



# B. What You Need to Know About Interpersonal Violence

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## INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal violence is defined as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person or against a group or community that results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation" (Dahlberg & Krug, 2002). **The term interpersonal violence may be used interchangeably with the terms gender-based violence or power-based personal violence in this toolkit.** While each frames the violence slightly differently, all involve violence used against a person using power, control and/or intimidation to harm another.

**Interpersonal violence is a serious problem on college campuses.** As noted in *Beyond Title IX: Guidelines for Preventing and Responding to Gender-based Violence in Higher Education* (Fleck-Henderson, 2012), women of traditional college age continue to be at particular risk for interpersonal violence:

- ✓ Approximately 80% of female rape victims experienced their first rape before the age of 25 (Black et al., 2011). About 1 in 5 women experience sexual assault during their college years (Krebs et al., 2007).
- ✓ About 12% of completed rapes, 35% of attempted rapes and 22% of threatened rapes on college campuses occurred on a date (Fisher, Cullen & Turner, 2000).
- ✓ Women ages 20 to 24 are at highest risk for violence by an intimate partner (Rennison & Welchans, 2000).
- ✓ Women ages 18 to 24 are at highest risk of stalking (Baum et al., 2009).

**The main acts of interpersonal violence explored in this toolkit are sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking.** Intervening in and preventing interpersonal violence requires understanding the fact that while anyone can be a victim or a perpetrator, research indicates that specific populations are more likely to experience these types of violence at a higher rate (e.g., women, people with disabilities, etc.) and that men are more likely to be offenders than women.




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Acquiring new knowledge and putting it into practice is a process. You are not expected to “know” the information in the toolkit all at once. Instead, you can work through toolkit sections at your own pace, building your knowledge base as you go.

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## B1. EXPLANATION OF KEY TERMS

It is helpful to be familiar with terms that explain the nature and scope of interpersonal violence.

**Consensual Sex:** The voluntary agreement, by words or conduct, to engage in sexual activity. Lack of consent is critical in determining whether a sexual assault has occurred. People have the right to change their minds at any point in a sexual encounter and to withdraw consent by words or conduct. Consent cannot be provided under the following conditions: when the victim was incapable of consenting due to age, mental or physical incapacity; when the victim used words or conduct to indicate “no;” or when the victim changed his/her mind. In West Virginia, a person cannot legally consent to sexual activity if she/he is under the age of 16. (See *WVC §61-8B-2*.)

**Coercion:** The use of manipulation, threat or force to have sexual contact with someone without her/his consent. Many behaviors that are deemed socially acceptable actually promote and lead to sexual coercion (e.g., initiating any sexual contact without explicit permission and/or without explicit awareness of what the other person wants, acting despite mixed signals from the other person, sexual contact with someone who is drunk or on drugs or otherwise unable to give consent, and impulsive sexual action or acting on a dare) (University of Chicago).

**Electronic Aggression:** Any kind of aggression perpetrated through technology or the Internet and cell phone harassment or bullying (Hertz & David-Ferdon, 2008). Electronic aggression may be used interchangeably in this toolkit with the term cyberstalking.

**Dating Violence:** Dating violence is controlling, abusive and aggressive behavior against a person on a date or a dating partner. It can include any combination of physical, emotional or

sexual abuse. Dating violence should not be viewed simply as a form of domestic violence—the fact that individuals are on a date or dating doesn't necessarily mean they are in an intimate relationship. Even if they have been intimate, it does not mean they consider what they have as a relationship. In many instances on college campuses, violence while on a date may have more to do with sexual than domestic violence.

**Domestic Violence:** Abusive behavior perpetrated by an intimate partner against another is domestic violence. Under West Virginia law, the definition extends to include a victim who is related to the abuser's family or who is another household member.

**Drug-Facilitated Sexual Assault:** This type of sexual victimization occurs when drugs or alcohol are used to compromise an individual's ability to consent to sexual activity. Drugs and alcohol are also used to minimize the victim's resistance to sexual assault as well as her/his memory of the assault. Drugs commonly used to incapacitate a victim include Ecstasy, Ketamine, Benzodiazepines, GHB and GBL (RAINN, 2009).

**Non-Stranger Sexual Assault and Abuse** (generally referred to as non-stranger sexual assault): Involves coercive sexual activities that are imposed upon a person by someone she/he knows, including a friend, date or acquaintance (adapted from Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network—RAINN, 2009). In the vast majority of sexual assaults, the victim knows the offender.

**Sexual Abuse:** Occurs when a person subjects another to sexual contact without her/his consent, and that lack of consent is due to physical force, threat or intimidation (according to West Virginia law).

**Sexual Assault:** Sexual intercourse or sexual intrusion without consent (according to West Virginia law). Some types of sexual acts which fall under the category of sexual assault include forced sexual intercourse, sodomy (oral or anal sexual acts), incest and attempted rape.

**Sexual Harassment:** Unwanted and unwelcome sexual behavior that makes the person being harassed feel uncomfortable and affects her/his employment, unreasonably interferes with his/her work or school performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment.

**Sexual Violence:** Conduct of a sexual nature which is non-consensual and is accomplished through threat, coercion, exploitation, deceit, force, physical or mental incapacitation and/or power of authority (Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance).

**Stalking:** A course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person fear. West Virginia's stalking statute includes stalking (repeated following) and harassment. Under West Virginia law, stalking includes one behavior - repeated (more than one time) following. Harassment can include many types of unwanted behaviors, including telephone harassment; sending/giving unwanted gifts, letters or e-mails to the victim; monitoring of telephone calls or computer use; spreading rumors or otherwise defaming the victim's character; vandalism or other destruction of property; and threats to the victim and her family, friends and pets.

## B2. TYPES OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

Sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking are serious crimes affecting millions of individuals across the nation, including many attending college. This section offers general information on these crimes and applicable criminal offenses, as well as data specific to various forms of interpersonal violence against college students.

### Sexual Violence

**Sexual violence is broadly defined** by the World Health Organization (Krug et al., 2002) as **any sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act** (as well as unwanted sexual comments or advances or acts to traffic) **directed against a person's sexuality using coercion**. For the toolkit's purpose, this **overview of sexual violence is focused on those acts which are considered crimes in West Virginia**. Examples of crimes of sexual violence include:

- ✓ Rape—sexual intercourse against a person's will;
- ✓ Forcible sodomy—anal or oral sex against a person's will;
- ✓ Forcible object penetration—penetrating someone's vagina or anus, or causing that person to penetrate her/himself, against that person's will;
- ✓ Unwanted sexual touching;
- ✓ Sexual contact with a person who lacks the capacity to give consent;
- ✓ Incest (sexual contact between family members); and
- ✓ Any other nonconsensual sexual contact (see blue chart below).



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When discussing criminal offenses (see below), specific terms are used to describe specific criminal acts. However, unless otherwise specified, the terms sexual violence and sexual assault are generally used in this toolkit to encompass the spectrum of sexual assault, sexual abuse and other forms of sexual violence.

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### STATE LAWS



**Sexual assault and sexual abuse are the two major classifications of sex offenses in West Virginia (WVC§61-8B).**

**Sexual abuse** occurs when a **person subjects another to sexual contact without her/his consent**, and that **lack of consent is due to physical force, threat or intimidation**. There are **three levels** of sexual abuse in West Virginia:

- ✓ **1<sup>st</sup> Degree:** Sexual contact without the victim's consent due to forcible compulsion, the victim is physically helpless, or the victim is younger than age 12 and the perpetrator is age 14 or older. *Penalty:* An indeterminate term of not less than 1 nor more than 5 years in a state correctional facility; and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000. However, if the defendant is 18 or older and the victim is younger than 12, the penalty is not less than 5 nor more than 25 years in a state correctional facility; and/or a fine of not less than \$1,000, nor more than \$5,000.

- ✓ **2<sup>nd</sup> Degree:** Sexual contact with someone who is mentally defective or mentally incapacitated. *Penalty:* Confinement in a regional jail for not more than 12 months; and/or a fine of not more than \$500.
- ✓ **3<sup>rd</sup> Degree:** Sexual contact with a victim under age 16 without her/his consent. *Penalty:* Confinement in a regional jail for not more than 90 days; and/or a fine of not more than \$500.

**Sexual assault is sexual intercourse or sexual intrusion without consent.** There are **three levels** of sexual assault in West Virginia:

- ✓ **1<sup>st</sup> Degree:** The perpetrator inflicts serious bodily injury, uses a deadly weapon, or the perpetrator is over age 14 and the victim is younger than 12 years old and is not married to that person. *Penalty:* An indeterminate term of not less than 15 nor more than 35 years in a state correctional facility; and/or a fine of not less than \$1,000 nor more than \$10,000. However, if the defendant is 18 or older and victim is younger than 12, the penalty is not less than 25 nor more than 100 years in a state correctional facility, and or a fine of not less than \$5,000 nor more than \$25,000.
- ✓ **2<sup>nd</sup> Degree:** Sexual intercourse or intrusion without consent and lack of consent is due to forcible compulsion or physical helplessness. *Penalty:* An indeterminate term of not less than 10 nor more than 25 years in a state correctional facility; and/or a fine of not less than \$1,000 nor more than \$10,000.
- ✓ **3<sup>rd</sup> Degree:** Sexual intercourse or intrusion with someone who is mentally defective or mentally incapacitated, or when someone age 16 or older assaults someone less than 16 who is at least 4 years younger than the perpetrator and not married to him/her. *Penalty:* An indeterminate term of not less than 1 nor more than 5 years in a state correctional facility; and/or a fine of not more than \$10,000.

There is **no statute of limitations for felony sex offenses (all degrees of sexual assault and 1<sup>st</sup> degree sexual abuse); 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree sexual abuse must be charged within 1 year** after the offense was committed (*WVC§61-11-9*).

#### **Explanation of Terms: WV Sexual Abuse and Sexual Assault Laws**

**Forcible compulsion:** (a) physical force that overcomes such earnest resistance as might reasonably be expected, under the circumstances; (b) threat or intimidation, expressed or implied, placing a person in fear of immediate death or bodily injury to him/herself or another person or in fear that he/she or another person will be kidnapped; or (c) fear by a person under 16 years of age caused by intimidation, expressed or implied, by another person who is at least 4 years older than the victim. For the purpose of this definition, "**resistance**" includes physical resistance or any clear communication of the victim's lack of consent.

**Married:** for the purpose of this article, in addition to its legal meaning, includes persons living together as husband and wife regardless of the legal status of their relationship.

**Mentally defective:** a person suffers from a mental disease or defect which renders that person incapable of appraising the nature of his/her conduct.

**Mentally incapacitated:** a person is rendered temporarily incapable of appraising or controlling his/her conduct, as a result of the influence of a controlled or intoxicating substance administered to that person without his/her consent or a result of any other act committed upon that person without his/her consent.

**Physically helpless:** a person is unconscious or for any reason is physically unable to communicate unwillingness to an act.

**Sexual contact:** intentional touching, either directly or through clothing, of the anus/any part of the sex organs of another person, or the breast of a female or intentional touching of any part of another person's body by the actor's sex organs, where the victim is not married to the actor and the touching is done to gratify the sexual desire of either party.

**Sexual intercourse:** any act between persons involving penetration, however slight, of the female sex organ by the male sex organ or involving contact between the sex organs of one person and the mouth or anus of another person.

**Sexual intrusion:** any act between persons involving penetration, however slight, of the female sex organ or of the anus of any person by an object for the purpose of degrading or humiliating the person so penetrated or for gratifying the sexual desire of either party.

**Bodily injury:** substantial physical pain, illness or any impairment of physical condition.

**Serious bodily injury:** bodily injury which creates a substantial risk of death, which causes serious or prolonged disfigurement, prolonged impairment of health, or prolonged loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ.

**Deadly weapon:** any instrument, device or thing capable of inflicting death or serious bodily injury and designed or adapted for use as a weapon or possessed, carried or used as a weapon.

*While some terms are not the most sensitive choice of language, they currently define the law. Avoid use of legal terms such as "mentally defective" when talking with victims as this could increase their reluctance to seek assistance.*

## DRUG FACILITATED SEXUAL ASSAULT/ABUSE

**In West Virginia, someone who is drunk or drugged cannot give consent to sex.**

Perpetrators may intentionally drug their victims or prey on persons who have been voluntarily drinking in order to have sexual intercourse with them. If a person has sex or sexual contact with someone who is in such an incapacitated condition, it is a form of sexual violence.

**Sexual violence is often linked to the abuse of drugs, primarily alcohol, that decrease inhibitions and make the user incapacitated.** In addition to alcohol, the drugs most often used to facilitate sexual violence are GHB, Ecstasy, Rohypnol (a benzodiazepine), Ketamine and Soma, although other benzodiazepines and sedative hypnotics are used as well. (RAINN offers a brief [explanation of each of these drug's street names, what they are and their effects.](#))

These drugs cause unconsciousness—an effect that is quickened and intensified when the drugs are taken with alcohol. They can also cause intense sleepiness, memory loss, nausea, lack of coordination, slurred speech, loss of inhibition, confusion, seizures and even death.

**Victims may be unconscious during all or parts of the sexual assault and, upon regaining consciousness, may experience anterograde amnesia**—the inability to recall events that occurred while under the influence of the drug.

**Victims often are reluctant to report drug facilitated sexual violence** because of a sense of guilt, embarrassment or perceived responsibility because they lack specific recall of the assault. Many of the drugs used in these cases are rapidly absorbed and metabolized by the body, making them undetectable in routine urine and blood drug screenings.



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### Potential signs a person may have been drugged:



- ✓ Feeling more intoxicated than usual for the amount of alcohol that was consumed;
  - ✓ Waking up feeling hung over or still feeling intoxicated/drugged;
  - ✓ Experiencing memory lapse and not being able to account for periods of time;
  - ✓ Remembering taking a drink but not being able to recall what happened for a period of time after consuming the drink; and/or
  - ✓ Thinking sex occurred, but not being able to remember the actual incident.
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## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST COLLEGE STUDENTS

### What number of college students experience sexual assault?

In the U.S., it is estimated that 1 in 6 women and 1 in 33 men will become a victim of attempted or completed rape in their lifetimes (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998, 2006). In West Virginia, 1 in 6 women and 1 in 21 men will experience an attempted or completed forcible sexual assault during their lifetimes (West Virginia Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey, 2008).

**College women have even higher rates of sexual victimization than the general and state populations.** The *National College Women Sexual Victimization Study* (Fisher, Cullen & Turner, 2000) found 35 incidents of rape per nine-month academic year for every 1,000 female students at a college. When projected to a full calendar year, nearly 5% of college women are victims of rape annually (Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, 2004). This projection coincides with the findings of several other national studies (Kilpatrick, Edmunds & Seymour, 2007; Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004). Based on these figures, **1 in 5 women (20%) experience rape during a now-typical five-year college career** (Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, 2004). Similarly, the more recent *Campus Sexual Assault Study* (Krebs et al., 2007) found **19% undergraduate women had been victims of an attempted or completed sexual assault since entering college.**

### Who sexually assaults college students?

According to the West Virginia State Police 2012 Incident-Based Reporting System, **85% of sexual assault victims knew their offenders: 47% of sexual assaults were committed by an acquaintance (non-intimate partner)**, 9% by an intimate partner, 29% by other family members, 5% by a stranger and in 11% of these cases, the relationship between victim and offender was unknown. Similarly, Fisher, Cullen and Turner (2000) found 9 out of 10 of the female rape victims knew their offenders. Most often they were boyfriends, ex-boyfriends, classmates, friends, acquaintances or co-workers. Another survey indicated that 3 out of 4 victims knew their offenders (Hart, 2003). Clearly, **the vast majority of sexual assaults are perpetrated by persons known to victims rather than by strangers.**

### In what contexts does sexual assault occur in the college environment?

Non-stranger sexual assault in college settings occurs in a variety of contexts, including:

- ✓ **At a party:** For example, at an off-campus residence, involving a perpetrator plying the targeted victim with alcohol or targeting someone who is intoxicated.
- ✓ **On a date:** For example, after going out to the movies together and then kissing back at the victim's house, the perpetrator forces sex on the victim.
- ✓ **Non-party, non-date situation:** For example, where two students who are just becoming acquainted and the perpetrator sexually assaults the victim in a car or residence.
- ✓ **Sexual assault by a current or former intimate partner:** For example, one current partner overpowers the other and forces sex on them.




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**The majority of sexual assaults of college students are not perpetrated by dating partners or during a date**, but occur when the victim and perpetrator are otherwise in the same place, such as at a party together (Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, 2004).

Unfortunately, the term “date rape” so commonly used on college campuses has led many to believe that rapes are committed by “basically good guys” who, when faced with the combination of too much alcohol and “miscommunication,” accidentally commit a sexual assault. However, research on sexual perpetrators over the last two decades has clearly shown that **many campus rapes are not “accidents” due to miscommunication and, in fact, are committed by a small number of students who are, in essence, serial rapists** (West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services, 2012). Lisak and Miller (2002) found that perpetrators of sexual assaults on college campuses were often premeditating, repeat offenders, who targeted females who were most vulnerable and would lack credibility.

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### **Where and when do sexual assaults of college students occur?**

Fisher, Cullen and Turner (2000) found that sexual assaults of college women took place both on- and off-campus, in the victims' residences and other living quarters, and at fraternities, bars, nightclubs and work settings. They also found that the vast majority of sexual victimizations occurred in the evening after 6 p.m.

### **Do victims experience physical injuries in the course of a sexual assault?**

Fisher, Cullen and Turner (2000) found that in about 1 in 5 rape and attempted rape incidents of college women, victims reported being injured, most often citing the response “bruises, black-eye, cuts, scratches, swelling or chipped teeth.” **As perpetrators are often successful in using coercion, intimidation and the threat of force to facilitate sexual assault, excessive force is generally not a factor. As a consequence, most victims of sexual assault have few visible physical injuries.** Note, however, that the absence of physical evidence in no way correlates with the level of fear and terror that victims may have experienced during an assault.

Emotional trauma as result of a sexual assault is more likely than physical injuries. Victims also may be at risk for getting a sexually transmitted infection, including HIV/AIDS, from their perpetrators, becoming pregnant if they are females, or having short- and long-term physical ailments associated with emotional trauma caused by sexual victimization (see *C. Responding to Disclosures*).



## What factors may raise college women’s risk for sexual victimization?

Numerous risk factors as cited below are associated with sexual victimization for college students. Note that most studies cited focus on women rather than men due to the high rates of sexual assault of college women. Just being a female is a risk factor for victimization.

**Alcohol and Drug Use: Most college sexual assaults involve alcohol consumption**, by either or both the victims and perpetrators (Abbey, 2002; Abbey et al., 1996; Koss et al., 1987; Presley et al., 1997; Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). Attending a college where heavy drinking is the norm (where more than 50% of students "binge drink") has been connected with increased risk of alcohol-involved sexual assault (Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004; Norris, 2008). In addition, heavy drinking puts women at risk for more severe assaults (Abbey et al., 2003). Drug use has also been linked with increased risk of sexual assault (Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004). There is a connection between alcohol consumption and drug-facilitated rape—Lawyer et al. (2010) found that 84% of drug-facilitated sexual assaults were preceded by the victim’s voluntary alcohol consumption. See Norris (2008) and Abbey (2008) for more discussion of the ways that alcohol can contribute to sexual assault perpetration and victimization. Note that alcohol does not cause someone to be an offender or a victim—it can, however, reduce the inhibitions of offenders and render their victims helpless.

**Class Rank and Age: The first weeks of the fall semester, referred to as “the red zone” by some researchers, often are the most risky for sexual victimization for new students.** There is also a **greater risk of sexual victimization for freshmen and sophomores than for juniors and seniors.** Gross et al. (2006) found that during their first four semesters, 84% of college women had sexually coercive experiences. Mohler-Kuo et al. (2004) found that underage women are more likely to experience sexual assault than those 21 and over.

**Greek Affiliation:** Research suggests that **students who live in sorority houses or belong to sororities have an increased risk for sexual victimization** (Copenhaver & Grauerholz, 1991; Franklin, 2010; Kalof, 1993; Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004; Tyler, Holt & Whitbeck, 1998). **Fraternity members and student athletes are more likely than any other men on campus to commit a sexual assault** (Murnen & Kohlman, 2007). Fisher, Cullen and Turner (2000) found that of the rapes reported by students surveyed in their study, 10.3% occurred in a fraternity house.

**Prior Victimization: Women who experience a sexual assault while attending college or prior to college are at risk for further victimization while in college** (Fisher, Cullen & Turner, 2000, Krebs et al., 2007). Similarly, women who have experienced intimate partner violence are more at risk for sexual violence while in college (American College Health Association, 2004).

**Race/Ethnicity:** White women and Native Americans may be most at-risk for rape on college campuses, while Asian-Americans appear to have the lowest risk (Tjaden & Theonnes, 2006). However, white women are less likely to experience physically forced or threatened forcible rapes than women of other ethnicities or races (Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004).

**Consensual Sexual Experiences:** There is a **connection between the number of sex partners a college woman has had and an increased risk for being sexually assaulted, especially when intoxicated** (Tyler, Hoyt & Whitbeck, 1998; Parks et al., 2008). One study (Parks et al., 2008) indicates that “women who have more consensual sexual partners are more likely to encounter a sexually aggressive individual and are more likely to experience sexual victimization.” At the same time, women who increased their drinking are more likely to be behaviorally and cognitively impaired and less likely to recognize, avoid or defend themselves against sexual aggression (Science Daily, 2008).



**Regardless of the circumstances, sexual assault is never the victim’s fault.** The presence of one or more risk factors does not cause or justify sexual assault. Even if, for example, a woman had too much to drink, the consequence for naive or regrettable

decisions should never be rape. Perpetrators must be held accountable for their actions.

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## How often is sexual assault of college students reported?

National studies indicate that only 14% to 39% of all sexual assaults or rapes are reported to law enforcement (Kilpatrick, 2000). Some of the most common reasons victims are reluctant to report are self-blame, fear of retaliation, fear of rejection and the negativity they perceive might accompany criminal justice system involvement (Office on Violence Against Women, 2004).

**College students appear to report sexual assault even less frequently than the general population.** Fisher, Cullen and Turner (2000) found that of students who indicated they experienced completed or attempted rape, only 5% said reported it to law enforcement.

College students may want help following a rape, but most are aware of the tendency of others to blame victims rather than hold offenders accountable (see *B4. Background: Victim Blaming*). To a degree, they may even buy into victim-blaming (“if I haven’t been drinking,” “if I had only stayed with my friends,” etc.) and be silenced by their shame. Victim-blaming can be particularly harsh when victims know their offenders. Not surprisingly, **victims of non-stranger sexual assault indicate reasons such as the following for not reporting:**

✓ Self-blame	✓ Lack of anonymity	✓ Participation in illegal activity during assault (e.g., underage drinking)
✓ Not seeing the assault as serious enough to report	✓ Fear of publicity	✓ Outstanding warrants
✓ Not sure if a crime had been committed	✓ Fear of reprisal	✓ Possible immigration concerns
✓ Lacking proof of the assault	✓ Fear of isolation	
✓ Not knowing how or to whom to report	✓ Fear of not being believed	
✓ Desire to protect the offender	✓ Fear of being treated with hostility or indifference (e.g., by law enforcement or college administrators)	
	✓ Community backlash	

## What reactions are common for sexual assault victims?

(Section adapted from the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, 2000. Also see *C3. Responding to Disclosures: Understanding Victims’ Needs*.)

Some **common victim reactions to sexual assault** include:

✓ Humiliation	✓ Guilt	✓ Fear of people
✓ Shame and self-blame	✓ Grief	✓ Concern for the rapist
✓ Feeling a loss of control over life	✓ Depression	✓ Anger and irritability
	✓ Denial	✓ Memory loss

Each person reacts to trauma differently. As described above, some reactions are fairly common, but emotional trauma triggered by a sexual assault can surface in many forms. Some victims may react by being hysterical and crying, while others might giggle, be devoid of emotion, or move from one emotion to the next. It is more realistic to expect that victims will react differently following an assault or a disclosure of one—in the timing of their reactions, their concerns, their facial and body language, their coping strategies and their feelings and

understanding about their experience. Thus, **avoid make assumptions about the situation based solely on the victim's reactions** (e.g., if she was raped she won't be laughing now).

## CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

On college campuses, it is more likely that sexual assault and sexual abuse as defined by the West Virginia Code will occur than child sexual abuse. However, child sexual abuse is not out of the realm of possibility, as minors can come/be brought to campus for any number of reasons (e.g., summer programs, athletic programs/events, etc.).



In addition to sexual assault and sexual abuse, West Virginia law describes other **sex offenses involving children**. Sexual abuse of children includes, but is not limited to, sexual intercourse, sexual intrusion and sexual contact (West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Child Protective Services, 2008).

Additional laws include:

- ✓ **Use of minors in filming sexually explicit conduct** (*WVC§61-8C-2*);
- ✓ **Distribution and exhibiting of material depicting minors engaging in sexually explicit conduct** (*WVC§61-8C-3*);
- ✓ **Sexual abuse** by a parent, guardian, custodian or person in a position of trust to a child; a parent, guardian, custodian or person in a position of trust to a child allowing sexual abuse to be inflicted on that child; and displaying of a child's sex organs by a parent, guardian or custodian (*WVC§61-8D-5*);
- ✓ **Sending, distributing, exhibiting, possessing, displaying or transporting of material** by a parent, guardian or custodian **depicting a child engaged in sexually explicit conduct** (*WVC§61-8D-6*); and
- ✓ **Incest**—engaging in sexual intercourse or sexual intrusion with one's father, mother, brother, sister, daughter, son, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, nephew, niece, uncle or aunt (*WVC§61-8-12*).

Generally speaking in West Virginia, child abuse involves **a parent, guardian or custodian of a child who knowingly or intentionally inflicts an injury upon that child**. However, teenagers, for example, can experience sexual assault perpetrated by their peers.

### Examples of Child Sexual Abuse

- ✓ Sexual touching and fondling of a child's sexual body parts
- ✓ Attempted or actual oral, anal or vaginal penetration
- ✓ Forcing a child to touch another person's sexual body parts or engage in sexual activity with animals
- ✓ Exposing a child to adult sexual activity or pornography or taking pornographic pictures of a child
- ✓ Having a child undress, pose or perform in a sexual manner
- ✓ Voyeurism, exposing oneself to a child or masturbating in front of a child
- ✓ Sexualized talk with a child or making fun of a child's sexual development, preferences or organs
- ✓ Forcing overly rigid rules on dress or forcing a child to wear revealing clothes
- ✓ Stripping a child to hit or spank, or getting sexual excitement out of hitting

### Symptoms a Child Who is Being Sexually Abused May Display

(Note the presence of such symptoms is not necessarily indicative of abuse)

- ✓ Sleep disturbances or nightmares and bedwetting
- ✓ Change in eating habits
- ✓ Excessive clinging or crying
- ✓ Depression and/or anxiety
- ✓ School problems
- ✓ Running away
- ✓ Hostility or aggression
- ✓ Sexually transmitted diseases
- ✓ Fear/dislike of particular adults/places
- ✓ Drug/alcohol problems
- ✓ Withdrawal from family, friends or usual activities
- ✓ Frequent touching of private parts or sexual behavior inappropriate to the age of the child
- ✓ Physical symptoms involving the genital, anal or mouth area
- ✓ Any dramatic change in behavior or development of new behavior

### Common Emotional Responses of Children to Sexual Abuse

- ✓ **Fear** of the abuser, of getting into trouble/getting a loved one into trouble, and/or of not being believed
- ✓ **Guilt** for not stopping the abuse, believing they consented to it, telling/keeping the secret, etc.
- ✓ **Shame** about the abuse and/or their body's reactions
- ✓ **Confusion** due to their emotions (e.g., because they love the abuser)
- ✓ **Anger** at themselves and/or the abuser and others who failed to protect them
- ✓ **Sadness** at being betrayed by someone they trusted
- ✓ **Isolation** because they feel alone and have trouble talking about the abuse

## Sexual Harassment

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission defines sexual harassment as a **continuum of acts, including unwelcome sexual advances, conduct of a sexual nature and requests for sexual favors**. These acts must explicitly or implicitly affect a person's employment, unreasonably interfere with work or school performance or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment. Sexual harassment can be (examples may overlap):

Category	Examples
<b>Verbal or Written</b> (via in-person comments, mail, phone calls, texting, e-mails, other social media, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Requesting sexual favors/repeatedly asking a person out</li><li>✓ Offering academic benefits/employment advancement in exchange for sexual favors</li><li>✓ Making sexual innuendoes/comments with sexual overtones</li><li>✓ Describing attributes of a person's body, clothing or behavior in a sexual manner</li><li>✓ Telling sexual or sex-based jokes</li><li>✓ Asking a person about her/his sexual experiences, fantasies or preferences</li><li>✓ Spreading rumors about a person's personal or sexual life</li><li>✓ Making statements that threaten a person or involve sexual bribery</li><li>✓ Making threats after a negative response to sexual advances</li><li>✓ Calling a person sexually oriented names such as hunk, doll, babe or honey</li><li>✓ Calling a person a sexually derogatory name such as bitch, whore or slut</li></ul>

<b>Non-verbal/visual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Looking/staring up and down a person's body</li> <li>✓ Making facial expressions of a sexual nature such as leering, winking, throwing kisses or licking lips</li> <li>✓ Making sexually suggestive or derogatory gestures</li> <li>✓ Sending/distributing sexually explicit or derogatory posters, drawings, pictures, cartoons, cards, publications, screensavers, novelties, etc.</li> <li>✓ Creating public graffiti about a person's sexuality</li> <li>✓ Touching or rubbing oneself sexually in view of another person</li> <li>✓ Exposing oneself to another person</li> <li>✓ Following a person</li> </ul>
<b>Physical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Impeding or blocking a person's movement/path</li> <li>✓ Inappropriately touching a person or a person's clothing</li> <li>✓ Standing closer than appropriate or necessary to a person</li> <li>✓ Assaulting a person</li> <li>✓ Having unwanted sexual contact with a person</li> <li>✓ Patting, hugging, kissing or stroking</li> </ul>

Sexual harassment victims can be of the opposite or same sex as their harassers. It is not always confined to unwanted sexual conduct. For example, *WVC§5-11, Legislative Rule Title 77-4* indicates that hostile or physically aggressive behavior may constitute sexual harassment, if it is based on gender.

### What are forms of sexual harassment?

**Quid pro quo** (“this for that” behavior): In this form of sexual harassment, educational or employment decisions are made on the condition that a person accepts unwelcome sexual behavior. This behavior only needs to happen one time to be considered sexual harassment. An example would be a professor making a passing grade contingent upon whether a student has sex with him.

**Hostile environment:** This form of sexual harassment is characterized by pervasive (persistent or all encompassing), sex-related verbal or physical conduct that is unwelcome or offensive, and can unreasonably interfere with school or work performance. For the conduct to be considered sexual harassment, the hostile environment must be extreme or sustained and non-trivial. An example would be a male student continuously e-mailing degrading jokes about women to the only female student in his engineering classes even after she tells him to stop.

### How many college students experience sexual harassment?

The American Association of University Women Education Foundation estimates that **2/3 of college students have experienced sexual harassment while in college** (Hill & Silva, 2005).

### What sexual harassment laws apply to college students?

Sexual harassment is a civil rights violation of federal and state discrimination laws in qualifying settings. The law applicable in educational settings is Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972. The amendment includes a prohibition of sexual harassment in schools that receive federal funding. Sexual harassment, along with other forms of sexual violence, is typically also a

violation of a campus's student code of conduct. (See *C6. Reporting on College Campuses: Options for Reporting and Key Federal Legislation Influencing Response*.)

Keep in mind that students may be employed, on or off campus. If sexual harassment occurs at their workplaces, there may be laws that protect them from sexual harassment as employees. Federal discrimination laws apply to certain work sites (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964). West Virginia law (*WVC§5-11, Legislative Rule Title 77*) addresses certain work settings.

A surprising number of campus staff until recently were uninformed about Title IX, thinking that it only applied to athletics. Title IX offers protection to victims of interpersonal violence and sexual harassment (See *C6. Reporting on Campus: Title IX*.)

### How do victims react to sexual harassment?

(Drawn from West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services, 2012)

Sexual harassment can cause victims to feel:	At school, sexual harassment can lead to:	In the workplace, sexual harassment can lead to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Powerlessness, anger and anxiety</li> <li>✓ Self-blame, depression and lowered self-esteem</li> <li>✓ Denial that the harassment is occurring</li> <li>✓ Isolation—family, friends and co-workers may minimize the victimization, and peers may blame and reject them</li> <li>✓ Decreased mental/physical well-being</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Inability to concentrate</li> <li>✓ Lower grades</li> <li>✓ Withdrawal from courses</li> <li>✓ Changing majors</li> <li>✓ Absenteeism</li> <li>✓ Dropping out of school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Decreased productivity</li> <li>✓ Denial of advancement and/or benefits</li> <li>✓ Loss of income or job</li> </ul>

Sexual harassment is not necessarily confined to the person targeted for sexual harassment; anyone can be negatively affected by this offensive conduct.

### Domestic Violence

(Section adapted in part from [National Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#), 2007)

Domestic violence is **abusive behavior**—e.g., willful intimidation, physical assault, battery and sexual assault as well as emotionally abusive and controlling tactics— **perpetrated by an intimate partner against another**. This **definition sometimes extends, as it does in West Virginia law, to include victims who are related to the abuser or are other household members**. Domestic violence affects individuals in every community, regardless of age, economic status, race, religion, nationality, education, gender identity or sexual orientation. In addition to emotional trauma caused by domestic violence, physical harm can vary from simple assault to homicide (Sampson, 2006).

### STATE LAWS



*WVC §48-27-202* defines **domestic violence or abuse** as the occurrence of one or more of the following acts **between family or household members**:



- ✓ Attempting to cause or intentionally, knowingly or recklessly **causing physical harm** to another person with or without dangerous or deadly weapons
- ✓ Placing another person in **reasonable apprehension of physical harm**
- ✓ **Creating fear of physical harm** by harassment, stalking, psychological abuse or threatening acts
- ✓ **Committing either sexual assault or sexual abuse**
- ✓ **Holding, confining, detaining, or abducting another person** against that person's will

A **family or household member**: current or former spouses, persons living as spouses or who have formerly resided as spouses, current or former intimate partners, persons who are dating/have dated, persons who are presently or in the past have resided together in the same household, persons who have a child in common, parents and in-laws, siblings, children and stepchildren, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and nieces, nephews, first and second cousins.

### **Domestic violence offenses and penalties (WV §61-2-28) in West Virginia:**

**Domestic Assault**: The unlawful attempt to commit a violent injury of another family or household member or unlawfully committing an act which places another family or household member in reasonable apprehension of immediately receiving a violent injury.

Domestic assault is a **misdemeanor charge**, with penalty of confinement in a county or regional jail for not more than 6 months, or fined not more than \$100, or both. For the **2<sup>nd</sup> violation**, the penalty is confinement in a county or regional jail for not less than 30 days nor more than 6 months, or fined not more than \$500, or both.

**Domestic Battery**: The unlawful and intentional physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with another family or household member or unlawfully and intentionally causing physical harm to another family or household member.

Domestic battery is a **misdemeanor charge**, with penalty of confinement in a county or regional jail for not more than 12 months, or fined not more than \$500, or both. For the **2<sup>nd</sup> violation**, the penalty is confinement in a county or regional jail for not less than 60 days nor more than 1 year, or fined not more than \$1,000, or both.

**A 3<sup>rd</sup> violation for domestic assault or battery** is a **felony charge** if the offense occurs within 10 years of a prior conviction of these offenses. The penalty is confinement in a state correctional facility not less than 1 nor more than 5 years and/or fined not more than \$2,500.



Domestic violence victims often seek **civil protective orders** against their abusers. In West Virginia, they can petition their **county magistrate** for an emergency order—if the magistrate finds that domestic violence or an imminent threat of domestic violence exists, an emergency order may be issued. The order will require the abuser to stop abusing, harassing, stalking, threatening or otherwise intimidating the victim. The emergency order is good until the family court hearing is held and a decision is made whether to issue a final protective order. If the abuser violates the conditions of an emergency or permanent protective order, it may result in a contempt of court charge or a criminal charge.

(See the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeal's brochure, [Domestic Violence Protective Orders](#), for more information.)

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## **BASIC DATA ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

As for **domestic violence in West Virginia in general** ([West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#), 2012): 14,880 domestic violence cases were filed in West Virginia Family Court in 2010 (West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals) and 12,661 domestic violence offenses were reported to law enforcement in 2010 (West Virginia State Police, 2010).

The incidence of domestic violence in the state is likely much higher than the above statistics reflect as many victims do not report this crime. In fact, domestic violence is chronically underreported: nationally, women report only 1/4 to 1/2 of their assaults to police and male victims report perhaps even less (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Rennison & Welchans, 2000; Klein, 2009). However, domestic violence related law enforcement calls have been found to constitute the single largest category of calls received by law enforcement, accounting for 15% to more than 50% of all calls (Friday, 2006; Hendricks, 1991; Klein, 2009.)

Approximately **1/3 of homicides in the state were related to domestic violence** (West Virginia State Police, 2010). **Over 2/3 of women murdered were killed by a family or household member** (West Virginia Bureau of Public Health, 2010).

### **In general, what is the nature of the physical violence?**

When physical assault does occur in domestic violence situations, it often involves pushing, slapping and hitting (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Rennison & Welchans, 2000; Sampson, 2007). The 2010 [National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey](#) found that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men have been the victim of severe physical violence by an intimate partner. It also indicated that many female victims experienced multiple forms of violence (physical and sexual violence and stalking) while male victims most often experienced physical violence. Another study found that sexual assault occurs in approximately 40 to 45% of abusive intimate relationships (Campbell et al., 2003).

### **How many college students experience domestic violence?**

Rennison and Welchans (2000) found that women within the typical age bracket of high school and college students, ages 16 to 24, experience the largest per capita rate of intimate partner violence (defined as violent crimes committed against persons by their current or former spouses, boyfriends or girlfriends). Catalano (2007) found that women ages 20 to 24 are at the greatest risk of nonfatal intimate partner violence.

### **What is the general context in which domestic violence occurs?**

(Adapted from the University of Michigan's Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center)

Unfortunately, **violence in an intimate relationship typically reoccurs**. It seldom is a one-time occurrence. It **usually begins with verbal and emotional abuse to establish control**. It

can be so subtle that the other person doesn't even recognize it. **Physical violence may not even begin until the abused partner decides to leave or becomes committed to the relationship** (e.g., becoming monogamous, moving in together, gets engaged or married or have a child together).

**Most abused women try to escape the relationship at some point, but face many barriers in doing so.** For example, they may still have hope in the relationship and love the abuser. Emotionally abusive tactics used by the abuser may have led them to lack faith in themselves. They may fear increased violence, death, or violence against their loved ones or pets if they try to leave. They may be isolated from their support system. They may fear losing custody of their children. They may feel they lack the resources needed to stay safe and support themselves once they leave.

**Abusers tend to escalate their violence when the abused person tries to leave, wants more independence, or has already left.**



**Educate students about warning signs of an abusive intimate or dating partner.** For example, a boyfriend might frequently check his girlfriend's phone or e-mail without permission, constantly tell her what to do and put her down, be possessive and jealous, be moody, have an explosive temper, be financially controlling, and try to isolate her.

### What factors may raise the risk of experiencing domestic violence?

(Also see *Factors Linked with Perpetration of Sexual and Domestic Violence*.)

Numerous risk factors as cited below (Sampson, 2007) are associated with domestic violence victimization for women. The presence of any of these factors does not mean that a person will become a victim.

<b>Age:</b> As cited earlier, women ages 16 to 24 are at highest risk for intimate partner victimization.
<b>Socioeconomic Status:</b> Victimization surveys indicate that lower-income women are more frequently victims of domestic violence than wealthier women (Rennison & Welchans, 2000).
<b>Race:</b> Black females experience intimate partner violence at a rate 35% higher than that of white females. Black males experience intimate partner violence at a rate about 62% higher than that of white males and about 2 ½ times the rate of men of other races (Rennison & Welchans, 2000). Another study that was more inclusive of additional racial groups found that American Indian/Alaskan Native women experience significantly higher rates of physical abuse than the general population (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).
Being <b>young, black, low-income, divorced or separated, a resident of rental housing, and a resident of an urban area</b> have all been associated with higher rates of domestic violence victimization among women and men (Rennison & Welchans, 2000).
Women whose <b>partners are verbally abusive</b> are at increased risk for physical intimate partner violence (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).
Women whose <b>partners are jealous or tightly controlling</b> are at increased risk of intimate partner violence and stalking (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).
Although alcohol and drug use do not cause intimate partner violence, the <b>risk of victim injury increases if the abuser is using alcohol or drugs</b> (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).

### What are common victim reactions to domestic violence?

(Adapted from the University of Michigan's Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center)

Like sexual assault victims, individuals react differently to domestic violence. However, it is common for a person who has just experienced the first incident of violence by her/his intimate partner to **respond with disbelief or denial and feel responsibility, shame and/or embarrassment. As violence increases in severity and frequency**, victims may **become more afraid**, but also may **internalize the problem and feel guilt and failure**. Other **common victim responses** include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Feeling hopeless or worthless</li> <li>✓ Becoming depressed</li> <li>✓ Having nightmares</li> <li>✓ Hypervigilance</li> <li>✓ Lacking emotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Becoming isolated</li> <li>✓ Becoming suicidal</li> <li>✓ Using alcohol or other drugs as a means to numb emotions</li> <li>✓ Developing post-traumatic stress disorder</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Developing physical health problems—e.g., headaches or migraines, fatigue, insomnia, musculoskeletal issues, anxiety, eating disorders, gastrointestinal disorders, and chronic pain</li> </ul>
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## Dating Violence

(Drawn in part from Dating Violence Resource Center, [Campus Dating Violence Factsheet](#))

Dating violence is controlling, abusive and aggressive behavior against a person on a date or a dating partner. Like sexual and domestic violence, it can occur regardless of the sexual orientation of the victim and perpetrator. It can include:

- ✓ **Physical abuse**—intentional use of physical force with the intent to cause fear or injury, such as hitting, shoving, biting, strangling, kicking or using a weapon
- ✓ **Emotional abuse**—non-physical behaviors such as threats, insults, constant monitoring, humiliation, intimidation, isolation or harassment
- ✓ **Sexual abuse**—when a person subjects another to sexual contact without her/his consent, and that lack of consent is due to physical force, threat or intimidation.

### Is dating violence the same as domestic violence?

In some situations, dating violence is the same as domestic violence. For example, college students may experience physical, sexual and emotional violence (including stalking) by a current or former boyfriend or girlfriend (dating partner). In other situations, dating violence may have different dynamics than domestic violence. For example, students may be abused by someone with whom they are casually dating or had a few dates. Abusive tactics in these situations may be more subtle than in established intimate relationships, but this is not always true. Dating violence may be a more comfortable term for teens and college students to use to explain their circumstances than domestic violence, especially if they associate domestic violence with couples who are older or in more serious or long-term relationships.

### How many college students experience dating violence?

In a study by Sellers and Bromley (1996), 32% of college students reported dating violence by a previous partner and 21% reported violence by a current partner. Fisher, Cullen and Turner (2000) found that 12% of completed rapes, 35% of attempted rapes and 22% of threatened

rapes on college campuses occurred on a date, and that of the college women who had been stalked, 42% indicated the stalker was a boyfriend or ex-boyfriend. A survey of college students by Straus (2004) asked about perpetration of dating violence; nearly 1/3 of students reported physically assaulting a dating partner in the previous year.



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**Research on dating violence sometimes lumps intimate partner violence together with violence that occurs on a date but not necessarily between individuals who have an intimate relationship.** Such a view can be misleading.

- ✓ While a date could involve persons who are already in an intimate relationship, a **date could also be a casual encounter of persons who have not yet been intimate** or may have been intimate but **do not consider themselves in a relationship** (e.g., if they had a one-night fling only after drinking at a party they both attended but otherwise do not interact). Note that many sexual assaults in college environments occur when the victim and offender are at the same location/function (a party, a bar, a dance, etc.) but not dating or on a date.
- ✓ **Violence committed on a date is often mainly sexual in nature**, making it more sexual rather than domestic violence.
- ✓ **Individual acts of violence committed by a date which are criminal offenses should be investigated as such** and not minimized because they occurred in a dating relationship. Violence is violence regardless of the victim's relationship to the offender.

For these reasons, when possible **avoid using the term dating violence and instead use terms that more powerfully describe the individual behaviors**—sexual assault, physical assault, intimidation, battery, stalking, etc.

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## Stalking and Harassment

The [Stalking Resource Center](#) defines **stalking as a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person fear**. Under this definition, stalking can include a variety of behaviors, including harassment.

### STATE LAW



**West Virginia law (WVC §61-2-9a) differentiates stalking from harassment. To be charged with stalking in West Virginia**, someone must repeatedly (two or more times) follow another person, knowing or having reason to know that the conduct causes the person followed to reasonably fear for his or her safety or suffer significant emotional distress. **To be charged with harassment**, someone must repeatedly (two or more times) harass or make credible threats of bodily injury against another person. **Both stalking and harassment are misdemeanors charges in West Virginia**, with penalties upon conviction of confinement in the county or regional jail for not more than 6 months and/or fined not more than \$1,000. If a person stalks or harasses another in violation of an order by the circuit court, magistrate court or family court judge, they are also guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction, can be incarcerated in the county/regional jail for not less than 90 days nor more than 1 year and/or fined not less than \$2,000 nor more than \$5,000.

**Note that the term stalking is used to refer to both stalking and harassment in this toolkit.**

**The federal stalking statute adds protection.** It specifically addresses and makes it a crime to travel across state lines or tribal jurisdiction with the intent to kill, injure, harass or place under surveillance with similar intent. The stalker must have the intent to harass, or intimidate the victim, or to place the victim, a family member, or a partner of the victim, in fear of death or serious bodily injury. [Details on the federal laws and penalties](#) for related federal violations can be found at the national Stalking Resource Center or by accessing the [stalking section \(18 U.S.C. 2261A Interstate Stalking\) of the federal code](#).

## **BASIC DATA ON STALKING AND HARASSMENT**

### **What tactics do stalkers use?**

Under West Virginia's definition of stalking/harassment, there are **many behaviors that could potentially be considered stalking or harassment** (Stalking Resource Center; West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services, 2014):

- Surveillance or watching the victim;
- Pursuing/following the victim;
- Unexpected appearances where the victim works, lives, goes to school or visits;
- Approaching or confronting the victim;
- Telephone harassment;
- Sending/giving unwanted gifts, letters or e-mails to the victim;
- Monitoring of telephone calls or computer use;
- Use or misuse of technology to stalk and harass;
- Spreading rumors or otherwise defaming the victim's character;
- Vandalism or other destruction of property;
- Threats to the victim and/or her/his family, friends and pets; and
- Physical attacks, including sexual assault.

These behaviors may not seem anything more than simply coincidental or annoying. Initially victims, their friends and families, law enforcement and the courts may not fully recognize that these offenders can be dangerous. However, **it is the cumulative pattern of behaviors that forms the "course of conduct" that can cause the targeted individual to be afraid and distressed** (and thus may be considered criminal). For example, a single e-mail or bouquet of flowers may not be frightening, but 150 e-mails, bouquets of dead flowers and late night threatening calls become actions that cannot and should not be ignored.



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**Most stalkers use multiple tactics.** The **most common tactics** reported by female college victims in the Fisher, Cullen and Turner 2000 study included **being telephoned** (78%), having a **stalker waiting** outside or inside places (48%), being **watched from a distance** (44%), **being followed** (42%), **being sent letters** (31%) and **being e-mailed** (25%).

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## How many people are stalked?

According to the *National Crime Victim Survey* (2012), **6.6 million people in the U.S. were stalked in one year**. Stalking does not just happen to celebrities and well-known people. Although high profile cases make the news, **stalking can happen to anyone. One in 6 women and 1 in 19 men have experienced stalking victimization at some point during their lifetime** (Black et al., 2011), during which they were very fearful or believed that they or someone close to them would be harmed or killed.

**Persons ages 18 to 24 experience the highest rate of stalking** (Baum et al., 2009).

According to [\*The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report\*](#) (Black et al., 2011), more than 1/2 of female stalking victims and more than 1/3 of male stalking victims indicated that they were stalked before the age of 25. Fisher, Cullen and Turner (2000) found that **more than 13% of college women had experienced stalking** (defined as experiencing repeated, obsessive and frightening behavior that made the victim afraid or concerned for her safety). College campuses have ideal environments for stalking as they are closed communities to a degree, where class schedules and other campus activities can be easily monitored (Fisher, Cullen & Turner, 2000). As students are making friends, learning about campus activities and registering for classes, they are likely to give their names and share cell phone numbers or dorm locations with virtual strangers.

## What is the relationship between victims and their stalkers?

The Bureau of Justice Statistics' 2006 *Supplemental Victimization Survey* found that **nearly 3 in 4 stalking victims knew their offenders** (Baum et al., 2009). Fisher, Cullen and Turner (2000) found that **4 out of 5 of college women who experienced stalking knew their stalkers**: In this study, the stalkers were victims' boyfriends or ex-boyfriends 43% of the time, classmates 25% of the time, acquaintances 10% of the time, friends 6% of the time and coworkers 6% of the time. Another national study of female college students found that about 5% reported being stalked by a partner or ex-partner over a 7-month period (Fritsch et al., 2005; Logan, 2010). A smaller study found that almost 7% of college women were stalked by a current or former partner (Buhi, Clayton & Surrency, 2009; Logan, 2010).

**Current or former partners know about the likes, dislikes, habits, interests and other details of their victims' lives that can assist them in stalking**. Partner stalkers also may have or could easily gain access to passwords, account numbers and other sensitive information that could be used against victims.

## Where are college students stalked?

Fisher, Cullen and Turner (2000) found that of the female students who were stalked, about 30% were stalked only off campus and about 70% were stalked either only on campus or both on and off campus.

## What is the typical length of time stalking lasts?

Fisher, Cullen and Turner (2000) found that almost **2/3 of the college women who were stalked indicated that they were stalked at least 2 to 6 times a week**. Stalking incidents lasted an average of 60 days. Tjaden and Thoennes (1998b) found that, for the general population, the **average case lasts 1.8 years**. Logan (2010) found that for partner stalking, the average duration was just over 2 years.

## Do stalkers engage in other violence?

As noted earlier, **stalking often occurs in the context of sexual assault, domestic violence and dating violence**. Jordan, Wilcox and Pritchard (2007) found that **3/4 of college women who experienced stalking-related behaviors also experienced other forms of violence**. Approximately 26% of stalking victims experienced stalking and sexual assault, while 11% experienced stalking and physical and sexual assault. Fisher, Cullen and Turner (2000) similarly found that in over 10% of campus stalking incidents, the victim reported that the stalker forced or attempted sexual contact and in over 15% of incidents, victims reported that the stalker either threatened or attempted to harm them.



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Research on sexual assault at colleges found that **perpetrators of sexual assaults were often premeditating, repeat offenders who use classic stalking strategies to select and ensure the vulnerability of their victims** (Lisak & Miller, 2002).

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## How dangerous are stalkers?

**Stalking behaviors should always be taken seriously. While stalking victims may not always be in imminent danger, the potential always exists.** Stalkers can be violent and can escalate their stalking over time (Stalking Resource Center). They most likely will not stop if their behavior is ignored. In fact, ignoring the behavior sometimes seems to cause the behaviors to increase in frequency and/or become more disturbing or bizarre. Stalkers have physically assaulted, sexually assaulted and/or murdered their victims. It can be useful for victims to develop a safety plan (see *C3. Responding to Disclosures: Understanding Victims' Needs*).

## Who is at risk for escalations in stalking violence?

**Being stalked by an intimate partner presents an increased risk of danger for victims.** Partner stalkers are more likely to physically approach their victims, be more insulting, interfering and threatening, and use weapons. Their behavior is more likely to escalate quickly. They are more likely to re-offend even after criminal justice intervention. Stalking can be extremely dangerous for female victims if it involves a recently ended intimate relationship.

**The risk of violence is also heightened** when the stalker makes direct threats of violence, is jealous of the victim's relationships with others, and uses illegal drugs.

There is a **higher risk for lethality when stalking accompanies physical or sexual violence** than for either physical or sexual violence alone.

### **How often is stalking reported to law enforcement?**

Fisher, Cullen and Turner (2000) found that **only 17% of stalking incidents were reported to law enforcement**. However, the vast majority (93%) of victims confided in someone, most often a friend, that they were being stalked. It is worth considering how to reach out to and educate those individuals to whom a student might disclose victimization.

As mentioned earlier, victims may not initially be aware that they are being stalked and thus not report. When they do become concerned, they may look back on the pattern of behaviors and realize that they were being stalked. If stalking is reported, the college should be prepared to educate students as to how stalking typically presents and take all stalking behaviors seriously.

### **What reactions are common for stalking victims?**

(Also see C3. *Responding to Disclosures: Understanding Victims' Needs*)

Fisher, Cullen and Turner (2000) found that 3 in 10 college women who reported they were stalked indicated being injured emotionally or psychologically. Findings from the *2006 Supplemental Victimization Survey* offers a snapshot of victim reactions (Baum et al., 2009):

- ✓ When stalking victims were asked about their worst fears related to stalking, 46% indicated they feared not knowing what would happen next, 30% were afraid of bodily harm, 29% feared the behavior would never stop, and 9% feared death at the hands of their stalker.
- ✓ As the stalking progressed, 74% of victims reported being angry/annoyed, 36% were anxious or concerned, 26% were frightened, 16% felt helpless, 10% felt depressed, and 10% felt sick.
- ✓ About 1 in 8 of employed victims lost time from work due to the stalking.
- ✓ About 3 in 10 victims accrued out-of-pocket costs associated with the stalking.

In addition, stalking victims may experience sleep and eating disturbances, nightmares, hyper-vigilance, shock and disbelief, and a feeling of loss of personal safety (National Center for Victims of Crime, 2010; West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services). If victims are in school, their academic performance could be affected. Some victims feel that they have to move to end the stalking.

## **Cybercrimes**

**Cybercrimes are criminal activities facilitated through the use of technology.** Technology used is not limited to computers and the Internet, but can extend to a broad range of electronic devices and media (e.g., telephones, fax machines, TTY/TTD equipment, cameras, webcams and spycams, computer software and hardware such as global positioning systems, caller ID systems, computer monitoring software, and keystroke logging systems and software).

**Stalking, sexual violence and domestic and dating violence may involve cybercrimes.**

**Electronic aggression** is a term used to describe any kind of aggression perpetrated through technology (Hertz and David-Ferdon, 2008). The Internet creates opportunities for electronic aggression to occur through e-mail, instant messaging, chat room exchanges, website posts, creating web pages, videos or profiles on social networking sites, taking pictures and distributing them, and uploading videos and posting them on-line for the world to see. The cell phone—via phone calling, texting, taking/distributing photos/videos, and connecting to the Internet—is another popular tool for electronic aggression.

Below are some examples of how electronic aggression is used in interpersonal violence cases (both alone and in combination with other controlling, abusive and/or violent tactics):

- ✓ **Sexual predators can victimize individuals online.** For example, they may (Wolak, Mitchell & Finkelhor, 2006): request victims to engage in sexual activities or provide personal sexual information, attempt offline contact with victims, expose victims to unwanted sexual material, and/or harass victims.
- ✓ **Prior to or following a sexual assault, a sex offender may also use electronic aggression to threaten or retaliate against the victim.**
- ✓ **For abusers in dating or domestic violence situations,** technology offers a host of readily available tools to **repeatedly control, pressure or threaten someone** they are in an intimate relationship with or dating.
- ✓ **Stalkers can use any form of electronic or technological media and/or devices to threaten, harass or intimidate their victims (sometimes referred to as cyberstalking).** With their technology arsenals, stalkers can easily gather information and spy on victims, impersonate them, intercept and monitor their communications with others, and embarrass, insult, harass and exploit them.



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See Campus Safety Magazine's [\*Your Ultimate Guide to Student and School Internet Safety\*](#) (Swanson, 2011) to explore how to protect students from cyberstalking and Internet predators.

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## B3. GENDER BIAS AND VIOLENCE

**Gender bias** is prejudice in treatment or action towards other persons on the basis of their sex. **Gender bias greatly influences social norms that tolerate interpersonal violence.** It is useful to examine gender stereotypes you may have to be able to dispel myths related to interpersonal violence and avoid gender bias in your own interactions.



**Individuals' beliefs and behaviors are shaped by the environment in which they are socialized and its norms.** Norms are habits, beliefs and standards that are grounded in a particular culture. **Norms provide society with patterns and signals to model "proper" behaviors.**

**When interpersonal violence is typical, expected and reinforced by media, family, peers, schools or the community, it will occur more often.** If norms reinforced healthy, safe relationships, there would be a change in the level of violence in our society.

(Drawn from International Association for Chiefs of Police's *National Campus Law Enforcement Institute on Violence Against Women*, 2010.)

We are socialized from an early age—through the media, family, community, peers, schools, religious institutions, etc.—accept stereotypes of females and males that reflect and reinforce gender bias. **Due to gender bias, girls and women are more at risk for violence throughout their lives.** The following are a few examples of societal beliefs about gender roles, relationships and sexuality that support gender-based violence:

- ✓ It's acceptable to tell jokes and show visual images that degrade women.
- ✓ If a man takes a woman out on an expensive date, it is OK for him to expect sex in return.
- ✓ It's OK for males to be sexually aggressive, while females are expected to set and enforce limits on male sexual behavior.
- ✓ In an intimate relationship between males and females, women traditionally were expected to listen and be supportive to their male partners, fulfill their sexual needs, care for their children, and cook and clean their home. An abusive husband may rationalize the use of violence if his wife fails to live up to such expectations. (For more on domestic violence and adherence to gender roles, see [University of Michigan, Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center](#).)

While many men and women do not buy into beliefs rooted in gender bias, the overall message of male power and female submissiveness is inescapable in our culture. **Note the following overlapping social norms that contribute to gender-based violence** (The Prevention Institute, 2007; Cohen, Davis & Graffunder, 2006):

- ✓ **Traditional male roles** promote domination, exploitation, objectification, oppression, risk-taking behaviors in men and boys, often glorifying victimizing women and girls.
- ✓ **Limited female roles that sexualize women** from a very young age blur the morality of age and ability to give consent, sending the message that women are objects for the pleasure of

men and allowing men/boys to see themselves as the takers and users of the “commodity” of women.

- ✓ **Images of power support violent norms** that allow men to exert control over women.
- ✓ **Violence as an acceptable option** and tolerated as normal behavior that can be used as a way to solve problems (and where blame for using aggression is attributed to the victim).
- ✓ **The norm of privacy and shame encourages secrecy and silence around violence and fosters stigmatization and lack of intervention.** This norm promotes a shame-based culture that perpetuates abuse by immobilizing victims and their supporters with public shame and stigma. Privacy effects victim reporting rates, as victims say that they are reluctant to come forward because of the victim blaming from media, friends, family, etc.

Community factors can reinforce societal norms, such as weak sanctions against perpetrators and lack of support for victims from institutions that are supposed to help them seek justice. For example, college students who had been sexually victimized give a number of reasons for not reporting their victimizations to law enforcement officials. Fear of being treated with hostility by law enforcement and anticipation that law enforcement would not believe the incident was serious enough and/or would not want to be bothered with the incident were listed as barriers to reporting (Fisher, Cullen & Turner, 2000).



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**Gender bias is exacerbated by discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, perceived gender identity, socio-economic status, class, disability and/or age.** These forms of discrimination can further increase a person’s vulnerability to violence and make safety, healing and justice less feasible (Amnesty International).

**Gender bias affects all victims of interpersonal violence.** When men are victims of sexual or domestic violence, they may be even less likely than female victims to seek help because these crimes are seen as ones that “happen to” females, who are perceived as the “weaker” sex. Despite the public’s growing awareness about male victimization, there is still a sense of disbelief that boys and men could be violated sexually or by a female intimate partner. Heterosexual male victims may fear being perceived as homosexual, feminine or weak if they were assaulted by a male. If they were sexually assaulted by a female, many believe that they should just enjoy “the sex” instead of “complaining” about it. When girls and women experience sexual or domestic violence by a female perpetrator, gender bias that sanctions violence against women can still be a factor.

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## B4. VICTIM BLAMING

It’s important for you to recognize that a key reason for a victim’s reluctance to report or seek help following an act of interpersonal violence is society’s tendency to blame the victim. **Victim blaming in essence removes the responsibility for the violence from the offender and places it upon the victim.** We can address these myths during education and prevention programs by focusing on the offenders’ behaviors and the realities of interpersonal violence.

Some **examples of myths that people believe that support victim blaming in interpersonal violence cases** include:



- ✓ If a woman wears revealing clothing, flirts with or walks home with the perpetrator, she is enticing him, so it can't be sexual assault.
- ✓ If a woman is out alone at night, she deserves what she gets.
- ✓ If a woman did not physically resist the perpetrator's advances or there was no "real" threat of physical harm, then it cannot be sexual assault.
- ✓ If an individual had sex previously with the perpetrator, it can't now be sexual assault.
- ✓ A woman might fabricate interpersonal violence to seek attention or revenge.

**When women remain in abusive relationships, people may question why they stay** and blame them for "letting" the abuse happen. Some may justify the violence if they feel the woman provoked it. Some may excuse violence as a side effect of the abuser's use of alcohol or drugs. **The blame that victims receive from others often erodes their confidence and develops into self-blame**, which can manifest into feelings of guilt, shame, anxiety, depression, lack of trust and isolation. It makes it harder for victims to come forward and report the violence. **Just as damaging, victim blaming can lead to backlash and retaliation against victims**—for example, a victim might be labeled promiscuous by peers after being sexual assaulted by a classmate or sexually harassed by a professor. If the incident is reported, a victim may be subjected to retaliation (e.g., her stalker may increase the level of attacks or others may harass her if her abusive partner or rapist is a popular public figure such as an athlete). In addition, institutions and the media can add to the damage by portraying victims negatively.

**Why do people blame victims of interpersonal violence?** Some thoughts and theories:

- ✓ **Men and women are socialized to believe stereotypes that support gender discrimination, including gender-based violence.**
- ✓ **People want to believe that as long as they behave "appropriately," nothing bad will happen to them.** This belief leads to the view that victims must have done something to encourage or deserve the violence and thus are to blame. Those who blame victims may feel a sense of security because they view themselves as acting appropriately and therefore are not vulnerable to violence. (Bullet adapted from Rape Crisis Information Pathfinder.)
- ✓ **People may believe that sexual violence is caused by uncontrollable sexual desire,** which leads them to conclude that the way a person looks or behaves can elicit irrepressible sexual arousal in others.
- ✓ **People may find it difficult to comprehend that a person they know is capable of interpersonal violence.** This is especially true when the alleged perpetrator is someone they like and/or respect.
- ✓ **People may not be educated about the nature of interpersonal violence.** Some people maintain victim blaming attitudes simply because they have not been taught about the realities of interpersonal violence and have not had the opportunity to counter their assumptions and biases with facts.




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Some tips ([Center for Relationship Abuse Awareness](#)): Challenge victim-blaming statements. Don't agree with perpetrators' excuses for violence (they will try to rationalize their actions). Let victims know that it is not their fault. Hold perpetrators accountable for their actions. Provide victims with resources and support. Avoid victim blaming.

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## B5. PERPETRATORS OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

This section is intended to provide you with a very brief overview of perpetrators of different types of interpersonal violence. Note there is some overlap of this section with *B2*.

### Sex Offenders

(Partly drawn from the Center for Sex Offender Management's ([CSOM](#)) publications)

The primary motivation for sex offenders to commit sexual violence is generally not sexual gratification, although that may be part of it. More commonly, **offenders use sexual violence as a tactic to overpower, control and/or humiliate another person**. They often have a need to compensate for their own feelings of inadequacy, anger and/or powerlessness. By humiliating victims, their anger is discharged and their feelings of strength and capability are validated. Offenders' dehumanizing acts of sexual coercion may help them gain a temporary sense of control, while leaving their victims feeling devastated, traumatized and powerless.

**There is no profile of a typical sex offender** (Becker & Murphy, 1998; Hunter, 2006; Marshall, 1996; Talbot et al., 2002). Instead (paragraph and bullets drawn from CSOM, 2010; Gilligan, 2008):

- ✓ Sex offenders vary from one another in terms of demographics, range of offending behaviors, motivations, intervention needs and levels of risk they pose (Carter, 2008).
- ✓ Sex offenders can be adults or juveniles. Sex offenders may offend against adults and/or children, males and/or females.
- ✓ The vast majority of sex offenses are committed by males, but females do commit these crimes (FBI, 2005; Schwartz & Cellini, 1995).
- ✓ Sex offenders vary in marital status, socio-economic level, education and family ties.
- ✓ Some have been victims of sexual abuse, but many have not. Being sexually abused does not cause people to become sex offenders.
- ✓ Offenders' sex crimes can range from non-contact offenses such as flashing or voyeurism to contact offenses such as fondling or rape.
- ✓ Most sex offenders commit multiple sex crimes against multiple types of victims with whom they have varying types of relationships (Denver Police Department, 2011).
- ✓ Sex offenders may have a long criminal history or none at all.

**Key points about sex offenders** (drawn in part from [Lisak & Miller](#), 2002):

- ✓ When discussing sexual assault that occurs on college campuses, people may have an image of a male student "who, under the influence of alcohol, mistakenly crosses the line between sexual pressure and rape." However, the **majority of rapists plan their assaults as well as how to get away with them** (e.g., by identifying potential victims who are vulnerable, accessible and easily manipulated/isolated, and whose credibility will be called into question if they report due to factors such as they were drinking or doing drugs, involved in illegal activities, have a mental disability, had sex with the rapist previously, etc.).
- ✓ **Offenders use violence as needed**. They may not need to use physical force if they can incapacitate, intimidate or wear down resistance of victims. It is easier to avoid prosecution if

force is not used. Bachman (1998) found that the only factors associated with rape that increased the likelihood of victim reporting were physical injuries and the use of a weapon.

**Between 12 and 24% of convicted sex offenders are known to have repeated sex crimes, as indicated by a new charge or conviction for a sex offense** (Hanson & Harris, 2004; Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2005). However, **these rates likely are underestimated since most sex crimes are not reported**. There is usually no single factor that makes someone more likely to reoffend, but rather a combination of factors that might include problems in relationships, difficulty in dealing with emotions such as anger, having antisocial values, hostile attitudes toward women, or being sexually attracted to children. Treatment may help sex offenders develop skills to manage their behavior, which can reduce their chances of reoffending. But whether they will be successful depends on whether they are motivated to change their behaviors (Aos, Miller & Drake, 2006). (Paragraph drawn from CSOM, 2010.)



It is likely that **sex offenders committed far greater number of sex crimes than they are or will be convicted of (most will likely not be convicted at all)**. Lisak and Miller (2002) found that of 1,882 men they assessed for acts of interpersonal violence, 120 reported acts that met legal definitions of rape or attempted rape, but were never prosecuted by criminal justice authorities. The majority (76) were repeat rapists. The 76 repeat “undetected” rapists together committed: 439 rapes and attempted rapes, 49 sexual assaults, 277 acts of child sexual abuse, 66 acts of child physical abuse, and 214 acts of battery. Lisak and Miller also found common characteristics between incarcerated and undetected rapists: Anger directed at women, need to dominate women, belief in rape myths, hyper-masculine attitudes, view of violence as normal, view of women as objects to be conquered, and deficits in empathy.

Lisak and Miller noted that with both incarcerated and undetected rapists, there is **a pattern that a small number of men committed the majority of sex crimes** (rather than many men committing single acts of sexual violence).

As mentioned earlier, **the courts can impose a variety of sentences for sex offending, depending upon the offender, the facts of the case and state laws**. While some offenders are sentenced to prison or jail, others are sentenced to community supervision (e.g., probation). Depending on their age and conviction, some are on the sex offender registry for their lifetimes, others for 10 years, and some not at all. For those sentenced to prison or jail, some are released with parole or probation supervision, while others are released with no supervision. When they are under community supervision, sex offenders are required to abide by certain restrictions and rules, such as the following (Paragraph and bullets drawn from CSOM, 2010):

- ✓ No contact with their victims;
- ✓ No or limited contact with minors;
- ✓ Participation in sex offender-specific treatment;
- ✓ Limited or no Internet access;
- ✓ No use of alcohol or drugs;
- ✓ Restrictions on where they can live and work;
- ✓ Restricted movement within the community and within and across state line; and
- ✓ Reporting to a probation/parole officer as required.



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**In every state, law enforcement agencies must maintain registries of certain convicted sex offenders** (e.g., including data such as offenders' names, addresses, photographs and crime or conviction). The State Police administers the [West Virginia sex offender registry](#), as per the stipulations of the *Sex Offender Registration Act (WVC§15-12)*. In addition to updating the registry on a daily basis, the State Police distributes registrant data to the FBI and local entities in the county that the registrant resides, owns or leases property that he/she regularly visits, is employed or attends a school/training facility.

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## Abusive Partners

Like sex offenders, there is **no one profile for abusive intimate partners**. They come from all socioeconomic backgrounds, races, religions and walks of life. However, what they have in common is the **use of power and control as the main tactic in their abusive behavior**.

**Abusive partners often** (from [Maricopa Association of Governments Domestic Violence Council](#); Wilson, 1997):

- ✓ **Equate jealousy with love**—continually question their partners about people spoken to or associating with, become jealous of time their partners spend with others, including family;
- ✓ **Use controlling behavior** to inhibit almost every aspect of their partners' lives;
- ✓ **Lie** or alter or withhold the truth;
- ✓ **Pressure their partners** to become committed to their relationship quickly;
- ✓ **Hold unrealistic expectations**—they may expect their partners to meet all of their needs;
- ✓ **Isolate** their partners by severing outside ties, support and resources, accuse others of being "troublemakers," block partners' access to use of vehicles, work or telephone service;
- ✓ **Blame others for their feelings** and may use their feelings to manipulate their partners—e.g., "You are hurting me by not doing as I want;"
- ✓ **Hold children to high expectations** and then punish them for not performing up to their harsh standards;
- ✓ Exhibit **cruelty to animals**;
- ✓ **Use force in sex**—may restrain their partners against their will during sexual activity, act out fantasies in which their partners are helpless, force sex when their partners are asleep, ill or tired; show little concern for their partners' desire to be touched, and use sulking or anger to manipulate sexual compliance;
- ✓ **Verbally abuse their partners**; and
- ✓ **Hold rigid gender roles**.

**Although both men and women are abusers, the vast majority are men.** Like sex offenders, they may refuse to accept responsibility for their behavior and believe that it is justified. Often they will try to excuse the violence or blame the victim for causing it. The tendency to use abuse as a control tactic can be aggravated by the use of drugs and alcohol, but overcoming a substance abuse problem does not usually end the abusive behavior. There is treatment available to help abusive partners address abusive behavior. (Paragraph from Maricopa Association of Governments Domestic Violence Council.)

## Stalkers

Most stalkers are men; however, females can also be stalkers. Like sex offenders and abusive intimate partners, stalkers are a heterogeneous group. One broad way they can be categorized is by their relationship with their victims: current or former intimate partner, acquaintance or stranger (Mohandie, Meloy, Green-McGowan & Williams, 2006; Logan, 2010).

**Many stalkers know their victims, particularly those who stalk women.** For 66% of female stalking victims and 41% of male victims identified in *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report*, a current or former intimate partner was their stalker (Black et al., 2011). About 10% of stalkers are strangers to their victims (Baum et al., 2009).

**Partner stalkers are more likely to be threatening and violent towards their victims than stalkers who are acquaintances or strangers.** For example, 71% of the partner stalking victims who were threatened were actually assaulted compared to 33% of non-partner stalking victims who were threatened (Thomas et al., 2008; Logan, 2010). Similarly, Tjaden and Thoennes (1998) found that 81% of women who were stalked by current or former intimate partners were also physically assaulted by them; 31% were also sexually assaulted.

Compared to stalkers who were acquaintances or strangers, **partner stalkers were also more likely to be violent towards third parties and damage property, and reoffend after court interventions** (Logan, 2010). **They also appeared to engage in stalking more frequently and intensely than non-partner stalkers.**

## Factors Linked with Perpetration of Sexual and Domestic Violence

Research suggests that most college men who commit non-stranger sexual assaults perceive their behavior as normative and reasonable (PCAR, 2004). Their peer groups often also consider their behavior as normal (Sampson, 2002). Their likelihood of committing sexual assault is associated with factors such as negative attitudes toward women and a belief that men are entitled to sex under certain conditions (PCAR, 2004). Based on Krug et al. (2002), the CDC (2004, 2009) identified a combination of individual, relational, community and societal factors that may contribute to the risk of becoming a perpetrator of sexual violence in the general population (see below, *Factors Associated with Perpetration of Sexual Violence*). The CDC (2010) also identified a list of risk factors that may contribute to a greater likelihood of domestic violence perpetration in the general population (see below, *Factors Associated with Domestic Violence Perpetration*). Note that the CDC indicated that some risk factors for perpetration of domestic violence are the same for victimization.

Factors Associated with Perpetration of Sexual Violence	Factors Associated with Perpetration of Domestic Violence
<p><b>Individual risk factors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Alcohol and drug use</li> <li>✓ Coercive sexual fantasies</li> <li>✓ Impulsive and antisocial tendencies</li> <li>✓ Preference for impersonal sex</li> <li>✓ Hostility towards women</li> <li>✓ Hyper-masculinity</li> <li>✓ Childhood sexual/physical abuse</li> <li>✓ Witnessed family violence as a child</li> </ul> <p><b>Relationship factors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Association with sexually aggressive and delinquent peers</li> <li>✓ Family environment characterized by physical violence and few resources</li> <li>✓ Raised in homes with strong patriarchal structures rather than egalitarian structures</li> <li>✓ Emotionally unsupportive familial environment</li> </ul> <p><b>Community factors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Lack of employment opportunities</li> <li>✓ Lack of institutional support from police and judicial system</li> <li>✓ General tolerance of sexual violence within the community</li> <li>✓ Weak community sanctions against sexual violence perpetrators</li> </ul> <p><b>Societal factors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Poverty</li> <li>✓ Societal norms that support sexual violence</li> <li>✓ Societal norms that support male superiority and sexual entitlement</li> <li>✓ Societal norms that maintain women's inferiority and sexual submissiveness</li> <li>✓ Weak laws and policies related to gender equity</li> <li>✓ High tolerance levels of crime and other forms of violence</li> </ul>	<p><b>Individual risk factors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Low self-esteem</li> <li>✓ Low income</li> <li>✓ Low academic achievement</li> <li>✓ Aggressive or delinquent behavior as a youth</li> <li>✓ Heavy alcohol and drug use</li> <li>✓ Depression</li> <li>✓ Anger and hostility</li> <li>✓ Antisocial personality traits</li> <li>✓ Borderline personality traits</li> <li>✓ Prior history of being physically abusive</li> <li>✓ Having few friends/being isolated from others</li> <li>✓ Unemployment</li> <li>✓ Emotional dependence and insecurity</li> <li>✓ Belief in strict gender roles</li> <li>✓ Desire for power/control in relationships</li> <li>✓ Perpetrating psychological aggression</li> <li>✓ Being a victim of physical/psychological abuse</li> <li>✓ History of poor parenting as child</li> <li>✓ History of physical discipline as child</li> </ul> <p><b>Relationship Factors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Marital conflict-fights, tension, other struggles</li> <li>✓ Marital instability-divorces or separations</li> <li>✓ Dominance/control of relationship by one partner over the other</li> <li>✓ Economic stress</li> <li>✓ Unhealthy family relationships and interactions</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Factors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Poverty and associated factors (e.g., overcrowding)</li> <li>✓ Low social capital- lack of institutions, relationships, and norms that shape a community's social interactions</li> <li>✓ Weak community sanctions against intimate partner violence</li> </ul> <p><b>Societal Factors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Traditional gender norms</li> </ul>

Note that there is considerable overlap between the risk factor for perpetration of sexual and domestic violence. To that end, a 2011 WHO report identified **risk factors associated with perpetrators of both intimate partner violence and sexual violence**: lower levels of education, exposure to child maltreatment, witnessing parental violence, harmful use of alcohol, attitudes accepting of violence and violence against females in particular, antisocial personality disorder, males with multiple partners or who are suspected of infidelity, beliefs in family honor and sexual purity, ideologies of male sexual entitlement.



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\*Note: As a convenience, hyperlinks to sources are often provided. If a listed hyperlink cannot be accessed, it is suggested you search online for the resource by title and author.