What is the Impact of Teen Dating Violence?

Survivors of teen dating violence may experience a wide range of emotional, psychological, social, and health issues

Emotional and Psychological Issues

- Depression and anxiety
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and difficulty concentrating
- Contemplated or attempted suicide
- Stress, anger, hurt, and/or fear
- Lowered self-esteem
- For LGBTQ survivors, feelings of isolation due to discrimination, homophobia, and a lack of services available to this community

Evidence suggests that the consequences of Teen Dating Violence tend to be greater for girls compared to boys, but it affects students regardless of race, income, sexual identity, religion,

Social and Health Issues

- Limited contact with peers, family, and other organizations, resulting in social isolation
- Increased likelihood of engagement in unhealthy and antisocial behaviors such as:
  - Drug, alcohol, and/or tobacco use
  - Eating disorders
  - Unsafe sex
- Possibility of sustained injuries such as bruises, broken bones, cuts, lacerations, and concussions
- Female high school survivors of TDV are:
  - 4 to 6 times more likely to get pregnant than non-survivor
  - 3 times more likely to have been tested for Sexual Transmitted Infections and HIV than non-survivors
  - More than twice as likely to have an STI than non-survivor

“Being abused in a relationship can shatter a teenager’s belief that she is a worthy, decent, and independent person who can cope with life in a mature, self-assertive fashion. For the teen victim, the world becomes a frightening, confusing place where understanding how things are supposed to work is called into question. The victim’s sense of her ability to protect herself and function autonomously is undermined.”

References


Compiled by the Center on Violence Against Women and Children, School of Social Work, Rutgers University, vawc.rutgers.edu in collaboration with the NJ Domestic Violence Fatality and Near Fatality Review Board, www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/boards/dvfnf/