Family Violence

Family violence includes child abuse and intimate partner violence. Abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual, or economic. Existing data are helpful in understanding the prevalence of abuse, but more data are needed to understand possible disparities in family violence. For more information, see the Health of Washington state chapter on Child Abuse and Neglect. ¹

Key Findings

Child Abuse

Child Protective Services Referrals
- Only a portion of child abuse is reported to Child Protective Services (CPS). Referrals are accepted for investigation following an initial screening. In 2013, 48,250 Washington children were in accepted referrals to CPS for a rate of 31 per 1,000 children under age 18. The rate of children in accepted referrals has been stable since at least 1998, which was the first year CPS data were available that counted each child only once regardless of the number of referrals. ²

History of Child Abuse
- On the 2011 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), about 21 percent of both men and women reported a history of childhood physical abuse by a parent or other adult in the home. ³,a

- On the 2011 BRFSS, women were more likely than men to report a history of childhood sexual abuse. About 22 percent of adult Washington women and 9 percent of men reported a history of childhood sexual abuse. ³,b

Intimate Partner Violence

Crime in Washington
- In 2013, there were 46,657 domestic violence offenses (including 44 homicides) reported in Washington State. Domestic violence crimes accounted for about 13 percent of all crimes reported in the state. ⁵

- Between January 1, 1997 and June 30, 2010, 514 people were killed by domestic violence abusers, or an individual associated with the abuser, in Washington State. Almost a third of the abusers who committed homicides during this time also committed suicide. Over half of the victims killed by current or former partners had children living in the home with them at the time they were murdered. ⁶

Youth Dating Violence
- In 2012, about 6 percent of 8th graders, 8 percent of 10th graders and 11 percent of 12th graders reported a boyfriend or girlfriend had limited their activities or made them feel unsafe. Females were more likely than males in grade 10 to report that their activities had been limited or a partner had made them feel unsafe. ⁴,d

- In 2012, about 7 percent of Washington 8th graders, 7 percent of 10th graders, 8 percent of 12th graders reported that a boyfriend or girlfriend had caused injuries
such as bruises, cuts, black eyes or broken bones in the past year. Males were more likely to report being hurt than females in grades 8.4,e

- Nationally in 2013, about 10 percent of 10th graders and 12 percent of 12th graders reported a boyfriend or girlfriend had hit or physically hurt them in the past 12 months.7,d In 2013, about 13 percent females and 8 percent males nationally reported a boyfriend or girlfriend had hit or physically hurt them in the past 12 months.7,d

Pregnancy Violence
- In 2009-2011, about 4 percent of Washington women reported that they were physically abused by their husband or partner before or during pregnancy. Women under age 20 were more likely than older women to report that their husband or partner had physically abused them before or during pregnancy.8,f

- In 2009-2011, about 76 percent of pregnant Washington women reported that their healthcare provider asked them during their pregnancy whether someone was hurting them physically or emotionally.8,g

Healthy People 20209
- Healthy People 2020 has a goal of reducing physical violence by current or former intimate partners, but there is no target objective.9
- The Healthy People 2020 objective is to reduce child maltreatment to 8.5 per 1,000 children under age 18 years, and maltreatment fatalities of children to 2.2 per 100,000 children under the age of 18 years. In 2012 Washington Child Protective Services (CPS) reported 4.1 children with CPS-verified maltreatment per 1,000 children and 1.32 fatalities per 100,000 children, suggesting that Washington has continued to meet Healthy People 2020 goals.9,10

**History of Child Abuse: Youth Reported**4,c

**Dating Violence: Youth Reported**4,e
**Boyfriend or Girlfriend Limiting Activities or Making Feel Unsafe: Youth Reported**[^4][^d]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Boys</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th grade</td>
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**Abuse before or during pregnancy**[^8][^f]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maternal age</th>
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<th>WAPRAMS 2009-2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;20</td>
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<td>9.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
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<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>35+</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^4]: Refer to text for details.
[^d]: Refer to text for details.
[^8]: Refer to text for details.
[^f]: Refer to text for details.
Data Sources

4. Washington State Healthy Youth Survey (2012). Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Health, Department of Social and Health Services, the Family Policy Council, the Liquor Control Board, the Department of Commerce and RMC Research Corporation. Website: http://www.waspc.org/stage.dll/$

Endnotes

a. Based on the question “Before age 18, how often did a parent or adult in your home ever hit, beat, kick, or physically hurt you in any way? Do not include spanking.”
b. Based on the question “How often did anyone at least 5 years older than you or an adult, ever touch you sexually,” “How often did anyone at least 5 years older than you or an adult, ever try to make you touch them sexually” and “How often did anyone at least 5 years older than you or an adult, force you to have sex?”
c. Based on the question “Have you ever been physically abused by an adult?”
d. Based on the question “During the past 12 months, did your boyfriend or girlfriend ever limit your activities, threaten you, or make you feel unsafe in any other way?”
e. Based on the question “During the past 12 months, have you had any injuries such as bruises, black eyes, or broken bones as a result of being hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend?”
f. Based on the questions “During the 12 months before you got pregnant with your new baby, did your husband or partner push, hit, slap, kick, choke or physically hurt you in any other way?” and “During your most recent pregnancy, did your husband or partner push, hit, slap, kick, choke or physically hurt you in any other way?”
g. Based on the question “During any of your prenatal care visits, did a doctor, nurse or other health care worker ask if someone was hurting you physically or emotionally?”

For persons with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TDD/TTY call 711).