

Domestic Violence Victimization in the U.S.

- In a 2016/2017 national study, almost **1 in 2 women** in the U.S., and about **40% of men**, report having been subjected to contact sexual violence, physical violence and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime. Nearly a third of women and nearly a quarter of men report having been subjected to severe physical violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime.¹
- **Two in five women (41%) and 1 in 4 men (26%)** report experiencing at least one impact from intimate partner violence in their lifetime. Among women subjected to intimate partner contact sexual violence, physical violence and/or stalking, 1 in 4 were fearful; 1 in 3 had PTSD symptoms; 1 in 3 were injured; and 1 in 8 needed medical care. Among men subjected to intimate partner contact sexual violence, physical violence and/or stalking; 1 in 13 were fearful; 1 in 7 had PTSD symptoms; 1 in 5 were injured; and 1 in 23 needed medical care.²
- **1 in 8 high school students** reported being subjected to teen dating violence (physical, sexual, or both) within the last year. Among female high school students, 15% reported having been subjected to sexual dating violence and 10% reported having been subjected to physical dating violence within the preceding 12 months. Among male high school students, 4% reported having been subjected to sexual dating violence and 6.7% reported having been subjected to physical dating violence within the preceding 12 months.³
- Across 25 years, 92% of female homicide victims killed by a male offender were known to each other, 62% of whom were killed by an intimate partner.⁴

- 54% of **Black women** report having been subjected to contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime.⁵
- 58% of **American Indian or Alaska Native women** report having been subjected to contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime.⁶
- Over 40% of **Hispanic women** report having been subjected to contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime.⁷
- 48% of **white women** report having been subjected to contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime.⁸
- Bisexual, gay and lesbian people are subjected to intimate partner violence (including contact sexual violence, physical violence and/or stalking) at higher rates than heterosexual people. **Bisexual women and men experienced the highest rates at 69% and 46% respectively.**⁹

Gun Violence in the U.S

- In 2021, approximately **eight in ten murders** in the United States involved a firearm.¹⁰
- **Young Black men** (ages 15-34) are disproportionately impacted by gun violence. In 2021, although they represented only 2% of the total population in the U.S. they accounted for **36% of all gun homicides**.¹¹
- Gun violence is the leading cause of death for **children and teens age 1-19**.¹²
- While men are at an elevated risk for gun violence overall and are five times more likely to die by firearm homicide than women, women are more likely to be subject to domestic violence with a firearm.¹³
- Across 25 years, **more than half of all female homicide victims** were killed with a firearm.¹⁴
- The percentage of Black female homicide victims killed with a gun has dramatically increased in recent years (from 51% in 2011 to 72% in 2020). In 2020, **Black women were murdered at nearly four times the rate of white women** and 89% of Black homicide victims overall were killed with a gun.¹⁵
- Women who are **pregnant or postpartum** are twice as likely to be murdered than to die from common obstetric causes. In 2020, 80% of pregnancy-associated homicides involved guns.¹⁶

Domestic Violence and Firearms: A Deadly Combination

- Access to a firearm makes it **five times more likely** a woman will be killed by her abusive partner.¹⁷
- Every month in the United States an average of **70 women are killed by a firearm** at the hands of an intimate partner.¹⁸
- Firearms are used to commit more than half of all intimate partner homicides in the United States.¹⁹
- **American Indian/Alaskan Native women** are nearly **four times more likely** than white women to be fatally shot by an intimate partner.²⁰
- **Black women are three times more likely** than white women to be fatally shot by an intimate partner.²¹
- The use of a firearm in domestic violence incidents is associated with a dramatically increased risk of lethality. One study found that **domestic violence incidents involving firearms are twelve times more likely to result in death** than incidents involving other weapons or bodily force. A 2003 case-control study found that when a firearm was used in the most severe incident of domestic violence the odds of it ending in homicide were **41 times** that of when a firearm was not used.²²
- **Four and a half million** American women report being threatened with a gun by an intimate partner.²³
- Nearly **1 million** American women have been nonfatally shot or shot at by an intimate partner.²⁴

- In one study which surveyed survivors of intimate partner violence residing at a shelter, 38% reported that their partner threatened to shoot them and 14% reported that their partner threatened to shoot children. 28% percent reported that their partner had pointed a gun at them.²⁵
- In one study, 28% of female intimate partner violence survivors had been subjected to **both** stalking and a gun threat.²⁶
- Between 1,000 and 1,500 Americans die in murder-suicides each year. 90% involve guns and nearly two thirds involve an intimate partner.²⁷
- One study in California found that those who used a gun to murder an intimate partner were **13 times** more likely to die by suicide following the homicide than those who used any other kind of weapon.²⁸

Domestic Violence, Firearms, and Community Violence

- More than half of **mass shootings** between 2014-2019 were domestic violence-related and in more than two-thirds of mass shootings the perpetrator either killed at least one partner or family member or had a history of domestic violence.²⁹
- One study found that men who murdered an intimate partner were nearly twice as likely to have at least one additional victim when they used a firearm as compared with other means of homicide.³⁰
- In 2023, of the 136 **law enforcement officers** who died in the line of duty, firearms-related fatalities were the leading cause. Of the 47 officers killed with a firearm in the line of duty in 2023, 7 were responding to a domestic violence-related call.³¹

Impact on Children

- 31% of firearm homicides of **children under the age of 13** were found to be related to intimate partner violence.³²
- Domestic violence is the **second** most common circumstance precipitating the firearm deaths of those age **12 and younger**.³³
- An analysis of intimate partner homicides across 16 U.S. states between 2003-2009 found that **nearly 30% of the incidents resulted in multiple deaths** and nearly 50% of those additional deaths were of children or other family members of the abused intimate partner. Roughly 70% of all additional victims were killed with a firearm.³⁴

Efficacy of Firearm Prohibition Laws

- An analysis of data for 45 U.S. states between 1980-2013 demonstrated that domestic violence protection orders that require relinquishment of firearms is associated with a **12% reduction in intimate partner homicides** and a prohibition on firearm access when subject to a domestic violence protection order that includes dating partners is associated with a 13% reduction in intimate partner homicides.³⁵
- Laws that prohibit firearm access to those convicted of violence misdemeanors—regardless of the relationship between the defendant and victim—are associated with a **23% reduction in intimate partner homicides**.³⁶
- More than half of all intimate partner homicides are committed by dating partners. Among states in which state law firearm prohibitions cover abusive dating partners, **there is a 13% reduction in intimate partner homicides** and a 16% reduction in intimate partner homicides committed with firearms.³⁷
- Between November 1998 and February 2024, the federal background check system stopped nearly **80,000 firearm sales** to people subject to qualifying domestic violence protection orders and nearly **195,000 firearm sales** to people with domestic violence misdemeanor convictions.³⁸

Endnotes

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