**Preventing Teen Dating Violence**

**Dating violence can happen to any teen, anytime, anywhere. But it doesn't have to happen at all. Learn how to prevent teen dating violence and promote healthy relationships with CDC's online resources.**

Did you know that in the past 12 months, one in 10 teens report being hit or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend at least once? And nearly half of all teens in relationships say they know friends who have been verbally abused.

Before violence starts, a teen may experience controlling behavior and demands. One partner may tell another what to wear and who to hang out with. Over time, the unhealthy behavior may become violent. That's why adults need to talk to teens now about the importance of developing healthy, respectful relationships.

Dating violence can have a negative effect on health throughout life. Victims of teen dating violence are more likely to do poorly in school, and report binge drinking, suicide attempts, physical fighting and current sexual activity. Victims may also carry the patterns of violence into future relationships.

CDC's Division of Violence Prevention is undertaking a new initiative, Dating Matters: Strategies to Promote Healthy Teen Relationships, to promote respectful, nonviolent dating relationships among youth in high-risk, urban communities. The comprehensive approach will draw from current evidence-based practice and experience to reduce the burden of teen dating violence in these communities. The initiative will support communities as they implement prevention strategies in schools, with families, and in neighborhoods.

Learn more about CDC's efforts to prevent dating violence:

* [What is Teen Dating Violence?](http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teen_dating_violence.html)
* [Understanding Teen Dating Violence Fact Sheet Adobe PDF file[PDF - 291 KB]](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/TeenDatingViolence_2010-a.pdf)
* [Dating Matters: Understanding Teen Dating Violence Prevention[External Web Site Icon](http://www.vetoviolence.org/datingmatters)](http://www.vetoviolence.org/datingmatters)  
  This 60-minute, interactive training is designed to help educators, youth-serving organizations, and others working with teens understand the risk factors and warning signs associated with teen dating violence.
* [Choose Respect](http://www.cdc.gov/chooserespect)Choose Respect is an initiative that helps teens form healthy relationships to prevent dating violence before it starts. This national effort helps parents, caregivers, older teens, educators, and other caring adults motivate teens to challenge harmful beliefs about dating violence and take steps to form healthy and respectful relationships.