

**RIISING CRIME IN PERSPECTIVE: YOUTH STILL  
ACCOUNT FOR SMALL PORTION OF ARRESTEES;  
HIGHER UNEMPLOYMENT ASSOCIATED WITH  
“DANGEROUS”CITIES  
FACT SHEET**

The 2005 FBI Uniform Crime Reports released on September 18, 2006 generated concerns over a 19 percent increase in juvenile murder arrests. The Justice Policy Institute (JPI), a Washington, D.C. based policy group that promotes fair and rational justice policies, cautions that a one-year change in arrests cannot be interpreted as a “trend,” and that no single factor can explain changes in arrests across the nation, or within a jurisdiction. The UCR represents crime reported to law enforcement only, and does not account for changes in law enforcement practices that may lead to more reports of crime (i.e. changes in policing practices, or enforcement), versus true victimization and crime. Criminologists and law enforcement officials use both the UCR and the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) to get a more accurate and detailed sense of public safety by region, specific population subsets, and type of offense.<sup>1</sup> JPI further warns that young people should not be targeted for punitive or enhanced responses, as the vast majority of the nation’s violent crime is still committed by adults.

To put the new UCR figures in their appropriate context, JPI draws key findings from this new arrest survey.

**Adults, not youth, represent 84 percent of all violent crime arrests—the increase in juvenile crime is only a fraction of the nation’s public safety challenges.**

Adults are responsible for 91 percent of all murder arrests, 84 percent of rape arrests, 75 percent of robbery arrests and 86 percent of aggravated assault arrests. The proportion of violent crime involving juvenile arrestees has not changed substantially since the previous year.

While the increase in juvenile arrests for homicide (an increase of +145, nationwide), robbery (3,268), and aggravated assaults (1,876) are a cause for concern, these figures need to be kept in their proper context: The FBI reports that there were 1,390,695 violent crimes nationwide in 2005.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information see “the Nation’s two crime measures,”  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/html/ntcm.htm>

**Juvenile vs. Adult Arrests**  
**Percentage of Total Arrests for Violent Crimes**

|                      | 2004         |              | 2005         |              |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                      | Juveniles    | Adults       | Juveniles    | Adults       |
| Murder               | 8.2%         | 91.8%        | 9.0%         | 91.0%        |
| Rape                 | 16.2%        | 83.8%        | 15.4%        | 84.6%        |
| Robbery              | 23.2%        | 76.8%        | 25.2%        | 74.8%        |
| Aggravated Assault   | 13.8%        | 86.2%        | 13.6%        | 86.4%        |
| <b>Total Arrests</b> | <b>15.5%</b> | <b>84.5%</b> | <b>15.8%</b> | <b>84.2%</b> |

The recent study from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Violent Felons in Large Urban Counties*, is an analysis of violent felony cases from jurisdictions that together accounted for half of the reported violent crime in the nation. According to this report only 10 percent of homicide convictions, 12 percent of robbery convictions, and 4 percent of rape and assault convictions were under the age of 18.