

# Sexual Violence Against People with Disabilities

Rates of rape and sexual assault for people with disabilities were more than twice those for people without.  
*National Crime Victimization Survey, "Crime Against People with Disabilities," E. Harrell, et al., 2008*

Women with disabilities, compared to people without disabilities, are more likely to experience more severe victimization and for a longer duration and be survivors of multiple episodes of abuse from a larger number of perpetrators.

*Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling, "Issues of Abuse for Women with Disabilities and Implications for Rehabilitation Counseling," J. Schaller, et al., 1998*

Isolation within a community, reliance on caregivers for personal care, and limited transportation options can create unsafe situations for people with disabilities.

*Sexuality and Disability, "The Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Assault. Sexual Exploitation of People with Disabilities," D. Sobsey et al., 1998*

Each year 15,000 to 19,000 people with developmental disabilities are raped in North America.

*California Coalition Against Sexual Assault, "Serving Survivors of Sexual Assault with Disabilities," 2001*

Among adults who are developmentally disabled, as many as 83% of the females and 32% of the males are the victims of sexual assault.

*Journal of Interpersonal Violence, "Forced Sexual Intercourse Among Intimates," I. Johnson, et al., 2000*

45% of female psychiatric outpatients reported being sexually abused during childhood. Respondents who had been abused in childhood had higher levels of depressive and psychotic symptoms and higher rates of sexual victimization in adulthood than those who had not been abused.

*Hospital Community Psychiatry, "Childhood Abuse and Neglect Among Women Outpatients with Chronic Mental Illness," K. Muenzenmaier, et al., 1993*

Lifetime risk for violent victimization for homeless women with severe mental illness is 97%.

*American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, "Episodically Homeless Women with Serious Mental Illness: Prevalence of Physical and Sexual Assault," L. A. Goodman, et al., 1995*

33% of abusers are acquaintances, 33% are natural or foster family members, and 25% are caregivers or service providers for disabled survivors of sexual assault.

*Visa Vis, "Sexual Offenses and Disabled Victims: Research and Practical Implications," D. Sobsey, 1988*

One study found that individuals with developmental disabilities are up to 10 times more likely to experience sexual assault than adults without these disabilities.

*"Violence and Abuse in the Lives of People with Disabilities: The End of Silent Acceptance," D. Sobsey, 1994*

Males with disabilities are twice as likely than males without disabilities to be sexually abused in their lifetime.

*Centre for Justice Statistics, "1994 in Roehrer Institute, Harm's Way. Ontario: Roehrer Intstitute," 1995*