

ICPSR 25961

Statewide Study of Stalking and Its Criminal Justice Response in Rhode Island, 2001-2005

Description

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Bibliographic Description

ICPSR Study No.: 25961

Title: Statewide Study of Stalking and Its Criminal Justice Response in Rhode Island, 2001-2005

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Scope of Study

Summary: The research team collected data from statewide datasets on 268 stalking cases including a population of 108 police identified stalking cases across Rhode Island between 2001 and 2005 with a sample of 160 researcher identified stalking incidents (incidents that met statutory criteria for stalking but were cited by police for other domestic violence offenses) during the same period. The secondary data used for this study came from the Rhode Island Supreme Court Domestic Violence Training and Monitoring Unit's (DVU) statewide database of domestic violence incidents reported to Rhode Island law enforcement. Prior criminal history data were obtained from records of all court cases entered into the automated Rhode Island court file, CourtConnect. The data contain a total of 121 variables including suspect characteristics, victim characteristics, incident characteristics, police response characteristics, and prosecutor response characteristics.

Subject Term(s): abuse, arrest records, criminal justice system, domestic violence, offenders, police response, prosecution, recidivism rates, stalkers, stalking, victims

Smallest Geographic Unit: None.

Geographic Coverage: Rhode Island, United States

Time Period: • 2001 - 2005

Date(s) of Collection: • 2007 - 2008

Unit of Observation: stalking case

Universe: All stalking incidents identified by Rhode Island law enforcement and all domestic violence cases reported to Rhode Island law enforcement between 2001 and 2005.

Data Type: administrative records data

Data Collection Notes: The research team also conducted group interviews with select members of Rhode Island law enforcement officers, prosecutors, defense lawyers, and court advocates. However, the qualitative interview data are not available as part of this data collection.

Methodology

Purpose of the Study: The primary goal of this study was to determine if Rhode Island police are correctly identifying stalkers and whether such identification impacts the likelihood of subsequent arrest and prosecution in the short term, and the likelihood of reabuse in the longer term.

Study Design: The research team collected data from statewide datasets on 268 stalking cases including a population of 108 police identified stalking cases across Rhode Island between 2001 and 2005 with a sample of 160 “researcher identified stalking incidents” (incidents that met statutory criteria for stalking but were cited by police for other domestic violence offenses) during the same period. The secondary data used for this study came from the Rhode Island Supreme Court Domestic Violence Training and Monitoring Unit's (DVU) statewide database of domestic violence incidents reported to Rhode Island law enforcement. Data on all incidents of domestic violence, arrests and non-arrests, are submitted to the DVU by Rhode Island law enforcement agencies using the legislatively mandated Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault/Child Molestation

Police Reporting Form (DV/SA form) and incident reports of domestic abuse and/or sexual assault/child molestation. Prior criminal history data were obtained from records of all court cases entered into the automated Rhode Island court file, CourtConnect, through the last record check on July 16, 2008. The automated records contained all felony court cases entered from 1979 and misdemeanors from the mid-1980's onward.

Sample: The data collection is comprised of 268 stalking cases including 108 police identified stalking cases and 160 "researcher identified stalking incidents" (incidents that met statutory criteria for stalking but were cited by police for other domestic violence offenses). Researchers identified every domestic violence incident report between 2001 and 2005 inclusive with female victims where Rhode Island police identified the case as stalking. The resulting 108 police identified stalking cases represents the complete population of all stalkers identified by police in incident reports from 2001 through 2005. The research team also reviewed reports of domestic violence incidents not identified as stalking cases by Rhode Island police filed between 2001 and 2005. Cases from each year were reviewed until researchers identified 35 incident reports that met the statutory definition of stalking for each year. Researchers did not review all domestic violence incident reports, but reviewed all cases beginning with those filed January 1 in 2001, 2002, and 2004, and cases filed April 1 in 2003 and 2005. The two separate time periods were employed to ensure that cases were not all drawn only from the same months for each year. The researcher identified stalking incidents represent a sample, not the complete population of stalking incidents, unlike the police identified stalking cases. Only cases in which the victim was a female, regardless of the gender of the offender, were included in the sample. A total of 2,582 domestic violence incidents were reviewed from the years 2001-2005 and 175 were identified as meeting the criteria for the crime of stalking. Of the 175 cases, 15 involved the same stalkers so the actual sample of unduplicated researcher identified stalking incidents used in the study is 160.

Weight: None.

Sources of Information: Rhode Island Supreme Court Domestic Violence Training and Monitoring Unit's statewide database of domestic violence incidents reported to Rhode Island law enforcement.

Prior history data were obtained from records of all court cases entered into the automated Rhode Island court file, CourtConnect, through the last record check on July 16, 2008.

Mode of Data Collection: record abstracts

Description of Variables: The data contain a total of 121 variables including suspect characteristics, victim characteristics, incident characteristics, police response

characteristics, and prosecutor response characteristics. Suspect and victim characteristics variables include general demographic information. Suspect characteristics also include variables on prior arrests, offenses, types of offenses, and incarcerations. Victim characteristics also include variables on relationship to the suspect, type of contact initiated by the suspect, and the demeanor after law enforcement arrived. Law enforcement characteristics variables include the police response to stalking incidents. Prosecutor characteristics variables include data regarding if they chose to prosecute stalking offenses and what other charges were brought, if any.

Response Rates: Not applicable.

Presence of Common Scales: none

Extent of Processing: Standardized missing values.

Checked for undocumented or out-of-range codes.

Access and Availability

Note: A list of the data formats available for this study can be found in the [summary of holdings](#). Detailed file-level information (such as record length, case count, and variable count) is listed in the [file manifest](#).

Restrictions: Access to these data is restricted. Users interested in obtaining these data must complete a Restricted Data Use Agreement, specify the reasons for the request, and obtain IRB approval or notice of exemption for their research.

Original ICPSR Release: 2012-09-18

Version History: The last update of this study occurred on 2012-09-24.

2012-09-24 - A page describing frequencies and summary statistics was added to the Codebook.

Dataset(s):

- DS1: Statewide Study of Stalking and Its Criminal Justice Response in Rhode Island, 2001-2005

Publications

Final Reports and Other Publication Resources: A list of publications related to, or based on, this data collection can be accessed from the study's download page on the NACJD Web site or through the ICPSR Bibliography of Data-Related Literature at

<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/ICPSR/citations/index.html>. The list of citations includes links to abstracts and publications in Portable Document Format (PDF) files or text files when available.

Final reports and other publications describing research conducted on a variety of criminal justice topics are available from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS). NCJRS was established in 1972 by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), an agency of the U.S. Department of Justice, to provide research findings to criminal justice professionals and researchers. NCJRS operates specialized clearinghouses that are staffed by information specialists who supply a range of reference, referral, and distribution services. Publications can be obtained from NCJRS at NIJ/NCJRS, Box 6000, Rockville, MD, 20849-6000, 800-851-3420 or 301-519-5500. TTY Service for the Hearing Impaired is 877-712-9279 (toll-free) or 301-947-8374 (local). The URL for the NCJRS Web site is:

<http://www.ncjrs.gov/>

NIJ Data Resources Program

About the DRP: The National Institute of Justice Data Resources Program (DRP) makes datasets from NIJ-funded research and evaluation projects available to the research community and sponsors research and training activities devoted to secondary data analysis. Datasets are archived by the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) at the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan.

The NACJD maintains a World Wide Web site with instructions for transferring files and sending messages. Criminal justice data funded by the Department of Justice are available via the Internet at this site at no charge to the user. NACJD may be contacted at NACJD/ICPSR, P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, MI, 48106-1248, 800-999-0960. The URL for the NACJD Web site is:

<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD/>