



Utah State Courts



JUVENILE COURT REPORT CARD TO THE COMMUNITY 2009



When citizens are asked what they would like the juvenile justice system to accomplish, the message is clear. Citizens expect the justice system to further community safety, hold offenders accountable, and protect the constitutional rights of juveniles, while at the same time providing justice to victims. They also expect juvenile offenders to stop criminal behavior and become responsible and productive citizens.

Taxpayers invest significant resources in the justice system and should expect a sound return on this investment. The purpose of this report card is to provide taxpayers with an update on how Utah's juvenile justice system is performing. The Juvenile Court has established benchmarks, which are listed in this report, to inform the community on its progress in furthering safety, restoring justice for victims, and reducing the risk of re-offending.

The Juvenile Court can and should be held accountable for its performance on these measures. The highest level of public safety, however, is achieved not only through the sound use of tax dollars, but through public involvement. Working together we can build a safer and more just community.



Ray Wahl
Juvenile Court Administrator

DELINQUENCY REFERRALS

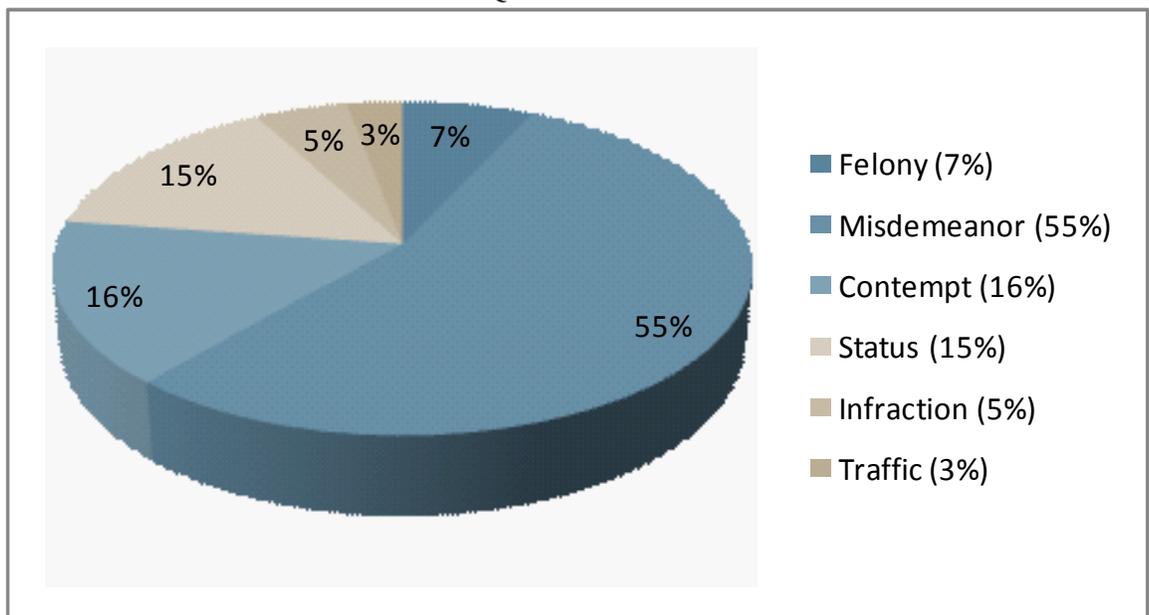


Delinquency referrals are an important measure of juvenile crime. When a juvenile commits an offense in the community, he or she may be referred to the Juvenile Court by a number of different agencies, such as the local police department or school. The type of crime determines the severity of the referral to the Juvenile Court.

There are six major severity categories for delinquency referrals: felonies, misdemeanors, contempt of court, status, infraction, and traffic offenses. Felony-level offenses, such as burglary or robbery, are the most severe. These offenses are defined as those punishable with more than one year in prison, if committed by an adult. Misdemeanor-level offenses, such as theft or shoplifting, are less severe offenses that would be punishable with up to one year in jail and/or a fine, if committed by an adult. Status offenses, such as truancy or alcohol possession, are offenses that would not be a violation of the law but for the age of the offender. Infractions, such as disorderly conduct or criminal trespass, are lesser offenses that are not punishable by imprisonment. Certain traffic offenses are also referred to the Juvenile Court when committed by a juvenile. For more information on the classification of offenses, please see the Utah Code.

Similar to 2007, most delinquency cases referred to the Juvenile Court in 2008 were misdemeanor offenses. Misdemeanor offenses accounted for 55 percent of delinquency referrals in 2008. In contrast, the percent of delinquency referrals for status offenses decreased slightly from 17 percent to 15 percent. The percent of felony referrals and traffic referrals remained unchanged between 2007 and 2008.

DELINQUENCY REFERRALS 2008

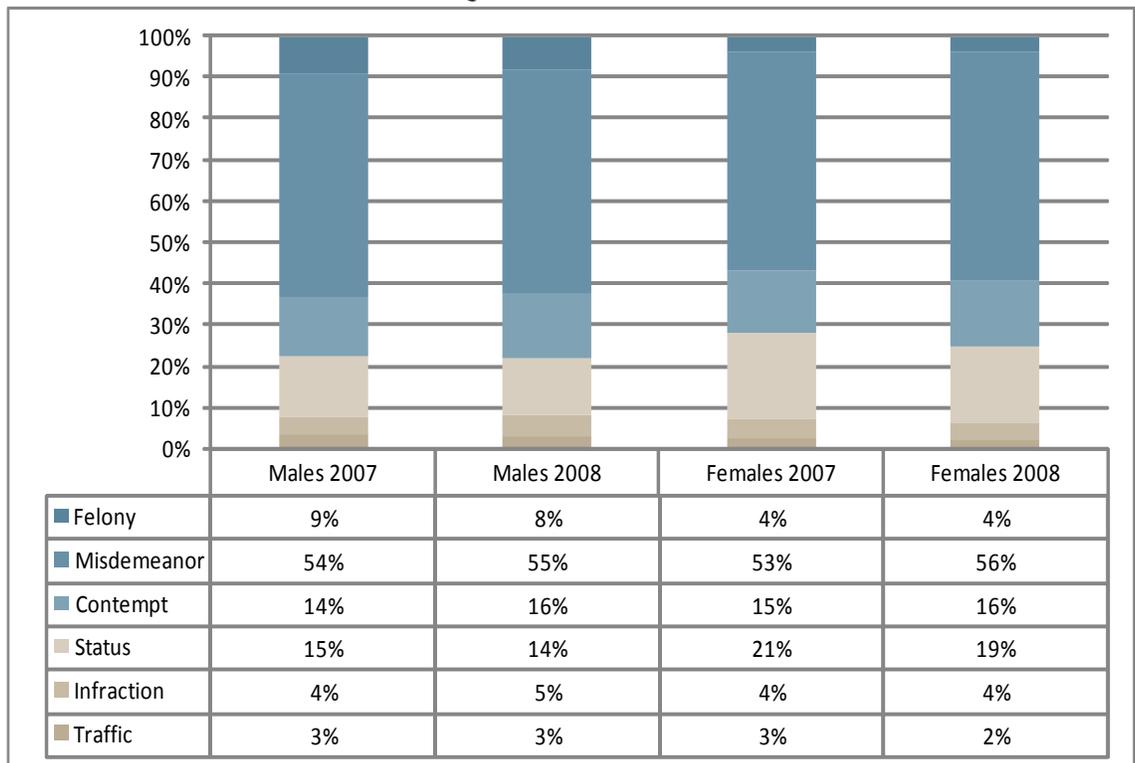




Delinquency referral rates varied for male and female juveniles in 2008. While 14 percent of referrals for males were for status offenses, 19 percent of referrals for females were for status offenses. In contrast, a higher percentage of referrals for males were for felony offenses. Eight percent of referrals for males were for felony offenses while 4 percent of referrals for females were for felony offenses.

When comparing 2008 to the previous year, the percent of male referrals for contempt increased slightly from 14 percent to 16 percent between 2007 and 2008. The percent of female referrals for misdemeanors also increased from 53 percent to 56 percent. However, the percent of male referrals for felonies and the percent of female referrals for status offenses both declined slightly.

DELINQUENCY REFERRALS BY GENDER



Note: Due to rounding, totals may not equal 100 percent.

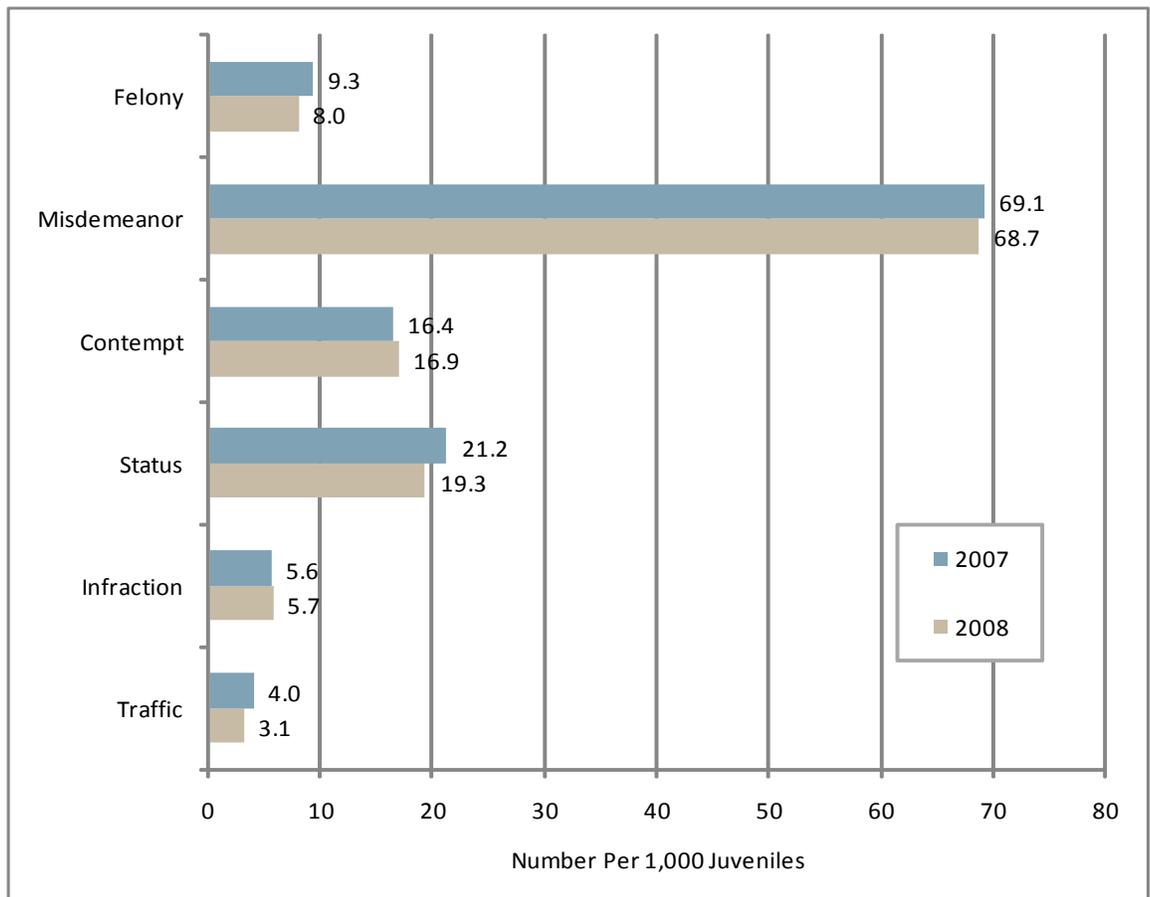
JUVENILE CRIME

Another key indicator of juvenile delinquency is the per capita rate of delinquency referrals. The per capita referral rate examines the number of delinquency referrals for youth 10 to 17 years of age per 1,000 members of the Utah population 10 to 17 years of age. This measure compares juvenile crime referral trends across years while controlling for changes in the juvenile population size.



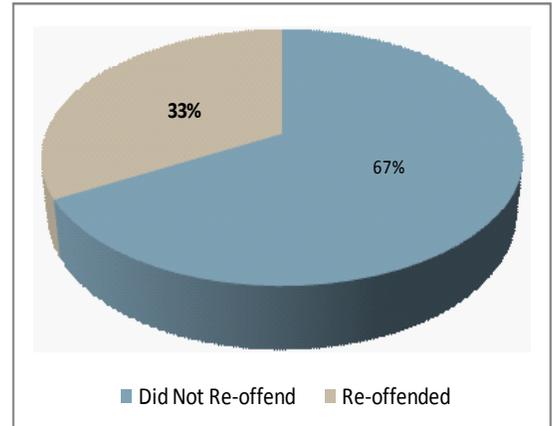
The overall per capita rate of delinquency referrals fell from 125.6 referrals per 1,000 youth in 2007, to 121.6 referrals per 1,000 youth in 2008. Felony offense rates, misdemeanor offense rates, status offense rates, and traffic offense rates also declined between 2007 and 2008. The rate of contempt referrals increased slightly from 16.4 referrals per 1,000 youth, to 16.9 referrals per 1,000 youth between 2007 and 2008. Infraction referral rates remained relatively stable with 5.6 infraction referrals per 1,000 youth in 2007, and 5.7 infraction referrals per 1,000 youth in 2008.

PER CAPITA REFERRAL RATES



LAW ABIDING BEHAVIOR

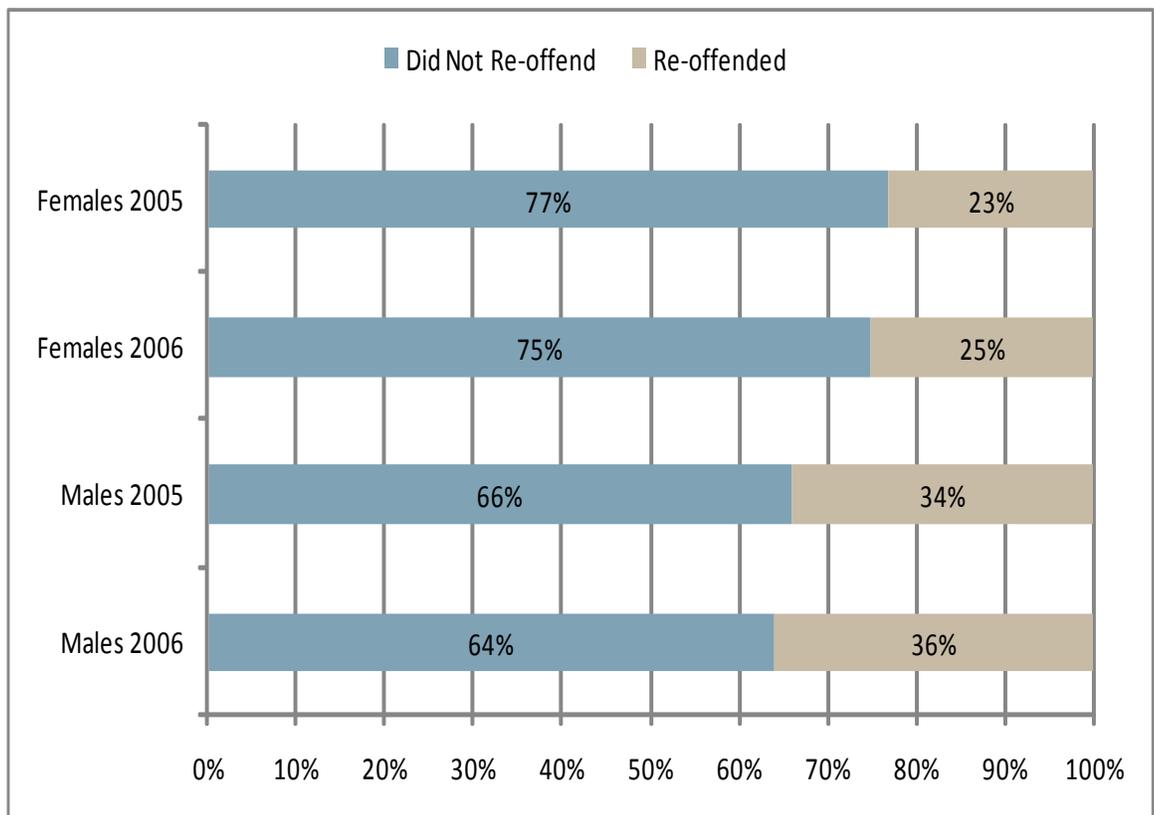
Whether or not a youth re-offends after being involved with the Juvenile Court is a valuable gauge of juvenile crime. In 2005, 69 percent of youth involved with the juvenile court for a misdemeanor or a felony did not re-offend, while 31 percent re-offended. In 2006, the percent of youth who re-offended increased slightly to 33 percent, while 67 percent did not re-offend.



Females re-offended at lower rates than males in 2006. Thirty-six percent of males re-offended and 25 percent of females re-offended in 2006, which represented an increase for both genders. In 2005, 23 percent of females and 34 percent of males re-offended.

Felony-level and misdemeanor-level findings or admissions of guilt in 2006 were used as the baseline for this measure. Re-offense was defined as a new felony-level or misdemeanor-level finding or admission of guilt within one year of the original adjudication date. An additional one year follow-up period was required for the processing and adjudication of all new offenses occurring within the re-offense time period. Technical violations were not included in this measure.

RE-OFFENSE RATES BY GENDER



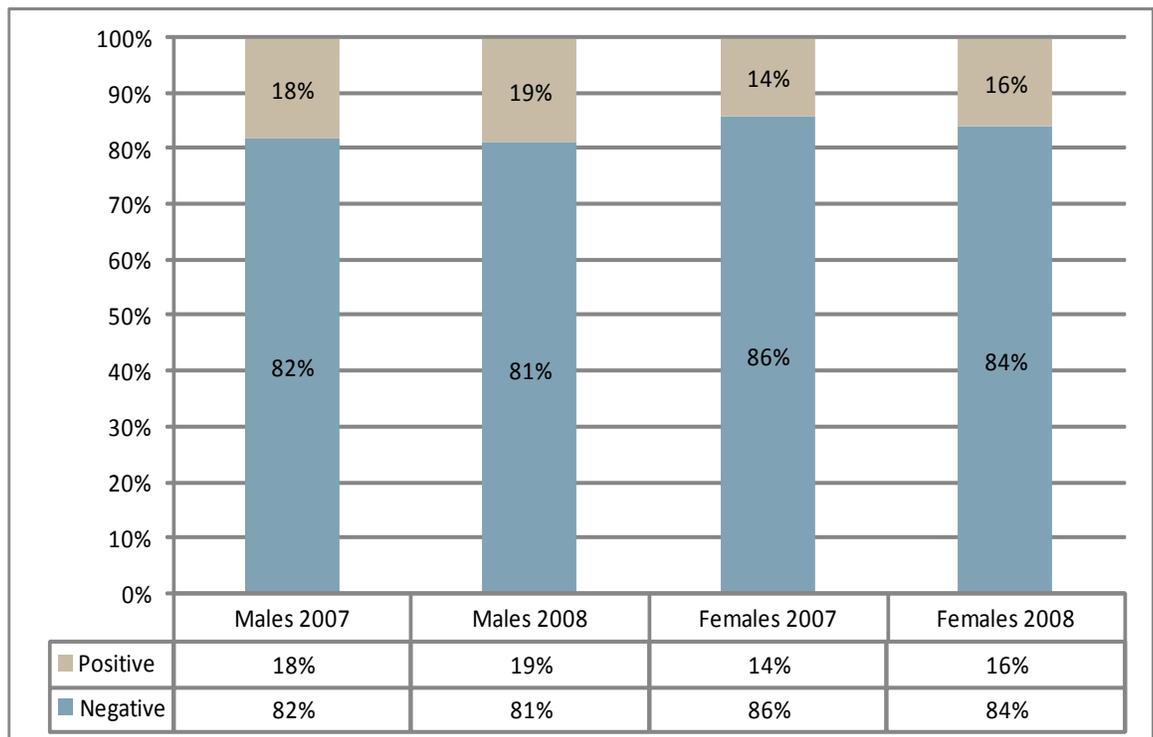
DRUG TESTING

A juvenile offender's resistance to drug use helps the court determine the progress these youth are making toward law abiding behavior. In 2008, 18 percent of drug test results were positive and 82 percent were negative, which was a slight increase from 2007 when 17 percent of drug test results were positive and 83 percent were negative.



A higher percentage of drug tests administered to females were negative than drug tests administered to males. In 2008, 84 percent of drug test results for females were negative while 81 percent of drug test results for males were negative. However, both males and females showed a slight increase in the percent of positive drug tests between 2007 and 2008. From 2007 to 2008, the percentage of positive drug tests increased by one percent for males and two percent for females.

DRUG TEST RESULTS BY GENDER



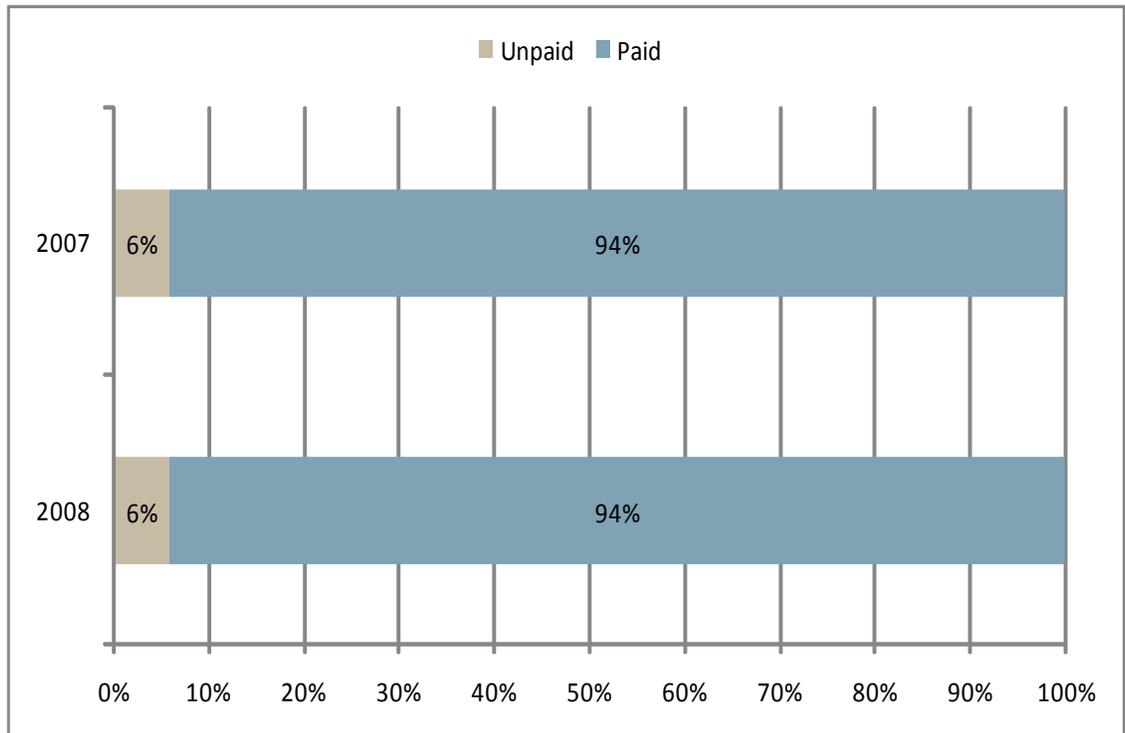
RESTITUTION PAID

Ensuring that offenders pay restitution to the victims they have harmed is an important goal of the Juvenile Court. The payment of restitution is a priority that takes precedence over the payment of all other types of fees or fines ordered by the court.

In 2008, offenders paid more than \$750,000 in restitution to compensate victims that were harmed as a result of juvenile criminal behavior. This was an increase from the more than \$615,000 that was paid in 2007. It also accounted for 94 percent of all restitution due in 2008. However, while the amount paid increased, the percentage paid remained stable from 2007 to 2008.



PERCENT OF RESTITUTION PAID

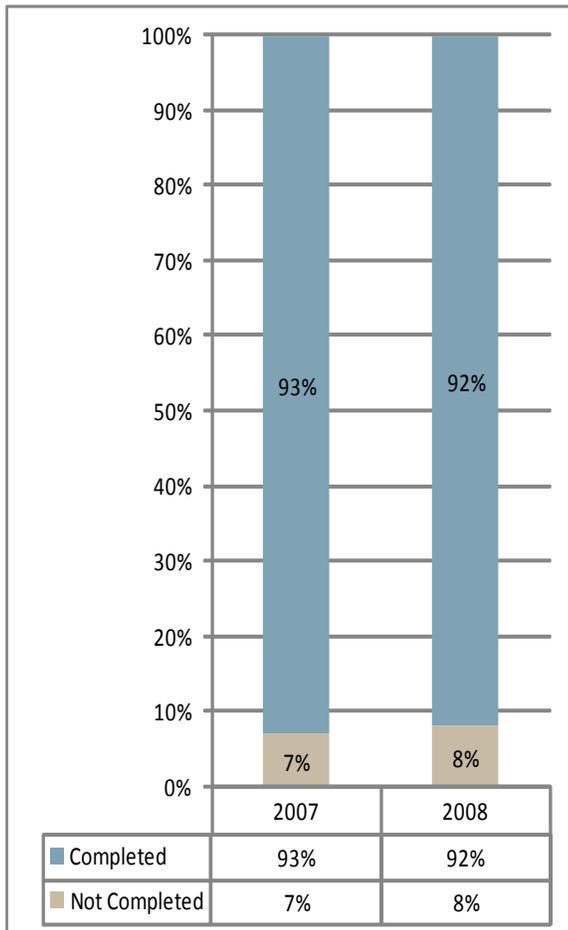


COMMUNITY SERVICE

Like the payment of restitution, the performance of community service hours is an important way of holding delinquent youth accountable.

In 2008, offenders performed more than 410,000 hours of community service, which represents more than \$1.6 million in taxpayer benefits. Of the community service hours due in 2008, 92 percent were completed. This is similar to the percentage completed in 2007.

COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS



A safe home and safe community for all.



Administrative Office of the Courts
450 South State Street
P.O. Box 140241
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-0241

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