The NO MORE Study: Teens and Young Adults on Dating Violence and Sexual Assault

January 2013
EMBARGOED UNTIL MARCH 13TH, 9:00 A.M. EST
Background, Objectives and Methodology
Background & Objectives

- NO MORE, with funding from the Avon Foundation for Women, commissioned GfK Public Affairs and Corporate Communications to conduct research about dating and sexual abuse among teens and young adults, in an effort to further support the foundation’s mission of educating people about sexual assault and domestic violence.

- The objective of the study was to explore attitudes toward, and experience with, dating abuse/violence and sexual assault among teens aged 15 to 17, and among young adults aged 18 to 22.

- Areas explored included:
  - Perception of incidence of dating abuse/violence among friends and in society as a whole;
  - Conversations centering around the topics of dating abuse/violence;
  - Personal experience with dating abuse;
  - Likelihood to “step-in” if abuse against family members, friends and strangers is witnessed.
Methodology

- GfK Public Affairs and Corporate Communications Group conducted interviews with a total of 750 respondents, 15 to 22 years of age. The study was conducted using the KnowledgePanel. Use of the KnowledgePanel assures representative samples that are statistically valid and projectable to the population of teens 15 to 17 and young adults 18 to 22.

- All respondents qualified for the survey, but were placed into one of two main quota groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of completes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teens 15 to 17</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young adults 18 to 22</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Equal numbers of men and women were interviewed in each quota group.

- The data was weighted to the population it represents. The margin of error for this study was 3.61

- Interviewing took place December 13 through December 19, 2012
Key Findings
Key Findings: The Problem

Dating violence and sexual assault are a disturbing reality in the lives of young people between the ages of 15-22. One-in-two of every young man and woman in this county knows a victim of either dating violence or sexual assault (51%)

- 44% know someone who has been a victim of dating violence; 30% know someone who has been a victim of sexual assault
- One-in-two young women (51%) say they know a victim of dating violence
- Young men are less likely to know victims; yet, a surprising 1-in-3 young men say they know a victim of dating violence (36%) and 1-in-4 know a victim of sexual assault (25%)
- Sexual assault has a far more personal impact on young women than young men: 1-in-6 young women self-report having personally been a victim of sexual assault, versus 1-in-50 young men
Key Findings: The Problem

Many are willing to help, but young people don’t know how and significant numbers are just not intervening

- Of those who have known a victim of dating abuse/violence, more than half intervened (54%). The majority of those who did *not* intervene at the time say they would if they could go back (60%)

- Yet, in contrast, fully 46% of those who have known a victim of dating abuse/violence *did not* intervene

- And even greater numbers say it would be difficult for them to do so. More than half (53%) say it would be hard for them to step in and help someone who is the victim of dating abuse/violence or sexual assault

- One factor making it difficult may be a lack of tools: 40% said they would not know *what to do* if they were to witness dating abuse or sexual assault

- Specifically, young people need advice on how to *safely* step-in to abusive situations: more than 1-in-3 say being “afraid to get hurt physically” could prevent them from intervening

- There has been significant change in attitudes and acceptance of abusive behavior: only 19% say they did not intervene because they consider abuse a private matter – which is a big societal change from only a short time ago when police did not even respond to “domestic incidents” citing they were private family matters
Key Findings: The Opportunities

- Build awareness of own actions: Every action has a consequence

  ✓ One-in-ten have hit their significant others (9%). Young women are three times as likely as young men to report having done so (14% vs. 5%)

  ✓ The overwhelming majority of these young people did not think they would ever be capable of hitting a significant other beforehand (76%) – similar to the 86% of those who haven’t hit who don’t think they are capable

  ✓ Though the numbers who report hitting a partner is under 10%, when asked why they’ve hit, the primary reason is “they hit me first” (59%)

  ✓ These young people lack a full understanding that abusive behavior is reactionary: arguments can quickly escalate to abuse. There is a need to create a greater awareness of the consequences of one’s actions

1Please note, this question was only asked among those who have hit and has a small base size of 39
Key Findings: The Opportunities

➢ There is a critical window of opportunity to educate young women

✓ Far more females (aged 18 - 22) than teens (aged 15 -17) know someone who has been a victim of dating abuse (58% vs. 40%) or sexual assault (42% vs. 25%). This data underscores the rapid changes females experience themselves and observe around them in these early formative years.

✓ Not only are females between the age of 18 - 22 more likely than 15-17 year old females to know someone who was a victim of sexual assault, they are at least three times more likely to have personally been a victim (22% vs. 6%).

✓ One-in-three (30%) young women (ages 15-22) say they do not know the signs of sexual assault.

✓ While teens females are as willing as 18 - 22 year old females to step-in to help a family member or friend who was a victim of sexual assault (96% and 95%, respectively), they are less capable of recognizing the signs (60% vs. 73%).

✓ It is vital that young women be educated early in their teenage years so they know what to look for and what to do.
Key Findings: The Opportunities

- It is essential to educate young men about dating abuse and sexual assault and what to do to help others

- While young men are less aware of the problem of abuse, they are highly willing to intervene: 62% of young men would help a stranger who was being abused

- Young men have the good-intention of intervening, but they are held back by a lack of understanding of abuse: nearly half of young men do not think they would recognize the signs of sexual assault (46%)

- Young men need help defining dating abuse: They are less likely than young women to label several behaviors as abusive. In particular, young men have difficulty recognizing the less obvious forms of abuse, such as controlling behavior, stalking and name calling

- Once abusive behaviors are more clearly defined and young men are educated to recognize abuse, it is likely they will intervene more often and more successfully
Detailed Findings
One-in-two young women and men in this country reports knowing a victim of dating abuse or sexual assault

Q23. Have you ever known a girl/boy who was a victim of dating abuse/violence (someone you were not in a dating relationship with)?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)

Q39. Have any of your friends been a victim of sexual assault (sexual assault is an assault of a sexual nature on another person, or any sexual act committed without consent)?

Q40. Has someone you know, other than a friend, been a victim of sexual assault (sexual assault is an assault of a sexual nature on another person, or any sexual act committed without consent)?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
Dating violence is a significant reality among young women

Known a victim of dating abuse/violence

- Yes: 44%
- No: 55%
- Refused: 1%

% who know victim

- Males: 36
- Females: 51

Q23. Have you ever known a girl/boy who was a victim of dating abuse/violence (someone you were not in a dating relationship with)?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
Q24. Did you intervene and do something for this person?
Base: Has known someone who was a victim of abuse/violence (n=318)
Q25. If you could go back, would you have stepped in/intervened?
Base: Did not intervene (n=158)
Q39. Have any of your friends been a victim of sexual assault (sexual assault is an assault of a sexual nature on another person, or any sexual act committed without consent)?
Q40. Has someone you know, other than a friend, been a victim of sexual assault (sexual assault is an assault of a sexual nature on another person, or any sexual act committed without consent)?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
Young women are also more apt to self-report being a victim of sexual assault, personally

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male A</th>
<th>Female B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personally been a victim</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many are willing to intervene: half who know a victim have intervened, but disturbing numbers of young people do not get involved.

Q23. Have you ever known a girl/boy who was a victim of dating abuse/violence (someone you were not in a dating relationship with)?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
Q24. Did you intervene and do something for this person?
Base: Has known someone who was a victim of abuse/violence (n=318)
Q25. If you could go back, would you have stepped in/intervened?
Base: Did not intervene (n=158)

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More than half think it would be difficult to step-in to help a victim of dating abuse or sexual assault

Q44. How hard do you imagine it would be for you to step in and help someone who is a victim of dating abuse or sexual assault?  
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)

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40% say they wouldn’t know what to do if they witnessed dating abuse or sexual assault.
More than 1-in-3 are afraid to get hurt physically – they need tips on how to intervene safely

Q34. Which of the following, if any, could you imagine would prevent you from getting involved?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
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One-in-ten self-report having hit their significant other – an action more common among young women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males (A)</th>
<th>Females (B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have hit significant other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q15. Have you ever hit a girlfriend or boyfriend?
Base: Has or has had a boyfriend/girlfriend (n=517)
Q18. Do you think you are capable of hitting a girlfriend or boyfriend?
Base: Has never had a boyfriend/girlfriend or never hit boyfriend/girlfriend (n=704)
The majority of those who have hit did not think they were capable beforehand – most who haven’t hit don’t think they’re capable, either.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HAVE hit and thought capable of hitting girlfriend or boyfriend beforehand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes 24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No 76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have NOT hit and think that capable of hitting girlfriend or boyfriend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No 86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q16. Before that incident did you think you were capable of hitting your girlfriend or boyfriend?
Base: Has hit a boyfriend/girlfriend (n=39)
Q18. Do you think you are capable of hitting a girlfriend or boyfriend?
Base: Has never had a boyfriend/girlfriend or never hit boyfriend/girlfriend (n=704)

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The top reason for hitting is “they hit me first,” with 3-in-5 citing this as the reason.

Why?

- They hit me first: 59
- They called me a name: 23
- They deserved it: 20
- They were cheating on me: 15
- They were getting out of control: 14
- I had no choice: 14
- They embarrassed me: 13
- They were constantly bugging me: 9
- They were getting too full of her/himself/thought they were too good: 8
- They were flirting with other people: 7
- They wanted to break up with me: 1
- They were dressing too sexy: 0
- Other: 14

Q17. Why did you do it?
Base: Has or has had a boyfriend/girlfriend and has hit boyfriend/girlfriend (n=39)* (caution small base size)

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Women – those aged 18 - 22 – are most affected by the epidemic of
dating abuse and sexual assault with higher proportions knowing a
victim and being impacted themselves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Know someone who has been a victim of dating abuse</th>
<th>15-17 Females</th>
<th>18-22 Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Know someone who has been a victim of sexual assault (either a friend or someone else)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has personally been a victim of sexual assault</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q23. Have you ever known a girl/boy who was a victim of dating abuse/violence (someone you were not in a dating relationship with)?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
Q38. Have you been a victim of sexual assault (sexual assault is an assault of a sexual nature on another person, or any sexual act committed without consent)?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
Q39. Have any of your friends been a victim of sexual assault (sexual assault is an assault of a sexual nature on another person, or any sexual act committed without consent)?
Q40. Has someone you know, other than a friend, been a victim of sexual assault (sexual assault is an assault of a sexual nature on another person, or any sexual act committed without consent)?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
The younger women are less confident in their ability to recognize the signs of sexual assault than their older counterparts.

Would recognize the signs of sexual assault

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-17 Females</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-22 Females</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q41. Do you think you would recognize the signs of sexual assault?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
A majority would step-in if they saw a stranger being abused. This is equally true of both genders.

Step-in if saw a stranger being abused

Refused 1%
Yes 62%
No 37%

Young men and women are equally likely to step-in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Young men are less confident in their ability to recognize sexual assault: Nearly half don’t think they would recognize the signs.

Q41. Do you think you would recognize the signs of sexual assault?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)

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Young men are less likely than young women to label several behaviors as abusive.

Q4. Which of the below do you consider dating abuse/violence?
Base: Total Respondent (n=375 (males); n=375 (females)

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Appendix
Majorities agree talking about dating abuse and sexual assault would make it easier to step-in to help someone

% Agree

Refused
2%

No
36%

Yes
62%

Males are less likely than females to believe talking about dating abuse and sexual assault would make it easier to step in, with 56% saying so versus 69% – but they are having an easier time, to begin with

Q45. If more kids talked about dating abuse/sexual assault at school, would that make it easier for you to step in and help someone?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
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Not surprisingly, males are less afraid of getting hurt physically when stepping in than females. Males are also somewhat more likely to say “nothing would prevent me from getting involved”
There are racial differences, too: Hispanics are more likely to admit they have hit a boyfriend or girlfriend when compared to whites, with 1-in-6 saying so.

Q15. Have you ever hit a girlfriend or boyfriend?
Base: Has or has had a boyfriend/girlfriend (n=517)

Hispanics
- Yes: 17%
- No: 83%
- Refused: 1%

Whites
- Yes: 7%
- No: 92%
- Refused: 1%
The Disconnect: Youth are far more likely to believe dating violence is a problem in society overall than among their friends (76% vs. 22%)

Dating violence is a problem…

Q2. Do you think dating abuse/violence among your friends is a problem?
Q3. Do you think dating abuse/violence is overall a big problem in our society?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
While there is still a large disconnect, women are more likely to see dating abuse as a problem – both among society, as well as among their friends.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Believe dating abuse is a problem among society</th>
<th>Males (A)</th>
<th>Females (B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Believe dating abuse is a problem among their friends</th>
<th>Males (A)</th>
<th>Females (B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q2. Do you think dating abuse/violence among your friends is a problem?  
Q3. Do you think dating abuse/violence is overall a big problem in our society?  
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
There are race differences, too, with Hispanics the most apt to see dating abuse as a problem among their friends (37%) and African Americans the most apt in society overall (88%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>African Americans</th>
<th>Hispanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...among friends</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...among society</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Perhaps reflective of an increased prevalence and awareness, older youth (age 18-22) are more apt to see dating abuse as a problem than their younger counterparts – both among their friends and society overall.

Dating violence is a problem...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>15-17</th>
<th>18-22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q2. Do you think dating abuse/violence among your friends is a problem?
Q3. Do you think dating abuse/violence is overall a big problem in our society?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
Perhaps relatedly, males are less likely than females to have spoken to their friends or parents about both dating abuse or sexual assault.

Q5. Have you talked about the issues of dating abuse/violence and sexual assault with your friends?

Q6. Have you talked about the issue of dating abuse/violence and sexual assault with your parents?

Base: Total Respondent (n=750)
African Americans have more conversations than Whites with their friends and parents – about both dating abuse/violence and sexual assault. Hispanics are having fewer conversations, as well, with less than 1-in-4 saying they’ve spoken with their parents about sexual assault.

Q5. Have you talked about the issues of dating abuse/violence and sexual assault with your friends?
Q6. Have you talked about the issue of dating abuse/violence and sexual assault with your parents?
Base: Total Respondent (n=750)