



ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Stark County Family Court

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Message from the Court



Dear Stark County,

“The social, economic, technological and policy trends shaping courts since the 1990s, coupled with emerging trends, will require courts to alter their roles more profoundly by 2020 than ever before. Courts must revolutionize how they provide justice services, rethink how they do business and assertively shape a better future.” Martin, John A and Brenda J. Wagenknecht-Ivey.

21st century Juvenile Justice possesses research that was not available as little as 15 years ago. Stark County Family Court continues to study present day research allowing for the implementation of service delivery supported by evidence. Juvenile & Family Court Journal, Volume 68, Number 4’s article “Caught in the Act: States Doing Some Things Right in Juvenile Justice” define best practice service delivery as “Providing the right service, to the right juvenile, at the right time and in the ideal setting.” Judge Jim D. James, Judge Rosemarie Hall and Judge David R. Nist are committed to the implementation of best practice service delivery, giving juveniles their very best chance at not penetrating the system any further than what is necessary to allow for accountability, community safety and habilitation. Joining JDAI (Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative) in late 2017 allowed the Judges to re-evaluate service delivery as we approached 2018. This evaluation led to organizational realignment, full implementation of objectively assessing a juvenile’s risk and needs, structured decision making, and implementing the beginning stages of Probation transformation. Additionally, the court expanded upon it’s continuum of care, streamlined

community referral processes for youth and families, and defined data necessary to determine service impact.

Statewide trends report a reduction of incoming delinquency cases. The Ohio Supreme Court shows a 52% reduction from 2009 to 2018. Stark County is on trend with the decrease, reporting a 48% reduction. Many variables contribute to this reduction. In Stark County's case, one of those variables is the collaborative relationships between children serving agencies. Ensuring juveniles and/or families have the opportunity to participate in services that can help to produce positive results is our common goal. A community willing and wanting to wrap around juveniles and/or families in need, is a community striving for betterment. We live in such a community!

Pairing downward incoming juvenile delinquency cases with continued efforts in implementing best practices, Stark County Family Court *is* revolutionizing how it provides justice services, *is* rethinking how it does business and *is* assertively shaping a better future.

Indicative of the Judges steadfast commitment to providing the best fiscally sound, data driven and research supported services, please see the following 2018 accomplishments.

Stark County Family Court 2018 Accomplishments

Realignment of the Table of Organization & Administration remodel

In 2018, the Judges developed a “stand alone” Diversion Unit devoted solely to the diversion process. Diversion, previously, was a function of the Intake Department and one of the many responsibilities of an Intake Officer. Recognizing the diversion process requires a dedicated staff able to develop its own continuum of care, the Diversion Unit was placed under the Behavioral Health Services Department. Three current Probation Officers were named members of the newly designed Diversion Unit. A standardized way in which cases were diverted was established, and the Diversion Unit began hearing cases October 2018.

In addition, Probation staff were re-assigned to create a new Misdemeanor Services Unit, a Felony Probation Unit and a Title IVE unit. Our certified Drug Court docket, the Star Program, replaced the Probation Officer role with that of a Case Manager. Our Chief Probation Officer became our JDAI Director, our Assistant Chief became the Chief Probation Officer and a new Assistant Chief Probation Officer was named.

The Judges reorganized their Administration Department to combine the oversight of all budgetary matters, including grants and subsidies into a Finance Administrator position. The Judges also named a Human Resource Officer and a Grants & Billing Officer. Furthermore, two positions left vacant in 2018 were not filled as the work load was absorbed by present positions.

The realignment of the Table of Organization was done with no net increase in personnel and an overall cost savings by not filling 2 vacant positions.

Lastly, The Judges approved a remodel to the Administration suite. With the addition of the JDAI Director and the need for the Program Analyst to be physically located in Administration, a conference room was converted into 2 offices. In addition to this work, card readers were added to staff restrooms and to both the CASA and Probation suites main entrances. Card readers eliminate the costs associated to keys and maintenance to, and/or replacement of locks.

Implementation of the RAI (Risk Assessment Instrument)

The Risk Assessment Instrument, known as the RAI, is a tool designed for equitable, objective and informed detention decisions. The morning following an arrest, the Intake Department conducts the RAI, which assesses a juvenile's risk to public safety and his/her likelihood of a failure to appear. Juveniles can score a "release from secured detention", with instructions for pending court proceedings, or a "hold in secure detention", in which they are arraigned that afternoon. An override process is built into the RAI. An Administrator override is typically prompted by "danger of harm to self" concerns. Data from the RAI continues to be reviewed ensuring it is meeting the needs of the Court and Community.

Short term emergency respite

An alternative to detention for youth who do not score a "detention hold" but cannot immediately return home (typically based upon the offense) was developed. To stabilize the home environment, services must first be put in place. Working with Pathway Caring for Children has allowed up to a 14 day emergency stay within a certified foster home. This time period allows services to be established. In some cases, where providers are already working services with a family, this 14 day window allows service provider notification. The service

provider can reassess the juvenile and/or family, developing services to meet the present circumstances. The hearing is expedited to ensure emergency respite does not extend past 14 days.

Adherence to Marsy's Law Victim Notification Process

With the passing of Marsy's Law, the Court worked with the Prosecutor's Office to ensure our victim notification process for informal hearings met Marsy's Law. The updated process was fully implemented in February 2018.

Bridges implementation

The Bridges Program expands state funding and support services for young adults who age out of foster care, ages 18-21. Bridges program administration is the responsibility of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, however Family Court (as a Title IVE agency) maintains a critical role prior to emancipation by ensuring youth in custody are informed about and prepared for their transition. Bridges hearings began before Family Court's Citizens Review Board in 2018.

JDAI System Assessment, Detention Utilization Study and JDAI Roll Out

Joining JDAI allowed for an outside party to assess Stark County's Juvenile Justice System. Along with the System Assessment, a Detention Utilization Study was conducted allowing for a historical data collection of the way in which detention was utilized in Stark County. Our JDAI "roll out" allowed for our community partners to join the Court in an all-day training session. Dr. Edward Latessa, University of Cincinnati, spent the first half of the day educating court staff and our community partners on the "What Works" literature along with current trends in juvenile justice. The second half of the training day allowed DYS's Anthony Panzino to share how data and research are changing the ways in which the state is funding juvenile programs. Lastly, JDAI State Executive Committee Chairman, Judge Robert Fragale, Marion County, shared insights regarding the JDAI philosophy and specific changes the JDAI philosophy helped to launch in his county.

Reclaim funded program staff trained in the use of Motivational Interviewing

By fiscal year 2020, the Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS) will no longer fund supervision probation. All ODYS Reclaim funded programs must implement an evidenced

based practice into their programming. Probation and Behavioral Health Services staff were trained in the use of Motivational Interviewing. The Court contracted with the University of Cincinnati to provide Quality Assurance to ensure fidelity to the Motivational Interviewing intervention model. Our Court is now ready to meet the funding requirements ODYS has put in place for fiscal year 2020.

Truancy Mediation Reimbursement process

For several years now, Stark County Family Court has contracted with Coleman Mediation Services to provide the scheduling and payment of truancy mediation services for many of our school districts. In addition, the Court paid other independent mediation contractors for the same services. The truancy mediation reimbursement process was designed to streamline the payment process. Instead of the Court utilizing an agency for scheduling and payment of truancy mediation services, schools are able to use a mediator of their choice, pay the mediator for services rendered and submit documentation to the Court for reimbursement of this payment. The Court continues to work with community partners to develop and implement innovative ways to reduce truancy in Stark County.

Recertification of the STAR Court (certified Drug Court docket)

Every three years from the receipt of the original certification, a specialized docket must again apply for recertification. To receive recertification of a specialized docket, the Supreme Court requires maintaining fidelity to the program standards as outlined in the original specialized docket certification. Upon review of our recertification application and a site visit conducted by the Ohio Supreme Court, the STAR program was recertified.

Digitalization of the Citizen Review Board's (CRB) case distribution procedures

The Citizens Review Board members are appointed by the Stark County Family Court Judges to review the status of children in custody of a public or private placement agency, and to determine a plan for permanency of these children. The role of the Board is similar in function to that of a Court Magistrate. CRB conducts statutory review hearings and makes dispositional recommendations. There are two CRB's, with five members to each board. Board members would receive cases prior to hearing dates. This required every case to be copied for each of the board members. In 2018, this process has been digitalized creating efficiency with staff time and saving county dollars.

Digitalization of hearing scheduling

The Assignment Office is responsible for maintaining the schedule of hearings for both Juvenile and Domestic Relations Divisions of the Court. This involves scheduling cases for three Judges and seven Magistrates. Judges, Magistrates, Intake Officers, Attorneys, and many county agencies work with the Assignment Office to set dates for cases. Dates would be assigned using a paper calendar. In 2018 the Assignment office went completely digital using computerized calendaring. Computerized calendaring allows all calendar users immediate access to hearing dates. This “real time” access to hearing dates removes the ability to double-book dates/times. It also allows several users immediate access.

The itemized 2018 accomplishments do not take into account departmental changes to policy and practice, as they would be too many to list. Family Court employees remain its most prized asset. They take the Judges’ vision and bring it to life. They do not balk at the changing times. They work tirelessly to embrace change by trying, testing and learning. The staff are role models who believe in and understand that challenges create growth opportunities. Their belief in change is the foundation to the efficient operation of this Court.

In compliance with Ohio revised Code 2151.18, it is my honor to submit the 2018 Annual Report.

Best regards,

Diane

Diane Wilson,
Court Administrator

STARK COUNTY CENSUS

Stark County's total population, according to 2017 Census Bureau estimates, is 374,272. Below is a breakdown of that population as it would relate to Family Court

- 21.9% of the population is under the age of 18
- 78.1% of the population is over the age of 18
- The median age in Stark County is 41.8 years-old.

Demographic Information

Of the total population, here is breakdown of Stark County demographics.

- Population that identifies as "one race" - 96.7%
- Population that identifies as "two or more races" - 3.3%

One Race

- White - 88.2%
- Black or African American - 7.1%
- Asian - 0.8%
- Hispanic or Latino - 1.9%

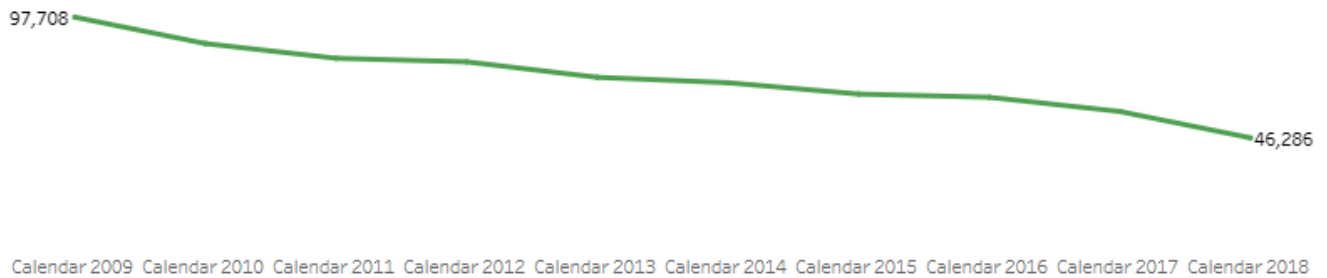
*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

STATEWIDE TRENDS

The following is a summation of statewide trends in Juvenile Justice as reported to the Ohio Supreme Court.

Delinquency Incoming Cases, 2009-2018

County: All

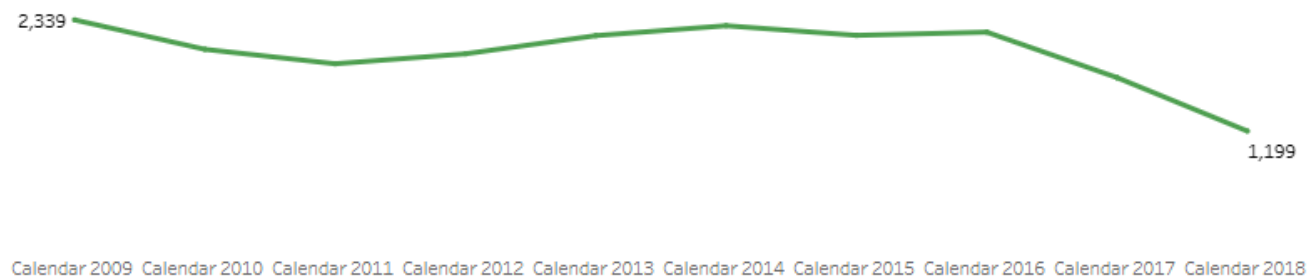


Data Source: Supreme Court of Ohio Case Management Section statistical reporting, collected under Sup. R. 37.

Delinquency case filings have been declining steadily throughout the State of Ohio. The same trends can be seen here in Stark County.

Delinquency Incoming Cases, 2009-2018

County: Stark

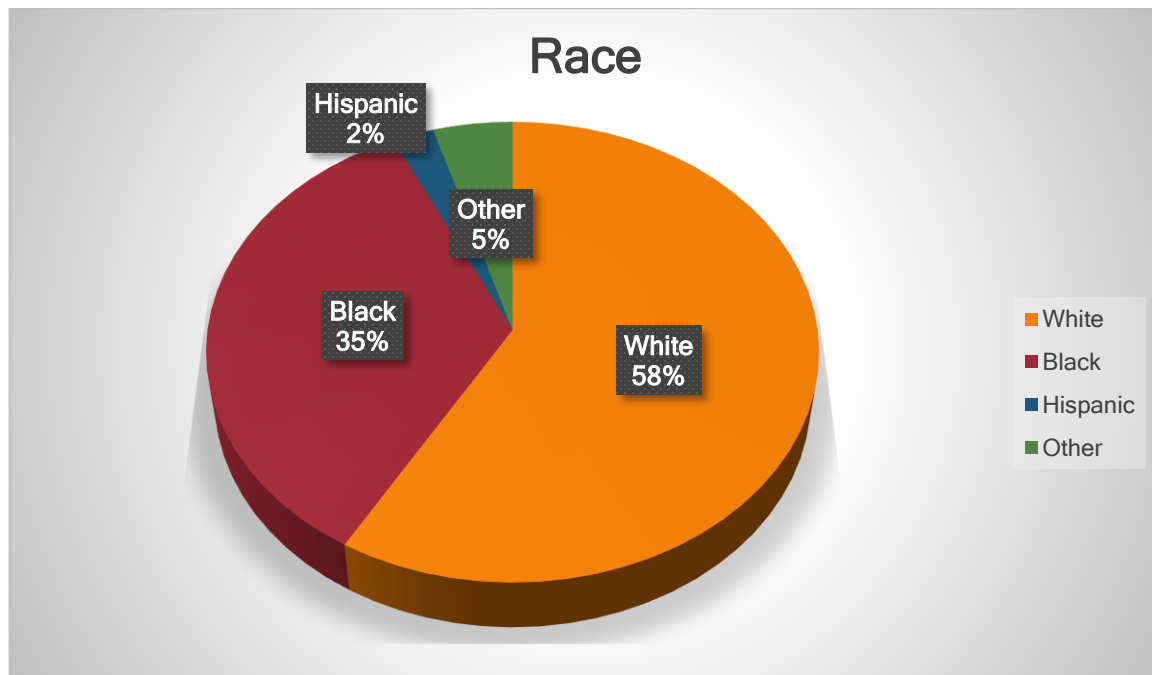


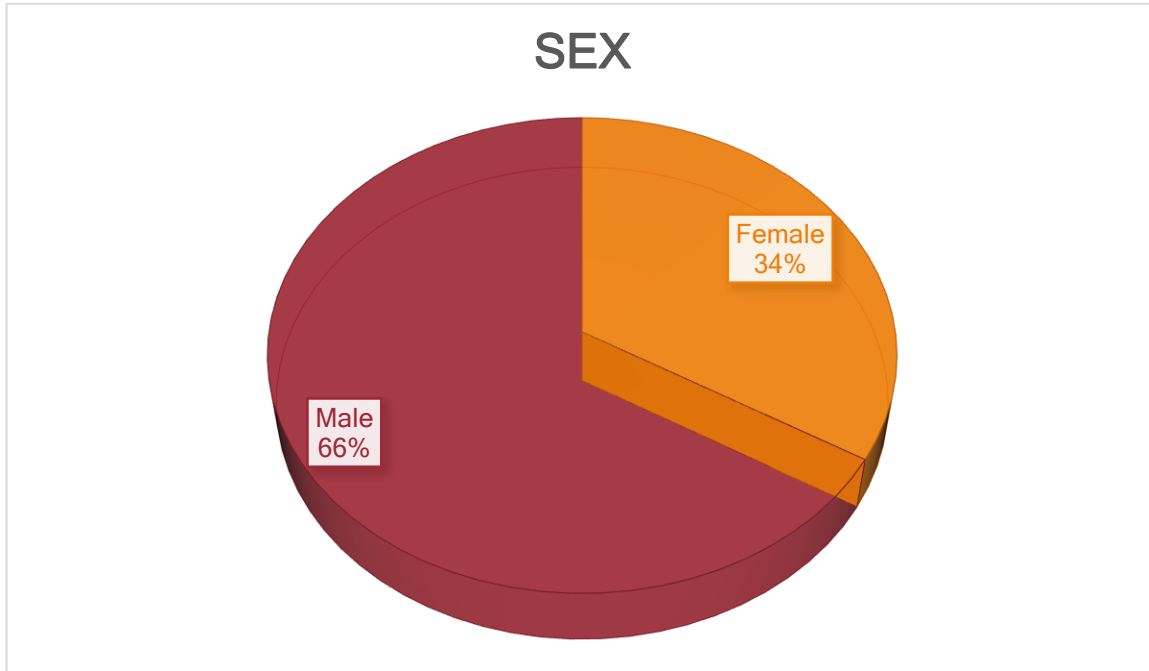
* Data Source: Supreme Court of Ohio Case Management Section statistical reporting, collected under Sup. R. 37.

STARK COUNTY FAMILY COURT DEMOGRAPHICS

Court referrals

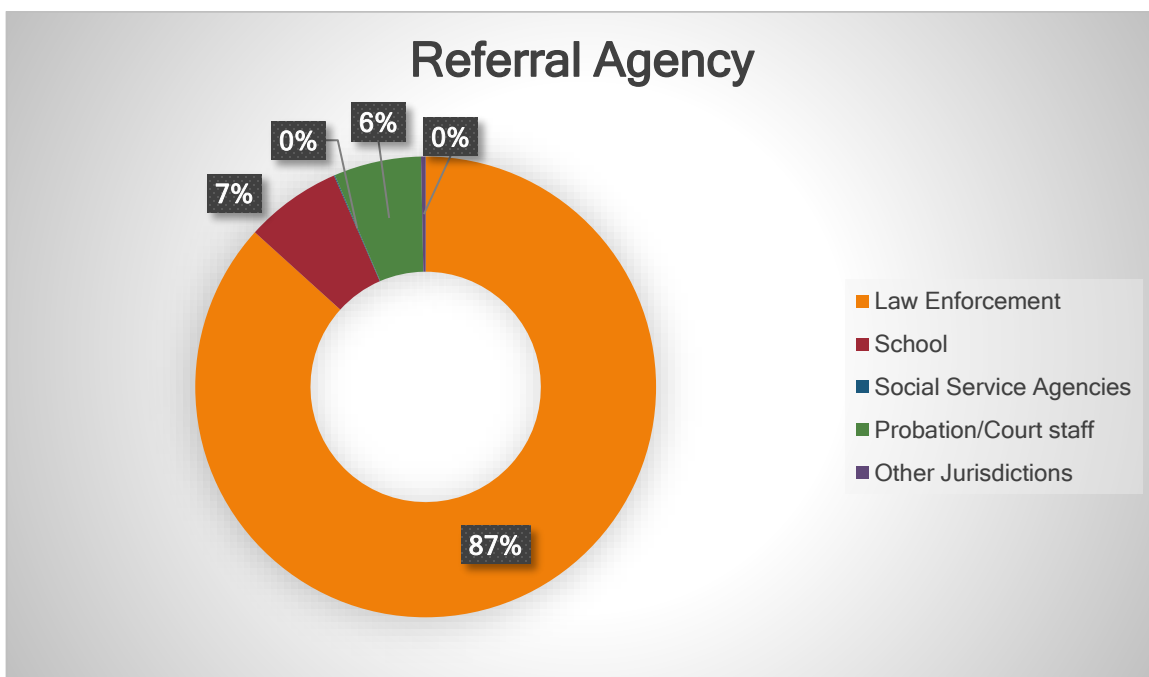
This section will focus on juvenile referrals to court for formal hearings. The cases diverted from formal court proceedings will be looked at in a later section.





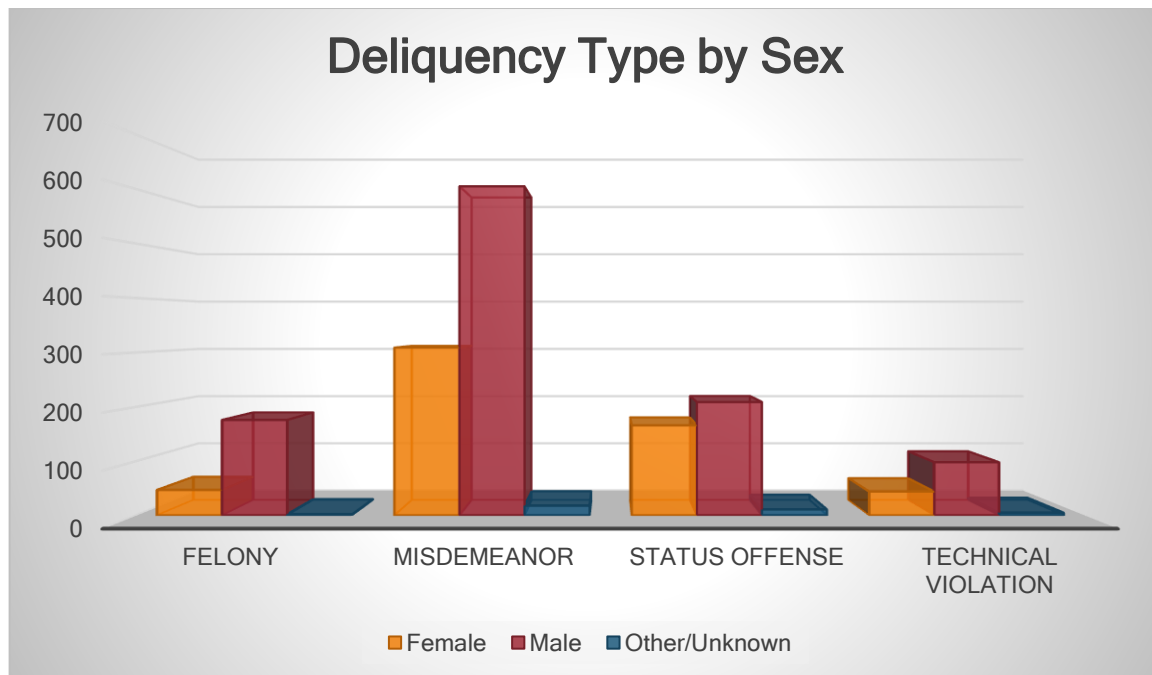
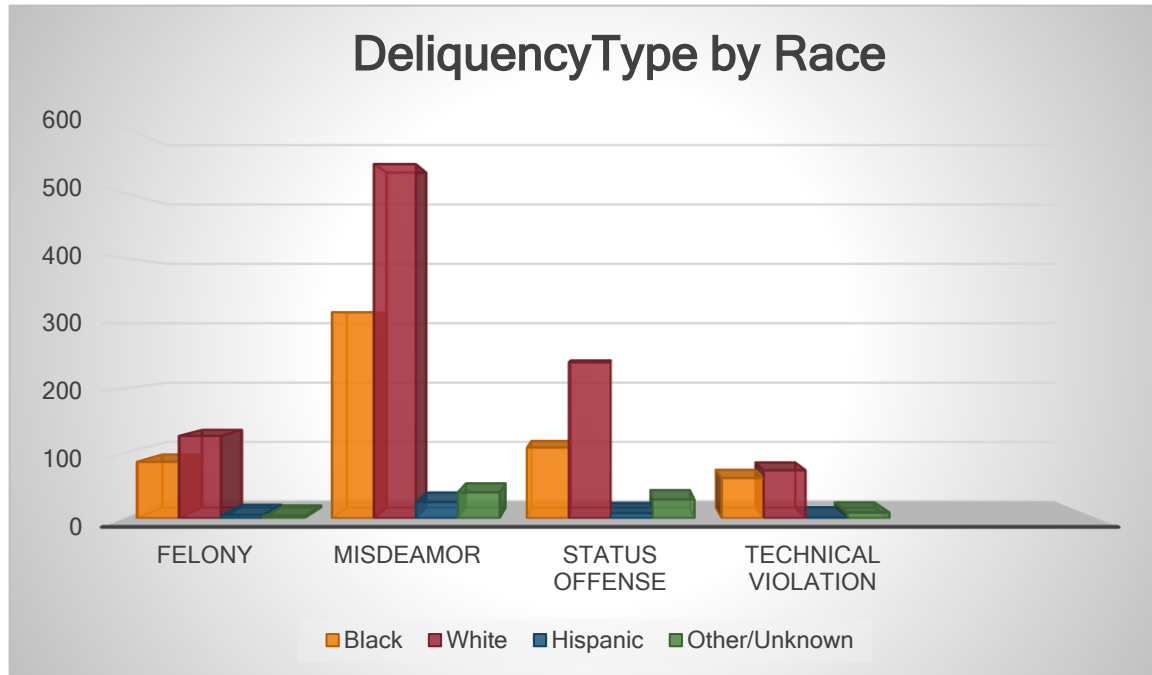
Referrals to Family Court

This graph illustrates how juveniles are referred to Court for formal proceedings. Helping to identify referral sources allows the Court to adjust programmatically to the needs of the community.



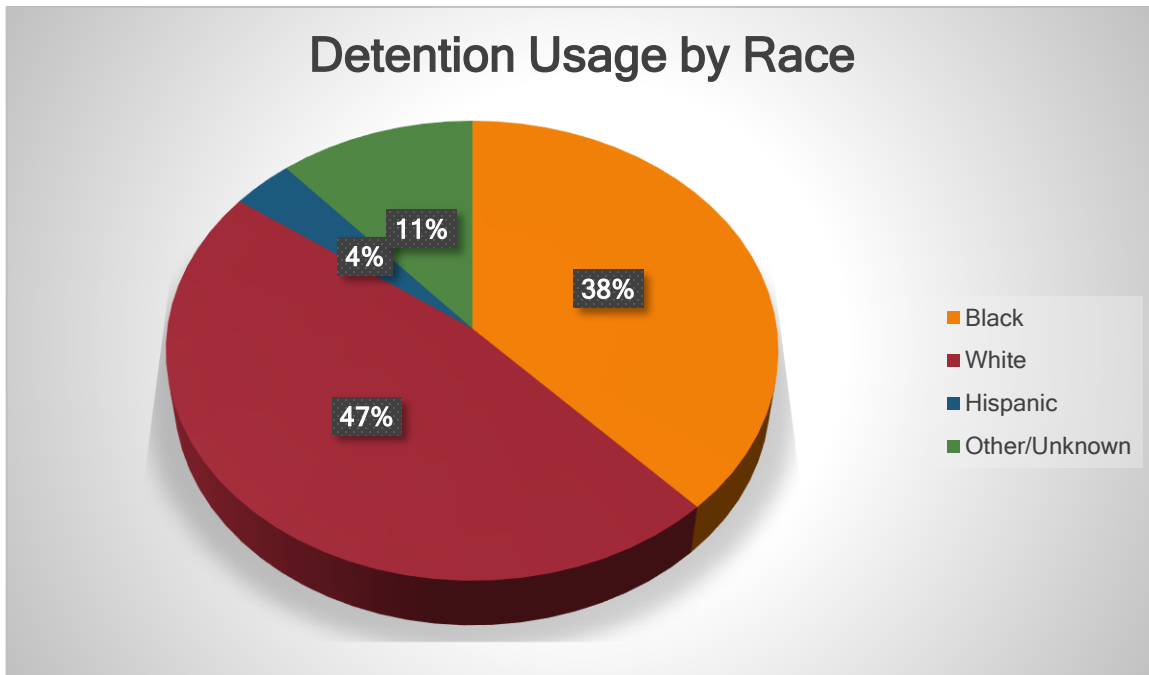
Charges by Race

The following graphs represents a breakdown of charges referred to Family Court according to race and sex demographics.

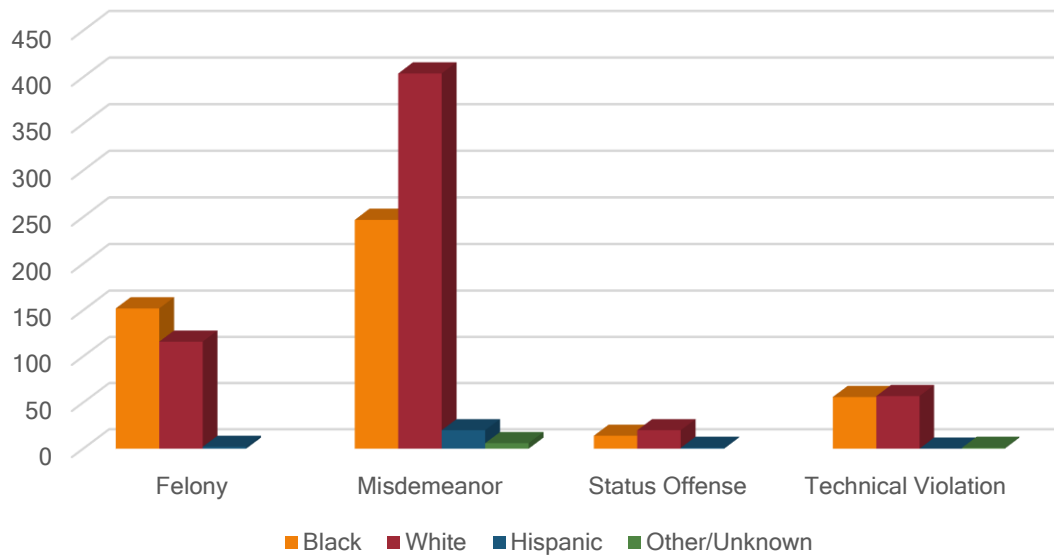


Detention Usage

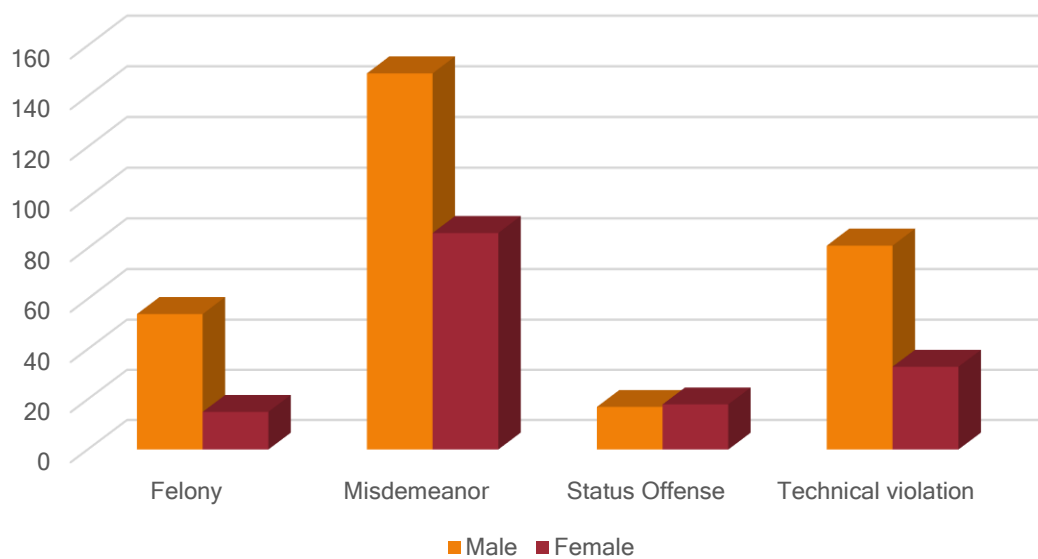
The Court's use of detention mirrors what has been happening statewide, in that there are fewer juveniles being held in locked facilities. The following graphs illustrate the detention population for Stark County in 2018. Please note, juveniles spending at least one night in detention were counted as "detained".



Charges held in Detention Demographics

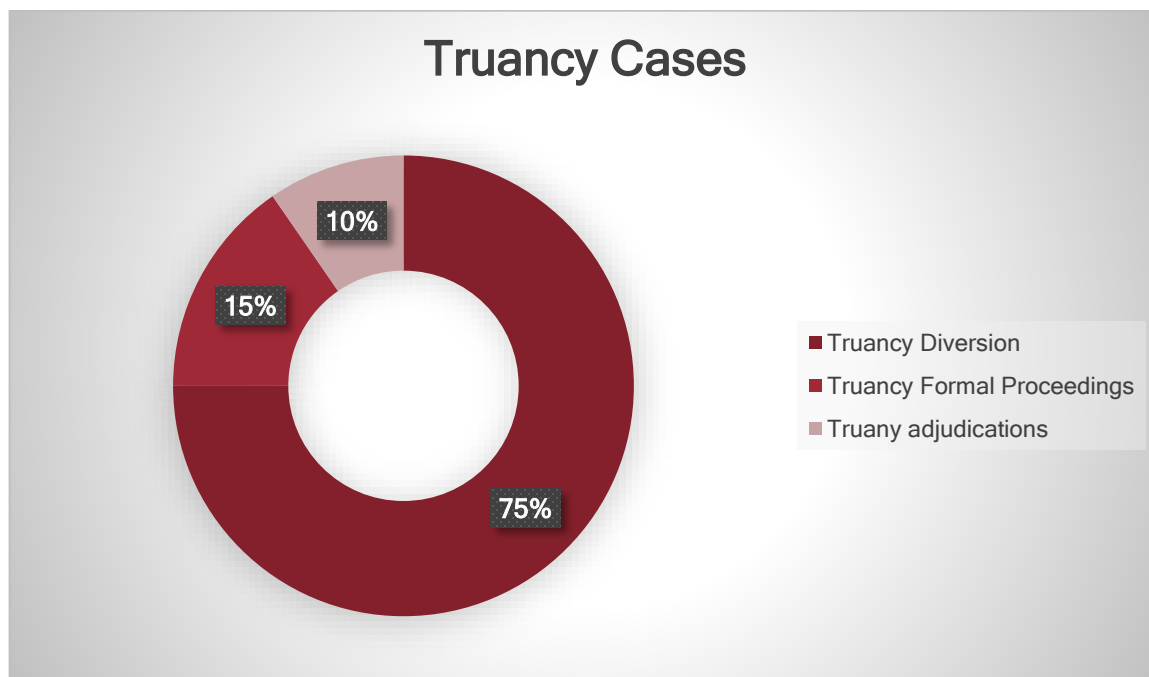


Detention Charge Demographics



Truancy Referrals

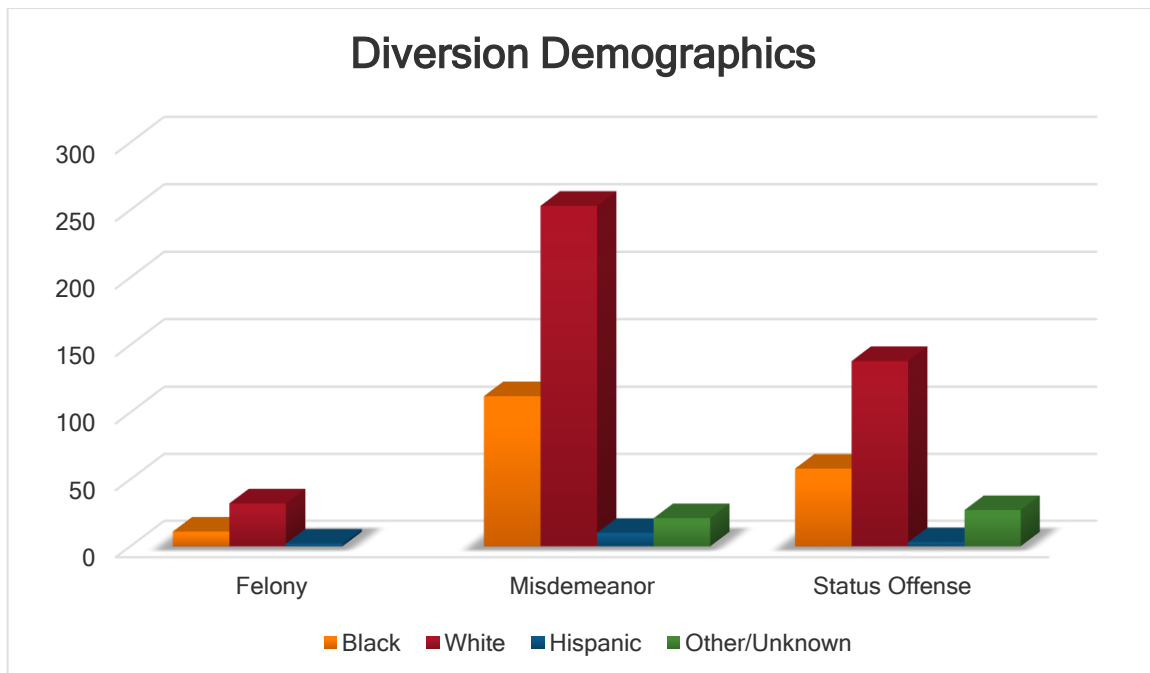
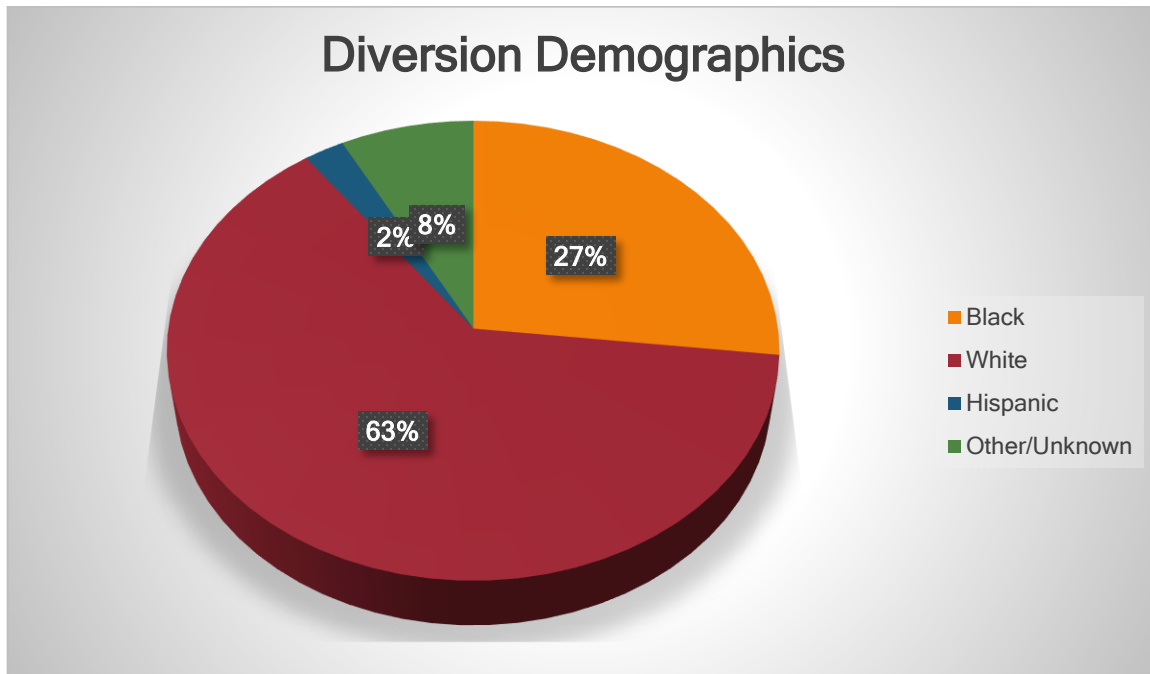
2018 represented the first full year of school districts operating under the passage of House Bill 410. This bill drastically changed the way schools responded to truancy within their districts. Consideration should also be given to the fact that this annual report represents cases within a calendar year, not an academic year. In 2018, Stark County saw 39 truancy cases go through the informal process. 8 of those cases proceeded formally and 5 were adjudicated unruly. These truancy numbers encompass dates between January through June of 2018.



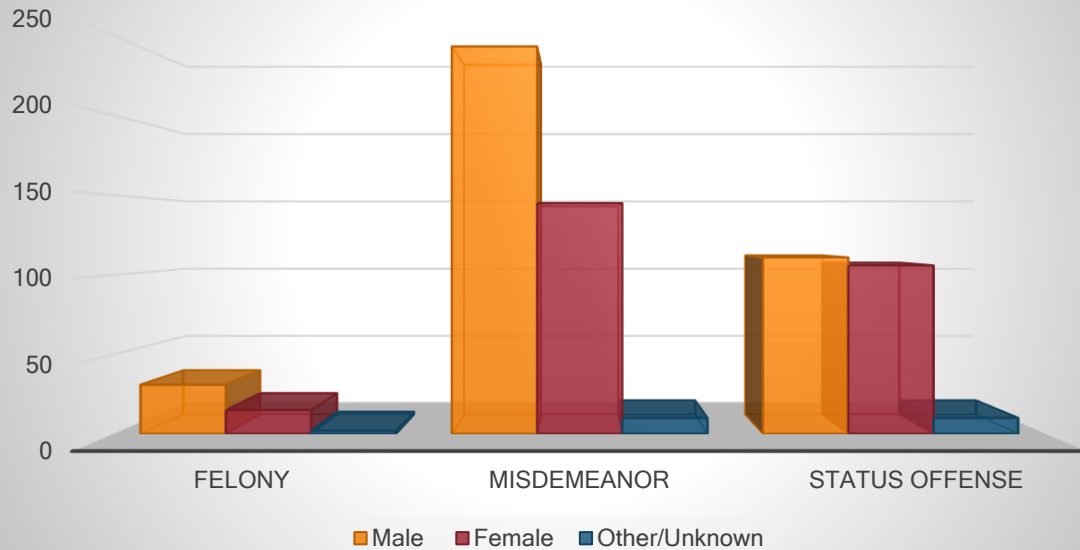
Diversion Case Demographics

The Ohio Supreme Court bench card indicates, “In all appropriate cases formal court action should be avoided and other community resources utilized to ameliorate situations brought to the attention of the Court. [Juv. R. 9(A)] Growing research shows that diversion is the most effective method of disposing of juvenile cases.” Some considerations for the Courts according to this bench card are: Any child is eligible for diversion, diversion should be considered prior to any formal adjudication and diverting youth from formal processing can

take many forms. In 2018, Stark County Family Court referred 690 juveniles through the Diversion Program.



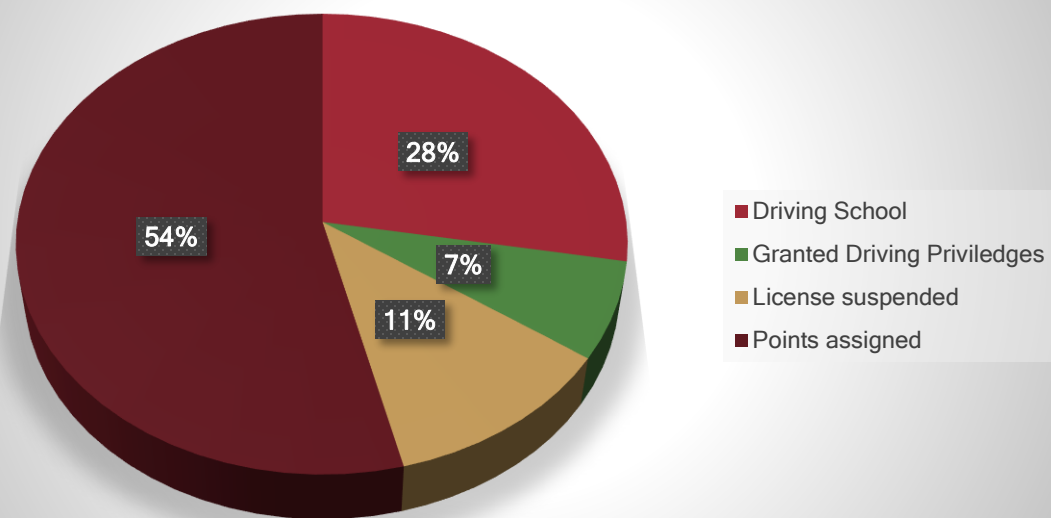
Diversion Demographics



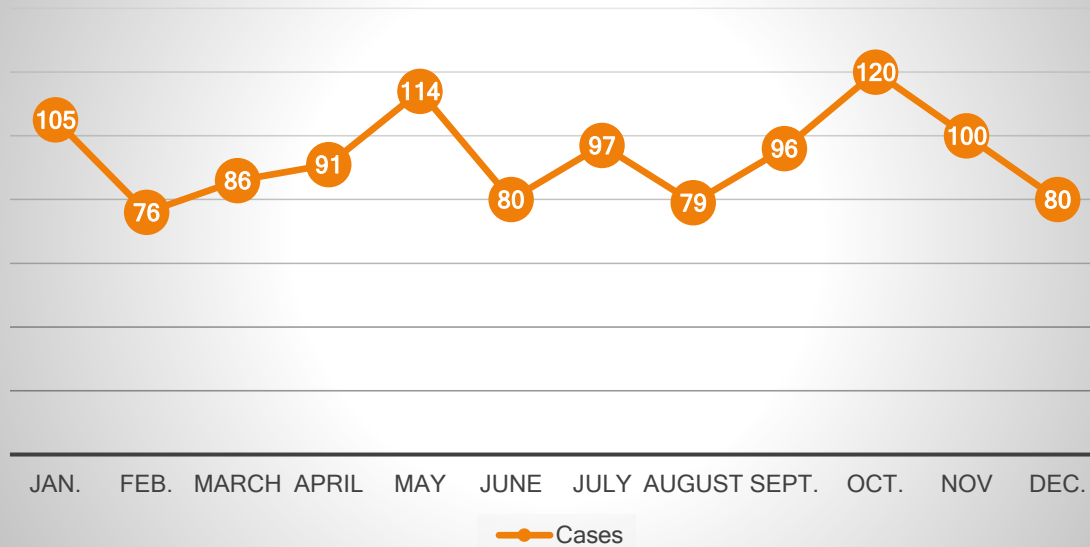
Traffic Court

This graph represents the referral reasons for juveniles coming to traffic court. Stark County Family Court processed 1,124 juvenile traffic cases in 2018 with \$201,420.17 in fines and costs assessed.

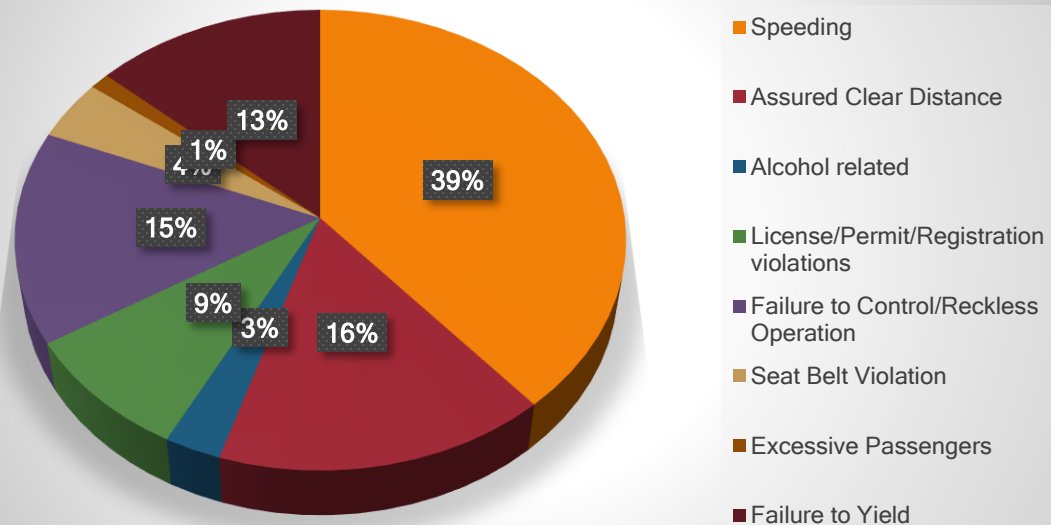
Traffic Dispositions



Traffic Cases by Month

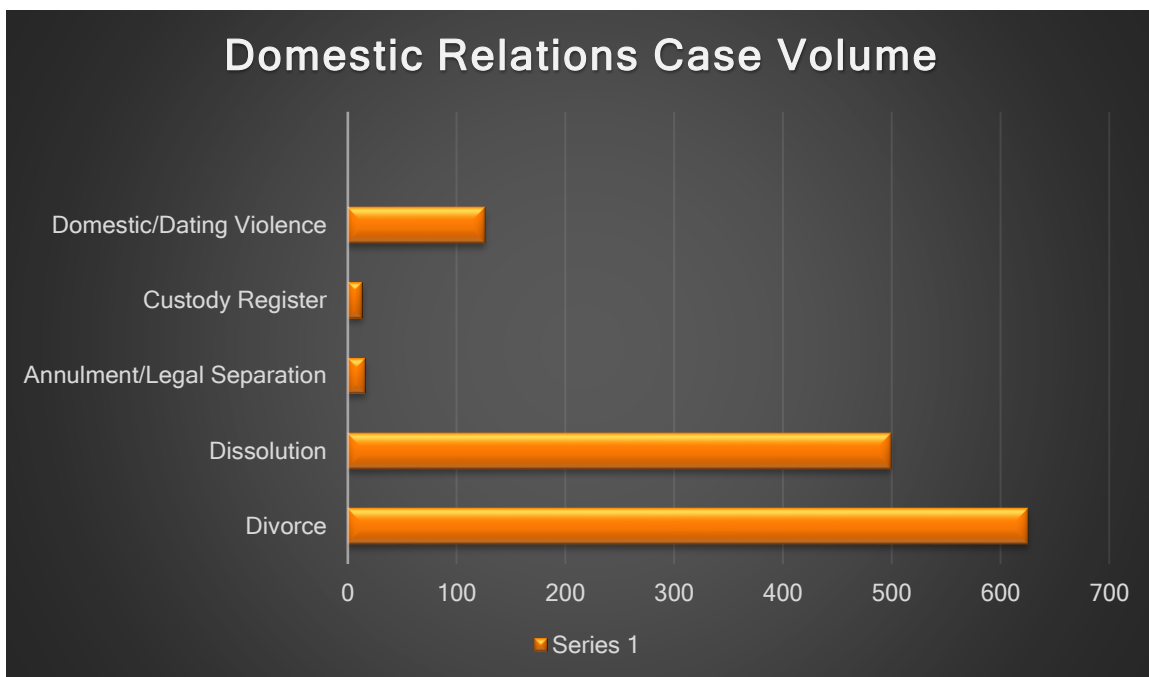
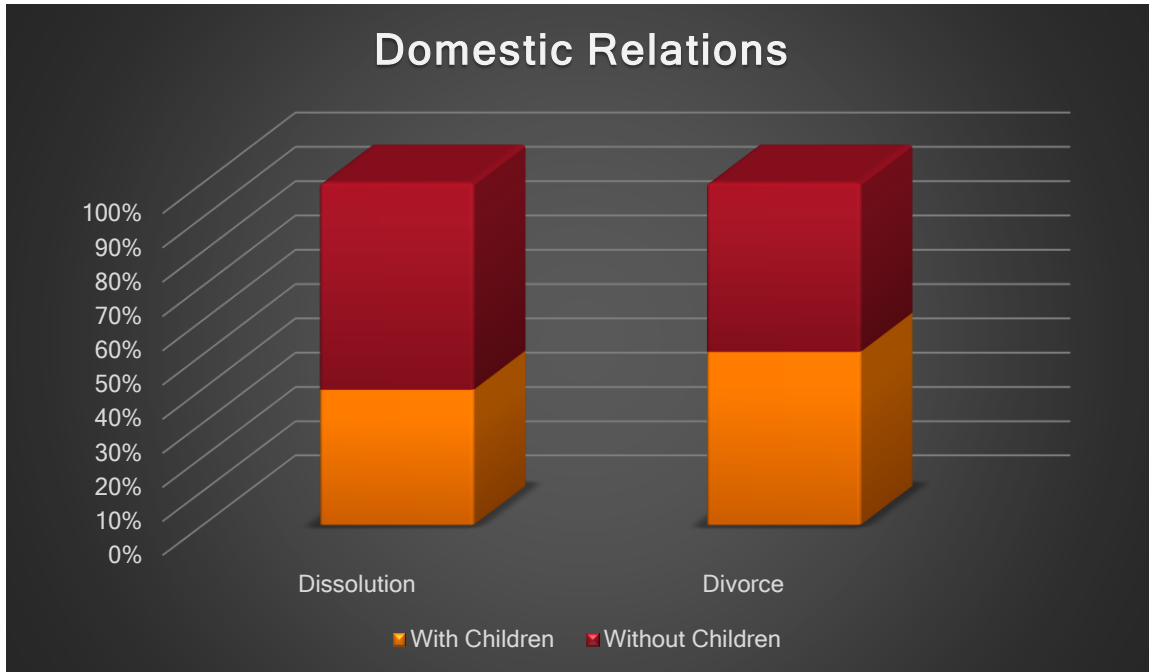


Traffic Offenses



Domestic Relations

This table summarizes the Domestic Relations docket that Stark County saw in 2018.



Clearance Rates

Monthly, The Stark County Family Court reports to the Ohio Supreme Court statistics regarding the types of cases filed and the timeliness with which those cases are disposed. The Ohio Supreme Court determines how much time a case type should take from filing to disposition. Clearance rates are the length of time from filing to disposition that a case type would remain active on the Court's docket without going past the Ohio Supreme Court time guidelines. Rates that extend beyond 100% indicates that the Court has cleared a backlog of those case types.

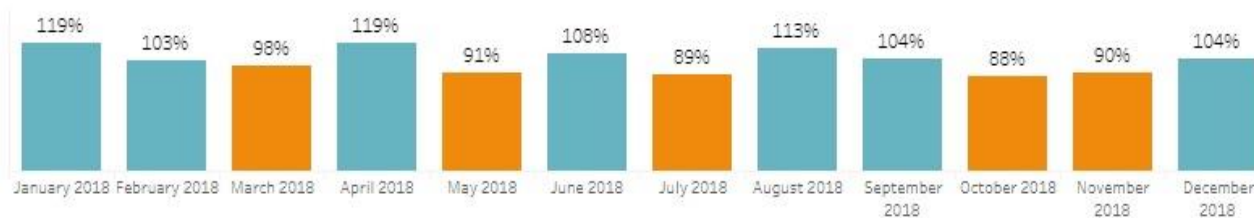
Stark County Juvenile Docket Clearance Rates

Clearance Rate, All Case Types

2018 County: Stark

Clearance rate is figured by dividing the number of cases disposed in a given month by the number of cases coming in to the court in the same month.

Orange bars indicate where the clearance rate is less than the optimal 100%.



*Data Source: Supreme Court of Ohio Case Management Section statistical reporting, collected under Sup. R. 37.

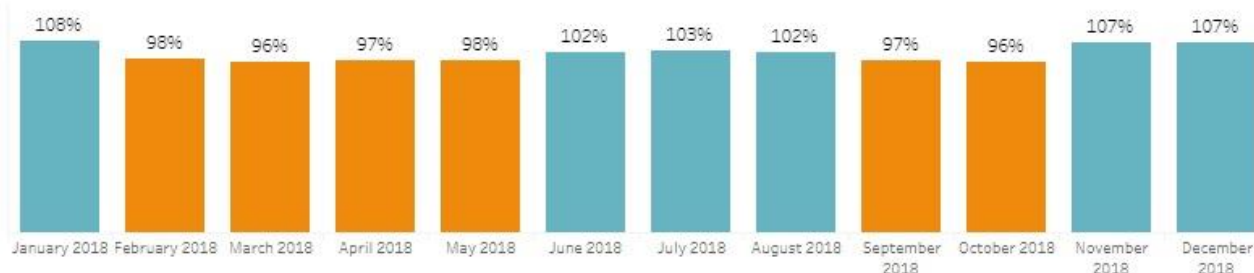
Juvenile Docket Clearance Rates for the State of Ohio

Clearance Rate, All Case Types

2018 County: All

Clearance rate is figured by dividing the number of cases disposed in a given month by the number of cases coming in to the court in the same month.

Orange bars indicate where the clearance rate is less than the optimal 100%.



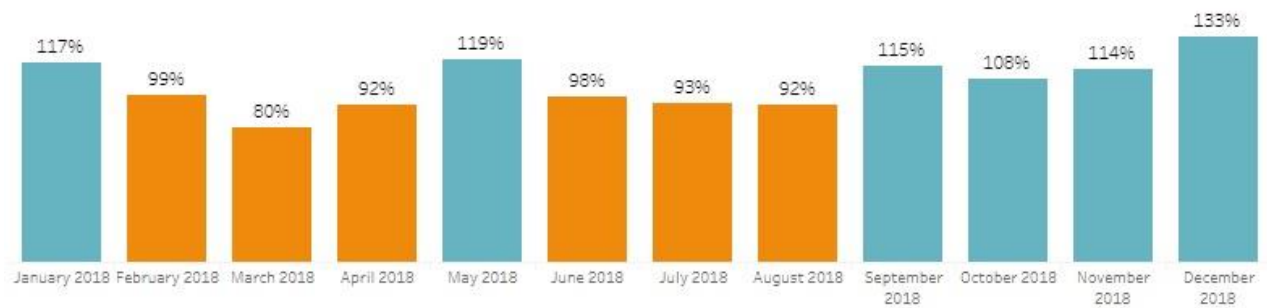
* Data Source: Supreme Court of Ohio Case Management Section statistical reporting, collected under Sup. R. 37.

Stark County Domestic Relations Docket Clearance Rates

Clearance Rate, All Case Types

2018 County: Stark

Clearance rate is figured by dividing the number of cases disposed in a given month by the number of cases coming in to the court in the same month. Orange bars indicate where the clearance rate is less than the optimal 100%.



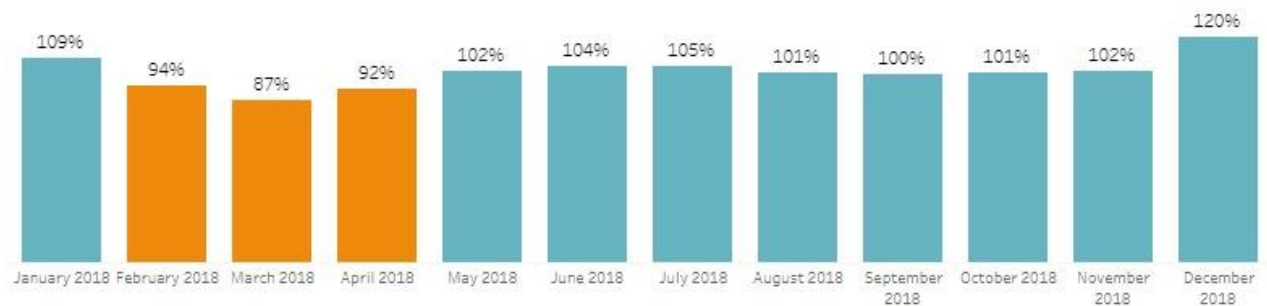
* Data Source: Supreme Court of Ohio Case Management Section statistical reporting, collected under Sup. R. 37.

Domestic Relations Docket Clearance Rates for the State of Ohio

Clearance Rate, All Case Types

2018 County: All

Clearance rate is figured by dividing the number of cases disposed in a given month by the number of cases coming in to the court in the same month. Orange bars indicate where the clearance rate is less than the optimal 100%.



* Data Source: Supreme Court of Ohio Case Management Section statistical reporting, collected under Sup. R. 37.

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