

Juvenile Justice Efforts to Reduce DMC in King County

Law, Justice, Health, and Human Services
Committee

March 9, 2010

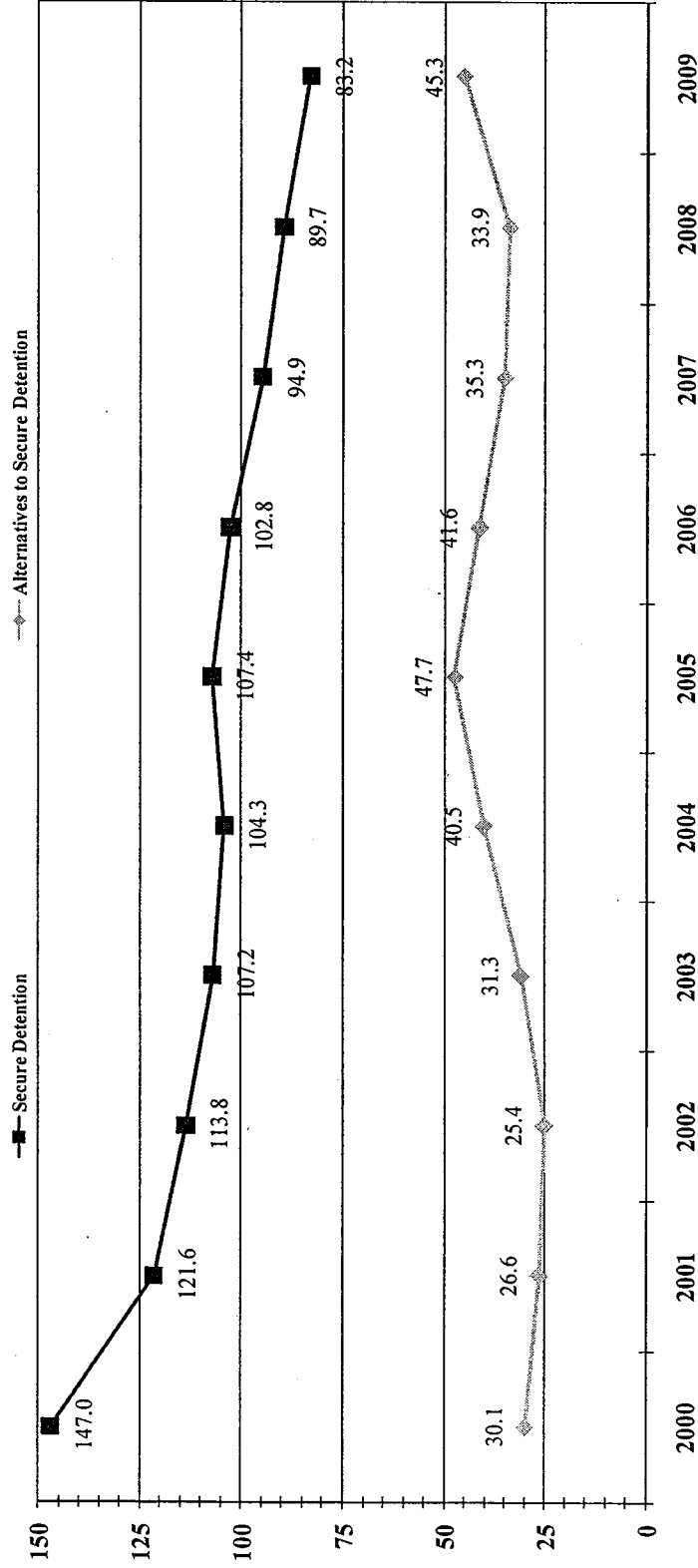
Judge Philip Hubbard, Chief Juvenile Judge, Superior Court
Michael Gedeon, Senior Policy Analyst, OSPPM

Overview

- Trends in Detention and Disproportionality
- Background on Juvenile Detention Reform
- Principles for Reducing DMC
- DMC Strategies
 - Structure
 - Decision Point Analysis
 - Target Specific Issues
 - Staff Training and Development
 - Related Efforts
- Definition
 - DMC = Disproportionate Minority Contact

Trends in Juvenile Detention

King County Juvenile Detention
Average Daily Population by Calendar Year

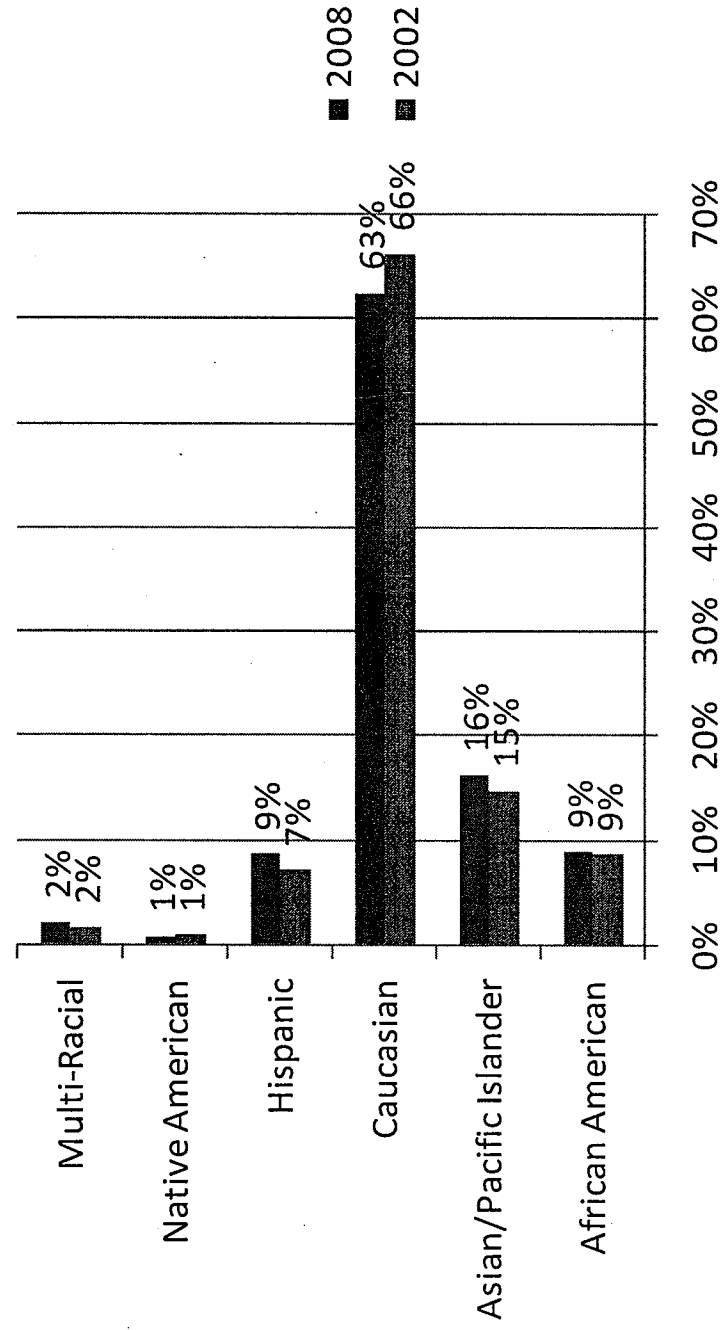


The average daily population (ADP) in secure detention population dropped by 7% in 2009 from 2008, primarily due to a drop in admissions. The ADP in the alternatives increased by 34% as a result of both more admissions and longer lengths of stay.

3/9/2010

King County Youth Population

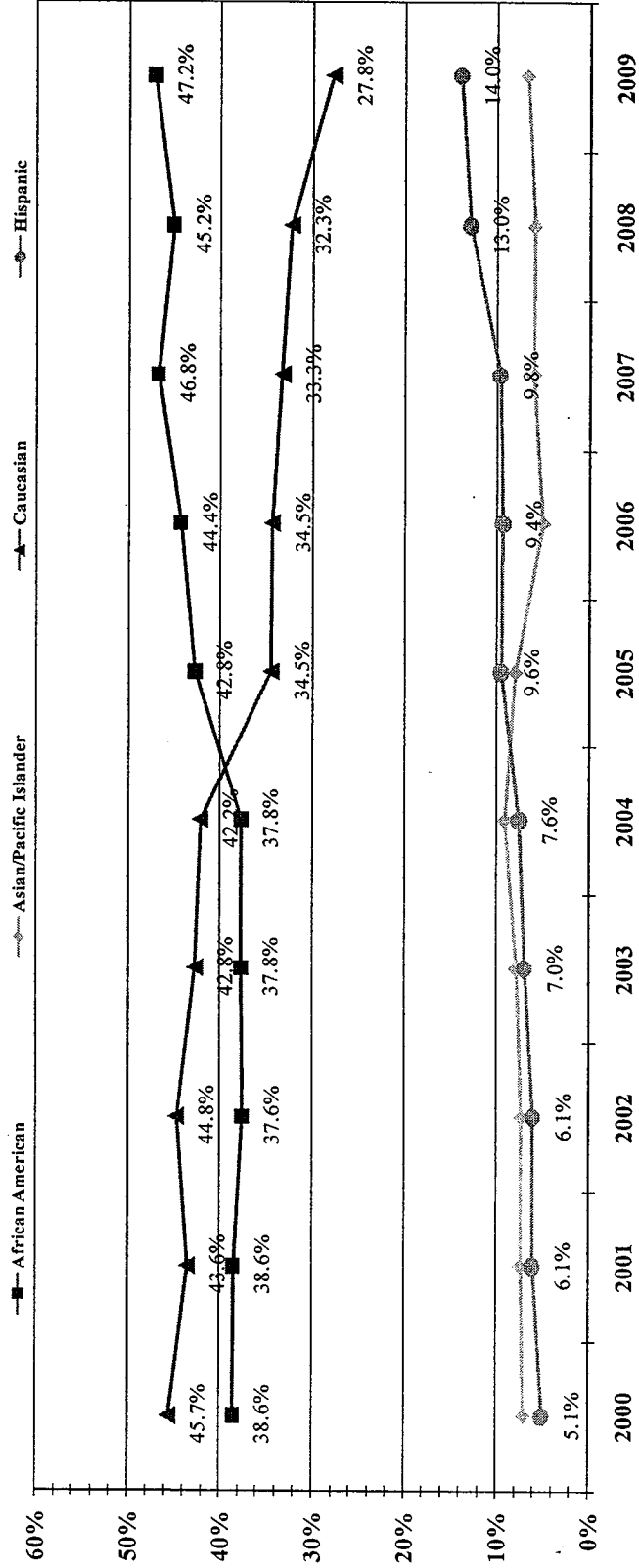
King County Youth, 10-17



In the general population of youth (10-17), youth of color are increasing at a faster rate than white youth and now make up 37% of the total population.

Trends in Disproportionality

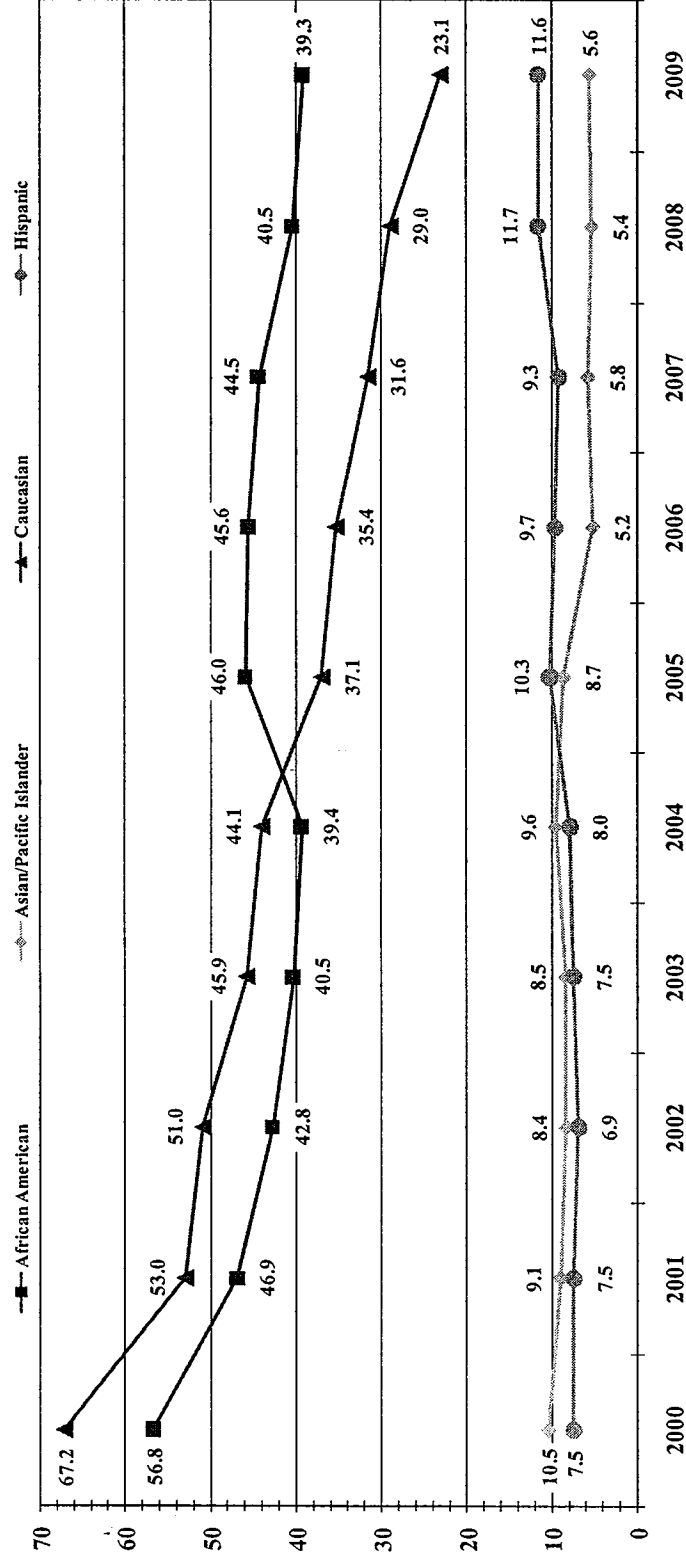
King County Secure Juvenile Detention
Average Daily Population Percentage Composition



Disproportionality for youth of color, particularly African American youth, in the secure detention increased in 2009 from 2008. (See the next page for more trends.)

Trends in Disproportionality (con't)

King County Secure Juvenile Detention
Average Daily Population by Race/Ethnicity



Note that in 2009 the number of youth color in secure detention did not increase but the number of Caucasian youth decreased.

King County's Juvenile Justice Efforts to Reduce DMC - Background

- Since 1998, King County has been engaged in several **reform initiatives** initially driven by a crowded detention facility in the late 1990s.
- The initiatives include the Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan (JJOMP), Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI), Reclaiming Futures, and MacArthur Models for Change.
- The major policy goal was to reform the system and **avoid building another juvenile jail.**
- **Reducing DMC**, while part of the planning, emerged as major goal after holding several community forums where community members strongly advocated for it.
- As a recipient of federal juvenile justice funds, King County is required to report DMC data annually.

JDAI DMC Reduction Principles

1. All youth should be **treated equally** within the juvenile justice system
2. Disparities in detention are often **unintended consequences** of seemingly race neutral practices
3. **Data** must be collected and carefully analyzed to inform efforts to reduce racial disparity
4. **Leadership** makes a difference
5. Both **individuals and agencies** have a responsibility to address this issue
6. While we cannot control all the factors that lead to racial disparities, there are **things we can control** and change within the juvenile justice system

Structure for Addressing DMC in Juvenile Justice System

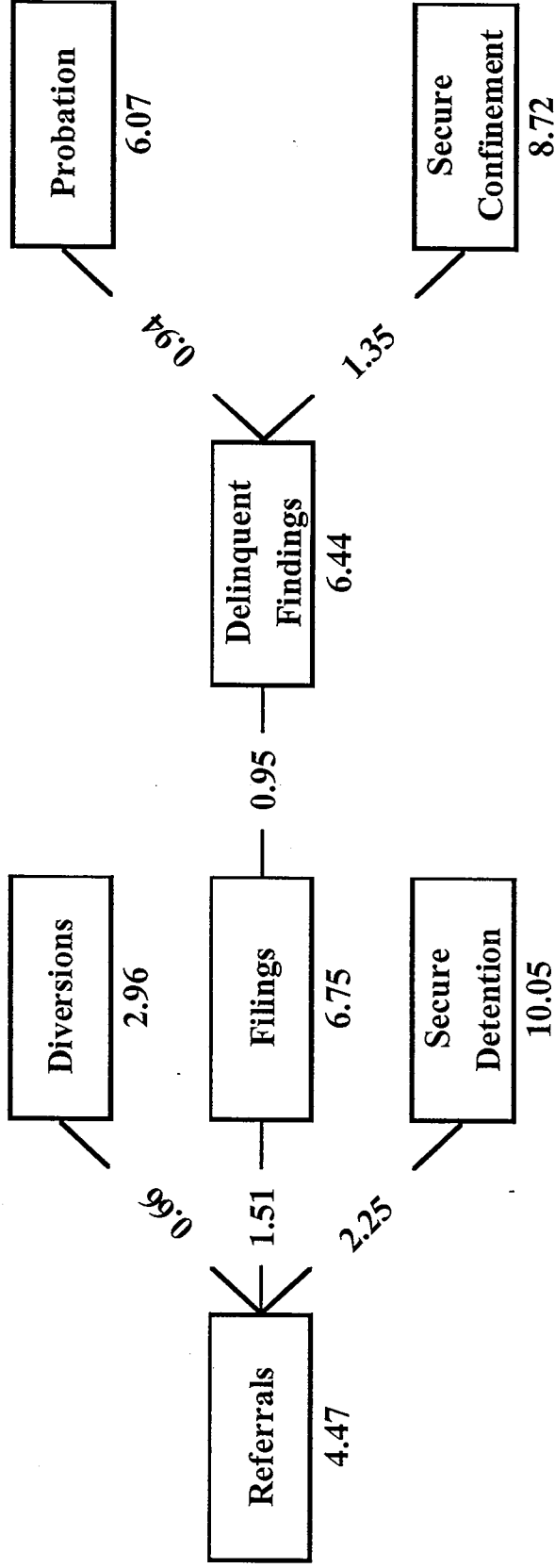
- DMC Workgroup – a dedicated group
 - Chaired by the Chief Juvenile Judge, this group has representatives from the probation, detention, prosecution, defense, law enforcement, and community services agencies.
 - Considers DMC outcomes when reviewing policies and practices.
 - Recommends changes in practices for review by other groups and approval by the court.
- Juvenile Detention Oversight Committee monitors strategies and reviews DMC data

DMC Specific Strategies:

Decision Point Analysis at Each Stage

- Stage - Front door of detention
 - Detention Intake Criteria: Objective criteria used before youth are brought to detention. Criteria will be evaluated in 2009 for effectiveness and impact on DMC.
 - Detention Risk Assessment Instrument: Tool provided to court at first appearance on youth's risk to FTA or reoffend. Recently evaluated and updated.
 - Expedite Placement into Alternatives: Redesigned process for reviewing and placing youth into alternatives to secure detention.
- Next Stage – Filing
 - In the 4th Quarter, the DMC Workgroup will identify relevant decision points, collect data on DMC, discuss DMC implications, and recommend mitigation strategies.

Example: African American Youth Compared to White Youth, 2008



Note: This analysis is strictly a starting point for the discussion on disproportionality. It is an aggregate comparison that includes all offenses/offense types and does not distinguish between differences in the severity of offenses, nor does it factor in gender, age or other differences. The figures above represent the difference between African American youth and Caucasian youth at various stages in the juvenile justice system in King County (disproportionality). The figures under each box represent the cumulative disproportionality at each stage, while the figures in each path represent the incremental change between stages.

DMC Specific Strategies: Target Specific Populations / Issues

- JDOC and DMC Workgroup have identified several areas contributing to DMC: **Warrants, Felony Drug Offenses, Length of Stay in Detention, & Youth Violence**
- Example: Failure to Appear **Warrants**
 - Youth of color disproportionality are booked into detention for warrants resulting for failure to appear to court hearings.
 - With input from youth focus groups, discovered in some cases reasons for FTA could be incorrect addresses, transportation, language, and other reasons not related to public safety.
 - **Reminder Call System:** Staff make reminder calls to the homes of youth two nights ahead of arraignment hearings to reduce FTAs.
 - **Two-Tier Warrants:** Implemented a process in 2008 where youth with an eligible warrant on low-level charge can have their court hearing rescheduled and avoid detention.
 - **Warrant Prevention Pilot Project:** Piloting a project to identify and connect youth (at risk of failing to appear) to a community based provider for support. The target population prioritizes minority youth.

DMC Specific Strategies: Staff Training and Development

□ **Strategic Diversity Initiative**

- In 2007, King County Juvenile Court Services completed a Strategic Diversity Plan and affirmed its commitment to a cultural competency initiative.
- Vision: Improve Juvenile Court Services' effectiveness in intra-department, inter-department, inter-agency and customer related cross-cultural situations.
- Goals: Customers involved with Juvenile Court Services have improved access to justice, improved access to appropriate services and decreased disproportional representation of children of color.
- Each work unit has convened a Cultural Competence Action Team and a cultural competency survey was distributed to all Juvenile Court Services staff. Each work unit has identified and prioritized annual cultural competence improvement goals.

Related Efforts

- The King County **Coalition on Racial Disproportionality** continues to examine child welfare data and practices and is part of the Model Court Initiative to reduce disparity in the child welfare system.
- Since 2004, the local CASA program has secured four different grants through the National CASA Association to support **CASA Volunteer Minority Recruitment** including hiring a part-time recruiter and expand advertising specifically targeting communities of color.
- Through Uniting for Youth, undertaking effort to develop a diverse **Community Advisory Group** as a partner in addressing DMC.
- Participating in **Probation Violation Study** with the University of California, Irvine to conduct a study of DMC in probation violations sponsored by the MacArthur Foundation.

Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.

-- *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

