

# Sexual Violence

Division of Injury and  
Violence Prevention

## BRFSS Fact Sheet 2005-2006

Sexual violence is a serious social problem that affects the lives of many men, women and children. Sexual violence and assault can affect the physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing of victims, and is associated with a number of health consequences including unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, gynecological complications, depression, post traumatic stress disorder and suicidal ideation and behavior (1).

Most sexual assaults are not reported to authorities and most victims do not seek services (2). As a result, statistics on the prevalence and incidence of sexual victimization are underestimated. To help provide a more reliable estimate, several nationwide, representative telephone surveys have been conducted. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), an on-going telephone health survey system, tracks health conditions and risk behaviors of adults in the United States. In 2005 and 2006, the Virginia BRFSS survey included questions on Sexual Violence. This fact sheet uses the data from 2005 and 2006 to estimate the extent of sexual violence among Virginian adults 18 and older.

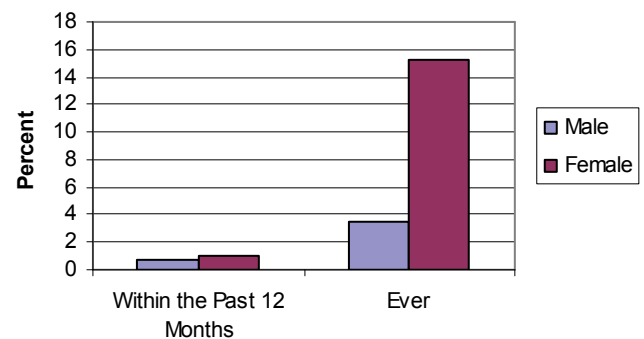
### Lifetime Prevalence of Rape

- I in 10 Virginian adults reported being the victim of rape or attempted rape at some point during their lifetime.
- The lifetime prevalence of rape or attempted rape was over four times higher among women (15%) than men (3.5%). Among women, prevalence was higher among whites (16.5%) than other (16%), Hispanics (13%), or blacks (10%).

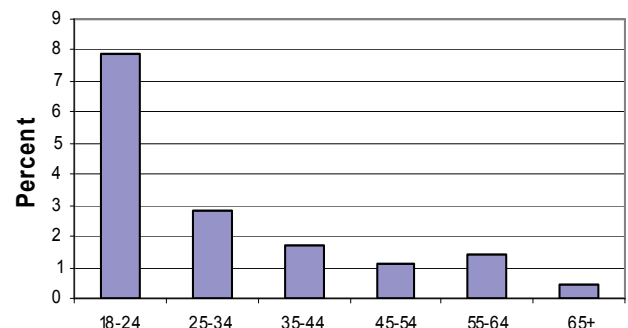
### 12 Month Incidence of Sexual Violence

- 2.4% of adults reported being the victim of sexual violence (includes rape, attempted rape, and sexual touching/situations) in the past 12 months.
- The prevalence of sexual violence was almost equal among men and women at just over 2%.
- The incidence of sexual violence decreased with increasing age, from 8% among 18-24 year olds to 0.4% among those aged 65 and older.
- 1% of adults reported being the victim of rape or attempted rape during the past 12 months.
- 2% of adults reported being exposed to unwanted sexual situations that did not involve physical touching (i.e. flashing, peeping, sexual harassment). During the same period, 1% reported that sexual touching occurred without their consent.

Prevalence of Rape or Attempted Rape in  
Virginia, 2005-2006



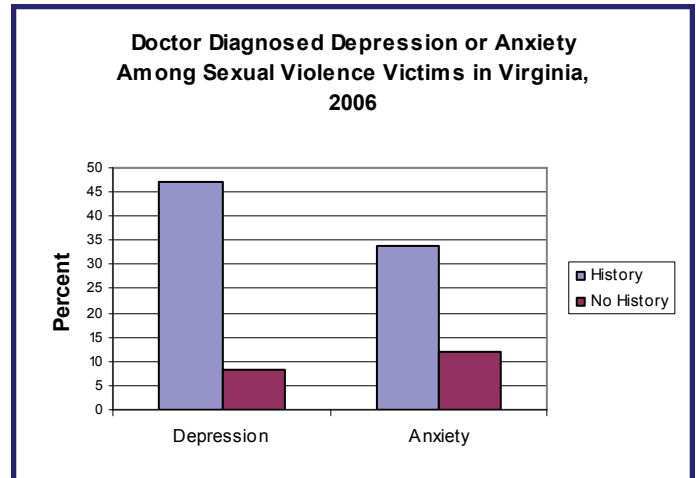
12 Month Incidence of Sexual Violence by Age  
Group, Virginia 2005-2006



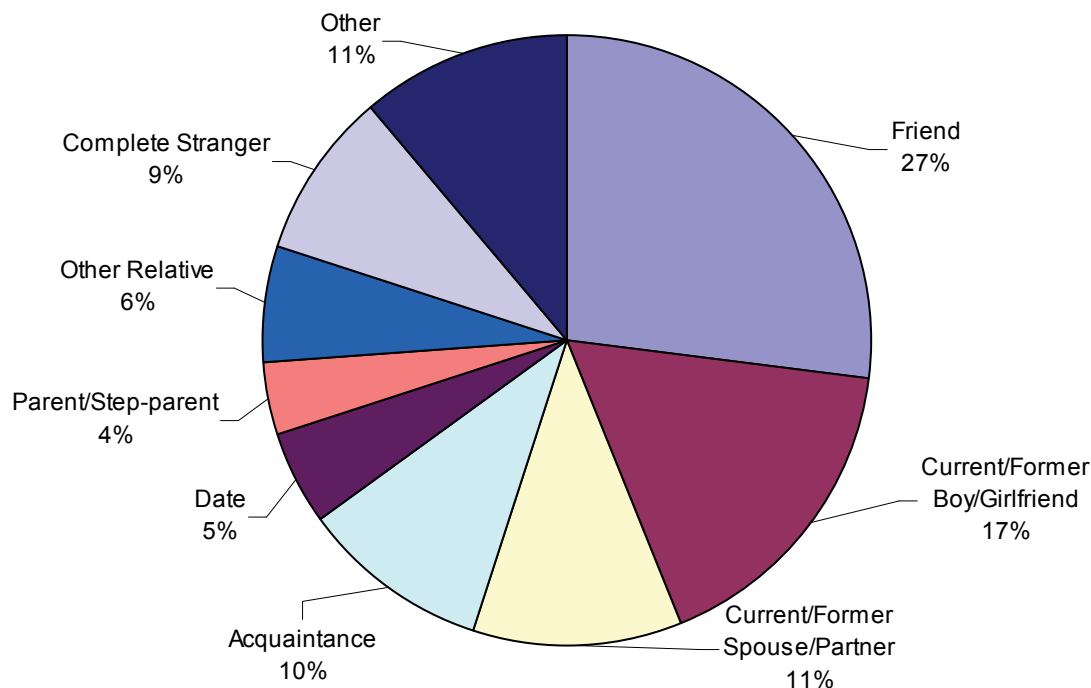
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- 87% of victims reported that their perpetrator was male.
- In 2006, Virginians with a lifetime history of rape or attempted rape were more likely to report a doctor diagnosis of depression or anxiety (47% and 34% respectively) than those with no history of rape (12% and 8.5%). *(The question relating to depression/anxiety diagnosis was not included in the 2005 BRFSS. As a result, only 2006 sexual violence data was used in the analysis related to depression/anxiety.)*



**Relationship of Perpetrator to Sexual Violence Victim, Virginia 2005-2006**



### Resources

Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance  
[www.vsdvalliance.org](http://www.vsdvalliance.org)

The RAINN Network  
[www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)

National Sexual Violence Resource Center  
[www.nsvrc.org](http://www.nsvrc.org)



### References:

1. Krug EG et al., eds. World report on violence and health. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2002.
2. Criminal Victimization, 2005. National Crime Victimization Survey. U.S. Department of Justice. [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/)

Division of Injury and Violence Prevention  
Virginia Department of Health  
1-800-732-8333  
[www.vahealth.org/civp](http://www.vahealth.org/civp)