

**FEMALE JUVENILE OFFENDER STUDY**

The occurrence of female offenses is a growing issue in the United States. The Juvenile Violent Crime Index shows that the arrest rate for females more than doubled between 1987 and 1994. According to the FBI Uniform Crime Report Data, violent crime arrest rates for girls have increased at a rate of 103% from 1981 to 1997, compared to a 27% increase for boys between the same years. General delinquency cases have increased at the rate of 76% for girls and only 42% for boys between 1987 and 1996. Drug related offenses are the fastest growing for females, up 132%. FBI Youth Crime Data indicates that from 1992 to 1997 there was a 43% increase in drug related offenses for girls. Girls have been outpacing boys in 7 out of 14 drug use categories by the fifth grade. Little is known about the connection between drug use and juvenile offenses for females. The Juvenile Female Offender study is an ongoing study administered in qualitative, in-depth, open-ended interviews conducted by undergraduates with the female juvenile offenders in the Utah juvenile justice system. The object of the study is to explore the multiple levels, such as the individual, as well as the influence of primary (family) and secondary (peers) socializing agents on female delinquency. This study is revolutionary in design because of the primary focus on females, as well as considering the female gendered experience without orienting it to the male experience.