

Survivors of Sexual Offenses

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Quick Overview

- Why should we talk about it?
 - Statistics and numbers
 - Emotional Impact
 - Medical Impact
 - Trauma factors

Quick Stats

- Nearly every minute someone is sexually assaulted in the United States. (Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN))
- Every 68 sec someone is sexually assaulted in the United States (Arizona Coalition to end sexual violence and domestic abuse (ACESDV))
- Both RAINN and ACESDV report every 9 minutes the 'someone' is a child.
- More than 1 in every 3 women and nearly 1 in every 4 men have experienced sexual violence (ACESDV)
- An estimated 443,635 People age 12+ experience sexual violence each year in the U.S. (RAINN)
- 45.1% of women and 16.9% of men in the United states experiences some form of contact sexual violence in their lifetime (National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS))

The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2023/2024 Sexual Violence Data Brief

Sexual violence is a preventable public health problem in the United States. Comprehensive, multi-sector and multi-level prevention efforts that seek to teach skills, change norms, create protective environments, address structural factors, increase economic stability, and support victims may be helpful to prevent sexual violence on a large scale. CDC has released the Sexual Violence Prevention Resource for Action to help communities make use of the best available evidence to prevent sexual violence and support survivors.

Child Sexual Abuse Material CSAM

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

- Since 1998 195 million reports have been made
- The Child Victim Identification Program (CVIP) has reviewed more than 425 million images/videos
- More than 30,000 victims have identified by law enforcement

This report was completed in 2018 and uses data collected through
2014

CSAM

According to the NCMEC 2018 report

- 67% of CSAM survivors said the distribution of their images impacts them differently than the hands-on abuse they suffered because the distribution never ends and the images are permanent.
- More and more, survivors of CSAM speak to the long-lasting damage and impact of their images and videos being circulated on the internet. The lack of control of both the files' existence and circulation leaves the survivors struggling in their recovery.

Reporting and Prosecution

According to RAINN research

- For every 1000 sexual assaults, 50 reports lead to arrests, 28 cases lead to felony convictions, and only 25 perpetrators are sentenced to incarceration.
- 1 in 3 victims Report to police
- 80% of female college students do not report to the police.
- 72% of elderly victims do not report to the police
- Male reporting ???

False reporting

According to a 2012 report by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC)

To date, much of the research conducted on the prevalence of false allegations of sexual assaults is unreliable because of inconsistencies with definitions and methods employed to evaluate data (Archambault, n.d.). A review of research finds that the prevalence of false reporting is between 2 percent and 10 percent.

False reporting

According to a 2012 report by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) Their conclusion is:

Research shows that rates of false reporting are frequently inflated, in part because of inconsistent definitions and protocols, or a weak understanding of sexual assault. Misconceptions about false reporting rates have direct, negative consequences and can contribute to why many victims don't report sexual assaults (Lisak et al., 2010). To improve the response to victims of sexual violence, law enforcement and service providers need a thorough understanding of sexual violence and consistency in their definitions, policies and procedures.

Why people don't report

Women according to RAINN

- 20% feared retaliation
- 13% believed the police would not do anything to help
- 13% believed it was a personal matter
- 8% reported to a different official
- 8% believed it was not important enough to report
- 7% did not want to get the perpetrator in trouble
- 2% believed the police could not do anything to help
- 30% gave another reason or did not cite one reason

A survivor's experience of reporting her sexual assault

- "I'll always be angry at them and I'll always be angry at the police. So many of us have been through it. It doesn't seem like there was a lot of protection for women in the 80's, 90's and even up to 2010. As much as I make jokes about the current generation, they have made progress. I don't think what happened to me wasn't wrong, I have accepted it like I've accepted my CPTSD. I was in my darkest spot, it doesn't excuse them taking advantage of me. I blamed myself for a long time. Now that I understand why I was there I don't have a lot of shame around it. I Went to the emergency room and waited for 4 hours. I now know I that is how they lose evidence. Then a sheriff came and wouldn't let me get medical treatment until after I had spoken with them. I was told they knew this guy and he was a violent and scary person. Then police came to my house and took all my stuff. They later called and told me that, because there was weed and alcohol involved, my report was unreliable so they wanted me to wear a wire and confront this guy who they had just told me was dangerous. It was fucked up and I will never report anything to the police ever again. Fuck the police. I have a lot more compassion for that version of myself. I want to hug that version for myself." -anonymous

Why people do not report

Men Specifically

- Fear of retaliation
- Shame and embarrassment

Long term impact

Mental and Emotional

- Approximately 70% of female survivors experience moderate to severe distress - RAINN
- 94% of women report Acute Distress Disorder during the 2 weeks following the assault - RAINN
 - 30% will later meet the criteria for PTSD -RAINN
- 33% of female survivors contemplate suicide and 13% attempt suicide -RAINN

Understanding the Psychological Impact of Sexual Assault: From Immediate to Long-term Effects

- PTSD
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
 - Dissociation and Dissociative Disorder
 - Substance use and abuse
 - Trust and Intimacy Issues
 - Sleep Disturbances
 - Eating Disorders
 - *Physical Health Consequences
 - Re-victimization
- Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute

Medical and Physical Impact on Survivors

Survivors are at a greater risk of long-term physical conditions.

- Hypertension
- Thyroid disorders
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- High Cholesterol
- Stroke
- Sexually Transmitted Disease

- Severe Perimenstrual Periods
- Pain during intercourse
- Abnormal pap smear
- Chronic pain
- Headaches or migraines
- Irritable bowel syndrome

- National Library of Medicine (NIH)

- Harvard Health Publishing

Financial Cost

It is estimated in the United States

- \$122,461 lifetime cost per rape victim
 - \$282,000 lifetime cost for survivors of sexual abuse
 - \$3.1 trillion is spent in our society due to rape

- Justice system costs
- Workplace and Educational Impact
- Intangible expenses

- Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Just a few (of many) Trauma Factors

- Disclosure Disaster
- Victim Blaming and Shaming
 - PTSD
- Neurobiology (Amy and CC)