

Arizona Criminal Justice Commission



Arizona Youth Survey: Teen Dating Violence Fact Sheet

Our mission is to sustain and enhance the coordination, cohesiveness, productivity and effectiveness of the criminal justice system in Arizona

The Arizona Youth Survey (AYS)

August 2011

In the 2010 administration of the Arizona Youth Survey (AYS), a question was added to measure teen dating violence. Specifically, youth were asked, “How many times in the past year (12 months) have you been hit, slapped, pushed, shoved, kicked or any other way physically assaulted by your boyfriend or girlfriend?” This fact sheet provides a brief overview of the frequency of teen dating violence relative to respondent demographics, their exposure to other forms of violence, current substance use, and risk and protective factors.

Teen Dating Violence

Teen dating violence has recently been recognized as a significant public health problem by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as other governmental and non-governmental agencies. Unhealthy or abusive relationships can cause short-term and long-term negative effects. The CDC reported that adolescents experiencing teen dating violence were more likely to do poorly in school, abuse illicit substances, suffer from emotional problems, and continue patterns of violence into adulthood (CDC, 2010). To raise awareness for this dangerous phenomenon, in 2010 the Justice Department designated the entire month of February as National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

Overall, 17.3 percent of youth reported being a victim of one or more incidents of teen dating violence during the previous 12 months (Table 1). Of the youth that experienced one or more incidents of teen dating violence, 10th graders, males, and Native American youth indicated higher rates of victimization by a dating partner. A total of 17.4 percent more Hispanic/Latino youth reported teen dating violence compared to their Non-Hispanic counterparts.

Table 1. Frequency of Reported Incidents Among Adolescents That Reported Teen Dating Violence

	Frequency of Incidents for Youth Who Reported Teen Dating Violence		Frequency of Incidents for Youth Who Reported Teen Dating Violence			
	No Reported Violence	Any Reported Violence	1 or 2 Times	3 to 9 Times	10 to 39 Times	40+ Times
Overall	82.7	17.3	46.7	28.3	15.2	9.8
Grade						
8th Grade	82.8	17.2	48.9	28.2	14.0	8.8
10th Grade	81.9	18.1	44.0	28.3	16.9	10.7
12th Grade	83.6	16.4	46.3	28.3	14.9	10.5
Gender						
Male	81.6	18.4	42.5	27.8	16.4	13.3
Female	83.9	16.1	51.5	29.0	13.6	5.9
Race						
Asian	88.8	11.2	48.5	24.6	14.0	12.9
Pacific Islander	82.5	17.5	46.9	21.9	12.5	18.8
Native American	78.6	21.4	48.4	29.9	14.0	7.8
Black	80.4	19.6	38.1	30.5	19.7	11.8
White	84.6	15.4	47.0	28.5	15.2	9.3
Multi-Racial	81.5	18.5	40.6	29.3	16.9	13.2
Ethnicity						
Latino	81.1	18.9	48.2	28.1	14.0	9.7
Non-Hispanic	83.9	16.1	45.9	28.7	15.6	9.9

Exposure to Other Forms of Violence

The percentage of teens who reported exposure to other types of violence was one-third to nearly three times higher for those youth who had experienced teen dating violence compared to those who reported no incidents of teen dating violence (Table 2). Youth who reported being a victim of teen dating violence were 2.9 times more likely to attack someone with the intent to cause harm compared to youth who experienced no teen dating violence. Victims of teen dating violence also reported higher rates of having seen someone attacked with a weapon and seeing someone shot or shot at, 2.8 times and 2.9 times higher, respectively.

Table 2. Percentage of Youth Who Reported Teen Dating Violence by Exposure to Other Violence

Other Exposures to Violence	No Reported Teen Dating Violence	Any Reported Teen Dating Violence
Attacked Someone With the Intent to do Harm	11.1	32.0
Perception That it is Okay to Beat People Up Who Start Fights	48.9	65.2
Seen Someone Punched, Kicked, Choked or Beaten Up	62.7	86.5
Seen Someone Attacked With a Weapon	13.1	36.9
Seen Someone Shot or Shot At	9.0	25.9

Teen Dating Violence and Substance Abuse

AYS data also reveal that victims of teen dating violence had higher rates of current illicit substance use compared to those youth who indicated never experiencing violence in a dating relationship (Table 3). For example, 64.3 percent of youth who reported teen dating violence also reported using an illicit substance in the past 30 days, while only 39.2 percent of youth who did not experience teen dating violence reported current substance use. Overall, adolescents who had been the victim of teen dating violence used illicit substances at a rate 1.64 times higher than youth who had not experienced dating violence. Specifically, those students who reported teen dating violence in the past year, also reported using steroids, meth and heroin at much higher rates compared to students with no reported incidents of teen dating violence (4.0, 3.3 and 3.2 times higher, respectively). While levels of self-reported use of these substances were relatively low in general, these data highlight the relationship between serious drug use and teen dating violence. Additionally, youth who reported being victims of teen dating violence used 11 of the 17 substances at a rate more than 2.0 times higher than their counterparts who had not experienced teen dating violence.

Type of Substance	No Reported Teen Dating Violence	Any Reported Teen Dating Violence
Any Substance	39.2	64.3
Alcohol	28.5	48.8
Heavy Alcohol	16.6	33.6
Cigarettes	12.5	25.6
Chewing Tobacco	4.1	9.9
Marijuana	12.9	24.3
Hallucinogens	1.3	3.4
Cocaine	1.1	3.1
Inhalants	2.9	7.8
Methamphetamines	0.3	1.0
Heroin or Other Opiates	0.6	1.9
Ecstasy	1.9	5.4
Steroids	0.4	1.6
Rx Pain Relievers	6.2	15.5
Rx Stimulants	1.6	4.5
Rx Sedatives	3.4	8.4
Total Rx Drugs	8.5	19.7
Over-the-Counter Drugs	4.7	11.8

County	County
Apache	Mohave
19.6	21.4
Cochise	Navajo
17.5	19.7
Coconino	Pima
18.0	19.2
Gila	Pinal
27.2	20.8
Graham	Santa Cruz
20.0	16.6
Greenlee	Yavapai
25.5	20.1
La Paz	Yuma
20.1	18.6
Maricopa	State of Arizona
16.0	17.3

County-Level Percentages

County specific teen dating violence data reveal noticeable variation in the frequency of teen dating violence, ranging from a low of 16.0 percent in Maricopa County to a high of 27.2 percent in Gila County (Table 4). Thirteen of Arizona's 15 counties reported higher rates than the state. Gila and Greenlee county youth reported the highest rates of teen dating violence, 1.6 times and 1.5 times higher than the state-level, respectively.

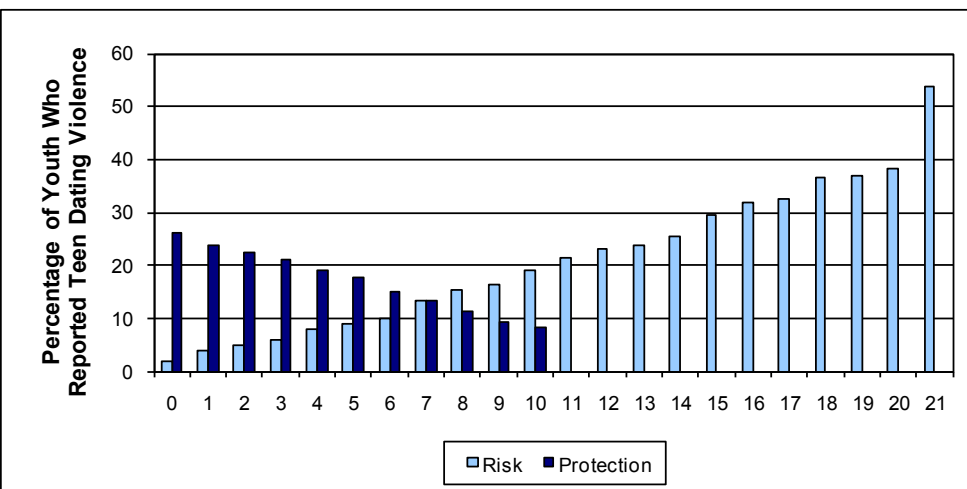
Risk and Protective Factors

At the core of the Arizona Youth Survey are questions based on a risk and protective factor prevention model. This model is based on research that has identified several risk and protective factors for delinquency and substance use. That data reveal that as risk factors accumulate in youth's lives, the percentage of youth who report experiencing teen dating violence in the past year also increases. Conversely, as protective factors increase, the percentage of youth who report teen dating violence incidents decreases (Chart 1).

Next Steps

Future administrations of AYS will allow for the examination of teen dating violence from a longitudinal perspective, thus providing more insight into the pervasiveness of dating violence experienced by Arizona youth. Yet, what is clear from these data is that there is a need for projects or programs that raise awareness of teen dating violence and promote prevention strategies to reduce teen dating violence.

Chart 1. Relationship Between Those Youth Who Experienced Teen Dating Violence and Accumulated Risk and Protective Factors



Reference: Centers for Disease Control. (2010). Understanding teen dating violence. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/TeenDatingViolence_2010-a.pdf

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