

Numbers Now....

Criminal Justice in Oklahoma

April (Vol. 6, No. 1)

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National Youth Violence Prevention

Meredith Mouser

National Youth Violence Prevention Week not only heightens awareness of youth violence, but also serves to provide strategies for preventing youth violence (SAVE, 2016). According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), factors that contribute to youth violence can operate at a variety of levels, including the individual level, relationship level, community level, and societal level. In order to prevent youth violence, it is important to understand how risk factors at each level contribute to youth violence. Additionally, it is important to understand the best practices for reducing youth violence.

Individual risk factors may include the inability to delay gratification, drug and alcohol abuse, poor academic performance, pro-violence beliefs and attitudes, and past experience with violence or abuse (CDC, 2014). At the relationship level, peer groups and families can influence youth violence. Those who associate with groups that possess pro-violent attitudes and behaviors are much more likely to be the victim of, or inflict violence. Risk factors at the family level may include weak attachment with parents, poor monitoring and supervision, conflict and violence within the home, and rigid or erratic punishment (CDC, 2014). Community attributes may include high levels of crime, anti-social interactions among residents, poverty, unemployment, and even beliefs that violence is suitable behavior (CDC, 2014). Societal influences encompass factors from social norms regarding youth violence to wide-ranging sources of social inequality (CDC, 2014).

Youth violence information centers on those aged 10-24 years. However, the CDC maintains early prevention is essential to stopping youth violence – preferably during early childhood. Many resources are available to help parents nurture strong relationships with their children, including the CDC's *Essentials for Parenting Toddlers and Preschoolers*. Though, prevention strategies should not stop in the home. At the community level, broad prevention strategies should be considered and implemented. Furthermore, these strategies should be evidence-based. The CDC offers an abundance of information on evidence-based youth violence prevention programs. For more information, visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/opportunities-for-action.html>.

In this issue:

National Youth Violence Prevention Week

Students Against Violence Everywhere

Nikki Lofftus

On a Friday night in 1989, high school student Alex Orange lost his life after being shot while trying to break up a fight. The following Monday, Alex's classmates vowed to honor him by promoting the vision of a safe, secure, and fear-free school through the founding of Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE), a non-profit organization. Since its inception, SAVE has grown to 2,200 U.S. and 26 international chapters over the last 26 years – nine of which are in Oklahoma. Students establish and operate the chapters. The focus is on crime prevention, conflict management, service projects, and spreading the message of non-violence to youth within communities. SAVE is also a founding partner of the National Youth Violence Prevention Campaign, which will be observed April 4-8 this year. The campaign focuses on educating the community in the best approach to youth violence prevention. SAVE provides action kits and other resources for the campaign.

For more information, please visit <http://nationalsave.org/>

Oklahoma Youth Risk Behavioral Survey, 2015

John Flores-Hidones

The Oklahoma Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is a statewide survey that is part of the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS). Both surveys collect data for six categories of health risk behavior, which include inadequate physical activity, unhealthy dietary behavior, sexual behavior, tobacco use, drug/alcohol abuse, and those behaviors that may lead to unintentional injuries or violence. These health risk behaviors contribute to some of the leading causes of death and disability among youth in our country. According to data collected for the 2015 Oklahoma YRBS, 21% of respondents were in a physical fight during the study period. At the time of the survey, five percent of respondents reported they had carried a weapon to school in the last 30 days.

The Oklahoma YRBS also includes questions about electronic bullying (cyber bullying). The School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act (O.S. § 70. 24-100.3) defines electronic communications as “the communication of any written, verbal, pictorial information or video content by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, a mobile or cellular telephone or other wireless telecommunication device, or a computer.” According to 2015 survey results, 14% of public high school students reported they had been bullied electronically one or more times in the 12 months preceding the survey.

For more information about this survey, please visit the Oklahoma State Department of Health – YRBS Website at <https://www.ok.gov/health>.

Upcoming Publications

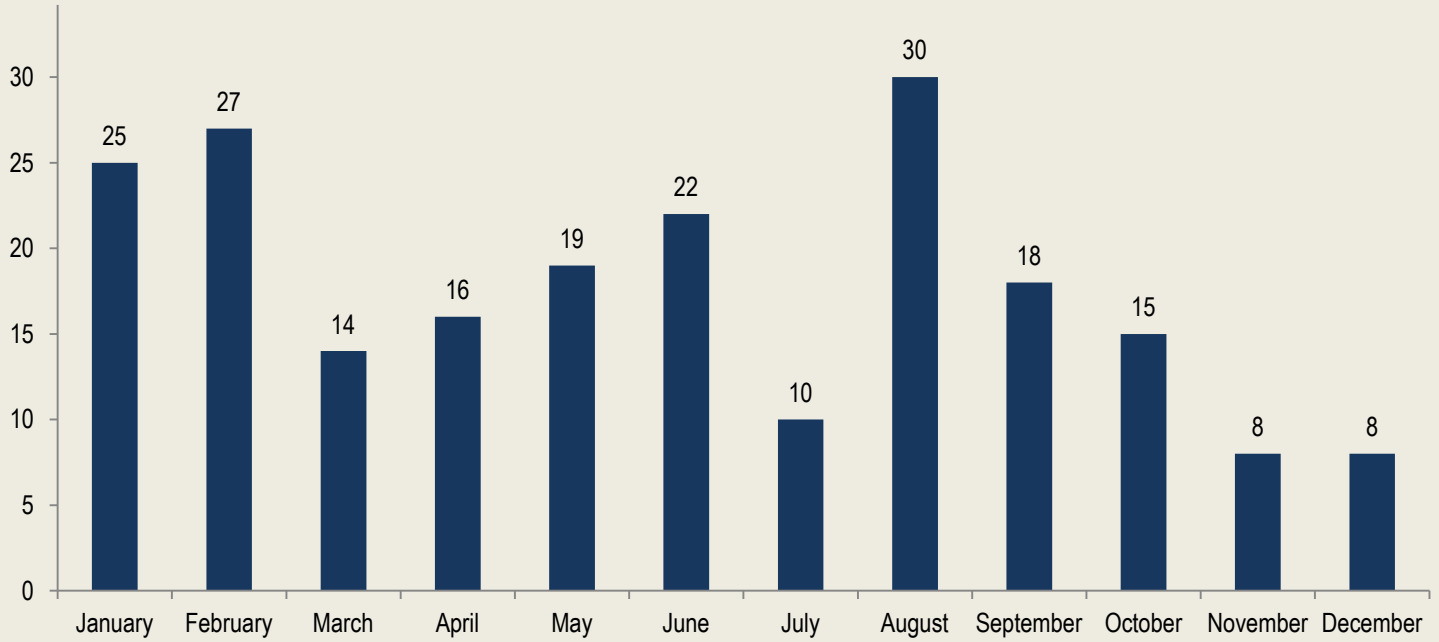
Oklahoma Crime
Victimization Survey
Report, 2016

Crime in Oklahoma, 2015

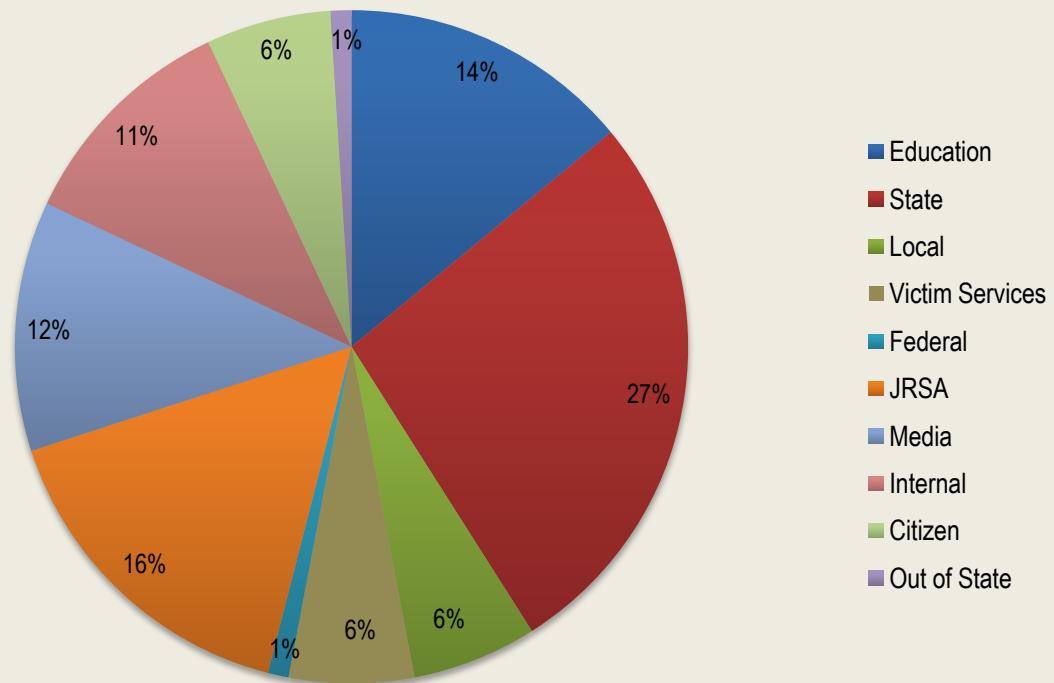
Fatal Officer-Involved
Shootings, 2015

Office of Criminal Justice Statistics: Research Requests, 2015

Research Requests, by Month



Research Requests, by Requestor



Mission

To collect, analyze, and public criminal justice research and statistics to assist in ensuring the safety and security of the citizens of Oklahoma.