



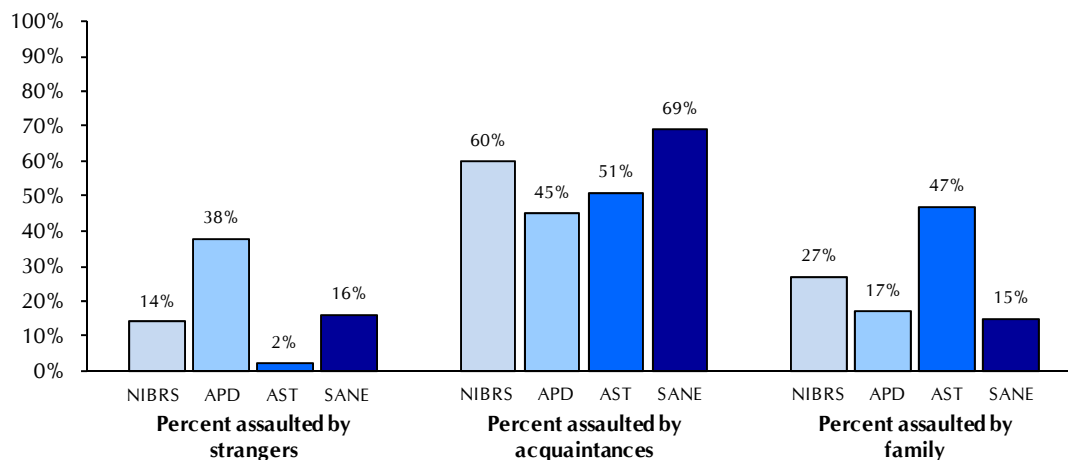
## Victim-Suspect Relationship in Sexual Assault Cases Reported to Law Enforcement: Alaska and National Data

Relationships between victims and suspects in sexual assault cases have important implications for policy. In particular, stranger assaults are more likely to be reported to police:

- The National Crime Victimization Survey shows that 41% of sexual assaults committed by strangers are reported, while only 27% committed by non-strangers are reported.
- In the Alaska Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner study, patients assaulted by at least one stranger were 5.5 times more likely to report their victimization within two hours.

This research overview presents information on victim-suspect relationships in sexual assault cases in Alaska compared to national averages from the National Incident-Based Reporting System.

Victim-Suspect Relationship in Sexual Assault Cases



### National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)

The National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) includes sexual assaults reported from 1991 to 1996 in 12 states (AL, CO, ID, IL, IA, MA, MI, ND, SC, UT, VT, and VA). The NIBRS data include forcible rape, forcible sodomy, sexual assault with an object, and forcible fondling.

- Acquaintance was the most common type of relationship between suspects and victims.
- 14% of assaults reported to law enforcement were committed by strangers.

## Victim-Suspect Relationship in Sexual Assault Cases Reported to Law Enforcement: Alaska and National Data

---

### The Alaska Perspective

Alaskan estimates of victim-suspect relationships were gathered from three different studies of sexual assaults and sexual abuses of minors reported to law enforcement. The Anchorage Police Department (APD) study includes all sexual assaults reported to APD from 2000 to 2003. The Alaska Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) study includes all sexual assault nurse examinations conducted in Anchorage from 1996 to 2004, in Bethel and Fairbanks in 2005 and 2006, and in Homer, Kodiak, Kotzebue, Nome, and Soldotna in 2005. The Alaska State Trooper (AST) study includes all sexual assaults reported to AST in 2003 and 2004.

- In all three Alaska studies, acquaintance was the most common type of relationship between suspects and victims.
- In Alaska, the percentage of reported assaults committed by strangers varied from a low of 2% in the Alaska State Trooper study to a high of 38% in the Anchorage Police Department study.

### Selected References

- Hart, T. C., & Rennison, C. (2003). *Reporting crime to the police, 1992-2000*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- Postle, G., Rosay, A. B., Wood, D., & TePas, K. (2007). *Descriptive analysis of sexual assault incidents reported to Alaska State Troopers: 2003-2004*. Anchorage, AK: University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center.
- Rand, M. R. (2008). *National crime victimization survey: Criminal victimization, 2007* (NCJ 224390). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- Rosay, A. B. (2005). *Descriptive analysis of sexual assaults in Anchorage, Alaska: 2002/2003 Update*. Anchorage, AK: University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center.
- Rosay, A. B., & Henry, T. (2007). *Reporting sexual victimizations to law enforcement*. Anchorage, AK: University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center.
- Rosay, A. B., & Henry, T. (2008). *Alaska sexual assault nurse examiner study* (NCJ 224520). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- Snyder, H. N. (2000). *Sexual assault of young children as reported to law enforcement: Victim, incident, and offender characteristics* (NCJ 182990). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.

*Research compiled by André Rosay, Associate Professor, and Steven Amundson, Research Assistant*