



# Newcomb Institute

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# Community safety as a risk factor for intimate partner violence (IPV): Findings from the 2023 VEX Surveys in California and Louisiana

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## Prevalence of IPV in the United States

National estimates of IPV assess physical violence, sexual violence, and stalking from a current or prior sexual or romantic partner (2016/17 data).

47% of women and 44% of men report IPV ever

7% of women and men, respectively, report past year IPV

Impacts of IPV are:

- Social: isolation and alienation
- Economic: negative effects on education and employment
- Health: depression/anxiety, injury, sexual & reproductive health, maternal health concerns, death (leading cause of maternal death in the US)



## VEX Surveys to Understand IPV and Other Forms of Violence and Discrimination

The Violence Experiences Survey (VEX) assesses the prevalence, correlates, and consequences of physical, sexual, and community violence across the lifespan, using state representative data. We have conducted VEX surveys in California annually from 2020-2023 (CalVEX) and conducted VEX in Louisiana in 2023 (LaVEX). We have approximately 3000 participants from California and 1000 participants from Louisiana.

We commissioned NORC at the University of Chicago, a survey research firm, to conduct the VEX surveys. Participants are from a general population sample of adults aged 18 and older selected from AmeriSpeak®, a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. In California, we included an oversample to allow for higher representation of Asian Californians.

Ethical considerations included: IRB approvals, informed consent, verification on safe space for responding, clarity on types of questions that will be asked, choice regarding non-response without penalty, provision of resources or referrals regardless of responses to sexual violence questions.

# IPV in California and Louisiana: 2023 VEX Surveys

*Higher IPV risk for Women and Non-Binary (NB) Adults vs Men  
Gendered Risk increases with severity in form of IPV*

## California

### IPV Ever

- Women: 54%, Men: 38%, NB: 76%

### Physical and/or Sexual IPV Ever

- Women: 37%, Men: 21%, NB: 37%

### Choking/Suffocating

- Women: 12%, Men: 1%, NB: 3%

### Use of a gun

- Women: 2%, Men: <1%, NB: 2%

## Louisiana

### IPV Ever

- Women: 55%, Men: 47%

### Physical and/or Sexual IPV Ever

- Women: 42%, Men: 29%

### Choking/Suffocating

- Women: 16%, Men: 4%

### Use of a gun

- Women: 4%, Men: 1%

# Demographics Risk for Past Year IPV: 2023 VEX Surveys

## California

*3% of women and men reported past year physical and/or sexual IPV*

Sexual identity: Californians identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other self-described sexual identity were 2x as likely to report past year IPV relative to heterosexual respondents (7% vs. 3%).

Age: Young adults (aged 18–24 years) were most likely to report past year IPV (6%); rates declined steadily with age, with <1% of those 65 years and older reporting IPV.

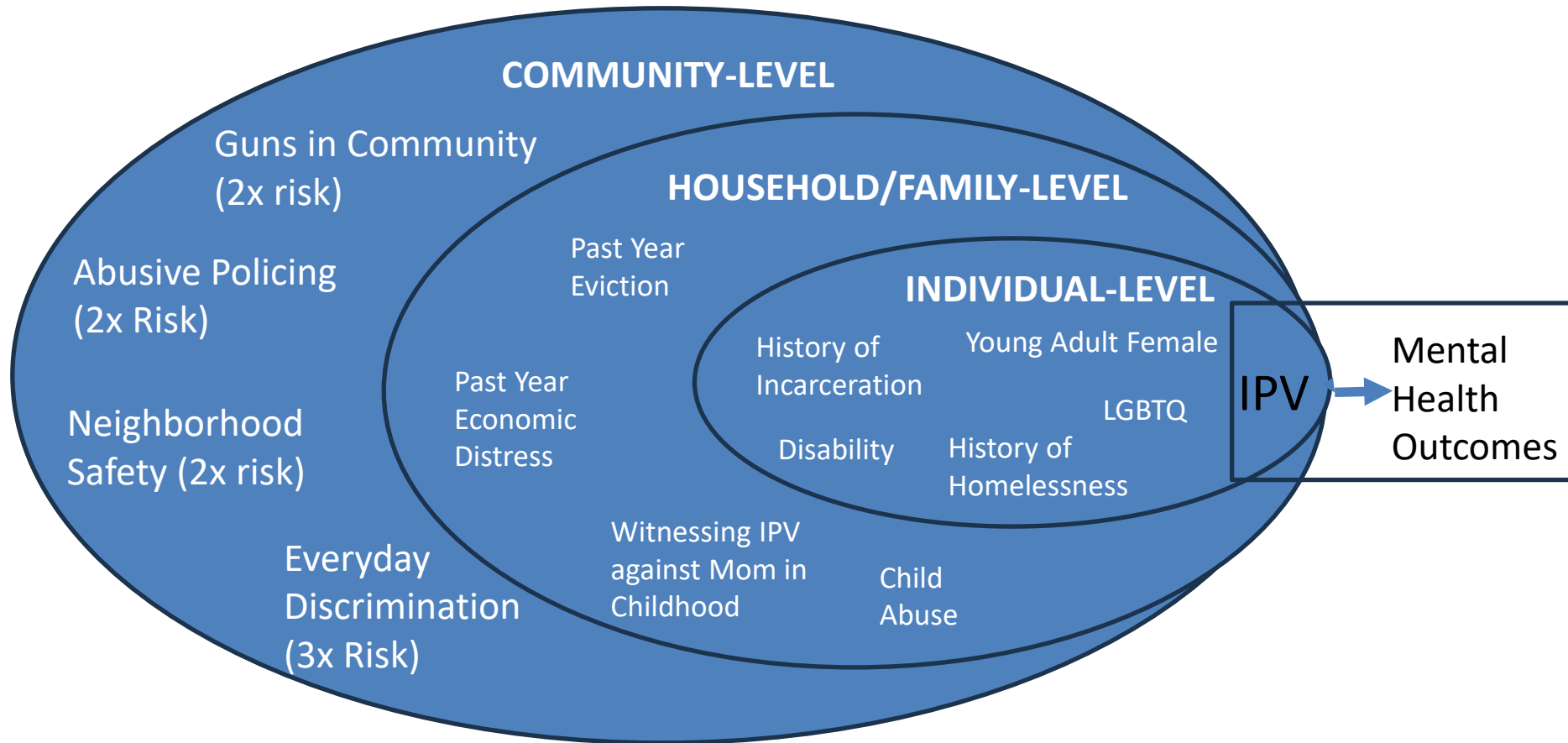
## Louisiana

*4% of women and men reported past year physical and/or sexual IPV*

Sexual Identity: Louisianans identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other self-described identity were 2x as likely to report past year IPV relative to heterosexual respondents (8% vs 4%).

Age: Young adults (aged 18-24 years) were most likely to report past year IPV (8%); rates declined steadily with age, with 1% of those 65 years and older reporting IPV.

# Empirically Supported Ecological Model to Understand IPV and Resultant Mental Health Outcomes: VEX 2023



# Demographics Risk for Past Year IPV: 2023 VEX Surveys

## California

- *Depression/Anxiety*: moderate to severe symptoms 2x as likely for those reporting past year IPV compared to those reporting no past year IPV (36% vs. 17%)
- *Suicidality*: serious consideration of suicide in the past year 5x more likely among those reporting past year IPV compared with those reporting no past year IPV (26% vs 5%).
- *Substance misuse*: past 30-day substance misuse (binge drinking or illicit drug use) 2x as likely for those reporting past year IPV compared with those reporting no past year IPV (63% vs. 28%).

## Louisiana

- *Depression/Anxiety*: moderate to severe symptoms 2.5x as likely for those reporting past year IPV compared to those reporting no past year IPV (49% vs. 21%)
- *Suicidality*: serious consideration of suicide in the past year 4x more likely among those reporting past year IPV compared with those reporting no past year IPV (24% vs 6%).
- *Substance misuse*: past 30-day substance misuse (binge drinking or illicit drug use) almost 2x as likely for those reporting past year IPV compared with those reporting no past year IPV (58% vs. 28%).



# Conclusions and Implications

IPV is at an epidemic level in the United States, but lack of timely data impede our ability to act and track change

VEX Surveys offer timely data on IPV in California and Louisiana and document ecological factors affecting IPV and mental health outcomes.

Findings from VEX data highlight key areas of community safety connected with IPV and resultant mental health concerns, including:

- Neighborhood safety
- Guns in communities
- Abusive Policing exposure
- Discriminatory “Microaggressions” in the community environment

Addressing community safety may reduce IPV and mental health concerns, but community safety approaches must focus on violence AND discrimination. Standard approaches to community violence prevention, such as policing, may not be effective in creating community safety.



# Thank You!

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