

Teen dating violence is target of new CDC program

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(HealthDay)—Reducing teen dating violence in the United States is the

aim of a new program introduced by federal health officials.

This is a widespread problem that can have serious effects. But, many teens don't report incidents because they're afraid to tell their family and friends, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says.

The agency defines teen dating [violence](#) as physical, sexual, mental or [emotional violence](#) that occurs in a dating relationship. It includes stalking and can happen in person or electronically with current or former partners.

Of U.S. students who said they were dating, 21 percent of girls and 10 percent of boys said they had been victims of physical and/or [sexual violence](#) from a dating partner in the previous 12 months, according to the CDC.

Among people who had ever been victims of rape, physical violence or stalking by an intimate partner, 23 percent of girls and 14 percent of boys suffered some form of [partner violence](#) between the ages of 11 and 17.

The CDC's new program—called Dating Matters: Strategies to Promote Healthy Teen Relationships—seeks to encourage respectful, nonviolent relationships among youth in high-risk communities in cities. It promotes prevention efforts in schools and neighborhoods and with families.

"A healthy relationship is built on respect and is free of violence," the CDC said in a news release.

Safe, fulfilling teen relationships can be achieved through communication, managing emotions such as anger and jealousy, and treating others with respect.

"Dating violence is preventable when teens, families, organizations, and communities come together and implement effective prevention efforts," according to the CDC.

More information: Here's where you can learn more about the [Dating Matters program](#).

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