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85,000 Rapes Per Year In State Of Mexico

by Steven Ranieri

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According to Patricia Valladares, coordinator of the Interdisciplinary Program for Attention to Rape Victims (PIAV), 85,000 rapes occur every year in the state of Mexico, while only 5% are reported to the authorities. Valladares said that 60% of the victims are minors. PIAV, a new program developed with funding from the District Attorney's office, was designed to provide legal, physical and emotional aid to rape victims. Valladares said that the proportion of reported cases is extremely low because Mexican women and children are victims social norms which encourage subservience to authority, and silence. Since perpetrators are often family members or family friends, victims are afraid of reprisal or of being blamed for the rape. Sergio Martinez Arrieta, president of the Mexico State Bar Association, said PIAV estimates of the incidence of rape are accurate. He added that the court system is currently unprepared to investigate and punish persons responsible for sexual assault. (Source: El Nacional, 03/11/91; The Mexico City News, 03/12/91)

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