

3.—Rates per 100,000 Population of Convictions against Youthful Offenders for Indictable Offences, by Age Groups, Years Ended Sept. 30, 1945-48

Year	16-18 Years			19-20 Years			21-24 Years		
	Number of Convictions	Rate per 100,000 Estimated Population	Percentage Change from Preceding Year	Number of Convictions	Rate per 100,000 Estimated Population	Percentage Change from Preceding Year	Number of Convictions	Rate per 100,000 Estimated Population	Percentage Change from Preceding Year
1945....	6,958	1,064	-7.1	3,732	842	-5.3	6,025	686	+2.4
1946....	6,674	1,033	-4.1	4,305	983	+15.4	7,208	823	+19.6
1947....	5,709	889	-14.5	3,789	867	-12.0	7,586	861	+5.2
1948....	5,414	841	-5.2	3,810	868	+0.6	7,379	831	-2.7

Non-indictable Offences.—Since offences in this category are not reported by age of offender, it is not possible to segregate those committed by young people between the ages of 16 and 24 years.

PART III.—JUVENILE DELINQUENTS

The Juvenile Delinquents Act defines a child as "any boy or girl apparently or actually under the age of 16 years". Provision is made, however, by which the Governor General in Council may proclaim that in a province the definition of a child be a "person under the age of 18 years". This has been done in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Quebec. For uniformity the figures relating to juveniles compiled by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics refer to the younger ages of under 16 years only and deal primarily with cases disposed of by the courts. The fact that juvenile court statistics furnish the most comprehensive figures collected on a country-wide basis makes it important that their possibilities and limitations be understood.

It is impossible to give a complete picture of juvenile delinquency for the reason that many instances of minor offences are not detected while others are settled by the police, by social agencies or school authorities without the necessity of apprehending the child. This is particularly true in rural districts where the courts are not readily accessible.

The number of cases brought before the courts is influenced by such factors as personnel and facilities of the court, community interest in and understanding of the function of a juvenile court, and by variations in the policies of the courts in the disposition of cases. Some courts do not consider a case "adjourned *sine die*" as a proven delinquency; other courts handle certain cases unofficially when legal papers are not prepared and the case is adjusted as an "occurrence" without a formal hearing. Furthermore, as time goes on more courts are established and the additional returns may exaggerate an apparent increase in delinquency or may underestimate a decrease.

It should be noted, too, that the figures refer to offenders rather than offences and do not represent the number of delinquent juveniles because some children may be brought to court more than once within a year (see p. 277). In the following tables, children are recorded as separate individuals each time they appear on a new complaint.

Reports of juvenile offences were received in 1948 from 129 of the 150 judicial districts; 16 reported no offences. The reporting areas were particularly representative of cities and towns, including 106 urban centres in Canada with populations of 100 or over.