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INTRODUCTION

During my tenure as Director of the Commission, attention to the multi-faceted problem of violence against women and children has continued to expand. The following Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan produced by the Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape and Domestic Violence is further evidence of the state's commitment to the women and children of Arkansas.

As outlined in the Needs Assessment, Arkansas is no stranger to sexual assault and domestic violence. However, it is through understanding the issues that we are capable of resolving them. I feel positive that our state will rise to the challenge to end violence against women and children, and look forward to the progress that will be made through the planning and programmatic efforts of various state agencies, not-for-profits and other organizations.

I thank those who have been involved in this effort. Most particularly the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Arkansas Department of Health, Barbara Niess, the Commission's Rape and Domestic Violence Projects Coordinator and the many people across the state that participated in the assessment and planning process. Without their support and diligence, this effort would not have been possible.

Max Snowden
Executive Director



In Arkansas, the commitment to protecting women from violence is a growing priority. While many advocates would say that we have not achieved comprehensive services for women who experience sexual or domestic violence, they would also assert that there has been growth in better recognizing the need to protect women.

However, a planning problem exists for resource distribution in the state. The primary (and often the most reliable) sources of funding are funds distributed from the federal government. This indicates that guidance for distribution of resources needs to be developed in response to the needs as defined by service providers and survivors. With that knowledge, it is clear that a needs assessment and a strategic plan is necessary for future resources to be available for women who experience sexual and domestic violence.

The Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape and Domestic Violence (hereafter referred to as the Commission) has completed a needs assessment to better understand the impact of violence against women in Arkansas and services available. The intent of this needs assessment is a process to accurately document the following:

- Current status of services for female victims of sexual and domestic violence and their children
- Services most needed to ensure safety and well being for all victims and their children
- Determination of systems change issues that will best protect women and their children overall

The Commission is collaborating with various groups concerned about violence against women issues to develop a strategic plan to map services and develop recommendations for current and future resources.



METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The methodology of the needs assessment is to develop a global view of various information sources related to female victims of sexual and domestic violence and their children. The pieces of information included state data related to these crimes (protective orders filed, domestic homicides, child maltreatment, rape offenses and sexual assault exam kits distributed), focus group information and surveys of service providers.

Process issues became very important in the work of this needs assessment for two reasons, 1) this is the first needs assessment of its kind to be developed in Arkansas and 2) the process has not been documented in the other needs assessments that were reviewed, in or out of state. Because of the importance of the process to the final goal of a completed needs assessment, it is included as part of the methodology of the assessment.

Objective 1: Conduct necessary background work

Tasks:

1. Gather relevant assessments and plans from other states and review;
2. Develop regions of analysis;
3. Contact frontline responders to determine what they see as the issues to be addressed;
4. Draft intent of the project for individual use and community notification.

Objective 2: Create database of persons to be involved

Tasks:

1. Gather addresses of law enforcement, judges, victim service agencies, child abuse service agencies and hospitals statewide for the database;
2. Create database;
3. Use identifier for those involved in focus groups, survey, other information, etc.

Objective 3: Collect state data related to sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse

Tasks:

1. Collect protective order filings, domestic homicide information, child maltreatment assessment and founded victim information, rape offenses and sexual assault exam kit information;
2. Compile information
3. Review and analyze information;
4. Develop comparable charts of the information.

Objective 4: Prepare for and conduct key informant focus groups

Tasks:

1. Locate areas and facilities for focus groups;
2. Arrange for the focus groups;
3. Identify key informants through local service providers and professionals;
4. Schedule focus groups;
5. Discuss with local community members of those who need to be invited to the focus groups;
6. Prepare outline and other information for the focus groups;
7. Draft and mail invitation letter to key informants at least two weeks prior to the meeting;
8. Organize the focus group meeting with refreshments;
9. Collect and quantify results of the focus groups.

Objective 5: Create survey to be distributed to all persons who serve victims of domestic abuse

Tasks:

1. Develop and distribute general introductory letter to all participating in survey;
2. Create surveys tailored to law enforcement, judges, victim service agencies, child abuse service agencies and hospitals;¹
3. Finalize survey after two focus groups, including other information as needed;
4. Distribute surveys with return envelopes and letter;
5. Collect and analyze survey results.

Objective 6: Create survey to be distributed to women who have experienced sexual and domestic violence.

Tasks:

1. Create surveys tailored to women having had experienced sexual assault or domestic violence.
2. Identify programs willing to have the survey distributed.
3. Arrange to conduct focus groups after distribution of the survey (if possible).
4. Collect and analyze survey results.

¹ For the purposes of this assessment, regions were developed and coded on the survey to avoid identifying the respondent.

*Domestic violence seems to be a revolving cycle
for both the men and women involved.*
Law Enforcement, Northwest

Project Opportunities and Challenges

During this project, like any other project, components existed that make the project easier and other areas that are challenges. The components which made the project easier included:

- Good relationships with partner agencies
- Extensive knowledge of the violence against women issues
- Adequate funding for the project
- Available advice

Some of the challenges included:

- Coordination of groups intended to be involved
- Size and breadth of project
- No strong models to follow
- The unknown

Literature Review

Two types of literature were used in putting together the beginning stages of the work on the needs assessment. To begin, needs assessments from the following states were used to gain a conceptual framework:

- Georgia (1995)
- Rhode Island (1995)
- Kentucky (1995)
- Iowa (2000)
- Pennsylvania (2000)
- Florida (1994)

Overall, there were several components that were derived from those needs assessments that will be useful. A primary component of all the needs assessments is a statistical review of violence against women crimes and related demographic data in their states. Whether it was number of domestic homicides, or sexual assault offenses by county, the information was helpful. Another component of each assessment was a breakdown of issues related to violence against women issues. This helped our process in defining the general areas that need to be addressed in the focus groups and the survey.

Since there is not a specific model for the needs assessment, ideas from several sources were used. To start, components from the volume Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets by Kretzman and McKnight from the Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research of Northwestern University were used. This piece has provided excellent guidance on recognizing resources in a community for the purpose of building on them.

It is commonly called an “assets based” approach. Another piece that is being partially used is from the “Foundations of Prevention: Core Knowledge and Practice” manual. The components that have been most beneficial include references to data sources, force field analysis and beginning stages on community’s willingness to change.

Books related to survey analysis were also helpful in development of the surveys attached in the appendix. One book, titled Designing Surveys That Work! A Step-by-Step Guide, by Susan J. Thomas provided practical insight into survey development. Response rate is always a concern, and this volume addressed those issues, as well as increasing data validity through appropriately worded questions. In addition to this, Mail Surveys, Improving the Quality by Thomas W. Mangione, provided practical information about the quality of the survey and also some information on survey development.

The data indicators used in the needs assessment are from the following sources:

1. Arkansas Administrative Office of the Courts: Case Filings Reports, (2001)
2. Arkansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence, (2001)
3. Arkansas Coalition Against Sexual Assault, (2001)
4. Arkansas Crime Information Center, (2001)
5. Arkansas Crime Lab, (2001)
6. Arkansas State Police Information, Statistics, (2001).

Additionally, there were articles that provided a framework for analysis. The two that served as the greatest resource were *Intimate Partner Homicide* through the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention and *Rape in America* authored by Dr. Dean Kilpatrick et al. These articles helped to better understand where Arkansas falls throughout the country, as well as the benefits and limitations of the information collected.

For a woman to become self - sufficient, our goal is to implement transitional living focused on education that will roll into permanent housing and higher paying jobs.

Victim Services, Central



REVIEW OF STATE DATA

An overall look at state data, year 2000 yielded:

- 34 domestic abuse shelters
- 9 sexual assault programs
- 847 rape offenses reported
- 17 domestic homicides
- 19 child deaths due to maltreatment
- 7,023 founded cases of child maltreatment
- 8,277 protective orders filed

There are several more domestic abuse shelters than there are sexual assault programs, and a majority of the sexual assault programs started establishing themselves just in the past five years. Beyond that information, all the incident and case report numbers are high, especially when looking at the information in relation to the small population of Arkansas.

Prior to taking a more in-depth look at the data outlined in this assessment, there are some state data issues that need to be pointed out. Domestic violence incidence data is not currently collected by the Arkansas Crime Information Center. This situation is expected to correct itself once the National Incident Based Reporting System is implemented. Until then, the state does not have a grasp of frequency, locality, etc. of domestic violence. National information shows that the crimes of domestic abuse, sexual assault and child maltreatment are severely under-reported. This is most likely attributable to the intimate nature of the crimes, humiliation that victims often face as a result of reporting the crimes, the lack of knowledge of what abuse constitutes a crime, as well as other myths that surround sexual and domestic violence.

Another issue related to the state data is that it comes from several different sources, which develops potential for inconsistency in collection of the information. For example, the Arkansas Crime Information Center was used for some information, yet the State Crime Lab was used for other, and so on. Comparing the information from the vastly different sources may diminish the validity of the information. And finally, this is the first needs assessment of this kind. There is nothing else to compare to the information gathered.

State Data: Protective Orders-2000

One of the indicators of domestic abuse is number of protective orders filed. The number of protective orders filed by region is illustrated in Chart One. Protective orders are used by those who fear or have experienced abuse by another family member. The order is filed by the person seeking relief and is considered a civil process. As a note, protective orders are not available to those who are in a dating relationship, only those who live together currently or have in the past, are currently or in the past have been married to each other, or have a child in common and sufficient evidence that abuse exists. The information comes from the Administrative Office of the Courts, which oversees data collection related to case filings and dispositions. The protective order rate for the state of Arkansas is 43 (± 4)² orders filed per 10,000 adults. Two areas in the state exceed that rate, the Delta Southeast (75) and the Northeast (47).

² All confidence levels were calculated at the .5 level with the idea of demonstrating the areas that are further outside the state rate.

CHART 1: Protective Orders Filed - 2000

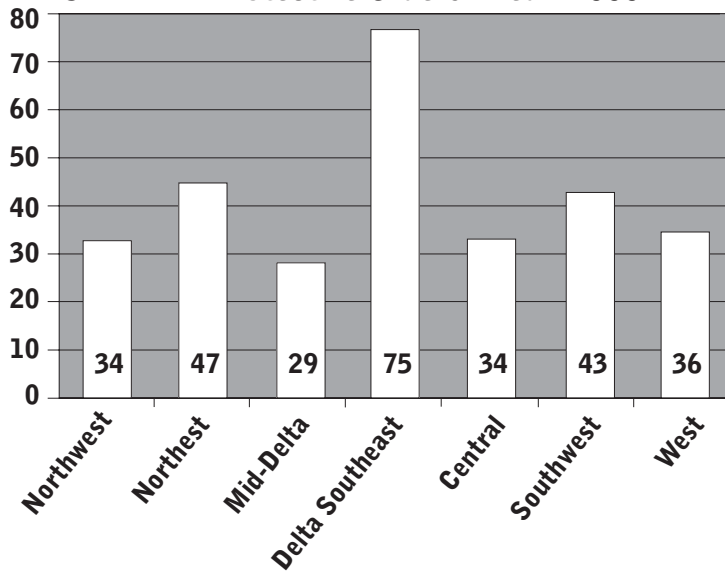
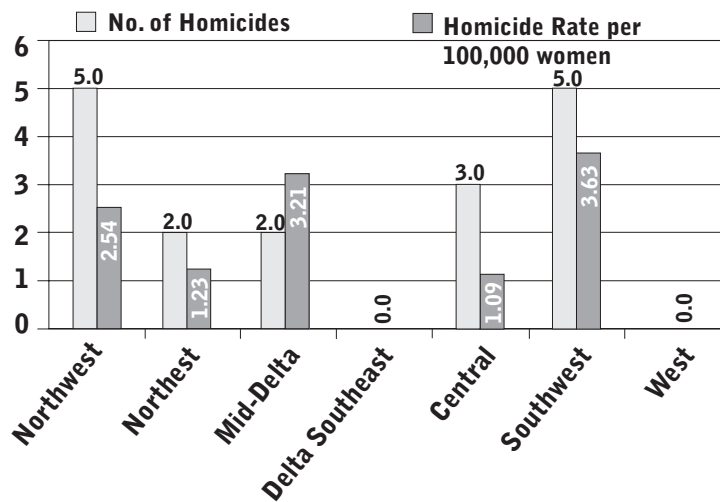


CHART 2: Domestic Homicides in Arkansas - 2000

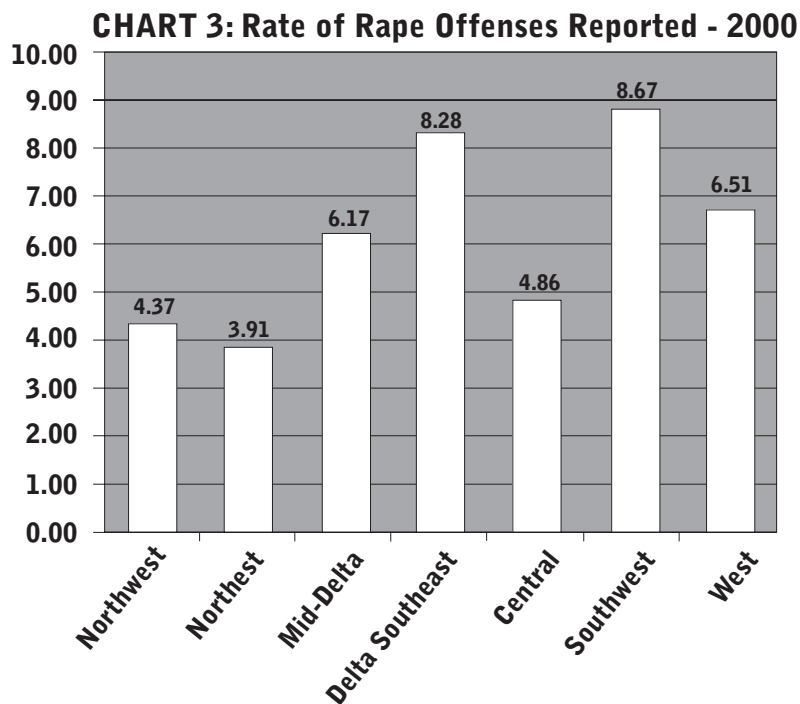


State Data: Domestic Homicides-2000

The number of domestic homicides is another indicator related to domestic abuse. Domestic homicide information is gathered by the Arkansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Chart Two illustrates the rates and number of homicides across the regions. Arkansas ranks among the top three states for rates related to domestic homicide. Arkansas is first in domestic abuse homicides for African-American women and third for women overall. The domestic homicide rate for the state of Arkansas is 1.67 (\pm .376) per 100,000 women. There are several areas that exceed this rate, and two areas that did not experience domestic homicide. Trend data may reveal different results.

State Data: Rape Offenses-2000

During 2000, the Arkansas Crime Information Center (ACIC) reported a total of 847 rapes reported in Arkansas. And, according to the National Victimization Survey, the average number of rapes reported nationally hovers around 16% of actual rapes occurring. Translating that information into what Arkansans experience, this means that approximately 5,293 rape offenses occurred in 2000. According to the ACIC, a rape offense is considered carnal knowledge of a female by force, or attempted carnal knowledge of a woman by force. According to the numbers presented by the ACIC, the rape offense rate for the Arkansas is 6.11 (± 4.75) per 10,000 females-illustrated in Chart Three. There are several areas that exceed this rate, including the Mid-Delta, Delta Southeast and Central Arkansas.



State Data: Sexual Assault Exam Kits-2000

The number of sexual assault exam kits for forensic medical exams that the Arkansas State Crime Lab distributes (as indicated in Chart Four) serves as a dual indicator of sexual assault. In one respect, the number of kits distributed is an indication of the number of sexual assaults that occurred by the number of kits distributed annually. Also, it serves as an indicator of the number of people who seek medical assistance following a sexual assault. A primary inconsistency of this information is that the Arkansas Crime Information Center only reports females as having had experienced sexual assault. However, sexual assault exam kits are also done on males. If the number of kits were compared to the total population (instead of just females), the rates would drop by about fifty percent. The sexual assault exam kit distribution rate for Arkansas is 4.89 (± 3.79) per 10,000 females.

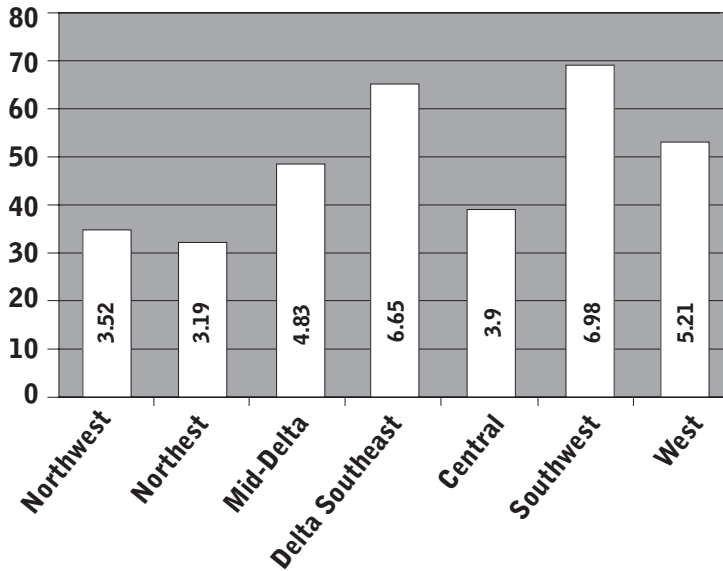


CHART 4:
Rate of Sexual
Assault Exam Kits
per 10,000 Females

State Data: Child Maltreatment-2000

The data outlined in Chart Five related to child maltreatment is sourced to the Arkansas State Police (ASP). There are two types of data illustrated: assessments and founded child victimization. In Arkansas, there are two entities that follow child abuse cases, the ASP and Department of Human Services (Division of Children and Family Services-DCFS). The ASP takes all calls on the hotline through the Crimes Against Children Division. The dispatcher of the call makes a decision on the priority of the case; priority one or priority two. Priority one cases are considered to be more severe than priority two cases. In priority one cases investigations by state police are initiated within twenty-four hours and the priority two cases investigated by DCFS workers are initiated within seventy-two hours. As illustrated in Chart Five, about fifty percent of the assessments resulted in founded child victimizations. For Arkansas, the rate of child maltreatment assessments is 230.87 (± 29.38) and for founded victims is 105.51 (± 15.19) per 10,000 children. The region that is experiencing higher rates is the northeast area of the state. It is possible that more child maltreatment occurs in that part of the state, but there is also the greater likelihood that the population is more comfortable reporting the child maltreatment.

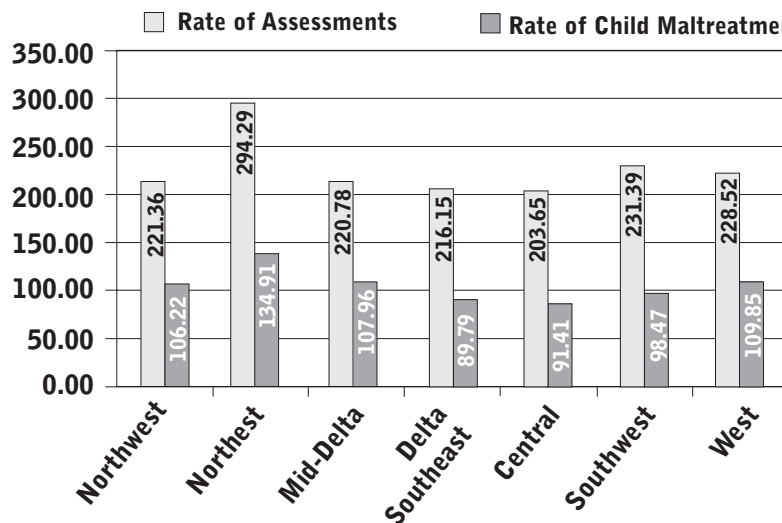


CHART 5:
Assessment and
Founded Child
Victimization
2000



REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Northwest Arkansas Regional Analysis

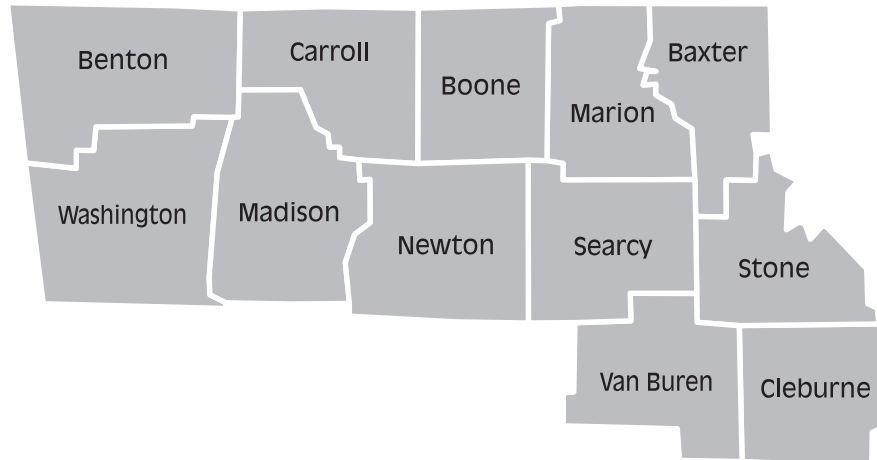
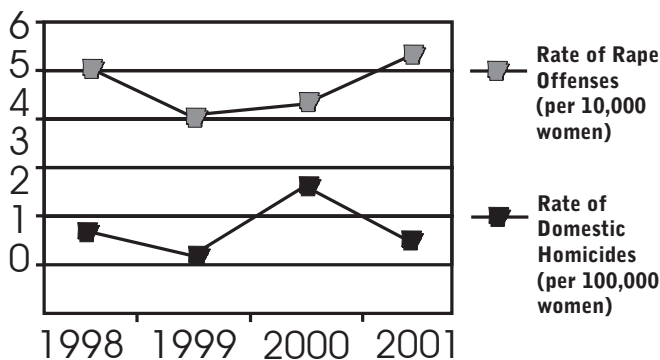


Table One

Type of Offense	1998	1999	2000	2001
Rate of Child Maltreatment Victims (per 10,000 children)	105	115	84	27
Rate of Protective Orders (per 10,000 women)	77	71	69	84
Rate of Domestic Homicides (per 10,000 women)	1.65	1.08	2.54	1.53
Rate of Rape Offenses (per 10,000 females)	5.05	3.89	4.37	5.07
Rate of Sexual Assault Exam Kits (per 10,000 population)	3.78	3.12	2.09	1.38
Rate of Reimbursed Sexual Assault Exam Kits (per 10,000 population)	2.25	2.59	3.07	2.54

Chart One

Comparison of domestic violence and rape offenses by calendar year

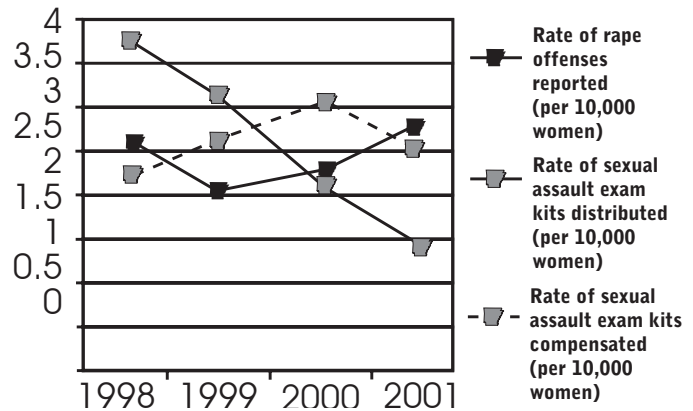


As illustrated in Table One and Charts One through Three, it is evident that sexual and domestic violence exists in this region. Chart One shows a similar trend of domestic homicide rates with rape offense rates. However, rape affects more women than does domestic homicide. The overall trend is not conclusive, because the four years of available data do not indicate that less or more rape or domestic homicide occurred in a particular area.

A closer look at Chart Two provides a comparison of rate of rape offenses reported by the Arkansas Crime Information Center, the rate of sexual assault exam kits distributed by the State Crime Lab and the rate of sexual assault exam kits that are compensated for through the Arkansas Attorney General's Office. Again, in this instance, it appears to have a similar trend, although with different population rates.

Chart Two

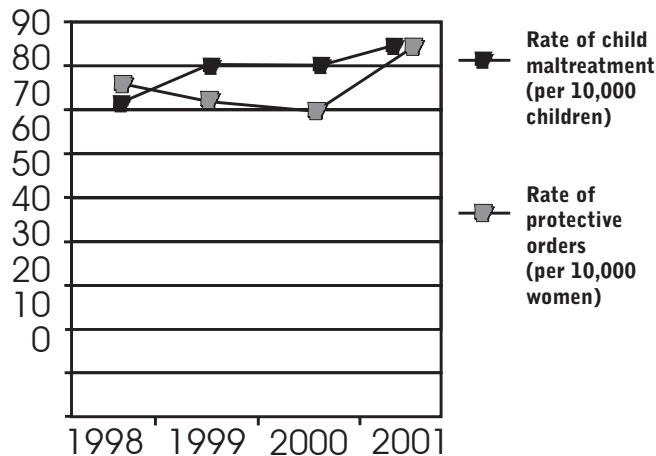
Comparison of sexual assault data



According to national data, it is estimated that child abuse exists in twenty-five to fifty percent of domestic violence cases. Because Arkansas does not currently collect domestic violence data, child maltreatment could perhaps be viewed as collateral information. Chart Three illustrates a degree of consistency of rates of domestic abuse orders along with rates of child maltreatment in Northwest Arkansas.

Chart Three

Comparison of child maltreatment and protective order rates by calendar year



Northeast Arkansas Regional Analysis

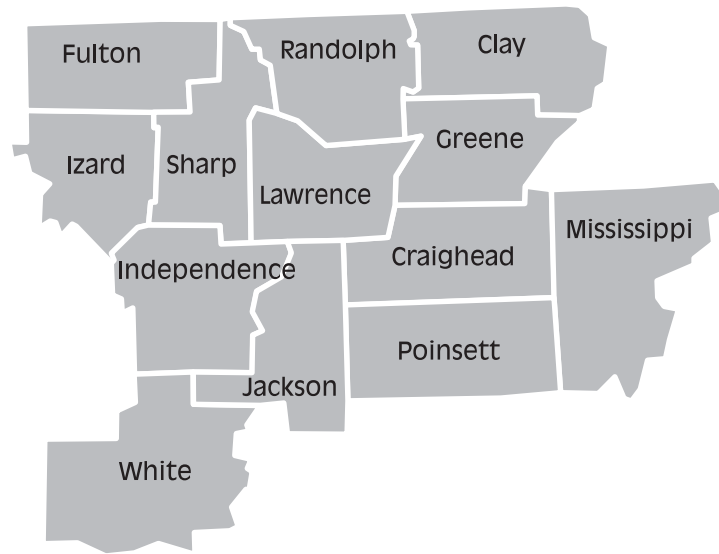
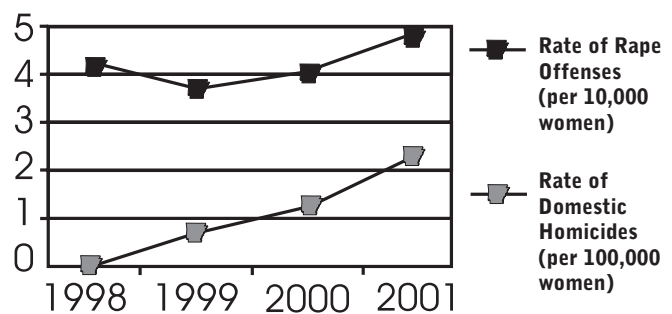


Table One

Type of Offense	1998	1999	2000	2001
Rate of Child Maltreatment Victims (per 10,000 children)	94	108	106	105
Rate of Protective Orders (per 10,000 women)	77	71	69	84
Rate of Domestic Homicides (per 100,000 women)	0.0	.64	1.23	2.46
Rate of Rape Offenses (per 10,000 females)	4.09	3.64	3.87	4.62
Rate of Sexual Assault Exam Kits (per 10,000 population)	4.31	4.20	3.56	3.09
Rate of Reimbursed Sexual Assault Exam Kits (per 10,000 population)	2.57	2.44	2.00	2.22

Chart One

Comparison of domestic violence and rape offenses by calendar year



As illustrated in Table One and Charts One through Three, it is evident that Northeast Arkansas is not a stranger to sexual or domestic violence. As illustrated in Chart One, there is not a similar trend of domestic homicide rates with rape offense rates. It is interesting to note, however, that domestic homicides appear to be increasing while rapes reported are increasing. The overall trend is not conclusive.

Chart Two

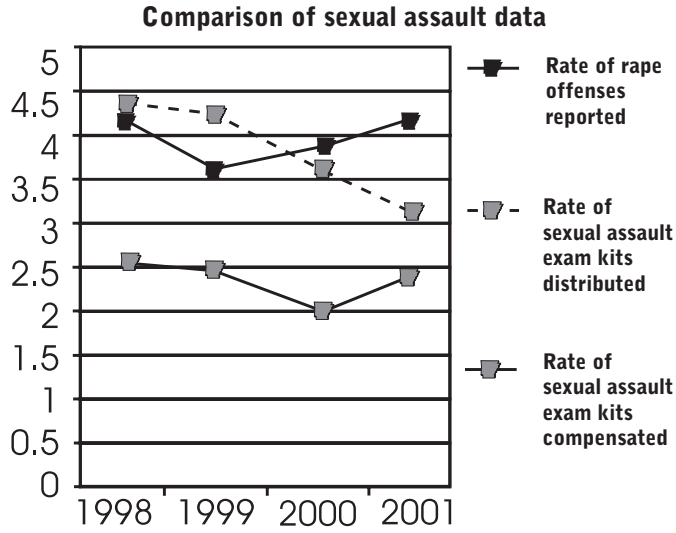
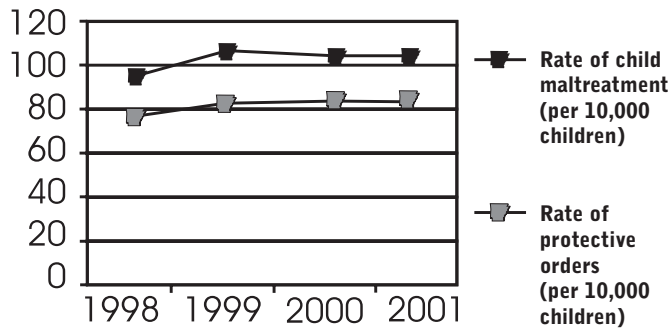


Chart Two provides a comparison of rate of rape offenses reported by the Arkansas Crime Information Center, the rate of sexual assault exam kits distributed by the State Crime Lab and the rate of sexual assault exam kits that are compensated for through the Arkansas Attorney General’s Office. Again, in this instance, there is not a consistent trend.

According to national data, it is estimated that child abuse exists in twenty-five to fifty percent of domestic violence cases. Because Arkansas does not currently collect domestic violence data, child maltreatment could perhaps be viewed as collateral information. Chart Three illustrates some emerging consistency of rates of domestic abuse orders along with rates of child maltreatment in Northeast Arkansas. It is interesting to note the similar trend between these two rates.

Chart Three
Comparison of child maltreatment and protective order rates by calendar year



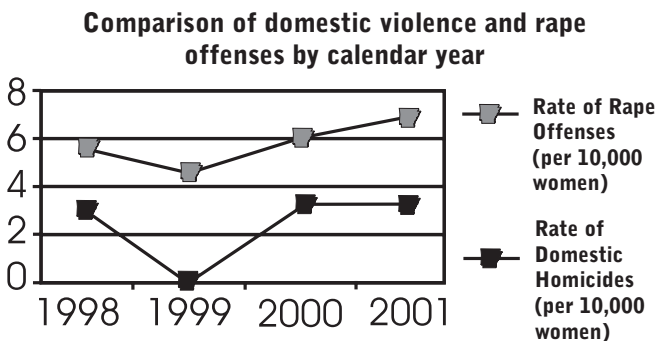
Mid-Delta Arkansas Regional Analysis



Table One

Type of Offense	1998	1999	2000	2001
Rate of Child Maltreatment Victims (per 10,000 children)	77	91	91	83
Rate of Protective Orders (per 10,000 women)	52	50	68	55
Rate of Domestic Homicides (per 100,000 women)	3.2	0.0	3.21	3.21
Rate of Rape Offenses (per 10,000 females)	5.49	4.72	6.08	7.57
Rate of Sexual Assault Exam Kits (per 10,000 population)	7.05	3.21	6.03	2.53
Rate of Reimbursed Sexual Assault Exam Kits (per 10,000 population)	4.88	4.06	3.80	3.44

Chart One



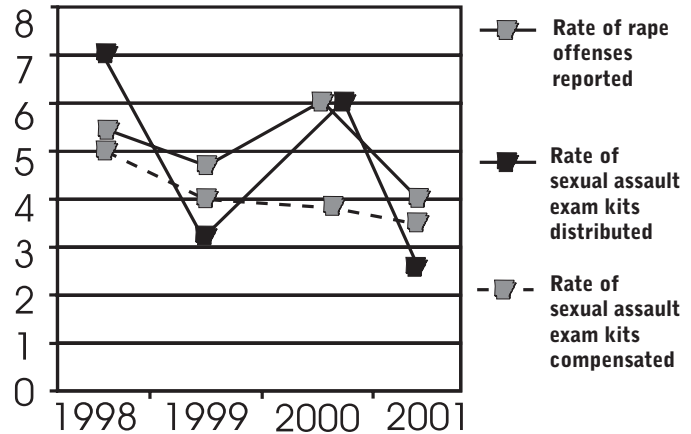
Although the fewest service agencies exist in this region of the state, it is evident that Mid-Delta Arkansas is not a stranger to sexual or domestic violence through the data presented. As illustrated in Chart One, there is a similar trend of domestic homicide with rape offense rates. However, rape affects more women than does domestic homicide. The overall trend is not

conclusive, because the four years of available data do not indicate that less or more rape or domestic homicide occurs.

Chart Two provides a comparison of rate of rape offenses reported by the Arkansas Crime Information Center, the rate of sexual assault exam kits distributed by the State Crime Lab and the rate of sexual assault exam kits that are compensated for through the Arkansas Attorney General's Office. Again, in this instance, there is not a consistent trend.

Chart Two

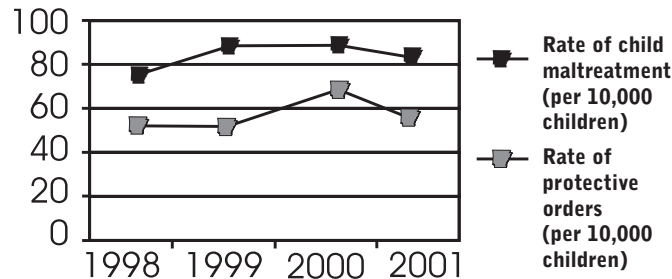
Comparison of sexual assault data



According to national data, it is estimated that child abuse exists in twenty-five to fifty percent of domestic violence cases. Because Arkansas does not currently collect domestic violence data, child maltreatment could perhaps be viewed as collateral information. Chart Three indicates some emerging consistency of rates of domestic abuse orders along with rates of child maltreatment in Mid-Delta Arkansas.

Chart Three

Comparison of child maltreatment and protective order rates by calendar year



Southeast Arkansas Regional Analysis

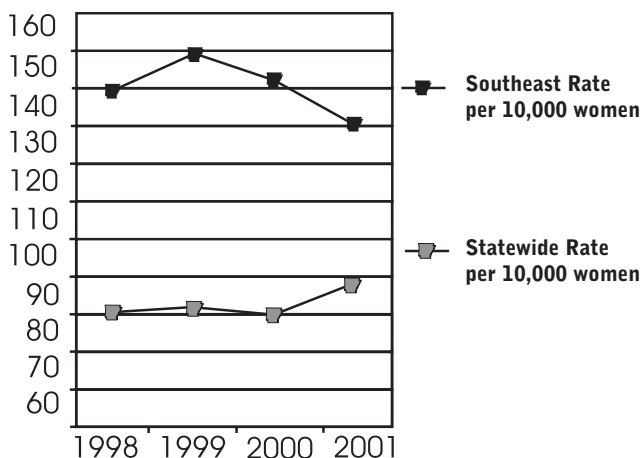


Table One

Type of Offense	1998	1999	2000	2001
Rate of Child Maltreatment Victims (per 10,000 children)	86	91	85	76
Rate of Protective Orders (per 10,000 women)	138	148	143	131
Rate of Domestic Homicides (per 100,000 women)	1.26	2.53	0.00	1.23
Rate of Rape Offenses Reported (per 10,000 females)	8.11	7.03	8.22	8.87
Rate of Sexual Assault Exam Kits Distributed (per 10,000 population)	6.77	5.60	4.70	3.28
Rate of Sexual Assault Exam Kits Reimbursed (per 10,000 population)	5.76	4.29	4.04	2.61

Chart One

Rate of domestic abuse filings



As illustrated in Table One and Charts One through Three, violence against women is a social problem in Southeast Arkansas. Chart One shows that over the past four years the southeast region has had consistently higher rates of DA filings than other regions of the state: 131-148 filings per 10,000 women in the southeast region vs. 80-82 filings per 10,000 women statewide.

Chart Two

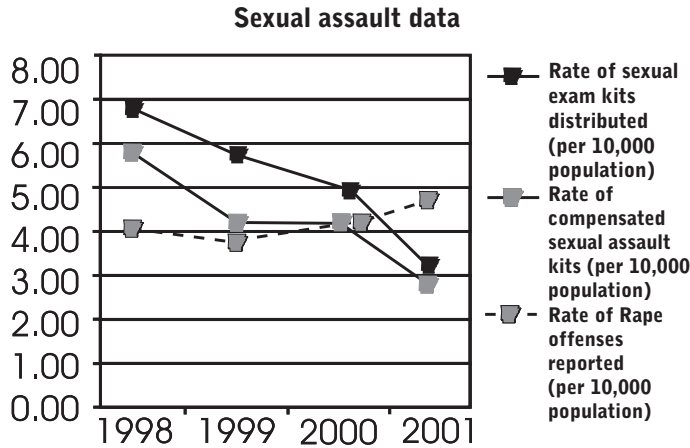
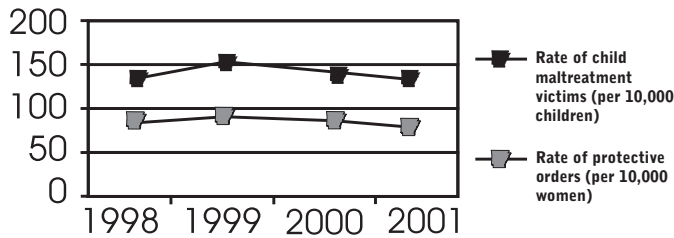


Chart Two provides a comparison of rape offenses reported, the number of sexual assault exam kits distributed by the Arkansas Crime Lab, and those reimbursed by the state. There appears to be a similar trend downward in these sexual assault indicators. Only rape of a female is reported by the Arkansas Crime Information Center. This is one possible explanation why the rates of rapes reported by the ACIC appear much lower in comparison to the rates of kits distributed and paid by the state.

According to national data, it is estimated that child abuse exists in twenty-five to fifty percent of domestic violence cases. A potential relationship between domestic abuse filings and founded cases of child maltreatment is illustrated in Chart Three, in which similarities in the rate trends of the two indicators are demonstrated. The Southeast Region of the state had a slight decline in rates for both domestic abuse filings and founded child maltreatment victims in the past two years. Because Arkansas does not currently collect domestic violence data, child maltreatment could perhaps be viewed as collateral information for domestic violence data.

Chart Three

Comparison of child maltreatment victims and protective order rates by calendar year



Southwest Arkansas Regional Analysis

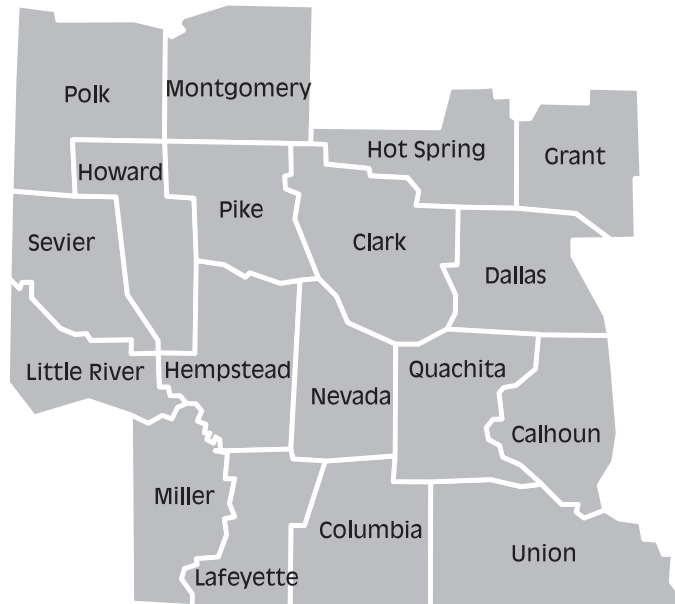
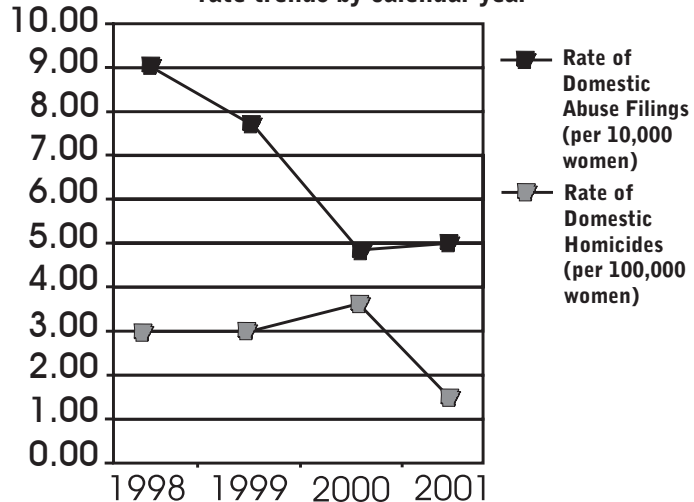


Table One

Rate of Indicators	1998	1999	2000	2001
Rate of Child Maltreatment Victims (per 10,000 children)	79	85	80	77
Rate of Protective Orders (per 10,000 women)	66	66	69	60
Rate of Domestic Homicides (per 100,000 women)	3.00	3.00	3.63	1.45
Rate of Rape Offenses Reported (per 10,000 females)	8.93	7.60	4.80	4.91
Rate of Sexual Assault Exam Kits Distributed (per 10,000 population)	3.59	4.52	3.89	3.04
Rate of Sexual Assault Exam Kits Reimbursed (per 10,000 population)	2.09	1.59	2.36	1.56

Chart One

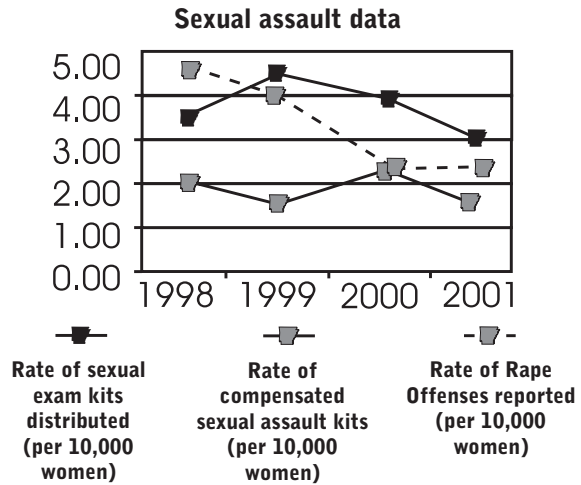
Comparison of protective order and domestic homicide rate trends by calendar year



As illustrated in Table One and Charts One through Three, it is evident that Southwest Arkansas is no stranger to sexual or domestic violence. There are not similar trends in sexual assaults and domestic abuse related homicides illustrated in Chart One; however, sexual assaults occur far more often than domestic homicides. In 2001, the numbers declined in domestic homicide rates for the southwest region of the state.

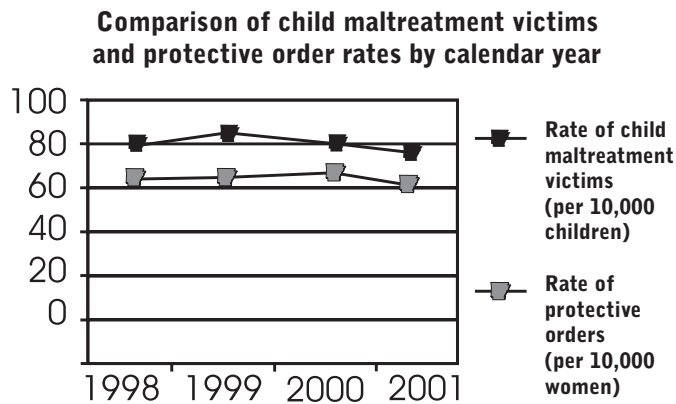
Chart Two provides a comparison of rape offenses and the number of sexual assault exam kits distributed by the Arkansas Crime Lab and reimbursed by the state. In this instance there appears to be a similar trend downward. The rates for all three indicators are calculated per 10,000 southwest regional population. Though the rape offenses include only those with female victims as reported by the Arkansas Crime Information Center, the sexual assault exam kits statistics do not differentiate between those distributed for male or female victims.

Chart Two



According to national data, it is estimated that child abuse exists in twenty-five to fifty percent of domestic violence cases. Because Arkansas does not currently collect domestic violence data, child maltreatment could perhaps be viewed as collateral information for domestic violence data. Both child maltreatment and protective order rates were down from previous years in 2001 for the southwest region. The overall trend, however, is not conclusive.

Chart Three



Central Arkansas Regional Analysis

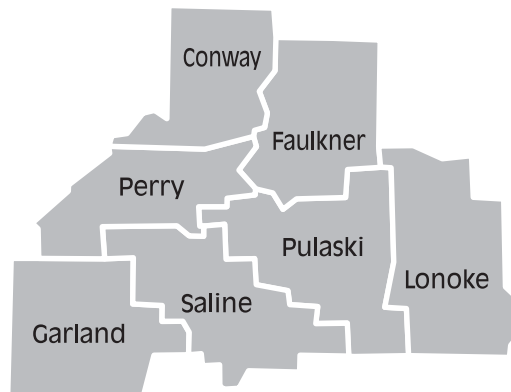
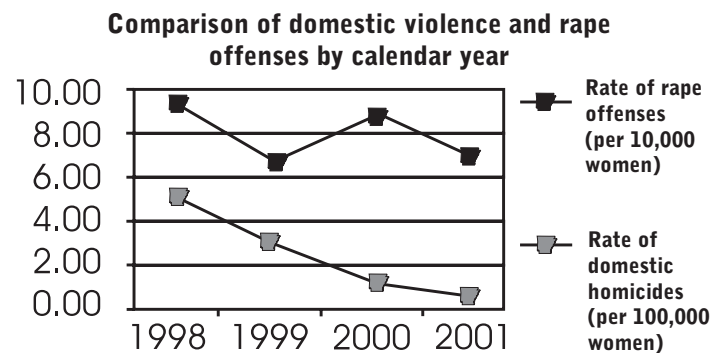


Table One

Type of Offense	1998	1999	2000	2001
Rate of Child Maltreatment Victims (per 10,000 children)	74	81	77	86
Rate of Protective Orders (per 10,000 women)	93	90	83	92
Rate of Domestic Homicides (per 100,000 women)	4.92	3.00	1.09	.72
Rate of Rape Offenses Reported (per 10,000 females)	9.45	6.91	8.57	7.37
Rate of Sexual Assault Exam Kits Distributed (per 10,000 population)	6.83	5.96	6.51	4.37
Rate of Sexual Assault Exam Kits Reimbursed (per 10,000 population)	4.90	4.12	4.28	3.16

Chart One



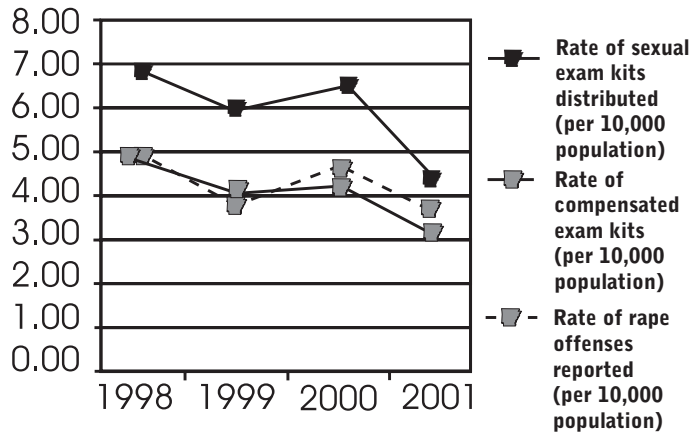
As illustrated in Table One and Charts One through Three, the sexual or domestic violence indicators showed decreasing rates for 2001, except for child maltreatment and domestic abuse filings. The rate of domestic abuse filings for 2001 increased over that of 2000, but remained at a level consistent with 1998 and 1999. In Chart One, domestic homicide and rape rates

appear to be trending lower. However, rape affects more women than does domestic homicide. The overall trend is not conclusive, because the four years of available data do not indicate that less or more rape or domestic homicide occurs.

Chart Two

Sexual assault data

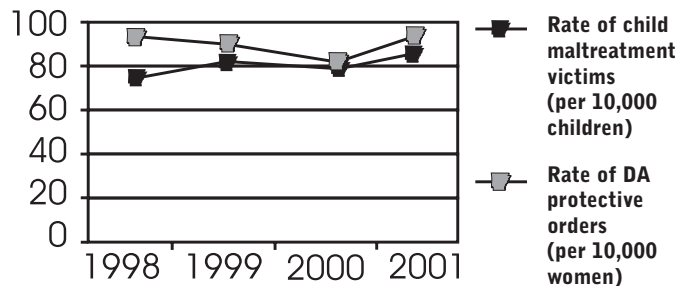
Chart Two provides an illustration of the trend in the rate of rapes occurring in Central Arkansas per 10,000 total population. Three key indicators of the amount of rapes occurring in the region appear on the chart: the rate of rapes reported to law enforcement, the number of kits distributed by the State Crime lab, and the number of sexual assault examinations reimbursed by the state. All indicated a sharp drop in the year 2001. Indeed, the number of rapes of females reported to law enforcement dropped by 64% in 2001 as reported by the Arkansas Crime Information Center.



According to national data, it is estimated that child abuse exists in twenty-five to fifty percent of domestic violence cases. Because Arkansas does not currently collect domestic violence data, child maltreatment could perhaps be viewed as collateral information for domestic violence data. Chart Three supports this assumption; the trend data in the rate of child maltreatment victims and domestic abuse filings have shown similar trends in 1998-2001. Both indicators rose by a factor of 12% in 2001 over year 2000 in the Central Arkansas Region.

Chart Three

Comparison of child maltreatment victims and protective order rates by calendar year



West Arkansas Regional Analysis



Table One

Type of Offense	1998	1999	2000	2001
Rate of Child Maltreatment Victims (per 10,000 children)	79	84	86	88
Rate of Protective Orders (per 10,000 women)	56	61	66	57
Rate of Domestic Homicides (per 100,000 women)	2.64	0.87	0.00	3.30
Rate of Rape Offenses Reported (per 10,000 females)	3.69	3.08	6.46	6.77
Rate of Sexual Assault Exam Kits Distributed (per 10,000 population)	5.45	4.55	4.98	1.90
Rate of Sexual Assault Exam Kits Reimbursed (per 10,000 population)	1.68	1.50	2.41	2.73

As illustrated in Table One and Charts One through Three, West Arkansas has varying incidences of sexual and domestic violence. In Chart One, the 1998-2001 rates of both domestic homicide and rapes are reported. The 1998-2001 data reveals no apparent trend in either the rape or domestic homicide rate in the west region of Arkansas.

Chart One

Comparison of domestic violence and rape offenses by calendar year

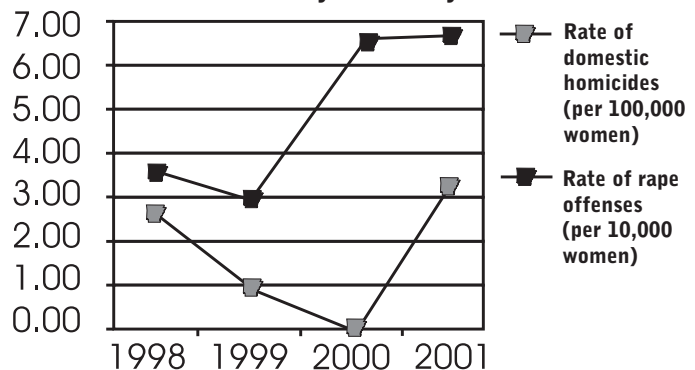


Chart Two

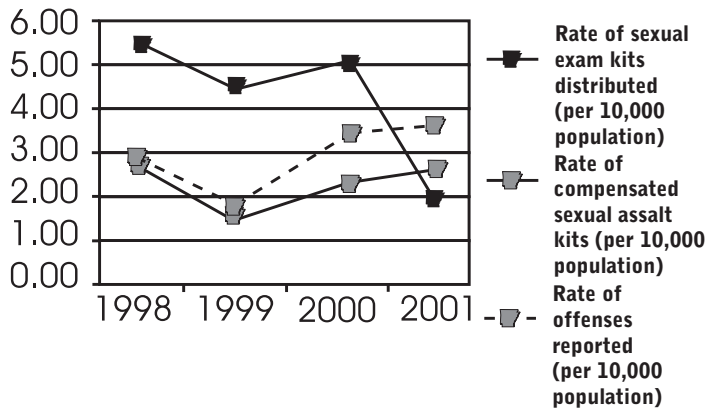


Chart Two provides a comparison of rape offenses, the rate per 10,000 of sexual assault exam kits distributed by the Arkansas Crime Lab, and the rate of sexual assault examination kits which were reimbursed by the state. In this instance, there appears to be an upward trend in the number of rapes reported in West Arkansas. This is supported by the corresponding trend in the rate of sexual assault exam kits reimbursed in

the region, a key indicator for the number of sexual assaults which have actually occurred.

The rate of child maltreatment has been rising steadily since 1998 in the western region of the state, as illustrated in Chart Three. During the same time period, the rate of domestic abuse filings followed a similar trend until 2001, when it dropped by 13% to a rate of 57 per 10,000 women, based on data obtained from the Arkansas Administrative Office of the Courts.

Chart Three

