



DEPARTMENT OF
JUVENILE SERVICES

Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor

Wes Moore
Governor

217 East Redwood Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Vincent Schiraldi
Secretary

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CONTACT: Eric Solomon
DJS Communications Director
(O) 410-230-3164 (C) 443-492-9781

Maryland Department of Juvenile Services Releases Research Brief on Youth Crime in Maryland

Findings show that while youth crime is a small proportion of overall crime and has declined in recent years, the number of youth involved in gun violence has increased significantly

Baltimore, Maryland – The Maryland Department of Juvenile Services today released a comprehensive research brief concerning recent trends in juvenile crime in Maryland. The department produced the brief as part of a comprehensive review of the agency, providing context to inform policy and programmatic discussions that will help address the challenges of gun crime facing Maryland today.

Findings show that most categories of youth crime—including violent crime—are below pre-pandemic levels and have generally been declining for more than a decade. Findings also show that the proportion of crime that is committed by youth is much smaller in comparison to crime committed by adults, overall. And while youth crime has primarily declined in recent years, violent gun crime committed *against* young people—especially in Baltimore City—has increased significantly, as has the number of youth under care with the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services who are victimized by gun violence.

“Under the leadership of Governor Wes Moore, the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services is focused on promoting accountability, keeping the young people in our care safe, and preventing them from reoffending,” **said Maryland Department of Juvenile Services’ Secretary Vincent Schiraldi.** “Using a data-informed approach, we are moving in partnership with law enforcement, community-based organizations, parents, caregivers, victims, and village elders to stem the tide of violence and create more opportunity for youth across Maryland.”

Other findings in the brief include:

- An increase in overall juvenile crime in Maryland over the last two years since its pandemic low, though complaints are still below pre-pandemic levels and down sharply—by over 50%—over the past decade.
- The proportion of juvenile violent crime complaints has not changed significantly over the past decade.
- The share of crime and violent crime in Maryland committed by juveniles is low and decreasing, similar to national rates and historical trends within Maryland.
- Murder and attempted murder arrests for juveniles in Baltimore City have consistently increased over the past five years, while juvenile arrests for murder across the state fluctuated somewhat through 2021.
- The number of youth who are victims of violent crimes has increased significantly, with non-fatal shooting of young people quadrupling statewide over the past decade.
- Non-fatal shootings of youth in Baltimore City have continued to rise over the past decade.



- Youth of color are overrepresented in Maryland’s juvenile justice system as incarcerated youth and victims compared to rates in Maryland’s overall youth population.
- Youth of color are also underrepresented in community-based rehabilitation options such as being placed on probation or diversion.
- According to 2021 data from the [Maryland State Police](#), 92.6 percent of homicide arrests and 92.9 percent of all arrests in Maryland are of adults while 7.4 percent of homicide arrests and 7.1 percent of overall arrests are of juveniles.

To help address the challenges represented in the brief, the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services has conducted a thorough review of our agency and taken the following action:

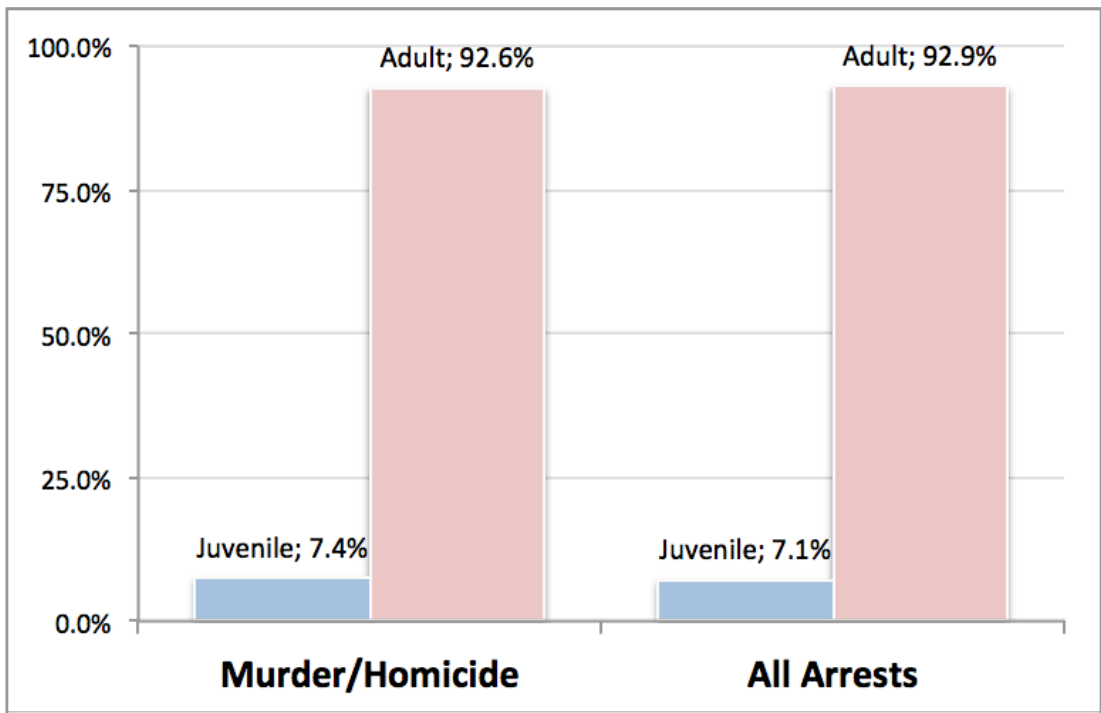
- Participated in Governor Wes Moore’s *Safe Summer* initiative, which provided \$5 million to 12 Maryland counties, particularly focusing on counties with high gun violence.
- Launched *The Thrive Academy* focusing wraparound services on youth in Baltimore City and County who are at highest risk of gun violence.
- Initiated Youth Engagement and Safety Strategies Improvement Teams with prosecutors, law enforcement, community leaders, victims, and family members in Baltimore City and County to advise on best approaches to preventing gun involvement by youth in our care in their communities.
- Targeted resources with the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services and Department of Human Services as part of Governor Moore’s “all of government” approach to reducing crime and improving communities.
- Reduced idle time and launched evidence-based programming for youth in department facilities, including Dialectical Behavioral Therapy and Trauma-informed care which have been shown to improve outcomes for youth in custody.
- Cut the vacancy rate among front line staff in department facilities by more than half.
- Continue to support legislation to hold young people accountable in the juvenile justice system, where they are mostly likely to thrive.

For more information and to [view the complete research brief](#), visit the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services website at djs.maryland.gov.

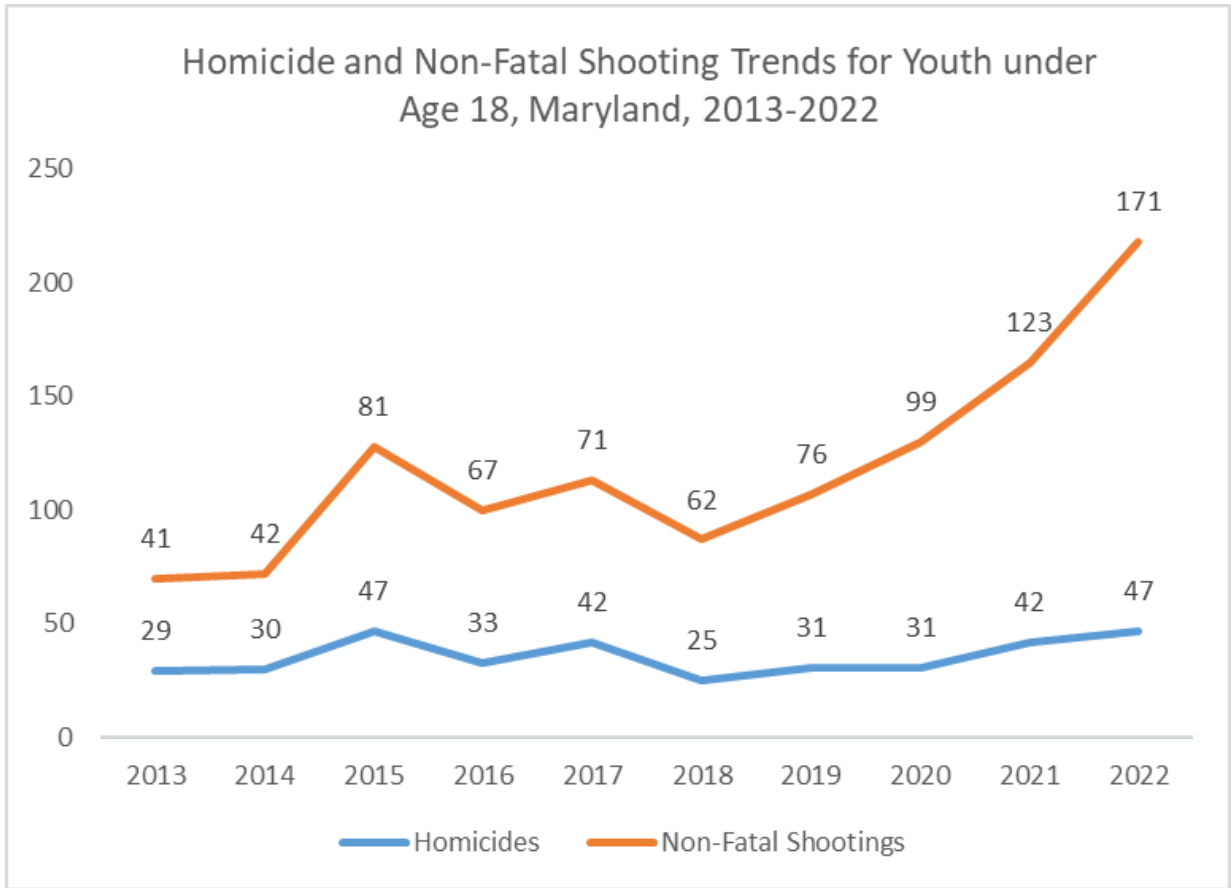
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2021 Maryland Arrests by Crime and Age

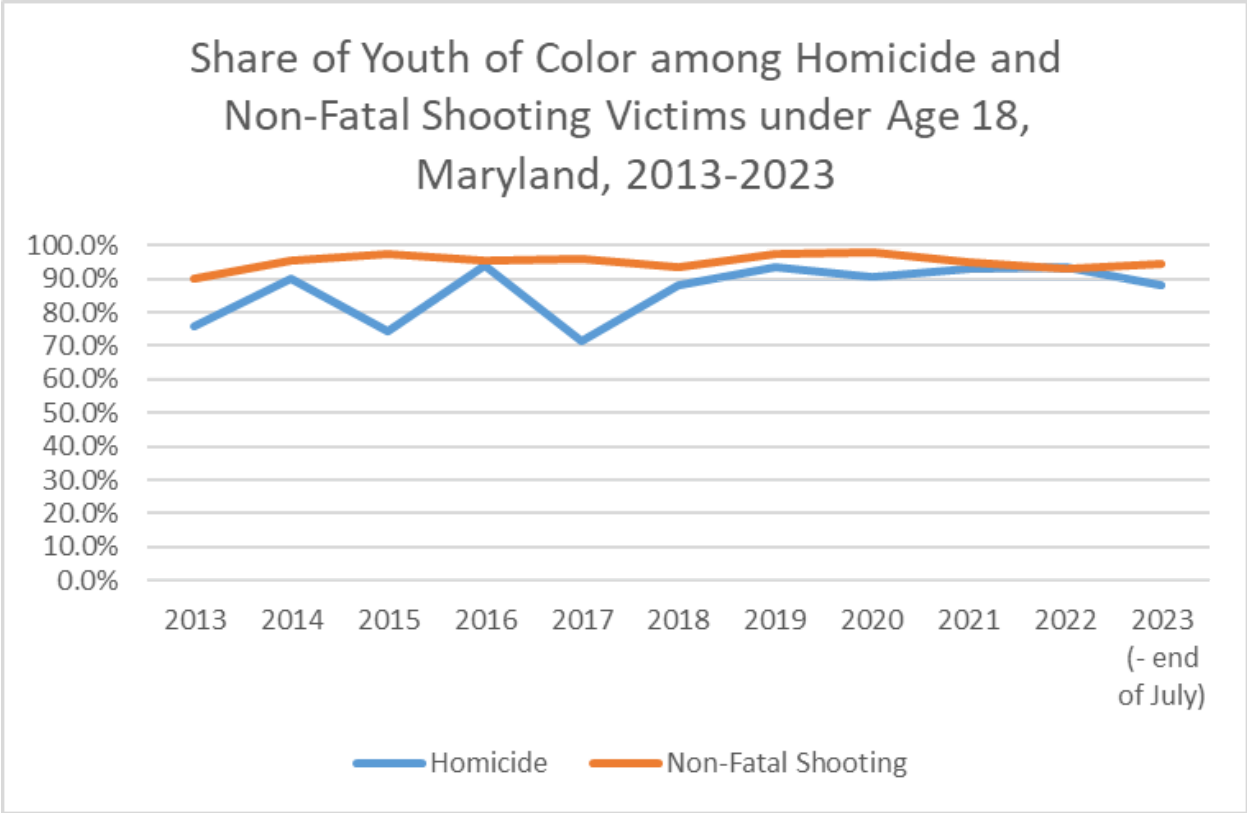
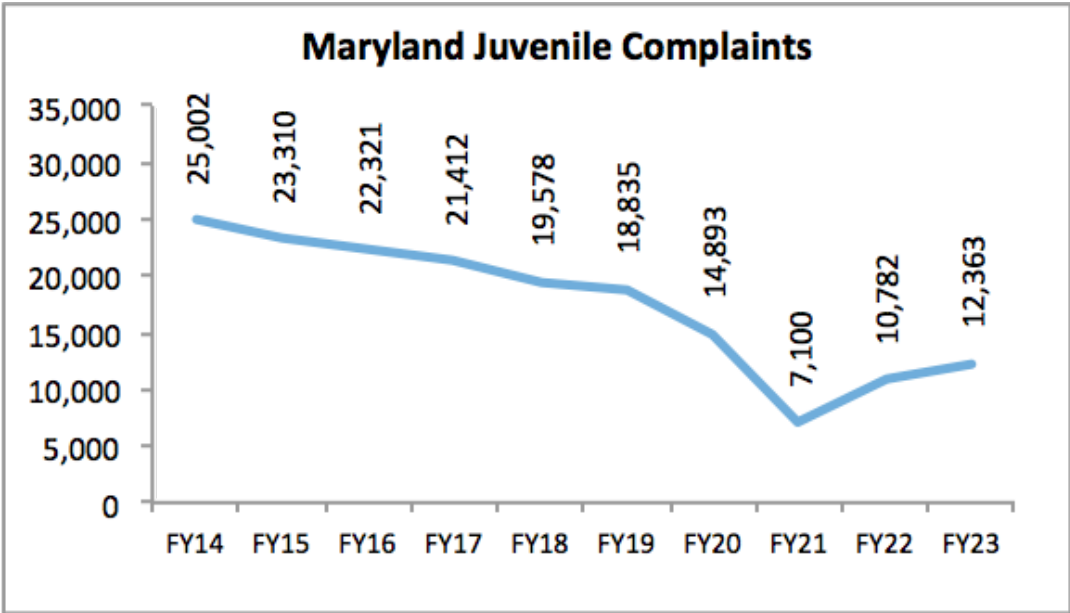


Homicide and Non-Fatal Shooting Trends for Youth under Age 18, Maryland, 2013-2022



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