

North Carolina Department of Crime Control and Public Safety  
 The Governor's Crime Commission  
 Criminal Justice Analysis Center

# COMPONENTS OF CRIME AND JUSTICE

## Trends and Projections

Summer 1997

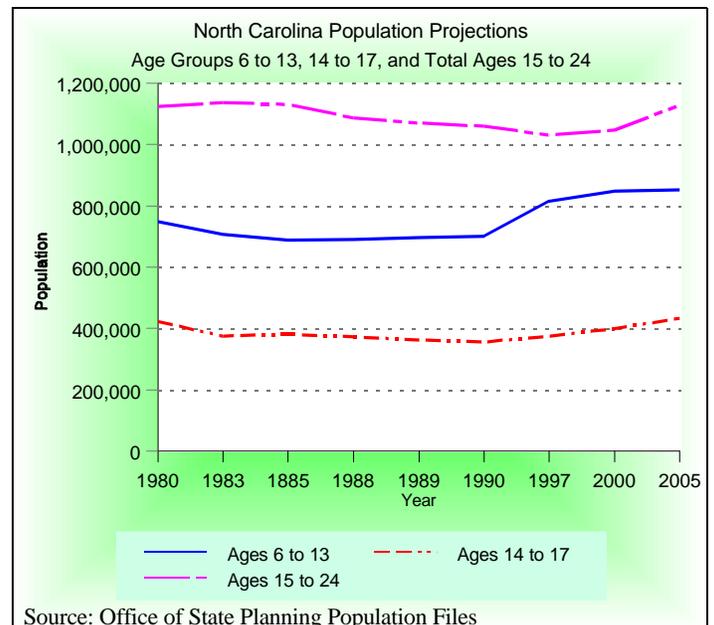
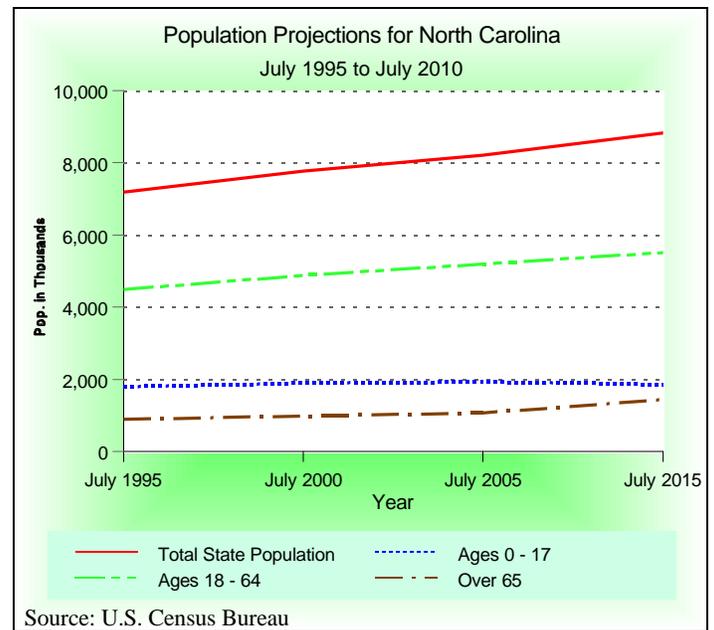
### Forecast of North Carolina's Population

Both the Office of State Planning and the United States Census Bureau are projecting continued growth in North Carolina for the next 18 years. North Carolina's population in 1995 was determined to be 7,195,000 and is projected to rise to 8,227,000 (14.3% increase) by the year 2005 and to 8,840,000 by 2015 (22.9%). Review of the data as broken down in the adjacent chart indicates that each age grouping depicted will maintain roughly similar percentages of total population in the near future.

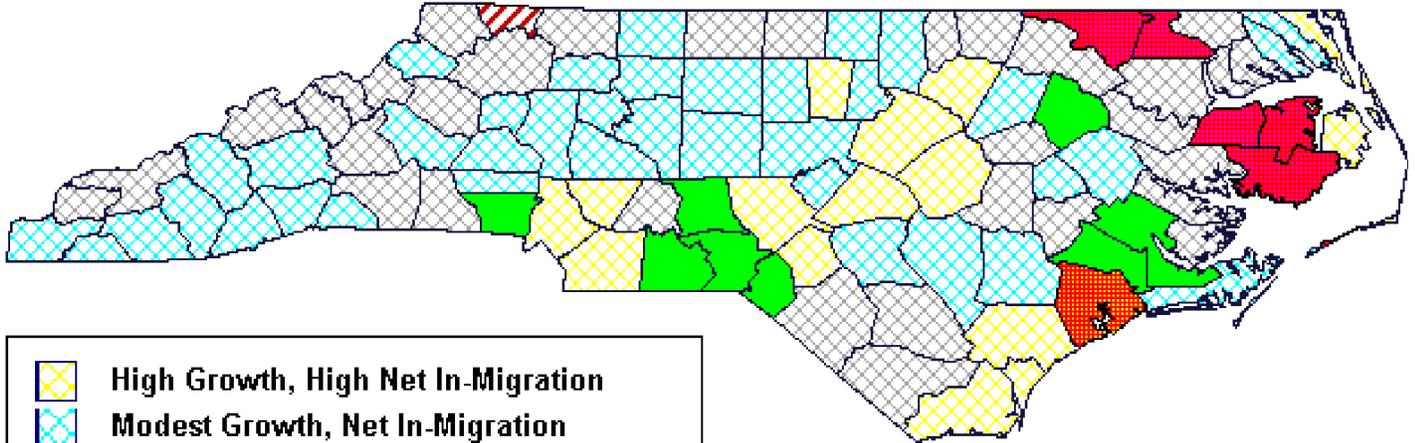
	Age Group % of Total Population			
	1995	2000	2005	2015
Under 18 Years of Age	25	24.5	24	21.2
18 to 64 Years of Age	62.5	62.8	63.5	62.5
Age 65 and Over	12.5	12.7	12.5	16.3

The group most likely to impact this growth is in what is traditionally the workforce age group of 18 to 64. The increase for this group is 715,000 (16%) between 1995 and 2005 and 1,022,000 (23%) by 2015. This would tend to indicate migration of workforce positions into the state. As the second chart illustrates, the 15 to 24 year old population, traditionally the most at risk group for criminal activity and victimization, declined 8.4 percent between 1980 and 1997. This group accounted for 43 percent of the 1996 index crime arrests. The birth boom of the 1980s and 1990s will contribute to a 9.6 percent increase in this age group by 2005. The percentage growth for our senior citizens will increase dramatically by 20 percent in 2005 and by 61 percent in 2015.

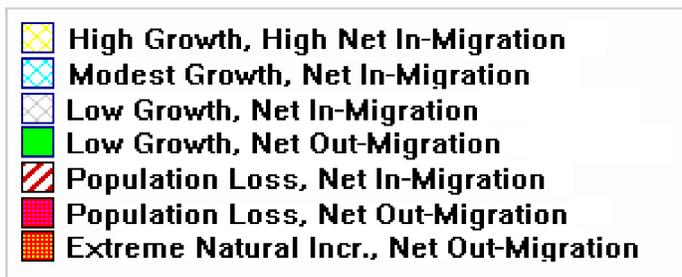
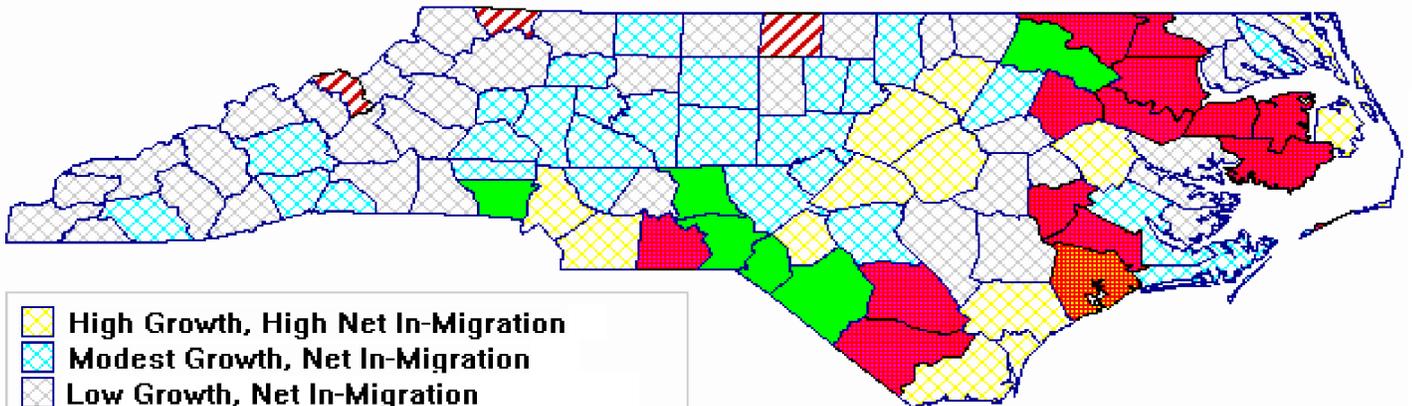
The following maps depict changes in North Carolina counties. Map 1 depicts current (1990s) population trends by county, while Map 2 illustrates the projected trends for the first 10 years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Counties currently experiencing rapid growth are Currituck, Mecklenburg, Union, Cabarrus, Moore, Hoke, Brunswick, Pender, New Hanover, Harnett, Wake, Johnston, Franklin, Dare, and Orange. High growth will continue for these counties between 2000 and 2010, with the addition of Pitt to the high growth category, while a few of the previous counties drop back to the modest growth category. Counties currently experiencing population loss are Hyde, Onslow, Tyrrell, Washington, Northampton, and Hertford. These counties will be joined by Columbus, Bladen, Jones, Lenoir, Edgecombe, Martin, Bertie, and Anson in the first ten years of the next century.



# POPULATION GROWTH 1990 To 2000

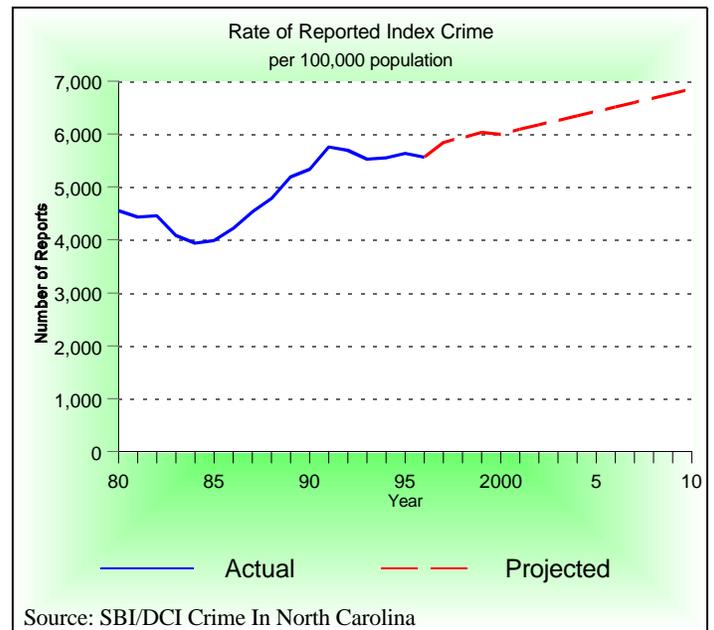


# POPULATION GROWTH 2000 TO 2010



## Reported Index Crime

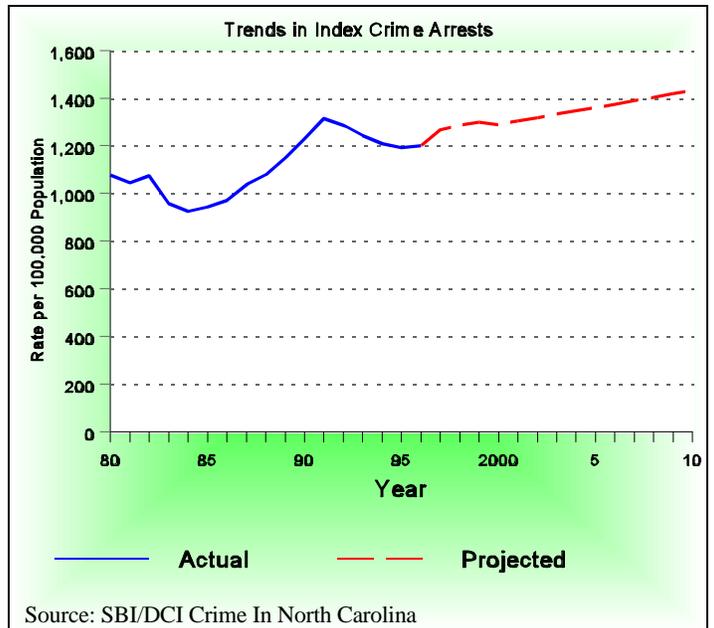
North Carolina's rate of reported index crime grew 79.7 percent between 1980 and 1996. This rate peaked in 1991 and has slowly declined since then. However, if the previously discussed population projections hold true, the reported index crime rate will begin an upward shift by the year 2000. At the turn of the century, this rate could be slightly over 6,000 reported index crimes per 100,000 citizens. By 2010 North Carolina could be reporting 6,851 index crimes for every 100,000 citizens. This would be 23.2 percent higher than the 1996 rate and 50.6 percent greater than the 1980 rate.



## 1980-2010 Index Crime Arrest Rates

The index crime arrest rate fluctuated between 1980 and 1996, reaching a period low in 1984 (925 arrests per 100,000) and peaking in 1991 (1,316 arrests per 100,000). Between 1980 and 1996 the arrest rate grew 11.4 %.

Arrests for index crimes declined from 1991 to 1995, yet they experienced a minimal upswing in 1996. If this trend persists, North Carolina's index crime arrest rate will grow to 1,433 per 100,000 or a total number of 119,469 arrests by 2010. If this occurs, the index crime arrest rate will be 19 percent higher than it is today and 32.8 percent higher than it was in 1980.

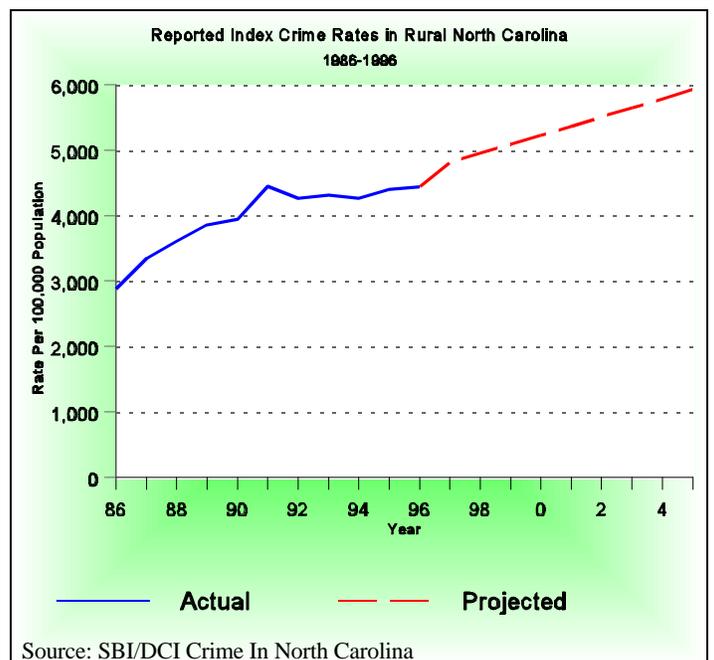


## Reported Index Crime in Rural Areas

In 1986, the rate of reported index crime in rural North Carolina was 2,880 reported incidences per 100,000. Ten years later this rate had swelled to 4,439 reported index crimes per 100,000 rural citizens. This represents an increase of 54.1 percent.

Reported index crime within the rural areas of the state has grown nearly five times faster than reported index crime in urban areas. The rate of reported index crime in the urban areas of the state only grew 11.1 percent from 1986 to 1996.

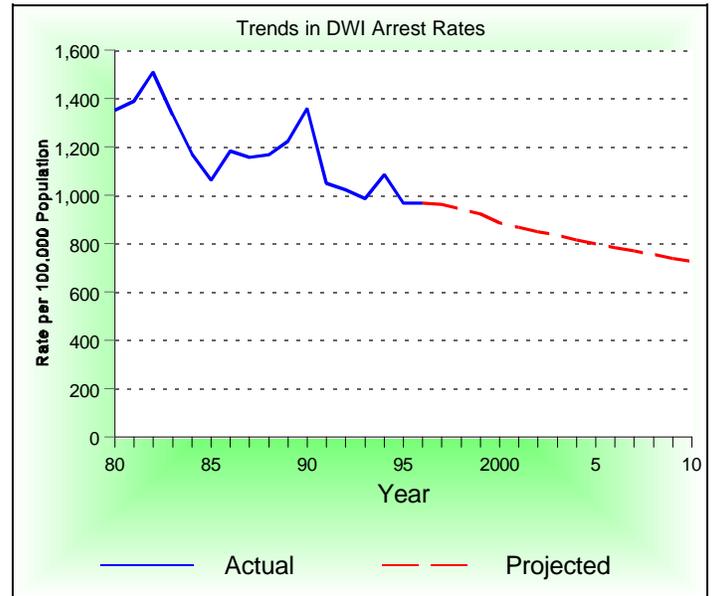
If this growth continues into the next century, an estimated 5,927 index crimes could be reported for rural North Carolina in 2005. This would be 33 percent higher than the rate in 1996 and slightly more than double the 1986 rate.



## D.W.I. Arrests

In the 1980's, D.W.I. arrests varied considerably and ranged from a high of 90,920 in 1982 to a low of 66,567 in 1985. Since this decade began, these arrests have dropped dramatically. Between 1990 and 1996, the total number of D.W.I. arrests declined by 23 percent.

In 1990, the arrest rate was 1,361, per 100,000, and in 1996, it was 1,202.4 per capita. If this downward trend continues, the arrest rate will drop to 886 per 100,000 in the year 2000 and 725.4 per 100,000 in 2010. This would represent a decline of 25 percent when compared to the 1996 rate and a decline of 52 percent when contrasted with the 1982 record high.



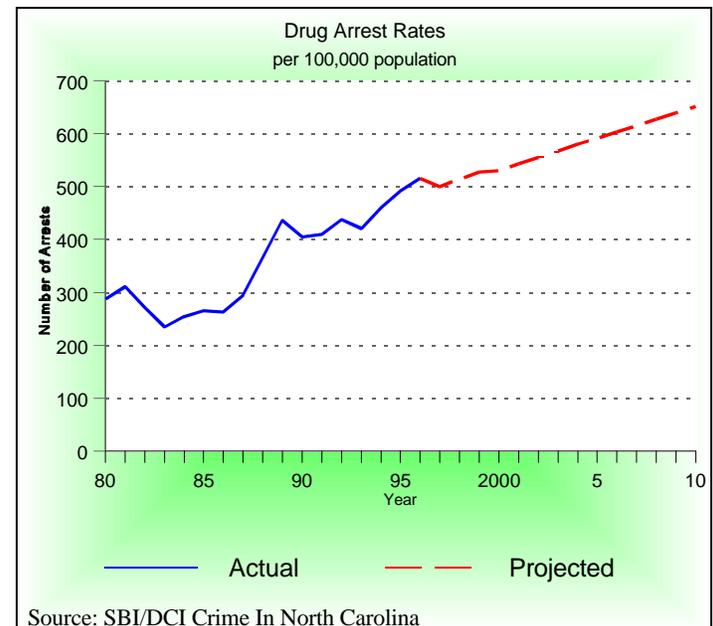
## Drug Arrests

The state's drug arrest rate grew from 286 per 100,000 in 1980 to 515 arrests per 100,000 persons in 1996 (80.1 percent). This rate has grown consistently since 1993, and based on this growth pattern, the state could record as many as 530 arrests per 100,000 in the year 2000. By 2010, the drug arrest rate could be as high as 651 per capita. This would equate to an increase of 26.3 percent over last year's rate and a 127.1 percent increase over the 1980 rate.

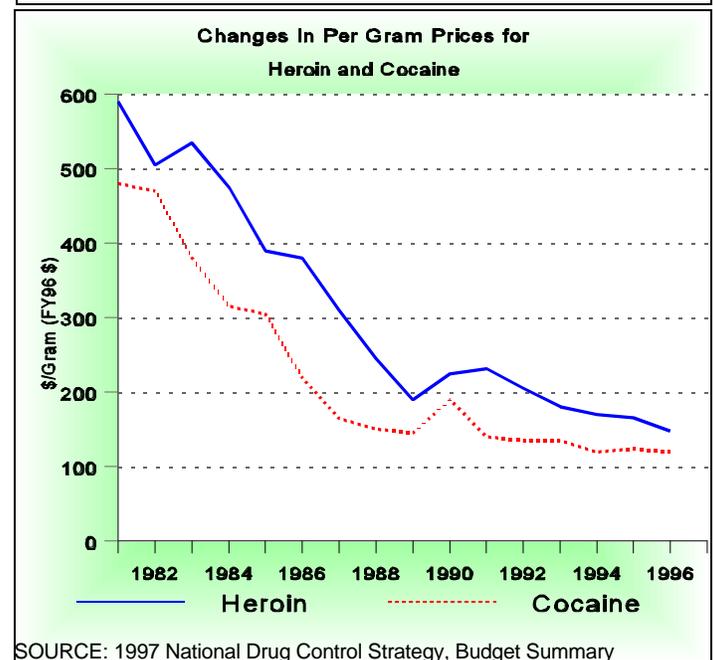
## The Market Economy of Drugs

As legal commodities are seen as having a market utility, illegal drug usage also can be tied to forces such as supply, demand, price, quality, and quantity. The adjacent table provides an overview of the price trends of per gram undercover purchase prices for *pure* cocaine and heroin. The price of heroin has been divided by 10 to facilitate this trend comparison. Economics of given markets have long been the basis for policy decisions.

The trend of heroin and cocaine usage rising during the 1980s and 1990s has a correlation to the fall in street prices for these substances, indicating price affects consumption. In economic markets, higher prices tend to drive down consumption. However, recent trends indicate the lower prices for heroin and cocaine combined with their increasing purity levels have driven new demand among former addicts and younger adults. Prices tend to escalate based on the distance from the source. For example, cocaine is more expensive in Buffalo than in New York City and even more expensive in European countries. However, in Mexico, Florida, and major American cities the prices tend to be lower. The trend of inexpensive drugs prompting a rise in usage can be seen by the spread of D-Methamphetamine use in western states. While this drug has made its way to North Carolina, an abundance of inexpensive high quality cocaine has prevented an outbreak of this drug among substance abusers here.



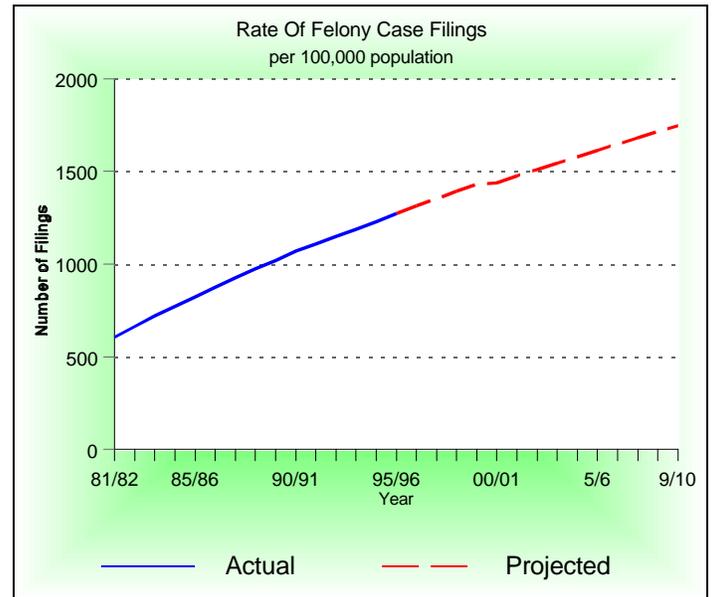
Source: SBI/DCI Crime In North Carolina



SOURCE: 1997 National Drug Control Strategy, Budget Summary

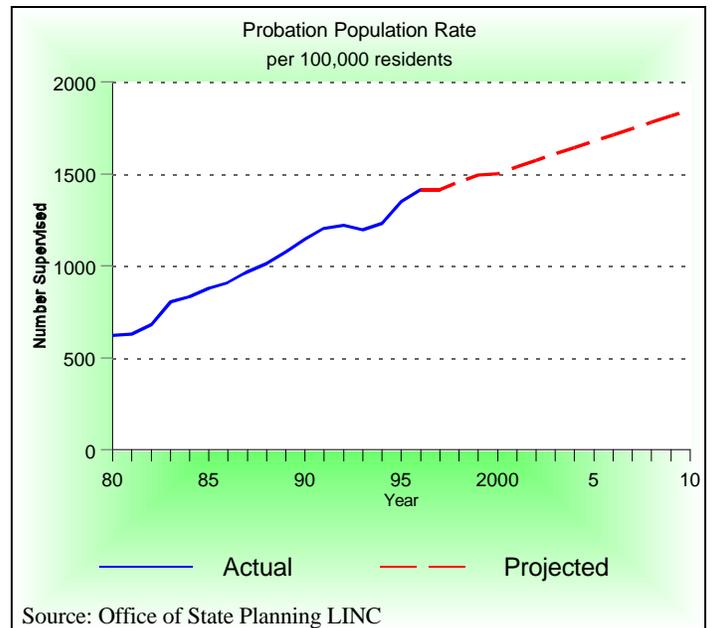
## Felony Case Filings in Superior Court

As the figure demonstrates, the rate at which felony court cases have been filed in North Carolina's Superior Courts has grown each year since 1981. In Fiscal Year 81-82, 606 felony cases were filed per 100,000 citizens ( 36,084 total number). By Fiscal Year 95-96 this rate expanded to 1,274 (110 percent growth with a total number of 90,404 ). If this trend continues into the next decade, an estimated rate of 1,442 felony case filings could be reported in Fiscal Year 2000-2001 and a rate of 1,750 per 100,000 in Fiscal Year 2009-2010. If this projection becomes a reality, this would be 37 percent higher than the 95-96 rate and 189 percent larger than the 81-82 rate.



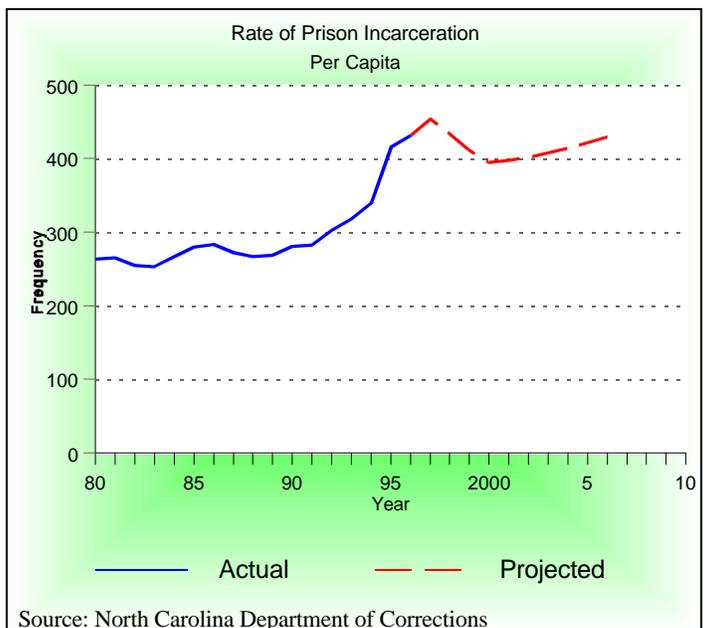
## Probation Population per 100,000

The state's probation population swelled from 623 per 100,000 residents in 1980 to 1,416 in 1996 (127 percent increase). In 1980, a total of 36,651 people were under some form of supervised probation. Sixteen years later, the state's probation population was 101,537. By the year 2000, the probation population rate could surpass 1,500, and by 2010 an estimated 1,850 persons out of every 100,000 could be on probation. This would be 31 percent higher than it was in 1996 and 197 percent greater than the 1980 rate.



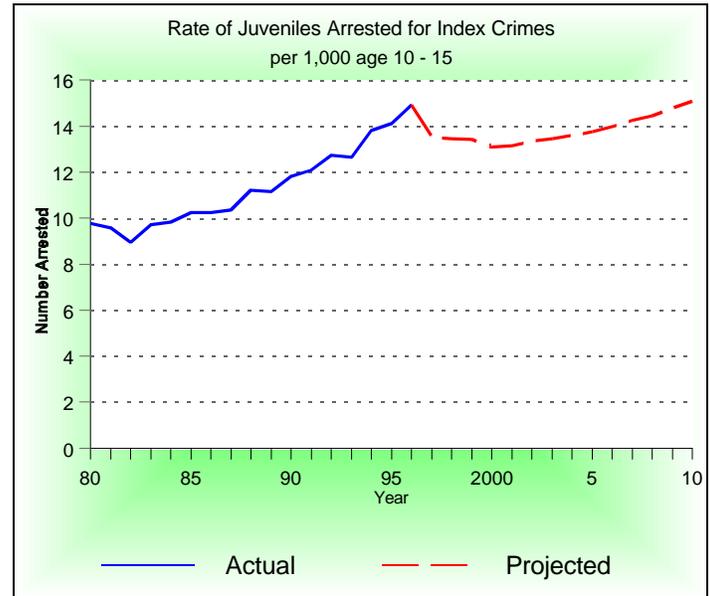
## Prison Population

The incarceration rate has grown from 263 per capita in 1980 to 431 in 1996 (63.8 percent increase). In 1980, the state's prison population was 15,485 and last year it was 30,924. Projections indicate that this population may have peaked, will slowly decline until the year 2000, and then experience an upward shift with 33,741 inmates being housed in the state's prisons by 2005. This equates to a rate of 422 per capita which is slightly lower than the 1996 rate but still 60 percent higher than the 1980 rate.



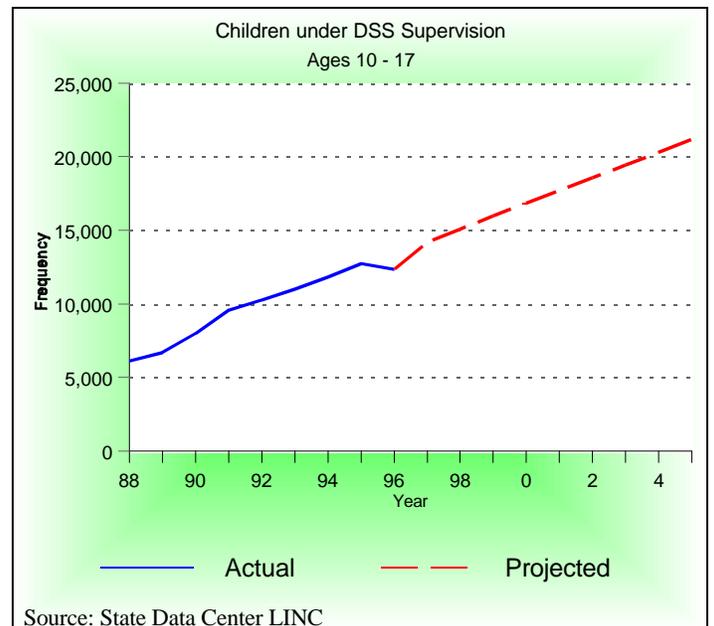
## Juvenile Index Crime Arrests

The rate at which 10 to 15 year old juveniles were arrested for index crimes dipped slightly during the early 1980's but steadily increased from 1986 to 1996. In 1980, 9.8 out of every 1,000 10 to 15 year olds were arrested for committing one of the index crimes. Last year, the rate was a higher 14.9 per 1,000: 52 percent greater than the 1980 arrest rate. Projections derived from the population estimates for this group indicate that these arrests may experience a minimal drop within the next few years and then rise again by 2010. By 2010 the juvenile index crime arrest rate could surpass the trend high level that was reported in 1996. While the rates remain relatively low, it is also important to consider that the 10 to 15 year old juvenile population will have only grown 8 percent between 1980 and 2010; the arrest rate for this group will have grown 67 percent during the same period, and the total number of index crime arrests will have expanded from 5,747 in 1980 to 9,637 in 2010.



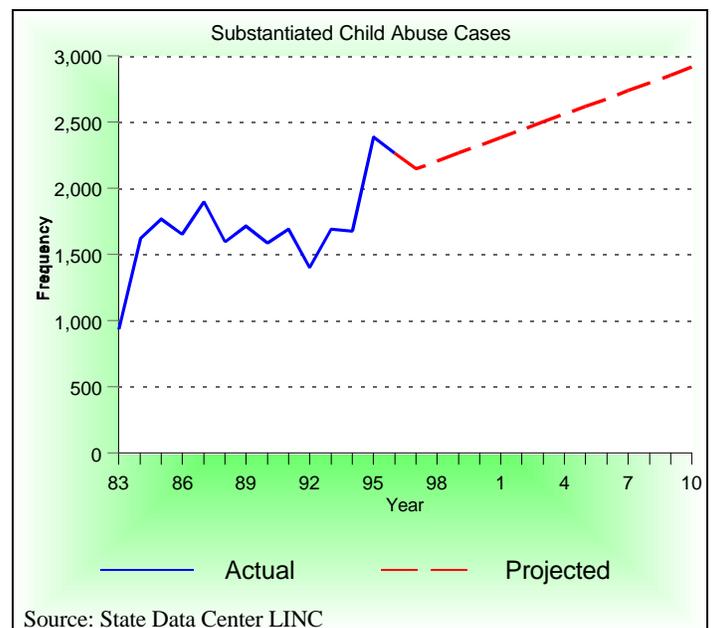
## Children Under DSS Supervision

The number of children under the custody of county departments of social services has more than doubled since 1988. In 1988, there were 6,125 children under supervision, and last year there were 12,382. If this growth trend continues and interacts with the anticipated rise in the state's population of children, an estimated 16,837 kids could be under social services supervision by the year 2000. Five years later, this number could be as high as 21,197. This equates to a projected rate of 11 supervised children for every 1,000. This would be 189 percent greater than the 1988 rate of 3 per 1,000.



## Substantiated Child Abuse Cases

The number of substantiated child abuse cases has fluctuated a considerable amount since 1983. In 1996, there were 2,264 cases which was 142 percent higher than the 934 which were reported in 1983. A large proportion of this increase can be explained by recent changes and improvements in the investigative and reporting processes; however, the data still provide some insight into the nature of this problem. By the year 2000, the number of substantiated cases could approximate 2,327, and by 2010, this number could be as high as 2,917. If this occurs, then the number of substantiated child abuse cases in 2010 would be over 200 percent greater than the number reported in 1983.



## **RECENT SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, and CRIME TRENDS**

- ◆ The unemployment rate declined from 5.8% to 4.3% (1991-1995).
- ◆ Personal per capita income grew from \$18,269 to \$21,082, while the median income for 4 person families grew from \$ 41,766 to \$47,367 (1992-1995).
- ◆ Retail sales grew 35% but farm income dropped 4.5% (1991-1995).
- ◆ The state's total revenue grew 25% with expenditures for health care expanding 64.7%, 48.6% for corrections, 30% for police protection, and 23% for education (1992-1995).
- ◆ Collections for child support increased by 63% (1991-1995).
- ◆ Infant mortality dropped 7.8% (1991-1995).
- ◆ The average SAT score improved from 841 to 860 while the dropout rate declined 49.6% (1990-1995).
- ◆ Weapon carrying in schools and fighting declined, while marijuana use and experimentation with LSD and heroin increased (1993-1995).
- ◆ The number of juveniles who were arrested for weapon law violations increased 116% (1991-1996).
- ◆ Auto and truck registrations grew by 11.4% while traffic accidents increased 33% (1991-1995).
- ◆ The percentage of births to single teens grew 8.9% (1990-1995).
- ◆ Arrests for women have increased 6 ½ times faster than arrests of men with index crime arrests growing 7% for women and declining 5.5% for men (1991-1996).
- ◆ Arrest rates for minorities have grown nearly 2 ½ times faster than those for Whites (1991-1996).

*Sources: State Data Center LINC, Crime in North Carolina, Children's Index, U.S. Census Bureau, High School Risk Behavior Survey*

## **Selected Findings from the 1995 North Carolina Youth Risk Behavior Survey**

- 31% of the middle school students who responded to this survey reported that they had carried a gun previously.
- 7.9% of the high school respondents stated that they had carried a gun within the last month.
- 10% of the middle school students reported that they had been threatened with/or injured by weapons at school.
- 8% of the high school students reported being threatened or injured with a weapon at school within the past year.
- 66% of the middle school respondents and 28.4% of the high school students admitted that they had been in a physical fight.
- 40% of the middle school students had ridden in a vehicle which was driven by someone who had been drinking, and 29% of the high school students did this within the past month.
- 58.5% of the middle school students and 69% of the high school students had consumed alcohol at some point in their lives.
- Prior marijuana use was reported by 16.5% of the middle school students and 36% of the high school students.
- Less than five percent of both groups reported prior cocaine use.
- Nearly 1/5th of the middle and high school students had sniffed glue or other inhalants.

Sources: Department of Public Instruction, Middle School Risk Behavior, 1995 Survey Results; High School Risk Behavior, 1995 Survey Results

## **Firearms and Crime Facts**

- In North Carolina, the percentage of robberies and aggravated assaults which are committed with firearms has remained relatively stable since 1980. Approximately 45 percent of all robberies and 28 percent of all aggravated assaults involve firearms.
- The same consistency is true for murder with around 70 percent of these being committed with a firearm.
- However, the percentage of murders which are committed with handguns has increased from 44.6% in 1980 to 51.9% in 1996.
- The adult arrest rate for weapon law violations grew 55.2% from 1980 to 1996 while the juvenile rate grew 813.3%.
- A national survey of inmates revealed that concealable, large caliber handguns are the most preferred for criminal activity. Nationally, large caliber revolvers are the most frequent type of gun used in murder, but the number of murders involving semiautomatic weapons is increasing.
- National Crime Victimization Survey data indicate that 86% of all firearm related crime involved handguns.
- More than 40 million handguns have been produced in the U.S. since 1973.
- The F.B.I.'s stolen gun file contains more than 2 million reports of which 60% are handgun thefts.
- Young Black males continue to be the most vulnerable to handgun crime victimization. For males 16 to 19, this group's victimization rate is four times higher than the rate for White males.
- Gunshot wounds are the second leading cause of death for 15 to 24 year olds.
- The average gunshot injury costs the victim \$83,500.

Sources: Crime in North Carolina, BJS Guns and Crime Brief, BJS Guns Used in Crime-Selected Findings, National Public Services Research Institute

The following predictions about the future were offered in 1983 by the Crime Commission's Committee on Future Directions. Fourteen years later, it is informative to revisit these and assess their accuracy.

- The criminal justice system will be more integrated with a greater reliance on information
- Greater emphasis placed on serious offenses
- Awareness of victims' needs will grow
- Technology will revolutionize the system
- Electronic monitoring will be used to track offenders
- Crimes by, and against, the elderly will increase
- Females will be committing more crime and more women will be employed within the system
- Law enforcement's use of non-lethal weaponry will increase
- Shift from street crime to white collar and environmental crimes
- The right to bear arms may take on a new meaning
- Future seems to promise less violent crime
- Strong pressure to return to a "beat" system of policing
- Accounts of victims will be given greater consideration by the courts
- Fewer and speedier trials
- Arbitration and mediation will become powerful tools of justice
- The length of sentences will generally be shorter
- All offenders will compensate their victims
- Only the most serious offenders will be incarcerated
- Many juveniles will be served by the community and be diverted from entering the formal system

Source: Tomorrow Together: *Future Directions of Crime and Justice in North Carolina*. A report by the Governor's Crime Commission, December 1983.