



Men's Perceptions About Relationship Violence

February 2005

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this survey is on men's perceptions about stalking, relationship violence, and sexual assault. Topics include their awareness of women friends who have encountered behaviors related to these problems, how they have responded to such situations, and their own experiences with relationship violence. This survey, conducted by Student Affairs Research and Assessment, was administered by phone and also by Web¹ at the request of The Center for Women Students. In addition, a similar survey was conducted in 2003.

In total, 1,036 male students at University Park responded to the survey. By phone, 634 responded for a 29.1% response rate and, of those contacted, 58.3% participated. By Web, 402 responded for a 14.2% response rate. The confidence interval for the total sample is +/-3.0%.

Of the respondents, 82.7% are undergraduate students; 45.5% are 20 years old or younger, 38.1% are between 21 and 23 years of age, and 16.5% are 24 or older; 81.0% are White/Caucasian; and 54.6% live off campus. For additional information on the Pulse methodology, please visit <http://www.sa.psu.edu/sara/qa.shtml>.

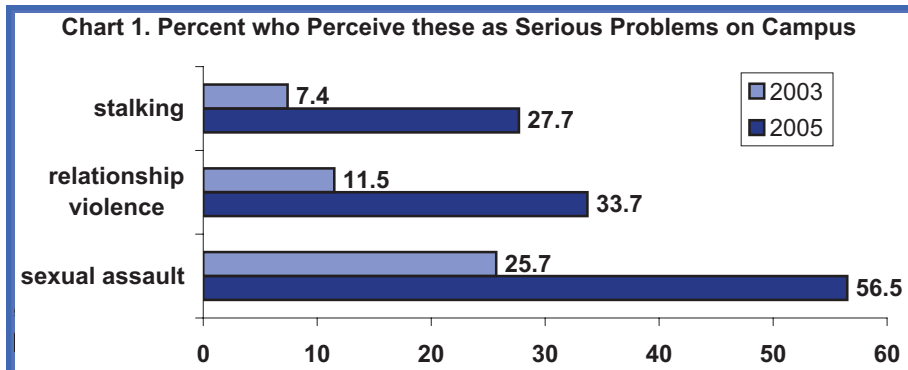
FINDINGS

Perceptions of Stalking, Relationship Violence, and Sexual Assault

Men were asked if they perceived stalking, relationship violence, and sexual assault as serious problems on campus (see Chart 1).

- In both 2003 and 2005, men were most likely to perceive sexual assault to be a serious problem on campus than they were to perceive stalking or relationship violence as serious problems.
- Since 2003, there was a 20% increase in the percent of men who perceived stalking to be a serious problem, a 22% increase for relationship violence, and a 31% increase for sexual assault. These increases may be a reflection of the success of educational efforts directed toward men.

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For more information please visit Student Affairs Research and Assessment at <http://www.sa.psu.edu/sara>

¹ The Web survey administration is utilized in order to account for students for whom local phone information was unavailable.



- In addition, white men, off-campus residents, and undergraduate students were significantly more likely to perceive stalking, relationship violence, and sexual assault as serious problems on campus than were men of color, on-campus residents, and graduate students, respectively (data not shown).

Stalking

Men were asked, since coming to Penn State, if they were aware of women friends who had experienced a series of behaviors related to stalking (see Table 1).

- Men were most frequently aware of women who had been pursued without encouragement on their part (53.5%) or followed (45.0%).
- In 2005, men were less likely to be aware of women friends who had experienced stalking behaviors than they were in 2003.

Table 1: Awareness of a Female Friend who had Experienced Stalking Behaviors

Percent	2003	2005
Pursued without encouragement on their part	60.6	53.5
Followed	47.9	45.0
Frightened by someone showing up at their residence, classroom, or workplace	39.2	32.0
Sent unwanted personal e-mail notes (not including junk mail)	37.5	28.7
Sent unwanted personal letters	21.6	16.0
Sent unwanted personal gifts	21.7	14.4

Relationship Violence

Another section of the survey focused on men's awareness of women friends who had experienced behaviors related to relationship violence. The most frequently reported behaviors are provided in Table 2.

- Over half of the men reported knowing at least one woman whose partner had constantly checked up on her, prohibited her from hanging out with other friends, or verbally belittled her.
- With the exception of knowing a woman whose partner constantly checked up on her, men were less likely to report having a female friend whose partner had exhibited behavior related to relationship violence in 2005 than they were in 2003.

Table 2: Awareness of a Female Friend in a Relationship Whose Partner Exhibited Behaviors Related to Relationship Violence

Percent	2003	2005
Constantly checked up on where they were, what they were doing, or who they were with	55.5	58.6
Prohibited them from hanging out with other friends or guys	58.0	55.9
Verbally belittled them	63.3	54.9
Used extreme jealousy as a means of control	73.0	47.4
Verbally threatened them	31.9	27.2
Pushed or shoved them	28.2	24.2

Sexual Assault

Similarly, men were asked if they were aware of women friends who had someone try to force sexual interaction through a number of behaviors (see Table 3).

- Men most frequently (43.4%) reported having women friends who had someone use alcohol or other drugs to get what they wanted.
- In 2005, men were less likely to be aware of women friends who had experienced someone trying to force sexual interaction through each of the behaviors than they were in 2003.

Table 3: Awareness of a Female Friend who had Someone Try to Force Sexual Interaction by the Following Behaviors

Percent	2003	2005
Using alcohol or other drugs to get what they wanted	47.3	43.4
Continued pressure or pestering	37.3	34.4
Causing them to feel afraid	25.8	20.2
Verbal threats	17.5	13.4
Physical threats	11.2	8.2

Responses to Stalking, Relationship Violence, and Sexual Assault

Men who had been aware of a woman friend who had experienced at least one of the behaviors related to stalking, relationship violence, and sexual assault were asked how they responded to these situations.

- In 2005, 69.0% said they encouraged the victim to discuss the situation with someone, approximately a 10% increase from 2003 (see Table 4).
- Men most frequently reported that they or their women friends discussed these situations with friends (83.2%) (see Table 5).
- There was a slight increase in the percentage of men who reported that they or their women friends discussed these situations with various members of the Student Affairs staff, law enforcement, or community services (see Table 5).

Table 4: Men's Responses to Women Friends' Experiences

Percent	2003	2005
Encourage the victim to discuss the situation with someone	59.4	69.0
Do nothing or ignore the situation	29.6	28.4
Confront the person	25.3	28.6
Find out who the harasser was and pursue them	26.6	21.7
Retaliate against the person	7.0	7.8
Take any other action	na	32.0

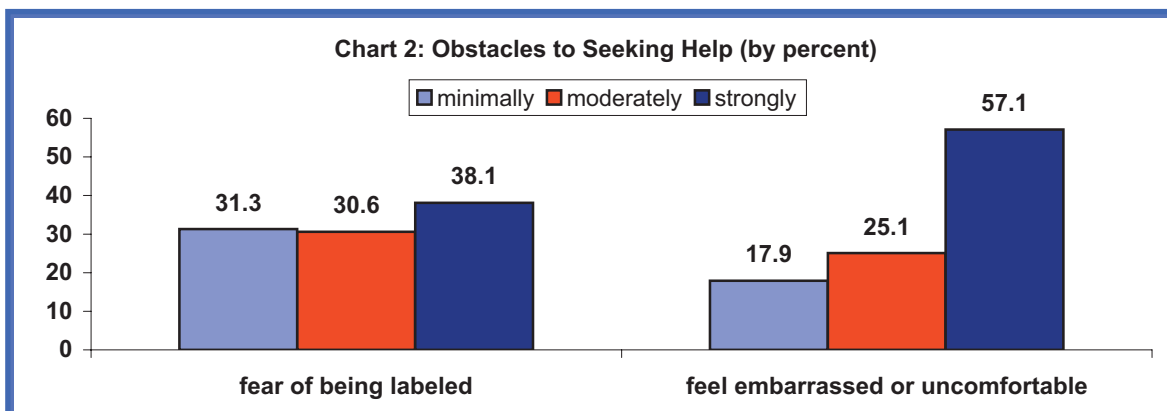
Table 5: With Whom Did Men or their Women Friends Discuss These Situations

Percent	2003	2005
Friends	71.3	83.2
On- or off-campus police	10.9	13.4
CAPS counselor or off-campus counselor	8.8	9.7
Health care provider in UHS	4.6	7.4
Staff member in Judicial Affairs	2.3	3.3
Advocate in the Centre County Women's Resource Center	1.7	3.5
Staff member in the Center for Women Students	2.1	2.9

Obstacles to Seeking Help

A series of questions assessed the extent to which men perceived a variety of consequences as obstacles to seeking help or discussing these types of relationship violence situations with someone.

- Men responded that feeling embarrassed or uncomfortable served as the greatest obstacle to seeking help followed by the fear of being labeled (see Chart 2).
- Other obstacles included worrying about retaliation, unaware of resources, and concern that family would find out (data not shown).



Personal Experiences

Men were also asked if they personally had been a victim of any of the behaviors related to stalking, relationship violence, or sexual assault or if they had initiated any of these behaviors (see Chart 3).

- Men were slightly less likely to report being a victim of relationship violence in 2005 than they were in 2003.
- Of those who had been a victim, 45.9% reported that alcohol or other drugs were involved (data not shown).
- The percentage who reported initiating such behaviors remained consistent between 2003 and 2005.
- Of those who reported initiating such behaviors in 2005 (question was not asked in 2003), 55.0% reported that alcohol or other drugs had been involved (data not shown).

