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PRESS RELEASE

Juvenile Justice Administrators Reported Over 1,200 Youth-on-Youth and Nearly 500 Staff-on-Youth Substantiated Sexual Victimization Incidents in 2013–2018

WASHINGTON – The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is announcing the release of *Substantiated Incidents of Sexual Victimization Reported by Juvenile Justice Authorities, 2013–2018*. Administrators in state juvenile systems and locally and privately operated juvenile facilities reported 1,263 substantiated incidents of sexual victimization perpetrated by youth and 499 perpetrated by staff over a six-year period of 2013–18.

Substantiated incidents involved allegations that were investigated and determined to have occurred based on a preponderance of the evidence. These incidents could have had multiple victims or multiple perpetrators, which could result in more persons involved than the total number of incidents.

In all, there were nearly three times as many substantiated incidents of youth-on-youth abusive sexual contact (952) as nonconsensual sexual acts (312). Also, there were three times as many victims of abusive sexual contact (1,054) as victims of nonconsensual sexual acts (358).

Regarding facility staff, two-thirds (68%) of staff-on-youth sexual victimization incidents involved sexual misconduct and a third (32%) involved sexual harassment. In incidents of staff-perpetrated sexual victimization, there were 657 victims and 511 perpetrators.

“An important finding is that nearly half of all staff-perpetrated incidents involved staff who had worked at the facility for one year or less,” said Dr. Alexis Piquero, Director of BJS.

About 19% of youth-on-youth nonconsensual sexual acts and 7% of abusive sexual contacts occurred in the victim’s cell or room. Nearly 40% of staff sexual misconduct incidents occurred in the victim’s cell or room (19%) or in a program area such as a commissary, cafeteria or workshop (19%).

Youth-on-youth abusive sexual contact incidents (63%) were more likely to be reported by the victim than nonconsensual act incidents (49%). An estimated 23% of nonconsensual sexual acts were reported by another nonvictim youth, compared to 13% of abusive sexual contacts. Sixty-three percent of staff sexual harassment incidents were reported by the victim, compared to 47% of staff sexual misconduct incidents.

About 63% of victims and 73% of perpetrators of youth-on-youth sexual victimization were male. Female staff were 29% of the perpetrators of sexual harassment and 61% of sexual misconduct perpetrators.

Victims received counseling or mental health treatment following 58% of nonconsensual sexual acts and 45% of abusive sexual contacts. Staff perpetrators of sexual harassment were reprimanded or disciplined in 40% of incidents and discharged, terminated or denied contract renewal in 32%. Legal action occurred in 42% of incidents of staff sexual misconduct.

“The administrative records obtained in our Survey of Sexual Victimization complement the self-reported experiences of sexual victimization captured by our National Survey of Youth in Custody. Together, these collections, which are part of our PREA program, give stakeholders a more complete picture of victimization in juvenile facilities that can be used to inform policy and prevention efforts,” said Director Piquero.

The report also contains statistics related to 1,814 incidents of youth-on-youth sexual harassment during 2013-18, which are presented separately from other types of youth-perpetrated victimizations. There were 2,170 victims and 2,047 perpetrators of youth-on-youth sexual harassment. A loss of privileges was the most-reported sanction for youth perpetrators of sexual harassment (57%).

The BJS report [*Substantiated Incidents of Sexual Victimization Reported by Juvenile Justice Authorities, 2013–2018*](#), written by BJS Statistician Emily D. Buehler, PhD; related documents; and additional information about BJS’s statistical publications and programs are available on the BJS website at bjs.ojp.gov.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics, a division of the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Justice Programs, is the principal federal agency responsible for collecting, analyzing and disseminating reliable statistics on crime and criminal justice in the United States. Alexis R. Piquero, PhD, is the director. More information about BJS and criminal justice statistics can be found at bjs.ojp.gov.

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