



Jackson County Family Court

2023

Statistical Report

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16th Circuit Court

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16th Circuit Court

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	5
Current Demographic Picture	6
Referrals and Formal Filings	8
Child Welfare Referrals, Filings, and Open Cases	9
Status Offense Referrals and Filings	18
Delinquent and Technical Offense Referrals, Filings, and Open Cases.....	21
Delinquent and Technical Offense Filings by Race, Gender, Age, and City of Residence	24
Disposition and Intervention Services	31
Family Court Services – Delinquency.....	32
Commitments to the Division of Youth Services.....	38
Certification Cases.....	42
Family Court Services – Children and Families.....	45
COVID-19 Pandemic Monitoring.....	52
Conclusions.....	62

Executive Summary

Two major trends have defined the post-pandemic period at the Family Court: An increase in delinquency filings to well above pre-pandemic levels and the steady but dramatic drop in child abuse and neglect filings, which are now less than half what they were in 2019.

Other related metrics have risen and fallen accordingly. Detentions are up considerably, for example, and adoption and termination of parental rights filings are down. So are families served in the Child Protection and Permanency Unit and Family Treatment Court.

Commitments to the Division of Youth Services were well below pre-pandemic levels, despite the fact that more youth are being referred to the Court, including for serious offenses. Indeed, certification case filings were relatively high in 2023—a testament to the high number of serious referrals—but the number of youth certified so far is relatively low. Even Hilltop commitments were stable when compared to the pre-pandemic years. Youth with delinquency cases were often placed on probation or in one of the Court's diversion programs, such as Emerging Adult Justice, which accepted 87 cases in 2023. And while rates of secure detention are currently quite high, non-secure methods of detention have increased even more. The number of youth ordered to home detention with electronic monitoring has jumped from 60 youth in 2019 to 334 youth in 2023.

Introductory sections throughout this report present the data from 2023 and situate it within the context of the past eight years. A pandemic monitoring section at the end of the report looks more closely at specific indicators starting in 2019. The conclusion of this report provides takeaways from each section of the report.

Introduction

This report provides statistical information about Jackson County Circuit Court – Family Court Division for 2023 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.

Three years ago, we introduced a section specifically to monitor trends related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we have 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.

In some regards, the effects of the pandemic seem long behind us. For example, delinquency referrals, which declined during the pandemic, have not only returned to their pre-pandemic baseline but far exceeded it. 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 resumed normal operations.

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

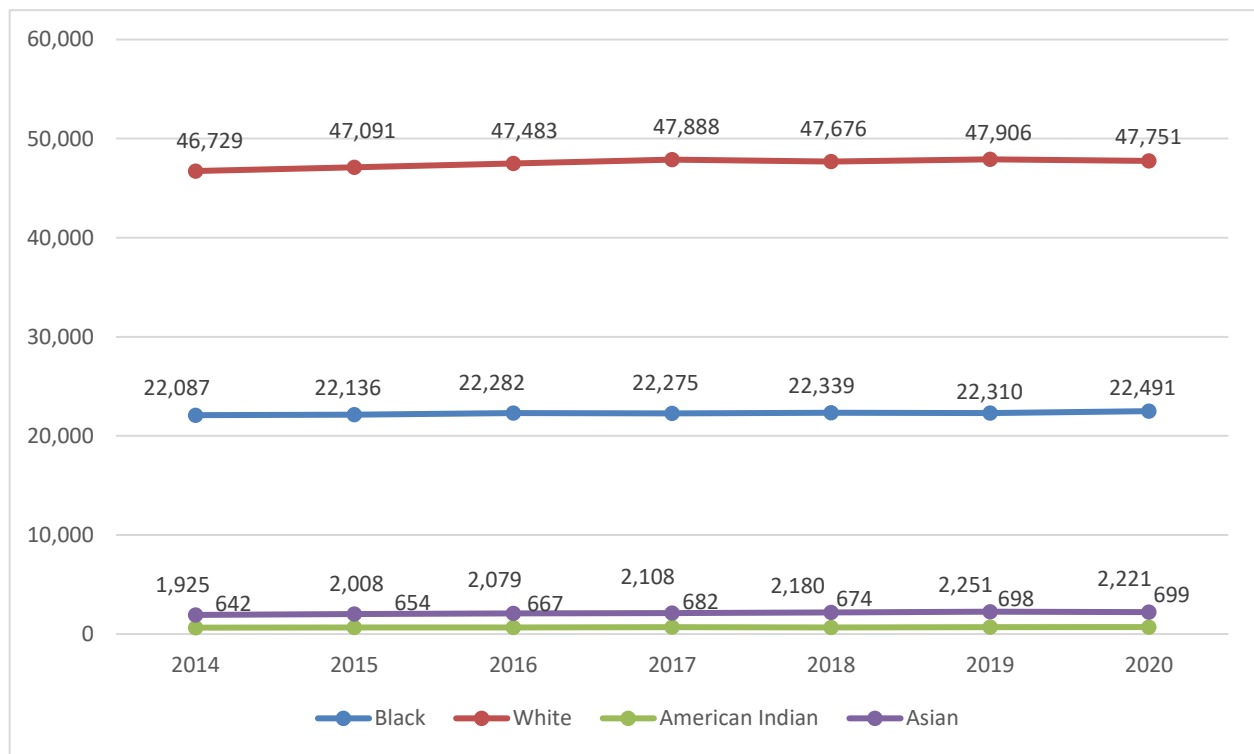
¹ Puzanchera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2020). "Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2020." Available: <http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/>. United States Census Bureau. Quick Facts: Jackson County, Missouri. Available: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/jacksoncountymissouri/PST045217>.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

² Puzanchera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2020). "Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2020." Available: <http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/>. More recent population data 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/>. More recent population data 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 sixth year in a row—down another 16% from last year. Referrals filed in 2023 were less than half what they were in 2019. The number of petitions and motions to modify for child abuse and neglect has declined at a similar rate when compared to 2019.

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. The clearance rate was exceptionally high in 2023 at 156%.

New adoption and termination of parental rights (TPR) filings are down as well. Adoption filings in 2023 were 44% lower than they were in 2019, and TPR filings declined by 75%.

Table 4. Child Abuse and Neglect Referrals and Formal Filings

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Referrals	1,387	1,501	1,408	1,337	1,097	1,030	771	645
% change	+19%	+8%	-6%	-5%	-13%	-6%	-25%	-16%
Rate per 1,000 ⁴	8.4	9.1	8.5	8.1	7.0	6.3	4.7	3.9

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Open Cases December 31	2,020	2,019	2,056	1,888	1,891	1,727	1,507	1,259
New Cases	983	991	1,034	845	794	707	608	463
Releases	1,031	994	1,001	1,094	802	912	812	720
Clearance Rate	105%	100%	97%	129%	101%	129%	134%	156%

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Petitions and Mot to Modify	1,423	1,277	1,304	1,228	983	976	787	597
% change	+10%	-10%	+2%	-6%	-20%	-1%	-19%	-24%

Table 5. Adoption and Termination of Parental Rights Formal Filings

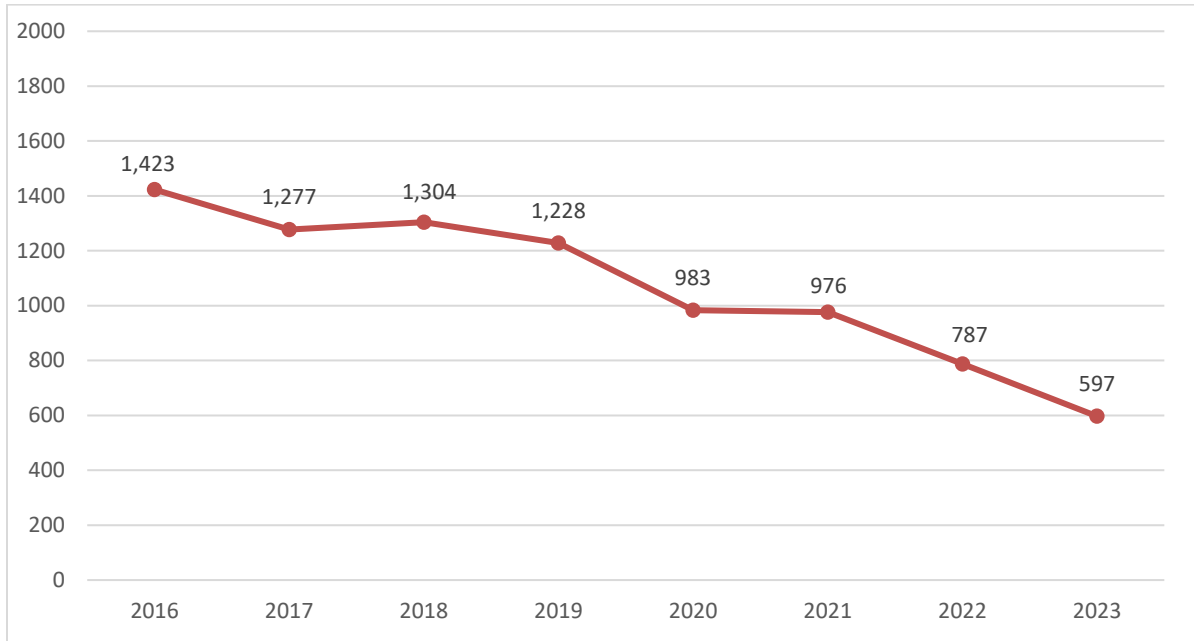
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
New Adoption Cases ⁵	294	299	348	335	257	256	241	188
New Termination of Parental Rights Cases	449 ⁶	368	335	310	210	113	127	77

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

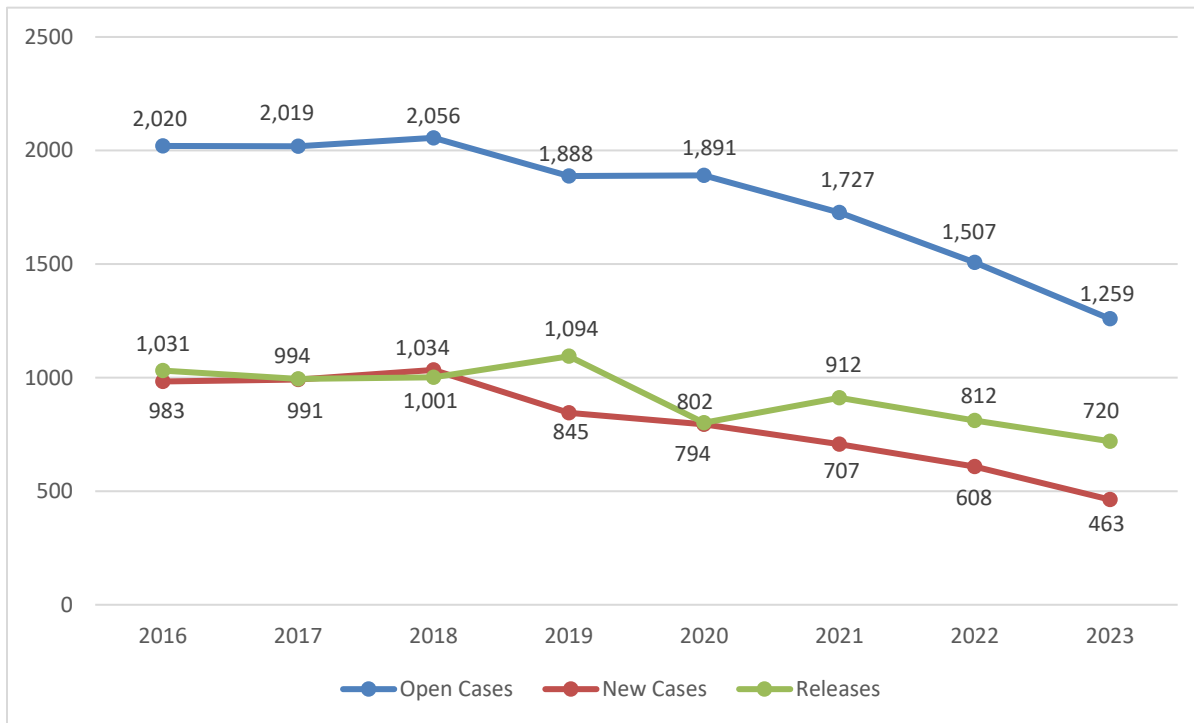
⁵ This table reports regular adoption cases and does not include stepchild or adult adoptions.

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.

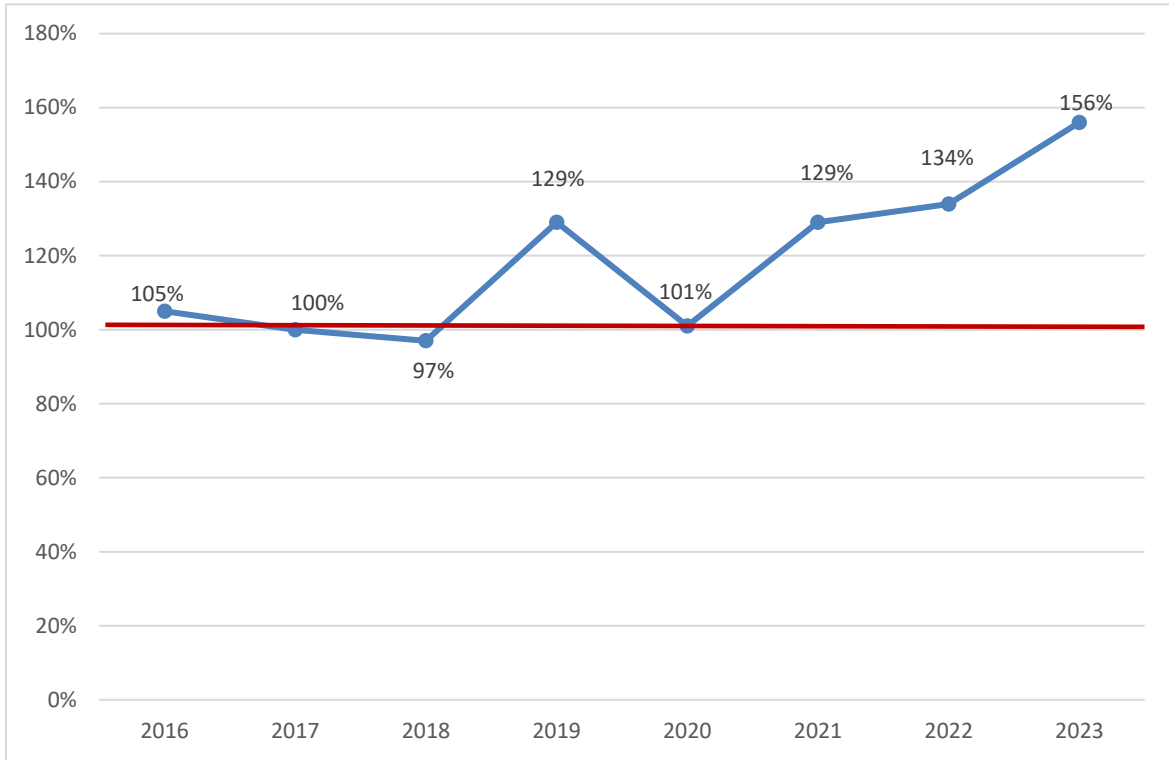
Graph 2. Child Abuse and Neglect Formal Filings by Year



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

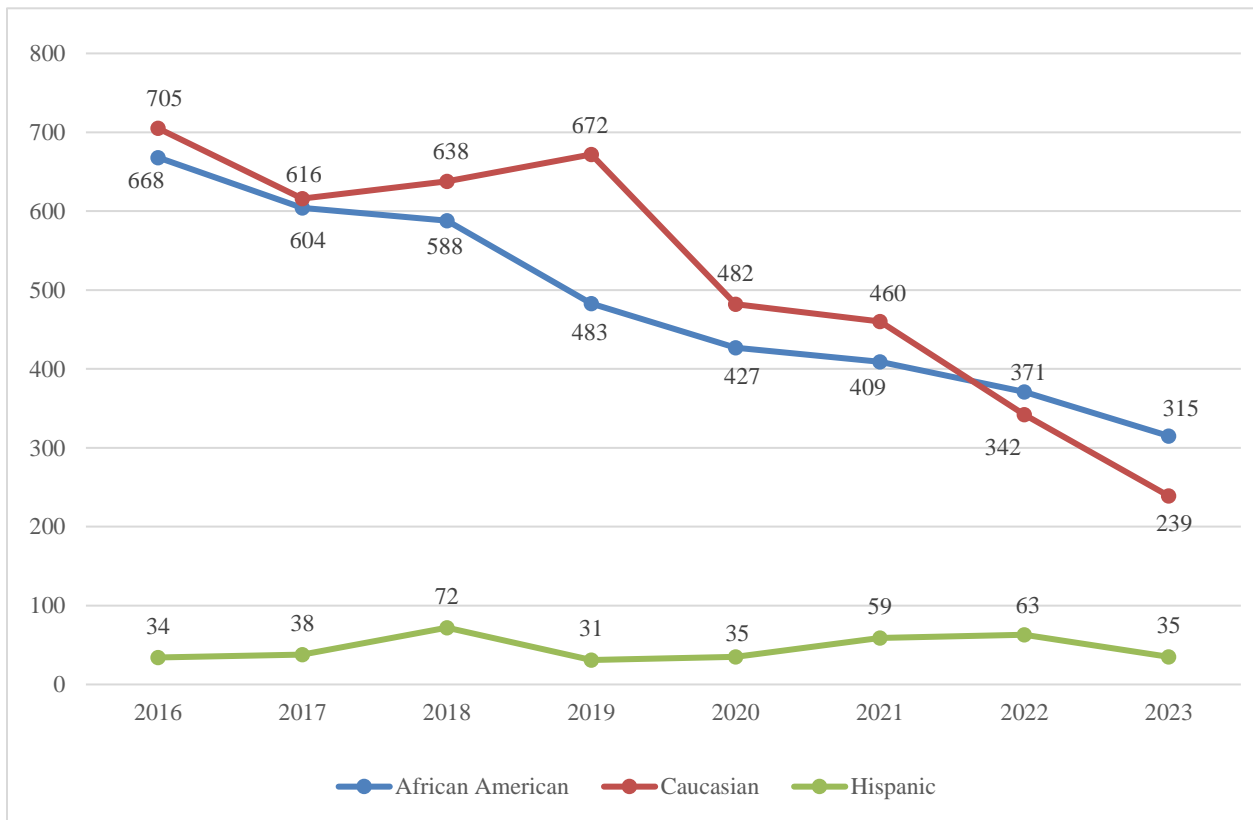


Graph 4. Clearance Rates in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases



**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	%
2016 ⁷	668	47%	705	50%	34	2%	13	1%	3	<1%
2017 ⁸	604	47%	616	48%	38	3%	19	1%	0	0%
2018 ⁹	588	45%	638	48%	72	5%	17	1%	1	<1%
2019 ¹⁰	483	39%	672	55%	31	3%	9	1%	33	3%
2020 ¹¹	427	43%	482	49%	35	4%	4	<1%	35	4%
2021 ¹²	409	42%	460	47%	59	6%	20	2%	28	3%
2022 ¹³	371	47%	342	43%	63	8%	3	<1%	8	1%
2023 ¹⁴	315	53%	239	40%	35	6%	5	1%	3	1%



⁷ Race was unknown for 3 cases in 2016. Twenty-six youth included in the African American category identified as biracial.

⁸ Twenty-five youth included in the African American category in 2017 identified as biracial.

⁹ Race was unknown for 1 case in 2018. Twenty-nine youth included in the African American category identified as biracial.

¹⁰ Race was unknown for 33 cases in 2019. Ten youth included in the African American category identified as biracial.

¹¹ Race was unknown for 35 cases in 2020. Twelve youth included in the African American category identified as biracial.

¹² 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.

¹³ Race was unknown for 8 cases in 2022. Two youth included in the African American category identified as biracial.

¹⁴ Race was unknown for 3 cases in 2023. Eleven 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	%
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%
2023	304	51%	293	49%

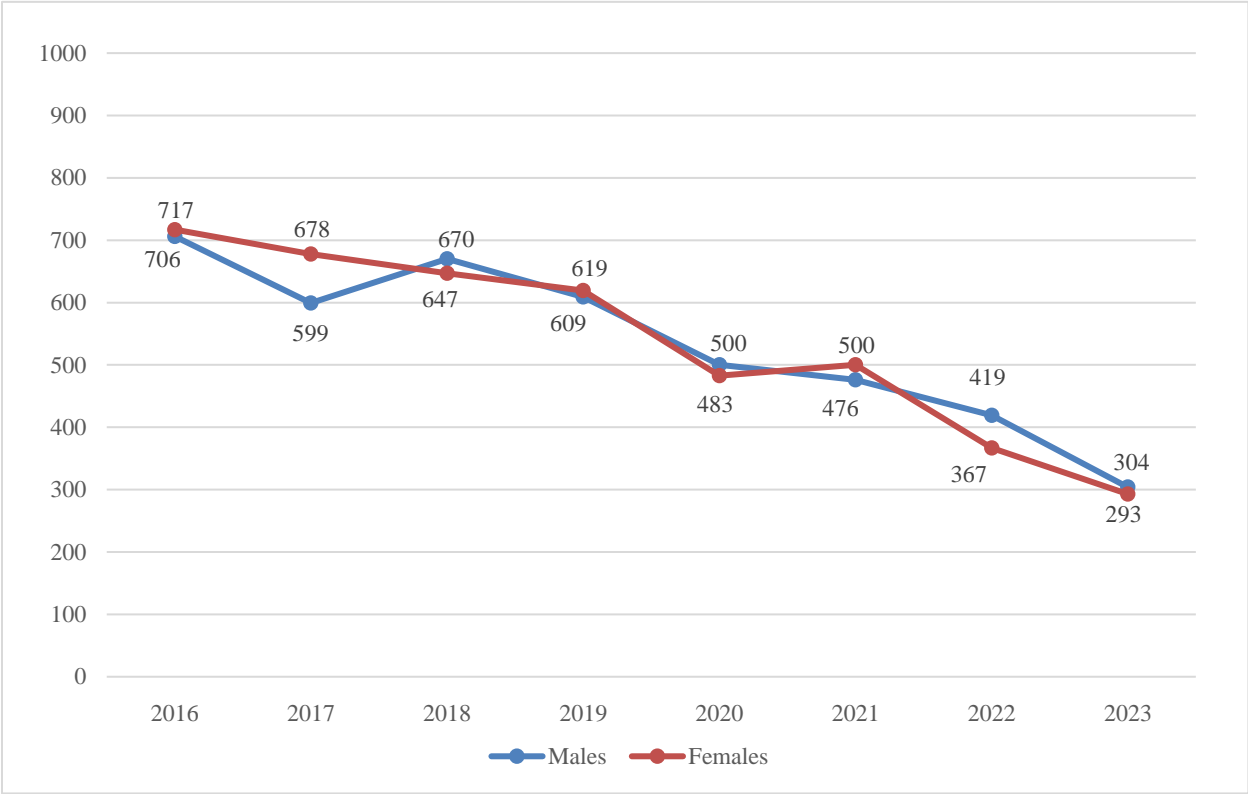
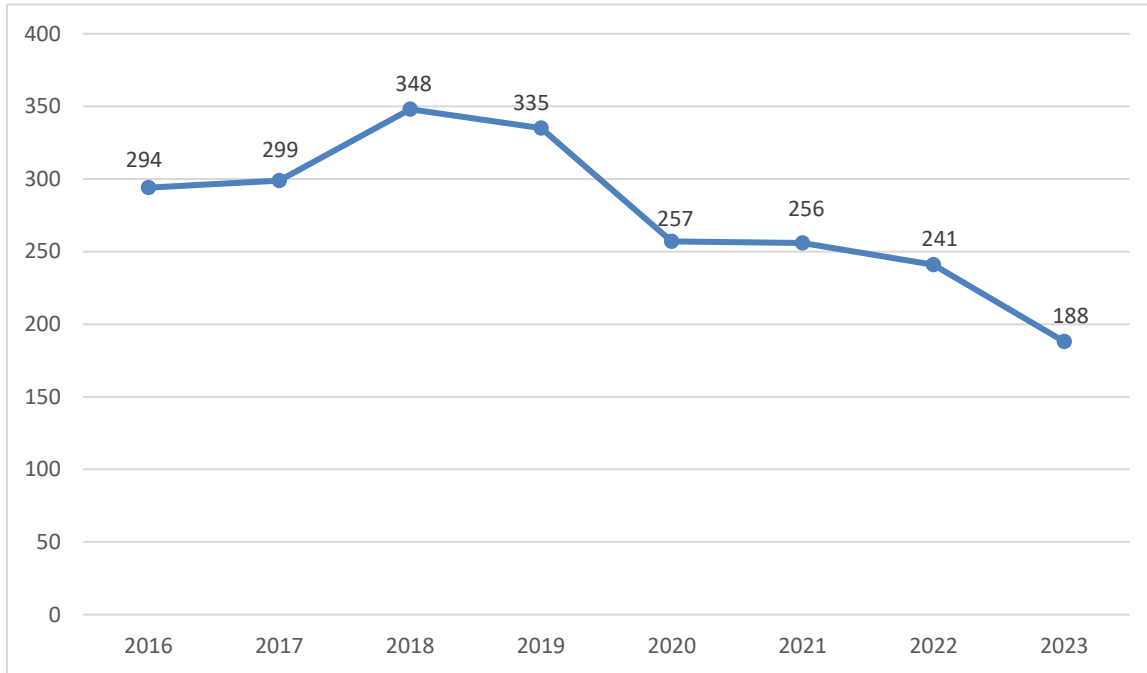


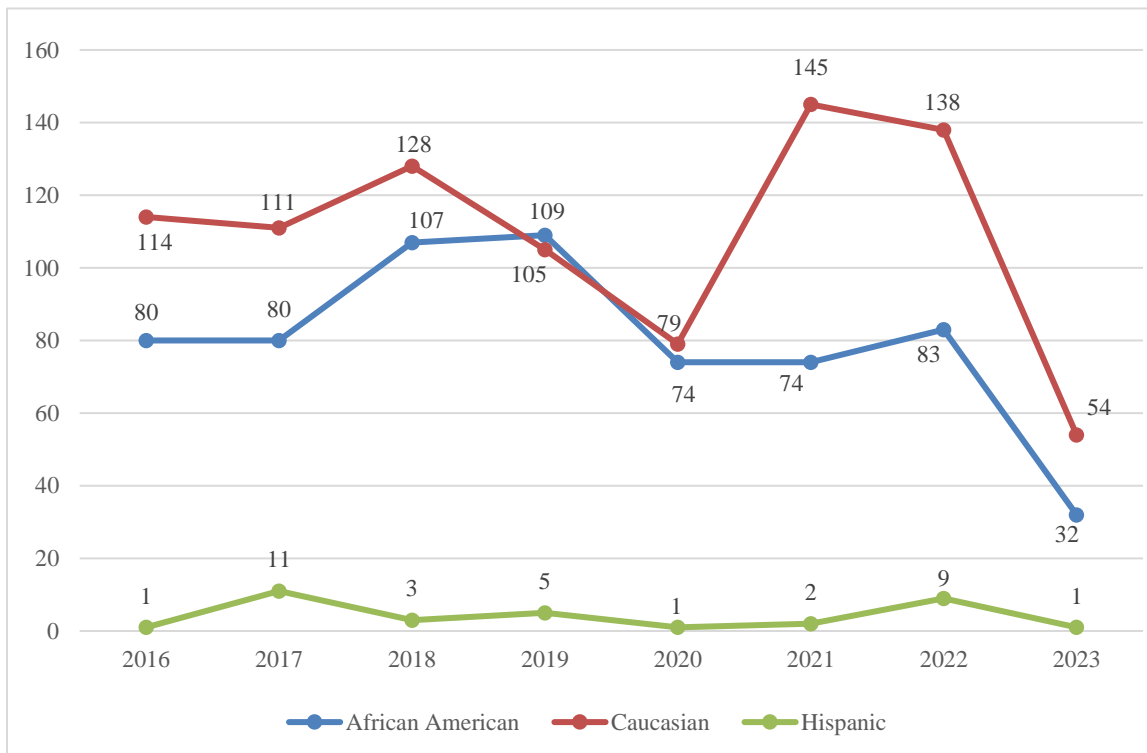
Table 8. Issues Identified in Child Abuse and Neglect Petitions

Issue	2007		2022		2023	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Physical Abuse	161	21%	154	25%	144	32%
Sexual Abuse	85	11%	16	3%	33	7%
Neglect (unsafe situation)	392	50%	97	16%	113	25%
Neglect (living conditions)	174	22%	48	8%	48	11%
Neglect (abandonment)	64	8%	97	16%	87	19%
Neglect (CAN cases for siblings)	87	11%	133	22%	96	21%
Neglect (w/o proper supervision)	103	13%	147	24%	119	26%
Neglect (medical)	110	14%	56	9%	34	8%
Neglect (educational)	49	6%	27	4%	15	3%
Substance Abuse	370	48%	262	43%	153	34%
Criminal Activity	154	20%	134	22%	67	15%
Domestic Violence	149	19%	81	13%	51	11%
Mental Health	127	16%	113	19%	69	15%
Child Born Drug Exposed	122	16%	81	13%	54	12%
Homelessness	41	5%	83	14%	45	10%
Age of Parent	9	1%	4	1%	1	<1%
Cognitive Impairment	4	1%	6	1%	4	1%
Other	4	1%	33	5%	26	6%
Total Cases	777		607		452	
Avg. Issues Identified	2.8		2.6		2.5	

Graph 7. Adoption Cases Filed by Year

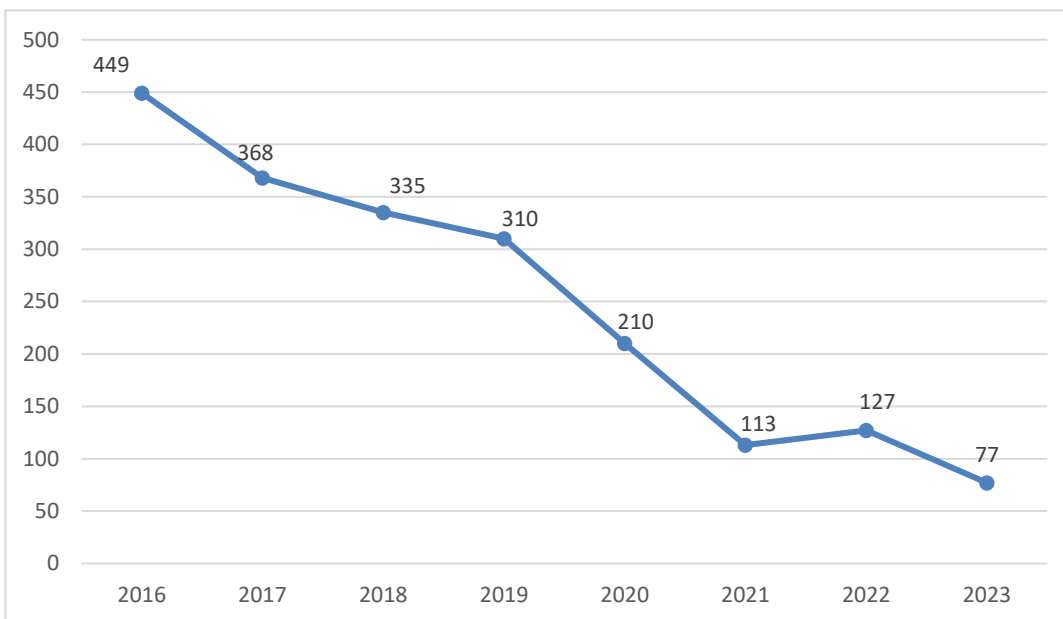


Graph 8. Adoption Cases Filed by Race¹⁵

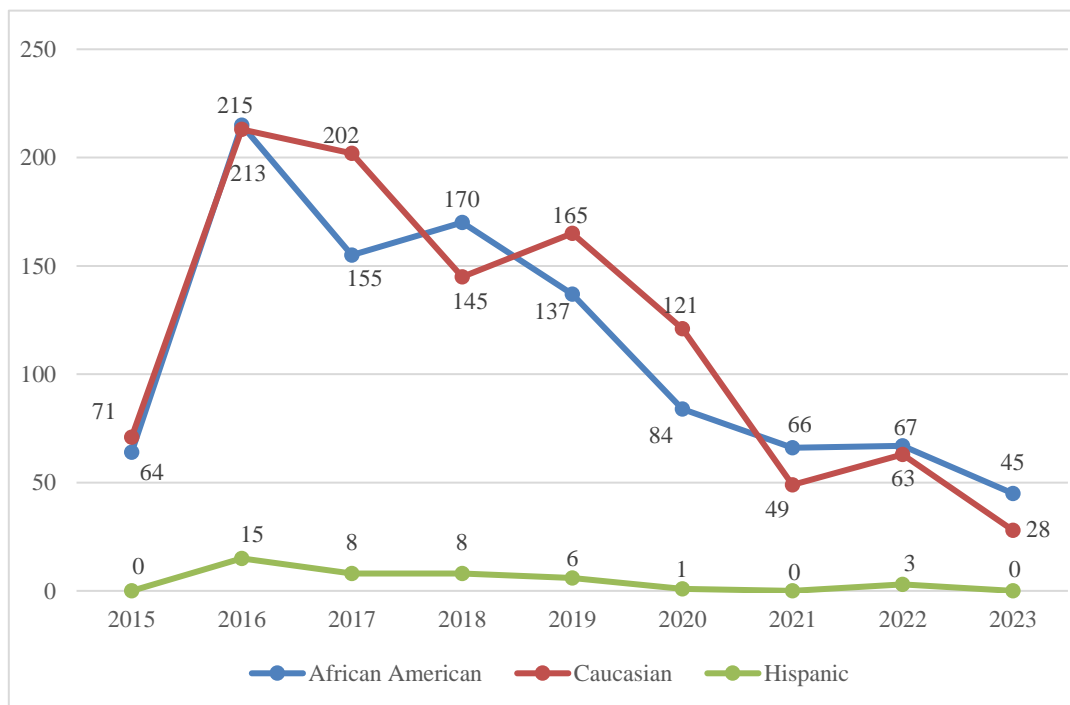


¹⁵ Race is unknown for a significant number of youth. Cases with multiple children of different races are coded for the race of the child named first on the petition.

Graph 9. Termination of Parental Rights Cases Filed by Year¹⁶



Graph 10. Termination of Parental Rights Cases Filed by Race¹⁷



¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ Race was unknown for 1 youth in 2017, 3 youth in 2018, 3 youth in 2020, 2 youth in 2021, 6 youth in 2022, and 4 youth in 2023.

Status Offense Referrals and Filings

The number of status offense referrals more than doubled from 2022 and was higher than any other year of the last eight. This was largely due to an increase in referrals for firearm possession (from two referrals in 2022 to 21 in 2023) and running away from home (from 16 referrals in 2022 to 39 referrals in 2023). More status referrals were filed for behavior outside the home in 2023, such as alcohol possession or possessing a fake ID. In 2022, 25% of status referrals were for behavioral issues in the home, compared to 5% of referrals in 2023.

The number of formal filings for status offenses was high but not outside the normal range. Of the 12 formal filings, 9 were new petitions, and 5 of these were for incidents involving firearm possession.

Table 9. Status Offense Referrals and Formal Filings

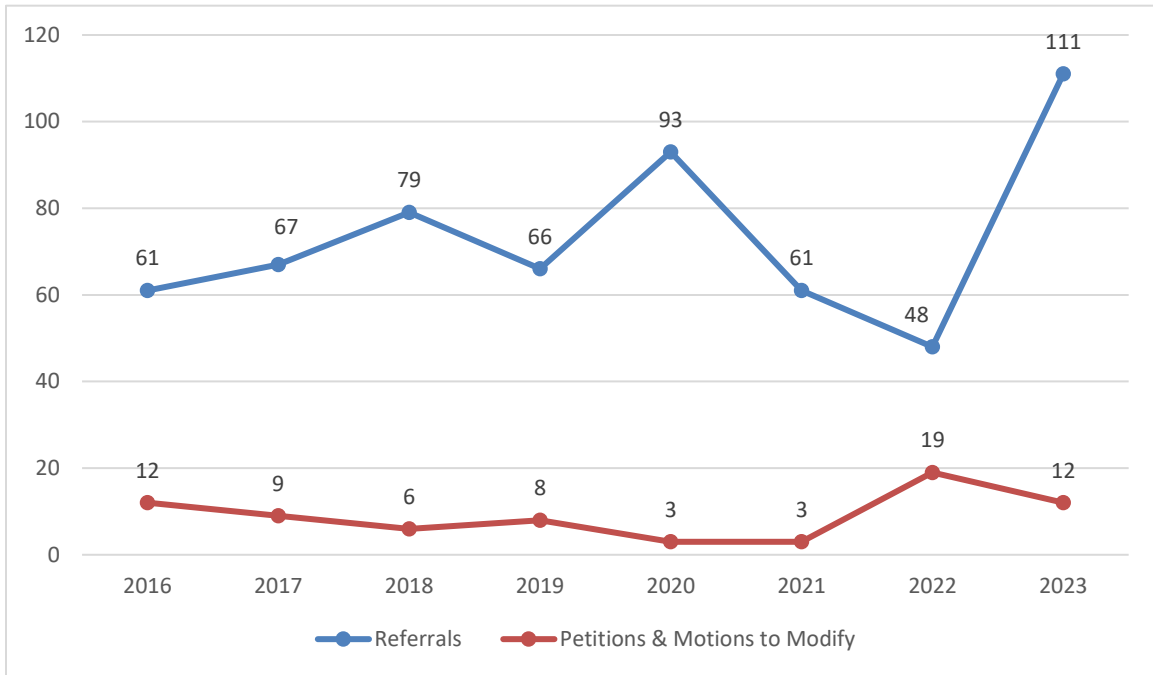
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Referrals	61	67	79	66	93	61	48	108
% change	+30%	+10%	+18%	-16%	+41%	-34%	-21%	+125%
Rate per 1,000 ¹⁸	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	1.3	0.8	0.7	1.5
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Petitions and Mot to Modify	12	9	6	8	3	3	19	12
% change	-14%	-25%	-33%	+33%	-63%	+0%	+533%	-36%

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

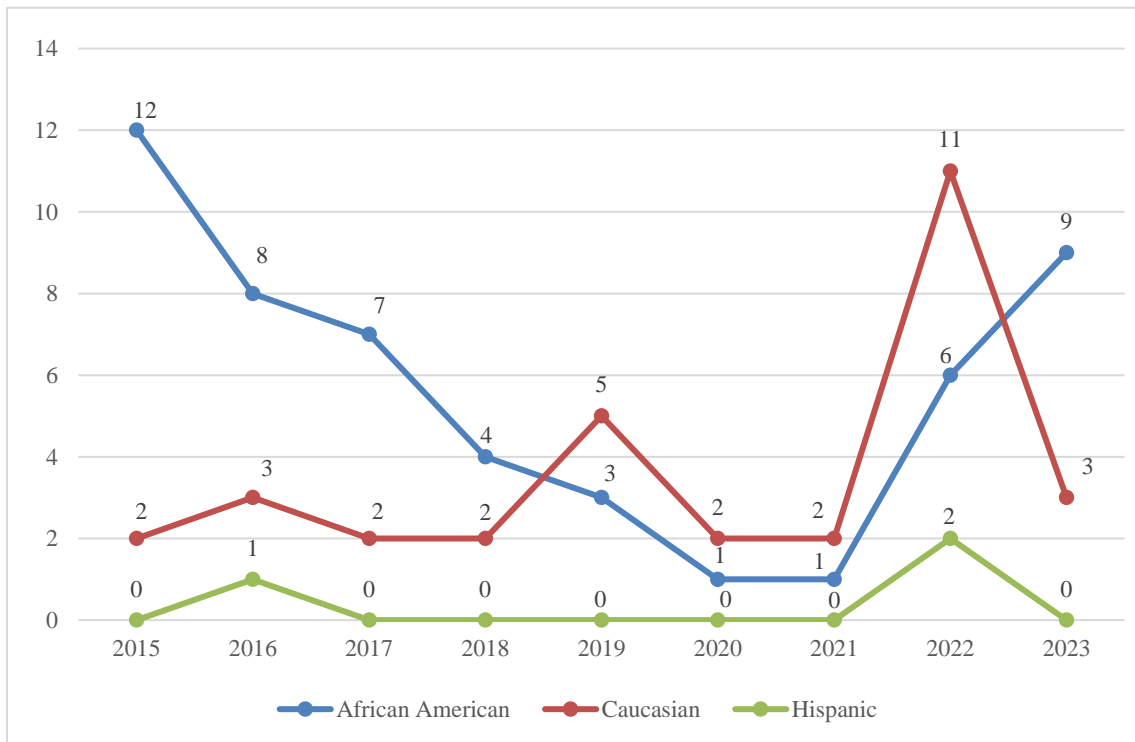
Table 10: Reasons for Status Referrals

Reason	2022		2023	
	N	%	N	%
Alcohol/vaping	0	0%	10	9%
Behavior at home	12	25%	5	5%
Behavior at school	1	2%	8	7%
Fake ID	0	0%	6	6%
Firearm	2	4%	21	19%
In stolen vehicle	0	0%	2	2%
Out-of-county warrant	1	2%	0	0%
Running away	16	33%	39	36%
Stealing/possessing stolen property	2	4%	0	0%
Truancy	10	21%	6	6%
Other socially inappropriate behavior	1	2%	9	8%
Unknown	3	6%	2	2%
Total Cases	48		108	

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 around pre-pandemic levels. Referrals in 2023 increased just 3% from 2022, but formal filings increased by 18%, indicating a higher rate of formal filing on referrals in 2023..

Compared with eight years ago, delinquent and technical filings are still low. In 2016, the rate of referral to the Court was around 19 referrals per 1,000 Jackson County youth, compared to a rate of 16 referrals per 1,000 youth in 2023.

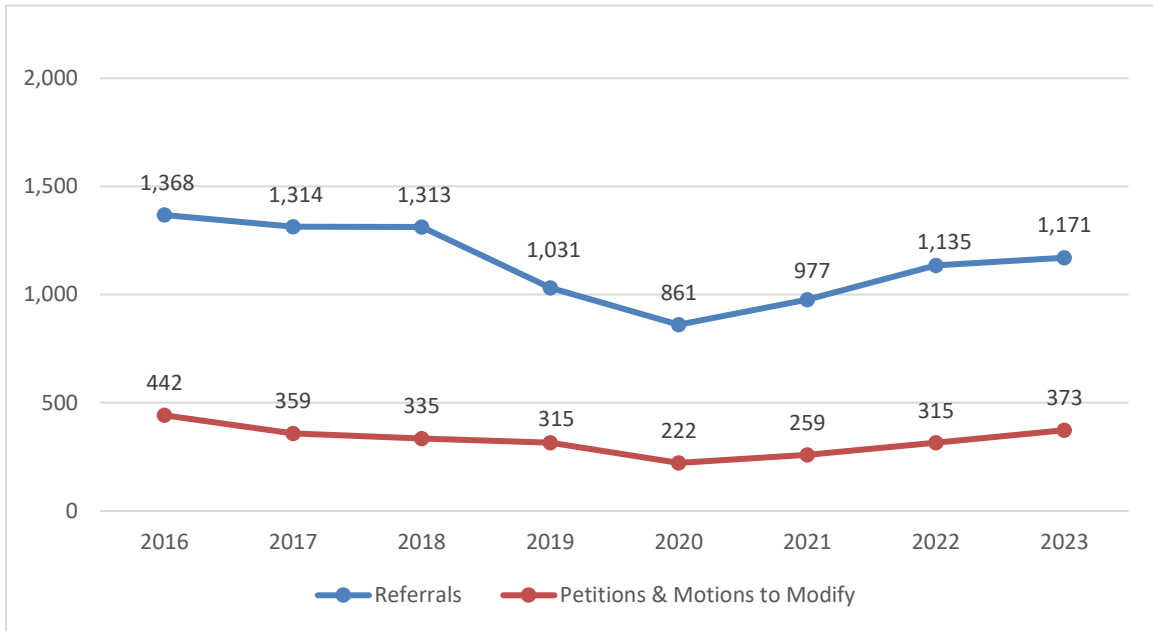
After several years of consistently exceeding 100%, the clearance rate of delinquent and technical cases dropped to 73% in 2022 and remained about the same in 2023 at 77%.

Table 10. Delinquent and Technical Referrals and Formal Filings

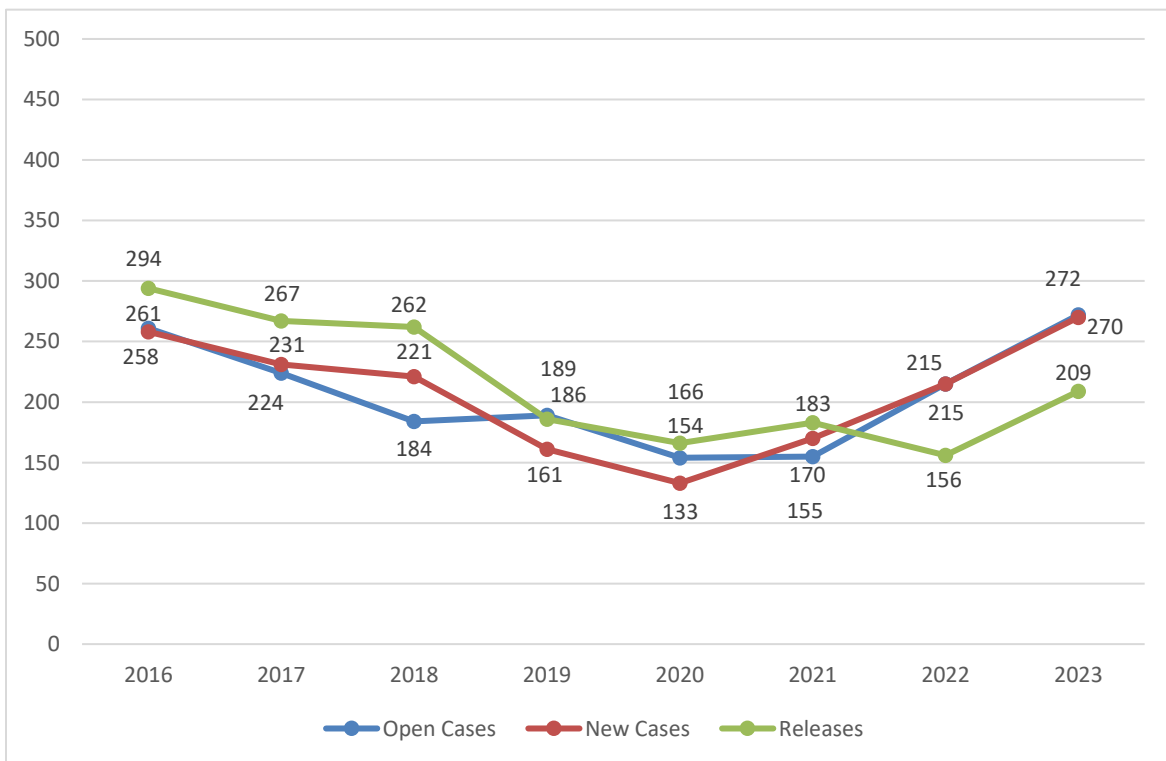
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Referrals	1,368	1,314	1,313	1,031	861	977	1,135	1,171
% change	-2%	-4%	0%	-21%	-17%	+13%	+16%	+3%
Rate per 1,000 ¹⁹	19.1	18.1	18.0	14.1	11.7	13.4	15.5	16.0
Open Cases December 31	261	224	184	189	154	155	215	272
New Cases	258	231	221	161	133	170	215	270
Releases	294	267	262	186	166	183	156	209
Clearance Rate	114%	116%	119%	116%	125%	108%	73%	77%
Petitions and Mot to Modify	442	359	335	315	222	259	315	373
% change	-9%	-19%	-7%	-6%	-30%	+17%	+22%	+18%

¹⁹ Rates were calculated based on the number of youth in Jackson County aged 10-17 years.

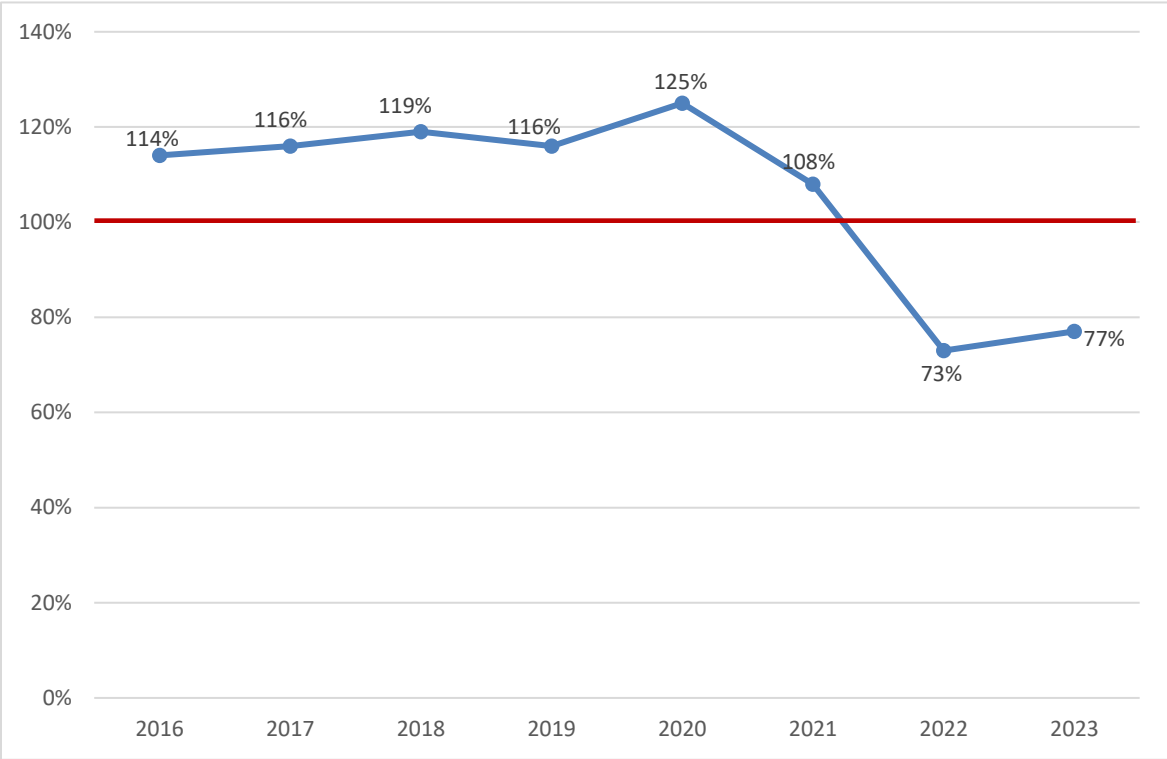
Graph 13. Delinquent and Technical Referrals and Formal Filings by Year



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.

The share of delinquent and technical filings for African American youth was exceptionally high in 2023 at 81%. This was an 11 percentage-point increase from 2022 and 10 percentage points higher than average for the previous 7 years. The share of filings for Caucasian youth dropped accordingly. African American youth make up about 31% of the youth population in Jackson County, so the 81% filing rate is highly disproportionate to the population. Family Court Services is actively examining racial equity issues in its juvenile justice processes and programs.

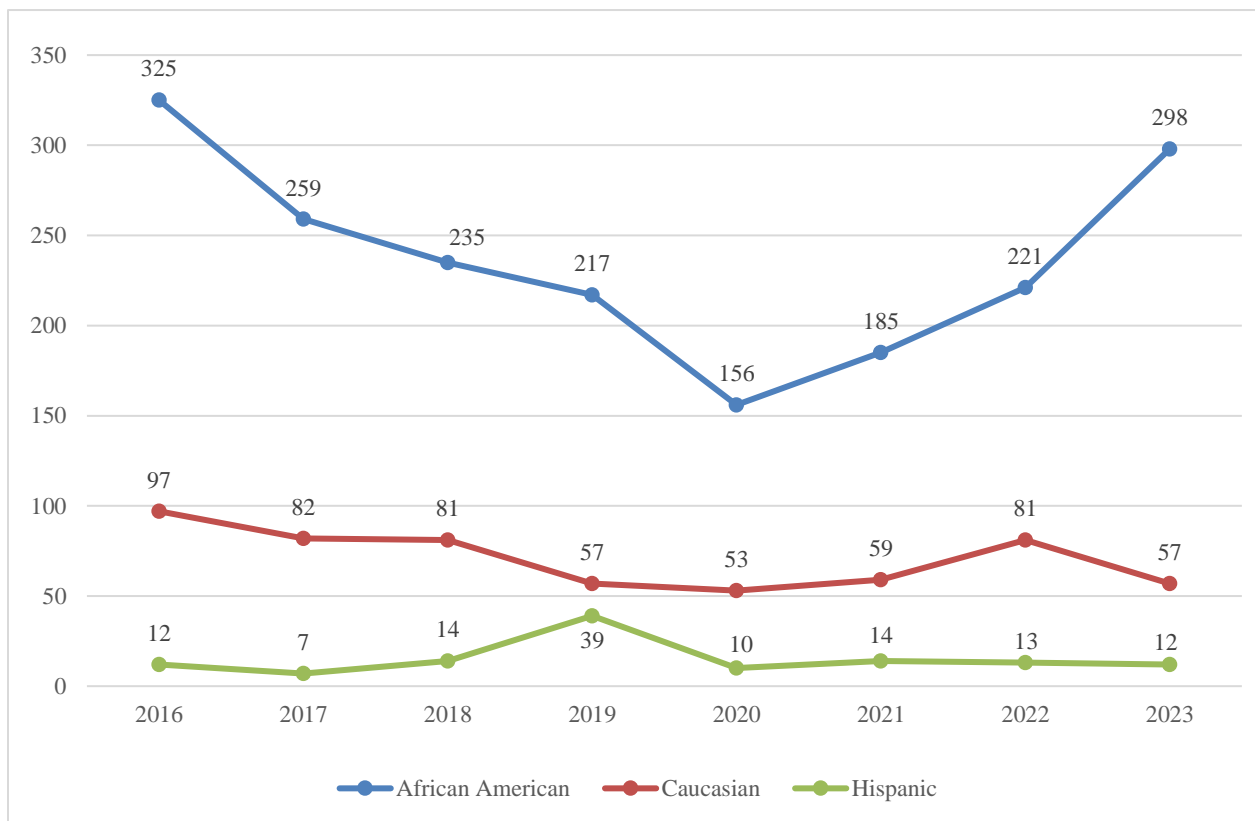
The percentage of filings for males has fluctuated around 82% for the last eight years and was just below this average rate in 2023 at 81%.

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 and 29% of petitions filed in 2023.

After declining steadily since 2018, the share of youth residing in Kansas City jumped from 52% in 2022 to 64% in 2023, returning to the 2016-2019 level. The rate of youth from each of the suburbs remained steady or declined except Independence, which increased as well from 12% in 2022 to 15% in 2023.

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

Year	African American		Caucasian		Hispanic		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2016 ²⁰	325	74%	97	22%	12	3%	6	1%
2017 ²¹	259	72%	82	24%	7	2%	3	<1%
2018 ²²	235	72%	81	24%	14	4%	1	<1%
2019	217	69%	57	18%	39	12%	3	1%
2020 ²³	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	--
2023 ²⁴	298	81%	57	15%	12	3%	2	1%



²⁰ Race was unknown for 2 cases in 2016.

²¹ Race was unknown for 8 cases in 2017.

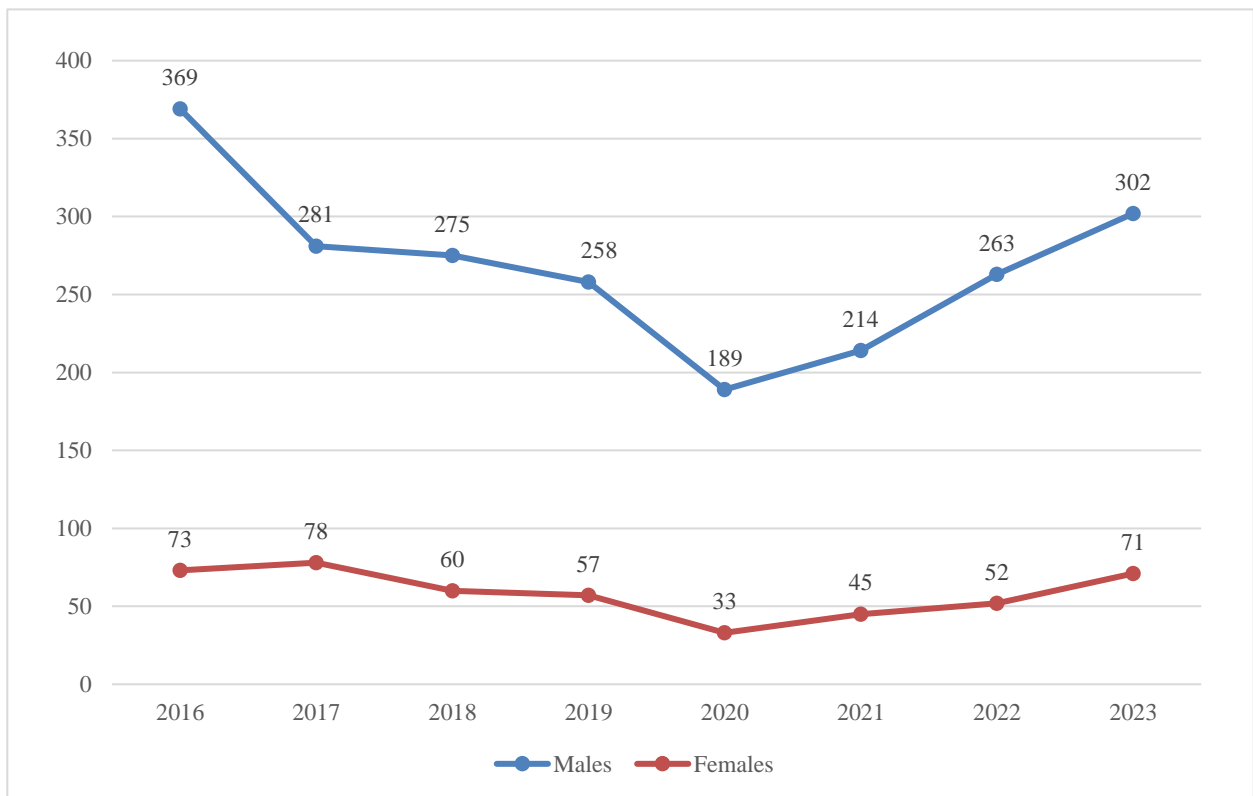
²² Race was unknown for 4 cases in 2018.

²³ Race was unknown for 1 case in 2020.

²⁴ Race was unknown for 4 cases in 2023.

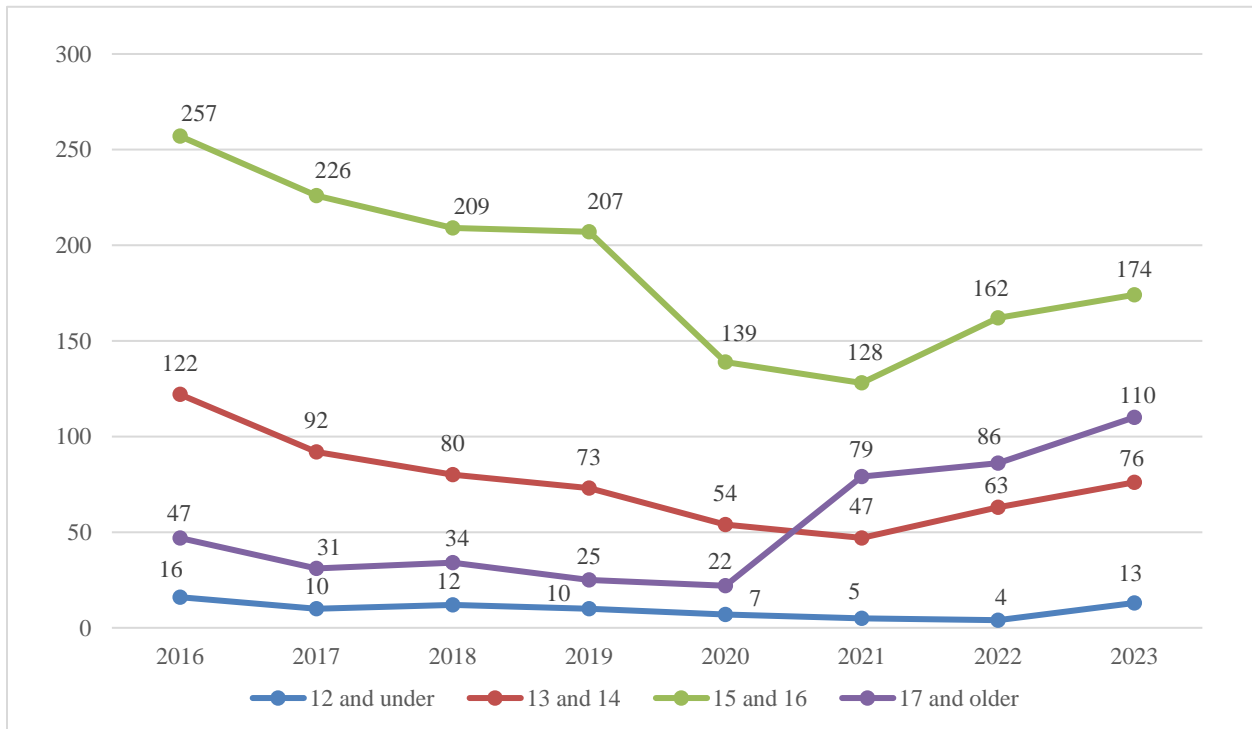
**Table 13 and Graph 17
Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings by Gender**

Year	Males		Females	
	N	%	N	%
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%
2023	302	81%	71	19%



**Table 14 and Graph 18
Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings by Age at Filing**

	≤11	12	13	14	15	16	17 ²⁵	≥18
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%
2023	3 1%	10 3%	29 8%	47 13%	80 21%	94 25%	96 26%	14 4%



²⁵ 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 12. Youth with Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings by City of Residence

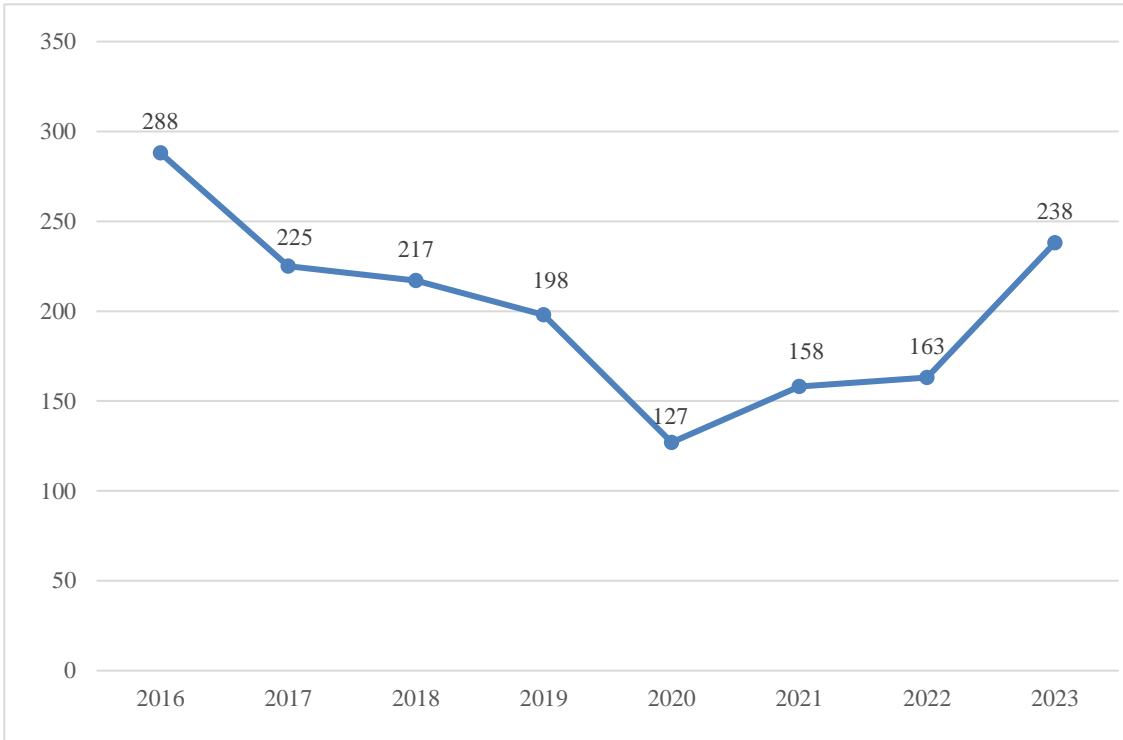
City	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Blue Springs	17 4%	11 3%	17 5%	10 4%	16 7%	13 5%	20 6%	14 4%
Grain Valley	5 1%	7 2%	2 1%	4 1%	2 1%	3 1%	9 3%	2 1%
Grandview	17 4%	20 5%	8 2%	8 4%	13 6%	6 2%	21 7%	11 3%
Greenwood	0	2 <1%	2 1%	3 3%	1 1%	1 <1%	1 <1%	0
Independence	46 10%	35 10%	31 9%	34 12%	33 15%	33 13%	38 12%	56 15%
Kansas City	288 65%	225 63%	217 65%	198 63%	127 57%	158 61%	163 52%	238 64%
Lee's Summit	25 6%	20 6%	11 3%	15 3%	12 5%	11 4%	25 8%	18 5%
Oak Grove	1 <1%	1 <1%	3 1%	0	1 1%	0	0	1 <1%
Raytown	9 2%	12 3%	10 3%	10 2%	4 2%	7 3%	9 3%	11 3%
Sugar Creek	1 <1%	0	0	1 <1%	0	1 <1%	1 <1%	3 1%
Other	20 4%	22 6%	25 7%	29 9%	11 5%	19 7%	23 7%	19 5%
Unknown	13 3%	4 1%	9 3%	3 <1%	2 1%	7 3%	5 2%	0
Total	442	359	335	315	222	259	315	373

Table 13. Rate of Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings per 1,000 Youth in 2023 by City

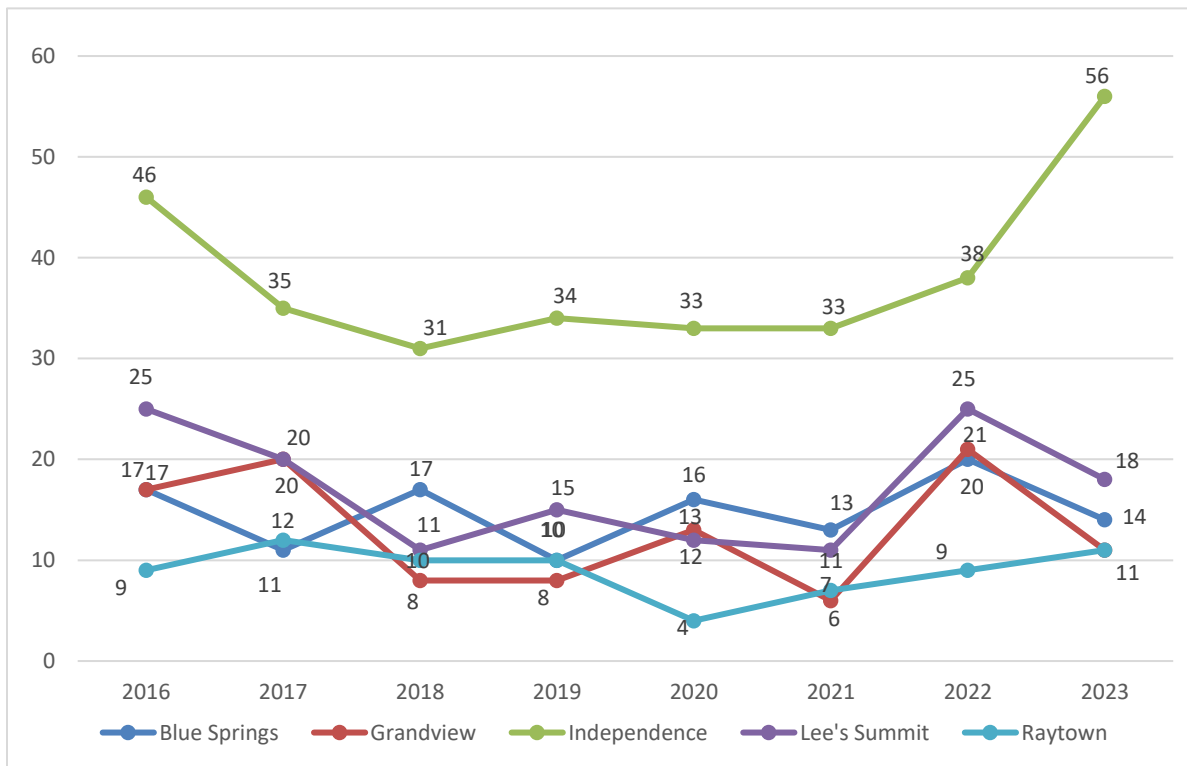
City	Number of Youth Ages 10-17 ²⁶	Rate of Filings per 1,000 Youth Ages 10-17
Blue Springs	7,330	1.9
Grandview	2,601	4.2
Independence	12,577	4.4
Kansas City	46,488	5.1
Lee's Summit	14,467	1.2
Raytown	2,789	3.9

²⁶ Number of youth in each city comes from the 2022 American Community Survey "Age and Sex" charts for individual cities available on United States Census Bureau website: <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table>.

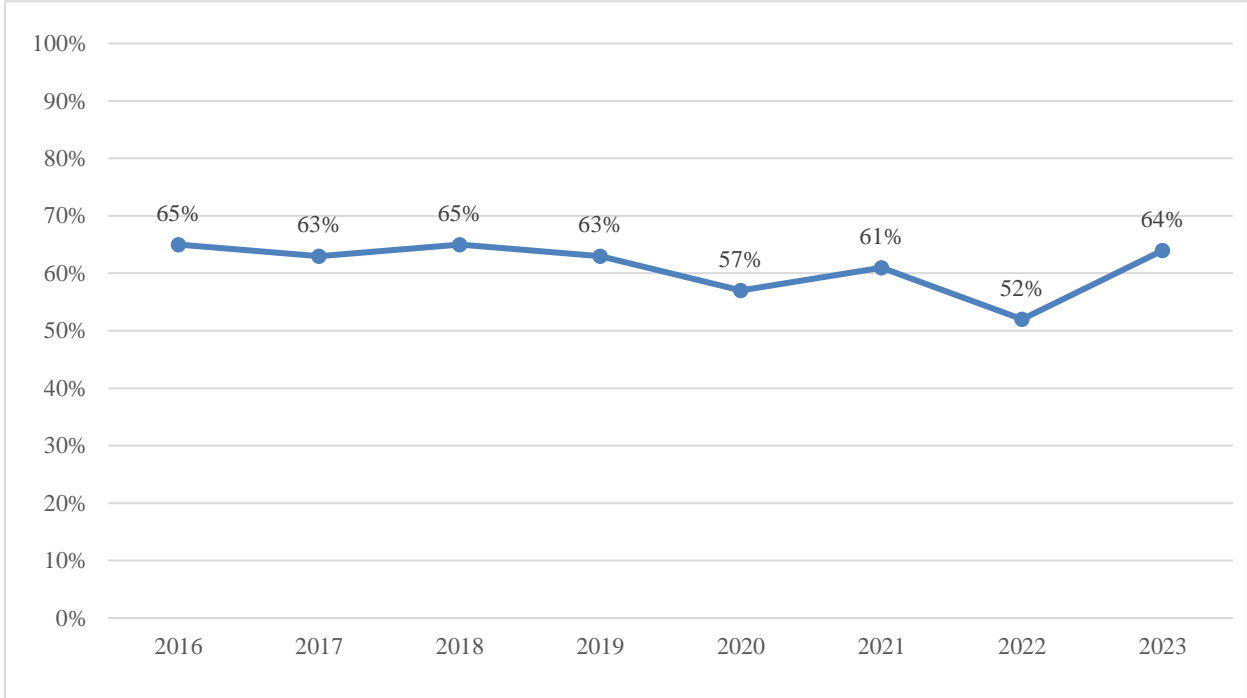
Graph 19. Youth Residing in Kansas City, Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings



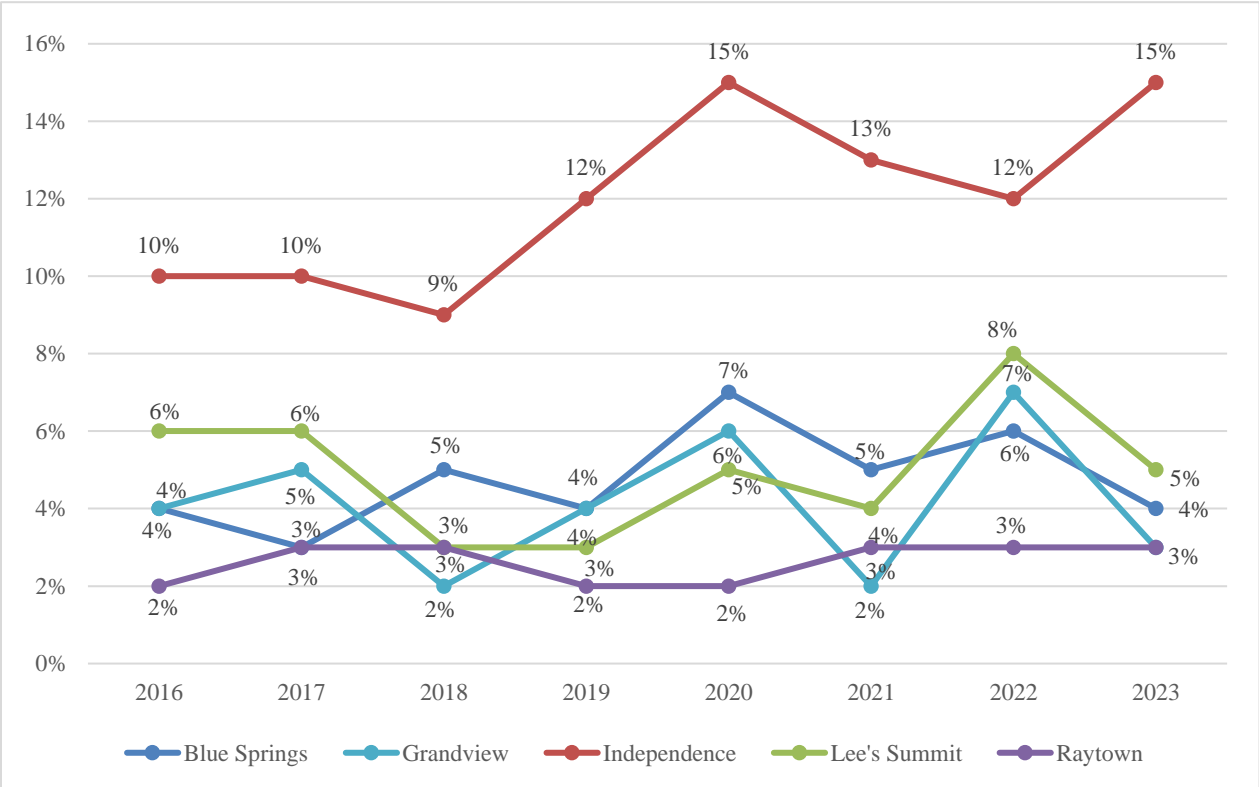
Graph 20. Youth Residing in Other Cities, Delinquent and Technical Formal Filings



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). The number of youth detained in secure detention in 2023 increased by 40 youth from 2022 and was by far the highest admissions total in the last 8 years. At 24 youth, the average daily population was not drastically higher than it was in 2016-2018 (23 youth), but admissions were around 25% higher, indicating that more youth in 2023 experienced a stay in detention, though that stay was likely to be shorter. The rate of detention for African American youth was 78%—a bit lower than the share of delinquent filings for African Americans (81%).

The number of youth detained in non-secure detention has been increasing significantly as well—up 59% last year, which was up 65% from the year before. About half as many youth were detained in non-secure detention as in the secure facility.

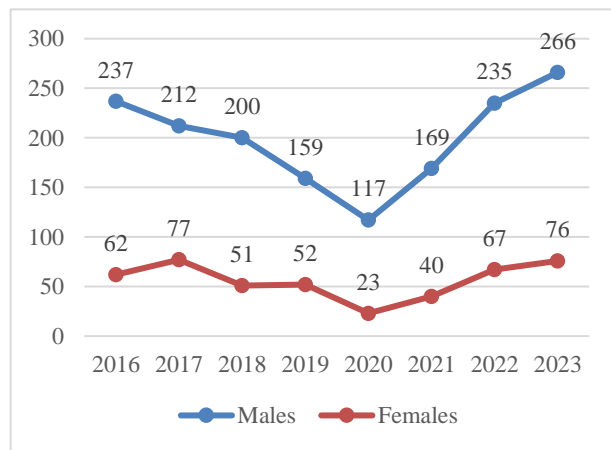
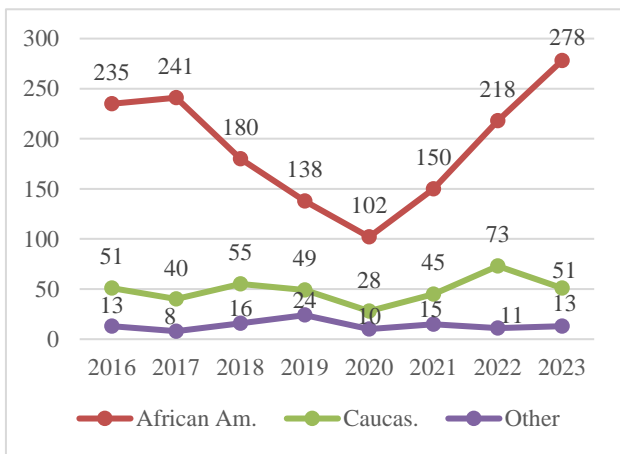
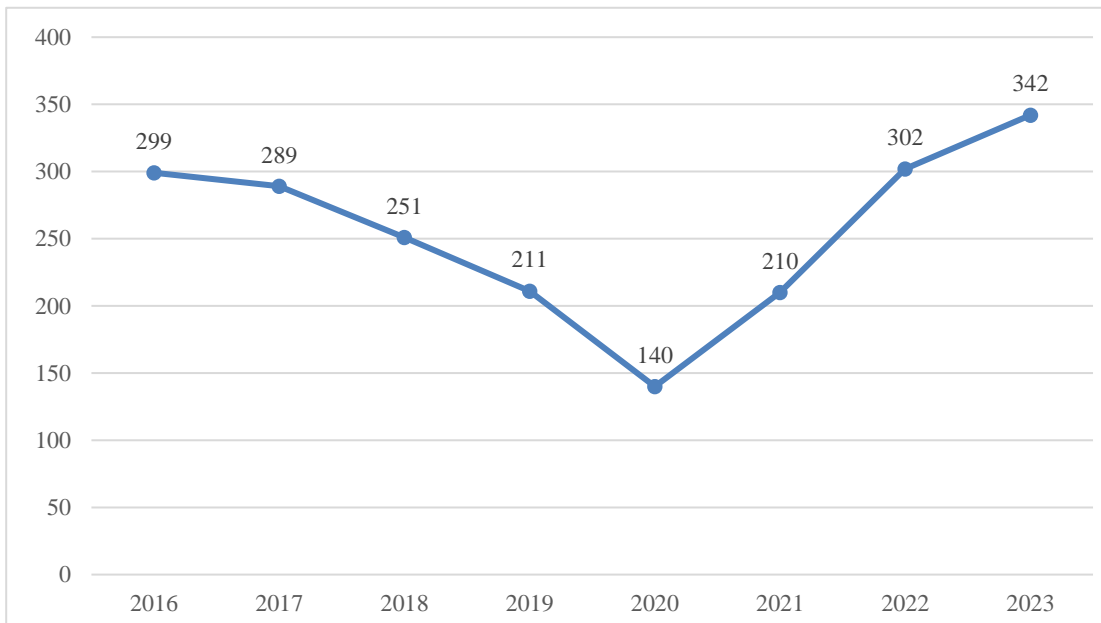
Prevention & Diversion. In 2023, the Juvenile Assessment Center served 125 youth and their families through three channels (prevention, diversion, and care calls). The Emerging Adult Justice Unit, which started in 2021 to serve youth who were 17 years old at the time of their alleged offense, served an additional 87 youth in 2023. In total, the Court served 212 youth on diversion—a 21% decline from the number served in 2022.

Probation & Residential Treatment. The number of youth ordered to probation has increased dramatically in the last two years, more than recovering from the sharp drop during the pandemic and making up some of the decline from years prior. One hundred more youth were ordered to probation in 2023 than in 2021 and around 20 more than in 2017. With the exception of two years during the pandemic, commitments to Hilltop have been very stable over the past 8 years, with around 27-30 youth committed each year.

Table 14. Detainments in Secure Detention

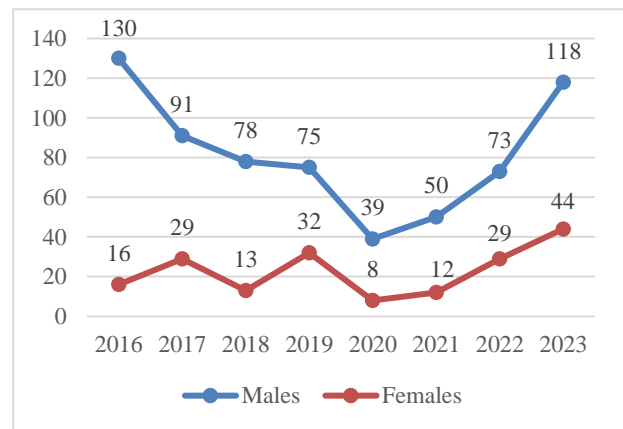
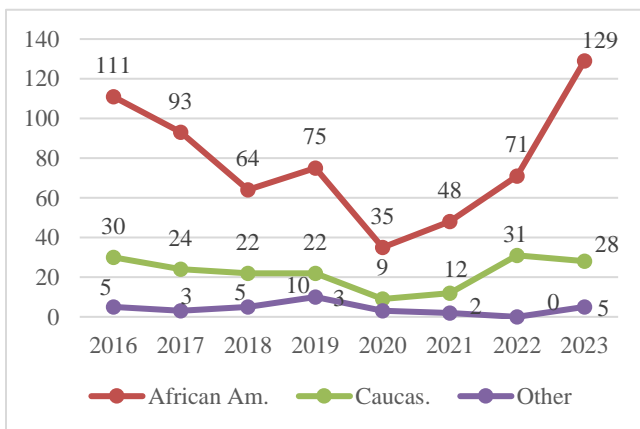
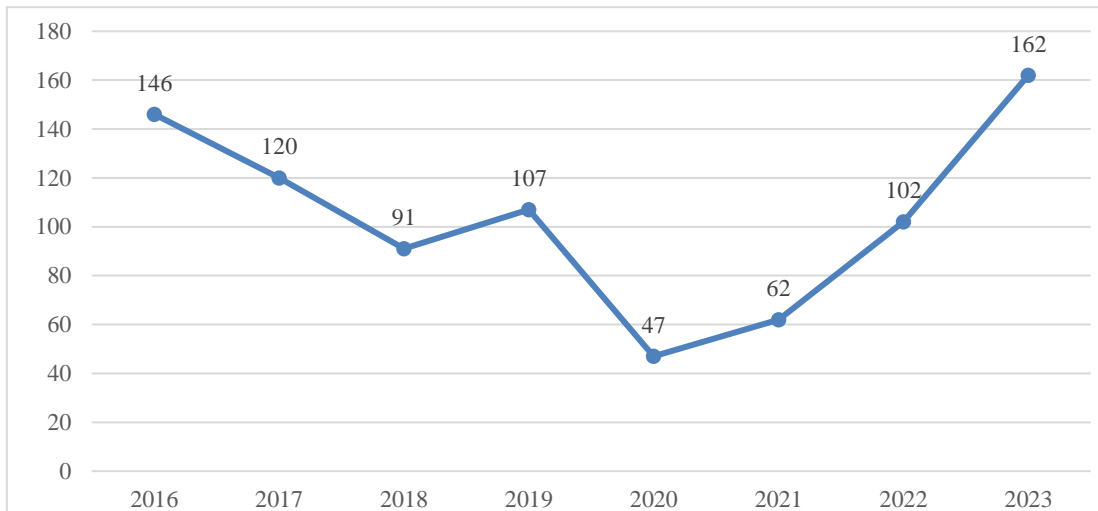
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Detention	299	289	251	211	140	210	302	342
% change	-16%	-3%	-13%	-16%	-34%	+50%	+44%	+13%
Avg. Daily Population	23	23	23	18	14	17	22	24

Graphs 23-25. Youth Admitted to Detention



**Table 15 and Graphs 28-28
Detainments in Non-Secure Detention Facilities**

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jackson House Community Reintegration Group Home ²⁷	--	--	14	--	--	--	--	--
Hilltop Residential Center	30	59	77	107	47	62	102	162
Total	146	120	91	107	47	62	102	162
% change	-28%	-18%	-24%	+18%	-56%	+32%	+65%	+59%



²⁷ 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 16. Prevention and Diversion Programs

Program	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
ASSP (Alternative to School Suspension) ²⁸	18a/ 29y	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Juvenile Assessment Center – Diversion Program ²⁹	94	65	40	34	29	34	14	15
Juvenile Assessment Center – Prevention ³⁰	--	--	--	22 ³¹	42 ³²	73 ³³	67 ³⁴	45 ³⁵
Juvenile Assessment Center – Care Calls ³⁶	164	153	199	202	55	84 ³⁷	79	65
Shoplifting Diversion	66	58	10	27	18	0	2	0
Success Court ³⁸	116	146	29	--	--	--	--	--
Emerging Adult Justice Unit ³⁹	--	--	--	--	--	40	107	87
Total	469	422	278	285	144	231	269	212
% change	-25%	-10%	-34%	+3%	-49%	+60%	+16%	-21%

²⁸ 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.

²⁹ 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.

³⁰ The Juvenile Assessment Center began accepting cases on September 15, 2019.

³¹ In 2019, the JAC received 12 referrals from the Warrant Desk, 9 walk-ins, and 1 referral from law enforcement.

³² 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.

³³ 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.

³⁴ 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.

³⁵ In 2023, the JAC received 28 referrals from the Warrant Desk, 14 referrals from law enforcement, 2 walk-ins, and 1 referral from another source.

³⁶ Care calls became a function of the Juvenile Assessment Center in September 2019. They were previously handled by the Family Counseling Unit.

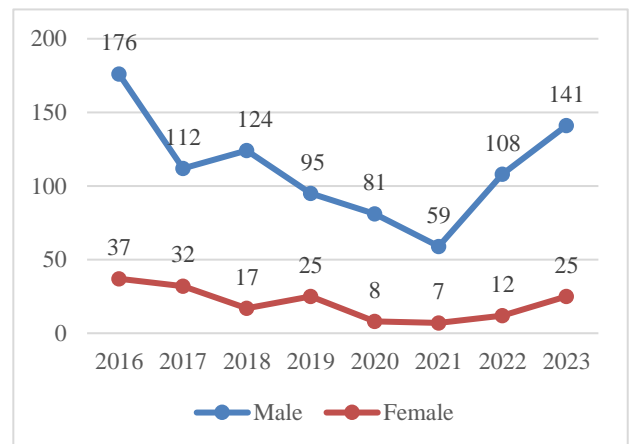
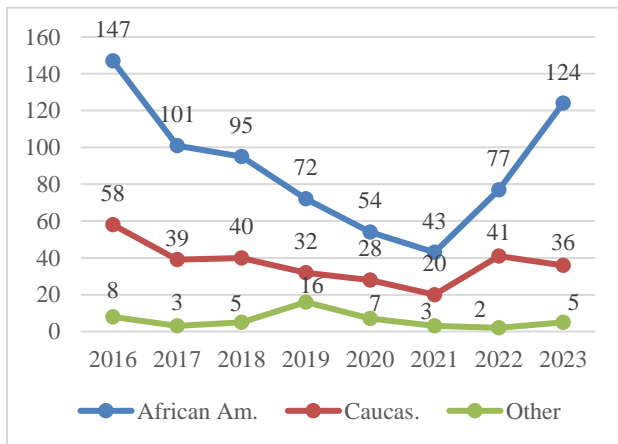
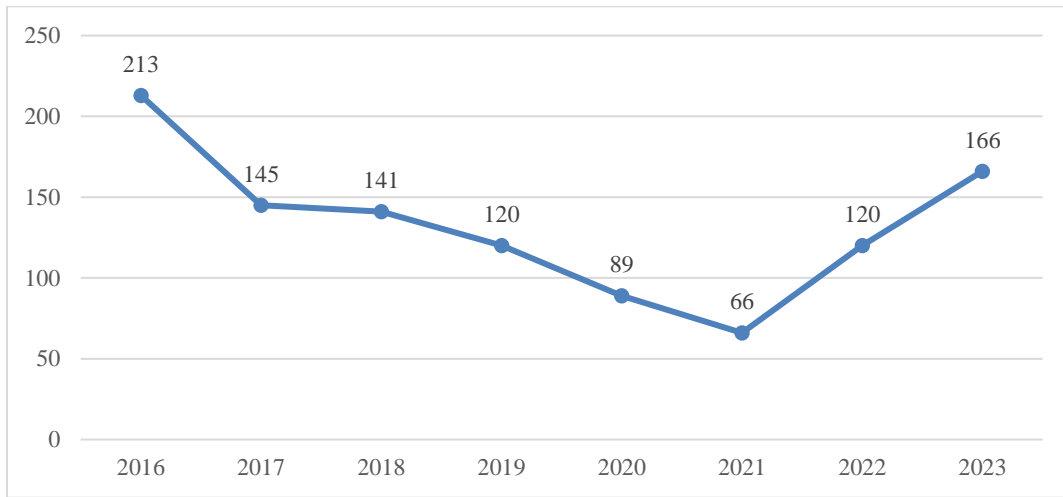
³⁷ The number of care calls reported in 2021 does not include 16 care calls directed to JAC – Prevention for referral to services. Those are included in the total for JAC – Prevention.

³⁸ This program was previously titled Truancy Court. It has not been in operation since 2018.

³⁹ The Emerging Adult Justice Unit began accepting cases referred to the Court on or after July 1, 2021.

**Table 17 and Graphs 33-31
Youth on Probation**

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Youth Ordered to FCS Supervision ⁴⁰	213	145	141	120	89	66	120	166
% change	+1%	-32%	-3%	-13%	-26%	-26%	+82%	+38%

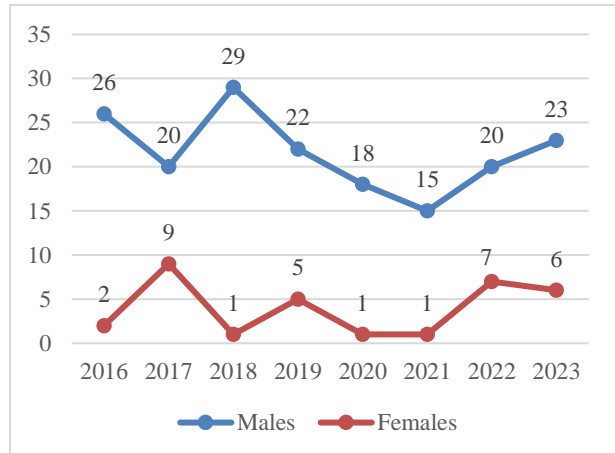
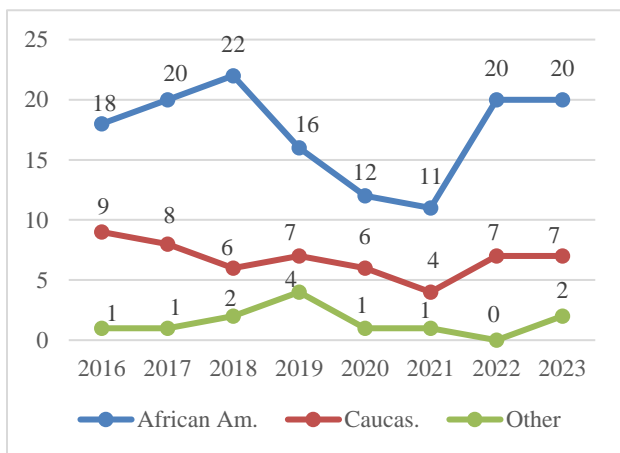
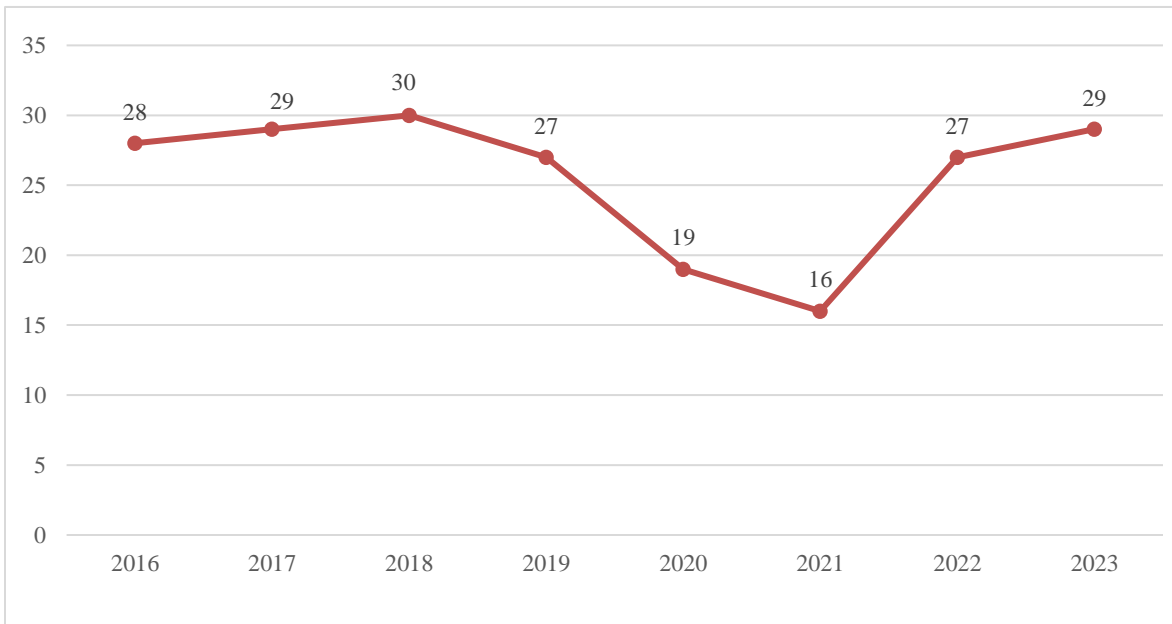


Race was unknown for one youth in 2017, two youth in 2018, one youth in 2023.

⁴⁰ Youth ordered to Family Court Supervision includes youth on probation, at Hilltop Residential Center, and in private residential placements.

**Table 18 and Graphs 38-34
Commitments to Hilltop Residential Center**

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Hilltop ⁴¹	28	29	30	27	19	16	27	29
% change	-22%	+4%	+3%	-10%	-30%	-16%	+69%	+7%



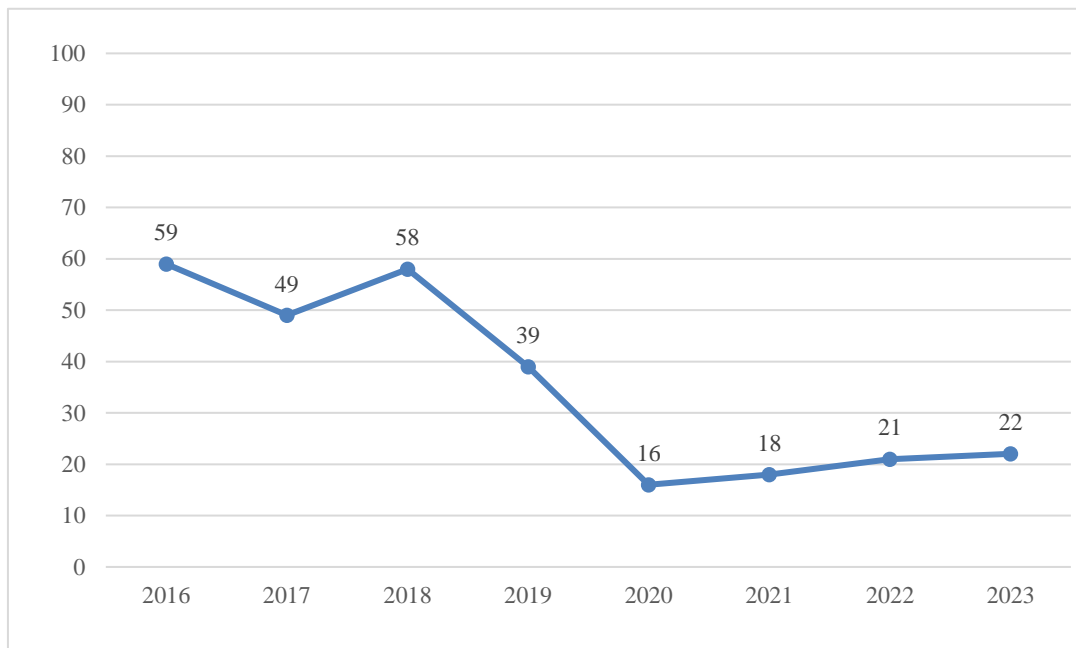
⁴¹ Commitment figures capture initial commitment and do not include occasions when youth were returned to Hilltop after having been absent without leave or after being released on furlough.

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 57% compared to the 2015-2019 average. The percentage of youth committed to DHS who were African American dropped to 73%, which was five percentage points below average for the previous seven 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 19 and Graph 43
Commitments to the Division of Youth Services

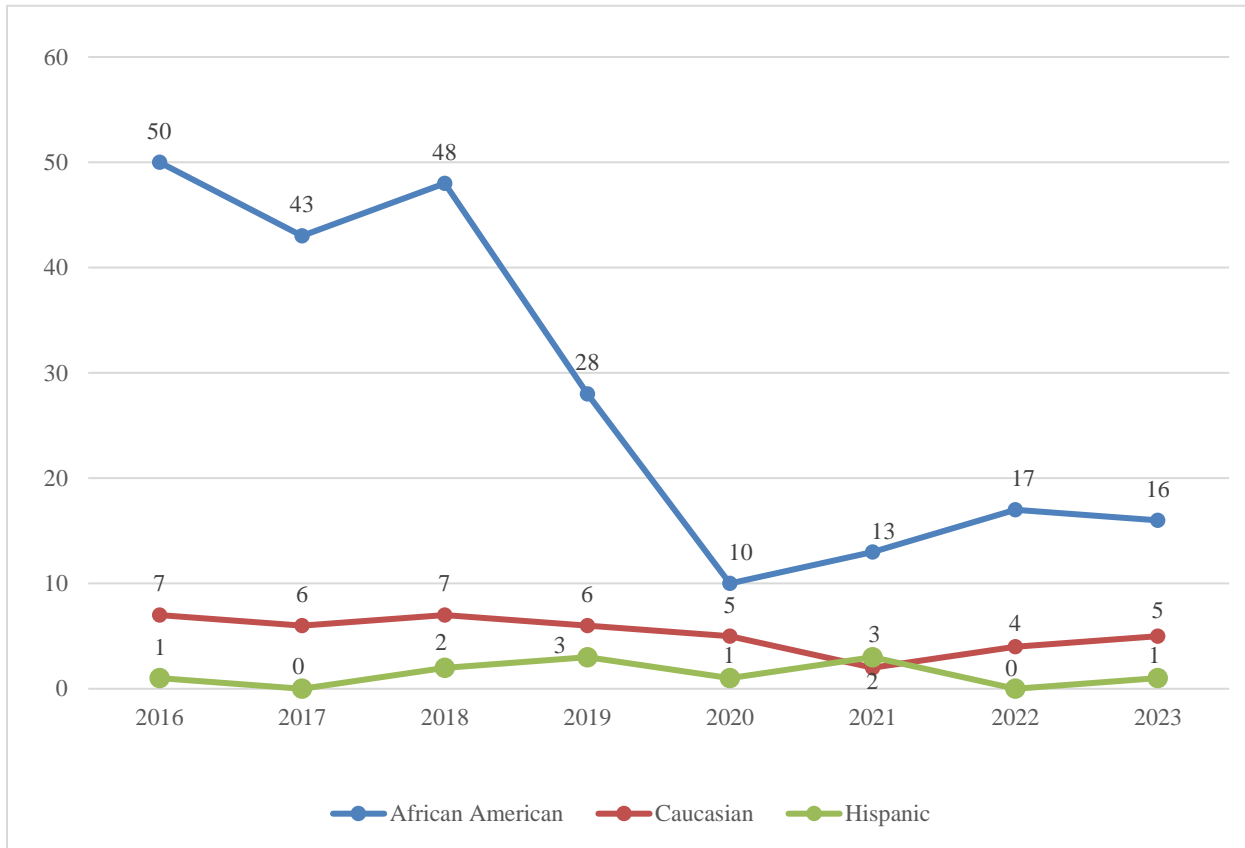
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number	59	49	58	39	16	18	21	22
% change	+2%	-17%	+18%	-33%	-59%	+13%	+17%	+5%
Rate per 1,000 youth ⁴²	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3



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

**Table 20 and Graph 44
Commitments to DYS by Race**

Year	African American		Caucasian		Hispanic	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
2016 ⁴³	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%
2023 ⁴⁴	16	73%	5	23%	1	5%

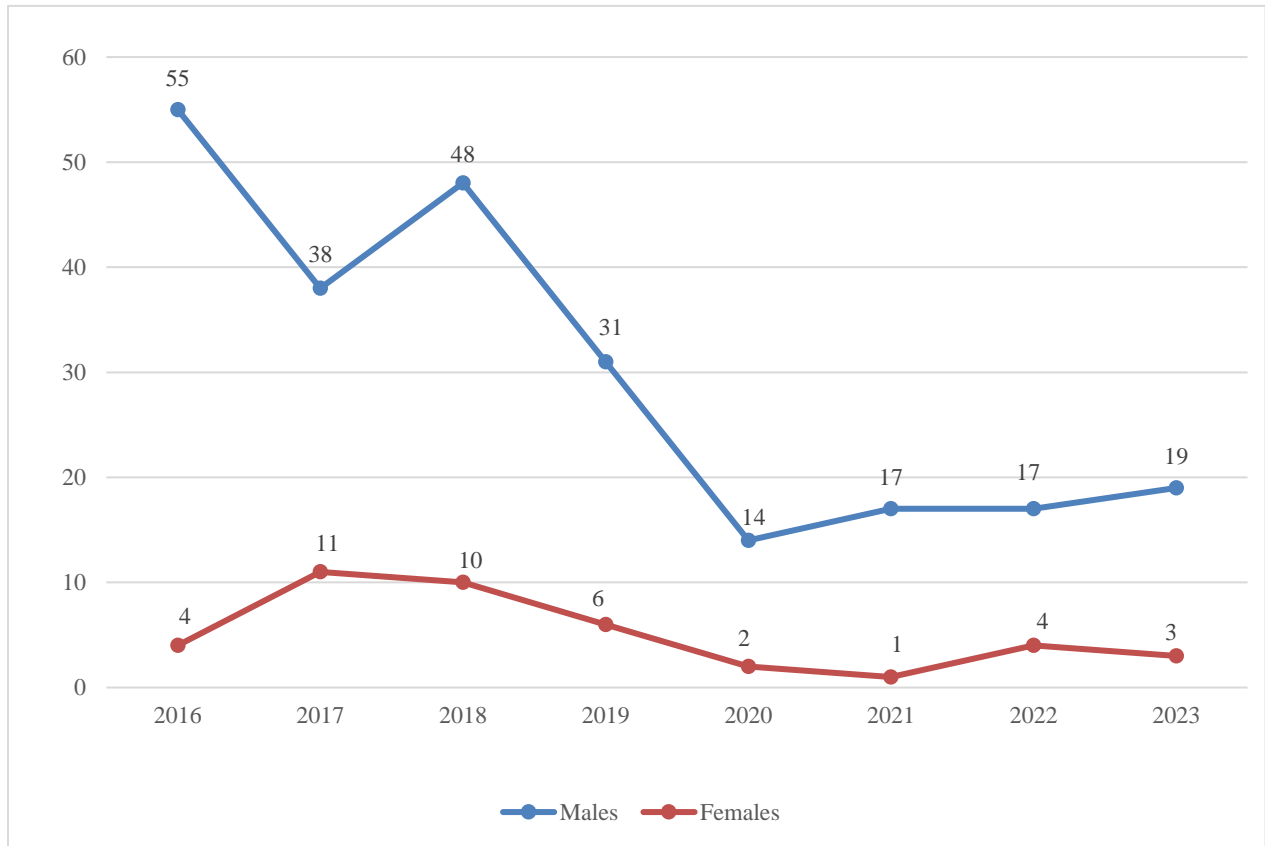


⁴³ Race for one youth was designated other than African American, Caucasian, or Hispanic in 2016.

⁴⁴ One youth included in the African American category identified as biracial.

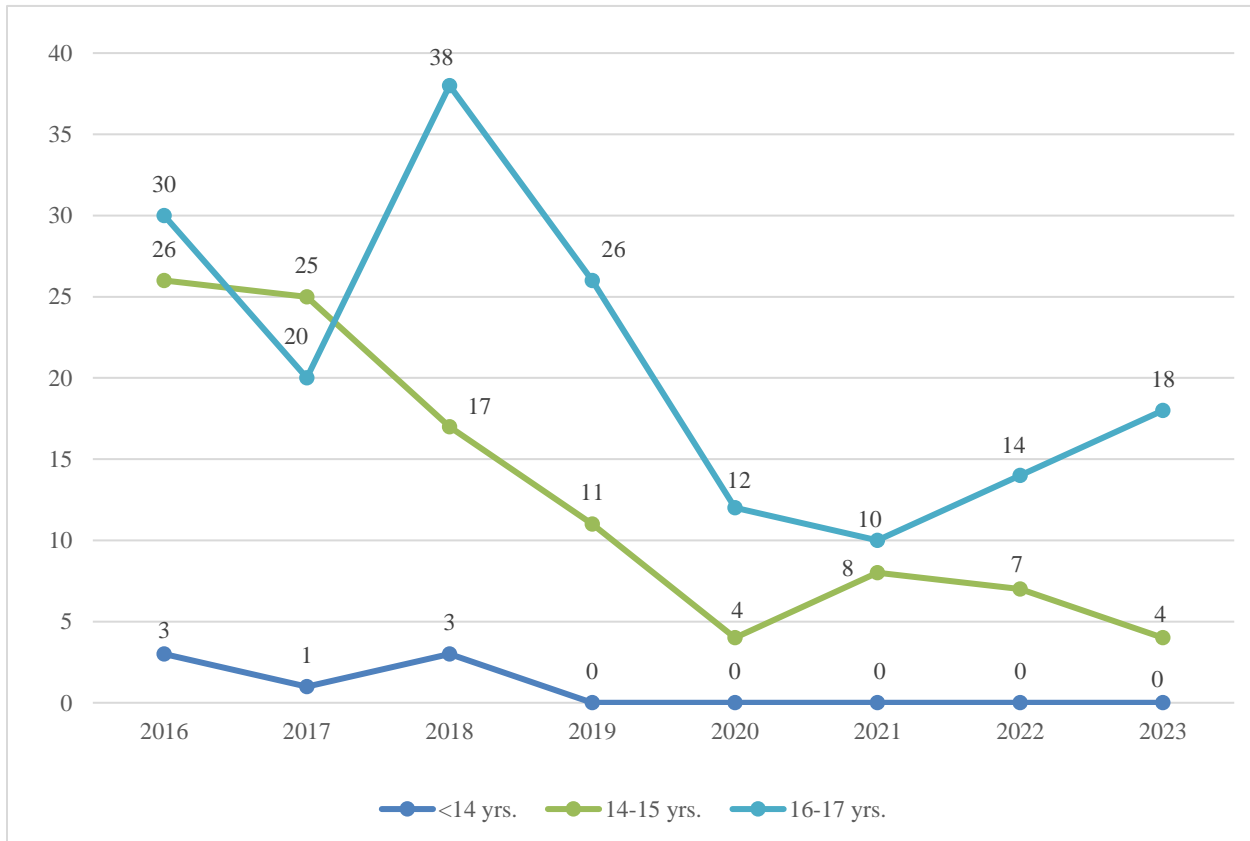
**Table 21 and Graph 45
Commitments to DYS by Gender**

Year	Males		Females	
	N	%	N	%
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%
2023	19	86%	3	14%



**Table 22 and Graph 46
Commitments to DYS by Age**

Year	<14 yrs.		14-15 yrs.		16-17 yrs.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
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%
2023	0	--	4	18%	18	82%



Certification Cases

According to Missouri Statute:

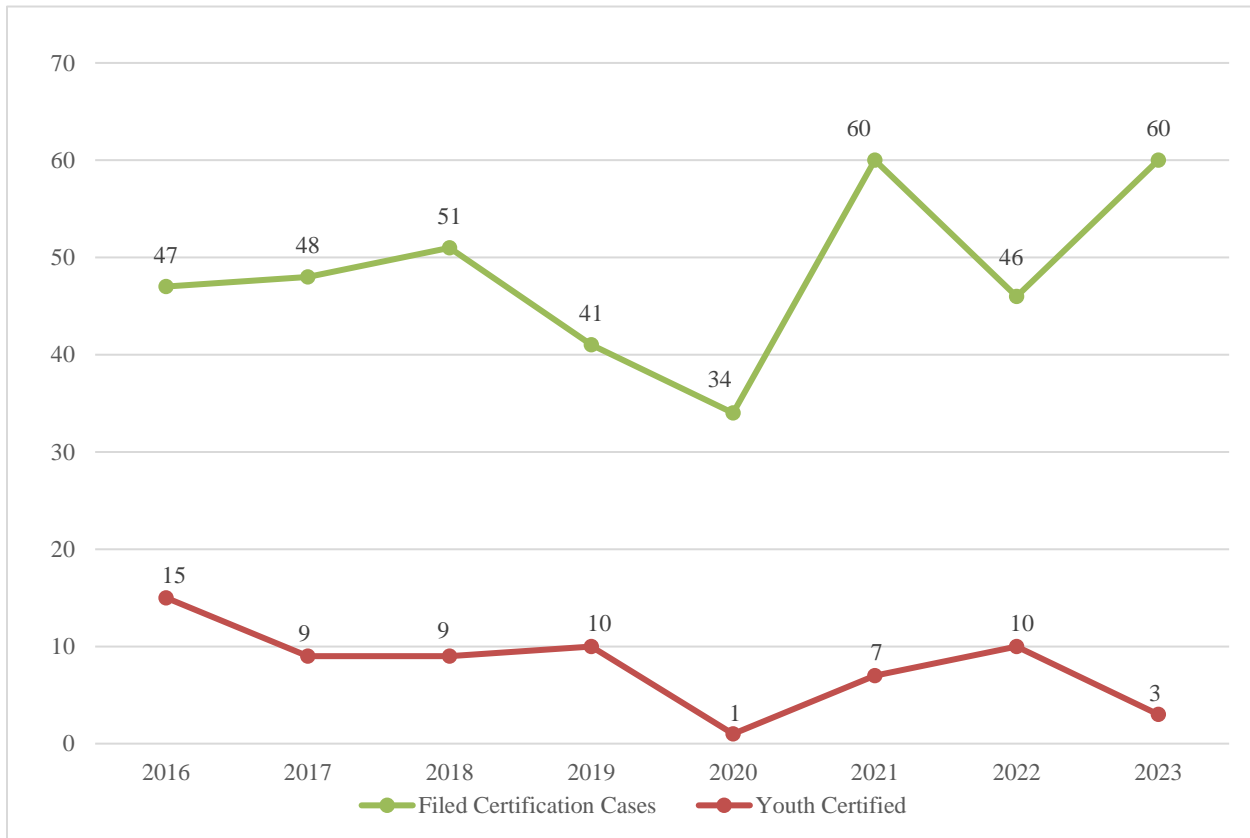
“If a petition alleges that a child between the ages of twelve and eighteen has committed an offense which would be considered a felony if committed by an adult, the court may, upon its own motion or upon motion by the juvenile officer, the child or the child's custodian, order a hearing and may, in 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.”⁴⁵

In the context of the past 8 years, the number of certification cases filed was relatively high in 2023 at 60 cases. The number of youth certified, however, was very low—just 3% of cases at the time of this report, though around half of cases are still undisposed. We will update this section of the report once all cases have been disposed.

⁴⁵ Missouri General Assembly. Revised Statute 211.071.

Table 23 and Graph 47
Certification Cases Filed and Youth Certified by Year

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Cases Filed	47	48	51	41	34	60	46	60
% change	-13%	+2%	+6%	-20%	-17%	+76%	+22%	+30%
Rate per 1,000 youth ⁴⁶	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.8	0.6	0.8
Youth Certified ⁴⁷	15	9	9	10	1	7	10 ⁴⁸	3 ⁴⁹
% of cases filed	32%	19%	18%	24%	3%	12%	22%	5%



⁴⁶ Rates were calculated based on the number of youth in Jackson County aged 10 to 17 years.

⁴⁷ Certifications are reported by year the case was filed rather than year certification took place.

⁴⁸ Two certification cases filed in 2022 were undisposed at the time of this report. This report will be updated once all cases are disposed.

⁴⁹ Twelve cases filed in 2023 were undisposed at the time of this report. This report will be updated once all cases are disposed.

Table 24. Certification Cases Filed in 2023 by Charge

Charge Category	Mandatory Filings (Offense⁵⁰)	Mandatory Filings (Priors⁵¹)	Discretionary Filings
Assault 1 st /2 nd (incl. Domestic)	16	0	0
Murder 1 st /2 nd	11	0	0
Sex Offense	3	0	0
Robbery 1 st /2 nd	29	0	0
Unlawful Use Of Weapon	0	0	1
Total	59	0	1

Table 25. Details for Youth Certified (of Youth with Certification Cases Filed in 2023)

Offense	Num of Filings	Filing Type	Age at Filing	Race	Gender
Murder 2 nd	2	Mandatory	2 aged 17 yrs	2 African American	2 Male
Robbery 1st	1	Mandatory	1 aged 17 yrs	1 African American	1 Male
Total Certified in 2023	3	3 Mandatory	3 aged 17 yrs	3 African American	3 Male
Total with Certification Denied	45				
Undisposed at the time of this report⁵²	12				

⁵⁰ 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.

⁵¹ 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.

⁵² 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 entering Family Treatment Court remained fairly stable compared to 2022, after a much larger drop the previous year. Cases eligible for both Family Treatment Court and the Child Protection and Permanency Unit were typically served in FTC in 2023—which had not been the case in 2022.

Child Protection & Permanency Unit. The Child Protection & Permanency Unit seeks to safely reduce time to permanency for children ages 0-3. Families in 14 CAN cases were admitted to the CPPU in 2023, a 52% reduction from the number admitted in 2022. This is due to limited capacity early in the year, followed by a shift in procedure to send cases that qualified for both Family Treatment Court and CPPU to Family Treatment Court.

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 1,738 parents were served in 2023, an increase of 12% from last year but decrease of 40% from 2019.

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 have been trending back upward since dropping considerably during the pandemic but for the most part have not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Mediation. Overall, mediators served 438 cases in 2023, a slight increase from last year and the highest number since 2016.

Table 26 and Graphs 48-42
Participants Entering the Family Treatment Court by Year

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
FTC	96	76	133	115	72	80	46	42
% change	+7%	-21%	+75%	-14%	-37%	+11%	-43%	-9%

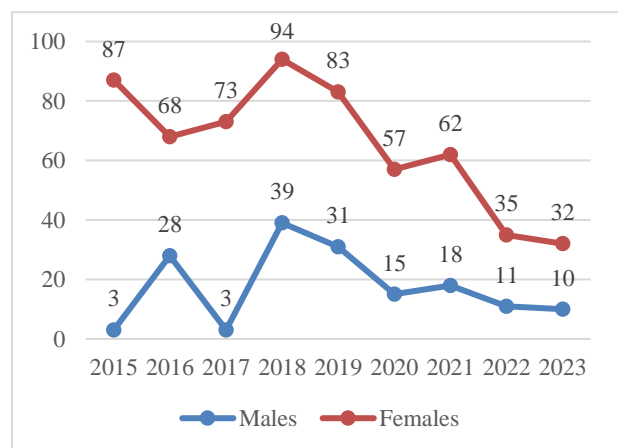
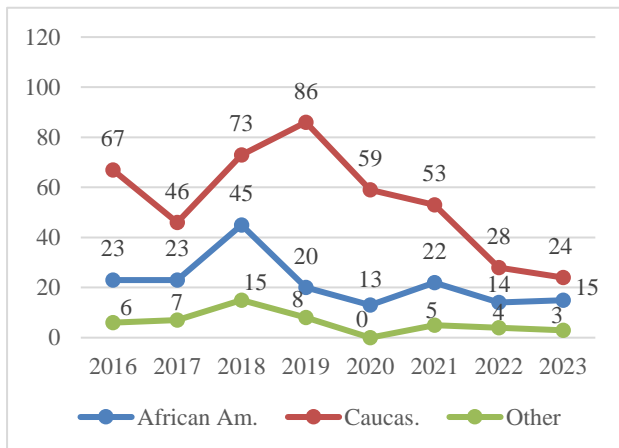
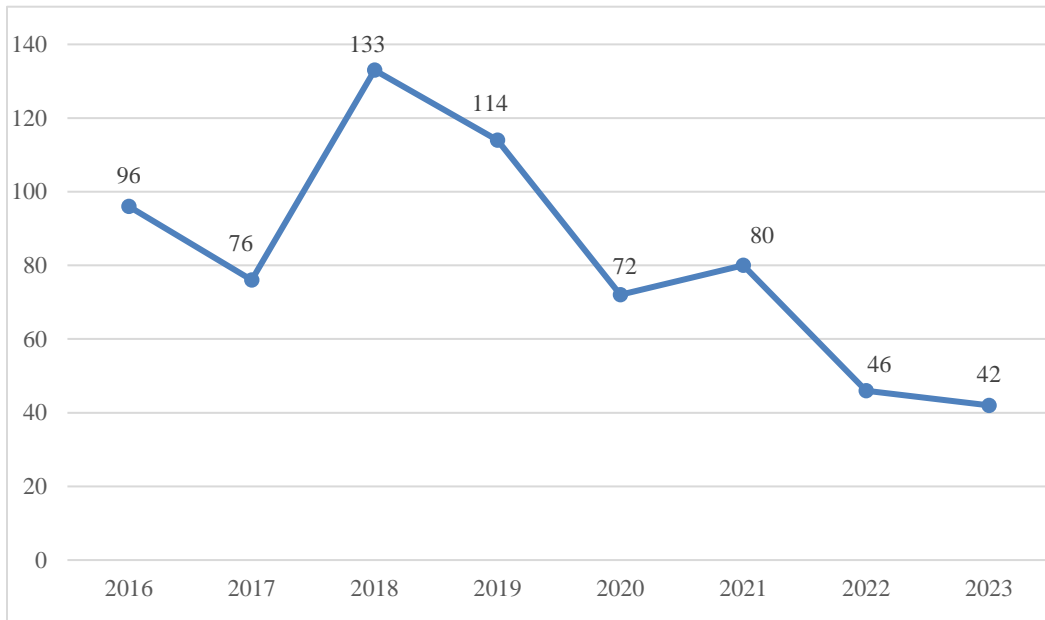
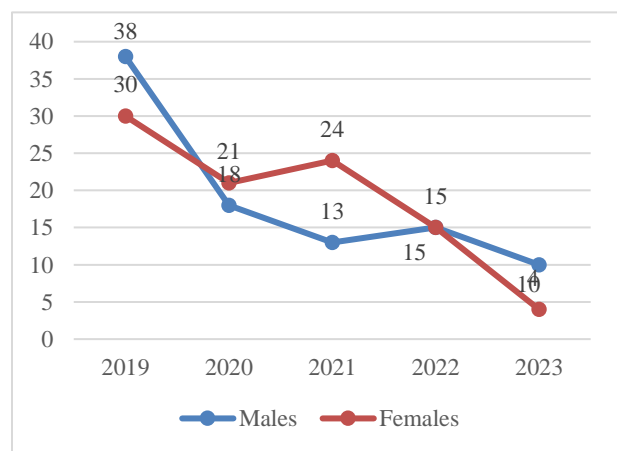
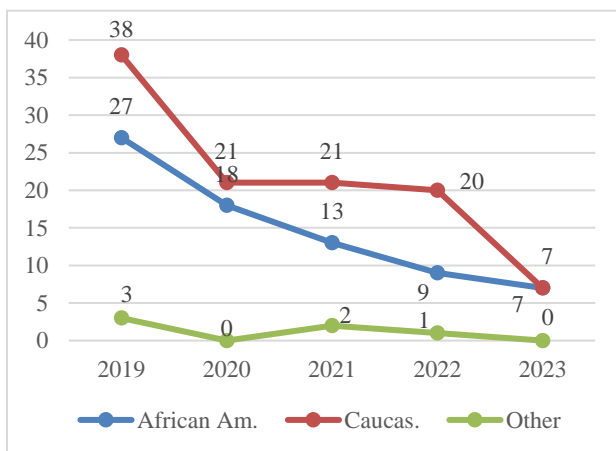
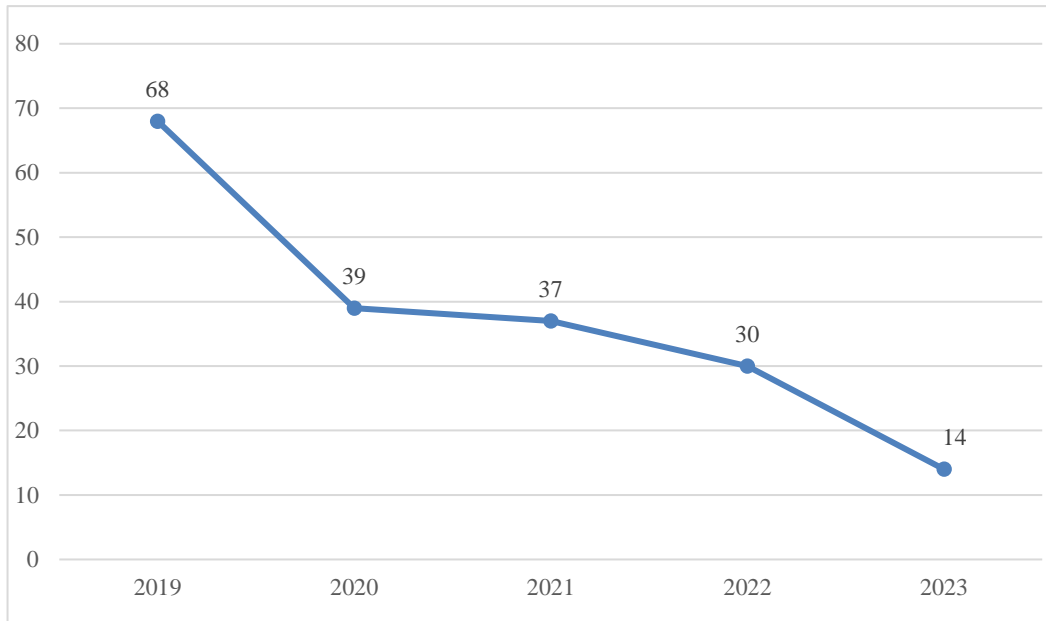


Table 30 and Graphs 53-45
Children with Cases Entering the Child Protection & Permanency Unit by Year

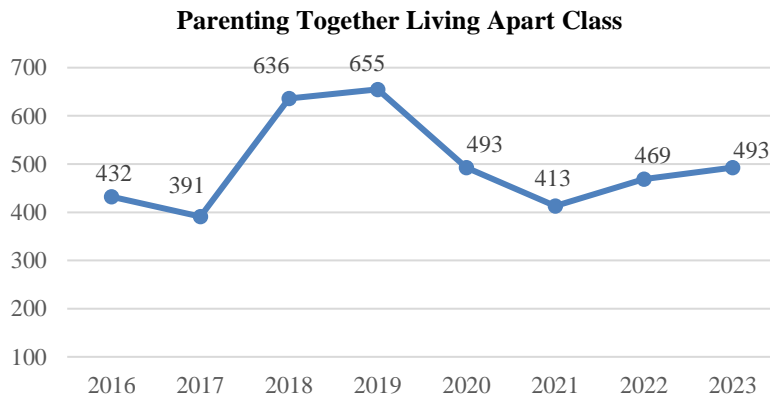
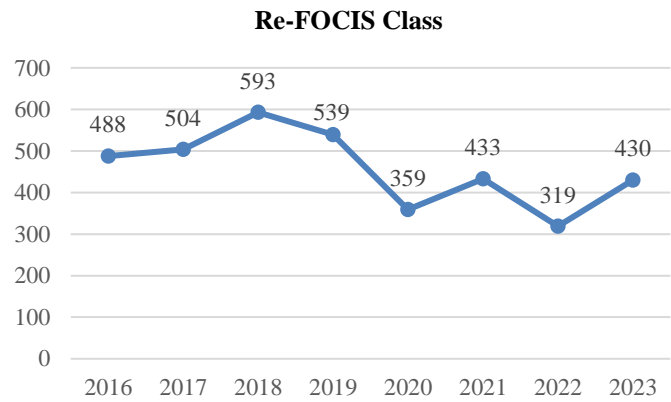
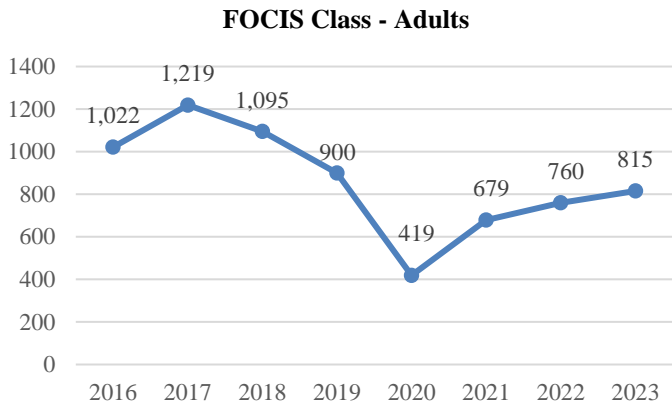
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
CPPU	68	39	37	30	14
% change	--	-43%	-5%	-19%	-53%



Race was unknown for 1 youth in 2021.

**Table 31 and Graphs 58-48
Parent Awareness Courses**

Course	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 ⁵³	2021 ⁵⁴	2022	2023
FOCIS								
Adults	1,022	1,219	1,095	900	419	679	760	815
Youth	738	779	834	797	92	0	0	0
FOCIS Total	1,760	1,998	1,929	1,697	511	679	760	815
Re-FOCIS	488	504	593	539	359	433	319	430
Parenting Together Living Apart	432	391	636	655	493	413	469	493
Grand Total	2,680	2,893	3,158	2,891	1,363	1,525	1,548	1,738
% change	-17%	+8%	+9%	-9%	-53%	+12%	+2%	+12%



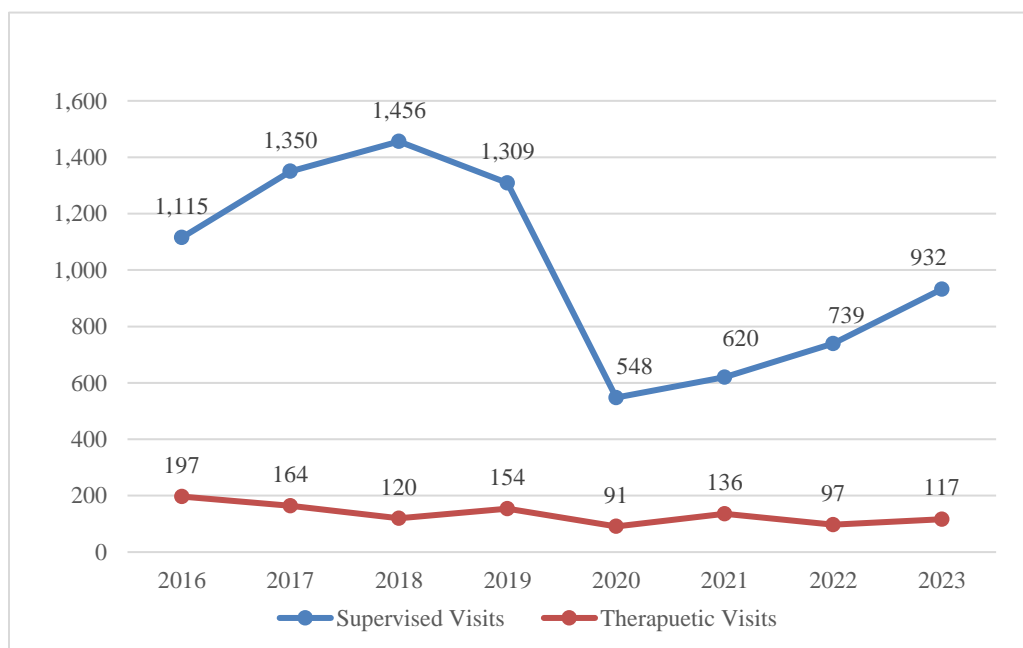
⁵³ For several months in 2020, all in-person classes were suspended, and class content was provided to parents in the form of packets sent through Civil Records. The number of packets sent out was not tracked. For a few months before packets were assembled, parents who would have attended FOCIS were sent to a similar online class. They are not reflected in the numbers presented in this table.

⁵⁴ 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 27. Connections Program Visits and Exchanges

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 ⁵⁵	2021 ⁵⁶	2022 ⁵⁷	2023
Supervised Visits								
Scheduled Visits	1,643	1,876	2,144	1,889	1,118	921	1,276	1,565
Actual Visits	1,115	1,350	1,456	1,309	548	620	739	932
Therapeutic Visits								
Scheduled Visits	332	250	181	227	158	219	185	217
Actual Visits	197	164	120	154	91	136	97	117
Grand Total Visits								
Scheduled Visits	1,975	2,126	2,325	2,116	1,276	1,140	1,461	1,782
Actual Visits ⁵⁸	1,312	1,514	1,576	1,463	639	756	836	1,049
Monitored Exchanges								
Scheduled Exchanges	1,043	710	189	94	13	6	31	74
Actual Exchanges	786	561	100	49	4	5	23	43

Graph 63. Connections Program Visits Held



⁵⁵ Visitation services were cancelled several times throughout 2020 due to concerns about safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁵⁶ 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.

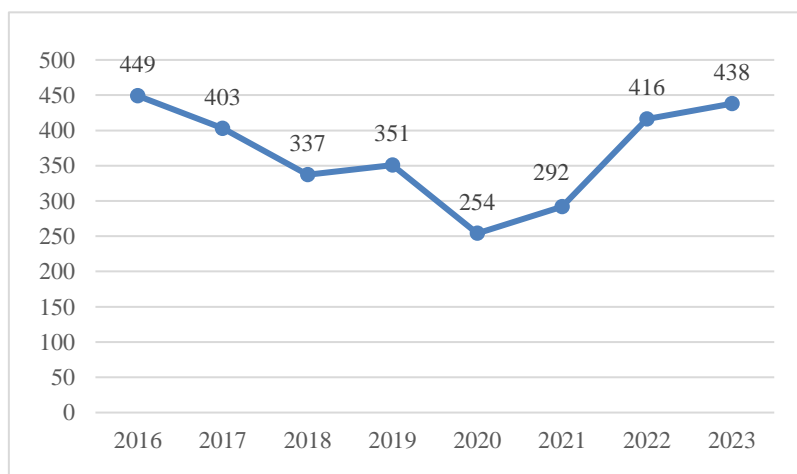
⁵⁷ Visitation services did not occur in January and February 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁵⁸ Actual visits represent units of services. One unit of service equals one hour.

Table 28. Mediation Services

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Mediation (Rule 68.12)								
Referrals	101	107	96	49	21	22	17	-- ⁵⁹
Mediations	--	--	--	--	--	--	2 ⁶⁰	--
Adult Abuse Mediation								
Referrals	202	161	115	141	41	72	175	231
Mediations	202	156	112	136	38	71	173	231
Child Dependency Mediation								
Referrals	276	238	249	229	180	287	284	257
Mediations	217	227	208	203	207 ⁶¹	211	234	200
Other Domestic Relations Mediations⁶²								
Referrals	41	33	16	14	9	12	9	7
Mediations	30	20	17	12	9	10	7	7
Grand Total Mediations								
Referrals	620	539	476	432	251	393	485	495
Mediations	449	403	337	351	254	292	416	438

Graph 64. Total Mediations Held



⁵⁹ Rule 68.12 mediations were discontinued in 2023.

⁶⁰ Two Rule 68.12 mediations were conducted by Family Court staff; fifteen were conducted by outside mediators.

⁶¹ Twenty-seven child-dependency mediations completed in 2020 were carried over from the previous year.

⁶² 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 29. Cases Referred to Victim Services

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Victim Services Cases	515	351	377	296	232	326	-- ⁶³	240
% change	+9%	-32%	+7%	-21%	-22%	+41%	--	-26%

⁶³ 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 2019-2023 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 has increased steadily since summer 2021 and long since surpassed pre-pandemic levels. The breakdown by offense type has not changed substantially in the past five 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 also dropped during the pandemic but rose again in 2023 to above 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 39% lower than it was at the beginning of 2019.

The numbers of open TPR cases and children free for adoption continued their declines as well. The inventory of TPR cases was down by 48% compared to January 2019, and 63% fewer children were awaiting adoption. The decrease in termination of parental rights cases reflects an increase in other approaches to permanency, including guardianship and two-count adoption petitions.

Graph 65. Inventory of Open Delinquency Cases

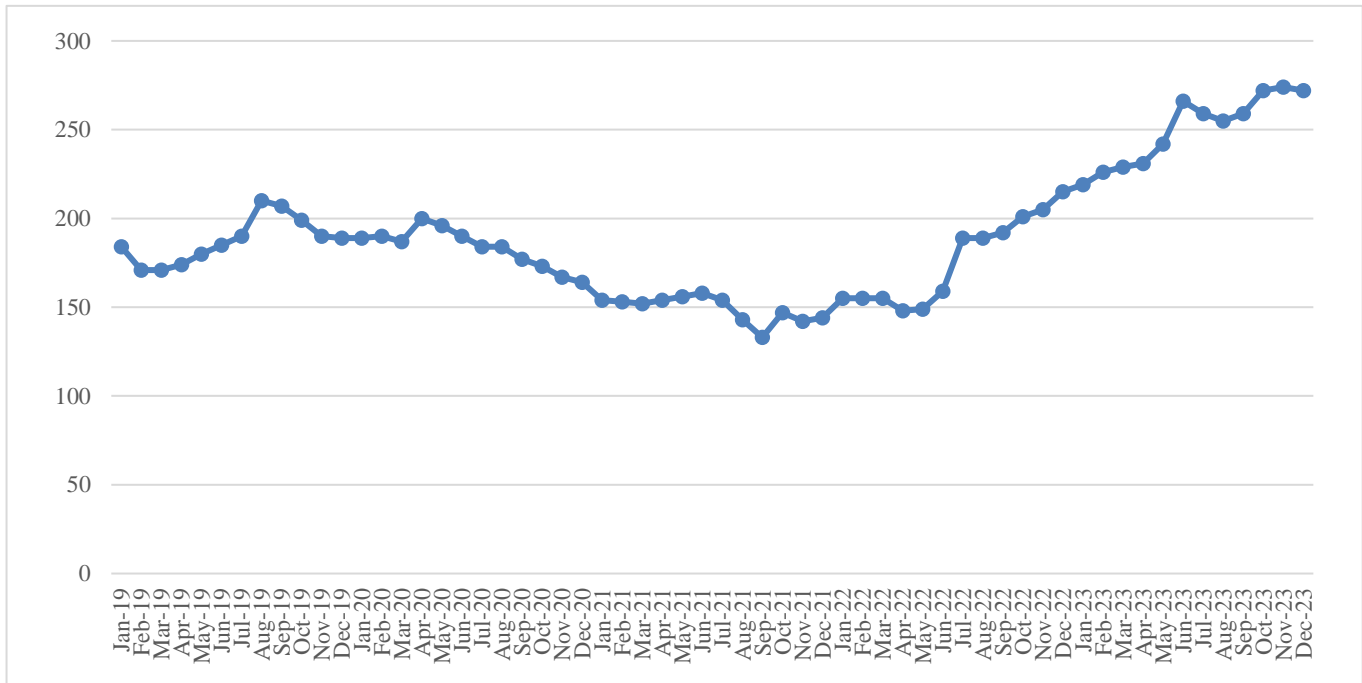
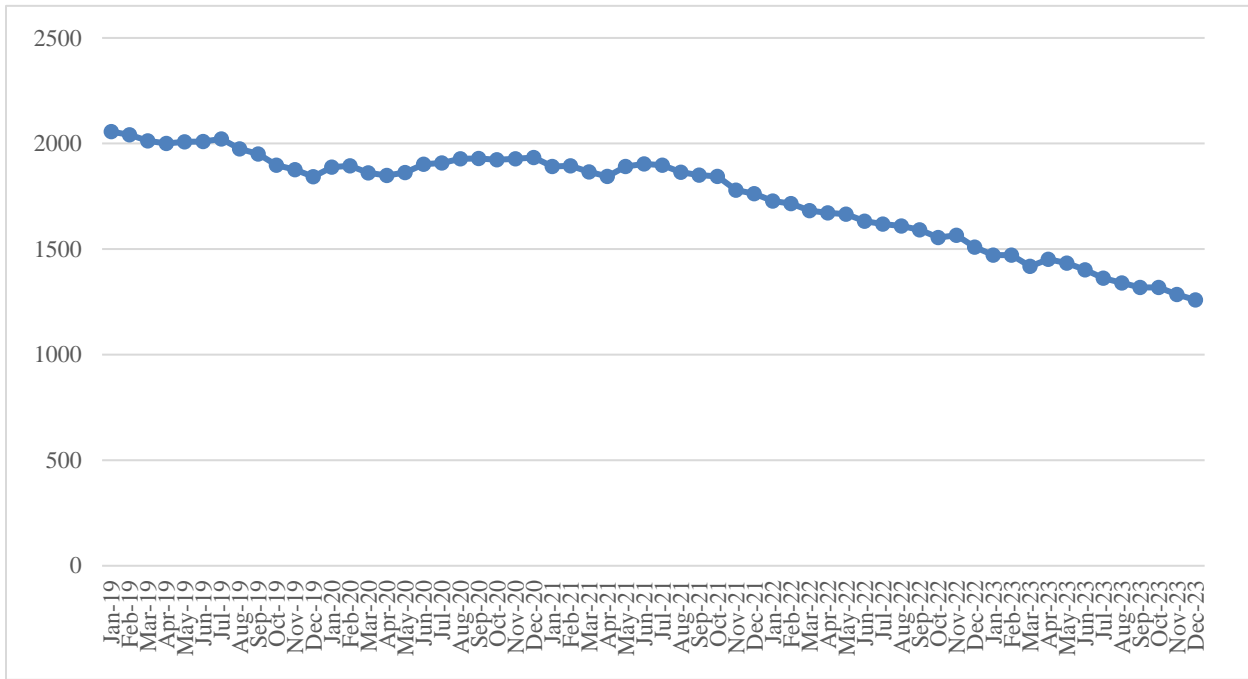


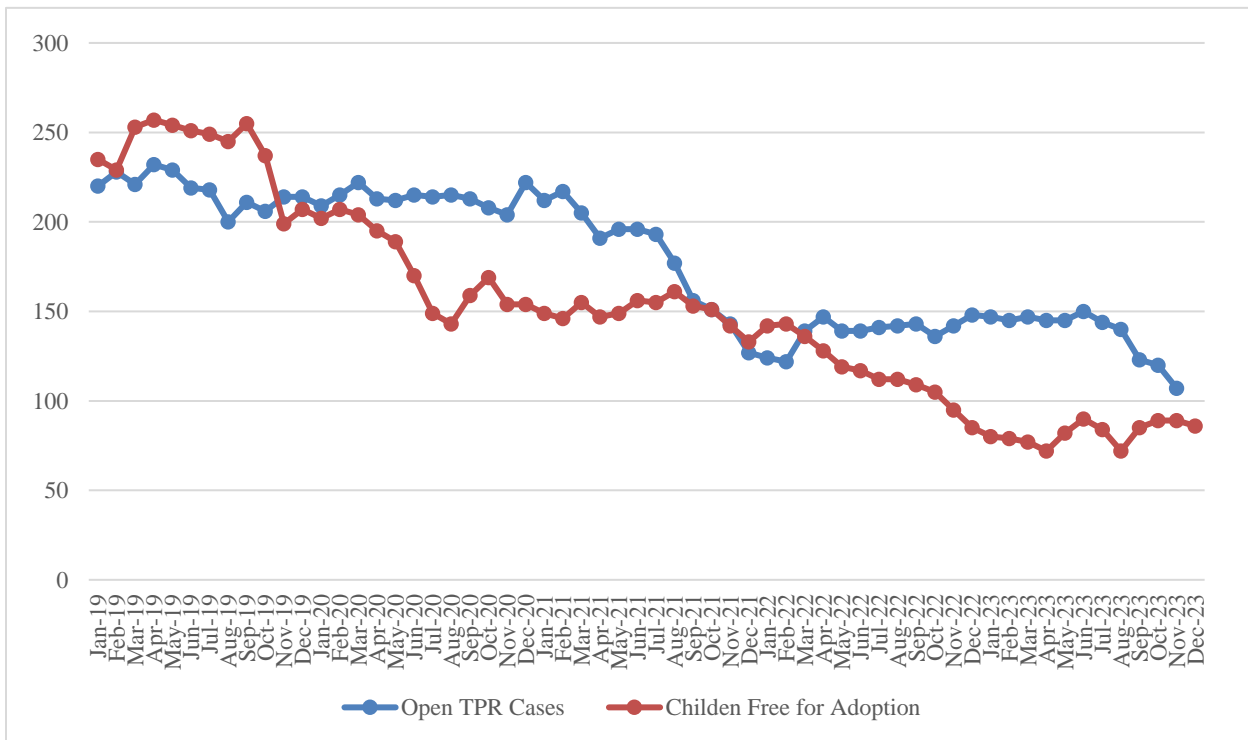
Table 30. Delinquent Referrals by Offense Type

	Homicide	Assault 1st/2nd	Robbery 1st/2nd	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
2023	19 (2%)	55 (5%)	52 (5%)	15 (1%)	81 (8%)	33 (3%)	131 (13%)	144 (14%)	35 (3%)	1,022

Graph 66. Inventory of Open Child Abuse & Neglect Cases



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



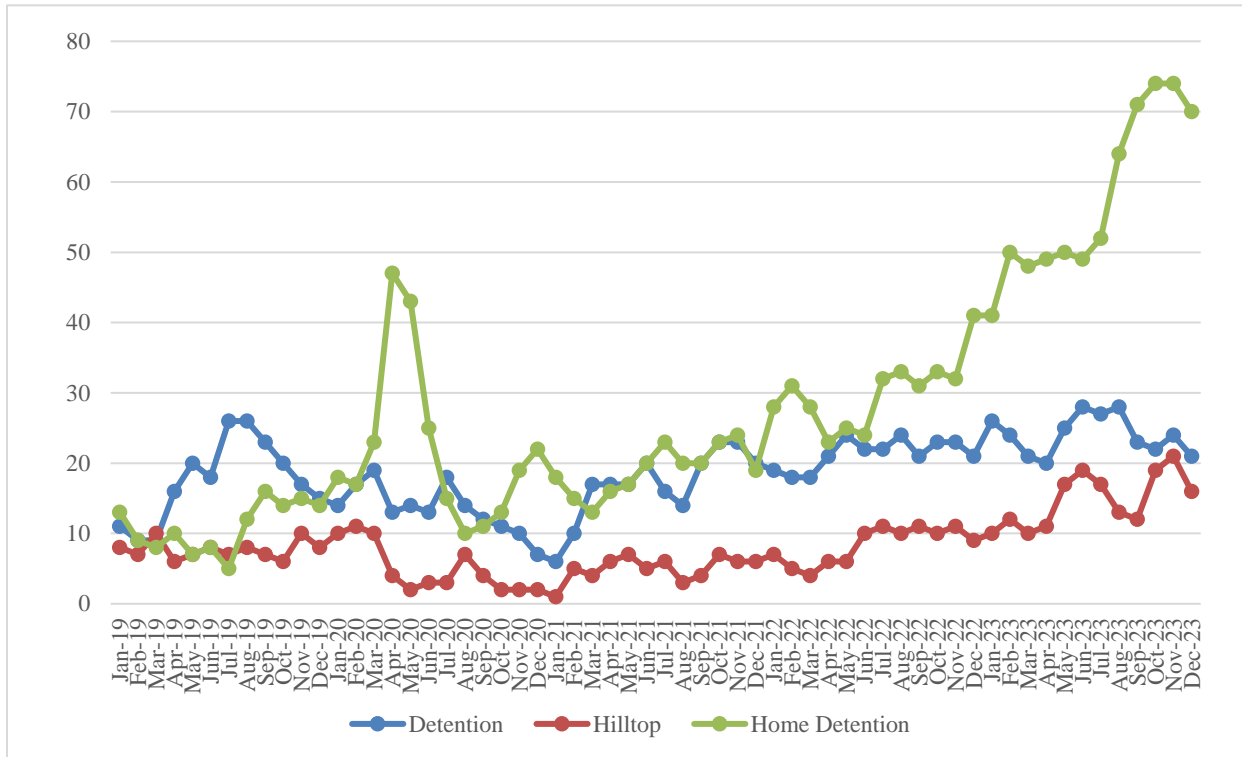
Detention and Probation

With the increase in delinquency petitions since the pandemic has come a rise in the number of youth admitted to all forms of detention. Around 28 youth each month were admitted to secure detention in 2023—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.

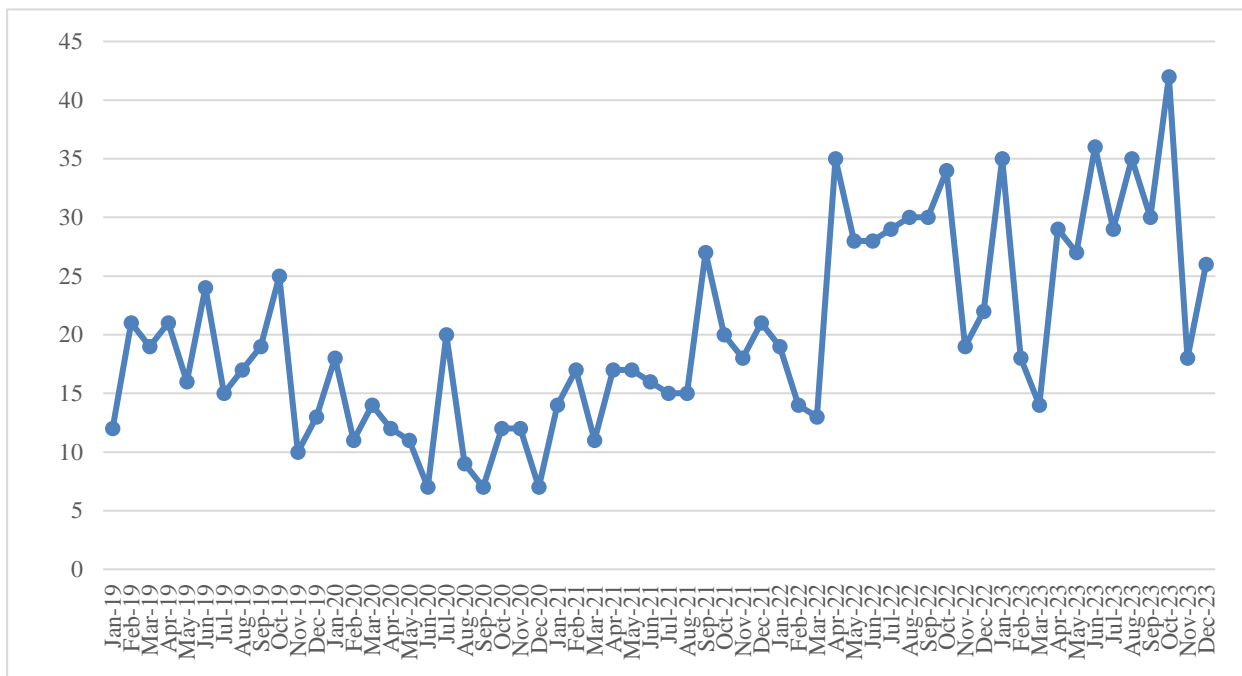
Detentions at Hilltop surpassed pre-pandemic levels in 2023, with an average of 14 youth admitted each month. Home detention with electronic monitoring became a much more common form of non-secure detention beginning with the pandemic. In 2023, an average of 28 youth started electronic monitoring each month, compared to 5 youth per month in 2019. The increased use of home detention likely reflects efforts on the part of the Court to utilize the least restrictive detention option available.

After decreasing steadily between 2019 and 2022, the share of youth who receive a new referral while on probation rose a bit in 2023 to 11%—still around half the level from 2019. This increase from 2022 is somewhat expected given the overall increase in delinquent referrals, and it is encouraging that the rate of recidivism remains well below that from 2019.

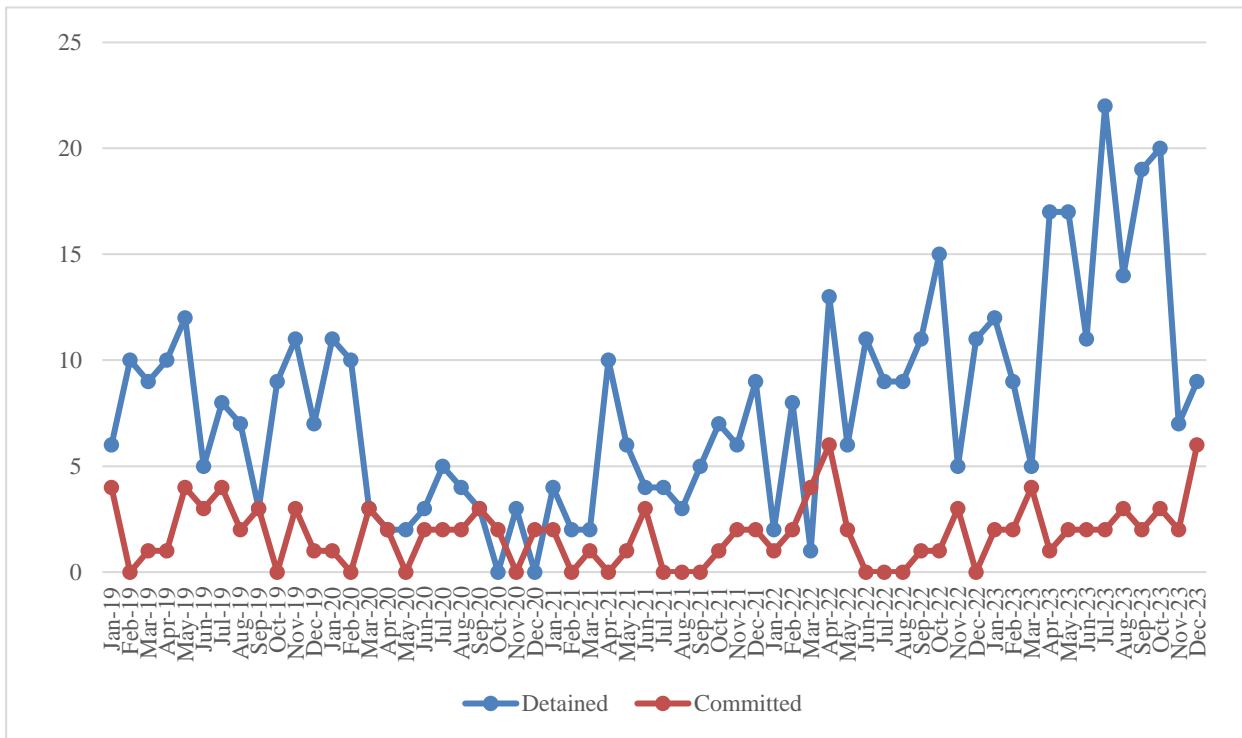
Graph 68. Average Daily Population – Secure Detention and Detention Alternatives



Graph 69. Admissions to Secure Detention



Graph 70. Admissions to Hilltop



Graph 71. Admissions to Home Detention

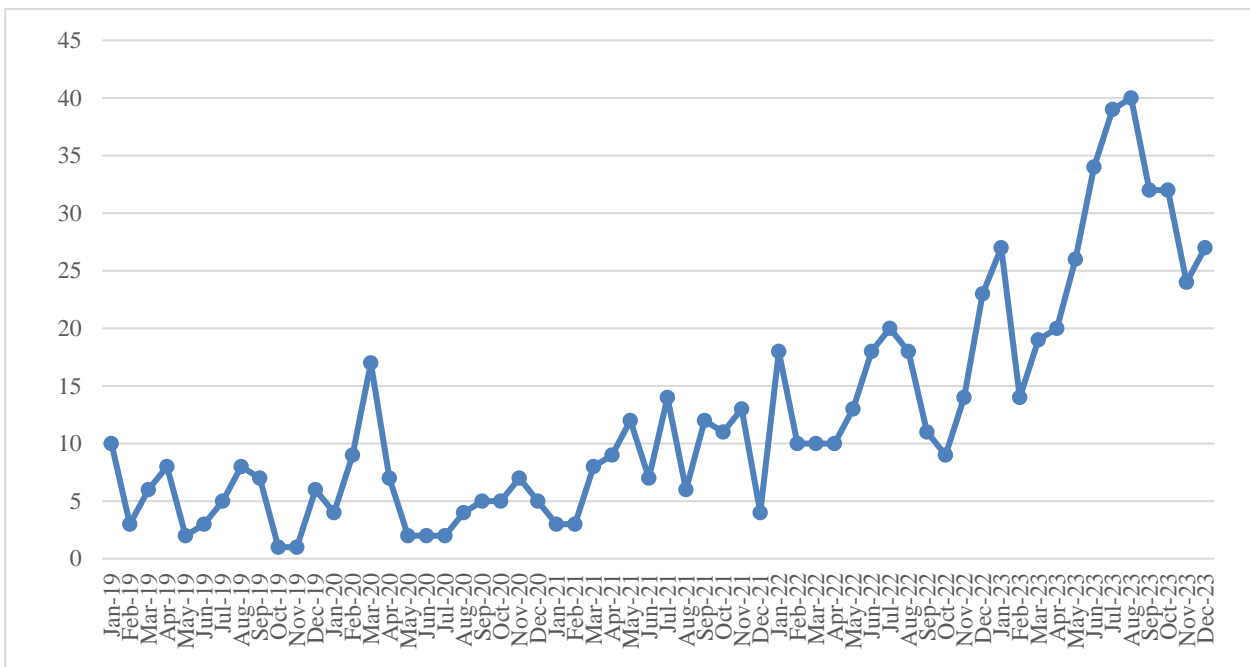


Table 31. New Referrals for Youth on Probation⁶⁴

	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)
2023	18 (7% of 253 youth on probation)	14 (6% of 253 youth on probation)	28 (11% of 253 youth on probation)

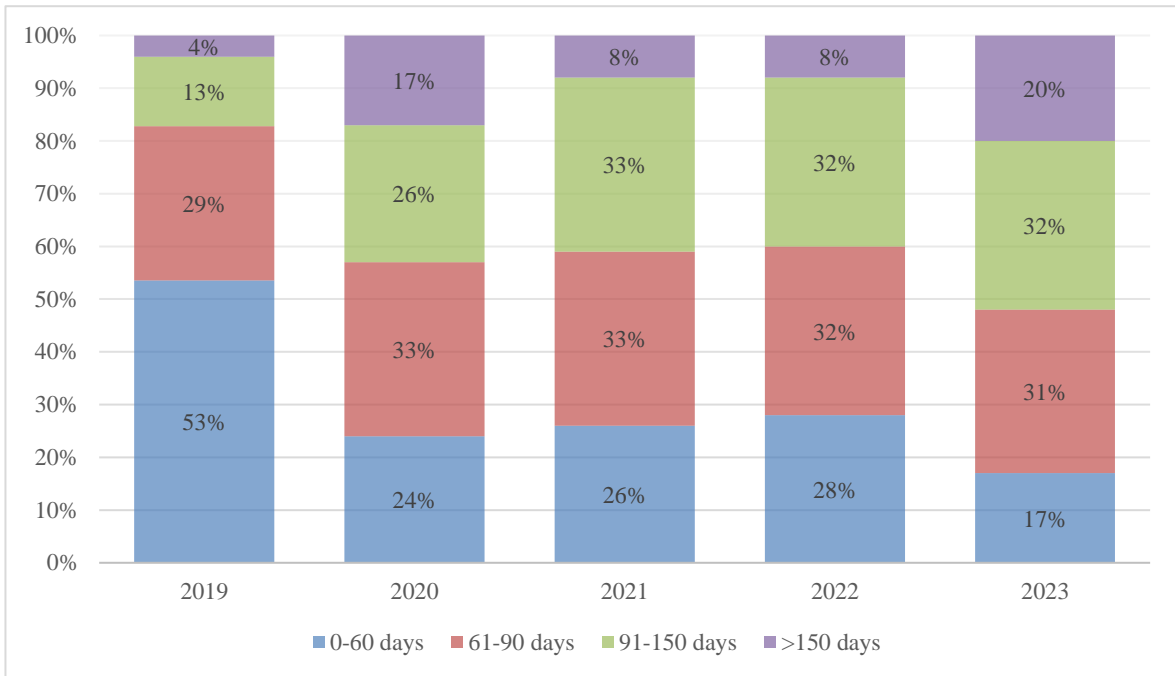
⁶⁴ New referrals received while on probation in a given year for youth served on probation in that year.

Time to Disposition

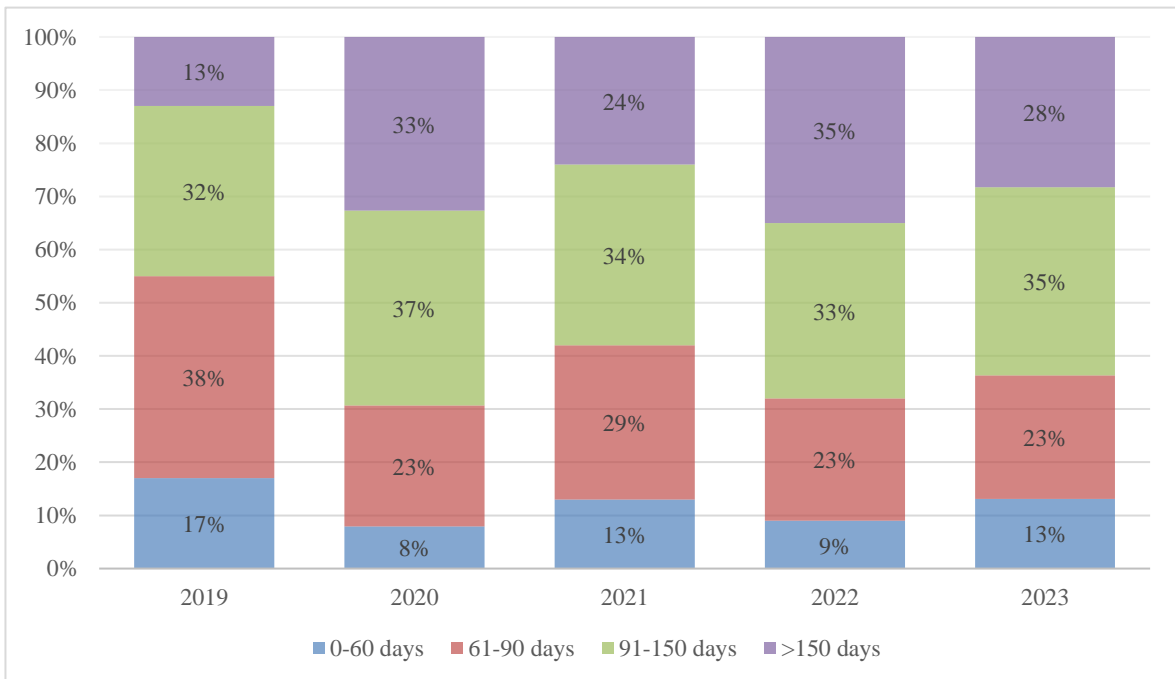
Time to disposition for delinquency cases increased in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic then came back down somewhat before increasing again in 2023 to above the pandemic level. Average time to disposition was 77 days in 2019, 100 days in 2020, just under 90 days in 2021 and 2022, and 105 days in 2023.

Average time to disposition for child abuse and neglect cases decreased somewhat from 2022 to 2023, with more cases disposed in 60 days or less and fewer cases open for more than 150 days. Average time to disposition for abuse and neglect cases was 100 days in 2019, 135 days in 2020, 120 days in 2021, 138 days in 2022, and 132 days in 2023.

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 2023 were 53% lower than in 2016. Adoptions and TPR filings have fallen considerably as well. Adoption filings were 36% lower in 2023 than in 2016, and TPR filings were 83% lower.

The number of youth aged 10-17 in Jackson County has increased by around 1% since 2016, but the number of delinquent and technical referrals to the Family Court has decreased by 14% in that same period, and the number of petitions and motions to modify has decreased by 16%.

African American youth accounted for 81% of the delinquent and technical offense petitions and motions to modify filed in 2023. Caucasian youth accounted for 15%, and Hispanic youth accounted for 3%.

Youth residing in Kansas City continue to account for the largest share of delinquent and technical offense filings in Jackson County (64% of all delinquent and technical offense petitions and motions to modify). 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 22 youth committed in 2023. African American youth represented 73% of all commitments to DYS in 2023. This is five percentage points below average for the last 8 years.

The number of certification cases filed in 2023 was fairly high within the context of the past eight years, though the number certified so far is fairly low. At the time of this report, just 3% of youth with a certification hearing held have been certified, but about half of cases remain undisposed. 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 2023, the Court's prevention and diversion programs served a total of 212 youth as well as their families. The number served was down 21% compared to 2022.

The number of youth starting probation dropped dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic but has since risen to above pre-pandemic levels. The number of youth on probation is up 150% from the low point in 2021 though still 22% lower than the total from 2016. Commitments to Hilltop in 2023 were right in line with the pre-pandemic baseline at 29 youth committed.

Detainments at Hilltop and in secure detention also increased significantly in 2023—both reaching their highest points in at least the last eight years. Detainments in non-secure detention facilities were 11% higher and secure detention 14% higher than in 2016. The use of home detention with electronic monitoring has increased significantly since the pandemic: 334 youth were placed on HDEM in 2023 compared to 60 youth in 2019.

Family Treatment Court served 42 participants in 2023, a decrease of 9% from 2022.

Family Court Resource Services offered a wide variety of services to court-involved families. A total of 1,738 people were served by three parent awareness courses in 2023. The Connections Program provided 1,049 supervised and therapeutic visits and arranged 43 monitored exchanges. These figures have increased since dropping during the pandemic but have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Mediations, however, have exceeded the 2019 baseline and were at nearly the highest level in the last eight years with 438 mediations held.