



## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AMONG NATIVE WOMEN & GIRLS

### NATIVE WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE OVERREPRESENTED AMONG SEX TRADE SURVIVORS

- In South Dakota, Native American<sup>i</sup> women represent 40% of sex trafficking victims, though Native Americans are only 8% of the population.<sup>ii</sup>
- In Hennepin County, Minnesota, American Indian women comprise approximately 25% of women arrested for prostitution though American Indians are only 2% of the population.<sup>iii</sup>
- In Anchorage, Alaska, Alaskan Native women and girls represent 33% of all female sex trade survivors, though Alaskan Native people are less than 8% of the population.<sup>iv</sup>

### NATIVE WOMEN EXPERIENCE DISPROPORTIONATE RATES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- Native American women are over 2.5 times as likely to be sexually assaulted or raped than the general population of women.<sup>v</sup>
- Nearly 46% of American Indian/Alaskan Native women have experienced some form of sexual violence compared to 36% of women of all races.<sup>vi</sup>
- Of American Indian/Alaskan Native women, 29% report having been raped as compared to 19% of women of all races.<sup>vii</sup>
- In Seattle, 94% of Native women were forced or coerced into sex in their lifetimes.<sup>viii</sup>

### NATIVE GIRLS EXPERIENCE DISPROPORTIONATE RATES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- In one Minnesota study, 30% of Native girls ages 11-17 had a history of sexual abuse.<sup>ix</sup>
- In one survey, 11% of Native American girls reported being raped and 23% reported being touched without their consent.<sup>x</sup>
- Approximately 13% of American Indian/Alaskan Native high school students report being raped at some time in their lives compared to approximately 12% of girls of all races.<sup>xi</sup>

### NATIVE WOMEN AND GIRLS RARELY GET JUSTICE

Sexual violence against Native women and girls thrives because their predators are often shielded from accountability.

- Native women and girls who experience sexual violence and exploitation are often criminalized for their own victimization through [the abuse-to-prison pipeline](#).<sup>xii</sup>
- Of American Indian/Alaskan Native female sexual assault survivors, 96% were assaulted by someone of a different race at some point in their lives.<sup>xiii</sup> However, complex jurisdictional issues limit the ability of tribal governments to hold non-Native perpetrators accountable.<sup>xiv</sup>
- Though many crimes committed against Native women and girls fall under federal jurisdiction, the federal government often fails to investigate. From 2013 to 2016, there were only 14 federal investigations of human trafficking in tribal communities compared to over 6,100 federal human trafficking investigations nationally, from 2013 to 2015.<sup>xv</sup>



- 
- <sup>i</sup> The terms “Native,” “Native American,” “American Indian,” and “Alaskan Native” are the original terminology used in the cited material. The use of these terms is not meant to exclude any Native community nor generalize how Native peoples choose to identify.
- <sup>ii</sup> Danielle Ferguson, Argus Leader, “[Law enforcement, Native Communities focus on sex trafficking prevention training](#)” (Aug. 27, 2016).
- <sup>iii</sup> Victoria Sweet, Human Trafficking Center, “[Disproportionate Impacts of Human Trafficking on Native Communities](#)” (Feb. 14, 2017).
- <sup>iv</sup> Melissa Farley, Nicole Matthews, Sarah Deer, Gaudalupe Lopez, Christine Stark, & Eileen Hudon, Minnesota Indian Women’s Sexual Assault Coalition & Prostitution Research and Education, *Garden of Truth: The Prostitution and Trafficking of Native Women in Minnesota* (2011), p.17.
- <sup>v</sup> Alexandra Pierce, The Minnesota American Indian Women’s Resource Center, [Shattered Hearts: The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of American Indian Women and Girls in Minnesota](#) (Aug. 2009), p.66.
- <sup>vi</sup> National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 State Report* (2017), pp.17, 20.
- <sup>vii</sup> *Id.* at 18, 20.
- <sup>viii</sup> Vianna Davila, “[Nearly every Native American woman in Seattle survey said she was raped or coerced into sex.](#)” *Seattle Times* (Aug. 2018),
- <sup>ix</sup> Alexandra Pierce, The Minnesota American Indian Women’s Resource Center, [Shattered Hearts: The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of American Indian Women and Girls in Minnesota](#) (Aug. 2009), p.64.
- <sup>x</sup> Kayla Patrick & Neena Chaudhry, National Women’s Law Center, [Let Her Learn: Stopping School Pushout for Girls Who Have Suffered Harassment and Sexual Violence](#) (2017), p.3.
- <sup>xi</sup> National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [Sexual Violence: Facts at a Glance](#) (2012), p.1.
- <sup>xii</sup> See our [Racial and Gender Disparities in the Sex Trade](#) fact sheet and our [Sexual Abuse to Prison Pipeline](#) fact sheet for more information.
- <sup>xiii</sup> André B. Rosay, National Institute of Justice, *Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and Men* (2016), p.19.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Lyndsey Gilpin, High Country News, “[Why Native American Women still Have the Highest Rates of Rape and Assault](#)” (June 7, 2016).
- <sup>xv</sup> Government Accountability Office, [Human Trafficking: Investigations in Indian Country or Involving Native Americans and Actions Needed to Better Report on Victims Served](#) (2017), p.6.