



# OJJDP FACT SHEET

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## Robbery Cases in Juvenile Court, 1989–1998

by Paul Harms

### The number of robbery cases<sup>1</sup> handled by juvenile courts peaked in 1995 and has since decreased

In 1998, juvenile courts processed an estimated 29,600 robbery cases. Between 1989 and 1995, the robbery caseload increased 76%, to a peak of 40,400 cases in 1995. The robbery caseload declined 27% between 1995 and 1998. However, juvenile courts processed 29% more cases in 1998 than in 1989.

### Males accounted for the majority of juvenile robbery cases handled between 1989 and 1998

For both males and females, the robbery caseload increased from 1989 and peaked in 1995. During this period, the growth in the female robbery caseload was greater than that for males (100% versus 74%). Between 1995 and 1998, the robbery caseload declined by 30% for females and 26% for males. The net result was a 40% increase in the robbery caseload for females and a 28% increase for males between 1989 and 1998. Despite the growth in the female caseload, males still accounted for most (91%) of the robbery cases handled in 1998.

### Most adjudicated robbery cases resulted in placement or probation in 1998

When a case is referred to juvenile court, a decision is made to handle the case informally or formally. When a case is handled informally, without the filing of a petition for an adjudicatory or waiver hearing, the youth may voluntarily agree to comply with certain specified sanctions without a formal court order. In 1998, 12% of the robbery cases referred to juvenile courts were handled informally. More than half of these cases (57%) were dismissed. In 15% of the informally handled cases, youth agreed to comply with probation conditions, and in another 27%, youth agreed to other sanctions, such as restitution, community service, or fines, without a term of probation.

### Characteristics of robbery cases disposed by juvenile courts, 1989–1998

	1989	1994	1998
<b>Cases disposed</b>	22,900	38,300	29,600
<b>Manner of handling</b>			
Formal	87%	87%	88%
Informal	13	13	12
<b>Outcome of formal handling</b>			
Waived	4%	6%	3%
Adjudicated	60	55	62
Not adjudicated	37	39	34
<b>Disposition of adjudicated cases</b>			
Out-of-home placement	45%	47%	43%
Formal probation	43	40	47

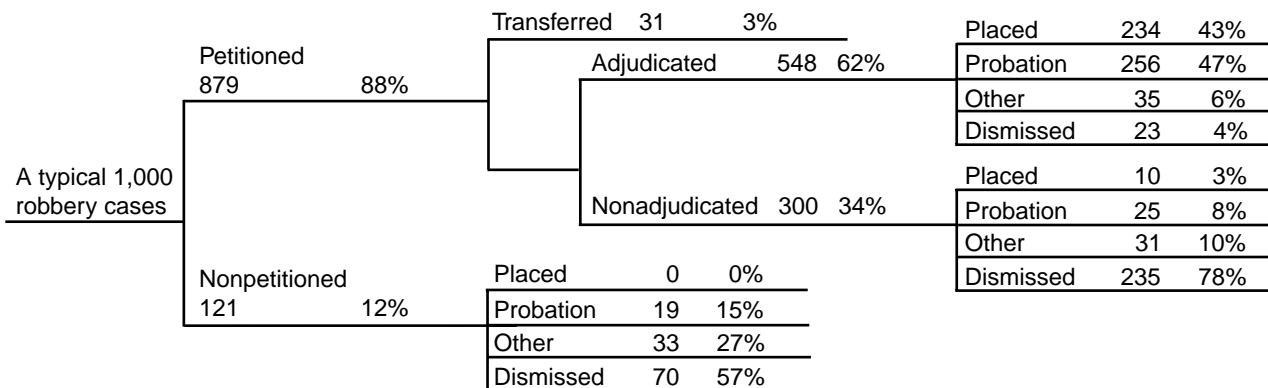
In 1998, 88% of the juvenile robbery cases referred to juvenile court were handled formally (with the filing of a petition). About 3% of these petitioned cases were judicially waived to criminal court. Another 62% of the formally processed robbery cases resulted in the youth being adjudicated delinquent. Probation was the most serious disposition ordered in more than 47% of these adjudicated cases. In 6% of adjudicated cases, the youth was ordered to comply with specified sanctions such as restitution, community service, or fines, and in another 43%, the youth was placed in a residential facility.

### Court processing of juvenile robbery cases varied little for males and females

In 1998, 88% of juvenile robbery cases involving males were formally processed, compared with 85% of the cases involving females. Once petitioned, cases involving males were more likely to be waived to criminal court than cases involving females (4% versus 2%). Males were somewhat more likely to be adjudicated delinquent than females (63% versus 61%). Once adjudicated, males were more likely to be placed out of the home in a residential facility (43% versus 38%), whereas females were more likely to receive probation as the most restrictive disposition (51% versus 46%).

<sup>1</sup>A case represents one youth processed on a new referral, regardless of the number of offenses contained in that referral. An individual can be involved in more than one case during the year.

## Juvenile court processing of a typical 1,000 robbery cases, 1998



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

Data source: Analysis of the National Center for Juvenile Justice's *National Juvenile Court Data Archive: 1998 Juvenile Court Case Records* [machine-readable data file].

## Characteristics of robbery cases disposed by juvenile courts, by gender, 1989–1998

	Males		Females	
	1989	1998	1989	1998
<b>Cases disposed</b>	20,900	26,700	2,000	2,800
<b>Manner of handling</b>				
Formal	87%	88%	86%	85%
Informal	13	12	14	15
<b>Outcome of formal handling</b>				
Waived	4%	4%	1%	2%
Adjudicated	59	63	65	61
Not adjudicated	37	34	34	37
<b>Disposition of adjudicated cases</b>				
Out-of-home placement	47%	43%	33%	38%
Formal probation	43	46	48	51

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

## For further information

This Fact Sheet is based on the forthcoming Report *Juvenile Court Statistics 1998*, which will be available on the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP's) Web site ([ojjdp.ncjrs.org](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org)). To learn more about juvenile court cases, visit OJJDP's *Statistical Briefing Book* ([ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/index.html](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/index.html)) and click on "Juveniles in court." OJJDP also supports Easy Access to Juvenile Court Statistics, a Web-based application that analyzes the data files used for the *Juvenile Court Statistics Report*. This application is available from the *Statistical Briefing Book*.

Paul Harms, Ph.D., is a Research Associate with the National Juvenile Court Data Archive, which is supported by an OJJDP grant.

*The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office of Victims of Crime.*

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