

The Connecticut Social Health Index - 2008

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What is the Connecticut Social Health Index?

- Way to track changes in the well-being of the people of Connecticut.
- It is broad, rather than narrow, in its scope.
- First published in 1994 with subsequent annual updates.
- Ultimate goal is to integrate public and private groups working toward the improvement of social problems and to encourage dialogue between citizens and policy makers.

What are the elements of the Index?

- Eleven indicators tracked from 1970 to 2006.
- Focus on multiple stages of the life course.

| <u>Childhood/Youth:</u> | <u>Adults:</u> | <u>All Ages:</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Infant Mortality | Unemployment | Violent Crime |
| Child Abuse | Average Weekly Wages | Affordable Housing |
| Youth Suicide | No Health Insurance | Income Variation |
| High School Dropouts | | |
| Teenage Births | | |

How is the Index Constructed?

- Each of the 11 indicators is calculated as a percentage of its best historical value.
- An index value of 100 means the indicator is at its best, whereas values below 100 mean the indicator is underperforming.
- The index values for the 11 indicators are summed and averaged into a single index value that represents the overall social health of Connecticut.
- Note that just because an indicator is at 100 does not mean that it is performing as well as it could be!

A Specific Example: Infant Mortality

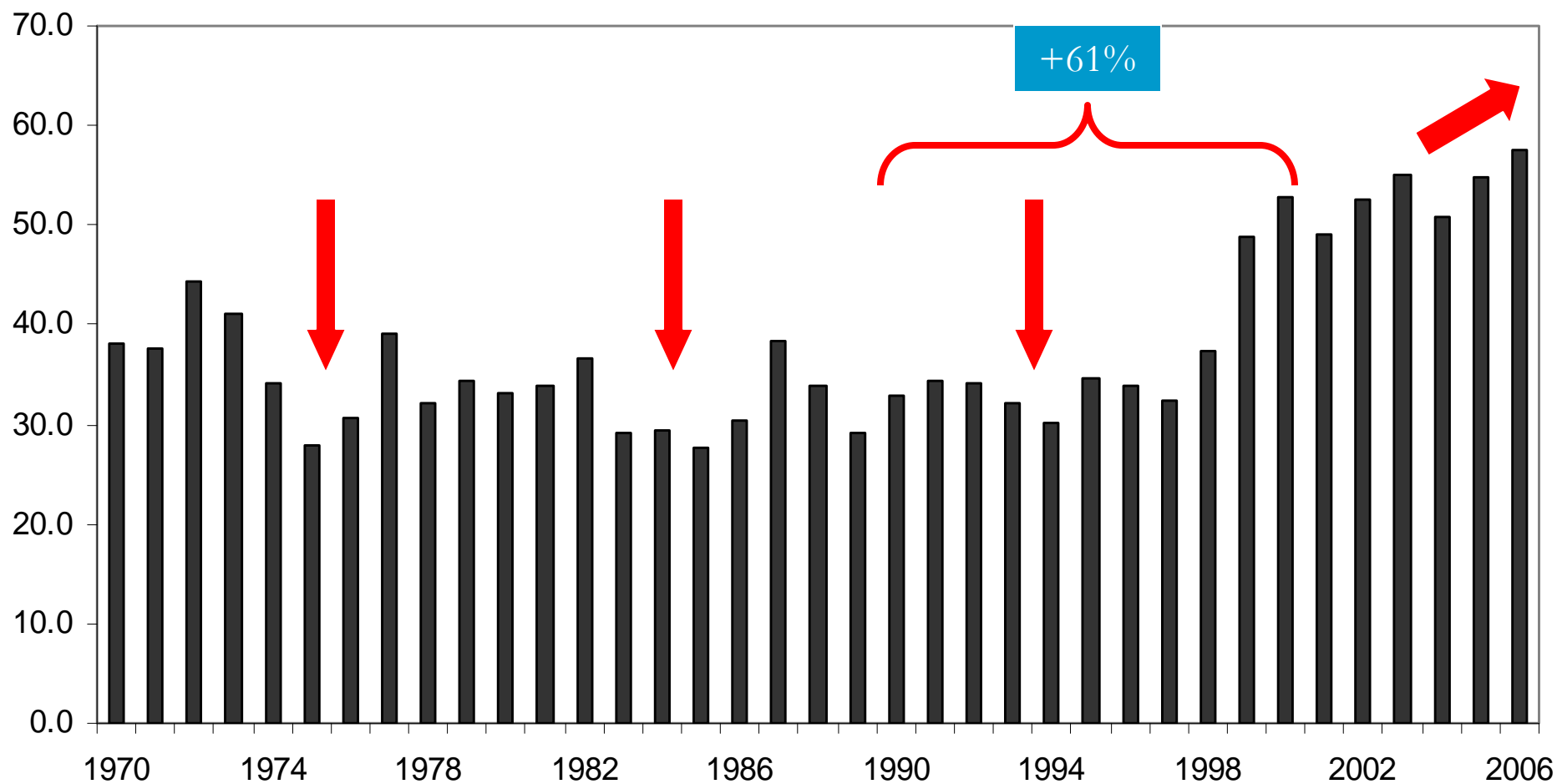
- 2006: 6.1 deaths per 1,000 live births
- 2003: 5.4 deaths per 1,000 live births
- Applying the index formula:

$$100 - \left(\frac{(6.1 - 5.4)}{5.4} * 100 \right)$$

- The 2006 index value for Infant Mortality is: 87.04.

What does the most recent Index show?

Connecticut Social Health Index, 1970 - 2006



Key Highlights: Long-Range Trends

- Since 1970
 - IMPROVED: infant mortality, high school dropouts, teenage births, unemployment, and average weekly wages
 - WORSENER: child abuse, no health insurance, violent crime, and income variation
 - STABLE W/FLUCTUATION: youth suicide and affordable housing

Key Highlights: Mid-Range Trends

- 1996 to 2006
 - IMPROVED: infant mortality, youth suicide, unemployment, high school dropouts, teenage births, and violent crime
 - WORSENERD: child abuse, no health insurance, affordable housing, and income variation
 - STABLE W/FLUCTUATION: average weekly wages

Key Highlights: Short-Range Trends

- 2002 to 2006
 - IMPROVED: infant mortality, child abuse, high school dropouts, teenage births, unemployment, average weekly wages, and violent crime
 - WORSENERD: youth suicide, affordable housing, and income variation
 - STABLE W/FLUCTUATION: no health insurance

2006 Report Card

Historical View of Social Health Index Indicators, 1970-2006.
Current, Best, and Worst Values

| | 2006 | Best | | Worst | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Value | Year | Value | Year | Value |
| Infant Mortality ^a | 6.1 | 2003 | 5.4 | 1970 | 17.2 |
| Child Abuse ^a | 51.7 | 1977 | 10.4 | 2002 | 60.7 |
| Youth Suicide ^b | 7.0 | 1972 | 5.1 | 1994 | 11.8 |
| High School Dropouts ^c * | 6.6 | 2006 | 6.6 | 1980 | 25.3 |
| Teenage Births ^a | 23.5 | 2005 | 23.3 | 1970 | 44.1 |
| Unemployment ^d | 4.4 | 2000 | 2.3 | 1976 | 9.5 |
| Average Weekly Wages ^e * | 834.7 | 2006 | 834.7 | 1970 | 140.3 |
| No Health Care ^d | 10.7 | 1987 | 7.4 | 1998 | 14.3 |
| Violent Crime ^b | 280.8 | 1970 | 170.4 | 1991 | 539.7 |
| Affordable Housing ^f | 5.6 | 1999 | 3.9 | 1987 | 8.3 |
| Income Variation ^g | 56.9 | 1977 | 33.4 | 2006 | 56.9 |

Notes: ^a per 1,000 units. ^b per 100,000 units. ^c per 100. ^d percentage of population. ^e in 2000 dollars.
^f multiple of per capita income. ^g percent difference.

More Key Findings

- **Infant Mortality:** The infant mortality rate for African Americans is over twice as high as that of Whites. This trend has persisted since 1970.
- **Child Abuse:** Neglect is the most common form of child maltreatment, representing 91% of substantiated reports.
- **Youth Suicide:** The majority of youth suicide victims are White males.

More Key Findings (2)

- High School Dropouts: During the 2005-2006 school year, the annual high school dropout rate among African American and Hispanic students was more than double the rate among White students.
- Teenage Births: The 2006 teenage birth rate represents a 47% decline from the 1970 rate.
- Unemployment: In 2006, Hartford, New Haven, and Windham all had unemployment rates above 5% compared to a state average of 4.4%.

More Key Findings (3)

- *Average Weekly Wages:* Wages for manufacturing jobs have steadily declined since 1970 whereas wages for health care and social assistance jobs have steadily increased.
- *Health Care:* In 2006, 38.2% of persons over age 18 were overweight and an additional 20.6% were obese.
- *Violent Crime:* Hate crimes increased by 28% between 2005 and 2006. Over half were motivated by racial or ethnic bias.

More Key Findings (4)

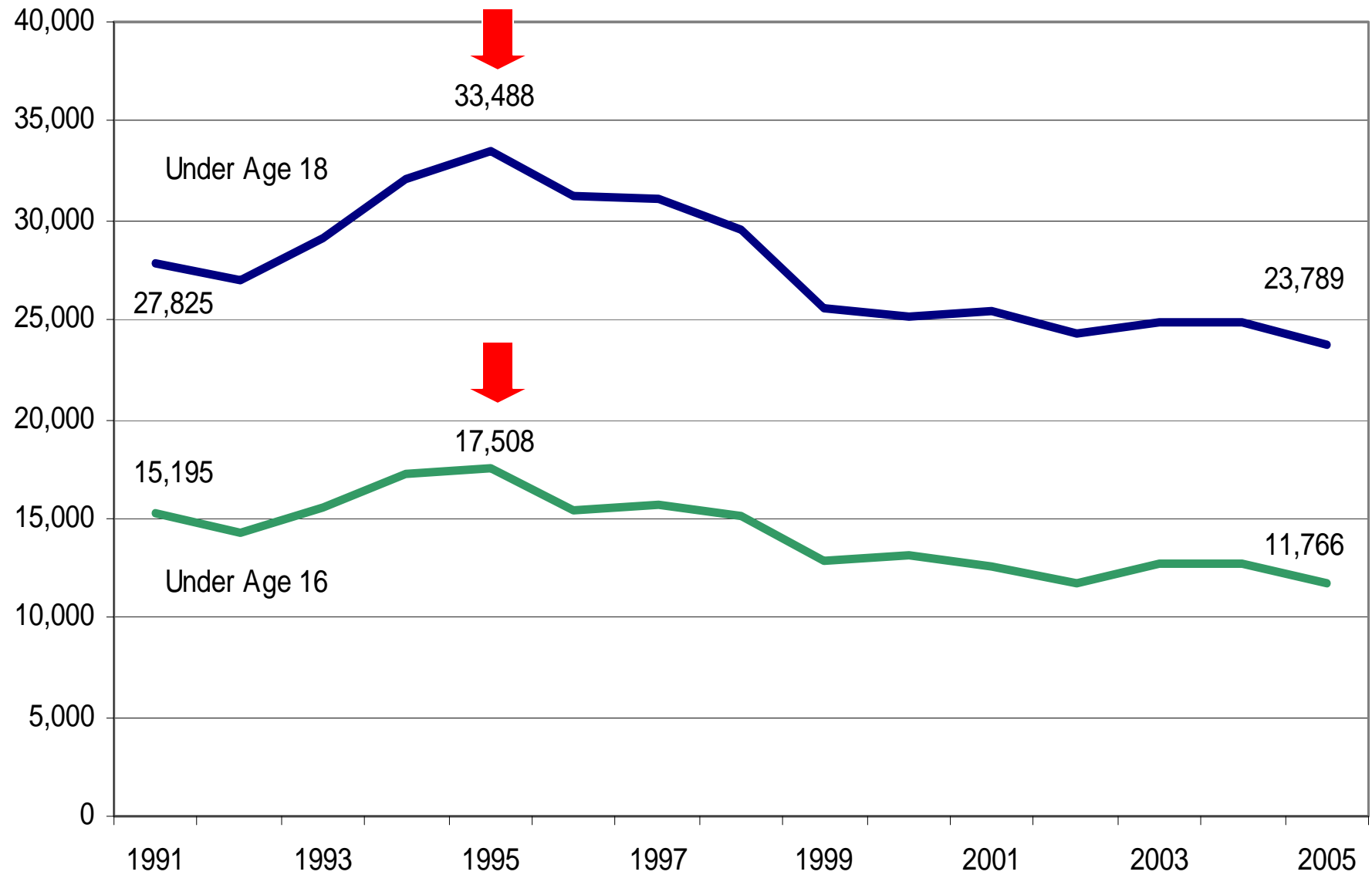
- Affordable Housing: The median price of a single family home in 2006 was \$286,000.
- Income Variation: The percent of the population living below the poverty line declined from 9.3% in 2005 to 8.0% in 2006.

Special Section: Youth and the Law

- Two important changes:
 - Public Act 05-250, *An Act Concerning Children of Families with Service Needs* (FWSN)
 - Public Act 07-4
- Goal of the updated Juvenile Justice System is to rehabilitate, rather than punish.
 - Punitive systems are tied to high recidivism rates and escalation in violent offending.
 - Recognizes that much delinquency is the reflection of problems at home or in the youth's community.

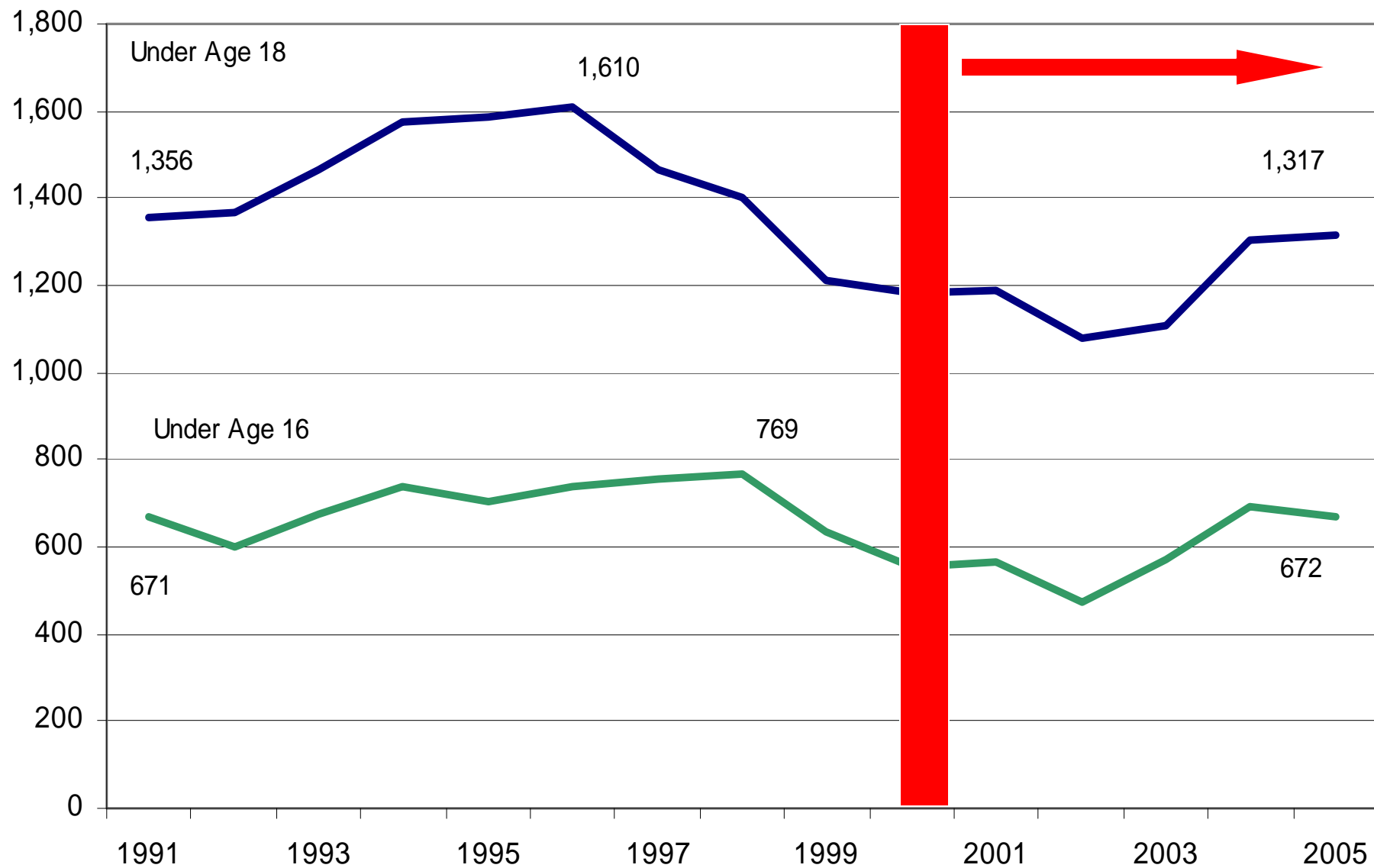
Arrests--All Crimes, By Age

Number of arrests under age 16 and under age 18



Arrests--Violent Crime, By Age

Number of arrests under age 16 and age 18



Other Important Trends

- Connecticut has seen a decrease in the number of youths referred to court for both delinquency and FWSN offenses, primarily since 2004.
- Recent data shows that detention admissions have also been declining.
- These reductions exemplify the state's work to prevent youth from entering and progressing into the system inappropriately.

Race/Ethnicity and Gender

- Minority youth are over-represented in detention and outnumber their White peers in both secure residential care and correctional facilities.
- This disparity can be traced all the way back to delinquency cases and admissions referrals, where minority overrepresentation is also apparent.
- With the exception of certain status offenses, males far outnumber females in every aspect of the system.
- Complex issue requiring a multi-faceted solution.

Conclusion

- Index of Social Health is at its highest level since 1970.
- Accomplishments include reduction in teenage childbearing, high school dropouts, and infant mortality and increase in average weekly wages.
- Potential causes of concern include unemployment, affordable housing, and income variation.
- Youth violent crime is higher than it has been in the past five years, **but still represents only 6% of all crime committed by youths.** Minority over-representation may be more troubling.

Conclusion (2)

- Current economic situation may affect already problematic indicators like unemployment, affordable housing, and income variation.
- Possible “trickle-down” effect on other indicators.
- BUT knowledge is half the battle!

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- And many others!