

Chapter 6. PUBLIC SAFETY OVERVIEW

Public safety supports Oregon’s strategic goal #2, “safe, caring and engaged communities” (see Figure 1, page 4). Oregon’s public safety performance improved dramatically from D+ in the 1997-99 biennium, to B+ for this reporting period.

Oregon’s improvements were concentrated in two benchmarks:

- *Overall Crimes (F to A)*. This represents the biggest improvement in public safety. Reported crime overall in Oregon held steady at about 140 per 1,000 until the mid-90s, peaking at about 150 and then decreasing since 1997 to a low of 131.7 in 1999. This exceeds the target for 2000 and earns an “A” for this benchmark.

- *Juvenile Arrests (F to C)*. This benchmark experienced a similar pattern, decreasing since its peak in 1996 of 62 per 1,000 juveniles to a 1999 rate of 48.3, just higher than the base year. However, the target rate of 46.5 per 1,000 has not yet been met.

Both overall and juvenile crime have been decreasing nationwide for about eight years, a decline which started several years earlier than in Oregon.

These public safety benchmarks earned good grades this biennium. This means:

- Fewer students are carrying weapons (improved from a B to an A).
- Less recidivism among paroled offenders.
- Almost all counties have signed cooperative policing agreements.
- All but one county meets emergency preparedness standards.

	1998	2000	Page
KEY PUBLIC SAFETY BENCHMARKS			
Overall Crimes	F	A	51
Juvenile Arrests	F	C	52
OTHER PUBLIC SAFETY BENCHMARKS			
Students Carrying Weapons	B	A	53
Recidivism	A	B-	53
<i>Juvenile Recidivism</i>		<i>new</i>	53
Cooperative Policing	N/A	A	54
Emergency Preparedness	A	A	54
AVERAGE OTHER GRADE	A-	A-	
OVERALL PUBLIC SAFETY GRADE*	D+	B+	

*The overall grade is a weighted average. Each key benchmark is given a weight of one. All other benchmarks are averaged, and that average is also given a weight of one.

NEW AND MODIFIED BENCHMARKS PUBLIC SAFETY

New Benchmark	Rationale
61. Overall reported crimes per 1,000 Oregonians: a. person crimes, b. property crimes, c. behavior crimes.	This is now stratified by type of crime.
62. Juvenile arrests per 1,000 juvenile Oregonians per year: a. person crimes, b. property crimes.	This benchmark now addresses only property and person crimes. Because of their sensitivity to arrest policy in different jurisdictions, behavior crimes have been excluded.*
64. Percentage of paroled adult offenders convicted of a new felony within three years of initial release.	The recidivism benchmarks now address adult and juvenile recidivism separately. Benchmark #64 focuses on adults only. (See #65 below.)
65. Percentage of juveniles with a new criminal referral to a county juvenile department within 12 months of the initial criminal offense.	This new benchmark focuses on juvenile recidivism.

* Person crimes include sex crimes, homicide, rape, kidnapping, robbery, and assault.
 Property crimes are fraud, embezzlement, burglary, larceny, vehicle theft, arson, forgery, and vandalism.
 Behavior crimes include drug, liquor, weapons, curfew, runaway violations, prostitution, gambling, offenses against family and disorderly conduct.
Source: The Oregon Uniform Crime Reporting Program

Benchmark
61

Key Benchmark
OVERALL CRIME
Overall reported crimes per 1,000 Oregonians.

Grade
A

Crime is Falling in Oregon

Contributes to Goal 2, Safe, Caring and Engaged Communities.

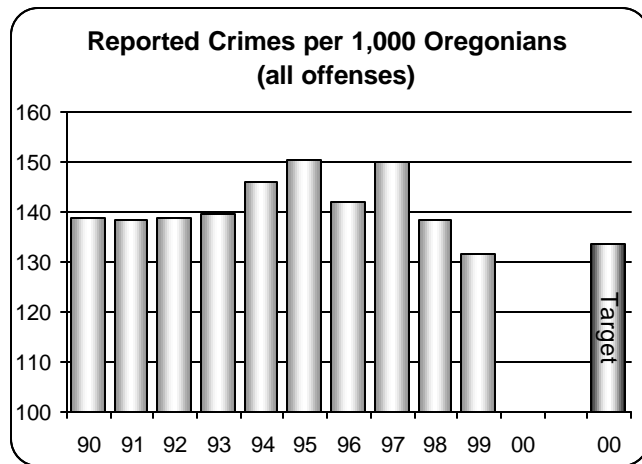
The Oregon Uniform Crime Reporting Program characterizes crime in three ways: 1) crimes against persons (sex crimes, homicide, rape, kidnapping, robbery, and assault); 2) crimes against property (fraud, embezzlement, burglary, larceny, vehicle theft, arson, forgery, and vandalism); and 3) behavioral crimes (drug, liquor, weapons, curfew, runaway violations, prostitution, gambling, offenses against family and disorderly conduct).

Target for 2000

The target for this benchmark aims to reduce reported crimes over all categories about four percent over ten years. *In the future, this benchmark will be stratified by type of crime.*

Grade A Results: Crime Rate is Declining

Reported crime overall in Oregon held steady at about 140 per 1,000 until the mid-90s, peaking at about 150 and then decreasing dramatically since 1997 to a low of 131.7 in 1999. This exceeds the target for 2000 and earns an “A” for this benchmark.



Source: Oregon State Police

OREGON'S NATIONAL CRIME RANK

	1995	1996	1997	1998
OR	45th	42nd	46th	44th
WA	42nd	39th	41st	46th

Source: CJED: The Development Report Card 1st=best

How Oregon Compares

Oregon's offenses per 100,000 population exceeded the national average in 1998 and 1999 and Oregon ranked near the bottom for crime when compared to other states.* However, Oregon's crime rate dropped 11% between 1998 and 1999, compared to a slower drop in Washington and an 8% crime increase nationwide.

ALL OFFENSES PER 100,000

	1998	1999
OR	5,646	5,002
WA	5,867	5,255
U.S.	4,266	4,619

FBI, Uniform Crime Reports, 1999

What Has Been Done and What Needs to be Done

Oregon's crime spending increased in the 1990s. In the mid 80s, Oregon had not built new prisons in decades. Less than half of convicted felons served time and even more served partial sentences because of overcrowding. By 1994, Oregon had added thousands of prison beds and more than two-thirds of convicted felons served time. Since 1994, Oregon added even more prison beds and programs, and a unique partnership between state and county corrections agencies called the “Community Corrections Partnership Act” of 1995. Between 1993 and 1997, state spending on public safety increased by 66 percent.

Building up corrections and criminal justice resources is only part of the answer. In 1997, Governor Kitzhaber advocated four additional steps, the first and most important of which was to target high-risk juveniles to keep them out of criminal activity. The other steps were: 2) increase the number of law enforcement officers; 3) focus on public safety—through Local Public Safety Coordinating Councils; and 4) improve public safety information systems and program effectiveness data. The Governor's proposed 2001-2003 budget cuts back on some law enforcement programs.

Relevant State Agencies: State Department of Police, www.osp.state.or.us. (See the Oregon Progress Board website for other key players and stakeholders.)

See Also: www.crimevictimsunited.org, www.ncpc.org, www.ncjrs.org/statswww.html, www.albany.edu/sourcebook, www.governor.state.or.us/governor/speeches/s971119.htm

*Benchmark 61 counts all offenses and this is represented in the bar chart, above. However, since crimes are variously defined across states, national comparisons are based on only a few specific index crimes, which are the basis of the “crime index.”

Benchmark
62

Key Benchmark

JUVENILE ARRESTS

Total juvenile arrests per 1,000 juvenile Oregonians per year.

Grade
C

Juvenile Arrests Have Dropped since 1996

Contributes to Goal 2, Safe, Caring and Engaged Communities.

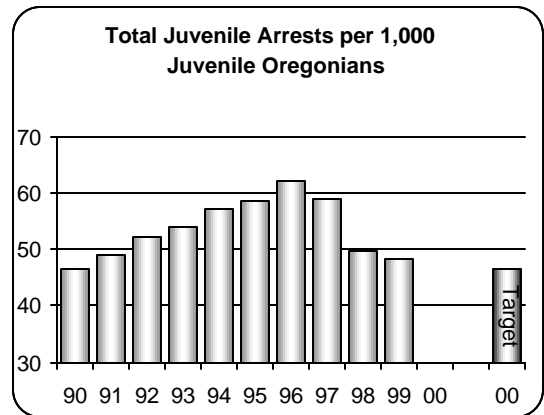
Juvenile (under 18) crime is often one aspect of a cluster of behaviors - including substance abuse, teen pregnancy, dropping out of school and violence. Almost all professionals agree that support and treatment of these at-risk children is critical. Even more critical for society and child is crime prevention, by fostering a sense of connection to school and family and by finding ways to help these individuals feel loved, valued and safe.

Target aims for 1990 Level

This target was adjusted in 1996 based on the upward swing that was evident at that time. Therefore, the 2000 target is the same as the actual base year rate (in 1990), upon which the grade is calculated.

Juvenile Crime Lower, but Still Above 1990

Juvenile crime has markedly decreased since its peak in 1996 of 62 per 1000 to a 1999 rate of 48.3, just higher than the base year and target year rate of 46.5. The most notable decline was from 1997 to 1998 when the rate dropped by nearly 16%.



Source: Oregon State Police

JUVENILE ARREST RATES

	1998	1999
OR	3,180	2,734
WA	3,910	3,408
U.S.	2,524	2,210

OJJDP, Statistical Briefing Book

How Oregon Compares

The table at left demonstrates that Oregon's juvenile arrest rate per 100,000 teens (10-17) was higher than the nation but lower than Washington in 1998 and 1999. Oregon's drop from 1998 to 1999 was greater at 14% than either Washington's (13%) or the U.S. (12%).*

What Needs to be Done

There are three recurring themes in reducing juvenile crime: community, prevention, and protection. Research has found that the level of community cohesion, social trust, and a shared willingness to intervene in the lives of children is a reliable predictor of juvenile crime rates. Urban neighborhoods exhibiting community cohesion found lower rates of juvenile crime where risk factors such as poverty, unemployment, racial discrimination and single-parent households would have predicted otherwise.

Some experts believe the only way to substantially reduce serious offending is through prevention, including early and long term intervention which addresses risk factors that can multiply and become more interwoven over time**. The 1999 Oregon legislature spent \$20 million and Governor Kitzhaber's proposed 2001-2003 budget proposes \$30 million for juvenile crime prevention. This is in addition to 66\$ for early childhood programs.

Established in 1995, the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) addresses a continuum of services to protect the public and reduce juvenile crime. Other public safety efforts include Oregon's Measure 11 (passed in 1994), which requires that violent youth offenders be treated as adults. Subsequently, Oregon has more than doubled prison space for juveniles.

Relevant State Agencies: State Department of Police, www.osp.state.or.us; Adult Family Services Division, www.afs.hr.state.or.us; Oregon Youth Authority, www.oya.state.or.us. (See the Oregon Progress Board website for other key players and stakeholders.)

See Also: www.pdxccc.org, www.ncpc.org, www.ncjrs.org/statswww.htm, www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/data.htm, www.open.org/~lwvor/M11JJ.htm

* This Oregon Benchmark counts all offenses. However, since crimes are variously defined across states, national comparisons are based on only seven specific crimes which are the basis of the "crime index."

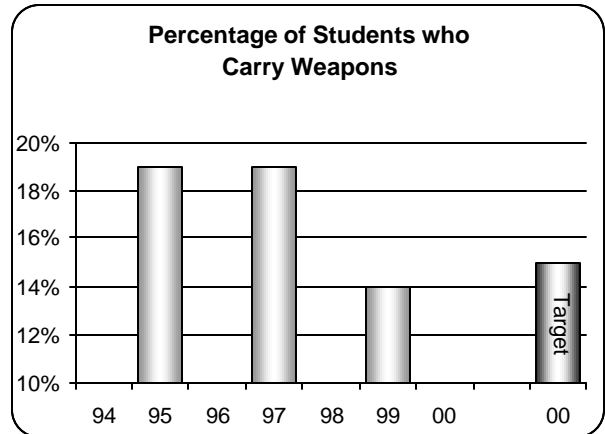
** "Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising." University of Maryland Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice; U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, February 1997.

63	Students Carrying Weapons <i>Percentage of students who carry weapons.</i>	For Benchmarks 61, 62, see pages 51-52.	Grade A
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Fewer Grade 9-12 Students Carrying Weapons
Weapon-related violence in adolescents was catapulted to the top of the national scene after a series of deadly school shootings in the late 1990s.

The percentage of students in grades 9-12 who carry weapons declined to 14% in 1999, exceeding the 2000 target of 15% and earning an “A” for this benchmark. However, this still means that roughly 22,000 Oregon students carried weapons in 1999. This benchmark is based on self-reporting by students through Oregon’s Youth Risk Behavior Survey

(See Benchmark 62 for an analysis of juvenile arrests.)



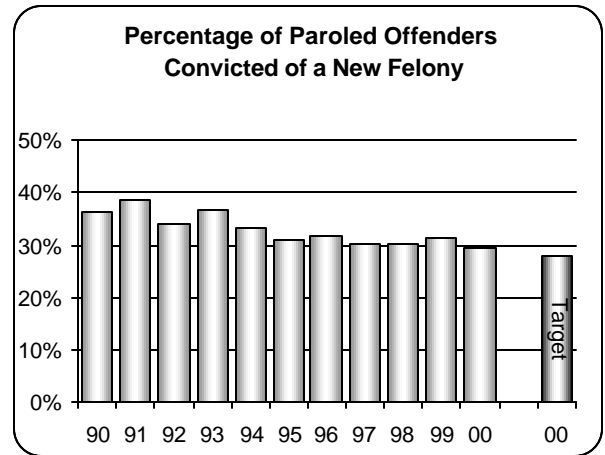
Source: Oregon Health Division

64	Adult Recidivism <i>Percentage of paroled offenders convicted of a new felony within three years of initial release.</i>		Grade B-
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Recidivism Going Down
This benchmark defines recidivism as the percentage of paroled offenders from adult court, convicted of a new felony within three years of parole. This is a critical measure of public safety and our ability to help felons succeed in the community.

The chart at right shows that Oregon’s recidivism rate has declined throughout the 1990s from 37% in 1990 to 30% in 1997. The target for 2000 was 28%.

In the future this benchmark will be reworded to specify adult offenders and a new benchmark will focus on juvenile recidivism (see Benchmark 65, below).

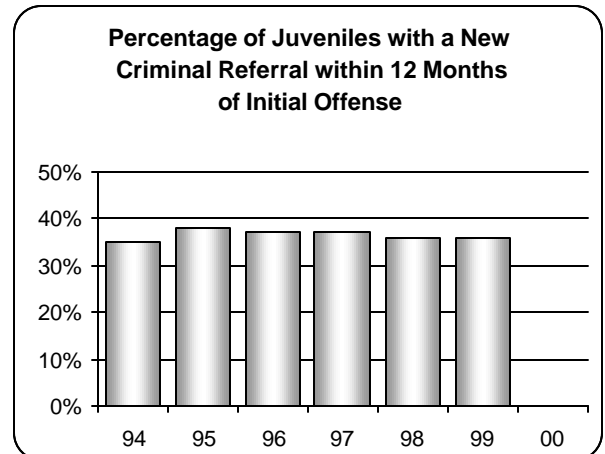


Source: Oregon Department of Corrections

65 (New)	Juvenile Recidivism <i>Percentage of juveniles with a new criminal referral to a county juvenile department within 12 months of the initial criminal offense.</i>		Grade N/A
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1/3 of Juvenile Offenders Repeat within 12 Months
This new benchmark tracks the extent to which juvenile offenders repeat within 12 months of their initial offense. Data show that juvenile recidivism has dropped slightly from the decade high of 38% in 1995. It remained at 36% in 1998 and 1999, one percentage point higher than the base year (1994). Future targets will aim to reduce this to 33% or less. (See Appendix A.)

Oregon data show that 14% of all juveniles commit 82% of all new offenses. State officials acknowledge past methods have not worked and new approaches are needed. Oregon’s new Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) will allow better analysis of factors contributing to juvenile recidivism and provide more insight into the services that may better address them.



Source: Oregon Youth Authority

66

Cooperative Policing

Percentage of counties that have completed a strategic cooperative policing agreement.

Grade

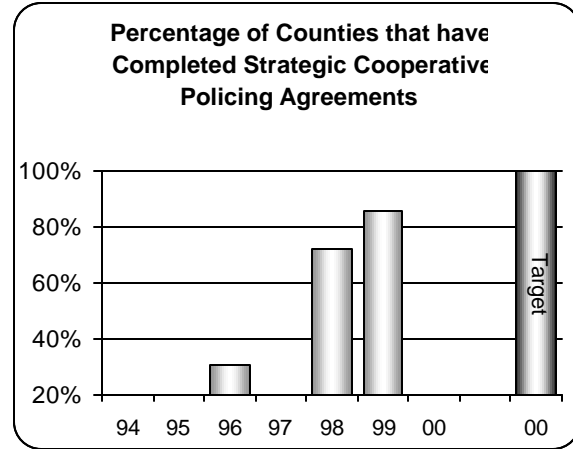
A

Cooperative Policing Leverages Public Safety Resources

Cooperative policing is an Oregon invention that was born out of the notion that mutual ownership between multiple agencies and the public is necessary to create safe, crime-free communities.

Oregon's State Police and the chiefs of police and sheriffs are partnering with district attorneys' offices to activate cooperative policing agreements in each of Oregon's 36 counties. Between 1996 and 1999, 20 additional Oregon counties entered into cooperative policing agreements, bringing the total to 31 or 86% of all counties.

All counties have functioning Local Public Safety Coordinating Councils, mandated in 1995 by SB1145.



Source: Oregon State Police

67

Emergency Preparedness

Percentage of Oregon counties with the capability to respond to an emergency, and to assist communities to recover fully.

Grade

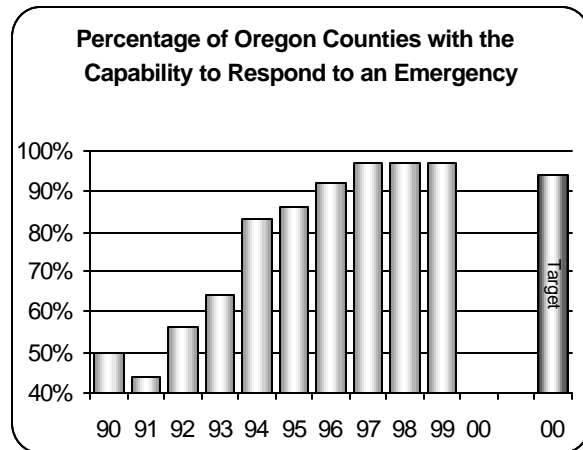
A

Nearly All Counties Meet Preparedness Standards

Emergency preparedness means that each county must have a minimum emergency plan plus meet three of these five categories: 1) hazard analysis, 2) all-hazards disaster plan, 3) emergency management organization, 4) emergency management training, and 5) an on-going exercise program.

As of 1999, all but one county met these criteria. This is a marked improvement from 1991 when only 16 (or 44%) of Oregon's 36 counties met the emergency preparedness standards.

The Oregon Progress Board will modify this benchmark to address county preparedness for geo-hazards when appropriate data is available.



Source: Oregon State Police