

What is the Impact of Teen Dating Violence?

Survivors of teen dating violence may experience a wide range of emotional, psychological, social, and health issues.

Emotional and Psychological Issues

- Depression and anxiety
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and difficulty concentrating
- Contemplated or attempted suicide
- Stress, anger, hurt, and/or fear.
- Lowered self-esteem
- For LGBTQ survivors, feelings of isolation due to discrimination, homophobia, and a lack of services available to this community

“Being abused in a relationship can shatter a teenager’s belief that she is a worthy, decent, and independent person who can cope with life in a mature, self-assertive fashion. For the teen victim, the world becomes a frightening, confusing place where understanding how things are supposed to work is called into question. The victim’s sense of her ability to protect herself and function autonomously is undermined.”¹

Evidence suggests that the consequences of TDV tend to be greater for girls compared to boys, but it affects students regardless of race, income, sexual identity, religion, and disability.

Social and Health Issues

- Limited contact with peers, family, and other organizations, resulting in social isolation
- Increased likelihood of engagement in unhealthy and antisocial behaviors such as...
 - Drug, alcohol, and/or tobacco use
 - Eating disorders
 - Unsafe sex
- Possibility of sustained injuries such as bruises, broken bones, cuts and lacerations, concussions, etc.
- Female high school survivors of TDV are...
 - 4 to 6 times more likely to get pregnant than non-survivors.
 - 3 times more likely to have been tested for STIs and HIV than non-survivors.
 - More than twice as likely to have an STI than non-survivors.

References

Button, D. M., and Miller, S. L. (2013). Teen dating relationships and outcomes of well-being: Examining gender differences in nonviolent and violent dating relationships. *Women and Criminal Justice*, 23(3), 247-265; Roberts, S. (2001). *Bullying and dating violence: Effective intervention and prevention in Multnomah County*. (n.d.). Multnomah County Domestic Violence Coordinator’s Office: Portland, OR. <http://bit.ly/173xt30>; Promote Prevent. (2011). *Teen dating violence: Prevention, identification, and intervention*. <http://bit.ly/173yyzy>; “Dating violence in LGBTQ communities.” (n.d.). <http://bit.ly/1DniCev>