

Survey of teen dating violence among US high school students

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Credit: Petr Kratochvil/public domain

A survey of U.S. high school students suggests that 1 in 5 female students and 1 in 10 male students who date have experienced some form of teen dating violence during the past 12 months, according to an article published online by *JAMA Pediatrics*.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's national Youth Risk

Behavior Survey has provided estimates of teen dating violence (TDV) since 1999 but changes were made to the survey in 2013 to capture more serious forms of physical TDV, screen out students who did not date and assess sexual TDV. Over the years, nationwide prevalence estimates of TDV have remained at about 9 percent for both males and females in this annual CDC survey. Teen [dating violence](#) can provide a point of potential intervention as specific types of TDV have been associated with increased alcohol and tobacco use, depressive symptoms and suicidality, eating disorders, and high-risk sexual behavior, according to the study background.

Kevin J. Vagi, PhD, of the CDC in Atlanta, and coauthors provide updated prevalence estimates for TDV, which include the first-ever published overall "both physical and sexual TDV" and "any TDV" national estimates using the revised and new questions. They also examined associations of TDV with health-risk behaviors.

Among 9,900 students who reported dating, [survey](#) results indicate that female students who dated during the past 12 months had a prevalence of physical TDV only of 6.6 percent, 8 percent for sexual TDV only; 6.4 percent for both physical and sexual TDV, and 20.9% for any TDV. Prevalence of TDV among dating males in the preceding 12 months was 4.1 percent for physical TDV only, 2.9 percent for sexual TDV only, 3.3 percent for both physical and sexual TDV, and 10.4% for any TDV. While the vast majority of students did not report experiencing TDV, the authors note that most students who experienced TDV experienced more than one incident.

The question on physical TDV asked how many times someone "physically hurt you on purpose" and the new question on sexual TDV asked "how many times did someone you were dating or going out with force you to do sexual things that you did not want to do?"

All health-risk behaviors, including alcohol use, suicide ideation and drug use were most prevalent among students who had experienced both physical and sexual TDV and least prevalent among students who experienced no TDV.

"These results present broader implications for TDV prevention efforts. Although female students have a higher prevalence than [male students](#), male and female [students](#) are both impacted by TDV, and prevention efforts may be more effective if they include content for both sexes," the study concludes.

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