

Data Issues for Researchers

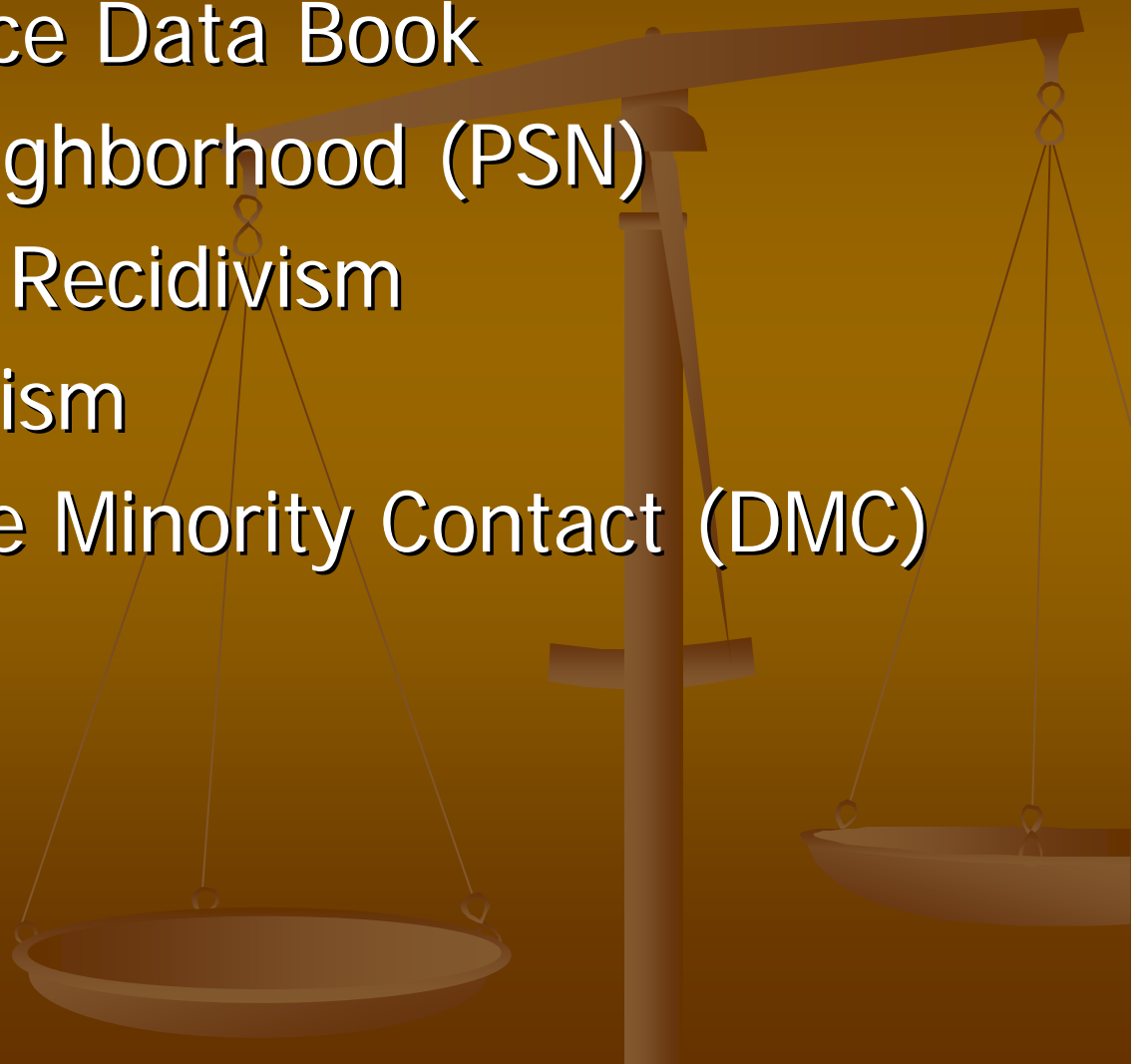


MCJUSTIS

5/17/2005

Projects

- Crime and Justice Data Book
- Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN)
- Adult Probation Recidivism
- Juvenile Recidivism
- Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC)



Crime and Justice Data Book



1. Annual Report monitoring statewide crime trends
2. Data Challenges
 1. Using two year old UCR data to monitor crime patterns
 2. Inability to get characteristics of offenders
 3. No Prosecutorial data
 4. Limited access to MEJIS data

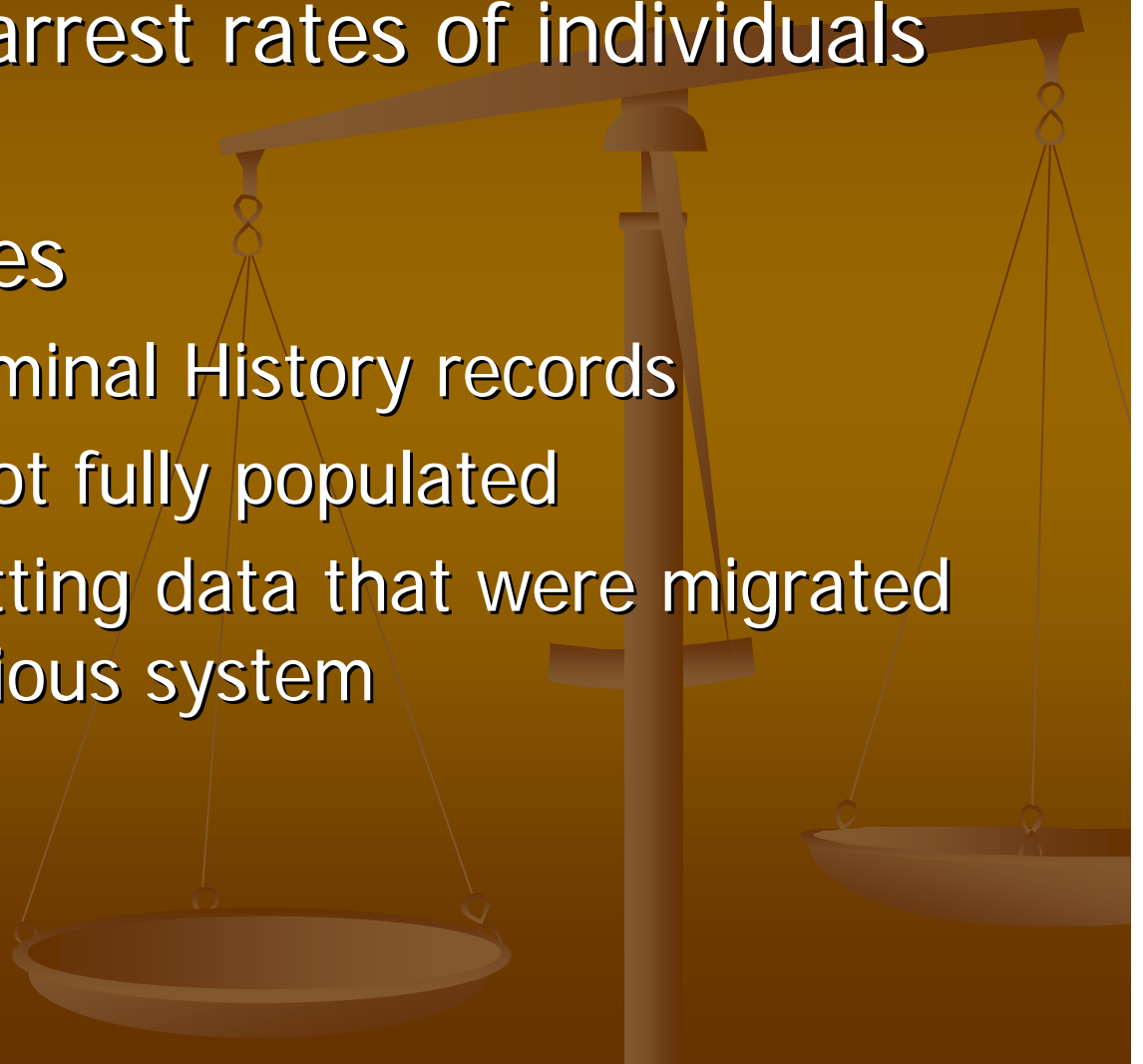
Project Safe Neighborhoods



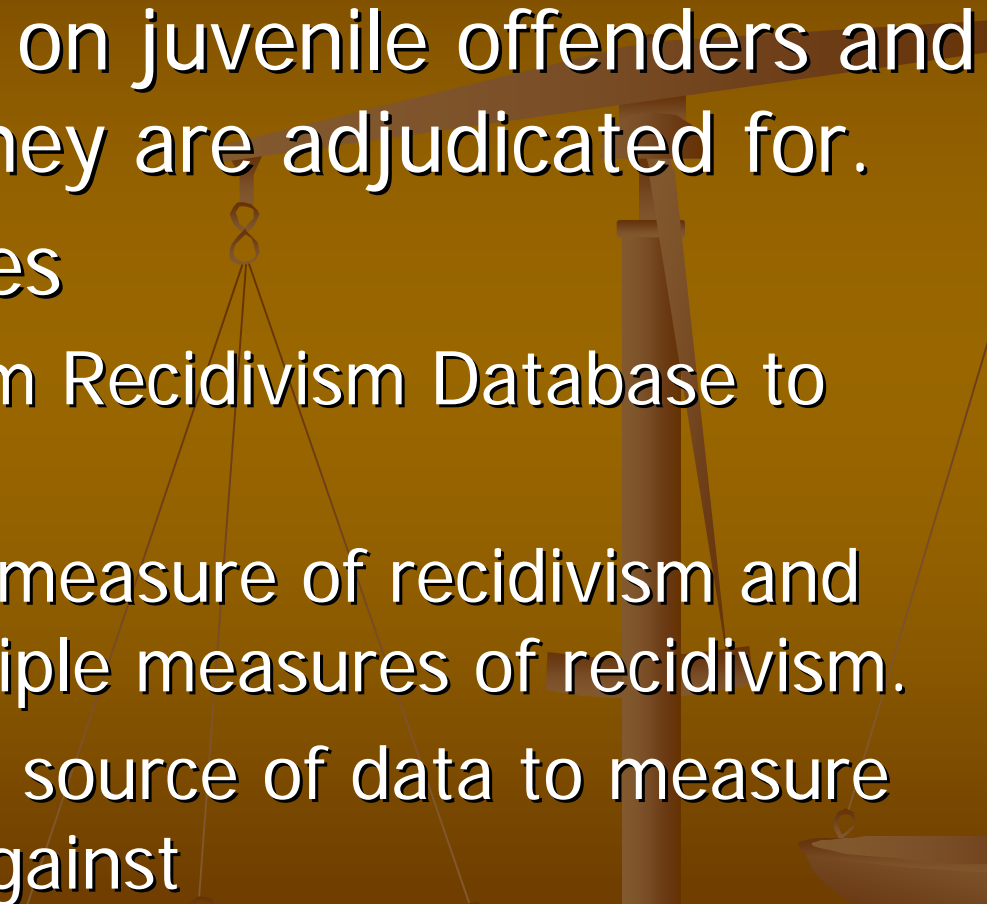
1. Monitoring Firearm violence across the state
2. Data Challenges
 1. Violent firearm crime totals reliant on UCR data (i.e. 2 years old)
 2. No data on possessory offenses
 3. No data on threatened use of a firearm
 4. Little data on the offender characteristics (except for federal firearm offenders)

Adult Probation Recidivism

1. Measuring re-arrest rates of individuals on probation
2. Data Challenges
 1. Reliant on Criminal History records
 2. CORIS data not fully populated
 3. Difficulties getting data that were migrated from the previous system



Annual Recidivism Report (1998-2003)

1. Annual Report on juvenile offenders and the offenses they are adjudicated for.
 2. Data Challenges
 1. Transition from Recidivism Database to CORIS.
 2. Changing the measure of recidivism and including multiple measures of recidivism.
 3. Do not have a source of data to measure data quality against
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Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC)

1. Federal regulation requiring all states to report out on the proportion of minorities at each stage in the juvenile criminal justice system.
2. Data Challenges
 1. DMC project has required us to look at all decision points in the juvenile justice system.
 1. Examples: arrest, no further action, detention, referral, diversion, petition, adjudication, commitment.
 2. DMC has required assessment of data availability, usability and reliability at each decision point.

Capacity Assessment and Improvements



- Four data sources all useful for criminal justice research: Police, Prosecutors, Courts, and Corrections
- Systems do not communicate, and some data are not available electronically.
- Data quality control:
 - How do we know how good the data are?
 - Would audits or spot checks help identify data deficits and where to target support?
- Source book of standards, training and data entry support
- Training of data enterers (policemen, probation officers, etc.)

Issues to Consider



- What are the research/policy questions you want answered? What will those questions be in the next 5 years?
- Are the data systems flexible to answer those questions?
- The inability of the data systems to speak with one another prevents the criminal justice research community in Maine from fully conveying what is occurring in the state.