

Fact Sheet: Domestic Violence and Cybervictimization

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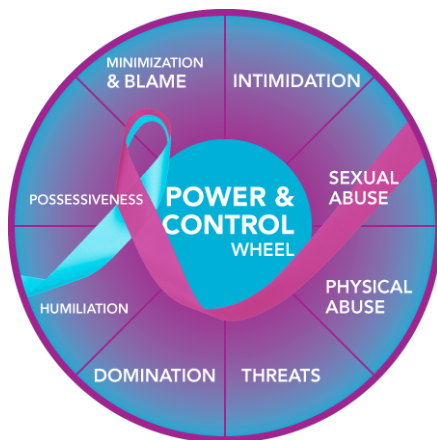


Domestic Violence and Cybervictimization: The Facts

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What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence, or intimate partner violence, is deliberate violent behavior perpetrated by an intimate partner against another. The violent behavior is often abusive and a part of a pattern to maintain power and control over a partner and can include acts of verbal abuse, physical attacks, sexual assault, stalking, and other abusive behavior. The frequency and severity of this crime varies¹.



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Have you Heard?

- ◇ Approximately 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men experience some form of domestic violence during their lifetime².
- ◇ Over 81 million women and men experience some form of psychological abuse by an intimate partner in their lifetime².
- ◇ About 20% of women and 14% of men report experiencing severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime².
- ◇ Approximately 20% of women and 8.3% of men experience sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime².
- ◇ 1 in 10 women and 1 in 50 men report being stalked by an intimate partner².

What are the Consequences?

Domestic or intimate partner violence is a concerning public health issue with consequences both individual and societal. Survivors of domestic violence can experience physical injuries, which can lead to lifetime financial costs such as medical services and loss of work productivity³. Additionally, a U.S. crime report indicated that 16% of homicide victims are killed by a current or former intimate partner with ethnic minorities disproportionately affected⁴.

There are negative health outcomes associated with domestic violence, such as mental health issues (e.g., depression and PTSD) and physical health issues (e.g., chronic heart, digestive, and reproductive conditions)⁵. Survivors of domestic violence are at an increased risk for engaging in risky health behavior, such as alcohol and substance abuse⁶.

What is Cyber Abuse and Cyber Intimate Partner Abuse?

Domestic or intimate partner violence also occurs online. Cyber abuse is abuse perpetrated online within adolescent relationships, and cyber domestic or intimate partner abuse relates to adult relationships⁷. Additionally, types of online domestic violence include cyberstalking, image-based sexual abuse or revenge pornography, cybersextortion, identity theft or cyberfraud, and child pornography. This cybervictimization includes intrusive behavior involving coercive control by abusers on survivors to demand compliance with orders⁸.

Have you Heard?

- ◇ Cyber intimate partner abuse is usually not visible to outsiders of a relationship, but prevalent in the intimate relationship⁹.
- ◇ Cybervictimization can be endless due to ease of use of the Internet from any geographical location¹⁰.
- ◇ Cyber intimate partner abuse is underreported given its complexity¹¹.
- ◇ Approximately, 10 to 20% of women and men experience some form of cybervictimization¹²(e.g., stalking).

What are the Consequences?

Consequences of cybervictimization include negative mental health outcomes, such as depression, anxiety, PTSD^{13,14}. Additionally, consequences include fear of using technology, employment loss due to implications from revenge pornography, identity theft via an intimate partner leading to financial loss and credit damage. These consequences collectively can lead to self-harm behaviors, such as alcohol and substance abuse^{15,16} and even suicide.



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What can you do if you're experiencing domestic violence and/or cyber intimate partner abuse?

- ◇ Call a domestic violence agency or law enforcement
- ◇ Document your experience covertly (e.g., email yourself or keep documentation in separate, private area)
- ◇ Confide (if comfortable) to friend or family member to get help
- ◇ Safety plan for possible departure

How Can You Help Survivors?

- ◇ Believe, validate, and empower survivor experiences
- ◇ Offer support (if wanted) by calling a domestic violence agency, hotline, or law enforcement.
- ◇ Educate yourself on resources to assist others

Resources

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Texas

- ◇ Houston Area Women’s Center (HAWC)—www.hawc.org (713-528-2121)
- ◇ Montgomery County Women’s Center—www.mcwctx.org (936-441-7273)
- ◇ Bexar County Family Justice Center—www.bcfjc.org (210-631-0100)

- ◇ Mosaic Family Services—www.mosaicservices.org (214-823-4434)
- ◇ Center Against Sexual & Family Violence—www.casfv.org (915-593-7300)
- ◇ Texas Advocacy Project—www.texasadvocacyproject.org (800-374-4673)

National

- ◇ National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV)—www.ncadv.org
- ◇ National Domestic Violence Hotline—www.ndvh.org (1-800-799-7233)
- ◇ National Resource Center on Domestic Violence—www.nrcdv.org & www.vawnet.org (1-800-537-2238)
- ◇ Cyber Civil Rights Initiative—www.cybercivilrights.org (844-878-2274)
- ◇ National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma, and Mental Health—www.nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org (312-726-7020)

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