



# **Sexual Assault Among Racial and Ethnic Minority Populations**

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# National Women's Study (NWS)

## Source of NWS Data:

- Conducted in 1989
- Telephone survey of 4,008 adult women in the U.S.
- Age 18 and older

# Definition of Sexual Assault

Rape is an attempted or complete event that occurs without the victim's consent, that involves the use or threat of force to penetrate the victim's vagina or anus by penis, tongue, fingers or object or to the victim's mouth by a penis

# National Women's Study (NWS)

- **Screening Question Examples:**
  - Has a man or boy ever made you have sex using force or threatening to harm you or someone close to you? Just so there is no mistake, by sex we mean putting a penis in your vagina.
  - Has anyone, male or female ever put fingers or objects in your vagina or anus against your will using force or threats?

# NWS Data Set

4,008 women

	<u>n</u>	<u>percent</u>
■ Native American	69	1.7
■ Asian/Pacific Islander	44	1.1
■ Hispanic	215	5.4
■ African American	439	11.0
■ Non-Hispanic White	3214	80.7

# Lifetime Completed Rape Estimates

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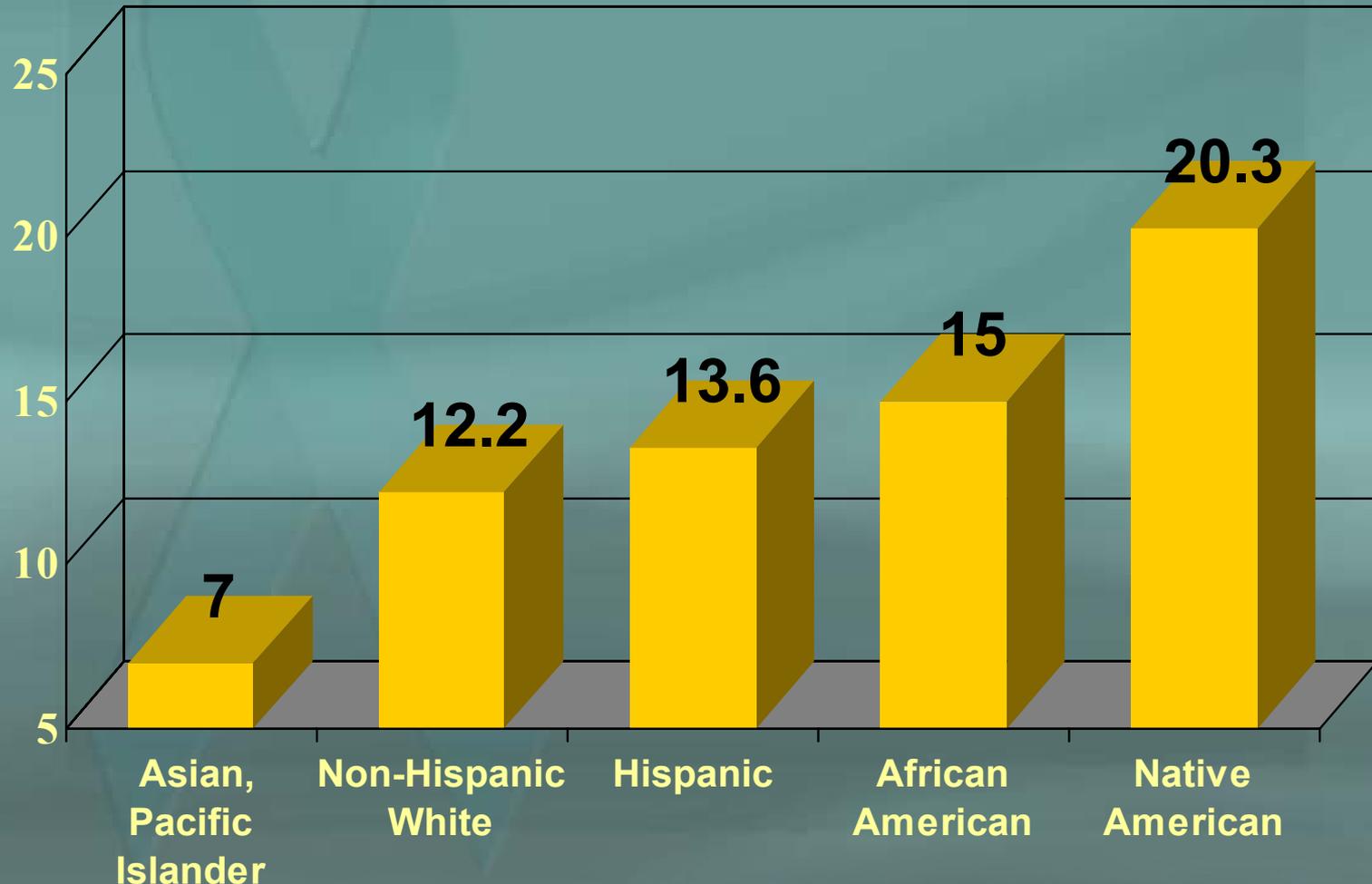
	<b>Percent in Sample</b>	<b>Number in Population</b>
<b>National Women's Study<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>12.65%</b>	<b>12.1 million</b>

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<sup>1</sup>Based on 1989 U.S. Census Bureau estimates.

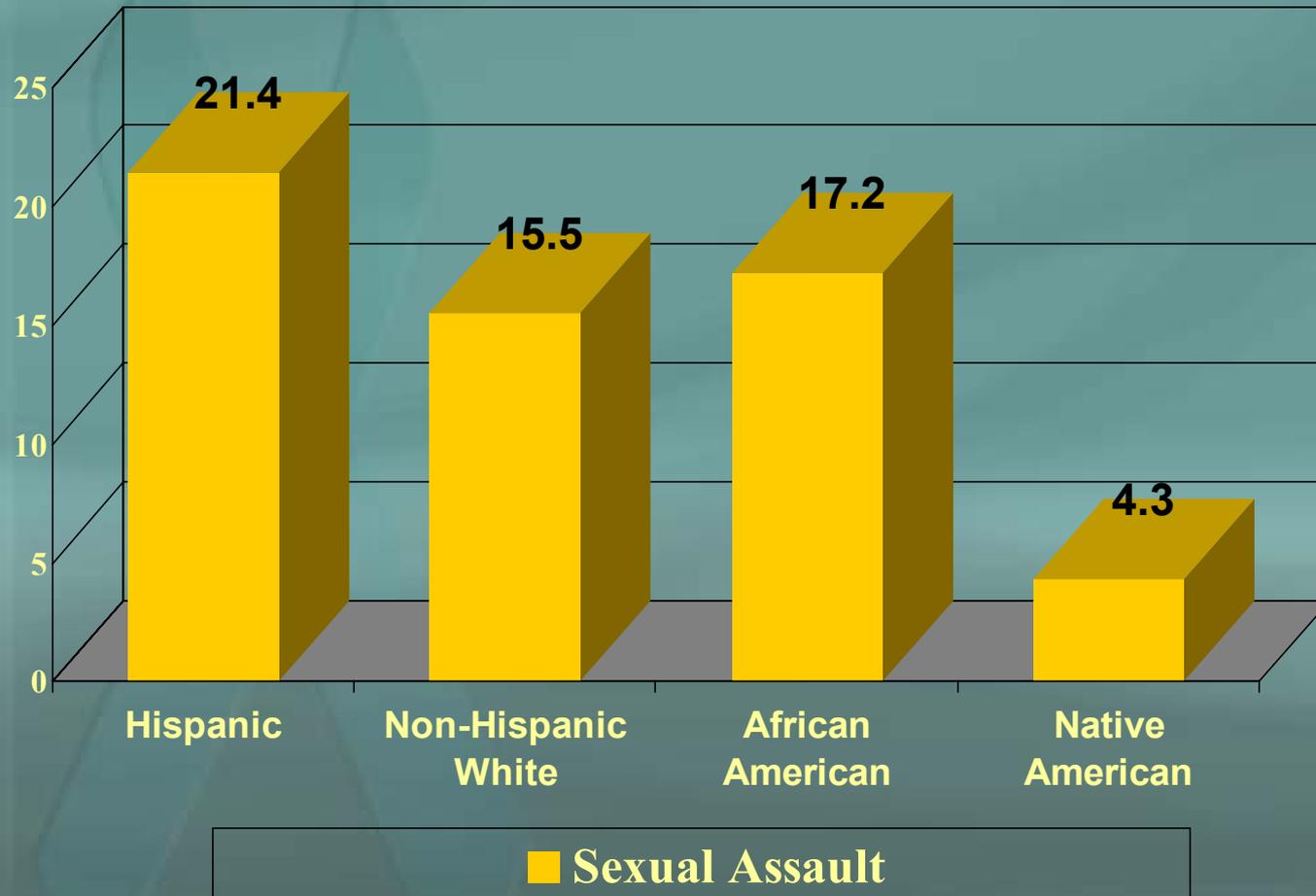
# Lifetime Prevalence of Completed Rape by Race and Ethnicity

## NWS



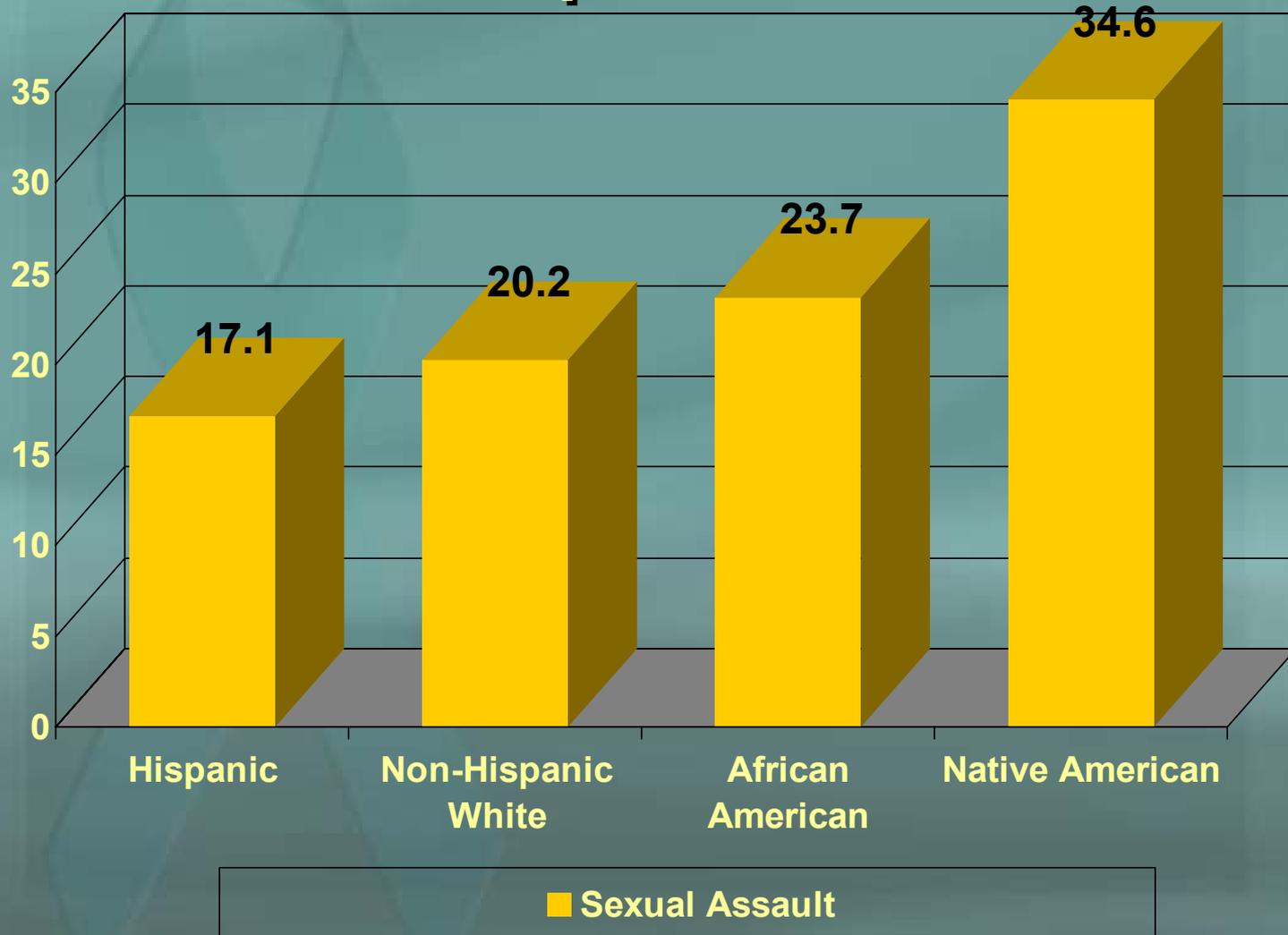
$p < .0001$

# Assault by Stranger



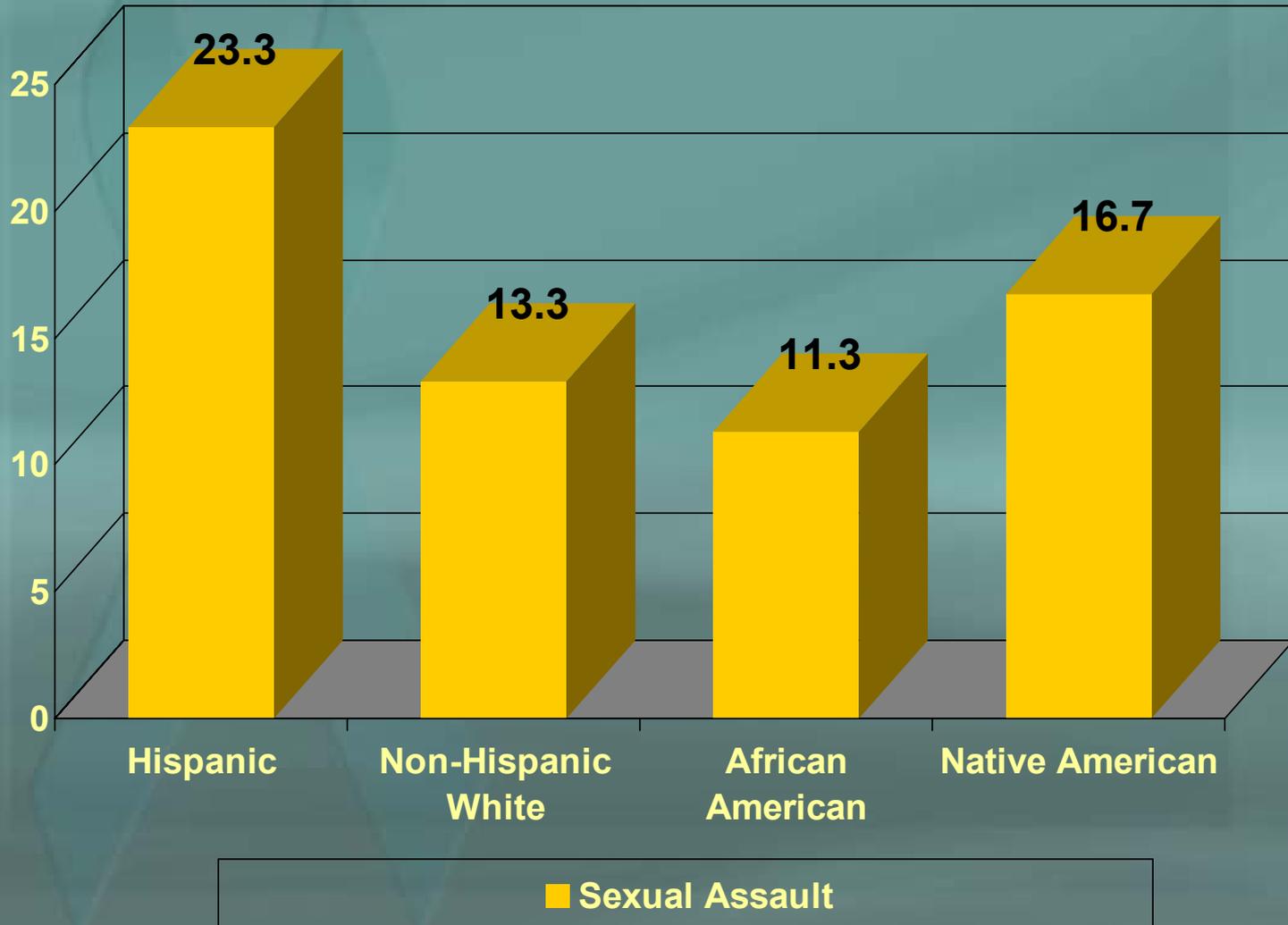
\*Number of Asians too small for meaningful comparisons.

# Immediate Family Member as Perpetrator

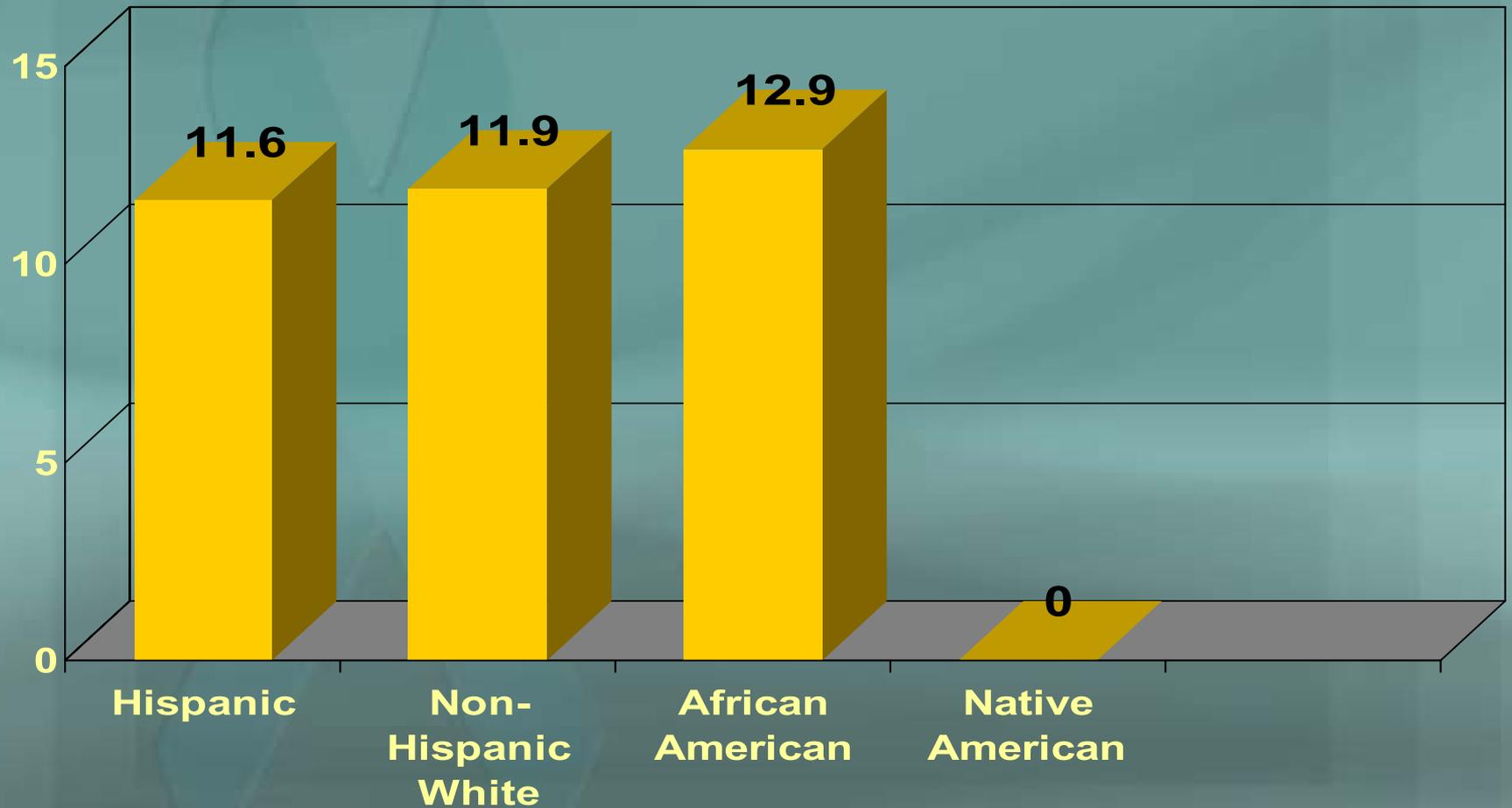


\*Number of Asians too small for meaningful comparisons.

# Other Family Member as Perpetrator



# Boyfriend as Perpetrator



■ Sexual Assault

# Summary

- **Prevalence:**
  - **Native Americans appear to be at significantly greater risk for sexual assault**
  - **Hispanic victims were more likely to be assaulted by a stranger**
- **Substance Use:**
  - **African Americans and Hispanics who have been sexually assaulted may be more likely to abuse alcohol**

# Summary

## ■ Perpetrator Characteristics:

**–Native Americans appear to be less likely to be assaulted by a stranger or a boyfriend than other ethnic groups. However, they appear to be more likely to be assaulted by an immediate family member**

**–In contrast, Hispanics appear more likely to be assaulted by non-immediate family members than the other racial and ethnic groups**

**–African Americans appear to be at a slightly higher risk of sexual assault by a boyfriend, but the statistics are somewhat similar to those of Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Whites**

# Recommendations

- Prevention programs should be sensitive to differences in sexual assault prevalence, characteristics, and consequences across racial and ethnic groups
- Prevention programs should also address risk from a variety of potential perpetrators, including acquaintances, family, extended family and strangers
- The increase in risk for substance use among victims of assault should also be addressed in secondary and tertiary sexual assault prevention strategies.