Abuse in Teenage Relationships

Amanda Jones
Teenage Pregnancy
Co-ordinator
Definition and age

“coercive control”
A pattern of power and control over time

Age of classification now 16
Outline

- What do we know about partner violence in teenage relationships?
- The prevalence of partner sexual violence and links to sexual health and wellbeing
- Recommendations from the research
- Opportunities
- Some programmes in Redbridge
Young people’s experiences

Risk factors: previous experiences of parental domestic violence, physical and sexual abuse and violent peer groups

13 to 15 years olds as likely as older teenagers to experience some forms of relationship abuse

Around 75% of girls and 50% of boys reported some form of emotional relationship abuse.
Having a same sex partner was also associated with increased incidence rates for all forms of partner violence.

The majority of young people either told a friend or no-one about the violence; only a minority informed an adult.
Attitudes

• 43% of young people surveyed believe it is acceptable for a boyfriend to get aggressive in circumstances when a girlfriend cheated, flirted, or dressed outrageously

• 40% of young girls would give boys a second chance if they hit them

(Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust, 1998)
Research on teenage partner violence

- Emotional
- Physical

- Sexual - 1 in 3 girls & 16% of boys reported some form of sexual partner violence.
Self-blame

“For girls issues of self-blame were very prominent, especially in relation to sexual coercion, where girls felt they had “given in” to sexual pressure from their partners. Often it was this aspect of the sexual violence, rather than the act itself, which girls said affected them in the long term”.

Partner Exploitation and violence in teenage intimate relationships
Christine Barter, Melanie McCarry and Kathy Evans
Coercive control

“The level of coercive control in some young people’s relationships was highly worrying. Again, girls were most often affected, experiencing high levels of control over where they could go, whom they could see or what they could do. Often girls were under constant surveillance through the use of online technologies, mobile telephones and text messaging. Control often resulted in isolation from peer networks.”

Partner Exploitation and violence in teenage intimate relationships
Christine Barter, Melanie McCary and Kathy Evans
Support

In many cases peers provided a valuable source of support, in some instances they held inappropriate views about the acceptability of violence.

“Everybody does it [control], I thought he was weird and then I talked to my friends and all their boyfriends are the same.”
This is abuse campaign

“If you could see yourself, would you stop yourself?”
Some key features from the research with young people

- Post-relationship violence
- Older male partners
- 13-15 experience the same levels of abuse
- Support
Recommendations from the research

- Recognition of *teenage* partner violence as a significant child welfare problem
- Impact of teenage partner violence – the gender divide
- Different forms of partner violence (physical, emotional and sexual)
- New technologies
- Family and peer violence
- Older boyfriends
- Enhancing help-seeking
- PHSE
Some programmes in Redbridge
Support to Parents

- Parenting Teenagers Course
- LSCB Training for Foster Carers
- FPA Speakeasy
- Young parents
Personal, Health & Social Education

- Equip young people with a ‘media filter’
- SRE or *Relationships* and Sexual Health Education?
- School Governor Training
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre – Safeguarding in a Digital World (LSCB)
- Go Girls
- R U Ready?
R U Ready?

“The earlier first sex occurs, the greater the likelihood that people express regret about the timing and report being more or less (but not equally) willing compared with their partner.

Women were more likely than men to say they wished they had waited longer and to report not having been equally willing.”

From Sexual Behaviour in Britain
Early Heterosexual Experience The Lancet, December 1st Wellings, Johnson et al. 2001
Strong factors causing regret of first sex:

- Having exerted pressure on partner (for boys)
- Having been put under pressure (for boys and girls)
- Not having planned or discussed sex with the partner
- For young women, it seems to be especially related to lack of control

Extent of regretted intercourse among Young Teenagers in Scotland – Wight, Henderson et al

BMJ Vol 320 - 6th May 2000
Girls and Pleasure

There is a tension for young women between
– the pressure not to be seen to want sex and
– a sense of obligation to have sex.

They struggle to articulate what they actually want, for fear of being seen as a ‘slag’ or ‘frigid’

Female sexuality is widely seen in terms of sex as pain rather than pleasure

Enhancing help seeking
Brook Drop-in at Loxford Polyclinic

Brook Sexual Health Clinic for young people at Loxford Polyclinic,
Ilford Lane, Ilford, IG1 25N
Mondays 5-7.30pm
Thursday 5.15-7.30pm
Saturdays 2-4pm
Walk-in: no appointment necessary for:
- someone to talk to
- contraception including the pill, injection, implant & IUD
- condoms
- chlamydia treatment and screening
- emergency contraception
- pregnancy testing
- referral for abortion
- pre & post abortion counselling

For directions and more Info log onto
www.youngpeoplefriendly.co.uk

You don’t have to be having sex to come to Brook
You can come along and talk to us:
- if you are being bullied
- if you are having problems at school, college, home
- if you are worried about family/relationships
- if you are thinking of having sex for the first time
- if you are feeling pressured into having sex

Brook is Free and Confidential
If you are worried about confidentiality ask someone to explain the policy to you when you arrive.

For more Info log onto
www.youngpeoplefriendly.co.uk
or call Ask Brook on 0808 802 1234
You can get free condoms at the Polyclinic Pharmacy, just ask or show a YPF card
Support

Taking Control
Are you aged 14 to 16 years and interested in:
• Having a Healthy Relationship?
• Your Emotional Well being?
• Breaking the Cycle of Abuse?
• Understanding the Power of Control?

Then come to our FREE programme

Tuesday 9th October 4.30 to 6.00pm
Tuesday 16th October 4.30 to 6.00pm
Tuesday 23rd October 4.30 to 6.00pm
Tuesday 30th October 4.30 to 6.00pm

You need to attend all four sessions

Venue: Redbridge Central Library, Clements Road, Ilford, Essex, IG1 1EA

Further information and to book your place, please contact:
Marsha Mattis 0208 418 2397 marsha.mattis@vslondon.org
or George Anastasi 0208 708 3639 george.anastasi@redbridge.gov.uk

victim support
Vision
London Borough of Redbridge
PHSE

Thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk

RECOGNISE ABUSE?

Relationship abuse can happen to anyone. It involves more than physical violence; it can be when someone puts you down, threatens you or forces you to do something you don’t want to. Find out more about how to spot the signs, have your say on the issue and seek help here.

SPOT THE SIGNS

Are you a
dream boyfriend?

Take a look at these videos

- PARTY
- SCHOOL
- TAKEAWAY

HOME HAVE YOUR SAY STOP YOURSELF SPOT THE SIGNS FAQ NEED HELP? POLLS

CLICK BELOW

SPEAK OUT AGAINST ABUSE

Home Office
Toolkit for Schools

EXPECT RESPECT
A TOOLKIT FOR ADDRESSING TEENAGE RELATIONSHIP ABUSE IN KEY STAGES 3, 4 AND 5
Does your boyfriend tell you you're **PRETTY**?
**PRETTY UGLY, PRETTY STUPID, PRETTY FRIGID.**

This is abuse. You don't have to stand for it.
For information and help search abuseinrelationships.Home Office

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Do you make your girlfriend **WEAK AT THE KNEES**
**BECAUSE SHE’S SCARED YOU’LL HIT HER?**

This is abuse. Stop yourself.
For information and help search abuseinrelationships.Home Office
Thank you for listening

Amanda Jones
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London Borough of Redbridge
Tel: 020 8708 5337

- For information on local sexual health services for young people log on to: www.youngpeoplefriendly.co.uk
- For services for pregnant young people and young parents: www.teenpreghelp.org.uk
- For our professionals website: www.teenpregredbridge.co.uk
Mayfield School Drama Students:

“Sweet Dominion”

&

Interview with the cast