

Highlights of *Costs of Sexual Violence in Minnesota*

What is the report?

Costs of Sexual Violence in Minnesota is the state's first-ever report on the estimated economic impact of rape and other forms of sexual assault. It was prepared by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Sexual Violence Prevention Program. It is available online at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/svp>.

What was the total cost of sexual violence?

Sexual assault in Minnesota cost more than \$8 billion in 2005. This is about three times more than costs related to drunk driving. Cost per sexual assault was estimated at \$184,000 for children and \$139,000 for adults.

Who was assaulted?

More than 61,000 Minnesota children and adults were sexually assaulted in 2005, some of them more than once, for a total of 77,000 assaults. Of the 61,000 people, 80 percent were female and 29 percent were under age 18. One in 70 Minnesota children was sexually assaulted, with the highest rate among girls aged 13-17. The report includes additional information on who was assaulted.

What costs were counted?

The report counted costs of medical and mental health care for victims, lost work and other quality-of-life issues, victim services, and criminal justice costs. In 2005, Minnesota state government spent about \$130 million on treatment and confinement of perpetrators of sexual violence and about \$90 million on medical costs and other services for victims. The report also included costs of issues that may arise after an assault, such as sexually-transmitted diseases, unplanned pregnancies, suicide, and substance abuse.

What costs were not counted?

Because data were not available, the report did not include costs of sexual harassment, pornography, voyeurism, or other forms of sexual violence. Also excluded were some indirect costs such as family and relationship problems that arise when someone is a victim or perpetrator, re-victimization during the criminal justice process, and cost of personal and community security. While state government costs were included, county costs were not included.

What is being done to prevent sexual violence?

Prevention efforts are supported by about \$800,000 per year that comes to Minnesota from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. MDH, working with diverse partners, is developing a unified state plan to prevent sexual violence, with these goals:

- Change social norms that encourage and normalize sexual violence.
- Find and train leaders across the state to educate people about prevention and the “normalization” of sexual violence.
- Learn from non-traditional communities (e.g., immigrants, people with disabilities, communities of color, GLBT persons, and prostituted women) how sexual violence affects them and how to address their needs.
- Increase the capacity of individuals, groups, and communities to prevent sexual violence.
- Seek action by local and state public policy bodies.

- Research, share, implement and evaluate best practices for preventing sexual violence.

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