

Dating Abuse Statistics



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

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.⁴
- 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.⁵
- Violent behavior often 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

Don't Forget About College Students

- Nearly half (43%) of dating college women report experiencing violent and abusive dating behaviors.⁸
- 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.⁹
- 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.¹⁰
- One in six (16%) college women has been sexually abused in a dating relationship.¹¹

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.¹²
- Being physically or sexually abused makes teen girls six times more likely to become pregnant and twice as likely to get a STD.¹³
- 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.¹⁴

Lack of Awareness

- Only 33% of teens who were in an abusive relationship ever told anyone about the abuse.¹⁵
- Eighty-one (81) percent of parents believe teen dating violence is not an issue or admit they don't know if it's an issue.¹⁶
- 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.¹⁷

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- 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.
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- ⁴ Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice and Statistics, *Intimate Partner Violence in the United States, 1993-2004*. Dec. 2006.
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- ⁸ 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>.
- ⁹ 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>.
- 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 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>.
- ¹² 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
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