

ANNUAL REPORT

2018

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Juvenile Assessment Center of Lee County





*Assisting Youth and Their Families to Seek the  
Treatment and Programs They Need  
to Lead Productive, Crime-Free Lives*

Published February 2018



Lee County Sheriff's Office  
Juvenile Assessment Center of Lee County  
2107 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard  
Fort Myers, FL 33901

# JAC Overview

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The Juvenile Assessment Center of Lee County, also called the “JAC,” is located in downtown Fort Myers, Florida. The JAC was founded in 2003 through a collaborative community planning process. The JAC co-locates various agencies which serves to streamline the local juvenile justice system, to promote timely case processing, and to reduce the duplication of services. The JAC assists both “at risk” youth and arrested youth and their families. The JAC is operated by the Lee County Sheriff’s Office in partnership with the Lee County Board of County Commissioners and the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. The physical facility and the JAC’s management is funded by the Lee County Board of County Commissioners. The JAC receives no state funding, although it indirectly benefits from state resources through its co-located partners.

The JAC is located in downtown Fort Myers, Florida and is part of the Lee County Justice Center Complex.

## CENTRALIZED BOOKING AND RECEIVING FACILITY

When a youth is arrested in Lee County, the arresting officer transports the youth to the Juvenile Booking Facility which is attached to both the JAC and to the Lee County Jail. The design of the facility allows for the sharing of the Lee County Sheriff’s Office’s booking staff between the juvenile booking area and the adult jail to maximize staffing resources. Arrested youth are kept separate from detained adults at all times. When an arrested youth is brought to the Juvenile Booking Facility he or she has his or her fingerprints, palm prints, and a booking photograph taken. Arrested youth who are charged with a felony also have a DNA sample taken.

## SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT

When arrested youth arrive at the Juvenile Booking Facility/JAC they are screened by Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) intake staff to determine if they are eligible for secure detention. DJJ’s detention risk assessment considers a youth’s arrest history, the seriousness of the charges, and whether the youth is a flight risk. Based on the youth’s detention risk assessment score, he or she may be taken to secure detention, placed on home detention, or directly released to his or her parent or guardian. DJJ staff also screen each arrested youth for their risk to offend again and for any substance abuse and/or mental health issues. Based on this screening, DJJ staff may recommend that the youth receive a more in-depth assessment from SalusCare, one of the JAC’s community partners.



# JAC Overview (cont.)

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## PROMOTING PUBLIC SAFETY

Before the JAC opened in 2003, law enforcement officers were responsible for supervising arrested youth who were not detained until the youth could be released to the custody of his or her parents. Law enforcement officers are now able to deliver all arrested youth to the JAC and return to road patrol within a few minutes. Department of Juvenile Justice staff at the JAC track all arrested youth who are placed on home detention and disseminate this information to local law enforcement agencies. This allows law enforcement officers to provide increased monitoring and supervision of youth who are placed on home detention.

## LINKING YOUTH AND FAMILIES TO SERVICES

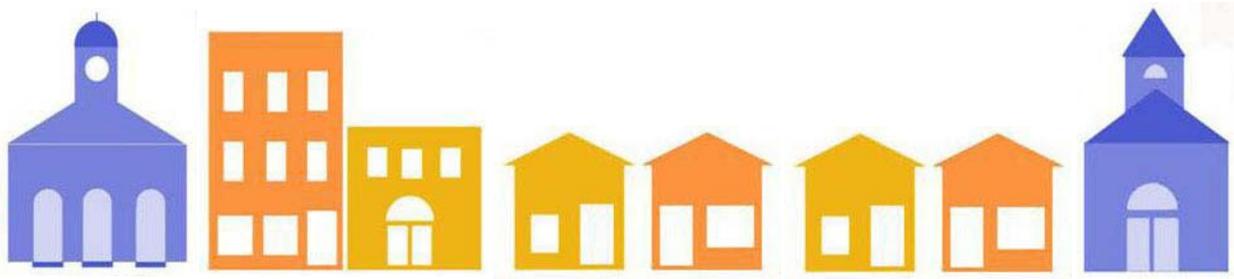
The JAC's main phone number at (239) 258-3450 serves as an information and referral line for parents seeking help for their youth and for others requesting information about services available for local youth and families. The JAC maintains a Community Resource Guide of youth related services that can be accessed from the JAC's website at [www.swfljac.org](http://www.swfljac.org).

## COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

The JAC tracks trends in juvenile crime and risk factors for delinquency within the community. JAC staff work collaboratively with community partners to identify emerging trends, gaps in services, and resources for the prevention and intervention of youth crime.

## INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

The JAC serves as a hub for information about the local juvenile justice system. The JAC's website, [www.swfljac.org](http://www.swfljac.org), provides information about the local juvenile justice system for parents, law enforcement officers, and community partners. The JAC has developed brochures to assist in answering some of the most frequently asked questions from parents and community partners. These are available in the JAC's lobby and also on the JAC's website. Some are available in Spanish. The JAC broadcasts prevention oriented Public Service Announcements (PSA's) in its lobby. Some of the PSA's were donated by community partners. The JAC provides tours of the JAC and presentations about the juvenile justice system to a variety of school and community groups.



# JAC Overview (cont.)

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## PREVENTION

### PREVENTION COUNSELING

Lutheran Services of Florida co-locates one counselor at the JAC who provides individual and family counseling with non-arrested youth and their families.

### TRUANCY INTERVENTION PROGRAM (TIP)

The TIP program is coordinated by the JAC in partnership with the School District of Lee County. TIP works with families whose elementary or middle school aged youth are at risk of becoming habitually truant. TIP works with the families to improve school attendance or to proceed toward judicial action.

### TRUANCY UNGOVERNABLE RUNAWAY NETWORK (TURN)

TURN works with families of youth that are habitually truant, ungovernable, or runaways. TURN works with the families to improve the youth's behavior or to proceed toward judicial action. TURN is coordinated by Lutheran Services of Florida in partnership with multiple community agencies.

## EARLY INTERVENTION

### CIVIL CITATION

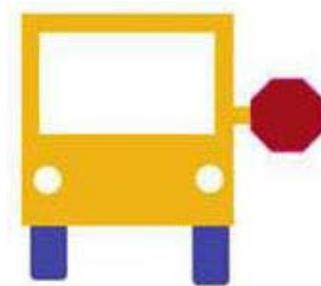
The JAC operates a civil citation program which provides an alternative to an arrest for youth who commit minor crimes. Law enforcement officers have the discretion to issue a youth a civil citation rather than make an arrest if a youth has had no more than two prior misdemeanor arrests and commits a misdemeanor crime that meets the criteria. Youth must meet with the Civil Citation Deputy within one week of being issued a civil citation. Youth are typically assigned community service hours and/or a service learning project as a consequence for their offense. Depending on the case, youth may be referred to the CHAMPS Program at the JAC or to other programs and services in the community to assist youth in remaining crime free.

302 youth participated in the Civil Citation Program in Lee County in 2017.

204 youth participated in the TIP and TURN programs at the JAC in 2017.

The JAC provided tours and presentations about the local juvenile justice system to 63 school and community groups during 2017.

The JAC provides free drug test kits to parents to use as a drug prevention tool. Approximately 600 drug test kits were distributed in 2017.



# JAC Overview (cont.)

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212 youth participated in the CHAMPS Program in 2017.

172 youth were arrested for domestic violence.

250 youth were arrested for a school based offense.

## EARLY INTERVENTION

**CHAMPS: Choosing Healthy Attitudes & Motivating Personal Success**

The CHAMPS Program at the JAC works with youth in the Civil Citation Program with substance abuse issues. The program provides screening, youth counseling, peer support groups, random drug testing, short term case management, and referrals to other programs and services in the community for continued services.

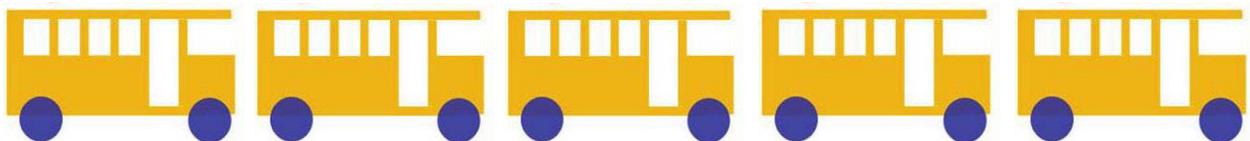
36% of arrested youth in Lee County report that they are currently using drugs. Over 50% of the arrested youth in Lee County that are assessed as being at a high risk for reoffending have a mental health need.

Source: DJJ PACT Profile 2013-14  
(Most recent available at the time of this report.)

## INTERVENTION

**MORAL RECONATION THERAPY (MRT)**

Through a partnership with the Lee County Department of Human and Veterans Services, MRT is provided at the JAC. The MRT program works primarily with first time juvenile offenders who have committed a violent crime such as a misdemeanor battery or an aggravated battery. Youth are approved for the program by the Office of the State Attorney. MRT is an evidence based, 12-step cognitive behavioral intervention that seeks to reduce recidivism by increasing moral reasoning.



# Data Trends

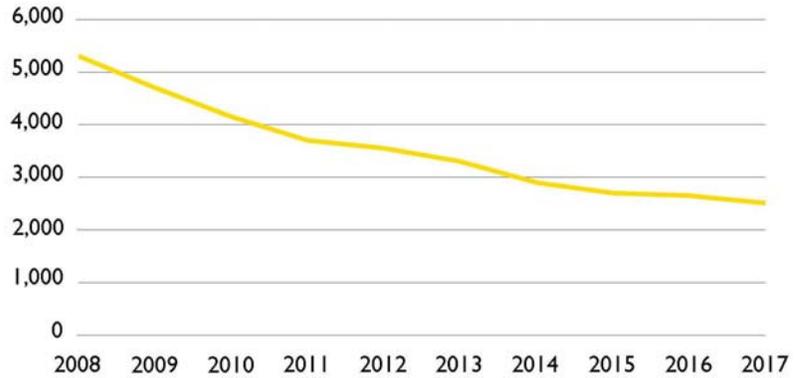
## TOTAL ARRESTS

During 2017 the JAC received 2,562 arrested youth. This number includes youth who were arrested more than one time during the year. It also includes youth who were screened as eligible for secure detention from Charlotte, Hendry, and Glades Counties. Youth from these counties are transported to the Juvenile Assessment Center of Lee County prior to being transported to the Southwest Florida Regional Detention Center in Fort Myers. This does not include youth over the age of 18 arrested on juvenile sanctions. An additional 195 adults over the age of 18 were arrested with juvenile sanctions in 2017.

In 2017 the JAC saw the fewest number of youth arrests since the JAC began tracking arrests in 2004.

15 Lee County youth were transferred to the adult court system in 2017.

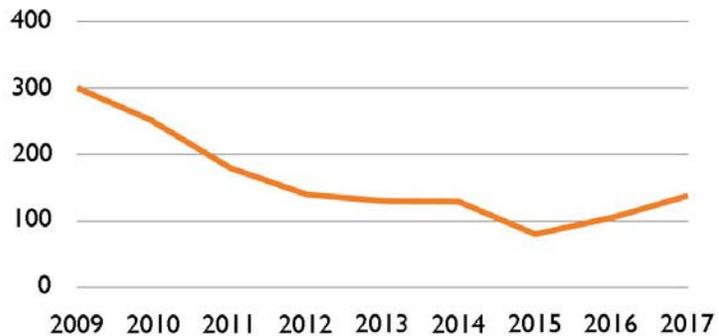
YOUTH ARRESTS IN LEE COUNTY, 2008 - 2017



TOP YOUTH ARREST CHARGES IN LEE COUNTY, 2013 - 2017

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Burglary	424	391	377	403	339
Battery/Simple Assault	301	232	228	221	236
Larceny	262	292	201	258	223
Misdemeanor Marijuana	250	211	195	207	209
Resisting Arrest w/o Violence	223	175	175	186	182
Loitering/Prowling	147	136	137	170	182
Possess Drug Equipment	139	118	132	130	165
Larceny Petit Theft	352	315	276	224	150
Auto Theft	73	81	61	95	101

LEE COUNTY DELINQUENCY REFERRALS COMMITTED BY STATE FISCAL YEAR

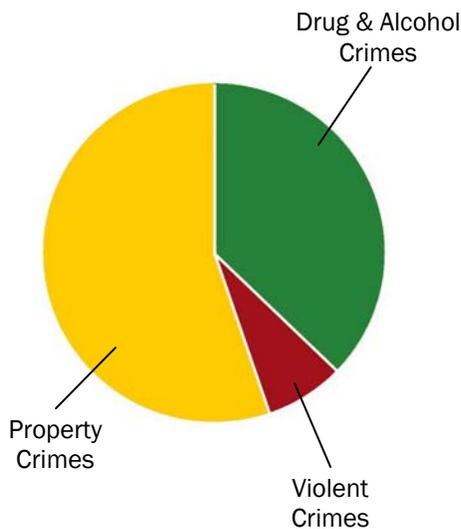


Source: Florida Department of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Profile

# Data Trends (cont.)

The most prevalent youth drug charge in Lee County in 2017 was for marijuana. There were 266 marijuana related charges among arrested youth.

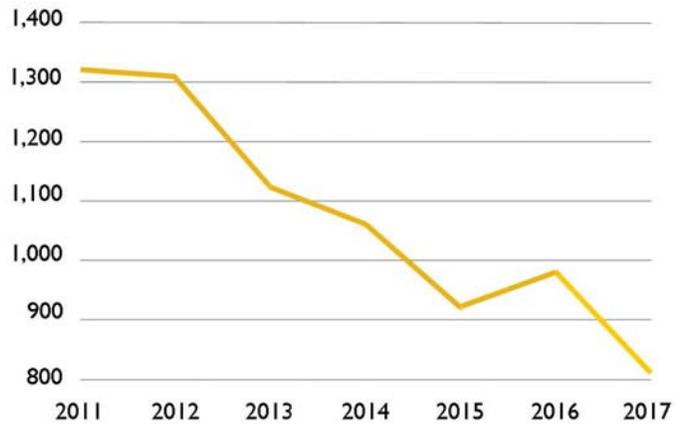
Violent youth crime decreased in 2017 compared to 2016. Youth violent crime is relatively low in proportion to drug crime and property crime.



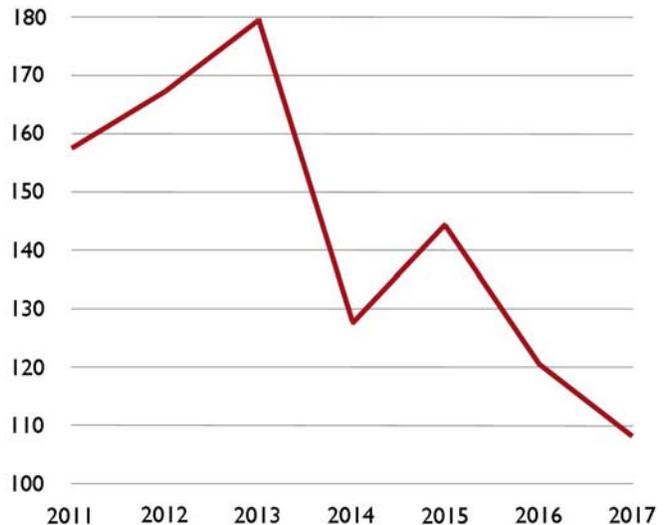
**YOUTH DRUG AND ALCOHOL CRIMES**



**YOUTH PROPERTY CRIMES**



**YOUTH VIOLENT CRIMES**



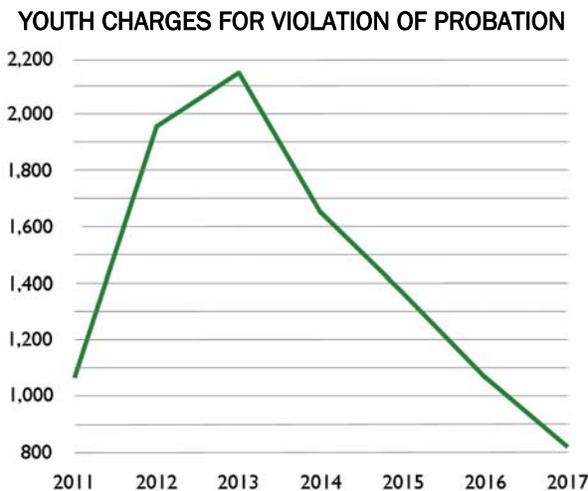
# Data Trends (cont.)



In 2017 the highest number of youth arrests were in March (263). The lowest number of youth arrests were in September (170), a new historical low. Hurricane Irma arrived in Lee County on September 10th of 2017.

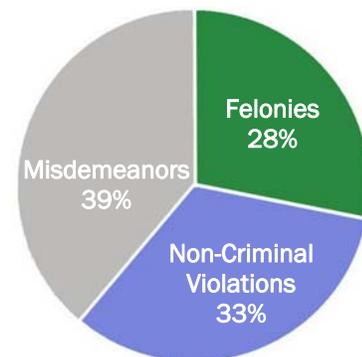


There were 499 youth charges for Failure to Appear to Court in 2017.



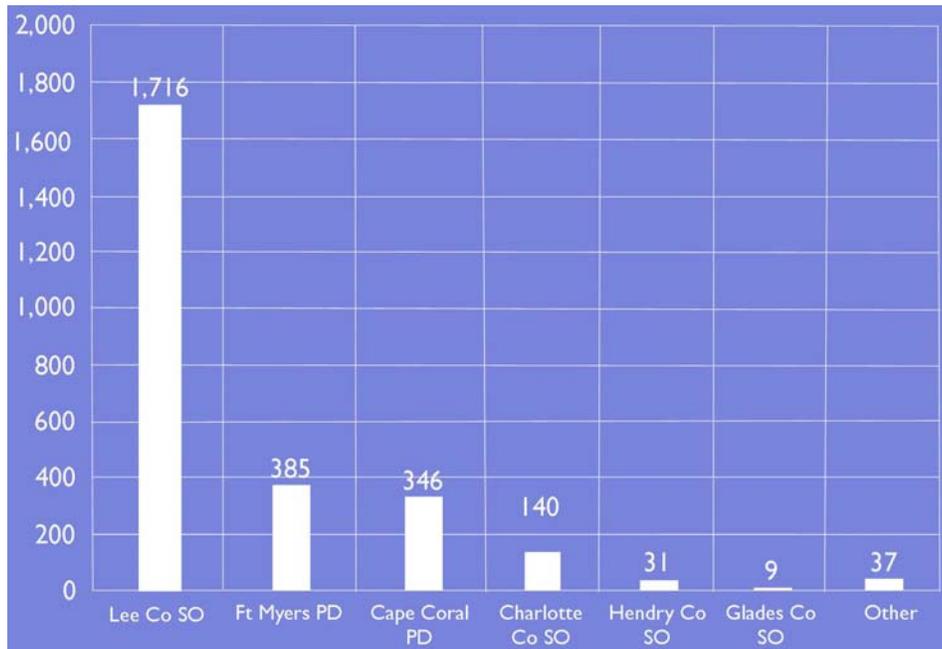
Youth charges for violations of probation decreased by 62% from 2013 to 2017.

**TYPE OF ARREST CHARGES RECEIVED BY LEE COUNTY YOUTH IN 2017**

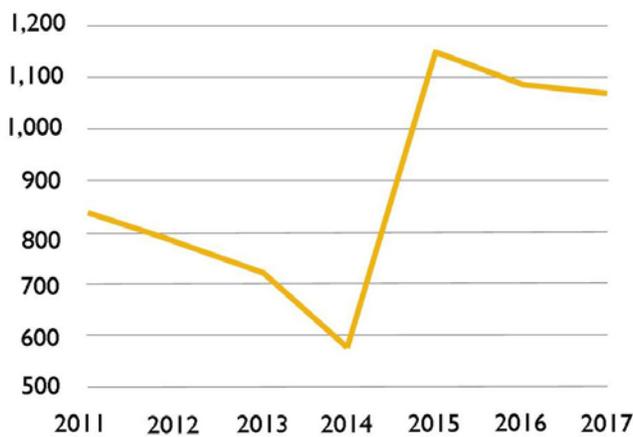


# Data Trends (cont.)

**LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY UTILIZATION**  
(NUMBER OF ARRESTED YOUTH DELIVERED TO THE JAC IN 2017)



**LEE COUNTY YOUTH SENT TO SECURE DETENTION**  
2011 - 2017



During 2017 there were 1,062 Lee County youth who were sent to secure detention. 516 Lee County youth were placed on home detention in 2017.



# JAC Partnerships

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## **Lee County Board of County Commissioners**

Provides the physical facility that houses the JAC service array.

## **Florida Department of Juvenile Justice**

Screens arrested youth for detention and mental health and/or substance abuse issues, and makes recommendations to the court. Southwest Florida Regional Detention staff transport youth between the JAC and the detention center.

## **Lee County Sheriff's Office**

Provides management for the operation and coordination among the JAC partners. Coordinates the Civil Citation program and the Truancy Intervention Program (TIP). Partner in the TURN Program.

## **Lutheran Services of Florida**

Provides screening and assessments for non-arrested youth, and individual and family counseling. Coordinates the TURN program.

## **Lee County Department of Human and Veterans Services**

Provides Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT).

In addition to the above agencies physically located at the JAC, the JAC has enjoyed the participation and partnership with many other agencies and organizations including:

AMI Kids Southwest Florida  
Cape Coral Police Department  
Charlotte County Sheriff's Office  
Children's Advocacy Center  
Department of Children and Families  
Elite DNA  
Fort Myers Police Department  
Florida Gulf Coast University Campus Police  
Florida Highway Patrol  
Florida Southwestern College Campus Police  
Glades County Sheriff's Office  
Hanley Center  
Hendry County Sheriff's Office  
Lee County Clerk of Courts  
Lee County Coalition for a Drug Free SW Florida  
Lee County Port Authority  
Office of the State Attorney  
PACE Center for Girls  
Public Defender's Office  
Punta Gorda Police Department  
Sanibel Police Department  
SalusCare  
School District of Lee County  
20th Circuit Judicial Court



# For More Information

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Juvenile Assessment Center of Lee County  
2107 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Fort Myers, FL 33901

Phone: (239) 258-3450  
Fax: (239) 258-3474  
Website: [www.swfljac.org](http://www.swfljac.org)

## Lee County Sheriff's Office Staff at the JAC

William C. Naylor  
*Director*

Deputy Carolyn Woulard  
*Civil Citation Coordinator*

Amanda Cruz  
*Youth Program Coordinator*

Carol Helton  
*Community Program Coordinator*



## Resources Available from the JAC Website at [www.swfljac.org/publications](http://www.swfljac.org/publications)

Community Resource Guide

I Wish I Knew Then What I Know Now

Know the Law: A Guide for Adolescents and Their  
Parents

Know the Law: Consequences to a Juvenile Arrest  
or Conviction

Know the Law: Emancipation

Know the Law: Truancy

Juvenile Criminal Records

How a Case Moves Through the Court

What to Wear and What Not to Wear in Court

Writing a Letter of Apology

*Available in Spanish:*

Absentismo Escolar

Consecuencias del Arresto o Condena Juvenil

Emancipación