

## Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC)

### The Relative Rate Index Method (RRI)

#### What does this mean?

This method compares the (rate) of activity for each major stage of the juvenile justice system of minority youth compared to white (majority) youth.

The RRI provides a single index number that indicates the extent to which the volume of that form of **contact (i.e., arrest, viable referrals, etc.)** differs for *minority* and *white* youth.

**The RRI is simply the rate of activity involving minority youth divided by the rate of activity involving majority youth (white youth).**

**Example:** The **RRI** comparing the rates of detention:

$$55.7 \text{ minority youth rate} / 29.5 \text{ white youth rate} = \mathbf{1.89}$$

(Remember: white youth comparison = 1.00)

The RRI means the rate of detention for minority youth was **89% higher** than the rate of detention for white youth.

Note: Statistically significant results are in **Bold Font**

**Table 1: Identifying the Numerical Bases for Rate Calculations**

| Stage/Contact Point                              | Preferred base for rates             |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Arrest</b>                                    | Rate per 1,000 population            |
| <b>Referral to juvenile court</b>                | Rate per 100 arrests                 |
| <b>Diversion (prior to adjudication)</b>         | Rate per 100 referrals               |
| <b>Detention</b>                                 | Rate per 100 referrals               |
| <b>Petition/charges filed</b>                    | Rate per 100 referrals               |
| <b>Delinquency finding</b>                       | Rate per 100 petitions/charges filed |
| <b>Placement in probation</b>                    | Rate per 100 delinquency findings    |
| <b>Placement in secure correctional facility</b> | Rate per 100 delinquency findings    |
| <b>Transfer to adult court</b>                   | Rate per 100 petitions filed         |

**Table 2: Relative Rate Index (RRI) Values**

| Areas of concern      | Decision stages or contact points  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>More than 1.00</b> | Arrests<br>Referrals to juvenile court<br>Cases involving secure detention<br>Cases petitioned<br>Cases resulting in delinquency findings<br>Cases resulting in confinement in secure juvenile correctional facilities<br>Cases transferred to adult court |
| <b>Less than 1.00</b> | Cases diverted<br>Cases resulting in probation placement   |

**Note: RRI values that cause DMC concern can be greater than 1 or less than 1.**

Values that are both **more than and less than 1.00** thus reflect disproportionate contact.

In two stages of the system diagram, lower volumes of activity will reflect a disadvantage for minority youth.

- If the diversion index is less than 1.00, this means that a lower rate of diversion is used for minority youth.
- In the probation index, a value less than 1.00 typically means that a more restrictive option than probation is being used for minority youth.