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Domestic Abuse

- Around the world, at least one in every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused during her lifetime. ¹
- Nearly one-third of American women (31%) report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives. ²
- Thirty percent of Americans say they know a woman who has been physically abused by her husband or boyfriend in the past year. ³
- Domestic violence is primarily a crime against women. In 2001, women accounted for 85 percent of the victims of domestic partner violence and men accounted for approximately 15 percent of the victims. ⁴
- 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 a domestic partner. ⁵

Domestic Homicides

- Women are much more likely than men to be killed by an intimate partner. In 2000, intimate partner homicides accounted for 33.5 percent of the murders of women and less than four percent of the murders of men. ⁷
- Pregnant and recently pregnant women are more likely to be victims of homicide than to die of any other cause⁷, and evidence exists that a significant proportion of all female homicide victims are killed by their intimate partners. ⁸

Health Issues

- The health-related costs of rape, physical assault, stalking and homicide committed by intimate partners exceed \$5.8 billion each year. Of that amount, nearly \$4.1 billion are for direct medical and mental health care services, and nearly \$1.8 billion are for the indirect costs of lost productivity or wages.⁹
- About half of all female victims of intimate violence report an injury of some type, and about 20 percent of them seek medical assistance.¹⁰

Domestic Violence and Youth

- Approximately one in five female high school students reports being physically and/or sexually abused by a dating partner.¹¹
- Eight percent of high school age girls said “yes” when asked if “a boyfriend or date has ever forced sex against your will.”¹²
- Forty percent of girls age 14 to 17 report knowing someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend.¹³

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.¹⁴
- Slightly more than half of female victims of domestic abuse live in households with children under age 12.¹⁵

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, cohabiting partner, or date committed the assault. ¹⁶
- Rapes/sexual assaults committed by strangers are more likely to be reported to the police than rapes/sexual assaults committed by “nonstrangers,” including intimate partners, other relatives and friends or acquaintances. Between 1992 and 2000, 41 percent of the rapes/sexual assaults committed by strangers were reported to the police. During the same time period, 24 percent of the rapes/sexual assaults committed by an intimate were reported. ¹⁷

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. ¹⁷
- 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. ¹⁸

Sources

¹Heise, L., Ellsberg, M. and Gottemoeller, M. Ending Violence Against Women. Population Reports, Series L, No. 11., December 1999

²The Commonwealth Fund, Health Concerns Across a Woman’s Lifespan: 1998 Survey of Women’s Health, May 1999

³Lieberman Research Inc., Tracking Survey conducted for The Advertising Council and the Family Violence Prevention Fund, July – October 1996

⁴Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001, February 2003

- ⁵U.S. Department of Justice, Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current or Former Spouses, Boyfriends, and Girlfriends, March 1998
- ⁶Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001, February 2003
- ⁷Frye, V. (2001). Examining Homicide's Contribution to Pregnancy-Associated Deaths. The Journal of the American Medical Association, 285, No. 11, March 21, 2001
- ⁸Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States, April 2003.
- ⁹National Crime Victimization Survey, 1992-96; Study of Injured Victims of Violence, 1994
- ¹⁰Jay G. Silverman, PhD; Anita Raj, PhD; Lorelei A. Mucci, MPH; and Jeanne E. Hathaway, MD, MPH, "Dating Violence Against Adolescent Girls and Associated Substance Use, Unhealthy Weight Control, Sexual Risk Behavior, Pregnancy, and Suicidality," Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol. 286, No. 5, 2001
- ¹¹The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls, November 1997
- ¹²Children Now/Kaiser Permanente poll, December 1995
- ¹³Strauss, Murray A, Gelles, Richard J., and Smith, Christine. 1990. Physical Violence in American Families; Risk Factors and Adaptations to Violence
- ¹⁴U.S. Department of Justice, Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current or Former Spouses, Boyfriends, and Girlfriends, March 1998
- ¹⁵U.S. Department of Justice, Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey, November 1998
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- ¹⁷Center for Policy Research, Stalking in America, July 1997
- ¹⁸Center for Policy Research, Stalking in America, July 1997