



# The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey

## 2010 Findings on Victimization by Sexual Orientation

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# **The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS):**

## **2010 Findings on Victimization by Sexual Orientation**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Little is known about the national prevalence of sexual violence, stalking, and intimate partner violence among gay, lesbian, and bisexual women and men in the United States. Information at a national level focusing on these types of interpersonal violence based on the sexual orientation of U.S. adults has not been previously available. The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) is an ongoing, nationally representative survey that collects information about experiences of sexual violence and stalking by any perpetrator and intimate partner violence among English and/or Spanish-speaking women and men aged 18 years or older in the United States. This report presents information based on respondents' self-reported sexual orientation and their lifetime victimization experiences of sexual violence, stalking, and violence by an intimate partner. The findings in this report are for 2010, the first year of NISVS data collection, and are based on complete interviews. Complete interviews were obtained from 16,507 adults (9,086 women and 7,421 men). Prevalence estimates for some types of violence for particular groups were too small to produce reliable estimates and, therefore, are not reported.

## Key Findings

### Overall

- Bisexual women had significantly higher lifetime prevalence of rape and sexual violence other than rape by *any perpetrator* when compared to both lesbian and heterosexual women.
- Bisexual women had significantly higher lifetime prevalence of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by *an intimate partner* when compared to both lesbian and heterosexual women.
- Lesbian women and gay men reported levels of intimate partner violence and sexual violence equal to or higher than those of heterosexuals.

### Sexual Violence by Any Perpetrator

- The lifetime prevalence of rape by any perpetrator was:

#### For women:

- Lesbian – 13.1%
- Bisexual – 46.1%
- Heterosexual – 17.4%

#### For men:

- Gay – numbers too small to estimate
- Bisexual – numbers too small to estimate
- Heterosexual – 0.7%

- The lifetime prevalence of sexual violence other than rape (including being made to penetrate, sexual coercion, unwanted sexual contact, and non-contact unwanted sexual experiences) by any perpetrator was:

#### For women:

- Lesbian – 46.4%
- Bisexual – 74.9%
- Heterosexual – 43.3%

#### For men:

- Gay – 40.2%
- Bisexual – 47.4%
- Heterosexual – 20.8%

### Sex of Perpetrator among Rape Victims

- Most bisexual and heterosexual women (98.3% and 99.1%, respectively) who experienced rape in their lifetime reported having only male perpetrators. Estimates for sex of perpetrator of rape for other groups (lesbian women, gay and bisexual men) were based upon numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and, therefore, are not reportable.

### Sex of Perpetrator among Victims of Sexual Violence Other than Rape

- The majority of lesbian, bisexual, and heterosexual women (85.2%, 87.5%, and 94.7%, respectively) who experienced sexual violence other than rape in their lifetime reported having only male perpetrators.
- 78.6% of gay men and 65.8% of bisexual men who experienced sexual violence other than rape in their lifetime reported having only male perpetrators.
- 28.6% of heterosexual men who experienced sexual violence other than rape in their lifetime reported having only male perpetrators,



while 54.8% reported only female perpetrators, and 16.6% reported both male and female perpetrators.

### Stalking Victimization by Any Perpetrator

- 1 in 3 bisexual women (36.6%) and 1 in 6 heterosexual women (15.5%) have experienced stalking victimization at some point during their lifetime.
- Estimates of stalking for other groups (lesbian women, gay and bisexual men) were based upon numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and, therefore, are not reported.
- Estimates of sex of perpetrator of stalking for lesbian and bisexual women and gay and bisexual men were based upon numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and, therefore, are not reported.

### Violence by an Intimate Partner

- The lifetime prevalence of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner was:

#### For women:

- Lesbian – 43.8%
- Bisexual – 61.1%
- Heterosexual – 35.0%

#### For men:

- Gay – 26.0%
- Bisexual – 37.3%
- Heterosexual – 29.0%

- The lifetime prevalence of severe physical violence by an intimate partner (e.g., hit with fist or something hard, slammed against something, or beaten) was:

#### For women:

- Lesbian – 29.4%
- Bisexual – 49.3%
- Heterosexual – 23.6%

#### For men:

- Gay – 16.4%
- Bisexual – numbers too small to report
- Heterosexual – 13.9%

### Sex of Perpetrator of Intimate Partner Violence

- Most bisexual and heterosexual women (89.5% and 98.7%, respectively) reported having only male perpetrators of intimate partner violence. Two-thirds of lesbian women (67.4%) reported having only female perpetrators of intimate partner violence.
- The majority of bisexual men (78.5%) and most heterosexual men (99.5%) reported having only female perpetrators of intimate partner violence. Most gay men (90.7%) reported having only male perpetrators of intimate partner violence.

### Impact of Intimate Partner Violence

- More than half of bisexual women (57.4%), a third of lesbian women (33.5%), and more than a fourth of heterosexual women (28.2%) who experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime reported at least one negative impact (e.g., missed at least one day of school or work, were fearful, were concerned for their safety, experienced at least one post-traumatic stress disorder symptom).
- Estimates of negative impact of intimate partner violence for gay and bisexual men were based upon numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and, therefore, are not reported.

This report highlights the lifetime prevalence of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking victimization for U.S. women and men by self-reported sexual orientation. Individuals who self-identified as lesbian, gay, and bisexual reported rates of violence that were equal to or higher than those reported by self-identified heterosexuals. The goal of public health is to prevent violence from occurring in the first place. A comprehensive violence prevention plan that includes LGB individuals will assist in furthering a comprehensive understanding of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking.







## Background and Methods

Little is known about the national prevalence of intimate partner violence (IPV), sexual violence, and stalking among lesbian, gay, and bisexual women and men in the United States. Smaller-scale studies have examined these types of violence among individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, but the use of non-representative samples has produced inconsistent findings in terms of victimization rates among each group (Balsam, 2001; Burke et al., 2002; National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2002).

Information at a national level on experiences of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking victimization among U.S. adults by sexual orientation has not been available previously. However, data from seven states and six cities participating in Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System from 2001-2009 was used to assess violence-related health risk behaviors among youth, and indicated a higher prevalence of dating violence and unwanted forced sexual intercourse among lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth than heterosexual youth (Kann et al., 2011).

National-level data on the prevalence of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking by sexual orientation are important for understanding and addressing disparities in these forms of violence. Furthermore, a better understanding of differences in the characteristics of these forms of violence, such as age at first victimization and number of perpetrators as well as the impacts on victims, can inform targeted prevention strategies and raise awareness about service needs.

### What Is NISVS?

The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) is an ongoing, nationally representative survey that assesses experiences of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking victimization among adult women and men in the United States. It measures lifetime victimization for these types of violence as well as victimization in the 12 months prior to taking the survey. The survey is focused exclusively on violence and collects information about:

- Sexual violence by any perpetrator including information related to rape, being made to penetrate someone else, sexual coercion, unwanted sexual contact, and non-contact unwanted sexual experiences
- Stalking, including the use of newer technologies such as text messages, emails, monitoring devices (e.g., cameras and or global positioning system devices), by perpetrators known and unknown to the victim
- Physical violence by an intimate partner
- Psychological aggression by an intimate partner including information on expressive forms of aggression and coercive control
- Control of reproductive or sexual health by an intimate partner

In addition to collecting lifetime and 12-month prevalence data on intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking, the survey collects information on the age at the time of the first victimization, demographic characteristics of respondents, demographic characteristics of perpetrators (e.g., age, sex), and detailed information about the patterns and impact of the violence by specific perpetrators.

## What Does This Report Include?

This report summarizes findings on the lifetime prevalence of sexual violence and stalking victimization by any perpetrator as well as intimate partner violence victimization stratified by sex and self-reported sexual orientation. In addition, this report highlights some characteristics of these victimization experiences including the number and sex of perpetrators and reported impact of violence by an intimate partner. Respondents who reported that the perpetrator was a current or former intimate partner at the time the perpetrator first committed any violence against them are considered victims of intimate partner violence. Respondents were not asked whether their victimization experience was associated with their sexual orientation or sex of the perpetrator. Although 12-month prevalence of these types of violence was collected in NISVS, the sample size was too small to permit reporting reliable estimates by self-reported sexual orientation. As a result, data are summarized based on lifetime prevalence of violence victimization by self-reported sexual orientation. The report first presents data on victimization by any perpetrator—specifically rape, other sexual violence, and stalking—and then presents data on victimization by an intimate partner, including rape, other sexual violence, stalking, physical violence, and psychological aggression by an intimate partner.

## Methods

The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey is a national random digit-dial telephone survey of non-institutionalized English- and/or Spanish-speaking U.S. population aged 18 or older. NISVS uses a dual-frame sampling strategy that includes both landlines and cell phones. The survey was conducted in 50 states and the District of Columbia and was administered from January 22, 2010 through December 31, 2010. In 2010, a total of 18,049 interviews were conducted (9,970 women and 8,079 men) in the U.S. general population. This includes 16,507 completed and 1,542 partially completed interviews. A total of 9,086 females and 7,421 males completed the survey. Approximately 45.2% of interviews were conducted by landline telephone and 54.8% of interviews were conducted using a respondent's cell phone. The sexual orientation of the sample included 96.5% females identified as heterosexual, 2.2% bisexual, and 1.3% lesbian. For males, 96.8% identified as heterosexual, 1.2% bisexual, and 2.0% gay.

The overall weighted response rate for the 2010 NISVS ranged from 27.5% to 33.6%. This range reflects differences in how the proportion of the unknowns that are eligible is estimated. The weighted cooperation rate was 81.3%. A primary difference between response and cooperation rates is that telephone numbers where contact has not been made are still part of the denominator in calculating a response rate.

## How NISVS Measured Sexual Orientation<sup>1</sup>

Sexual orientation was measured using the following question:

Do you consider yourself to be heterosexual or straight, gay or lesbian, or bisexual?

The cooperation rate reflects the proportion who agreed to participate in the interview among those who were contacted and determined to be eligible. The cooperation rate obtained for the 2010 NISVS data collection suggests that, once contact was made and eligibility determined, the majority of respondents chose to participate in the interview.

The NISVS questionnaire includes behaviorally specific questions that assess sexual violence, stalking, and intimate partner violence over the lifetime and during the 12 months prior to the interview. Intimate partner violence-related questions assess psychological aggression, including expressive aggression (5 items) and coercive control (12 items); control of reproductive or sexual health (2 items); physical violence (11 items); sexual violence (21 items); and stalking (7 items).

<sup>1</sup>During the first and second quarters of data collection, respondents were only asked about sexual orientation if they reported engaging in any same-sex sexual activity. This skip pattern was changed in the third and fourth quarters so that, regardless of sexual activity, all respondents were asked about sexual orientation. Analysis of data collected after the change in the skip pattern revealed minimal impact with respect to the misclassification of respondents in the first and second quarters. Among men who reported only having sex with women (n=3,440), 11 self-identified as bisexual, and 1 self-identified as gay. Among women who reported only having sex with men (n=4,106), 14 self-identified as bisexual and none self-identified as lesbian. Additional information about response and cooperation rates and other methodological details of NISVS can be found in the technical note in Appendix B in *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report* (Black et al., 2011).

Lifetime prevalence estimates were calculated for the different forms of violence presented in this report. To be included in the prevalence estimate for sexual violence, physical violence, or psychological aggression, the respondent must have experienced at least one behavior within the relevant violence domain during the time frame of reference (i.e., lifetime). Respondents could have experienced each type of violence more than once, so prevalence estimates should be interpreted as the percentage of the population who experienced each type of violence at least once. To be included in the prevalence of stalking, a respondent must have experienced more than one of the seven stalking tactics that were measured in the survey, or experienced a single tactic multiple times by the same perpetrator, and must have been very fearful or believed that they or someone close to them would be harmed or killed as a result of the perpetrator's behavior.

Within categories of violence (e.g., rape, other sexual violence, any severe physical violence, any reported IPV-related impact), respondents who reported more than one subcategory of violence are included only once in the summary estimate but are included in each relevant subcategory. For example, victims of completed forced penetration and alcohol or drug facilitated penetration are included in each of these subtypes of rape but counted only once in the estimate of rape prevalence.

The denominators in prevalence calculations include persons who answered a question or responded

with "don't know" or "refused." Missing data (cases where all questions for constructing an outcome of interest were not fully administered) were excluded from analyses. All analyses were conducted using SUDAAN™ statistical software for analyzing data collected through complex sample design.

The estimated number of victims affected by a particular form of violence is based on U.S. population estimates from the census projections by state, sex, age, and race/ethnicity (<http://www.census.gov/popest/data/index.html>).

Statistical inference for prevalence and population estimates were made based on weighted analyses, where complex sample design features, such as stratified sampling, weighting for unequal sample selection probabilities and non-response adjustments, were taken into account. The estimates presented in this report are based on complete interviews. An interview is defined as "complete" if the respondent completed the screening, demographic, general health questions, and all questions on all five sets of violence victimization, as applicable.

Analyses were conducted by sex. As prevalence and population estimates were based on a sample population, there is a degree of uncertainty associated with these estimates. The smaller the sample upon which an estimate is based, the less precise the estimate becomes and the more difficult it is to distinguish the findings from what could have occurred by chance. The relative standard error (RSE) is a measure of an

estimate's reliability. The RSE was calculated for all estimates in this report. If the RSE was greater than 30%, the estimate was deemed unreliable and was not reported. Consideration also was given to the case count. If the estimate was based on a numerator < 20, the estimate is also not reported. Tables where specific estimates are missing due to high RSEs or small case counts are presented in full with missing unreliable estimates noted by an asterisk so that the reader can clearly see what was assessed and where data gaps remain. Statistical significance testing was conducted comparing the prevalence of two sexual orientation groups only when both prevalence estimates met the reliability criteria. A two-tailed t-test ( $\alpha = .05$ ) was conducted to assess the difference in prevalence between two groups. A statistically significant difference in prevalence was established between two estimates when  $p < .05$ . Statistically significant differences in prevalence between two groups are noted in the tables by the initial letters of the two groups.

Additional information about the sampling strategy, weighting procedures, and other methodological details of NISVS can be found in *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report* (Black et al., 2011).



# Sexual Violence Victimization

## How NISVS Measured Sexual Violence

Five types of sexual violence were measured in NISVS. These include acts of rape (forced penetration), and types of sexual violence other than rape.

- **Rape** is defined as any completed or attempted unwanted vaginal (for women), oral, or anal penetration through the use of physical force (such as being pinned or held down, or by the use of violence) or threats to physically harm, and includes times when the victim was drunk, high, drugged, or passed out and unable to consent. Rape is separated into three types, completed forced penetration, attempted forced penetration, and completed alcohol or drug facilitated penetration.
  - Among women, rape includes vaginal, oral, or anal penetration by a male using his penis. It also includes vaginal or anal penetration by a male or female using their fingers or an object.
  - Among men, rape includes oral or anal penetration by a male using his penis. It also includes anal penetration by a male or female using their fingers or an object.
- **Being made to penetrate someone else** includes times when the victim was made to, or there was an attempt to make them, sexually penetrate someone without the victim's consent because the victim was physically forced (such as being pinned or held down, or by the use of violence) or threatened with physical harm, or when the victim was drunk, high, drugged, or passed out and unable to consent.
  - Among women, this behavior reflects a female being made to orally penetrate another female's vagina or anus.
  - Among men, being made to penetrate someone else could have occurred in multiple ways: being made to vaginally penetrate a female using one's own penis; orally penetrating a female's vagina or anus; anally penetrating a male or female; or being made to receive oral sex from a male or female. It also includes female perpetrators attempting to force male victims to penetrate them, though it did not happen.
- **Sexual coercion** is defined as unwanted sexual penetration that occurs after a person is pressured in a nonphysical way. In NISVS, sexual coercion refers to unwanted vaginal, oral, or anal sex after being pressured in ways that included being worn down by someone who repeatedly asked for sex or showed they were unhappy; feeling pressured by being lied to, being told promises that were untrue, having someone threaten to end a relationship or spread rumors; and sexual pressure due to someone using their influence or authority.
- **Unwanted sexual contact** is defined as unwanted sexual experiences involving touch but not sexual penetration, such as being kissed in a sexual way, or having sexual body parts fondled or grabbed.
- **Non-contact unwanted sexual experiences** are those unwanted experiences that do not involve any touching or penetration, including someone exposing their sexual body parts, flashing, or masturbating in front of the victim, someone making a victim show his or her body parts, someone making a victim look at or participate in sexual photos or movies, or someone harassing the victim in a public place in a way that made the victim feel unsafe.

Black et al. (2011). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report*. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

This section summarizes lifetime experiences of sexual violence victimization of women and men in the United States by self-reported sexual orientation, including rape (forced penetration,

attempted forced penetration, alcohol or drug facilitated penetration), being made to penetrate someone else, sexual coercion, unwanted sexual contact, and non-contact unwanted sexual

experiences. This section also includes particular characteristics of victimization such as the number and sex of perpetrators as well as the age at first completed rape victimization.



## Lifetime Prevalence of Sexual Violence Victimization by Any Perpetrator by Sexual Orientation

### Prevalence among Women

Approximately 1 in 8 lesbian women (13.1%), nearly half of bisexual women (46.1%), and 1 in 6 heterosexual women (17.4%) in the United States have been raped in their lifetime (Table 1). This translates to an estimated 214,000 lesbian

women, 1.5 million bisexual women, and 19 million heterosexual women. Approximately 36.5% of bisexual women and 11.4% of heterosexual women reported experiencing completed forced penetration. The differences observed between bisexual and heterosexual women in terms of rape, completed forced penetration, and completed alcohol and drug facilitated rape were statistically significant. Too few lesbian women reported completed forced penetration to produce a reliable estimate.

Nearly half of bisexual women, 1 in 8 lesbian women, and 1 in 6 heterosexual women have experienced rape at some point in their lifetime.

**Table 1**

### Lifetime Prevalence of Sexual Violence by Any Perpetrator by Sexual Orientation — U.S. Women, NISVS 2010

	Lesbian		Bisexual		Heterosexual	
	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>
<b>Rape<sup>HB, BL</sup></b>	<b>13.1</b>	214,000	<b>46.1</b>	1,528,000	17.4	19,049,000
Completed forced penetration <sup>HB</sup>	*	*	36.5	1,209,000	11.4	12,490,000
Attempted forced penetration	*	*	*	*	5.1	5,590,000
Completed alcohol/drug facilitated penetration <sup>HB</sup>	*	*	24.4	810,000	7.6	8,263,000
<b>Other Sexual Violence<sup>HB, BL</sup></b>	<b>46.4</b>	756,000	<b>74.9</b>	2,482,000	<b>43.3</b>	47,325,000
Sexual coercion <sup>2, HB</sup>	*	*	29.6	981,000	12.4	13,523,000
Unwanted sexual contact <sup>3, HB, BL</sup>	32.3	526,000	58.0	1,922,000	25.9	28,352,000
Non-contact unwanted sexual experiences <sup>4, HB, BL</sup>	37.8	616,000	62.9	2,085,000	32.4	35,422,000

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to the nearest thousand.

<sup>2</sup> Pressured in a non-physical way (includes, for example, threatening to end the relationship, using influence or authority).

<sup>3</sup> Includes unwanted kissing in a sexual way, fondling or grabbing sexual body parts.

<sup>4</sup> Includes, for example, exposing sexual body parts, being made to look at or participate in sexual photos or movies, harassed in a public place in a way that felt unsafe.

\* Estimate is not reported; relative standard error > 30% or cell size ≤ 20.

<sup>HB</sup> Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between heterosexual and bisexual groups.

<sup>BL</sup> Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between bisexual and lesbian groups.

Nearly half of lesbian and heterosexual women (46.4% and 43.3%, respectively) and three-quarters of bisexual women (74.9%) reported experiencing sexual violence other than rape in their lifetime. Approximately, one-third of lesbian women (32.3%), more than half of bisexual women (58.0%), and one-quarter of heterosexual women (25.9%) experienced unwanted sexual contact, while 37.8% of lesbian, 62.9% of bisexual, and 32.4% of heterosexual women reported non-contact unwanted sexual experiences. The differences in reported lifetime prevalence of

sexual violence other than rape, unwanted sexual contact, and non-contact unwanted sexual experiences between bisexual women and heterosexual women and between bisexual women and lesbian women were statistically significant. Differences between heterosexual women and lesbian women were not statistically significant.

### Prevalence among Men

Approximately 4 out of 10 gay men (40.2%), half of bisexual men (47.4%), and 1 in 5 heterosexual men (20.8%) in the United States

have experienced sexual violence other than rape at some point in their lives (Table 2). This translates into nearly 1.1 million gay men, 903,000 bisexual men, and 21.6 million heterosexual men. The differences in reported lifetime prevalence of sexual violence other than rape between gay men and heterosexual men and between bisexual men and heterosexual men were statistically significant. Estimates of rape for gay and bisexual men were based upon numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and, therefore, are not reported.

**Table 2**

### Lifetime Prevalence of Sexual Violence by Any Perpetrator by Sexual Orientation — U.S. Men, NISVS 2010

	Gay		Bisexual		Heterosexual	
	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>
<b>Rape</b>	*	*	*	*	0.7	770,000
Completed forced penetration	*	*	*	*	0.4	463,000
Attempted forced penetration	*	*	*	*	0.2	218,000
Completed alcohol/drug facilitated penetration	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Other Sexual Violence<sup>HB, HG</sup></b>	40.2	1,096,000	47.4	903,000	20.8	21,664,000
Made to penetrate	*	*	*	*	4.3	4,478,000
Sexual coercion <sup>2</sup>	*	*	*	*	5.5	5,787,000
Unwanted sexual contact <sup>3, HG</sup>	32.3	879,000	21.1	403,000	10.8	11,289,000
Non-contact unwanted sexual experiences <sup>4, HB, HG</sup>	37.8	829,000	28.9	550,000	11.7	12,153,000

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to the nearest thousand.

<sup>2</sup> Pressured in a non-physical way (includes, for example, threatening to end the relationship, using influence or authority).

<sup>3</sup> Includes unwanted kissing in a sexual way, fondling or grabbing sexual body parts.

<sup>4</sup> Includes, for example, exposing sexual body parts, being made to look at or participate in sexual photos or movies, harassed in a public place in a way that felt unsafe.

\* Estimate is not reported; relative standard error > 30% or cell size ≤ 20.

<sup>HB</sup> Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between heterosexual and bisexual groups.

<sup>HG</sup> Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between heterosexual and gay groups.

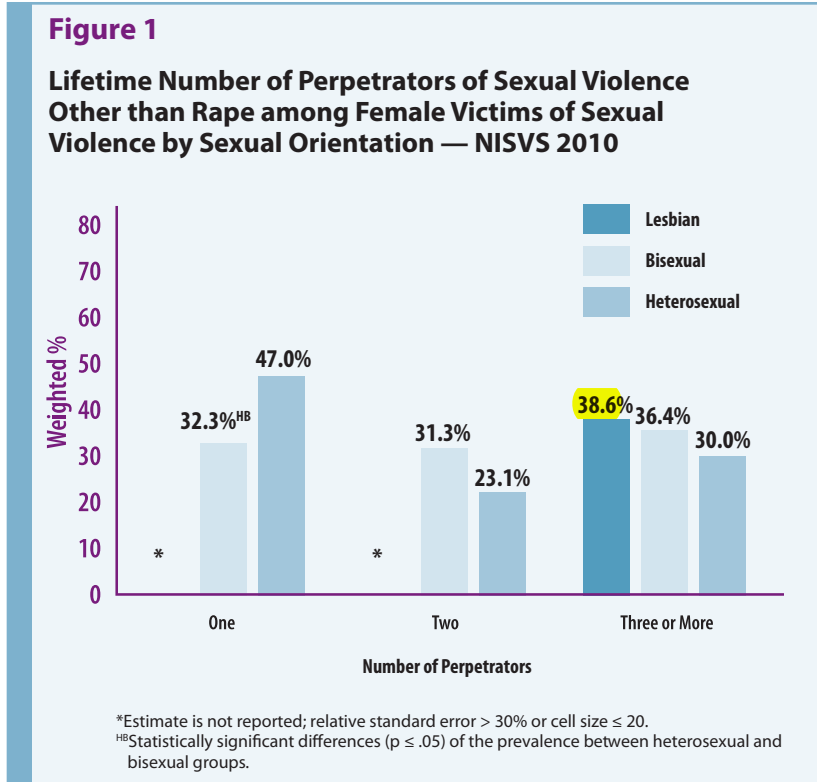
Approximately 1 in 3 gay men (32.3%), 1 in 5 bisexual men (21.1%), and 1 in 10 heterosexual men (10.8%) reported experiencing unwanted sexual contact during their lifetime. The differences in reported lifetime prevalence of unwanted sexual contact between gay men and heterosexual men were statistically significant. However, the differences between bisexual men and heterosexual men and between bisexual men and gay men were not statistically significant.

In addition, 30.5% of gay men, 28.9% of bisexual men, and 11.7% of heterosexual men reported non-contact unwanted sexual experiences. Differences in reported lifetime prevalence of non-contact unwanted sexual experiences between gay men and heterosexual men and between bisexual men and heterosexual men were statistically significant.

## Number of Perpetrators in Lifetime Reports of Sexual Violence Victimization by Sexual Orientation

### Number of Perpetrators among Female Victims

Among victims of rape, most bisexual and heterosexual women reported having only one perpetrator in their lifetime (62.3% and 72.3%, respectively) (data not shown). Among victims of sexual violence other than rape, approximately one-third of bisexual women (32.3%) and one-half of heterosexual women (47.0%) reported having one perpetrator (Figure 1). Approximately one-third of lesbian women (38.6%), bisexual women (36.4%), and heterosexual



women (30.0%) reported three or more perpetrators of sexual violence other than rape. The differences between bisexual women and heterosexual women in having one perpetrator of sexual violence other than rape were statistically significant. All other differences were not statistically significant.

### Number of Perpetrators among Male Victims

Approximately 4 out of 10 gay men (42.3%) and 1 in 2 heterosexual men (49.7%) who reported experiencing sexual violence other than rape reported having one perpetrator (data not shown). One-third of gay men (33.0%) and more than one-quarter of heterosexual men (27.0%) reported having three or more perpetrators in their lifetime. The difference

between the number of perpetrators for gay men and heterosexual men were not statistically significant. For each subgroup of men, the numbers were too small to produce a reliable estimate for the number of perpetrators for rape. In addition,

**Nearly half of bisexual men, 4 out of 10 gay men, and 1 in 5 heterosexual men in the U.S. have experienced sexual violence other than rape in their lifetime.**

for similar reasons, estimates of the number of perpetrators of sexual violence other than rape for bisexual men are not reported.

## Sex of Perpetrator in Lifetime Reports of Sexual Violence Victimization by Sexual Orientation

### Sex of Perpetrators among Female Victims

Most bisexual and heterosexual women in the United States who experienced rape reported having only male perpetrators — specifically, this includes 98.3% of bisexual women, and 99.1% of heterosexual women who reported being a victim of rape in their lifetime. Similarly,

85.2% of lesbian women, 87.5% of bisexual women, and 94.7% of heterosexual women who reported experiencing sexual violence other than rape in their lifetime also reported having only male perpetrators (data not shown).

Estimates for the sex of perpetrator of rape for lesbian women were based on numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and, therefore, are not reported. Statistical tests comparing the sex of the perpetrator across sexual orientation for female victims of sexual violence was not conducted due to small sample sizes.

### Sex of Perpetrators among Male Victims

More than three-quarters of gay men (78.6%) and about two-thirds of bisexual men (65.8%) who experienced sexual violence other

than rape identified male perpetrators (data not shown). However, of heterosexual men who reported sexual violence other than rape, 28.6% reported only male perpetrators, more than one-half (54.8%) reported only female perpetrators, and 16.6% reported having both male and female perpetrators. Estimates for the sex of perpetrators of rape for gay and bisexual men were based upon numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and therefore are not reported. Statistical tests comparing the sex of the perpetrator across sexual orientation for male victims of sexual violence was not conducted due to small sample sizes.

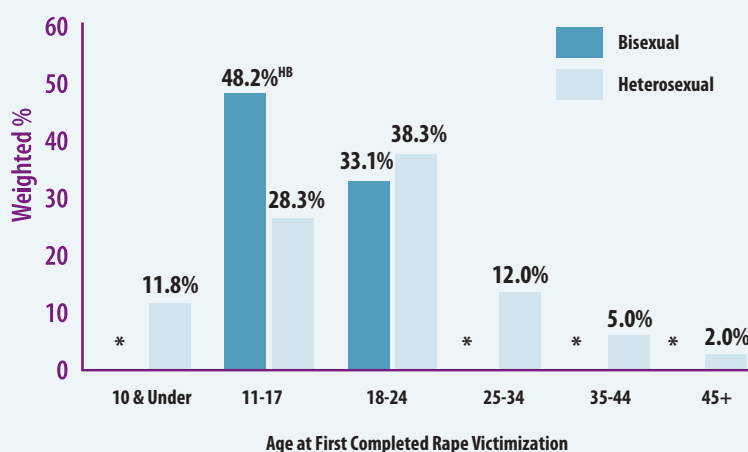
## Age at Time of First Completed Rape Victimization by Sexual Orientation

### Age at Time of First Completed Rape Victimization among Women

More than three-quarters of both bisexual and heterosexual women who were victims of completed rape (91.0% and 78.5%, respectively) were raped before 25 years of age. Nearly half of bisexual women (48.2%) and more than one-quarter of heterosexual women (28.3%) experienced their first completed rape between the ages of 11 and 17 years (Figure 2). The differences between bisexual women and heterosexual women in the 11-17 age range were statistically significant. Estimates for age at time of first completed rape for lesbian women and for gay and bisexual men were based upon numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and, therefore, are not reported.

**Figure 2**

**Age at Time of First Completed Rape Victimization among Female Victims by Sexual Orientation — NISVS 2010<sup>1,2</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> The reported age is the youngest age reported across all perpetrators.

<sup>2</sup> All percentages are weighted to U.S. population.

\* Estimate is not reported; relative standard error > 30% or cell size ≤ 20.

<sup>HB</sup> Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between heterosexual and bisexual groups.



# Stalking Victimization

## How NISVS Measured Stalking

Stalking victimization involves a pattern of harassing or threatening tactics used by a perpetrator that is both unwanted and causes fear or safety concerns in the victim. For the purposes of this report, a person was considered a stalking victim if they experienced multiple stalking tactics or a single stalking tactic multiple times by the same perpetrator and felt *very fearful*, or believed that they or someone close to them would be harmed or killed as a result of the perpetrator's behavior.

Stalking tactics measured:

- Unwanted phone calls, voice or text messages, hang-ups
- Unwanted emails, instant messages, messages through social media
- Unwanted cards, letters, flowers, or presents
- Watching or following from a distance, spying with a listening device, camera, or global positioning system (GPS)
- Approaching or showing up in places, such as the victim's home, workplace, or school, when it was unwanted
- Leaving strange or potentially threatening items for the victim to find
- Sneaking into victims' home or car and doing things to scare the victim or let the victim know the perpetrator had been there

Black et al. (2011). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report*. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## Lifetime Prevalence of Stalking Victimization by Any Perpetrator by Sexual Orientation

Approximately 1 in 3 bisexual women (36.6%) and 1 in 6 heterosexual women (15.5%) in the United States has experienced some type of stalking behavior in their lifetime in which they felt very fearful or believed that they or someone close to them would

be harmed or killed (data not shown). This translates into 1.2 million bisexual women and 16.8 million heterosexual women. The differences in lifetime prevalence of stalking between bisexual and heterosexual women were statistically significant. Estimates of stalking for lesbian women and gay and bisexual men were based upon numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and, therefore, are not reported.

**Approximately  
1 in 3 bisexual  
women and 1 in 6  
heterosexual women  
experienced stalking  
in their lifetime.**





## Violence by an Intimate Partner

### How NISVS Measured Intimate Partner Violence

Five types of intimate partner violence were measured in NISVS. These include sexual violence, stalking, physical violence, psychological aggression, and control of reproductive/sexual health.

- **Sexual violence** includes rape, being made to penetrate someone else, sexual coercion, unwanted sexual contact, and non-contact unwanted sexual experiences.
- **Stalking** victimization involves a pattern of harassing or threatening tactics used by a perpetrator that is both unwanted and causes fear or safety concerns in the victim.
- **Physical violence** includes a range of behaviors from slapping, pushing, or shoving to severe acts such as being beaten, burned, or choked.
- **Psychological aggression** includes expressive aggression (such as name calling, insulting, or humiliating an intimate partner), and coercive control, which includes behaviors that are intended to monitor and control or threaten an intimate partner.
- **Control of reproductive or sexual health** focuses on interference with birth control. This includes the refusal by an intimate partner to use a condom. For a woman, it also includes times when a partner tried to get her pregnant when she did not want to become pregnant. For a man, it also includes times when a partner tried to get pregnant when the man did not want her to become pregnant.

Black et al. (2011). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report*. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) includes physical violence, sexual violence, threats of physical or sexual violence, stalking, and psychological aggression (including coercive tactics) by a current or former intimate partner. Intimate partner violence may occur among cohabitating or non-cohabitating romantic or sexual partners and among opposite or same sex couples. This section summarizes lifetime

experiences of intimate partner violence among women and men in the United States by self-reported sexual orientation. Included in this section are estimates for a composite measure of intimate partner violence that combines only rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner as a conservative measure of the overall prevalence of intimate partner violence. In addition, this section includes

more detailed data on sexual violence, stalking, physical violence, psychological aggression (expressive aggression and coercive control), and control of reproductive or sexual health by an intimate partner. This section also includes information on the characteristics of victimization experiences including the number and sex of perpetrators as well as age at the time of first intimate partner violence victimization.

## Lifetime Prevalence of Rape, Physical Violence, and/or Stalking Victimization by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation

### Prevalence among Women

Four in 10 lesbian women (43.8%), 6 in 10 bisexual women (61.1%), and 1 in 3 heterosexual women (35.0%) reported experiencing rape, physical violence, and/or stalking within the context of an intimate partner relationship at least once

during their lifetime (Table 3).

This translates to an estimated 714,000 lesbian women, 2 million bisexual women, and 38.3 million heterosexual women in the United States. Bisexual women experienced significantly higher prevalence of these types of violence compared to lesbian and heterosexual women. There were no statistically significant differences between the prevalence of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking when comparing lesbian women and heterosexual women. IPV-related impact is explored in more detail later in this document.

**Bisexual women experienced significantly higher lifetime prevalence of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner when compared to lesbian and heterosexual women.**

**Table 3**

### Lifetime Prevalence of Rape, Physical Violence, and/or Stalking Victimization by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation — U.S. Women, NISVS 2010

	Lesbian		Bisexual		Heterosexual	
	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>
<b>Rape<sup>HB</sup></b>	*	*	22.1	731,000	9.1	9,984,000
<b>Physical violence<sup>HB, BL</sup></b>	40.4	659,000	56.9	1,886,000	32.3	35,291,000
<b>Stalking<sup>HB</sup></b>	*	*	31.1	1,030,000	10.2	11,126,000
<b>Rape, physical violence, and/or stalking<sup>HB, BL</sup></b>	43.8	714,000	61.1	2,024,000	35.0	38,290,000
<b>With IPV-related impact<sup>2,3,4,HB, BL</sup></b>	33.5	547,000	57.4	1,901,000	28.2	30,828,000

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to the nearest thousand.

<sup>2</sup> Includes experiencing any of the following: being fearful, concerned for safety, any PTSD symptoms, need for health care, injury, contacting a crisis hotline, need for housing services, need for victim's advocate services, need for legal services, missed at least one day of work or school. For those who reported being raped, it also includes having contracted a sexually transmitted disease or having become pregnant.

<sup>3</sup> IPV-related impact questions were assessed in relation to specific perpetrators, without regard to the time period in which they occurred, and asked in relation to any form of intimate partner violence experienced (sexual violence, physical violence, stalking, expressive aggression, coercive control, and reproductive control) in that relationship; 12-month prevalence of IPV-related impact was not assessed.

<sup>4</sup> By definition, all stalking incidents result in impact because the definition of stalking includes the impacts of fear and concern for safety.

\* Estimate is not reported; relative standard error > 30% or cell size ≤ 20.

<sup>HB</sup> Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between heterosexual and bisexual groups.

<sup>BL</sup> Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between bisexual and lesbian groups.

**Prevalence among Men**

Approximately 1 in 4 gay men (26.0%), 4 in 10 bisexual men (37.3%), and more than 1 in 4 heterosexual men (29.0%) reported experiencing rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime

(Table 4). This equates to 708,000 gay men, 711,000 bisexual men, and over 30 million heterosexual men in the United States. The differences between these groups of men were not statistically significant. The numbers of men who reported rape by an intimate

partner among gay, bisexual, and heterosexual men in the United States are too small to report. In addition, the number of men who reported stalking by an intimate partner among gay and bisexual men were too small to report.

**Table 4****Lifetime Prevalence of Rape, Physical Violence, and/or Stalking Victimization by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation — U.S. Men, NISVS 2010**

	Gay		Bisexual		Heterosexual	
	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>
<b>Rape</b>	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Physical violence</b>	25.2	685,000	37.3	711,000	28.7	29,926,000
<b>Stalking</b>	*	*	*	*	2.1	2,222,000
<b>Rape, physical violence, and/or stalking</b>	26.0	708,000	37.3	711,000	29.0	30,250,000
<b>With IPV-related impact<sup>2,3,4</sup></b>	10.9	297,000	*	*	10.2	10,583,000

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to the nearest thousand.

<sup>2</sup> Includes experiencing any of the following: being fearful, concerned for safety, any PTSD symptoms, need for health care, injury, contacting a crisis hotline, need for housing services, need for victim's advocate services, need for legal services, missed at least one day of work or school. For those who reported being raped, it also includes having contracted a sexually transmitted disease.

<sup>3</sup> IPV-related impact questions were assessed in relation to specific perpetrators, without regard to the time period in which they occurred, and asked in relation to any form of intimate partner violence experienced (sexual violence, physical violence, stalking, expressive aggression, coercive control, and reproductive control) in that relationship; 12-month prevalence of IPV-related impact was not assessed.

<sup>4</sup> By definition, all stalking incidents result in impact because the definition of stalking includes the impacts of fear and concern for safety.

\* Estimate is not reported; relative standard error > 30% or cell size ≤ 20.

## Lifetime Prevalence of Sexual Violence Victimization by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation Prevalence among Women

Approximately 1 out of every 5 bisexual women (22.1%) and nearly 1 out of every 10 heterosexual women (9.1%) in the United States have been raped by an intimate partner in their lifetime (Table 5). This translates to an estimated 731,000 bisexual women and 10 million heterosexual women. Approximately 17.0% of bisexual

women and 6.3% of heterosexual women reported experiencing completed forced penetration by an intimate partner. The differences observed between bisexual and heterosexual women in terms of rape, including completed forced penetration by an intimate partner, were statistically significant.

Approximately 40% of bisexual women and 15% of heterosexual women reported experiencing sexual violence other than rape by an intimate partner in their lifetime. Approximately 1 in 4 bisexual women (23.6%) and 1 in 10 heterosexual women (9.5%)

**Bisexual women experienced significantly higher lifetime prevalence of rape and other sexual violence by an intimate partner when compared to heterosexual women.**

**Table 5**

### Lifetime Prevalence of Sexual Violence by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation — U.S. Women, NISVS 2010

	Lesbian		Bisexual		Heterosexual	
	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>
<b>Rape<sup>HB</sup></b>	*	*	22.1	731,000	9.1	9,984,000
Completed forced penetration <sup>HB</sup>	*	*	17.0	562,000	6.3	6,929,000
Attempted forced penetration	*	*	*	*	2.5	2,821,000
Completed alcohol/drug facilitated penetration	*	*	*	*	3.4	3,711,000
<b>Other Sexual Violence<sup>HB</sup></b>	*	*	40.0	1,320,000	15.3	16,761,000
Made to penetrate	*	*	*	*	*	*
Sexual coercion <sup>2, HB</sup>	*	*	23.6	781,000	9.5	10,368,000
Unwanted sexual contact <sup>3, HB</sup>	*	*	19.2	638,000	6.0	6,554,000
Non-contact unwanted <sup>4, HB</sup>	*	*	24.7	817,000	7.4	8,103,000

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to the nearest thousand.

<sup>2</sup> Pressured in a non-physical way (includes, for example, threatening to end the relationship, using influence or authority).

<sup>3</sup> Includes unwanted kissing in a sexual way, fondling or grabbing sexual body parts.

<sup>4</sup> Includes, for example, exposing sexual body parts, being made to look at or participate in sexual photos or movies, harassed in a public place in a way that felt unsafe.

\* Estimate is not reported; relative standard error > 30% or cell size ≤ 20.

<sup>HB</sup>Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between heterosexual and bisexual groups.

experienced sexual coercion by an intimate partner, while 24.7% of bisexual women and 7.4% of heterosexual women reported non-contact unwanted sexual experiences by an intimate partner. The differences in reported lifetime prevalence of sexual violence victimization, including rape and sexual violence other than rape, between bisexual women and heterosexual women were statistically significant. Estimates of rape and sexual violence other than rape by an intimate partner for lesbian women were based on numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and, therefore, are not reported. Similarly, estimates

of rape and sexual violence other than rape by an intimate partner for gay and bisexual men were based on numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and, therefore, are not reported.

### Lifetime Prevalence of Physical Violence Victimization by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation

#### Prevalence among Women

More than one-third of lesbian women (36.3%), over half of

bisexual women (55.1%), and more than one-quarter of heterosexual women (29.8%) in the United States have been slapped, pushed, or shoved by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime (Table 6). This translates into 591,000 lesbian women, 1.8 million bisexual women, and 32.5 million heterosexual women who have been slapped, pushed, or shoved by an intimate partner at some point during their lifetime. Bisexual women experienced significantly higher prevalence of these types of violence compared to lesbian women and heterosexual women.

**Table 6**

#### Lifetime Prevalence of Physical Violence by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation — U.S. Women, NISVS 2010

	Lesbian		Bisexual		Heterosexual	
	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>
<b>Slapped, pushed, or shoved<sup>HB, BL</sup></b>	36.3	591,000	55.1	1,825,000	29.8	32,527,000
Slapped <sup>HB, BL</sup>	23.2	378,000	41.2	1,365,000	19.7	21,581,000
Pushed, or shoved <sup>HB, BL</sup>	32.5	529,000	46.6	1,545,000	27.1	29,651,000
<b>Any severe physical violence<sup>HB, BL</sup></b>	29.4	480,000	49.3	1,632,000	23.6	25,770,000
Hurt by pulling hair <sup>HB</sup>	*	*	26.5	877,000	9.8	10,765,000
Hit with something hard <sup>HB</sup>	*	*	30.4	1,007,000	13.6	14,888,000
Kicked <sup>HB</sup>	*	*	19.0	630,000	6.6	7,252,000
Slammed against something <sup>HB, BL</sup>	17.7	288,000	41.9	1,388,000	16.6	18,103,000
Tried to hurt by choking or suffocating <sup>HB</sup>	*	*	26.2	869,000	9.3	10,219,000
Beaten	*	*	17.5	580,000	11.0	12,057,000
Burned on purpose	*	*	*	*	1.0	1,076,000
Used a knife or gun <sup>HB</sup>	*	*	15.0	495,000	4.4	4,773,000

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to the nearest thousand.

\* Estimate is not reported; relative standard error > 30% or cell size ≤ 20.

<sup>HB</sup> Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between heterosexual and bisexual groups.

<sup>BL</sup> Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between bisexual and lesbian groups.

**Nearly 1 in 3 lesbian women, 1 in 2 bisexual women, and 1 in 4 heterosexual women has experienced at least one form of severe physical violence by an intimate partner in her lifetime.**

Nearly 1 in 3 lesbian women (29.4%), 1 in 2 bisexual women (49.3%), and 1 in 4 heterosexual women (23.6%) has experienced at least one form of severe physical violence by an intimate partner in her lifetime. That translates into 480,000 lesbian women, 1.6 million bisexual women, and 25.7

million heterosexual women who have experienced at least one form of severe physical violence in an intimate relationship at some point in their lifetime. Bisexual women experienced significantly higher prevalence of these types of severe violence compared to lesbian and heterosexual women. The difference between lesbian and heterosexual women was not statistically significant.

Looking at several individual forms of severe physical violence, an estimated 17.7% of lesbian women, 41.9% of bisexual women, and 16.6% of heterosexual women reported they had been slammed against something hard by an intimate partner at least once in their lives. An estimated 26.2% of bisexual women and 9.3% of heterosexual women reported an intimate partner tried to hurt them by choking or suffocating them during their lifetime. The differences between bisexual women and heterosexual women for the

types of violence noted above were statistically significant.

### Prevalence among Men

Approximately one-quarter of all men, regardless of sexual orientation reported being slapped, pushed, or shoved by an intimate partner at some point during their lifetime (24.0% gay men, 27.0% bisexual men, and 26.3% heterosexual men) (Table 7). That translates into 655,000 gay men, 515,000 bisexual men, and 27.4 million heterosexual men. In addition, 16.4% of gay men and 13.9% of heterosexual men reported having experienced severe physical violence by an intimate partner at least once in their lives. Estimates of severe physical violence for bisexual men and estimates of individual severe physical behaviors for gay and bisexual men were based on numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and therefore are not reported. The differences between these groups of men were not statistically significant.

**Table 7**

### Lifetime Prevalence of Physical Violence by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation — U.S. Men, NISVS 2010

	Gay		Bisexual		Heterosexual	
	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>
<b>Slapped, pushed, or shoved</b>	24.0	655,000	27.0	515,000	26.3	27,409,000
Slapped	16.8	458,000	14.4	275,000	18.8	19,633,000
Pushed, or shoved	18.3	499,000	21.6	413,000	19.8	20,673,000
<b>Any severe physical violence<sup>2</sup></b>	16.4	447,000	*	*	13.9	14,468,000

\* Estimate is not reported; relative standard error > 30% or cell size ≤ 20.

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to the nearest thousand.

<sup>2</sup> Any severe physical violence consists of respondents who reported experiencing one or more of the following behaviors: hurt by pulling hair, hit with something hard, kicked, slammed against something hard, tried to hurt by choking or suffocating, beaten, burned on purpose, or had a partner use a knife or gun on them.

## Lifetime Prevalence of Psychological Aggression Victimization by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation

### Prevalence among Women

More than 6 in 10 lesbian women (63.0%), 7 in 10 bisexual women (76.2%), and nearly one-half of heterosexual women (47.5%) experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner at some point in their lives (Table 8). The differences in prevalence between heterosexual and both bisexual women and lesbian women were statistically significant. No statistically significant differences were found between bisexual and lesbian women.

Comparing across groups, the prevalence of each type of psychological aggression was higher for bisexual women. The differences between bisexual and heterosexual women for expressive aggression were statistically significant with 63.0% of lesbian women, 67.0% of bisexual women, and 39.4% of heterosexual women reporting they have experienced expressive aggression by an intimate partner during their lifetime. In addition, 48.4% of lesbian women, 68.8% of bisexual women, and 40.5% of heterosexual women reported experiencing coercive control by an intimate partner in their lifetime. The differences in prevalence for coercive control between bisexual and heterosexual women and bisexual and lesbian women were also statistically significant.

However, the differences in the prevalence between heterosexual and lesbian women were not statistically significant.

**6 in 10 lesbian women, 7 in 10 bisexual women, and one-half of heterosexual women reported having experienced psychological aggression at some point in their lifetime.**

**Table 8**

### Lifetime Prevalence of Psychological Aggression by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation — U.S. Women, NISVS 2010

	Lesbian		Bisexual		Heterosexual	
	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>
<b>Any psychological aggression<sup>HB, HL</sup></b>	63.0	1,027,000	76.2	2,524,000	47.5	51,896,000
Any expressive aggression <sup>HB</sup>	50.6	825,000	67.0	2,219,000	39.4	43,114,000
Any coercive control <sup>HB, BL</sup>	48.4	789,000	68.8	2,279,000	40.5	44,238,000

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to the nearest thousand.

<sup>HB</sup>Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between heterosexual and bisexual groups.

<sup>HL</sup>Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between heterosexual and lesbian groups.

<sup>BL</sup>Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between bisexual and lesbian groups.



### Prevalence among Men

Approximately 60% of gay men, 53% of bisexual men, and 49% of heterosexual men reported experiencing psychological aggression in the context of an intimate relationship at some point in their lives (Table 9). Nearly half

of gay men (44.5%), one-quarter of bisexual men (24.4%), and one-third of heterosexual men (32.4%) experienced expressive aggression by an intimate partner during their lifetime. The differences in the prevalence of any expressive aggression across groups was

statistically significant when comparing gay and heterosexual men and gay and bisexual men but not when comparing bisexual and heterosexual men. The prevalence of coercive control by an intimate partner was similar across the three groups of men.

**Table 9**

#### Lifetime Prevalence of Psychological Aggression by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation — U.S. Men, NISVS 2010

	Gay		Bisexual		Heterosexual	
	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>
<b>Any psychological aggression</b>	59.6	1,622,000	53.0	1,011,000	49.3	51,458,000
Any expressive aggression <sup>HG,BG</sup>	44.5	1,213,000	24.4	466,000	32.4	33,750,000
Any coercive control	45.2	1,231,000	48.2	919,000	43.0	44,890,000

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to the nearest thousand.

<sup>HG</sup> Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between heterosexual and gay groups.

<sup>BG</sup> Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between bisexual and gay groups.

### Psychologically Aggressive Behaviors Experienced by Female Victims

Among female victims of psychological aggression, the experience of individual psychologically aggressive behaviors was common regardless of sexual orientation. Examples include: being called names like ugly, fat, crazy, or stupid (lesbian women 59.6%, bisexual women 75.7%, and heterosexual women 63.8%); witnessing an intimate partner act angry in a way that seemed dangerous (lesbian women 63.5%, bisexual women 69.7%, and heterosexual women

57.7%); being insulted, humiliated, or made fun of (lesbian women 55.9%, bisexual women 64.2%, and heterosexual women 58.1%); and being kept track of by demanding to know her whereabouts (lesbian women 60.7%, bisexual women 66.3%, and heterosexual women 61.4%) (Table 10).

In comparing bisexual and heterosexual women, bisexual women experienced a significantly higher prevalence of expressive aggression and coercive control behaviors by an intimate partner. See Table 10 for the list of these

behaviors. No statistical differences were found between lesbian and heterosexual women with regard to individual psychologically aggressive behaviors.

### Psychologically Aggressive Behaviors Experienced by Male Victims

Among male victims of psychological aggression, 61.6% of gay men, 34.4% of bisexual men, and 42.3% of heterosexual men were told they were a loser, a failure, or not good enough by an intimate partner (data not shown). Other commonly reported forms

of psychological aggression against gay and heterosexual men included having a partner act very angry in a way that seemed dangerous (48% and 39%, respectively), being called names like ugly, fat, crazy, or stupid (65% and 51.1%, respectively), being kept track of by demanding

to know where they were and what they were doing (49.3% and 63.5%, respectively), being insulted, humiliated, and made fun of (39% and 39.5%, respectively), having a partner who made threats to physically harm (28.6% and 19.9%, respectively), or having a partner who

threatened to hurt herself/himself or commit suicide because she/he was upset (23% and 25%, respectively). There were no significant differences noted for males by sexual orientation with regard to individual psychologically aggressive behaviors (data not shown).

**Table 10**

**Lifetime Reports of Psychological Aggression among Female Victims by Type of Behavior Experienced by Sexual Orientation — U.S. Women, NISVS 2010**

	Victims of Psychological Aggression		
	Lesbian	Bisexual	Heterosexual
	Weighted %	Weighted %	Weighted %
<b>Expressive Aggression</b>			
Acted very angry in a way that seemed dangerous <sup>HB</sup>	63.5	69.7	57.7
Told they were a loser, a failure, or not good enough	42.5	56.4	48.8
Called names like ugly, fat, crazy, or stupid <sup>HB</sup>	59.6	75.7	63.8
Insulted, humiliated, made fun of	55.9	64.2	58.1
Told no one else would want them	*	44.2	39.2
<b>Coercive Control</b>			
Tried to keep from seeing or talking to family or friends <sup>HB</sup>	55.9	59.2	42.5
Made decisions that should have been yours to make <sup>HB, BL</sup>	30.3	58.4	40.4
Kept track of by demanding to know where you were and what you were doing	60.7	66.3	61.4
Made threats to physically harm	45.9	52.5	45.5
Threatened to hurt herself/himself or commit suicide because she/he was upset <sup>HB</sup>	45.1	52.6	36.4
Threatened to hurt a pet or take a pet away	*	*	10.6
Threatened to hurt someone you love	*	*	14.4
Hurt someone you love	*	*	13.5
Threatened to take your children away from you	*	15.7	21.8
Kept you from leaving the house when you wanted to go <sup>HB</sup>	47.0	49.1	34.8
Kept you from having your own money to use	*	20.3	22.6
Destroyed something that was important to you	*	48.2	39.2
Said things like "If I can't have you then no one can" <sup>HB</sup>	*	42.1	26.6

<sup>HB</sup>Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between heterosexual and bisexual groups.

<sup>BL</sup>Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between bisexual and lesbian groups.

## Lifetime Prevalence of Control of Reproductive or Sexual Health by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation

Approximately 1 in 7 bisexual women (14.9%) and 1 in 20 heterosexual women (4.5%) reported ever having had a partner who tried to get them pregnant when they did not want to. These differences between bisexual and heterosexual women were statistically significant. In addition, approximately 1 in 10 bisexual women (9.4%) and 1 in 15 heterosexual women (6.8%) reported ever having a partner who refused to use a condom (data not shown). Estimates of lifetime prevalence of control of reproductive or sexual health by an intimate partner for lesbian women and for gay and bisexual men were based upon numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and, therefore, are not reported.

**1 in 7 bisexual women and 1 in 20 heterosexual women reported having had a partner who tried to get them pregnant when they did not want to.**

## Number of Perpetrators in Lifetime Reports of Rape, Physical Violence, and/or Stalking Victimization by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation

### Number of Perpetrators among Female Victims

An estimated 78.9% of lesbian women, 60.2% of bisexual women, and 71.6% of heterosexual women who were victims of intimate partner violence reported having only one perpetrator (data not shown). The difference in the number of lifetime perpetrators of intimate partner violence between female bisexual victims and female heterosexual victims were significantly different. The difference in the number of lifetime perpetrators of intimate partner violence between female bisexual victims and lesbian victims was also significantly different. Heterosexual female victims reported a significantly higher percentage of having only one perpetrator compared to female bisexual victims. Lesbian victims also reported significantly higher percentage of having only one perpetrator compared to bisexual female victims. There were no statistical differences between female heterosexual victims and lesbian victims.

### Number of Perpetrators among Male Victims

A similar pattern was seen among the male victims. Almost 90% of gay men (89.1%), more than half of bisexual men (53.6%), and almost three-quarters of heterosexual men (73.3%) who were victims of intimate partner violence reported having only one perpetrator (data not shown). The difference in the number of lifetime perpetrators of intimate partner violence between gay male victims and heterosexual male victims was significantly different. Also, the difference in the number of lifetime perpetrators of intimate partner violence between bisexual male victims and gay male victims was significantly different. Gay male victims reported a significantly higher percentage of having only one perpetrator compared to heterosexual male and bisexual male victims. There were no statistical differences between bisexual male victims and heterosexual male victims.

## **Sex of Perpetrator in Lifetime Reports of Rape, Physical Violence, and/or Stalking Victimization by an Intimate Partner by Sexual Orientation**

### **Sex of Perpetrator of Violence among Female Victims**

Among women who experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking in the context of an intimate relationship, the majority of bisexual and heterosexual women (89.5% and 98.7%, respectively) reported only male perpetrators (data not shown). More than two-thirds of lesbian women (67.4%) identified only female perpetrators. Statistical testing to compare sex of perpetrator across all sexual orientations was not conducted.

### **Sex of Perpetrator of Violence among Male Victims**

Among men who experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner, approximately 90.7% of gay men reported only male perpetrators, 78.5% of bisexual men identified only females as their perpetrators, and 99.5% of heterosexual men reported only female perpetrators (data not shown). Statistical testing to compare sex of perpetrator across all sexual orientations was not conducted.



# Impact of Intimate Partner Violence

## How NISVS Measured the Impact of Intimate Partner Violence

For each perpetrator of intimate partner violence, respondents were asked about whether they had experienced:

- Being fearful
- Being concerned for safety
- Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
  - Having nightmares
  - Trying hard not to think about it or avoiding being reminded of it
  - Feeling constantly on guard, watchful, or easily startled
  - Feeling numb or detached from others, activities, or surroundings
- Being injured
- Needing health care as a result of the intimate partner violence experienced
- Needing housing services
- Needing victim's advocate services
- Needing legal services
- Contacting a crisis hotline
- Missing days of work or school because of the intimate partner violence experienced
- For those reporting rape by an intimate partner — contracting a sexually transmitted infection or becoming pregnant (for women)

The questions were assessed in relation to specific perpetrators, without regard to the time period in which they occurred. Because violent acts often do not occur in isolation and are frequently experienced in the context of other violence committed by the same perpetrator, questions regarding the impact of the violence were asked in relation to all forms of violence (sexual violence, physical violence, stalking, expressive aggression, coercive control, and reproductive control) committed by the perpetrator in that relationship. Such information provides a better understanding of how individual and cumulative experiences of violence interact to result in harm to victims and provides a more nuanced understanding of the overall impact of violence.

Black et al. (2011). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report*. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Impact was measured using a set of indicators that represent a range of direct impacts that may be experienced by victims of intimate partner violence. Intimate partner violence (IPV)-related

impact was assessed in relation to specific perpetrators, without regard to the time period in which impact occurred, and asked in relation to the forms of intimate partner violence experienced

(sexual violence, physical violence, stalking, expressive aggression, coercive control, and control of reproductive or sexual health) in that relationship (Black et al., 2011).

## **Lifetime Prevalence of Rape, Physical Violence, and/or Stalking Victimization with Intimate Partner Violence-Related Impact by Sexual Orientation**

### **Prevalence among Women**

The lifetime prevalence for bisexual women who experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner and reported at least one measured impact related to experiencing these or other forms of violent behaviors in that relationship was significantly higher compared to lesbian and heterosexual women (Table 11). Approximately one-third of lesbian women (33.5%), over half of bisexual women (57.4%), and one-third of heterosexual women (28.2%) who experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner reported at least one measured impact related to experiencing these or other forms of violent behaviors in that relationship.

**Nearly 1 in 3 bisexual women and 1 in 7 heterosexual women were injured as a result of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner.**

Nearly 30% of lesbian women (29.1%), over half of bisexual women (52.9%), and one-quarter of heterosexual women (25.2%) reported being fearful as a result of the violence experienced. In addition, approximately one-fifth of lesbian women and heterosexual women (19.5% and 21.9%, respectively) and one-half of bisexual women (47.5%) reported they were concerned for their safety and/or reported at least one post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptom (19.5%, 46.2%, and 22.1%, respectively). Of the IPV-related impacts reported in Table 11, the differences between bisexual women and heterosexual women and between bisexual women and lesbian women were statistically significant with the exception of missing at least one day of work or school and needing legal services. However, the differences reported between lesbian women and heterosexual women were not statistically significant. Similarly, estimates of lifetime prevalence of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner with specific types of IPV-related impact for gay and bisexual men were based upon numbers too small to calculate a reliable estimate and, therefore, are not reported.

**More than one-third of lesbian women, more than half of bisexual women, and almost one-third of heterosexual women in the United States who experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner reported at least one measured impact related to these or other forms of violence in that relationship.**



**Table 11****Lifetime Prevalence of Rape, Physical Violence, and/or Stalking Victimization by an Intimate Partner with IPV-Related Impact by Sexual Orientation — U.S. Women, NISVS 2010**

	Lesbian		Bisexual		Heterosexual	
	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>
<b>Any reported IPV-related impact<sup>2,3,4, HB, BL</sup></b>	33.5	547,000	57.4	1,901,000	28.2	30,828,000
<b>Fearful<sup>HB, BL</sup></b>	29.1	474,000	52.9	1,752,000	25.2	27,537,000
<b>Concerned for safety<sup>HB, BL</sup></b>	19.5	317,000	47.5	1,572,000	21.9	23,969,000
<b>Any PTSD symptoms<sup>5, HB, BL</sup></b>	19.5	317,000	46.2	1,530,000	22.1	24,196,000
<b>Injury<sup>HB</sup></b>	*	*	27.5	909,000	14.6	15,967,000
<b>Needed medical care<sup>HB</sup></b>	*	*	15.7	519,000	8.0	8,761,000
<b>Needed housing services</b>	*	*	*	*	2.5	2,760,000
<b>Needed victim's advocate services</b>	*	*	*	*	2.6	2,834,000
<b>Needed legal services</b>	*	*	10.7	354,000	7.8	8,546,000
<b>Contacted crisis hotline</b>	*	*	*	*	1.7	1,833,000
<b>Missed at least one day of work/school</b>	*	*	17.1	567,000	10.2	11,176,000
<b>Contracted sexually transmitted disease<sup>6</sup></b>	*	*	*	*	1.5	1,647,000
<b>Became pregnant</b>	*	*	*	*	1.7	1,877,000

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to the nearest thousand.<sup>2</sup> Includes experiencing any of the following: being fearful, concerned for safety, any PTSD symptoms, need for health care, injury, contacting a crisis hotline, need for housing services, need for victim's advocate services, need for legal services, missed at least one day of work or school. For those who reported being raped, it also includes having contracted a sexually transmitted disease or having become pregnant.<sup>3</sup> IPV-related impact questions were assessed in relation to specific perpetrators, without regard to the time period in which they occurred, and asked in relation to any form of intimate partner violence experienced (sexual violence, physical violence, stalking, expressive aggression, coercive control, and control of reproductive or sexual health) in that relationship; 12-month prevalence of IPV-related impact was not assessed.<sup>4</sup> By definition, all stalking incidents result in impact because the definition of stalking includes the impacts of fear and concern for safety.<sup>5</sup> Includes: nightmares; tried not to think about or avoided being reminded of; felt constantly on guard, watchful, or easily startled; felt numb or detached.<sup>6</sup> Asked only of those who reported rape by an intimate partner.<sup>HB</sup>Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between heterosexual and bisexual groups.<sup>BL</sup>Statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) of the prevalence between bisexual and lesbian groups.



## Discussion

Consistent with previous national studies (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000), the findings from this report indicate that women are heavily impacted by sexual violence, stalking, and intimate partner violence. However, differences in victimization based on self-reported sexual orientation have not been previously reported from a national survey. The findings of this report indicate that bisexual women had significantly higher prevalence of virtually all types of sexual violence and intimate partner violence measured in the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) when compared to both heterosexual and lesbian women. For example, 46.1% of bisexual women experienced rape in their lifetime compared to 13.1% of lesbian women and 17.4% of heterosexual women. That translates into 1.5 million bisexual women, 214,000 lesbian women, and 19 million heterosexual women who have been raped during their lifetime. In terms of intimate partner violence, 61.1% of bisexual women who reported experiencing rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime compared to 43.8% of lesbian women and 35% of heterosexual women. That translates into 2 million bisexual women, 714,000 lesbian women, and 38 million heterosexual women who have experienced at least one of these forms of violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime.

Fewer significant differences were found when comparing lesbian women and heterosexual women in terms of the prevalence of most types of violence measured. Most differences found between lifetime victimization of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking by males, based on their self-reported sexual orientation, were not statistically significant with the exception of sexual violence other than rape and one form of psychological aggression, specifically expressive aggression. In terms of sexual violence other than rape, both gay men and bisexual men reported significantly higher prevalence compared to heterosexual men. Similarly, gay men reported significantly higher prevalence of expressive aggression compared to bisexual and heterosexual men. The estimates for some forms of sexual violence, intimate partner violence, and stalking for both women and men were not calculated due to low statistical reliability, limiting the number of conclusions that can be drawn related to victimization by sexual orientation. Among women who experienced rape, bisexual women were significantly more likely to have first been raped between the ages of 11 and 17 years, as compared to heterosexual women. Future studies might examine whether the age at which bisexual women experience other forms of violence (stalking, intimate partner violence) are similarly experienced in adolescence.

For most types of violence examined in this report, the majority of both male and female victims, regardless of sexual orientation, reported having one perpetrator in their lifetime. Across all forms of violence, the majority of bisexual women and heterosexual female victims reported having only male perpetrators. The majority of heterosexual male victims of sexual violence other than rape identified their perpetrator as exclusively female. Almost all gay male victims of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner reported their perpetrator as being of the same sex. The majority of lesbian victims of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner reported their perpetrator as female.

To our knowledge, the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) provides the first nationally representative prevalence estimates of sexual violence, stalking, and intimate partner violence among those who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. These nationally representative findings are consistent with findings from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), which found a higher prevalence of dating violence and unwanted forced sexual intercourse among lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth compared to heterosexual youth (Kann et al., 2011). The YRBSS, focuses on a variety of different risk

behaviors of adolescents in grades 9–12 and, unlike NISVS, does not focus exclusively or as intensively on intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking.

Additional research would help improve the understanding of the relatively high levels of victimization experienced by bisexual women as compared to heterosexual women. Similarly, bisexual men evidenced a higher prevalence of sexual violence, other than rape, in comparison to heterosexual men. Due to small cell sizes, many of the estimates for men were not reported and statistical comparisons were not examined. In the future, the ability of NISVS to combine data across years will allow for an examination of whether bisexual men evidence similarly elevated levels of victimization across multiple forms of violence, as found among bisexual women.

## Limitations

The findings of this report are subject to a number of limitations, which are explained in detail in the *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report* (Black et al., 2011). There are additional limitations related specifically to this report. Respondents with a victimization history who did not report their sexual orientation were not included in subgroup analyses. These missing data impact the ability to compare estimates across reports. Therefore, comparisons between the findings in this special report and the main summary report cannot be made. Small numbers for particular subgroups limited our ability to report and to detect differences between groups

based upon sexual orientation. For example, individual forms of severe physical violence by an intimate partner experienced among bisexual men and gay men in their lifetimes were not reported due to small numbers. Furthermore, insufficient statistical power due to small cell size restricted the application of statistical tests for differences between these groups. It is possible that other variables, such as age, race, and income, might partially explain the differences found between bisexual and heterosexual respondents. For example, many of the forms of violence examined in this report are more prevalent during adolescence and young adulthood (Basile, 2005; Basile & Black, 2010; Breiding et al., 2008) and it is possible that there are cohort effects. Also, the possible hesitancy of participants to disclose their sexual orientation based on perceived risk or fear of discrimination may have resulted in the misclassification of sexual orientation for some respondents. Finally, research suggests that there is a degree of fluidity related to self-identified sexual orientation across the life span (Diamond, 2008; Ott et al., 2011). Consequently, the basis of the key independent variable in this report, current sexual orientation, may not represent the sexual orientation of respondents when the violence actually occurred.





## Implications for Prevention

This report highlights the lifetime prevalence of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking victimization for U.S. women and men by self-reported sexual orientation including those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and heterosexual. While *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report* (Black et al., 2011) focused on the population as a whole and found that the experiences of sexual violence, stalking, and intimate partner violence place a substantial burden on women and men in the United States, this report offers a more focused examination of these forms of violence by self-reported sexual orientation. The pattern of results suggests that individuals who self-identify as lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) experience an equal or greater likelihood of experiencing sexual violence, stalking, and intimate partner violence as compared to self-identified heterosexuals.

The findings in this report suggest a number of specific prevention implications that may be considered. First, the high levels of violence experienced by bisexual women and the high levels of sexual violence other than rape experienced by bisexual men suggest a particular need for services and support systems focused on bisexual women and men. In addition, lesbian women and gay men evidenced levels of violence victimization that were equal to or higher than those of heterosexual persons indicating the

need to ensure that prevention and intervention resources be available for these groups at commensurate levels to those available for heterosexual populations.

Another finding that may have implications for prevention is that bisexual women and lesbian women are less likely than heterosexual women to have only one perpetrator of sexual violence other than rape. This suggests that additional efforts might be needed to prevent revictimization among bisexual and lesbian women.

Other results in this report suggest opportunities for the targeting of prevention efforts. Although this report was not able to produce a reliable estimate of lifetime rape victimization for lesbian women and bisexual and gay men, it was clear that among women who experienced rape, bisexual women were more likely to experience their first rape between the ages of 11 and 17 years, as compared to heterosexual women. Many people may not identify their sexual orientation during their adolescence, making it difficult to target specific subgroups of adolescents for prevention, further strengthening the need for broad-based prevention efforts that include individuals as well as communities. However, more research could be undertaken to better understand the adolescent experience of bisexual women and other LGB individuals, with the goal of identifying potential risk

or protective factors for rape as an adolescent.

Another avenue for targeting prevention efforts is related to the sex of perpetrators. Like heterosexual women, bisexual women and lesbian women predominantly reported male perpetrators of rape and sexual violence other than rape. Further, bisexual women and men reported predominantly opposite-sex perpetrators of intimate partner violence (among those who experienced rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner). Future research focused on better understanding the dynamics surrounding experiences of intimate partner violence in opposite-sex relationships as compared to same-sex relationships for bisexual men and women is warranted.

### Ensure Access to Protection, Services, and Resources

Currently, communities are lacking in resources for LGB victims of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking. While there are approximately 2,000 domestic-violence shelters (National Network to End Domestic Violence, 2011) in the United States, only a small fraction have programs designed specifically for lesbian survivors of intimate partner violence (Helfrich & Simpson, 2005). The number of services available to gay and bisexual men is even more limited (Davies, 2002). A critical need exists

for services and resources for LGB victims of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking. In order to address the burden of domestic violence among this population, laws that protect victims of domestic violence could explicitly include members of the LGB community. Currently, LGB individuals are covered in most state domestic violence laws (including civil and criminal protections such as protective orders) through the use of gender-neutral language. However, because of the gender-neutral language, the final decision on whether LGB persons are protected or not under the law may be at the discretion of an individual judge. In addition, a few remaining states require that an intimate relationship exists between two people of the opposite sex in order for an order of protection to be issued. In many cases, in these states, the victims of same-sex intimate partner violence are prohibited from seeking legal protection under the law (American Bar Association, 2008).

Given the findings of this report and the current state of the practice field, additional efforts could be made to enhance training for domestic violence and sexual assault service providers. Such training may improve access to services for individuals who either experience intimate partner violence, sexual violence, or stalking in the context of a same-sex relationship. In light of these findings, state and local criminal justice systems may want to consider how the services they provide serve intimate partner violence and sexual violence victims regardless of sexual orientation.

Nonbiased training and expanded education for service providers that focus on LGB issues as they relate to intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking are also needed (Duke & Davidson, 2009; Girshick, 2002; Simpson & Helfrich, 2005). Such education will increase knowledge, which could help facilitate reporting and work to provide survivors with the support they need. Creating a legal and resource environment that is safe and where confidentiality is maintained is an important step in the process.

### Implement Strong Data Systems for Monitoring and Evaluation

The NISVS provides the first national-level data on the prevalence of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking among the LGB population. In order to more fully understand the extent to which intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking is prevalent among and impacts LGB survivors, more research as well as ongoing data collection is needed. The use of consistent measures of sexual orientation and gender identity will help to consistently report these types of violence occurring within LGB communities and to LGB individuals. The Department of Health and Human Services is developing standardized measures of sexual orientation and gender identity to be included in all national surveys in an attempt to collect more reliable data (Department of Health and Human Services, 2011) and NISVS will incorporate these measures once they are completed.

### Conclusion

The combined efforts of public health, criminal justice, service providers, and other stakeholders can improve our knowledge about intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking in LGB communities and improve the availability of prevention programs and services for those affected by violence.

These findings underscore the broad range of violence experienced by LGB individuals in the United States and reiterate the important need for immediate, but thoughtful, actions to prevent and respond to the violence occurring within LGB populations. A more comprehensive plan for violence prevention that includes LGB individuals is needed to address issues that include effective prevention efforts focused on intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking. In addition, the inclusion of LGB persons in national violence research will assist in furthering a more comprehensive understanding of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking.







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