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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 Pope County Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems

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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

Pope County, located in southern Illinois, covers an area of 371 square miles and had a 2003 population of 4,261, according to estimates by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census. Using these figures, Pope County was the 22nd smallest county in Illinois geographically, but the smallest in terms of population. Combining these two measures, Pope County had the lowest population density per square mile among Illinois' 102 counties.

As with the previous reports, information specific to Pope 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

Based on these characteristics, Pope County is one of Illinois' 66 rural counties. Throughout this report, the criminal justice activity trends experienced in Pope 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 Pope 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 that 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.

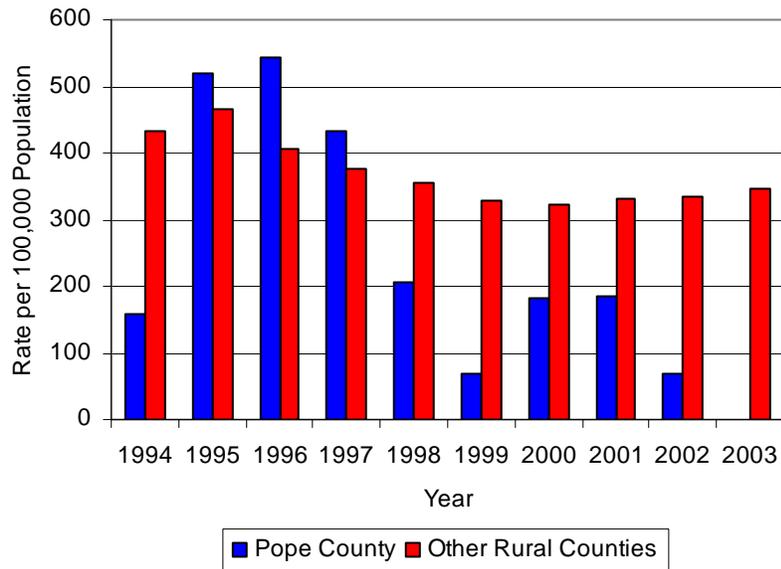
Violent Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Pope County

The number of violent Index offenses reported to the police decreased in Pope County between 1994 and 2003, from seven to zero. In previous years, and in most other counties, aggravated assault offenses accounted for the majority of violent Index offenses.

Between 1994 and 2003, the violent Index offense rate in Pope County decreased, from 160 to zero offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 1). During that same period, the violent Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 20 percent, from 434 to 347 offenses per 100,000 population.

Figure 1

Total Violent Index Offense Rates in Pope and Other Rural Counties



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

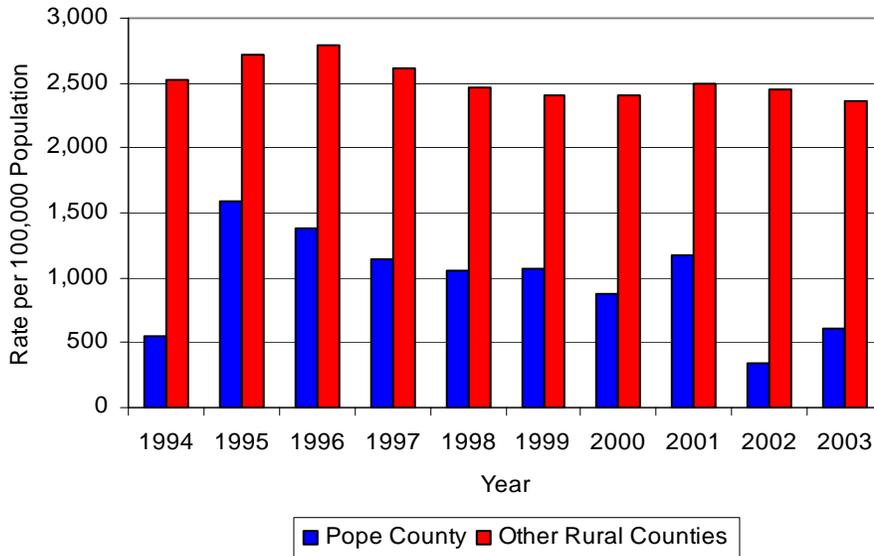
Property Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Pope County

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of property Index offenses reported to the police in Pope County increased, from 24 to 26. Thefts accounted for 54 percent of all property Index offenses reported in Pope County during 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the property Index offense rate in Pope County increased 11 percent, from 547 to 610 offenses per 100,000 population. During the same period, the property Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 6 percent, from 2,527 to 2,366 offenses per 100,000 population. Pope County's 2003 property Index offense rate was 74 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Total Property Index Offense Rates in Pope and Other Rural Counties



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

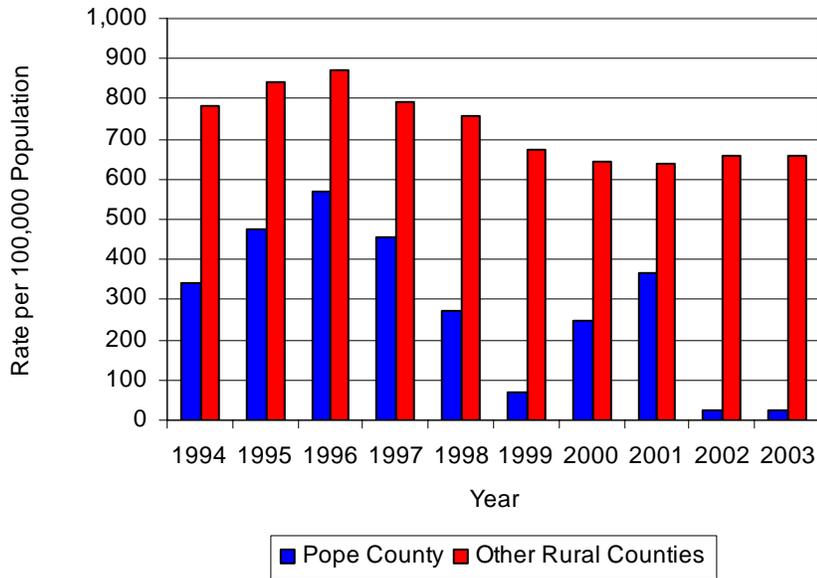
Index Arrests by Pope County Law Enforcement Agencies

Between 1994 and 2003, arrests for total Index offenses by law enforcement agencies in Pope County decreased 93 percent, from 15 to one. The majority of Index arrests was for property Index offenses. The only Index arrest made in Pope County during 2003, was for a property Index crime. Theft accounted for the arrest for property Index offenses.

Between 1994 and 2003, the Index arrest rate in Pope County decreased 93 percent, from 342 to 23 arrests per 100,000 population (Figure 3). During the same period, the Index arrest rate in the other rural counties decreased 16 percent, from 784 to 658 arrests per 100,000 population. In 2003, Pope County's Index arrest rate was 96 percent lower than the Index arrest rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 3

Index Arrest Rates in Pope and Other Rural Counties



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

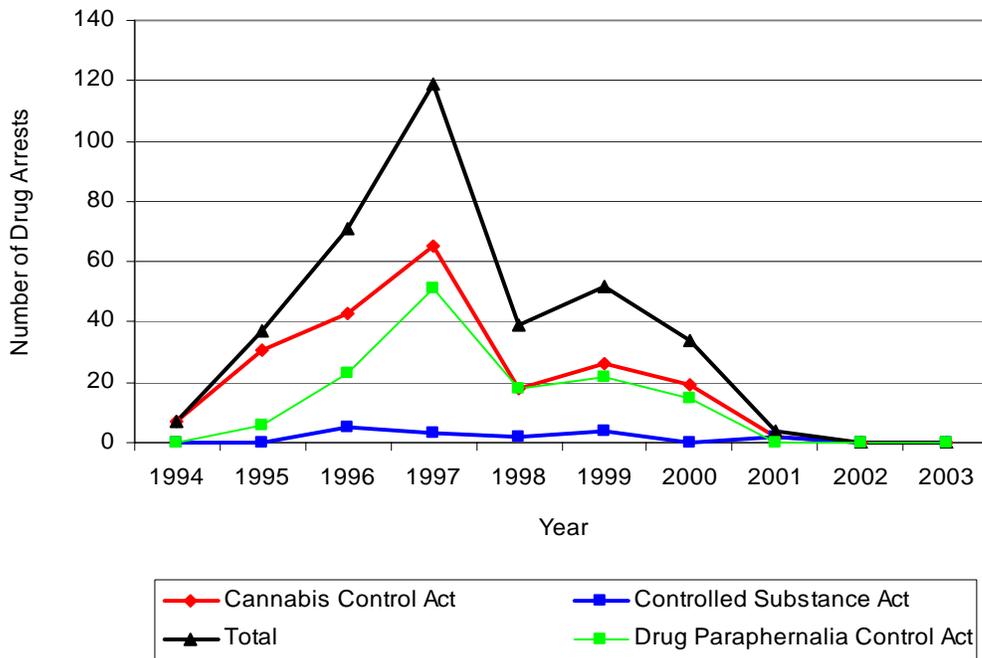
Drug Offense Arrests in Pope County

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 Syringes and Needles Act) decreased in Pope County, from seven to zero arrests (Figure 4).

During the period analyzed between 1994 and 2003, arrests for violations of Illinois' Cannabis Control Act (which prohibits the possession, sale and cultivation of cannabis) in Pope 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 Pope County decreased, from seven to zero. Arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act remained unchanged at zero (Figure 4).

Figure 4

Drug Arrests in Pope County

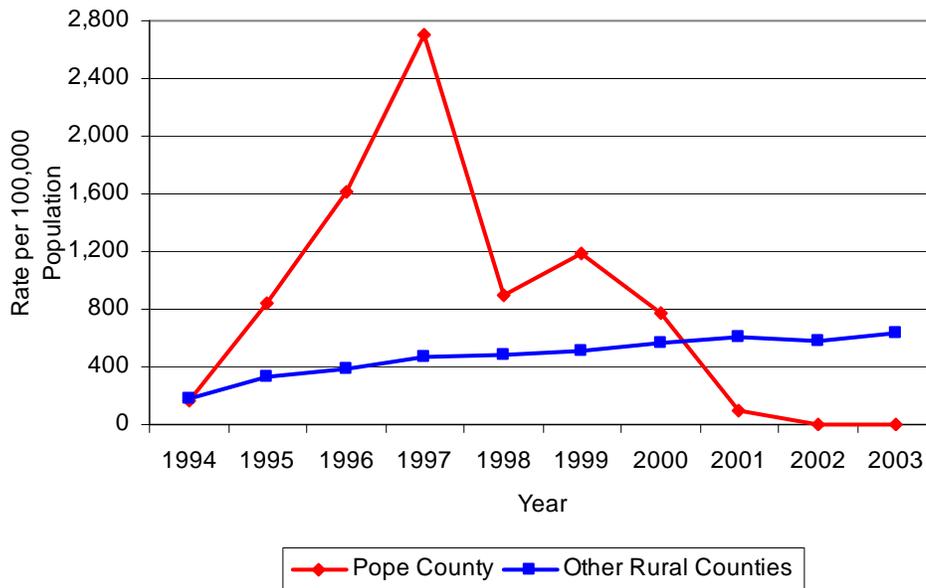


Source: Illinois State Police

Between 1994 and 2003, the arrest rate for all drug law violations in Pope County also decreased, from 160 to zero arrests per 100,000 population (Figure 5). The total drug arrest rate in the other rural counties more than tripled between 1994 and 2003, from 181 to 634 per 100,000 population.

Figure 5

Drug Arrest Rates in Pope and Other Rural Counties



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

Drugs Seized in Pope County

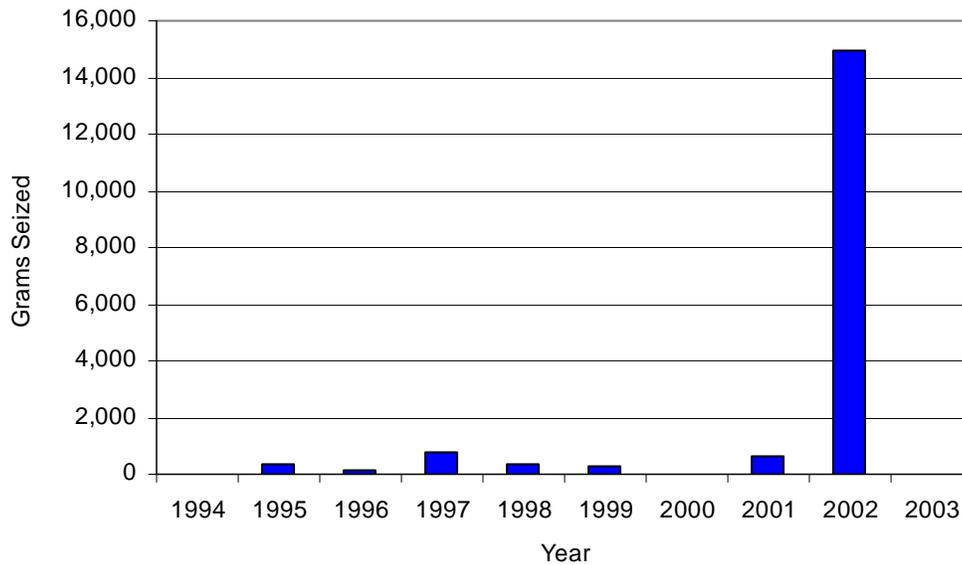
Drugs seized by law enforcement agencies are another indicator of the extent and nature of the illegal drug trade in a jurisdiction. When illegal drugs are seized by law enforcement agencies in Illinois, they are submitted to a crime lab for analysis. Most agencies submit drugs to one of the Illinois 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 Pope County.

Cannabis Seized in Pope County

Cannabis accounts for the majority of drugs seized in Pope 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 Pope County remained unchanged at zero grams, while reaching a period high of 14,963 grams seized in 2002 (Figure 6).

Figure 6

Cannabis Seized in Pope County



Source: Illinois State Police

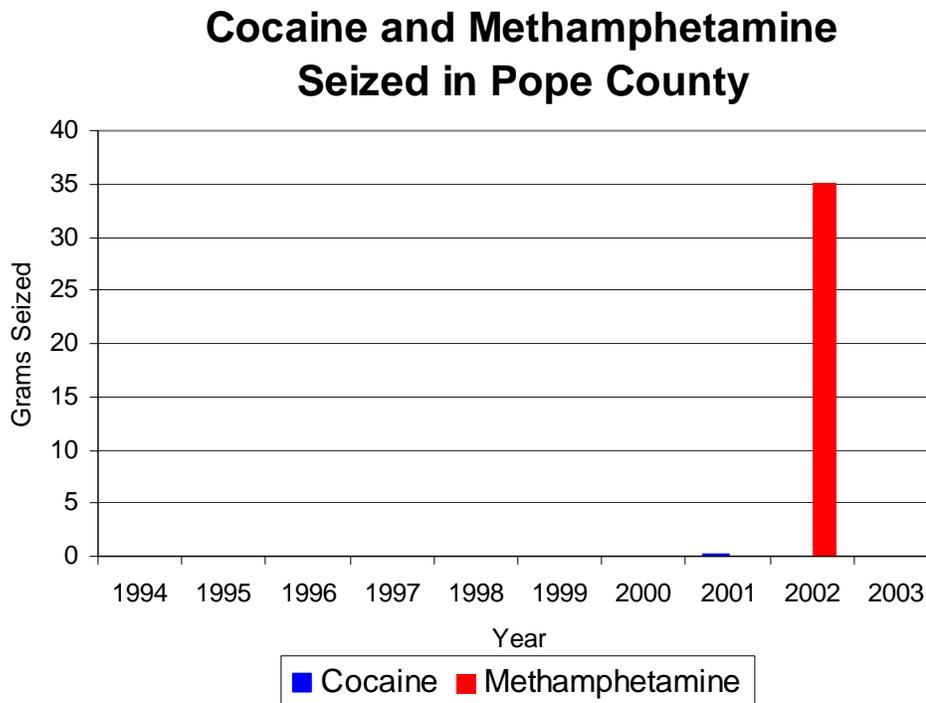
During the period between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in the other rural counties decreased 55 percent, from 608,149 grams to 272,643 grams. In 2003, other rural counties had a cannabis seizure rate of 16,167 per 100,000 population.

Cocaine and Methamphetamine Seized in Pope 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.

During the period analyzed, there was only one-tenth of one gram of cocaine seized in Pope County (2001). Similarly, there were only 35 grams of methamphetamine seized in Pope County during the period analyzed (2002).

Figure 7



Source: Illinois State Police
* Includes powder and crack cocaine.

Between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of methamphetamine seized in the other rural counties increased dramatically during the period analyzed from 2,619 grams to 13,217 grams. Between 1994 and 2003, the amount of cocaine seized in the other rural counties decreased 79 percent, from 71,279 to 15,170 grams. In 2003, 900 grams of cocaine per 100,000 population and 784 grams of methamphetamine per 100,000 population were seized in the other rural counties.

III. Adult and Juvenile Court Activity in Pope 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 Pope County and the other rural counties.

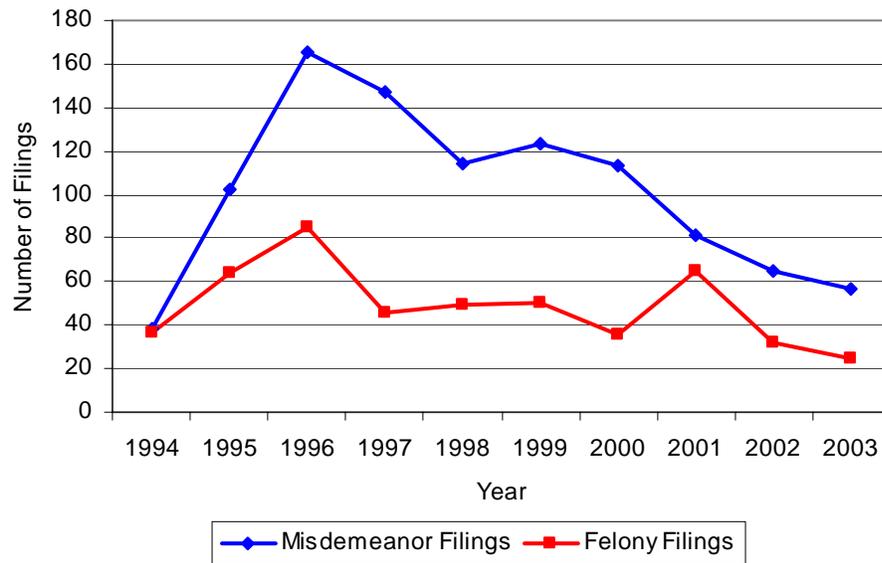
Misdemeanor and Felony Filings in Pope County

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 8 percent of all filings in Pope County's courts (civil, traffic, family, and other). Between 1994 and 2003, the number of felony filings in Pope County decreased 32 percent, from 37 to 25 (Figure 7). During the same period, misdemeanor filings increased, from 38 in 1994 to 57 in 2003. In 2003, misdemeanor filings outnumbered felony filings by more than two to one.

Figure 8

Felony and Misdemeanor Filings in Pope County

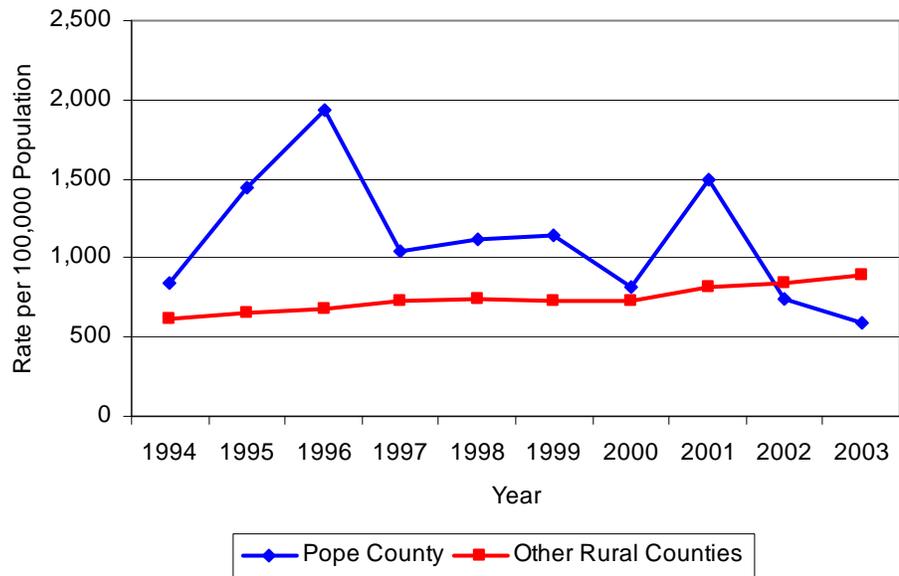


Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Between 1994 and 2003, the felony-filing rate in Pope County decreased 30 percent, from 844 to 587 cases per 100,000 population (Figure 8). Similarly, the felony-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 45 percent during this period, from 614 to 890 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the felony-filing rate in Pope County was 34 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 9

Felony Filing Rates in Pope and Other Rural Counties



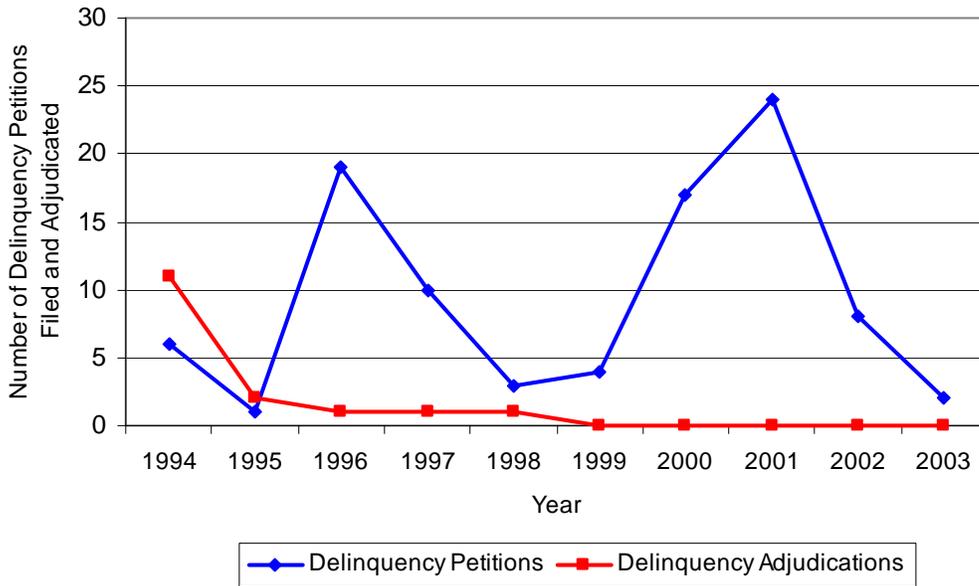
Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts and U.S. Census Bureau data

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 Pope County decreased from six to two (Figure 9). Between 1994 and 2003, delinquency adjudications decreased from 11 to zero.

Figure 10

Juvenile Delinquency Petitions Filed and Adjudicated in Pope County



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

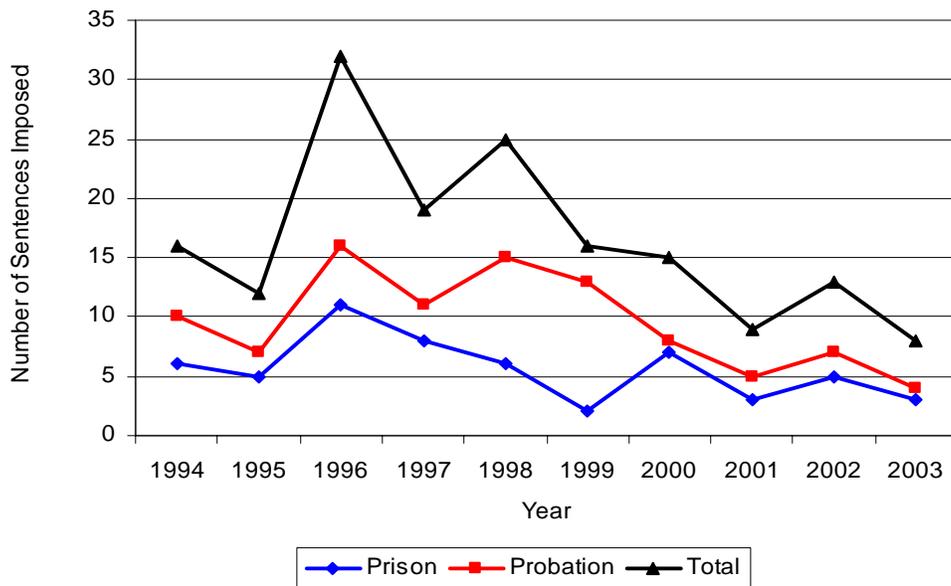
Between 1994 and 2003, the delinquency petition-filing rate in Pope County decreased 62 percent, from 1,357 to 512 per 100,000 juveniles. During the same period, the delinquency petition-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 13 percent, from 2,013 to 2,270 petitions per 100,000 juveniles. In 2003, the delinquency petition-filing rate in Pope County was 77 percent lower 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 Pope County decreased 50 percent, from 16 to eight (Figure 10). The number of convicted felons sentenced to probation during this period decreased from ten to four, while the number of felony prison sentences decreased from six to three between 1994 and 2003. As a result, felony probation sentences decreased as a proportion of total felony sentences, decreasing from 63 percent in 1994 to 50 percent in 2003. Between 1994 and 2003, the proportion of felons sentenced to prison remained the same, at 38 percent in 1994 and 2003. In 2003, 12 percent of convicted felons were sentenced to something other than prison or probation.

Figure 11

**Sentences Imposed on Felons
Convicted in Pope County**



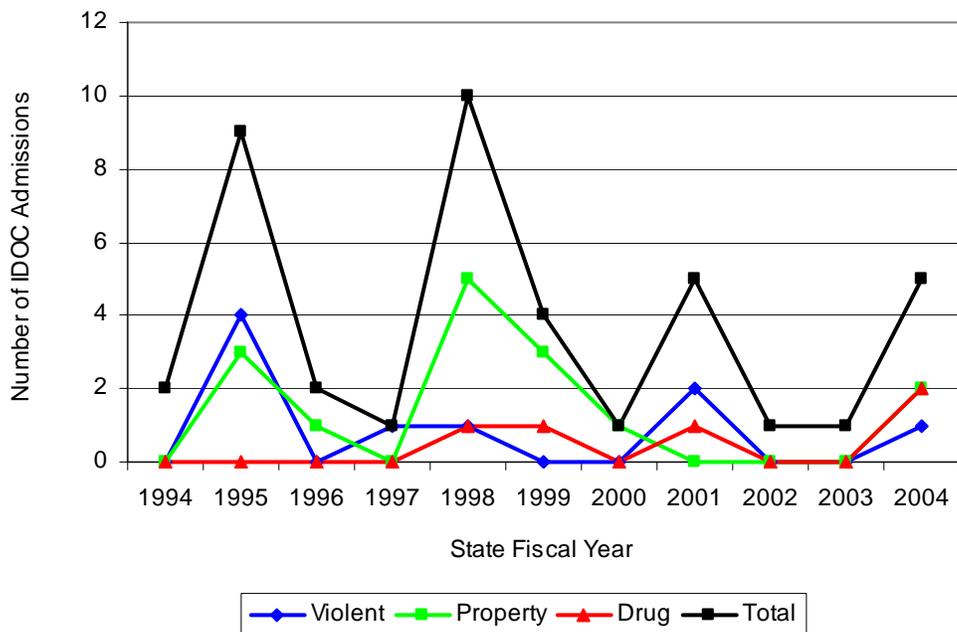
Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Adult Prison Admissions from Pope County

Between State Fiscal Years (SFYs) 1994 and 2004, the number of admissions to the Illinois Department of Corrections' Adult Division from Pope County increased from two to five (Figure 11). The number of violent offender admissions increased from zero in SFY 1994 to one in SFY 2004. The number of property and drug offender admissions each increased from zero to two during the period analyzed.

Figure 12

IDOC New Court Commitments from Pope County, by Offense Type



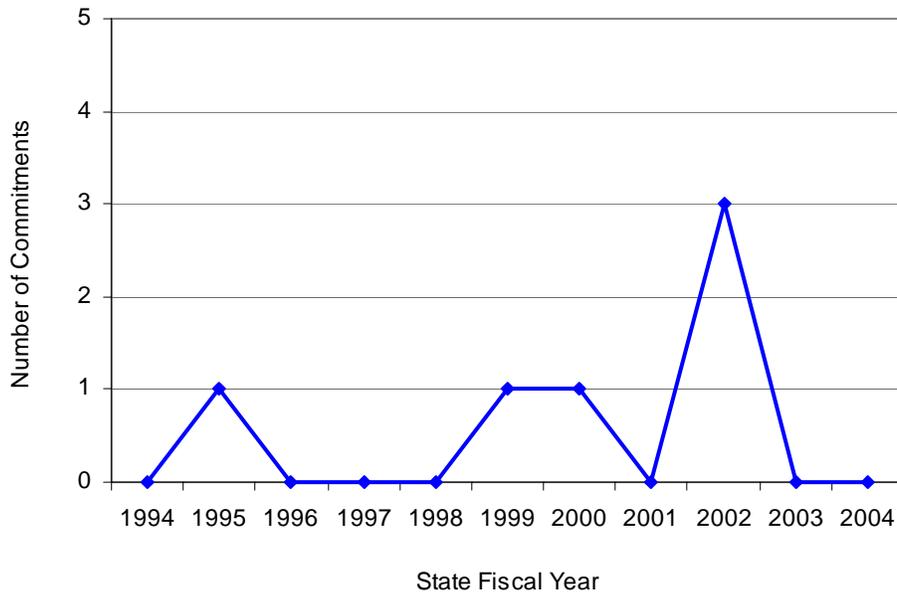
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

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 were six court commitments to the IDOC's Juvenile Division from Pope County. In State Fiscal Year 2004, there were no commitments to the IDOC's Juvenile Division from Pope County.

Figure 13

Juvenile Court Commitments to the IDOC Juvenile Division from Pope County



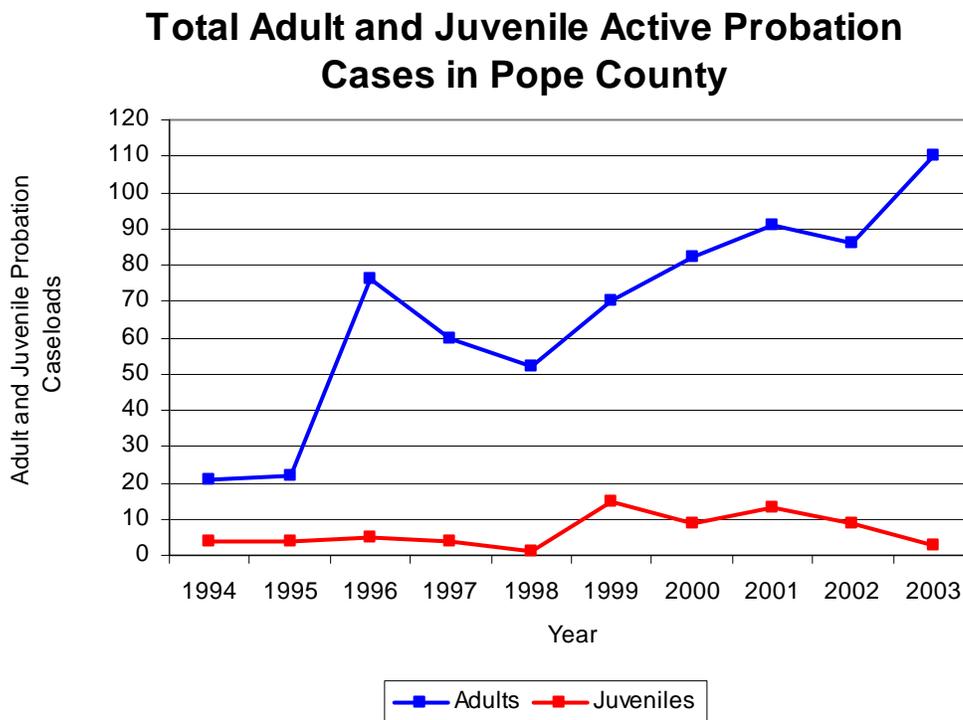
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

In State Fiscal Year 2004, the rate of commitment to the IDOC's Juvenile Division from the other rural counties combined was 230 commitments per 100,000 juveniles.

Adult and Juvenile Probation Caseloads in Pope County

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of active adult probation cases in Pope County increased more than four-fold, from 21 to 110 (Figure 12). In 2003, felony offenders accounted for 16 percent of Pope County's active adult probation caseload. Between 1994 and 2003, the number of juveniles supervised by the Pope County Juvenile Probation Department decreased from four to three. By comparison, the number of active adult probation cases in the other rural counties increased 38 percent between 1994 and 2003, while the juvenile probation caseloads increased 24 percent.

Figure 14



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

The active adult probation caseload rate per 100,000 population in Pope County also increased more than four-fold between 1994 and 2003, from 479 to 2,582 cases per 100,000 population. During that same period, the active adult probation caseload rate increased 40 percent in the other rural counties, from 745 to 1,040 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the active adult probation caseload rate in Pope County was more than double the rate in the other rural counties.

IV. Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect in Pope County

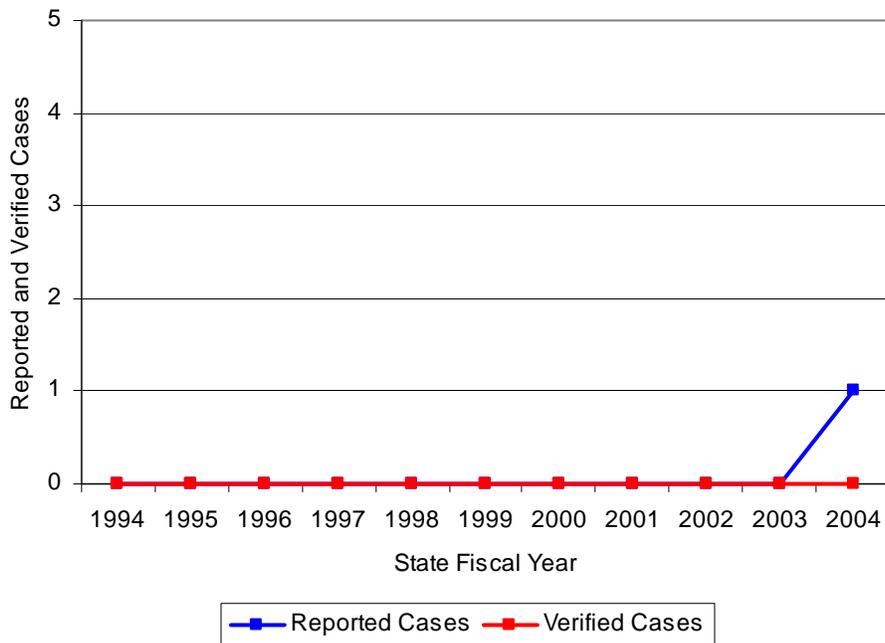
Substance-Exposed Infants in Pope County

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 State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2003, 96 of Illinois' 102 counties reported at least one case of a substance-exposed infant.

Between State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2004, there was one reported but unverified case of a substance-exposed infant in Pope County. During the same period, the number of reported cases of substance-exposed infants in the other rural counties decreased 23 percent, from 83 to 102, while the number of verified cases of substance-exposed infants increased 43 percent, from 44 to 63.

Figure 15

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



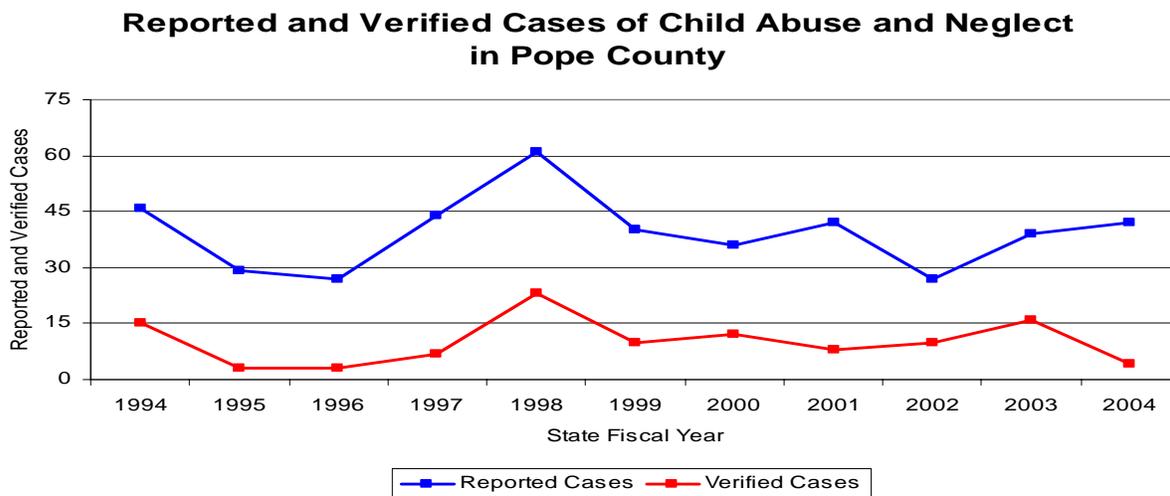
Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

Child Abuse and Neglect Cases Reported and Verified in Pope 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 Pope County decreased slightly, from 46 to 42 (Figure 18). During that same period, 111 cases, or 26 percent of all cases reported, were verified by a DCFS investigation. Verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Alexander County decreased 73 percent between SFYs 1994 and 2004, from 15 to four.

Figure 16



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.

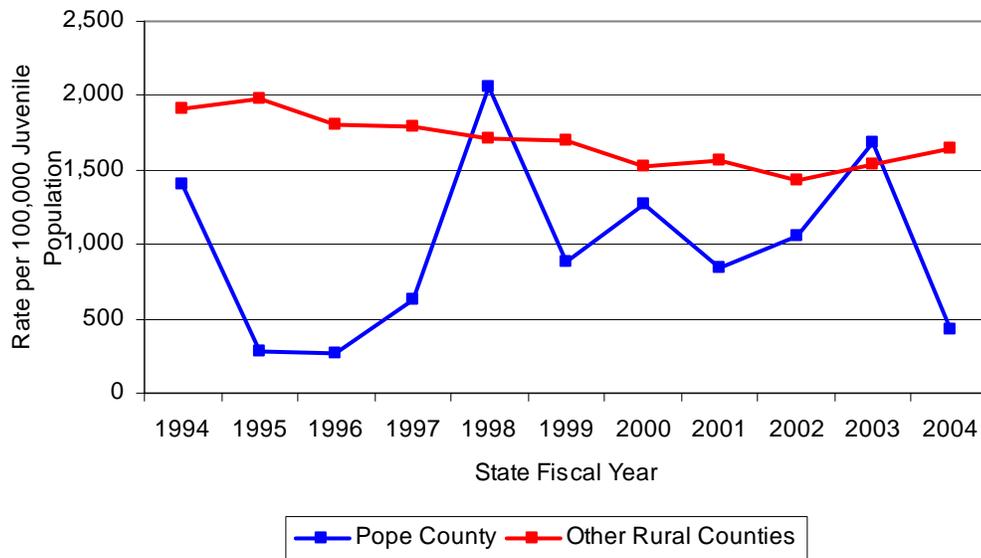
² Kelly, B., Thornberry, T. and Smith, C. 1997. “In the Wake of Childhood Maltreatment.” *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

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 State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2003, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Pope County decreased from 1,404 to 421 per 100,000 juveniles, a 70 percent decrease (Figure 17). During the same period, the rate of verified child abuse and neglect cases decreased 14 percent in the other rural counties, from 1,910 to 1,638 per 100,000 juveniles. In SFY 2004, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Pope County was 74 percent lower than in the other rural counties.

Figure 17

Rate of Verified Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect, Pope 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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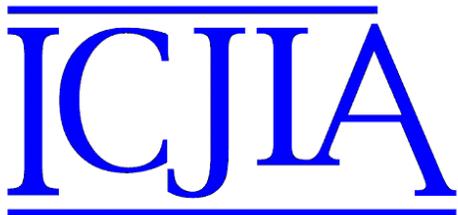
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