

Juvenile Crime and Victimization

In 1997, twelve percent of the violent crime clearances and 23 percent of those for property crimes were accounted for by juveniles (ages 18 and under). (*Federal Bureau of Investigation. (released November 22, 1998). Crime in the United States, Uniform Crime Reports, 1997, p. 211. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.*)

Though the juvenile male violent crime arrest rate expanded by 124 percent from 1967 to 1996, the juvenile female arrest rate is nearly triple that figure, 345 percent. (*Ibid.*, p. 288.)

While crimes committed by the very young often receive a great deal of attention, in reality they account for very few arrests. Juvenile males show progressively higher arrest rates as they age. Generally, 16- and 17-year-old males account for the majority of juvenile violent crime arrests. (*Ibid.*)

National Incident-Based Reporting System data (of the Uniform Crime Reports) from 1997 indicate that the victims of both male and female juvenile crimes are predominantly other juveniles. When limited to incidents when offenders are known, offenders tend to victimize juveniles of their same sex. (*Ibid.*, p. 292.)

In 1997, the victim of a juvenile crime was another juvenile in 63 percent of incidents involving a male offender; the percentage increases to 70 percent when considering incidents in which the offender was female. (*Ibid.*)

From 1990-94, in the nation's largest 75 counties, juveniles transferred to criminal courts represented about 1 percent of all felony defendants. (*Bureau of Justice Statistics. (1998, September). "Juvenile Felony Defendants in*

Criminal Courts." Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.)

In a national random sample of male high school sophomores and juniors, of those juveniles who had carried guns during the 12 months prior to the survey, nearly half (43 percent) cited the perceived need for personal protection as the primary reason for bearing arms. (*National Institute of Justice. (1998, October). "High School Youths, Weapons and Violence: A National Survey." Research in Brief. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.*)

In September 1997, the Bureau of Justice Statistics released a Special Report entitled *Age Patterns of Victims of Serious Crimes*. The Report found that vulnerability to violent crime victimization varies across the age spectrum -- victimization rates increase through teenage years, crest at around age 20, and steadily decrease throughout adult years. This pattern, with some exceptions, exists across all race, sex, and ethnic groups. (*Perkins, C. A. (1997, September). Age Patterns of Victims of Serious Crimes, NCJ-162031, p. 1. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice.*)

Persons younger than 25 were the most vulnerable to serious violent crime, regardless of how age patterns are analyzed. They made up almost 50 percent of all persons suffering a serious violent crime and almost 56 percent of rape/sexual assault victims. (*Ibid.*, p. 2 and 3)

Follow-up studies of children who had cases of substantiated abuse or neglect found that 26 percent of the children were later arrested as juveniles. (*National Institute of Justice. (1995, March). Victims of Childhood Sexual Abuse - Later Criminal Consequences, Research in Brief. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.*)