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Crime Data Brief

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Violence by Gang Members, 1993-2003

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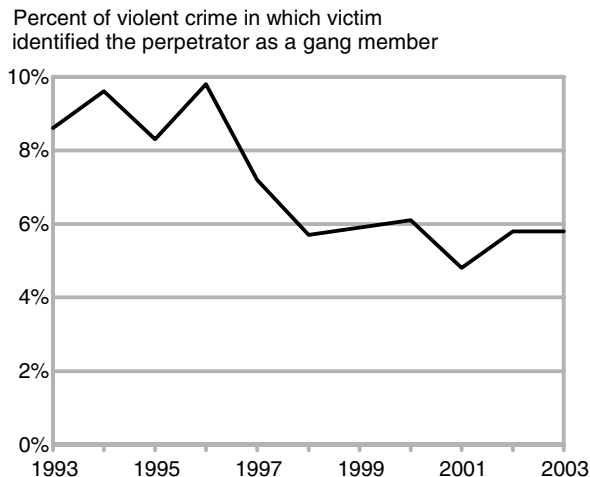
According to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), victims perceived perpetrators to be gang members in about 6% of violent victimizations between 1998 and 2003. On average for each year, gang members committed about 373,000 of the 6.6 million violent victimizations. Nonfatal violent acts measured include rape/sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault.

Victims believed that perpetrators were not gang members in 55% of all nonfatal violent crimes between 1998 and

2003, and victims were unsure of gang affiliation in 37%. The 1998-2003 average is lower than that for the 1993-96 period, when victims in about 9% of all violent crimes believed the offenders to have been gang members.

Violence by perceived gang members declined over most of the 11-year period, falling from a 1994 peak of about 1.1 million violent victimizations (5.2 per 1,000 persons age 12 or older) to 341,000 (1.4 per 1,000) in 2003.

From 1998 to 2003 gang members committed about 6% of violent crime, according to the victims



Violent crimes for which victims identified the offender to be a gang member peaked in 1996 at 10% of all violent crime and decreased until 1998 to about 6%, not significantly changing since.

- Male victims of violence identified gang members as the offenders at a higher rate than female victims.
- Hispanics were more likely than non-Hispanics to be victims of violent crimes committed by gang members.
- Gang members were more likely to victimize younger persons than older persons.

NCVS gang question:

- (Was/were any of) the offender(s) a member of a street gang, or don't you know?**
- Yes (a member of a street gang)
 - No (not a member of a street gang)
 - Don't know (if a member of a street gang)

Table 1. Rates of violence by perceived gang members, by gender, race, Hispanic origin, and age, 1993-2003

Victim characteristic	Rate of violence by victim-perceived gang members per 1,000 persons in each group
Total	2.8
Gender	
Males	3.8
Females	1.8
Race	
White	2.6
Black	4.1
Other	3.0
Hispanic origin	
Hispanic	5.7
Non-Hispanic	2.4
Age	
12-19	9.8
20-49	2.3
50 or older	0.4

Males experienced violence attributed to gang members at higher rates than those of females.

Hispanic victims of violence identified the offenders as gang members at a higher rate than non-Hispanic victims, and blacks at a higher rate than whites, for the period between 1993 and 2003.

Victims believed the offenders were gang members in about 12% of all aggravated assaults that occurred between 1993 and 2003. Offenders were identified as gang members in about 4% of rapes, 10% of robberies, and 6% of simple assaults.

Between 1993 and 2003 younger victims of violence were more likely than older victims to believe the perpetrator was a gang member. Offenders were perceived to be gang members in 12% of violent crimes against those age 12 -19. The offender was identified as a gang member in about 6% of violent crimes against persons age 20-49 and in about 4% of violent crimes against those age 50 or older.

Table 3. Where victims of violence lived, by their perception of gang membership of offenders, 1993-2003

Where victims lived	Percent of victims of violence, by perceived gang membership of offender			
	Total	Gang member	Not a gang member	Unsure of gang membership
Urban	100%	8.6%	49.5%	41.9%
Suburban	100	7.3	55.9	36.7
Rural	100	5.9	65.7	28.4

Table 2. Victims' perception of gang membership of the offender, by police notification and number of offenders, 1993-2003

	Percent of victims of violence, by perceived gang membership of offender		
	Gang member	Not a gang member	Unsure of gang membership
Police notified			
Total	100%	100%	100%
Yes	47.2	44.6	45.0
No	52.8	55.4	55.0
Number of offenders			
Total	100%	100%	100%
One	53.6	89.3	67.9
More than one	46.4	10.7	32.1

Urban victims were more likely than suburban or rural victims to identify offenders as gang members.

Police were as likely to be notified when the victims believed the offender *not* to be a gang member (45% of violence reported to the police) as when they believed the offender belonged to a gang (47% reported).

Of the violence that victims believed gang members committed between 1993 and 2003, a lone offender accounted for about 54% and more than one offender, 46%.

Except for homicides, all data presented in this report are from the NCVS. For more information see the methodology section of *Criminal Victimization, 2003*: <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv03.htm>>.

Homicides by gang members

	Percent gang related	
	All homicides	Firearm homicides
According to the FBI's Supplementary Homicide Reports, each year between 1993 and 2003, from 5% to 7% of all homicides and from 8% to 10% of homicides committed with a firearm were gang related.		
1993	5.6%	7.5%
1994	5.7	7.7
1995	6.2	8.7
1996	5.6	7.6
1997	5.5	7.7
1998	4.9	7.1
1999	5.4	7.6
2000	5.4	7.8
2001	6.7	9.0
2002	6.9	9.9
2003	6.5	9.3