

# Teen Healthy Relationships

t h e f a c t s & s t a t s



Healthy relationships are built on trust, intimacy, communication, respect, safety, independence & more.

*Healthy relationships are as important in friendships, family & caregiving dynamics, as they are in intimate partnerships.*

Learning how to identify, build, & maintain healthy relationships is important for emotional and social development.

In healthy relationships, teens feel safe expressing themselves & their needs.

## why are teen healthy relationships such an urgent issue? statistics

1

In **Kingston** from 2014 to 2021, the highest rate of victims of police-reported **sexual assault was youth aged 12 to 17, followed by young adults aged 18 to 24**. The rate of police-reported **sexual assault was higher in the Kingston census metropolitan area than Ontario** (95.72 vs. 75.1), reflecting a longstanding trend. (<https://doi.org/10.25318/3510020001-eng>)

2

More than **four in 10 (45%) of teens aged 15 to 17 experience dating violence since age 15**. According to self-reported data, emotional abuse is the most common form of violence (45%), followed by physical violence (10%) and sexual violence (7%). ([Sutton and Burczycka, Statistics Canada, 2024](#)).

3

The **experience of intimate partner violence as a teen** has been linked to negative outcomes in later life, including an **increased risk of experiencing intimate partner violence again in adulthood**. Young women who experience **harsh physical/mental parenting** are **more likely to report experiencing intimate partner violence as adults** (62% and 43%, respectively)

4

**“Nonbinary youth report significantly higher rates of all forms of adolescent dating violence victimization** than their cisgender peers,” with psychological victimization being the highest (42%), followed by cyber (32.8%) and physical (25.6%) victimization.

5

**Indigenous and Northern** young women (66%) and men (54%) **between the ages of 15 and 24 report significantly higher rates of intimate partner violence**.

6

According to Statistics Canada, “in 2022, the rate of police-reported dating violence was about **nine times higher** for teenage girls than boys”. **One in three youth** report experiencing physical, psychological and/or cyber teen dating violence and among teen girls, **7% report experiencing sexual abuse** by a dating partner.

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## should I talk to my children about healthy relationships? facts

- Teenagers are influenced by the relationships they have growing up. Healthy and supportive relationships during adolescence are positive assets and protect against the impact of “structural inequalities”. Similarly, the *negative effects associated with unhealthy, abusive, or violent relationships can be “far reaching and long-lasting,”* leaving teens with negative and unhealthy ways of relating that can become patterns in their adult lives
- **These consequences include, but are not limited to: “depressive symptoms, suicidality, increased anxiety, trauma symptoms, problematic substance use, sexual health issues, injury, decreased ability to regulate negative emotions and stress, continued involvement in violence, and decreased academic performance”.**
- **Teaching about healthy relationships and violence prevention in schools, and in ways that involve families and community, is key to helping teens learn how to build healthy relationships.**

## how can parents and caregivers help? resources

1

Adults may need help forming healthy relationships with young people, creating healthy social climates, and addressing bullying.

The Promoting Relationships & Eliminating Violence Network has created a [Healthy Relationships Training Module](#) to fill this gap for adults who work with young people.

2

“As parents and caregivers, you are integral to the emotional and physical well-being of your children. [Navigating the complexities of youth dating violence can be challenging, but your involvement is crucial in fostering healthy relationships and preventing abuse](#)”  
Resources available at [www.prevnet.ca/youth-dating-violence/for-parents-and-caregivers](http://www.prevnet.ca/youth-dating-violence/for-parents-and-caregivers)

3

[Expressing “personal boundaries early in intimate relationship interactions](#) is key to reducing the likelihood of unhealthy relationship dynamics from forming”  
Resources available at [www.canadianwomen.org/the-facts/teen-healthy-relationships](http://www.canadianwomen.org/the-facts/teen-healthy-relationships)

4

[It is a Big Deal: Grades 9-12 Activity Book](#) can also be a helpful guide for caregivers and young people to talk about relationships and sexual consent. [It discusses stereotypes, dating relationships, sexting, sexual consent, sexual violence, the law, uncomfortable situations, and how to get help.](#) Resource from the Canadian Centre for Child Protection available at [https://content.c3p.ca/pdfs/ItisaBigDeal\\_en.pdf](https://content.c3p.ca/pdfs/ItisaBigDeal_en.pdf)