

Violent Crime Victimization

Headline

Violent crime victimization among adolescents has declined by more than half since the early 1990s. Between 1994 and 2004, the victimization rate declined for adolescents ages 12 to 15 from 118.6 per 1,000 to 49.7 per 1,000. For youth ages 16 to 19, the rate declined from 123.9 per 1,000 to 45.9 per 1,000. ([See Figure 1](#))

Importance

Adolescents ages 12 to 19 are the victims of violent crime (including simple and aggravated assault, rape and other sexual assault, and robbery) at much higher rates than are adults.^{1,2} Violence during adolescence can have very serious repercussions. Adolescents who have been violently victimized are more likely to have physical and mental health problems, substance abuse problems, and problems at school.³ Additionally, adolescents who are the victims of violent crime may be more likely to commit violent criminal offenses themselves.⁴

Violent victimization during adolescence also predicts problem behaviors in adulthood. For example, teenage victims of violent crime are more likely than other teens to be perpetrators or victims of violence as adults and to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder as adults.⁵

Trends

Violent crime victimization rates increased substantially during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Since 1994, however, rates have fallen by more than half from to 118.6 per 1,000 adolescents ages 12 to 15 to 49.7 per 1,000 and from 123.9 per 1,000 youth ages 16 to 19 to 45.9 per 1,000 in 2004. ([See Figure 1](#)) Data for 1996 to 2004 show similarly strong reductions for many types of violent crime including simple assault, aggravated assault, and robbery. ([See Table 1](#))

Differences by Type of Victimization

Most adolescent victims of violent crime are victims of simple assault, which accounted for between 60 percent and 75 percent of all adolescent violent crime victimization in 2004. Aggravated assault is the next most common, followed by robbery and then rape/sexual assault. ([See Figure 2](#))

Differences by Age

In 2004, older and younger adolescents overall were about equally likely to be victims of violent crime.⁶ ([See Figure 2](#))

Differences by Gender

Among all adolescents ages 12 to 15 and youth ages 16 to 19, males had higher rates of total violent crime victimization than females in 2003, with the exception of rape.

Females in both age groups had higher rates of rape/sexual assault than did males of the same age (e.g., among adolescents ages 12 to 15, 2.0 per 1,000 compared with 0.4* per 1,000, respectively, in 2003). ([See Table 2](#))

*Note: Estimate based on 10 or few cases.

Differences by Race

Violent crime victimization rates do not differ by race in a simple pattern and are not consistent over time. White youth ages 16 to 19 were more likely than black youth of the same age to be victims of simple assault in 2003 (39.1 per 1,000 compared with 18.9 per 1,000, respectively). Other differences by race were not statistically significant in 2003. ([See Table 2](#))

State and Local Estimates

None available

International Estimates

None available

National Goals

Through its *Healthy People 2010* initiative, the federal government has set many related goals, which aim to reduce the annual rate of physical assault, sexual assault, and rape among the general population. Additionally, there is a goal to reduce physical fighting among youth.

15-37 Reduce the rate of physical assault

<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/document/html/objectives/15-37.htm>

15-26 Reduce the rate of sexual assault

<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/document/html/objectives/15-36.htm>

15-35 Reduce the rate of rape

<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/document/html/objectives/15-35.htm>

15-38 Reduce physical fighting among adolescents

<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/document/html/objectives/15-38.htm>

Definition

For this indicator, violent crime includes robbery, simple assault, aggravated assault, and rape/sexual assault.

Simple assault is defined as attack without a weapon resulting in either no injury, minor injury or in undetermined injury requiring less than two days of hospitalization.

Aggravated assault is defined as attack or attempted attack with a weapon, regardless of whether or not an injury occurred and attack without a weapon when serious injury results.

These estimates do not include victims of homicide.

Data Sources

Data for 2004: Catalano, Shannon M. (2004). *Criminal Victimization, 2004* (NCJ 210674): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics: Table 6.
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv04.htm>

Gender and race breaks for 2003: U.S. Department of Justice. (2005). *A National Crime Victimization Survey, 2003- -Statistical Tables* (NCJ 207811): Tables 3, 4, 9, 10.
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cvus03.pdf>

Data for 2003: Catalano, Shannon M. (2004). *Criminal Victimization, 2003* (NCJ 205455): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics: Table 6.
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cv03.pdf>

Gender and race breaks for 2002: U.S. Department of Justice. (2003). *A National Crime Victimization Survey, 2002- -Statistical Tables* (NCJ200561): Tables 3,4, 9, 10.
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cvus02.pdf>

All other data for 2002: Rennison, C. and M. Rand. (2003) *Criminal Victimization 2002* (NCJ199994): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 6.
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv02.htm>

Data for 2001: Rennison, C. (2002). *Criminal Victimization 2001: Changes 2000-01 with Trends 1993-2001* (NCJ 194610): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 2.
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv01.htm>
A National Crime Victimization Survey, 2001- -Statistical tables (NCJ 197064) (2003). Tables 4, 9, 10. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cvus01.pdf>

Data for 2000: Rennison, C. (2001). *Criminal Victimization 2000, Changes 1999-2000 with Trends 1993-2000* (NCJ 187007): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 2
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv00.htm>

Data for 1999: Rennison, C. (2000). *Criminal Victimization 1999, Changes 1998-99 with Trends 1993-99* (NCJ 182734): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 2.

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv99.htm>

Data for 1998: Rennison, C. (1999). *Criminal Victimization 1998, Changes 1997-98 with Trends 1993-98* (NCJ 176353): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 2.

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv98.htm>

Data for 1997: Rand, M. R. (1998). *Criminal Victimization 1997* (NCJ 173385): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv97.htm>

Data for 1996: Ringel, C. (1997). *Criminal Victimization 1996* (NCJ 165812): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 2. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv96.htm>

Data for 1975-1995: *Key Facts at a Glance: Trends in victimization rates by age* (2002, September 9, 2002). Bureau of Justice Statistics. Retrieved October 21, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/glance/tables/vagetab.htm>.

Raw Data Source

National Crime Victimization Survey

http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD/NCVS/#About_NCVC

In most cases, crimes are reported by the teenagers themselves. If the teen is age 12 or 13, a knowledgeable adult household member may respond for the teen.

Next Update

Winter 2006

¹ This is not true of homicides.

² Rennison, C. (2002). *Criminal Victimization 2001: Changes 2000-01 with Trends 1993-2001* (NCJ 194610): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv01.htm>

³ Wordes, M., & Nunez, M. (2002). *Our Vulnerable Teenagers: Their Victimization, Its Consequences, and Directions for Prevention and Intervention*: National Council on Crime and Delinquency: 13.

<http://www.ncvc.org/teens/>

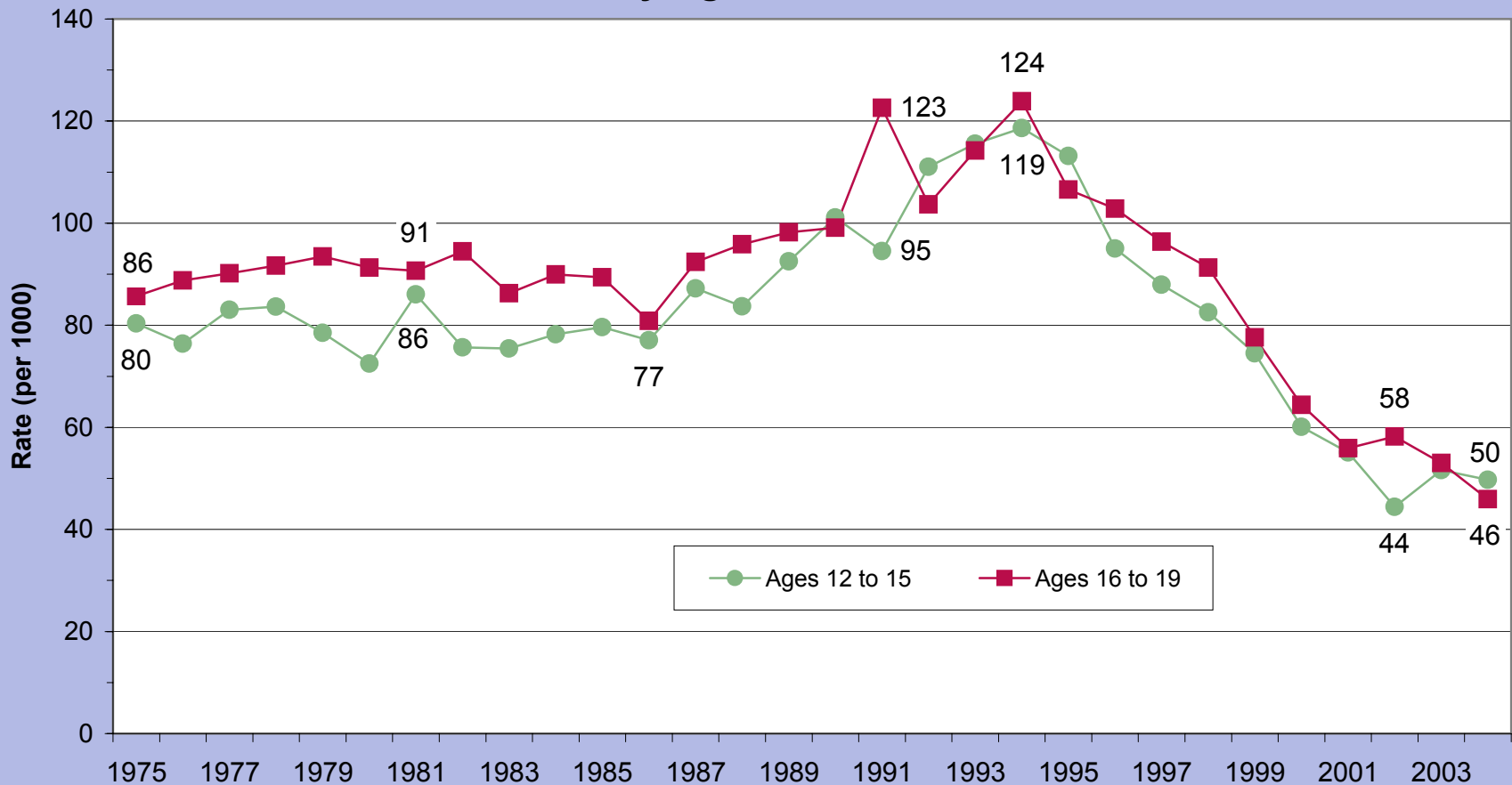
⁴ Ibid, 15.

⁵ Menard, S. (2002). *Youth Violence Research Bulletin: Short- and Long-Term Consequences of Adolescent Victimization*: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/ojdp/191210.pdf>

⁶ Estimates for aggravated assault by age are only significant at the 90% confidence interval. Estimates for all other types of crime by age are significant at the 95% confidence interval.

Figure 1

Violent Crime Victimization Rate for Adolescents Ages 12 to 19, by Age, 1975-2004

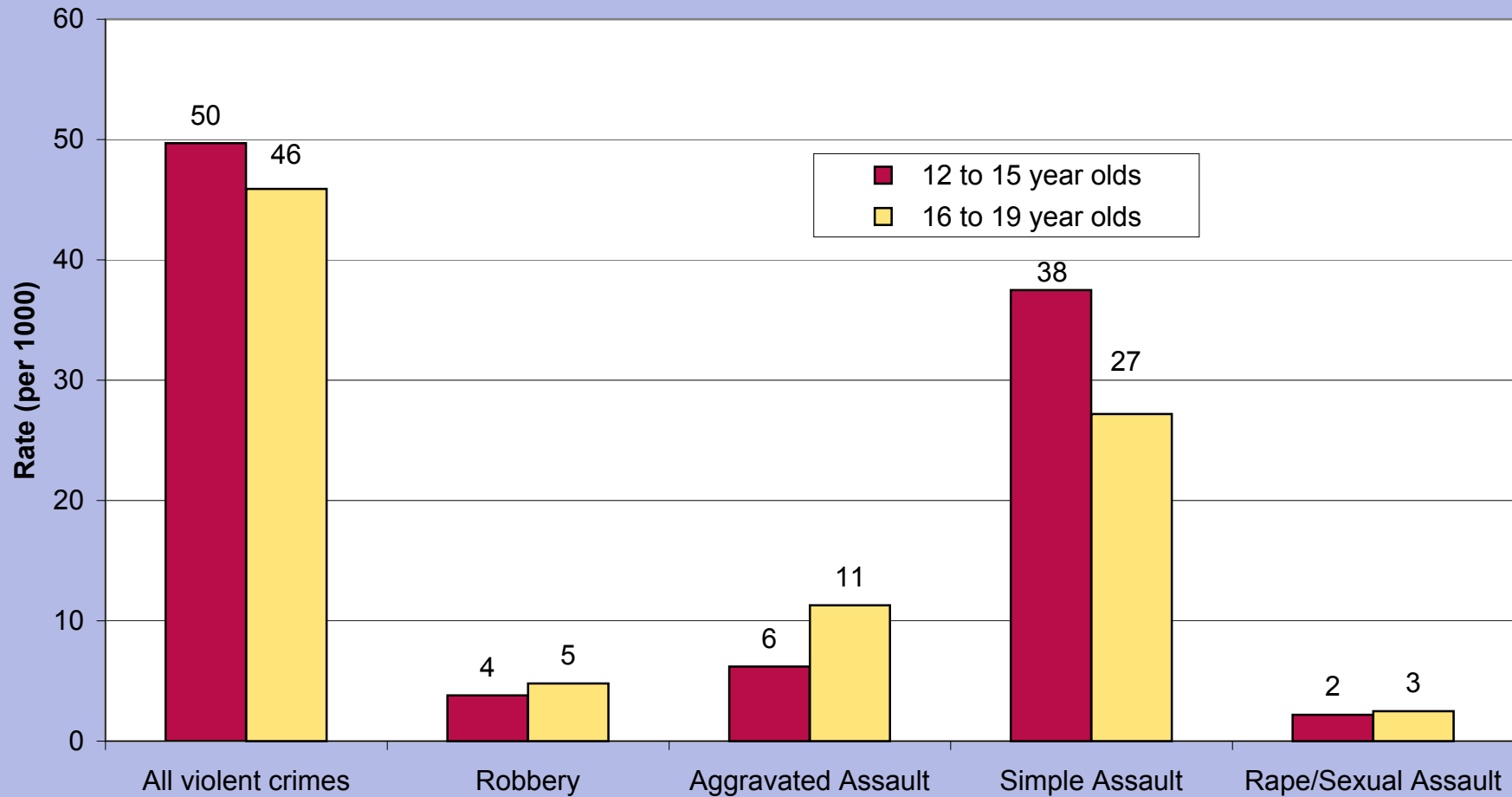


Sources: Data for 1975-2001: Key Facts at a Glance: Trends in victimization rates by age (2002, September 9, 2002). Bureau of Justice Statistics. Retrieved October 21, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/glance/tables/vagetab.htm>. Data for 2002: Rennison, C. and M. Rand. (2003). *Criminal Victimization 2002* (NCJ 199994): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics: Table 6. Data for 2003: Catalano, Shannon M. (2004). *Criminal Victimization, 2003* (NCJ 205455): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics: Table 6. Data for 2004: Catalano, Shannon M. (2005). *Criminal Victimization, 2004* (NCJ 210674): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics: Table 6. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv04.htm>



Figure 2

Violent Crime Victimization Rates (per 1,000) for Adolescents Ages 12 to 19, by Age and Type of Victimization, 2004



Source: Catalano, Shannon M. (2005). *Criminal Victimization, 2004* (NCJ 210674): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics: Table 6. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv04.htm>

Table 1

Violent Crime Victimization Rates (per 1,000), Ages 12 to 19, by Type of Crime and Age, Selected Years 1975-2004

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
All violent crimes															
12-15 years	80.3	72.5	79.6	101.1	118.6	113.1	95.0	87.9	82.4	74.4	60.1	55.1	44.4	51.6	49.7
16-19 years	85.7	91.3	89.4	99.1	123.9	106.6	102.7	96.2	91.1	77.4	64.3	55.8	58.2	53.0	45.9
Robbery															
12-15 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	10.0	8.2	7.7	6.7	4.2	5.2	3.0	5.2	3.8
16-19 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	12.0	10.2	11.4	8.2	7.3	6.4	4.0	5.1	4.8
Aggravated Assault															
12-15 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	15.6	15.1	12.2	13.1	9.9	8.7	5.0	8.9	6.2
16-19 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	25.3	24.6	19.0	16.8	14.3	12.3	11.9	11.9	11.3
Simple Assault															
12-15 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	66.8	62.0	58.9	50.6	43.9	39.6	34.3	36.4	37.5
16-19 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	60.4	55.8	55.7	45.5	38.3	33.8	36.7	34.7	27.2
Rape/Sexual Assault															
12-15 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.6	2.5	3.5	6.0	2.1	1.7*	2.1	1.2*	2.2
16-19 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.9	5.6	5.0	6.9	4.3	3.4	5.5	1.3*	2.5

*Estimate based on 10 or fewer cases

Sources: Data for 1975-1995: *Key Facts at a Glance: Trends in victimization rates by age* (2002, September 9, 2002). Bureau of Justice Statistics. Retrieved October 21, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/glance/tables/vagetab.htm>. Data for 1996: Ringel, C. (1997). *Criminal Victimization 1996* (NCJ 165812): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 2. Data for 1997: Rand, M. R. (1998). *Criminal Victimization 1997* (NCJ-173385): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Data for 1998: Rennison, C. (1999). *Criminal Victimization 1998, Changes 1997-98 with Trends 1993-98* (NCJ 176353): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 2. Data for 1999: Rennison, C. (2000). *Criminal Victimization 1999, Changes 1998-99 with Trends 1993-99* (NCJ 182734): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 2. Data for 2000: Rennison, C. (2001). *Criminal Victimization 2000, Changes 1999-2000 with Trends 1993-2000* (NCJ 187007): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 2. Data for 2001: Rennison, C. (2002). *Criminal Victimization 2001: Changes 2000-01 with Trends 1993-2001* (NCJ 194610): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 2. Data for 2002: Rennison, C. and M. Rand. (2003). *Criminal Victimization 2002* (NCJ 199994): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 6. Data for 2003: Catalano, Shannon M. (2004). *Criminal Victimization, 2003* (NCJ 205455): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 6. Data for 2004: Catalano, Shannon M. (2005). *Criminal Victimization, 2004* (NCJ 210674): U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Table 6. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv04.htm>



Table 2

Violent Crime Victimization Rates (per 1,000), Ages 12 to 19, by Gender, Race, and Type of Crime, 2003

	All Violent Crime	Robbery	Aggravated Assault	Simple Assault	Rape/Sexual Assault
12 to 15 years	51.6	5.2	8.9	36.4	1.2 *
Male	69.9	6.9	11.1	51.6	0.4 *
Female	32.3	3.4 *	6.5	20.4	2.0
White	48.2	3.0	9.7	34.2	1.3 *
Male	60.9	3.0 *	11.5	46.0	-
Female	34.9	3.0 *	7.8	21.9	-
Black	68.6	14.0	1.0 *	53.6	0.0 *
Male	112.3	20.8 *	1.9 *	89.5	-
Female	21.1 *	6.6 *	0.0 *	14.5	-
16 to 19 years	53.0	5.1	11.9	34.7	1.3 *
Male	68.0	7.1	17.9	43.0	0.0 *
Female	37.6	3.1 *	5.7	26.2	2.6 *
White	54.5	4.3	9.8	39.1	1.3 *
Male	67.6	6.4	14.9	46.3	-
Female	41.0	2.1 *	4.5 *	31.7	-
Black	48.9	10.1	18.3	18.9	1.7 *
Male	70.3	11.0 *	26.5 *	32.8	-
Female	28.9	9.2	10.6 *	5.8	-

*Estimate based on 10 or fewer cases
 - Data not available

Source: U.S. Department of Justice. (2005). *A National Crime Victimization Survey, 2003- -Statistical Tables* (NCJ207811): Tables 3,4, 9, 10.
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/sheets/cvsprshts.htm>

