

## Date Rape

### Who is most at risk?

- Of rape victims who reported the offense to law enforcement, about 40% were under the age of 18, and 15% were younger than 12.

Source: Greenfeld, L.A. Sex offenses and offenders: An analysis of data on rape and sexual assault: Sex offenses and offenders. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, 1997. (Bureau of Justice Statistics, report no. NCJ-163392).

- Of 1,000 representative female students at a large urban university, over half had experienced some form of unwanted sex. Twelve percent of these acts were perpetrated by casual dates and 43% by steady dating partners.

Source: Abbey, A.; Ross, L. T.; Mcduffie, D.; Mcauslan, P. Alcohol and dating risk factors for sexual assault among college women. *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 1996; 20(1)147-169

- Female adolescents are frequent victims of sexual assault and rape. The incidence of rape in the United States peaks among young women 16 to 19 years of age. The reported incidence of rape and sexual assault reflects a fraction of the actual frequency of this crime. The National Victim Center estimates that almost 700,000 women are raped each year, and that 61% of the victims are under the age of 18.

Source: FBI. Uniform crime reports: crime in the United States. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1988;46-48.

- Female adolescents are at high risk for becoming victims of acquaintance rape or “date rape.” Studies have shown that the highest incidence of acquaintance rape occurred in grade 12 and during the freshman year of college. Of the 25% of college women surveyed who reported having had unwanted sexual intercourse, 84% knew their assailant, 57% of the episodes occurred on dates, and 41% of the women stated that they were virgins at the time of the assault. Again, this is probably an underestimation of the true incidence of date rape

Sources: Koss MP, Gidycz CA, Wisniewski N. The scope of rape: incidence and prevalence of sexual aggression and victimization in a national sample of higher education students. *J Consult Clin Psychol* 1987; 55:162-170. Gavey N. Sexual victimization prevalence among New Zealand university students. *J Consult Clin Psychol* 1991; 59:464-466.

### Risk factors:

- The National Crime Victimization Survey indicates that for 1992-1993, 92% of rapes were committed by known assailants. About half of all rapes and

sexual assaults against women are committed by friends and acquaintances, and 26% are by intimate partners.

Source: Bachman, R. and Saltzman, L.E. Violence against women: Estimates from the redesigned survey. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, 1995. (Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, no. NCJ-154348).

- Research indicates that the majority of rapes are committed by males, and that approximately 60% of rapes occur before the victim is 18 years old.

Source: Smith P, Welchans S. Peer education: does focusing on male responsibility change sexual assault attitudes? *Viol Women* 2000; 6:1255-1268.

### **Alcohol a factor:**

- It is estimated that approximately one-half of assault cases involve alcohol consumption by the perpetrator, victim, or both. Moreover, while alcohol consumption and sexual assault frequently co-occur, this phenomenon does not prove that alcohol use causes sexual assault. Rather, alcohol contributes to sexual assault through multiple pathways, often exacerbating existing risk factors. For example, the desire to commit sexual violence may actually cause alcohol consumption in that a male perpetrator drinks alcohol before committing a sexual assault in order to justify his behavior. Whereas, among college-aged males, fraternities encourage both heavy drinking and the sexual exploitation of women.

Source: Abbey A, Zawacki T, Buck PO, et al. Alcohol and sexual assault. *Alcohol Res Health* 2001; 25:43-51 This excellent review article addresses and reports on the use of alcohol in adolescent sexual assault.

- Among adults, 30-40% of the men and 27-34% of women who perpetrated violence against their partners reported drinking at the time of the event. Moreover, alcohol-related problems such as abuse and dependence have been associated with violence among African-Americans and Caucasians but not among Hispanics.

Source: Caetano R, Schafer J, Cunradi CB. Alcohol-related intimate partner violence among white, black and Hispanic couples in the United States. *Alcohol Res Health* 2001; 25:58-65. This interesting article examines the relationship between alcohol use and intimate partner violence and race/ethnicity.

### **Date rape drugs:**

- Date rape drugs or drug-facilitated sexual assault causes sedation and amnesia to the extent that a potential victim cannot resist or may not be aware of the assault. In fact, about 25% of the women who contacted the Canadian Sexual Assault Center reported that drugs were a factor in a rape. The most commonly reported drugs in addition to alcohol to facilitate sexual assault are flunitrazepam and gamma hydroxybutyric acid (GHB), which is now touted as a new recreational 'club drug'.

Sources: Weir E. Drug-facilitated date rape. CMAJ 2001; 165:80. This is a very nice review article that addresses current information for clinicians on drug-facilitated sexual assault. Druid H, Holmgren P, Ahlner J. Flunitrazepam: an evaluation of use, abuse, and toxicity. Forensic Sci Int 2001; 122:136-141 This interesting article uses a Swedish forensic database to examine the use of flunitrazepam as an abuse substance in Sweden. Nicholson KL, Balster RL. GHB: a new and novel drug of abuse. Drug Alc Depend 2001; 63:1-22. This nice review article provides an excellent description of the properties and pharmacology of gamma hydroxybutyric acid.

### **Long term effects:**

- Victims of marital or date rape are 11 times more likely to be clinically depressed, and 6 times more likely to experience social phobia than are non-victims. Psychological problems are still evident in cases as long as 15 years after the assault.

Source: Kilpatrick, D.G., Best, C.L., Saunders, B.E., and Veronen, L.J. Rape in marriage and in dating relationships: How bad is it for mental health? Annals of New York Academy of Sciences, 1988, 528: 335-344.



### **How to Prevent Date Rape**

*Think about it before you go on a date*

- Have good communication with your date.
- Have an idea of where you're going.
- Plan to go places where there are a lot of people around.
- Suggest going on a group date if you feel uncomfortable going as a couple.
- Don't use drugs (including alcohol) that can alter your thinking and/or your behavior.
- Don't get stranded without money.
- Don't interpret a "No" as a "Yes."

*Know Where You Are Going*

- Make sure when you go out, that someone, your brother or sister, a parent or a friend, knows where you are going. Also, know how to get home on your own so you can leave if you need to.

*You Have The Right To Say No*

- Don't have sex just because someone else is paying for the date. "No" means "No!" If the person you are with moves to fast, tell him or her to stop. If it continues, move away and if you need to, leave.

*Tell Someone You Trust*

- Date rape does happen. If you have been raped or sexually assaulted, tell someone that you feel comfortable with. It's not uncommon to feel that you're to blame, but you're not. No one asks to be raped.

Source: "How to Prevent Date Rape - Teen Tips" was written by teen members of Advocates for Youth's Teen Council. Advocates for Youth, 2000 M Street NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20036, P: 202.419.3420.

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