

Seven Key Facts About *Domestic Violence*

Fact #1: Each year, similar numbers of men and women experience physical domestic violence and psychological aggression, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control:

- Domestic violence:¹
 - Men: 6.5 million victims
 - Women: 5.7 million victims
- Psychological aggression:²
 - Men: 8.2 million victims
 - Women: 8.4 million victims

Fact #2: Domestic violence rates are higher in certain groups:

- Same-sex lesbian couples have higher lifetime rates than same-sex gay couples for domestic violence, rape, and/or stalking:³
 - Lesbian: 44%
 - Gay: 26%
- Domestic violence is more common between partners who are lower income⁴ or who are not in intact, married relationships.⁵

Fact #3: Partner aggression is often two-way.

- A comprehensive review of the research found 58% of all intimate partner violence is bi-directional.⁶
- A survey funded by the Centers for Disease Control found that injury was more than twice as likely when the violence was reciprocal (28.4%), compared to unidirectional violence (11.6%).⁷

Fact #4: Many risk factors contribute to domestic violence:

- The Centers for Disease Control has identified over 25 different risk factors for domestic violence. These include individual, relationship, and community factors.⁸
- Substance abuse, marital instability, psychological disorders, and other factors are especially important contributors to domestic violence.⁹

Fact #5: Domestic violence rates have fallen dramatically since the 1970s:

- Since the mid-1970s, domestic violence among intimate partners has fallen dramatically, whether violence is assessed by community surveys,¹⁰ crime surveys of non-fatal violence,¹¹ or FBI homicide statistics.¹²

Fact #6: Many victims of domestic violence face barriers to getting help:

- The latest Biennial Report to Congress documents large disparities in the provision of services to male victims:¹³
 - Legal Assistance: 6% male, 94% female (Page 104)
 - Rural Assistance: 11% male, 89% female (Page 116)
 - Sexual Assault Services: 7% male, 93% female (Page 125)
 - Transitional Housing: 2% male, 98% female (Page 145)
 - Indian Tribal Governments: 7% male, 93% female (Page 161)
 - Tribal Sexual Assault: 8% male, 92% female (Page 178)
 - Services to Underserved Populations: 21% male, 79% female (Page 248)
- One survey highlighted the discriminatory practices of many domestic violence shelters, concluding that lesbian and gay victims “still did not have consistent access to culturally competent services to prevent and address the violence against them.”¹⁴

Fact #7: Similar patterns are seen in domestic violence rates in countries around the world:

- The International Dating Violence Study of 13,601 university students in 32 countries found that the most common pattern of dating violence was bi-directional, followed by female-perpetrated violence.¹⁵
- Other reviews conducted in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America reveal similar findings.¹⁶

Citations

- ¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence*, Atlanta, Georgia. 2022. Tables 9 and 11. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs/nisvsreportonipv_2022.pdf
- ² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence*, Atlanta, Georgia. 2022. Tables 5 and 6. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs/nisvsreportonipv_2022.pdf
- ³ Centers for Disease Control: *An Overview of 2010 Findings on Victimization by Sexual Orientation*. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/cdc_nisvs_victimization_final-a.pdf
- ⁴ Department of Justice. Criminal Victimization in the United States, 2007. February 2010. NCJ 227669. Table 35. <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=1743>
- ⁵ Catalano S. Intimate Partner Violence, 1993–2010. U.S. Department of Justice, 2012. Table 1. <http://bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ipv9310.pdf>
- ⁶ Jennifer Langhinrichsen-Rohling. Rates of bi-directional vs. uni-directional intimate partner violence: A comprehensive review. *Partner Abuse* Vol. 3, No. 2, 2012. <http://www.springerpub.com/content/journals/PA-KnowledgeBase-41410.pdf>
- ⁷ Whitaker DJ et al. Differences in frequency of violence and reported injury between relationships with reciprocal and nonreciprocal intimate partner violence. *American Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 97, No. 5, 2007.
- ⁸ Centers for Disease Control: Intimate Partner Violence: Risk and Protective Factors. <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/intimatepartnerviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html>
- ⁹ Stith, S. M., et al. Intimate partner physical abuse perpetration and victimization risk factors: A meta-analytic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 10(1), 65–98. 2004.
- ¹⁰ From 1975 to 1992. Male victims: From 11.6% to 9.5% of couples. Female victims: From 12.1% to 9.1% of couples. *Source of 1975 data: National Surveys of Family Violence. Source of 1992 data: National Alcohol and Family Violence Survey.*
- ¹¹ From 1993 to 2001. Male victims: From 1.6 to 0.9/1,000 persons. Female victims: From 9.8 to 5.0/1,000 persons. Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001. Table 2. <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=1001>
- ¹² From 1976 to 2000. Male victims: From 1,357 to 440 murders. Female victims: From 1,600 to 1,247 murders. Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001. <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=1001>
- ¹³ 2020 Biennial Report to Congress: Grant Programs Under the Violence Against Women Act, <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/page/file/1525621/download>
- ¹⁴ National Center for Victims of Crime and the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs. Why it Matters. 2010. <http://www.ncvc.org/ncvc/main.aspx?dbName=DocumentViewer&DocumentID=47632>
- ¹⁵ Straus, Murray A. Dominance and symmetry in partner violence by male and female university students in 32 nations, *Children and Youth Services Review*. 2008. <https://www.scinapse.io/papers/2031649620>
- ¹⁶ Compiled by the Domestic Abuse and Violence International Alliance. <https://endtodv.org/davia/>

Updated: 4/12/2023