




# JUVENILE JUSTICE STATISTICS

## NATIONAL REPORT SERIES BULLETIN

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# Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020: Selected Findings

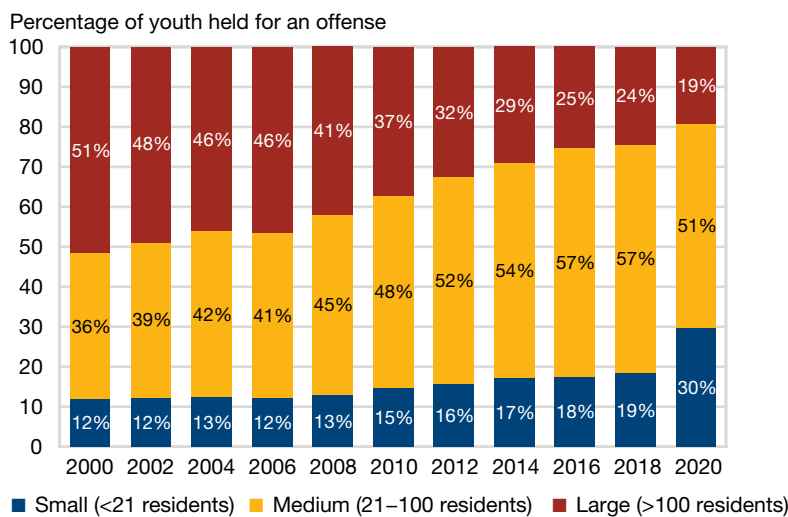
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## Highlights

Nationally, 25,014 youth charged with or adjudicated for an offense were held in 1,323 residential placement facilities on October 28, 2020. Facilities that hold youth vary in their operation, type, size, security features, screening practices, and services provided. To better understand the characteristics

of these facilities, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention sponsors the Juvenile Residential Facility Census (JRFC), a biennial survey of public and private juvenile residential facilities in every state. Findings in this bulletin are based on JRFC data collected for 2020.

**Since 2000, the proportion of youth held in large facilities has decreased while the proportion held in small or medium facilities has increased**



- More than half of all facilities were publicly operated in 2020; they held 77% of youth held for an offense.
- Nearly 7 in 10 facilities (68%) were small (20 or fewer residents), but more than half (51%) of all youth were held in medium-size facilities (holding 21–100 residents).
- A small proportion (1%) of facilities operated over capacity in 2020; these facilities held 2% of all youth.
- Most facilities screened all youth for suicide risk (96%) and educational needs (90%).
- Ten youth died in placement in 2020; five of these were ruled suicides.

## A Message From OJJDP and NIJ

On October 28, 2020, OJJDP conducted the 11th Juvenile Residential Facility Census, a snapshot of the facilities—both publicly and privately operated—that house youth charged with or adjudicated for law violations.

OJJDP’s biennial census collects data on how juvenile facilities operate and the services they provide. The census also provides information on facility ownership, security, capacity and crowding, and injuries and deaths of youth in custody.

Data from the 2020 census indicate that the number of youth in residential placement declined from the previous year, a trend that has lasted two decades. In 2020, more youth were held in county, city, or municipally operated facilities on the census date than were held in state-operated facilities. Facility crowding affected a relatively small proportion of youth in custody. Most responding facilities routinely evaluated all youth for suicide risk, education needs, substance abuse, and mental health needs.

We hope this bulletin will serve as an important resource to inform and support efforts to ensure that the nation’s juvenile residential facilities are safe and that youth in custody receive the treatment and services they need.

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# The Juvenile Residential Facility Census provides data on facility operations

## Facility census describes 2,019 juvenile facilities

In October 2020, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) administered the 11th Juvenile Residential Facility Census (JRFC). JRFC began in 2000 with data collections occurring every other year. JRFC routinely collects data on how facilities operate and the services they provide. It includes questions on facility ownership and operation, security, capacity and crowding, and injuries and deaths in custody. The census also collects supplementary information each year on specific services, such as mental and physical health, substance abuse, and education.

JRFC collects information from secure and nonsecure residential placement facilities that hold youth who were charged with or adjudicated for law violations. These law violations encompass both delinquency offenses and status offenses. JRFC does not capture data on adult prisons, jails, or federal facilities, nor does it include information for youth who were convicted in criminal court and sentenced to incarceration. Additionally, JRFC does not include facilities used exclusively for mental health or substance abuse treatment or for abuse/neglect cases (nonoffenses), although reporting facilities may hold youth for nonoffense reasons, as well as some adults. However, unless noted otherwise, this bulletin focuses on youth younger than 21 who are in residential placement after being charged with or adjudicated for an offense. As used in this bulletin, “youth” always refers to those held for an offense. The term “resident” is used when discussing facility size or crowding, as these are characteristics related to all persons in the facility.

The 2020 JRFC collected data from 2,019 facilities. Analyses in this bulletin were based only on data from facilities housing youth held for an offense on the census date (October 28, 2020); 1,323 facilities were included in the analyses. Excluded from the analyses were

data from 2 facilities in Puerto Rico, 1 in the Virgin Islands, 13 Tribal facilities, and 680 facilities that held no youth for an offense on that date.

The 1,323 facilities housed a total of 25,014 youth held for an offense who were younger than 21 on the census date. This represents the fewest such youth in residential placement since the 1975 Children in Custody Census (the predecessor data collection to the JRFC and its companion collection, the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement). From 1975 to 2000, the data collections recorded increasingly larger 1-day counts of youth in public and private residential placement facilities. From 2000 to 2020, those increases were erased, resulting in the lowest census population recorded since 1975. It should be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had significant effects on all stages of the juvenile justice system, including juvenile residential facilities. This may have impacted multiple aspects of the 2020 JRFC data, such as reporting, the number of youth in placement, and the services received.

## Local facilities outnumber state facilities—and hold more youth

Although local facilities (those staffed by county, city, or municipal employees) outnumbered state facilities each year since 2000, state facilities held more youth through 2008. Beginning in 2010, more youth were held in local facilities than in state facilities, a pattern that continued through 2020.

	Facilities		Youth held for an offense	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	1,323	100%	25,014	100%
Public	838	63	19,211	77
State	317	24	9,536	38
Local	521	39	9,675	39
Private	485	37	5,803	23

**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

## On October 28, 2020, 63% of juvenile facilities were publicly operated; they held 77% of youth

State	Juvenile facilities			Youth			State	Juvenile facilities			Youth		
	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private		Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private
U.S. total	1,323	838	485	25,014	19,211	5,803	Missouri	45	42	3	498	477	21
Alabama	29	12	17	639	366	273	Montana	11	4	7	93	60	33
Alaska	12	6	6	162	129	33	Nebraska	9	4	5	240	162	75
Arizona	17	10	7	492	426	66	Nevada	11	–	–	330	–	–
Arkansas	20	16	4	345	300	45	New Hampshire	2	–	–	15	–	–
California	91	62	29	2,673	2,388	285	New Jersey	23	–	–	456	–	–
Colorado	21	12	9	447	381	66	New Mexico	11	–	–	201	–	–
Connecticut	3	–	–	39	–	–	New York	76	17	59	792	414	378
Delaware	7	–	–	81	–	–	North Carolina	30	24	6	501	402	99
District of Columbia	4	–	–	99	–	–	North Dakota	5	–	–	36	–	–
Florida	62	25	37	1,473	759	714	Ohio	63	56	7	1,335	1,254	81
Georgia	32	25	7	1,089	993	96	Oklahoma	19	11	8	237	159	78
Hawaii	4	–	–	48	–	–	Oregon	28	22	6	573	474	99
Idaho	14	–	–	318	–	–	Pennsylvania	71	20	51	1,125	504	621
Illinois	28	24	4	573	540	33	Rhode Island	9	1	8	63	18	45
Indiana	52	25	27	924	522	402	South Carolina	19	8	11	483	324	159
Iowa	31	10	21	483	144	342	South Dakota	14	9	5	111	90	21
Kansas	12	–	–	303	–	–	Tennessee	20	13	7	237	153	84
Kentucky	26	23	3	252	222	30	Texas	75	63	12	2,700	2,277	420
Louisiana	26	15	11	675	441	234	Utah	19	12	7	243	135	111
Maine	1	–	–	33	–	–	Vermont	1	–	–	15	–	–
Maryland	18	12	6	234	210	27	Virginia	34	–	–	654	–	–
Massachusetts	31	17	14	168	96	72	Washington	31	–	–	504	–	–
Michigan	36	23	13	738	432	306	West Virginia	30	10	20	249	153	96
Minnesota	31	16	15	417	303	114	Wisconsin	31	20	11	339	267	69
Mississippi	16	–	–	141	–	–	Wyoming	12	6	6	147	108	39

**Notes:** “State” is the state where the facility is located. Youth sent to out-of-state facilities are counted in the state where the facility is located, not the state where they committed their offense. Cell counts for the number of youth have been rounded to the nearest multiple of three to preserve the privacy of residents. To preserve the privacy of individual facilities, detail is not displayed in states with one or two private facilities.

**Source:** Authors’ analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

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

Facility operation	Facility type							
	Total	Detention center	Shelter	Reception/ diagnostic center	Group home	Ranch/ wilderness camp	Training school	Residential treatment center
Number of facilities	1,323	599	82	28	219	22	136	452
<b>Operations profile</b>								
All facilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Public	63	93	39	79	26	64	91	38
State	24	23	7	64	16	36	68	21
Local	39	70	32	14	10	27	24	17
Private	37	7	61	21	74	36	9	62
<b>Facility profile</b>								
All facilities	100%	45%	6%	2%	17%	2%	10%	34%
Public	100	66	4	3	7	2	15	20
State	100	43	2	6	11	3	29	29
Local	100	81	5	1	4	1	6	15
Private	100	9	10	1	33	2	2	58

■ Detention centers, reception/diagnostic centers, ranch/wilderness camps, and training schools were more likely to be public facilities than private facilities.

■ Most shelters, group homes, and residential treatment centers were private facilities.

■ Detention centers made up the largest proportion of all public facilities (66%)—this was true for both state facilities (43%) and local facilities (81%).

■ Residential treatment centers accounted for the largest proportion of all private facilities (58%), followed by group homes (33%).

**Notes:** Counts (and row percentages) may sum to more than the total number of facilities because facilities could select more than one facility type. Detail may not sum to total because of rounding.

**Source:** Authors’ analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

# Confinement features and size varied across types of facilities

## Facilities varied in their use of confinement features

Overall, 53% of facilities said that, at least some of the time, they locked youth in their sleeping rooms. Among public facilities, 83% of local facilities and 72% of state facilities reported locking youth in sleeping rooms. Few private facilities reported locking youth in sleeping rooms (8%).

### Percentage of facilities locking youth in sleeping rooms

Facility operation	Percentage
Total	53%
Public	78
State	72
Local	83
Private	8

**Note:** Percentages are based on facilities that reported confinement information (5 of 1,323 facilities [less than 1%] did not report).

Among facilities that locked youth in sleeping rooms, most did this at night (88%) or when a youth was out of control (74%). Locking doors whenever youth were in their sleeping rooms (59%) and locking youth in their rooms during shift changes (53%) were also fairly common. Fewer facilities reported locking youth in sleeping rooms for a part of each day (19%) or when they were suicidal (20%). Very few facilities reported that they locked youth in sleeping rooms most of each day or all of each day (less than 1% each). Six percent (6%) had no set schedule for locking youth in sleeping rooms.

Facilities indicated whether they had various types of locked doors or gates to confine youth within the facility (see sidebar, this page). Of all facilities that reported confinement information, 69% said they had one or more confinement features (other

than locked sleeping rooms), with a greater proportion of public facilities using these features than private facilities (88% vs. 34%).

	Percentage of facilities	
	No confinement features	One or more confinement features
Total	31%	69%
Public	12	88
State	13	87
Local	11	89
Private	66	34

**Note:** Percentages are based on facilities that reported confinement information (5 of 1,323 facilities [less than 1%] did not report).

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

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

Facility type	Number	Percentage
Total facilities	903	69%
Detention center	583	97
Shelter	24	30
Reception/diagnostic center	25	93
Group home	44	20
Ranch/wilderness camp	8	36
Training school	131	96
Residential treatment center	248	55

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

Among group homes, 1 in 5 facilities said they had locked doors or gates to confine youth. The presence of staff and the remote location of some facilities are also features that help to keep youth from leaving.

## The Juvenile Residential Facility Census asks facilities about their confinement features

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

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

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

Overall, 31% of facilities reported having external gates in fences or walls with razor wire. This arrangement was most common among training schools (64%), reception/diagnostic centers (56%), and detention centers (50%).

## In general, the use of confinement features increased as facility size increased

Facility size is determined by the number of residents held at the facility on the census date. Although the use of confinement generally increased as facility size increased, the proportion of facilities holding more than 200 residents using these features was lower than the proportion of facilities holding between 101 and 200 residents. Nearly 9 in 10 (87%) facilities holding between 101 and 200 residents reported using one or more confinement features, compared with 60% of facilities holding more than 200 residents.

Although the use of razor wire is a far less common confinement measure, more than half (60%) of facilities holding more than 200 youth said they had locked gates in fences or walls with razor wire.

## The number of facilities that reported holding more than 200 residents has declined since 2006

In 2006, 3% of facilities held more than 200 residents, compared with less than 1% in 2020. Additionally, the proportion of youth held at these facilities has also decreased. In 2006, 24% of youth held in facilities on the census date were in large facilities, compared with 3% of youth held in 2020.

## Large facilities were most likely to be state operated

About a quarter (27%) of state-operated facilities (87 of 317) held 10 or fewer residents in 2020. In contrast, 47% of private facilities (228 of 485) were categorized as small. In fact, these small private facilities made up the largest proportion of private facilities.

### Although about two-thirds of facilities were small (holding 20 or fewer residents), about half of youth were held in medium facilities (holding 21–100 residents)

Facility size	Number of facilities	Percentage of facilities	Number of youth	Percentage of youth
Total facilities	1,323	100%	25,014	100%
1–10 residents	539	41	2,570	10
11–20 residents	361	27	4,921	20
21–50 residents	301	23	8,290	33
51–100 residents	78	6	4,449	18
101–200 residents	39	3	4,094	16
201+ residents	5	0	690	3

- The largest facilities—those holding more than 200 residents—accounted for less than 1% of all facilities and held 3% of all youth in placement.
- Although the smallest facilities—those holding 10 or fewer residents—accounted for 41% of all facilities, they held 10% of all youth in residential placement.

**Note:** Column percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

### Among group homes, those holding 20 or fewer residents were most common

Facility size	Facility type						
	Detention center	Shelter	Reception/diagnostic center	Group home	Ranch/wilderness camp	Training school	Residential treatment center
Number of facilities	599	82	28	219	22	136	452
Total facilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
1–10 residents	36	77	14	63	23	13	34
11–20 residents	30	17	14	24	32	23	29
21–50 residents	25	5	43	10	36	35	27
51–100 residents	6	1	7	2	9	16	7
101–200 residents	2	0	14	1	0	12	3
201+ residents	1	0	7	0	0	1	0

- 63% of group homes and 77% of shelters held 10 or fewer residents. For other facility types, this proportion was 36% or less.

- 7% of reception/diagnostic centers held more than 200 residents. For other facility types, this proportion was 1% or less.

**Notes:** Facility type counts sum to more than 1,323 facilities because facilities could select more than one facility type. Column percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

Facility size	Facility operation		
	State	Local	Private
Total facilities	317	521	485
1–10 residents	87	224	228
11–20 residents	86	149	126
21–50 residents	94	112	95
51–100 residents	31	24	23
101–200 residents	17	11	11
201+ residents	2	1	2

State-operated facilities made up 24% of all facilities and accounted for 40% of facilities holding more than 200 residents. Private facilities constituted 37% of all facilities and accounted for 42% of facilities holding 10 or fewer residents.

# Facility crowding affected a relatively small proportion of youth in custody

## One in six youth were in facilities that were at or over their standard bed capacity

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

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

Fifteen percent (15%) of facilities said that the number of residents they held on the 2020 census date put them at or over the capacity of their standard beds or that they relied on some makeshift beds. These facilities held 16% of youth in 2020 compared with 42% of youth in 2000. In 2020, 1% of facilities

reported being over capacity (having fewer standard beds than they had residents or relying on makeshift beds). These facilities held 2% of youth. In comparison, 8% of facilities in 2000 reported being over capacity and they held 20% of youth.

## In 2020, both public and private facilities reported operating above capacity

For both publicly and privately operated facilities, 1% each exceeded standard bed capacity or had residents occupying makeshift beds on the 2020 census date. In contrast, a larger proportion of private

facilities (19%) compared with public facilities (11%) said they were operating at 100% capacity.

Facility operation	Percentage of facilities at or over their standard bed capacity		
	≥100%	100%	>100%
Total	15%	14%	1%
Public	12	11	1
State	12	11	1
Local	12	11	1
Private	20	19	1

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

## Facilities holding between 51 and 100 residents were the most likely to be crowded

Facility size	Number of facilities	Percentage of facilities under, at, or over their standard bed capacity		
		<100%	100%	>100%
Total facilities	1,323	85%	14%	1%
1–10 residents	539	84	15	1
11–20 residents	361	84	15	0
21–50 residents	301	90	8	2
51–100 residents	78	83	12	5
101–200 residents	39	74	23	3
201+ residents	5	40	60	0

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

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

## A small percentage of public detention centers, training schools, and residential treatment centers reported operating above capacity in 2020

Facility type	Percentage of facilities at their standard bed capacity			Percentage of facilities over their standard bed capacity		
	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private
Total	14%	11%	19%	1%	1%	1%
Detention center	11	10	16	1	1	0
Shelter	20	9	26	0	0	0
Reception/diagnostic center	11	9	17	0	0	0
Group home	20	14	22	1	0	2
Ranch/wilderness camp	18	14	25	0	0	0
Training school	10	10	8	2	2	0
Residential treatment center	16	13	17	1	1	1

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

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

## Nationwide, 198 juvenile facilities (15%) were at or over standard capacity or relied on makeshift beds

State	Total facilities	Number of facilities under, at, or over capacity			Percentage of youth in facilities at or over capacity		State	Total facilities	Number of facilities under, at, or over capacity			Percentage of youth in facilities at or over capacity	
		<100%	100%	>100%	100%	>100%			<100%	100%	>100%	100%	>100%
U.S. total	1,323	1,125	182	16	14%	2%	Missouri	45	40	5	0	10%	0%
Alabama	29	25	4	0	14	0	Montana	11	7	3	1	26	26
Alaska	12	10	2	0	9	0	Nebraska	9	9	0	0	0	0
Arizona	17	14	3	0	31	0	Nevada	11	9	2	0	20	0
Arkansas	20	14	6	0	50	0	New Hampshire	2	–	–	–	–	–
California	91	78	13	0	32	0	New Jersey	23	19	4	0	9	0
Colorado	21	18	3	0	18	0	New Mexico	11	10	1	0	1	0
Connecticut	3	–	–	–	–	–	New York	76	58	17	1	23	4
Delaware	7	7	0	0	0	0	North Carolina	30	25	5	0	9	0
District of Columbia	4	–	–	–	–	–	North Dakota	5	5	0	0	0	0
Florida	62	47	11	4	17	13	Ohio	63	56	7	0	7	0
Georgia	32	31	1	0	6	0	Oklahoma	19	12	7	0	39	0
Hawaii	4	–	–	–	–	–	Oregon	28	23	4	1	6	12
Idaho	14	14	0	0	0	0	Pennsylvania	71	61	9	1	9	1
Illinois	28	24	4	0	39	0	Rhode Island	9	8	1	0	13	0
Indiana	52	48	4	0	3	0	South Carolina	19	16	3	0	12	0
Iowa	31	23	8	0	58	0	South Dakota	14	8	2	4	28	15
Kansas	12	11	1	0	8	0	Tennessee	20	16	3	1	14	1
Kentucky	26	23	3	0	13	0	Texas	75	70	5	0	2	0
Louisiana	26	23	3	0	11	0	Utah	19	14	5	0	32	0
Maine	1	–	–	–	–	–	Vermont	1	–	–	–	–	–
Maryland	18	14	4	0	7	0	Virginia	34	32	2	0	4	0
Massachusetts	31	29	2	0	10	0	Washington	31	28	2	1	3	25
Michigan	36	32	4	0	6	0	West Virginia	30	25	5	0	6	0
Minnesota	31	24	7	0	10	0	Wisconsin	31	27	3	1	5	1
Mississippi	16	14	1	1	3	15	Wyoming	12	10	2	0	16	0

**Notes:** A single bed is counted as one standard bed, and a bunk bed is counted as two standard beds. Makeshift beds (e.g., cots, rollout beds, mattresses, and sofas) are not counted as standard beds. Facilities are counted as over capacity if they reported more residents than standard beds or if they reported any occupied makeshift beds. Facilities could select more than one facility type. "State" is the state where the facility is located. Youth sent to out-of-state facilities are counted in the state where the facility is located, not the state where they committed their offense.

– To protect the identity of specific facilities, some data are suppressed. If the total number of facilities for a state is greater than 0 and less than 5, no detail data will be displayed.

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

# Most youth were evaluated for educational needs and attended school while held in facilities

## Facilities that screened all youth for educational needs held 91% of the youth in custody

As part of the information collected on educational services, the JRFC questionnaire asked facilities about their procedures regarding educational screening.

In 2020, 90% of facilities that reported educational screening information said that they evaluated all youth for grade level and educational needs. An additional 3% evaluated some youth. Only 8% did not evaluate any youth for educational needs.

Of the 37 facilities in 2020 that screened some but not all youth, 70% evaluated youth

whom staff identified as needing an assessment, 67% evaluated youth with known educational problems, 59% evaluated youth for whom no educational record was available, and 15% evaluated youth who came directly from home rather than from another facility. In addition, 38% reported evaluating youth based on some “other” reason.

In 2020, those facilities that screened all youth held 91% of the youth in custody. An additional 3% of such youth in 2020 were in facilities that screened some youth.

### The largest facilities were the least likely to evaluate all youth for grade level

Education screening	Facility size based on residential population						
	Total	1–10	11–20	21–50	51–100	101–200	201+
Total facilities	1,323	539	361	301	78	39	5
Facilities reporting	1,275	517	350	293	72	38	5
All reporting facilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
All youth screened	90	84	94	94	93	97	60
Some youth screened	3	4	1	2	6	3	0
No youth screened	8	12	5	4	1	0	40

■ Facilities holding 101–200 youth were the most likely to evaluate all youth for grade level in 2020.

**Notes:** Reporting total excludes one facility that did not indicate which youth were screened. Column percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

**Source:** Authors’ analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

## Most facilities used previous academic records to evaluate educational needs

The vast majority of facilities (93%) that screened some or all youth for grade level and educational needs used previous academic records. Some facilities also administered written tests (56%) or conducted an education-related interview with an education specialist (61%), intake counselor (33%), or guidance counselor (24%).

### Most facilities evaluated youth for grade level between 24 hours and 7 days after arrival

When youth are evaluated for educational needs	Number of juvenile facilities			As a percentage of facilities that evaluated youth for grade level		
	All facilities	All youth evaluated	Some youth evaluated	Facilities that evaluated	All youth evaluated	Some youth evaluated
				evaluated	evaluated	evaluated
Total reporting facilities	1,179	1,142	37	100%	97%	3%
Less than 24 hours	249	243	6	21	21	1
24 hours to 7 days	913	894	19	77	76	2
7 or more days	58	52	6	5	4	1
Other	89	75	14	8	6	1
Facilities not evaluating (or not reporting)	144	–	–	–	–	–

**Note:** Reporting facilities sum to more than 1,179 because they could select more than one time period.

**Source:** Authors’ analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

## Most facilities reported that youth in their facility attended school

Ninety-six percent (96%) of facilities reported that at least some youth in their facility attended school either inside or outside the facility. Facilities reporting that all youth attended school (75% of facilities) accounted for 71% of the youth population in residential placement. Reception/diagnostic centers were the least likely to report that all youth attended school (57%) and also the most likely to report that no youth attended school (11%). Facilities with 21–50 residents were most likely to report



that all youth attended school (77%), while facilities with more than 200 residents were least likely (40%) to have all youth attend school. Facilities reporting that no youth attended school (4%) accounted for 4% of all youth in residential placement.

## Facilities offered a variety of educational services

Facilities that provided both middle and high school-level education housed 96% of all youth. Ninety-five percent (95%) of all facilities provided high school-level education, and 89% provided middle school-level education. Most facilities also reported offering special education services (82%) and GED preparation (74%). A much smaller percentage of facilities provided vocational or technical education (41%) and post-high school education (39%).

In 2020, facilities were asked if they communicated information regarding the education status, services, and/or needs of the young person to the new placement or residence; 94% of facilities said that they did. Most of these (89%) said that they communicated education status information for all youth departing the facility.

### Detention centers and shelters were most likely to report that all youth attended school (78% each), and facilities holding more than 200 residents were least likely to report that all or some youth attended school

Facility type	Percentage of facilities with youth attending school			
	Total	All youth	Some youth	No youth
Total facilities	100%	75%	21%	4%
Detention center	100	78	19	3
Shelter	100	78	20	2
Reception/diagnostic center	100	57	32	11
Group home	100	66	31	4
Ranch/wilderness camp	100	73	27	0
Training school	100	65	32	2
Residential treatment center	100	77	19	4
<b>Facility size</b>				
1–10 residents	100%	75%	21%	4%
11–20 residents	100	75	21	4
21–50 residents	100	77	20	3
51–100 residents	100	68	24	8
101–200 residents	100	67	31	3
201+ residents	100	40	40	20

**Note:** Row percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

### Most facilities provided middle and high school-level education

Education level	Facility type							
	All facilities	Detention center	Shelter	Reception/diagnostic center	Group home	Ranch/wilderness camp	Training school	Residential treatment center
Elementary level	49%	64%	57%	32%	30%	18%	38%	42%
Middle school	89	94	95	89	79	82	89	88
High school	95	97	95	89	94	100	97	95
Special education	82	84	77	89	76	77	94	83
GED preparation	74	72	72	86	71	86	89	75
GED testing	50	40	40	82	52	68	75	55
Post-high school	39	30	30	75	40	59	70	43
Vocational/technical	41	25	27	75	53	64	76	52
Life skills training	63	52	55	75	73	82	78	70

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

# Most facilities reported screening youth for substance abuse problems

## Facilities that screened all youth held 76% of the youth in custody

In 2020, 76% of facilities that reported information about substance abuse evaluation said that they evaluated all youth, 9% said that they evaluated some youth, and 15% did not evaluate any youth.

Of the 121 facilities that evaluated some but not all youth, 90% evaluated youth that the court or a probation officer identified as potentially having substance abuse problems, 68% evaluated youth that facility staff identified as potentially having substance abuse problems, and 69% evaluated youth charged with or adjudicated for a drug- or alcohol-related offense. Those facilities that screened all youth held 76% of the youth in custody. An additional 9% of youth were in facilities that screened some youth.

## The most common form of evaluation was a series of staff-administered questions

The majority of facilities (76%) that evaluated some or all youth for substance abuse problems had staff administer a series of questions about substance use and abuse, 62% visually observed youth to evaluate them, 50% used a self-report checklist inventory that asks about substance use and abuse to evaluate youth, and 43% used a standardized self-report instrument, such as the Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory.

## Drug testing was a routine procedure in most facilities in 2020

As part of the information collected on substance abuse services, JRFC asked facilities if they required any youth to undergo drug testing after they arrived at the

facility. The majority of facilities (63%) reported that they required at least some youth to undergo drug testing. A request from the court or probation officer was the most common reason for testing. Of facilities that reported testing all youth, 65% tested for this reason. For facilities that tested some youth, 66% of facilities that tested youth suspected

### Facilities holding 1–10 youth were the least likely to evaluate all youth for substance abuse problems

Substance abuse screening	Facility size based on residential population						
	Total	1–10	11–20	21–50	51–100	101–200	201+
Total facilities	1,323	539	361	301	78	39	5
Facilities reporting	1,275	517	350	293	72	38	5
All reporting facilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
All youth screened	76	73	77	77	86	74	100
Some youth screened	9	8	11	10	8	13	0
No youth screened	15	19	13	12	6	13	0

Note: Column percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

Source: Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

### Two-thirds of reporting facilities evaluated youth for substance abuse within their first day at the facility

When youth are evaluated for substance abuse	Number of juvenile facilities			As a percentage of facilities that evaluated youth for substance abuse		
	All facilities	All youth evaluated	Some youth evaluated	Facilities that evaluated	All youth evaluated	Some youth evaluated
Total reporting facilities	1,088	967	121	100%	89%	11%
Less than 24 hours	720	690	30	66	63	3
24 hours to 7 days	429	370	59	39	34	5
7 or more days	85	59	26	8	5	2
Other	96	66	30	9	6	3
Facilities not evaluating (or not reporting)	235	—	—	—	—	—

Note: Facilities sum to more than 1,088 because they were able to select more than one time period.

Source: Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

of recent drug or alcohol use did so at the request of the court or probation officer, and 63% of facilities that tested youth with substance abuse problems did so at the request of the court or probation officer.

Circumstances of testing	Percentage of facilities
<b>All youth</b>	
After initial arrival	40%
At each reentry	25
Randomly	31
When drug use is suspected or drug is present	55
At the request of the court or probation officer	65
<b>Youth suspected of recent drug/alcohol use</b>	
After initial arrival	37%
At each reentry	23
Randomly	27
When drug use is suspected or drug is present	52
At the request of the court or probation officer	66
<b>Youth with substance abuse problems</b>	
After initial arrival	31%
At each reentry	22
Randomly	28
When drug use is suspected or drug is present	48
At the request of the court or probation officer	63

In 2020, JRFC asked facilities if they communicated information regarding the substance abuse status, services, and/or needs of the young person to the new placement or residence; 61% of facilities said that they did. Of these facilities, many (77%) said that they communicated substance abuse status information for all youth departing the facility.

### Education was the most common substance abuse service provided at all reporting facilities

Substance abuse service	Facility size based on residential population						
	Total	1–10	11–20	21–50	51–100	101–200	201+
Total facilities	1,323	539	361	301	78	39	5
Facilities reporting	967	377	266	230	62	28	4
Substance abuse education	95%	93%	95%	96%	95%	100%	100%
Case manager to oversee treatment	55	51	52	62	63	82	0
Treatment plan for substance abuse	79	79	75	83	79	96	50
Special living units	8	4	4	10	19	39	0
None of above services provided	2	2	2	0	2	0	0

■ Of the facilities holding between 101 and 200 residents that reported providing substance abuse services, all of them provided substance abuse education and were more likely than smaller facilities to have special living units in which all young persons have substance abuse offenses and/or problems.

Source: Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

### The majority of facilities that provided substance abuse counseling or therapy were most likely to provide services on an individual basis

Service provided	Facility type							
	Total	Detention center	Shelter	Reception/diagnostic center	Group home	Ranch/wilderness camp	Training school	Residential treatment center
Total facilities	1,323	599	82	28	219	22	136	452
Facilities reporting counseling	712	237	41	17	142	16	96	296
Individual	94%	92%	98%	82%	96%	81%	92%	95%
Group	81	76	85	100	79	88	84	87
Family	50	36	63	41	47	19	45	66
Facilities reporting therapy	870	302	46	22	165	19	129	369
Individual	98%	97%	100%	95%	98%	95%	98%	99%
Group	79	70	91	95	78	89	84	86
Family	51	41	67	45	48	32	49	62

■ In 2020, shelters, group homes, and residential treatment centers were most likely to provide individual counseling, and shelters were most likely to provide individual therapy.

■ Reception/diagnostic centers were the most likely to provide group counseling and group therapy (100% and 95%, respectively).

■ Half of all facilities provided both family therapy and family counseling.

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

Source: Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

# Most youth were evaluated for mental health needs while held in facilities

## In nearly two-thirds of facilities, in-house mental health professionals evaluated all youth held

Facilities provided information about their procedures for evaluating youth's mental health needs. Among facilities that responded to mental health evaluation questions in 2020, 74% reported they evaluated all youth for mental health needs using an in-house mental health professional. These facilities held 67% of youth on the census date. Facilities that reported using an in-house mental health professional to evaluate some youth (26%) held 22% of youth.

In 2020, a greater proportion of privately operated than publicly operated facilities said that in-house mental health professionals evaluated all youth (94% vs. 64% of facilities reporting mental health evaluation information). However, in a greater proportion of public facilities than private facilities (36% vs. 6%), in-house mental health professionals evaluated some youth.

Evaluation by in-house mental health professional	Facility type	
	Public	Private
Total reporting facilities	707	355
All reporting facilities	100%	100%
All youth screened	64	94
Some youth screened	36	6

Facilities also indicated whether treatment was provided onsite. Facilities that said they provided mental health treatment inside the facility were likely to have had all youth evaluated by an in-house mental health professional. Facilities that did not provide onsite mental health treatment were more

## Facilities holding 101–200 youth were most likely to have in-house mental health professionals evaluate all youth for mental health needs

In-house mental health evaluation	Facility size based on residential population						
	Total	1–10	11–20	21–50	51–100	101–200	201+
Total facilities	1,323	539	361	301	78	39	5
Facilities reporting	1,062	378	293	280	70	37	4
All reporting facilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
All youth evaluated	74	74	71	76	74	89	75
Some youth evaluated	26	26	29	24	26	11	25

Source: Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

## Ranch/wilderness camps were more likely than other types of facilities to have in-house mental health professionals evaluate all youth for mental health needs

In-house mental health evaluation	Facility type						
	Detention center	Shelter	Reception/ diagnostic center	Group home	Ranch/ wilderness camp	Training school	Residential treatment center
Total facilities	599	82	28	219	22	136	452
Facilities reporting	508	49	25	126	16	129	397
All reporting facilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
All youth evaluated	55	69	84	90	94	85	88
Some youth evaluated	45	31	16	10	6	15	12

Source: Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

likely to have had some youth evaluated by an in-house mental health professional.

Evaluation by in-house mental health professional	Onsite mental health treatment?	
	Yes	No
Total reporting facilities	961	100
All reporting facilities	100%	100%
All youth screened	77	43
Some youth screened	23	57

In 2020, JRFC asked facilities if they communicated information regarding the mental health status, services, and/or needs of the young person to the new placement or residence; 90% of facilities said that they did. Most of these (76%) said that they communicated mental health status information for all youth departing the facility.

**The most common approach to in-house mental health evaluation was to screen all youth by the end of their first day or first week at the facility**

When youth are evaluated for mental health needs	Number of juvenile facilities			As a percentage of facilities that evaluated youth in-house for mental health needs		
	All facilities	All youth evaluated	Some youth evaluated	Facilities that evaluated	All youth evaluated	Some youth evaluated
Total reporting facilities	1,060	786	274	100%	74%	26%
Less than 24 hours	480	413	67	45	39	6
24 hours to 7 days	427	329	98	40	31	9
7 or more days	29	17	12	3	2	1
Other	124	27	97	12	3	9

■ In 70% of facilities that reported using an in-house mental health professional to perform mental health evaluations, they evaluated all youth for mental health needs by the end of their first week in custody.

**Note:** Percentage detail may not sum to total because of rounding.

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

**Of facilities that reported using in-house mental health professionals to conduct mental health evaluations, 39% of youth were in facilities that evaluated all youth on the day they arrived at the facility**

When youth are evaluated for mental health needs	Number of youth			As a percentage of youth in facilities that provided in-house evaluation for mental health needs		
	All facilities	All youth evaluated	Some youth evaluated	Facilities that evaluated	All youth evaluated	Some youth evaluated
Total youth held for an offense residing in reporting facilities	22,207	16,709	5,498	100%	75%	25%
Less than 24 hours	9,995	8,566	1,429	45	39	6
24 hours to 7 days	9,122	6,933	2,189	41	31	10
7 or more days	1,028	773	255	5	3	1
Other	2,062	437	1,625	9	2	7

■ Facilities reporting that they evaluated all youth by the end of their first week held 70% of youth who resided in facilities that reported using in-house mental health evaluation procedures.

**Note:** Percentage detail may not sum to total because of rounding.

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

# Most youth were held in facilities that evaluate all youth for suicide risk on their first day

## Facilities that screened all youth for suicide risk held 94% of the youth in custody

As part of the information collected on mental health services, the JRFC questionnaire asks facilities about their procedures regarding screening youth for suicide risk.

In 2020, 96% of facilities that reported information on suicide screening said that they evaluated all youth for suicide risk. Less

than 1% said that they evaluated some youth. Some facilities (4%) said that they did not evaluate any youth for suicide risk.

In 2020, a larger proportion of public than private facilities said that they evaluated all youth for suicide risk (98% vs. 91%).

In 2020, among facilities that reported suicide screening information, those that screened all youth for suicide risk held 97% of youth who were in residential

placement—up from 78% in 2000. An additional 1% of such youth in 2020 were in facilities that screened some youth.

Suicide screening	2000	2020
Total youth	108,802	25,014
Youth in reporting facilities	103,508	24,025
Total	100%	100%
All youth screened	78	97
Some youth screened	16	1
No youth screened	6	2

**Note:** Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

## Some facilities used trained counselors or professional mental health staff to conduct suicide screening

More than half (54%) of facilities that screened some or all youth for suicide risk reported that mental health professionals with at least a master's degree in psychology or social work conducted the screenings. About one quarter (26%) used neither mental health professionals nor counselors whom a mental health professional had trained to conduct suicide screenings.

Facilities reported on the screening methods used to determine suicide risk. Facilities could choose more than one method. Of facilities that conducted suicide risk screening, a majority (73%) reported that they incorporated one or more questions about suicide in the medical history or intake process to screen youth, 41% used a form their facility designed, and 24% used a form or questions that a county or state juvenile justice system designed to assess suicide risk. More than half of facilities (53%) reported using the Massachusetts Youth

### Suicide screening was common across facilities of all sizes

Suicide screening	Facility size based on residential population						
	Total	1–10	11–20	21–50	51–100	101–200	201+
Total facilities	1,323	539	361	301	78	39	5
Facilities reporting	1,273	516	349	293	72	38	5
All reporting facilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
All youth screened	96	93	98	98	97	95	100
Some youth screened	1	1	0	0	1	5	0
No youth screened	4	6	2	2	1	0	0

**Note:** Column percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

### Group homes were the least likely to screen youth for suicide risk

Suicide screening	Facility type						
	Detention center	Shelter	Reception/diagnostic center	Group home	Ranch/wilderness camp	Training school	Residential treatment center
Total facilities	599	82	28	219	22	136	452
Facilities reporting	583	80	25	211	22	133	433
All reporting facilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
All youth screened	99	94	96	87	91	98	96
Some youth screened	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
No youth screened	1	6	4	12	9	2	3

**Note:** Column percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

Screening Instrument (MAYSI)—42% reported using the MAYSI full form, and 11% used the MAYSI suicide/depression module. Very few facilities (less than 1%) used the Voice Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children.

Of facilities that reported screening youth for suicide risk, 91% reassessed youth at some point during their stay. Most facilities (88%) reported rescreening on a case-by-case basis or as necessary. An additional 38% of facilities also reported that rescreening occurred systematically and was based on a variety of factors (e.g., length of stay, facility events, or negative life events). Less than 10% of facilities did not reassess youth to determine suicide risk.

### All facilities used some type of preventive measure once they determined a youth was at risk for suicide

Facilities that reported suicide screening information were asked a series of questions related to preventive measures taken for youth determined to be at risk for suicide. Of these facilities, 64% reported placing at-risk youth in sleeping or observation rooms that are locked or under staff security. Aside from using sleeping or observation rooms, 85% of facilities reported using line-of-sight supervision, 84% reported removing personal items that could be used to attempt suicide, and 76% reported using one-on-one or arm's-length supervision. About half of facilities (51%) reported using special clothing to prevent suicide attempts, and 28% reported removing the youth from the general population. Twenty-one percent (21%) of facilities used special clothing to identify youth at risk for suicide, and 21% of facilities used restraints to prevent suicide attempts.

### In 2020, the majority (90%) of youth in facilities that screened for suicide risk were in facilities that conducted suicide screenings on all youth on the day they arrived

Suicide screening	When suicide risk screening occurs					Never or not reported
	Total	Less than 24 hours	24 hours to 7 days	7 days or more	Other	
<b>Number of facilities that screened</b>						
Total	1,228	1,093	59	7	69	46
All youth screened	1,220	1,089	56	7	68	0
Some youth screened	8	4	3	0	1	0
<b>Percentage of facilities that screened</b>						
Total	100%	89%	5%	1%	6%	—
All youth screened	99	89	5	1	6	—
Some youth screened	1	0	0	0	0	—
<b>Number of youth</b>						
In facilities that screened	23,668	21,513	832	222	1,101	361
In facilities that screened all youth	23,418	21,357	751	222	1,088	0
In facilities that screened some youth	250	156	81	0	13	0
<b>Percentage of youth</b>						
In facilities that screened	100%	91%	4%	1%	5%	—
In facilities that screened all youth	99	90	3	1	5	—
In facilities that screened some youth	1	1	0	0	0	—

- Nearly all facilities (93%) that reported screening for suicide risk said they screened all youth by the end of the first week of their stay at the facility. A large portion (89%) said they screened all youth on their first day at the facility. These facilities accounted for 90% of youth held in facilities that conducted suicide screenings.
- Very few facilities that reported screening for suicide risk reported that they conducted the screenings at some point other than within the first week of a youth's stay (6%). Facilities that conducted screenings within other time limits gave varying responses. For example, some facilities reported that screenings occurred as needed or as deemed necessary. Some reported that screenings were court ordered. A small number of facilities indicated that screenings occurred before the youth was admitted.

**Note:** Percentage detail may not sum to total because of rounding.

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

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

In addition to information gathered on the census date, JRFC collects data on the following questions for the 30-day period of September 2020:

- Were there any unauthorized departures of any young persons who were assigned beds at this facility?
- Were any young persons assigned beds at this facility transported to a hospital emergency room by facility staff, transportation staff, or by an ambulance?
- Were any of the young persons assigned beds here restrained by facility staff with a mechanical restraint?

- Were any of the young persons assigned beds here locked for more than 4 hours alone in an isolation, seclusion, or sleeping room to regain control of their unruly behavior?

## Illness was the most common reason for emergency room (ER) visits in the previous month

Reason for ER visit	Percentage of facilities
Total	24%
Injury	
Sports-related	29
Work/chore-related	2
Interpersonal conflict (between residents)	26
Interpersonal conflict (by nonresident)	3
Illness	34
Pregnancy	
Complications	4
Labor and delivery	0
Suicide attempt	12
Nonemergency	
No other health professional available	13
No doctor's appointment could be obtained	10
Other	32

**Note:** Percentages are based on facilities that reported emergency room information (20 of 1,323 facilities [2%] did not report).

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

## One-eighth of facilities (13%) reported unauthorized departures in the month before the census date

Facility type	Number of facilities		Percentage of reporting facilities with unauthorized departures
	Total	Reporting	
Total facilities	1,323	1,276	13%
Detention center	599	583	2
Shelter	82	81	28
Reception/diagnostic center	28	25	12
Group home	219	213	27
Ranch/wilderness camp	22	22	23
Training school	136	133	2
Residential treatment center	452	434	21

- Shelters and group homes were most likely to report one or more unauthorized departures.

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

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

## Facilities were more likely to report using mechanical restraints than locking youth in some type of isolation; use of these practices differed by facility type

Facility type	Percentage of reporting facilities	
	Used mechanical restraints	Locked youth in room for 4 or more hours
Total facilities	25%	21%
Detention center	38	37
Shelter	5	4
Reception/diagnostic center	52	52
Group home	3	0
Ranch/wilderness camp	27	9
Training school	61	47
Residential treatment center	15	10

- Reception/diagnostic centers and training schools were the most likely facilities to use mechanical restraints (i.e., handcuffs, leg cuffs, waist bands, leather straps, restraining chairs, strait jackets, or other mechanical devices) in the previous month. They were also the most likely to lock a youth alone in some type of seclusion for 4 or more hours to regain control of their unruly behavior.
- Group homes were the facilities least likely to use either of these measures.

**Note:** Percentages are based on 1,303 facilities that reported information on mechanical restraints and locked isolation, out of a total of 1,323 facilities.

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.



# Facilities reported 10 deaths of youth in placement over 12 months—5 were suicides

## Youth in residential placement rarely died in custody

Facilities holding youth reported that 10 youth died while in the legal custody of the facility between October 1, 2019, and September 30, 2020.

Routine collection of national data on deaths of youth in residential placement began with the 1988–1989 Children in Custody (CIC) Census of Public and Private Juvenile Detention, Correctional, and Shelter Facilities. Accidents or suicides have usually been the leading cause of death. Over the years 1988–1994 (CIC data reporting years), an average of 46 deaths were reported nationally per year, including an annual average of 18 suicides. Over the years 2000–2020 (JRFC data reporting years), those averages dropped to 16 deaths overall and 7 suicides.

Residential treatment centers reported four deaths—three suicides and one death with an unknown cause. Training schools reported three deaths—two as a result of an injury or natural illness and one as a result of an injury that occurred prior to admission. Detention centers reported two deaths—both were suicides. Group homes accounted for one death with an unknown cause.

## There is no pattern in the timing of deaths in 2020

In 2020, the timing of death varied between 11 and 346 days after admission. Two suicides occurred within 2 weeks (11 and 14 days) of admission, one occurred within 9 weeks, one within 6 months, and one within 12 months. One youth died 1 month after admission as a result of an injury prior to entering the facility. Of the deaths that were a result of an illness or natural cause, one occurred 2 months after admission and the other occurred 11 months after admission.

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

Cause of death	Total	Inside the facility			Outside the facility		
		All	Public	Private	All	Public	Private
Total	10	7	4	3	3	2	1
Suicide	5	5	2	3	0	0	0
Illness/natural	2	1	1	0	1	1	0
Injury/prior	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Don't know	2	1	1	0	1	0	1

■ In 2020, more deaths occurred at public facilities (6) than at private facilities (4).

**Notes:** Data are reported deaths of youth in custody from October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020. None of the deaths from illness were related to AIDS or COVID-19.

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

### In 2020, the death rate was higher for private facilities than for public facilities

Cause of death	Deaths per 10,000 youth held on the census date, October 28, 2020		
	Total	Public facility	Private facility
Total	4.0	3.1	6.9
Suicide	2.0	1.0	5.2
Illness/natural	0.8	1.0	0.0
Injury/prior	0.4	0.5	0.0
Don't know	0.8	0.5	1.7

Type of facility	Deaths per 10,000 youth held on the census date, October 28, 2020		
	Total	Public facility	Private facility
Detention center	1.6	1.6	0.0
Ranch/wilderness camp	4.8	5.0	0.0
Group home	5.8	0.0	7.3
Residential treatment center	5.1	2.8	7.1

■ The death rate in 2020 (4.0) was higher than that in 2000 (2.8). Of the 30 reported deaths of youth in residential placement in 2000, accidents were the most commonly reported cause. In 2020, suicides were most common.

**Notes:** Data are reported deaths of youth in custody from October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020. None of the deaths from illness were related to AIDS or COVID-19. One death was reported in a privately operated shelter, but the relatively small size of the population of youth held in such facilities in 2020 (1,375 youth) results in a high death rate.

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

Similarly, of the two deaths where the cause was unknown, one occurred 2 months after

admission and the other occurred 7 months after admission.

**Of the total deaths in residential placement (10), 8 involved males and 2 involved females**

Race/ethnicity	Cause of death									
	Total		Suicide		Illness/natural		Injury/prior		Don't know	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	8	2	4	1	2	0	0	1	2	0
White non-Hispanic	4	1	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Black non-Hispanic	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0

**Note:** Data are reported deaths of youth in custody from October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020.

**Source:** Authors' analysis of *Juvenile Residential Facility Census 2020*.

**The Juvenile Residential Facility Census asks facilities about deaths of young persons at locations inside or outside the facility**

During the year between October 1, 2019, and September 30, 2020, did any young persons die while assigned to a bed at this facility at a location either inside or outside of this facility?

If yes, how many young persons died while assigned beds at this facility during the year between October 1, 2019, and September 30, 2020?

What was the cause of death?

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

- Suicide
- Homicide by another resident
- Homicide by nonresident(s)
- Accidental death
- Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Other (specify)

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

## The Juvenile Residential Facility Census includes data that Tribal facilities submitted

OJJDP works with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to ensure a greater representation of Tribal facilities in the CJRP and JRFC data collections. As a result, the 2020 JRFC collected data from 13 Tribal facilities. The Tribal facilities were in Arizona, Colorado, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and South Dakota and held 75 youth charged with or adjudicated for an offense (down from 116 in 2018, when 16 facilities reported).

Tribal facilities were asked what agency owned and/or operated their facilities. The Tribe owned and operated 9 of the 13

facilities. The remaining four facilities were either owned by the Tribe and operated by the federal government or owned and operated by the federal government.

Twelve Tribal facilities identified themselves as detention centers and one identified itself as a shelter. Tribal facilities were small, most holding 10 or fewer residents; 79% of youth were held at facilities that held between 1 and 10 residents. On the census day, almost all facilities (11) were operating at less than their standard bed capacity, 1 was operating at capacity, and 1 above

capacity. Standard bed capacities ranged from 6 to 62.

Eleven of the 13 Tribal facilities reported locking youth in their sleeping rooms. Among Tribal facilities that locked youth in their rooms, 10 did so when the youth were out of control. Nine facilities locked youth in their rooms at night, 10 facilities locked youth in rooms during shift changes, and 8 locked youth in their rooms whenever the youth were in their rooms. Seven facilities locked youth in their rooms when youth were suicidal, and four facilities locked youth in their rooms for part of each day.

### Other OJJDP data collection efforts describe youth in residential placement

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

- National Juvenile Court Data Archive: Collects information on sanctions that juvenile courts impose.
- Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement: Collects information on the demographics and legal attributes of each youth in a juvenile facility on the census date.

### Resources

OJJDP's online Statistical Briefing Book (SBB) offers access to a wealth of information about youth crime and victimization and about youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Visit the Juveniles in Corrections section of the SBB at [ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/corrections/faqs.asp](http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/corrections/faqs.asp) for the latest information about youth in corrections. The Juvenile Residential Facility Census Databook is a data analysis tool that gives users quick access to national and state data on the characteristics of residential placement facilities, including detailed information about facility operation, classification, size, and capacity.

### Data sources

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Variable. *Juvenile Residential Facility Census* for the years 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020 [machine-readable data files]. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau (producer).

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