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Crime Data Brief

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Child Rape Victims, 1992

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According to the FBI, 109,062 forcible rapes of females were reported to the Nation's law enforcement agencies in 1992.¹ A Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) survey of the States (including the District of Columbia) solicited data on victims' ages. Thirty-six States reported that they did not keep such statistics, and the remaining 15 responded with information on 26,427 female victims, or nearly one-fourth the national total. Statistics from the BJS State survey revealed that:

About 1 in 4 rape victims were under age 10 in Delaware, Michigan
age 11 in North Dakota
age 14 in Arkansas
age 15 in Alabama, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin
age 16 in the District of Columbia, Idaho

About 1 in 3 rape victims were under age 13 in Delaware, Michigan, North Dakota
age 16 in Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin
age 17 in Alabama
age 18 in the District of Columbia, Idaho

Female rape victims under age 18

Twelve States reported in sufficient detail to distinguish juvenile from adult rape victims. Their 20,824 victims comprised 20% of the national total. In the 12 States, 51% of female rape victims were juveniles under age 18. By comparison, females under 18 comprised 25% of the 1992 U.S. female population.

Female rape victims under age 12

Two Federal statistical programs provide national measures of rape incidence: the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program, which records rapes reported to law enforcement agencies, and the BJS National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), which records reported and unreported rapes, based on Census Bureau interviews with the American public age 12 and older.

While statistics from the NCVS provide details on victims' ages, they do not include children under age 12. Experts agree that this segment of the population cannot be reliably interviewed in the NCVS. Children under 12 are included in the UCR program, but UCR national statistics provide no

¹FBI, *Crime in the United States, 1992*, p. 23, 1993.

State	Number of female victims of forcible rape*	Cumulative percent of female victims of forcible rape									
		under age 10	under age 11	under age 12	under age 13	under age 14	under age 15	under age 16	under age 17	under age 18	18 or older
Alabama	1,404	4%	6%	7%	10%	17%	24%	30%	35%	38%	62%
Arkansas	986	9				24				44	56
Delaware	783	22			29		50	61	66	71	29
District of Columbia	205			5				22	28	32	68
Florida	7,280		14							46	54
Idaho	221	6			9		20	24	29	35	65
Kansas	1,013	1					12				
Michigan	4,731	25	28	31	35	41	49	58	64	68	32
Nebraska	290		6					31		42	58
North Carolina	2,397		5					20			
North Dakota	124		25	30	35	44	48	50	52	57	43
Pennsylvania	2,996		9		14		25	32	37	42	58
Rhode Island	490					49				70	30
South Carolina	2,193	9			16				40		
Wisconsin	1,314	4	6	8	10	14	22	29	37	42	58

Note: Blanks indicate detail was not reported.

*Excludes victims with unknown age.

Source: BJS State survey of rapes reported to law enforcement agencies in 1992.

age details. Consequently, neither program offers information on rape victims under 12. In recent years a growing number of States have adopted a more detailed reporting system in the UCR program. Data from the developing system were gathered in the BJS survey of States and used here to estimate the number of rape victims under age 12. The estimate was based on those States that indicated the number of victims under age 12 or thereabout. Data from 12 States qualified: the 5 that reported the number under 12, 4 others that reported the number age 12 and under, and 3 others that reported the number under 11.

The 12 States reported ages on 23,938 victims, or 22% of the national total.² Based on these data, an estimated 16% of rape victims, or 1 in 6, were under age 12. By comparison, females under 12 comprised 17% of the 1992 U.S. female population.

Applying the 16% figure from the 12 States to the national total, BJS estimated that nationwide about 17,000 girls under age 12 (16% of 109,062) were raped in 1992. This is a conservative estimate because it was derived from statistics on rapes reported to law enforcement officials and did not include unreported rapes. Also, to some unknown degree the estimate is imprecise because the 12 States that formed its basis were probably not nationally representative.

Victim-offender relationship

Two sources provided information on rapists: interviews with rape victims reported to law enforcement agencies in 1991 in three States (Alabama, North Dakota, and South Carolina) and 1991 interviews with rapists confined in the Nation's State prisons. Sources indicated similar accounts of rape victim ages:

1991 source	Percent of female rape victims			
	Total	Under 12	12-17	18 or older
Victims in 3 States	100%	14%	29%	57%
Imprisoned rapists	100	14	24	62

²These are not the same 12 States that reported the number under age 18.

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Regardless of the source, when the victim was under 12, the likelihood of a family relationship was relatively high: 46% of victims and 70% of imprisoned rapists. Additional detail from the three-State survey revealed that 20% of victims under age 12, 11% of victims age 12 to 17, and 1% of those 18 or older were raped by their fathers.

Relationship between victim and offender

The older the victim, the less likely that victim and offender were family members and the more likely they were strangers to one another: 4% of victims under 12 said the rapist was a stranger, compared to 33% of victims 18 or older; 6% of imprisoned rapists of females under 12 said the victim was a stranger, compared to 47% of imprisoned rapists of females 18 or older.

Age of victim	Victim-offender relationship			
	Total	Family member	Acquaintance or friend ^a	Stranger
Source: Victims in 3 States				
Under 12	100%	46%	50%	4%
12-17	100	20	65	15
18 or older	100	12	55	33
Source: Imprisoned rapists				
Under 12 ^b	100%	70%	24%	6%
12-17	100	36	45	19
18 or older	100	8	45	47

^aIncludes other nonfamily relationships.

^bMay include some 12-year-olds.

Sources: Tabulated from data described in *Using NIBRS Data to Analyze Violent Crime*, BJS technical report, NCJ-144785, October 1993; BJS, *Survey of State Prison Inmates, 1991*, NCJ-136949, March 1993.

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