TROUBLING PERCEPTIONS

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MINNESOTA PLANNING

Minnesota Planning is charged with developing a long-range plan for the state, stimulating public participation in Minnesota's future and coordinating public policy with state agencies, the Legislature and other units of government.

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MINNESOTA CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTER

The Minnesota Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center, housed at Minnesota Planning, conducts analysis on the criminal justice system to promote better policy development.

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January 1994

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GLOSSARY

Below are generally accepted crime definitions, along with the related questions from the 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey.*

Rape involves carnal knowledge through the use of force or threat of force, including attempts. Statutory rape (without force) is excluded. Both heterosexual and homosexual rape are included.

Question 19: Did anyone force you, or attempt to force you, to have sexual intercourse with them?

Robbery involves completed or attempted theft, directly from a person by force or threat of force, with or without a weapon.

Question 14: Did anyone take something directly from you by using force, such as by a stick-up, mugging or threat?

Assault involves a physical attack or threat of attack. Assault can be simple or aggravated. Rape and attempted rape are excluded from this category, as well as robbery and attempted robbery.

Aggravated assault involves an attack or attempted attack with a weapon, regardless of whether or not an injury occurred, and attack without a weapon when serious bodily injury occurs.

Question 16: Were you knifed, shot at or attacked with some other weapon by anyone at all (other than any incidents already mentioned)?

Question 17: Did anyone threaten to beat you up or threaten you with a knife, gun or some other weapon NOT including telephone threats (other than any incidents already mentioned)?

Simple assault involves a physical attack without a weapon that produces minor injury or when injury is only threatened.

Question 18: Did anyone hit you, attack you or beat you up (other than any incident already mentioned)?

Burglary involves unlawful or forcible entry or attempted entry of a residence. This crime usually, but not always, involves theft. As long as the person entering has no legal right to be present in the structure, a burglary has occurred. Furthermore, the structure need not be the house itself; illegal entry of a garage, shed or any other structure on the premises also constitutes burglary.

Question 22: Did anyone break in or try to break in to your car or truck, home or some other building on your property?

Larceny involves theft or attempted theft of property without involving force or illegal entry. Larceny is categorized as personal or household larceny.

Question 23: Did anyone damage, steal or try to steal something that belonged to you?

Troubling Perceptions

1993 Minnesota Crime Survey

SUMMARY

All Minnesotans, regardless of their age, gender, income level or residence, are potential crime victims. In 1992, more than 464,600 crimes were reported in Minnesota, yet national estimates indicate that as many as three out of every five crimes may go unreported.

The 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey,* conducted by Minnesota Planning and the Department of Public Safety, asked a random sample of more than 5,000 Minnesotans age 15 and older about their experiences with crime in 1992. The results, based on a response rate of more than 72 percent, provide a baseline for measuring citizens' experience with crime and their fear of it, as well as the relationship between these.

Among the key findings of the 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey* are:

■ Thirty-one percent of Minnesotans surveyed said they were crime victims in 1992. Of the respondents, 28 percent were victims of property crime and 10 percent were victims of violent crime. (Respondents who were victims of both property and violent crime were counted only once.)

■ Sixty-eight percent of the 15- to 24-year-old respondents who live in cities in Hennepin and Ramsey counties were crime victims.

■ Forty-three percent of all victims of violent crime ages 15 to 24 said their assailant was a juvenile, compared to 8 percent for victims older than 24.

■ Relatives, friends or acquaintances were identified most often as the assailants by the victims of violent crime.

■ Both the incidence of crime and fear of crime were highest among respondents who said they lived in a city in Hennepin or Ramsey county. Forty-five percent of this group said they were crime victims, 41 percent were victims of property crime, and 14 percent were victims of violent crime. Nearly three-quarters of all respondents living in these cities, including 88 percent of the females, reported being afraid to walk alone at night within a mile of their home.

■ Forty-four percent of the Minnesotans surveyed said they were afraid to walk alone at night within a mile of home. Six

MINNESOTA MILESTONES

One of the state's long-range goals articulated in *Minnesota Milestones* is to have communities that are safe, friendly and caring.

The crime survey provides data by which progress toward this goal can be measured based on two specific milestones: the percentage of people who have been crime victims and the percentage of people who feel safe in their communities.

The intent of Minnesota Planning is to conduct the *Minnesota Crime Survey* every three years.

I think burglary is a heinous crime and should be dealt with more harshly. All of my neighbors have been burglarized and as a result live in a constant state of fear and hypervigilance. When your home is violated and your hard-earned possessions are gone, your life is never the same.
— 44-year-old man from Hennepin County

I have a daughter who was kidnapped off the street and raped a couple of years ago. [The rapist] was caught and is in prison.... She has been emotionally hurt badly and tried suicide after this. I think the victims so many times are hurt worse than the criminal.
— 49-year-old man from Hennepin County

I live in rural Minnesota, 50 miles away from the cities, and I'm fortunate enough to not have to be fearful of crime every day of my life. I think it's possible for the system to make those who are fearful more comfortable in their environment. We should do whatever it takes.
— 18-year-old man from McLeod County

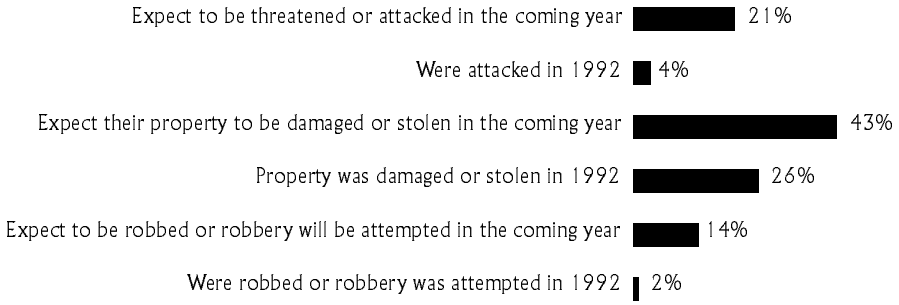
out of 10 female respondents were afraid, and the rate was highest for females living in cities. One of every four males surveyed said he was afraid to walk alone at night. Crime victims were more likely to be afraid than nonvictims.

■ The percentage of respondents who believe they are likely to be victims of violent crime in the next year is much higher than the percentage reporting they had been victims in 1992.

■ Minnesotans are pessimistic about the possibility of reducing violent crime. Forty-three percent said that violent crime in their community was worse than three years ago, and 51 percent expected it to get worse in the next three years.

■ More than 75 percent of respondents believe that use of drugs, breakdown of the family and lack of parental discipline contribute to violent crime. More than half said that gangs, alcohol, a criminal justice system that is too easy, moral decay, availability of guns, television and movie violence, and the economy and poverty were responsible.

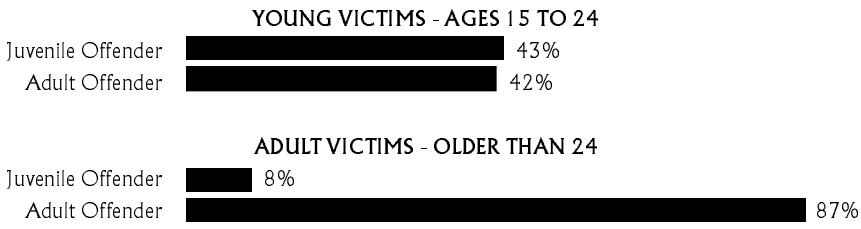
FEAR VERSUS ACTUAL EXPERIENCE



■ Many more people thought they would become victims of violent crime in the future than those who said they were victims of violent crime in 1992. Respondents' fear of being robbed was seven times greater than their actual chances of being robbed, and their fear of assault was five times greater.

Source: 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey*, Minnesota Planning

OFFENDERS AND VICTIMS



■ Young people tend to prey on their own age group, not older people. Victims of violent crime between the ages of 15 and 24 were far more likely than older victims to say the offender was a juvenile (under age 18).

■ The selected crimes in this graph are being threatened or assaulted with a weapon; being threatened, attacked, hit or beaten; and rape.

Source: 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey*, Minnesota Planning

VICTIM CHARACTERISTICS

	Victim of Crime	Victim of Property Crime	Victim of Violent Crime
TOTAL	**31%**	**28%**	**10%**
GENDER			
Male	32	29	10
Female	31	26	10
AGE			
15-24	47	39	26
25-34	37	31	12
35-44	33	31	7
45-54	28	25	4
55-64	20	19	3
65+	15	13	3
TYPE OF COMMUNITY			
Rural area	26	23	9
Town	27	24	8
Suburb	31	28	8
City/not center	37	33	12
Center city	44	39	15

■ The younger the respondent, the more he or she was likely to be a victim of crime in 1992. Place of residence also played a role.

Note: Respondents who said they were victims of both property and violent crimes are counted only once in the "Victim of Crime" category.
Source: 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey*, Minnesota Planning

The survey results describe how fear affects people's lives, who is most likely to be afraid of crime and who is most likely to be a victim. Respondents were compared by gender, age, type of community where they live, geographic regions, employment, number of people in the household, marital status, family income, education level, race and ethnicity. Because some races were underrepresented in survey responses, racial breakdowns are not provided.

The survey measured violent crimes — those involving person-to-person contacts, such as robbery or mugging, assault with a weapon, rape and forced sexual activity, hitting, beating and other attacks, as well as threats to commit any of these behaviors. Murder was not included in the survey. Property crimes covered in the survey included breaking into or attempting to break into vehicles, homes or other buildings; theft or attempted theft and damage to property.

Each section of the report presents basic descriptive data. Also included is a statistical analysis of the best predictors of who will be crime victims and who will be most afraid of crime.

It is difficult for individuals to develop a realistic perception of their risk of becoming victims of crime. The number of articles in newspapers or magazines or the minutes of television and radio broadcasts given to crime reporting do not necessarily reflect the true incidence of crime. Media reporting of exceptionally violent crimes may increase fear beyond actual crime risk levels. The next four sections will describe the major findings of the survey and the more complex relationships between crime, victim characteristics and fear.

The family breakdown, no one at home, drugs, alcohol and TV have changed the values of the country and there is no right or wrong any more — that does not add up to a trustworthy society.
— 47-year-old woman from Hennepin County

We are the most violent society among [the] industrialized nations. ...We have to restore our basic education systems, the family structures, the economy, our parental discipline and our responsibilities to our citizens. We all have to work hard to create a more peaceful and safe society.
— 41-year-old man from Ramsey County

VICTIMS AND OFFENDERS

Although I live in a quiet suburban area, I work in Minneapolis, where we regularly have theft, vandalism and other security concerns (I've had my wallet stolen twice)....I am always aware of the need to use caution when I am out in my community, day or night....I think poverty and racism and hopelessness are on the rise, and our youth are frustrated, uneducated and striking out. I don't expect it to get better in the near term.

— 36-year-old man from Hennepin County

All Minnesotans are potential crime victims. The risk of becoming a victim of crime, however, is not evenly distributed throughout the population. The survey found that victims of crime were more likely to be 15- to 24-year-olds and from urban center cities. Males were as likely to be crime victims as females.

Although the geographical area and type of community identified by each respondent as their residence are not necessarily where the crime occurred, respondents living in Hennepin and Ramsey counties, especially within cities, were more likely to be a victim of an offense in 1992 than any other group.

Age is the best predictor of being a crime victim, which is consistent with national crime victim surveys. For different age groups, such factors as family income, type of community and education are associated with the risk of being a crime victim.

Statewide, those most likely to be crime victims were 15- to 24-year-olds with a family income of less than $20,000; 65 percent of this group were victims in 1992.

For 25- to 44-year-olds, living in a city is the best predictor of the likelihood of being a victim of crime, and for 45- to 64-year-olds, a low education level is the best predictor.

Although the *National Crime Victimization Survey* has consistently shown that males have a higher rate of being victims of violent crime than females, the *Minnesota Crime Survey* found virtually the same rate for males and females — 10 percent of all respondents. While females were less likely to be victims of assaults with weapons and property crime, they were more likely to report being hit, beaten, raped, forced into unwanted sex or attacked in some other way.

OFFENDERS' RELATIONSHIP TO VICTIMS

SELECTED VIOLENT CRIMES

	Threaten or Assault with a Weapon	Threaten, Attack, Hit or Beat	Rape and Unwanted Sexual Activity	Total
RELATIONSHIP				
Stranger	46%	26%	13%	32%
Acquaintance	27	20	47	29
Well-known person	17	37	34	27
Family member	6	10	3	7
Multiple	2	2	3	2
TOTAL	98%	95%	100%	97%
OFFENDER AGE				
Juvenile	36%	22%	13%	26%
Adult	55	66	67	61
Unknown	4	6	8	6
Multiple	4	4	9	5
TOTAL	99%	98%	97%	98%

■ For the three violent crime types, the offender usually was an adult. Robbery was not included because respondents were not asked about robbery offenders.

Note: Totals may not add to 100 percent because not all victims answered this part of the question. Due to rounding, columns may not equal the sum of the parts. Columns labeled "total" are for the three crime types listed. The total columns are slightly different because not all respondents answered both questions.
Source: 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey*, Minnesota Planning

The national survey also shows that African Americans are significantly more likely to be victims of crime than whites or persons of other races. The *Minnesota Crime Survey* was unable to gather enough responses from people of color to produce reliable information on this demographic group. The appendix discusses efforts made to collect this information.

Nearly two-thirds of the victims of violent crime knew their assailants. Half of those who were victims of assault with weapons or threats knew the offender. Slightly more than two-thirds of those who were victims of beating, hitting, attack or threats and more than 80 percent who were victims of sexual violence knew the offender.

Three-quarters of the 15- to 24-year-old victims said they knew the offender, compared to 53 percent of the victims 25 or older. Twenty-seven percent of all respondents who were victims said the assailant was a juvenile.

My car has been vandalized. Also, two people were murdered three blocks away from my house. More beatings and robberies are happening in Duluth. No one feels as safe as they did a few years ago.
— 20-year-old woman from St. Louis County

CRIME AND CITIES

Both the incidence of crime and fear of crime are higher for respondents who live within the cities of Hennepin and Ramsey counties than for other groups.

Age is the best predictor of being a crime victim for people living in cities in Hennepin and Ramsey counties, as well as statewide. Among respondents in cities in Hennepin and Ramsey counties, 68 percent of the 15- to 24-year-olds reported being a victim of some type of crime in 1992, compared to 50 percent of the 25- to 44-year-olds, 37 percent of the 45- to 64-year-olds and 24 percent of those 65 or older.

Statewide, property crimes occur more frequently than violent crimes. More than a quarter of all respondents said someone had damaged, stolen or tried to steal property from them in 1992. The 15- to 24-year-olds had the highest reported rates of property crime, at 39 percent, while those 65 and older had the lowest, at 13 percent. Property crime rates decrease steadily as respondent age increases.

Only slightly more males than females reported being victims of property crime: 28 percent of males and 25 percent of females reported being victims of vandalism and theft, and 19 percent of males and 16 percent of females reported being victims of break-ins.

Population density appears to influence the likelihood of being a victim of property crime. Respondents who live in rural areas were the least likely to be a victim of theft, attempted theft or vandalism. Those who live in towns and rural areas are the least likely to be a victim of break-ins or attempted break-ins.

The best predictor of being a victim of property crime for 15- to 24-year-olds in Hennepin and Ramsey counties was family income; the lower the family income, the

Although in my community there's little crime, I believe that if the system doesn't correct the problem now with a better justice system, the crime problem will only get worse in the cities and spread to the outer suburbs in the near future.
— 36-year-old woman from Hennepin County

VICTIMS OF VIOLENT CRIME

	Statewide
Robbery/mugging	1%
Attempted robbery	1
Assault w/weapon	1
Threaten assault w/weapon	5
Hit, attack or beat	3
Forced/attempted rape	2
Forced/attempted unwanted sex	1
Attack in some other way	1

■ Overall, 10 percent of respondents said they were victims of violent crime.

Note: Reported crimes and attempts or threats in 1992 were combined. A victim of multiple violent crimes is counted only once as a victim of violent crime.
Source: 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey*, Minnesota Planning

We called 911 weekly, sometimes daily, about crack dealing, gun shots, loud car radios that shake the house. We called for ambulances on two different occasions because someone was shot outside our house. I have watched this neighborhood go downhill in the last two years more than I ever would have guessed.
— 24-year-old man from Hennepin County

PROPERTY CRIME

	Statewide	Rural	Town	Suburb	City	Center City
Burglary or break-in	17%	14%	12%	17%	22%	27%
Theft or property damage	26	22	25	26	32	34
Total property crimes	28	23	24	28	33	39

■ Respondents who live in the central area of a city experienced the most property crime.

Note: Reported crimes and attempts or threats in 1992 were combined.
Source: 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey*, Minnesota Planning

greater the likelihood of being the victim of property crime. Thirty-one percent of this group who have a family income above $50,000 reported being a victim of property crime, compared to 56 percent for those with lower family incomes.

For the combined age groups of 25- to 44-year-olds, 45 percent living in cities, including center cities, were property crime victims, compared to 26 percent of rural, town and suburban dwellers.

Seventeen percent of respondents 65 years or older living in Hennepin or Ramsey counties said they were a victim of property crime, compared to 12 percent of this age group who live in the other 85 counties.

Because such a small number of respondents said they were victims of specific violent crimes, the relationship of demographic factors cannot be accurately analyzed. When all the specific types of violent crime are combined into a single category, however, the number of violent crime victims becomes large enough for further description.

The factors that best predict the likelihood of being a victim of violent crime are a person's age and the size of community. Slightly more than one-fourth of 15- to 24-year-olds statewide said they were a victim of violent crime in 1992, compared to 9 percent of 25- to 44-year-olds and 3 percent of those 45 and older. Nine percent of respondents from rural areas said they were victims of violent crime, 8 percent from towns and suburbs, 12 percent from cities but not center cities and 15 percent from center cities.

FEAR OF CRIME

One of the state's long-range goals is to create communities that are safe, friendly and caring. Measuring fear of crime is difficult since crime rates alone do not give a clear picture of how safe people feel. Fluctuations in fear caused by specific incidents of crime can make establishing a baseline difficult. A serial rapist at large or the killing of a police officer and the resulting media attention during a survey period could increase the level of fear.

Fear of crime is measured in this survey by several questions: fear of walking alone at night near home, fear of being a victim of violent crime and worry that loved ones will be hurt by criminals.

Statewide, more than twice as many people said they are not fearful of becoming a victim of violent crime as those who said they were. When asked about their concern for loved ones becoming victims, however, more than

three times as many respondents said they were very worried as said they were not worried.

The question most frequently used as a fear indicator in national surveys is whether the respondents feel safe walking alone at night near their home. The *Minnesota Crime Survey* found that 44 percent of the respondents said they would be afraid to walk alone at night within a mile of their home. A national poll asking the same question in 1992 found the same rate.

I do not think any place is safe for women — sexual assault and battering happens everywhere. My neighborhood is very safe, but I don't feel particularly safe.
— 24-year-old woman from Hennepin County

Although I have never been a victim of crime, I am very aware of the statistics. I no longer walk alone down our country road because I know we are not without risk, even in the rural areas. There is so much I cannot control, but I try not to worry or dwell on the negative possibilities.
— 49-year-old woman from Meeker County

EXPECTATIONS OF CRIME VERSUS ACTUAL CRIME

	Overall Expectations	Overall Actual Crime	Cities in Hennepin and Ramsey Counties Expectations	Cities in Hennepin and Ramsey Counties Actual Crime
Damage, steal property	43%	26%	54%	37%
Break into home, car, property	25	17	36	31
Attack or threaten with weapon	11	5	19	8
Hit, attack, beat or threaten	21	4	32	5
Rape or unwanted sex	8	2	13	3
Rob or attempt	14	2	25	4
Rape or unwanted sex (female only)	13	4	22	4

■ More respondents expect to be a victim of crime in the next year than were victims in 1992.

Note: Reported crimes and attempts or threats in 1992 were combined.
Source: 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey*, Minnesota Planning

FEAR OF VIOLENT CRIME

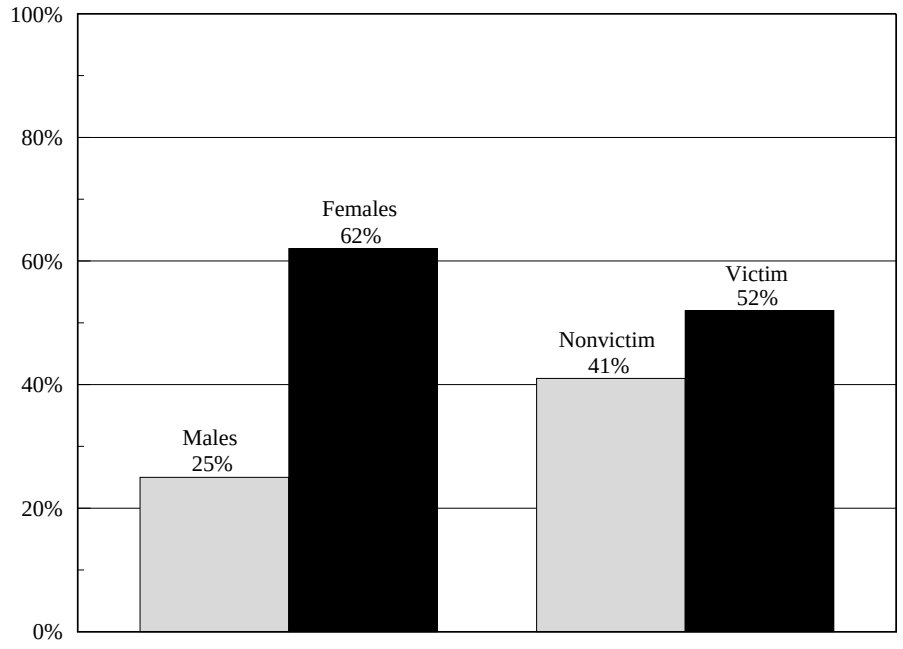
	FEAR ABOUT BECOMING A VICTIM		WORRY ABOUT LOVED ONES	
	Very Much	Never	Very Much	Never
TOTAL	**6%**	**14%**	**19%**	**6%**
GENDER				
Male	3	19	16	7
Female	10	9	21	5
AGE				
15-24	10	17	11	13
25-34	8	11	18	5
35-44	6	9	22	3
45-54	5	10	17	4
55-64	3	15	21	4
65+	4	20	24	6
TYPE OF COMMUNITY				
Rural area	3	18	15	8
Town	5	19	14	8
Suburb	8	10	20	4
City/not center	8	11	22	5
Center city	10	16	28	9

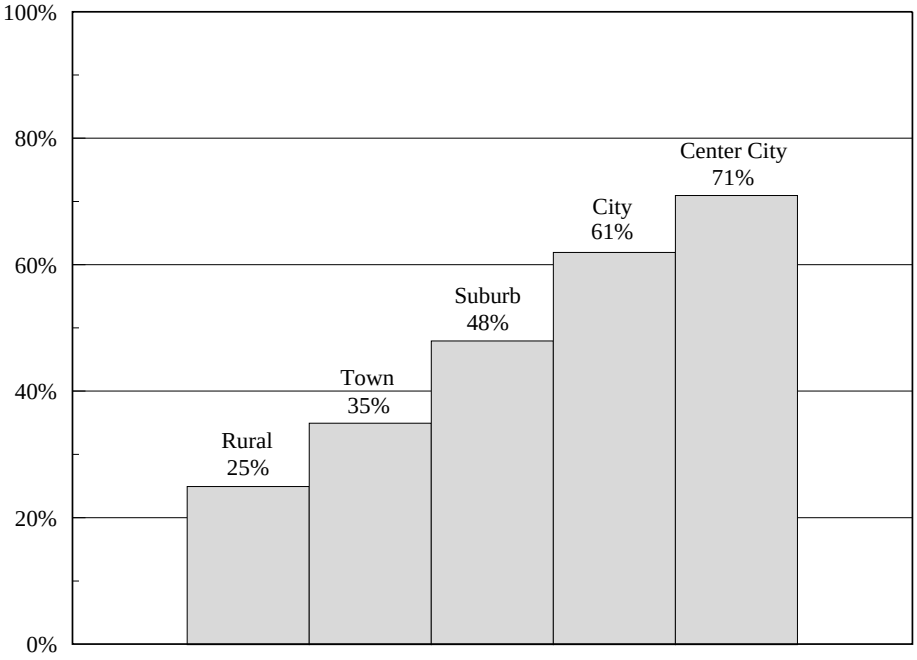
■ Respondents were far more worried about their loved ones being hurt by criminals than fearful that they would become a victim themselves.

Note: City and center city include all cities in the state. Other response choices included "somewhat" and "rarely."
Source: 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey*, Minnesota Planning

As a woman and a person who takes care of children, I never feel completely safe in our society. Even though it is unconscious, I am always very aware of my surroundings and assessing the safety of myself and my family and friends. Until we learn that violence is unacceptable, we will not be able to be completely free. Boys and men, particularly, need to be nurtured better so they can live peacefully. *— 46-year-old woman from Hennepin County*

AFRAID TO WALK ALONE





■ Females and those who have been victims of crime are the most likely to be afraid to walk alone at night within a mile of their home.

■ Where they lived influenced respondents' fear of walking alone at night.

Source: 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey*, Minnesota Planning

Major factors predicting fear of crime are gender, community type, age and geographical area. Gender was the best predictor of fear of walking alone at night within a mile of home: 62 percent of females were afraid, compared with 25 percent of males.

Among females statewide, the best predictor of the level of fear was the type of community in which they lived. Forty percent living in rural areas said they were afraid to walk alone at night within a mile of their home, compared to 53 percent in towns, 70 percent in suburban areas and 79 percent in cities. Of females living in cities in Hennepin and Ramsey counties, 88 percent were afraid to walk alone at night, compared to 66 percent of the females living in cities in the other 85 counties.

The expectation of becoming a crime victim far exceeds the actual experience of respondents in the survey. A higher percentage of respondents said they expect to be a victim of six specific crimes within the next year than said they were victims of those same crimes in 1992. This expectation compared to the actual experience of crime victims was even greater among respondents who lived in the cities in Hennepin and Ramsey counties.

Although our neighborhood is pretty safe, you still have to be on guard and take some precautions. A person feels lucky that something hasn't happened to them and feels it's just a matter of time before some kind of crime will happen.
— 52-year-old woman from Hennepin County

PERCEPTIONS AND PRECAUTIONS

The survey also explored respondents' perceptions about the causes of crime and the effectiveness of law enforcement efforts, as well as efforts they have taken to protect themselves.

Respondents were asked to select from a list of factors those that they believed cause violent crime. They most frequently chose the use of drugs, the breakdown of the family and the lack of parental discipline. Almost nine out of 10 said that use of drugs was a major cause.

Three-fifths of the respondents said guns contributed to violent crime. Major differences of opinion on this factor were found between males and females and between rural and metropolitan area residents. Half of the males cited guns as a factor, compared to more than two-thirds of the females. Two-thirds of the suburban, city and center city respondents said guns contributed to violent crime, compared to only half of the rural and town respondents.

Gangs are created when a group has little self-esteem, too much spare time, a lack of family values, no ready employment and [its members] find friendship, acceptance and power by being in it.
— 35-year-old woman from Anoka County

SECURITY MEASURES

	Percent
Burglar alarms	11%
Extra door locks	52
Window guards	19
Guns	19
Police ID stickers	17
Dogs	32
Outside security lights	49

■ More respondents used extra door locks to improve their feeling of safety than any other security measure.

Note: Respondents could check more than one security measure.
Source: 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey*, Minnesota Planning

PROTECTIVE DEVICES

	All Respondents	Males	Females
Gun	1%	3%	0%
Mace	8	3	12
Tear gas	1	1	2
Whistle	5	1	9
Other	9	8	11

■ Most respondents said they do not carry protective devices.

Note: Respondents could check more than one protective device.
Source: 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey*, Minnesota Planning

At the business where I work, we (me and my parents) have been broken into and assaulted several times. The only time, to our knowledge, that the county police did anything to help us was the one time where we captured the juveniles ourselves and called the police to come.
— 21-year-old man from Houston County

Slightly more than two-thirds of the respondents felt law enforcement performance in their community was good or excellent. Respondents who were not victims of crime were more likely to feel law enforcement performance was good to excellent, while those who were victims were more likely to feel it was fair to poor.

Respondents were asked to identify which of several security measures they were using in their residences to feel safer from crime. Extra door locks and outside security lights were the most frequently cited. The best predictor of the use of security devices was whether the respondent had been a victim of a crime in 1992; the survey, however, did not ask when the measures were installed.

Almost one-fifth of all respondents said they keep a gun in their home for protection from crime. Asked which of a list of devices they carry for protection when away from home, respondents most often cited mace and whistles. Fifteen percent said they carry one or more protective devices.

LAW ENFORCEMENT PERFORMANCE

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Not a victim	13%	59%	24%	4%
Violent crime victim	7	42	34	17
Property crime victim	10	56	28	6
Both property/violent	7	40	32	21

■ Being a victim of crime affected respondents' opinions of the effectiveness of law enforcement.

Source: 1993 *Minnesota Victim Survey*, Minnesota Planning

ABOUT THE SURVEY

Since installing security lights, we have not had our home or cars broken into. Prior to that, we had numerous cases of vandalism and theft. The handgun is for back-up only!
— 51-year-old woman from Hennepin County

I live in a Crime Watch neighborhood. Everybody is involved. I think that is real important. We all look out for one another and their homes. I feel very safe in my neighborhood. I hope it will always be that way.
— 30-year-old woman from Hennepin County

The purpose of the *Minnesota Crime Survey* was to find out how many Minnesotans have been crime victims and to assess citizens' perceptions of crime. Surveys conducted on a regular basis can identify changes in public concern as well as trends in victim-reported offenses.

The *Minnesota Crime Survey* used a survey designed by Virginia Commonwealth University and subsequently used in North Carolina in 1992. More than 6,000 individuals in Minnesota were selected to participate, including citizens aged 15 to 94 from all counties. Out of

SAMPLE SIZE AND RESPONSE RATE

Governmental Unit	Population 1990	1992 Driver License Records	Original Sample Size	Responses	Response Rate (adjusted)
Minnesota	4,375,099	3,409,500	6,029	3,927	72.4%
Hennepin and Ramsey counties	1,518,196	1,203,400	4,013	2,501	69.7
Counties other than Hennepin and Ramsey	2,856,903	2,206,100	2,016	1,426	75.8

■ Out of the original sample, 5,427 had a current mailing address. Of these, 3,927 returned the survey.

Note: The response rate is adjusted to account for individuals who did not have a current mailing address or were otherwise ineligible to participate in the survey.
Source: 1993 *Minnesota Crime Survey*, Minnesota Planning

the 5,427 who had a current mailing address, 3,927 returned a survey.

The survey's total response rate was 72.4 percent. This high rate indicates the reliability of the findings. The survey's margin of error is plus or minus 1.5 percent. The response rate varied by geographic area: it was 69.7 percent for Hennepin and Ramsey counties and 75.8 percent for the other 85 counties. The survey was done in the summer of 1993.

The random sample of names and addresses for this project was drawn from the driver license records maintained by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. These records include driver licenses, driving permits and state identification cards. A larger number of names was selected for Hennepin and Ramsey counties in an attempt to get sufficient responses from people of color. However, not enough responses were received from people of color to permit detailed analysis.

To describe the entire state's experiences and perceptions, the results from the 3,927 respondents were weighted to reflect statewide age, gender and geographic population distribution. This statistical method allowed the oversampled number of responses from Hennepin and Ramsey counties to represent their actual proportion of the state's population.

Measuring differences within smaller groups, however, such as looking at the relationship between age and level of fear, has a larger margin of error because there were fewer respondents.

All results are rounded to the next highest number, so information in a table or the text may differ slightly (within a percentage point) from the same information described in another context.

Many of the statewide findings that compared two factors, such as reported crime by type of community or crime by age group, followed a very similar pattern of an even progression between the low and high ends of the scale. In most cases, only the highs and lows are highlighted in the text.

Part of the problem is that we lack police involvement in the community....The young people have no role models to identify with. (I work in law enforcement.)
— 20-year-old man from Hennepin County

APPENDIX

We have violent crime in America because violence is as American as apple pie. Look at our history and our current foreign policy. Look at capital punishment: it is a poor deterent and costs much more to carry out than life imprisonment; but it is violent, so we like it. Guns rarely provide protection where needed and they make society more dangerous, but we like them and allow easy access to them. Basic attitudes have to change. We need to train people to solve conflicts without violence.
— 51-year-old man from Ramsey County

SURVEY METHODS

Measuring Crime: Crime surveys collect data by asking a representative sample of people about crimes committed against them within a specific period. Surveys provide a different picture of crime than that provided by official law enforcement reports. Because both have limitations, however, neither provides a "true" description of crime.

Minnesota crime statistics are published in *Minnesota Crime Information* by the Office of Information Systems Management, Minnesota Department of Public Safety. The *National Crime Victimization Survey* program collects detailed information on the frequency and nature of crimes and victim characteristics. Up to now, no statewide crime survey information has been available for Minnesota.

The *Minnesota Crime Survey* asks questions about crimes in behavioral terms, such as "did anyone hit you, attack you or beat you up," rather than in legal terms used to determine different degrees of assault. For this reason, direct comparisons to crime index statistics must be made with extreme caution.

Direct comparisons between local, state and national victim survey statistics generally should not be made because of methodological differences in how the surveys were conducted and the population base. These differences include respondents' ages, the time frame for reporting crimes and information collection methods. Comparisons between surveys are possible, however, when similar questions are asked in similar ways.

Measurement Issues: Underlying the measurement of crime are conceptual issues concerning crime definitions, reporting and counting methods, and public perceptions of crime. Individual perception of an incident within a social context will affect whether the event is defined as a crime. A threat on a playground, a push or shove in a bar or physical aggression within a family may be labeled by some individuals, but not others, as a crime. The interpretation of the event as a criminal act in a victim survey is up to the individual respondent, whereas offenses reported to law enforcement officials are investigated and found to be an actual criminal offense before being recorded as a crime.

Other factors influence the reporting of a crime to either law enforcement officials or in victim surveys: the type of crime, the relationship between the offender and the victim, the amount of economic loss involved, whether force or a weapon was used, whether the victim sustained an injury and whether the victim was involved in an illegal act. The wishes of the victim, the likelihood of obtaining a conviction, time constraints and the level of professionalism within the law enforcement agency influence officials' decision to record the event as a crime.

Some crimes are not covered in victim surveys since the victim is often not directly affected. These include white-collar crimes, such as price fixing, vandalism to public schools or parks, discrimination and environmental pollution.

The *Minnesota Crime Survey* does not directly measure exposure to risk. The relative risk of becoming a crime victim (or the level of fear) depends on who you are (age and gender), where you live, with whom you associate and what you do to protect yourself. The survey did not attempt to measure differences in daily activities that may increase or decrease the chances of becoming a crime victim. National research has shown that differences in reported victim rates and fear levels between 15- to 24-year-olds and those 65 and older may result from the older group's limited exposure to risk by spending more time at home, while the younger group may be more likely to go out at night. When those in the older

group go shopping or visiting, however, they may be at a higher risk of becoming a victim because of their greater vulnerability.

The *National Crime Victimization Survey* in 1992 conducted about 166,000 in-person and telephone interviews within 84,000 households, with a response rate of 95 percent or higher. The same households are surveyed for three years, and each member of the household over the age of 12 is interviewed. Field representatives of the U.S. Census Bureau repeat the survey every six months, for a total of seven interviews per household. The initial interview is conducted in person; five of the next six interviews are conducted by telephone. The interview begins with a screening questionnaire to determine if any crimes had occurred within the household in the past six months. If any crime is reported, detailed questions are asked about the incident. The same screening questions were used as the basis for the *Minnesota Crime Survey.*

The *Minnesota Crime Survey:* The *Minnesota Crime Survey* replicated a mail survey conducted in North Carolina in 1992. The survey instrument and methodology were validated by Virginia Commonwealth University, which tested different questions from several different survey instruments to determine which questions and what ordering would give the most accurate responses.

Both the *Minnesota Crime Survey* and the North Carolina survey focus on crimes of personal violence. Because neither asks questions about auto theft, the surveys are not comparable to others that develop rates for all types of crime or total property crime. Other potential causes of error in survey research include sampling bias, where not everyone has an equal chance of being included in the survey, and response bias, where some individuals are more or less likely to respond to the survey. A higher number of people in a sample who are illiterate or cannot read English will reduce the response rate for mail surveys. A specific problem for this survey was the time frame in which a crime occurred. Respondents were asked to recall crimes from 1992 during the summer of 1993. Some crimes occurring in 1992 may have been forgotten or a crime that occurred in 1993 may have been reported as having occurred in 1992.

Another problem is not all respondents who described the area where they lived as a city within Hennepin and Ramsey counties necessarily lived in Minneapolis or St. Paul. Since the respondents selected the description of the community where they lived, it is possible that some who indicated they lived in a city actually live in a suburban community, such as in Bloomington or Roseville. For this reason, it also is not possible to determine how respondents defined whether they lived in the central area of the city or in a city but not the central part.

The random sample of names and addresses for this project was drawn from driver license records maintained by the Driver and Vehicle Services Division of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. These records also include provisional driving permits and identification cards. All returned surveys from respondents under the age of 15 were excluded from the analysis.

Driver license records have been used as a sample frame for crime victim surveys among the general population by Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and North Carolina. One potential problem with this method is that younger individuals who are not homeowners are more likely to move and less likely to change the address on their license or identification card. National estimates, as well as the *Minnesota Crime Survey,* find that this age group is more likely to be victims of crimes. The present analysis attempted to reduce this source of bias by a statistical method of weighting the survey responses to match the age and gender distribution in the state.

The names and addresses of 6,029 individuals were randomly selected from the 3.4 million records available in 1993. A total of 4,013 names were selected from Hennepin and Ramsey county records and 2,016 names from the other 85 counties. The data base is considered a representative listing for the estimated population of 3.4 million Minnesota citizens age 15 and older in 1993.

In mid-May 1993, 6,029 postcards were mailed to people in the sample to alert them that they would be getting the survey in the mail. The postcards were sent by first-class mail so those that were undeliverable would be returned to the Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center at Minnesota Planning. The U.S. Post Office forwards first-class mail to a new address for 12 months. Names of individuals who no longer lived at the address listed on the driver's license or ID card were taken from the returned postcards, coded not eligible to participate and deleted from subsequent mailings.

A total of 5,670 surveys and cover letters were sent by bulk-rate mail. In mid-June, 3,276 follow-up postcards were mailed to those who had not responded to the survey. In early July, a second survey was mailed to 2,453 individuals who had not responded. In early August, 1,732 reminder postcards about the second survey were sent by first-class mail.

Names of people from the sample who did not have a current address were deleted from the survey mailing list and were not used to calculate the overall response rate. From the postcards, it was determined that a total of 554 people, 9.2 percent of the original sample, no longer lived at the address on their driver's license. An additional 48 people were not eligible to complete the survey because they were deceased (33), relatives said the individuals no longer lived there (8) or the wrong person filled out the survey (7). Subtracting the 602 not eligible to participate from the original 6,029 left a total of 5,427 randomly selected individuals as the eligible sample for the survey. Previous national crime victim research has consistently shown a higher victim rate for minorities. Therefore, a larger sample was selected for Hennepin and Ramsey counties in an attempt to get sufficient minority responses to describe the role of race in becoming a crime victim. Minorities made up 5.6 percent of the total state population in 1990. Hispanics, who may be of any race, account for another 1.2 percent. Since 67 percent of all minorities in the state live in Hennepin and Ramsey counties, these two counties were oversampled to increase minority eligibility. Although minorities made up approximately 14 percent of the combined population in Hennepin and Ramsey counties in 1990, minority respondents made up 6 percent of the total response from the two counties.

The responses from self-identified minorities are included in all analyses, but no separate analysis of their experience as crime victims is reported. The low response rate would skew any description of minority crime victim experiences and characteristics. Using the driver license records as a sample frame may have had an adverse impact on minority response rate. Because race information is not included in Minnesota driver license and identification card records, the potential bias of using these records as a sample frame cannot be evaluated. Minority participation may be increased in future crime victimization surveys by using recognized minority community leaders and organizations as sponsors or partners.

The responses have been weighted to reflect statewide age, gender and geographic population distribution to adjust for the higher number of responses in Hennepin and Ramsey counties. Separate analysis done on crime victim rates for the state as a whole, the combined Hennepin and Ramsey county area and the remaining counties showed no changes in the frequency distribution of crime victims. Although the weighting

process allows accurate calculation of proportion or percentages for the entire state, it does not provide an accurate number of offenses that occurred.

In weighting the response sample and determining victim rates, a 1993 population projection was calculated based on the 1990 census and the 1995 population projection data provided by the State Demographer. Since the 1995 population estimate is based on migration patterns as well as births, it provides a more accurate estimate than a simple projection from the 1990 census.

Statistical analysis for the report was done using the SPSS/PC+ V4.0 and the Chi-Squared Automatic Interaction Detection package. CHAID performs segmentation analysis, or "tree analysis," by analyzing the relationship between a categorical response variable, such as fear or being a crime victim, and categorical predictor variables. The variables used to predict fear or being a crime victim included: gender; age group; type of residence (rural, town, suburban, city but not central area and central city); Hennepin, Ramsey or other counties; employment; number in household; marital status; family income; education; race; and ethnicity.

Segmentation analysis identifies and specifies population groups, or segments, that differ in their probability of an event, such as being a crime victim or levels of fear of crime. Starting with a data set representing measured characteristics of a large number of cases, CHAID attempts to explain the variation in the dependent variable through the use of an iterative chi-squared-based search. Portions of subgroups with differences that are not significant are collapsed to form a common segment. The results of a CHAID analysis are summarized in a tree diagram. The branches of the trees document a repetition of the analysis within each segment, successively splitting the population of cases into smaller groups that are mutually exclusive and significantly different.

The CHAID analysis allows the user to control the analysis through setting specific program parameters. The following parameters were used for the analysis of both fear and becoming crime victim variables: the minimum group size was set at 50 before splits and 30 after, and the statistical significance level was set at .05 for both combination within segments and predicting differences between the groups on the dependent variable.

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1993 MINNESOTA CRIME SURVEY

NOTE: Responses have been weighted to reflect statewide age, gender and geographic population distribution. Answers in italics were not asked in the survey but were calculated by the Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center. To conserve space, some questions, such as number eight, show data for "yes" responses only. Percentages for "no" responses can be calculated by subtracting the data given from 100.

The total number of respondents were 3,927. Percentages are based on valid answers.

INSTRUCTIONS

This booklet contains questions about your opinions on crime, criminals and the criminal justice system in Minnesota. Your cooperation in answering these questions will help in the fight against serious and violent crime in Minnesota.

Your answers will be treated confidentially by the researchers at the Minnesota Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center. The booklet is numbered so we can keep track of the 6,000 booklets without using your name on the booklet.

Please answer every question. Some questions may have more than one answer that applies to you. If so, check all the answers that apply to you. If you need additional space to answer a question or if you have any comments you would like to make, please use the last page of the booklet to do so.

Please take a few minutes to read and answer these questions. Thank you for your cooperation.

ATTITUDES TOWARD CRIME

1. Is there any area right around your home — that is, within a mile — where you would be afraid to walk alone at night?

44.3% Yes
55.7% No

2. How much does fear of crime prevent you from doing things you would like to do?

5.2% Very much
35.3% Somewhat
45.2% Rarely, or
14.4% Never [not at all]

3. When you leave your home or apartment, how often do you think about being robbed or physically assaulted?

7.3% Very often
26.5% Somewhat
45.8% Rarely, or
20.5% Never [not at all]

4. When you leave your home, how often do you think about it being broken into or vandalized while you're away?

12.9% Very often
38.2% Somewhat
39.3% Rarely, or
9.5% Never [not at all]

5. How much do you worry that your loved ones will be hurt by criminals?

18.8% Very much
45.3% Somewhat
30.0% Rarely, or
5.9% Never [not at all]

6. When you're in your home, how often do you feel afraid of being attacked or assaulted?

2.8% Very often
16.4% Somewhat
52.2% Rarely, or
28.6% Never [not at all]

7. How fearful are you of being the victim of a violent crime?

6.4% Very much
31.8% Somewhat
48.1% Rarely, or
13.7% Never [not at all]

8. Do you think any of the following are likely to happen to you during the next year?

Yes	
25.3%	Someone breaking into your home and taking something or attempting to take something
25.9%	Someone stealing or attempting to steal a motor vehicle belonging to you
43.2%	Someone stealing other property or valuable things belonging to you
14.4%	Someone taking something from you by force or threat of force
10.5%	Someone beating or attacking you with a knife, gun, club or other weapon
21.3%	Someone threatening you with their fist, feet or other bodily attack
7.8%	Someone forcing you to have sexual intercourse with them against your will
2.3%	Being beaten or attacked by a member of your family or someone in your household

HOW WELL IS THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM WORKING?

9. Over the past three years, do you believe the violent crime problem in your community has:

3.2%	Gotten better
53.8%	Stayed about the same
43.0%	Gotten worse

10. During the next three years, do you believe that the violent crime problem in your community will:

5.0%	Get better
44.0%	Stay about the same
51.1%	Become worse

11. How would you rate the job being done by law enforcement in your community?

11.4%	Excellent
56.8%	Good
25.9%	Fair
5.9%	Poor

12. Which of the following do you believe are responsible for our violent crime problem? (Check all that apply)

66.1%	Criminal justice system is too easy
77.1%	Breakdown of family life
31.2%	Population increase
64.0%	Moral decay
86.7%	Use of drugs
58.0%	Television and movie violence
58.6%	Availability of guns
51.9%	The economy/poverty
23.7%	Too much leisure time
71.3%	Gangs
66.5%	Use of alcohol
76.9%	Lack of parental discipline
14.0%	Other, specify

13. Which drugs, if any, do you feel contribute to the violent crime problem in your community? (Check all that apply)

83.0%	Alcohol
51.4%	Cocaine
48.1%	Crack cocaine
29.5%	Heroin
48.2%	Marijuana
6.1%	Other drugs, specify
4.2%	Drugs do not contribute to the violent crime problem

QUESTIONS 14 TO 23 REFER ONLY TO THINGS THAT HAPPENED TO YOU DURING 1992, BETWEEN JANUARY 1 AND DECEMBER 31:

14. Did anyone take something directly from you by using force, such as by a stick-up, mugging or threat?

99.0%	No
1.0%	Yes - How many times? Range 1-2

15. Did anyone TRY to rob you by using force or threatening to harm you (other than any incident already mentioned)?

98.8%	No
1.2%	Yes - How many times? Range 1-2

16. Were you knifed, shot at or attacked with some other weapon by anyone at all (other than any incidents already mentioned)?

99.5% No
.5% Yes - How many times? Range 1-2

If yes, was the most recent of these done by:
A stranger or unknown person
A casual acquaintance
A person well known to you (but not a family member)
A family member

In your knowledge, was the assailant:
A juvenile (under 18 years old)
An adult (18 years and older)
Unknown

17. Did anyone threaten to beat you up or threaten you with a knife, gun or some other weapon NOT including telephone threats (other than any incidents already mentioned)?

94.7% No
5.3% Yes - How many times? Range 1-10

If yes, was the most recent of these done by:
A stranger or unknown person
A casual acquaintance
A person well known to you (but not a family member)
A family member

In your knowledge, was the assailant:
A juvenile (under 18 years old)
An adult (18 years and older)
Unknown

18. Did anyone hit you, attack you or beat you up (other than any incident already mentioned)?

97.4% No
2.6% Yes - How many times? Range 1-8

If yes, was the most recent of these done by:
A stranger or unknown person
A casual acquaintance
A person well known to you (but not a family member)
A family member

In your knowledge, was the assailant:
A juvenile (under 18 years old)
An adult (18 years and older)
Unknown

19. Did anyone force you, or attempt to force you, to have sexual intercourse with them?

98.4% No
1.6% Yes - How many times? Range 1-4

If yes, was the most recent of these done by:
A stranger or unknown person
A casual acquaintance
A person well known to you (but not a family member)
A family member

In your knowledge, was the assailant:
A juvenile (under 18 years old)
An adult (18 years and older)
Unknown

20. Did anyone force you, or attempt to force you, to engage in any unwanted sexual activity (other than those incidents already mentioned)?

98.7% No
1.3% Yes - How many times? Range 1-7

If yes, was the most recent of these done by:
A stranger or unknown person
A casual acquaintance
A person well known to you (but not a family member)
A family member

In your knowledge, was the assailant:
A juvenile (under 18 years old)
An adult (18 years and older)
Unknown

21. Did anyone try to attack you in some other way (other than any incidents already mentioned)?

98.6% No
1.4% Yes - How many times? Range 1-7

If yes, was the most recent of these done by:
A stranger or unknown person
A casual acquaintance
A person well known to you (but not a family member)
A family member

In your knowledge, was the assailant:
A juvenile (under 18 years old)
An adult (18 years and older)
Unknown

22. Did anyone break in or try to break in to your car or truck, home or some other building on your property?

82.9% No
17.1% Yes - How many times? Range 1-8

23. Did anyone damage, steal or try to steal something that belonged to you?

73.8% No
26.2% Yes - How many times? Range 1-10

SECURITY MEASURES

24. Which, if any, of the following have you placed in your home or apartment to make you feel safer from crime? (Check all that apply)

10.6% Burglar alarms
52.1% Extra door locks
18.5% Window guards
18.9% Guns
17.1% Police department identification stickers
31.6% Dogs
48.7% Outside security lights

25. If anything happened to you last year which you thought was a crime, did you report it to the police or sheriff?

17.9% Always
6.8% Sometimes
8.6% Never
66.7% Was not a victim of a crime

26. If you feel that you were a victim of a crime but did not report the crime to the police or sheriff, what was the primary reason for not reporting it?

1.3% Afraid of the offender
4.3% Dealt with it another way
8.5% Not important enough—minor offense
.5% Felt sorry for the offender
1.2% Crime due to my own carelessness
1.4% Did not want to get involved
5.7% Police couldn't do anything
3.2% No confidence in the justice system
1.8% Other, specify

27. Do you keep a gun in your home for protection from criminals?

80.2% No
19.8% Yes

28. Which of the following items do you carry to protect yourself when you leave your home? (check any that apply)

1.3% Gun
7.5% Mace
1.1% Tear gas
5.0% Whistle
9.2% Other, specify
80.0% None

YOUR CHARACTERISTICS (will be used for statistical analysis only):

29. In what year were you born?

Age Groups
15-24 - 17.6%; 25-34 - 21.2%;
35-44 - 20.8%; 45-54 - 14.1%;
55-64 - 10.0%; 65+ - 16.3%

30. What is your gender?

48.4% Male
51.6% Female

31. What is your racial background?

95.6% Caucasian
1.0% Black/African American
.6% American Indian
1.8% Asian
1.0% Other, specify

32. What is your ethnic background?

.9% Hispanic
99.1% Non-Hispanic

33. Please check the category which describes your highest level of education:

.3% 6th grade or less
4.7% 7th-9th grade
8.8% 10th-11th grade
26.4% High school graduate or GED
30.2% Some college
21.7% College degree
8.1% Advanced college degree

34. Which best describes where you live? (Check only one)

26.0% Rural area
13.9% Town away from an urban area
34.8% Suburb of urban area
18.6% In a city but not in the central area of the city
6.7% Central area of a city

35. Are you:

29.8% Single
59.0% Married
5.5% Divorced
5.0% Widowed
.7% Separated

36. Including yourself, how many people live in your home or apartment?

11.7% 1
33.0% 2
17.7% 3
21.9% 4
15.6% 5 or more

37. Of these categories, which describes your total family income?

7.2% Under $10,000
12.6% $10,000 to $19,999
17.3% $20,000 to $29,999
17.1% $30,000 to $39,999
15.4% $40,000 to $49,999
30.4% Over $50,000

38. What is your present employment status? (Check only one)

50.0% Employed full-time
16.8% Employed part-time
5.8% Homemaker
7.7% Student
2.9% Unemployed
15.6% Retired
2.0% Other, specify

39. In what county do you live?

54.9% Seven-county metro area
45.1% Nonseven-county metro area

40. What is your zip code?

Thank you for completing this survey.
Please staple this form closed
and drop in the mail right away.

Comments: