



SWEDISH GENDER  
EQUALITY AGENCY

# YOUTH INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

A summary of three research papers



This is a summary of three research papers.  
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Photo: Stina Gränfors

This is a summary of three research papers commissioned by the Swedish Gender Equality Agency.

Each examines youth intimate partner violence from a different perspective:

- Youth intimate partner violence and honour-related violence and oppression.
- Fatal intimate partner violence against young people.
- Youth intimate partner violence and nonprofit support.

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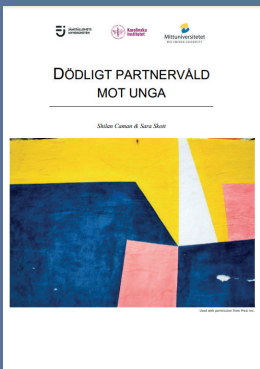


# READ THE FULL REPORTS



## YOUTH INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND HONOUR-RELATED VIOLENCE AND OPPRESSION

Authors:  
Carolina Jernbro, lecturer in public health sciences at Karlstad University and expert on violence against children at the Children´s Welfare Foundation Sweden; Åsa Landberg, external expert on violence against children at the Children´s Welfare Foundation Sweden.



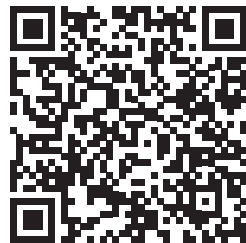
## YOUTH INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE

Authors:  
Shilan Caman, PhD, Centre for Psychiatry Research at Karolinska Institutet; Sara Skott, Associate Professor of Criminology at Mid Sweden University.



## YOUTH INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND NONPROFIT SUPPORT

Authors:  
Sibel Korkmaz, PhD, and Professor Carolina Överlien of the Department of Social Work, Stockholm University.







# YOUTH INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND HONOUR-RELATED VIOLENCE AND OPPRESSION

The report Våld i ungas nära relationer och hedersrelaterat våld och förtryck [Youth Intimate Partner Violence and Honour-Related Violence and Oppression] is based on a survey sent to 149 schools around Sweden.

A total of 5,820 youths in year 9 (15–16 years) responded to the survey, answering questions on violence in intimate relationships and honour-related violence and oppression. One third of those who had been in an intimate partner relationship said that they had experienced violence. The most common is being subjected to digital and psychological violence.

Almost one in ten of those who had been in an intimate relationship responded that they had been subjected to sexual and/or physical violence within an intimate relationship. Girls and nonbinary youths constituted a clear majority of those subjected to intimate partner violence

The report reveals that those who had been subjected to intimate partner violence had often experienced violence by someone else, such as a family member. Youths with neuropsychiatric disabilities and youths whose parents had substance abuse and dependency issues were also subjected to violence to a greater extent than others.

One key conclusion of the report is that violence prevention needs to be reinforced and expanded to include younger children. If violence-prevention efforts are strengthened among young children, the risk of being subjected to intimate partner violence in older ages can be reduced.

**Youths who had been subjected to intimate partner violence had often been subjected to violence by someone else, such as a family member.**



Photos: Stina Gränfors

Authors:  
Carolina Jernbro & Åsa Landberg

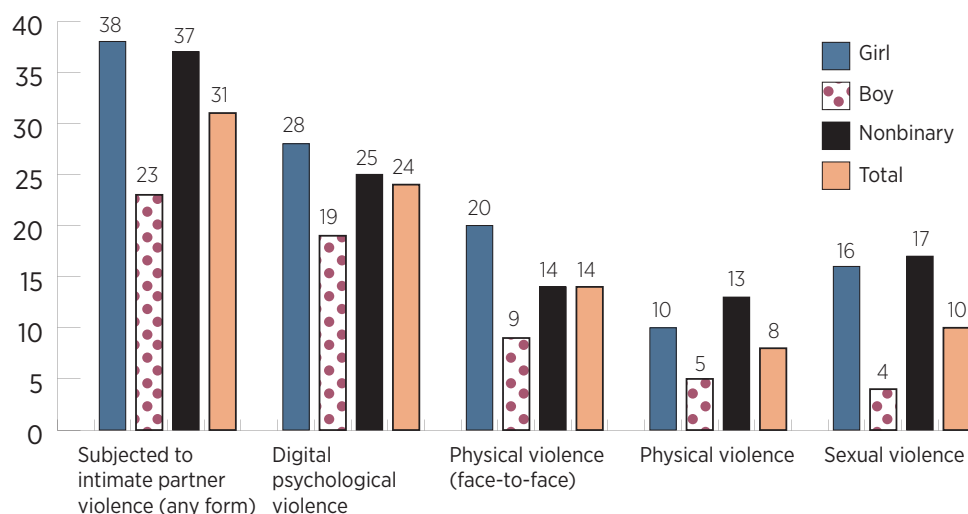
# CONCLUSIONS

- Violence is common in youths' intimate relationships and often overlaps with other forms of violence.
- This study is unique as the respondents are so young. Many of them had already experienced violence in their own intimate relationships, which shows that violence prevention work needs to start early.
- The study explores various forms of violence: physical child abuse, psychological child abuse, experience of violence against parents, neglect, sexual assault and bullying. All of these overlap with youth intimate partner violence.
- Almost one in three youths who had been involved in an intimate relationship had been subjected to youth intimate partner violence by the age of 15. One in ten had been subjected to sexual violence and eight percent to physical violence.
- Girls and nonbinary youths were subjected to all forms of violence to a greater extent than boys. Compared to boys, girls and nonbinary youths were four times more likely to be subjected to sexual violence. Girls were twice as likely to be subjected to physical violence by an intimate partner compared to boys.
- Digital psychological violence was the most common form of youth intimate partner violence.
- Sixteen percent of all respondents who had been involved in an intimate relationship had been subjected to at least two forms of violence.
- The survey reveals that being subjected to violence had a significant impact on mental health. Youths subjected to intimate partner violence were more likely to report self-harm, suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts than their peers who did not have the same experience.
- About one in five respondents stated that they experienced pressure to remain a virgin. In this regards there was clearly a gender imbalance.
- The demand to remain a virgin was most common among girls with foreign-born parents.
- Girls under pressure to remain virgins were subjected to more severe and systematic violence than boys and other girls.
- These girls also faced higher demands from those around them regarding choice of partner, including greater pressure/demands to be in a heterosexual relationship.



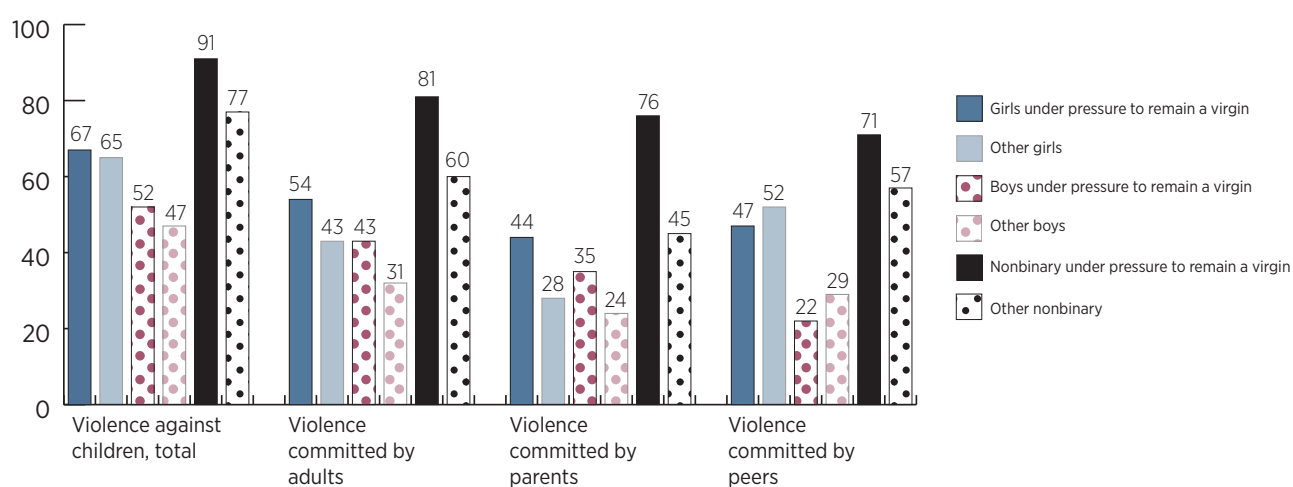
# STATISTICS

**Vulnerability to various forms of intimate partner violence, by sex (%)**



Respondents: 1,311 girls, 1,311 boys and 89 nonbinary who have been in an intimate relationship

**Vulnerability to violence committed by parents, other adults and peers among youths under pressure to remain a virgin, compared with other youths (%)**



# FATAL VIOLENCE IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

The report *Dödligt partnervåld mot unga* [Youth intimate partner homicide] examines the extent and development of fatal violence in intimate heterosexual relationships. The report is based on all solved cases of fatal intimate partner violence in Sweden between 1990 and 2017.

The report reveals that fatal intimate partner violence is not limited to adult relationships. Young people are also subjected to fatal intimate partner violence to a similar extent. Despite this, there are significant knowledge gaps and little research is conducted in the field.

Comparisons between young people and adults over 26 years of age reveal both similarities and disparities between the two age groups. One thing that is clear is that most young victims of fatal intimate partner violence are girls, as many as 97 per cent, in heterosexual relationships.

Another significant conclusion is that fatal intimate partner violence against young people has not decreased over time. Between 1990 and 2017, fatal intimate partner violence against adult women decreased by an average of 1.7 percent annually. A similar downward trend is not evident in cases of fatal intimate partner violence against girls and young women.

One possible explanation for this disparity is that adults have been the primary target of most violence prevention interventions over the years.



**Fatal intimate partner violence against young people has not decreased over time in Sweden**



Photos: Stina Gränfors

Authors:  
Shilan Caman & Sara Skott



# CONCLUSIONS

- Fatal intimate partner violence against women has declined over time. This downward trend does not, however, apply to fatal violence against girls and young women.
- In cases of fatal intimate partner violence against young people, the victims are almost exclusively female: 97 per cent of victims are girls or young women killed by a male partner.
- In Sweden, 16 per cent of the victims of fatal intimate partner violence are under 26 years of age.
- Girls and women are six times more likely than boys and men to be killed by an intimate partner.
- On average, 14 girls and women are killed by a male partner every year in Sweden.
- There are both similarities and significant differences between girls, young women and adult women who fall victim to fatal intimate partner violence. The most significant factors that differentiate fatal intimate partner violence against girls and young women are separation as motive and strangulation as cause of death. Girls and young women are twice as likely to be killed by strangulation compared to adult women.
- There are important differences between young people and adults in terms of substances consumed and abused. Both perpetrator and victim were more likely to have taken drugs prior to fatal intimate partner violence against girls and young women.
- There is limited knowledge about fatal violence in young people's intimate relationships. To effectively combat and prevent intimate partner violence at all ages, specific consideration must be given to young victims of crime.



# YOUTH INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND NONPROFIT SUPPORT

The report Våld i ungas nära relationer och det ideella stödet [Youth Intimate Partner Violence and Nonprofit Support] examines how and why young people seek support from helplines and young women's/youth empowerment centres when they are victims or perpetrators of intimate partner violence.

**Helplines are often the first place people turn to discuss violence.**

The report shows that nonprofit organisations are important because of the low threshold for support they offer. Another important reason that young people turn to NGO:s [Non governmental organisations] is that the support they offer is unconditional.

Another advantage is that young people can choose to remain anonymous in their contacts with the NGO. This also offers them some level of control over whether social services or other agencies become involved.

The report also reveals that young people often seek support when the situation is acute. Some call about something that is happening right now. Others seek support when they realise, or are told, that they have subjected their partner to violence or some other problematic behaviour within a relationship.

The reported is divided into three sub-studies: the role of nonprofit organisations and society's responsibility to offer support, what support the victims and perpetrators of violence seek online, and young people's thoughts on society's support with regard to intimate partner violence.

Authors:  
Sibel Korkmaz & Carolina Överlien

Photo: Stina Gränfors



# CONCLUSIONS

- Helplines and NGO:s around the country offering support to girls, young people and trans people gather dedicated individuals and knowledge about youth intimate partner violence. These helplines and empowerment centres play a vital role, offering support at a low threshold from experts in the kinds of problems that young people may have.
- Helplines and NGO:s are often the first place that young people turn to in order to discuss their experiences of intimate partner violence.
- NGO helpline staff report that local and regional authorities are often unable to take over from where the role and mandate of the NGO:s ends.
- The picture painted by many helplines is that young people have a certain distrust of the authorities and therefore turn to an NGO instead.
- Young people often seek support for an ongoing violent situation/in an emergency. This should be viewed in relation to the fact that it often takes a long time for the victims of violence to talk to someone and ask for help.
- There is a need to pay attention to young people with neuropsychiatric and other types of disabilities, as there is an increased risk of exposure to violence
- It is important to be able to seek support anonymously. This is especially true of young people at risk of honour-related violence and oppression, who are unable to turn to anyone in their family or community.
- Young people raised in an honour context often choose not to seek support from those with formal responsibility for children and young people's health and welfare, such as school health care or social services.
- Many young people seek help because they are unsure whether the behaviour they have been subjected to is actually violence.
- Young perpetrators of violence tend to seek support when a former partner tells them that they crossed their sexual boundaries. Under such circumstances, the perpetrator are more likely to turn to an anonymous chat.



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