

## Identity and Violence

Childhood sexual violence affects some communities and societies more than others. Factors like gender and social inequalities, poor housing and job opportunities, weak governmental policies, cultural norms, and economic and health barriers contribute to this problem.

Understanding these factors is essential to solving the crisis. **We need to know the facts before we can find solutions.**

### Gender

#### Women and Girls

- Globally, more girls and young women are survivors of childhood sexual violence<sup>1</sup>.
- Girls and women face damaging beliefs that violence against them is normal and expected.
- Many systems of power in the world are male-dominated.

#### Men and Boys

- Systems and patriarchal views that devalue women and girls also harm men.
- Many male survivors don't report their experiences due to a culture of silence and shared concepts about masculinity.

#### Gender non-conforming

- People who identify as gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and transgender have higher rates of violence<sup>2</sup>
- Ideas around gender are nuanced and fluid and we respect those who are non-gender conforming.

### Race and Ethnicity

- Race and ethnicity can also disproportionately affect children who may be exposed to sexual violence
- The Economist Impact found that 79% of 18 year olds belonging to an ethnic or racial minority experienced at least one sexual harm during childhood<sup>3</sup>.
- Race and ethnicity can also lead to differences in access to prevention, healing, and justice

### Other Social Factors

Social inequities affect childhood sexual abuse and allow people in different social positions or statuses have unequal opportunities and rewards. This happens in consistent and predictable ways, leading to unequal distribution of resources, wealth, opportunities, rewards, and punishments. Examples include:

- Unequal access to opportunities such as employment and economic systems
- Health disparities, such as access to services and information leading to worse health outcomes
- Inequities in the legal and justice systems that can lead to imprisonment

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<sup>1</sup> *Devastatingly Pervasive: 1 in 3 Women Globally Experience Violence*, 2021:

<https://www.who.int/news/item/09-03-2021-devastatingly-pervasive-1-in-3-women-globally-experience-violence>

<sup>2</sup> Human Rights Foundation: <https://reports.hrc.org/an-epidemic-of-violence-2023>

<sup>3</sup> Harrison, L. (n.d.). *Global Threat Assessment 2023 Data*. WeProtect Global Alliance. Retrieved June 14, 2024, from <https://www.weprotect.org/global-threat-assessment-23/data>