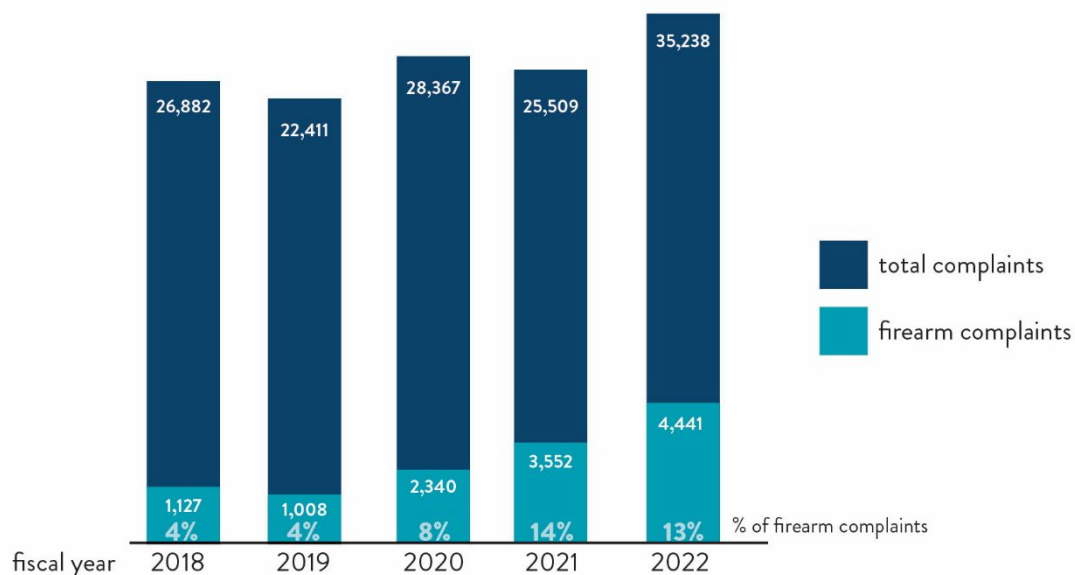


Juvenile Firearm Offenses and Trends

Prior to implementing the increase in juvenile jurisdiction to 16- and 17-year-olds, also known as Raise the Age (RtA), the N.C. Department of Public Safety, Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP), routinely experienced a low volume of complaints related to allegations of juvenile firearm offenses. Subsequent to RtA implementation on Dec. 1, 2019, JJDP now receives complaints associated with juvenile firearm offenses alleged for 16 and 17-year-olds. In the past four fiscal years, juvenile firearm offenses rose from 1,000 annually to more than 4,000 annually related to the population of youth added to juvenile jurisdiction.

FIGURE 1. TOTAL COMPLAINTS AND FIREARM COMPLAINTS

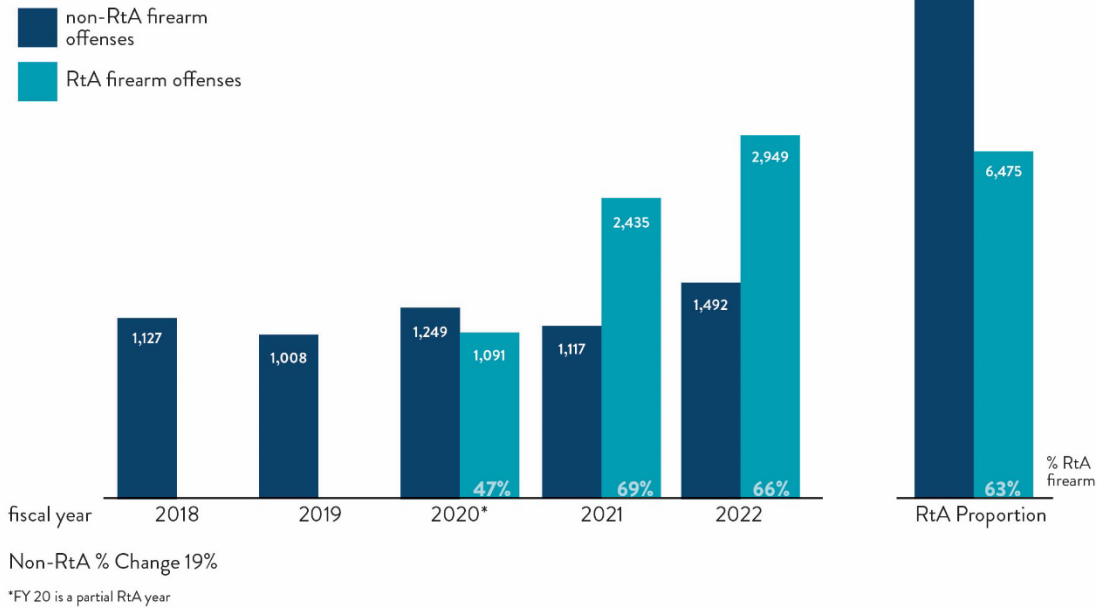


Juvenile Subpopulations

The RtA population (juveniles ages 16 or 17 at offense) is the subpopulation of juveniles driving the firearm offense volume upward. In the past three fiscal years, RtA firearm offenses comprised two-thirds of the firearm offenses alleged. However, it is also worth noting the non-RtA offenses increased 19% (+243 offenses) in the same time period.



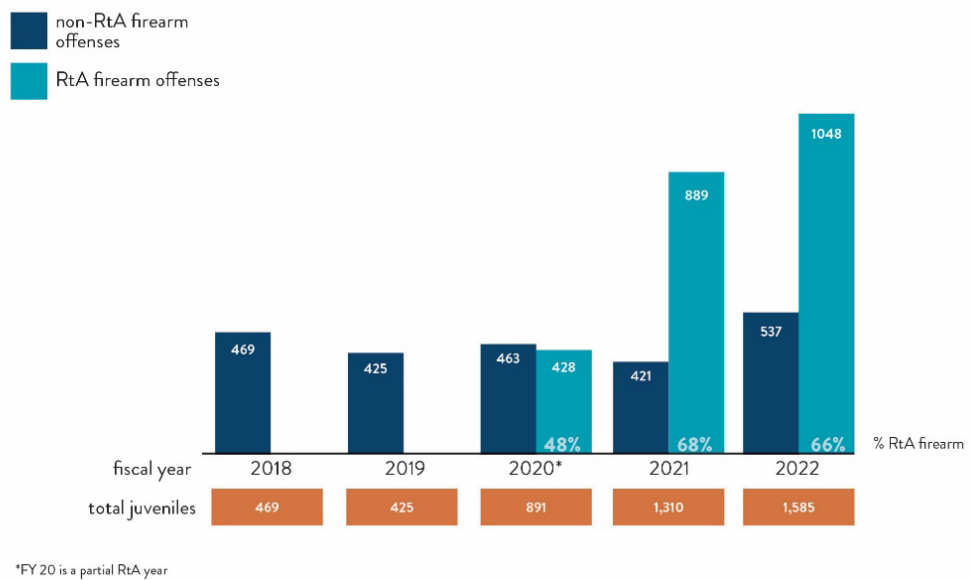
FIGURE 2. FIREARM COMPLAINTS - NON-RtA AND RtA



In the past five years, more than 12,000 firearm offenses were charged on approximately 4,000 distinct juveniles (some juveniles offended in multiple years). Examining the firearm offense trend at the juvenile level, we see the same pattern, that two-thirds of the distinct juveniles charged with firearm offenses since RtA implementation are RtA juveniles. Prior to and after RtA implementation, juveniles under age 16

were charged at the same volume each year – under 500 juveniles per year. Fiscal year 2022 was the first year that more than 500 non-RtA juveniles were charged with a firearm offense.

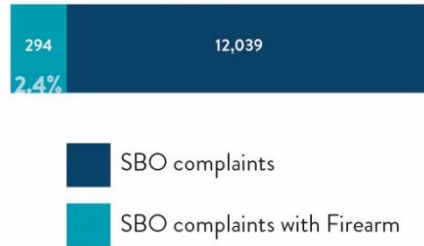
FIGURE 3. FIREARM JUVENILES - NON-RtA AND RtA



School-Based Firearm Offenses

Less than 3% of school-based offenses” (SBOs) are categorized as firearm offenses. The most recent fiscal year data are considered to reflect the impacts of RtA as well as conditions of schools operating in-person (post-high active COVID-19 years).

FIGURE 4. SBO COMPLAINTS WITH A FIREARM – JULY 1, 2021 - JUNE 30, 2022



Firearm Offense Groups

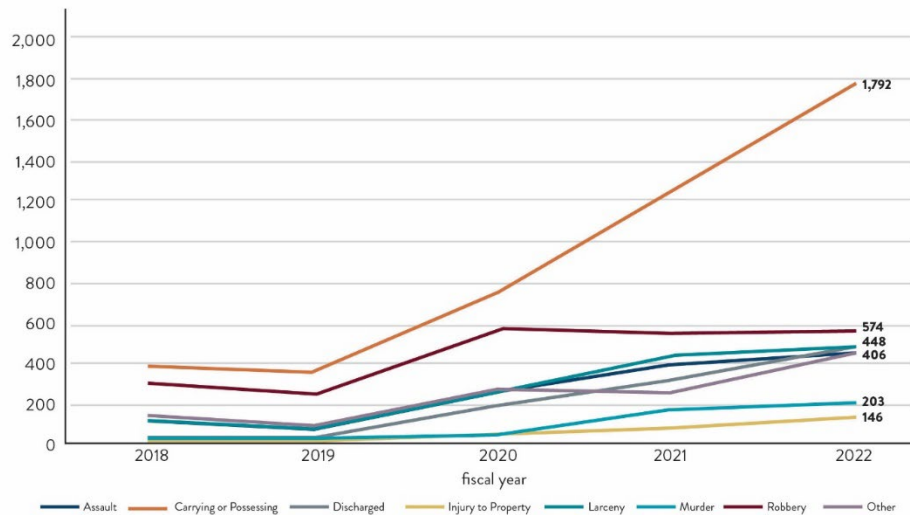
One may ask – What kinds of firearm offenses are charged on juveniles in the juvenile justice system? To answer this question, JJDP grouped similar individual charged firearm offenses. Categories developed include:

- Assault (with a firearm)
- Carry or Possess (a firearm)
- Discharge (of a firearm)
- Injury to Property (with a firearm)
- Larceny (of/with a firearm)
- Murder (with a firearm)
- Other
- Robbery (with a firearm)

The most common charged firearm offense group is Carrying or Possessing a Firearm. In the past three fiscal years, 37% of firearm offenses involve carrying or possessing a firearm. In fiscal year 2020, a partial Raise the Age year, 766 carrying or possessing firearm offenses were charged. In fiscal year 2022, 1,792 were charged in the same group. This firearm offense group has increased the most (134%) since implementation of Raise the Age.

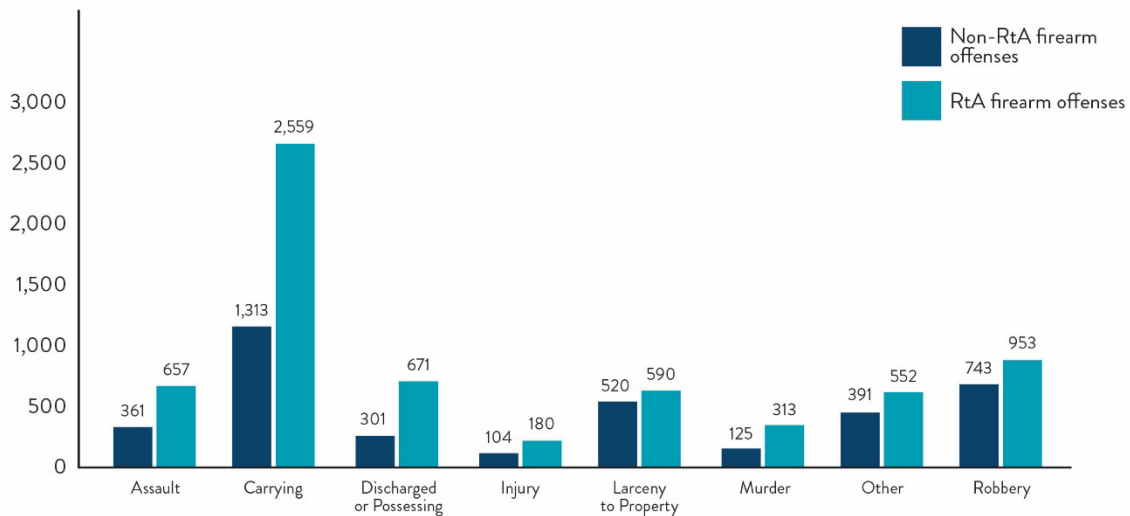
The second most common offense group in the past three fiscal years is Robbery with a Firearm at 16%, followed by Larceny of a Firearm at 11%, and Assault with a Firearm at 10%.

FIGURE 5. FIREARM OFFENSE GROUP TREND FY 18 - FY 22



The next step in our analysis is to take the groups of offenses and categorize them by the RtA and Non-RtA sub-populations. It can be seen that in some offense groups RtA complaints are much higher in volume than non-RtA complaints. This is most especially evident with 1) Carrying or Possessing a Firearm, 2) Discharge a Firearm and 3) Assault with a Firearm groups.

**FIGURE 6. NON-RtA AND RtA FIREARM OFFENSE GROUPS
FY 20 - FY 22**



Conclusion

Although it is concerning to public safety to see the firearm offenses increase, JJDP is taking efforts to bring awareness and education to the issues of storage and juvenile access to firearms. In the past three fiscal years, the increase in juvenile justice firearm offenses is mostly attributable to the additional population of youth added to juvenile jurisdiction. In the recent three-year period, firearm offenses by juveniles under age 16 increased by 19%. Since implementation of Raise the Age, two-thirds of firearm offenses and distinct juveniles who commit firearm offenses are youth ages 16 or 17. What may be contrary to media coverage, in North Carolina, a small proportion of school-based offenses – less than 3% - are firearm offenses. Another important note about North Carolina juvenile firearm offense trends is that the most frequently charged firearm offense type is carrying or possessing.