⁴⁵ Thirty certification cases filed in 2022 were undisposed at the time of this report. This report will be updated once all cases are disposed.

Table 26. Certification Cases Filed in 2022 by Charge

Charge Category	Mandatory Filings (Offense⁴⁶)	Mandatory Filings (Priors⁴⁷)	Discretionary Filings
Assault 1 st /2 nd (incl. Domestic)	20	0	0
Murder 1 st /2 nd	10	0	0
Sex Offense	0	0	2
Robbery 1 st /2 nd	14	0	0
Total	44	0	2

Table 27. Details for Youth Certified (of Youth with Certification Cases Filed in 2022)

Offense	Num of Filings	Filing Type	Age at Filing	Race	Gender
Murder 2 nd	2	Mandatory	1 aged 17 yrs 1 aged 18 yrs	2 African American	2 Male
Assault 1 st	1	Mandatory	1 aged 17 yrs	1 Hispanic	1 Male
Sexual Abuse 1 st	1	Discretionary	1 aged 18 yrs	1 African American	1 Male
Total Certified in 2022	4	3 Mandatory 1 Discretionary	2 aged 17 yrs 2 aged 18 yrs	3 African American 1 Hispanic	4 Male
Total with Certification Denied	13				
Undisposed at the time of this report⁴⁸	29				

⁴⁶ MO Rev. Statute 211.071.1 reads: “If a petition alleges that a child between the ages of twelve and seventeen has committed an offense which would be considered a felony if committed by an adult and if a petition alleges that any child has committed an offense which would be considered first degree murder under section 565.020, second degree murder under section 565.021, first degree assault under section 565.050, forcible rape under section 566.030 as it existed prior to August 28, 2013, rape in the first degree under section 566.030, forcible sodomy under section 566.060 as it existed prior to August 28, 2013, sodomy in the first degree under section 566.060, first degree robbery under section 570.023, or distribution of drugs under section 579.055 the court shall order a hearing, and may in its discretion, dismiss the petition and transfer the child to a court of general jurisdiction for prosecution under the general law.” These offenses constitute the mandatory (offense) designation in this table.

⁴⁷ MO Rev. Statute 211.071.1 reads: “If a petition alleges that a child between the ages of twelve and seventeen has committed an offense which would be considered a felony if committed by an adult and the child has committed two or more prior unrelated offenses which would be felonies if committed by an adult, the court shall order a hearing, and may in its discretion, dismiss the petition and transfer the child to a court of general jurisdiction for prosecution under the general law.” These offenses constitute the mandatory (priors) designation in this table.

⁴⁸ This report will be updated once all cases have been disposed.

Family Court Services – Children and Families

This section covers Family Court Services interventions and resources for families with child welfare cases, families experiencing separation or divorce, and individuals who have been the victims of offenses committed by youth.

Family Treatment Court. The number of participants in Family Treatment Court dropped considerably in 2022 to 46—a 43% decrease from 2021. Many protective custody hearings were still held virtually in 2022, resulting in lower levels of screening and enrollment. Additionally, many eligible cases were served in the Child Protection and Permanency Unit. Staff addressed this imbalance by developing a protocol for determining where families eligible for both programs should be served.

Child Protection & Permanency Unit. The Child Protection & Permanency Unit seeks to safely reduce time to permanency for children ages 0-3. Since it began in January 2019, the program has seen a higher rate of reunification and shorter time under jurisdiction. Families in 30 CAN cases were admitted to the CPPU in 2022, a 19% reduction from the number admitted in 2021. This is due to the limited capacity of the program to admit more cases.

Parent Awareness Courses. Family Court Resource Services offers three parent awareness courses. Focus on Children in Separation (FOCIS) and Re-FOCIS are for married but separated couples with children, and Parenting Together Living Apart (PTLA) is a class for never-married parents. Enrollment in all three courses remains low compared to numbers from immediately before the pandemic. A total of 1,548 parents were served in 2022, an decrease of 46% from 2019 but increase of 14% from 2020.

Supervised Visitation. Supervised visitation is provided for cases with issues such as custodial access interference or parent-child estrangement. Therapeutic visitation may be ordered to address child exposure to domestic violence, parent estrangement, and any other issue deemed appropriate by the court. Visitation services increased some from 2020 and 2021 but still remained far below pre-pandemic levels. This may be because some families had made other arrangements for visitation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mediation. Overall, mediators served 416 cases in 2022, a 42% increase from 2021.

Table 28 and Graphs 48-42
Participants Entering the Family Treatment Court by Year

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
FTC	90	96	76	133	115	72	80	46
% change	--	+7%	-21%	+75%	-14%	-37%	+11%	-43%

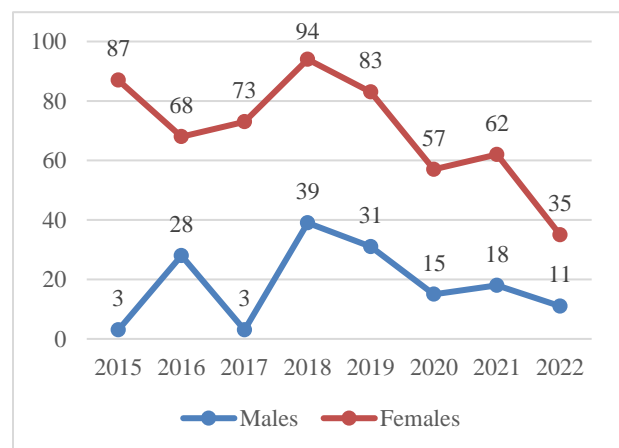
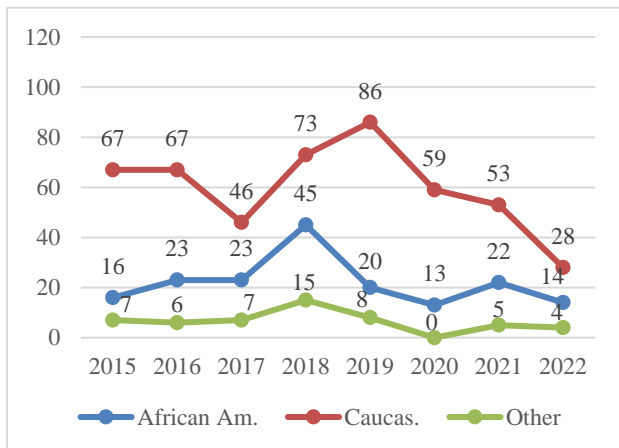
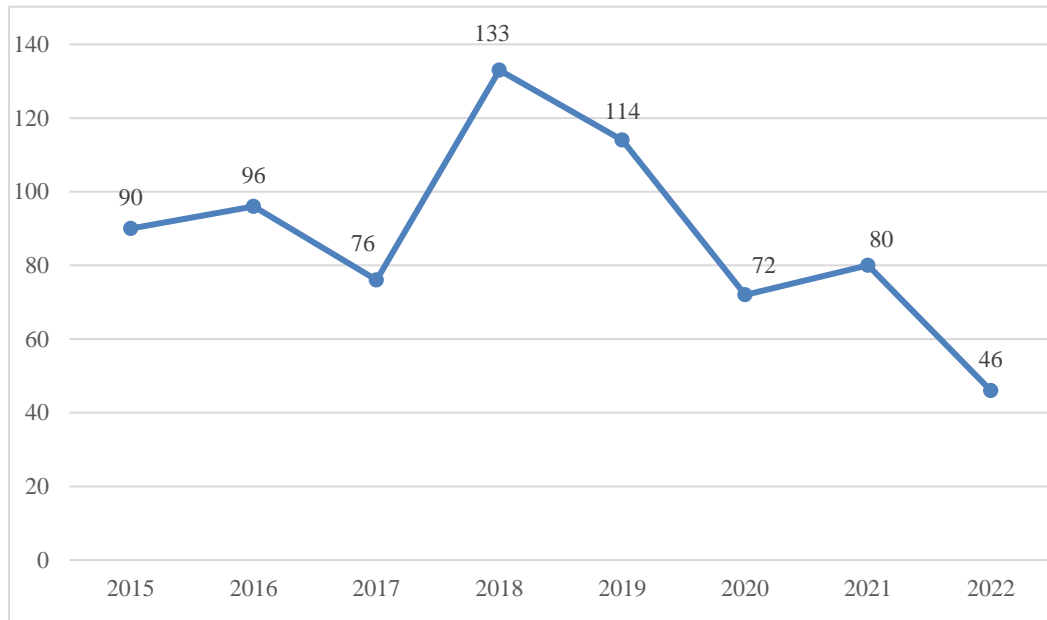
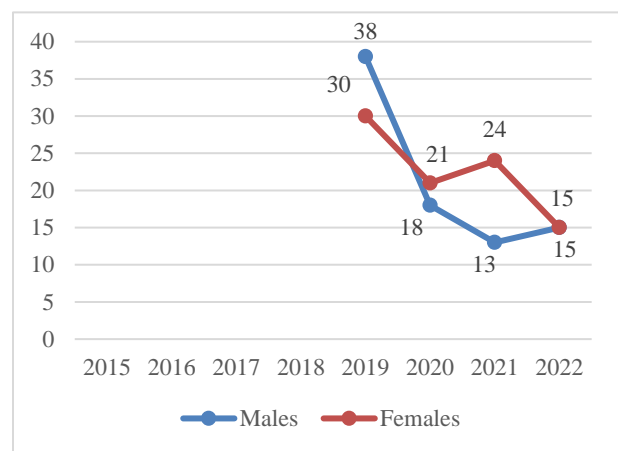
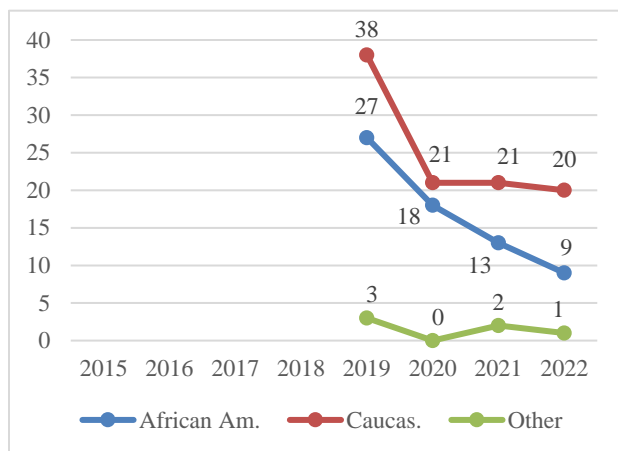
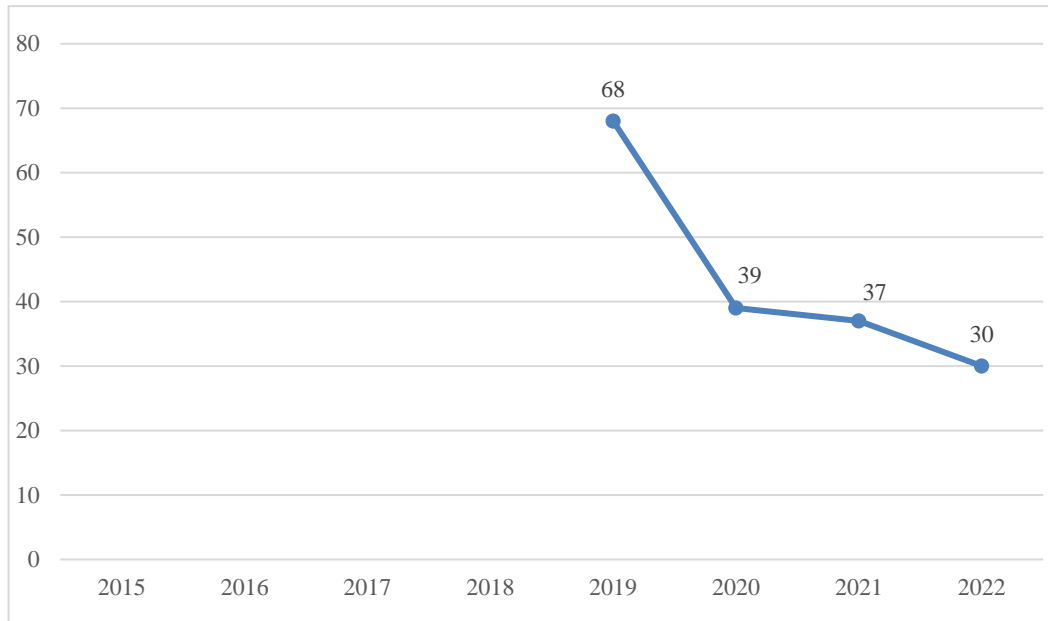


Table 29 and Graphs 53-45
Children with Cases Entering the Child Protection & Permanency Unit by Year

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
CPPU	--	--	--	--	68	39	37	30
% change	--	--	--	--	--	-43%	-5%	-19%

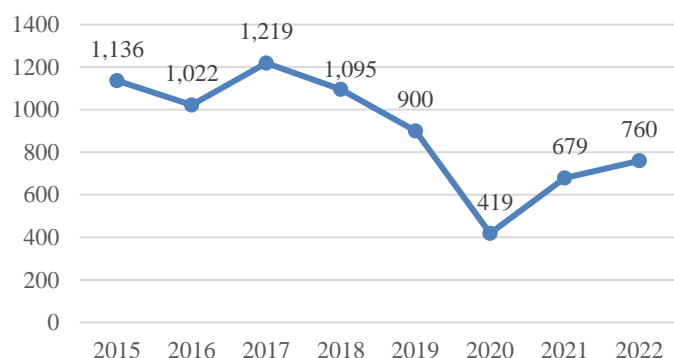


Race was unknown for 1 youth in 2021.

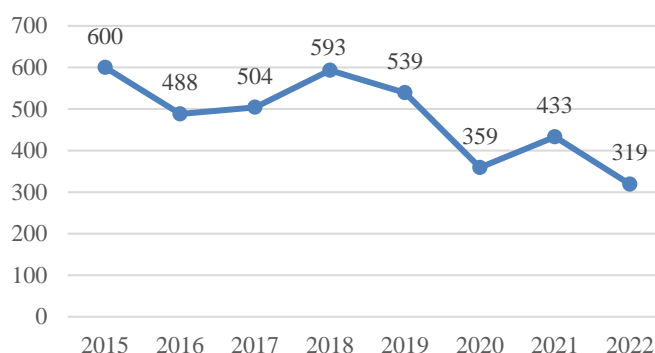
Table 30 and Graphs 58-48
Parent Awareness Courses

Course	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 ⁴⁹	2021 ⁵⁰	2022
FOCIS								
Adults	1,136	1,022	1,219	1,095	900	419	679	760
Youth	859	738	779	834	797	92	0	0
FOCIS Total	1,995	1,760	1,998	1,929	1,697	511	679	760
Re-FOCIS	600	488	504	593	539	359	433	319
Parenting Together Living Apart	653	432	391	636	655	493	413	469
Grand Total	3,248	2,680	2,893	3,158	2,891	1,363	1,525	1,548
% change	--	-17%	+8%	+9%	-9%	-53%	+12%	+2%

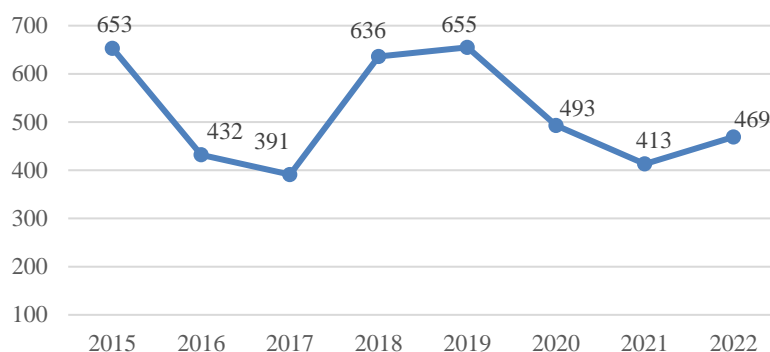
FOCIS Class - Adults



Re-FOCIS Class



Parenting Together Living Apart Class



⁴⁹ For several months in 2020, all in-person classes were suspended, and class content was provided to parents in the form of packets sent through Civil Records. The number of packets sent out was not tracked. For a few months before packets were assembled, parents who would have attended FOCIS were sent to a similar online class. They are not reflected in the numbers presented in this table.

⁵⁰ Live classes were reinstated in 2021 but were available for adults only. Children were prohibited from attending in-person classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Adults were also given the opportunity to participate in classes via Webex for Re-FOCIS and Parent Together Living Apart.

Table 31. Connections Program Visits and Exchanges

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 ⁵¹	2021 ⁵²	2022 ⁵³
Supervised Visits								
Scheduled Visits	1,308	1,643	1,876	2,144	1,889	1,118	921	1,276
Actual Visits	855	1,115	1,350	1,456	1,309	548	620	739
Therapeutic Visits								
Scheduled Visits	346	332	250	181	227	158	219	185
Actual Visits	217	197	164	120	154	91	136	97
Grand Total Visits								
Scheduled Visits	1,654	1,975	2,126	2,325	2,116	1,276	1,140	1,461
Actual Visits ⁵⁴	1,072	1,312	1,514	1,576	1,463	639	756	836
Monitored Exchanges								
Scheduled Exchanges	757	1,043	710	189	94	13	6	31
Actual Exchanges	449	786	561	100	49	4	5	23

⁵¹ Visitation services were cancelled several times throughout 2020 due to concerns about safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁵² Visitation services reopened in February 2021, but the program lost many families that had previously participated in visits and exchanges as they had made other arrangements during the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁵³ Visitation services did not occur in January and February 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁵⁴ Actual visits represent units of services. One unit of service equals one hour.

Graph 63. Connections Program Visits Held

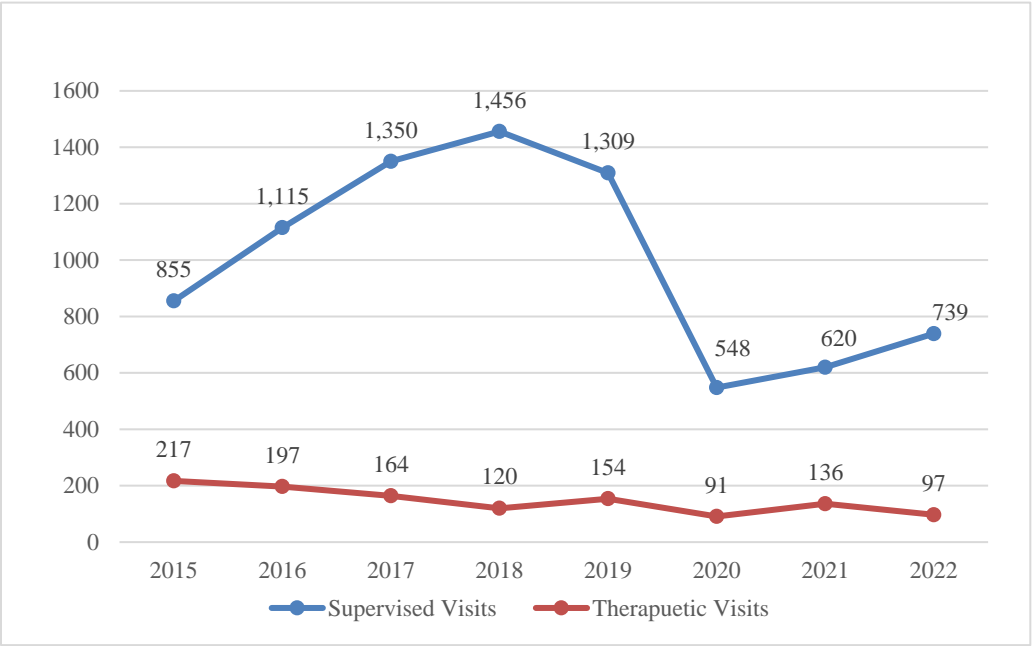
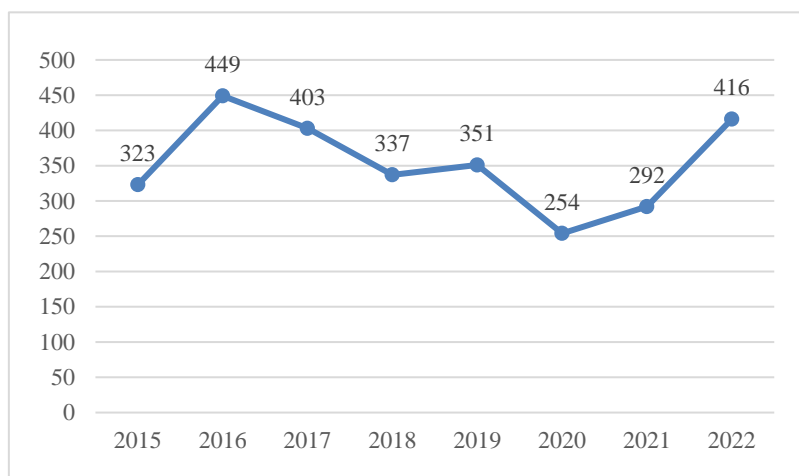


Table 32. Mediation Services

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Mediation (Rule 68.12)								
Referrals	155	101	107	96	49	21	22	17
Mediations	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2 ⁵⁵
Adult Abuse Mediation								
Referrals	200	202	161	115	141	41	72	175
Mediations	180	202	156	112	136	38	71	173
Child Dependency Mediation								
Referrals	157	276	238	249	229	180	287	284
Mediations	115	217	227	208	203	207 ⁵⁶	211	234
Other Domestic Relations Mediations⁵⁷								
Referrals	34	41	33	16	14	9	12	9
Mediations	28	30	20	17	12	9	10	7
Grand Total Mediations								
Referrals	546	620	539	476	432	251	393	485
Mediations	323	449	403	337	351	254	292	416

Graph 64. Total Mediations Held

⁵⁵ Two Rule 68.12 mediations were conducted by Family Court staff; fifteen were conducted by outside mediators.

⁵⁶ Twenty-seven child-dependency mediations completed in 2020 were carried over from the previous year.

⁵⁷ This includes mediations related to modifications of custody and visitation, Family Access motions, and mediations previously reported under Mediation (IV-D)/Paternity and Victim-Offender Mediation. In 2013, a Missouri Appellate Court decision (DSK, MO App Western District 76789, Dec 31, 2013) substantially reduced the number of paternity mediations referred to FCRS, resulting in a sharp decline in referrals for this service.

Table 33. Victim Services Cases Served

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Victim Services Cases	471	515	351	377	296	232	326	-- ⁵⁸
% change	--	+9%	-32%	+7%	-21%	-22%	+41%	--

⁵⁸ The number of Victim Services cases from 2022 is unknown because some data from the year was lost and could not be recovered.

COVID-19 Pandemic Monitoring

Family Court operations looked very different starting in March 2020, as the 16th Circuit made the decision to suspend most in-person hearings and programs and began delivering its services virtually. While some operations returned to normal in 2021, other services continued to be impacted by the need for social distancing. By 2022, the Court was operating mostly as it was before the pandemic.

This section presents data from 2019-2022 in a few key areas of operation to paint a statistical portrait of how the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to trends at the Court. These include:

- Inventory of Open Cases
- Detention Admissions and Daily Populations
- Re-offense Rates
- Time to Disposition

In some areas, the pandemic had a clear and time-limited impact, but this was not always the case. We will continue to monitor these areas to determine whether conditions during the pandemic were anomalous or indicative of more persistent trends.

Referrals and Open Cases

The inventory of open delinquency cases decreased steadily after the pandemic began until late 2021 when it began to stabilize before increasing significantly in summer 2022. The number of open delinquency cases is now at the highest point in the past four years. Referrals for delinquent offenses were higher in 2022 as well—the Court received about 100 more than in 2021 and 200 more than in 2020. The breakdown by offense type has not changed substantially in the past four years for most categories, but the share of referrals for first- and second-degree assault were notably higher during the pandemic years—about twice the rate from 2019 or 2022. The share of youth referred for tampering with a motor vehicle has also dropped to about half the level from 2019.

In contrast to delinquency cases, the number of open child abuse and neglect cases continues the gradual decline we've seen since 2019. This number plateaued for much of 2020 and 2021—likely due to the backlog of hearings generated during the first few months of the pandemic. But this backlog has since cleared out, as evidenced by the falling number of open cases, which is now 27% lower than it was at the beginning of 2019.

The numbers of open TPR cases and children free for adoption are both much lower than they were in 2019, but the number of open TPR cases trended upward this year from a low point at the end of 2021. The low number of open TPR cases in 2020 and 2021 may have been due to staffing issues at the Family Court as well as a hesitation to change case goals to TPR during the pandemic, when it was more difficult for parents to make reasonable efforts toward reunification. Those conditions turned around somewhat in 2022. The lower number of TPR cases compared to before the pandemic reflects an increase in other approaches to permanency, including guardianship and two-count adoption petitions.

Graph 65. Inventory of Open Delinquency Cases

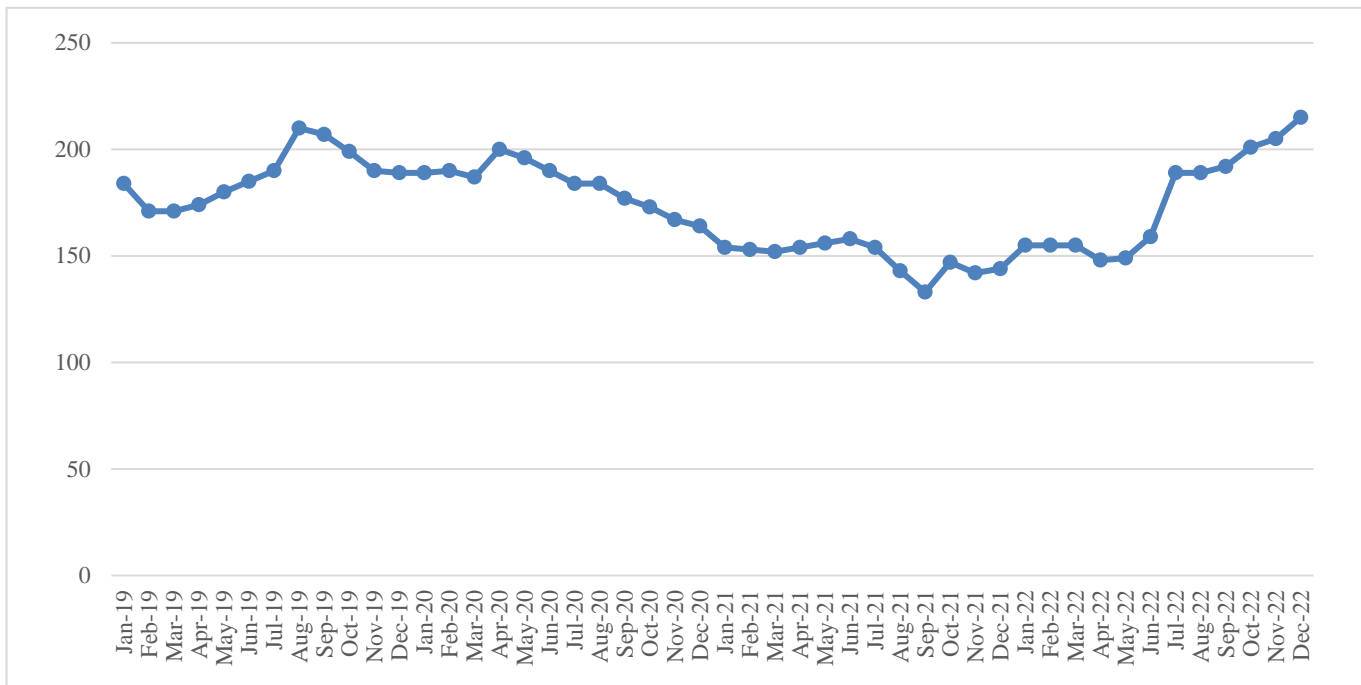
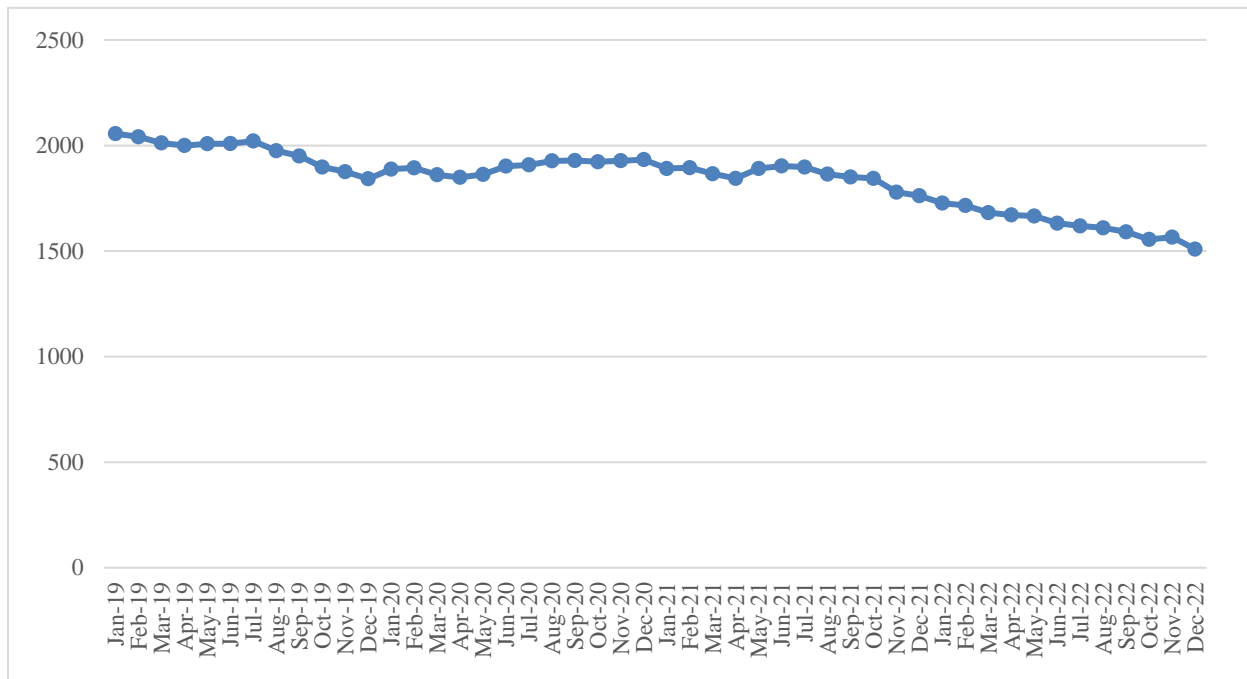


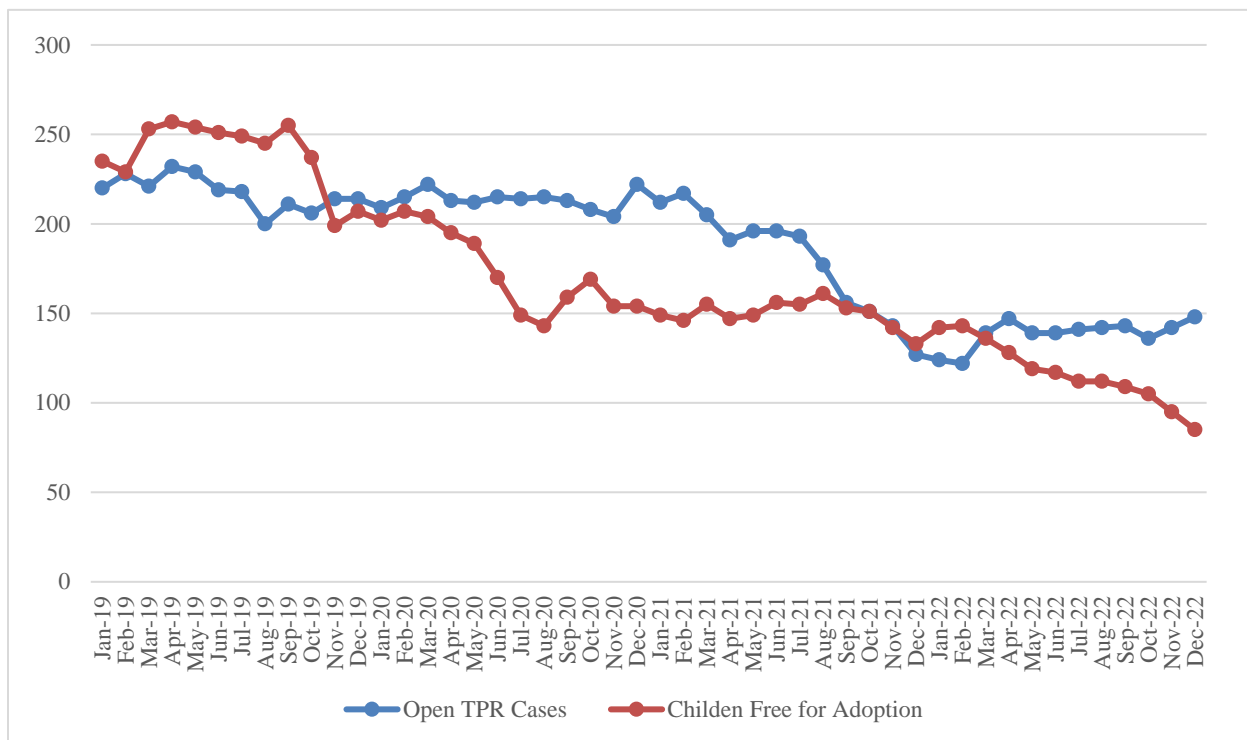
Table 34. Delinquent Referrals by Offense Type

	Homicide	Assault 1 st /2 nd	Robbery 1 st /2 nd	Vehicle Hijack	Sex Offense	Drug Offense	Burg/ Steal	Tampering	Weapons	Total
2019	7 (1%)	45 (5%)	56 (7%)	0 (0%)	99 (12%)	66 (8%)	136 (17%)	102 (12%)	17 (2%)	823
2020	7 (1%)	88 (12%)	64 (9%)	0 (0%)	104 (14%)	38 (5%)	140 (19%)	43 (6%)	20 (3%)	723
2021	16 (2%)	106 (13%)	62 (7%)	0 (0%)	123 (15%)	56 (7%)	121 (15%)	54 (7%)	25 (3%)	830
2022	18 (2%)	62 (7%)	51 (5%)	19 (2%)	150 (16%)	59 (6%)	164 (18%)	42 (5%)	41 (4%)	930

Graph 66. Inventory of Open Child Abuse & Neglect Cases



Graph 67. Inventory of Open TPR Cases and Children Free for Adoption



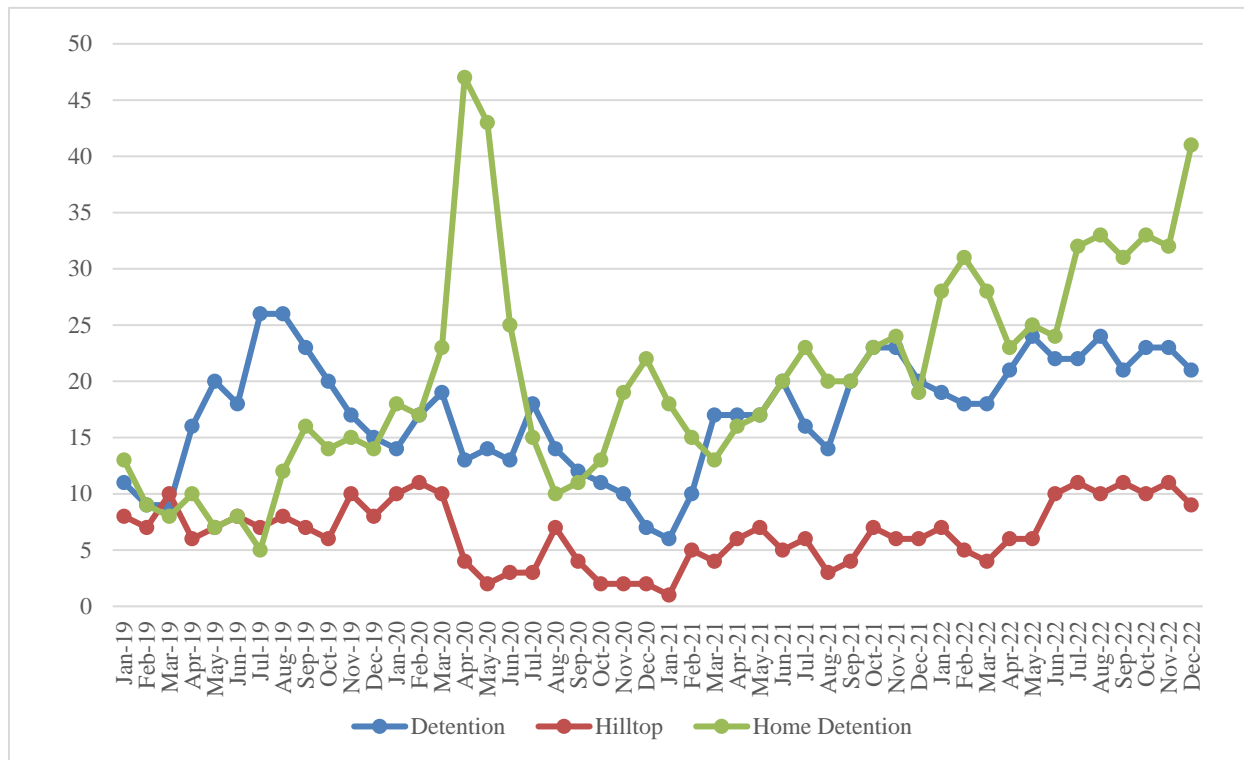
Detention and Probation

With the increase in delinquency petitions and open cases in 2022 came a rise in the number of youth admitted to all forms of detention. Around 25 youth each month were admitted to secure detention in 2022—a significant increase from the 18 or so youth admitted each month in 2019 and 12-17 youth admitted each month in 2020 and 2021.

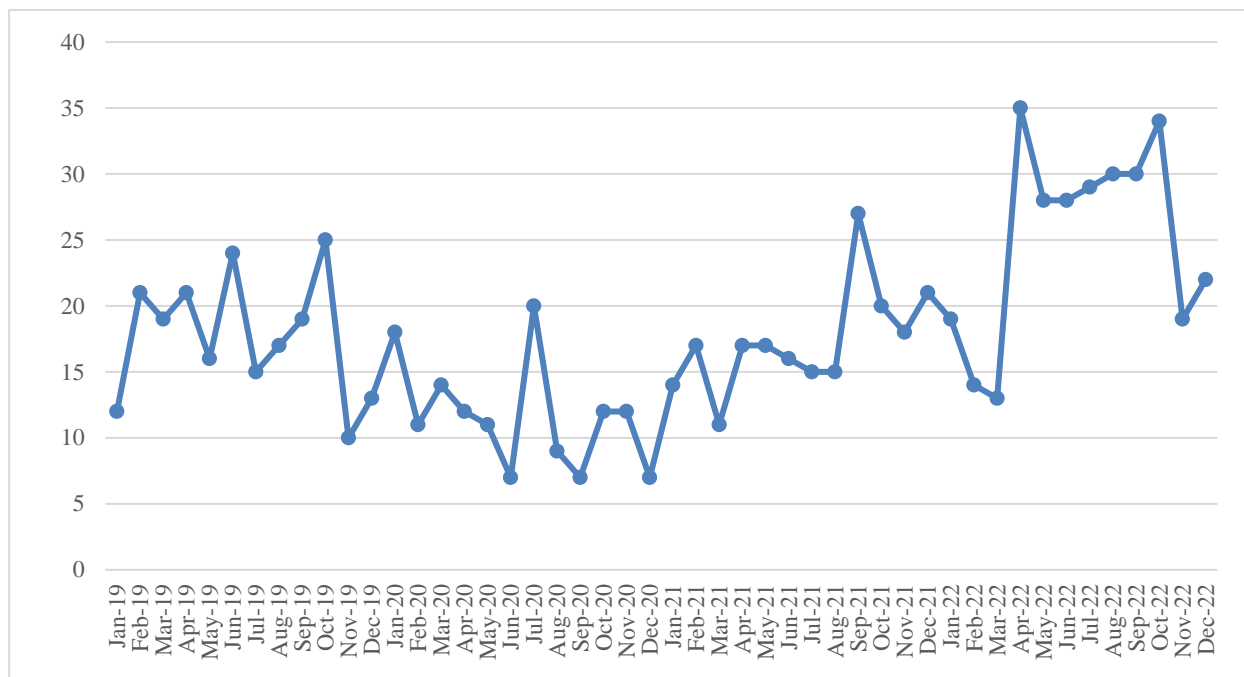
Detentions at Hilltop increased from the low numbers in 2020 and 2021 but are still lower than the highest points of 2019—so not outside the pre-pandemic baseline range. Home detention with electronic monitoring, however, has become a much more common form of non-secure detention. When the pandemic began in March 2020, many youth were released from detention facilities to home detention, and the population spiked to far outside the normal range. It quickly dropped but has worked its way up again and is now not far below that March 2020 high point. The increased use of home detention likely reflects efforts on the part of the Court to utilize the least restrictive detention option available.

The share of youth who receive a new referral while on probation has decreased steadily since 2019. In 2022, just 3% of the youth on probation received a new delinquent or status referral that year compared to 14% of the youth on probation in 2019 and 7-8% of the youth on probation in 2020-2021. This continued decline is a positive sign given that delinquent referrals overall were up in 2022.

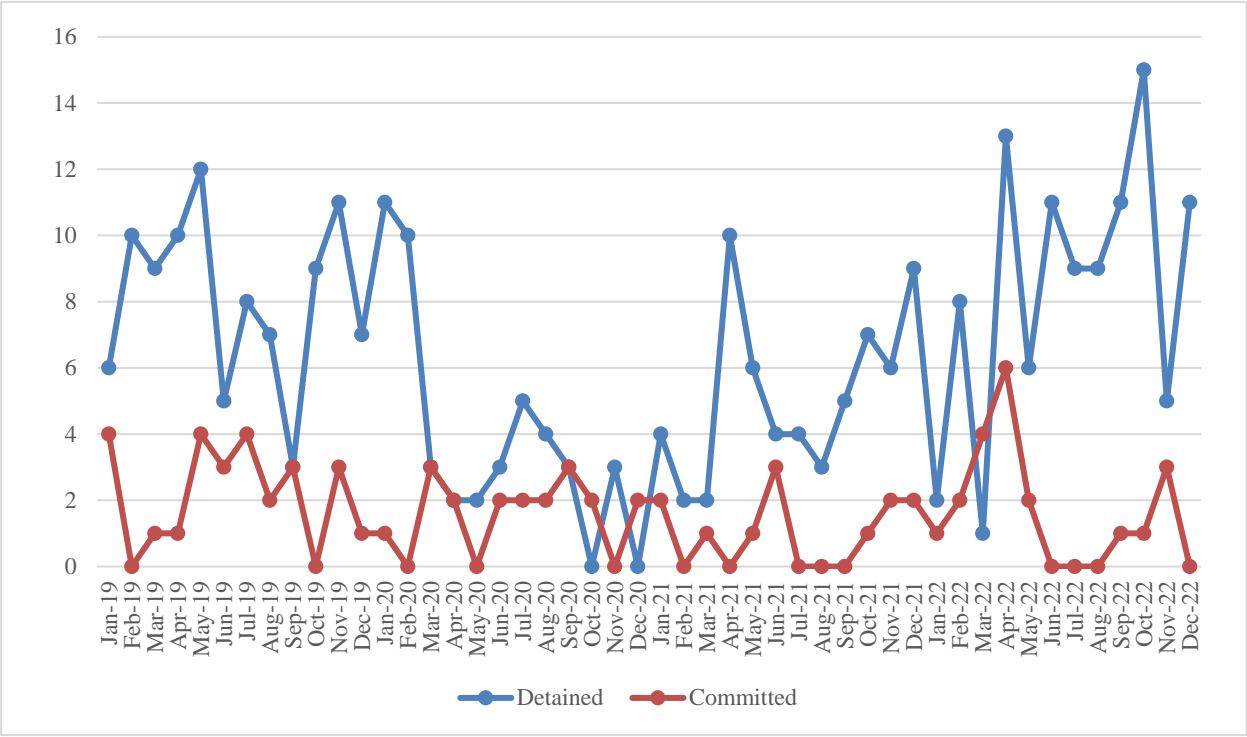
Graph 68. Average Daily Population – Secure Detention and Detention Alternatives



Graph 69. Admissions to Secure Detention



Graph 70. Admissions to Hilltop



Graph 71. Admissions to Home Detention

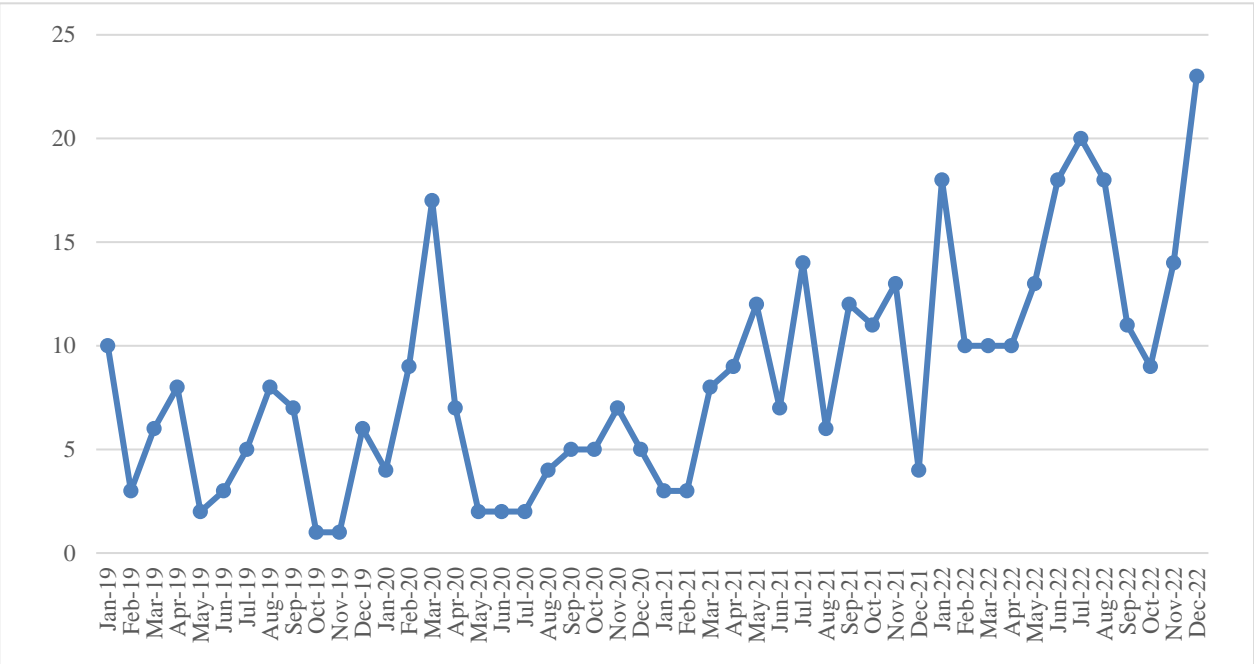


Table 35. New Referrals for Youth on Probation⁵⁹

	Delinquent/Status Referral While on Probation in Given Year	Technical Referral While on Probation in Given Year	Any Referral While on Probation in Given Year
2019	33 (14% of 232 youth on probation)	28 (12% of 232 youth on probation)	49 (21% of 232 youth on probation)
2020	17 (8% of 218 youth on probation)	27 (12% of 218 youth on probation)	37 (17% of 218 youth on probation)
2021	12 (7% of 170 youth on probation)	10 (6% of 170 youth on probation)	20 (12% of 170 youth on probation)
2022	6 (3% of 196 youth on probation)	10 (5% of 196 youth on probation)	13 (7% of 196 youth on probation)

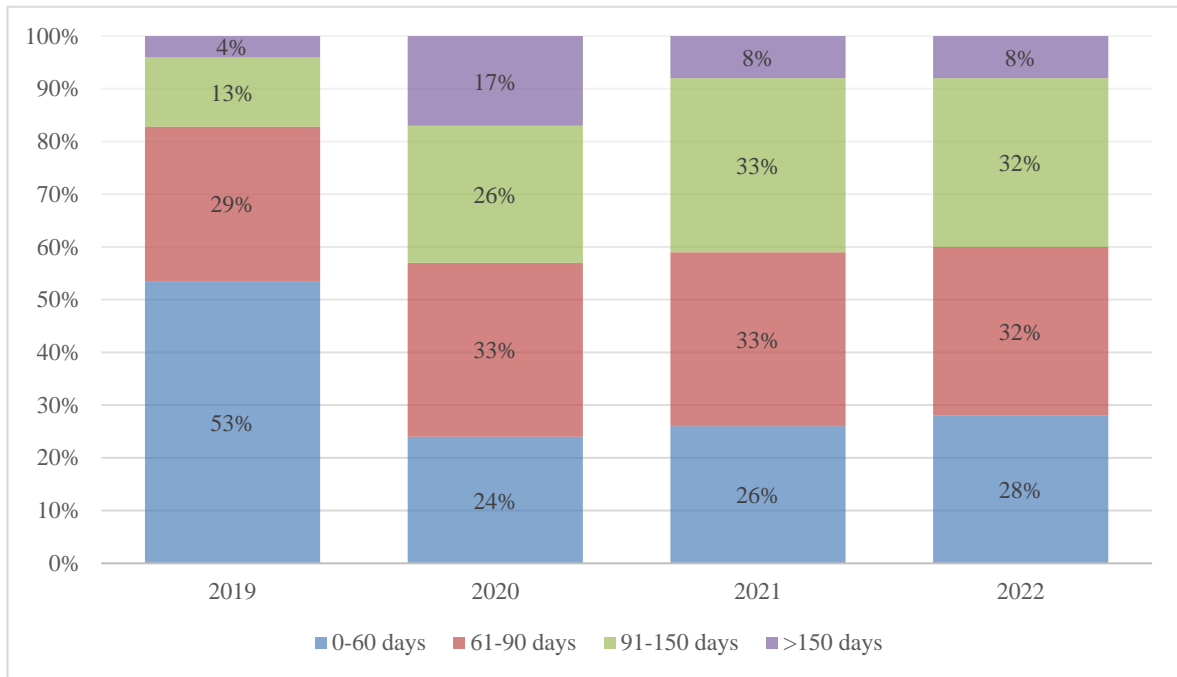
⁵⁹ New referrals received while on probation in a given year for youth served on probation in that year.

Time to Disposition

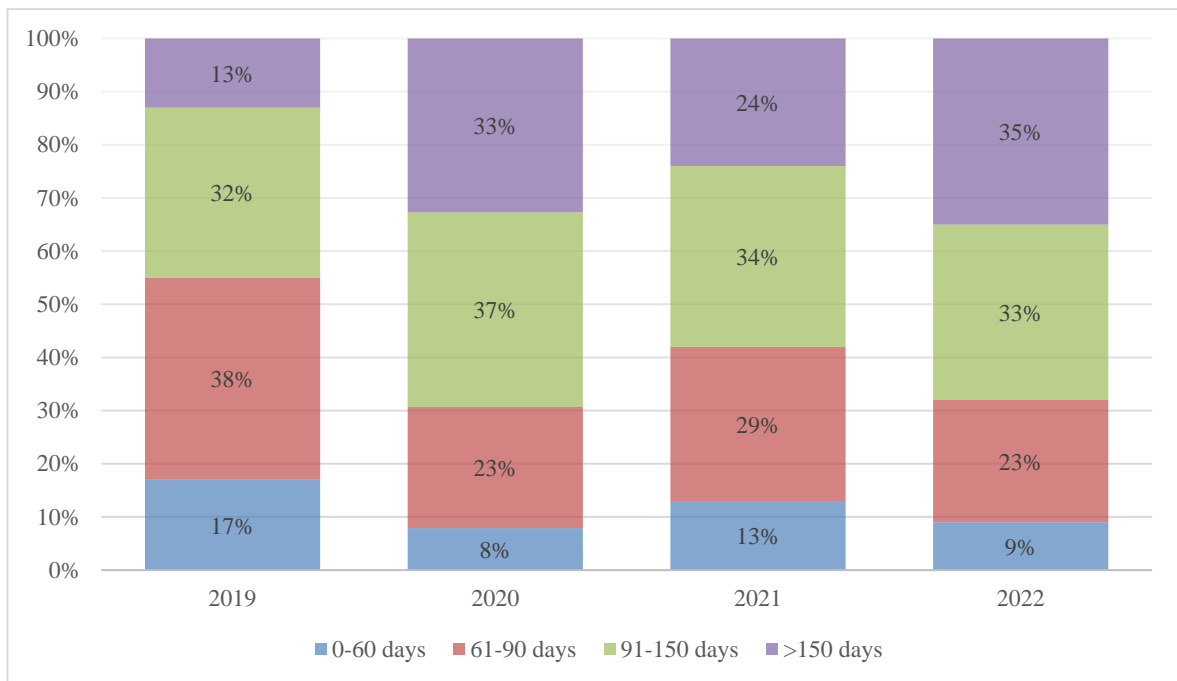
Time to disposition for delinquency cases increased during the COVID-19 pandemic compared to 2019. Average time to disposition was 77 days in 2019 and 100 days in 2020. It has settled in between those two figures in the past two years, with an average time to disposition of 89 days in 2021 and 88 days in 2022.

Time to disposition for child abuse and neglect cases also increased in 2020 and dropped a bit in 2021, but unlike delinquency cases, it increased again in 2022 with a case-length breakdown similar to 2020. Average time to disposition for abuse and neglect cases was 100 days in 2019, 135 days in 2020, 120 days in 2021, and 138 days in 2022.

Graph 72. Time to Disposition for Delinquency Cases



Graph 73. Time to Disposition for Child Abuse and Neglect Cases



Conclusions

This report captured statistical information related to activities and selected outcomes for the 16th Circuit Court – Family Court Division and Family Court Services. The goal of the annual report is to provide complete, accurate, and helpful information to enable the Family Court to better serve the youth, families, and community of Jackson County.

Over the last eight years, the number of referrals filed for child abuse and neglect has trended fairly steadily downward. Referrals in 2022 were 34% lower than in 2015, an indication that the low numbers in 2020 and 2021 were not merely a pandemic-related anomaly. Adoptions have fluctuated from year to year, but TPR filings have decreased each year since the high point in 2016. Less than half as many cases were filed in 2022 as in 2019.

The number of youth aged 10-17 in Jackson County has increased by about 2% since 2015, but the number of delinquent and technical referrals to the Family Court has decreased by 18% in that same period, and the number of petitions and motions to modify has decreased by 35%.

African American youth accounted for 70% of the delinquent and technical offense petitions and motions to modify filed in 2022. Caucasian youth accounted for 26%, and Hispanic youth accounted for 4%.

Youth residing in Kansas City continue to account for the largest share of delinquent and technical offense filings in Jackson County (52% of all delinquent and technical offense petitions and motions to modify), though this share dropped by nine percentage points from 2021. Youth from Independence made up the next largest share of filings, followed by youth from Lee's Summit.

In the last eight years, the number of youth committed to the Division of Youth Services fluctuated between 50 and 60 commitments a year until 2019, when 37 youth were committed. This number dropped significantly to 16 youth in 2020 and has remained low since, with 21 youth committed in 2022. African American youth represented 81% of all commitments to DYS in 2022. This is in line with rates from 2015-2019 but above those we saw during the pandemic (63% and 72% in 2020 and 2021).

The number of certification cases filed in 2022 was just about average for the past eight years. So far, 25% of the youth with a certification hearing held have been certified, but about two-thirds of cases remain undisposed at the time of this report. We will update this figure once all cases have been disposed.

Family Court Services offered a broad range of prevention, intervention, and treatment services to youth in Jackson County. In 2022, the Court's prevention and diversion programs served a total of 269 youth as well as their families. The number served was up 16% compared to 2021.

The number of youth starting probation dropped dramatically during the pandemic but returned in 2022 to the 2019 level (120 youth). This is an increase of 82% from 2021 but is down 43% compared to 2015. Commitments to Hilltop also returned to their pre-pandemic level, with 27 youth committed in 2022. This is down 25% from the number committed in 2015. Detainments at Hilltop and in secure detention also increased significantly in 2022. Hilltop detentions nearly matched the number of youth detained in 2019, but secure detentions well surpassed this baseline, with 302 youth detained, compared to about 210 youth in 2019 and 2021. Compared to 2015, secure detainments were down 15% while non-secure detainments were cut in half.

Family Treatment Court served 46 participants in 2022, a decrease of 43% from 2021.

Family Court Resource Services offered a wide variety of services to court-involved families. A total of 1,548 people were served by three parent awareness courses in 2022. The Connections Program provided 836 supervised and therapeutic visits and arranged 23 monitored exchanges. Mediators served 416 cases.

Starting in March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic affected operations in every area of the Court. While many programs continue to be impacted, the Court has largely recovered from the shock to the system. In some areas, it seems that changes we saw in 2020 and 2021 were due directly to the pandemic, and these trends have reversed. For example, the numbers of youth ordered to probation and detained at Hilltop dropped significantly in 2020 and 2021 but returned

to 2019 levels in 2022. In other areas, changes we saw in during the pandemic have remained. DYS commitments, for example, remain well below 2019 levels, and enrollment in Family Treatment Court has dropped even below where it was in 2020 and 2021. We will continue to monitor areas such as these to determine whether the changes reverse as the pandemic recedes or are the beginning of a new normal.