

29.—First Offenders and Repeaters of Major Offences, 1943-52

NOTE.—See headnote to Table 22, p. 314.

Year	Total Delinquents	First Offenders	Repeaters					Total	Percentage of Total Delinquents
			Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth or More	Total		
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.		
1943.....	6,494	4,831	865	386	183	229	1,663	25.6	
1944.....	6,529	4,665	943	429	221	271	1,864	28.6	
1945.....	5,758	4,231	812	337	137	241	1,527	26.5	
1946.....	4,949	3,430	799	344	155	221	1,519	30.7	
1947.....	4,683	3,376	673	329	138	167	1,307	27.9	
1948.....	4,591	3,340	674	266	147	164	1,251	27.3	
1949 ¹	6,198	5,195	603	208	109	83	1,003	16.2	
1950 ¹	6,418	5,039	892	314	140	33	1,379	21.5	
1951 ¹	6,644	5,141	909	324	132	138	1,503	22.6	
1952 ¹	6,068	4,412	963	367	155	171	1,656	27.3	

¹ Includes minor offences.

Disposition of Cases.—In 1952, not quite one-half of the children's cases (48.2 p.c.) were heard within four days of the charge and slightly over two-thirds (68.6 p.c.) within nine days. However, 19.1 p.c. of them had to wait at least two weeks and 8.5 p.c. waited a month or more before the first hearing. These waiting periods may be explained in various ways.

Some county courts sit only twice or even once a month. Hearings may be deferred because of sickness in the family, school examinations, stormy weather, or long distances. The chief cause for delay, however, is the time it takes to investigate the facts properly. The probation officer, and frequently there is only one to a court, has to find out what occurred at the time of the delinquency; he must contact the parents and the school, learn something of the home situation, perhaps arrange medical or psychiatric examinations and explore community resources. The disadvantage of a long waiting period is outweighed by the assistance the court receives in deciding the form of treatment best suited to the child's needs and the type of care that will be the most economical for the community. For these intervening days or weeks most children are left in their own homes while a minority are placed in detention homes and, in the long run, whether the effect of the waiting period is good or bad is determined by the care given the youngster during that time.

Juvenile court judges heard 93.1 p.c. and magistrates 6.8 p.c. of the juvenile cases before the courts. The balance were heard by justices of the peace. The proportion of those declared delinquent (97.6 p.c.) in the magistrate's courts was greater than in the juvenile courts (83.2 p.c.). In the former court 2.4 p.c. of the cases were dismissed while in the juvenile courts only 2.5 p.c. were dismissed but 14.3 p.c. were adjourned *sine die*.

Some courts consider children whose hearings are adjourned *sine die* as delinquent while others do not but, for the sake of uniformity in this report, the latter point of view is maintained by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. In assessing the total problem of juvenile delinquency, however, cases adjourned *sine die* have to be taken into account for, when the proportion of cases dealt with in this way increases, the proportion of those declared delinquent declines.