

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

Children and Domestic Violence

At a Glance

- At least 10 to 20 percent of children are exposed to intimate partner violence annually, with as many as one-third exposed at some point during childhood or adolescence.¹⁰
- Between 3.3 million children and 10 million children in the U.S. are exposed to domestic violence each year.¹¹
- Overall lifetime rates of exposure to violence are higher among black and Native American adolescents.¹²

Child Custody and Domestic Violence

- An estimated 58,000 children a year in the United States are court ordered into unsupervised contact with physically or sexually abusive parents following divorce.¹³
- In a national study of 238 custody cases published online in which alienation was alleged, fathers who were accused of abuse and who accused the mother of alienating the children won their custody cases the majority of the time (72 percent).¹⁴
- Abusive parents use child custody as a way to continue to threaten and harass the victim.¹⁵
- Because an abuse victim is less likely to be able to afford legal representation, he or she is at an automatic disadvantage when involved in a child custody case.¹⁶

The Effect of Domestic Violence on Children

- Females who are exposed to their parents' domestic violence as adolescents are significantly more likely to become victims of dating violence than daughters of nonviolent parents.¹⁷
- Children can exhibit behavioral and emotional problems, as well as cognitive functioning due to being direct targets of abuse and from exposure to DV.¹⁸
- Children who live with domestic violence over time can sustain lasting effects on their development, behavior, and overall wellbeing, including: depression, anxiety, poor coping mechanisms, suicidal ideations, self-harm, substance abuse, and chronic pain.¹⁹

Endnotes

- 1 Ruth Leemis, et al., The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence (2022), National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; https://www.cdc.gov/nisvs/documentation/nisvsreportonipv_2022.pdf?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs/NISVSReportonIPV_2022.pdf.
- 2 See fn 1.
- 3 Heather Clayton, et al. Dating Violence, Sexual Violence, and Bullying Victimization Among High School Students—Youth Risk Behavior Survey, United States, 2021. *MMWR Suppl* 2023;72(Suppl-1):66-74. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.su7201a8>; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 1991-2021 High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data. Available at <http://nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/>.
- 4 When Men Murder Women: A Review of 25 Years of Female Homicide Victimization in the United States (October 2023), Violence Policy Center, <https://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2023.pdf>
- 5 See fn 1.
- 6 See fn 1.
- 7 See fn 1.
- 8 See fn 1.
- 9 Chen, J., et al. (2023, October). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) 2016/2017: Report on Victimization by Sexual Identity. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/nisvs/documentation/nisvsreportonsexualidentity.pdf?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs/nisvsReportonSexualIdentity.pdf
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- 13 Jaffe et al., Common Misconceptions, supra note 42.
- 14 Meier, J. S., & Dickson, S. (2017). Mapping gender: Shedding light on family courts’ treatment of cases involving abuse and alienation. *Law & Inequality: A Journal of Theory and Practice*, 35(2), 311-334.
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- 18 Campo, M. (2015). Children’s exposure to domestic and family violence (pp. 6-8). Consistent research. See Edleson, J. L. (1999). Children’s witnessing of adult domestic violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 14(8), 839-846.
- 19 Jaffe, P. G., et al. (2014). Risk factors for children in situations of family violence in the context of separation and divorce (pp. 12-13). Retrieved from <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/fv-vf/rfcsfv-freevf/rfcsfv-freevf.pdf>



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