

Research on Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence



Using methodologically rigorous approaches, RTI International's research professionals seek results that can reduce the prevalence, consequences, and costs of intimate partner violence (IPV) and sexual violence (SV). For more than 30 years, we have researched epidemiology, prevention, crime, violence, and justice systems, and we conduct a variety of studies specifically related to IPV and SV among adults and teens.

Overview

IPV and SV endanger people's health and well-being throughout the world. Despite a considerable amount of research into this public health and safety problem, researchers continue to be challenged in their efforts to effectively measure the prevalence and nature of IPV and SV and to identify evidence-based prevention and intervention approaches, particularly among college campus and military populations.

Areas of Expertise

RTI's extensive data collection, intervention development, evaluation, and analytic capabilities yield valid, comprehensive, actionable data. In particular, our Global Gender Center (www.rti.org/gender) unites experts across numerous disciplines to improve knowledge, policies, practice, and programs to reduce gender inequities and disparities.

Our substantive expertise offers familiarity with the current state of research, policy, and practice priorities regarding IPV, SV, teen dating violence (TDV), and the intersections between relationship violence and other risk behaviors, as well as evidence-based prevention approaches to address these types of violence. Our technical expertise

encompasses intervention development, outcome evaluation (with a focus on randomized controlled trials), process and outcome evaluation, literature review, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, technical assistance, intervention development and training, and dissemination.

RTI's research includes

- Researching campus sexual assault and IPV among college students to understand the prevalence and nature of the problem and inform prevention, risk reduction, and service provision activities
- Building a framework for addressing IPV in Healthy Relationship (HR) programs, identifying and testing IPV screening tools and protocols with HR program populations, documenting IPV experiences among HR program populations, and documenting HR program approaches to addressing IPV
- Providing training and technical assistance to federal grantees that are implementing and evaluating TDV and SV prevention programs
- Conducting implementation, outcome, cost-effectiveness, and policy evaluations of TDV prevention efforts involving the Safe Dates program and other evidence-based and evidence-informed programs

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- Working with military partners to understand IPV and SV prevalence; examine co-occurrence of spouse abuse, child abuse, and substance abuse and related service delivery issues; and develop and evaluate SV interventions
- Studying IPV and SV among American Indian/Alaska Native women living on reservation lands, including prevalence and nature of violence and federal and tribal responses
- Understanding and cataloguing workplace-based approaches for addressing IPV, including through employee assistance programs
- Conducting evidence-based reviews and environmental scans of sexual assault and SV prevention programs

Project Highlights

Campus Climate Survey Validation Study (CCSVS)—RTI and the Bureau of Justice Statistics are designing and conducting the CCSVS to collect valid university-level data on campus climate and sexual violence. We will be cognitively testing the survey instrument, recruiting 10–15 universities to participate in a pilot test, and conducting a pilot test of the survey instrument and the data collection methodology. (Office of Violence Against Women)

Development and Evaluation of a U.S. Air Force Intervention to Reduce Victims' Risk of Repeat Sexual Abuse/Assault—RTI is working with the Air Force to develop, implement, and evaluate an empirically based revictimization intervention for female and male sexual abuse/assault victims. This includes developing screening measures to identify those victimized prior to service entry; developing an empirically based graphic (comic book format) short story revictimization intervention and complementary evidence-based classroom intervention that will be provided during Basic Military Training; developing web-based booster interventions after Basic Training; and designing and executing a process and randomized experimental outcome evaluation to assess implementation, fidelity, acceptability, and impacts of the intervention on sexual abuse/assault outcomes. (U.S. Department of Agriculture)

Dating Matters: Strategies to Promote Healthy Teen

Relationships Initiative—The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed Dating Matters as a comprehensive, community approach to preventing TDV. RTI provides direct training and technical assistance to Dating Matters grantees; monitors and supports training and technical assistance activities, including provision of logistical support; and conducts data collection, analysis, and reporting for a process evaluation of Dating Matters activities, which further informs technical assistance. (CDC)

Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships

—RTI conducted an independent outcome and policy evaluation of the Start Strong program, which funded 11 sites across the country to promote healthy relationships among 11- to 14-year-olds and identified promising strategies at multiple levels across the community to prevent TDV. The outcome evaluation examined both student and teacher differences over time in four Start Strong schools and four comparison schools. The policy evaluation assessed the adoption, implementation, and sustainability of TDV prevention policy efforts in all Start Strong sites over the course of 2 years. (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Blue Shield of California Foundation)

National Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence Survey

(NISVS)—RTI and CDC worked collaboratively to design and implement the NISVS, which generates accurate national- and state-level data on the prevalence and nature of IPV and SV. In 2010–2013, we completed more than 55,000 interviews. In 2016–2017, we are conducting 27,500 interviews of the U.S. population and more than 10,000 interviews with active-duty military and female spouses. The findings have informed the development of programs and policies designed to prevent IPV and SV in the United States. (CDC)

More Information

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