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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 Warren 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

Warren County, located in northern Illinois, covers an area of 542 square miles and had a 2003 population of 18,246, according to estimates by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census. Using these figures, Warren County was the 47th largest county in Illinois geographically, but 62nd largest in terms of population. Combining these two measures, Warren County had the 27th lowest population density per square mile among Illinois' 102 counties.

As with the previous reports, information specific to Warren 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, Warren County is one of Illinois' 66 rural counties. Throughout this report, the criminal justice activity trends experienced in Warren 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 Warren 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.

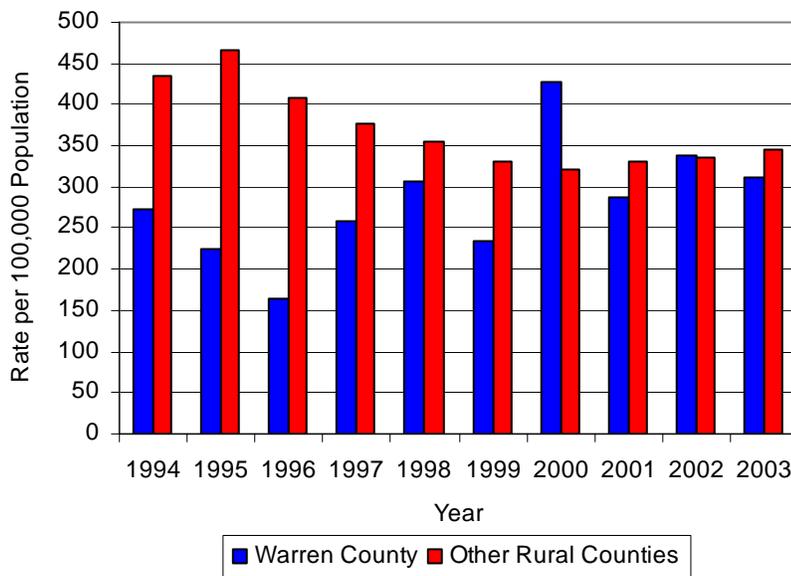
Violent Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Warren County

The number of violent Index offenses reported to the police increased 10 percent in Warren County between 1994 and 2003, from 52 to 57. As in previous years and in most other counties, aggravated assault offenses accounted for the majority (65 percent) of violent Index offenses reported in Warren County in 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the violent Index offense rate in Warren County increased 14 percent, from 273 to 312 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 435 to 346 offenses per 100,000 population. The 2003 violent Index offense rate in Warren County was 10 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 1

Total Violent Index Offense Rates in Warren and Other Rural Counties



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

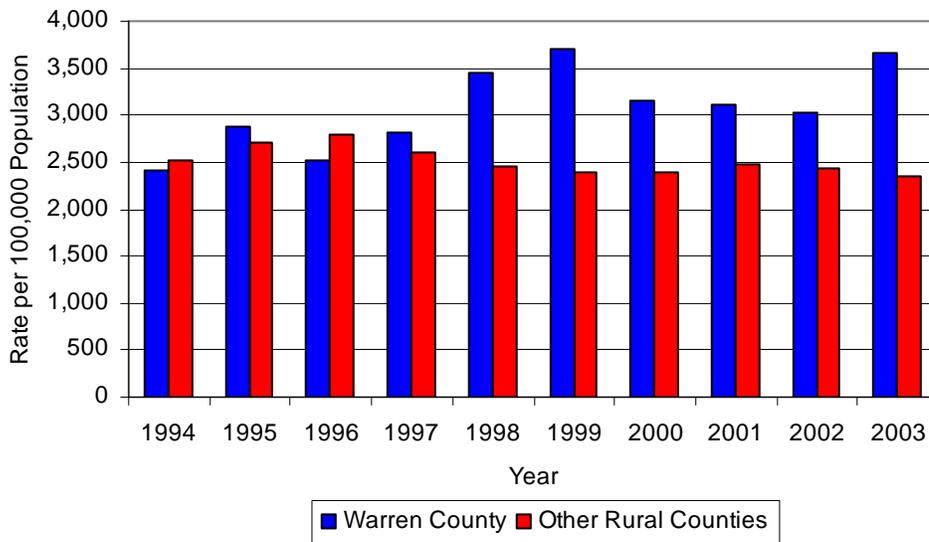
Property Index Offenses Reported to the Police in Warren County

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of property Index offenses reported to the police in Warren County increased 46 percent, from 458 to 669. Thefts accounted for 67 percent of all property Index offenses reported in Warren County during 2003.

Between 1994 and 2003, the property Index offense rate in Warren County increased 52 percent, from 2,406 to 3,667 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 2). On the other hand, the property Index offense rate in the other rural counties decreased 7 percent, from 2,523 to 2,348 offenses per 100,000 population. Warren County's 2003 property Index offense rate was 56 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 2

Total Property Index Offense Rates in Warren and Other Rural Counties



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

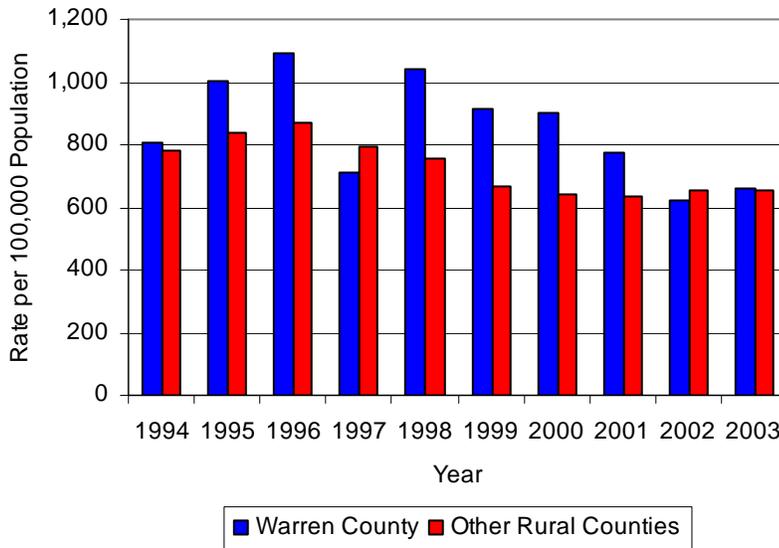
Index Arrests by Warren County Law Enforcement Agencies

Between 1994 and 2003, arrests for total Index offenses by law enforcement agencies in Warren County decreased 21 percent, from 153 to 121. The majority of Index arrests were for property Index offenses. Of the 121 Index arrests made in Warren County during 2003, 38 percent were for violent Index crimes and 69 percent were for property Index crimes. Arrests for theft and aggravated assault accounted for the majority of property and violent Index arrests in Warren County during 2003. Of all violent Index arrests, 92 percent were arrests for aggravated assault, while thefts accounted for 72 percent of all property Index arrests.

Between 1994 and 2003, the Index arrest rate in Warren County decreased 17 percent, from 804 to 663 arrests per 100,000 population (Figure 3). During the same period, the Index arrest rate in the other rural counties decreased 16 percent, from 782 to 656 arrests per 100,000 population. In 2003, Warren County's Index arrest rate was slightly (1 percent) higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 3

Index Arrest Rates in Warren and Other Rural Counties



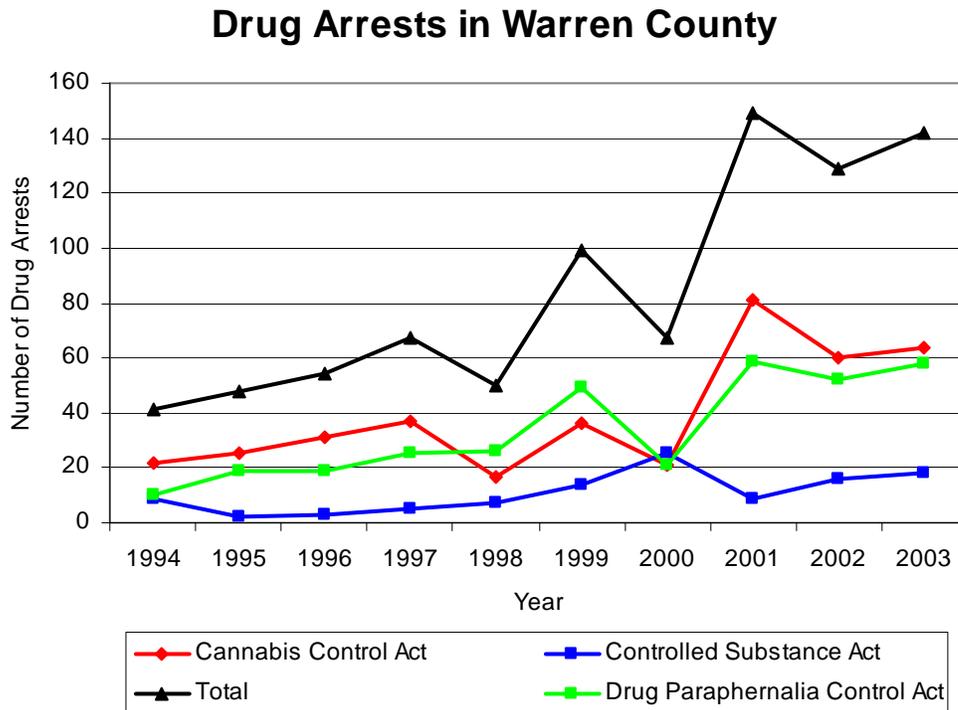
Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

Drug Offense Arrests in Warren 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) more than tripled in Warren County, from 41 to 142 (Figure 4). Similar to other counties, total drug arrests in Warren County remained relatively stable between 1983 and 1992, before increasing annually to a period high of 149 in 2001. Drug Paraphernalia Control Act violations accounted for the majority of the increase in total drug arrests, increasing from ten arrests in 1994 to 58 in 2003, or in other words, 41 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 Warren 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) except for in 2000. Between 1994 and 2003, the number of arrests for violations of the Cannabis Control Act in Warren County nearly tripled, from 22 to 64. Similarly, arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act doubled from nine to 18, during the same period (Figure 4).

Figure 4

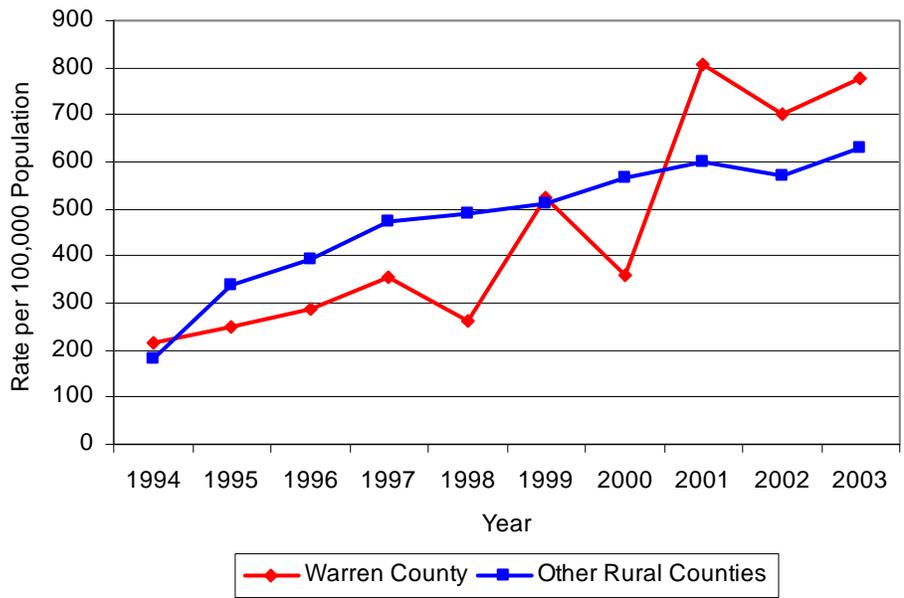


Source: Illinois State Police

Between 1994 and 2003, the arrest rate for all drug law violations in Warren County more than tripled, from 215 to 778 per 100,000 population (Figure 5). The total drug arrest rate in the other rural counties also more than tripled between 1994 and 2003, from 180 to 631 per 100,000 population. In 2003, the drug arrest rate in Warren County was 23 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 5

Drug Arrest Rates in Warren and Other Rural Counties



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

Drugs Seized in Warren County

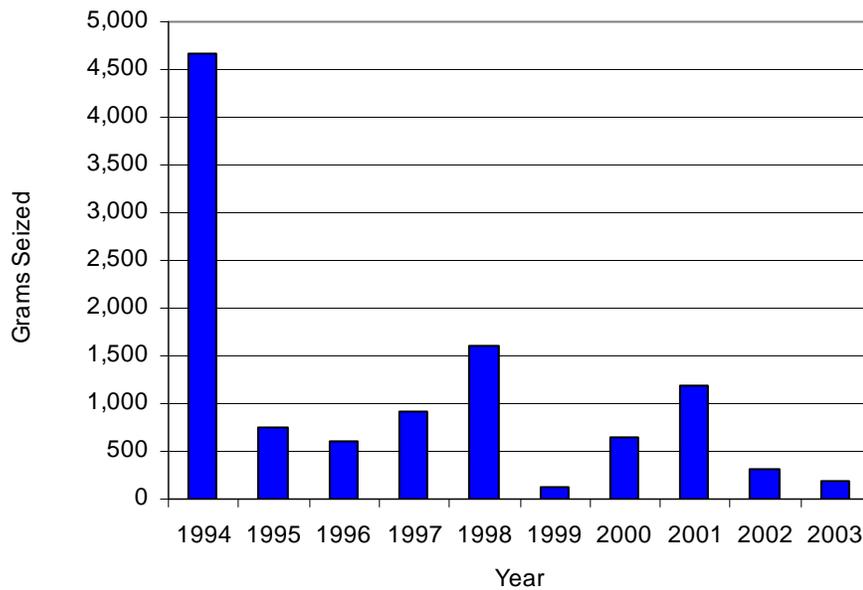
Drugs seized by law enforcement agencies are another indicator of the extent and nature of the illegal drug trade in a jurisdiction. When illegal drugs are seized by law enforcement agencies in Illinois, they are submitted to a crime lab for analysis. Most agencies submit drugs to one of the Illinois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

Cannabis Seized in Warren County

Cannabis accounts for the majority of drugs seized in Warren 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 Warren County decreased 96 percent, from 4,662 grams to 194 grams (Figure 6).

Figure 6

Cannabis Seized in Warren County



Source: Illinois State Police

Between 1994 and 2003, the quantity of cannabis seized in the other rural counties decreased 55 percent, from 603,487 grams to 272,449 grams. In 2003, Warren County had a cannabis seizure rate of 1,064 grams per 100,000 population, compared to the rate of 16,290 grams per 100,000 population in the other rural counties.

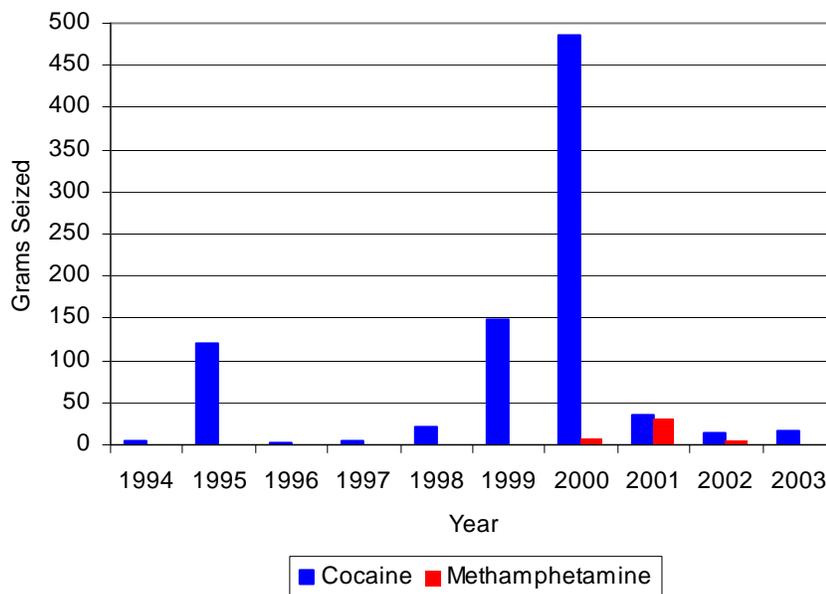
Cocaine and Methamphetamine Seized in Warren County

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 cocaine seized in Warren County increased between 1994 and 2003 (Figure 7). The quantity of cocaine seized in Warren County increased from five grams in 1994 to 17 grams in 2003. Between 1994 and 2003 in Warren County, crack cocaine accounted for a relatively small proportion (2 percent) of cocaine seizures. Additionally, between 1994 and 2003, there were 41 grams of methamphetamine seized in Warren County (Figure 7).

Figure 7

Cocaine* and Methamphetamine Seized in Warren County



Source: Illinois State Police

*Totals include powder and crack cocaine

The quantity of methamphetamine seized in the other rural counties increased dramatically during the period analyzed, from 2,619 grams in 1994 to 13,217 grams in 2003. The amount of cocaine seized in other rural counties decreased from 71,274 grams in 1994 to 15,153 grams in 2003. In 2003, Warren County had a cocaine seizure rate of 94 grams seized per 100,000 population, compared to a rate of 906 grams of cocaine seized in the other rural counties.

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

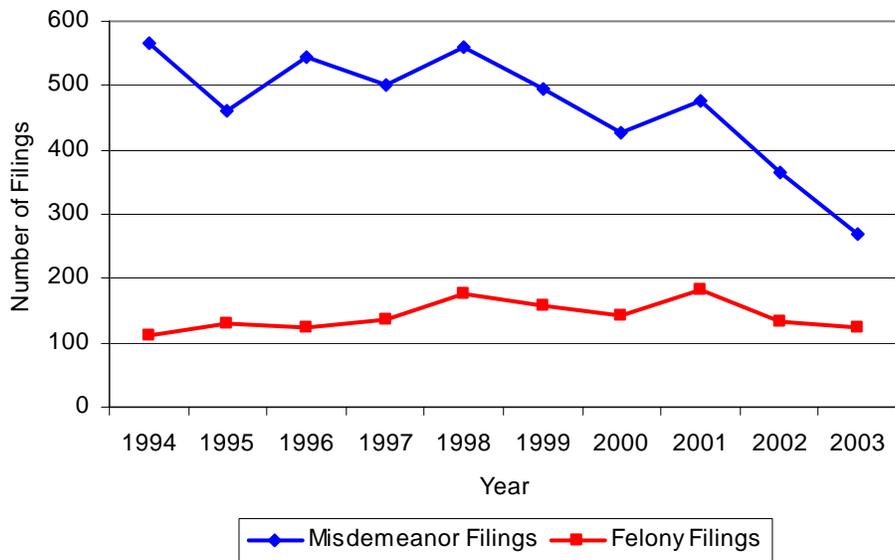
Misdemeanor and Felony Filings in Warren County

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 6 percent of all filings in Warren County's courts (civil, traffic, family, and other). Between 1994 and 2003, the number of felony filings in Warren County increased 13 percent, from 110 to 124 (Figure 8). During the same period, misdemeanor filings decreased 53 percent, from 565 in 1994 to 268 in 2003. In 2003, misdemeanor filings have out-numbered felony filings by more than three to one.

Figure 8

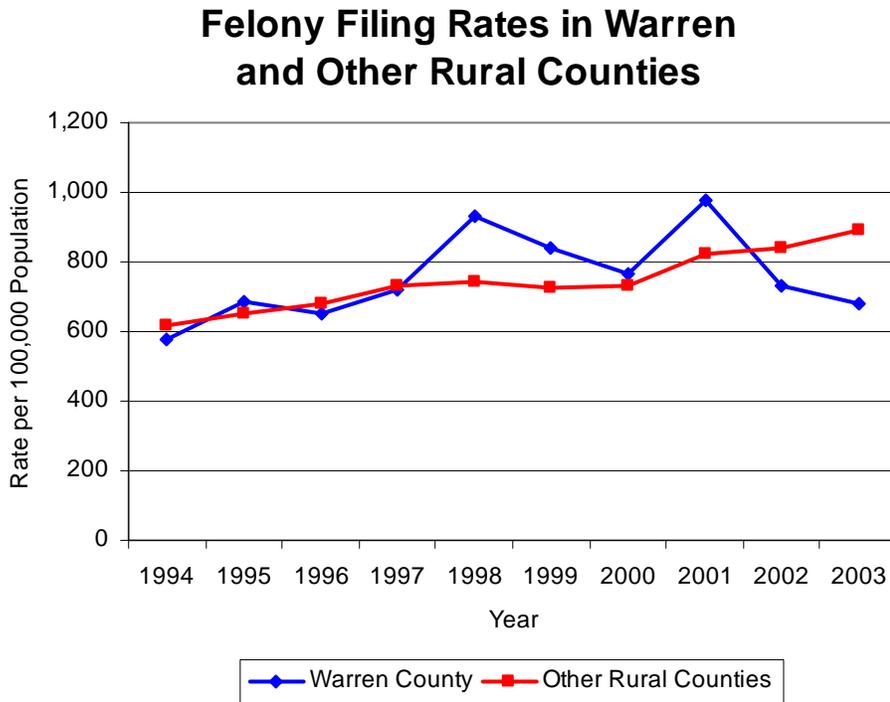
**Felony and Misdemeanor Filings
in Warren County**



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Between 1994 and 2003, the felony-filing rate in Warren County increased 18 percent, from 578 to 680 cases per 100,000 population (Figure 9). During the same period, the felony-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 45 percent, from 615 to 891 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the felony-filing rate in Warren County was 24 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 9



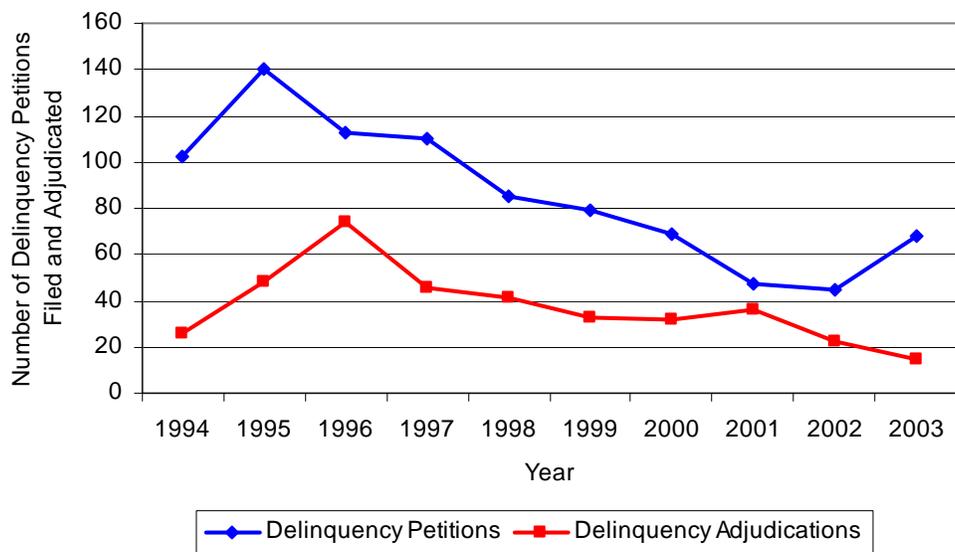
Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts and U.S. Census Bureau data

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 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 “adjudicatory hearing” and “dispositional hearing” terms.

Between 1994 and 2003, the number of juvenile delinquency petitions filed in Warren County decreased 33 percent, from 102 to 68 (Figure 10). In 2003, 22 percent of the juveniles named in delinquency petitions were adjudicated delinquent. Between 1994 and 2003, delinquency adjudications decreased 42 percent, from 26 to 15. The majority of cases not resulting in an adjudication were continued under supervision.

Figure 10

Juvenile Delinquency Petitions Filed and Adjudicated in Warren County



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

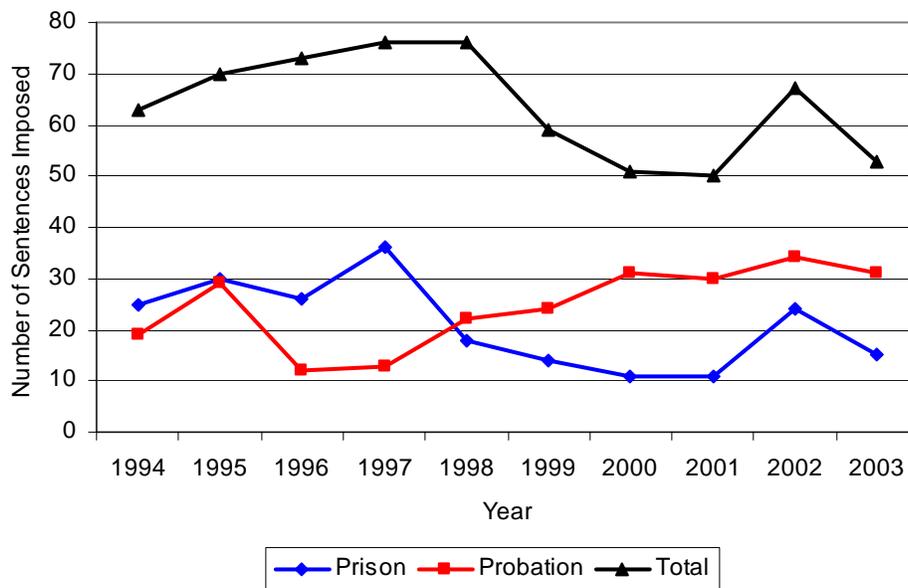
Between 1994 and 2003, the delinquency petition-filing rate in Warren County decreased 26 percent, from 4,928 to 3,656 per 100,000 juveniles. During the same period, the delinquency petition-filing rate in the other rural counties increased 14 percent, from 1,976 to 2,251 petitions per 100,000 juveniles. In 2003, the delinquency petition rate in Warren County was 62 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 Warren County decreased 16 percent, from 63 to 53 (Figure 11). The number of convicted felons sentenced to prison decreased 40 percent, from 25 to 15, while the number of convicted felons sentenced to probation increased 63 percent, from 19 to 31. As a result, felony probation sentences increased and prison sentences decreased as a proportion of total sentences. In 1994, 30 percent of all convicted felons were sentenced to probation, compared to 58 percent in 2003. Between 1994 and 2003, the proportion of felons sentenced to prison decreased from 40 percent to 28 percent. In 2003, 14 percent of convicted felons in Warren County were sentenced to something other than prison or probation.

Figure 11

Sentences Imposed on Felons Convicted in Warren County



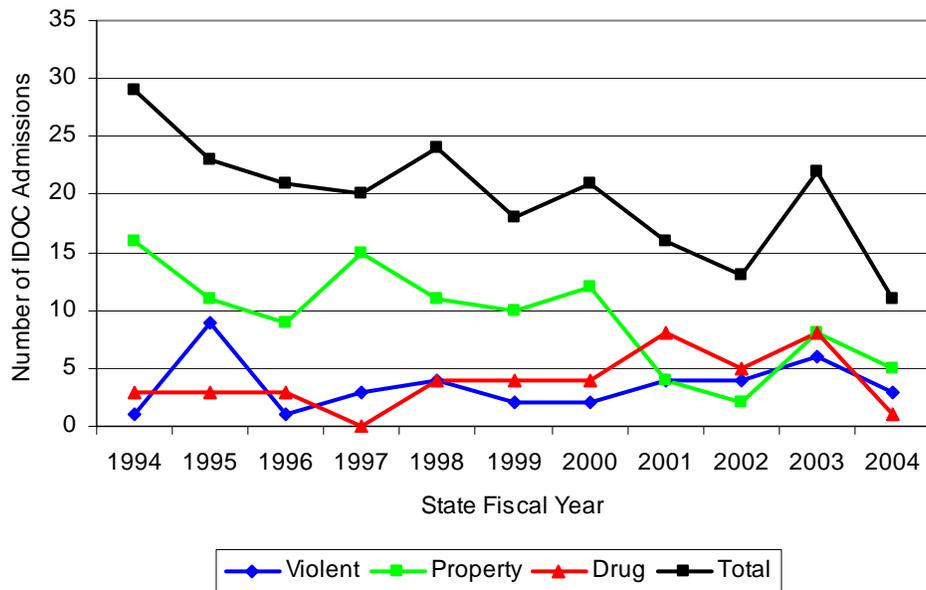
Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Adult Prison Admissions from Warren County

Between State Fiscal Years (SFYs) 1994 and 2004, the number of admissions to the Illinois Department of Corrections' Adult Division from Warren County decreased 62 percent, from 29 to 11 (Figure 12). During this period, the number of drug and property offender admissions decreased, while the number of violent offender admissions increased. The number of violent offender admissions increased from one to three. The number of property offenders admitted decreased from 16 to five and the number of drug offender admissions decreased from three in SFY 1994 to one in SFY 2004.

Figure 12

IDOC New Court Commitments from Warren County, by Offense Type



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

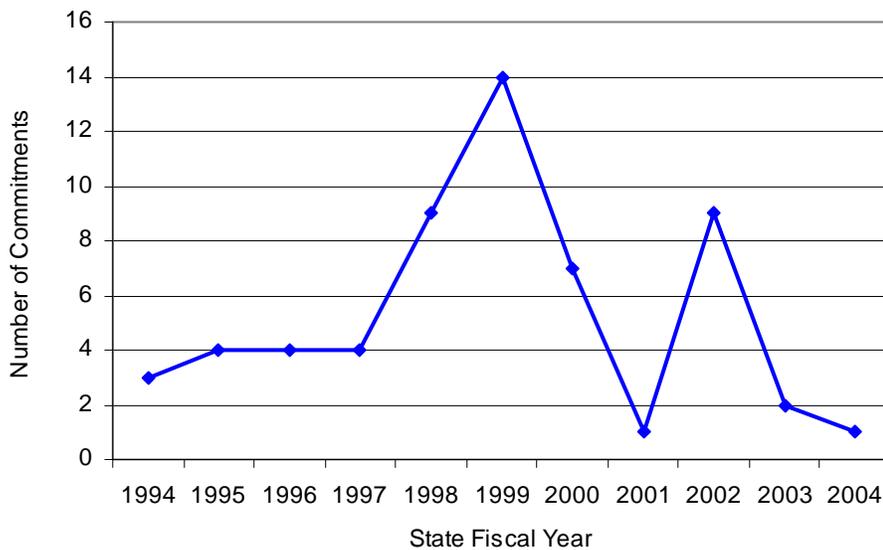
In SFY 2004, violent offenders accounted for 27 percent of all admissions from Warren County, compared to 3 percent in SFY 1994. The proportion of property offenders decreased from 55 percent in SFY 1994 to 45 percent in SFY 2004. Between SFYs 1994 and 2004, drug offenders decreased slightly from 10 percent to 9 percent of all admissions from Warren 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 SFYs 1994 and 2004, the number of court commitments to the IDOC's Juvenile Division from Warren County decreased from three to one, reaching a high of 14 court commitments in SFY 1999 (Figure 13).

Figure 13

Juvenile Court Commitments to the IDOC Juvenile Division from Warren County



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

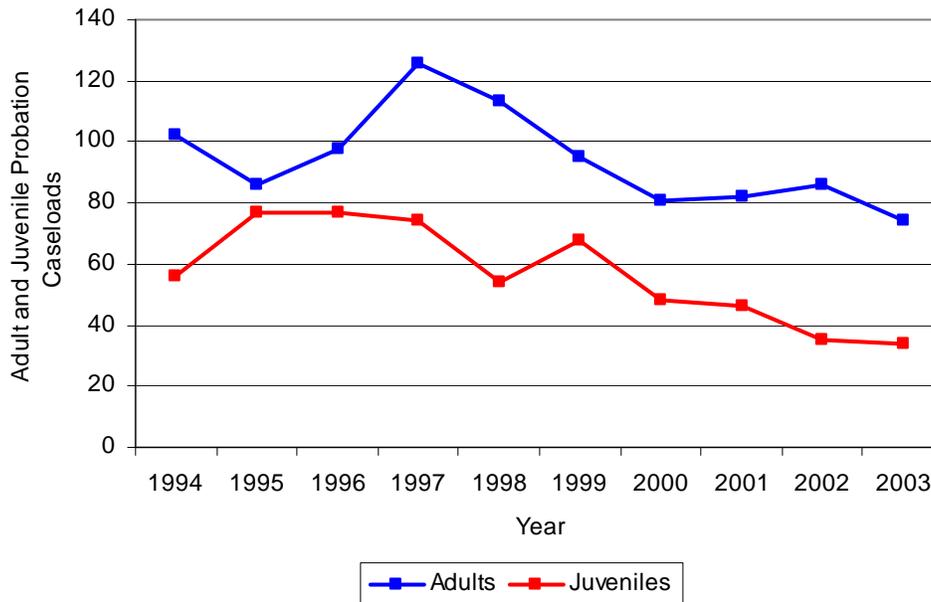
In SFY 2004, Warren County's rate of commitments to the IDOC's Juvenile Division of 57 commitments per 100,000 juveniles was 75 percent lower than the 231 commitments per 100,000 juveniles from the other rural counties.

Adult and Juvenile Probation Caseloads in Warren County

Between December 31, 1994 and December 31, 2003, the number of active adult probation cases in Warren County decreased 27 percent, from 102 to 74 (Figure 14). In 2003, felony offenders accounted for 80 percent of Warren County's active adult probation caseload. Between 1994 and 2003, the number of juveniles supervised by the Warren County Juvenile Probation Department decreased 39 percent, from 56 to 34. By comparison, the number of active adult probation cases in the other rural counties increased 40 percent between 1994 and 2003, while the juvenile probation caseloads increased 1 percent.

Figure 14

Total Adult and Juvenile Active Probation Cases in Warren County



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

The active adult probation caseload rate per 100,000 population in Warren County decreased 24 percent between 1994 and 2003, from 536 to 406 cases per 100,000 population. During that same period, the active adult probation caseload rate increased 41 percent in the other rural counties, from 747 to 1,051 cases per 100,000 population. In 2003, the active adult probation caseload rate in Warren County was 61 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

IV. Jail Populations in Warren 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.

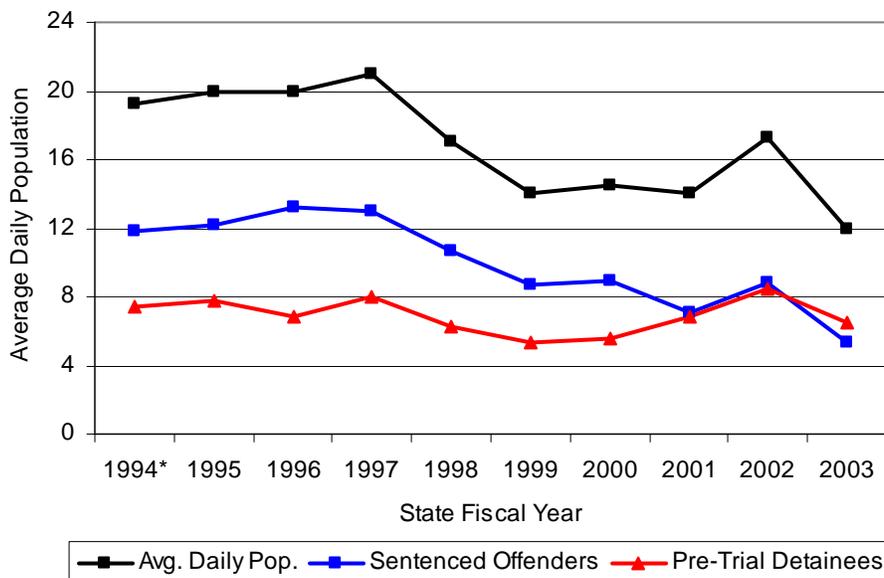
Average Daily Population of the Warren County Jail

The Warren County Jail was one of 91 county jails in operation in Illinois during State Fiscal Year 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 Warren County Jail decreased 38 percent, from 19 to 12 inmates (Figure 15). During this period, pretrial detainees (those individuals who have been arrested for a crime and are awaiting trial) have accounted for an increased percentage of the average daily population, increasing from 39 percent in SFY 1994 to 55 percent in SFY 2003. Sentenced offenders (those offenders who have been convicted and sentenced to the county jail) accounted for a decreased percentage, decreasing from 61 percent in SFY 1994 to 45 percent in SFY 2003.

Figure 15

Average Daily Population of the Warren County Jail

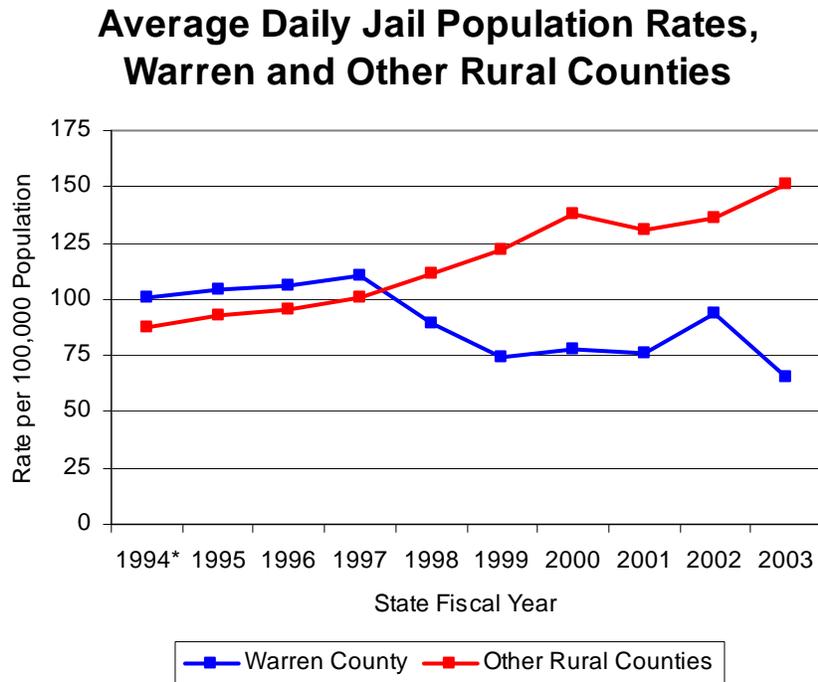


Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

* Information estimated by ICJIA

Between State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2003, the average daily jail population rate in Warren County decreased 35 percent, from 101 to 65 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 Warren County Jail had an average daily jail population rate 57 percent lower than the rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 16



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 Warren County

Substance-Exposed Infants in Warren 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 2004, 96 of Illinois' 102 counties reported at least one case of a substance-exposed infant.

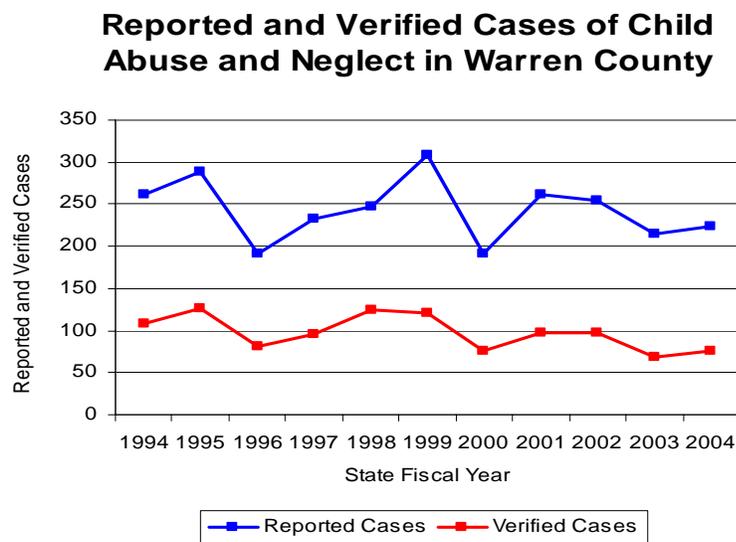
Between State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2004, there were four cases of a substance-exposed infant reported and two verified cases in Warren County. During the same period, the number of reported cases of substance-exposed infants in the other rural counties increased 22 percent, from 83 to 101, while the number of verified cases of substance-exposed infants increased 41 percent, from 44 to 62.

Child Abuse and Neglect Cases Reported and Verified in Warren 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 State Fiscal Years 1994 and 2004, the number of child abuse and neglect cases reported in Warren County decreased 15 percent, from 262 to 224 (Figure 17). During that same period, 1,074 cases, or 40 percent of all cases reported, were verified by a DCFS investigation. Verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Warren County decreased 30 percent between SFYs 1994 and 2004, from 109 to 76.

Figure 17



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.

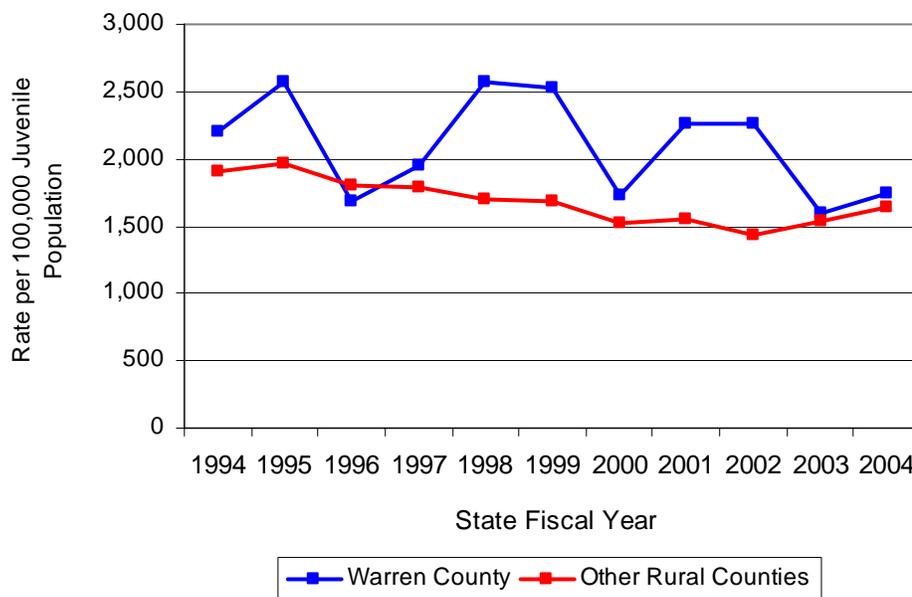
² Kelly, B., Thornberry, T. and Smith, C. 1997. “In the Wake of Childhood Maltreatment.” *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

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 2004, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Warren County decreased from 2,197 to 1,750 per 100,000 juveniles, a 20 percent decrease (Figure 18). During the same period, the rate of verified child abuse and neglect cases decreased 14 percent in the other rural counties, from 1,906 to 1,634 per 100,000 juveniles. In SFY 2004, the rate of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Warren County was 7 percent higher than the rate in the other rural counties.

Figure 18

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



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

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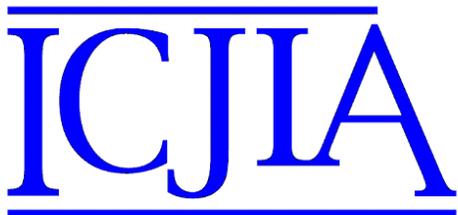
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