



# **TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY:**

**2010 – 2022**

Report presented to the Miami-Dade Economic  
Advocacy Trust



UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
SCHOOL of EDUCATION  
& HUMAN DEVELOPMENT



# TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

## **Trends in Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County: 2010 – 2022**

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We also want to thank the Juvenile Services Department (JSD) of Miami-Dade County for providing data on youth arrests. We particularly want to thank Jessica Landestoy and Cristina Molina for their assistance and answering many of our data questions during the project. Finally, we would like to thank Maria Gilhooey from the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice for her assistance and insights regarding the data. This project is only possible when agencies willingly share their data and for that, we are grateful.

## **Executive Summary**

### **Introduction**

At the request of the Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust (MDEAT), data were analyzed, and this report was written to examine racial disproportionality associated with youth arrests in Miami-Dade County. According to the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), racial disproportionality refers to one race being over- or under- represented compared to the racial composition of the residing community. Racial disparity, on the other hand, is a term used to describe when youth and families in similar situations received different outcomes based on race (e.g., receiving different sentences for the same charge, similar risk factors, and prior criminal history). For the purposes of this report, the focus will primarily be on racial disproportionality in youth arrests in Miami-Dade County. Data on outcomes beyond arrest for youth were not made available to the researchers. Therefore, this report will focus on one piece of the juvenile justice system, youth arrests. The second goal of this report was to review and summarize evidence-based practices aimed at reducing racial disproportionality in youth arrests. The evidence-based, best practices recommendations in this report can provide support and guidance for the continued development of new programs in the community, along with the expansion and further support of programs already in place aimed at reducing racial inequities in youth arrests.

Research from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention indicates that racial disproportionality in youth arrests is a nationwide problem. According to OJJDP, Black youth are 2.4 times more likely to be arrested than their White counterparts and represent 35-40% of cases referred to juvenile court following an arrest, despite constituting only 15-17% of the total youth population in the United States (Puzzanchera, Hockenberry, & Sickmund, 2022). Unfortunately, the state of Florida is no exception in this regard. As recently as 2018, a report from the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice found racial disproportionality in all 67 counties, including Miami-Dade County. Across the state, Black youth were 3 times more likely to be arrested than their White counterparts. It is against this backdrop that the MDEAT wanted to further unpack the nature of youth arrests in Miami-Dade County specifically. As a result, the MDEAT reached out to the Community and Educational Well-Being Research Center (CEWRC) at the University of Miami to examine the data on youth arrests and review the literature on the topic. This initial investigation will provide valuable information about the degree to which racial disproportionality in youth arrests exists in Miami-Dade County and ideas for how to alleviate these differences.

### **Summary of Findings from Data Analyses:**

1. Overall, youth arrests in Miami-Dade County have decreased by 76% since 2010.
2. The total number of youths arrested has decreased by 81% since 2010.
3. Differences in arrest rates between Black youth and White-Latinx and White Non-Latinx youth have decreased by 63% and 65% respectively since 2010.

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4. The percentage of Black youth arrested is consistently higher and disproportionate to the population of Black youth in Miami-Dade County. While Black youth represent about 17-18% of the 10–17-year-old population in Miami-Dade County, they account for 58% of all youth arrests since 2010 and 63% of arrests in 2022.
5. Arrests of Black male youths accounted for 48% of all arrests in Miami-Dade County during the thirteen-year period and 52% of arrests in 2022 despite accounting for only 9% of the 10-17-year-old youth population. Furthermore, in 2022, arrest rates of Black female youth were higher than both White Latinx males and White Non-Latinx males.
6. Black youth were much more likely to be arrested and re-arrested compared to White-Latinx and White Non-Latinx youth.
7. The pattern of racial disproportionality in arrests was found for all charge types, charge severity, and warrants issued (pick-up orders).
8. Only a small percentage of youth arrests (6%) consisted of youth residing outside of Miami-Dade County.

### **Summary of Findings from Literature Review to Reduce Racial Disparities and Disproportionality for Youth:**

1. Increasing safe and affordable housing options for families with lower socioeconomic status to build stronger families and communities by providing access to more and better health care, educational, and career opportunities.
2. Shifting the mindset and reducing biases of system actors, or closely monitoring of system actors' behavioral outcomes, for decreasing the overall disparities in the DJJ system. The full potential of tools or protocols to equitably guide decision-making and ultimately reduce disparities will not be realized without a change in system actors' perceptions of Black and Latinx youth and communities. Police self-monitoring their behaviors and avoiding Black and/or Latinx youth in the community when public safety is not at risk could lower the high rates of youth and law enforcement contact, resulting in fewer referrals to the DJJ.
3. Overhauling or eliminating the current school policing model as it has resulted in a greater number of arrests for Black and Latinx youth in school for offenses that were typically handled by teachers and/or administrators before SROs were housed in schools.
4. Supporting and involving the family and community throughout the DJJ process, from initial contact to aftercare, is important for family and community voices to drive systems change.
5. Collaborating and partnering among community-based organizations, the DJJ, and law enforcement is necessary to carry out successful diversion and reform-based interventions.

### **Conclusions**

There are three main conclusions to draw from this report. First, there are substantially fewer youth getting arrested in Miami-Dade County over the last 13 years. Compared to 2010, the total number of youth arrests are down 76% and the total number of individual youths arrested has decreased by 81%. Second, despite these decreases in arrests, racial and ethnic disproportionality



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remains, particularly for Black youth. And finally, the problem of racial and ethnic disproportionality in the juvenile justice system is a complex combination of cumulative factors that disadvantage youth of color. Therefore, the solutions to alleviate these differences will require multifaced solutions across a number of different domains that affect youth development.

Overall, there are far fewer youth arrests and youths getting arrested in Miami-Dade County. This finding is consistent with national trends on youth arrests (Puzzanchera, Hockenberry, & Sickmund, 2022) which have decreased by 58% since 2010. The decreasing trend in youth arrests was found for all racial and ethnic groups, males and females, and for felony, as well as misdemeanor charges. Additionally, Black youth saw the greatest decrease in arrests in terms of sheer volume. Arrests of Black youth decreased by 3,026 from 2010 to 2022, a drop of 76% over that time. Furthermore, differences in arrest rates between Black youth and White Latinx youth, and White Non-Latinx youth have decreased substantially as well. Differences in arrest rates have declined by 63% and 65% respectively.

However, despite these positive gains, Black youth continue to be arrested at higher and disproportionate rates in Miami-Dade County compared to their White Latinx and White Non-Latinx counterparts. Black youth accounted for 58% of the arrests overall, and yet only comprise 17-18% of all youth in Miami-Dade. This remained true in 2022 (last year of analysis) as Black youth accounted for 63% of all youth arrests, which is much higher than the percentage arrested nationally at 34% (Puzzanchera, Hockenberry, & Sickmund, 2022). In nearly every analysis conducted for this report, Black youth were arrested more often and at higher rates compared to White Latinx and White Non-Latinx youth. Even more staggering are the differences between Black youth and White Non-Latinx youth. We found that arrest rates for Black youth were still 19 times higher in 2022 than White Non-Latinx youth. The differences between these two groups were consistently large. Based on the results of our analyses, we concluded that any interventions that have taken place to reduce youth arrests have been effective in reducing arrests as a whole and have been far less effective at alleviating racial disparities and disproportionality that exist among the different groups.

After reviewing the literature on the topic, it has become clear that racial disparities and disproportionality in youth arrests is a nationwide problem, and Miami-Dade is no exception. Unfortunately, there is no single cause or mechanism that needs to be addressed, but rather several ways that Black youth enter the system in greater numbers compared to their White Latinx and White Non-Latinx counterparts. The cumulative effect of these disproportionate paths into the system (e.g., school arrest, booking arrest, court ordered warrant) contributes to the overall overrepresentation of Black youth. Furthermore, this report only examines data at the “front-end” or beginning of the process regarding interaction with the juvenile justice system. Black youth have historically been overrepresented at later decision-points in the juvenile justice system beyond the initial arrest. Research from national and state sources have also echoed the same conclusions regarding the overrepresentation of Black youth in other cities and localities. Therefore, we hope to continue the project by further exploring what happens to youth beyond the arrest point.

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The literature review below summarizes some of the explanatory factors related to disproportionate minority contact for youth and listed above are some of the recommendations that have come from that review. The recommendations provided in this report target areas for improvement and incorporate evidence-based practices to reduce disproportionate minority contact in other places. Because the problem is complex and multifaceted, implementing a single solution will likely be ineffective. The combination of factors leading to these outcomes are the result of primarily two sources: internal factors within the juvenile justice system that are associated with differential outcomes, and external factors that are associated with historical racial and ethnic disparities beyond the juvenile justice system. A combination of solutions targeting both areas will be needed to continue decreasing the number of youth arrests *and* alleviate racial disproportionality among youth of color.

One final note that is important and worthy of mentioning. Most youth never come into contact with law enforcement or get arrested. Only 788 different individual youths were arrested in 2022 (last year of analysis) out of the entire population of 244,955. Furthermore, only 383 Black youth were arrested out of a population of 43,285 in Miami-Dade County. Therefore, approximately 99% of Black youth were not arrested and do not come into contact with law enforcement. While the problem of disproportionality in arrests is a big problem, and the impetus for this report, we feel it is very important to put this into the larger context of youth generally to combat certain stereotypes about youth of color, particularly young males.

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### **Definitions and Data Sources on Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County**

#### *Miami-Dade County Juvenile Services Department*

Data for this report was provided by the Miami-Dade County Juvenile Services Department (MDJSD)<sup>1</sup>. These data provided information on all youth 17 years of age or younger that were arrested in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Included in the data was information on youth demographics, arrest date, charges, severity of charges (misdemeanor, felony), origin of arrest (booking or pickup order), and arresting agency. Youth ethnicity, race, and gender were self-reported to the arresting officer during the booking process. Each arrest in the dataset was assigned a file number to the youth during processing to hold the identity of the minor confidential. All data were de-identified by the Juvenile Services Department prior to the data being made available to the research team.

All data provided are the property of the Miami-Dade Juvenile Services Department. Any further use of these data must be approved by the MDJSD. All conclusions drawn in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the MDJSD.

#### *United States Census Bureau*

Data was downloaded from the United States Census Bureau (<https://data.census.gov/>) on population estimates for youth ages 10 – 17 in Miami-Dade County for each year from 2010 – 2021<sup>2</sup>. Rates were calculated using the ages of 10 – 17 only and did not include population estimates for youth younger than 10 years old. We believe that not including youth under the age of 10 in rate calculations is a more accurate representation of the population likely to be arrested in Miami-Dade County.

Population estimates for *Black Alone*, *Hispanic or Latino*, and *White, Non-Hispanic or Latino* were used for this report. Population estimates for *Hispanic or Latino* youth that did not include the *White, Non-Hispanic or Latino* estimates were not available. Therefore, population estimates in the report for *White-Latino* youth were calculated by taking the population estimates of *Hispanic or Latino* youth and subtracting the population estimates of the *White, Non-Hispanic or Latino* youth (see below). This was done to minimize the overlap to the greatest extent possible, but because of the nature of the data, there is some possible overlap between the groups. We acknowledge this limitation and still believe it is informative to calculate rates of youth arrest over time by race and ethnicity.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.miamidade.gov/global/juvenileservices/home.page>

<sup>2</sup> Population estimates were drawn from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey 1-year estimates.

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Table 1

Miami-Dade County Youth Population Demographics <sup>3</sup>				
	Black	White-Latinx	White Non-Latinx	Total
Ages 10-17	17.6% (43,285)	49.8% (122,197)	14.0% (34,475)	100% (244,955 <sup>4</sup> )

For the year 2022, population estimates were not yet available. Therefore, population estimates from 2021 were used to calculate rates for year 2022. As a result, future analyses examining rates for the year 2022 may vary slightly from those presented here because of changes in population estimates from 2021 to 2022 for youth 10 – 17.

Data in this report are presented by raw numbers, percentages, and population rates. Raw numbers are useful for demonstrating broad trends over time and understanding the total volume of youth arrests. Percentages are useful for demonstrating relative comparisons rather than absolute comparisons. Finally, population rates allow for specific demographic group comparisons while accounting for overall differences in the population. Rates were calculated by taking the total number of arrests for a particular category (e.g., males), dividing it by the total number in the population, and multiplying it by a constant of 10,000. Please note that rates are an *arrest* rate and not an *individual* rate of arrests because the unit of analysis for rates was the arrest rather than the individual.

For clarification, the term *youth arrest* is used to describe an arrest of a minor aged 17 or younger<sup>5</sup>. Here the unit of analysis is the arrest (not the youth). One youth can be arrested multiple times which would be included here when examining arrests. The term *individual youth arrest* refers to the number of individual minors that were arrested to get a better understanding of the number of distinct youths arrested. Here the unit of analysis is the individual minor, and each youth was only counted once in the analysis. Distinguishing between these two and running analyses independently provides a better understanding of recidivism and how many youths are arrested more than once.

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<sup>3</sup> Population totals reported in Table 1 were drawn from the 2021 American Community Survey from the U.S. Census Bureau.

<sup>4</sup> Total reported here is for all youth in Miami-Dade County ages 10-17 in 2021.

<sup>5</sup> There are exceptions of youth older than 17 in the dataset, but they were quite rare. Most likely related to prior interactions with the juvenile system when the youth was younger than 17.

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### **Data Analysis Findings**

The following sections provide detailed analyses regarding youth arrests in Miami-Dade County from 2010-2022. Data in this section of the report are presented in raw numbers, percentages, and population rates. Using these three approaches, we examined various factors related to the arrest including residential status (e.g., zip code), gender, race and ethnicity, recidivism, charge severity (misdemeanor or felony), charge group (e.g., drug, property, violent), and charge type (booking or warrant issued).

Please note the data used for this report provides a lot of information about youth arrests and many more statistical analyses could be conducted than are presented in this report. We believe the results in this report provide a good foundation for understanding youth arrests in Miami-Dade County. However, many more analyses could be conducted to further understand the nuanced issues and complexity of youth arrests. Further exploration of these data are encouraged beyond the completion of this report and examining data at subsequent decision points after the arrest are strongly recommended.

Also note the variation in scale size among different graphs in this section of the report. Every effort was made to keep the scale of graphs consistent *within* each subsection below. However, unfortunately because of the vast differences in volume (e.g., arrests among males and females), scale size will vary across different areas of analysis. This is important to remember when comparing or understanding the nature of differences in arrest patterns among different groups or arrest factors.

Finally, ***results must be interpreted with caution and thoughtfulness***. When demographic factors (e.g., race & ethnicity) are used in analyses, it can foster the misinterpretation that race or ethnicity *causes* different outcomes. It can promote thinking about race in terms of what is good and bad by implying that race actually predicts negative outcomes. In other words, race does not *cause* someone to be more or less likely to perpetrate criminal activity. Therefore, interpretation of the data regarding race and arrests should examine the various environmental and systemic variables available for analysis that are associated with racial disparities and disproportionality (see literature review below).

### **Results**

Local data on de-identified youth arrests from the Miami-Dade Juvenile Services Department was analyzed to better understand longitudinal arrest patterns and trends in Miami-Dade County. Overall, 47,125 youth arrests occurred from 2010 - 2022. In total, 19,903 different youth accounted for the total number of arrests during this time period and the average age at arrest was 15.73 with ages ranging from 8 – 25 years old. The majority of youth arrested were Black (58%), followed by White-Latinx (37%), and White Non-Latinx (5%) respectively (Table 2). Males comprised 83% of arrests compared to females 17% (Table 3) and the vast majority of youth arrested resided in Miami-Dade County, 93% (Table 4).

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Table 2

Total Number of Youth Arrests by Race & Ethnicity: 2010-2022					
	Black	White-Latinx	White Non-Latinx	Other	Total
Arrests	27,306 (57.9%)	17,492 (37.1%)	2,259 (4.8%)	68 (0.1%)	47,125 (100%)

Table 3

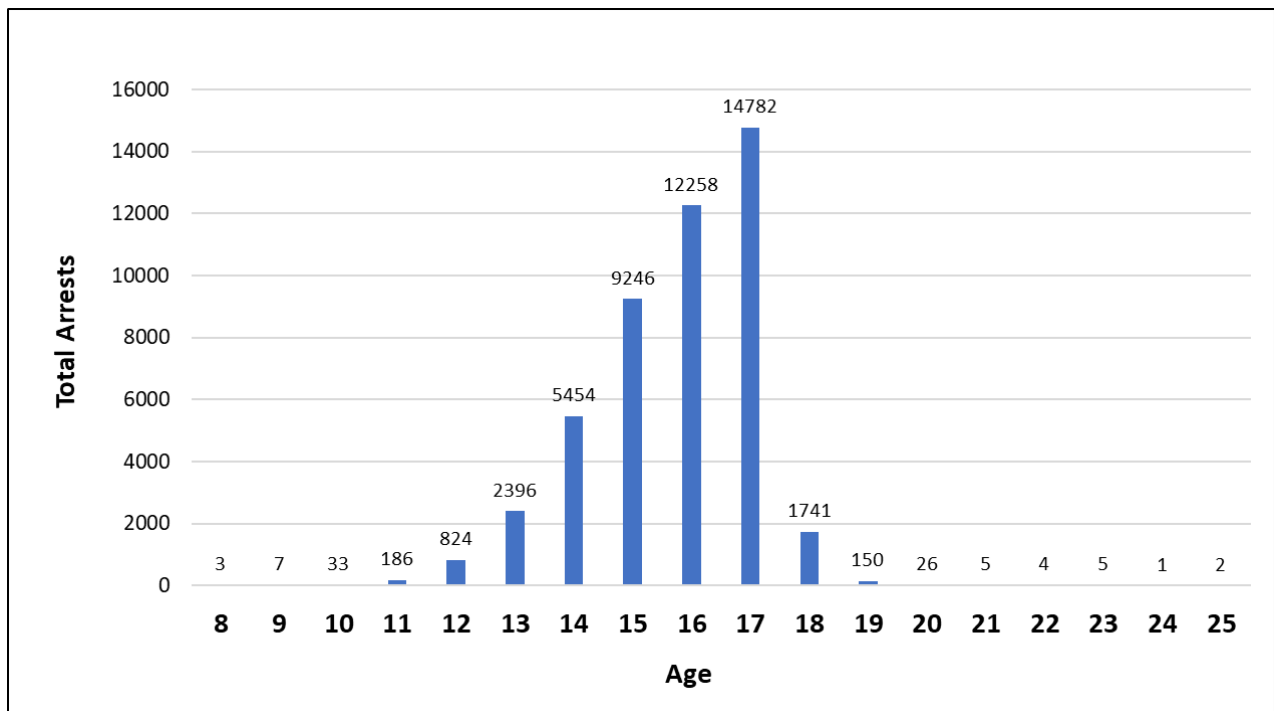
Total Number of Youth Arrests by Gender: 2010-2022		
	Male	Female
Arrests	38,985 (82.7%)	8,140 (17.2%)

Table 4

Total Number of Youth Arrests by Residential Status: 2010-2022		
	Miami-Dade Resident	Non-Miami-Dade Resident
Arrests	43,987 (93.3%)	3,113 (6.6%)

Overall, 77% of youth were 15-17 years old (Figure 1) at arrest. Seventeen was the most frequent age at arrest (14,782) followed by ages 16, 15, 14, and 13.

**Figure 1: Age of Youth at Arrest**



## List of Tables and Figures

### NUMBER AND RATES OF ARRESTS: OVERALL

The following graphs present data on the total number of arrests, the total number of youths arrested, the residential status of youths arrested, and the arrest rate for Miami-Dade County from 2010-2022.

**Figure 2: Total Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County: 2010 – 2022**

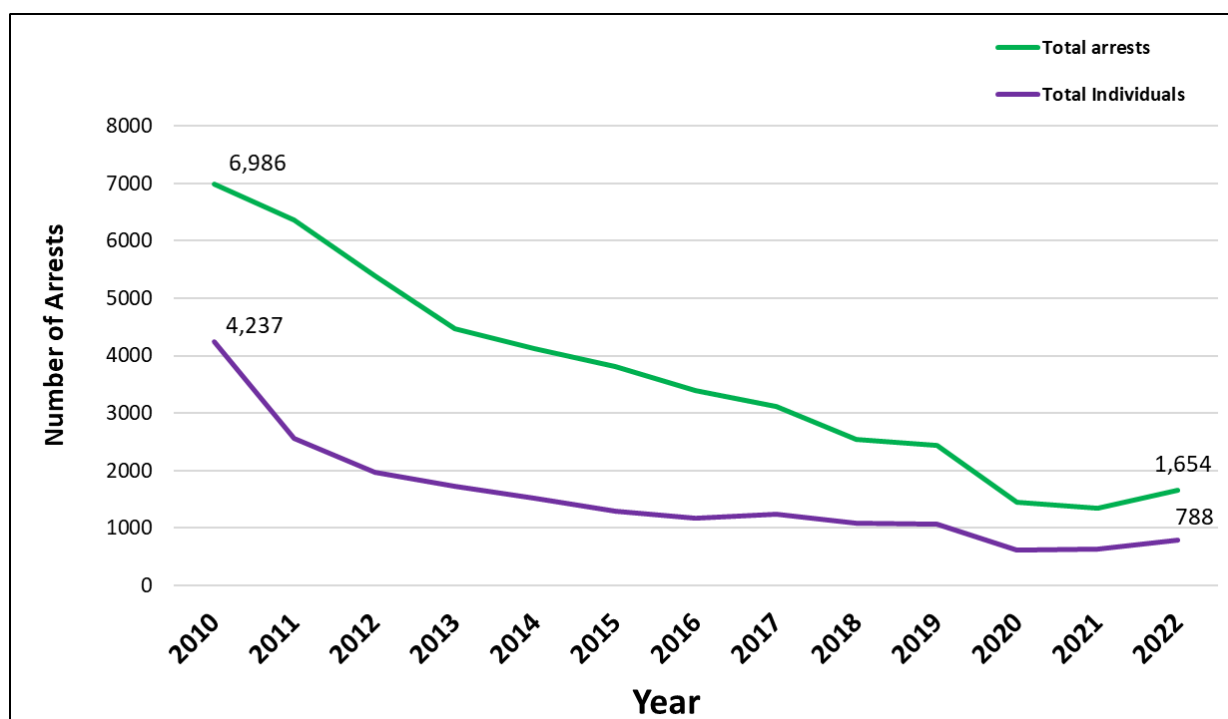


Figure 2 shows changes in the total number of youth arrests (green) and the total number of individual youths arrested (purple) in Miami-Dade County from 2010-2022. To clarify, individual youth in this analysis (purple) were only counted once. This was done to better understand not only how many total arrests occurred during this time period, but to also understand how many distinct youths account for the total number of arrests. The purpose of this approach was to get a general understanding of recidivism. More detailed analyses regarding recidivism are presented below.

Overall, a consistent decline was revealed in both the total number of youth arrests and the total number of individuals accounting for these arrests from 2010 – 2022. In 2010, a total of 6,986 arrests were made. This number dropped significantly to 1,654 arrests in 2022, a decrease of 76% during that time period. It is important to note there was a slight increase in youth arrests from 2021 – 2022. This was a pattern that was discovered in many of the analyses throughout

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the study. Although we cannot state causality from the following analyses, the slight increase in arrests in 2022 is likely associated with post-pandemic trends and more similar to pre-pandemic levels of youth arrests.

A similar trend was observed in the total number of individuals arrested. In 2010, 4,237 individuals accounted for 6,986 arrests. By 2022, that number had dropped to 788 individuals accounting for 1,654 arrests. The total number of individual youths arrested decreased during this time period by 81% indicating that fewer individuals are getting arrested and fewer total arrests are being made.

Please note that for youth arrested more than one time, the year of their 1<sup>st</sup> arrest is what is included in the analysis above. This is true for all other graphs and figures that use individual youth as the unit of analysis (IDs).



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**Figure 3: Total Number of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Residential Status: 2010 – 2022**

The following graphs present data on the total number of arrests made of youth that live in Miami-Dade County (MD) versus those who do not live in the county. Residential status was determined using the residing zip code<sup>6</sup> reported during the booking process.

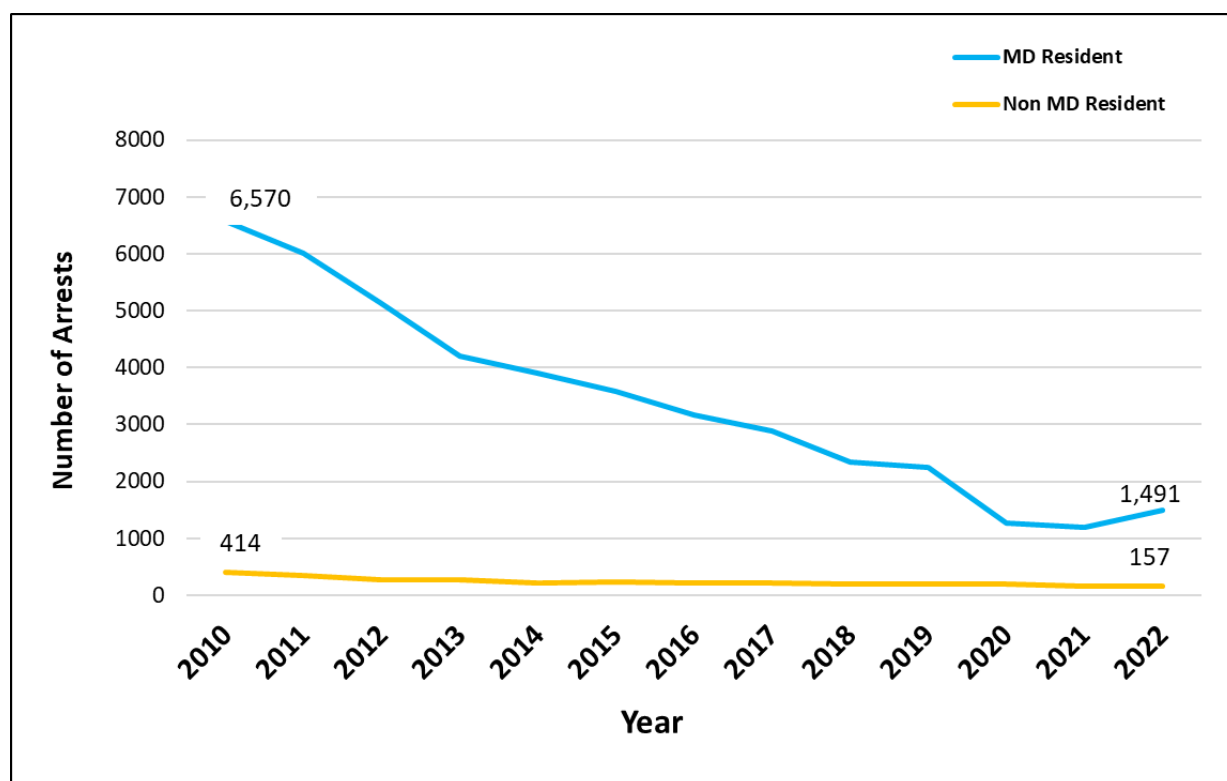


Figure 3 compares the total number of youth arrests for individuals that reported living in Miami-Dade County and those who do not reside in the County from 2010-2022. Notably, the vast majority of arrests were made of youth that reside in Miami-Dade (93%) and non-MD youth never accounted for more than 10% in any given year. This was a fairly consistent trend. In 2010, MD youth accounted for 94% of all arrests made and in 2022, they accounted to 90% of arrests. Overall, the decline in MD resident arrests was more significant, indicating a greater impact on the local youth population.

<sup>6</sup> Residing information was self-reported by youth during the booking process after the arrest.

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**Figure 4: Total Number of Individual Youth Arrested in Miami-Dade County by Residential Status: 2010 – 2022**

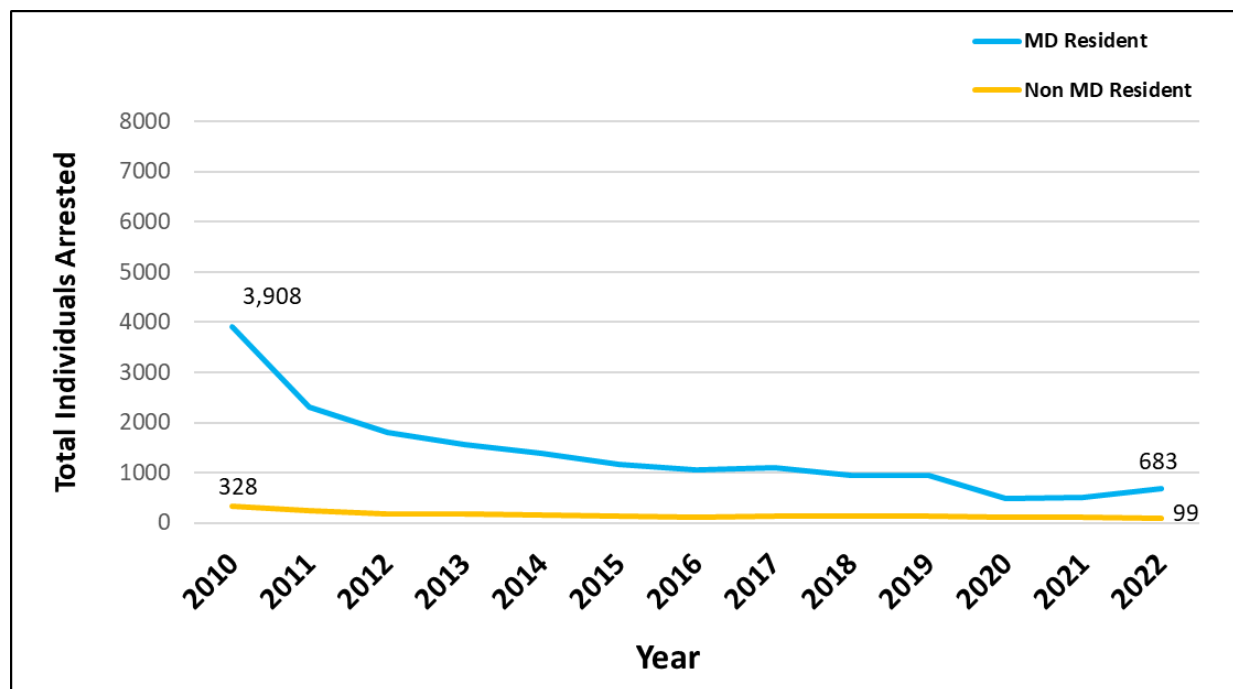


Figure 4 compares the total number of individuals arrested based on their residential status from 2010 to 2022. Similar to total arrests, both groups exhibited an overall decrease in the total number of individuals arrested.

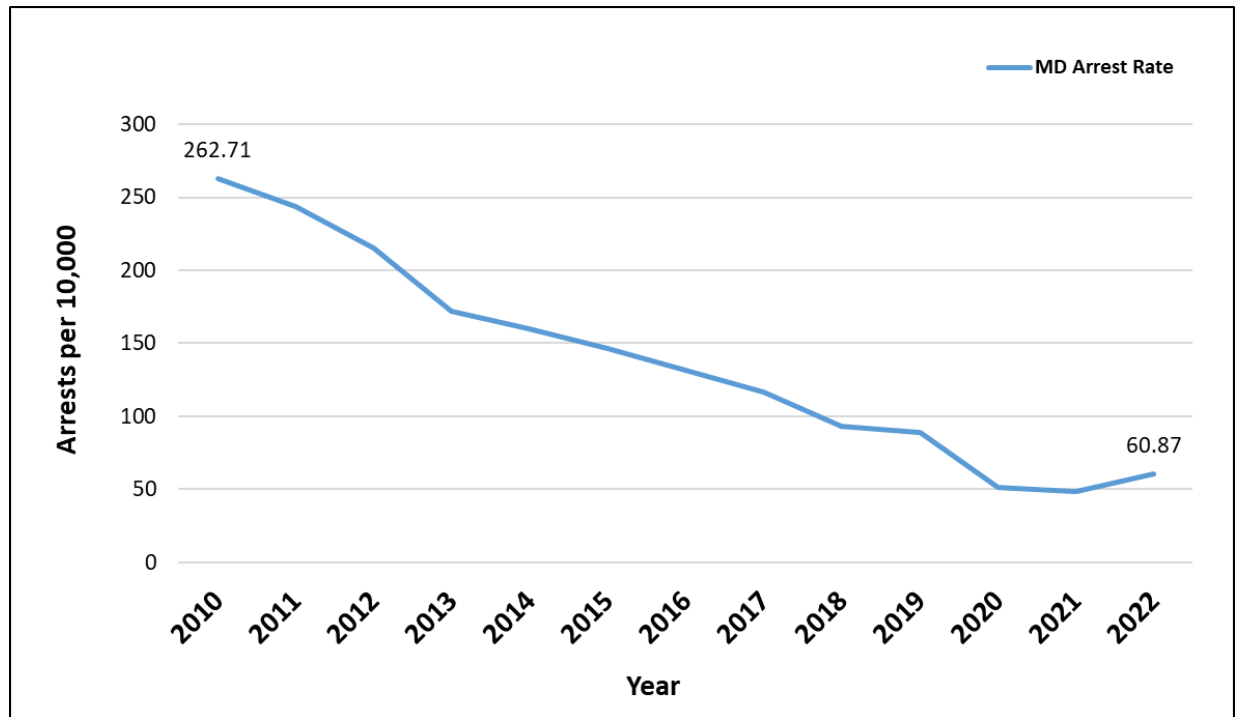
For MD residents, the number of youths arrested was 3,908 in 2010, and gradually declined to 683 individuals arrested in 2022.

For non-MD residents, there were 328 individuals arrested in 2010, which is approximately 11.9 times fewer than the number of MD resident arrests. Over the following years, the number of arrests steadily decreased to 99 by 2022. These findings highlight the contrasting trends in youth arrests between MD and non-MD residents; most notably that the vast majority of arrests (93%) are youth that reside in MD.

*\*Please note that all remaining analyses in this report will include only arrests of youth that reside in Miami-Dade County.*

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 5: Arrest Rate for Youth Arrested in Miami-Dade County: 2010 – 2022**



The graph above illustrates the MD youth arrest rate per 10,000 in the population from 2010 - 2022. Similar to the results on arrests, the data reveals a consistent downward trend in the arrest rate over the thirteen years, with a with a slight increase in 2022.

In 2010, the arrest rate was 262.71 (per 10,000), and by 2013, it had significantly dropped to 183.04 (per 10,000). This decline continued, with the arrest rate further decreasing to 55.03 (per 10,000) in 2021 with a slight increase in 2022 to 60.87 (per 10,000). This decline signifies a considerable reduction in youth arrests relative to the population size.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 6: Residing Zip Codes of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County: 2010 – 2022**

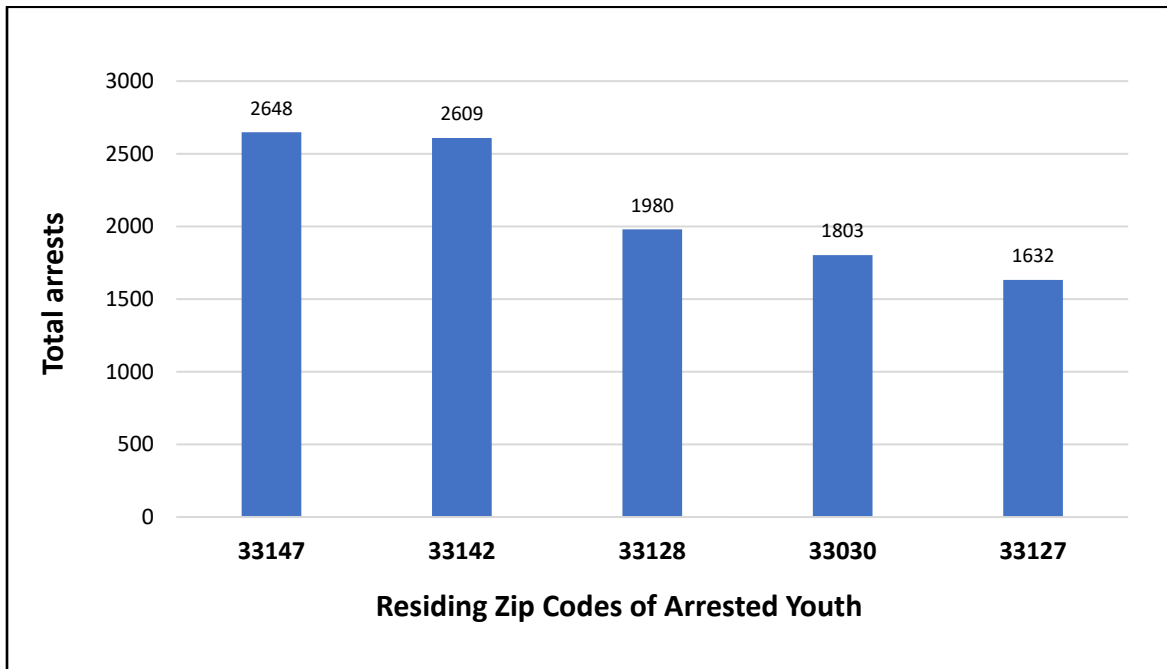


Figure 6 above illustrates the five most frequent residing zip codes of youth arrested in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Zip code, 33147 accounted for 2,648 (6%) of all youth arrests during this time period, followed by zip code 33142 with 2,609 (5.9%) arrests, zip code 33128 with 1,980 (4.5%) youth arrests, zip code 33030 with 1,803 (4.1%) arrests, and zip code 33127 with 1,632 (3.7%) arrests.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

### NUMBER AND RATES OF ARRESTS: RACE & ETHNICITY

All analyses in this report on race and ethnicity only included youth who self-reported as Black, White-Latinx, or White Non-Latinx. While youth from other racial and ethnic backgrounds do get arrested in Miami-Dade County, it was rare. Youth from these groups constituted only 0.1% of all arrests during this time period and never exceeded 0.002% in any given year. Therefore, all youth that self-identified as something other than the three categories listed above was not included in the analyses focusing on race and ethnicity for this report.

The figures presented below illustrate trends in youth arrests in Miami-Dade County by race and ethnicity. Total arrests, total individuals arrested, and arrest rates are presented for Black youth, White-Latinx youth, and White Non-Latinx youth. Overall, more Black youth were arrested and had much higher arrest rates compared to White-Latinx youth and White Non-Latinx youth.

**Figure 7: Total Number of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

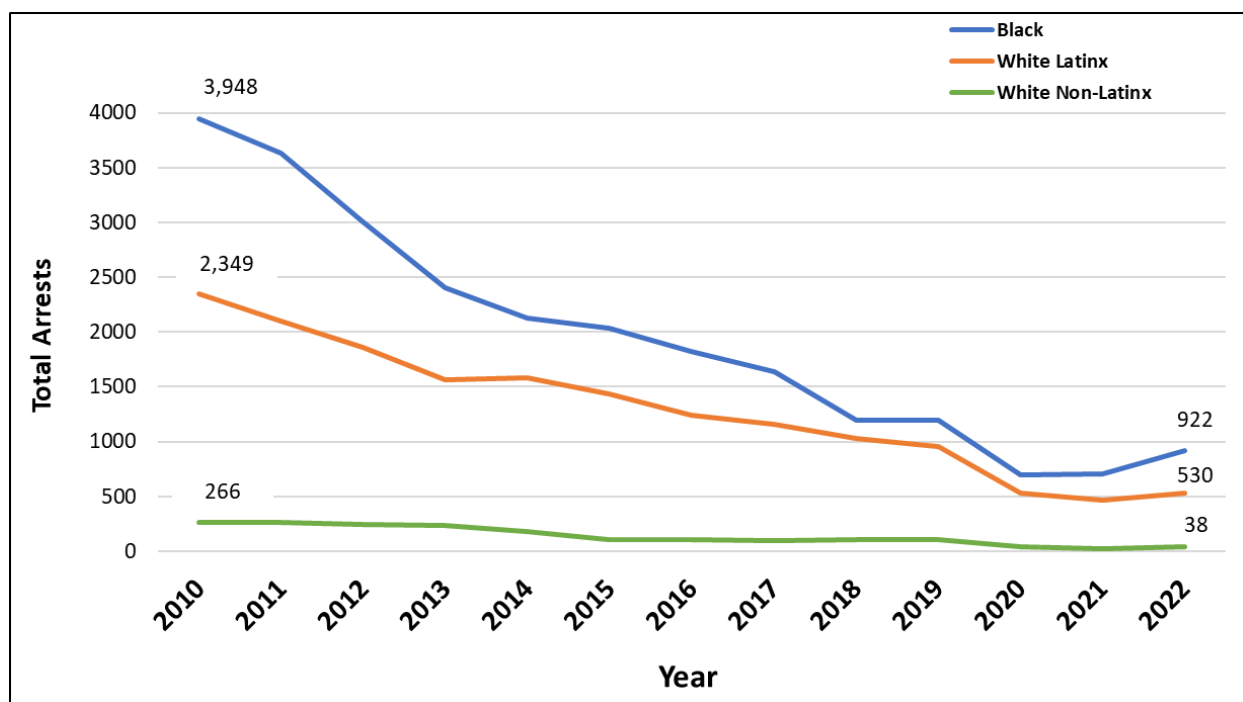


Figure 7 displays the total number of youth arrests in Miami-Dade County categorized by race and ethnicity from 2010 - 2022. Overall, there were more arrests of Black youth compared to White-Latinx and Non-White Latinx youth. This pattern was true overall and for every year examined. In 2010, there were 3,948 arrests involving Black youth compared to 2,349 for

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

White-Latinx youth, and 266 for White Non-Latinx youth. During 2010, Black youth accounted for 60% of all youth arrests compared to 36% for White-Latinx youth, and 4% for White Non-Latinx youth. By 2022, total arrests had decreased substantially across all racial and ethnic groups with 922 arrests of Black youth, 530 arrests of White-Latinx youth, and 38 arrests of White Non-Latinx youth. For each group specifically, arrests of Black youth decreased 76%, arrests of White-Latinx youth decreased by 77%, and arrests of White Non-Latinx youth decreased by 85%. Although Black youth saw the greatest decline in terms of volume of arrests, Black youth still accounted for 62% of all arrests<sup>7</sup> in 2022 compared to 35% for White-Latinx youth, and only 2% for White Non-Latinx youth. Therefore, while the number of arrests decreased for each group, the percentage of arrests that each group accounted for remained relatively constant throughout the 13-year period.

**Figure 8: Total Number of Individual Youth Arrested in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

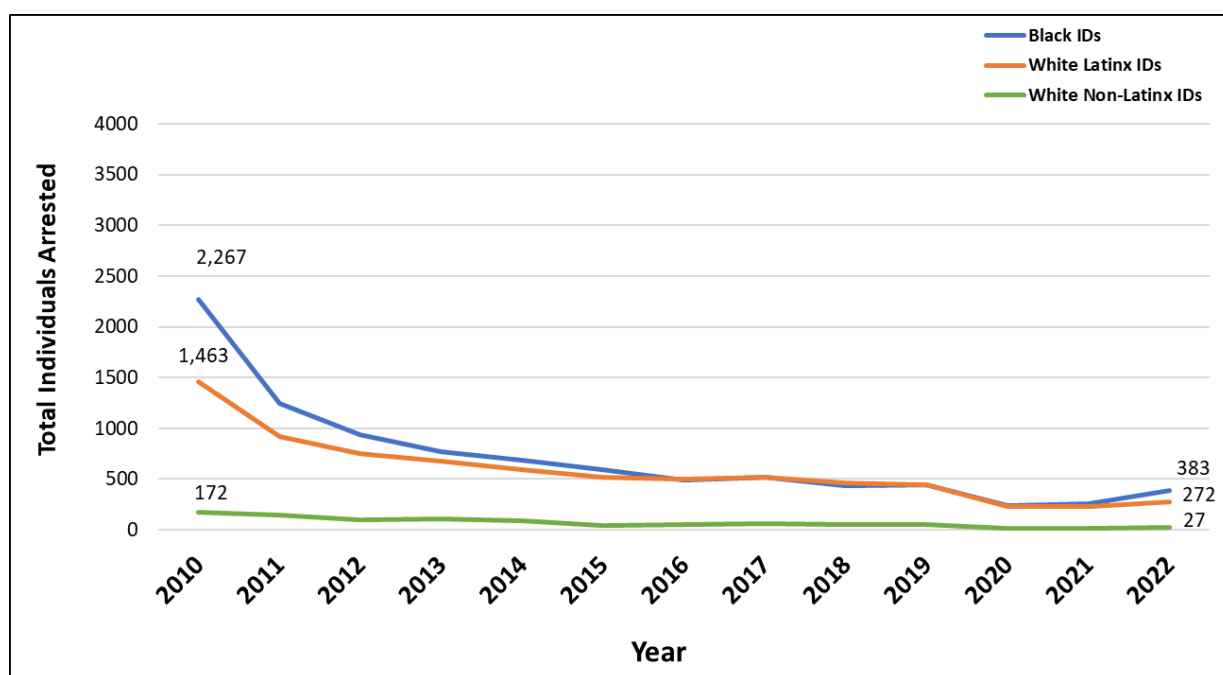


Figure 8 shows the total number of individual youths arrested in Miami-Dade County categorized by race and ethnicity from 2010 - 2022. Similar to the trends in total arrests, more individual Black youth were arrested compared to White-Latinx youth, and White Non-Latinx youth. In 2010, 2,267 individual Black youth were arrested compared to 1,463 White-Latinx youth, and 172 White Non-Latinx youth. This trend continued for each year until 2016 when

<sup>7</sup> This percentage represents arrests of youth that live in Miami-Dade County in 2022. The total percentage reported on page 6 reports the total number of all youth arrested that live in Miami-Dade and outside of Miami-Dade.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

more White Latinx individual youth were arrested than Black individual youth<sup>8</sup> and continued until 2020. Overall, there was a significant decrease in the total number of individual youths arrested for all three racial and ethnic groups. By 2022, the numbers had decreased to 383 Black youth, 272 White-Latinx youth, and 27 White Non-Latinx youth respectively. Despite these decreases, Black youth still accounted for 56% of all individuals arrested compared to White-Latinx youth at 39%, and 4% for White Non-Latinx youth.

**Figure 9: Arrest Rate for Youth Arrested in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

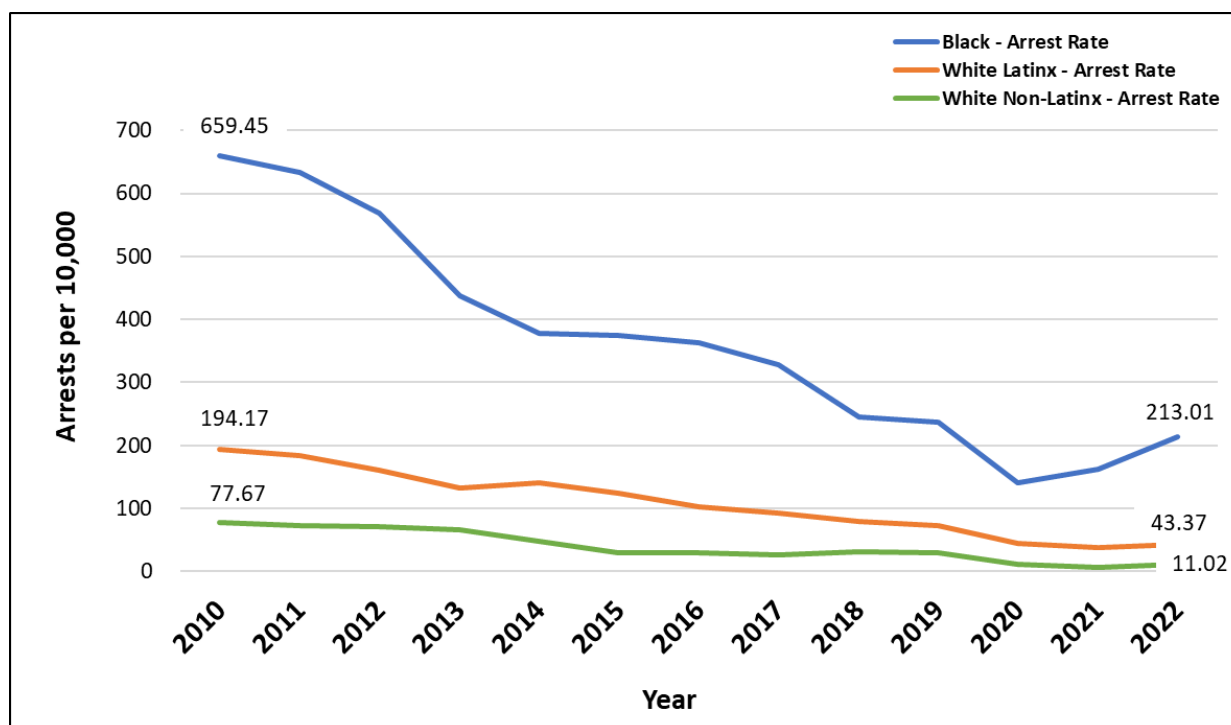


Figure 9 shows the arrest rates for youth in Miami-Dade County by race and ethnicity from 2010 - 2022. Consistent with trends in arrests, the arrest rate decreased for all racial and ethnic groups during this time period. In 2010, the arrest rate for Black youth was 659.45 per 10,000 population, 194.17 for White-Latinx youth and 77.67 for White Non-Latinx youth. By 2022, the arrest rate for Black youth had decreased to 213.01 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 67%. The arrest rate for White-Latinx youth had decreased to 43.37 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 77%. The arrest rate for White Non-Latinx had decreased to 11.02 per 10,000 population, a

<sup>8</sup> Important to note the data presented here are counting unique (new) individuals that are arrested in that year and not counting youth that had been arrested previously. It is possible that more Black individual youths were actually arrested than White Latinx youths from 2016 – 2020, particularly because the total number of arrests for Black youth is higher than for White-Latinx youths. The likely explanation is recidivism during those years.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

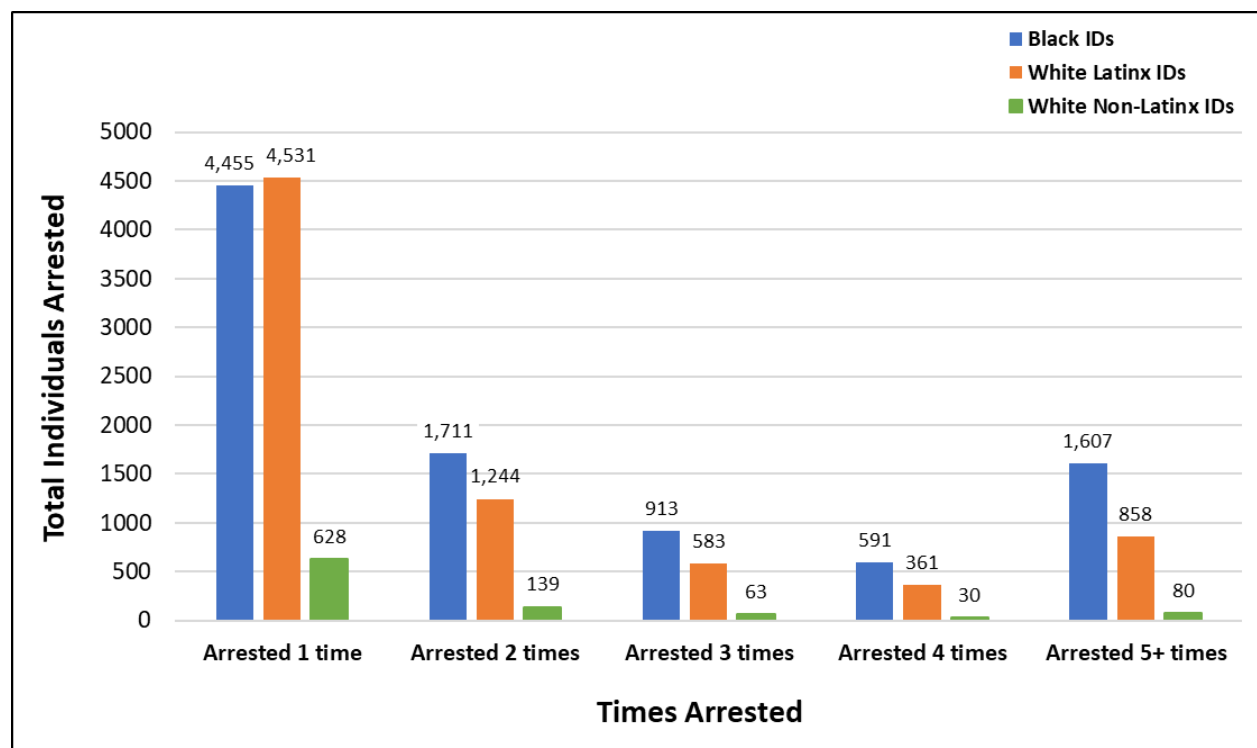
decrease of 85%. However, despite these decreases across all groups, the arrest rate for Black youth was higher than for White-Latinx, and White Non-Latinx youth. In 2022, the arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 5 times higher than the arrest rate for White-Latinx youth and 19 times higher than the arrest rate for White Non-Latinx youth.



## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

### RECIDIVISM: RACE & ETHNICITY

**Figure 10: Total Number of Arrests per Individual Youth in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**



Recidivism, which refers to the act of reoffending after a previous arrest, is depicted in Figure 10. The bar graph shows the total number of arrests of individual youth arrested in Miami-Dade County, by race and ethnicity from 2010 - 2022. Having data on recidivism helps provide a clearer understanding of youth arrest patterns over time. For example, it is important to know if a small number of youths are accounting for a large number of arrests in the data.

Overall, most youth get arrested only one time with 54% of all youth getting arrested only one time. Just over 17% of all youth were arrested 2 times, approximately 9% of youth were arrested 3 times, 5% of youth were arrested 4 times, and approximately 14% of youth were arrested 5 or more times. The average was 2.09 arrests per youth with a range from 1 – 41 arrests.

For those who were only arrested one time, White-Latinx youths were the most frequent with 4,531, followed by Black youths at 4,455, and 628 White Non-Latinx youths. However, beyond the initial arrest, Black youth were much more likely to be re-arrested compared to White-Latinx youth, and White Non-Latinx youth as Black youth comprised 59% of all youth arrested 2 or more times. The average number of arrests per youth for each racial and ethnic category were,

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

2.27 arrests per Black youth, 1.91 arrests per White-Latinx youth, and 1.72 arrests per White Non-Latinx youth.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

### NUMBER AND RATES OF ARRESTS: GENDER

The next section of figures shows trends in youth arrests in Miami-Dade County by gender from 2010 – 2022. Consistent with the developmental literature on offending, we found that males had a substantially higher number of arrests and rates of arrests. This pattern was true across all racial and ethnic groups which is illustrated in the next section.

**Figure 11: Total Number Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Gender: 2010 – 2022**

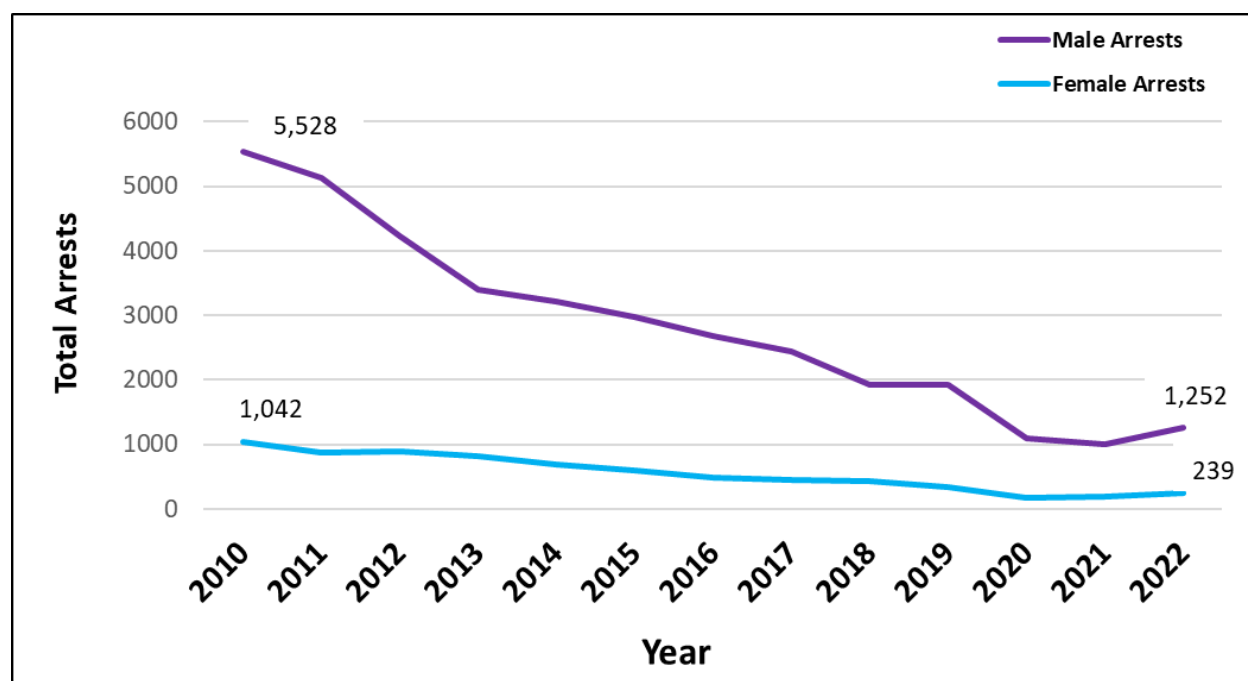


Figure 11 shows the total number of youth arrests by gender in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. The graph shows that more male youths were arrested compared to female youths and an overall decrease in the total number of arrests for both males and females from 2010 - 2022.

In 2010, there were 5,528 male youth arrests. Over time, this number decreased 77% to 1,252 arrests in 2022. Of note, male arrests increased slightly in 2022.

In 2010, there were 1,042 females arrested, which was much lower than the number of male arrests. However, similar to the number of male arrests, female youth arrests also decreased by 77% to 239 arrests by 2022.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 12: Total Number of Individual Youth Arrested in Miami-Dade County by Gender: 2010 – 2022**

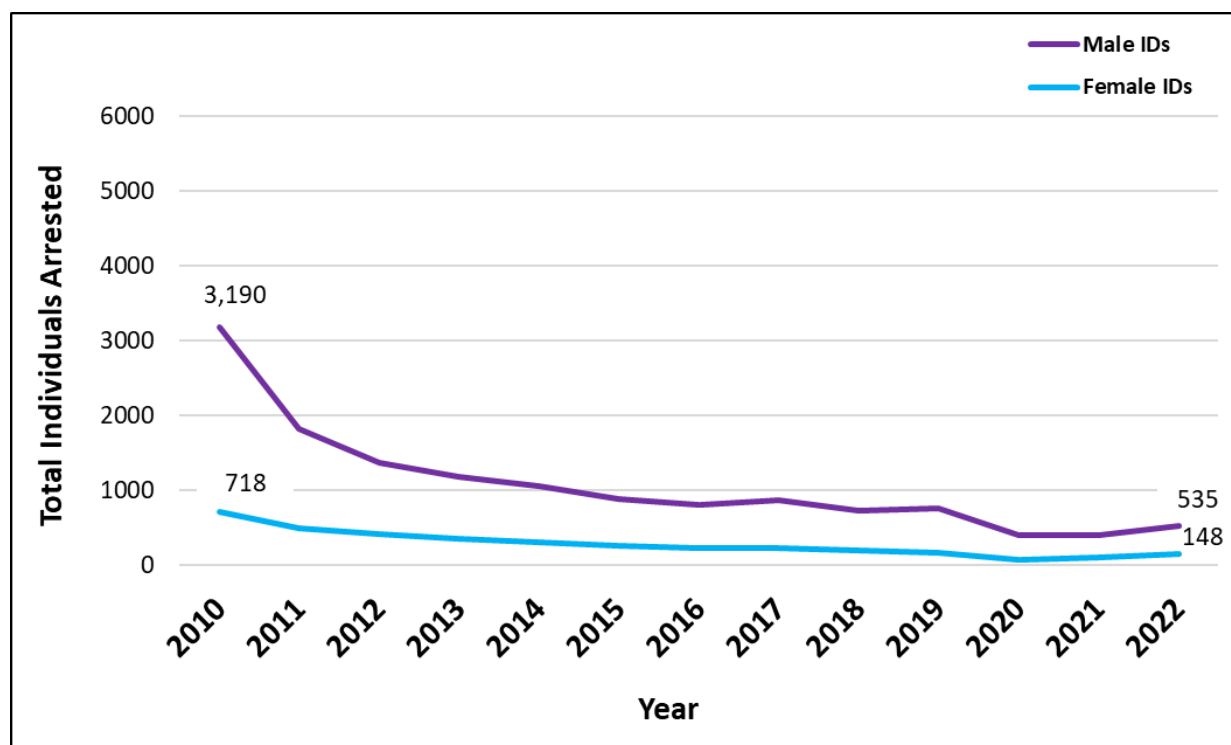


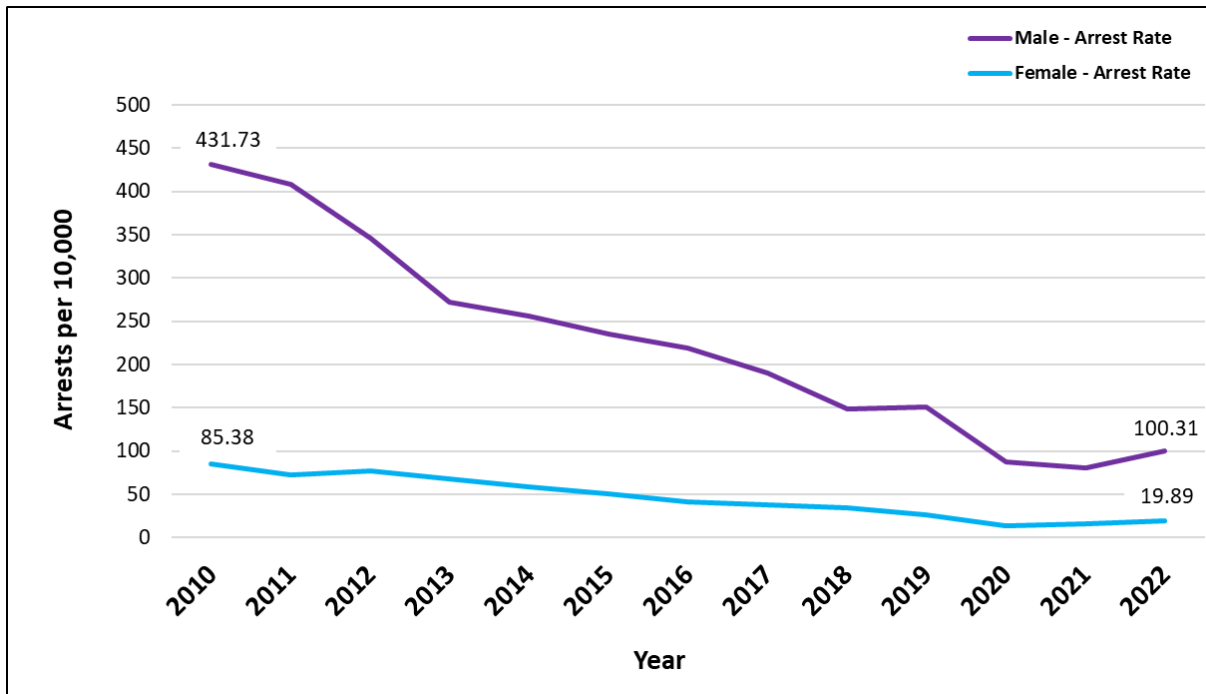
Figure 12 highlights that more male youths were arrested compared to female youths and the overall decrease in individuals arrested held true for both males and females from 2010 - 2022.

In 2010, there were 3,190 different male youths arrested, which was the highest total of any given year from 2010 - 2022. Over time, this number decreased significantly to 1,191 arrests in 2013, and eventually to 535 arrests in 2022. This was a decrease of 83%.

In 2010, there were far fewer females arrested, 718 compared to males. However, similar to the number of males arrested, 2010 was the peak year in which more individual female youths were arrested compared to any other year. This number decreased to 362 arrests in 2013, and eventually to 148 arrests in 2022. Overall, this was a 79% decrease.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 13: Arrest Rate for Youth Arrested in Miami-Dade County by Gender: 2010 – 2022**



The line chart (figure 13) illustrates arrest rates for male and female youth in Miami-Dade County from 2010 -2022, highlighting the consistent pattern of higher arrest rates for males and decreasing arrest rates for both genders.

For male youth, the arrest rate started at 431.73 per 10,000 population in 2010 and steadily declined over the years. There was a significant decrease between 2011 and 2018, with the arrest rate dropping to 100.31 per 10,000 population in 2022. Although there was a slight increase in the arrest rate in 2021 compared to the previous year, it remained lower than the initial rate in 2010.

In the case of female youths, the arrest rate was much lower at 85.38 per 10,000 population in 2010. Similar to males, the arrest rate for females exhibited a continuous decline throughout the years. Notable decreases were observed between 2013 and 2016, and the arrest rate reached 19.89 per 10,000 population in 2022. It's worth mentioning that there was a slight increase in the arrest rate for females in 2021 compared to 2020.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

### NUMBER AND RATES OF ARRESTS: GENDER, RACE, & ETHNICITY

**Figure 14: Total Number of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity Among Males: 2010 – 2022**

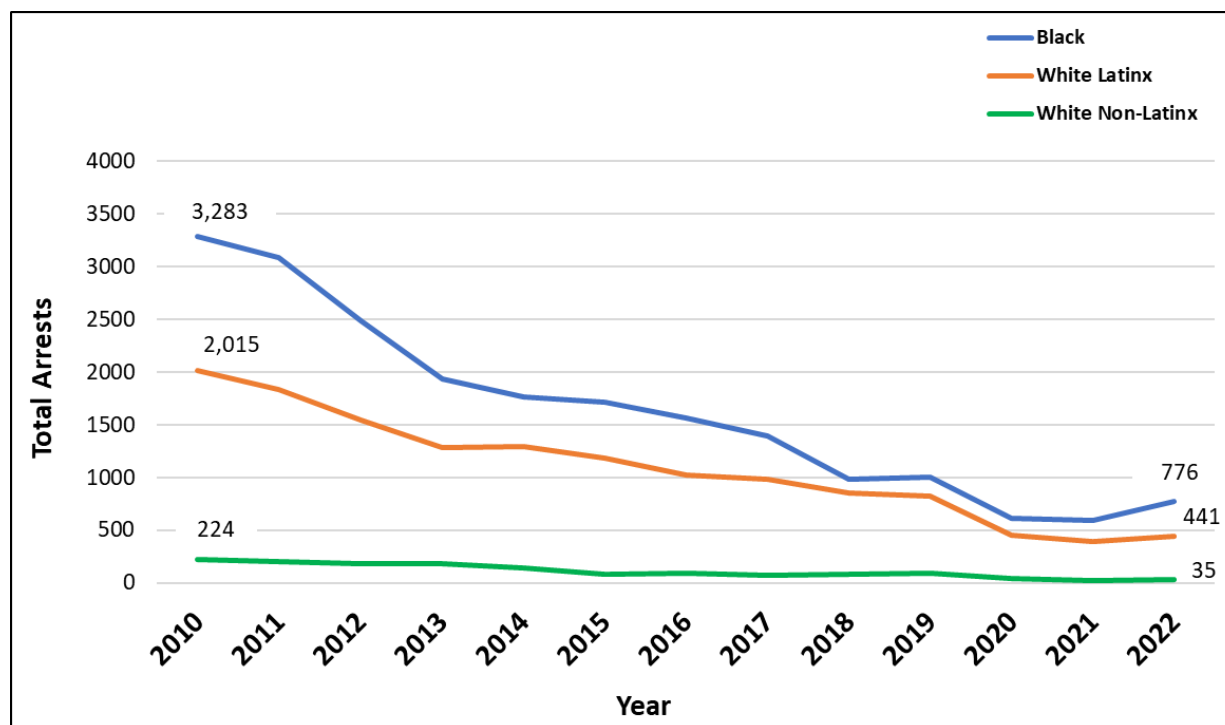


Figure 14 displays the total number of arrests of male youth, aged 10-17 categorized by race and ethnicity. Over the thirteen period, Black males were arrested most frequently, followed by White Latinx youth and White Non-Latinx youth. In fact, overall, Black male youths comprised 48% of all arrests in Miami-Dade County during this time period despite accounting for only 9% of the 10-17-year-old youth population. In 2010, there were 3,283 arrests involving Black male youths compared to 2,015 for White-Latinx males, and 224 for White Non-Latinx males. By 2022, total arrests had decreased substantially across all racial and ethnic groups with 776 arrests of Black males, 441 arrests of White-Latinx males, and 35 arrests of White Non-Latinx males. For each group specifically, arrests of Black males decreased 76%, arrests of White-Latinx males decreased by 78%, and arrests of White Non-Latinx males decreased by 84%. Although Black males saw the greatest decline in terms of volume of arrests, Black youth still accounted for 62% of all male arrests in 2022 compared to 35% for White-Latinx youth, and only 2% for White Non-Latinx youth. Therefore, while the number of arrests decreased for each group, the percentage of arrests that each group accounted for remained relatively constant throughout the 13-year period. Furthermore, in terms of a percentage, White Non-Latinx males saw the largest

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

decrease in total arrests as a percentage, followed by White-Latinx males, and Black males respectively.

**Figure 15: Total Number of Individual Youth Arrested in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity Among Males: 2010 – 2022**

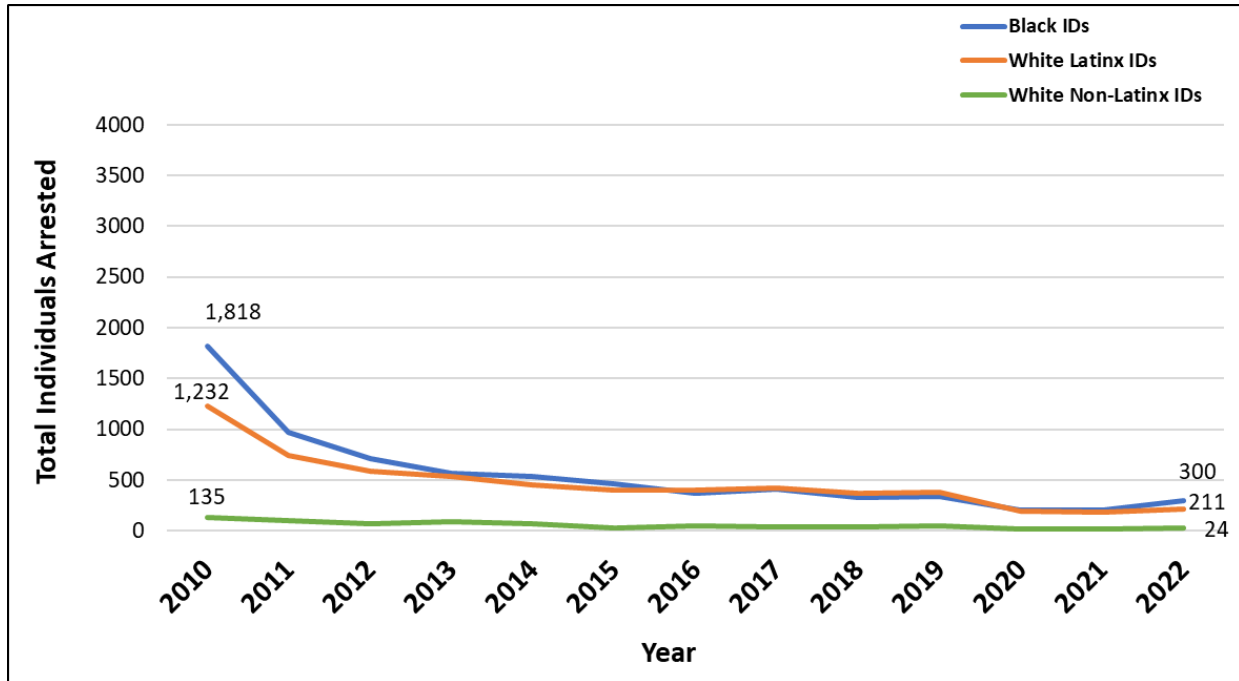


Figure 15 displays the total number of individuals arrested by race and ethnicity for males in Miami Dade County. Similar to previous findings, the total number of Black individual males arrested was highest until 2013. From 2013 to 2021, the total number of individual males arrested for Black youth and White-Latinx youth were fairly similar. Far fewer White Non-Latinx males were arrested during this time period and that trend held throughout the 13-year period. By 2022, the numbers had decreased to 300 Black male youth, 211 White-Latinx male youth, and 24 White Non-Latinx male youth respectively. Despite these decreases, Black youth still accounted for 56% of all males arrested compared to White-Latinx males at 39%, and 4% for White Non-Latinx males.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 16: Total Arrest Rate of Youth in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity Among Males: 2010 – 2022**

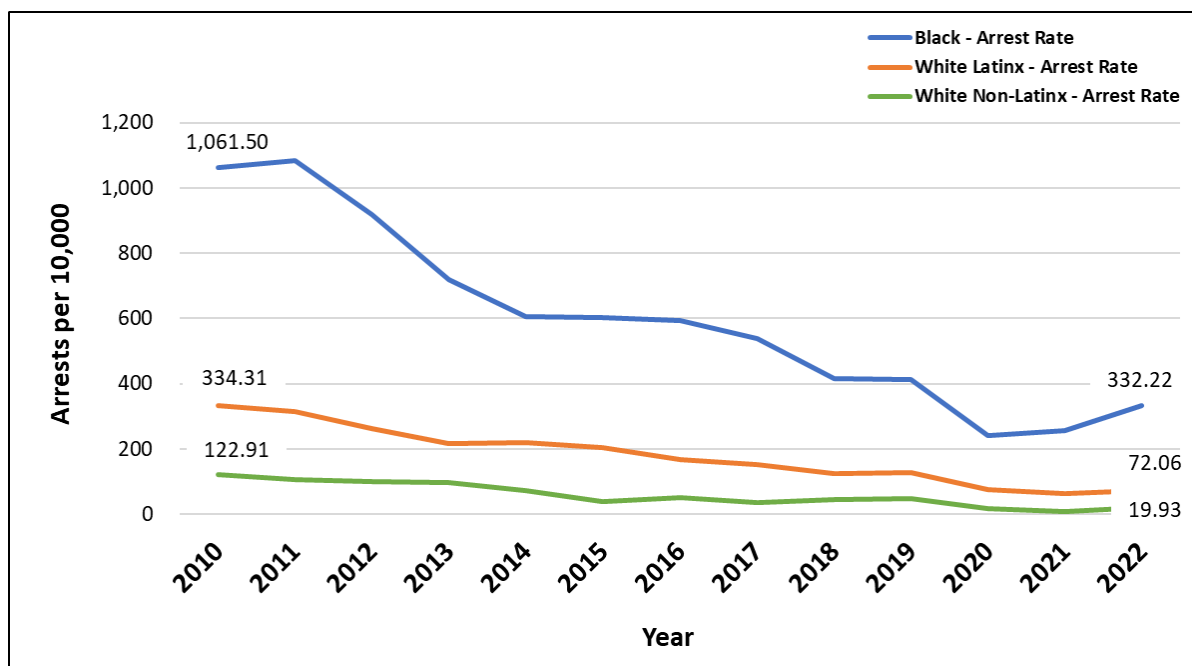


Figure 16 displays the arrest rates for males aged 10-17 in Miami-Dade County, categorized by race and ethnicity. Similar to previous findings, A The arrest rate decreased for all racial and ethnic groups of males during this time period. In 2010, the arrest rate for Black males was 1,061.50 per 10,000 population, 334.31 for White-Latinx males and 122.91 for White Non-Latinx males. By 2022, the arrest rate for Black males had decreased to 332.22 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 68%. The arrest rate for White-Latinx males had decreased to 72.06 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 78%. The arrest rate for White Non-Latinx males had decreased to 19.93 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 83%. However, despite these decreases across all groups, the arrest rate for Black males was still higher than for White-Latinx males, and White Non-Latinx males throughout the entire 13-year period. In 2022, the arrest rate for Black males was approximately 4.61 times higher than the arrest rate for White-Latinx males and 16.6 times higher than the arrest rate for White Non-Latinx males.



## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 17: Total Number of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity Among Females: 2010 – 2022**

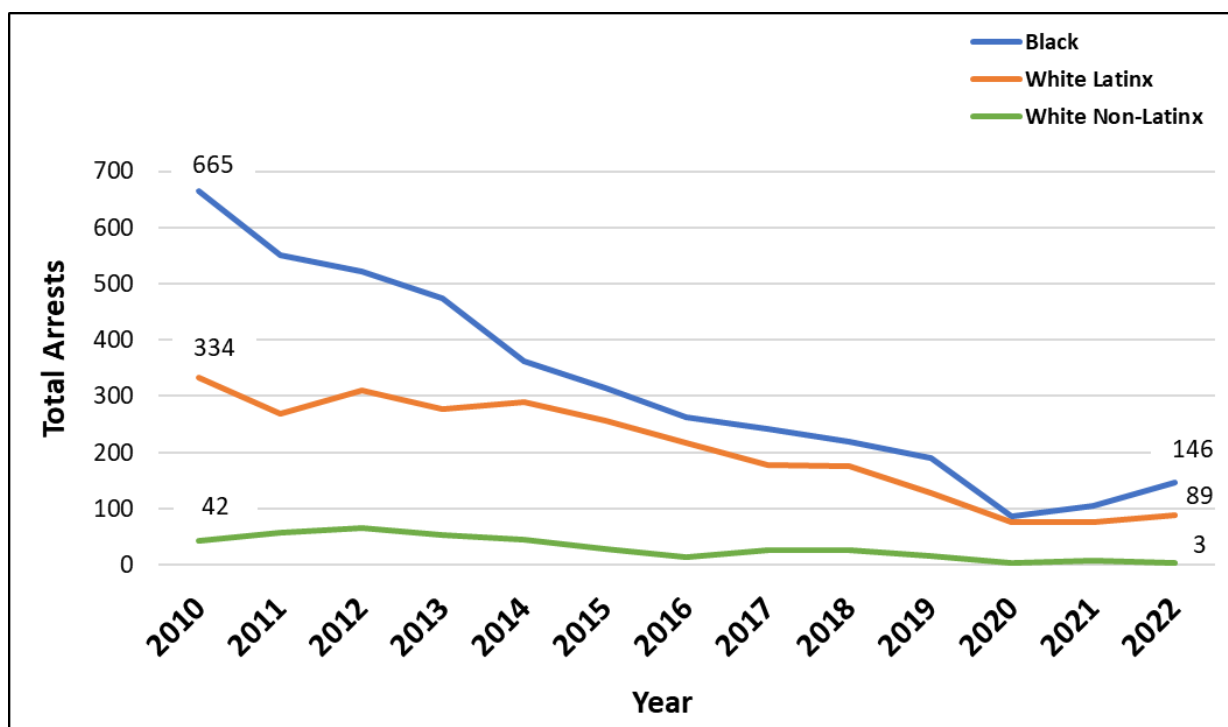


Figure 17 displays the total number of youth arrests among females in Miami-Dade County from 2010 - 2022, categorized by race and ethnicity. Consistent with previous findings, the total number of female youth arrests decreased for all racial and ethnic groups during this time period. Over this 13-year span, Black female youth were arrested most frequently, followed by White Latinx youth, and White Non-Latinx youth. In 2010, there were 665 arrests involving Black female youth—compared to 334 for White Latinx females, and 42 for White Non-Latinx females. By 2022, total arrests had decreased substantially among females across all racial and ethnic groups: 146 arrests of Black females, 89 arrests of White Latinx females, and 3 arrests of White Non-Latinx females. In terms of volume, Black females saw the greatest decline in arrests (519); however, Black youth still accounted for the largest percentage of all female arrests in 2022 at 61%, compared to 37% for White Latinx youth, and 1.2% for White Non-Latinx youth. Furthermore, in terms of percent decrease, total arrests went down by 78% for Black females, 73% for White Latinx females, and 93% for White Non-Latinx females. Thus, White Non-Latinx females saw the largest decrease in total arrests as a percentage, followed by Black females, and White Latinx females respectively.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 18: Total Number Individual Youth Arrested in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity Among Females: 2010 – 2022**

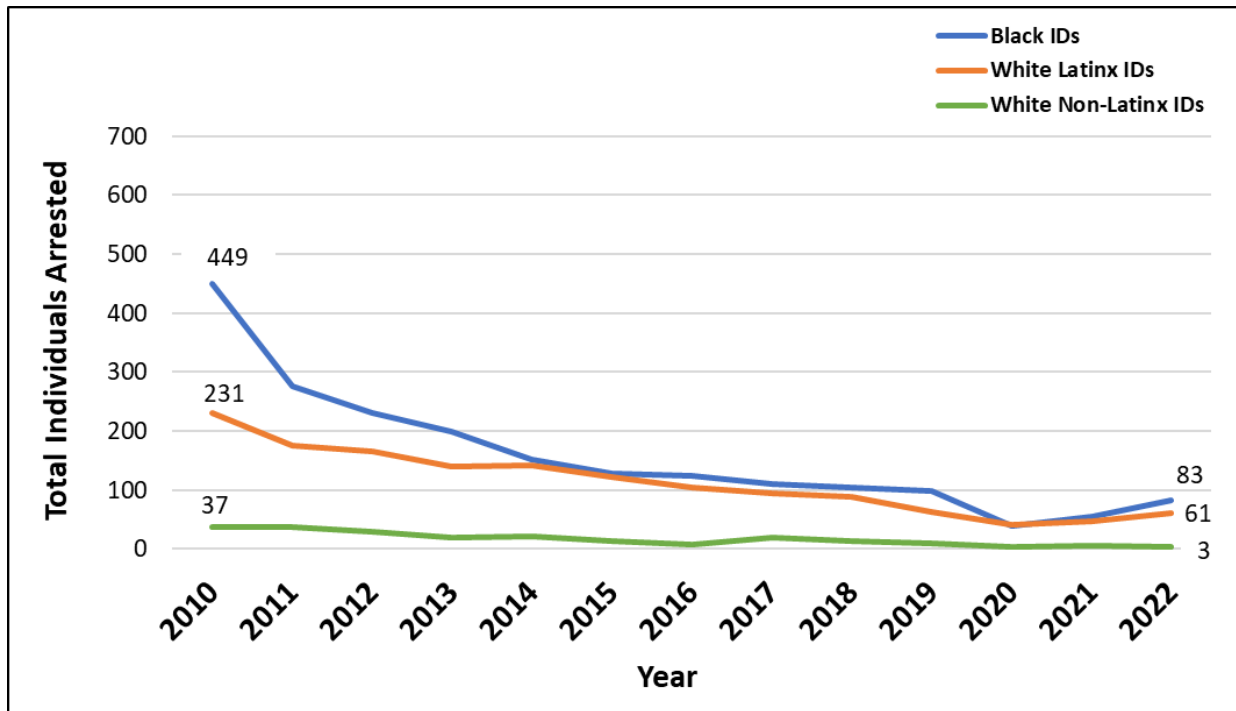


Figure 18 displays the total number of individuals arrested by race and ethnicity for female youth in Miami-Dade County from 2010 - 2022. Until 2014, the total number of Black individual females arrested was highest when compared to their White Latinx and White Non-Latinx counterparts. From 2014 - 2022, the total number of individual females arrested for Black youth and White Latinx youth were fairly similar. However, significantly fewer White Non-Latinx females were arrested during this same time period. In 2010, the total number of individuals arrested was 449 for Black females, 231 for White Latinx females, and 37 for White Non-Latinx females. By 2022, the numbers had decreased to 83 Black female youth, 61 White Latinx female youth, and 3 White Non-Latinx female youth. This represented a percent decrease of 82% for Black females, 74% for White Latinx females, and 92% for White Non-Latinx females over the 13-year time period. Despite the decreasing trend for all racial and ethnic groups, Black youth still accounted for the greatest proportion of all females arrested in 2022 at 56%—compared to 41% for White Latinx youth and 2% for White Non-Latinx youth.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 19: Total Arrest Rate of Youth in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity Among Females: 2010 – 2022**

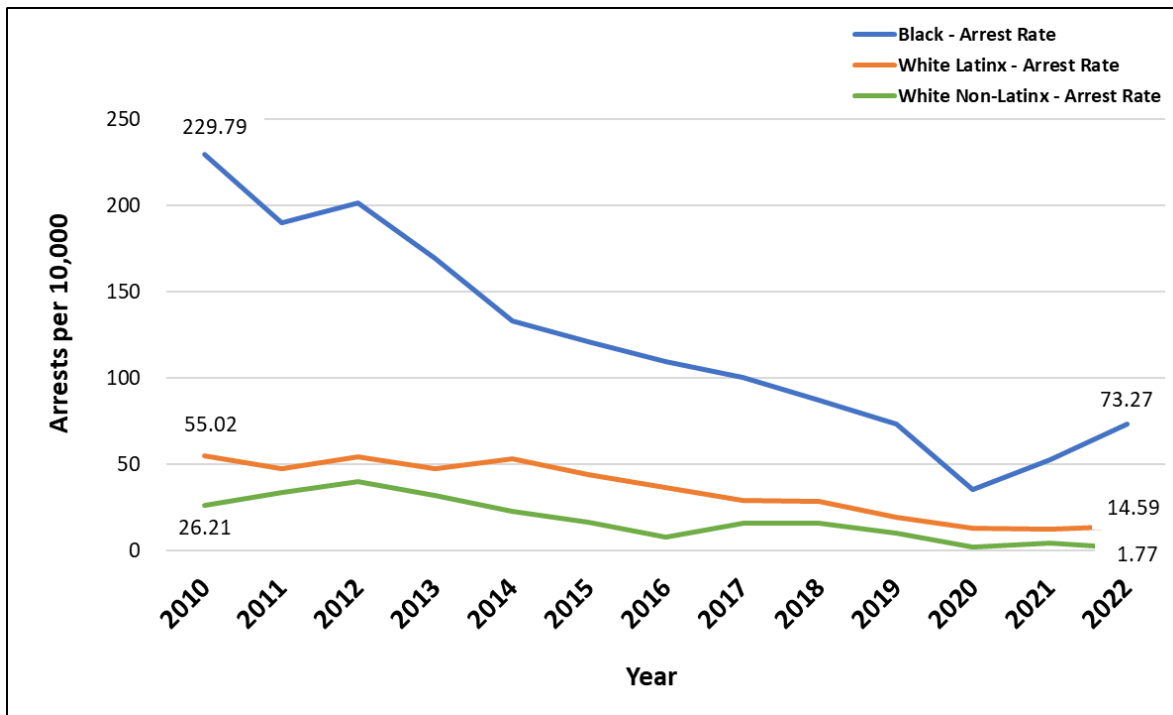


Figure 19 displays the arrest rates for female youth in Miami-Dade County from 2010 - 2022, categorized by race and ethnicity. Consistent with previous trends, the arrest rate for all racial and ethnic groups of females decreased during this time period. In 2010, the arrest rate for Black females was 229.79 per 10,000 population, 55.02 for White Latinx females, and 26.21 for White Non-Latinx females. By 2022, the arrest rate for Black females had decreased to 73.27 per 10,000 population, 14.59 for White Latinx females, and 1.77 for White Non-Latinx females. Over this time, the rates for Black females decreased by 68%, 73% for White Latinx females, and 93% for White Non-Latinx females. Despite these decreases in arrest rates across all groups, the arrest rate for Black females was still highest when compared to White Latinx, and White Non-Latinx females throughout the entire 13-year span. In 2022, the arrest rate for Black females was approximately 5.02 times higher than the arrest rate for White Latinx females and 41.4 times higher than the arrest rate for White Non-Latinx females. One final note worth mentioning, the arrest rate of Black female youth in 2022 (73.27) was higher than both White Latinx males (72.06) and White Non-Latinx males (19.93).

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

### NUMBER AND RATES OF ARRESTS: CHARGE SEVERITY

The figures presented below illustrate trends in youth arrests in Miami-Dade County by charge severity. Charge severity was the categorization of the arrest as either a felony, misdemeanor, or N/A. Total arrests and total individuals arrested are presented, followed by a breakdown of charge severity by race and ethnicity in the next section. It is important to note that youth could receive more than one charge per arrest. However, only one charge per arrest was recorded in the data. Therefore, the data on charge severity that is reported in the analyses below corresponds to one arrest that was coded in the data.

**Figure 20: Total Number of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Charge Severity: 2010 – 2022**

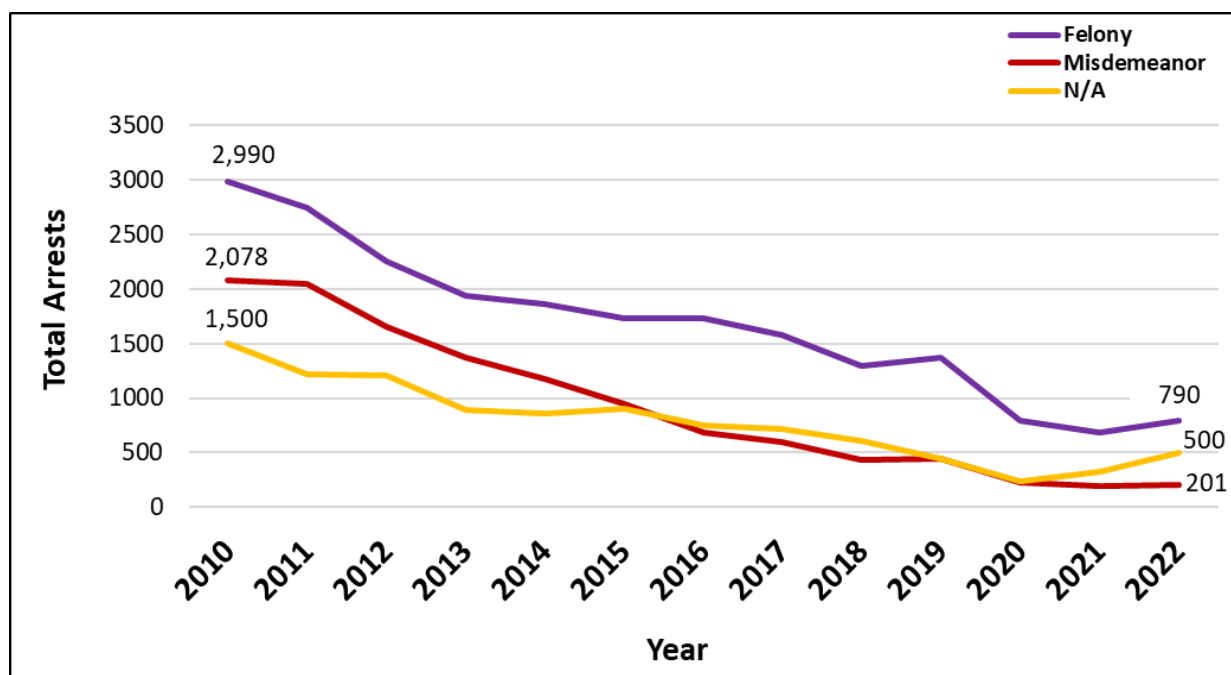


Figure 20 shows total youth arrests in Miami-Dade County from 2010 - 2022, categorized by charge severity. Overall, there were more youth felony arrests in any given year than misdemeanor arrests, and N/A arrests. Total youth arrests decreased across all charge severities in the 13-year time period. In 2010, there were 2,990 felony youth arrests; 2,078 misdemeanor youth arrests; and 1,500 N/A youth arrests. By 2022, this had decreased to 790 felony youth arrests, 201 misdemeanor youth arrests, and 500 N/A youth arrests. This was a decrease of 73.6% for felony arrests, 90.3% for misdemeanor arrests, and 66.7% for N/A arrests. Despite a decrease across all charge severities, felony youth arrests comprised the highest proportion of all

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

arrests throughout the entirety of the time period. In 2022, felony youth arrests made up approximately 53.0% of all total arrests, compared to 13.5% for misdemeanor arrests and 33.5% for N/A arrests.

**Figure 21: Total Number Individual Youth Arrested in Miami-Dade County by Charge Severity: 2010 – 2022**

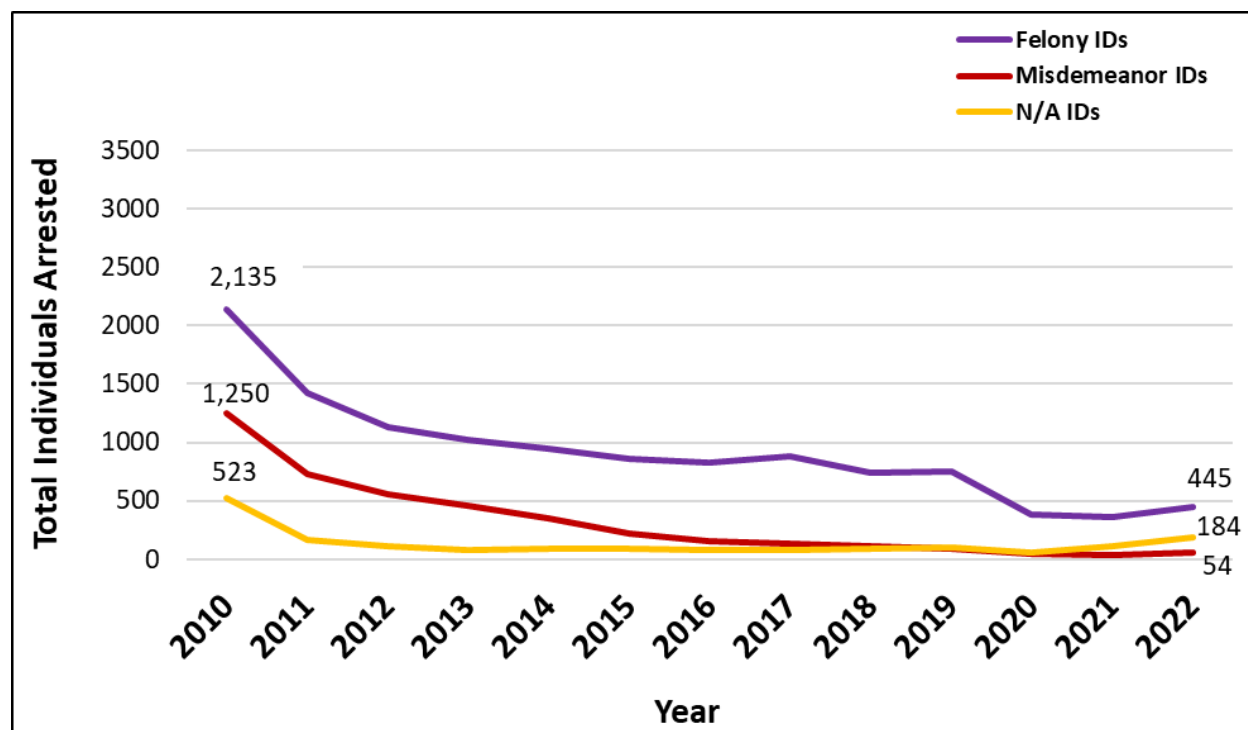


Figure 21 displays the total number of individual youths arrested in Miami-Dade County from 2010 - 2022, categorized by charge severity. Similar to previous findings, the number of individual youths arrested decreased across all charges. In 2010, there were 2,135 individuals arrested for felony charges; 1,250 individuals arrested for misdemeanor charges; and 523 individuals arrested for N/A charges. By 2022, this had decreased to 445 individuals arrested for felony charges, 54 individuals arrested for misdemeanor charges, and 184 individuals arrests for N/A charges. This was a decrease of 79.2% for individual youths arrested for felony charges, 95.7% for misdemeanor charges, and 64.8% for N/A charges. During this same time period, individual youths arrested for felonies comprised the largest portion of total individual youths arrested. In 2022, individuals arrested for felony charges were 65.2% of the total sample—compared to 7.91% for individuals arrested for misdemeanor charges and 26.9% for individuals arrested for N/A charges.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

### NUMBER AND RATES OF FELONY ARRESTS: RACE & ETHNICITY

**Figure 22: Total Number of Felony Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

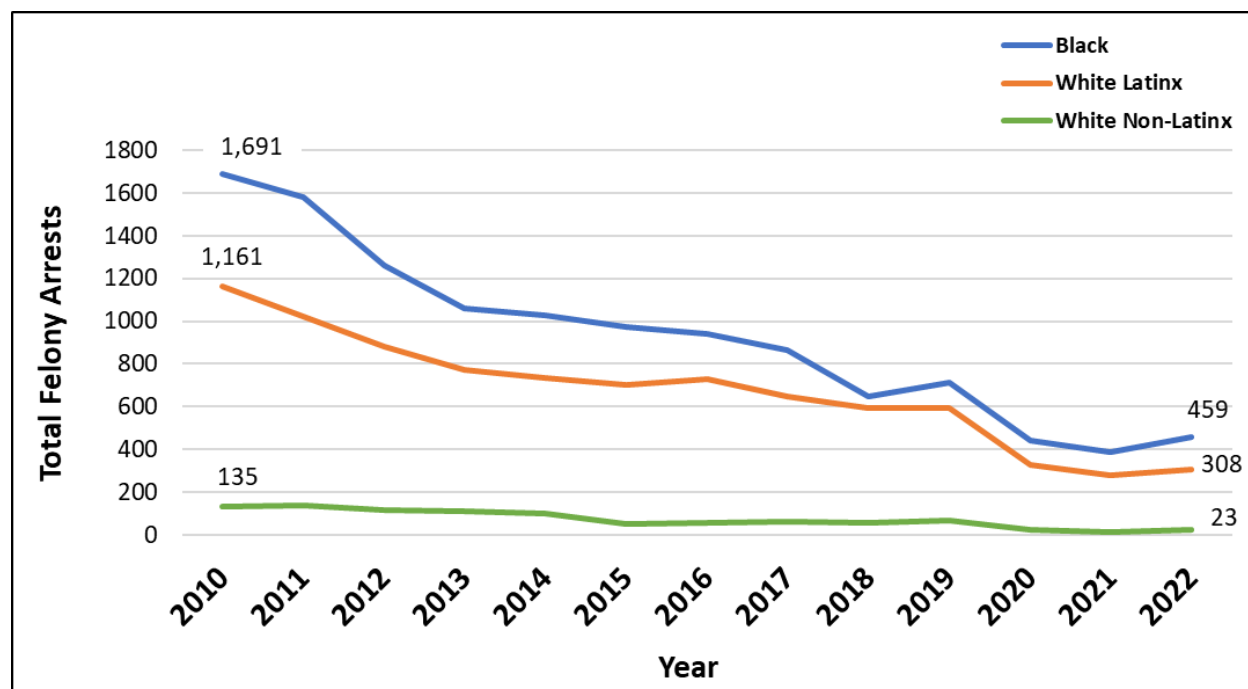


Figure 22 shows the number of youth arrests for felony charges by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Overall, youth arrests for the three groups combined decreased from 2,987 in 2010 to 790 in 2022 – a decrease of 74% – with a slight increase in 2021 for all three groups. Despite the decreases for all groups, Black youths were still arrested for more felonies compared to White Latinx, and White Non-Latinx youth in every year examined.

The number of Black youths arrested for a felony decreased from 1,691 to 459, a decrease of 72%. The number of White Latinx youths arrested for a felony decreased from 1,161 in 2010 to 308 in 2022, a decrease of 73%. White Non-Latinx had the fewest arrests of the three groups, with 135 arrests in 2010 and 23 arrests in 2022, a decrease of 83%. However, Black youth still accounted for 58% of youth felony arrests compared to 38% for White-Latinx youth, and 3% for White Non-Latinx youth.

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**Figure 23: Total Number of Individual Youth Arrested for a Felony in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

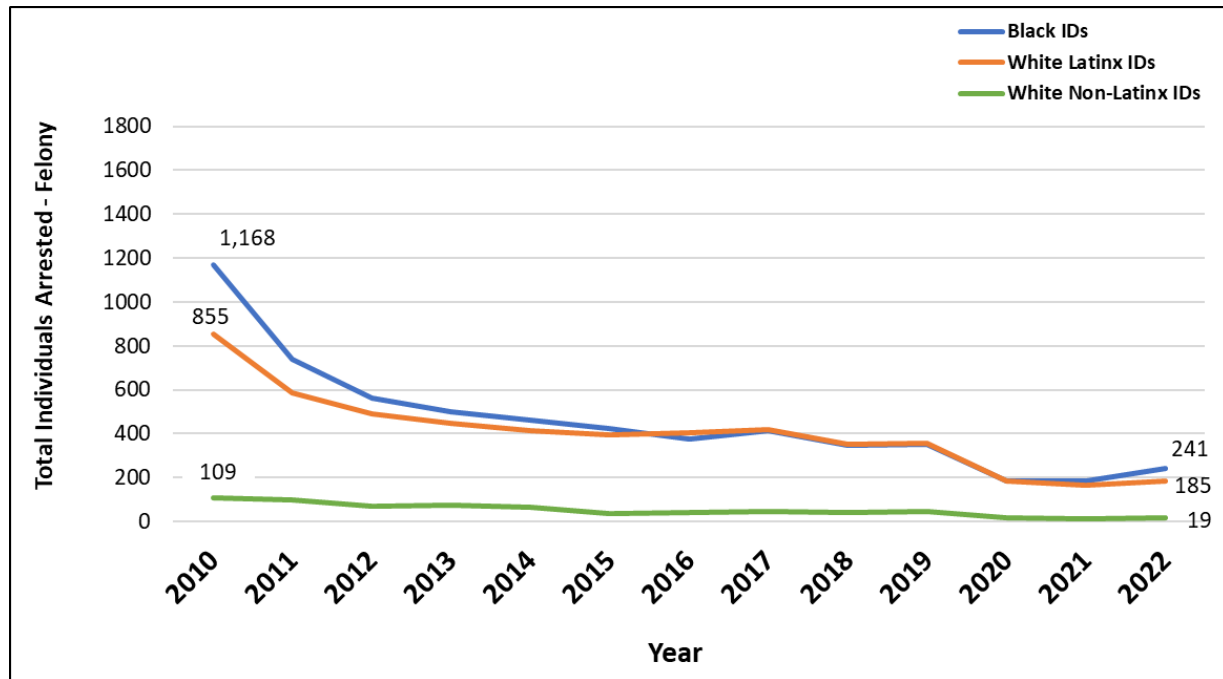


Figure 23 shows the number of individual youths arrested for felony charges by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Overall, the number of individual youths arrested for felonies for the three groups combined decreased from 2,132 in 2010 to 445 in 2022, a decrease of 79%. Until 2016, the total number of Black individual youths arrested for a felony was highest compared to their White Latinx, and White Non-Latinx counterparts. From 2016 - 2021, the total number of individuals arrested for Black youth and White Latinx youth were fairly similar with a slight increase in 2022 for Black youth. However, significantly fewer White Non-Latinx individual youths were arrested during this same time period.

Overall, the number of individual Black youths arrested for a felony decreased from 1,168 in 2010 to 241 in 2022, a decrease of 79%. The number of individual White Latinx youths arrested for a felony decreased from 855 in 2010 to 185 in 2022, a decrease of 78%. White Non-Latinx had the fewest individuals arrested of the three groups, with 109 arrests in 2010 and 19 arrests in 2022, a decrease of 83%.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 24: Total Arrest Rate for Felonies in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

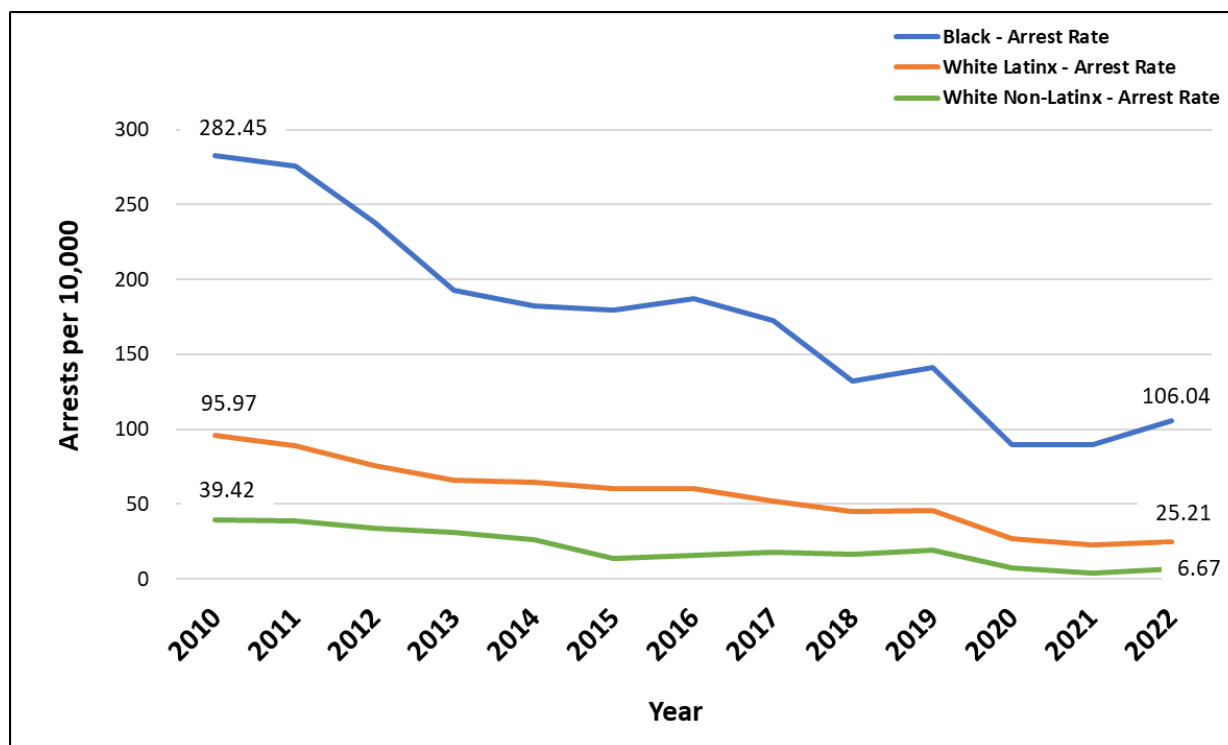


Figure 24 shows the total youth arrest rate for felony arrests by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. In 2010, the felony arrest rate for Black youth was 282.45 per 10,000 population, 95.97 for White Latinx youth, and 39.42 for White Non-Latinx youth. By 2022, the arrest rate for Black youth decreased to 106.04 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 62%. The arrest rate for White Latinx youth decreased to 25.21 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 74%. The arrest rate for White Non-Latinx youth decreased to 6.67 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 83%.

Overall, the felony arrest rate for all three groups decreased. Despite these decreases across groups, Black youths had a higher felony arrest rate than White Latinx, and White Non-Latinx youths throughout the 13-year period, while also experiencing 3 small increases in rates during this time.

In 2010, the felony arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 2.94 times higher than White Latinx youth and 7.16 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth. By 2022, the differences in felony arrest rates for Black youth was approximately 4.21 times higher than White Latinx youth, and 15.92 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth. Therefore, even though the total arrest rate for felonies decreased for all three groups, the disparity between the groups actually increased slightly by 2022.



## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

### NUMBER AND RATES OF MISDEMEANOR ARRESTS: RACE & ETHNICITY

**Figure 25: Total Number of Misdemeanor Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

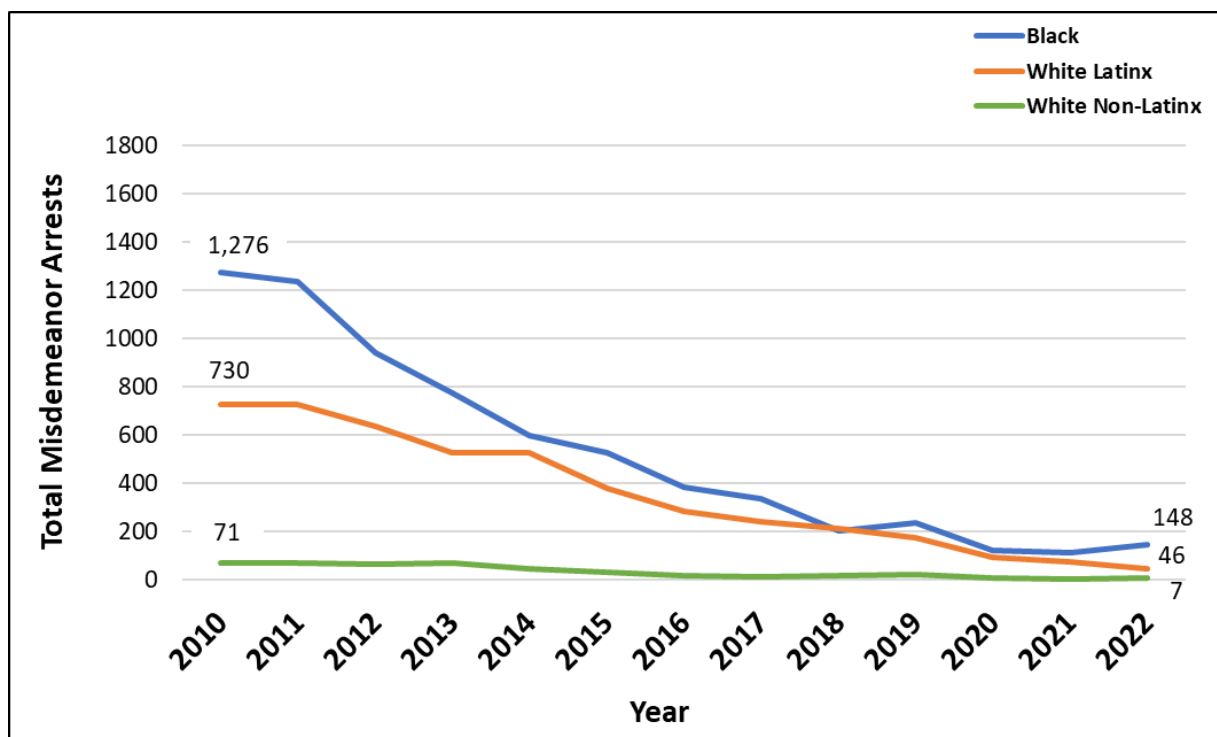


Figure 25 shows the total number of youth arrests for misdemeanor charges by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Overall, youth arrests for the three groups combined decreased from 2,077 in 2010 to 201 in 2022, a decrease of 90%. Despite these declines, Black youth were more frequently arrested for misdemeanors compared to White-Latinx and White Non-Latinx youth (with exception of 2018).

The number of misdemeanor arrests of Black youths decreased from 1,276 to 148, a decrease of 88%. The number of misdemeanor arrests of White Latinx youths decreased from 730 in 2010 to 46 in 2022, a decrease of 94%. White Non-Latinx had the fewest arrests of the three groups, with 71 arrests in 2010 and 7 arrests in 2022, a decrease of 90%. Despite these drastic declines, Black youths still accounted for 74% of all misdemeanor arrests compared to 23% for White-Latinx youths, and 3% for White Non-Latinx youths.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 26: Total Number of Individual Youth Arrested for a Misdemeanor in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

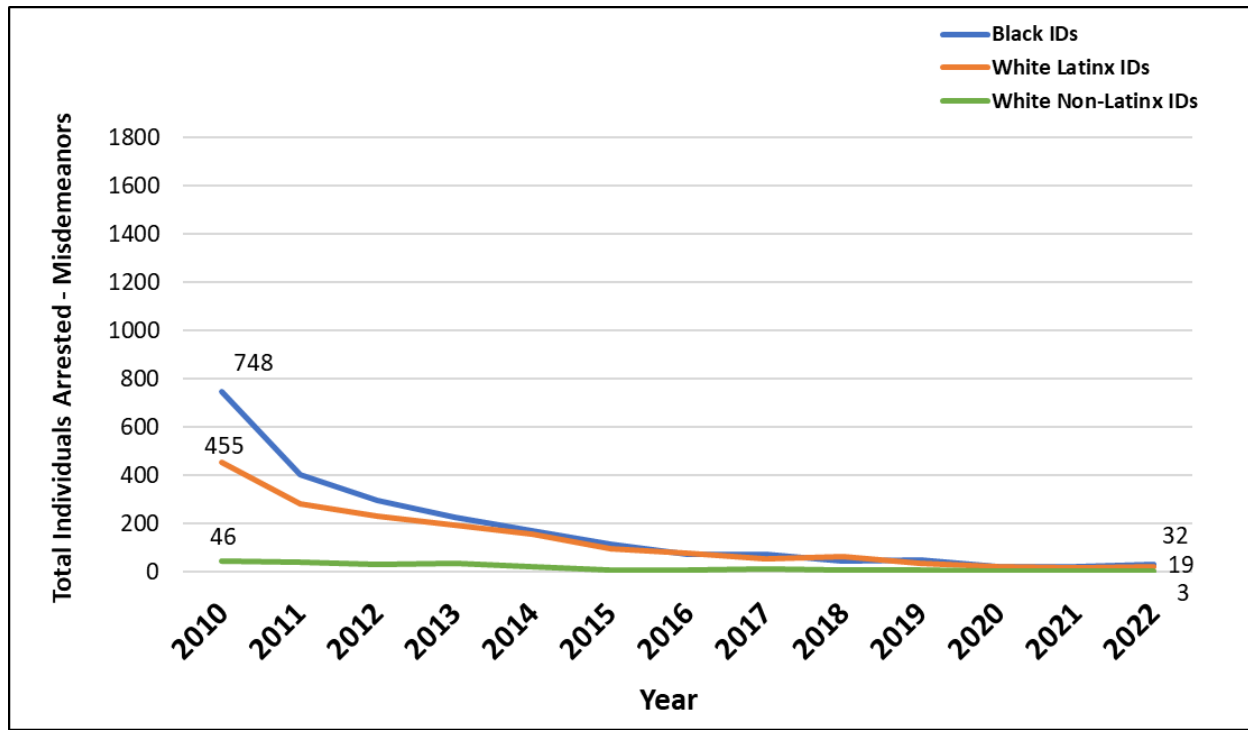


Figure 26 shows the number of individual youths arrested for misdemeanor charges by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Overall, the number of individual youths arrested for misdemeanors for the three groups combined decreased from 1,249 in 2010 to 54 in 2022, a decrease of 96%.

The number of different individual Black youths arrested for a misdemeanor decreased from 748 to 32, a decrease of 96%. The number of individual White Latinx youths arrested for a misdemeanor decreased from 455 in 2010 to 19 in 2022, a decrease of 96%. White Non-Latinx had the fewest individuals arrested for a misdemeanor of the three groups, with 46 arrests in 2010 and 3 arrests in 2022, a decrease of 93%.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 27: Total Arrest Rate for Misdemeanors in Miami-Dade County by Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

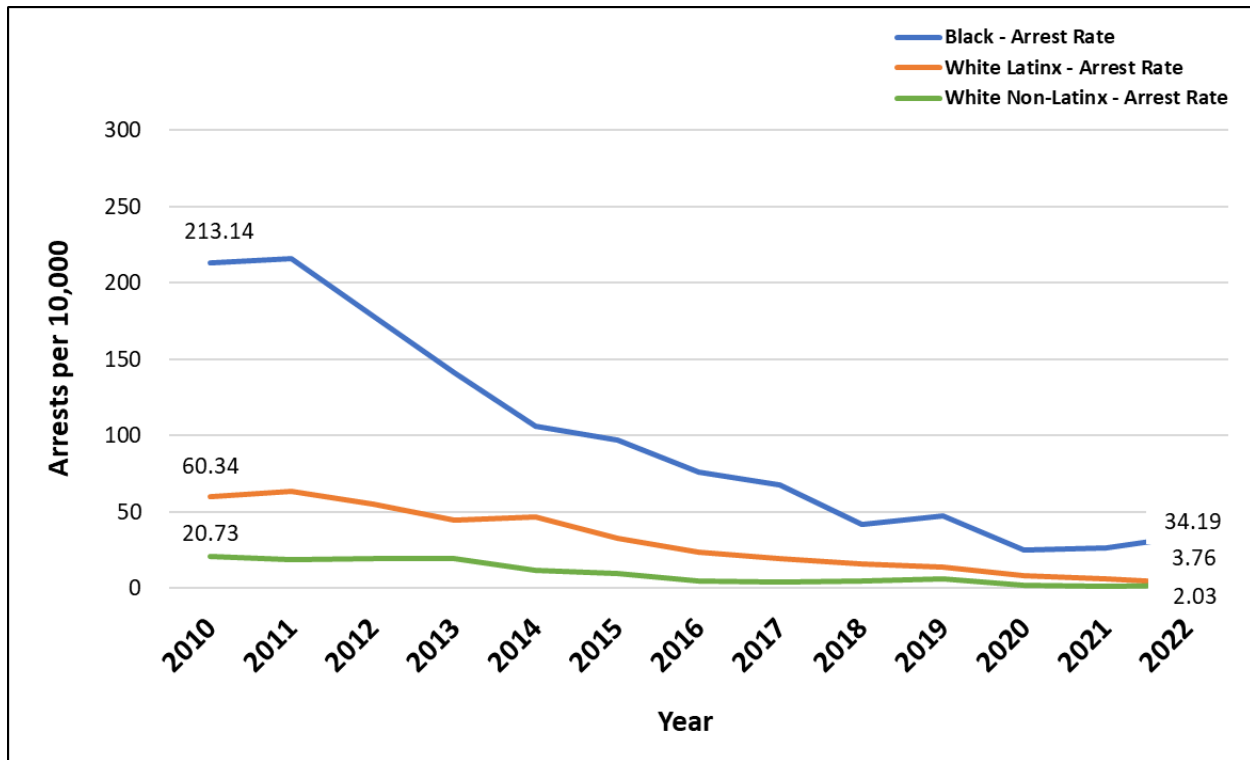


Figure 27 shows the total youth arrest rate for misdemeanors by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. In 2010, the misdemeanor arrest rate for Black youth was 213.14 per 10,000 population, 60.34 for White Latinx youth, and 20.73 for White Non-Latinx youth. By 2022, the arrest rate for Black youth decreased to 34.19 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 84%. The arrest rate for White Latinx youth decreased to 3.76 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 94%. The arrest rate for White Non-Latinx youth decreased to 2.03 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 90%.

Overall, the misdemeanor arrest rate for all three groups decreased. Despite these decreases for all groups, Black youths had a higher misdemeanor arrest rate than White Latinx, and White Non-Latinx youths throughout the entire 13 years. In 2010, the misdemeanor arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 3.5 times higher than White Latinx youth and 10.3 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth. By 2022, the misdemeanor arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 9.1 times higher than White Latinx youth and 16.9 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth. This was an actual increase in the differences among the arrest rates compared to 2010.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

### NUMBER AND RATES OF ARRESTS: CHARGE GROUP

The graphs presented in this section show trends in youth arrests in Miami-Dade County by charge group. Charge group was the categorization of the arrest charge as either a drug, property, violent, other, or unknown charge<sup>9</sup>. More information regarding the specific charges is provided below for the other charge category. Total arrests and arrest rates by charge group and race and ethnicity are presented in the next section. It is important to note that youth could receive more than one charge per arrest. However, only one charge per arrest was recorded in the data. Therefore, the data on charge group that is reported in the analyses below corresponds to one arrest that was coded in the data.

**Figure 28: Total Number of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Charge Group: 2010 – 2022**

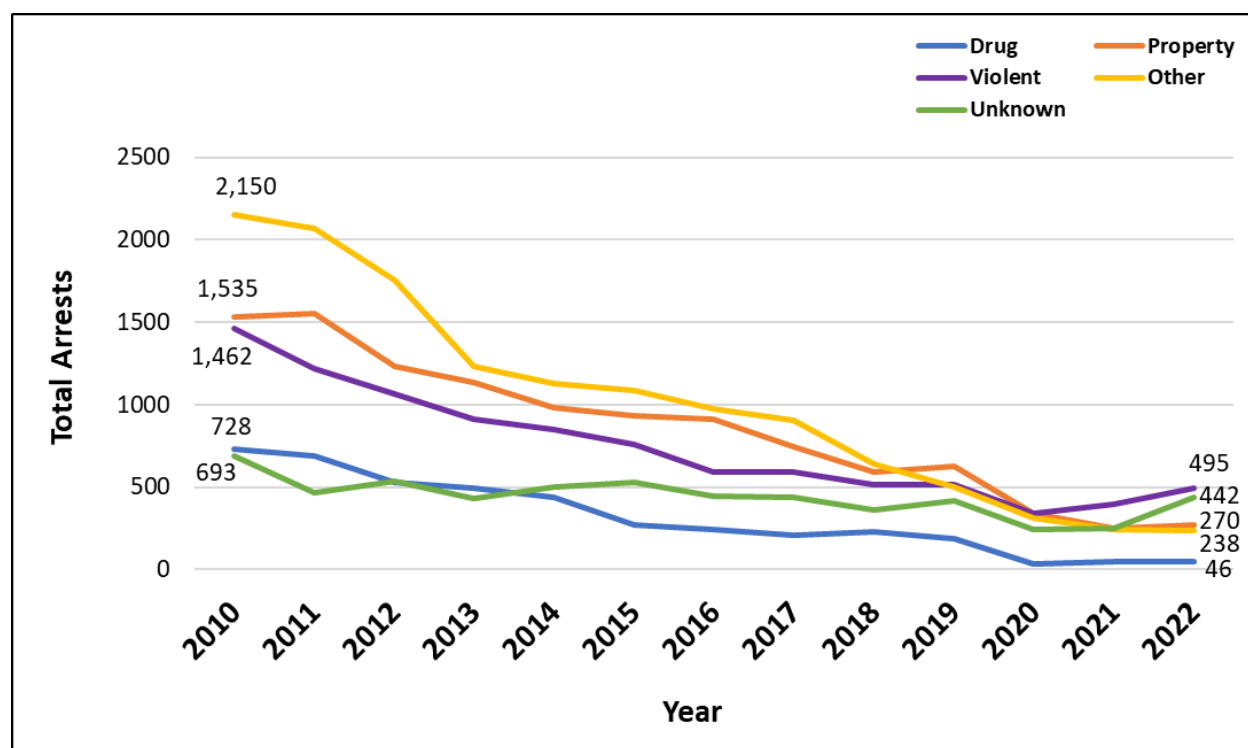


Figure 28 depicts the total number of youth arrests from 2010 – 2022 across different charge groups: Drug, Property, Violent, Other, and Unknown. Overall, Miami-Dade County saw a

<sup>9</sup> Because we were unable to gain more clarity on how charges were categorized into the Unknown group, further analyses of this charge group were not included in the report. Further results of the analyses regarding this charge group can be made available upon request.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

decline in total arrests across all charge groups between 2010 – 2022. The amount of this decrease varies per charge group. However, although the general trend is downward, there are slight increases that occur some years, which varies per charge group.

In terms of the Drug charge group, the total number of arrests per year decreased overall from 728 in 2010 to 46 in 2022 – a 94% decrease. As of 2022, the Drug charge group has the fewest number of youth arrests from the charge groups depicted in Figure 27. Although drug arrests for youth generally decreased, there were two slight increases from 2017 - 2018 and from 2020 - 2021. Over time, drug arrests for youth eventually decreased to 46 in 2022, our last year of data. And finally, arrest rates for drug charges were lower compared to all other charge group categories (see rates below).

For the Property charge group, there was an overall decline in the total number of youth arrests, from 1,535 in 2010 to 270 in 2022. Similar to the Drug charge group, there were three slight increases noted in youth arrests receiving a property charge from 2010 - 2011, from 2018 - 2019, and from 2021 - 2022. The number of arrests receiving a property charge eventually decreased to 270 in 2022.

Violent youth arrests overall decreased from 1,462 in 2010 to 495 arrests in 2022, making it the highest youth arrest by charge groups depicted in this graph in 2022. Youth arrests for violent charges steadily declined from 2010 - 2020 with slight increases, from 339 in 2020 to 495 in 2022.

The largest decline was seen in the Other charge group, which decreased by 89%. It had the highest number of arrests among all the charge groups in 2010 at 2,150 youth arrests. However, it decreased to 238 arrests in 2022, a difference of 1,912 arrests.

For the Unknown charge group, it had the lowest number of arrests in 2010 compared to the rest of the charge groups with 693 arrests. Unlike the other charge groups, it remained relatively steady during the time period with a slight decrease by the year 2022 to 442 youth arrests.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

### CHARGE GROUP BY RACE & ETHNICITY

**Figure 29: Total Number of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Drug Charge and Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

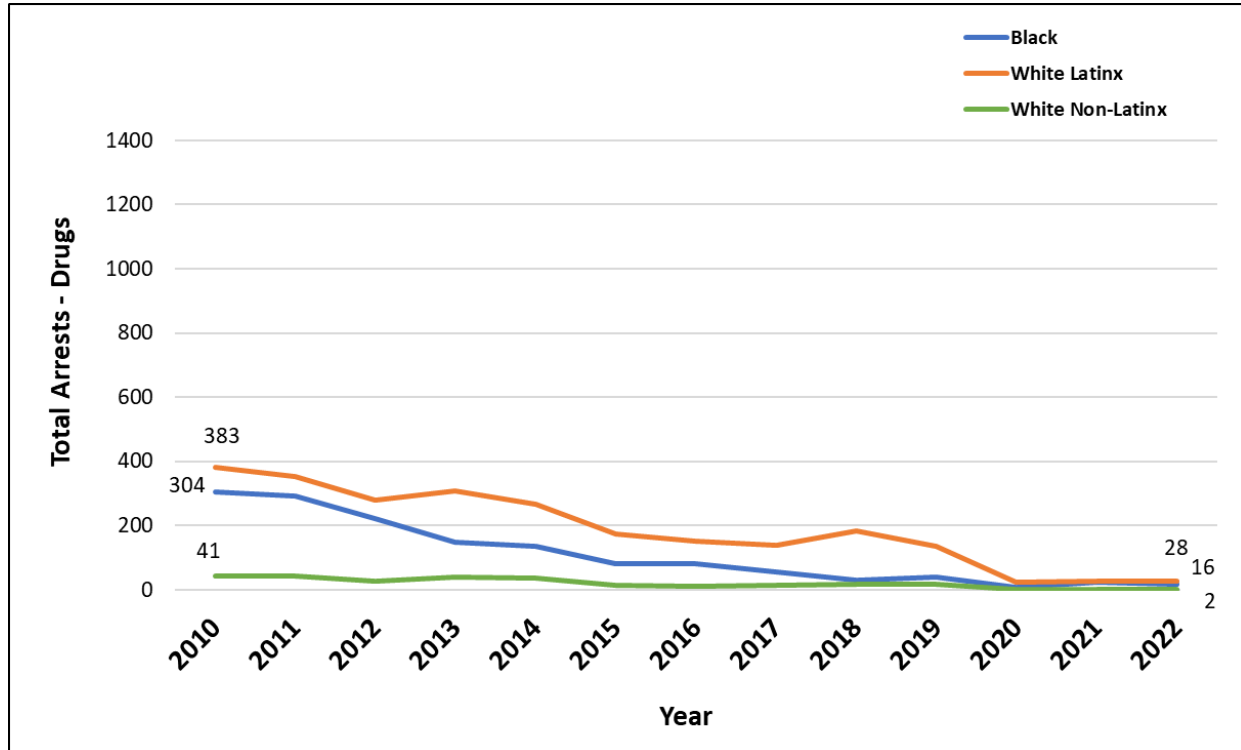


Figure 29 presents the number of youth arrests for drug charges by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 - 2022. Most notably, youth arrests for the three groups combined decreased from 728 in 2010 to 46 in 2022, a decrease of 94%.

Overall, the number of Black youths arrested for drug charges decreased from 304 to 16, a decrease of 94%.

Similarly, the number of White Latinx youths arrested for a drug charge decreased from 383 in 2010 to 28 in 2022, a decrease of 92%. White Latinx youth were arrested more frequently compared to Black youth and White Non-Latinx youth. Of note, this is the only analysis where White-Latinx arrests exceed that of Black youth. Despite this fact, the arrest rate for Black youth receiving a drug charge was still higher (see below).

White Non-Latinx youth had the fewest arrests of the three groups with 41 arrests in 2010 to only 2 in 2022.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 30: Total Arrest Rate of Youth in Miami-Dade County by Drug Charge and Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

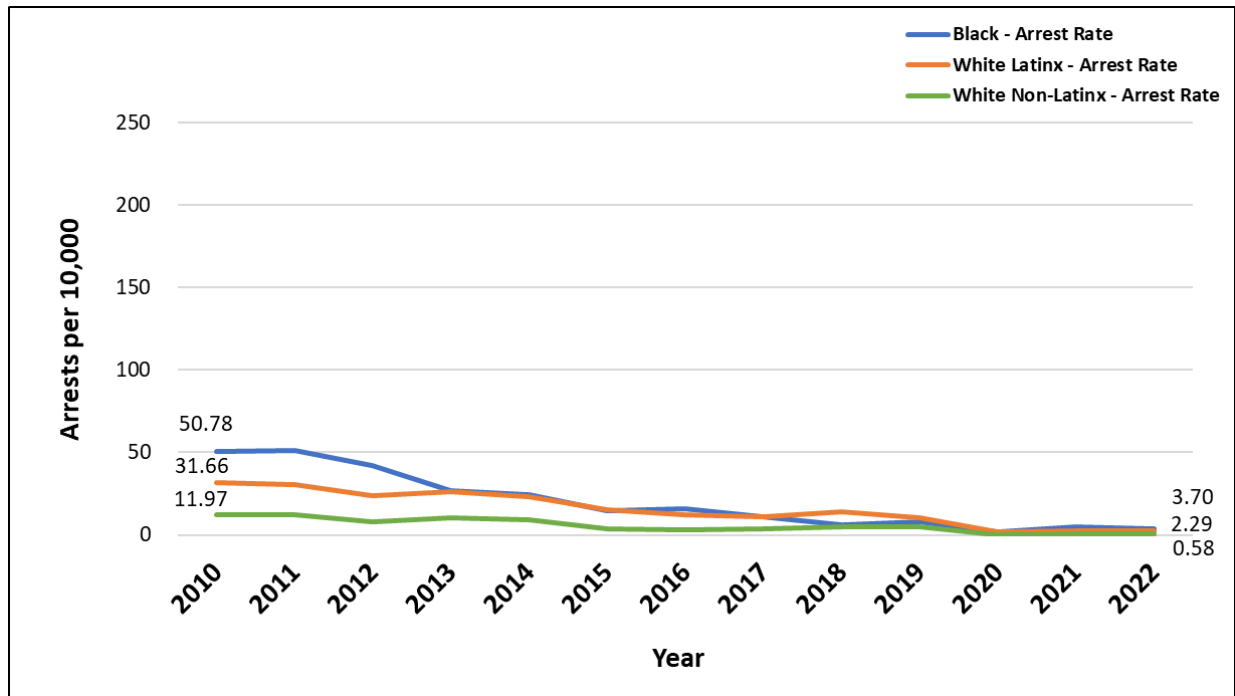


Figure 30 shows the total youth arrest rate for drug charges by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Overall, the drug charge arrest rate for all three groups decreased and was fairly low throughout the 13-year period. In 2010, the drug charge arrest rate for Black youth was 50.78 per 10,000 population, 31.66 for White Latinx youth, and 11.97 for White Non-Latinx youth. By 2022, the arrest rate for Black youth decreased to 3.70 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 93%. The arrest rate for White Latinx youth decreased to 2.29 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 93%. The arrest rate for White Non-Latinx youth decreased to 0.58 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 95%. Of note, although the total number of drug charge arrests were higher for White-Latinx youths (see figure above), the arrest rates for Black youth were higher from 2010 – 2013 and ended slightly higher in 2022.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 31: Total Number of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Property Charge and Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

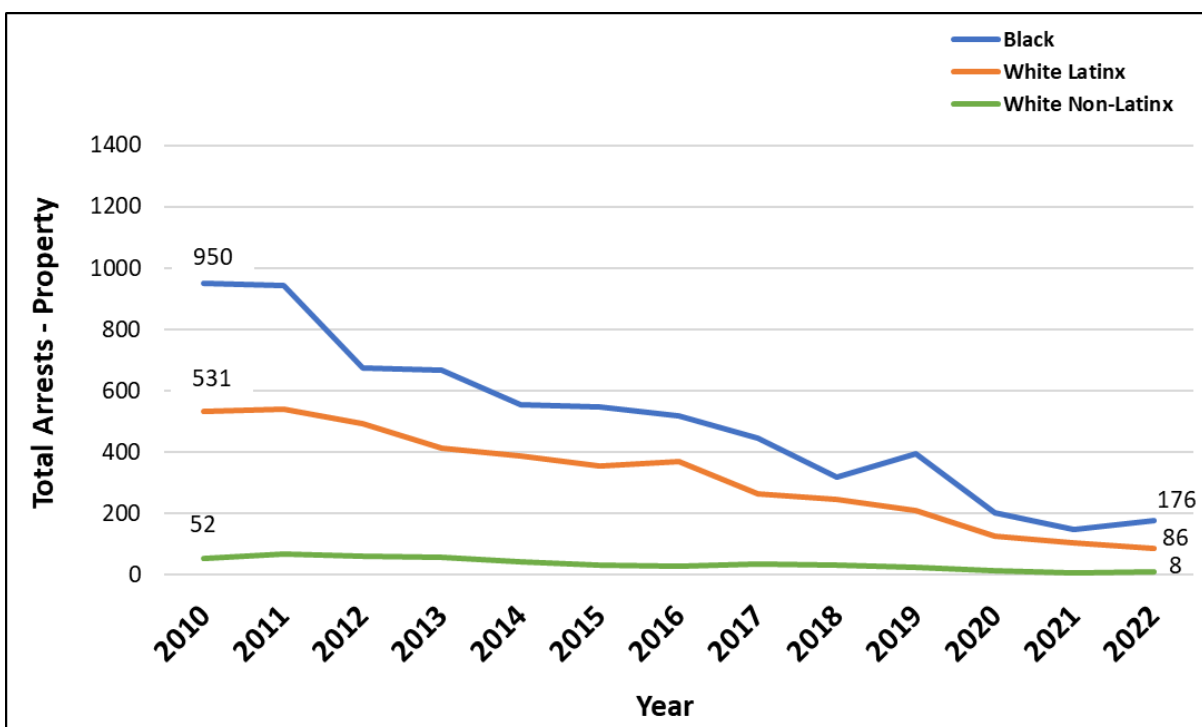


Figure 31 presents the number of youth arrests for property charges by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Overall, youth arrests for the three groups combined decreased from 1,533 in 2010 to 270 in 2022, a decrease of 82%. Although the overall pattern for all three groups decreased, Black youths had a slight increase in arrests in 2019 and White Latinx youth in 2016.

The number of property arrests of Black youths decreased from 950 in 2010 to 176 in 2022, a decrease of 81%. The number of White Latinx youths arrested for a property charge decreased from 531 in 2010 to 86 in 2022, a decrease of 84%. White Non-Latinx had the fewest arrests of the three groups, with 52 arrests in 2010 and 8 arrests in 2022, a decrease of 85%. Compared to White-Latinx and White Non-Latinx youth, Black youths were arrested more frequently for property charges throughout the 13-year period. In the last year of analysis (2022), Black youth accounted for 65% of all youth arrests receiving a property charge, while White-Latinx and White Non-Latinx youth accounted for 32% and 3% respectively.



## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 32: Total Arrest Rate of Youth in Miami-Dade County by Property Charge and Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

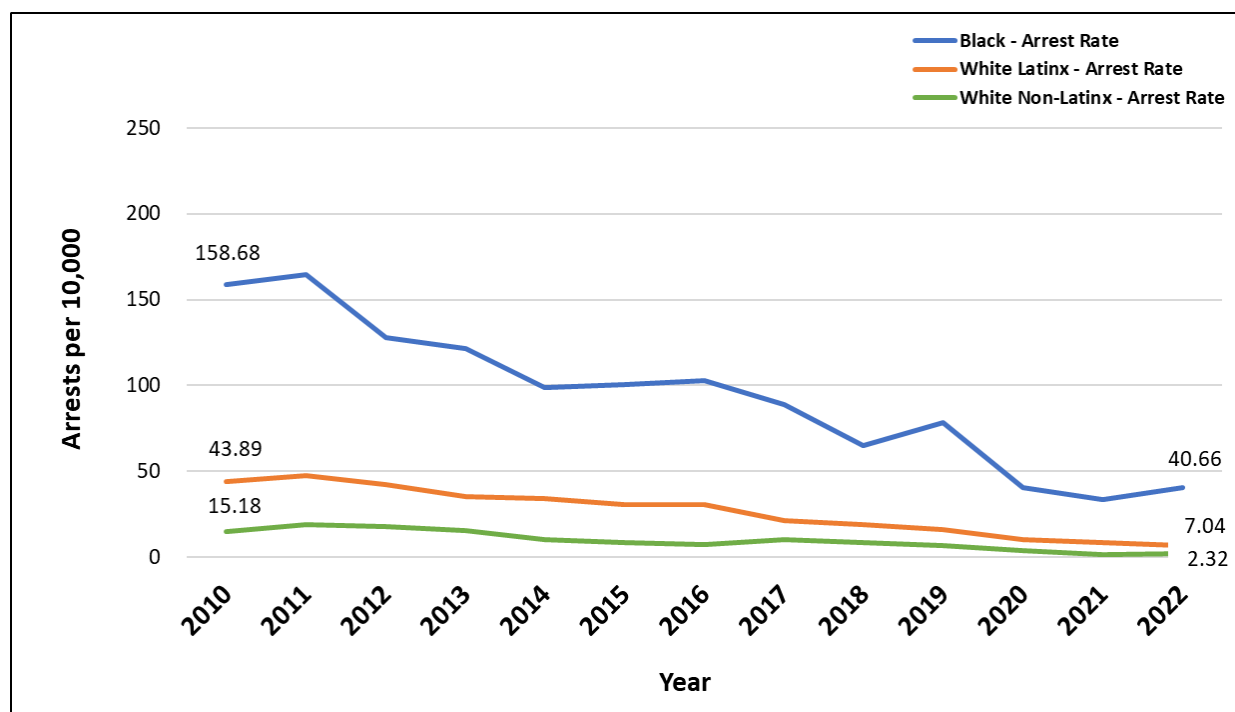


Figure 32 shows the total youth arrest rate for property charges by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. In 2010, the property charge arrest rate for Black youth was 158.68 per 10,000 population, 43.89 for White Latinx youth, and 15.18 for White Non-Latinx youth. By 2022, the arrest rate for Black youth decreased to 40.66 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 74%. The arrest rate for White Latinx youth decreased to 7.04 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 84%. The arrest rate for White Non-Latinx youth decreased to 2.32 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 85%.

Overall, the property charge arrest rate decreased for all three groups. Despite these decreases, Black youth had a higher property charge arrest rate than White Latinx and White Non-Latinx youths throughout the 13-year period. In 2010, the property charge arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 3.6 times higher than White Latinx youth and 10.4 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth. In 2022, the property charge arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 5.7 times higher than White Latinx youth and 17.5 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth. This shows that the disparity between Black youth property charge arrests and White Latinx & White Non-Latinx youths actually increased between 2010 – 2022, despite the arrest rates decreasing for all youth.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 33: Total Number of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Violent Charge and Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

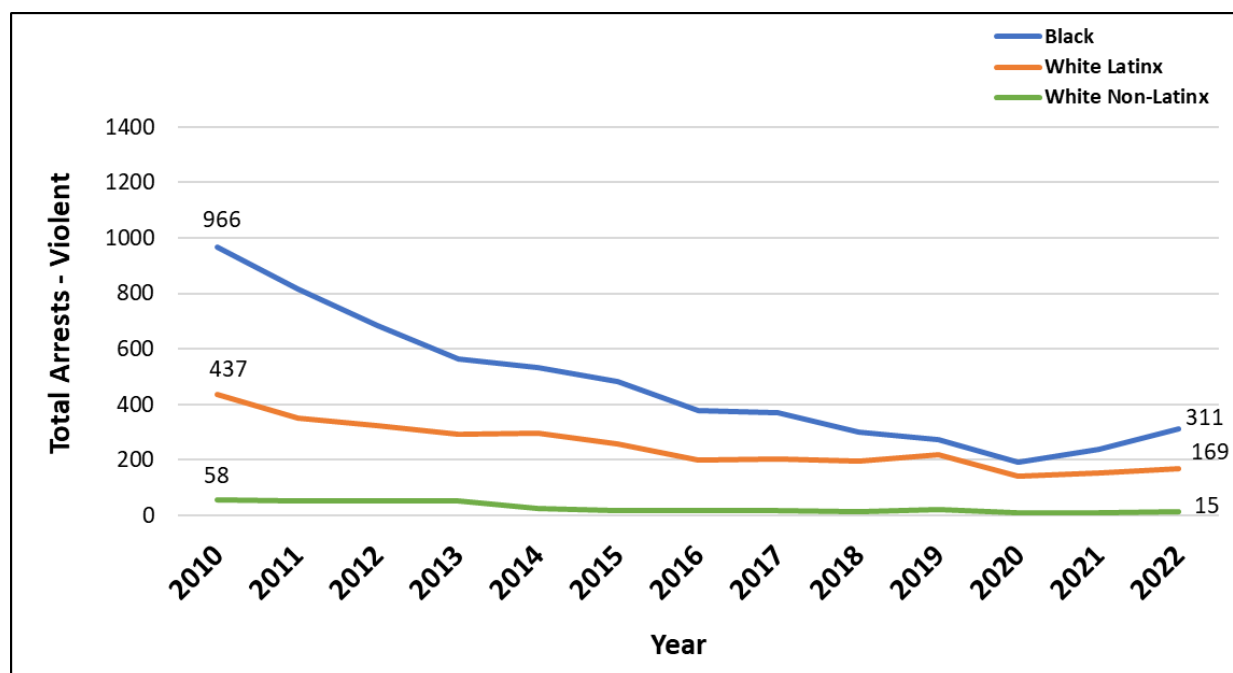


Figure 33 presents the total number of youth arrests for violent charges by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Overall, youth arrests for the three groups combined decreased from 1,461 in 2010 to 495 in 2022, a decrease of 66% for violent charges. Although the overall pattern for violent charges decreased over time, arrests began to increase slightly in 2020, continuing through 2022.

The number of Black youths arrested for violent charges decreased from 966 to 311, a decrease of 68%. The number of White Latinx youths arrested for a violent charge decreased from 437 in 2010 to 169 in 2022, a decrease of 61%. White Non-Latinx had the fewest arrests of the three groups, with 58 arrests in 2010 and 15 arrests in 2022, a decrease of 74%. Compared to White-Latinx and White Non-Latinx youths, Black youths were arrested more frequently in any given year during this time period. In 2022, Black youth accounted for 63% of arrests for violent charges, White-Latinx youths accounted for 34%, and White Non-Latinx youths accounted for 3%.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 34: Total Arrest Rate of Youth in Miami-Dade County by Violent Charge and Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

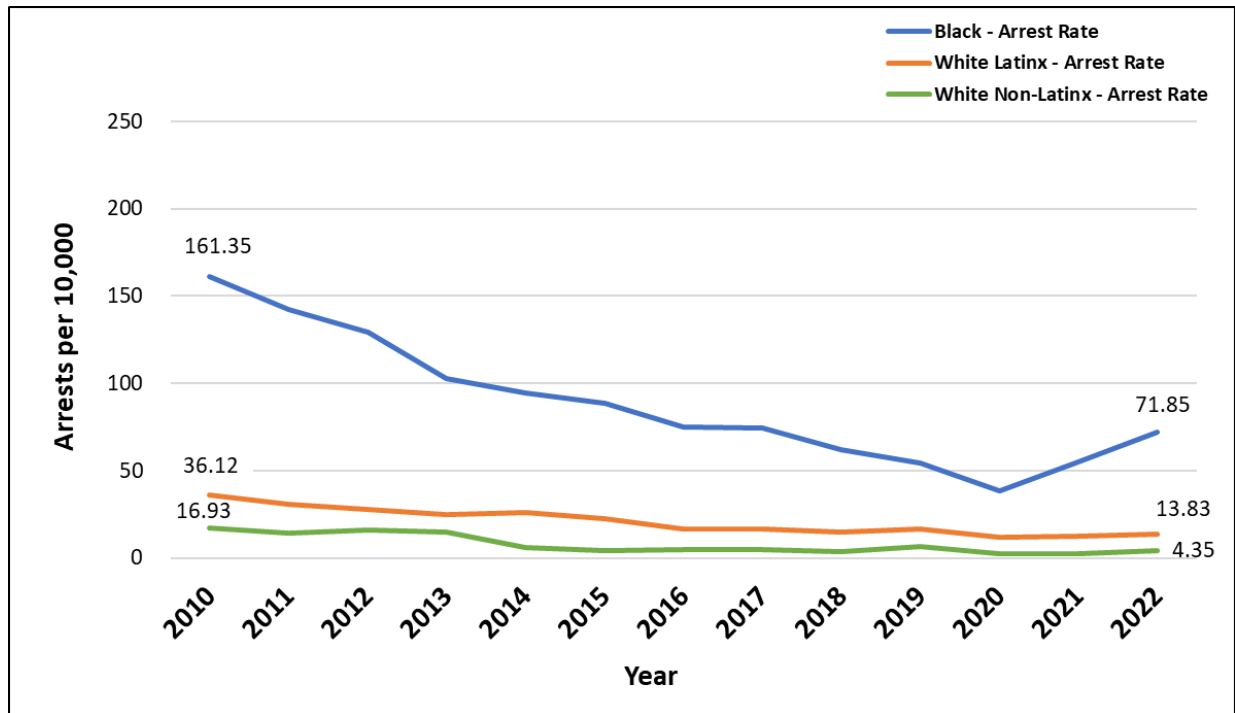


Figure 34 shows the total youth arrest rate for violent charges by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. In 2010, the violent charge arrest rate for Black youth was 161.35 per 10,000 population, 36.12 for White Latinx youth, and 16.93 for White Non-Latinx youth. By 2022, the arrest rate for Black youth decreased to 71.85 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 55%. The arrest rate for White Latinx youth decreased to 13.83 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 62%. The arrest rate for White Non-Latinx youth decreased to 4.35 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 74%.

Overall, the violent charge arrest rate for all three groups decreased. Despite these decreases across groups, the arrest rates for all three groups increase starting in 2020. Additionally, Black youths had a higher violent charge arrest rate than White Latinx and White Non-Latinx youths throughout 2010 – 2022, similar to other charge groups. In 2010, the violent charge arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 4.5 times higher than White Latinx youth and 9.5 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth. In 2022, the violent charge arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 5.2 times higher than White Latinx youth and 16.5 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

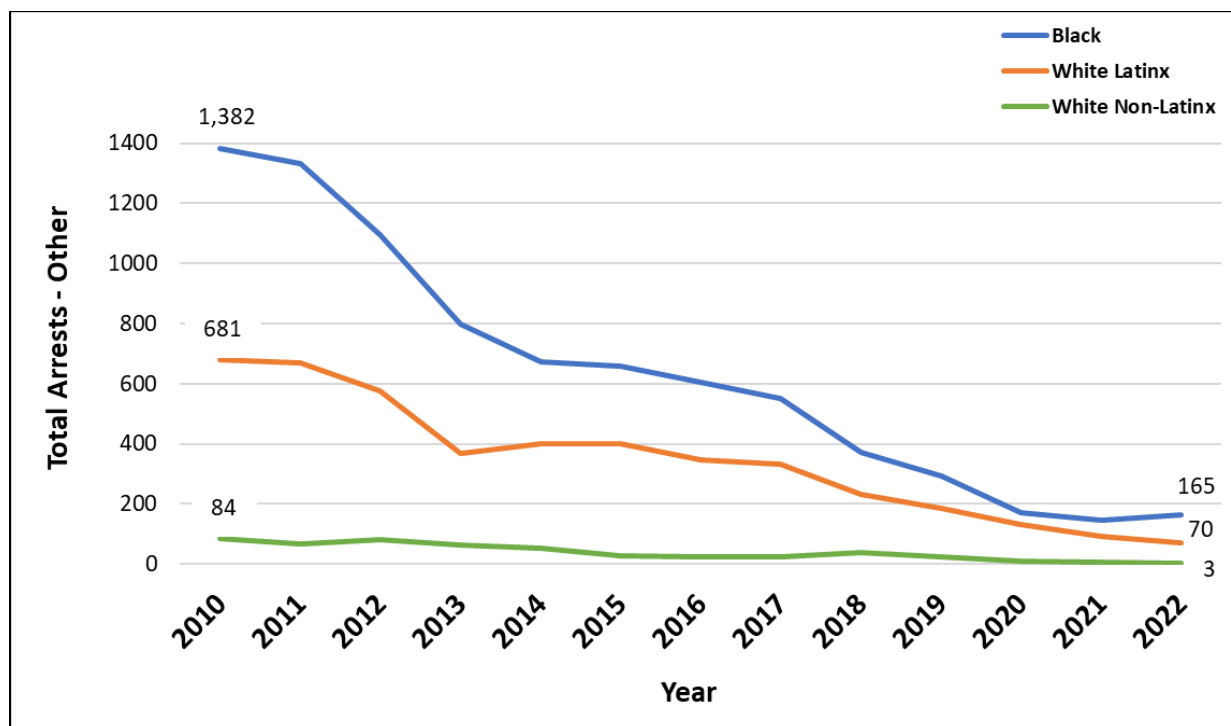
### Total Number of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Other Charge and Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022

The figures below show trends in youth arrests for the charge group ‘other’. While the process for categorizing specific charges into the various groups was not clear, we were able to analyze what specific charges were the most frequently categorized as other. The most frequently recorded charges for the other category are presented in table 5 below. The total number of arrests and the percentage of arrests within the category are presented. Providing the most frequently received charges that are categorized as other will hopefully provide a clearer understanding of this charge group.

Table 5

Most frequent charges categorized as ‘other’: 2010-2022					
	Pick-up Order	Trespassing	Loitering and Prowling	Obstruction of Justice - Misd	Disorderly Conduct
Arrests	6,595 (50%)	1,354 (10%)	1,236 (9%)	1,140 (8%)	706 (5%)

Figure 35: Total Number of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Other Charge and Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022



## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

Figure 35 shows the total number of youth arrests for the Other charge group by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Compared to all charge groups, the ‘other’ category was the most frequent charge group for all youth arrests from 2010 – 2022. Overall, Combined, youth arrests for the other charge group decreased from 2,147 in 2010 to 238 in 2022, a decrease of 89%. This charge group saw the largest decline in total arrests compared to any other category (1,909).

The number of Black youths arrested for ‘other’ charges decreased from 1,382 to 165, a decrease of 88%. The number of White Latinx youths arrested for ‘other’ charges decreased from 681 in 2010 to 70 in 2022, a decrease of 90%. White Non-Latinx had the fewest arrests of the three groups, with 84 arrests in 2010 and 3 arrests in 2022, a decrease of 96%. Overall, Black youths were arrested more frequently compared to White Latinx and White Non-Latinx youth throughout the entire 13-year span.

**Figure 36: Total Arrest Rate of Youth in Miami-Dade County by Other Charge and Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

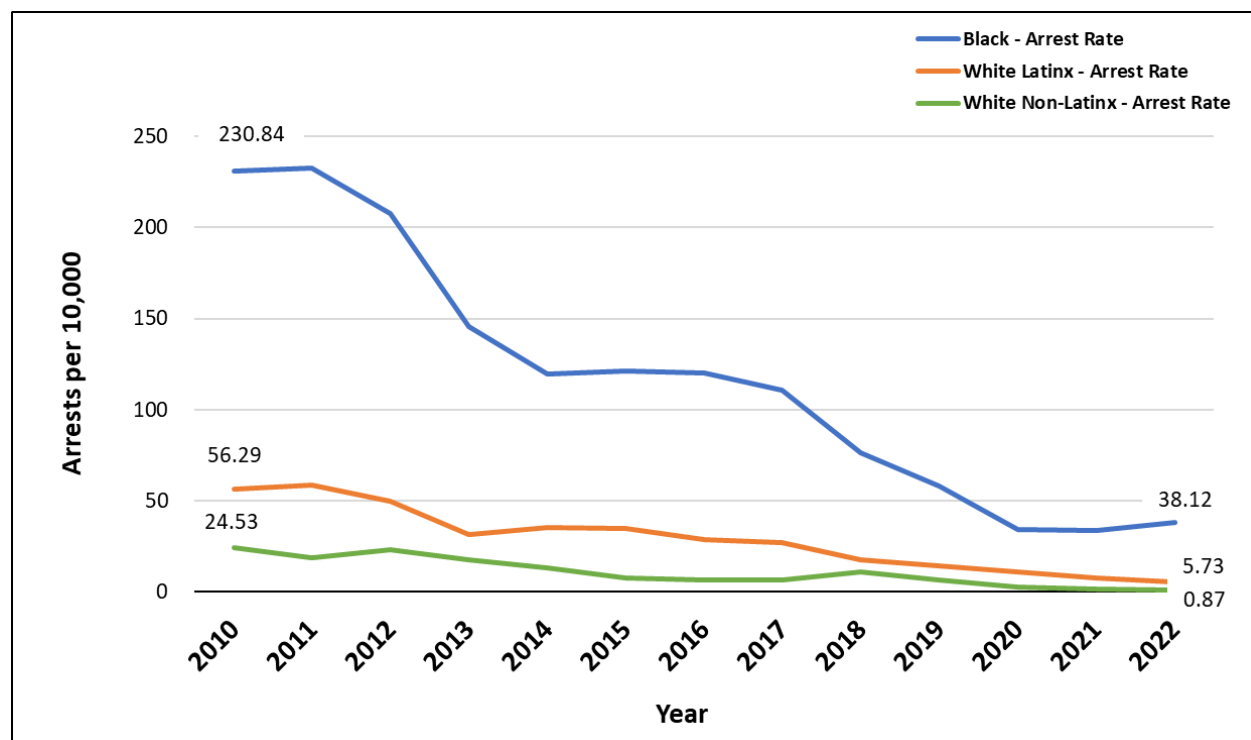


Figure 36 shows the total youth arrest rate for ‘other’ charges by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. In 2010, the ‘other’ charge arrest rate for Black youth was 230.84 per 10,000 population, 56.29 for White Latinx youth, and 24.53 for White Non-Latinx youth. By 2022, the arrest rate for Black youth decreased to 38.12 per 10,000 population, a

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

decrease of 83%. The arrest rate for White Latinx youth decreased to 5.73 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 90%. The arrest rate for White Non-Latinx youth decreased to 0.87 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 96%.

Overall, the ‘other’ charge arrest rate for all three groups decreased. Despite these decreases across groups, the arrest rates for Black youths began increasing in 2020 while White Latinx and White Non-Latinx youth arrest rates continued to decrease. Additionally, Black youths had a higher ‘other’ charge arrest rate than White Latinx and White Non-Latinx youths throughout 2010 – 2022, similar to other charge groups. In 2010, the ‘other’ charge arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 4.1 times higher than White Latinx youth and 9.4 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth. In 2022, the ‘other’ charge arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 6.6 times higher than White Latinx youth and 43.8 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth. This shows that although arrest rates were decreasing over time, the disparity between Black youth and White Latinx & White Non-Latinx youths actually increased between 2010 – 2022.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

### NUMBER AND RATES OF ARRESTS: ARREST TYPE

The figures presented below illustrate trends in youth arrests in Miami-Dade County by arrest type. Arrest type was the categorization of the arrest as either a booking or pickup order. Booking arrests were defined as arrests that were processed and booked through the Juvenile Services Department via law enforcement. Pickup Order arrests were defined as arrests that originated via a court issued warrant. Total arrests and arrest rates by race and ethnicity are presented.

**Figure 37: Total Number of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Arrest Type: 2010 – 2022**

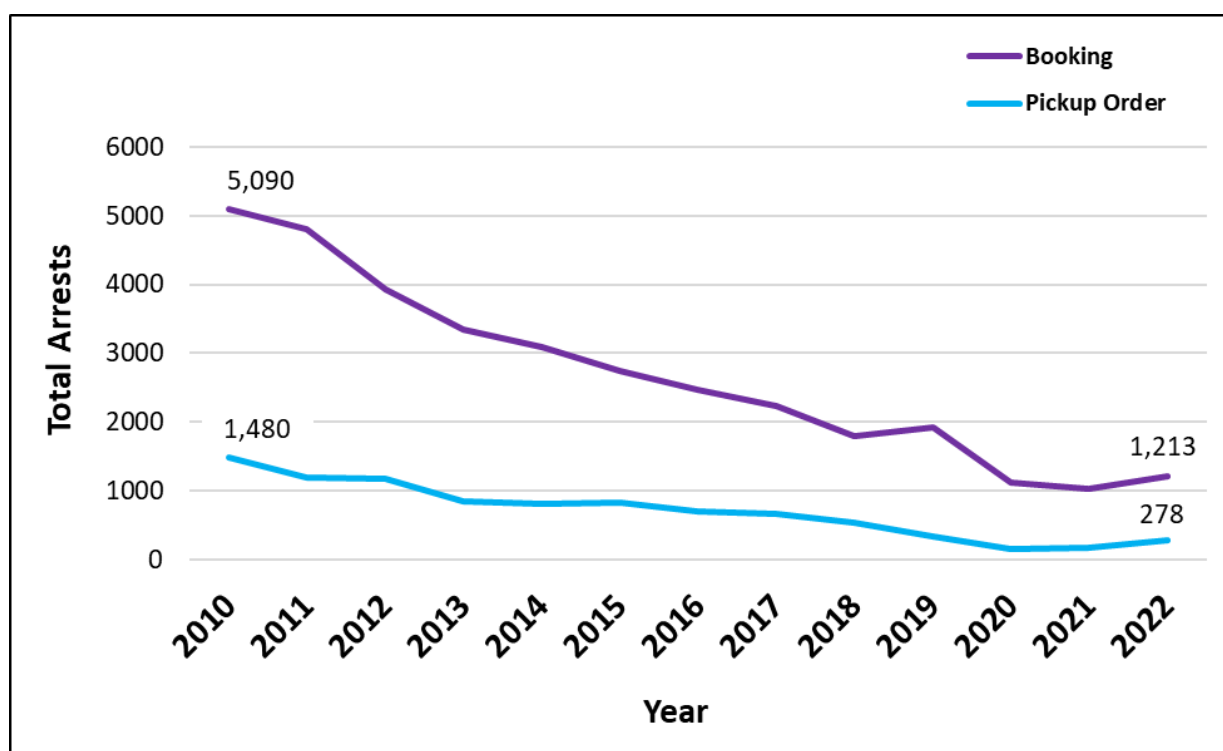


Figure 37 shows the total number of youth arrests by arrest type – either booking or pickup order – in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Overall, there were many more arrests as a result of a booking compared to a pickup order. The number of youths arrested by booking decreased from 5,090 in 2010 to 1,213 in 2022, a decrease of 76%. The number of youths arrested by pickup order decreased from 1,480 in 2010 to 278 in 2022, a decrease of 81%.

ARREST TYPE BY RACE & ETHNICITY

**Figure 38: Total Number of Youth Arrests of Youth in Miami-Dade County by Booking and Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

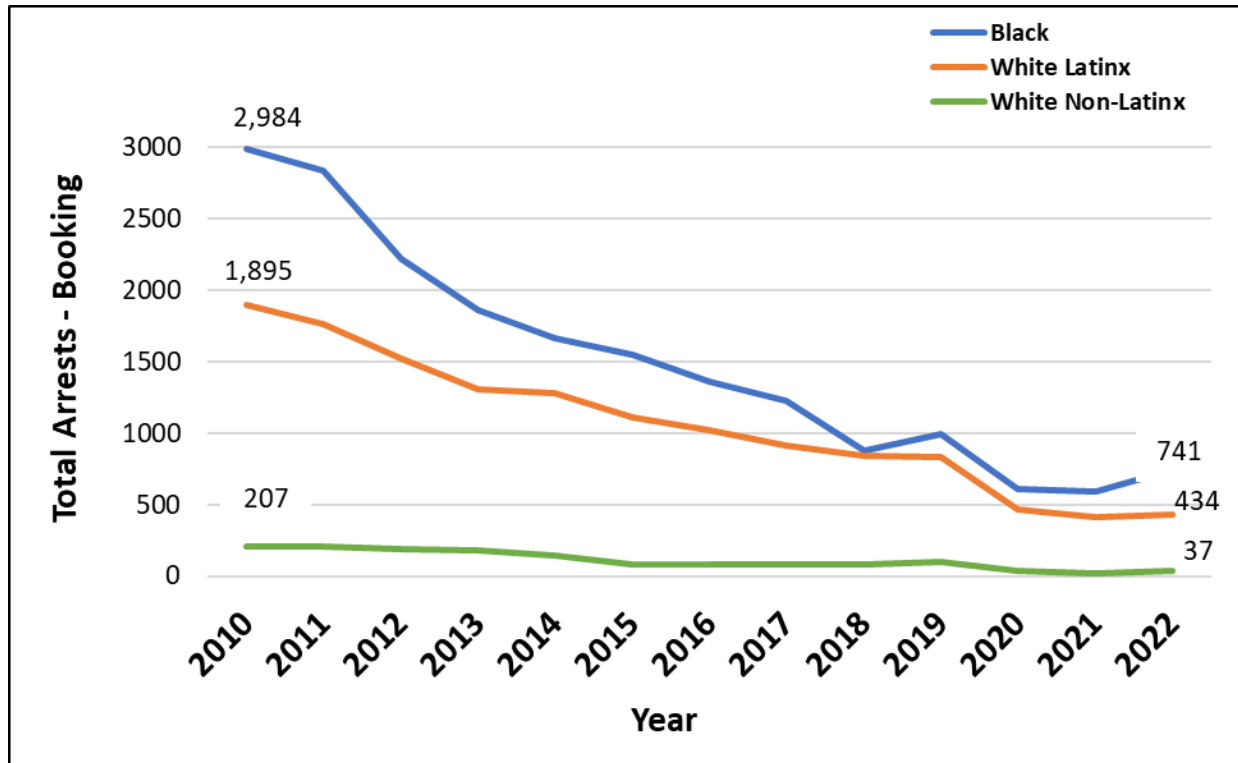


Figure 38 shows the total number of youth arrests for Booking arrest type by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Overall, booking youth arrests for the three groups decreased from 5,086 in 2010 to 1,212 in 2022, a decrease of 76%.

The number of Black youths arrested by booking decreased from 2,984 to 741, a decrease of 75%. The number of White Latinx youths arrested by booking decreased from 1,895 in 2010 to 434 in 2022, a decrease of 77%. White Non-Latinx had the fewest arrests by booking of the three groups, with 207 arrests in 2010 and 37 arrests in 2022, a decrease of 82%. Consistent with other trends in youth arrests, Black youths were arrested via booking more frequently in every year of the 13-year period.



## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 39: Total Arrest Rate of Youth in Miami-Dade County by Booking and Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

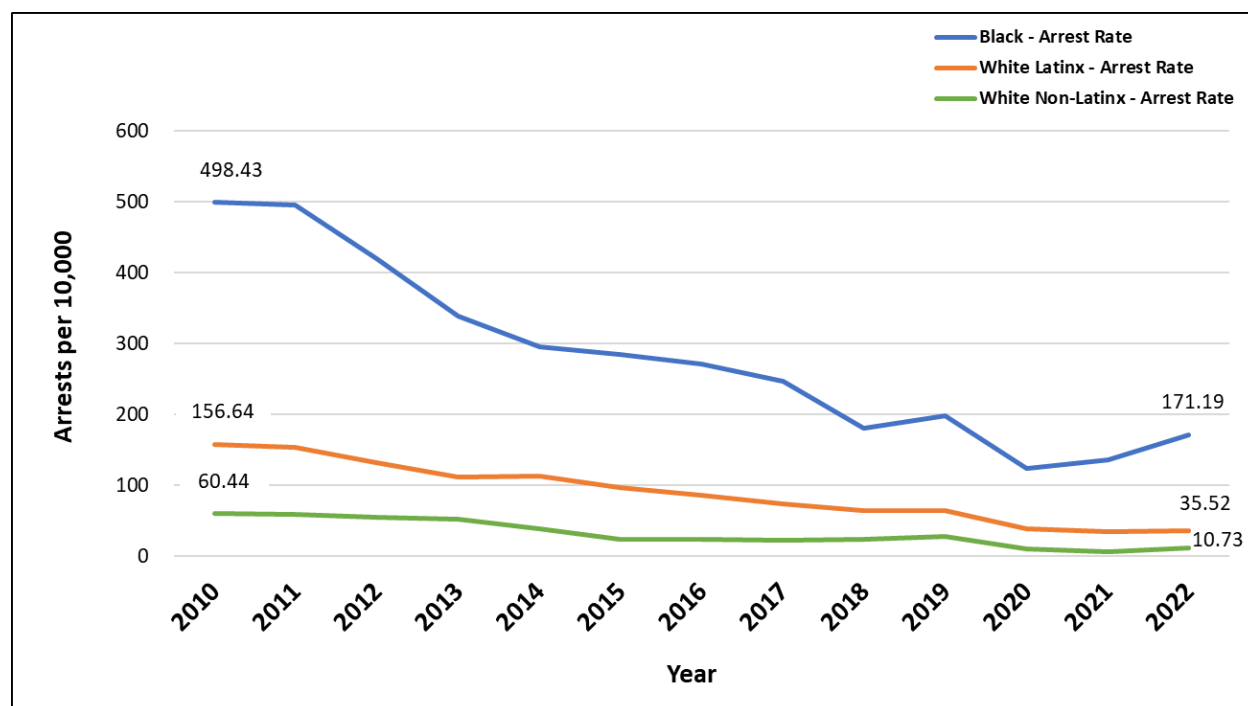


Figure 39 shows the total youth arrest rate for Booking arrest type by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. In 2010, the booking arrest rate for Black youth was 498.43 per 10,000 population, 156.64 for White Latinx youth, and 60.44 for White Non-Latinx youth. By 2022, the arrest rate for Black youth decreased to 171.19 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 66%. The arrest rate for White Latinx youth decreased to 35.52 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 77%. The arrest rate for White Non-Latinx youth decreased to 10.73 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 82%.

Overall, the youth booking arrest rate decreased for all three groups, especially for Black youths. However, an increase in booking arrest rates for Black youths began in 2020. In 2010, the booking arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 3.2 times higher than White Latinx youth and 8.2 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth. In 2022, the booking arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 4.8 times higher than White Latinx youth and 15.9 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth. This shows that even though the booking arrest rates decreased, the disparity between arrest rates of Black youths and White Latinx & White Non-Latinx youth have increased.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 40: Total Number of Youth Arrests in Miami-Dade County by Pickup Order and Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

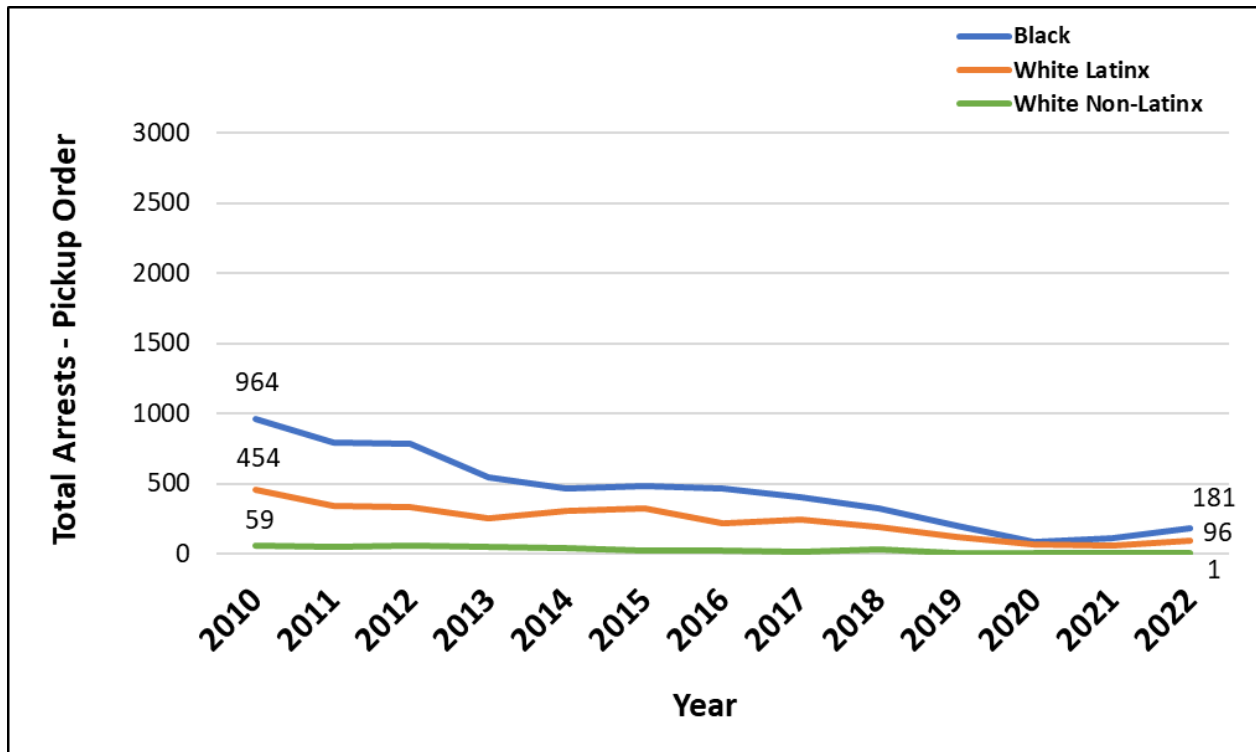


Figure 40 shows the total number of youth arrests for Pickup Orders by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Overall, pickup order youth arrests for the three groups combined decreased from 1,477 in 2010 to 278 in 2022, a decrease of 81%.

The number of total arrests via a pickup order for Black youths decreased from 964 in 2010 to 181 in 2022, a decrease of 81%. The number of White Latinx youths arrested by booking decreased from 454 in 2010 to 96 in 2022, a decrease of 79%. White Non-Latinx had the fewest arrests by pickup order of the three groups, with 59 arrests in 2010 and 1 arrest in 2022, a decrease of 98%. Although the total number of pickup order arrests decreased for Black youths, they still received more pickup order arrests compared to White-Latinx youths and White Non-Latinx youths and still accounted for 65% of all pickup order arrests.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

**Figure 41: Total Arrest Rate of Youth in Miami-Dade County by Pick-up Order and Race & Ethnicity: 2010 – 2022**

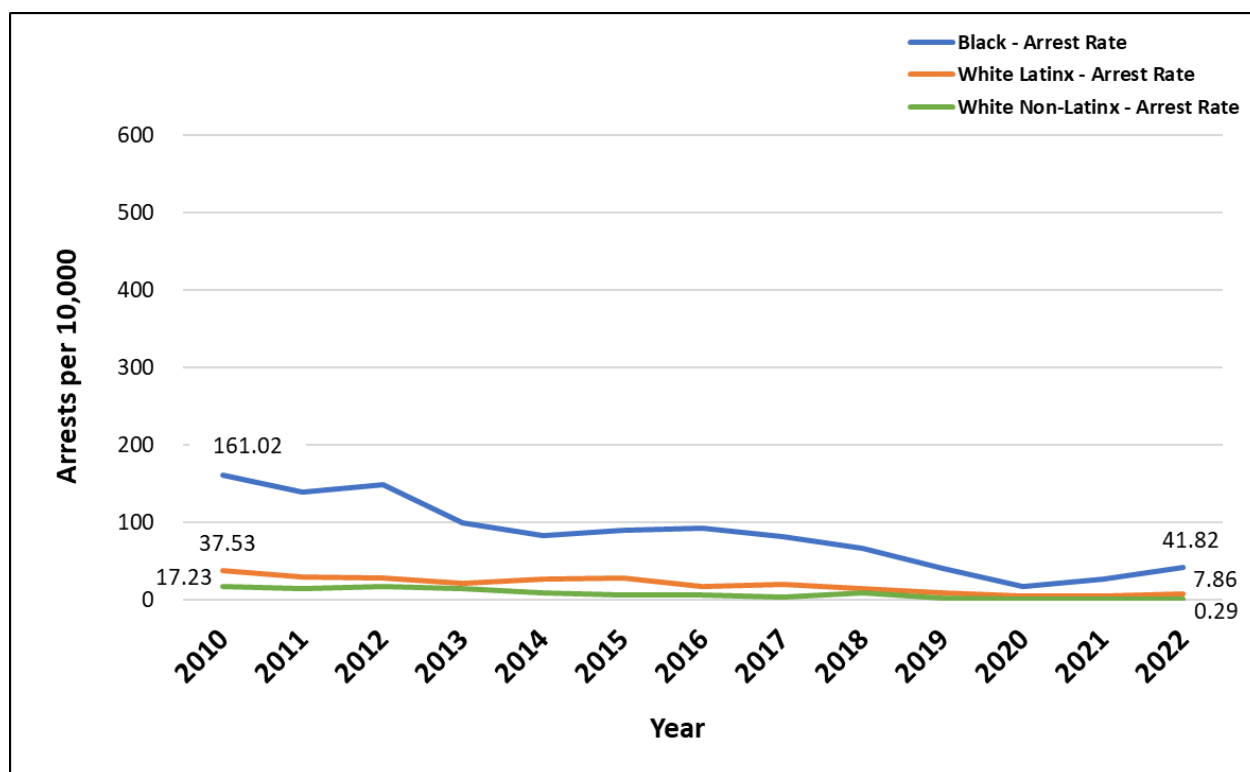


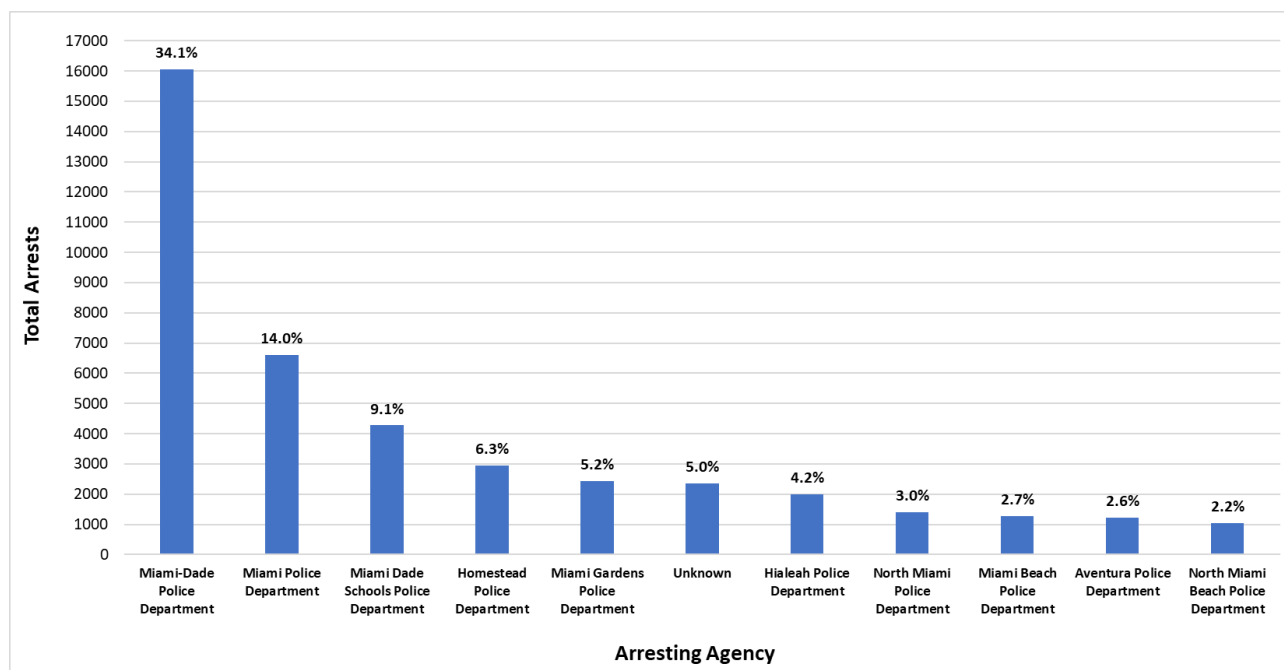
Figure 41 shows the total youth arrest rate for Pickup Orders by race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. In 2010, the pickup order arrest rate for Black youth was 161.02 per 10,000 population, 37.53 for White Latinx youth, and 17.23 for White Non-Latinx youth. By 2022, the arrest rate for Black youth decreased to 41.82 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 74%. The arrest rate for White Latinx youth decreased to 7.86 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 79%. The arrest rate for White Non-Latinx youth decreased to 0.29 per 10,000 population, a decrease of 98%.

Overall, the youth pickup order arrest rate decreased for all three groups, yet the arrest rate for Black youth was consistently higher throughout the 13-year period. In 2010, the pickup order arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 4.3 times higher than White Latinx youth and 9.3 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth. In 2022, the pickup order arrest rate for Black youth was approximately 5.3 times higher than White Latinx youth and 144.2 times higher than White Non-Latinx youth. This shows that even though the booking arrest rates decreased, the disparity between arrest rates of Black youths and White Latinx & White Non-Latinx youth have increased as a percentage.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

### NUMBER OF ARRESTS: ARRESTING AGENCY

**Figure 42: Total Arrests of Youth in Miami-Dade County by Arresting Agency: 2010 – 2022**



The figure (42) above displays the total number of youth arrests from various law enforcement agencies in Miami-Dade County from 2010 – 2022. Furthermore, the percentage of youth arrests that each agency was responsible for during this 13-year span is also included in the figure. Agencies with a minimum of 1,000 youth arrests were included in the graph. Overall, 10 agencies conducted 1,000 or more youth arrests (with unknown agency also pictured) from 2010 – 2022.

The Miami-Dade Police Department conducted the most youth arrests, 16,067, during this time period and accounted for 34.1% of all youth arrests; followed by the Miami-Police Department with 6,601 youth arrests (14%). The Miami-Dade Schools Police Department conducted the 3<sup>rd</sup> most youth arrests of any agency during this time period with 4,274 arrests (9.1%). All other agencies accounted for less than 3,000 arrests in total, and 6.3% or fewer of all youth arrests.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Introduction**

A long national history of inequities and social biases in the U.S. has resulted in Black American, Latinx, and Native American people to experience racial inequality<sup>10</sup> in the national justice system (National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, 2023). Racial inequality stems from a complex relationship between systemic factors, often rooted in socioeconomics, resulting from historical and present-day oppression, structural racism, and prejudice, intended or unintended (NASEM, 2023, p. 2). As a result, Black youth experience a disproportionate number of arrests and incarcerations. In other words, although Black youth make up a smaller percentage of the total adolescent population than White youth, Black youth are arrested and incarcerated at a higher rate than their White counterparts (Abrams et al., 2021). This literature review<sup>11</sup> provides an overview of recent statistics and interventions at the national, state (Florida), and local (Miami-Dade) levels to determine trends in juvenile arrests by race/ethnicity, and to identify evidence-based recommendations for reducing arrests among youth. The research questions guiding this investigation of the literature include:

- What are the national, state, and local trends for youth arrests in the U.S. Juvenile Justice System reported in the literature?
- What are evidence-based recommendations for decreasing racial disparities and disproportionality for youth arrests at the national, state, and local levels?

The findings of the review are organized to first present the trends for national, Florida, and Miami-Dade County arrest rates (or if noted, total population percentages), followed by explanatory factors for these trends as reported by the sources reviewed. Next, Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) is defined with suggestions for interventions, programs, or alternatives to arrest that reduce juvenile arrests and/or recidivism, recommended based on findings from published studies or use of statistics to demonstrate evidence of success. The conclusion provides explicit recommendations to reduce arrest rate and recidivism disparities for Miami-Dade County.

### **National, State, and Miami-Dade County Youth Arrest Trends**

#### **National Youth Arrest Data and Trends**

Recent reports at the national level indicate that there has been an improvement in reducing the number of youth arrests over the past 30 years (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2021;

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<sup>10</sup> Racial inequality is defined as, "...group-based differential treatment or access to valued resources rooted in law and public policy as well as individual behavior and institutional practices" (NASEM, 2023, p.2).

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix A for the methods that guided the literature review.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

Office of Juvenile Justice Prevention, 2019). While encouraging, there is still evidence that more work is needed to further reduce and eliminate the arrest disparities experienced by Black, Latinx, and Native American male youth (Claus et al., 2017; Puzzanchera, 2021; Puzzanchera et al., 2022). To summarize, Puzzanchera and colleagues (2022) report that Black youth made up 15% of the juvenile population in 2019, but 35% of the delinquency caseload. Also, Black youth arrested for violent crimes between 2012-2022 was more than five times that for White youth, and for aggravated assault, the Black-White ratio for arrests made was slightly higher than 3-to-1. Even though the arrest rates for murder charges fell drastically for all youth in 2019, Black youth were still disproportionately arrested (49% of total population arrested) (Puzzanchera, 2021). Despite the declining number of arrests for assault across all racial/ethnic groups of youth, a disproportionate number of Blacks were arrested when compared with White youth. For arson, Black youth were arrested at a rate two times higher than White youth. While the disparity between Black and White youth arrested for burglary has decreased, Blacks are still more likely to be arrested at rates eight times higher than White, twelve times higher than Native American, and fourteen times higher than Asian youth. For burglary and larceny-theft, the percentage of Black youth arrested in 2006 (29%) grew to 41% in 2019, almost three times higher than White youth. The juvenile arrest rates referred to juvenile courts across the U.S. were reduced by 58%, with the Departments of Juvenile Justice in larger cities (population 250,000+) leading the way to cut the number of cases referred to the courts over moderate sized (100,000-250,000) and smaller (fewer than 100,000) cities. Additionally, moderate cities were more likely than smaller cities to handle the arrest outside of the courthouse. Also, while youth confinement rates have dropped by 70% between 1995-2019, an overreliance on incarceration, specifically for Black and Native American youth, is evident as an Annie E. Casey Foundation report (2021) stated that the chances for these youth to be arrested and referred to court still are 1 in 3 and have not changed since 2005. Black youth made up 17% of the juvenile detention population in 2019<sup>12</sup>; however, they were detained disproportionately for charges related to robbery or stolen property (62% of total juveniles detained), murder, and/or motor vehicle theft (50%).

### State Youth Arrest Data and Trends

The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (FDJJ) maintains an online data dashboard<sup>13</sup> to disseminate state- and county-level statistics for youth intake, diversion, probation, residential commitment (also disaggregated for nonsecure, high, and maximum security), and adult transfer<sup>14</sup>. During 2021-22, the overall youth delinquency intake numbers totaled 22,909<sup>15</sup>, representing the number of youth aged 10-17 who were screened and assessed after allegedly

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<sup>12</sup> Although data for post-arrest processing was not included within the previous section of the report, the disproportionate numbers of Black and Latinx youth in the justice system are a result of complex and interrelated factors that span and impact all levels of interaction they experience with the DJJ; we believe it is important to provide the information for context due to recidivism's interrelated nature.

<sup>13</sup> Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. (2021). *Delinquency Profile Dashboard*, 2022. <https://www.djj.state.fl.us/research/reports-and-data/interactive-data-reports/delinquency-profile/delinquency-profile-dashboard>

<sup>14</sup> For the definition of terms used by the FDJJ, see the Glossary: <https://www.djj.state.fl.us/youth-families/glossary>

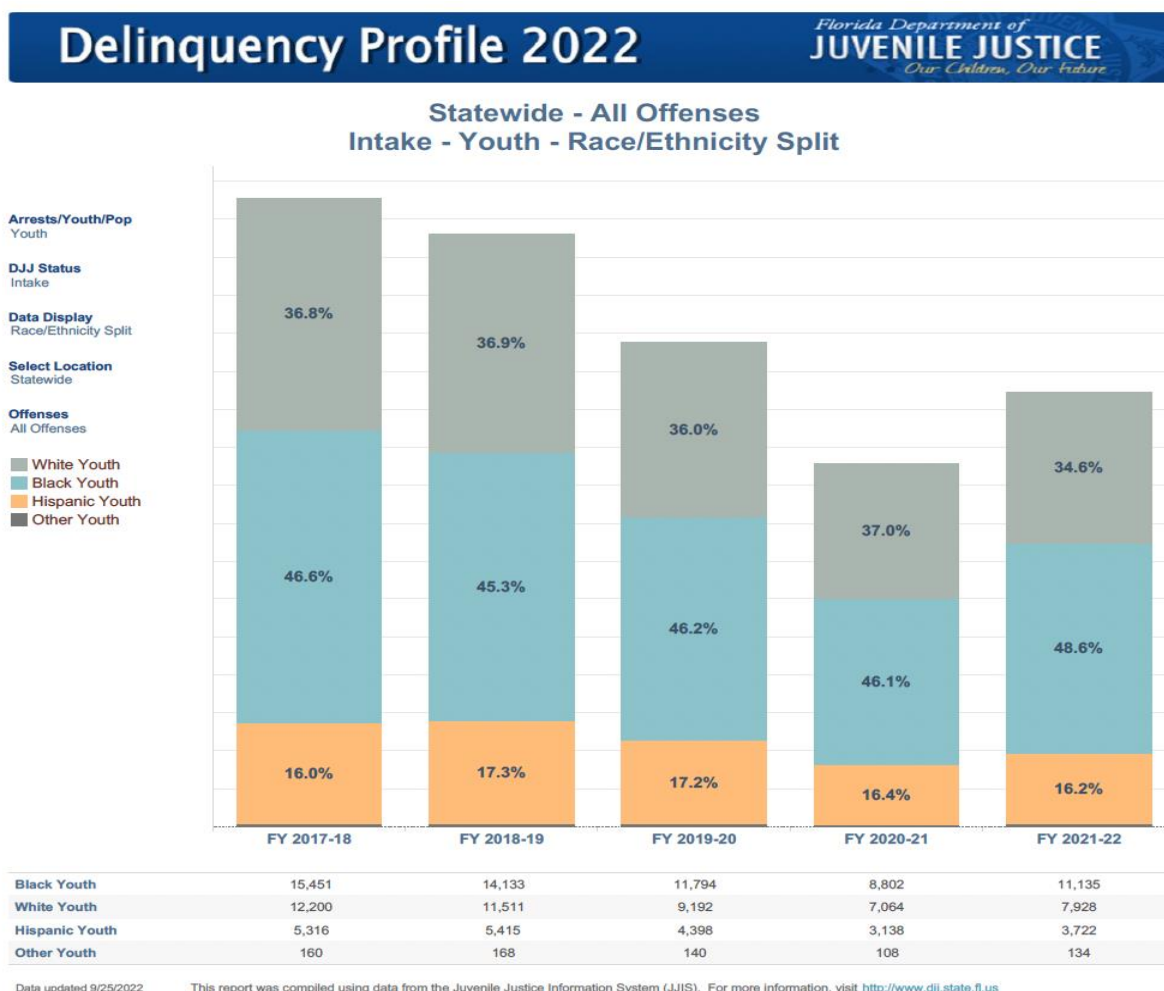
<sup>15</sup> If a youth was taken in or arrested for multiple charges in one year, this number includes only the most serious offense for each time the youth encountered law enforcement.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

violating a law or court order. Black youth had the highest delinquency intake rates statewide at 11,125. White youth followed at 7,928, and Latinx youth had 3,722 (Figure 43).

Figure 43

Florida youth delinquency intake rates by race/ethnicity<sup>16</sup> statewide



As far as arrests, the total number of youths arrested in Florida during 2021-22 was 36,996 with Black youth arrests making up over one-half of the total intake population (53%), compared to White youth 32%, and Latinx around 15%. Based on the declining numbers over the past five years, Florida arrest data (Figure 44) reflect national statistics with fewer youth arrests each year, trending downward even before COVID-19; however, there is still work to be done in Florida regarding eliminating disproportionate outcomes, as Black youth are about 21%<sup>17</sup> of the total Florida youth population yet made up over half the total number of youth

<sup>16</sup> FDJJ Data Dashboard, Retrieved from <https://www.djj.state.fl.us/research/reports-and-data/interactive-data-reports/delinquency-profile/delinquency-profile-dashboard>

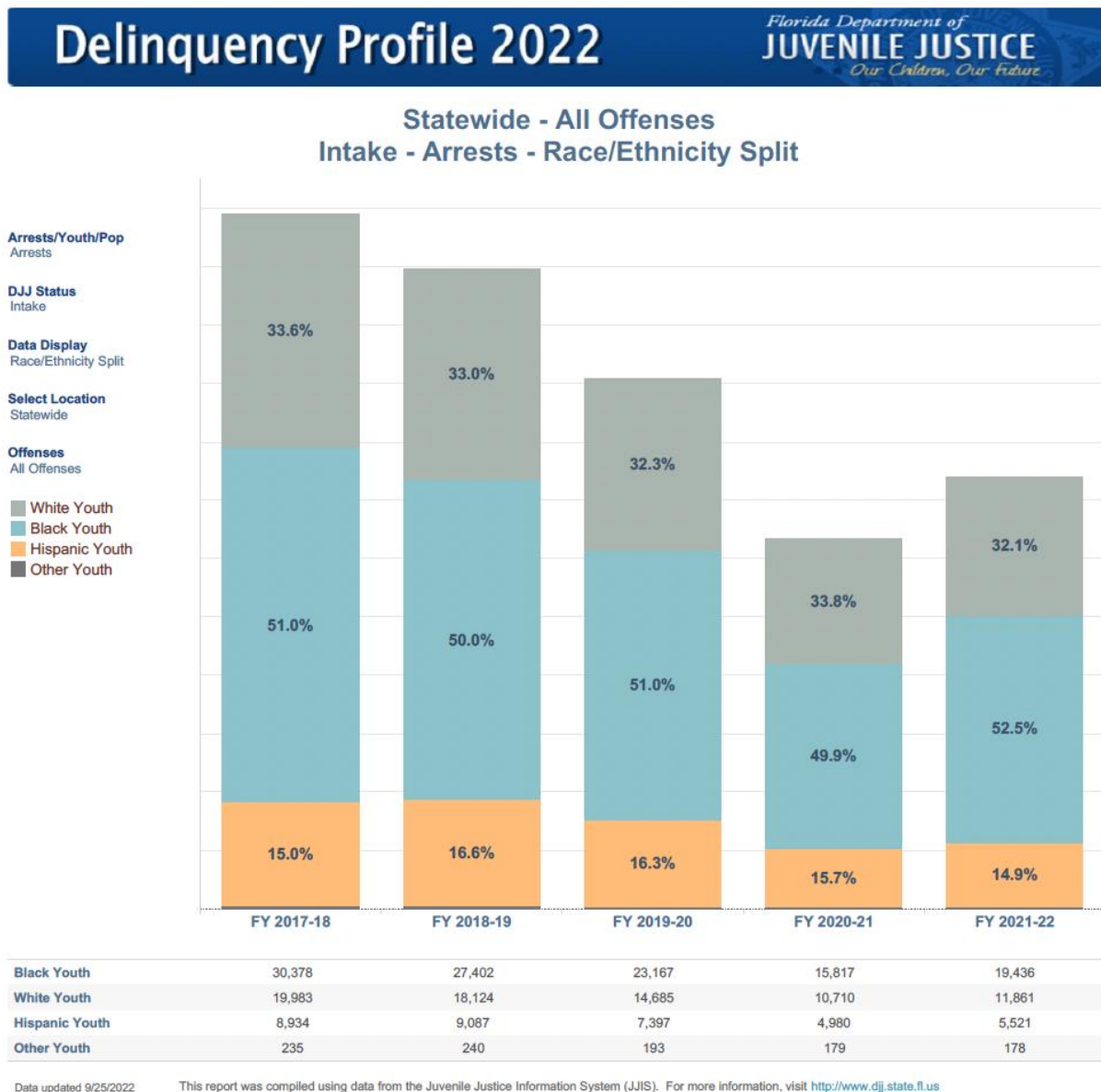
<sup>17</sup> The demographic statistics for the literature review were taken from the FDJJ Data Dashboard, whereas the demographic statistics for the previous section of arrest analyses, were taken from the Census Bureau. Although different numbers are reported, the same trends are evident.

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arrested (53%). For eligible first-time misdemeanants in Florida, about 37% of Black youth received a disposition of diversion, as compared with 46% of White, and 15% of Latinx youths. Moreover, nearly 60% of statewide youth receiving a disposition of residential detention were Black as compared to 30% White, and 12% Latinx. Finally, of the youth transferred to criminal (adult) court, over two thirds were Black (64%), less than one quarter were White (22%), and the remainder Latinx (14%).

Figure 44

Florida intake youth arrest rates by race/ethnicity.<sup>18</sup>



<sup>18</sup> FDJJ Data Dashboard, Retrieved from <https://www.djj.state.fl.us/research/reports-and-data/interactive-data-reports/delinquency-profile/delinquency-profile-dashboard>



## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

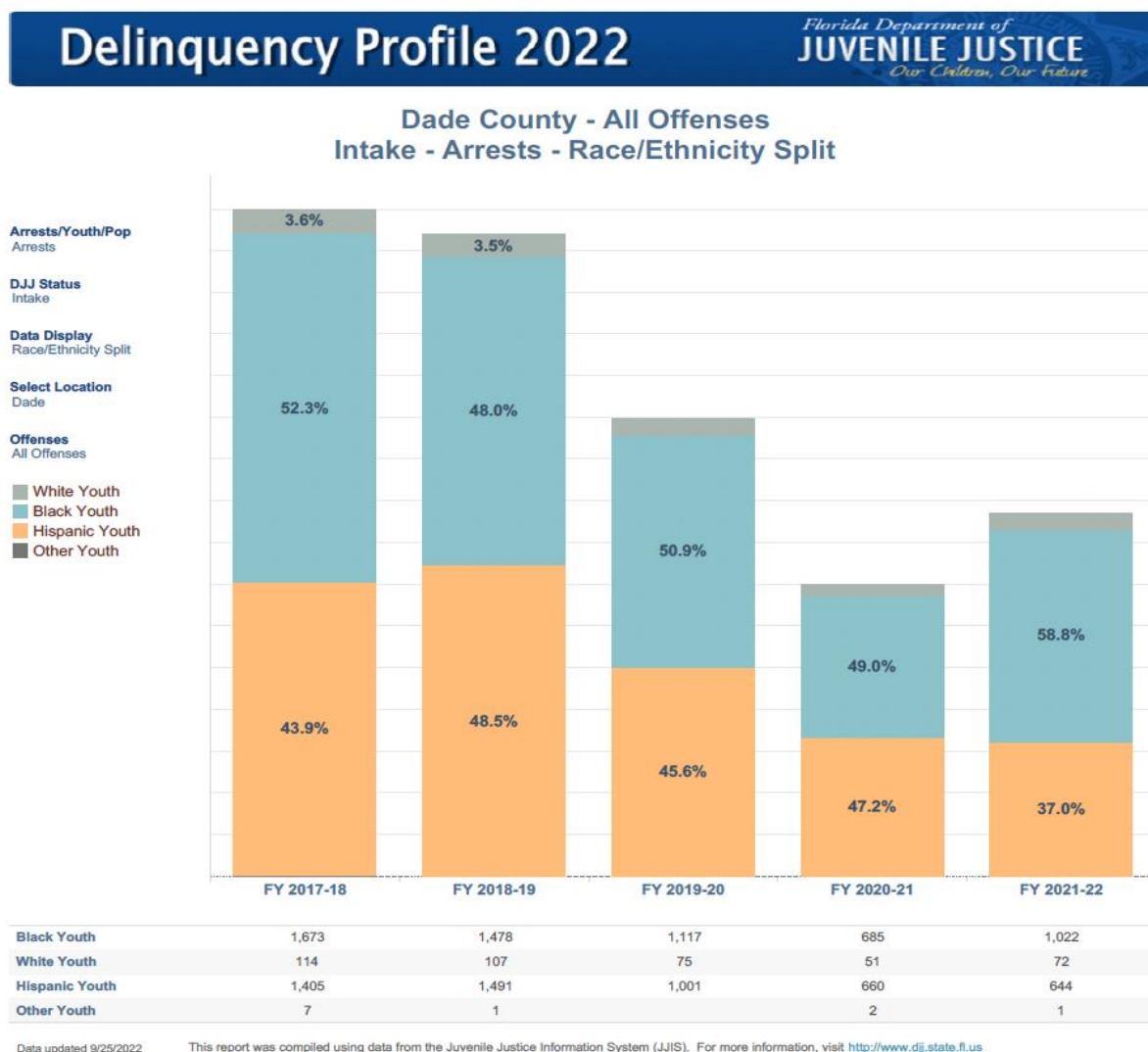
### **Miami-Dade County Youth Arrest Data and Trends**

Although the FDJJ's online data dashboard provides evidence of improving outcomes for arrest rates across race and ethnicity in Miami-Dade (M-D) county, there is still work to be done to further improve disproportionate numbers of Black youth entering the juvenile justice system. Black youth made up 19% of the population aged 10-17 during 2021-22, Latinx, 68%, and Whites, 11%; however, Black youth experienced the highest intake numbers (57% of the total population), followed by Latinx (38%) and Whites (5%). Of these intake numbers, 59% of Blacks were arrested, and thus the highest number of youths entering the DJJ system were Black, as compared with 37% Latinx, and 4% White (Figure 45). For eligible first-time misdemeanants in Miami-Dade, about 50% were Black youth who received a disposition of diversion, 46% were Latinx, and 4% were White. Of the youth receiving a disposition of residential detention in Miami-Dade, over 56% were Black, 41% Latinx, and less than 4% were White. Finally, of the youth receiving a disposition of adult transfer, over 65% were Black and the remainder were Latinx (35%); no White youth had a disposition of adult transfer in 2021-22. Again, while an improvement, these descriptive data demonstrate racial disparities across all phases of the FDJJ points measured, from intake to adult transfer, which reflects data in the latest national report, as well (Puzzanchera et al., 2022).

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Figure 45.

Miami-Dade County intake youth arrest rates by race/ethnicity.<sup>19</sup>



## Explanatory Factors

The racial disparities noted in the previous section are a result of complex constructs within communities and the DJJ, including poverty, structural racism, and bias among law enforcement and other juvenile justice system professionals (Birkhead, 2017; National Research Council, 2013). These complex constructs are described next, using explanatory factors or reasons for the disparities among disproportionate DJJ statistics, in particular for Black youth. Drawn from the literature, the factor related to arrest rates begins with Disproportionate Minority

<sup>19</sup> FDJJ Data Dashboard, Retrieved from <https://www.djj.state.fl.us/research/reports-and-data/interactive-data-reports/delinquency-profile/delinquency-profile-dashboard>

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

Contact (DMC) or more explicitly, racial and ethnic disparities (Center for Policing Equity, 2023); however, DMC also impacts the interconnected network of pre-, during-, and post-arrest processes. Other explanatory factors that ultimately lead to higher arrest rates and disproportional numbers of Black youth in the Juvenile Justice System include the Racialization of the Juvenile Justice System, Transition to School Policing, Criminalization of Youth Behaviors, and the Biases of System Actors. Many of these factors are inter-related, creating additional layers of complexity when working to address them. This section concludes with other explanations mentioned briefly in the literature for reported arrest rates.

### Disproportionate Minority Contact

Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) is the disproportionate overrepresentation of racial, ethnic, and linguistic minority youths in the juvenile justice system. Several factors contribute to these disparities and include systemic racism, biases and prejudices, disproportionate exposure to poverty and trauma, and disparities in access to education and mental health services (OJJDP, 2018). Other cited causes include family risk factors, such as unmarried or single parents, incarcerated parents, harsh, lax, or inconsistent discipline, exposure to violence, and delinquent peers (Development Services Group, 2022). In 2002, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPa) required all states to address DMC by broadening the scope from minority youth in confinement to *contact*. Expanding the scope of the JJDPa authorized the federal government to withhold funding from states if the disproportionality of minority youth at all phases of interaction with the justice system was not addressed, requiring an action plan for each year (Coalition for Juvenile Justice, n. d.). During 2021-22, 22,919 youth were arrested in Florida; Table 6 provides demographic data for the arrests recorded. While Black youth comprise just 18% of the state's population and Latinx youth, 24% (OJJDP, 2018), the majority arrested were Black youth, followed by White youth, and Latinx youth (FDJJ, 2023b). This disproportionality is also evident by reviewing the statistics of youth in detention (FDJJ, 2023b). According to the Office of Justice Programs Florida DMC Plan 508 (OJJDP, 2018), in Miami-Dade County Latinx youth make up the majority total population (64%), with Black youth accounting for 20%<sup>20</sup>. Yet in 2021-22, the majority arrested were Black (1,008 youth), followed by Latinx (918 youth), and White (88 youth) (OJJDP, 2018).

Table 6.

*Total Population of Florida Youth: Arrest Rates and Detention by Race and Gender, 2021-22*

Race and Gender	Percent Population	Arrest Rate	Detention
Black Males	18%	35%	40%
Black Females		14%	11%

<sup>20</sup> Note the figures reported here were drawn from the FDJJ dashboard and show some differences compared to figures drawn from the U.S. Census Bureau.

## TRENDS IN YOUTH ARRESTS

White Males	58%	24%	23%
White Females		10%	7%
Latinx Males		12%	12%
Latinx Females	24%	4%	3%

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Negative impacts of DMC on minority youth include, but are not limited to, higher rates of incarceration and recidivism, the broader societal impacts of perpetuating racial disparities, and mistrust in the justice system (Padgaonkar et al., 2020). Strategies that have been employed to address DMC across the U.S. are community-based diversion programs, cultural competency training for justice professionals, and data-driven approaches to identifying and addressing disparities (National Juvenile Justice Network, 2014; Padgaonkar et al., 2020). Another potential strategy is to reduce police contact with youth, particularly in situations where it is not necessary for public safety (McGlynn-Wright et al., 2020). For example, when the situation might be more appropriate for a mental health professional to intervene, rather than law enforcement. This could be accomplished by police training programs emphasizing the importance of reducing contact with youth, while also maintaining public safety.

According to the OJJDP (2018) *Plan for Compliance with the Disproportionate Minority Contact*, Florida detained Black youth at a higher rate than their White counterparts. The resulting recommendations offered to reduce this disparity included: Develop a new Detention Risk Assessment Instrument that utilized the latest data driven development practices; Create a full alternative to secure detention continuum.; Ensure youth placement into the alternative programs is a function of the newly developed instrument. The FDJJ implemented a three-phase plan to reduce DMC in response to these recommendations: Identification & Assessment, Diagnosis, and Intervention and Prevention. For the Identification and Assessment phase, the Relative Rate Index (RRI) is used to assess the relative overrepresentation of minority groups at several important decision points in the juvenile justice continuum. The RRI provides an unbiased estimation of the extent and nature of DMC at each stage of the juvenile justice system, enabling the allocation of resources to implement interventions and changes at the appropriate decision points. The RRI provides a statistical representation of Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) for each of the 67 counties in Florida. A county's population is taken into account and controlled for when calculating the rate. Thus, smaller counties are measured the same as larger counties and their rates are comparable.

To summarize, DMC persists in Florida's juvenile justice system with its effects most pronounced for Black youth residing in Black and lower socioeconomic areas. To effectively reduce DMC, all sectors (i.e., law enforcement and juvenile justice systems, families, and communities) need to work together and take responsibility for addressing and eliminating racial/ethnic youth disparities (Kakar, 2006).

### ***Racialization of Juvenile Justice System***

According to Birkhead (2017), racialization is deeply ingrained within the Juvenile Justice System and is a result of its early history, beginning at least 200 years ago. She describes racialization as "the dynamic of racial formation that has animated the juvenile justice system for centuries and that the system continues to reproduce" using "linguistic codification of race-based stereotypes that influence the practices and decision making of the various players in the juvenile justice system - from judges and lawyers to police and probation officers" (p. 387). This includes the "narratives that court actors use to construct baseline norms, informed by white cultural norms, to distinguish the 'good' kids from the 'bad' ones" (p. 387). This process of racialization allows for these labels "to serve as code for racially biased judgments of the young person rather than reflect an objective analysis of the relevant risk factors and demonstrated needs of an individual child" (p. 387). In what should be a "race-neutral" system, the racialization process not only advances, but also highlights negative stereotypes about the "other" (i.e., people of color, immigrants, or impoverished individuals), creating and sustaining racialized stereotypes (p. 388).

The impact of racialization in the juvenile justice system is harmful and is both a symptom and cause of the disproportionate representation of Black youth in the system (Birkhead, 2017, p. 390). For example, Black and Latinx youth are more likely than Whites to be transferred to adult court, especially when the offenses are committed in counties with increased Black and Latino growth (Warren et al., n.d.). Additionally, poverty significantly increases the likelihood of transfer to adult court for Black youth. Black youth are more likely to be committed to either a residential placement or a secure facility, compared to Latinx youth. Importantly, the socioeconomic, racial/ethnic context of the Florida county influenced the likelihood that Black and Latinx youth would be committed to a residential placement or detention center. Birkhead (2017) states that defense attorneys are critical in addressing racialized stereotypes because they must be aware how their clients are likely to be treated differently based on their race and work to challenge these stereotypes and biases at every step of the legal process - i.e., advocating for fair treatment in court, challenging discriminatory practices by law enforcement, and advocating for policies that address the root causes of racial disparities in the justice system (p. 438). Finally, Birkhead (2017) states that the connection between race and crime has also been reinforced through the radicalization of public policy, with laws targeting the "behaviors, habits, and life conditions" of Black youths living in poverty (p. 390). As an example, the increase in school resource officers has also led to an increase in the number of youths referred to the juvenile justice system (FDJJ, 2022). This leads to related explanatory factor, the over-surveillance and criminalization of "normal" youth behaviors in Black communities.

### ***Criminalization of Youth Behaviors***

According to Abrams and colleagues (2021), criminalization of younger children (i.e., under age 12) may be a launching point for racial overrepresentation of Black youth in the Juvenile Justice system. Criminalization occurs when the environmental response to developmentally normal behavior that may be undesirable (e.g., fighting in school; destruction of

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school property) is legal intervention, rather than other alternatives that do not include contact with the legal system. Most notably, the increase of School Resource Officers in schools has led to many youths being referred to the juvenile justice system for behaviors that, in the past, would have been handled by persons other than law enforcement officers (Henning, 2013).

In the U.S., there is no federal statute to determine the minimum age at which a child can be held legally responsible for committing a crime and processed in the juvenile justice system. Decisions on the minimum age for children to enter the juvenile justice system varies by state, although 28 states do not have age limits or a minimum age law. This is seen as problematic since minimum age laws are a potential policy solution to address racial overrepresentation (Abrams et al., 2021). Black youth are more likely than white youth to be stopped, searched, and arrested by police (McGlynn-Wright et al., 2022). Police contact before age 18 is also associated with an increased likelihood of adult arrest, particularly for Black youth. Furthermore, the effect of police contact on adult arrest is strongest for individuals who had multiple police contacts before age 18, suggesting that repeated police contact may have cumulative effects. The effect of police contact on adult arrest was especially stronger for individuals who were younger at the time of their first police contact, suggesting that early police contact may be particularly consequential for youth developmentally.

### *Biases of System Actors*

The police officer is the first point of contact for most youth who enter the juvenile justice system. The officer determines whether the juvenile will move further into the system or be diverted after apprehension for a law violation (Puzzanchera et al., 2022). Multiple studies have indicated that police officers hold more suspicion towards children living in low-income neighborhoods, which can be used to justify or even incentivize aggressive law enforcement methods in those areas (Birckhead, 2017, p. 413). In turn, this leads to racialization, resulting in harmful effects that go beyond stereotypes to force people of color to choose between their safety and their rights (legal, privacy, dignitary). The most common context in which this occurs for youth is during interactions with police. To avoid being perceived as a criminal or dangerous, Black youth are more likely than White youth to relinquish their rights, including 1) legal rights (e.g., the right to remain silent or refuse to consent to a search without a warrant), 2) privacy rights (e.g., the right to refuse to provide personal information when randomly stopped), or 3) dignitary rights (e.g., the right to be treated with respect). This is exacerbated by distrust or illegitimate perceptions of law enforcement (Tyler, 2005), which may contribute to youth wanting to prevent stirring a police officer's suspicion.

Enhancing the cultural competency and sensitivity of police officers and DJJ personnel has been suggested as an intervention that may help reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the Juvenile Justice System (Meldrum, 2017); however, these training programs have had mixed results, particularly trainings that primarily focus on implicit bias (Fix, 2020; Lieber & Fix, 2019; Spinney et al., 2018; Worden et al., 2020). For example, Worden et al. (2020) analyzed the impact of an implicit bias training with the New York City Police Department (NYPD) and found that while many officers reported increased knowledge of implicit bias and reported that the training was useful, they found no evidence that racial and ethnic disparities in police

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enforcement actions were reduced as a result of the training. On the other hand, Fix (2020) found an increase in cultural competency and ethnocultural empathy for juvenile justice professionals as a result of implicit bias training. Birckhead (2017) analyzed the efficacy of implicit bias training for police officers and other court actors. She noted the need to implement practical safeguards so that defense attorneys can raise awareness of bias, rather than focus on the nearly impossible task of eradicating it. Also, as mentioned earlier, another suggestion includes the need for police training programs that emphasize the importance of reducing contact with youth, while also maintaining public safety (McGlynn-Wright et al., 2022). While these trainings may produce some better understanding of implicit bias knowledge and empathic understandings of other groups, the link between implicit bias training and changes in behavior among law enforcement remains weak. And finally, regardless of the content of any given training for law enforcement, the likelihood of success will increase for trainings that have a continuous component to them and are incorporated into the culture of the agency. Alternatively, one-time trainings for cultural competency or implicit bias are much more likely to produce weak effects over time, if any at all.

### *Other Explanatory Factors*

Other factors noted by the reviewed literature as potential explanations for reported arrest rates are explained here. First, as mentioned previously, increasing the number of school resource officers (SROs) has led to concerns about negatively impacting the school learning environment (Justice Policy Institute, 2011) and more youth being referred to the juvenile justice system (Ryan et al., 2018). The '*carceral continuum*' is the flow of decisions made from the moment of reporting a potential illegal activity through the decision to prosecute, sentence, and/or incarcerate a young person" (Shedd, 2011, as cited in Abrams et al., 2021, p. 74). This tends to begin with academic discipline, where schools punish Black children more harshly than White children, and police and school resource officers disproportionately arrest Black youth on school grounds - this is also termed the "school to prison pipeline" (Abrams et al., 2021). Suggestions to improve school policing in the U.S., include: 1) involve SROs for school-based student behavior referrals only if a criminal charge could result; 2) increase training for SROs to include behavior management, child development, communication techniques, and disability awareness; 3) utilize MOUs to define specific SRO roles and responsibilities; 4) include SROs as a team member for positive behavioral supports to enhance school safety planning (Ryan et al., 2018). In place of the current punitive approach followed by school police, public health interventions that focus on mental health and restorative practices should be implemented (Development Services Group, 2022).

According to the FDJJ (2022), the five-year trend for school arrests across the state and Circuit 11 (Miami-Dade) showed a decline from 2018-19 through 2020-21, increasing somewhat in 2021-22. During 2021-22, the Florida school arrest rate for youth in grades 6-12 averaged 4.2 and Miami-Dade County's reported school arrest rate was 1.7. This decline in arrest rates were likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic shut-down mandates, requiring school closures and distance learning (FDJJ, 2022). Another issue is the fact that the reporting practices for race categories impact data accuracy. In particular, the juvenile justice system's data do not count

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Hispanic/Latinx youth in ways that are consistent and transparent, and they are often either placed in the "youth of color" broader category (Abrams et al., 2021), or within the race category of White (e.g., FDJJ, 2023a-d).

### **Recommendations to Reduce Racial Disparities**

Suggestions for evidence-based interventions to reduce racial disparities at the pre-, during, and post-arrest phases within the juvenile justice system from the national, state, and local literature are described in this section. After a brief introduction to reform-based interventions at the systems level, the recommended interventions are described. These include civil citations, education-related programs, and a focus on youth, family, and community. Also important to these efforts are collaborative partnerships and tools designed to guide DJJ personnel at key decision-making points. This section concludes with a brief section of who benefits from the recommended interventions.

#### **Reform-based Interventions**

A National Research Council report (2014) stated that by including youth in a justice system that uses confinement for serving time or holding teens accountable (e.g., a system similar to what has been designed and implemented for adults), adolescent development is hindered and recidivism is more likely because teens need active involvement by a parent figure, peer groups to model positive socialization and academic success, and experiences that will help contribute to their decision-making and critical-thinking abilities. The report advocated for a more reform-oriented approach to account for the developmental needs of adolescents and emphasize restorative justice practices, community service, taking responsibility, and making amends for actions taken. Hay and colleagues' (2020) report found five protective factors to be consistently impactful in predicting reoffending: 1. Prosocial peers, 2. Employment-vocational commitment, 3. Academic commitment, 4. Current social skills, and 5. Prosocial attitudes. Thus, further investment in interventions that emphasize these protective factors are warranted. Juvenile justice systems should use reform-based interventions to address multiple facets of interaction at the arrest, diversion, adjudication and disposition, community supervision, and aftercare phases to reduce the number of arrests and recidivism.

The following "systems-level" interventions seek to change "systems" (i.e., the DJJ) by addressing root causes of disparities or inequalities (e.g., the structures in place) rather than the symptoms (e.g., the disproportionate numbers of Black youth arrested) to create more fair and equitable communities for all people (Full Frame Initiative, 2023). As noted earlier, root causes related to the DJJ's racial disparities found across the country include poverty, structural racism, and bias among law enforcement (Birckhead, 2017). It has been established that the systems surrounding and within the juvenile justice system must be changed in order for reforms to be effective (Puzzanchera et al., 2022). The literature reviewed included reform-based interventions for systems change that focused on civil citation (diversion), youth and families, interdisciplinary collaboration, and education and career opportunities, as well as other interventions that seek to reduce DMC.

#### ***Civil Citation***



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According to a Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (FDJJ) report (2023a), the civil citation and other alternative-to-arrest programs are designed to give law enforcement an alternative to arresting youth for minor, misdemeanor delinquent acts. Law enforcement officers have the discretion to issue a citation rather than a formal complaint or arrest. Diverting the youth prior to arrest while holding the youth accountable for their actions and involving parents in determining an appropriate sanction to prevent further involvement in the justice system are the primary goals of the civil citation program. Statewide, there were a total of 5,632 releases (citation issued and youth released from formal processing) and 4,556 completions (youth completing required behaviors to close their case) for youth participating in the civil citation process throughout Florida during FY 2020-21. The recidivism rate for youth across Florida completing the civil citation process during 2020-21 was just 4%, which is the lowest recidivism rate of any program type monitored by the FDJJ and demonstrates the promise of this approach to reduce the number of youth arrests. At the local (county) level, civil citation providers oversee youth participating in the civil citation process. Youth are required to participate in an assessment of needs, perform community service hours, and complete various sanctions, which may include reparations and treatment services. In Miami-Dade County, there were 420 releases and 83% of eligible youth (n=348; (55% Latinx, 40% Black; average age of 15.4 years)) were given a civil citation during 2020-21. The recidivism rate was just 2%, demonstrating this diversion program's success at the local level as well. The FDJJ credits the collaboration among multiple agencies and personnel throughout the community for this success. These include, but are not limited to, law enforcement, state attorneys, judges, the DJJ, public defenders, work sites, as well as the coordinating entity for the local civil citation process.

### ***Focus on Youth and Families***

Programs that offer supports to youth and families have been found to be effective in reducing arrest and recidivism rates. According to the OJJDP (2018), the FDJJ continues reform-based work to improve reintegration and aftercare practices within communities for youth returning home from a residential placement. Effective and comprehensive services for youth have been developed and implemented in efforts to provide alternatives to secure detention placements, reduce restrictive out-of-home placements, and reduce overcrowding in juvenile facilities. For example, to limit and/or prevent detention, a Kinship Care program implemented in Lauderdale Lakes, FL entitled, Family Response through Extended Networks to prevent Delinquency and Detention (FRENDD), entailed placing youth with any eligible family member when the court or family decided that a return to the parent's home was not possible (Duncan, 2019). Kinship care focuses on the strengths and resilience of Black families and reinforces goals of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems to retain youth in the family setting. Kinship care models that foster family inclusion in decision-making and culturally sensitive assessments may be increasingly effective in reducing the number of Black youths in detention (Duncan, 2019).

Evidence-based best practices for reducing youth incarceration rates include minimizing all forms of out-of-home placement by significantly increasing the amount of young people kept safely in their communities, expanding the use of community interventions, making strategies

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explicitly about race to counterbalance generations of structural racism and overrepresentation of youth of color in the legal system, and transforming probation into a relationship-based, time-limited intervention focused on positive behavior change and long-term success (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2021).

### *Interdisciplinary collaboration*

The FDJJ contracts for services and awards grants to community-based organizations to provide delinquency prevention programs across the state (FDJJ, 2023c). The department receives General Revenue funds for two primary programs: Children in Need of Services and Families in Need of Services (CINS/FINS), which is currently contracted with the Florida Network of Youth and Family Services, Inc., and Practical Academic Cultural Education (PACE). The intent of CINS/FINS is to divert children who commit status offenses from entering the child welfare or juvenile justice system. The community agencies of the Florida Network of Youth and Family Services operate youth crisis shelters and provide non-residential services across the state of Florida as part of a continuum of services for children 5 to 17 years of age and their families. The Florida Network of Youth and Family Services and the nonprofit community-based providers/agencies provide only non-residential services in seven of the largest urban counties in the state. CINS/FINS agencies provide centralized intake, screening, acceptance and assessment, prevention outreach, case management, non-residential counseling services, and shelter services. Every judicial circuit has at least one Florida Network of Youth and Family Services provider, and every county has access to services and centralized intake. Other prevention programs (see pp. 12-14 for descriptions) are funded through two different sources: (1) state trust fund grants, which include Community Partnership and Invest in Children grant, and (2) federal grants, which are administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Office of Justice Programs, and U.S. Department of Justice. Program expenditures are listed on pp. 15-16. Other interventions include: Prodigy Programs, SNAP Services, Afterschool Programs, CINS/FINS Non-Residential Services, and Female Diversion Programs.

The FDJJ Office of Education also utilizes multi-agency collaboration in the delivery of education services for at-risk youth to provide academic and pre-employment curricula for students in DJJ programs (FDJJ, 2023d). The Office of Education works with myriad stakeholders to support these objectives including youth, families, department and contracted education and program personnel, district school boards, the Florida Department of Education (FDOE), the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), Career Source Florida, regional workforce boards, the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), and the Florida Youth Foundation (FYF).

### *Education and Career*

The mission of the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice's Office of Education is to support meeting the individual education goals for every adjudicated youth (FDJJ, 2023d). This is accomplished by training opportunities for education stakeholders, supporting academic and pre-employment curricula that reflects real life for students in DJJ programs, and utilizing

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resources to support educational initiatives. The Florida Office of Education focuses on: 1) developing and implementing accountability measures to be sure DJJ youth attain measurable academic improvement and learn a career skill for employability following release from department supervision; 2) increasing opportunities for earning credentials recognized by industries and valued by youth in residential programs; 3) establishing collaboration of youth and families and multiple agencies (e.g., contracted education program personnel, district school boards, the Florida Department of Education [FDOE], the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Career Source Florida, regional workforce boards, the Florida Department of Children and Families, and the Florida Youth Foundation) in the delivery of education services for at-risk youth. The Florida Legislature stipulates that FDOE and DJJ serve as the points of contact for resolving issues not addressed by district school boards and to provide each department's participation in the four primary areas (NOTE: there are multiple programs for each area; just a few are mentioned here): Training for DJJ staff and educators (objective is to improve low-performing DJJ education programs as needed in each district); Academic performance (to provide continuity of education programming for students in juvenile detention centers, prevention, day treatment programs, and residential commitment settings; uses a FL "common assessment" for math and reading to determine academic gains from entry to exit of the DJJ program). Data from 2020-21 show a 59% increase in math achievement and a 63% increase for reading achievement, on Common Assessment scores from entry to exit.

The FDJJ Office of Education provides three types of programming for vocational education: 1. Programs that teach personal accountability skills and behaviors for students in all age groups and ability levels, and that lead to work habits that help maintain employment and living standards. 2. Program that includes Type 1 content (above) and an orientation to the broad scope of career choices, based upon personal abilities, aptitudes, and interests to explore/gain knowledge of occupational options and the level of effort required to achieve them. 3. Programs that include Type 1 content and the competencies or prerequisites needed for entry into a specific occupation; this type offers certificate programs in numerous areas (e.g., culinary arts, carpentry, welding, building tech, etc.). During 2021-22, 135 students participated and 129 of them earned Pre-Apprentice Certificate training certificates. Of the 135 students who participated, 74 (55%) were placed in a job, enlisted in the military, or continued their education in school.

Finally, the FDJJ offers an enrichment program for the arts in collaboration with Arts4all (affiliated with University of South Florida), and a Brain Bowl for students in residential commitment, prevention, and day treatment programs. The Brain Bowl is an academic competition for which students work as a team to prepare for five rounds of questioning for school subjects (i.e., math, ELA, science, social studies), and some questions on music, movies, sports, and other fun topics. Students compete to earn points and win the title, "DJJ Brain Bowl winners."

### ***Other Interventions to Reduce DMC***

The FDJJ Office of Prevention Services offers voluntary prevention, intervention, and treatment service programs for youth throughout the state of Florida. These services are designed to address specific needs and provide interventions for youth and their families to prevent

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juvenile crime and protect public safety. Other interventions funded by the FDJJ Office of Prevention Services include Prodigy Programs, SNAP Services, Afterschool Programs, CINS/FINS Non-Residential Services, and Female Diversion Programs. The average 12-month recidivism rate across programs was 3% with the highest rate occurring in the CINS/FINS shelters (10%) and the lowest rates (0-3%) found in Prodigy Programs (0%), SNAP Services (0%), Afterschool Programs (1%), CINS/FINS Non-Residential Services (2%), and Female Diversion Programs (3%) (FDJJ, 2023c). The FDJJ has also implemented comprehensive services for youth in efforts to improve public safety, reduce restrictive out-of-home placements, reduce overcrowding in juvenile facilities, reduce the cost burden to the public, and provide alternatives to secure detention placements (National Juvenile Justice Report, 2014).

### *Tools to Guide Dispositions for Key Decision-making Points*

Structured tools or protocols have been implemented with the goal of reducing the overrepresentation of youth of color in the DJJ by collecting data regularly and using it to assess and guide decision-making (National Juvenile Justice Report, 2014). These assessments are categorized into three models. The statewide uniform assessment requires or encourages the use of a single risk assessment tool statewide. The layered/regional assessment is implemented when states are unable to achieve statewide implementation with a single tool due to regional differences or layered probation (state and local). For example, as already mentioned, the RRI and Detention Risk Assessment were implemented by the FDJJ to comply with the OJJDP requirements for measuring and minimizing DMC disparities. Finally, the locally administered assessment is implemented when states lack a requirement to implement a risk assessment tool, allowing local policy to govern the use of such tools (National Juvenile Justice Report, 2014, p. 90). Most states have implemented a single risk/needs assessment tool statewide to measure the risk of reoffending and the criminogenic needs of youth (Puzzanchera et al., 2022). Other tools have been developed to measure variables at all phases of youth interaction with the justice system for program evaluation or research purposes.

Current FDJJ assessment tools (FDJJ, 2021) include the Prevention Assessment Tool or PAT, Community Assessment Tool or CAT, and the Residential Assessment for Youth or RAY; these assessments help to determine risk of reoffending, develop an intervention plan, improve protective factors, and monitor progress. Case planning tools include the Youth Empowered Success Plan and the Residential Performance Plan. These assessment tools inform the FDJJ about the needs of youth across the state for appropriate funding and program offerings and allow for a common language and information sharing across the Department, from intake to aftercare and release. Also in Florida, the Disposition Matrix was implemented in 2013 as a structured decision-making tool, used by juvenile probation officers to make disposition recommendations to the court. FDJJ data from FYs 2012-13 and 2014-15 were analyzed for disposition/placement decisions using the Disposition Matrix to determine recidivism based on the first disposition decision of a given arrest (Meldrum, 2017). The tool groups all dispositions into four categories: Below Guidelines (less restrictive than the Disposition Matrix would suggest); Optimum (least restrictive option suggested that has not been attempted previously with the youth); Appropriate (within the suggested range of the Disposition Matrix score, but not

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optimum); and Above Guidelines (more restrictive than the DM would recommend). Of the dispositions examined in Meldrum's study, 97% fell within the guidelines of the Disposition Matrix; however, youth who scored higher on the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT<sup>21</sup>) were less likely to receive a disposition within the guidelines of the Matrix. Male youth were less likely than female youth to receive a disposition within the guidelines of the Matrix. Black youth were more likely than White youth to receive a disposition above the guidelines of the Matrix. Youth in the North region of the state were more likely to receive a disposition above the guidelines of the Matrix. A conservative estimate is that, across all youth in the state, receiving a disposition that is above the guidelines of the Disposition Matrix increases the likelihood of recidivism by at least 75%. The data indicate this might be significantly higher for some subgroups of youth, particularly Black youth. No firm conclusion can be reached regarding the impact of receiving a disposition below guidelines on the likelihood of recidivism, as only 0.31% of all dispositions were below the guidelines of the Disposition Matrix. This strongly suggests that the implementation of the Disposition Matrix beginning in 2013 has influenced decision-makers (i.e., probation officers, prosecutors, judges) in the process of assigning dispositions to youth, resulting in a greater percent of dispositions that meet the recommended service needs of youth across the state (Meldrum, 2017).

The kinship care model used a Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI), conducted by (re)trained culturally competent case workers to recognize the impact of DMC. Initially the RAI assessed the current allegation with the youth's history of delinquency and seriousness of offence. A follow-up assessment (14 days from referral to the DJJ) included (available and willing) extended family members' input, while providing them with kinship cared program expectations, procedures and sanctions. A resulting risk score and family circumstances determined whether youth were placed with his/her kinship group in the program or if a different residential model was used.

Hay and colleagues (2020) also used the Residential Positive Achievement Change Tool (RPACT; since revised and renamed the Residential Assessment of Youth or RAY) to measure protective factors that helped to prevent residential youth from reoffending. Data from the FDJJ were used to identify factors that protected residential youth from reoffending. Prosocial peers, Employment-vocational commitment, School commitment, Current social skills, and Prosocial attitudes were found to be the most protective factors. Specifically, the authors suggested additional investment in the following to improve protective factors for residential youth: cognitive behavioral therapies (CBT) that target these factors, school, employment, and vocational services that youth receive in residential placements, and understanding and attending to the peer dynamics inside of facilities. Also, priority should be given to better understand this study's negligible effects of mental health services and family support along with the implications this has for family-focused interventions. Hays and colleagues end the report stating that the examination of these factors during the residential stay provides a useful but incomplete understanding of the link between protective factors and reoffending. As research shows reentry

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<sup>21</sup> The PACT was the risk assessment tool used by the FDJJ at the time of Meldrum's study; this has been replaced by the PAT, the CAT, and the RAY (as detailed in this section).

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from a residential placement can result in disconnection and critical complications with respect to education, interpersonal relationships, social support, and substance use, the authors call for further studies to understand how protective factor improvements that begin during residential placements are maintained – or not – in the period after release. These insights could beneficially shape FDJJ’s understanding of different protective factors and how to reinforce more effective protective factor improvements during the residential stay.

Tools to guide decision-making and dispositions hold promise for reducing DMC and resulting DJJ disparities; however, as pointed out by Padgaonkar and colleagues (2020), cultural and racial/ethnic biases by system actors is one of the root causes of DMC. Thus, addressing these biases via cultural sensitivity and other training programs for police and DJJ personnel is necessary in order for the tools to reach their full potential.

### ***Community Interventions, Resource Inequality, and DMC***

Much of the literature on reducing DMC and youth arrests focuses on factors related to the Juvenile Justice System, and rightfully so. However, DMC is a nuanced, multifaced, and complex phenomenon that is inextricably linked to larger racial and ethnic disparities that exist well before youth come into contact with law enforcement. Racial and ethnic disparities for youth exist in the child welfare system, foster care system, school readiness, access to quality early childhood education, school performance, school suspensions, and expulsions (HHS, 2021; Knott & Giwa, 2012; Morris & Perry, 2016). Furthermore, youth of color are more likely to live in single-parent families, in poverty, and in disadvantaged communities with lower performing schools, lower quality housing, and higher crime rates (Hirshfield, 2018; Moak et al., 2012; National Research Council, 2013). Unfortunately, Miami-Dade County is no exception in this regard. According to a report (2019) released by Florida International University (FIU), Miami-Dade has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest level of income inequality in the United States, second only to Manhattan, New York. Nearly 1 of every 5 children in Miami-Dade lives in poverty (19.3%), and poverty is more concentrated in Black and Hispanic communities. The poverty rate for Black residents in Miami-Dade (23.8%) is nearly two-and-a-half times higher than the poverty rate for White residents (9.2%). And the poverty rate for Hispanic households (17.8%) is nearly twice the rate compared to White residents. Although casual mechanisms are too complex to infer, these poverty trends are consistent with the trends observed for youth arrests over the last 13 years. As part of their report (2013) on juvenile justice reforms, the National Research Council concluded that addressing these larger complex social inequities has to be a part of any long-term solution. Therefore, any interventions or investments focused on increasing upward social mobility, educational and vocational opportunities, and quality of life (e.g., housing, access to healthcare) are likely to have an indirect effect on decreasing youth involvement with the juvenile justice system.

### ***Who benefits?***

Ultimately, all benefit from diversion programs and the reduction of DMC, especially youth of color and their families. The civil citation process greatly reduces case processing and paperwork time for law enforcement, the courts, and juvenile justice personnel, and is more cost-

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effective than formally processing a youth in the court and juvenile justice (FDJJ, 2023a). The civil citation benefits youth by offering them an opportunity to receive sanctions, treatment, and to make reparations without a delinquency record that could interrupt future educational, work, and military service opportunities. Kinship care has also proven to be cost effective and promote cultural responsiveness. For example, Duncan (2019) states that a program similar to the kinship care model implemented in Multnomah County, Oregon, lowered the daily detention population by 65%. This included a reduction in minority youth rates from 70 youth before the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) to 16 youth in 2003. By reducing detention, over \$12 million was reallocated to other programs. Reducing disparities in the juvenile justice system would reduce costs so that tax dollars can be reallocated to other programs that could positively impact youth and families rather than disrupting future opportunities.

### Conclusions

Since DMC is rooted in complex issues, such as the racialization of the DJJ system, criminalization of youth behaviors, and biases of system actors, multidimensional solutions are required to reduce DMC (OJJDP, 2018). Multiple oppressive systems in our society drive and lead to inequities that impact youth of color and their families. Overall, the literature points to the importance of focusing on implementing systems-level change to eliminate root causes of disparities over addressing the symptoms of inequalities within the DJJ. Explicit recommendations include:

- Increasing safe and affordable housing options for families with lower socioeconomic status to build stronger families and communities by providing access to more and better health care, educational, and career opportunities.
- Shifting the mindset and reducing biases of system actors, or closely monitoring of system actors' behavioral outcomes, for decreasing the overall disparities in the DJJ system. The full potential of tools or protocols to equitably guide decision-making and ultimately reduce disparities will not be realized without a change in system actors' perceptions of Black and Latinx youth and communities. Police self-monitoring their behaviors and avoiding Black and/or Latinx youth in the community when public safety is not at risk could lower the high rates of youth and law enforcement contact, resulting in fewer referrals to the DJJ.
- Overhauling or eliminating the current school policing model as it has resulted in a greater number of arrests for Black and Latinx youth in school for offenses that were typically handled by teachers and/or administrators before SROs were housed in schools.
- Supporting and involving the family and community throughout the DJJ process, from initial contact to aftercare, is important for family and community voices to drive systems change.
- Collaborating and partnering among community-based organizations, the DJJ, and law enforcement is necessary to carry out successful diversion and reform-based interventions.

### **Appendices**

#### **Appendix A:**

##### **Literature Review Method**

A search of reports and articles published between 2010-2022 was conducted to identify relevant sources with information and findings pertaining to youth contact, arrests, and interventions in the Juvenile Justice System. In all, 20 sources were reviewed and contributed to findings at the national level and 10 sources, at the state or local level. The research team read each source and utilized grounded theory and constant comparison methods (Charmaz, 2006) to systematically analyze the literature. While reading the sources, the team noted specific information or quotes that addressed the research questions to develop broad, thematic open codes, refining these as quotes were added from multiple sources. Upon review and consensus of the quotes grouped as thematic codes, the team further analyzed the quotes to identify patterns within the themes and develop axial codes, grouping them into subcategories such as, “recidivism” and “more work to be done” to describe the specific topic and/or nature of the quotes. Finally, selective coding was used to relate the axial codes to each other to outline and organize the findings for the literature review.



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