Physical, Sexual, and Date Abuse
Older Girls Are More Likely Than Older Boys to Experience Abuse

Percent reporting ever abused, grades 9-12

- **Sexual abuse**: 12% (Girls) vs. 5% (Boys)
- **Physical abuse**: 17% (Girls) vs. 12% (Boys)
- **Date-forced sex**: 8% (Girls) vs. 5% (Boys)
- **Physical, sexual, or date-forced sex**: 26% (Girls) vs. 17% (Boys)

*The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls, 1997*
Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Physical and Sexual Abuse of Younger Adolescents
Abuse Happens at an Alarmingly Young Age

Percent reporting ever abused, grades 5-8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical abuse</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual abuse</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Most Abuse Happens at Home, It Happens More Than Once, and the Abuser Is Usually a Family Member

Percent of sexually or physically abused girls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abuser was a family friend</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuser was a family member</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse happened at home</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse happened more than once</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls, 1997*
Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Girls and Boys Often Tell No One About Their Abuse

Percent of sexually or physically abused adolescents who told:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No one</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best friend</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor or nurse</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Adolescent Girls: at Risk at Home
One in Four Girls Has Wanted to Leave Home Because of Violence or Threat of Violence

Percent who wanted to leave home because of violence or threat of violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades 5-8</th>
<th>Grades 9-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girls: 24</td>
<td>Boys: 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls: 29</td>
<td>Boys: 23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Self-Rated Health Status
Steep Decline for Older Girls But Not for Older Boys

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Depressive Symptoms
Girls Are at Higher Risk Than Boys

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Self-Confidence

Girls’ Self-Confidence Declines and Boys’ Increases with Age

Grades 5-8  Grades 9-12

GIRLS

Percent

70  60  50  40  30  20  10  0

Low self-confidence  High self-confidence

9  14  44  39

BOYS

Percent

70  60  50  40  30  20  10  0

Low self-confidence  High self-confidence

7  7  48  55

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Mental Health and Family Status

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Depressive Symptoms and Low Self-Confidence

Black Girls Least Likely to Have Symptoms

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Sources of Support When Stressed or Depressed: Girls with Depressive Symptoms Often Have No One to Turn To

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Physical and Sexual Abuse and Mental Health
Abused Girls Are Twice as Likely to Have Symptoms of Poor Mental Health

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Girls: Diet and Exercise
Dieting Increases and Exercise Decreases with Age

Percent of girls who:

- Have dieted
  - Grades 5-8: 39
  - Grades 9-12: 58

- Exercise three or more times a week
  - Grades 5-8: 81
  - Grades 9-12: 67

*The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls, 1997*
Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Risky Behaviors: Smoking, Drinking, Using Drugs
Older Girls and Boys Report Similar Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smoke *</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink *</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Drugs *</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Smoke = smoke several cigarettes or a pack or more in the past week
  Drink = drink at least once a month or once a week
  Use drugs = used illegal drugs in the past month

*The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls, 1997*
Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Reasons for Smoking, Drinking, and Using Drugs
Stress Is a Leading Reason Given by Girls

Percent of girls giving reason for behavior

- **Smoke**: 66% (Relieve stress), 53% (around people who do it), 15% (try it), 5% (fun)
- **Drink**: 38% (relieve stress), 29% (around people who do it), 5% (try it), 5% (fun)
- **Use drugs**: 41% (relieve stress), 28% (around people who do it), 9% (try it), 53% (fun)

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Drink = drink at least once a month or once a week
Use drugs = used illegal drugs in the past month

*The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls, 1997*
Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Abuse and Risky Behaviors
Abused Girls Are Twice as Likely to Put Their Health at Risk

- **No abuse**
- Physical or sexual abuse or forced by a date to have sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>No Abuse</th>
<th>Abused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smoke</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use drugs</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binge and purge</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Smoke = smoke several cigarettes or a pack or more in the past week
  Drink = drink at least once a month or once a week
  Use drugs = used illegal drugs in the past month
  Binge and purge = binge and purge more than once a week

*The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls, 1997*
Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Risky Behaviors and Mental Health
Girls with Depressive Symptoms Are Twice as Likely to Smoke, Drink, or Use Drugs

Percent of girls grades 9-12

- No or few depressive symptoms
- Moderate or severe depressive symptoms

Smoke *
- 11
- 23

Drink *
- 11
- 25

Use drugs *
- 14
- 30

* Smoke = smoke several cigarettes or a pack or more in the past week
Drink = drink at least once a month or once a week
Use drugs = used illegal drugs in the past month

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Risky Behaviors and Race/Ethnicity
Black and Asian American Girls Are Less Likely to Engage in Risky Behaviors

Percent of girls

- White
- Hispanic
- Black
- Asian American

Smoke *
- 11
- 6
- 2
- 4

Drink *
- 11
- 7
- 4
- 5

Use drugs *
- 13
- 11
- 7
- 6

* Smoke = smoke several cigarettes or a pack or more in the past week
  Drink = drink at least once a month or once a week
  Use drugs = used illegal drugs in the past month

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Girls with Less-Educated Mothers Are More at Risk

Percent of girls

- Black: Mother did not graduate from high school
- Light gray: Mother is a high school graduate
- White: Mother has some college
- Dark gray: Mother is a college graduate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smoke *</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drink *</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Use drugs * | 21 | 12 | 12 |
|             |    |    |    |
|             |    |    | 8   |

* Smoke = smoke several cigarettes or a pack or more in the past week
  Drink = drink at least once a month or once a week
  Use drugs = used illegal drugs in the past month

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.*
Access Barriers
One in Four Girls Did Not Get Needed Care

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Reasons Why Older Adolescents Do Not Get Needed Care

Percent of those who did not get needed care, grades 9-12

- Did not want to tell parents: Girls 41, Boys 27
- Cost too much/no insurance: Girls 36, Boys 30
- No time to get care: Girls 25, Boys 20
- No transportation: Girls 11, Boys 6

*The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls, 1997*
Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Uninsured Girls Are at High Risk for Access Barriers

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Girls with Less-Educated Mothers Are at Risk for Access Barriers

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Minority Girls Less Likely to Have a Regular Source of Care

Percent of girls who do not have a regular doctor

Asian American: 26
Hispanic: 21
Black: 13
White: 0

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Abused Girls and Girls with Depressive Symptoms Are at High Risk of Access Barriers

Percent of girls who had an instance of not getting needed care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Depressive Symptoms</th>
<th>Physical or Sexual Abuse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has symptoms</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few or none</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls, 1997*
Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Gaps Exist Between What Girls Believe Doctors Should Discuss and What Doctors Have Discussed

- **Eating disorders**: 66% reported doctors should discuss, 24% reported discussed.
- **Sexually transmitted disease prevention**: 65% reported doctors should discuss, 28% reported discussed.
- **Drugs**: 65% reported doctors should discuss, 28% reported discussed.
- **Drinking**: 56% reported doctors should discuss, 23% reported discussed.
- **Physical or sexual abuse**: 48% reported doctors should discuss, 13% reported discussed.

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.*
Abused Girls or Girls with Depressive Symptoms Often Embarrassed to Talk to Their Doctor

Percent of girls who have had a time when they were too embarrassed or uncomfortable to discuss problems with physicians

- Abused: 52%
- Not abused: 32%
- Depressive symptoms: 51%
- No depressive symptoms: 31%

*The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls, 1997*
Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Girls Often Prefer Female Doctors and Want to Talk Privately to Doctors, Without Parents

- Prefer a female doctor: Total 51, Grades 5-8 55, Grades 9-12 46
- Doctor's gender makes no difference: Total 46, Grades 5-8 42, Grades 9-12 50
- Prefer to see doctor alone: Total 29, Grades 5-8 18, Grades 9-12 41

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.
Girls’ Preferences for Doctors Are Not Always Met

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preference</th>
<th>Percent of Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prefer a female doctor</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor is female</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor is male and prefer female</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.*