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MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS OF SERIOUS VIOLENT CRIME VICTIMS EXPERIENCED SOCIO-EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS

WASHINGTON – In 2009–12, more than two-thirds (68 percent) of serious violent crime victims experienced socio-emotional problems as a result of the victimization, the Justice Department’s Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) announced today. Serious violent crime includes rape or sexual assault, robbery and aggravated assault.

In the BJS National Crime Victimization Survey, socio-emotional problems are defined as the victim’s experience of moderate to severe emotional distress, increased relationship problems, or disruptions at school or work resulting from the victimization.

Regardless of the type of violence, a greater percentage of victims of intimate partner violence than violence committed by strangers experienced socio-emotional problems. After controlling for other variables, intimate partner violence victims were over five times more likely to experience socio-emotional problems than victims of violence by strangers.

About three-quarters of victims of rape or sexual assault (75 percent), robbery (74 percent), violence involving a firearm (74 percent) and violence resulting in medical treatment for injuries (77 percent) experienced socio-emotional problems. In comparison, about half of victims of simple assault (51 percent), which does not involve serious physical injuries or a weapon, experienced socio-emotional problems from the victimization.

Overall, a greater percentage of victims of violence who experienced socio-emotional problems (54 percent) reported their victimization to police than victims who did not experience socio-emotional problems (38 percent). Twelve percent of victims who experienced socio-emotional problems received victim services, compared to 5 percent of victims reporting no socio-emotional problems. Among victims with socio-emotional problems, more than 40 percent neither reported to police nor received victim services.

(MORE)

Other findings include—

- Most violent crime victims with socio-emotional problems suffered from one or more emotional (91 percent) or physical (61 percent) symptoms for at least a month or more, such as feeling anxious, depressed, or angry, or having trouble sleeping.
- A greater percentage of victims reported socio-emotional problems when the violence occurred at the victim's home than at other locations.
- Female victims were 2.6 times more likely than males to experience socio-emotional problems.
- Older victims ages 35 to 54 and age 55 or older were significantly more likely than victims ages 12 to 17 to experience socio-emotional problems.
- A similar percentage of non-Hispanic whites (57 percent), non-Hispanic blacks (58 percent), Hispanics (54 percent), and other races (56 percent) experienced socio-emotional problems as a result of their violent victimization.
- A greater percentage of violent crime victims who lived in households headed by a single female with (67 percent) and without (79 percent) children experienced socio-emotional problems than those who lived in households headed by a single male with (47 percent) and without (45 percent) children.

The report, *Socio-emotional Impact of Violent Crime* (NCJ 247076), was written by BJS statisticians Lynn Langton and Jennifer Truman. The report, related documents and additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics' statistical publications and programs can be found on the BJS website at <http://www.bjs.gov/>.

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The Office of Justice Programs (OJP), headed by Assistant Attorney General Karol V. Mason, provides federal leadership in developing the nation's capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice, and assist victims. OJP has six components: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; the Office for Victims of Crime; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking. More information about OJP can be found at <http://www.ojp.gov>.