

# Facts about Teen Dating Violence

## What is Teen Dating Violence?

Teen dating violence occurs in a dating relationship when one adolescent uses assault and coercive behaviors, including physical, emotional, or sexual attacks, to intimidate another adolescent.

## How does domestic violence affect Latino youth?

The effects of teen dating violence on youth are profound. Youth who are experiencing domestic violence typically display some or all of the following behaviors and characteristics:

- Psychosomatic issues, e.g., stomachaches, ulcers, headaches
- Subtle reactions: loss of appetite, overeating, sleep difficulties, nail biting, or stuttering
- Low self-esteem and feelings of failure
- Anger: aggression, hostility, or destructiveness
- Disruptive behavior or violence toward peers
- Wearing high-necked or long-sleeved clothing in warm weather to hide physical abuse
- Juvenile delinquency, e.g., truancy, vandalism, drinking, or drug abuse

## Issues that exacerbate teen dating violence for Latino youth

- Undocumented youth experience many fears. Calling the police or telling a school counselor or parents may open up an investigation that could ultimately lead to the deportation of the boyfriend/girlfriend.
- When someone is in the midst of a crisis, it is common to go back to one's first language. Youth who do so cannot utilize resources or confide in counselors or teachers who speak only English.

## Statistics

- One in three adolescents reports knowing a peer who has been part of a physically abusive relationship. (Davis, Antoinette, MPH. 2008. Interpersonal and Physical Dating Violence among Teens. The National Council on Crime and Delinquency Focus.)
- 25% of adolescent girls have reported that they have been pressured to perform sexual acts. (Liz Claiborne Inc. study on teen dating abuse conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, February 2005.)
- 30% of adolescent girls (15 to 19) who are murdered every year in the USA die by the hands of an abusive partner. (City of New York, Teen Relationship Abuse Fact Sheet, March 1998.)
- Studies have found that women and girls are more likely to be victims of teen dating violence than men and boys and that they suffer significantly more injuries than males. (Rand, Michael. 2008. Criminal Victimization, 2007. U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics.) (Baum, Katrina, Catalano, Shannan, Rand, Michael and Rose, Kristina. 2009. Stalking Victimization in the United States. U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics.)