



## Fact Sheet: Alabama

### Key Facts:

- In 2006, the Alabama Department of Youth Services (DYS) admitted 3,340 youths. In 1996, 2,532 youth were admitted.<sup>1</sup>
- Approximately 62% of admitted youth were black while only 37% were white in the 2006 fiscal year.<sup>2</sup>
- 44% of youth admitted to DYS in FY2006 were under the age of 16.<sup>3</sup>
- Nearly one out of every five youth admitted to DYS was female.<sup>4</sup>
- 65% of youth went through regular DYS admission, while 34% were admitted to the High Intensity Treatment program, which is comparable to boot camp.<sup>5</sup>
- Only 1% of admitted youth were admitted as Serious Juvenile Offenders.<sup>6</sup>
- 79% of youth admitted to DYS in FY 2006 were charged with non-violent offenses. Public order offenses comprised the majority offenses (53%) in the 2006 fiscal year.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2006, 76% of public order offenses were for to violation of probation (VOP); 41% of all admitted youth have VOP or violation of aftercare offenses.<sup>8</sup>
- There are 12 juvenile detention facilities in Alabama.<sup>9</sup>

### Major Developments:

- In 2005 the Alabama Youth Justice Coalition formed to reduce juvenile crime, to ensure that taxpayer money is spent wisely, to empower families and

communities, and to provide youth with the tools and opportunities they need to become and remain healthy, responsible, productive adults.

- In 2007, the Annie E. Casey Foundation chose Alabama as a site for its Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI), which seeks to end the overreliance on detainment and provide community-based alternatives.<sup>10</sup>
- At Governor Bob Riley's request, the Casey Strategic Consulting Group also began work in Alabama in 2007.

### What Alabama Law Says:

- Alabama State law allows youth as young as 14 to be tried as adults.<sup>11</sup>
- The juvenile court will retain jurisdiction over a child's case until the age of 21, unless otherwise terminated by order prior to this date.<sup>12</sup>
- Detainment may occur if a parent cannot or will not provide supervision, the youth is seen as a threat to himself, others or property, or if the youth has a history of failing to appear for court. Detention hearings must occur within 72 hours.<sup>13</sup>

*"The Mission of the Alabama Department of Youth Services is to enhance public safety by holding juvenile offenders accountable through the use of institutional, educational, and community services that balance the rights and needs of victims, communities, courts, and offenders."*

## **State Resources:**

### **Alabama Youth Justice Coalition**

Danielle J. Lipow, Coordinator  
P.O. Box 4516  
Montgomery, AL 36103  
334-956-8336  
Email: [danielle.lipow@splcenter.org](mailto:danielle.lipow@splcenter.org)  
[www.nijn.org/AL.html](http://www.nijn.org/AL.html)

### **Children First Foundation, Inc.**

Christy Mehaffey, Executive Director  
1401 185 PKWY, Suite F  
Montgomery, AL 36106  
(334) 396-6314  
[www.alabamachildrenfirst.com](http://www.alabamachildrenfirst.com)

### **State of Alabama Department of Youth Services**

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P.O. Box 66  
Mt. Meigs, AL 36057  
(334) 215-3800  
Email: [Walter.Wood@dys.alabama.gov](mailto:Walter.Wood@dys.alabama.gov)  
<http://dys.alabama.gov>

### **Administrative Office of Courts, Family Courts Division**

Karen Trussell, Director  
300 Dexter Avenue  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104  
(334) 954-5063  
Email: [karen.trussell@alacourt.gov](mailto:karen.trussell@alacourt.gov)

### **Southern Juvenile Defender Center/ Southern Poverty Law Center**

P.O. Box 2087  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104  
334-956-8200  
[www.juveniledefender.org/al.html](http://www.juveniledefender.org/al.html)

### **Juvenile Justice Specialist**

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### **State Advisory Group (SAG)**

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### **Alabama Department of Corrections**

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P.O. Box 301501  
Montgomery, AL 36130-1501  
334-353-3883

### ***Prepared by the Justice Policy Institute.***

<sup>1</sup> State of Alabama, Department of Youth Services. 2007. *Youth Admitted by DYS: 1996-2006*. [http://dys.alabama.gov/PDFs/Comm\\_Juv\\_Chart\\_12\\_18\\_06.pdf](http://dys.alabama.gov/PDFs/Comm_Juv_Chart_12_18_06.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> State of Alabama, Department of Youth Services. 2007. *FY 2006 Admitted Youth Demographics*. [http://dys.alabama.gov/PDFs/FY2006YouthServedDemographics-2006\\_12\\_18.pdf](http://dys.alabama.gov/PDFs/FY2006YouthServedDemographics-2006_12_18.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> State of Alabama, Department of Youth Services. 2007.

<sup>4</sup> State of Alabama, Department of Youth Services. 2007.

<sup>5</sup> State of Alabama, Department of Youth Services. 2007.

<sup>6</sup> State of Alabama, Department of Youth Services. 2007.

<sup>7</sup> State of Alabama, Department of Youth Services. 2007.

<sup>8</sup> State of Alabama, Department of Youth Services. 2007.

<sup>9</sup> National Center for Juvenile Justice. *NCJJ State Profiles: Alabama*. [www.ncjj.org/](http://www.ncjj.org/).

<sup>10</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation. 2007. JDAI sites and contacts. *The Annie E. Casey Foundation: Helping vulnerable kids and families succeed*.

[www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/JuvenileDetentionAlternativeInitiative/SitesAndContacts.aspx](http://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/JuvenileDetentionAlternativeInitiative/SitesAndContacts.aspx).

<sup>11</sup> Southern Juvenile Defender Center. *Alabama Juvenile Justice Act Overview*.

[www.juveniledefender.org/alcode.html](http://www.juveniledefender.org/alcode.html).

<sup>12</sup> Southern Juvenile Defender Center.

<sup>13</sup> National Center for Juvenile Justice.