

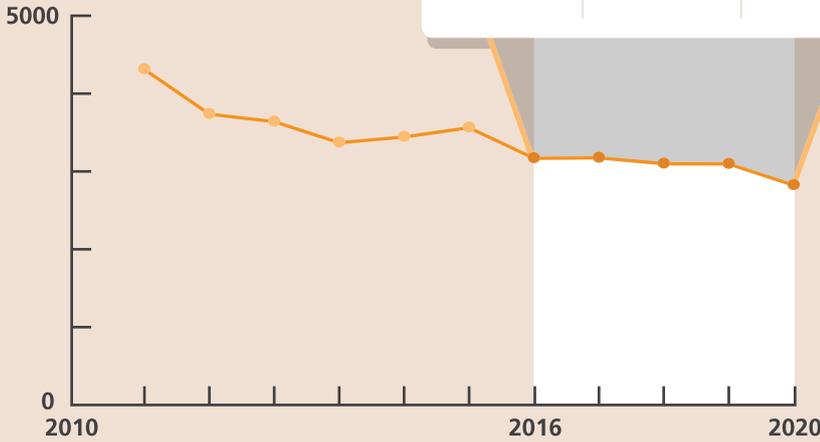


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# Youth Offending Situation

## Top Three Offences (2016–2020)

- 1 Shop Theft
- 2 Cheating and Related Offences
- 3 Sexual Penetration



The number of youth offenders<sup>1</sup> decreased by

# 43.3%

between 2010 and 2020.

Source: Singapore Police Force

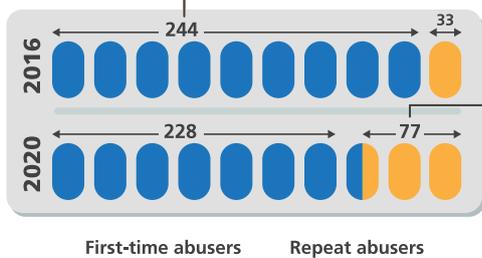
<sup>1</sup> Youth offenders refer to those arrested for overall crime excluding drug and inhalant abuse, and aged 7 to 19 years.

## Other Youth Offences of Concern (2016–2020)

### Youth Drug Abusers

There was a **10.1%** rise in the total number of youth drug abusers over the **past five years**.

**First-time abusers** accounted for a majority,



Source: Central Narcotics Bureau

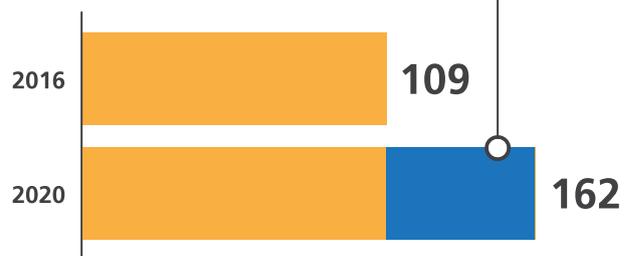
and the number of **repeat youth drug abusers** more than doubled.

### Outrage of Modesty and Rape Offences

The number of youth offenders who committed outrage of modesty and rape offences has increased by

# 48.6%

over the **past five years**.



Source: Singapore Police Force



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# Difficult Family Environment

Numerous studies have shown that family background and environment are important contributing factors of youth offending and reoffending.



## Key Types of Childhood Maltreatment

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

## Childhood Maltreatment

Youth offenders with a history of childhood maltreatment are **1.38 times** as likely as those without to reoffend within **7.4 years**, after controlling for other familial and parental issues.<sup>1</sup>



## Family Disruptions

Youth probationers who experienced



### Family Disruptions<sup>2</sup>



were more likely to continue to show moderate-to-high risk.

### Family Supervision<sup>3</sup>

and positive relationships with their parents



were more likely to successfully complete probation.

Youth offenders who had adverse childhood experiences were more likely to<sup>4</sup>:

- Consume alcohol or illicit drugs
- Consume these substances more frequently
- Start taking these substances at a younger age
- Have stronger dependency on drugs



## Examples of Family Disruptions

- Presence of substance abuse, mental disorders, incarceration and/or violence within the family
- Childhood maltreatment (i.e., emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect)
- Community violence
- Bullying
- Absence of both parents due to either death or separation
- Absence of a loving mother
- Parental conflict
- Arrival of stepparents

## Family Criminality

Youth offenders who had household member with a history of

### Incarceration were



**1.5 times**

as likely to join gangs<sup>5</sup>

### Substance Abuse were



**2.2 times**

as likely to join gangs<sup>5</sup>



**1.7 times**

as likely to abuse drugs themselves<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Social and Family Development & National Council of Social Service (2020). *Understanding the Intergenerational Transmission of Criminality in Singapore*. Occasional paper.

<sup>2</sup> Xu, X., Li, D., Chu, C.M., Chng, G. S. & Ruby, K. (2020). Understanding changes in youth offenders' risk profiles: A latent transition analysis. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 18, 294-312.

<sup>3</sup> Li, D., Chu, C.M., Xu, X., Zeng, G., & Ruby, K. (2019). Risk and protective factors for probation success among youth offenders in Singapore. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 17(2), 194-213. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1541204018778887>

<sup>4</sup> Oei, A., Chu, C.M., Li, D., Ng, N., Yeo, C. & Ruby, K. (2021). Relationship between adverse childhood experiences and substance use in youth offenders in Singapore. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 117. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2021.105072>.

<sup>5</sup> Oei, A., Li, D., Chu, C.M., Chng, G, Ruby, K. (2020). *Factors associated with gang affiliation in offending youths*. Presented at NCPD meeting Feb 2020.

<sup>6</sup> Oei, A (2019). *Substance use amongst youth offenders: Insights from a 10-wave longitudinal study on youth offending*. Presented at Conversation on Youth 2019.

# Difficult Global Environment

In response to challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the government worked with agencies and individuals to roll out a suite of support measures to meet the wide range of youth’s needs during the Circuit Breaker period in 2020.



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## Educational & Mental Well-Being Support

KEY CHALLENGE

- Face-to-face lessons in schools moved online and co-curricular activities suspended



- Reduced opportunities for engagement with peers and schools
- Suspension of face-to-face preventive and rehabilitative programmes



### MEASURES

- More than 20,000 computing devices and 1,600 internet-enabling devices loaned to students
- Expanded provision of computers and streamlined admission process for the NEU PC Plus programme, which caters to students from low-income households
- School-based Student Care Centres kept open with limited services

- Active engagement of vulnerable students through text messages, phone calls and video calls, as well as allowing a small number to return to school
- Tele-befriending programmes, online tuition sessions and online reading programmes by volunteers
- National CARE hotline set-up to provide psychological support for all Singaporeans

## Financial Support

KEY CHALLENGE

- More families with financial difficulties in 2020



### MEASURES

- Continued meal subsidies to students from low-income families during the Circuit Breaker period
- Suite of financial support measures such as the COVID-19 Budget relief measures, Temporary Relief Fund, COVID-19 Support Grant and COVID-19 Recovery Grant

## Family Support

KEY CHALLENGE

- Increased reports and enquiries on domestic violence during the Circuit Breaker period
- Increased enquiries and investigation on child protection issues in 2020



### MEASURES

- Virtual programmes on parenting, engaging with children and family bonding rolled out by Families for Life during the Circuit Breaker period
- Increased public awareness of family violence through various channels