

# Magnitude of Sexual Violence in Arizona

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Over the past decade, Arizona has experienced a surge in population, with an estimated 28.6% increase in the total population from 2000 to 2009.<sup>1</sup> Because of this increase in population, the occurrence of sexual violence in the state remains high. According to the *Crime in Arizona 2010* report by the Arizona Department of Public Safety, in 2010 there were 1557 rapes reported to law enforcement, of which 1374 were completed rapes and 183 were attempted rapes.<sup>2</sup> Of the reported rape cases, only 197 arrests were made, which included 178 adults and 19 juveniles.<sup>2</sup> In a 2011 report, *The Reporting of Sexual Assault in Arizona, CY 2008-2009*, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission determined that in 2009 sexual assault was involved in 320 arrest reports, which resulted in 703 charges of sexual assault.<sup>3</sup> A report may contain more than one sexual assault charge. From these charges, 175 convictions were obtained, 160 of which were for the original charge of sexual assault.<sup>3</sup> Despite the high incidence of rape in Arizona, the actual number of sexual assault cases in Arizona can be expected to be much higher than portrayed by the numbers above, based on the results from the U.S. Department of Justice/Office of Justice Programs' *Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Rape Victimization: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey* (2006), showed that of the surveyed women who were victims of rape (n=734), only about 19% reported their rape to law enforcement, meaning almost 81% of rape cases went unreported.<sup>4</sup>

When compared the United States as a whole, the rate of forcible rapes in Arizona is higher than that of the Nation. According to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report from 2009, in the U.S. there were 28.7 forcible rapes per 100,000 inhabitants, while in Arizona there were 32.0 forcible rapes per 100,000 inhabitants (based on 2110 forcible rapes, as reported by the FBI), though both the U.S. and Arizona did see a decrease from 2008 (3.5% and 5.2%, respectively).<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, the overall state rate does not accurately reflect the rate of forcible rapes (per 100,000) at the community level due to differences in demographics and population between communities throughout the state. Even the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) rates do not accurately portray the rates of individual communities, as seen in the table below.<sup>5</sup> Metropolitan Statistical Areas are centered on a large city and include the individuals who reside in that city, the county the city resides in, and at least one additional county. These additional populations influence the MSA rape rates, which can cause the rates to greatly differ from the rates of the city the MSA is centered on. For example, the Flagstaff MSA rape rate is 48.3 while the rape rate for the city of Flagstaff is 70.4. The MSA rape rate for the Lake Havasu City-Kingman MSA is almost half of the state rate at 17.1, while the rape rates for the individual cities of Lake Havasu City and Kingman are roughly double that of the MSA (32.5 and 34.8, respectively). Likewise, for

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<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau. *National and State Population Estimates*. , 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Arizona Department of Public Safety. *Crime in Arizona 2010*. , 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Arizona Criminal Justice Commission. *Reporting of Sexual Assault in Arizona, CY 2008-2009*. , 2011.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs . *Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Rape Victimization: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*. , 2006.

<sup>5</sup> United States FBI Uniform Crime Report. *Crime in the United States 2009*. , 2010.

Tucson, the MSA rape rate is below the state rate at 29.5, but the actual rape rate for the city of Tucson is above the state rate at 37.2.

Metropolitan Statistical Area Rates of Forcible Rape (per 100,000)	City Rates of Forcible Rape (per 100,000)	State Rate of Forcible Rate (per 100,000)
Flagstaff : 48.3	Flagstaff: 70.4	32.0
Lake Havasu City-Kingman: 17.1	Lake Havasu City: 32.5     Kingman: 34.8	32.0
Phoenix-Mesa-Glendale: 25.4	Phoenix: 32.7     Mesa: 21.1     Glendale: 26.1	32.0
Prescott: 16.9	Prescott: 18.3	32.0
Tucson: 29.5	Tucson: 37.2	32.0
Yuma: 18.9	Yuma: 26.2	32.0

This supports the fact that prevention measures should be community focused, rather than state focused, because community demographics vary and their needs are vastly different throughout the state.

Of growing concern in Arizona is also the prevalence of sexual assault in the younger population of the state. As the overall population of Arizona continues to grow, so does the population of individuals under 25. From the National Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) of high school students in 2009, 11.0% of 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders in Arizona who were surveyed (n=2557) reported having been physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to, compared to 7.4% nationally (n=15735), with Arizona’s percentage being statistically higher than that of the Nation.<sup>6</sup>

In the same survey, 11.8% of surveyed students in Arizona (n=2569) reported having been hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend during the 12 months prior to the survey, compared to 9.8% nationally (n=16217).<sup>6</sup> Uniquely, however, the State of Arizona was also able to address the question of dating violence in Arizona teens by use of the Arizona Youth Survey (AZYS), which surveyed almost 64,000 Arizona teens in grades 8, 10, and 12. Overall, a staggering 17.3% of the Arizona students surveyed in the 2010 AZYS reported having been hit, slapped, pushed, shoved, kicked, or in any other way physically assaulted by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the past year.<sup>7</sup> At the county level, survey reports of dating violence ranged from 16.0% to 27.2%.<sup>8</sup> This again shows that with the variability of sexual assault throughout Arizona, prevention would be most beneficial if focused at the community level. Though the results of the YRBS and the AZYS are not entirely comparable due to the difference in grades surveyed and slightly different wording of the question, due to

<sup>6</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Youth Online: High School YRBS: Unintentional Injuries and Violence*. <<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/App/QuestionsOrLocations.aspx?CategoryId=1>>.

<sup>7</sup>Arizona Criminal Justice Commission. *Arizona Youth Survey State Report 2010*. , 2010

<sup>8</sup>Arizona Criminal Justice Commission. *Arizona Youth Survey: 2010 County Profile Reports*. , 2010. <<http://acjc.state.az.us/ACJC.Web/sac/AYS.aspx>>.

sample size the AZYS gives a more accurate portrayal of the problem of dating violence in Arizona teenagers.

Also of growing concern in Arizona is also the prevalence of sexual assault among American Indians. Currently Arizona has 21 federally recognized Tribes<sup>9</sup>, comprising of almost 300,000 American Indians and Alaskan Natives, totaling 4.6% of Arizona's population, while nationally this population makes up 0.9% of the U.S. population.<sup>10</sup> Arizona's high Native American population is an important area in respect to sexual assault in the state, because according to U.S. Department of Justice/Office of Justice Programs' *Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Rape Victimization: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey* (2006), Native American women have a higher risk of being raped at some point in their lives as compared to other racial ethnic groups.<sup>4</sup>

The data presented above shows the magnitude of the incidence of sexual assault in the state of Arizona and indicates a definite need of effective prevention strategies at the state and community levels.

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<sup>9</sup>2010 National Conference of State Legislatures. Federal and State Recognized Tribes. May 2011.

<sup>10</sup>2010 United States Census Bureau. American Fact Finder. 2010.