

Minor Role II: Youth Under Age 18 and New York City Violence

by Jeffrey A. Butts and Gina Moreno

Using data from the New York City Police Department, researchers examined trends in the number of people arrested for any of three violent offenses in New York City between 2006 and 2024.

- **Felony assault** involves charges of assault in the first and second degree as well as strangulation in the first degree (see NY Penal Law [Article 120](#) & [Article 121](#)).
- **Felony dangerous weapon** includes charges for firearms or other weapons (see NY Penal Law [Article 265](#)).
- **Felony robbery** includes charges for forcible theft of property that involves the use of physical force (see NY Penal Law [Article 160](#)).

The study examines changes in arrests from 2006 to 2024 for three age groups: 17 and younger, 18 to 24, and 25 and older. New York officials have been especially concerned about crime trends in the 17 and younger age group since New York State's 2017 "[Raise the Age](#)" law began to return youth ages 16 and 17 to family court jurisdiction. The law eliminated default criminal prosecution for those under age 18 in 2019.

Annual figures for 2024 were estimated using actual data from the first two quarters of the year and weighting them to represent the expected yearly total based on the average percentage of annual arrests accounted for by January to June for each separate offense and each of three age groups from 2006 to 2023.

The violent crime increases associated with the COVID-19 pandemic are clear in NYPD data. Arrests surged as the social and economic disruptions of the pandemic took hold in 2020. Based on the newest data, however, it is still not appropriate to attribute New York's violent crime increases to young people specifically. As the incidence of violent crime grew, arrest trends among people under age 18 generally mirrored the scale and direction of trends among adults.

Robbery is a partial exception. Youth arrests for robbery grew sharply enough to account for a larger share of the overall total. Robbery arrests grew after declining relatively consistently from 2006 through 2021. Arrests among under-18 youth doubled between 2021 and 2023, from approximately one thousand per year to more than 2,300. The estimated figure for youth robbery arrests in 2024 suggests that arrests may have rebounded to the level of 2016.

Violent arrests among New Yorkers ages 17 and younger surged after 2020, most likely for the same reasons violence increased among adults ages 18 and older. Some advocates continue to argue that changes in criminal court jurisdiction are contributing to increases in youth crime, but that effect is not evident in New York City violent crime trends.

Violence in New York City is Predominantly an Issue Involving Adults Age 18 and Older

Arrests for Felony Dangerous Weapon Charges

Age Group	Number			Percent		
	2006	2015	2024*	2006	2015	2024*
17 & Younger	652	463	486	11%	8%	7%
18 to 24	2,509	2,160	2,008	41%	35%	28%
25 & Older	2,922	3,493	4,581	48%	57%	65%
Total	6,083	6,116	7,075	100%	100%	100%

Arrests for Felony Assault Charges

Age Group	Number			Percent		
	2006	2015	2024*	2006	2015	2024*
17 & Younger	1,921	1,166	1,081	15%	8%	5%
18 to 24	3,600	3,523	3,442	28%	24%	15%
25 & Older	7,144	9,846	18,234	56%	68%	80%
Total	12,665	14,535	22,757	100%	100%	100%

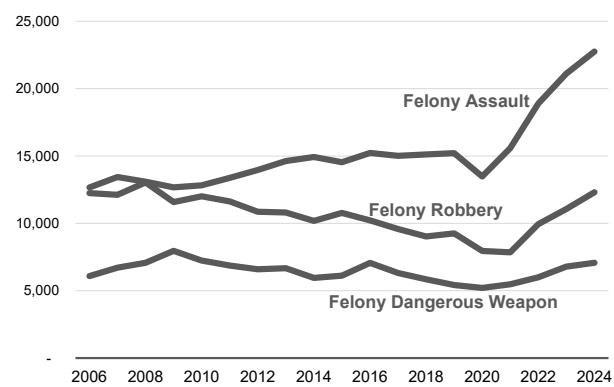
Arrests for Felony Robbery Charges

Age Group	Number			Percent		
	2006	2015	2024*	2006	2015	2024*
17 & Younger	5,316	3,192	2,676	43%	30%	22%
18 to 24	3,600	3,437	2,889	29%	32%	23%
25 & Older	3,329	4,148	6,741	27%	38%	55%
Total	12,245	10,777	12,306	100%	100%	100%

Data provided by the New York City Police Department on the [Open Data](#) portal, then inspected and analyzed by the Research and Evaluation Center. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

* Figures for 2024 are estimated using data from the first two calendar quarters of the year (i.e., January through June).

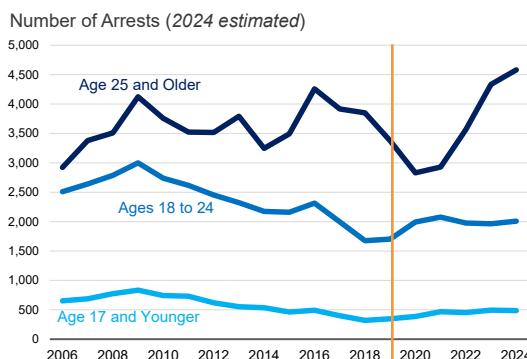
Arrests for Violent Offenses in New York City (2024 estimated)



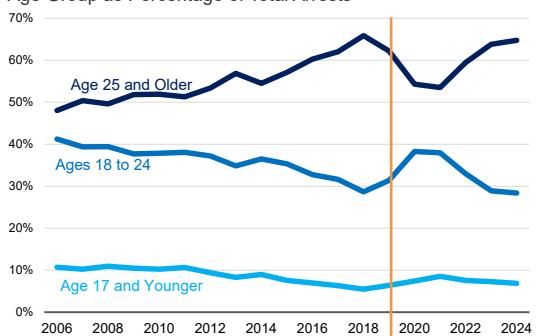
Violent Offense Arrests by Age Group

JohnJayREC.nyc
DataBit 2024-1
October 17, 2024

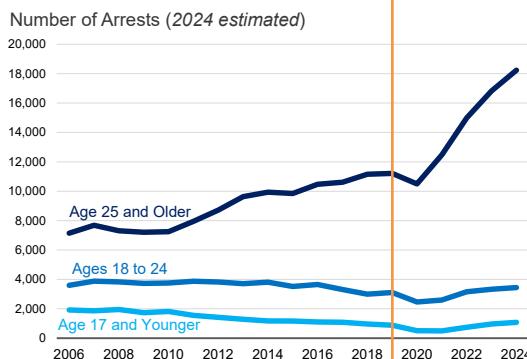
New York City Arrests for Felony Dangerous Weapons



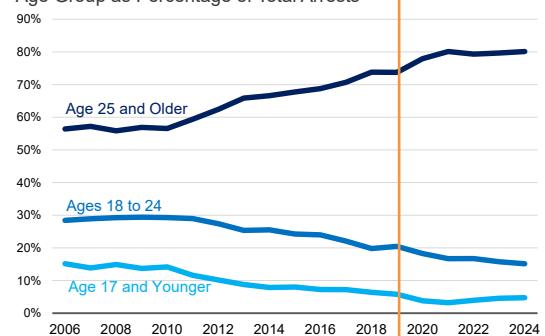
Age Group as Percentage of Total Arrests



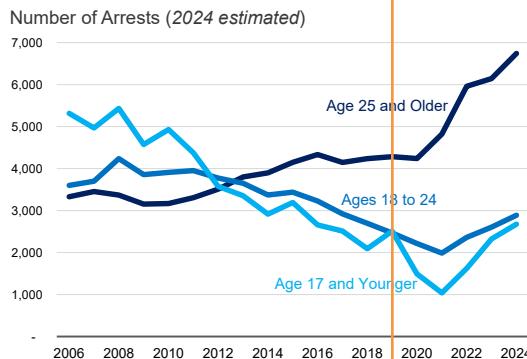
New York City Arrests for Felony Assaults



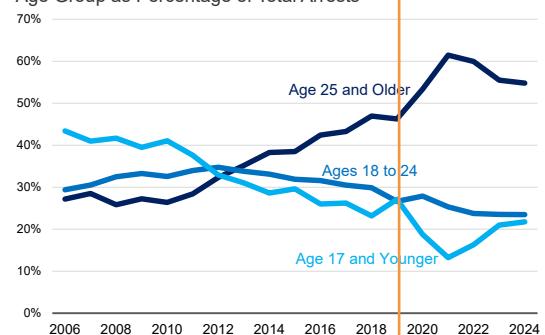
Age Group as Percentage of Total Arrests



New York City Arrests for Felony Robbery



Age Group as Percentage of Total Arrests



New York's "Raise the Age" Law
fully implemented as of 2019