

# STOCKTON, SAN BERNARDINO SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICERS HAVE ARRESTED OVER 90,000 YOUTHS



Michael Males, Senior Research Fellow  
Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice

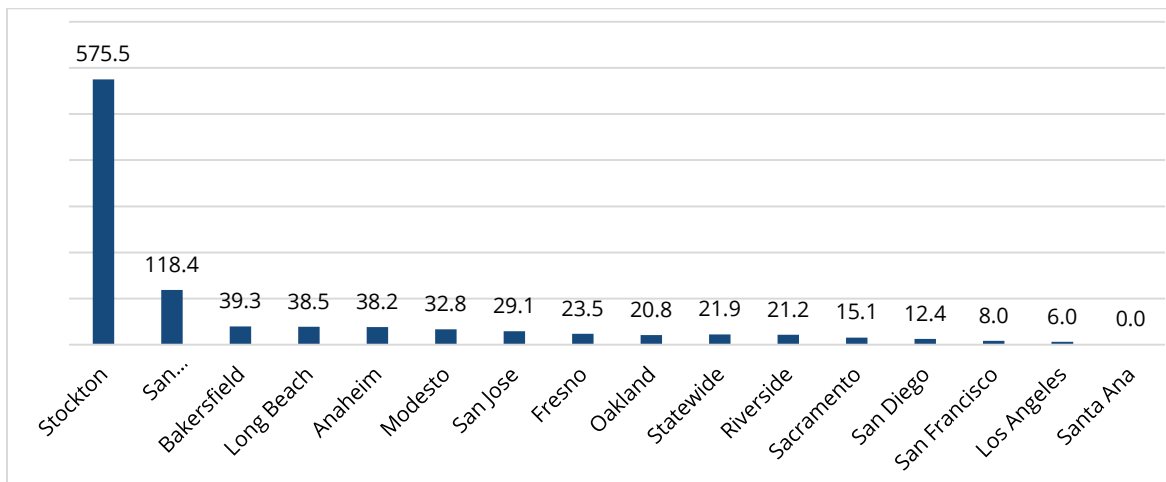
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Research Report

## Introduction

“Five-Year-Old Handcuffed, Charged with Battery on Officer,” headlined a KCRA-TV report on a confrontation between the Stockton Unified School District officers and a kindergarten boy diagnosed with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (Manouchen, 2012). Stockton is one of two major California cities whose school district officers have authority to arrest students, and they do so regularly. In Stockton, where the school officer arrest policy was implemented in 1991, and San Bernardino, which implemented the policy in 1997, school officers have arrested 34,368 and 59,290 students under age 18, respectively, on criminal charges through 2013. More than 1,800 of those arrested students were under age 10 — 1,590 in Stockton and 247 in San Bernardino (see Appendix).<sup>1</sup> The Criminal Justice Statistics Center (CJSC, 2014) lists no other cities where school officers have made any arrests. Arrests by school district officers explain why San Bernardino and, to a much larger extent, Stockton, have substantially higher arrest rates and slower declines in arrest rates for children under age 10 than the rest of the state (Figure 1; CJJC, 2015).

**Figure 1. Arrest rates for children ages <10, California’s major cities, all agencies (2013)**



Note: Rates are per 100,000 population, data for children ages 8-9 used to calculate rates for ages <10. Sources: CJSC (2014); US Census Bureau (2015).

<sup>1</sup> Arrest figures by city and for the state from CJSC (2014) are divided by the populations age 8-9 and 8-17 for Stockton and San Bernardino, estimated from ages 0-17 provided by the US Census Bureau (2015), to produce arrest rates per 100,000 population by age and city.

Table 1 details arrest rates for children under age 10 for California, Stockton, and San Bernardino over the 1990-2013 period. In 2013, the two cities had arrest rates for children under 10 that were 24 times that of the rest of California — 37 times higher in Stockton, and eight times higher in San Bernardino. Stockton, with one percent of California’s youth under age 10, accounts for 26 percent of the state’s arrests of children that age. The school district accounts for 89 percent of all arrests of youths under age 10 in Stockton and 44 percent in San Bernardino. Further, while arrest rates for children under 10 fell by 73 percent in San Bernardino and rose by 29 percent in Stockton, child arrest rates fell 96 percent elsewhere in California. These trends are particularly surprising given the more than 85 percent reduction in arrests of children by the city police forces of the two cities over the same time period.

**Table 1. Arrest rates for children ages <10, California, Stockton, and San Bernardino (1990 vs. 2013)**

	1990	2013	Change	2013 arrests
<b>California, including Stockton/San Bernardino</b>	<b>355.1</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>-94%</b>	<b>219</b>
Stockton/San Bernardino total	438.7	347.0	-21%	66
<b>Stockton total</b>	<b>445.7</b>	<b>575.5</b>	<b>+29%</b>	<b>57</b>
Stockton schools	0.0	514.9		51
Stockton city police	445.7	60.6	-86%	6
<b>San Bernardino total</b>	<b>431.7</b>	<b>118.4</b>	<b>-73%</b>	<b>9</b>
San Bernardino schools	0.0	52.6		4
San Bernardino city	431.7	65.8	-85%	5
<b>California minus Stockton/San Bernardino</b>	<b>353.9</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>-96%</b>	<b>153</b>

Note: Rates are per 100,000 population, data for children ages 8-9 used to calculate rates for ages <10. Sources: CJSC (2014); US Census Bureau (2015).

Table 2 compares Stockton and San Bernardino to nearby major cities (Sacramento, Bakersfield, Modesto, Fresno and Riverside, none of which authorize school police to make arrests). Stockton and San Bernardino combined had arrest rates 91 percent higher for people under 18, including rates 1,300 percent higher for children under 10, than the average for comparable cities. Stockton is by far the major contributor, with arrest rates for children under age 10 nearly five times higher than San Bernardino and 22 times higher than in the comparison cities (Table 2).

Together, Stockton Police Department and Stockton Unified School District officers arrest children under age 10 at levels 15 times higher than in Bakersfield, 24 times higher than in Fresno, and 38 times higher than in Sacramento. Average felony arrest rates in Stockton and San Bernardino are five times higher for children under 10 than in the comparison cities, but only marginally higher for all students under age 18 (Table 2).

In Stockton, 22 percent of the 1,510 children under age 10 arrested by school district officers during the 1991-2013 period were charged with felonies, the remainder were charged with misdemeanors or status offenses (see Appendix). In San Bernardino, the same proportion, 22 percent, of the 246 youths under age 10 arrested by school district officers during the 1997-2013 period were charged with felonies.

**Table 2. Arrest and felony rates of youths, Stockton and San Bernardino vs. five comparison cities whose school officers did not make arrests (2013)**

City	Agency	All age <18		Age <10	
		All arrests	Felonies	All arrests	Felonies
Stockton	School officers	1,939.8	195.7	514.9	80.8
	City police	1,329.9	617.5	60.6	40.4
	Total	3,269.7	813.2	575.5	121.2
San Bernardino	School officers	3,017.0	360.5	52.6	52.6
	City police	811.2	475.7	65.8	39.5
	Total	3,828.2	836.3	118.4	92.1
<b>5 comparison cities</b>					
Sacramento	City police	2,566.4	746.0	15.1	7.5
Bakersfield	City police	1,824.5	747.6	39.3	39.3
Modesto	City police	1,705.8	957.7	32.8	32.8
Fresno	City police	1,632.0	516.3	23.5	5.9
Riverside	City police	1,581.6	893.4	21.2	10.6
<b>Statewide Average</b>	<b>All agencies</b>	<b>1,901.5</b>	<b>604.4</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>7.8</b>

Note: Rates per 100,000 population, data for children 8-9 used to calculate rate for ages <10, and 8-17 for all ages <18.  
Sources: CJSC (2014); US Census Bureau (2015).

## Conclusion

Stockton and, to a lesser extent, San Bernardino are significant anomalies to both the rates and trends in arrests of younger children compared to other California jurisdictions. Stockton schools' criminal arrest policies, beginning in 1991, may have stemmed from the Stockton school massacre two years earlier, when a gunman fired into the school playground, killing and wounding 34 children and one teacher before committing suicide. The origin of the school arrest policy in San Bernardino is less clear.

Unfortunately, Stockton's school-arrest policies originally implemented to protect children and schools from intruders now effectively criminalize students, even those as young as five, imposing arrest more than other jurisdiction across the state. That very high arrest rates persist among both younger and older students in Stockton and San Bernardino suggests that arresting students in high numbers is not successful in producing better behaviors, and may have the opposite effect. The high levels and negative trends in the two cities suggest the need for serious reevaluation of school district officer arrest policies.

## References

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**Please note:** Each year, every county submits their data to the official statewide databases maintained by appointed governmental bodies. While every effort is made to review data for accuracy and to correct information upon revision, CJC cannot be responsible for data reporting errors made at the county, state, or national level.

**Contact:** [cjcmedia@cjci.org](mailto:cjcmedia@cjci.org), (415) 621-5661 x. 123, [www.cjci.org](http://www.cjci.org)

## Appendix

**Table 1. Arrests of children under age 10, Stockton and San Bernardino**

Arrest category	Stockton arrests, 1991-2013			San Bernardino arrests, 1997-2013		
	Total	School officers	City police	Total	School officers	City police
All offenses	2,887	1,510	1,377	399	247	152
Felonies	722	327	395	108	54	54
Violent	158	91	67	13	7	6
Property	349	101	248	71	27	44
Drug	1	0	1	2	0	2
Misdemeanors	1,986	1,031	955	271	173	98
Assault	622	468	154	20	18	2
Drug	8	5	3	0	0	0
Status offenses	179	152	27	20	20	0
Truancy	123	123	0	18	18	0

Source: CJSC (2014).

**Table 2. Arrests of youth ages 10-17, Stockton and San Bernardino**

Arrest category	Stockton arrests, 1991-2013			San Bernardino arrests, 1997-2013		
	Total	School officers	City police	Total	School officers	City police
All offenses	107,898	32,858	75,040	77,159	59,043	18,116
Felonies	79,741	4,701	29,048	10,147	3,923	6,224
Violent	30,594	1,546	7,125	2,721	1,074	1,647
Property	8,396	1,271	16,339	3,843	890	2,953
Drug	16,642	303	2,222	886	221	665
Misdemeanors	29,308	27,086	41,876	60,905	49,047	11,858
Assault	48,409	6,533	9,021	3,135	2,097	1,038
Drug	11,117	2,096	876	5,072	4,014	1,058
Status offenses	1,947	1,071	4,116	6,107	6,073	34
Truancy	5,101	985	16	5,796	5,762	34

Source: CJSC (2014).