

Elder Mistreatment Facts and Figures: The National (USA) Elder Mistreatment Study

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Goals

- Discuss Prevalence of Elder Mistreatment in the US
- Outline just who the perpetrators are
- Highlight some important common themes

The NIJ National Elder Mistreatment Study

- Random Digit Dialing methodology was used to derive a representative national (continental US) sample of 5,777 older adults
- Computer Assisted Interviewing procedures were used to standardize assessments and assured only relevant questions were asked
- Participants were interviewed via telephone in English or Spanish
- Cooperation rate was 69% for the sample.

Sample

- 5,777 adults age 60 and over
- 60.2% women / 39.8% men
- Average age 71.5 years (SD = 8.1), a range of 60 to 97 years.
- 57% married or cohabitating, 12% separated or divorced, 25% were widowed, and 5% never married
- 85% White, 7% Black, 2% American Indian or Alaskan Native, 1% Asian, 0.2% Pacific Islander
- 4.3% of Hispanic or Latino origin.

Sample continued...

- ◆ 46% Income less than \$35,000 per year
- ◆ 81% Unemployed or retired
- ◆ 22% poor health
- ◆ **62% prior traumatic event**
- ◆ **43.6% low social support**
- ◆ 40.8% used social or community services
- ◆ 37.8% needed at least some assistance with activities of daily living (ADL).

Mistreatment Types

- Emotional
- Physical
- Sexual
- Neglect
- Financial

Mistreatment variables **EMOTIONAL**

Emotional mistreatment was defined as an affirmative answer to any one of the following four questions following the contextually orienting preface statement.

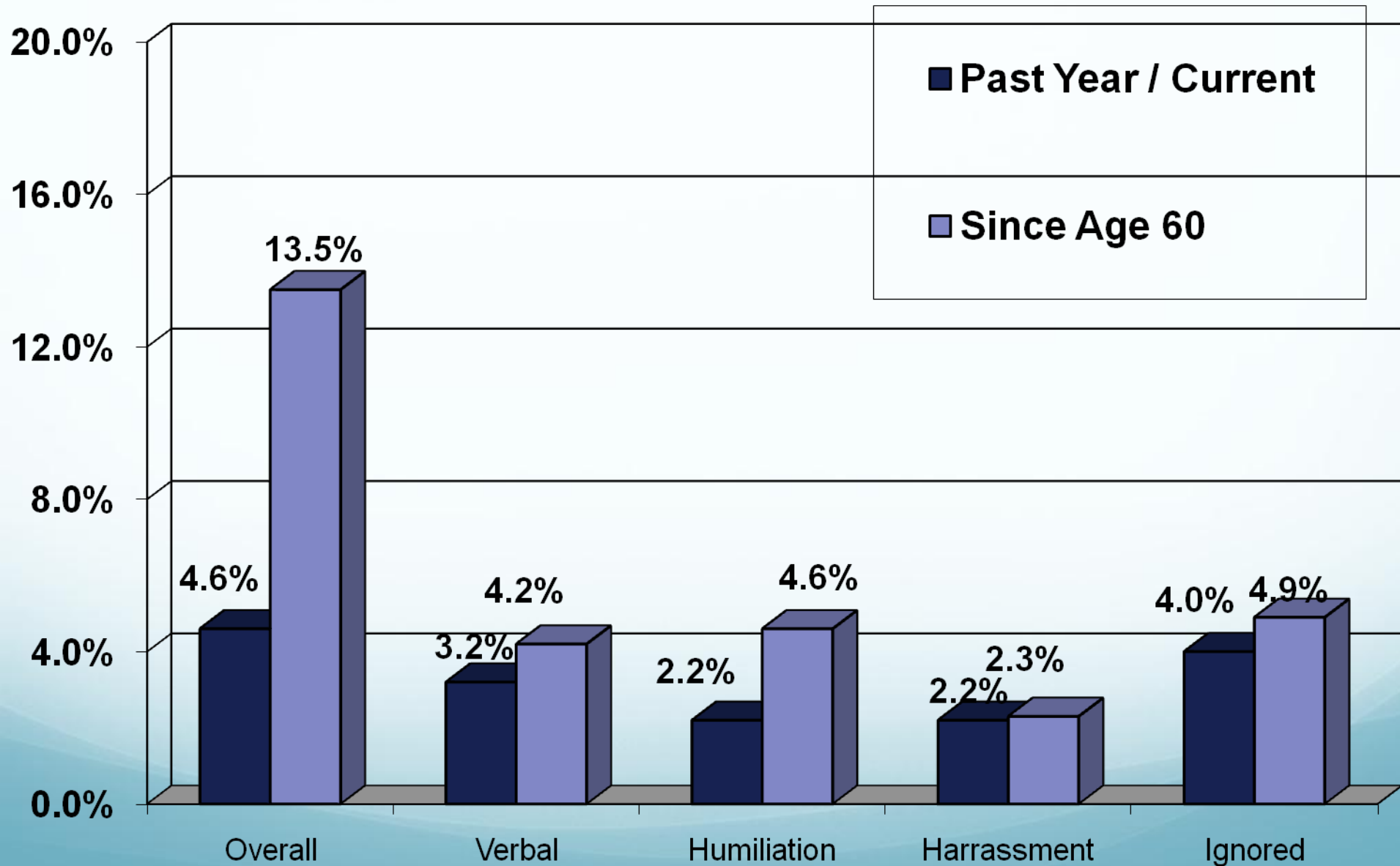
“Now we want to ask you about some things that people in your life might do that make you feel bad, such as saying very mean things to you, or being rude to you. A lot of people say this happens to them, and we really need to find out how often it happens. Sometimes, we call these things emotional mistreatment. The person who might do these things could be a romantic partner, spouse, family member, friend, or someone who helps take care of you.”

Mistreatment variables

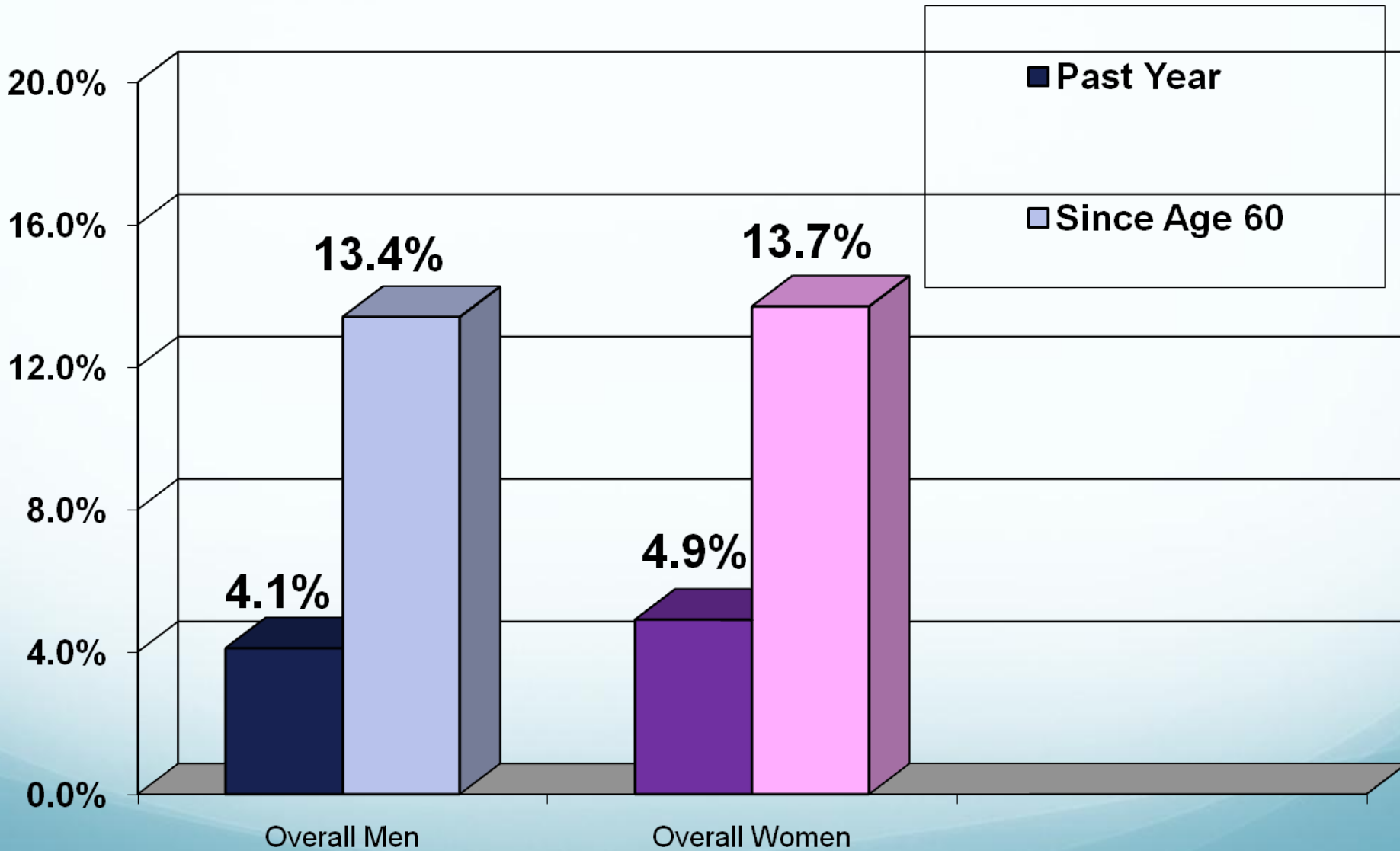
EMOTIONAL

- *1. Has anyone ever verbally attacked, scolded, or yelled at you so that you felt afraid for your safety, threatened or intimidated?”*
- *2. “Has anyone ever made you feel humiliated or embarrassed by calling you names such as stupid, or telling you that you or your opinion was worthless?”*
- *3. “Has anyone ever forcefully or repeatedly asked you to do something so much that you felt harassed or coerced into doing something against your will?”*
- *4 “Has anyone close to you ever completely refused to talk to you or ignored you for days at a time, even when you wanted to talk to them?”*

Emotional Mistreatment

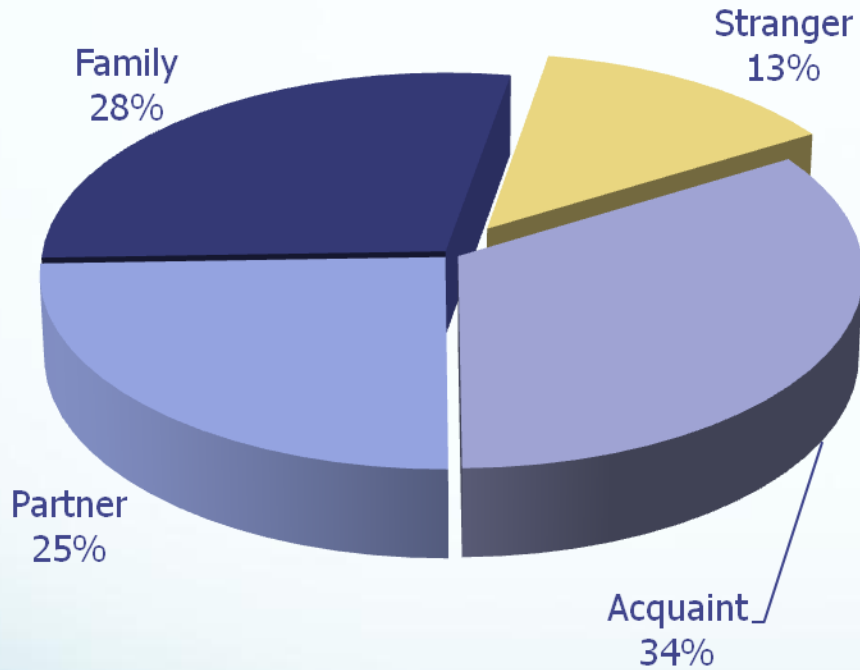


Emotional Mistreatment by Gender

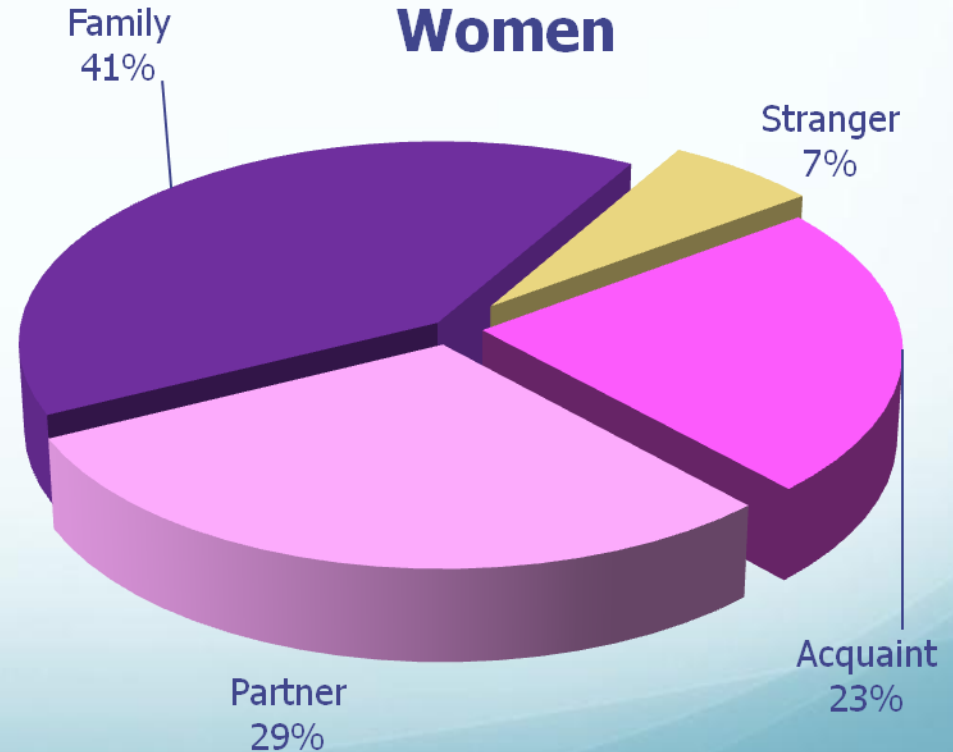


Emotional Mistreatment Perps

Men



Women



Emotional Mistreatment: Significant Risk factors (logistic regression odds ratio results in red)

- Lower Age (OR = 3.2)
- Being Employed (OR = 1.8)
- Poor Self-Rated Health (ns)
- Prior Traumatic Event (OR = 2.3)
- ***Low Social Support (OR = 3.2)***
- Needing ADL Assistance (OR = 1.8)

Mistreatment variables **PHYSICAL**

Physical mistreatment was defined as an affirmative answer to any one of the following three questions following the following contextually orienting preface statement.

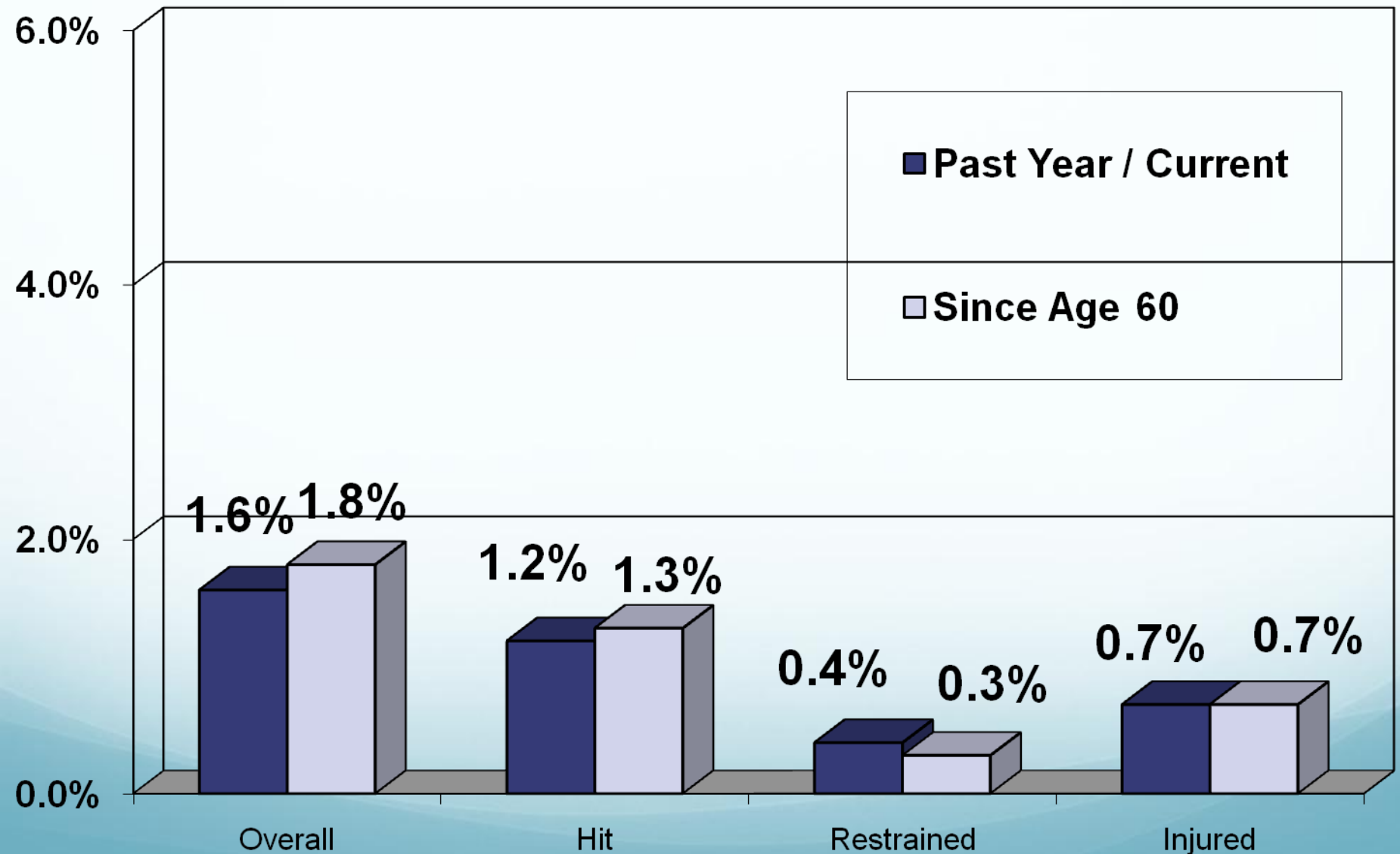
Another type of stressful event that people sometimes experience is being physically hurt by another person. The person doing these things could be a romantic partner, spouse, family member, friend, or someone who helps take care of you.

Mistreatment variables

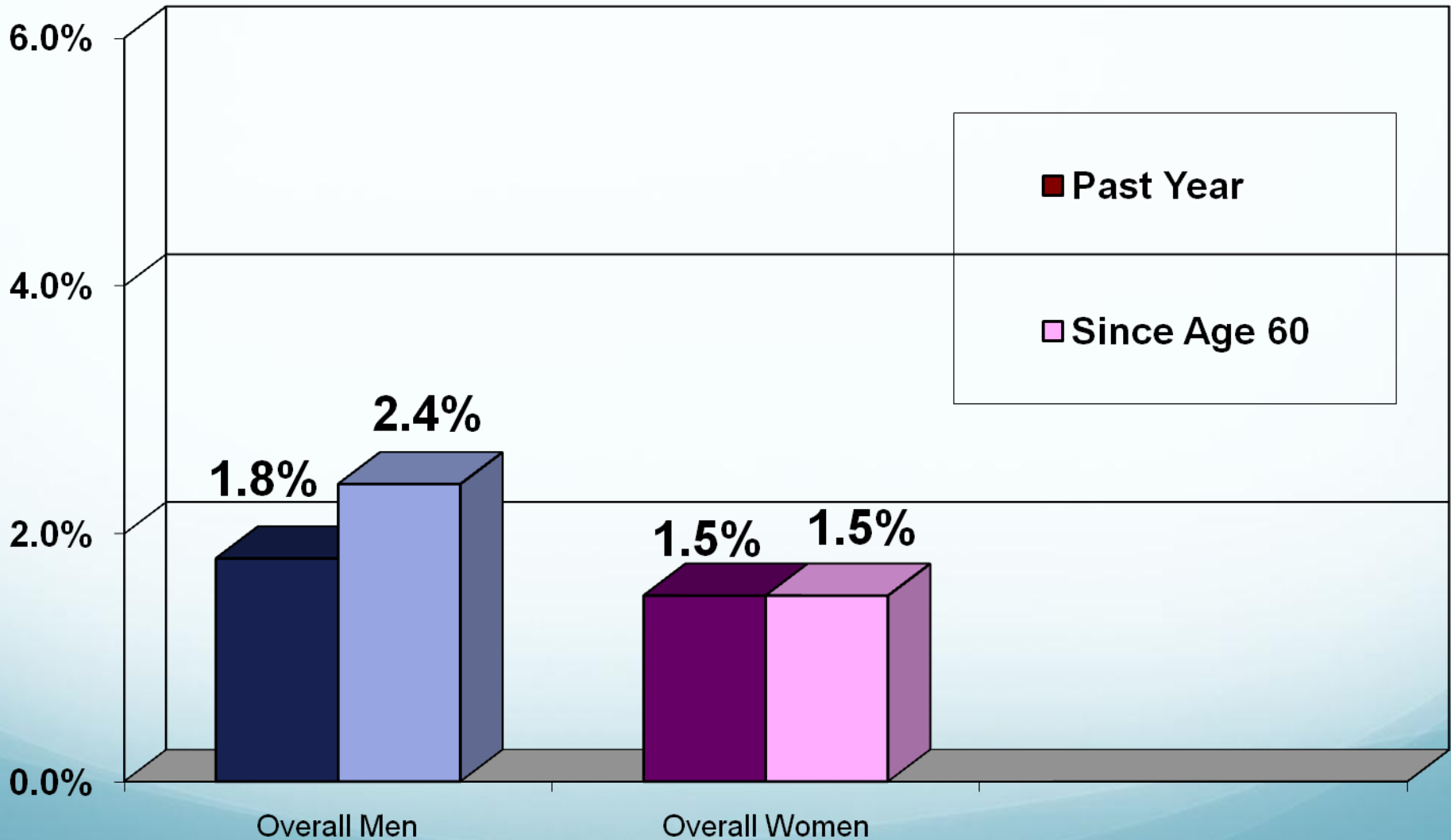
PHYSICAL

- 1. *“Has anyone ever hit you with their hand or object, slapped you, or threatened you with a weapon?”*
- 2. *“Has anyone ever tried to restrain you by holding you down, tying you up, or locking you in your room or house?”*
- 3. *“Has anyone ever physically hurt you so that you suffered some degree of injury, including cuts, bruises, or other marks?”*

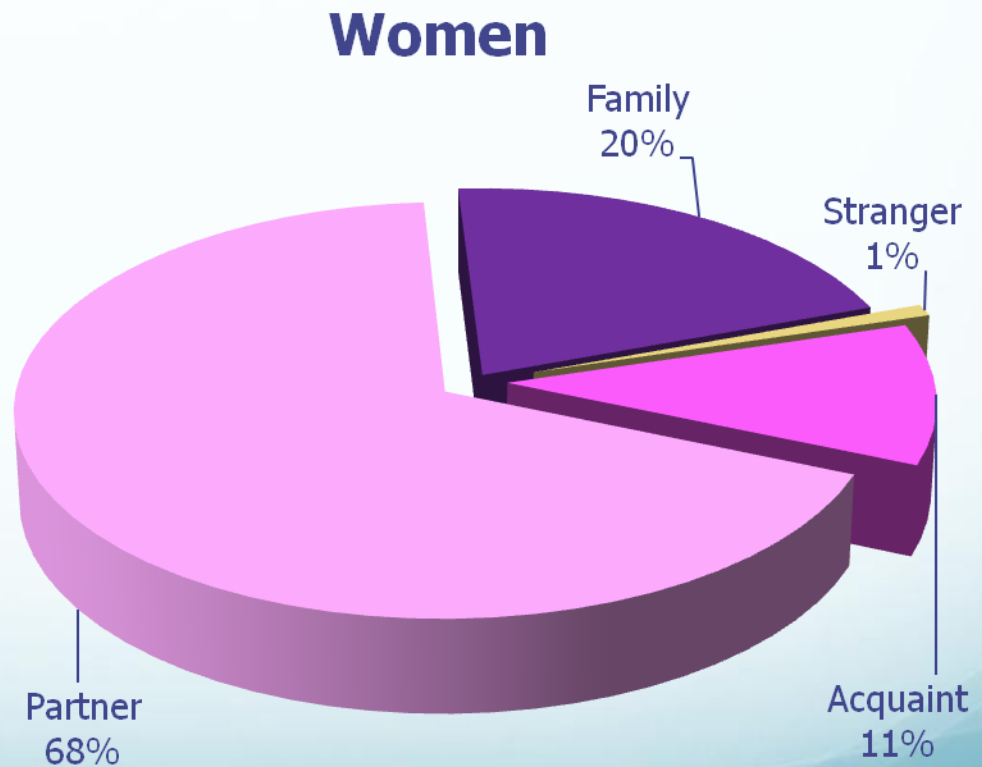
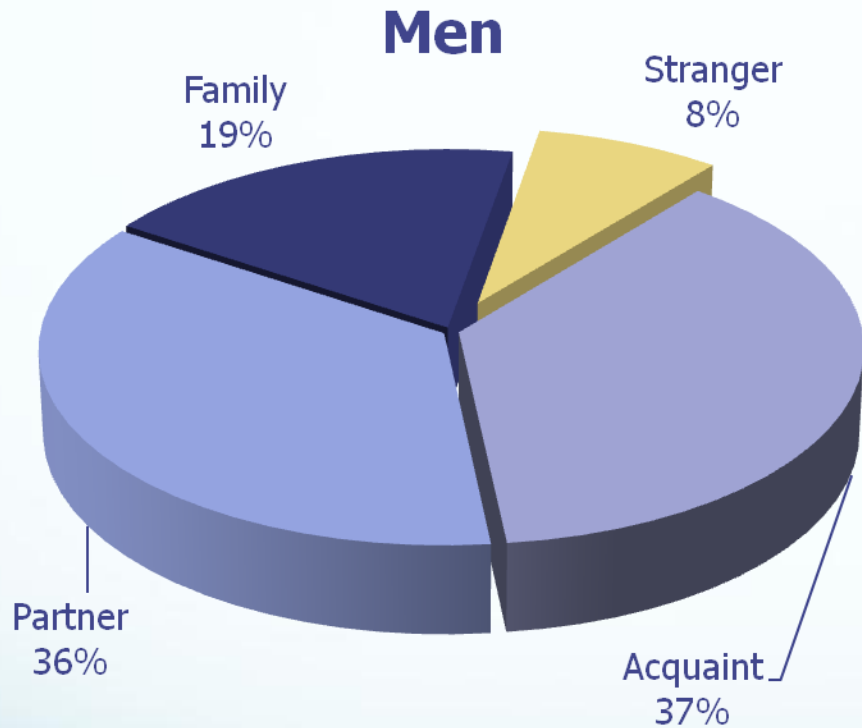
Physical Mistreatment



Physical Mistreatment by Gender



Physical Mistreatment Perps



Physical Mistreatment: Significant Risk factors (logistic regression results highlighted in red)

- **Lower Age (OR = 4.1)**
- Non-White Racial Status
- Lower Income
- Poor Self-Rated Health
- Prior Traumatic Event
- ***Low Social Support (OR = 3.0)***

Mistreatment variables **SEXUAL**

Sexual mistreatment was defined as an affirmative answer to any one of the following three questions following the contextually orienting preface statement.

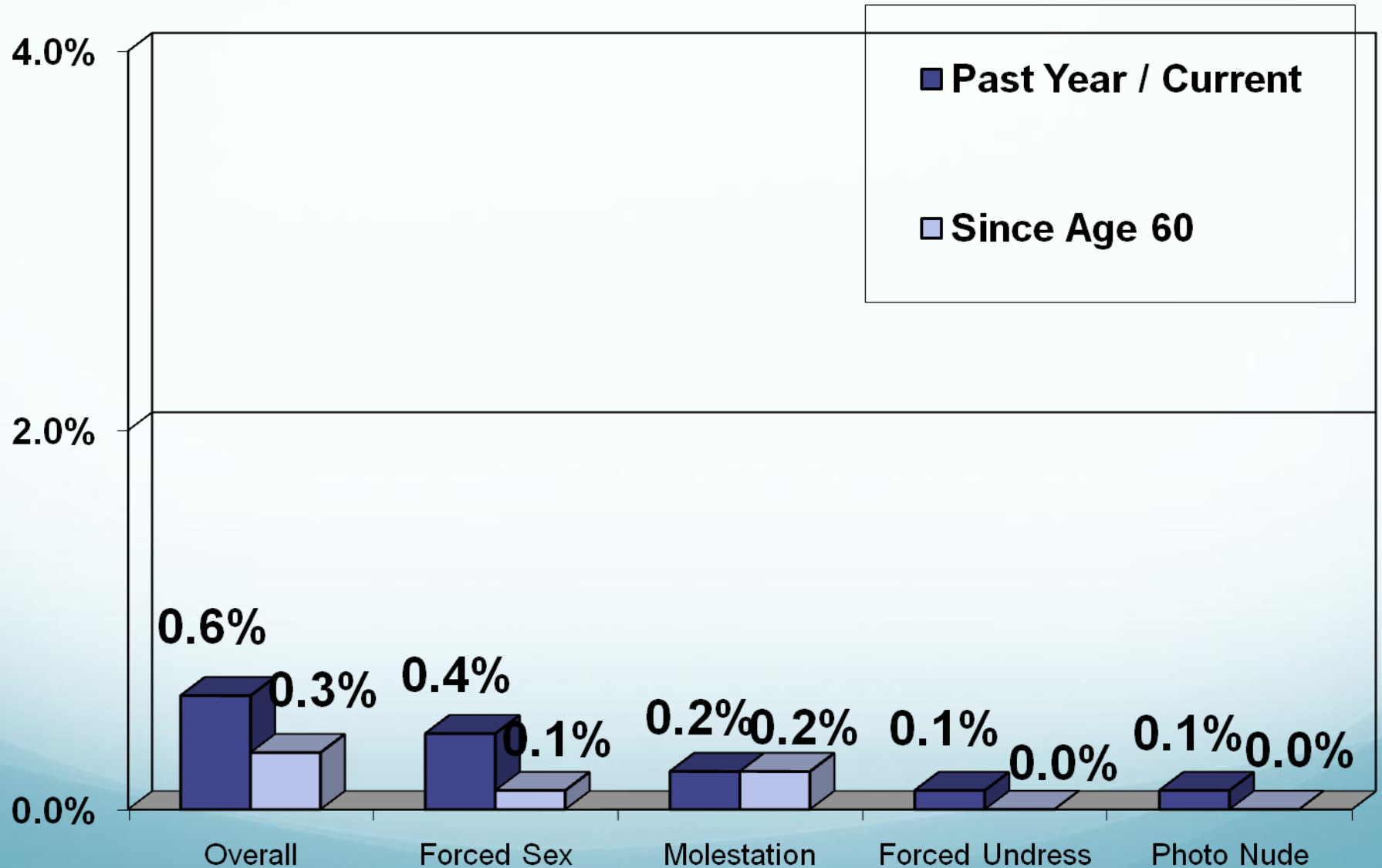
“I am going to ask you questions about unwanted sexual advances that you may have experienced over your lifetime. People do not always report such experiences to the police or discuss them with family or friends. The person making the unwanted advances isn't always a stranger, but can be a friend, romantic partner, or even a family member or someone you trust to help you or help take care of you. Such experiences can occur anytime in a person's life. Regardless of how long ago it happened or who made the advances,

Mistreatment variables

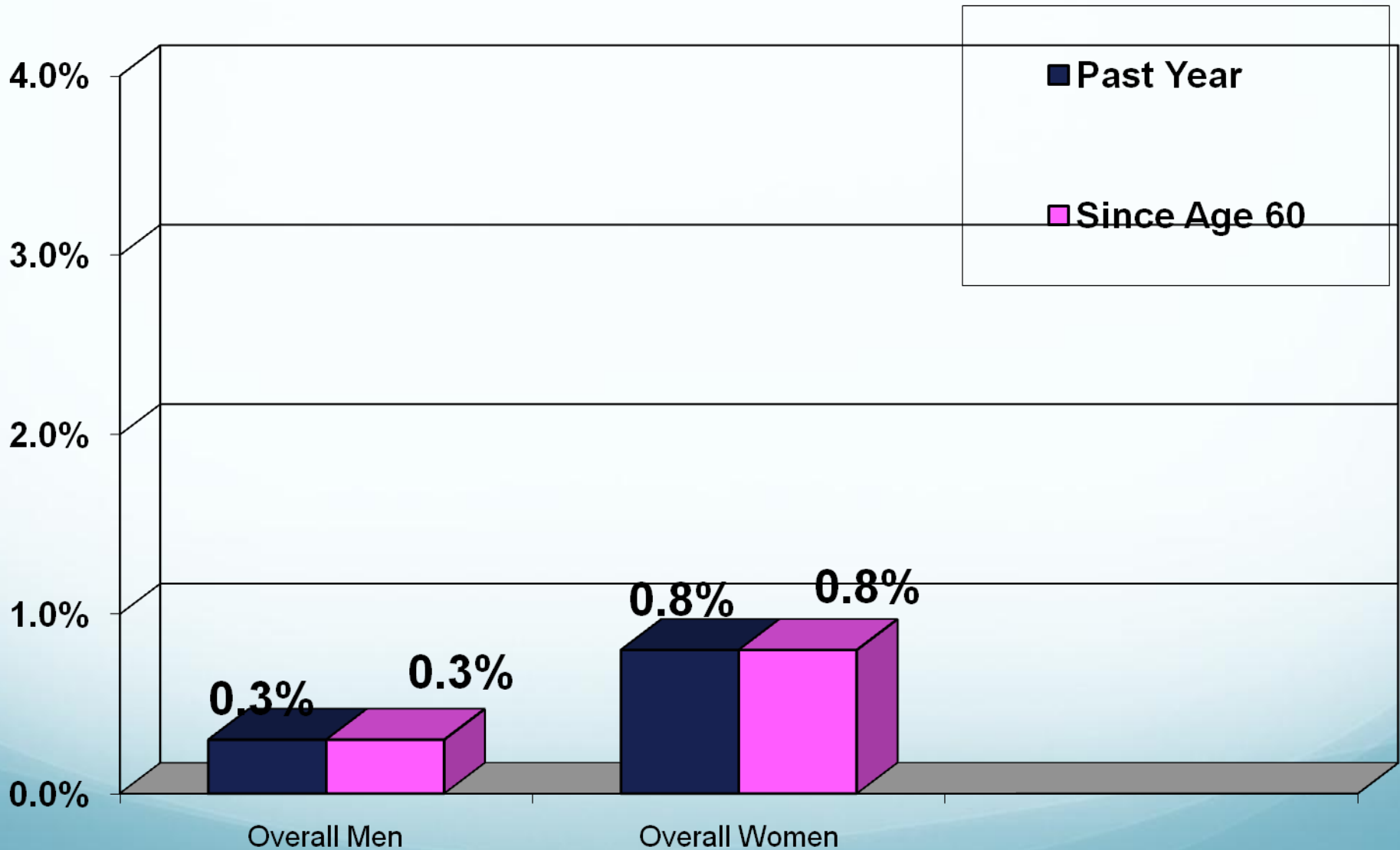
SEXUAL

1. *“Has anyone ever made you have sex or oral sex by using force or threatening to harm you or someone close to you?”*
2. *“Has anyone ever touched your pubic area or made you touch their pubic area by using force or threat of force?”*
3. *“Has anyone ever forced you to undress or expose your breasts or pubic area when you didn’t want to?”*

Sexual Mistreatment

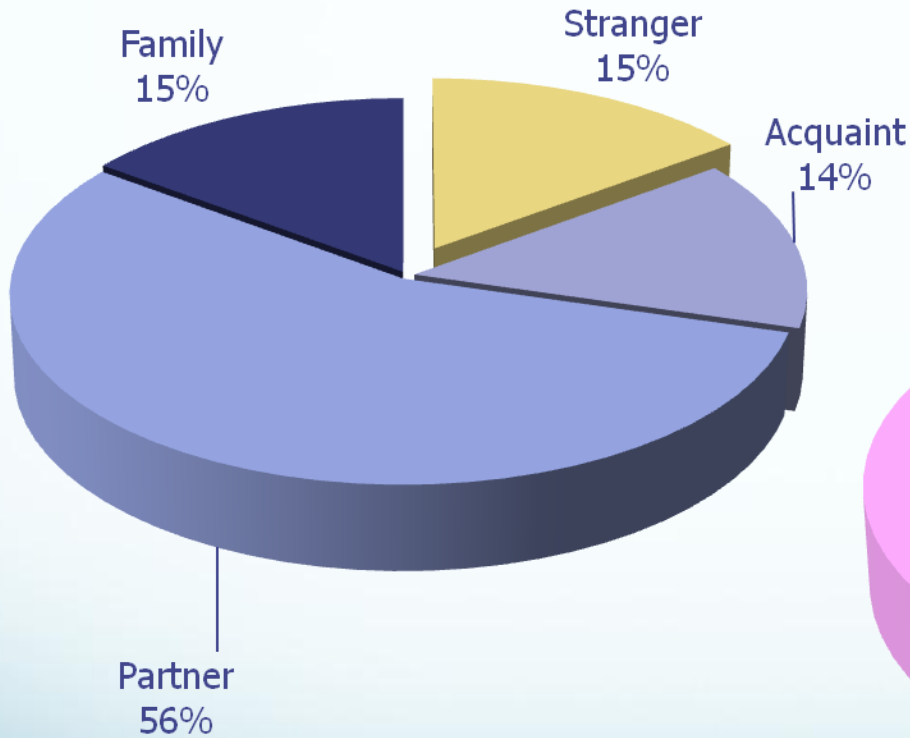


Sexual Mistreatment by Gender (sig)

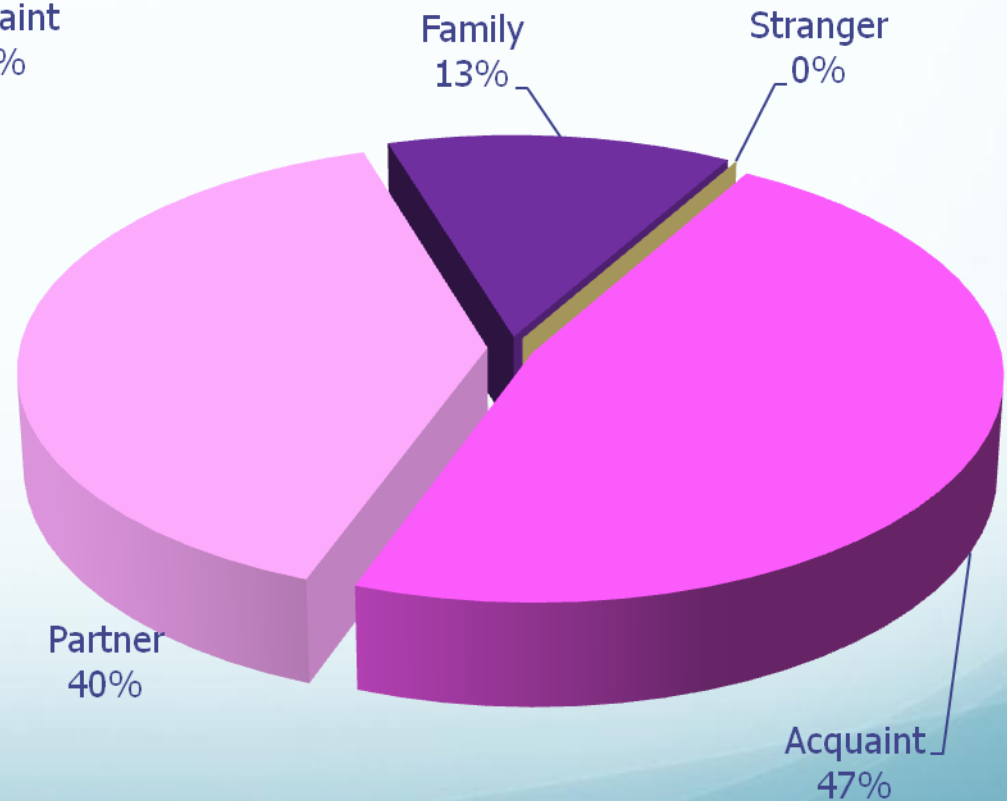


Sexual Mistreatment Perps. Note: N too small to be reliable

Men



Women



Sexual Mistreatment: Significant Risk factors (tentative Due to Low N)

- Female Gender
- Low Income
- Poor Self-Rated Health
- Prior Traumatic Event
- ***Low Social Support***
- Needs ADL Assistance

Mistreatment variables— Current **NEGLECT**

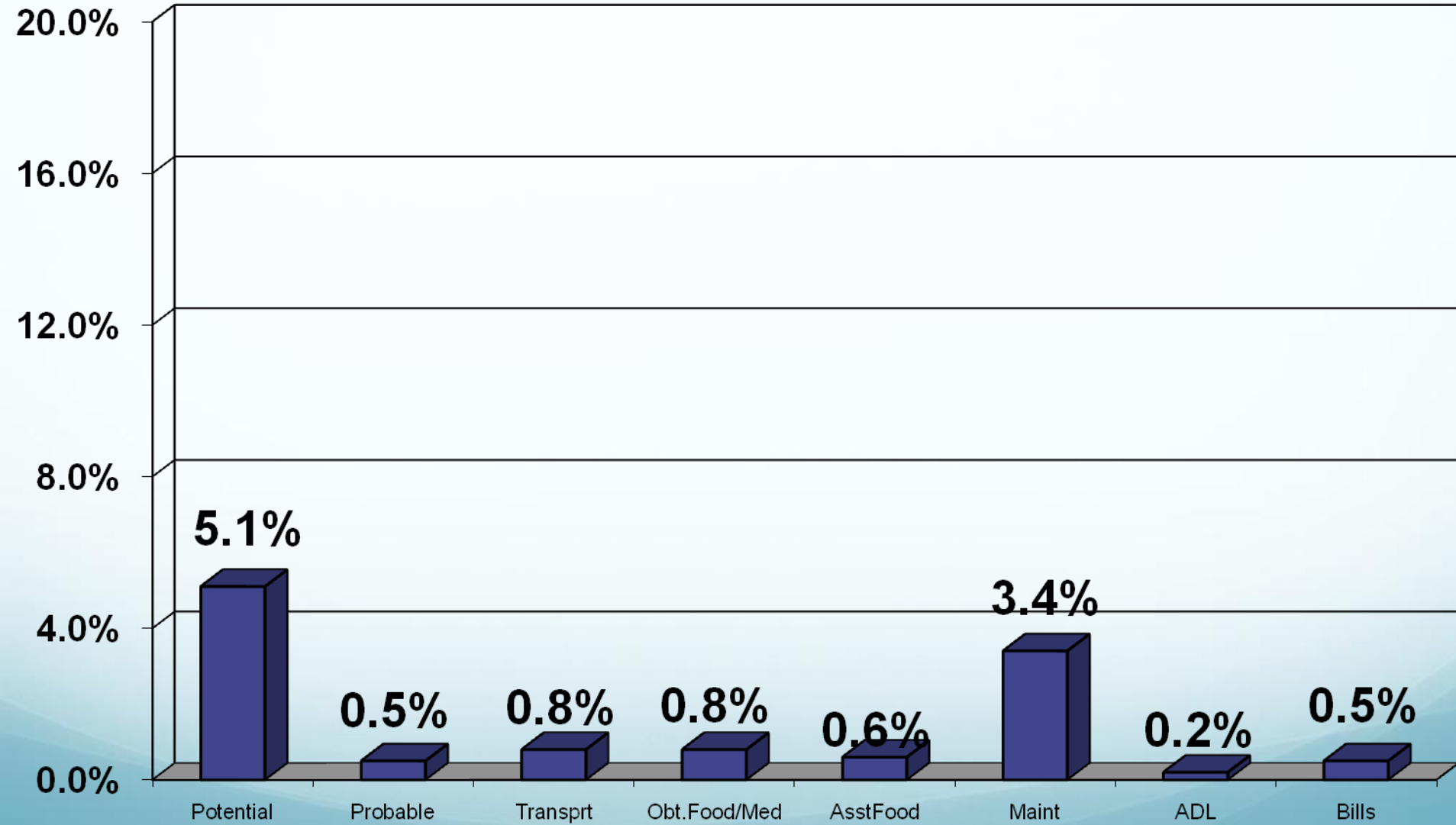
Neglect was defined in two ways: Potential Neglect, in which an older adult identified that they had one of the needs listed below, and Caregiver Neglect, in which an older adult identified a need, and also noted that a caregiver had been designated to meet that need, but was not currently doing so. Potential Neglect is reported here.

“Now we would like to ask you some additional questions about whether or not there is someone who helps you with day to day things. You may not need help with any of these things, and if that is the case, just feel free to tell us you don’t need this type of help. Some older adults do need help with these things, so it’s important for us to ask.”

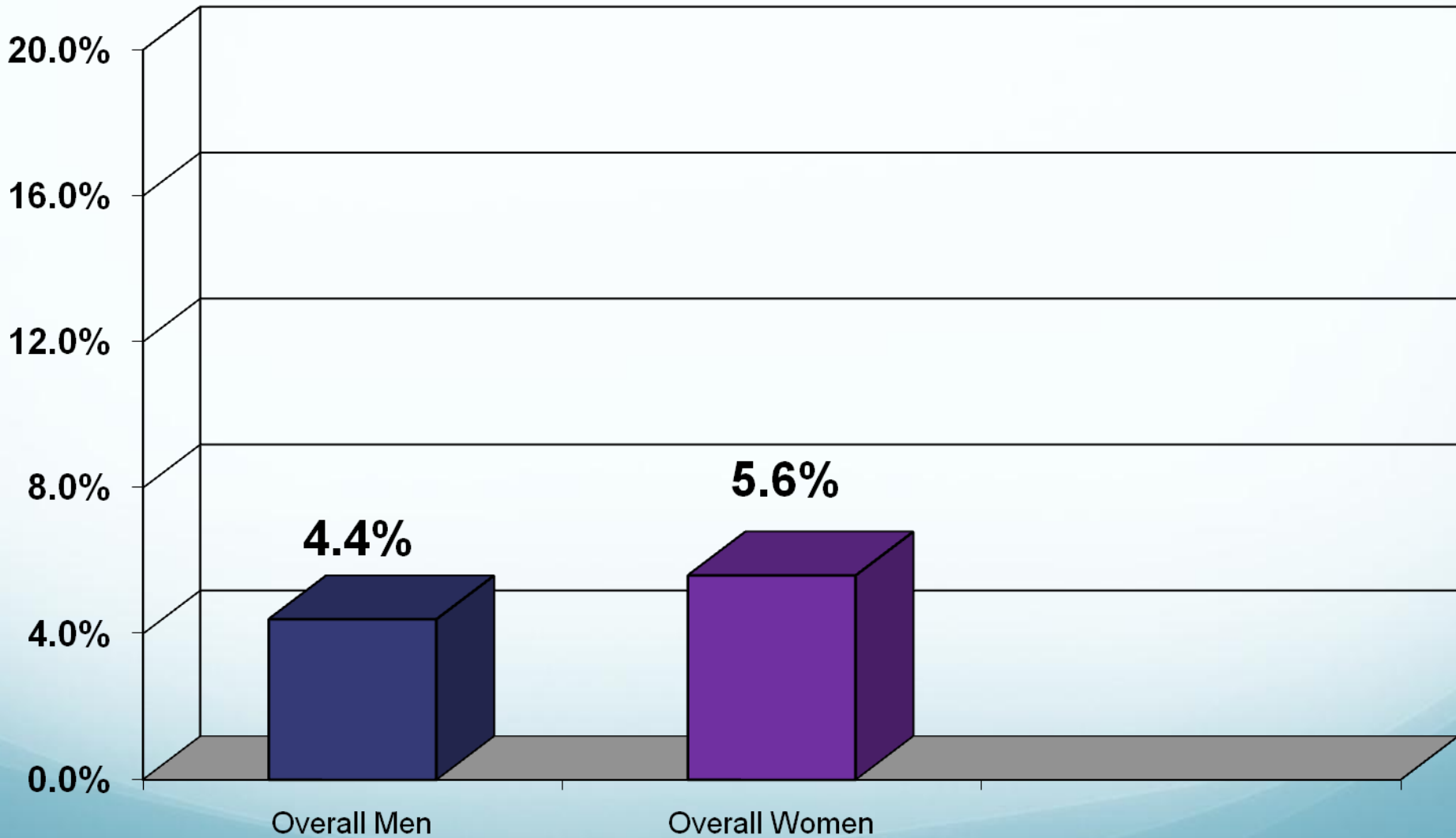
Current Neglect

- 1. *“Do you need someone to help you get to the places you need to go, for example do you need someone to drive you to the grocery store, a place of worship, the doctor?”*
- 2. *“Do you need someone to make sure you have enough food, medicines or any other things you need in your house?”*
- 3. *“Do you need someone to help you with household things, like cooking meals, helping you eat, or making sure you take the correct medicines each day?”*
- 4. *“Do you need someone to help you with house cleaning or yard work?”*
- 5. *“Do you need someone to help you get out of bed, get showered, or get dressed?”*
- 6. *“Do you need someone to make sure your bills get paid?”*

POTENTIAL Neglect: Current



Potential Neglect by Gender (sig)



Potential Neglect: Significant Risk factors (logistic regression results in red)

- Female Gender
- **Non-White Racial Status (OR = 1.9)**
- **Low Income (OR = 2.0)**
- Being Un-Employed
- **Poor Self Reported Health (OR = 2.2)**
- Prior Traumatic Event
- ***Low Social Support (OR = 4.1)***
- Use of Social Services
- Needs ADL Assistance

Mistreatment variables **FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION**

Financial exploitation was asked in terms of mistreatment by family members (current exploitation) or strangers (ever exploited) and risk factors for each type of financial mistreatment were analyzed separately.

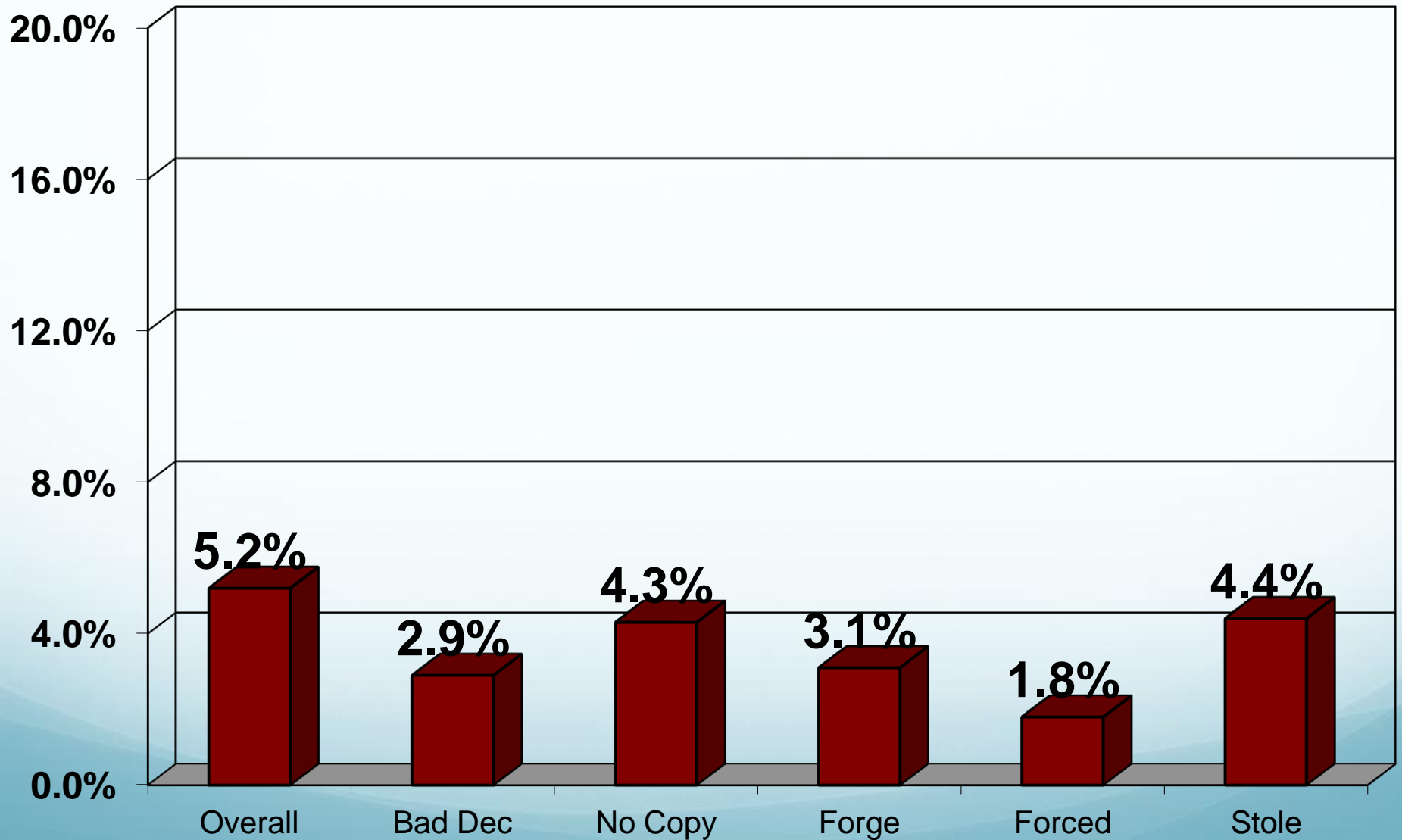
“Now we would like to ask your opinion about how your finances and property are handled. Is there someone who helps you take care of your finances, or is there someone other than yourself who makes decisions about your money and your property, either with or without your approval?”

Mistreatment variables

FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION

1. *“Does that person ask for your PERMISSION before deciding to spend your money or sell your property?”*
2. *“Do you feel like that person makes good decisions about your finances?”*
3. *“Do you have the copies of paperwork for the financial decisions they make or can you get copies if you wanted them?”*
4. *“Has that person ever forged your signature without your permission in order to sell your property or to get money from your accounts?”*
5. *“Has that person ever forced or tricked you into signing a document so that they would be able to get some of your money or possessions?”*
6. *“Has that person, or anyone else you are close to, ever stolen your money or take your things for themselves, their friends, or to sell?”*
7. *“Has a stranger ever spent your money or sold your property without your permission?”*
8. *“Has a stranger ever forged your signature in order to get some of your money or sell your property?”*
9. *“Has a stranger ever forced or tricked you into signing a document so that they would be able to get some of your money or possessions?”*

Financial Mistreatment: Family Current

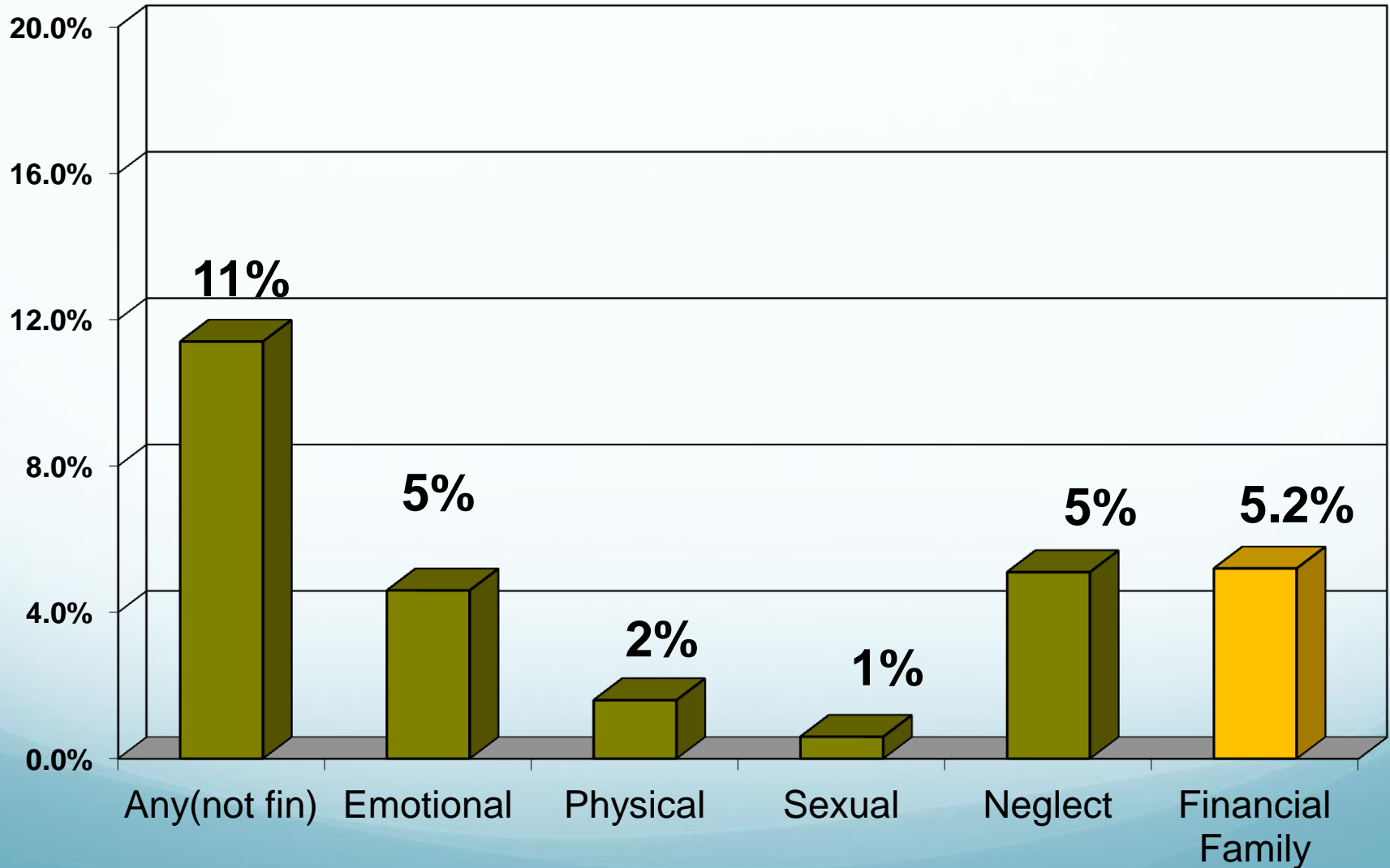


Financial Mistreatment by Family

Current : Significant Risk factors (logistic regression results in red)

- Non-White Racial Status
- Poor Self-Reported Health
- Prior Traumatic Event
- Use of Social Services (OR = 1.3)
- Needs ADL Assistance (OR = 2.0)

Summary: Past Year Mistreatment Prevalences



Overall Conclusions

- 1 in 10 community-residing older adults reported experiencing elder mistreatment in the past year. If family financial mistreatment is counted, that proportion increases to 1 in 7.
- Most of this is perpetrated by family members, not just spouses
- Thus, the focus should not be on partner violence per se, but on family level domestic violence
- **Social Support is a consistent risk factor for all abuse types, and fortunately, modifiable.**

Now we know the numbers....So What?

- We don't know the health effects of elder mistreatment
- We don't know the mental health effects of elder mistreatment
- We don't know the costs of elder mistreatment
- We don't know the Criminal Justice System involvement characteristics
- Basically, we have no epi-level outcomes research--this is a problem because ***THIS*** is how policy will be implemented and evaluated.