



# Family Violence Prevention Fund

## The Facts on Intimate Partner Violence and Reproductive Health In the African-American Community

This fact sheet is designed to explore what the data tells us about domestic violence and its reproductive health consequences in the African-American community. While some of the data compare prevalence in various communities, it is clear that violence is a significant problem, with serious consequences, for the entire nation. On average, more than three women a day are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Women experience two million injuries from intimate partner violence each year,<sup>2</sup> and young women age 20 to 24 experience intimate partner violence at above average rates.<sup>3</sup> Please see the Family Violence Prevention Fund's general fact sheet on intimate partner violence for additional statistics.

### Domestic and Sexual Violence in the African-American Community

- African-American women experience higher rates of intimate partner violence than white women.<sup>4</sup> In general African-Americans experience higher rates of violence than whites.<sup>5</sup>
- Between 2001 and 2005, African-Americans were more likely than whites and Hispanics to experience a rape, sexual assault or aggravated assault.<sup>6</sup>
- A recent study found that almost one in four African-American women age 20 to 24 has been a victim of forced sex.<sup>7</sup>

### Reproductive Health Concerns

Violence is linked to a range reproductive health issues, including sexually transmitted disease and HIV transmission, miscarriages, risky sexual health behaviour and more.<sup>8</sup> Women disclosing physical violence are nearly three times more likely to experience a sexually transmitted infection than women who don't disclose physical abuse.<sup>9</sup> One in three adolescents tested for sexually transmitted infections and HIV have experienced domestic violence.<sup>10</sup> Major reproductive health concerns like HIV/AIDS and unplanned pregnancy are more prevalent in the African-American community.

- African-Americans are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections. Although African-Americans make up only 13 percent of the U.S. population, they accounted for one-half of the estimated new HIV/AIDS diagnoses in 2004. The rate of Chlamydia among African-American women was nearly eight times the rate among white women and the gonorrhea rate among African-Americans was 19 times the rate among whites.<sup>11</sup>

- African-American women have the highest rates of unintended pregnancy – they are three times as likely as white women to experience it.<sup>12</sup>
- In 1999, homicide was the second leading cause of injury-related death among women age 15 to 24 years and among African-American women of reproductive age.<sup>13</sup>
- From 1991 to 1999, pregnant African-American women were about seven times more likely to be homicide victims than pregnant white women. Race is strongly associated with pregnancy-associated homicide deaths.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Intimate Partner Violence in the United States. U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2006. Available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/intimate/ipv.htm>

<sup>2</sup> CDC, Adverse Health Conditions and Health Risk Behaviors Associated with Intimate Partner Violence, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, February 2008. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5705a1.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Intimate Partner Violence in the United States. U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2006. Available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/intimate/ipv.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Intimate Partner Violence in the United States. U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics. 2007. Available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/intimate/victims.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Criminal Victimization, 2006, U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2007. Available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cv06.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Special Report, Black Victims of Violent Crime. U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics. 2007. Available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/bvvc.htm>

<sup>7</sup> Child Trends, Forced Sexual Intercourse Among Young Adult Women, 2008

<sup>8</sup> Violence Against Women: Effects on Reproductive Health. *Outlook* 20(1). 2002. Available at [http://www.path.org/files/EOL20\\_1.pdf](http://www.path.org/files/EOL20_1.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Coker, AL, Smith PH, Bethea L, King MR, McKeown RE. Physical Health Consequences of Physical and Psychological Intimate Partner Violence. *Archives of Family Medicine*. 2000; 9 451-457.

<sup>10</sup> Decker, MR, Silverman, JG and Raj, A; 2005 *Pediatrics*: Volume 116, Number 2, e272-e276.

<sup>11</sup> Guttmacher Institute, Facts on Sexually Transmitted Infections in the United States, 2006. Available at [http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb\\_sti.html](http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_sti.html)

<sup>12</sup> Guttmacher Institute, Abortion and Women of Color: The Bigger Picture, Guttmacher Policy Review, Volume 11, Number 3, Summer 2008. Available at <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/gpr/11/3/gpr110302.html>

<sup>13</sup> Chang, Jeani, MPH, Berg, Cynthia J. MD, MPH, Saltzman, Linda E. PhD, Herndon, Joy, MS. March 2005.

“Homicide: A Leading Cause of Injury Deaths Among Pregnant and Postpartum Women in the United States, 1991-1999,” *American Journal of Public Health*. Volume 95, Number 3, 471-477.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*