



# ***Alameda County Youth in the Department of Juvenile Justice***

**DRAFT**

*April 2021*



***Prepared by  
Impact Justice  
in partnership with  
Alameda County***



## **Introduction**

In September 2020, California’s Senate Bill 823 (SB 823) was approved, setting in motion the plan to eliminate the centralized Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities and start the transfer of youth committed at DJJ from the state to local jurisdictions. In this context, Alameda County’s juvenile justice stakeholders sought to identify relevant characteristics of local youth sentenced to DJJ who would be impacted by SB 823. To inform this process, Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD) provided Impact Justice with archival data from youth who were adjudicated to custody at DJJ as of March 2021.

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### ***Topics covered in this report:***

***Target Population***  
***Primary Offenses***  
***Prior System Contact***  
***Risk & Needs Assessment***

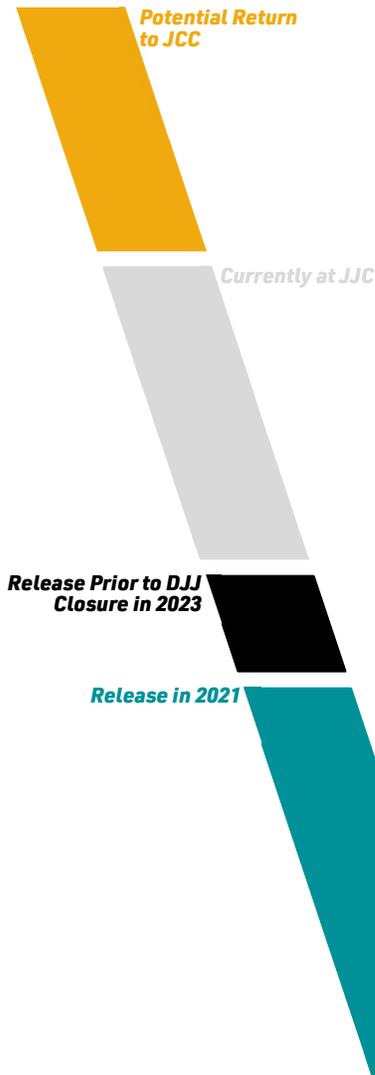
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# Target Population

As of March 2021, there were 21 youth from Alameda County committed to the California Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). This represents the total number of youth currently committed to DJJ, with the earliest commitment registered in 2014.

The current DJJ population is the focus of this report. This includes youth set to be released into the community in 2021, youth currently at the Juvenile Justice Center (JJC), youth who could potentially return to the JJC, and youth set to be released into the community prior to DJJ closure in 2023.

Alameda County currently has a total of 55 youth detained in the JJC, including 44 youth (80%), who are pending resolution of 707(b) offenses.



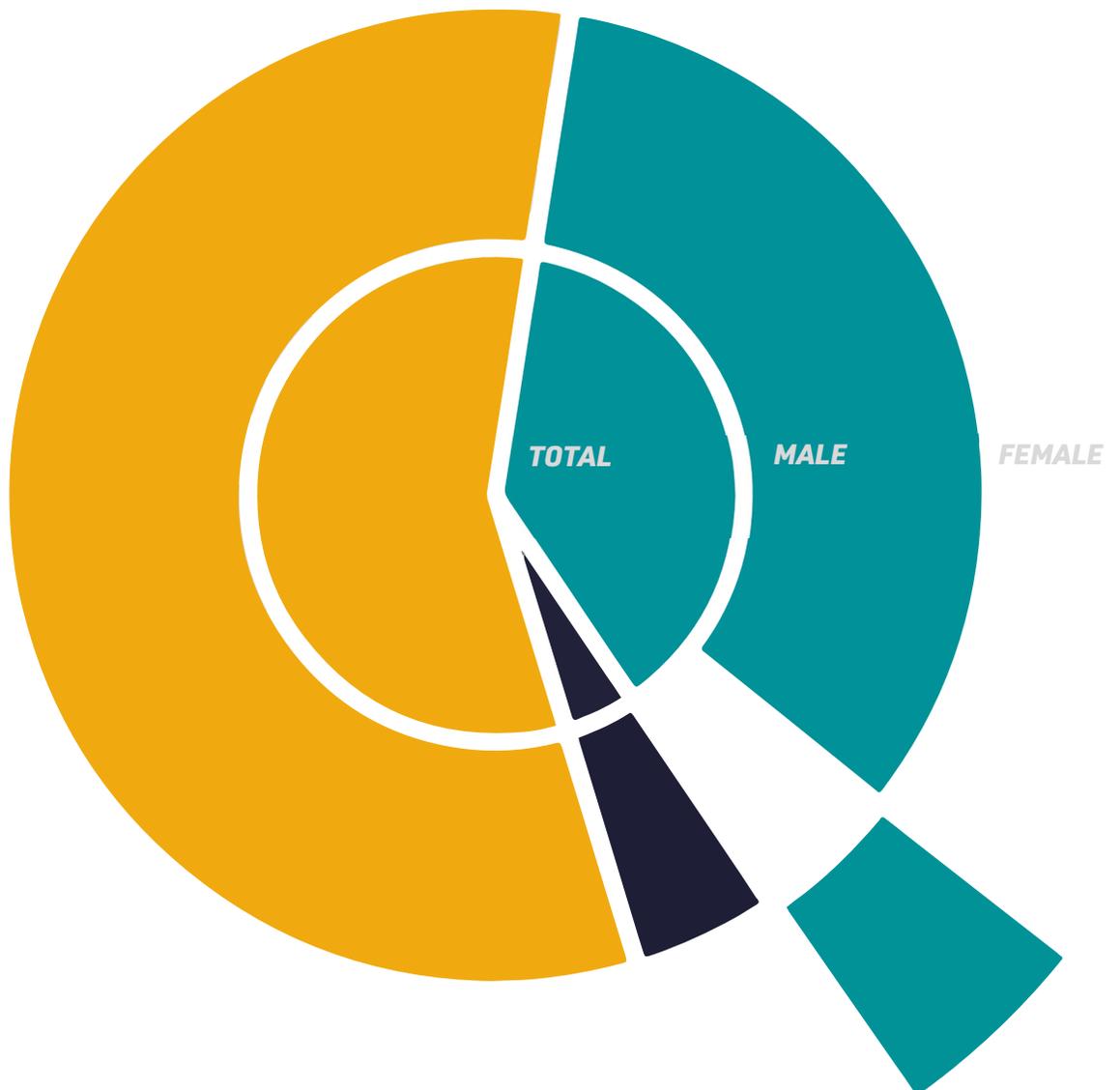
<i>DJJ Status</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>%</i>
<b>Release in 2021</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>38%</b>
<i>Currently at JJC</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>29%</i>
<b>Potential return to JJC</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Release prior to DJJ closure in 2023</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100%</b>

Youth’s age at commitment ranged from 14 to 25 years old with a mean age of 18.9. Male youth comprised most of the population (20 youth or 95%) of all youth currently at DJJ, compared to one female youth (5%). In terms of primary race/ethnicity, youth of color were disproportionately committed to DJJ. Specifically,

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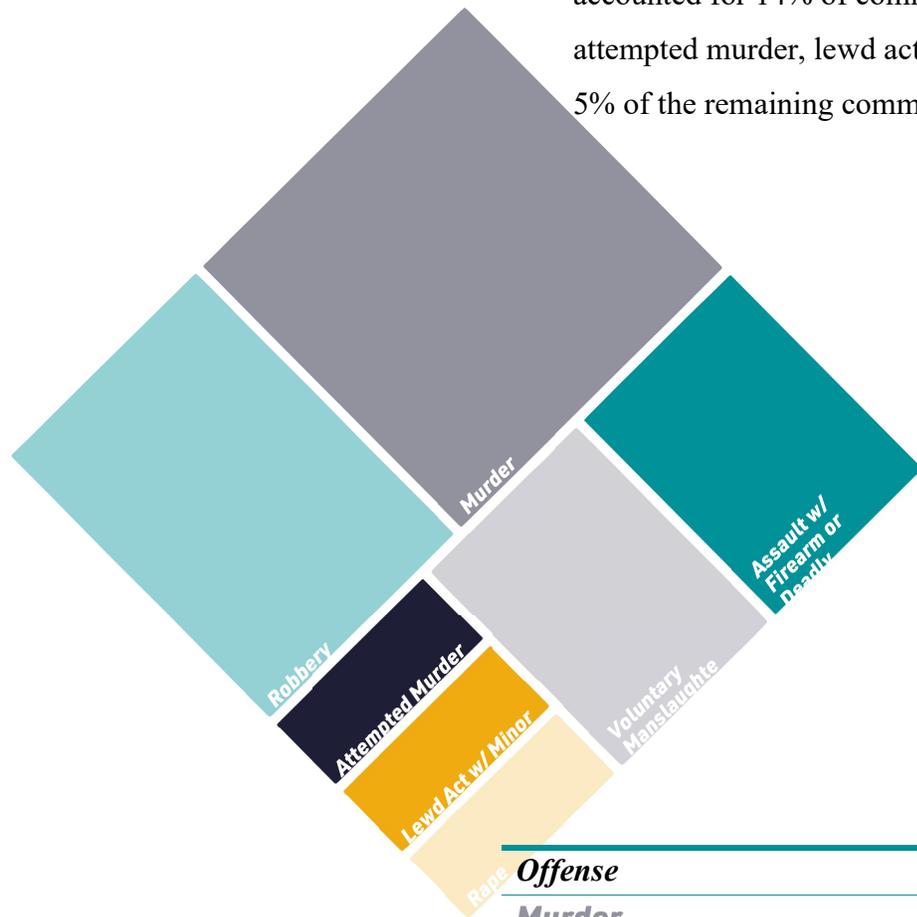
almost three in five youth were Black (57%), 38% were Hispanic, and 5% were Asian.

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Asian</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Female</i>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Male</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Total</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>21</b>



## Primary Offenses

All of the youth committed (100%) to DJJ had WIC-707(b) offenses. The most common offenses were murder (33%) and robbery (24%). Youth committed for assault with a firearm or a deadly weapon and voluntary manslaughter each accounted for 14% of commitments. Youth committed for attempted murder, lewd act with a minor, and rape each made up 5% of the remaining commitments.



<i>Offense</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>%</i>
<b>Murder</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Robbery</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Assault w/ firearm or deadly weapon</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Voluntary manslaughter</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Attempted murder</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Lewd act w/ minor</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Rape</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **Prior System Contact**

### **Referrals to Probation**

Prior to DJJ commitment, youth had an average of 5 referrals to Probation. Almost half (48%) had up to 3 referrals while approximately 24% had 7 or more referrals. The average age at first referral was 14 years old. About 43% were 13 or younger at their first referral while 19% were 17 or older.

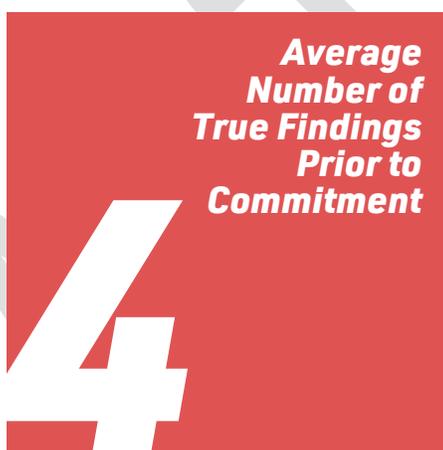
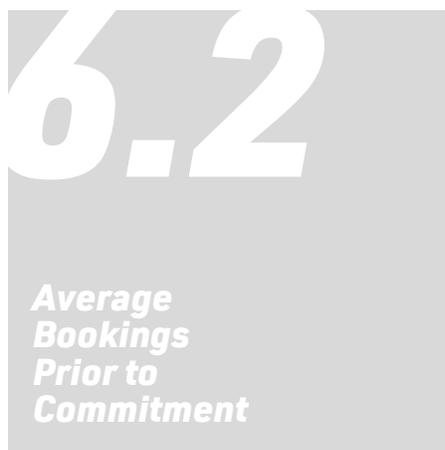
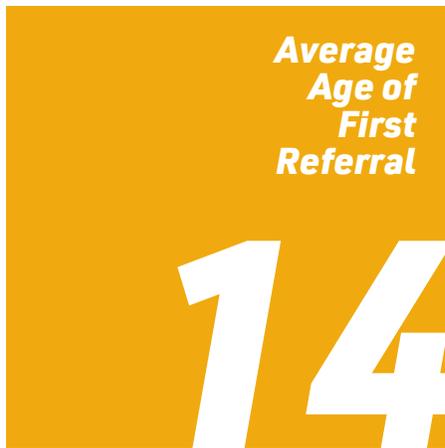
The average span of time between a youth's first referral and DJJ commitment was 4.4 years. Significantly, no youth went from first referral to DJJ commitment in under one year, and only 2 youth (9.5%) went from first referral to DJJ commitment in under 2 years. The offenses for these two youth were murder and lewd act with a minor.

### **Bookings into Custody**

Before the DJJ commitment, youth were booked into custody on average 6.2 times, with 24% of youth having 10 or more bookings prior to commitment.

### **True Findings on Charges**

On average, before their DJJ commitment youth had 4 true findings (i.e., formal finding by the court that the youth was involved in a delinquent act). Approximately 1 in 3 (33%) youth had 5 or more true findings before the DJJ commitment.



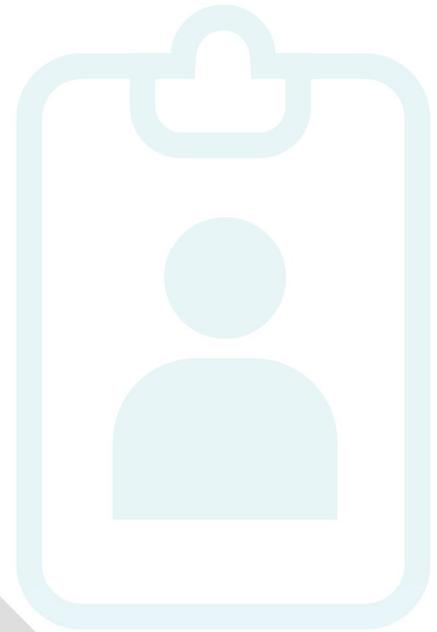
## TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ **Archival data pertaining to youth's contact with the system indicate long-sustained involvement with the juvenile justice system prior to their commitment to DJJ**
- ✓ **Youth's first contact with the system starts at a fairly young age; almost half (48%) of all youth had their first referral to Probation at 14 years or younger**
- ✓ **These findings highlight the need to concentrate efforts and allocate resources specifically focused on prevention strategies in order to disrupt pathways that lead to deeper system involvement**

## **Risk & Needs Assessment**

Youth in Alameda County Probation are assessed using the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) prior to disposition. The YLS/CMI is a validated assessment tool that was developed to assess the level of risk for antisocial behaviors for youth who have committed offenses. Specifically, the YLS/CMI assesses eight categories of risk factors associated with recidivism and need factors. The scoring of risk factors provides an estimate of the overall risk of likelihood for future offending. The overall risk score ranges from 1 to 5 and is categorized into four risk categories: low, moderate, high, or very high.

The YLS/CMI assists youth workers to identify the youth's needs, strengths, barriers and incentives, select the most appropriate goals for the youth, and produce an effective case management plan. Additionally, the results of the risk and needs assessment are considered in making a recommendation to the Court regarding Probation in the youth's home, placement in Camp, or placement facility.



Out of the 21 youth from Alameda County currently in DJJ, a total of 19 youth (90%) took part in this risk and needs assessment process using the YLS/CMI and Converted YLS. In terms of the overall risk classification, 42% of youth assessed were rated as **HIGH** or **VERY HIGH** risk, while another 42% were rated as **MODERATE**. The table below displays youth's average risk scores for each of the main risk and needs domains.

### **AVERAGE SCORE FOR RISK & NEEDS DOMAINS**

<i>Domain</i>	<i>Average Score</i>
<i>Family Circumstances/Parenting</i>	<b>3.58</b>
<i>Peer Relations</i>	<b>3.47</b>
<i>Prior and Current Offenses/Dispositions</i>	<b>2.79</b>
<i>Attitudes/Orientation</i>	<b>2.58</b>
<i>Education/Employment</i>	<b>2.53</b>
<i>Personality/Behavior</i>	<b>1.95</b>
<i>Leisure/Recreation</i>	<b>1.89</b>
<i>Substance Abuse</i>	<b>1.84</b>

The following table shows the number of youth that scored as **HIGH** and **MODERATE** for each of the main risk and need domains.

### **HIGH/MODERATE SCORES FOR RISK & NEEDS DOMAINS**

<i>Domain</i>	<i>Score</i>	
	<i>High</i>	<i>Moderate</i>
<i>Attitudes/Orientation</i>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>Education/Employment</i>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>Family Circumstances/Parenting</i>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>Leisure/Recreation</i>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>Prior &amp; Current Offenses/Disposition</i>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>Personality/Behavior</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>
<i>Peer Relations</i>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Substance Abuse</i>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>