

# African-American Women and Sexual Assault

- African American girls and women 12 years old and older experienced higher rates of rape and sexual assault than white, Asian, and Latina girls and women from 2005-2010.  
*U.S. DOJ Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Female Victims of Sexual Violence, 1994-2010," 2013*
- 40-60% of black women report being subjected to coercive sexual contact by age 18.  
*Black Women's Blueprint, "The Truth Commission on Black Women and Sexual Violence," 2012*
- 4 in 10 black women have been subjected to intimate partner violence in their lifetimes.  
*National Center for Injury Prevention and Control and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report," 2011.*
- 40% of confirmed sex trafficking survivors in the U.S are African-American.  
*Banks, Duren and Kyckelhahn, Tracey, "Characteristics of Suspected Human Trafficking Incidents, 2008-2010", The Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011.*
- "Stereotypes regarding African American women's sexuality, including terms like 'Black jezebel,' 'promiscuous,' and 'exotic,' perpetuate the notion that African American women are willing participants in their own victimization. However, these myths only serve to demean, obstruct appropriate legal remedies, and minimize the seriousness of sexual violence perpetrated against African American women."  
*Women of Color Network, "Communities of Color: African American Women" 2014.*
- A study found that college students perceived a black victim of sexual assault to be less believable and more responsible for her assault than a white victim.  
*Donovan, "To Blame or Not to Blame: Influences of Target Race and Observer Sex on Rape Blame Attribution," 2007.*
- Some African American women's decisions not to report their sexual assaults may be influenced by the criminal justice system's history of treating European-American perpetrators and victims differently than perpetrators and victims of color.  
*Women's Institute for Leadership Development for Human Rights, "The Treatment of Women of Color Under U.S. Law: Violence," 2001.*

## In Maryland:

- In 2013, 30.1% of the population in Maryland is African American, compared to 13.2% in the U.S. overall. Therefore, it is particularly important for sexual assault survivor services in Maryland to consider the unique issues this community faces, and how best to serve African American survivors.  
*U.S. Census Bureau, "State and County Quick Facts: Maryland," 2013.*
- A study of African American women in Maryland found that African American respondents were less likely than white women to access services such as those offered at rape crisis centers. As well African American women in Maryland were less satisfied with sexual assault hotline services than white women were.  
*Weist et al, "Sexual Assault in Maryland: The African American Experience," 2007.*