

# YOUTH SURVEY

## FAIRFAX COUNTY

# TEEN DATING ABUSE in Fairfax County

Fairfax County youth self-reported behavior  
(Youth Survey results for 8th, 10th, and 12th graders)

**81%** of teens did not report any TDA



**5%** of teens reported physical abuse by a dating partner



**16%** reported emotional abuse by a dating partner



**47%** of teens who reported being victims of TDA also reported symptoms of depression



**4%** reported being pressured to have sex by a dating partner

## What You Need to Know

The Fairfax County Youth Survey asked teens about their dating relationships.

Teen Dating Abuse (TDA) is a pattern of controlling behaviors in a dating or close personal relationship that may be emotional, physical or sexual.

Eighty-one percent of 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students surveyed said they had not been victims of TDA.

However, approximately one in six teens have had a boyfriend or girlfriend who always wanted to know where they were, called them names or put them down verbally.

Nearly five percent of students surveyed have had a boyfriend or girlfriend hit, slap or physically hurt them on purpose, and four percent have been pressured to have sex when they did not want to.

Both girls and boys reported being victims of teen dating abuse, but girls report verbal and sexual abuse at a higher rate.

Teen dating abuse is often thought of as just physical injuries, but before you see bruises, there may be other early warning signs that a relationship is not healthy or safe.

## What Can You Do?

### KNOW THE SIGNS OF A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

- ▶ Mutual respect.
- ▶ Trust.
- ▶ Honesty.
- ▶ Compromise.
- ▶ Individuality.
- ▶ Equality.
- ▶ Good communication.
- ▶ Anger control.
- ▶ Problem-solving.
- ▶ Fighting fair.
- ▶ Understanding.
- ▶ Self-confidence.

Adapted from the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence and Love is Not Abuse

### KNOW ABUSE WARNING SIGNS

#### DATING PARTNER BEHAVIOR

- ▶ Extreme jealousy or possessiveness.
- ▶ Constant checking in through phone calls and text messages.
- ▶ Isolation from family or friends.
- ▶ Repeated name calling and put-downs.
- ▶ Controlling victim's choices or actions.
- ▶ Loss of temper or violent behavior.

#### VICTIM BEHAVIOR

- ▶ Apologizing/making excuses for dating partner.
- ▶ Concern over angering him/her.
- ▶ Giving up important things/loss of interest in activities.
- ▶ Dramatic change in weight (up or down), appearance, dress, or grades.
- ▶ Unexplained injuries.

### IF YOU ARE CONCERNED

- ▶ Stay calm and tell your teen you are concerned for his/her safety and you are there to listen.
- ▶ Let your teen know the abuse is not their fault and that abuse is never ok.
- ▶ If your teen is injured, go to your doctor or the emergency room.
- ▶ If your teen is in danger, report the abuse to law enforcement.
- ▶ Contact a teen dating abuse hotline or helpline to help your teen develop a personal safety plan and to get information or additional assistance.
- ▶ Your teen's safety is the most important thing of all. Don't allow further contact with the dating partner.

## Who Can Help?

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline  
24 hours/7 days  
866-331-9474, TTY 866-331-8453

Fairfax County Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline  
24 hours/7 days  
703-360-7273, TTY 703-435-1235  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofw](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofw)

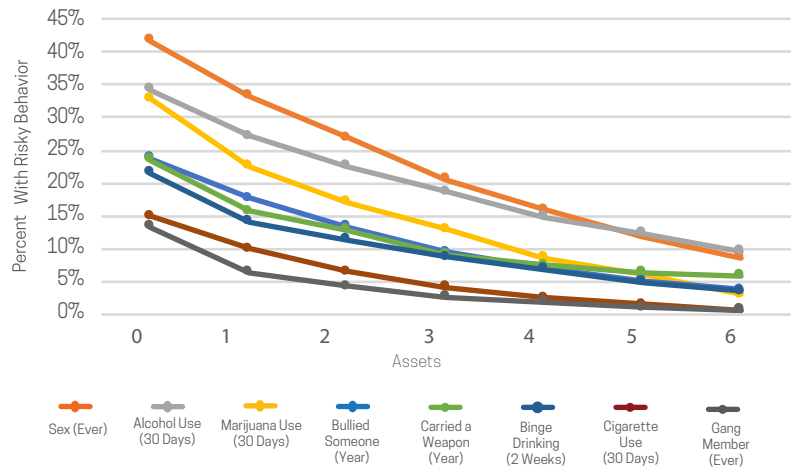
Fairfax County Domestic Violence Action Center (DVAC)  
8 am—4 pm  
703-246-4573, TTY 711  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/domesticviolence/dvac](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/domesticviolence/dvac)

# 3 Three to Succeed

THREE TO SUCCEED IS BASED ON THE YOUTH SURVEY ANALYSIS THAT SHOWS HAVING JUST **THREE ASSETS** DRAMATICALLY REDUCES RISK BEHAVIORS AND PROMOTES THRIVING YOUTH.

Assets are strengths in young people, their families, friends, schools and communities that help them thrive in health, in school, in daily life, and in a safe environment. The more assets a person has, the fewer risk behaviors they report and the Youth Survey shows that every asset makes a difference.

Young people in Fairfax County report positive influences from the people and other assets in their lives, though there are disparities that make it more challenging for some to thrive. Take action to be an asset in any young person's life and help build a stronger, more positive community that benefits ALL children.



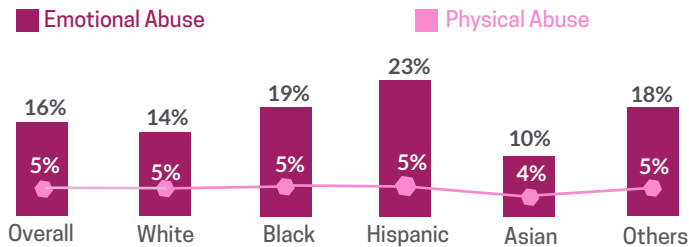
## Assets

Having High Personal Integrity  
Having Community Adults to Talk to  
Performing Community Service

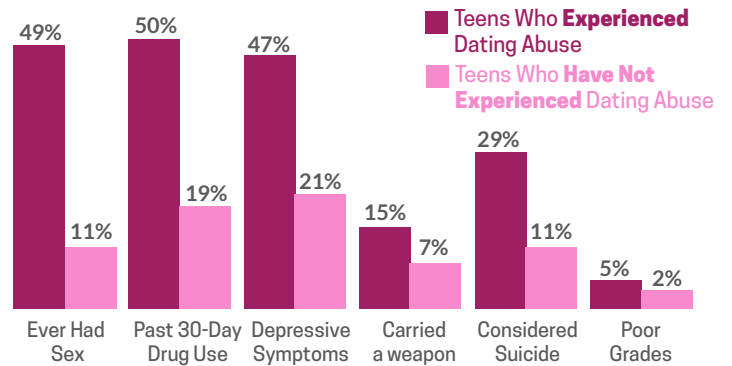
Participating in Extracurricular Activities  
Having Teachers Recognize Good Work  
Having Parents Available for Help

## Teen Dating Abuse in Fairfax County

Youth of all races and ethnicities experience physical dating abuse at similar rates, but there are disparities in experiences of emotional abuse.



Teens who have experienced dating abuse are at higher risk of engaging in risky behavior or experiencing poor outcomes.



## WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

Fairfax County Youth Survey  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey)

Fairfax County Prevention System  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/prevention](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/prevention)

Fairfax County Teen Dating Violence/Abuse  
[fairfaxcounty.gov/domesticviolence/teen-dating-abuse.htm](http://fairfaxcounty.gov/domesticviolence/teen-dating-abuse.htm)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
[http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teen\\_dating\\_violence.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teen_dating_violence.html)

Break the Cycle  
[www.breakthecycle.org](http://www.breakthecycle.org)

The Fairfax County Youth Survey was administered in the fall semester of 2015.

## Related Factors

Youth who report experiencing dating abuse are more likely to report ...

- Being sexually active.
- Using drugs or alcohol.
- Being depressed, and considering, and/or attempting suicide.
- Carrying a weapon.
- Having poor grades (mostly Ds/Fs).



Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. For information, call 703-324-4600, TTY 711.



A Fairfax County, Va., publication  
September 2017