



Under present law, a juvenile under the age of 16 who takes indecent liberties with another juvenile could be subject to delinquency adjudication for assault under existing G.S. 14-33. G.S. 14-33(b)(3) specifically addresses assault on a child under the age of 12. Other related, and more serious, sexual offenses that may be applied under current law are first-degree rape and first-degree sexual offense (G.S. 14-27.1, -27.4).

If conduct amounting to indecent liberties is presently being processed under existing laws, such as the assault statute, it seems likely that enacting the proposed legislation would not lead to additional delinquency petitions. Based on interviews with several district attorneys, the Administrative Office of the Courts estimates that most cases involving conduct amounting to indecent liberties are presently being adjudicated under existing laws, specifically, on the basis of misdemeanor assaults. It is possible that a few more juvenile cases may be filed as a result of the proposed legislation, but the Administrative Office of the Courts would not expect the number of cases to be significant. Thus, the Administrative Office of the Courts does not expect the proposed legislation to result in an increase in the number of petitions filed.

**SOURCES OF DATA:** Administrative Office of the Courts

**FISCAL RESEARCH DIVISION**

**733-4910**

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**DATE:** April 10, 1995

**[FRD#003]**



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