



April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month and CDC's Injury Center is urging you to spread the word about preventing sexual assault. Sexual violence is a serious problem that affects millions of people every year. National studies indicate that an alarming 1 in 5 women have experienced rape or attempted rape and 1 in 15 men have been made to penetrate someone during their lifetimes

Sexual Violence involves a range of acts including attempted or completed forced or alcohol/drug facilitated penetration (i.e., rape), being made to penetrate someone else, verbal (non-physical) pressure that results in unwanted penetration (i.e., sexual coercion), unwanted sexual contact (e.g., fondling), and non-contact unwanted sexual experiences (e.g., verbal harassment, voyeurism). The consequences of sexual violence burden victims with physical and psychological injuries that can last throughout the lifespan—a burden that also results in significant economic and societal costs.

Sexual assault is preventable, not inevitable. Evidence supports comprehensive approaches with interventions at multiple levels (individual, relationship, community) are critical to having a population level impact on sexual violence.

Preventing Sexual Violence

CDC recently released [*STOP SV: A Technical Package to Prevent Sexual Violence*](#) to help states and communities prioritize efforts to prevent sexual violence. A technical package is a collection of strategies that represent the best available evidence to prevent or reduce public health problems like violence. The technical package highlights 5 main strategies to prevent sexual violence:



- **S** – Promote **social norms** that protect against violence
- **T** – **Teach** skills to prevent sexual violence
- **O** – Provide **opportunities** to empower and support girls and women
- **P** – Create **protective** environments
- **SV** – **Support victims/survivors to lessen harms**

This technical package is intended as a resource to guide prevention decision-making in communities and states and help focus their efforts on not only lessening the immediate and long-term harms of sexual violence, but also on preventing sexual violence from happening in the first place.

Learn More

- [STOP SV: A Technical Package to Prevent Sexual Violence](#)
- [Sexual Violence Prevention Web Pages](#)
- [PreventConnect](#)
- [National Sexual Violence Resource Center](#)

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