

# CDC's National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey



## Definitions

Violence impacts every community and affects people of all genders, sexual orientations, and ages—anyone can experience or perpetrate these types of violence.

**Sexual Violence (SV)** – Sexual activity when consent is not obtained or given freely.

**Stalking** –Pattern of repeated harassing or threatening behavior by someone else, causing fear or safety concerns.

**Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)** – Physical violence, sexual violence, stalking, psychological aggression, or control of reproductive or sexual health by a current or former intimate partner.

## Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Violence, and Stalking Have Widespread Effects

Findings from CDC's **National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS)** indicate that millions of Americans are affected by sexual violence (SV), stalking, and intimate partner violence (IPV) every year.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the immediate physical and emotional toll, a wide range of chronic physical and mental health problems are associated with these forms of violence. Impact is felt well beyond an individual victim, with substantial economic costs across victims' lifetimes due to medical care, lost work, and criminal justice activities.<sup>2,3</sup>

## Monitoring the Magnitude of IPV, SV, and Stalking

IPV, SV, and stalking can be challenging to monitor due to the sensitive nature of these forms of violence—NISVS can help. NISVS is an **ongoing, nationally representative survey** that gathers timely and reliable **national and state-level data** on SV, stalking, and IPV victimization from adult women and men in the United States.

NISVS asks questions about these sensitive topics using a health and behavior frame to help maximize reliable reporting of these important public health issues. NISVS collects lifetime and 12-month prevalence data, describes who is most likely to experience these forms of violence, as well as information on the impacts and health consequences associated with these types of violence. NISVS data inform and improve prevention and response efforts.

## Why NISVS Matters

NISVS is the **first** survey that:

- Regularly monitors SV, stalking, and IPV in a public health context
- Reports on lifetime and 12-month experiences of SV, stalking, and IPV at the national and state level
- Examines associated health impacts and age of first victimization of SV, stalking, and IPV



### About NISVS

NISVS is an ongoing, nationally representative telephone survey that collects detailed information on SV, stalking, and IPV victimization of adult women and men ages 18 and older in the United States. The survey collects data on past-year and lifetime experiences of violence. CDC developed NISVS to better describe and monitor the magnitude of these forms of violence in the United States.



## How NISVS is Helpful to your Work

NISVS data are used to:

- Help plan and prioritize violence prevention and response efforts at the national, state, and local levels
- Educate communities about the prevalence and characteristics of SV, stalking, and IPV
- Inform policies, programs, and practices for violence prevention and response initiatives
- Guide and evaluate progress at the state level toward the reduction of these forms of violence

## Prevention Begins with Action

A comprehensive strategy to prevent these types of violence requires that public health works with other sectors, such as education, justice, and social services, to implement prevention efforts. By understanding and addressing SV, stalking, and IPV we can empower communities to stop violence before it begins.

## To Learn More:

### **The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey**

[www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs)

### **Technical Packages for Violence Prevention**

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pub/technical-packages.html>

## References

1. Smith SG, Zhang X, Basile KC, Merrick MT, Wang J, Kresnow M, Chen. [The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey \(NISVS\): 2015 Data Brief—Updated Release \[1.26 MB, 32 Pages\]](#). Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018.
2. Peterson C, DeGue S, Florence C, Lokey CN. [Lifetime economic burden of rape among U.S. adults](#). *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 2017; 52(6):691-701.
3. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. [Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States](#). Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2003.