Dating Abuse Statistics

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Young adult dating violence 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 adolescents in the U.S. is a victim of physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse from a dating partner, a figure that far exceeds rates of other types of youth violence.[2]
- One in 10 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.[4]

Why Focus on Young People?

- 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]
- Violent behavior typically begins between the ages of 12 and 18.[6]
- The severity of intimate partner violence is often greater in cases where the pattern of abuse was established in adolescence.[7]
- About 72% of eighth and ninth graders are "dating".[8]

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.[9]
- Being physically or sexually abused makes teen girls 6x more likely to become pregnant and twice as likely to get an STI.[10]
- 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.[11]

Dating Violence and the Law

- Eight states currently do not include dating relationships in their definition of domestic violence. As a result, young victims of dating abuse often cannot apply for restraining orders.[12]
- New Hampshire is the only state where the law specifically allows a minor of any age to apply for a protection order; more than half of states do not specify the minimum age of a petitioner.[12]
- Currently only one juvenile domestic violence court in the country focuses exclusively on teen dating violence.[13]

Lack of Awareness

- Only 33% of teens who were in a violent relationship ever told anyone about the abuse.[14]
- Eighty one percent of parents believe teen dating violence is not an issue or admit they don't know if it's an issue.[15]
- A teen's confusion about the law and their desire for confidentiality are two of the most significant barriers stopping young victims of abuse from seeking help.[16]

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call 1-866-331-9474

Discuss your options anonymously.
Peer advocates are available 24/7.

For more information, visit www.loveisrespect.org

Repurposing is allowed and encouraged.

Please contact Break the Cycle or the National Dating Abuse Helpline for more information.

Citations

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