



RESEARCH AT A GLANCE

Chicago Homicide Dataset Series: Children's risk of homicide victimization records 31-year increase

Homicide is a leading cause of death for children and infants in the U.S. From 1965 to 1995, Chicago recorded 1,124 homicides of children ages 14 and younger.

A population-based examination of the risk of homicide over the 31-year period compares the risks for young children versus older teens and adults, boys versus girls, children of different racial/ethnic groups, and children in different developmental age groups.

Although young children had a lower risk of homicide victimization than adults, trends in the murder rate for children from birth to age 14 increased steadily. This long-term increase occurred only for the youngest developmental age group (birth to age four), especially children under age two (Figure 1), although the oldest age group (ages 10 to 14) suffered a sharp increase in risk between 1991 and 1995 (Figure 3).

The risk of being murdered increased for both girls and boys. The risk for boys was higher, and increased with each developmental age group. The risk of being murdered rose steadily only for non-Latino black girls and boys.

Figure 1
Risk trends for infants and pre-schoolers compared to all young children

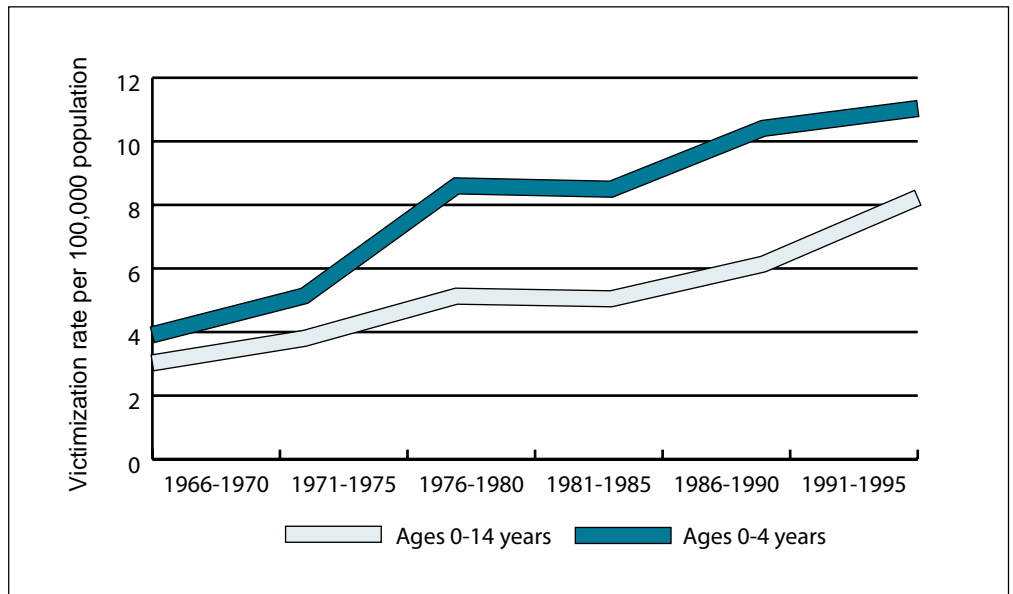
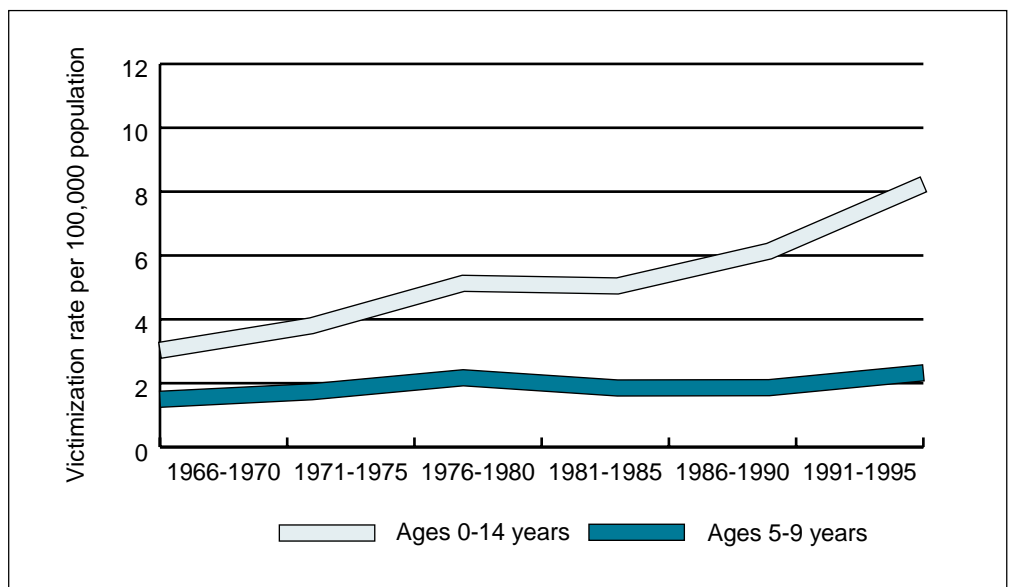


Figure 2
Risk trends for primary school-aged children compared to all young children

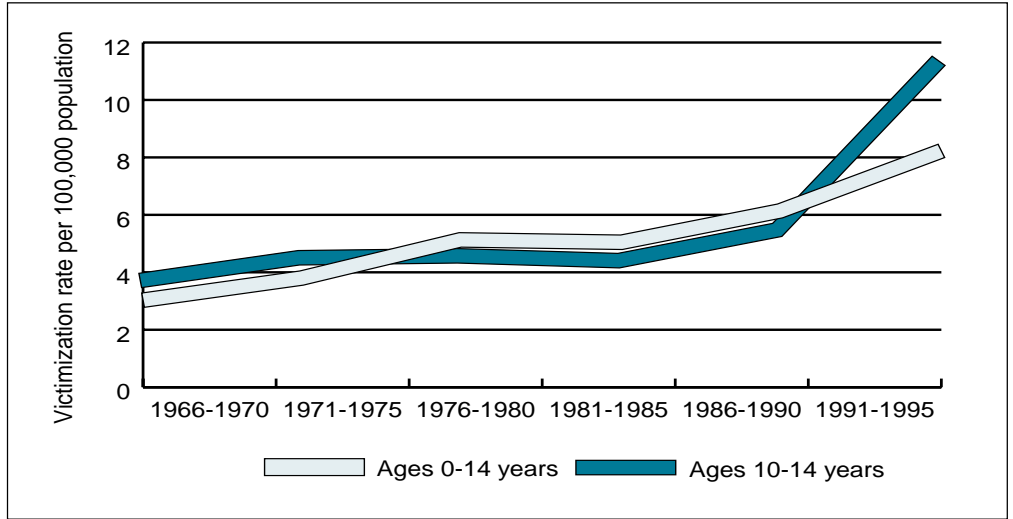


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- The Authority has supported and maintained the Chicago Homicide Dataset Project since 1979. Beginning in 1968 with the collection of 1965 data, the Crime Analysis Unit of the Chicago Police Department has assisted and advised Richard Block, Carolyn Rebecca Block, and others in the project.
- In Illinois, public health planners and lawmakers not only documented the high child homicide rates in the

Figure 3
Risk trends for middle school-aged children compared to all young children



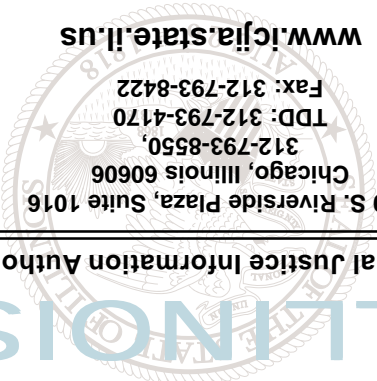
mid-1990s, but developed legislation aimed at their reduction.

- The Authority is gathering Chicago Homicide Dataset data for the years 1996 to 2000. The hope is that a

comparison of the figures will show that the risk of being murdered stopped escalating, or even declined, for these youngest children. Research is beginning to show just such a decline on a national level.

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