

Disproportionate Minority Contact

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Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act

- Since 1998, the JJDP Act has required States that receive Formula Grants program funding to determine whether the proportion of juveniles minorities in confinement exceeds their proportion of the population and, if so, to develop corrective strategies.
- In 1992, Congress elevated this issue to a “core requirement” of the JJDP Act.
- 2002, Disproportionate Minority *Contact*

From “confinement” to “contact”

- The shift to “contact” allows a more encompassing examination of the juvenile justice system.
- Racial/ethnic differences occur at various decision points within the juvenile justice system.
- Research has shown that disparity is the most pronounced at the beginning stages – intake and detention decision points.
- When racial/ethnic differences are found, they tend to accumulate as youth are processed through the justice system.

Key Terms

- *Overrepresentation*: a larger proportion of a particular group is present at various stages within the juvenile justice system than would be expected based on their proportion in the general population.
- *Disparity* means that the probability of receiving a particular outcome differs for different groups

Reasons for Overrepresentation

- Discrimination: differential actions throughout the justice system may account for minority overrepresentation.
- Minority youth commit proportionately more crime, are involved in more serious incidents, and have more extensive criminal histories than white youth.
- Either or both of these causes of disparity may be operating.

Race and Ethnicity Categories

- White
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Source of data: US Census Bureau

Shift from DRI to RRI

The Disproportional Representation Index (DRI) is a proportional index. It is a comparison of the population's racial composition in an entire jurisdiction to the racial composition of a group of youth handled at particular decision point.

DRI calculation = $\frac{\text{\% of minority population at decision point}}{\text{\% of the jurisdictions population that is minority}}$

The Relative Rate Index (RRI) is a the calculation of a rate at some decision point for each racial/ethnic group and a comparison of those rates.

RRI calculation = $\frac{\text{The rate of minority youth confined in the population}}{\text{The rate of white youth confined in the population}}$

Why the change in method of reporting?

- DRI has different *theoretical maxima* depending on the base population of the minority group being studied.
- RRIs allow comparisons across jurisdictions with different, or rapidly changing, minority populations.
- Indexes can be calculated for cumulative as well as decision specific relative rates.

Implementation is multi-phased

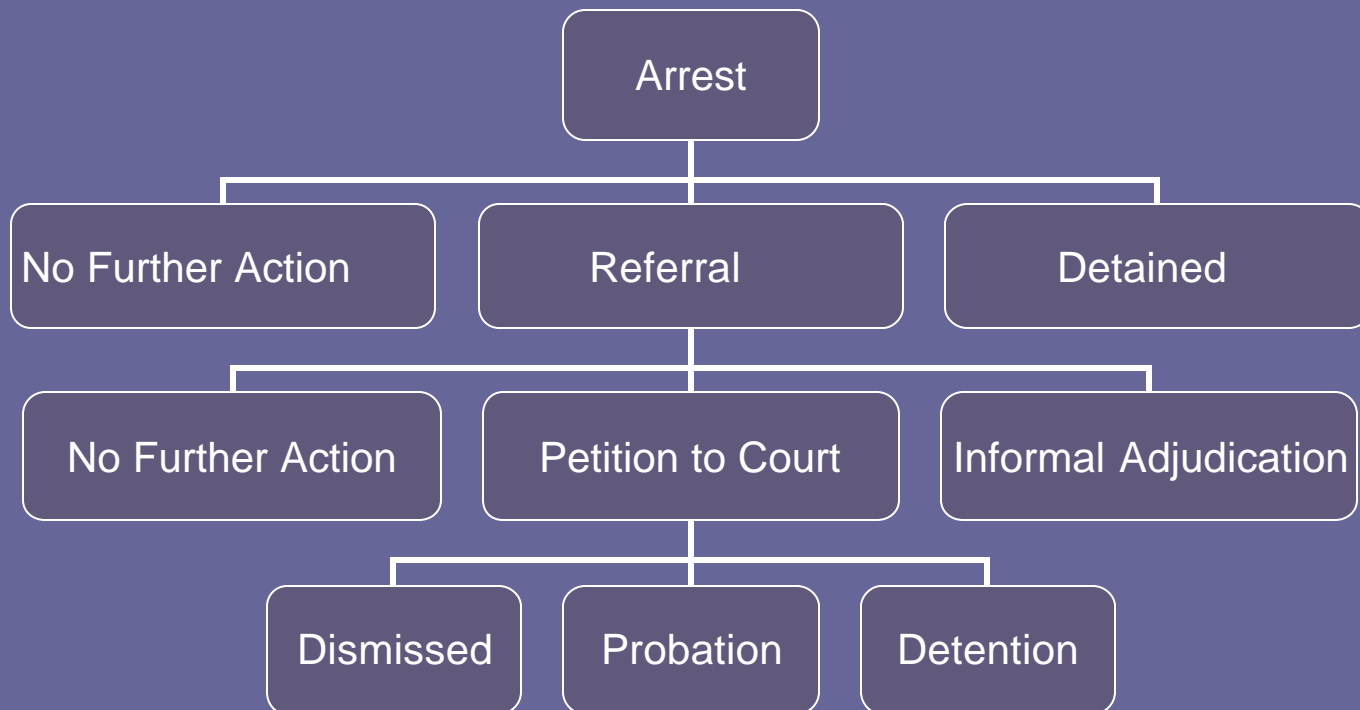
- **ID Phase** – determine if DMC exists, and if it exists, at what decision point(s) in the juvenile justice system is it occurring.
- **Assessment Phase** – Examine data from each decision point to determine why DMC exists.
- **Intervention**– Work in all areas of law enforcement, the courts and corrections to reduce/eliminate DMC.
- **Evaluation** – How DMC responds to policy initiatives and system interventions.
- **Monitor** – trends in DMC within and across jurisdictions.

Data Collection

- The definition of processing stages will probably vary slightly across jurisdictions within states and across states.
- We need to look at our juvenile justice system and our data collection systems.
- What data is available and in what format?
- *There is room for negotiation* – if unable to collect data at a certain decision point, it must be explained why.

System change may be necessary

Decision Points



Capacity Assessment

- MDPS: Arrest data including ethnic/race information is recorded by PDs but is not available in electronic format. Hand search of 2004 records.
- Detention database: Juvenile detention records are input into an electronic file at DOC.
- CORIS: Data for all other decision points extracted from CORIS.

Where we are

- DMC research and practice review.
- Contact DMC experts and review of research in other states.
- Analysis of Relative Rate Index.
- Attended DMC Conference in Chicago.
- Capacity Assessment for Maine.
- IRB waiver.

Timeline

- Data collection to begin February, 2005
- Data analysis to be completed by May, 2005
- Final Report submitted September, 2005.