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BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS
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PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH IN JUVENILE FACILITIES WHO REPORTED BEING SEXUALLY VICTIMIZED DECLINED FROM 2012 TO 2018

WASHINGTON — In 2018, an estimated 7.1% of youth in juvenile correctional facilities reported being sexually victimized during the prior 12 months, down from 9.5% in 2012, the Bureau of Justice Statistics announced today. From 2012 to 2018, the percentage of youth who reported forced or coerced sexual victimization involving another youth declined from 2.5% to 1.9%, and the percentage of youth who reported sexual misconduct by facility staff declined from 7.7% to 5.8%.

BJS defines sexual victimization in a juvenile facility as any sexual activity with facility staff, or any forced or coerced sexual activity with another youth. Force or coercion includes physical force, threat of force, or other forms of pressure or coercion, such as threatening to get the youth in trouble, giving the youth money, favors, protection, or special treatment, or repeatedly asking the youth to engage in sexual activity. The findings are based on a survey that was completed by 6,049 youth in 327 juvenile facilities, including at least one juvenile facility in every state and the District of Columbia.

In all, 4.0% of youth in juvenile facilities reported experiencing sexual victimization involving force or coercion. About half of these youth reported forced or coerced sexual victimization by youth (1.9% of all youth in juvenile facilities) and about half reported forced or coerced sexual victimization by staff (2.1%).

Among the 1.9% of youth in juvenile facilities who reported sexual victimization involving force or coercion by another youth, about two-thirds (1.2% of all youth in juvenile facilities) reported that the victimization involved sexual acts—sexual activity involving touching or penetrating of sexual body parts. An estimated 0.5% reported being forced or coerced into other sexual activity with another youth, such as kissing, looking at private body parts, or being shown something sexual. About 0.2% of youth who reported forced or coerced sexual activity with another youth did not provide information about the type of activity.

Among the 5.8% of youth in juvenile facilities who reported sexual victimization by facility staff, about one-third (2.1% of all youth in juvenile facilities) reported that the staff sexual misconduct involved force or coercion, while about two-thirds (3.9%) did not include a report of force or coercion.

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In 2018, female youth (4.7%) in juvenile facilities were more likely than male youth (1.6%) to report youth-on-youth sexual victimization. Male youth (6.1%) were more likely than female youth (2.9%) to report staff sexual misconduct. About two-thirds of the male youth who reported staff sexual misconduct did not include a report of force or coercion (4.1%). Regardless of whether the youth were male or female, the majority of staff sexual misconduct reported by youth involved sexual acts—sexual activity that involved touching or penetrating of sexual body parts.

Out of the 113 facilities that had enough interviews of eligible sampled youth to qualify for facility-level rankings, 12 were identified as high-rate and 14 as low-rate, based on the prevalence of sexual victimization reported by youth. Among states that were eligible for state-level estimates and had at least a 50% response rate among eligible sampled youth, the rate of sexual victimization reported by youth ranged from 0.0% to 12.3%.

These statistics are based on the National Survey of Youth in Custody, 2018, conducted from March to December of 2018. The survey is part of BJS’s National Prison Rape Statistics Program and collects data on allegations of sexual victimization as required by the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-79).

The report, [*Sexual Victimization Reported by Youth in Juvenile Facilities, 2018*](#) (NCJ 253042), was written by BJS statistician Erica L. Smith and former BJS statistician Jessica Stroop. The report, related documents and additional information about BJS’s statistical publications and programs are available on the BJS website at www.bjs.gov.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice is the principal federal agency responsible for collecting, analyzing and disseminating reliable statistics on crime and criminal justice in the United States. Jeffrey H. Anderson is the director.

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