

December 11, 2014



THINGS TO KNOW

Report on victimization of college-age females: 3 critical points

The Bureau of Justice Statistics released data today on *Rape and Sexual Assault Victimization Among College-Age Females, 1995–2013*. The special report uses the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) to compare the rape and sexual assault victimization from 1995 to 2013 of female college students (enrolled in a college, university, trade school or vocational school) and female nonstudents. The full report can be accessed online at <http://tinyurl.com/loo4gdx>. Below, some highlights from the report:

1. Women ages 18 to 24 have the highest rate of rape and sexual assault

- **This is an at-risk age group.** Females ages 18 to 24 had the highest rate of rape and sexual assault victimizations compared to females in all other age groups. The rate of rape and sexual assault was 1.2 times higher for female nonstudents (7.6 per 1,000) than for female students (6.1 per 1,000). For the period 1995–2013, the rate of rape and sexual assault victimization was lower for males ages 18 to 24 than for females, regardless of enrollment status. College-age male victims accounted for 17% of rape and sexual assault victimizations against students and 4% against nonstudents. No data was presented on transgender victims.
- **In the majority of cases, victims know the person who sexually assaulted them.** For both college students and nonstudents, the offender was known to the victim in about 80% of rape and sexual assault victimizations. Nonstudents (34 percent) were more likely than students (24 percent) to experience rape or sexual assault committed by an intimate partner. Among female student victims, half of victimizations were committed by friends or acquaintances.
- **Both students and nonstudents are victims of drug-facilitated sexual assault.** 47% of student victims and 40% of nonstudent victims perceived that the offender was drinking or using drugs.

2. Within this age group, the majority of incidents are not reported to police

- **From 1995 to 2013, the majority of rapes and sexual assaults were not reported to law enforcement.** Of students, 80% of student victimizations were unreported, and 67% of nonstudent victimizations were unreported.
- **Victims did not report for a variety of reasons.** About a quarter of student (26%) and nonstudent (23%) victims who did not report to police believed the incident was a personal matter, and regardless if they were students or nonstudents, one in five (20%) stated a fear of reprisal.
- **Rape is a serious crime and victims' voices are important.** The survey is about crime and oftentimes, many people don't relate to that description or feel uncomfortable saying that they were a victim of a crime. Student victims (12%) were more likely than nonstudent victims (5%) to state that the incident was not important enough to report.

3. Sexual assault is a widespread problem, but support and services are available.

- **Support and services need to be widely available and easy to access.** Fewer than one in five female student (16%) and nonstudent (18%) victims of rape and sexual assault received assistance from a victim services agency.
- **This is a widespread problem that isn't exclusive to college campuses:** 50% of nonstudents were at home when the victimization occurred. The rate of rape and sexual assault was 1.2 times higher for nonstudents (7.6 per 1,000) than for students (6.1 per 1,000). Among females living in rural areas, the rate of rape and sexual assault was almost two times higher for nonstudents (8.8 per 1,000) than students (4.6 per 1,000).