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## Violence statistics

It is almost impossible to give an accurate count of the incidents of violence against women and girls. One in three women is physically or sexually assaulted sometime in her life. Yet, this epidemic is invisible. Most violence goes unreported. Our culture does not allow women to feel safe enough to talk about it, let alone report it. So, numbers barely tell this story.

This is for many reasons, including:

- Too many women do not feel safe in coming forward to law enforcement officials, nor do they want to take part in judicial proceedings. They have seen repeated examples in high-profile cases where it is the victim on trial, rather than the perpetrator. This we have heard from many service providers and advocates who talk with victims who have come to the agency for help but have not gone to the police.
- Many women are ashamed and believe that the violence (the beating, the rape or the various forms of abuse) is their fault. A study of American high school students found that the majority of girls and three-quarters of boys thought that forced sex was acceptable under some circumstances, including when a woman had had past sexual experiences or when a boy spent a lot of money on the girl.<sup>1</sup>
- Many women who are victims of domestic violence do not even understand that forced sex is rape. They believe this is part of marriage.<sup>2</sup>

### Domestic violence

- More than three women are killed each day by an intimate partner.<sup>3</sup>
- An abusive husband or partner will hit a woman an average of 35 times before police are notified for the first time.<sup>4</sup>
- There are about 30,000 domestic violence orders of protection in effect on any given day for women and girls—that's 30,000 women who have gone to court to get a civil stay-away order.<sup>5</sup>
- Domestic violence—which includes physical, sexual, or psychological harm to another by a current or former partner or spouse—affects more than 32 million Americans each year; with more than

<sup>1</sup> Sexual Assault Awareness Resolution testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives.

<sup>2</sup> "Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States," by the Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, March 2003

<sup>3</sup> Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, February 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Peter Jaffe, David Wolfe and Susan Kaye Wilson, Children of Battered Women, 1990.

<sup>5</sup> Illinois State Police, April, 2007.

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2 million injuries and approximately 1,300 deaths. There were almost 700,000 incidents of domestic violence reported in America during 2001 alone.<sup>6</sup>

- About one-third of all women murdered each year are killed by their husbands or former husbands.<sup>7</sup>
- The price tag each year for men committing intimate partner rape, physical assault and stalking women is more than \$5.8 billion, which includes medical and mental health services and lost productivity.<sup>8</sup>
- Domestic violence costs U.S. employers an estimated \$3 to \$13 billion annually.<sup>9</sup>
- Lesbian, bisexual and transgender women are not immune to intimate partner violence—it occurs at the same rate among them as the general population.<sup>10</sup>
- Batterers are likely to become more physically abusive when a woman is pregnant.<sup>11</sup>
- In Chicago, police received a total of 204,729 domestic relate calls for service, which is an average of 561 daily. This was down 3 percent from 2005.<sup>12</sup>
- Between one-quarter and one-half of domestic violence victims report that they had lost a job due, in part, to domestic violence.<sup>13</sup>

### Domestic violence and homelessness

- About 38 percent of all women who have been victims of domestic violence become homeless at some point in their lives.<sup>14</sup>
- About 92 percent of homeless women reported being severely physically or sexually abused at some point in their lives, and 63 percent have been victims of intimate partner violence as adults.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>6</sup> “Costs of Intimate Partner Violence in the United States.” U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Bureau of National Affairs Special Rep. No. 32, Violence and Stress: The Work/Family Connection 2 (1990); Joan Zorza, *Women Battering: High Costs and the State of the Law* Clearinghouse Rev.; National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2003.

<sup>10</sup> The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, Annual Report on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Domestic Violence, 1998.

<sup>11</sup> American Medical Association’s Diagnostic and Treatment Guidelines on Domestic Violence, 1992.

<sup>12</sup> Mayor’s Office on Domestic Violence, “Assessment of the Current Response to Domestic Violence in Chicago” May, 2007.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office, Domestic Violence Prevalence and Implications for Employment Among Welfare Recipients, 1998.

<sup>14</sup> Charlene K. Baker, Cook, Sarah L., Norris, Fran H., “Domestic Violence and Housing Problems: A Contextual Analysis of Women’s Help-seeking, Received Informal Support, and Formal System Response,” *Violence Against Women*, 2003.

<sup>15</sup> Browne, A. & Bassuk, S., “Intimate Violence in the Lives of Homeless and Poor Housed Women: Prevalence and Patterns in an Ethnically Diverse Sample,” *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, April 1997; Browne, A., “Responding to the Needs of Low Income and Homeless Women Who are Survivors of Family Violence,” *Journal of American Medical Association*, Spring 1998.

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## Stalking

- Stalking is the most prevalent form of violence against women and the strongest indicator of extreme violence. Yet, there are barely any numbers on stalking. A national survey found about 1 million women over 18 say they have been stalked—but in only 10 percent of those cases did women feel safe enough to call the police.<sup>16</sup>
- One in 12 women and 1 in 45 men will be stalked in their lifetime. Eighty-seven percent of stalkers are men.<sup>17</sup>
- More than 80 percent of women stalked by a current or former intimate partner are also physically assaulted by that partner. More than 30 percent of women stalked by a current or former intimate partner are also sexually assaulted by that partner. Intimate partners that stalk are four times more likely than intimate partners in the general population to physically assault their victims and six times more likely to sexually assault their victims.<sup>18</sup>
- About one third (32 percent) of all teenagers who use the Internet say they have been targets of a range of annoying and potentially menacing online activities such as: receiving threatening messages; having their private emails or text messages forwarded without consent; having an embarrassing picture posted without permission; or having rumors about them spread online.<sup>19</sup>

## The sex trade

- Chicago's commercial sex trade involves 16,000-25,000 women and girls on any one day—most of whom have been coerced into the industry. According to a sample of women in the Cook County Jail, 62 percent who had regularly participated in the sex trade started doing so before the age of 18. In addition, 86 percent of women who had been in the sex trade had experienced domestic violence, 75 percent had been sexually assaulted and 66 percent were victims of incest.<sup>20</sup>
- About 15 percent of men in a survey of “johns” who use women in the sex trade, said that they had been sexually abused as a child. And this was connected to their decision to use individuals in prostitution. One man said that he buys women in prostitution to reverse the out-of-control feelings he felt during his childhood sexual abuse because when he pays for sex, he is in total control of the sexual experience.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, “Full Report of the Prevalence, Incidence and Consequences of Violence Against Women,” 2000.

<sup>17</sup> Tjaden, Patricia and Nancy Thoennes, April 1998, *Stalking in America: Findings From the National Violence Against Women Survey*. <<http://www.ncjrs.org/textfiles/169592.txt>> 25 July 2007

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Pew Internet and American Life Project. 2007. Nationally representative phone survey of 935 teenagers from Oct. 23-Nov. 19, 2006.

<sup>20</sup> “The Prostitution of Women and Girls in Metropolitan Chicago: A Preliminary Prevalence Report,” Center for Impact Research, 2001; Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, 2006.

<sup>21</sup> A national survey of the men in the sex trade. Yet to be released. Conducted in 2007. Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation.

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## Women with disabilities

- Among developmentally disabled adults, as many as 83 percent of the women and 32 percent of the men have been victims of sexual assault. Persons with disabilities are 1.5 to 5 times the risk of sexual abuse and assault as are members of the general population.<sup>22</sup>
- More than 90 percent of people with developmental disabilities are sexually abused at some point in their life.<sup>23</sup>
- About half—49 percent—of persons with developmental disabilities who experience sexual abuse) experience 10 or more abusive incidents.<sup>24</sup>
- Women with developmental disabilities are 4 to 10 times as likely to be sexually assaulted as other women.<sup>25</sup>
- Almost two-thirds of women with disabilities reported abuse and violence in one study; and, in cases of domestic violence, women reported staying with the men who battered them almost twice as long as women without disabilities. This may be because of increased physical, economic, social or psychological dependence on others and a fear of abandonment or institutionalization.<sup>26</sup>
- Often service providers are not fully equipped to deal with the special circumstances facing victims with disabilities. Only 35 percent of shelters surveyed have disability awareness training for their staff and only 16 percent have a dedicated staff person to deliver services to women with disabilities.<sup>27</sup>
- Women and girls with physical disabilities often are not asked about physical or sexual abuse by their disability-related service providers. Yet, battered women's programs are just beginning to make their facilities and services accessible to women with physical disabilities.<sup>28</sup>

## Incarcerated women

- Almost 60 percent of women in state prisons—compared to 16 percent of men in state prisons—were subject to physical or sexual abuse before incarceration. Almost half the women in jail, as well as two out of five women either in federal facilities or on probation, suffered abusive experiences. About one third of women in state prison and jail had been sexually abused at

<sup>22</sup> Sobsey, D. *Violence and Abuse in the Lives of People with Disabilities: The End of Silent Acceptance?* Paul H. Brookes, Baltimore, 1994.

<sup>23</sup> Baladerian, N.J. (1986). *Survivor: Special Edition*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Commission on Assaults.

<sup>24</sup> Sobsey, D. and Doe, T. (1991). Patterns of sexual abuse and assault. *Sexuality and Disability*,

<sup>25</sup> Wilson, C. and Brewer, N. (1992). The incidence of criminal victimization of individuals with an intellectual disability. *Australian Psychologist*, 27(2), 114-117.

<sup>26</sup> Young, M.E., Nosek, M.A., Howland, C.A., Chanpong, G., Rintala, D.H.: (1997) Prevalence of abuse of women with physical disabilities. *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Special Issue*. 78.

<sup>27</sup> Margaret A. Nosek, Ph.D. et al., Baylor College of Medicine, Violence Against Women with Disabilities, Fact Sheet #1: Findings from Studies 1992-2002.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

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some point in their lives, and more than a quarter of women in state prison were molested before age 18.<sup>29</sup>

- A high percentage of the nearly half a million 14-24 year olds who leave the juvenile justice system, federal or state prisons or local jails annually have experienced or witnessed violence at home.<sup>30</sup>

### Sexual abuse and assault

- In 73 percent of sexual assaults, the perpetrator knew the victim—38 percent of perpetrators were a friend or acquaintance, 28 percent were an intimate and 7 percent were another relative. Every two and a half minutes, somewhere in the United States, someone is sexually assaulted.<sup>31</sup>
- One in five high school girls reported being physically or sexually abused by a date.<sup>32</sup>
- Less than half—39 percent—of sexual assaults are reported to the police.<sup>33</sup>
- African American women are more likely to suffer the most severe forms of violence when compared to most other groups of women.<sup>34</sup>
- Women who have been raped are 13 times more likely to attempt suicide than non-crime victims, and six times more likely than victims of other crimes.<sup>35</sup>
- More than 50 percent of young women who reported dating violence or being raped also reported attempting suicide.<sup>36</sup>

### Immigrant women

- Language, cultural and financial barriers isolate immigrant women, and that means additional barriers to finding services or reporting abuse.<sup>37</sup>
- A recent study in New York City found that 51 percent of intimate partner homicide victims were foreign-born, while 45 percent were born in the United States.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, "Prior Abuse Reported by Inmates and Probationers," 1999.

<sup>30</sup> Rosewater, A., "Promoting Prevention, Targeting Teens: An Emerging Agenda to Prevent Domestic Violence," Family Violence Prevention Fund, 2003.

<sup>31</sup> National Crime Victimization Survey, 2005.

<sup>32</sup> Teen Action Campaign and The Family Violence Prevention Fund, from a 2001 Harvard School of Public Health study of Massachusetts public high school students.

<sup>33</sup> National Crime Victimization Survey, 2005.

<sup>34</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, 2001.

<sup>35</sup> *Rape in America: A Report to the Nation*. National Victim Center and Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center, University of South Carolina, Charleston, 1992.

<sup>36</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Physical Dating Violence Among High School Students – United States, 2003" *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, May 19, 2006.

<sup>37</sup> Orloff, Leslye and Rachael Little, "Somewhere to Turn: Making Domestic Violence Services Accessible to Battered Immigrant Women," 1999.

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- Forty-eight percent of Latinas in one study reported that their partner's violence against them had increased since they immigrated to the United States.
- A survey of immigrant Korean women found that 60 percent had been battered by their husbands.<sup>39</sup>
- Married immigrant women experience higher levels of physical and sexual abuse than unmarried immigrant women, 59.5 percent compared to 49.8 percent, respectively.
- Abusers often use women's immigration status as a tool of control.<sup>40</sup>
- Immigrant women often suffer higher rates of battering than U.S. citizens because they may come from cultures that accept domestic violence or because they have less access to legal and social services.<sup>41</sup>

### Elder abuse

- In Illinois, 8,359 cases of elder abuse were reported in 2004. Four to five percent of Illinois elderly—80,000 people—experience physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse.<sup>42</sup>
- Women are the most likely victims of elder abuse—more than 76 percent—and the victims—nearly 90 percent—are harmed primarily by family members.<sup>43</sup>
- Most victims of elder abuse—more than 76 percent—are dependent on others for at least some of their care. Only 23 percent of elder abuse victims are able to care for themselves.<sup>44</sup>

### Child abuse

- More than 95,000 Illinois children were reported as abused in the 2006 fiscal year. Almost 9,000 reports of child sexual abuse were reported.<sup>45</sup>
- In 2000, an estimated 1,356 children died in the U.S. as a result of child abuse and neglect, nearly four children every day. Four out of five deaths were children under age 5; two out of five were less than 1 year old.

<sup>38</sup> Femicide in New York City: 1995-2002. New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, October 2004.

<<http://www.ci.nyc.ny.us/html/doh/html/public/press04/pr145-1022.html>>

<sup>39</sup> Tjaden, Patricia and Nancy Thoennes. 2000. *Extent, Nature and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*. The National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2004.

<<http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/183781.pdf>>.

<sup>40</sup> Tjaden, Patricia and Nancy Thoennes. 2000. *Extent, Nature and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*. The National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2004.

<http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/183781.pdf>.

<sup>41</sup> Orloff, Leslye and Janice V. Kaguyutan. 2002. "Offering a Helping Hand: Legal Protections for Battered Immigrant Women: A History of Legislative Responses." *Journal of Gender, Social Policy, and the Law*.

<sup>42</sup> Illinois Department on Aging; University of Illinois Extension – Elder Abuse and Neglect. 2004.

<sup>43</sup> Toshio Tatara et al., American Public Human Services Association, The National Elder Abuse Incidence Study: Final Report, 1998.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Illinois Department of Child and Family Services, January 2007.

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- Exposure to violence as a child—directly observing, hearing or learning about the abuse of another person (child, relative, caregiver, or individual) or a direct experience with abuse and neglect—is the strongest predictor of domestic violence victimization as an adult and a strong predictor of perpetration as an adult.<sup>46</sup>
- Very young children (ages 0–6) may be especially traumatized as result of their exposure to violence. Even before they can verbalize, infants and young children are found to be sensitive and responsive to the fears and emotions of their caregivers and may suffer anxiety, increased aggressiveness, and developmental delays.<sup>47</sup>

### Physicians and domestic violence

- Fewer than 10 percent of primary care physicians routinely screen women patients for domestic violence during new patient visits; fewer than 9 percent screen during periodic checkups. Yet, about 70 percent of patients experiencing abuse have said they would like health care providers to ask them privately about intimate partner violence.<sup>48</sup>
- Between 70-81 percent of women patients experiencing abuse would like to have their health care providers ask them privately about intimate partner violence.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Ehrensaft, M. K., Cohen, P., Brown, J. Smailes, E., Chen, H., & Johnson, J. G. (2003). "Intergenerational transmission of partner violence: A 20-year prospective study." *Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology*, 71, 741–753

<sup>47</sup> Shonokoff, J. P., & Phillips, D. A., 2000. *From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

<sup>48</sup> Rodriguez, M., Bauer, H., McLoughlin, E., Grumbach, K. 1999. "Screening and Intervention for Intimate Partner Abuse: Practices and Attitudes of Primary Care Physicians." *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

<sup>49</sup> Caralis, P., Musialowski, R. 1997. "Women's Experiences with Domestic Violence and Their Attitudes and Expectations Regarding Medical Care of Abuse Victims." *South Medical Journal*; McCauley, J., Yurk, R., Jenckes, M., Ford, D., 1998. "Inside 'Pandora's Box': Abused Women's Experiences with Clinicians and Health Services." *Archives of Internal Medicine*; Friedman, L., Samet, J., Roberts, M., Hudlin, M., Hans, P. 1992. "Inquiry About Victimization Experiences: A Survey of Patient Preferences and Physician Practices." *Archives of Internal Medicine*; Rodriguez, M., Quiroga, SS., Bauer, H. 1996. "Breaking the Silence: Battered Women's Perspectives on Medical Care." *Archives of Family Medicine*.

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