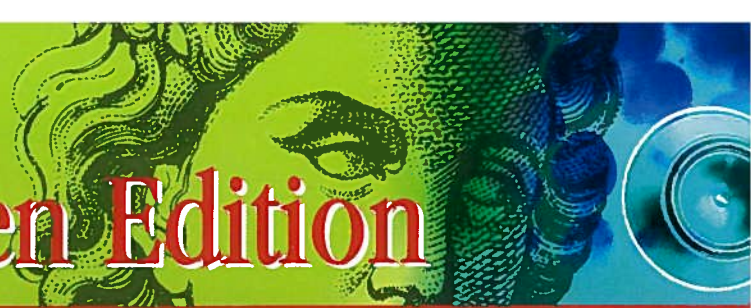


Health News You Can Use - Teen Edition



TEEN VIOLENCE

"So much of youth violence is a product of the environment and main stream media, however, lack of self-confidence plays a role as well..." - BQLI summer intern/Violence researcher

THE FACTS:

FIGHTS

- According to SafeYouth.com more than 1 in 3 high school students, both male and female, have been involved in a physical fight. 1 in 9 of those students have been injured badly enough to need medical treatment
- An estimated 30 % of teens in the US (or over 5.7 million) are involved in school bullying
- 13 % of students in grades 6 to 10, reported bullying others & 11 % reported being the target of school bullies
- In 2003, 6% of youth used weapons in school compared to 2005 which was 7%, as seen on the survey of adolescents in public schools

DATING VIOLENCE

- One in 11 young people report being a victim of physical dating abuse
- Seventy percent of girls and 52% of boys who are abused report an injury from an abusive relationship
- One in five high school girls have been in a violent relationship with a boy as stated by at-risk.org.
- Eight percent of boys and 9% of girls have been to an emergency room for an injury received from a dating partner
- Victims of dating abuse are not only at greater risk for injury. They are also more likely to engage in binge drinking and suicide attempts.

GANG VIOLENCE

- 42% of cities with a population of at least 25,000 reported an increase in the number of gang members
- 35% of suburban counties reported gang activity in 2001
- 11% of rural counties reported gang activity in 2001

What You Should Know...

Teen violence is an epidemic that is plaguing the adolescent society of today's world in more ways than one. There is dating violence, gang violence, school violence to name a few, all of which are noted as increasingly pervasive issues in our society. These types of behaviors are present in all segments of the country, crossing lines of race and class. Violence is a learned behavior and today's youth are consistently bombarded with violent images everyday from peers, the media and even family members; some of which they have been exposed to for a very large part of their developmental years. These behaviors are reinforced over and over again by similar images on the internet, in video games, music videos, and the movies. Additionally, ones home environment is crucial to the adopting these types of behaviors.

Dating violence includes physical abuse as well as sexual, verbal and emotional abuse. Youngsters should know that the more serious a relationship becomes is usually when these types of issues can arise. The problem is that many victims of dating violence feel

obligated to stay, sometimes out of love, fear, guilt or lack of self-confidence. In this instance, some of the signs of abuse, such as jealousy or possessiveness, may be confused as signs of love. Usually, this over-possessive, controlling behavior stems from the perpetrator's insecurity and lack of self-worth. Additionally, most of the relationships seen in pop culture (TV, magazines and movies) are either unrealistic or unhealthy. As such, young people often think unhealthy relationships are the norm.

Once considered to be an inner-city problem, **gang violence** has spread to communities all across the United States. More than 24,500 different youth gangs have been identified around the country, and more than 772,500 teens and young adults were reported as members of gangs. Research shows gang presence in most communities encourage fear and increase the areas overall amount of violence. Most teens who join gangs are seeking protection, a chance to make money, or a sense of belonging. Few teens are forced to join gangs; in most

cases, teens can refuse to join without fear of retaliation.

School violence can include the aforementioned issues, however also describes violent behaviors that stem from retaliation, embarrassment and sometimes harassment. Our nation's schools are filled with young people who are not getting the love & support they really need from their families and sometimes even their own friends. Additionally, the social contributors of most school environments are crucial, as popular cliques, have been identified as important social dynamic that may make a teenager feel left out, alienated and targeted. Fame or the need for notoriety is also a very important factor in teen violence, as youngsters may feel the only way to gain respect and acceptance is to lash out in an act of violence.

How To Get Help

If you or someone you know is dealing with any of these issues, please seek help. The following organizations are committed to the reduction of violence among teens. Remember that violence is never the answer.

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline	866-331-9474
TIPS Hotline (Gang Violence)	816-474-TIPS
Domestic Violence Hotline	800-978-3600
National Domestic Violence Hotline	800-799-SAFE (7233)
National Youth Crisis Line	800-448-4663
Child Help USA, National Hotline	800-422-4453
Covenant House	800-999-9999
Choose Respect. go to www.chooserespect.org .	
Day One (Teen Dating Abuse)	800-214-4150
Love is Respect Hotline	866-331-9474

