

Facts About Dating Violence

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Between 20% and 25% of women will sustain an act of violence from a dating/marital partner at some point in her lifetime. (National Family Violence Surveys – Straus, 1995; National Violence Against Women Survey – Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).

Approximately 12% of women will sustain at least one act of minor violence (e.g., slapping, pushing) from a male partner in a given year, and 4% will sustain at least one act of severe violence (e.g., punching, kicking, beating up). This projects to about 2.5 million women per year who sustain severe violence (National Family Violence Surveys – Straus, 1995).

Between 7% and 25% of men will sustain an act of violence from a dating/marital partner at some point in his lifetime. (National Family Violence Survey – Straus, 1995; National Violence Against Women Survey – Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).

Approximately 12% of men will sustain at least one act of minor violence (e.g., slapping, pushing) from a female partner in a given year, and 4% will sustain at least one act of severe violence (e.g., punching, kicking, beating up). This projects to about 2.5 million men per year who sustain severe violence (National Family Violence Surveys – Straus, 1995).

Violence in GLBT couples is approximately equal to the rate and frequency of violence in heterosexual couples (see Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2005, for a review).

Younger couples have even higher rates of dating violence, with approximately 25% - 30% of men and women in college dating relationships sustaining violence (International Dating Violence Study of college students, Sabina & Straus, 2008).

Dating violence can happen to anyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, social class, or age.

Some of the more common risk factors for dating violence perpetration include: anger management issues, antisocial personality traits, borderline personality traits, substance/alcohol abuse, jealousy issues, a history of child abuse, approval of violence, stressful life circumstances, poor communication skills, having a negative view of one's partner, and a need for dominance in one's relationship (International Dating Violence Study of college students; Medeiros & Straus, 2006).

Dating violence can have substantial short-term and long-term impacts on the victim's mental and physical health (Coker et al., 2002; Romito & Grassi, 2007). Therefore, it is important for anyone who sustains dating violence to seek help.

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