



# TEEN TALK TIME

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## DATING VIOLENCE

### Teens and Dating

It is difficult to say how common dating violence is among teens. Studies and surveys ask about it in various ways and get very different results. There is one common ground among all studies and surveys and that is the fact that dating violence **DOES** exist among teens.

### Violent Facts

In a recent study done with 463 students:

- 32% reported having been the victim of severe physical violence (punched, kicked, or beaten)
- 9% reported being the victim of severe physical violence more than twice that year
- 22% reported being a victim once or twice during the year
- 5% admitted to being the perpetrator of dating violence

(American Journal of orthopsychiatry)

### Signs of an Abusive Relationship

1. He acts extremely jealous of others who pay attention to her especially other men.
2. She becomes quiet when he is around and seems afraid of making him angry.
3. She stops seeing her friends and family members, becoming more and more isolated.
4. She often cancels plans at the last minute.
5. You see him violently lose his temper, striking or breaking objects.
6. She often has unexplained injuries, or the explanations she offers don't quite add up.
7. She has casually mentioned his violent behavior but laughed it off as a joke.

## I Got Flowers Today

***I got flowers today.  
It wasn't my birthday or any other special day.  
We had our first argument last night,  
And he said a lot of cruel things that really hurt me.  
I know he is sorry and didn't mean the things he said.  
Because he sent me flowers today.***

***I got flowers today.  
It wasn't our anniversary any other special day.  
Last night, he threw me into a wall and started to choke me.  
It seemed like a nightmare.  
I couldn't believe it was real.  
I woke up this morning sore and bruised all over.  
I know he must be sorry.  
Because he sent me flowers today.***

***I got flowers today,  
and it wasn't Mother's Day or any other special day.  
Last night, he beat me up again.  
And it was much worse than all the other times.  
If I leave him, what will I do?  
How will I take care of my kids?  
What about money?  
I'm afraid of him and scared to leave.  
But I know he must be sorry.  
Because he sent me flowers today.***

***I got flowers today.  
Today was a very special day.  
It was the day of my funeral.  
Last night, he finally killed me.  
He beat me to death.  
If only I had gathered enough courage and strength to leave him,  
I would not have gotten flowers...today.***

**By Paulette Kelly**

## Ways to Help

Victims of dating violence feel alone, ashamed, and that they deserve the abuse. Help them to understand that it is not their fault and help them find ways and the strength to leave their abuser.

- *Help them to understand that love does not hurt*
- *Help them to be able to identify healthy relationships*
- *Give them resources that can help*
- *Encourage them to talk to someone*
- *Be available, be understanding, be there*

## Helpful Resources

[www.safeyouth.org](http://www.safeyouth.org) is the National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center

[www.loveisnotabuse.com](http://www.loveisnotabuse.com) provides information on dating violence as well as support to end dating violence

## References

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