



## rape and abuse crisis center

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### **Are Women Equally as Violent as Men?**

**Myth:** The term 'domestic violence' and 'partner abuse' mean that men and women are equally violent.

**Reality:** Research findings compiled by the U.S. Department of Justice indicate that when compared, females experience more violence by an intimate partner each year than do males. Data collected from the National Crime Victim Survey shows that "the majority (73%) of family violence victims were female. Females were 84% of spouse abuse victims and 86% of victims of abuse at the hands of a boyfriend or girlfriend. While about three-fourths of the victims of family violence were female, about 75% of the persons who committed family violence were male."<sup>1</sup>

It is also important to note the difference in the level of seriousness of assaults reported. Recent research also demonstrates that much of female violence is committed in self-defense and inflicts less injury than male perpetrated violence. Marital homicide also differs significantly by gender: most of the homicides committed by women are acts of self-defense, while almost none of the homicides committed by men are in self-defense. According to the National Crime Victims Survey, "eight in ten murderers who killed a family member were male. Males were 83% of spouse murderers and 75% of murderers who killed a boyfriend or girlfriend."<sup>2</sup>

It is hard to escape what research findings continue to tell us about domestic violence:

- Women are significantly at greater risk of partner violence and severe injury than men.
- Violence against women is primarily partner violence.
- Violence against women is primarily perpetrated by men.
- Females are at greater risk of violent assault in their own home at the hands of their male partner.

**References:**

1. United States Department of Justice: <http://www.ojp.gov/bjs/abstract/cnh05.htm>
2. National Coalition Against Domestic Violence: <http://www.ncadv.org>

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