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MEMBERS:

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& Domestic Violence**

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(Women's Information Service)
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Voices Against Violence

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A Safe Place

Portsmouth
Rochester
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Sexual Assault Support Services

Portsmouth
Rochester

**For information or help,
call toll free 1-800-277-5570
for sexual assault,
or 1-866-644-3574 for
domestic violence.**

A FACT SHEET ABOUT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Child sexual abuse is the sexual exploitation of a child by an adult, adolescent, or older child. The sexual activity does not necessarily involve force; children are often bribed or verbally coerced into sexual acts. The difference in age and sexual knowledge between a child and an older person makes informed consent to sexual activity impossible.

(Sexual Assault Facts and Statistics; Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault)

People known to the victim were offenders in 93% of sexual assaults of juveniles reported to the police from 1991 to 1996. A person known to the victim was the perpetrator in 97% of cases where the victim was under age six, 95% of cases where the victim was age 6 to 11 and in 90% of cases where the victim was age 12 to 17.

(Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Sexual Assault of Young Children as Reported to Law Enforcement," 2000)

Information collected from the states through the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System reveals that the 1999 sexual abuse rate was 1.6 for every 1,000 female children and 0.4 for every 1000 male children.

(U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "Child Maltreatment," 1999)

A compilation of 1991-1996 National Incidence Based Reporting System master files from twelve states shows that 67% of victims of sexual assault reported to law enforcement were under age 18 and 34% were under 12. One in seven victims was under age 6.

(Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Sexual Assault of Young Children as Reported to Law Enforcement," 2000, p. 2)

The estimated number of sexually abused children in the United States rose from 119,200 in 1986 to 217,700 in 1993. This estimate is based on a nationally representative sample of 5,600 professionals and 842 agencies. Results of this study also suggest that girls' disproportionately greater risk for sexual abuse has been stable over time.

(U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect," 1996)

In cases reported to the police from 1991 to 1996, 34% of child sexual assault offenders were family members of the victim. The offender was a family member in 49% of the cases where the victim was under age 6, 42% of cases where the victim was age 6 to 11 and 24% of cases where the victim was age 12 to 17.

(Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Sexual Assault of Young Children as Reported to Law Enforcement," 2000, p. 10)

A review of 166 studies between 1985 and 1997 found that, compared to males who were never abused, sexually abused males were four times more likely to suffer from major depression, three times more likely to be bulimic, and at least two times more likely to have antisocial personality disorder, behavioral problems, low self image, or runaway behavior. In addition, sexually abused males were one and a half to fourteen times more likely to attempt suicide.

(Holmes, William C., "Sexual Abuse of Boys: Definition, Prevalence, Correlates, Sequelae, and Management," Journal of the American Medical Association, 1998, No. 21, p 1858)

From 1991 to 1996, the relative proportion of female victims increased with age in cases of sexual assaults reported to the police. Sixty-nine percent of victims under 6 were female, while 73% of victims under 12 were female and 82% of victims under 18 were female.

(Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Sexual Assault of Young Children as Reported to Law Enforcement," 2000, p. 4)

In 1997, incidents of child abuse committed by parents and other caretakers made up about one-fifth (19%) of violent crimes against juveniles reported to the police and 4% of crimes against persons of any age, according to aggregate National Incidence Based Reporting System data from 12 states. Twenty-three percent of these parent and other caretaker crimes were cases of sexual abuse.

(U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, "Child Abuse Reported to the Police," 2001, p. 2)

According to law enforcement data, between 1991 and 1996 40% of offenders who sexually assaulted children under age 6 were juveniles.

(Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Sexual Assault of Young Children as Reported to Law Enforcement," 2000, p. 8)

Male offenders were responsible for three-quarters of the 1997 child abuse incidents reported to the police, including 92% of sexual assaults of children.

(U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, "Child Abuse Reported to the Police," 2001, p. 2)

There were arrests in 29% of child sexual assault cases reported to the police from 1991 to 1996. (There were arrests in 22% of adult sexual assault cases reported to the police).

(Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Sexual Assault of Young Children as Reported to Law Enforcement," 2000, p. 11)

Parents and other caretakers committed 26% of the sexual assaults on juveniles reported to the police in 1997.

(U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, "Child Abuse Reported to the Police," 2001, p. 3)

The 14 member programs of the NH Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence assist survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, and members of their families, with 24-hour crisis lines, emergency shelter, counseling, support groups and help dealing with police, medical, and court personnel. The crisis centers also provide speakers and educational programs to community groups. In 2003, Coalition member agencies assisted 1,325 sexual assault survivors.

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