Teen Dating Violence Facts

PREVALENCE AND FREQUENCY

- Teen dating violence runs across race, gender, and socioeconomic lines. Both males and females are victims, but boys and girls are abusive in different ways:
  - Girls are more likely to yell, threaten to hurt themselves, pinch, slap, scratch, or kick;
  - Boys injure girls more severely and frequently;
  - Some teen victims experience violence occasionally;
  - Others are abused more often...sometimes daily.

- A comparison of Intimate Partner Violence rates between teens and adults reveals that teens are at higher risk of intimate partner abuse.

- Females ages 16-24 are more vulnerable to intimate partner violence than any other age group— at a rate almost triple the national average.

- Approximately 1 in 5 female high school students report being physically and/or sexually abused by a dating partner.

- Among female victims of intimate partner violence, a current or former boyfriend or girlfriend victimized 94% of those between the ages of 16-19.

- Between 1993 and 1999, 22% of all homicides against females ages 16-19 were committed by an intimate partner.

- In a study of gay, lesbian, and bisexual adolescents, youths involved in same-sex dating are just as likely to experience dating violence as youths involved in opposite sex dating.

- Nearly one-half of adult sex offenders report committing their first sexual offenses prior to the age of 18.
58% of rape victims report being raped between the ages of 12-24.

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), (2002).

Half of the reported date rapes occur among teenagers.


Intimate partner violence among adolescents is associated with increased risk of substance use, unhealthy weight control behaviors, sexual risk behaviors, pregnancy, and suicide.


PARENTAL AWARENESS

81% of parents surveyed either believe teen dating violence is not an issue or admit they don’t know if it’s an issue.


A majority of parents (54%) admit they’ve not spoken to their child about dating violence.


TEEN AWARENESS

Nearly 25% of 14-17 year-olds surveyed know at least one student who was a victim of dating violence, while 11% know multiple victims of dating violence. 33% of teens have actually witnessed such an event.


20% of surveyed male students report witnessing someone they go to high school with physically hit a person they were dating.


39% of female high school students report that students talk in school about whether someone is attempting to control the person they are dating.

57% of teens know someone who has been physically, sexually, or verbally abusive in a dating relationship.

Liz Claiborne Inc., Conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, (February 2005).

45% of girls know a friend or peer who has been pressured into either intercourse or oral sex.

Liz Claiborne Inc., Conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, (February 2005).

One in three teens reports knowing a friend or peer who has been hit, punched, kicked, slapped or physically hurt by their dating partner.

Liz Claiborne Inc., Conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, (February 2005).

In 9 out of 10 rapes in which the offender is under 18, so is the victim.

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Fact Sheet on Violence: Adolescents & Young Adults, 5, (2002).

INCIDENT REPORTING

When female high school students were asked whom they would talk to if someone they date is attempting to control them, insults them, or physically harms them, 86% percent said they would confide in a friend, while only 7% said they would talk to police.


83% of 10th graders surveyed at the 4th Annual Teen Dating Abuse Summit reported that they would sooner turn to a friend for help with dating abuse than to a teacher, counselor, parent or other caring adult.

The Northern Westchester Shelter, with Pace Women’s Justice Center, (April 2003).

Only 33% of teens who were in an abusive relationship ever told anyone about the abuse

Liz Claiborne Inc., Conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, (February 2005).

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

A study of 1,600 juvenile sexual assault offenders nationwide indicated that only around 33% of the juveniles perceived sex as a way to demonstrate love or caring for another person; 23.5% percent perceived sex as a way to feel power and control; 9.4% as a way to dissipate anger; 8.4% percent as a way to punish.

A University of Texas medical center study of new mothers, age 18 and younger, chronicled numerous reports of being slapped, hit, kicked or physically hurt by a husband or boyfriend. Most of the violent incidents occurred during the first three months after childbirth.


Both victims and abusers attribute the responsibility for violent dating behavior to victims, caused by: provocation by the girl; the victim’s personality type; the girl’s need for affection; communication problems; and peer group influence.


77% of female and 67% of male high school students endorse some form of sexual coercion, including unwanted kissing, hugging, genital contact, and sexual intercourse.


Male peer support for violence against women is a constant predictor of male violence within post-secondary educational institutions.


50% of youth reporting both dating violence and rape also reported attempting suicide, compared to 12.5% of non-abused girls and 5.4% of non-abused boys.


THE LEGACY OF RELATIONSHIP ABUSE

More than half of both prison and jail inmates serving time for violence against an intimate were using drugs, alcohol or both at the time of the incident for which they were incarcerated.


The severity of violence among intimate partners has been shown to increase if the pattern has been established in adolescence.


Patterns of dating violence behavior often start early and carry through into adult relationships.


Violent relationships in adolescence can have serious ramifications for victims: Many will continue to be abused in their adult relationships and are at a higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, and suicide.