



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2013-03999

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Offence-Type Behaviour Committed by Children Under 10

Request and Answer:

Question 1

I would like to make a request under the Freedom of Information Act regarding people who break the law but are under the age of criminal responsibility (i.e. under 10). Please provide the figure for the number of individuals who are under the age of criminal responsibility who have broken laws in 2012.

Answer

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested. The decision has been taken to disclose the located information to you in full.

In 2012, 13 children under the age of 10 were reported for offence-type behaviour.

Question 2

Please provide a list of all cases of individuals under the age of criminal responsibility who have broken the law in 2012. For each case, please specify:

- age
- sex
- the law(s) that was broken (e.g. theft)
- action that was taken (if any), e.g. child curfew.

If, for whatever reason, it is not possible all these details, please nevertheless provide as much as possible.

Answer

Children under the age of 10 are under the age of criminal responsibility and therefore not deemed capable of committing a crime. Therefore there is no disposal as such. However, depending on the behaviour, police may offer advice to the young person, send a letter to parents, or make a referral to a partner agency for support services. Police may record the incident for information so that any risk posed to the young person may be monitored.

Please note: The accuracy of this information cannot be guaranteed. Human error must be taken into consideration when examining data of this nature. There are a number of labelling options and age related factors that can be misinterpreted, which can create the potential for

incorrect data.

Please see the table below detailing the number of children aged under 10 reported for offence-type behaviour.

	AGE	GENDER	NUMBER
Common Assault	8	Male	3
Common Assault	9	Male	2
Theft	7	Female	1
Theft	9	Male	1
Criminal Damage	5	Male	1
Criminal Damage	7	Male	1
Criminal Damage	8	Female	1
Cruelty	5	Male	2
Burglary	9	Male	1

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing foi@psni.pnn.police.uk.

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ www.psnipolice.uk

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.