# the LATEST in DATA

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For more information, contact MCADSV.

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# The Latest in Data

These statistics and research findings compile the most current information available on domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking. All of the data comes from national and state governmental agencies or peer-reviewed research published by reputable sources.

When reading this report, remember that each number and finding represents a person whose life has been affected by violence. This is the collective story of survivors of violence in our communities, our state and our country.

Different sources report different numbers for the same categories, due to differences in the definitions of violence used and the way studies asked questions. While all of the information in this report is critically analyzed and reputable, this does tell us that, depending upon how we view domestic and sexual violence, we will see different stories of victimization. This report includes these varying sources to represent the fact that intimate partner violence, sexual violence and stalking are a continuum of violence.

Finally, at the end of this report is the publication *The Basics of Data*, which provides more information about understanding and using data to build credibility in advocacy work.

Each number and finding represents a person whose life has been affected by violence.

# Domestic Violence

- The rate of intimate partner violence declined 64% from 1994 to 2010 (Catalano, 2012b, p. 1).
- 26% of female crime victims are victimized by intimate partners; 5% of male crime victims are victimized by intimate partners (Truman & Rand, 2010, p. 7).
- About 4 in 5 victims of intimate partner violence were female, according to results from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), from 1994 to 2010 (Catalano, 2012b, p.3).
- Females living in households comprised of one female adult with children experienced intimate partner violence at a rate more than 10 times higher than households with married adults with children did, and 6 times higher than households with one female only (Catalano, 2012b, p. 7).

1 in 3 women have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner.

## NATIONAL LIFETIME PREVALENCE-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) estimated that 1 in 3 women have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.43). More than 48% of women have experienced at least one form of psychological aggression by an intimate partner in their lifetimes (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.45).
- The NISVS estimated that 1 in 4 men have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner in his lifetime (Black *et al.*, 2011, p. 40).
- The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System estimated that 24% of women have experienced domestic violence in their lifetimes (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008).

## NATIONAL YEARLY ESTIMATES-DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- The NISVS estimated that more than 6.9 million women experience rape, physical violence or stalking by an intimate partner each year (Black *et al.*, 2011, p. 38).
- The NISVS estimated that 5.6 million men experience rape, physical violence or stalking by an intimate partner each year (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.38).
- The NCVS estimated there were 1.1 million intimate partner victimizations in 2011 (Truman & Planty, 2012, p. 2).

## HOMICIDE REPORT

### NATIONAL

- A study reviewing homicide trends from 1980-2008 found that the proportion of intimate homicides by a spouse has decreased since 1980, while the proportion committed by a boyfriend or girlfriend has increased (Cooper & Smith, 2011, p.19).

- Among homicides with known victim/offender relationships, nearly 1 of 6 murder victims (16.3%) were killed by an intimate partner (Cooper & Smith, 2011, p.18).
- 1,640 women were murdered by intimate partners in 2007 in the U.S. (Catalano, Smith, Snyder, & Rand, 2009).
- In 2007, 45% of female homicide victims were murdered by intimate partners; 5% of male homicide victims were murdered by intimate partners (Catalano, Smith, Snyder, & Rand, 2009, p. 4).

**MISSOURI**

- The Missouri State Highway Patrol defines domestic violence-related homicides as "the willful killing of one human being by another and the victim and offender are related by blood, related by marriage, reside together, have resided together in the past, or are romantically involved" (Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2012a, p. 81).
- The Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (MCADSV) only reports on homicides related to intimate partner violence, including the murders of children and bystanders to the situation. For more information on the methods used for our homicide report, contact MCADSV.

| HOMICIDE REPORT | 2011 (Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2012b) | 2012 (Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2013b) |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | **54** | **51** |
| Perpetrated by men against their female intimate partners | 36 | 32 |
| Perpetrated by men against children and other bystanders | 13 | 14 |
| Perpetrated by women against their male intimate partners | 5 | 5 |

| PRIMARY WEAPON | 2011 (Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2012b) | 2012 (Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2013b) |
|---|---|---|
| Firearm (handgun, rifle, shotgun, unknown and other firearms) | 74% | 57% |
| Strangulation | 0% | 16% |
| Knives or cutting instrument | 15% | 14% |
| Arson | 0% | 4% |
| Personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.) | 4% | 4% |
| Other (blunt instrument, asphyxiation, drugs/ narcotics and unknown causes) | 7% | 6% |

Multiracial women faced higher rates of intimate partner violence compared to any other racial or ethnic group.

## MISSOURI CRIME REPORT

- 40,642 incidents of domestic violence were reported to law enforcement in 2011 (Criminal Justice Information Services Division, 2013).
- 40,645 incidents of domestic violence were reported to law enforcement in 2012 (Criminal Justice Information Services Division, 2013).
- Incidents of domestic violence in Missouri include violence between individuals who are married, are residing together, have resided together in the past, have a child in common or are relate by blood. In 2011, the definition included individuals in a continuing social relationship (Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2012a, p. 81).

| Offense | Number of Arrests in 2011 | Number of Arrests in 2012 |
|---|---|---|
| Violating an Order of Protection | 1,983 | 1,914 |
| First-degree domestic assault | 922 | 962 |
| Second-degree domestic assault | 3,601 | 3,338 |
| Third-degree domestic assault | 10,040 | 9,107 |

(Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2013a)

## REPORTING AND ARRESTS

- From 2006-2010, 46% of violent victimizations by an intimate partner in the U.S. were not reported to the police (Langton, 2012, p. 6).
- The most common reason given for not reporting violent victimization by an intimate partner in the U.S. was "fear of reprisal or getting offender in trouble" (Langton, 2012, p. 4).

## NUMBER OF INCIDENTS PER 100,000

Missouri counties with the highest rates of reported domestic violence in 2010 and 2011, rated highest to lowest:

| NUMBER OF REPORTED INCIDENTS PER 100,000 PEOPLE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2010 (Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2011) | | 2011 (Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2012a) | |
| MCDONALD | 1,926 | MILLER | 2,030 |
| MISSISSIPPI | 1,879 | MCDONALD | 1,774 |
| GRUNDY | 1,745 | MISSISSIPPI | 1,631 |
| CLINTON | 1,547 | SCOTT | 1,478 |
| LINN | 1,535 | ADAIR | 1,370 |
| JASPER | 1,525 | GRUNDY | 1,330 |
| SCOTT | 1,517 | STONE | 1,250 |
| CASS | 1,462 | AUDRAIN | 1,194 |
| TANEY | 1,444 | PETTIS | 1,181 |
| ADAIR | 1,397 | GREENE | 1,156 |

- Incidents of domestic violence in Missouri includes violence between individuals who are married, are residing together, have resided together in the past, have a child in common or are relate by blood. In 2011, the definition changed to include individuals in a continuing social relationship.
- To find more county-level data visit Missouri Department of Public Safety's Uniform Crime Reporting Query at: http://www.mshp.dps.missouri.gov/MSHPWeb/SAC/data_and_statistics_ucr_query_backup.html

## ORDERS OF PROTECTION

Full orders granted are Orders of Protection issued after a court hearing before a judge—granted during calendar year 2011 and 2012.

**ORDERS OF PROTECTION FILED AND FULL ORDERS GRANTED STATEWIDE**
**Calendar Years 2011 and 2012**

| | Calendar Year 2011 (Missouri Office of State Courts Administrator, 2012) | | Calendar Year 2012 (Missouri Office of State Courts Administrator, 2013) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Type of Order** | **Orders Filed** | **Full Orders Granted*** | **Orders Filed** | **Full Orders Granted*** |
| Adult Abuse with Stalking | 16,073 | 5,075 | 16,262 | 5,011 |
| Adult Abuse without Stalking | 28,029 | 7,970 | 28,325 | 7,954 |
| Adult Abuse Extended/Modified | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Child Orders | 8,513 | 1,336 | 8,697 | 1,386 |
| Child Orders Extended/Modified | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| **Total** | **52,625** | **14,385** | **53,285** | **14,351** |

## RACE/ETHNICITY

- Women in relationships in which both individuals identify as the same racial and/or ethnic minority demonstrate the greatest risk for physical and non-physical forms of violence, in comparison to women in interracial relationships or where both individuals are white, non-Hispanic (Carbone-Lopez, 2012).
- Women in interracial relationships report higher rates of nonphysical violence than women in relationships where both individuals are white, non-Hispanic (Carbone-Lopez, 2012).

**LIFETIME PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE BY AN INTIMATE PARTNER BY RACE/ETHNICITY**
U.S. WOMEN

| | HISPANIC | NON-HISPANIC | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Black | White | Asian or Pacific islander | American Indian or Alaska native | Multiracial |
| Raped, assaulted, and/or stalked by an intimate partner | 37.1% | 43.7% | 34.6% | 19.6% | 46.0% | 53.8% |

(Black *et al*., 2011)

| LIFETIME PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE BY AN INTIMATE PARTNER BY RACE/ETHNICITY<br>U.S. MEN | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | HISPANIC | NON-HISPANIC | | | | |
| | | Black | White | Asian or Pacific islander | American Indian or Alaska native | Multiracial |
| Raped, assaulted, and/or stalked by an intimate partner | 26.6% | 38.6% | 28.2% | * | 45.3% | 39.3% |

** Estimate is not reported; relative standard error>30% or cell size ≤20*

(Black *et al*., 2011)

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION

| LIFETIME PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE BY INTIMATE PARTNER BY SEXUAL ORIENTATION<br>U.S. WOMEN | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Lesbian | Bisexual | Heterosexual |
| Raped, assaulted, and/or stalked by an intimate partner | 33.5% | 57.4% | 28.2% |

(Walters & Breiding, 2013)

| LIFETIME PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE BY INTIMATE PARTNER BY SEXUAL ORIENTATION<br>U.S. MEN | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Gay | Bisexual | Heterosexual |
| Raped, assaulted, and/or stalked by an intimate partner | 26.0% | 37.3% | 29.0% |

(Walters & Breiding, 2013)

## HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- More than 1 in 5 female survivors of intimate partner violence reported being concerned for her safety or having at least one identified post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptom (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.54).
- Approximately 1 in 10 male survivors of intimate partner violence reported at least one measured impact related to rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner or other forms of violent behaviors in that relationship (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.55).
- Women who have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime are more likely to report the following than women who have not experienced domestic violence:
    - Use of disability equipment
    - Arthritis
    - Asthma
    - Activity limitations
    - Stroke
    - High blood cholesterol
    - Heart attack
    - Heart disease
    - Risk factors for HIV and STDs
    - Smoking and heavy or binge drinking
    - Diabetes
    - Irritable bowel syndrome
    - Frequent headaches
    - Chronic pain
    - Difficulty sleeping
    - Poor physical or mental health

(Black *et al.*, 2011; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008)

## ECONOMIC COST

- The direct health care costs of domestic violence are approximately $4.1 billion with an additional $1.8 billion in productivity loss associated with injuries and premature death (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2003).

More than 1 in 5 female survivors of intimate partner violence reported being concerned for her safety or having at least one identified post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptom.

# Sexual Violence

- From 1995 to 2010, the estimated annual rate of female rape or sexual assault victimizations declined 58%, from 5.0 victimizations per 1,000 females age 12 or older to 2.1 per 1,000 (Planty, Langton, Krebs, Berzofsky, & Smiley-McDonald, 2013).
- Approximately 9% of all rape or sexual assault victimizations recorded in the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) involved male victims (Planty *et al.*, 2013).
- Approximately 50% of rapes and sexual assaults took place at or near the victim's home (Planty *et al.*, 2013, p.4).
- From 2005 to 2010, 78% of sexual violence involved an offender who was a family member, intimate partner, friend or acquaintance (Planty *et al.*, 2013).

From 2005 to 2010, 78% of sexual violence involved an offender who was a family member, intimate partner, friend or acquaintance.

## NATIONAL LIFETIME PREVALENCE-SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) estimated that nearly 1 in 5 women is raped in her lifetime (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.18). NISVS estimated that approximately 1 in 2 women has experienced sexual violence other than rape in her lifetime (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.18).
- The NISVS estimated 1 in 71 men is raped in his lifetime (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.18). 1 in 5 men have experienced sexual violence other than rape in his lifetime (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.18).

## NATIONAL YEARLY ESTIMATES-SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- The NISVS estimated that 1.2 million women are raped each year (Black *et al.*, 2011, p. 18). An additional 6.6 million women experience sexual violence other than rape each year, according to their estimations (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.18).
- The NISVS estimated that 6.0 million men experience sexual violence other than rape each year (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.18).
- The NCVS estimated that there were 243,800 rape/sexual assault victimizations in 2011 (Truman & Planty, 2012, p. 2).

## MISSOURI CRIME REPORT

- There were 1,466 reports of rape or attempted rape to law enforcement in 2011 (Criminal Justice Information Services Division, 2013).
- There were 1,504 reports of rape or attempted rape to law enforcement in 2012 (Criminal Justice Information Services Division, 2013).

| ARRESTS FOR SEX CRIMES IN MISSOURI | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Definition** | **2011** | **2012** |
| Forcible rape and attempted forcible rape | Sexual intercourse by force | 374 | 349 |
| Sexual assault | Sexual intercourse without the victim's consent | 131 | 131 |
| Forcible sodomy and attempted forcible sodomy | Deviate sexual intercourse by force | 29 | 40 |
| Deviate sexual assault | Deviate sexual intercourse without the victim's consent | 76 | 70 |
| Sexual abuse | Sexual contact by force | 59 | 59 |
| 1st degree sexual misconduct | Sexual contact without the victim's consent | 187 | 148 |
| 2nd degree sexual misconduct | Genital exposure, sexual contact in the presence of others, sex in public with the knowledge that the behavior was likely to cause affront or alarm | 209 | 147 |
| 3rd degree sexual misconduct | Soliciting sexual contact with the knowledge that the behavior was likely to cause affront or alarm | 78 | 75 |
| 1st degree statutory rape and attempted statutory rape | Sexual intercourse with a victim who is younger than 14 | 282 | 241 |
| 2nd degree statutory rape | Sexual intercourse with a person who is younger than 17 and the perpetrator is 21 or older | 232 | 226 |
| 1st degree statutory sodomy and attempted statutory sodomy | Sexual contact with a victim who is younger than 14 | 374 | 365 |
| 2nd degree statutory sodomy | Deviate sexual intercourse with a person who is younger than 17 and the perpetrator is 21 or older | 203 | 191 |
| 1st degree child molestation | Sexual contact with a victim who is younger than 14 | 379 | 372 |
| 2nd degree child molestation | Sexual contact with a victim who is younger than 17 | 146 | 131 |
| Incest | Marriage, sexual intercourse, or deviate sexual intercourse with a relative | 44 | 29 |
| Sexual misconduct involving a child | Exposing genitals to a child younger than 15 or coercing a child to expose his/her genitals | 137 | 111 |

(Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2013a)

## REPORTING AND ARRESTS

- From 2006-2010, 65% of rapes were not reported to the police. The most common reason given for not reporting was "fear of reprisal or getting offender in trouble" (Langton, 2012, p. 4).
- There were approximately 20,100 arrests for forcible rape in the U.S. in 2010 (Snyder, 2012, p. 4).

## RACE/ETHNICITY

| LIFETIME PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE BY RACE/ETHNICITY<br>U.S. WOMEN | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | HISPANIC | NON-HISPANIC | | | | |
| | | Black | White | Asian or Pacific islander | American Indian or Alaska native | Multiracial |
| Rape | 14.6% | 22.0% | 18.8% | * | 26.9% | 33.5% |
| Other sexual violence | 36.1% | 41.0% | 47.6% | 29.5% | 49.0% | 58.0% |

**Estimate is not reported; relative standard error>30% or cell size ≤20*

(Black *et al.*, 2011)

| LIFETIME PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE BY RACE/ETHNICITY<br>U.S. MEN | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | HISPANIC | NON-HISPANIC | | | | |
| | | Black | White | Asian or Pacific islander | American Indian or Alaska native | Multiracial |
| Rape | * | * | 1.7% | * | * | * |
| Other sexual violence | 26.2% | 22.6% | 21.5% | 15.7% | 20.1% | 31.6% |

**Estimate is not reported; relative standard error>30% or cell size ≤20*

(Black *et al.*, 2011)

Nearly 1 in 2 bisexual women is raped in her lifetime and nearly 3 in 4 bisexual women experience sexual violence other than rape in their lifetimes.

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION

**LIFETIME PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE BY ANY PERPETRATOR BY SEXUAL ORIENTATION**
U.S. WOMEN

| | Lesbian | Bisexual | Heterosexual |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rape | 13.1% | 46.1% | 17.4% |
| Other sexual violence | 46.4% | 74.9% | 43.3% |

(Walters & Breiding, 2013)

**LIFETIME PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE BY ANY PERPETRATOR BY SEXUAL ORIENTATION**
U.S. MEN

| | Gay | Bisexual | Heterosexual |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rape | * | * | 0.7% |
| Other sexual violence | 40.2% | 47.4% | 20.8% |

**Estimate is not reported; relative standard error>30% or cell size ≤20*

(Walters & Breiding, 2013)

## HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- Adult victims of sexual violence can experience long-term consequences such as depression, physical symptoms, eating disorders, suicidal thoughts and attempts, and substance abuse (Yuan, Koss, & Stone, 2006).
- Sexual violence survivors often experience gynecologic injuries and elevated levels of sexually transmitted infections (Martin & Macy, 2009).
- Based on 2005 data from The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), for both women and men, links were found between history of non-consensual sex and high cholesterol, stroke and heart disease; female victims of nonconsensual sex were more likely to report heart attack and heart disease compared to non-victims (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012).

## ECONOMIC COST

- The total lifetime cost for an adult sexual assault survivor who receives medical care from an emergency department and is treated and released is $5,273 (Office of Statistics and Programming, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2005a).
- The total lifetime cost for an adult sexual assault survivor who is hospitalized because of injuries is $48,567 (Office of Statistics and Programming, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2005b).

# Stalking

Most stalking victims know the offender in some capacity, with former or intimate partner being the most common relationship (28.1% of stalking victims) and a friend, roommate or neighbor being the second most common (15.2%).

- Most stalking victims know the offender in some capacity, with former or intimate partner being the most common relationship (28.1% of stalking victims) and a friend, roommate or neighbor being the second most common (15.2%) (Catalano, 2012a, p. 5).
- Women aged 18 to 24 are at the greatest risk of stalking (Catalano, 2012a, p. 4).

## NATIONAL LIFETIME PREVALENCE-STALKING

- The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) estimated that nearly 1 in 6 women is stalked in her lifetime (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.30).
- NISVS estimated 1 in 19 men is stalked in his lifetime (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.30).

## NATIONAL YEARLY ESTIMATES-STALKING

- The NISVS estimated that 5.1 million women are stalked each year (Black *et al.*, 2011, p. 30).
- The NISVS estimated that 1.4 million men are stalked each year (Black *et al.*, 2011, p.30).
- The Bureau of Justice Statistics found that in a 12-month period, an estimated 1.5% of persons age 18 or older were victims of stalking (Catalano, 2012a, p.1).

## MISSOURI CRIME REPORTS

- There were 114 arrests for stalking in 2011 (Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2013a).
- There were 138 arrests for stalking in 2012 (Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2013a).
- There were 98 arrests for aggravated stalking in 2011 (Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2013a).
- There were 145 arrests for aggravated stalking in 2012 (Missouri Statistical Analysis Center, 2013a).

## REPORTING AND ARRESTS

- 36% of men and 41% of women reported stalking victimization to the police (Baum, Catalano, Rand, & Rose, 2009).
- When contacted about a stalking victimization, the most common response by police was to take a report. Only 8% of responding officers arrested the perpetrator (Baum *et al.*, 2009).

## RACE/ETHNICITY

| LIFETIME PREVALENCE OF STALKING VICTIMIZATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY U.S. WOMEN | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | HISPANIC | NON-HISPANIC | | | | |
| | | Black | White | Asian or Pacific islander | American Indian or Alaska native | Multiracial |
| Stalking | 15.2% | 19.6% | 16.0% | * | 22.7% | 30.6% |

** Estimate is not reported; relative standard error>30% or cell size ≤20*

(Black *et al*., 2011)

| LIFETIME PREVALENCE OF STALKING VICTIMIZATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY U.S. MEN | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | HISPANIC | NON-HISPANIC | | | | |
| | | Black | White | Asian or Pacific islander | American Indian or Alaska native | Multiracial |
| Stalking | 5.1% | 6.0% | 5.1% | * | * | * |

** Estimate is not reported; relative standard error>30% or cell size ≤20*

(Black *et al*., 2011)

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- Approximately 1 in 3 bisexual women and 1 in 6 heterosexual women in the U.S. have experienced some type of stalking behavior in their lifetime in which they felt very fearful or believed that they could or someone close to them would be harmed or killed (Walters & Breiding, 2013, p.15).

## HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- About 15% of stalking victims felt depressed or sick, and 1% reported feeling suicidal (Baum *et al.*, 2009).
- For stalking victims, the most common fear cited was not knowing what would happen next (Baum *et al.*, 2009).

## ECONOMIC COST

- 1 in 8 employed stalking victims lost time from work as a result of victimization and more than half lost 5 days of work or more (Baum *et al.*, 2009).
- About 130,000 victims reported that they had been fired from or asked to leave their jobs because of the stalking (Baum *et al.*, 2009).
- More than 13% of victims of stalking lost $1,000 or more because of lost wages (Baum *et al.*, 2009).
- 3 in 10 victims of stalking accrued out-of-pocket costs for things such as attorney fees, damage to property, childcare costs, moving expenses, or changing phone numbers (Baum *et al.*, 2009).

# Conclusion

The data in this report were selected because they are the most current and accurate information available. These sources were chosen in order to help tell a collective story of survivors of violence. While some older sources were chosen, presently they are the most current sources in that field. Visit the websites listed in the reference section to read the entirety of these sources and for more information about the research being done in our state and nation. Each study used in this report is listed there. Additionally, if questions arise in reading this report, contact MCADSV for technical assistance. MCADSV can provide more information about the research in this report and how to use it in advocacy work.

These sources were chosen in order to help tell a collective story of survivors of violence.

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# Appendix

1 the basics of data

THE BASICS
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# The Basics of Data

Research and data collection are important tools in the effort to address violence against women. To many, numbers communicate the extent of a problem. Problems that affect large numbers of individuals are more likely to receive resources and attention than problems that affect smaller numbers of individuals. Of course, severity is also a factor that affects public attention and the allocation of resources. Advocates tend to prefer not to categorize victims' experiences. Who is to say physical abuse is worse than verbal abuse? However, to communicate effectively with the public, advocates must be able to detail the problem of domestic and sexual violence. How many people does violence against women affect? How does it affect them?

Research and data can also increase the credibility of your message. Being able to discuss the prevalence of domestic violence or the most current research in sexual assault suggests that you've done your homework and that you know what you're talking about. However, your credibility is only enhanced if you're using the data appropriately.

## KEYS TO USING DATA

- **Use reputable sources.** Do not quote Oprah. Do not quote just anyone who has an Internet site. Government studies are usually reputable. Research studies published in peer-reviewed journals are reputable (e.g., the journal *Violence Against Women*, *The Journal of Interpersonal Violence*).
- **Cite sources.** Let readers and participants know where the information comes from. Citing sources adds another layer of credibility to the information presented.
- **Do not inflate numbers or exaggerate your message.** The true magnitude of domestic and sexual violence is shocking. We don't need to exaggerate the numbers of women who are affected by violence. If your numbers sound too outrageous, people won't accept your message. Sometimes people don't want to believe the truth or can't absorb the realities experienced, and that's when it's important to be able to report your source and stand firm in your conviction that what you're saying is truthful. If you routinely inflate your

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## 2 the basics of data



***DEFINITIONS*:**

**Peer review:** The evaluation of research studies by people in the same field to ensure scientific rigor and improve quality.

**Lifetime prevalence:** Statistical term to describe the percentage of individuals who have ever been affected by violence (or another health issue.)

numbers, eventually the numbers will be challenged and credibility will be lost. In the field of violence against women, this means that if one advocate makes up numbers, the rest of us are affected by the perception that we can't be trusted. The community depends on our adherence to truth.

- **Critically analyze the data you use.** In addition to thinking about the source of the data, also think about how the data was collected, what pieces might be missing or alternative explanations for findings. Others with whom you share this information will conduct this analysis, and it's important to be prepared and to acknowledge limitations.
- **Practice your message.** Talking about data and research doesn't always come naturally. Make sure you're comfortable with the information before you speak in public. Practicing with your colleagues is a way to become more comfortable using statistics.
- **Data is a tool to try to better understand a problem, but it is rarely an accurate picture of reality or truth.** Findings will vary depending on how data is collected, how the problem is defined and how it is interpreted. For instance, data on the number of crimes reported to police has the obvious drawback of not containing the number of crimes that go unreported. As such, it's important to remember that crime reports do not fully describe the problem of domestic and sexual violence. Also, Missouri's definition of domestic violence, in the section of state law on crime reporting, does not include acts of violence between individuals who are dating but have not lived together or had a child in common. Most people consider this type of violence to be domestic violence, but it is not included in Missouri's official crime data because the state laws do not define these acts as domestic violence.* This does not mean that the data does not have worth; instead, it should be considered as an additional, albeit imperfect, tool in understanding a problem.

**In past legislative sessions MCADSV has worked to expand the definition of domestic violence for crime and arrest reporting to include violence between individuals who are dating. The Coalition will continue to advocate for this change in coming sessions.*