

Sexual violence is sexual activity when consent is not obtained or freely given. It can occur in person, online, or through technology, and the person causing harm is often someone the survivor knows.

WHAT SEXUAL VIOLENCE INCLUDES

Rape

Completed or attempted unwanted penetration involving force, threats, or when a person cannot consent.

Being made to penetrate

When a person is forced, threatened, or unable to consent and is made to sexually penetrate someone else.

Sexual coercion

Unwanted penetration after nonphysical pressure, manipulation, repeated requests, or misuse of authority.

Unwanted sexual contact

Unwanted sexual touching that does not involve penetration, including groping, grabbing, or fondling.

Technology-facilitated sexual violence

Unwanted sexual messages or images, or sharing a revealing or sexual image without consent.

LATEST NATIONAL DATA

45.1% of women

Nearly half have experienced contact sexual violence during their lifetime.

16.9% of men

More than 1 in 6 have experienced contact sexual violence during their lifetime.

21.0% of women and 3.2% of men

More than 1 in 5 women and 1 in 31 men have experienced completed or attempted rape.

5.5% of women and 2.1% of men

About 1 in 18 women and 1 in 48 men experienced contact sexual violence in the 12 months before the survey.

28.2% of women and 15.4% of men

More than 1 in 4 women and about 1 in 6 men have experienced technology-facilitated sexual violence.

IMPACT AND PREVENTION

Sexual violence can affect physical and mental health

Possible consequences include injury, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy, depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, post-traumatic stress, and chronic health problems. Survivors may also experience disruptions to work, school, relationships, and financial stability.

Sexual violence can be prevented

Effective prevention includes promoting social norms that protect against violence, teaching relationship and consent skills, creating protective environments, strengthening economic supports, and supporting survivors. Prevention requires action across individuals, relationships, communities, and systems.

NEED SUPPORT?

National Sexual Assault Hotline:
Call 800-656-HOPE (4673) Text HOPE to 64673 Chat at hotline.rainn.org

SOURCES

CDC, NISVS 2023/2024 Sexual Violence Data Brief (2025): cdc.gov/nisvs/media/pdfs/sexualviolence-brief.pdf

CDC, About Sexual Violence: cdc.gov/sexual-violence/about • RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline: rainn.org/help-and-healing/hotline/