Dating Violence and Adolescents

Adapted from http://www.cdc.gov/Features/DatingViolence/

Some adolescents get involved in unhealthy dating relationships. About one in ten adolescents have been hit, slammed into something, or injured with an object or weapon on purpose by someone they were dating. Controlling and demanding behaviors often happen before violence occurs. For example, one partner may tell another what to wear and with whom to spend time. Over time, controlling and demanding behavior may become increasingly violent and that violence can have negative effects on physical and mental health throughout life (including depression, eating disorders and suicidal thoughts). Adults can help by paying attention and talking to adolescents about how to build healthy, respectful relationships.

Learn More about How to Prevent and Stop Dating Violence in Your Community

- One of the goals of the Office of Adolescent Health's Pregnancy Assistance Fund is to improve services for pregnant and parenting teens who are experiencing domestic violence, sexual violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

- First enacted in 1994, the Violence Against Women Act provides funding to states and communities to develop specialized law enforcement units, provide services to men and women who encounter abuse or violence, and improve prosecution of these crimes. The Act seeks to protect both males and females that experience dating violence. Since its passage, the annual incidence of domestic violence has dropped by more than half.

- The Office on Violence Against Women, within the U.S. Department of Justice, administers financial and technical assistance to communities across the country that are developing programs, policies, and practices aimed at ending domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

The Office on Women's Health offers an array of resources on dating violence that highlight helpful strategies for teens and their families, including how to leave an abusive relationship and how to avoid date rape drugs. The CDC's Dating Matters Initiative provides tips for maintaining healthy teen relationships and preventing dating violence.

Footnotes


