

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

Introduction

I chose this topic because when I was eighteen, I experienced an episode of teen dating violence. I learned a lot from my personal experience; however, I wanted to look further into other cases of teen dating violence as well as the causes and solutions. Teen dating violence is a serious topic and I do not think that many people realize how widespread of an issue it is. By furthering my education on this topic, I can reach out to others that have either gone through the same situation as me, or one like it; and help them overcome the traumatic experience that they have had.

Section 1: Background and Problem Statement

- **Web site #1 Name:** Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic
- **Web address:** <http://www.ctcadv.org/WhatIsDomesticViolence/WhatIsTeenDatingViolence/tabid/169/Default.aspx>
- **Background Information:**
 - Healthy People 2010 did not have any information on this topic. CCADV is a statewide network of community-based programs providing shelter, support, and advocacy to victims of domestic violence. They assist member programs in building their capacity so they can support victims to live free from violence. Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behavior in an intimate relationship with one partner tries to control and dominate the other. There are many kinds of domestic violence. They include: verbal, psychological, physical, and sexual. Assaulting, threatening or stalking an intimate partner is a crime in the state of Connecticut.

- **Web site #2 Name:** Center Against Domestic Violence
- **Web address:** <http://www.cadvny.org/>
- **Background Information:**
 - CADV offers support, shelter, and education through counseling, safe houses, and school programs for teens. Their ultimate goal is to move residents from victims to survivors. CADV can be found in New York and they provide shelter for 1000 victims of domestic abuse each year. They also teach tens of thousands of students at twelve high schools year-round about healthy relationships. They strive to lead society away from domestic abuse through cultural changes through education and intervention. They help lead the way to developing healthy relationships, breaking free of a violent relationship, and moving onto a new and independent life.

- **Web site #3 Name:** Love Is Respect: National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline
- **Web address:** <http://www.loveisrespect.org/>
- **Background Information:**
 - Loveisrespect.org provides resources for teens, parents, friends and family, peer advocates, government officials, law enforcement officials and the general public.

All communication is confidential and anonymous. It is a national 24-hour resource that can be accessed by phone or through the Internet. It is specifically designed for teens and young adults, in real time with one-on-one support from trained Peer Advocates. These Peer Advocates are trained to offer support, information and advocacy to those involved in dating abuse relationships as well as concerned parents, teachers, clergy, law enforcement, and service providers.

Section 2: Research

- **Web site #1 Name:** National Criminal Justice Reference Service
- **Web address:** <http://www.ncjrs.gov/App/publications/abstract.aspx?ID=110960>
- **Summary of the research:**
 - This article talks about violence among teenage dating couples and the severity of the violence. A survey was conducted of 256 high school students in Sacramento, California during the 1982-1983 school year. Thirty-five percent of the students were either victims of abuse, perpetrators, or both. The severity of abuse indicated that the most frequently exhibited forms of violence were slapping, pushing, and shoving. Many of the students experience severe levels of violence. This study also found that the relationship between boys and girls was reciprocal meaning those who slapped or pushed were victims of being slapped or pushed. The study also revealed three more findings: 1) the violence in and of itself was not sufficient to ending the relationship, 2) the students that reported spousal violence had a greater chance of violence in their relationship, and 3) fifty percent of the students that never experienced violence, knew of someone that did.

- **Web site #2 Name:** Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics
- **Web address:** <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/114/2/e220>
- **Summary of the research:**
 - This study is about dating violence and associated sexual risk and pregnancy among adolescent girls in the United States. They conducted an experiment on 6,864 female students grades 9 through 12. The girls participated in the 2001 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey and they completed a measure of physical dating violence during the previous year. They took assessments of health risk behaviors. Rates were determined between sexually experienced girls and inexperienced girls. The results showed that 1 in 5 of the girls reported being intentionally hurt by a date, and 1 in 25 girls reported sexual experience associated with violence. The conclusion is that dating violence is prevalent among US adolescent girls, especially those reporting having sexual intercourse. Those females that report being intentionally hurt by a date in the first year are more likely to experience sexual health risks like HPV, STDs or pregnancy.

- **Web site #3 Name:** JSTOR
- **Web address:** <http://www.jstor.org/pss/3480981>
- **Summary of the research:**
 - This article is geared towards making it known to lawmakers that intimate violence among teenagers is a social problem of epidemic proportion that has

remained largely unrecognized and it needs to be. If this abuse continues to be ignored by society, then a whole new generation of acts of abuse will be designed and condoned, leading to societal attitudes that facilitate and tolerate all forms of domestic violence. The author makes it clear that this is an urgent matter and it needs to be addressed as soon as possible before it gets worse. This article demands that each state should expand the coverage of its civil and penal domestic violence statutes to include teenagers in dating relationships.

Section 3: Statistics

- **Web site #1 Name:** Clothes Line Project
- **Web address:** <http://clotheslineproject.org/teendatingviolencefacts.pdf>
- **Summary of the statistics:**
 - Teen dating violence runs across race, gender, and socioeconomic lines. Both males and females are victims, but boys and girls are abusive in different ways: Girls are more likely to yell, threaten to hurt themselves, pinch, slap, scratch, or kick; Boys injure girls more severely and frequently; Some teen victims experience violence occasionally; Others are abused more often...sometimes daily. A comparison of Intimate Partner Violence rates between teens and adults reveals that teens are at higher risk of intimate partner abuse. Females ages 16-24 are more vulnerable to intimate partner violence than any other age group. Approximately 1 in 5 female high school students report being physically and/or sexually abused by a dating partner. Among female victims of intimate partner violence, a current or former boyfriend or girlfriend victimized 94% of those between the ages of 16-19. Between 1993 and 1999, 22% of all homicides against females ages 16-19 were committed by an intimate partner. In a study of gay, lesbian, and bisexual adolescents, youths involved in same-sex dating are just as likely to experience dating violence as youths involved in opposite sex dating. Nearly one-half of adult sex offenders report committing their first sexual offenses prior to the age of 18. 58% of rape victims report being raped between the ages of 12-24. Half of the reported date rapes occur among teenagers. Intimate partner violence among adolescents is associated with increased risk of substance use, unhealthy weight control behaviors, sexual risk behaviors, pregnancy, and suicide.
- **Web site #2 Name:** Lindsay Ann Burke Memorial Fund: Supporting the prevention of relationship violence
- **Web address:** <http://labmf.org/facts/statistics>
- **Summary of the statistics:**
 - Only 33 % of teens who have been in or known about an abusive dating relationship report having told anyone about it. Teen girls face relationship violence 3 times more than adult women; 25% of victims say they have been isolated from family and friends. More than half of victims say they have compromised their own beliefs to please a partner. Many teens think this is normal. Teens report dating abuse via cell phones is a serious problem. Cell phone calls and texting mean constant control: 1 in 3 teens say they are text

messaging 10, 20, 30 times an hour by a partner keeping tabs on them; 82% of parents whose teens were emailed or text messaged 30 times an hour were not aware of this. The majority of parents of teen victims are unaware of the abuse.

- **Web site #3:** S.A.F.E Network
- **Web address:** [http://www.safenetwork.org/date rape statistics.html](http://www.safenetwork.org/date Rape statistics.html)
- **Summary of the statistics:**
 - Forty percent of teenage girls ages 14 to 17 say they know someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend. In one study, from 30 to 50 percent of female high school students reported having already 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. 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 involve non-married persons.

Section 4: Consumer Information

- **Web site #1 Name:** MissouriFamilies.org: Relationships
- **Web address:** <http://missourifamilies.org/features/divorcearticles/relations59.htm>
- **Summary of the information:**
 - Researchers have identified several early warning signs that a dating relationship might likely turn violent. Some reasons include: excessive jealousy, constant checking in with you or making you check in with him or her, attempts to isolate you from friends and family, insulting or putting down people you care about, is too serious about the relationship too quickly, is very controlling, blames you when he or she treats you badly, and does not take responsibility for their own actions. There are several actions that can be taken if these signs are noticed in a relationship. They include: trust your intuition, spend time with people you care about other than your partner, stay in touch with your friends, keep up with activities that you enjoy, and looking for help or further resources.

- **Web site #2 Name:** Teen Dating Violence Prevention Project
- **Web address:** <http://www.teendvmonth.org/>
- **Summary of the information:**
 - February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. The purpose of this is to put the word out there that teen dating violence is a huge issue and can not be ignored. This month brings national focus to this issue and highlights the need to educate our youth about healthy relationships, raises awareness among those who care for them, and provides communities with a critical opportunity to work together to prevent this devastating cycle of abuse. TDVAM was spearheaded by teenagers across the nation who chose to take a stand and put a stop to teen dating violence. In 2005, the importance of addressing teen dating

violence was highlighted by its inclusion in the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act.

- **Web site #3 Name:** A Safe Place: Lake County Crisis Center
- **Web address:** <http://www.asafeplaceforhelp.org/datingabuse.html>
- **Summary of the information:**
 - Not all teen dating violence victims are physically abused. Some are emotionally. However, even if they are just physically or sexually abused, the victim can face many side effects other than bruising or soreness. Effects include: depression, suicidal, abuse of substances, low self-esteem, taking responsibility, feeling numb, feeling confused or dizzy, not focusing, feelings of shame and embarrassment, feeling like a failure or disconnected from others, and may need constant validation and reassurance. Abusers may come from an abusive family or origin, and may need special attention. They are not wrong and it is not their fault.

Section 5: Solutions to the Problem (or Issue)

- **Web site #1 Name:** InnovationLink: Preventing teen dating violence: We need to start early
- **Web address:** <http://ehe.osu.edu/publications/downloads/innovation-link-volume-1.pdf>
- **Summary of the information:**
 - School districts should start talking about respect and love before dating begins. They should develop viable prevention models that should address relationship violence in youth before they start dating. The younger the kids are when they are introduced to methods against dating violence, the stronger the outcomes will be. Organizations, drama club plays, peer counseling groups, and pro-social groups are very helpful aids in mastering this kind of achievement in early childhood up through young adulthood.
- **Web site #2 Name:** Teen Relationships: You deserve a healthy relationship!
- **Web address:** <http://www.teenrelationships.org/solutions/>
- **Summary of the information:**
 - This teen relationship Web site is a part of CORA (Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse). They are a non-profit organization that serves victims of domestic violence. They provide education on healthy relationships and hosts a series of teen dating abuse workshops, violence-prevention groups, community projects, and campaigns. They believe there are 10 things you can do to prevent dating abuse. They are: 1 Practice and model respectful, non-violent behavior and healthy problem solving in your relationships, 2 Educate yourself and others about dating abuse: call your local domestic violence agency and ask for materials and workshops for your school, classroom, organization, religious congregation etc. (call 1-800-799-SAFE for the number of a domestic violence agency in your community), 3 Listen to and believe victims/survivors of dating abuse, 4 Provide nonjudgmental support and options for victims/survivors of dating abuse (dating/domestic abuse can be dangerous—encourage victims/survivors to call 911 in emergencies, help them come up with a plan for safety and encourage them

to call a domestic violence agency for support and services), 5 Hold abusers accountable for their abusive behavior in safe and non-blaming ways (focus on the behavior, not the person), 6 Speak out against victim-blaming attitudes and myths about dating/domestic abuse (for example, you can challenge the attitude, “why doesn’t she just leave?”” by explaining that leaving can be the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship), 7 Challenge gender rules that normalize violence against heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer women and men (speak out against sexist and homophobic jokes, attitudes, behavior etc. and help create inclusive, safe spaces for everyone), 8 Challenge abuse/oppression in all its forms (racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, ableism, xenophobia, adultism, ageism), 9 Find out what your school, congregation or neighborhood is doing to prevent dating abuse (for example, ask your teachers, counselors and administrators to adopt school policies and training to protect victims/survivors of dating abuse, sexual harassment and homophobia, racism), 10 Volunteer and raise funds for your local domestic violence agency.

- **Web site #3 Name:** Family Violence Prevention Fund: Picturing A World Without Violence
- **Web address:** <http://www.endabuse.org/content/news/detail/1489/>
- **Summary of the information:**
 - This article is from a conference that our country’s leading violence prevention experts went to during February, National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. They talked about preventing teen domestic violence by urging lawmakers, educators, and parents to change social norms around teen dating violence in their communities and help young people build healthy relationships. They really want to reach out and make it known that we need to start teaching kids at an early age about healthy relationships and to steer them away from violent behavior.

Conclusions

Even after my own personal experience with teen dating violence, there is much more information out there and there are far more abuse cases than just what I went through. During my process I thought I was alone and I didn’t have anyone to turn to, however this research has shown me that there are so many other females in my age group that have either experienced dating violence or are going to experience it. It is a tragic event to happen to anyone and prevention should be taken more seriously and should be taught to younger children. I feel as though I have furthered my education on this topic and I can now talk to others that have experience dating violence. I can teach them what I have learned, follow up on recent studies and articles, join one of the organizations, and speak about my personal experience.

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