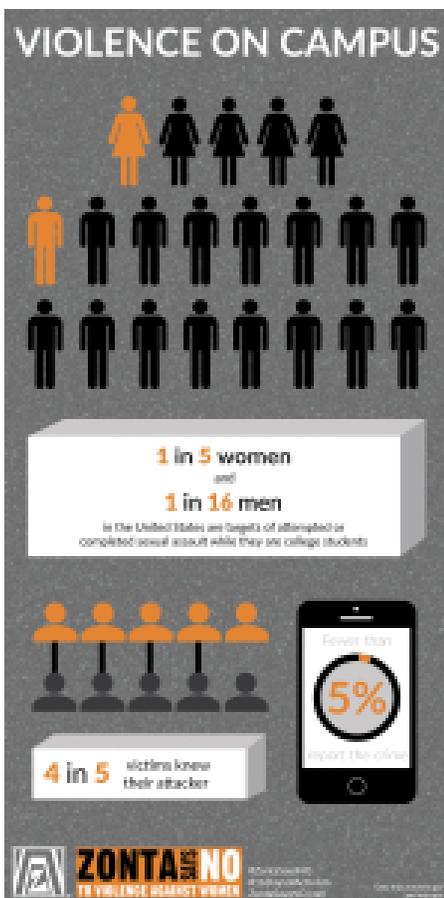




16 Days of Activism – Day 9

Rape and other forms of sexual assault are prevalent on college campuses across the U.S. However, almost 90% of college campuses reported zero rapes in 2015, according to a new report from the American Association of University Women (“AAUW”), but those statistics do not add up. The AAUW was obviously skeptical about the accuracy of these statistics, given that the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (“NSVRC”) reports that one in five women will be sexually assaulted in college, as well as one in 16 men, and that statistics from the Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (“RAINN”) report about 23% of college women and 5% of college men "experience rape or sexual assault through physical force, violence, or incapacitation," as have 21% of transgender or gender nonconforming students. The idea that 89% of the about 11,000 campuses included in the report *actually* had no rapes or sexual assaults is ridiculous, and that fact isn't lost on the researchers who collected the data. The researchers say that these numbers "indicate that the annual statistics collected by colleges and universities still do not tell the full story of sexual violence on campus," and that the schools that reported no sexual assaults "have work to do." The stats come from colleges reporting crime data as per the Clery Act, which requires colleges and universities to "provide transparency around campus crime policy and statistics."



It may be terrible to think that schools that do not have any evidence of rape are failing students instead of somehow protecting their students from any and all instances of sexual violence, but this is the reality. Knowing how pervasive rape culture can be on college campuses, it is clear that these schools do not have necessary methods in place for survivors to feel safe reporting their assaults. In fact, the schools that *do* report sexual violence on campus are likely safer for students, because it indicates previous students have felt safe going to campus officials for help. "The extraordinarily high number of zeros suggests some students continue to feel uncomfortable coming forward to report such incidents at some schools," the researchers said in the study. "This should be a cause for concern for colleges and universities. Schools must take an honest look at their processes: Do they facilitate accurate data collection, welcome reporting, provide resources and training to support survivors, and disclose statistics correctly? If not, reforms must be made." Despite under reporting, the statistics are clear that at least 19% of women will be sexually assaulted during their time at college, and 90% of campus sexual assaults are committed by perpetrators that the survivor knows. Studies also indicate that 84% of female survivors report being sexually assaulted during their first four semesters on campus. This has been called the 'red zone' on college campuses. Disturbingly, the majority of undetected

college rapists are likely serial perpetrators, committing an average of 6 rapes each. In addition to sexual assault, 13% of women report being stalked during their time in college, and 43% of dating college women report experiencing violent and abusive dating behaviors including physical, sexual, technology-facilitated, verbal or other forms of controlling abuse.

REPORTING

- Only 12% of college student survivors report the assault to police. Notably, only 7% of survivors of incapacitated sexual assault report to the police. Survivors cite a number of reasons for not reporting: not wanting others to know; lack of proof; fear of retaliation; being unsure of whether what happened constitutes assault; did not know how to report; and fear of being treated poorly by the criminal justice system.
 - Of those victims who have called the police, 2 in 3 were afraid to call the police in the future.

- Only 1 in 5 victims actually felt safer after calling the police, and 1 in 3 victims felt less safe.
- Of victims who have called the police, nearly half felt police discriminated against them.
- Of victims who have called the police, 1 in 4 report being arrested or threatened with arrest.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM RESPONSES

- For every 100 rapes committed, approximately two rapists will ever serve a day in prison.
- A plurality of law enforcement officers believe rape myths, which refer to the stereotypical and empirically incorrect beliefs that an individual holds concerning rape, rapists, and the victims of rape. Some examples of rape myths include: only bad girls get raped, “women ask for it,” and women “cry rape” only when they’ve been jilted or have something to cover up.
- Approximately 50% of all assaults that result in a police investigation are prosecuted. Prosecutors were more inclined to prosecute if the suspect had a criminal record; if there was physical evidence; and if there were no questions about the survivor’s character/behavior during the assault.
- Although there is little national data on this topic, an estimated 400,000 rape kits have not been tested.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE

- 34% of college student survivors have experienced Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.
- 33% of college student survivors have experienced depression.
- Drug or alcohol abuse (often used by survivors to self-medicate) was reported by 40% of college student survivors as opposed to 17% of the general college population.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- There are few student survivor-specific estimates of the costs of violence. The White House noted that for rape survivors, studies found that costs ranged from \$87,000 to \$240,776 per rape. These costs include medical treatment, counseling, and harder to quantify impacts on quality of life.
- For student survivors, costs can also include tutoring, lost tuition, and accrued student loan interest if they take a leave of absence.

TAKE ACTION NOW

#MYACTIONS MATTER

What can **you** do to take action against gender-based violence?

ACT.

Giving your time to an organization or group that works to prevent and address gender-based violence. Be the change you want to see and **take on a leadership role within your community!**

 Status of Women Canada / Condition féminine Canada

Canada