

VIOLENCE AGAINST ADOLESCENT WOMEN SURVEY

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Prepared by:

Dr. Charles Atkin

Department of Communication

Michigan State University

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Executive Summary

A mail questionnaire was completed in August 1997 by a representative sample of 2,300 male and female early adolescents between the ages of 13 and 15; half live in Michigan and half in Ohio and Illinois. The instrument measured how frequently girls are involved in various types of aggressive behavior.

Physical attacks: Violence plays a significant role in the lives of a majority of girls:

- 51% express concern about getting attacked.
- 37% have thought about physically attacking another kid.
- 35% have threatened to hurt another kid.
- 12% have been involved in gang-related fighting.
- 8% have been threatened with a gun, knife or other weapon.

When asked about the incidence of four common types of physical violence, survey results show that many girls report being victims:

- 44% were shoved or shaken in the past year (26% monthly or more often).
- 27% were punched or kicked one or more times (14% monthly).
- 26% were slapped at least once (13% monthly).
- 23% were hit by an object (11% monthly).

Many girls report committing these violent acts: 40% shove or shake (24% monthly), 25% punch or kick (14% monthly), 23% slap (15% monthly), and 20% hit with object (10% monthly).

By comparison, boys are more likely than girls to be victims of violence (58% shove/shake, 43% punch/kick, 30% slap, 26% hit with object), and boys commit more violence (56% shove/shake, 43% punch/kick, 23% slap, 26% hit with object).

Girls say they're most likely to be attacked in school settings: in hallways (56%), on grounds (53%), at games (44%), and in locker rooms (36%), gyms (33%), restrooms (29%), and classrooms (29%). Away from school, girls cite houses (30%), cars (16%) and "around town" (56%).

When asked to identify perpetrators, girls say they are more often attacked by another girl (35%) than by a boyfriend (9%) or another boy (20%).

Verbal aggression: The results show that verbal attacks against females are quite prevalent:

- 80% were targets of mean or nasty comments in the past year (59% monthly; 36% weekly).
- 79% were targets of swearing or name-calling (59% monthly; 38% weekly).

Most girls commit verbal aggression: 72% report making mean/nasty comments at least once (50% monthly; 30% weekly) and 72% swear/insult (53% monthly; 35% weekly). Boys commit and experience the same levels of verbally aggressive behavior as girls.

Sexual aggression: 52% of girls report experiencing offensive sexual remarks in the past year, and 33% say it happens to them once a month or more; 35% of boys admit they've made sexually harassing comments in the past year, and 20% do it on a monthly basis. Some girls verbally harass other girls: 26% have targeted offensive sexual remarks to girls in the past year, and 15% do it once a month or more.

Regarding sexual violence, 4% of girls report that a dating partner has forced them to have unwanted sexual activities.

Social environment: Male and female respondents described how often they observe physical and verbal aggression against girls. These findings provide an indicator of social norms in the adolescent culture, and yield additional information about the relative incidence of each type of aggression and the relative frequency of male vs. female aggressors against girls:

- 47% see boys shoving/shaking girls at least monthly; 56% see girls doing this to other girls.
- 25% observe boys slapping girls at least once a month; 39% see girls slapping girls.
- 24% see boys punching/kicking girls monthly; 37% see girls committing these acts.
- 19% observe boys hitting girls with an object monthly; 22% see girls hitting other girls.

Observational measures demonstrate widespread verbal aggression against girls: 82% see boys swear/insult girls at least monthly (67% weekly), and 83% see boys say mean/nasty comments (66% weekly); 85% see girls swear/insult other girls monthly (71% weekly), and 84% see girls say mean/nasty comments (68% weekly).

Fully 80% of respondents witnessed offensive male remarks to females in the past year; 65% notice sexual comments at least monthly, and 48% at least weekly. Many also observe female-instigated remarks to other females: 57% at least annually, 38% monthly, and 22% weekly.

The survey also examined the interpersonal and media influences on these adolescents:

- 42% say that at least a few of their friends commit physical attacks
- 73% say that at least a few friends try to prevent attacks.
- 85% say that most of adults in their life disapprove of violent behavior.
- 69% report seeing violence on television almost every day.
- 35% are fans of gangsta rap music.

Male movie stars who tend to play violent roles are widely popular with these adolescents: Will Smith (76%), Eddie Murphy (55%), John Travolta (49%), and Arnold Swartzenegger (47%).

Summary: The overall pattern of survey findings demonstrates that aggressive incidents are prevalent in the lives of early female adolescents. In the past year, 54% of the girls have been victims of some form of physical violence, 86% have experienced verbal aggression, and 52% have experienced offensive sexual remarks.

Regarding frequency, about half of the reported physical attacks occur at least once or twice a month rather than once or twice a year. Three-quarters of verbally aggressive acts occur at least monthly; almost half of these incidents happen at least once or twice per week.

For most types of aggression, the perpetrators tend to be other girls rather than boys. Indeed, girls commit almost as many aggressive acts as they experience.

About one out of 10 girls has been involved in serious incidents involving gangs or weapons, and one out of 25 has experienced forced sex. Violence in dating relationships in this early adolescent age group is less likely to occur than non-partner attacks.

The normative and mediated environment is permeated with violence; aggressive acts observed in the peer culture and the media may be significant contributors to perpetration of physical and verbal aggression against girls and by girls.

Charles Atkin, Department of Communication, Michigan State University

The survey portion of the research project involves administration of a comprehensive mail questionnaire to examine the incidence of violence against adolescent women and the risk factors that are associated with violence. The basic purpose is to provide baseline data describing the amount and nature of violence against early adolescent women and formative information inputs for designing a model primary prevention demonstration program.

Method. This study uses the survey method to gather information from a representative sample of N=2,300 male and female adolescents between the ages of 13 and 15. Respondents completed a survey instrument containing 107 items and sub-items. The mail questionnaire was selected as the most effective and efficient form of data collection because it enables maximum confidentiality and validity of responses and because sampling via mail provides excellent geographical dispersion. In order to reach a typical cross-section of the population and assure a high return rate for the questionnaires, the field work was performed by the National Family Opinion (NFO) Research organization.

NFO Research is a highly respected survey company that has developed a nationwide panel of a half-million families, which is the largest in the world. The carefully-recruited panel constitutes a random sample that precisely represents the general public (sample characteristics are identical to U.S. Census figures). NFO has cultivated a cooperative and trusting relationship with participants who regularly complete mail and telephone surveys, attaining a 70% to 80% response rate. This organization has 50 years of experience in conducting survey research, performing about 3,000 custom studies per year for clients in 600 companies, hospitals, universities, foundations and government agencies. In one notable study of adolescent problems, NFO Research recently conducted a national survey of 13-17-year-olds for widely-publicized *Parade* magazine cover story.

In order to maximize the proportion of youth who were at home when the survey was mailed, the data were collected during the last two weeks of August and first week of September (when fewer adolescents are away at camps or vacations, and most aren't yet busy with school).

Sample. Of the total of N=2,300 adolescents, 1,146 reside in Michigan and the rest were sampled from the nearby states of Ohio (N=550) and Illinois (N=604). There are two reasons for expanding the sample beyond Michigan. First, NFO's basic panel of 16,000 Michigan families includes an insufficient number of adolescents in the narrow age range specified for this project. The addition of 1,154 adolescents in Ohio and Illinois helps provide a substantial number of minority and private school students for more precise projections to these relatively small segments of the population, and provides a sufficient base for relatively rare risk markers. The total number of African-American youth is N=307 (including a supplemental set of N=20 Michigan boys and girls who were surveyed by the MSU researchers), and the total number of Hispanic youth is N= 85 (including N=30 surveyed by MSU researchers). Thus, 17% of the sample is comprised of minority youth.

Second, the prevalence figures in Michigan can be compared to results in the other two states for this baseline survey; furthermore, if a follow-up survey is conducted after a broad-scale

intervention in Michigan, the states of Illinois and Ohio can be used as a control sites to permit quasi-experimental comparisons of change over time.

The chart below displays the computations for margin of sampling error for the overall sample and key subgroups, using the standard formula of 1.96 times the square root of $p \times q$ divided by n . The figure p is the expected percentage of respondents who will fall in a particular response category (e.g., the percent “yes” or “agree”). The other figure is q , which is $100 - p$. Thus, the sampling error varies from item to item in the survey, depending on the degree to which p is an extremely high or low value; for many of the questions it is likely that a low p will be obtained (rather a 50%-50% split) because of the exceptional nature of the violence issues. The following percentage points illustrate the 95% confidence intervals for various sample sizes and p values (in each case, plus or minus the percent figure obtained in the survey):

<i>Sample size</i>	p = or	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%
		90%	80%	70%	60%	50%
n = 2,300 Full sample		1.2	1.7	1.9	2.0	2.1
n = 1,150 Male/Female or 1,150 Michigan		1.7	2.4	2.7	2.9	3.0
n = 300 African-American		3.4	4.5	5.2	5.5	5.7

Suppose that in the full sample the results show that 40% of the respondents perform a certain type of aggressive behavior. Due to sampling error of approximately two points, there is a 95% likelihood that the actual population figure is no higher than 42% nor lower than 38%. For females only, the sampling error is somewhat greater because of the smaller sample size; a 40% finding in the sampled females may range from 37% to 43% (with a 95% degree of confidence). For infrequent behaviors (e.g., acts reported by only 10% of the sample), the confidence interval is narrower: approximately 9% to 11% for the full sample, and 8% to 12% for females.

Measures. The survey questionnaire measured observation of and experience with verbal and physical aggression as both a perpetrator and victim. Among the risk factors are exposure to TV violence, preferences for violent entertainers, peer influences, and demographic factors.

Media use: The survey opened with a set of items measuring exposure to television programming and frequency of viewing violence portrayals. There are three purposes for these questions: to warm up the respondents with interesting and non-sensitive topics, to serve as a transition from media violence to real life violence, and to gain background information about respondents that might be related to their violent attitudes and behaviors. The questions measured amount of television viewing time, exposure to 12 television programs that portray or describe aggression (daytime talk shows, real-life violence docu-dramas, and violent fictional series), preference for actresses and actors who play violent roles, and enjoyment of violent musical videos and recordings.

Violence dimensions: The central section of the questionnaire featured a series of items designed to comprehensively and sensitively measure the rate of occurrence of violence among

young teenagers. During pretesting, the array of verbal and physical aggression dimensions was refined and narrowed to seven basic indicators: *swearing/insulting* and *cruel/mean/nasty comments* (both verbal aggression), *shoving/shaking, punching/kicking, slapping, and hitting with object* (all physical aggression), and *offensive sexual remarks*.

The measurement format featured a brief labeling of each focal behavior, accompanied by a series of descriptions specifying how the respondent was personally involved (as perpetrator or victim) and whether they observed each behavior performed by other adolescents (and gender of the parties observed in aggressive exchanges), and scales representing frequency of occurrence.

The most crucial set of items asked adolescents to report their personal involvement in each type of aggression as perpetrator and victim by responding to the descriptors “I do it to someone” and “Someone does it to me.”

The questionnaire also asked about observed violence involving other male and female adolescents, with the descriptors “I see guys doing it to girls” and “I see girls doing it to guys.” This set of observational items provides valuable supplemental information because (a) it serves as an external indicator of both the relative incidence of each type of aggression and the relative frequency of male vs. female aggressors against girls, (b) it measures the perceived normative setting that may influence individual behavior, and (c) it gives respondents an opportunity to first describe less sensitive observations of what other adolescents are doing before they disclose their own personal experiences.

Incidence scales: Each response scale ranged along a five-category continuum with the following frequency labels: “almost every day” to “once or twice per week” to “once or twice per month” to “once or twice per year” to “never in past year.” The tables of findings present the percent of adolescents answering in each of the five response categories.

This approach for measuring incidence was selected after extensive development, testing and refinement of the instrument. The research team initially identified three basic measurement techniques (and several variants) for gauging the quantity of adolescent aggression that is observed or personally experienced:

First, adolescents could report the total number of incidents in which they were involved (or observed) per unit of time: day, week, month, school year, summer, full year, or even their whole life. This measure may be open-ended (where respondents write a number in a blank), or a fixed array of numbers could be presented to choose from. There are several major drawbacks to numerical approaches, especially with younger survey respondents. It is very difficult for adolescents to accurately recall and mentally tabulate the total number of times a behavior occurs, particularly for the milder frequently-occurring acts that are estimated over a lengthy period of time; while they can probably respond with some number, the validity is dubious and there is a great risk of pseudo-precision in the results. Greater accuracy can be attained using a relatively brief and recent time unit such as the “last week” or “last month,” but two key problems arise with this variant of the technique: the recent period may be atypical, and the period will not be lengthy enough to capture the less frequently-occurring types of aggressive incidents which tend to be the most serious and problematic. Moreover, if the pre-determined array of numbers is

displayed in the instrument, an additional problem arises: at the high end of the frequency continuum, normative expectations may be created by the use of relatively larger or smaller number as an anchor. Another variant is to measure frequency of incidents in terms of the number of days per week, month, or year; this may slightly alleviate the difficulty of accurately tabulating the quantity, but it still poses a challenging mental task for the respondent when dozens of reports must be made in the survey.

Second, adolescents could be asked to indicate the frequency of incidents by responding to a standardized set of verbal labels such as FREQUENTLY OFTEN SOMETIMES OCCASIONALLY RARELY NEVER. Although this ordinal measurement technique addresses the problem of accurately recalling and tabulating a specific number because it simplifies the estimation task, it suffers from ambiguity of interpretation regarding the quantitative meaning of labels such as “frequently” or “sometimes.” This technique is satisfactory for measuring the relative rate of occurrence under specified conditions, but it provides only an imprecise estimate of absolute frequency.

There is a third technique which combines elements of the first two. The questionnaire can display a limited number of commonly-understood frequency-based labels, ranging from the lowest (“never” or “zero”) to the most frequent response category that is likely to occur (e.g., “several times per day” or “weekly”). To avoid the problem of overtaxing the capacity of adolescents to make discriminations among the various categories displayed, it is important to restrict the array of choices to a small number; a maximum of five or six options is advisable.

The most crucial consideration in constructing time-span category labels is to understand which time referents respondents use to frame their recall. Most people think in terms of the conventional divisions of day, week, month, or year. They can readily relate to events or incidents occurring on a daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly basis, but there are no commonly-comprehended time units falling between these levels; few people can conceive of time ranges such as “semi-weekly,” “quarterly,” or “semi-annually” (likewise for two-month units, three-month seasons, or four- or eight-month periods).

Of course, certain aggression incidents may occur at frequencies falling in the gaps between daily and weekly, or between weekly and monthly; most notably, there is a large gap between monthly and yearly. While the daily/weekly/monthly/yearly (and never) category scheme offers great simplicity for respondents in terms of framing and discriminating between a limited array of categories, these labels are insufficient for sensitively capturing the frequencies that fall in the gaps. Thus, this scheme can be adapted to broaden the ranges in a more comprehensive and comprehensible manner by using the labels “once or twice per week,” “once or twice per month,” and “once or twice per year.”

Although this still falls short of total exhaustiveness (e.g., missing incidents that might occur three days per week and three days per month, and those incidents occurring once every two or three months), this refined technique proved to be satisfactory after pretesting because (a) adolescents reported few aggression frequencies in these narrower gap periods, and (b) in the relatively rare cases when respondents thought of incidents as occurring at these in-between frequencies, they could readily round upwards or downwards to the nearest defined category. The

only gap of even marginal significance is for those incidents that happen four to eight times per year, where several percent of the sample must either round up or down; it was determined that the minor gain in precision was insufficient to warrant squeezing in a sixth category, which complicates the discrimination process and which has no readily-understood descriptor paralleling the other time labels (e.g., “once or twice per half-year”).

Pretesting also indicated that the top-end options of “daily” or “once or twice per day” were interpreted too literally (e.g., if a behavior didn’t happen every single day, then they didn’t mark the category); the pretesting also showed that some incidents occur four or five days per week (e.g., on most or all school days). Thus, the top-frequency category was re-labeled “*almost every day*” to capture a slightly broader time span than one day and to include incidents that don’t occur on every single day of the week.

Sexual violence: Special attention was devoted to sexual violence incidence and attitudes. Items measure observation and experience involving offensive sexual remarks, history of forced sex by a dating partner, and attitudinal views regarding date rape seriousness, pressure for sexual favors, forced sexual activities, and dating violence.

Additional violence dimensions: In addition to measuring the frequency of observed and personally-experienced aggressive behavior, the survey also posed an open-end question asking for a verbal description of the worst incident involving physical violence and several queries about the locations and parties involved in physical violence. There are also questions asking whether the respondent worries about being attacked, has been threatened with a weapon, has thought about committing violence, has threatened someone, and has been involved in gang fighting.

Other risk factors: Another section of the survey examines peer group norms, asking respondents to report how many of their friends get drunk, use drugs, smoke cigarettes, play on the football team, get into trouble with cops, physically attack other kids, and try to prevent physical attacks. In addition, there is an item measuring perceptions of the violence attitudes of adults close to the respondent. Personal background characteristics and values are also measured, including gender, age, size of school, grades in school, religiosity, and attitude toward alcohol. Finally, family demographic attributes were provided from the NFO panel records.

Analyses. For each variable in this study, the findings are tabulated and presented in terms of the percentage of respondents who answer in each response category. To compare male vs. female differences, cross-tabs are computed on many variables using percentage figures. For the key dimensions of physical violence (four types) and verbal aggression (two types), indices are constructed by summing the responses on the multiple measures. To examine the relationship for these aggression indices with demographic and social predictors, correlations are computed to indicate the direction and degree of association; these are presented in Table 1.

OBSERVATION OF VERBAL AGGRESSION

The section of the questionnaire measuring prevalence of real-life violence began with a pair of items dealing with verbal aggression: swearing/insulting and saying cruel/mean/nasty comments. The introductory question asked “In the past year (*during school and summer*) ,how

often do aggressive comments and violent actions happen with kids you know? As with all of the aggression measures, the format featured a brief description of the focal behavior, labels identifying whether the respondent was personally involved or observed the behavior (and gender of the parties observed in the aggressive exchange), and scales representing frequency of occurrence.

The first set of findings examines observation of verbal aggression. The presentation displays the wording of the items in the questionnaire, and the figures show the percentage of respondents who report seeing each type of verbally aggressive incident.

Swearing at Someone or Calling Them an Insulting Name

- SEE GUYS DOING IT TO GIRLS:

- 39% ALMOST EVERY DAY
- 28% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
- 15% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
- 10% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
- 8% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

- SEE GIRLS DOING IT TO GIRLS

- 43% ALMOST EVERY DAY
- 28% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
- 14% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
- 9% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
- 6% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

Saying Cruel, Mean, or Nasty Things

- SEE GUYS DOING IT TO GIRLS

- 39% ALMOST EVERY DAY
- 27% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
- 17% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
- 10% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
- 7% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

- SEE GIRLS DOING IT TO GIRLS

- 40% ALMOST EVERY DAY
- 28% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
- 16% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH

- 9% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
- 7% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

Based on the two sets of observational measures, verbal aggression is widespread among these younger teenagers. About four out of five respondents report that they see other adolescents swearing, issuing insults, or making nasty comments at least once or twice a month. Female-targeted verbal aggression is slightly more likely to be perpetrated by girls than by boys.

For the category of “swearing at someone or calling them an insulting name,” 92% have observed boys doing this to girls in the past year and 94% have seen girls doing this to other girls. These verbally-aggressive incidents occur quite often, as 82% see boy-on-girl swearing/insulting at least once a month, 67% see it at least once per week, and 39% see it almost every day. The parallel girl-on-girl figures are 85% monthly, 71% weekly, and 43% almost daily.

The prevalence is almost identical for the category of “saying cruel, mean, or nasty comments.” In the past year, 93% have observed boys doing this to girls and 94% have seen girls doing this to other girls. Boy-on-girl comments are seen at least once a month by 83% of respondents, while 66% see this at least once per week and 39% see this happening almost every day. Nasty comments to girls by other girls are seen monthly by 84%, weekly by 68%, and almost daily by 40% of the sample.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH VERBAL AGGRESSION

Following the observational reports, respondents were next asked to indicate how often they personally have been the target or perpetrator of verbal aggression over the past year. Because these questions tap individual experiences, the results are presented separately for boys and girls in the sample. The same two focal behaviors are measured.

Swearing or Calling an Insulting Name

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	SOMEONE DOES IT TO ME
21%	14%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
21%	22%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
20%	23%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
19%	20%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
19%	21%	HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR
<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	I DO IT TO SOMEONE
19%	14%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
21%	21%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
16%	18%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH

17%	19%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
27%	28%	HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

Saying Cruel, Mean, or Nasty Things

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	SOMEONE DOES IT TO ME
18%	17%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
20%	19%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
23%	23%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
20%	21%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
19%	20%	HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	I DO IT TO SOMEONE
15%	11%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
18%	19%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
22%	20%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
20%	22%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
25%	28%	HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

The two types of verbal aggression yield very similar findings; in each case, about four out of every five girls report that they experience swearing/insults (79%) and mean/nasty comments (80%) at least once per year. Each type of verbal aggression is experienced at least monthly by three-fifths of the girls (59% swearing/insults and 59% mean/nasty comments), and at least weekly by almost two-fifths (38% swearing/insults and 36% mean/nasty comments).

It should be noted that 86% of the girls report that they experienced at least one of the two types of verbal aggression once or more often in the last year (including 72% who experienced both types). Moreover, 67% experienced at least one type at least monthly, 45% at least weekly, and 21% almost every day.

The experiences of boys as targets of verbal aggression are nearly identical; the only minor exception is that 42% of the boys report hearing swearing/insults at least once per week (compared to 36% of the girls).

Almost as many teenagers admit that they verbally aggress against other kids, as 75% of the girls (73% of boys) report that they swear/insult at least once per year, and 73% of girls (72% of boys) say mean/nasty comments annually. Swearing once or more per month is reported by 55% of girls (56% of boys), and nasty comments are made by 50% of girls (53% of boys). Swearing at least weekly is acknowledged by 33% of girls (40% of boys), and nasty comments are made by 30% of girls (35% of boys).

Finally, adolescents who most often perform verbal aggression tend to be the same ones who report being targets of verbally aggressive comments. For both committing and experiencing verbal aggression, a two-item index was constructed by adding the scores for swearing/insults and mean/nasty comments. There is a very strong correlation of $+0.72$ between indices of committing and experiencing verbal aggression.

OBSERVATION OF PHYSICAL AGGRESSION

A parallel set of incidence items deals with physical aggression. There are four types of violence measured in the questionnaire: shoving/shaking, punching/kicking, slapping, and hitting with an object (such as a stick, club, rock, bottle, or book bag). The first portion of the results describes what respondents have observed among teenagers that they know:

Shoving or Shaking Someone

- SEE GUYS DOING IT TO GIRLS
 - 16% ALMOST EVERY DAY
 - 14% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
 - 17% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
 - 20% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
 - 33% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR
- SEE GIRLS DOING IT TO GIRLS
 - 18% ALMOST EVERY DAY
 - 18% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
 - 20% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
 - 22% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
 - 22% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

Punching or Kicking Hard

- SEE GUYS DOING IT TO GIRLS
 - 7% ALMOST EVERY DAY
 - 6% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK

11% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
18% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
58% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

- SEE GIRLS DOING IT TO GIRLS

9% ALMOST EVERY DAY
11% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
17% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
26% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
37% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

Slapping Someone

- SEE GUYS DOING IT TO GIRLS

6% ALMOST EVERY DAY
7% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
12% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
19% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
56% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

- SEE GIRLS DOING IT TO GIRLS

9% ALMOST EVERY DAY
12% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
18% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
25% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
36% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

Hitting Someone with an Object (such as a stick, club, rock, bottle, book bag)

- SEE GUYS DOING IT TO GIRLS

5% ALMOST EVERY DAY

- 5% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
- 9% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
- 17% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
- 64% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

- SEE GIRLS DOING IT TO GIRLS

- 6% ALMOST EVERY DAY
- 6% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
- 10% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
- 20% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
- 58% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

Based on observational reports, shoving or shaking is the most prevalent form of physical aggression against girls. Two-thirds of all respondents report that they have seen boys doing this to girls in the past year; 47% see it occurring at least once per month (including 30% who see it at least weekly). Girls are slightly more likely than boys to be the perpetrators of acts of shoving or shaking adolescent women: more than three-quarters of the sample report seeing girls doing this to other girls, including 56% who see it occurring at least once per month (36% see it at least weekly).

Slapping is next in prevalence, with females somewhat more likely than males to be the attackers. More than two-fifths of the respondents have seen boys slap girls in the past year, including 25% who see it happening at least once per month (13% at least weekly). More than three-fifths of the respondents report seeing girls slap other girls; 39% observe slapping at least monthly (21% weekly).

Observation of girls getting punched or kicked is almost equally frequent. In the past year, two-fifths of the sample have seen boys punch or kick girls, including 24% who see it happening at least monthly (13% weekly). More than three-fifths of the respondents report seeing girls punch or kick other girls; 37% observe such incidents at least monthly (20% weekly).

There is a lower incidence of girls being hit with an object; girls are observed doing this to other girls slightly more often than boys hitting girls. More than one-third of respondents say they've seen boys hit girls with an object in the past year, including 19% who see it at least once per month (10% weekly). More than two-fifths have seen girls hit girls; 22% observe this form of attack at least monthly (12% weekly).

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH PHYSICAL AGGRESSION

Following the observational reports, respondents were next asked to indicate how often they have been the target or perpetrator of physical aggression over the past year. The same four focal behaviors were identified:

Shoving or Shaking

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	SOMEONE DOES IT TO ME
11%	8%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
13%	7%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
14%	11%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
20%	18%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
42%	56%	HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	I DO IT TO SOMEONE
11%	6%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
10%	7%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
13%	11%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
22%	16%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
44%	60%	HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

Punching or Kicking Hard

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	SOMEONE DOES IT TO ME
4%	3%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
7%	3%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
10%	8%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
22%	13%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
57%	73%	HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	I DO IT TO SOMEONE
5%	3%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
6%	4%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
9%	7%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
21%	11%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
59%	75%	HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

Slapping

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	SOMEONE DOES IT TO ME
4%	2%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
4%	3%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
6%	8%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
16%	13%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR

70% 74% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	I DO IT TO SOMEONE
3%	3%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
3%	5%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
5%	8%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
12%	12%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
77%	72%	HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

Hitting With an Object
(such as a stick, club, rock, bottle, book bag)

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	SOMEONE DOES IT TO ME
3%	2%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
3%	3%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
6%	6%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
14%	12%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
74%	77%	HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	I DO IT TO SOMEONE
2%	2%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
3%	3%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
5%	5%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
14%	10%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
76%	80%	HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

Examining the pattern of findings for female victims of physical violence, 44% of the girls report that they have experienced shoving or shaking at least once in the past year, including 26% who report that this happens at least monthly. Second, 27% of the girls were punched or kicked at least once; 14% say it occurs on a monthly basis. Slapping occurs at about the same prevalence, with 26% reporting this annually and 13% monthly. Getting hit by an object at least once in the past year is reported by 23% of the girls, including 11% who say it happens at least monthly.

Relatively few girls experience these violent incidents on a frequent basis; the “almost every day” figures are 8% for shoving/shaking, 3% for punching/kicking, 2% for slapping, and 2% for getting hit by an object. An additional 3% to 7% say this happens once or twice per week.

Broadly considering all four types of violence victimization, 54% of girls report experiencing at least a single incident of any of these four types of attacks in the last year (including 35% who experienced at least two types, 21% at least three, and 11% all four). Moreover, 33% reported that they experienced at least one type of violence on at least a monthly basis.

Physical violence is experienced somewhat more often by boys. In the past year, 58% have been shoved or shaken, 43% punched or kicked, 30% slapped, and 26% hit by an object. Across these four types of violence, 66% of the boys report being a victim at least once in the past year and 42% at least monthly.

Focusing on the incidence of once per month or more often, the figures for boys are 38% for shoving/shaking, 21% for punching/kicking, 14% for slapping, and 12% for getting hit by an object. Relatively few boys say that they experience violence frequently: 11% for shoving/shaking, 4% for punching/kicking, 4% for slapping, and 3% for getting hit by an object (an additional 11% are shoved or shaken once or twice per week, while the other three forms of violence are experienced by 3% to 7% of the boys).

Reviewing the findings for direct comparison of victimization of female vs. male adolescents, the incidence figures are very similar for slapping and for getting hit by an object. Girls less often experience shoving or shaking: 44% of the girls vs. 58% of the boys say this happens at least once per year, and the monthly figures are 26% vs. 38%. Getting punched or kicked hard at least annually is reported by 27% of the girls vs. 43% of boys, and the monthly figures are 14% vs. 21%.

Regarding the commission of physical violence, boys perform three of the four behaviors more often than girls. One-third of the boys and one-fourth of the girls say that they shove or shake someone at least once per month. For kicking or punching, the monthly proportions are one-fifth among boys and one-seventh among girls. About one-ninth of both the boys and the girls hit someone with an object at least once time per month. Monthly slapping is performed more often by female teenagers: 15% of the girls vs. 11% of the boys.

There is a strong connection between the frequency of committing physical and verbal aggression. The correlation between the four-item index of committing physical aggression and the two-item verbal aggression index is +.56. An equally strong correlation of +.55 is found between the indices of being the victim of physical and verbal aggression. Moreover, there is a very strong +.82 correlation between committing and receiving physical aggression.

EXAMPLES OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS

Beyond the quantitative measurement of observed and personally-experienced aggressive behavior, the survey also posed an open-end question asking for a brief written recounting of a specimen event involving physical violence. In the section of the survey following the incidence

scales, respondents were told to write down a description of the “worst incident” of violence that they had observed or experienced:

Please describe the worst incident of physical violence that you’ve seen or experienced.

About four out of five respondents described a violent incident, ranging from innocuous tussles to bloody assaults. A listing of several hundred quotes, identified by age and gender, appears in the appendix.

VIOLENCE VICTIMIZATION: WHERE, WHAT, AND WHO

The violence frequency findings are supplemented by several questions about the locations, concerns and parties involved in physical attacks; there is also an item asking if the respondent has ever been threatened with a weapon. The where item listed 10 locations, and asked respondents to indicate in which places they might be assaulted:

Mark all of the locations where you might get physically attacked (punched, slapped, hit with object):

55% --- HALLWAYS

54% --- SCHOOL GROUNDS

54% --- AROUND TOWN

41% --- AT A GAME

40% --- LOCKER ROOM

34% --- GYM

29% --- RESTROOM

29% --- CLASSROOM

26% --- IN A HOUSE

13% --- IN A CAR

School hallways and grounds are both mentioned as potential assault sites by more than half of the sample of young teenagers. Several other school-related sites receive mentions by three-to-four out of every 10 respondents: at a game, in the locker room or gym, in restrooms, and in classrooms. Away from school, “around town” is cited by more than half, while houses and cars are cited by one quarter or fewer respondents.

There are several modest differences between the locations cited by males vs. females. A higher proportion of girls than boys mention cars (16% girls; 9% boys), houses (30% girls; 21% boys),

games (44% girls; 38% boys), and around town (56% girls; 52% boys). A lower proportion of girls mention locker rooms (36% girls; 45% boys) and school grounds (53% girls; 56% boys). There is almost no difference for hallways (56% girls; 55% boys), classrooms (29% girls; 30% boys), gyms (33% girls; 35% boys), and restrooms (29% girls; 29% boys).

Another questionnaire item sought to measure the respondents' concern about being a victim of violence. The questionnaire listed three general categories of frequency; because of ambiguities between "sometimes" and "seldom," these are collapsed into one grouping:

How often do you worry about getting physically attacked by some kid?

52% --- SOMETIMES/SELDOM
48% --- NEVER

Slightly more than half of the young teenagers worry about getting attacked; 51% of the girls vs. 54% of the boys express concern.

The next set of items seeks to identify the parties who are committing the attacks experienced by the respondents. Three types of perpetrators are listed: a dating partner, other boys, and other girls. The results are presented separately for males and females:

When you get physically attacked, who does it?

Females: Boyfriend attacks

9% SOMETIMES / SELDOM
91% NEVER

Another guy attacks

20% SOMETIMES / SELDOM
80% NEVER

Another girl attacks

35% SOMETIMES / SELDOM
65% NEVER

Males: Girlfriend attacks
 8% SOMETIMES / SELDOM
 92% NEVER

 Another guy attacks
 59% SOMETIMES / SELDOM
 41% NEVER

 Another girl attacks
 16% SOMETIMES / SELDOM
 84% NEVER

Violence in dating relationships is relatively infrequent compared to non-relationship attacks. Among girls, 9% report that a boyfriend has physically attacked them; 8% of the boys say they have been attacked by a girlfriend. By comparison, 20% of the girls report that some other boy has attacked them, and 35% report that they've been attacked by another girl. Fully 59% of the boys have been attacked by another boy, and 16% say a girl other than their girlfriend committed an attack.

It should be noted that the adolescents may not clearly distinguish between "boyfriend/girlfriend" vs. "another guy/girl" because of ambiguities in defining the closeness of relationship. The lower percentages for relational violence may also be due three factors: younger teenagers may not yet have a "boyfriend/girlfriend," attacks by a previous boyfriend (or girlfriend) may not be reported in this category, and some respondents may feel inhibited about disclosing attacks by a current boyfriend or girlfriend. The first issue can be partly addressed by comparing the findings for girls of different age levels. For the 15-year-old girls, 11% report being attacked by a boyfriend; this compares to 10% for the 14-year-olds and 6% for the 13-year-olds. Assuming that older girls are more likely to be involved with a boyfriend, the higher rate for these older girls may be a more accurate reflection of the incidence of boyfriend violence.

Finally, a key question was posed to determine how many of the young teenagers have ever experienced a threat backed up with a weapon:

Have you ever been threatened by a kid with a gun, knife or other weapon?

12% -- YES
88% -- NO

The use of a gun, knife or other weapon to threaten harm occurs to a significant degree among these youths. More than one out of every eight respondents report that they have been threatened with a weapon; such incidents have been experienced by 17% of the boys and 8% of the girls in the sample.

VIOLENCE THOUGHTS, THREATS, AND GANGS

Another array of items asks respondents about their aggressive impulses and actions. These questions focus on contemplation of committing violence, issuance of threats to commit violence, and involvement in gang fighting. In each case, the questionnaire simply measured whether the respondent had ever done it:

Have you ever thought about physically attacking another kid?

48% -- YES

52% -- NO

Have you ever threatened to hurt some kid?

42% -- YES

58% -- NO

Have you ever been involved in fighting between gangs or groups of kids?

14% -- YES

86% -- NO

About half of these young teenagers say that they've thought about physically attacking another kid; the proportions are only slightly higher than for actual commission of violence, indicating that most youths act upon their violent impulses. The contemplation figure for boys is 60% and for girls is 37%; compared to actual aggression, it appears that girls are much more likely than boys to perform rather than merely think about aggression. Two out of every five respondents have threatened to hurt another kid, including 50% of boys and 35% of girls. Regarding gang violence, 16% of the boys and 12% of girls have been involved in fighting.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE ATTITUDES AND EXPERIENCES

An important set of items deals with the incidence of and attitudes toward sexual violence. The violence frequency scale was used to measure observation and experience involving offensive sexual remarks, and another question asked about behavioral experiences with forced sex by a dating partner. Here are the findings:

Observation: Offensive Sexual Remarks

- SEE GUYS DOING IT TO GIRLS

28% ALMOST EVERY DAY
 20% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
 17% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
 15% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
 20% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

- SEE GIRLS DOING IT TO GIRLS

10% ALMOST EVERY DAY
 12% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
 16% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
 19% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
 43% HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

Experience: Offensive Sexual Remarks

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	SOMEONE DOES IT TO ME
6%	9%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
8%	11%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
12%	13%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
19%	19%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
55%	48%	HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	I DO IT TO SOMEONE
5%	2%	ALMOST EVERY DAY
4%	5%	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
11%	8%	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
15%	11%	ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR
65%	74%	HASN'T HAPPENED IN PAST YEAR

Has a dating partner ever forced you to have unwanted sex activities?

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	
1%	4%	YES
99%	96%	NO

Offensive male remarks to females were observed by 80% of respondents in the past year;

65% witness sexual comments at least monthly, and 48% at least weekly. The observational reports also indicate a considerable amount of female-instigated remarks to other females: 57% at least annually, 38% monthly, and 22% weekly.

Among the adolescent females, 52% report that they have experienced offensive comments in the past year, and 33% say it happens to them once a month or more. One-fifth of the boys admit making sexually harassing comments on a monthly basis, and 35% have done it in the past year.

Some females also admit harassing others: 15% do it once a month or more, and 26% have done it in the past year. A surprising 45% of the boys report being harassed in the past year, including 26% who experience it as frequently as once per month.

The use of force to perform unwanted sex is relatively rare; 4% of the girls report that a dating partner forced them to have sexual activities, and 1% of boys say that this has happened to them.

There are four attitudinal items (measured on a five-step agree-disagree scale), which assess the perceived seriousness of date rape, disapproval of using pressure for sexual favors, approval of forced sexual activities, and relational benefits of dating violence:

Date rape is a serious problem for high school girls

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	
33%	44%	AGREE STRONGLY
32%	33%	AGREE
35%	23%	NEUTRAL/DISAGREE

It's wrong to use pressure to get sexual favors

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	
58%	80%	AGREE STRONGLY
31%	16%	AGREE
11%	4%	NEUTRAL/DISAGREE

It's OK to force sexual activities if a girl is teasing or dressed sexy

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	
16%	9%	AGREE/NEUTRAL
27%	16%	DISAGREE
57%	75%	STRONGLY DISAGREE

Violence between dating partners can improve the relationship

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	
10%	4%	AGREE/NEUTRAL
22%	12%	DISAGREE
68%	84%	STRONGLY DISAGREE

Fully 77% of girls and 65% of boys agree that date rape is a serious problem for high school girls. There is even broader agreement with the statement that pressure shouldn't be used to get sexual favors, as 96% of the girls and 89% of the boys agree. Disapproval of forced sexual activities is also widespread, as 91% of the girls and 84% of the boys disagree with this reverse-worded item. Similarly, 96% of the girls and 90% of the boys express disagreement with the notion that violence can improve a dating relationship. Across these four items, an average of 90% of female respondents demonstrate the enlightened stance regarding sexual violence. Although boys lag slightly behind, the appropriate response is still given an average of 82% of the male respondents.

TELEVISION VIOLENCE VIEWING PATTERNS

The survey opened with a set of items measuring exposure to television programming and frequency of viewing violence portrayals. There are three purposes for these questions: to warm up the respondents with interesting and non-sensitive topics, to serve as a transitional device in shifting from media violence to real life violence, and to gain background information about respondents that might be related to their violent attitudes and behaviors. The first question simply measured amount of television viewing, using a standard time-based scale that is purposely non-hourly and overlapping (e.g., 1 to 2 hours vs. 2 to 3 hours) in order to reflect the tendency for young people to watch TV for irregular time periods (rather than combinations of half-hour and one-hour programs) and to prevent respondents from non-reflectively rounding to the typically over-used "two" and "three" hour categories:

“About how many hours of TV do you watch on a typical day?”

7%	LESS THAN ONE HOUR
18%	ONE-TWO HOURS
24%	TWO-THREE HOURS
22%	THREE-FOUR HOURS
12%	FOUR-FIVE HOURS
9%	FIVE-SIX HOURS
4%	SIX-SEVEN HOURS
4%	SEVEN OR MORE HOURS

These young teenagers spend an average of about three hours per day watching television. One quarter of the sample watch one-two hours or less, while one-sixth watch five-six hours or more. The amount of time viewing television is related to only a slight degree with the aggression indices: the correlations are +.07 with committing verbal aggression and +.11 with committing

violence, and +.06 with being a victim of verbal aggression and +.09 with violence victimization (see Table 1).

Next, respondents were presented with a list of 12 television programs and asked to indicate which ones they usually view. The first set of programs are daytime talk shows (Jenny, Ricki, Geraldo, and Oprah), which present many interviews with guests who discuss interpersonal conflict and violence in their lives; the typical case involves young women describing violent experiences with boyfriends. Teenage women, who are frequent viewers of these daytime shows, may gain the impression that violence is commonplace in relationships.

Two other programs depict real-life examples of violence (Cops and America's Most Wanted). Another set of entertainment programs portray verbal and physical aggression in relationships (dramas Melrose Place and Party of Five, and the videos on MTV), or violent behavior involving guns and fights (dramas Nash Bridges, Walker Texas Ranger, and Xena Warrior Princess). The figures below show the percentage of respondents who indicate that they "usually" watch each program:

"Mark all the TV shows that you usually watch:"

17% OPRAH	8% MELROSE PLACE
4% GERALDO	56% MTV
25% RICKI	18% PARTY OF FIVE
24% JENNY	10% NASH BRIDGES
20% COPS	18% XENA WARRIOR PRINCESS
19% AMERICA'S MOST WANTED	23% WALKER, TEXAS RANGER

More than half of the respondents regularly watch MTV, which leads the other shows by a wide margin. The two youth-oriented talk shows, hosted by Ricki Lake and Jenny Jones, are usually viewed by one-quarter of the sample; Oprah reaches one of six respondents, while few see Geraldo's talk show. About one in five are regular viewers of the two real life crime docu-dramas, Cops and America's Most Wanted. Two of the violent dramas, Walker and Xena, also attain a substantial audience of young teenagers. These youthful viewers have ample opportunity for viewing a wide variety of violence depictions on their television screens.

An index representing the three talk shows viewed (excluding the less violence-oriented Oprah) is related only slightly with the aggression indices: the correlations are +.10 with committing verbal aggression and +.12 with committing physical violence, and +.06 with being a victim of verbal aggression and +.06 with physical victimization (see Table 1). An index of all other violent shows viewed correlates +.04 with verbally aggressive behavior, +.11 with physically violent behavior, +.10 with verbal victimization and +.13 with violent victimization.

One item directly measures the amount of violence viewed by each respondent, using the same frequency scale that is used in the items measuring real-life experiences:

“When you’re watching television, how often do you see violent actions?”

- 69% SEE ALMOST EVERY DAY
- 26% ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK
- 4% ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH
- 1% ONCE OR TWICE IN LAST YEAR

More than two-thirds of the sample report that they are exposed to TV violence almost every day, and almost all say they view violence at least once or twice a week. Clearly, young teenagers frequently see violence when watching TV. The nature of their viewing patterns is examined in more detail with performer preference measures. Boys see violence somewhat more frequently; 75% say they are exposed almost every day, compared to 63% of girls. This item correlates mildly with the aggression indices: +.21 with committing verbal and +.11 with committing physical, and +.18 with experiencing verbal and +.13 with receiving violent attacks (see Table 1).

PREFERENCES FOR VIOLENT ENTERTAINMENT

Moving beyond simple exposure patterns, the instrument next assessed respondent preferences for entertainers and musical genres. First, the questionnaire listed 18 actors and actresses (most with considerable appeal to teenage audiences) who tend to display the most aggressive and violent behavior in movies that are viewed in theaters, rental videos, cable, and broadcast television. Rather than listing titles of individual movies (which are less accessible than weekly or daily TV shows), it was decided that measuring affiliation with favorite stars would provide a more stable basis for capturing both exposure to violence and identification with violent performers.

There are eight white male stars, five minority male stars, and five female stars who have typically performed in “action” roles over the past several years. The figures below indicate the percentage of the sample who indicate a strong liking for each performer:

Mark all the movie stars that you like a lot:

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| 49% JOHN TRAVOLTA | 76% WILL SMITH | 23% CLAIRE DANES |
| 47% SWARTZENEGGER | 55% EDDIE MURPHY | 19% HALLE BERRY |
| 36% CHRIS O’DONNELL | 27% JACKIE CHAN | 14% SHARON STONE |
| 32% VAN DAMME | 24% SAMUEL L. JACKSON | 9% SIGORNEY WEAVER |
| 31% BRAD PITT | 13% LAWRENCE FISHBURNE | 5% LINDA HAMILTON |
| 30% STALLONE | | |
| 29% BRUCE WILLIS | | |

The two most popular stars are black males: Will Smith and Eddie Murphy. Travolta and Swartzenegger are well liked by almost half of the youth. About one-third of the respondents regard actors O'Donnell, Van Damme, Pitt, Stallone, and Willis among their favorites. About one-quarter like Chan, Jackson, Cage, and Danes, who is the only female with a fairly wide following. An index summing the number of violent performers liked is correlated only slightly with the aggression indices: +.08 with committing verbal and +.10 with committing violence, and +.12 with experiencing verbal and +.10 with experiencing violence (see Table 1).

The other set of entertainment preference items focuses on musical genres that are featured on the radio, CDs, and TV music videos. The first two, heavy metal and gangsta rap, are noted for violent and misogynist themes. Here are the percentages of respondents who indicate a strong liking for each of six genres popular with teenagers:

Mark all the types of music that you really enjoy listening to or watching on music videos:

59% ALTERNATIVE

38% POP

35% GANGSTA RAP

35% HIP-HOP

22% HEAVY METAL

11% GRUNGE

Alternative rock is by far the most popular type of music among these adolescents, as three-fifths say they “really enjoy” hearing or watching these performers. Three other genres appeal to slightly more than one-third of the sample: Pop, Gangsta Rap, and Hip-hop. Heavy Metal and Grunge music currently have a more limited following in this age group. The only major sex difference is found for Heavy Metal, which is preferred by 31% of boys vs. 13% of girls.

An index combining preference for the violence-oriented heavy metal and gangsta rap is positively associated with real-life violence experiences. There is a correlation of +.27 with committing physical aggression and +.25 with committing verbal aggression; the correlation coefficients are somewhat lower for verbal and physical victimization (see Table 1). These relationships are stronger than for the other media predictor variables such as viewing violent TV programming.

PEER INFLUENCES

To help ascertain the potential impact of peers, a set of items measured the number of friends who display certain behaviors that might directly or indirectly have implications for acting violently. The purpose of these items is to measure the subjective normative influences that might serve as predictor variables influencing the respondents' behavior, rather than to provide a

quantitative indication of the amount of such behavior that occurs among adolescents. A list of seven behavioral patterns was presented in the questionnaire, with four levels of prevalence among each respondent's peers ("most" friends, "some" friends, "a few" friends, or "none")

About how many of your friends do the following things:

• Get drunk occasionally

7%	MOST
14%	SOME
27%	A FEW
52%	NONE

• Use drugs such as pot

6%	MOST
10%	SOME
23%	A FEW
61%	NONE

• Smoke cigarettes

15%	MOST
18%	SOME
29%	A FEW
38%	NONE

• Play on football team

17%	MOST
32%	SOME
28%	A FEW
23%	NONE

• Get into trouble with cops

3%	MOST
8%	SOME
31%	A FEW
58%	NONE

• Physically attack other kids

4%	MOST
9%	SOME
29%	A FEW
58%	NONE

- Try to prevent physical attacks

18% MOST
24% SOME
31% A FEW
27% NONE

The three substance use items indicate that only a limited subset of respondents are surrounded by many peers who drink, smoke, and do drugs. Nevertheless, a large portion of the sample are exposed to at least a few friends who display these habits: 62% have smoker friends, 48% have friends who get drunk, and 38% have drug-using friends. An index of these three items is moderately correlated with both verbal aggression (+.35) and physically-violent behavior (+.27); correlations with the parallel victimization indices are slightly lower (see Table 1).

In addition, about half say that some or most of their friends play the physically aggressive sport of football. Just 11% say that some or most friends have gotten into trouble with the police, but an additional 31% have a few friends who have come to the attention of the police. The police trouble item correlates positively with the indices of committing aggression (+.23 verbal and +.26 physical) and experiencing aggression (+.16 verbal and +.20 physical).

Regarding violence, 42% say that at least a few friends commit physical attacks but a much higher 73% say that at least a few friends try to prevent attacks. The “friends commit” item is positively related to aggression (+.24 verbal and +.31 physical) and victimization (+.16 verbal and +.25 physical). The “friends prevent” item is basically unrelated to these indices.

BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS AND VALUES

Finally, there is an assortment of respondent attributes that may be related to patterns of violence. The survey measured religious involvement, drinking attitude, adult disapproval of violent behavior, school grades, size of school, gender, age, and race. In addition to describing the characteristics of the sample, these demographic and attitudinal items serve as predictor variables in the correlational analyses.

Religion is very important in my life

30% AGREE STRONGLY
27% AGREE
29% NEUTRAL
8% DISAGREE
6% DISAGREE STRONGLY

Kids should wait until age 21 to drink alcohol

40% AGREE STRONGLY
26% AGREE
20% NEUTRAL
9% DISAGREE
5% DISAGREE STRONGLY

Most adults that I know disapprove of violent behavior

47% AGREE STRONGLY
38% AGREE
10% NEUTRAL
3% DISAGREE
2% DISAGREE STRONGLY

Gender

48% MALE
52% FEMALE

Age

34% THIRTEEN YEARS OLD
33% FOURTEEN YEARS OLD
33% FIFTEEN YEARS OLD

Race

83% WHITE (NON-HISPANIC)
4% HISPANIC
13% AFRICAN AMERICAN

What are your grades in school?

30% EXCELLENT
46% GOOD
21% FAIR
3% POOR

How many kids are in your grade at school?

- 10% UNDER 50
- 15% 50-100
- 31% 100-200
- 44% MORE THAN 200

Religion is important to 57% of the respondents, including 30% who agree strongly that it's very important in their life. Moreover, 56% of these young teenagers take a conservative position on appropriate drinking age. Regarding the attitude of "adults you know," 85% say that most of these adults disapprove of violent behavior. Almost one-third report that their school grades are "excellent," and slightly less than half say their grades are "good." One-quarter of the respondents are enrolled in smaller-size schools with fewer than 100 students in their grade, about one-third are in mid-sized schools, and the rest are in large schools with more than 200 students in their grade. The sample is evenly balanced between males and females and the three age levels, and the racial figures proportionately reflect population figures.

Table 1 shows the correlational findings for these demographic and values variables. Boys perform only slightly more physical and verbal aggression than girls; boys are a bit more likely than girls to be victimized. Involvement in physical aggression decreases marginally between the ages of 13 and 15, while verbal aggression involvement rises slightly with age. There is slightly less involvement with physical aggression in smaller schools, but verbal aggression is the same regardless of school size. Students who receive higher grades in school tend to be less involved in aggressive incidents. Those from higher income homes are also less involved in aggression. The importance of religion in the adolescents' lives is inversely related to aggression. Youth with more conservative drinking views tend to be less involved in aggression.

It is important to note that there is almost no difference in aggression levels according to state of residence. While the pattern of differences between Michigan vs. Ohio/Illinois varies one or two percentage points from one incidence category to another, the overall frequency for each type of physical and verbal aggression does not differ.

Table 1: Predictors of Physical and Verbal Aggression

Commit:		Victim of:		
Physical	Verbal	Physical	Verbal	
Media Predictor Variable: (Low High)				
+0.11	+0.07	+0.09	+0.06	TV viewing time
+0.11	+0.04	+0.13	+0.10	Violent program viewing index
+0.11	+0.21	+0.13	+0.18	See violent actions on TV
+0.12	+0.10	+0.06	+0.06	Talk show viewing index
+0.10	+0.08	+0.11	+0.12	Violent actor liking index
+0.27	+0.25	+0.20	+0.16	Violent music liking index
Demographic Predictor Variable:				
+0.08	+0.05	+0.11	+0.05	Gender (Female Male)
-0.03	+0.09	-0.06	+0.03	Age (Younger Older)
+0.01	-0.05	-0.02	-0.09	Race (White Minority)
-0.08	-0.01	-0.10	-0.01	Size of school (Small Large)
-0.23	-0.21	-0.19	-0.15	Grades in school (Poor Excellent)
-0.17	-0.10	-0.14	-0.09	Family income (Low High)
-0.15	-0.19	-0.10	-0.08	Religion (Unimportant Important)
-0.22	-0.29	-0.14	-0.13	Conservative drink values (Low High)
Social Predictor Variable:				
-0.18	-0.19	-0.11	-0.09	Adult violence attitude (Pro Anti)
-0.02	-0.02	+0.02	+0.05	Peer violence prevention (None Most)
+0.26	+0.23	+0.20	+0.16	Peer trouble with police (None Most)
+0.31	+0.24	+0.26	+0.16	Peer violence behavior (None Most)
+0.27	+0.35	+0.20	+0.24	Peer substance use (None Most)

The figures in this table are correlation coefficients between each predictor variable (scored as indicated in parentheses) and the four aggression indices (scored from lowest to highest levels of committing or experiencing verbal and physical aggression).

Appendix A

Open-End Responses Describing Worst Incident of Physical Violence Seen or Experienced

All respondents were asked to write a description on two blank lines in response to this item:

“Please describe the worst incident of physical violence that you’ve seen or experienced.”

This appendix reproduces a random selection of verbatim quotes representing the full array of answers; each is identified by the gender and age of the respondent.

Male 15 A junior in high school punched a freshman three times in the face and then kicked him in the head which in turn knocked the freshman out.

Male 15 I saw two men hitting each other with a hammer on a public street.

Male 15 Two adults beating each other aggressively.

Female 15 A boy in my class was smarting off and got punched by an older boy.

Female 14 Sibling fighting.

Female 13 A gang fight.

Male 15 A bottle was stabbed into a friend’s face and punctured his eye.

Female 13 When a girl punched another girl in the nose at the movies.

Male 15 My brother was shot by a gang of kids standing on a street corner. He was in a car driving.

Male 14 I saw a big fight at school where two guys were punching each other in the face.

Female 13 At school a high school guy took a screwdriver from shop class and stabbed another guy in the head with it. The screwdriver hit a vein and busted it making lots of blood.

Male 14 Fight in locker room at school.

Male 14 Today at school a guy was talking bad at another guy so he hit him in the nose. There was blood all over and the kid's nose was broke. He got 10 days suspension, on the 1st day of school!

Male 13 At school three kids jumped another in the hall way before 1st hour one kept hitting and kicking him. The other held him.

Female 15 There was a fight between two girls at my school with punching and name calling (swearing).

Female 15 I was at a party and one of the guys got one of my friends in a room (alone) and almost raped her before another guy stepped in.

Female 13 During gym a girl slapped another girl and the girl slapped her back and almost broke her jaw.

Male 13 I saw a guy punch another guy repeatedly on the street.

Male 13 Punching and swearing.

Male 15 A boy pushed my head against the bus window.

Female 14 Two boys fighting at a football game. They were throwing rocks and punching and shoving each other.

Female 14 Six boys with sticks surrounded me and my brother and sister. They spit in my sisters hair, hit my brother with a stick. I picked him up and grabbed her hand and ran for home. We were on our way home from school.

Female 14 The worst incident of physical violence I ever saw was just two neighborhood boys fighting.

Female 13 My friend and I were by school. A guy came over and punched me. He tripped me, kicked by head and spat a loogie on my coat.

Male 15 Two girls were fighting about something and they were literally pulling some hair out. One got a broken nose from a punch.

Female 13 I do not see anything of the sort yet if I do it's usually joking around. But once I saw a 22 year old grab a girl by the neck.

Female 13 I've seen many fights between two guys.

Male 14 At a gas station a car pulled up and shot somebody in the jaw.

Female 14 When my two friends got in this huge fight. They were punching, kicking, and rolling around on the ground beating each other up.

Female 15 Where I live it isn't bad. The worst I've seen is someone shoving somebody else.

Female 13 Two guys were supposed to fight after school and when one said "I've got practice." The other said you're just chicken. The one tried to attack him with a razor. Another one was when a kid tried to attack a teacher with a metal chain.

Female 14 A kid at my old school marked on my shirt with a marker during class and I got up and beat him up.

Female 15 I saw my friend's brother punch him and broke his nose.

Male 14 Two kids beat the hoo-ha out of each other. Even bloodied the principal.

Female 13 These two guys was fighting and one guy slammed another guy's head into a glass window.

Female 14 A girl getting jumped at a camp I was at.

Female 13 A person swung purse like a mad woman.

Male 13 Two girls fighting pulling hair.

Female 14 Boys fighting in hallway over a girl, one boy hurt the other very bad and cops took him away.

Female 15 A lot of fights at school.

Female 15 When my ex-boyfriend got in a fight at a dance we were at. He punched another guy, and slashed his eye open. There was blood every where.

Female 14 Smashing a girl's head against a locker.

Female 14 A young female molested by male two years older at the park.

Female 13 The really bad things I've seen were all on TV, but the worst violence I've personally seen was a fight between two girls at school. They were slapping, punching, and swinging each other around by the hair. They were kicking swearing back and forth.

Male 15 All I've seen is a few playground fights where some punches were thrown and then they were broken up.

Male 14 Punching someone hard.

Male 13 I saw somebody who didn't listen to his a mom and she wouldn't let him do what he wanted. Then he attacked her with a pan. She took the pan away and hit him with the pan.

Female 14 Just two people fighting.

Female 15 I saw a boy get jumped, hit in the head, back, stomach, and face by four other boys' in a church parking lot after school.

Male 15 I got the crap beat out of me.

Male 14 At our school one of the 8th graders beet up a little kid for no reason. The kid broke his arm, nose, and jaw.

Female 13 Someone threw someone on the sidewalk at school and they cracked their head open.

Female 15 A couple of girls fighting and one girl getting her head slammed into the locker.

Female 13 Someone hit a guy with a cellular phone when the guy on the bike was trying use a pay phone and the guy with the cell phone put money in it.

Female 15 When I got my butt kicked by a 24 year old.

Male 15 I seen a kid get beat with a ball bat and later I heard he was put in the hospital.

Female 14 When I got attacked by eight girls.

Male 13 I saw a guy get shot.

Female 15 Getting thrown into a glass coffee table face first.

Male 13 Someone getting shoot on the street.

Female 14 Someone stabbed another (each other) to frame another father because they hate him.

Male 13 Someone at school got their nose broken and had stitches and bruises all over.

Female 14 Someone bit one of my friends.

Female 15 The most violent thing I've ever seen would probably be fight at high school. Some kids come out of the fights with so much blood on their faces, you can barely tell who they are.

Male 13 Being tripped while running and then falling on blacktop and skinning elbow and then being punched hard twice in the stomach.

Female 13 Two kids were fighting at school. One got a bloody nose.

Male 14 My brother sucker punched me; kicked me in the stomach, and pulled my hair.

Female 15 Two boys were fighting in the hallway at school. They were punching and shoving in to the lockers and other people walking by. I got squashed by them.

Female 13 Older kid hitting small kid..

Male 14 I saw my friend beat up a kid who was bugging him all week.

Female 13 Mostly on TV involving guns and knives every so often in hallways of school.

Female 13 When these girl's at my school start fighting and one girl hit the other girl with a combination lock.

Male 13 A boy that I know getting beat up.

Male 14 A kid and I got in a fist fight.

Female 13 A kid got mad at another and started punching him till he got a bloody nose.

Male 15 After lunch, I saw 1 group of kids gang up on another racial group and start severely beating them down. The first group had about 25 kids and the second had about 6 or 7 kids. The police had to come and secure the locker room the rest of the day.

Male 15 When an adult pushed me down and slugged me.

Female 13 A bunch of guys fighting in the back of our school, just throwing some punches.

Male 15 I saw a kid get punched and kicked in the face.

Male 13 A fight at school between two guys, where one got a black eye and the other a bad bloody nose.

Female 15 A fight where a guy pounced on another guy.

Male 15 Two girls were fighting over a boy. One girl punched the other in the mouth.

Male 14 An 8th grader picked up a 7th grader in the lunchroom at school and threw him. The boys wrestled and fist fought, both were bloody. The 7th grader started it not thinking the 8th grader would defend himself.

Male 14 One time I saw two kids beat a kid up the hallway at school. It was right by my locker. One kid threw the other kid into a locker and cracked his skull, while the other kid was kicking him really hard. The kid went to the hospital.. I think it was a gang thing.

Female 15 When I was at school there was a fight in the hallway and no one was there to break it up. They took all of his stuff and took off.

Female 14 Two boys fist fighting.

Male 13 Two people in school got in a fight.

Male 15 Some kid kicked another kid in the head a few times at school and the kid had to go to the hospital.

Female 14 We were in school and a girl threw this other girl in the typing room and started banging her head against a typewriter. She had to have about 40 stitches in her head.

Female 14 I've seen two girls get in a fight around town they were punching, slapping, kicking, and yelling.

Female 15 At a dance, a girl yelled at me because I was yelling at this one guy, because he hit my best friend. So she came over and wanted to know what my problem was, then we started yelling at each other, then I punched her and we got kicked out, I got a crack on my lip, I gave her a black eye, and a bloody nose.

Male 15 When my uncle put my grandma's head through the door window.

Male 13 During lunch time a boy took his friends juice and walked away with it. They started to argue over who's juice it was and then they got into a fist fight. At they end one boy had a bloody lip and the other had a bloody nose.

Female 14 The couple fights in the school hallway, where they were fist fighting.

Male 14 A friend hitting someone in the face.

Female 13 At a school football game a girl was picking on me and pulled my hair and shoved me into the school's fence. I told the principle and the girl was reprimanded and nothing has happen since. My parent had to get involved to make sure it never happened again or charges would have been filed against her for assault.

Female 14 Someone getting hit by bats, clubs and 2x4's.

Male 13 I was roller blading and a kid came up behind me on his bike and started hitting me and I got a black eye.

Female 13 Someone got really mad a guy at my school and he hit him in the head and he went to the hospital and the guy that hit him went Juvenile Hall.

Male 14 I saw a kid get on top of another and repeatedly hit him.

Female 15 A boy got kicked in the face at school.

Male 15 One kid beat-up by someone else with a lock. He had blood all over his face.

Male 14 A friend of mine gets tough with me at times. He scratches me at times, hitting hard. One time he pinched me so bad that it left a bruise on my chest.

Male 15 A locker room fight between me and someone who has since become my friend. Said nasty things 'bout my father. Put him in submission hold and slammed him into lockers.

Male 13 While driving down a busy street at night I saw a guy get out of his truck and pick a fight. He got pushed, punched, and pushed again.

Male 15 Some kids were beating on my friend. it started with on kid punching him then his other friends jumped in knocked him down and were kicking him in the face while other ones were holding me back.

Female 13 Two boys fighting on school grounds. One boy threw the other to the ground and he got a bad bloody nose.

Female 14 Worst physical violence I've seen is on the streets of the Bronx. It was a huge gang fight. There were knives and bats. We didn't stay so I don't know what happened.

Female 14 I was waiting for my bus and two boys my age got in a fist fight. One kid got his glasses broken and he had a bloody nose.

Female 14 Five boys jumping on and beating on one boy. They cut him with a knife and also hit him with a bat.

Female 14 I was held down kicked and then a guy was putting fingers in my pants and touching places.

Male 15 A bully kept beating me up in Junior High. The reason I didn't fight back was because he had about 10 friends and I thought they'd jump in

Female 13 My boyfriend beat me up (minor, just sore) on the school grounds.

Female 14 Got into a fist fight with a boy and a girl.

Male 14 Two big guys were kicking a smaller boy while he was huddled on the ground.

Female 13 When my mom's boyfriend punched and kicked my mom and made her get stitches in her lip; he went to jail.

Male 15 I have never been attacked cause I am so big.

Female 15 Two boys in 7th grade got in a big fight and one pushed the other through a glass door. Both were seriously injured and taken away in an ambulance.

Female 14 My best friend called after her mom had severely beaten her. My mom went and took her to my house and we called Social Security.

Male 15 Two girls were fighting at school and there was blood everywhere.

Female 15 Three guys were fighting in front of our school office. They were punching and kicking each other. They all had bloody noses and cuts on their faces. One ended up with a broken nose and a black eye. The other two just had black eyes. They hit each other with their textbooks and stabbed them with their pencil while the teachers just stood there and watched.

Male 13 Fight with my brother.

Female 15 A boy punching another boy in the face so hard and many times that he knocked out four of his teeth, busted his chin, and made him get 20 stitches in his lip.

Male 13 A fight where there was blood all over the place because it was on the street where nobody was at. It was pretty bad.

Female 14 I have seen a man give his wife/girlfriend a black eye and a bloody nose.

Female 14 There were two girls fighting in the hallway. They were shoving each other and one of the girls grabbed the other's hair and slammed her head against the locker and broke her nose.

Female 14 A fist fight that occurred on the bus. One kid was having a bad day so he lashed out at the other kid.

Male 15 On school grounds, where they beat this kid and put him in the hospital.

Male 15 Last day of school a kid took a crutch from another kid and beat someone until he passed out.

Female 14 Being hit or slapped is probably the most offensive thing that has happened. Violence is seldom used against me.

Male 13 Getting into a fist fight with friends.

Female 15 Six guys got into a fight at school in hallway.

Male 13 One man was kicking another man in the face and stomach at a store.

Male 15 Two guys from rival high schools started fist fighting at a football game.

Female 14 At a football game, my friend was getting pushed around by a group of older kids.

Female 14 One of my friends got hit by her jerk of a boyfriend.

Female 14 My brother and I got into a physical fight.

Female 13 Another boy slammed this boy's head in the wall. And I punched a girl in the stomach.

Female 13 When I was younger and I went and stayed with my dad, his girlfriend threw a remote control at him and it hit me in the head and left a huge bump the size of a golf ball.

Female 15 A man hitting his son in a parking lot, when on vacation in Canada.

Male 15 A guy picked up another guy in the gym locker room, punched him in the nose and slammed him against the locker.

Male 13 Punching a kid when he pushed me, but it's not so easy when there is a circle of people around you and won't let you out.

Female 14 In school one kid shoved another kid's head through a window.

Male 15 A kid punched another kid several times in the face, then when he fell over he kicked him several more times until he began coughing up blood.

Male 15 My brother got in a fight and got a broken nose.

Male 14 Somebody almost going to die by beating.

Male 15 A man on my grandmother's street beat his wife, while she had her baby in her arms.

Female 15 We were at lunch period at high school and a classmate began to argue with a rival gang member and he took a knife out of his gym shoe and stabbed the other in the abdomen.

Male 13 I have seen a man hit a women with his first. Then he hit her with the club (the steering wheel lock).

Female 13 Me and my friend and our brothers were walking to her house after school and we went behind a church and 6-10 guys attacked us with knives.

Female 13 My friend's brother drove by this kid that was on a bike and spit on him and the kid on the bike got in his truck and followed us until we stopped and they got in a fist fight and the kid had to get pins in his hand because he hit my friend's brother's head so hard.

Male 13 I saw a baby get slapped hard for playing with her mothers purse.

Male 13 Two girls beating themselves up in front of the buses in the school parking lot.

Female 15 When a classmate had died they had a poster in the lunchroom for everyone to sign. A girl tried to start something with me because I didn't know him as much as she did.

Male 15 I saw a fight because one kid spilled a drink on another kid and they were all bloody in the face.

Female 13 When these people were having a big fight and kicking and punching was all going on The cops had to come break it up.

Female 15 In school, two kids older than me had a huge fist fight. Swearing and yelling and tons of blood was involved (no serious injuries).

Male 13 Me and a kid hated eat other and so we got in to a fight after school.

Female 13 My friend got his nose punched in by his ex-girlfriend's new boyfriend.

Female 15 Girls fighting by hair pulling, kicking.

Male 13 A guy being beaten with sticks and then dragged into the alley.

Female 14 Two girls got in a fight over one being a poser and got into a really bad fist fight.

Female 15 Last year someone hit my friend over the head with a baseball bat, almost killing him.

Male 15 I got jumped because some kids wanted my new jacket.

Male 15 Two older girls and one small, same-aged boy attacked me. The girls held me down and allowed the smaller boy to punch me repeatedly in the face and head. One girl had her foot over my mouth and nose. The other girl held my arms and threatened my friends.

Male 13 My dad beat up my mom.

Female 15 One boy pushed another boy into the metal door dividers and slammed his head against it and sliced his ear on it.