What is Teen Dating Violence?

A pattern or series of abusive behaviors over a course of time that reflects the perpetrator’s desire to control, dominate, and exert power over a dating partner.

Physical

- Hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, shoving
- Scratching, pinching, biting, choking, hair pulling
- Grabbing a dating partner’s body parts or clothing to prevent partner from leaving or forcing him/her to go somewhere
- Grabbing a partner’s face to make him/her look at them
- Throwing a foreign object at a dating partner
- Using a gun, knife, bat, mace, or other weapon

Sexual

- Unwanted kissing, touching, and sexual activity gained through force, pressure, threats, manipulation and/or intimidation
- Sexual assault or attempted sexual assault
- Getting a dating partner drunk/drugged for sex
- Sexual contact with a dating partner who is drunk, drugged, unconscious, or otherwise unable to give a clear and informed “yes” or “no”
- Keeping a dating partner from protecting him/herself from STIs or getting pregnant
- Sexual slurs or attacks on a dating partner’s gender or sexual orientation
- Sending unwanted, explicit pictures/videos and/or demanding them in return

Psychological

Verbal and Emotional
- Yelling and screaming
- Name-calling, ridiculing, criticizing, humiliating
- Starting rumors about a dating partner
- Making a dating partner feel guilty or insecure
- Making a dating partner think s/he is irrational
- Emotional blackmailing
- Playing mind games

Threatening to...
- Harm a dating partner or his/her pet or loved ones
- Report a dating partner to police
- Have children taken away
- Expose a dating partner’s secrets such as sexual orientation or immigration status
- Leave the dating partner
- Commit suicide

Controlling Behaviors
- Isolation
- Preventing a dating partner from interacting with friends/family
- Controlling what a dating partner does and who s/he sees and talks to

Intimidation
- Stalking
- Using looks, actions, gestures to scare a dating partner
- Smashing things/destroying personal property
- Displaying weapons

Manipulation
- Blaming dating partner’s actions for perpetrator’s abusive or unhealthy behavior
- Forcing a partner to drop charges/do illegal activities
- Using jealousy to justify actions
- Minimizing – making light of the abuse and not taking concerns about it seriously
- Denying the abuse happened
- Shifting responsibility for abusive behavior

Any of these behaviors can be perpetuated via electronic methods (i.e. phone calls, texts, emails, social media, etc.)

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/dvfnfrb/