



ISSUE NO. 277

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## Does Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Work in Criminal Justice? A New Analysis From CrimeSolutions.gov

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# National Institute of Justice

## Nancy Rodriguez, Ph.D.

Director, National Institute of Justice

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# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Science takes many forms, and the articles in this issue illustrate several of those forms. But for the policymakers and practitioners who read the *NIJ Journal*, what is most important is that the articles illustrate how NIJ *applies* science by providing evidence-based results to help us make decisions about policies and practices.

The *NIJ Journal* provides scientific knowledge that helps elected and appointed officials at all levels of government and practitioners from all parts of the criminal justice system deal with the challenges they face every day as they work to keep our communities safe.

Science for its own sake — what is sometimes called “pure” or “basic” science — is crucial, and some of NIJ’s work is dedicated to such research. But the major thrust of the articles in this issue, as in everything NIJ does, involves using science to understand human behavior,

develop more precise measurements, uncover cause and effect, and conduct other scientific inquiries that have direct application to our mission to strengthen science and advance justice.

How you apply the science makes the difference in our shared goal to advance justice. NIJ recognizes that sometimes it is hard to understand what the science actually means for your day-to-day professional life. One of the biggest contributions the *NIJ Journal* makes is to serve as a research-to-practice translator. Take, for example, the two articles in this issue — one on sexual assault on college campuses, the other on the effects of cognitive behavioral therapy — that sort through and make sense of large quantities of data. The articles explain how to make sense of the many different studies and use the research to address the needs of your own jurisdiction or agency.

Another article in this issue deals with a phenomenon for which, in the past, we have had limited data: violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and men. I especially like the sidebar that explains the differences between two major victimization surveys. The overall message in both of the articles that discuss violence is that data collection and analysis can produce different prevalence rates depending on the definitions, sample size and methods that scientists use.

An article about forensic science explores issues surrounding the need to develop more precise measurements. It points out something we don’t think about very often: the similarities and differences between the science of analyzing data and the art of interpreting the data. NIJ’s mission is to strengthen the science, but our staff are also investigating cognitive bias and human errors — and not just in forensics but in policing, corrections and other criminal justice areas.

I hope you enjoy the findings from Miami about what makes a cohesive, safe neighborhood. Creating and experimenting with innovative statistical techniques is a scientist’s dream come true. I am pleased it has led to a more nuanced understanding of the factors that build safer neighborhoods.

The innovative statistical methods used in the Miami study remind me of another innovative project NIJ has recently launched: the Real-Time Crime Forecasting Challenge. Please encourage all your colleagues to enter the challenge, which is about using real-time crime data from law enforcement agencies, applying innovative models and algorithms, and helping communities find effective predictive tools to improve safety for their residents. You can find out about the challenge on [NIJ.gov](https://www.nij.gov), keywords: forecasting challenge.

All the articles in this issue are examples of how science builds on itself. One small study can produce findings that lead researchers to expand or deepen our knowledge about a topic. When a larger study or several related studies replicate an original study, those are the building blocks, the foundation that makes research at NIJ exciting and ever evolving.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Rodriguez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "N" and a stylized "R".

Nancy Rodriguez, Ph.D.

Director, National Institute of Justice

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**The National Institute of Justice is the research, development and evaluation agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. NIJ's mission is to advance scientific research, development and evaluation to enhance the administration of justice and public safety.**

**The National Institute of Justice is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the Office for Victims of Crime; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART).**

Image Sources: Thinkstock, iStock, Sam English, Freddy Trejo, the American Society of Criminology's Division of Victimology, the National Institute of Justice.

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# NIJ BULLETIN



## Publications in Brief



### Lessons Learned From Research on Unsubmitted Sexual Assault Kits

In 2011, NIJ awarded grants to the Houston Police Department and the Prosecutor's Office of Wayne County (Detroit), Michigan, to look at the issue of sexual assault kits that had not previously been sent to a crime laboratory for DNA testing. The goal was to understand the nature of the problem and identify effective, sustainable solutions. These four brochures offer practical lessons for criminal justice professionals, based on findings from the research teams:

- Performing an Audit of Sexual Assault Evidence in Police Custody
- Forming an Action-Research Team to Address Sexual Assault Cases
- Creating a Plan to Test a Large Number of Sexual Assault Kits
- Notifying Sexual Assault Victims After Testing Evidence

Download these brochures at [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keyword: LLkits.



### What Do We Know About Administrative Segregation in America?

Concern is growing about the effects and utility of administrative segregation in the U.S., and there is bipartisan support for safely reducing its use. In 2015, NIJ commissioned a white paper on the use of administrative segregation in U.S. corrections systems. The white paper and an executive summary, both written by Natasha A. Frost and Carlos E. Monteiro of Northeastern University, describe the historical and contemporary use of administrative segregation in the U.S.; summarize issues related to its use with certain populations, including juveniles; synthesize the current empirical literature; and discuss research gaps and next steps.

Download the executive summary at [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keyword: 249750.

Download the complete white paper, "Administrative Segregation in U.S. Prisons," at [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keyword: 249749.



### Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and Men

A new *Research in Brief* by NIJ grantee André B. Rosay uses a large, nationally representative sample to examine the prevalence of violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and men. The brief provides estimates of sexual violence, physical violence by intimate partners, stalking, and psychological aggression by intimate partners. It includes estimates of interracial and intraracial victimization and examines the impact of the violence. The results — which show high rates of violence against both women and men — provide the most thorough assessment to date of the extent of violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and men.

Read the full report at [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keyword: 249736.

Read an article by Rosay about his study in this issue of the *NIJ Journal* on page 38.



## News & Events



### **CrimeSolutions.gov Reaches 400 Program Evaluations**

CrimeSolutions.gov has reached a significant milestone in its program and practice holdings: It has assembled more than 400 programs and 50 practices to help inform practitioners and policymakers about what works, what doesn't and what is promising in criminal justice, juvenile justice and crime victim services.

CrimeSolutions.gov, which launched in 2011 with 150 programs, serves as a centralized resource for practitioners and policymakers interested in finding information — reviewed and rated by subject matter and research method experts — about different programs' effectiveness, to guide decision-making and to encourage practitioners to replicate programs that have demonstrated past success.

Visit [CrimeSolutions.gov](http://CrimeSolutions.gov) to learn more.

Read a new analysis of cognitive behavioral therapy programs and practices in CrimeSolutions.gov in this issue of the *NIJ Journal* on page 10.



### **Lisa Fedina, Jennifer Lynne Holmes and Bethany Backes Win ASC's Division of Victimology 2015 Graduate Student Paper of the Year Award**

Congratulations to NIJ Research Assistants Lisa Fedina and Jennifer Lynne Holmes and NIJ Social Science Analyst Bethany Backes on receiving the Division of Victimology 2015 Graduate Student Paper of the Year Award from the American Society of Criminology. Their paper, "Campus Sexual Assault: A Systematic Review of Prevalence Research from 2000 to 2015," was published in the journal *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*.

The authors examined the findings, methods and definitions used in studies about the prevalence of campus sexual assault within the research sample. They found that despite discrepancies in prevalence findings, a substantial proportion of college students experience sexual assault. The prevalence of different forms of sexual assault may vary from campus to campus, so prevention and intervention strategies should start with a detailed understanding of the specific needs of a campus population.

To learn more about their work, see "How Prevalent Is Campus Sexual Assault in the United States?" in this issue of the *NIJ Journal* on page 26.





### NIJ Grantee Work Highlighted in *Science*

Research is a critical part of strengthening the accuracy and reliability of the forensic sciences, and developing new tools can enhance scientists' ability to examine forensic evidence. A special issue of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's magazine *Science* showcases efforts being made by researchers across a variety of forensic science disciplines. These researchers, including many supported by NIJ, are trying to develop new ways to investigate and solve crimes and to apply statistics to assess the validity of current methods.

These articles feature work by NIJ-supported researchers, who are listed below each title.

"Sizing Up the Evidence," by Kelly Servick

- Cedric Neumann, South Dakota State University
- Chris Saunders, South Dakota State University

"How Hair Can Reveal a History," by Hanae Armitage and Nala Rogers

- Glen Jackson, West Virginia University
- Brett Tipple, IsoForensics

"A Trail of Microbes," by Kai Kupferschmidt

- Jack Gilbert, University of Chicago
- Rob Knight, University of California, San Diego
- Rhonda Roby, J. Craig Venter Institute

"The Microbial Death Clock," by Kai Kupferschmidt

- Rob Knight, University of California, San Diego
- Jessica Metcalf, University of Colorado Boulder

Article summaries are available for free at <http://science.sciencemag.org/content/351/6278>.



## Multimedia



### The NIJ-FBI Sexual Assault Kit Partnership

Three videos highlight NIJ's work with the FBI Laboratory in Quantico, Virginia, to test sexual assault kits and develop best practices to improve the quality and speed of testing.

- In "A Sexual Assault Kit Partnership," NIJ's Gerald LaPorte and Heather Waltke, along with the FBI's Heather LaSalle and Tina Delgado, discuss how the partnership will shed light on the complexities of sexual assault cases, particularly kits that have not been submitted to a laboratory for testing.
- In "What Is a Sexual Assault Kit?" LaPorte, Waltke and LaSalle explain what a sexual assault kit is and how it is used as part of a sexual assault investigation.
- In "Moving Forward: How Research and Technology Are Expanding Sexual Assault Kit Testing," LaPorte, Waltke, LaSalle and Delgado discuss how scientific advances can help jurisdictions process a large number of previously unsubmitted sexual assault kits.

Find these videos under the Playlists tab at NIJ's YouTube channel, [YouTube.com/OJPNIJ](https://www.youtube.com/OJPNIJ). Look for "The NIJ-FBI Sexual Assault Kit Partnership — A Research Initiative for Unsubmitted Sexual Assault Kits."





### Applying for NIJ's Graduate Research Fellowship Program

For 40 years, NIJ's Graduate Research Fellowship program has supported doctoral students across the country who are conducting research that advances NIJ's mission. The program has two tracks:

- The Social and Behavioral Sciences program supports research in all social and behavioral science disciplines, including criminology, psychology and sociology.
- The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) program supports research in the life sciences, physical sciences, engineering, computer and information sciences, and mathematical sciences.

NIJ scientists Marie Garcia and Greg Dutton have made three videos with information about how to apply for the fellowship program. Find these videos under the Playlists tab at NIJ's YouTube channel, [YouTube.com/OJPNIJ](https://www.youtube.com/OJPNIJ). Look for "NIJ Graduate Research Fellowship: Hints and FAQs for Applicants."

Read more about the program and find biographies of past fellows at [NIJ.gov](https://www.nij.gov), keyword: GRF.



## Recent Research Findings



### Community Policing Strategies to Counter Violent Extremism

Little is known about the extent to which police departments have adopted community policing practices, the methods they are using to address the threat of violent extremism, and what they consider to be best practices. A recent project used a nationwide survey, in-depth interviews and focus groups to better understand the extent to which law enforcement agencies are using community policing to combat violent extremism. The researchers drew two main conclusions. First, police agencies face multiple obstacles to creating community partnerships that focus on preventing acts of violent extremism. Second, some law enforcement agencies are engaged in promising practices; if applied effectively, these practices can result in greater trust between the police and the communities they serve. This trust can be the basis for addressing many threats to public safety, including violent extremism.

Read more at [NIJ.gov](https://www.nij.gov), keyword: 249674.



### Trace DNA From Fingernails: Increasing the Success Rate of Widely Collected Forensic Evidence

Evidence collected from assault victims routinely includes fingernail evidence if there is a possibility that a victim scratched an assailant. Researchers at Michigan State University (MSU), working with an NIJ grant, studied how to optimize and standardize methods for collecting, processing and analyzing nail evidence. The researchers, led by David Foran, director of MSU's forensic science program, systematically examined the variables and effectiveness of several collection methods and determined that each has strengths and weaknesses, depending on circumstances. "The preferred method in a crime laboratory should be based on the nature of the assault and laboratory capabilities," the researchers concluded.

Access the full report at [NIJ.gov](https://www.nij.gov), keyword: 249534.



### Applying Lean Design to Crime Laboratories

Over the past decade, several tools have been developed to increase organizational efficiency and reduce backlogs in laboratories, including process mapping and Lean Sigma Six. More recently, a variation of Lean Sigma Six — Lean Design — has been applied successfully to the planning and construction of health care research and development and quality management laboratories. A report from NIJ's Forensic Technology Center of Excellence (FTCoE) presents a crime laboratory design model that incorporates Lean Design thinking into the planning and construction of forensic facilities. The report includes comprehensive checklists and guidelines to integrate Lean Design concepts and principles into the traditional approaches described in the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST's) updated *Forensic Science Laboratories: Handbook for Facility Planning, Design, Construction, and Relocation*.

Download the report from the FTCoE at <https://forensiccoe.org/Our-Impact/Advancing-Technology/Reports/Development-of-a-Lean-Facility-Design-Roadmap-for-Design-Bid-Build-Forensic-Facilities>.

Download the NIST handbook at [http://www.nist.gov/oles/forensics/facilities\\_forensics.cfm](http://www.nist.gov/oles/forensics/facilities_forensics.cfm).



## New NIJ.gov Pages



### Drug Recognition and Impairment Research Meeting

NIJ held a multidisciplinary, multiagency meeting to review research on drug recognition and impairment. Experts from NIJ, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the National Institute on Drug Abuse gave presentations on a variety of topics, including research on drugged driving, drug testing and impairment, and NIJ's controlled substances and forensic toxicology research and development program. A roundtable discussion between presenters, practice experts and federal meeting partners helped identify primary concerns and critical needs for tools and protocols in their jurisdictions and professional fields.

Learn more about the meeting at NIJ.gov, keywords: drug recognition.



### Restrictive Housing

Restrictive housing, also called solitary confinement and administrative segregation, has a long history in the U.S. corrections system. In recent years, both scholars and practitioners have become more interested in learning how this practice is implemented and what its effects are on inmates, corrections staff and the prison system at large. NIJ has funded two completed studies on the effects of restrictive housing on inmates. One study, conducted in several facilities in Colorado, examined whether inmates in restrictive housing had worse psychological outcomes than their counterparts in other housing statuses. The second study used longitudinal data on inmates in the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction prison system to examine the effects of restrictive housing on institutional misconduct.

Learn more about both studies and other work NIJ has done on restrictive housing at NIJ.gov, keywords: restrictive housing.



### Research on Illegal Prescription Drug Market Interventions

Public health and law enforcement agencies in the U.S. are increasingly concerned with the abuse and diversion of prescription drugs. NIJ funds studies on a variety of programs and practices designed to deter, investigate and disrupt illegal prescription drug markets. These projects include examining the utility of law enforcement and prosecution resources such as prescription drug monitoring programs, High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas and other task forces, and anti-drug diversion legislation.

Read more at [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keywords: prescription markets.



## Sharing Data to Improve Science



### Data Resources Program

Secondary data analysis allows researchers to build on existing findings, replicate results and conduct new analyses. Through NIJ's Data Resources Program, data collected as part of NIJ research are archived in the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data and made available to support new research aimed at reproducing original findings, replicating results and testing new hypotheses.

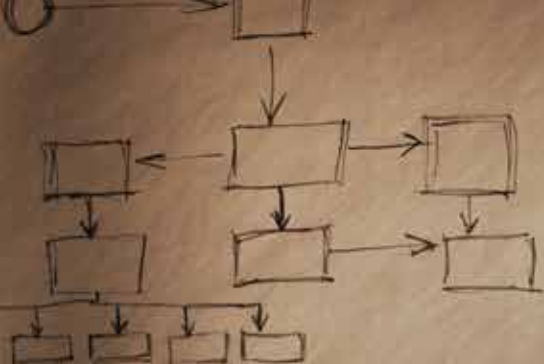
- Learn about NIJ's Data Resources Program at [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keyword: DRP.

Recent data sets added to the National Archive include the following:

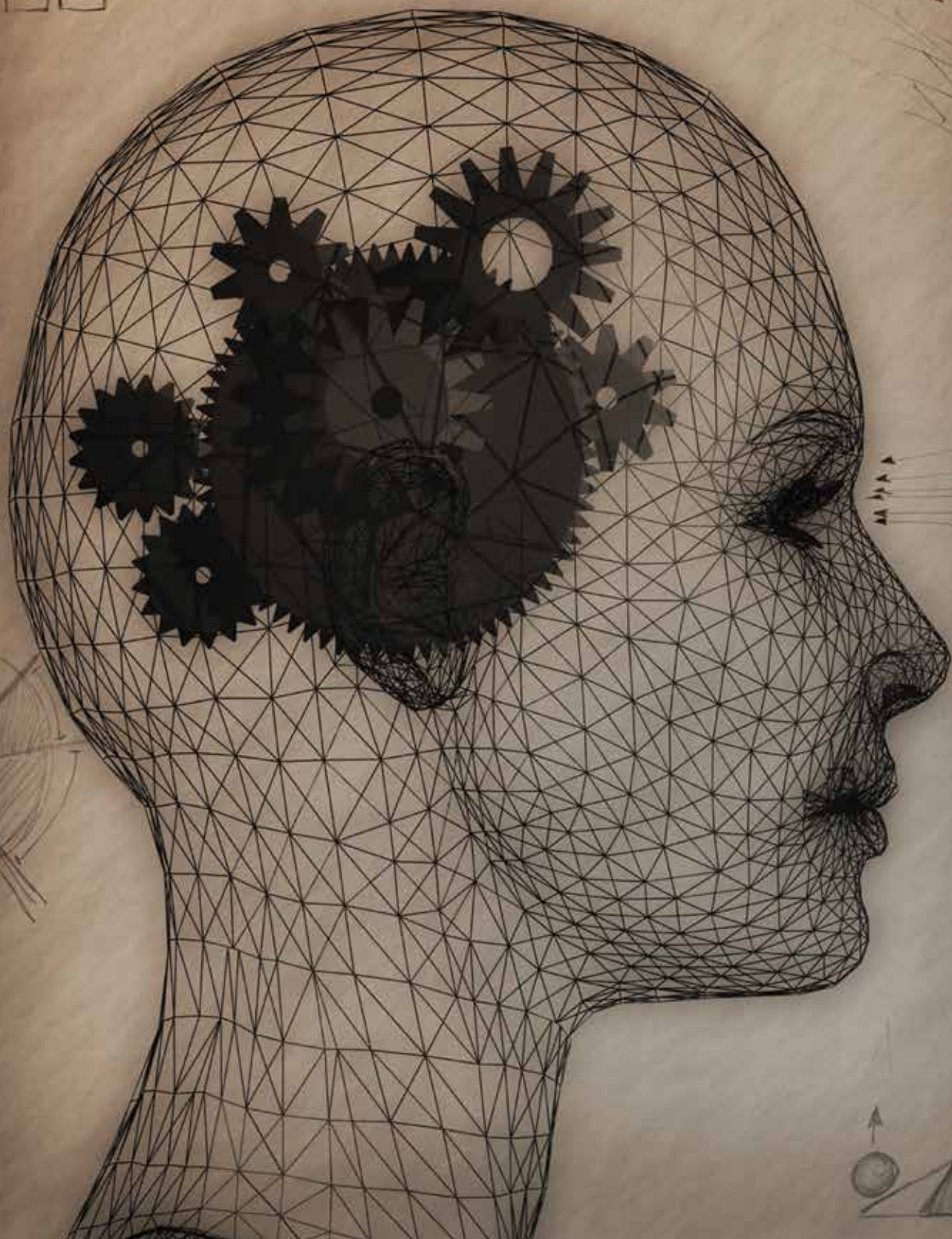
- Evaluating a Presumptive Drug Testing Technology in Community Corrections Settings, 2011, Alabama, Florida and Wyoming
- Evaluation of Internet Safety Materials Used by Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Forces in School and Community Settings, 2011-2012
- Evidence-Based Enhancement of the Detection, Prevention, and Treatment of Mental Illness in the Connecticut Corrections Systems, 2003
- Multiple Imputation for the Supplementary Homicide Reports: Evaluation in Unique Test Data, 1990-1995, Chicago, Philadelphia, Phoenix and St. Louis
- National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) Data, 2010
- Responding to Fiscal Challenges in State Correctional Systems: A National Study of Prison Closings and Alternative Strategies, 2007-2012
- Testing the Efficacy of Judicial Monitoring Using a Randomized Trial at the Rochester, New York Domestic Violence Courts, 2006-2009
- The Anatomy of Discretion: An Analysis of Prosecutorial Decision-making for Cases Processed by Officers in One Northern County and One Southern County, 2007-2010
- The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in New York City, 1982-2007
- Utility of Whole-Body CT Imaging in the Post Mortem Detection of Elder Abuse and Neglect in Maryland, 2007

Learn about accessing and using research data from NIJ studies at [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keywords: using data resources.





10/10/10



# DOES COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY WORK IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE? A NEW ANALYSIS FROM CRIMESOLUTIONS.GOV

BY **THOMAS FEUCHT** AND **TAMMY HOLT**

An analysis of programs and practices in CrimeSolutions.gov finds that cognitive behavioral therapy can deter crime, assist victims and prevent recidivism.

Perhaps no other intervention has attracted more attention across the criminal justice system than cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). First widely used in the latter half of the 20th century, as large numbers of people with mental illness were deinstitutionalized and treated in community settings, CBT has since found its way into nearly every aspect of the justice system, often supplementing or displacing other programs and interventions. Practitioners today use CBT to reduce recidivism among adults and juveniles; help victims deal with the aftermath of crimes; and address substance abuse, depression, violence and other problematic behavior.<sup>1</sup>

So what is CBT? And more importantly, does it work?

CBT is a class of therapeutic interventions based on a common theory about the connection between our thoughts, attitudes and beliefs — cognitions — and our behavior. The core premise of CBT is simple: The

way we think about situations shapes our choices, behavior and actions. If flawed or maladaptive thoughts, attitudes and beliefs lead to inappropriate and even destructive behavior, then changing those thoughts, attitudes and beliefs can lead to more appropriate, pro-social behavior. That is the therapeutic promise of CBT.

CBT focuses on providing, through individual or group therapy, the means to correct flawed cognitive-behavior processes. A key goal of CBT is to help people make better behavioral choices by understanding the way they think. Once people become more cognitively self-aware, CBT theorists argue, they can learn strategies to help them refrain from problematic behavior and make wiser behavioral decisions.

Rigorous evaluations have examined CBT-based interventions in criminal and juvenile justice. You can find many of these evaluations in NIJ's

## To better understand what the evidence tells us about using CBT in criminal justice, we reviewed and tabulated 50 individual programs and eight “practices.”

CrimeSolutions.gov, the U.S. Department of Justice clearinghouse for what works, what doesn’t and what’s promising in criminal justice, juvenile justice and crime victim services. CrimeSolutions.gov uses research to rate the effectiveness of programs and practices in achieving outcomes as “Effective,” “Promising” or “No Effects.” Programs and practices may also be classified as “Insufficient Evidence.”<sup>2</sup>

To better understand what the evidence tells us about using CBT in criminal justice, we reviewed and tabulated 50 individual programs and eight “practices” (or meta-analysis results) in CrimeSolutions.gov that incorporate CBT as a central part of the intervention.<sup>3</sup> These programs and practices address a range of issues and populations, and they differ in their CrimeSolutions.gov ratings. But the overall evidence in CrimeSolutions.gov is clear and consistent: Individual CBT programs that have been rigorously evaluated are effective at deterring crime, assisting victims and preventing recidivism.<sup>4</sup>

**You can perform a similar analysis using other CrimeSolutions.gov topics of interest.**

## A Closer Look at the CBT Programs

Focusing first on the 50 CBT programs, we looked for program features that might be linked to effectiveness, such as clients served, topic area, and whether CBT was the program’s primary or secondary focus. We also looked for any common attributes among programs rated “Effective.”

The CBT programs in CrimeSolutions.gov serve juveniles, adults or both (see Table 1). About half ( $n = 24$ ) focus on juveniles.<sup>5</sup> Programs serving juveniles or both juveniles and adults were somewhat more likely to be rated “Effective” than programs serving only adults. Seven CBT programs targeting only adults received a “Promising” rating, but only one was found to be “Effective.”

We also examined the gender of clients served by CBT programs but found little variation: CBT programs are comparable in effectiveness for either gender.<sup>6</sup>

The CBT programs cover seven topic areas (see Table 2), and nearly every topic area includes programs rated “Effective” and “Promising.” However, corrections and re-entry, crime and crime prevention, and victims and victimization have larger numbers — and higher proportions — of “Effective” or “Promising” interventions. Only a small number of the CBT programs in CrimeSolutions.gov deal with sex offenders or domestic violence, and although most of these are rated “Promising,” none are rated “Effective.”

**Table 1. Age Group of Clients Served**

Age Group	Total	% Effective or Promising	Effective	Promising	No Effects	Insufficient Evidence
Juveniles	24	79.2	6	13	1	4
Adults	15	53.3	1	7	4	3
Both	11	90.9	5	5	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>74.0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>

**Table 2. Program Topic Area**

Topic	Total*	% Effective or Promising	Effective	Promising	No Effects	Insufficient Evidence
Courts	5	60.0	1	2	2	0
Corrections and re-entry	21	71.4	2	13	6	0
Crime and crime prevention	26	69.2	7	11	5	3
Drugs and substance abuse	19	63.1	2	10	5	2
Victims and victimization	14	78.6	5	6	1	2
Sex related/sex offenders	6	83.3	0	5	0	1
Domestic violence	2	50.0	0	1	1	0

\*The total counts add up to more than 50 because programs fall into multiple categories.

Thirty-five of the 50 CBT programs in CrimeSolutions.gov feature CBT as the primary focus of the intervention (see Table 3). The remaining 15 interventions use CBT along with other intervention strategies or therapeutic modalities, such as lifestyle and life skills training, medication management, or day treatment programs. The programs in which CBT is a primary feature were more likely to receive “Effective” ratings than were programs in which CBT is a secondary feature or is used in combination with other therapeutic approaches.

We also found this pattern among the 24 programs targeting juveniles: Programs using CBT as a primary

feature received more “Effective” ratings than those using CBT as a secondary feature. The pattern did not hold among the 15 adult-focused CBT programs.

### What Do the CBT Practices Tell Us?

We also examined evidence from eight CrimeSolutions.gov CBT practices, which incorporate results from 18 different meta-analyses. These meta-analyses, in turn, contain results from 299 evaluations of individual programs. (See sidebar, “‘Practices’ and Meta-Analyses in CrimeSolutions.gov.”)

**Table 3. CBT as a Primary or Secondary Program Feature**

CBT Level	Total	% Effective or Promising	Effective	Promising	No Effects	Insufficient Evidence
Primary	35	77.1	10	17	4	4
Secondary	15	66.7	2	8	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>74.0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>



The eight practices focus on six different justice topics (see Table 4):

- Helping crime victims recover from trauma
- Treating sex offenders
- Preventing truancy
- Reducing substance abuse
- Using incarceration-based adult therapeutic communities to prevent recidivism
- Preventing domestic violence reoffending

CrimeSolutions.gov's practices can examine evidence for multiple outcomes as long as the underlying studies provide evaluation evidence for those outcomes.<sup>7</sup> In Table 4, the number of outcomes assessed reflects the total number of outcome ratings across all practices on that topic. For example, the two practices on victim trauma each reported on two outcomes, for a total of four outcomes.

The columns to the right show the frequency with which the practices received "Effective," "Promising" and "No Effects" ratings for individual outcomes. For instance, the two victim trauma practices were rated "Effective" for all four outcomes. In contrast, neither of the practices on treating sex offenders received

"Effective" ratings for any of the six outcomes, and the practice for preventing domestic violence reoffending received a "No Effects" rating for both intended outcomes.

## Limitations to Our Analysis

### Studies we may have excluded:

CrimeSolutions.gov reviews and screens crime and justice research to find studies showing program effectiveness. The screening process intentionally focuses on finding, reviewing and rating programs with strong research designs. Thus, programs using less robust designs — such as weak quasi-experimental comparisons or case studies — are not in CrimeSolutions.gov.

Though we strive for breadth and inclusiveness in our search, we may miss some publications that are outside the mainstream channels. More problematic, however, may be the tendency to publish research findings that confirm results from evaluations of effective programs while banishing "null" or mixed findings from journals. Thus, there may be "No Effects" studies that do not show up in our literature searches.

**Table 4. CBT Practices in CrimeSolutions.gov**

Topic	Number of Practices	Number of Outcomes Assessed	Effective	Promising	No Effects
Crime victim trauma	2	4	4	-	-
Treating sex offenders	2	6	-	4	2
Preventing truancy	1	1	1	-	-
Reducing substance abuse	1	1	1	-	-
In-prison therapeutic communities to prevent recidivism	1	1	1	-	-
Preventing domestic violence reoffending	1	2	-	-	2

In addition, due to resource limitations, CrimeSolutions.gov cannot review and rate every evaluation study. NIJ prioritizes recent studies that are most likely to provide strong evidence on the question of effectiveness, based on evaluation design. As a result, CrimeSolutions.gov may not show a complete picture of all available program evaluations, but it likely provides a guide to the best, most rigorous evidence.<sup>8</sup>

**Making comparisons across CBT programs:** Part of the challenge of compiling evidence across individual studies is that we might overlook subtle program differences. For example, we examined 26 programs focused on crime prevention and 19 programs focused on substance abuse prevention. These are compilations of results from evaluations of different interventions attempting to prevent crime or stop substance abuse. The programs all use CBT, but they may differ in important ways.

Multiple independent studies of the same intervention or program (typically referred to as “replications”), in which the CBT intervention is delivered the same way with fidelity in all studies, would be ideal, but that just has not occurred in criminal justice research. So our challenge is to try to discern patterns of effectiveness across a variety of interventions that use CBT in some way, on some population, to prevent crime or substance abuse.

**The power and complexity of meta-analyses:**

Crime and justice evidence gets more complicated yet potentially much more powerful when we turn to meta-analyses. Meta-analyses typically have strict parameters for the sources scanned, the types of studies included (for example, randomized controlled trials or quasi-experimental designs), the range of publication dates included, how program effects are calculated and weighted, and other considerations. These parameters often differ from one meta-analysis to the next. A single practice in CrimeSolutions.gov can incorporate results from several meta-analyses, bringing together dozens — even hundreds — of individual evaluations with varying parameters. As such, it is difficult to boil down all of this fine-grained research and provide a simple answer to a complex question like “Does CBT work?”

## So Does CBT Work in Criminal Justice?

Several months ago, a colleague asked us, “So don’t we have enough evidence to say that CBT works in a justice context?” That discussion led to this article. Our conclusion, based on our examination of the 58 CrimeSolutions.gov programs and practices, is “yes — in some cases.”

CBT appears to be more effective with juveniles. This is consistent with the conceptual basis of CBT: Adults may have developed more deeply rooted maladaptive cognitive processes that may be more difficult to change. CBT also appears to be consistently effective in helping crime victims deal with trauma. And there is good evidence that CBT, in the controlled setting of a prison therapeutic community, can reduce the risk of reoffending.

But CBT doesn’t always work.

The practices offer mixed evidence on the use of CBT for treating sex offenders, and we found “No Effects” ratings for CBT in preventing domestic violence reoffending. Among the individual programs, even in the areas with the strongest evidence that CBT works, there are still ineffective CBT programs: Of the 50 programs we reviewed, six received “No Effects” ratings and seven offered “Insufficient Evidence” to reach a conclusion about program effectiveness (see Table 1).

Crime and justice policies and programs should be informed by the most rigorous evidence available. The goal of CrimeSolutions.gov is to help clarify the growing body of evidence for interventions like CBT for practitioners and policymakers. Overall, we found that CBT is effective at deterring crime, assisting victims and preventing recidivism. Some of the strongest evidence we found about CBT offers effective strategies to help crime victims recover from the trauma of victimization. Our analysis is consistent with what researcher Mark Lipsey pointed out in his seminal work on the subject: Like other therapeutic interventions, CBT is more effective than punishment-based responses to prevent reoffending. Also, by effectively addressing recidivism and reoffending, CBT programs can provide additional benefits to potential crime victims by preventing future victimization.<sup>9,10</sup>

If program evaluations — particularly rigorous designs, like randomized controlled trials — are powerful jet engines that deliver strong evidence for policy and practice, then meta-analyses are jet-fueled supertankers, capable of carrying more payload and traveling farther to bring a rich bounty of evidence to bear on policy and practice decisions. Yet often in criminal justice, we do not have the evidence payload we need — individual rigorous evaluations, performed with exacting care on stable intervention models and

replicated with fidelity — to deliver the evidence to inform practice and policy. Although the body of evidence for CBT in justice settings is relatively large, there remain research gaps, diverse program models with few strict replications, and failed evaluations that provide insufficient evidence of effectiveness.

Some might say these different studies provide a useful diversity of CBT strategies from which we can try to learn whether CBT works. However, bringing

### “Practices” and Meta-Analyses in CrimeSolutions.gov

A meta-analysis combines results from multiple program evaluations to assemble a composite of the evidence about what works to obtain a desired outcome. Meta-analyses can be particularly powerful when there are repeated evaluations of a single intervention (or minor variations of an intervention) in different settings or with different samples of the target population. Even when the studies evaluate slightly different interventions, a meta-analysis can provide powerful evidence.

Typically, the meta-analysis author sets specific inclusion criteria and then conducts a wide-ranging literature search to find all of the studies, published and unpublished, that fit those criteria. Like the evaluations they combine, most meta-analyses focus on causal evidence to show what works to achieve a certain outcome.

A meta-analysis is usually conducted on a group of similar programs targeting comparable outcomes. However, even similar programs might vary in terms of what the exact intervention is, how it is implemented, and how outcomes are measured. The meta-analysis inevitably conceals some of this variation, which can make it challenging to determine exactly what it is about the programs’ features that achieves or fails to achieve a desired outcome.

The methods of a meta-analysis are fairly demanding and typically exclude studies with weaker designs. CrimeSolutions.gov places a premium on strong designs; consequently, meta-analyses that set a low evidence standard often score lower or are simply excluded from the clearinghouse.

At the time of this writing, CrimeSolutions.gov includes 50 “practices,” which present results from one or more meta-analyses on a given topic. The meta-analyses focus on causal evidence for specific criminal or juvenile justice outcomes, such as desistance or stopping truancy. Studies included in a single meta-analysis tend to focus on the same outcomes, and their programmatic features, such as dosage and target population, tend to be similar. Frequently, however, the programs differ in important ways. For instance, some programs may use CBT as the main intervention, while others in the same meta-analysis may use CBT in conjunction with other intervention strategies. Some programs may provide a higher dosage of the intervention or target a lower-risk population. (Some meta-analyses might include additional analyses to determine these differences and their potential impact on outcomes.)

Thus, although meta-analyses assemble a great deal of evidence in a single calculation of effectiveness, important details often lie beneath the CrimeSolutions.gov practice rating. It is always a good idea to read the entire practice profile on CrimeSolutions.gov to get a complete understanding of what works and what does not.

evidence to bear on policy and practice also means informing choices of which version of CBT is more effective in a given setting, for a given issue, on a specific population, or which modifications of a given CBT program are linked to greater effectiveness. For CBT and other justice interventions and programs with even less evidence, we must do much more to cultivate and assemble a coordinated, interrelated and comprehensive body of applied research if we are to answer the practical question “Does it work?”

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## About the Authors

**Thomas Feucht** is an executive senior science advisor at NIJ. **Tammy Holt**, an associate with Booz Allen Hamilton, serves as a subject matter expert for CrimeSolutions.gov.

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## For More Information

For the latest on what works in criminal justice, juvenile justice and crime victim services, visit CrimeSolutions.gov.

Read a related *NIJ Journal* story, “Preventing Future Crime With Cognitive Behavioral Therapy,” at NIJ.gov, keyword: 229888.

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## Notes

1. Milkman and Wanberg (2007) provide a concise history of the rise of CBT out of two distinct traditions in psychology: behavioral theory, with its emphasis on altering or “conditioning” behavior to specific stimuli, and cognitive theory, which stresses that behavior must be understood in the context of internal cognitive processes. The National Institute of Corrections produced the 2007 publication, which serves as a good handbook on CBT in a corrections context. See Milkman, Harvey, and Kenneth Wanberg, *Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment: A Review and Discussion for Corrections Professionals*, Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Corrections, 2007, available at <http://static.nicic.gov/Library/021657.pdf>. See also Lipsey, Mark W., James C. Howell, Marion R. Kelly, Gabrielle Chapman, and Darin Carver, *Improving the Effectiveness of Juvenile Justice Programs: A New Perspective on Evidence-Based Practice*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, Georgetown University, 2010, available at <http://cjjr.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/ebppaper.pdf>; and Ndrecka, Mirlinda, Kristin Bechtel, Christopher T. Lowenkamp, and Edward J. Latessa, “Effectiveness of Juvenile Cognitive Behavioral and Family-Oriented Interventions—A Meta-Analysis,” in *Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for At-Risk Youth*, ed. Barry Glick, Kingston, New Jersey: Civic Research Institute, 2009: 14-1–14-16.
  2. “Insufficient Evidence” programs were determined to have insufficient evidence for a rating to be assigned; the program could not be judged effective or ineffective. See <http://www.crimesolutions.gov> for detailed information about program and practice ratings.
  3. Other programs and practices in CrimeSolutions.gov may include elements of CBT. For this analysis, we focused on a set of programs and practices in which CBT is a central part of the intervention being tested. The data presented here are based on holdings as of March 4, 2016. CrimeSolutions.gov continues to curate new programs and review and rate new evidence on the use of CBT. Readers should visit the website for the latest information on CBT programs and other information about “what works” in criminal justice.
  4. A detailed listing of these 58 CBT programs and practices can be found at NIJ.gov, keywords: cbt list.
  5. CrimeSolutions.gov combines the evidence database on adult criminal justice programs with evidence on juvenile justice programs from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention’s Model Programs Guide, which uses the same rating system as CrimeSolutions.gov. This accounts for the parity between adult- and juvenile-focused programs in CrimeSolutions.gov.
  6. Thirty-seven of the 50 CBT programs in CrimeSolutions.gov serve both males and females; the remaining programs are about equally divided between male-only and female-only clients.
  7. For more information about specific outcomes and other practice features, see the list of practices on CrimeSolutions.gov at <http://www.crimesolutions.gov/programs.aspx#practices>.
  8. Generally, CrimeSolutions.gov includes all recent rigorous evaluations on a given crime or justice issue. Exceptions may occur when many evaluations have already been conducted, and additional studies may largely be redundant with evidence already included in CrimeSolutions.gov.
  9. Lipsey, Mark W., “The Primary Factors that Characterize Effective Interventions with Juvenile Offenders: A Meta-Analytic Overview,” *Victims and Offenders* 4 (2) (2009): 124-147, available at [http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/sites/default/files/community/Lipsey\\_Effective%20interventions%20-%202009.pdf](http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/sites/default/files/community/Lipsey_Effective%20interventions%20-%202009.pdf).
  10. Landenberger, Nana A., and Mark W. Lipsey, “The Positive Effects of Cognitive-Behavioral Programs for Offenders: A Meta-Analysis of Factors Associated With Effective Treatment,” *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 1 (4) (2005): 451-476.
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NCJ 249825





# COLLECTIVE EFFICACY: TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOODS

BY BRIAN R. HIGGINS AND JOEL HUNT

In neighborhoods with collective efficacy, neighbors agree on what is acceptable behavior and reinforce it in each other.

Collective efficacy is the glue that binds neighborhoods together. It helps explain why some communities fight crime and disorder and others do not. It can be small actions, such as asking questions of strangers, calling the police when a neighbor needs help, shoveling snow off an elderly neighbor's driveway and attending city council meetings. Local governments and police departments can work with community members and organizations to take larger actions to eliminate nuisances and help improve collective efficacy: cleaning up litter and graffiti, repairing and restoring dilapidated houses, and bringing in new businesses.

## What Makes a Neighborhood?

Neighborhoods are principally defined by the people who live in them. They are areas within cities where children attend school, play and grow up. Adults live and work there and form friendships. Neighborhoods offer schools, churches, libraries, community centers, parks, stores, child care centers, entertainment facilities and other "anchor points" where neighbors meet and socialize.

However, some neighborhood establishments can create problems. Bars, pawnshops and liquor stores, for example — and even public transportation

centers, shopping centers and fast food restaurants — can attract or generate crime. Certain types of locations may serve as anchor points in one neighborhood but crime hot spots in another. A park may be where children play, adults exercise and families picnic — or it may be where drugs are sold, gangs hang out and criminals commit violent crimes.

## Collective Efficacy and Social Cohesion

*Social cohesion* describes how residents *think* and *feel* about their neighborhood: Do people get along with their neighbors? Can they count on each other's help when there is a problem? Do they get together for holiday dinners? Do they babysit each other's children? Do they walk in the local park after dinner? Do they think their children are being taught well in school? Do they feel safe? Can students go to the library after school? Residents' care and concern for each other's welfare provide the social glue that holds a community together.

Some neighborhood characteristics promote social cohesion: high levels of home ownership; a core of stable, long-term residents; the presence of extended families; close friendships among neighbors; good schools; people who attend local centers of worship; and the use of amenities such as parks, recreation centers and libraries.

*Collective efficacy* describes what residents are willing to *do* to improve their neighborhoods. Although social cohesion is the foundation of collective efficacy, at the core of collective efficacy are the willingness to intervene and the capacity for informal social control. In neighborhoods with collective efficacy, neighbors agree on what is acceptable behavior and reinforce it in each other.

Together, social cohesion and collective efficacy are the qualities that distinguish well-functioning, harmonious neighborhoods from poorly functioning, disordered ones.

### Measuring Attitudes and Actions in Miami Neighborhoods

NIJ and the Children's Trust of Miami-Dade County, Florida, sponsored a study to better understand collective efficacy. A team of researchers led by Craig Uchida of Justice & Security Strategies, Inc., randomly selected and surveyed more than 1,200 residents in eight ethnically and economically diverse Miami neighborhoods with differing crime rates. Specifically, the researchers examined the relationship between residents' perceptions of collective efficacy and social cohesion and their perceptions of neighborhood conditions, their confidence in the police, and their fear of crime — and whether these relationships varied within and between neighborhoods. The researchers also looked at how the use of neighborhood resources, such as grocery stores, churches and parks, affects perceptions of collective efficacy.

Uchida and his team applied new statistical techniques that look at neighborhoods in smaller geographical areas of six to 10 square blocks and can point to where and how to intervene to reduce crime and build up communities. In addition to the in-person resident surveys, trained research staff conducted systematic walkthroughs of street segments in each of the eight neighborhoods, observing resident activity as well as any vacant buildings, litter and graffiti.

All of these data led to a number of important findings. The researchers found that generally, homeowners,

older residents and others who used neighborhood facilities, volunteered and attended community meetings were more likely to see their neighborhoods as having social cohesion, whereas renters, younger residents, women and those who relied on income assistance perceived lower levels of collective efficacy and social cohesion.

The researchers found that residents with high perceptions of collective efficacy and social cohesion saw themselves and their neighbors as protectors of their communities, perceived their communities to have fewer incivilities (e.g., litter, disorder, graffiti), and were more satisfied with the work of police. Also, perceptions of social cohesion had a statistically significant effect on residents' fear of crime: Those who had higher perceptions of social cohesion had less fear of crime. Perceptions of collective efficacy, however, did not have a statistically significant effect on fear of crime.

Overall, the researchers found that the relationship between perceptions of collective efficacy and social cohesion and perceptions of neighborhood conditions, confidence in the police, and fear of crime and incivilities varied across neighborhoods. The researchers further found that levels of collective efficacy and social cohesion varied considerably *within* neighborhoods: People who lived in areas within a neighborhood with better housing, better-maintained common spaces and more stable populations were more willing and able to protect their communities. The researchers also noted that “rises” (areas with higher levels) and “sinks” (areas with lower levels) in collective efficacy and in social cohesion do not necessarily coincide, indicating that two distinct social processes are at work. The researchers said that this finding suggests that policymakers — with proper input from research — could design and implement unique solutions to intra-neighborhood issues within targeted areas.

### Steps to Prevent Crime and Strengthen Neighborhoods

The researchers offered policy recommendations to help neighbors come together to reduce crime and build up neighborhoods.



**Invest in research and evaluation:** Community leaders, police, policymakers, elected officials and other stakeholders can engage researchers in surveying residents to learn how they feel about their neighborhoods. Information on neighbors' concerns can help community leaders and police find ways to promote the overall well-being of neighborhoods. Examining police data (e.g., crime incidents and calls for service) can also help leaders more effectively respond to residents' concerns and possibly reduce crime. Finally, researchers can look at how to configure traffic patterns, common and private spaces, and other neighborhood features to reduce disorder and enhance neighborhood safety.

**Engage in problem solving:** Stakeholders can use the data gathered in community surveys to identify problems, craft solutions and assess responses. They can apply these data to focus interventions on specific areas or groups of people and then use data to determine whether the focused interventions and community responses have improved neighborhood conditions.

**Target problems and interventions:** Interventions can focus on smaller areas within neighborhoods with lower social control by filling in and building up those areas. Areas for *filling in* are those that function poorly, where community-building efforts can be focused. *Building up* focuses on areas that function well within a distressed community and how their residents can be mobilized to improve the poorly functioning areas nearby. By continually bringing in residents and building outward, communities can improve the entire neighborhood.

**Restore anchor points:** Residential surveys can identify public spaces where residents socialize, talk about what is going on in the neighborhood and become friends. Police, city officials, individuals and community organizations can work together to find the resources to repair and improve parks, community centers, recreational areas and other public spaces. They can also help enrich neighborhoods by sponsoring and organizing regular activities that encourage residents to use these spaces (e.g., a day at the park, picnics).

### **Organize the community and encourage**

**volunteerism:** Communities often organize themselves to combat crime and promote safety because of a general issue (e.g., crime) or a specific need (e.g., to reduce drunk driving or residential burglaries, or to ensure school safety). Police can promote residents' involvement in community advisory boards, neighborhood watch programs, police athletic leagues and similar efforts. Maps and surveys can locate residents of poorly functioning neighborhoods who care about the community and will volunteer to help it improve. Community and service organizations can recruit these individuals and encourage their efforts.

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## **About the Authors**

**Brian R. Higgins**, a writer-editor with Lockheed Martin, passed away last year. He contributed significantly to a body of work produced through the National Criminal Justice Reference Service and available on NCJRS.gov. **Joel Hunt** is a senior computer scientist in the Office of Science and Technology's Research Division at NIJ.

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## **For More Information**

To read more about the Miami study, "Neighborhoods and Crime: Collective Efficacy and Social Cohesion in Miami-Dade County," go to [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keyword: 245406.

To learn more about collective efficacy, visit [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keywords: collective efficacy.

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This article discusses the following grant:

- "Reducing Crime Through Collective Efficacy: Identifying Social Control and Social Cohesion in Miami Neighborhoods," grant number 2009-IJ-CX-0039.
- 

**NCJ 249823**

6.28.5.2

**Perforation resistance:** Perforation resistance shall be determined using the test methodology described in clause 3.2.7 and 3.3.5.5.2 TP 2.1.3 with the following exception:

- a) A total of six test drops per bullet size is required as described in Table 9 of this standard.

## APPENDIX A. Protection Areas

The bomb suit protection areas defined for fragmentation testing are detailed in Table 15. For each protection area, the coverage must be equal to or greater than the zone defined by the landmarks listed in Table 15 for the body size for which the bomb suit is intended. The bomb suit protection areas are represented in Figure 5. Front and rear sections are separated by the frontal or coronal plane (see Figure 7). Body landmarks and body planes are illustrated in Figure 6 and Figure 7. Human body directions are shown in Figure 8.

6.28.6

**Report**

Abdomen - Front

Medial

6.28.7

**Report**

Pelvis - Front

Medial

6.29

**Neck**

Spinal Protection Test

6.29.1

**Report**

Face

Samples

Head

6.29.1.1

**Three**

facemask samples

each of the

facemask samples

shall be

submitted

for

evaluation

coverage

shall be

submitted

for

evaluation

coverage

shall be

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evaluation

coverage

shall be

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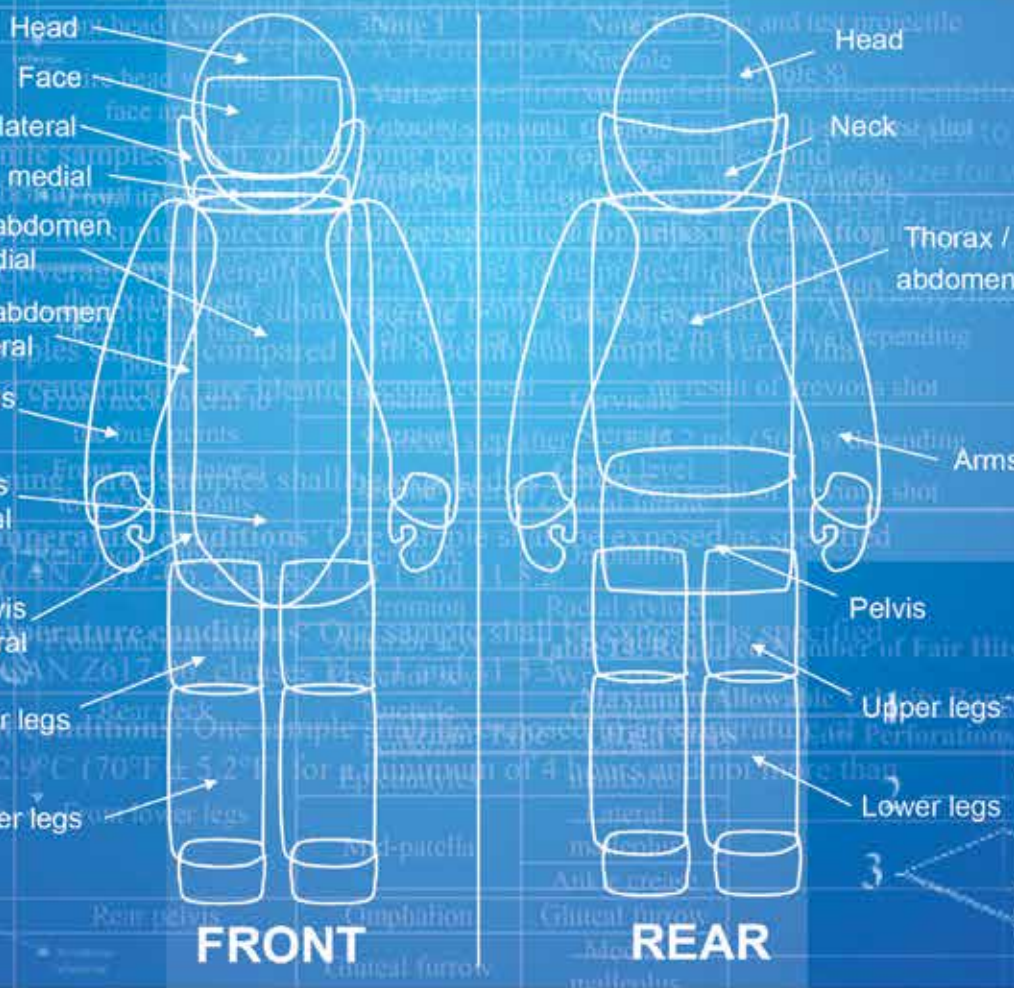


Figure 5. Protection Areas

FRONT

REAR

6.30.5

Report



# NIJ ISSUES A REVISED BOMB SUIT EQUIPMENT STANDARD

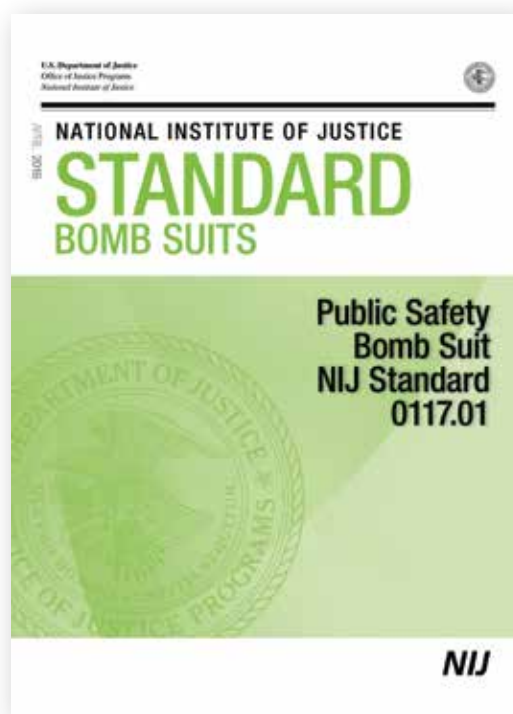
BY BRIAN MONTGOMERY

The revised standard provides updated test methods and requirements for the protective ensembles worn by public safety bomb technicians.

Public safety responders regularly use protective equipment in hazardous situations — for example, when they clear meth labs, mitigate bomb threats, or respond to other incidents that can lead to significant loss of life or property damage. Those who risk their lives and use the equipment and those who make decisions about buying it need to be sure it is going to work as intended. That is where equipment performance standards and conformity assessment programs come in.

NIJ standards define performance requirements for equipment and provide precise, detailed methods for testing to those requirements. Committees of scientists, engineers, compliance experts and relevant first responders develop the standards through a consensus process, and manufacturers and the public provide input through public comment opportunities. The responders who use the equipment know best how it needs to perform. The scientists and engineers match those performance needs with requirements and testing criteria. Manufacturers help identify unrealistic test methods and expectations about performance.

In March 2012, NIJ issued *Public Safety Bomb Suit NIJ Standard 0117.00*, the first performance standard for the specialized protective ensembles that public safety bomb technicians wear when



Download the revised bomb suit standard at [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keyword: 249560.

they identify, disable and dispose of explosive devices and materials. In April 2016, NIJ issued a revised standard, *Public Safety Bomb Suit NIJ Standard 0117.01*.

**As bomb suits were tested to the original standard, issues arose with the test methods (related to field-of-view and other ergonomic requirements) and with flammability testing. NIJ investigated each issue and developed a revised standard.**

There are many reasons to revise a standard: advances in technology, improved test methods, identification of additional requirements and issues with the existing standard, to name a few. As bomb suits were tested to the original standard, issues arose with the test methods (related to field-of-view and other ergonomic requirements) and with flammability testing. NIJ investigated each issue and developed a draft standard that incorporated revised test methods and requirements. Before publishing, the Institute released the draft standard for public comment and addressed the comments received.

Identifying performance requirements and test methods for a particular piece of equipment and publishing a standard are only the first steps. The next step is identifying models that meet the standard's requirements. This is done through conformity assessment programs, which can include self-declaration by a manufacturer and third-party certification. In the case of bomb suits, the Safety Equipment Institute (SEI), a private-sector certification body, has established a program to certify models to the NIJ bomb suit standard. SEI will oversee testing; certify compliant models; monitor to ensure certified models continue to meet the standard; and establish guidelines for safety concerns, including complaints and recalls. Other certification bodies could establish additional conformity assessment programs to test bomb suits to the NIJ standard.

NIJ collaborates with public and private standards development organizations and certification bodies like SEI to maximize resources and speed the introduction of needed standards and conformity assessment programs. Other collaborators include the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the National Fire Protection Association and ASTM International. NIJ teamed with ASTM International to provide the complete library of standards and test methods developed by ASTM Committee E54 on Homeland Security Applications to eligible law enforcement, corrections and forensics professionals free of charge. For free access to these standards and test methods, visit [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keyword: ASTM.

*Public Safety Bomb Suit NIJ Standard 0117.01* lays out minimum performance requirements. A model tested and found to meet those requirements may not necessarily meet the specific needs of a particular agency. Agencies are responsible for determining whether a particular model meets their needs.

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## About the Author

**Brian Montgomery** is a general engineer in NIJ's Office of Science and Technology's Research Division.

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## For More Information

Download a copy of the *Public Safety Bomb Suit NIJ Standard 0117.01* at [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keyword: 249560.

A full list and description of the NIJ standards program can be found at [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keywords: standards program.

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## NCJ 249826

# THE LEADS PROGRAM: SUPPORTING THE GROWING ROLE OF RESEARCH IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

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Research is a valuable tool for law enforcement agencies. NIJ's partnership with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) supports the integration of research into law enforcement activities, not only by the police chiefs who make policy decisions but also by the officers who carry out those decisions.

In 2014, NIJ and IACP created the Law Enforcement Advancing Data and Science (LEADS) program to develop mid-rank officers who want to advance the role of research in their agencies. The program competitively awards scholarships to mid-rank officers each year to attend the IACP Conference.

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## **Learn more about the LEADS program:**

- Read about past LEADS scholars and find out how to apply at [NIJ.gov](https://www.nij.gov), keyword: LEADS.
- Watch NIJ Director Nancy Rodriguez and IACP's former Director of Research and Programs Hassan Aden describe the partnership between NIJ and IACP at [NIJ.gov](https://www.nij.gov), keyword: IACP.
- Watch Rodriguez, Aden and two 2014 LEADS scholars describe the LEADS program and how the program has benefited the scholars at [NIJ.gov](https://www.nij.gov), keyword: IACP.
- Read an *NIJ Journal* article by a 2014 LEADS scholar at [NIJ.gov](https://www.nij.gov), keyword: 249223.







# HOW PREVALENT IS CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT IN THE UNITED STATES?

BY **LISA FEDINA, JENNIFER LYNNE HOLMES AND BETHANY BACKES**

A review of research from the last 15 years finds that although prevalence rates vary, they all indicate that a substantial number of college students are sexually assaulted.

**S**exual assault on college campuses continues to make national headlines. We know the victims suffer short- and long-term health problems, such as sexually transmitted infections, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, chronic illness and post-traumatic stress disorder. We also know that college students who have been sexually assaulted are more likely to engage in risky behaviors, such as binge drinking and drug use, and have lowered academic achievement, and they may be at greater risk for revictimization.

A number of government and campus initiatives aim to address the problem. For instance, in September 2014, the White House partnered with stakeholders to launch “It’s On Us” and “Not Alone,” national public awareness campaigns focusing on preventing and responding to campus sexual assault.

But to truly tackle sexual assault on college campuses, we must understand how often it occurs. How many college students are sexually assaulted, and what factors are associated with higher or lower prevalence rates?

Official estimates vary widely. To date, no studies have systematically reviewed prevalence findings in

the research on college-based sexual victimization, which would provide greater insight into the extent of the problem, the types of sexual victimization that students experience, and how study methodologies influence the prevalence rates found.

To help fill this knowledge gap, we systematically gathered prevalence estimates for campus sexual assault in the U.S. that were published between January 2000 and February 2015. We defined “prevalence” as the reported percentage of study participants who reported sexual victimization since entering college or during a study follow-up period or time frame while attending college. (For more on the definitions used in our review, see the sidebar, “Defining Sexual Assault.”)

We examined peer-reviewed studies, dissertations and reports on a wide range of topics, such as health outcomes, risk factors, and evaluations of campus intervention or prevention programs. We assessed and synthesized prevalence findings, research designs and methods, sampling techniques, and measures, including types of sexual victimization.

Our goal was to better understand the range of prevalence findings currently available and the



factors behind the variation. We also wanted to present recommendations for campus prevention and response strategies and propose research questions for future studies on campus sexual assault.

## An Incomplete Picture

We found that estimates of completed forcible rape, incapacitated rape, unwanted sexual contact and sexual coercion on college campuses in the U.S. vary widely. Unwanted sexual contact and sexual coercion appear to be most prevalent, followed by incapacitated rape and attempted or completed forcible rape. The infographic on the following page shows which factors are associated with higher or lower prevalence rates.

The variability is due in large part to differences in measurement and definitions of sexual assault among studies. To date, the majority of research on campus sexual assault has been limited to white, heterosexual, female students attending four-year colleges. Few studies measure prevalence among racial and ethnic minority students or other students who may be

particularly at risk for campus sexual assault, such as lesbian and bisexual women, sorority women, students with disabilities, and students who have suffered prior victimization. Some studies included in our review found higher rates of sexual assault among these students.

Only one study sampled students at vocational and trade schools, so it is unclear whether the prevalence of sexual assault among nontraditional college students differs from that among traditional full-time students attending four-year colleges.

Despite the discrepancies, the studies we reviewed — even those with lower estimates — all point to the same troubling truth: A substantial proportion of college students are sexually assaulted.

## Recommendations

Students experience different forms of sexual victimization, and prevalence rates for each form often vary from campus to campus. Schools should

## Defining Sexual Assault

We used the following definitions in our review of sexual assault on U.S. campuses:

- **Prevalence:** the reported percentage of study participants who reported sexual victimization since entering college or during a study follow-up period or time frame while attending college
- **Unwanted sexual contact:** attempted or completed unwanted kissing, fondling, petting or other sexual touching using physical force, threat of physical force, verbal coercion or a combination of these, but excluding vaginal, anal and oral intercourse
- **Sexual coercion:** completed unwanted sexual contact (kissing, fondling or other sexual touching) or completed vaginal, anal or oral intercourse through nonviolent means (such as intimidation, pressure, lies, threats to end a relationship or continual arguments)
- **Incapacitated or alcohol-related sexual assault:** completed vaginal, anal or oral intercourse while victim was intoxicated or on drugs
- **Broadly defined sexual assault:** involving multiple forms of sexual victimization, including rape, sexual coercion, incapacitated or alcohol-related sexual assault, and unwanted sexual contact
- **Physically forced completed and attempted rape:** vaginal, anal or oral intercourse using physical force or threat of force

# A Close Look at Research on Sexual Assault on U.S. Campuses

## How prevalent is campus sexual assault? Official estimates vary widely.

Researchers reviewed 15 years of data to better understand the variation and shed light on what factors are associated with higher or lower prevalence rates.

	Who was sexually victimized?	What occurred?	What kind of data did the study collect?
<div>▲</div> <div>Higher</div> <div>Prevalence Rate</div>	Women	Unwanted sexual contact	Smaller sample size
	Underclassmen	Sexual coercion	Convenience sample <sup>1</sup>
	Racial, ethnic and sexual minorities	Incapacitated or alcohol-related sexual assault	One or two universities, based in one local area
	Sorority women	Broadly defined sexual assault, which has the highest prevalence rate because it includes multiple forms of sexual victimization	
	Students with disabilities		
<div>▼</div> <div>Lower</div> <div>Prevalence Rate</div>	Students with past histories of sexual victimization		
	Men	Physically forced rape	Larger sample size
	Upperclassmen	Attempted rape	Random sample <sup>2</sup>
	Graduate students		Multiple universities, based across the United States



<sup>1</sup> All students from a designated pool of participants are invited to participate.

<sup>2</sup> Select students from a designated pool of participants are randomly chosen to participate.

start with a detailed understanding of the types of sexual victimization occurring on their campuses and appropriately tailor prevention and intervention strategies, treatment for victims, and campus response.

We found a high prevalence of unwanted sexual contact and sexual coercion; therefore, prevention efforts should include a focus on the dynamics of these two forms of victimization. Further, the disproportionate rates of victimization among LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning) students, students with disabilities, and racial and ethnic minority students highlight the need for responses that are inclusive and culturally specific.

When researching campus sexual assault, it is important to clearly define and separately measure the range of experiences that may fall under “unwanted sexual contact,” “forcible rape,” “incapacitated rape” and “drug- or alcohol-facilitated rape.” Standardized definitions can help us better understand how prevalence rates vary and how to develop appropriate prevention and intervention strategies for various types of sexual victimization. Studies should continue to include behaviorally specific measures, such as providing students with examples of unwanted sexual experiences. Also, measuring victimization “since entering college” will help distinguish campus sexual assault from childhood, adolescent and lifetime sexual victimization.

Future studies should measure sexual victimization among students who may be at greater risk for sexual assault, such as LGBTQ students, students with past histories of sexual victimization and students with disabilities. Future research should also explore whether sexual assault among students at alternative college education programs is similar to or different from sexual assault among traditional college students; this will help nontraditional programs

develop appropriate intervention and prevention responses for students. Additionally, researchers should consider contextual and cultural differences between public and private universities — for example, small liberal arts colleges versus large public state universities — as well as four-year colleges and vocational or trade schools when measuring the prevalence of sexual victimization on different types of campuses.

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### About the Authors

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### For More Information

For a detailed discussion of our review and findings, see “Campus Sexual Assault: A Systematic Review of Prevalence Research from 2000 to 2015” in *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*.

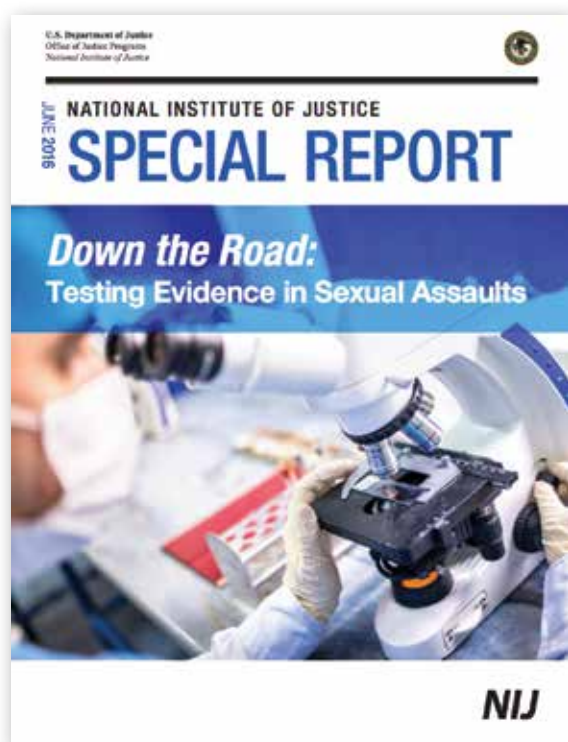
To learn more about NIJ’s research on campus sexual assault, go to [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keyword: campus.

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**NCJ 249827**

# NOW AVAILABLE: *DOWN THE ROAD: TESTING EVIDENCE IN SEXUAL ASSAULTS*

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How do we develop long-term, scientifically sound strategies to solve the nationwide problem of sexual assault kits that have not been submitted to crime laboratories for DNA testing? And how can evidence collected in a sexual assault kit most effectively contribute to solving a sexual assault crime?

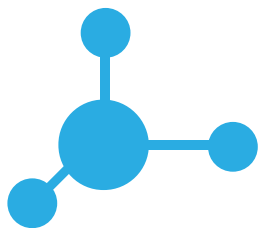
This new special report takes an agency-wide look at NIJ's research on evidence in sexual assault cases. The report focuses on findings from action research projects in Houston and Detroit, where NIJ worked with two teams of criminal justice professionals to develop strategies to address the issue of large numbers of sexual assault kits that had not been submitted for DNA testing.

The Houston and Detroit multidisciplinary teams were catalysts for change in these two very different cities. The lessons learned may help other jurisdictions improve their criminal justice response to sexual assault, from performing a

census of previously untested sexual assault kits to understanding the complex reasons why many kits might go untested; developing trauma-informed, victim-centered approaches; and notifying victims about testing.

The report also includes discussions of NIJ's forensic and social science research portfolios as they relate to the issue of using biological evidence to solve sexual assault cases.

Read the report at [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keyword: 249805.



# FORENSIC SCIENCE: A TIME OF TRANSFORMATION

BY JIM DAWSON

The field finds itself in turmoil over how experts present their results in the courtroom.

For those in the criminal justice system who like certainty, it was a rough week at the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) Annual Scientific Meeting in Las Vegas. The February 2016 conference, themed “Transformation: Embracing Change,” reflected the current turmoil in the forensic, legal and law enforcement communities over the roles of science and forensic science and the certainty of evidence presented in the courtroom.

(See sidebar, “The State of Forensic Science: A Q&A With NJ’s Director of Investigative and Forensic Sciences.”)

Speaking at a session on jurisprudence, Linda Chezem, a Purdue University professor and retired Indiana state appeals court judge, noted that scientific ethics, particularly forensic science ethics, do not square neatly with the “rule-of-law” ethic of the courtroom. Lawyers do not understand science, and scientists do not understand the law, the former judge observed. Overseeing this conflict are judges who are often “science phobic,” she said, including herself in that group. And as forensic science becomes more and more complex, resolving forensics-based disputes in the courtroom is becoming increasingly difficult, she said.

Another session at AAFS saw Henry Swofford, chief of the Latent Print Branch at the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory at the Defense Forensic Science Center, warn against using latent fingerprints to definitively identify an individual. He cited one of the center’s recent information

papers that discusses the “growing debate among the scientific and legal communities” regarding the use of the terms “identification” or “individualization” in court to associate “an item of evidence to a specific known source.”

“Central to the debate,” the paper says, “is that these terms imply absolute certainty of the conclusion of the fact-finder which has not been demonstrated by available scientific data.” The paper calls for latent print experts to use a “more scientifically appropriate framework for expressing source associations.” When testifying, the paper says, stay away from specific “identification” and instead use this “recommended” language: “The likelihood of observing this amount of correspondence when two impressions are made by different sources is considered extremely low.”

The center’s recommendation reflects a broader “lack of certainty” problem that is affecting virtually all of the non-DNA forensic evidence fields, says David Stoney, former director of forensic sciences at the University of Illinois. Stoney, who now heads Stoney Forensic, Inc., in Chantilly, Virginia, is sympathetic to the dilemma this scientific transition is causing for veteran forensics experts.

“Examiners in some forensic science disciplines have been trained that if you aren’t certain about your result, you don’t say anything,” Stoney says. “It’s your professional reputation every time you go into court, and you’ve got this great responsibility. It’s your job



as, say, a latent print examiner to only provide an opinion when you are absolutely sure. That's historically been part of the quality control of the system."

But in the wake of the 2009 National Academy of Sciences report *Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward*, that has changed. Many courts no longer accept the "absolutely sure" quality control system, Stoney says, and instead, "we want to have methods to measure the best that we can, and if we don't have those, we want people to say they don't know."

From a purely scientific perspective, where nothing is known with absolute certainty, that may be proper. But for many veteran fingerprint or firearms experts, this less-than-certain approach is a problem.

"These people have been trained another way, and some view this effort as 'You're asking me to do a less competent job, because you're asking me to pretend I'm uncertain when I'm certain, and you're asking me to testify when I'm not certain. It isn't fair. You're undermining my profession,'" Stoney says. "It's not an ego thing; it's changing to a completely different paradigm."

The certainty issue is more than theoretical, as was made clear in a recent opinion written by a District of Columbia Court of Appeals judge in connection with a homicide case. A firearms expert testified in the case that there was a "unique" match between bullet slugs recovered from the victim's car and a handgun found in the suspect's bedroom. The judge wrote that to claim a one-to-one match of a bullet to a gun required the "vision of a

## The State of Forensic Science: A Q&A With NIJ's Director of Investigative and Forensic Sciences

In his role as director of NIJ's Office of Investigative and Forensic Sciences, Gerry LaPorte oversees more than \$20 million in annual federal funding for forensic science research. LaPorte, who was the chief research forensic chemist for the United States Secret Service before coming to NIJ in 2009, works with four of NIJ's physical scientists each year to manage and review scores of research proposals.

The hundreds of projects that NIJ has supported under LaPorte's direction cover a wide range of forensic science disciplines, including DNA, trace evidence, firearms and tool marks, fingerprints, toxicology, crime scene investigation, forensic pathology, and forensic anthropology.

LaPorte, who began his career in 1993 as an autopsy assistant at the Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office in Birmingham, Alabama, is keenly attuned to the unrest in forensic science brought on by the 2009 National Academy of Sciences report *Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward*. That report cited serious deficiencies in the nation's forensic science system and called for major reforms and new research.

Several days before presenting the opening remarks for NIJ's daylong Forensic Science Research and Development Symposium at the American Academy of Forensic Sciences Annual Scientific Meeting in Las Vegas, LaPorte discussed what he sees as the main issues confronting forensic science.

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**NIJ: The forensic science community is struggling with how a forensic analyst should testify in court about uncertainty. Traditional scientists note nothing in science is absolutely certain, so how does a forensic scientist testify about evidence?**

**LaPorte:** That is a major challenge for forensic scientists: how you testify when you are not able to quantitatively express your limitations — or articulate uncertainty. Forensic scientists are asked to analyze evidence from a crime scene and determine the origin of that evidence. After a complete analysis and consideration of all of your observations and data, forensic scientists are often looked upon to quantify their certainty, such as, "What are the chances a certain item came from another source?"



Forensic scientists struggle with words to describe their conclusions and have used terminology like “consistent with” or “similar to” instead of using the words “the same.” Without properly defining our terminology and by using terminology inconsistently, words become ambiguous and mean different things to different people. We struggle to try to come up with the words that qualify our conclusions.

**NIJ: S. James Gates, Jr., the physicist on the National Commission on Forensic Science, said one of the problems with forensic science is the lack of error rates that are standard in established science. Partly for that reason, he described forensic science as “its own unique thing, as opposed to hard science.” Is he correct?**

**LaPorte:** I agree with [Gates] that we often don’t know what the plus and minus is, and that’s why we come up with these terms “consistent with” and “similar to.” I’m a chemist, and in the world of chemistry, we can measure uncertainty. In the impression and pattern evidence disciplines, we don’t have that measurement of uncertainty.

**NIJ: Why not require rigorous scientific measurement of error rates in forensic science?**

**LaPorte:** Very rarely do I say you can’t do something — and as a scientist, I won’t say something is impossible — but quantifying uncertainty in the impression and pattern evidence disciplines is very, very difficult based on the way crime scenes are. Every time somebody looks at a latent print from a crime scene, they will not have seen the same thing previously, and they will never see the same thing again. They will always get something different. It is not like DNA, where you have statistical information about the frequency of certain loci that occur in a certain population.

**NIJ: The lack of national training standards is also an issue in the forensic science community. How does training play into the current debate?**

**LaPorte:** Training and continuing education are the most overlooked needs in the forensic science community, and when agencies are cutting their budgets, training and continuing education are often the first thing to be cut. Laboratories are ultimately responsible for conducting forensic analysis and providing results to their stakeholders. Of course, quality is always the number one priority, but without a commitment from jurisdictions to provide forensic laboratories with training and continuing education, they are ultimately doing a disservice to the criminal justice system.

There is immense pressure on laboratories to train new analysts, and this is something that should never be rushed. But even after training is completed, when analysts are confined strictly to casework, they might not stay abreast of new technologies and methods; they may not hear how their peers are addressing certain challenges; they won’t be able to refine their skills — they will simply be isolated from learning more about their own fields. One of the biggest challenges our nation’s laboratories are facing is the lack of standardized training and how that training is administered.

**NIJ: If you look five years into the future, what changes would you like to see in forensic science?**

**LaPorte:** Undoubtedly, I am an optimist. I’ve been in the field for over 20 years, and I’ve seen many positive changes. Just about every forensic scientist I know is so committed to their discipline; we all continually strive to make things better. Overall, if you look at the thousands of cases that involved the forensic sciences over the years, I’d say we’ve been pretty successful but certainly not perfect. Like any science, though, forensic science can be strengthened. Studies generally show that the error rates are very low. Where we’d like to go is to be able to express things more quantitatively. At the end of the day, it really comes down to understanding your limitations and conveying where your error bars are. In five years, we will be better than we are today.

## Underlying much of the turmoil is a fundamental question that many associated with the legal system are asking: Exactly what is forensic science?

psychic” and was based on “foundationless faith in what he believes to be true.” The judge concluded that, “to uphold the public’s trust, the District of Columbia courts must bar the admission of these certainty statements. We cannot be complicit in their use.”

The firearms ruling is part of a trend that has seen the Texas Forensic Science Commission vote to ban bite mark evidence from court and the FBI reveal that a review of trial transcripts found that hair analysis experts made “erroneous statements” in 90 percent of the cases in which they testified.

Underlying much of the turmoil is a fundamental question that many associated with the legal system are asking: Exactly what is forensic science?

“When I agreed to serve on the National Commission on Forensic Science (NCFS), I was stunned by what I saw for the first six months,” says S. James Gates, Jr., a University of Maryland theoretical physicist known for his work on supersymmetry, supergravity and superstring theory. Given his work in some of the most challenging areas of physics, Gates, who received the National Medal of Science in 2013, thought his work on NCFS would be relatively simple.

“I thought we just would have to move more science into this,” Gates says. “What I found was a far, far, far more complicated environment and organization. I started asking questions such as ‘Has anybody really stepped back from what’s going on here and enunciated a high-level set of principles that ought to be guiding this?’”

The answer, he discovered, was no. Experts in the forensic fields were mostly trying to put out fires,

he says, as opposed to thinking deeply about a set of principles. “Eventually, I came up with a metaphor that might be useful, and that is to compare forensic science to medicine.”

For thousands of years, Gates notes, there were local medicine men knowledgeable about the folklore of the healing properties of herbs and plants. “In medicine,” he says, “that only really changed in the 1700s, when medicine became amenable to input from science.” Gates says that one of the signal events was the cholera outbreak in 1854 in London, where public health, epidemiology and statistics were born. “That marks medicine’s moment when input from science replaced the folklore art of practice.”

“Now, medicine still isn’t science, but it is amenable to the methodologies of science,” Gates says. “Medicine will never be a science, but an art. It is a spectrum that you are on.”

The issue for forensic science is finding its place on that spectrum, he says. “As you look at forensic science, it has just gotten to that cholera outbreak episode moment. It recognizes that science can benefit the practice of forensic science.”

The comparison of forensic science to the practice of medicine is not unique to Gates. Stoney, who wrote an article in 1988 suggesting a medical model for criminalistics education, says there are a lot of parallels between medicine and forensics.

“The doctor is applying judgment to a set of tests, a set of observations,” Stoney says. “A firearms examiner is doing a similar thing: doing tests, making observations and making a judgment.” Both the doctor and the forensic examiner assess a range of risks, take the best science they have and decide what the next steps should be, he says.

“That analogy breaks down when you say what happens next,” Stoney notes. “If the forensic scientist says, ‘It’s his gun’ or ‘He did it,’ that’s different than a doctor saying a guy has the flu. If the doctor is wrong, there is some ground truth at the end of it [in the form of a sick patient], and you will find out. But in the criminal justice system, how do I know it’s the wrong guy? I don’t.”

Stoney, like Gates, is troubled by the lack of principles guiding forensic science. “It is critical that we develop a whole theory and set principles for forensic science,” he says. “What is forensic science?”

Gates notes that defining forensic science is made more difficult because it is a segmented problem, one part being the system and technology that can accurately identify a latent print and another part being a court case where the fingerprint expert is not allowed to use a print to definitively identify a specific person. In addition, he is concerned about the conflicts among the four distinct cultures that exist in the community: scientific, engineering, legal/jurisprudence and law enforcement.

“So what does a fingerprint expert testify to?” Gates asks. “If you make the argument on the basis of science, then the first thing you have to recognize is that science is never perfect. Never expect science to give you perfect answers because it is impossible to do so.”

The transformation under way in how forensic science functions and how the broader legal community perceives it promises to tie the field closer to the traditional hard sciences, such as physics and chemistry. But exactly what the end product will look like is far from clear.

NIJ supports strengthening the underpinnings of the forensic science disciplines through its research and development program. “A key goal of the program is to support research in the forensic sciences and direct results of that research toward more discriminating and accurate methods of analysis and interpretation of physical evidence,” said Gerry LaPorte, director of NIJ’s Office of Investigative and Forensic Sciences.

In addition to NIJ’s funding support of forensic science research, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the forensic community have established the Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) to set standards and, according to NIST, “improve quality and consistency of work in the forensic science community.”

Gates describes himself as “an enormous fan” of the potential progress from the NIST/OSAC work. “They are really putting in place and evaluating observational and experimental technology and vetting their reliability,” he says — work that is necessary to move forensics forward.

“Twenty years from now, I’d like to have a judiciary that is far more comfortable with science-based evidence than our current judiciary,” he says. “For forensic scientists themselves, I would hope that the community, looking back 20 years, will have engaged in a vigorous reconceptualization of its practices and ethos in order to deliver a higher quality of evidence to court cases.”

Stoney foresees rough spots in the forensic science transformation but believes that forensic testing will become more quantifiable and objective. “We’ll eliminate individual biases as best we can,” he says. But if the push to eliminate bias means creating crime laboratories that are removed from law enforcement, he says, that will create a new problem.

“We’re going to find out that there are a lot of things laboratory tests could help [a police investigation] with but that don’t involve definitive results,” he says. “There are things that give you very good clues but aren’t giving you solid proof. A good estimate from science about what a clue means has a place in the criminal justice system, even if it’s not the courtroom,” he says. “A good portion of what science has to offer is having reasonable hunches.”

Stoney’s concerns reflect the view Chezem expressed at AAFS that forensic science ethics do not square neatly with the “rule-of-law” ethic of the courtroom.

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## About the Author

**Jim Dawson** is a forensic science writer with Palladian Partners, Inc.

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## For More Information

Read more about NIJ’s forensic science work at [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keywords: forensic science.

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English  
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# VIOLENCE AGAINST AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE WOMEN AND MEN

BY **ANDRÉ B. ROSAY**

An NIJ-funded study shows that American Indian and Alaska Native women and men suffer violence at alarmingly high rates.

**M**ore than four in five American Indian and Alaska Native women and men have experienced violence in their lifetime, and more than one in three experienced violence in the past year, according to a new report from an NIJ-funded study.

The study, part of NIJ's research program on violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women (see sidebar, "Examining Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women"), looked at how prevalent psychological aggression and physical violence by intimate partners, stalking, and sexual violence were among American Indian and Alaska Native women and men. It also examined the perpetrators' race and the impact of the violence.

The study used a nationally representative sample from the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS),<sup>1</sup> with a total of 2,473 adult women and 1,505 adult men who identified themselves as American Indian or Alaska Native, either alone or in combination with another racial group. Most women (83 percent) and most men (79 percent) were affiliated or enrolled with a tribe or village. More than half of women and men (54 percent for each group) had lived within reservation boundaries or in an Alaska Native village in the past year.

The results, which show high rates of violence against both women and men, provide the most thorough assessment on the extent of violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and men to date. These results complement those from the National Crime Victimization Survey (see sidebar, "Differences Between Two National Surveys"). Prior to this project, there were few estimates available, and often these estimates were based on local samples.<sup>2</sup> The few national estimates available used very small samples, which did not always accurately represent the American Indian and Alaska Native population in the United States.<sup>3</sup>

## Violence Against Women

Results show that more than four in five American Indian and Alaska Native women (84.3 percent) have experienced violence in their lifetime (see Table 1). This includes 56.1 percent who have experienced sexual violence, 55.5 percent who have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner, 48.8 percent who have experienced stalking, and 66.4 percent who have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner. Overall, more than 1.5 million American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence in their lifetime.



The study also found that more than one in three American Indian and Alaska Native women (39.8 percent) have experienced violence in the past year. This includes 14.4 percent who have experienced sexual violence, 8.6 percent who have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner, 11.6 percent who have experienced stalking, and 25.5 percent who have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner. Overall, more than 730,000 American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence in the past year.

American Indian and Alaska Native women are 1.2 times as likely as non-Hispanic white-only<sup>4</sup> women to have experienced violence in their lifetime and 1.7 times as likely to have experienced violence in the past year. They are also significantly more likely to have experienced stalking and physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime, as well as

psychological aggression by an intimate partner both in their lifetime and in the past year.

### Violence Against Men

American Indian and Alaska Native men also have high victimization rates. More than four in five American Indian and Alaska Native men (81.6 percent) have experienced violence in their lifetime (see Table 2). This includes 27.5 percent who have experienced sexual violence, 43.2 percent who have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner, 18.6 percent who have experienced stalking, and 73 percent who have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner. Overall, more than 1.4 million American Indian and Alaska Native men have experienced violence in their lifetime.

**Table 1. Violence Against Women**

Type of Violence	American Indian or Alaska Native, %	Non-Hispanic White Only,* %	Relative Risk
Any Lifetime Violence	84.3	71.0	1.2
Sexual Violence	56.1	49.7	NS
Physical Violence by Intimate Partner	55.5	34.5	1.6
Stalking	48.8	26.8	1.8
Psychological Aggression by Intimate Partner	66.4	52.0	1.3
Any Past-Year Violence	39.8	23.3	1.7
Sexual Violence	14.4	5.4	NS
Physical Violence by Intimate Partner	8.6	4.1	NS
Stalking	11.6	7.0	NS
Psychological Aggression by Intimate Partner	25.5	16.1	1.6

NS = Percentages across racial and ethnic groups are not significantly different ( $p > .05$ ).

\* Non-Hispanic white only represents people who identified themselves as both non-Hispanic and white, with no other race.

More than one in three American Indian and Alaska Native men (34.6 percent) have experienced violence in the past year. This includes 9.9 percent who have experienced sexual violence, 5.6 percent who have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner, 3.8 percent who have experienced stalking, and 27.3 percent who have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner. Overall, more than 595,000 American Indian and Alaska Native men have experienced violence in the past year.

American Indian and Alaska Native men are 1.3 times as likely as non-Hispanic white-only men to have experienced violence in their lifetime. In particular, American Indian and Alaska Native men are 1.4 times as likely to have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner and 1.4 times as likely to have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner in their lifetime. The other estimates are not significantly different across racial and ethnic groups.

## Who Are the Perpetrators?

The federal government has a “trust responsibility to assist tribal governments in safeguarding the lives of Indian women.”<sup>5</sup> Yet in *Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe* (1978), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that tribes did not have criminal jurisdiction over non-Indian perpetrators. This meant that federally recognized tribes had no authority to criminally prosecute non-Indian offenders, even for crimes committed in Indian Country. This essentially provided immunity to non-Indian offenders and compromised the safety of American Indian and Alaska Native women and men. The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013<sup>6</sup> partially corrected this problem by providing federally recognized tribes with special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction, which allows tribes that meet certain conditions to prosecute certain cases involving non-Indian offenders.

**Table 2. Violence Against Men**

Type of Violence	American Indian or Alaska Native, %	Non-Hispanic White Only,* %	Relative Risk
Any Lifetime Violence	81.6	64.0	1.3
Sexual Violence	27.5	20.9	NS
Physical Violence by Intimate Partner	43.2	30.5	1.4
Stalking	18.6	13.4	NS
Psychological Aggression by Intimate Partner	73.0	52.7	1.4
Any Past-Year Violence	34.6	25.7	NS
Sexual Violence	9.9	3.8	NS
Physical Violence by Intimate Partner	5.6	4.5	NS
Stalking	3.8	3.7	NS
Psychological Aggression by Intimate Partner	27.3	19.3	NS

NS = Percentages across racial and ethnic groups are not significantly different ( $p > .05$ ).

\* Non-Hispanic white only represents people who identified themselves as both non-Hispanic and white, with no other race.

Figure 1 shows the percentages of American Indian and Alaska Native victims who have experienced violence by a perpetrator who was not American Indian or Alaska Native (interracial) and by an American Indian or Alaska Native perpetrator (intraracial). The majority of American Indian and Alaska Native victims have experienced violence at the hands of at least one interracial perpetrator in their lifetime — 97 percent of female victims and 90 percent of male victims. Fewer American Indian and Alaska Native victims have experienced intraracial violence in their lifetime — 35 percent of female victims and 33 percent of male victims. The study found similar results for all types of lifetime and past-year experiences.

The American Indian and Alaska Native population is relatively small, so these results are not surprising. Nonetheless, they provide continuing support for federally recognized tribes' sovereign right to prosecute non-Indian offenders.<sup>7</sup>

### How Does the Violence Affect Victims?

The study also briefly examined how physical violence by intimate partners, stalking, and sexual violence affects American Indian and Alaska Native victims. Among the victims:

- 66.5 percent of women and 26.0 percent of men expressed concern for their safety.

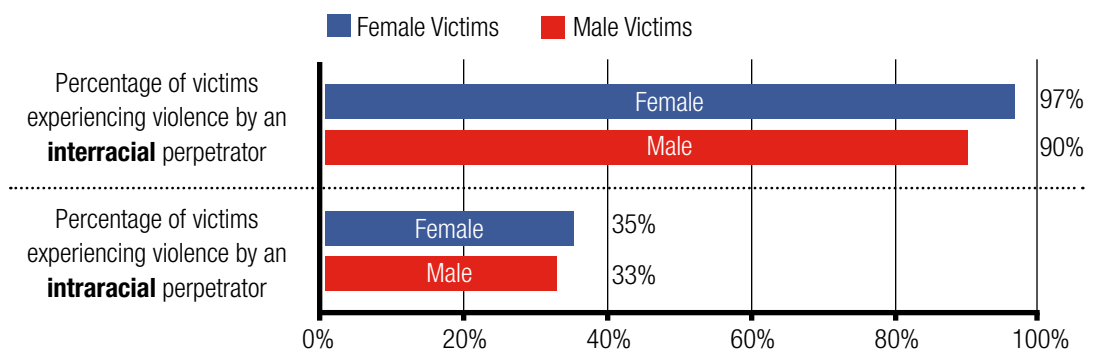
- 41.3 percent of women and 20.3 percent of men were physically injured.
- 49.0 percent of women and 19.9 percent of men needed services.
- 40.5 percent of women and 9.7 percent of men missed days of work or school.

American Indian and Alaska Native female victims were 1.5 times as likely as non-Hispanic white-only female victims to be physically injured, 1.8 times as likely to need services, and 1.9 times as likely to have missed days of work or school. Other differences across racial and ethnic groups were not statistically significant.

Victims identified a variety of needed services. American Indian and Alaska Native female victims most commonly needed medical care (38 percent of victims) and were 2.3 times as likely as non-Hispanic white-only victims to need this type of care. They also needed legal services (16 percent), housing services (11 percent), and advocacy services (9 percent). Medical care and legal services were the most commonly reported needs for male victims as well.

Unfortunately, not all victims were able to access services. More than one in three American Indian and Alaska Native female victims (38 percent) and more than one in six American Indian and Alaska Native male victims (17 percent) were unable to get the

**Figure 1: Estimates of Lifetime Interracial and Intraracial Violence**



Notes: Samples are restricted to American Indian and Alaska Native victims of stalking, sexual violence, and psychological aggression and physical violence by intimate partners. Some victims experienced violence by both interracial and intraracial perpetrators.

## Differences Between Two National Surveys

Our understanding of victimization of American Indians and Alaska Natives comes primarily from two sources: the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (discussed in the main article) and the National Crime Victimization Survey. There are key differences between these two national surveys, which can lead to very different estimates.

	National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey	National Crime Victimization Survey
<b>Goals</b>	Uses a public health approach to (1) measure the prevalence and characteristics of violence, (2) determine who is most likely to experience violence, (3) assess the patterns and impacts of violence experienced by specific perpetrators, and (4) identify the health consequences of violence.	Uses a criminal justice approach to (1) develop detailed information about the victims and consequences of crime, (2) estimate the number and types of nonfatal crimes not reported to the police, (3) provide uniform measures of selected types of crimes, and (4) permit comparisons over time and types of areas.
<b>Samples</b>	Adult women and men residing in the United States. The 2010 data collection included three samples: a general population sample, an oversample of American Indians and Alaska Natives, and a sample of active-duty military and female spouses of active-duty military.	Every household member 12 years of age or older, from nationally representative samples of U.S. households. Follow-up surveys occur every six months over the course of three years (for a total of seven interviews).
<b>Methods</b>	Interviews conducted by phone, using randomly selected landline telephone numbers and cell phone numbers.	Most initial interviews conducted in person, with follow-up interviews conducted by telephone or in person.
<b>Estimates</b>	National- and state-level estimates for the prevalence of lifetime and past-year victimizations (the number of victims).	National estimates for the prevalence and incidence of past-year victimizations (the number of victims and the number of victimizations).
<b>Types of Victimization</b>	Psychological aggression by intimate partners, coercive control by intimate partners, physical violence by intimate partners, stalking and sexual violence.	Broad range of nonfatal personal and property crimes, including rape and sexual attack, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, purse snatching/pocket picking, burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, and vandalism.
<b>Measures</b>	Behaviorally specific questions about what other people have done (e.g., "How many people have ever used force or threats of physical harm to make you have vaginal sex?").	Incident-specific questions about experiencing certain crimes (e.g., "Has anyone attacked or threatened you with rape, attempted rape or other type of sexual attack?").

services that they needed. American Indian and Alaska Native women were 2.5 times as likely as non-Hispanic white-only women to lack access to needed services.

### Addressing the Problem

These results should raise awareness and understanding of violence against American Indian and Alaska Native victims. They also highlight the continued need for services for American Indian and Alaska Native victims of crime.<sup>8</sup>

As former U.S. Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr., declared, the Department of Justice has both “a legal

duty and a moral obligation to address violent crime in Indian Country and to assist tribes in their efforts to provide for safe tribal communities.”<sup>9</sup> To help address the problem, NIJ has implemented the Violence Against Indian Women National Baseline Study (also called the Tribal Study of Public Safety and Public Health Issues Facing American Indian and Alaska Native Women), a capstone project within its research program on violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women. The information collected from the study will provide a rich and comprehensive picture of American Indian and Alaska Native women’s experiences with violence and victimization, health and wellness, community crime, service needs, and help-seeking behaviors and outcomes, as well as their opinions on public safety.

## Examining Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women

The reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act of 2005, Title IX, Section 904(a)(1)(2),<sup>1</sup> authorized NIJ, in consultation with the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office on Violence Against Women, to conduct research on violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women in Indian Country. The needed research was broad in scope, so NIJ developed a research program that included multiple projects over an extended period.

The purpose of NIJ’s program is to:

- Examine violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women, including intimate partner violence, dating violence, sexual assault, sex trafficking,<sup>2</sup> stalking, and murder.
- Identify the factors that put American Indian and Alaska Native women at risk for victimization.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of federal, state, tribal and local responses to violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women.
- Propose recommendations to improve the effectiveness of these responses.

NIJ’s program of research entails primary data collections (such as the data collection discussed in the main article), secondary data analyses, and evaluations. To learn more, visit [NIJ.gov](http://NIJ.gov), keyword: VAIW.

### Notes

1. Title IX, Section 904(a) of the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005, Public Law No. 109-162 (codified at 42 U.S.C. § 3796gg-10 note), as amended by Section 907 of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, Public Law No. 113-4.
2. The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 added “sex trafficking.”



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## About the Author

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## For More Information

Read the full report at [nij.gov](http://nij.gov), keyword: 249736.

Learn more about NIJ's program of research on violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women at [nij.gov](http://nij.gov), keyword: VAIW.

Read a related NIJ report, "Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and the Criminal Justice Response: What Is Known," at [nij.gov](http://nij.gov), keyword: 223691.

Access the NISVS data at <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/NACJD/index.jsp>.

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- "National Institute of Justice Fellowship: Violence Against Indian Women Research Program," grant number 2012-PJ-BX-K001.
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## Notes

1. Launched in 2010 by the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the NISVS provides data on psychological aggression and physical violence by intimate partners, stalking, and sexual violence among a general population sample of adult women and men. NIJ provided additional funding that allowed CDC to collect data from an oversample of American Indian and Alaska Native adults. We based our analysis on these two samples — the general population sample and the American Indian and Alaska Native oversample.

The NISVS has important limitations: The survey includes only certain types of victimization, was administered only by phone, and was not conducted in any indigenous languages.

As with other victimization surveys, recall errors and the continuing stigma associated with disclosing victimization may affect estimates. Some estimates have large margins of error. Despite these limitations, the survey has important strengths: It uses behaviorally specific questions and was administered to a large, nationally representative sample.

2. For example, see Magen, Randy H., and Darryl S. Wood, "Intimate Partner Violence Against AHTNA (Alaska Native) Women in the Copper River Basin," Final report to the National Institute of Justice, grant number 2000-WT-VX-0013, July 2006, NCJ 215350, available at <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/215350.pdf>.
  3. Crossland, Christine, Jane Palmer, and Alison Brooks, "NIJ's Program of Research on Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women," *Violence Against Women* 19 (2013): 771-790. <http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/19/6/771>.
  4. Non-Hispanic white represents only people who identified themselves as both non-Hispanic and white, with no other race.
  5. See the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 at [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=109\\_cong\\_bills&docid=f:h3402enr.txt.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=109_cong_bills&docid=f:h3402enr.txt.pdf).
  6. See the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 at <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/s47/text>.
  7. Indian Law & Order Commission, *A Roadmap for Making Native America Safer: Report to the President & Congress of the United States*, November 2013, available at [http://www.aisc.ucla.edu/iloc/report/files/A\\_Roadmap\\_For\\_Making\\_Native\\_America\\_Safer-Full.pdf](http://www.aisc.ucla.edu/iloc/report/files/A_Roadmap_For_Making_Native_America_Safer-Full.pdf).
  8. For example, see Office for Victims of Crime, "Vision 21: Transforming Victim Services—Final Report," May 2013, NCJ 239957, available at [http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/vision21/pdfs/Vision21\\_Report.pdf](http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/vision21/pdfs/Vision21_Report.pdf).
  9. Holder, Eric H., Jr., Statement to the Senate, Committee on the Judiciary. *Oversight of the Department of Justice*, November 18, 2009, available at <https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/testimonies/witnesses/attachments/2009/11/18/2009-11-18-ag-holder-oversight-doj-sjc.pdf>.
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