



Girl Connection

For those who serve adolescent females
Iowa Gender-Specific Services Task Force
October 2005

FBI National Incident-Based Reporting System

Data on Statutory Rape*

(from 21 states including Iowa)

- 95% of victims are female. They are most often 14-15 years old.
- 99% of offenders are male. They are most often 18-20 years old.
- The median age difference between offender and victim is 6 years.
- 3 out of 10 statutory rape relationships are defined as boyfriend/girlfriend.
- 6 out of 10 statutory rape relationships are defined as acquaintance.
- The older the victim, the older the offender.
- Forcible rape outpaces statutory rape by a ratio of 3 to 1.

Statutory Rape is defined as nonforcible sexual intercourse with or between people who are younger than the age of consent.

In Iowa

Statutory Rape is called Sexual Abuse in the 3rd Degree. This change came about in 1979 as a result of the reclassification of specific crimes under more general headings. These crimes are then distinguished by degree of severity with penalties assigned based on that degree (1st, 2nd, etc.).

The age of consent in Iowa is 14 if the sexual activity occurs with another minor (under the age of 18). Children age 13 or younger can never consent to have sexual intercourse. At age 16 with permission from parents, a child can marry and therefore have sexual intercourse with their spouse no matter what the spouse's age.

A person 14 - 17 years old may consent to have sex with a partner in the same age range. If they consent to have sex with a partner over the age of 17 the partner will either be committing sexual abuse in the 3rd degree or lascivious acts with a minor. If a 14 - 17 year old has consensual sex with minor age 13 or less they will be committing sexual abuse in the 3rd degree or sexual abuse in the 2nd degree.

Preventing and/or Responding to Statutory Rape (3rd Degree Sexual Abuse)

- ~Develop a solid relationship with the girl. It is the foundation of making progress on any issue at all.
- ~Be aware of her history of relationships with males, particularly older males.
- ~Talk about the messages she and all other girls are inundated with regarding the importance of girls having boyfriends.
- ~Show her all the other paths that girls and women take (e.g., some remain single, some date but choose to refrain from having sex, some have only friendships with boys, etc.) The goal is to show her that it is not an all-or-nothing choice.
- ~Closely examine the messages you send through your behavior and attitude about relationships. If you demonstrate an empowered attitude toward relationships, it can have a significant positive impact on her, just as a disempowered attitude in the life of a professional can have a negative impact. Self-awareness is crucial. Many girls don't know what an equal partnership looks like and showing them how a strong woman handles relationships can be powerful.
- ~If she is not in serious danger, realize that you may simply have to be there for her until the relationship ends on its own. You may push her further into the relationship if you insist she end it on your terms.
- ~Don't focus solely on the extreme dangers (e.g., violence, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, etc.). Talk to her about the dangers that are most likely to occur: a broken heart, damage to her reputation and self-respect, loss of time spent with friends and the disappointment of adults who care for her.
- ~Most importantly, show her your care and concern are unconditional and won't go away, regardless of her decisions.

* *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs, Office of Justice Programs, US Department of Justice, August 2005, www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp

Iowa Gender-Specific Services Task Force Fall Retreat 2005

October 27-28

Wesley Woods Camp & Retreat Center near Indianola, Iowa

Topics

Relational Aggression and Young Women
Self-Care for Girls and the Women Who Work with Them

Space is limited. Please register early!
Registration materials can be found at www.state.ia.us/dhr/sw/girls

Questions: contact Kathy Nesteby
Iowa Commission on the Status of Women
800/558-4427 or 515/281-6915 or email: kathy.nesteby@iowa.gov

October 2005

The Girl Connection

newsletter is provided as a service of the Iowa Gender-Specific Services Task Force.
For back issues of *The Girl Connection*, more information about the Gender-Specific Services Task Force,
or if you are willing to receive future issues via e-mail to save mailing costs, please contact us:

Kathy Nesteby, Challenge Grant Coordinator
Iowa Commission on the Status of Women
1-800-558-4427 or (515) 281-6915
Kathy.Nesteby@iowa.gov
www.state.ia.us/dhr/sw/girls

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Iowa Gender-Specific Services Task Force
Iowa Commission on the Status of Women
Lucas State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319