

# Aspects of Abuse

Adolescents – Abusive Relationships  
Impact, Intervention & Prevention

Reading University

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# Dating Relationships

- As many as 42% of adolescents experienced some form of abusive behaviour from a partner (Southwark 2006)
- 16% young women had been hit by a boyfriend, 40% were accepting of aggressive behaviour (NSPCC & Sugar 2005)
- 27% boys expect sex if a girl is flirtatious (EVAW poll 2006)
- More than 50% young people feel that women provoke men into using violence (NHS Survey Scotland 2005)
- Teens maybe at higher risk of intimate partner violence & abuse than adults (Silverman 2001)

# Definition

## Sexual Relationship Violence

‘Psychological, physical and/or sexual violence in sexual/romantic relationships of adolescents and includes violence in such relationships whether formal, partnered, casual or intimate, short or long term dating relationships – age 10 – 19 years’

Jo Nurse – Department of Health

Sexual Relationship Violence In Adolescents –  
Health Impact & Opportunities for Prevention

# Sexual Abuse

- CSA - 40% perpetrated by siblings (NSPCC 2000)
- CSA - 25 – 40% of all sexual abuse involves young perpetrators (Retrospective Research Studies 2006)
- 43% college males used coercive behaviour to have sex (US Survey)
- 7% young men thought that forcing their girlfriend into having sex was something that just happened (NHS Survey Scotland 2005)
- One in ten 16 -19 year old females are sexually assaulted each year (BCS 2004/5)
- Age of referrals are reducing – nearly 30% below age ten (NSPCC Coventry & Lincolnshire)

# Parental / Family Abuse

- Paucity of statistics and information
- First studied by Sears in 1957 – lack of ongoing research particularly in the sphere of family violence – to date CJ or Medical Models
- USA research has identified risk factors associated with parental assault
- Sibling abuse neglected area of research & practice – reminder of types - biological, half, step, adoptive, foster & fictive
- Significant under-reporting

# Impact

- Long term health and mental health implications – substance misuse, risky behaviours, poor health, teenage pregnancy, STIs, poor physical & mental health
- Origins of interpersonal violence frequently start in adolescence
- The severity of violence in IPV can be increased if the pattern is established in adolescence
- Victims of violent relationships in adolescence are at higher risk of being abused in adult relationships

# Intervention

- The earlier interventions are made the more likely they are to be effective and less expensive
- Interventions with young people involved with community violent crime can be effective
- Gap in service provision for all adolescents with abusive behaviours
- Age appropriate - models do not necessarily translate
- Emerging group work models in the UK

# Prevention

- Adolescence time of transition
- Development of complex cognitive skills - unique opportunity to improve relationship skills
- Reduce the risk of future domestic and sexual abuse
- Benefits of short impactful awareness raising in boosting protective factors eg 'Safe Dates'
- Needs to address co-existing risk behaviours eg substance misuse



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