

## KNOW THE FACTS

### *Understanding Sexual Assault*

**Sexual assault** is any type of unwanted sexual encounter where one person does not consent or have the capacity to consent (is under age, under the influence, or mentally impaired). Sexual assault is about power and control, and it is intended to cause fear and intimidation. **It is against the law.**

**Rape** is forced sexual intercourse. "Forced sexual intercourse" includes vaginal, anal or oral penetration by the offender(s). Rape can happen when any body parts or other foreign objects are inserted into any part of a person's body.

### *Statistics*

- ❖ **1 out of 4** girls and **1 out of 6** boys will experience some form of sexual abuse before the age of 18.<sup>1</sup>
- ❖ Approximately **3/4** of reported cases of child sexual abuse are committed by family members or other individuals that are considered part of the victim's "circle of trust."<sup>1</sup>
- ❖ **80%** of children who have been sexually abused have some symptoms of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder).<sup>2</sup>
- ❖ **1 out of every 6 American women** has been the victim of an attempted or completed rape in her lifetime. **17.7 million American women** have been victims of attempted or completed rape.<sup>3</sup>
- ❖ About **3% of American men** — or **1 in 33** — have experienced an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime. **2.78 million** men in the U.S. have been victims of sexual assault or rape.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2005). Adverse Childhood Experiences Study: Data and Statistics. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Retrieved January 12, 2009 from: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/ace/prevalence.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Shanta R. Dube, MPH, Robert F. Anda, MD, MS, Charles L. Whitfield, MD, David W. Brown, MSPH, MS, Vincent J. Felitti, MD, Maxia Dong, MD, PhD, Wayne H. Giles, MD, MS. Long-Term Consequences of Childhood Sexual Abuse by Gender of Victim. American Journal of Preventative Medicine. 2005;28(5):430–438.

<sup>3</sup> National Institute of Justice & Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. Prevalence, Incidence and Consequences of Violence Against Women Survey. 1998.

- ❖ **1 in 4 college women report surviving rape or attempted rape.** <sup>5</sup>
  
- ❖ More than 50% of all rape/sexual assault incidents were reported by victims to have occurred within 1 mile of their home or at their home:
  - 4 in 10 take place at the victim's home
  - 2 in 10 take place at the home of a friend, neighbor, or relative
  - 1 in 12 take place in a parking garage. <sup>6</sup>
  
- ❖ Sexual assault is one of the most under reported crimes, with **54%** still being left unreported. <sup>7</sup>
  
- ❖ Over **30%** of survivors never disclose the experience to ANYONE. <sup>8</sup>
  
- ❖ Survivors of sexual assault are:
  - **3** times more likely to suffer from depression.
  - **6** times more likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.
  - **13** times more likely to abuse alcohol.
  - **26** times more likely to abuse drugs.
  - **4** times more likely to contemplate suicide. <sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> National Institute of Justice & Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. Prevalence, Incidence and Consequences of Violence Against Women Survey. 1998. U.S. Department of Justice. 2003 National Crime Victimization Survey. 2003.

<sup>5</sup> Tjaden, P. & Thoennes, N. (2006). Prevalence, incidence, and consequences of violence against women: Findings from the national violence against women survey. Research in Brief, Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, US Department of Justice.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Statistics. 1997 Sex Offenses and Offenders Study. 1997.

<sup>7</sup> Justice Department, National Crime Victimization Survey: 2006-2010.

<sup>8</sup> Tennessee Children's Advocacy Centers, [www.tncac.org](http://www.tncac.org)

<sup>9</sup> World Health Organization, 2002.