

[courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-prison-rates-fall-20131218,0,5819018.story](http://courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-prison-rates-fall-20131218,0,5819018.story)

# Courant.com

## State's Juvenile Incarceration Rate Plummet: Report

By LISA CHEDEKEL, Conn. Health I-Team Writer

The Hartford Courant

2:47 PM EST, December 18, 2013

Connecticut is one of nine states recognized in a new national report for significantly reducing youth incarceration rates since 2001 – a drop attributed to new policies and expanded community alternatives to detention.

advertisement

The report (<http://www.njjn.org/uploads/digital-library/The-Comeback-and-Coming-from-Behind-States.pdf>) by the National Juvenile Justice Network (NJJN) and the Texas Public Policy Foundation's Center for Effective Justice found that Connecticut had 252 youths confined in 2011 – a drop of 60 percent from 2001 and one of the highest reduction rates in the country.

Nationally, youth confinement declined by 41 percent since 2000, when a record-setting 108,802 youths were held in detention centers awaiting trial or confined by the courts in juvenile facilities.

"States have made strides in changing their policies so that youth are held accountable in age-appropriate ways, but there is more work to be done," said Sarah Bryer, director of the NJJN.

Besides Connecticut, the other states applauded for significant reductions were California, Illinois, Ohio, New York, Mississippi, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin.

The report attributes the drop in Connecticut's rate of youth confinement in prisons, detention centers and other facilities to community alternatives; restrictions on the use of detention; and less reliance on law enforcement for school discipline.

On a related issue, new state numbers show that a "raise the age" law that is keeping juveniles under 18 out of the adult justice system has helped to fuel a significant drop in youth incarceration. As of Dec. 1, there were 89 people under 18 in adult prisons – down significantly from 2009, when more than 300 young people were in adult prisons in an average month.

Younger offenders are now handled by the juvenile justice system. Sixteen-year-olds returned to juvenile jurisdiction on January 1, 2010; 17-year-olds were moved out of the adult system in 2012.

*This story was reported under a partnership with the Connecticut Health I-Team ([www.c-hit.org](http://www.c-hit.org)).*

Copyright © 2013, [The Hartford Courant](http://www.hartfordcourant.com)