

## Sexual Assault in Delaware, 2017

In 2017, **16.2 percent** of adult women in Delaware reported having been forced into non-consensual sex at some point during their lives.

The question on the Delaware Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS) is: "Has anyone ever forced you to have sex without your consent, after you said or showed that you didn't want to?" The 2017 prevalence of self-reported sexual assault was about the same as the prevalence in 2015 (15 percent), and the difference is not statistically significant. The only other time the Delaware BRFS asked questions about non-consensual sex was in 2005, when the prevalence was 12 percent.

The 16.2 percent prevalence among women age 18 to 65 represents **more than 39,800 women** in Delaware who have been forced to have sex without their consent at some point in their lives. There was little or no difference in prevalence by age group in the 2017 survey for lifetime sexual assault.

About **4 percent** of adult Delaware men reported that they had at some time been forced to have sex without their consent.

### Sexual Assault among High School Students

The Division of Public Health also surveys public high school students through the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) in odd-numbered years, and the YRBS also includes questions about sexual assault.

About **9 percent** of Delaware female public high school students reported "ever being physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to." This compares to **3.4 percent** of male high school students. There was no statistically significant difference between the 2015 and the 2017 prevalence.

**Other Dating Violence: 11.1 percent** of public high school females reported "experiencing physical dating violence one or more times during the year before the survey," compared to **7.6 percent** of male high school students. Physical dating violence is defined in the question as "being physically hurt on purpose by someone they were dating or going out with."

### Resources

- **Contact Lifeline Delaware** operates a crisis hotline (**800-262-9800**) and provides sexual assault counseling by trained volunteers and staff.
- **YWCA Delaware** also operates a rape crisis hotline (**800-773-8570**) and **Sexual Assault Response Center**, with locations in Newark, Wilmington, and Georgetown.