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Youth Crime in Canada, 2006

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Highlights

- In 2006, almost 180,000 youth were implicated in a violation of the *Criminal Code* (excluding traffic offences). At 6,885 per 100,000, the youth crime rate in 2006 was up 3% over the previous year, but remained 6% lower than the rate a decade earlier and 25% below the 1991 peak.
- In 2006, about 6 in 10 youth implicated in an offence did not face charges and were handled outside the formal justice system. The use of charges against youth accused of a crime declined markedly following the introduction of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA)* in 2003.
- Since the introduction of the *YCJA*, the proportion of accused youth who were cleared by means other than a charge increased for virtually all offences, particularly for youth accused of possession of stolen goods, bail violations, and fraud. Nevertheless, police charges continued to be the norm for offences associated with the most severe penalties, while offences carrying less serious penalties remained among those least likely to result in charges.
- The violent crime rate among youth rose 12% over the last decade. Increases in assault rates, the most prevalent type of violent offence for which youth were apprehended, accounted for much of the increase in youth violent crime rates.
- About 5% of all *Criminal Code* violations committed by youth involved a weapon. When a weapon was present in a youth crime, it was most commonly a knife.
- Crime rates for 'other' *Criminal Code* offences such as mischief and disturbing the peace rose between 1997 and 2006, while declines in rates for offences such as theft and break and enter have contributed to the overall drop in property crime rates among youth during this 10-year period.
- Youth apprehended for drug crimes were mostly involved in cannabis-related offences (84%) and, in 2006, the drug-related offence rate for youth had nearly doubled from 1997.
- In 2006, about 1 in 10 youth crimes occurred on school property, with assaults being the most prevalent offence (27%), followed by drug-offences (18%). Weapons were present in about 7% of school crimes; less than 1% of all school crimes involved firearms.



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Introduction

In 2006, the national crime rate was down 3% over the previous year and was the lowest it had been in more than 25 years. However, the youth crime rate, which includes youth (12 to 17 years of age) formally charged or recommended to the Crown for charging by police as well as youth cleared by means other than the laying of a charge, was up 3% from a year earlier. Moreover, since 1961 when statistics were first available, the rate of homicides committed by young people under the age of 18 was at an all-time high. Still, the youth crime rate in 2006 was substantially lower than in the early 1990s. Additionally, the replacement of the *Young Offenders Act* (YOA) with the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) in 2003 has brought significant changes to how the criminal justice system in Canada responds to youth involved in criminal activities (see Text box 1, *The YCJA: A summary*).

This *Juristat* presents a picture of youth crime in Canada, as reported to police and examines trends in the youth crime rate since its peak in 1991 as well as recent trends in crimes committed by youth, with particular reference to the period following the implementation of the *YCJA*.

**Text box 1
The YCJA: A summary**

In 1998, the Department of Justice Canada introduced a "Strategy for Youth Justice" that approached youth justice with an inclusive framework, including crime prevention, education, child welfare, child mental health, family and the community. One aspect of the "Strategy for Youth Justice" was the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA), which was first introduced into Parliament in March 1999 and came into force on April 1, 2003 (Department of Justice Canada, 2003).

Building on the strengths of the *Young Offenders Act* (YOA), the *YCJA* also addresses the weaknesses of the previous legislation and provides the legislative framework for a fairer and more effective youth justice system. Among the chief objectives of the *YCJA* are: clear and coherent principles to improve decision-making in the youth justice system; more appropriate use of the courts, fairness in sentencing, and reduced use of custody so that the most serious interventions are reserved for the most serious crimes; clear distinctions between serious violent offences and less serious offences; and effective reintegration of youth (Department of Justice Canada, 2003:20).

One of the main features of the *YCJA* is the diversion of youth who have committed non-violent and minor crimes away from the formal court system by encouraging the use of extrajudicial measures. These measures are meant to provide timely and meaningful consequences and allow the community to participate in developing community-based responses to youth crime. Extrajudicial measures include taking no further action, informal police warnings, referrals to community programs, formal police cautions, Crown cautions and extrajudicial sanctions programs (Department of Justice Canada, 2003).

Trends in youth crime rates¹

After peaking in 1991 (9,126 per 100,000 youth), the youth crime rate, following a pattern similar to the national crime rate, decreased throughout the 1990s. More recently, youth crime has fluctuated; generally increasing from 1999 to 2003 then decreasing until 2006. Despite the 3% increase in 2006, youth crime was 6% below the rate a decade earlier and 25% below the 1991 peak. In 2006, almost 180,000 youth were implicated in a violation of the *Criminal Code* (excluding traffic), bringing the youth crime rate to 6,885 per 100,000 youth (Table 1).

Across Canada the rate of youth crime varied considerably, with provincial crime rates ranging from a low of 3,765 per 100,000 youth in Quebec to a high of 19,939 in Saskatchewan (Table 2). All provinces except Quebec reported an annual increase in their youth crime rate in 2006,² with Prince Edward Island (+38%), Newfoundland and Labrador (+22%), Nova Scotia (+17%), and Manitoba (+14%) recording the largest increases.

Following the national trend, British Columbia (-49%), Alberta (-41%), Ontario (-34%) and Quebec (-25%) were the only provinces to experience declines in their youth crime rates between the 1991 peak in youth crime and 2006. In the other six provinces, particularly New Brunswick (+40%), Nova Scotia (+35%), Saskatchewan (+34%), and Newfoundland and Labrador (+25%), youth crime rates were up between 1991 and 2006.

Violent crimes make up a larger share of youth crime

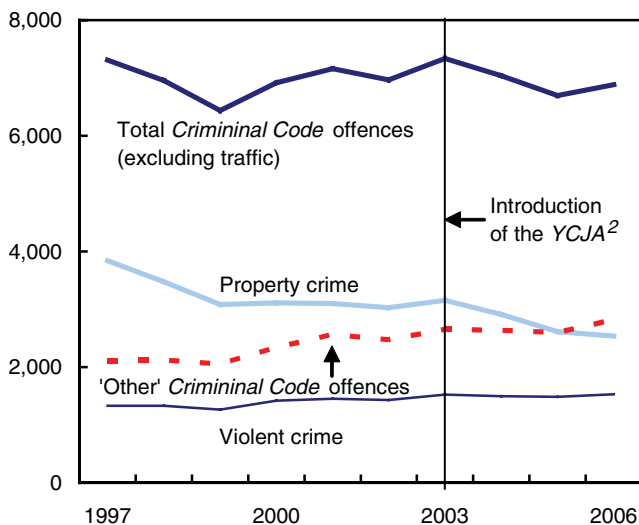
The last 10 years have seen a shift in the distribution of the types of crimes for which youth are apprehended with increases in both violent offences and 'other' *Criminal Code* offences. While the proportion of youth involved in property crimes has decreased over this time period, still youth involved in these types of offences accounted for about 4 in 10 youth accused of crimes in Canada in 2006 (Chart 1).

In the 10 years between 1997 and 2006, the overall violent crime rate in Canada declined 4%. However, the violent crime rate among youth has risen 12% in the last 10 years and has climbed 30% since 1991. By 2006, youth accused of violent offences accounted for nearly a quarter of youth crime; up from one in five 10 years earlier. Much of this increase in the rate of youth violent crime has been driven by an increase in youth involvement in assault. Youth accused of assault represented nearly 80% of those apprehended for a violent crime in 2006, with those accused of common assault constituting about 60% of all youth involved in violent offences (Table 1).

Chart 1

Youth violent crimes and 'other' *Criminal Code* offences increase while property crimes drop over the last decade

rate per 100,000 youth¹



1. Youth aged 12 to 17.

2. *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA).

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

In 2006, both the number and rate of youth aged 12 to 17 years accused of homicide reached their highest point since data were first collected in 1961. However, just 5 years prior, the youth homicide rate was at a 30-year low. Thus, while one of the largest growths in the youth crime rate in the past decade has been in the rate of youth accused of homicide (+41%), it is important to note that the rate of youth-perpetrated homicide can vary greatly from year-to-year due to the relatively small number of youth who commit homicide.

In total, 84 youth³ (72 male and 12 female), representing less than 0.1% of all young offenders, were implicated in 54 homicides in 2006 (Li, 2007). Moreover, about half (52%) of homicides where the accused was a youth involved multiple perpetrators versus a single accused; this compared to just 15% of homicides involving an adult accused (Li, 2007). In addition, evidence of gang involvement was reported by police in 22% of homicides with a youth accused (versus 9% of homicides where adults were accused) (Li, 2007).

About 5% of all youth crimes in 2006 involved a weapon.⁴ Considering youth violent crime alone, weapons were present in about 20% of cases, a figure that has remained stable since 2004 but represents a decline from previous years. Between 1998 and 2003, weapons were present in about 25% of violent crimes among youth.⁵ Knives and other cutting instruments were the weapons most commonly involved in youth violent crimes, accounting for about one-third of the weapons in 2006. Another 15% of weapons were blunt objects such as clubs or bats, 14% were firearms,⁶ and other types of weapons made up the remainder. Typically, it was older youth (i.e., aged 15 to 17) who were involved in violent offences where weapons were present.

In 2006, nearly 7 in 10 (69%) youth violent offences involving weapons were assaults. Homicides constituted a very small percentage (0.05%) of youth crime and represented less than 1% of all violent crimes where a weapon was present in 2006. However, 44% of homicides committed by youth involved a knife and 17% a firearm (Li, 2007).

In addition to the growth in youth violent crime rates, youth involvement in 'other' *Criminal Code* offences such as mischief, bail violations, disturbing the peace, offensive weapons⁷ and counterfeiting have increased considerably over the last 10 years (+34%) (Table 1). In particular, rates for mischief (+46%), which accounts for one-third of 'other' *Criminal Code* offences, bail violations (+33%) and offensive weapons (+44%) have shown notable increases from 10 years earlier.

Drops in minor theft and break and enter drive continuing decline in youth property crime rates

Opposite the trend in violent crime rates, the youth property crime rate fell to a third of what it had been 10 years earlier, putting it at its lowest point in a decade. Much of the decline in the rate of property crime in 2006 can be explained by substantial decreases in rates for break and enters (-47%) and minor theft (-33%), the criminal offence in which youth were most commonly implicated. Together, youth accused of these crimes represented more than two-thirds of the

youth apprehended for property offences. Motor vehicle theft rates also declined in 2006, down 41% from 10 years ago (Table 1).

By 2006, the rate of break-ins among youth in Canada had dropped to its lowest level in a decade. The large reduction in the rate of break-ins may be related, in part, to innovative police crime prevention programs targeting break-ins in specific neighbourhoods.⁸ Another contributing factor may be an increase in the use of home security devices by Canadians. The General Social Survey (GSS) reported that more than twice as many Canadians had burglar alarms or motion detectors in 2004 (31%) than in 1993 (15%) (Gannon, 2005). Also, one-third of Canadians reported in 2004 that they had installed new locks or security bars in their home.

Increase in cocaine and other drugs

In 2006, close to 18,000 youth, or 693 youth per 100,000 population, were accused of drug-related offences (Table 1). Drug-related crimes among youth have climbed dramatically over the last 10 years, with a rate of drug offences among youth in 2006 that was nearly double (+97%) that of 10 years earlier (Table 1). While the vast majority of drug-related offences involved cannabis (84%), the proportion of youth accused of cocaine and other drug offences has grown, more than doubling over the last 10 years.

This growth follows the introduction of the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA)* in May 1997. Replacing the *Narcotic Control Act*, the *CDSA* strengthened law enforcement powers and broadened the range of illegal substances covered by the drug legislation to include substances such as amphetamines, LSD and anabolic steroids. Other explanations for the increased rates of other drugs may reside in the growing popularity of certain drugs, such as ecstasy and crystal methamphetamines (Gannon, 2006; Silver 2007). For example, in a report discussing the drug culture in Ontario, it is indicated that methamphetamine labs, which produce 'crystal meth', have increased significantly throughout the province, particularly between 2001 and 2004.⁹

Youth crimes at school¹⁰

Continued concerns over bullying and violence in schools makes youth crime committed on school grounds a topic of ongoing interest. About one-tenth (13%) of *Criminal Code* (excluding traffic) and drug violations by youth occurred on school property in 2006. About three-quarters (73%) of youth criminal incidents taking place on school grounds that came to the attention of the police occurred during the hours of supervised school activities—about a quarter of police-reported youth crime occurred after school. However, with the absence of students, teachers and other school staff outside regular school hours, crimes occurring at these times would be more likely to go undetected and unreported than those taking place during school hours. In addition, 'zero tolerance' policies may increase the likelihood that violent offences that have taken place during school hours will be reported to police.

Assaults, particularly common assault, represented about 30% of all violations committed by youth on school property and

uttering threats constituted another 8%. Nearly 20% of crimes committed at school were drug offences, whereas 5% of youth crimes committed elsewhere were drug-related. Youth drug offences taking place on school grounds usually involved the possession (78%) or trafficking of cannabis (10%).

Rates of youth crime occurring on school property have shown some fluctuations over the last few years. However, generally, youth crime rates at school have risen. According to police-reported data, the rate for youth committing *Criminal Code* and drug offences on school grounds was up 27% in 2006 over 1998.¹¹ This increase was due in part to an 18% rise in youth crime rates for *Criminal Code* offences committed at school, as well as a 66% rise in drug offences.

Weapons were not present in most crimes occurring on school property, either during or after supervised hours. About 7% of all youth crimes committed on school grounds involved weapons and less than 1% of all school crimes in Canada involved firearms. Moreover, police-reported data from 1998 to 2006 indicate that these figures are consistent with previous years.¹² When a weapon was present, it was most often a knife or blunt object. Among those school incidents where a weapon was known to be present, 36% involved a knife or some other cutting instrument, 14% a club or other blunt instrument and 9% a gun. In the remaining incidents, some other type of weapon was used.

Measures other than charges used to handle the majority of youth crimes

Once a young person accused of a crime is apprehended by police, he or she may be formally charged, recommended to the Crown for charging by police, or dealt with through other means. Police-reported data¹³ show that charges were laid or recommended against 42% of youth accused of a *Criminal Code* offence in 2006, while 58% of youth accused were given a warning, caution, referral to a community or extrajudicial program or handled through some other means in lieu of formal charges (Table 3). In total, about 74,000 youth, or 2,862 per 100,000, were charged¹⁴ with a crime and about 104,000 (4,023 per 100,000) were cleared using other measures (Table 1).

The proportion of youth charged varied across Canada. In 2006, the proportion of apprehended youth charged was smallest in the territories (26% overall), followed by British Columbia (29%) and the Atlantic provinces (35% overall); while Ontario (47%), Saskatchewan (46%) and Manitoba (45%) had higher proportions charged (Table 3). It is important to note, however, that differences in the mix of offences committed by youth across the provinces and territories could account for some of the inter-jurisdictional variations in the proportions of youth charged. While generally similar, the specific make-up of youth crime is distinctive for each province and territory. For instance, youth apprehended for violent crime constitute a smaller proportion of the youth accused of crimes in Yukon (18%), Northwest Territories (17%) and Nunavut (18%) than in provinces such as Ontario and Manitoba, where about one-quarter of apprehended youth are accused of violent offences. Additionally, jurisdictional differences may be, in part, a

reflection of the differences in the administration of youth justice across Canada, as well as inter-jurisdictional variations in the availability of extrajudicial programs and recording practices surrounding their usage.

Warnings and cautions accounted for 44% of the alternatives to formal charges employed by police, referrals to community and extrajudicial programs made up 9%, and other means¹⁵ made up the remaining 47%.¹⁶ Overall, warnings and cautions were most commonly issued to youth implicated in property offences (30%) such as minor theft, rather than violent crimes (19%) or 'other' *Criminal Code* violations (20%). Among violent offences, common assaults were most likely to result in a warning or caution, as were violations for disturbing the peace among 'other' *Criminal Code* offences. Referrals to community and extrajudicial programs were also more likely among youth involved in property offences (7%) compared to youth accused of violent offences (4%) and 'other' *Criminal Code* offences (1%).

Measures other than formal charges were used to handle just over half (55%) of male youth implicated in a crime, whereas alternate means were used for close to two-thirds (64%) of female youth accused of an offence. Formal charges were also more likely to be laid against older youth, namely those aged 15 to 17, than against youth under the age of 15; more than half of 16- and 17-year-olds and just under half of 15-year-olds were charged, compared to 40% of youth aged 14, 31% aged 13 and 19% of 12-year-olds.

Differences in the proportion of male and female youth charged may be related to the types of offences for which each group tends to be implicated. However, when the type of offence (e.g., robbery and break and enter) was considered in conjunction with the sex of the accused, male youth were still more likely to be charged in some cases. Overall, the proportion of male youth involved in property (38%) and violent (49%) crimes who were formally charged rather than dealt with through other means was greater than for female youth apprehended for these types of offences (28% and 41%, respectively). In particular, the proportion of male youth accused of robbery and break and enter who faced charges for these offences was about twice that of female youth apprehended for these crimes.

Further examination of the circumstances surrounding the offences, such as the presence of a weapon, or whether or not the apprehended youth was accused of more than one offence, may offer insight into the differential charging of male and female youth for certain crimes. For example, police-reported data reveal that compared to female youth (24%), higher proportions of male youth were involved in robberies where a weapon was present (41%). As well, male youth (45%) charged with robbery were more likely than female youth (36%) charged with this crime to be accused of three or more offences in addition to the robbery. Such was not the case, however, for male and female youth charged with break and enters, where 29% of female youth so charged were also accused of other offences as were 24% of male youth.¹⁷

The proportion of accused youth cleared by means other than charges increased following the introduction of the YCJA

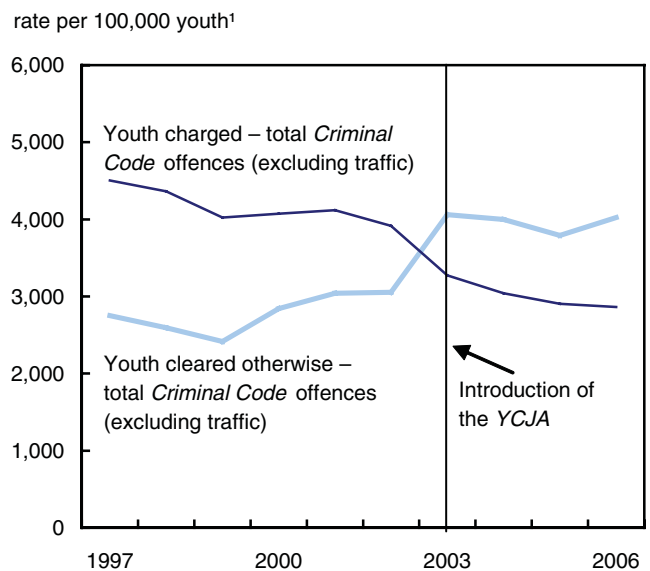
One of the primary objectives of the *YCJA* is to divert more youth involved in minor, non-violent crimes from the formal justice system. Furthermore, the *YCJA* "...formalizes and structures the police use of discretion..." (Carrington and Schulenberg, 2005: 5) providing police with specific legislative guidance to encourage the use of extrajudicial measures and sanctions for youth accused of less serious offences. Thus, the subsequent increase in the proportion of youth processed through means other than charges following the introduction of the *YCJA* is not unexpected. Moreover, research assessing the preliminary impact of the *YCJA* on police use of measures other than charges shows that, at least initially, these practices changed to coincide with the implementation of the *YCJA* (Carrington and Schulenberg, 2005).

Hence, despite a 3% year-over-year increase in the total youth crime rate in 2006, the rate of youth charged dropped 1% from the previous year and 27% since 2002, the year prior to the enactment of the *YCJA*. Accordingly, this decrease in the youth charge rate was accompanied by a corresponding rise in the rate of accused youth dealt with through other means. In 2006, the rate of accused youth not charged was up 6% over the previous year and was 32% above the 2002 rate (Chart 2).

Over the last decade, the proportion of youth apprehended by police but not formally charged or recommended for charging has generally been on the rise (Chart 3). Until 2002, this upward

Chart 2

Rates of youth formally charged down while those cleared otherwise up since introduction of the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA)



1. Youth aged 12 to 17.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

trend was gradual. However, in the period immediately following the introduction of the *YCJA*, the relative number of cases where youth were handled through means other than charges climbed sharply. Over the six-year period from 1997 to 2002, the proportion of youth accused of a *Criminal Code* offence but not charged ranged from 37% to 44%. However, over the one-year period from 2002 to 2003, this proportion climbed to 55%. Since the *YCJA* came into force in 2003, the proportion of accused youth cleared otherwise¹⁸ has remained relatively stable with measures other than charges used in almost 60% of youth crimes in 2006.

Subsequent to the implementation of the *YCJA*, the proportion of accused youth who were cleared by means other than a charge increased for virtually all offences (Table 4). Despite this change, the crimes that were most likely to result in charges prior to the *YCJA* remained as such after the new legislation came into force. For example, after the introduction of the *YCJA*, charges continued to be the norm for offences associated with the most severe penalties, such as homicide, attempted murder and aggravated assault. Correspondingly, offences carrying less serious penalties, such as disturbing the peace, mischief of \$5,000 and under and minor theft, were still among those least likely to result in charges.

Changes in the proportion of youth charged since the *YCJA* are especially notable for certain *Criminal Code* offences

Since the *YCJA* came into effect, there have been pervasive changes in the use of means other than charges to handle

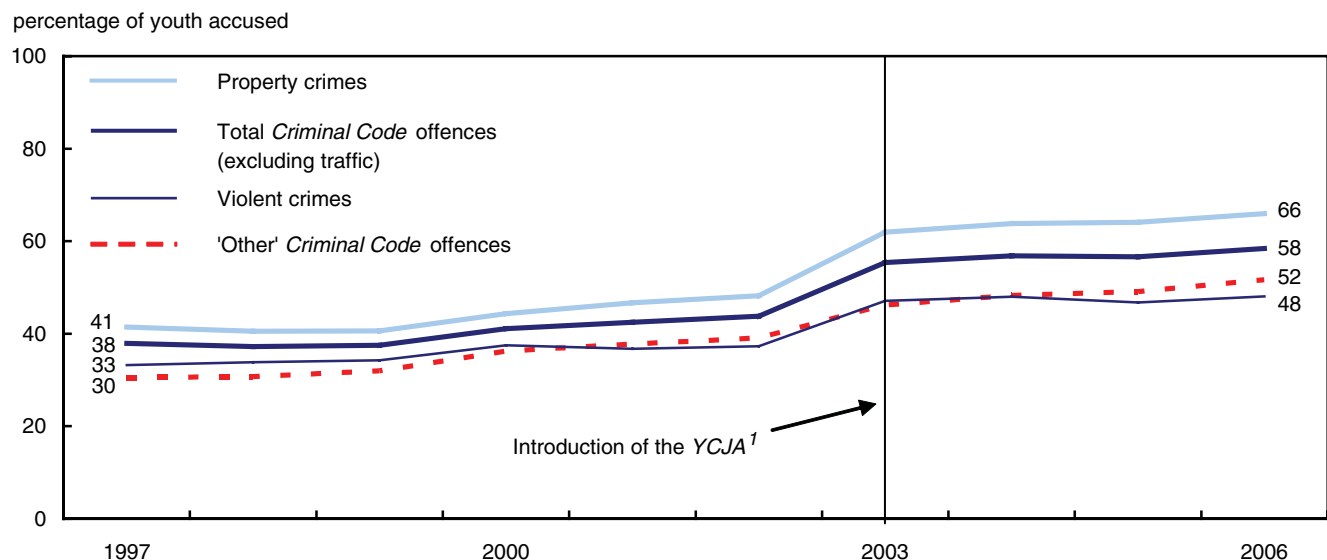
Text box 2 Decline in the proportion charged after the *YCJA* greater for female youth

Following a longstanding trend, the majority (77%) of youth charged with a criminal offence in 2006 were male, with male youth charged with an offence at three times the rate of female youth (4,285 per 100,000 males compared to 1,366 females). In the 10 years between 1997 and 2006, police charges declined for both male (-38%) and female (-34%) youth. However, since 2002 and the introduction of the *YCJA*, decreases in charge rates have been more pronounced for female youth (-31%) than for male youth (-25%). This difference is likely related to the different types of offences that each group typically commits. For example, the proportion of female youth charged with minor theft was nearly twice that of young males. Minor, non-violent offences, such as theft of \$5,000 and under, are more likely to be targeted for diversion under the *YCJA*.

youth crime, particularly for youth accused of certain offences (Table 3). For example, in 2006, the proportions of youth cleared otherwise for possession of stolen goods and bail violations were more than double what they had been in the year prior to the *YCJA*'s implementation. As well, just over a third (38%) of youth fraud offences were cleared by means other than charges in 2002. However after the *YCJA* came into force, more than half (54% in 2006) of youth accused of fraud offences were cleared otherwise. Even among offences where historically a majority of the accused were cleared otherwise, following the implementation of the *YCJA*, there were increases in the proportion of youth handled through means other than charges

Chart 3

Proportion of accused youth cleared by means other than formal charges has grown across all major *Criminal Code* offence categories



1. Youth Criminal Justice Act (*YCJA*).

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

(Table 3). For instance, about 80% of youth accused of minor mischief offences were cleared otherwise in 2006, up from two-thirds in 2002. Similarly, in 2006, three-quarters of minor thefts resulted in the accused youth being cleared by means other than charges compared to 56% in 2002. And while just under half (48%) of youth accused of common assault were cleared otherwise prior to the *YCJA*, in 2006 the figure was up to just over 60%.

Greater use of warnings and cautions

Detailed information on how youth cleared by means other than by charges are handled is not available through the UCR Survey prior to 2003. However, since that time, the use of warnings and cautions has generally increased among the extrajudicial means used to process youth accused of a crime. For example, a third of youth cleared by means other than charges were issued a warning or caution in 2003. By 2006, this figure was up to more than 4 in 10 youth cleared otherwise. Meanwhile, there has been little change in the extent to which referrals are used, and the use of means not otherwise classified has shown a slight decline. Furthermore, this usage pattern among the various types of diversion used for youth accused of crime was generally similar across the major offence categories.

Changes also seen in youth courts and correctional services post-*YCJA* implementation

Coinciding with reductions in the use of charging by police to handle youth accused of a crime and commensurate with the objectives of the new legislation, the number of cases coming to youth courts has dropped noticeably since the *YCJA* came into force. Furthermore, since the introduction of the *YCJA*, there has been a marked decline in the use of custody for youth found guilty.

Between 2002/2003 and 2003/2004, the years immediately preceding and following the introduction of the *YCJA*, there was an unprecedented annual drop in the number of cases completed in youth courts (Thomas, 2005). By 2005/2006, the youth court caseload was down 26% over 2002/2003 (Statistics Canada, 2007). Caseload declines were greatest for cases involving property-related crimes such as theft, break and enter, and fraud — offences for which there were also notable increases in the use of measures other than charges by police. In the first year of the *YCJA*, the number of cases for property offences dropped 19% over 2002/2003, while the caseload for violent crimes was down 9%. By 2005/2006, caseloads for property-related and violent offences were down 31% and 18%, respectively, from 2002/2003.

In addition to diverting youth accused of minor, non-violent offences from the formal justice system, the *YCJA* also aims to reduce reliance on remand and sentenced custody and ensure that custodial sentences are not overused. Consistent with this objective, the proportion of guilty cases sentenced to custody has decreased from about 27% prior to the new legislation to about 18% in 2005/2006 (Statistics Canada, 2007). Decreases in the use of custody varied by offence but, overall, declines were recorded for virtually all types of youth crime.

Not unexpectedly, changes were also seen in youth correctional services after the *YCJA* was implemented. Within the first year following the introduction of the *YCJA*, the incarceration rate¹⁹ for youth fell 38% from 15 per 10,000 youth to 9, the largest drop in about a decade. In 2004/2005, the incarceration rate remained stable then declined further to 8 per 10,000 youth in 2005/2006.

Admissions to custody were gradually decreasing prior to the introduction of the *YCJA* in 2003. However, a year after the legislation was implemented, total custodial admissions were down markedly, dropping 25% between 2002/2003 and 2003/2004. Two years after the enactment of the *YCJA*, admissions to custody were down 30% compared to 2002/2003 (Calverley, 2006; 2007).

Reductions in admissions to both secure and open sentenced custody were larger than decreases in remand (pre-trial detention) admissions. By 2004/2005, sentenced custody²⁰ admissions were nearly half of what they were in 2002/2003 (i.e., secure custody was down 48% and open custody was down 45%), whereas remand admissions were lower by 20%. Under the *YCJA*, the provisions for remanding high-risk offenders remain the same as under the *YOA*, which in turn, may offer some explanation for why the magnitude of change is smaller for remand admissions compared to admissions to sentenced custody (Calverley, 2006).

It is likely that the implementation of the *YCJA* has also contributed to a decrease in the use of probation. Under the former *YOA*, youth found guilty and sentenced to custody were often ordered to probation as well to ensure supervision and integration into the community after custodial sentences had been served. However, under the *YCJA*, mandatory community supervision upon release from custody is automatically built into youth custody sentences. Accordingly, the percentage of guilty cases sentenced to probation fell from 70% to 60% between 2002/2003 and 2005/2006 (Statistics Canada, 2007). Moreover, from 2002/2003 to 2003/2004, probation admissions dropped 34% and continued to decline, but less dramatically in the following year. In 2004/2005, probation admissions were down 20% over the previous year and were 43% lower than 2002/2003 figures (Calverley, 2007).

The *YCJA* has also offered courts new sentencing options such as deferred custody and supervision orders, intensive support and supervision, and orders to attend a non-residential program. Of these new sentencing options, deferred custody and supervision orders were most frequently issued, representing 3% of guilty cases in 2005/2006 (Statistics Canada, 2007).

Community portions of custody and supervision orders (CPCS), as well as deferred custody and supervision orders, two of the new community sentence options made available through the *YCJA*, represented almost one-tenth (9%) of correctional services admissions in 2004/2005. While 2004/2005 admissions to CPCS were stable over the previous year, admissions to deferred custody and supervision increased 16% in its second year of usage (Calverley, 2007).

Summarizing youth crime in 2006

In 2006, the youth crime rate was 3% higher than the previous year, but 6% lower than the rate 10 years earlier. The overall decline in youth crime rates between 1997 and 2006 was driven by decreases in rates of youth property offences such as minor theft and break and enter. In contrast, youth violent crime rates, particularly for assault, increased, as did rates for 'other' *Criminal Code* offences such as mischief and disturbing the peace.

Involvement in drug-related crimes was also up among youth in 2006. Crime rates for youth accused of cannabis-related offences, which constituted 84% of youth drug crimes, were nearly twice what they had been 10 years prior, while rates for cocaine and other drug violations had more than doubled.

In 2006, almost 60% of youth implicated in an offence did not face charges but were dealt with through alternate means such as warnings, cautions, community programs and extrajudicial programs. Since the introduction of the YCJA in 2003, the use of these alternate measures to handle youth accused of a crime has increased for almost all *Criminal Code* offences. Despite this overall decline in charging among accused youth, those implicated in more serious crimes were still among the most likely to face charges, while youth apprehended for less serious offences continued to be among the least likely to be formally charged or recommended for charging.

Data sources

The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey

The UCR Survey was developed in 1962 with the cooperation and assistance of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. UCR Survey data reflects reported crime that has been substantiated through police investigation from all separate

federal, provincial and municipal police services in Canada. There are currently two versions of the UCR Survey: aggregate and incident-based microdata.

Aggregate UCR Survey

The Aggregate UCR Survey includes the number of reported offences, actual offences, offences cleared by charge or cleared otherwise, persons charged (by sex and by adult/youth breakdown) and those not charged. It does not include victim or incident characteristics. Coverage of the UCR Survey in 2006 was at 99.9% of the caseload of all police services in Canada. Unless otherwise mentioned, all analysis in this report is based on Aggregate Survey counts. The overall "youth crime rate" includes all *Criminal Code* offences except traffic violations for youth aged 12 to 17. It does not include other federal statutes such as drug offences.

Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey

The Incident-based UCR2 Survey captures detailed information on individual criminal incidents reported to police, including characteristics of victims, accused persons and incidents. Police services switch over from the Aggregate to the Incident-based Survey as their records management systems become capable of providing this level of detail. Coverage of the UCR2 Survey for 2006 represented 90% of the population in Canada.

The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Trend Database

The UCR2 Trend Database contains historical data, which permits the analysis of trends in the characteristics of the incidents, accused and victims, such as weapon use and accused-victim relationships. This database currently includes 63 police services in 6 provinces who have supplied data to the UCR2 Survey for the complete years from 1998 to 2006. These respondents accounted for 52.8% of the population of Canada in 2006. This list of respondents will remain unchanged until large police services such as the RCMP and OPP have

Text box 3

Key terminology and definitions

Youth crime rate includes youth, aged 12 to 17, accused of a criminal offence and formally charged, recommended to the Crown for charging by police or cleared by means other than the laying of a charge. Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 youth aged 12 to 17 in the population.

Violent offences involve the use or threatened use of violence against a person, including homicide, attempted murder, assault, sexual assault and robbery. Robbery is considered a violent offence because, unlike other theft offences, it involves the use or threat of violence.

Homicide, the most serious of all criminal acts, includes first and second degree murder, manslaughter and infanticide.

Assault is classified into three levels: level 1 or common assault, the least serious form including behaviours such as pushing, slapping, punching and face-to-face threats; level 2 assault, defined as assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm; and level 3 aggravated assault, defined as assault that wounds, maims, disfigures or endangers the life of the victim.

Sexual assault is classified into one of three levels according to the seriousness of the incident: level 1, the category of least physical injury to the victim; level 2, sexual assault with a weapon, threats to use a weapon, or causing bodily harm; and level 3, sexual assault that wounds, maims, disfigures or endangers the life of the victim.

Property offences involve unlawful acts to gain property, but do not involve the use or threat of violence against the person. They include offences such as break and enter, theft and fraud.

'Other' Criminal Code offences include crimes such as mischief, disturbing the peace, arson, offensive weapon use, bail violations, prostitution and counterfeiting currency.

Drug-related offences include offences under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* such as importation, exportation, trafficking, production and possession of drugs or narcotics. Examples include cannabis/marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and other drugs such as crystal meth, PCP, LSD and ecstasy.

provided at least five years of data to the UCR2 Survey, at which point they will become part of this Trend Database. The coverage provided by these services in the Trend Database is distributed as follows: 44.1% from Quebec, 38.5% from Ontario, 10.6% from Alberta, 3.4% from British Columbia, 2.6% from Saskatchewan, and 0.7% from New Brunswick.

For more detailed information on the UCR and UCR2 Surveys, please refer to: http://www.statcan.ca/cgi-bin/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=get_Survey&SDDS=3302&lang=en&db=IMDB&dbg=f&adm=8&dis=2.

Homicide Survey

The Homicide Survey collects police-reported data on the characteristics of all homicide incidents, victims and accused persons in Canada.

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Endnotes

1. Unless otherwise stated, data used in this section come largely from the Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey. For more information see the "Data sources" section of this report.
2. Annual changes in youth crime rates for the territories are not presented here, since the territories can have large year-over-year fluctuations due to their relatively small populations.
3. Table 1 indicates a total of 85 youth as it includes one accused under the age of 12.
4. Data on weapons present in youth crimes in 2006 come from the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey which captures detailed information on individual criminal incidents reported to police, including characteristics of victims, accused persons and incidents. Coverage of the UCR2 survey for 2006 represented 90% of the population in Canada. For more information see the "Data sources" section of this report.
5. Data on trends in weapons present in youth crimes come from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Trend Database. The UCR2 Trend Database currently includes 63 police services in 6 provinces who have supplied data to the UCR2 survey for the complete years from 1998 to 2006. These respondents accounted for 52.8% of the population of Canada in 2006. For more information on the UCR2 Trend Database, see the "Data sources" section of this report.
6. The present report provides a general examination of incidents of youth crime where a weapon was present. For information on youth accused of firearm-related violent crimes, please see the *Juristat*, "Firearms and violent crime" by Mia Dauvergne and Leonardo De Socio (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-XIE, Vol. 28, no. 2).
7. "Offensive weapons" refers to all weapon-related offences including illegal firearms usage (e.g., using a firearm in the commission of an offence or pointing a firearm); illegal possession of a weapon (e.g., having an unregistered firearm or failing to possess a license to possess a firearm); weapons importation, exportation and trafficking; and other weapon offences (e.g., careless use, illegal destruction of a firearm, tampering with serial numbers).
8. Edmonton Police Service, <http://www.police.edmonton.ab.ca/Pages/NETindex.asp> (accessed April 2, 2008).
9. Ontario Provincial Police. 2005. Provincial Business Plan. Drug Enforcement/Traffic. http://www.opp.ca/Intranetdev/groups/public/documents/webpage/opp_000690.pdf (accessed April 2, 2008).
10. With the exception of the data on trends in youth crime at schools, data for this section come largely from the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey. Data on trends in youth crime at school come from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Trend Database. For more information on the UCR2 Trend Database, please see "Data Sources" section of this report.

11. Refers to the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Trend Database; the UCR2 Trend Database currently includes 63 police services in 6 provinces who have supplied data to the UCR2 Survey for the complete years from 1998 to 2006. These respondents accounted for 52.8% of the population of Canada in 2006. For more information on the UCR2 Trend Database, see the "Data sources" section of this report.
12. Ibid.
13. Refers to the Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey; see the "Data sources" section of this report for more information.
14. Throughout this report the term 'charged' is used to refer to incidents where formal charges were laid by police or where the accused has been recommended to the Crown for charging by police.
15. Youth handled through 'other means' includes such measures as cases where departmental discretion is exercised by police; the complainant declines to lay charges; the accused is under the age of 12; the accused has diplomatic immunity; or the accused is referred to some other type of diversionary program.
16. Data on warnings, cautions, community programs, extrajudicial programs and other alternatives to charging used by police come from the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey.
17. Information on the most serious weapon present during the commission of a criminal incident is collected for crimes involving a violent violation and thus, would not include property offences such as break and enter.
18. An incident is "cleared otherwise" when police have identified at least one accused and there is sufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incident, but the accused is processed by other means. In the case of youth, this could include formal measures such as a police caution or extrajudicial sanctions, or informal measures such as a police warning or referral to a community program. Processing by other means could mean that the youth is involved in other incident(s) in which charges have been laid or it could refer to the committal to a mental hospital and death of accused.
19. The incarceration rate is the average daily number of young persons in custody per 10,000 youth aged 12 to 17 in the population.
20. Sentenced custody includes both open and secure custody. Under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, each province or territory must have at least two levels of custody which are distinguished by the degree of restraint of the young persons within them. For conventional purposes, this *Juristat* designates the levels of restraint as open and secure custody.

Table 1

Youth accused, charged and cleared by means other than formal charges by selected *Criminal Code* incidents,¹ Canada, 2006

	Youth charged		Youth cleared otherwise ²		Total youth accused		Percent change in total youth crime rate	
	number	rate ³	number	rate ³	number	rate ^{3,4}	2005 to 2006	1997 to 2006
Homicide ⁵	83	3	2	0.1	85	3	17	41
Attempted murder	69	3	5	0.2	74	3	-6	6
Assault - total	14,160	548	16,745	648	30,905	1,196	3	17
Level 1	8,964	347	14,184	549	23,148	896	3	11
Level 2-weapon	4,779	185	2,517	97	7,296	282	3	40
Level 3-aggravated	417	16	44	1.7	461	18	-4	21
Other assaults - total	1,152	45	271	10	1,423	55	-6	13
Unlawfully causing bodily harm	34	1	17	1	51	2	-38	-86
Discharge firearm with intent	31	1	22	0.9	53	2	15	28
Assault against police	825	32	173	7	998	39	-2	97
Assault against other peace-public officers	86	3	14	0.5	100	4	-14	17
Other assaults	176	7	45	2	221	9	-12	-17
Sexual assault - total	1,188	46	963	37	2,151	83	-6	-8
Level 1	1,166	45	944	37	2,110	82	-6	-6
Level 2-weapon	20	1	13	0.5	33	1	-6	-53
Level 3-aggravated	2	0.1	6	0.2	8	0	-1	-70
Other sexual offences	139	5	164	6	303	12	3	1
Abduction	5	0.2	5	0.2	10	0	-10	-5
Robbery	3,704	143	817	32	4,521	175	8	-2
Violent crime - total	20,500	794	18,972	734	39,472	1,528	3	12
Breaking and entering	7,434	288	5,399	209	12,833	497	-10	-47
Motor vehicle theft	3,012	117	2,100	81	5,112	198	-3	-41
Theft over \$5,000	152	6	163	6	315	12	-26	-61
Theft \$5,000 and under - total	9,164	355	27,805	1,076	36,969	1,431	-2	-33
Shoplifting	4,514	175	14,878	576	19,392	751	-1	-46
Other	4,650	180	12,927	500	17,577	680	-4	-7
Possession of stolen goods	4,899	190	2,912	113	7,811	302	8	9
Fraud	1,119	43	1,302	50	2,421	94	-2	-24
Property crime - total	25,780	998	39,681	1,536	65,461	2,534	-3	-34
Mischief	5,681	220	21,374	827	27,055	1,047	12	46
Counterfeiting currency	107	4	145	6	252	10	-23	39
Bail violations	11,327	438	1,325	51	12,652	490	5	33
Disturbing the peace	542	21	8,331	322	8,873	343	14	217
Offensive weapons	1,787	69	1,831	71	3,618	140	1	44
Prostitution	22	1	26	1	48	2	-40	-81
Arson	516	20	976	38	1,492	58	2	1
Kidnapping/forcible confinement	278	11	37	1	315	12	12	66
Other	7,401	286	11,226	435	18,627	721	7	-3
Other <i>Criminal Code</i> offences - total	27,661	1,071	45,271	1,752	72,932	2,823	9	34
<i>Criminal Code</i> - total (excluding traffic)	73,941	2,862	103,924	4,023	177,865	6,885	3	-6
Drug offences - total	6,382	247	11,509	446	17,891	693	2	97
Heroin	23	1	10	0.4	33	1	174	-54
Cocaine	794	31	202	8	996	39	26	135
Other drugs	828	32	1,075	42	1,903	74	10	156
Cannabis	4,737	183	10,222	396	14,959	579	-1	91

1. Figures presented here include a small number of accused under the age of 12.
2. An incident is "cleared otherwise" when police have identified at least one accused and there is sufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incident, but the accused is processed by other means. In the case of youth, this could include formal measures such as a police caution or extrajudicial sanctions, or informal measures such as a police warning or diversion to a community program. Processing by other means could mean that the youth is involved in other incident(s) in which charges have been laid or it could refer to the commitment to a mental hospital and death of accused.
3. Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 youth aged 12 to 17. In 2006 the population aged 12 to 17 was 2,583,351. The population estimates come from Statistics Canada, Demography Division.
4. Total youth crime rate.
5. For 2006, the total includes one accused under the age of 12.

Note: Percent change based on unrounded rates.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 2

Youth accused of selected *Criminal Code* incidents,^{1,2} Canada and the provinces and territories, 2006

	Violent crime												
	2006 population		Homicide		Assault - level 1, 2, 3			Sexual assault - level 1, 2, 3			Robbery		
	number	number	rate	% change in rate	number	rate	% change in rate	number	rate	% change in rate	number	rate	% change in rate
Newfoundland and Labrador	38,588	0	0	-100	572	1,482	19	29	75	0	8	21	-17
Prince Edward Island	11,783	0	0	...	141	1,197	-3	9	76	203	2	17	...
Nova Scotia	71,868	0	0	-100	1,413	1,966	9	55	77	-20	109	152	-10
New Brunswick	57,009	0	0	...	841	1,475	12	57	100	-10	16	28	-38
Quebec	581,350	3	1	-77	4,914	845	1	521	90	-7	666	115	8
Ontario	1,017,727	25	2	65	10,746	1,056	-3	796	78	-13	2,405	236	8
Manitoba	102,190	18	18	99	2,267	2,218	20	111	109	25	248	243	5
Saskatchewan	88,910	3	3	-78	2,469	2,777	9	116	130	0	360	405	37
Alberta	278,229	24	9	98	3,671	1,319	8	222	80	6	338	121	-6
British Columbia	324,952	12	4	100	3,276	1,008	2	204	63	4	353	109	14
Yukon	2,697	0	0	...	101	3,745	-2	8	297	38	7	260	623
Northwest Territories	4,197	0	0	...	304	7,243	9	8	191	-52	2	48	-59
Nunavut	3,851	0	0	...	190	4,934	21	15	390	48	7	182	245
Canada	2,583,351	85	3	17	30,905	1,196	3	2,151	83	-6	4,521	175	8

	Property crime										
	2006 population		Breaking and entering			Motor vehicle theft			Theft \$5,000 and under		
	number	number	rate	% change in rate	number	rate	% change in rate	number	rate	% change in rate	
Newfoundland and Labrador	38,588	426	1,104	1	97	251	10	494	1,280	12	
Prince Edward Island	11,783	103	874	37	32	272	15	253	2,147	74	
Nova Scotia	71,868	522	726	11	195	271	21	1,191	1,657	5	
New Brunswick	57,009	386	677	0	94	165	-14	941	1,651	10	
Quebec	581,350	1,975	340	-13	869	149	-14	5,015	863	-8	
Ontario	1,017,727	3,786	372	-4	1,136	112	-19	14,704	1,445	5	
Manitoba	102,190	986	965	-14	497	486	0	1,496	1,464	-1	
Saskatchewan	88,910	1,632	1,836	-13	681	766	13	2,598	2,922	-9	
Alberta	278,229	1,360	489	-14	869	312	13	4,982	1,791	-13	
British Columbia	324,952	1,075	331	-13	501	154	4	4,905	1,509	-5	
Yukon	2,697	69	2,558	-16	15	556	11	70	2,595	-28	
Northwest Territories	4,197	281	6,695	-18	80	1,906	30	196	4,670	13	
Nunavut	3,851	232	6,024	-24	46	1,194	-9	124	3,220	6	
Canada	2,583,351	12,833	497	-10	5,112	198	-3	36,969	1,431	-2	

	'Other' <i>Criminal Code</i> offences										
	2006 population		Bail violations			Disturbing the peace			Mischief		
	number	number	rate	% change in rate	number	rate	% change in rate	number	rate	% change in rate	
Newfoundland and Labrador	38,588	187	485	9	199	516	28	851	2,205	49	
Prince Edward Island	11,783	22	187	39	66	560	48	249	2,113	12	
Nova Scotia	71,868	584	813	69	500	696	30	1,363	1,897	11	
New Brunswick	57,009	162	284	33	227	398	4	966	1,694	17	
Quebec	581,350	494	85	-7	26	4	-1	2,436	419	-3	
Ontario	1,017,727	5,391	530	4	934	92	-3	6,643	653	6	
Manitoba	102,190	867	848	8	864	845	36	1,733	1,696	28	
Saskatchewan	88,910	2,301	2,588	7	905	1,018	34	3,831	4,309	21	
Alberta	278,229	1,683	605	-12	2,024	727	16	4,771	1,715	18	
British Columbia	324,952	818	252	22	2,661	819	14	3,306	1,017	6	
Yukon	2,697	28	1,038	-7	108	4,004	-17	197	7,304	15	
Northwest Territories	4,197	77	1,835	16	212	5,051	-12	444	10,579	11	
Nunavut	3,851	38	987	10	147	3,817	-8	265	6,881	27	
Canada	2,583,351	12,652	490	5	8,873	343	14	27,055	1,047	12	

Table 2

Youth accused of selected *Criminal Code* incidents,^{1,2} Canada and the provinces and territories, 2006 (continued)

	2006 population		Violent crime - total ³				Property crime - total ³				Other <i>Criminal Code</i> offences - total ³			<i>Criminal Code</i> - total (excluding traffic) ³		
	number	rate	number	rate	% change in rate	number	rate	% change in rate	number	rate	% change in rate	number	rate	% change in rate		
Newfoundland and Labrador	38,588	1,620	625	1,620	15	1,125	2,915	9	1,638	4,245	36	3,388	8,780	22		
Prince Edward Island	11,783	1,332	157	1,332	3	452	3,836	67	499	4,235	32	1,108	9,403	38		
Nova Scotia	71,868	2,272	1,633	2,272	5	2,650	3,687	10	3,704	5,154	29	7,987	11,113	17		
New Brunswick	57,009	1,680	958	1,680	5	1,563	2,742	1	2,286	4,010	10	4,807	8,432	6		
Quebec	581,350	1,110	6,454	1,110	1	8,791	1,512	-9	6,643	1,143	0	21,888	3,765	-4		
Ontario	1,017,727	1,438	14,634	1,438	-2	24,987	2,455	2	20,995	2,063	2	60,616	5,956	1		
Manitoba	102,190	2,709	2,768	2,709	19	3,469	3,395	-1	5,147	5,037	22	11,384	11,140	14		
Saskatchewan	88,910	3,466	3,082	3,466	10	5,616	6,316	-7	9,030	10,156	16	17,728	19,939	7		
Alberta	278,229	1,590	4,423	1,590	6	8,505	3,057	-9	11,347	4,078	11	24,275	8,725	2		
British Columbia	324,952	1,254	4,074	1,254	4	7,095	2,183	-7	9,753	3,001	7	20,922	6,438	1		
Yukon	2,697	4,524	122	4,524	7	166	6,155	-19	401	14,868	0	689	25,547	-4		
Northwest Territories	4,197	7,744	325	7,744	1	604	14,391	-3	944	22,492	3	1,873	44,627	1		
Nunavut	3,851	5,635	217	5,635	24	438	11,374	-10	545	14,152	17	1,200	31,161	6		
Canada	2,583,351	1,528	39,472	1,528	3	65,461	2,534	-3	72,932	2,823	9	177,865	6,885	3		

	Drug offences										
	2006 population		Heroin			Cocaine			Cannabis		
	number	rate	number	rate	% change in rate	number	rate	% change in rate	number	rate	% change in rate
Newfoundland and Labrador	38,588	0	0	0	...	0	0	...	73	189	-13
Prince Edward Island	11,783	0	0	0	...	1	8	...	28	238	102
Nova Scotia	71,868	0	0	0	-100	9	13	-30	320	445	23
New Brunswick	57,009	0	0	0	-100	6	11	204	240	421	20
Quebec	581,350	3	1	197	...	92	16	0	3,979	684	-10
Ontario	1,017,727	4	0	...	...	460	45	28	6,080	597	2
Manitoba	102,190	0	0	...	...	70	68	216	273	267	29
Saskatchewan	88,910	0	0	...	...	26	29	65	525	590	28
Alberta	278,229	3	1	...	...	171	61	16	1,194	429	19
British Columbia	324,952	23	7	155	...	158	49	20	2,187	673	-11
Yukon	2,697	0	0	...	...	1	37	...	13	482	347
Northwest Territories	4,197	0	0	...	...	2	48	-71	39	929	-19
Nunavut	3,851	0	0	...	...	0	0	...	8	208	-1
Canada	2,583,351	33	1	174	...	996	39	26	14,959	579	-1

	2006 population		Other drugs ⁴				Drugs - total		
	number	rate	number	rate	% change in rate	number	rate	% change in rate	
Newfoundland and Labrador	38,588	13	34	34	-36	86	223	-18	
Prince Edward Island	11,783	16	136	136	102	45	382	107	
Nova Scotia	71,868	34	47	47	11	363	505	19	
New Brunswick	57,009	33	58	58	59	279	489	25	
Quebec	581,350	628	108	108	21	4,702	809	-7	
Ontario	1,017,727	765	75	75	3	7,309	718	4	
Manitoba	102,190	53	52	52	3	396	388	39	
Saskatchewan	88,910	44	49	49	-17	595	669	24	
Alberta	278,229	136	49	49	33	1,504	541	20	
British Columbia	324,952	173	53	53	6	2,541	782	-8	
Yukon	2,697	2	74	74	-31	16	593	175	
Northwest Territories	4,197	6	143	143	-23	47	1,120	-25	
Nunavut	3,851	0	0	0	-100	8	208	-21	
Canada	2,583,351	1,903	74	74	10	17,891	693	2	

... not applicable

1. 'Youth accused' includes all youth charged with an offence and those cleared by means other than a charge. The administration of the youth justice system is the responsibility of the provinces and territories. Thus, it is important to note that jurisdictional differences in youth crime are, in part, a reflection of the differences in the administration of youth justice across Canada.

2. Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 youth aged 12 to 17. The population estimates come from Statistics Canada, Demography Division.

3. Only selected offences are shown and will therefore not add up to the total in each category.

4. 'Other drugs' includes the categories 'restricted drugs', 'controlled drugs', as well as other drugs.

Note: Percent change based on unrounded rates and are in comparison to the previous year's rate.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 3

Youth accused of *Criminal Code* offences (excluding traffic), charged and cleared by means other than formal charges, Canada, provinces and territories, 2006

	Total youth charged	Total youth cleared otherwise ¹	Total youth accused	Accused youth charged	Accused youth cleared otherwise ¹
	number			percentage	
Canada²	73,941	103,924	177,865	42	58
Newfoundland and Labrador	1,227	2,161	3,388	36	64
Prince Edward Island	347	761	1,108	31	69
Nova Scotia	2,716	5,271	7,987	34	66
New Brunswick	1,833	2,974	4,807	38	62
Quebec	9,099	12,789	21,888	42	58
Ontario	28,531	32,085	60,616	47	53
Manitoba	5,115	6,269	11,384	45	55
Saskatchewan	8,230	9,498	17,728	46	54
Alberta	9,763	14,512	24,275	40	60
British Columbia	6,093	14,829	20,922	29	71
Yukon	180	509	689	26	74
Northwest Territories	497	1,376	1,873	27	73
Nunavut	310	890	1,200	26	74

1. An incident is "cleared otherwise" when police have identified at least one accused and there is sufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incident, but the accused is processed by other means. In the case of youth, this could include formal measures such as Crown caution or extrajudicial sanctions, or informal measures such as a police warning or diversion to a community program. Processing by other means could refer to the committal to a mental hospital and death of accused.
2. The administration of the youth justice system is the responsibility of the provinces and territories. Thus, it is important to note that jurisdictional differences in youth crime are, in part, a reflection of the differences in the administration of youth justice across Canada.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 4

Proportion of accused youth cleared by means other than a formal charge by selected *Criminal Code* offences,¹ Canada, 2002, 2003 and 2006

	2006		2003	2002
	Total youth accused of a crime	Accused youth cleared otherwise ⁴	First year of the YCJA ²	Last year of the YOA ³
			Accused youth cleared otherwise ⁴	Accused youth cleared otherwise ⁴
	number	percentage	percentage	
Homicide	85	2	2	0
Attempted murder	74	7	0	2
Assault - level 1	23,148	61	60	48
Assault with weapon or causing bodily harm - level 2	7,296	34	29	23
Aggravated assault - level 3	461	10	7	7
Other assaults	1,423	19	20	15
Sexual assault - total	2,151	45	49	34
Robbery	4,521	18	15	11
Other violent offences	313	54	55	45
Breaking and entering	12,833	42	38	31
Motor vehicle theft	5,112	41	32	28
Theft over \$5,000	315	52	41	34
Theft \$5,000 and under	36,969	75	74	56
Possession of stolen goods	7,811	37	29	16
Fraud	2,421	54	49	38
Mischief \$5,000 and under	25,470	80	78	66
Mischief over \$5,000	1,585	64	61	51
Bail violations	12,652	10	7	4
Disturb the peace	8,873	94	91	87
Offensive weapons	3,618	51	55	43
Arson	1,492	65	61	59
Obstruct public peace officer	954	30	24	19
Other <i>Criminal Code</i> offences	18,288	61	55	46
Total <i>Criminal Code</i> offences (excluding traffic)⁵	177,865	58	55	44

1. Figures presented include a small number of accused under the age of 12.

2. *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.

3. *Young Offenders Act*.

4. An incident is "cleared otherwise" when police have identified at least one accused and there is sufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incident, but the accused is processed by other means. In the case of youth, this could include formal measures such as a Crown caution or extrajudicial sanctions, or informal measures such as a police warning or diversion to a community program. Processing by other means could refer to the committal to a mental hospital or the death of an accused.

5. Only selected offences are shown and therefore, will not add up to equal 'Total *Criminal Code* offences (excluding traffic)'.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics

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