

ADOLESCENT SEXUAL COERCION FACT SHEET

“Sexual coercion is the act of persuading or coercing a minor into engaging in an unwanted sexual activity through physical force, threat of physical force, or emotional manipulation. It differs from rape in that the coerced individual consents to the sexual activity for a variety of reasons. The coerced individual feels it is easier to consent to sexual activity than decline due to an imbalance of power. Coercive situations may not be obvious, even to the coerced individual.

Many young girls consent to sex without thinking they have a choice, often due to age and inexperience. Coercive situations may use threats, humiliation, and anger as means to convince a partner to consent to sexual behavior. The coerced individual often consents to the activity because she does not feel she is able to say ‘no’ and have that decision be respected.” (1)

Too many teens say they have been pressured to do something sexual that made them uncomfortable or took them farther sexually than they wanted to go.

Of teens participating in a 2014 survey, 17% felt pressured to do something sexual that made them uncomfortable; of those teens,

- 20% were black non-Hispanic,
- 18% were white,
- and 12% were Hispanic.

Looking at results by gender, 24% were 17-year-old girls, 21% were teen girls 13 – 17 and 12% were teen boys 13 – 17. (2)

Students who first had sex before age 15 were seven times more likely to report being forced to have sex than students who first had sex after age 15. (3)

Among students who reported that they had sex before age 15, 41.5% of females reported being forced to have sex compared to 5.5% of males. (3)

In a 2011 survey, 1,500 black youth ages 13-21 reported considerable pressure to have sex. “Of those who have had sex, 47% of those ages 13 – 21 (including 21% of those 13 – 15) say they have been pressured to go further than they wanted to.” (4)

Students ever forced to have sex were significantly less likely to use condoms and had lower protective factors including parents’ knowledge of activities and connections to school and community. (3)

Sexual pressure behaviors and tactics create or enhance power differences. Power differences increase the likelihood of unwanted sex and unhealthy relationships. (3)

If one partner performs a sexual act that is not pleasurable or that crosses a boundary the other has set, the probability of further violation is very strong. There may be some shame in discussing this. (1)
Any time that a partner refers to women in a derogatory way, judges women, uses disturbing language about women or views violent or degrading pornography, young women should be suspicious. (1)

2013 Oregon Healthy Teens Survey Results

(5)

“During the past 30 days, have you ever been harassed at school (or on the way to or from school) with unwanted sexual comments or attention?”

“Yes” 8.6% Grade 8 “Yes” 6.7% Grade 11

“During the past 30 days, have you ever been harassed at school (or on the way to or from school) because someone thought you were gay, lesbian, or bisexual?”

“Yes” 7.0% Grade 8 “Yes” 3.6% Grade 11

“Have you ever given in to sexual activity when you didn’t want to because of pressure?”

11th grade “Yes” 11.7% “No” 88.3%

“Have you ever been physically forced to have sexual intercourse when you did not want to?”

11th grade “Yes” 5.5% “No” 94.5%

“During your life, has any adult ever had sexual contact with you?”

11th grade “Yes” 7.3% “No” 92.7%

“During the past 12 months, did your boyfriend or girlfriend ever hit, slap, or physically hurt you on purpose?”

11th grade “Yes” 4.2% “No” 95.8%

“During your life, has any adult ever intentionally hit or physically hurt you?”

11th grade “Yes” 23.2% “No” 76.8%

(1) *Preventing Sexual Coercion Among Adolescents: A Training Guide for the Family Planning Provider*, Emory University Regional Training Center 2nd Edition, 2003.

(2) *Survey Says... Under Pressure*, Data from a national telephone survey conducted for The National Campaign by Social Science Research Solutions. January and February 2014.

(3) *Oregon Health Trends*, Oregon Department of Human Services, Center for Health Statistics, Series No. 60, September 2003.

(4) *Almost Half of Black Youth Report Pressure to Have Sex: New Essence Magazine/National Campaign Survey Released*. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, September 2011, Essence Magazine October 2011 issue.

(5) 2013 *Oregon Healthy Teens Survey*, Oregon Health Authority, International Survey Associates, March 2014.

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