

Dangerous Liaisons

Effectively Recognizing and Responding
to Sexual Assault



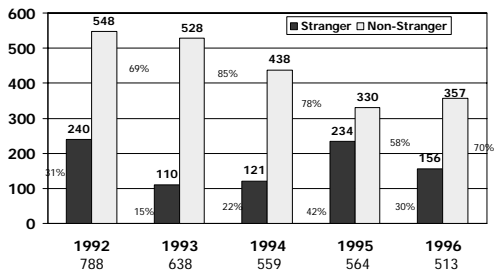
6,094 Sexual Assaults
1992 - 2001



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Slide 1 - Law Enforcement

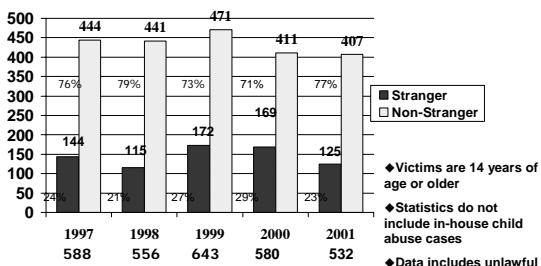
1992-1996 Sexual Assaults 72 % Committed by Non-Strangers



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Five Year Total = 3,062 (5 year average 72%)

1997-2001 Sexual Assaults 75% Committed by Non-Strangers



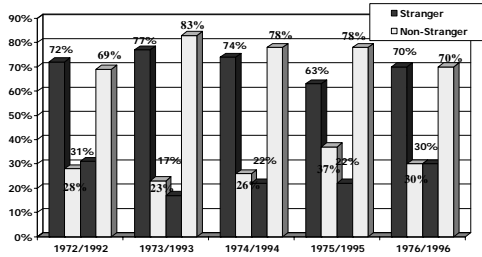
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5 Year Total = 2,899 (5 Year Average 75%)

◆ Victims are 14 years of age or older
◆ Statistics do not include in-house child abuse cases
◆ Data includes unlawful sexual intercourse

Percentage of Stranger Rapes in the 1970's vs. 1990's

City of San Diego



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IDENTIFIED TRAINING NEEDS

“Generally, the actions and the appearance of a legitimate rape victim leave little doubt that a crime has been committed. Under such circumstances, the victim is highly agitated, emotionally distraught, often in a state of hysteria and may have sustained injuries, cuts, bruises or wounds. The victim’s clothing is often ripped or torn off as evidence that it was forcibly removed and if the rape occurred outdoors, the victim is generally thrown to the ground and her outer garments stained or soiled.”

--- 1995 Law Enforcement Publication

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Community Responses

- Law enforcement, medical personnel, and other members of the community, including juries, are still looking for the stereotypical sexual assault
 - Surprise attack
 - No prior contact with the suspect
 - Ski mask, weapon
 - Immediate report to authorities
 - Injury requiring medical attention

Challenges

- A large percentage of sexual assaults involve
 - Adolescents
 - Homeless
 - Mentally ill
 - Prostitutes
 - Runaways
 - Substance abuse

Challenges

- Most sexual victims aren't perfect
- Many will lie about aspects of the circumstances because they don't think they will be believed by authorities
- The sad truth is they are right far too often

Violence in Public Health

The intentional use of physical force against another person or against oneself which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury or death

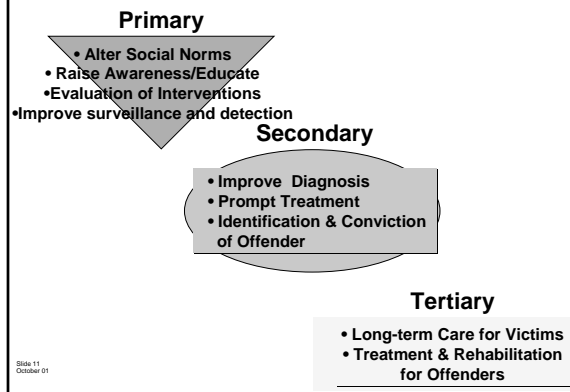
Center for Disease Control

Violence: Multiple Professional Responses



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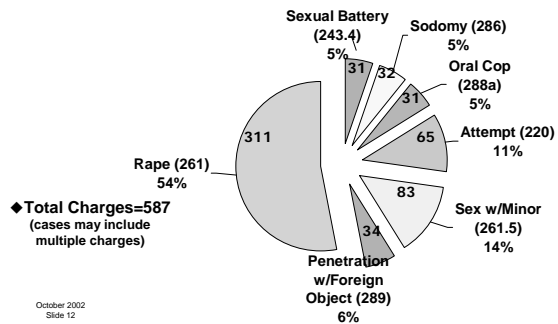
Public Health Strategies for Violence Prevention



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Total Sex Crimes By Type

2001



Sex Crimes
75% Committed by Non-Strangers

Sexual assault includes:

- Penile/vaginal intercourse
- Contact between the genitals and mouth
- Contact between an anus and a penis
- Penetration of the vagina or anus with a foreign object, including a finger

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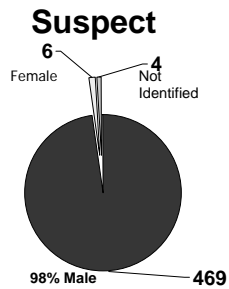
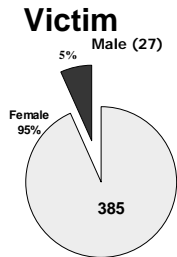
Sex Crimes
75% Committed by Non-Strangers

When one of the following conditions exist

- Force, even if there is no bruise or injury
- Fear, even if the victim didn't fight back
- A person is incapable, because of a mental disorder or developmental or physical disability, of giving legal consent
- A person is severely intoxicated or unconscious as a result of drugs or alcohol
- If the victim is under the age of 18

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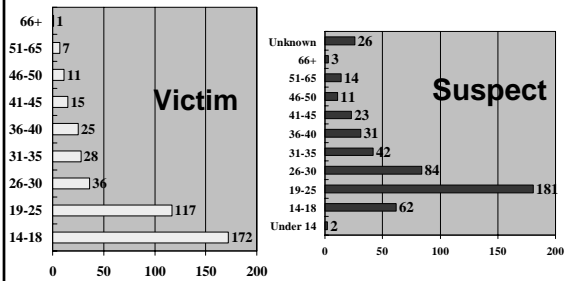
Victim & Suspect Gender Breakdown
2001 Non-Stranger Assaults



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Victim and Suspect Age Breakdown

2001 Non-Stranger Assaults



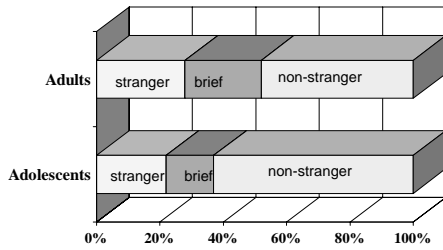
70% Of The High Risk Victims Are 14-25 Yrs

«Exploitation»

55% Of Known Suspects Are Between 19-30 Yrs

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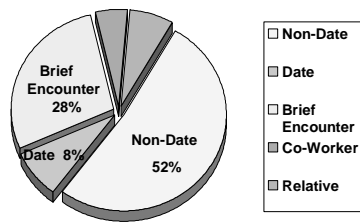
Victim Age Group and Relationship to Suspect



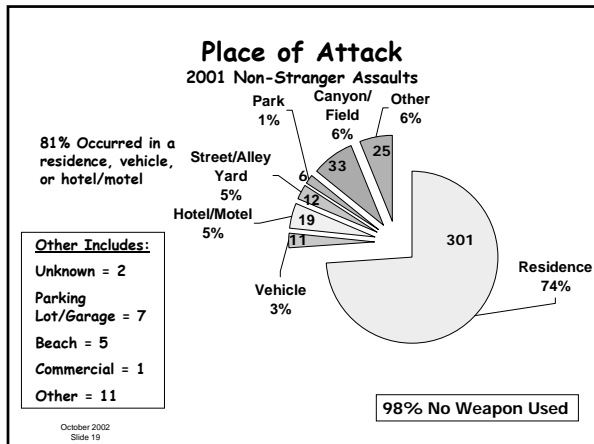
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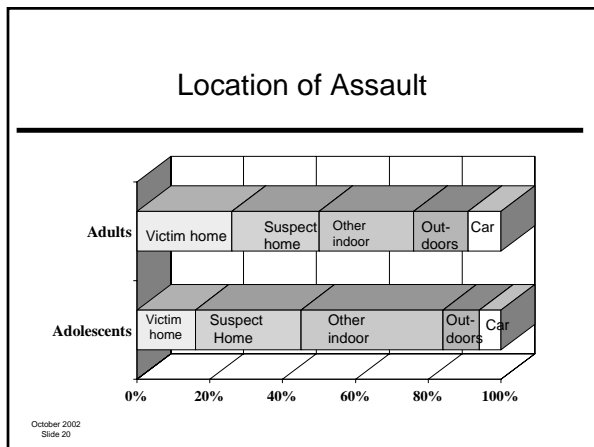
Non-Stranger Subtypes

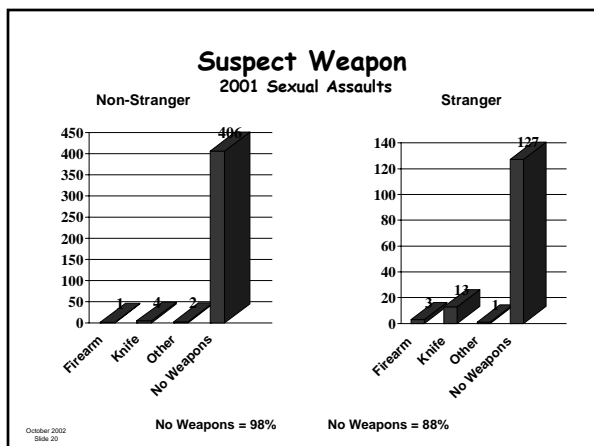
(n=721 reported cases)



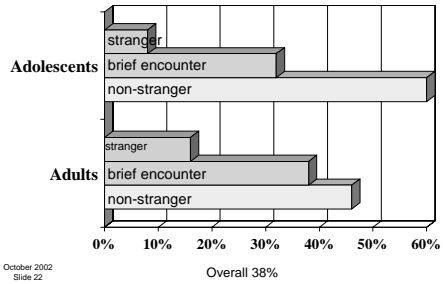
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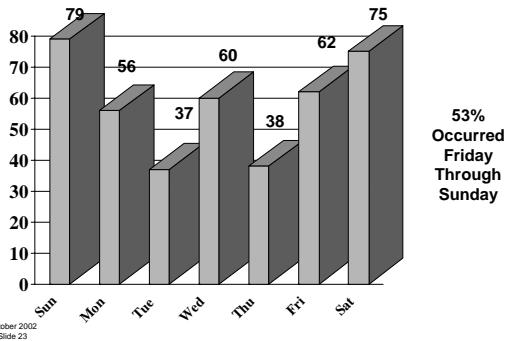


Victim Use of Drugs or Alcohol

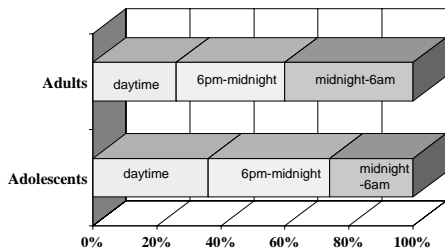


Day of the Week

2001 Non-Stranger Assaults



Time of Day of Assault



2000: The Youth Sexual Assault Prevention School-Based Partnership

- **Community-Oriented Policing Grant**
- **Collaborating agencies:**
 - San Diego Police Department (lead)
 - San Diego City Schools
 - SDSU Institute for Public Health
- **Goal:**
 - To develop age-appropriate sexual assault curriculum for school-aged children.

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COPS Grant Activities:

- **Examine existing data (police logs)**
- **Survey key stakeholders**
- **Conduct focus groups**
- **Develop curriculum**
- **Modify Speaker's Bureau**

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2001: Survey Stakeholders

- **Students**
- **Parents**
- **Teachers**
- **Law Enforcement (police)**
- **Victim Advocates**
- **Medical Personnel**

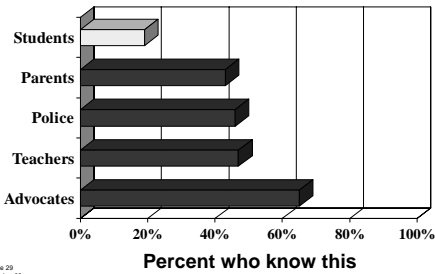
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Survey Questions:

- **Knowledge**
- **Attitudes and Beliefs**
- **Should adolescents learn more about sexual assault?**
- **Who should teach this information?**
- **How should it be taught?**

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Over 75% of reported adolescent sexual assaults involve non-strangers:



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The majority of parents, teachers, police, and advocates indicated that a sexual assault curriculum should begin no later than the 7th or 8th grade.

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How should this information be taught?

- **Teachers:** *Group discussions, Guest speakers, Movies, lectures*
- **Advocates:** *Group discussions, Guest speakers, Movies, lectures*
- **Police:** *Group discussions, Guest speakers, Movies, lectures*
- **Parents:** *Group discussion, Movies, Guest speakers, lectures*
- **Students:** *Movies, Guest speakers, Group discussion, lectures*

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Recommendations for Successful School-Based Programs:

- *Identify developmental guidelines*
- *Provide training opportunities for presenters and other adults*
- *Identify curriculum/ presentation materials*
- *Include question and discussion time*

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Recommendations for Successful School-Based Programs:

- *Provide follow-up that includes opportunities for disclosure*
- *Access to resources*
- *Provide information for parents/community*

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**2000: The Youth Sexual Assault
Prevention School-Based Partnership**

- **To obtain a free copy of the curriculum**

<http://www.mysati.com/products.htm>

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**Overcoming Investigative
Challenges**

- Ensure the victim you understand the dynamics of sexual assault
- Corroborate the victim's credibility
- Understand the bias and investigate through it
- Understand the difference in evidence needed to overcome a consent defense

**Common Evidence
Considerations**

- Clothing, bedding
- SART Exam – rape kit
 - Evidence considered rich in biological and trace evidence
 - However, up to 90% of sexual assault cases are not a question of identity but consent

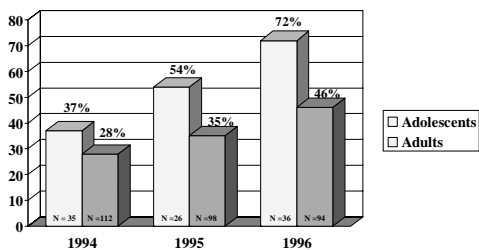
Evidence to Overcome A Consent Defense

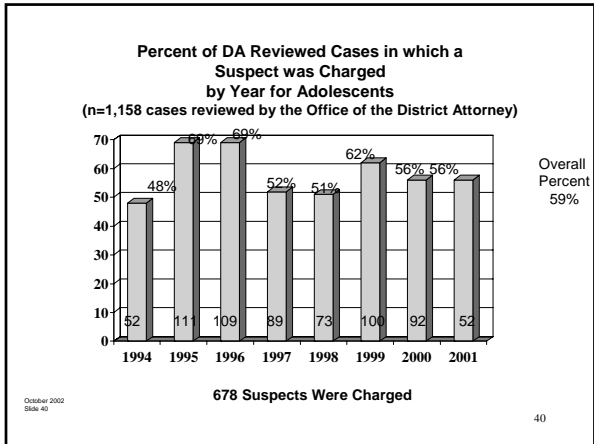
- Blood to corroborate force
- Hair to show that it was pulled from the head
- External non-genital injuries
- Genital injuries
- Torn clothing, stretched elastic, missing buttons
- Evidence to corroborate a struggle

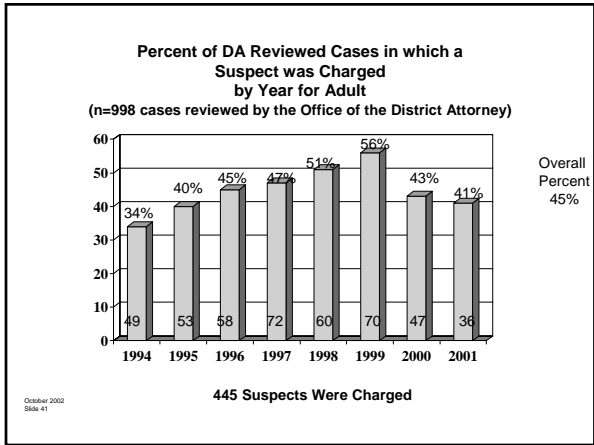
Overcoming Challenges

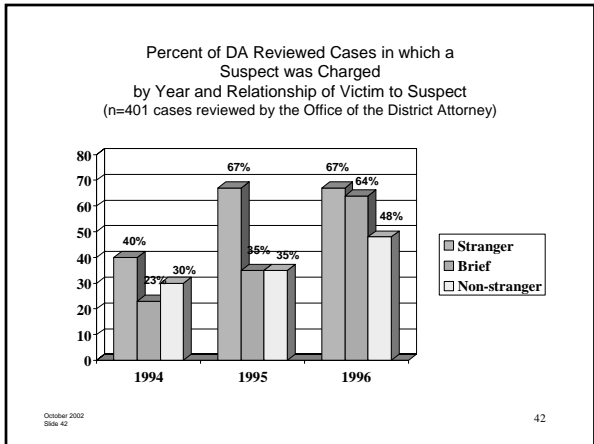
- Identify innovative investigative strategies
 - Pretext phone calls
 - Ruse
 - Search warrants
 - Suspect interview
- Think outside the box

**Percent of DA Reviewed Cases in which a
Suspect was Charged
by Year and Age group**
(n=401 cases reviewed by the Office of the District Attorney)









Building on Research:

- ***Victim Advocates are now present in SDPD Sex Crimes Unit to assist victims as needed***
- ***DNA is currently being analyzed in cases without identified suspects***
- ***A sexual assault curriculum for school-aged children was developed with the help of a Community Oriented Policing Grant***

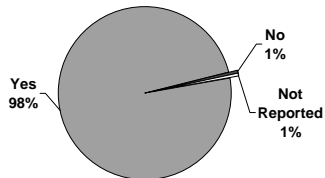
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**Benefits of a Coordinated
Community Response**

- 184 Confidential surveys completed by survivors of sexual assault who obtained SART exams in San Diego County between 2000-2001
- 20.31% return rate

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**Satisfactory Explanation of
Examination Process**



N=186
Source: SART Victim/Survivor Confidential Questionnaire, 2000-2001

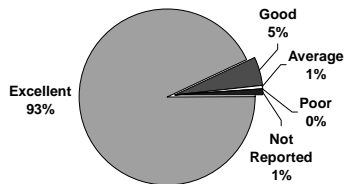
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Benefits of a Coordinated Community Response

- Forensic Examiners received the highest rating with 98% rating their care excellent to good

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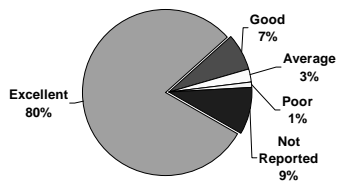
Services Provided by SART Forensic Examiner



N=188
Source: SART Victim/Survivor Confidential Questionnaire, 2000-2001

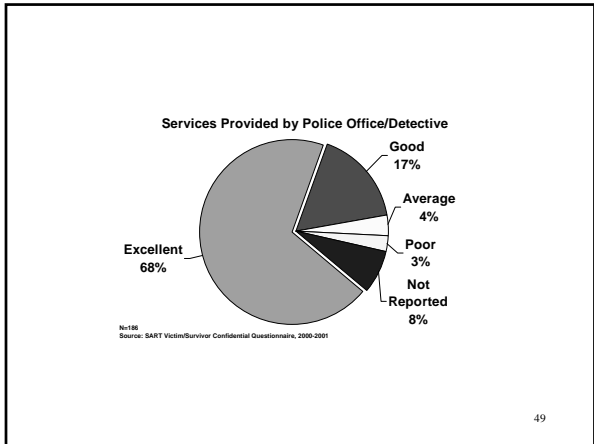
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Services Provided by Victim Advocate



N=186
Source: SART Victim/Survivor Confidential Questionnaire, 2000-2001

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Comments from Survivors

- Riding in the back of the patrol car was not pleasant. I understood why I had to go with the police officer, but I feel it might be less humiliating to provide other transportation. Maybe a detective or unmarked car.
- It had to wait 4 hours from when I first reported it. By the time they got to my house, I didn't want to go because it was so late.
- Having a more sensitive male officer who didn't make me stop telling my story in order to catch up with his writing.
- I felt intimidated, unbelievably and I felt I was just wasting everyone's time, which was an over heard comment.
- A little kinder. I felt like I asked for it because they smelled alcohol.

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Comments

- Thank you for helping me through the worst crisis of my life. Both the nurse and counselor. Mostly the officers, one being Officer Nugen who I feel literally saved my life.
- Police Officer Gray mentioned that he was new to the force and the process. I felt he was the perfect person to help me. He was kind, caring and compassionate.
- Remembered my story instead of me repeating myself over and over
- The officer did a good job. He was also very patient helpful and extremely friendly. While my mother was with me at the hospital, he would come out every so often and check to see if she needed anything and bring her something to drink while I was being examined by the nurse.

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Key Points

- *Analyze sexual assault data for discernable patterns*
- *Collaborate! Listen to one another!*
- *Potential victims, offenders, police, healthcare professionals, prosecutors, judges, and jury pools need to be educated about the dynamics of non-stranger assault*

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Key Points

- *Women are at far more risk of sexual assault by a non-stranger than by a stranger.*
- *Develop age-specific information addressing the real life possible sexual assault situations. (not just stranger danger messages)*
- *Begin sexual assault education early!!*

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