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.
  

- 40-60% of black women report being subjected to coercive sexual contact by age 18.
  

- 4 in 10 black women have been subjected to intimate partner violence in their lifetimes.
  

- 40% of confirmed sex trafficking survivors in the U.S are African-American.
  

- “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.”
  

- 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.
  

### 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.
  