




One in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused before they turn 18 years old, according to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center. BY [ALYSSA HODENFIELD](#) ✉

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A new study shows one Georgia juvenile detention center has some of the highest rates of what the study calls “coerced sexual activity” among children in custody of any such facility in the country.

The findings are a part of the federal Department of Justice [National Survey of Youth In Custody](#). That survey is conducted in accordance with federal [Prison Rape Prevention Act](#) passed in 2003.

The survey was administered to young people in 327 detention facilities nationwide in 2018. On average, 7.1% of children surveyed reported experiencing being coerced

State Sen. David Lucas, who represents much of Middle GA, hospitalized with COVID-19

But bucking that trend, 19% of respondents at the all-female Macon Youth Detention Center reported being subjected to coerced sexual contact. That's the fourth-highest rate of reported violations in the study.

Georgia's Department of Juvenile Justice Communications Director Glenn Allen declined requests to be interviewed about issues at the Macon YDC. He did provide a written response via email.

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“The report shows a decline in victimization in juvenile facilities across the country in 2018,” Allen said before continuing.

“Many of the youth in our care experienced inappropriate sexual contact prior to entering the juvenile system. Safeguards have been put in place to screen for employees who may have the potential to victimize youth. Our staff are also trained on how to appropriately engage youth and maintain appropriate personal boundaries. The Department of Juvenile Justice is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all youth in our care,” Allen said.

The Department of Justice position is that any further investigation into conditions at the Macon YDC should be left to the state of Georgia. Allen offered no answer at all to a follow up question about what, if any, investigation the Georgia DJJ would



The federal Department of Justice National Survey of Youth In Custody found the all-female Macon Youth Detention Center detainees reported the fourth-highest rate of "coerced sexual activity." GRANT BLANKENSHIP TELEGRAPH FILE PHOTO

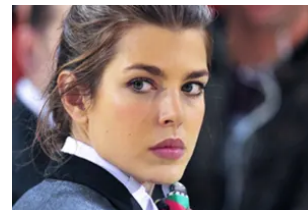
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