An Exploration of Dating Violence Norms Among Early Adolescents
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Abstract
Early adolescence is a significant time of development, as many middle schoolers begin to explore dating and relationships, and unfortunately, may experience violence from dating partners. Not only may issues of violence arise, but gender roles and norms may also influence adolescents in a detrimental way. Thus, it is imperative to find preventative programs that educate adolescents about dating violence and healthy dating behaviors and norms. During the 2020-2021 school year, 7th-grade students at a midwestern semi-urban school district participated in a dating violence prevention program. Surveys were conducted before and after the program. The group found two dating violence norms showed negative changes: 1) more students agreed sometimes boys have to hit their partner to get them back under control, and 2) it is okay for a girl to hit someone they are dating if she is hit first. We will explore reasons why these adolescents continue to believe violent dating behaviors are acceptable, even after participating in a prevention program. This exploration has the potential to bring awareness as to why students believe dating violence is justifiable and provide prevention programs with suggestions on strengthening their dating violence prevention programs.

Keywords: dating violence, adolescents, prevention programs

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An Exploration of Dating Violence in Early Adolescents

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

**Dating Violence Norms**
Controlling behaviors one partner uses to gain power and control over another in a relationship

**Early Adolescents**
Students between the ages of 11 and 13
- This study reviews a program that focuses on middle school students
- Early adolescence is a time where peers are crucial in shaping behavior norms

**Dating Violence Prevention Program**
Designed to educate and inform teens about dating violence and encourage healthy relationships
- Types of abuse discussed: emotional, verbal, financial, physical, sexual
- Importance of communication, setting boundaries, and seeking support
- Empowerment through education and awareness

This program aims to raise awareness and promote healthy relationships among young people.
References


Week 4: reviewed six types of abuse, viewed a dating violence scene from “What Would You Do?”, briefly discussed resources

Week 5: reviewed six types of abuse, discussed reactions to different dating violence situations as a victim and as a bystander, briefly discussed resources