

National Juvenile Detention Association (NJDA)

DEFINITION OF JUVENILE DETENTION

Juvenile detention, as part of the juvenile justice continuum, is a process that includes the temporary and safe custody of juveniles whose alleged conduct is subject to court jurisdiction who require a restricted environment for their own and the community's protection while pending legal action. Juvenile detention may range from the least restrictive community based supervision to the most restrictive form of secure care.

The critical components of juvenile detention include:

- Screening to ensure appropriate use of detention,
- Assessment to determine the proper level of custody, supervision and placement,
- Policies that promote the safety, security and well being of juveniles and staff,
- Services that address immediate and/or acute needs in the educational, mental, physical, emotional and social development of juveniles.

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