FACTS ABOUT DATING ABUSE

Dating abuse is a big problem, affecting youth in every community across the nation. Learn the facts below.

Too Common
- Nearly 1.5 million high school students nationwide experience physical abuse from a dating partner in a single year.¹
- One in three girls in the US is a victim of physical, emotional or verbal abuse from a dating partner, a figure that far exceeds rates of other types of youth violence.²
- One in ten high school students has been purposefully hit, slapped or physically hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend.³
- One quarter of high school girls have been victims of physical or sexual abuse or date rape.⁴

Why Focus on Teens?
- Girls and young women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rate of intimate partner violence, almost triple the national average.⁵
- Among female victims of intimate partner violence, 94% of those age 16-19 and 70% of those age 20-24 were victimized by a current or former boyfriend or girlfriend.⁶
- Violent behavior often begins between the ages of 12 and 18.⁷
- The severity of intimate partner violence is often greater in cases where the pattern of abuse was established in adolescence.⁸
- About 72% of eighth and ninth graders are ‘dating.’⁹

Don’t Forget About College Students
- Nearly half (43%) of dating college women report experiencing violent and abusive dating behaviors.¹⁰
- College students are not equipped to deal with dating abuse – 57% say it is difficult to identify and 58% say they don’t know how to help someone who’s experiencing it.¹¹
- One in three (36%) dating college students has given a dating partner their computer, email or social network passwords and these students are more likely to experience digital dating abuse.¹²
- One in six (16%) college women has been sexually abused in a dating relationship.¹³

For more information visit www.teendvmonth.org
Long-Lasting Effects

- Violent relationships in adolescence can have serious ramifications by putting the victims at higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior and further domestic violence.\(^\text{14}\)
- Being physically or sexually abused makes teen girls six times more likely to become pregnant and twice as likely to get a STD.\(^\text{15}\)
- Half of youth who have been victims of both dating violence and rape attempt suicide, compared to 12.5% of non-abused girls and 5.4% of non-abused boys.\(^\text{16}\)

Lack of Awareness

- Only 33% of teens who were in an abusive relationship ever told anyone about the abuse.\(^\text{20}\)
- Eighty one percent of parents believe teen dating violence is not an issue or admit they don’t know if it’s an issue.\(^\text{21}\)
- Though 82% of parents feel confident that they could recognize the signs if their child was experiencing dating abuse, a majority of parents (58%) could not correctly identify all the warning signs of abuse.\(^\text{22}\)

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8 S.L. Feld & M.A. Strauss, Criminology, 27, 141-161, (1899).
10 Fifth & Pacific Companies, Inc. (Formerly: Liz Claiborne, Inc.), Conducted by Knowledge Networks, (December 2010). “College Dating Violence and Abuse Poll,” Available at: https://www.breakthecycle.org/surveys.
11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
16 D. M. Ackard, Minneapolis, MN, and D. Neumark-Sztainer, Division of Epidemiology, School of Public Health, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN. Date Violence and Date Rape Among Adolescents: Associations with Disordered Eating Behaviors and Psychological Health, Child Abuse & Neglect, 26 455-473, (2002).
18 Ibid.
20 Liz Claiborne Inc., conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, (February 2005).