

120 S. Riverside Plaza,
Suite 1016
Chicago, Illinois 60606

Tel: (312) 793-8550
Fax: (312) 793-8422
TDD: (312) 793-4170

www.icjia.state.il.us

Prepared by

The Research and
Analysis Unit

Rod R. Blagojevich
Governor

Sheldon Sorosky
Chairman

Lori G. Levin
Executive Director

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Research and Program Evaluation in Illinois: The Extent and Nature of Drug and Violent Crime in Illinois' Counties



A Profile of the Coles County Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems

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Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
120 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 1016
Chicago, Illinois 60606-3997
Telephone (312) 793-8550
Telefax (312) 793-8422
World Wide Website <http://www.icjia.state.il.us>

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This document was put together by the following Research and Analysis Unit staff:

Sharyn Adams
Jessica Ashley
Robert Bauer
Christopher Humble
Adriana Perez
Idetta Phillips
Michelle Repp

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FOREWORD

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority is a state agency created in 1983 to promote community safety by providing public policymakers, criminal justice professionals and others with information, tools and technology needed to make effective decisions that improve the quality of criminal justice in Illinois. The Authority provides an objective system-wide forum for identifying critical problems in criminal justice, developing coordinated and cost-effective strategies, and implementing and evaluating solutions to those problems. The specific powers and duties of the Authority are delineated in the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Act (Illinois Compiled Statutes, Ch. 20, Sec. 393/7). Two of the Authority's many responsibilities are serving as a clearinghouse of information and research on criminal justice and undertaking research studies to improve the administration of criminal justice.

Since 1989, the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit has received funds under the federal Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 to document the extent and nature of drug and violent crime in Illinois and the criminal justice system's response to these offenses. As a result of these efforts, the Authority has amassed a large amount of data measuring the extent and nature of drug and violent crime in Illinois and the impact these crimes have had on the criminal justice system. To put this information into the hands of Illinois' criminal justice policymakers in a useful summary format, the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit has developed profiles of the criminal justice system for each county in Illinois. In 1994, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority produced a series of reports detailing criminal justice system activity levels for each of Illinois' 102 counties. As a result of the positive response by local criminal justice officials, in 1996 the Authority updated and expanded the scope of these reports to reflect current criminal and juvenile justice activity. It is hoped that these 2004 updated reports will be as valuable, if not more, than the original versions. In addition to providing policymakers with an overview of activities across the components of the justice system in their county (law enforcement, courts and corrections), the profiles also provide perspective by including trends experienced in counties with similar population sizes.

While the data presented in this report are by no means inclusive of all indicators, they do provide a general overview of crime and the criminal justice system's response. In addition, these data are readily available and consistently defined through existing statewide data collection mechanisms.

The information presented in this profile has been provided to the Authority by a number of state agencies, specifically: the Illinois State Police, the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, the Illinois Department of Corrections, and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. The support and cooperation of these agencies and their staffs have helped make this report an informative and timely source of information on the activities of the criminal justice system in Illinois.



The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority's
Web-based clearinghouse of criminal justice data available at:

<http://www.icjia.state.il.us>.

I. Introduction

Coles County, located in east central Illinois, covers an area of 508 square miles and had a 2003 population of 51,880, according to estimates by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census. Using these figures, Coles County was the 52nd largest county in Illinois geographically, but 28th largest in terms of population. Combining these two measures, Coles County had the 22nd highest population density per square mile among Illinois' 102 counties.

As with the previous reports, information specific to Coles County is presented in comparison with similar counties. To provide more useful comparisons, counties have been separated into four types; 1) Cook County, 2) Collar counties, 3) urban counties (outside of Cook and the Collar counties), and 4) rural counties. Because of its size, Cook County is compared to the rest of the state. The Collar counties are the five that border Cook County (DuPage, Lake, Kane, McHenry, and Will). Urban and rural counties are defined by whether or not they lay within a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (Appendix 1, page 24). Based on these definitions, there are 36 counties in Illinois that are part of a MSA (Cook, Collar, and urban counties) and 66 counties that are not part of a MSA (in other words, rural).

Recent changes to the standard definitions of MSAs have affected the classification of several Illinois counties. The United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB) defines metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas according to published standards that are applied to Census Bureau data. The general concept of a metropolitan or micropolitan statistical area is that of a core area containing a substantial population nucleus, together with adjacent communities having a high degree of economic and social integration with that core. Currently defined metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas are based on the application of 2000 standards to 2000 decennial census data and were announced by OMB on June 6, 2003.

Standard definitions of metropolitan areas have changed over time. The term "metropolitan area" (MA) was adopted in 1990 and referred collectively to metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), consolidated metropolitan statistical areas (CMSAs), and primary metropolitan statistical areas (PMSAs). More recently, the term "core based statistical area" (CBSA) became effective in 2000 and refers collectively to metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas.

The 2000 standards require that each CBSA must contain at least one urban area of 10,000 or more population. Each metropolitan statistical area must have at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more inhabitants. Each micropolitan statistical area must have at least one urban cluster of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population.

Under the standards, the county (or counties) in which at least 50 percent of the population resides within urban areas of 10,000 or more population, or that contain at least 5,000 people residing within a single urban area of 10,000 or more population, is identified as a "central county" (counties). Additional "outlying counties" are included in the CBSA if they meet specified requirements regarding residents commuting to or from the central counties.

Changes in the definitions of these statistical areas since the 1950 census have consisted chiefly of: 1) the recognition of new areas as they reached the minimum required city or urbanized area population, and 2) the addition of counties to existing areas due to new decennial census data. In some instances, formerly separate areas have been merged, components of an area have been transferred from one area to another, or components have been dropped from an area. The large majority of changes have taken place on the basis of decennial census data.

Because of these historical changes in geographic definitions, users must be cautious in comparing data for these statistical areas from different dates. For more information, contact the Population Distribution Branch at (301) 763-2419 (U. S. Census Bureau).

Based on these characteristics, Coles County is one of Illinois' 66 rural counties. Throughout this report, the criminal justice activity trends experienced in Coles County will be compared to those trends experienced in the other rural counties. This comparison will be realized through the calculation of rates for the activities being analyzed, with the number per 100,000 population the format for all the rates.

II. Law Enforcement Activities in Coles County

One of the most commonly used indicators of the level of crime in a particular jurisdiction is the number of *Index offenses* reported to the police. There are eight separate offenses which constitute the Crime Index, including murder, criminal sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault (violent Index offenses), burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson (property Index offenses). Although these eight offenses do not account for all crimes reported to the police, they are considered to be the most serious, frequent, pervasive, and consistently defined by different law enforcement agencies.

An indicator of the workload that law enforcement agencies place on other components of the justice system is the number of arrests made by police, including those for violent and property Index offenses and drug offenses. Unlike offenses, which are what police must respond to, arrests represent those offenders who may eventually be processed through other components of the justice system, including the courts, county jails, and state and local correctional programs.

In addition to local law enforcement agencies, the East Central Illinois Task Force (ECITF) also serves Coles County. Throughout most of the period analyzed, there were 21 Metropolitan Enforcement Group (MEGs) and task forces operating in Illinois. A county is considered to be served by a MEG or task force if at least one law enforcement agency within that county participated in that MEG or task force either by providing personnel or financial resources.

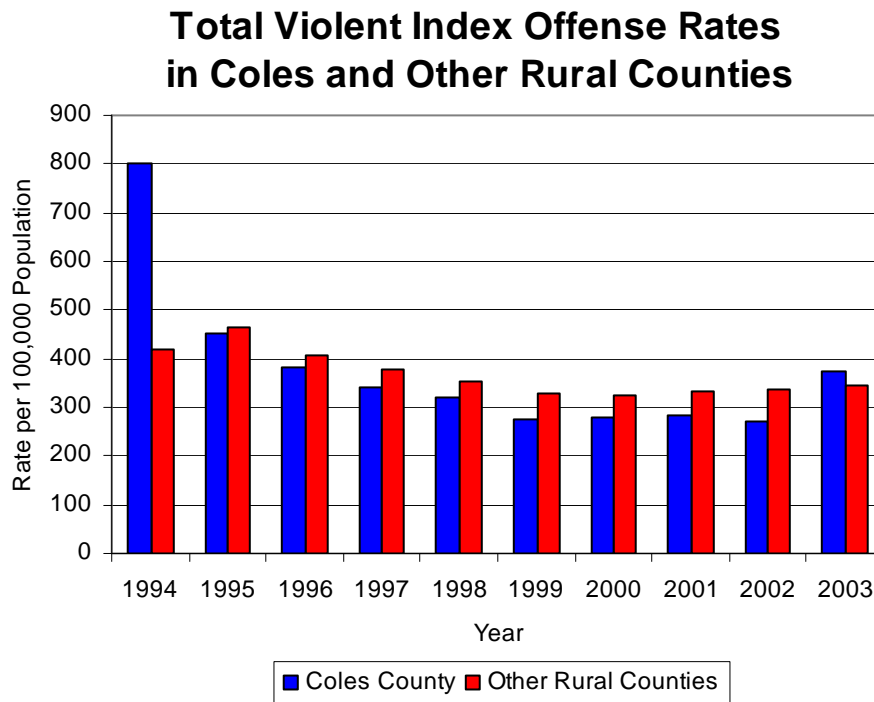
To learn more about the drug enforcement activities of the East Central Illinois Task Force and Illinois' other MEGs and task forces, profiles of each of the units were developed by the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit and are available through the Authority's Criminal Justice Information Clearinghouse or can be downloaded from the Authority's Website at www.icjia.state.il.us.

Violent Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Coles County

The number of violent Index offenses reported to the police decreased 55 percent in Coles County between 1994 and 2003, from 429 to 195. As in previous years and in most other counties, aggravated assault offenses accounted for the majority (68 percent) of violent Index offenses reported in Coles County in 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the violent Index offense rate in Coles County decreased 53 percent, from 803 to 376 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 1). Similarly, during that same period, the violent Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 18 percent, from 421 to 345 offenses per 100,000 population. The 2003 violent Index offense rate in Coles County was 9 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 1



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

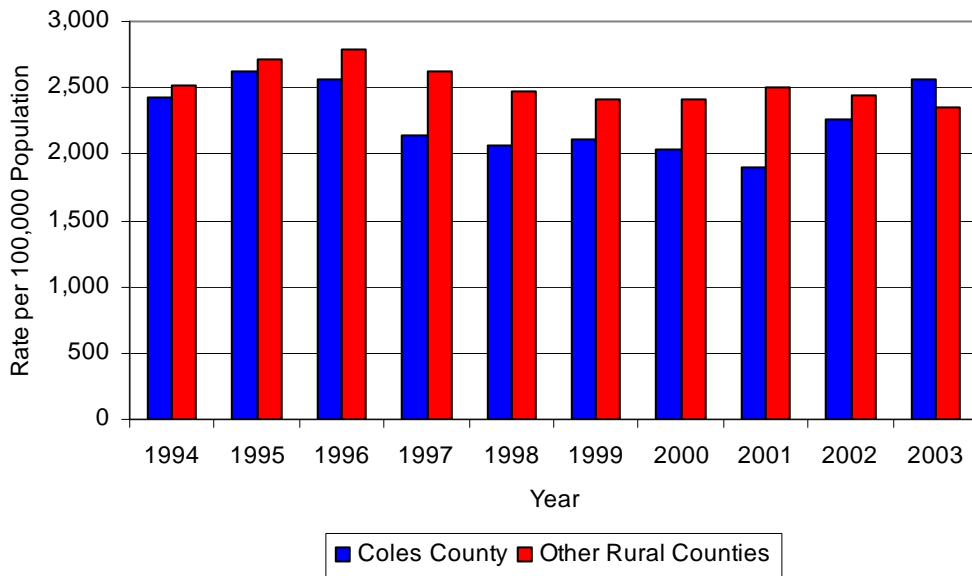
Property Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Coles County

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of property Index offenses reported to the police in Coles County increased 3 percent, from 1,295 to 1,331. Thefts accounted for 71 percent of all property Index offenses reported in Coles County during 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the property Index offense rate in Coles County increased 6 percent, from 2,424 to 2,566 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 2). The property Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 7 percent, from 2,525 to 2,355 offenses per 100,000 population. Coles County's 2003 property Index offense rate was 9 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 2

Total Property Index Offense Rates in Coles and Other Rural Counties



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

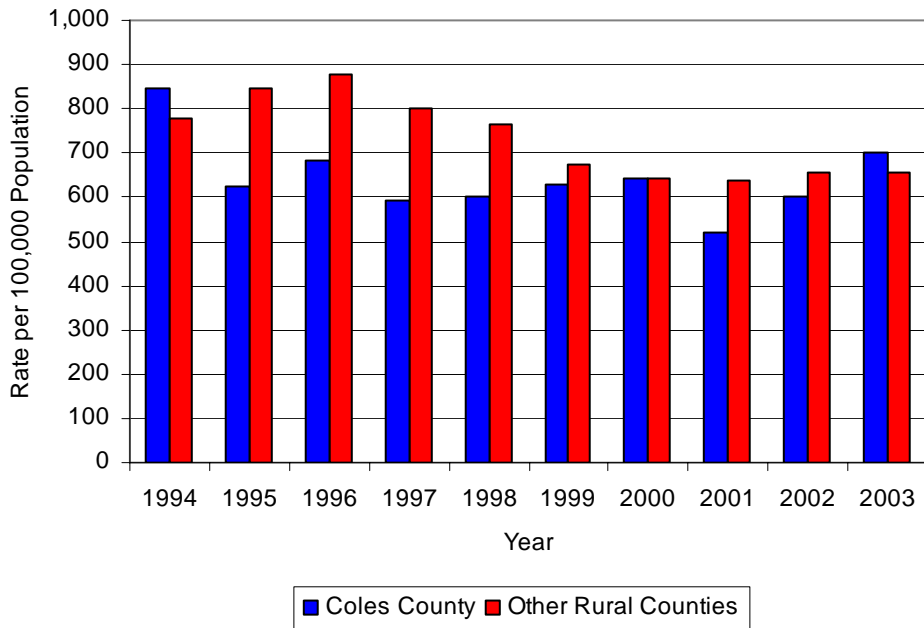
Index Arrests by Coles County Law Enforcement Agencies

Between 1994 and 2003, arrests for total Index offenses by law enforcement agencies in Coles County decreased 20 percent, from 453 to 364. The majority of Index arrests were for property Index offenses. Of the 364 Index arrests made in Coles County during 2003, 23 percent were for violent Index crimes and 77 percent were for property Index crimes. Arrests for theft and aggravated assault accounted for the majority of property and violent Index arrests in Coles County during 2003. Of all violent Index arrests, 86 percent were arrests for aggravated assault, while thefts accounted for 91 percent of all property Index arrests.

Between 1994 and 2003, the Index arrest rate in Coles County decreased 17 percent, from 848 to 702 arrests per 100,000 population (Figure 3). During the same period, the Index arrest rate in the other rural counties decreased 16 percent, from 780 to 655 arrests per 100,000 population. In 2003, Coles County's Index arrest rate was 7 percent higher than the Index arrest rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 3

Index Arrest Rates in Coles and Other Rural Counties



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

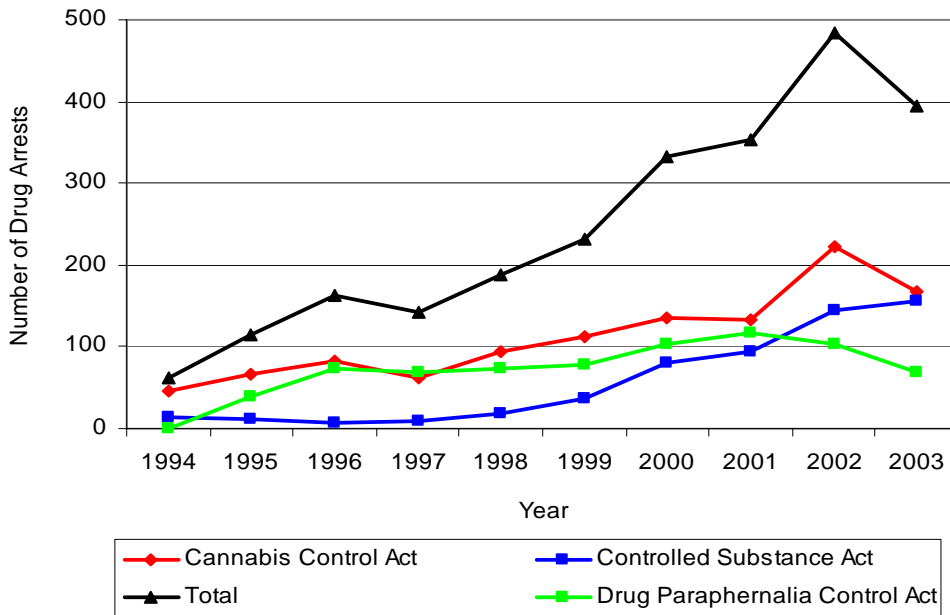
Drug Offense Arrests in Coles County

Between 1994 and 2003, arrests for total drug offenses (including violations of Illinois' Cannabis Control Act, Controlled Substances Act, Drug Paraphernalia Control Act, and the Hypodermic Syringe and Needles Act) increased more than five-fold in Coles County, from 63 to 395 (Figure 4). Controlled Substances Act violations accounted for the majority of the increase in total drug arrests, increasing from 13 to 155 arrests, while Drug Paraphernalia Control Act arrests increased from just one arrest in 1994 to 68 arrests in 2003, or in other words, 17 percent of all drugs arrests in 2003.

Arrests for violations of Illinois' Cannabis Control Act (which prohibits the possession, sale and cultivation of cannabis) in Coles County have consistently out-numbered arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act (which prohibits the possession, sale, distribution, or manufacture of all other illegal drugs such as cocaine and opiates). Between 1994 and 2003, the number of arrests for violations of the Cannabis Control Act in Coles County more than tripled, from 46 to 168. Arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act increased nearly 11-fold in Coles County, from 13 in 1994 to 155 in 2003 (Figure 4).

Figure 4

Drug Arrests in Coles County

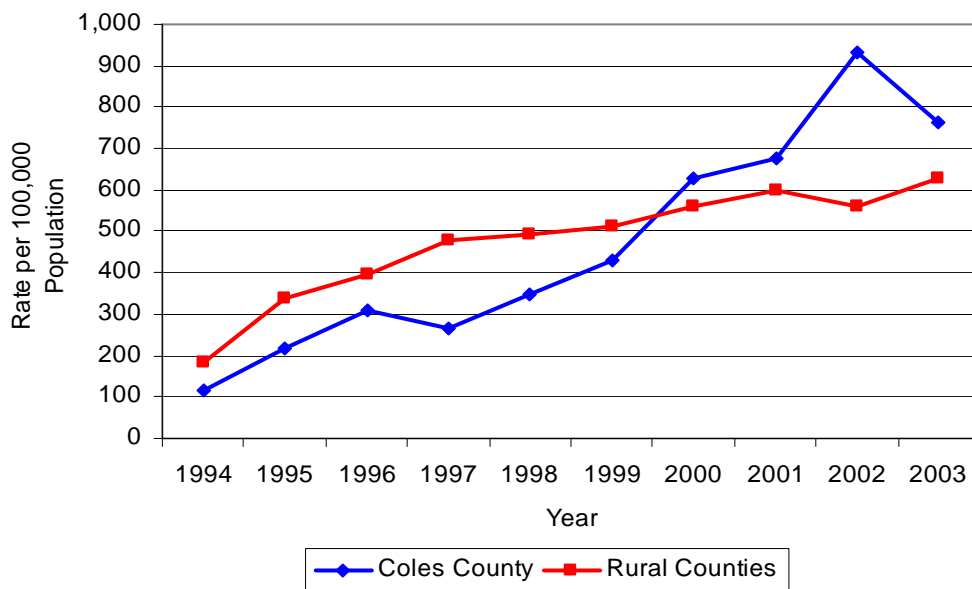


Source: Illinois State Police

Between 1994 and 2003, the arrest rate for all drug law violations in Coles County increased more than five-fold, from 118 to 761 per 100,000 population (Figure 5). The total drug arrest rate in the other rural counties more than tripled between 1994 and 2003, from 183 to 628 per 100,000 population. In 2003, the drug arrest rate in Coles County was 21 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 5

Drug Arrest Rates in Coles and Other Rural Counties



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

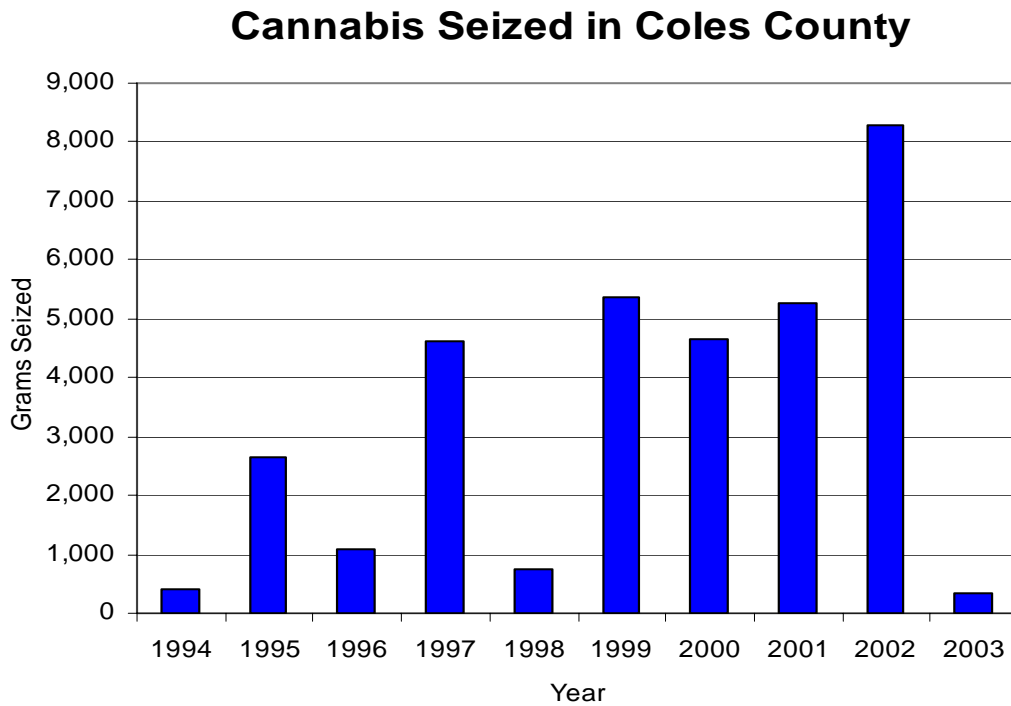
Drugs Seized in Coles County

Drugs seized by law enforcement agencies are another indicator of the extent and nature of the illegal drug trade in a jurisdiction. When illegal drugs are seized by law enforcement agencies in Illinois, they are submitted to a crime lab for analysis. Most agencies submit drugs to one of the Illinois State Police crime labs. These labs record the quantity of drugs submitted from each county. This section discusses the quantities of illegal drugs seized and submitted to the Illinois State Police from law enforcement agencies in Coles County.

Cannabis Seized in Coles County

Cannabis accounts for the majority of drugs seized in Coles County and in most Illinois jurisdictions. Although there were large variations in the number of grams of cannabis seized between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in Coles County decreased 17 percent, from 411 grams to 340 grams, while reaching a period high of 8,271 grams seized in 2002 (Figure 6).

Figure 6



Source: Illinois State Police

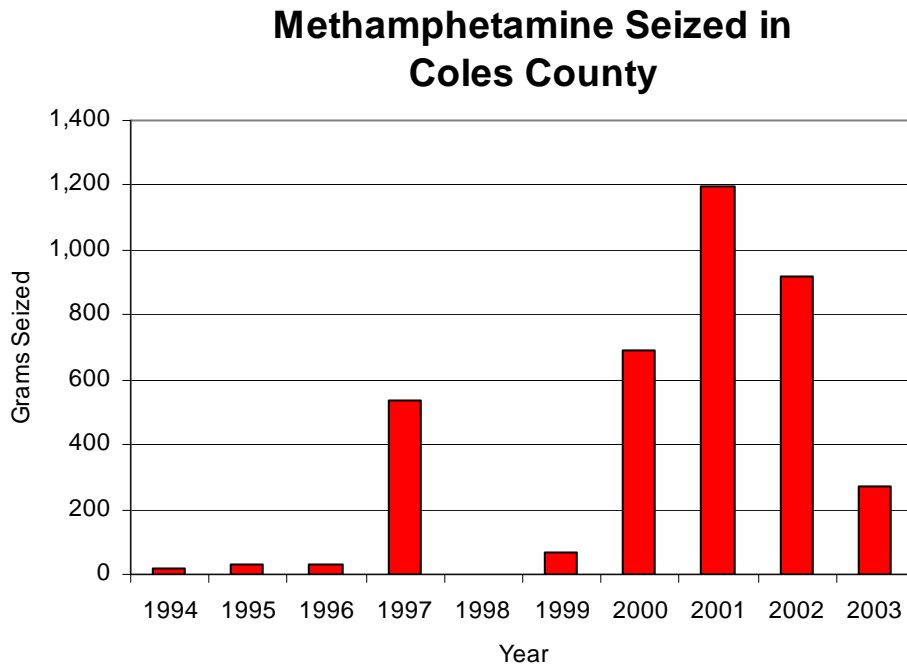
Between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in the other rural counties decreased 55 percent, from 607,738 grams to 272,303 grams. In 2003, Coles County had a cannabis seizure rate of 655 grams per 100,000 population, compared to a rate of 16,616 grams per 100,000 population in the other rural counties.

Methamphetamine Seized in Coles County

During the past decade, it is clear that methamphetamine “activity” in the state has increased drastically and has become a significant drug problem in many jurisdictions. Further, the extent to which law enforcement agencies are encountering methamphetamine has also dispersed across a large area of the state, with most of this being fueled by activities taking place in Illinois’ rural jurisdictions.

The quantity of methamphetamine seized in Coles County increased between 1994 and 2003. The quantity of methamphetamine seized in Coles County jumped from 16 grams in 1994 to a period high of 1,195 grams in 2001 before dropping to 271 grams in 2003 (Figure 7). The quantity of cocaine (cocaine includes both powder cocaine and crack cocaine) seized in Coles County increased slightly between 1994 and 2003, from 81 grams to 88 grams.

Figure 7



Source: Illinois State Police

The quantity of methamphetamine seized in the other rural counties increased dramatically during the period analyzed. Between 1994 and 2003, the amount of methamphetamine seized increased nearly four-fold in the other rural counties, from 2,603 grams to 12,931 grams. In 2003, 523 grams of methamphetamine per 100,000 population were seized in Coles County, 34 percent lower than the 798 grams of methamphetamine per 100,000 population seized in the other rural counties. The quantity of cocaine (cocaine includes both powder cocaine and crack cocaine) seized in other rural counties decreased 79 percent from 71,182 in 1994 to 15,064 in 2003.

III. Adult and Juvenile Court Activity in Coles County

Although Illinois has one of the best court reporting systems in the country, the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts only collects information regarding the aggregate number of court filings, dispositions, and probation caseloads. Currently, there are no statewide data available on court filings, dispositions, and convictions by offense type. However, detailed offense data are available from the Illinois Department of Corrections for those convicted felons sentenced to prison.

Trends in the number of delinquency petitions filed and adjudicated in juvenile court are also presented. Illinois statutes define delinquency offenses as those committed by someone younger than 17 years old that would be considered crimes if committed by someone 17 years of age or older.

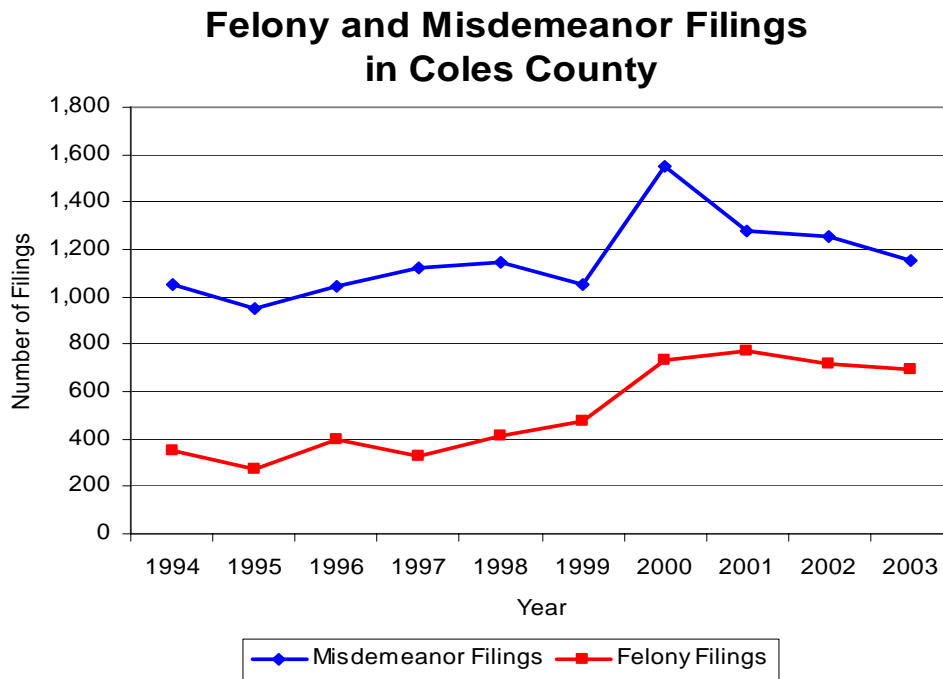
In Illinois, county probation departments are overseen by the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts' Probation Division. This section also presents data on active misdemeanor and felony adult caseloads and the number of juveniles under the supervision of the probation departments in Coles County and the other rural counties.

Misdemeanor and Felony Filings in Coles County

The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts reports data on criminal court cases in two categories: misdemeanors and felonies. After screening a case and deciding it warrants further action, the state's attorney must file formal charges in court. Misdemeanor cases are less serious than felonies and can be punished by a probation sentence of one year or less and less than one year of incarceration. Felony cases, on the other hand, are more serious and can be punished by a probation term up to four years and incarceration for more than one year. When comparing the number of filings across time and across counties, it should be noted that differences in reporting practices exist. For example, when two or more defendants are involved in a single case, some state's attorneys file a single case charging all defendants, while others file a separate case for each suspect.

In 2003, felony and misdemeanor court filings accounted for nearly 12 percent of all filings in Coles County’s courts (civil, traffic, family, and other). Between 1994 and 2003, the number of felony filings in Coles County more than doubled, from 347 to 694 (Figure 8). During the same period, misdemeanor filings increased 10 percent, from 1,049 in 1994 to 1,152 in 2003. In 2003, misdemeanor filings out-numbered felony filings by 66 percent.

Figure 8

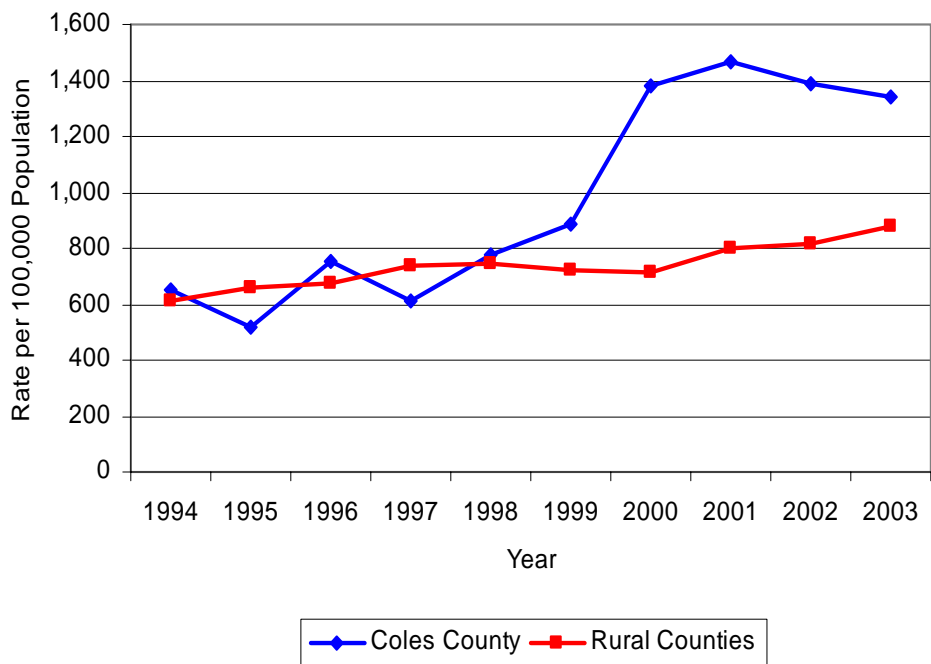


Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Between 1994 and 2003, the felony-filing rate in Coles County also more than doubled from 650 to 1,338 cases per 100,000 population (Figure 9). The felony-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 43 percent during this period, from 613 to 875 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the felony-filing rate in Coles County was 53 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 9

Felony Filing Rates in Coles and Other Rural Counties



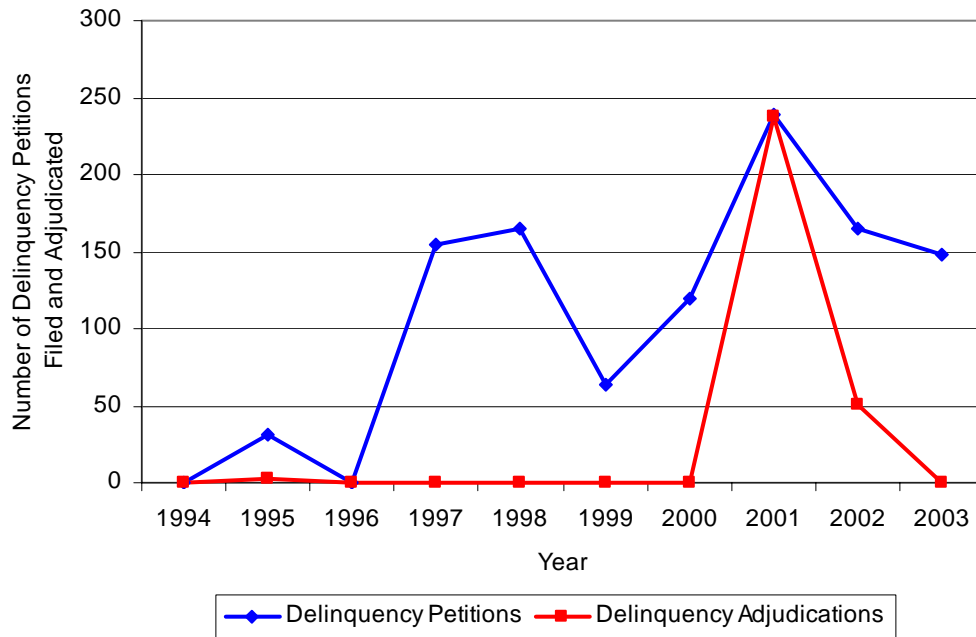
Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts and U.S. Census Bureau data

Illinois’ juvenile court system differs in several key aspects from the adult criminal court system. One aspect revolves around the difference in treatment between juveniles and adults: the juvenile courts process the somewhat less formal and adversarial; authorities are given much more latitude in determining the proper responses to each case. Traditionally, the terminology used to describe juvenile proceedings has been less harsh than that used for the adult criminal process. For example, Illinois juvenile court accept “petitions of delinquency” rather than misdemeanor or felony criminal complaints. However, pursuant to the Juvenile Court Reform Act of 1998, criminal court terms, such as “trial” and “sentencing,” have replaced the less harsh “adjudicatory hearing” and “dispositional hearing” terms.

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of juvenile delinquency petitions filed in Coles County increased from zero to 148 (Figure 10). In 2003, none of the juveniles named in delinquency petitions were adjudicated delinquent.

Figure 10

Juvenile Delinquency Petitions Filed and Adjudicated in Coles County



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

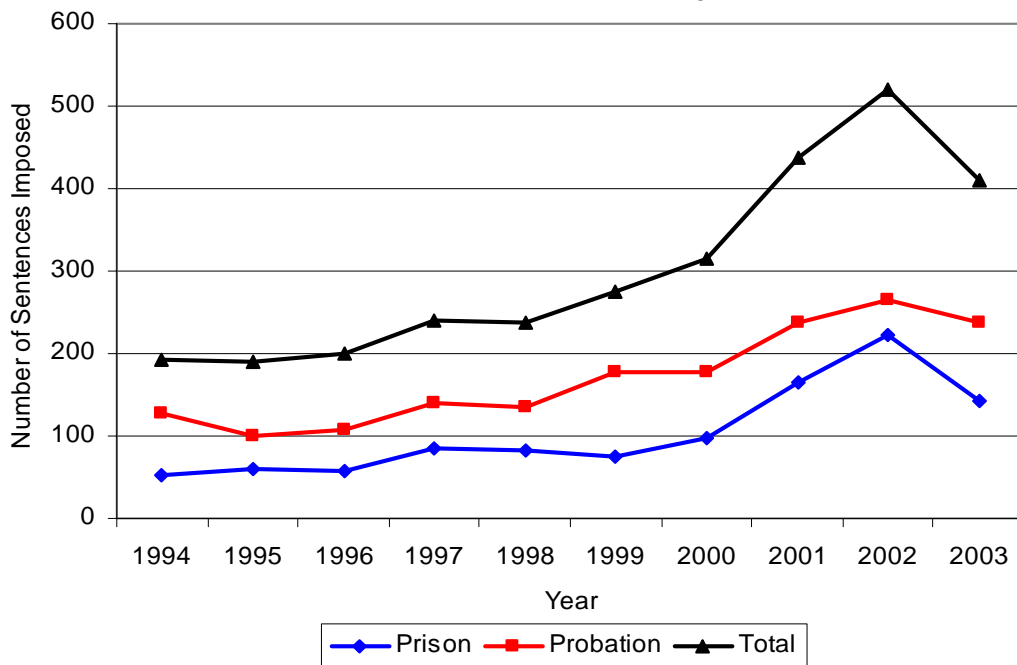
Between 1994 and 2003, the delinquency petition-filing rate in Coles County increased from zero to 3,531 per 100,000 juveniles. During the same period, the delinquency petition-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 8 percent, from 2,064 to 2,234 petitions per 100,000 juveniles. In 2003, the delinquency petition rate in Coles County was 58 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

Anyone convicted of a felony in Illinois can be sentenced either to prison or probation, or receive a conditional discharge. A number of factors influence the type and length of sentence imposed on convicted felons, including the severity of the crime, the offender’s criminal and social history, safety of the community, and legislation affecting certain types of offenses. For some types of convictions a sentence to prison is required by state statute.

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of offenders convicted of a felony and sentenced in Coles County more than doubled, from 193 to 409 (Figure 11). While the number of convicted felons sentenced to probation during this period increased 85 percent, from 128 to 237, felony probation sentences decreased as a proportion of total sentences. In 2003, 58 percent of all convicted felons were sentenced to probation, compared to 66 percent in 1994. Between 1994 and 2003, the proportion of felons sentenced to prison increased from 27 percent in 1994 to 35 percent in 2003.

Figure 11

Sentences Imposed on Felons Convicted in Coles County



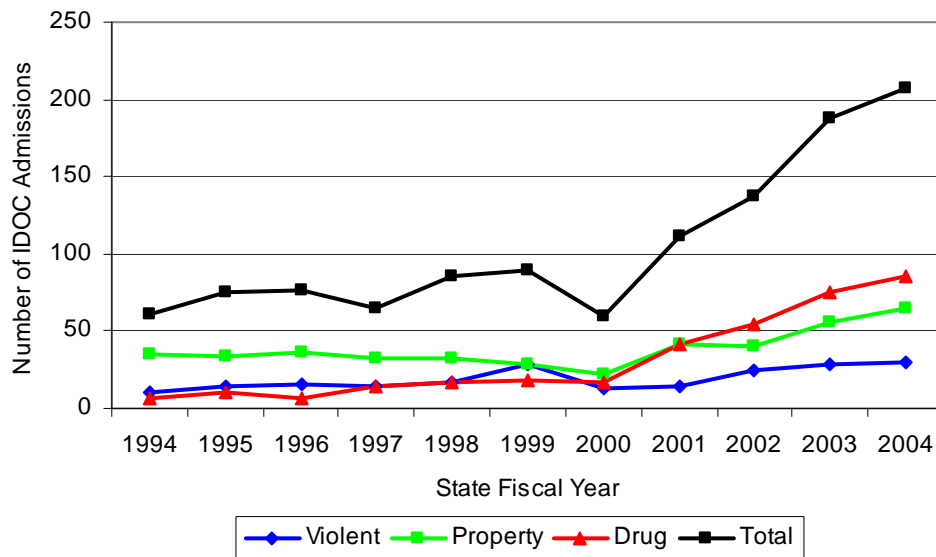
Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Adult Prison Admissions from Coles County

Between State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2004, the number of admissions to the Illinois Department of Corrections' Adult Division from Coles County more than tripled from 61 to 207 (Figure 12). During this period, the number of violent, property, and drug offender admissions increased. The number of violent offender admissions tripled from ten to 30 between SFYs 1994 and 2004, while the number of property offender admissions increased 86 percent, from 35 to 65. The number of drug offender admissions increased 11-fold during the period analyzed, from seven to 85.

Figure 12

IDOC New Court Commitments from Coles County, by Offense Type



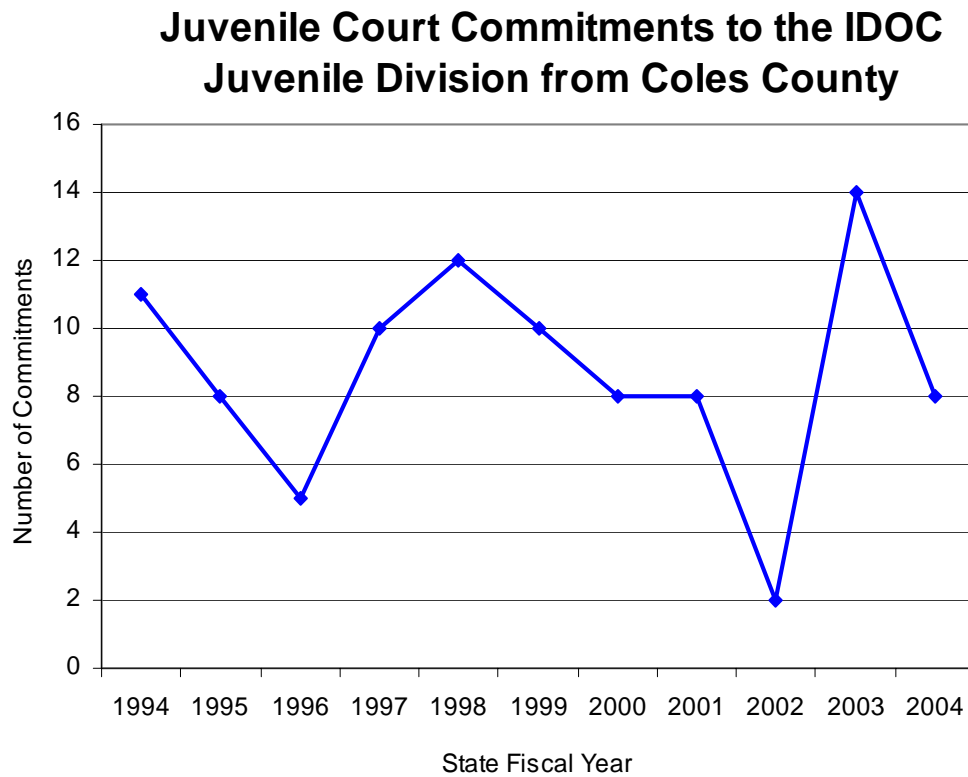
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

In SFY 2004, violent offenders accounted for 14 percent of all admissions from Coles County, compared to 16 percent in 1994, while the proportion accounted for by property offenders decreased from 57 percent in SFY 1994 to 31 percent in SFY 2004. Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the proportion of all admissions to IDOC from Coles County accounted for by drug offenders increased dramatically, from 11 percent to 41 percent.

Juvenile Court Commitments to the Illinois Department of Corrections

The Illinois Department of Corrections' Juvenile Division provides long-term custody for youths, 13 to 17 years old, who have been found delinquent by the juvenile court and committed to the IDOC. Youths may remain in an IDOC juvenile facility until they are 21. Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, there was a 20 percent decrease in new court commitments to the IDOC's Juvenile Division from Coles County, decreasing from 11 to eight.

Figure 13



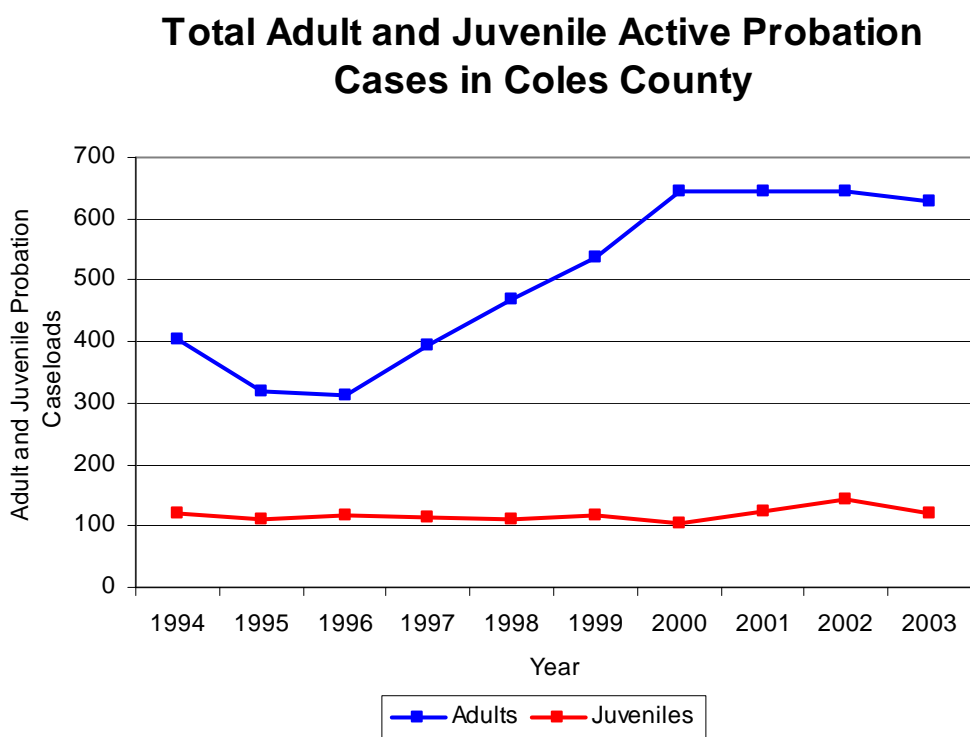
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

In SFY 2004, the commitment rate to the IDOC's Juvenile Division from the other rural counties was 209 commitments per 100,000 juveniles, 9 percent lower than the 230 commitments per 100,000 juveniles from the other rural counties.

Adult and Juvenile Probation Caseloads in Coles County

Between December 31, 1994 and December 31, 2003, the number of active adult probation cases in Coles County increased 55 percent, from 405 to 629 (Figure 13). In 2003, felony offenders accounted for 53 percent of Coles County's active adult probation caseload. Between 1994 and 2003, the number of juveniles supervised by the Coles County Juvenile Probation Department decreased slightly, from 121 to 120. By comparison, the number of active adult probation cases in the other rural counties increased 39 percent between 1994 and 2003, while the juvenile probation caseloads increased less than 1 percent.

Figure 14



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

The active adult probation caseload rate per 100,000 population in Coles County increased 60 percent between 1994 and 2003, from 758 to 1,212 cases per 100,000 population. During that same period, the active adult probation caseload rate increased 40 percent in the other rural counties, from 744 to 1,038 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the active adult probation caseload rate in Coles County was 17 percent higher than in the other rural counties.

IV. Jail Populations in Coles County

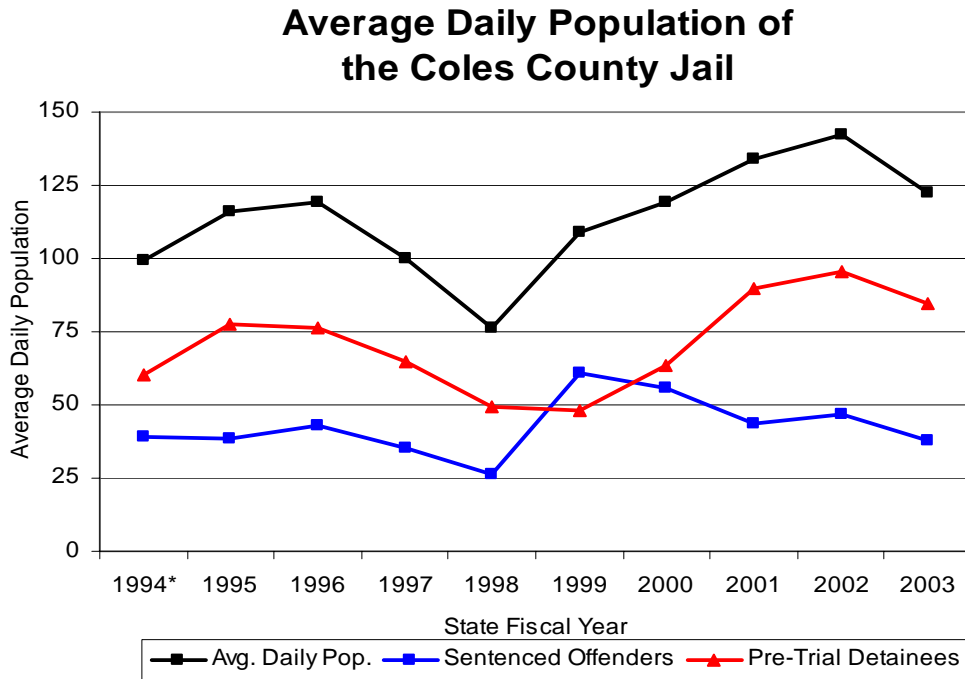
Jail data in Illinois are collected by the Illinois Department of Corrections' Bureau of Inspections and Audits. As with court data, data are not available detailing the specific offenses for which offenders were held in county jails. In addition, between SFYs 1992 and 1994, the IDOC did not collect Illinois jail population data. Data presented for SFY 1994 was estimated by the Authority using the reported SFYs 1991 and 1995 data.

Average Daily Population of the Coles County Jail

The Coles County Jail was one of 91 county jails in operation in Illinois during state fiscal year 2003. There are ten counties that did not operate a jail of their own; they rely on other counties to house their pretrial detainees and sentenced offenders at either a per-diem or contracted rate.

Between SFYs and 2003, the average daily population of the Coles County Jail increased 23 percent, from 100 to 123 inmates (Figure 14). During this period, pretrial detainees (those individuals who have been arrested for a crime and are awaiting trial) accounted for an increasing percentage of the average daily population, from 61 percent in SFY 1994 to 69 percent in SFY 2003. On the other hand, sentenced offenders (those offenders who have been convicted and sentenced to the county jail) accounted for a decreased percentage; 39 percent in SFY 1994, compared to 31 percent in SFY 2003.

Figure 15



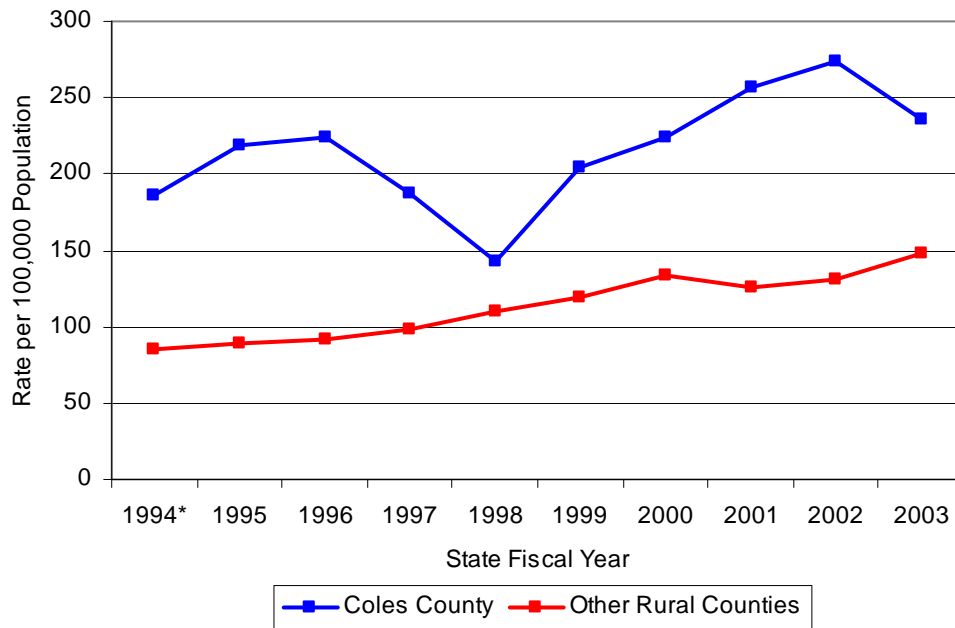
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

* Information estimated by ICJIA

Between SFYs 1994 and 2003, the average daily jail population rate in Coles County increased 27 percent, from 185 to 236 per 100,000 population (Figure 15). During this same period, the average daily jail population rate in the other rural counties increased 74 percent, from 50 to 148 per 100,000 population. In 2003, the Coles County Jail had an average daily jail population rate 60 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 16

**Average Daily Jail Population Rates,
Coles and Other Rural Counties**



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois Department of Corrections and U.S. Census Bureau data

* Information estimated by ICJIA

V. Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect in Coles County

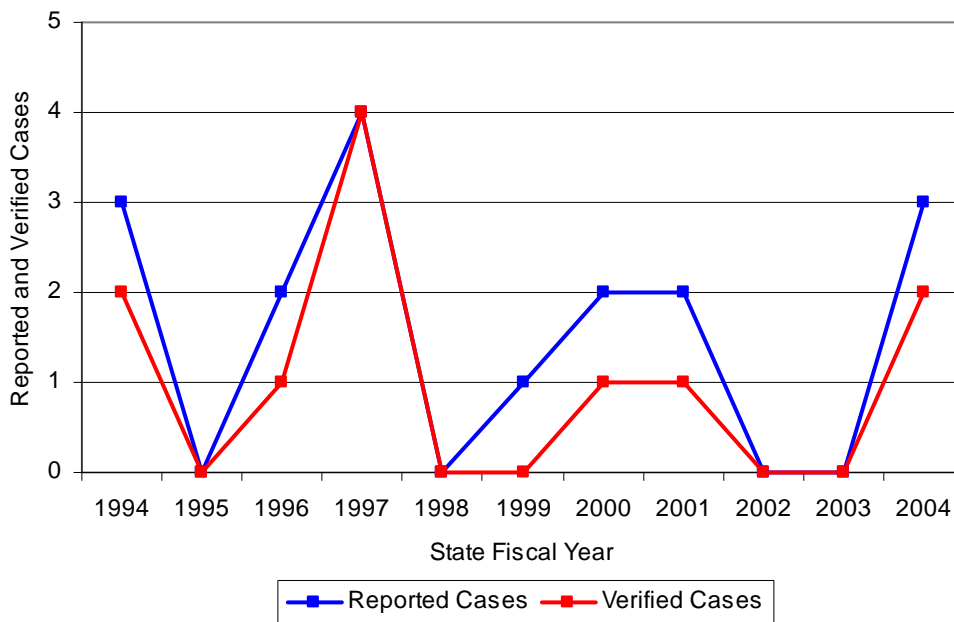
Substance-Exposed Infants in Coles County

Illinois continues to experience the effects of prenatal substance abuse. In Illinois, if a baby is born and thought to have been exposed to illegal substances or alcohol, either through observation by physicians or toxicology tests, the case is reported to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). These cases are then investigated by DCFS to verify the child's prenatal exposure to either alcohol or illegal substances. Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, 96 of Illinois' 102 counties reported at least one case of a substance-exposed infant.

Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, 17 cases of substance-exposed infants were reported in Coles County. During the same period, 11 of those cases were verified (Figure 17).

Figure 17

Substance-Exposed Infants, Reported and Verified Cases in Coles County



Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

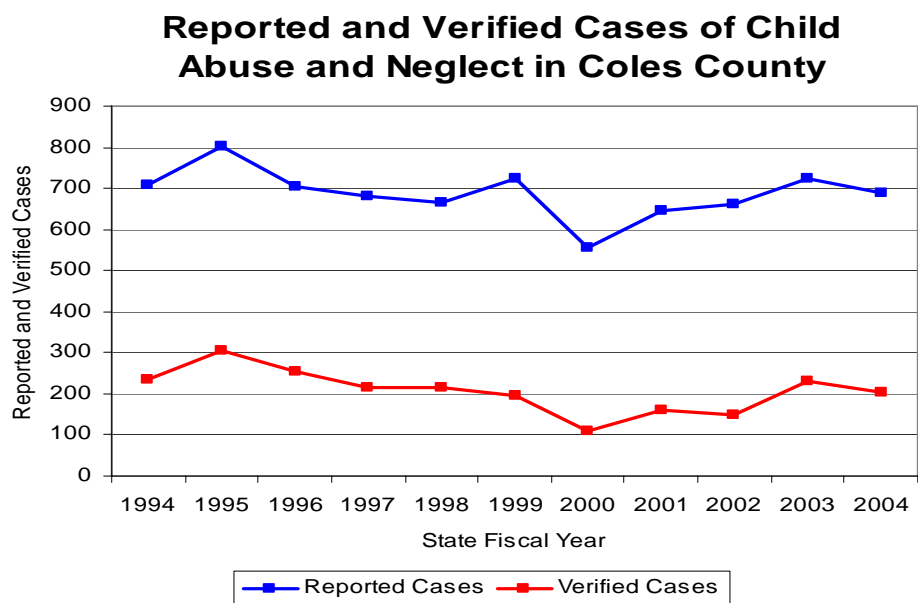
Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of reported cases of substance-exposed infants in the other rural counties decreased 16 percent, from 75 to 63, while the number of verified cases of substance-exposed infants decreased 19 percent, from 53 to 43.

Child Abuse and Neglect Cases Reported and Verified in Coles County

Recent research on the relationship between maltreatment of youth and delinquency has revealed an important distinction between child maltreatment and adolescent maltreatment. Using data from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention’s Program of Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency, researchers have found that youth that were abused during childhood (12 years of age or less) were no more likely to become delinquent than youth who were not abused, but youth who were abused during adolescence (after age 12) were significantly more likely to be delinquent.¹ While prior child abuse may not be linked to juvenile delinquency, studies examining prior child abuse have shown that childhood victimization may be linked to other poor outcomes in youth, including low academic achievement, teenage parenthood (particularly for females), drug use, and symptoms of mental illness.² Additionally, research examining adolescent victimization (including physical and sexual assaults) and adult outcomes has found a correlation between previous victimization and substance abuse, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder in adulthood.³ In Illinois, DCFS investigates reported cases of child abuse.

Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of child abuse and neglect cases reported in Coles County decreased 3 percent, from 709 to 687 (Figure 17). During that same period, 2,272 cases, or 30 percent of all cases reported, were verified by a DCFS investigation. Verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Coles County decreased 14 percent between SFYs 1994 and 2004, from 236 to 204.

Figure 18



Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

¹ Thornberry, Terence P., David Huizinga and Rolf Loeber. 2004. “The Causes and Correlates Studies: Findings and Policy Implications.” *Juvenile Justice Journal*, 9:1. Washington, D.C. : U.S. Government Printing Office.

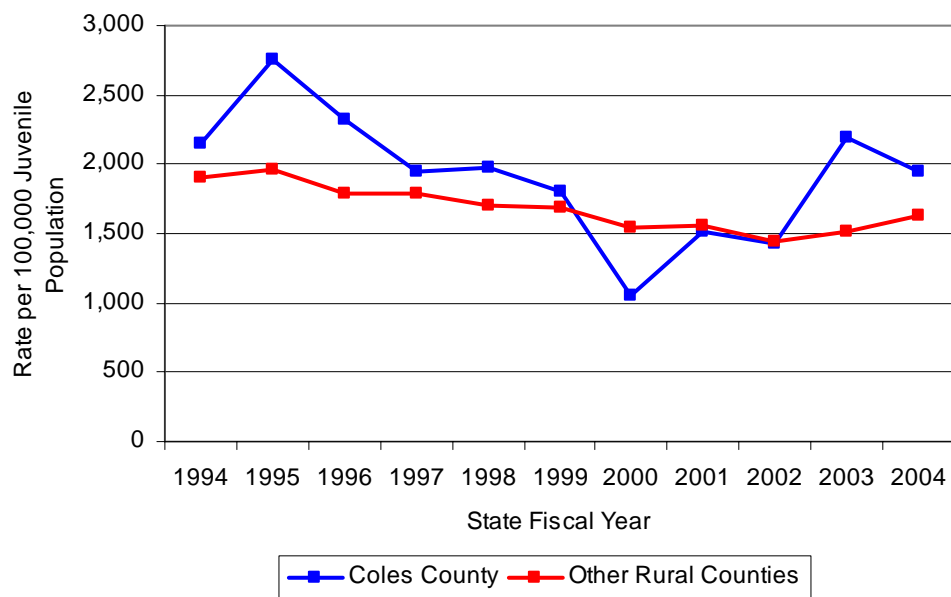
² Kelly, B., Thornberry, T. and Smith, C. 1997. “In the Wake of Childhood Maltreatment.” *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

³ Menard, S. 2002. 2002. “Short and Long-Term Consequences of Adolescent Victimization.” *Youth Research Bulletin*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Coles County decreased 10 percent from 2,152 to 1,947 per 100,000 juveniles (Figure 18). During the same period, the rate of verified child abuse and neglect cases decreased 15 percent in the other rural counties, from 1,903 to 1,627 per 100,000 juveniles. In SFY 2004, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Coles County was 20 percent higher than in the other rural counties.

Figure 19

Rate of Verified Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect, Coles and All Other Rural Counties



Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and U.S. Census Bureau data

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Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

120 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 1016
Chicago, Illinois 60606
Telephone: 312-793-8550
TDD: 312-793-4170
Fax: 312-793-8422
www.icjia.state.il.us



Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor
Sheldon Sorosky, Chairman
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