

Sexual Victimization in Juvenile Facilities Reported by Youth, 2008-09¹

Adapted by Mariame Kaba, Project NIA

National Context

According to a new study released by the Justice Department on January 7th 2010, an estimated **12 percent** of adjudicated youth in state operated and large locally or privately operated juvenile facilities reported experiencing one or more incidents of sexual victimization² by another youth or facility staff in the past 12 months or since admission, if less than 12 months. About 2.6 percent of youth reported an incident involving another youth, and 10.3 percent reported an incident involving facility staff.

About 4.3 percent of youth reported having sex or sexual contact with staff as a result of force 6.4 percent of youth reported sexual contact with staff without any force, threat, or other explicit form of coercion. Among youth victimized by facility staff, more than two-third (69 percent) did not report any force, threat of force, or offers of favors, protection, drugs, or alcohol to engage in the sexual activity. Approximately 95 percent of all youth reporting staff sexual misconduct said they had been victimized by female facility staff. In 2008, 42 percent of staff in juvenile facilities under state jurisdiction were female.

Males were more likely than females to report sexual activity with facility staff (10.8 percent compared to 4.7 percent). Black youth (11.9%) reported a slightly higher rate of sexual victimization by facility staff than white youth (9.7%) and Hispanic youth (8.1%).

Rates of staff sexual misconduct with youth were higher in state operated facilities (10.9%) than in non-state facilities (7.9%). Male-only facilities had the highest rates of staff sexual misconduct (11.3%). Reports of staff-on-youth sexual victimizations increased with the length of time a youth had been in the facility. An estimated 14.6% of youth who had been in the facility 12 months or more, compared to 8.3% of youth who had been in the facility for less than 6 months, said they had sexual contact with facility staff.

Nearly half of the youth victimized by another youth reported they had experienced physical force or threat of force (46 percent), 30 percent had been offered favors or protection, and 17 percent had been given drugs or alcohol. Nearly 20 percent of youth sexually victimized by another youth reported being injured in the incident, compared to five percent of youth victimized by staff. Females were more likely than males to report forced sexual activity with another youth (9.1 percent compared to 2.0 percent). White youth (4.4%) were more likely than black youth (2.1%) and Hispanic youth (0.9%) to report sexual victimization by another youth.

¹ Beck, Allen J., Harrison, Paige M., and Paul Guerino. (January 2010). Sexual Victimization in Juvenile Facilities Reported by Youth, 2008-09. Bureau of Justice Statistics. NCJ 228416. <http://bjs/ojp.usdoj.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=2113> (retrieved on 1/7/10).

² Sexual victimization is defined as any unwanted sexual activity between youth and all sexual activity between youth and staff.

Female-only facilities had the highest rates of youth-on-youth sexual victimization (11.0%).

Rates of reported sexual victimization varied among youth:

- 10.8% of males and 4.7% of females reported sexual activity with facility staff.
- 9.1% of females and 2.0% of males reported unwanted sexual activity with other youth.
- Youth with a sexual orientation other than heterosexual reported significantly higher rates of sexual victimization by another youth (12.5%) compared to heterosexual youth (1.3%).
- Youth who had experienced any prior sexual assault were more than twice as likely to report sexual victimization in the current facility (24.1%), compared to those with no sexual assault history (10.1%).

Facilities in which youth were held an average of less than 5 months had the lowest rates of sexual victimization (7.4%), compared to facilities in which youth were held for longer periods (12.7% in facilities with an average of 5 to 6 months and 14.2% in facilities with an average of 7 to 12 months).

Overall, 91 percent of youth in the facilities in the survey were males; 9 percent were females. The National Survey of Youth in Custody was conducted between June 2008 and April 2009 in 166 state-owned or operated juvenile facilities and 29 locally or privately operating facilities, yielding 9,198 completed interviews from adjudicated youth.

Table 1. Youth reporting sexual victimization, by type of incident, National Survey of Youth in Custody, 2008-09³

Sexual Victimization	National estimate ⁴		
	Number	Percent	Standard error
U.S.total	3,220	12.1%	0.4%
Youth-on-youth⁵	700	2.6%	0.2%
Nonconsensual sexual acts ⁶	530	2.0	0.2
Other sexual contacts only ⁷	140	0.5	0.2
Staff sexual misconduct	2,730	10.3%	0.4%
Force reported ⁸	1,150	4.3	0.3
Excluding touching ⁹	1,030	3.9	0.2
Other sexual contacts only ¹⁰	90	0.3	0.1
No report of force	1,710	6.4	0.3
Excluding touching	1,560	5.9	0.3
Other sexual contacts only	150	0.6	0.1

Note: Detail may not sum to total because youth may have reported multiple victimizations or due to item non-response. Youth were asked to report on any victimization involving another youth or facility staff in the past 12 months or since admission to the facility if less than 12 months.

³ Beck, Allen J., Harrison, Paige M., and Paul Guerino. (January 2010). Sexual Victimization in Juvenile Facilities Reported by Youth, 2008-09. Bureau of Justice Statistics. NCJ 228416. <http://bjs/ojp.usdoj.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=2113> (retrieved on 1/7/10).

⁴ Estimates based on reports from 9,198 adjudicated youth interviewed in 195 juvenile facilities and weighted to represent the number of adjudicated youth held in the nation.

⁵ Excludes acts in which there was no report of force. Detail does not sum to total due to item non-response.

⁶ Includes contact between the penis and the vagina or the penis and the anus; contact between the mouth and the penis, vagina, or anus; penetration of the anal or vaginal opening of another person by a hand, finger, or other object; and rubbing of another person's penis or vagina by a hand.

⁷ Includes kissing on the lips or other part of the body, looking at private body parts, showing something sexual like pictures or movie, and engaging in some other sexual contact that did not involve touching.

⁸ Includes physical force, threat of force, other force or pressure, and other forms of coercion, such as being given money, favors, protections, or special treatment.

⁹ Includes contact between the penis and the vagina or the penis and the anus; contact between the mouth and the penis, vagina, or anus; penetration of the anal or vaginal opening of another person by a hand, finger, or other object; and rubbing of another person's penis or vagina by a hand.

¹⁰ Includes kissing on the lips or other part of the body, looking at private body parts, showing something sexual like pictures or movie, and engaging in some other sexual contact that did not involve touching.

Table 2: Prevalence of sexual victimization, by type of incident and selected youth victim characteristics, National Survey of Youth in Custody, 2008-09

Youth victim characteristic	Number of youth ¹¹	Youth reporting any sexual victimization ¹²	Youth reporting sexual victimization by another youth	Youth reporting sexual victimization by facility staff
		Percent	Percent	Percent
Gender				
Male	24,200	12.1%	2.0%	10.8%
Female	2,350	12.1	9.1	4.7
Age				
15 or younger	4,920	10.7%	3.1%	8.7%
16	6,150	12.9	2.5	11.2
17	7,410	11.5	2.1	10.4
18 or older	8,080	13.0	2.9	10.5
Race/Hispanic origin				
White	9,100	12.9%	4.4%	9.7%
Black	11,280	13.2	2.1	11.9
Hispanic	5,020	8.5	0.9	8.1
Other, non-Hispanic	730	8.3	2.2	6.1
Two or more races	420	12.8	2.7	10.0
Sexual orientation				
Heterosexual	23,340	11.1%	1.3%	10.2%
Other ¹³	3,210	20.4	12.5	11.2
Time in facility				
Less than 6 months	14,370	9.8%	2.0%	8.3%
6-11 months	6,910	15.5	3.2	11.3
12 months or more	5,260	16.8	3.7	14.6
Prior sexual assault				
Yes	3,830	24.1%	9.5%	17.3%
No	22,720	10.1	1.4	9.1
Sexual assaulted at another facility				
Yes	550	65.0%	28.8%	50.5%
No	26,000	10.9	2.0	9.5

Among adjudicated youths who had been victimized, 92% were males reporting sexual activity with female staff: an additional 2.5% were males reporting sexual activity with both female and male staff. Among adjudicated youths who reported that force had been used in their sexual victimization, 86% were males who had sexual activity with female staff. 91% of all adjudicated youth held in the sampled facilities were male.

¹¹ Estimated number of adjudicated youth, nationwide, in facilities covered by the NSYC.

¹² Weighted percent of youth reporting one or more incidents of sexual victimization involving another youth or facility staff in the past 12 months or since admission in the facility, if less than 12 months.

¹³ Includes youth who identify as mostly straight but also attracted to people of the same sex; equally attracted to males and females (bisexual); mostly gay, but also attracted to people of the opposite sex; and totally gay (homosexual).

Table 3: Victims of staff sexual misconduct, by gender of youth and staff and use of force, National Survey of Youth in Custody, 2008-09

	Victims of staff sexual misconduct		
	All victims	Force reported	No report of force
All victims	100%	100%	100%
Male victims			
Male staff	1.7%	3.1%	0.3%
Female staff	92.0	86.1	96.3
Both male and female staff	2.5	4.7	0.7
Female victims			
Male staff	3.0%	4.5%	1.9%
Female staff	0.0	0.1	0
Both male and female staff	0.8	1.4	0.5
Estimated number of victims	2,730	1,150	1,710

Note: In facilities covered by the NYSC, an estimated 91% of adjudicated youth were male. Based on available data from 43 states and the District of Columbia, 42% of staff in juvenile facilities under state jurisdiction on October 22, 2008, were female.

Illinois Context

According to the National Survey of Youth in Custody, male adjudicated youth in the Joliet Youth Center report experiencing the highest level of sexual victimization by another youth or facility staff at 13.9 percent. This is followed by 11.8 percent of male adjudicated youth at Harrisburg Youth Center who report one or more incidents of sexual victimization by another youth or facility staff.

11.4 of female adjudicated youth at Warrenville Youth Center reported one or more incidents of sexual victimization by another youth or facility staff.

Two juvenile facilities in Illinois had no reported incidents of sexual victimization: the Chicago Youth Center and Murphyboro Youth Center.

Table 4. Percent of Illinois youth reporting sexual victimization, by facility, National Survey of Youth in Custody, 2008-09

Facility name	Number of respondents ¹⁴	Response rate	Percent of youth reporting sexual victimization		
			Percent	95% confidence interval	
				Lower bound	Upper bound
<i>All facilities</i>					
Illinois Youth Ctr. Chicago	17	45.9%	0.0%	0.0%	11.7%
Illinois Youth Ctr. Harrisburg	76	51.4	11.8%	6.8%	19.8%
Illinois Youth Ctr. Joliet	118	59.1	13.9	10.0	18.9
Illinois Youth Ctr. Kewanee	117	65.1	9.8	6.9	13.8
Illinois Youth Ctr. Murphyboro	26	48.1	0.0	0.0	7.6
Illinois Youth Ctr. St. Charles	74	48.7	10.2	4.5	21.3
Illinois Youth Ctr. Warrenville¹⁵	28	51.6	11.4	4.8	24.7

In keeping with national statistics, it appears that adjudicated female youth (11.4%) at Warrenville were significantly more likely to report sexual victimization by another youth compared to their male counterparts. They were also much more likely to report that these incidents were nonconsensual (6.8 percent). Among adjudicated male youth in Illinois, the young men (4.1 percent) housed at Kewanee Youth Center were most likely to report being victimized by another youth.

¹⁴ Sexual victimization survey – portion of the National Survey of Youth in Custody (2008-2009)

¹⁵ Facility houses females only

Table 5. Percent of Illinois youth reporting sexual victimization by another youth, by type of incident and facility, National Survey of Youth in Custody, 2008-2009

Facility name	Percent of Illinois youth reporting victimization by another youth					
	All youth-on-youth			Nonconsensual sexual acts		
	Weighted percent	95% confidence interval		Weighted percent	95% confidence interval	
		Lower bound	Upper bound		Lower bound	Upper bound
Illinois Youth Ctr. Harrisburg	3.4%	1.1%	9.4	1.7%	0.4%	7.2%
Illinois Youth Ctr. Joliet	1.5	0.4	5.3	1.5	0.4	5.3
Illinois Youth Ctr. Kewanee	4.1	2.3	7.4	4.1	2.3	7.4
Illinois Youth Ctr. St. Charles	0.8	0.2	3.5	0.8	0.2	3.5
Illinois Youth Ctr. Warrenville¹⁶	11.4	4.8	24.7	6.8	2.3	18.2

Note: Facilities in which there were no reports of sexual victimization of any type are not listed. Facilities house males only unless otherwise noted.

Table 6. Percent of Illinois youth reporting staff sexual misconduct, by type of incident and facility, National Survey of Youth in Custody, 2008-2009

Facility name	Percent of Illinois youth reporting staff sexual misconduct					
	All staff sexual misconduct			Sexual acts excluding touching		
	Weighted percent	95% confidence interval		Weighted percent	95% confidence interval	
		Lower bound	Upper bound		Lower bound	Upper bound
Illinois Youth Ctr. Harrisburg	11.8%	6.8%	19.8%	11.8%	6.8%	19.8%
Illinois Youth Ctr. Joliet	13.9	10.0	18.9	13.2	9.4	18.2
Illinois Youth Ctr. Kewanee	5.7	3.8	8.5	5.7	3.8	8.5
Illinois Youth Ctr. St. Charles	9.3	3.9	20.6	9.3	3.9	20.6
Illinois Youth Ctr. Warrenville¹⁷	6.8	2.3	18.3	2.2	0.6	8.4

Note: Facilities in which there were no reports of sexual victimization of any type are not listed. Facilities house males only unless otherwise noted.

¹⁶ Facility houses females only

¹⁷ Facility houses females only

Table 7. Percent of Illinois youth reporting staff sexual misconduct, by use of force and facility, National Survey of Youth in Custody, 2008-2009

Facility name	Percent of Illinois youth reporting staff sexual misconduct excluding touching ¹⁸					
	Force reported			No report of force		
	Weighted percent	95% confidence interval		Weighted percent	95% confidence interval	
		Lower bound	Upper bound		Lower bound	Upper bound
Illinois Youth Ctr. Harrisburg	6.7%	3.1%	13.9%	5.1%	2.2%	11.3%
Illinois Youth Ctr. Joliet	5.5	3.1	9.6	8.3	5.3	12.8
Illinois Youth Ctr. Kewanee	3.7	2.2	6.3	3.0	1.6	5.6
Illinois Youth Ctr. St. Charles	3.0	0.8	10.2	6.4	3.1	12.8
Illinois Youth Ctr. Warrenville¹⁹	2.2	0.6	8.4	0.0	0.0	8.0

Note: Facilities in which there were no reports of sexual victimization of any type are not listed. Facilities house males only unless otherwise noted.

¹⁸ Weighted percent of youth reporting one or more incidents of sexual victimization involving facility staff in the past 12 months or since admission to the facility, if less than 12 months.

¹⁹ Facility houses females only