Violence in Illinois
Fact Sheet

Violent Crimes

- In 2008, there were 69,441 violent crimes (homicide, criminal sexual assault, aggravated assault and robbery) reported to the Illinois State Police; a 4% decrease from 2005[1].
- In 2008, there were 790 homicides reported to Illinois law enforcement, a 3% increase from 2005[1].
- In 2008, there were 5,620 criminal sexual assault offenses reported to the Illinois State Police, a 6% decrease from 2005[1].
- In 2008 there were 38,952 aggravated assaults in Illinois, a 8% decrease from 2005[1].
- In 2008, there were 27,079 reported robberies in Illinois, a 17% increase from 2005[1].

Gun Violence

- In 2008, 79% of murders in Illinois (421 out of 530) were gun-related, compared to 72% of murders nation-wide[11].
- Young people are disproportionately affected by gun violence in Illinois. In 2006, youths (0-19 years) comprised nearly 22% of all gun related deaths in Illinois. By comparison, in the United States 9.8% of all gun-related deaths were among youths under the age of 19[11].
- In 2007, 150 children and adolescents under the age of 19 died as a result of a firearm in Illinois[18].
- In 2007, 88.5% of murder-suicides involved the use of a firearm[4].

Youth Violence

- In 2008, 33,161 children under age 18 were arrested in Illinois, a 2% decrease from 2006. Of the 2008 arrests, 1,098 were for possession of weapons[11];
- In 2008, 15,243 juveniles were admitted to a secure detention facility in Illinois[16];
- In 2009, 16% of Illinois high school students carried a weapon (gun, knife, or club) during the past month (the nationwide average was 17.5%)[12].
- In 2009, 33% of Illinois high school students reported that they were in a physical fight during the past year, compared to 31.5% of students nationally[12].

Domestic Violence

- In 2008, there were 109,089 domestic violence crimes reported in Illinois, 5% decrease from 2005[1].
- In 2009, there were 60,260 Orders of Protection entered into the State Police LEADS system in Illinois, a 6.8% decrease from 2000[1].
- In 2008, IDHS funded domestic violence programs responded to over 219,283 hotline calls and provided 619,475 hours of services to 59,780 individual adults and children. Residential programs provided 231,444 days of shelter. Programs also conducted over 114,042 hours of prevention and outreach activities that reached 522,817 community members[17].

- 73% of all murder-suicides in the United States involved an intimate partner (spouse, common-law spouse, ex-spouse, or boyfriend/girlfriend). Of these, 94% were females killed by their intimate partners[4].

Sexual Assault

- In 2008 there were 10,074 reported cases of child sexual abuse in Illinois, a 13% increase from 2005. 3,205 of the 2008 reported cases were indicated[3].
- In 2008, there were 5,620 criminal sexual assault offenses reported to the Illinois State Police, a 6% decrease from 2005[1].

Child Abuse & Neglect

- In 2008, 111,890 children were reported for abuse or neglect in Illinois, a 1% increase from 2005. 30,047 of the 2008 reports were indicated (founded) [3].
- In 2008, there were 32,519 crimes against children reported to the Illinois State Police; a 17% decrease from 2005[1].
- In 2008, there were 175 reported cases of children's deaths as a result of abuse or neglect in Illinois[3].
- In 2008, 903 substance-exposed infants were reported to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, a 14% decrease from 2005[3].

Elder Abuse

- According to a National Elder Abuse Incidence study, only 20% of cases of elder abuse are reported to the authorities. It is estimated that financial exploitation of the elderly is especially unreported, with only about 4% of cases being formally recorded[9]. (no later data)
- In 2008, the Illinois Department on Aging received 10,583 reports of elder abuse. This represents a 23% increase from the number of reports filed in 2005[10].
- In FY 08, there were 2,321 cases of physical abuse and 576 cases of sexual abuse reported to the Illinois Department of Aging. The most commonly reported forms of elder abuse in Illinois were financial exploitation and emotional abuse; however, individuals often suffer more than one form of abuse[10].

Bullying

- In 2009, 20% of Illinois high school students reported being bullied on school property during the past year, a rate similar to that of high school students nationally[12].
- Bullying and being bullied at school are associated with key violence-related behaviors, including carrying weapons, fighting, and sustaining injuries from fighting[7].
- Boys are typically more physically aggressive (physical bullying), whereas girls rely more on social exclusion, teasing, and cliques (verbal or emotional bullying). Bullying can also take the form of cyber communication, e.g., via email (cyber bullying). It is estimated that one in four boys who bully will have a criminal record by age 30[6].

Hate Violence

- In 2008, according to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report on violent hate crimes, 54.6% were motivated by race, 20.6% were based on sexual orientation, 14.2% were based on ethnicity/national origin, 9.6% were based on religion, and roughly one percent were based on handicap (mental/physical)[11].
- 66 law enforcement agencies in Illinois reported incidences of hate crime[11].
- In 2008, 175 incidents of hate crime were reported in Illinois, a 24% decrease from 2005[1].

Violence in the Media

- A typical child in the U.S. watches 28 hours of TV weekly, seeing as many as 8,000 murders by the time he or she finishes elementary school at age 11. The killers depicted on TV get away with the murders 75% of the time while showing no remorse or accountability[14].Studies of the effects of TV violence on children and teenagers have found that children may[2]:
    - become "immune" or numb to the horror of violence
    - gradually accept violence as a way to solve problems
    - imitate the violence they observe on television; and
    - identify with certain characters, victims and/or victimizers
- A 2003 study involving U.S. college students found that songs with violent lyrics increased aggression related thoughts and emotions. The research showed that media content has an impact on violence by young adults[19].
- One study found that in a random sample of 81 teen-rated video games[15]:
    - 79 games (98%) involved intentional violence, representing 36% of game play time, and 34 games (42%) contained blood;
    - 72 games (89%) depicted injuries to human characters, including the player, and 44 games (54%) depicted injuries to nonhuman characters;
    - There was an average rate of 122 deaths per hour of game play time.
- Adolescents with greater violent video game exposure have been demonstrated to be more hostile, report getting into more arguments with teachers, were more likely to be involved in physical fights, and performed more poorly in school[15].
- An Indiana University School of Medicine study using a functional MRI to measure brain activity found that adolescents who played a violent video game for 30 minutes exhibited greater brain activity in the amygdala, an area closely linked to emotional arousal, and less brain activity in the prefrontal portions of the brain which are involved in inhibition, concentration and self-control[20].

Suicide

- Between 1997 and 2006, a total of 10,463 Illinois residents committed suicide[16].
- Suicide is the 12th leading cause of death in the state for all ages and genders[13].
- 38% of Illinois suicides between 2005 and 2007 were committed with firearms and explosives[16].
- Men comprise 81% of suicide victims in Illinois; however women attempt suicide 1.6 times more than men[13].
- In 2008, 9,584 Illinois residents were hospitalized for attempting suicide[21].
- In 2009, 8.9% of Illinois high school students reported that they had attempted suicide during the past year, compared to 6.3% of students nationally[12].

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