

Rape/Sexual Assault Statistics

Rape and sexual assault is a serious and destructive problem affecting hundreds of thousands of people each year. Ascertaining an accurate picture of the impact of sexual violence is a difficult task and the data vary greatly due to reasons such as underreporting, lack of standardized definitions, and how data are collected. The available data seriously underestimate the enormity of this problem. Rape is one of the most underreported crimes. In 2002, only 39% of rapes and sexual assaults were reported to law enforcement officials (Department of Justice, 2003).

Nationally

- Every two and a half minutes, somewhere in the United States, someone is sexually assaulted (calculation based on National Crime Victimization Survey, 2004).
- In 2004, there were 209,880 victims, ages 12 or older, of rape, sexual assault or attempted rape in the United States; 203,680 were female victims and 6,200 were male victims (National Crime Victimization Survey, 2004).
- According to the NCVS (2004) 67% of sexual assaults are perpetrated by someone known to the victim.
- Among college students nationwide, between 20% and 25% of women report experiencing completed or attempted rape (Fisher, Cullen, and Turner, 2000).
- Over 32,000 pregnancies result from rape every year (Holmes et al., 1996).
- Women are more likely than men to be victims of sexual violence; 78% of the victims of rape and sexual assault are women and 22% are men (Tjaden and Thoennes, 2000).
- Sexual violence victimization starts very early in life. More than half of all rapes of women (54%) occur before age 18; 22% of these occur before age 12. For men, 75% of all rapes occur before age 18, and 48% before age 12 (Ibid.).