

Sexual Violence

Virginia BRFSS Fact Sheet 2005-2007

Virginia Department of Health

Division of Injury and Violence Prevention

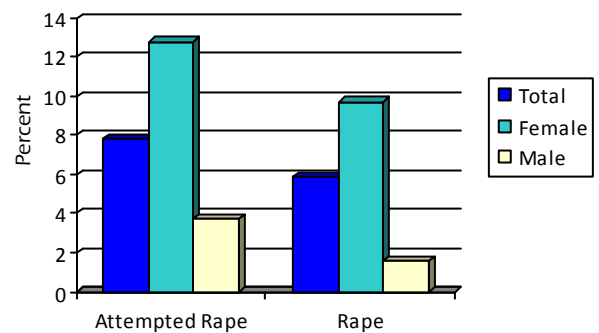
Sexual violence is a serious social problem that affects the lives of many men, women and children. Sexual violence and assault can affect the physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing of victims, and is associated with a number of health consequences including unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, gynecological complications, depression, post traumatic stress disorder and suicidal ideation and behavior¹.

Most sexual assaults are not reported to authorities and most victims do not seek services². 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. From 2005 to 2007 the Virginia BRFSS survey included questions on sexual violence. This fact sheet uses data from 2005 thru 2007 to estimate the extent of sexual violence among Virginian adults 18 and older.

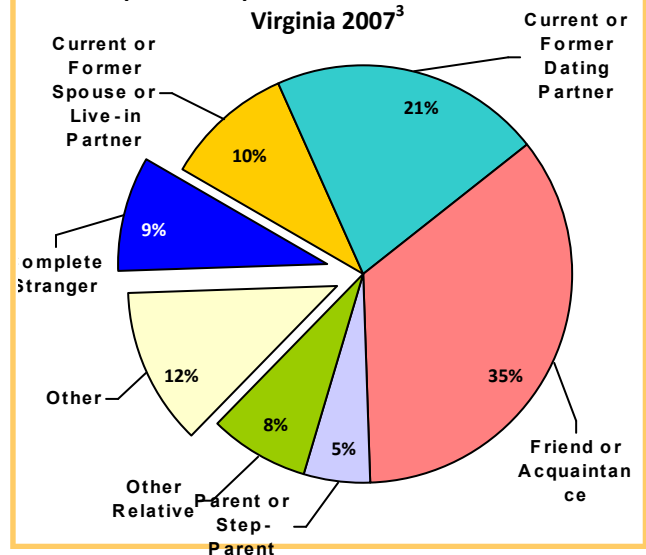
Lifetime Prevalence of Rape

- Approximately 1 in 10 (10.4%) Virginian adults reported experiencing attempted rape or rape at some point in their lifetime.
 - * The prevalence of sexual violence was almost four times higher among women (16.1%) than men (4.5%).
- Virginians reported lifetime prevalence of rape 5.9% and attempted rape 7.8%.
 - * Females (9.7%) were 6 times as likely as men (1.6%) to report rape; females (12.8%) were 3 times as likely as men (3.7%) to report attempted rape.
- In 2007, 79% of reported perpetrators of sexual violence were a known person to the victim.
- Of Virginian adults that reported either attempted rape or completed rape, 85% of the perpetrators were male.
- 5.3% of adults reported experiencing unwanted sex by a current or former intimate partner.
 - * Reports of unwanted sex were almost eight times higher among women (9.2%) than men (1.2%).
- The lifetime prevalence of sexual violence was highest among white people (22.6%) compared to black (12.9%), Hispanic (17%) or other (16.7%).

Lifetime Incidence of Attempted Rape and Rape



Reported Perpetrators of Sexual Violence, Virginia 2007³

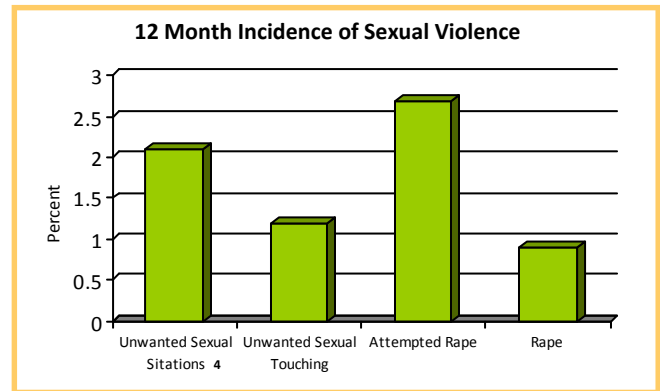


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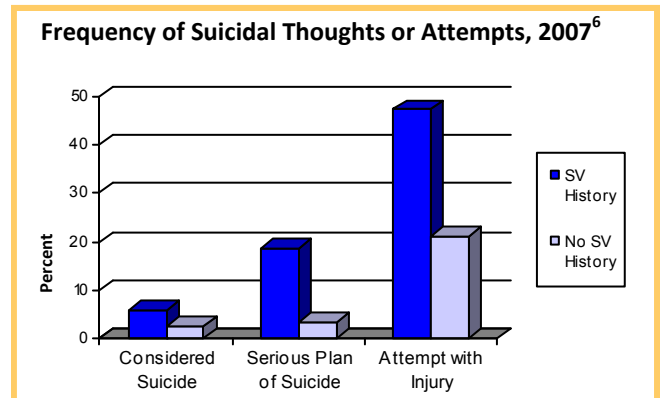
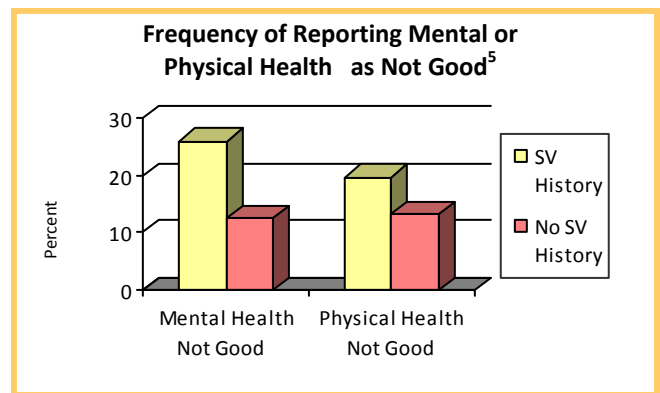
12 Month Incidence of Sexual Violence

- From 2005 to 2007, 5.2% of adults reported incidents of sexual violence (including rape, attempted rape, and unwanted sexual touching or situations⁴) over the past twelve months.
- 2.6 % of Virginians reported attempted rape in the last twelve months. Attempted rape was reported as frequently by men as by women.
- In the last twelve months, rape was reported with less than 1% of Virginians.
 - * Of these adults, males (.5%) were almost half as likely to disclose rape as females (.9%).



Physical and Mental Health Problems Associated with Sexual Violence

- Virginians with a lifetime history of sexual violence were twice as likely to also be smokers (33.3%) when compared to those without a history of sexual violence (17.8%).
- Virginians with a lifetime history of sexual violence were twice as likely to report that their mental health was not good compared to those without a history of sexual violence.⁵
- Those with a lifetime history of sexual violence were also more likely to report that their physical health was not good compared to those without a history of sexual violence.⁵
- Those with a lifetime history of sexual violence were more likely to report suicidal thoughts or attempts than those without a history of sexual violence.



Resources

Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance
www.vsdvalliance.org

The RAINN Network
www.rainn.org

National Sexual Violence Resource Center
www.nsvrc.org



Virginia Department of Health
 Division of Injury and Violence Prevention
 1-800-732-8333
www.vahealth.org/injury

¹ Krug EG et al., eds. World report on violence and health. World Health Organization, 2002.

² Criminal Victimization, 2005. National Crime Victimization Survey. U.S. Department of Justice. www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/

³ This data is from 2007 only because the format of the question on the survey was changed from previous years.

⁴ Includes flashing, peeping, sexual harassment or being made to view sexually explicit materials.

⁵ Physical and mental health status defined as how the respondent felt for six or more days of the previous 30.

⁶ This data is from 2007 only because data from previous surveys was not available.