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August 15, 2017

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New Resource Outlines Economic Costs of Violence Against Women

Health care costs, job instability, and reduced educational attainment compound the negative effects of violence

Washington, DC—Intimate partner violence (IPV), sexual assault, and stalking have profound economic effects on victims and survivors, according to [a new fact sheet](#) from the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR), which summarizes findings from research literature on the economic consequences and costs of violence against women. In addition to physical harm, survivors and victims often must contend with high medical expenses, lower wages from diminished educational attainment, lost wages from missed work and job loss, debt and poor credit, and costs associated with housing instability.

“In addition to the physical costs, the economic costs of violence continue long after abuse has ended, making survivors vulnerable to economic instability across the lifespan. We all have an interest in reducing violence against women and helping them cover the costs when it does occur, so survivors may fully recover and rebuild their lives,” said Director of IWPR's [Economic Security for Survivors Project](#) Sarah Gonzalez Bocinski.

The [fact sheet](#) compiles social science research and survey findings in four key areas of economic impact:

- IPV assault, rape, and psychological abuse increase **health care utilization**, resulting in high out-of-pocket costs and medical debt. For example, one survey in the Pacific Northwest found that health care costs for those experiencing abuse were 42 percent higher than the costs for nonabused women.
- Physical and psychological trauma and partner interference impede **educational attainment**. In addition to fewer years of higher education than those who did not experience violence, research also finds challenges to participating in and completing job training programs that can lead to better jobs with higher earnings.
- Physical, psychological, and economic abuse often lead to **job instability**. In addition to lost days of paid work, research has found that experiencing violence often leads to job loss.

- **Debt and poor credit** due to financial control and exploitation restricts **access to safe housing** and can lead to homelessness. Surveys of survivors have found that victims of IPV who seek to break free from an abusive relationship often face housing instability and homelessness due to high housing costs, economic insecurity, damaged credit, and/or a negative tenant history.

One analysis of the National Youth Survey found that adolescents who experienced physical or sexual assault earned more than one dollar less per hour than their peers, with researchers estimating the expected lifetime income losses for adolescent victims of sexual violence at \$52,242 in 2017 dollars. Another study estimates the costs of IPV to the United States economy at \$9.3 billion in 2017 dollars.

Read [the fact sheet](#), "The Economic Cost of Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking" at IWPR.org.

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