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December  
2004

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



## A Profile of the Christian County Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems



This project was supported by Grant # 02-DB-MU-0017, awarded to the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, coordinates the activities of the following programs, offices, and bureaus: Bureau of Justice Assistance, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime. Points of view or opinions contained within this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A number of organizations and individuals put a great deal of effort into the development of this document. The Authority's Research and Analysis Unit is very grateful for the assistance provided by the following organizations:

*Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts*  
*Illinois Department of Children and Family Services*  
*U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census*  
*Illinois Department of Corrections*  
*Illinois State Police*

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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

Christian County, located in central Illinois, covers an area of 709 square miles and had a 2003 population of 35,127, according to estimates by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census. Using these figures, Christian County was the 24<sup>th</sup> largest county in Illinois geographically, but 44<sup>th</sup> largest in terms of population. Combining these two measures, Christian County had the 50<sup>th</sup> highest population density per square mile among Illinois' 102 counties.

As with the previous reports, information specific to Christian 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, Christian County is one of Illinois' 66 rural counties. Throughout this report, the criminal justice activity trends experienced in Christian 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 Christian 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 Central Illinois Enforcement Group (CIEG) also serves Christian County. Throughout most of the period analyzed, there were 21 Metropolitan Enforcement Groups (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 Central Illinois Enforcement Group 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](http://www.icjia.state.il.us).

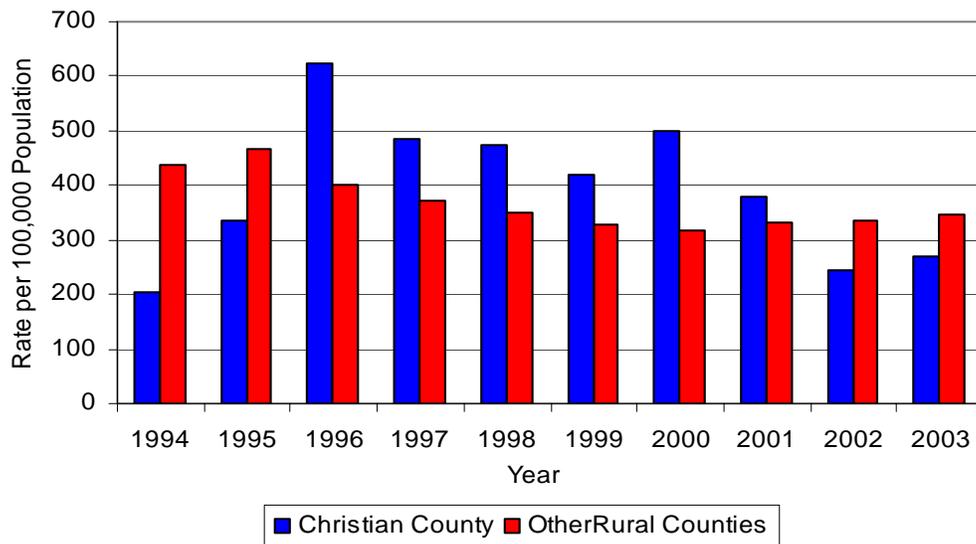
### *Violent Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Christian County*

The number of violent Index offenses reported to the police increased by 30 percent in Christian County between 1994 and 2003, from 73 to 95. As in previous years and in most other counties, aggravated assault offenses accounted for the majority (73 percent) of violent Index offenses reported in Christian County in 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the violent Index offense rate in Christian County has increased 31 percent from 206 to 270 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 1). During that same period, the violent Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 38 percent, from 438 to 347 offenses per 100,000 population. The 2003 violent Index offense rate in Christian County was 22 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 1**

### **Total Violent Index Offense Rates in Christian and Other Rural Counties**



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

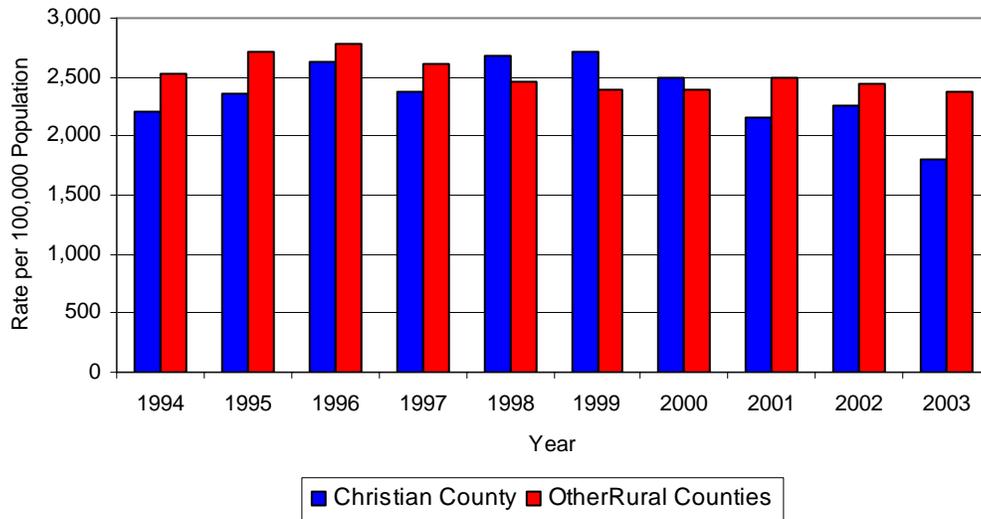
*Property Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Christian County*

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of property Index offenses reported to the police in Christian County decreased 20 percent, from 786 to 632. Thefts accounted for 78 percent of all property Index offenses reported in Christian County during 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the property Index offense rate in Christian County also decreased 19 percent, from 2,214 to 1,799 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 2). On the other hand, the property Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 6 percent, from 2,528 to 2,374 offenses per 100,000 population. Christian County's 2003 property Index offense rate was 24 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 2**

**Total Property Index Offense Rates in Christian and Other Rural Counties**



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

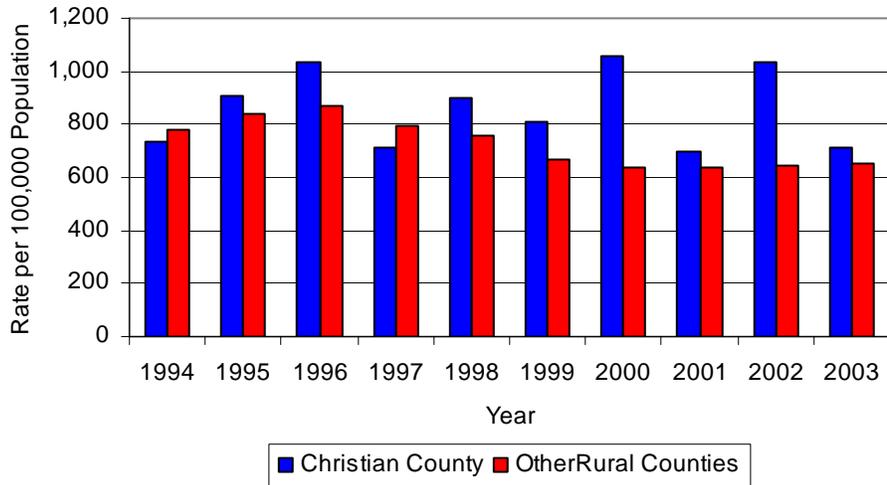
*Index Arrests by Christian County Law Enforcement Agencies*

Between 1994 and 2003, arrests for total Index offenses by law enforcement agencies in Christian County decreased 5 percent, from 262 to 250. The majority of Index arrests were for property Index offenses. Of the 250 Index arrests made in Christian County during 2003, 28 percent were for violent Index crimes and 72 percent were for property Index crimes. Arrests for theft and aggravated assault accounted for the majority of property and violent Index arrests in Christian County during 2003. Of all violent Index arrests, 73 percent were arrests for aggravated assault, while thefts accounted for 78 percent of all property Index arrests.

Between 1994 and 2003, the Index arrest rate in Christian County decreased 4 percent, from 738 to 712 arrests per 100,000 population (Figure 3). During the same period, the Index arrest rate in the other rural counties decreased 16 percent, from 783 to 655 arrests per 100,000 population. In 2003, Christian County's Index arrest rate was 9 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 3**

**Index Arrest Rates in Christian and Other Rural Counties**



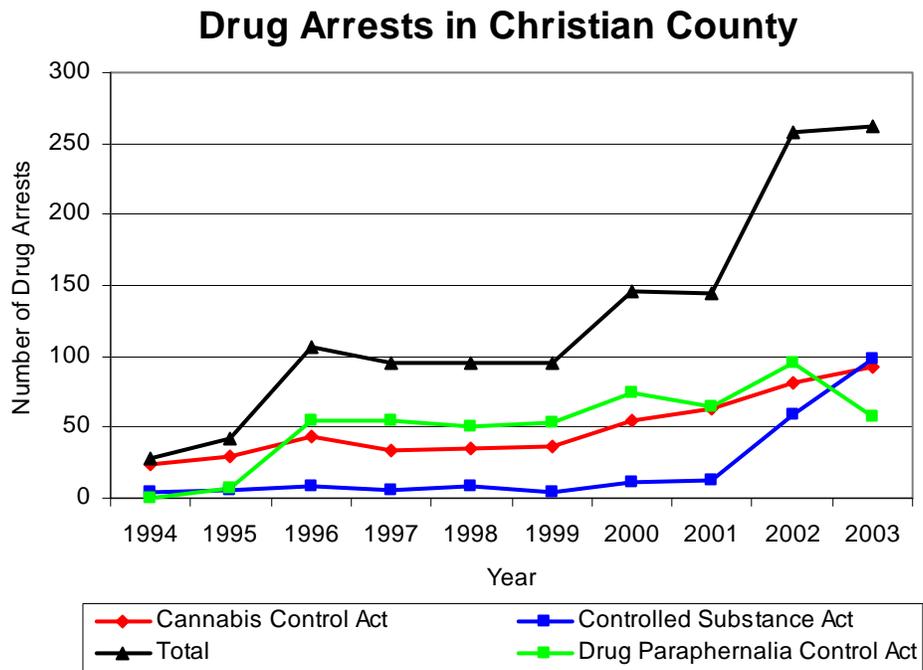
Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

### Drug Offense Arrests in Christian 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 36 nearly ten fold in Christian County, from 28 to 262 (Figure 4). Similar to other counties, total drug arrests in Christian County remained relatively stable between 1983 and the early 1990s, before jumping to a period high of 107 in 1996. Between 1996 and 1999, total drug offenses remained stable, but between 2000 and 2003, total drug offenses increased 79 percent, from 146 in 2000 to 262 in 2003. Drug Paraphernalia Control Act violations accounted for the majority of the increase in total drug arrests, increasing from zero arrests in 1994 to 58 arrests in 2003, or in other words, 22 percent of all drugs arrests in 2003.

During the period analyzed, arrests for violations of Illinois' Cannabis Control Act (which prohibits the possession, sale, and cultivation of cannabis) in Christian County 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) every year with the exception of 2003. Between 1994 and 2003, the number of arrests for violations of the Cannabis Control Act in Christian County increased from 24 to 93. Arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act remained relatively low and stable throughout most of the period analyzed, but increased drastically from 12 in 2001 to 98 in 2003 (Figure 4).

Figure 4

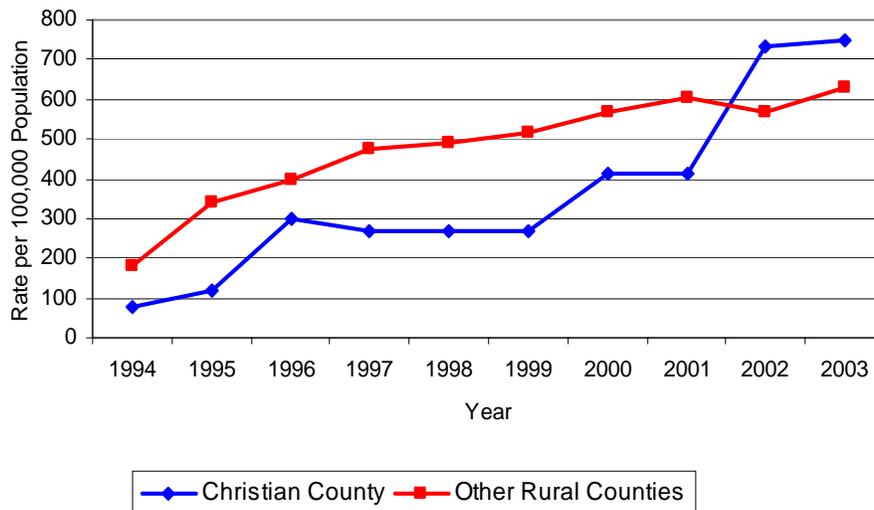


Source: Illinois State Police

Between 1994 and 2003, arrest rate for all drug law violations in Christian County also increased nearly ten-fold from 79 to 746 arrest per 100,000 population (Figure 5). The total drug arrest rate in the other rural counties increased nearly three fold between 1994 and 2003, from 183 to 630 arrests per 100,000 population. In 2003, the drug arrest rate in Christian County was 18 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 5**

### **Drug Arrest Rates in Christian and Other Rural Counties**



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

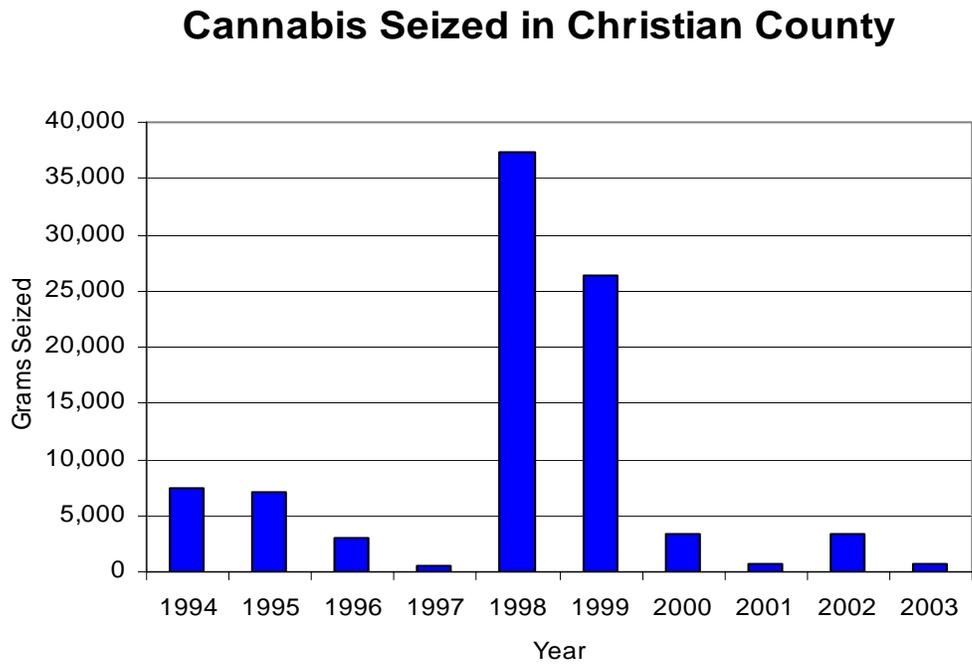
### **Drugs Seized in Christian County**

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 Christian County.

### *Cannabis Seized in Christian County*

Cannabis ranked second among drugs seized in Christian County (behind methamphetamine). Although there were large variations in the number of grams of cannabis seized between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in Christian County decreased dramatically, from 7,499 grams to 793 grams (Figure 6).

**Figure 6**



Source: Illinois State Police

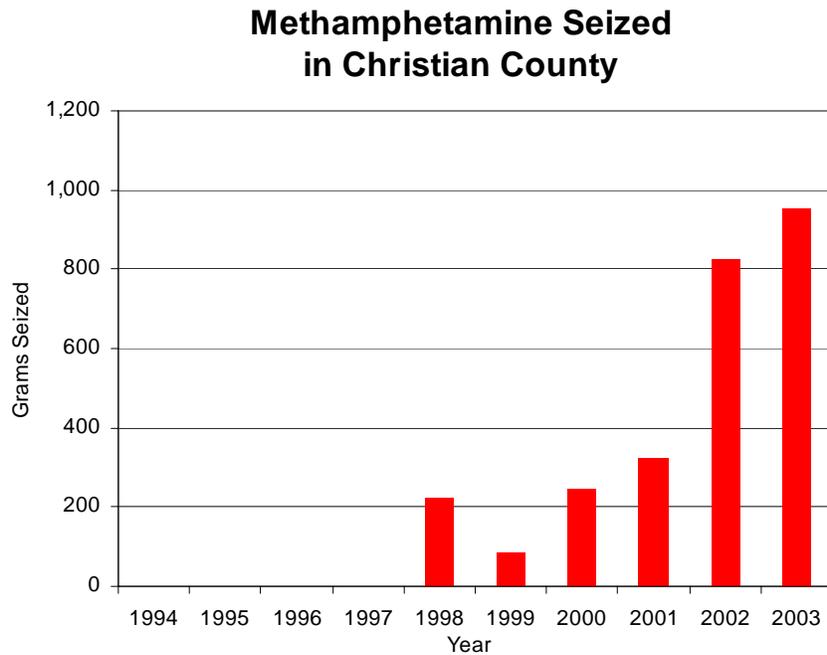
Between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in the other rural counties decreased 55 percent, from 606,650 grams to 271,850 grams. In 2003, Christian County had a cannabis seizure rate of 2,258 grams per 100,000 population, 86 percent lower than the other rural counties of 16,420 grams per 100,000 population.

### *Methamphetamine Seized in Christian County*

During the past decade, it is clear that methamphetamine “activity” in the state has increased dramatically 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 Christian County increased drastically from zero grams in 1994 to 953 grams in 2003 (Figure 7). Methamphetamine accounted for a substantial proportion of drugs seized in Christian County, accounting for 46 percent in 2003, compared to zero percent in 1994. Conversely, the quantity of powder cocaine seized in Christian County decreased dramatically, from 175 grams in 1994 to zero grams in 2003.

**Figure 7**



Source: Illinois State Police

The quantity of methamphetamine seized in the other rural counties also increased dramatically during the period analyzed, from 2,619 grams in 1994 to 13,217 grams in 2003, while powder cocaine and crack cocaine seized in the other rural counties decreased, from 71,279 grams 1994 to 15,170 grams in 2003. In 2003, 2,714 grams of methamphetamine were seized per 100,000 population in Christian County, nearly four times higher than the rate of 740 grams seized per 100,000 population in the other rural counties. In 2003, zero grams of powder cocaine seized per 100,000 population were seized in Christian County, compared to the rate of 789 grams of powder cocaine seized per 100,000 population in the other rural counties.

### **III. Adult and Juvenile Court Activity in Christian 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.

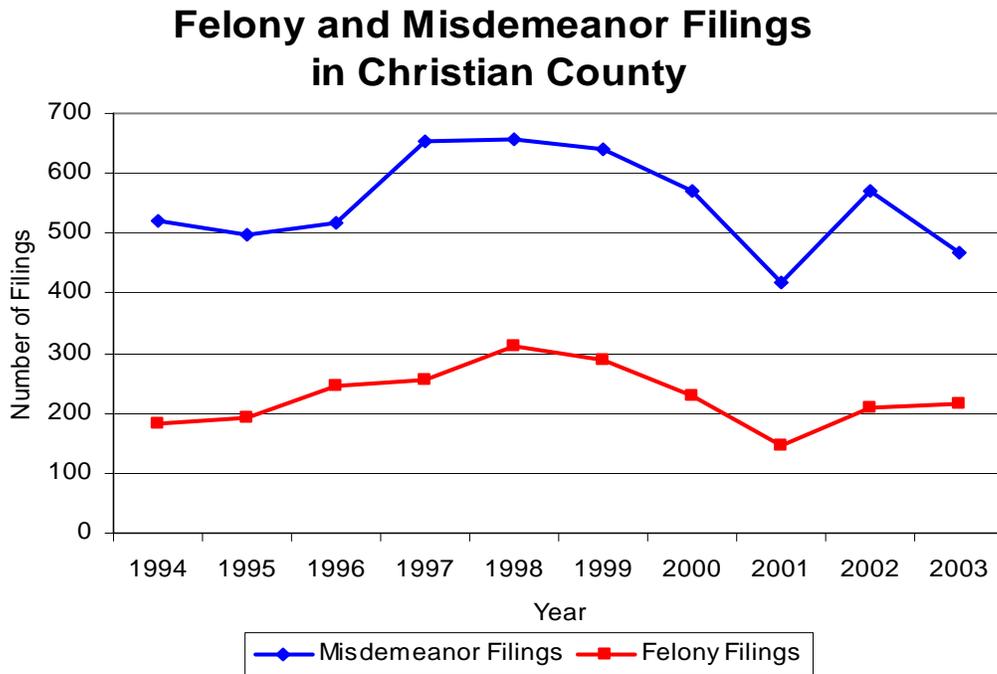
In Illinois, county probation departments are overseen by the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts' Probation Division. This section also presents data on active misdemeanor and felony adult caseloads and the number of juveniles under the supervision of the probation departments in Christian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

#### *Misdemeanor and Felony Filings in Christian 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 9 percent of all filings in Christian County’s courts (civil, traffic, family, and other). Between 1994 and 2003, the number of felony filings in Christian County increased 17 percent, from 184 to 216 (Figure 8). During the same period, misdemeanor filings decreased 10 percent, from 522 to 469. In 2003, misdemeanor filings out-numbered felony filings by more than two to one.

**Figure 8**

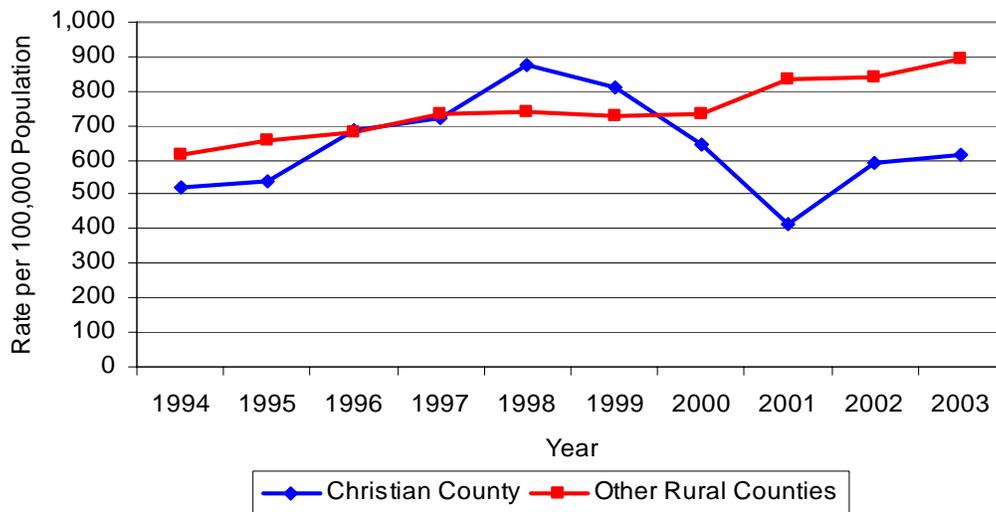


Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Between 1994 and 2003, the felony-filing rate in Christian County increased 19 percent, from 518 to 615 cases per 100,000 population (Figure 9). The felony-filing rate in the other rural counties also increased during this period, increasing 45 percent, from 616 to 895 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the felony-filing rate in Christian County was 31 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 9**

**Felony Filing Rates in Christian and Other Rural Counties**



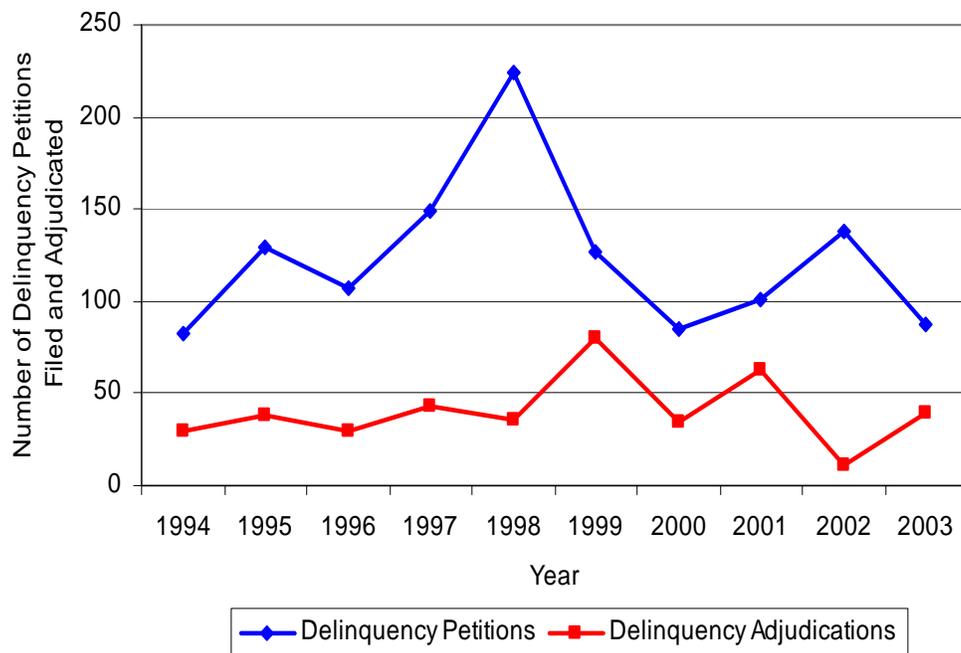
Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts and U.S. Census Bureau data

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 court process is somewhat less formal and non-adversarial; authorities are given much more latitude in determining the proper response 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 courts 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 “ad judicatory hearing” and “dispositional hearing” terms.

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of juvenile delinquency petitions filed in Christian County increased 6 percent from 83 to 88, while reaching a period high of 224 petitions filed in 1998 (Figure 10). In 2003, over one-half of the juveniles named in delinquency petitions were adjudicated delinquent. Between 1994 and 2003, delinquency adjudications increased 38 percent, from 29 to 40. The majority of cases not resulting in adjudication were continued under supervision.

**Figure 10**

### Juvenile Delinquency Petitions Filed and Adjudicated in Christian County



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

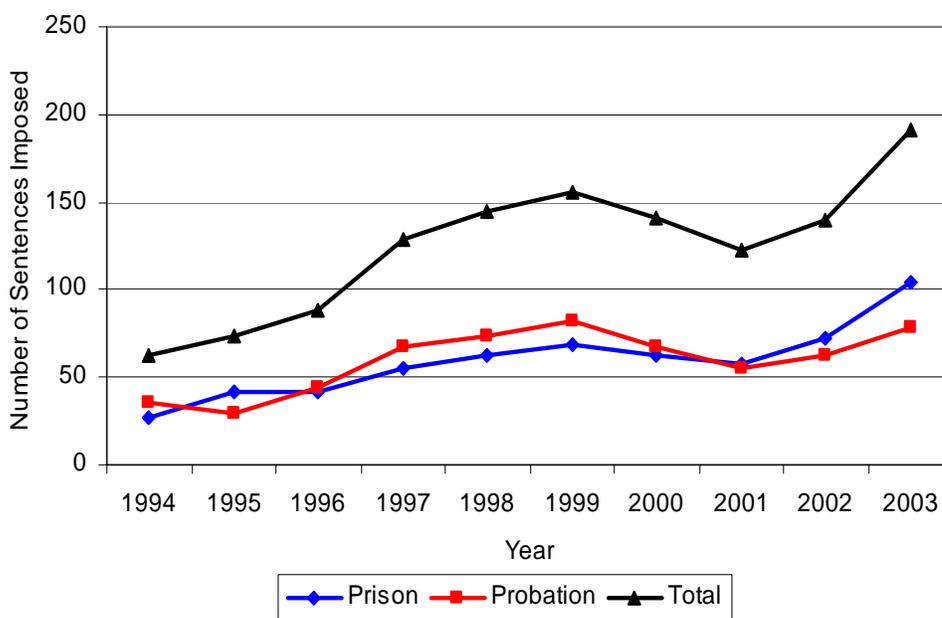
Between 1994 and 2003, the delinquency petition-filing rate in Christian County increased by 6 percent, from 2,355 to 2,504 petitions per 100,000 juveniles. During the same period, the delinquency petition-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 13 percent, from 2,005 to 2,261 petitions per 100,000 juveniles. In 2003, the delinquency petition rate in Christian County was 11 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 Christian County increased from 62 to 191 (Figure 11). The number of convicted felons sentenced to probation during this period more than doubled, from 35 to 79, while the number of convicted felons sentenced to prison increased nearly 4 times, from 27 to 104. In 2003, 41 percent of all convicted felons were sentenced to probation, compared to 56 percent in 1994. Between 1994 and 2003, the proportion of felons sentenced to prison increased from 44 percent to 54 percent. In 2003, 4 percent of convicted felons in Christian County were sentenced to something other than prison or probation.

**Figure 11**

### Sentences Imposed on Felons Convicted in Christian County



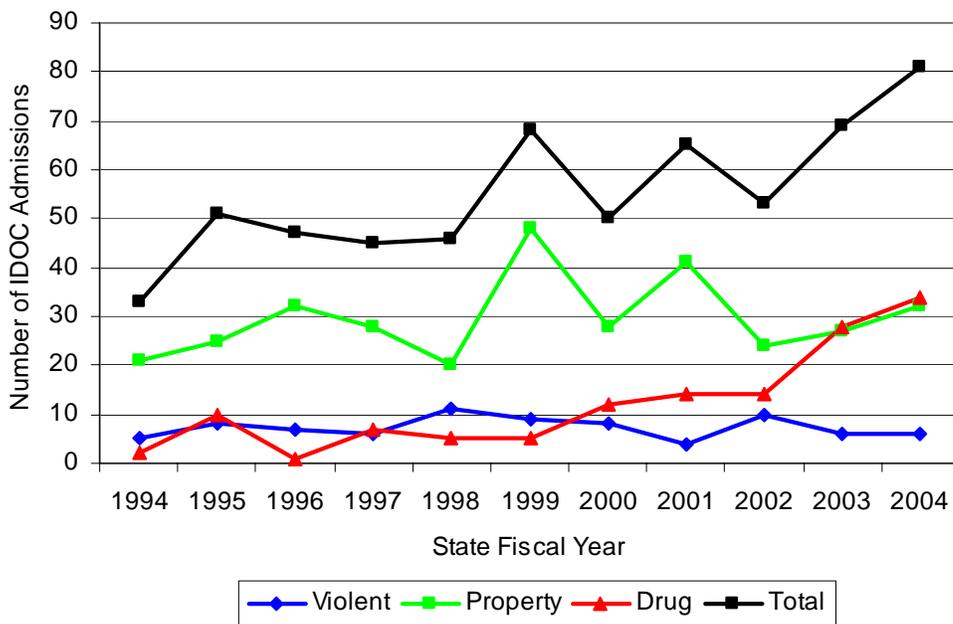
Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

## Adult Prison Admissions from Christian County

Between State Fiscal Years (SFYs) 1994 and 2004, the number of admissions to the Illinois Department of Corrections' Adult Division from Christian County more than doubled, from 33 to 81 (Figure 12). During this period, the number of violent, property, and drug offender admissions increased. The number of violent offender admissions increased from five in SFY 1994 to six in SFY 2004. While the number of property offenders admitted increased 52 percent, from 21 to 32, between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of drug offender admissions increased significantly from two to 32.

Figure 12

### IDOC New Court Commitments from Christian County, by Offense Type



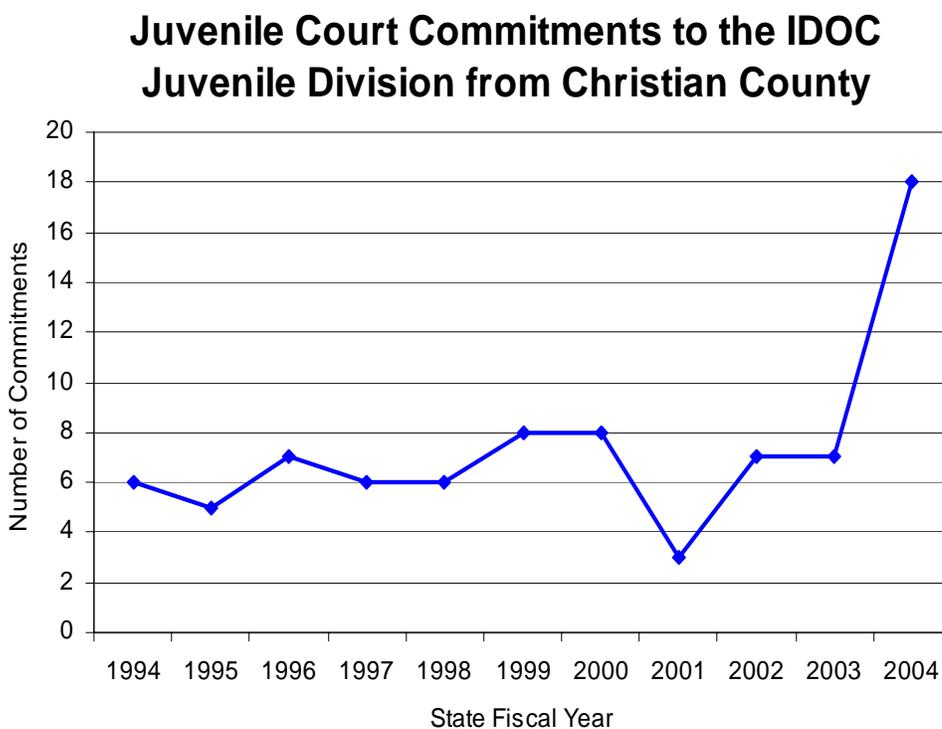
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

In SFY 2004, violent offenders accounted for 7 percent of all admissions from Christian County, compared to 15 percent in SFY 1994, while the proportion accounted for by property offenders decreased from 64 percent in SFY 1994 to 40 percent in SFY 2004. Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, drug offenders increased from 6 percent to 42 percent of all admissions from Christian County.

### 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 State Fiscal Years (SFYs) 1994 and 2004, the number of court commitments to the IDOC's Juvenile Division from Christian County tripled from six to 18 (Figure 13).

Figure 13



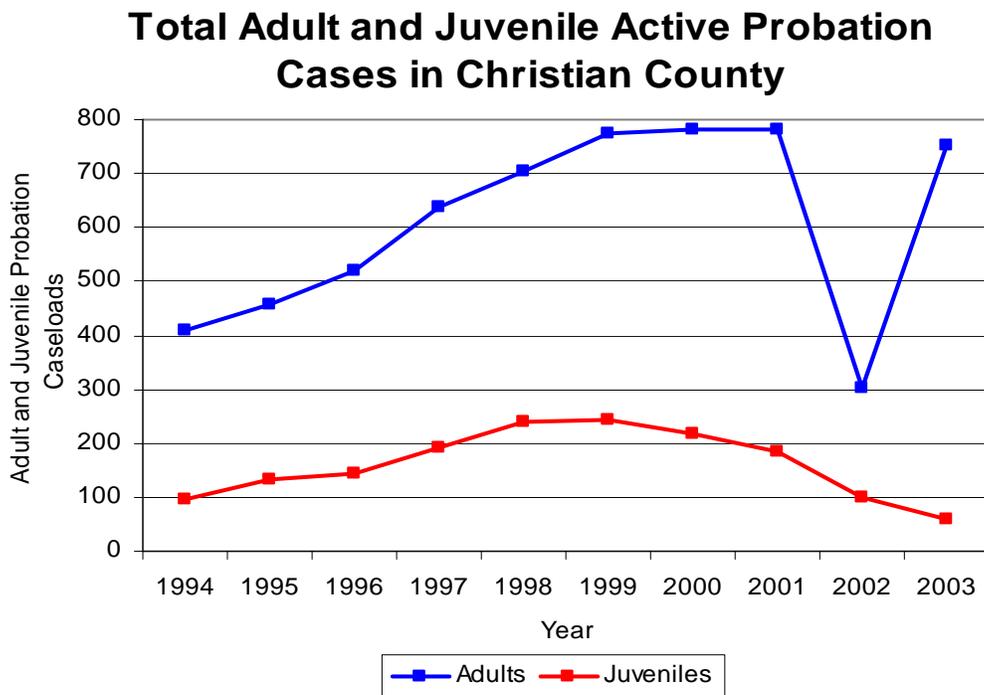
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

In SFY 2004, Christian County's rate of commitments to the IDOC's Juvenile Division of 574 commitments per 100,000 juveniles was more than twice the rate of 222 commitments per 100,000 juveniles from the other rural counties.

## Adult and Juvenile Probation Caseloads in Christian County

Between December 31, 1994 and December 31, 2003, the number of active adult probation cases in Christian County increased 83 percent, from 410 to 752 (Figure 14). In 2003, felony offenses accounted for 15 percent of Christian County's active adult probation caseload. Between 1994 and 2003, the number of juveniles supervised by the Christian County Juvenile Probation Department decreased 37 percent from 95 to 60. 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 in Christian County increased 85 percent between 1994 and 2003, from 1,155 to 2,141 cases per 100,000 population. During that same period, the active adult probation caseload rate increased 39 percent in the other rural counties, from 736 to 1,020 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the active adult probation caseload rate in Christian County was more than double the rate in the other rural counties.

#### IV. Jail Populations in Christian County

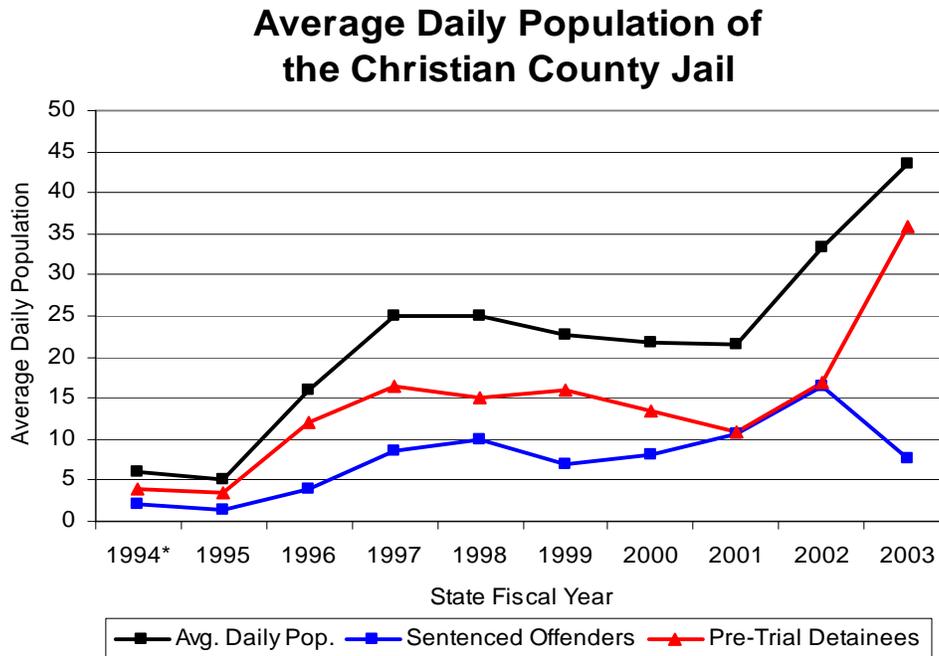
Jail data in Illinois are collected by the Illinois Department of Corrections' Bureau of Inspections and Audits. As with court data, data are not available detailing the specific offenses for which offenders were held in county jails. In addition, between SFYs 1992 and 1994, the IDOC did not collect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

##### *Average Daily Population of the Christian County Jail*

The Christian County Jail was one of 91 county jails in operation in Illinois during SFY 2003. There are 11 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 1994 and 2003, the average daily population of the Christian County Jail increased seven fold from six to 44 inmates (Figure 15). During this period, pretrial detainees (those individuals who have been arrested for a crime and are awaiting trial) accounted for an increased proportion of the average daily population; increasing from 66 percent in 1994 to 82 percent in SFY 2003. Sentenced offenders (those offenders who have been convicted and sentenced to the county jail) accounted for a decreased proportion; decreasing from 34 percent in SFY 1994 to 18 percent in SFY 2003.

**Figure 15**



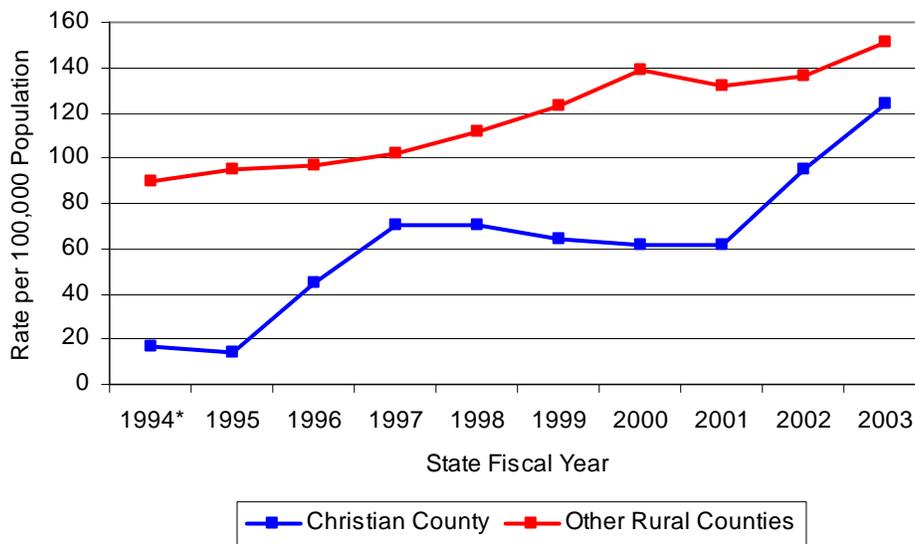
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

\* Information estimated by ICJIA

Between State Fiscal Years (SFYs) 1994 and 2003, the average daily jail population rate in Christian County also increased, from 17 to 124 per 100,000 population (Figure 16). During this same period, the average daily jail population rate in the other rural counties increased 72 percent, from 88 to 151 per 100,000 population. In SFY 2003, the Christian County Jail had an average daily jail population rate 22 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 16**

**Average Daily Jail Population Rates,  
Christian 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 Christian County

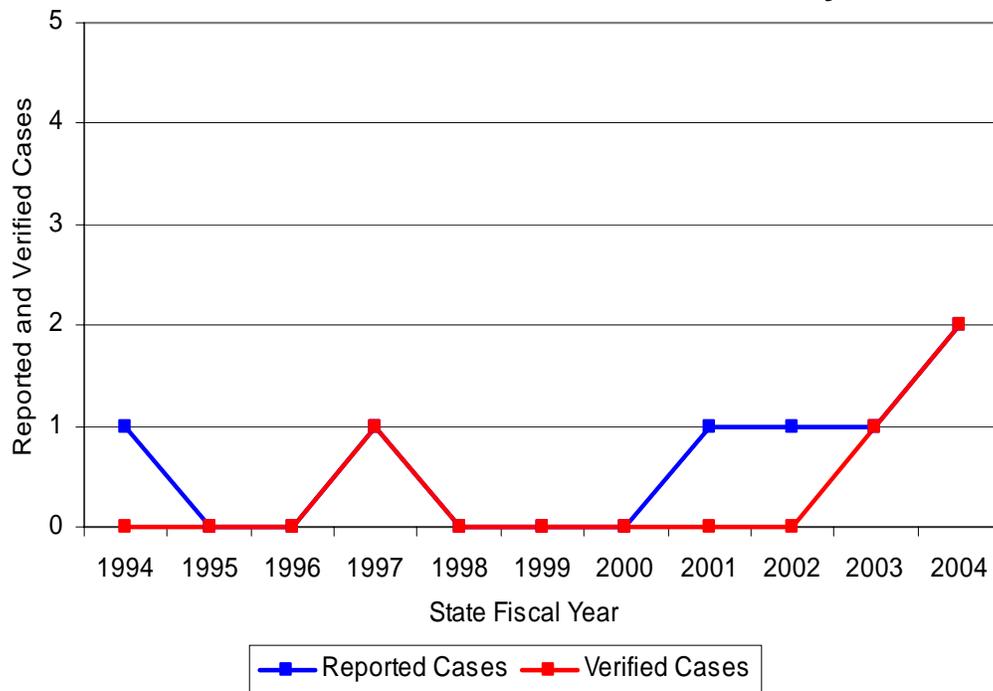
### Substance-Exposed Infants in Christian County

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, there were a total of seven substance-exposed infant cases reported in Christian County, four of which were verified. Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of reported cases of substance-exposed infants in the other rural counties increased 23 percent, from 83 to 102, while the number of verified cases of substance-exposed infants increased 43 percent, from 44 to 63.

**Figure 17**

### Substance-Exposed Infants, Reported and Verified Cases in Christian County



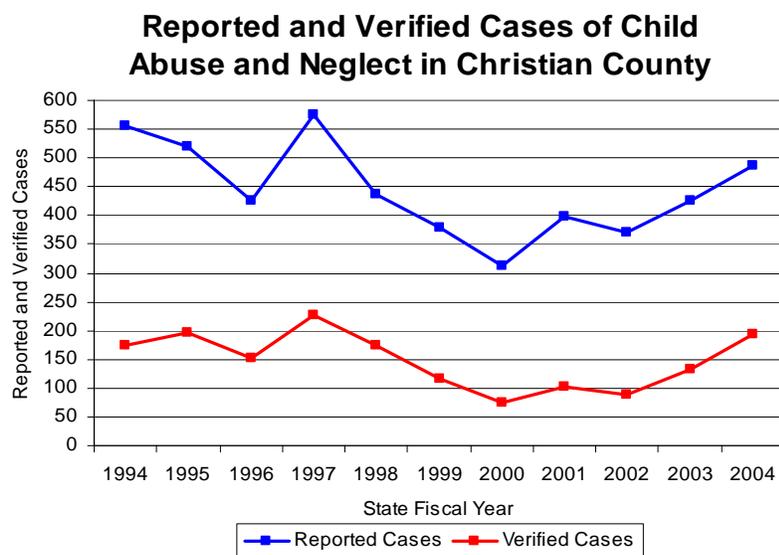
Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

## Child Abuse and Neglect Cases Reported and Verified in Christian 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> In Illinois, DCFS investigates reported cases of child abuse.

Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of child abuse and neglect cases reported in Christian County decreased 12 percent, from 555 to 486 (Figure 18). During that same period, 1,627 cases, or 33 percent of all cases reported, were verified by a DCFS investigation. Verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Christian County increased 12 percent between 1994 and 2004 from 173 to 193.

**Figure 18**



Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

<sup>1</sup> 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.

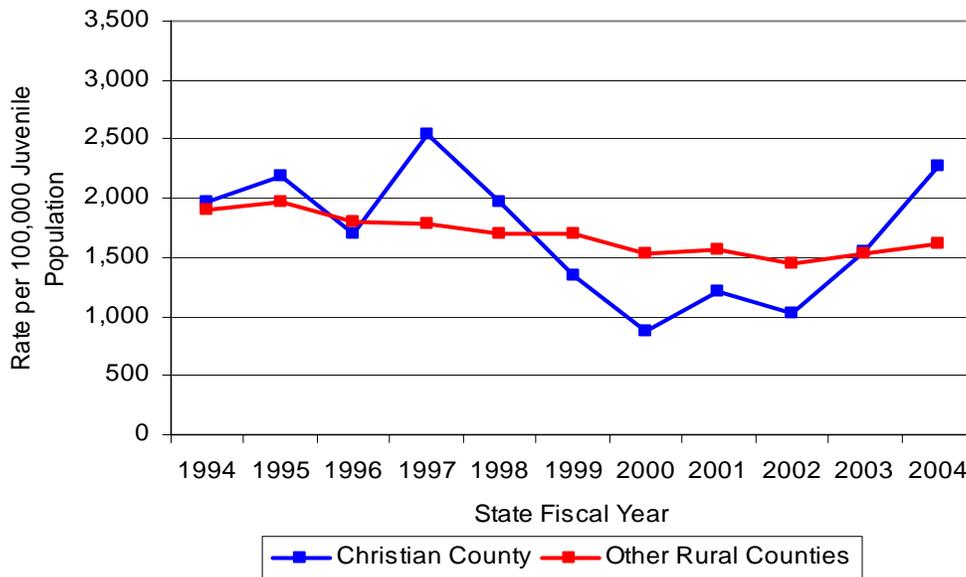
<sup>2</sup> Kelly, B., Thornberry, T. and Smith, C. 1997. “In the Wake of Childhood Maltreatment.” *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

<sup>3</sup> 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 Christian County increased 15 percent from 1,965 to 2,265 per 100,000 juveniles (Figure 19). During the same period, the rate of verified child abuse and neglect cases decreased 15 percent in the other rural counties, from 1,908 to 1,621 per 100,000 juveniles. In SFY 2004, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Christian County was 40 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

**Figure 19**

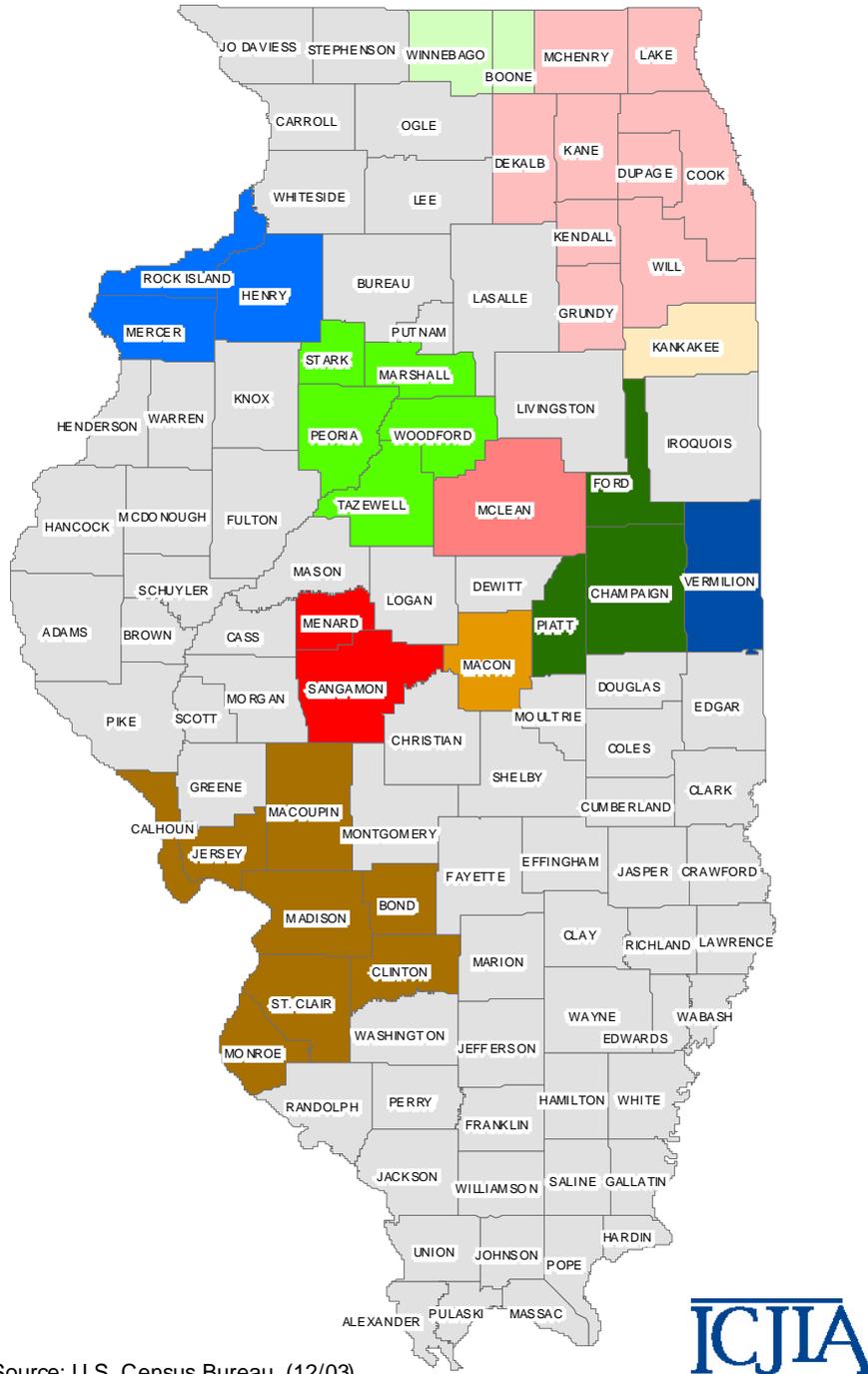
**Rate of Verified Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect, Christian and Other Rural Counties**



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

**VI. Appendix I (Map of Illinois Counties within a Metropolitan Statistical Area)**

**Illinois Counties, by Metropolitan Statistical Area\***

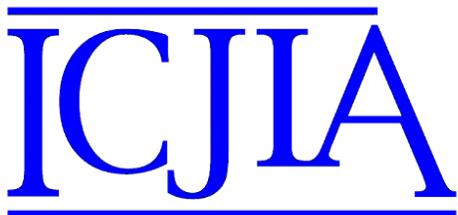


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, (12/03)



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