

Domestic Violence Offenses in West Virginia, 2003

According to data published in *Crime in West Virginia, 2003*, issued by the West Virginia State Police, there were over 10,000 domestic violence offenses reported in West Virginia in that year. The breakdown of these offenses by gender, age, and race of the victim is presented in Table 11 (unknowns are not included in the breakdowns).

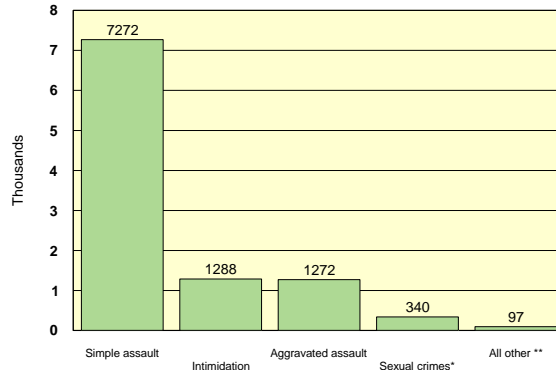
The overall rate of domestic violence offenses committed in West Virginia in 2003 was 5.7 offenses per every 1,000 state residents. The rate of offenses committed against women was threefold that against men, 8.4 offenses per 1,000 women compared with 2.8 offenses per 1,000 men. Persons aged 18-29 were the most likely to be victims (12.9 offenses per 1,000); those aged 65 and older were the least likely (0.5 offenses per 1,000). The rate of domestic violence among white victims was 5.5 offenses per 1,000 population, while that among African Americans was 12.0 and that among persons of other races was 0.6.

Table 11			
Number and Rate of Domestic Violence Offenses by Age, Gender, and Race of Victim			
West Virginia, 2003			
	Number	Population	Rate per 1,000
Total	10,269	1,810,347	5.7
Gender			
Male	2,504	883,874	2.8
Female	7,760	926,473	8.4
Age			
<18	1,202	388,781	3.1
18-29	3,692	285,157	12.9
30-39	2,488	234,352	10.6
40-49	1,671	278,838	6.0
50-64	621	345,878	1.8
65+	143	277,341	0.5
Race			
White	9,429	1,720,378	5.5
African American	702	58,483	12.0
Other	19	31,486	0.6
Source: <i>Crime in West Virginia, 2003</i>			

Seven out of 10 (70.8%) domestic violence offenses reported in 2003 involved simple assault, followed by intimidation (12.5%) and aggravated assault (12.4%). Sexual crimes accounted for 3.3% of the incidents, as shown in Figure 27. Three out of every four (75.6%) victims of domestic violence in 2003 were women (Figure 28). Ninety-two percent (91.8%) of victims were white; 6.8% were African American, while 1.3% were of other races or race was unknown (Figure 29). Half (49.8%) of all 2003 domestic violence victims were under the age of 30; 11.7% were under the age of 18, while 36.0% were aged 18-29. Only 7.4% were 50 and older (Figure 30). More than two-thirds of the

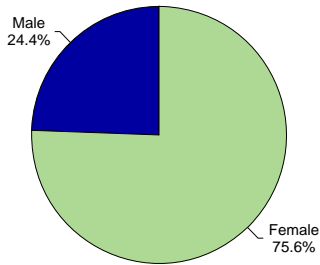
crimes (67.7%) were directed against an intimate partner, while 9.3% were against a child and 8.2% against a parent (Figure 31).

Figure 27. Number of Domestic Violence Offenses by Type of Offense West Virginia, 2003



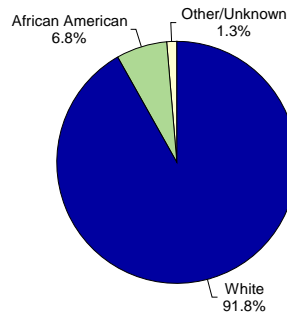
*Forcible fondling, forcible rape, forcible sodomy, incest, sexual assault with object, statutory rape
 **Kidnapping/abduction, murder/nonnegligent manslaughter, negligent manslaughter
 10,269 incidents; Source: Crime in West Virginia, 2003

Figure 28. Domestic Violence Offenses by Gender of Victim West Virginia, 2003



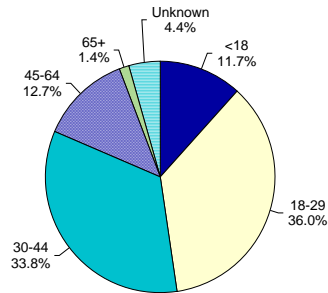
10,264 incidents for which gender of victim was known
 Source: Crime in West Virginia, 2003

Figure 29. Domestic Violence Offenses by Race of Victim West Virginia, 2003



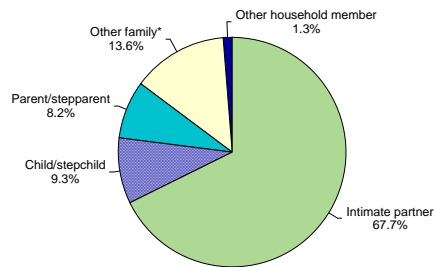
10,269 incidents
 Source: Crime in West Virginia, 2003

Figure 30. Domestic Violence Offenses by Age of Victim West Virginia, 2003



10,269 incidents
 Source: Crime in West Virginia, 2003

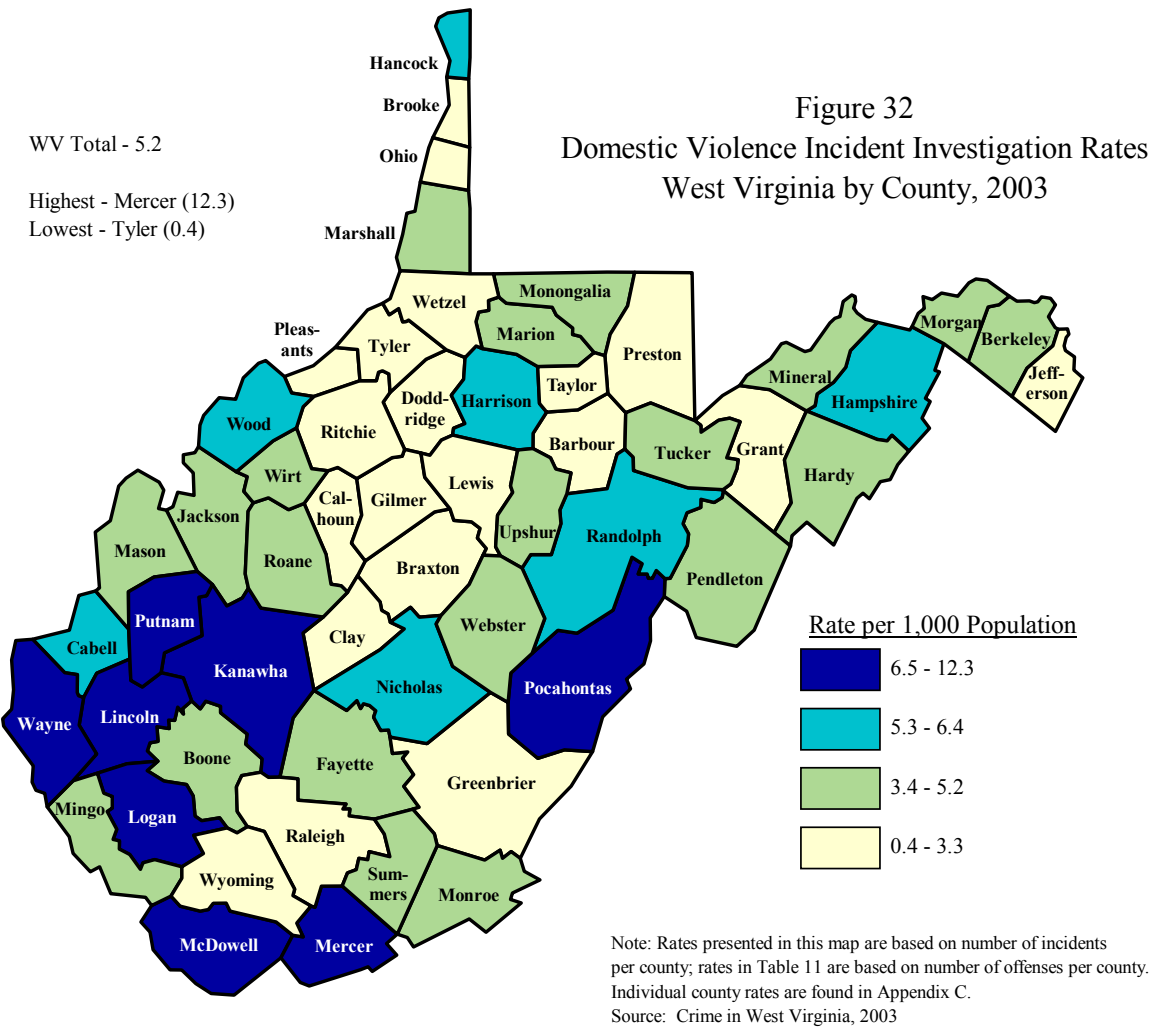
Figure 31. Domestic Violence Offenses by Relationship of Victim to Perpetrator West Virginia, 2003



10,205 incidents for which relationship of victim to perpetrator was known
 Source: Crime in West Virginia, 2003
 *Grandparent, grandchild, in-law, sibling, stepsibling, other

Information on weapon used during the offense was supplied for 9,077 offenses in 2003. Personal weapons, i.e., hands and feet, were the most commonly used (6,796 or 74.9%), followed by no weapon (1,250 offenses, or 13.8%). Firearms were used in 190 offenses (2.1%), knives in 177 (1.9%), and other weapons in 476 offenses (5.2%). The weapon was unknown for 188 (2.1%) offenses.

The county where the domestic violence investigation occurred was reported for 9,400 incidents.⁸ Figure 32 shows the rate of domestic violence investigations by county. (Individual county rates are found in Appendix C.)



⁸ An incident may have more than one offense, explaining the difference in totals used in this chapter. In addition, information was not available for the city of Wheeling in the 2003 report, resulting in a smaller number of incidents in Ohio County, while incomplete reporting in Raleigh and Wyoming counties due to delays in implementing a new reporting system resulted in the submission of a smaller number of incidents than actually occurred.