



YOUNG PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES TO DOMESTIC, FAMILY & TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

YOUTH ACTION AND WHITE RIBBON RESEARCH SNAPSHOT

SEPTEMBER 18, 2015

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Domestic, Family and Dating violence is a core issue for young people, as they are involved in the vast number of domestic violence incidences.

Young women (aged 18 – 25) are twice as likely to experience physical or sexual violence than older women, with some estimating it could be up to 4 times more likely for young women aged 14 – 19.¹

Young people experience violence in their own relationships. Approximately one third of adolescents experience some type of violence from an intimate partner, with an estimated 12% experiencing physical violence.²

It is also clear that gender inequality increases girls and young women's risk of violence.³

Moreover, attitudes shape behaviours, and violence in domestic settings is most common in communities where violence-supportive attitudes are prevalent.⁴ There is therefore a need to take action to address attitudes in communities, but to do so requires an understanding of what those attitudes are.

Since there had not been national research into young peoples attitudes since 1999, Youth Action and the White Ribbon Foundation surveyed over 3,000 young people across Australia on their attitudes to Domestic, Family and Teen Dating Violence in 2014.

This research forms the largest and most comprehensive survey of Australian young people's attitudes in 15 years.

Below provides a snapshot of key findings.

¹ Allison, S & McGaurr, L. 'Violence against young women in Australia: Snapshot', Face the Facts, n.d., accessed via <http://acys.info/resources/face-facts/violence-against-young-women/violence-against-young-women-snapshot/>

² Halpern, C., Oslak, S., Young M et al., 'Partner Violence Among Adolescents in Opposite-Sex Romantic Relationships: Findings from the national longitudinal study of adolescent health, American Journal of Public Health, 91(10), 2000, p.1682.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ Flood, M & Pease, B, 'Factors influencing attitudes to violence against women', Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, Vol. 10:2, 2009, p. 125.

- ◆ More than three-quarters (76%) of young people feel that domestic violence is common in Australia, but they have some difficulty in understanding what behaviours are normal and what is domestic violence.
- ◆ Most young people got information about domestic violence from the media related sources like the news, with less than half reporting they got information at school.
- ◆ We also found that some young people didn't recognise domestic violence in their own context – such as dating their peers - as opposed to an adult contexts
- ◆ Young men were more likely than young women to agree with statements supporting gender stereotypes and attitudes supporting violence, such as:
 - 1 in 4 young men agreed with the statement 'Girls like guys who are in charge of the relationship'
 - 1 in 6 young men thought 'Men are usually better at more things than women'
 - 1 in 7 young men agreed that 'Men are supposed to be the head of the household and take control of the relationship'
- ◆ Only 8% of young people said that they would not know what they could do, or would stay out of it.
- ◆ However, young people were also less likely to directly support a friend experiencing violence, but would suggest their friend:
 - Talk to another adult, rather than talk to an adult themselves
 - Suggest their friend tell the police, rather than telling the police themselves
 - Get their friend to contact a counseling service, rather than call a service themselves

The full report⁵ can be found on Youth Action's website:

<http://youthaction.org.au/dv-attitudes-2015/>

⁵ Cale, J. and Breckenridge, J. (2015) Gender, Age and the Perceived Causes, Nature and Extent of Domestic and Dating Violence in Australian Society, Gendered Violence Research Network, UNSW Australia