



U.S. Department of Justice  
*Office of Justice Programs*

# Violent Crime in America: An Examination of Federal Statistics

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BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS

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# The Nation's Two Crime Measures

- U.S. Department of Justice administers 2 statistical programs to measure the magnitude, nature, and impact of crime in the U.S.
  - Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program
  - Bureau of Justice Statistics' (BJS) National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)
- Each year, the FBI and BJS release annual publications from these collections
  - FBI releases *Crime in the United States*
  - BJS releases *Criminal Victimization*

**FBI: UCR**

## 2016

# CRIME in the UNITED STATES

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### About *Crime in the U.S. (CIUS)*

This year, CIUS has been streamlined and updated. UCR staff have strategically trimmed the amount of tables and refined the presentation of data in this year's publication. [Read more about this shift and how to use CIUS.](#)

In response to user feedback regarding the streamlining of *Crime in the United States, 2016*, the FBI has published an amendment containing 70 supplemental tables to the report.

Offenses Known to Law Enforcement

Violent Crime

Expanded Offense Data

Persons Arrested

Includes data about the age,

Police Employee Data

Includes data about sworn employees

U.S. Department of Justice  
Office of Justice Programs  
Bureau of Justice Statistics

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## Criminal Victimization, 2016: Revised

Rachel E. Morgan, Ph.D., and Grace Kena, BJS Statisticians

**FIGURE 1**  
Rate of violent victimization, 2015 and 2016

| Category               | 2015 | 2016 |
|------------------------|------|------|
| Males                  | 15.9 | 19.6 |
| Persons age 25-34      | 21.8 | 28.4 |
| Rape or sexual assault | 1.4  | 1.1  |
| Aggravated assault     | 14.8 | 16.9 |
| Aggravated assault     | 3.0  | 3.8  |

Note: See appendix table 1 for standard errors.  
 \*Significant difference from comparison year at the 95% confidence level.  
 †Significant difference from comparison year at the 90% confidence level.  
 ‡Per 1,000 persons within the group.  
 §Per 1,000 persons age 12 or older.  
 ¶Includes aggravated and simple assault.  
 Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2015 Public-Use File and 2016 Revised Public-Use File.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- The rate of violent victimization against males increased from 2015 to 2016, rising from 15.9 to 19.6 per 1,000 males age 12 or older.
- From 2015 to 2016, the rate of aggravated assault against males age 12 or older rose from 2.7 to 4.2 per 1,000.
- The rate of violent victimization against persons ages 25 to 34 rose from 21.8 per 1,000 persons in 2015 to 28.4 per 1,000 persons in 2016, and the rate of aggravated assault in this age group rose from 2.7 to 4.2 per 1,000.
- From 2015 to 2016, the number of persons experiencing one or more violent victimizations increased from 2.7 million to 2.9 million.
- Among U.S. households, the property crime rate increased from 2015 to 2016, rising from 110.7 to 118.6 victimizations per 1,000 households.
- From 2015 to 2016, the rate of rape or sexual assault declined from 1.6 to 1.1 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older, and from 2.7 to 1.8 among females age 12 or older.

# UCR

- International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) began publishing information for the UCR program in 1929 and the FBI has administered it since 1930
- FBI compiles summary-level data from monthly law enforcement reports or crime incident records that are directly transmitted to the FBI (or to other agencies that transmit to the FBI)
- Data are adjusted to compensate for incomplete reporting
- Data are presented at a variety of geographic levels (national, regional, state, county, city, etc.)
- Information collected on the following crime types –
  - *Violent crime* – murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault
  - *Property crime* – burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson



# NCVS

- Began in 1972 as the National Crime Survey (NCS)
- Redesigned & renamed in 1992 to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)
- Data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau for the BJS from a nationally representative sample of U.S. households
- Census Bureau interviews more than 130,000 households each year, which comprises over 220,000 persons
- Households/persons are interviewed every 6 months over a 3.5 year period
- Collects information on nonfatal violent and property crimes reported and not reported to police for persons ages 12 or older
  - *Violent crime* – rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault
  - *Property crime* – household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and other theft
  - *Personal larceny (theft)* – pocket picking and purse snatching



# NCVS

- Goals –
  - Measure the ‘dark figure’ of unreported crime
  - Provide an independent calibration for the UCR
  - Provide a measure of victim risk
  - Serve as an index of changes in police reporting in the population
- Only source of national data on a number of policy-relevant subjects related to criminal victimization – intimate partner violence, hate crime, workplace violence, injury, firearms & crime, cost of crime, and reporting to police
- National rates and levels of violent and property victimization, crime and victim characteristics, and consequences of victimization
- In 2016, the sample was redesigned, in part, to facilitate the ability to produce state- and local-level victimization estimates for the 22 largest states & large metropolitan areas within those states



# The Nation's Two Measures of Homicide

- FBI's Supplementary Homicide Reports (SHR)
  - Part of the UCR Program
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Vital Statistics System (NVSS), Fatal Injury Reports
  - NVSS mortality data derived from state and local death records
  - The death certificates are submitted to state vital statistics offices and forwarded to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). NCHS then classifies each death according to the International Classification of Diseases (ICD).
  - Information on manner of death (e.g., homicide, suicide, unintentional) is combined with information on cause of death.
- For more information, see *The Nation's Two Measures of Homicide* report (BJS web, NCJ 247060, July 2014)



# Differences between NCVS and UCR

| NCVS                         | UCR                                  |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b><u>Violent crime</u></b>  | <b><u>Violent crime</u></b>          |
| --                           | Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter |
| Rape                         | Rape                                 |
| Sexual assault               | --                                   |
| Robbery                      | Robbery                              |
| Aggravated assault           | Aggravated assault                   |
| Simple assault               | --                                   |
| <b><u>Property crime</u></b> | <b><u>Property crime</u></b>         |
| Burglary                     | Burglary                             |
| Other theft                  | Larceny-theft                        |
| Motor vehicle theft          | Motor vehicle theft                  |
| --                           | Arson                                |



# Differences between NCVS and UCR

| NCVS  | UCR   |
|---|---|
| Interviews with a nationally representative sample of persons age 12 or older in U.S. households    | Based on counts of crimes reported to law enforcement agencies                                      |
| Excludes crimes against children age 11 or younger, homeless persons, and institutionalized persons | Includes crimes against children age 11 or younger, homeless persons, and institutionalized persons |
| Excludes crimes against commercial establishments   | Includes crimes against commercial establishments   |





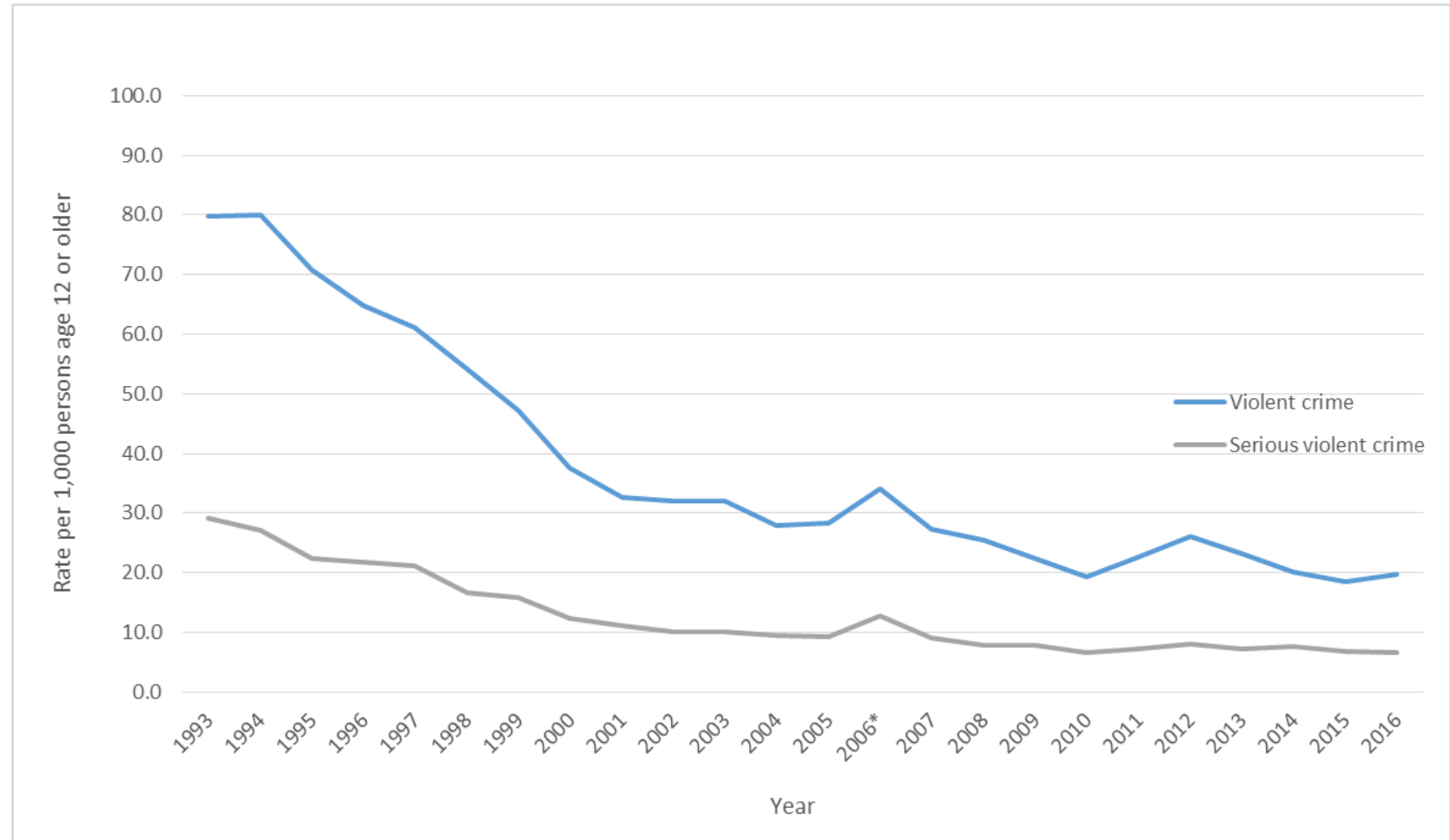
# Trends and patterns in violent crime



# Rates of violent crime & serious violent crime

From 1993 to 2016 –

- **Violent crime** (rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault) declined 75% from 79.8 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older to 19.7 per 1,000.
- **Serious violent crime** (violent crime excluding simple assault) declined from 29.1 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older to 6.6 per 1,000 (77% decrease).

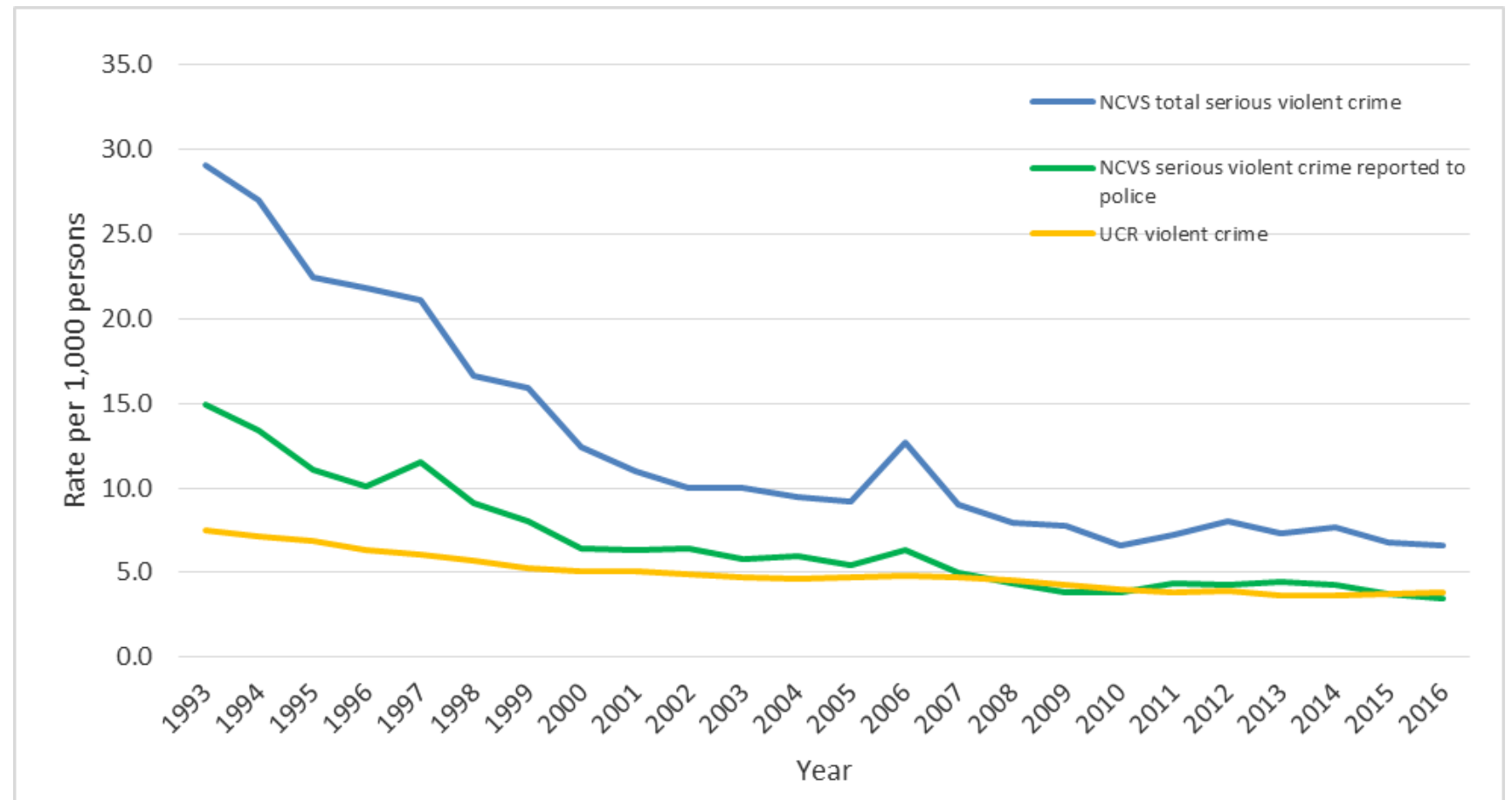


Data source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 1993-2016 Public-Use Files.



# Rates of violent crime & serious violent crime reported to police

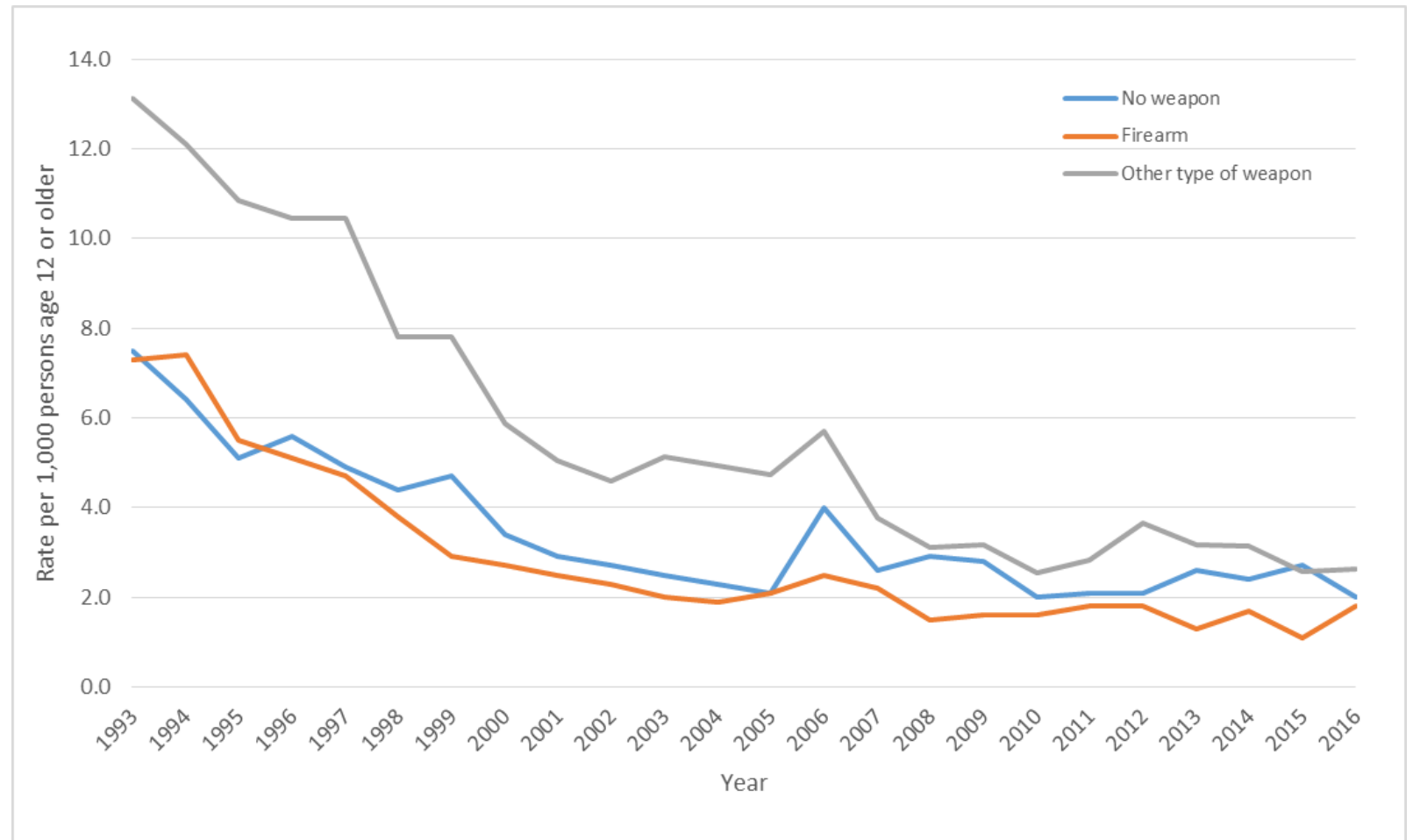
- Restricting the NCVS to serious violence reported to police keeps the NCVS & UCR measures as similar as possible.
- From 1993 to 2016, **NCVS serious violent crime** reported to police declined 77% from 14.9 per 1,000 persons age 12 or older to 3.5 per 1,000.
- During the same time period, **UCR violent crime** reported to police declined 48% from 7.5 per 1,000 persons to 3.9 per 1,000.



Data sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 1993-2016 Public-Use Files and FBI, *Crime in the United States*, 1993-2016.

# Rates of serious violent crime involving weapons

- The NCVS classifies weapon involvement as a serious violent crime, however, a weapon is not always present in a serious violent crime.
- Weapons include items such as guns, knives, and other objects that are used as weapons (e.g., rock and clubs).
- From 1993 to 2016, **firearm violence** declined 75% from 7.3 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older to 1.8 per 1,000.
- Serious violence involving **another type of weapon** declined 80% from 1993 to 2016.

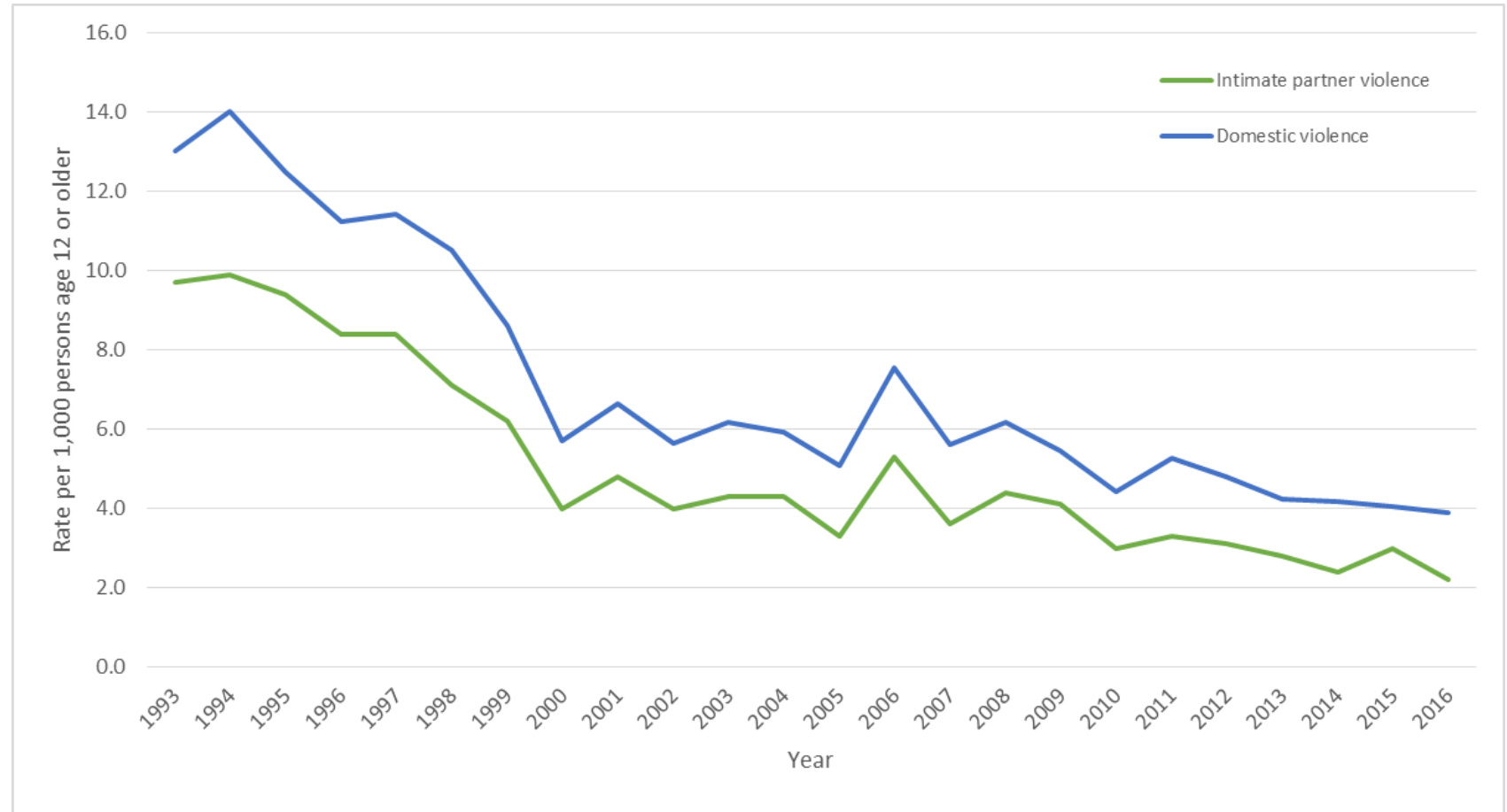


Data source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 1993-2016 Public-Use Files.



# Rates of domestic & intimate partner violence

- The NCVS collects information on the victim-offender relationship.
- **Intimate partner violence** includes current or former spouses, boyfriends, or girlfriends. **Domestic violence** includes current or former intimate partners, immediate family members, and other relatives.
- Patterns of domestic violence & intimate partner violence have remained similar over time: from 1993 to 2016, **domestic violence** declined 70% and **intimate partner violence** declined 77%.

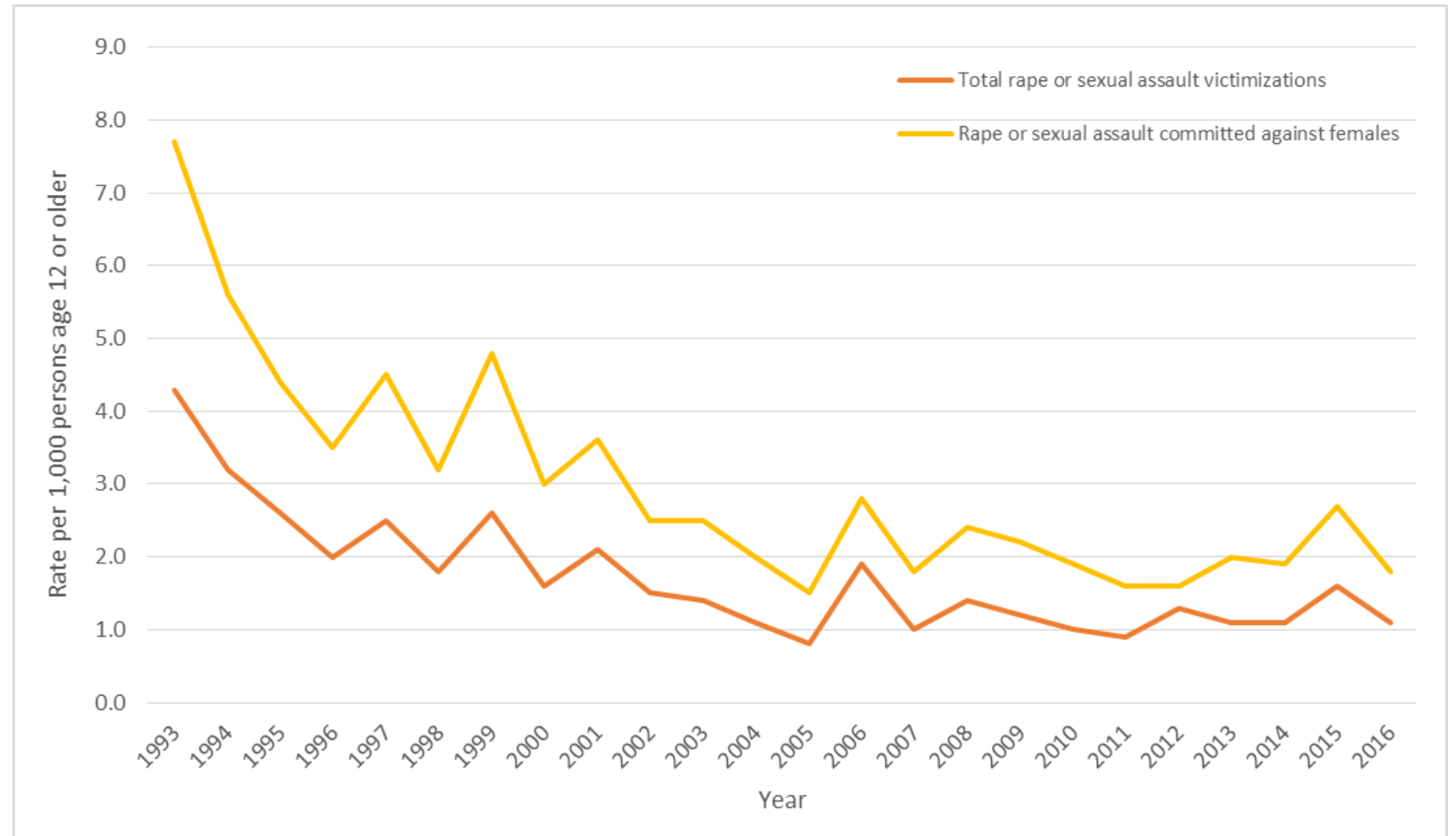


Data source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 1993-2016 Public-Use Files.



# Rates of rape or sexual assault victimization

- NCVS collects information on rape or sexual assault victimization.
- From 1993 to 2016, **rape or sexual assault** victimization declined 74% from 4.3 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older to 1.1 per 1,000.
- The **rate for females** declined 77% from 1993 to 2016. The majority of rape or sexual assault victimizations (89%) were committed against females.

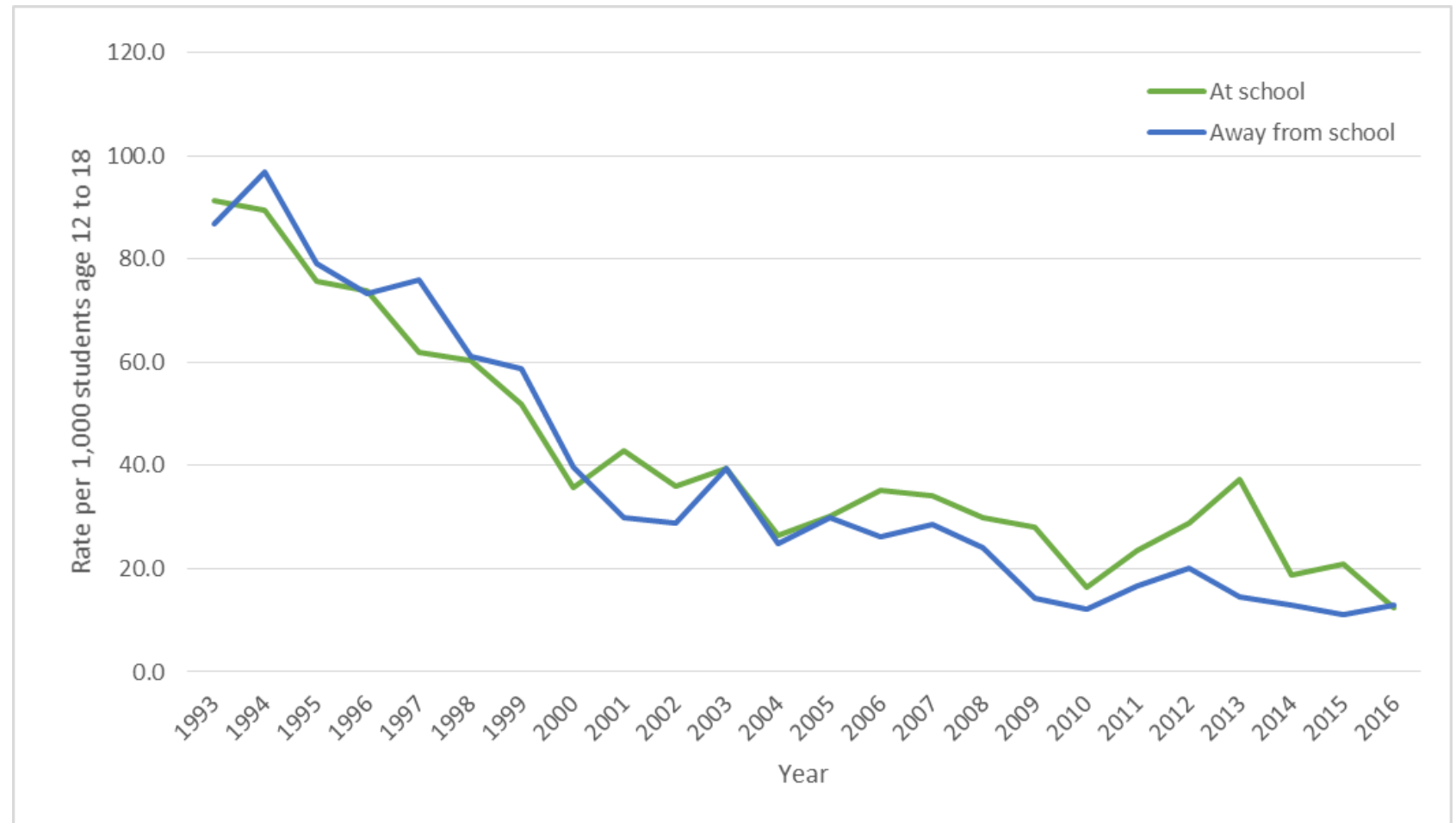


Data source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 1993-2016 Public-Use Files.



# Rates of violence committed against students

- NCVS collects information on violence committed against students. “At school” includes inside the school building, on school property, and on the way to or from school.
- Between 1992 and 2000, the rate of violent victimization **at school was generally lower than the rate away from school.**
- From 2001 to 2016, the rate of violent victimization **at school has generally been higher than the rate away from school.**



Data source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 1993-2016 Public-Use Files.



# Resources

- Methodological & technical resources
  - *The Nation's Two Crime Measures* (BJS web, NCJ 246832, September 2014)
  - *The Nation's Two Measures of Homicide* (BJS web, NCJ 247060, July 2014)
  - *NCVS, 2016 – Technical Documentation* (BJS web, NCJ 251442, December 2017)
- Data resources
  - NCVS Public-Use Files archived and available for download from the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD)
  - NCVS Restricted-Use Files archived at the U.S. Census Bureau's Federal Statistical Research Data Centers
  - Various statistical reports analyzing NCVS data on BJS' website
  - *Crime in the United States* tables on FBI's website
  - Online data tools available
    - NCVS Victimization Analysis Tool (NVAT) (BJS web)
    - UCR Statistics Data Tool (BJS web)
    - UCR Crime Data Explorer (FBI web)





# Thank you!

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