

Teenagers & Sexual Violence

Who Experiences Teen Sexual Violence?

Rates of sexual violence against youth aged 12-18 are very high,¹ and the survivor normally knows the person who committed the offense.² Nationally, about 8% or 10 million girls and 0.7% or 791,000 boys under the age of 18 have experienced either rape or attempted rape.² Experiencing sexual violence as a child or teen makes it more likely the survivor will experience re-victimization in adulthood.² One in three (30.1%) victims of completed rape experienced their first rape between ages 11-17.³

It is difficult to determine the full impact of sexual violence against teenagers since most research focuses on children or college-aged youth. There are many gaps in research on sexual violence against teens, especially those from marginalized, unserved, and underserved communities.

Throughout this document we will alternate between using teen, youth, and young people to reflect the variety of ways people identify.



1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys have been sexually abused before the age of 18.⁴

Who Commits Sexual Violence Against Teens?

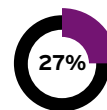
Youth who experience sexual violence are more likely to be victimized by a peer or someone they know.²



10.1% of girls were victimized by a stranger.



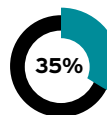
43.6% of girls were victimized by an acquaintance.



27.7% of girls were victimized by a family member.



28.8% of girls were victimized by a current or former intimate partner.

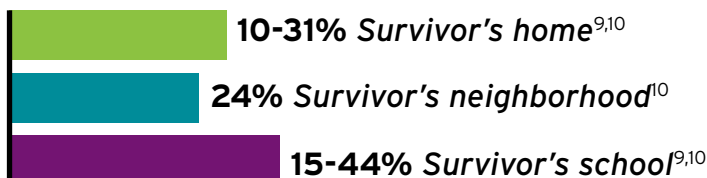


Over 35% of boys were made to penetrate someone else (completed or attempted) by an acquaintance.

Effects of Sexual Violence

Young people who experience sexual violence may experience: poor academic performance,⁵ sexual risk taking behavior,⁶ pregnancy,⁷ and self-harm.⁸

Sexual assaults against youth happen in familiar places.



Teens who experience sexual violence may suffer from mental health conditions:

