



Bureau of Justice Statistics

Family Violence Statistics

Including Statistics on Strangers and Acquaintances

Reported and unreported family violence

Murder of family members

Family violence reported to police

Family violence recorded by police

State prosecution of family assault

Federal prosecution of domestic violence

Family violence offenders in prison

Family violence offenders in jail

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Family Violence Statistics

Including Statistics on Strangers and Acquaintances

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Highlights, definitions, and counting rules

Introduction

This compendium contains the most recent family violence statistics from these sources: surveys conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), the BJS database of Federal statistics, and two statistical databases maintained by the FBI.

The sources provide statistical snapshots of family violence at different stages in the administration of justice. First are statistics on the nature and extent of family violence. Next are statistics on family violence that is reported to police, followed by statistics on the prosecution of persons charged with family violence. Lastly are statistics on persons sent to prison or jail for family violence.

The report is divided into eight sections giving statistics on —

- Reported and unreported family violence
- Fatal family violence
- Family violence reported to police
- Family violence recorded by police
- State prosecution of family assault
- Federal prosecution of domestic violence
- Family violence offenders in prison
- Family violence offenders in jail.

Highlights

Trends in family violence

The rate of family violence fell between 1993 and 2002 from an estimated 5.4 victims to 2.1 victims per 1,000 U.S. residents age 12 or older. Throughout the period family violence accounted for about 1 in 10 violent victimizations.

Reported and unreported family violence

Family violence accounted for 11% of all reported and unreported violence between 1998 and 2002. Of these roughly 3.5 million violent crimes committed against family members, 49% were crimes against spouses, 11% were sons or daughters victimized by a parent, and 41% were crimes against other family members.

The most frequent type of family violence offense was simple assault. Murder was less than half of 1% of all family violence between 1998 and 2002.

About three-fourths of all family violence occurred in or near the victim's residence.

Forty percent of family violence victims were injured during the incident. Of the 3.5 million victims of family violence between 1998 and 2002, less than 1% died as a result of the incident.

The majority (73%) of family violence victims were female. Females were 84% of spouse abuse victims and 86% of victims of abuse at the hands of a boyfriend or girlfriend.

While about three-fourths of the victims of family violence were female, about three-fourths of the persons who committed family violence were male.

Most family violence victims were white (74%), and the majority were between ages 25 and 54 (65.7%). Most family violence offenders were white (79%), and most were age 30 or older (62%).

Fatal family violence

About 22% of murders in 2002 were family murders. Nearly 9% were murders of a spouse, 6% were murders of sons or daughters by a parent, and 7% were murders by other family members.

Females were 58% of family murder victims. Of all the murders of females in 2002, family members were responsible for 43%.

Children under age 13 were 23% of murder victims killed by a family member, and just over 3% of nonfamily murder victims.

The average age among sons or daughters killed by a parent was 7 years, and 4 out of 5 victims killed by a parent were under age 13.

Eight in ten murderers who killed a family member were male. Males were 83% of spouse murderers and 75% of murderers who killed a boyfriend or girlfriend.

In 2002 family murders were less likely than nonfamily murders to involve a firearm (50% versus 68%). Parents were the least likely family murderers to use a firearm (28%), compared to spouses (63%) or other family members (51%).

Among incidents of parents killing their children, 19% involved one parent killing multiple victims.

Family violence reported to police

Approximately 60% of family violence victimizations were reported to police between 1998 and 2002. The reporting rate among female victims was not significantly greater than the reporting rate among male victims.

The most common reason victims of family violence cited for not reporting the crime to police was that the incident was a "private/personal matter" (34%). Another 12% of non-reporting family violence victims did not report the crime in order to "protect the offender."

Among the 2.1 million incidents of family violence reported to police between 1998 and 2002, 36% resulted in an arrest.

Family violence recorded by police

Family violence accounted for 33% of all violent crimes recorded by police in 18 States and the District of Columbia in 2000. Of these more than 207,000 family violence crimes, about half (53%, or 110,000) were crimes between spouses.

Among crimes recorded by police, 2% of family violence involved a firearm, compared to 6% of nonfamily violence. A weapon was used in 16% of family and 21% of nonfamily violence.

About 6% of all violent crime recorded by police in 2000 involved more than one offender victimizing a lone victim. The exception was stranger crime, in which 14% of incidents involved multiple offenders victimizing a lone victim.

About 49% of family violence crimes recorded by police resulted in an arrest. Males comprised 77% of suspected family violence offenders arrested in 2000.

State prosecution of family assault

Of the approximately 1,500 defendants charged with felony assault during May 2000 in the State courts of 11 large counties, about a third were charged with family violence.

Among felony assault defendants charged with family violence in State courts, 84% had at least one prior arrest for either a felony or a misdemeanor (not necessarily for family violence), and 73% had been previously convicted of some type of felony or misdemeanor (not necessarily family violence).

Nearly half of felony assault defendants charged with family violence were released pending case disposition.

Among the 1,500 felony assault cases, the probability of the case leading to conviction (felony or misdemeanor) was greater for family assault defendants (71%) than nonfamily assault defendants (61%).

State courts sentenced 83% of persons convicted of assault (both family and nonfamily) to either prison or jail. Among felony assault defendants convicted in State courts —

- 68% of incarceration sentences for family assault were to jail
- 62% of incarceration sentences for nonfamily assault were to prison
- 45% of persons sent to prison for family assault received a sentence of more than 2 years, compared to 77% of nonfamily assault offenders sent to prison.

Federal prosecution of domestic violence

Persons suspected of domestic violence made up 4% of the total 18,653 Federal suspects referred to U.S. attorneys for alleged violent crimes from 2000 to 2002.

Of the 757 suspects referred to U.S. attorneys for domestic violence offenses between 2000 and 2002, most were firearm-related domestic violence offenses rather than interstate domestic violence offenses.

- The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives accounted for 80% of all referrals for firearm-related domestic violence.
- The FBI accounted for 72% of all interstate domestic violence referrals.

Federal courts convicted 90% of defendants adjudicated for an interstate domestic violence offense.

Among defendants convicted in federal courts —

- 79% of convictions were the product of a guilty plea, and the remaining 21% were the product of conviction following a trial
- most were male (96%), under age 40 (67%), white (72%), and non-Hispanic (95%)
- 4 in 5 defendants had a prior adult conviction.

Of 47 Federal defendants sentenced for an interstate domestic violence offense between 2000 and 2002, 91% received a prison term with a median length of 60 months.

Family violence offenders in prison

Of the nearly 500,000 men and women in State prisons for a violent crime in 1997, 15% were there for a violent crime against a family member.

Nearly half of all the family violence offenders in State prisons were serving a sentence for a sex offense against a family member. More than three-quarters of parents convicted of a violent crime against their son or daughter were in prison for a sex offense.

Of the crimes for which family violence offenders were in prison —

- most were against a female (78%)
- more than half were against a child under age 18
- more than a third were against a child under age 13.

About 90% of offenders in State prisons for family violence had injured their victim:

- 50% of family violence victims were raped or sexually assaulted
- 28% of the victims of family violence were killed
- 50% of offenders in State prisons for spousal abuse had killed their victims
- Of State prison inmates imprisoned for a crime against their son or daughter, 79% had raped or sexually assaulted the child, and another 10% had killed the child.

Among family violence offenders in State prisons in 1997 —

- most were male (93%)
- 6 out of 10 were white, while about a quarter were black
- about 80% were between ages 25 and 54.

Among offenders whose incarceration in State prisons was for family violence, 23% had used a weapon to commit their crime. The comparable percentage among State prisoners incarcerated for nonfamily violence was higher— 46%.

Family violence offenders in jail

Convicted family violence offenders made up about 22% of the nearly 86,500 convicted violent offenders in local jails in 2002. Most (60%) of these approximately 18,700 jail inmates incarcerated for family violence were in jail for an aggravated assault.

Local jail inmates convicted of family violence reported that —

- their victims were predominantly female (79%)
- nearly 30% of their victims were under age 18.

Among local jail inmates convicted of family violence, 55% injured their victim.

Most convicted jail inmates serving time for violence against a family member (88%) did not use a weapon during the crime.

Among jail inmates convicted of family violence, 45% had been subject to a restraining order at some point in their life. About 18% were under an active restraining order at the time of admission to jail.

Definitions

Violent crime Unless indicated otherwise, statistics on violent crime in this report pertain to all forms of the following crimes: criminal homicide, completed and attempted rape, sexual assault (including threats), robbery, assault (including threats), kidnaping, intimidation, illegal abortion, extortion, cruelty towards child or wife, hit-and-run driving with bodily injury, and miscellaneous crimes against persons (as opposed to crimes against property).

Family violence Unless indicated otherwise, family violence includes all types of violent crime committed by an offender who is related to the victim either biologically or legally through marriage or adoption. A crime is considered family violence if the victim was the offender's current or former spouse; parent or adoptive parent; current or former stepparent; legal guardian; biological or adoptive child; current or former stepchild; sibling; current or former step sibling; grandchild; current or former step- or adoptive-grandchild; grandparent; current or former step- or

adoptive-grandparent; in-law; or other relative (aunt, uncle, nephew).

Nonfamily violence Unless indicated otherwise, nonfamily violence includes all types of violent crime between current or former boyfriends and girlfriends; between current or former friends and acquaintances; and between strangers.

Relationship of victim to offender The databases used in this report all contain sufficient information to permit identification of family violence cases.

However, the types of information that make identification possible are not uniform. Some provide more relationship categories than others. For example, the Supplemental Homicide Reports provides 28 different categories of victim-offender relationship, while the National Crime Victimization Survey has 15 categories. Also, the databases use different terms to describe specific victim-offender relationships. For example, one uses the category "employee/employer," while another uses "colleague at work."

In general, enough information was available in each of the databases to distinguish six categories of victim-offender relationship: three family categories (spouse, son or daughter, and other family), and three nonfamily categories (boyfriend/girlfriend, friend/acquaintance, and stranger). Most sections of the report present statistics on all six categories.

Sources of data on family violence

National Crime Victimization Survey (a BJS survey)

One data source used to document the nature and extent of family violence in the United States is the BJS National Crime Victimization Survey, or NCVS, for 1998 to 2002. The NCVS compiles data on family and nonfamily violence through biannual interviews with nationally representative samples of U.S. residents age 12 or older. In these interviews, residents are asked if they were a recent victim of crime. Those who were victims are then asked numerous questions about the incident, such as where it occurred and whether they knew the offender. Residents are encouraged to tell interviewers both about crimes that were reported to police and about unreported crimes.

Because the survey data come from interviews with victims, the NCVS has no information on homicide. The survey's scope is limited to certain forms of nonfatal violence: rape and sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. Based on interviews with the Nation's crime victims, estimates are formed not only of how many of these crimes occur each year but also of the characteristics pertaining to the criminal incidents. Such characteristics include the number of victims that obtained medical care for their injuries, the number that reported the crime to police, and the number whose assailant was a relative.

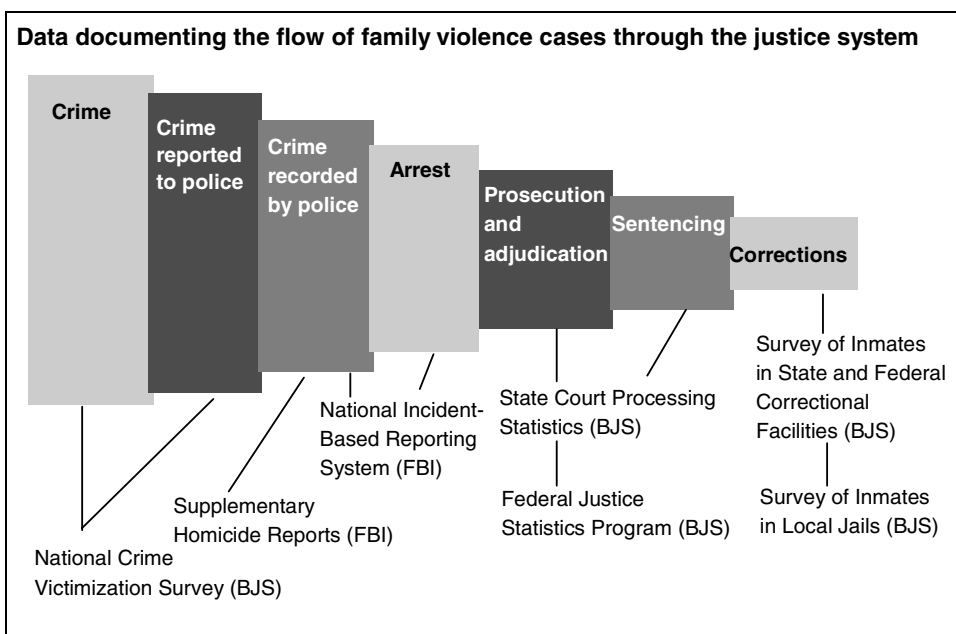


Figure 1

*Supplementary Homicide Reports
(an FBI database)*

For national statistics on family homicide for the year 2002, the source used in this report was the FBI's Supplementary Homicide Reports, or SHR. The FBI compiles detailed national data on family and nonfamily homicide from the thousands of law enforcement agencies across the Nation. For each criminal homicide, the SHR record such information as the age and race of the offender, the relationship of the victim to the offender, and the type of weapon used in the killing.

National Incident-Based Reporting System (an FBI database)

For statistics on family violence that comes to police attention and for statistics on arrests for family violence, the source used in this report is the database for the year 2000 from the National Incident-Based Reporting System, or NIBRS. The database, compiled by the FBI, contains NIBRS data from at least 1 police agency in each of 18 States and the District of Columbia. These jurisdictions cover about 16% of the U.S. population and do not include any areas with a population of one million or more.

The NIBRS data have information on victims, offenders, persons arrested, and incidents of family and nonfamily violence. For example, information on victims includes the type of injury sustained and the victim's relationship to the offender. Among the various details available on offenders and arrestees are their age, race, and gender. Offense characteristics available in the NIBRS data include the type of weapon used and the type of location where the crime occurred.

*State Court Processing Statistics
(a BJS data collection)*

No national data in the United States describe the processing of family violence cases from arrest through final disposition by a court. The available alternative used in this report is an extract of the BJS data collection State Court Processing Statistics (SCPS). The SCPS data used are entirely from police and court records that tracked family and nonfamily assault cases in 11 counties, from the filing of State court charges in May of 2000 to their final court disposition. These data include information about persons arrested and charged with family and nonfamily assault: their demographic characteristics, their prior arrest and conviction record, and their criminal justice status at time of arrest. The SCPS data also contain information about the processing of the assault cases, such as type of pretrial release, adjudication outcome, and type of sentence imposed.

*Federal Justice Statistics Program
(a BJS database)*

Information regarding violations of family violence-related Federal statutes that were subsequently referred to Federal court come from the Federal Justice Statistics Program (FJSP), a database maintained by the Bureau of Justice Statistics. FJSP provides annual data on workload, activities, and outcomes associated with Federal criminal cases. Data for 2000 to 2002 were acquired on all aspects of processing in the Federal justice system, including the number of persons investigated, prosecuted, convicted, and incarcerated. The FJSP database is a BJS database, constructed from files provided by the U.S. Marshals Service, the Executive Office for United States Attorneys, the

Administrative Office of the United States Courts, the United States Sentencing Commission, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities (a BJS survey)

For national statistics on persons in prison for family violence, this report used the BJS Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, conducted in 1997. The survey involves face-to-face interviews with a nationally representative sample of State prisoners. Persons in prison for either family or nonfamily violence are included in the sample. Through interviews with them, information is obtained on their victims and on numerous other characteristics of the crime that brought them into prison, such as whether a weapon was used, and the location of the offense.

*Survey of Inmates in Local Jails
(a BJS survey)*

For statistics on inmates who were convicted of family violence and sentenced to a period of incarceration of less than 1 year, the source used in this report is the BJS Survey of Inmates in Local Jails. This is a periodic survey which describes the current offenses and offense characteristics of local jail inmates. Most recently conducted in 2002, face-to-face interviews were conducted with a nationally representative sample of local jail inmates to collect systematic information on this special correctional population. Questions were asked regarding the relationship of the victim to the incarcerated offender, the gender, race/Hispanic origin, and age of victims and offenders, injury to the victim, offender use of a weapon, offender substance use at the time of the crime, and the place at which the crime occurred.

Uniform counting rules

Incidents of crime vary depending on the number of offenders, number of offenses committed, and number of victims. For instance, in a single incident where two men rape and rob a woman, there are two offenders, four offenses (a rape and a robbery committed by each man), and a single victim. Such an incident differs from one in which a lone man assaults another individual. That incident involves one offender, one offense, and one victim.

The various databases used in this report are not uniform in the amount of information they contain about each incident of crime. One of the databases (NIBRS) contains information on virtually every offender, every victim, and every offense in an incident. The other databases contain less information. For example, offender characteristics available in the prisoner database pertain only to each individual incarcerated offender. The incident that resulted in that person's incarceration may have involved multiple offenders, but information on co-offenders was unavailable.

To improve the comparability of statistics across the databases, rules were adopted to guide tabulations. All statistics in this report — that is, statistics on offenders, on offenses, and on victims — follow the rule that each incident be treated as though it involved one offender, one offense, and one victim.

If an incident involved more than one *offender* and information (such as age, race, and gender) was available on more than one offender, the available data on just one of the offenders were tabulated. Similarly, if an incident involved more than one *offense* and information on the different offenses (such as the place where each occurred) was available, only the data on one of the offenses were counted.

Likewise, if an incident involved more than one *victim* and the database contained information (such as the victim's age, race, and gender) on more than one victim, victim statistics used in the analysis were based on just one of the victims.

Certain databases used in the report — NCVS, SHR, and NIBRS — were victim-based. Choosing a particular victim to characterize an incident was unnecessary with these databases. Other data collections used in the report — Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities and Survey of Inmates in Local Jails — were offender-based. Choosing a particular offender to characterize an incident was unnecessary with these sources.

Where choices had to be made about which offender, which offense, or which victim characterized an incident, the choices were guided by various hierarchies. Information about the hierarchies is summarized below.

In choosing a particular *offender* to characterize an incident, the choice was guided by the victim's relationship to the offender. For example, in a single incident in which a woman was assaulted by her husband and a stranger, the incident was treated as a spouse-on-spouse assault. Offender statistics for such an incident (such as age, race, and gender) therefore pertained solely to the characteristics of the husband; characteristics of the stranger were not tabulated.

Selecting the husband over the stranger to characterize the incident conforms to a rule adopted for this report that says to select whichever offender is highest in the following victim-to-offender relationship hierarchy (shown in order from highest to lowest, with column headings in italics):

Spouse

spouse and common-law spouse
ex-spouse

Son or daughter

child
stepchild

Other family

parent and stepparent
sibling and step-sibling
grandchild
grandparent
in-laws
other relative

Boyfriend or girlfriend

boy/girlfriend
ex-boy/girlfriend
homosexual partner

Friend or acquaintance

child of girl or boyfriend
friend
neighbor
employer
employee
acquaintance
babysittee
otherwise known

Stranger

stranger

Not included in analysis

relationship unknown

When it was necessary to choose a single *victim* to characterize an incident, the victim-offender relationship hierarchy was also used. Again, the chosen victim was the one highest in the hierarchy.

In choosing a particular *offense* to characterize an incident, the choice was guided by the offense's position in a hierarchy of offense seriousness. The offense highest in the hierarchy was selected to characterize the incident. For example, in a single incident where the victim was raped and murdered, the offense selected to characterize the incident was murder because murder is higher in the offense seriousness hierarchy than rape. The offense seriousness hierarchy (from most to least serious) generally corresponds to the offense list shown in table 5.1.

As noted earlier, each incident tabulated in this report was treated as having one offender, one offense, and one victim. Each incident was also treated as having one offense location, one victim injury (if any), one weapon involved (if any), one arrestee (if any), and one arrest offense (if any). The characteristic's position in a hierarchy determined which characteristic (for example, which injury) was tabulated. The characteristic with the highest position was chosen.

Listed in order from highest to lowest, the offense location hierarchy is in table 5.2; victim injury hierarchy, table 8.4; offender weapon use hierarchy, table 5.6; and arrest offense hierarchy, table 5.8. The arrestee hierarchy is the same as the victim-to-offender relationship hierarchy described above.

Family violence reported to police

About the data in this section

As the term is used throughout the following section, "violent crime" refers to five types of nonfatal violence: rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault and simple assault. The seven tables in this section are all based on the personal accounts of victims who described violent victimizations occurring between 1998 and 2002. The NCVS documented these accounts in interviews with a nationally representative sample. The tables compare family violence to nonfamily violence with respect to the likelihood of being reported to police, the identity of the persons who did the reporting, reasons for not reporting, and the likelihood that reported offenses resulted in an arrest.

Reporting family violence to police

Of the 32.1 million violent victimizations that occurred between 1998 and 2002, 47.2% were reported to the police (table 4.1). Violence against family members was more likely to be reported to police than violence involving persons who were not family members. Of the 3.5 million family violence incidents, 59% were reported, compared to 45.7% reported of the 28.6 million crimes against persons who did not belong to the offenders' family.

Both spouse abuse (61.7%) and violence against family members other than a spouse or a son or daughter (58.8%) were reported at higher rates than violence by a parent against a son or daughter (47.3%).

Spouse violence (61.7%) was somewhat more likely to be reported than violence against a boyfriend or girlfriend (55.4%).

Among the 28.6 million violent crimes involving nonfamily members, the type of violence most likely to be reported was violence between boyfriends and girlfriends (55.4%). The type of violence least likely to be reported was violence against friends and acquaintances (40%), which was reported less often than both boyfriend/girlfriend violence (55.4%) and stranger violence (48.9%).

Table 4.1. Percent of family violence reported to police between 1998 and 2002, compared to percent of nonfamily violence, by relationship

Offense characteristic	All non-fatal violent crimes	Percent reported and not reported, for crimes in which the victim was the offender's —							
		Family member				Nonfamily member			
		Total	Spouse	Son or daughter	Other family	Total	Boyfriend or girlfriend	Friend or acquaintance	Stranger
All offenses	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Crime reported to police	47.2%	59.0%	61.7%	47.3%	58.8%	45.7%	55.4%	40.0%	48.9%
Crime not reported to police	52.8	41.0	38.3	52.7	41.2	54.3	44.6	60.0	51.1
Total offenses	32,116,920	3,534,150	1,729,360	369,220	1,435,570	28,582,770	2,034,160	11,753,660	14,794,960

Note: Data identifying the victim's relationship to the offender were reported for 95.9% of 33,501,120 nonfatal violent crimes.

Of these 32,116,920 crimes with known relationships, police notification was reported for 98.7%.

Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

Source: BJS, 1998 — 2002 National Crime Victimization Survey.

Types of crime and reporting rate differences

Of the 32.1 million violent victimizations that occurred between 1998 and 2002, robbery and aggravated assault were the most likely to be brought to police attention. Police learned of 60.8% of the 3.2 million cases of robbery and 57.9% of the 6.4 million cases of aggravated assault. Sexual assault (31.8%) was the least likely type of crime to be reported to police. Overall, between 1998 and 2002, fewer than 4 out of 10 sex offenses — either rape or sexual assault — came to the attention of law enforcement.

Type of offense	Number of violent victimizations 1998 — 2002	Percent reported to police
Sex offenses	1,424,830	38.2%
Rape	818,790	42.8
Sexual assault	606,040	31.8
Robbery	3,242,410	60.8
Aggravated assault	6,356,940	57.9
Simple assault	21,092,740	42.4
Total offenses	32,116,920	47.2%

Fifty-nine percent of family violence crimes were brought to police attention (table 4.2). Among the 3.5 million crimes against family members, sex offenses (39.1%) were less likely to be reported to police than other types of crime. Robbery (70.6%), aggravated assault (63.3%), and simple assault (57.5%) were all reported more often.

Of the total 1.4 million violent sex offenses that occurred between 1998 and 2002, approximately 1.3 million were against persons outside the offenders' families. Of these 1.3 million sex offenses that occurred between nonfamily members, those committed by a stranger were the most likely to result in police notification. Of stranger sex crimes, 46.4% were reported, compared to 35% of those committed by a friend or acquaintance and 29.8% of those committed by a boyfriend or girlfriend.

Nearly two-thirds of all violence between 1998 and 2002 was simple assault (not in table). Simple assaults against a family member (57.5%) were more likely to be reported to police than simple assaults that involved offenders from outside the victims' family (40.4%). Similarly, authorities were notified about spouse-inflicted simple assaults (62%) at a higher rate than simple assaults by a boyfriend or girlfriend (53%).

Table 4.2. Percent of family violence reported to police between 1998 and 2002, compared to nonfamily violence, by relationship and offense type

Type of offense	All non-fatal violent crimes	Percent reported, for crimes in which the victim was the offender's —							
		Family member				Nonfamily member			
		Total	Spouse	Son or daughter	Other family	Total	Boyfriend or girlfriend	Friend or acquaintance	Stranger
All offenses	47.2%	59.0%	61.7%	47.3%	58.8%	45.7%	55.4%	40.0%	48.9%
Sex offenses	38.2%	39.1%	36.2%*	58.8%*	35.0%*	38.1%	29.8%	35.0%	46.4%
Rape	42.8	43.6	37.3*	50.8*	61.7*	42.6	26.7	42.9	52.5
Sexual assault	31.8	26.0*	32.1*	100*	0*	32.2	39.5*	25.7	40.1
Robbery	60.8	70.6	75.1	75.0	62.9	59.8	75.6	52.4	60.5
Aggravated assault	57.9	63.3	60.5	53.9	67.8	57.3	69.1	52.0	59.4
Simple assault	42.4	57.5	62.0	40.9	56.3	40.4	53.0	36.7	42.1
Total offenses	32,116,920	3,534,150	1,729,360	369,220	1,435,570	28,582,770	2,034,160	11,753,660	14,794,960

Note: Data identifying the victim's relationship to the offender were reported for 95.9% of 33,501,120 nonfatal violent crimes. Of these 32,116,920 crimes with known relationships, offense type was known for all victims, and police notification was reported for 98.7%. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.
*Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases.
Source: BJS, 1998 — 2002 National Crime Victimization Survey.

Demographic differences in reporting rates

Gender

In general, violent crimes against females were more likely to be reported to police than violent crimes against males. Between 1998 and 2002, 52.3% of all violent victimizations of females were reported to police, compared to 43% of those of males (table 4.3).

The likelihood of family violence being reported to police did not differ significantly between male victims and female victims. Females' 60.1% reporting rate was not significantly greater than the males' 55.9% rate.

For nonfamily violence, a larger percentage of crimes against females than against males was reported to police. Authorities were notified of about 50.5% of nonfamily violent crimes against females and 42.2% of those against males.

Among violent victimizations by a friend/acquaintance, female victimizations were reported at a greater rate (45.6%) than those of males (35.2%). Reporting of stranger victimizations of females (54%) was also greater than that of males (46.5%).

Race/Hispanic origin

Between 1998 and 2002, a smaller percentage of violence against white victims was reported to police than violence against victims of other races (including Hispanics). The police were notified of 46% of violent crimes against white victims, compared to 50.3% of those against other races.

Nonfamily violence against whites (44.4%) was less likely to be reported than nonfamily violence against other races (49%).

Among the 2 million victims of violence by a boyfriend or girlfriend, crimes against white victims (50.4%) were

significantly less likely to be reported to authorities than crimes against victims of other races (67.5%).

The likelihood of police notification of stranger violence did not differ significantly between incidents involving white victims (48.1%) and those involving victims of other races (50.7%).

Age

Violent crimes against younger victims were less likely to be reported than violent crimes against older victims. Of the 32.1 million violent victimizations that occurred between 1998 and 2002, violence involving victims under age 18 (32%) and victims between ages 18 and 24 (44.7%) was reported at lower rates than violence involving victims in each of the other age categories.

Among the 3.5 million family violence crimes, those involving the youngest victims were least likely to be reported. That is, violence by a family member

Table 4.3. Percent of family violence reported to police between 1998 and 2002, compared to percent of nonfamily violence, by relationship and demographic characteristics of victim

Victim characteristic	All non-fatal violent crimes	Percent reported, for crimes in which the victim was the offender's —							
		Family member				Nonfamily member			
		Total	Spouse	Son or daughter	Other family	Total	Boyfriend or girlfriend	Friend or acquaintance	Stranger
All offenses	47.2%	59.0%	61.7%	47.3%	58.8%	45.7%	55.4%	40.0%	48.9%
Gender									
Male	43.0%	55.9%	53.8%	52.0%	57.8%	42.2%	50.5%	35.2%	46.5%
Female	52.3	60.1	63.1	44.5	59.4	50.5	56.2	45.6	54.0
Race/Hispanic origin									
White	46.0%	58.1%	60.7%	45.0%	58.6%	44.4%	50.4%	39.1%	48.1%
Other races ^a	50.3	61.5	64.9	55.8	59.3	49.0	67.5	42.8	50.7
Age									
Under 18	32.0%	38.0%	18.8%*	46.9%	30.3%	31.7%	47.6%	28.7%	35.2%
18 - 24	44.7	62.8	68.5	50.5	62.1	43.1	52.6	37.8	44.3
25 - 34	56.9	63.0	64.2	53.4*	62.3	55.9	60.4	54.0	56.3
35 - 54	53.5	59.1	59.0	35.7*	60.5	52.3	57.6	47.2	55.3
55 or older	56.8	68.1	54.6	0*	75.0	55.1	62.3*	53.9	55.6
Total offenses	32,116,920	3,534,150	1,729,360	369,220	1,435,570	28,582,770	2,034,160	11,753,660	14,794,960

Note: Data identifying the victim's relationship to the offender were reported for 95.9% of 33,501,120 nonfatal violent crimes. Of these 32,116,920 crimes with known relationships, victim characteristics were reported for virtually all victims, and police notification was reported for 98.7%. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

*Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases.

^aIncludes victims of Hispanic origin.

Source: BJS, 1998 — 2002 National Crime Victimization Survey.

against victims 18-24 (62.8%), 25-34 (63%), 35-54 (59.1%), and 55 or older (68.1%) were each reported at higher rates than family violence against victims under 18 (38%).

Of the 28.6 million violent crimes against persons unrelated to the offenders, those involving older victims were generally more likely to be reported than those involving younger victims. Nonfamily violence against victims 25- 34 (55.9%), victims 35-54 (52.3%) and victims 55 or older (55.1%) were reported at higher rates than nonfamily violence against victims under 18 (31.7%) and victims 18-24 (43.1%).

For each of the three types of nonfamily violence — violence against boyfriends and girlfriends, violence against friends or acquaintances, and stranger violence — no significant differences in the likelihood of notifying authorities were found between the age categories.

Reporting rate differences in relation to weapon involvement

Between 1998 and 2002, 25.7% of violent crime victims indicated that the offender had a weapon at the time of the incident. Just under three-quarters of violent crimes involved an offender who did not have a weapon of any sort.

Whether offender had a weapon	Number	Percent
Offender —		
Had a weapon	8,264,110	25.7%
Did not have a weapon	23,852,810	74.3
Total offenses	32,116,920	100%

Violent crimes involving a weapon were more likely to be reported to police than those not involving a weapon. Of the 8.3 million violent crimes in which the offender had a weapon, 53.8% were reported to police (table 4.4). Among the remaining 23.9 million violent crimes not involving an offender with a weapon, 40% were brought to the attention of authorities.

Reporting rates among family violence victims did not differ significantly between incidents that did and did not involve a weapon. This was true among all three categories of family violence.

Among nonfamily violence incidents, those involving a weapon were more likely to be reported than those not involving a weapon. Of the nonfamily violence incidents in which the offender had a weapon, 58% were reported to police, compared to 41.2% of those not involving a weapon. Violence against boyfriends or girlfriends that involved a weapon (69.6%) was reported to police more often than boy/girlfriend violence without a weapon (52.7%). Similarly, friend/acquaintance violence involving a weapon was reported at a higher rate (51.6%) than friend/acquaintance violence not involving a weapon (36.9%), and weapon-involved stranger violence had a higher reporting rate (60.2%) than stranger violence not involving a weapon (43.5%).

Table 4.4. Percent of family violence reported to police between 1998 and 2002, compared to percent of nonfamily violence, by relationship and whether offender had a weapon

Whether offender had a weapon	All non-fatal violent crimes	Percent reported, for crimes in which the victim was the offender's —							
		Family member				Nonfamily member			
		Total	Spouse	Son or daughter	Other family	Total	Boyfriend or girlfriend	Friend or acquaintance	Stranger
Offender —									
Had a weapon	53.8%	62.1%	60.5%	55.5%	65.1%	58.0%	69.6%	51.6%	60.2%
Did not have a weapon	40.0	58.1	62.2	45.3	56.4	41.2	52.7	36.9	43.5
Total offenses	32,116,920	3,534,150	1,729,360	369,220	1,435,570	28,582,770	2,034,160	11,753,660	14,794,960

Note: Data identifying the victim's relationship to the offender were reported for 95.9% of 33,501,120 nonfatal violent crimes. Of these 32,116,920 crimes with known relationships, data on police notification were available for 98.7%. Of the 31,704,160 crimes with data on police notification, data indicating whether the offender had a weapon were reported for 92.2%. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.
Source: BJS, 1998 — 2002 National Crime Victimization Survey.

Reasons why violence was not reported to police

An estimated 17 million violent crimes did not come to the attention of law enforcement officials between 1998 and 2002 (table 4.5). These 17 million crimes were 52.8% of all violent victimizations that occurred during those years.

The two most common reasons for not reporting violence to the police were that the incident was a "private/personal matter" (22.8%) or that the incident was "reported to some other official" (19.5%). An additional 16.4% of victims indicated that the violence was considered "not important enough" to report, while 16.6% did not inform police for some "other reason."

Approximately a third of the 1.4 million family violence victims who did not report the incident to police stated the reason for not reporting was that it was a "private/personal matter." A quarter

said they did not inform police for some "other reason." Another 12% of nonreporting family violence victims said they did not report the crime in order to "protect the offender."

Twenty-five percent of the 663,000 victims of spouse violence indicated that they did not notify the authorities because the incident was a "private/personal matter." "Fear of reprisal" was indicated by 8.3% of nonreporting victims of spouse violence, and an additional 9.3% said they wanted to "protect the offender."

Thirteen percent of spouse abuse victims indicated they did not report the crime because it was "not important to police." This percentage was higher than the corresponding percentage for violence by a parent against a son or daughter (3%), by other family members (6.3%), by boyfriends or girlfriends (5.5%), by friends or acquaintances (4.2%), and by strangers (7.7%).

In 21.8% of unreported nonfamily violence cases, the incident was considered a "private/personal matter," while in another 20.9% it was "reported to some other official."

Among nonreporting victims of boyfriend/girlfriend violence, 33.8% said they did not report the incident to police because it was a "private/personal matter." An additional 10.6% indicated "fear of reprisal," and 16.9% stated they wanted to "protect the offender."

The 7 million victims of violence by a friend or acquaintance who did not report the crime to police most often stated that the incident was "reported to some other official" (29.4%). Twenty-three percent of nonreporting victims of stranger violence indicated that the incident was "not important enough" to report to police.

Table 4.5. Reasons family violence was not reported to police between 1998 and 2002, compared to reasons nonfamily violence was not reported, by relationship

Reasons for not reporting violence	Unreported violent crimes	Percent of reasons for not reporting, for crimes in which the victim was the offender's —							
		Family member				Nonfamily member			
		Total	Spouse	Son or daughter	Other family	Total	Boyfriend or girlfriend	Friend or acquaintance	Stranger
All unreported offenses	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Private/personal matter	22.8%	33.6%	25.1%	31.7%	43.7%	21.8%	33.8%	23.5%	18.7%
Not important enough	16.4	5.4	4.9	11.1*	4.1*	17.5	7.4	13.3	22.7
Reported to some other official	19.5	5.3	5.6	5.1*	5.1	20.9	3.1*	29.4	15.1
Not important to police	6.3	8.9	13.0	3.0*	6.3	6.0	5.5	4.2	7.7
Fear of reprisal	3.8	5.9	8.3	9.5*	2.1*	3.6	10.6	3.3	3.0
Not clear a crime occurred	4.9	2.5	1.5*	5.2*	2.7*	5.2	2.5*	5.8	4.9
Lack of proof	3.6	0.8*	1.8*	0*	0*	3.9	0.6*	0.6	7.4
Protect the offender	3.7	12.0	9.3	11.3*	15.1	3.0	16.9	3.2	1.0
Inconvenient	2.3	1.4*	1.6*	1.7*	1.2*	2.3	2.8*	1.6	3.0
Other reason	16.6	24.1	28.9	21.5	19.6	15.8	16.9	15.0	16.5
Total offenses not reported to police	16,965,300	1,448,620	662,590	194,640	591,090	15,521,300	907,560	7,049,790	7,563,680
Percent of all unreported offenses	100%	8.5%	3.9%	1.1%	3.5%	91.5%	5.3%	41.6%	44.6%

Note: Of the 16,965,300 offenses not reported to police, reasons for not reporting were available for 100%. "Other reason" includes victims who did not know why they did not report the crime to police. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

*Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases.

Source: BJS, 1998 — 2002 National Crime Victimization Survey.

The person who reported the crime to police

Of the 32.1 million violent victimizations that occurred between 1998 and 2002, 15.2 million were reported to police (table 4.6). These 15.2 million violent crimes came to police attention from a variety of sources. For 54.4% of all reported violence, the person reporting the crime to police was the victim. An additional 10.9% were reported by other household members; 8.9% by an official other than the police; and 15.6% by someone else, such as a bystander, a relative, or an acquaintance.

An estimated 13.8% of all reported violence between 1998 and 2002 was family violence. Of these 2.1 million cases of family violence that came to police attention, 67.4% were taken to the authorities by the victim. This was larger than the corresponding percentage for nonfamily violence (52.3%).

The victim was the reporter in approximately three-quarters of reported spouse abuse.

Of the approximately 15.2 million violent crimes reported to police, about 13 million (86.2%) involved nonfamily members. Of the 13 million reported nonfamily violence incidents, victims made up 52.3% of persons who contacted police. In 6.3% of cases of reported nonfamily violence, the police were at the crime scene at the time of the incident.

Table 4.6. Persons who reported family violence to police between 1998 and 2002, compared to those who reported nonfamily violence, by relationship

The person who reported the crime to police	Reported violent crimes	Percent of reporters, for crimes in which the victim was the offender's —							
		Family member				Nonfamily member			
		Total	Spouse	Son or daughter	Other family	Total	Boyfriend or girlfriend	Friend or acquaintance	Stranger
Total reported offenses	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Reported by —									
Victim	54.4%	67.4%	77.6%	52.2%	57.6%	52.3%	67.6%	51.5%	50.4%
Other household member	10.9	15.3	6.4	24.8	24.5	10.1	9.4	14.1	7.6
Official other than the police	8.9	2.0	1.9*	5.1*	1.5*	10.0	1.8*	12.1	10.0
Someone else	15.6	11.2	9.6	14.6*	12.6	16.3	18.4	14.4	17.2
Police were at crime scene	5.5	0.8*	1.0*	0*	0.6*	6.3	1.1*	3.1	9.2
Other	4.8	3.4	3.5	3.2*	3.2*	5.0	1.7*	4.7	5.6
Total offenses reported to police	15,151,620	2,085,530	1,066,770	174,580	844,480	13,061,470	1,126,610	4,703,860	7,231,280
Percent of all reported offenses	100%	13.8%	7.0%	1.2%	5.6%	86.2%	7.4%	31.0%	47.7%

Note: Of the 15,151,620 offenses reported to police, the identity of the person who reported the crime was available for 100% of incidents. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

*Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases.

Source: BJS, 1998 — 2002 National Crime Victimization Survey.

Reported violent crimes that resulted in an arrest

Arrests were made in about a third of all reported violent crimes between 1998 and 2002. Of the 15.2 million violent crimes of which authorities were notified, 31.6% resulted in an arrest (table 4.7). Overall, police were less likely to make an arrest for robbery (25.9%) than for other types of violent crime that came to their attention.

The probability of arrest for family violence was higher than for nonfamily violence. Among family violence crimes reported to police, 35.9% resulted in arrest, compared to 30.8% of nonfamily violence crimes.

Among the 2.1 million family violence crimes reported to police, robbery (20%) was less likely to result in an

arrest by police than both aggravated assault (39%) and simple assault (36.8%).

Police were as likely to make an arrest for spouse violence (35.5%) as they were for violence by a parent against a son or daughter (37.9%) or for violence against other family members (35.9%).

Table 4.7. Of crimes reported to police between 1998 and 2002, the percent that resulted in arrest, by offense category and relationship

Offense category	Reported nonfatal violent crimes	Percent resulting in arrest, for crimes in which the victim was the offender's —							
		Family member				Nonfamily member			
		Total	Spouse	Son or daughter	Other family	Total	Boyfriend or girlfriend	Friend or acquaintance	Stranger
All reported offenses	31.6%	35.9%	35.5%	37.9%	35.9%	30.8%	47.0%	30.2%	28.5%
Sex offenses	35.0%	52.4%*	53.1%*	100%*	0%*	33.2%	43.5%*	33.9%	29.3%
Rape	34.5	46.4*	48.9*	100*	0*	32.9	42.7*	34.9	26.8*
Sexual assault	36.0	80.0*	69.6*	100*	0†	33.8	45.0*	31.7*	33.0*
Robbery	25.9	20.0	21.6	20.9*	16.8*	26.6	47.5	27.8	24.2
Aggravated assault	36.2	39.0	39.6	26.4*	40.7	35.8	46.5	35.6	34.6
Simple assault	30.8	36.8	36.2	39.9	37.2	29.6	47.3	28.4	26.9
Total offenses reported to police	15,151,620	2,085,530	1,066,770	174,580	844,480	13,061,470	1,126,610	4,703,860	7,231,280

Note: Of the 15,151,620 offenses reported to police, offense type was reported for all victims, and whether an arrest occurred was reported for 92.0%. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

*Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases.

†No crimes in this category were reported to police.

Source: BJS, 1998 — 2002 National Crime Victimization Survey.

Methodology

Reported and unreported family violence

Statistics comparing reported and unreported nonfatal family violence to reported and unreported nonfatal nonfamily violence come from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) for 1998 to 2002. The statistics are based on data gathered from residents living throughout the United States, including persons living in group quarters, such as dormitories, rooming houses, and religious group dwellings. Crew members of merchant vessels, Armed Forces personnel living in military barracks, and institutionalized persons, such as correctional facility inmates, were not included in the scope of this survey. Similarly, U.S. citizens residing abroad and foreign visitors to this country were excluded. With these exceptions, individuals age 12 or older living in units selected for the sample were eligible to be interviewed.

In addition to single incidents of criminal victimization, the NCVS records data on series victimizations. A series victimization is defined as six or more similar but separate crimes which the victim is unable to recall individually or describe in detail to an interviewer. Survey respondents who indicated they were series victims were asked to provide details for the most recent incident. In annual BJS reports on the NCVS, series victimizations are excluded from the published victimization estimates. However, because repeat victimization is an important aspect of family violence, series crimes were included in these analyses, counted as "1" victimization to represent all the incidents in the series.

NCVS data in this section are based on a nationally representative sample of the general population age 12 or older who experienced a violent victimization that occurred between January 1998

and December 2002. Data were aggregated over this 5-year period to obtain sample sizes large enough to detect differences between family and nonfamily violence victims, as well as to detect differences between family and nonfamily violent crimes based on the characteristics of the incident.

Additional information on weighting, along with other methodological details, can be found in the BJS Internet-only report *Criminal Victimization in the United States — Statistical Tables, 2002* (NCJ 200561).

Fatal family violence

To compare family murder to nonfamily murder, this report uses data from the FBI's 2002 Supplementary Homicide Reports (SHR). Murder as defined here includes murder and nonnegligent manslaughter which is the willful killing of one human being by another. Not included in the analyses are deaths caused by negligence, suicide, or accident; justifiable homicides; and attempts to murder.

SHR data are based solely on police investigation. Not all law enforcement agencies which report offense information to the FBI also submit supplemental data on murder. At the time of analysis, the most recent SHR data contained information on 12,940 of the 16,204 murders reported in the FBI's Uniform Crime Report. To account for the total number of homicides, the SHR data were weighted to match national and State murder estimates prepared by the FBI. All victim-based analyses are adjusted in this manner.

While many law enforcement agencies report supplemental data on murder, one reason why much of the data concerning victim-offender relationship may not be reported is because no suspects were identified. In 2002, SHR data recorded information on the

relationship of the victim to the offender for 56.2% (9,102) of the 16,204 murders committed that year.

The dataset utilized in this report was compiled by James Alan Fox, the Lipman Family Professor of Criminal Justice at Northeastern University. The dataset, along with additional details about imputation and estimation procedures, is available from the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data <<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD>>, please refer to ICPSR 4179. After the analysis for this report was completed, the SHR database was updated to include information on an additional 2,117 murders, bringing the total number of murders included in the database to 15,057 of the 16,204 murders in the United States in 2002.

Family violence recorded by police

To compare family violence recorded by police to nonfamily violence recorded by police, this report utilizes official police statistics reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 2000. Law enforcement agencies can report official police statistics to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting System in one of two ways:

1. the Summary reporting system
2. the Incident-based reporting system (NIBRS).

Under the Summary system, law enforcement authorities aggregate the number of incidents by offense type and report these totals to the FBI on a monthly basis. Under the NIBRS system, agencies provide an individual record for each reported crime, including detailed information regarding the victim(s) and offender(s) involved, characteristics of the incident, and information on any arrests made in connection with the incident. In this regard, NIBRS represents a more comprehensive and detailed crime reporting

system, with the ability to capture a wide range of information on specific incidents.

To compare the characteristics of family violence to nonfamily violence, only cases with incident dates during calendar year 2000 were included in the analysis. In addition, only incidents from law enforcement agencies officially certified by the FBI to report NIBRS data were included. Currently, no agencies serving jurisdictions with populations of one million or more are certified to report NIBRS data. In 2000, agencies from 18 States and the District of Columbia submitted NIBRS data, representing 16% of the U.S. population and 13% of crime.

Additional methodological details can be found on the BJS website <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/nibrs.htm>>, as well as at the Incident-Based Reporting Resource Center <<http://www.jrsa.org/ibrrc>>.

State prosecution of family assault

To compare the prosecution of family and nonfamily violence defendants, this report uses data from the BJS data collection State Court Processing Statistics (SCPS). The most recent SCPS study collected data for 14,877 felony cases filed during May 2000 in 40 large counties selected to represent the estimated 54,590 felonies filed in the Nation's 75 most populous counties during that month. Results of that study and information regarding sampling and other methodological details are available in the BJS publication *Felony Defendants in Large Urban Counties, 2000*, NCJ 202021, December 2003.

Data from all 40 counties were not used to compare the case processing of family violence to nonfamily violence. Since assault was the only crime in the

Table 10.1. Felony assault cases in the State courts of 11 counties during May 2000, by county and type of assault

County (State)	Unweighted		Weighted	
	Family	Nonfamily	Family	Nonfamily
Contra Costa (CA)	19	26	19	26
Los Angeles (CA)	30	66	120	264
Riverside (CA)	60	36	120	72
San Bernardino (CA)	27	33	54	66
Santa Clara (CA)	19	24	38	48
Pinellas (FL)	15	53	30	106
Essex (NJ)	15	72	30	144
Franklin (OH)	7	9	14	18
Harris (TX)	9	39	36	156
Tarrant (TX)	8	38	16	76
Travis (TX)	8	24	16	48
Total defendants	217	420	493	1,024

Source: BJS, 2000 State Court Processing Statistics.

2000 SCPS data to have specific statutes that identified family violence, other violent crimes (such as murder, rape, or robbery) were excluded from the analysis. To be in this study, a county also had to meet two criteria:

1. The county had an estimated 10 or more assault defendants charged under a family or domestic violence statute (table 10.1).
2. The county had at least 17% of its assault defendants charged with committing family or domestic violence.

A total of 11 counties met the selection criteria. For instance, Travis County, Texas, had an estimated 16 family violence cases which accounted for 25% of the 64 assault cases filed in that county during May 2000. Within the selected counties, a sample of 637 cases was statistically weighted to represent 1,517 family and nonfamily assault defendants. Although the estimated 1,517 cases were less than 3% of the 54,428 felony cases filed in the Nation's 75 largest counties in May 2000, demographic characteristics of both cohorts were similar (table 10.2).

Where family assault defendants were compared to nonfamily assault defendants in this section, sampling error was

Table 10.2. Demographic distribution of felony defendants in the 11-county study compared to the Nation's 75 largest counties, 2000

Defendant characteristic	Felony defendants in State courts during May 2000	
	Assault cases in 11 counties	All cases in the 75 largest counties
Total	100%	100%
Gender		
Male	84.7%	81.0%
Female	15.3	19.0
Race/Hispanic origin		
White	26.2%	29.6%
Black	39.2	45.4
Hispanic	32.6	22.7
Other	2.0	2.4
Age at arrest		
Under 18	1.6%	2.9%
18 - 24	30.7	30.8
25 - 34	31.5	30.9
35 - 54	32.8	33.2
55 or older	3.4	2.1
Total defendants	1,517	54,428*

*Excludes 162 weighted cases for which the arrest charge could not be classified.
Source: BJS, 2000 State Court Processing Statistics.

taken into account. All differences discussed were statistically significant at the .05 level.

Federal prosecution of domestic violence

The source of data for statistics on Federal prosecution of domestic violence is the BJS Federal Justice Statistics Program database covering the years 2000 to 2002. The database is presently constructed from source files provided by the U.S. Marshals Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the United States Sentencing Commission, and the U.S. Bureau of Prisons. A description of the source agency data files, along with other methodological details, can be found in the methodology section in the BJS Internet-only document *Compendium of Federal Justice Statistics, 2002* (NCJ 205368).

Family violence offenders in prison

Information about offenders in prison for family violence were obtained from BJS's 1997 Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities. From June through October, 1997, a nationally representative sample of inmates in State prisons were interviewed about their current offense and sentences, criminal histories, family and personal backgrounds, gun possession and use, prior drug and alcohol use and treatment, educational programs, and other services provided while in prison.

Data and documentation with additional details are available from the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data <<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD>>. Please refer to ICPSR 2598.

Family violence offenders in jail

The 2002 Survey of Inmates in Local Jails provides nationally representative data on persons held in local jails including those held prior to trial and convicted offenders serving sentences in local jails or awaiting transfer to prison. Data in the survey include the individual characteristics of jail inmates; current offenses, sentences and time served; criminal histories; jail activities, conditions and programs; prior drug and alcohol use and treatment; and health care services provided while in jail. In the last Survey, completed in 1996, a representative sample of 6,000 inmates were interviewed. The sample for the 2002 survey was selected from 3,365 jails housing 558,017 males and 73,224 females. The dataset and documentation with additional details about the survey will be available from the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data <<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD>>.

Appendix

Discrepant findings from two different ways of measuring family violence

The extent of family violence in the United States is measured two different ways in this report. One way — through the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) — is based on survey interviews with samples of the U.S. population. The other way — through the FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) — is based on statistics compiled by police.

NCVS data summarized in this report indicated that family violence makes up 11% of all violence (both reported to police and unreported) (table 2.1), but police statistics summarized in this report indicated that family violence makes up nearly 33% of all police-recorded violence (table 5.1). No firm explanation for this apparent discrepancy is offered in the report. Presumably the discrepancy is caused by a host of factors. The discussion that follows identifies some of them, not necessarily the most important ones.

One factor pertains to the willingness of victims (and others) to report crime to police. If family violence is more likely than nonfamily violence to be reported to law enforcement authorities, the family violence percentage in police statistics will tend to be larger than the percentage in the statistics for all violence (reported and unreported). To check that possibility, reporting rates for family and nonfamily violence were compared. Results indicated that family violence (59%) is more likely than nonfamily violence (46%) to be reported to police (table 4.1). While the difference is not large enough to fully account for the 11%-versus-33% discrepancy between NCVS and police statistics, results do suggest that a difference in reporting between family and nonfamily violence is a contributing factor.

A second factor pertains to the fact that the police statistics on family violence used here are not directly comparable to the NCVS statistics in terms of geographical coverage. That is, the police statistics are based on data from agencies reporting in 18 States and the District of Columbia, while the NCVS statistics are for the entire United States. If the family violence percentage in the 18 States and the District of Columbia happens to be much larger than other States, using these jurisdictions to compare to the NCVS will create the appearance of a greater discrepancy than may actually exist.

A third factor pertains to the handling of "series" victimizations in the analysis of the NCVS data. The 11% family violence percentage from NCVS data was based on an analysis that treated each "series" victimization (6 or more crimes of a similar nature that the victim is unable to recall individually) as a single victimization. Since family violence series victimizations comprised 17% (rather than 11%) of all violent series victimizations, treating each series victimization as 6 or more victimizations (rather than 1) would tend to raise the family violence percentage above 11%. To illustrate, when the family violence percentage was re-computed, this time treating each series using the actual number of incidents (up to 20) indicated by the victim, the percentage rose to 12.5%.

A fourth factor pertains to the possibility that the NCVS undercounts family violence to a greater extent than nonfamily violence. If so, that would make the family violence percentage look lower than it actually is. The little research on the undercount that has been done — notably, a small study of assault victims whose victimization was reported to police in San Jose, California, and a national study of victims who went to hospital emergency rooms for their injuries — compared undercounts

between family and nonfamily violence. Findings from both studies suggest that the NCVS undercounts family violence to a greater extent than nonfamily violence. The two studies are summarized below.

San Jose study of known assault victims

In January 1971, a sample of victims of assault was drawn from the records of the San Jose Police Department. These known victims were interviewed and asked whether they had been a victim of crime at any time in 1970. The victims and their interviewers were not told that the researchers wanted to determine to what extent known assault victims tell interviewers about recent victimizations.

Results suggested that family assault victims were less likely than nonfamily assault victims to tell interviewers about their victimization (table 11.1). While 78% of 18 family assault victims did not mention being a victim of family violence, the comparable percentage for 62 nonfamily assault victims was lower: 29%.

Table 11.1. Among known assault victims, percent who told NCVS interviewers about the victimization

Relationship of victim to offender	Known assault victims who did not tell NCVS interviewers about their victimization
Family violence	78%
Nonfamily violence	29

Source: Adapted from U.S. Department of Justice, Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (1972). *San Jose Methods Test of Known Crime Victims*, Statistics Technical Report No. 1. Washington, DC: USGPO, June.

The original purpose of the San Jose study was to determine the effects of the passage of time on the recall of criminal victimizations. The survey design emphasized overall reporting issues, not the specific reporting of family violence. Hence, one limitation of the study is the small sample size. Of 126 sampled victims of assault, 18 family assault victims and 62 nonfamily assault victims were located and agreed to participate, a 63.5% response rate.

Another limitation pertains to the fact that the questionnaire used in the study was more similar to the pre-1993 NCVS questionnaire than the one in use today. Consequently, the San Jose study results may be more relevant to the pre-1993 version than today's questionnaire.

The pre-1993 version was replaced with one that was specifically designed to reduce undercounting of family (and domestic) violence. There is some evidence that the redesign may have succeeded in reducing the undercount. In 1991 (the last full year of interviews using the old questionnaire), family violence victims made up 7.3% of all violence victims (8% if series victimizations totaling 3 are counted as 3 crimes rather than 1; 4 counted as 4; and 5 counted as 5). In 1993 (the first full year using the redesigned questionnaire), the percentage was 10.2%.

Hospital emergency room study

While results of the San Jose study only shed light on the extent to which police-reported family violence (family violence that was brought to police attention) is mentioned in NCVS interviews, results of another study may shed light on the extent to which victims tell interviewers about both reported and unreported

Table 11.2. Comparison of the Study of Injured Victims of Violence (SIVV) and the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), by offense and by relationship, 1994

Type of offense	SIVV-recorded admissions to hospital emergency rooms in 1994*		NCVS-estimated admissions to hospital emergency rooms in 1994		Ratio of SIVV/NCVS
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Total	954,000	100%	504,700	100%	1.9
Family violence	179,000	18.8	33,300	6.6	5.4
Nonfamily violence	775,000	81.2	471,400	93.4	1.6

*Age 12 or older

Source: Adapted from BJS, *Violence-Related Injuries Treated in Hospital Emergency Departments*, NCJ 156921, August 1997.

family violence of a particularly serious nature. In this other study, two national numbers were compared:

1. from the NCVS, the total (reported and unreported) estimated number of family violence victims who said they went to a hospital emergency room for treatment for their injuries in 1994
2. from a national survey — the Study of Injured Victims of Violence (SIVV) — the total (reported and unreported, presumably) estimated number of family violence victims whose injuries brought them to hospital emergency rooms for treatment in 1994.

All other things being equal, the two numbers should be the same if injured family violence victims tell NCVS interviewers about any incidents that lead to emergency room treatment.

In fact, SIVV recorded far more emergency room admissions in 1994 than the NCVS, suggesting that the NCVS undercounts victims of serious family violence. The SIVV number of emergency room admissions for family violence (179,000) was found to be over 5 times the number recorded by the NCVS (33,300) (table 11.2). By comparison, the SIVV number of emergency room admissions for nonfamily violence (775,000) was 1.6 times greater than the NCVS-estimate (471,400), suggesting that the NCVS

undercounts particularly serious types of family violence to a greater extent than nonfamily violence.

The relevance of the SIVV study is limited by the fact that its findings pertain to victims who were injured and went to an emergency room. Such victims are a small percentage of all family violence victims. Furthermore, the statistics for the NCVS-documented victims of family violence (who went to emergency rooms) may be unreliable because they are based on a small sample. Also, the SIVV study did not document how many victims had, and how many had not, reported the crime to police. Presumably, the SIVV study included some of both.