

# **Intimate Partner Violence**

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# Prevalence of Dating Aggression in Young Couples

What is the Physical Aggression in Couples?

1. Threw something at partner
2. Physically restrained partner
3. Pushed, grabbed or shoved partner
4. Slapped partner
5. Kicked, bit or hit partner
6. Choked your partner
7. Beat up your partner
8. Threatened partner with knife or gun

# Partner Violence in Representative High School Samples

- One in United States and One in Canada
- The one in the US assessed only Victimization- not perpetration; CDC, 2003
- The one in Canada assessed perpetration and victimization; Wolfe et al, 2001
- The rate of victimization in the US was 9% and in Canada it was 19%.

# Need for Study of Large Sample in US

- Our Sample was 2363 Students from Long Island
- The sample was from 7 large public schools
- Representative sample from health classes
- Health Class required of all
- Daily Attendance was about 92%

# Characteristics of Sample

- White 55%
- African-American 14%
- Hispanic 18%
- Asian 3%
- Mixed 7%
- Other 3%
- Ever Dated 89%

# Prevalence of Partner Aggression

- Males Perpetration 24%
- Males Victimization 31%
  
- Females Perpetration 40%
- Females Victimization 30%

# Prevalence Rates of Others

- Perpetration was higher for high school females than males in Long Beach CA; Malik et al 1997
- Perpetration was higher for high school females than males in Madrid; Munos- Rivas et al 2007
- In young married couples, perpetration is higher for females than males, O'Leary 1989

# Perpetration v Victimization

- Females Perpetration 40%
- Females Victimization 30%
- Significant Difference
- Highest rates of aggression; push, grab or shove; slapped; kicked, bit or hit; threw something at partner
- In Spain, very similar results but female victimization is higher for forced sex



# Injury Rates

- In Long Island HS Sample, 26% of the females reported that they had been injured by their partners
- For males, 30% reported that they had been injured
- For females, most frequent injuries were minor cuts and bruises; 3% needed treatment from MD
- In Spain, injuries are higher for females than males 13% v 8%

# Murder Rates of Partners in US

- In 2000, 1247 women were killed by intimate partners
- In 2000, 440 men were killed by an intimate partner (Rennison, Dept of Justice, 2003)

# Is Partner Aggression Unilateral or Mutual

- About 66% of aggression is mutual in high school and young married populations
- In high school, more aggression is unilateral by females according to their own reports
- 27% of females reported exclusive perpetration v 5% reported exclusive victimization
- In married populations, about one third is unilateral male or female

# Stability of Partner Aggression

- In high school steady dating partners, the correlation of aggression at one month and three months was .69 for males and .62 for females (reports of partner aggression)
- Conditional Probabilities: Time 2/Given Time 1: .47 for boys; .69 for girls
- (O'Leary & Slep, 2003).

# Stability of Aggression in Young Married Couples

- Stability is much higher than previously thought
- 72% of the men who were physically aggressive initially were physically aggressive at one or more of the next three assessments across 30 months (Lorber & O'Leary, in press)

# Most Important Assessment Question

- Did your partner engage in physical aggression last year?
- Did your partner engage in physical aggression two years ago
- If yes to Q1 & Q2, approximately 65% likelihood of aggression at Time 3

# Risk Factors for Partner Aggression

- Young Married/Relationship Major Risks:
  - Previous Physical Aggression
  - Dominance and Jealous Behaviors
  - Marital/Relationship Discord
  - Alcohol/Substance Abuse

# Other Risk Factors

- Observing Parents Fight
- Being Physically Abused as a Child
- Impulsivity and General Aggressiveness



# Is There Any Good News: Aggression Declines with Age

- Partner Aggression Declines with Age
- Correlation of  $-.82$  for Mild and Severe Across Decades (O'Leary & Woodin, 2005)
- Representative Civilian and Army Samples