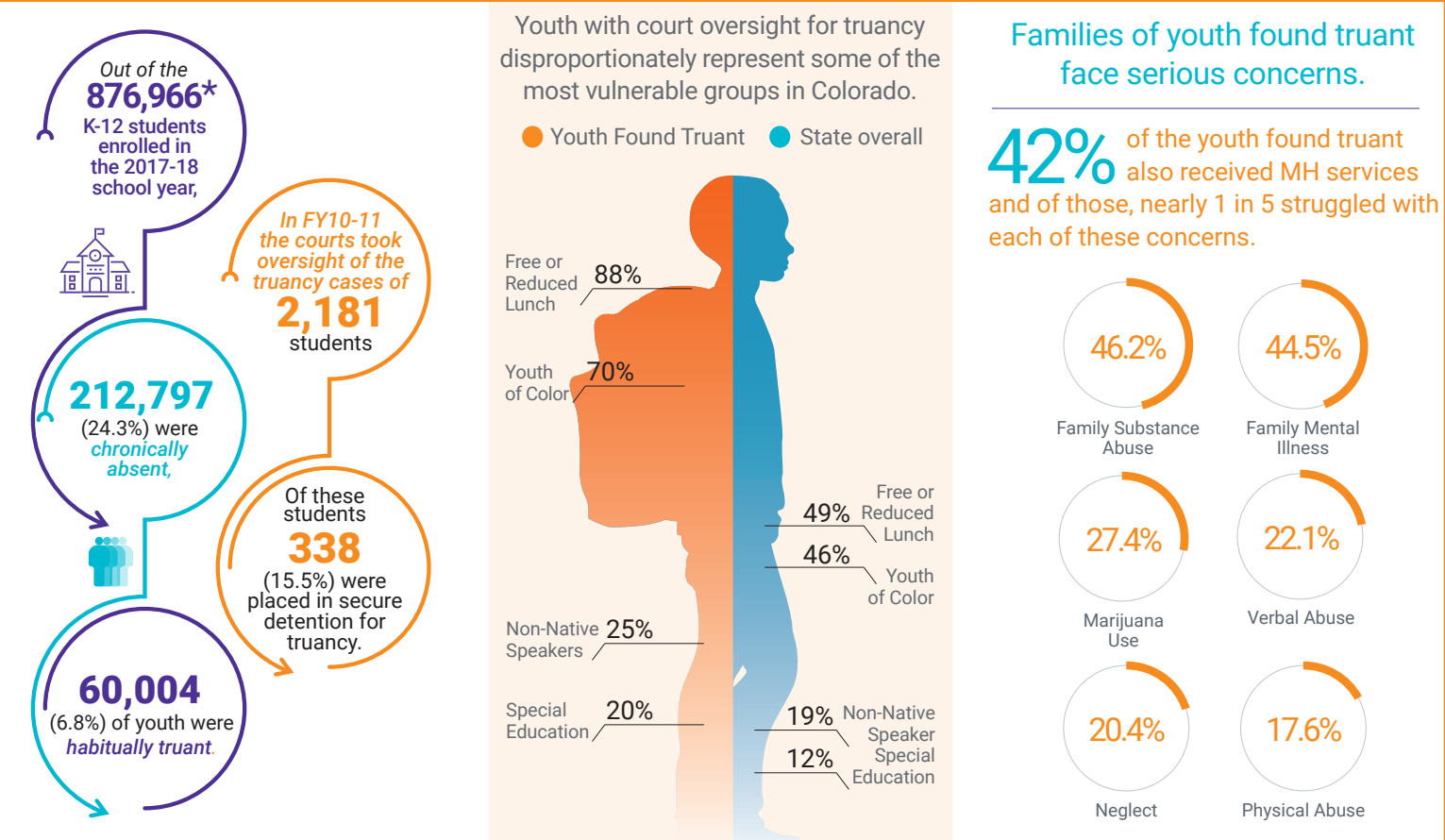


Secure Detention of Youth Found Truant: IMPACTS ON COLORADO YOUTH

Juvenile justice reform efforts are underway both in Colorado and across the country. The impact of using secure detention for truancy is largely understudied. A prior Colorado study of the practice suggested that detaining truant youth had negative impacts. Youth with court oversight for truancy were 1.9 times more likely to have a subsequent criminal filing and 14.5 times less likely to graduate from high school than comparable youth who did not go to secure detention for truancy. The updated study added three additional years to outcome data and incorporated data from the public mental health system.

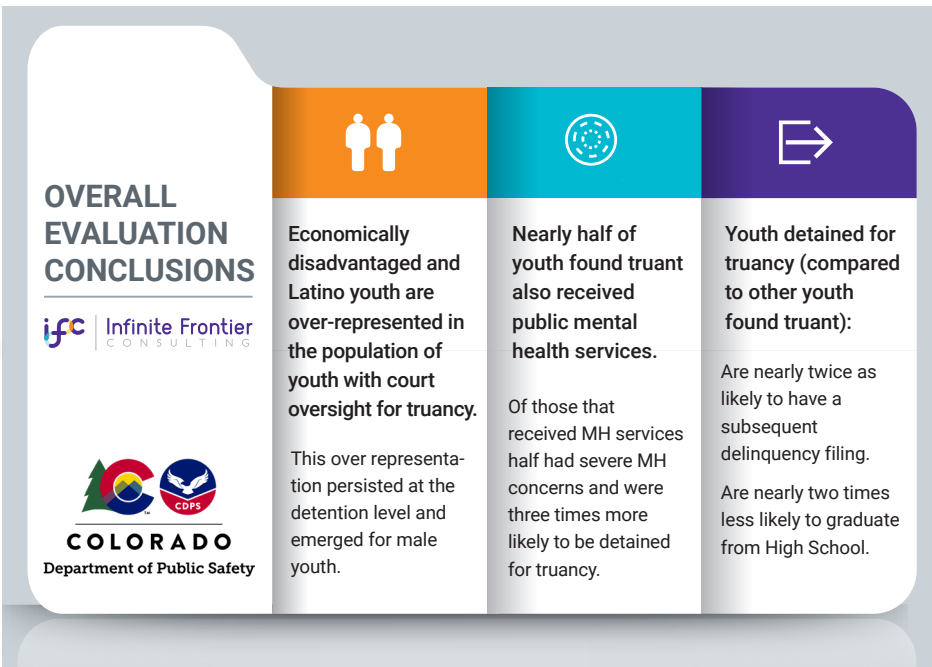
Who are Colorado's Youth Found Truant?



METHODOLOGY: This study matched historical data from Juvenile Justice (FY08-10), Child Welfare (FY03-10), and Mental Health (FY06-10) to students with court oversight of their truancy cases filed in FY10-11.



These data were then analyzed to determine the relative importance in predicting each of three outcomes: Secure Detention, Subsequent Criminal or Juvenile Justice Filings, High School Graduation.

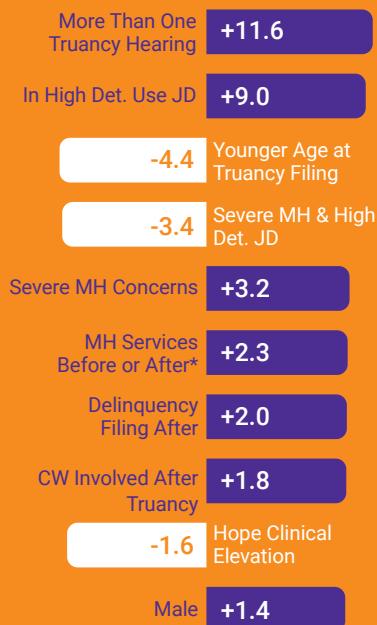


*<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/truancystatistics>. Accessed on 10/11/19

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dcj/truancy-and-use-detention>

How much more or less likely
is a youth to be detained
for truancy?

● Times Less Likely ● Times More Likely



PREDICTORS OF SECURE DETENTION

Local practice: Some JDs filed on youth prior to intensively engaging with families, resulting in an unexpected number of youth with a single court hearing. Youth who appeared before the judge on multiple occasions were more likely to go to detention. Risk of secure detention was also higher if youth had court oversight in a JD that frequently used secure detention for truancy.

Other system involvement: Youth with a delinquency filing after the truancy filing and youth with Child Welfare (CW) involvement after the truancy filing were more likely to be detained for truancy.

Behavioral Health: Youth with mental health needs were overall more likely to go to detention for truancy. Youth with high mental health needs were even more likely to be detained, except when they were filed on in a JD that had high rates of detaining youth for truancy. An absence of hope for the future was also associated with a lower likelihood of detention.

Socio-demographic: Two demographic factors were important: age and gender. Youth with truancy petitions filed under the age of 12 were less likely to be detained across the duration of the study. It is possible the young filing age provided a window into the broader family and environmental challenges influencing school attendance. Male youth were more likely to go to secure detention.

PREDICTORS OF SUBSEQUENT DELINQUENCY FILINGS

Socio-demographic: Youth with a truancy filing before age 12 were 9x less likely to have a later delinquent filing. Male youth were 1.9 times more likely to have a later delinquency filing.

Local practice: More than one truancy hearing, detention for truancy, and a truancy filing in JD C or E all increased the likelihood of a subsequent delinquent filing. In contrast being filed on in JD A or in a high truancy detention utilization JD decreased the likelihood of a delinquency filing.

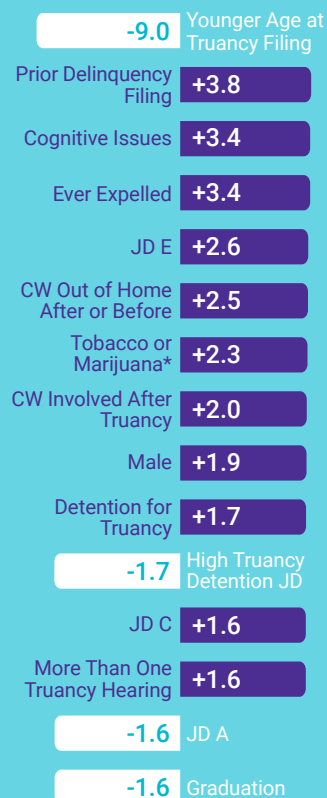
Education: Expulsion and graduation predicted a later delinquency filing.

Other system involvement: Youth with a delinquency filing prior to truancy were nearly 4 times more likely to have a filing after their truancy case started. Youth with child welfare involvement after truancy and youth with a child welfare out of home placement before or after their truancy filing were more likely to have a later delinquency filing.

Behavioral: Marijuana use, tobacco use, and clinically elevated cognitive scores suggesting cognitive impairment were associated with a higher likelihood of later filings.

How much more or less likely
is a youth to have a subsequent
delinquency filing?

● Times Less Likely ● Times More Likely



TRUANCY TERMINOLOGY

Court Oversight: The youth was filed on, had one or more court hearings and the court record indicated a) the youth was found truant by the court or b) the court entered an order (i.e., attend school) compelling an action by the youth or family.

Subsequent Delinquency Filings: includes both delinquency filings (for those under 18) and criminal filings (for those over 18).

More Than One Truancy Hearing: A variable used in analyses to differentiate youth with a single court hearing from those with multiple court hearings.

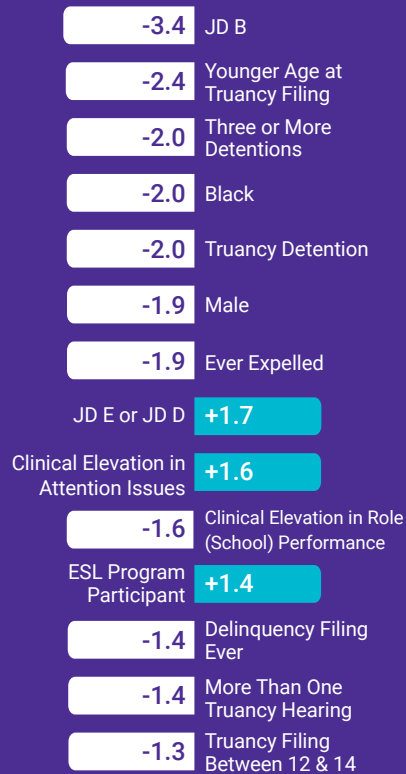
*Composite variables - represents range of values

Factors that Did NOT Impact the Model: Race/Ethnicity or Social Factors (FRL, SPED, ESL, Non-Native English Speaker)

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dcj/truancy-and-use-detention>

How Much Less/More Likely is a Youth to Graduate Based on Each Variable?

● Times Less Likely ● Times More Likely



Note: this model only included the 1,853 youth who were 17.5 years of age by the end of the study period.

ACADEMIC OUTCOMES

A moderate model emerged predicting high school graduation. There are many factors that influence whether a student will graduate so it is not surprising that the variables available are only moderate predictors of graduation. No one factor dominated, although being filed on in JD B did make it 3.4 times less likely that a student would graduate.

Local practice variables also had mixed associations with the likelihood of graduation. A truancy filing in JD B decreased the likelihood of graduation while truancy filings in JD E or D increased the chances of graduation. Having a truancy case length of greater than one hearing also moderately decreased the likelihood of graduation.

Other system involvement was related to decreased likelihood of graduation. A key finding is that being detained for truancy made youth two times less likely to graduate as did having three or more detentions. Ever having a delinquency filing (either before or after the truancy filing) also decreased the likelihood of graduation.

Only one behavioral health variable was associated with a higher likelihood of graduation. Having attention issues that were identified and possibly addressed by the public mental health system was associated with higher graduation rates.

Socio-demographic factors including age, race, and gender did impact the likelihood of graduation. Two age variables, being under the age of 12 or between the ages of 12 and 14 both made it less likely a student would graduate. Furthermore, Black students were two times less likely to graduate and males were 1.9 times less likely to graduate.

Education variables had mixed associations. Ever being expelled decreased the likelihood of graduation. A clinically elevated rating (by a MH clinician) on the Role domain which indicates problems in school performance was also associated with a decreased likelihood of graduation. Participation in an English as a second language program (ESL), however, moderately increased the likelihood of graduation.

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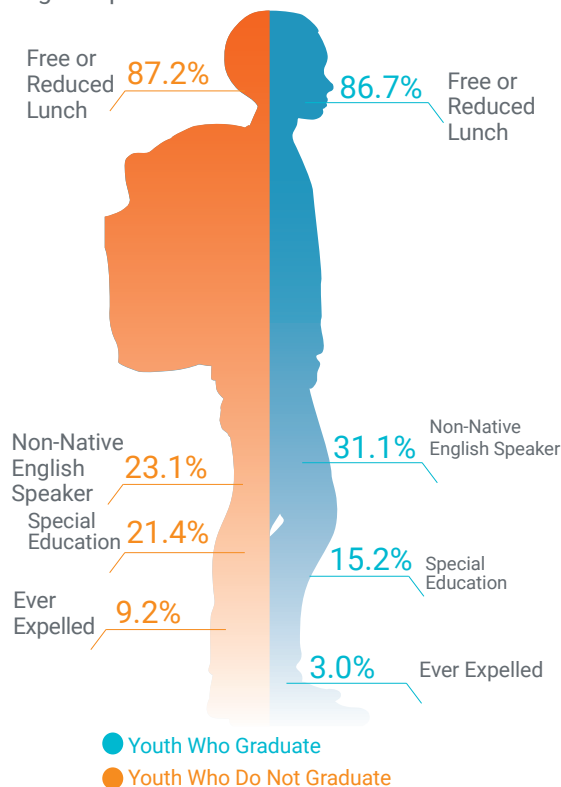
<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dcj/truancy-and-use-detention>

FOCUS ON THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Approximately 29% (533) of youth found truant who were also 17.5 years of age or older by the end of the study period graduated from high school. Those youth who graduated were more likely to be female but did not differ on racial/ethnic characteristics from other youth found truant but who did not graduate.

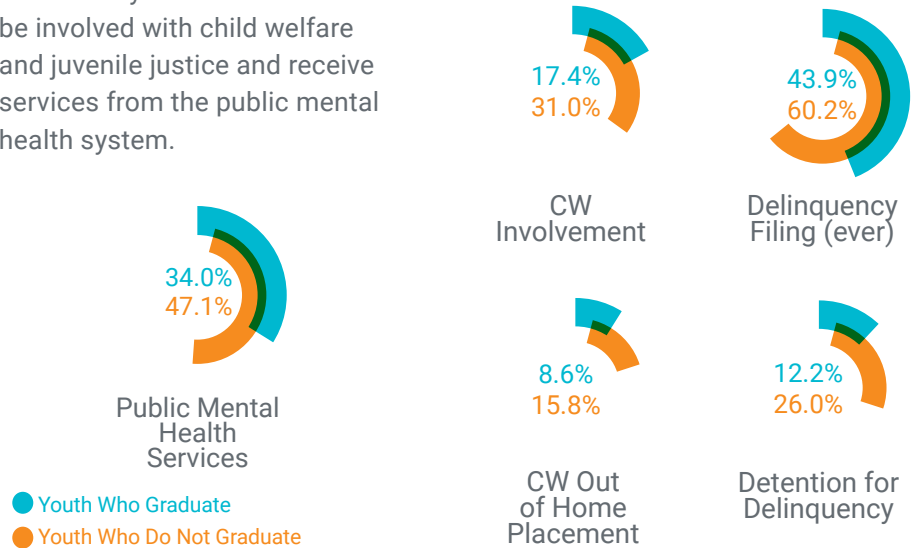
SOCIAL/EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS: YOUTH WHO GRADUATE AND THOSE WHO DO NOT

Youth who graduate have similar rates of economic disparity as measured by free and reduced lunch eligibility, however they are less likely to have special education status or be expelled from school, but more likely to be non-native English speakers.



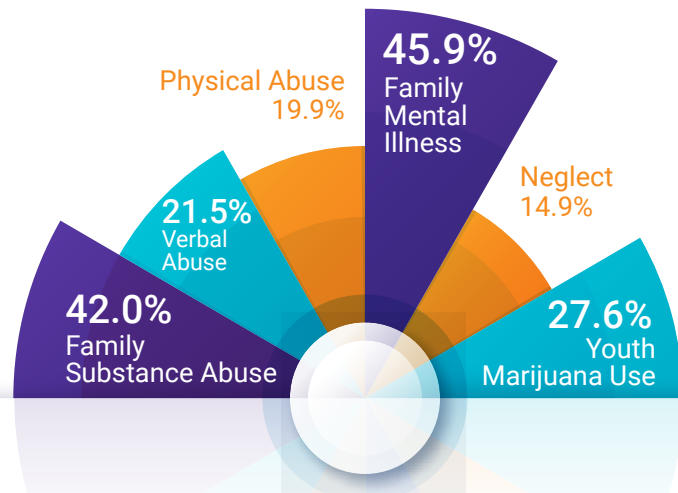
OTHER SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT

Youth who graduate are less likely than other youth found truant to be involved with child welfare and juvenile justice and receive services from the public mental health system.



CLINICAL CONCERNS FOR YOUTH WHO GRADUATE

Of youth who graduate, **34%** (181) received services from the public mental health system. While these youth are achieving the positive outcome of graduating, **they and their families still struggle with some serious concerns.**



OUTCOMES

Youth who graduate are much less likely to have a subsequent delinquency filing or be committed to the Division of Youth Services (DYS) than other youth found truant who do not graduate.

