

Summary of Sexual Victimization in Prisons and Jails Reported by Inmates, 2011-12

Created on 5/30/13

This summary is based on data gathered from the third National Inmate Survey (NIS-3) from the Bureau of Justice Statistics. The summary highlighted findings that may be useful to the Arizona Department of Health Program Manager and funded contractors for the Sexual Violence Prevention & Education Program. Findings specific to facilities in Arizona are located at the end of the summary. The full report can be retrieved from <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/svpjri1112.pdf>.

Background

Between February 2011 and May 2012, data were collected from 233 state and federal prisons, 358 jails, and 15 special confinement facilities operated by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the U.S. Military, and correctional authorities in Indian country. The survey was administered to 92,449 inmates ages 18 or older which included: 38,251 inmates in state and federal prisons, 52,926 in jails, 573 in ICE facilities, 539 in military facilities, and 160 in Indian country jails.

NIS-3 contained two separate questionnaires. One was a survey of sexual victimization and the other a survey of past drug and alcohol use and treatment. Inmates were randomly assigned to receive one of the two questionnaires. The survey was administered using an audio computer-assisted self-interview. This allowed inmates to use a touch-screen and a computer-assisted questionnaire in which they followed audio instructions delivered via headphones. A small portion of inmates (751) used a short paper form. Inmates were asked to report sexual victimization in the past 12 months or since admission to the facility.

General Findings of Sexual Victimization in Prisons & Jails from 2011 to 2012

- 3,381 reported experiencing one or more incidents
- 4 % of prison inmates reported experiencing one or incidents
- 3.2% of jail inmates reported experiencing one or incidents
- Females were (6.9%) more likely than male inmates (1.7%) to report experiencing inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization.
- Among all prison inmates 2.0% reported an incident involving another inmate and 2.4% reported an incident involving the staff.
- Among all jail inmates 1.6% reported an incident involving another inmate and 1.8% reported an incident involving the staff.

Inmate-on-Inmate Victimization

- Inmates held for violent sexual offenses reported higher rates of inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization (3.7% in prison and 3.9% in jails) than inmates held for other offenses.
- Among state and federal prison inmates, an estimated 6.3% of those identified with serious psychological distress reported that they were sexually victimized by another inmate. In comparison, among prisoners with no indication of mental illness, 0.7% reported being victimized by another inmate.

- Gender differences of inmate-on-inmate victimization were documented.
 - Female heterosexual inmates reported a rate of inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization of 3.6%
 - Female non-heterosexual inmates reported a rate of inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization of 9.4%¹
 - Male heterosexual inmates reported a rate of inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization of 1%.
 - Male non-heterosexual inmates reported a rate of inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization of 11.9%¹
 - Rates of inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization were highest among specific groups of individuals.
 - Inmates who were white or multi-racial compared to black inmates
 - Inmates with college degree or more compared to those who did not complete high school
 - Inmates whose sexual orientation was not heterosexual
 - Those who had experienced sexual victimization before coming to the facility

Staff Sexual Misconduct

- Among all facilities sampled, staff sexual misconduct was highest in the Oglala Sioux Tribal Offenders Facility (South Dakota) (10.8%).
- In five state prisons, at least 9% of surveyed inmates reported being the victims of staff sexual misconduct.
- Reports of staff sexual misconduct were linked to strip searches and pat downs
- Most victims and perpetrators of staff sexual misconduct were of the opposite sex (i.e., male staff assaulted female inmates).
 - Female heterosexual inmates reported a rate of staff sexual misconduct of 1%
 - Female non-heterosexual inmates reported a rate of staff sexual misconduct of 3%¹
 - Male heterosexual inmates reported a rate of staff sexual misconduct of 2%
 - Male non-heterosexual inmates reported a rate of staff sexual misconduct of 6.1%¹
- Rates of staff sexual misconduct were highest among certain groups.
 - Inmates with a college degree
 - Inmates who experienced sexual victimization before coming to the facility
 - Rates of staff sexual misconduct were lowest among certain groups.
 - White inmates compared to black inmates
 - Inmates ages 25 or older

Facility Level Sexual Victimization Rates²

- 11 male prisons, 1 female prison, & 9 jails were designated as high rate facilities* based on inmate-to-inmate victimization (see Table 2 in full report)
- 8 males prisons, 4 female prisons, & 12 jails were designated as high rate facilities based on staff sexual misconduct (see Table 3 in full report)

- Rates in 2 facilities operated by the military, & 1 in Indian Country reported higher than average rates of staff sexual misconduct compared to rates of state and federal prisons (see Table 6 in full report).

Findings for Arizona Facilities

Table 1. Characteristics of jails and prevalence of sexual victimization, by facility, **National Inmate Survey, 2011-12.**

County	Facility	Inmates in custody	Number of respondents to survey	Percentage of inmates reporting sexual victimization
Maricopa	Estrella Jail	925	205	3.7
	Fourth Avenue Jail	1,927	193	1.5
	Towers Jail	167	85	5.4
Pima	Arizona State Prison Complex-Tucson	5,092	273	3.7
Yuma	Yuma County Detention Center	620	162	2.1

*Appendix Tables 4, 5 in full report.

Table 2. Percent of jail inmates reporting victimization, by type of incident and facility, National Inmate Survey, 2011-12.

County	Facility	Inmate-on-inmate victimization	Staff Sexual Misconduct
Maricopa	Estrella Jail	3.7	0.3
	Fourth Avenue Jail	0.6	0.9
	Towers Jail	1.1	4.3
Pima	Arizona State Prison Complex-Tucson	1.3	2.4
Yuma	Yuma County Detention Center	0.5	1.4

*Appendix Tables 2, 6 in full report.

Table 3. Percent of jail inmates reporting nonconsensual sexual acts and abusive sexual contacts, by facility, National Inmate Survey 2011-12.

County	Facility	Nonconsensual sexual acts	Abusive sexual contacts only
Maricopa	Estrella Jail	2.3	0.3
	Fourth Avenue Jail	0.6	0.9
	Towers Jail	1.1	1.8
Pima	Arizona State Prison Complex-Tucson	1.6	2.1
Yuma	Yuma County Detention Center	0.5	1.4

*Appendix Tables 7, 8 in full report.

Limitations

The NIS-3 collected data only on allegations of sexual victimization. Rates of under reporting and false reporting by inmates on the e NIS-3 are unknown.

¹Includes gay, lesbian, bisexual, and other sexual orientations

² High rate facilities of sexual victimization were those that had at least twice the national rates.