



**VIOLENT VICTIMIZATION OF  
COLLEGE STUDENTS  
1995 - 2002**

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## VIOLENT VICTIMIZATION OF COLLEGE STUDENTS 1995—2005

In January 2005, the Bureau of Justice Statistics released a special report from the National Crime Victimization Survey titled “Violent Victimization of College Students, 1995-2002.” College students were defined as those persons ages 18 to 24 who reported being enrolled full- or part-time in a college or university. Nonstudents in the same age category were those who did not attend a college or university but may have attended another type of school. The following statistics and the data table were taken from the report.

- From 1995—2002, violence against college students decreased 54 percent, while violence against nonstudents of similar ages fell 45 percent.
- Average annual rates of violent victimization for college students were lower than for nonstudents for robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. Rates for rape/sexual assault for the two groups did not differ significantly.
- Simple assault accounted for 63 percent of violent victimizations against college students. Rape/sexual assault accounted for about 6 percent of violent victimizations against college students.
- The average annual overall violent crime rate was nearly twice the rate for male students as for female students. Among nonstudents, overall violence rates against males were higher than that of females, but the difference between male and female nonstudents was much smaller.
- For both whites and blacks, nonstudents had higher rates of violent victimizations than college students. For Hispanics, the violent victimization rates of students and nonstudents were nearly identical.
- Except for rape/sexual assault, college students were most often violently victimized by people they did not know. Victims of rape/sexual assault were about 4 times more likely to be victimized by someone they knew than by a stranger.
- About 4 in 10 violent crimes against college students were committed by offender(s) who were perceived by victims to be using drugs/alcohol. A similar proportion was unsure if the offender(s) were using drugs/alcohol.
- Slightly more than 5 percent of student victims of violent crime thought the offender to be part of a gang. Of the rest, 55 percent did not perceive the offender to be involved in a gang, and 39 percent were unsure.
- College students were more likely to be violently victimized off campus than on campus. Off campus, violent crimes were more likely to occur in the evening or at night than during the day (72 percent vs. 25 percent). On campus, 56 percent occurred during the day.
- About two-thirds of violently victimized college students said that the offender did not have a weapon.

- When a weapon was used in a violent crime, firearms were the weapon of choice about one-quarter of the time. Slightly more than 25 percent did not know the type of weapon used or if a weapon was used.
- About 35 percent of violent victimizations against college students were reported to police. Victimization of nonstudents were more likely to be reported than those of college students.
  - The most common reasons given by college students for not reporting crime were that the violence was a private or personal matter and that the crime was minor or resulted in no loss.

**Table 1. Violent victimization rates of college students and nonstudents, by type of crime, 1995-2002**

Year	Rates per 1,000 persons ages 18-24											
	Violent crime		Rape/sexual assault		Robbery		Aggravated assault		Simple assault		Serious violent crime <sup>a</sup>	
	College students	Non-students	College students	Non-students	College students	Non-students	College students	Non-students	College students	Non-students	College students	Non-students
1995	87.7	101.6	4.3	4.4	8.4	12.2	14.5	22.2	60.5	62.8	27.3	38.8
2002	40.6	56.1	3.3	4.1	2.9*	6.8	9.1	13.2	25.3	32.0	15.3	24.1
Average annual	60.7	75.3	3.8	4.1	5.0	9.5	13.5	17.7	38.4	44.1	22.3	31.3
Percent change, 1995-02	-53.7%**	-44.8%**	-23.3%	-7.0%	-65.7%**	-44.1%**	-37.1%†	-40.5%**	-58.1%**	-49.1%**	-43.8%**	-37.9%**

\*Based on 10 or fewer sample cases.  
 \*\*The difference from 1995 to 2002 is at the 95%-significance level.  
 †The difference from 1995 to 2002 is at the 90%-significance level.  
<sup>a</sup>Serious violent crime includes rape/sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault.

For a link to the full report, go to: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/vvcs02.pdf>