

# WHAT IS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE?

## DEFINITION

Gender-based violence is an umbrella term that refers to different types of harm:

- Intimate partner violence, sexual assault or rape, and physical violence or threats
- Harassment, stalking, or blackmail
- Emotional abuse, financial abuse, and more.

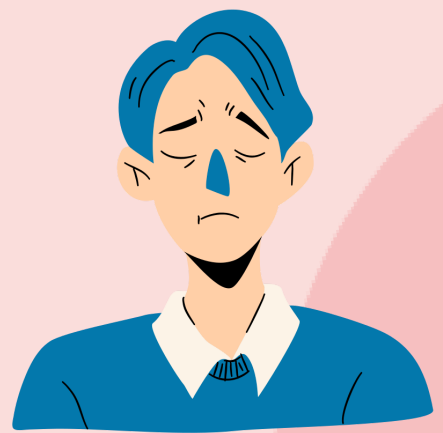
Also sometimes called **power-based violence**, GBV is a **human rights violation** and is a public health crisis in the US and globally (UNHCR, 2010).



## WHO DOES GBV AFFECT?

Anyone can experience GBV, regardless of sex, gender identity, socioeconomic status, relationship status, race or ethnicity, religion, or education level.

The most important thing to know is that victims are **NEVER** at fault for experiencing gender-based violence.



## HOW BIG OF A PROBLEM IS GBV?

According to the CDC:

- At least **50%** of women and **33%** of men experience sexual violence
- At least **41%** of women and **26%** of men experience intimate partner violence
- Nearly **half** of all first assaults occur when the victim is a minor

According to the NSVRC:

- At least **47%** of transgender individuals experience sexual assault
- These rates are **even higher** among people of color, those who have experienced homelessness, and people with disabilities



## IS GBV PREVENTABLE?

**YES!** There are *many* ways individuals and society can end the cycle of GBV. Individuals can:

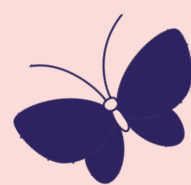
- **Interrupt** speech and/or actions that normalize violence
- Call out gender stereotypes and **friends who violate boundaries** or act inappropriately
- Teach children how to communicate and set healthy boundaries
- **Believe survivors**

(WHO.int, UN Women.org)

## RESOURCES

If gender-based violence has impacted you or someone you know, help is available. These websites can help you find support close to you:

- National Domestic Violence Hotline: [thehotline.org](http://thehotline.org)
- Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network: [rainn.org](http://rainn.org)
- National Sexual Violence Resource Center: [nsvrc.org](http://nsvrc.org)
- National Resource Center on Domestic Violence: [nrcdv.org](http://nrcdv.org)



# NOW WE KNOW GBV EXISTS... SO WHAT?

## WHAT CAUSES GBV?

Gender-based violence is a systemic problem that permeates every level of society.

- Patriarchal roots that contribute to discrimination, exclusion, and powerlessness
- Gendered stereotypes and social expectations that normalize violence, such as rape jokes or extreme jealousy/possessiveness
- Social structures that reward toxic masculinity and encourage people to misuse or abuse power
- Hate and ignorance towards those seen as "lesser", which is fueled by rigid social identities that encourage disrespect

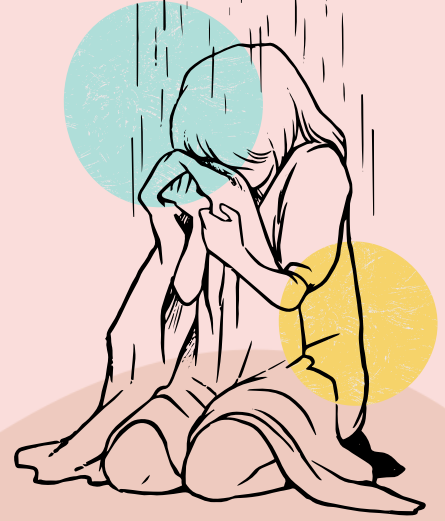


## WHY SHOULD SOCIETY CARE?

The consequences of gender-based violence are widespread and devastating to every part of society.

### Impact on Individuals:

- Long term mental health impacts
  - Isolation, sleep disorders, PTSD, anxiety and depression, and suicide
- Inability to work, inability to complete school, and difficulty functioning in daily life
- Severe physical or psychological injury, or permanent disability
- GBV can be fatal:
  - the CDC reports 20% of homicide victims were killed by an intimate partner



- Forced pregnancy
  - Unwanted pregnancy can increase risk of abuse, neglect, and homicide (Sharman et al, 2018)
  - Completed pregnancies after GBV are at much higher risk for maternal and infant death, preterm or low birth weight babies, and other complications (Nesari et al, 2018)



### Impact on Families:

- Intergenerational trauma
- Children exposed to more adverse experiences
- Lower academic performance, lower income opportunities, which can lead to cyclical poverty and violence

### Impact on Society:

- Increased strain on social welfare and healthcare systems
- Systematic exclusion of certain groups, leading to loss of vibrant and creative minds
- Cycle of continued violence
- Marginalized groups continue to be unsafe in public spaces
- Lack of social and economic opportunity

### Impact on the Economy:

Per the CDC, the lifetime economic cost on society of GBV is \$3.6 trillion!



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