

The Hard Facts

Online-only content for “Women: An Endangered Species?” by Maureen Shawn Kennedy, MA, RN, and Karen Roush, MSN, RN, FNP-BC, in the American Journal of Nursing, June 2009, p. 24-25.

The number of women and girls who suffer violence and human rights abuses around the world—and in the United States—is rising with alarming speed. The following are just a few statistics that have propelled women’s rights groups to call for action.

- **“Practically every” woman or girl over the age of 12** who survived the Rwandan genocide had been raped according to a 2000 report by the Organization of African Unity.
- **60 million** female fetuses are aborted or young infants killed in Asia because of their sex.
- **2 million** women in developing countries live with obstetric fistulas.
- **500,000** women die annually from preventable complications of pregnancy or childbirth.
- **15% to 71%** of women worldwide (the rate varies according to country) have experienced violence at the hands of intimate partners.
- **59%** of those living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa are women.
- **22.6%** of girls (now ages 20 to 24) in India were married before age 16, and 2.6% were married before age 13.
- **One of seven** girls in the developing world (excluding China) is married before age 15.
- **5,000** women are murdered each year in “honor killings.”