

# What You Should Know About Relational Violence and Victims with Disabilities

## How Serious is the Problem?



- Persons with disabilities are 4 to 10 times more likely to become a victim of violence, abuse, or neglect than persons without disabilities (Petersilia 2001).
- Victimization can occur anywhere; however, it usually happens in isolated locations where a person with disabilities has little or no control of the environment (Sobsey and Mansell 1994), and the setting is away from the view of law enforcement (Verdugo and Mermejo 1997)

-Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

- Women with disabilities had a 40% greater risk of violence than women without disabilities.
- Studies estimate that 80% of disabled women have been sexually assaulted.
- Studies estimate that between 70% and 85% of cases of abuse against disabled adults go unreported.

-National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV)

## Who Commits These Acts of Violence?

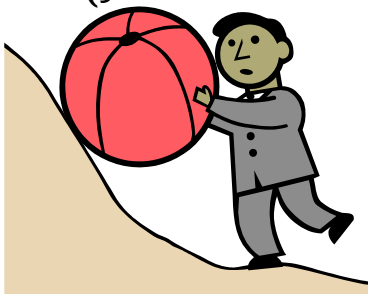
- Personal home care attendants, institutional settings, intimate partners and family members caring for individuals with disabilities have been reported for committing these crimes.
- More men than women are reported for physical and sexual violence, emotional abuse or neglect against persons with disabilities.
- The most common perpetrators of violence against women with disabilities are their male partners.

-CDC

-NCADV



**Your ADA Officer**  
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## What Additional Obstacles do Victims with Disabilities Face?

- Community resources for victims of physical and sexual violence, emotional abuse, or neglect are usually designed to assist people without disabilities (Swedlund and Nosek 2000; Chang et al. 2003; Cramer et al. 2003).
- A traumatic brain injury can cause cognitive problems that reduce one's ability to perceive, remember, or understand risky situations that could lead to an incident of physical or sexual violence (Kim 2002; Levin 1999).
- People with disabilities often lack accessible services due to limited resources, lack of transportation (especially in rural communities), or structural limitations of service facilities.

-CDC

-NCADV

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VIPER:  
Violence Intervention, Prevention  
and Early Response

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