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Contact: Brian Namey, 202-251-9039; bnamey@nnedv.org

New Survey Underscores Need for More Services, Funding for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, Dating Violence

Washington, D.C. - The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) today welcomed new data that supports the need for funding and services for victims of violence against women. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released its first National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS), which describes the astounding prevalence of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence.

According to the survey of more than 16,500 adults, on average, 24 people per minute are victims of physical violence, rape or stalking by an intimate partner in the United States. More than 7 million women were the victims of physical violence by an intimate partner in the 12 months prior to the survey. One in four women and one in seven men reported severe physical violence perpetrated by an intimate partner. According to the CDC, this includes a range of physical violence from a slap to a longer term pattern of abuse.

The data also states that women are four times more likely than men to be beaten; six times more likely to be slammed against something; and nine times more likely to be strangled or suffocated. Seventy-two percent of women and 18 percent of men reported being frightened by the violence they experienced.

“The numbers in this new survey are staggering,” said Sue Else, president of NNEDV. “This data provides yet another body of evidence that more needs to be done to serve survivors of violence and hold perpetrators accountable.”

Nearly one in five women and one in 71 men reported having been raped at some point in their lifetime. More than one million women reported being raped in the 12 months prior to the survey. Nearly 92 percent of the female victims of rape were assaulted by an intimate partner or acquaintance.

The report emphasizes the importance of prevention and early intervention efforts. Approximately 80 percent of female victims experienced their first rape before the age of 25 and nearly half experienced the first rape before age 18. Almost a third (28 percent) of men experienced their first rape when they were ten years of age or younger.

The report's release supports the federal government's efforts to address intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking including the recently-introduced Senate bill to reauthorize the landmark Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). VAWA is the cornerstone of the federal government's response to these crimes, authorizing critical funding, support and services to survivors and to the criminal justice system. NNEDV and victim advocates across the country urge Congress to swiftly reauthorize the legislation.

"This new data confirms that we continue to rely on legislation like the Violence Against Women Act," said Else. "While the Violence Against Women Act has begun to make a difference in preventing and ending violence, it is clear that more must be done to address this significant threat to public health and safety.

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