

Dating Violence & Bullying

What is dating violence and how is it related to bullying?

- Dating violence is *physical* (hitting, kicking, shoving), *sexual* (forced sexual act without consent), or *psychological* (shaming, embarrassing on purpose, or isolating from others) violence within a dating relationship.¹
- Both bullying and dating violence are forms of aggressive behavior that occur over and over, are intended to cause harm, and involve an imbalance of power between two individuals.¹
- Although many behaviors and factors are in common between bullying and dating violence, the distinction is the relationship between individuals.
- About 1 in 10 high school students (9.4 %) report being physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the last twelve months, while lifetime prevalence rates suggest two in five (41%) adolescent females and one in three (37%) adolescent males have been victimized.^{3, 4}

Who is at risk for involvement in dating violence?

- Students who engage in bullying or other forms of peer violence are more likely to engage in dating violence.^{1,2}
- Lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth show higher rates of victimization and perpetration of dating violence.⁵
- Youth who are victims of dating violence are at higher risk for future victimization and are more likely than non-abused peers to (a) smoke and use drugs, (b) engage in unhealthy dieting, (c) engage in risky sexual behaviors and, (d) have suicidal ideation or attempts^{6, 11}
- Individuals who (a) believe that dating violence is acceptable, (b) exhibit aggressive behaviors, (c) experience symptoms of depression, low self esteem, anxiety, or trauma, (d) have difficulty managing anger or frustration, (e) have lower grades, and (f) use substances are more likely to perpetrate dating violence^{6, 10}
- Youth who have (a) early sexual experiences, (b) multiple sexual partners, (c) a friend involved in dating violence, (d) been exposed to stressful life events or show symptoms of trauma, (e) live in poverty, and (e) been exposed to harsh parenting or inconsistent discipline are also more likely to be involved in dating violence^{6, 1}
- Violence experienced in the home or community and parental conflict are associated with bullying, dating violence, decreased school attendance and lower academic performance.^{6, 1}

Warning signs⁷

(1) Sudden changes in clothes or make-up, (2) erratic mood swings, (3) changes in eating or sleeping habits, (4) bruises, scratches, or other physical injuries, (5) use of alcohol or drugs, (6) difficulty making decisions, (7) pregnancy, (8) isolation from family and friends, and, (9) romantic partner seems angry, jealous, insecure, or possessive

What can we do to stop dating violence and bullying?^{3,5,7-9}

- Prevention programs to STOP dating violence *before* it starts.
 - Utilize programs that target a variety of youth behaviors including dating violence, bullying, substance use, and sexual risk behaviors.
 - Integrate dating violence prevention with lessons on healthy relationships, relationship skills, sexual health, problem solving, and decision-making, using interactive exercises.
- Facilitate school climate change and norms in which aggression is not tolerated in any form.
- Train influential adults to work with youth to prevent dating violence.
- Target the needs and vulnerabilities of lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth, in addition to those of female and transgender youth.

GET HELP NOW & Additional Resources

National Dating Abuse Helpline: 1-866-331-9474 or text 77054; **National Domestic Violence Hotline:** 1-800-799-SAFE (7233); **National Sexual Assault Hotline:** 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

CDC's Dating Matters: www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/datingmatters

Love is Respect: www.loveisrespect.org

Break the Cycle: <http://www.breakthecycle.org/>

National Sexual Violence Resource Center: www.nsvrc.org

Department of Justice's Violence Against Women Office: <http://www.justice.gov/ovw>

National Center for Victims of Crime: <http://www.victimsofcrime.org/>

National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women: <http://www.vawnet.org/>

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