

FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION FUND

The Facts on Teenagers and Intimate Partner Violence

Dating violence affects women regardless of their age, but teens are particularly vulnerable. In fact, women age 16 to 24 experience the highest per capita rate of intimate partner violence.ⁱ Teen dating violence is prevalent and teens may also be exposed to domestic violence in their homes. Teens and young adults who are disconnected from social supports such as school, family, and work are at particular risk for domestic violence.

- In a study of eighth and ninth graders, 25 percent indicated that they had been victims of dating violence, including eight percent who disclosed being sexually abused.ⁱⁱ
- Approximately one in five female public high school students in Massachusetts reported ever experiencing physical and/or sexual violence from dating partners.ⁱⁱⁱ
- In a survey of 232 high school girls, 17.8 percent of the subjects indicated that they had been forced to engage in sexual activity against their will by a dating partner.^{iv}
- Among female students between the ages of 15-20 who reported at least one violent act during a dating relationship, 24 percent reported experiencing extremely violent incidents such as rape or the use of weapons against them.^v
- Girls who reported that they had been sexually or physically abused were more than twice as likely as non-abused girls to report smoking (26 percent versus ten percent), drinking (22 percent versus 12 percent), and using illegal drugs (30 percent versus 13 percent). In addition, 32 percent of girls who had been abused reported bingeing and purging, compared to 12 percent of girls who had not been abused.^{vi}
- In a study of 724 adolescent mothers between the ages of 12-18, one of every eight pregnant adolescents reported having been physically assaulted by the father of her baby during the preceding 12 months. Of these, 40 percent also reported experiencing violence at the hands of a family member or relative.^{vii}

ⁱ Rennison, Callie Marie and Sarah Welchans. 2003. *Intimate Partner Violence 1993-2001*. U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics. Washington, DC. Retrieved January 9, 2004. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/ipv01.htm>.

ⁱⁱ Foshee, VA; Linder, GF; Bauman, KE; Langwick, SA; Arriaga, XB; Heath, JL; McMahon, PM; Bangdiwala, S. 1996. "The Safe Dates Project: Theoretical Basis, Evaluation Design, and Selected Baseline Findings." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*. 12(5 Suppl):39-47.

ⁱⁱⁱ Silverman, J., Raj, A., Mucci, L., Hathaway, J. 2001. "Dating Violence Against Adolescent Girls and Associated Substance Abuse, Unhealthy Weight Control, Sexual Risk Behavior, Pregnancy, and Suicidality." *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 286(5): 572-579.

^{iv} Jezl, D., Molidor, C. & Wright, T. 1996. "Physical, Sexual & Psychological Abuse in High School Dating Relationships: Prevalence Rates and Self-esteem Issues." *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 13(1): 69-87.

^v Symons, P., Groer, M., Kepler-Youngblood, P., Slater, V. 1994. "Prevalence and Predictors of Adolescent Dating Violence." *Journal of Child & Adolescent Pediatric Nursing*. 7(3).

^{vi} Schoen, C., Davis, K., Collins, K., Greenberg, L., Des Roches, C., Abrams, M. 1997. *The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls*. The Commonwealth Fund. New York, NY.

^{vii} Wiemann, C., Aguarica, C., Berenson, A., Volk, R., Rickert, V. 2000. "Pregnant Adolescents: Experiences and Behaviors Associated with Physical Assault by an Intimate Partner." *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 93-101.

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More Facts on Teen Dating Violence

DATING VIOLENCE

In a study of eighth and ninth graders, 25 percent indicated that they had been victims of dating violence, including eight percent who disclosed being sexually abused.ⁱ

Approximately one in five female public high school students in Massachusetts reported ever experiencing physical and/or sexual violence from dating partners.ⁱⁱ

Women aged 16-24 experience the highest per capita rate of intimate partner violence.ⁱⁱⁱ

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

In a survey of 232 high school girls, 17.8 percent of the subjects indicated that they had been forced to engage in sexual activity against their will by a dating partner.^{iv}

Of 273 high school students surveyed in the Chicago area, 16 percent identified past sexual victimization by a dating or ex-dating partner within the last year.^v

Among female students between the ages of 15-20 who reported at least one violent act during a dating relationship, 24 percent reported experiencing extremely violent incidents such as rape or the use of weapons against them.^{vi}

PREGNANCY AND FAMILY PLANNING

Teens are at a higher risk of abuse during pregnancy than adult women: 21.7 percent of teens experience abuse as opposed to 15.9 percent of adults.^{vii}

High school girls reporting experiences of violence from dating partners were found to be approximately 4 to 6 times more likely than their nonabused peers to have ever been pregnant.^{viii}

In a study of 724 adolescent mothers between the ages of 12-18, one of every eight pregnant adolescents reported having been physically assaulted by the father of her baby during the preceding twelve months. Of these, forty percent also reported experiencing violence at the hands of a family member or relative.^{ix}

In a study of young mothers on public assistance, half (51 percent) reported experiencing birth control sabotage by a dating partner.^x

The experience of interpersonal violence is correlated with rapid repeat pregnancy (RRP: defined as pregnancy onset within 12-24 months of the previous pregnancy outcome,) among low-income adolescents. In a study of 100 women aged 13-21 receiving prenatal care, those who experienced any form of abuse during the year-long study were substantially more likely to miscarry than were their nonabused peers, and spontaneous abortion was also very strongly associated with RRP.^{xi}

EFFECTS

Younger girls report more severe violence—62 percent in girls aged 11-15.^{xii}

Female teens cause more minor injuries to their partners than male teens, but are also likely to receive more significant physical injuries and are more likely to be sexually victimized by their partners.^{xiii}

HEALTH CARE

Of 2,224 ninth to twelfth graders surveyed, 76 percent wanted the ability to obtain confidential health care, but only 45 percent perceived their regular provider to provide this, and only 28 percent had discussed confidentiality explicitly.^{xiv}

Sixty percent of abused girls said they felt doctors should talk to them about sexual and physical abuse, but only 21 percent of abused girls reported ever having a discussion with their health care provider about physical or sexual abuse. Only seven percent of abused girls said they had told their physician about being abused.^{xv}

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDERED AND QUEER YOUTH

In a survey of gay, lesbian and bisexual students, 40 percent answered 'yes' to the question, "have you ever been hurt physically or sexually by a date or someone you were going out with?"^{xvi}

In a survey of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer identified youth, 49 percent of the respondents reported feeling abused by a partner in a past relationship.^{xvii}

ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE, EATING DISORDERS AND SUICIDE

Girls who reported that they had been sexually or physically abused were more than twice as likely as non-abused girls to report smoking (26 percent versus 10 percent), drinking (22 percent versus 12 percent), and using illegal drugs (30 percent versus 13 percent). In addition, 32 percent of girls who had been abused reported bingeing and purging, compared to 12 percent of girls who had not been abused.^{xviii}

Suicide ideation and actual suicide attempts were approximately 6 to 9 times as common among adolescent girls who reported having been sexually and physically hurt by dating partners.^{xix}

SCHOOL

In a study of young women at a shelter for displaced teens aged 12-20, 44.4 percent of nonbattered women were attending school, whereas only 22 percent of battered women were in school. Fifty percent of the nonbattered women reported that they made good grades, whereas only 34.1 percent of the battered women reported good academic performance.^{xx}

ⁱ Foshee, V., Linder, G., Bauman, K., Langwick, S., Arriaga, X., Heath, J., McMahon, P., Bangdiwala, S. (1996). "The Safe Dates Project: Theoretical Basis, Evaluation Design, and Selected Baseline Findings." American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 12(5 Suppl):39-47.

ⁱⁱ Silverman, J., Raj, A., Mucci, L., Hathaway, J. (2001). "Dating Violence Against Adolescent Girls and Associated Substance Abuse, Unhealthy Weight Control, Sexual Risk Behavior, Pregnancy, and Suicidality," Journal of the American Medical Association, 286(5): 572-579.

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Department of Justice. (1997). Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes Committed by Current & Former Spouses, Boyfriends & Girlfriends. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

^{iv} Jezl, D., Molidor, C. & Wright, T. (1996). "Physical, Sexual & Psychological Abuse in High School Dating Relationships: Prevalence Rates and Self-esteem Issues," Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal, 13(1): 69-87.

^v Bennett, L., Finern, S. (1998). "Sexual and Severe Physical Violence Among High School Students," American Orthopsychiatric Association, Inc., 68 (4), 645-652.

^{vi} Symons, P., Groer, M., Kepler-Youngblood, P., Slater, V. (1994). "Prevalence and Predictors of Adolescent Dating Violence," Journal of Child & Adolescent Pediatric Nursing, Volume 7, No. 3.

^{vii} Parker, B., McFarlane, J. (1993). "Physical and Emotional Abuse in Pregnancy: A Comparison of Adult and Teenage Women," Nursing Research, Vol. 42. No. 3, 173-177.

^{viii} Silverman et al., Op. Cit.

^{ix} Wiemann, C., Aguarcia, C., Berenson, A., Volk, R., Rickert, V. (2000) "Pregnant Adolescents: Experiences and Behaviors Associated with Physical Assault by an Intimate Partner," Maternal and Child Health Journal, Vol. 4, No. 2, 93-101.

^x Center for Impact Research (2000) Domestic Violence & Birth Control Sabotage: A Report from the Teen Parent Project. Chicago. IL: Center for Impact Research.

^{xi} Jacoby, M., et. al., (1999). "Rapid Repeat Pregnancy and Experiences of Interpersonal Violence Among Low-Income Adolescents," American Journal of Preventive Medicine, Vol. 16 Issue 4, 318-321.

^{xii} Center for Impact Research. (2000).

^{xiii} Cohall, A; Cohall, R; Bannister, H; Northridge, M. (1999). "Love Shouldn't Hurt: Strategies for Health Care Providers to Address Adolescent Dating Violence," Journal of the American Medical Womens Association, 54 (3):144-8.

^{xiv} Thrall, Jeannie S., et. al., (2000) Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 154: 885-892.

^{xv} Schoen, C., Davis, K., Collins, K., Greenberg, L., Des Roches, C., Abrams, M. (1997). The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls. New York, NY: The Commonwealth Fund.

^{xvi} Goodenow, Carol. (1998). 1997 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Malden, MA: Massachusetts Department of Education.

^{xvii} Tham, K., et al. (2000). Queer Youth Relationship Violence. Community United Against Violence and Lavender Youth Recreation & Information Center, California State Department of Health Services.

^{xviii} Schoen et al., Op. Cit.

^{xix} Silverman et al., Op. Cit.

^{xx} Richards, Julie, RNC, MS, MSN, 1991, "Battering in a Population of Adolescent Females," Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, Vol. 3, No. 4.