

# Know This . . . About Teen Dating Violence

One in three teens experience some kind of abuse in their romantic relationships, including physical, verbal, and emotional abuse.<sup>1</sup>

Forty-two states include a dating relationship in their definition of domestic violence, and in most states youth can apply for protective orders.<sup>2</sup>

Confidentiality and mandatory reporting laws vary from state to state. Learn your agency's policy so you will know what to do if a teen discloses abuse.<sup>3</sup>

## Ashley

Adolescent girls who reported dating violence were less likely to use condoms and were approximately twice as likely to have been pregnant.<sup>4</sup>

## Kyoko

Leaving (or attempting to leave) the relationship can be a particularly dangerous time. About 75% of domestic violence assaults reported to the police occur after separation.<sup>6</sup>

## Samantha

Teens identifying as lesbian, gay, or bisexual are as likely to experience violence as teens in heterosexual relationships.<sup>8</sup>

## Cara

Abusers' threats of suicide are a red flag for increased danger for victims. About one third of domestic violence murders are followed by the perpetrator's suicide.<sup>5</sup>

## Elena

One in four teens have been called names, harassed, or put down by their partners through cell phones and texting.<sup>7</sup>

## Derek

While both boys and girls perpetrate physical violence in dating relationships, violence against girls is more severe and has greater negative consequences to their health and well-being. Boys are more likely to report control as the motivation for their use of violence; girls are more likely to have used violence in self-defense.<sup>9</sup>



### loveisrespect.org

The National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline is anonymous, confidential, and available 24 hours a day. You can call **1-866-331-9474 (1-866-331-8453 TTY)** or chat online from 4 pm to midnight CST.

### breakthecycle.org

This site is a great resource for figuring out how to take action on dating violence. Advocates can learn how to prevent abuse with curricula and products. Parents and educators can get training, resource manuals, and free handouts in English and Spanish. Teens can ask anything about their relationships.

### loveisnotabuse.com

This site provides information and tools that adults and teens can use to learn more about teen dating violence and find out how they can help end this epidemic.

### thatsnotcool.com

This site is designed to address new and complicated problems between teens who are dating or hooking up—such as constant and controlling texting, pressuring for nude pictures, and breaking into someone's email or social networking page.

1 Carolyn Tucker Halpern, Ph.D., et al., "Partner Violence Among Adolescents in Opposite-Sex Romantic Relationships: Findings From the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health," *American Journal of Public Health* 91 (2001): 1680.

2 Break the Cycle 2009 State-by-State Teen Dating Violence Report Cards.

3 Break the Cycle is available for individualized consultation on this issue. Call 202-824-0707, or email [expert@breakthecycle.org](mailto:expert@breakthecycle.org).

4 Jay G. Silverman, Anita Raj, and Karen Clements, "Dating Violence and Associated Sexual Risk and Pregnancy Among Adolescent Girls in the United States," *Pediatrics* (2004): 114.

5 *Now That We Know: Findings and Recommendations from the Washington State Domestic Violence Fatality Review*, Jake Fawcett, Kelly Starr and Ankita Patel for the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2008.

6 U.S. Department of Justice, 1995.

7 Technology and Teen Dating Abuse Survey of ages 13–18 (Liz Claiborne 2007).

8 C. T. Halpern et al., "Prevalence of Partner Violence in Same-Sex Romantic and Sexual Relationships in a National Sample of Adolescents," *Journal of Adolescent Health* 35 (2004): 124–131.

9 Christian Molitor, Richard Tolman, and Jennifer Kober, "Gender and Contextual Factors in Adolescent Dating Violence," *The Prevention Researcher* (February 2000), Vol 7, No. 1.