Teen Dating Violence

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Early Dating Activity

- Suburban high school students report starting to date at 12 years old
- Two thirds of 6th grade inner city students report “going out” with someone
- Of nearly 2000 8th graders, 79% reported they had dated
Statistics

- 20% of children between 11 and 14 say their friends are victims of dating violence

- 34% of teens sexually active by 15 have been physically abused

- 20% of all teens in relationships have been physically abused
Statistics

- One in three teens in a serious relationship report having been hit, slapped, or pushed by a partner.

- 40% of girls ages 14 to 17 report knowing someone their age who has been beaten or hit by a boyfriend.

- 30% of murdered teenage girls are killed by current or former partners.
Statistics

- 8% of high school girls said a boyfriend or date has forced them to have sex

- Teenage girls who have witnessed violence are 2 to 3 times more likely to smoke & use drugs

- Teenage girls who have experienced violence were also more likely to have sex at an early age, have multiple partners, & get an STD
Chris & Rihanna

- 46% of Boston teens surveyed said the beating was her fault!
- 52% said they both were to blame
- 44% said fighting is normal part of relationship
What are Parents Saying?

- 2/3rds of parents whose teens who are dating believe their children have never been abused

- A majority of parents do not talk to their teens about dating violence

- 81% of parents surveyed either believe teen dating violence is not an issue or admit they don’t know if it’s an issue.
Definition

Dating violence is controlling and aggressive behavior in a romantic relationship. It can happen in straight or gay relationship, and include verbal, emotional, physical, sexual abuse, or a combination of all.
Teen Dating Violence: Power & Control Wheel

- **Intimidation**: Bullying you to get their way.
- **Anger**: Controls you with his or her anger.
- **Isolation**: Prevents you from spending time with friends or family.
- **Threats**: Threatens you, your family, or your friends.
- **Sexual Coercion**: Deliberate pregnancy or forced sexual contact.
- **Social Status**: Using popularity to control relationship.
- **Peer Pressure**: He or she spreads rumors or secrets about you.
- **Blame**: Blames you for his or her anger.

Based on The Duluth Model
www.TheDuluthModel.org

Life. Love. Jennifer Ann’s Group
The Jennifer Ann Crescenta Memorial Group, Inc.
Physical Abuse

- Punching, kicking, biting, slapping
- Hurting partner where bruises won’t show
- Holding partner to stop them from leaving
Sexual Abuse

- Bragging about sex life
- Comparing partner to past partners
- Flirting to make partner jealous
- Rape
Isolation & Possessiveness

- Prevents from seeing friends
- Uses jealousy as sign of love
- Tells partner what to wear, think, and act
- Accuses partner of cheating
Minimization & Blaming

- Doesn’t accept responsibility for actions
- Blames partner for his actions
- Makes a joke when hurting partner
Intimidation

- Yelling or screaming
- Threatening to hurt partner or self
- Making partner feel afraid
- Destroying property
Domination

- Treating partner like a baby, property, or servant
- Making all of the decision
- Setting all of the rules in relationship
- Unreasonable expectations
Myth or Fact?

- Dating violence is rare
- Physical abuse is as common among teens as adults
- Jealousy is a warning sign
- A victim must like the abuse or she would leave
Warning signs: Victim

- Change in eating or sleeping habits
- Acting out: aggressive or inappropriate behavior
- Increased risk taking
- Poor school performance
- Fear of attending school
- Change in appearance
Warning signs: Victim

- Physical signs of stress
- Nightmares
- Anger
- Concentration difficulties
- Mood swings, depression
- Anxiety
Warning Signs: Abuser

- Threatening to hurt others in any way
- Insulting a dating partner in public or private
- Constantly calling to check up on a dating partner
- Damaging or destroying a dating partner’s personal belongings
- Attempting to control what a dating partner wears
Technology Abuse

- 93% of teens use the internet
- Over 50% have a profile on social networking site
- 72% own desktop computer
- 67% own cell phones
Technology Abuse

- Cell Phones
  - Calls
  - Texts
  - Instant Messaging
- GPS monitoring
- Computer spyware
- Social Networking Sites
What to Do About Cell Abuse

- Turn phone off
- Only answer known numbers
- Do not respond to hostile, abusive texts or messages
- Block phone number
- Change phone number
What to Do About Tech Abuse

- Check personal computer for spyware
- Use public computer for dating violence research
- Google self
- Make profile on social networking sites private
- Preserve evidence
Legal Remedies

PDVA defines Victim of DV as:

Any person, regardless of age, who is subjected to domestic violence by a person with whom the victim has had a dating relationship.
Restraining Orders
“Healthy Relationship” Activities with Teens
Establish Ground Rules

- One person speaks at a time
- Everyone’s opinion is respected
- Listen
- What is said in activity remains confidential*
- No one is forced to speak, volunteers only!
Agree/Disagree Activity

- Teachable Moments:
- One side of room is “Agree”, the other is “Disagree”
- Read each statement and students pick which side of room to stand in.
- Ask a few to explain why they are on the side they are
- Can add “Not Sure” section if wanted
Critiquing Mass Media

- Critique messages from TV, radio, magazines, movies, billboards and other advertisements.

- Discuss with classmates how these messages may or may not reflect the principles of equality, respect, dignity and non-violence.

- Have students bring in their own examples, or you can provide examples for them.
Defining Teen Dating Violence

- Using Teen Dating Power & Control wheel, write each main topic on separate sheet of large paper. (10)
- Divide teens into smaller groups
- Have them write the types of behavior under their topic
How to help a friend

- Listen
- Believe
- Don’t judge
- Understand what she is saying
- Tell her the abuse is NOT her fault
- Support her right to make her own decision.
Safety Planning with Teens in Abusive Relationships

- Suggest she tell someone: school counselor, principal, church member
- Let her tell you what they need
- Could she change their school locker or lock.
- Suggest she change their route to/from school.
- Use a buddy system for going to school, classes and after school activities.
- Suggest keeping a journal describing the abuse (Secret/hidden)
Safety Planning with Teens

- Who could she call if stranded?
- Keep spare change and cell/calling cards at all times
- Suggest she create a code word with friends if in danger
- Try not to be alone with abuser; don’t let him into house if alone, if possible

- Change cell number
Safety Planning: When Breaking Up

- Suggest they do it in public
- Tell others what they plan to do and when they will be done
- They should ignore his apologies or promises
- They can’t be ‘friends’
- Tell her to trust her instincts
Successful Programs to Combat Teen Dating Violence

- Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationship
- Love is Respect (Liz Claiborne)
- TEAR (Teens Experiencing Abusive Relationships)
- Choose Respect
The Expect Respect Program
Available in 2008 at www.expectrespect.org

• Comprehensive program manual includes:
  – Research on effective dating violence prevention strategies
  – Support group curriculum for at risk youth
  – Teen leadership training
  – School-wide prevention strategies
CHOOSE RESPECT CAMPAIGN

- **Goal:** to prevent dating violence *before it happens*
- **Target audience:** 11-14 year old youth and the adults in their lives
- **Award-winning videos, Speakers’ Kit, PSA’s, posters, pocket guides, fact sheets, website, media access guide, parent information, online teacher training coming soon, and more**

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  - **Goal:** to prevent dating violence
The *Love Is Not Abuse* Curriculum is a step-by-step guide to teaching high school students about the issue of dating violence. Using literature and poetry, this program provides teachers with the tools to teach about this sensitive subject and is intended to be taught in either Health or English/Language Arts classes.

*... from Love Is Not Abuse Website, www.loveisnotabuse.com*
Resources

- National Teen Dating Hotline: 866-331-9474
- www.loveisrespect.org
- www.endabuse.org
- www.breakthecycle.org
- www.seeitandstopit.org
- www.startstrongteens.org
- www.thesafespace.org
Thank You!

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