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FIVE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT CRIME DATA

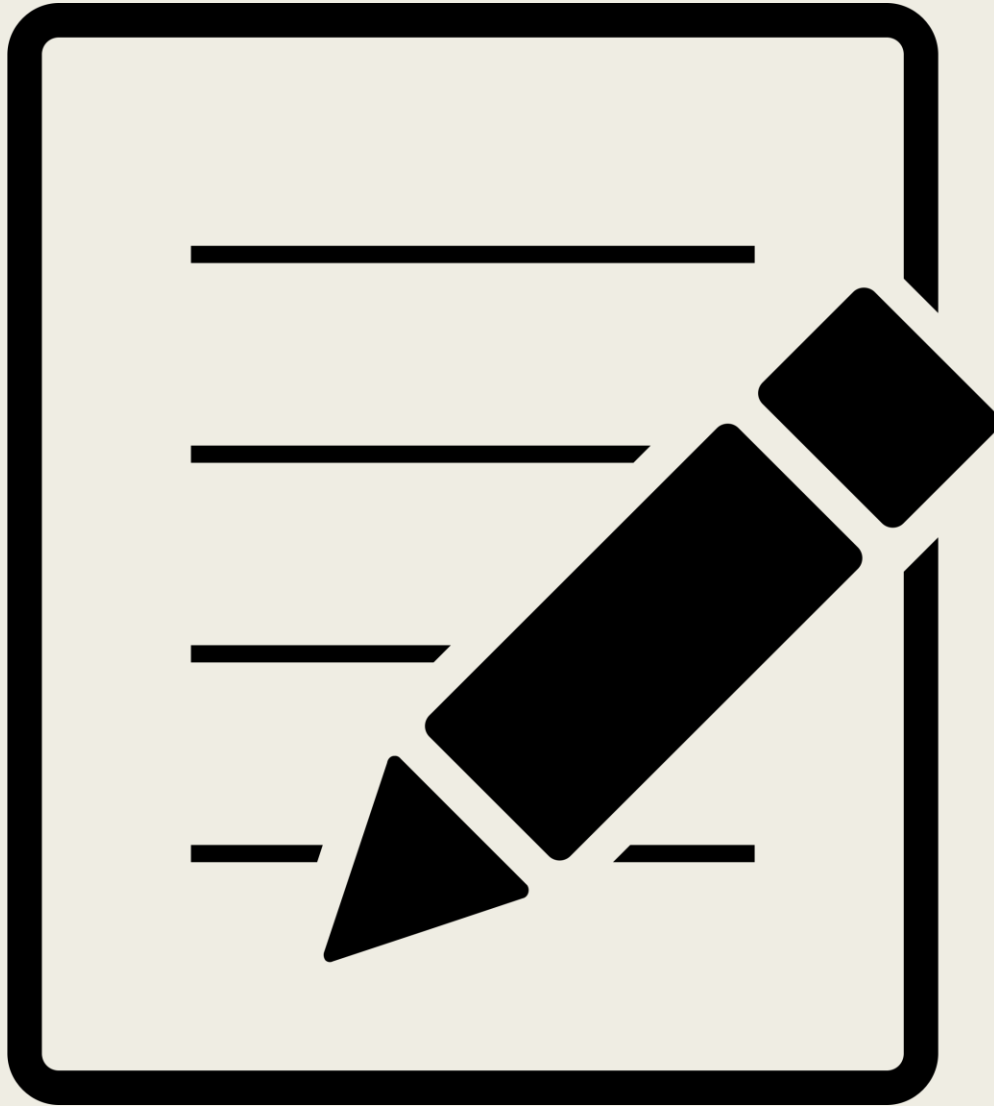
Tips for Interpreting FBI Crime Statistics

What is FBI Uniform Crime Reporting?

- National repository for the collection of crime statistics
- Administered by the FBI since 1930
- 18,000 city, university, county, state, tribal, and federal agencies participate
- Primary Goal: Build a reliable set of crime statistics for use in law enforcement administration, operation, and management
- Other uses-
 - *Policy and academic research*
 - *Regulate staffing levels*
 - *General information on crime over time*
- The FBI refers to these statistics as *estimates*

Five Things to Know

1. Things have changed over time
2. There are differences between agencies
3. There are two classification systems
4. Compliance is voluntary
5. It is based on reported crimes



1. Things Have Changed Over Time

Two types of changes:

- Definitions (ie, rape)
- Procedural guidance

2. There are Differences Between Agencies

- Procedural differences are known as “jurisdictional reporting”
- FBI UCR handbook is meant to minimize between-state differences
- FBI does not “collect” the data. What do they do?
 - Provide guidelines
 - Aggregate data collected by individual agencies

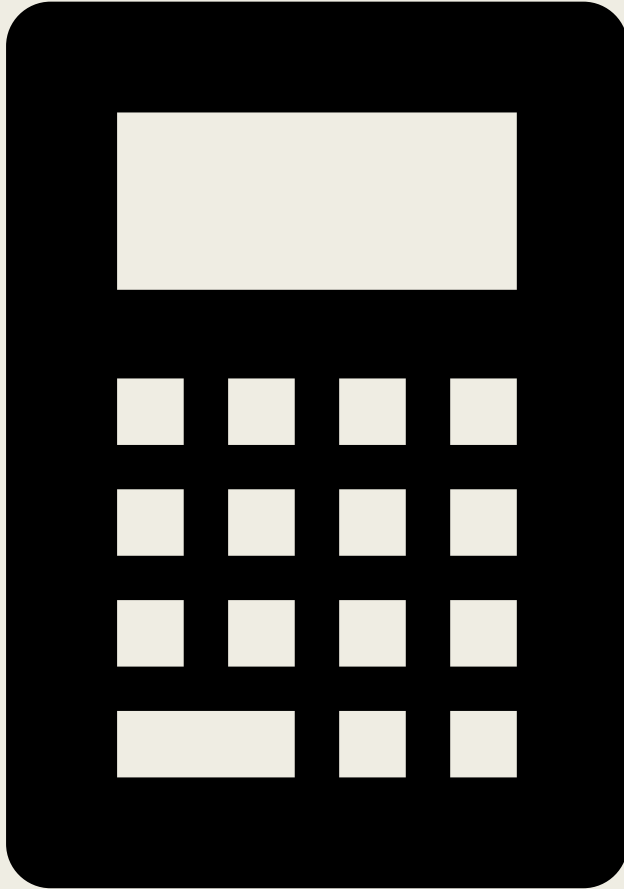
3. There are Two Classification Systems

Summary Reporting System (SRS)

- Traditional system
- Hierarchy Rule: Not all crimes in one incident are necessarily captured
- Fewer crime categories
- Collects less data that can be used to understand causes of crime

National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)

- Goal: Reduce variation between agencies
- Collects more information about each incident
- South Bend started January 2018
- The future: Everyone by 2021



4. Participation in UCR is Voluntary

- Agencies should make a “good faith” effort to report
- Estimates may be generated for agencies reporting less than 12 months of data (South Bend has not used estimates in recent memory)

5. UCR is Based on Reported Crimes

- Not equivalent to:
 - *911 calls for service*
 - *Crimes convicted or charged*
- Many factors impact whether or not crimes are reported
 - *Fear of retaliation*
 - *Not wanting offender to be punished*
 - *Belief that incident is personal or insignificant*
 - *Belief that the police cannot or will not help*
- The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is a complementary tool for estimating unreported crimes

“SINCE CRIME IS A SOCIOLOGICAL PHENOMENON INFLUENCED BY A VARIETY OF FACTORS, THE FBI DISCOURAGES RANKING THE AGENCIES AND USING THE DATA AS A MEASUREMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFECTIVENESS”

-A WORD ABOUT UCR DATA, MAY 2017



Explore
national
crime
trends
over time



Compare
one
agency
over time



Compare
one
agency
to
national
averages



Compare
agencies
to one
another

SBPD Transparency Hub

For other information on crime in South Bend and the South Bend Police Department, see our Transparency Hub.

police.southbendin.gov/datahub

Resources

- [Uniform Crime Reporting Website](#)
- [UCR Data Tool](#)
- [A Word About UCR Data](#)
- [Proper Use of UCR Data](#)
- [Transition to NIBRS](#)
- [UCR Data Quality Guidelines](#)
- [2019 NIBRS Manual](#)
- [National Crime Victimization Survey](#)
- [Criminal Victimization Report Summary 2016](#)