

The Source

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The Quarterly Newsletter of the Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence

In Brief: Sexual Violence and Adolescents

Over the last decade, researchers, clinicians, and health advocates have explored the incidence, prevalence, and consequences of sexual violence, including attempted and/or completed rape, sexual coercion and harassment, and sexual contact with force or threat of force, within adolescent acquaintance and dating relationships (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Wordes & Nunez, 2002). Current estimates reported by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) noted that adolescents are more likely to experience sexually violent crimes than any other age group. Furthermore, more than half of all victims of sexual crimes, including rape and sexual assault, are women under the age of 25 years (AAP, 2001). Similar rates were reported by the National Crime Victim Survey (2000). To meet the needs of the adolescent population, attention to risk factors for experiencing sexual violence, the health and psychosocial implications of victimization, and resources for preventing violence is merited.

Risk Factors Associated with Sexual Violence

To date, several risk factors have been associated with an increased risk of experiencing sexual victimization within adolescent dating or acquaintance relationships. These factors largely include youth, which is associated with limited knowledge and lack of experience in interpersonal relationships (WHO, 2002), substance use, including alcohol and drugs (Abbey, Zawacki, Buck, Clinton, & Mcauslan, 2001), previous victimization (Rhea, Chafey, Dohner, & Terragno, 1996; Wordes & Nunez, 2002), and acceptance of gender based stereotypes (Kershner, 1996; Rickert, Sanghvi, & Wiemann, 2002). Ironically, a combination of these same factors is also associated with an increased risk of adolescent males perpetrating sexually based crimes against their female counterparts.

Reporting Sexual Violence

Because these crimes occur within the context

of existing relationships, many victims never disclose sexual violence to appropriate authorities. In fact, sexual violence in dating relationships is frequently referred to as a "hidden crime" (CDC, 2000) because less than one-fifth of rapes are ever reported to the police (Texas Association Against Sexual Assault, 2001). Many victims cite denial, minimization, fear, guilt, and shame as factors that deter them from reporting sexual violence. These feelings may be even more pronounced for adolescents when alcohol or other substances have been used prior to victimization (Abbey, Zawacki, Buck, Clinton, & Mcauslan, 2001; National Center for Victims of Crime, 1998). Furthermore, reporting victimization may also be particularly difficult for younger adolescents, many of whom have had limited experience advocating for their health, safety, and well-being.

Sexual Violence Prevention Programs

In an effort to prevent sexual victimization and the myriad of negative physical and mental health consequences of sexual violence, including trauma to the genital tract, exposure to sexually transmitted infections, unplanned pregnancy, depression, post traumatic stress disorder, and anxiety (Ackard & Neumark-Sztainer, 2002; WHO, 2002), a number of prevention programs sponsored by schools and communities have been implemented in the United States. Many programs target adolescent males and females of varying ages using a variety of modalities, including general education on sexual violence, theatre productions, poster contests, and involvement in community activities. Furthermore, mixed gender programs have also been developed that utilize similar modalities.

Limitations

Despite the great strides that have been made in understanding sexual violence in adolescent dating and acquaintance relationships, future research, clinical practice, and advocacy efforts should continue to address areas where data are sparse and understanding limited. One noticeable gap in the scientific literature is the limited inclusion of persons from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds in sample

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The Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence is a collaboration of the Michigan Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board and the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence.

New Print Resources

Available to borrow from the Michigan Resource Center

- **Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Among Lesbians and Gay Men**
- **Promoting Diversity and Social Justice: Educating People from Privileged Groups**
- **Disability, Equality, and Human Rights: A Training Manual for Development and Humanitarian Organizations**
- **The Eight Essential Steps to Conflict Resolution: Preserving Relationships at Work, at Home, and in the Community**
- **Endowment Builder: Practical Ideas to Generate More Endowment Gifts**
- **The 2004 Michigan Nonprofit Compensation & Benefit Survey**
- **Violence Against Women in Asian Societies**
- **Islam, Gender, and Social Change**
- **Trans Liberation: Beyond Pink or Blue**
- **Prostitution Trafficking and Traumatic Stress**

Sexual Violence and Adolescents

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populations. Additionally, inadequate attention has been paid to perpetration of sexual violence, including the factors that facilitate or impede a male's decision to perpetrate sexual violence either through coercive or aggressive tactics. Furthermore, limitations in existing studies, including sampling bias and conceptual inconsistencies, reduce the ability to generalize findings across populations. Lastly, intervention programs that show promise in reducing sexual violence among adolescents must be thoroughly investigated and documented so that future researchers, clinicians, and health advocates may replicate model programs (Foshee et al., 1998; Foshee et al., 2000).

Reprinted with permission. In Brief: Sexual Violence and Adolescents highlights issues discussed in a longer document authored by Holly Harner, R.N.C., Ph.D., M.P.H., S.A.N.E., for the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, PCADV, and VAWnet. This document and references are available online at <http://www.vawnet.org/>.

International Trafficking Of Persons Site: Protection Project

Reprinted from the Family Violence Prevention Fund Newsflash.

Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) developed www.protectionproject.org to establish an international framework for the elimination of trafficking in persons, especially women and children. The web site contains information about trafficking throughout the world, featuring country reports with statistics and maps of trafficking routes, as well as profiles of survivors.

The U.S. section outlines relevant federal and state laws, shows U.S. trafficking routes and provides the toll-free number for the U.S. Department of Justice Trafficking Hotline (1-888-428-7581). There is also a referral system that includes listings of trained service providers and resources for helping U.S. victims of trafficking. At present this includes detailed lists for Seattle, San Francisco, Washington, DC and Chicago.

Sibling Violence Is A Predictor Of Dating Violence, Study Finds

Reprinted from the Family Violence Prevention Fund Newsflash.

A study of 371 unmarried students with siblings at a Tampa, Florida community college finds that sibling violence can have long-term negative consequences, and that perpetrating sibling violence predicts perpetrating dating violence. Published in the March/April issue of the American Journal of Health

Behavior, the study notes, "surprisingly, parent-to-child violence was a significant predictor of sibling violence, but parent-to-parent violence was not."

The authors charge that society has been slow to recognize youth violence, and that violence between siblings is rarely acknowledged, even though it may occur in 60 percent of American families with more than one child living at home. Author Virginia Noland of the University of Florida writes, "the findings suggest that sibling violence is not harmless and may be an important influence later in violence between intimate partners."

Participants included men and women age 16 to 30 who have siblings and who responded to a written questionnaire about conflict behaviors occurring between ages of ten and 14, which is when sibling violence peaks. "After the older sibling reaches 14, they tend to gravitate to their peer group and spend less and less time with their brothers and sisters," Noland said.

Seventy-eight percent of respondents reported being pushed or shoved by a sibling, while 77 percent said they had pushed or shoved their sibling. At the more extreme level, ten percent of men and eight percent of women said a sibling had used a knife or gun against them. The highest level of sibling violence was found between two brothers and the least between two sisters.

In addition to Noland, the authors are: Karen D. Liller, PhD; Robert J. McDermott, PhD, FAAHB; Martha L. Coulter, DrPH; and Anne E. Seraphine, PhD. They note, "the presence of violent behavior, whether observed or experienced directly, can affect relationships later in life." They recommend further research into violence in blended households, single-parent families and homes with paramours.

"Is Sibling Violence A Precursor to College Dating Violence?" by Virginia J. Noland, PhD; Karen D. Liller, PhD; Robert J. McDermott, PhD, FAAHB; Martha L. Coulter, DrPH; Anne E. Seraphine, PhD was published in the March/April Supplement issue of the American Journal of Health Behavior. To view the complete report, please visit <http://www.ajhb.org/2004/s1.htm>

Have Any Suggestions?

The Resource Center welcomes your suggestions for materials to add to the collection. Drop us an email at resource@mcadsv.org or give us a call at (517) 381-4663, ext. 17

Research Update: Power and Control in Stalking

Reprinted from the Newsletter of the Stalking Resource Center, Volume 3, Number 3, Fall 2003.

A new study examines the role of power and control in stalking situations and in the prior relationship between the stalker and the victim. In "Power and Control Dynamics in Prestalking and Stalking Situations," researchers define power and control as the ability of one person to "get another person to do something that they would not otherwise do."¹ Data was gathered from interviews with 187 women stalked by former intimates.

Researchers found that 75 percent of the women in the study experienced controlling behavior during their former relationship with the stalker and that stalkers exercised control over their victims through financial, social, psychological, and physical acts. One fifth of the women said that their former partner had possessed a form of financial control over them. Sixty-one percent of the women had had restricted access to family members and friends. More than half of the women were psychologically abused, 65 percent reported physical abuse, and 9 percent experienced sexual abuse during their prior relationship with the stalker.

Upon termination of the relationship, the former partners attempted to reestablish control over the victims, again through financial, social, psychological, and physical means. One fourth of the victims reported the stalker's financial control, for example by obtaining credit cards in the victim's name, withholding child support payments, stealing from the victim, failing to pay the mortgage, or damaging property. Many stalkers (68 percent) attempted to control the victim socially by contacting the victim's family or friends, showing up at locations where the victim was socializing, and sabotaging the victim's new relationships. Ninety-eight percent of stalkers made reported phone calls, trespassed, and followed victims to gain psychological control over them. Although less than half of the women had children with their stalker, those who did reported that the stalker used the children to control the victim. The stalker would threaten to take the children away, try to gain custody, withdraw child support, or negatively discuss the victim with the children. Stalkers physically assaulted 46 percent of the victims.

Most victims felt there was more than one motivating factor for the stalking. They cited reconciliation, revenge, possession, jealousy, intimidation, a desire to see children, and mental illness as perceived reasons. The most significant triggers named by the victims were drug/alcohol use, the break-up, jealousy, and court hearings.

¹Brewster, Mary. (2003). "Power and Control Dynamics in Prestalking and Stalking Situations." *Journal of Family Violence* 18 (4).

Stalking Resource Center's Information Clearinghouse Index Now Online

The Stalking Resource Center's (SRC) mission is to raise national awareness about stalking and to foster the creation of multidisciplinary responses to the issue. A vital element of this initiative is the collection and dissemination of resources on stalking. Over the past two years, the Stalking Resource Center has worked to locate and obtain the best resources to support practitioners in the field. Their extensive collection exceeds 400 different items, ranging from print resources of various kinds (books, brochures, articles, etc.), to slides (PowerPoint presentations) and videos.

In January 2003 the Stalking Resource Center launched a searchable index of stalking resources on their Website at www.ncvc.org/src. Visitors to the site will be able to search the index using several categories. These categories are:

JURISDICTION—This category allows searching for material that is specific to a jurisdiction (i.e., a police protocol for a specific department in your state), or select "general" to search for material or a document not specific to any locality.

FOCUS—This category includes an array of topics, such as advocacy, campus stalking, cyberstalking, domestic violence, law enforcement, and prosecution.

TYPE—Refers to the nature of the content (i.e., incident log, investigative strategies, protocol, research, statute, training materials, and victim assistance).

FORMAT—book, brochure, other print materials, slides, video, Website.

While the entire Clearinghouse index will be available online, only a small portion of the materials are currently available for download. For more information, please visit the SRC website at www.ncvc.org/src and look for the Information Clearinghouse Index.

Coordinating a Community Response to Violence Against Women

Internet Resources

Preventing Family Violence: Community Engagement Makes the Difference

<http://endabuse.org/programs/children/files/Preventing.pdf>

Coordinated Community Approaches to Domestic Violence

<http://www.mincava.umn.edu/hart/nij.htm>

How to Start a Coordinated Community Response to Sexual Assault

<http://danenet.wicip.org/dccrsa/org/start.html>

New Print Resources

Available to borrow from the Michigan Resource Center

- **Arab Women: Between Defiance and Restraint**
- **Voicing Chicana Feminisms: Young Women Speak Out on Sexuality and Identity**
- **A Call to Action: Ending Crimes Against Children and Adults with Disabilities**
- **Making the Connection: Domestic Violence and Public Health**
- **In Love and In Danger: A Teen's Guide to Breaking Free of Abusive Relationships (Spanish-language edition)**
- **Transforming Board Structure: Strategies for Committees and Task Forces (BoardSource Committee Series)**
- **Family and Friends' Guide to Domestic Violence: How to Listen, Talk and Take Action When Someone You Care About is Being Abused**

The Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence is a collaboration of the Michigan Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board and the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence.

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**MICHIGAN
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
PREVENTION &
TREATMENT BOARD**



Filing for a Protection Order Decreases Violence

Reprinted from the Family Violence Prevention Fund Newsflash.

A study of 150 women in Houston, Texas finds that abused women who apply for a two-year protection order report lower levels of violence after they apply, whether or not the order is granted. The study was reported in the April issue of the American Journal of Public Health.

The study included black, Hispanic and white women and was conducted from January 2001 to June 2002 at a family violence unit of the Houston District Attorney's office. Authors are: Judith McFarlane, DrPH, Ann Malecha, PhD, and Julie Gist, PhD of the College of Nursing at Texas Woman's University; Kathy Watson, MS, of the Baylor College of Medicine; Elizabeth Batten, BA, of the Harris County District Attorney's Office, Family Criminal Law Division; and Iva Hall, PhD, and Sheila Smith, PhD, of the Nursing Department of Lamar University.

Of the 150 participants, 81 women were granted a protection order and 69 women were not. Forty of those who were not granted a protection order dropped the request before their court dates. However, both groups reported lower levels of intimate partner violence, including worksite harassment, when they applied for the protection order, as well as during the subsequent three-, six-, twelve- and 18-month periods.

Results are consistent with other studies, showing that, "When an abused woman decides to contact a criminal justice, civil justice, health or social service agency, information about the abuse is shared and contact is made," the authors write. "Just as the privatization of domestic violence contributes to its continuation, perhaps the contact and public knowledge stemming from justice encounters can prevent reoccurrence of violence."

The Houston study cites an earlier qualitative study in which women discuss using the application for a protection order as a "loudspeaker" to notify the abuser that the legal system knows about his behavior.

Welcome to the Kids Count 2004 Data Book Online

Data from the 2004 KIDS COUNT Data Book are now available in our easy-to-use, powerful online database that allows you to generate custom graphs, maps, ranked lists, and state-by-state profiles; or, download the entire data set as delimited text files. The pull-down menu allows you to read the book online or view the book in PDF format. Additionally, you can order a free copy of the Data Book. For more information, please visit www.aecf.org/kidscount/databook/.

Resources Available Via Fax-on-Demand

The Resource Center staff is pleased to offer a selection of frequently requested bibliographies, fact sheets and violence against women law compilations to our patrons via fax-on-demand. This technology allows our patrons to have immediate and 24-hour access to resources.

Instructions for Using Fax-On-Demand:

- 1) To access the system, pick up the handset or press the Hook (or Unhook) button on the fax machine.
- 2) Dial (517) 347-1060 (Do Not Press Start).
- 3) You will be prompted by a welcome message. Next, you will be asked to enter the two digit box number of the desired material, followed by the # sign. You may request up to five boxes during this session.
- 4) If you need another box number enter the number followed by the # sign.
- 5) When finished with your session press # #. Then, press the Start button to begin receiving your requested materials.

If you have any questions, need assistance or are having problems with the system, please call us at (517) 381-4663.

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