

What is domestic violence?

The Office for Victims of Crime defines domestic violence as a pattern of coercive behavior designed to exert power and control over a person in an intimate relationship through the use of intimidating, threatening, harmful, or harassing behavior. It can be sexual, physical, or emotional abuse.

Domestic violence in America

- In 2003, it was estimated that there were more than 521,000 nonfatal violent victimizations committed by intimate partners in America; of these, 84 percent were against women.
- From 2001 to 2003, overall violent crime by intimate partners decreased by 25 percent, but rape/sexual assault fell by more than 33 percent. Aggravated assault increased slightly.
- In 2003, domestic violence made up 19 percent of all nonfatal violent crime victimizations experienced by women, and 3 percent experienced by men.
- In 2002, 1,202 females and 388 men were murdered by an intimate partner. Homicide by intimates has declined since 1993, especially for male victims.

Who are victims of domestic violence?

A 2003 study compared women from advantaged neighborhoods to those living in disadvantaged neighborhoods. The results revealed that women living in disadvantaged neighborhoods were:

- More than twice as likely to be victims of intimate partner violence.
- Three times as likely to be victims of severe violence (2 percent compared to 6 percent).
- More likely to be victimized repeatedly or to be injured by their domestic partners.

African-Americans and whites with similar economic circumstances had similar rates of intimate partner violence. There was a higher rate of intimate partner violence among African-Americans because a higher proportion lived in disadvantaged neighborhoods and were under economic distress.

The costs of intimate partner violence

In 2003, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention reported that health-related costs of intimate partner violence (includes rape, physical assault, stalking, and homicide) exceeded \$5.8 billion each year in the United States. Of this total, nearly \$4.1 billion were direct medical and mental health care services and \$1.8 billion were productivity losses.

Domestic violence in Minnesota

In 2003, at least 13 women and 10 children were murdered in Minnesota as the result of domestic violence.

Wilder Foundation homeless study

According to a Minnesota study on homelessness, the most common reason women sought shelter was to flee an abusive partner.

- In 2003, nearly one in three homeless women was homeless because of domestic abuse.
- Nearly half of homeless women reported that they stayed in an abusive relationship because they had nowhere else to live.
- An association exists between homelessness and abuse as children; 42 percent of homeless adult women reported that they were mistreated as children.

Victim programs in Minnesota

In 2004, there were 81 domestic violence programs. Battered women in Minnesota spent nearly 99,000 nights and children spent nearly 116,000 nights in safe shelter in 2004. In Community Advocacy Programs (CAP), almost 25,000 victims were served in the same time period.

*Source: Office of Justice Programs Statistical Analysis Center
www.ojp.state.mn.us*