

A 3D illustration of a wooden gavel. The gavel has a cylindrical head with three horizontal grooves and a handle with two smaller cylindrical sections. It is resting on a flat, circular wooden base. The background is a dark brown with a diagonal line pattern.

# Crime in America

## Chapter 7



# The Nature of Crimes

- **A crime**
  - is something that a person does or fails to do that violates the law.
  - The government establishes penalties for such behavior.



# Crime rates

- **influenced by many factors,**
- **although many people disagree about the causes of crime and the best solutions to the problem.**

**One Crime Index Offense**

2000: Every 2.7 seconds  
1996: Every 2 seconds

**One Violent Crime**

2000: Every 22.1 seconds  
1996: Every 19 seconds

**One Murder**

2000: Every 33.9 minutes  
1996: Every 27 minutes

**One Forcible Rape**

2000: Every 5.8 minutes  
1996: Every 6 minutes

**One Robbery**

2000: Every 1.3 minutes  
1996: Every 59 seconds

**One Aggravated Assault**

2000: Every 34.6 seconds  
1996: Every 31 seconds

**One Property Crime**

2000: Every 3.1 seconds  
1996: Every 3 seconds

**One Burglary**

2000: Every 15.4 seconds  
1996: Every 13 seconds

**One Larceny-Theft**

2000: Every 4.5 seconds  
1996: Every 4 seconds

**One Motor Vehicle Theft**

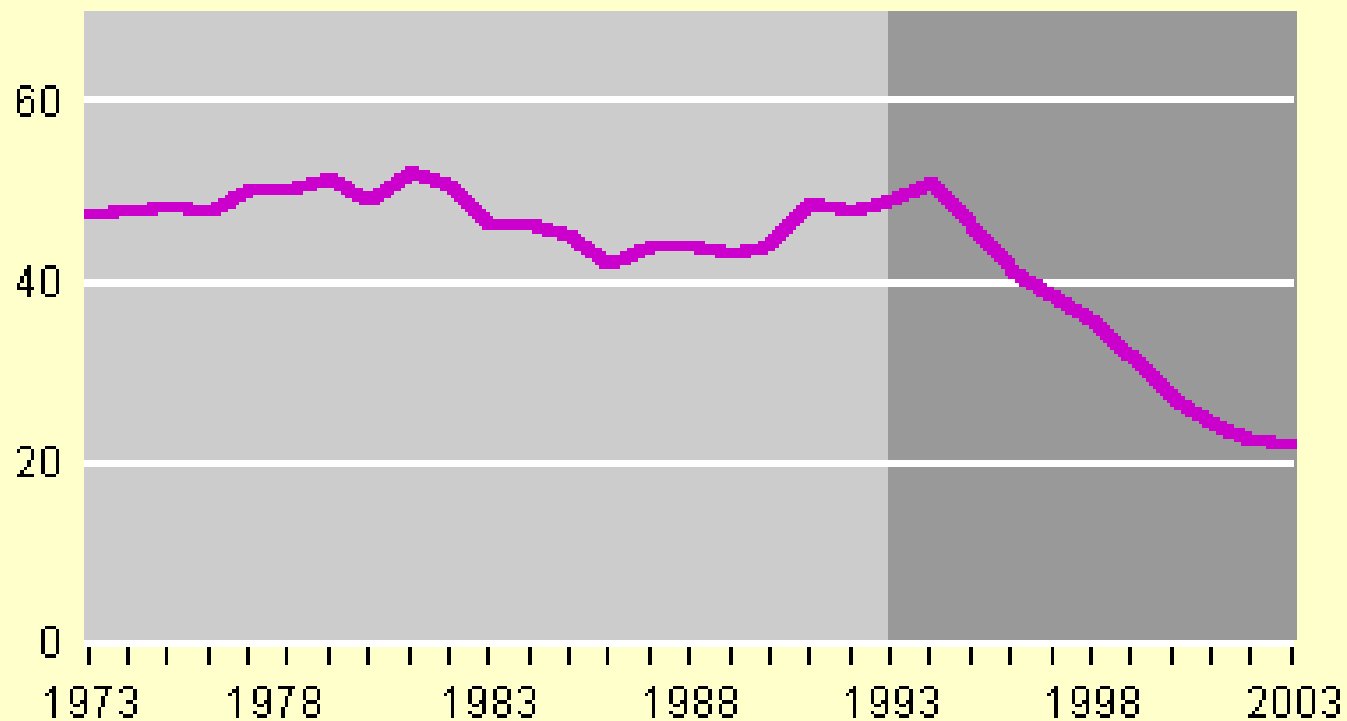
2000: Every 27.1 seconds  
1996: Every 23 seconds

**Pg. 74: Crime  
rate clock,  
2000**



## Violent crime rates

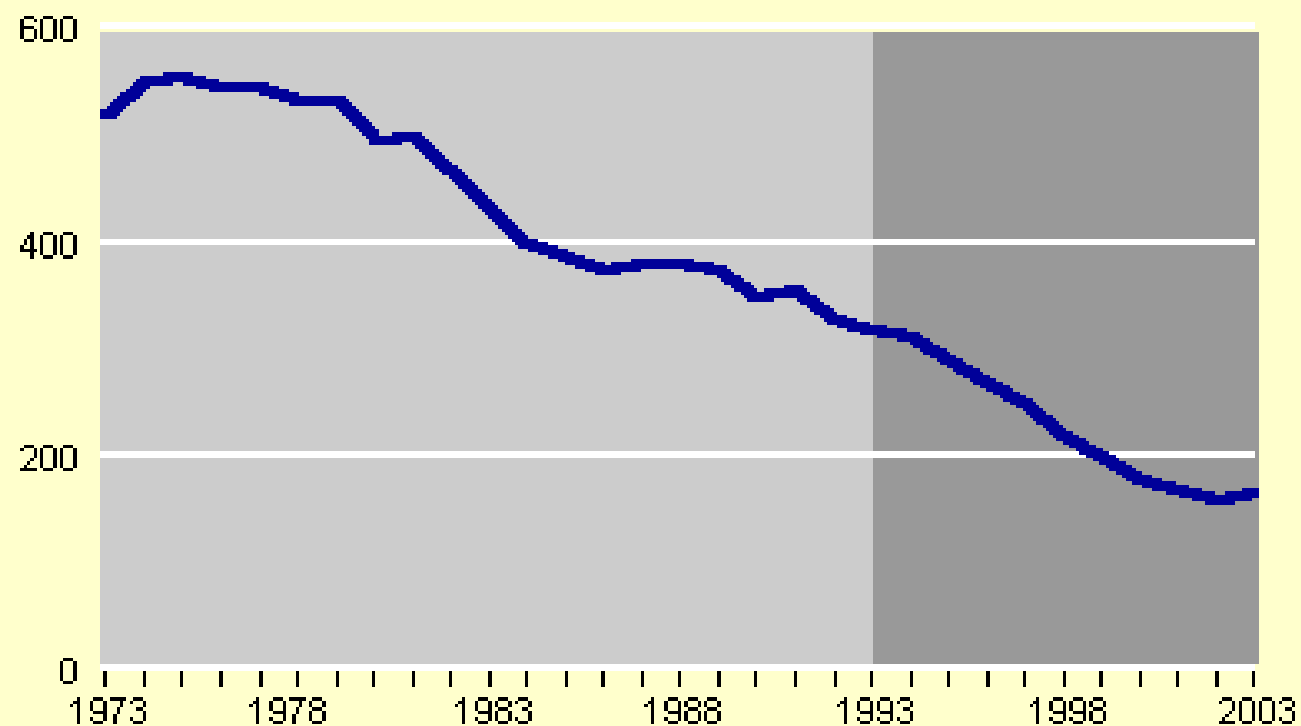
Adjusted victimization rate  
per 1,000 persons age 12 and over





## Property crime rates

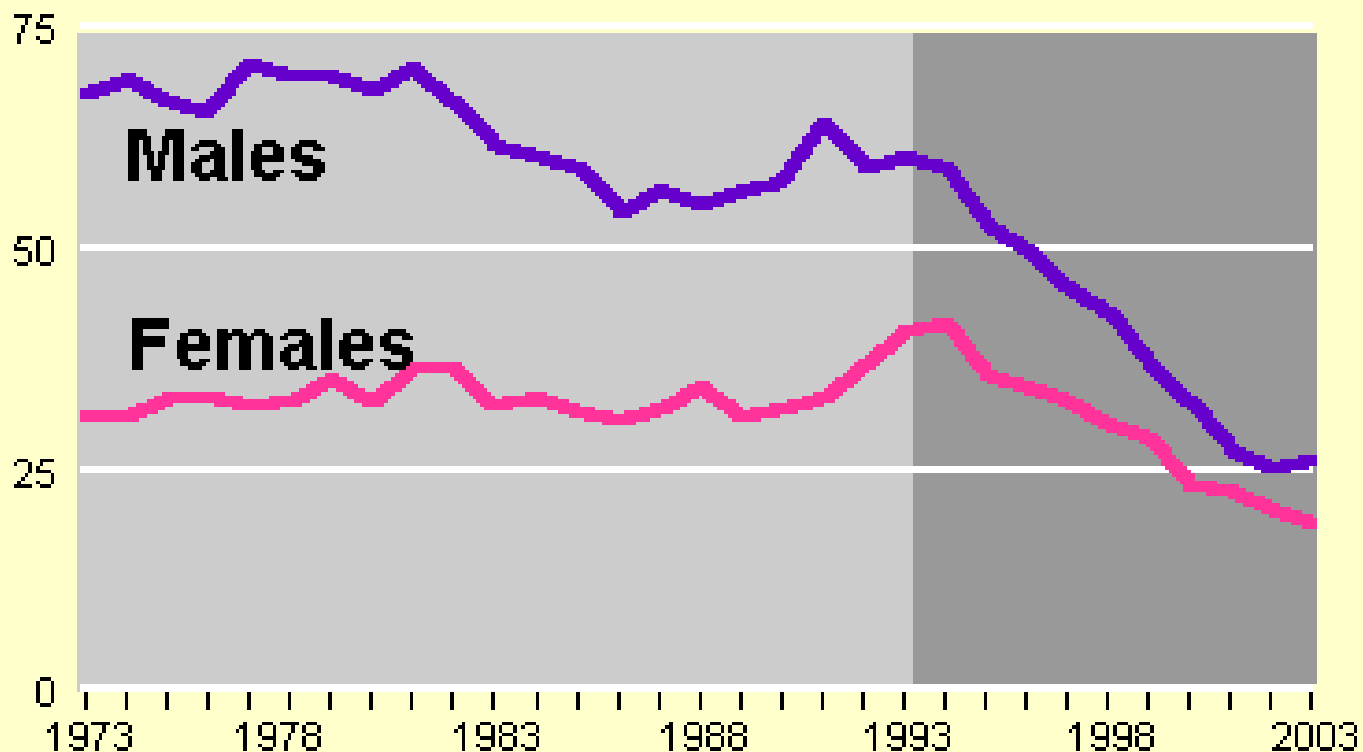
Adjusted victimization rate  
per 1,000 households





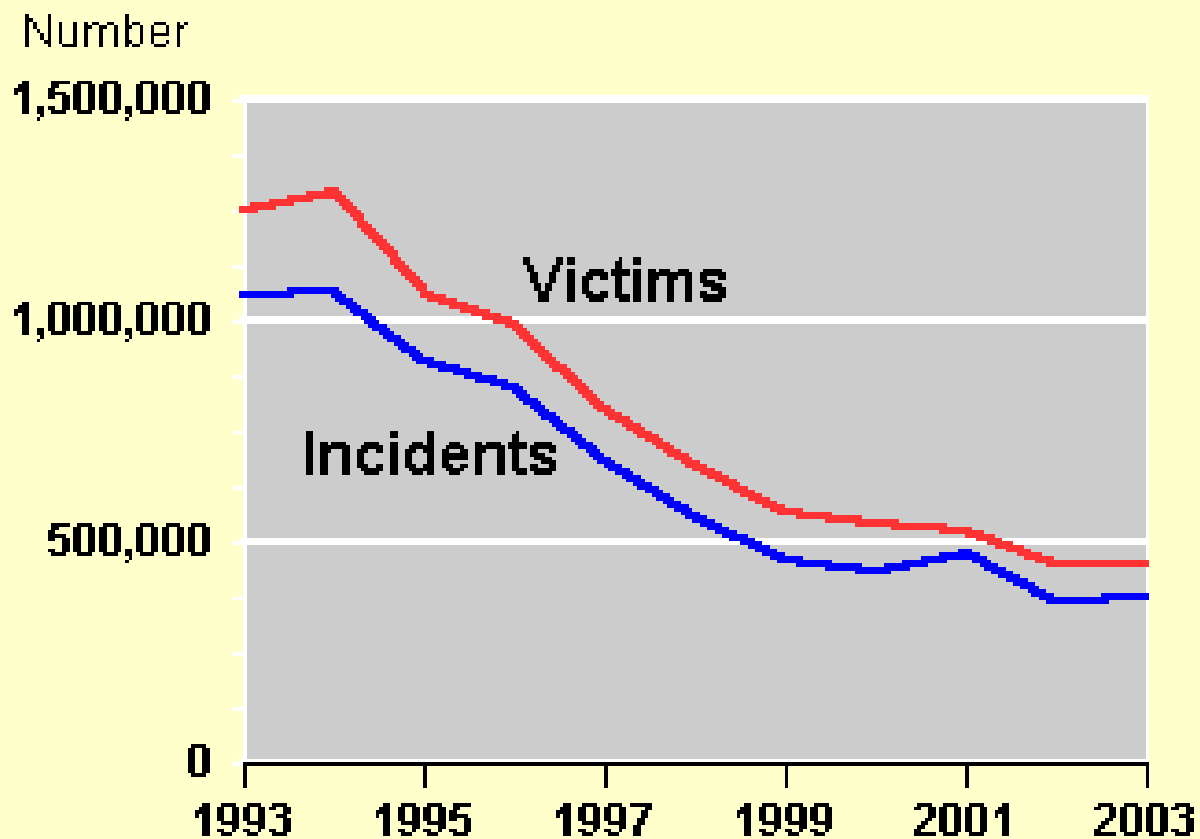
## Violent crime rates by gender of victim

Adjusted victimization rate  
per 1,000 persons age 12 and over





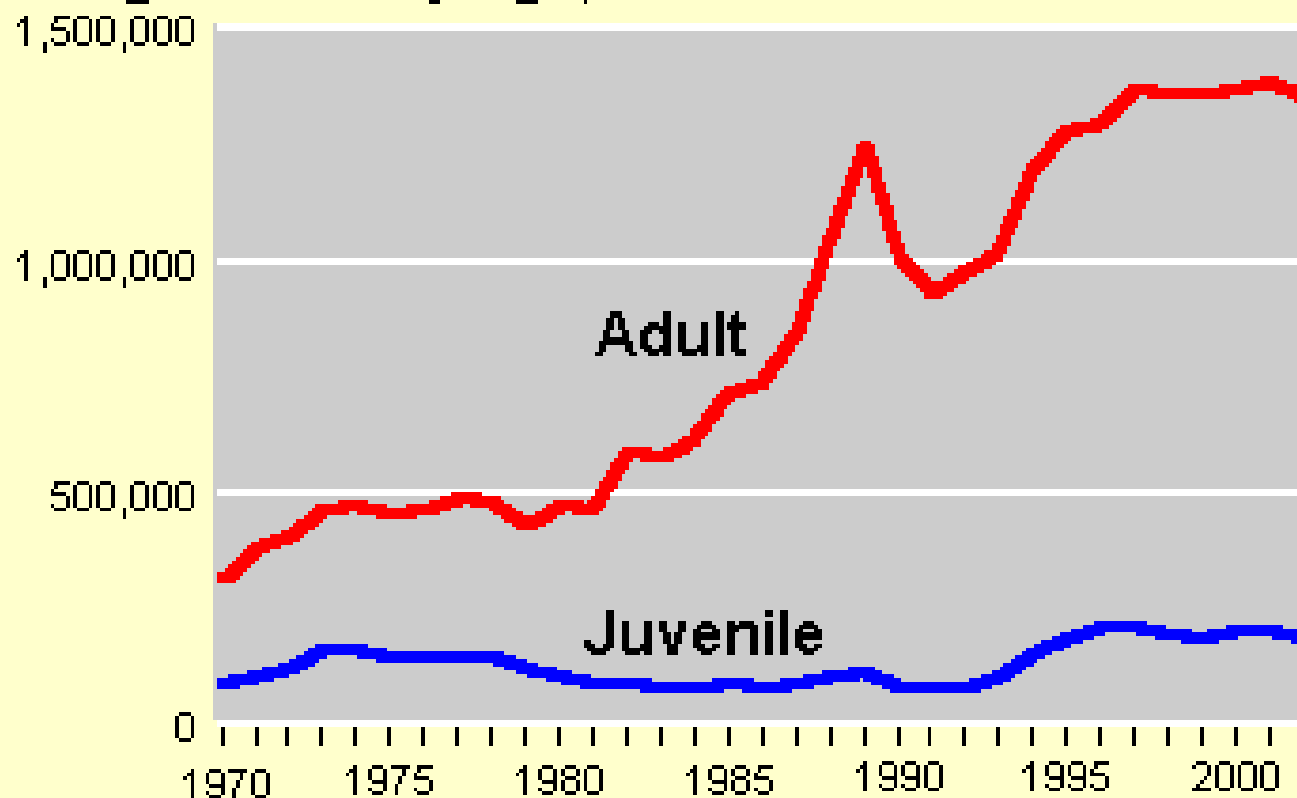
## Nonfatal firearm-related violent crimes, 1993-2003







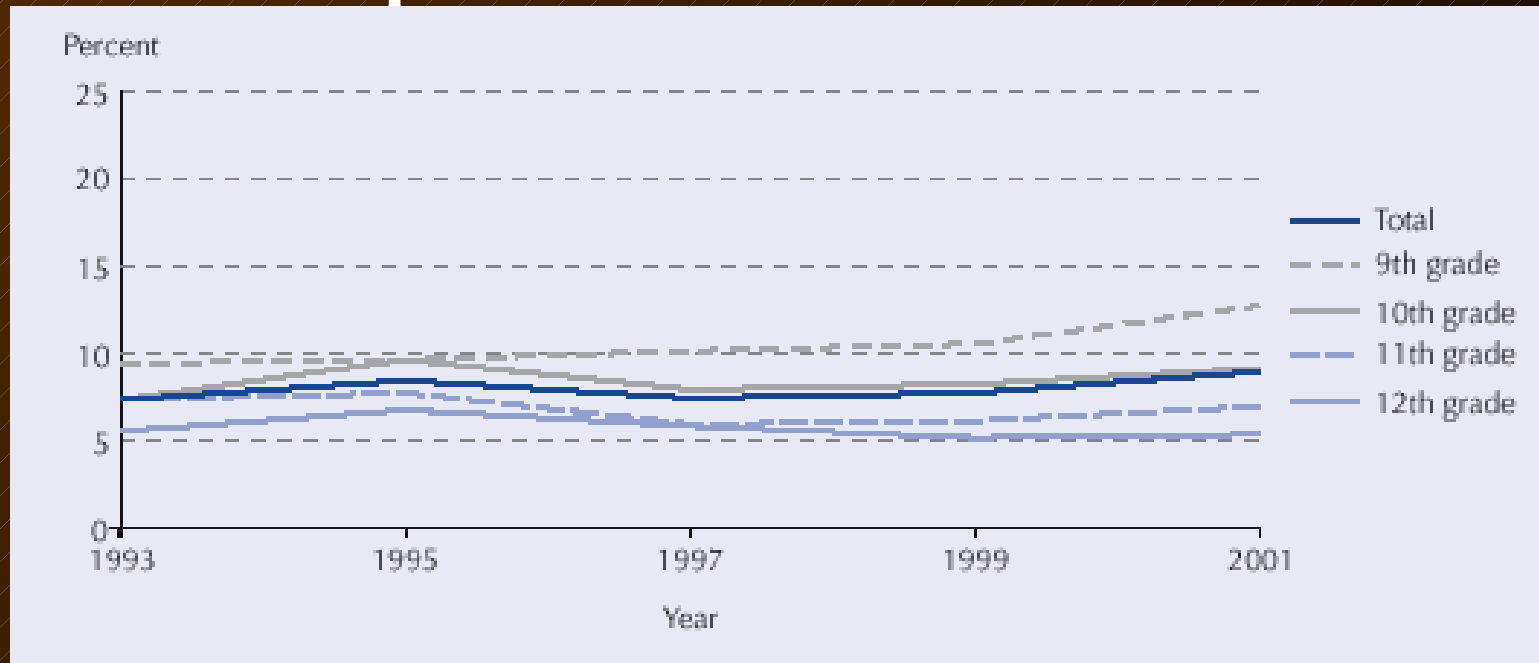
## Drug arrests by age, 1970-2002





# Crime on campus

- Crime on high school and college campuses remains a problem.

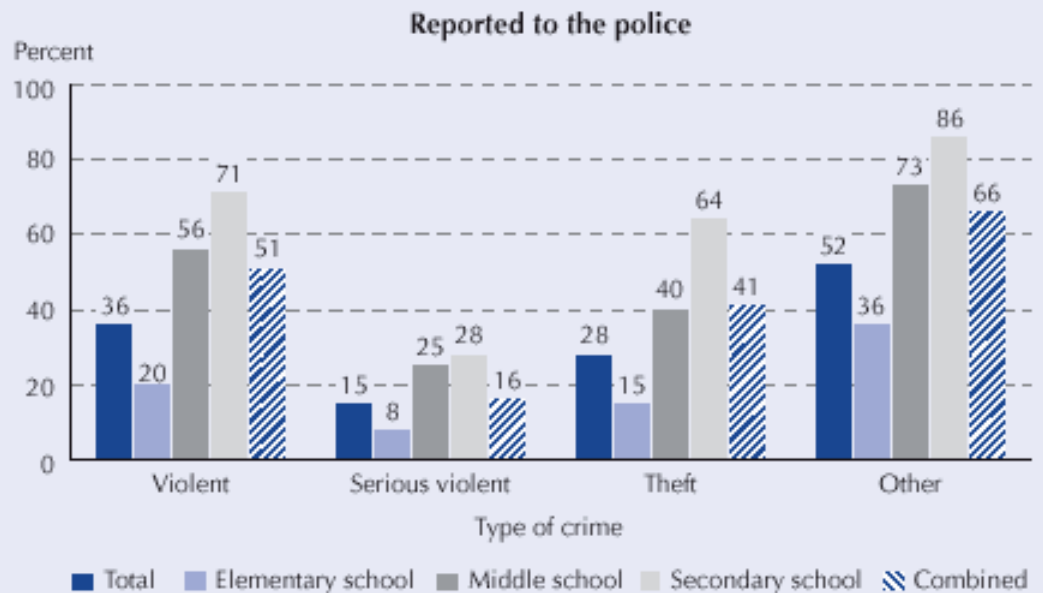
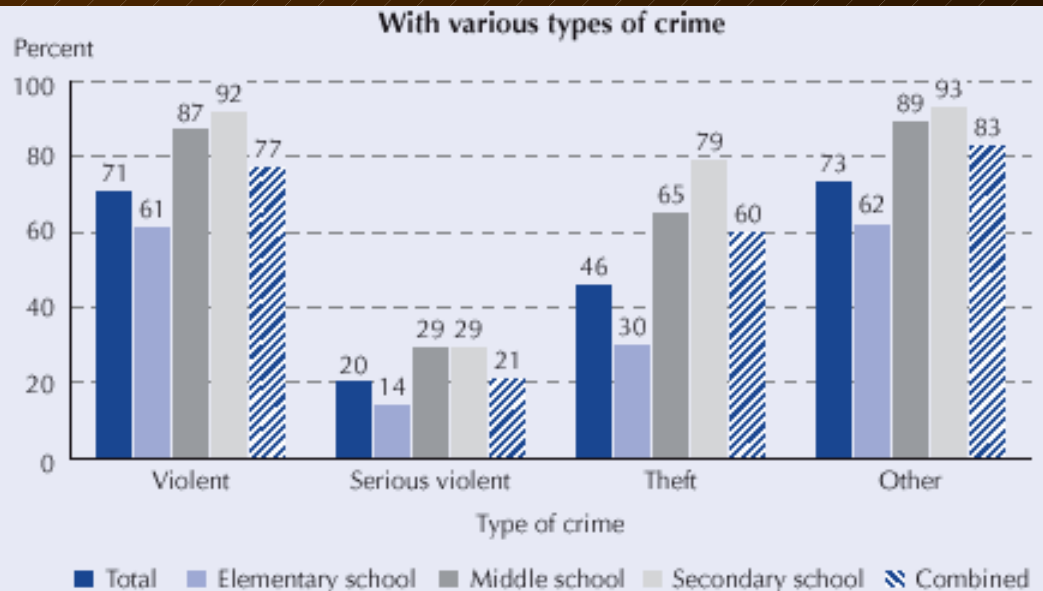


Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property during the previous 12 months, by grade: Selected years 1993–2001



# Percentage of public schools with various types of crime and percentage of public schools that reported various types of crime to the police, by school level: 1999–2000

Source: National Center for Educational Statistics





# Real rates of campus crime

- However, despite much publicized incidents like the shootings at Columbine and Santee, no consistent pattern of increase or decrease was observed in the number of homicides or suicides of school-aged youth at school
- In fact, there has been a decline in the number of homicides at school, from 33 during the 1998-99 school year to 14 during the 2001-2002 school year.



# Homicides at school, 1992-2002



***In each school year from 1992 to 2000, youth ages 5-19 were at least 70 times more likely to be murdered away from school than at school.***



# Crime is costly

- in addition to the loss of life and property,
- it costs the government a great amount of money to
- prevent, investigate, and prosecute crime.

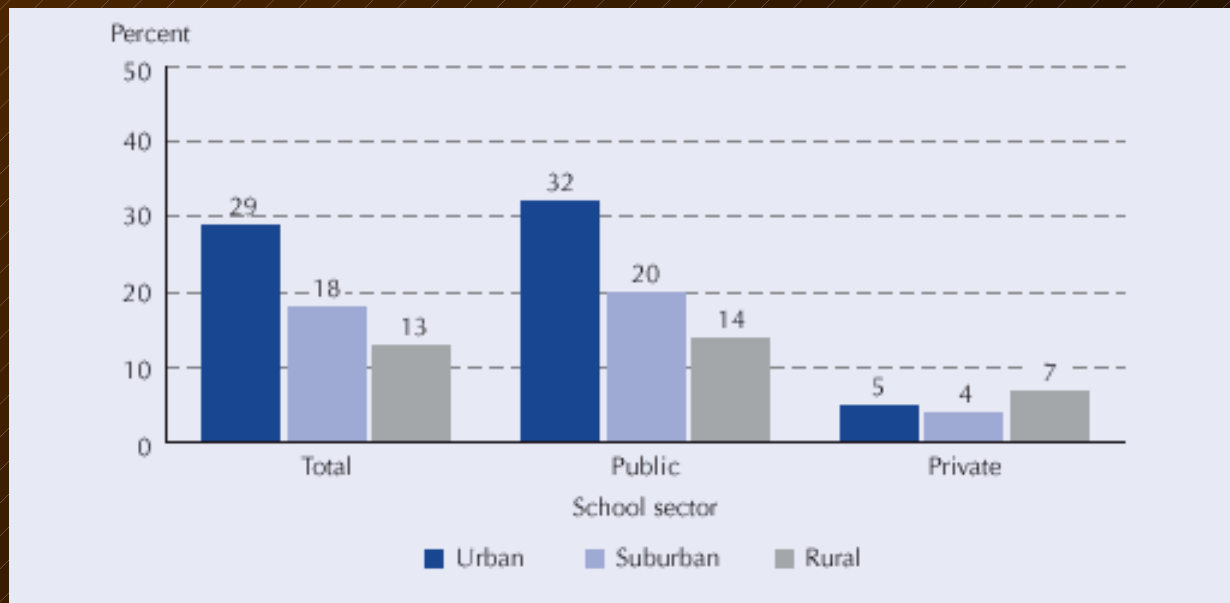






# Gangs and Crime

- Gangs are active in towns and cities of all sizes throughout the country.



**Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported that street gangs were present at school during the previous 6 months, by urbanicity and school sector: 2001**





# Gangs

- **Gangs expose their members and their communities to extreme violence and danger. Many youths join gangs because**



# Gangs

- offer a sense of belonging and
- an opportunity to earn money.



# Gang prevention

- **Most people agree that a promising strategy to discourage gang membership is to**
  - **provide young people with opportunities and**
  - **community connections that will offer them**
  - **a greater sense of belonging.**

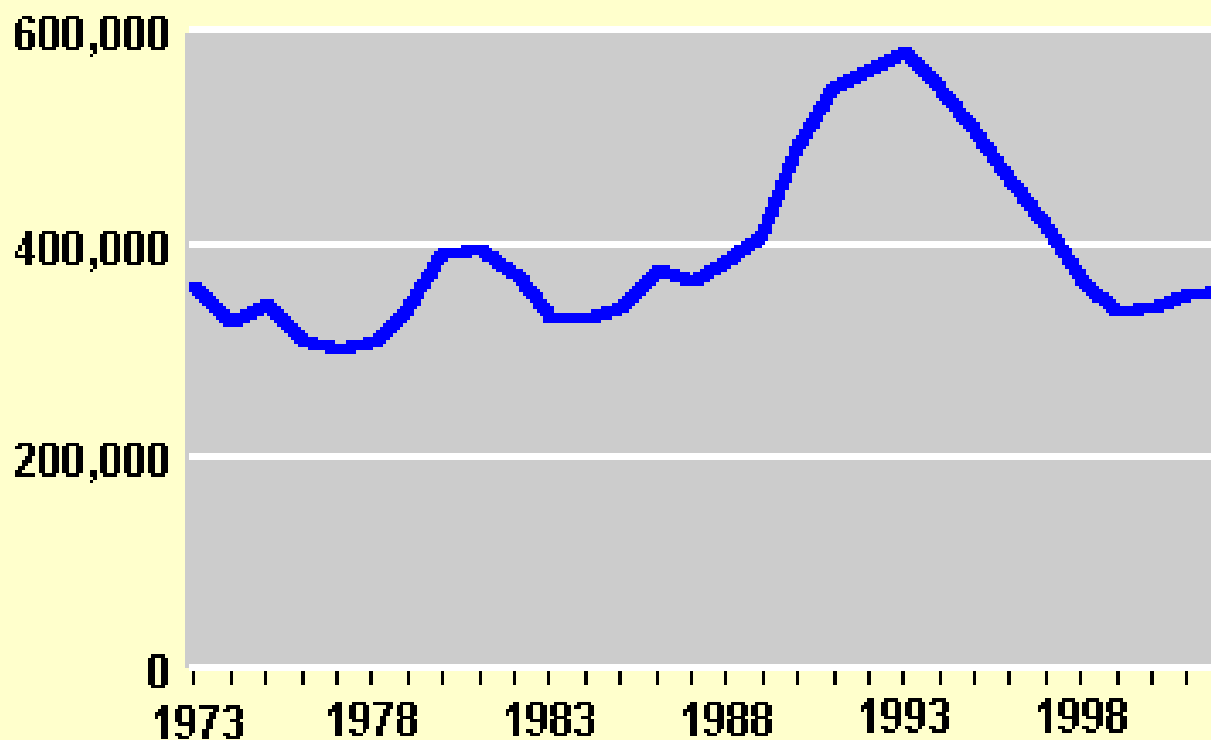
A 3D illustration of a wooden gavel. The gavel has a cylindrical head with three horizontal bands and a long, tapered handle. It is resting on a circular wooden base. The background is a dark brown with a diagonal line pattern.

# Guns and Crime



# Guns and the Law

**Crimes committed with firearms, 1973-2002**



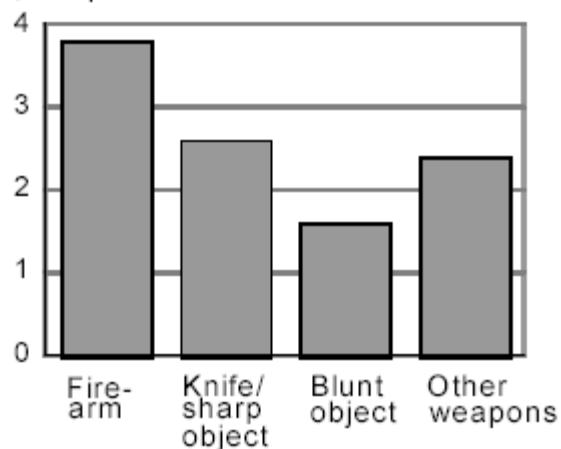


# Weapons use and violent crime

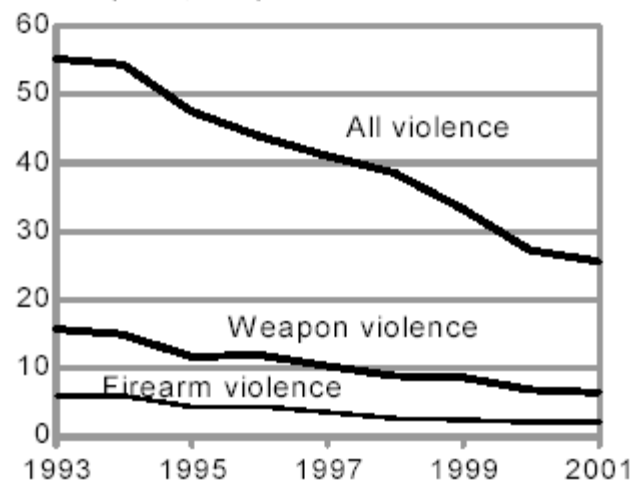
## Highlights

For nonfatal violent crimes, offenders were more likely to have a firearm than a knife or club. From 1993 to 2001 the rate of firearm violence fell 63%

Rates of violent crime per 1,000 persons



Rates per 1,000 persons





# Weapons and crime statistics

- Approximately half of all robberies, about a quarter of all assaults, and roughly a twelfth of all rapes/sexual assaults involved an armed assailant.
- About 90% of homicide victims were killed with a weapon.
- Firearm violence rates for blacks age 12 or older (8.4 per 1,000 blacks) were
  - 40% higher than rates for Hispanics (6.0)
  - 200% higher than rates for whites (2.8 per 1,000).
- Blacks were about 9 times more likely than whites to be murdered with a firearm.
- On average black victims of firearm violence were 3 years younger than white victims 29 versus 32.





# Weapons and crime statistics

- From 1993 through 2001 blacks accounted for 49% of homicide victims and 54% of victims of firearm homicide but 12% of the U.S. population.
- The likelihood of an injury was the same for victims facing armed and unarmed offenders (26%); serious injury was more likely from armed offenders (7% versus 2%).
- From 1993 through 2001 the number of murders declined 36% while the number of murders by firearms dropped 41%.
- From 1994 through 1999, the years for which data are available, about 7 in 10 murders at school involved some type of firearm, and approximately 1 in 2 murders at school involved a handgun.





# Guns and the Law

- **Most Americans who own firearms own them legally and use them lawfully.**
- **However, guns are often used in violent crimes.**



# Guns and the Constitution

- The Second Amendment to the Constitution:
- *A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.*



# Gun control?

- Many people disagree about the government's role in controlling gun ownership.
  - Some groups believe the Second Amendment protects the right of **individuals** to own guns.
  - Other people believe that the Second Amendment gives the **state power to maintain a militia** but does not entitle individuals to own guns.



# Federal Gun Laws

- The *Federal Gun Control Act of 1968* is
  - the primary federal gun-control law.
  - Congress amended this law 1993 by enacting the *Brady Act*.
    - Provided for background checks and waiting periods before a purchase



# Assault weapons

- Ten years ago, Congress passed legislation to ban 19 types of military assault weapons
- That ban was allowed to lapse on Monday, September 13
- Gun groups are opposed to renewal of the ban; police and law enforcement groups are in favor of renewal



# Local Gun laws

- Gun laws have also been enacted at the state and local levels.
- California (as well as New York, Massachusetts, and Hawaii) maintains a more stringent assault weapons ban than the old federal law





# Substance Abuse and Crime



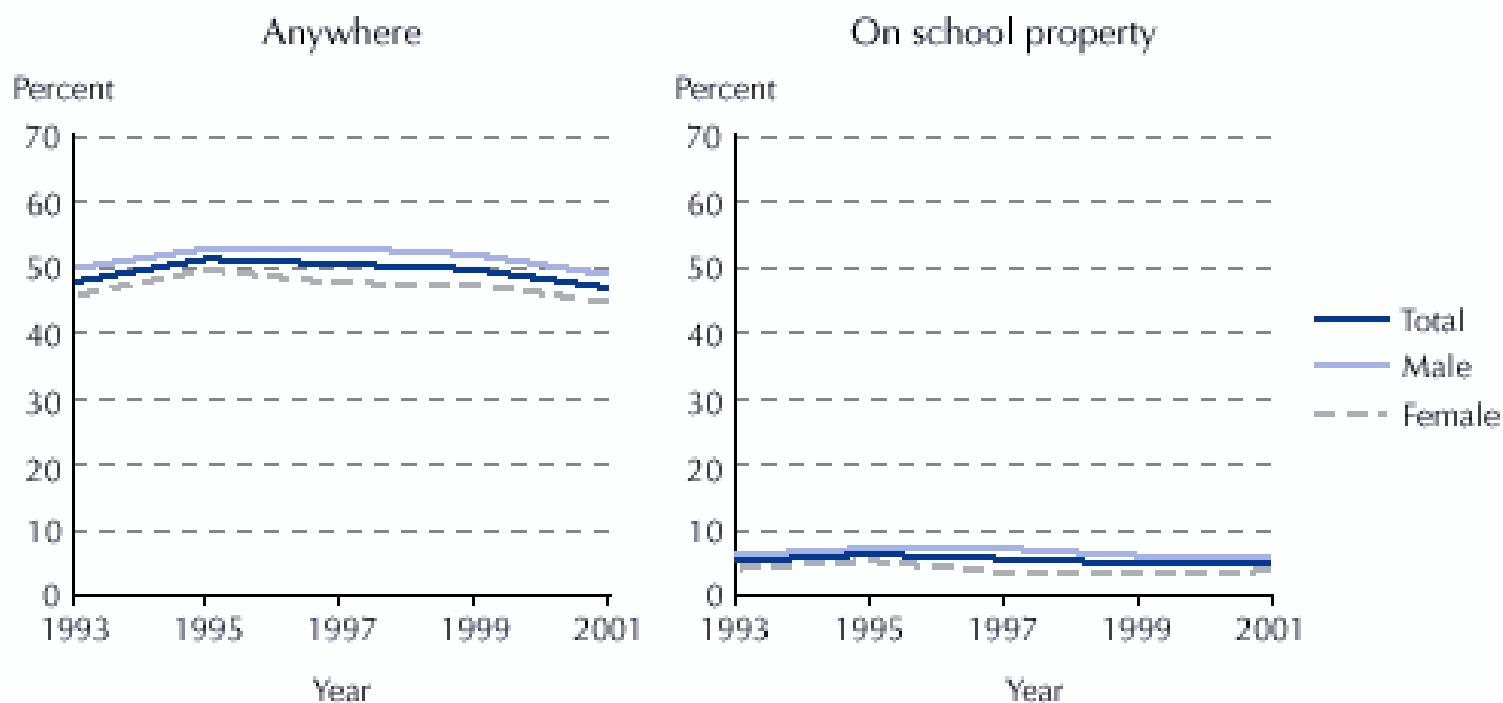
# Substance Abuse and Crime

- Abuse of alcohol and drugs, often called substance abuse, contributes to many social problems and
- often leads to other criminal activity.



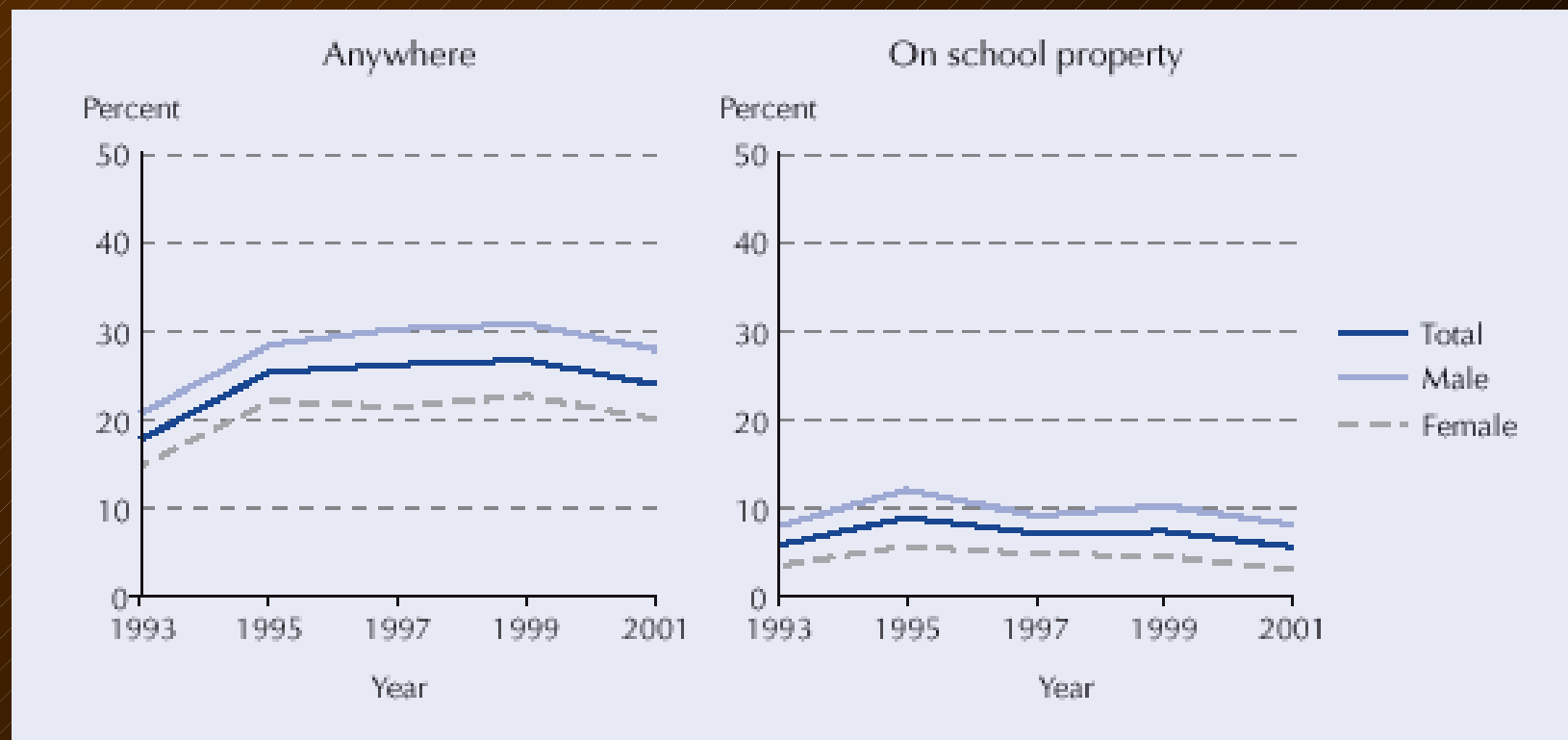


**Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported using alcohol during the previous 30 days, by sex:  
Selected years 1993–2001**





**Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported using marijuana during the previous 30 days, by sex:  
Selected years 1993–2001**





# Alcohol

- Although many adults use alcohol responsibly...
- alcohol abuse can be very harmful to society.
- A 1995 National Institute on Drug Abuse report estimates the total cost of the abuse of alcohol alone is \$150 billion per year (accidents, health care, treatment, lost productivity, etc.)



# Drug use and Crime: Local findings

From over 7000 bookings taken during a 2-week sample period

## Urinalysis Findings

### Percent Positive



Any Drug <sup>a</sup>	<div></div>	73.5
Cocaine	<div></div>	18.4
Marijuana	<div></div>	50.0
Opiates	<div></div>	3.3
Methamphetamine	<div></div>	29.3
PCP	<div></div>	0.3
Multiple Drugs	<div></div>	25.3

## 2000 FINDINGS -

### Sacramento, California



Catchment Area:  
SACRAMENTO COUNTY

From the National Institute of Justice  
Annual Report of 2003: Year 2000  
Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring



# **Solutions?**

- **Some people argue that the best way to handle the drug problem is to legalize some or all drugs.**
- **They believe legalization would allow the government to better regulate drugs and**
- **would eliminate the problems that are associated with illegal distribution of drugs.**
- **Many others, however, strongly oppose legalization.**

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# Crime Victims



# Victims of Crime

- Every person is at risk to be a victim of crime.
- However, teens and young adults are more likely than any other age groups to be victims.

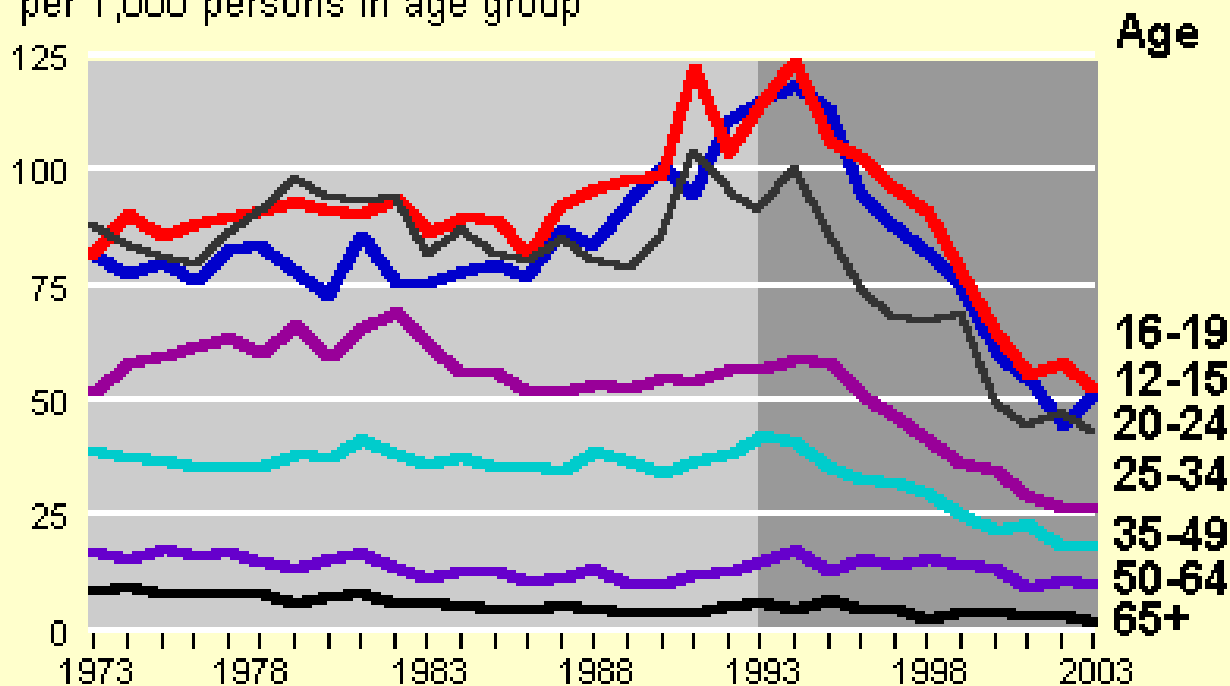




# Victims of Crime by Age

## Violent crime rates by age of victim

Adjusted victimization rate  
per 1,000 persons in age group



Persons age 12 to 24 sustained violent victimization at rates higher than individuals of all other ages. Beginning with the 20-24 age category, the rate at which persons were victims declined significantly as the age category increased.



# Victim advocacy

- **Victim advocacy groups work to protect victims by...**
- **promoting the concerns and rights of victims.**



# Preventing and Reporting Crime

- You can help fight crime by learning how to protect yourself.
- Also, reporting crime can help to prevent others from being victims.



# Crime victim assistance

- There are many organizations and programs that exist to assist victims of crime and prevent future crime.
  - National Center for Victims of Crime
  - National Organization for Victim Assistance
  - Victims of Crime Resource Center, McGeorge School of Law, Sacramento
  - WEAVE: Women Escaping A Violent Environment