

HAMILTON POLICE SERVICES BOARD

- INFORMATION -

DATE: 2018 April 19

REPORT TO: Chair and Members
Hamilton Police Services Board

FROM: Eric Girt
Chief of Police

SUBJECT: *Year-End Report: Youth Crime - 2017*
PSB 18-062

BACKGROUND:

The attached Youth Crime Report provides a summary and reflection of 2017 youth crime trends, as well as the continued commitment to youth engagement by the Hamilton Police Service (HPS). Our overall approach to youth crime and youth services for 2017 is guided by our Strategic Approach to Youth Crime.

The total number of youth (ages 12-17) involved in crime, in the City of Hamilton, in 2017 was 1,529. There was a 4.1% decrease in Youth involvement in crime, whereas there was a national decrease of 5%.

Youths involved in property crime in 2017 increased slightly by 0.69% compared to data from 2016.

The Hamilton Police Service continued to find new ways to engage and educate youth in an attempt to decrease youth and violent crime whenever possible. Hamilton Police Service youth, community and school officers have continued to participate in intelligence led policing and have actively liaised with front line officers in many areas including the Strategic Targeted Offender Program (STOP) and Drug Sweeps.

In 2017, the goals of Hamilton Police Youth Services were as follows:

- 1.1 Implement effective and innovative approaches for the Hamilton Police Service to respond to crime, safety and quality of life issues.
- 2.1 Reach out to share information and build relationships and partnerships by interacting with all communities including: Youth, Newcomers, People in Crisis, Seniors and Diverse Groups.

- 3.4 Increase training to achieve our vision by sharing knowledge and resources in our communities, freeing up time for training and expanding the training budget.

The annual report outlines the internal and external programs and initiatives in which the Service and community partners engage in collaboratively, to reduce youth crime in our community and contribute to the achievement of these goals.



Eric Girt
Chief of Police

EG/G.Huss
Attachment: *Youth Services Annual Report - 2017*

cc: Dan Kinsella, Deputy Chief – Community Policing
Greg Huss, Superintendent – Community Mobilization Division

Hamilton Police Service

Youth Services Annual Report

Submitted by Sgt. Jon Alsbergas
Community Mobilization Division



2017



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The total number of Youth (ages 12-17) involved in crime in the City of Hamilton in 2017 is down again after having slightly risen in 2016. Nationally, the number of youth involved in crime has steadily decreased since 2009.¹ Hamilton has mirrored this trend except in 2016. In 2017, 1529² youth were involved in crime, compared to 1595 in 2016. This represents an overall 4.1% decrease in Youth Involvement in Crime whereas there was a National decrease of 5%.³

The demographics of youth between the ages of 12 and 17 continue to decrease, albeit slightly; 1.0% less than 2016. In 2017 there were 34,936 youths in the City of Hamilton between the ages of 12 and 17; 17,695 males and 17,241 females.⁴

When compared to 2016 the 2017 Hamilton data results identified a decrease in violent crime by 7.25%. This is a considerable change from 2016 where there was an 18% increase in violent crime. Of the 473 youth involved in violent crime, 62% were not charged and were dealt with through an Extrajudicial Measure i.e. No Further Action, Warning, Police Caution or Diversion. This is in keeping with the principles of the Youth Criminal Justice Act in that “extrajudicial measures are often the most appropriate and effective way to address youth crime.”⁵

Property crime increased slightly by 0.69%, from 580 youth involved in property crime in 2016 to 584 in 2017. Of the 584 involved youth, 121 were charged with a property crime and 79% were dealt with through an extrajudicial measure.

Youth involved in drug offences decreased significantly by 18% from 219 youth in 2016 to 179 in 2017. Only 24 were charged with an offence and 87% were dealt with through an extrajudicial measure.

The Hamilton Police Service continued to find new ways to engage, educate youth and to decrease youth crime and violent crime wherever possible. HPS youth, community, and school officers have continued to participate in intelligence led policing and have actively liaised with front-line officers in many areas including the Strategic Targeted Offender Program (STOP) and Drug Sweeps. The statistics captured in this report for these two areas are proof the School, Youth and Community Officers are working in a positive fashion with front-line Patrol.

This report will highlight the youth crime trends for 2017 and outline the Strategic Approach to Youth Crime adopted by the HPS 2016-2018 Business Plan.

¹ Police-reported crime statistics in Canada, July 24, 2017, Statistics Canada

² H.P.S. Niche data effective February 23, 2018

³ Police-reported crime statistics in Canada, July 24, 2017, Statistics Canada

⁴ Hamilton Police Service Planning and Research

⁵ Youth Criminal Justice Act, s. 4(a)

2017 STRATEGIC APPROACH TO YOUTH CRIME

In 2017 the goals of the Youth Services Coordinator as identified in the 2016-2018 Business Plan were to:



- Implement effective and innovative approaches for the Hamilton Police Service to respond to crime, safety and quality of life issues



- Reach out to share information and build relationships and partnerships by interacting with all communities including: Youth, Newcomers, People in Crisis, Seniors and Diverse Groups



- Increase training to achieve our vision by sharing knowledge and resources in our communities, freeing up time for training and expanding the training budget



The Hamilton Police Service through their Youth, Community and School Officers working in partnership and complementing General Patrol continue to offer effective and innovative approaches to respond and prevent crime. These officers are responsible for the coordination and implementation of the Strategic Targeted Offender Program (S.T.O.P.), the Extrajudicial Measures Diversion Program and the Hamilton Youth Drug Diversion program which incorporates “Drug Sweeps” at our local schools.

In addition they provide programming to our elementary and secondary schools by giving presentations on a variety of subjects including personal safety, social media and internet safety, and cyber-bullying. They also investigate school related incidents and participate in Formal and Informal Restorative Justice Circles. The below table provides a brief synopsis of all the work they do in responding to crime, safety and quality of life issues as well as building relationships by interacting with our community partners.

	Division 1	Division 2	Division 3	Totals
Presentations	144	141	322	607
School Visits	672	978	920	2570
Investigations	88	247	289	624
Informal Restorative Justice Circles	58	30	8	96
Formal Restorative Justice Circles	7	1	1	9
Days Seconded to Patrol/Other Duties	17	5	71	93



The Hamilton Police Service through the office of the Youth Service's Coordinator participates in a number of organizations and committees enhancing our commitment to work with the public to share responsibilities with community safety problems and issues. These organizations and committees include the Violent Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Protocol Committee, the John Howard Youth At Risk Development Operational and Steering Committees, the Beasley Youth Initiative Committee, the Active Sustainable Safe Transportation Routes Committee, the Best Start Committee (Learning Mobilization Network), the Week of the Child and Youth Committee, the Ontario School Safety Education Officers Community Committee (OSSEOC), the Community of Youth Officers Committee (COYO), the Chief's Student Advisory Board Committee, the Chief's School Board Liaison Committee, the Youth Justice Committee, the Chief's Committee on Police Interventions with Persons in Crisis, the Street Youth Front Line Advisory Committee, the Greater Toronto Area Extrajudicial Measures Committee, the Human Services and Justice Committee, the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board's Mental Health Advisory Council Committee, the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Network, the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board's Safe Schools Committee, the Hamilton Collaborative Committee on the Management of Youth Suicide, and the Probation/Parole and Youth Officers Committee.

In addition, the Youth Services Coordinator delivered presentations on various topics including the Strategic Approach to Youth Crime, Extrajudicial Measures and Diversions, Youth in Crisis, Personal Safety, the Police/School Board Bomb Threat Protocol and Lockdown Procedures and the Strategic Police Emergency Action Response Program (S.P.E.A.R) to several community group/organizations including Redeemer College, the Police Services Board, the Hamilton Mountain Mosque, the Islamic School of Hamilton, the John Howard Society, Lee Academy, the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board, the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board and the Mood Menders Society.

The Youth Services Coordinator also delivered Lockdown and S.P.E.A.R. training to new HPS. Communications personnel. The Coordinator has also given interviews to the Hamilton Spectator regarding drug use in our high schools, McMaster University Researchers regarding Police Response to New Immigrants, and the Toronto Globe and Mail regarding the Hamilton Police Service's School Resource Officers.

The Coordinator appeared as an "on air live" radio interview guest on the Bill Kelly Show, the Jamie West Show and the Rick Zamperin Show regarding Youth Crime, School Safety and the Hamilton School Resource Officer Program respectively. The Coordinator gave a "live" interview to CHCH Television regarding Youth Crime and appeared as a guest panel member at the Crisis Workers of Ontario Conference discussing Youth Suicide and Youth in Crisis. The Coordinator also participated in a live interview along with John Howard Society Personnel on Cable 14's "City Matters" show discussing the Youth At Risk Development Program (YARD).

The Coordinator supervised and implemented HPS participation in the Pinball Clemons Foundation Cram a Cruiser Food Drive with all donations going to the Hamilton Food Share and assisted with the development and submission of Proceeds of Crime of Crime Grant Applications on behalf of Notre Dame House and the John Howard Society.

As per the VTRA protocol, the Hamilton school boards, police and community partners are committed to making our schools safe for students and staff. As a result, the Hamilton school boards will respond to all student behaviours that are deemed to pose a potential risk to other students, staff and members of the community. It is hoped that support for early intervention measures by the school boards and community partners will prevent school violence. The Hamilton Police Service participated in eleven VTRA community collaborations in 2017.

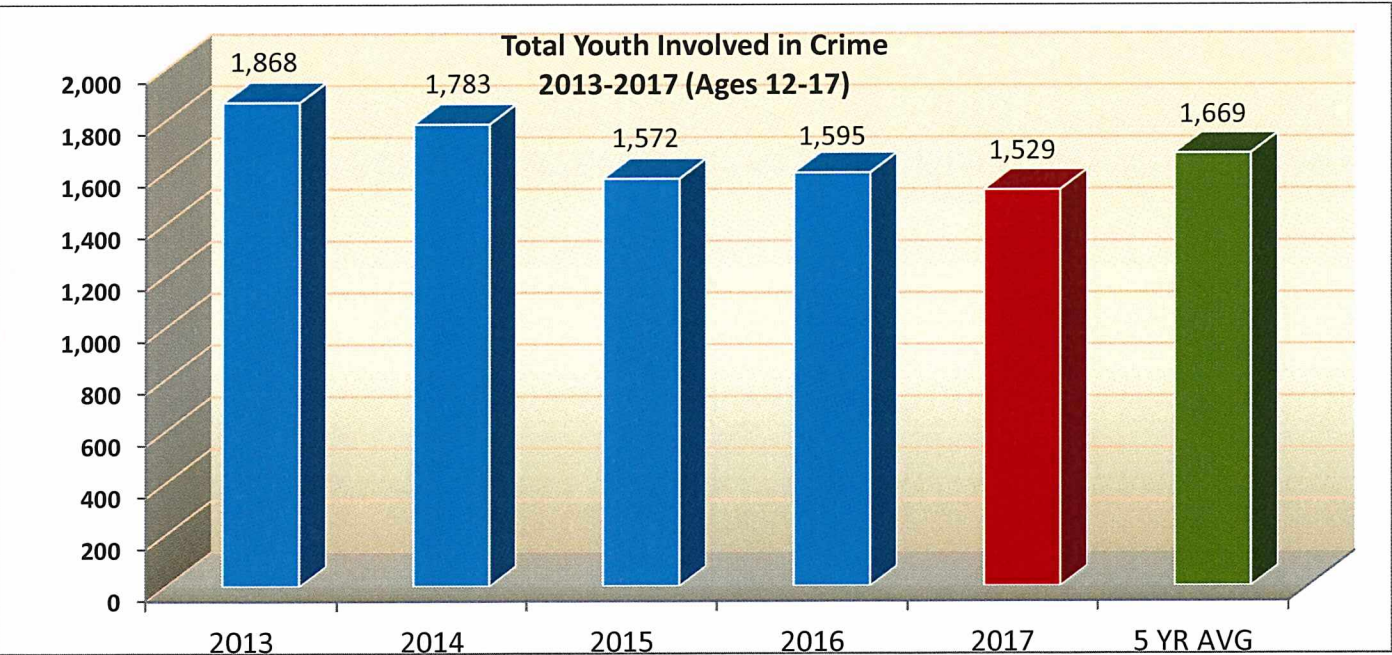


The Hamilton Police Service remains committed to increasing training opportunities for our School and Youth Officers. In 2017, officers received the following training: Seven Officers attended the COYO Conference (Committee of Youth Officers in Ontario) in Niagara Falls. Six Officers received training on Intensive Rehabilitation Custody and Supervision Orders given by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. Seven Officers attended the Human Trafficking Conference in St. Catharines. Three Officers attended the Crisis Workers of Ontario Conference in Hamilton. Four Officers attended Mental Health First Aid Training. Four Officers attended the HPS Crisis Intervention Course. Two Officers attended the Youth Officer Course conducted by the Ontario Police College. Two Officers attended the Fitness Pin Appraisal Course in Peel. Five Officers attended the in-house ongoing Leadership Course. Three Officers received Interview/Interrogation Techniques Training. Four Officers attended the Peel Regional Drug and Gang Conference. Two Officers attended the Ontario Gang Investigators Association Conference in Windsor.

All Youth Officers received training in the following areas at our semi-monthly training meetings; the YMCA's Youth in Transition Program, the Social Planning and Research Council's Street Youth Collaborative Initiative, the Hamilton Regional Indian Center's Youth Programming, Liberty For Youth programming, the YMCA's Human Trafficking Program, the HPS Auxiliary Branch, the new HPS Diversity and Discrimination power-point and a review of divisional current numbers for Diversions, Drug Sweeps, STOP Target checks and arrest as well as divisional numbers for School Visits, Presentations and Formal and Informal Restorative Justice Circles.

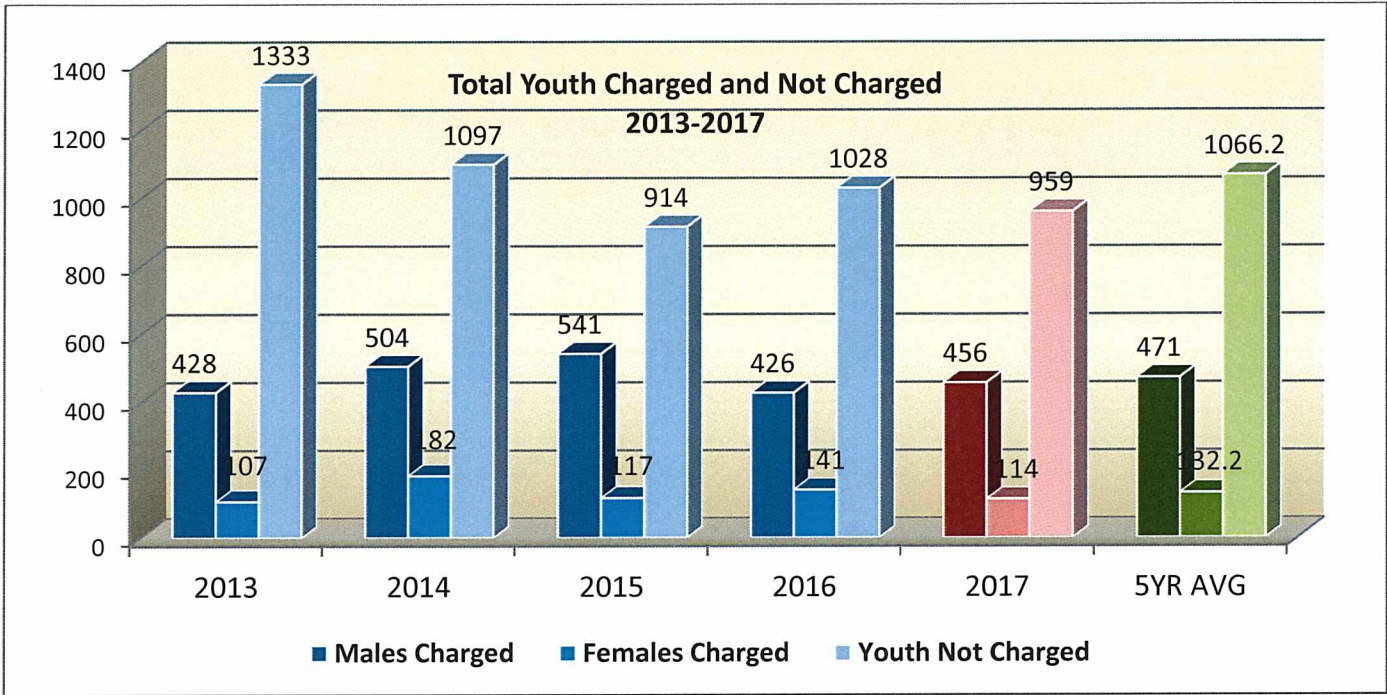
Total Youth Involved in Crime

Overall youth involved in crime (charged and not charged) has decreased from 1595 in 2016 to 1529 in 2017. This is a decrease of 4.1% in comparison to a National decrease of 5%.



Total Number of Youth Charged and Not Charged

Of the 34,936⁶ youth ages 12-17 in Hamilton, 1529 were involved in crime and 570 were charged; 456 males and 114 females. In 2017, 4.4% of youth (12-17 yrs) were involved in crime, down from 4.5% in 2016, and 1.6 % of youth were charged with an offence which is the same percentage as 2016. However, of all the 1529 youth involved in crime, 959 of them (63%) were dealt with through an Extrajudicial Measure i.e. No Further Action, Warning, Police Caution or Diversion. As stated in the Executive Summary this is in keeping with the principles of the Youth Criminal Justice Act in that “extrajudicial measures are often the most appropriate and effective way to address youth crime.”⁷

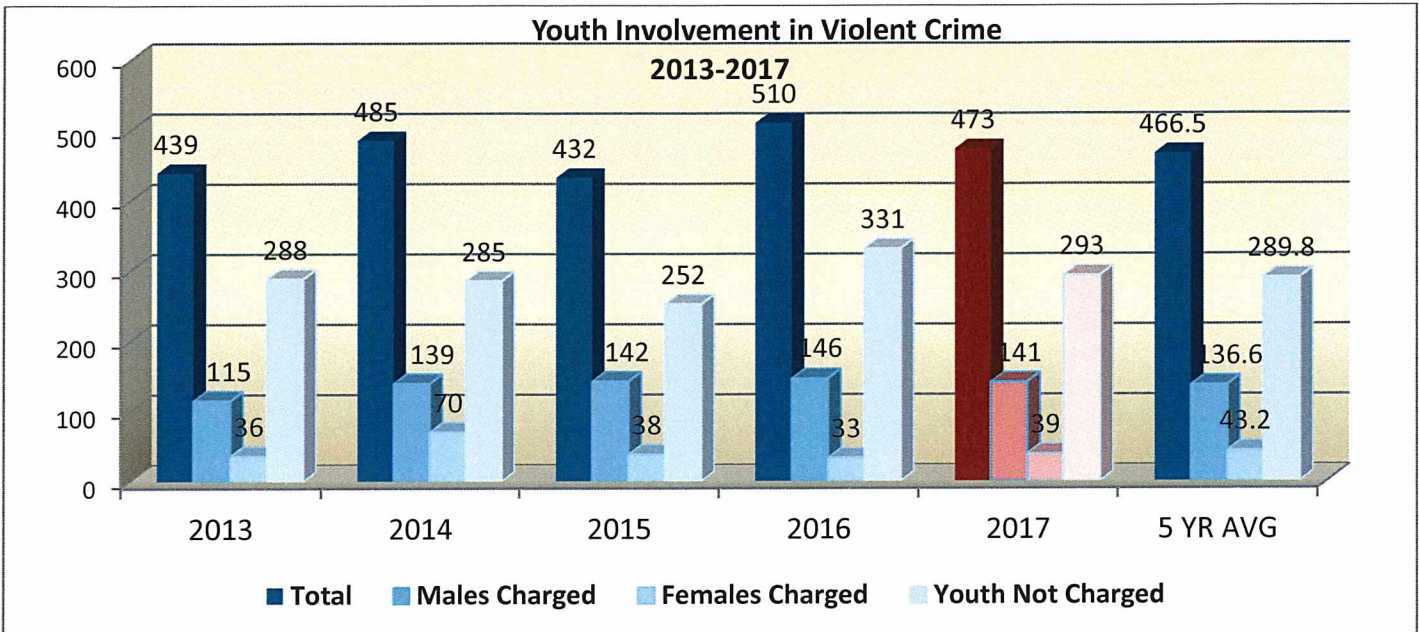


⁶ Hamilton Police Service Planning and Research

⁷ Youth Criminal Justice Act, s. 4(a)

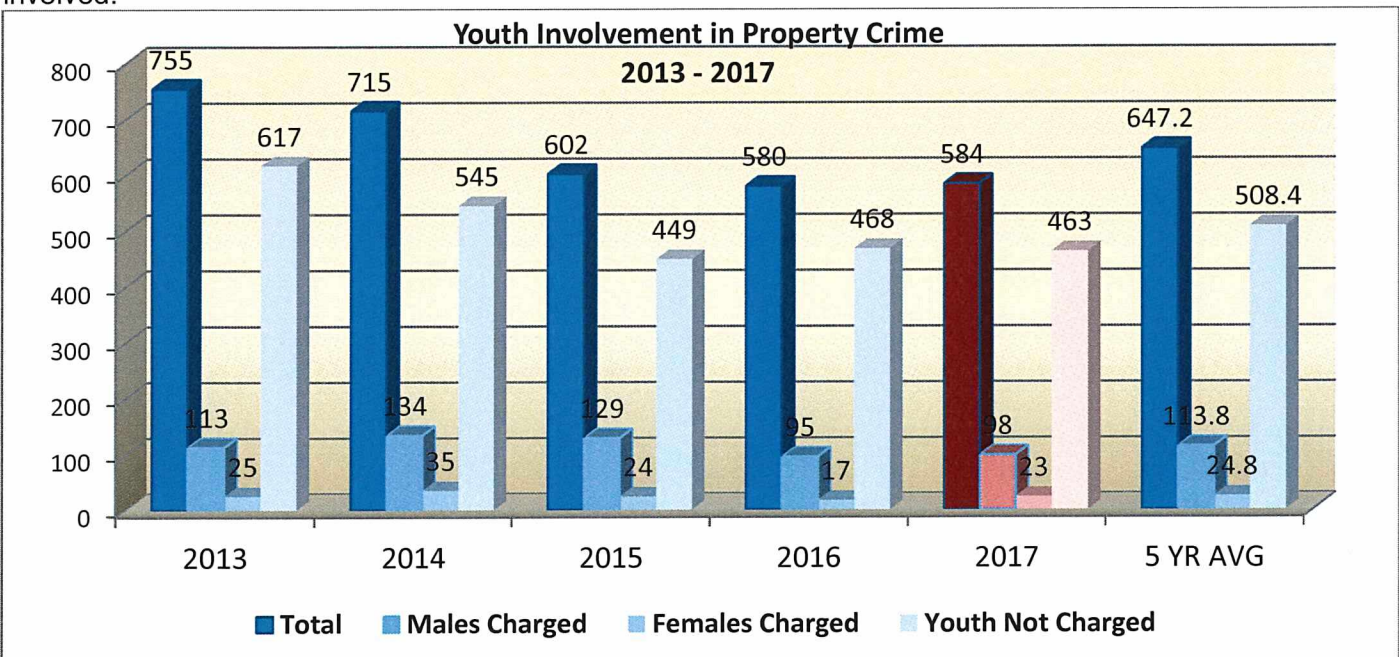
Total Youth Involved in Violent Crime

When compared to 2016, the 2017 Hamilton data results identified a decrease in violent crime by 7.25%. However of the 473 youth involved in violent crime, 62% were not charged and were dealt with through an Extrajudicial Measure i.e. No Further Action, Warning, Police Caution or Diversion, as opposed to 65% in 2016. Therefore, although the total number of youth involved in violent crime decreased, the percentage charged rose slightly from 35% to 38%.



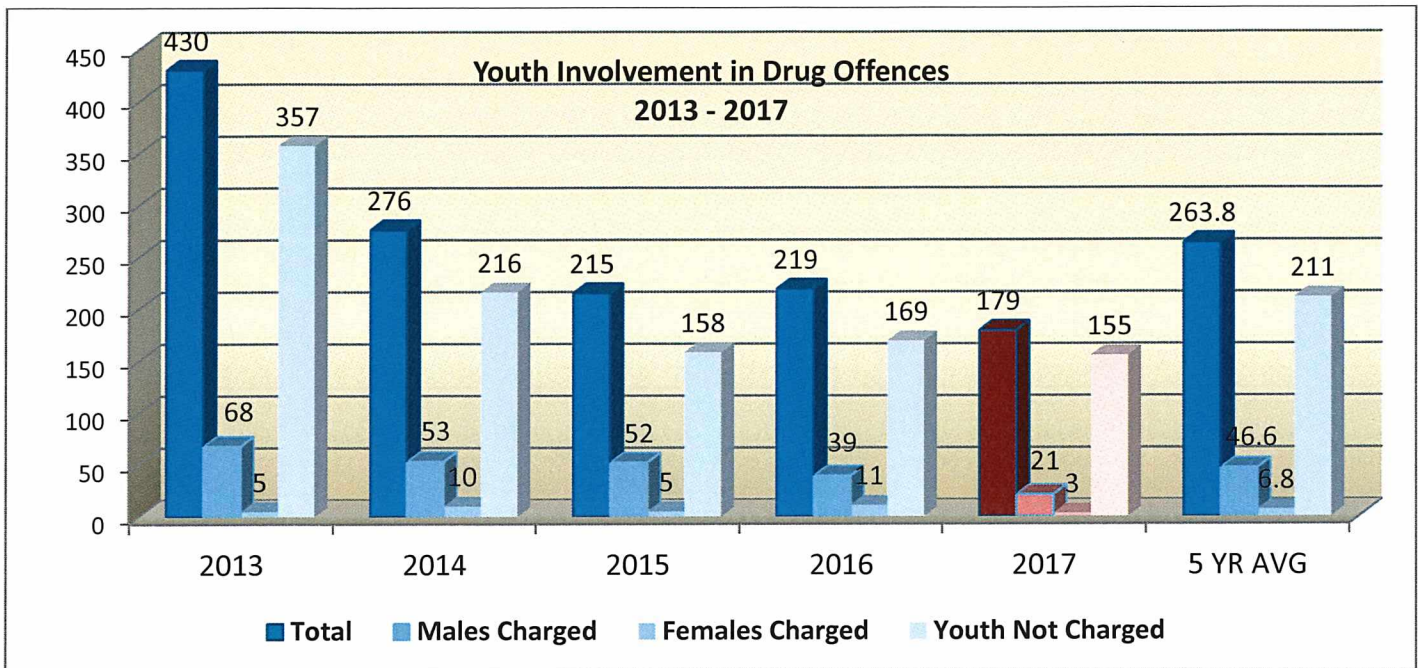
Total Youth Involved in Property Crime

Youth involved in property crime increased slightly by 0.69% from 580 in 2016 to 587 in 2017. Shoplifting still remains the number one property crime with 188 youth involved followed by Mischief Under at 113 youth involved.



Total Youth Involved in Drug Offences

In 2017, 179 youth were involved in drug offences. This is a significant decrease of 18% when compared to 2016 where 219 youth were involved in drug offences. In 2017, 24 youths were charged; 21 males and 3 females. 87% of youth involved in drug offences were not charged and dealt with by way of an extrajudicial measure.



Youth Crime by Offence

Shoplifting (under \$5000.00) is the most frequent youth offence followed by Assault Level One, Possession of Cannabis and Mischief Under. The below listed 15 offences constitute 86% of all youth involvement in crime.

Youth Involvement in Crime by Frequency of Offence – Top Fifteen				
Offence	Males Charged	Females Charged	Not Charged (%)	Total
Shoplifting (under \$5000.00)	6	3	179 (95%)	188
Assault Level One	29	19	117 (67%)	165
Possession of Cannabis	12	1	150 (92%)	163
Mischief (under \$5000.00)	6	4	103 (91%)	113
Bail Violations	79	22	6 (5.6%)	107
Theft (under \$5000.00)	7	1	89 (92%)	97
Utter Threats	7	4	70 (86%)	81
Robbery	55	4	17 (22%)	76
Assault Level Two	22	8	46 (61%)	76
Break and Enter	37	6	33 (43%)	76
Probation Violations	48	11	3 (4.8%)	62
Fail to Attend Court	29	10	0 (0.0%)	39
Theft From a Motor Vehicle	6	1	25 (78%)	32
Sexual assault	5	0	21 (81%)	26
Possession of Stolen Property Over \$5000.00)	18	3	0 (0.0%)	21

Strategic Targeted Offender Program

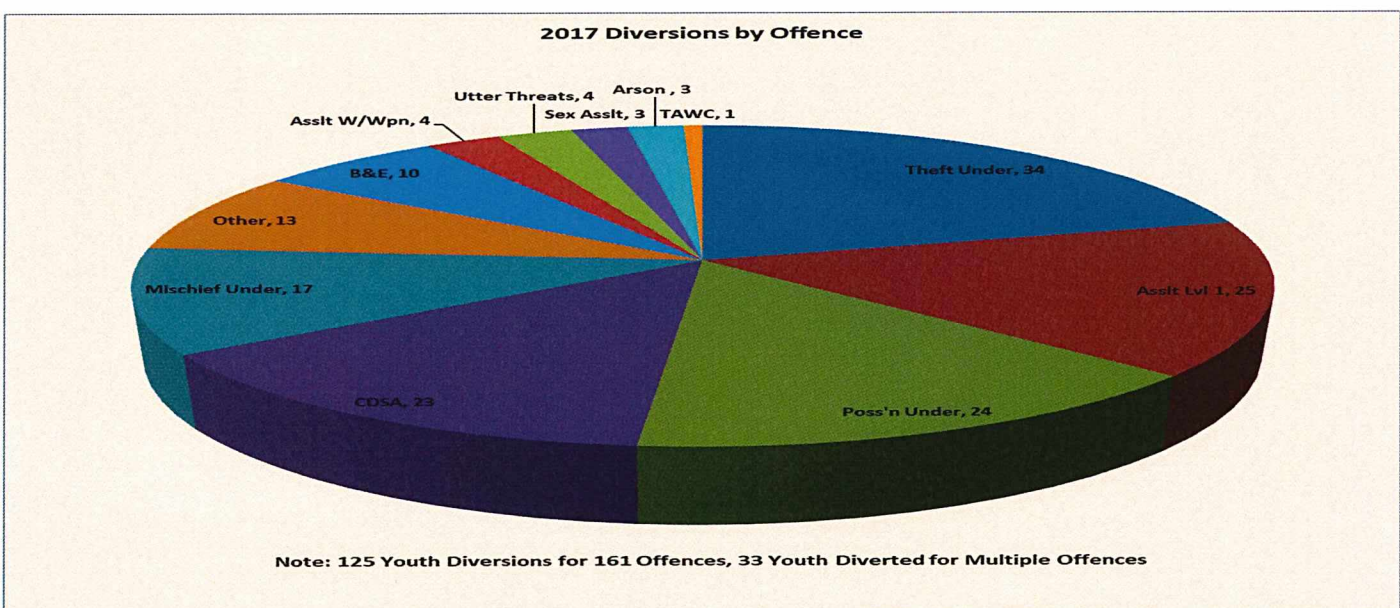
The STOP Program is specifically directed at “High Risk Youth”⁸ who have been charged formally and who are not abiding by conditions of release. The STOP program is a way for officers to check and ensure they are compliant with the court imposed conditions. The number of youths arrested outside of the STOP checks would indicate the program is identifying the correct youth to be on the program. In 2017, there were 985 STOP checks; a decrease of 7% over 2016 and in 2017 there were 119 total arrests made, an increase of 22% over 2016.

2017 Strategic Targeted Offender Program (STOP)					
Division	Number of STOP Targets	Number of STOP Checks	Targets Arrested As Result Of STOP Checks	Targets Arrested Outside Of STOP Checks	Total
Div. 1	22 avg. per month	266	8	41	49
Div. 2	14 avg. per month	332	11	11	22
Div. 3	25 avg. per month	387	4	44	48
Total	61 avg. per month	985	23	96	119

2016: 1058 STOP Checks, 97 Total Arrests

Intervention Programs

The Hamilton Police Service are active members on the John Howard’s Youth Justice Steering Committee (JYC), Hamilton Youth Justice Committee (HYJC)), and the Hamilton Youth Drug Diversion Program (HYDDP). As per the requirements of the YCJA, the HPS has a formal agreement with the John Howard Society to operate its extrajudicial measures diversion referral program. The program educates young people who have been diverted away from the judicial system about the impact of their actions and on the community. In 2017 the John Howard Society received 125 EJM’s diversion referrals from the Hamilton Police Service. This is 13% less than the 144 referrals made in 2016, but 15% more than the 5 year low number of 109 referrals in 2015. The majority of referrals were for Theft Under (34), Assault Level 1 (25), Possession Under (24), CDSA 4(1) simple possession (23), Possession Under (24), and Mischief Under (17).



⁸ HPS Policy and Procedure 4.3.1

Hamilton Youth Drug Diversion Program (HYDDP) – Drug Sweeps

In support of the HPS goal of reducing the availability and use of illegal drugs in our community, Youth Officers, Crime Managers, and HEAT officers attend local high schools and randomly conduct drug sweeps. If a youth qualifies, they will attend drug counseling and an education day in lieu of criminal charges. The goal of the diversion program is to decrease the number of youth who are in contact with the police for school based, drug related offences. The John Howard Society of Hamilton, Burlington and Area as part of our extrajudicial measures program, facilitate the education day. The day is run in partnership with the HPS, Alternatives for Youth, and the Good Shepherd Youth Services. In 2017, 20 youths were referred to this diversion program in lieu of charge.

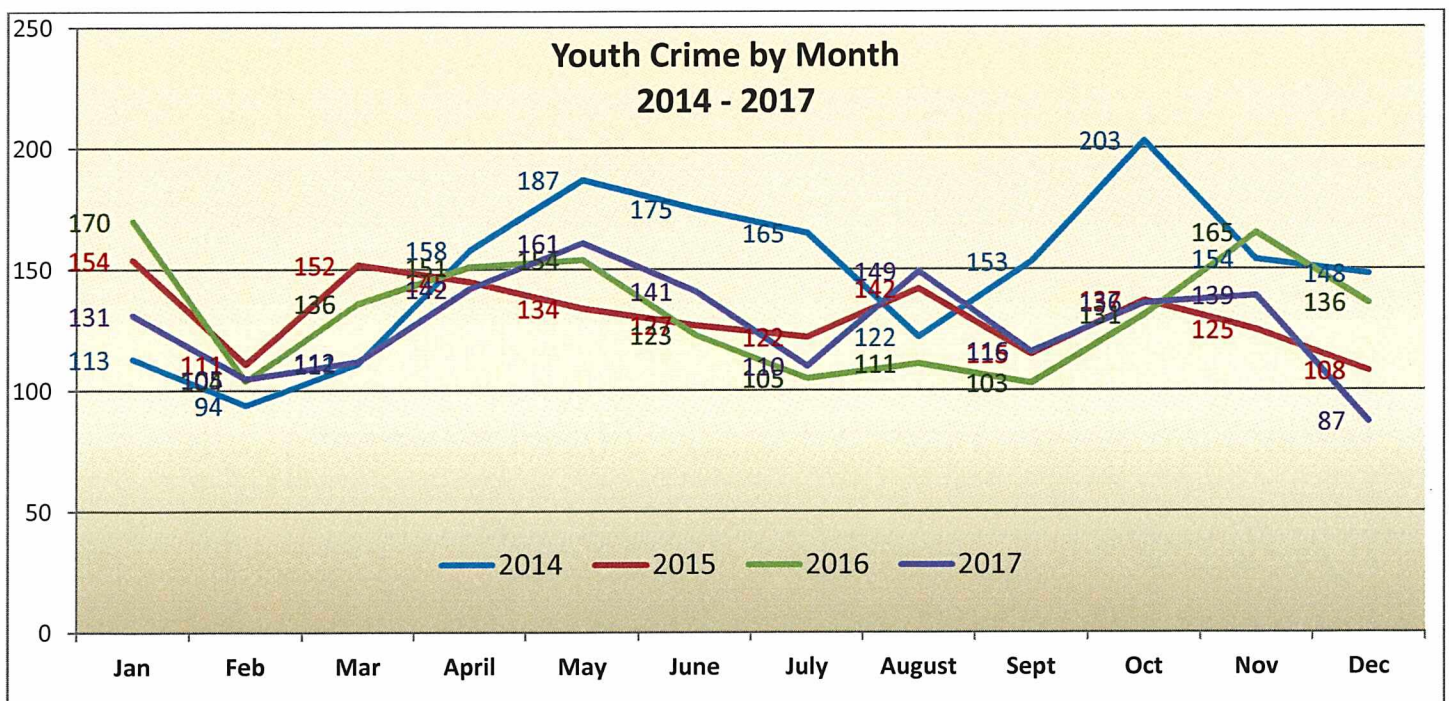
Drug Sweep Totals - 2017

Division	Number of Sweeps	Number Arrested	Persons Charged	Pre-Charge Diversion	Police Cautions	Marijuana Seized (in grams)	Other Drugs Seized	Drug Items Seized	Weapons Seized
One	40	27	1	9	17	33.5	3	13	5
Two	40	9	0	4	5	41.5	0	0	0
Three	23	27	2	7	18	93.1	11	26	0
Totals	103	63	3	20	40	168.1	14	39	5

2016: 145 Sweeps, 93 Arrests, 13 Charged, 35 Diversions, 45 Cautions

Youth Crime by Month

Youth criminal activity by month has been tracked since 2014. There are several discernible trends. It is clear that youth crime decreases significantly in the month of February which historically is one of the coldest months of the year. It then rises in March; plateaus or decreases in June and July and then begins to rise in October and November. Data from future years will have to be gathered to see if this pattern continues.



Youth Crime by Division

The City of Hamilton is divided into three policing divisions. Division One comprised of the downtown inner city area; Division Two comprised of the City's east end, Stoney Creek and Stoney Creek Mountain and Division Three, comprised of the Mountain, Ancaster, Dundas, Waterdown and outlying area. The City of Hamilton's population is approximately 536,930⁹. Division One contains 104,655 people (19% of the overall population), Division Two contains 171,495 people (32% of the total population) and Division Three contains 260,780 people (49% of the total population).

As would be expected, the majority of youth crime occurs in Division Three as the majority of Hamilton's population resides there. However, when the overall percentage of youth crime per Division is compared to the Division's percentage of the overall population, it appears that on a per capita basis more youth crime occurs in Division One than in Divisions Two and Three. Division One accounts for 19% of the City's population and 28% of the youth crime.

Youth Crime by Division 2017				
	Males Charged	Females Charged	Not Charged	Totals
Division One	149	44	234	427
Division Two	113	38	291	442
Division Three	194	32	434	660
Totals	456	114	959	1529

Youth Crime by Division %Youth Involved vs % Divisional Population		
	%Youth Involved in Crime	%Population
Division 1	28%	19%
Division2	29%	32%
Division 3	43%	49%

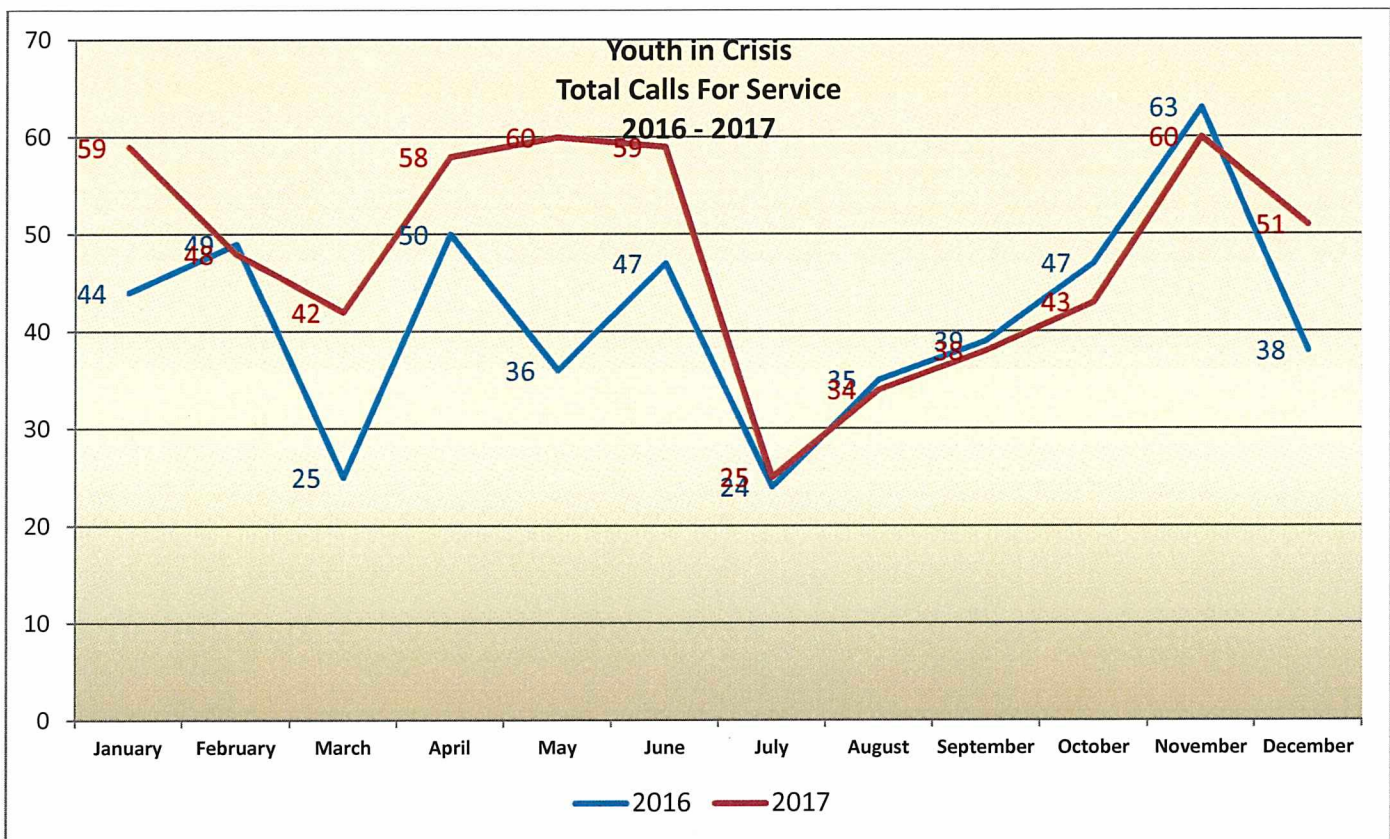
⁹ City of Hamilton web-site, February 2017

Youth in Crisis

In 2014 the Chief's Student Advisory Committee Meeting, a committee made up of high school students and youth across the City identified the number one issue of concern for youth in their schools was mental health. Training opportunities were afforded to the youth officers on mental health in order to better address youth in crisis. To assist in dealing with youth in crisis, St. Joseph's Health Care opened the Youth Wellness Center in 2015 and the Police Service implemented the Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Team (MCRRT) as well as continuing the C.O.A.S.T. Program.

The number of youth in crisis wasn't previously tracked by the Youth Coordinator until 2014. In 2017, the HPS responded to 414 individuals under the age of 18 for a Mental Health/Person in Crisis call for service. In 2016 we responded to 350 youth in crisis, 282 in 2015, 247 in 2014 and 157 in 2013.

Of the 414 individuals, 190 were males and 224 were females. 79 of those youths were involved in more than one incident for a total of 577 calls for service; 16% more than in 2016. It is obvious that youth in crisis incidents are rising and continue to be a concern.



Conclusion

Overall youth involvement in crime decreased in 2017 by 4.1%, consistent with the national decrease of 5%. As per the below table, youth involvement in violent crime markedly decreased, property crime marginally increased and drug offences dropped significantly.

The Youth Criminal Justice Act clearly states that the promotion of the long term protection of the public is best achieved through prevention and engaging youth in a more meaningful way than through the formal justice system. HPS will continue to find new ways to engage, educate, and prevent youth crime and violent crime through continued support and facilitation of youth programs and initiatives.

	2017	2016	Percentage Increase/Decrease
Total Youth Involved in Crime	1529	1595	-4.1%
Total Youth Charged and Not Charged			
Males Charged	456	426	+7%
Females Charged	114	141	-19%
Not Charged	959	1028	-6.7%
Youth Involvement in Violent Crime			
Males Charged	141	146	-3.4%
Females Charged	39	33	+18%
Not Charged	293	331	-11.5%
Total	473	510	-7.25%
Youth Involvement in Property Crime			
Males Charged	98	95	+3.2%
Females Charged	23	17	+35%
Not Charged	463	468	-1.0%
Total	584	580	+0.69%
Youth Involvement in Drug Offences			
Males Charged	21	39	-46%
Females Charged	3	11	-73%
Not Charged	155	169	-8.3%
Total	179	219	-18%