

The Source

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

Violence Against Women Goes Unreported

Reprinted from the Family Violence Prevention Fund Newsflash, April 18, 2003

Approximately half the violent crimes committed against people age 12 and older including rape, sexual assault, robbery, and simple and aggravated assault went unreported in 2000, according to a report released last month by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). *Reporting Crime to the Police, 1992-2000* finds that, while violent crime is reported to police more often than personal theft and property crime, much violent crime goes unreported and that is particularly true for violent crime committed by someone the victim knows.

"This report underscores what advocates have known for years: many victims of domestic and sexual violence do not report the crimes to police," said Family Violence Prevention Fund President Esta Soler. "The severe underreporting of violence against women leads people to believe that the problem is less pervasive than it is, and that illusion is dangerous. We need to put more energy and resources into improving our response to violence. Victims of domestic and sexual violence will be more likely to come forward when they know that law enforcement and the courts will hold perpetrators accountable, and that more adequate support and services will be available to them."

Reporting Crime is based on the results of the National Crime Victimization Survey. The report was written by BJS statisticians Timothy C. Hart and Callie Rennison, Ph.D.

In 2000, approximately half the violent crime in the United States (49 percent) was reported to the police, according to *Reporting Crime*. This marks an increase from an annual average of 43 percent from 1992 through 1999. From 1992 to 2000, the number of violent crimes decreased and "the overall percentage of crime reported to police increased," the report concludes.

Serious violent crime, which excludes the "verbal threats and minor injuries" that constitute simple assault, was reported to police at a higher

percentage than overall violent crime: 53 percent compared with 43 percent, according to *Reporting Crime*. Fifty-five percent of aggravated assaults were reported to the police and 38 percent of simple assaults were reported.

Victims of violent crime are more likely to report crimes committed by strangers, finds the report. A "nonstranger" is defined in *Reporting Crime* as an intimate, friend/acquaintance or other relative. Forty-five percent of violent crime committed by a stranger was reported to the police, and 41 percent committed by "nonstranger" was reported. When the relationship between the victim and the attacker is unknown, 43 percent of the crimes are reported to the police.

Reporting Crime examines the reasons that victims did or did not report crimes to the police. The most common reason given for reporting violence to the police was to "prevent further violence"—19 percent. The most common reason given for not reporting violence was because it was a "private/personal matter"—20 percent overall. Twenty-three percent of victims of rape/sexual assault said it was a "private/personal matter." Twelve percent of rape/sexual assault victims said "fear of reprisal" was the reason they did not report the crime to the police. Six percent did not report to protect the offender, three percent because it was "not clear a crime occurred," and two percent do not report the crime to the police because of lack of proof.

Overall, violence against females was more likely to be reported than violence against males, finds the report. This includes all forms of crime, not just intimate partner violence, rape/sexual assault or other forms of violence against women. From 1992-2000, 47 percent of the violent crimes against females were reported to the police and 40 percent of violent crime against males were reported, according to *Reporting Crime*.

In 2000, 48 percent of rapes/sexual assaults committed were reported to the police, according to the report. This marks an increase from 1999, when only one-quarter (25 percent) of the rapes/sexual assaults were reported. On average, from 1992 through 2000, 31 percent of rapes/sexual assaults committed were reported. Thirty-two

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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 Resources

Available to borrow from the Michigan Resource Center

Print Materials:

- **Teen Dating Violence Prevention Curriculum and Workbook for Native American Girls (Facilitator's Guide and Workbook)**
- **Anicare Child: An Assessment and Treatment Approach for Childhood Animal Abuse**
- **A Man's Recovery from Traumatic Childhood Abuse: The Insiders**
- **I Am the Central Park Jogger: A Story of Hope and Possibility**
- **Unspoken Crimes: Sexual Assault in Rural America**
- **Principles of the Law of Family Dissolution: Analysis and Recommendations by the American Law Institute**
- **Model Domestic Violence Court Watch Program**
- **Managing Your Divorce: A Guide for Battered Women (in Chinese and Korean)**
- **Partners in Change: Working with Men to End Gender-Based Violence**

percent of rapes/sexual assaults with female victims were reported to the police and 27 percent of the rapes/sexual assaults with male victims were reported. But, the report notes, the "differences in percentages of reporting rape/sexual assault for male and female victims were not 'statistically significant.'"

Victims of rape/sexual assault were more likely to report the crime when their attackers were strangers: 41 percent of the rapes/sexual assaults committed by strangers were reported, compared with 27 percent committed by "nonstrangers." Just under one-quarter of the rapes/sexual assaults committed by an intimate (24 percent) were reported to the police and 27 percent of those committed by a friend/acquaintance of the victim were reported.

Between 1992 and 2000, 54 percent of the violent crime committed by intimates, including rape/sexual assault, was reported to the police, according to *Reporting Crime*. Fifty-five percent of the serious violent crime committed by an intimate was reported to the police.

Robberies committed by intimates were the type of intimate partner violence most likely to be reported to the police; 72 percent were reported. Sixty-three percent of aggravated assaults committed by intimate partners were reported to police and 53 percent of simple assaults were reported. The report does not examine the gender of the victims of intimate partner violence. The report, *Reporting Crime to the Police, 1992-2000*, is available on the Bureau of Justice Statistics' web site, www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs.

Increasing Agency Accessibility For People With Disabilities

*I*ncreasing Agency Accessibility for People with Disabilities: Domestic Violence Agency Self-Assessment Guide by Cathy Hoog for the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence is a new resource intended for use in domestic violence victim services programs and agencies. This guide was produced to provide domestic violence programs and agencies with a practical tool to review the accessibility of the agency and services offered for victims with disabilities.

Andrea Dworkin's Online Library

A collection of writings (fiction and nonfiction), articles, speeches, essays, books and interviews on topics of pornography, violence against women and feminism is available online at:

www.nostatusquo.com/ACLU/dworkin/index.html

A guide to developing a plan of action to improve services to victims with disabilities, this resource includes creative solutions to removing obstacles to victim safety and features both short and long-term planning steps and suggestions for problem-solving and community involvement. Focusing on how access does not have to be complicated, expensive or accomplished all at once, this guide encourages programs to start with what is feasible and affordable.

Two additional materials have recently been released by the Washington Coalition:

- *Model Protocol on Screening Practices for Domestic Violence Victims with Disabilities*
- *Model Protocol on Safety Planning for Domestic Violence Victims with Disabilities*.

These two protocols, along with *Increasing Agency Accessibility for People with Disabilities: Domestic Violence Agency Self-Assessment Guide*, were designed to help domestic violence programs expand their advocacy practices to provide quality services to victims with disabilities. The Screening Protocol provides information about how domestic violence victim services programs can identify victims that are affected by issues of disability, both during their initial contact with the agency and at key points in service delivery.

The Safety Protocol discusses how domestic violence victim advocates can expand their safety planning practices to include the many complex issues facing victims with disabilities. This will assist domestic violence advocates in developing a safety planning process that is adapted to a victim's individual situation and respects the victim's assessment of how disability issues affect safety planning.

The above publications are available for free on the Washington Coalition's website: www.wscadv.org. For a hard-copy of any of these resources, contact the Resource Center at (517) 381-4663, ext. 17 or resource@mcadv.org.

New Toolkit for Child Advocates

A new resource is now available for advocates working with children. The Children's Program Tool Kit by House of Ruth Maryland is intended to help service providers create or enhance a children's program. The content includes:

- Program philosophy and objectives
- Job descriptions for staff and volunteers
- Policies and procedures
- Forms, including forms for collecting consumer feedback in order to assess program effectiveness
- A plan for quality assurance

The toolkit is available on-line at: <http://www.hruth.org/www/Toolkit/toolkit.pdf>. Hard-copy and CD-ROM versions of the toolkit are also available for loan from the Resource Center.

Sexual Assault: Victimization Across the Life Span — New Two Volume Set Now Available

Sexual assault knows no boundaries. It crosses all gender, social, ethnic, religious, and cultural lines. As awareness of the problem grows, it has become evident that children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly are all vulnerable targets. *Sexual Assault Victimization Across the Life Span: A Clinical Guide* is a comprehensive reference for anyone who may come in contact with someone who has been sexually assaulted. In this text, emergency room personnel, physicians, emergency medical technicians, social service agencies, judges, and law enforcement personnel will find critical information on how to perform a physical examination, proper documentation, forensic evidence (including DNA analysis), and legal issues. The special sections devoted to the unique problems of sexual victimization of each age group are also invaluable. Other chapter topics include partner rape, sexual assault and pregnancy, genital injury and sexual assault, disability and sexual violence and legal issues involved in prosecuting sexual assault cases. This text eliminates the need to consult multiple references, saving time and resources.

Any physician, nurse, or EMT could come into contact with a victim of sexual assault. Even for the seasoned professional, physically discerning whether or not sexual assault has occurred can be a daunting task. Natural variants in anatomy must be considered, as well as injuries resulting from consensual contact. *Sexual Assault Victimization Across the Lifespan: A Comprehensive Color Atlas* provides over 1,500 photos of normal anatomy, non-assault variants, and assault findings to help with the process of determining abuse. Complete case studies from experts in the field are also present, including photos of the same injury in various stages of healing, to help determine the age of the injury, as well as whether or not it stems from assault.

The most comprehensive photographic atlas of sexual assault in the world, *Sexual Assault Victimization Across the Lifespan: A Comprehensive Color Atlas* has photos detailing assault of people of all ages, ranging from infant to assault of the elderly. Special considerations for examination and support of each age group are addressed. This atlas will be especially useful in emergency rooms and family clinics, and will be an asset to nurses, emergency medical technicians, and physicians who treat all ages of patients. The photos can also be used by legal personnel and law enforcement agencies during prosecution of perpetrators.

To borrow this resource, contact the Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence at (517) 381-4663, ext. 17 or resource@mcadsv.org.

Michigan Protection Advocacy Service Resources

People with disabilities have to deal with a wide variety of issues. Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service, Inc. (MPAS) promotes, expands and protects the human and legal rights of people by providing them with information and advocacy. MPAS has experience in the areas of education, employment, housing, and public places; abuse and neglect; Social Security benefits; Medicaid, Medicare and other insurance; housing; Vocational Rehabilitation; HIV/AIDS issues; and many other disability-related topics. MPAS works to advance the dignity, equality, self-determination, and expressed choices of individuals and provides a wide variety of publications available for purchase.

The following MPAS publications are now available for loan from the Resource Center:

- *Advocating for Access: A Consumer's Guide*
- *Don't Get Mad Get Powerful!*
- *Fair Housing for People with Disabilities: Legal Protection, Remedies, and Practical Strategies*
- *My Rights: A Book About the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*
- *Your Rights in Michigan: Legal Rights of People who are HIV+ or Living with AIDS*
- *Disability Rights & Issues: A Consumer's Guide*

To purchase a copy of any of these materials or for more information about MPAS, visit their Web site at www.mpas.org or call 1-800-288-5923 (in Michigan, voice/TTY). To borrow any of these resources, contact the Resource Center at (517) 381-4663, ext. 17 or resource@mcadsv.org

Stalking Resource Center's Information Clearinghouse Index Now Online

The National Center for Victims of Crime Stalking Resource Center has launched a searchable index of all of the documents available on their Web site:

www.ncvc.org/src

Search their database for access to over 400 different resources including books, journals, magazine articles, Power Point slides, videos, and many more sources of information. The Information Clearinghouse Index is searchable by jurisdiction, focus, type, or format. A small portion of the materials are available directly online, and other resources are obtainable through the Stalking Resource Center at: src@ncvc.org.

New Resources

Available to borrow from the Michigan Resource Center

Video Materials:

- **Color of Violence Conference Workshop 2: Racism and Heterosexism**
- **Staying Safe: Personal Protection Orders (in Spanish and Arabic)**
- **It Never Hurts to Ask. You May Save a Life. Assessment and Management of Domestic Violence in the Primary Health Care Setting.**
- **The Time is Now: Serving Crime Victims with Disabilities**
- **Meet Us Where We Are: Serving Crime Victims with Disabilities**

New Nonprofit Resources in Print:

- **Nuts-and-Bolts Guide to Developing and Operating Your Nonprofit Board of Directors**
- **Nuts-and-Bolts Guide to Leadership and Supervision for Nonprofit Staff**
- **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Youth: Pressing Needs and Promising Practices**

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



Resources Available Via Fax-on-Demand from the Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence

The Resource Center staff is pleased to offer a selection of frequently requested materials and other important documents to our patrons via fax-on-demand. This technology will allow our patrons to have immediate and 24-hour access to resources.

Instructions for Using Fax-On-Demand:

- 1) To access the system, please 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 please enter the number followed by the # sign.
- 5) When finished with your session please 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. We are more than happy to assist you.

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