

YOUTH
JUSTICE
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CONVENING

Briefing Book



EMORY
LAW

Barton Child Law
and Policy Center

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Additionally, portions of this manual were excerpted in whole or in part from the “Whole Child Manual” authored by Rande J. Waldman, Emory University School of Law.

A full copy of the Whole Child Manual can be found here: https://law.emory.edu/_includes/documents/sections/faculty/representing-whole-child.pdf

November 2024

YOUTH
JUSTICE

CONVENING

The Youth Justice Convening Agenda

Thursday November 7, 2024
Anderson Conference Center
Macon, GA

8:15 – 9:15	Breakfast
8:45 – 8:55	Welcome Welcome remarks provided by Melissa Carter, Executive Director, Barton Child Law & Policy Center, Emory Law School Opening provided by DJJ Commissioner Shawanda Reynolds-Cobb
8:55 – 9:00	Short Film, Stuck
9:00 – 10:15	Juvenile Justice Data Landscape National and Georgia <i>Moderator:</i> Melissa Carter, Executive Director, Barton Child Law & Policy Center, Emory Law School <i>Panelists:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Christy Doyle, Senior Research Associate at the Georgia Health Policy Center of Georgia State University• Ms. Allyson Richardson, Deputy Commissioner of Administrative Services, DJJ• Ms. Windy Hix, Director, Office of Classification, DJJ• Ms. Cathy Dravis, Program Coordinator, DJJ• Ms. Lesley Kelley, Senior Policy Analyst, Voices for Georgia’s Children• Mr. Joe Vignati, Senior Policy Analyst, Voices for Georgia’s Children
10:15 – 10:30	Break ~ Short Film, Waiting Short film will be played from 10:15 – 10:20
10:30 – 12:00	Georgia’s Grassroots: The Strengths of Grassroot Programming <i>Moderator:</i> Felix Rodriguez, Program Manager of Civic Innovation Fellowships, Center for Civic Innovation Atlanta <i>Panelists:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Omar Howard, Founder, Freedom is a Choice, Atlanta, Georgia• Ms. Tekesia Shields, Founder, Mothers Against Gang Violence, Atlanta, Georgia• Ms. Najiva Timothee, Founder & Executive Director, Girls Dig Deeper Initiative, Macon, Georgia• Mr. Julius Campbell, Life Navigator, Deep Center, Savannah, Georgia• Ms. Marisa Arnold, Director of Youth Programs, Deep Center, Savannah, GA <i>Young Adult Speakers:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Curtis Trimble• Ade’ Ison, Jr.

The Youth Justice Convening Agenda

Thursday November 7, 2024
Anderson Conference Center
Macon, GA

- 12:00 – 12:45** **Lunch ~ Short Films, Dream and Chillin’**
Short films will be played from 12:00 – 12:05 and 12:40 – 12:45
- 12:45 – 2:15** **Promising Practices: The Research to Practice Continuum of Evidence Based Programming**
Moderator: Dr. Christy Doyle, Senior Research Associate at the Georgia Health Policy Center of Georgia State University
Panelists:
- Dr. Briana Woods-Jaeger, Associate Professor, Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University
 - Dr. Kristine Jolivette, Paul W. Bryant and Mary Harmon Bryant Endowed Professor, University of Alabama
 - Dr. Sara Sanders, Assistant Research Professor, University of Alabama
 - Dr. Gabrielle Chapman, Research Assistant Professor, Department of Human and Organizational Development, Peabody College at Vanderbilt University
- 2:15 – 2:30** **Break ~ Short Film, I Care**
Short film will be played from 2:15 – 2:20
- 2:30 – 3:30** **HEY! Let’s Talk About Empowering Youth**
Presentation by KaCey Venning, Director of HEY! (Helping Empower Youth) that addresses the plight of the “Water Boys” and their pathway to entrepreneurship with HEY! Hydrate
- 3:30 – 3:35** **Short Film, Hope**
- 3:35 – 4:00** **Endnote Address**
Endnote address provided by OJJDP Administrator Liz Ryan
- 4:00 – 5:00** *Optional:* Audience Meet & Greet with Panelists
-

Glossary of Terms

Adjudication

In juvenile court the term used for a child's trial is "adjudication hearing." At the adjudication hearing the court determines if there is sufficient evidence to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the child committed the alleged delinquent acts.

Arraignment

A non-detained child who is accused of committing a delinquent act is given an arraignment before the juvenile court no later than 30 days after the filing of the petition.

Child

For purposes of delinquency, a child is a person under the age of 17 when alleged to have committed a delinquent act.

Complaint

The complaint is the initial document setting out the circumstances that resulted in a child being brought before the court. Filed by either a police officer, parent, or private citizen, it is analogous to an arrest warrant in the adult system.

Delinquency Offenses

Delinquent offense refers to an act committed by a child that would be a criminal act if committed by an adult.

Designated Felony

The Juvenile Code provides that certain felony acts when committed by a child are "designated felonies." Under Georgia law there are two types of designated felonies: Class A and Class B designated felonies. The offenses encompassed in Class A designated felonies are enumerated in Code Section 15-11-2 (12) and the offenses encompassed in Class B designated felonies are enumerated in Code Section 15-11-2 (13). A child adjudicated delinquent for the commission of a Class A designated felony can be placed in DJJ custody for up to 60 months.¹ A child adjudicated delinquent for the commission of a Class B designated felony can be placed in DJJ custody for up to 36 months.² Notably, up to 18 months can be served in restrictive custody.³

Detention Hearing

A detention hearing is the proceeding at which the court determines if there is probable cause to believe that a delinquent offense occurred and that continuing the temporary custody of an alleged delinquent child in a secure environment is merited for their own or the community's protection or to ensure they appear at their next court appearance.

Disposition

A child's disposition hearing follows their adjudication and is the phase similar to the "sentencing" phase of an adult trial. The court will determine whether the child "is in need of treatment, rehabilitation, or supervision" and if so, enters an order as prescribed in O.C.G.A. § 15-11-601.

PBIS

"PBIS" stands for "Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports" and is a tiered system of incentives and supports implemented in the school system to reward positive behavior among children.

Petition

A petition of delinquency is a formal document filed in juvenile court that outlines the State's accusations against an alleged delinquent child.

Regional Youth Detention Centers

Regional Youth Detention Centers (RYDC) are managed by the Department of Juvenile Justice and provide temporary secure care to youth who are awaiting adjudication or awaiting placement after being committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice. A full list of all RYDCs across Georgia can be found here: <https://djj.georgia.gov/locations/regional-youth-detention-centers>

Youth Development Campuses

Youth Development Campuses (YDC) are managed by the Department of Juvenile Justice and provide secure care and treatment services to youth who have been committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice. A full list of all YDCs across Georgia can be found here: <https://djj.georgia.gov/locations/youth-development-campuses>

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Georgia's Juvenile Delinquency System

Jurisdiction of the Juvenile Courts

The Juvenile Code governs the treatment of children within the jurisdiction of juvenile courts.⁴ The Juvenile Code is grounded in principles of accountability, rehabilitation, and “[a]bove all” advancing the “best interests of its children.”⁵

There are two types of Juvenile Courts in Georgia: Independent and Dependent Juvenile Courts.⁶ Independent Juvenile Courts are managed and run on the county level.⁷ In contrast, Dependent Juvenile Courts are managed and run by the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).⁸ Currently just over half a dozen Georgia counties have Independent Juvenile Courts.⁹

Juvenile courts in Georgia have jurisdiction broadly over any “child” defined as any individual who is:

- Under the age of 18 years;¹⁰
- Under the age of 17 years when alleged to have committed a delinquent act;¹¹
- Between 18 and 21 years of age and receiving extended care youth services from DFCS;¹² or
- Under the age of 21 years who committed an act of delinquency before reaching the age of 17 years and who has been placed under the supervision of the court or on probation to the court for the purpose of enforcing orders of the court.¹³

Concurrent Jurisdiction with the Superior Court

Juvenile courts exercise concurrent jurisdiction with the superior court over any child who commits offenses that would be punishable by “loss of life, imprisonment for life without possibility of parole, or confinement for life in a penal institution” if committed by an adult.¹⁴

Exclusive Jurisdiction of the Superior Court

Superior courts have exclusive original jurisdiction over the trial of any child 13–17 years of age who commits any of the following offenses:

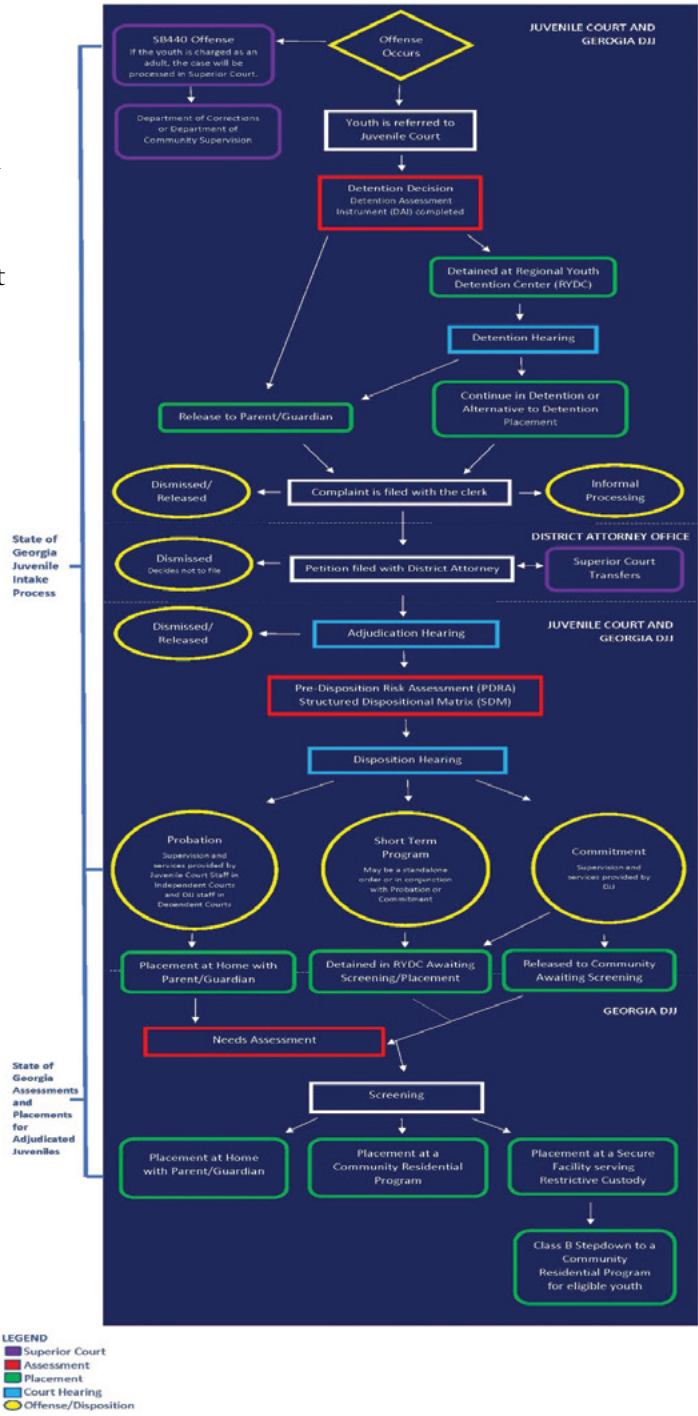
- (1) Murder;
 - (2) Murder in the second degree;
 - (3) Voluntary manslaughter;
 - (4) Rape;
 - (5) Aggravated sodomy;
 - (6) Aggravated child molestation;
 - (7) Aggravated sexual battery;
 - (8) Armed robbery if committed with a firearm;
 - (9) Aggravated assault if committed with a firearm upon a public safety officer as such acts are prohibited under subsection (c) of Code Section 16-5-21; or
 - (10) Aggravated battery upon a public safety officer as such acts are prohibited under subsection (c) of Code Section 16-5-24.
- O.C.G.A. § 15-11-560 (b)(1)-(10)

Overview of the Delinquency Process

In Georgia the juvenile court system is distinct from the criminal legal system and adjudicates “delinquency offenses” which are offenses that would be criminal acts if committed by an adult.¹⁵ While many aspects of the delinquency system mirror those of the criminal system there are large variances between the two systems. The delinquency system is designed to have expedient review of cases, bench trials in place of jury trials, and less punitive and more rehabilitative outcomes than that of the criminal system. Further, “delinquent acts” are not regarded as “criminal acts”¹⁶ and children’s delinquency records are treated as confidential.¹⁷ The delinquency process can be broken into discrete phases:

1. Creation of Complaint
2. Intake
3. Detention
4. Filing of Petition
5. Arraignment
6. Adjudication
7. Disposition

Georgia Juvenile Justice System Flow



Overview of the Delinquency Process

Complaint

A police officer, private citizen, or parent can file a complaint referring a youth to juvenile court. After the complaint is filed, an intake officer at the juvenile court makes the decision as to whether to detain the youth based on the allegations.

Intake

If a child has not been detained after the filing of the complaint the child will either be referred to intake or given the date for their arraignment.¹⁸ Juvenile court intake officers inform the child about the allegations in the complaint made against them, the nature of the proceedings, the possible disposition and consequences that may flow from an adjudication of delinquency, and advise the child of their due process rights including their right to an attorney.¹⁹

Intake officers may elect to pursue the case through informal adjustment or another nonadjudicatory procedure.²⁰

Detention

Detention Assessment Instrument

An alleged delinquent child may be taken into custody pending formal adjudication. At intake a juvenile court officer will administer an Detention Assessment Instrument (DAI) to evaluate whether the child should be detained or released to their parent or guardian.²¹ The DAI considers the juvenile history and age of the child and assigns a number of points to each factor.²² Under this system a child with a more extensive juvenile history and other pending charges will have a higher score, and thus a greater likelihood of being detained, than a child with no prior charges.

Factors Justifying Detention

While detention is authorized in certain circumstances it may not be used as a preemptive punishment for a child.²³ Rather, detention is authorized when it is clear that “no less restrict alternatives will suffice” and that:

- Detention is likely to prevent the child from seriously harming themselves or others;
- The child has a demonstrated pattern of theft or

destruction of property;

- Detention is necessary to secure the child’s presence in court; or
- The juvenile court issues an order for detention.²⁴

Detention Hearing

If a youth is taken into custody at intake, a detention hearing shall be held promptly, and not later than 2 days if the youth was taken into custody without an arrest warrant or 5 days if the youth was taken into custody pursuant to an arrest warrant.²⁵

In the event that the required hearing falls on a weekend or holiday, the court should review the detention decision and make a determination with respect to probable cause within 48 hours of the youth being taken into custody.²⁶

At the start of the detention hearing the court shall inform the child of:

- The contents of the complaint or petition;
- The nature of the proceedings;
- The right to make an application for bail;
- The possible consequences or dispositions that may apply to such child’s case following adjudication; and
- His or her due process rights, including the right to an attorney.²⁷

Petition

Cases that are not resolved through informal adjustment or other nonadjudicatory methods are referred to the prosecutor for the filing of a formal petition.²⁸ For non-detained children a formal petition of delinquency must be filed within 30 days of the filing of the complaint.²⁹ If a child is detained, the petition must be filed no later than 72 hours after the detention hearing.³⁰

Arraignment

A non-detained child’s case will proceed to an arraignment where the child is given the opportunity to admit or deny the offenses alleged against them in the petition. The arraignment must take place no later than 30 days after the filing of the petition.³¹

At arraignment the court must inform the child of:

Overview of the Delinquency Process

- The contents of the petition alleging delinquency;
- The nature of the proceedings;
- The possible consequences or dispositions that may apply to such child's case following adjudication; and
- His or her due process rights, including the right to an attorney.³²

If the child is represented by counsel, the court may accept the child's admission and proceed directly to disposition of the case.³³

Adjudication

In juvenile court a child's adjudication hearing resembles a trial in an adult criminal court proceeding. At the adjudication hearing the State puts on its case, the State and child both have the right to present evidence. Unlike an adult criminal trial where juries are common, all adjudication hearings are bench trials. At the adjudication hearing, the State bears the burden of proving the allegations against the child beyond a reasonable doubt.³⁴

The timeline for a child's adjudication hearing depends on whether the child was detained or not:

- **Detained Child:** Adjudication is held no later than ten (10) days after the filing of petition alleging delinquency.³⁵
- **Non-Detained Child:** The adjudication hearing shall be held no later than 60 days from the filing of the petition alleging delinquency unless a continuance is granted.³⁶

In order for a child to be adjudicated delinquent the court must find that the child has: (1) committed a delinquent act and (2) is in need of treatment or rehabilitation.³⁷ If the court finds that the State has not met its burden of proof, then the court shall dismiss the delinquency proceeding.³⁸ If the court finds that the child has committed the alleged delinquent acts, then the court may either move directly into a disposition hearing or schedule a disposition hearing.³⁹

Disposition

The purpose of a disposition hearing is to determine whether a child "is in need of treatment, rehabilitation, or supervision," and if so, what services and supervision is appropriate for the child.⁴⁰ The disposition hearing may be scheduled no later than 30 days after the adjudication hearing provided that the court files a written finding of fact explaining the need for delay.⁴¹

Pre-Disposition Report

Prior to the disposition hearing the court may direct probation to prepare a pre-disposition report that minimally includes or addresses the following:

- A summary of the facts of the conduct of such child that led to the adjudication;
- The sophistication and maturity of such child;
- A summary of such child's home environment, family relationships, and background;
- A summary of such child's prior contacts with the juvenile court and law enforcement agencies, including the disposition following each contact and the reasons therefor;
- A summary of such child's educational status, including, but not limited to, his or her strengths, abilities, and special educational needs. The report shall identify appropriate educational and vocational goals for such child. Examples of appropriate goals include:
 - Attainment of a high school diploma or its equivalent;
 - Successful completion of literacy courses;
 - Successful completion of vocational courses;
 - Successful attendance and completion of such child's current grade if enrolled in school; or
 - Enrollment in an apprenticeship or a similar program;
- A summary of the results and recommendations of any of such child's significant physical and mental examinations;
- The seriousness of the offense to the community;

Overview of the Delinquency Process

- The nature of the offense; and
- Whether the offense was against persons or against property.

O.C.G.A. § 15-11-590(b)

The report must be presented in a concise and factual manner and a copy of the report must be provided to the child at least 5 days prior to the scheduled disposition hearing.⁴²

Disposition Outcomes

If the court determines that child is in need of treatment or rehabilitation, then the court must enter the “least restrictive” disposition order appropriate for the child. A judge’s disposition order may include the following:

- Dismissal (no need for treatment, rehabilitation, or supervision)
- Abeyance or hold open
- Informal adjustment or other diversion program
- Treatment as CHINS (no need for treatment or rehabilitation, but need for supervision)
- Probation (supervised or unsupervised; possibly with probation management program)
- Placement in a secure residential facility for up to 30 days (felony or misdemeanor with prior felony and other adjudications)
- Commitment to DJJ (2 years, felony or misdemeanor with prior felony and other adjudications)
- Restrictive custody with commitment to DJJ for up to 3 or 5 years (class B or class A designated felony acts).

O.C.G.A. § 15-11-601

The disposition options will vary depending upon the type of offense for which the child has been adjudicated delinquent. The offenses are broken down into 4 categories: misdemeanors, felonies / misdemeanors (+)⁴³, class B designated felony acts, and class A designated felony acts.

Misdemeanor Offenses

In general, youth who have been adjudicated delinquent of a misdemeanor offense (unless they fall into the misdemeanor (+) category described below)

will be placed on probation with conditions. They may also be required to complete community service, pay restitution, and finish school. It is also possible that their driver’s license will be suspended or that issuance of their license will be delayed.⁴⁴

Conditions of Probation

The probation conditions imposed on a young person in juvenile court often differ from those in adult court. It is common for youth to have the following conditions: stay away from victim or co-defendant, curfews or home confinement, attend classes assigned to them by probation, write book reports or essays, complete study logs and maintain a certain average in school, submit to random drug screenings, and comply with counseling and medication recommendations. Other conditions may be imposed as deemed appropriate by the court.

Probation Management Program

In addition to any other terms or conditions of probation, the judge may order a child to participate in a probation management program or a secure probation sanctions program.⁴⁵ If a child is ordered to participate in one of these programs, either DJJ (dependent counties) or the probation office (independent counties) shall establish the applicable rules and regulations for graduated sanctions as an alternative to court imposed sanctions.⁴⁶ The restrictions imposed through a probation management or secure probation sanctions program may not be more restrictive than the maximum sanction set forth by the court.⁴⁷

The secure probation sanctions program is run by DJJ, and may result in periods of secure confinement equaling 7, 14, or 30 days.⁴⁸ The Juvenile Code outlines a series of procedural steps (and a requirement that the child has had three or more violations of probation) before a child can be placed in the secure probation sanctions program.⁴⁹ The Code also outlines due process protections relating to the imposition of sanctions for each violation of a condition of probation.⁵⁰

An overview of the available disposition options is

Overview of the Delinquency Process

contained in the following chart:

Disposition Options



Felony / Misdemeanor (+)

There are several additional disposition options available for youth who have been adjudicated of a felony offense, or who have been adjudicated delinquent of a misdemeanor offense where the child has had at least one prior adjudication for a felony offense, and at least three other prior adjudications for a delinquent act. Youth who fall within this category of delinquent child may be committed to DJJ for a period of 2 years, and may be ordered to serve up to 30 days in a secure residential facility (RYDC) in addition to those disposition options available for youth who have been adjudicated delinquent for a misdemeanor.⁵¹

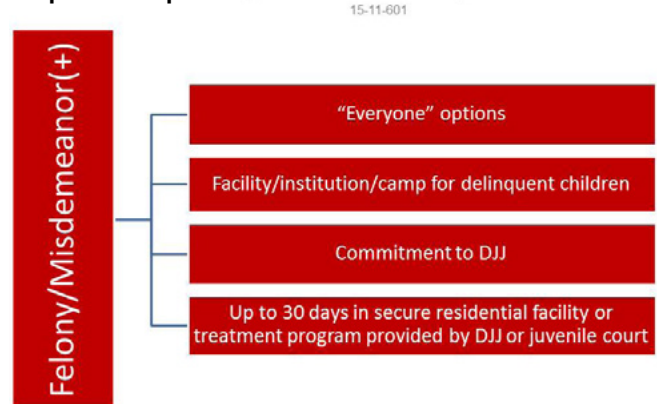
Commitment to the Department of Juvenile Justice

When a child is committed to DJJ, legal custody is transferred temporarily to the State of Georgia to create a plan for treatment and rehabilitation. DJJ, not the court, is then responsible for making placement decisions about the youth in its care. Therefore, upon commitment to DJJ, all youth are screened and assessed to determine the most appropriate, least restrictive placement that will meet the needs of the youth and public safety.⁵² The screening committee will ultimately make a recommendation for 3

placements, with the “best” placement listed first.⁵³ For most youth, the first recommendation will be at home in the community, akin to probation. However, this is not always the first recommendation, and more restrictive placements might be recommended. Additional DJJ placement options include drug and alcohol treatment program, sex offender treatment program, independent living, group home, and even placement at a Youth Development Campus.

An overview of the available disposition options is contained in the following chart:

Disposition Options



Applicable for felonies and misdemeanors if child has at least one prior felony adjudication and at least three other prior adjudications for a delinquent act.

Designated Felony Act

When a child is adjudicated of committing a Class A or Class B designated felony act, the court must first consider whether restrictive custody is required.

This determination of whether restrictive custody is required is based upon a finding, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the child requires placement in restrictive custody.⁵⁴ The court shall consider and make specific written findings of fact with respect to each of the restrictive custody factors, which include:⁵⁵

- (1) The age and maturity of the child;
- (2) The needs and best interests of the child;
- (3) The record, background, and risk level for the child, as calculated by a risk assessment, including information disclosed in the

Overview of the Delinquency Process

probation investigation report, diagnostic assessment, school records, and dependency records;

- (4) The nature and circumstances of the offense, including whether an injury to another resulted, the culpability of the child in planning and carrying out the offense, and the existence of any aggravating or mitigating factors;
- (5) The need for protection of the community; and
- (6) The age and physical condition of the victim.

Juvenile courts must also adhere to specific direction in law when the act was trafficking of substances or aggravated child molestation.⁵⁶

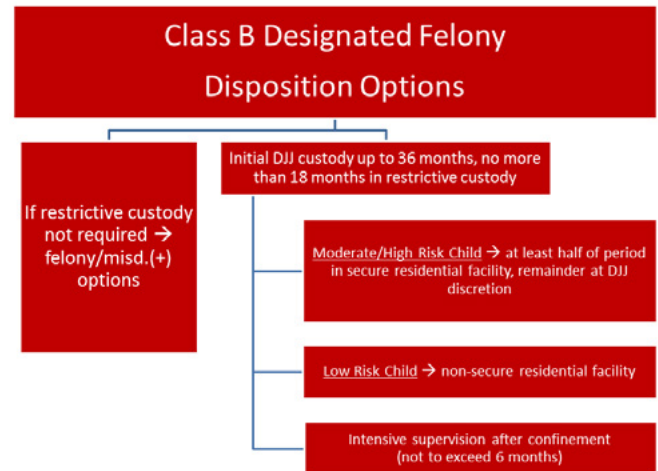
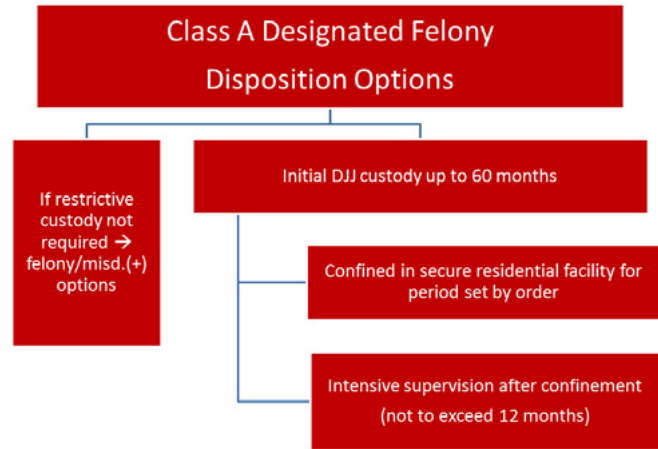
Prior to ordering a child placed in restrictive custody, the court must order a behavioral health evaluation and give consideration to the results, unless the court has considered the results of a prior behavioral health evaluation that had been completed within the last 6 months.⁵⁷

The disposition order for a child adjudicated delinquent for a class A or class B designated felony act must be issued within 20 days of the disposition hearing.⁵⁸

If restrictive custody is not required, the court may enter any disposition order available for a child who has been adjudicated delinquent of a misdemeanor or felony offense.⁵⁹

If the court finds that restrictive custody is required, the court may order that the child be committed to DJJ for a period of up to 5 years (class A) or 3 years (class B), with a portion of that time to be served in restrictive custody.

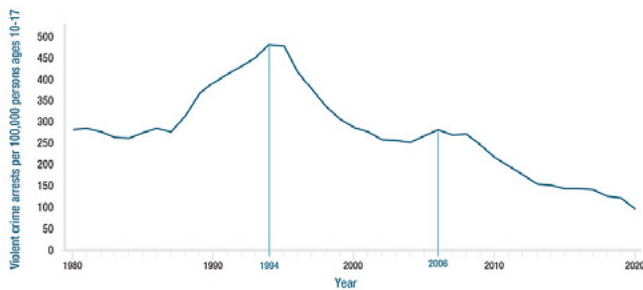
An overview of the available restrictive custody options is contained in the following charts:



Profile of System Impacted Youth

National census data reflect a major decline in juvenile detention and arrest rates in the last 20 years. Georgia alone saw a 46% decrease in the number of juvenile commitments in 2018 after the 2014 implementation of statutory reforms and refinancing to support increased availability and access to evidence-based programs in the community.⁶⁰

National Youth Arrests 1980–2020



Source: U.S. Department of Justice & National Institute of Justice. (2024). *Five Things About Youth and Delinquency*. In National Institute of Justice (NCJ 309129). <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/309129.pdf>

Georgia’s investment over recent years to expand the capacity of evidence-based alternatives to detention for delinquent youth through the Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant has proven to be an effective reform. Nevertheless, racial disparities persist. Within Georgia’s youth justice system youth of color are consistently overrepresented, particularly within the Black and Latine populations. Black youth are overrepresented at each decision point in the juvenile justice process in each category of decision points in the juvenile justice process.⁶¹ They are more likely to be the subject of a referral to juvenile court and more likely to be formally adjudicated rather than have a charge dismissed or case diverted than youth of other races. Moreover, despite making up around 35% of the general youth population in Georgia, Black youth represented approximately 70% of youth committed and detained.⁶² Gender differences are also notable. Rates of detention among boys are higher than for girls.⁶³ Male offenders account for 73% of the detained youth population while female offenders account for 27%.⁶⁴

Types of Crimes and Outcomes

2023 YDC Population Most Serious Offenses by Male Youth

Offense Classification Gender: Male	Age										Total Males
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
Public Order ¹		1	1	12	19	19	12	2	2		68
Property ²		6	9	19	20	21	6	1	2		84
Violent ³		4	10	20	27	18	19	28	7	1	134
Violent Sex ⁴	1	1	10	11	14	18	9	12	3		79
VOP/VOAC/VOAP ⁵			1	2	2			1			6
Grand Total	1	12	31	64	82	76	46	27	14	1	371

Source: Reynolds-Cobb, S., Heath Taylor, S., & Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. (2023). *FY2023 Annual Report*. In Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. Retrieved September 30, 2024, from <https://indd.adobe.com/view/b9208c64-d7df-4999-a101-f6e8e09b5687>

2023 YDC Population Most Serious Offenses by Female Youth

Offense Classification Gender: Female	Age										Total Females
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
Public Order ¹				6	4	1					11
Property ²			3	3	6	4	2				18
Violent ³			7	10	13	7	5	1			43
Violent Sex ⁴						1	1				2
Grand Total	0	0	10	19	23	13	8	1	0		74

Female Youth

Source: Reynolds-Cobb, S., Heath Taylor, S., & Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. (2023). *FY2023 Annual Report*. In Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. Retrieved September 30, 2024, from <https://indd.adobe.com/view/b9208c64-d7df-4999-a101-f6e8e09b5687>

Profile of System Impacted Youth

Risk Factors of Offending Developmental Factors

A developmental approach to youth justice considers not only the physical markers of development but the foundational socioemotional progression necessary for children to lead holistic and healthy lives. Aspects of a child’s life such as their environment, family medical history, and “within-child” components (temperament, behavior, health issues, educational development capacity) all work together to adversely or positively influence school performance, tendency for delinquency, and overall success.

In FY2023, the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice reported that most youth included in the RYDC Average Daily Population were 15 years of age and older.⁶⁵ This is a critical time in a youth’s neurological development, and the changes during this time increase the likelihood of risky and impulsive behavior.⁶⁶ The hormonal and neurological changes associated with this period of development often produce increased reward-seeking as teens navigate the complexities of self-regulation.⁶⁷ Compellingly, in 2023, 62.5% of youth in DJJ secure care were diagnosed with disruptive, impulse control, and conduct disorders.⁶⁸ The prevalence of this impulsive behavior declines as adolescents transition into adulthood as both functional and structural changes occur in the portion of the brain that controls decision-making.⁶⁹

FY2023 RYDC Average Daily Population by Age Range

Age Group	Community	RYDC	YDC	Residential	Jail	Grand Total
Age 14 & Under	1,944.44	45.28	7.62	15.26	-	2,012.60
Age 15 & 16	3,395.17	227.60	37.10	44.00	1.26	3,705.14
Age 17 & Older	3,290.77	191.85	132.29	65.07	156.33	3,836.31
Grand Total ADP FY2023	8,630.38	464.73	177.01	124.34	157.59	9,554.05

Georgia DJJ FY2023 Annual Report

Source: Reynolds-Cobb, S., Heath Taylor, S., & Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. (2023). FY2023 Annual Report. In Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. Retrieved September 30, 2024, from <https://indd.adobe.com/view/b9208c64-d7df-4999-a101-f6e8e09b5687>

Trauma and Stress Related Impacts on Functioning

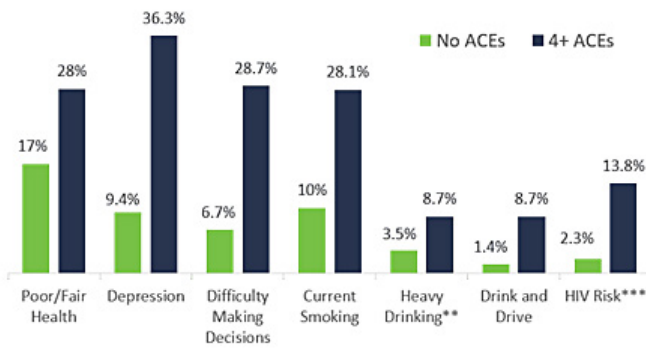
The experience of trauma also profoundly impacts brain development and disrupts normal childhood developmental patterns. Of youth receiving a diagnosis in secure facilities, 39.88% received a diagnosis of trauma and stressor-related disorders.⁷⁰ System-impacted youth are highly likely to experience Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) which can directly increase the probability of engaging in delinquent behavior.⁷¹ The assessment of Adverse Childhood Experiences includes 10 areas correlated with physical, mental health, and behavioral problems among youth.

1. Emotional Abuse
2. Physical Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Emotional Neglect
5. Physical Neglect
6. Family Violence
7. Household Substance Abuse
8. Household Mental Illness
9. Parental Separation or Divorce
10. Household Member Incarceration

Around 3 in 5 Georgians have reported at least one ACE.⁷² In this same study, the data shows that those with 4 or more ACEs had higher rates of adverse outcomes to those without.⁷³ While this study does not segment data by age demographics, other supplemental information clearly demonstrates a high probability of ACEs among juvenile offenders.⁷⁴

Profile of System Impacted Youth

Health Behavior and Outcomes for GA Adults Reporting 4+ ACEs Compared to 0 ACEs (Georgia Essentials for Childhood)



Source: Davis, V.N., Bayakly, A.R., Chosewood, D., Drenzek, C. 2018 Data Summary: Adverse Childhood Experiences. Georgia Department of Public Health, Epidemiology Section, Chronic Disease, Healthy Behaviors, and Injury Epidemiology Unit

Family as a Social Institution

Strong, healthy familial ties and support systems are imperative for producing thriving children. Safe and stable homes are the foundation for positive development in children. The control theory in social sciences asserts that positive parent-child relationships can be a bond that precludes delinquency.⁷⁵ This is particularly true when considering the intersections of the family structure, poverty, school performance, and juvenile outcomes. As of 2022, 39% of surveyed Georgia households were headed by single parents, higher than the national average of 34%.⁷⁶ Family disruption is listed as an Adverse Childhood Experience. A single-parent household is more likely to exist below the poverty line,⁷⁷ another factor that contributes to juvenile offending.

The Community and Environment Violence Exposure

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recognized violence as a public health crisis because of the long-term adverse effects that experiencing and witnessing violence can have on an individual.⁷⁸ A report by the CDC provides that children living in environments that are habitually threatening have an increase likelihood

of responding violently or running away.⁷⁹ Some risk factors of violence include living in neighborhoods with low social cohesion, social isolation, and living in areas that lack economic opportunity.⁸⁰ Studies have shown that a significant majority of detained youth have witnessed violence within their communities.⁸¹ Research has shown that youth who are exposed to one type of victimization are significantly more likely to be exposed to other forms of victimization.⁸²

Socioeconomic Status

According to 2022 Census data, around 17.2% of Georgia's children under the age of 18 live in poverty.⁸³ Nationally, 16.3% of youth under the age of 18 were reported to live in poverty.⁸⁴ Census data indicates that the Supplemental Poverty Measure has more than doubled for youth under the age of 18 from 5.2% in 2021 to 12.4% in 2022.⁸⁵

Mental Health

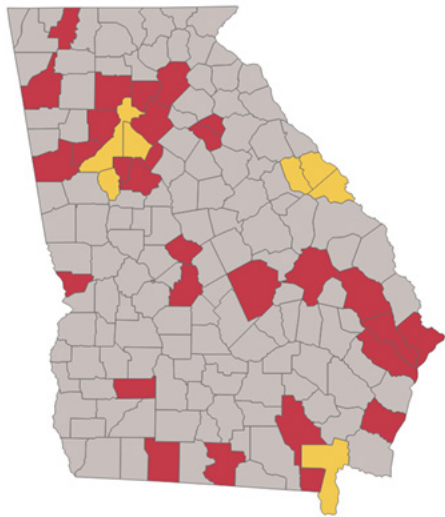
Data and empirical research show that there is an overlap between youth with mental health conditions and those who are system-impacted. According to a briefing by the National Judicial Task Force to Examine State Courts' Response to Mental Illness "[n]early 90% of youth involved with the justice system have been exposed to at least one potentially traumatic event."⁸⁶ Estimates show that over half of system-impacted youth (50 to 75%) meet the criteria for mental health disorder or illness while 40–80% have at least one diagnosed mental illness.⁸⁷

From 2020–2021 roughly 24% of Georgia's children (approximately 515,491 children) had one or more emotional, behavioral, or developmental condition.⁸⁸ However, the lack of adequate mental health care for youth across Georgia may result in an undercounting of impacted youth. There is a well-documented shortage of Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists (CAPs) in Georgia.⁸⁹ As of 2017, there were only 199 CAPs in the state of Georgia serving a youth population of 2,504,491.⁹⁰

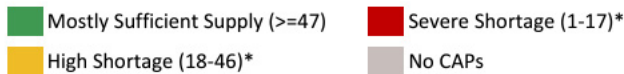
Profile of System Impacted Youth

Map of CAPs Shortage Across Georgia

Practicing Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists by County 2017
Rate per 100,000 children age 0-17



CAPs Per 100K Children



Source: American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, GEORGIA Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist (CAP) Workforce Distribution Map, (last accessed October 30, 2024), https://www.aacap.org/app_themes/aacap/docs/Advocacy/federal_and_state_initiatives/workforce/individual_state_maps/Georgia%20workforce%20map.pdf

Youth Justice System Outcomes: Recidivism Trends

Commonalities Among Repeat Offenders

The Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice defines and measures recidivism as “a new charge within three years of the initial post-adjudication community placement which results in a juvenile court delinquency adjudication or adult criminal conviction.”⁹¹ In 2020, the DJJ released a report examining the recidivism data of the individuals released in 2016.⁹² During this time, offenders were surveyed annually for three years post-release.⁹³ Through this analysis, the DJJ found that 75% of the juveniles who did recidivate did so within one year

of release.⁹⁴ Youth were segmented into four legal action categories: those who received probation, placed in short-term programs, were committed, and committed designated felons.⁹⁵ Of this release cohort, 88% of youth were on probation, a status which continues to represent a large portion of the greater juvenile release population.⁹⁶ The traditional probationary period focuses on externalizing factors such as drug use and good behavior, and, in the context of this study proved to be the group that recidivated the least.⁹⁷ The committed felons segment of the sample was highest in those who recidivated at a 42.2% recidivism rate, indicating the lack of rehabilitative experiences while confined.⁹⁸ These varying factors and outcomes highlight the need for individualized supervision plans for improving offender outcomes.

Other research efforts from the Council of State Governments have identified primary recidivism predictors such as:

1. Behavioral problems/traits: This includes anti-social behavior and mental health-related difficulties.⁹⁹
2. Family Circumstances: The structure, interpersonal dynamics, and socio-economic standing of the family. It is important to note that family may extend beyond one’s biological relatives.¹⁰⁰
3. Negative Peer Groups: The adolescent period is one of increased forms of peer pressure and a drive to fit in. This desire to be socially acceptable creates a particular susceptibility to delinquent behavior.¹⁰¹
4. Behavioral problems in school: Some children may act out due to difficulties at home, peer influence, or due to underlying mental health complications. These behavioral issues lead to discipline that may include out-of-school suspension. While being suspended from school is not an automatic cause for delinquency, it does increase the likelihood of academic struggles and that the student will drop out. Moreover, students who miss school are more

Profile of System Impacted Youth

likely to engage in risky behavior associated with delinquency.¹⁰²

Youth Protective Factors

Researchers have posited that protective factors should be accounted for when exploring youth capacity for recidivism particularly after any supervisory period has ended.¹⁰³ Such factors include:

- **Identity of Self:** The process of youth understanding who they are, what their future self could look like, and how they may navigate to their moral ideal self.
- **Pro-Social Engagement:** This may include the youth's sense of connection to their school, involvement in their community, and forming strong connections that promote concern for others.
- **Social Supports:** Sense of belonging and community with peers and family
- **Self-control and Self-efficacy:** Youth believing that they have a say in their future and the way they navigate the world. This also includes modulating impulsive behavior. Self-efficacy describes the belief in one's capacity to achieve and succeed in goals.

Intervention & Prevention

Evidence-Based Programming

Since 2013, the Georgia Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant (JJIG) has supported the use of evidence-based programming (EBP) across 33 counties to reduce recidivism and increase the use of community-based services.¹⁰⁴ Evidence-based practice and programming are modalities in which scientific data has supported efficacy. Through the implementation of 9 core evidence-based programs, the JJIG aims to address the risk factors of youth delinquency and to enhance or strengthen the protective factors against delinquency.

- Aggression Replacement Training (ART)
- Botvin Life Skills Training (Botvin LST)
- Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT)

- Connections Wraparound (Connections)
- Functional Family Therapy (FFT)
- Multidimensional Family Therapy (MDFT)
- Multisystemic Therapy (MST)
- Thinking for a Change (T4C)
- Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)

Across the 33 counties offering EBP alternatives, the interventions most implemented in fiscal year 2022 were Functional Family Therapy (33%), Multisystemic Therapy (28%), Aggression Replacement Training (16%), and Thinking for a Change (9%).¹⁰⁵ In total, 16,281 EBP sessions were delivered to youth enrolled in such programs.¹⁰⁶

Functional Family Therapy: Twelve counties currently provide Functional Family Therapy. This therapy focuses on the risk and protective factors associated with youth family dynamics. Some risk factors of the family structure can include high family conflict, negative communication, and poor family management. Protective factors can include positive family attachment styles, positive parenting and discipline, and supportive communication patterns. FFT works to integrate skills the youth is learning into the greater picture of the family or household. Over three to four months, enrolled families will meet with the therapeutic practitioner for 10-hour weekly sessions to learn more about their functional behaviors, ways to alleviate strains in communication, and how to set expectations of roles, privileges, and rewards interpersonally. In Fiscal Year 2022, a reported 74% of enrolled youth and their families completed this program between July 2021 to June 2022.¹⁰⁷

Aggression Replacement Therapy: Aggression Replacement Therapy is a group-based form of therapy targeted to alleviate outcomes of violence and aggression. ART is administered over a 10-week course for a total of 30 intervention hours with sessions including Social Skills Training, Moral Reasoning, and Anger Control training.¹⁰⁸ In Fiscal Year 2022, a reported 63% of enrolled youth completed this program between July 2021 to June 2022.¹⁰⁹

Profile of System Impacted Youth

Multisystemic Therapy (MST): MST extends beyond individual-family therapy and into the community aspects of juvenile functioning. This program works to work with youth and antisocial behavior.

Thinking for Change (T4C): T4C is a group-based intervention to address the thought patterns that may lead youth to offend. Youth principally work on developing problem-solving and social skills to learn to take control of their lives by taking control of their thoughts. In Fiscal Year 2022 a reported 71% of youth enrolled completed this program between July 2021 to June 2022.¹¹⁰

Restorative Justice

Despite having a history dating back decades, restorative justice (RJ) remains an intervention that has yet to be widely implemented, and research on the effectiveness of restorative justice is still in its infancy. RJ centers victims’ rights and on repairing harm and restoring relationships rather than punishing the offender.¹¹¹ Some popular modalities of RJ include:

1. Victim-offender mediation and dialogue
2. Community Justice Committees
3. Victim Impact Panels
4. Family Group Counseling

Some school districts in Georgia have adopted restorative justice principles into their policies and discipline procedures.¹¹² With these guardrails in place, schools can funnel resources into more effective discipline approaches.¹¹³

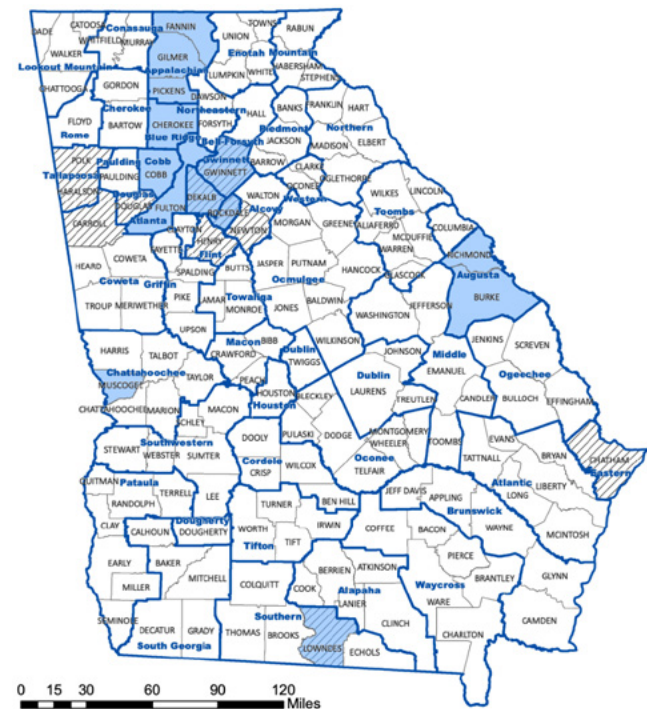
Diversion

Youth involved in a diversion program are 45% less likely to recidivate than youth who move through traditional court procedures.¹¹⁴ Established examples in Georgia include juvenile mental health courts, locally developed court-based diversion programs, and Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports implemented in local schools.

Juvenile Mental Health Courts

Currently, only 11 of Georgia’s 159 counties (Polk, Haralson, Douglas, Carroll, Gwinnett, DeKalb, Rockdale, Henry, Newton, Lowndes, and Chatham) have juvenile mental health courts as a diversionary alternative to formal delinquency adjudication.¹¹⁵ The mental health courts function as accountability courts for youth who have severe or persistent mental illness and whose mental illness provides a barrier to rehabilitation.¹¹⁶

Juvenile Drug and Juvenile Mental Health Courts Available by County



Legend

- Georgia Judicial Circuits
- Georgia Counties
- Juvenile Drug Courts
- Juvenile Mental Health Court



This map was created with data from the Accountability Court Directory listed on the Council of Accountability Court Judges website. The directory is available at <https://caj.georgia.gov/>

Profile of System Impacted Youth

Youth Diversion Program (Gwinnett County)¹¹⁷

This program has been in place since 1996 to target first-time nonviolent juvenile offenders in Gwinnett County to “resolve the matter within the community without being prosecuted through the traditional court process.”¹¹⁸ Eligible offenders must be willing to admit guilt for the crime for which they are charged.¹¹⁹ This admission is not on record, but rather the foundational step of accountability for the youth’s understanding and development beyond delinquency. Individuals referred to the Youth Diversion Program meet with trained community volunteer panels and their parent(s) or guardian(s).¹²⁰ This panel conducts a conference in which they will weigh the facts and circumstances of the case. Upon discussion, the panel presents the agreed-upon consequences which will be signed by the youth and their parents. With this signed order in place, the youth is responsible for fulfilling all requirements of the consequences. If the youth is successful, the case will be dismissed and keep the youth from beginning a record.¹²¹

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

The Georgia Board of Education and Governor’s Office of Student Achievement reported an enrollment of 1,923,756 children in the 2023 school year.¹²² Of these, 258,189 students were involved in school-based incidents resulting in discipline. The 583,062 total incidents yield an average of two incidents per disciplined child.¹²³ Georgia schools opted for out-of-school suspensions in 38.5% of cases, in-school suspension 50.2% of the time, and expulsion 0.3% of the time.¹²⁴

- **Gender:** 64.5% of disciplinary incidents were committed by male students, 35.5% committed by female students (please note when considering gender there is a gap in trans and gender non-conforming youth).¹²⁵
- **Socioeconomic Status:** Economically disadvantaged youth account for 56% of the general public-school K-12 population, and 73.4% of the total disciplined population.¹²⁶
- **Race:** Black youth account for 37.5% of the surveyed population but account for 54.3% of all disciplinary incidents in 2023.¹²⁷ This is the only demographic overrepresented in disciplinary data.
- **Grade:** Most of the disciplined youth were ninth graders. The middle school-aged population accounted for a total of 38.7% of disciplined students.¹²⁸

PBIS has been implemented successfully in Georgia schools to reduce disciplinary incidents and promote positive student behavior through a three-tier plan.¹²⁹

Tier 1: Assessment of challenges or behavioral issues experienced within the school or organization. Professionals under PBIS collect data on these incidents and work to identify contributing factors.

Tier 2: Implements an intervention plan informed by the findings during the tier 1 phase. This plan may include teaching strategies for positive behavior and discouraging problem behaviors. This tier focuses on interventions that tackle social skills, self-management, and academic support.

Tier 3: This tier is typically reserved for the most serious cases of disruptive and problematic behavior. This level of intervention may include individualized instruction outside of the classroom, residential treatment programs, or even hospitalization.

Counties such as Spalding and Lee have implemented PBIS since 2009. Griffin-Spalding has had a decrease in the number of days students spend out of school by 30%. Lee County also joined in this initiative in 2009 and saw a 58% decrease in referrals and a 24% reduction in out-of-school suspensions by 2014.¹³⁰

Funding For Intervention and Prevention Programs

Federal Funding

United States Department of Justice

The United States Department of Justice (DOJ) funds a number of grants annually that are targeted

Profile of System Impacted Youth

specifically at improving outcomes for systems impacted youth. Detailed information about the grants available, grantee toolkit, and other resources are available at their webpage: <https://www.ojp.gov/funding>. DOJ has compiled a Guidebook that grant applicants can utilize when applying for various DOJ grants, located on their webpage: <https://www.ojp.gov/doj-financial-guide-2024>.

In addition to grants offered by the DOJ, the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) offers a wide range of both formula and discretionary grants. In the past, OJJDP has funded a number of grants that address a wide range of topics including enhancing youth defense, youth reentry, and supporting youth community art programs. Local opportunities include a 2023 award of \$450,000 to Fulton County Juvenile Court to implement a Youth Intervention Program (YIP) that evaluates current intervention programs, identifies strategies for cost savings, and establishes a continuum of care framework for youth.¹³¹ More information about funding opportunities through OJJDP is available at their webpage: <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/funding>.

State Funding

Grants Managed by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC)

The CJCC administers numerous federal grant programs and manages state grant programs funded by the Georgia legislature. Notable funding streams include the Delinquency Prevention Grant, Title II Formula Grant, STOP School Violence Grant, and the Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant (JJIG).¹³² Detailed information about these and other grant awards is available on CJCC's webpage: <https://cjcc.georgia.gov/grants/grant-subject-areas/juvenile-justice/juvenile-justice-incentive-grant-program>.

Local Funding

Macon Violence Prevention Initiative

The Macon Violence Prevention (MVP) Initiative is a program spearheaded by local government in Macon-Bibb County that is aimed at reducing crime and creating a safer community.¹³³ You can read more information about MVP on their webpage: <https://maconviolenceprevention.org/about-macon-violence-prevention/> and find application information for the MVP Grant Program, here: <https://cfcga.org/grant/mvp-program/>.

Appendix

Data From the Juvenile Justice System The Department of Juvenile Justice

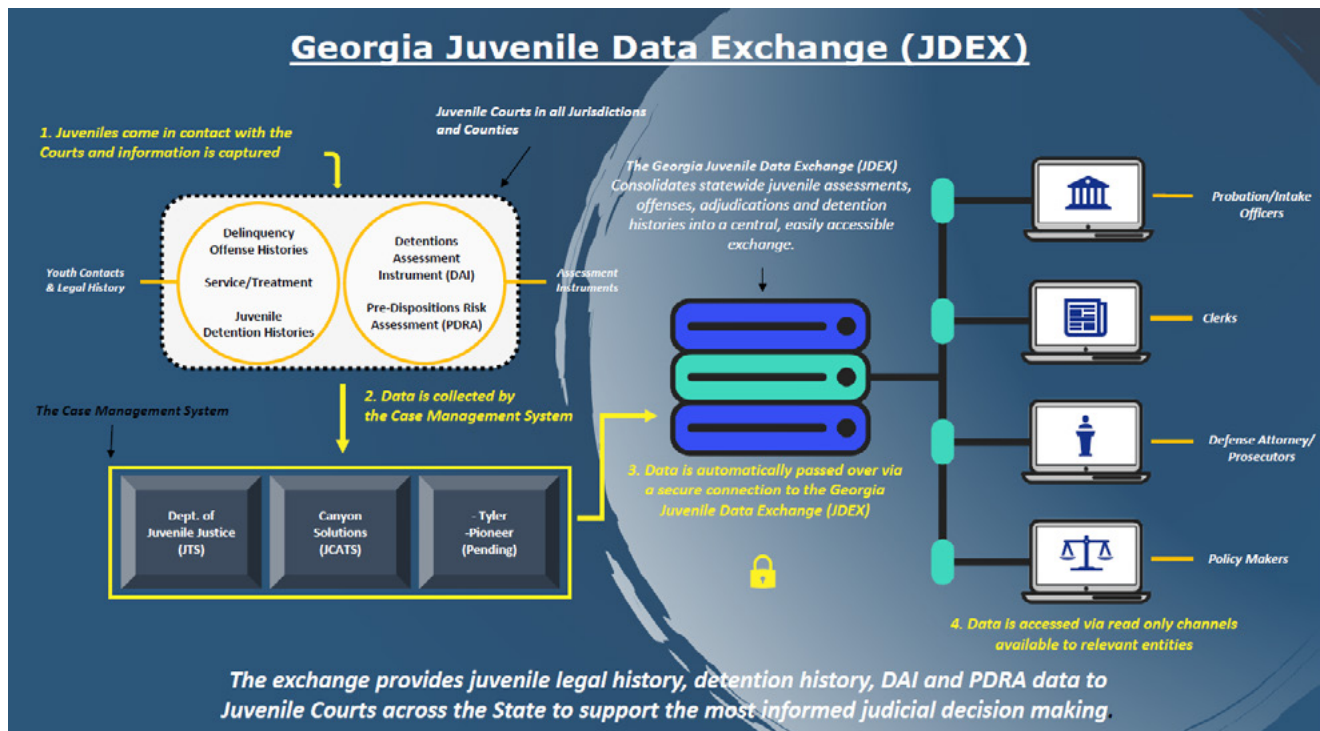
The Department of Juvenile Justice or “DJJ” compiles annual reports of the youth under its care. These reports include demographic information of youth under DJJ care, data relating to the treatment and care of youth under DJJ care, and education data for youth under DJJ care. DJJ publications can be found on the agency’s webpage: <https://djj.georgia.gov/djj-publications>

The Juvenile Data Exchange

The Juvenile Data Exchange (JDEX) is a collaborative effort on the part of stakeholders across Georgia to

create one central data repository for juvenile justice data.¹³⁴ JDEX has some of the most comprehensive datasets regarding juvenile delinquency in the state of Georgia. Some of this information is publicly accessible via: <https://juveniledata.georgiacourts.gov/dashboards-reports/>

For more information about the data available through JDEX or to initiate a data request, contact: Ms. Kristy King (Kristy.king@georgiacourts.gov), Mr. Andrew Cummings (acummings@acog.org), or Ms. Anne Kirkhope (akirkhope@cjcjofga.org). The below charts highlight the resources and data available through JDEX:






Appendix

TOTAL RECORDS: 313,928
TOTAL DAI : 136,491
TOTAL PDRA : 85,390
TOTAL OFFENSES: 928,119
TOTAL CHINS: 146,526

How much data is in JDEX?



Welcome to JDEX analytic dashboards

 Readjudication Data	 DAI Access Log / JDEX Utilization Report	 DAI / Detention Comparison	 DAI	 CHINS
 Legal History	 Adjudication / PDRA Comparison	 PDRA	 Detention History	 Top JDEX Users

Appendix

Assessment Instruments

c: November, 2022

Georgia Detention Assessment Instrument

Date: ____/____/____ Time: ____ a.m./p.m. (actual date/time DAI completed)

Youth's Name: _____ County: _____

ID #: _____/_____/_____
Last Name (4) First Name (4) DOB (6)

Gender: Male Female Other Case Manager's Last Name: _____

Race: White (not Hispanic) Black (not Hispanic) American Indian Other (not Hispanic)
 White (Hispanic) Black (Hispanic) Asian Other (Hispanic)

Location of Youth at Time of Offense: Community RYDC or YDC Other (shelter, alternative placement)

Detention assessment instrument completed:

At intake

To document detention decision already made

To document detention following a hearing (if selected here, one of the following must be selected)

Preliminary hearing Disposition hearing Revocation hearing

Risk Items

Youth has additional delinquent charges pending adjudication in the past 90 days that are not on this referral.

No0

Yes.....2 _____

Youth has prior escape(s) and failure(s) to appear for a delinquency court hearing.

No0

Yes.....2 _____

Number of prior adjudicated delinquent charges (do not include violations, escapes, contempt of court charges, or traffic charges)

None0

One1

Two or three2

Four or more3 _____

Age at first delinquent offense

16 or older.....0

14 or 151

13 or younger.....2

N/A.....0 _____

Is youth currently under judicial supervision for a criminal or delinquent offense?

No, the youth is not on probation.....0

Yes, the youth is on probation.....1 _____

Total risk score (0-10) _____

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Appendix

c: November, 2022

Most serious current offense

- Class A designated felonies..... 12
- Class B designated felonies..... 10
- All other felonies..... 8
- All misdemeanors..... 2
- Lesser acts including but not limited to: CHINS, probation violations. 0

Final score (add total risk score and current offense score)

Detention Recommendation

- Score of 7 or less Unconditional release
- Score of 8–11 Release with conditions
- Score of 12 or more Detain

Select whether an override will be applied.

- No override
- Discretionary override to less restrictive custody
 - Override to release with conditions
 - Override to release

Select mitigating circumstances.

- Youth is under 12 years old
- Youth involvement in offense was remote
- Youth in active treatment
- Youth is employed
- Other (please specify) _____
- Apparent diminished cognitive or behavioral capacity
- Good adult supervision
- Good academic record
- Youth is remorseful and cooperative with authorities

- Discretionary override to more restrictive custody

- Override to detain
- Override to release with conditions

Select aggravating circumstances.

- Expressed intent to reoffend or harm victim
- Severe/violent harm done to victim
- Home invasion
- Lack of adequate adult supervision
- Victim is a young person, a disabled person, an older adult, or an otherwise vulnerable person
- Other (please specify) _____
- Youth has a bench warrant
- Possession of a weapon (as defined in school code § 16-11-127.1)
- Professed/verified criminal gang activity

- Policy override to detention

- Youth is an out-of-state runaway
- Judicial order mandating detention (oral or written order)

Detention Decision

- Released
- Released with conditions
- Detained

Appendix

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR PRE-DISPOSITIONAL YOUTH

Name: _____

Race: 1. Caucasian 2. African American 3. Hispanic 4. Other: _____ Gender: Male 2. Female

Age: _____ (years) Risk Assessment Date: ____/____/____

Most Serious Offense: _____ Is youth currently on probation: YES NO

	Score
1. Age at First Juvenile Adjudication (including current)	
a. 16 or older.....	-1
b. 14 or 15.....	0
c. 13 or younger.....	2 _____
2. Total Number of Juvenile Adjudications (count separate adjudication dates, including current)	
a. One.....	-1
b. Two or three.....	0
c. Four or more.....	2 _____
3. Total Prior Adjudications for Violent/Assaultive Offenses (count separate adjudication dates, NOT including current) (enter actual number _____)	
a. None.....	0
b. One or more.....	1 _____
4. Most Serious Current Offense is Property-Related	
a. No.....	0
b. Yes.....	1 _____
5. Number of Out-of-Home Placements (RYDC, YDC, residential [Do Not include DFCS placements]) (enter actual number _____)	
a. None.....	0
b. One or more.....	1 _____
6. School Discipline/Attendance During the Prior 12 months	
a. Enrolled, attending regularly, no out-of-school suspensions; or graduated or GED.....	-1
b. Some truancy; suspended out-of-school once or twice; considered somewhat disruptive.....	1
c. Major truancy or dropped out; suspended out-of-school three or more times; considered seriously disruptive.....	2 _____
7. Substance Abuse	
a. No problem or experimentation only.....	0
b. Use sometimes interferes with functioning.....	1
c. Use frequently interferes with functioning; chronic abuse; dependency.....	2 _____
8. Peer Relationships	
a. Friends provide positive influence.....	-1
b. Some delinquent friends with negative influence.....	0
c. Most friends are delinquent with strong negative influence; or youth is a gang member.....	2 _____
9. Parental/Caregiver Supervision	
a. Parental/Caregiver supervision and discipline usually effective; youth usually obeys rules; Minor conflict.....	0
b. Parental/Caregiver supervision often ineffective or inconsistent; frequent parent-child conflict.....	1
c. Little or no parental/caregiver supervision/discipline; or constant conflict; youth usually disobeys..	2 _____
10. Youth Participation in Pro-Social Activities	
a. Youth participates in at least one sport/athletic, church, hobby/creative, or school activity.....	0
b. Youth does not participate in any of the above pro-social activities.....	1 _____

Total Score _____

Score Risk Level (check one): -4 to 1 Low Risk 2 to 5 Medium Risk 6+ High Risk

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Pre-Dispositional Risk Assessment Definitions

1. Age at First Juvenile Adjudication

Determine the youth's age at the time of his/her 1st adjudication for a delinquent or status offense. DO NOT Include adjudications for dependency or custody. If this is the youth's 1st adjudication, base the score on the youth's current age.

2. Total Number of Juvenile Adjudications

This is a count of the number of different DATES of juvenile adjudications for the youth for a delinquent or status offense, including the current adjudication. If a juvenile was adjudicated on one date for three different offenses, or multiple counts related to 1 offense, it is still considered 1 adjudication.

3. Total Adjudications for Violent/Assaultive Offenses

This is a count of all adjudication DATES in which 1 or more allegations were for violent/assaultive offenses. Be sure to count any and all adjudications of delinquency for violent/assaultive offenses that occurred in the past, NOT including the current adjudication. Violent/assaultive offense include all offenses against persons that are assaultive in nature including felony and misdemeanor assaults, kidnapping, murder, armed robbery, robbery, carjacking, sexual assault, etc. Burglary and weapons possession are not violent offenses.

4. Most Serious Current Offense is Property Related

Indicate whether the most serious offense the youth is CURRENTLY charged with is a property-related crime.

5. Number of Prior Out-of-Home Placements

This is a count of the number of time the court has previously ordered an out of home placement as a result of a delinquent or status offense. Include commitments to group homes, correctional facilities, residential treatment centers and post dispositional detention. DO NOT include pre-dispositional stays in detention, informal placements with relatives or foster care placements as a result of child abuse and neglect.

6. School Discipline/Attendance During the Prior 12 months

This is a combined measure of the youth's school attendance and/or behavior.

Enrolled, attending regularly, no out of school suspensions: During the past year, the youth has been enrolled in school, and attended regularly (Fewer than 5 days truant), and has not been suspended out of school and is not considered a discipline problem by school officials (one or fewer written behavioral reports to school officials in the last 3 months of school). Include here any youth who has graduated or obtained a GED. Also include youth who have not attended school in more than 1 year, are older than 16, have no plans to finish high school or earn a GED and are employed (full or part time).

Some truancy, or suspended 1-2 times or considered somewhat disruptive: During the past year the youth has been enrolled in school, but has missed 5-15 days of school due to truancy, OR has been suspended out of school on 1-2 occasions due to either truancy or behavior problems, OR is considered somewhat disruptive by school officials (2-3 written behavioral reports to school officials in the past 3 months of school).

Major truancy or dropped out; suspended out of school 3+ times or considered seriously disruptive: During the past year the youth has been enrolled in school, but has missed more than 15 days of school due to truancy, OR was not in school due to dropping out or expulsion; OR has been suspended out of school for 3 or more occasions due to either truancy or behavior problems, OR is considered a major discipline problem by school officials- (4 or more written behavioral reports to school officials in the past 3 months of school and/or violent/aggressive toward person(s)) AND/OR youth is 16 or older, not enrolled in school and is not employed.

Continued on back

7. Substance Abuse

Indicate the degree to which drug/alcohol involvement has affected the youth's functioning in the year prior to the CURRENT disposition.

No problem or experimentation: No use or occasional use that does not result in disruption of functioning. Uses less than once per month; OR more frequently, but relationships with parents not strained over use or involvement with using peers; AND no school problems associated with use; AND no arrests for drug/alcohol related offenses (within the past year).

Use sometimes interferes with functioning: Use of substances is associated with some disruption of the functioning. Family relationships may have become strained over use; OR the youth often associates with substance abusing peers and this has had a negative impact on family, school or community functioning; OR some deterioration in school performance or attendance believed to be drug/alcohol related; OR 1-2 school disciplinary actions related to substance abuse; OR 1-2 substance abuse related arrests in the past year; OR any referral in the past year for out-patient treatment for drug/alcohol abuse.

Use frequently interferes with functioning; chronic abuse; dependency: Use of substances is associated with significant disruption of the functioning. Family relationships have become strained over use; OR the youth primary peer group is substance abusers and this has had a negative impact on family, school or community functioning; OR major deterioration in school performance believed to be drug/alcohol related; OR 3 or more school disciplinary actions related to substance abuse; OR 3 or more substance abuse related arrests in the past year; OR any referral in the past year for in-patient treatment for drug/alcohol abuse; OR admitted or diagnosed dependency.

8. Peer Relationships

Use the definitions below to guide scoring.

Friends provide positive influence: Friends provide positive support and influence. Friends not known to be delinquent or to have influenced youth's involvement in delinquent behavior; no more than 1 juvenile complaint involving co-defendants within the past year.

Some delinquent friends with negative influence: Some companions involved in delinquent behavior. Has had co-defendants in 2-3 arrests in the past year and/or a juvenile complaint was made for some friends.

Most friends are delinquent with strong negative influence or youth is a gang member: Primary peer group has a strong delinquent orientation and/or most friends have been referred to juvenile court, and/or 4 or more arrests involving co-defendants in the past year. OR youth is a gang member; youth demonstrates involvement in gang activity, e.g., tattoo(s), self-admission; use of gang symbols/signs, logos, drawings, hang signs, street gang or gang-related charges.

9. Parental/Primary Caregiver Supervision

Use the definitions below to determine the nature and extent of parental/caregiver supervision.

No problem: Parental/caregiver supervision, discipline and control is consistent and usually effective. Any conflict with the parents/caregivers over discipline reflects a degree of conflict that would be expected with any teenager.

Some problem: Parental/caregiver-child conflict occurs occasionally and at times is disruptive, OR parental/caregiver supervision, discipline and control are sometimes ineffective or inconsistent.

Major problems: Parental/caregiver-child conflict occurs consistently and creates turmoil, OR repeated instances of family violence involving the youth, OR parental/caregiver supervision, discipline and control are almost non-existent, OR parent/caregiver contributes to the youth's delinquency OR parent/caregiver rejecting of, or refuses responsibility for youth.

10. Youth Participation in Pro-Social Activities

Indicate whether the youth participates in or has participated in at least 1 pro-social activity during the past 3 months (any activity, for any length of time) Pro-social activity includes sports/athletics, church activities, hobbies, creative activities such as art, clubs, drama, music, or school activities at which an adult is present. If the youth is engaged in any activity related to pro-social activity (e.g., training for sports, practicing music, creating art) score as if the youth was participating in the activity.

Appendix

Georgia Juvenile Justice Dispositional Matrix

Offense Severity Class	Risk Level		
	High	Medium	Low
Class A: Designated Felony	Commit to Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) 24 months in Youth Development Campus (YDC) plus 12 months intensive supervision 1	Commit to DJJ 12 months in YDC plus 9 months intensive supervision 2	Probate or Commit to DJJ 6 - 9 months in YDC plus 6 months intensive supervision 3
Class B: Designated Felony	Commit to DJJ 12 months confinement plus 6 months intensive supervision 4	Commit to DJJ 6 - 9 months confinement plus 6 months intensive supervision 5	Probate 6 months intensive supervision 6
Serious Felony	Probate with short-term program (STP) (0 to 30 days) or Commit to DJJ 7	Probate with STP (0 to 30 days) or Commit to DJJ 8	Probate 6 months supervision 9
Other Felony (not designated felony) or Misdemeanor With Exception	Probate for 24 months If DJJ: 24 months supervision; eligible for administrative caseload/termination after 12 months 10	Probate for 18 months If DJJ: 24 months supervision; eligible for administrative caseload/termination after 6 months 11	Probate for 12 months If DJJ: 24 months supervision; eligible for administrative caseload/termination after 3 months 12
Misdemeanor	Supervised probation 12 months; eligible for termination at 6 months or refer to restorative justice practice or refer to services 13	Supervised probation for 6 months or refer to restorative justice practice or counsel and release 14	Court-involved: Judicial reprimand refer to restorative justice practice Not court-involved: Counsel and release or informal adjustment (diversion) 15

Endnotes

- 1 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-602 (c)(1)
 - 2 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-602 (d)(1)
 - 3 Id.
 - 4 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-1
 - 5 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-1
 - 6 Carl Vinson Institute of Government, Georgia Criminal Justice Data Landscape Report Criminal Court System, University of Georgia, p. 14, (September 2021), https://cviog.uga.edu/_resources/documents/resources/cj-courts-supplement-0921.pdf
 - 7 Id.
 - 8 Id.
 - 9 Id.
 - 10 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-2 (10) (A)
 - 11 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-2 (10) (B)
 - 12 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-2 (10) (C)
 - 13 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-2 (10) (D)
 - 14 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-560(a)
 - 15 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-2 (19). “Delinquent acts” also include disobeying terms of supervision contained in a court order after a child has been adjudicated delinquent and failing to appear when required by citation for an act that would be a crime if committed by an adult.
 - 16 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-606.
 - 17 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-704; O.C.G.A. § 15-11-708.
 - 18 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-510 (a)
 - 19 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-510 (b)
 - 20 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-510 (c)
 - 21 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-505 (a)
 - 22 See Appendix, DAI
 - 23 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-503(c)(1)
 - 24 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-503 (a)
 - 25 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-506 (a)-(b)
 - 26 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-506 (c)
 - 27 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-506 (f)
 - 28 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-510 (d)
 - 29 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-510 (d)
 - 30 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-521
 - 31 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-472 (c)(3)
 - 32 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-511 (a)
 - 33 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-511 (b)
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- 34 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-581
- 35 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-472 (d)(3)
- 36 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-472(c)(3)
- 37 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-2 (20)
- 38 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-582 (d)
- 39 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-582(e)
- 40 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-600 (a)(1)
- 41 O.C. G.A. § 15-11-600 (b)
- 42 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-590 (e)-(f)
- 43 Misdemeanor (+) is a term that we have ascribed to the following: An offense that would be a misdemeanor if committed by an adult and such child has had at least one prior adjudication for an offense that would be a felony if committed by an adult, and at least three other prior adjudications for a delinquent act. See O.C.G.A. § 15-11-601(a)(10); O.C.G.A. § 15-11-601(a)(11); and O.C.G.A. § 15-11-601(b).
- 44 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-601(a)
- 45 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-605(a)
- 46 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-605(c)
- 47 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-605(d)
- 48 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-605(e), (f)
- 49 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-605(f)
- 50 O.C.G.A. § 15-11-605(g)
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