

Teenagers & Sexual Violence

Who Experiences Teen Sexual Violence?

Rates of sexual violence against youth aged 12-18 are very high,¹ and the survivor normally knows the person who committed the offense.² Nationally, about 8% or 10 million girls and 0.7% or 791,000 boys under the age of 18 have experienced either rape or attempted rape.² Experiencing sexual violence as a child or teen makes it more likely the survivor will experience re-victimization in adulthood.² One in three (30.1%) victims of completed rape experienced their first rape between ages 11-17.³

It is difficult to determine the full impact of sexual violence against teenagers since most research focuses on children or college-aged youth. There are many gaps in research on sexual violence against teens, especially those from marginalized, unserved, and underserved communities.

Throughout this document we will alternate between using teen, youth, and young people to reflect the variety of ways people identify.



1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys have been sexually abused before the age of 18.⁴

Who Commits Sexual Violence Against Teens?

Youth who experience sexual violence are more likely to be victimized by a peer or someone they know.²



10.1% of girls were victimized by a stranger.



43.6% of girls were victimized by an acquaintance.



27.7% of girls were victimized by a family member.



28.8% of girls were victimized by a current or former intimate partner.

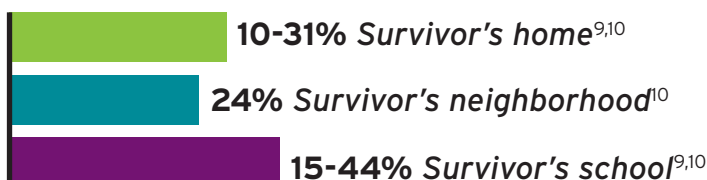


Over 35% of boys were made to victimize someone else (completed or attempted) by an acquaintance.

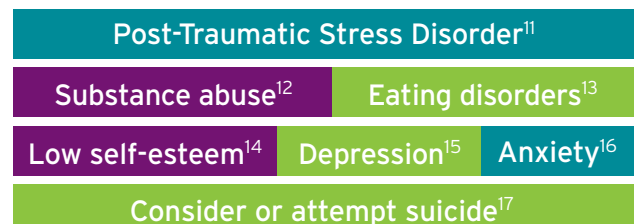
Effects of Sexual Violence

Young people who experience sexual violence may experience: Poor academic performance,⁵ Sexual risk taking behavior,⁶ Pregnancy,⁷ and Self-harm.⁸

Sexual assaults against youth happen in familiar places.



Teens who experience sexual violence may suffer from mental health conditions:



Teenagers & Sexual Violence

Sexual Violence and Students

According to the 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 6.7% of high school students reported they were physically forced to have sexual intercourse. This includes:¹⁸



A study on sexual harassment of 7-12 grade students found:¹⁹



56% of girls have experienced any kind of sexual harassment.



40% of boys have experienced any kind of sexual harassment.

Experiencing any kind of Sexual Harassment



48% of all Students

Experiencing Sexual Harassment in Person

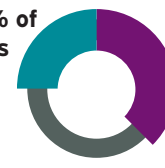
35% of Boys



52% of Girls

Experiencing Sexual Harassment Online

24% of Boys



36% of Girls

Sexual Violence in Detention Facilities

A Bureau of Justice Statistics report found that in a nationally survey of juvenile facilities and state contract facilities that:²⁰



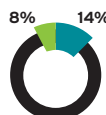
Almost 1 in 10 youth were sexually abused in the past year.



Over 90% of youth who reported staff sexual misconduct were victimized by a female facility staff.



Most youth were abused by a staff member and over 85% were assaulted multiple times.



Gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth experience higher rates of sexual violence (14.3%) compared to heterosexual youth (8.9%).

In 2011-12 4.7% of youth age 16-17 who were held in adult prisons and jails reported sexual victimization. This rate is similar to those of adult inmates.²¹

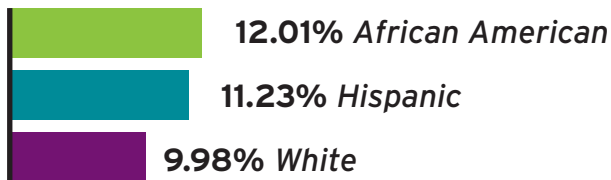
Teenagers & Sexual Violence

Oppression and Sexual Violence Against Teens

Sexual violence does not happen in isolation. Oppression (racism, classism, heterosexism, ableism, etc) is one of the root causes of sexual violence.²² Youth of color, homeless youth, and LGBTQ youth are more likely to experience sexual violence.

Race and Sexual Violence

African American and Hispanic girls are more likely to experience sexual violence than white girls.²³

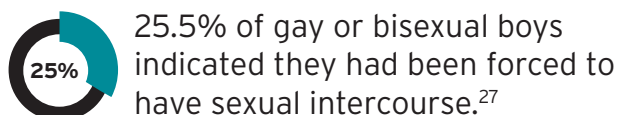
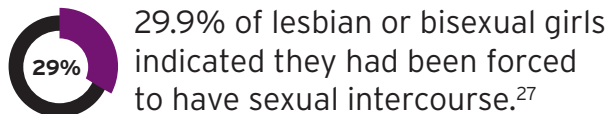


LGBTQ and Sexual Violence

LGBT youth are more than three times as likely to engage in survival sex or exchange sex for food, money, shelter, drugs, or clothing.²⁶

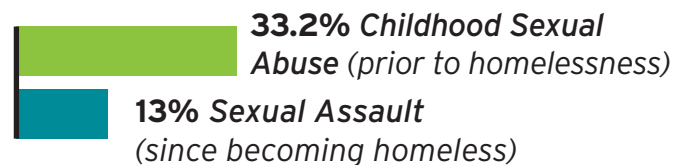


LGBTQ youth are more likely to experience sexual harassment than heterosexual youth. In one study 81% of transgender youth experienced sexual harassment.²⁸



Homelessness and Sexual Violence

Homeless or precariously housed youth reported experiencing childhood sexual abuse and sexual assault.²⁴

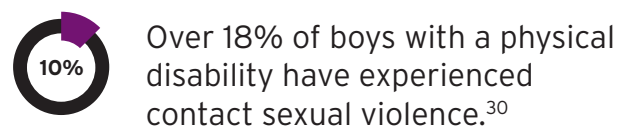
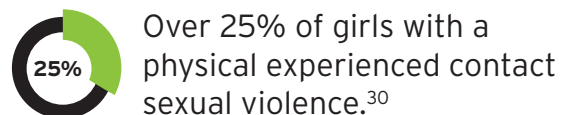


LGBTQ youth experience higher rates of sexual violence before becoming homeless.²⁵

Once homeless LGBTQ youth are victims of 7.4 more acts of sexual violence during their lifetime than their heterosexual homeless peers.²⁵

Disability and Sexual Violence

Youth with physical disabilities are more likely to experience sexual violence than youth without physical disabilities.²⁹



In one study over 22% of physically disabled youth experienced contact sexual violence - this is 1.74 times higher than able bodied youth. Over 40% of physically disabled youth experienced non-contact sexual violence.³⁰

Teenagers & Sexual Violence

References

- ¹Black, M. C., Basile, K. C., Breiding, M. J., Smith, S. G., Walters, M. L., Merrick, M. T., ... Stevens, M. R. (2011). *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 summary report*. Retrieved from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control: https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf
- ²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.) *Sexual violence in youth: Findings from the 2012 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/2012FindingsonSVinYouth.pdf>
- ³Smith, S. G., Chen, J., Basile, K. C., Gilbert, L. K., Merrick, M. T., Patel, N., ... Jain, A. (2017). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 state report*. Retrieved from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS-StateReportBook.pdf>
- ⁴Dube, S. R., Anda, R. F., Whitfield, C. L., Brown, D. W., Felitti, V. J., Dong, M., & Giles, W. H. (2005). Long-term consequences of childhood sexual abuse by gender of victim. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 28*, 430-438. doi:10.1016/j.amepre.2005.01.015
- ⁵Macmillan, R., & Hagan, J. (2004). Violence in the transition to adulthood: Adolescent victimization, education, and socioeconomic attainment in later life. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 14*, 127-158. doi:10.1111/j.1532-7795.2004.01402001.x
- ⁶Lang, D. L., Sales, J. M., Salazar, L. F., Hardin, J. W., DiClemente, R. J., Wingood, G. M., & Rose, E. (2011). Rape victimization and high risk sexual behaviors: Longitudinal study of African-American adolescent females. *Western Journal of Emergency Medicine, 12*, 333-342. Retrieved from the U.S. National Library of Medicine, National Center for Biotechnology Information: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3117610/pdf/wjem12_3p0333.pdf
- ⁷Noll, J. G., Shenk, C. E., & Putman, K. T. (2009). Childhood sexual abuse and adolescent pregnancy: A meta-analytic update. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology, 34*, 336-378. doi:10.1093/jpepsy/jsn098
- ⁸Noll, J. G., Horowitz, L. A., Bonanno, G. A., Trickett, P. K., & Putnam, F. W. (2003). Revictimization and self-harm in females who experienced childhood sexual abuse: Results from a prospective study. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 18*, 1452-1471. doi:10.1177/0886260503258035
- ⁹Young, A. M., Grey, M., & Boyd, C. J. (2009). Adolescents' experiences of sexual assault by peers: Prevalence, and nature of victimization occurring within and outside of school. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 38*, 1072-1083. doi:10.1007/s10964-008-9363-y
- ¹⁰Kilpatrick, D. G., Saunders, B. E., & Smith, D. W. (2003, April). Youth victimization: Prevalence and implications (NCJ 194972). *NIJ Research in Brief*. Retrieved from National Criminal Justice Reference Service: <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/194972.pdf>
- ¹¹Kilpatrick, D. G., Ruggiero, K. J., Acierno, R., Saunders, B. E., Resnick, H. S., & Best, C. L. (2003). Violence and risk of PTSD, major depression, substance abuse/dependence, and comorbidity: Results from the National Survey of Adolescents. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 71*, 692-700. doi:10.1037/0022-006X.71.4.692
- ¹²Kilpatrick, D. G., Acierno, R., Saunders, B., Resnick, H. S., Best, C. L., & Schnurr, P. P. (2000). Risk factors for adolescent substance abuse and dependence: Data from a national sample. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 68*, 19-30. doi:10.1037/0022-006X.68.1.19
- ¹³Thompson, K. M., Wonderlich, S. A., Crosby, R. D., & Mitchell, J. E. (2001). Sexual violence and weight control techniques among adolescent girls. *International Journal of Eating Disorders, 29*, 166-176. doi:10.1002/1098-108X(200103)29:2<166::AID-EAT1006>3.0.CO;2-3
- ¹⁴Turner, H. A., Finkelhor, D., & Ormrod, R. (2010). The effects of adolescent victimization on self-concept and depressive symptoms. *Child Maltreatment, 15*, 76-90. doi:10.1177/1077559509349444

Teenagers & Sexual Violence

References

- ¹⁵Danielson, C. K., de Arellano, M. A., Kilpatrick, D. G., Saunders, B. E., & Resnick, H. S. (2005). Child maltreatment in depressed adolescents: Differences in symptomatology based on history of abuse. *Child Maltreatment, 10*, 37-48. doi:10.1177/1077559504271630
- ¹⁶Marshall, A. D. (2016). Developmental timing of trauma exposure relative to puberty and the nature of psychopathology among adolescent girls. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 55*, 25-32.e1. doi:10.1016/j.jaac.2015.10.004
- ¹⁷Anderson, L. M., Hayden, B. M., & Tomasula, J. L. (2014). Sexual assault, overweight, and suicide attempts in U.S. adolescents. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior, 45*, 529-540. doi:10.1111/sltb.12148
- ¹⁸Kann, L., McManus, T., Harris, W. A., Shanklin, S. L., Flint, K. H., Hawkins, J., ... & Zaza, S. (2016, June 10). Youth risk behavior surveillance - United States, 2015. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: Surveillance Summaries, 65*(6). Retrieved from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/2015/ss6506_updated.pdf
- ¹⁹Hill, C., & Kearl, H. (2011). *Crossing the line: Sexual harassment at school*. Retrieved from American Association of University Women: <http://www.aauw.org/files/2013/02/Crossing-the-Line-Sexual-Harassment-at-School.pdf>
- ²⁰Beck, A. J., Cantor, D., Hartge, J., & Smith, T. (2013). *Sexual victimization in juvenile facilities reported by youth, 2012: National Survey of Youth in Custody, 2012* (NCJ 241708). Retrieved from the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics: <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/svjfry12.pdf>
- ²¹Beck, A. J., Berzofsky, M., Caspar, R., & Krebs, C. (2013). *Sexual victimization in prisons and jails reported by inmates, 2011-12: National Inmate Survey, 2011-12* (NCJ 241399). Retrieved from U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics: <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/svpjri1112.pdf>
- ²²Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape. (n.d.). *Oppression & sexual violence*. Retrieved from <http://www.pcar.org/about-sexual-violence/oppression-sexual-violence>
- ²³Boothe, M. A. S., Wilson, R. M., Lassiter, T. E., & Holland, B. (2014). Differences in sexual behaviors and teen dating violence among Black, Hispanic, and White female adolescents. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, 23*, 1072-1089. doi:10.1080/10926771.2014.964436
- ²⁴Wong, C. F., Clark, L. F., & Marlotte, L. (2016). The impact of specific and complex trauma on the mental health of homeless youth. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 31*, 831-854. doi:10.1177/0886260514556770
- ²⁵National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2009). *Homeless youth and sexual exploitation: Research findings and practice implications*. Retrieved from: http://b3cdn.net/naeh/c0103117f1ee8f2d84_e8m6ii5q2.pdf
- ²⁶Cray, A., Miller, K., & Durso, L. E. (2013). *Seeking shelter: The experiences and unmet needs of LGBT homeless youth*. Retrieved from the Center for American Progress: <https://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/LGBTHomelessYouth.pdf>
- ²⁷Lindley, L. L., & Walsemann, K. M. (2015). Sexual orientation and risk of pregnancy among New York City high-school students. *American Journal of Public Health, 105*, 1379-1386. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2015.302553
- ²⁸Mitchell, K. J., Ybarra, M. L., & Obsuth, I. (2014). Sexual harassment among adolescents of different sexual orientations and gender identities. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 38*, 280-295. doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2013.09.008
- ²⁹Turner, H. A., Vanderminden, J., Finkelhor, D., Hamby, S., & Shattuck, A. (2011). Disability and victimization in a national sample of children and youth. *Child Maltreatment, 16*, 275-286. doi: 10.1177/1077559511427178
- ³⁰Mueller-Johnson, K., Eisner, M. P., & Obsuth, I. (2014). Sexual victimization of youth with a physical disability: An examination of prevalence rates, and risk and protective factors. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 29*, 3180-3206. doi:10.1177/0886260514534529