

Juvenile Offenders & Crime in Erie County

An Analysis of the Most Recent Arrest Data



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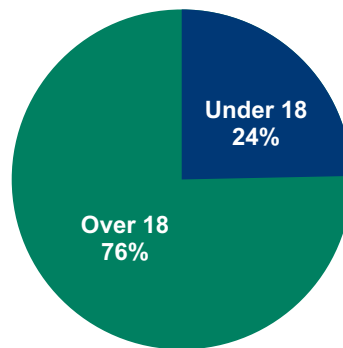
An Analysis of the Most Recent Arrest Data

I. Summary of 2004 Juvenile Arrest Data

In 2004, there were 11,805 arrests in Erie County. Of those arrests, 2,855 (24%) were juveniles (see Figure 1). This is a 1% increase from 2003 and is the third consecutive annual increase in juvenile arrests; however, it remains a 20% decrease from the peak year of 1994 (see Figure 2). Nationally in 2003, juveniles accounted for 16% of all arrests (Snyder, 2005).

Figure 1.

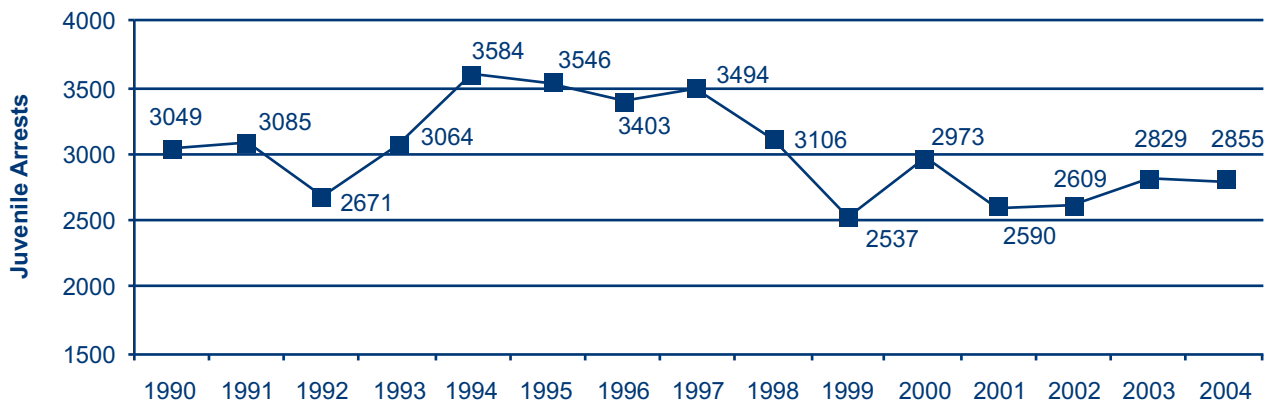
**Juvenile versus Adult Arrests
Erie County, 2004**



Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

Figure 2.

Total Juvenile Arrests for Erie County



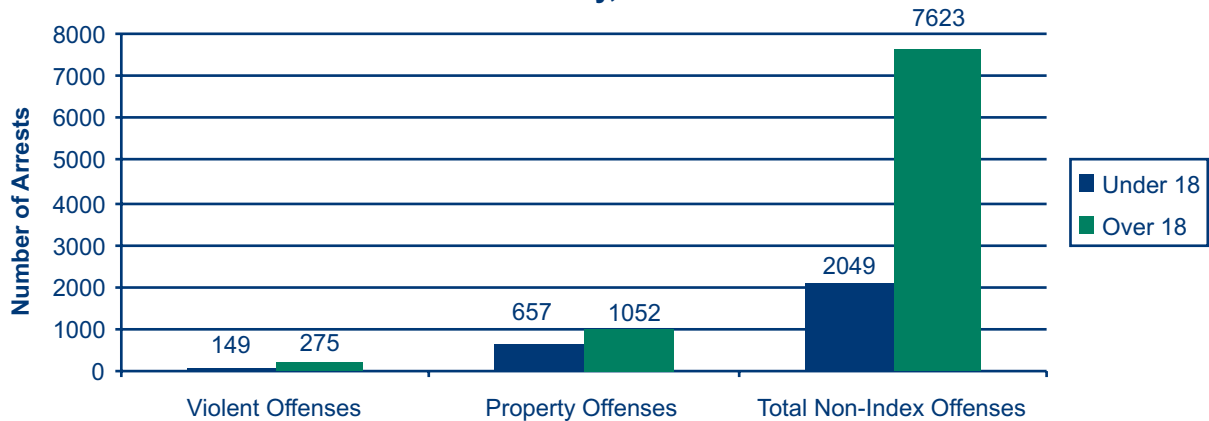
Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

Of all juvenile arrests in Erie County, more than 72% were for less serious, non-index offenses, consisting primarily of disorderly conduct, liquor law violations, and minor assaults. In 2004, juveniles accounted for 35% of arrests for violent offenses, 38% of property offenses, and 21% of all non-index offenses (see Figure 3).



Figure 3.

Juvenile versus Adult Arrests by Offense Type Erie County, 2004



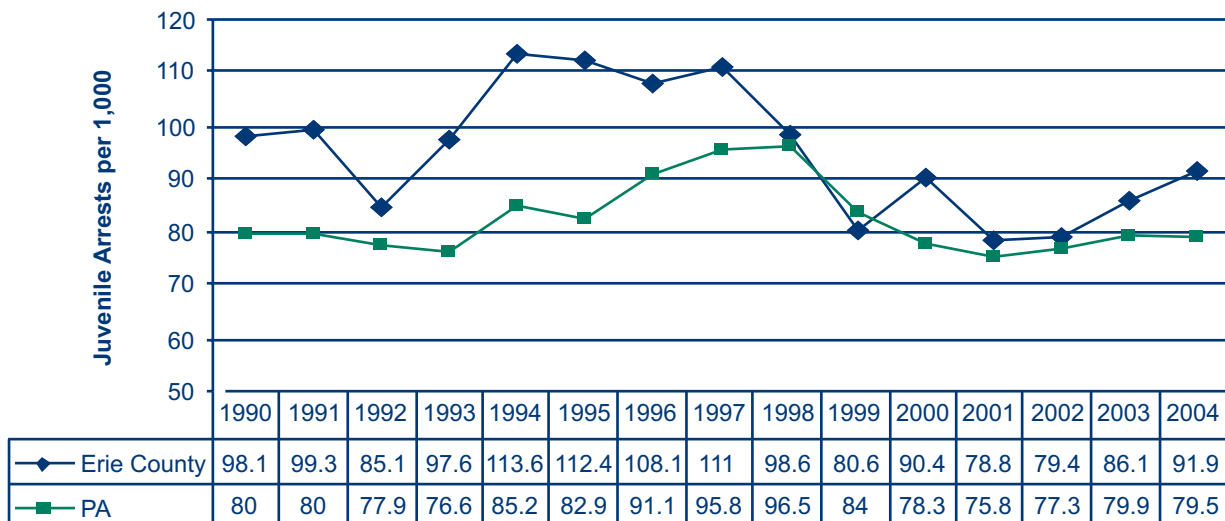
Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

II. Erie County versus Peer Counties & Pennsylvania

Although the juvenile arrest rate in Erie County has followed a similar trend within Pennsylvania over the past three years, the gap has continued to increase over the past two years with Erie County having a slightly higher rate of juvenile arrests than the state (see Figure 4).

Figure 4.

Juvenile Arrest Rates per 1,000



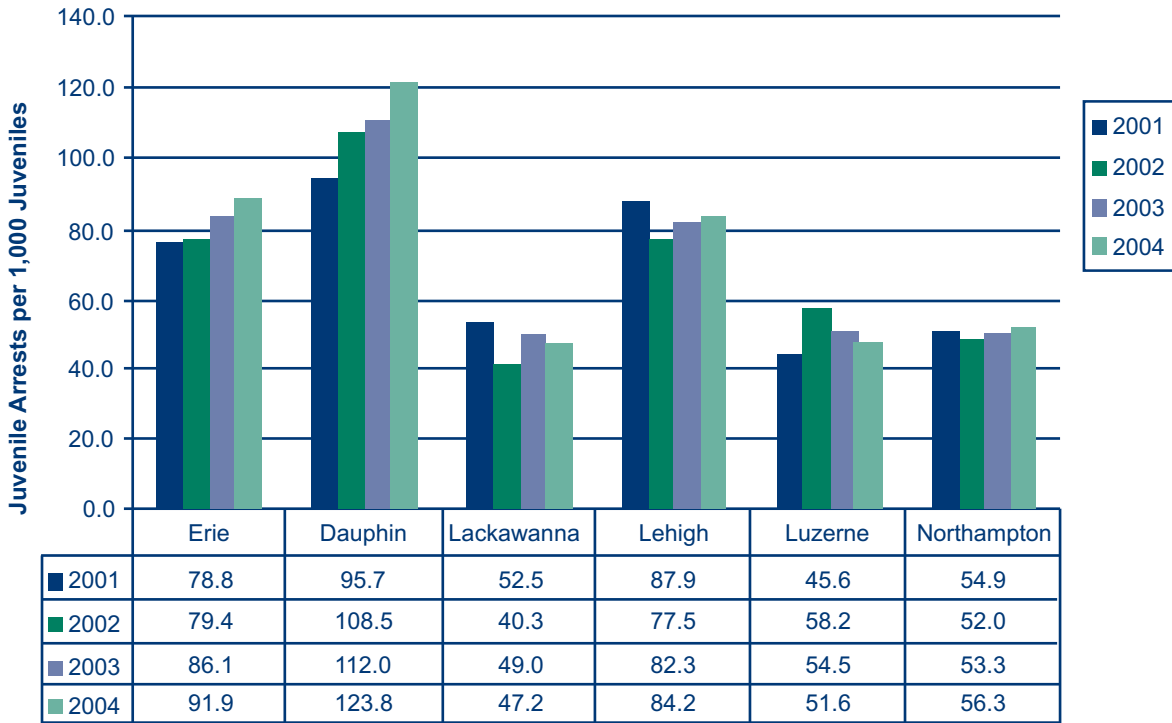
Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

In comparison to other urban third class counties, Erie holds the second highest juvenile arrest rate (91.9), second to Dauphin County (123.8). All urban third class counties have experienced increases in juvenile arrest rates during 2003 to 2004, with the exception of Lakawanna and Luzerne Counties (see Figure 5).



Figure 5.

Juvenile Arrests Per 1,000 Juveniles, Urban Third Class Counties



Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

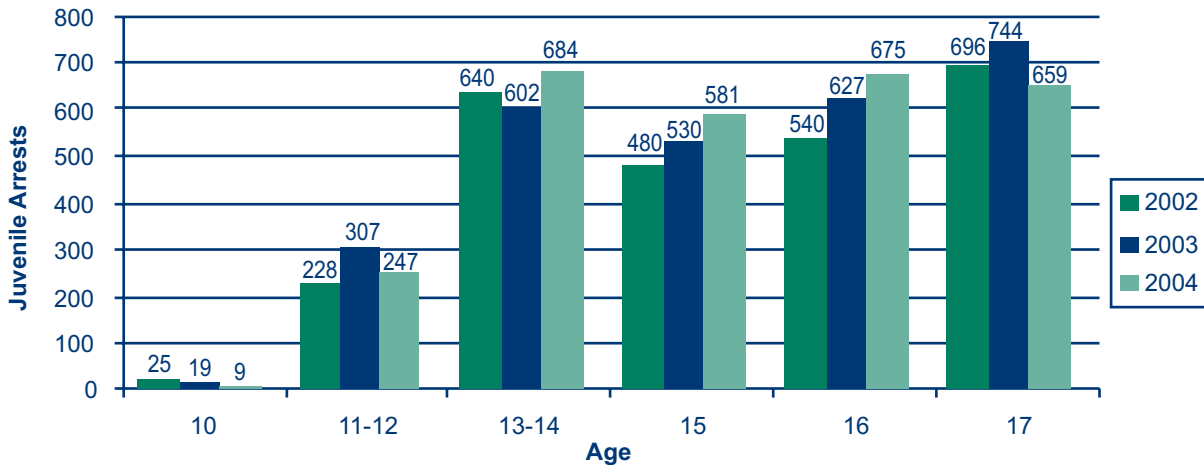
III. Arrests by Offender

Age

In Erie County, arrests for juveniles from 2003 to 2004 increased in ages 13-14 by 14%, 15 year olds by 9% and 16 year olds by 8% (see Figure 6). There were decreases in arrests for juveniles 11-12 years old by 20% and 17 year olds by 11%.

Figure 6.

Erie County Juvenile Arrests by Age



Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

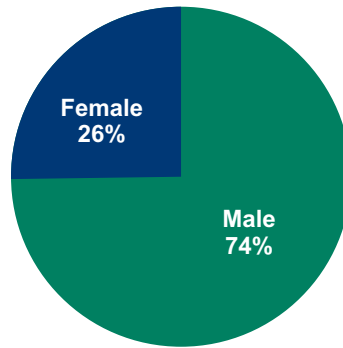


Gender

Females accounted for 26% of all juvenile arrests in 2004 (see Figure 7). Arrests decreased for males by 1% in 2004, but increased for females by 6% (see Figure 8). Therefore, the overall increase in juvenile arrests in 2004 was on account of female juvenile offenders. Nationally in 2003, females accounted for 29% of all juvenile arrests (Snyder, 2005).

Figure 7.

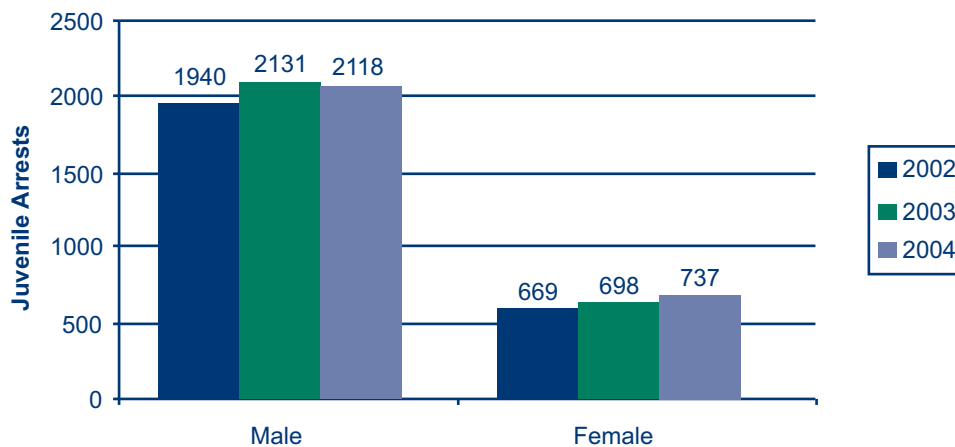
Juvenile Arrests Totals by Gender for Erie County, 2004



Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

Figure 8.

Juvenile Arrests by Gender for Erie County



Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

Juvenile arrests for violence increased among both males and females during 2004. Juvenile male arrests for violence increased by 11%; however, juvenile female arrests for violence increased by 34%. Property offenses for males decreased by 11% while property offenses for females increased by 23%. There was a slight increase in non-index offenses among males (3%) and only a 1% decrease in non-index offenses for females (see Figures 9 & 10).



Figure 9.

Juvenile Arrests for Females by Offense in Erie County

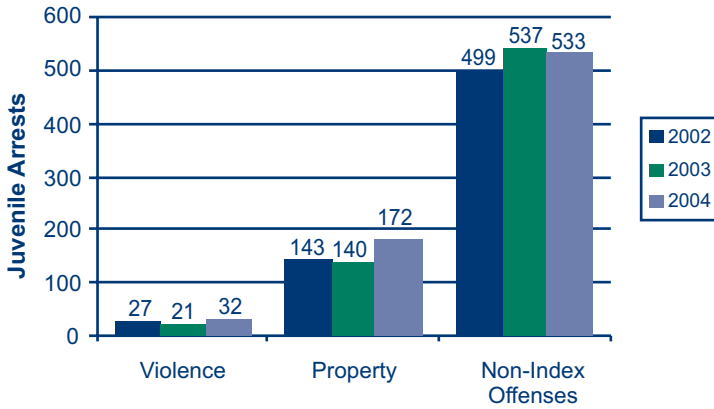
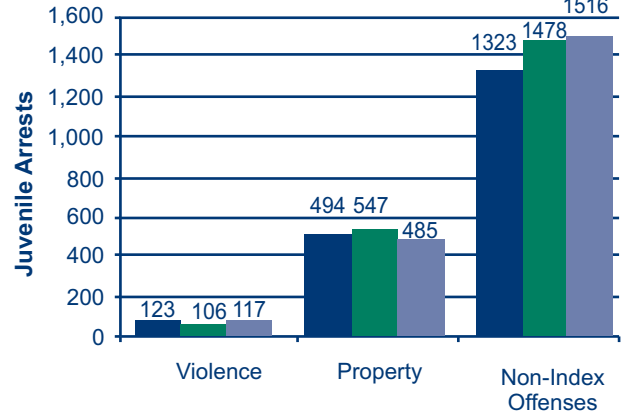


Figure 10.

Juvenile Arrest for Males by Offense in Erie County



Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

The mode age group of juvenile arrests for females occurred in the 13-14 year old age group; for males it was the 16 year old age group (see Figures 11 & 12). Arrests for 11-12 year old females represented the greatest age group increase, rising by 48% from 2003 to 2004 followed by the 15 year old females increasing by 35%.

Arrests for the 13-14 year old female age group along with the 15 and 16 year old male age groups have been experiencing an ongoing increase over the past three years (see Figure 11).

Figure 11.

Juvenile Arrests for Females in Erie County

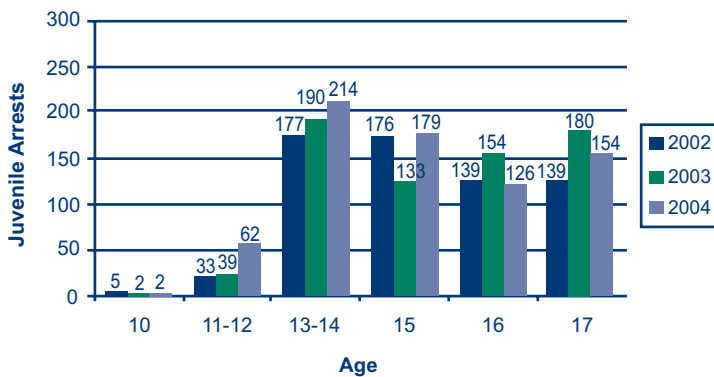
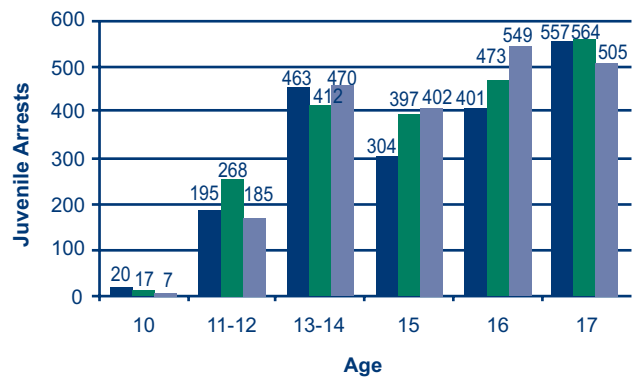


Figure 12.

Juvenile Arrests for Males in Erie County



Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

Race

In Erie County, white juveniles between 10 and 17 years of age comprise 88% of the population of youth between 10 and 17 years of age and accounted for 77% of juvenile arrests in 2003 (see Figure 13). That is a rate of 7.5 arrests for every 100 white youth between the ages of 10 and 17 years of age. Black juveniles between the ages of 10 and 17 comprise 8% of that population in Erie County and account for 24% of juvenile arrests in 2003. That is a rate of 26 arrests for every 100

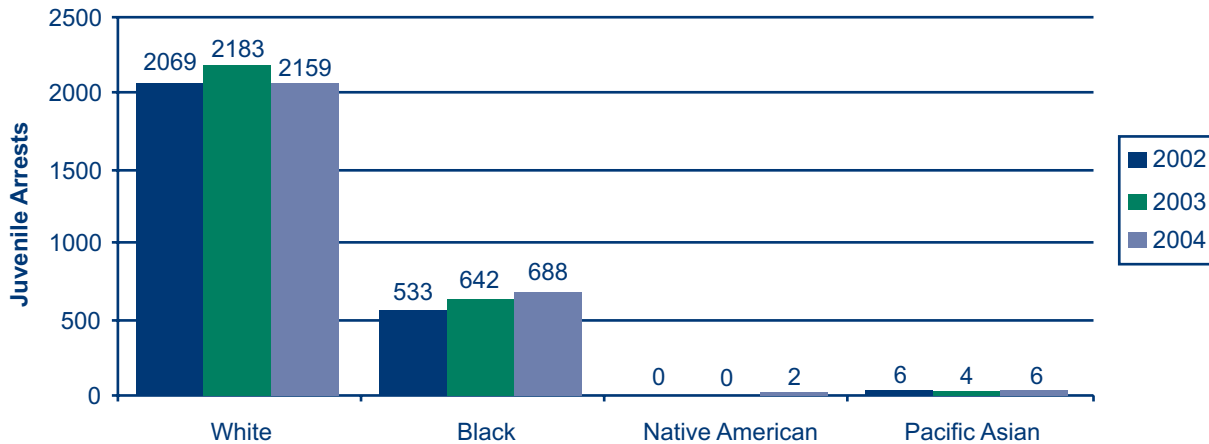


black youth between 10 and 17 years of age. Therefore, black youth continue to be over-represented in juvenile arrests.

White females between the ages of 10 and 17 account for 91% of the female population of youth between 10 and 17 years of age and accounted for 70% of all female arrests in 2004. That is a rate of 3.7 arrests for every 100 white females between 10 and 17 years of age. Black females account for 8.6% of that population in Erie County and accounted for 30% of all female arrests in 2004. That is a rate of 16.5 arrests per every 100 black females between 10 and 17 years of age.

Figure 13.

Juvenile Arrests by Race for Erie County



Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

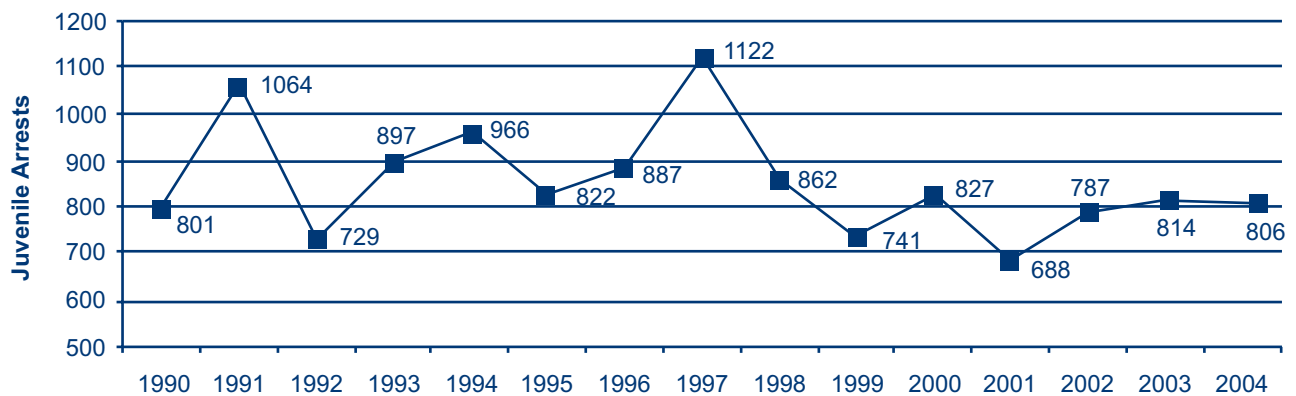
IV. Arrests by Offense Type

Crime Index Offenses

Of the 2,855 juvenile arrests during 2004, 806 (28%) were for index offenses (see Figure 14). Index offenses include murder, manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. This represents a 1% decrease from 2003, but is a 28% decrease from the peak year of 1997.

Figure 14.

Total Juvenile Arrests for Crime Index Offenses for Erie County



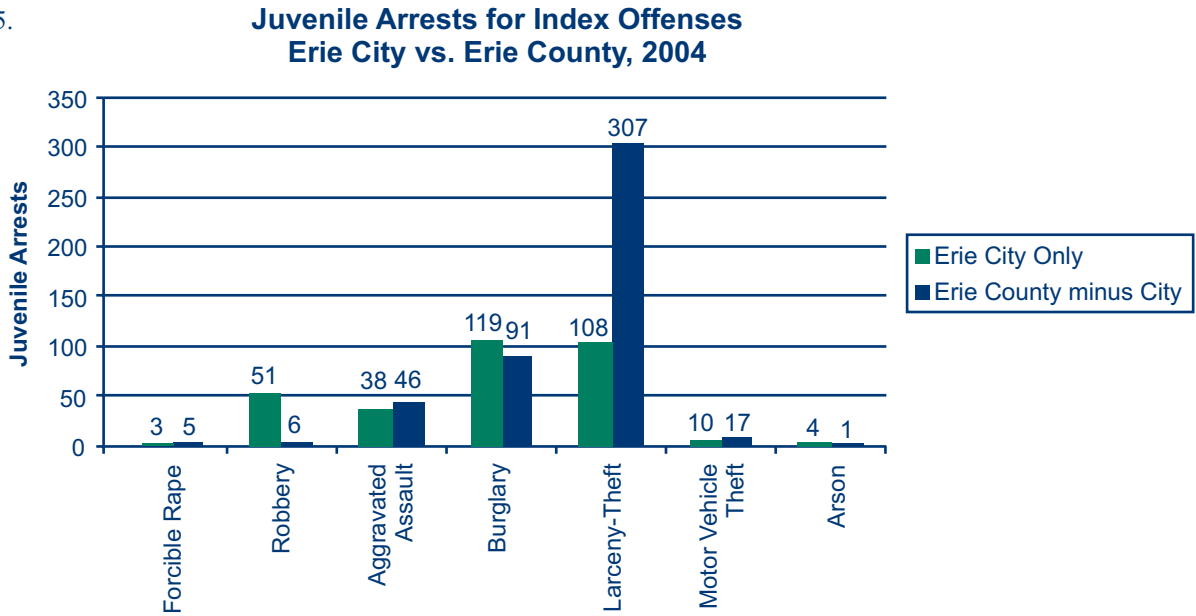
Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System



When separating Erie City from Erie County, 89% of juvenile arrests for robbery and 57% of juvenile arrests for burglary were in Erie City. Seventy-four percent of juvenile arrests for larceny/theft, 63% of juvenile arrests for motor vehicle thefts, and 55% of juvenile arrests for aggravated assaults were in the county minus the city (see Figure 15).

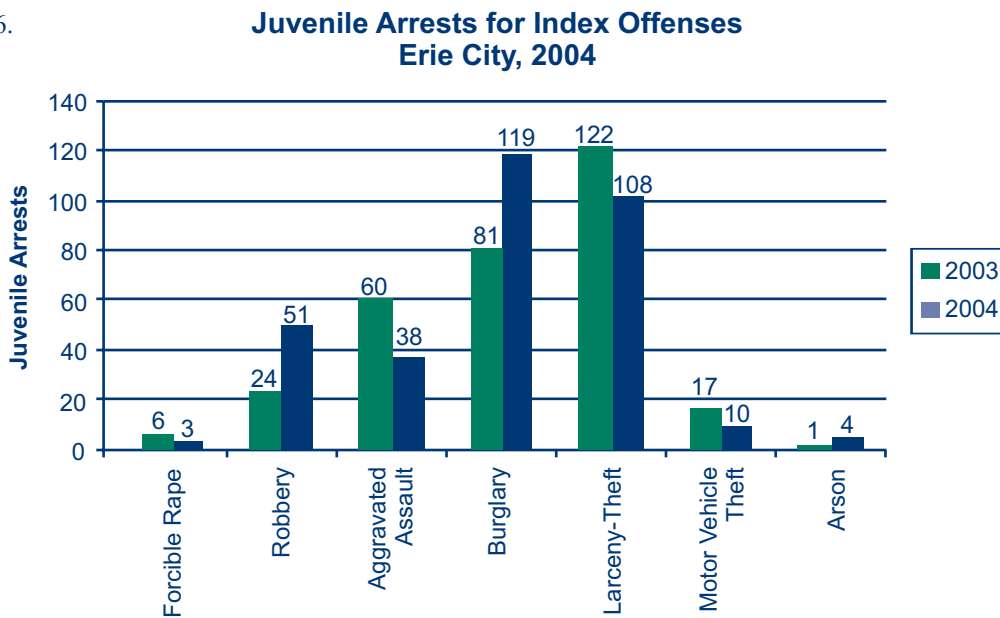
Juvenile arrests for robbery in the city increased 113%, arrests for burglary increased by 47%, and arrests for aggravated assaults went up 37% (see Figure 16).

Figure 15.



Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

Figure 16.



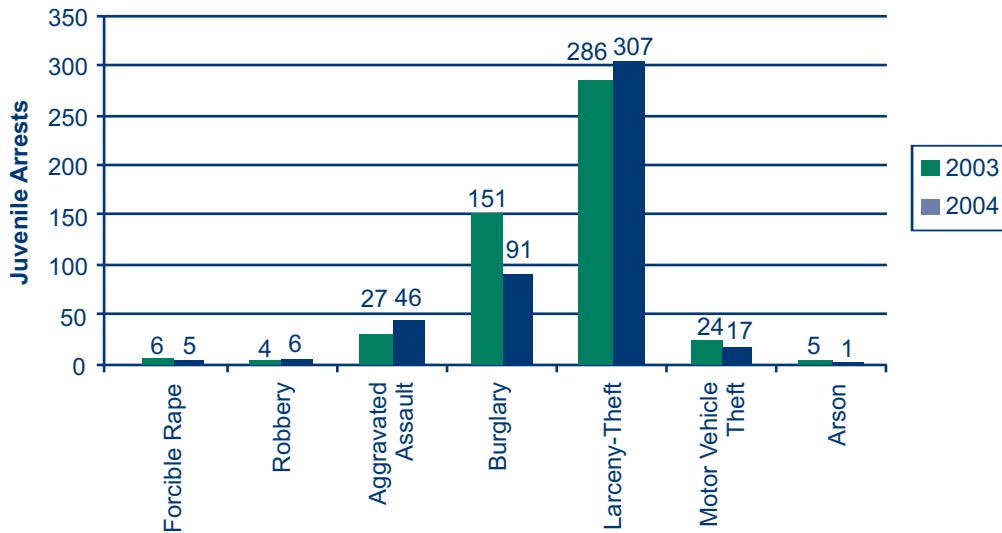
Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System



In the county excluding the city, arrests for burglary decreased by 40%, and arrests for aggravated assaults increased by 70% (see Figure 17).

Figure 17.

Juvenile Arrests for Index Offenses Erie County Minus City, 2004



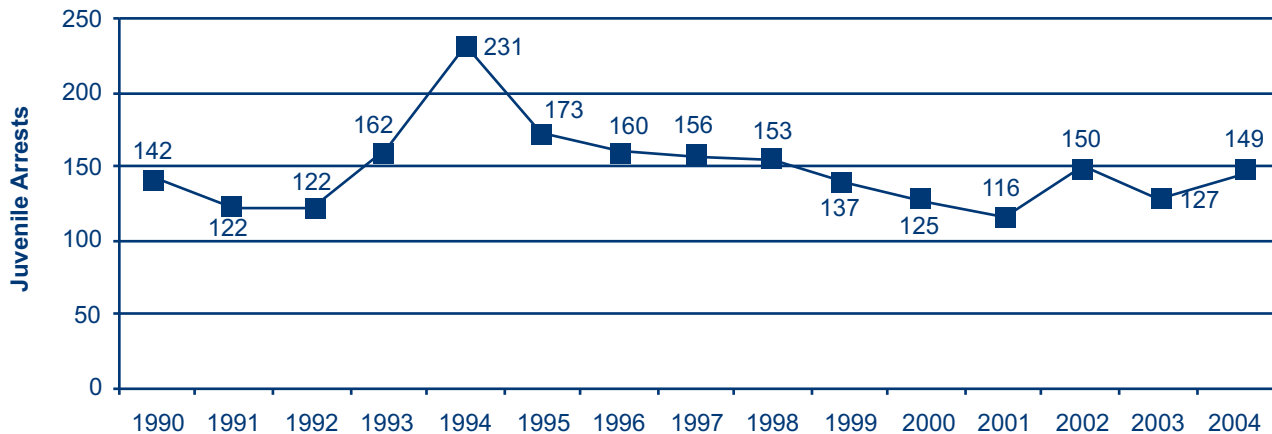
Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

Violent Offenses

Juvenile arrests for violent crimes, including murder, manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, reached its lowest point in 12 years in 2001 with 116 arrests. Juvenile arrests for violent crimes increased from 2003 to 2004 by 17%. Since 1994, the peak year, juvenile arrests for violent offenses have reduced by 35% (see Figure 18). Nationally, juvenile arrests for violent crime index offenses hit its lowest level since 1980, decreasing by 48% from the peak year of 1994 (Snyder, 2005).

Figure 18.

Erie County Juvenile Arrests for Violent Crimes

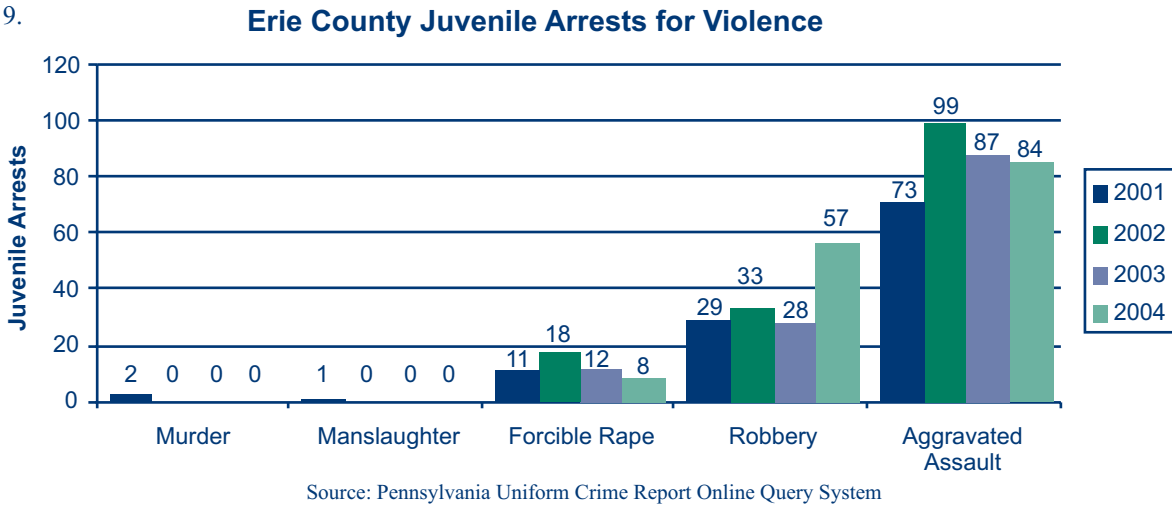


Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System



Juvenile arrests for violent offenses decreased in 2004, except for arrests for robbery which increased by 104% (see Figure 19).

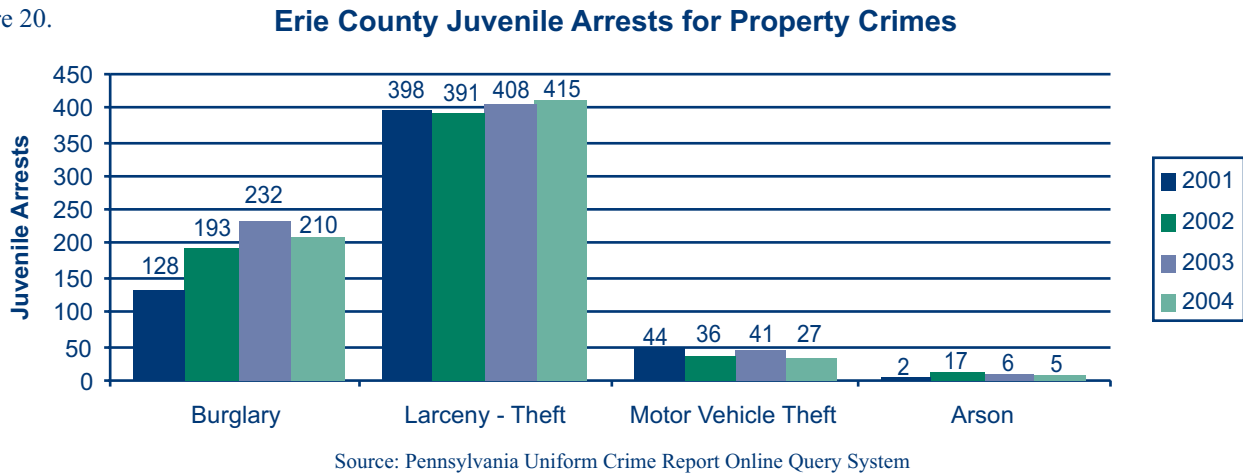
Figure 19.



Property Offenses

Juvenile arrests for property offenses accounted for 657 (23%) of all juvenile arrests in Erie County. There were slight increases in larceny-theft (2%). Decreases were noted in all other categories of property crimes including burglary (9%), motor vehicle theft (34%), and arson (17%) (see Figure 20). Nationally, juvenile arrests for property index offenses reached its lowest level since the 1970s, decreasing by 46% from the peak year of 1994 (Snyder, 2005).

Figure 20.



V. Arrests for Non-Index Offenses

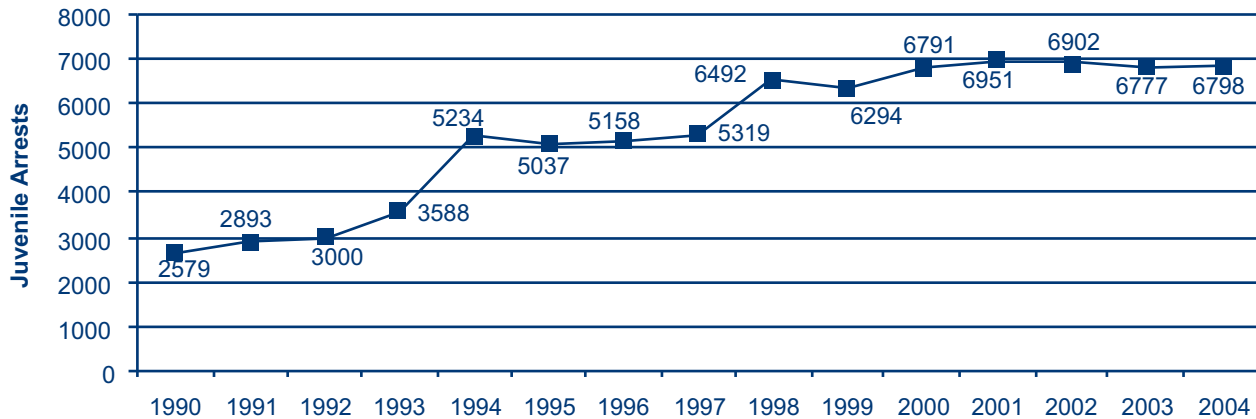
Drug Arrests

Arrests for drug offenses, including drug sales and possession, have been dramatically increasing in Pennsylvania and Erie County over the past 11 years. Statewide, juvenile drug arrests have leveled off over the past five years (see Figure 21). In Erie County, there was a 27% decrease in juvenile arrests for drug offenses from 2003 to 2004 (see Figure 22).



Figure 21.

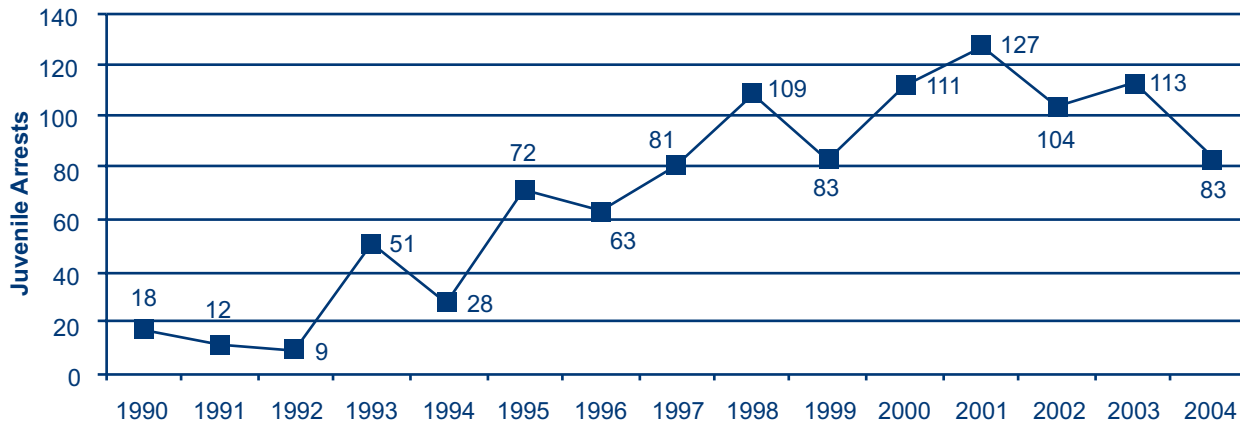
Pennsylvania Juvenile Drug Arrests



Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

Figure 22.

Erie County Juvenile Drug Arrests



Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

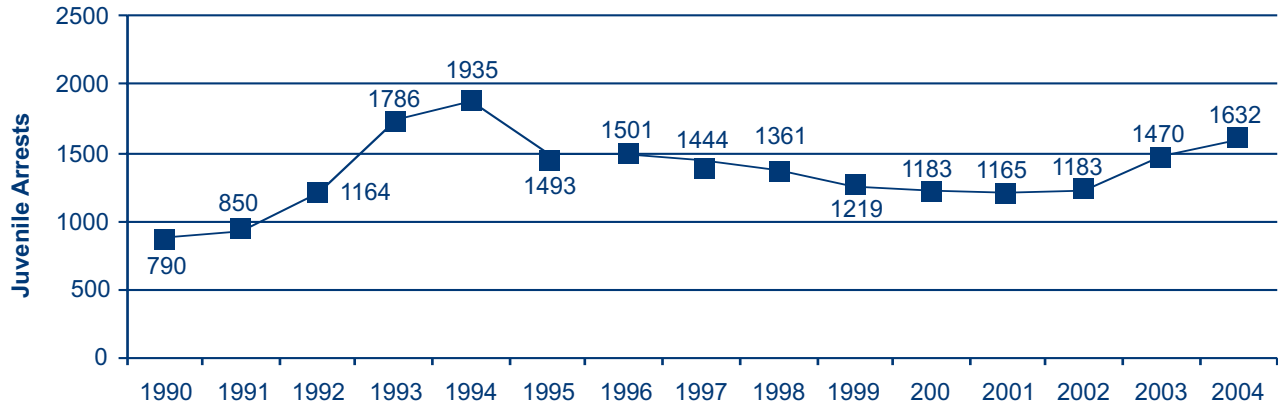
Weapons Arrests

Weapons offenses include the illegal use, possession, trafficking, carrying, manufacturing, importing, and exporting of guns, ammunition, explosives and certain types of knives. Juvenile arrests for weapons have remained relatively stable since the peak year of 1994 (see Figure 23). The Pennsylvania rate increased by 11% from 2003 to 2004 (see Figure 24) while Erie County juvenile arrests for weapons possessions decreased by 1% (see Figure 24).



Figure 23.

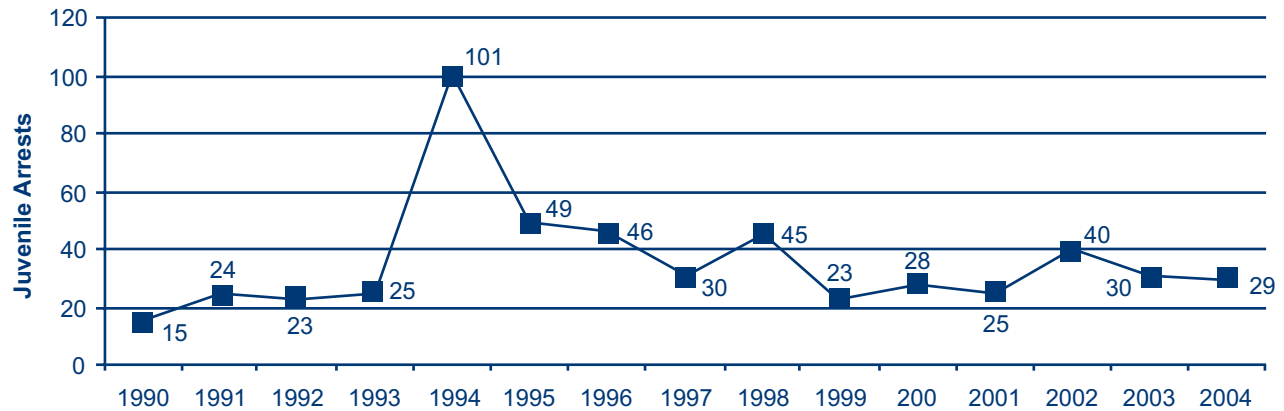
Pennsylvania Juvenile Weapon's Arrests



Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

Figure 24.

Erie County Juvenile Weapon's Arrests



Source: Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Report Online Query System

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This annual report was prepared by the Mercyhurst College Civic Institute and can be accessed at: www.civicinstitute.org or by calling Shelley Thayer at (814) 824-2327.

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