



Empowering Youth to End
Domestic Violence

www.breakthecycle.org
www.loveisrespect.org

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

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.¹⁴
- Being physically or sexually abused makes teen girls six times more likely to become pregnant and twice as likely to get a STD.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.¹⁶

Lack of Awareness

- Only 33% of teens who were in an abusive relationship ever told anyone about the abuse.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.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.²²

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Physical Dating Violence Among High School Students—United States, 2003," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, May 19, 2006, Vol. 55, No. 19.

² Davis, Antoinette, MPH. 2008. *Interpersonal and Physical Dating Violence among Teens*. The National Council on Crime and Delinquency Focus. Available at http://www.nccd-crc.org/nccd/pubs/2008_focus_teen_dating_violence.pdf.

³ Grunbaum JA, Kann L, Kinchen S, et al. 2004. *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2003*. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. 53(SS02); 1-96. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5302a1.htm>.

⁴ Schoen, C. et al., *The Commonwealth Fund Survey for the Health of Adolescent Girls*, November 1997.

⁵ Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice and Statistics, *Intimate Partner Violence in the United States, 1993-2004*. Dec. 2006.

⁶ Callie Marie Rennison, Ph.D., Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Intimate Partner Violence and Age of Victim, 1993-99" (2001). Available at: <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/ipva99.pdf>

⁷ Rosado, Lourdes, *The Pathways to Youth Violence; How Child Maltreatment and Other Risk Factors Lead Children to Chronically Aggressive Behavior*. 2000. American Bar Association Juvenile Justice Center.

⁸ S.L. Feld & M.A. Strauss, *Criminology*, 27, 141-161, (1989).

⁹ Foshee VA, Linder GF, Bauman KE, et al. *The Safe Dates Project: theoretical basis, evaluation design, and selected baseline findings*. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 1996; 12(2):39-47.

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.

¹⁴ Jay G. Silverman, PhD; Anita Raj, PhD; Lorelei A. Mucci, MPH; Jeanne E. Hathaway, MD, MPH, "Dating Violence Against Adolescent Girls and Associated Substance Use, Unhealthy Weight Control, Sexual Risk Behavior, Pregnancy, and Suicidality" *JAMA*. 2001;286(5):572-579. doi:10.1001/jama.286.5.572

¹⁵ Decker M, Silverman J, Raj A. 2005. *Dating Violence and Sexually Transmitted Disease/HIV Testing and Diagnosis Among Adolescent Females*. *Pediatrics*. 116: 272-276.

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).

¹⁷ Break the Cycle 2009 State-by-State Teen Dating Violence Report Cards. Available at www.breakthecycle.org/resources-state-law-report-cards-2009.html.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ I. Sagatun-Edwards, E. Hyman, et al. The Santa Clara County Juvenile Domestic and Family Violence Court, *Journal of the Center for Families, Children & the Courts*. 2003.

²⁰ Liz Claiborne Inc., conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, (February 2005).

²¹ "Women's Health," June/July 2004, *Family Violence Prevention Fund and Advocates for Youth*, <http://www.med.umich.edu/whp/newsletters/summer04/p03-dating.html>.

²² Fifth & Pacific Companies, Inc. (Liz Claiborne, Inc.), Conducted by Teen Research Unlimited, (May 2009). "Troubled Economy Linked to High Levels of Teen Dating Violence & Abuse Survey 2009," Available at: <https://www.breakthecycle.org/surveys>.