

**Research and program evaluation in Illinois:
The nature and extent of family violence**

**An Overview and Assessment of
Domestic Violence, Child Abuse, and
Elder Abuse Data in Illinois**

December 1999

Prepared by
Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

On behalf of
Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Council
Data Collection Committee



**ILLINOIS
CRIMINAL JUSTICE
INFORMATION AUTHORITY**

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January 2000

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Council's Data Collection Committee was established to enable the collection and analysis of existing family violence data and to identify and recommend strategies for the collection of other data that will more fully describe family violence in Illinois. The Committee initiated the Data Collection Project to expand and improve the quality of Illinois' family violence data. As part of this effort, this report describes the nature and extent of family violence in Illinois using existing statewide data. It also identifies gaps in these data and recommends strategies to address some of them.

Although several gaps were identified among Illinois' family violence data, much information can be obtained on all forms of family violence from multidisciplinary perspectives. Illinois' family violence data is particularly sufficient for describing victim/offender demographics and relationships between victims and offenders. In addition, several existing state data sets contain detailed information regarding injuries, weapon involvement, and the process of family violence cases through the criminal justice system. However, despite the vast amount of existing information, Illinois is still in the early stages of obtaining comprehensive data on family violence throughout the state.

The primary gap identified among Illinois' family violence data is that these sources are only partial indicators of the extent of family violence in Illinois. Taken together and considering the high underreporting rate of family violence incidents, data from these sources are still an underrepresentation of how many individuals experience violence within their families and households in Illinois. Currently, no single source of comprehensive data exists on the level of family violence in Illinois from which to base future plans, policy, and services.

Other gaps identified among Illinois' family violence data were:

- Determining the amount of overlap in the number of victims and offenders served among health, social service, and criminal justice agencies;
- Multiple forms of family violence occurring within families or households, e.g. child abuse, intimate partner violence, and elder abuse;
- Health care and social services provided to victims;
- Prosecutorial and court-related data on family violence cases progressing through the criminal justice system; and
- Unknown quality of data.

Although these gaps are substantial, many processes are under way to improve Illinois' family violence data. Several of the data sources examined for this report are very new. The potential of these sources is high if the rate and consistency of reporting improves, however, this usually requires ample time to develop. Moreover, several additional sources are currently developing which may be ready for analyses in the near future.

These sources may offer further potential for providing a more complete picture and a better understanding of family violence in Illinois.

Along with allowing newer existing data sets to mature, the Committee recommends the following strategies to help alleviate these gaps:

- Ensure that state and local agencies are informed of and understand the complete definition of domestic violence contained in the Illinois Domestic Violence Act (IDVA), especially the definition *family or household member* relationships;
- Allocate more resources for creating automated systems and improving their capacity to filter family violence cases, especially with prosecutorial and court-related data;
- Invite more individuals working directly with data sources to serve on the Data Collection Committee;
- Select a sample of family violence cases to track through the criminal justice system to better understand their process through the system;
- Seek additional family violence data sources as they develop;
- Encourage more data collection in areas identified as lacking, such as social service or health-related data;
- Encourage wider and more applied use of state and local family violence data;
- Continue multidisciplinary collaboration.

The Data Collection Committee seeks to relay these report findings to state agency heads and other family violence professionals. Collaboration of state agencies is necessary to address identified gaps, expedite recommendations, and improve the overall utility of Illinois' family violence data.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Project Background

The Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Council's Data Collection Committee is comprised of a diverse group of experts who represent state and local health, social service, and criminal justice agencies. In response to the suspicion that Illinois' family violence data was relatively limited, the committee initiated the Data Collection Project. Ultimately, this project aims to expand and improve the utility of Illinois' family violence data. As the first objective toward this goal, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) has produced this report. First, this report describes the nature and extent of family violence in Illinois based on existing state data sets. When these data sources were collectively examined, the Committee was able to more easily identify gaps that existed among Illinois' family violence data. This report also describes these gaps and provides recommendations for addressing some of them. Thus, the complete report provides a comprehensive description and assessment of Illinois' family violence data, and recommends strategies for improving it.

Implementing local data collection models in five pilot sites (Judicial Circuits 6, 8, 11, 13, and 21) is the second objective for improving Illinois' family violence data. The Local Council Coordinators in the pilot sites are identifying the special interests of their circuits, identifying data sources and collecting available data, and coordinating the implementation of a data collection model with ICJIA staff. These data collection models should result in more comprehensive and accurate descriptions of family violence in the pilot sites, thus increasing the ability of local support systems to effectively respond to family violence in their areas. With increased utility of Illinois' family violence data, Illinois will gain a more useful tool for policy and planning in the area of family violence.

How is family violence defined in this report?

It is important to understand exactly how family violence is defined in this report, because our definition expands beyond the scope of an actual "family." In this report, family violence is interpreted exactly as domestic violence is defined in the Illinois Domestic Violence Act of 1986 (750 ILCS 60/101; 725 ILCS 5/112A). Specifically then, family violence is defined as an act of abuse, neglect, or exploitation¹ committed against a person by another person(s) who is related to the victim through a *family or household member* relationship. *Family or household members* include: spouses, former spouses, parents, children, stepchildren and other persons related by blood or by present or prior marriage, persons who share or have shared a common dwelling, persons who have or allegedly have a child in common, persons who share or allegedly share a blood relationship through a child, persons who have or have had a dating or engagement relationship, and persons with disabilities and their personal assistants². Because this

¹ For specific definitions of abuse, neglect and exploitation, see the Illinois Domestic Violence Act of 1986, p. 4, Definitions (750 ILCS 60/103).

² Definition of *family or household members* is quoted directly from the Illinois Domestic Violence Act of 1986 (p. 4, Definitions (750 ILCS 60/103)).

definition includes such a broad range of relationship types, family violence expands well beyond abuse in relationships commonly associated within a family. Thus, family violence includes not only spousal and child abuse, but also elder abuse, abuse between unmarried intimate partners, and even abuse of dependent individuals in a long-term care facility by employees. This report will discuss family violence in all of these forms from available data contributed from several state agencies.

Family Violence Data Collection

Systematic data collection and reporting are the cornerstone of community needs assessment. Family violence events are currently reported independently via healthcare, criminal justice and community service organizations. In a report to Congress, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) detailed their analysis of reporting systems for violence against women and sexual violence. NIJ found that many states are systematically reporting such events in the criminal justice area, but not as often in the health and social service areas. Two issues identified within the report are: 1) variation of definitions across states; and 2) a need to include data from law enforcement as well as other criminal justice agencies, health care providers, employers, and school systems. The report calls for collaborative efforts between researchers and policymakers (NIJ, 1996).

This topic was revisited at a workshop meeting sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) in October, 1998. Again the consensus was that collaboration across fields effected by violence is an important component to systematic reporting and policy making as a result of data analysis (Martin, Silverman, & Visher, 1999).

Even nationally, family violence data are scarce. However, research that has been conducted warrants serious concerns. For example, the 1997 Bureau of Justice Statistics Sourcebook reports of national survey respondents, 55 percent of urban area respondents reported that they knew of a woman who had been physically abused by her husband or boyfriend. Fifty-two percent of suburban respondents and 55 percent of rural respondents reported to have known of such a woman. From the same national survey, 16 percent of urban respondents reported that a spouse or companion had physically abused them in their lifetime. Fourteen percent of suburban respondents and 6 percent of rural respondents reported similar experiences of abuse.

Statistical Analysis Centers (SACs) in Alabama, California, Delaware, Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming have been investigating methods of data collection that facilitate comprehensive, timely, and accurate data collection. Recently, the Justice Research and Statistics Association began to document types and characteristics of state data collection systems by working with SACs in Connecticut, Illinois, and Iowa (JRSA, 1999).

Of the three statewide reporting systems (other than Illinois) reviewed for this report, all rely heavily on reporting via the criminal justice system (Delaware, 1993 & 1994;

Connecticut, 1998; Rhode Island, 1986, 1993 & 1997). In 1993, Rhode Island issued *Domestic Violence: Rhode Island's Comprehensive Status Report*. The report examined reported domestic violence events and included related issues of community response, national and regional information, and proposed avenues of funding for needed services. Literature centered on systematic reporting of family violence in areas such as health care are scarce.

All states have established domestic violence coalitions and community service systems each reporting statewide numbers of violence to a centralized database. In Illinois, the category of community service systems includes the criminal justice system, Department on Aging (IDoA), Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Department of Human Services (DHS), and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). The number of family violence offenses are reported to the Illinois State Police (ISP) by local law enforcement agencies. The number of Orders of Protection issued in the courts are reported to the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC). The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) collects data that provides the number of offenders incarcerated for conviction of domestic battery offenses. IDoA collects and reports the number of elder abuse cases. DHS captures data on victims serviced by domestic violence and sexual assault programs that they fund. DCFS collects and reports the number of child abuse and neglect cases occurring in the state. And finally, IDPH collects family violence injury data via a registry system.

In 1993, the Illinois Supreme Court approved a plan to establish Family Violence Coordinating Councils. The councils use data reported to the state to analyze the needs of their communities and compare the needs of neighboring communities with their own. According to an article published by ICJIA, the state council is committed to developing local councils at the judicial circuit level. The local councils advocate family violence prevention through strengthened services, comprehensive systems coordination and protocol development, public education, professional training and information exchange (DiGirolamo, J. & George, S., 1996).

Although several states are attempting to collect and analyze family violence data in their state, no attempt has been made to integrate data from all sources. Illinois is the first state to collect family violence data from criminal justice, healthcare, and social service agencies, and then to combine these data in a comprehensive report. The result is a multidisciplinary approach to describing family violence in Illinois.

II. THE DATA

This report combines 10 different data sources to describe the nature and extent of family violence in Illinois. Table 1 lists the name of the data set, the agency that supplied the data set, and the time period covered by these data.

Table 1

Data Sources Used to Describe Family Violence

<u>Data Set</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Time Period</u>
Uniform Crime Reporting of Domestic Offenses	Illinois State Police	April, 1996 – December, 1998
Orders of Protection entered into the Law Enforcement Agency Data System (LEADS)	Illinois State Police	1991 – 1997
Orders of Protection Reported to the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts	Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts	1996 – 1997
Illinois Probation Outcome Survey	Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts	November, 1997 – December, 1997
Domestic Battery Admissions to the Department of Corrections	Illinois Department of Corrections	1994 – 1998
Child Abuse and Neglect Reports	Illinois Department of Children and Family Services	Fiscal Years ³ 1988 – 1998
Domestic Violence Prevention and Intervention Program	Illinois Department of Human Services	Fiscal Years 1994 – 1997
Elder Abuse and Neglect Reports	Illinois Department on Aging	1990 – 1998
Reports of Abuse and Neglect of Residents in Long-Term Care Facilities to the Central Complaint Registry Hotline	Illinois Department of Public Health	Fiscal Years 1997 – 1998
Illinois Violence Registry, Head and Spinal Cord Registry, Trauma Registry	Illinois Department of Public Health	1996 – 1998

³ Illinois' fiscal year begins July 1st and ends June 30th. The numeric label of the fiscal year is determined by the calendar year, which falls during the latter half of the fiscal year (January 1st through June 30th.)

To provide more useful comparisons, some data sets used for this report are presented by four county types; 1) Cook County, 2) collar counties, 3) urban counties (outside of Cook and the Collar counties), and 4) rural counties. Because of its size, Cook County is compared to the rest of the state. The Collar counties are the five which border Cook County (DuPage, Lake, Kane, McHenry and Will). Urban and rural counties are defined by whether or not they lie within a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). A geographic area qualifies as a MSA in one of two ways defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census: if it includes a city of at least 50,000 population or if it includes an urbanized area of at least 50,000 population with a total metropolitan population of at least 100,000. In addition to the county containing an urbanized area, a MSA may include counties having strong economic or social ties to the central county (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census). Based on this definition, there are 28 counties in Illinois which are part of a MSA (Cook, collar and urban counties) and 74 counties which are not part of a MSA, or in other words, rural.

When data from different agencies were compared, some inconsistencies became apparent in how race and ethnic categories were defined. Most data sets classified Caucasian, African-American, and Hispanic as mutually exclusive categories. However, the U.S. Census Bureau provides race and ethnicity categories separately as Hispanics may be included in either a Caucasian or African-American category. These categories include white-Hispanic, white non-Hispanic, black, total Hispanic (including black Hispanic), American Indian/Alaskan, and Asian/Pacific Islander. This form of classification is consistent with the federal Office of Management and Budget's recommendations for federal agencies. However, most Illinois agencies do not provide racial breakdowns for Hispanics. The Illinois State Police LEADS data set defines racial categories but not ethnicity, so it follows federal recommendations most closely. Hispanics are designated into either the Caucasian or African-American categories, however, no information on Hispanic origin is obtainable from this data set.

This report provides the U.S. Census Bureau's population estimates for Hispanic populations in Cook County and Illinois, which are consistent with federal guidelines. Hispanic population estimates represent both African-American and Caucasian Hispanics, while African-American population estimates include all African-Americans including Hispanics. Caucasian population estimates for Cook County and Illinois displayed in this report do not include Hispanics of any race, even Caucasian Hispanics, because most of the data sets used for this report base race and ethnicity classifications on self-reporting or appearance. Therefore, race and ethnicity data collected for state data sets may have been categorized slightly differently than the race and ethnicity population estimates provided in this report.

To fully understand the descriptions provided in this report, specific traits of each data set and their data collection procedures must be explained. For example, some data sets may not have a 100 percent compliance or reporting rate, which would render the data set incomplete. This section explains exactly what should be noted about each data set so the information can be interpreted appropriately.

Uniform Crime Reporting of Domestic Offenses – Illinois State Police (ISP)

The Illinois State Police (ISP) began collecting separate data for domestic offenses on April 1, 1996. Since this date, the reporting of domestic offenses by local law enforcement agencies has been mandated by Illinois Compiled Statutes Chapter 20, Criminal Identification Act 2630/5.1. The statute mandates the reporting of all offenses of abuse, neglect, or exploitation that occur between *family or household members* to ISP.

Illinois State Police designed a special form to collect offense-level data on all domestic offenses. Thus, one record in the data set is equal to one offense reported. Although the annual number of reported domestic offenses could be determined, the number of domestic *incidents* local law enforcement agencies responded to in Illinois is not included in this report. It is important to note that an incident may include more than one offense. For example, if a police officer responding to a domestic incident arrested the offender for two offenses, Domestic Battery *and* Violation of an Order of Protection, this would create *two* records in the data set rather than one. Therefore, the number of domestic offenses reported to ISP will be greater than the actual number of domestic incidents police responded to and reported in Illinois. This also means that the actual number of victims and offenders were not provided in this report, as one offense may include multiple victims and/or offenders.⁴

The following data elements are collected on each offense reported: offense code, date and time of the offense, victim age, race, and gender, offender age, race, and gender, injury type, weapons used, dispositions or end outcomes of offenses, and the victim's relationship to the offender. This information is recorded on the form and submitted to ISP monthly.

Although the statute mandates the reporting of domestic offenses from all local law enforcement agencies, this data set is not fully representative of Illinois' population. In 1998, ISP received reports from 61 percent of all local law enforcement agencies. However, it is normal to expect less than full reporting compliance rates in the first few years of any new data collection system. Thus, this percentage is expected to increase as the system becomes more routinized for ISP and all local law enforcement agencies.

Although less than two-thirds of local agencies reported domestic offenses to ISP in 1998, this data set represents jurisdictions including 83 percent of Illinois' total population when 1998 population estimates are considered. Population representation by the data set varies somewhat across different regions of the state. Cook County had the highest representation at 91 percent, whereas the urban counties had the lowest representation at 73 percent. Table 2 illustrates these differences by listing the total number of law enforcement agencies within a region, the number of those agencies that

⁴ A case number is included for each record of an offense reported, so a count of incidents, victims, and offenders is technically possible. However, the procedure necessary to complete this involves complicated data manipulation strategies, which could not be completed in the time frame provided to complete this report.

reported domestic offense data, and the differences in populations served between these two groups.

Table 2

Percentages of Local Law Enforcement Agencies Reporting Domestic Offenses to ISP and Population Represented by Reported Data by Region, 1998

Region	State	Cook	Collar	Urban	Rural
Total # of Agencies ⁵	824	136	130	231	327
# of Agencies Reporting	506	91	93	142	180
% of Agencies Reporting	61%	67%	72%	61%	55%
Total Population of Region	12,012,335	5,173,647	2,539,081	1,916,358	2,383,249
Total Population Represented by Data	10,024,610	4,728,557	1,998,956	1,407,662	1,889,435
% of Population Represented by Data	83%	91%	79%	73%	79%

Source: ICJIA calculation using Illinois State Police population data⁶ and the number of local law enforcement agencies that reported domestic offense data in 1998.

Orders of Protection Entered into the Law Enforcement Agency Data System (LEADS) – Illinois State Police

Illinois State Police maintain a database of Orders of Protection issued by courts in Illinois, as they are required by the Illinois Domestic Violence Act (750 ILCS 60/101). This law specifies that all Orders of Protection must be entered into the Law Enforcement Agency Data System (LEADS) by county sheriffs on the day the Order of Protection is issued. The LEADS system is then available to officers on the street who may be responding to family violence situations and require immediate knowledge of any Orders of Protection in effect at that time. Thus, timely entry of this data is important to protect citizens who may experience repeated incidents of family violence and to protect officers responding to them. Although it is believed that most Orders of Protection are in fact entered into LEADS, this has not been systematically tested.

The data set used for this report includes all Orders of Protection entered into LEADS from 1991 to 1997. The data set contains 310,630 records, each record representing one Order of Protection. Each record in the data set contains several dates regarding the Order of Protection: the date issued, the date entered into LEADS, the expiration date, in some cases a second, later expiration date, and the date the Order was served to the respondent (person whom the petitioner of order seeks protection from). The date served is important because some remedies (conditions of the order) are not in effect unless the order has

⁵ This represents the total number of agencies that reported UCR Index Crime data. Currently, this is the most accurate measure available of Illinois' population by law enforcement jurisdictions.

⁶ Population data provided by the Illinois State Police varies slightly from that provided from the U.S. Census Bureau due to differing data collection methods.

been served. A cancellation date may also exist in the record. ISP requires that an order over two years old and not canceled must be validated to determine if it is still in effect. In addition, each record contains the petitioner's name and address, and the respondent's name, gender, race, relationship to the petitioner, and date of birth. It also contains data indicating which of 17 available remedies are included as part of the order. Finally, each record contains the court case number, the LEADS number, and the county in which the order was issued.⁷

It is important to understand how the LEADS data were manipulated. It is very unlikely that more than one Order of Protection would be issued on the same petitioner and respondent on the same date. However, the same petitioner/respondent combination may likely be the subjects of multiple orders issued consecutively over time. Initial examination of the LEADS data set revealed many instances of multiple record sets with the same issue dates. If the petitioner, respondent and the respondent's date of birth were identical within these sets,⁸ then all but one of these records were excluded. For the retained record, the latest date within the multiple record set was substituted for each of the date fields for each order (date entered, date served, expiration date, and canceled date).⁹ If the gender, race, relationship of the respondent to the petitioner, county were the same in all records in the multiple record set with the same issue date, this information was retained for the single record kept. If these variables were inconsistent across the records in the set, these variables were replaced with missing values. A total of 12,130 records (4 percent) were excluded from the data set because they represented multiple orders issued to the same petitioner/respondent combination on the same date. The final data set used for analysis contains 298,500 records, representing all Orders of Protection entered into the LEADS system from 1991 through 1997.

Orders of Protection Reported to the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC)

An additional measure of Orders of Protection is available in Illinois. County Circuit Clerks have been required to submit quarterly counts of the number of Orders of Protection issued within their county to the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC) since the enactment of the Illinois Domestic Violence Act. These numbers were taken directly from the *Annual Report of the Illinois Courts - Statistical Summary* from 1996 to 1997. Prior to 1996, Orders of Protection were grouped together with other family case filings; thus these figures are not available for prior years.

⁷ The county is derived from the terminal from which the record is entered. In a few cases, this is likely to lead to misclassification of the order by county because a small number of counties actually use another county's LEADS terminal to enter their data.

⁸ Because middle initials were inconsistently recorded, they were eliminated from both the respondent's and the petitioner's names before comparison was made. Examination of the data set also showed many instances where the respondent name/respondent date of birth/petitioner name combination are the same except for one digit of the date of birth or one character in the name set. While it is likely that these represent data entry errors, no attempt has been made to view these as part of the multiple record set.

⁹ This could introduce error if the latest date was entered incorrectly. However, since only one date could be retained, this seemed the most conservative course--one that would result in the data reflecting the longest possible time the order was in effect.

Since only aggregate totals are submitted to AOIC, no detailed information is available on each Order of Protection such as the type of order or petitioner/respondent demographics. However, AOIC's annual report does provide these data at the county level so that regional breakdowns can be illustrated.

The primary limitation in the number of Orders of Protection reported to AOIC is that not all of these orders are captured. Most of these county reports include only those Orders of Protection that are "stand-alone," meaning that no criminal charge against the respondent was filed or no divorce case is existing in conjunction with the order. Because most circuit clerks organize their case files into civil (with a separate section for Orders of Protection), criminal, and divorce categories, they are only able to count those orders in the civil section for the quarterly reports submitted to AOIC. Most counties outside of Cook do not have the ability to "flag" orders that are with divorce or criminal cases, so totals provided to AOIC are under-counted. Although it is believed that the majority of Orders of Protection are *not* filed with criminal charges or divorce cases, no formal attempt at providing estimations has been made.

Illinois Adult Probation Outcome Survey – Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC)

Although no ongoing data collection system exists to capture information on probationers in Illinois, AOIC's Probation Services Division and ICJIA collected data on offenders discharged from probation in Illinois during a four-week period in November and December of 1997. Probation officers throughout the state were instructed to complete a survey instrument for all offenders from their caseloads who were discharged during the study period. The survey collected information on the demographic characteristics of probationers, prior criminal history, the nature of the current offense, types of court-ordered sanctions, performance while on probation, and case outcomes. For the analyses presented in this report, those offenders who were sentenced to probation for domestic violence¹⁰ offenses were extracted from the data set.

The primary limitation of using this data source is the small sample of domestic violence offenders. Although more than 2,400 probationers were included in this study, domestic violence offenders totaled only 135--about 6 percent of total sample. Another limitation is that probation officers were instructed to check only the most serious offense for each offender discharged, thus, domestic violence probationers convicted of additional, more serious offenses were not captured in the sample. It is likely then that many probationers, such as those who assaulted a child or an elderly victim, could not be filtered from the data set. However, this source may provide some insight as to how these domestic violence offenders differ from the general population of probationers, and also serve as a comparison to other data sets used for this report which include offender information.

¹⁰ The survey instrument provided "domestic violence" as one of several offense type responses. The probation officer was asked to indicate the most serious offense type for which the offender was convicted.

Domestic Battery Admissions to the Department of Corrections – Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC)

The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) collects and maintains data on offenders within the Illinois prison system. Since 1979, summaries of this information have been published annually in *Statistical Presentation* in compliance with the Unified Code of Corrections (730 ILCS 5/5-5-4.3). These reports provide information on offender demographics, admissions and exits, populations, sentencing, and actual length of stay.

Although the *Statistical Presentation* does not include separate statistics for family violence offenders, IDOC performed queries of domestic battery offenders admitted to prison from 1994 through 1998 specifically for this report. Additional data for comparison was taken directly from *Statistical Presentation*.

Again, a low sample limits research capacities with this data set. For the entire five-year period between 1994 and 1998, only 295 offenders were admitted to IDOC for domestic battery as a most serious offense. This is primarily because domestic battery is only a misdemeanor, thus not eligible for a prison sentence. However, domestic battery becomes a felony upon an offender's second conviction. Therefore, all offenders included in this data set have been convicted of domestic battery at least twice. Another reason for the limited sample is that IDOC is only able to filter offender data by the most serious offense for which the offender was convicted. This means that offenders who were admitted to IDOC for domestic battery in conjunction with a more serious offense, such as murder, are not captured in this data set. Thus, those offenders convicted of family violence offenses more serious than domestic battery cannot be accounted for at the state level.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reports – Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is the state agency designated to investigate reports of suspected child abuse and neglect, as defined by the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (P.A. 81-1077, effective July 1, 1980). At its inception in 1964, DCFS began publishing reports with information such as the annual numbers and rates of reported and verified cases of child abuse and neglect, victim and abuser demographics, and the relationships between victims and abusers.

In order for a report of child abuse or neglect to be made, four elements must be present:

1. A situation involving a child under 18 years old.
2. A caretaker responsible for the child must be present.
3. A set of circumstances or a specific incident must have occurred.
4. Harm or substantial risk of harm to the child must be present.

The second requirement was added in 1995 due to the increasing number of neglect reports of children who had been left with a friend or relative of a parent or legal guardian. For example, if a parent left his or her child with a relative and informed the

relative that he or she would return in two days, but subsequently did not, the relative may call DCFS reporting neglect against the parent. Since 1995, DCFS may, if necessary, investigate such a situation to determine if the child is in need of foster care; however, these cases are no longer included as reports of neglect.

Those legally mandated to report suspected child abuse or neglect include but are not limited to medical personnel/medical examiners, teachers, law enforcement officials, crisis or hotline personnel, social workers/family violence program personnel, and social service personnel. DCFS also accepts reports from the general public.

From 1965 to 1980, DCFS maintained a paper-based register of all abuse and neglect reports. This way of maintaining data became ineffective as the number of reports began to increase. As a result, DCFS created a centralized child abuse hotline in 1980, and past and current reports were electronically stored. Although often refined and amended, this structure for receiving and processing reports remains today.

For this report, data was collected directly from DCFS's annual reports. DCFS performed a few additional queries discerning abuse from neglect specifically for this report. It is important to note that these data include cases beyond our definition of family violence (e.g., child abuse by a teacher or day care employee.) However, when verified perpetrators of abuse and neglect were examined, 90 percent of them were *family or household members* of the child.

Domestic Violence Prevention and Intervention Program – Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS)

Through its Domestic Violence Prevention and Intervention Program, the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) provides financial support to crisis intervention and prevention programs providing services to adult victims of family violence and their children. Service providers may offer victims a range of services such as shelter, transportation, crisis hotlines, counseling, or court advocacy.

Each year, DHS publishes an annual report which provides the number of victims, types of services rendered, and victim demographic information for all victims serviced through their programs. Data from fiscal years 1994 through 1997 were taken directly from the fiscal year 1997 report. A report for fiscal year 1998 will probably not be completed for some time due to the transition of entering these data into the new InfoNet system designed and funded by ICJIA. Since this process only began in mid 1997, the local programs, along with DHS and ICJIA continue to work together to standardize the new reporting procedures and compiling of reports.

It is important to recognize that these data are based on only those victims served by the DHS-funded programs. Although the 52 programs in fiscal year 1997 were located throughout the state in metropolitan as well as rural areas, other domestic violence programs do exist.

Domestic Elder Abuse and Neglect Reports - Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA)

The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) administers the statewide Elder Abuse and Neglect Program under the authority of the Elder Abuse and Neglect Act (ILCS 29/1 et seq.), to respond to allegations of abuse or mistreatment of any Illinois citizen 60 years or older.

In prior years, the reporting of elder abuse/neglect was voluntary. Since January 1, 1999, however, a wide range of professionals became required by the Elder Abuse and Neglect Act (ILCS Chapter 320/1 et seq.) to report elder abuse in situations where a victim may be unable to self-report due to physical or mental conditions. Such conditions may include dementia, paralysis, speech disorders, being confined to a bed, etc. Mandated reporters include but are not limited to professionals in social services, those who engage in the care of an eligible adult (60 or older), and law enforcement professionals. These professionals must report suspected abuse to IDoA within 24 hours of initial suspicion.

IDoA publishes annual reports that include information on the types of abuse reported; victim and offender demographics, interventions pursued, and program accomplishments. Although the Elder Abuse and Neglect Program is fairly new and the reporting of elder abuse and neglect was only mandated this year, IDoA has been publishing annual reports on the number of cases reported each year since 1990.

IDoA provided ICJIA with case-level data of elder abuse and neglect cases specifically for this report, but they were asked to exclude cases that may not be considered family violence. Of the six different abuse type classifications: financial exploitation, emotional abuse, physical abuse, willful deprivation, confinement, sexual abuse, and passive neglect (unintentional neglect), financial exploitation and passive neglect were excluded. Cases where the relationship between the victim and the alleged perpetrator did not fall within the definition of *family and household members* were also excluded.

In this data set, one record represents one victim. If a report of elder abuse/neglect includes more than one victim, two records would be entered into the data set. However, more than one offender may be found within one record or victim. Since only 17 percent of all cases involved more than one offender, analyses presented in this report represent only the primary abusers.

Reports of Abuse and Neglect of Residents in Long-Term Care Facilities to the Central Complaint Registry Hotline – Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)

In Illinois, because *family and household members* include relationships of persons with disabilities and their legal or informal caretakers, such a person abused by an employee of a long-term care facility is also considered a victim of family violence. Cases of abuse and neglect in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities are reported through a hotline to the Central Complaint Registry. The Central Complaint Registry is the division of the Illinois Department of Public Health that investigates complaints of incidents in long-term care facilities. This includes not only cases of abuse and neglect of residents,

but also accidental injuries among residents and even operational problems within the facility.

Data from this source represents victims of all ages, not just elderly residents. Although the overwhelming majority of residents in long-term care facilities are over 60 years of age, these data also represent abuse and neglect of younger individuals living in a long-term residential facility.

Very limited data are available on this type of abuse and neglect, perhaps because these victims are overlooked as victims of family violence. For this reason, data are only provided on the number and types of abuse and neglect reported to the registry. Although this type of abuse and neglect is much different in context than other forms, it is by definition of the Illinois Domestic Violence Act abuse within a household and thus included within the domain of family violence.

Illinois Violence Registry, Head and Spinal Cord Registry, and Trauma Registry – Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) began collecting data on injuries caused by violent acts on March 10, 1998. Since this date, all reporting facilities have been mandated to report victims diagnosed with an injury allegedly caused by an External Cause of Injury found in the *Illinois Violent Injury Code* by Illinois Public Act 89-0242. This act was established with the intention of providing accurate data for healthcare providers, injury prevention programs, special interest groups, governmental planners, and others who conduct needs assessments for victims of violence. This new data collection system joins two other registries that have been maintained by IDPH for several years—the Head and Spinal Cord Registry and the Trauma Registry.

Reporting facilities include those defined by the Hospital Licensing Act (210 ILCS 85), and the University of Illinois Hospital Act (110 ILCS 330). Other reporting facilities include ambulatory surgical treatment centers licensed under the Ambulatory Surgical Treatment Center Licensing Act (210 ILCS 5); and freestanding emergency centers licensed under the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Systems Act (210 ILCS 50). Physicians and dental offices are excluded. Registry data includes all facility admissions, including 23-hour observations, patients who sign themselves out against medical advice, patients that have expired or are dead on arrival (DOA), and patients that are admitted and discharged from the emergency department.

All three registries maintained by IDPH utilize *E-codes* (external causes of injury) to identify the type of incident which caused the injury(ies). Currently, only one E-code allows IDPH to identify some forms of family violence. This E-code is labeled, "Child Battering and Other Maltreatment," which includes child as well as adult abuse. Family violence victims can be identified with this E-code, because it includes several sub-codes that identify the alleged perpetrator of the act. This enables IDPH to filter injuries of abuse based on the relationship between the victim and the alleged perpetrator, and thus acts of family violence. A substantial limitation is that these sub-codes identifying the

perpetrator are not used with other E-codes, so only incidents categorized as "Child Battering and Other Maltreatment" can be captured. For example, the E-code for gunshot wounds does not include the sub-codes identifying perpetrators, so family violence victims with a gunshot wound would not be included in the data used for this report. This problem limits the sample substantially; only 287 cases could be queried for the three-year period between 1996 and 1998. It is suspected that this number represents only a small portion of the actual number of family violence victims examined in emergency rooms over the three-year period. Moreover, these cases are not representative of all family violence victims who entered emergency rooms because of the limitations in filtering family violence victims from the data set. E-codes are used internationally in the healthcare industry and are maintained and updated by the World Health Organization. Therefore, much persuasion and cooperation would be required to adjust the codes to more accurately identify victims of family violence.

IDPH estimated a compliance rate of 90 to 95 percent for the Violence Registry and nearly 100 percent for the other two registries in 1998. However, the quality and completeness of these data cannot be determined. Data used for this report were queried from all three registries for 1996 through 1998. However, since data collection for the Violence Registry did not begin until March 10, 1998, any family violence victims admitted prior to this date were captured from either the Head and Spinal Cord Registry or the Trauma Registry. To be included in the query, the case must have categorized under the E-code, "Child Battering and Other Maltreatment." In addition, the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator (identified by the sub-code) had to fall within the definition of *family or household members*. As previously stated, the query identified a total of 287 cases that met these requirements. Due to the small number of cases found, data are presented for the entire 3-year time period rather than annually. Although these cases were collected from three different registries, IDPH reported that no records in the query were double-counts (due to qualifying for more than one registry). One record in this data set represents one victim admitted to an emergency department.

III. INCIDENCE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

A primary goal of family violence data collection is to help determine prevalence, or the overall level of reported family violence in Illinois. All but one of the data sources used for this report can serve as a measure of prevalence, but limitations with these data hinder this ability. Moreover, some data sources have simply not existed long enough to describe trends. AOIC's Probation Outcome Survey cannot measure prevalence because it is not an ongoing data collection system, but a one-time study in which a sample of probationers in Illinois were examined during the study period. Therefore, this data source is not represented in this section. Data from the IDPH Violence, Head and Spinal Cord, and Trauma Registries are also not presented in this section on prevalence because the number of cases was so small (287 victims during a three-year period). Moreover, a date field was not included with the data set, so cases could not be separated by year.

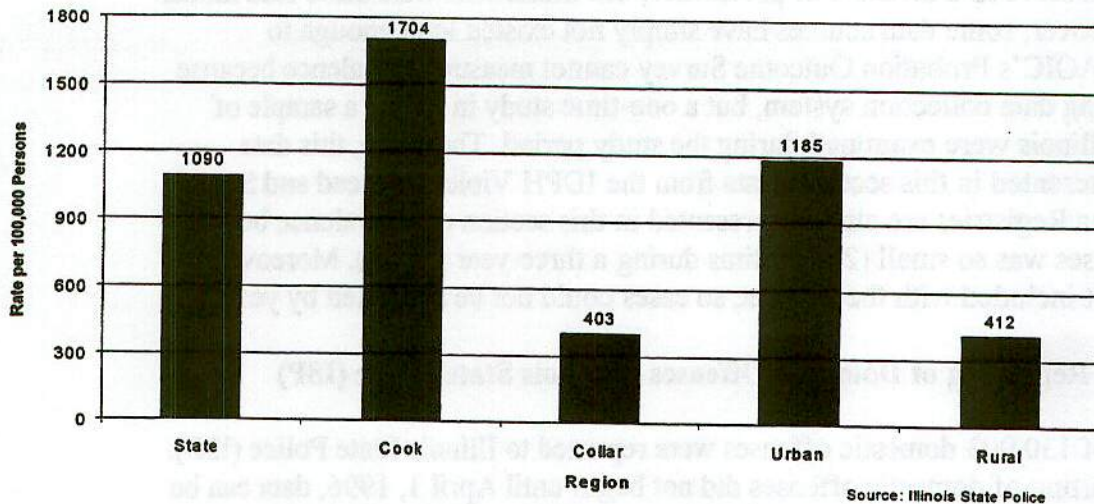
Uniform Crime Reporting of Domestic Offenses – Illinois State Police (ISP)

In 1998, a total of 130,903 domestic offenses were reported to Illinois State Police (ISP). Because the reporting of domestic offenses did not begin until April 1, 1996, data can be examined solely for April through December of that year. From April to December of 1996, a total of 95,374 domestic offenses were reported to ISP. For the entire year of 1997, 127,962 domestic offenses were reported. During 1998, a total of 130,903 domestic offenses were reported, a slight increase of 2 percent since 1997.

Although rates may be calculated and compared across regions, they must be interpreted with caution because this data set only represents 83 percent of Illinois' total population. It is also important to consider differences in regional population representations as illustrated in Table 2, as some variation was noted across regions. From all reported offenses in 1998, the rate at which domestic offenses were reported in Illinois was 1,090 per 100,000 persons (Figure 1). This is more than one reported offense for every 100 people. When rates are examined by region, however, notable differences were seen across the state. Cook County had the highest domestic offense rate of all four regions. Cook County's rate of 1,704 offenses per 100,000 persons is nearly 50 percent higher than the statewide rate. The collar counties had the lowest rate at 403 offenses per 100,000 persons. This figure is more than 63 percent lower than the statewide rate and more than 75 percent lower than Cook County's rate.

Figure 1

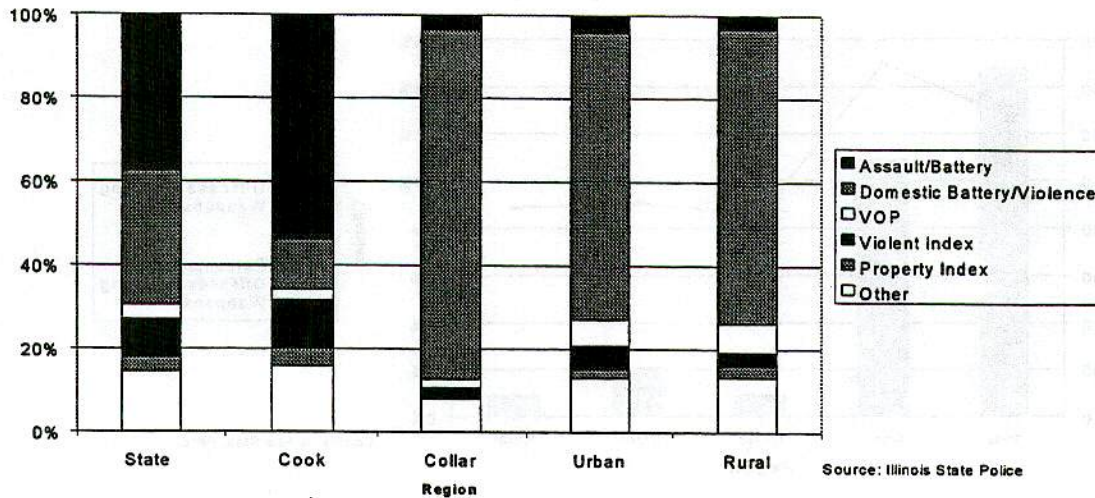
Rates of All Domestic Offenses Reported in Illinois by Region, 1998



Of the more than 130,000 domestic offenses reported in 1998, the majority was reported as *domestic* battery/violence (32 percent) and *simple* assault/battery (38 percent) (Figure 2). However, vast differences between these two offense types were noted when regions were compared. In Cook County, 54 percent of these offenses were reported as *simple* assault/battery offenses, while only 12 percent were reported as *domestic* battery/violence. On the other hand, the collar counties reported 84 percent of offenses as *domestic* battery/violence, while only 4 percent were reported as *simple* assault/battery. In addition, reported domestic offenses in Cook County comprise greater portions of Index offenses, especially violent Index offenses, and lesser portions of Violations of Orders of Protection than the other regions.

Figure 2

Domestic Offense Types Reported in Illinois by Region, 1998

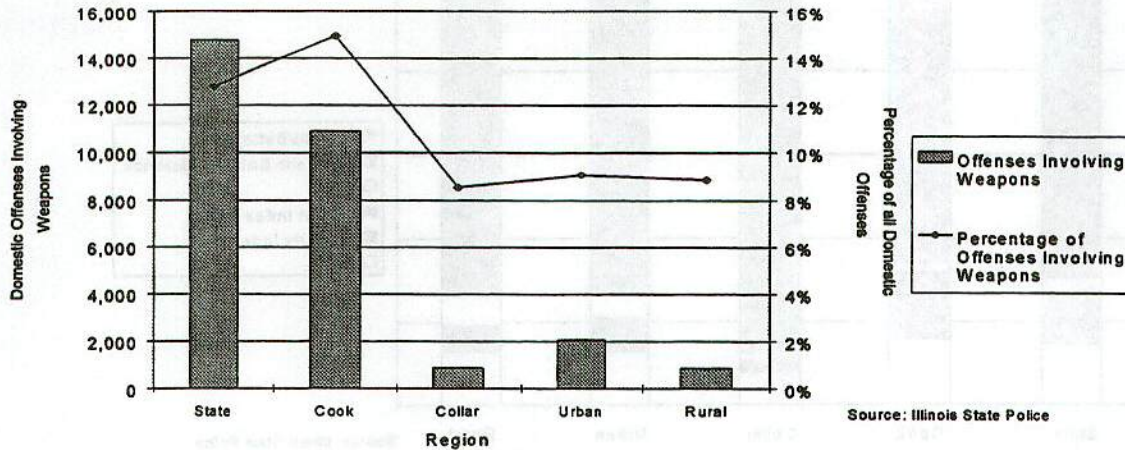


ISP's domestic offense data set was the only one containing information on types of weapons used during family violence incidents. In 1998, the types of weapons involved in domestic offenses were recorded in more than 88 percent of all reported domestic offenses. Weapon involvement data were missing in the remaining 12 percent of offenses. Of 115,526 domestic offenses reported that did include weapon information, more than one in ten offenses (13 percent) involved some type of weapon other than personal weapons (hands, fist, feet) (Figure 3).

When regions were examined, differences were not as pronounced as they were with rates and offense types, but some variation was apparent. Excluding the missing cases, Cook County had the highest percentage of reported domestic offenses involving weapons in 1998 at 15 percent. Excluding the missing cases, collar counties had the lowest percentage of weapon involvement (8.7 percent), 42 percent lower than Cook County.

Figure 3

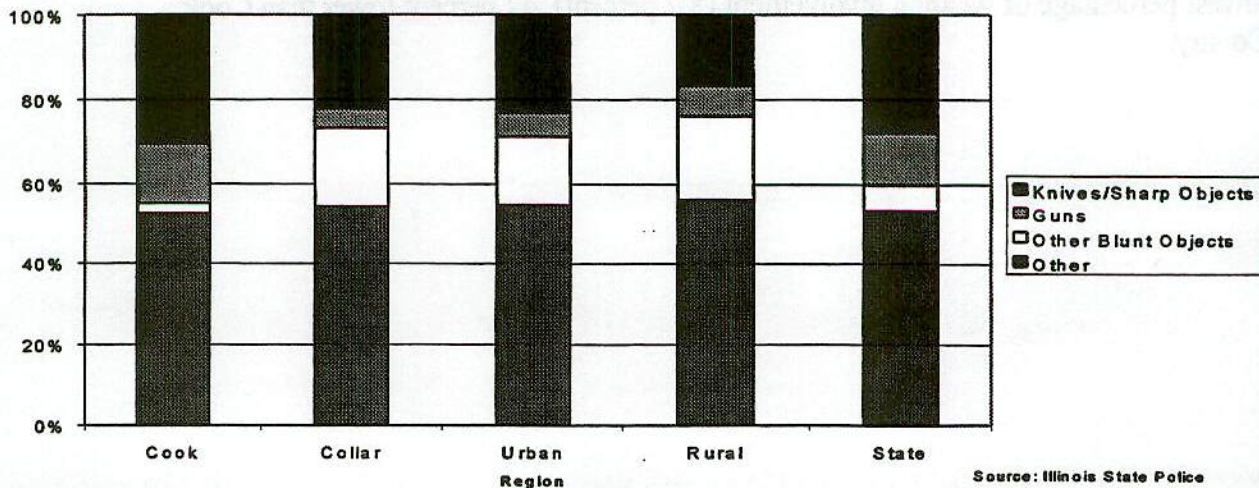
Number and Percentage of Reported Domestic Offenses Involving Weapons of all Reported Domestic Offenses in Illinois by Region, 1998



Of those offenses involving weapons, the most common types of weapons used were knives or other lethal sharp objects (28 percent), followed by guns (12 percent) (Figure 4). Similar to regional patterns of weapon involvement, Cook County had the highest portion of all reported domestic offenses involving the use of knives/lethal sharp objects (30 percent) and the use of guns (14 percent). Rural counties had the lowest portion of all reported domestic offenses involving knives/lethal sharp objects (17 percent), and the collar counties had the lowest portion of all reported domestic offenses involving guns at 4 percent.

Figure 4

Domestic Offenses Involving Weapons Reported in Illinois by Weapon Type and Region, 1998



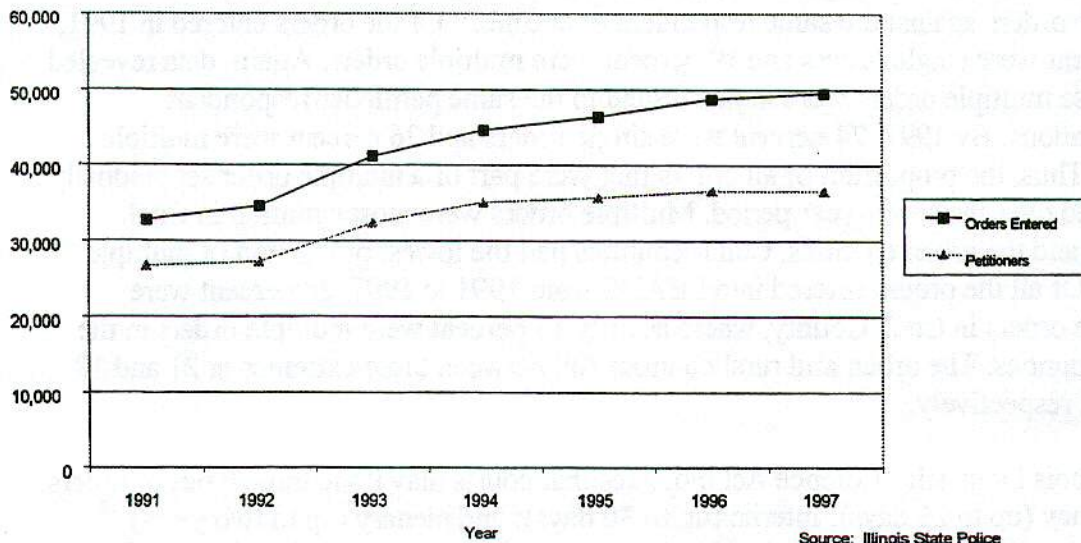
Orders of Protection Entered into the Law Enforcement Agency Data System (LEADS) – Illinois State Police (ISP)

In 1991, a total of 32,702 Orders of Protection were entered into the LEADS system. By 1997, this number reached 49,501--an increase of 51 percent over the seven-year period (Figure 5). This is a substantial increase, however, perhaps law enforcement agencies became more compliant with entering the orders into LEADS.

It is important to note that these data represent the number of orders entered into LEADS, not the number of petitioners seeking orders. A given petitioner may have had multiple orders over this seven-year period. The number of petitioners can be calculated from this data set using some data manipulation techniques. Figure 5 also presents the number of petitioners with orders entered during this same period. The number of petitioners with orders entered rose sharply between 1992 (27,170) and 1993 (32,337), and then increased more slowly through 1996. The number of petitioners actually declined slightly from 1996 to 1997. Thus, while the number of orders increased 51 percent from 1991 to 1997, the number of petitioners increased only 37 percent during the same period. Perhaps this was due to the increased number of orders entered for the same petitioner and respondent¹¹.

Figure 5

Number of Orders of Protection Entered and Number of Petitioners in the Illinois LEADS System, 1991 - 1997



¹¹ It is explained later in this report that of the orders issued in 1991, 19 percent were multiple orders entered on the same petitioner/respondent combination. By 1997, 26 percent were multiple orders. Thus, the proportion of all orders that are part of a multiple set has increased somewhat between 1991 and 1997.

When orders entered into LEADS between 1991 and 1997 were compared across regions, Cook County had the largest number of orders, followed by other urban counties (Table 3). The collar and rural counties each had lower amounts of total orders entered, but the rural counties had a slightly higher number of orders than the collar counties. The number of petitioners in the different state regions show a pattern similar to the number of orders, i.e., the number of petitioners is highest in Cook County, next highest in other urban counties and lowest in collar and rural counties.

Table 3

Number of Orders of Protection Entered and Number of Petitioners in the Illinois LEADS System by Region, 1991 - 1997

Region	Number of Orders	% of State Total	Number of Petitioners	% of State Total
Cook	134,372	45%	96,292	42%
Collar	42,299	14%	36,695	16%
Urban	74,273	25%	58,972	25%
Rural	47,432	16%	38,814	17%
State	298,326*	100%	230,773	100%

* The region of origin could not be determined for 124 orders, so this total is slightly less than the total number of orders in the data set.

Source: Illinois State Police

Most petitioners seek a single order, but a substantial minority of petitioners seek multiple orders against the same respondent over time.¹² Of the orders entered in 1991, 82 percent were single orders and 19 percent were multiple orders. Again, data revealed that these multiple orders were in fact issued to the same petitioner/respondent combinations. By 1997, 74 percent were single orders and 26 percent were multiple orders. Thus, the proportion of all orders that were part of a multiple order set gradually increased over the seven-year period. Multiple orders were most common in Cook County and the urban counties. Collar counties had the lowest proportion of multiple orders. Of all the orders entered into LEADS from 1991 to 1997, 28 percent were multiple orders in Cook County, where as only 13 percent were multiple orders in the collar counties. The urban and rural counties fell between these extremes at 21 and 18 percent, respectively.

The Illinois Domestic Violence Act indicates that courts may issue three types of orders: emergency (up to 21 days); interim (up to 30 days); and plenary (up to two years).¹³ Emergency orders can be issued without the respondent being served with the order and can therefore only have some of the seventeen remedies as part of the order. About half

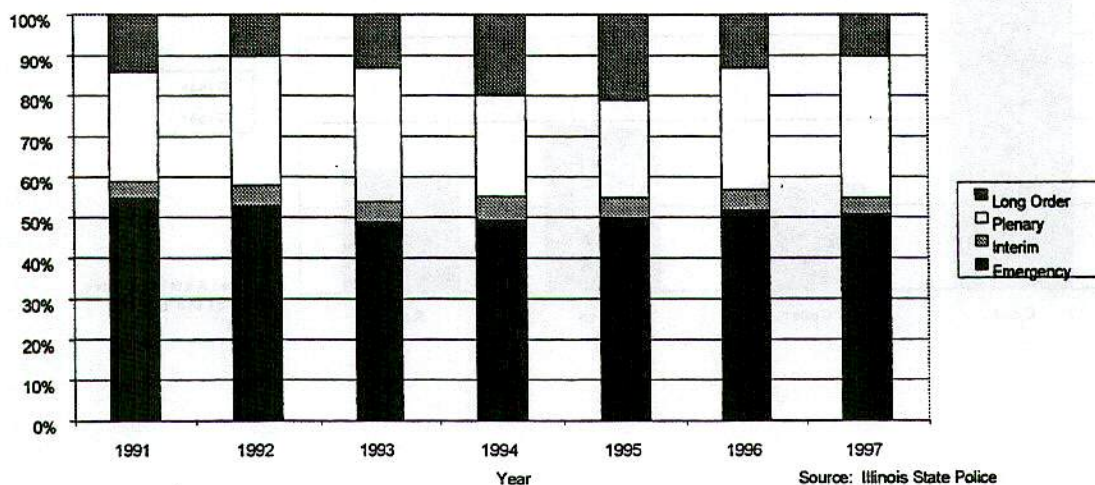
¹² This, of course, is limited by the period of time covered by our data. However, it is likely that if a petitioner sought more than one order against the same respondent the second order would be issued within the seven year period covered by our data.

¹³ Illinois LEADS Reference Manual: Orders of Protection, Illinois State Police, November, 1995. The length of an order was determined by subtracting the issue date from the latest expiration date.

the orders entered into LEADS from 1991 through 1997 were emergency orders, about 5 percent were interim orders, and about 30 percent were plenary (Figure 6). Another 15 percent of orders were over two years in length, longer than the longest order mentioned in the LEADS manual. However, it is not clear if these were orders extended after an initial two-year period. The proportion of emergency orders has declined slightly from 1991 through 1997, while the proportion of interim orders remained fairly constant. The proportion of plenary orders increased from 1991 through 1993, declined in 1994 and 1995, and increased again in 1996 and 1997.

Figure 6

Orders of Protection Entered into LEADS by Type of Order, 1991 - 1997



Orders of Protection Reported to the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC)

A second measure of Orders of Protection is available from the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC). As previously stated, each county circuit clerk submits the number of Orders of Protection issued in their county to AOIC quarterly. Remember, however, that numbers reported outside of Cook County may exclude orders filed with criminal or divorce cases.

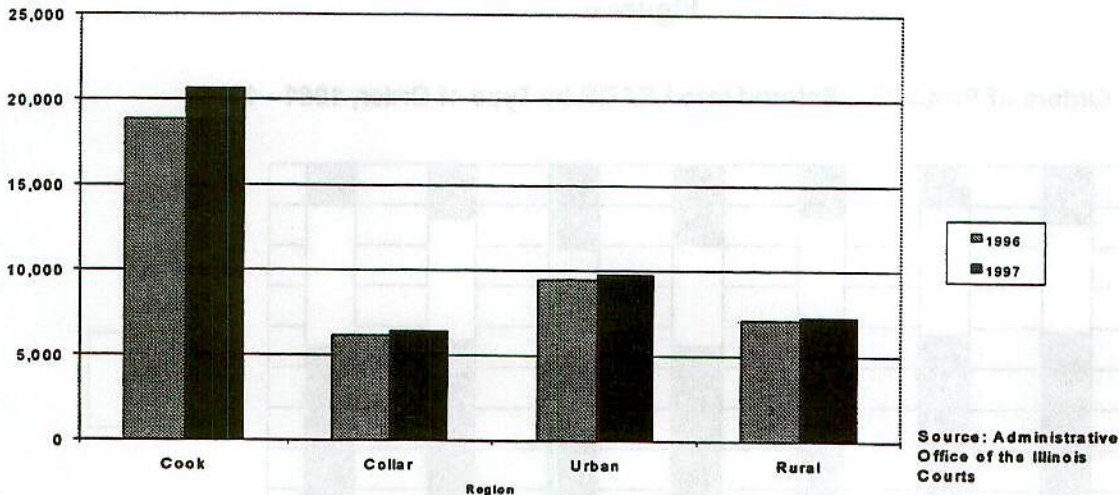
In 1996, the number of new Orders of Protection issued in Illinois Courts and reported to AOIC was 41,504. This number then increased about 6 percent to 44,039 in 1997. When the two measures were compared, the number of orders reported to AOIC was less than the number of Orders of Protection entered into ISP's LEADS system. In 1997, the number of orders entered into LEADS was about 12 percent higher than the number of orders reported to AOIC and 17 percent higher in 1996.

In 1996 and 1997, Cook County accounted for nearly half of all Orders of Protection reported to AOIC statewide, 45 and 47 percent respectively. The urban counties made up

the next largest portion at about 23 percent, while the collar and rural counties each comprised portions between 14 and 17 percent. Cook County experienced the largest increase during these two years, increasing 9 percent from 1996 to 1997 (Figure 7). Other regions of the state also experienced small increases of 5 percent or less during the same period.

Figure 7

Orders of Protection Reported to AOIC, 1996 - 1997



Domestic Battery Admissions to the Department of Corrections – Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC)

Figure 8 illustrates the number of offenders admitted to IDOC for a domestic battery offense from 1994 to 1998. Although the number of domestic battery offenders admitted to prison has increased dramatically over the five-year period throughout the state (7 offenders in 1994 to 129 in 1998), these numbers are still very low compared to offenders admitted for other offense types. These increases were primarily due to the increase of domestic battery admissions from the urban and rural counties. From 1994 to 1998, urban domestic battery admissions increased from 3 to 65, and rural domestic battery admissions increased from 1 in 1994 to 40 in 1998. During the same five-year period, domestic battery admissions increased only from 3 to 13 in Cook County and from zero to 11 in the collar counties.

Figure 8

Offenders Admitted to IDOC for Domestic Battery by Region, 1994 - 1998

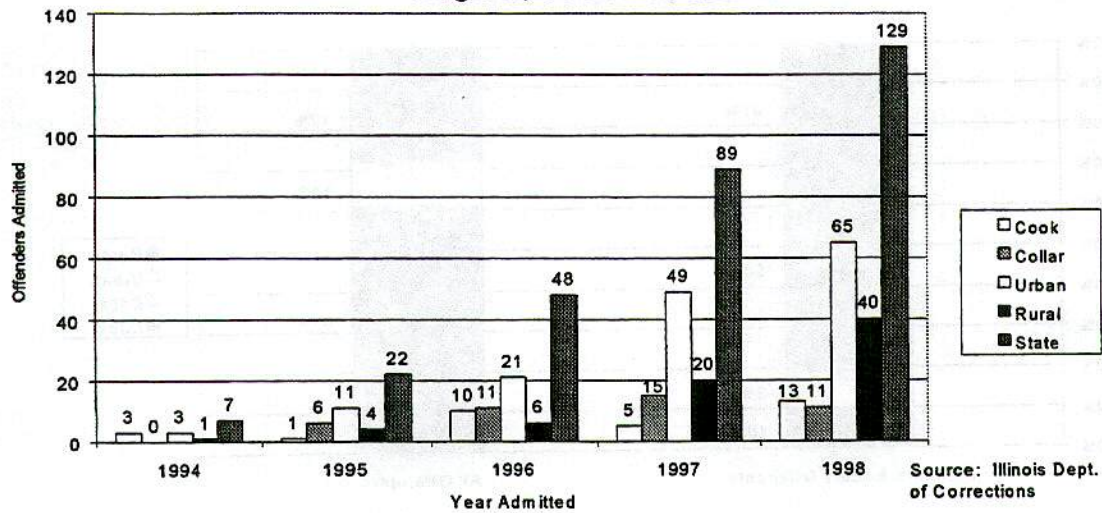
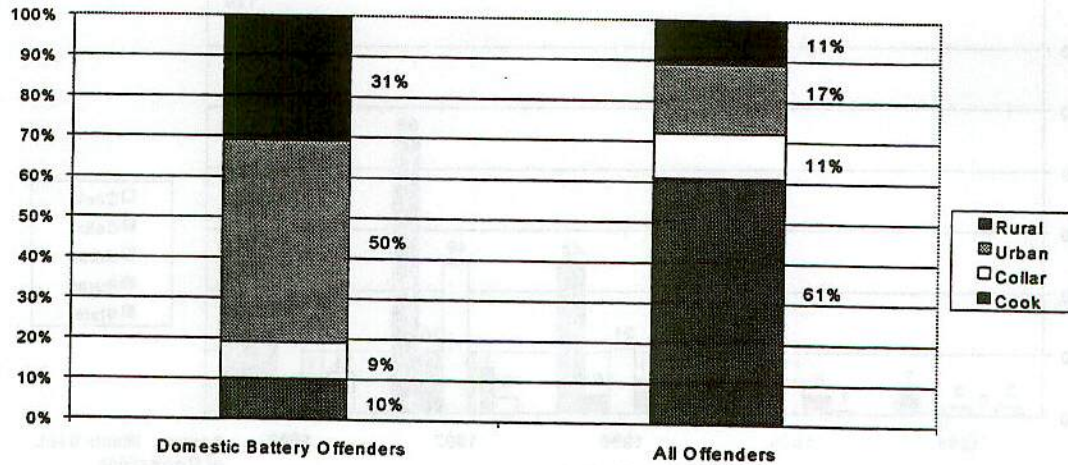


Figure 9 illustrates 1998 regional distributions among domestic battery offenders compared to all offenders admitted to IDOC (including domestic battery offenders). In general, regional proportions among the two groups of offenders varied substantially. While over 60 percent of IDOC admissions for all offenses in 1998 came from Cook County, only 10 percent of domestic battery admissions were from Cook County that same year. Most domestic battery offenders admitted to IDOC in 1998 were from urban counties (50 percent), while these counties only accounted for 17 percent of all 1998 IDOC admissions. A large portion of domestic battery offenders also came from rural counties in 1998 (31 percent). One possible explanation for these differences is that typically, Cook County sends much more serious offenders to IDOC than the downstate regions. Since domestic battery is only a Class 4 felony, Cook County may reserve its Class 4 felony admissions for the most dangerous offenders.

Figure 9

Domestic Battery Offenders and All Offenders Admitted to IDOC by Region, 1998



Source: Illinois Dept. of Corrections

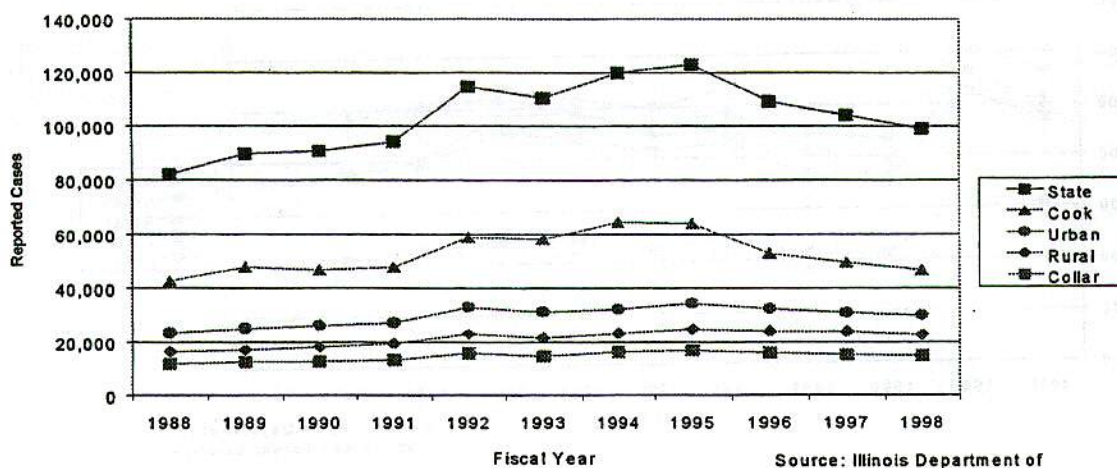
Child Abuse and Neglect Reports – Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

It is important to remember that the DCFS child abuse and neglect data presented in this section include reports where the victim was not a *family or household member* of the perpetrator. However, at least 90 percent of perpetrators from verified reports were *family or household members* of the child in fiscal year 1998.

The number of child abuse and neglect reports to DCFS has declined since fiscal year 1995 (Figure 10). Although the number of reports increased nearly 50 percent from 93,880 in fiscal year 1988 to 139,726 in fiscal year 1995, this number has since decreased to 113,994 in fiscal year 1998—an 18 percent decrease. Cook County experienced the greatest decrease since fiscal year 1995 of 27 percent. The other regions experienced lesser decreases averaging about 11 percent between fiscal years 1995 and 1998.

Figure 10

**Reported Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect in Illinois
by Region, Fiscal Years 1988 - 1998**



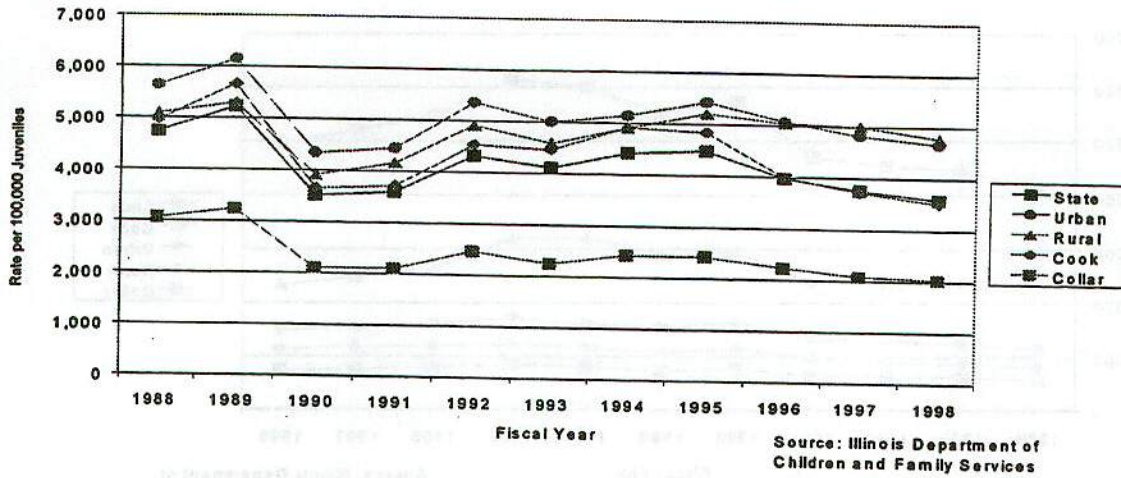
Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

In part, this decrease was due to the additional requirement for abuse/neglect reports in fiscal year 1995. However, a similar pattern was also noted in the number of substance exposed infants (SEI), or infants born that test positive for illegal substances. Since fiscal year 1995, the number of verified reports of substance exposed infants has decreased from 3,567 to 1,949 in 1998, a 45 percent decrease.

When rates of reported child abuse and neglect were examined (based on the Illinois' juvenile population 17 and under), a decrease was also noted statewide since fiscal year 1995 (Figure 11). Although statewide rates fluctuated somewhat between fiscal years 1988 and 1995, they have since decreased from 4,734 reports per 100,000 juveniles to 3,591 reports per 100,000 juveniles in 1998—a 20 percent decrease. The rural counties had the highest reported child abuse and neglect rate of 4,765 reports per 100,000 juveniles in fiscal year 1998. Not far behind were the urban counties with 4,653 reports per 100,000 juveniles, while Cook County's rate was 3,511 reports per 100,000 juveniles. The collar counties had the lowest rate at 2,034 reports per 100,000 juveniles.

Figure 11

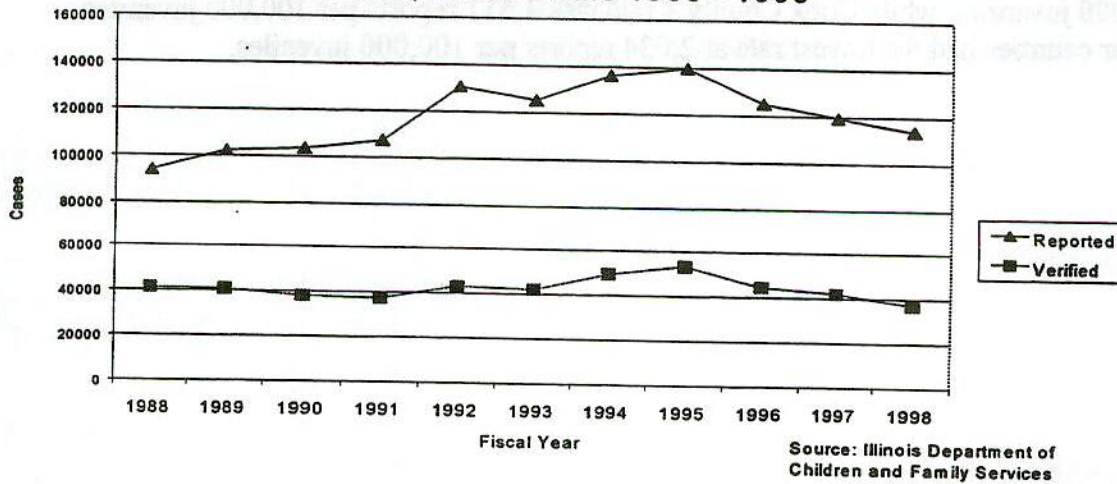
Reported Child Abuse and Neglect Rates in Illinois by Region, Fiscal Years 1988 - 1998



After an incident of child abuse or neglect is reported to DCFS, an investigation is conducted to determine whether the report is verified. When enough evidence is found to indicate as such, the report is then verified. Of all child abuse and neglect cases reported to DCFS between fiscal years 1988 and 1998, 36 percent were verified. The pattern in the number of verified cases of child abuse and neglect is similar to that displayed by the number of reported cases. The number of verified cases of child abuse and neglect in Illinois increased from 41,329 in fiscal year 1988 to 53,325 in fiscal year 1995—a 29 percent increase, then decreased to a record low of 37,042 by fiscal year 1998—a 31 percent decrease (Figure 12).

Figure 12

Reported and Verified Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect in Illinois, Fiscal Years 1988 - 1998



Specifically for this report, DCFS performed special queries that provided breakdowns of verified perpetrators of abuse versus neglect. Of all 26,557¹⁴ perpetrators from verified cases during fiscal year 1998, nearly two-thirds (65 percent) were verified for abuse only (physical and sexual). An additional third of them (34 percent) were verified for only neglect. Of only those perpetrators of verified physical and sexual abuse cases in fiscal year 1998, 3,244 of them committed sexual abuse. This is 12 percent of the total number of verified perpetrators and 19 percent of the total number of verified perpetrators of abuse for fiscal year 1998.

Because ISP's Reported Domestic Offenses data set captures all forms of family violence, it can often serve as a comparison source for other data sets which may reflect only one form. However, it is important to realize that although it is interesting to compare data across agencies, the differences noted should certainly not be deemed conclusive. Many discrepancies are inherent in the data sources themselves and the mechanisms in which data are collected; thus, these comparisons should only lead to additional questions. For example, 6,690 offenses were reported to police in 1998 where the victim was 17 or younger and the offender was a parent, stepparent, or grandparent of the victim, or the offender was an intimate partner of the victim's parent. Of these offenses, 437 or 6.5 percent were sex offenses, and an additional 56 percent (3,726) were violent offenses. Another 17.5 percent were offenses of Endangering the Life or Health of a Child (1,171 offenses), and 11 percent were offenses of either Child Abandonment or Neglect of a Child. Thus, the numbers of reported offenses against children by family or household members from the ISP data set are substantially lower than the numbers of child abuse and neglect cases from the DCFS data set.

Domestic Violence Prevention and Intervention Program – Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS)

In fiscal year 1994, domestic violence programs funded by DHS serviced a total of 43,391 clients. By fiscal year 1997, the number of clients reached 51,566--a 19 percent increase since fiscal year 1994. The number of service hours provided by DHS-funded programs also increased between fiscal years 1994 and 1997, from 430,989 hours in fiscal year 1994 to over one half-million in fiscal year 1997--a 17 percent increase. While the number of clients increased during the four-year period by 19 percent, the number of service hours increased 17 percent. Thus, the number of service hours provided to clients decreased slightly from an average of 9.93 hours per client to 9.75 hours. In addition, the number of shelter nights provided during the four-year period (residential and off-site) decreased 12 percent from 4,701 in fiscal year 1994 to 4,131 in fiscal year 1997 (Table 4).

¹⁴ Since these special queries were performed a few months after data was obtained from DCFS's annual report for fiscal year 1998, the number of verified perpetrators is slightly more than that shown later in this report. This is due to constantly changing case statuses from further investigation.

Table 4

Number of Clients Served, Hours of Service Provided, Average Service Hours per Client, and Shelter Nights Provided by DHS-Funded Programs, Fiscal Years 1994 – 1997

Category	1994	1995	1996	1997	% Change 1994 – 1997
Clients Served (Adults and their Children)	43,391	46,262	47,287	51,566	19%
Hours of Service	430,989	447,846	458,929	502,653	17%
Average Hrs./Client	9.93	9.68	9.70	9.75	-1.8%
Residential Shelter Nights Provided	176,543	171,906	170,224	177,075	0.3%
Off-site Shelter Nights Provided	4,701	5,414	5,120	4,131	-12%

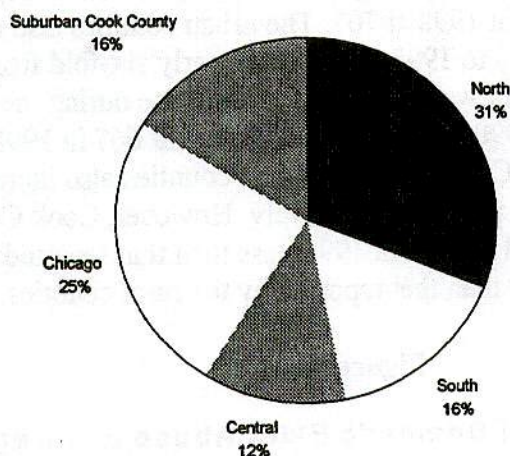
Source: Illinois Department of Human Services

Of the 38,985 adults serviced by DHS-funded programs in fiscal year 1997, 95 percent reported they had experienced emotional abuse, while nearly 86 percent reportedly had been physically abused. Sixteen percent of adult clients serviced in fiscal year 1997 reported they had been sexually abused.

Figure 13 breaks down the number of service hours provided by DHS-funded programs by geographic area. DHS defines Illinois regions by geographic location, where as ICJIA defines them by counties' inclusion of urbanized areas. Since DHS data were not provided at county levels, regional breakdowns are presented using DHS's regions. The regions defined by DHS are Chicago, suburban Cook County, and the North, South, and Central Illinois regions. Of the more than half-million service hours provided by DHS service providers in Illinois in fiscal year 1997, almost a third (31 percent) were provided in the North region of Illinois (excluding Cook County). An additional quarter (25 percent) of these hours were provided by Chicago programs, while 16 percent were provided by suburban Cook County programs during the same year. Programs in the Central region provided 16 percent of all service hours in fiscal year 1997, while the Southern region provided 12 percent (Figure 13).

Figure 13

**Service Hours Provided by DHS-Funded Programs
by Region, Fiscal Year 1997**



Source: Illinois Department of Human Services

Although DHS-funded programs provide a many different services to victims of domestic violence, the overwhelming majority of service hours comprised counseling and legal advocacy. Nearly half of all service hours during fiscal year 1997 consisted of group counseling (44 percent), while another 26 percent consisted of individual counseling. An additional quarter (25 percent) provided legal advocacy for clients. The remaining 6 percent of service hours consisted of other services such as transportation, educational or employment assistance or child care during the same year.

Domestic Elder Abuse and Neglect Reports - Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA)

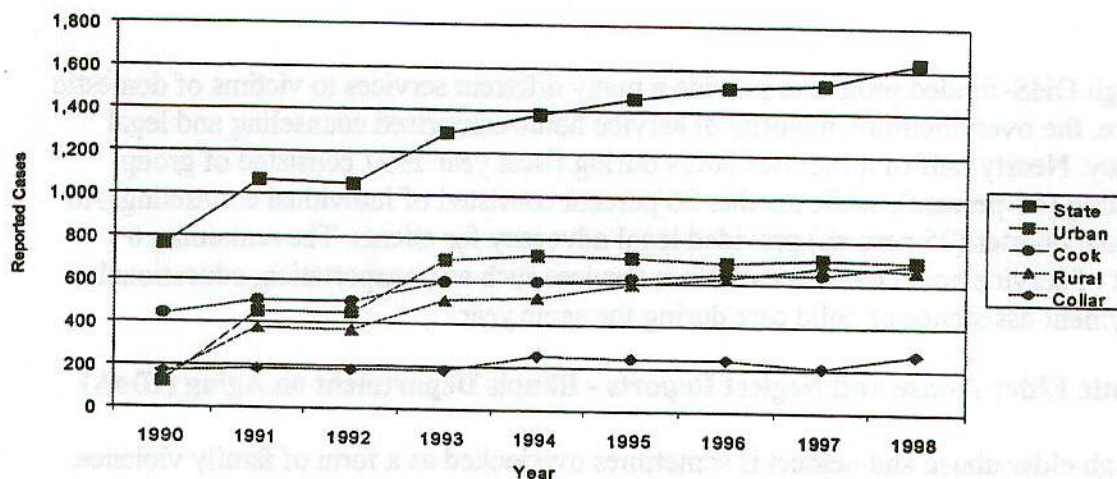
Although elder abuse and neglect is sometimes overlooked as a form of family violence, at least 75 percent of all cases reported to the Illinois Department on Aging in fiscal year 1997 involved victim-abuser relationships among *family and household members*. For this report, IDoA provided case-level data of elder abuse and neglect cases from 1990 to 1998 for only those cases containing these relationship types between the victim and the abuser. Therefore, unlike the DCFS data, the charts displayed in this section reflect the actual number of *family and household member* reports of elder abuse made to IDoA.

It is important to note that data displayed in this section include reports of emotional abuse. As displayed in Table 5, this type of abuse was reported in 76 percent of all cases verified reports by IDoA in 1998. Although this may not be considered a form of family violence, the repercussions from this form of abuse can be quite severe for elderly victims. Since IDoA provides services for victims of verified emotional abuse, these cases were included in the data set used for this report.

Reported elder abuse and neglect cases increased 60 percent nationally between 1986 and 1996 (NCEA, 1998). In Illinois, the number of elder abuse and neglect cases reported to IDoA increased dramatically from 890 in 1990 to 2,343 in 1998--a 163 percent increase (Figure 14). This increase may have been affected by a heightened awareness of elder abuse in recent years. When these data were examined across regions, they ranked differently than their order in terms of population. The urban counties reported the most cases of elder abuse and neglect in 1998 at 707. The urban counties also experienced the most dramatic increase from 1990 to 1998, increasing nearly six-fold from 125 reports in 1990. The rural counties also underwent a substantial increase during the same period, increasing from 156 reports in 1990 to more than four-fold at 667 in 1998. Reported elder abuse and neglect cases in Cook County and the collar counties also increased during the same period at 59 percent and 61 percent respectively. However, Cook County reported only 696 cases of elder abuse and neglect in 1998, less than that reported by the urban counties and only slightly greater than that reported by the rural counties.

Figure 14

Reported Cases of Domestic Elder Abuse and Neglect in Illinois by Region, 1990 - 1998



Source: Illinois Department on Aging

Similar to reported cases of child abuse and neglect, reported elder abuse and neglect cases are investigated by IDoA staff to determine whether enough evidence exists to verify the case. Verified cases of elder abuse and neglect in Illinois increased nearly two-and-a-half times from 873 in 1990 to 2,120 in 1998 (Figure 15). Thus, this pattern mirrors the large increase displayed by the number of reported cases. The percentage of elder abuse and neglect cases that were verified differs largely from the percentage of verified reports of child abuse and neglect made to DCFS. However, much of this may be due to the inclusion of emotional abuse in IDoA's data. Of all elder abuse and neglect cases reported from 1990 to 1998, nearly 89 percent were verified, compared to 36 percent of reported child abuse and neglect cases.

Figure 15

Reported and Verified Cases of Domestic Elder Abuse and Neglect in Illinois, 1990 - 1998

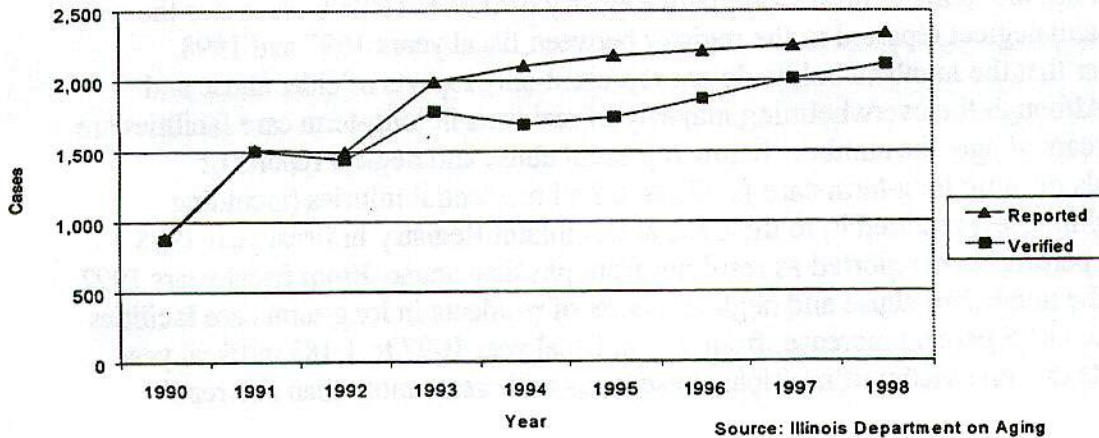


Table 5 displays verified elder abuse and neglect cases by abuse type. In 1998, more than three-quarters of cases (76 percent) included emotional abuse. Physical abuse was the second most common abuse type, comprising nearly a third (32 percent) of all verified cases in 1998. Cases of willful deprivation comprised about 6 percent of all verified reports, while 4 percent involved confinement during the same year. Only 12 reports of sexual abuse were verified by IDoA in 1998, comprising less than 1 percent of all verified cases that year. When trends were examined, both emotional and physical abuse types experienced substantial increases (162 percent and 102 percent respectively). Other abuse types also experienced increases, however, trends were difficult to determine due to such low case numbers.

Table 5

Domestic Elder Abuse and Neglect Cases Verified in Illinois by Abuse Type, 1998

Type of Abuse	Cases	Percent of all Cases
Physical	675	32%
Sexual	12	> 1%
Emotional	1,615	76%
Confinement	85	4%
Willful Deprivation	116	6%

The sums of each column are greater than the total number of verified cases and 100 percent because one case (victim) may experience more than one type of abuse.

Source: Illinois Department on Aging

Reports of Abuse and Neglect of Residents in Long-Term Care Facilities to the Central Complaint Registry Hotline – Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Abuse and neglect in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities are reported through a hotline to the Central Complaint Registry of IDPH. Table 6 illustrates the types of abuse and neglect reported to the registry between fiscal years 1997 and 1998. Remember that the numbers below do not represent only reports of elder abuse and neglect. Although the overwhelming majority of residents in long-term care facilities are over 60 years of age, the numbers below represent abuse and neglect reports of individuals residing long-term care facilities. Of all residential injuries (including accidental injuries) reported in to the Central Complaint Registry in fiscal year 1998 (825), 23 percent were reported as resulting from physical abuse. From fiscal years 1997 to 1998, the number of abuse and neglect reports of residents in long-term care facilities experienced a 25 percent increase, from 943 in fiscal year 1997 to 1,183 in fiscal year 1998. Note that one victim of multiple abuse types will create more than one report.

Table 6

Reports of Abuse and Neglect of Residents in Long-Term Care Facilities in Illinois to the Central Complaint Registry Hotline by Abuse Type, Fiscal Years 1997 and 1998

Type of Abuse	FY 1997		FY 1998	
	Reports	% of all Reports	Reports	% of all Reports
Physical	171	18%	186	16%
Sexual	84	9%	105	9%
Verbal	67	7%	51	4%
Neglect	355	38%	557	47%
Emotional	266	28%	284	24%
Total	943	100%	1,183	100%

Source: Illinois Department of Public Health

IV. VICTIMS

Victim/Abuser Relationships

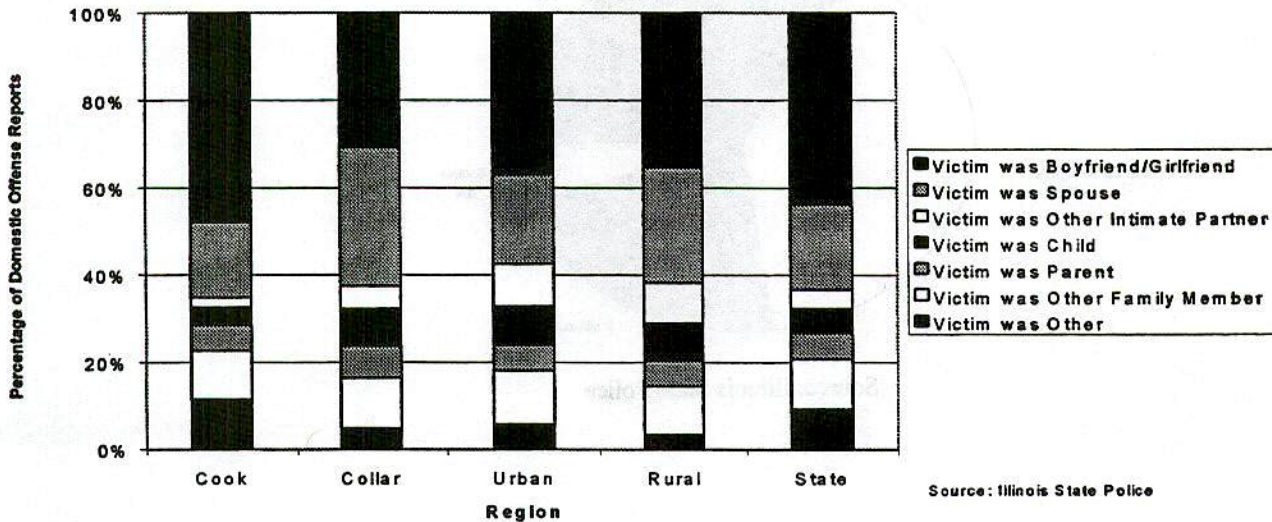
Uniform Crime Reporting of Domestic Offenses – Illinois State Police (ISP)

Family violence is distinguished from other forms of violence by the victim's relationship to the abuser. As stated previously, if the relationship between the victim and the abuser falls within the definition of a *family or household member*, then that offense should be reported as a domestic offense and thus included in the ISP domestic offenses data set.

In 1998, the victim was a boyfriend/girlfriend of the offender in 44 percent of domestic offenses reported statewide, while the victim was a spouse of the offender in 20 percent of the cases (Figure 16). However, this pattern is not consistent across regions. In Cook County, the victim was a boyfriend/girlfriend of the offender in almost half of domestic offenses reported (48 percent), while the same relationship type accounted for only 31 percent of offenses in the collar counties for the same year. Moreover, the victim was a spouse of the offender in only 17 percent of domestic offenses reported in Cook County, where they accounted for 32 percent in the collar counties.

Figure 16

Domestic Offenses Reported in Illinois by Victim Relationship to Offender and by Region, 1998

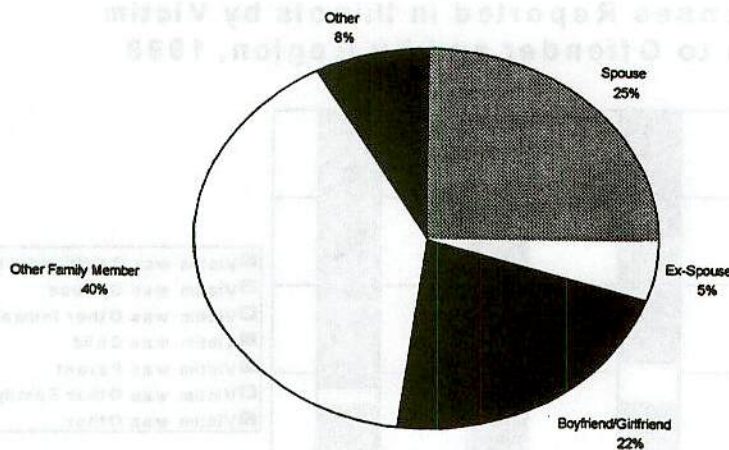


Orders of Protection Entered into the Law Enforcement Agency Data System (LEADS) – Illinois State Police (ISP)

When the relationship between the respondent and the petitioner was examined for Orders of Protection entered into LEADS from 1991 to 1997, the respondent was an intimate partner of the petitioner (spouse, ex-spouse, boyfriend, and girlfriend) in about half of the orders (Figure 17). Another 40 percent of the orders indicated other family relationships between the respondent and the petitioner. Thus, these data suggest that Orders of Protection are sought primarily against intimate partners (or ex-partners) and other family members. The relationship between respondent and the petitioner was evidently not widely collected in 1991 and 1992. However, the proportion of respondents who were spouses decreased from 30 percent in 1993 to 24 percent in 1997. In Cook County, 68 percent of the respondents were other family members, and few are boyfriends/girlfriends, spouse or ex-spouses.¹⁵ In the collar, urban and rural counties, respondents were boyfriends, girlfriends or spouses of the petitioners over 50 percent of the time. In rural counties, the respondent was the ex-spouse more than three times as often as in the collar counties.

Figure 17

Orders of Protection Entered into LEADS by
Petitioner Relationship to Respondent, 1991 - 1997



Source: Illinois State Police

¹⁵ This large difference in percentages may suggest that Cook county LEADS were often not using relationship codes correctly.

Illinois Adult Probation Outcome Survey – Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC)

Because the outcome survey of probationers was not designed with a special focus on family violence offenders, the victim/offender relationship category is limited. The only breakdown of this variable is that the majority (64 percent) of probationers were “relatives” of the victims, while 34 percent of probationers were “friends” of the victims. Based on victim-offender relationship breakdowns from other data sets, it is suspected the majority of the offenders that were “relatives” of the victims are spouses or former spouses, and that most of the offenders who were “friends” of the victim are intimate partner relationships.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reports – Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

Child abuse and neglect reports may be broken down by victim/abuser relationship types *and* the gender of the abuser. Because this additional level of analysis is provided, abuser gender is discussed somewhat in this section.

Of the 26,557 abusers from all verified cases of child abuse and neglect in fiscal year 1998, 23,884 of them were related to the victim via a *family or household member* relationship. This means that 90 percent of all abusers from verified child abuse and neglect cases in fiscal year 1998 were living with or related to the child. Of these 23,884 perpetrators, more than three-fourths of them were natural parents of the child. Another 15 percent were adoptive, foster, or stepparents or parental substitutes¹⁶ (Table 7).

¹⁶ Examples of parental substitutes include intimate partners of single parents, legal guardians, or a non-related adult living in the same household as the victim.

Table 7

Abusers of Verified Child Abuse and Neglect Cases in Illinois by Abuser Relationship to Victim and Abuser Gender, Fiscal Year 1998

Relationship	Males	Females	Total Abusers	% of all Abusers*
Natural Parent	5,483	12,489	17,972	75.2%
Adoptive Parent	72	57	129	0.5%
Foster Parent	39	120	159	0.7%
Step Parent	1,315	177	1,492	6.2%
Parental Substitute	1,631	151	1,782	7.5%
Institution Staff	34	19	53	0.2%
Grandparent	309	428	737	3.1%
Sibling	612	120	732	3.1%
Aunt/Uncle	557	271	828	3.5%
Total	10,052	13,832	23,884	100.0%

*Percent of all abusers of verified cases that were related to the victim via a family or household member relationship

Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

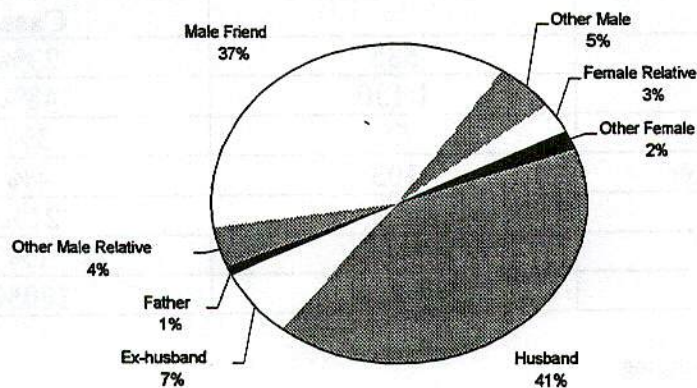
Nearly 70 percent of perpetrators who were natural or foster parents of the victims were female, while nearly 90 percent who were adoptive or stepparents or parental substitutes of the victims were male. Because the overwhelming majority of perpetrators of verified cases in fiscal year 1998 were natural parents of the victims, 58 percent of all perpetrators related to the victim through a *family or household member* relationship were female.

Domestic Violence Prevention and Intervention Program – Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS)

When relationships between the victims and the abusers were examined among those clients serviced by DHS-funded programs, more than three-fourths (78 percent) of abusers were either husbands or male friends of the client (Figure 18). Although intimate and platonic relationships could not be distinguished within the “male friend” category, intimate male partners of unmarried clients would be placed in this category. An additional 7 percent of abusers were ex-husbands of the clients, and another 4 percent were other male relatives. Five percent of the abusers were females, either relatives or other relations to the clients.

Figure 18

Clients Served by DHS-Funded Programs by Abuser Relationship to Client, Fiscal Year 1997



Source: Illinois Department of Human Services

When trends among relationship categories were examined, some substantial changes were noted between fiscal years 1994 and 1997. The greatest increases occurred among females as abusers between fiscal years 1994 and 1997. Although the combined total of wives, ex-wives, and female friends as abusers still comprised a very small portion of all abusers in fiscal year 1997, this number more than doubled from 510 to 1047 during this four-year period. This caused their percentage of all abusers to increase from 1.6 percent to 2.7 percent from fiscal years 1994 through 1997. When male abuser categories were examined for the same four-year period, the percentage of male friends as abusers increased slightly (33 to 37 percent), while the percentage of husbands as abusers actually decreased (47 to 41 percent).

Domestic Elder Abuse and Neglect Reports - Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA)

Of all domestic cases of elder abuse and neglect reported to IDoA in 1998, nearly half of them involved abusers who were children of the victims (Table 8). Abusers who were spouses or former spouses of the victims comprised nearly a quarter of reported cases in 1998. Perhaps many of these reports represent several years of intimate partner abuse lasting to the senior years. An additional 21 percent of 1998 reported cases involved abusers who were other relatives of the victims.

Table 8

Domestic Elder Abuse and Neglect Cases Reported in Illinois by Abuser Relationship to Victim, 1998

Abuser Relationship to Victim	Number of Cases	Percent of All Domestic Cases
(Former) Spouse	535	23%
Child	1,130	48%
(Former) Housemate	68	3%
Caretaker/In-Home Worker	103	4%
Other Relative	493	21%
Other	14	1%
Total	2,320	100%

Source: Illinois Department on Aging

Illinois Violence Registry, Head and Spinal Cord Registry, and Trauma Registry – Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Relationship types indicated in the cases reported to the registries maintained by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) consisted of just four categories: “fathers/stepfathers,” “spouses/ex-spouses/partners/ex-partners,” “siblings,” and “other family members.” Although an E-code exists for identifying mothers or stepmothers as the alleged perpetrator, no records in the data set had the sub-code identifying such a relationship. An additional limitation exists in that three of the categories include more than one relationship type, thus limiting our capacity to identify specific relationship types between abusers and victims within the categories themselves.

Of all registry cases reported from 1996 to 1998, half of them indicated intimate partners as the alleged abuser of the victim (spouses, ex-spouses, partners, and ex-partners) (Table 9). Another 46 percent of these cases indicated fathers/stepfathers as alleged abusers, while the remaining 4 percent of cases indicated siblings (1 percent) and other family members (3 percent) as alleged abusers.

Table 9

Victims of Family Violence Reported to Illinois Registries by Alleged Abuser Relationship to Victim, 1996 - 1998

Alleged Abuser's Relationship to Victim	Number of Victims Reported	Percent of all Victims Reported
(Ex)Spouse/(Ex)Partner	133	46%
(Step)Father	143	50%
Sibling	2	1%
Other Relative	9	3%
Total	287	100%

Source: Illinois Department of Public Health

Victim Demographics

In this section, victim demographics are often compared among data sets from different agencies. These comparisons must be interpreted lightly because data elements may be defined differently and reporting procedures vary widely across agencies. As stated previously, because ISP's Reported Domestic Offenses data set captures all forms of family violence, it can often serve as a comparison source for other data sets which may reflect mostly one type of family violence, such as DCFS, DHS and IDoA data, as these sources capture mostly child abuse, intimate partner abuse, and elder abuse respectively. Thus, often ISP's domestic offense data is broken down in victim age groups to distinguish between offenses committed against victims 17 and younger, 18 and older, and 60 and over. Note that these categories are not mutually exclusive, as adult and elderly victims overlap. In addition, it is important to recognize that ISP domestic offense data simply contain records of reported offenses that occurred between *family or household members*. Just because a victim of a reported domestic offense is 75 years old, this does not mean that the offense was one of elder abuse by a child or caretaker, as this may very well be intimate partner abuse lasting into the senior years. Likewise, reported domestic offenses committed against children 17 or younger are not all child abuse offenses. In fact, some of these offenses may be the result of abuse in teen dating relationships or sibling rivalry. Thus, differences noted from these cross-data source comparisons should only raise additional questions about similar populations served by different agencies rather than conclusions.

Gender

Of all domestic offenses reported to ISP and committed against *only adults* aged 18 or older statewide in 1998, 77 percent involved female victims, while the remaining 23 percent involved male victims. Of all adult¹⁷ victims serviced by DHS-funded programs, 96 percent were female and 4 percent were male. Of all the adult victims reported to the IDPH registries from 1996 to 1998, 90 percent were female, while 10 percent were male. Similarly, the Probation Outcome Study indicated that of all offenders who committed a domestic violence offense against an adult 18 or older, 91 percent of them committed the offense against a female victim, while only 9 percent committed the offense against a male victim.

The majority of victims were also female when elder abuse and neglect data were examined. Of the 2,343 domestic elder abuse and neglect cases reported to IDoA in 1998, 75 percent of them involved female victims (1,761), while the remaining 25 percent (582) involved male victims. Clients aged 60 or older serviced by DHS-funded programs comprised only 2 percent of all adult clients, however the number (672) is still high enough to make gender comparisons. Of all clients aged 60 and older serviced by DHS-funded programs in fiscal year 1997, 84 percent were female and the remaining 16 percent were male. A gender breakdown was also conducted of all reported domestic offenses reported to ISP *only involving victims aged 60 or older*¹⁸. Of these 2,939 offenses reported in 1998, 62 percent involved female victims while 38 percent involved male victims.

With the child abuse and neglect data from DCFS, the data still indicate most of the victims to be female, however, to a much lesser degree. Of all verified cases of child abuse and neglect by DCFS in fiscal year 1998, slightly more females than males were victims of child abuse and neglect (52 percent and 48 percent respectively). In addition, of the more than 12,500 children served by DHS-funded programs in fiscal year 1997, 51 percent were female and 49 percent were male. Of those domestic offenses reported to ISP in 1998 that were committed against children, 59 percent involved female victims and 41 percent involved male victims. Finally, of the 126 child abuse victims reported to IDPH registries between 1996 and 1998, 54 percent are female and 46 percent are male.

When solely adult victims 18 and older were examined from all available data sets, the overwhelming majority of the victims were female (77 to 89 percent). When victims 60 and older were examined separately, this percentage decreased somewhat (62 to 84 percent). Finally, when child victims 17 and under were examined separately, females then comprised slightly more than half of victims (51 to 59 percent). Perhaps a similar

¹⁷ A specific age determining adult status is not provided by DHS. Rather, an adult client is defined as the primary client served. The child(ren) of the primary client served (if they are served) is defined as children regardless of their age. Thus, the number of adult clients includes a small portion of clients under age 18, while the number of child clients may also include children 16 or 17. However, the total number of clients served does not contain duplicate counts of clients.

¹⁸ Offenses reported to ISP involving victims age 60 or older were filtered because this is the minimum age requirement required by IDoA to receive their services.

pattern would be found among cases of intimate partner abuse, elder abuse, and child abuse respectively.

Age

Of those domestic offenses reported to ISP and committed only against adults statewide in 1998, 24 percent involved victims between 25 and 32 years old. An additional 24 percent involved victims aged 17 to 24, and another 20 percent involved victims aged 33 to 40. The average victim age among these offenses was 29. The overwhelming majority of adult clients (72 percent) serviced by DHS-funded programs in fiscal year 1997 were in their 20's and 30's--36 percent each. Only 7 percent of these clients were age 19 or younger, 16 percent were in their 40's, and the remaining 5 percent were age 50 or older. Of all adult victims of family violence reported to the IDPH registries from 1996 to 1998, 32 percent were between 25 and 32. An additional 31 percent were young adults between the ages of 17 and 24, and 26 percent were ages 33 to 40. The average age for these victims was 30 years old, slightly higher than the average age of victims from the ISP data set of domestic offenses. The victim age data from the Illinois Probation Outcome Survey is again somewhat limited given that the victim age categories were very broad. Of the 122 surveys which indicated that the offender had committed a domestic offense against a victim 18 years or older, 39 percent of those victims were between 18 and 29. An additional 55 percent of those victims were between 30 and 59. Thus, all these data indicate that the overwhelming majority of adult victims of family violence are in their 20's and 30's.

When the 1998 domestic elder abuse and neglect data were examined from IDoA, the average age found among victims was 76 years old, and the distribution among age groups was fairly evenly apportioned. Twenty-four percent of the 2,343 victims reported in 1998 were in their 60's, 38 percent were in their 70's, and another 30 percent were in their 80's. When only older clients of DHS-funded programs in fiscal year 1997 were examined, 41 percent were aged 60 through 65 while the remaining 59 percent were 65 or older. When the domestic offenses against elderly victims reported to ISP were examined, however, more victims younger than those from the prior two data sources. Of these 2,939 offenses reported in 1998, 62 percent involved victims between 60 and 69, and an additional 30 percent involved victims in their 70's. Thus, elderly victims of domestic offenses reported to ISP were quite a bit younger than victims of domestic elder abuse and neglect reported to IDoA. It is unclear why this pattern is noted. Perhaps victims in their 60's are more likely or simply more able to contact police, or perhaps these some older victims are more reluctant to seek help from an agency designated to service the elderly.

Table 10 was constructed using the DCFS child abuse and neglect data from fiscal year 1998 to illustrate not only the victim age distribution, but also the varied rates of child abuse and neglect for each age group. These data indicate that victimization rates of child abuse and neglect decrease with age. Thus, although children between ages 6 and 9 comprised almost a quarter of victims (24.5 percent), their rate of child abuse and neglect was 31 percent lower than the rate for children 2 and under. (13.6 compared to 19.7

reports per 1,000 children). Also note how the proportions for victims decrease substantially for victims 10 years and older.

Table 10

Verified Victims and Rates of Child Abuse and Neglect in Illinois by Victim Age Group, Fiscal Year 1998

Child Age Range	Number of Victims	Percent of Total	Rate per 1000 Children
0-2	10,058	27%	19.7
3-5	7,550	20%	14.9
6-9	9,076	25%	13.6
10-13	6,329	17%	9.8
14-17	3,952	11%	6.4
Missing	727	2%	-
Total	37,692	100%	12.8

Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

Of the 12,581 children serviced by DHS-funded programs, ages among them were fairly evenly apportioned through age 14, while much less were 15 or older. Thirty percent of these children were 3 years old or younger, 31 percent were ages 4 to 7, and another 32 percent were ages 8 to 14. Only 6 percent of these children serviced were age 15 or older.

Of the 126 child abuse victims reported to IDPH registries between 1996 and 1998, a much greater percentage of younger children are noted. In fact, nearly 20 percent of these victims were less than a year old. Moreover, the majority of these victims were 4 years old or younger (53 percent), and nearly three quarters of them were 10 years or younger.

Of those domestic offenses reported to ISP in 1998 that were committed against children, a much different pattern emerged. These data indicate that child victimization *increases* with age rather than decreases. Of the 21,145 domestic offenses reported against children 17 and under in 1998, only 5 percent involved victims 2 years or younger, 8 percent involved victims ages 3 to 5, and 14 percent involved victims between ages 6 and 9. On the other hand, 29 percent of these same offenses involved victims ages 10 to 13, and almost half (44 percent) involved victims ages 14 to 16. The reasons for such a wide difference are unclear. This pattern is at least somewhat affected by the number of teen offenses against each other, as the ISP data were only filtered by victim age group, not offense or relationship type.

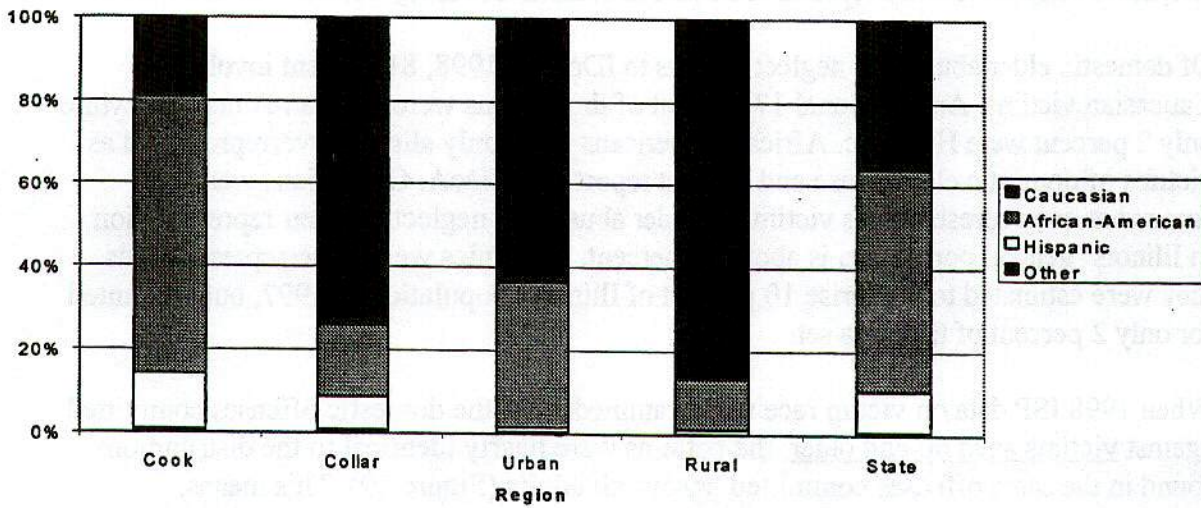
Race

When victim age and gender were examined from the domestic offenses reported to ISP in 1998, patterns were very similar throughout different regions of the state (for children, adults, and elders). However, victim race distributions varied widely across regions. Of

those domestic offenses reported in Cook County in 1998, more than two-thirds (67 percent) involved African-American victims. Only 19 percent of offenses reported in Cook County involved Caucasian victims (Figure 19). Cook County also had the largest number of offenses involving Hispanic victims compared to other regions (13 percent). Inversely, the vast majority of domestic offenses reported in rural counties in 1998 involved Caucasian victims (87 percent), while only 12 percent involved African-American victims and 1 percent involved Hispanic victims. In the urban counties and collar counties during the same year, the majority of domestic offenses reported involved Caucasian victims, 64 percent and 74 percent respectively. Of all domestic offenses reported statewide in 1998, 53 percent of them involved African-American victims, 36 percent involved Caucasian victims, and 10 percent involved Hispanic victims.

Figure 19

Domestic Offenses Reported in Illinois by Victim Race and by Region, 1998



Source: Illinois State Police

According to 1997 population estimates by the U. S. Census Bureau¹⁹, African-Americans comprise more than 15 percent of Illinois' general population, while Hispanics make up nearly 10 percent. Thus, African-Americans were overrepresented as adult victims of domestic offenses reported statewide by more than three times their representation in the general population, while Hispanics were represented proportionately to their estimated population. 1997 Cook County population estimates indicate that African-Americans account for nearly 27 percent of the general population, while Hispanics comprise nearly 17 percent. African-Americans were again overrepresented as victims of domestic offenses reported in Cook County by two-and-a-half times their population representation, while Hispanics were somewhat underrepresented as victims of domestic offenses reported in Cook County.

¹⁹ 1998 population estimates were not available as of June, 1999.

Statewide racial distributions for adult clients served by DHS-funded programs are available for fiscal year 1997, however, regional distributions are not. Of all adults serviced by these programs in fiscal year 1997, 59 percent were Caucasian, while 28 percent were African-American and 11 percent were Hispanic. The remaining adult clients serviced were Native American, Asian, biracial, or other races or ethnicities. Thus, African-Americans were overrepresented as adults serviced by DHS-funded programs by nearly double their representation in the state's population, while Hispanics were only slightly overrepresented.

When racial distributions were examined among adult victims only of family violence reported to the IDPH registries between 1996 and 1998, more than two-thirds of these victims (67 percent) were Caucasian. Another 27 percent were African-American, and 3 percent were Hispanic. The remaining 3 percent were categorized as "other" or "unknown" races or ethnicities. When these figures were compared with 1997 population estimates, African-Americans were again overrepresented as adult victims of family violence by almost twice their representation in Illinois' population. Caucasians and Hispanics were both underrepresented as adult victims of family violence in this data set.

Of domestic elder abuse and neglect reports to IDoA in 1998, 81 percent involved Caucasian victims. An additional 17 percent of the victims were African-American, while only 2 percent were Hispanic. African-Americans were only slightly overrepresented as victims of domestic elder abuse and neglect reported to IDoA. Caucasians were also somewhat overrepresented as victims of elder abuse and neglect, as their representation in Illinois' general population is about 72 percent. Hispanics were underrepresented as they were estimated to comprise 10 percent of Illinois' population in 1997, but accounted for only 2 percent of this data set.

When 1998 ISP data on victim race was examined from the domestic offenses committed against victims aged 60 and older, the patterns were nearly identical to the distributions found in the same offenses committed against all adults (Figure 19). This means, however, that they were also very different than the race distributions found with the domestic elder abuse and neglect data set from IDoA. Of those domestic offenses committed against persons ages 60 and over in Cook County, over two-thirds (68 percent) of domestic offenses reported involved African-American victims. Only 25 percent of all domestic offenses against elders reported in 1998 involved Caucasian victims. Cook County also had the largest number of offenses involving Hispanic victims compared to other regions (5 percent), however, Hispanics were still underrepresented as they were estimated to comprise 17 percent of Cook County. When only rural counties were examined, the overwhelming majority of domestic offenses reported against adults ages 60 and over in 1998 involved Caucasian victims (94 percent), while only 6 percent involved African-American victims and none of the reported offenses involved Hispanic victims. Of all domestic offenses against adults 60 and over reported statewide in 1998, more than half involved African-American victims (56 percent). Another 39 percent involved Caucasian victims, and 5 percent involved Hispanic victims. Thus, African-Americans were overrepresented as elderly victims of domestic offenses reported

statewide by more than three-and-a-half times their estimated population in Illinois, while Hispanics and Caucasians were again underrepresented.

Table 11 was constructed using the DCFS child abuse and neglect data from fiscal year 1998 to illustrate victim race distributions and the corresponding rates of abuse and neglect per 1,000 children. During fiscal year 1998, the victimization rate of child abuse and neglect for African-American children was more than three times the rates for Caucasian and Hispanic children (Table 11). Caucasian children comprised a little under half of all verified victims of abuse and neglect, while 40 percent were African-American. Hispanic victims of verified child abuse and neglect accounted for about 9 percent. Thus, African-American children were overrepresented as victims of child abuse and neglect by more than two-and-a-half times their population, while Caucasian children were underrepresented by about a third.

Table 11

**Verified Victims of Child Abuse and Neglect in Illinois by Victim Race,
Fiscal Year 1998**

Victim Race	Verified Victims	Percent of Total	Rate per 1,000 Children
Caucasian	17,733	47.9%	8.3
African-American	14,775	39.9%	26.7
Hispanic	3,216	8.7%	8.0
Other/Not Specified	1,302	3.5%	-
Total	37,026	100.0%	12.8

Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

Of children serviced by DHS-funded programs during fiscal year 1997, only 42 percent were Caucasian while 37 percent were African-American and 11 percent were Hispanic. An additional 6 percent of children served were biracial, and the remainder were Asian, Native Americans, and other races or ethnicities. Thus, African-American children were overrepresented as victims of family violence serviced by DHS-funded programs even more than African-American adults. African-American children were overrepresented by two-and-a-half times their state population, while African-American adults were overrepresented by just under twice their state population.

Of the 126 child abuse victims reported to IDPH registries between 1996 and 1998, a disproportionate amount of African-American children was also noted. In fact, the number of African-American child abuse victims reported to the registries during this period was almost as high as the number of Caucasian child abuse victims (39 percent and 45 percent respectively). Consistent with the DCFS data, African-Americans were overrepresented as victims of child abuse more than two-and-a-half times their 1997 Illinois population estimate, while Caucasians were again underrepresented by more than a third. Hispanic victims of child abuse accounted for 13 percent of all child abuse cases

reported to the IDPH registries between 1996 and 1998, while Hispanics were estimated to comprise 10 percent of Illinois' population in 1997.

African-Americans were also overrepresented as child victims when the domestic offenses reported to ISP in 1998 that were committed against children were examined. These data indicate that African-American children comprised over 70 percent of all domestic offenses against children reported in Cook County, and 58 percent of all domestic offenses against children reported statewide. Caucasian children accounted for only 13 percent of the domestic offenses against children reported in Cook County, and only 31 percent of those offenses reported for Illinois. Hispanic children comprised 14 percent of those offenses for Cook County, and 11 percent for offenses statewide. Thus, Caucasians were largely underrepresented as victims of domestic offenses against children in 1998 statewide and even more so in Cook County. Hispanics were slightly overrepresented statewide and underrepresented in Cook County, while African-Americans were again considerably overrepresented throughout the state and Cook County.

African-Americans were consistently and largely overrepresented as victims of family violence in all but one of the data sets examined. Although African-Americans were estimated to comprise 15 percent of Illinois' population in 1997, they usually accounted for at least twice that percentage of victims represented in each data set. The only data set not reflecting such disproportions was the reported cases of elder abuse and neglect to IDoA, where 17 percent of the reported cases involved African-American victims. However, a sizable 56 percent of domestic offenses against elders reported to ISP in 1998 involved African-American victims. Other patterns noted among the data sets were the frequent underrepresentations of Caucasian victims.

Additional Demographic Data

DHS collects some additional demographic information on clients served such as marital status and source of income. Table 12 illustrates this additional information, however, cross-data set comparisons are not provided because other state agencies do not collect comparable data. These data indicate that nearly half (45 percent) of all adult clients serviced by DHS-funded programs were married in fiscal year 1997. In addition, only 43 percent of these clients were reportedly receiving income from employment. Five percent of clients, or 1 in 20, serviced in fiscal year 1997 were reportedly pregnant at the time they received service, and the overwhelming majority of all clients (77 percent) serviced that same year reported having at least one child (Table 12). This indicates that many children may be experiencing the effects of intimate partner violence also, as either direct or indirect victims.

Table 12

Adult Clients Serviced by DHS-Funded Programs by Marital Status, Source of Income, Pregnancy Status, and Number of Children, Fiscal Year 1997

Category	Clients	% of all Clients
<i>Marital Status</i>		
Not Married	12,276	31%
Married	17,384	45%
Legally Separated	1,060	3%
Divorced	6,682	17%
Widowed	555	1%
Unknown	1,028	3%
<i>Source of Income*</i>		
Employment	18,452	43%
AFDC	6,619	15%
General Assistance	1,233	3%
Social Security	2,217	5%
Supplemental Security	1,706	4%
Alimony/Child Support	857	2%
Other	3,868	9%
None	4,411	10%
Unknown	3,873	9%
<i>Pregnancy Status</i>		
Pregnant	1,848	5%
Not Pregnant	37,137	95%
<i>Number of Children</i>		
No Children	6,058	16%
1 - 2 Children	19,224	49%
3 - 4 Children	9,004	23%
5 or more Children	1,923	5%
Unknown	2,776	7%

* Percentages in this category will total more than 100 percent because clients may be receiving more than one income source.

Source: Illinois Department of Human Services

IDoA also collects additional demographic information on victims of domestic elder abuse and neglect. Table 13 displays victim income, marital status, living status, and whether or not the victim lives with the abuser. These data indicate that reported victims of domestic elder abuse and neglect are more likely to have an annual income below \$10,000, be a widow, live with at least one of their children, and live with the abuser.

Table 13

Domestic Elder Abuse and Neglect Cases Reported in Illinois by Victim Income, Marital Status, Living Status, and Living Status with the Abuser, 1998

	Reported Cases	% of all Reported Cases
<i>Victim Income</i>		
\$5,000 or Less	105	8%
\$5,001 - \$10,000	614	49%
\$10,001 - \$15,000	164	13%
\$15,001 - \$25,000	25	2%
\$25,001 or More	337	27%
<i>Marital Status of Victim</i>		
Married	805	34%
Divorced/Separated	210	9%
Widowed	1132	48%
Not Married	84	4%
Unknown	112	5%
<i>Living Status of Victim</i>		
Alone	475	20%
With Spouse	522	22%
With Child(ren)	707	30%
With Spouse and Child(ren)	182	8%
With Other Relatives	249	11%
With Non-Relatives	118	5%
Other	85	4%
<i>Living Status with the Abuser</i>		
Lives with Abuser	1571	67%
Does Not Live with Abuser	772	33%

*Percentages may not total 100 percent due to missing data.

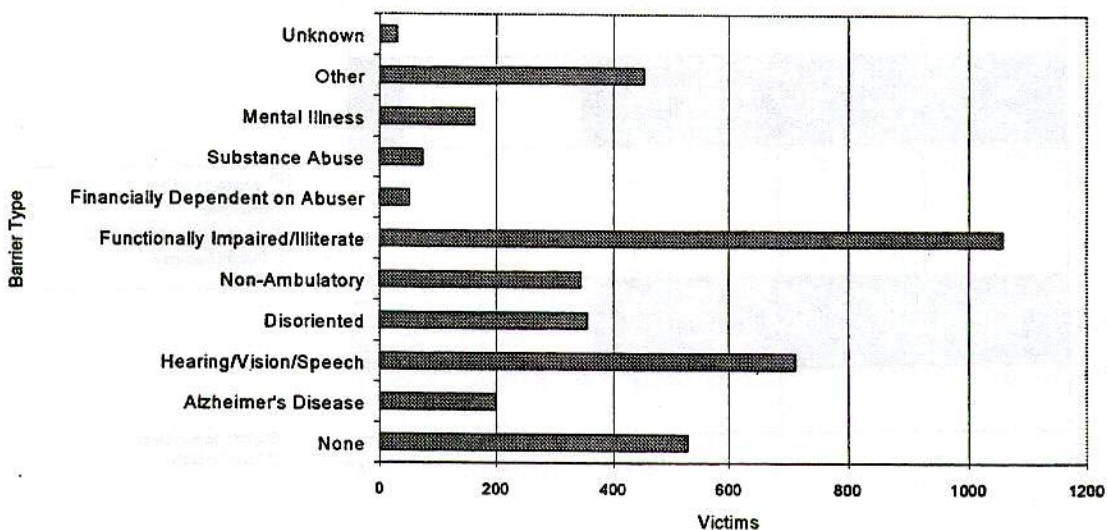
Source: Illinois Department on Aging

IDoA also collects information on victim *barriers*, or conditions that may make a victim more vulnerable and less able to help themselves in an abusive situation. These barriers may include physical or mental conditions, drug abuse, or financial dependency. The barrier categories are not mutually exclusive. Because victims may have one or more barriers, the sum of these categories will be greater than the total number of reports. In 1998, 3,450 total barriers were identified among 2,343 victims. The most common barrier found among victims of domestic elder abuse and neglect was functional impairment/illiteracy, which comprised 31 percent of all barriers identified among reported domestic elder abuse and neglect victims in 1998 (Figure 20). Twenty-one percent of those barriers identified among victims consisted of hearing, vision, or speech impairments. Only 2 percent of all barriers identified accounted for substance abuse.

Only 1 percent of the reports involved victims who were financially dependent on their abuser. Overall, 85 percent of all reported victims of domestic elder abuse and neglect had at least one barrier present.

Figure 20

Victims of Domestic Elder Abuse and Neglect Reported in Illinois by Barrier Type, 1998



Source: Illinois Dept. on Aging

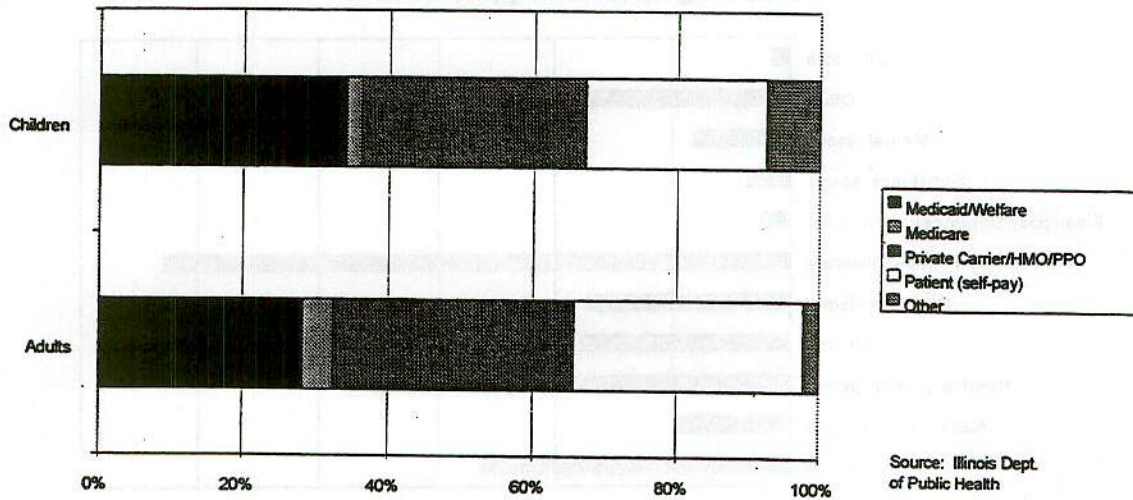
Besides income data collected on victims of domestic elder abuse and neglect by IDoA, the only other available measure of victim socioeconomic status is the payment method of family violence victims reported to IDPH's registries from 1996 to 1998. This may provide some insight on the financial situations victims of abuse are experiencing. This variable, however, is extremely limited because much of the data are missing. Of all 287 victims reported to IDPH registries from 1996 to 1998, 100 were missing this data element. However, when these victims with missing payment method information are excluded, there are still nearly 100 child victims and 100 adult victims remaining in the data set.

Figure 21 displays payment methods used for emergency services to child and adult victims of family violence reported to the registries between 1996 and 1998. The proportions of payment methods were fairly similar for both child and adult victims of family violence. The most frequent payment method used for emergency service to child abuse victims was welfare or Medicaid, accounting for 34 percent of child victims. A private insurance carrier or an HMO/PPO plan was used as payment for an additional 31 percent of child victims. The most frequent payment method used for adult victim service was a private insurance carrier or an HMO/PPO plan, which applied to exactly one third of these victims. An additional 32 percent of adult victims of family violence paid for the medical costs themselves. Payment methods for child abuse victims reported to the registries were more likely to be through welfare or Medicaid, as this method was used for 34 percent of the child victims and only 28 percent of the adult victims. Also, services

for adult victims of family violence reported to the registries were more likely to be paid through self-pay methods than services for child victims of family violence--32 percent and 26 percent of victims respectively.

Figure 21

Family Violence Victims Reported to Illinois Registries by Victim Payment Method, 1996 - 1998



Victim Injuries

According to Uniform Crime Reports provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1991, family violence was the leading cause of injury to women between 15 and 44 years old in the United States--more than car accidents, muggings, and rapes combined. Nationally, women were injured by intimates in 52 percent of attacks, compared to 20 percent of attacks by strangers (Bachman, 1994).

The ISP data set on domestic offenses reported and the IDPH registries both contain information on injuries sustained by victims of family violence, however, both data sets contain substantial limitations with this variable. In 1998, about 45 percent of the domestic offenses reported by police in Illinois resulted in an injury; however, this percentage is based on only those offenses in which the injury variable was not missing. In Cook County, the injury variable was complete in only 14 percent of all offenses reported in 1998, where as there were no missing injury codes for offenses reported in the other regions of the state. The remaining number of offenses which did include injury codes in Cook County can still be examined, because even only 14 percent of these offenses totals more than 12,000. However, it is extremely important to consider this limitation when interpreting these data. The IDPH registries yield limitations in that the sample is so small and for the reasons described earlier in the data section.

Table 14 displays percentages of reported domestic offenses in 1998 that involved injuries using the ISP data set. Regional breakdowns for each victim age group (children, adults, and elders) are illustrated to provide insight on the different types of abuse and the areas in which they occur. The data indicate that adult victims aged 18 and over are most likely to become injured from a family dispute; as nearly 46 percent of all domestic offenses against adults reported statewide involved injuries. Although most of these injuries were non-life threatening, (94 percent), this indicates that almost half of all domestic offenses against adults are likely to result in injuries. On the other hand, the data also indicate that children and elderly victims are less likely to become injured during a family dispute, as the percentages of all offenses against children and elders involving injuries are somewhat less than those for adult offenses (39 percent and 36 percent respectively).

Table 14

Percentages of Reported Domestic Offenses Involving Injuries in Illinois by Victim Age Group and Region, 1998

Region	Child Victims Aged 17 or younger	Adult Victims Aged 18 or older	Elderly Victims Aged 60 or Older
Cook County*	47.8%	51.2%	46.1%
Collar	46.1%	55.4%	58.1%
Urban	34.1%	39.6%	23.8%
Rural	37.2%	41.9%	27.1%
State	39.1%	45.7%	35.8%

* Cook County percentage is based on only 14 percent of domestic offenses reported due to missing injury codes.

The IDPH registries contain more detailed injury information than any other state data set. The most common injury sustained by family violence victims reported to the registries in Illinois from 1996 to 1998 were contusions²⁰ (Table 14). Fracture injuries comprised 10 percent of all injuries reported to the registries during the same period. Abrasions²¹ made up 8 percent of reported injuries, and open wounds accounted for another 8 percent.

The “other” category includes injuries such as immunity disorders, symptoms (signs of injury with no definitive diagnosis); pregnancy or childbirth complications, nerves/spinal cord injuries, and injuries emergency departments define as “other.” These 105 cases make up 19 percent of the injuries sustained by victims of family violence. In addition, the registries may include pre-existing conditions of victims if these conditions affect the treatment given for a family violence injury. For example, if a victim admitted to an emergency department displays contusions on his/her chest, this condition may affect

²⁰ A contusion is a collection of blood under the surface of the skin with the skin surface intact.

²¹ An abrasion is a superficial injury to the skin caused by rubbing or scraping.

treatment provided for a violent injury. Because of situations like this, “diseases” exists as an injury category in this data set.

The remaining 79 cases (16 percent) constituted five different categories. Nine (3 percent) of the victims suffered from a mental illness. Thirty-one victims (6 percent) suffered internal injuries, while 26 (5 percent) suffered sprains or strains. Roughly three percent of these victims (13) suffered from either a dislocation, a burn, or poisoning (Table 15).

Table 15

Family Violence Victim Injuries (Children and Adults) Reported to Illinois Registries by Injury Type, 1996 – 1998

Injury Type	Number of Injuries	Percent of All Injuries
Diseases	19	3%
Mental Disorders	9	2%
Fractures	55	10%
Dislocations	2	0%
Sprains/Strains	26	5%
Internal Injuries	31	6%
Open Wounds	44	8%
Abrasions	46	8%
Contusions	207	37%
Burns	5	1%
Poisonings	6	1%
Other	105	19%
Total	555	100%

Source: Illinois Department of Public Health

V. ABUSERS

Abuser Demographics

Gender

The ISP data on domestic offenses reported indicated that of the reported offenses against only adults statewide in 1998, 82 percent involved male offenders, while the remaining 18 percent involved female offenders. Similarly, data from the Illinois Probation Outcome Survey indicated that 88 percent of domestic violence offenders who committed an offense against an adult 18 or older were male. Orders of Protection data from ISP's LEADS system and IDOC data on offenders admitted for domestic battery cannot be separated by the age of the victim. However, 89 percent of the respondents among Orders of Protection entered into LEADS between 1991 and 1997 were male, while 99 percent of all offenders admitted to IDOC for domestic battery offenses in 1998 were male. Thus, males were strongly overrepresented as perpetrators of family violence compared to their make-up in the general population.

For examining family violence against children, DCFS has provided a breakdown of the number of known abusers from verified cases of child abuse and neglect by gender and age group. Again, remember that only 90 percent of the abusers reflected below are related to the victim via a family or household member relationship.

Contrary to what other data sets have indicated, DCFS data indicate that verified abusers of child abuse and neglect are mostly female. However, when abuse was distinguished from neglect, data indicate that abuse type is an influencing factor in this gender pattern. When verified abusers of only neglect were examined, 77 percent were female (Table 16). When only abusers of physical or sexual abuse cases were examined, only about half the abusers were female (51 percent). Of all verified abusers of sexual abuse, 90 percent were male and 10 percent were female. Thus, a little more than half (55 percent) of the abusers in the DCFS data set were female. A likely factor for this pattern could be the greater number of single-mother households than single-father households in Illinois.

Table 16

Verified Abusers of Child Abuse and Neglect in Illinois by Age Group and Abuse Type, Fiscal Year 1998

Abuse Type of Verified Cases	Males	% Male	Females	% Female
Abuse Only	6,781	48%	7,219	52%
Neglect Only	2,087	23%	7,046	77%
Sexual Abuse	2,847	90%	319	10%
Total	11,715	45%	14,584	55%

Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

When reported domestic offenses against children 17 and under in 1998 were examined from the ISP data set, 68 percent of the offenses involved male offenders. Although the percentage of male offenders is less with offenses against children than with offenses against adults, this is contrary to what the DCFS data indicate (most of the abusers being female.) Perhaps this conflicting pattern relates to the differences in victim age patterns noted between the DCFS data and the domestic offenses reported to ISP. Remember that DCFS victims were younger, while offenses against children reported to ISP involved older children.

When the domestic elder abuse and neglect data reported to IDoA in 1998 were examined, the offenders were primarily male. Fifty-nine percent of the reported abusers of elderly victims were male, while the other 41 percent were female. Of the nearly 3,000 domestic offenses reported to ISP against elders in 1998, 69 percent were male, somewhat more than that showed by the data from IDoA. Although male abusers are in the majority, their proportions among abusers against elders comprise less than that showed for adult abusers in general.

Age

When the domestic offenses reported to ISP in 1998 were separated according to the age of the victim, the data indicate that the younger the age of the victim, the younger the age of the offender. As Table 17 illustrates, the average offender age is 24 among offenses against children, while the average offender age is 31 for offenses against adults, and 39 for offenses against elders.

Table 17

Domestic Offenses Reported in Illinois by Offender Age and Victim Age, 1998

Offender Age Group	Child Victims (17 or younger)	Adult Victims (18 or older)	Elderly Victims (60 or older)
12 years and under	9%	>1%	1%
13 to 17 years	31%	5%	6%
18 to 24 years	23%	23%	9%
25 to 32 years	13%	30%	16%
33 to 40 years	14%	25%	29%
41 to 50 years	7%	13%	21%
51 to 60 years	2%	3%	7%
61 years and over	1%	1%	12%
Total*	100%	100%	100%
Average Age of Offender	24	31	39

* Numbers may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Source: Illinois State Police

Most respondents of Orders of Protection entered into LEADS from 1991 to 1997 were between 20 and 39 years of age, with the largest portion being 30 to 39 years of age. Ninety-three percent were under 50. The respondent age groups were quite similar across the four regions of the state and relatively stable across the seven-year period covered by the data set. Data from the Probation Outcome Survey indicated that 40 percent of those domestic violence offenders who committed an offense against an adult were between 31 and 40, while 34 percent were between 21 and 30 and 24 percent were 41 or older. The average age among these offenders was 35, somewhat older than the average offender age for domestic offenses against adults reported to ISP in 1998. Among those offenders admitted to IDOC for domestic battery in 1998, most were either between 20 and 29 years of age (43 percent) or between 30 and 39 years of age (38 percent.)

Thirty-seven percent of the verified child abuse and neglect abusers reported to DCFS in 1998 were between 30 and 39 years of age, and 35 percent were between 20 and 29 years of age. Fourteen percent were aged 40 to 49, 10 percent were 20 or younger, and 5 percent were 50 or older. Thus, offenders who committed offenses against children were somewhat older in the DCFS data than in ISP's reported domestic offenses for 1998.

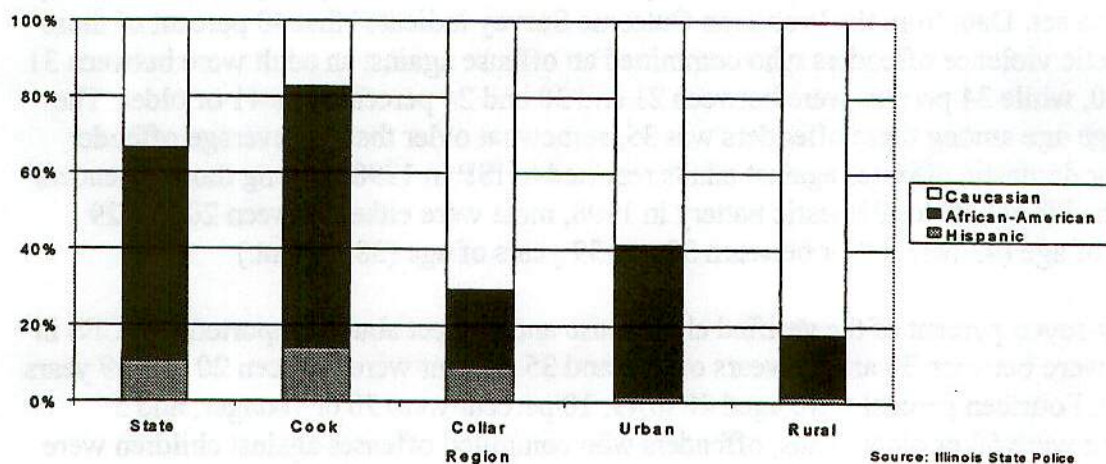
Of all cases of elder abuse and neglect reported to IDoA in 1998, 24 percent involved offenders between 40 and 49 years old. The next largest offender age group was 70 years or older at 19 percent. Eighteen percent of these offenders were between 30 and 39 years of age, and 16 percent were between 50 and 59 years of age. Only 11 percent of the cases involved offenders under 30 years old. Thus, except for the larger portion of offenders over 70, the offender age distribution from the IDoA data set was fairly similar to those derived from domestic offenses reported to ISP. Perhaps some of the older offenders from the IDoA data set reflect intimate partner abuse that had been occurring for years.

Race

When the domestic offenses reported to ISP in 1998 were examined by the race of the offender, the proportions were very similar among offenses against children, adults and elders, however, varied widely across regions. Of these offenses reported statewide, more than half (56 percent) involved African-American offenders, 33 percent involved Caucasian offenders, and 10 percent involved Hispanic offenders (Figure 22). Paralleling victim race distributions, offender race distributions varied considerably across regions. In Cook County during the same year, more than two-thirds (68 percent) of all domestic offenses reported involved African-American offenders, while less than one-fifth (17 percent) involved Caucasian offenders. Cook County also reported the largest number of offenses involving Hispanic offenders compared to other regions (14 percent). A much different pattern exists in the rural counties. More than four out of five, or 82 percent of domestic offenses reported in rural counties involved Caucasian offenders, while only 16 percent involved African-American offenders and 2 percent involved Hispanic offenders.

Figure 22

Domestic Offenses Reported in Illinois by Offender Race and Region, 1998



When offender race distributions are compared with 1997 population estimates, African-Americans were overrepresented as offenders of domestic offenses reported in Illinois by almost four times their representation in the general population, while Hispanics were represented proportionately statewide. In Cook County for the same year, African-Americans were again overrepresented by more than two-and-a-half times their representation in the general population, while Hispanics were slightly underrepresented and Caucasians were largely underrepresented in Cook County in 1998.

Although most of the respondents from the Orders of Protection data set were Caucasian (69 percent), African-Americans accounted for 31 percent of the respondents in the data set from 1991 to 1997. In Cook County, 54 percent of the respondents among orders issued from 1991 to 1997 were African-American, while African-Americans represent only 27 percent of the population of Cook County. These data indicate that African-Americans represent respondents of Orders of Protection entered into LEADS about double their representation in the general population statewide and in Cook County. When regions are compared, the proportion of respondents who were African-American is highest in Cook County, (52 percent), next highest in the urban counties (23 percent), and lower in collar counties (18 percent) and rural counties (6 percent). Currently, the LEADS data set does not contain data on Hispanic origin; Hispanic respondents are entered as either African-American or Caucasian. LEADS does, however, include data on respondents whom are Asian/Pacific Islander and American Indian/Alaskan. These categories together comprised less than 1 percent of the entire data set.

Offender race data from the Probation Outcome Study also reflect an overrepresentation of African-Americans, however, not to the same degree as seen in ISP's domestic offenses reported and Orders of Protection from the LEADS system. Of all the survey responses, 22 percent of the domestic violence probationers were African-American, while 67 percent were Caucasian and 9 percent were Hispanic. Thus, African-Americans

are overrepresented by nearly 50 percent, while Hispanic and Caucasian offenders were slightly underrepresented.

Data from domestic battery offenders admitted to IDOC also reflect an overrepresentation of African-Americans. More than a third (36 percent) of domestic battery offenders serving time IDOC in 1998 were African-American. The remainder of this population comprised of 58 percent Caucasian and 6 percent Hispanic. Although African-Americans are overrepresented by more than double their population, the degree of overrepresentation for domestic battery offenders who are African-American is substantially less than that reflected for offenders of all offense types. In 1998, African-Americans accounted for more than two-thirds of IDOC's entire population (67 percent).

Table 18 displays differences in race among abusers of child abuse and neglect verified by DCFS. Again, DCFS has provided another level of analysis by providing gender breakdowns for each race category. When examining race breakdowns only, African-Americans are overrepresented again by more than double their population. However, most of this is reflected by African-American females, who are overrepresented by more than triple their representation in the state population. African-American males, on the other hand, are overrepresented as abusers about 70 percent. Caucasians are underrepresented, comprising slightly more than half of all the abusers, while Hispanics are represented proportionately.

Table 18

Verified Abusers of Child Abuse and Neglect in Illinois by Abuser Race and Gender, Fiscal Year 1998

Abuser Race	Males	Females	Total Abusers	% of Total
Caucasian	7,107	6,819	13,926	53%
African-American	2,946	6,552	9,498	36%
Hispanic	1,359	983	2,342	9%
Other	154	145	299	1%
Total	11,566	14,499	26,065	100%*

* Percentages do not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Source: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

The only data set that did not indicate such high overrepresentation of African-Americans is that from the domestic elder abuse and neglect reports to IDoA in 1998. Most abusers of elder abuse and neglect were Caucasian (80 percent), while only 17 percent of the abusers were African-American. Although African-Americans are still slightly overrepresented, the extent to which is much less than that indicated by the other data sets. Hispanics were underrepresented as perpetrators of elder abuse and neglect as they comprised only 2 percent of the abusers, while they were estimated to comprise 10 percent of Illinois' population.

Offender Progress through the Criminal Justice System

Nearly 30 percent of all domestic offenses reported to ISP in 1998 also included disposition information, or a data element indicating any known outcome of the offense such as arrests, dismissals, or referrals. However, this varied widely by region. Cook County only had disposition records for 10 percent of all reported offenses, while all the other regions ranged from 63 to 71 percent of all reported offenses that included disposition information.

If only the offenses for which disposition records exist are examined (about a third of the entire data set), the portion of those offenses in which an offender was arrested can be identified. However, this limitation must be considered seriously, because those offenses that *did not* include disposition codes likely were very different than those offenses that *did* include a disposition code. For example, perhaps many of those offenses with missing disposition codes *did not* result in an arrest.

Of only those domestic offenses committed by adults reported in 1998 that included disposition codes, nearly 72 percent resulted in an arrest, while the remaining 28 percent resulted in referrals, summons, informal responses, or releases (Table 19). When these percentages were examined across regions, they were relatively similar throughout the state. The collar counties had the highest percentage of offenses reported that resulted in an arrest at 76 percent, while rural counties had the lowest percentage at just over 67 percent.

Table 19

Domestic Offenses Reported in Illinois by Arrest Status and by Region, 1998

Region	Number of Offenses with Disposition Code	Percent of Offenses with Disposition Code	Number of Offenses in which Offender was Arrested	Percent of Offenses in which Offender was Arrested*
Cook County	8,130	9.7%	5,535	68%
Collar	6,163	65.2%	4,686	76%
Urban	13,296	63.0%	9,840	74%
Rural	6,593	71.3%	4,450	67%
State	34,182	27.9%	24,511	72%

* Offenses with missing disposition codes were eliminated before percentages were calculated.

Source: Illinois State Police

Figure 23 displays fluctuations over the five-year period in the length of sentences given to domestic battery offenders and the actual time they served. Between 1994 and 1995, the average sentence length increased from 1.7 years to 2.3 years. However, since 1995, the average sentence length remained relatively stable through 1998 when the average

sentence was 2.2 years. Actual time served was also steady from 1995 to 1998. The largest increase in actual time served was between 1997 and 1998. In 1998 domestic battery offenders served 0.91 years as opposed to 0.74 years in 1997.

Figure 23

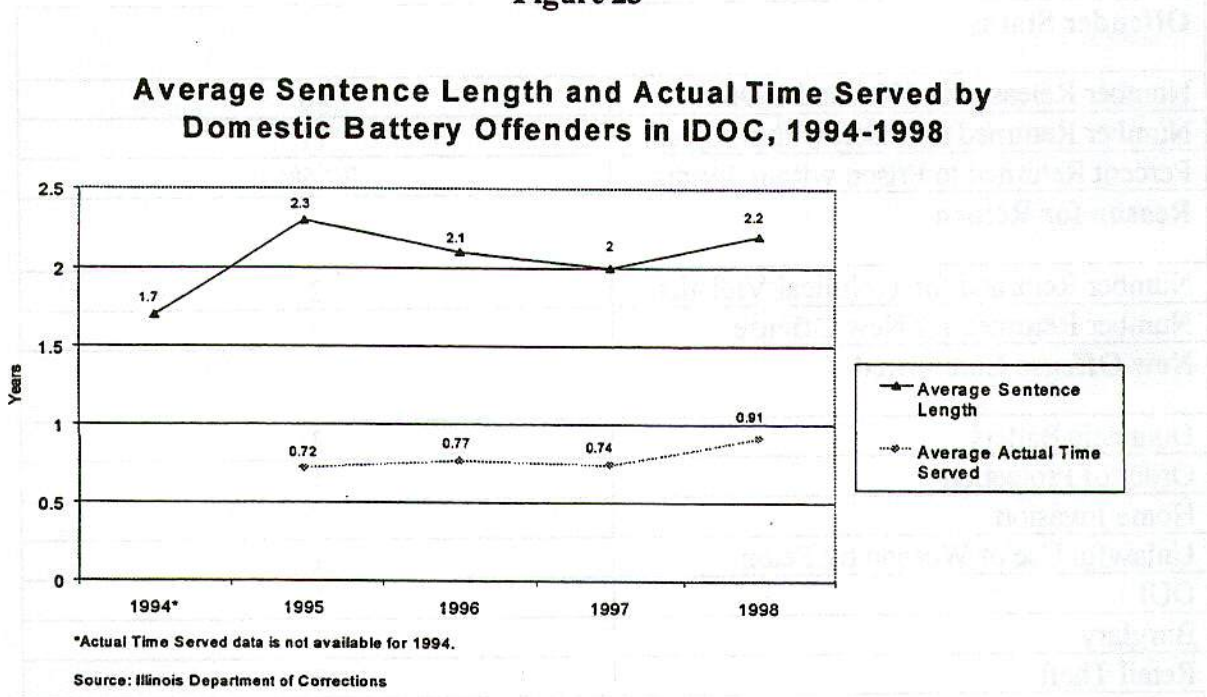


Table 20 displays recidivism rates for offenders admitted to IDOC for domestic battery offenses. Of the 40 offenders released in fiscal years 1994 and 1995, 27.5 percent, or 11 domestic battery offenders, returned to prison within three years of release. Of all offenders released in fiscal year 1994 and fiscal year 1995, 39 percent returned to prison within three years. The majority of these domestic battery offenders returned for committing a new offense. The remaining offenders returned for a technical violation.

Table 20
Recidivism Rates for Domestic Battery Offenders Released from IDOC during
Fiscal Years 1995 and 1996

Offender Status	
Number Released in 1995 and 1996	40
Number Returned to Prison within 3 years	11
Percent Returned to Prison within 3 years	27.5%
Reason for Return	
Number Returned for Technical Violation	2
Number Returned for New Offense	9
New Offense Committed	
Domestic Battery	3
Order of Protection	1
Home Invasion	1
Unlawful Use of Weapon by Felon	1
DUI	1
Burglary	1
Retail Theft	1

Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

When domestic violence offenders from the Probation Outcome Study were examined, more than 70 percent of them completed their sentences successfully. Another 13 percent of these probationers committed either a technical violation during their sentence or a new offense (Table 21).

Table 21

Reasons for Discharge Among Domestic Violence Offenders Discharged from Probation in Illinois

Reason for Discharge	% of Total
Scheduled Termination	68%
Early Termination	3%
Absconder	2%
Revoked-Technical	6%
Revoked-New Offense	7%
Alternate DOC Commitment	1%
Unsatisfactory Termination	8%
Other	6%
Total	100%

Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts' Probation Division

The Probation Outcome Study also examined the prior criminal histories of the sample of offenders used for the study. Although the domestic violence offenders had fewer prior convictions as juveniles than all of the offenders combined, they had more prior adult convictions (Table 22). For example, nearly 52 percent of domestic violence offenders had at least one prior adult convictions, while only 43 percent of all offenders in the sample had at least one prior adult conviction—16 percent lower than that for domestic violence offenders. It should be noted, however, that statistical significance could not be established among these comparisons, thus differences noted here are interesting but cannot be generalized to all probationers in Illinois.

Table 22

Prior Juvenile and Criminal Justice System Involvement Among Adults Discharged from Probation in Illinois, Comparisons Between Domestic Violence Offenders and All Offenders

Prior Juvenile/Criminal History	Domestic Violence Offenders	All Offenders
Percent with Prior Juvenile Adjudication	3.0%	7.4%
Percent with Prior Juvenile Probation	3.7%	6.4%
Percent with Prior Juvenile IDOC Commitment	0.0%	1.7%
Percent with Prior Adult Conviction	51.6%	43.2%
Percent with Prior Adult Probation	35.6%	31.2%
Percent with Prior Adult IDOC Commitment	9.6%	8.4%

Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts' Probation Division

Offender Substance Use

Of all the data sets used for this report, only the Probation Outcome Survey contained usable information on substance use of family violence abusers. Data from the survey indicated that prior drug abuse, and especially prior alcohol abuse, was more prevalent among domestic violence offenders than all offenders who committed a violent offense, and the entire sample of offenders (Table 21). In fact, nearly three-fourths of the domestic violence offenders had a history of either drug or alcohol abuse. Moreover, when only the violent offenders were examined (of which domestic violence offenders are included), only 47 percent of them had histories of drug and/or alcohol abuse. However, this percentage increases to 56 percent when the entire sample was examined. Thus, despite the domestic violence offenders' inclusion in the group with fewer histories of prior substance use, they had a much higher frequency of prior substance abuse when examined alone (Table 23). Because the sample of domestic violence offenders is so small, statistical significance is difficult to establish which determines whether similar inferences can be drawn about the entire population of offenders on probation. No statistically significant differences were found among the percentages in Table 23 except for "only alcohol abuse" between domestic violence probationers and all probationers sampled. Thus, this suggests that abuse of only alcohol is not only more prevalent among domestic violence offenders sampled, but among all domestic violence offenders in Illinois.

Table 23

Prior History of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Among Adults Discharged from Probation in Illinois, Comparisons Between Domestic Violence Offenders and All Offenders

	Domestic Violence Offenders	All Violent Offenders	All Offenders
Only Alcohol Abuse	34.6%	15.8%	20.8%
Only Drug Abuse	7.2%	3.2%	6.4%
Both Drug <i>and</i> Alcohol Abuse	31.5%	27.9%	28.5%
Total (History of Any Substance Abuse)	73.2%	46.9%	55.7%

Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts' Probation Division

VI. GAPS IDENTIFIED IN ILLINOIS' FAMILY VIOLENCE DATA

The data sets used for this report provided much information on the number and types of family violence cases reported in Illinois, family violence victims and offenders, the nature of family violence offenses, and, to some extent, the consequences of family violence. However, a more complete and comprehensive picture of family violence in Illinois would be gained if some of the gaps identified in these data were appropriately addressed. The following gaps were identified in family violence data available in Illinois:

- **Data sources do not estimate the prevalence of family violence.**

Prevalence of family violence is unclear in Illinois, despite the availability of several family violence data sets. The importance and difficulty of collecting family violence data has only been recently been fully recognized. The relationship between victims and offenders and the confidentiality issues inherent in family violence events are barriers to efficient data collection. Additionally, innovative programs and reporting mechanisms, legislative changes affecting data collection and reporting, and the general underreporting of family violence have hindered the maturity of quality family violence data collection systems. ISP's data on domestic offenses and data collected from IDPH's Violence Registry are still much too new to determine trends. The Elder Abuse and Reporting Program also is new and has raised public and professional awareness in this area, which could help explain the substantial increase in elder abuse and neglect reports over the past decade. The Order of Protection data set from LEADS indicates a steady increase in the number of orders entered and petitioners since 1991, however, this may be due to increased compliance with entering the orders into LEADS and/or improvements in technological capabilities. Data from IDOC on domestic battery offenders admitted also has shown increases over the last five years, but the offense of domestic battery was recently upgraded to a Class 4 felony upon an offender's second conviction of this offense. This likely affected the recent increase in the number of domestic battery offenders admitted to IDOC from 1994 to 1998. On the other hand, DCFS has reported a substantial decrease in the number of reported and verified cases of child abuse and neglect since 1995. However, some of this decrease was due to a change in reporting requirements.

Although many data sources have strong potential for alleviating this gap in the future, Illinois is in the early stages of obtaining quality measures of family violence in all forms. Realistically, our ability to determine whether family violence in Illinois has been increasing, decreasing, or remaining stable is quite limited.

- **Data are weak in determining the overlap in the number of victims and offenders served among health, social service, and criminal justice agencies.**

Another gap identified in these data sets is that few can help estimate the overlap of service provided among health, social service, and criminal justice agencies. For example, DCFS verified 1,076 abusers of committing sexual abuse against their child,

stepchild, or grandchild ages 17 or younger in fiscal year 1998. However, only 437 sex offenses against children ages 17 or younger were reported to ISP in 1998 where the offender was a parent, stepparent, or grandparent of the victim, or the offender was an intimate partner of the victim's parent. Perhaps DCFS does not report some cases to police as this is not required in some cases, or police departments are not recording these offenses as "domestic." Moreover, the extent to which these data overlap, if at all, cannot be estimated with available data. IDoA recently began to collect data on the criminal justice process of verified elder abuse and neglect cases, however, this data set is not yet ready for analysis. Estimations of overlap among these three areas could provide much insight on the degree of collaboration involved in area responses to family violence, the process underwent by victims and offenders through different areas of the system, and a better understanding of prevalence.

- **Data sources do not provide information on multiple forms of violence occurring within families or households.**

Perhaps due to the existence of agencies designated to provide specialized responses to specific forms of family violence, such as child and elder abuse, information is lacking on families or households, which may contain family violence in many forms. Although specific types of family violence, such as intimate partner violence, are commonly associated with other types, such as child or elder abuse, no information is available at the state level. While local agencies may have this information, it is not reported to a state central repository. For example, a DCFS investigator would probably be aware of multiple forms of family violence occurring within a family of his/her caseload; but this information is not reported to the state central repository. The value of such data could be instrumental toward planning multidisciplinary programs and collaboration among agencies serving different types of victims.

- **Health services data are lacking.**

Illinois, as most other states, is lacking a quality data set representing the health services perspective. Confidentiality and sensitivity issues of medical records are strong barriers to such a source. However, the implementation of IDPH's Violence Registry has much potential of substantially alleviating this gap. A health services perspective is important for understanding different kinds of family violence victims. Some victims who receive medical assistance may never come into contact with the criminal justice system or social service agencies for various reasons. Victims seeking medical assistance for injuries resulting from family violence also may represent those in the greatest danger, as the abuse is serious enough to seek emergency treatment. These victims may be the least likely and most afraid to seek other forms of community assistance. If the Violence Registry develops an improved ability to capture more family violence victims, then this data set would be much more representative of family violence victims seeking emergency medical treatment. This would also provide more detailed information on the consequences of family violence.

- **Data are lacking on social services provided to victims.**

Currently, statewide data are available through the Department of Human Services for fiscal years 1994 through 1997 on the number of victims seeking assistance from social service agencies. However, data from recent fiscal years are not available because service providers are using a new data collection reporting system, the InfoNet. DHS-funded programs are collecting a wide range of detailed information on victims, abusers, and the criminal justice process through the InfoNet system. This also is a new collection system for which data are not currently available. In addition, the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV) has been collecting data on clients served among their network of shelters since the early 1980's, but these data sets are not ready for analysis. A committee was formed to retrieve these data and examine the number and types of victims serviced over the last 15 years. Social services data may provide a way of obtaining outcome measures of those services provided to victims of family violence. Illinois could then better determine which methods of assisting family violence victims are most effective.

- **Limited data are available on the process of family violence cases through the court system.**

Illinois State Police data provide some information on how family violence cases progress through the criminal justice system via the number of offenses reported, the dispositions of these offenses, and the number of Orders of Protections issued in the state. In addition, IDOC provides some information on the most serious domestic battery cases, such as the length of sentence ordered and the actual time served by offenders sentenced to prison. AOIC's Probation Outcome Survey also provides information on the outcomes of their probation term. However, a significant gap exists in the middle of this process. Although limited information on the number of offenders arrested for family violence offenses can be obtained, data are not obtainable on the cases that are formally charged through the state's attorney's office. Since the numbers of family violence felony and misdemeanor cases filed are not obtainable, neither are outcomes for those family violence cases that are filed with the courts. The process of family violence cases through the court system, then, is the largest piece of the puzzle missing in understanding how these cases progress through the criminal justice system. The expansion of specialized family violence courts could provide a way to address this gap.

- **The overall quality of data is unknown.**

Probably the largest gap of these data sets is that the quality of them is unknown. Although some of these agencies may have a data checking system at the local level, an auditing system does not exist for ensuring data are reported and entered accurately. Conflicting patterns identified with cross-data set analyses and low reporting rates for some data sets raise concerns that some of these data may be inaccurate.

Although many gaps are present in existing family violence data in Illinois, these data sets capture various information on all forms of family violence and in different contexts.

Illinois is in the early stages of obtaining quality, comprehensive data on family violence, however, many processes are under way toward improving the ability to collect such data. Several data sets are in their preliminary stages. The rate and consistency of reporting, and the quality of data reported, should be allowed ample time to develop. Moreover, several efforts are in progress toward obtaining additional statewide family violence data sets, which are not included in this report.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for alleviating some of the gaps identified in Illinois' family violence data include:

- **Allow data sets to mature.**

With the implementation of several new data sets and reporting requirements, it is hoped that measures of prevalence will improve substantially as they mature. It is normal to expect lower compliance rates and reporting inconsistencies during the first few years of any new data collection system. If reporting agents are continuously educated about the new system (proper definitions of variables and codes, reporting procedures), the quality of the data should substantially improve within a few years.

- **Clarify the IDVA's definition of *domestic violence* with those involved in reporting family violence data.**

Definitions should be clarified with state and local agencies, practitioners, and police officers to see improvements in the quality of data derived from these data sets. Since domestic violence is commonly associated with intimate partner violence, all relationship types included in IDVA's definition of *family or household members* must be clearly conveyed and understood. For example, elder abuse or abuse of a disabled child living in a long term care facility might not be commonly conceptualized as forms of family violence, increasing the likelihood that these offenses would not be captured in a *domestic* data set.

- **Allocate more resources to create automated systems, particularly with prosecutorial and court-related data.**

The primary gap identified within the criminal justice system is the lack of data on the number of family violence cases filed, the dispositions of those cases, and sentences received by family violence offenders. Currently, neither prosecutors nor circuit clerks in Illinois have access to a state automated system. In fact, several downstate counties still keep records with paper files. Both state and local agencies would benefit from access to a statewide system network designed with the ability to keep confidential information in-house and to easily filter cases of family violence. Such a resource could provide a better understanding of the prevalence of family violence in Illinois and the process of family violence cases through Illinois' criminal justice system.

- **Increase automated systems' abilities to distinguish family violence cases from other cases maintained in the system.**

Many automated systems are unable to produce even simple counts of family violence records in a data set as they do not have the ability to filter records according to the relationship between the victim and the abuser. Since an act of family violence distinguished by this relationship rather than the nature of the act, family violence should

not be considered a “type” of case. This is often the case as many systems at state and local levels can filter by offense, E-Code, or type of case. This creates a barrier to effective data compilation because family violence is often applicable to other case types as well, thus creating categories that are not mutually exclusive. To count family violence cases efficiently, systems need the capacity to filter by the relationship between the victim and the offender or have an extra field that indicates whether or not the record qualifies as family violence.

- **Invite more agency representatives who work directly with the data sets to serve on the Data Collection Committee.**

Although the committee is comprised of senior individuals of agencies who have much expertise and influence within the agencies they represent, they may not work directly with the data obtained for this report. Many technical questions about coding mechanisms, filtering capabilities, and data reporting procedures were answered by other agency employees who work more closely with the data. The Data Collection Committee learned throughout the course of this project that including these people on the Committee would not only help the group answer questions that arose during meetings, but also better interpret patterns displayed by the data.

- **Follow a sample of family violence cases through the criminal justice system.**

Such a study would reveal much about the process of family violence cases through the criminal justice system, particularly what occurs after arrest. Findings from such a study could help determine what additional measures should be feasibly undertaken to address gaps in family violence data from the criminal justice system. Moreover, insight would be gained on how the criminal justice system responds to victims and offenders of family violence.

- **Develop a justification strategy to obtain supplemental health service data.**

Cornerstone is a management information system developed and implemented by DHS and IDPH, which may be available as a family violence data source in the future. The system is installed in about 260 community service providers of the following programs throughout the state: Family Case Management (FCM), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Prenatal Care, Pediatric Primary Care, Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening, and Childhood Immunizations. This network system is used by providers to share important client information collected with an assessment questionnaire. After each client is surveyed, data from the questionnaire is entered into the Cornerstone system and may be shared among other system users. Sensitive information remains at the site where it was entered. In addition, clients can request sensitive information to be flagged as confidential by the case manager, which blocks access of the information to most other system users. Data are maintained at the individual sites in which it was entered and not at a state central repository. However, the ability to pull information to a state central source exists if enough justification is provided to complete such a task.

The assessment questionnaire seeks health care histories on clients and their children, behavioral health risk indicators, financial, social, and emotional support accessible to clients and their children, and client abuse histories that include the client's relationship to the abuser(s). Thus, Cornerstone would be a desirable source of information on victims of family violence and on the health, financial, and emotional conditions that may accompany these victims. It is recommended that the Data Collection Committee seek a strategy for obtaining these data without breaching client confidentiality.

- **Encourage E-code revision to better identify patients who are family violence victims.**

IDPH's Violence Registry provides accessibility to information on a population of family violence victims who may never be captured via data collected from criminal justice or social service agencies--those who seek medical treatment for injuries resulting from family violence. This information could be essential toward learning the most effective ways to conduct professional health screenings for family violence victims, thus allowing medical professionals to respond to family victims more effectively and provide victims with information on available services. The Violence Registry has much potential for obtaining family violence data; the extent to which this potential is reached rests largely on whether the ability to filter family violence victims through the E-codes improves. Although much effort and persuasion would be required to implement new or revised E-codes, the information that could be gained from such a data source could prove instrumental to improving Illinois' response to family violence. Improved capacities of the Violence Registry would not only expand Illinois' health services family violence data, but also help researchers and policymakers better determine prevalence and understand family violence from the health services perspective.

- **Encourage more data collection from state agencies on multiple forms of family violence occurring within families or households.**

Although information on multiple forms of family violence within a household is usually either known, written in case notes, or addressed at the local level, no state level data source has such information available. For example, it would be important to learn the number of households containing intimate partner abuse that also include child and elder abuse. Adding such information to a state repository of whether other forms exist within a family or household would substantially alleviate this gap.

- **Encourage more data collection on referral source of victims, and other agency involvement in servicing victims of family violence.**

Improving the capacity to estimate the combined number of victims serviced among health, social service, and criminal justice agencies is difficult due to the priority of maintaining victim confidentiality. However, small changes may provide some estimation of this overlap. Obtaining the referral source of family violence victims upon initial servicing by an agency may accomplish this to some extent. Although this method would not allow agencies to track a particular victim through the process of seeking help,

it would provide a percentage of victims who were referred through another service. For example, a shelter collecting referral source data on victims serviced might discover that many of their clients are in contact with the police before they seek services of the shelter. Other relatively simple information to obtain on the victim to help address this gap would be a general inquiry of victims' prior attempts in seeking assistance from community agencies. For example, a victim advocate may not necessarily ask a victim what specific agency where he or she has sought prior service, but simply whether service had ever been sought, and, if so the type of service. This information could be collected in a general sense, for example, police, counseling, or medical assistance.

Collaboration also could help address this gap. For example, the overlap among child victims reflected in the data sets from DCFS and ISP could be better estimated if DCFS provided the number of verified cases for which police were notified. Or conversely, ISP could require that DCFS involvement be noted for offenses involving child victims. DCFS investigators and caseworkers, and police collect such information for their client files and incident reports, but no statewide queries on this information can be generated.

- **Encourage wider and more practical use of state and local family violence data.**

To address quality concerns with family violence data, it is strongly recommended that data collected on family violence be used to produce practical information that could improve how state and local agencies respond to family violence. This requires that a stronger communication network be established among researchers of state data, academic researchers, policymakers and decision-makers, and also practitioners who deal with victims and offenders of family violence directly on a daily basis. Practitioners who work directly with victims and offenders may notice significant patterns throughout their experiences. However, these patterns may not be communicated to researchers who can determine they are indicative in the data. If family violence data collected from state agencies could be used to produce more valuable information to directors and decision makers as well as those who deal directly with family violence, perhaps data quality would increase substantially. Local pilot sites for the Data Collection Project could be utilized to implement such a strategy.

In addition, those in academia could be encouraged to conduct more research using state family violence data. If these data were used to produce more valuable research findings, agencies that report and/or maintain family violence data may place more emphasis on the accuracy and consistency of the records in the data set.

- **Communicate report findings.**

The Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Council's Steering Committee should relay these report findings to state and local agency directors and practitioners. The cooperation of agencies that collect family violence data is necessary to address the gaps identified in this report and expedite the recommendations.

- **Continue multidisciplinary collaboration.**

The most important recommendation for improving the overall utility of Illinois' family violence data is to maintain strong collaborative relationships among agencies of different disciplines. Multidisciplinary collaboration is crucial toward improving what can be gained from the wide array of available data sets. Family Violence Coordinating Councils throughout the state are key in supporting this network and keeping communication lines open and frequent. Especially since the Council's infrastructure includes state and local levels, it is strongly recommended that the committees of these councils continue to hold frequent meetings, exchange information and ideas, and expedite cooperative strategies to address consensual concerns. Through this process, local councils will be able to address the recommendations of this report and enhance their own data collection systems. In addition, they will be able to address practical issues of integrating state and local data collection efforts, and serve as a model for other local areas. Through these collaborative efforts, the overall utility of Illinois' family violence data could be substantially improved to more fully describe family violence in Illinois. Thus, Illinois could gain a more useful tool for policy and planning with regard to family violence.

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