

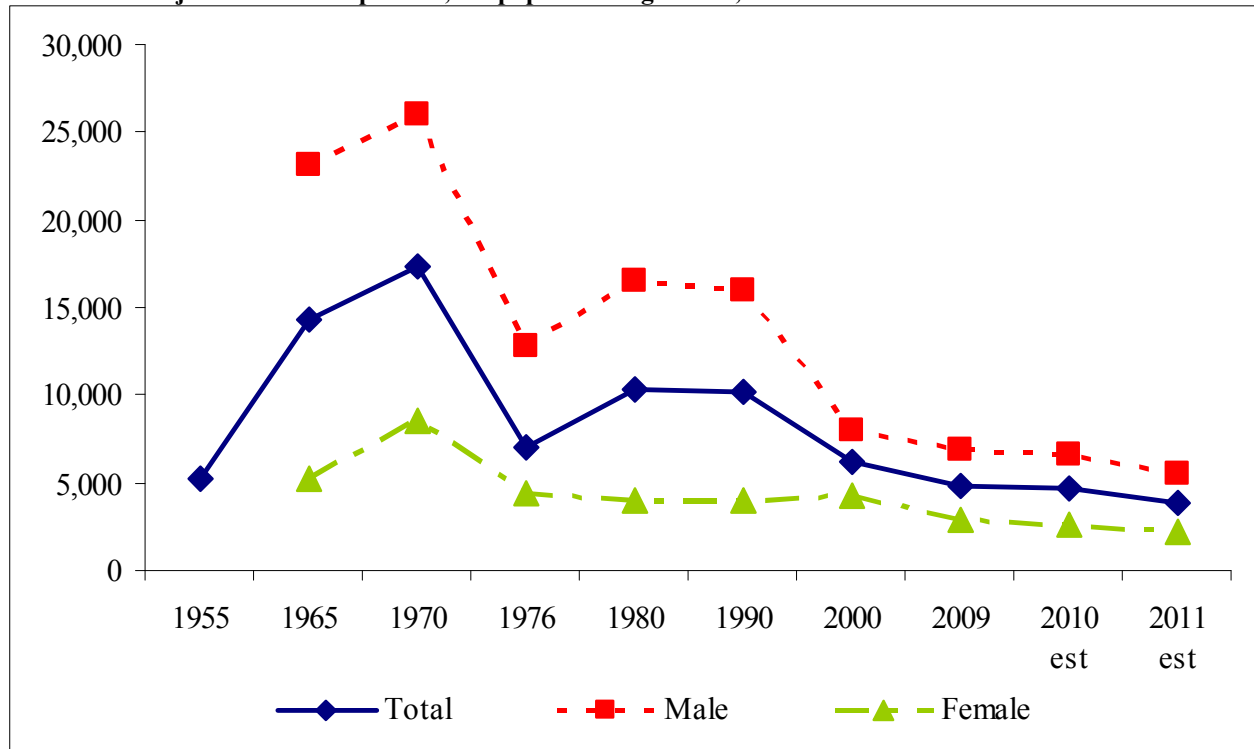
Fact Sheet

San Francisco Youth Crime at Record Low

Statistics released by the San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department along with historical data from police and the state’s Criminal Justice Statistics Center going back more than half a century show that today, **youth crime of every type stands at the lowest level ever reliably recorded.**

In the 1950’s, the annual number of juvenile arrests equaled 5% to 10% of the city’s youth population age 10-17, **peaking at 15% to 20% by the 1960’s and early 1970’s.** In the 1980’s and 1990’s, the juvenile arrest volume fluctuated between 7% and 10%. By 2000, juvenile arrests dropped to 6%, and **in 2011 to under 4% of the youth population.** Felony juvenile arrests, including for violence also peaked in the 1970’s and has generally declined since then. **Youth crime and violence are now at record lows among all races and both sexes.**

San Francisco juvenile arrests per 100,000 population age 10-17, 1955-2011



Sources: Criminal Justice Statistics Center, California Department of Justice (2011), Criminal Justice Profiles, San Francisco, 1976-2010; San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department (2012), Annual Report, 1985-2011; Demographic Research Unit, California Department of Finance (2011).

No one has provided a convincing explanation as to why San Francisco's youth crime has plunged to historic lows. One reason may be wiser, less heavy-handed law enforcement. Curfew, truancy, and other "status" arrests of youth have fallen to negligible levels. **Incarcerations** in San Francisco's Youth Guidance Center and Log Cabin Ranch, and state facilities **plummeted from the equivalent of 6.6% of the city's juvenile population in 1996 to 2.6% today**, the lowest level ever reliably recorded. Some researchers may point to **gentrification** as a possible cause for this trend, but poverty remains widespread among the city's young. In fact, record low youthful offending accompanies dramatic racial diversification. San Francisco County should rigorously research these trends and their implications on law enforcement policies and procedures regarding the juvenile population.

This fact sheet was produced for CJCJ's Executive Director Daniel Macallair's presentation at the San Francisco Youth Commission and Police Commission joint hearing discussing youth and police interactions held on March 7, 2012 at City Hall.

***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, CJCJ cannot be responsible for data reporting errors made at the county level.*

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