Consequences of Sexual Assault

Sexual Assault

Suicide
- Rape victims are 9 times more likely than non-victims to have attempted suicide.

Psychiatric Problems
- An estimated 3.8 million adult women have had rape-related Post Traumatic Stress Disorder; an additional 211,000 will develop it each year

Substance Abuse
- Victims of rape with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) are 13.4 times more likely than non-victims to have major alcohol-related problems and 26 times more likely to have serious drug problems.

Self-Esteem Problems
- Women with very poor self-esteem are four times as likely to have a history of childhood sexual abuse as other women.

Homelessness
- One study of homeless women found that 38 percent had a history of childhood sexual abuse.
- An additional 46 percent had a history of rape as an adult.

Teen Pregnancy
- 62 percent of pregnant or parenting adolescents had experienced contact molestation, attempted rape, or rape prior to their first pregnancy.
- Between 11 and 20 percent of girls were pregnant as a direct result of sexual assault.

HIV Risk Factors
- There is a strong link between sexual abuse victimization early in life and involvement later in life in sexual behaviors that place women at risk for contracting HIV.
- In one study, 65 percent of the HIV+ subjects had been sexually and/or physically abused in childhood.

Eating Disorders
- Girls and boys who were sexually abused are significantly more likely to report eating disorders than their non-abused like-gender peers.
- In one study of women sexually abused as children, 63 percent had eating disorders.

Information taken from the April 1998 newsletter of CONNSACS, Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services