

SECTION V

Incidents of Family Violence

An Analysis of 1998 NIBRS Data

This report was prepared using actual data supplied by law enforcement agencies to the Uniform Crime Reporting Program under the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) during calendar year 1998. Even though no efforts are made to project a national family violence experience from these NIBRS data, this report does present a picture of family violence that can be extracted from data drawn from those jurisdictions contributing crime data via the NIBRS.

BACKGROUND

Violent crimes reported to law enforcement in the United States during 1998 exceeded 1.5 million offenses. During 1998, aggravated assault accounted for 64 percent of the violent crimes reported. Robbery comprised 29 percent; forcible rape, 6 percent; and murder, 1 percent. While these Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR) summary statistics provide some information on the composition of violence in the United States, many details regarding the incidents during which these crimes occur remain elusive. In particular, excepting murder offenses, the involvement of family members, friends, and acquaintances is not delineated. When crimes involve family members as victims and offenders, they are generally considered incidents involving family violence.

An empirical examination of family violence is particularly relevant due to recent crime legislation regarding stalking, intimidation, and violence against women. This study focuses on such family violence incidents as reported to the National Incident-Based Reporting System¹ (NIBRS) maintained by the FBI. The aim is to explore the details of these incidents including but not limited to victim and offender profiles, the degree of injury suffered, weapon involvement, and the influence of substance abuse.

The focus on family violence in this study represents a departure from recent efforts to examine such crimes. Previously, much of the information known about crime was derived from one of two sources: the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) or the National Crime Victimization Survey. While each of these programs has contributed to an understanding of the crime that occurs throughout the country, the analysis of family violence incidents has suffered from both methodological and reporting difficulties associated with such crimes. This study, in contrast, relies upon the revised Uniform Crime Reports known as the NIBRS. This data collection program represents an enhancement to the traditional summary UCR statistics by including attributes of the incident beyond the most serious offense. Emphasis on incident characteristics permits analysis of victim, offender, and offense interactions in the same time and place. While the data from this system are still in their infancy in terms of nationally representative information, the NIBRS data submitted during 1998 provide a base to use in beginning exploration of topical studies.

SCOPE

The definition of family violence often varies in terms of the types of offenses included and the relationships that are

considered to be family. In this study, family violence is defined as a crime against a person or a robbery where the relationship of the victim to the offender is identified as within family. More specifically, the offenses included here are murder and nonnegligent homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, simple assault, intimidation, and other offenses including forcible sodomy, sexual assault with an object, forcible fondling, and kidnaping/abduction². These offenses are selected and analyzed to determine the relationship of the victim to the offender. A family violence incident is distinguished by the presence of a target offense, as noted above, and the existence of at least one relationship between the victim and offender that is within family. Within family is defined as including the following relationships: spouse, common-law spouse, parent, sibling, child, grandparent, grandchild, in-law, stepparent, stepchild, stepbrother or stepsister, or other family member. This definition of family violence does not include boyfriend, girlfriend, ex-spouse, ex-boyfriend, or ex-girlfriend. Therefore, a family violence incident is distinguished by the relationship of a violent offense victim to at least one of the offenders in that incident.

These incidents are then analyzed to determine the structure of family violence. The analysis is organized into two sections: 1) an overall analysis of family violence incidents and 2) offense-specific subsections.

DATA

Criminal incidents that became known to law enforcement during 1998 through submission to the FBI's NIBRS are the source of data for this study. During 1998, 14 states submitted a total of 1,626,381 Group A incident reports³ to the FBI.

The NIBRS data collection contains information on each incident and arrest within 22 crime categories. For each offense known to police within these categories, agencies report information on incident, victim, property, offender, and arrestee. Again, since the NIBRS is an incident-based reporting program rather than a summary data collection system, provisions exist for multiple attributes within given incidents. For example, an incident may contain multiple victims, multiple offenders, multiple offenses, and a given incident may possess multiple attributes (i.e., weapons,

² These offenses are defined in the *UCR Handbook*, NIBRS edition.

³ Group A incident reports relate to offenses within 22 crime categories that are considered appropriate indicators of the dimensions and trends in crime. The criteria for designation of a Group A offense are 1) the seriousness of the offense; 2) the frequency or volume of its occurrence; 3) how widespread the offense occurs in the U.S.; and 4) whether the offense will come to the attention to law enforcement. Other factors influencing the definition of offenses included in Group A the NIBRS incident reports are further outlined in the NIBRS edition of the *Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook*.

¹ The NIBRS is fully described in four volumes published by the UCR Program.

substance abuse, property loss, etc.). In the NIBRS, the attributes of up to 99 offenders, 999 victims, 10 offenses, and 99 arrestees may be reported for a single incident. While incidents infrequently involve such multiple attributes, the NIBRS provides for a complete description of such characteristics in these instances. The multiplicity of both individuals and attributes within a single incident presents significant challenges to efficient analyses. However, carefully managed data and structural relationships among the variables provides an avenue to conduct meaningful analyses.

According to the data submitted in 1998, these 1,626,381 incidents contained information on 1,746,555 victims, 1,752,318 offense types, and 1,824,506 offenders. The information pertaining to these aspects of the incidents reported serve as the basis for the statistical information presented herein. Before focusing on family violence, this study presents from the NIBRS data some general information relative to the overall violence picture.

OVERALL VIOLENCE

Of all the violent incidents reported to the NIBRS in 1998, 78 percent involved only a single victim. Of all individual victims reported to have been associated with a criminal incident, 36 percent, or 419,716, were reported to have suffered a violent offense. Table 1 shows that 58 percent of violent offenses were simple assault, 18 percent aggravated assault, 14 percent intimidation, 5 percent robbery, and 1 percent rape. Four percent were for other violent offenses (forcible sodomy, sexual assault with an object, forcible fondling, and kidnaping/abduction).

Table 5.1

Number of Violent Offenses and Percent Distribution, 1998		
Offense	Number	Percent
Murder	849	0.2
Forcible Rape	3,461	0.8
Robbery	19,537	4.7
Aggravated Assault	76,194	18.1
Simple Assault	244,395	58.2
Intimidation	58,600	13.9
Other Offenses	17,236	4.1
Total	420,272	100.0

Focusing on the relationships of the violent crime victims to their offenders reveals family relationships accounted for 23 percent. Specifically, 10 percent were spouses; 2 percent, common-law spouses; 2 percent, parents; 2 percent, siblings; 3 percent, children; and the remainder, otherwise related. (See Table 5.2.)

Among relationships identified in overall violence, 48 percent involved acquaintances of the victims; 12 percent, strangers; and 5 percent, persons involved in mutual violence where victims could not be distinguished from offenders, such as in bar fights or family fights where husband and wife are both charged. Relationships were unknown for 12 percent. (See Table 5.2.)

Table 5.2

Number of Victim to Offender Relationships and Percent Distribution

All Violent Crimes, 1998

Relationship	Number	Percent
Spouse	49,089	10.0
Common-law spouse	10,544	2.1
Parent	11,100	2.3
Sibling	11,726	2.4
Child	12,570	2.6
Grandparent	573	.1
Grandchild	762	.2
In-law	3,411	.7
Stepparent	1,957	.4
Stepchild	2,981	.6
Stepsibling	620	.1
Other family member	10,038	2.0
Offender ^a	24,360	5.0
Otherwise known	234,126	47.6
Stranger	59,229	12.0
Unknown	58,993	12.0
Total ^b	492,079	100.0

^a Cases where a participant in the incident is a victim and offender, such as bar fights or family disputes where both husband and wife are charged with assault.

^b Because of rounding, percentages may not add to total.

The distribution of victims of general violent crime by age, race, and sex may also be important. In terms of age, 76 percent of the violent crime victims were reported to be age 18 and over, 15 percent to be juveniles aged 12-17, and 6 percent children under the age of 12. Males accounted for 42 percent of the victims, and females, 58 percent. Of the victims, 72 percent were white, 25 percent were black, and race was unknown for the remainder. (See Table 5.3.)

In terms of injuries suffered, 50 percent of the victims of violent crime reported no injuries associated with the incident. Yet, 44 percent reported some minor injuries, and 6 percent suffered major injuries. (See Table 5.4.)

To summarize, 24 percent of the offenses in the NIBRS database for 1998 involve a violent crime. Based on victims where injury was provided, half sustained an injury as a result of the incident. The age, sex, and race data show that victims of violence in the NIBRS jurisdictions are predominately adult, white, and female. Family relationships comprise 23 percent of all relationships recorded for violent crimes.

Table 5.3

**Number of Victims and Percent Distribution,
by Age, Sex, and Race, All Violent Crimes, 1998**

	Number	Percent
Age:		
0-11	24,033	5.7
12-17	62,505	14.8
18 and over	321,446	76.3
Unknown	13,509	3.2
Total	421,493	100.0
Sex:		
Male	175,837	41.7
Female	243,196	57.7
Unknown	2,460	0.6
Total	421,493	100.0
Race:		
White	304,515	72.3
Nonwhite	105,623	25.1
Unknown	11,355	2.7
Total ^a	421,493	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

Table 5.4

**Number of Victims and Percent Distribution, Injury Type
All Violent Crimes^a, 1998**

Injury	Number	Percent
Major ^b	20,331	5.6
Minor	159,588	44.3
None	180,459	50.1
Total	360,378	100.0

^a Murder and intimidation are not included in this table.

^b Includes, but is not limited to, apparent broken bones, possible internal injuries, severe lacerations, loss of teeth, and unconsciousness.

While this information provides an overall description of the victims of violence and is useful for describing the general demographics of victims of violence, an examination of the structure of particular crimes that contribute to this overall picture may also be insightful. An analysis of particular types of crimes and comparisons and contrasts to this general picture of violence may suggest some facets of these crimes that are amenable to prevention efforts by law enforcement and the community. Further, law enforcement practice and policy may profit from a closer examination of the structure of particular crimes in terms of the victims, the typical offender, and the situational characteristics such as weapon use, injuries sustained, and substance abuse that may be involved in such crimes. With this in mind, this study undertakes a more in-depth analysis of the family violence incidents in the NIBRS database for 1998.

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Of the 421,493 victims of violent offenses, 112,042, or about 27 percent, were reported to have been related to one or more of their offenders. Incidents that involved this type of victimization (involving a violent offense perpetrated toward an individual by a relative) comprise the universe of incidents that were available for analysis. That is, a family violence incident must include a victim that can be identified as being related to one or more of the offenders involved in the incident.

The distribution of types of offenses against family violence victims are shown in Table 5.5. The majority, 94 percent, were assault offenses (i.e., either intimidation, simple assault, or aggravated assault). This percentage is about 4 points higher than the frequency of assault offenses in overall crimes of violence.

Table 5.5

**Number of Offenses and Percent Distribution
Family Violence, 1998**

Offense	Number	Percent
Murder	205	0.2
Forcible Rape	1,380	1.2
Robbery	153	0.1
Aggravated Assault	16,402	14.6
Simple Assault	80,689	72.0
Intimidation	8,195	7.3
Other Offenses	5,018	4.5
Total ^a	112,042	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to total.

Considering the relevance of the relationship between the victim and the offender, Table 5.6 shows that of all relatives involved in family violence, a spouse/common-law spouse is the most frequent at 43 percent.

Table 5.6

**Number of Victim to Offender Relationships and
Percent Distribution
Family Violence, 1998**

Relationship	Number	Percent
Spouse	49,089	35.1
Common-law spouse	10,544	7.6
Parent	11,100	7.9
Sibling	11,726	8.4
Child	12,570	9.0
Grandparent	573	0.4
Grandchild	762	0.6
In-law	3,411	2.4
Stepparent	1,957	1.4
Stepchild	2,981	2.1
Stepsibling	620	0.4
Other family member	10,038	7.2
Offender ^a	24,360	17.4
Total ^b	139,731	100.0

^a Cases where a participant in the incident is a victim and offender, such as bar fights or family disputes where both husband and wife are charged with assault.

^b Because of rounding, percentages may not add to total.

In terms of demographics, a higher percentage of victims of family violence are over the age of 18 than are the victims of overall crimes of violence (80 percent vs. 76 percent). Additionally, victims of family violence are overwhelmingly female (71 percent for family violence and 58 percent for overall violence). The data from these NIBRS jurisdictions also show that a slightly larger percentage of family violence victims are white compared to victims of overall violence, 74 percent and 72 percent, respectively. (See Tables 5.3 and 5.7.)

Table 5.7

Number of Victims and Percent Distribution, by Age, Sex, and Race, Family Violence, 1998

	Number	Percent
Age:		
0-11	8,430	7.5
12-17	11,674	10.4
18 and over	89,792	80.1
Unknown	2,146	1.9
Total	112,042	100.0
Sex:		
Male	32,144	28.7
Female	79,706	71.1
Unknown	192	0.2
Total	112,042	100.0
Race:		
White	83,232	74.3
Nonwhite	27,217	24.3
Unknown	1,593	1.4
Total ^a	112,042	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

The degree of injury varies somewhat from that suffered by victims of overall crimes of violence as well. Victims of family violence suffered some injury in 53 percent of the cases. (See Table 5.8.) This statistic compares with 50 percent in overall crimes of violence. However, generalizations from this information on victim injury could be limited by either the strict definitions of minor and major injury used in the NIBRS or by the likelihood that such injuries go unreported at the time of the incident.

Table 5.8

Number of Victims and Percent Distribution, Injury Type Family Violence^a, 1998

Injury	Number	Percent
Major ^b	3,973	3.8
Minor	50,650	49.0
None	48,728	47.2
Total	103,351	100.0

^a Murder and intimidation are not included in this table.

^b Includes, but is not limited to, apparent broken bones, possible internal injuries, severe lacerations, loss of teeth, and unconsciousness.

While the general picture of family violence is useful to contrast with that presented by overall crimes of violence, more fine-grained analyses of particular offenses may yield

information about the structure of specific types of family situations that involve such crimes. Such analyses are presented below.

MURDER

Data from the reporting NIBRS jurisdictions show that murder accounts for only about one-fifth of one percent (.2 percent) of all violent offenses, family connected or not. However, there are some differences in the composition of these crimes relative to demographics, substance abuse, weapon use, and offender characteristics.

In the jurisdictions which contributed these NIBRS data, individuals aged 18 and over, females, and whites accounted for larger proportions of family murder victims than of all victims of murder. Conversely, males and nonwhites accounted for a lesser proportion of family-related murders. (See Table 5.9.)

Table 5.9

Percent Distribution of Victims by Age, Sex, and Race Murder, 1998

	Overall	Family
Age:		
0-11	7.0	20.5
12-17	4.4	2.0
18 and over	85.0	74.6
Unknown	3.7	2.9
Sex:		
Male	65.7	43.9
Female	33.6	55.6
Unknown	0.7	2.9
Race:		
White	57.5	67.8
Nonwhite	40.1	30.7
Unknown	2.5	1.5
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

Substance abuse on the part of the offender in family murder appears only slightly more frequently than it does in offenders in the general case (22 percent versus 19 percent). No substance abuse was reported to be involved in 78 percent of the family murders and 81 percent of all murders. (See Table 5.10.)

Table 5.10

Percent Distribution of Offenses where Offenders were Suspected of Substance Abuse Murder, 1998

Suspected Use	Overall	Family
Alcohol	13.3	17.2
Drugs	3.2	3.4
Multiple	2.4	1.5
None	81.1	77.9
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

Firearms were reported to be involved in over 55 percent of the cases of both family and all murders. Comparing family cases to the overall picture of murder shows that personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.) are more prevalently involved in family murders (15 percent versus 8 percent) and knives less prevalent (9 percent versus 13 percent). Other weapon types are about equally represented in both the family cases and the overall murder picture. (See Table 5.11.)

Table 5.11

Percent Distribution of Weapons Used Murder, 1998		
Weapon	Overall	Family
Firearm	54.8	57.1
Knife	13.2	9.3
Blunt Object	5.3	3.9
Personal Weapons	8.2	15.1
Other	6.6	6.3
Multiple	5.3	4.4
None/unknown	6.6	3.9

Finally, focusing on the age of offenders and their victims shows that, proportionally, individuals aged 12-17 less frequently kill adults in family situations than they do in overall murder incidents (61 percent versus 77 percent). When adults are the offenders in either family or general murder, they most often murder other adults (76 percent, family and 87 percent, overall). (See Table 5.12.)

FORCIBLE RAPE

Rape accounts for slightly less than 1 percent of all violent offenses. The NIBRS data show that rape occurs at the same frequency in family violence as in overall violence. However, there are some differences in the composition of rape relative to demographics, substance abuse, weapon use, and offender characteristics.

In particular, children under 12 comprise a larger portion of victims of family rape than of all victims of rape (36 percent versus 12 percent). By gender, males comprise a slightly higher portion of family rape victims (3 percent) than of overall rape victims (2 percent). Likewise, whites comprise slightly more of the family rapes than of the overall rape victim population. (See Table 5.13.)

Table 5.12

Number and Percent Distribution of Confrontations by Victim and Offender Age
Murder, 1998

Victim Age*	Offender Age*			Total
	0-11	12-17	18 and over	
All murder:				
0-11	1 (1.1%) (100.0%)	7 (7.8%) (7.5%)	82 (91.1%) (8.6%)	90 (100.0%) (4.7%)
12-17	0 (0.0%) (0.0%)	14 (23.7%) (15.1%)	45 (76.3%) (4.7%)	59 (100.0%) (5.7%)
18 and over	0 (0.0%) (00.0%)	72 (8.0%) (77.4%)	823 (92.0%) (86.6%)	895 (100.0%) (85.7%)
Total	1 (0.1%) (100.0%)	93 (8.9%) (100.0%)	950 (91.0%) (100.0%)	1,044 (100.0%) (100.0%)
Family murder:				
0-11	1 (1.7%) (100.0%)	6 (10.0%) (33.3%)	53 (88.3%) (21.8%)	60 (100.0%) (22.9%)
12-17	0 (0%) NA	1 (16.7%) (5.6%)	5 (83.3%) (2.1%)	6 (100.0%) (2.3%)
18 and over	0 (0%) NA	11 (5.6%) (61.1%)	185 (94.4%) (76.1%)	196 (100.0%) (74.8%)
Total	1 (0.4%) NA	18 (6.9%) (100.0%)	243 (92.8%) (100.0%)	262 (100.0%) (100.0%)

* Does not include unknown ages.

Table 5.13

Percent Distribution of Victims by Age, Sex, and Race
Forcible Rape, 1998

	Overall	Family
Age:		
0-11	12.4	36.4
12-17	40.1	33.6
18 and over	45.6	28.3
Unknown	2.0	1.7
Total ^a	100.0	100.0
Sex:		
Male	2.1	2.9
Female	97.9	97.1
Unknown	0.0	0.0
Total ^a	100.0	100.0
Race:		
White	78.6	79.6
Nonwhite	18.3	18.1
Unknown	3.1	2.3
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

Substance abuse on the part of the offender occurs less frequently in family rape than in the overall case (10 percent versus 16 percent). At the same time, it is important to note that no substance abuse was reported to be involved in 90 percent of the family rapes and 84 percent of all rapes. (See Table 5.14.)

Table 5.14

Percent Distribution of Offenses where Offenders were Suspected of Substance Abuse
Forcible Rape, 1998

Suspected Use	Overall	Family
Alcohol	12.8	8.2
Drugs	1.3	0.9
Multiple	2.0	0.7
None	83.9	90.3

Table 5.16

Number and Percent Distribution of Confrontations by Victim and Offender Age
Forcible Rape, 1998

Victim Age*	Offender Age*				Total
	0-11	12-17	18 and over		
All forcible rape:					
0-11	155 (12.9%) (90.1%)	321 (26.6%) (22.9%)	730 (60.5%) (11.1%)		1,206 (100.0%) (14.8%)
12-17	13 (0.4%) (7.6%)	983 (28.0%) (70.3%)	2,519 (71.7%) (38.1%)		3,515 (100.0%) (43.0%)
18 and over	4 (0.1%) (2.3%)	95 (2.8%) (6.8%)	3,358 (97.1%) (50.8%)		3,457 (100.0%) (42.3%)
Total	172 (2.1%) (100.0%)	1,399 (17.1%) (100.0%)	6,607 (80.8%) (100.0%)		8,178 (100.0%) (100.0%)
Family forcible rape:					
0-11	57 (9.8%) (95.0%)	160 (27.4%) (73.1%)	366 (62.8%) (30.1%)		583 (100.0%) (39.0%)
12-17	3 (0.6%) (5.0%)	52 (10.3%) (23.7%)	448 (89.1%) (36.8%)		503 (100.0%) (33.7%)
18 and over	0 (0%) (0%)	7 (1.7%) (3.2%)	402 (98.3%) (33.1%)		409 (100.0%) (27.4%)
Total	60 (4.0%) (100.0%)	219 (14.7%) (100.0%)	1,216 (81.3%) (100.0%)		1,495 (100.0%) (100.0%)

* Does not include unknown ages.

Personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.) are the weapons most frequently used in all forcible rapes (overall or family-related). Firearms are infrequently involved in either family or overall rape. Other weapons such as knives, blunt objects, etc., are also only occasionally involved in these offenses. No weapon or unknown weapons were used in 35 percent of the family rapes and in 29 percent of all rapes. (See Table 5.15.)

Table 5.15

Percent Distribution of Weapons Used
Forcible Rape, 1998

Weapon	Overall	Family
Firearm	1.2	0.6
Knife	1.9	0.5
Blunt Object	0.3	0.1
Personal Weapons	63.4	59.6
Other	2.9	2.4
Multiple	1.7	1.3
None/unknown	28.8	35.4
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

Focusing on the age of offenders and their victims shows that children under the age of 12 almost always victimize other children of the same age. Juveniles aged 12-17 also tend to victimize individuals within the same age group in overall rape (70 percent), but in family cases, their victims are disproportionately children aged 11 or younger (73 percent). When adults are the victims in overall or family rape, they most often are raped by other adults (81 percent in each instance). However, when examining victim age regardless of offender age, the percentage of rape victims who are children under 12 years of age is more than twice as high in the family setting than in all rape offenses (15 percent versus 39 percent). (See Table 5.16.)

Finally, the injuries suffered by these rape victims were reported and analyzed. These violent offenses, however, were frequently reported as having involved no or only minor injuries. These data show no substantial difference between family rapes and overall rapes in major injuries being sustained. (See Table 5.17.)

Table 5.17

Number of Victims and Percent Distribution, Injury Type Forcible Rape, 1998		
Injury	Overall	Family
Major	5.5	6.3
Minor	24.6	20.3
None	69.9	73.4

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

In the jurisdictions studied, 18 percent of all violent offenses are aggravated assaults; 15 percent of all family violence offenses are aggravated assaults.

Children under the age of 12 comprise 5 percent of victims of family aggravated assault and 4 percent of all aggravated assault victims. Females, however, make up a considerably greater portion of family aggravated assault victims than they do overall aggravated assault victims (60 percent versus 41 percent). Conversely, males represent a greater portion of overall aggravated assault victims than they do victims of similar offenses in family settings (58 percent versus 40 percent). (See Table 5.18.) The racial patterns for aggravated assault show whites as the predominant victims in both family and overall violence. However, nonwhite victims are slightly more prevalent in family situations than in overall aggravated assaults.

Table 5.18

Percent Distribution of Victims by Age, Sex, and Race Aggravated Assault, 1998		
	Overall	Family
Age:		
0-11	4.2	5.3
12-17	13.3	9.7
18 and over	78.9	82.5
Unknown	3.6	2.5
Total ^a	100.0	100.0
Sex:		
Male	58.0	39.7
Female	41.4	60.1
Unknown	0.6	0.2
Total ^a	100.0	100.0
Race:		
White	64.2	62.8
Nonwhite	32.6	35.7
Unknown	3.2	1.6
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

In family aggravated assault there is more suspected substance abuse on the part of the offender than in the overall cases of aggravated assault (24 percent versus 18 percent). It is important also to note that no substance abuse was reported in 76 percent of the family incidents and 82 percent of overall aggravated assault. (See Table 5.19.)

Table 5.19

Percent Distribution of Offenses where Offenders were Suspected of Substance Abuse Aggravated Assault, 1998		
Suspected Use	Overall	Family
Alcohol	16.4	21.1
Drugs	0.9	1.2
Multiple	1.0	1.2
None	81.7	76.4
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

Firearms, while not the predominant weapons used in this offense, are involved in 16 percent of all aggravated assaults and 10 percent of the family cases. Personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.) and knives are used more frequently in family than in overall aggravated assault. Blunt objects are used with equal frequency in either case. (See Table 5.20.)

Table 5.20

Percent Distribution of Weapons Used Aggravated Assault, 1998		
Weapon	Overall	Family
Firearm	15.8	9.8
Knife	15.8	19.2
Blunt Object	13.9	13.5
Personal Weapons	26.5	29.1
Other	13.1	11.5
Multiple	8.6	11.7
None/unknown	6.3	5.2
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

Studying the age of offenders and their victims reveals that children under the age of 12 most frequently victimize other children of the same age in overall aggravated assault but tend to victimize older persons in family violence situations. Juveniles aged 12-17 proportionally victimize individuals within their own age group (47 percent) and adults (44 percent) in overall aggravated assault, but in family cases juveniles disproportionately victimize adults (67 percent). When adults are the offenders, however, the predominant victims in both the family and overall aggravated assaults are other adults. (See Table 5.21.)

Table 5.21

Number and Percent Distribution of Confrontations of Victim and Offender Age
Aggravated Assault, 1998

Victim Age*	Offender Age*			Total
	0-11	12-17	18 and over	
All Aggravated Assault:				
0-11	925 (14.8%) (62.4%)	1,208 (19.3%) (8.4%)	4,112 (65.8%) (5.8%)	6,245 (100.0%) (7.2%)
12-17	247 (1.9%) (16.7%)	6,768 (52.4%) (47.1%)	5,891 (45.7%) (8.3%)	12,906 (100.0%) (14.8%)
18 and over	310 (0.5%) (20.9%)	6,388 (9.4%) (44.5%)	61,189 (90.1%) (86.0%)	67,887 (100.0%) (78.0%)
Total	1,482 (1.7%) (100.0%)	14,364 (16.5%) (100.0%)	71,192 (81.8%) (100.0%)	87,038 (100.0%) (100.0%)
Family Aggravated Assault:				
0-11	46 (3.2%) (30.5%)	136 (9.5%) (6.0%)	1,249 (87.3%) (7.5%)	1,431 (100.0%) (7.5%)
12-17	28 (1.4%) (18.5%)	613 (31.5%) (27.2%)	1,303 (67.0%) (7.8%)	1,944 (100.0%) (10.2%)
18 and over	77 (0.5%) (51.0%)	1,508 (9.6%) (66.8%)	14,082 (89.9%) (84.7%)	15,667 (100.0%) (82.3%)
Total	151 (0.8%) (100.0%)	2,257 (11.9%) (100.0%)	16,634 (87.4%) (100.0%)	19,042 (100.0%) (100.0%)

* Does not include unknown ages.

The analysis of injuries incurred by aggravated assault victims shows that in terms of major injuries sustained, the occurrence of major injury is slightly higher for overall aggravated assault victims than for family aggravated assault victims. In a greater percentage of both family aggravated assault and the overall case, no injury or only minor injuries were sustained. (See Table 5.22.)

Table 5.22

Number of Victims and Percent Distribution, Injury Type
Aggravated Assault, 1998

Injury	Overall	Family
Major	24.1	23.0
Minor	33.4	37.8
None	42.5	39.2
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

SIMPLE ASSAULT

Simple assault accounts for 58 percent of all violent offenses. Considering family violence, simple assault accounts for 72 percent. In both overall and family simple assault, 5 percent of victims are children under 12 years of age. Considering their percentage of the totals, individuals aged 12-17 are less often victims of family simple assaults than of overall simple assaults (10 percent versus 15 percent). Also, adults account for 77 percent of the victims in overall assaults and 84 percent in family assaults. Females comprise a larger portion of family simple assault victims than of overall simple assault victims (72 percent versus 60 percent). By race, victims are more frequently white in both family simple assaults and overall offenses. (See Table 5.23.)

Table 5.23

Percent Distribution of Victims by Age, Sex, and Race
Simple Assault, 1998

	Overall	Family
Age:		
0-11	4.7	4.7
12-17	15.1	10.1
18 and over	77.4	83.6
Unknown	2.9	1.7
Total ^a	100.0	100.0
Sex:		
Male	39.1	27.4
Female	60.4	72.4
Unknown	0.6	0.2
Total ^a	100.0	100.0
Race:		
White	73.0	76.0
Nonwhite	24.8	22.8
Unknown	2.2	1.2
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

Offenders in family simple assault are more frequently suspected of substance abuse (21 percent) than in the general case (18 percent). No substance abuse was reported in 79 percent of the family simple assaults and 82 percent of all simple assaults. (See Table 5.24.)

Table 5.24

Percent Distribution of Offenses where Offender was Suspected of Substance Abuse
Simple Assault, 1998

Suspected Use	Overall	Family
Alcohol	16.5	19.6
Drugs	0.6	0.8
Multiple	0.7	0.9
None	82.2	78.7
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

By age, children under the age of 12 most frequently victimize other children of the same age in overall simple assaults. Data for family simple assaults, however, show that children under age 12 victimize other children of the same age group 42 percent of the time and adults 45 percent. Data for juveniles aged 12-17 reveal a similar picture; in

overall simple assaults other juveniles of the same age are the most frequent victims at 57 percent. In contrast, family assaults are shown to be more frequently focused on adults, 67 percent. When adults are the offenders in either overall or family assaults, however, the predominant victims are other adults, 86 percent. (See Table 5.25.)

Table 5.25

Number and Percent Distribution of Confrontations of Victim and Offender Age
Simple Assault, 1998

Victim Age*	Offender Age*			Total
	0-11	12-17	18 and over	
All Aggravated Assault:				
0-11	3,655 (18.7%) (64.9%)	4,390 (22.5%) (9.4%)	11,486 (58.8%) (5.1%)	19,531 (100.0%) (7.0%)
12-17	880 (1.9%) (15.6%)	26,306 (57.0%) (56.5%)	18,965 (41.1%) (8.4%)	46,151 (100.0%) (16.6%)
18 and over	1,101 (0.5%) (19.5%)	15,864 (7.5%) (34.1%)	194,825 (92.0%) (86.5%)	211,790 (100.0%) (76.3%)
Total	5,636 (2.0%) (100.0%)	46,560 (16.8%) (100.0%)	225,276 (81.2%) (100.0%)	277,472 (100.0%) (100.0%)
Family Aggravated Assault:				
0-11	239 (4.3%) (41.8%)	683 (12.3%) (7.0%)	4,646 (83.4%) (5.7%)	5,568 (100.0%) (6.0%)
12-17	74 (0.8%) (12.9%)	2,499 (26.0%) (25.7%)	7,058 (73.3%) (8.6%)	9,631 (100.0%) (10.4%)
18 and over	259 (0.3%) (45.3%)	6,538 (8.5%) (67.3%)	70,467 (91.2%) (85.8%)	77,264 (100.0%) (83.6%)
Total	572 (0.6%) (100.0%)	9,720 (10.5%) (100.0%)	82,171 (88.9%) (100.0%)	92,463 (100.0%) (100.0%)

* Does not include unknown ages.

INTIMIDATION

Intimidation, which involves placing victims in fear without the use of weapons, accounts for about 14 percent of all violent crimes and 7 percent of family violence offenses. Young persons are infrequent victims of intimidation for both overall and family-related offenses. Children under age 12 account for 2 percent of the victims in either case, while juveniles aged 12-17 represent about 9 percent of the overall intimidation victims and 4 percent of the family victims. Adults are the predominant victims of intimidation, 84 percent for overall intimidation and 92 percent of the family victims. Females comprise a larger portion of family intimidation victims than they do victims of overall intimidation, 75 percent versus 63 percent. Also, whites account for 3 out of every 4 victims within family and overall intimidation. (See Table 5.26.)

Table 5.26

Percent Distribution of Victims by Age, Sex, and Race
Intimidation, 1998

	Overall	Family
Age:		
0-11	1.7	1.5
12-17	9.2	4.0
18 and over	84.2	92.0
Unknown	5.0	2.5
Total ^a	100.0	100.0
Sex:		
Male	35.8	24.5
Female	63.3	75.3
Unknown	0.8	0.2
Total ^a	100.0	100.0
Race:		
White	77.6	74.5
Nonwhite	18.5	23.9
Unknown	4.0	1.6
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

Suspected substance abuse on the part of the offender occurs more frequently in cases of family intimidation than it does in the overall case (15 percent versus 6 percent). As was the case with the other assault offense categories, most intimidation offenses were reported to involve no substance abuse by the offender, 85 percent in family intimidations and 94 percent in overall intimidations. Alcohol use was, however, much more prevalent in family offenses than it was in overall offenses, 13 percent versus 5 percent. (See Table 5.27.)

Table 5.27

Percent Distribution of Offenses where Offender was Suspected of Substance Abuse Intimidation, 1998

Suspected Use	Overall	Family
Alcohol	5.2	13.1
Drugs	0.4	1.0
Multiple	0.4	0.8
None	94.0	85.1
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

Weapons involvement is not applicable to these incidents.

As was seen for the other assault offenses, young children under age 12 generally victimize other children of the same age (39 percent) and adults (49 percent) in overall intimidations. The number of cases reported in this age category for family intimidation, however, is too small to state any substantive findings.

Juveniles aged 12-17 show the same pattern of intimidation with other juveniles of their age group being victimized about 41 percent of the time and adults about 51 percent of the time in overall intimidation offenses. Looking at family intimidations among this same group of offenders, one finds that adults are the predominant victims at 84 percent. Adult offenders overwhelmingly victimize other adults (9 out of 10) for both family and general intimidations. (See Table 5.28.)

Table 5.28

Number and Percent Distribution of Confrontations by Victim and Offender Age Intimidation, 1998

Victim Age*	Offender Age*			Total
	0-11	12-17	18 and over	
All Intimidation:				
0-11	233 (8.1%) (38.7%)	595 (21.5%) (8.4%)	1,944 (70.4%) (4.6%)	2,762 (100.0%) (5.5%)
12-17	71 (1.3%) (12.3%)	2,916 (51.2%) (41.1%)	2,707 (47.5%) (6.3%)	5,694 (100.0%) (11.3%)
18 and over	283 (0.7%) (49.1%)	3,583 (8.5%) (50.5%)	38,116 (90.8%) (89.1%)	41,982 (100.0%) (83.2%)
Total	577 (1.1%) (100.0%)	7,094 (14.1%) (100.0%)	42,767 (84.8%) (100.0%)	50,438 (100.0%) (100.0%)
Family Intimidation:				
0-11	9 (3.0%) (24.3%)	32 (10.6%) (4.3%)	260 (86.4%) (3.3%)	301 (100.0%) (3.5%)
12-17	3 (0.8%) (8.1%)	85 (22.6%) (11.5%)	288 (76.6%) (3.7%)	376 (100.0%) (4.4%)
18 and over	25 (0.3%) (67.6%)	623 (7.9%) (84.2%)	7,277 (91.8%) (93.0%)	7,925 (100.0%) (92.1%)
Total	37 (0.4%) (100.0%)	740 (8.6%) (100.0%)	7,825 (91.0%) (100.0%)	8,602 (100.0%) (100.0%)

* Does not include unknown ages.

OTHER VIOLENT OFFENSES

Other violent offenses include forcible sodomy, sexual assault with an object, forcible fondling, and kidnaping/abduction. In the jurisdictions studied, these offenses account for about 4 percent of violent offenses, family or overall. When one looks at data for overall offenses, children under 12 years of age comprise about 41 percent of the victims. However, in family situations children in this age group represent 62 percent of all victims. Juveniles aged 12-17 comprise 30 percent of the victims in overall offenses and 23 percent in family occurrences. Females are most frequently the victims of these offenses, comprising 74 and 76 percent of the victims of family and overall offenses, respectively. Also, white individuals are the predominant victims of both overall and family offenses, comprising 80 percent in both categories. (See Table 5.29.)

Table 5.29

Percent Distribution of Victims by Age, Sex, and Race Other Violent Offenses, 1998		
	Overall	Family
Age:		
0-11	40.6	62.4
12-17	29.8	23.3
18 and over	27.8	12.5
Unknown	1.9	1.9
Total ^a	100.0	100.0
Sex:		
Male	23.5	25.7
Female	76.1	73.9
Unknown	0.4	0.3
Total ^a	100.0	100.0
Race:		
White	81.7	84.0
Nonwhite	14.8	12.5
Unknown	3.6	3.5
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

Offenders in family offenses of this type are less frequently suspected of substance abuse than they are in the overall case (6 percent versus 8 percent). It is important to note, however, that no substance abuse was reported in more than 9 out of 10 offenders in both the family and overall cases. (See Table 5.30.)

Table 5.30

Percent Distribution of Offenses where Offender was Suspected of Substance Abuse Other Violent Offenses, 1998

Suspected Use	Overall	Family
Alcohol	6.4	4.4
Drugs	0.8	0.7
Multiple	0.8	0.5
None	92.0	94.4
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

The main weapon reported used against these victims is personal weapons (hand, fists, feet, etc.). This finding remains consistent when looking at either family or overall cases. Offenders used no weapon or unknown weapons in 31 and 36 percent of the cases for both overall and family offenses, respectively. (See Table 5.31.)

Table 5.31

Percent Distribution of Weapons Used Other Violent Offenses, 1998

Weapon	Overall	Family
Firearm	3.3	0.7
Knife	1.4	0.7
Blunt Object	0.4	0.2
Personal Weapons	59.6	58.8
Other	3.3	3.2
Multiple	1.3	0.9
None/unknown	30.8	35.5
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

Data on the age of offenders and their victims show that individuals under the age of 12 almost exclusively victimize other children of the same age. This is evidenced in 95 percent of the family offenses cases and 93 percent of the overall general offenses. Juveniles aged 12-17, however, less frequently assault individuals within their same age group (43 percent) than they do victims under the age of 12 (52 percent) in overall general offenses. In family cases, 85 percent of these offenders in the 12-17 age group victimize children under age 12 and only 13 percent victimize similar-aged individuals. In overall other offense incidents, adult offenders victimize children, juveniles, and adults with almost the same frequency. However, within families, children under the age of 12 comprise 58 percent of the victims; juveniles aged 12-17, 27 percent; and adults the remainder. (See Table 5.32.)

Table 5.32

Number and Percent Distribution of Confrontations by Victim and Offender Age
Other Violent Offenses, 1998

Victim Age*	Offender Age*			Total
	0-11	12-17	18 and over	
All Other Offenses:				
0-11	976 (13.7%) (93.1%)	1,871 (26.2%) (51.9%)	4,299 (60.2%) (34.5%)	7,146 (100.0%) (41.8%)
12-17	59 (1.1%) (5.6%)	1,548 (29.2%) (42.9%)	3,704 (69.7%) (29.7%)	5,311 (100.0%) (31.1%)
18 and over	13 (0.3%) (1.2%)	186 (4.0%) (5.2%)	4,450 (95.7%) (35.7%)	4,649 (100.0%) (27.2%)
Total	1,048 (6.1%) (100.0%)	3,605 (21.1%) (100.0%)	12,453 (72.8%) (100.0%)	17,106 (100.0%) (100.0%)
Family Other Offenses				
0-11	287 (8.4%) (95.0%)	790 (23.0%) (85.0%)	2,355 (68.6%) (57.7%)	3,432 (100.0%) (64.6%)
12-17	13 (1.1%) (4.3%)	124 (10.2%) (13.4%)	1,084 (88.8%) (26.5%)	1,221 (100.0%) (23.0%)
18 and over	2 (0.3%) (0.7%)	15 (2.3%) (1.6%)	645 (97.4%) (15.8%)	662 (100.0%) (12.5%)
Total	302 (5.7%) (100.0%)	929 (17.5%) (100.0%)	4,084 (76.8%) (100.0%)	5,315 (100.0%) (100.0%)

* Does not include unknown ages.

Most of these offenses, 97 percent, involved no or only minor injuries to victims. The occurrence of major injury was negligible (3 percent) in both family and overall other violent offenses. (See Table 5.33.)

Table 5.33

Number of Victims and Percent Distribution, Injury Type
Other Violent Offenses, 1998

Injury	Overall	Family
Major	2.5	2.6
Minor	13.8	11.9
None	83.7	85.6
Total ^a	100.0	100.0

^a Because of rounding, percentages may not add to totals.

CONCLUSION

While the generalizations from an analysis of the presented data are currently limited only to the jurisdictions reporting, this analysis demonstrates that the data compiled by the NIBRS can be used effectively for analyzing many aspects of violent crime. This study shows that 27 percent of all violence occurs in a family setting and the majority of these offenses are assaultive in nature involving offenses such as intimidation, simple assault, or aggravated assault. In the jurisdictions studied, whites, adults, and females

were found to be the predominant victims of family violence, but within particular offenses, some variance with this general profile is evident. This seems to be particularly clear in sex offenses where children under the age of 12 were found to comprise larger percentages of the victims associated with family violence. The analysis for weapon use, substance abuse, and injury may be useful for further understanding the problems of family violence.

The reader, however, must be mindful of several limitations particular to the study of the NIBRS data in general and to family violence in particular. For instance, the NIBRS data collection cannot capture repeat calls to a given location. Additionally, no geographic identifiers are specific enough to support detailed geographic mapping of the data. And it is important to remember that data quality issues with the NIBRS are still evolving and statistical compatibility with other crime information systems remains to be studied. Further, the reporting of some information such as substance abuse in family violence may be hampered by the reluctance of or lack of opportunity for victims to come forward at the time of the offense. Nonetheless, this analysis of family violence, with its comparisons and contrasts to the overall picture of violence, may suggest some facets of these crimes that are amenable to efforts by law enforcement and the community to investigate and prevent such incidents.

