DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE
FACT SHEET

INCIDENCE, PREVALENCE AND SEVERITY

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

- Nearly 1 in 4 women are beaten or raped by a partner during adulthood\(^1\) and each year approximately 2.3 million people are raped and/or physically assaulted by a current or former intimate partner.\(^2\)
- 1 in 6 women and 1 in 33 men have experienced an attempted or completed rape.\(^3\)
- Nationwide, an average of 3 women are killed by a current or former intimate partner every day.\(^4\)

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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

- Approximately 15.5 million children are exposed to domestic violence every year.\(^5\)
- 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused before the age of 18.\(^6\) Incest accounts for half of all sexual abuse cases.\(^7\)
- Young women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rate of intimate partner violence and sexual assault.\(^8\)
- Children exposed to violence are more likely to attempt suicide, abuse drugs and alcohol, run away from home, engage in teenage prostitution and commit sexual assault crimes.\(^9\)
- Men exposed to physical abuse, sexual abuse and domestic violence as children are almost 4 times more likely than other men to perpetrate domestic violence as adults.\(^10\)

COSTS

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

- The cost of intimate partner violence annually exceeds $5.8 billion, including $4.1 billion in direct health care expenses.\(^11\)
- A 2009 study found that the assorted costs associated with murder are staggeringly high: the average victim costs exceed $6.5 million with more than $426,000 in justice system costs, and nearly $200,000 in lost offender productivity.\(^12\)
- In the U.S., rape is the most costly crime to its victims, totaling $127 billion a year, which includes medical costs, lost earnings, pain, suffering and lost quality of life.\(^13\)
- Between one-quarter and one-half of domestic violence victims report that they lost a job, at least in part, due to domestic violence.\(^14\)
- Sexual abuse has a negative impact on children’s educational attainment,\(^15\) later job performance\(^16\) and earnings.\(^17\)
- Sexual violence survivors experience reduced income in adulthood as a result of victimization in adolescence, with a lifetime income loss estimated at $241,600.\(^18\)
- Domestic violence has been estimated to cost employers in the U.S. up to $13 billion each year.\(^19\)

PROGRESS FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS

Congress’ 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 nearly $12.6 billion in net averted costs in its first 6 years alone.²⁰
- VAWA 2005 established the Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP), the first federal funding stream to support the critical work of rape crisis centers.
- More victims now report domestic violence to the police: there has been as much as a 51% increase in reporting rates by women and a 37% increase in reporting rates by men.²¹
- The rate of non-fatel intimate partner violence against women has decreased by 53%²² and the number of women killed by an intimate partner has decreased by 34%.²³
- A 2008 study shows conclusively that the nation’s domestic violence shelters are addressing victims’ urgent and long-term needs and are helping victims protect themselves and their children.²⁴

**OVERWHELMING NEEDS REMAİN**

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 2010, a 24-hour survey of domestic violence programs across the nation found that while over 70,600 victims were served in one day, there were over 9,500 unmet requests for services.²⁵
- A 2009 survey of rape crisis centers indicated that 25% of centers have a waiting list for crisis services, 61% of centers have 3 or fewer staff and 56% have had to reduce staff due to funding cuts.²⁶

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²¹ “Intimate partner Violence in the U.S.” U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Jan 2008; Cassandra Archer et al., Institute for Law and Justice, National Evaluation of the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies Program 14 (Nov. 2002).