



Institute for Children, Poverty & Homelessness



Homelessness is a Health & Well-Being Issue

Homeless high school students are at increased risk of experiencing sexual violence. The lack of housing alternatives and social networks can force these vulnerable teens into unsafe living arrangements or into staying with an abusive partner.

Nearly 1 in 4 homeless high schoolers reported being physically forced to have sexual intercourse. This is 3x the rate of their housed peers (23% vs. 7%).

During the previous 12 months, homeless students reported:

Unwanted Sexual Activity



30% were forced into unwanted sexual activity.
15% were forced by someone they were dating.

Emotional Abuse



36%

More than 1 in 3 homeless students were emotionally abused by someone they were dating.

Physical Abuse

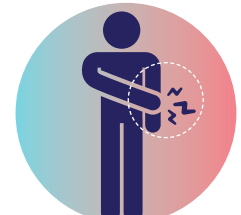


20% of homeless students reported physical abuse by someone they were dating, vs. 4% of housed students.

5X



Housed



Homeless

Emotional and physical abuse often lead to sexual assault.

The combined trauma of homelessness and sexual violence can stay with children and teens for a lifetime. Teens who are sexually assaulted or abused are at high risk for depression and anxiety, drug use, and antisocial behaviors like bullying and physical fights.

Teachers, direct service providers, and health care professionals should be equipped to:

- × Identify signs of housing instability and trauma
- × Maintain stability through routine
- × Encourage a sense of belonging and acceptance

