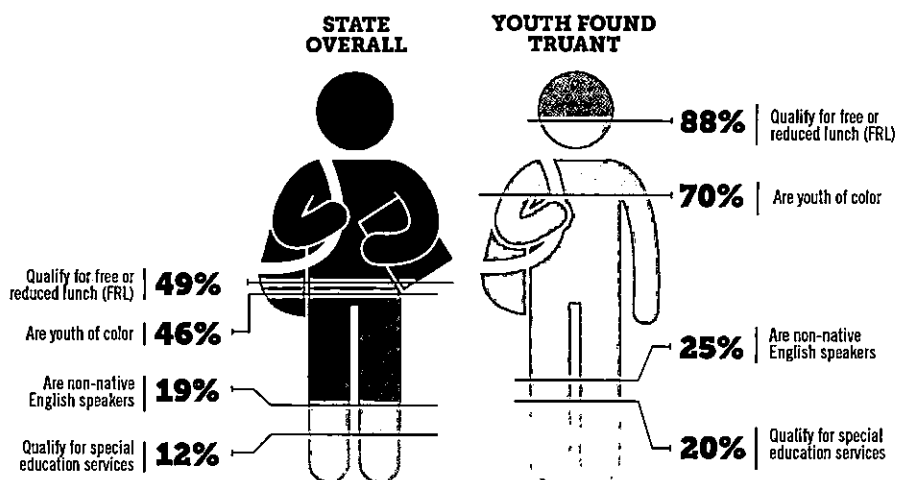


SECURE DETENTION FOR TRUANCY IMPACTS ON COLORADO YOUTH ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL SUCCESS

The impact of using secure detention for status offenses is largely unknown. This Colorado study examined the impacts on youth of secure detention for youth with court oversight for truancy. While the literature shows there are negative impacts associated with using secure detention for youth with low level criminal offenses, this literature may not be directly applicable to youth with status offenses. This issue is timely as the use of secure detention for status offenses is currently under review at both the federal and state levels. Major findings and youth characteristics are summarized below. Data from this study can be used to support efforts to review and recommend alternative approaches to truancy that can improve youth success in school and later in adulthood.

WHO ARE COLORADO'S YOUTH FOUND TRUANT?

For the first time, youth with truancy court oversight can be characterized. These youth disproportionately represent some of the most vulnerable groups in Colorado. This graphic shows how the overall Colorado student population compares to the population with truancy court oversight.



METHOD

This study integrated five-year datasets from education, child welfare, judicial, and juvenile justice. A total of 2,070 youth were identified as receiving court oversight for truancy in the 2010-2011 fiscal year. Cross system analyses examined this cohort over a five-year period to investigate predictors of secure detention and outcomes for youth with or without a secure detention for truancy.

Models were created to determine:

- factors predicting secure detention.
- whether secure detention for truancy predicted subsequent criminal filings.
- whether secure detention for truancy predicted graduation.

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Truancy Terminology

COURT OVERSIGHT means that 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.

SECURE JUVENILE DETENTION is the temporary care of any child who requires secure custody in a physically restricting facility pending sentencing.

STATUS OFFENSES are non-criminal acts that are considered a law violation only because of a youth's status as a minor. Status offenses include truancy, running away from home, violating curfew, and general ungovernability.

TRUANCY CASE LENGTH is a variable used in analyses to differentiate youth with a single court hearing from those with multiple court hearings.



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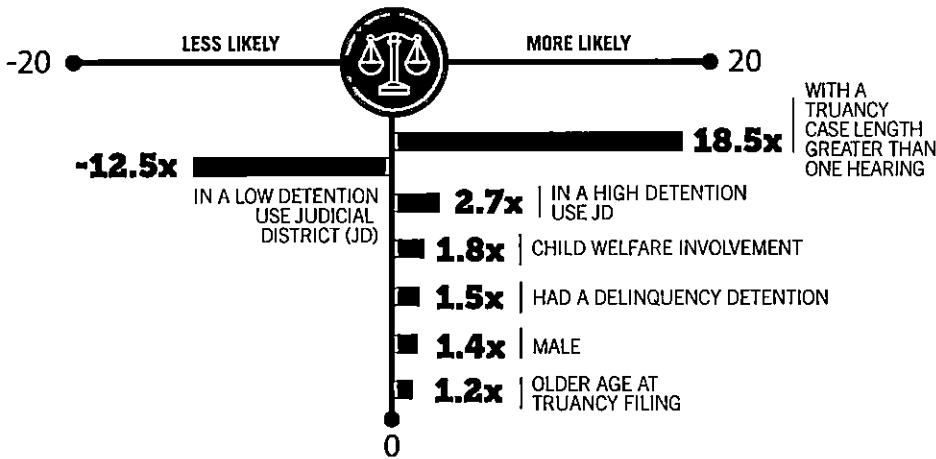
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KEY TAKEAWAYS

BASED ON EACH VARIABLE, HOW MORE OR LESS LIKELY IS A YOUTH TO...

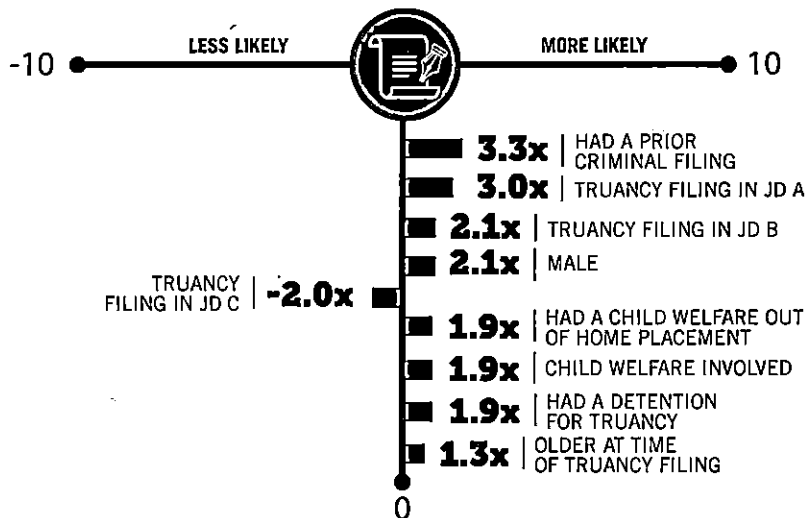
...be detained for truancy?



DETENTION:

Detention for truancy is mainly determined by local policy. The Judicial District (JD) where the case is located, along with court hearing practices, are the strongest predictors of detention. Youth are 18.5 times more likely to be detained for truancy with a truancy case length greater than one hearing. Being in a high detention use JD, having child welfare involvement, going to detention for delinquency, being male and older age at truancy filing all increase the risk of a youth being securely detained for truancy. Youth are 12.5 times less likely to go to detention for truancy if they were filed on in a JD that infrequently utilized detention for truancy.

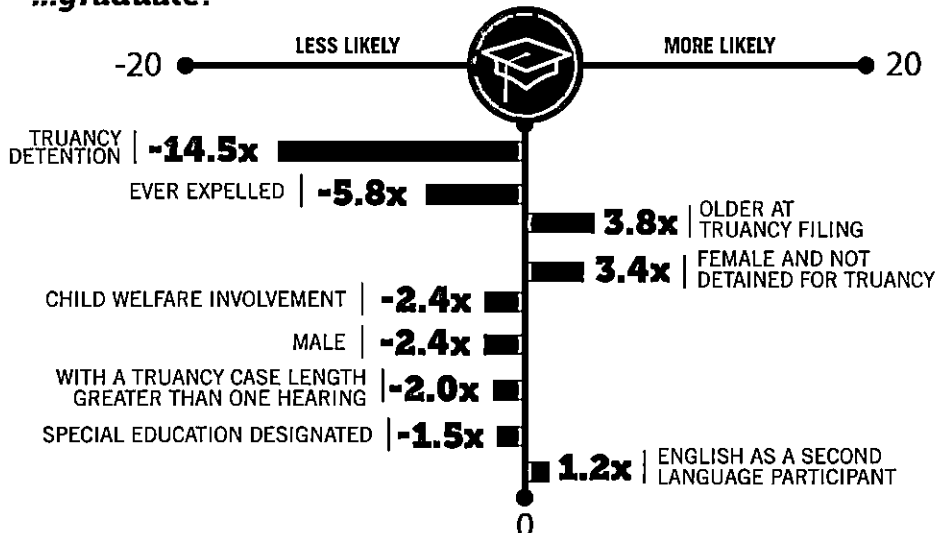
...have a subsequent criminal filing?



CRIMINAL FILING:

Most youth found truant did not have a subsequent criminal filing. Criminal filings were mostly influenced by local practice and system involvement in the model. Eight factors increased the likelihood of the youth having a subsequent criminal filing: a prior criminal filing, a truancy filing in JD A, a truancy filing in JD B, being male, having child welfare involvement, having an out of home child welfare placement, going to secure detention for truancy and older age at filing. Only having your truancy filing in JD C decreased the likelihood of a subsequent criminal filing. We do not yet understand why truancy filings in these three JDs impacted the likelihood of subsequent criminal filings.

...graduate?



GRADUATION:

Graduation was influenced by many factors, but detention was the strongest predictor. Youth who went to detention for truancy were 14.5 times less likely to graduate from high school than other Colorado youth found truant. In addition, five other variables significantly decreased the likelihood of graduation: ever being expelled, child welfare involvement, being male, truancy case length greater than one hearing and having a special education designation. In contrast, three factors increased the likelihood of graduation: older age at filing, being female and not detained for truancy and English as a second language program participation.