

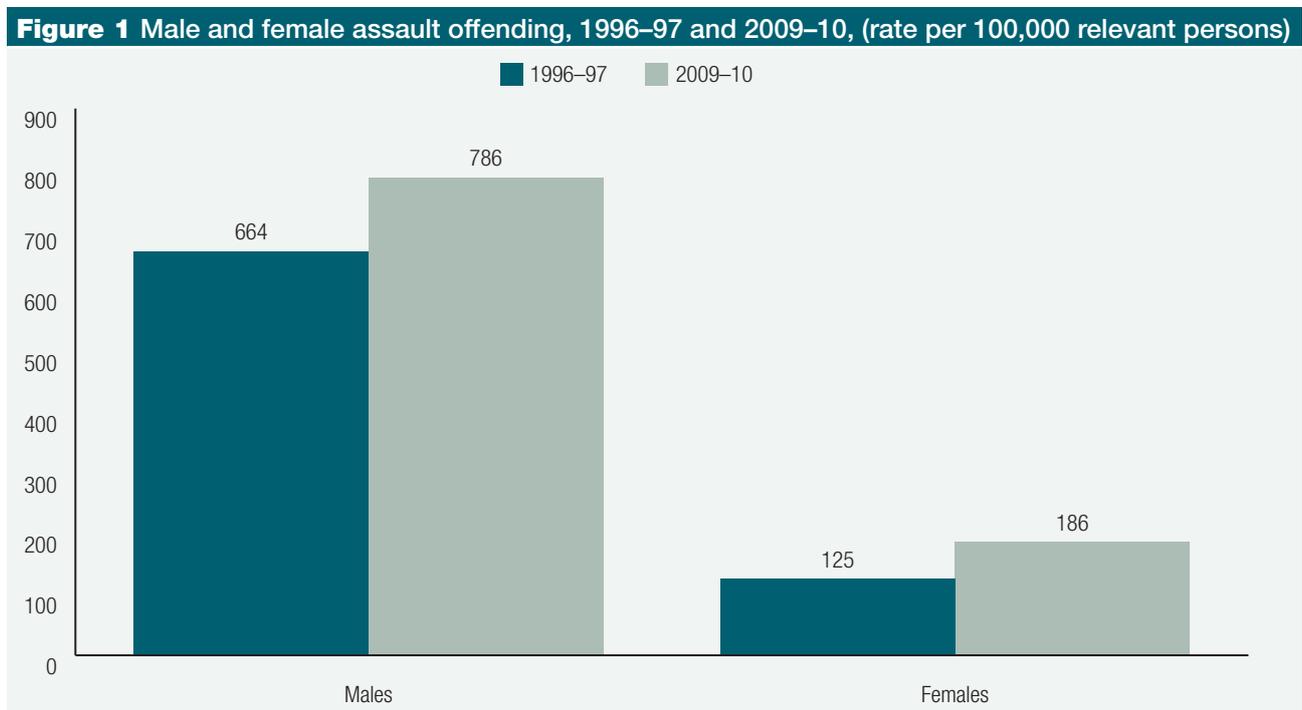


Research in Practice

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Male and female assault offending in Australia

Assault is by far the most common type of violent crime in Australia. In 2010, there were 171,083 assaults compared with 17,757 sexual assaults, 14,582 robberies and 260 homicides (AIC 2011). As shown in Figure 1, compared with the rate of offending recorded in 1996–97, assault offending has increased substantially.



Source: AIC data

Media commentary has recently focused on the increasing rate of female offending. As shown in Figure 1, both male and female assault offending increased between 1996–97 and 2009–10; the rate of female assault increased by 49 percent from 125 to 186 per 100,000 over this period. Despite male assault offending only increasing by 18 percent, it is important to note that males are still committing the majority of assaults and at more than four times the rate of females.

In 2009–10, males also experienced a higher rate of assault *victimisation* compared with females. Males were victimised at a rate of 837 per 100,000 compared with 675 per 100,000 for females (AIC 2011). Regardless, assault victimisation was highest for both genders in the 15 to 24 year age group (1,760 per 100,000 for males and 1,559 per 100,000 for females; AIC 2011). However, the statistics indicate some differences in the profiles of male and female victims of assault. For example, males are more likely to be assaulted by a peer or a stranger, while women are more likely to be victimised by a family member in a domestic violence situation (AIC 2011).

References

Australian Institute of Criminology 2011. *Australian crime: Facts and figures 2011*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. <http://aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/facts/1-20/2011.aspx>