

# ASHLAND COUNTY JUVENILE COURT



Annual  
Report

2016

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JUDGE DAMIAN J. VERCILLO



**INTRODUCTION**

The Ashland County Juvenile Court is committed to service to the community, treatment of all persons who come before the Court with dignity and respect, and to continuous improvement.

The Court is dedicated to holding offenders and/or their parents accountable for their actions; to protect the community; to guarantee the right of due process under the law to all persons; to develop services and positive relationships with all other agencies within the community, with the goal of meeting the unique needs of young people and their families; to ensure that victims’ rights are identified and their needs addressed; and to believe that the potential for positive change exists in all people.

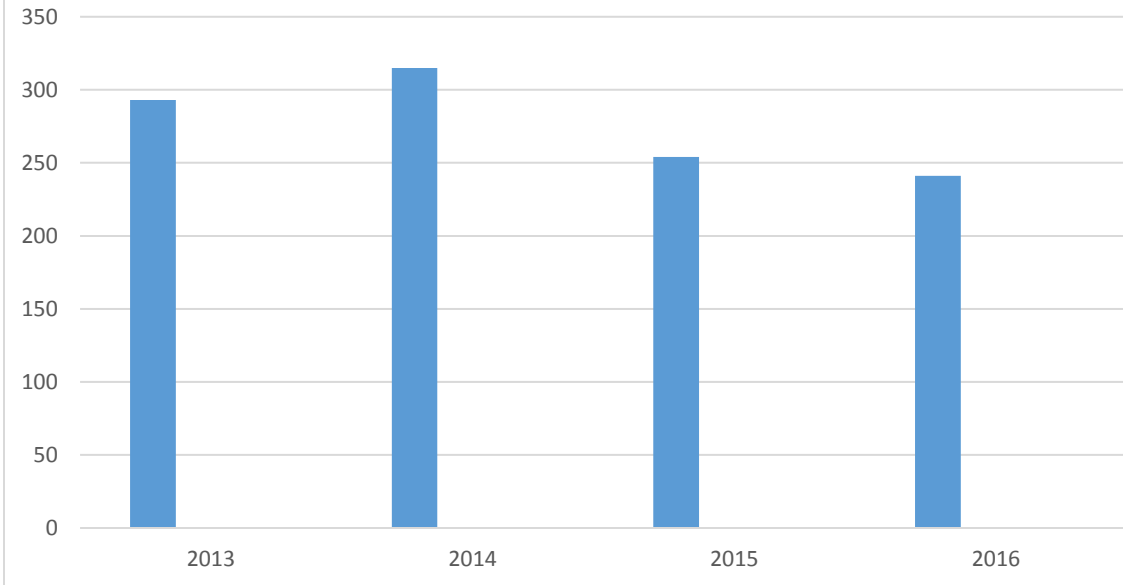
**GENERAL ACTIVITY**

The Juvenile Court deals with two types of young people who come within the juvenile justice system; namely, juvenile offenders and juvenile victims. Juvenile offenders are classified by law as either delinquent children, unruly children, or juvenile traffic offenders. Juvenile victims are classified by law as neglected children, dependent children, or abused children. In addition to the above, the Juvenile Court also handles numerous other types of cases, including paternity cases, custody and permanent custody cases, child support cases, and adult cases.

**2016 SUPREME COURT STATISTICS**

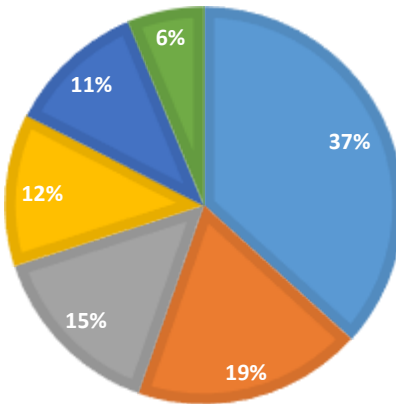
	<b>Delinquency</b>	<b>Traffic</b>	<b>Abuse, Neglect or Dependency</b>	<b>Unruly</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Motion for Permanent Custody</b>	<b>Custody or visitation</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Parentage</b>	<b>U.I.F.S.A.</b>	<b>All Others</b>
<b>New Cases Filed</b>	241	250	150	40	37	18	108	281	3	14	11
<b>Cases Terminated</b>	243	250	162	40	40	12	114	296	6	14	11

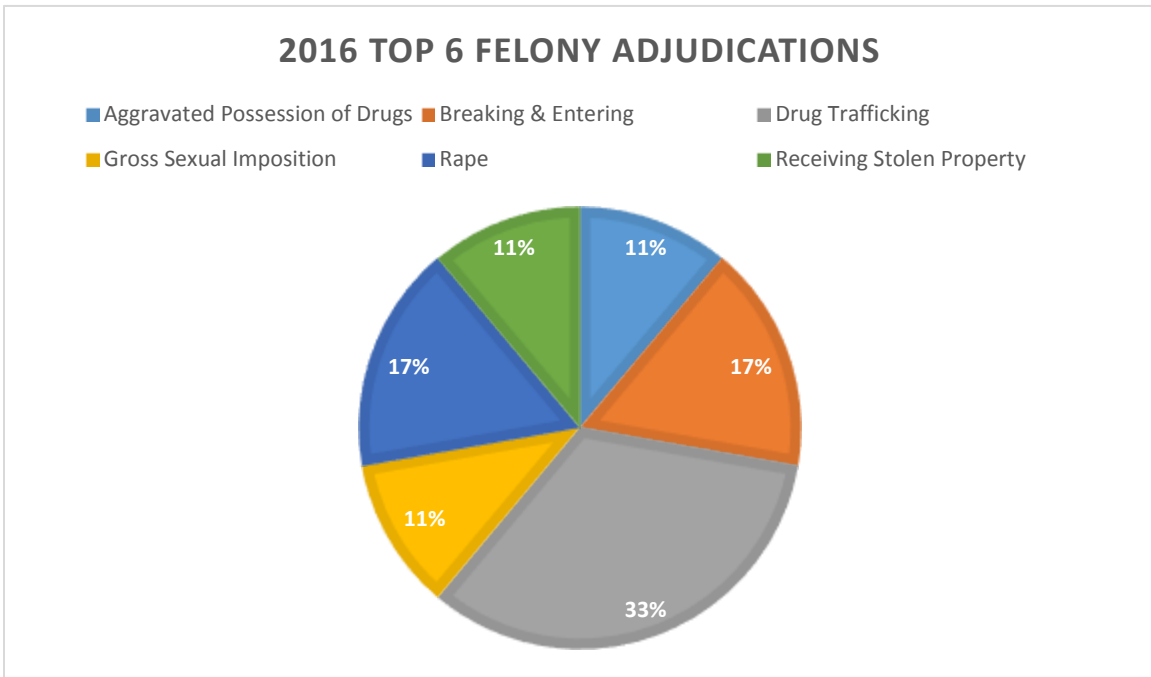
### NEW CASES FILED-DELINQUENCY COMPARISON CHART



### 2016 TOP 6 DELINQUENCY OFFENSES

- Probation Violations
- Theft
- Underage Consumption
- Possession of Marijuana
- Possession of Drug Paraphernalia
- Criminal Trespass





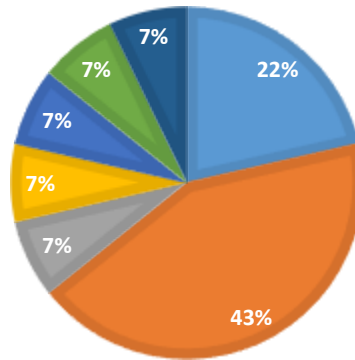
In 2016, a total of 22 youth (19 males, 3 females) committed a total of 32 felony offenses.

Of those who were adjudicated for having committed felonies 3 young people (all males) were committed to the custody of the Ohio Department of Youth Services with minimum commitments of six months to three year in duration, to a maximum of age twenty-one.

In addition, 3 adjudicated youth (all males) were placed at the Northern Ohio Juvenile Community Corrections Facility (NOJCCF). The NOJCCF is a secure facility funded by the Ohio Department of Youth Services and is located in Sandusky, Ohio. It is operated under the direction of five Juvenile Courts, Ashland County Juvenile Court being one of those courts. The NOJCCF is program-oriented, including, but not limited to, a sex offender program. Youth placed at that facility are expected to complete all programs in which they are placed. The length of stay at the NOJCCF is determined by the Court, but generally ranges from six months to one year.

## 2016 SERIOUS YOUTHFUL OFFENDER

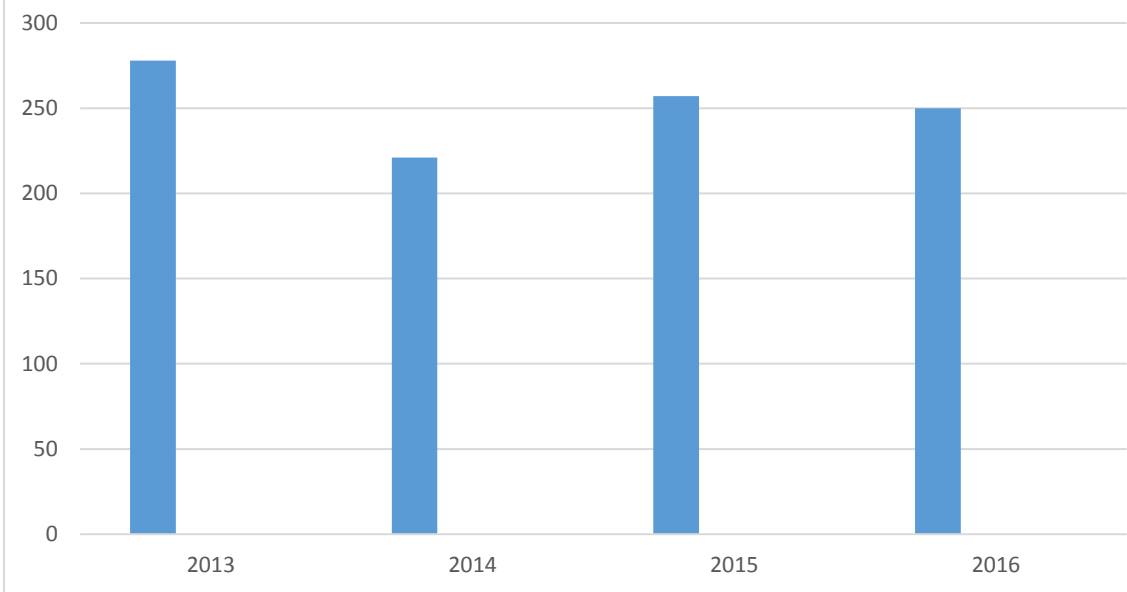
- Rape
- Gross Sexual Imposition
- Aggravated Burglary
- Complicity to Robbery
- Complicity to Aggravated Robbery
- Complicity to Kidnapping
- Complicity to Abduction



During 2016, three juveniles were sentenced as Serious Youthful Offenders. The above chart lists the offenses committed.

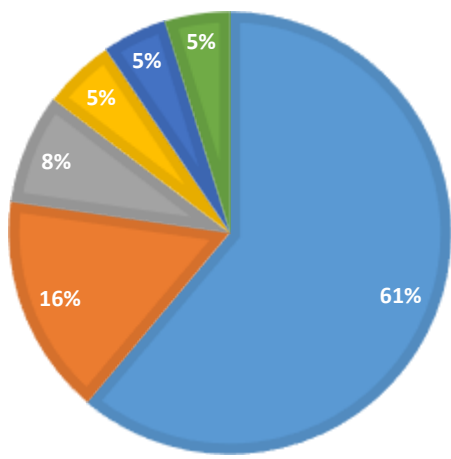
Juveniles designated as serious youthful offenders receive blended sentences, both a juvenile disposition and an adult sentence. In order to be designated as a serious youthful offender, one or more of the following need to apply: juvenile must be at least ten years of age; juvenile's charge is a violent offense; juvenile used, displayed or brandished a firearm while committing the offense; juvenile was previously committed to the Ohio Department of Youth Services.

### NEW CASES FILED-TRAFFIC COMPARISON CHART

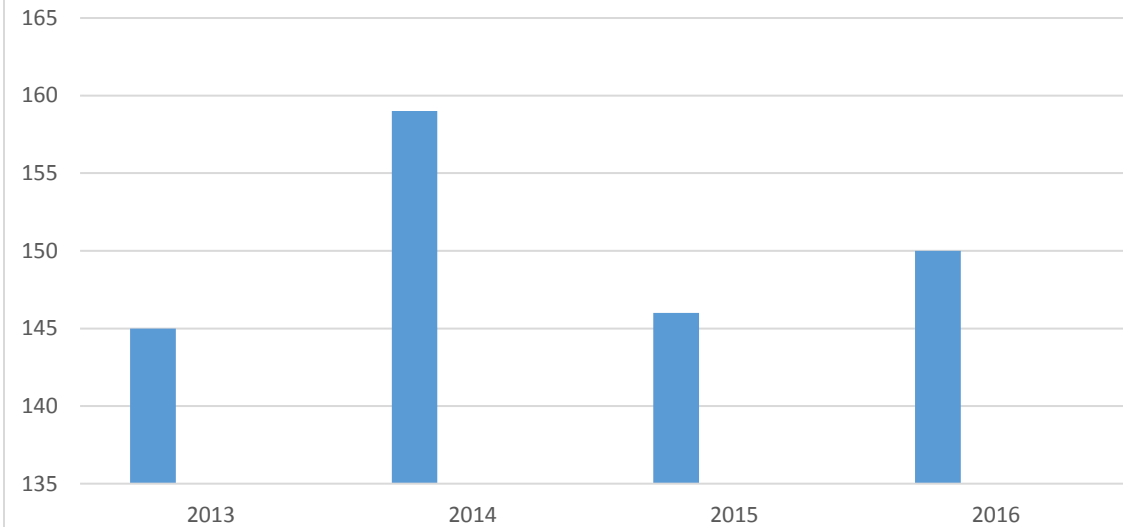


### 2016 TOP 6 TRAFFIC OFFENSES

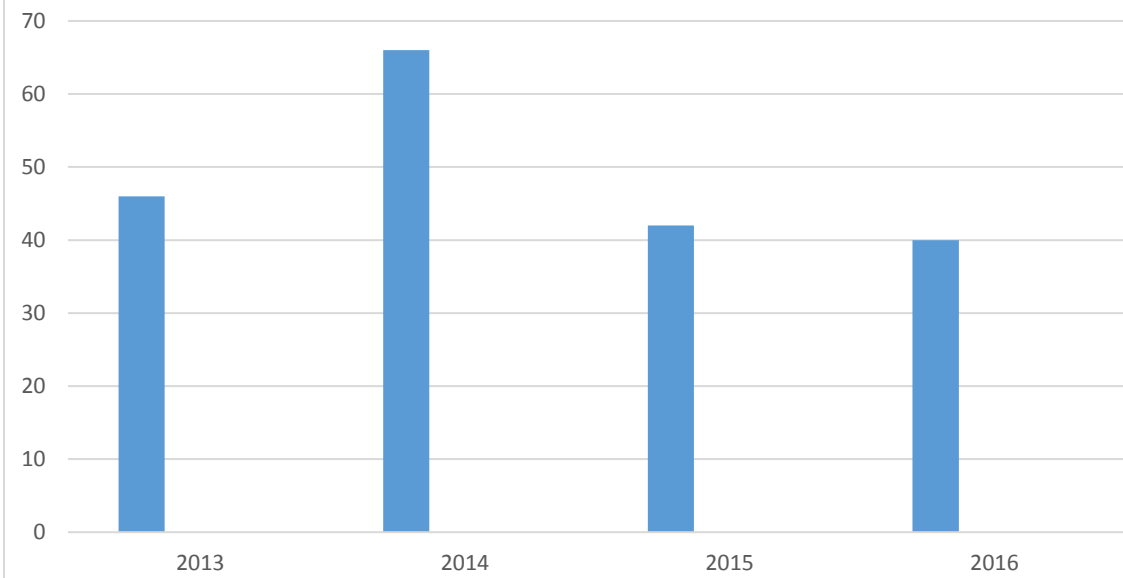
- Speeding
- Failure to Control
- Assured Clear Distance
- No Operator's License
- Stop Sign Violation
- Seat Belt Violation



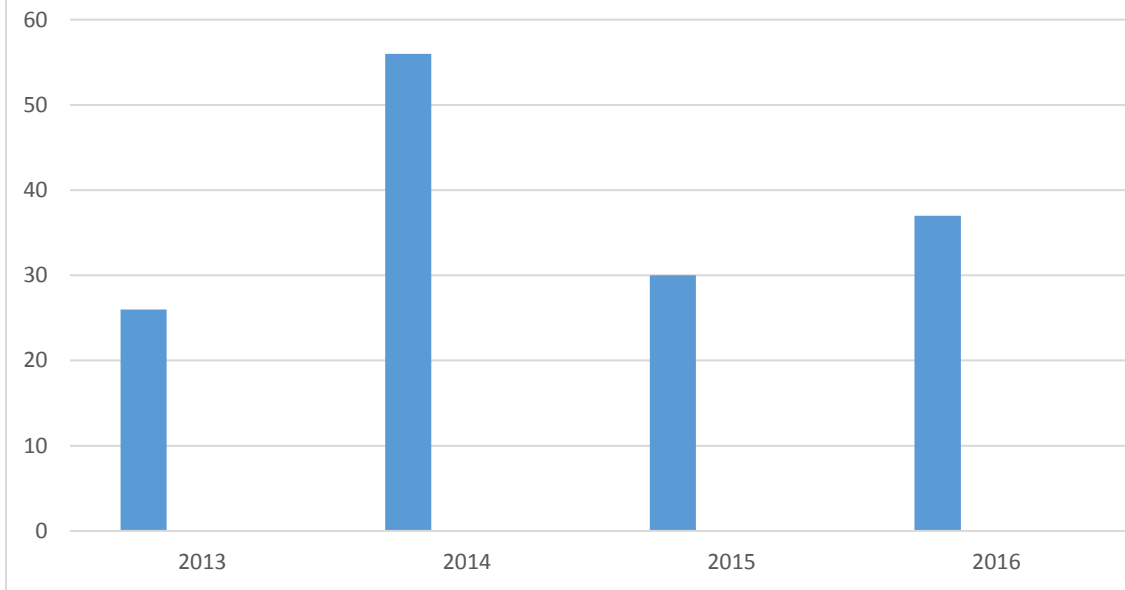
### NEW CASES FILED-ABUSE/NEGLECT/DEPENDENCY COMPARISON CHART



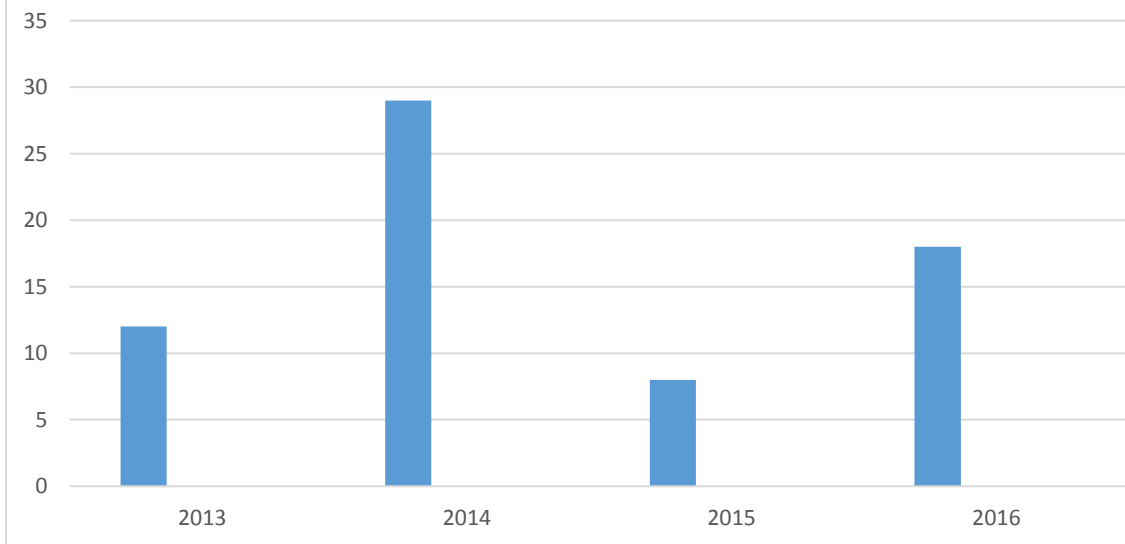
### NEW CASES FILED-UNRULY COMPARISON CHART



NEW CASES FILED-ADULT COMPARISON CHART

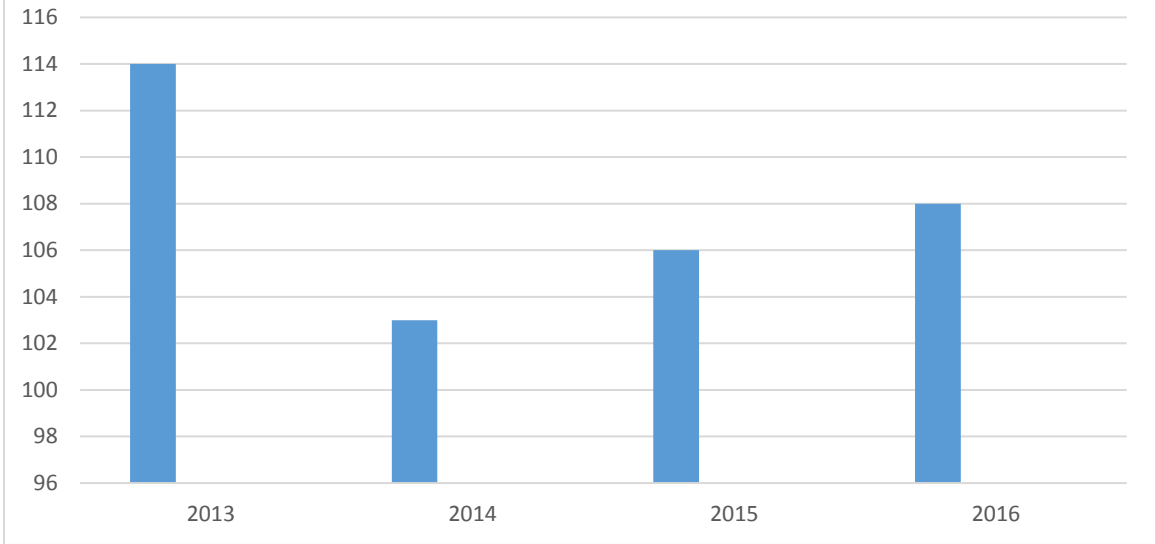


NEW CASES FILED-MOTION FOR PERMANENT CUSTODY  
COMPARISON CHART

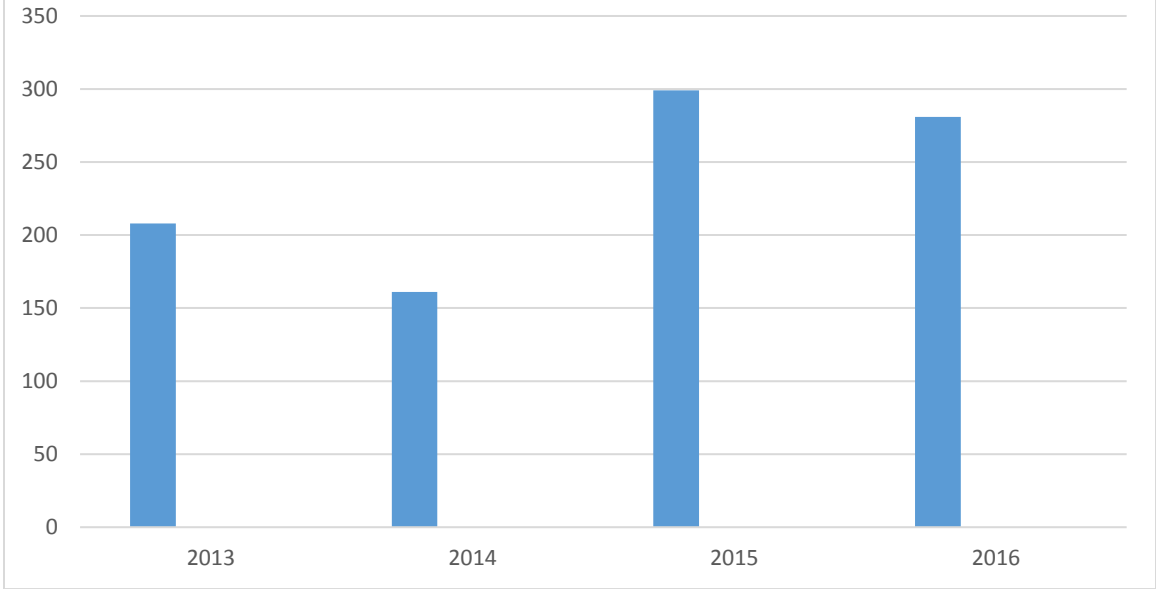




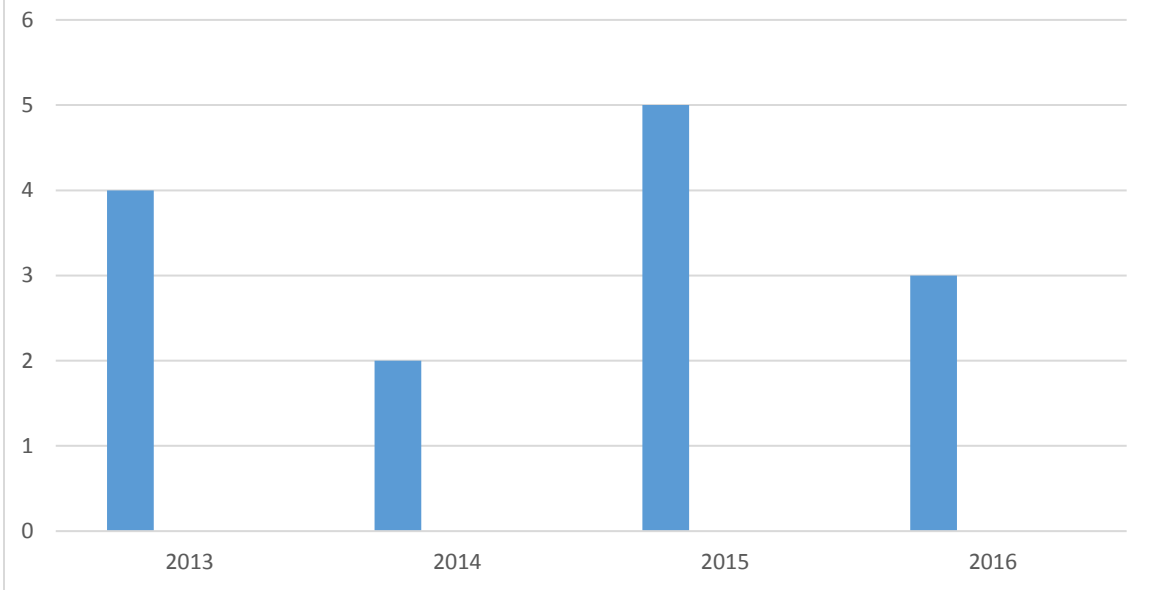
### NEW CASES FILED-CUSTODY/VISITATION COMPARISON CHART



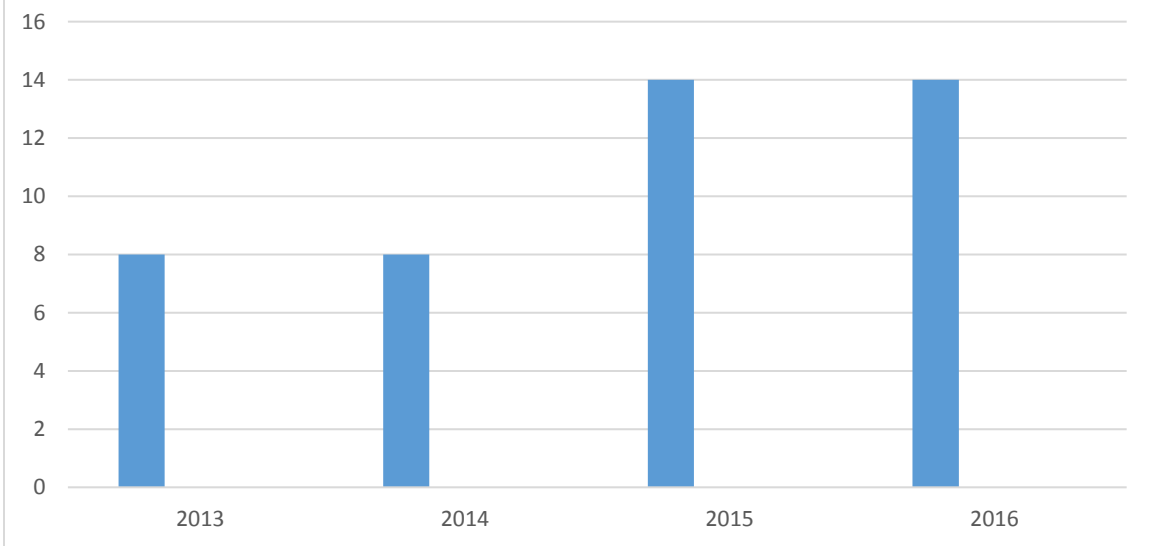
### NEW CASES FILED-CHILD SUPPORT COMPARISON CHART



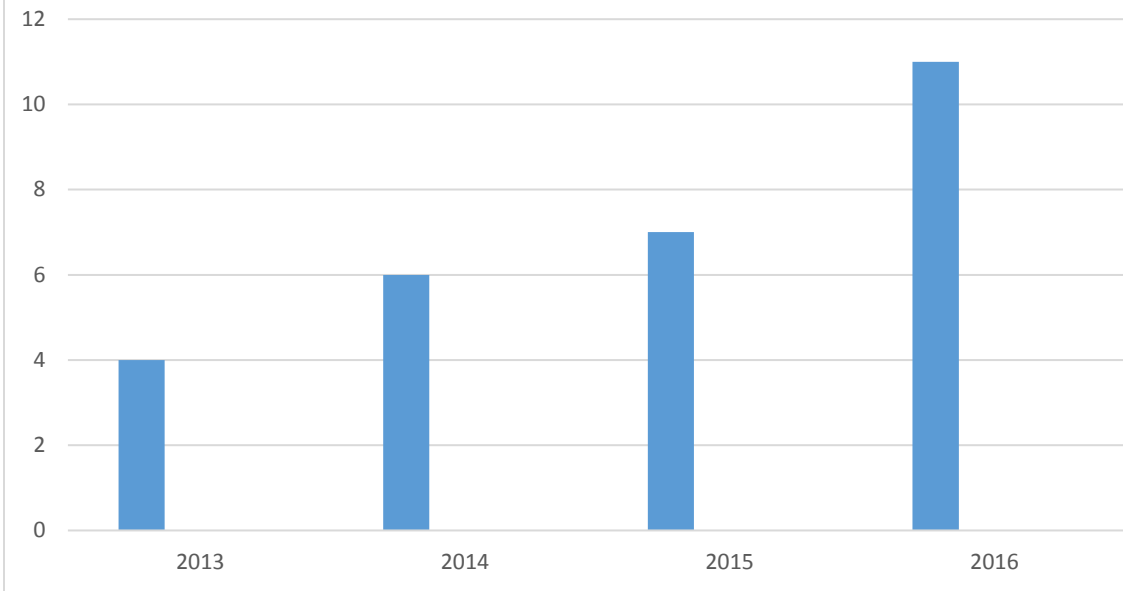
NEW CASES FILED-PARENTAGE COMPARISON CHART



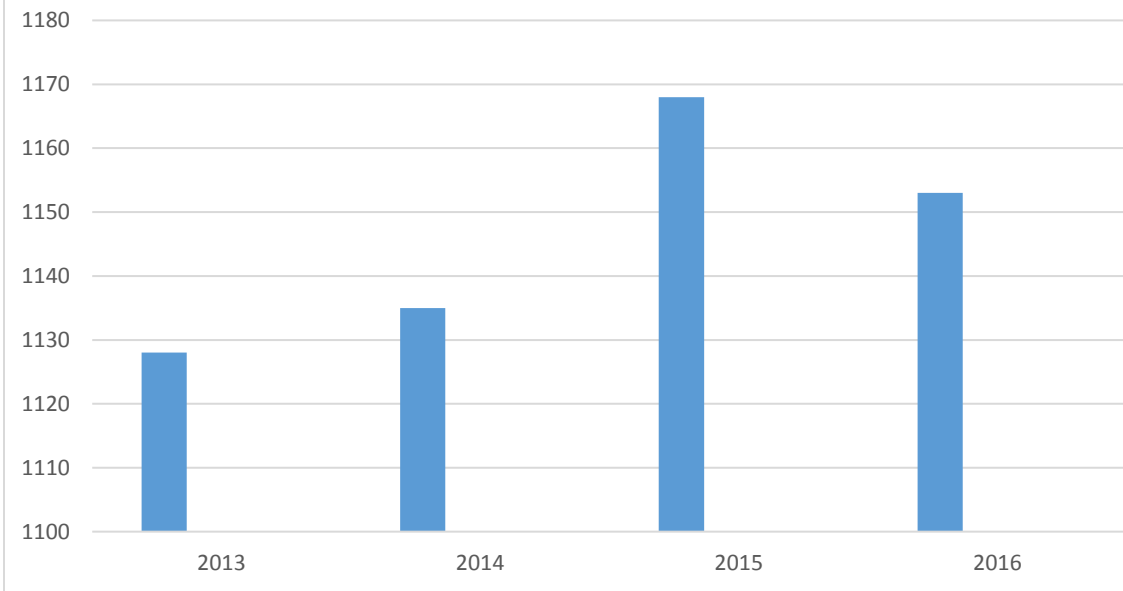
NEW CASES FILED-UNIFORM INTERSTATE FAMILY SUPPORT ACT (U.I.F.S.A.) COMPARISON CHART



NEW CASES FILED-ALL OTHERS COMPARISON CHART



TOTAL NEW CASES FILED COMPARISON CHART



## **PROGRAMS**

### **Community Work Service**

The Community Work Service Program through the Ashland County Juvenile Court is designed to help juveniles make positive contributions to their community, as well as hold them accountable for their actions. Juveniles become involved in the program by Order of the Court or by referral from their Probation Officers. Either way, the total number of hours assigned to the juvenile must be completed within ninety days.

The Community Work Service Program operates several programming options under the supervision of the Community Work Service Director for completion of hours:

- KnitWhits:** This program enables juveniles to earn community service hours by knitting hats for charity. The program teaches juveniles a new skill, provides a sense of accomplishment and is a calming, therapeutic activity. A ratio of 1:4 is maintained during sessions.
- Adopt-a-Highway:** This program allows juveniles to earn community service hours by cleaning up litter along a two mile stretch of State Route 58 in Ashland. The program is conducted at least four times a year and saves taxpayer dollars. The program instills responsibility towards the community as well as accountability. Our Adopt-a-Highway program has earned Gold Star status through the Ohio Department of Transportation. A ratio of either 1:4 or 2:8 is maintained during sessions.
- Fostering a Smile:** The Fostering a Smile Program was initiated in 2004 and benefits Ashland County foster children. Since its inception, juveniles have earned community service hours by donating care bag items, helping with fundraising events, decorating care bags, collecting luggage and more. The program teaches juveniles leadership skills and instills pride through their contributions. A ratio of either 1:4 or 2:8 is maintained during sessions.

Juveniles also have the opportunity to work with a number of community organizations to complete their work service obligations. All work sites must be a non-profit organization with the exception of nursing homes. Upon completion of all service hours, regardless of where it is performed, juveniles must write a reflection paragraph stating where they performed their community work service, what they did for their community work service and what they

learned from the experience. After their reflection and service log are completed and turned in to the Community Service Director, a certificate is given to the juvenile as well as the Court and the Probation Officer.

**A total of 4,855.25 hours of community work service were performed at 70 work sites by 119 juveniles in 2016. The average number of hours completed by each juvenile was 40 hours.**

2015	-	4,597.25 hours at 48 work sites
2014	-	3,398.25 hours at 57 work sites
2013	-	2,541.50 hours at 51 work sites
2012	-	3,052.75 hours at 62 work sites
2011	-	2,686.50 hours at 67 work sites

### **Probation Supervision**

Ashland County Juvenile Probation Officers are responsible for monitoring juveniles in the community who are placed on probation. Probation Officers visit homes, schools, attend court hearings and meetings with other involved community organizations. They conduct assessments and develop individual case plans, referring juveniles and their families to appropriate services. The goal of probation supervision is to rehabilitate youth while protecting the community. The Court's Probation Department covers all schools in Ashland County and several schools out of the county where Ashland County juveniles attend. The number of youth on probation generally averages between 70 and 90, both male and female, and ranging from age 11 to age 18. Probationary terms are indefinite in length and a juvenile earns his or her way off probation by completing Court Orders and modifying inappropriate behaviors.

**In 2016, Probation Supervision served a total of 166 juveniles.**

### **Pathfinder Farms**

Initiated in the fall of 2015, Pathfinder Farms is an outdoor program for boys 14-17 referred by Probation Supervision. The program meets every Tuesday for four hours during the school year. Situated on over eighty acres, Pathfinder Farms offers opportunities for the boys to participate in activities such as archery, hiking, fishing, tree and wildlife identification, geocaching, swimming, cooking over a campfire and more. The boys also learn to build picnic tables, lanterns, picture frames and other projects in the woodshop. The program is run by a group of adults including teachers, builders and outdoor enthusiasts as well as the Ashland County Juvenile Court's Program Director. The end of the year culminates in a weekend camping trip that includes equine activities and other outdoor activities. Throughout the program the boys are given leadership opportunities and work on developing strong teamwork, responsibility, coping skills, confidence, respect and good decision making.

**A total of 13 boys participated in Pathfinder Farms in 2016.**

### **Homework Club**

Homework Club is an afterschool tutoring program for juveniles on probation. Youth are referred by either the Court or by their Probation Officer. The Court has partnered with Ashland University's Collegiate Middle Level Association, with university students majoring in education volunteering to tutor. The program runs four days a week, Monday through Thursday, for one and a half hours each session. The purpose of the program is help juveniles struggling academically to improve their grades and academic performance.

**A total of 21 juveniles participated in Homework Club in 2016.**

### **Secure Detention**

Secure Detention is an out-of-home placement for a juvenile. The Ashland County Juvenile Court attempts to minimize out-of-home placements, but rather utilizes local resources to maintain a young person in the community and at the same time address identified issues. However, there are times when out-of-home placements become appropriate or necessary.

The Ashland County Juvenile Court no longer operates its own juvenile detention center. The Court primarily uses Erie County Juvenile Detention Center located in Sandusky, Ohio and to a lesser extent Richland County Juvenile Attention Center in Mansfield, Ohio and the Northwest Ohio Juvenile Detention, Training and Rehabilitation Center in Stryker, Ohio. The Court contracts with these detention centers on a per diem basis. The Court monitors the youth in detention. The youth placed in detention continue to be well-served. The cost savings to the county continues to be at least \$250,000.00 per year.

### **Residential Placement**

Residential placements are non-secure facilities specializing in specific programs. In 2016 three youth were placed in such a facility, including Mohican Youth Academy and The Village Network. These placements were funded by grant money received by the Ashland County Juvenile Court.

## GRANTS

The Ashland County Juvenile Court receives several grants that assist the Court in covering the costs of services to youth. The Court, through the Court Administrator, applies for and has received these grants. The grants are provided by the Ohio Department of Youth Services. The purpose of the grants is to reduce the number of youth committed to the Ohio Department of Youth Services by providing funding for programs designed to stop delinquent behavior in juveniles and to maintain the juveniles in the community while addressing their specific needs. In 2016 the Court used grant money to pay for probation services, community work service and related programs, out-of-home placements; all at a cost savings to Ashland County. The grants and amounts received (fiscal year) are:

1. RECLAIM (Reasonable and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to Incarceration of Minors)

Amount - \$118,940.92

2. Youth Services Grant (also referred to as the "510" grant)

Amount - \$86,841.00