

Juvenile and Adult Court Data
Year 15
Fast Track Project Technical Report
Jennifer Godwin
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Citation

Instrument:
Court Records Manual (2001)

Report:
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<http://www.fasttrackproject.org/>.

Data Sources

Raw:

jcd_unscored_adj (one record for each adjudication date)
jcd_unscored_off (one record for each offense, multiple records per adjudication date)

Scored: jcd

I. Scale Description

This measure captures crimes for which study youth were arrested, adjudicated, diverted at the intake level, or brought before the magistrate. Each record in the unscored adjudication dataset represents a court case. If a study youth has not had contact with the court system, he or she still has one observation in the dataset and the adjudication date for that record is coded as “skip”.

For each court case, details about each offense are coded as well as information about the sentencing associated with the case. The variables include:

A. Type of Court (jcd6)

This variable captures whether the case was from the juvenile or adult court system.

B. Date of Adjudication (jcd8)

This variable captures the date on which the youth’s case was adjudicated. If a youth was diverted before coming to court or after he appeared in front of magistrate, this variable captures the intake date or the date the youth appeared before the magistrate.

C. Offense Name (jcd9, jcd19, jcd29, jcd39, jcd49, jcd59, jcd69, jcd79, jcd89, jcd99)

These variables capture the name of each offense as reported in the court documents.

D. Crime Sum (jcd10, jcd20, jcd30, jcd40, jcd50, jcd60, jcd70, jcd80, jcd90, jcd100)

Multiple charges are often associated with the same crime. For example, a child who kidnapped someone and took him to a certain place, by the threat of a gun, and stole his wallet, using the victim's car will most likely receive the following charges: kidnapping, armed robbery, possession of a stolen vehicle and operating a motor vehicle without a license. All these offenses could be treated as one because they were committed in the context of one crime, or they could be considered separate crimes because they are separate offenses. Offenses within the same adjudication date that occurred on the same date will be given the same value for "crime sum" starting with 1 for offenses on the first date.

These variables have not been used in Fast Track data analyses thus far and therefore the accuracy of these variables should be double-checked prior to use.

E. Offense Type (jcd11, jcd21, jcd31, jcd41, jcd51, jcd61, jcd71, jcd81, jcd91, jcd101):

These variables describe the type of offenses committed.

These variables have not been used in Fast Track data analyses thus far and therefore the accuracy of these variables should be double-checked prior to use.

1 = People Crimes:

- homicide, first and second degree
- manslaughter
- assault
- simple assault or affray (show of force sufficient to place another in reasonable fear of immediate physical harm)
- kidnapping
- false imprisonment (restrains or detains a person without person's consent)
- armed robbery and attempted armed robbery
- forcible sexual offense (sexual act other than intercourse, by force)
- rape and statutory rape (vaginal intercourse, regardless of gender, with a child under 13)
- taking indecent liberties between children (act is done with purpose of arousing or gratifying sexual desire willfully and a lewd or lascivious act is done between children; perpetrator is less than 16 and victim at least 5 years younger)
- crime against nature (consent and age of victim is irrelevant; does not include 'natural' heterosexual act)
- hit and run involving a person
- communicating threats
- harassing phone calls
- common-law robbery (larceny is committed by violence or intimidation)
- first-degree arson (intentional fire of building when someone is in it)

2 = Property Crimes:

- setting fire to grass, brushlands and woodlands
- reckless burning of a building or vehicle
- second degree arson
- breaking and entering
- breaking and entering a motor vehicle
- first-degree burglary \
- grand larceny
- felony larceny

- larceny
- possession of stolen vehicle
- possession of stolen goods shoplifting (conceals goods of a store without authority without having purchased the goods while still on premises)
- trespassing
- injury of personal and real property
- altering or removing a serial # from a car
- hit and run involving property
- vandalism
- malicious mischief
- reckless burning of building or vehicle

3 = Weapon Crimes:

- manufacture, possession etc., of sawed-off shotgun or weapon of mass destruction (includes explosives, incendiaries, poison gas, or radioactive material, weapons with projectiles, fully automatic firearms, shotguns and rifles of certain length and barrel length, mufflers or silencers, or parts from which one of these weapons could be assembled)
- carrying a concealed weapon (carries willfully and concealed a deadly weapon like knife and razor or a handgun without a permit)
- possession of firearm by minor (minor possesses or carries a firearm)
- possession of weapons other than firearms and explosives on school grounds (BB gun, stun gun, knife, razors, and razor blades; box cutter probably fall in here)

4 = Drug Crimes:

- possession of counterfeit controlled substance with intent to sell or deliver
- possession of controlled substance regardless of Schedule with intent to manufacture, sell or deliver
- sale or delivery of controlled substance regardless of Schedule
- possession of controlled substance regardless of Schedule

5 = Public Order Crimes:

- resist, delay or obstruct a police officer
- obstruction of justice
- disorderly conduct in public building or by disrupting students\
- intoxicated and disruptive in public
- failing to stop for a police vehicle
- speeding to elude arrest
- prison breach and escape from county or municipal confinement facilities or officers
- possession of gambling paraphernalia

6 = Status Crimes (behavior that is unlawful for children, even though it is legal for adults):

- truant
- runaway
- disobeys parents (incorrigible)
- curfew violation
- alcohol possession by minor

7 = Traffic Crimes:

- operating a MV without wearing a seatbelt
- operating a MV without a license
- fail to stop at a stop sign
- speeding
- reckless driving
- reckless endangerment

F. Severity Codes (jcd12r, jcd22r, jcd32r, jcd42r, jcd52r, jcd62r, jcd72r, jcd82r, jcd92r, jcd102r):

These variables capture the severity of the offenses. These variables have been used in previous Fast Track analyses and have been double-checked for accuracy. The accurate versions of these variables end with an "r".

5 = Violent Crimes:

These are crimes where actual serious harm or the threat thereof to someone's physical or mental well being was perpetrated and the intent of the perpetrator is to hurt. Examples include:

- Aggravated Robbery
- Murder
- Rape
- Kidnapping
- Sex Offenses
- Aggravated Assault
- Aggravated Child Abuse
- Armed Robbery
- Arson in the 1st
- Assault in the 1st
- Armed with dangerous weapon intent to kill and injure
- Sex Abuse

4 = Severe Crimes:

These are crimes where no serious harm to a person is done but the potential for serious harm is high and the intent to harm is not clear. Examples include:

- assault in 2nd and 3rd
- domestic violence
- 1st degree and aggravated burglary
- assault with a deadly weapon
- Aid and Abet Kidnapping or Armed Robbery
- assault on government official
- Arson - less than 1st degree
- carjack
- child pornography
- robbery
- weapon possession with intent
- robbery
- discharging weapon

- false imprisonment
- child abuse
- bomb threat

3 = *Medium Severity Crimes:*

These are crimes which do not involve serious harm to a person but the potential for harm may be present. For example, a larceny or robbery when a weapon is not involved is a medium severity crime. Most property crimes will go in this category. Examples include:

- 1st degree theft
- aggravated trespassing
- arson unoccupied building
- assault in 4th or no distinction
- auto theft
- burglary less than first degree
- burning unoccupied building
- carry a concealed weapon
- child neglect/endangerment
- communicating threats/terrorist threats
- DUI
- escape
- evading arrest
- felony breaking and entering
- felony embezzlement
- felony larceny
- felony theft
- forgery
- harassment
- identity theft
- inciting a riot
- larceny of firearm
- possession with intent to manufacture or sell
- prostitution
- simple affray

2 = *Low Severity Crimes:*

These are crimes that do not involve people or threaten harm to people. Examples include:

- misdemeanor larceny
- breaking and entering
- misdemeanor breaking and entering
- Trespassing
- possession of controlled substance
- contributing to delinquency of minor
- contributing to delinquency of minor
- criminal mischief
- vandalism
- disorderly conduct
- embezzlement - misdemeanor

- evidence tampering
- joy riding
- obstruct law enforcement officer
- possession of stolen goods
- resisting arrest
- theft
- bail jumping

1 = Least Serious Crimes:

These are status offenses or traffic offenses. Examples include:

- purchase/possession/consumption of alcohol/tobacco by minor
- curfew violation
- delinquent minor
- littering
- loitering
- public consumption
- runaway
- truancy

G. Docket Number (jcd13, jcd23, jcd33, jcd43, jcd53, jcd63, jcd73, jcd83, jcd93, jcd103):

These variables capture the docket number assigned to each offense.

H. Date of offense (jcd14, jcd24, jcd34, jcd44, jcd54, jcd64, jcd74, jcd84, jcd94, jcd104):

These variables capture the date each offense was committed.

I. Offense Reduced to (jcd15, jcd25, jcd35, jcd45, jcd55, jcd65, jcd75, jcd85, jcd95, jcd105):

If an offense was reduced before or at the trial, these variables capture the new, reduced sentence.

J. Reduced Offense Type (jcd16, jcd26, jcd36, jcd46, jcd56, jcd66, jcd76, jcd86, jcd96, jcd106):

These variables capture the type of crime committed for those offenses that were reduced.

These variables have not been used in Fast Track data analyses thus far and therefore the accuracy of these variables should be double-checked prior to use.

K. Reduced Offense Severity Code (jcd17r, jcd27r, jcd37r, jcd47r, jcd57r, jcd67r, jcd77r, jcd87r, jcd97r, jcd107r):

These variables capture the severity of the reduced offense. These variables have been used in previous Fast Track analyses and have been double-checked for accuracy. The accurate versions of these variables end with an "r".

L. Disposition (jcd18, jcd28, jcd38, jcd48, jcd58, jcd68, jcd78, jcd88, jcd98, jcd108):

These variables capture the disposition the youth received for the offense (g=guilty, ng=not guilty, d-diverted, c=dismissed, p=postponed and m=missing).

M. Details regarding the Sentence (jcd109-jcd152):

These variables capture details regarding the youth's sentence if adjudicated or diverted. These details include type and length of sentence.

II. Report Sample

The explanatory analyses in this report are conducted on the Cohort 1 Normative (n=387) and high-risk Control samples (n=155, N=463 with overlap) in year 15. In Year 15, the study participants are considered adults by the court system. Therefore, all court records are public information and national searches eliminate any missing data.

III. Scaling

From the original unscored adjudication dataset, an unscored offense level dataset was created. Each offense from the original adjudication level dataset becomes an observation in this new unscored dataset (jcd_unscored_off).

From this offense level dataset, a scored dataset is constructed with one observation for each study child. First, probation violations and minor traffic violations are omitted due to potential inconsistencies in reporting across sites. Then only the most severe offense from each adjudication date was retained to avoid inflating the number of offenses committed.

Summary variables were constructed to capture information about the most severe offenses across all adjudication records in a given year. The summary scales are first separated by severity level and then combined across severity levels.

In addition to summary measures capturing offenses within a single study year, lifetime summary scales are also created.

The following scales were created:

- Number of Severity 1 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15aa1)
- Number of Severity 2 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15aa2)
- Number of Severity 3 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15aa3)
- Number of Severity 4 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15aa4)
- Number of Severity 5 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15aa5)

- Severity Weighted Adult Arrest Index Year 15 (jcd15aix)

- Lifetime Number of Severity 1 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15al1)
- Lifetime Number of Severity 2 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15al2)
- Lifetime Number of Severity 3 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15al3)
- Lifetime Number of Severity 4 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15al4)
- Lifetime Number of Severity 5 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15al5)

- Lifetime Severity Weighted Adult Arrest Index Year 15 (jcd15ail)

IV. Differences between Groups

T-tests for equality of means were conducted between the high-risk Control and the low-risk Normative samples for the scales.

In Year 15, the high-risk Control sample exhibited statistically significantly higher means at the 5 percent level or less on the following scales:

- Number of Severity 2 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15aa2)
- Number of Severity 3 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15aa3)
- Number of Severity 4 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15aa4)
- Number of Severity 5 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15aa5)

- Severity Weighted Adult Arrest Index Year 15 (jcd15aix)

- Lifetime Number of Severity 2 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15al2)
- Lifetime Number of Severity 3 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15al3)
- Lifetime Number of Severity 4 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15al4)
- Lifetime Number of Severity 5 Adult Arrests in Year 15 (jcd15al5)

- Lifetime Severity Weighted Adult Arrest Index Year 15 (jcd15ail)

Comparison of Means for Normative and Control for Continuous Scored Variables								
Variable		Normative		Control		t Value	DF	Pr > t
		Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev			
Number of Sev1 Adult Arrests in Yr15	jcd15aa1	0.02	0.13	0.02	0.14	0.01	461	0.99
Number of Sev2 Adult Arrests in Yr15	jcd15aa2	0.11	0.37	0.26	0.59	-4.71	461	<.0001
Number of Sev3 Adult Arrests in Yr15	jcd15aa3	0.13	0.48	0.21	0.66	-2.17	461	0.03
Number of Sev4 Adult Arrests in Yr15	jcd15aa4	0.05	0.31	0.10	0.45	-2.98	461	0.00
Number of Sev5 Adult Arrests in Yr15	jcd15aa5	0.01	0.13	0.06	0.34	-2.33	461	0.02
Sev Wgted Adult Arrest Index Yr15	jcd15aix	0.87	2.59	1.86	3.93	-4.9	461	<.0001
Lifetime Sev 1 Adult Arrests Yr15	jcd15al1	0.04	0.22	0.06	0.27	-0.66	461	0.51
Lifetime Sev 2 Adult Arrests Yr15	jcd15al2	0.39	0.94	0.75	1.47	-4.22	461	<.0001
Lifetime Sev 3 Adult Arrests Yr15	jcd15al3	0.42	1.12	0.73	1.45	-3.56	461	0.00
Lifetime Sev 4 Adult Arrests Yr15	jcd15al4	0.09	0.40	0.16	0.58	-2.77	461	0.01
Lifetime Sev 5 Adult Arrests Yr15	jcd15al5	0.10	0.49	0.20	0.72	-2.45	461	0.01
Lifetime Sev Wgted Adult Arrest Index Yr15	jcd15ail	2.94	6.36	5.41	8.57	-4.99	461	<.0001

V. Recommendations for Use

1. *Violations of Probation*

Probation violations were supposed to be recorded in the same record (adjudication date) as the original offense with the “crime sum” number corresponding to the original crime. Unfortunately, this was difficult in practice. The final scored dataset excludes probation violations due to inconsistencies in how they were recorded across time and sites.

2. *Diversion Issues*

If a youth who was given diversion does not fulfill all the diversion requirements and is then given additional ones, these diversions were supposed to be added to the original diversion requirements.

If a youth commits another crime while on diversion and he comes back to the intake officer or magistrate and it is decided to give him more diversion, a new record with a new intake date or magistrate appearance as the adjudication date was supposed to be entered.

Unfortunately, this practice was difficult to implement. This is part of the reason why Fast Track analyzes only the most severe offense within any adjudication date.