

## TEEN DATING VIOLENCE – INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

**Teen Dating Violence (TDV)** is a pattern of behavior that includes physical, emotional/psychological **aggression**, verbal or sexual abuse, and stalking used by one person in an intimate relationship **to exert power and control** over another. TDV is typically used to describe these behaviors in people 13 – 19 years old.

### Did you know....

The risk of dating violence among youth is quite significant:

- 12% of high school females reported **physical violence** and nearly 16% reported **sexual violence** from a dating partner in the 12 months before they were surveyed.
- For high school males, more than 7% reported physical violence and about 5% reported sexual violence from a dating partner (*National Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2015 - CDC*).
- 23% of females and 14% males experience intimate partner violence before age 18 (*CDC, 2011*).
- TDV occurs in **every community**, for every demographic: race, religion, sex, gender identity, income.

### TDV can look like...

- **Control**
  - “Requiring” a partner to check in
  - Keeping tabs on a partner (showing up at their friends’ home, at practice, at the library, etc.)
  - Approving or criticizing clothing choices/friends
  - Demanding all their time
- **Technology** plays a big role in teen relationships and can have a significant impact
  - Constant texting which can escalate
  - Rage if there is no reply
- **Extreme jealousy and/or emotional manipulation**
  - Jealous of friends, family, activities
  - Threats of harming self
- **Pressure**
  - To engage in sexual activity or drug use
  - Insisting on activities the partner doesn’t like (be it amusement parks or driving fast, or hanging out w/ friends s/he doesn’t care for)
- **Violence** – pushing, pinching, hitting, slapping, rough-housing, scaring

*Cont’d.*

### Why are young people at risk?

- *Inexperienced in relationships*
  - May struggle with knowing what is healthy and not healthy
  - First love and intimacy can be especially powerful
- *Normal adolescent development*
  - Need for independence can make youth unwilling to turn to adults
  - The partner may “fit in” with their peer group increasing their social status and making it hard to let go
- *Difficult to pinpoint exactly what a relationship is...*
  - Is it talking, hanging out, hooking up, friends-with-benefits?
  - Teens often see their relationships as casual which makes it hard to realize that it could be abusive
- *Youth may think drama or high conflict in relationships is normal*
  - May see this in their parents or other adult relationships
  - May think “drama” (passion, jealousy, intensity) is romantic
- *Youth can be impulsive*
  - Relationship conflicts may be more intense
  - May not know how to manage conflicts
- *May feel like it's impossible to get away* (see them in school every day)

### Resources

To learn more visit [Love is Respect](#)

### If you need help NOW

- [Dedicated Teen Helpline for ages 13-18](#) - Text 'LOVEIS' to 1.866.331.9474 or call 1-866-331-9474 / 800.787.3224 (TTY);
- [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#): 1-800-799-7233
- National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-4673
- [RAINN](#) – Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network: 1-800-656-4673

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**What can parents do?**

- Communicate about healthy relationships early and often
- Provide messages about bodily autonomy – we all have a right to control their own body
- Model healthy anger management and good communication
- Show children love without expectation or manipulation (*“I’ll love you more if you clean your room!”*)
- If a child comes to you with a relationship concern, (take a deep breath and...) listen openly without judgement or directives. Do provide offers to help
- Encourage positive social skills – communication, problem-solving, and emotional regulation