



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FACTS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Domestic violence is the willful intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behavior perpetrated by an intimate partner against another. It is an epidemic affecting individuals in every community, regardless of age, economic status, race, religion, nationality or educational background. Violence against women is often accompanied by emotionally abusive and controlling behavior, and thus is part of a systematic pattern of dominance and control. Domestic violence results in physical injury, psychological trauma, and sometimes death. The consequences of domestic violence can cross generations and truly last a lifetime.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- ◇ **One in every four women** will experience domestic violence in her lifetime.<sup>1</sup>
- ◇ An estimated 1.3 million women are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year.<sup>2</sup>
  - ◇ 85% of domestic violence victims are women.<sup>3</sup>
  - ◇ Historically, females have been most often victimized by someone they knew.<sup>4</sup>
- ◇ Females who are **20-24 years of age** are at the greatest risk of nonfatal intimate partner violence.<sup>5</sup>
  - ◇ Most cases of domestic violence are never reported to the police.<sup>6</sup>

## CHILDREN WHO WITNESS

- Witnessing violence between one's parents or caretakers is the strongest risk factor of transmitting violent behavior from one generation to the next.<sup>7</sup>
- Boys who witness domestic violence are *twice as likely* to abuse their own partners and children when they become adults.<sup>8</sup>
- 30% to 60% of perpetrators of intimate partner violence also abuse children in the household.<sup>9</sup>

## SEXUAL ASSAULT AND STALKING

- ≈ **One in 6 women and 1 in 33 men** have experienced an attempted or completed rape.<sup>10</sup>
- ≈ Nearly 7.8 million women have been raped by an intimate partner at some point in their lives.<sup>11</sup>
- ≈ Sexual assault or forced sex occurs in approximately 40-45% of battering relationships.<sup>12</sup>
- ≈ 1 in 12 women and 1 in 45 men have been stalked in their lifetime.<sup>13</sup>
- ≈ 81% of women stalked by a current or former intimate partner are also physically assaulted by that partner; 31% are also sexually assaulted by that partner.<sup>13</sup>

## HOMICIDE AND INJURY

- ⇒ Almost **one-third of female homicide victims** that are reported in police records are killed by an intimate partner.<sup>14</sup>
- ⇒ In 70-80% of intimate partner homicides, no matter which partner was killed, the man physically abused the woman before the murder.<sup>12</sup>
- ⇒ Less than one-fifth of victims reporting an injury from intimate partner violence sought medical treatment following the injury.<sup>15</sup>
- ⇒ Intimate partner violence results in more than **18.5 million mental health care visits** each year.<sup>16</sup>

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

- √ The cost of intimate partner violence **exceeds \$5.8 billion each year**, \$4.1 billion of which is for direct medical and mental health services.<sup>17</sup>
- √ Victims of intimate partner violence *lost almost 8 million days of paid work* because of the violence perpetrated against them by current or former husbands, boyfriends and dates. This loss is the equivalent of more than *32,000 full-time jobs* and almost *5.6 million days of household productivity* as a result of violence.<sup>17</sup>
- √ There are 16,800 homicides and \$2.2 million (medically treated) injuries due to intimate partner violence annually, which costs \$37 billion.<sup>18</sup>



## REPORTING RATES

- \* Domestic violence is one of the most chronically underreported crimes.<sup>20</sup>
- \* Only approximately one-quarter of all physical assaults, one-fifth of all rapes, and one-half of all stalkings perpetuated against females by intimate partners are reported to the police.<sup>1</sup>

## PROTECTION ORDERS

- \* Approximately 20% of the 1.5 million people who experience intimate partner violence annually obtain civil protection orders.<sup>1</sup>
- \* Approximately one-half of the orders obtained by women against intimate partners who physically assaulted them were violated.<sup>1</sup> More than two-thirds of the restraining orders against intimate partners who raped or stalked the victim were violated.

## STATE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAWS

- States differ on the type of relationship that qualifies under domestic violence laws.
- Most states require the perpetrator and victim to be current or former spouses, living together, or have a child in common.
- A significant number of states include current or former dating relationships in domestic violence laws.
- Delaware, Montana and South Carolina specifically exclude same-sex relationships in their domestic violence laws.

To find more information on the domestic violence laws in your state, visit [www.womenslaw.org](http://www.womenslaw.org).

## IF YOU NEED HELP

For more information or to get help, please call:  
**THE NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE at 1-800-799-7233**  
**THE NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE AT 1-800-656-4673**  
**THE NATIONAL TEEN DATING ABUSE HOTLINE AT 1-866-331-9474**

## SOURCES

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- <sup>2</sup> Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States. 2003. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Centers for Injury Prevention and Control. Atlanta, GA.
- <sup>3</sup> Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, *Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001*, February 2003.
- <sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Criminal Victimization, 2005," September 2006.
- <sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Intimate Partner Violence in the United States," December 2006.
- <sup>6</sup> Frieze, I.H., Browne, A. (1989) Violence in Marriage. In L.E. Ohlin & M. H. Tonry (eds.) *Family Violence*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- <sup>7</sup> Break the Cycle. (2006). *Starting Statistics*. [http://www.breakthecycle.org/html%20files/l\\_4a\\_startstat.htm](http://www.breakthecycle.org/html%20files/l_4a_startstat.htm).
- <sup>8</sup> Strauss, Gelles, and Smith, "Physical Violence in American Families: Risk Factors and Adaptations to Violence" in *8,145 Families*. Transaction Publishers (1990).
- <sup>9</sup> Edelson, J.L. (1999). "The Overlap Between Child Maltreatment and Woman Battering." *Violence Against Women*. 5:134-154.
- <sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, "Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women," November 1998.
- <sup>11</sup> *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States*. 2003. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Centers for Injury Prevention and Control. Atlanta, GA.
- <sup>12</sup> Campbell, et al. (2003). "Assessing Risk Factors for Intimate Partner Homicide." *Intimate Partner Homicide*, NJ Journal, 250, 14-19. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice.
- <sup>13</sup> Tjaden, Patricia & Thoennes, Nancy. (1998). "Stalking in America." National Institute of Justice.
- <sup>14</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports "Crime in the United States, 2000,"* (2001).
- <sup>15</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Intimate Partner Violence in the United States," December 2006.
- <sup>16</sup> *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States*. 2003. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Centers for Injury Prevention and Control. Atlanta, GA.
- <sup>17</sup> Tjaden, Patricia & Thoennes, Nancy.
- <sup>18</sup> *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States*. 2003. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Centers for Injury Prevention and Control. Atlanta, GA.
- <sup>19</sup> The Cost of Violence in the United States. 2007. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Centers for Injury Prevention and Control. Atlanta, GA.
- <sup>20</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Family Violence Statistics," June 2005.
- <sup>21</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Criminal Victimization," 2003.

For more information, please visit our website at [www.ncadv.org](http://www.ncadv.org).



The Public Policy Office of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) is a national leader in the effort to create and influence Federal legislation that positively affects the lives of domestic violence victims and children. We work closely with advocates at the local, state and national level to identify the issues facing domestic violence victims, their children and the people who serve them and to develop a legislative agenda to address these issues. NCADV welcomes you to join us in our effort to end domestic violence.