

Child Victimization

During a one-year period, 60.6 percent of children and youth from birth to 17 years of age experienced at least one direct or indirect (as a witness) victimization.¹

Almost half (46.3 percent) of children and youth from birth to 17 years of age experienced a physical assault; one in four (24.6 percent) a property offense, 1 in 10 (10.2 percent) child maltreatment, and 6.1 percent a sexual victimization.²

The youngest children from birth to 3 years of age had the highest rate of abuse and neglect and accounted for the largest percentage of child victims at 32 percent.³

Just under one-half (46 percent) of all child victims were white, 22 percent were African American, and 21 percent were Hispanic. African American children, American Indian or Alaska Native children, and children of multiple races had the highest rates of victimization.⁴

Mothers were the sole abuser in 39 percent of substantiated child abuse cases and fathers in 18 percent. In 17 percent of child abuse cases, both parents were perpetrators of child maltreatment, and child victims maltreated by a non-parental perpetrator accounted for 10 percent of the total.⁵

Eight percent of child abuse victims had a reported disability.⁶

Fifty-seven percent of children will be victims of some form of physical assault during their lifetime, 51 percent will be victims of bullying (emotional or physical) or teasing, and 10 percent of children will be victims of assault with a weapon.⁷

In 2007, child protective services found approximately 794,000 children to be victims of child abuse or neglect.⁸

During 2007, approximately 1,760 children died due to child abuse or neglect. More than three-quarters (76 percent) of children who were killed were younger than 4 years of age.⁹

During 2007, 59 percent of child victims experienced neglect, 11 percent were physically abused, 8 percent were sexually abused, 4 percent were psychologically maltreated, and 1 percent were medically neglected. In addition, 4 percent of child victims experienced other types of maltreatment such as abandonment, threats of harm, or congenital drug addiction.¹⁰

Fifty-two percent of child abuse or neglect victims were girls and 48 percent were boys.¹¹

Ten percent of children have experienced some form of sexual violence (sexual assault, rape, harassment or flash-

ing) during their lifetime.¹²

The older the child victim, the greater the likelihood of being sexually assaulted by an acquaintance: 53 percent of perpetrators against children ages 6 to 11 were acquaintances, as were 66 percent of perpetrators against adolescents ages 12 to 17.¹³

Strangers are the least likely perpetrators of sexual assault against children in cases reported to law enforcement: 3 percent of the youngest victims ages five and under, 5 percent of six- to eleven-year-olds, and 10 percent of teen victims were sexually assaulted by strangers.¹⁴

Fifty-one children were killed by their babysitter in 2008, representing 3 percent of child murder victims.¹⁵

A meta-analysis of 61 studies found that 12.7 percent of child molesters were convicted for a new sex offense within four to five years.¹⁶

The most significant predictor of whether a battered woman will physically abuse her child is having been physically abused by her own mother, not whether she has been battered by her partner.¹⁷

The direct cost of child abuse and neglect in the United States totals more than \$33 billion annually. (This figure includes law enforcement, judicial system, child welfare, and health care costs.) When factoring in indirect costs (special education, mental health care, juvenile delinquency, lost productivity, and adult criminality), the figure rises to more than \$103 billion annually.¹⁸

Approximately 2,900 criminal incidents of pornography with juvenile involvement were known to state and local police in 2000.¹⁹

American Indian/Alaska Native children known to child protective services from 1995 to 1999 were more likely to be victims of neglect and less likely to be victims of physical or sexual abuse than white children.²⁰

12 David Finkelhor, "Violence, Abuse, and Crime Exposure in a National Sample of Children and Youth," 4.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Data extrapolated from FBI, "Crime in the United States, 2008: Expanded Homicide Data, Table 12," (Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2009), http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2008/offenses/expanded_information/data/shrtable_12.html (accessed September 17, 2009) and from FBI "Crime in the United States, 2008: Expanded Homicide Data, Table 2," (Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2009), http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2008/offenses/expanded_information/data/shrtable_02.html (accessed September 17, 2009).

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17 Carol Coohy, "Battered Mothers Who Physically Abuse Their Children," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 19, no. 8 (August 2004): 943-52.

18 Ching-Tung Wang and John Holton, "Total Estimated Cost of Child Abuse and Neglect in the United States," (Washington, DC: Prevent Child Abuse America, 2007), 4, 5, http://www.preventchildabuse.org/about_us/media_releases/pcaa_pew_economic_impact_study_final.pdf (accessed September 17, 2009).

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2 Ibid.

3 *Child Maltreatment, 2007*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, 2009), 25, <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm07/cm07.pdf> (accessed September 17, 2009).

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid., 29.

6 Ibid., 27.

7 David Finkelhor, "Violence, Abuse, and Crime Exposure in a National Sample of Children and Youth," 3.

8 *Child Maltreatment, 2007*, 23.

9 Ibid., 55-56.

10 Ibid., 25-26.

11 Ibid., 25.

Cost of Crime

In 2007, for crimes both reported and not reported, the total economic loss to victims was \$2 billion for violent crime and \$16 billion for property crime.¹

In 2007, 15 percent of violent crimes and 94 percent of property crimes resulted in economic losses from theft or damage.²

In 2008, an estimated \$581 million worth of property was stolen during robberies reported to the police. The average dollar value of property stolen per robbery offense was \$1,315.³

Two-thirds of property crimes reported in 2008 were larceny-thefts, with the value of stolen property averaging \$925 per offense. The total value of stolen property was an estimated \$6.1 billion.⁴

In 2008, the average dollar loss due to arson was \$16,015 per offense.⁵

An estimated 30,500 fires were intentionally set to structures in 2008, a decrease of 6 percent from 2007. These fires resulted in 315 civilian deaths and \$866 million in property loss (an increase of 18 percent from 2007).⁶

Approximately 17,500 fires were intentionally set to vehicles in 2008, resulting in \$139 million in property damage, a 4 percent decrease from 2007.⁷

In 2008, the average dollar loss per burglary offense was \$2,079. The total amount lost to burglaries was an estimated \$4.6 billion.⁸

Victim compensation programs distributed \$461 million in 2008. This amount is an increase over the \$453 million paid in 2007 and \$444 million paid in 2006.⁹

Victim compensation programs paid \$29 million for forensic sexual assault exams in 2008, a 28 percent increase from 2007.¹⁰

Victims of child abuse constituted 19 percent of the recipients of crime victim compensation in 2008.¹¹

In 2008, domestic violence victims made up 22 percent of all adult victims compensated by victim compensation programs; 35 percent of all assault claims were paid to domestic violence victims.¹²

In 2008, medical expenses constituted 52 percent of all victim compensation payments; economic support for lost wages for injured victims and for lost support in homicides made up 16 percent of the total; 11 percent of total payments were for funeral bills; and 8 percent went toward mental health counseling for crime victims.¹³

In 2008, the total amount of money lost from all cases of Internet fraud referred to law enforcement for investigation was \$264.6 million, with a median dollar loss of \$931 per complaint. This amount is up from \$239.1 million with a median dollar loss of \$680 per complaint in 2007.¹⁴

In 2007, the two most common types of telemarketing fraud were fake check scams (average loss of \$3,855) and false prizes or sweepstakes (average loss of \$6,601), together accounting for 72 percent of telemarketing fraud complaints.¹⁵

Fake check scams were also the most common type of Internet fraud in 2007, constituting 29 percent of complaints, with an average loss of \$3,311. The second most common type of Internet fraud was non-auction general merchandise sales (goods never delivered or misrepresented).¹⁶

In 2007, consumers reporting fraud to the Federal Trade Commission lost a total of more than 1.2 billion dollars.¹⁷

In 2006, the United States (at federal, state, and local levels) spent \$214 billion for police protection, corrections, and judicial and legal activities.¹⁸

The direct cost of child abuse and neglect in the United States totals more than \$33 billion annually. When factoring in indirect costs, the figure rises to more than \$103 billion annually.¹⁹

1 Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Criminal Victimization in the United States, 2007: Statistical Tables," (soon to be published), Table B1.

2 Ibid.

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4 Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Crime in the United States 2008: Larceny-Theft," (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009), http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2008/offenses/property_crime/larceny-theft.html (accessed October 5, 2009).

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7 Ibid.

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11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

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Disabilities and Victimization

In 2007, persons ages 12 or older with disabilities experienced approximately 716,000 non-fatal violent crimes and 2.3 million property crimes.¹

People with disabilities experience an age-adjusted rate of violent crime, including rape and sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault, that is 1.5 times that of people without disabilities; for sexual assault and rape, the age-adjusted rate is twice that of persons without disabilities.²

Among persons with disabilities, females had a higher victimization rate than males, while among those without disabilities the reverse is true.³

Youth ages 12 to 19 with a disability experienced violence at nearly twice the rate of those without a disability.⁴

More than half of violent crimes against people with a disability were against those with multiple disabilities.⁵

People who reported having a cognitive disability had a rate of total violent crime victimization twice that of people who reported having any other type of disability.⁶

In 2007, about 19 percent of violent crime victims with a disability believed that they were victimized because of their disability.⁷

In 2007, about 35 percent of victims with disabilities perceived the offender to be under the influence of either alcohol or drugs.⁸

More than 25 percent of persons with severe mental illness had been victims of a violent crime during a single year, a rate more than 11 times that of the general population, even after controlling for demographic differences.⁹

Depending on the type of violent crime (rape, robbery, assault, and their subcategories), the incidence was 3 to 12 times greater among persons with severe mental illness than among the general population.¹⁰

In 2007, 8 percent of child victims of abuse or neglect had a reported disability. Disabilities considered risk factors included mental retardation, emotional disturbance, visual or hearing impairment, learning disability, physical disability, behavioral problems, or other medical problems.¹¹

A study of North Carolina women found that women with disabilities were 4 times more likely to have experienced sexual assault in the past year than women without disabilities.¹²

A 2006 study found that age, education, mobility, social isolation, and depression can be used to identify with 84 percent accuracy whether a woman with a disability may have experienced physical, sexual, or disability-related violence or abuse during the past year.¹³

In response to a survey of Michigan women with physical disabilities and a mean age of 45.3 years, 56 percent reported being abused at some point after reaching the age of 18 years. Of this group, 87 percent reported physical abuse; 66 percent reported sexual abuse; 35 percent were refused help with a personal need; and 19 percent were prevented from using an assistive device.¹⁴

In this same survey of adult women, 74 percent reported abuse lasting at least three months; 55 percent reported they had been abused multiple times as an adult; and 80 percent reported being abused by a male partner.¹⁵

Only 33 percent of the abused women with physical disabilities who were surveyed sought assistance to address the abuse. About half of those women viewed the assistance in a positive light.¹⁶

In a national survey of domestic violence and rape crisis agencies, 67 percent of the survey participants reported that their center had served people with mental illness over the past year. Despite the high incidence of violence against people with disabilities, few participants reported that their center served people with cognitive disabilities (7 percent), with physical disabilities (6 percent), or who are blind, deaf, or have hearing loss (1 percent).¹⁷

A study of sexual assault of adult males found that more than 10 percent of male victims had cognitive disabilities.¹⁸

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4 Ibid., 2.

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