

The Today Foundation

[Home](#) | [Our History](#) | [Contact](#) | [Donations](#) |

Children's Education Fund

[About](#)
[How CEF Works](#)
[Statistical Overview](#)
[Innovative School Awards](#)
[Technology Fundraisers](#)



Associated Texans Against Crime

Annual Report on Crime 2000-2001

Table of Contents

- [Letter from Chairman](#)
- [Foreward](#)
- [How much crime is there?](#)
- [Who commits crimes?](#)
- [Who are crime victims?](#)
- [What happens to criminals?](#)
- [Who is in prison?](#)
- [How much juvenile crime is there?](#)
- [How much drug abuse is there?](#)
- [How much family violence is there?](#)
- [How prevalent is DWI?](#)

Associated Texans ATAC Against Crime

[About](#)
[Annual Crime Report](#)
[Anti-Drug Awards](#)
[Distinguished Officer Awards](#)

The American Miracle

[About](#)

The Today Foundation

[Home](#) | [Our History](#) | [Contact](#) | [Donations](#) |

Children's Education Fund

[About](#)
[How CEF Works](#)
[Statistical Overview](#)
[Innovative School Awards](#)
[Technology Fundraisers](#)



[Table of Contents](#)
[Next](#)

Associated Texans Against Crime

Annual Report on Crime

Letter from Chairman

Dear Friends:

The good news for Texans is that crime is significantly lower today than at the beginning of this decade. The Texas violent crime rate in 1997 was 28% lower than the 1991 peak. The property crime rate is down 34% from its peak in 1988. The number of reported rapes are down 20% after peaking in 1993. The robbery rate has fallen 38% in five years. Car theft has fallen by a similar amount.

This real improvement did not take place in a vacuum. Texans, like Americans everywhere, have devoted increasing resources to fight crime at all levels. Certainly, not all crime-fighting dollars are well spent, but "tough" policies like limiting paroles have proven effective in reversing the rising trend of crime in Texas. This was a trend that rose virtually unabated from at least 1976 to the early 1990s.

But while we have made progress, problems remain. One of the most disturbing is the increasing problem of mandatory release. This law, mandating that prisoners be released by formula with no chance for the Parole Board to intervene, must be changed. The 16,000 inmates freed under the measure in 1997 outnumbered those released under traditional parole. In fact, annual paroles have fallen from 33,633 in 1991 to 10,608 in 1997. Mandatory releases over the same period rose from 2,213 to 16,402.

In addition, the Texas criminal justice system is a vast network of law enforcement officers, judges, probation and parole officers and government administrators. One of the biggest challenges going forward will be how to manage such a large and growing system efficiently and effectively. Prison management may not make a good news story, but this issue is crucial for an agency that spends \$2 billion of taxpayers' money a year.

Other concerns include family violence and drug abuse. These crimes continue to rise in contrast to the downward trend of overall crime. And despite the drop in juvenile crime, Texas juveniles are more likely to be arrested than adults.

These concerns continue to drive our research and education efforts.

I hope this Annual Report on Crime provides a snapshot of crime and crime trends in Texas. The report tries to answer questions such as, "How much crime is there? Are small towns still safer than large urban

Associated Texans ATCC Against Crime

[About](#)
[Annual Crime Report](#)
[Anti-Drug Awards](#)
[Distinguished Officer Awards](#)

The American Miracle

[About](#)

areas? Are our prisons full of petty offenders or violent felons?"

As you review the report, I hope you will take special note of the long period of rising violent and property crime in this state. Please keep these painful trends in mind when vocal opponents of tough criminal justice policies complain of new sanctions placed on sex offenders, tougher parole policies, or this State's commitment to carry out the death sentences placed on convicted killers.

By continuing to work together, we can make Texas safer for all of us.

Sincerely,



Richard H. Collins
Founder and Chairman

[Letter from Chairman](#) | [Foreward](#) | [How much crime is there?](#) | [Who commits crimes?](#) | [Who are crime victims?](#) | [What happens to criminals?](#) | [Who is in prison?](#) | [How much juvenile crime is there?](#) | [How much drug abuse is there?](#) | [How much family violence is there?](#) | [How prevalent is DWI?](#) | [Table of Contents](#)

The Today Foundation

[Home](#) | [Our History](#) | [Contact](#) | [Donations](#) |

Children's Education Fund

[About](#)
[How CEF Works](#)
[Statistical Overview](#)
[Innovative School Awards](#)
[Technology Fundraisers](#)



[Table of Contents](#)
[Next](#)
[Previous](#)

Associated Texans Against Crime

[About](#)
[Annual Crime Report](#)
[Anti-Drug Awards](#)
[Distinguished Officer Awards](#)

The American Miracle

[About](#)

Associated Texans Against Crime

Annual Report on Crime

Foreward by Senator Florence Shapiro

As we enter the new millennium, we must re-dedicate ourselves to the notion that criminal justice and public safety remain one of our highest concerns. After all, safety and justice are the foundations from which all social order flows. We should re-examine our commitment to that principle from time to time. The eve of the 20th Century is such an occasion.

Although the latter half of this decade saw common sense and logic return to our approach toward crime, for years this state floundered in a social experiment which failed each of us and resulted in the proliferation of victims. For too long, our system focused more on the rights of the criminal than on the rights of the law-abiding citizen. Our justice system produced lighter and easier sentences, an ever increasing focus on therapy, and an extremely high parole rate. As recently as 1990, we were granting parole for eight out of every ten convicts who were eligible.

People commit crimes because they choose to. It is our collective responsibility then, to make the choice to commit crimes as unattractive as possible. It is a battle we must all fight together. After all, to do otherwise is unthinkable. In fact, Francis Bacon might prove to be correct when he said, "If we do not maintain justice, justice surely will not maintain us."

The pendulum is finally swinging in favor of the citizens and victims. At the forefront of this, ATAC has worked hard to ensure that the rights of citizens were held above the rights of criminals. From the toughest sex offender laws in the country, to longer prison sentences and new standards in community supervision, we are changing our state's criminal justice system.

Texas has come a long way, but certainly there is much more to be done. The growing number of inmates freed early under the mandatory release statute is especially disturbing. Under Texas mandatory release laws, our prisons are forced to release criminals based on a formula of "good time" and time served. This loophole is no longer available to today's serious criminals, but many already in prison remain eligible for mandatory release. In fact, every year, thousands of prisoners are released into Texas communities. Incredibly, in each of the last three years, more prisoners were freed under mandatory release than traditional parole.

I know you are dedicated to making Texas a safer place to live and raise our families. I am proud that ATAC has been a great ally in this battle, informing both the public and legislators of important criminal justice issues. ATAC will continue to address important criminal justice topics, and just as important, ATAC will sound an alarm if the important accomplishments of the past few years begin to deteriorate.

(Florence Shapiro is serving her fourth term in the Texas Senate representing District 8 in North Texas. She is Chairman of the State Affairs Committee and also serves on the Criminal Justice and Administration committees. Senator Shapiro's accomplishments include passing a comprehensive package of bills that changed how Texas punishes sex offenders, known as Ashley's Laws.)

[Letter from Chairman](#) | [Foreward](#) | [How much crime is there?](#) | [Who commits crimes?](#) | [Who are crime victims?](#) | [What happens to criminals?](#) | [Who is in prison?](#) | [How much juvenile crime is there?](#) | [How much drug abuse is there?](#) | [How much family violence is there?](#) | [How prevalent is DWI?](#) | [Table of Contents](#)

The Today Foundation

[Home](#) | [Our History](#) | [Contact](#) | [Donations](#) |

Children's Education Fund

[About](#)
[How CEF Works](#)
[Statistical Overview](#)
[Innovative School Awards](#)
[Technology Fundraisers](#)



[Table of Contents](#)
[Next](#)
[Previous](#)

Associated Texans Against Crime

Associated Texans ATAC Against Crime

[About](#)
[Annual Crime Report](#)
[Anti-Drug Awards](#)
[Distinguished Officer Awards](#)

The American Miracle

[About](#)

Annual Report on Crime

How much crime is there?

Crime in Texas continues to fall

There were 1,064,914 UCR crimes reported to Texas law enforcement agencies in 1997, or 2.5% fewer than reported in 1996. UCR crimes are the seven serious crimes tracked by law enforcement authorities under the Uniform Crime Reporting program. The UCR crimes are murder, rape aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, theft and auto theft. Each category was lower in terms of the number of crimes reported and the crime rate (crimes reported per 100,000 Texans). [View Chart on Number of Crime vs. Crime Rate.](#)

Most crimes reported are property crime

In 1997, property crimes in Texas represented 89% of all crimes reported. Reported property crimes have fallen dramatically in recent years resulting in a property crime rate that is below levels of the 1970s. The violent crime rate has also fallen, but remains well above the levels of the 1970s. In fact, the violent crime rate was 70% higher in 1997 than in 1976. Rapes, robberies and aggravated assaults in 1997 were 40%, 13% and 126% higher respectively than in 1976. The murder rate, however, was 44% lower in 1997 than 1976. [View Chart on Violent Crime vs. Property Crime.](#)

Chance of becoming a victim resumes downward trend

In 1997, about 55 out of every 1,000 Texans were victims of a UCR crime, a figure slightly lower than in 1996. These closely tracked crimes are murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft or car theft. Texans were less likely to report property crimes in 1997 than anytime over the past 21 years. Reported violent crime, however, is higher today than 20 years ago. Texans were much less likely to be crime victims in 1997 than in the early 1990s. But reports of rape, robbery and aggravated assault remain more common today than in the 1970s. [View Chart on Reported Crimes per 1,000 Texans.](#)

Texans lose \$1.3 billion in property to crime

In 1997, Texans reported losses of \$1.35 billion from robbery, burglary, theft and car theft, about 2.5% more than in 1996. Stolen items most often recovered are "locally stolen" vehicles which are found 76% of the time. However, authorities arrest a suspect in only 16% of car thefts. Suspects for burglary are found 13% of the time. Most individuals arrested for burglary are 13-19 years-old. The value of property reported stolen rose in 1997 for theft and car theft, but fell slightly for burglary and robbery. Theft is the largest category of UCR crime. [View Chart on Reported Property Lost to Crime.](#)

Texas crime rate again tracking national average

For much of the 1980s the rate of violent and property crime in Texas was higher than the national average. But reported crimes in the state have reversed their upward trends. The reported crime rate in Texas is now close to the national average for both property and violent crime. [View Chart on Texas Crime Compared to U.S.](#)

Violent crime has fallen, but remains high

All four categories of violent crime fell in 1997. UCR violent crimes reported in Texas in 1997 were at their lowest level since 1985. Although the rate of reported rapes, robberies and aggravated assaults generally rose from the 1970s to the early 1990s, the murder rate peaked in 1981. In fact the 1997 murder rate was the lowest since at least 1976. Notably, convicted murderers were the least likely to be released early from prison during the 1980s and early 1990s, a period of soft parole policies in Texas. [View Chart on Texas Violent Crime Rates.](#)

More than one million arrests in 1997

Arrests for UCR crimes, the 7 serious offenses most closely tracked by the DPS, represented 15% of arrests in Texas in 1997. There were 6 times as many UCR crimes reported as there were arrests for such crimes in 1997. Arrests for drunkenness and driving under the influence account for almost a quarter of all arrests in Texas, resulting in a significant diversion of police and judicial resources away from property and violent crimes. [View Chart on Distribution of Texas Arrests.](#)

Crime could be twice as high as reported

According to the National Crime Victimization Survey for 1996, only 43% of violent crime victims nationwide bothered to report the crime to police. The survey measures the prevalence of offenses by interviewing all occupants 12 or older in a sample representative of households nationally. If national rates of reporting crimes holds true for Texas, then there were 1,402 victims of violent crime per 100,000 residents in 1997 rather than the 603 reported. According to the report, Crime Victimization 1997 by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, only 63% of crime victims nationwide bothered to report the crime to police. The survey measures the prevalence of offenses by interviewing all occupants 12 or older in a sample representative of households nationally. According to the survey, just 28% of thefts are reported and only 31% of rapes. [View Chart on Percentage of Crimes Not Reported.](#)

[Letter from Chairman](#) | [Foreward](#) | [How much crime is there?](#) | [Who commits crimes?](#) | [Who are crime victims?](#) | [What happens to criminals?](#) | [Who is in prison?](#) | [How much juvenile crime is there?](#) | [How much drug abuse is there?](#) | [How much family violence is there?](#) | [How prevalent is DWI?](#) | [Table of Contents](#)

The Today Foundation

[Home](#) | [Our History](#) | [Contact](#) | [Donations](#) |

Children's Education Fund

[About](#)
[How CEF Works](#)
[Statistical Overview](#)
[Innovative School Awards](#)
[Technology Fundraisers](#)

Associated Texans Against Crime

[About](#)
[Annual Crime Report](#)
[Anti-Drug Awards](#)
[Distinguished Officer Awards](#)

The American Miracle

[About](#)



[Table of Contents](#)
[Next](#)
[Previous](#)

Associated Texans Against Crime

Annual Report on Crime

Who are crime victims?

Minorities are more often victims of violent crime

Based on the nationwide 1996 Crime Victim Survey by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, minorities are most likely to be victims of violent crime. Blacks are three times as likely to be robbed as whites and two times as likely to be victims of aggravated assault. Males in general are twice as likely to be victims of robbery or aggravated assault. [View Chart on Victimization by Race.](#)

Violent offenders generally same race as victim

According to the 1990 National Crime Survey of Texas, victims of violent crime are most likely to be attacked or robbed by individuals of the same race. The violent crimes studied were rape, robbery and assault. [View Chart on Victim and Offender Relationship.](#)

Victimization varies with demographics

According to a 1996 survey performed by the Bureau of Justice statistics, 1 in 10 individuals 16 to 19 years of age were subject to a violent crime (or 102.7 victimizations per 1,000 population). Only 1 in 200 individuals 65 and older were violent crime victims. Males were more likely to be victims of violent crime as were minorities and the poor. About 1 in 15 individuals earning less than \$7,500 per year were violent crime victims. At least 15% of murder victims nationwide are ages 18-22 even though this group represents only 7% of the population. [View Chart on Demographics and Crime Victims.](#)

Texas becomes safer vs. other states

Between 1990 and 1996 violent crime in Texas fell to the degree that Texas improved its ranking vs. other states. Rankings are based on violent crimes reported to police. On this basis, Florida was the state most prone to violent crime in 1990 and 1996. New York ranked 2nd in terms of violent crime in 1990, but was only the 11th most violent state by 1996. [View Chart on Violent Crime in Larger States.](#)

Rape victims usually know their attacker

According to national crime data, about half of all violent crimes are committed by individuals familiar to the victim. Robberies are most likely to be committed by individuals unfamiliar to the victim, but two-thirds of rapes are committed by those known to the victim. According to national data recorded by police, 44% of rape victims are under the age of 18. Rape victims are likely to know their offender, with only 25% of victims reporting that the offender was a stranger. About half of rape defendants are released prior to trial, and only half of those must post a financial bond. [View Chart on Relationship of Victim to Offender.](#)

Violent crime hits the poor the hardest

Members of very poor households are more likely to be victims of violent crime than other individuals. According to a 1996 survey, 1 in 15 individuals from households earning less than \$7,500 annually were victims of violent crime. This compares to 1 in 32 victims earning more than \$75,000 per year. One in 18 urban dwellers were victims of violent crime in 1996 compared to 1 in 26 suburbanites. Those in rural areas had a 1 in 33 chance of becoming violent crime victims. [View Chart on Victimization and Income.](#)

[Letter from Chairman](#) | [Foreward](#) | [How much crime is there?](#) | [Who commits crimes?](#) | [Who are crime victims?](#) | [What happens to criminals?](#) | [Who is in prison?](#) | [How much juvenile crime is there?](#) | [How much drug abuse is there?](#) | [How much family violence is there?](#) | [How prevalent is DWI?](#) | [Table of Contents](#)



Children's Education Fund

- [About](#)
- [How CEF Works](#)
- [Statistical Overview](#)
- [Innovative School Awards](#)
- [Technology Fundraisers](#)



Associated Texans Against Crime

SAN ANTONIO & GALVESTON POLICE OFFICERS RECEIVE \$1,000 FOR OUTSTANDING LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

Each year the Associated Texans Against Crime recognizes an outstanding law enforcement officer for his or her efforts toward fighting crime in our state. This year ATAC is honored to name Detective Eddie Gonzales of the San Antonio Police Department and Officer Crystal Teague of the Galveston Police Department as the recipients of the Associated Texans Against Crime Distinguished Officer Award.

More than 1,200 sheriffs, police chiefs and city marshals received nomination forms this year. Officers Gonzales and Teague were two of the top 10 finalists and, ultimately, were selected as winners for 2002. On behalf of ATAC, San Antonio Police Captain Harry Griffin presented a certificate and \$1,000 check to Officer Gonzales, while Galveston Chief of Police Robert Pierce honored Officer Teague with the same.

Detective Gonzales received multiple nominations for the Distinguished Officer Award, including one from fellow officer FBI Special Agent Miguel Alba, and one from the Senior Vice President of Loss Prevention of Zale Jewelry Corporation. Gonzales was instrumental in the apprehension and arrest of members of a burglary ring that had struck multiple Zale Jewelers stores.

"Detective Gonzales doesn't know the meaning of failure. When a difficult case hits a roadblock, he finds a way around it. If not for his unstoppable perseverance, some crimes might be left unpunished," Patrol Division Executive Officer Griffin said in his nomination of Gonzales.

FBI Agent Alba added, "Detective Gonzales is highly regarded by his peers as an outstanding officer. He is sometimes known as the 'little pit bull' because when he gets his teeth on an investigation, he doesn't let go of it until the perpetrators are in custody."

In his nomination of fellow officer Crystal Teague, Detective Sergeant Jorge Trevino explained that Teague went above and beyond the call of duty in her role as part of the Criminal Investigations Division of the Galveston PD. Specifically assigned to follow domestic violence investigations, Officer Teague handles each case with the care and sensitivity it deserves. Along with ensuring the safety of domestic abuse sufferers, Teague spends countless uncompensated hours of overtime in counseling victims until they feel strengthened by the knowledge that someone does care.

"I have seen victims walk into the investigation room looking defeated and tired. I

Associated Texans Against Crime

- [About](#)
- [Annual Crime Report](#)
- [Anti-Drug Awards](#)
- [Distinguished Officer Awards](#)

The American Miracle

- [About](#)

have seen more than a few of these walk out with a little more self esteem and appearing encouraged because, thanks to Officer Teague, they know that they do have a choice and they do not deserve what is happening to them," Detective Sergeant Trevino said.

ATAC understands that law enforcement can be a dangerous and thankless profession. With this in mind, we are proud to show our appreciation to Officers Gonzales and Teague for their exceptional performance in the line of duty. We believe the Distinguished Officer Award is a small way to honor those who choose to serve Texas in this capacity and to increase the public's awareness of the excellent work performed by its officers.

Founded by Richard H. Collins, Associated Texans Against Crime is a non-profit organization based in Dallas that is committed to increasing the public's and policy maker's awareness of criminal justice issues. As part of the Today Foundation, ATAC's Anti-Drug Award also recognizes Texas schools with outstanding drug prevention programs.
