



A CAMPAIGN OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE & DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COALITION
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FACT SHEET: GIRLS AND JUVENILE JUSTICE

“I didn’t like how you had to put your hands behind your back, and how they’d restrain you. I was four months pregnant, and this [staff member] slammed me up against the wall. I could’ve miscarried! He knew I was pregnant because I had purple laces. I was in mudroom standing with my hands in a diamond.”¹ – *Dana G., 16, held in a unit at Tyron Girls Center in Johnstown, NY*

What are the current JJDPAs provisions related to gender?

To access formula funds under the JJDPAs, each state must submit a three-year plan to the Department of Justice, including a plan for providing needed gender-specific services. States must also assure equitable treatment according to gender, race, etc.

In addition, programs for girls and prenatal care for pregnant juveniles are listed as allowable expenditures under the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Block Grant (Title II), but this program has never been funded.

How should these provisions be strengthened?

- Add an accountability mechanism for the existing state plan requirement, which is often ignored.
- Require at least one member of the State Advisory Group to have expertise in gender-specific services.
- Direct funding to gender-specific prevention and treatment programs under Title V Delinquency Prevention grants.
- Eliminate the Valid Court Order exception for Status Offenders.
- Increase research and information dissemination on effective practices.

Why are these changes needed?

Between 1985 and 2002, the overall delinquency caseload for females increased 92%, while it decreased 29% for males. Even as juvenile crime has declined in recent years, the proportion of girls in the system has continued to increase.²