

Findings from the 2012 Survey on Abuse of People with Disabilities

The following are the key findings that emerged from an analysis of the responses to the survey. These findings were mentioned in this report (www.disabilityandabuse.org/survey). They are repeated here with links that will take the online reader directly to the area of the report from which the data for a specific finding was taken. For example, to view data on finding #1, click on the link from Report #1 and go to question #7 in that report.

Prevalence of Abuse

1. More than 70% of people with disabilities who took the survey reported they had been victims of abuse. (Q-7 of [Report #1](#) - PWD) [958 out of 1364 respondents]
2. More than 63% of parents and immediate family members reported that their loved one with a disability had experienced abuse. (Q-7 of [Report #2](#) - Fam) [1431 out of 2249 respondents]
3. Some disability types had a higher incidence of abuse than others. (Q-7 of [Report #4](#) - Types)
mobility 55.2% / autism 66.5% / I/DD 62.5% / speech 67.1% / mh 74.8%
* I/DD = intellectual/developmental ** mh = mental health

Types of Abuse

4. People with disabilities who were victims reported having experienced various types of abuse. (Q-8 of [Report #1](#) - PWD) [938 respondents]
verbal-emotional 87.2% / physical 50.6% / sexual 41.6% / neglect 37.3% / financial 31.5%
5. The rate of sexual abuse varied greatly among victims depending on the type of disabilities they had. (Q-8 of [Report #4](#) - Types)
mobility 31.6% / autism 24.9% / dd 34.2% / speech 24.6% / mh 47.4%

Frequency of Abuse

6. More than 90% of people with disabilities who were victims of abuse said they had experienced such abuse on multiple occasions. Some 57% of these victims said they had experienced abuse on more than 20 occasions, with 46% saying it was too frequent for them to even count. (Q-12 of [Report #1](#) - PWD)
7. The rate of victimization reported by various disability communities (pwd and families) was rather consistent, with the following victim types reporting having been abused 10 or more times at the following rates. (Q-12 of [Report #4](#) - Types)
mobility 45.7% / autism 44.3% / I/DD 39.9% / speech 43.8% / mh 59.4%

Disability Types of Victims

8. These are the types of disabilities that victims of abuse have. (Q-6 of [Report #13](#) - Victims)
I/DD 38.4% / mh 30.5% / autism 28.8% / mobility 22.6% / speech 16.9% / Deaf 10.3% / blind 7.2% / fasd 4.4%

Reporting of Abuse

9. Among people with disabilities who reported being victims of abuse, nearly two-thirds did not report it to the authorities. (Q-9 of [Report #1](#) - PWD)

62.7% did not report abuse / 37.3% did report abuse

10. When both families of victims and people with disabilities who are victims are considered, the rate of reporting increases (attributable to increased reporting by family members of victims). (Q-9 of [Report #13](#) - Victims)

48.3% did not report the abuse / 51.7% did report the abuse

11. The rate of reporting varies among disability communities (people with disabilities or “pwd” and families). (Q-9 of [Report #4](#) - Disability Community)

mobility 39.5% / autism 55.4% / dd 54% / speech 52.8% / mh 44.2%

12. The rates of non-reporting are high even with the most serious forms of abuse. For example, some 40% of victims of physical abuse (violence) did not report the abuse to the authorities. (Q-9 of [Report #14](#) - Physical Abuse Victims). More than 41% of victims of sexual abuse did not report. (Q-9 of [Report #15](#) - Sexual Abuse Victims)

Reasons for Not Reporting

13. People with disabilities who were victims gave various reasons for not reporting the abuse. (Q-11 of [Report #1](#) - PWD)

futility – 58% believed that nothing would happen

fear – 38% had been threatened or were otherwise afraid

lack of information – 33% did not know how to or where to report

14. Explanations for not reporting varied among disability communities (pwd and families). (Q-11 of [Report #4](#) - Disability Communities)

futility – mobility 56% / autism 54.1% / I/DD 59.1% / speech 56.7% / mh 75%

fear – mobility 30.4% / autism 25.4% / I/DD 27.8% / speech 30.0% / mh 57.4%

lack of info – mobility 30.9% / autism 42.1% / I/DD 32.1% / speech 36.7% / mh 52.3%

Outcomes of Reporting

15. In most cases when victims with disabilities reported incidents of abuse to authorities, nothing happened. Alleged perpetrators were arrested in a small percentage of cases reported to authorities. (Q-10 of [Report #1](#) - PWD)

alleged perpetrator was arrested - 9.8% / nothing happened - 52.9%

16. When reporting by families as well as reporting by people with disabilities who were victims is considered, the rate of nothing happening decreases to 42.8%. This is a little better outcome but is still a disappointing number. Unfortunately, the percent of alleged perpetrators who are arrested also

decreases to 7.8%. (Q-10 of [Report #13](#) - Victims)

Prevalence of Bullying

17. More than 73% of people with disabilities who participated in the survey reported they had been victims of bullying. Most of these victims had experienced bullying on multiple occasions, with 38% saying that their victimization had lasted for years. (Q-15 of [Report #1](#) - PWD)

18. People with autism and people with mental health problems were victims of bullying at a significantly higher rate than people with other types of disabilities. The following are the rates of bullying reported by various disabilities communities (pwd and families). (Q-13 of [Report #4](#) - Disability Communities)

mobility 55% / autism 77% / I/DD 64.3% / speech 66.8% / mh 74.7%

19. Most bullying occurred at school, followed by neighborhood or home, followed by work. (Q-14 of [Report #1](#) - PWD)

school 72% / neighborhood or home 42.4% / work 36.8% / sports team 8.8%

Frequency of Bullying

20. Most victims say their experience of bullying is not an isolated incident but rather something that happened on multiple occasions. (Q-12 of [Report #4](#) - Types)

more than once - mobility 89% / autism 89% / dd 88% / speech 89% / mh 95%

10 or more times - mobility 45.7% / autism 44.3% / I/DD 39.9% / speech 43.8% / mh 59.4%

Getting Therapy

21. Most people with disabilities who are victims of abuse or bullying do not receive counseling or therapy. (Q-17 of [Report #1](#) - PWD)

did receive therapy - 38.7% / did not receive therapy 65.4%

22. When therapy was provided, 83% of people with disabilities who were victims say that it was helpful to them. (Q-18 of [Report #1](#) - PWD)

23. More than 63% of victims of physical abuse and 52% of victims of sexual assault did not receive therapy. (Q-17 of [Report #14](#) - Sex Abuse Victims, and Q-17 of [Report #15](#) - Physical Abuse Victims)

Victim/Witness Programs

24. Fewer than 5% of victims of abuse received any benefits from a victim-witness program. (Q-10 of [Report #13](#) - Victims) This is true even for victims of physical abuse (Q-10 of [Report #14](#) - Physical Abuse Victims). A slightly higher percent of sexual abuse victims, some 8.6%, received benefits through a victim-witness program. (Q-10 of [Report #14](#) - Sexual Abuse Victims)