

Report on Drug Arrests in California, from 1990 to 1999



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Report on **Drug Arrests** in California, from 1990 to 1999

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Bureau of Criminal Information and Analysis
Criminal Justice Statistics Center

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- *To collect, analyze, and report statistical data, which provide valid measures of crime and the criminal justice process;*
 - *To examine these data on an ongoing basis to better describe crime and the criminal justice system;*
 - *To promote the responsible presentation and use of crime statistics.*
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HIGHLIGHTS

Drug Arrests

- ◆ *The juvenile drug arrest rate increased 39.0 percent since 1990, but decreased 12.2 percent since 1997.*
- ◆ *The adult drug arrest rate decreased 11.4 percent since 1990, and decreased 8.5 percent since 1997.*
- ◆ *Felony drug arrest rates decreased for males and females and all race/ethnic groups except white in both age categories during the last decade.*
- ◆ *Misdemeanor drug arrest rates increased steadily for juveniles over the last ten years, but since 1997, have decreased 7.1 percent. Adult misdemeanor drug arrest rates remained relatively stable.*
- ◆ *Felony and misdemeanor marijuana offenses were the only categories of drug offenses where juvenile arrest rates were higher than adult arrest rates.*
- ◆ *Marijuana arrests were the greatest factor in the 39.0 percent juvenile drug arrest rate increase.*



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Drug Arrests

1990 to 1999

In 1990, the Federal Bureau of Investigation estimated that 7.7 percent of all arrests in the United States were for drug offenses. Drugs accounted for 3.6 percent of juvenile arrests and 8.5 percent of adult arrests nationally. By 1998 (the most current

In comparison, California findings were similar to national trends. In 1990, 12.9 percent of all arrests in California were for drug offenses. Drugs accounted for 6.3 percent of juvenile arrests and 13.8 percent of adults arrests. By 1999, 17.5 percent

The total number of juvenile arrests decreased 1.6 percent in California over the last decade; however, the number of juvenile drug arrests increased 70.1 percent. In contrast, adults had a 28.7 percent decrease in total arrests and a 3.3 percent decrease

During this ten year period in California, the juvenile arrest rate for drug offenses increased 39.0 percent, while the adult arrest rate decreased 11.4 percent. To gain a better understanding of these rate fluctuations, specific categories must be examined

For example, from 1990 to 1999, felony drug arrest rates decreased for males and females and all race/ethnic groups except white in both age categories. Misdemeanor drug arrest rates decreased 6.0 percent for adults, while the juvenile misdemeanor rate i

When examining specific offenses, marijuana was found to be the greatest factor in the 39.0 percent increase in the juvenile drug arrest rate over the last decade. In 1990, marijuana accounted for 34.2 percent of juvenile drug arrests and, by 1999, it ac

When examining specific offenses for adults, the most significant rate change also occurred in the marijuana category with a 79.1 percent rate increase for misdemeanor marijuana offenses over the last ten years. However, this increase was not large enough