

The Nature and Extent of Intimate Partner Violence

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Overview

1. Definitional considerations
2. Statistics on intimate partner violence nationally and locally
3. Types of victimizations, victims, and perpetrators
4. Health and societal consequences of intimate partner violence
5. New response and directions in intimate partner violence – criminal justice and beyond

Violent Relationships: Who is Included?

- Tennessee law considers domestic assault between:
 - Current/former spouses
 - Living/formerly living together
 - Dating/sexual relationship
 - Related/formerly related by marriage
 - Children of parents in the above categories

Why Focus on IPV? Some Reasons

- Sexual assault and IPV the rare forms of victimization “gendered” towards women*
- Less studied historically, considered distinct form of violence by the system – why?
- One of the most consistent patterns in recidivism
- DV/IPV a predictor of ALL violent outcomes- including homicide

DV and IPV Statistics by Demographics

DV-Specific

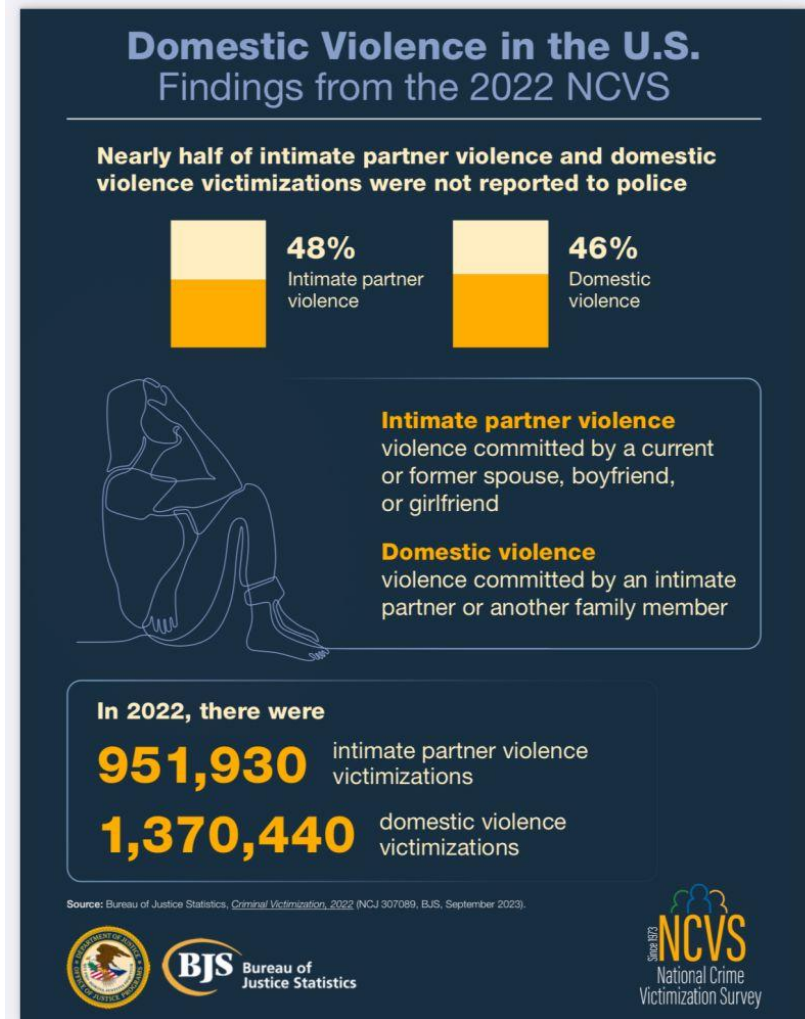
- Gender
 - Female more likely to be victim
 - Male more likely to be perpetrator
- Age
 - Starts young, but affects all ages
- Race/Ethnicity
 - Violence affects all races/ethnicities
 - POC more likely to report, but some debate
- Income
 - Violent crime disproportionately affects impoverished populations
- Prior Violence
 - Domestic violence tends to repeat
 - Domestic violence also a predictor for other forms of violence*

General Violence

- Gender
 - Male more likely to be victim
 - Male more likely to be perpetrator
- Age
 - Young people more likely to perpetrate and be victims of violent crime
- Race/Ethnicity
 - Violence affects all races/ethnicities, but depends on data source
 - Some differences across types of crime; blacks more likely to be affected by serious violence
- Income
 - Victims reporting disproportionately impoverished
- Prior Violence
 - Best predictor of future violence is past violence!

Domestic Violence Statistics

- Preliminary data from the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) show that in 2022 there were 16,232 reported domestic violence offenses in all of Shelby County, with 14,158 occurring in the city of Memphis.
- Domestic violence offenses are also becoming more violent; a larger majority of reported domestic violence aggravated assaults now involve firearms.



Domestic Violence by Relationships

- Domestic violence in the context of separation or divorce
 - Abuse continues during AND after separation: most dangerous time to leave
- Research shows high danger for women recently separated from partner, with strangulation and jealous/controlling behavior other risk factors for high danger (Messing et al., 2015)
 - Men and women roughly at equal risk for intimate partner homicide victimization but kill under different circumstances – men kill women who leave them!
 - Intimate femicides often preceded by female-initiated separations; women more likely to kill in self-defense, report history of abuse and violence immediately prior to committing the homicide
 - In terms of separation, can get especially messy when negotiating custody agreements, and dealing with court orders
 - Most commonly, joint custody ordered, which assumes that parents will cooperate in the best interests of the children



Local Concerns

- Memphis, Tennessee continues to be one of the few cities with consistently high violent crime, including homicide (Planty, Richardson, Langston, & Strom, 2019)
- Domestic violence one of the most serious problems facing Memphis/Shelby County.
 - Number one police call in Memphis and surrounding suburbs
- Domestic violence linked to a host of other problems, including further violence
 - Found that nearly 50% of 2015 homicide cases had offender or victim involved in a domestic violence incident in the past year (Iratzoqui & McCutcheon, 2018)
- Consequently, there are a number of domestic violence victims who are at great need for victims services within Shelby County
 - Domestic violence is one of the most underreported crimes (Truman & Morgan, 2016) so it is crucial to keep the victims we have participating in the system

Impact on Population

- Marginalized populations across factors of **gender, race and ethnicity, and sexuality** often report additional issues seeking out assistance from the social and criminal justice systems specifically, including experiences of discrimination related to language barriers, real or perceived concerns over immigration and legal status, prejudice, and homophobia, as well as historical and current systemic and political issues tied to poverty and deprivation compounding these especially heinous forms of victimization.
- 2021 Census data reported roughly two-thirds of the Memphis population identifying as Black/African American, and the majority of the population as female.
- Memphis has an overall poverty rate of 22.6%, compared to 12.5% nationally (Delavega & Blumenthal, 2024)
- Poverty is also endemic in Memphis, with close to half of its census tracts reporting persistent poverty, particularly among our non-White populations.
 - Intersecting issues of housing access, social assistance, food insecurity, unemployment

Types of Victimizations

- What we “think of” as abuse:
 - Physical
 - Sexual
 - Emotional

- But also:
 - Financial
 - Psychological

Perpetrators of IPV

- *Mostly* men against women
- Tend to be younger, violence between younger couples
- Prior relationship with victim
- Tend to use guns (especially in homicide)
- Overlap: domestic violence victims and abusers may be the same people in different or the same incidents

New Forms of IPV

- Control of **reproductive health**
 - Access to and use of birth control
 - Exposure to sexually transmitted diseases
 - Pregnancy and child-bearing, abortion ban
- Verbal abuse: part of a larger problem but **rarely criminalized**
- Stalking
 - Victims most often the current or **former** spouses or intimate partners of their stalkers
 - High correlation between stalking, verbal, and physical abuse in intimate relationships: stalking preceded by physical and often sexual violence
 - Maintain theme for control, reestablish relationship
 - Stalking may have begun while relationship was ongoing
- Strangulation **lethality**
 - Highly gendered form of domestic violence
 - Majority of DV victims are strangled at some point in their relationship, majority of perpetrators are men

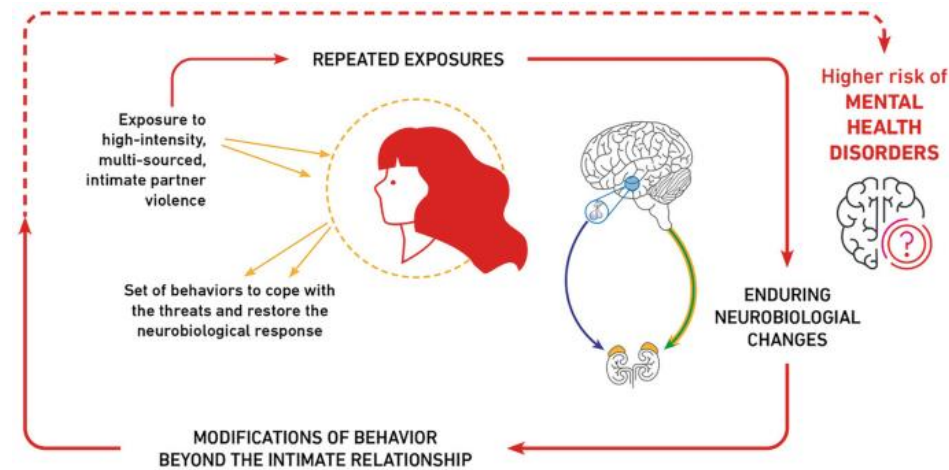
DOCUMENT EVERY STALKING INCIDENT.

STALKING INCIDENT AND BEHAVIOR LOG **SPARC**

Date	Time	Description of Incident	Location of Incident (physical location, technology used, online platform)	Witness Name(s) (last, first, middle and phone number)	Evidence Attached? (photos, video, screenshots, texts, etc.)	Report Made To (name, officer's badge or identification #)
1/6/24	12-2 AM	Multiple phone calls	Home/cell phone	None	Yes, screenshot of missed calls	Officer Dexter, Leno County PD, #2909
1/6/24	6 PM	Handwritten note left on my front door	Home/Front door	Neighbor, info attached	Kept the note	Officer Travis, Leno County PD, #1329
1/7/24	10 AM	Showed up, waited at my car	Parking lot, Ginger's Local Grocery	Security Guard, info attached	No	Ginger's Security Guard, info attached
1/10/24	9 AM	Locked out of my e-mail account	Google/GMAIL, I was home	No	Took screenshot but can't prove who did it	Didn't report
1/11/24	7:30 PM	Got several angry texts asking why I won't call	Messages via WhatsApp, was still at Harper's Bar w/ friend	My friend Emma said - info attached	Yes, screenshots of messages and saved to phone	Showed boss at Harper's Bar
1/13/24	10:00PM	Parked outside my apartment	Home	Not sure (probably a friend, think person used car I was guest though)	Staged at motel, saved receipt	Officer Dexter, Leno County PD, #2909
1/13/24	11:00PM	Pictures of me on Pornhub, NOT consensual!!!	Pornhub website, I was at motel when I saw it to me	Friend sent it to me	I emailed the website people to have it taken down, have email	Officer Dexter, Leno County PD, #2909
1/14/24	morning	Messages on WhatsApp	WhatsApp	No	Screenshots	Didn't report

Health Consequences

- Strangulation, to the point of losing consciousness, can cause mild or traumatic brain injury
 - One of the first indicators for an IPV-related traumatic brain injury is the presence of a form of violence that targeted the victim's head or neck
 - May occur immediately following the injury or as secondary events apparent in the hours or days following injury
- Severe injuries affecting receipt of medical treatment (bruises, knife/gunshot wounds, broken bones, TBI)
 - Insurance costs affect everyone!
- Many of the outcomes evident in survivors of IPV, which have been traditionally linked to abuse severity or PTSD, may be understood as occurring because of a physiological disruption to the brain and/or the chronic stress associated with IPV (Kwako et al., 2011)



Social Reactions to IPV

- Strained relationships with health providers and employers (job security)
- Deterioration of social networks
- Homelessness/restrictions on housing



Societal Consequences

- How does society react to IPV?
 - Idea that people “get what they deserve”
 - Victims who are seen as contributing to their own victimization in some way deserve less sympathy
- Economic effects
 - Cost of domestic violence exceeds \$8 billion a year
 - Victims lose a total of 8 million days of paid work each year

ABUSE APOLOGIST BINGO

"Well how are you defining abuse?"	"He feels awful about it, hasn't he suffered enough?"	"I don't know what to believe"	"You're being over dramatic & making too much of it"	"take the high road" "be the bigger person" "holding onto anger is like holding onto hot coal"
"He's not that kind of person"	"It's not his fault. He's struggling too"	"Well he said..." "Consider his side of things"	"You're ruining his life!"	"He's not like that anymore."
"It's not like it was REAL abuse, though"	"I understand you're hurt by what he did, but..."	FREE "I've never seen that side of him"	"You're lying for attention!"	"He made a mistake. What's done is done. Let it go."
"So why didn't you bring this up sooner, then?"	"You should have..."	"misunderstanding"	"You make it harder for REAL victims"	"Forgive him. Not because he deserves it but because he needs it/ because it will help you heal"
"*Asks for details so they can judge your story*"	"There's two sides to every story. You just remember things differently."	"I'm not taking sides."	"false rape claims"	"I think you were just toxic for each other"

Reconciling New Responses

- Incorporate interdisciplinary partners in responding to IPV
 - Law enforcement
 - Courts
 - Social services
 - Healthcare
 - *Who else?*
- Addressing unique needs
 - Victims with physical, mental disabilities
 - Physical and medical care for trans victims
 - Healthcare providers responding to consequence of reproductive coercion
 - Increased burden of shelter, advocacy services to victims with large families



Importance of Academic-Practitioner Partnerships

- For both sides, the partnership can be beneficial – for practitioners, the creation of strong and meaningful partnerships with academics is essential for the creation of “best practices”, and for academics, the opportunity to direct program development and implementation can be beneficial for later program evaluation.
- In addition, interdisciplinary projects across multiple disciplines can incorporate multiple perspectives, particularly when addressing the complex nature of violence
- The University of Memphis, a major research institution, has a strong commitment to community engagement and social impact.
 - Centrally located within the city

Memphis Partners

- Local law enforcement (Memphis Police Department, Shelby County Sheriff, suburban police agencies)
- City and county government
- Victim service agencies
- Shelby County District Attorney's Office
- Juvenile Court
- Outside entities:
 - Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, Regional One
 - 901 Bloc
 - Boys and Girls Club of Greater Memphis
- University faculty

Specific Needs for Memphis Victims

Contact with the criminal justice system

- Police response
- Police interaction
- Court experiences
- Systemic dissatisfaction

Interactions with social service agencies

- Negative staff interactions
- Lack of information
- Ease of contact with staff
- Overall provider experiences

Expectation for outcomes

- No assistance follow-through
- A lack of resources or miscommunication of program provisions
- Reliance on others, no providers
- Treatment by system and providers
- Lack of resolution
- Suggestions for improvement