



Sexual Violence Basics

*How Big a Problem is Sexual Violence?**



National Statistics on Sexual Victimization

- # **Every 6 minutes**, one rape is reported in the United States (compared with one murder every 27 minutes).¹
- # An estimated **1.1 million** people over age 12 were victims of rape and sexual assault in 1992. This compares with approximately 500,000 people who were physically injured by drunk drivers.²
- # Nearly **18%** of American women, and **3%** of American men, report having been victims of completed or attempted rape during their lifetimes.³
- # In one national survey, **84%** of women who disclosed that they had been raped never reported their rapes to the police.⁴
- # In a national study of college students, **27.5%** of the females reported that, since they were 14 years old, they had experienced an act that could be considered rape (based on the legal definition of rape).⁵
- # Only **3 out of 10** reported rapes/sexual assaults reported to law enforcement are committed by strangers (compared to 7 out of 10 robberies).⁶
- # While most rape victims are female, men and boys are also victimized by this crime. In 1995, **31,979** males age 12 and older reported being victims of rape, attempted rape or sexual assault.⁷
- # Every year approximately **1 million** women and **371,000** men are victims of stalking.³
- # In 1997, **15,889** charges of sexual harassment were filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and with local and state Fair Employment Practices Agencies around the country.⁸
- # In a nationwide survey, **56%** of women responding had received at least one obscene phone call, **16%** within the last six months.⁹

* Although statistics can help us understand the problem of sexual violence, they have some limitations. Statistics should be considered and used carefully.

National Statistics on Child Sexual Abuse

- # **At least 20%** of American women and **5% to 10%** of American men have experienced sexual abuse as children.¹⁰
- # Most child sexual abuse is committed by men (**90%**) and by persons known to the victim (**70% to 90%**).¹⁰
- # Family members constitute **30% to 50%** of the perpetrators against girls, and **10% to 20%** of the perpetrators against boys.¹⁰
- # The **vast majority of child sexual abuse victims** are not arrested for perpetrating sex crimes, or any other crimes, as adults; however, they are at higher risk for committing crimes than people who were not abused or neglected as children.¹¹
- # Children who are sexually abused are about **30 times more likely** to be arrested for prostitution as adults, compared to non-abused children.¹¹

National Statistics on Perpetration

- # About half of all adult sex offenders committed their first sexual offense during adolescence.¹²
- # In a national study of college students, **7.7%** of male respondents reported that, since they were 14 years old, they has committed an act that could be considered rape (based on the legal definition of rape).⁵
- # On a given day about **234,000** offenders convicted of rape or sexual assault are under the care, custody, or control of corrections agencies.¹³

National Statistics on Attitudes about Sexual Violence

- # In a survey of 432 male and female adolescents, aged 14 through 19, **72%** of respondents initially said that force is never justified in order to have sexual intercourse. However, when presented with nine specific scenarios, **76%** of the males and **56%** of the females responded that force was acceptable in at least one of those scenarios. The scenarios included "when a girl gets a guy sexually excited," "when she says she's going to have sex, then changes her mind," and "when she's led him on."¹⁴
- # By age 16, most Americans have already witnessed **200,000 acts of violent crime** on television.¹⁵
- # Among teenagers between ages 12 and 17, **8%** reported that the most important problem facing them is violence and crime in school. Another **8%** reported that sexual issues are the most important problem facing them.¹⁶

Minnesota Statistics

Every day in Minnesota:

- 6.7** rapes are reported to law enforcement.
- 5** people are arrested for prostitution.
- 10.8** other sex offenses are reported to law enforcement.¹⁷

- # Sex offenders make up the **largest single group of inmates** in Minnesota adult and juvenile correctional facilities (approximately **20.5%**).¹⁸
- # In 1997, **956** people were arrested for rape in Minnesota. **1,129** people were arrested for other sex offenses.¹⁸
- # Only **9%** of victims receiving services from Minnesota sexual assault programs did not know their perpetrators. **37%** of the perpetrators were acquaintances, friends, or dates, **33%** were parents, step-parents, siblings, or other relatives, and **8%** were spouses.¹⁹

1998 Minnesota Student Survey results *

Young people in the Minnesota public schools reported the following rates of sexual victimization in 1998 (*Chart 1*):

Type of Sexual Violence ²⁰	6 th Grade		9 th Grade		12 th Grade	
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Sexual abuse by family member	2%	3%	2%	5%	2%	5%
Sexual abuse by someone outside family	3%	5%	4%	10%	4%	9%
Date rape	n/a	n/a	3%	3%	4%	6%
Dating violence	n/a	n/a	5%	6%	5%	10%

1995 Minnesota Student Survey Results *

Young people in the alternative settings listed below reported the following rates of sexual victimization in 1995 (data for 1998 not yet available) (*Chart 2*):

Type of Sexual Violence ²¹	Juvenile Corrections Facilities		Residential Behavioral Facilities		Alternative Learning Centers		Chemical Dependency Treatment	
	<i>Females</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Males</i>
Child sexual abuse	51%	19%	49%	20%	35%	7%	30%	9%
Violence on a date	23%	2%	26%	6%	21%	4%	17%	4%

* Note: Due to differences in methodology, results from the 1998 survey of Minnesota public schools (*Chart 1*) cannot be directly compared with the results of the 1995 survey of the alternative settings (*Chart 2*).

¹ Federal Bureau of Investigations (1997)

² Miller, Cohen And Wiersema (1996)

³ Tjaden and Thoennes (1998)

⁴ Kilpatrick, Edmunds, and Seymour (1992)

⁵ Koss, Gidycz and Wisniewski. (1987)

⁶ Bureau of Justice Statistics (1996)

⁷ Rand (1998)

⁸ Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (1998)

⁹ Katz (1994)

¹⁰ Finkelhor (1994)

¹¹ Widom (1995)

¹² Cellini, H. (1995)

¹³ Greenfield (1997)

¹⁴ Goodchilds et al. (1988)

¹⁵ Cohen and Swift (1993)

¹⁶ National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (1997)

¹⁷ Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (1998)

¹⁸ Minnesota Department of Corrections (1998)

¹⁹ Minnesota Center for Crime Victim Services (1998)

²⁰ Minnesota Department of Children Families and Learning (1998)

²¹ Minnesota Department of Human Services (1996)