

Chapter 8. Personal Safety

Personal safety is an increasing concern for teens and parents alike. Overall, the statistics that are of greatest concern include information on: carrying a weapon, fighting, and dating violence. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), nationally 18.5% (16% for Wisconsin teens) of students carried a weapon at any time and 6.5% (4% for Wisconsin teens) carried a weapon at school. Wisconsin teens (33%) are less likely to be involved in a physical fight compared to the national average (35.9%).^{1,2}

Nationally, 9.2% of 9-12th graders report they had been physically abused by their boyfriend or girlfriend. Also, teens report on average that 7.5% had been forced to have sex. Three out of every 10 females in grades 9-12 in Wisconsin report having been sexually harassed at school.^{1,2}

A rising concern among adolescents and parents today is the use of the Internet and Cyber-bullying. Ninety-one (91%) percent of teens 12-15 and almost all (99%) teens ages 16-18 use the Internet. Most of their time spent on the Internet is spent talking with other teens. In a recent survey conducted nationwide, 35% of students have been threatened online and 42% have been bullied online. This type of bullying can lead to social isolation and low self-esteem along with many other consequences.³

This chapter looks at personal safety issues for teens in Southwest Wisconsin. Specifically, the chapter looks at:

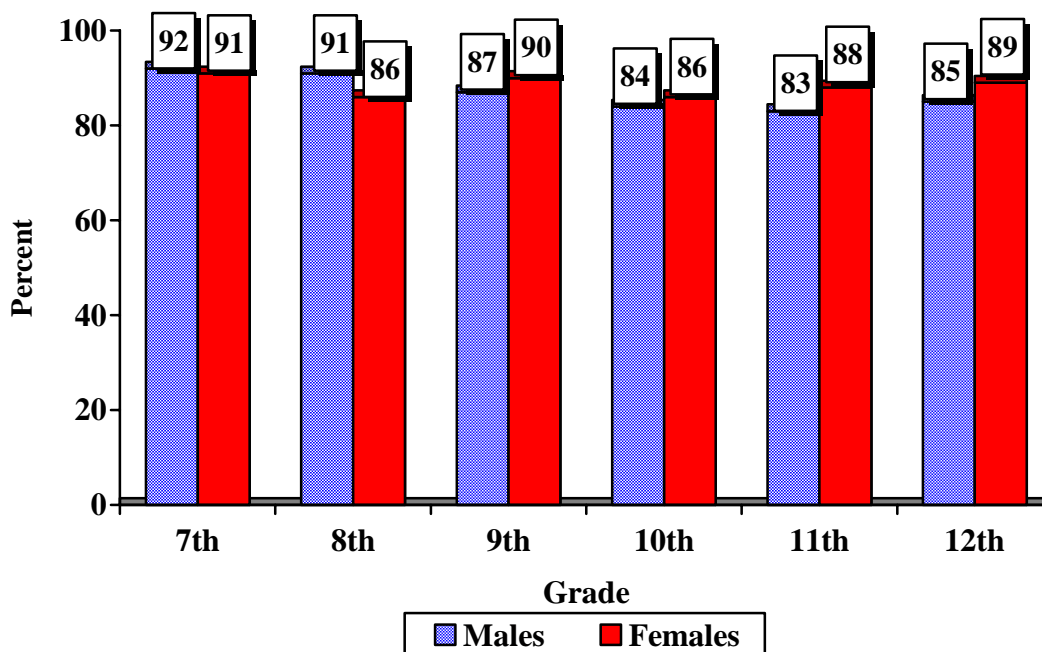
- Do teens feel safe in their community and school?
- How prevalent are weapons in southwest Wisconsin schools?
- What are the safety issues teens are exposed to on-line?
- To what extent do teens experience sexual harassment?
- How extensive are physical and sexual assaults?

¹ Centers for Disease Control. (2005) Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance-United States

² Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey: Executive Summary and Report (2005).

³ Keith, Susan & Marin, Michelle E. (2005). Cyber-bullying: Creating a Culture of Respect in a Cyber World. *Reclaiming Children & Youth, 13*, 224-228.

TEENS WHO FEEL SAFE WHERE THEY LIVE



Teens who “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement, “I feel safe at home, at school and in my community”:

Key Finding:

Over 80% of students at each grade level “strongly agree” or “agree” they feel safe at home, at school and in their community.

Other Notable Findings:

When asked how much they agree or disagree with the statement, “I feel safe at home, at school and in my community”, 42% of teens “strongly agreed”, 46% “agreed”, 8% “disagreed” and 4% “strongly disagreed”.

Four percent (4%) of teens are very unattached to their community, however of the teens who “strongly disagree” with the statement, “I feel safe at home, at school and in my community”, 54% are very unattached to their community.

Teens who “strongly disagree” with the statement, “I feel safe at home, at school and in my community”, report lower levels of family rules enforcement and parental monitoring.

THREATS AND INJURIES WITH WEAPONS AND CARRYING WEAPONS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

Teen responses to the following:

	None	1 time	2 or 3 times	4 times or more
<i>“During the past 12 months, how many times has someone threatened or injured you with a weapon such as a gun, knife or club on school property?”</i>	93%	4%	2%	1%
	0 days	1 day	2-3 days	4 or more days
<i>“During the past 30 days, on how many days did you carry a weapon such as a gun, knife or club on school property?”</i>	95%	2%	1%	2%

Key Findings:

Ninety-three percent (93%) of all students report they have not been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property in the past 12 months.

One in twenty (5%) of all students report they carried a weapon on school property in the past 30 days.

Other Notable Findings:

Ninety-one percent (91%) of males and 95% of females report they have not been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property in the past 12 months.

Twelve percent (12%) of 11th grade males report they have been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property in the past 12 months.

Overall, 8% of males and 2% of females report carrying a weapon on school property at least once in the past 30 days.

Six percent (6%) of 10th and 11th grade males report carrying a weapon on school property at least six out of the past 30 days.

VICTIMS OF DAMAGED OR STOLEN PROPERTY AND VANDALISM

Teen responses to the following:

	None	1 time	2 or 3 times	4 times or more
<i>“During the past 12 months, how many times has someone stolen or deliberately damaged your property (such as your car, clothing or books) on school property?”</i>	79%	13%	5%	2%

	NO	Yes, past year	More than a year ago
<i>“Have you ever vandalized public or private property (including school)?”</i>	77%	13%	9%

Key Findings:

Twenty percent (20%) of all students report they have had personal property stolen or deliberately damaged at school in the past 12 months.

Twenty-three percent (23%) of all students report they have engaged in vandalizing property.

Thirteen percent (13%) of all students report they have engaged in vandalizing property in the past 12 months.

Other Notable Findings:

Twenty-eight percent (28%) of 11th grade males and 22% of 10th grade females report they have had property stolen or deliberately damaged at school in the past 12 months.

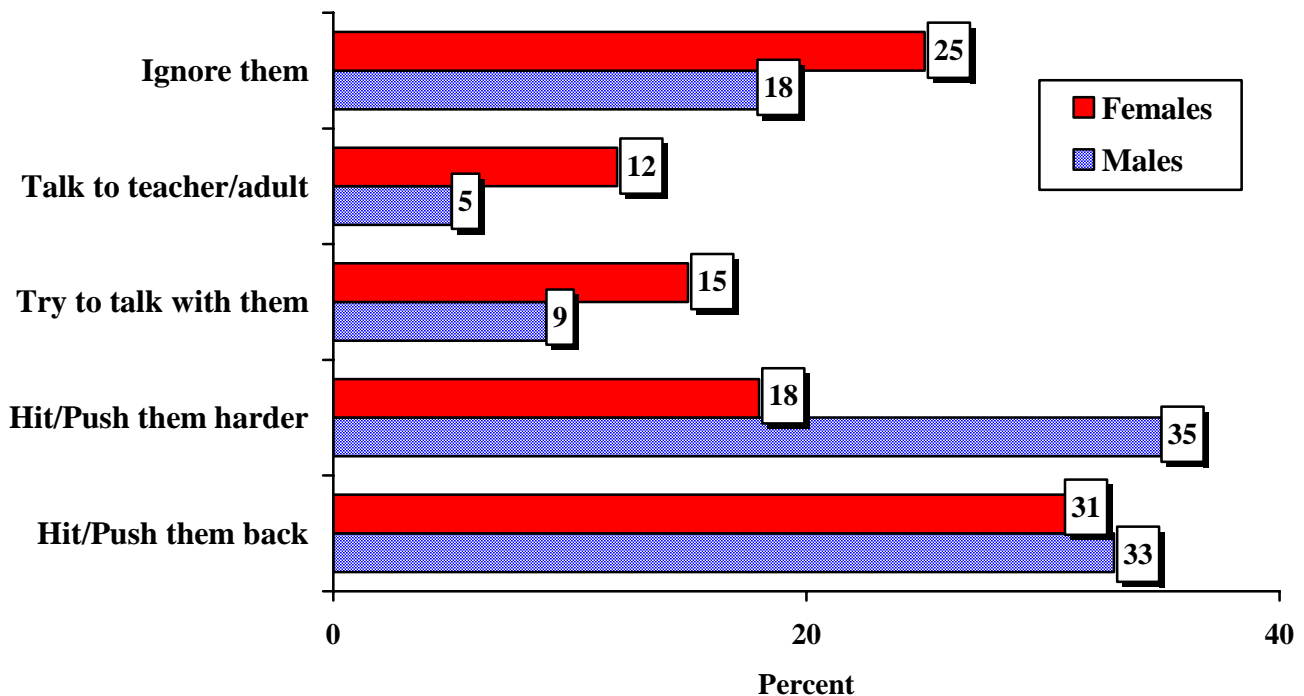
Overall, 22% of males and 19% of females report they have had property stolen or deliberately damaged at school in the past 12 months.

Twenty-four percent (24%) of 12th grade males and 23% of 11th grade males have vandalized property in the past 12 months.

Sixteen percent (16%) of 10th grade females have vandalized property in the past 12 months.

TEEN RESPONSES TO BEING HIT OR PUSHED BY ANOTHER STUDENT

Teen responses to the question: “Suppose another student hit you or pushed you for no reason. What would you do?”



Key Findings:

Fifty-two percent (52%) of females would respond to being pushed or hit by another student non-violently - trying to talk with the student, talking to a teacher or other adult or ignoring the student.

Sixty-eight percent (68%) of males would respond to pushed or hit by another student with violence – pushing or hitting the student right back or hitting or pushing the student right back harder so they wouldn't do it again.

Other Notable Finding:

At every grade level at least 31% of males, when hit or pushed for no reason, would hit or push the student right back harder so they wouldn't do it again. Forty-five percent of 10th grade males chose this option.

VICTIMS OF ABUSE BY ANOTHER TEEN

Teen responses to the question, *“In the past year, how many times have you been physically or verbally abused at school by another student?”*

	Not Abused	Yes, Verbally Abused	Yes, Physically Abused	Yes, Physically & Verbally Abused
Males	71%	18%	3%	8%
Females	69%	25%	2%	4%

Key Findings:

Seventy-one percent (71%) of males and 69% of females report they have not been victims of sexual abuse by another teen at school.

Eight percent (8%) of males and 4% of females report they have been both physically and verbally abused by another teen at school.

Twenty-five percent (25%) of females and 18% of males report they have been verbally abused, but not physically abused by another teen at school.

Other Notable Findings:

Thirty-eight percent (38%) of 10th grade females and 33% of 10th grade males report being victims of physical abuse by another teen.

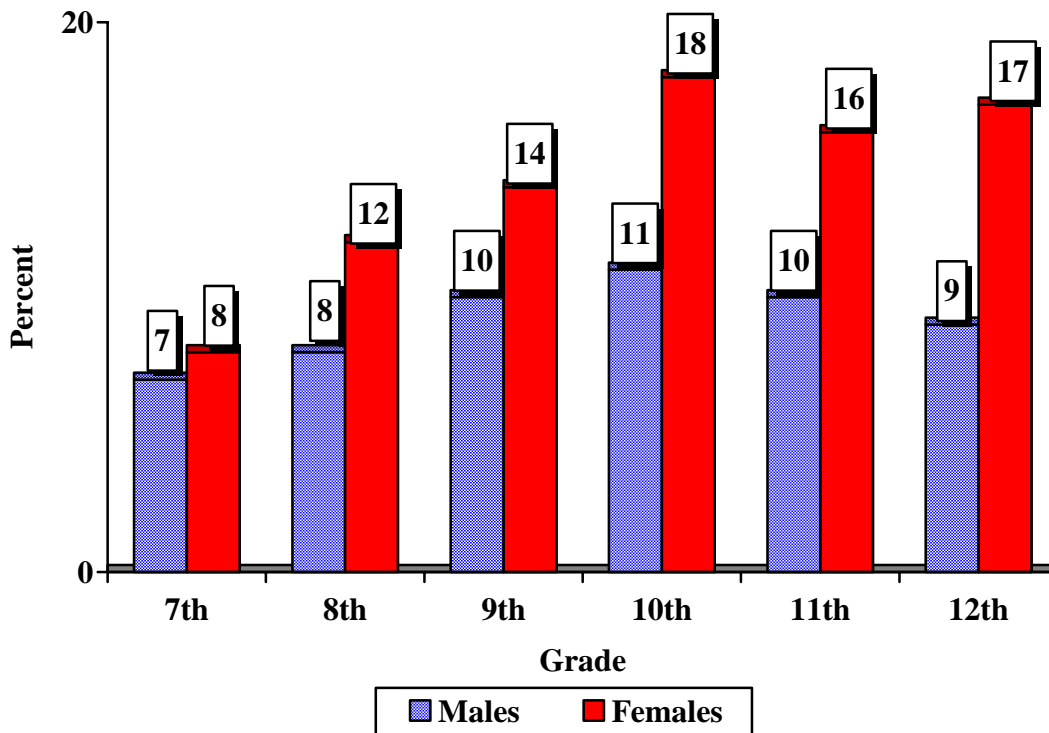
Thirty-two percent (32%) of 10th grade females and 22% of 11th grade males report being verbally abused by another teen at school.

Four percent (4%) of 11th grade males and 3% of 12th grade females report being physically abused by another teen at school.

Twelve percent (12%) of 10th grade males and 5% of 10th grade females report being both verbally and physically abused by another teen at school.

TEEN VICTIMS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE BY AN ADULT

Teens who respond “yes” when asked, “Have you ever been physically abused by an adult (e.g., beat up, hit with an object, kicked, or some other form of physical force)?”



Key Finding:

The percentage of males who report being victims of physical abuse by an adult ranges from 7-11%. For females the range is 8-18%.

Other Notable Findings:

Two percent (2%) of males and 3% of females report they are current victims of physical abuse by an adult. Seven percent (7%) of males and 12% of females report they are not currently being physically abused by an adult, but have been in the past.

Twenty-two percent (22%) of current victims and 9% of past victims of physical abuse from an adult “strongly disagree” when asked if their family loves them and gives them support when they need it. Overall, 3% of physically abused teens “strongly disagree” when asked if their family loves them and gives them support when they need it.

TEEN CYBER BULLYING

Teen responses to the following:

	No	Yes, within the past 30 days	Yes, within the past 12 months	Yes, more than a year ago
<i>“Have you ever been the victim of cyber bullying?”</i>	89%	4%	2%	4%
<i>“Have you ever engaged in cyber bullying?”</i>	87%	6%	4%	3%

Key Findings:

Eighty-nine percent (89%) of all students report they have not been the victim of, or engaged in, cyber bullying.

Thirteen percent (13%) of all students report they have engaged in cyber bullying at some time.

Other Notable Findings:

Ten percent (10%) of males and 11% of females report they have been a victim of cyber bullying.

Sixteen percent (16%) of males and 14% of females report they have engaged in cyber bullying.

Twenty percent (20%) of 10th grade males and 18% of 8th grade females have engaged in cyber bullying.

Of the teens that report very high levels of parental monitoring, 10% have engaged in cyber bullying. By comparison, of the teens who report low or very low levels of parental monitoring, 28% have engaged in cyber bullying.

TEENS AND SEXUAL ADVANCES ON INTERNET

Teen responses to the question, “How often do you experience unwanted sexual advances when you are on the Internet?”

Frequency of Unwanted Sexual Advances on the Internet - Males

	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Never	76%	70%	76%	70%	67%	71%
Rarely	7%	10%	7%	10%	10%	10%
Sometimes	4%	6%	6%	10%	11%	7%
Often	13%	14%	12%	10%	12%	11%

Frequency of Unwanted Sexual Advances on the Internet - Females

	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Never	68%	58%	55%	52%	59%	65%
Rarely	11%	15%	15%	18%	12%	11%
Sometimes	10%	12%	14%	15%	18%	11%
Often	12%	16%	17%	15%	11%	13%

Key Findings:

Fourteen percent (14%) of 8th grade males and 17% of 9th grade females report “often” experiencing unwanted sexual advances when on the Internet.

The majority of teens report they “never” experience unwanted sexual advances when they are on the Internet.

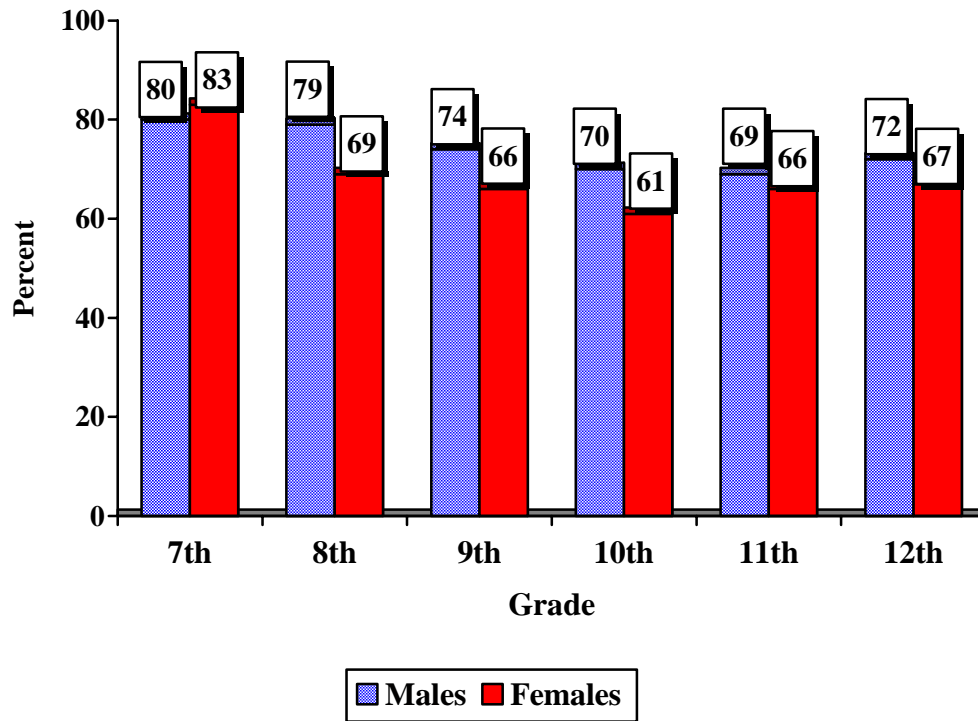
Nearly half (48%) of 10th grade females report experiencing unwanted sexual advances when they are on the Internet.

Other Notable Findings:

Overall, 28% of males and 41% of females report experiencing unwanted sexual advances when they are on the Internet.

Twenty-nine percent (29%) of teens who spend less than 4 hours per week on the Internet have experienced unwanted sexual advances on-line while 47% of teens who spend more than 15 hours per week on the Internet have experienced unwanted sexual advances.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY A TEEN AT SCHOOL



Teens who respond “never” to the question, “How often in the past year have you experienced some form of sexual harassment from a student at school?” (Sexual harassment is **unwanted sexual attention** such as sexual comments, jokes, graffiti, touching, blocking or cornering.)

Key Findings:

About one in five 7th grade males and females report they have been victims of sexual harassment by another teen at school.

Thirty-nine percent (39%) of 10th grade females report they have been victims of sexual harassment by another teen at school.

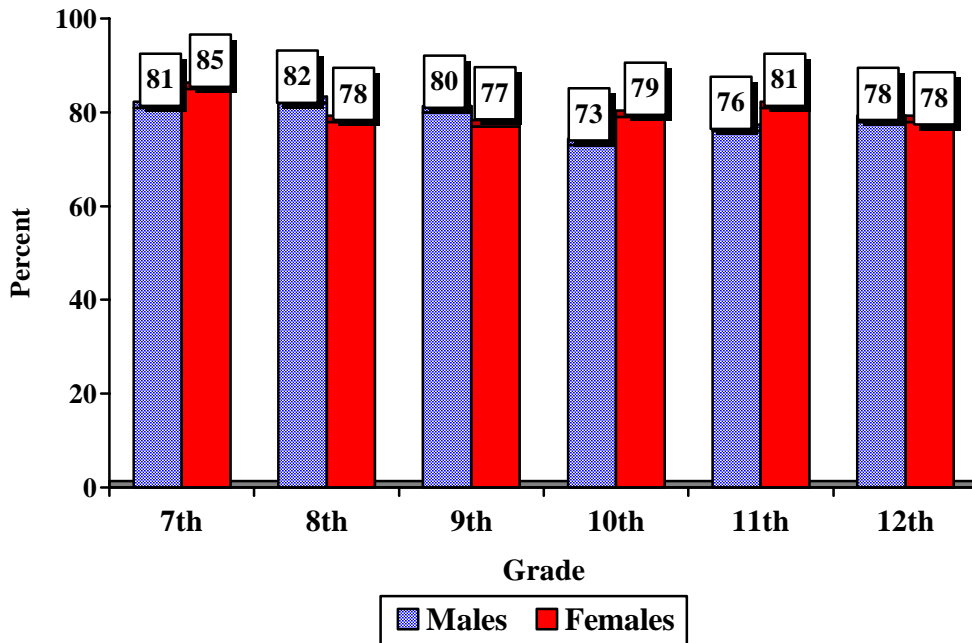
Other Notable Findings:

Overall, 10% of males and 7% of females report they “often” have been victims of sexual harassment by another teen at school in the past year.

Fourteen percent (14%) of 10th and 11th grade males report they “often” have been victims of sexual harassment by another teen at school in the past year.

Sixteen percent (16%) of males and females report sexual harassment by teens happens to them “occasionally” or “often” at their school.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY AN ADULT AT SCHOOL



Teens who respond “never” to the question, “How often in the past year have you experienced some form of sexual harassment from an adult at school?” (Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual attention such as sexual comments, jokes, graffiti, touching, blocking or cornering.)

Key Finding:

Over one in four (26%) of 10th grade males report being victims of sexual harassment by an adult at school in the past year.

Other Notable Findings:

Seventy-nine percent (79%) of all students report they have not been victims of sexual harassment by an adult at school in the past year.

More males (17%) than females (13%) report they have “often” been victims of sexual harassment by an adult at school in the past year.

VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE BY ANOTHER TEEN

Teen responses to the question, “*Has another teen ever done sexual things to you or made you do sexual things to them that you didn’t want to do?*”

	No	Kissing	Touching	Kissing and Touching	Sexual Intercourse	Touching and Sexual Intercourse
Males	94%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Females	84%	2%	6%	4%	2%	3%

Key Findings:

Ninety-four percent (94%) of males and 84% of females report they have not been victims of sexual abuse by another teen.

Two percent (2%) of males and 5% of females report they have been victims of sexual intercourse or unwanted touching and sexual intercourse by another teen.

Other Notable Findings:

Six percent (6%) of 7th grade females and 3% of 7th grade males report being victims of sexual abuse by another teen.

Seven percent (7%) of 12th grade males and 21% of 12th grade females report being victims of sexual abuse by another teen.

One percent (1%) of 7th grade males and females report being victims of sexual intercourse or unwanted touching and sexual intercourse by another teen.

Six percent (6%) of 11th grade females and 8% of 12th grade females report being victims of sexual intercourse or unwanted touching and sexual intercourse by another teen.

TEEN PERPETRATORS OF TEEN SEXUAL ABUSE

Relationship of the victim of teen sexual abuse to the perpetrators of the act:

	Victim's Gender	
	Males	Females
Someone the victim was dating for the first time	14%	11%
Someone the victim dated more than once	10%	5%
Victim's boyfriend/girlfriend	25%	20%
A friend, not boyfriend/girlfriend of victim	21%	31%
Someone the victim knew but did not consider a friend	11%	18%
Stranger to the victim	8%	6%
Brother or sister of the victim	6%	3%
Other teen relative of the victim	5%	7%

Key Findings:

Thirty-one percent (31%) of females and 21% of males who report being victims of sexual abuse by another teen respond that the perpetrator was a friend but not their boyfriend/girlfriend.

Twenty-five percent (25%) of males and 20% of females who report being victims of sexual abuse by another teen respond that the perpetrator was their boyfriend/girlfriend.

Eighteen percent (18%) of females and 11% of males who report being victims of sexual abuse by another teen respond that the perpetrator was someone they knew but did not consider a friend.

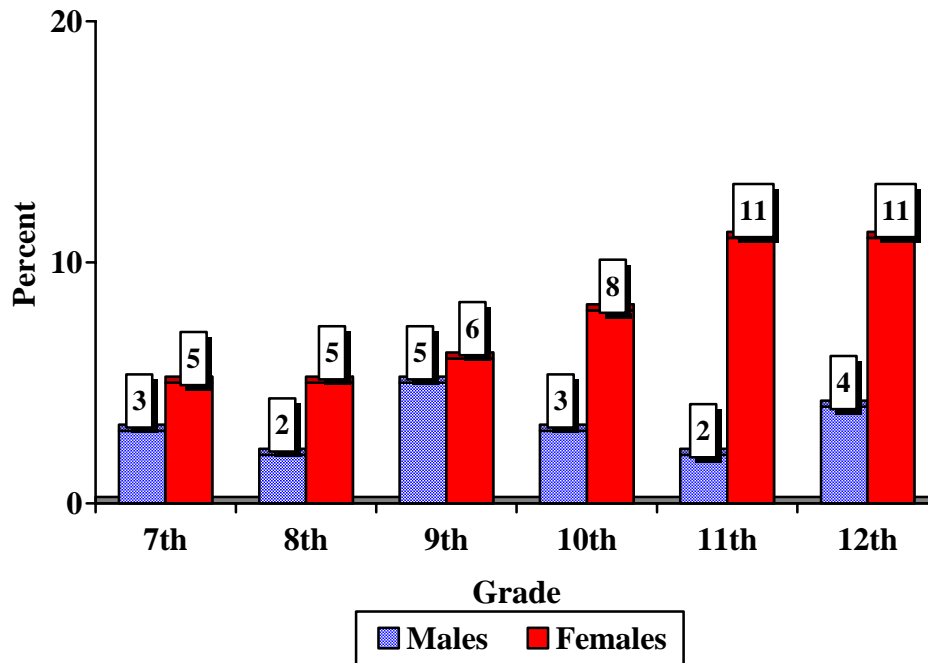
Twenty-four percent (24%) of males and 16% of females who report being victims of sexual abuse by another teen respond that the perpetrator was someone they were dating.

Six percent (6%) of males and 3% of females who report being victims of sexual abuse by another teen, report that the perpetrator was a sibling.

Five percent (5%) of males and 7% of females who report being victims of sexual abuse by another teen respond that the perpetrator was a teen relative who is not their sibling.

TEEN VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE BY AN ADULT

Teens who report that “*an adult has done sexual things to them or made them do sexual things to the adult that they didn’t want to do*”:



Key Findings:

Eleven percent (11%) of 11th and 12th grade females and 8% of 10th grade females report being victims of sexual abuse by an adult.

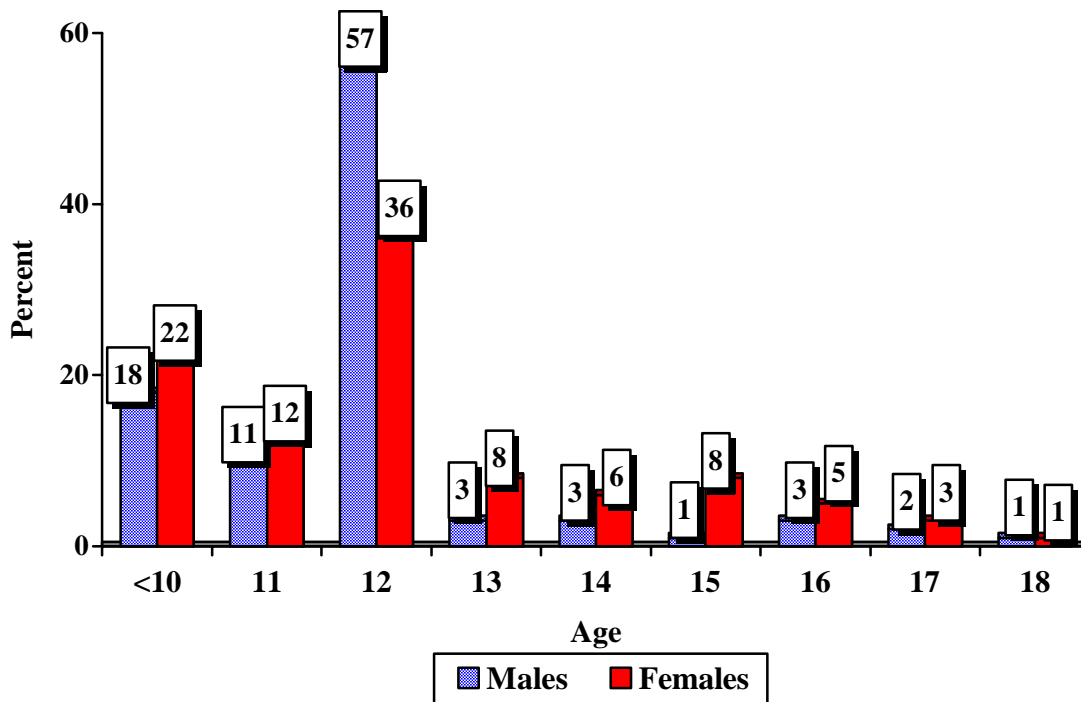
Five percent (5%) of 9th grade males report being victims of sexual abuse by an adult.

Other Notable Findings:

Overall, 8% of females report being victims of forced sexual activity by an adult. Seventeen (17%) of these victims report the perpetrator was an adult boyfriend/girlfriend, 17% report an aunt/uncle or grandparent, 14% report stranger, 12% report parent, 11% report parent’s boyfriend/girlfriend, 7% report neighbor, 7% report stepparent and 4% report sibling.

Overall, 3% of males report being victims of forced sexual activity by an adult. The perpetrators include: adult boyfriend/girlfriend (28%), aunt/uncle or grandparent (17%), stranger (17%), parent (11%), adult in authority (9%), sibling (8%), neighbor (6%), and stepparent (4%).

AGE OF SEXUAL ABUSE VICTIMS WHEN FIRST ABUSE OCCURRED



Teen responses to the question, “If you have been forced by anyone to do something sexual that you did not want to do, how old were you the first time?”

Key Findings:

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of male sexual abuse victims and 36% of female sexual abuse victims report the abuse first occurred at age 12.

Eighty-six (86%) of male and 70% of female sexual abuse victims report their abuse first occurred at age 12 or younger.

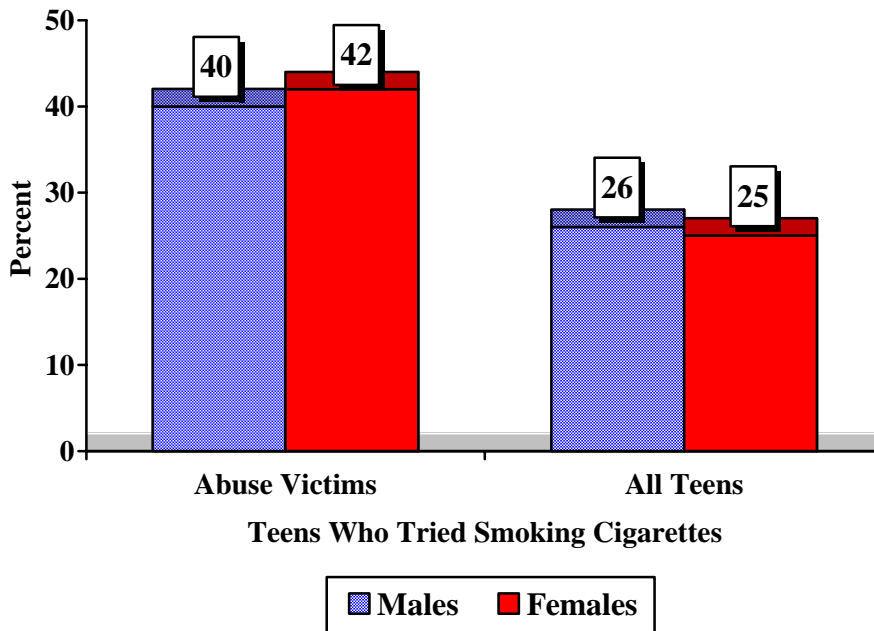
Other Notable Findings:

Nearly one in three (31%) of 11th grade females report having been victims of sexual abuse.

Sixty-two percent (62%) of 11th grade female sexual abuse victims, report the abuse first occurred at age 12 or younger.

SMOKING AND FORCED SEXUAL CONTACT

Teens That Tried Smoking compared with Teens That Tried Smoking and Were Forced to Do Something Sexual.



Abuse victims in this graph are defined by being forced by anyone to do something sexual that you didn't want to do.

Key Findings:

Male and female teens who report being forced to do something sexual that they did not want to do report higher rates of tobacco experimentation.

Forty percent (40%) of male students that were forced to do something sexual they did not want to do report having tried smoking cigarettes.

Forty-two percent (42%) of female students that were forced to do something sexual they did not want to do report having tried smoking cigarettes.

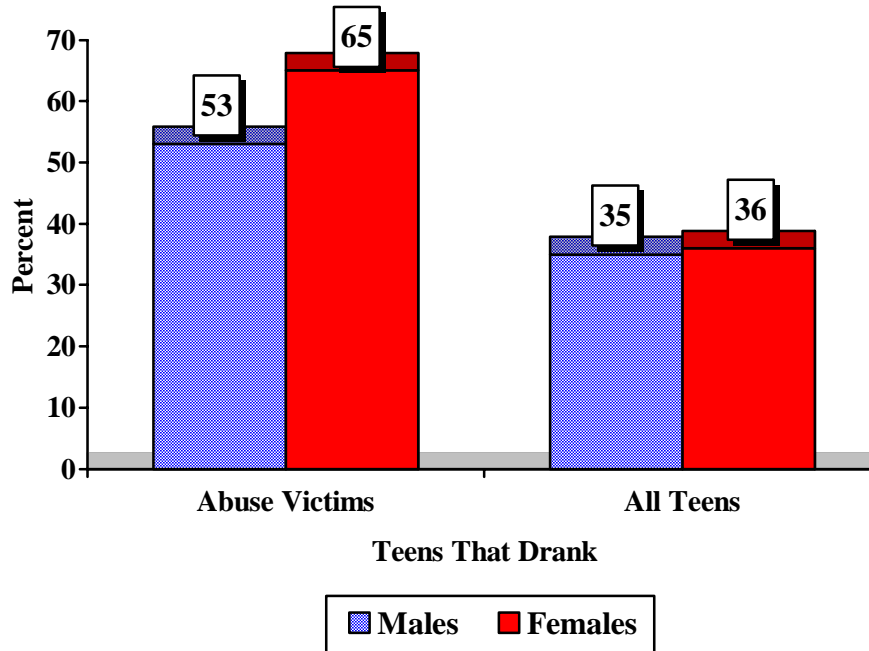
Other Notable Findings:

Overall, 18% of the teens report they smoked a whole cigarette in the past 30 days; while 30% of teens who were forced to do something sexual they did not want to do report smoking a whole cigarette in the past 30 days.

DRINKING AND FORCED SEXUAL CONTACT

Teens That Drank* compared with Teens That Drank and Were Forced to Do Something Sexual.

*Drank – Report drinking alcohol within the past 30 days.



Abuse victims in this graph are defined by being forced by anyone to do something sexual that you didn't want to do.

Key Findings:

Male and female teens who report being forced to do something sexual they did not want to do report higher rates of alcohol use.

Fifty-three percent (53%) of male teens who were forced to do something sexual they did not want to do report drinking in the past 30 days.

Sixty-five percent (65%) of female teens who were forced to do something sexual they did not want to do report drinking in the past 30 days.

Other Notable Findings:

Overall, 23% of all male teens and 24% of all female teens report they drink regularly (at least three times per month or drink five or more drinks in a row within a few hours time at least once a month); while 33% of male and 39% of female teens who were forced to do something sexual they did not want to do say they drink regularly.

