

# Kansas Juvenile Correctional Complex

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OCTOBER 2021

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Joint Committee on Corrections and Juvenile  
Justice Oversight Tour



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# Kansas Juvenile Correctional Complex

## Kansas Department of Corrections – Juvenile Services

Located on approximately 60 acres in northwest Topeka, the Kansas Juvenile Correctional Complex (KJCC) is the state’s only post-disposition, secure facility for males and females adjudicated by Kansas courts as juvenile offenders.

In Kansas, youth as young as 10 years of age and as old as 17 years of age may be adjudicated as juvenile offenders. Kansas law allows the KDOC to retain custody of a juvenile offender until the age of 22 ½ in a juvenile correctional facility.<sup>1</sup>

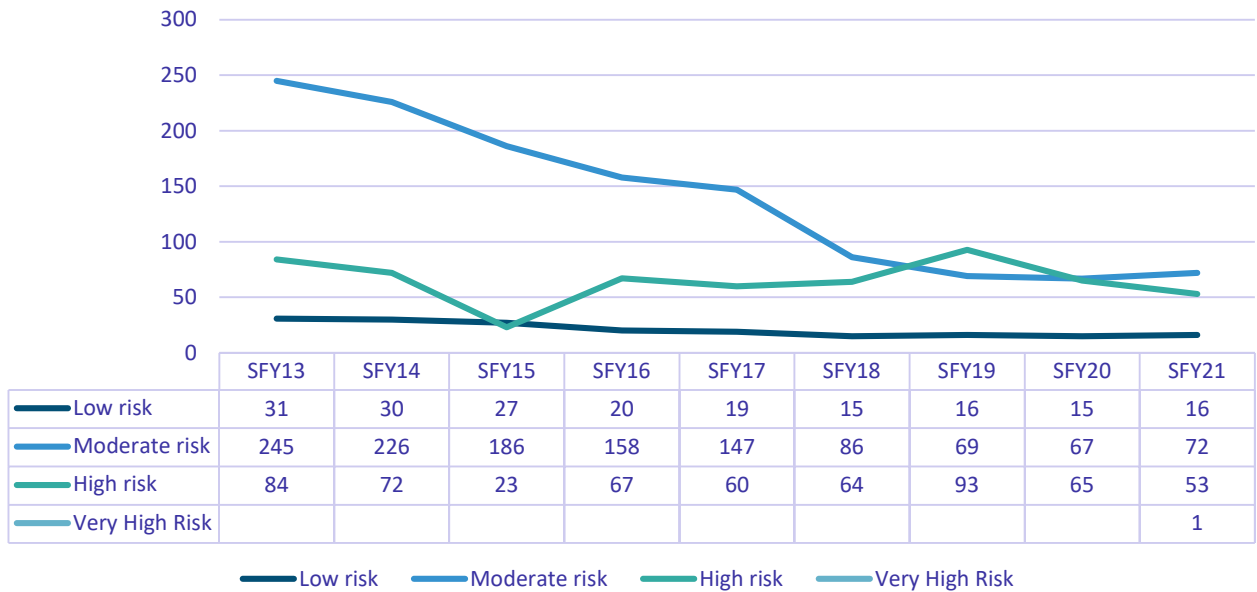
KJCC also serves Youthful Offenders – youth under the age of 18 who have been convicted of a crime in adult court. These residents remain at KJCC until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, when they are transferred to EDCF or TCF to serve the remainder of their adult sentence. While at KJCC, they have access to all the same programs and services as non-youthful offenders. KJCC currently has two youthful offenders at the facility.

KJCC employs approximately 250 staff, including medical, school, and food contractors.

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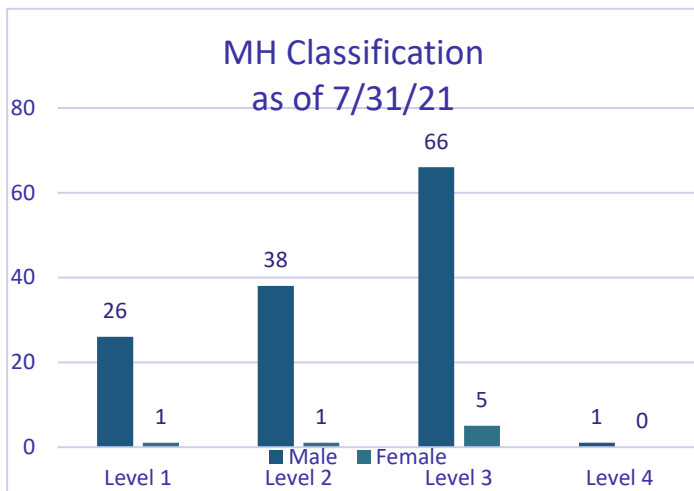
<sup>1</sup> K.S.A. 38-2369 was revised with SB367 to reflect the rebuttable presumption that youth ages 10-13 be diverted from the juvenile correctional facility to a community-based placement.

Number of Youth Placed in the JCF by Risk Level and State Fiscal Year



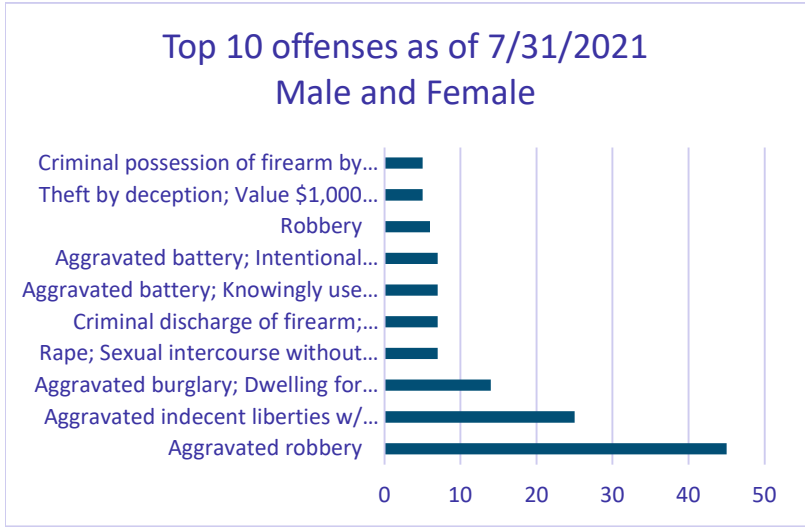
The figure above shows the significant changes in the KJCC population over the past 8 years. While the population started declining prior to 2016, the passage of SB367 made important changes to the Kansas sentencing matrix, narrowing the criteria for youth to be eligible for placement by the courts at the facility. Specifically, SB367 disallowed youth with misdemeanor offenses from the facility, along with conditional release violators. The reform bill also required courts to take into consideration risk and need of the youth when considering a JCF sentence. Therefore, the overall risk of the population has changed. No longer is Kansas sentencing low level offenders to the deepest end placement of the juvenile justice system. The majority of KJCC’s population is moderate to high risk to recidivate.

With this change in population, we have seen an increase in the needs of our youth. So, while we have fewer youth at the facility, they have elevated needs, such as mental health, substance abuse, education/vocation, and trauma.



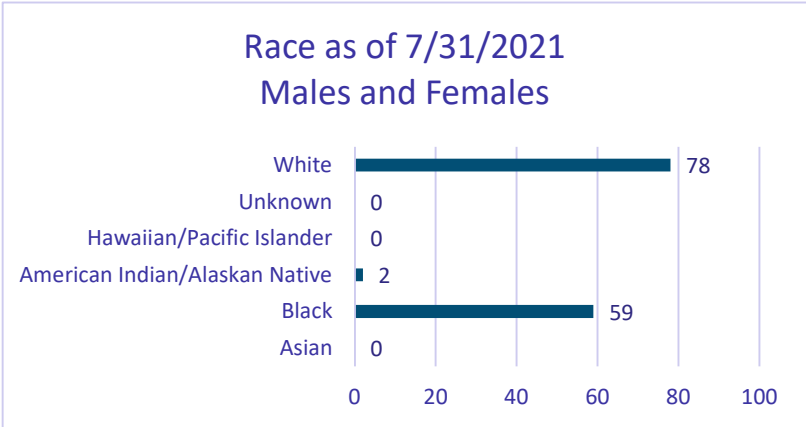
This figure shows the Mental Health Classifications of residents at KJCC on 7/31/21. Level 4 is the highest need and require the most intensive services from our behavioral health professionals, as well as medication management.

Fifty-two percent of our population are Level 3 or 4. This means these youth have a moderate to severe MH diagnosis (i.e., depressive disorder, anxiety disorder, PTSD, cognitive deficits, developmental disability, etc.). Typically, these youth require psychotropic medications.



The figure to the left describes the top 10 most common offenses at the facility.

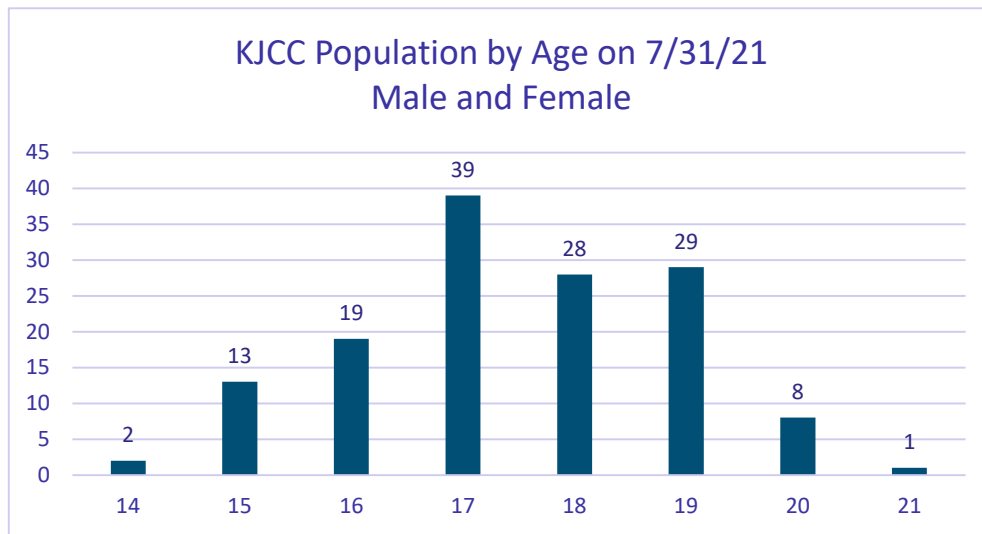
Like other parts of the juvenile justice system in Kansas, KJCC sees a disproportionate number of minority youth sentenced to the facility, with 42.4% of the population being Black youth. Examining this by gender shows similar disproportionality, with black and brown girls and boys both being over-represented in the facility.



One of the most prominent changes within our population, next to overall risk and need, is the age of our population. Like many similar facilities across the country, KJCC is serving more of an older youth/young adult population, with **83% of our population between the ages of 16-19 years of age.** Most notable is that **47% of the KJCC population is over 18 years old.**

Equipped with this information, KJCC is working to modify programs and services to reflect the needs of this “aging” population. Most of our residents will leave the facility as legal adults, needing to join the workforce and possibly living independently. KJCC, in conjunction with our fully accredited on-site high school, is currently working to expand the vocational and educational services for youth to meet this

need, through partnerships with the Washburn Institute of Technology and Highland County Community College.



**Education/vocation**

KJCC partners with Smoky Hill Education Service Center out of Salina, KS to operate the Lawrence-Gardner High School (LGHS). LGHS is a fully accredited school located in the main campus of KJCC. With 38 staff, including special education teachers, LGHS is able to offer as close to a real school experience as possible for our residents. Smaller class sizes offer more one-on-one instruction for our residents. LGHS utilizes Apex, an online education platform.

**DIPLOMA/GED ATTAINMENT RATES  
FY2016 TO FY2021**

YEAR	TOTAL	GEDs		High School Diplomas		Average Month-end Population
		#	%	#	%	
<b>FY 2016</b>	41	24	59%	17	42%	231
<b>FY 2017</b>	58	24	41%	34	59%	213
<b>FY 2018</b>	74	30	42%	44	70%	186
<b>FY 2019</b>	67	34	51%	33	49%	164
<b>FY 2020</b>	60	19	38%	31	62%	162
<b>FY 2021</b>	61	35	57%	26	43%	92

KJCC also partners with the Washburn Institute of Technology to offer post-secondary vocational education and industry-recognized certifications, such as OSHA 10, carpentry, plumbing, and electrical.

Post-Secondary Credit Hours Earned FY2016 to FY2020		
	Total Hours	Total National Certifications
<b>FY 2016</b>	1,225	221
<b>FY 2017</b>	1,809	290
<b>FY 2018</b>	2,681	416
<b>FY 2019</b>	2,650	405
<b>FY 2020</b>	1,241	150
<b>FY 2021</b>	816	62

### KJCC Recidivism Data

The Kansas Department of Corrections calculates recidivism rates annually. Recidivism is defined as a new conviction (adult or juvenile) or return to the facility based on a technical violation within 3 years of release from KJCC.

	CY2012	CY2013	CY2014	CY2015	CY2016	CY2017
Did Not Return in 3 Years	<b>65.33%</b>	<b>66.46%</b>	<b>62.69%</b>	<b>56.36%</b>	<b>61.00%</b>	<b>72.48%</b>
Overall Recidivism	<b>34.67%</b>	<b>33.54%</b>	<b>37.31%</b>	<b>43.64%</b>	<b>39.00%</b>	<b>27.52%</b>
Conditional Release Violators	<b>21.36%</b>	<b>17.24%</b>	<b>21.19%</b>	<b>15.81%</b>	<b>7.88%</b>	<b>0.46%</b>
New Convictions	<b>7.79%</b>	<b>7.21%</b>	<b>6.57%</b>	<b>8.59%</b>	<b>6.64%</b>	<b>6.42%</b>
Adult Facility Returns	<b>5.53%</b>	<b>9.09%</b>	<b>9.55%</b>	<b>19.24%</b>	<b>24.48%</b>	<b>20.64%</b>

This data shows a decrease in every category for CY2017 – fewer youth returning due to revocation (SB367 removed return to KJCC as an option for a revocation); fewer youth returning due to a new crime; and a declining number of youth being committed to the adult facilities. ***This means that 72.48% of youth who released from KJCC in 2017 were still out in their communities in 2020!***

## Reducing Isolation

Around 2015, KJCC began an intentional transition in the use of isolation (i.e., segregation) with residents at the facility. Equipped with adolescent development science and research, as well as a growing body of research about the impact of trauma on youth behaviors, a workgroup was formed to address this important issue within the facility.

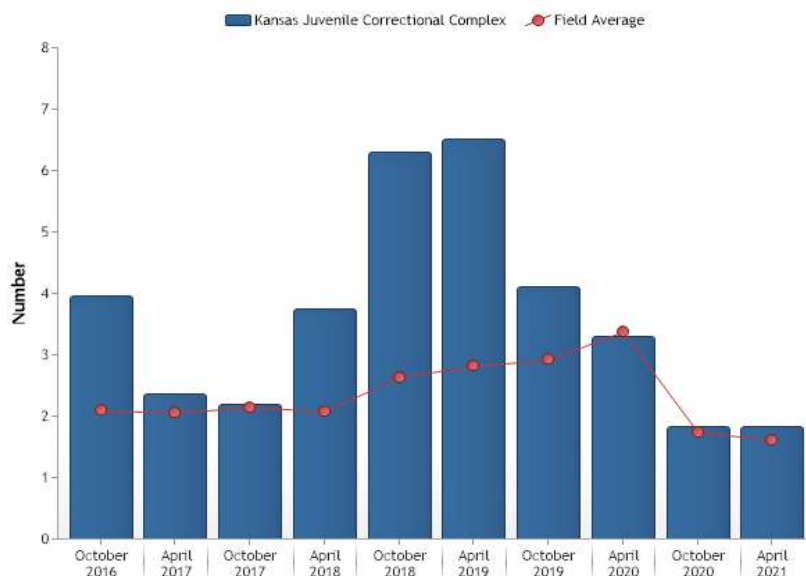
Not only does research point to the harm isolation can do to juveniles, but research also highlights the impact this practice can have on the safety of a facility such as KJCC. The workgroup’s goal was to identify strategies to reduce the facility’s use of isolation, while still providing a safe and secure facility for staff and residents.

***KJCC no longer uses restrictive housing (i.e., segregation) for disciplinary purposes. We have essentially eliminated this practice. Restrictive housing is only used when a resident presents an immediate and significant risk to self or others.***

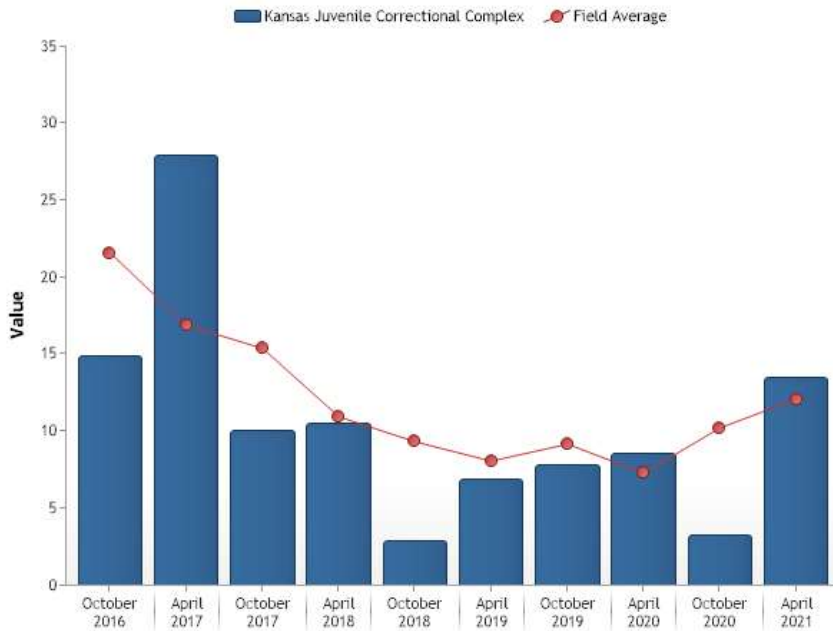
The KJCC participates in Performance-based Standards (PbS), a process of data collection, analysis, and facility improvement plans. Twice a year, KJCC submits hundreds of data points to the PbS portal, where we are compared to other like facilities across the nation in areas such as isolation. We can use this data in our process of continuous improvement. The below graphs are from our PbS data collection cycles.

### **Isolation, room confinement, segregation/special management unit use per 100 person-days of confinement (i.e., how often is it being used).**

This can be in the form of a quick timeout to cool down, all the way to restrictive housing. We are always working towards being below the field average (red line) in this area.



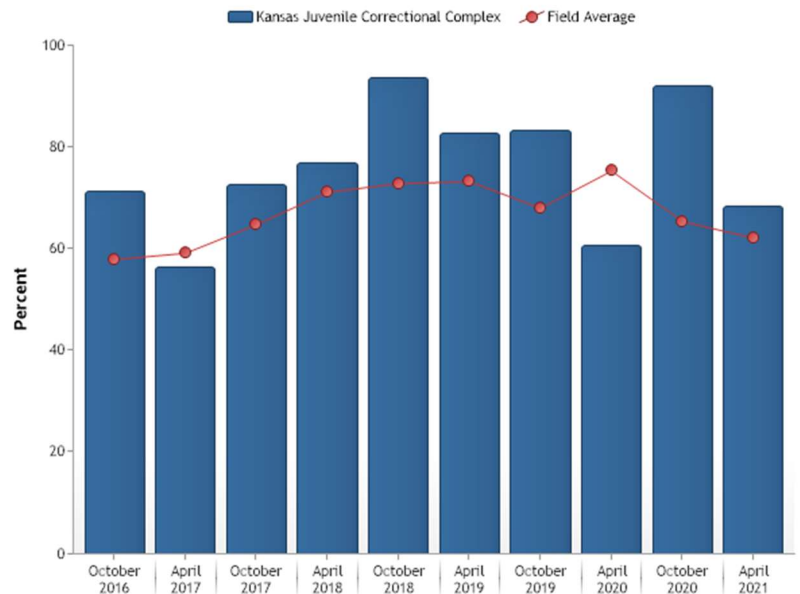
**Average duration of isolation, room confinement, and segregation/special management in hours.**



Ideally here, we want to be below the field average (red line). This data tells us that when room confinement is used, it is only being used for a short period of time. We do our very best to get residents out of room confinement as soon as possible.

**Percent of isolation, room confinement, and segregation/special management unit cases terminated in four hours or less.**

In this area, we are working to be above the field average (red line), in that most room confinement cases are terminated (i.e., released from room confinement) in four hours or less.

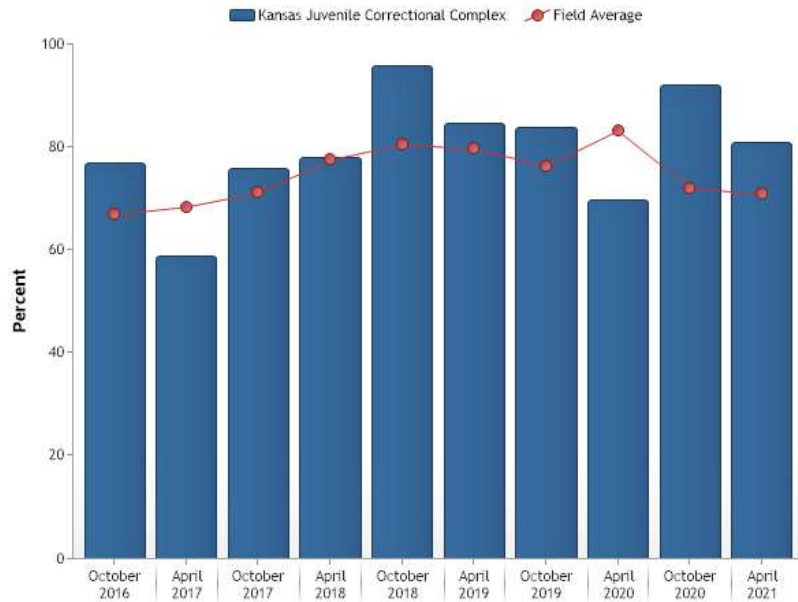




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## Percent of isolation, room confinement, and segregation/special management unit cases terminated in eight hours or less.

Here, again, we want to be above the field average (red line). This means that in most of these situations, youth return to their regular programming in less than 8 hours.



### Programs and Treatment

KJCC offers a robust menu of programs and services for residents. Our commitment is to use evidence-based and evidence-informed interventions to address the criminogenic needs (needs or factors that increase the likelihood of future criminal behavior) as well as responsivity needs (barriers to treatment). Below is a list of many of the services offered through our behavioral health team and our programming department. Referrals to these services are based on standardized assessments that identify these needs.

Aggression Replacement Training

Family Therapy

Thinking for a Change

Sex Offender Treatment

Matrix Model (Substance Abuse Treatment)<sup>2</sup>

Seeking Safety

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy

Girls Circle

Skillstreaming the Adolescent

Reentry Services

Spiritual Life Services

Recreational Services

Positive Life Changes Group

Curriculum-Based Motivation Group

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<sup>2</sup> KJCC is also licensed by KDADS as an outpatient substance abuse treatment center.