

Fact Sheet on Intimate Partner Sexual Violence



What is Intimate Partner Sexual Violence (IPSV)?

IPSV is any form of sexual assault that takes place within an intimate relationship. In an abusive relationship, sexual violence is used to gain power and control over a partner through humiliating and degrading that person. It may include verbal abuse, emotional coercion, stalking, and physical violence. IPSV may affect anyone from teens to elderly people (including same-sex partners) who are married, dating, or living together. Abuse by ex-spouses or former partners is also considered IPSV.

What does research tell us about IPSV?

- **68% of physically abused women also reported sexual assault**
- **79% of sexually assaulted women reported repeated episodes of forced sex**
- **6% of sexually assaulted women contacted the police following the first sexual assault and 8% applied for a protection order**
- **Justice contact, either police or protection orders, was associated with up to a 70% reduction in the risk of re-assault**
- **Not contacting the police after the first sexual assault doubled a woman's risk of re-assault and not applying for a protection order tripled her re-assault risk**
- **Abuse victims who are also sexually assaulted have higher rates of severe injury and being killed than victims of physical violence alone**
- **Women who are sexually assaulted by partners have longer-lasting trauma than other sexual assault survivors**
- **One in every five teen girls has been physically and/or sexually assaulted by a dating partner prior to graduating from high school**
- **In one study of gay, lesbian, and bisexual college students, 42% of these students reported being forced into sexual activity**

Sources:

McFarlane, J., & Malecha, (2005). A. *Sexual assault among intimates: Frequency, consequences and treatments*. <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/211678.pdf> (summary compiled by National Sexual Violence Resource Center)

McOrmond-Plummer, L. (2008) *Considering the differences: Intimate partner sexual assault and domestic violence discourse*. <http://www.wcsap.org/pdf/considering.pdf>

Silverman, J., Raj, A., Mucci, L., & Hathaway, J. (2001). Dating violence against adolescent girls and associated substance use, unhealthy weight control, sexual risk behavior, pregnancy, and suicidality. *JAMA*, 286, 572-579

Duncan, D. (1990) Prevalence of sexual assault victimization among heterosexual and gay/lesbian university students. *Psychological Reports* 66, 65-66

For more information: <http://www.wcsap.org/IPSV.htm>