Stop Abusive and Violent Environments

Fact Sheet:

Intimate Partner Violence in the African-American Community

1. One Department of Justice study of 8 urban counties found African-American men and women were almost equally likely to be victims of intimate partner homicide: 47% of victims were male and 53% female.¹

2. Studies show Black men and women engage in partner violence at similar rates:

- African-American college students were surveyed regarding partner violence. Findings reveal that 41% of men and 33% of women were physically abused by a dating partner during the previous year.²

- A survey of 865 white and black college students assessed the initiation of violence in their dating experience. Results indicated that "when one partner could be said to be the usual initiator of violence, that partner was most often the woman. This finding was the same for both black and white respondents."³

- A sample of 1,440 couples (358 Black, 527 Hispanic, 65 white) was obtained from the 1995 National Alcohol Survey. Black men were more aggressive than Black women. Alcohol-related problems were a predictor of intimate partner violence in Black couples.⁴

- One analysis compared African Americans interviewed in a 1975 national survey with African Americans from a 1985 national survey. While overall husband-on-wife violence remained stable, wife-on-husband violence increased 33% over the 10-year time period. For severe violence, husband-on-wife aggression decreased by 43%, while wife-on-husband assaults increased by 42%:⁵

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Husbands on Wives</th>
<th>Wives on Husbands</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Violence</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Severe Violence</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1985:</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Violence</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe Violence</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
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3. When income levels are controlled for, racial differences in interpersonal violence are greatly reduced.⁶

4. Male victims of domestic violence are far less likely to view the assault as a crime or to call for police assistance, distorting the results of crime surveys.⁷

5. Despite similar levels of intimate partner victimization by men and women, some reports provide a one-sided portrayal of the problem.⁸,⁹,¹⁰
References


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