

8.1 Violent and Assaultive Crimes

8.1.1 Juvenile Justice

Every year, the Kalamazoo County 9th Judicial Circuit Court's Juvenile Management Information System (JUMIS) releases an annual referrals report. Juvenile referrals to the Kalamazoo County Family Court for delinquency, status offenses and neglect/abuse are reported by month, census tract and specific charge category. Referrals are typically made by police departments, schools, court caseworkers and the Department of Human Services (formerly FIA). While total annual referrals may be a useful macroscopic indicator of juvenile risk, the distinctions between delinquent and status offenses and violent/assaultive and non-assaultive crimes are important to a clearer understanding of the local trends in juvenile justice.

Delinquent offenses are those juvenile crimes for which an adult would be tried (*e.g.* homicide, robbery, arson). Status offenses, on the other hand, are only considered infractions by virtue of one's juvenile status (*e.g.* breaking curfew laws, truancy, underage drinking). Violent and assaultive crimes committed by juveniles are delinquent offenses.

According to FBI standards, violent crimes are strictly defined as those aggressive acts causing serious harm to individuals and include aggravated assault, rape, robbery, and homicide. Murder, or non-negligent homicide, is the unlawful premeditated killing of a human being. Forcible rape is the carnal knowledge of a person, forcibly and/or against that person's will. Robbery, armed or unarmed, is the crime of seizing property through violence or intimidation. Aggravated assault involves attack with a weapon, though no injury is required. It also involves attack without a weapon resulting either in serious injury or in any injury requiring two or more days of hospitalization. In Michigan, juvenile crimes are offenses committed by youths aged 16 and under.

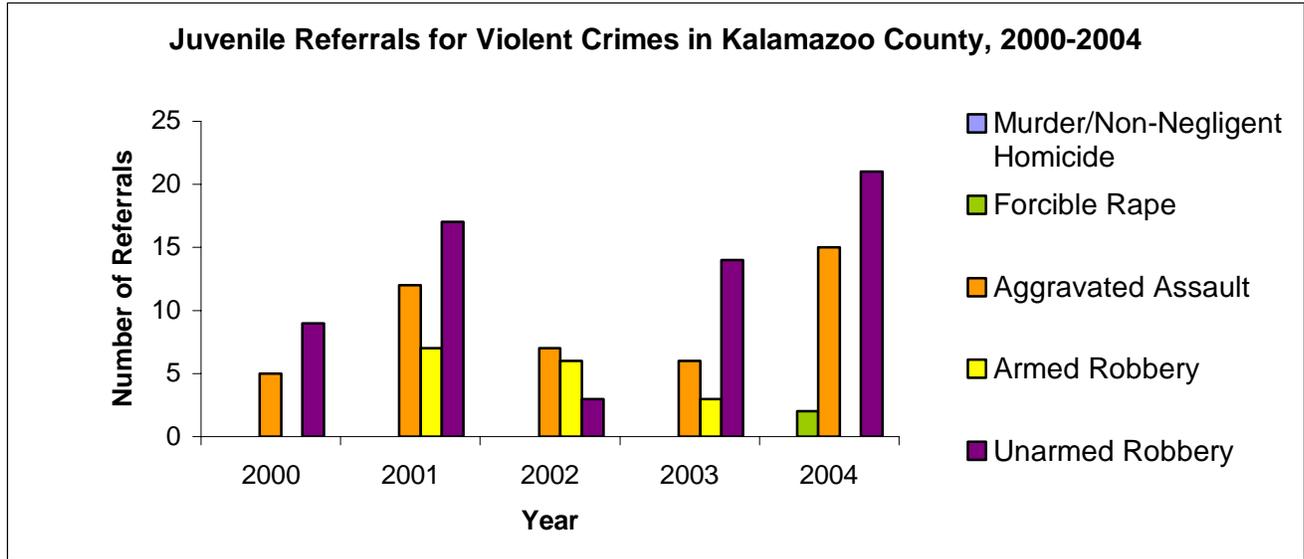
By comparison, assaultive crimes are more broadly and subjectively defined. In general, assaultive crimes indicate that an unlawful and credible threat, by word or act, to do violence to another person has been made. From 2000-2004, violent crimes were consistently a very small percentage of the assaultive crimes committed by juveniles in Kalamazoo County. From 2000-2004, assault and battery and domestic violence comprised the overwhelming majority of selected assaultive crimes, while aggravated assault and robbery, the most prevalent of violent crimes, were consistently minor categories. Fluctuations in total assaultive crimes over the past four years are explained primarily by fluctuations in the assault and battery trend line. Please note that the list of selected assaultive crimes is by no means exhaustive.

It would be difficult to compare the local JUMIS data directly with juvenile offenses for other counties, let alone with state and national statistics. Juvenile offenses at the state and national levels are published in the Uniform Crime Report, which reports on considerably fewer crime categories than JUMIS. While local police departments are mandated by a public act¹ to report local crime

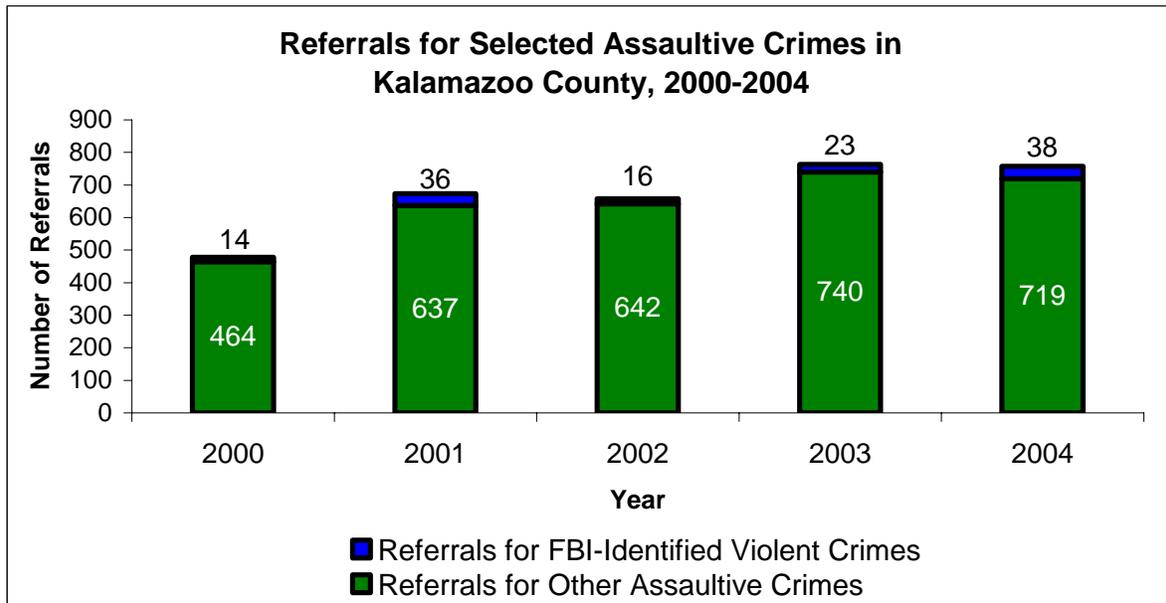
¹ Public Act 319 of 1968 states: "The police department of each city or village . . . once each month . . . shall forward to the department of state police a crime report [that] shall contain the number and nature of offenses committed."

statistics to the state, no penalty exists for a failure to report, rendering the reporting of crime statistics to the state, in effect, voluntary.

Finally, it is important to note that the JUMIS data do not indicate the outcome or disposition (detention, probation, diversion or dismissal) of each case by crime category.

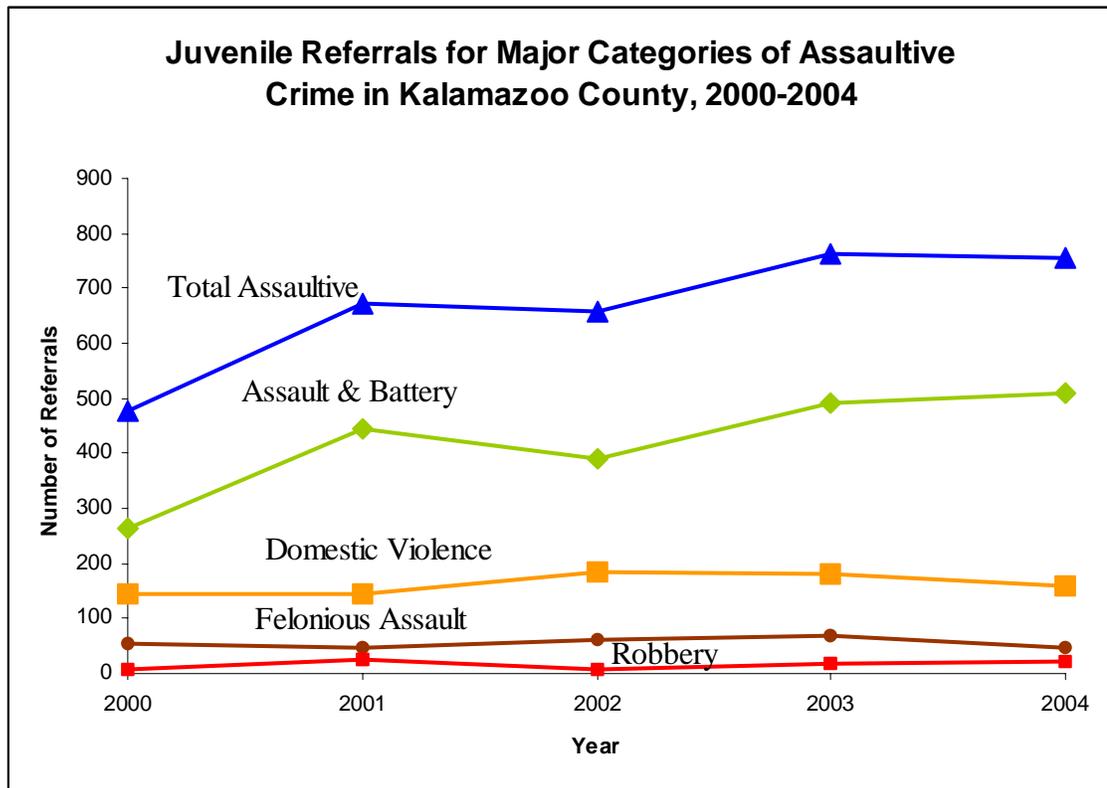


Source: Kalamazoo County 9th Judicial Circuit Juvenile Management Information System Annual Referrals Reports, 2000-2004.



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Number of Juvenile Referrals for Selected Assaultive Crimes in Kalamazoo County, 2000-2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Violent Crimes					
Murder/Non-Negligent Homicide	0	0	0	0	0
Forcible Rape	0	0	0	0	2
Aggravated Assault	5	12	7	6	15
Armed Robbery	0	7	6	3	0
Unarmed Robbery	9	17	3	14	21
Total Violent Crimes	14	36	16	23	38
Other Assaultive Crimes					
Felonious Assault	54	46	63	70	48
Domestic Violence	144	145	186	179	160
Assault and Battery	263	444	391	490	509
Manslaughter	0	0	0	0	1
Assault with Intent to Rob	3	1	2	1	1
Assault with Intent to Commit Criminal Sexual Conduct	0	1	0	0	0
Total Other Assaultive Crimes	464	637	642	740	719
Total Assaultive Crimes	478	673	658	763	757

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