



CANTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
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Crime Prevention Unit
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Teen Dating Violence

Teen Dating Violence is what happens in a teen dating relationship when one person uses abuse to gain power and keep control over their partner. This abuse can be physical, emotional or sexual.

Teen Dating Statistics

(Bureau of Justice Special Report: Intimate Partner Violence, May 2000)

- About one in three high school students have been or will be involved in an abusive relationship.
- Forty percent of teenage girls ages 14 to 17 say they know someone their age that has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend.
- In one study, from 30-50 percent of female high school students reported having experienced teen dating violence.
- Teen dating violence most often takes place in the home of one of the partners.
- In 1995, 7 percent of all murder victims were young women who were killed by their boyfriends.
- One in five or 20 percent of dating couples report some type of violence in their relationship.
- One of five college females will experience some form of dating violence.
- A survey of 500 young women, ages 15 to 24, found that 60 percent were currently involved in an ongoing abusive relationship and all participants had experienced violence in a dating relationship.
- One study found that 38 percent of date rape victims were young women from 14 to 17 years of age.
- A survey of adolescent and college students revealed that date rape accounted for 67 percent of sexual assaults.
- More than half young women raped (68 percent) knew their rapist either as a boyfriend, friend or casual acquaintance.
- Six out of 10 rapes of young women occur in their own home or a friend or relative's home, not in a dark alley.
- More than 4 in every 10 incidents of domestic violence involves non-married persons.

Abusive teen dating relationships, similar to adult domestic violence, generally exhibit a pattern, the major elements of which are:

- violence that affects people from all socio-economic, racial, and ethnic groups;
- repeated violence that escalates;

- violence that increases in severity the longer the relationship continues;
- violence and abusive behaviors are interchanged with apologies and promises to change;
- increased danger for the victim is when they are trying to terminate the relationship;
- occurrence in heterosexual and gay and lesbian relationships.

Characteristics of Teen Abusers:

- Is jealous and possessive, won't let you have friends, checks up on you, won't accept breaking up?
- Tries to control you by being bossy, giving orders, making all the decisions, not taking your opinions seriously?
- Puts you down in front of friends, tells you that you would be nothing without him or her?
- Scares you? Makes you worry about reactions to things you say or do? Threatens you? Uses or owns weapons?
- Is violent? Has a history of fighting, loses temper quickly, brags about mistreating others? Grabs, pushes, shoves or hits you?
- Pressures you for sex or is forceful or scary about sex? Gets too serious about the relationship too fast?
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs and pressures you to take them?
- Has a history of failed relationships? And blames the other person for all the problems?
- Makes your family and friends uneasy and concerned for your safety?

What Victims of Teen Abuse Should Do:

- Stay in touch with your friends and stay involved in activities that you enjoy.
- Consider telling your parents or other family members about what is happening. They can help you screen telephone calls or visitors.
- Try not to be alone. Let your friends know what is happening and have them walk to classes and spend time during lunch with you.
- Tell teachers, counselors, coaches, or security guards about what is happening. Have them help you be safe.
- Change your routine. Don't always come to school the same way, or arrive at the same time. Always have someone with you.
- Always keep extra change with you so you can make phone calls.
- Make a list of phone numbers, including 911, crisis lines, and supportive friends whom you can call when you are upset.
- Try not to be alone with your dating partner. Don't go by yourself to an isolated or deserted location.
- Before leaving home to go somewhere, let other people know what your plans are and where you'll be and when.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel you are in danger, get help immediately.
- Break up with your partner in a public place. Let other people know that you plan to break up with your partner and let them know where you'll be and when.

ABC's of Teen Dating Violence

(The Office of Circuit Court of Cook County, IL)

Anyone can be a victim of dating violence. Teens who are wealthy or not, religious or not, straight or not. It makes no difference what race or ethnic background a person is. Anyone can be a victim. Anyone can be an abuser.

Be safe. Be a survivor, not a victim. Understand the three types of abuse.

Control. Abuse is about control, not love. Learn the difference. Be safe.

Dating violence is a consistent pattern of verbal (or emotional) abuse, physical abuse, or sexual abuse.

Emotional abuse can be more serious than physical abuse. Does your partner call you names? Humiliate you? Isolate you from your friends? Make all the decisions? Threaten you? Make you afraid?

Family and friends can help you. **Don't keep any abuse secret.** The more people who know, the safer you are.

Get help. Call a domestic violence program. You are not alone.

Help your friends who may be victims. They need you as a friend now more than ever.

Intervention and prevention begin with you. **Do not accept any abuse from anyone or to anyone.**

Judges know the problems of dating violence. If you have to get an order of protection to be safe—do it.

Kicking, hitting, and punching are types of physical abuse. **Once is too many.**

Love should be special. It is never controlling. It is never about one person telling the other person what to think, do, or how to act.

Murder is the ultimate horror of dating violence. It is the cause of 24% of teen homicides.

No one likes being hit. Victims are afraid to leave abusers because they are afraid of being hit harder. Leave. Be a survivor.

Orders of protection tell the abusers what they can and cannot do. Call the Clerk's Office for more information.

Physical abuse doesn't always leave bruises, but it always leaves scars.

Qualified counselors are available to help teen dating violence victims 24 hours a day. **Call now for support.**

Read and remember everything you can about dating violence. It could be a real lifesaver.

Sexual abuse can be anything from ruining your reputation, to touching you improperly, to rape.

Tell. The abuser wants you to think that no one will believe you. The abuser wants you to think that no one else cares about you. The abuser is wrong. People believe. People care. Abuse should not be a secret. **Tell.**

Understand that you are not alone: friends, family, teachers, the police, judges, are all there to help.

Victory is in becoming a survivor. You do not have to be a victim. Only you can begin to make that change.

Winning the battle against teen dating violence is everyone's job. Listen to your friends. Share this brochure with anyone who may need it. **You can make a difference.**

X-rays don't show all the hurt. Teen dating violence hurts everyone. Help stop the hurt.

Yearly, about 40% of all teens are dating violence victims. Don't be a statistic.

Zero tolerance is the only acceptable level of teen dating violence.

Dating Bill of Rights

I have the right to:

- Ask for a date
- Refuse a date
- Suggest activities
- Refuse any activities, even if my date is excited about them
- Have my own feelings and to be able to express them
- Say, "I think my partner's information is wrong or her/his actions are unfair or inappropriate"
- Tell someone not to interrupt me
- Have my limits and values respected
- To be heard
- To refuse to lend money
- Tell my partner when I need affection
- Refuse affection
- Refuse sex anytime for any reason - or no reason at all
- Have friends and space aside from my partner

I have the responsibility to:

- Determine my limits and values
- Respect the limits and values of others
- Communicate clearly and honestly
- Not violate the limits of others
- Ask for help when I need it
- Be considerate
- Check my action/decisions to determine if they are good for me or bad for me
- Set high goals for myself

Possible Crime Prevention Initiatives

- School Resource Officers (RSO's) can provide programming for middle and high school students on teen dating violence.
- High school and middle school teachers, counselors, nurses, coaches, etc. can be trained to recognize symptoms of teen dating violence and informed what to do about it.
- A printed brochure addressing the topic of teen dating violence can be developed and distributed.
- Information about teen dating violence can be placed on the police department's Internet web site.