

Chapter 3.

Physical Violence by Intimate Partners

National estimates of physical violence by intimate partners against American Indian and Alaska Native women and men are available from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), the National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS), and the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS).

The NCVS examined simple and aggravated assaults committed by intimate partners and family members (Greenfeld and Smith, 1999; Perry, 2004). Simple assaults are attacks and attempted attacks without weapons and without serious injury, whereas aggravated assaults are attacks and attempted attacks with weapons or with serious injury. Using NCVS data from 1992 to 2001, Perry (2004) found that the average annual rate for American Indian and Alaska Native people age 12 or older was 25 per 1,000 for aggravated assaults and 61 per 1,000 for simple assaults. Fourteen percent of aggravated assaults and 25 percent of simple assaults were committed by intimate partners and family members (the remainder were committed by acquaintances and strangers). These NCVS estimates showed that the average annual rates for victimizations committed by intimate partners and family members were 3.5 per 1,000 for aggravated assaults and 15.3 per 1,000 for simple assaults. Similar (but slightly lower) numbers had been previously reported by Greenfeld and Smith (1999), who had used NCVS data from 1992 to 1996. Their NCVS estimates showed that the average annual rates for victimizations committed by intimates and family members were 2.5 per 1,000 for aggravated assaults and 13.3 per 1,000 for simple assaults.

Key Findings

Among American Indian and Alaska Native women, 55.5 percent have experienced physical violence by intimate partners in their lifetime, and 8.6 percent have experienced it in the past year. Among American Indian and Alaska Native men, 43.2 percent have experienced physical violence by intimate partners in their lifetime and 5.6 percent have experienced it in the past year. Among American Indian and Alaska Native victims, 90 percent of women and 85 percent of men have experienced physical violence by an interracial intimate partner.

The NVAWS asked women and men whether an intimate partner had thrown something at them that could hurt; pushed, grabbed or shoved them; pulled their hair; slapped or hit them; kicked or bit them; choked or attempted to drown them; hit them with some object; beat them up; threatened them with a knife or other weapon; used a gun on them; or used a knife or other weapon on them. Intimate partners included current and former spouses, same-sex and opposite-sex cohabitating partners, and dates. Results showed that 30.7 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native women and 11.4 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native men had experienced a physical assault by

an intimate partner in their lifetime (Tjaden and Thoennes, 2000a). Differences across racial groups were not statistically significant, but sample sizes were small (88 women and 105 men).

Similar questions were included in the NISVS. Respondents were asked whether any of their current or former romantic or sexual partners had ever slapped them, pushed or shoved them, hurt them by pulling their hair, hit them with a fist or something hard, kicked them, slammed them against something, tried to hurt them by choking or suffocating them, beaten them, burned them on purpose, or used a knife or gun on them. The 2010 results from the general population sample showed that 45.9 percent of non-Hispanic American Indian and Alaska Native women (an estimated 399,000) and 45.3 percent of non-Hispanic American Indian and Alaska Native men (an estimated 365,000) had experienced physical violence by an intimate partner (Black et al., 2011). The 2011

results showed that 51.7 percent of non-Hispanic American Indian and Alaska Native women (an estimated 424,000) and 43.0 percent of non-Hispanic American Indian and Alaska Native men (an estimated 355,000) had experienced physical violence by an intimate partner (Breiding et al., 2014). Past-year estimates were not provided.

This chapter focuses on physical violence by intimate partners and does not include other forms of violence by intimate partners (such as sexual violence or stalking). With the NISVS data, it is not always possible to know with certainty whether sexual violence and stalking incidents were committed by intimate partners or by non-intimate partners (for additional details, see Rosay's 2015 technical report, chapters 19 and 26). As a result, the analysis below focuses on physical violence only. Both lifetime and past-year estimates are provided.

Definition of NIJ Measures of Physical Violence by Intimate Partners

Physical violence by intimate partners includes (a) being slapped, pushed or shoved, and (b) severe physical violence. Severe physical violence includes being hit with a fist or something hard, being kicked, being hurt by having your hair pulled, being slammed against something, being hurt by being choked or suffocated, being beaten, being burned on purpose, or having a knife or gun used on you. Intimate partners include current and former romantic or sexual partners. This includes spouses, boyfriends, girlfriends, and people the respondents were dating, seeing, or hooking up with.

Differences Between CDC and NIJ Measures of Physical Violence by Intimate Partners

Other than differences in data cleaning and data analysis, there are no differences between the CDC and the NIJ measures of physical violence by intimate partners. However, it is important to note that the NIJ measures do not include stalking, sexual violence, psychological aggression, or the control of reproductive and sexual health (these, along with physical violence, are all included in CDC's measure of violence by intimate partners). Stalking and sexual violence were excluded from NIJ's measures because "it was not always possible to assess the age or relationship at the time specific types of violent behavior occurred" (Black et al., 2011:85). Psychological aggression and the control of reproductive or sexual health were excluded to focus on physical violence. Additional details are available in Rosay's (2015) technical report (see chapters 19 and 26).

Prevalence of Physical Violence by Intimate Partners Against Women

Lifetime and past-year estimates of physical violence against women are presented in table 3.1.

More than 1 in 2 American Indian and Alaska Native women (55.5 percent) have experienced physical violence by intimate partners in their lifetime:

- 52.2 percent have been slapped, pushed, or shoved by intimate partners.
- 42.4 percent have experienced severe physical violence by intimate partners.

Overall, more than 1 million American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced physical violence by intimate partners in their lifetime.

More than 1 in 12 American Indian and Alaska Native women (8.6 percent) have experienced physical violence by intimate partners in the past year:

- 8.0 percent have been slapped, pushed, or shoved by intimate partners.
- 2.8 percent have experienced severe physical violence by intimate partners.

Overall, more than 155,000 American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced physical violence by intimate partners in the past year.

Relative to non-Hispanic White-only women, American Indian and Alaska Native women are —

- 1.6 times as likely to have experienced physical violence by intimate partners ($p < .05$).
- 1.6 times as likely to have been slapped, pushed, or shoved by intimate partners ($p < .05$).
- 1.7 times as likely to have experienced severe physical violence by intimate partners ($p < .05$).

Past-year differences across racial and ethnic groups are not statistically significant ($p > .05$).

Table 3.1 Weighted Estimates of Physical Violence by Intimate Partners Against Women

Physical Violence by Intimate Partners Against Women	American Indian or Alaska Native	Non-Hispanic White Only	Relative Risk
Lifetime Estimate	55.5%	34.5%	1.6
Slapped, Pushed, or Shoved	52.2%	32.3%	1.6
Severe Physical Violence	42.4%	24.8%	1.7
Past-Year Estimate	8.6%	4.1%	NS
Slapped, Pushed, or Shoved	8.0%	3.6%	NS
Severe Physical Violence	2.8%	2.6%	NS

NS = Percentages across racial and ethnic groups are not significantly different ($p > .05$).
 Note: Confidence intervals are available in appendix table A.6.

Prevalence of Physical Violence by Intimate Partners Against Men

Lifetime and past-year estimates of physical violence against men are presented in table 3.2.

More than 1 in 3 American Indian and Alaska Native men (43.2 percent) have experienced physical violence by intimate partners in their lifetime:

- 36.5 percent have been slapped, pushed, or shoved by intimate partners.
- 25.2 percent have experienced severe physical violence by intimate partners.

Overall, more than 745,000 American Indian and Alaska Native men have experienced physical violence by intimate partners in their lifetime.

More than 1 in 18 American Indian and Alaska Native men (5.6 percent) have experienced physical violence by intimate partners in the past year:

- 5.4 percent have been slapped, pushed, or shoved by intimate partners.

- 4.2 percent have experienced severe physical violence by intimate partners.

Overall, more than 95,000 American Indian and Alaska Native men have experienced physical violence by intimate partners in the past year.

Relative to non-Hispanic White-only men, American Indian and Alaska Native men are —

- 1.4 times as likely to have experienced physical violence by intimate partners ($p < .05$).
- 1.7 times as likely to have experienced severe physical violence by intimate partners ($p < .05$).

Other differences across racial and ethnic groups are not statistically significant ($p > .05$).

Lifetime Forms of Physical Violence by Intimate Partners

Table 3.3 provides details on the types of physical violence that were experienced by American Indian and Alaska Native victims in their lifetime.

Table 3.2 Weighted Estimates of Physical Violence by Intimate Partners Against Men

Physical Violence by Intimate Partners Against Men	American Indian or Alaska Native	Non-Hispanic White Only	Relative Risk
Lifetime Estimate	43.2%	30.5%	1.4
Slapped, Pushed, or Shoved	36.5%	28.0%	NS
Severe Physical Violence	25.2%	14.5%	1.7
Past-Year Estimate	5.6%	4.5%	NS
Slapped, Pushed, or Shoved	5.4%	4.2%	NS
Severe Physical Violence	4.2%	1.8%	NS

NS = Percentages across racial and ethnic groups are not significantly different ($p > .05$).
 Note: Confidence intervals are available in appendix table A.7.

Among female victims, the most common forms of physical violence included being pushed or shoved (experienced by 83.2 percent of victims) and being slapped, slammed against something, and hit with a fist or something hard (all experienced by more than half of victims). Almost 1 in 2 female victims were beaten. More than 1 in 3 female victims were hurt by being choked or suffocated, and more than 1 in 4 were kicked, were hurt by having their hair pulled, and had a knife or gun used on them. Almost 1 in 10 female victims were burned on purpose.

Among male victims, the most common forms of physical violence included being slapped (experienced by 66.4

percent of victims), being pushed or shoved (experienced by 64.0 percent of victims), and being hit with a fist or something hard (experienced by 43.9 percent of victims). More than 1 in 5 male victims were kicked, and more than 1 in 6 were hurt by having their hair pulled, were slammed against something, and were beaten. More than 1 in 9 male victims had a knife or gun used on them.

Relative to female victims, male victims were less likely to have been slammed against something, to have been hurt by being choked or suffocated, to have been beaten, or to have been burned on purpose (differences across gender groups are statistically significant, $p < .05$; results not shown).

Table 3.3 Weighted Estimates of Lifetime Physical Violence by Intimate Partners Experienced by American Indian and Alaska Native Victims

Lifetime Physical Violence by Intimate Partners Experienced by American Indian and Alaska Native Victims	Female Victims	Male Victims
Slapped	59.8%	66.4%
Pushed or shoved	83.2%	64.0%
Hit with a fist or something hard	53.6%	43.9%
Kicked	28.3%	22.0%
Hurt by having hair pulled	27.3%	18.6%
Slammed against something	53.8%	18.0%
Hurt by being choked or suffocated	37.6%	6.3%
Beaten	45.9%	17.5%
Burned on purpose	9.1%	0.2%
Had a knife or gun used on them	27.1%	11.3%

Notes: Samples are restricted to victims of physical violence by intimate partners. Confidence intervals are available in appendix table A.8.

Race and Ethnicity of Perpetrators

Figures 3.1 and 3.2 provide information about the percentage of victims who have experienced physical violence in their lifetime by interracial and intraracial intimate partners. Interracial intimate partners are of a different race and ethnicity than the victim, while intraracial intimate partners are of the same race and ethnicity as the victim. All differences across racial and ethnic groups are statistically significant ($p < .05$).

American Indian and Alaska Native victims are significantly more likely than non-Hispanic White-only victims to have experienced physical violence by an interracial intimate partner:

- Female victims are 5.0 times as likely to have experienced physical violence by an interracial intimate partner as non-Hispanic White-only female victims (90 percent versus 18 percent).

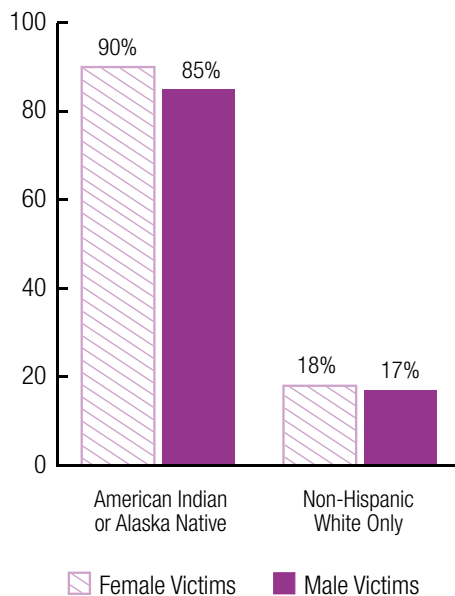
- Male victims are 5.0 times as likely to have experienced physical violence by an interracial intimate partner as non-Hispanic White-only male victims (85 percent versus 17 percent).

Conversely, American Indian and Alaska Native victims are significantly less likely than non-Hispanic White-only victims to have experienced physical violence by an intraracial intimate partner:

- Female victims are 0.2 times as likely to have experienced physical violence by an intraracial intimate partner as non-Hispanic White-only female victims (18 percent versus 89 percent).
- Male victims are 0.2 times as likely to have experienced physical violence by an intraracial intimate partner as non-Hispanic White-only male victims (21 percent versus 90 percent).

Figure 3.1 Interracial Physical Violence by Intimate Partners: Weighted Estimates for Lifetime Victims

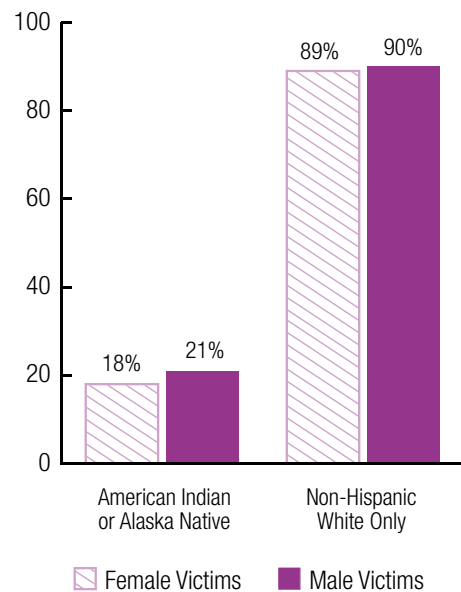
Percentage of victims experiencing physical violence by an interracial intimate partner



Notes: Samples are restricted to victims of physical violence by intimate partners. Confidence intervals are available in appendix table A.9.

Figure 3.2 Intraracial Physical Violence by Intimate Partners: Weighted Estimates for Lifetime Victims

Percentage of victims experiencing physical violence by an intraracial intimate partner



Notes: Samples are restricted to victims of physical violence by intimate partners. Confidence intervals are available in appendix table A.9.

Summary

Results showed that 55.5 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native women and 43.2 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native men have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner. These rates are significantly higher than the rates for non-Hispanic White-only women and men. They are similar to the previously reported NISVS rates and greater than the NVAWS rates. Past-year estimates showed that 8.6 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native women and 5.6 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native men have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner. These rates are higher than the rates for non-Hispanic White-only women and men, but not significantly so ($p > .05$). Not surprisingly, they are substantially greater than the NCVS rates.

Four behaviors were experienced by at least half of American Indian and Alaska Native female victims. These included being slapped, pushed or shoved, hit with a fist or something hard, and slammed against something. The behavior that was experienced by the least percentage of American Indian and Alaska Native female victims was being burned on purpose — but almost 1 in 10

experienced this form of physical violence. In addition, American Indian and Alaska Native female victims were significantly more likely to have been burned on purpose than American Indian and Alaska Native male victims ($p < .05$). Two behaviors were experienced by at least half of American Indian and Alaska Native male victims — being slapped and being pushed or shoved.

Relative to non-Hispanic White-only victims, American Indian and Alaska Native victims (both male and female) are significantly more likely to have experienced physical violence by an interracial perpetrator. Conversely, they are significantly less likely than non-Hispanic White-only victims to have experienced physical violence by an intraracial perpetrator.

It is important to emphasize that not all forms of physical violence are included. In addition, physical violence by non-intimate partners is not included. Nonetheless, estimates show that approximately half of American Indian and Alaska Native women and men have experienced physical violence by intimate partners. This is significantly more prevalent for American Indian and Alaska Native women and men than for non-Hispanic White-only women and men.