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Town and Gown Collaboration: An Example of University Support for the Development of a Local Delinquency Prevention Plan

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Kentucky Justice & Safety Research Bulletin

College of Justice & Safety "A Program of Distinction"

Abstract

This bulletin describes the role that the College of Justice and Safety at Eastern Kentucky University has played in supporting local efforts to develop a community delinquency prevention plan. Specifically, it describes the role that the college has played in the development of a local prevention plan and presents the preliminary results of this effort. The bulletin concludes by describing the potential benefits to the community that are associated with college support for local prevention planning.

The author would like to thank Richard Givan, Professor, Department of Criminal Justice and Police Studies, EKV, for helpful comments on an earlier draft of this bulletin.

Town and Gown Collaboration

An Example of University Support for the Development of a Local Delinquency Prevention Plan

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INTRODUCTION

The relationship between universities and the communities in which they reside is not always cordial. Indeed, there have often been complaints that universities are insular institutions that are disconnected from the community and uninterested in the problems that affect those outside the “ivory towers.” In contrast, there are good examples of universities that have made significant contributions to efforts to improve the quality of community life. This article describes the role that the College of Justice and Safety at Eastern Kentucky University has played in supporting local efforts to develop a community delinquency prevention plan. Specifically, it describes the role that the college has played in the development of a local prevention plan and presents the preliminary results of this effort. The article concludes by describing the benefits to the community that are possible as a result of these efforts.

COLLEGE SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A LOCAL DELINQUENCY PREVENTION PLAN

College of Justice and Safety support for local delinquency prevention planning efforts has come in both direct and indirect forms. One obvious form of direct support has been funding for the development of a data clearinghouse containing information on juvenile arrests, self-report delinquency, drug use, and other data needed to understand arrest trends and factors related to arrests such as child and family economic conditions, family relationships, community problems, child health, attachment to school, school safety, and data on the size and make-up of the youth population. Funding for the database project, which began in the Spring of 2007, was made possible through a Justice and Safety Technical Assistance Advisory Committee (JSTAC) grant. JSTAC serves as a funding source for small grants to faculty and is designed to provide assistance to local communities.

A second direct form of support by the college was financial and planning assistance for the First Annual Community Forum on Delinquency in Madison County presented by the Madison County Delinquency Prevention Council (MCDPC) and co-sponsored by the City of Richmond and the College of Justice and Safety.(1) By providing staff with expertise in event planning and staging and by providing funding for the facilities, advertising, and a forum luncheon, the College made a significant contribution to this event which attracted approximately 60 persons who interacted with panelists who gave presentations on child health, abuse/neglect, general school problems, substance use/abuse, Family Resource Centers, the alternative school, law enforcement, and juvenile court. Together, data collected via the clearinghouse and the Forum are needed by community planners who are attempting to identify local problems and trends in order to establish priorities and develop and implement interventions intended to address local problems.

College of Justice and Safety support for the development of the Data Clearinghouse and the Community Forum represent obvious examples of activities that have supported delinquency prevention planning in Madison County. However, college support for several earlier projects laid the groundwork for the Data Clearinghouse and the Forum. For example, in 1989, a JSC grant through the college made possible a pilot study focusing on school safety and delinquency at Daniel Boone Elementary School. (2) This survey not only provided useful information about youths' attitudes and behaviors within that school, but it served as an important test of the measures and survey administration procedures that were employed. In addition, it made

1. Eastern Kentucky University is located in Richmond, KY. Richmond is the county seat of Madison County.

2. See P. Elrod, D. Donner and N. Wood (1999). *Daniel Boone Elementary Students, Staff, and Parents Safety Assessment Survey Results*. Richmond, KY: Department of Correctional and Juvenile Justice Studies (Evaluation Report).

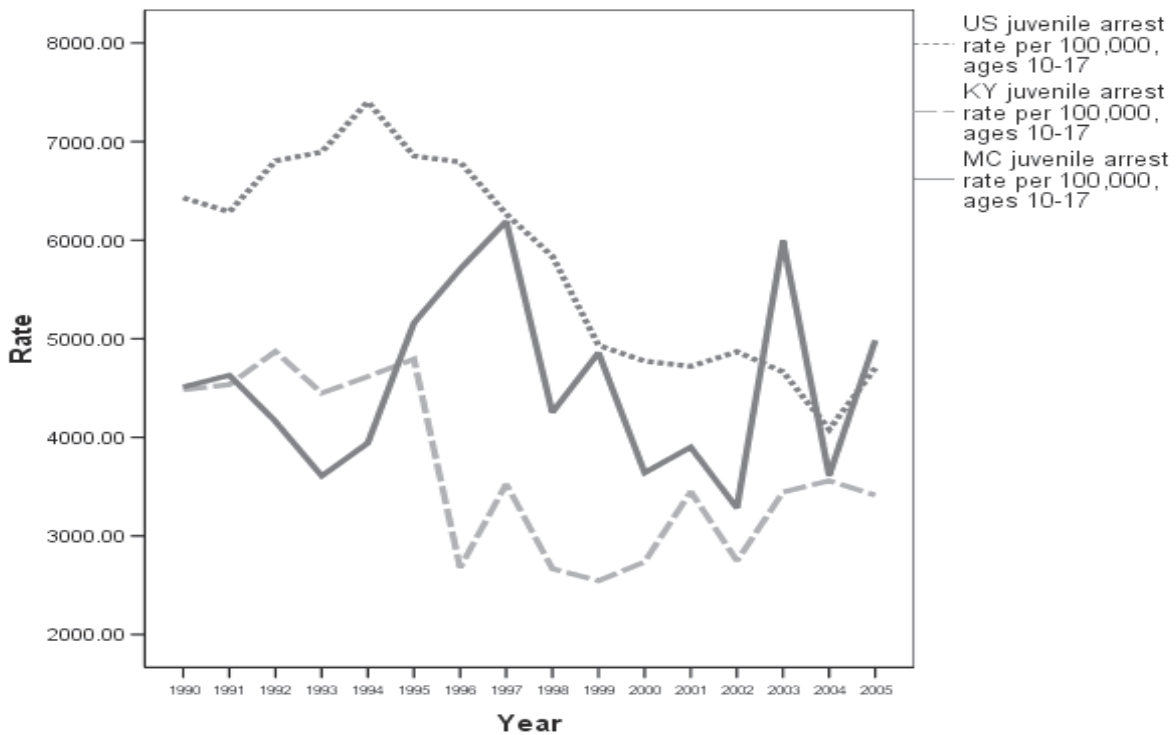
possible the development of a comprehensive survey of school safety conducted in 2001 of over 2,000 youths in grades 3 through 12 in two elementary, one middle, and one high school in the county and served as the first comprehensive school safety survey in Madison County. (3) Further, the 2001 survey served as the basis for a revised school safety survey that was administered in the same five schools in spring 2006. This most recent survey was also made possible by JSTAC funding. Moreover, these school safety studies, along with surveys of youths conducted by two community groups, (4) constitute the best available data on delinquency and risk factors associated with delinquency in the community. Data from these surveys are the only source of self-reported delinquency within the county and represent a key source of information that can be used to understand delinquency and develop responses tailored to child and family needs.

3. See P. Elrod (2001). *Madison County Public Schools: School Climate and Student Safety Survey Report to the Board of Education*. Richmond, KY: Eastern Kentucky University, Department of Correctional and Juvenile Justice Studies (Evaluation Report).

4. Community Partnerships and Communities that Care have conducted regular surveys on youths in Madison County over the past 10 years. These surveys focus on youth behaviors such as drug use and delinquency as well as on factors associated with delinquent behaviors.

DATA ON DELINQUENCY IN MADISON COUNTY: AN EXAMPLE OF SELECTED RESULTS OF COLLEGE OF JUSTICE AND SAFETY SUPPORT FOR LOCAL DELINQUENCY PREVENTION EFFORTS

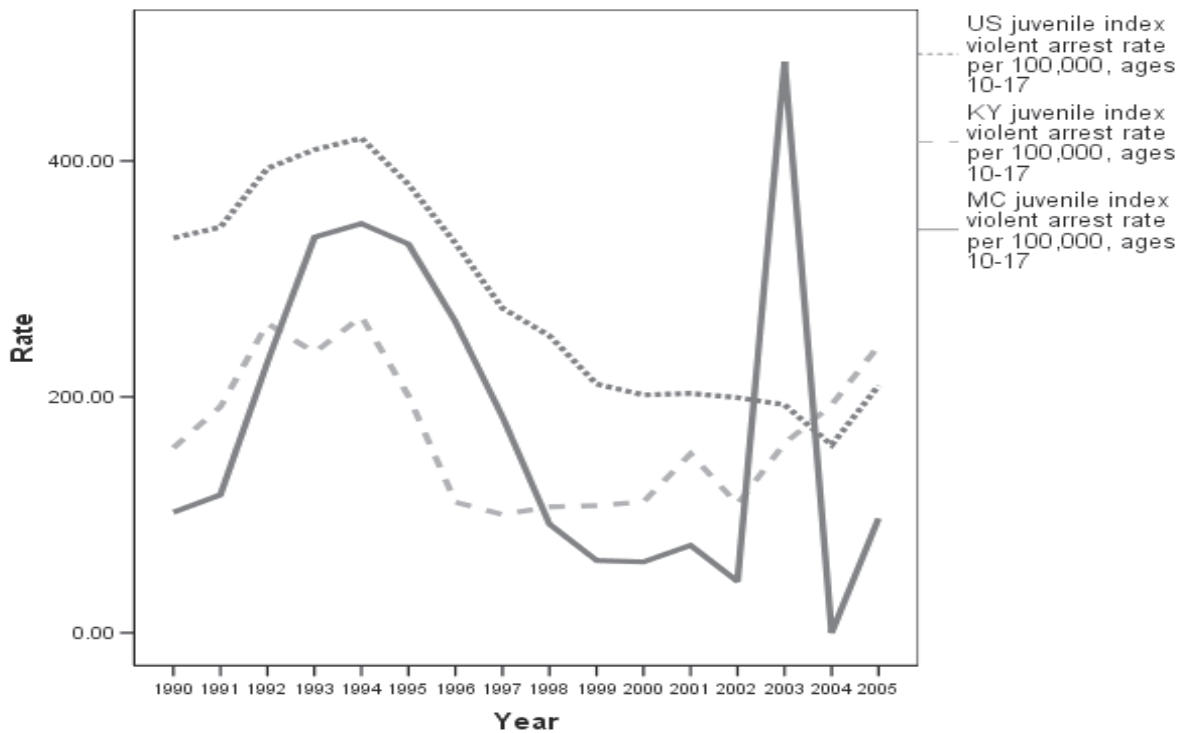
College of Justice and Safety support for the Data Clearinghouse and research on youths in Madison County has provided important data that can be used by the MCDPC and others in efforts to prevent delinquency and enhance the quality of life for youths and families in the community. By examining juvenile arrest trends over a number of years it is possible for local planners to understand trends in delinquency and identify potential problem behaviors that need to be addressed. Moreover, by examining juvenile arrest rates it is possible to compare juvenile arrest trends in Madison County with those in the state and in the nation. As Table 1 indicates, juvenile arrest rates in Madison County have typically been lower than the national rates, although they have equaled the national rates on several occasions and the county rate was higher than the national rate in 2005. However, county juvenile arrest rates have historically been higher than the state rates. Also, there is some indication that, like the state and national rates, county rates have been increasing somewhat in recent years. Additional data will need to be collected to determine if this slight increase represents the beginning of a more sustained trend.

Table 1. Juvenile Arrest Rates, U.S., Kentucky, Madison County, 1990-2005

While an examination of overall arrest rates can help planners understand the big picture of delinquency in the community, it is also important to examine trends in arrests for violent and property offenses and for specific types of offenses, particularly those often committed by youths. This type of examination allows local planners to determine the relative contribution of violent or property offending to the local delinquency problem and to determine which specific types of offenses account for the greatest numbers of arrests in the community.

For example, Tables 2 and 3 display juvenile arrest trends for Index Violent Offenses and Index Property Offenses.(5) As Table 2 indicates, Madison County, with the exception of 2003, has had a relatively low level of arrests for violent offenses.

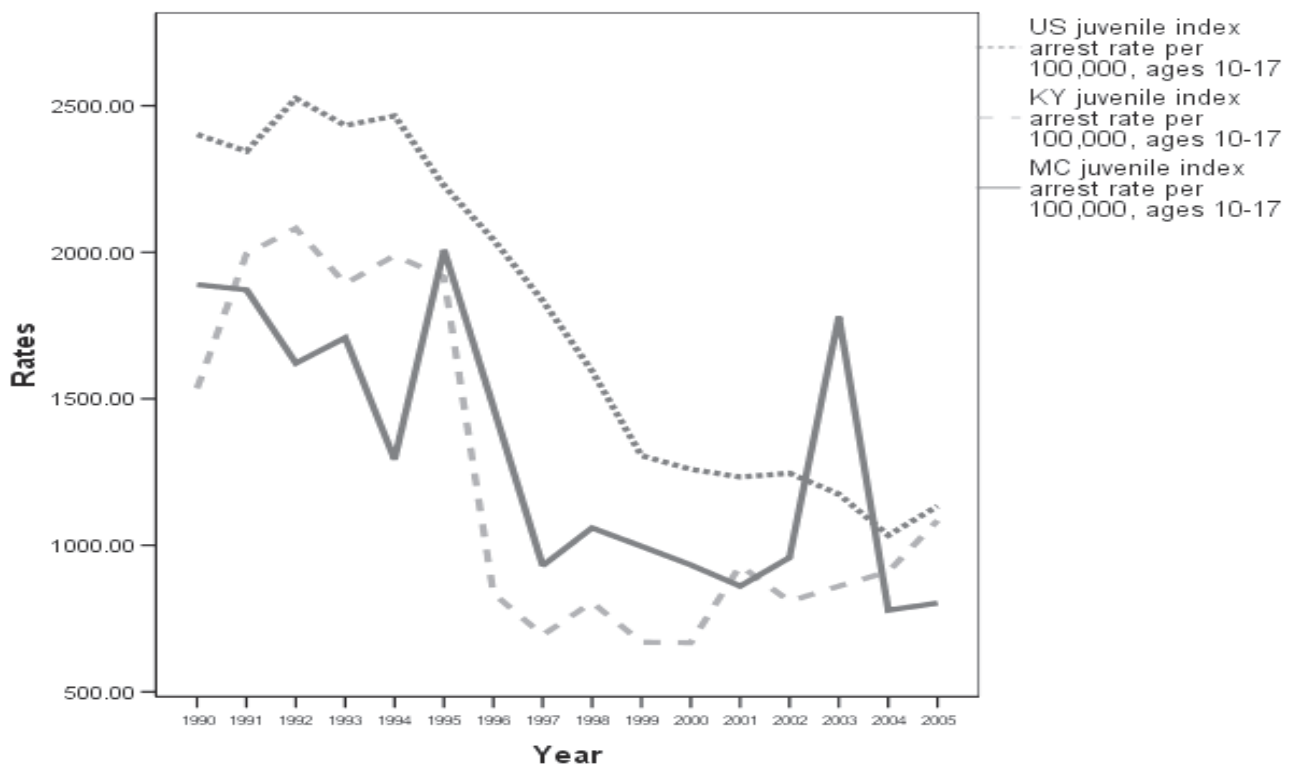
Table 2. Juvenile Index Violent Offense Arrest Rates, U.S. Kentucky, Madison County, 1990-2005



5. Arrest data are grouped into two categories (Index Offenses and Part II Offenses) under the Uniform Crime Reporting Program coordinated by the FBI. The Index Offenses considered to be the more serious and frequently occurring offenses and are further divided into Index Violent Offenses (murder, rape, aggravated assault, and robbery) and Index Property Offenses (larceny-theft, burglary, motor vehicle theft, and arson). Part II Offenses consist of 21 other offenses ranging from simple assault to running away from home.

As Table 3 reveals, however, arrest rates for Index Property Offenses in recent years have often exceeded the state rates, with the exception of 2005, although they have been lower than the national rates. (6)

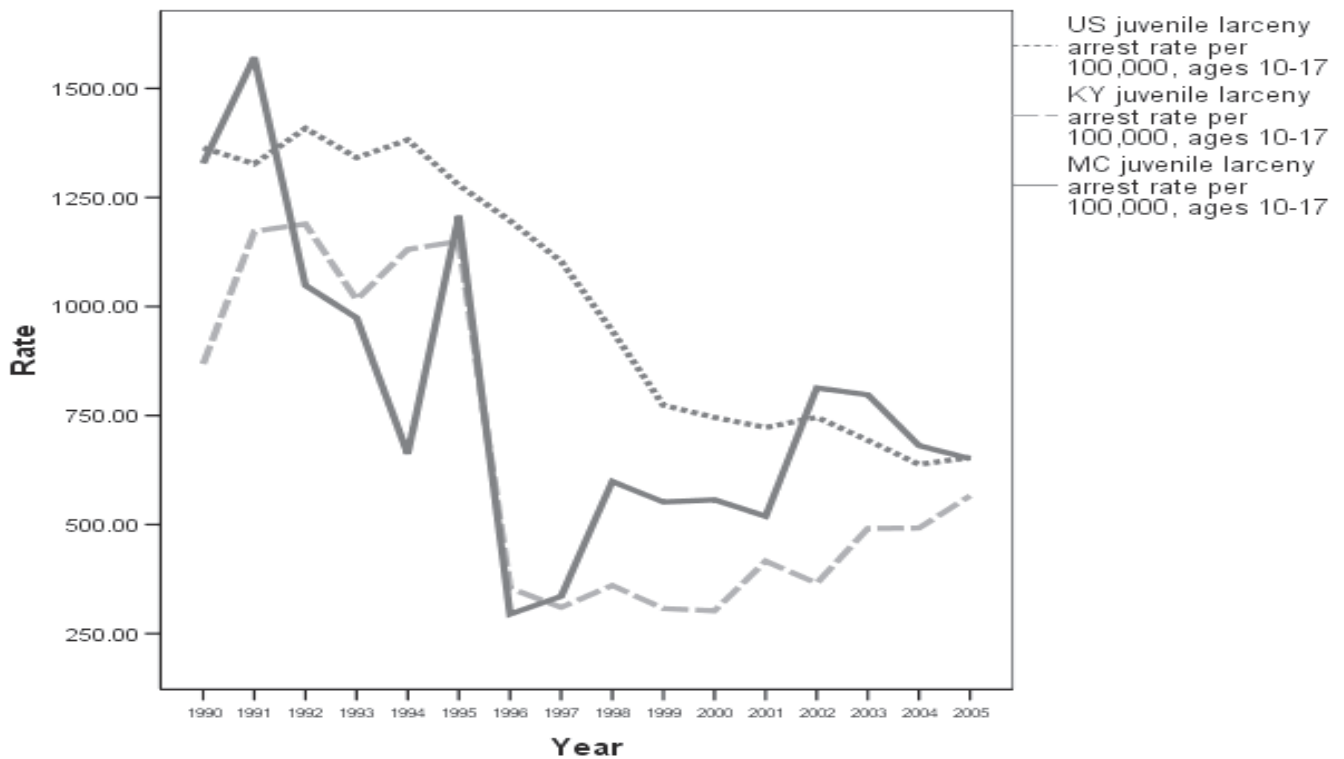
Table 3. Juvenile Index Property Offense Arrest Rates, U.S., Kentucky, Madison County, 1990-2005



6. There was an unusually high number of juvenile arrests in Madison County in 2003. The reasons for this are not clear. However, it does not mark a significant shift in the juvenile arrest trend.

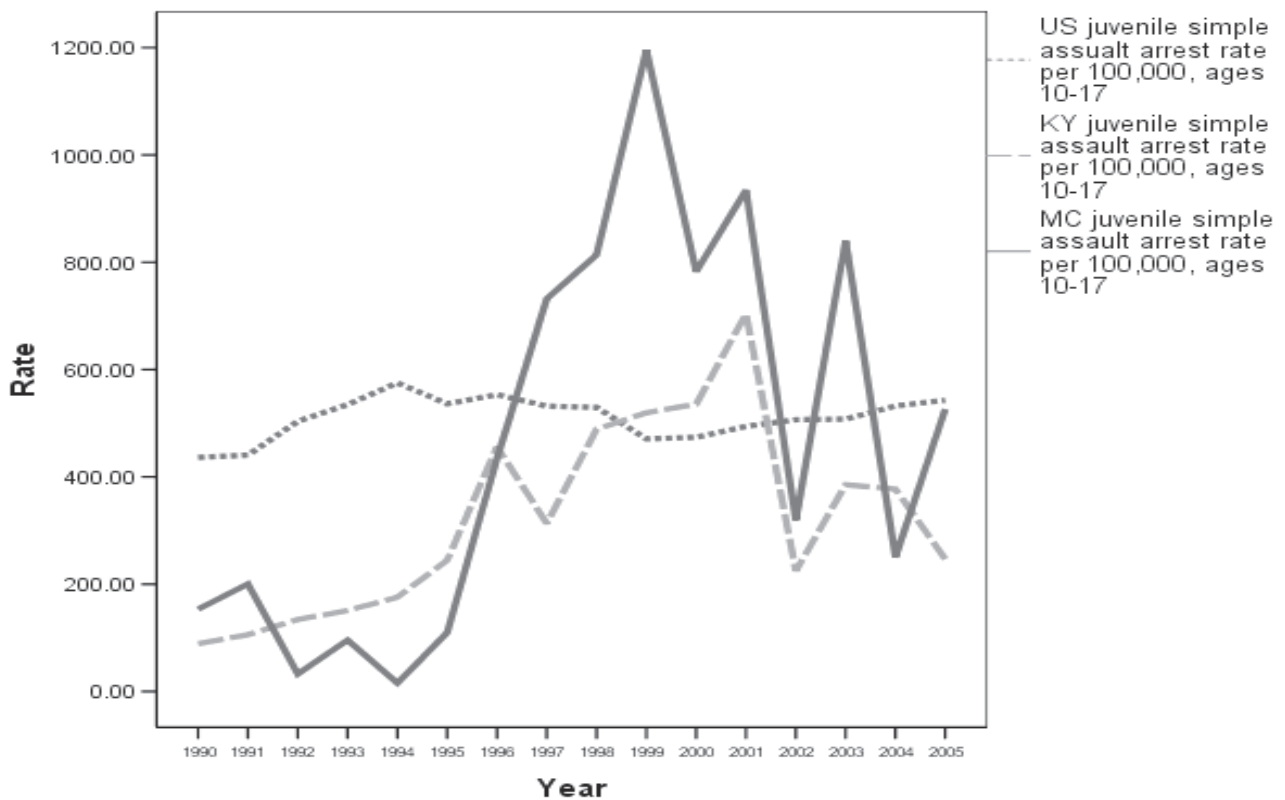
Of the Index Offenses, arrests for larceny-theft stand out. Indeed, the larceny-theft arrest rates for juveniles in Madison County have been higher than the state rates each year since 1997, and they have exceeded the national rates each year since 2002 when the Madison County rate was slightly less than the national rate (see Table 4).

Table 4. Juvenile Larceny-Theft Arrest Rates, U.S., Kentucky, Madison County, 1990-2005



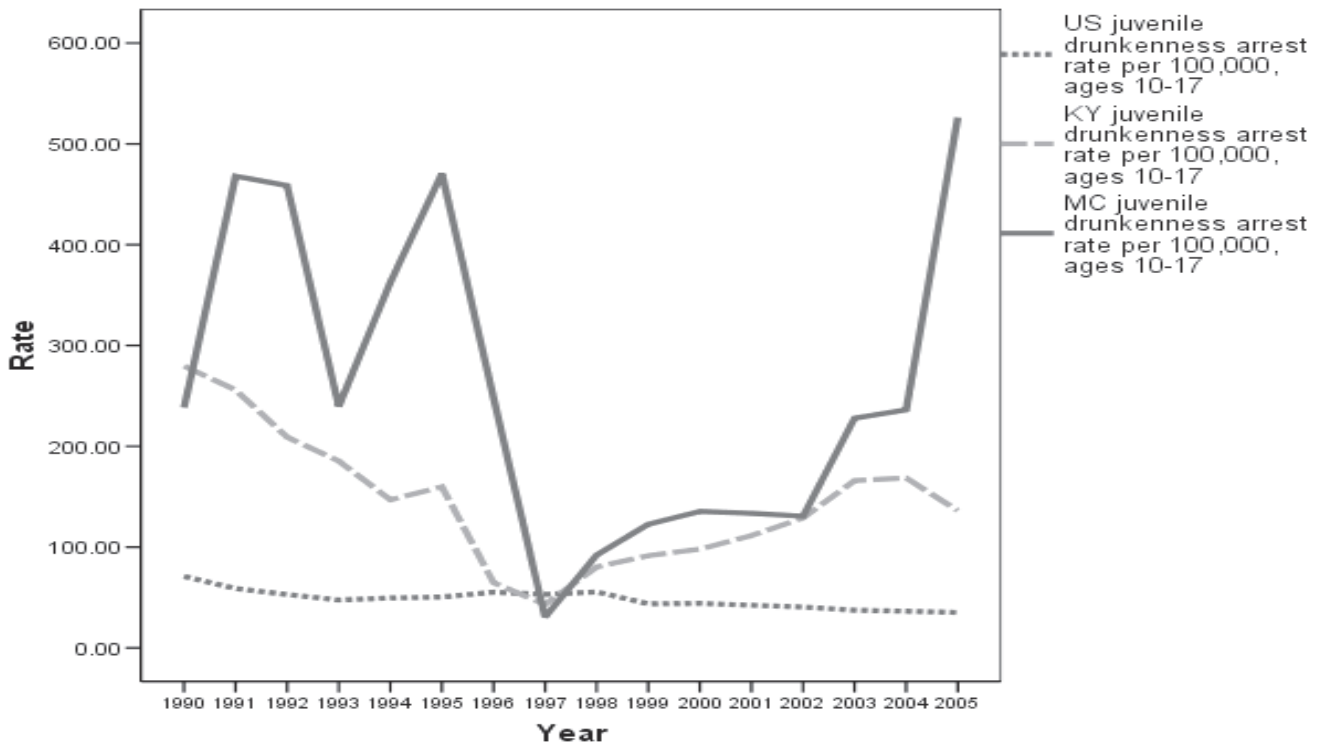
While larceny-theft stands out among the Index Offenses, several Part II offenses also represent areas of concern. One of these is simple assault. Juvenile arrests for simple assault in Madison County have, except for 2004, been higher than the state rates since 1996. They have also been higher than the national rates for a number of years, although the overall trend in these arrests has been downward in recent years (see Table 5).

Table 5. Juvenile Simple Assault Arrest Rates, U.S., Kentucky, Madison County, 1990-2005

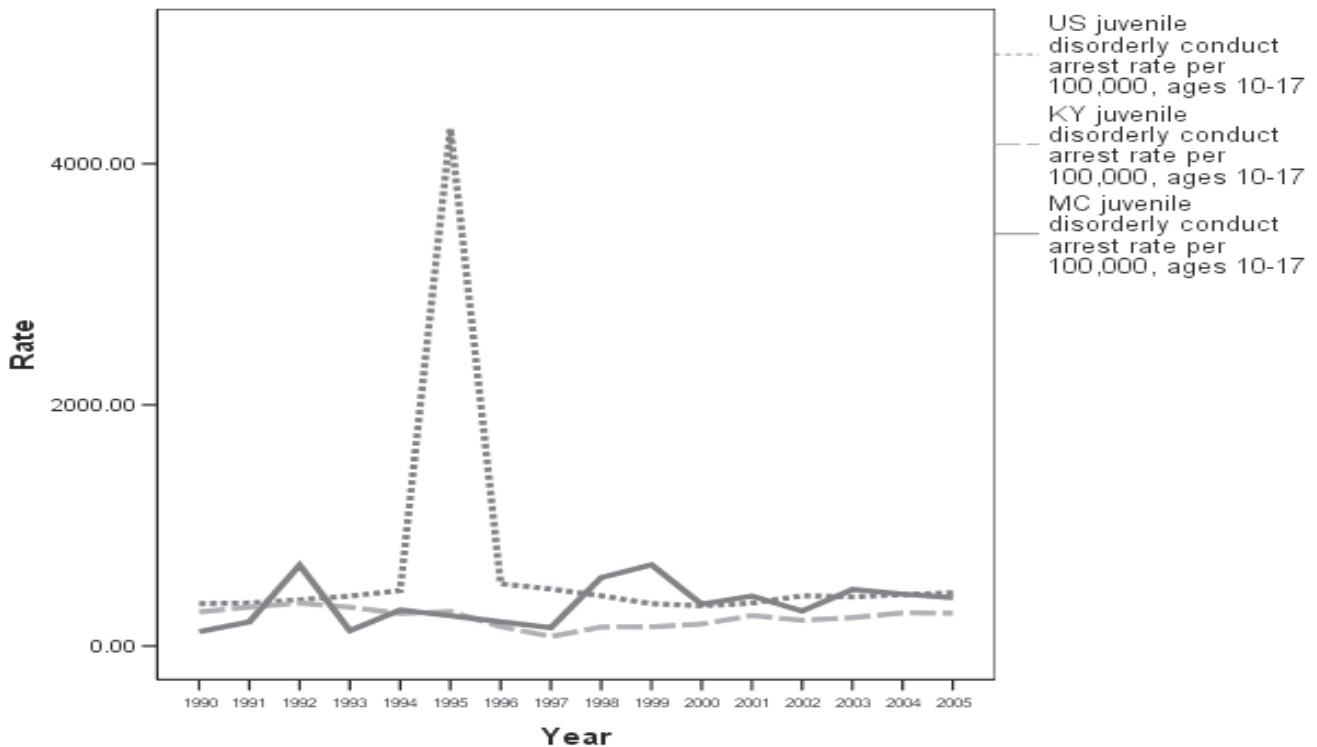


Another Part II Offense that deserves attention is drunkenness. Juvenile arrest rates for drunkenness in Madison County have been higher than the state or national rates since 1997. Moreover, as Table 6 indicates, the trend in juvenile arrests for drunkenness has been rising sharply. In 2005, there were 38 arrests of juveniles for drunkenness, which represents, by far, the largest number in recent years. In addition, juvenile arrest rates in Madison County for disorderly conduct have also been higher than the state rates and they have exceeded the national rates for several years (see Table 7). However, trends in juvenile arrest rates for disorderly conduct and drunkenness have been quite stable over time.

Table 6. Juvenile Drunkenness Arrest Rate, U.S., Kentucky, Madison County, 1990-2005



**Table 7. Juvenile Disorderly Conduct Arrest Rates, U.S.
Kentucky, Madison County, 1990-2005**



An examination of arrest rates in the county provides important insights on delinquency in the community. However, there are several problems with using arrest rates as an indicator of the level of delinquency. Many acts of delinquency do not come to the attention of the police. Moreover, arrests of youths are likely better indicators of police activity than youths' behaviors. For example, police exercise discretion and do not always make arrests, even when they could, and police resources are more likely to be targeted in particular areas and on particular types of offenses. Consequently, any effort to understand delinquency in the community should also examine self-report delinquency data. (7) Self-report data on delinquency are collected through studies that ask youths to report on their involvement in delinquency and they have been found to

produce a reasonably sound measure of delinquent behavior. Such data, however, are not available in many communities. Fortunately, in Madison County, several efforts have been undertaken to collect self-report data, several of which, as noted above, have been supported by the College of Justice and Safety.

One important source of self-report data is the Madison County Communities That Care Survey that examined youths in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 during 2003 and 2005. The Communities That Care survey is designed to examine youths' involvement in various delinquent and problem behaviors and the extent to which youths are exposed to or exhibit risk and protective factors that are related to problem and delinquent behaviors. The 2005 Communities That Care Survey indicated that the substances of choice among Madison County youths, like youths in the nation as a whole, are alcohol, tobacco products, and marijuana. However, compared to a national sample of youths, higher percentages of young people in Madison County used cigarettes and chewing tobacco. Moreover, the percentage of youths who reported inhalant use within 30 days of the survey and the percentage of county 12th graders who reported sedative use at some time during their life was somewhat higher among Madison County youths than among a national sample. Moreover, the data reveal that the popularity of certain substances changes over the life course. For example, the use of alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, and sedatives tends to increase in popularity between the 6th and 12th grades. The use of inhalants increases in popularity between the 6th and 8th grades, but it becomes less popular as youths get older. Nevertheless, while approximately 5% of 6th graders, 16% of 8th graders, 28% of 10th graders and 42% of 12 graders reported the use of some substance within 30 days of the 2005 survey, the percentages of youths who reported substance use have shown an overall decline since 2003. Nevertheless, the 2005

survey revealed that 10% or more of 8th through 12th grade students reported being drunk or high at school.

Data designed to reveal the extent to which Madison County youths are exposed to risk factors related to delinquency indicated that, with the exception of 12th graders, county youth are no more at risk than other youths in the nation. On 87% of the risk factor measures county youths scored at or below the norm, however, they scored above the norm on 13% of the measures. Moreover, 12th grade students reported an overall level of exposure to risk that exceeded the norm on seven risk factors—laws and norms favorable to drug use, perceived availability of drugs, low commitment to school, early initiation of drug use, interaction with antisocial peers, and intention to use drugs. Particularly noteworthy was the percentage of youths of all ages who reported low commitment to school. Other risk factors on which Madison County 8th, 10th, and 12th graders exceed the norm were students' perception that drug use carries little risk.

Finally, data on the percentages of youths who exhibited or who are exposed to protective factors that act as buffers against delinquent and other problem behaviors indicated that Madison County youths tended to score above the norm. On 77% of the protective factor measures, Madison County youths scored above or at the norm; they scored below the norm on 23% of the measures. Nevertheless, Madison County youths at each grade level scored below the norm on rewards for prosocial involvement indicating that many youths feel that there are too few incentives for involvement in positive activities within the community.

Another important source of self-reported data is The Madison County Community Partnership, a local coalition interested in substance use and other problem behaviors exhibited by county youths. Since 1997 the partnership has collected data on youths' self-reported drug and alcohol use. More recently the coalition has also collected data on perceptions of school safety and victimization at school. The most recent survey was administered in Spring 2007 and provides trend data since 1999 on youths' substance use, and it contains several measures of students' perceptions of school safety and victimization. (8)

8. A more comprehensive analysis of the data from this survey should be available by December 1, 2007.

According to the 2007 survey conducted by the Community Partnerships, the substances used by the largest number of Madison County youths are alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana. For example, 19% of the youths surveyed indicated that they had drunk alcohol during the month prior to the survey, 15% reported that they had gotten drunk, 16% indicated that they had smoked cigarettes, and 9% indicated that they had used marijuana. Far smaller percentages of youths reported the use of drugs such as cocaine, inhalants, crystal meth, and oxycontin. No more than 2% of the respondents indicated using any of these substances during the month prior to the survey.

As might be expected, the Community Partnerships survey has found that substance use tends to increase with the age of respondents. For example, approximately 3% of 6th graders reported that they smoke. However, the percentage increases to almost 10% for 8th graders, 18% for 10th graders, and 24% for 12th graders. Similar increases with age were noted for alcohol consumption. About 3% of 6th graders reported that they used alcohol compared to 15% of 8th graders, 34% of 10th graders, and 48% of 12th graders. Similar trends are noted for most other drugs as well. There are, also, some gender differences noted in alcohol use as youths get older. For instance, older males are somewhat more likely to report drinking large amounts of alcohol and getting drunk than older females. For example, when asked how much they drink at one time, 45% of male high school seniors indicated that they had nine or more drinks or beers compared to 14% of female high school seniors. Furthermore, 35% of senior males reported being drunk in the month prior to the survey compared to 29% of senior females, and males, overall, were somewhat more likely to report getting drunk or high at school compared to females. Approximately 12% of males indicated that they had gotten drunk or high at school at least once compared to about 9% of females.

When asked if they agreed or disagreed that it was easy for someone their age to get cigarettes or alcohol in the community, 61% of the youths surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that it was easy to get cigarettes and 58% agreed or strongly agreed that it was easy to obtain alcohol. Although the survey did not ask students where they obtained alcohol, it did ask respondents where they obtained cigarettes. Younger youths indicated that they were more likely to get cigarettes from a variety of sources such as parents, relatives and friends, while older youths were more likely to report that they obtained cigarettes at grocery or convenience stores, or gas stations.

Data from the Community Partnerships Survey that are designed to measure students' perceptions of school safety indicated that substantial percentages of youth have some concerns over safety. Although the majority of students surveyed indicated that their school was safe, about one in five students at each grade level did not feel safe. When asked how often they feel afraid that someone will attack or harm them at school almost 42% indicated that they were, at least sometimes, concerned that this will happen to them, and almost 5% indicated that they are afraid of being attacked often or most of the time. Concerns about being attacked were greater among younger students than among older students. For example, approximately 25% of 6th graders indicated that they were afraid of being attacked or harmed at school compared to about 18% of 8th graders, 17% of 10 graders and about 11% of 12th graders.

A final source of information on self-reported delinquency, school safety, adolescent victimization, and risk and protective factors related to delinquency is the Madison County School Safety Survey, 2000, developed by faculty of the College of Justice and Safety. This study examined 2,011 students in two elementary schools (grades 3-5), one middle school, and

one high school in the city of Richmond. An examination of the demographic characteristics of the students surveyed indicated that while they closely paralleled those in the five schools where the survey was administered, the study contained slightly larger percentages of females and minority youths than are found in the county as a whole. Thus, some caution should be exercised in generalizing findings to the larger population of county youths. The survey revealed that approximately two-thirds (66%) of all students surveyed indicated that they had engaged in at least one of the delinquent behaviors assessed on the survey during the school year. The behavior exhibited by the largest percentage of students was verbally threatening others (45%), followed by beating someone up (37%), taking something belonging to someone else (33%), damaging someone else's property (32%), participating in a fight involving multiple subjects (30%), touching or grabbing someone in a private place (26%), hurting someone bad enough that they needed treatment (22%), taking something from someone using force or threats (19%), and threatening someone with a weapon (14%). As might be expected, larger percentages of students reported involvement in each of these behaviors outside of school compared to inside school.

An examination of survey results by grade level indicated that larger percentages of middle school students (78%) reported involvement in delinquent behavior compared to elementary (64%) and high school students (58%), although reports of extreme levels of chronic offending were more likely to be reported by a very small number of high school students. Indeed, larger percentages of middle school students reported involvement in all but two of the delinquent behaviors contained in the survey. A larger percentage of elementary school students reported engaging in fights involving groups of youths, and more high school youths indicated that they had threatened someone with a weapon. The percentages of high school, middle school, and elementary school students who reported involvement in each of the nine delinquent behaviors contained in the survey can be seen in Table 1 on the following page.

Table 1. Percentages of Youths at Each School Level who Reported Involvement in Delinquent Behaviors During School Year*

Behavior	School Level		
	<i>Elementary</i>	<i>Middle</i>	<i>High School</i>
Verbal Threat	25%	57%	45%
Beat Up Someone	42%	46%	29%
Taken Something	24%	42%	32%
Damaged Property	25%	40%	29%
Fight (Groups)	39%	37%	21%
Inappropriate Touch	8%	32%	29%
Hurt Someone (Treatment)	21%	26%	18%
Taken Something (Force)	14%	26%	17%
Threaten (Weapon)	9%	13%	16%

*All Percentages Rounded

Another behavior that was assessed on the survey and that can involve illegal behavior is bullying. When asked if they had picked on or bullied someone during the school year, 39% of the students indicated that they had done this at least once. As was true of the delinquent behaviors, larger percentages of students reported bullying others outside of school (32%) than inside school (27%). It should also be noted that among students who reported bullying behavior, most reported that they had engaged in such behavior between one and three times. However, approximately 9% of students reported that they engaged in bullying on four or more occasions inside school, and 12% reported that they engaged in this behavior at least four times outside of school.

In addition to delinquent behavior and bullying, the School Safety Survey also collected data on youths' victimization. Victimization data are important because there is strong evidence that victimization and delinquency are strongly related. The data indicated that 77% of all students reported at least one victimization experience during the school year ranging from having something stolen from their desk or locker at school, having things taken from them by force, to being bullied. The types of victimization affecting the most youths were having things stolen from them (55%), being subjected to verbal threats (40%), and being bullied (39%). However, approximately one in five students reported that they had been inappropriately touched or subjected to a physical attack, and almost 9% indicated that they had something taken from them by force during the school year. Moreover, larger percentages of elementary (84%) and middle school students (83%) reported victimization than high school students (69%). However, victimization experience varied considerably by grade level. For example, larger percentages of elementary students reported being physically attacked and bullied, larger percentages of middle and elementary students reported that they had things stolen from them, and larger percentages of middle and high school students reported that they were inappropriately touched. Relatively small percentages of youths indicated that they had things taken from them by force; however, slightly larger percentages of high school youths reported this had happened to them, followed by middle school and elementary school youths.

The 2000 School Safety Survey also found that overall, 85% of the youths surveyed felt safe in school. In addition, the percentages of youths who felt safe or unsafe varied little across school levels. However, in line with other research on school safety, the survey data indicated that perceptions of safety varied considerably by school context. For example, students were more likely to feel safe in the school building than outside school buildings. Moreover, within the school, they were more likely to feel safe in their classrooms than any other location.

Data collected on a number of risk and protective factors associated with delinquent and other problem youth behaviors revealed some potential areas of concern.

Overall, survey respondents reported low levels of family strain, moderate to high levels of social bonding, moderate levels of attachment to school, reported doing average to above average in school, reported moderate levels of family involvement, and low levels of delinquent peer influence and negative labeling. In addition, most youths felt safe in their neighborhoods. Nevertheless, approximately 15% of students surveyed reported low levels of social bonding or high levels of exposure to delinquent peers. Also, over one in five youths reported low levels of attachment to school, a grade average of C or less, or that they spend less than one hour interacting with family members during the week. Furthermore, 25% or more reported that they had moved during the year, someone in their home had become ill or died, they had changed schools, or that someone in their home had been in a serious accident, or had been arrested during the year. In addition, approximately 60% of the respondents indicated that they had a firearm in their home, and 44% indicated that they had access to that firearm.

The survey also revealed some interesting grade level differences on a number of risk and protective factor measures. In general, larger percentages of elementary school students reported earning good grades, they reported higher levels of social bonding, and they reported less access to firearms in their homes compared to middle and high school students. However, elementary youths indicated that they felt less safe in their neighborhood than middle or high school youths. In contrast, larger percentages of middle and high school youths reported receiving average grades and high school youths tended to be represented more at the extremes of the social bonding scale.

Areas of Potential Concern

A review of the data presented above suggests a number of areas of potential concern.

With respect to official measures of juvenile crime, the following areas of concern should be noted:

- ◆ Historically, the overall juvenile arrest rate in Madison County has been higher than the state rate, and this is particularly true for larceny-theft.
- ◆ Juvenile arrest rates in Madison County are driven in large part by arrests of youths for Part II offenses. Offenses that contribute significantly to the arrests rates in Madison County are simple assault, drunkenness, and disorderly conduct.

Self-report studies of delinquency and substance use by youths in Madison County indicate that:

- ◆ Larger percentages of middle school students, compared to elementary and high school students report involvement in delinquency.
- ◆ Most delinquency occurs outside the school.
- ◆ The most common types of delinquent behaviors reported by youths are making verbal threats, beating someone up, theft, and damaging property.
- ◆ Another common behavior reported by students that may involve illegal behavior is bullying which occurs inside and outside schools settings.
- ◆ The substances of choice among community youths are alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana and use tends to increase with age. Few youths report involvement with other drugs.
- ◆ Youths report that it is relatively easy to obtain alcohol and cigarettes in the community.

Younger youths indicate that they are more likely to obtain cigarettes from parents, relatives and friends, whereas older youths are more likely to indicate that they get cigarettes from grocery or convenience stores or gas stations.

Another area of concern is school and community safety.

- ◆ The majority of students feel safe at school. However, school safety varies by school subcontext. For example, students tend to feel safe in their classrooms, but they feel less safe in parking lots before and after school.
- ◆ A small percentage of youths report taking weapons to school.
- ◆ Substantial percentages of youths report some type of victimization experience during the school year.

The data also indicate the county youths are exposed to a variety of risk factors associated with delinquent behavior.

- ◆ Overall, county youths, with the exception of 12th graders, have an overall risk factor score that is roughly equivalent to the national norm. However, 12th graders are exposed to or exhibit higher levels of risk than the national norm.

Areas of concern for large numbers of youths are the following:

- ◆ Low attachment and commitment to school.
- ◆ Few perceived rewards for positive involvement in the community.

Areas of concern for smaller populations are:

- ◆ Academic failure, particularly among middle and high school youths.
 - ◆ Lack of parental involvement and adult supervision.
 - ◆ Exposure to strains such as transience and changing schools, illnesses at home, legal problems in the family, and negative peer influence.
-

USING DATA TO DEVELOP A LOCAL DELINQUENCY PREVENTION PLAN

The College of Justice and Safety has played a pivotal role in supporting efforts to collect and assemble data on youths and families in Madison County. The data presented in this bulletin represent some of the data that are presently available to community planners. To date, this data has been shared with members of the Madison County Delinquency Prevention Council (MCDPC). Some of this data has been used to develop a council supported project at the county's alternative school and was used in the development of a Title V grant proposal that was funded through the State Department of Juvenile Justice in the Fall 2007. This particular project is designed to address school disengagement among high risk youth. In addition, the findings presented above have served as the basis of discussion about additional steps that need to be taken to address delinquency behavior within the community. Based on the above data and as a result of additional information gathered through the First Annual Forum on Delinquency in Madison County initiated by MCDPC, initial planning efforts focusing on the need to develop quality after school programs for youth in the community has begun.

Importantly, the support of the College of Justice and Safety has helped make it possible to collect quality data that can be used to develop programs that address significant needs within the community. Without this data, local planners would have a more difficult time understanding youth and family needs and targeting scarce resources to meet those needs. Fortunately, planners in Madison County have access to data that can be used to inform the development of local policies that address significant community needs. The result will undoubtedly be a more effective approach to policy development that is based on evidence, as opposed to political posturing, and has the potential to make a real difference for families and children in our community.

NOTES

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Eastern Kentucky University's College of Justice & Safety began as a single course offering to 49 students in 1966 at Eastern Kentucky State College. It has evolved to include more than 1,600 students and 46 full-time faculty. The College offers three departments, two service centers, three associate degrees, seven bachelor's degrees, three master's degrees and the designation of being a Program of Distinction in the commonwealth of Kentucky and one of the foremost institutions of learning and research in the fields of justice and safety in the nation and world.

Currently, under the leadership of Dr. Allen Ault, Dean of the College of Justice & Safety, the College has expanded into a multi-million dollar, many-disciplined complex serving students locally, nationally and internationally.

The three departments housed in the College are Correctional and Juvenile Justice Studies, Criminal Justice and Police Studies, and Safety, Security, and Emergency Management. Undergraduate degree programs are offered in the areas of: Assets Protection, Correctional and Juvenile Justice Studies, Criminal Justice, Emergency Medical Care, Fire and Safety Engineering Technology, Homeland Security and Police Studies. Graduate degree programs are offered in the areas of Safety, Security, and Emergency Management, Criminal Justice, and Correctional and Juvenile Justice Studies. In addition to our academic departments, the College houses the Justice & Safety Center and the Training Resource Center.

The goals of the College of Justice & Safety's departments and centers include enriching the lives of the students enrolled in our programs with inspiring and relevant instruction and furthering the studies of the respective fields by participating in research and scholarship.

In 1997, the Commonwealth of Kentucky initiated the opportunity for one program from each regional university to be chosen as a Program of Distinction, providing more resources to develop greater national prominence. In 1998, the College of Justice & Safety (then the College of Law Enforcement) was awarded this designation.

Additional state and university funding, provided through the Program of Distinction, has allowed the College to add professional staff, provide scholarships and graduate assistantships, purchase computers and distance education equipment, provide student and alumni services, support research and technical assistance, develop international opportunities, and expand our academic and service offerings.

Within the College of Justice & Safety, we do not look upon the Program of Distinction as a separate program, but rather one that encompasses and supports every aspect of our students, faculty, staff, academic departments, service centers and College success stories.



**EKU College of Justice and Safety
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Justice and Safety Research Bulletin
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