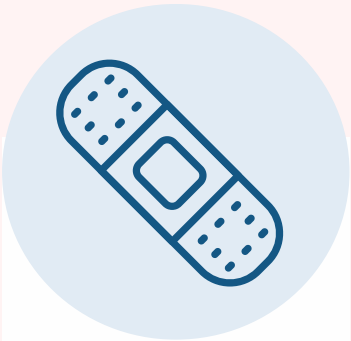
Teen Dating Violence
Tipsheet for Educators

What is teen dating violence?

Teen (or adolescent) dating violence refers to **physical**, **psychological**, **sexual**, or **stalking aggression** experienced in a **dating** or **romantic relationship** before age 18.



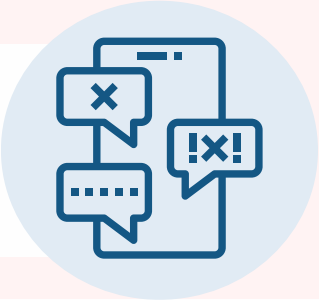
Physical involves the use or threat of physical force (e.g., hitting, pushing)

Psychological can involve trying to belittle or control a partner (e.g., name calling, constant criticism)

Sexual can involve pressuring or forcing a partner into sexual activity (e.g., unwanted touching, sending unwanted sexual messages)

Stalking involves unwanted and/or repeated surveillance (e.g., following, monitoring text messages) that leads to feelings of fear

Each of these forms of dating violence can take place **in person** or involve **cyber/online** activities.



Content by: Dr. Brett Holdfeld

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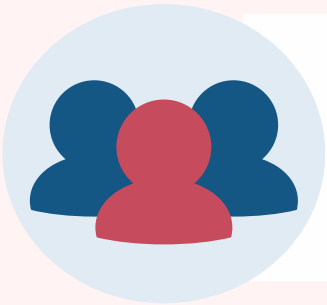
Prevalence of teen dating violence



- In a recent study with teens in grades 9 & 10 in Canada, **1 in 3** reported experiencing some form of teen dating violence
- **Psychological violence** was the **most commonly reported** form of dating violence perpetration and victimization, followed by **cyber violence**, and then **physical violence** [1]

Perpetration and Victimization Rates [1]

9.2%

Of youth surveyed had **perpetrated psychological dating violence**

7.7%

Of youth surveyed had **perpetrated cyber dating violence**

7.1%

Of youth surveyed had **perpetrated physical dating violence**

27.3%

Of youth surveyed had **experienced psychological dating violence**

17.1%

Of youth surveyed had **experienced cyber dating violence**

11.5%

Of youth surveyed had **experienced physical dating violence**

Impact on Teens

- Perpetration and victimization of teen dating violence are associated with negative **health**, **relationship**, and **academic outcomes**
- Experiencing teen dating violence is associated with **depression**, **anxiety**, and **problematic substance use**. This may be particularly true for **women** and **gender-diverse** teens [2-5]

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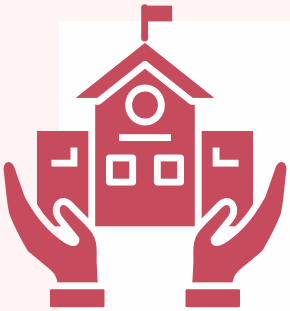
How can educators help?

1. Raise Awareness

- Recognizing this issue, and **raising awareness within your school**, is an important first step
- This may involve **sharing information** with other educators and school staff about the signs and impacts of teen dating violence, and ways they can respond to student disclosures

2. Teach and Model Healthy Relationship Skills

- Support students to develop healthy relationship skills by learning and practicing things like **emotional regulation**, **stress management**, **conflict resolution** and **consent**

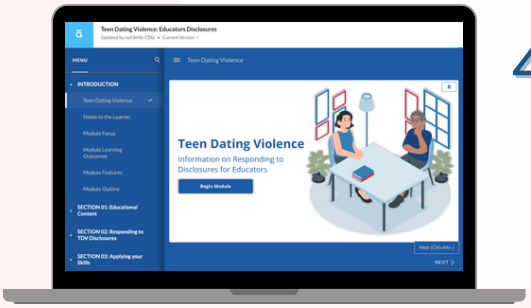


3. Create a Safe Environment

- There are steps you can take to help students feel safe when disclosing experiences of dating violence
- These include being an **active listener**, being **empathetic,** and **planning next steps** with the student (e.g., linking them to more resources or other professionals with training in this area)

3. Help Create a School Policy

- This should clearly **define** what teen dating violence is, and the **role** of students and educators in addressing it



4. Complete online training

- For more information on how to respond to disclosures of teen dating violence from students, complete PREVNet's **free**, **interactive online training**.

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Citations:

1. Exner-Cortens, D., Baker, E., & Craig, W. (2021). The national prevalence of adolescent dating violence in Canada. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 69*(3), 495–502. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2021.01.032
2. Hébert, M., Moreau, C., Blais, M., Lavoie, F., & Guerrier, M. (2017). Child sexual abuse as a risk factor for teen dating violence: Findings from a representative sample of Quebec youth. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma, 10,* 51-61. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40653-016-0119-7
3. Martin-Storey, A., & August, E. G. (2016). Harassment due to gender nonconformity mediates the association between sexual Minority identity and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Sex Research, 53*(1), 85–97. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2014.980497
4. Taquette, S. R., & Monteiro, D. L. M. (2019). Causes and consequences of adolescent dating violence: A systematic review. *Journal of Injury and Violence Research, 11*(2), 137. https://doi.org/10.5249/jivr.v11i2.1061
5. Piolanti, A., Waller, F., Schmid, I., & Foran, H. M. (2023). Long-term adverse outcomes associated with teen dating violence: A systematic review. *Pediatrics, 151*(6), e2022059654. https://doi.org/10.1542/peds-2022-059654

Additional Resources:

1. **Teen Dating Violence Information for Educators**
   www.prevnet.ca/teen-dating-violence/for-educators/
2. **Teen Dating Violence Online Training for Educators**
   www.prevnet.ca/teen-dating-violence-online-training/
3. **Healthy Relationships Training Module**
   www.prevnet.ca/healthy-relationships-training-module/

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