

# Fact Sheet: Native American Victimization

Executive Director: Mary M. Breaux Ph.D.

Crime Victims' Institute

College of Criminal Justice | Sam Houston State University



## Native American Victimization: The Facts

*Alyssa Linares, B.S.  
Taylor D. Robinson, M.S.*

### Who is Included Under the Umbrella Term of Native American?

The term Native American has expanded to include American Indians, Alaska Natives, and, in some cases, Native Hawaiians and American Samoans. Generally, an American Indian is an individual who has a percentage of Indian blood and is recognized by a tribe, village, and/or the United States.<sup>1</sup>



<https://www.greenpeace.org/usa/justice-for-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-will-move-us-closer-to-climate-justice/>

### Have you Heard?

- ◇ More than 80% of American Indian and Alaska Native adults have experienced violence in their lifetime. This violence is more likely to be perpetrated by an interracial perpetrator than an intraracial person<sup>2</sup>.
- ◇ Approximately 56% of women and 28% of men have experienced sexual violence<sup>2</sup>.
- ◇ About 49% of women and 19% of men report being stalked<sup>2</sup>.
- ◇ In 2018, 22.1 Native American people per 100,000 committed suicide. This is the highest rate of suicide of any racial category<sup>3</sup>.
- ◇ Approximately 56% of women and 43% of men have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner<sup>2</sup>.
- ◇ Life victimization rates for American Indians and Alaska Natives are about 1.2 times as high as Whites<sup>2</sup>.
- ◇ Women experienced the second highest rate of homicide (4.3 per 100,000). Fifty-five percent of homicides were related to intimate partner violence<sup>4</sup>.
- ◇ There were 5,712 reported cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. This is very likely to be an undercount due to limited resources and data collection<sup>5</sup>.

### Barriers to Seeking Help

Common barriers to seeking help with all survivors are financial

and resource (transportation, communication device, etc.) restraint, intimidation and fear, isolation, and loss of custody of children. Due to cultural differences, there may be certain reasons that survivors do not seek help. These factors should be taken into consideration and avoid cultural differences when possible to better serve this community.

- ◇ Negative views of seeking help from outside of the family or traditional Native American legal systems<sup>6</sup>
- ◇ Limited access to criminal justice response<sup>6</sup>
- ◇ Concerns over confidentiality in a small community<sup>6</sup>
- ◇ Language barriers<sup>6</sup>
- ◇ Lack of sufficient victim services in tribal communities<sup>6</sup>

### Provide Culturally Competent Victim Assistance

Providing culturally sensitive assistance can help survivors feel more comfortable in seeking help. To accomplish this, be aware of, and respect, cultural differences. Members of local tribes or other culturally competent agencies can be beneficial resources to seek advice and consultation. Most importantly, listen to the survivor about their experience and what would best help them<sup>6</sup>.

### Resources

- ◇ StrongHearts Native Helpline (1-844-762-8486)  
<https://www.strongheartshelpline.org/>
- ◇ Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian Country Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-799-7233)  
<https://www.bia.gov/bia/ois/dhs/child-and-adult-protective-services>
- ◇ Suicide Prevention Resource Center (1-800-273-8255)  
<http://www.sprc.org/settings/aian>
- ◇ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (1-800-662-4357)  
<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>
- ◇ Tribal Resource Tool  
<https://tribalresourcetool.org/map/>

### References

- 1 Native American Rights Fund. (n.d.). *Answers to frequently asked questions about native peoples*. <https://www.narf.org/frequently-asked-questions/>
- 2 National Institute of Justice. (2016). *Five things about violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and men*. <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/five-things-about-violence-against-american-indian-and-alaska-native-women-and-men>
- 3 Suicide Prevention Resource Center. (2020). *Racial and ethnic disparities*. <http://www.sprc.org/scope/racial-ethnic-disparities>
- 4 Petrosky, E., Blair, J. M., Betz, C. J., Fowler, K. A., Jack, S. P. D., & Lyons, B. H. (2017). *Racial and ethnic differences in homicides of adult women and the role of intimate partner violence—United States, 2003–2014*. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6628a1.htm>
- 5 Lucchesi, A. & Echo-Hawk, A. (2018). *Missing and murdered indigenous women & girls: A snapshot of data from 71 urban cities in the United States*. <http://www.uhi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Missing-and-Murdered-Indigenous-Women-and-Girls-Report.pdf>
- 6 Office of Victims of Crime. (n.d.). *VAT online-specific considerations—American Indian and Alaska Native populations*. <https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/tribal/overview>

**Sam Houston**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM™