

By Clayton R. Kaeiser posted in [Juvenile Crimes \(Blog\)](#)

The juvenile delinquency rate among public schools in Florida dropped significantly over the last six months of 2011. The recent numbers were released by the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice and the improved numbers are attributed to alternative policies that reduced the number of young people with juvenile crimes on their records.

Delinquency and school referrals in Florida schools have declined significantly over the last year. Delinquency referrals declined by 16 percent, and school referrals declined in the majority of Florida's counties. Miami-Dade County saw the largest decline in school-related referrals with a 60 percent decline. An arrest for a juvenile misdemeanor or felony committed on school grounds is considered to be a school-related referral.

According to the Secretary of the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, alternatives to arrest have contributed to the overall decline in delinquency and have made schools safer. Alternatives to arrest have also reduced the number of young people that otherwise would have had criminal records. An example of an alternative to arrest includes civil citations for delinquency violations. The chief of the Miami-Dade Schools Police Department said his department has been focused on preventative efforts to bring about the improved numbers.

The Department of Juvenile Justice handles all minors who have been charged with delinquent acts. The Department hopes that through the use of community-base programs, it can continue to reduce the number of acts that rise to the juvenile crimes level. According to the Department of Juvenile Justice, the majority of arrests related to school are for misdemeanor offenses. The public school system in Miami-Dade County was recognized for its role in lowering delinquency numbers.

