

Prevalence of Domestic Violence

- Estimates range from 960,000 incidents of violence against a current or former spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend per year ⁽¹⁾ to three million women who are physically abused by their husband or boyfriend per year ⁽²⁾.
- Around the world, at least one in every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused during her lifetime. ⁽³⁾
- Nearly one-third of American women (31 percent) report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives, according to a 1998 Commonwealth Fund survey. ⁽⁴⁾
- Nearly 25 percent of American women report being raped and/or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, cohabitating partner, or date at some time in their lifetime, according to the National Violence Against Women Survey, conducted from November 1995 to May 1996. ⁽⁵⁾
- Thirty percent of Americans say they know a women who has been physically abused by her husband or boyfriend in the past year. ⁽⁶⁾
- Intimate partner violence is primarily a crime against women. In 1999, women accounted for 85 percent of the victims of intimate partner violence (671,110 total) and men accounted for 15 percent of the victims (120,100 total). ⁽⁷⁾
- While women are less likely than men to be victims of violent crimes overall, women are five to eight times more likely than men to be victimized by an intimate partner. ⁽⁸⁾ From 1993 to 1998, victimization by an intimate accounted for 22 percent of the violence experienced by females. It accounted for three percent of the violent crime sustained by males. ⁽⁹⁾
- Women of all races are about equally vulnerable to violence by an intimate. ⁽¹⁰⁾
- Male violence against women does much more damage than female violence against men; women are much more likely to be injured than men. ⁽¹¹⁾
- The most rapid growth in domestic relations caseloads is occurring in domestic violence filings. Between 1993 and 1995, 18 of 32 states with three year filing figures reported an increase of 20 percent or more. ⁽¹²⁾
- Women are seven to 14 times more likely than men to report suffering severe physical assaults from an intimate partner. ⁽¹³⁾

Domestic Homicides

- On average, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in this country every day. In 1999, 1,642 murders were attributed to intimates; 74 percent of the murder victims (1,218 total) were women. ⁽¹⁴⁾
- Male murder victims are substantially less likely than female murder victims to be killed by an intimate partner. In 1999, intimate partner homicides accounted for 32 percent of the murders of women and approximately four percent of the murders of men. ⁽¹⁵⁾

Health Issues

- About half of all female victims of intimate violence report an injury of some type, and about 20 percent of them seek medical assistance. ⁽¹⁶⁾

- Thirty-seven percent of women who sought treatment in emergency rooms for violence-related injuries in 1994 were injured by a current or former spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend. (17)

Domestic Violence and Youth

- Approximately one in five female high school students reports being physically and/or sexually abused by a dating partner. (18)
- Eight percent of high school age girls said “yes” when asked if “a boyfriend or date has ever forced sex against your will.” (19)
- Forty percent of girls age 14-17 report knowing someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend. (20)
- During the 1996-1997 school year, there were an estimated 4,000 incidents of rape or other types of sexual assault in public schools across the country. (21)

Domestic Violence and Children

- In a national survey of more than 6,000 American families, 50 percent of the men who frequently assaulted their wives also frequently abused their children. (22)
- Slightly more than half of female victims of intimate violence live in households with children under age 12. (23)

Rape

- Three in four women (76 percent) who reported they had been raped and/or physically assaulted since age 18 said that a current or former husband, cohabitating partner, or date committed the assault. (24)
- One in five (21 percent) women reported she had been raped or physically or sexually assaulted in her lifetime. (25)
- Nearly one-fifth of women (18 percent) reported experiencing a completed or attempted rape at some time in their lives; one in 33 men (three percent) reported experiencing a completed or attempted rape at some time in their lives. (26)

Stalking

- Seventy-eight percent of stalking victims are women. Women are significantly more likely than men (60 percent and 30 percent, respectively) to be stalked by intimate partners. (27)
- Eighty percent of women who are stalked by former husbands are physically assaulted by that partner and 30 percent are sexually assaulted by that partner. (28)

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