

Family Violence Study 2012



CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS



BILL HASLAM
Governor

TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

901 R.S. Gass Boulevard
Nashville, Tennessee 37216-2639
(615) 744-4000
TDD (615) 744-4001



MARK GWYN
Director

June 19, 2013

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Each year the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation releases annual reports of crimes reported by law enforcement agencies to the Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System (TIBRS) program in five different reports. The TIBRS data contains a wide range of incident level information including victim and offender demographics. In the attached report, the TBI Crime Statistics Unit focused on domestic violence victims of crime for 2012 with a family relationship.

Realizing the far-reaching impact of domestic violence, we believe it is important to utilize crime statistics in an effort to offer insight into core questions surrounding the demographics of victims and offenders as well as the offenses occurring in the domestic violence incidents. We hope the information found in this report is beneficial to law enforcement and criminal justice policy makers in the state. Additional information may be found at www.tncrimeonline.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Gwyn".

Mark Gwyn
Director

Quick Facts

- Of the 2012 domestic violence offenses reported to TIBRS, 41,708 (50.3%) were reported as having a familial Victim to Offender relationship
- Simple Assault was, by far, the most frequently reported offense accounting for 67.5% of family violence offenses, outnumbering all other offenses by more than 4 to 1
- Females (65.3%) were almost two times more likely to be victimized than males (34.5%) in the state of Tennessee
- 98.9% of the 2012 family violence victims' race in Tennessee was either White (65.5%) or African American (33.3%)
- A total of 6,781 juveniles were documented as family violence victims, which is 16.2% of all victims
- 45.8% of Simple Assaults against juveniles reported the Victim to Offender relationship as *Child*, which denotes the parent as the offender and the child as the victim
- Offenders of familial Kidnapping/Abduction offenses in the state of Tennessee were most often parents in 2012 accounting for 57.7% of all reported Kidnapping/Abduction offenses
- Male offenders were reported in family violence offenses almost two times more likely than their female counterparts at 65.2% and 34.8% respectively
- The greatest gender disparity in offenders was clearly identified in the *Spouse* victim to offender relationship, where males accounted for the vast majority of offenders at 71.7%
- Forty-five of the 54 Murder/Non-negligent offenses documented with family relationships in 2012 were committed by males at 83.3%
- White offenders were documented 1.8 times more often than African-American domestic violence perpetrators
- Female parents were more likely to commit Simple Assault against their female children (68.3%) than male children (31.7%)
- The *Offender Suspected of Using* data element found that 17.5% (7,323) of family violence offenses involved drugs and/or alcohol use by the offender; the majority of these offenders, 82.5%, were using alcohol

Introduction

The emphasis on combatting and preventing domestic violence is not a new plight in the American society. For decades, many entities including community/social organizations, law enforcement agencies, and various sectors of the legal system across the nation have acknowledged and addressed the ongoing issue of domestic violence. Given the widespread nature of this issue, it is no surprise that the state of Tennessee is not exempt from the domestic violence problem and its coinciding effects. An approximated 14.5% of all 2012 crimes reported in the state were domestic in nature.

Realizing the far-reaching impact of domestic violence, it is important to utilize crime statistics in an effort to offer insight into core questions surrounding demography of victims and offenders as well as the prevalence of specific offenses. The purpose of the current report is to specifically examine reported domestic violence offenses in the state of Tennessee in 2012, where the victim and offender relationships are familial. This research is inspired by previous studies of domestic violence that revealed a high prevalence of family violence in the state's reported domestic cases. In addition to identifying relationships of victims and offenders, this report will also delve into the offenses types, victim and offender demographics, as well as looking at same sex aggression in families. Some other variables that are often considered important factors in domestic violence are the presence of drugs and/or alcohol during the commission of a crime. One specific TIBRS data element, Offender Suspected of Using, will be analyzed to give better insight into the influence of drugs and alcohol in familial violence.

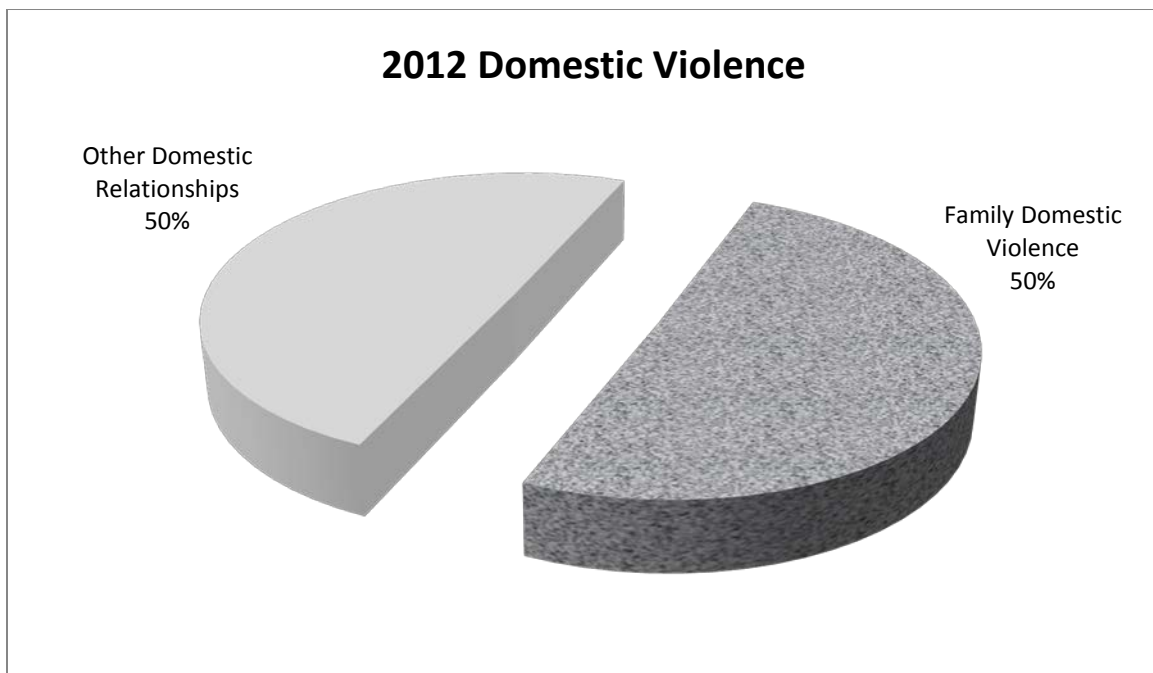
Women and children are most often documented as victims in domestic violence literature and criminal justice reports. This pattern does not deviate when looking within family settings. Juvenile victims and the corresponding offenses are closely examined here to address highly publicized issues involving juveniles such as child abuse and kidnapping offenses committed by family members.

The parameters of the current study should be specified. Given the topic, the scope of the study will be limited to offenses occurring in 2012 as reported to the Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System (TIBRS) where the incident was cited as domestically related. Of the offenses noted as domestic violence, only familial relationships will be examined closely in the current report. In an effort to consistently identify family relationships, the TIBRS *Victim to Offender* data element is utilized as a basis for the current analysis. This will allow us to identify family domestic violence relationships and the corresponding reported offenses, as well as victim and offender information. The innate nature of domestic violence is its tendency to be violence between persons. As such, only offenses defined by TIBRS as Crimes Against Persons will be included in the current analysis. Two offenses from this category will be excluded: Negligent Manslaughter (09B) and Justifiable Homicide (09C).

Due to the above mentioned report parameters, certain valid domestic violence relationships are omitted from the current study, particularly the Boyfriend/Girlfriend relationship which was the most commonly reported domestic violence relationship in 2012. It is important to note that, though not included in the analysis of this report, other domestic violence relationships were reported to TIBRS in 2012.

2012 Family Violence Offenses by Victim to Offender Relationship

Victim to Offender Relationship	Spouse	Child	Step-child	Grand-child	Sibling	Step-sibling	Parent	Step-parent	Grand-parent	In-Law	Other Family
Offense Type											
Murder	19	10	2	-	4	-	7	1	-	3	8
Kidnapping/Abduction	87	306	2	25	13	-	14	-	3	7	23
Forcible Rape	47	61	35	19	32	11	1	6	-	10	117
Forcible Sodomy	5	15	4	3	38	12	-	1	-	1	63
Sexual Assault w/Object	4	25	6	7	8	1	-	1	-	1	22
Forcible Fondling	7	151	67	49	75	27	3	11	-	5	203
Incest	-	20	3	4	11	-	2	3	-	-	10
Statutory Rape	-	2	7	-	1	-	-	2	-	3	11
Aggravated Assault	1,788	1,166	169	75	971	20	796	136	96	244	846
Simple Assault	9,398	3,461	641	213	4,558	100	4,964	572	446	837	3,025
Intimidation	1,794	428	96	15	676	27	920	138	96	345	827
Stalking	110	13	4	1	2	-	2	7	1	4	17
Total	13,259	5,658	1,036	411	6,389	198	6,709	878	642	1,460	5,172

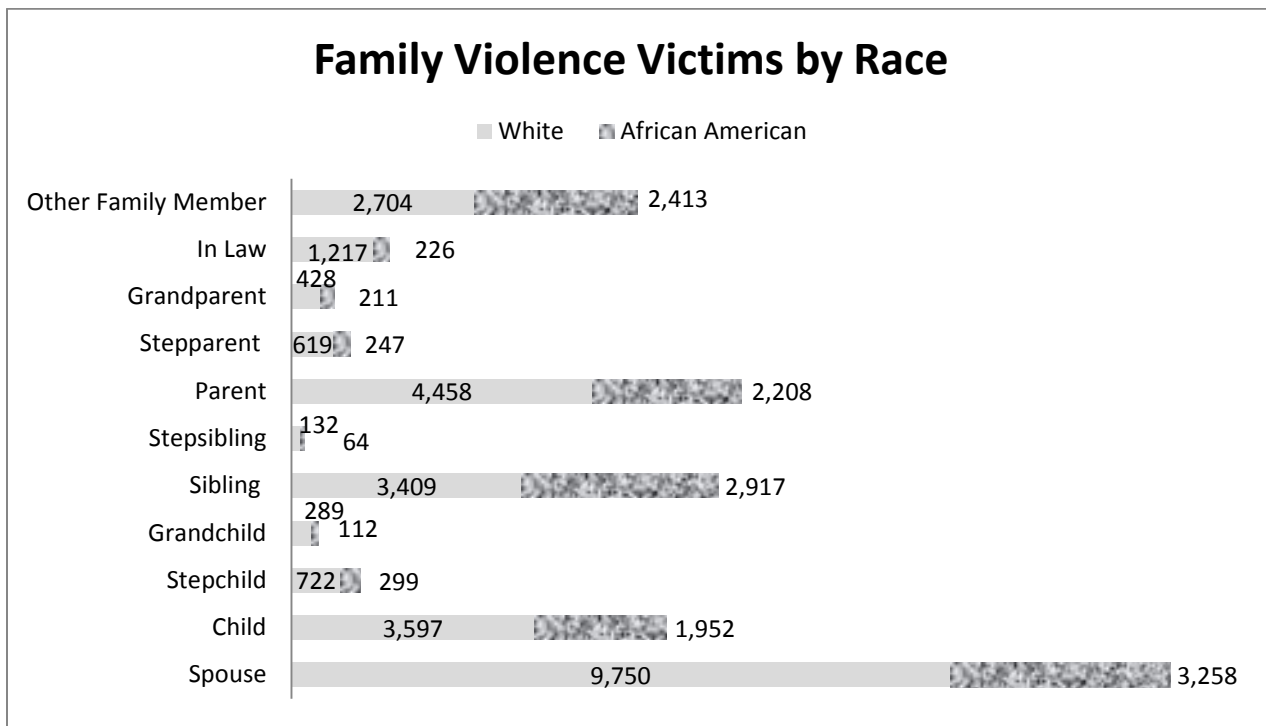


Victims

In 2012, a total of 41,708 individuals were victims of family domestic violence. As noted in the introduction, only offenses categorized as Crimes Against Persons were included in the current analysis. Simple Assault was, by far, the most frequently reported offense accounting for 67.5% of family violence offenses, outnumbering all other offenses by more than 4 to 1. The second most frequently reported offense was Aggravated Assaults (15.1%).

Examination of victim gender revealed that females (65.3%) were almost two times more likely to be victimized than males (34.5%) in the state of Tennessee. This pattern of females being victimized at a higher rate is seen in several family Victim to Offender relationships in 2012 including: Spouse (75.5%), Child (55.5%), Sibling (58.0%), Parent (73.1%), Grandparent (75.4%), Other Family Member (58.7%).

In addition to gender findings for family violence victims, some noteworthy points about victim race were also identified. The most prevalent victim race was White (65.5%) accounting for over half of the victims reported, while approximately one in every three victims were African American (33.3%). As such, 98.9% of the 2012 family violence victims' race in Tennessee was either White or African American. The races of Asian/Pacific Islander and Native American/Alaskan Native combined for less than one percent (0.5%) of all reported races. The number of reported White victims outnumbered African American victims in every family Victim to Offender relationship in 2012. The relationship having the greatest disparity between races was the *In-Law* relationship with White victims reported five times more often than African Americans.

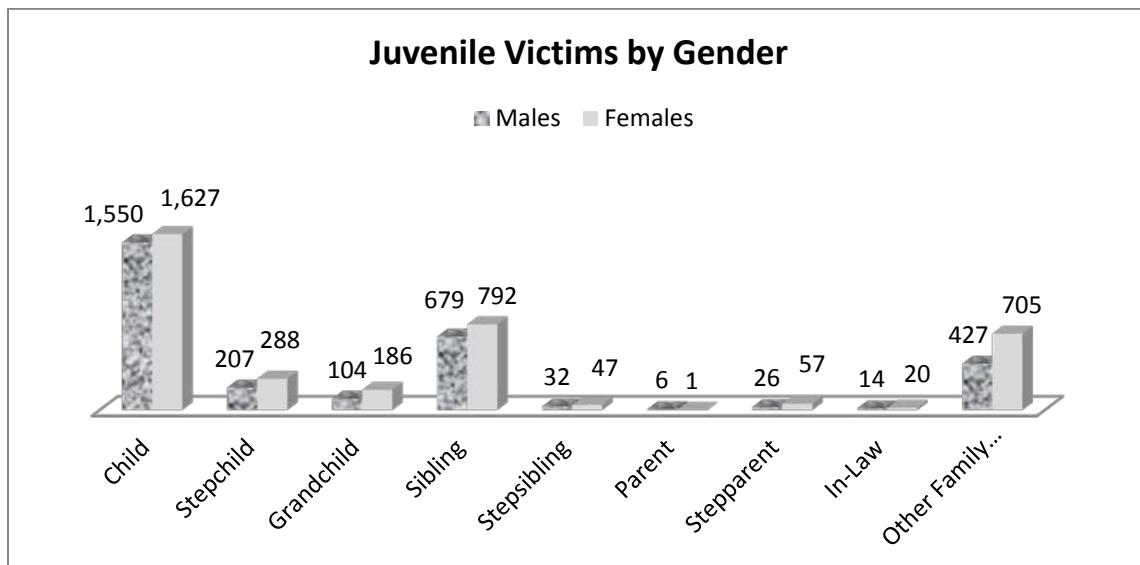


Juvenile Victims

Juveniles, those individuals under age 18, are often greatly affected by familial violence. A total of 6,781 juveniles were documented as victims in family violence incidents. Of the family violence victims with a known age, 16.2% were reported as juveniles (individuals under the age of 18). Examination of these victims and corresponding offenses and Victim to Offender relationships revealed that the most commonly reported offense was Simple Assault accounting for over half (58.1%) of all offenses committed against juveniles. Of these Simple Assaults, 45.8% of the Victim to Offender relationships were reported as *Child*, which denotes the parent as the offender and the child as the victim. Further analysis of the *Child* relationship reveals a very high number of Kidnapping/Abduction offenses (277). Offenders of familial Kidnapping/Abduction offenses in the state of Tennessee were most often parents in 2012 accounting for 57.7% of all reported Kidnapping/Abduction offenses.

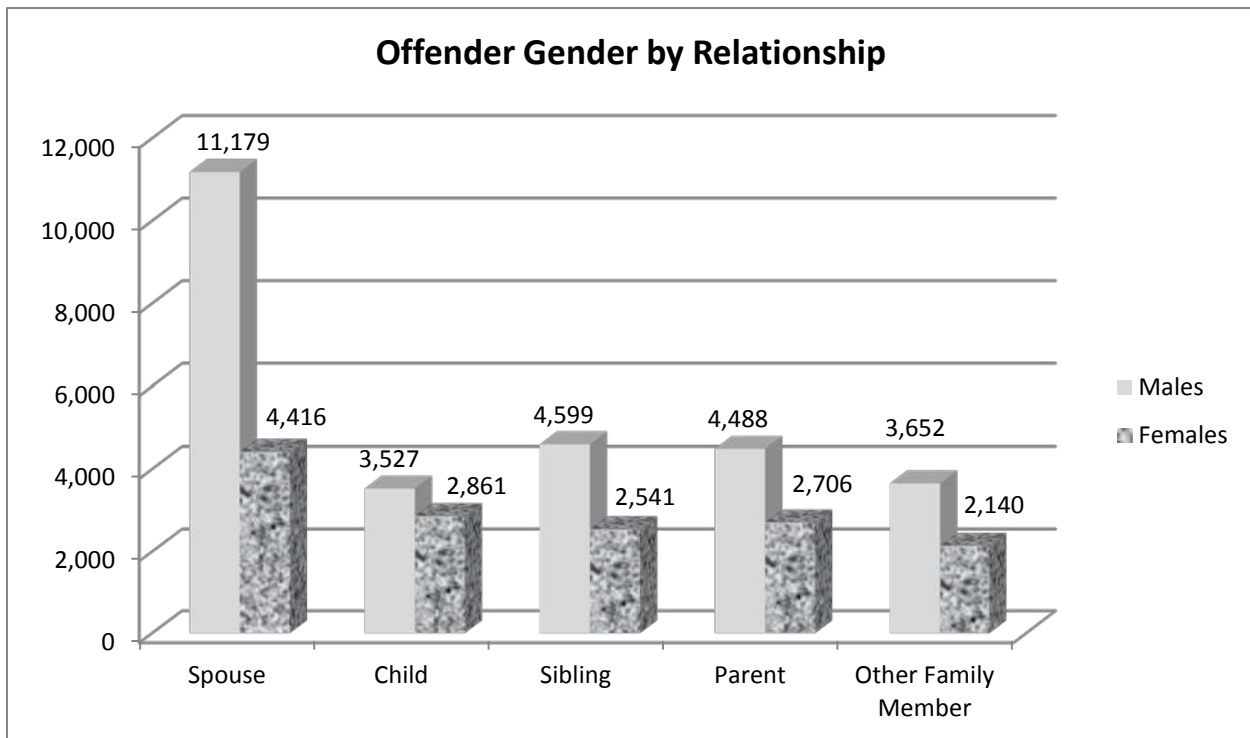
In 2012, six juveniles were murdered by family members in domestic violence incidents. Four of the six victims (66.7%), two males and two females, were murdered by his/her parent. Another juvenile murder victim was reported as being the stepchild of the offender. Juveniles were most often sodomized by a relative (*Other Family Member*) that does not fit into one of the other established familial Victim to Offender relationships. Of the 125 Forcible Sodomy offenses, 58 (46.4%) were documented with an *Other Family Member* Victim to Offender relationship; the next most frequently reported relationship was *Sibling* with 35 reported offenses (28.0%).

Analysis of juvenile victim gender found females (54.9%) to be victimized at a higher rate than males (44.9%). Thirteen juvenile victims were documented as having an Unknown gender. The greatest amount of variation between victim genders was seen in the TIBRS sex offenses. Females under age 18 were victims of Forcible Rape by family members 97.9% of the time in 2012, while juvenile males were most often Forcible Sodomy victims (69.6%). It should be noted that all same-sex rapes are reported in TIBRS as Forcible Sodomy. The vast majority of Sexual Assault with an Object and Forcible Fondling juvenile victims were females at 81.5% and 79.6% respectively.



Offenders

Of the reported 2012 offenses reported to TIBRS as domestic violence where familial relationships were reported, several trends emerged in the Offender profile. Close examination of offender demographic information revealed some notable findings when considering the variables of Gender and Race. It is often assumed that domestic violence involves a male offender and female victim. This general premise was found to be most often accurate in familial domestic violence, but certainly not in all cases. In 2012, male offenders were reported in family violence offenses almost two times more often than their female counterparts at 65.2% and 34.8% respectively. Additionally, male offenders outnumbered female offenders in every familial domestic violence relationship except for the *Grandchild* relationship, where female offenders (233) were reported in two more cases than males (231). The greatest gender disparity in offenders was clearly identified in the *Spouse* victim to offender relationship, where males accounted for the vast majority of offenders at 71.7%.



The Victim to Offender relationship with the highest frequency of female offenders was *Spouse* in which 4,416 were reported, accounting for 26.9% of all female offenders. Approximately thirty-five percent of the 480 Kidnapping/Abduction offenses by family members were committed by females (169).

Forty-five of the 54 Murder/Non-negligent offenses documented with family relationships in 2012 were committed by males at 83.3%. Additionally, the TIBRS Stalking offense reveals that males (100) stalked their spouses at more than seven times the rate of females (14) in 2012.

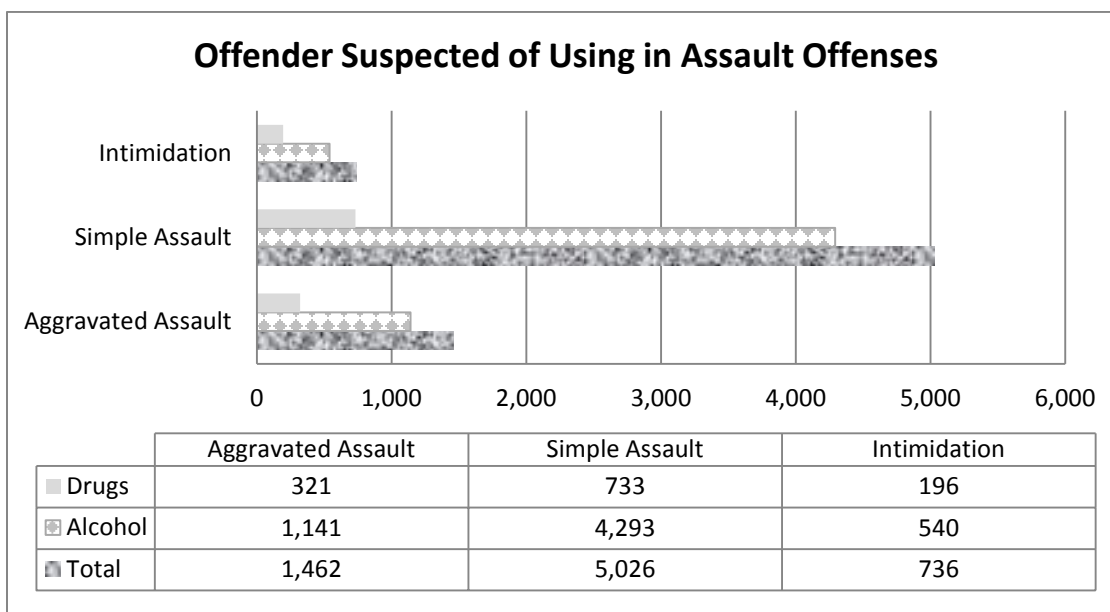
In addition to gender differences, the examination of Race also revealed some noteworthy findings. White offenders were more likely to offend than any other Race in 2012. As compared to other races, White offenders were documented 1.8 times more frequently than African-American domestic violence perpetrators. Asian/Pacific Islanders and Native American/Alaskan Natives were least often reported as offender races at 206 and 75 respectively. A closer look at the offenses and familial relationships reveals that, though White offenders outnumber African-Americans in most all offenses, the *Other Family Member* relationship shows decreased disparity between the races in reported offenses. This particular finding is detailed below comparing offenses committed by White and African-American offenders for *Other Family Member* relationship.

Other Family Member Relationship: Offenders by Race Comparison			
Offenses	White	African-American	Percent Difference
Murder	5	3	40.0%
Kidnapping/Abduction	14	9	35.7%
Forcible Rape	62	56	9.7%
Forcible Sodomy	26	36	38.5%
Sexual Assault w/Object	17	5	70.6%
Forcible Fondling	133	65	51.1%
Incest	10	0	100%
Statutory Rape	6	5	16.7%
Aggravated Assault	434	417	3.9%
Simple Assault	1,599	1,456	8.9%
Intimidation	416	417	0.2%
Stalking	13	4	69.2%

Another aspect of familial domestic violence that was captured in the current report is same sex aggression. Though less frequently reported to TIBRS than domestic violence between individuals of the opposite sex, crimes committed against same sex victims also occur. Given the lack of attention generally granted to this issue across domestic violence platforms, the current report intends to explore this occurrence in family violence across the state of Tennessee as reported to TIBRS.

Eighteen Murder offenses were documented as having both a male offender and victim as compared to three reported with female victim and offender. Female parents were more likely to commit Simple Assault against their female children (68.3%) than male children (31.7%). Similarly, the Sibling relationship also revealed Females offending at a higher rate of Simple Assaults against female victims (1,486) as compared to males (455). Interestingly, the male offenders in the *Child* and *Sibling* relationship categories do not show the same pattern. Simple Assault victims of male offenders with a *Child* Victim to Offender relationship were documented as 54.3% males and 45.7% females; a drastically decreased difference than shown in females. The same is true for the *Sibling* relationship with male same sex offenders and victims (50.5%) not being remarkably different in frequency from male offenders with female victims (49.5%) for 2012 Simple Assaults.

When analyzing crimes, it is imperative to acknowledge the role that certain variables, however minor or significant, may play in the actual commission of the final offense. Within law enforcement, the presence or prior use of drugs and alcohol are important when considering the overall circumstances and/or events that precede the crime. *Offender Suspected of Using* is a TIBRS data element that captures information about the offender's condition (using drugs and/or consuming alcohol) at the time of the incident. When examining this element in 2012 family violence offenses, 17.5% (7,323) involved drugs and/or alcohol use by the offender. The majority of these offenders, 82.5%, were using alcohol.



Seven murders reported in 2012 as a result of family violence were documented as the offender using drugs and/or alcohol. The offenses most frequently reported with offenders using drugs and/or alcohol were three of the four TIBRS Assault offenses: Simple Assault (68.6%), Aggravated Assault (20.0%), and Intimidation (10.1%). The actual frequency of each of these Assault offenses is depicted in the above chart.

Summary

The current report provides some insight into the issue of domestic violence within families in the state of Tennessee. Utilizing TIBRS crime statistics, analysis of victims, offenders, and their corresponding relationships was conducted to give an overview of important data elements documented in family domestic crimes. Half of all domestic violence offenses were committed against family members in 2012, and Spousal abuse was the most often reported type of family violence. Such definitive outcome data may be used in various ways to support avocation for domestic violence prevention and counseling. Additionally, there are implications for the damaging effects family violence has on children as both direct and indirect victims. As such, agencies dedicated to children's services may also take an interest in the current report. Shedding light on the prevalence of violence within Tennessee homes offers a quantitative basis for the obvious need for law enforcement, various social change agencies, and the community as a whole to address and combat this problem across the state.