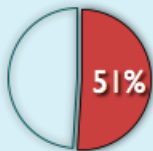


The Facts



51% of female victims of rape reported being raped by an intimate partner (CDC, 2010)



1 in 10 women in the United States has been raped by an intimate partner in her lifetime (CDC, 2011)



17% of women and 8% of men have experienced a form of sexual violence other than rape by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime (CDC, 2011)



2/3 of women who had been physically assaulted by an intimate partner also reported sexual assault by that partner in a 2005 study (McFarlane & Malecha, 2005).

Intimate Partner Sexual Violence

Intimate partner sexual violence (IPSV) is any unwanted sexual contact by an intimate partner with the purpose of controlling an individual through fear, threats or violence (WCSAP, 2009). IPSV occurs by force, threat of force, or when the victim is unable to consent.

Perpetrators of IPSV sexually assault their partners to reinforce their power, dominate or control their partner and/or family, humiliate their victim, or express anger. Victims/survivors do not cause their assaults and are not to blame. Perpetrators are solely responsible for their assaults.

Perpetrators of IPSV use a variety of methods, which fall on a continuum from coercion to physical force in order to intimidate their partner into sex. One form of sexual intimidation is social coercion, which is strongly influenced by familial, religious, and/or cultural belief systems regarding gender roles and expectations. Another form of sexual intimidation is interpersonal coercion, which is the use of non-physical threats, such as withholding money in return for sex or threatening to leave the relationship.

Potential Dynamics and Impacts of Intimate Partner Sexual Violence

Adapted from Louise McOrmand-Plummer
“Considering the Differences: Intimate Partner Sexual Violence in Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Discourse”
found in the Intimate Partner Sexual Violence: Sexual Assault in the Context of Domestic Violence—Second Edition, 2009, Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs (WCSAP)

Higher levels of physical injury

- While most rapes are not physically violent, those that do involve injury are more likely to be partner rapes

Incidence of multiple assaults

- While IPSV can be a single incident, survivors of IPSV often experience multiple assaults

Financial dependency on the perpetrator

- Victims who are not permitted money or employment may feel it is not possible to leave the relationship

Safety issues

- The survivor may need shelter, court-orders, and assistance with legal/custody matters

Difficulty defining the act/s as sexual assault

- Survivors may be reluctant to define a partner she loves as a “rapist” or may view sexual assault as only non-consensual sex between two strangers

Potential fatality

- Women who are being raped as well as battered face a higher risk of homicide than women who are battered but not raped

Deliberately inflicted pregnancy or STDs

- Perpetrators may intentionally force unprotected sex to impregnate or expose their partners to STDs as a way to force them to remain in or return to the relationship

Sources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2011). *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report*.

McFarlane, J. and Malecha, A. (2005). *Sexual Assault Among Intimates: Frequency, Consequences, and Treatments*. National Institute of Justice.

Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs. (2009). *Intimate Partner Sexual Violence: Sexual Assault in the Context of Domestic Violence—Second Edition*.

WCASA is a membership agency comprised of organizations and individuals working to end sexual violence in Wisconsin. Among these are the 56 sexual assault service provider (SASP) agencies throughout the state that offer support, advocacy and information to victims of sexual assault and their families. For information sheets on other topics and for more information about sexual assault, please visit our website. This sheet may be reproduced in its original format only.

This information does not constitute legal advice.