

The Development of Dating Violence: What Doesn't Develop, What Does Develop, How Does it Develop, and What Can We Do About It?

WHAT IS THE RESEARCH ABOUT?


This study is an overview of factors that can contribute to aggression in adolescents' dating relationships, from a developmental perspective. Specifically, this paper explores how dating violence may develop on an individual level, in relation to family and peer influences. Additionally, the researcher addresses what we can do to prevent teen dating violence (TDV), and how promoting supportive relationships may be key to reducing TDV among youth.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

- This research provides an overview of factors that may contribute to TDV, as well as factors that may inhibit aggression in relationships.
- This work argues that by understanding aspects that influence aggressive and violent behaviours in relationships, we can work to prevent and intervene with positive, healthy, prosocial behaviours

WHAT DID THE RESEARCHER DO?

In this article, the researcher provides a summary of factors that can either support or inhibit TDV. Specifically, the article discusses developmental problems for youth who engage in TDV, learned factors and social factors contributing to IPV (i.e., what are youth learning in their environment that is making them become aggressive), followed by strategies youth and health care educators can use in order to prevent/intervene before TDV develops.



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WHAT DID THE RESEARCHER FIND?

In the section concerning what doesn't develop, the researcher lists six characteristics of healthy relationships (i.e., the belief in nonaggressive problem solving, strong communication skills, compromise and negotiation in stressful situations, independence, mutual decision making, and trust), and suggests that deficits in these areas can lead to TDV among youth. Additionally, self-regulation, perspective-taking, and empathy are also characteristics that may not have fully developed for youth who engage in aggressive relationships. Consequently, there are several components that are essential for healthy development that may be absent in youth who participate in TDV.

In the section about what does develop, the researcher found that bullying, child maltreatment, violence at home, and stress likely play a role in youth displaying patterns of aggression in romantic relationships. Specifically, it could be that positive internal processes (i.e., the ability to regulate one's emotions) did not develop due to elevated stress and anxiety. Therefore, youth may have learned that aggression is an effective strategy for managing their emotions in romantic relationships.

HOW CAN YOU USE THIS RESEARCH?

This work can be used by public health educators looking to create workshops that provide parents, social workers, schools, and communities with information about what contributes to TDV among youth. Further, this work is useful for researchers who are looking to build on existing literature regarding the development of dating violence. Since this work is a summary of existing literature, researchers may want to consider using this as a starting point for future studies looking to explore prevention strategies for TDV.

ABOUT THE RESEARCHER:

Dr. Debra Pepler, York University and The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Canada

KEYWORDS

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FULL REFERENCE

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