



Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Fact Sheet

Incidence, Prevalence, Severity

Domestic violence and sexual assault are pervasive, life-threatening crimes affecting millions of individuals across our nation, regardless of age, economic status, race, religion, or education level.

- ★ Almost one in two women (47.3% or 59 million) and more than four in 10 men (44.2% or 52.1 million) in the United States reported contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime.¹
- ★ Nearly eight million women reported contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in the 12 months preceding one survey.²
- ★ One in five women and one in 14 men have experienced completed or attempted rape in her or his lifetime.³
- ★ In 2022, men killed 2,410 women in single victim/single offender incidents – an average of more than six homicides each day. For killings where the relationship could be identified, 87.5% of female victims were murdered by someone they knew; of these, 58.1% were wives, ex-wives, or girlfriends.⁴

Economic Barriers

Personal safety and economic security are inextricably linked for victims of domestic violence. For many victims, concerns about their ability to provide for themselves and their children are a significant reason for staying in, or returning to, an abusive relationship. Access to resources that increase economic stability are essential in rebuilding one's life after abuse.

- ★ One study showed that women and men who experienced food insecurity or housing insecurity in a 12-month period had a significantly higher prevalence of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in that same time period, as compared to those who did not experience food or housing insecurity.⁵
- ★ 51.5% of female lifetime victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner who identified a need for housing services did not receive them.⁶

- ★ 83% of survivors of intimate partner violence reported that their abusive partners disrupted their ability to work.⁷

Children and Youth

Children are particularly vulnerable as both victims of, and witnesses to, domestic violence, sexual abuse, and sexual assault. In order to break the cycle of violence, we must intervene and provide services.

- ★ Approximately 26% of children under the age of 18 are exposed to at least one form of family violence in their lifetime, including verbal threats and being an eyewitness to the assault of a parent.⁸
- ★ 8.5 million girls and 1.5 million boys reported having experienced a completed rape before the age of 18.⁹
- ★ Children exposed to violence are more likely to attempt suicide, abuse drugs and alcohol, run away from home, become victims of trafficking, and commit sexual assault crimes.¹⁰
- ★ 9.2 million female victims and 3.6 million male victims of stalking reported that they were first stalked before turning 18.¹¹

Cost

Domestic violence and sexual assault severely impact not only victims, but the entire nation. In addition to the devastating damage suffered by victims and their families, these crimes also have huge financial costs to society.

- ★ One study estimated the cost of intimate partner violence against women to U.S. society, including health costs and productivity losses, to be \$5.8 billion in 1995 dollars.¹² Converted to 2025 dollars, the same cost would be \$12.1 billion.
- ★ In the U.S., rape is the costliest crime to its victims, totaling \$122,461 per victim in medical costs, lost earnings, pain, suffering, and lost quality of life. For the country's 25 million victims of rape, this totals \$3.1 trillion in lifetime costs (2014 dollars).¹³ Converted to 2025 dollars, the same cost would be \$4.2 trillion.

Progress for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Victims

Congress's commitment to improving the response to domestic violence and sexual assault has made a significant difference in the lives of victims. The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA), enacted in 1984, has been the foundation of the response to domestic violence victims, supporting shelters and outreach programs

across the country. The landmark Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), first authorized in 1994, has changed the way federal, tribal, state, and local entities respond to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking.

- ★ VAWA saved an estimated \$12.6 billion in net-averted costs in its first 6 years alone.¹⁴ Additionally, the Kentucky Civil Protective Order Study found that Kentucky saved \$85 million in one year alone through the issuance of protection orders and the resulting reduction in violence.¹⁵
- ★ A 2010 study demonstrated that an increase in the availability of legal services is associated with a decrease in intimate partner homicide.¹⁶
- ★ A number of studies show that the nation's domestic violence shelters and programs are addressing victims' urgent and long-term needs, and are helping victims protect themselves and their children.¹⁷
- ★ A 2006 study found that when sexual assault victims have the support of an advocate in the aftermath of an assault, they receive more helpful information, referrals, and services, and experience less secondary trauma or re-victimization by medical and legal systems. They also fare better in the short and long term and are more likely to file a police report than those without such support.¹⁸

Overwhelming Needs Remain

While the United States has come a long way in meeting the needs of victims, there remains a significant gap between funding and the demand for services. As more and more victims courageously request services to escape from life-threatening situations, it is essential that their needs are met.

- ★ In 2024, the National Network to End Domestic Violence's 24-hour survey of domestic violence programs across the nation reported that 79,088 adults and children found refuge and help on the survey day, while programs could not meet an additional 14,095 requests for services on the same day because of a lack of resources.¹⁹
- ★ According to a 2023 survey by the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, almost 1/3 of the nation's sexual assault service providers have a waiting list for services, with most of the requests being for counseling services.²⁰

¹ Leemis R.W., Friar N., Khatiwada S., Chen M.S., Kresnow M., Smith S.G., Caslin, S., & Basile, K.C. (2022). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/nisvs/documentation/NISVSReportonIPV_2022.pdf

- ² Smith, S. G., Chen, J., Basile, K.C., Gilbert, L.K., Merrick, M.T., Patel, N., Walling, M., & Jain, A. (2017). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 State Report*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from: <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/46305>
- ³ Smith, S.G., Zhang, X., Basile, K.C., Merrick, M.T., Wang, J., Kresnow, M., & Chen, J. (2018). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2015 Data Brief – Updated Release*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from <https://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/2015data-brief508.pdf>
- ⁴ Violence Policy Center (2024). *When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2022 Homicide Data*. Retrieved from <https://vpc.org/studies/wmmw2024.pdf>.
- ⁵ Breiding, M.J., Chen J., & Black, M.C. (2014). *Intimate Partner Violence in the United States — 2010*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/21961>.
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- ⁸ Hamby S., Finkelhor D., Turner H., & Ormrod R. (2011). *National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence*. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Retrieved from: <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/ojdp/232272.pdf>.
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²⁰ National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (2023). *2023 Online Survey of Rape Crisis Centers* from all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and two territories, Retrieved from https://endsexualviolence.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/infographic_white_FINAL_brother1816.pdf